

TRIBUTE TO THE MAYOR

Let's face it, Cllr Kenny – Sally – was dealt a rotten hand for her year as Mayor of Merton. Elected at a much-delayed Annual Council Meeting in September last year, it seemed no time at all before the excesses of Eat Out to Help Out were coming back to push up the infection rate and we were back into lockdown by November. Fortunately, we were able to go ahead with planned events for Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day on a socially distanced basis. These are always solemn events in which the Mayor plays a key role as our first citizen, and one which Sally performed with dignity and composure.

But the Mayor's carol service planned for 16th December had to be cancelled at short notice, and there was no Christmas dinner or other seasonal festivities for us to enjoy with the Mayor.

Never mind. Andy Butcher, Chair of Merton and Morden Guild, and supporter of Morden Little League, came to the rescue with the Mayor's virtual Bingo session in January. This was great fun, even if his customary caller's patter had to be toned down a bit in the interests of political correctness.

Bingo seemed to bring out the gambling spirit in members, so in February we had the Mayor's horse racing sweepstake every Saturday, with a lively commentary on WhatsApp on the favoured runners and riders. The Southgate household provided surprisingly successful in the sweepstakes, so much so that we were emboldened to enter for the balloon race, but as this was entirely virtual, we never worked out how the

winners were determined. Never mind, it was fun, and Sally's two charities, Merton & Morden Guild and Morden Little League both benefitted.

And so Sally's Mayoral year comes to a close after just eight short months, thanks to the need to bring the ACM forward to avoid a possible ban on councils meeting virtually after 6th May. It's been too short. Let's thank Sally for her time as our Mayor, and the dignity and authority with which she has carried out her role. And here's hoping we can find an opportunity in the future for her to come back and be our Mayor again, only next time without the restrictions imposed by the pandemic getting in the way.

Cllr Peter Southgate