

# LOOK TO!

*ISSUE 170*

*December 2025*



**All Saints Church Pen-Y-Fai**  
**Newsletter of the Llandaff Branch of the L&M DACBR**

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## Newsletter submission

The deadline for the next edition is **15th February 2025**

## Front Cover

This month's cover photo was taken by **Rev Mark Broadway**

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**2025, Llandaff Branch of the Llandaff and Monmouth DACBR**

# Branch Officers

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## EDITORIAL

Well, just like Noddy Holder said, ‘It’s Christmas!’ and I do think it is the most wonderful time of the year. Now I think I’d better move off the Christmas talk. Since September, it’s been jam-packed for me. Back in school for my final year in comprehensive, which now makes me look back on school life, and it makes me feel old, thinking that the current year 7s were born in 2014. To put that into other terms, they were born the same year that Penguins of Madagascar came out, which is a personal favourite film of that year. I have had a very productive few months, though after feeling slightly nostalgic for a blip. I have successfully sent off my university applications, and I have received all of my offers.

With bell ringing, there have been no weddings which I have been able to ring for lately, which is unfortunate. But it seems to be getting more and more common. I am looking forward to the Christmas season ringing when the services across the area seem to multiply. The best ringing experience for me this season is always the Christmas Day ringing. There is a magical feeling in the bell tower on Christmas Day, and I am sure a lot of us can agree with this.

That’s my waffle for 2025. I hope you all enjoy this festive season and thank you all for the support that I have been given since taking on this incredible role. See you next year!

***Rhys Fairchild***

# Chairmans Quarterly Chat

Well then, where did that winter come from? I've just waded through a river in Cowbridge High Street to get to practice; I did think about turning around, given the horrendous weather. But seriously, please be careful out there this winter, both on the road and on any slippery tower steps!

It was good to hear of so many and take part in Remembrance Sunday ringing last week; it's certainly a poignant reminder of so many conflicts in which the UK has been involved during the past 120 years. Thank you to all who rang and played their part during the morning ceremonies.

**Andy Lingard**

# Restructuring the Association's Financial Arrangements: Proposals for Branch AGMs 2026

## **A reminder: what's the current system?**

- **Branch Autonomy:** Each Branch collects its own subscriptions, sets its own membership categories and subscription rates, and manages its own spending.
- **Association Levy:** The Association Management Committee (AMC) charges each Branch a levy to fund central services, which have expanded in recent years to include training, recruitment, and maintenance initiatives.
- **Branch Reserves:** Both Branches hold substantial reserves (£2,000 for Llandaff, £3,400 for Monmouth) but have limited outgoings and few plans to spend these funds.

## **The Proposal: Centralising Our Finances**

The AMC proposes a major restructuring: combining Branch funds into a single, centrally managed Association account (excluding the Bell Restoration Fund which will remain as a separate charitable fund). Key elements include:

- **One Bank Account:** All non-charitable funds pooled under the Association.
- **Single Treasurer:** One person responsible for budgets, reporting, and annual accounts.
- **Membership Officer(s):** Responsible for collecting subscriptions and maintaining a unified membership database, potentially with online payment options.
- **Annual Expenditure Budget for Branches:** following a discussion between the two Branch Chairs and the Association Treasurer, each Branch will be allocated an expenditure budget for the delivery of Branch activities with no need to gain approval from the AMC for expenditure within that budget.
- **Grant System:** Branches or groups can apply to the central fund for grants to run activities, training, or events.
- **Designated Funds:** The central fund could have specific pots for administration, young ringers, maintenance, PR, training, and social activities, with annual budgeting based on need and income.
- **Avoiding bank charges:** one of our Branches currently pays bank charges on its bank account. This expense can be avoided if funds are pooled.

## **What Are the Benefits?**

- **Consistent Membership Fees:** Consistent subscriptions and categories across the Association.
- **Transparency:** A clear, consolidated view of the Association's finances.

- Flexibility: Easier to fund cross-branch projects and larger initiatives.
- Reduced Admin: Less duplication, fewer accounts, and lower banking fees.
- Modernisation: Opportunity to adopt new technology for membership and payments.
- National Engagement: Better positioned to participate in national initiatives and adapt to future changes, such as becoming a charity or joining national membership schemes.
- Organisational Agility: More freedom to trial new ways of organising and supporting ringing in South Wales.

### **What needs to happen next?**

Since the 2025 Association AGM there have been several consultation sessions and an Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document has been produced. The FAQ document is available on the Association website (you will need to log in to view the document)

The next stage is that the two Branches will be asked to vote on the motion below at their respective AGMs in early 2026.

### **Motion for approval at Branch AGMs**

This proposal is about future-proofing our Association—making sure we have the right structures to support ringing for years to come.

The motion that the Branches will be asked to vote on is as follows:

“That the Branch resolves to transfer the funds in its bank account to the Association’s General Fund and to authorise the current Treasurer and other account signatories to close the account thereafter.”

As a result of this proposal, there will be no need for each Branch to elect a Treasurer for the coming year. However, it would be useful if the incumbent Treasurers could be empowered to assist with the transition.

Assuming that both Branches vote to approve the motion above, the 2026 AGM will be asked to approve the minor rule changes that result from this proposal.

*Association Management Committee*

*October 2025*

# The Dedication Of Pen-Y-Fai Bells

The bells were rung on Sunday, 2nd November 2025, between 10:15 a.m. and 11:05 a.m., marking a joyful return to full ringing following the recent refurbishment. A total of eleven ringers were present. Among them was Kenn Collier, who attended in support despite being unable to ring himself due to a hand injury. We were also delighted to welcome Pauline Morris, the secretary of the Llandaff and Monmouth association and one of the trustees of the Bell Fund, whose presence added significance to the occasion.



Throughout the ringing session, a variety of methods and techniques were performed, including rounds, plain hunt, call changes, and queens. All were executed to a high standard, reflecting both the enthusiasm of the ringers and the improved condition of the bells. As the date coincided with All Saints' Day, the ringing also held special liturgical meaning, helping to mark the patronal festival of the church.



During the service, the Reverend Mark Broadway spoke warmly about the long-standing importance of the bells at Pen-Y-Fai Church. He acknowledged not only their historical place in the life of the parish but also the considerable effort that had gone into their restoration. In his address, he recognised the dedication of everyone who contributed to the repair of the bells and the refurbishment of the tower, expressing gratitude

for the collective commitment that made the project a success.

Special thanks were offered to Nicholsons for their excellent workmanship and professional expertise throughout the restoration. Appreciation was also given to Gwyn Owen, whose generous contribution of labour helped to reduce costs significantly. Further thanks were extended to Ken Collier for assembling an informative display at the back of the church, detailing the restoration process, and for sharing a video showcasing the newly refurbished bells and the ringing chamber.

At the close of the service, a celebration cake was ceremonially cut by Councillor Bennett of Pen-Y-Fai, marking the culmination of a memorable and uplifting event. The church was filled to capacity, creating a warm and lively atmosphere, and refreshments were generously provided afterwards, allowing the congregation and visitors to continue their conversations and enjoy the sense of community.

Practice at Pen-Y-Fai takes place on Mondays from 7 to 8 p.m., and new or returning ringers are always welcome.

*Philip Williams*



# News From Around the Branch

## Caerphilly

Since my last report, we have been pleased to welcome yet another new learner to our number. Heather, now living in the area, comes from very good ringing stock in that her father is prominent amongst the Devon Call Change Ringers, and although Heather has not rung previously the progress she has made a learning, suggests she must have acquired something from her past, if not genetic, then perhaps absorbed while watching him and others ringing. It is indeed remarkable how small an amount of time it has taken for our concerns about the future of ringing at Caerphilly to be broadly allayed, and a pleasure for us to be part of what we can reasonably describe as a much more diverse but totally together ringing family.

As a result of the additions to our number, we were pleased for the first time in very many years to have been able to ring all eight bells half muffled to mark Remembrance Sunday. In addition, we have been pleased more generally to welcome a peal rung by a band from the Peterborough Diocesan Guild and at the time of writing, we are looking forward to following our recent welcome trend of closer contact with the Association by hosting their Surprise Major Practice.

*Peter Jones*

## Pen-Y-Fai

The bell tower was finished in September, and it was great to hear the bells again- very different and easier to ring!

We have a team to ring for the services on Sunday, as we haven't had one for a long time.

We have 10/12 people turning up for Monday practice, which is brilliant.

There are more learners coming in the new year, which is exciting. We are so lucky to have Thomas because he is so enthusiastic, and he is taking the session and improving our ringing.

*Trisha Owen*



## Llantrisant

### Bell Restoration

Regrettably, the bells at Llantrisant will not ring out for Christmas 2025; however, we are confident that the project to complete the restoration and augmentation to 10 bells will be complete by the end of January 2026.

The scaffolding has now been removed, and the work on the tower fabric is complete. During November, volunteers have decorated both the ringing chamber walls and timber roof, including the vestry immediately below.

We anticipate the supporting steel grillage to be in situ prior to Christmas, with the remaining steel frame in place during the second week of January, with the rehung completed by the end of the month. Almost there!!

### Hand Bells

Handbell ringing practice resumed in September as we prepare for our Ministry Area Christmas Carol services and annual Christmas Tree Festival at Llantrisant.

**Nigel Bosanko**



## Cowbridge

Hello from Cowbridge, Llanblethian and St. Hilary

Congratulations to James Bulleid's sons, Ollie and Jonny. Whilst both are still in primary school, they have raised a total of £800 for a combination of excellent causes. Ollie (9) has completed a solo 5-mile sailing challenge across Coniston Water, and Jonny (6) completed a 1.5-mile skateboard ride from Penarth Head to Cardiff Bay. A great achievement by each of them, and we wish them continued enjoyment and success in all their endeavours.



In August, Sophie, Nell and Charlie tried a different style of ringing on the Skeyton Six. These are a mini ring set up in the home of Richard Johns, in Norfolk. The Tenor of the bells, weighing in at an amazing 2lb 6oz. (for younger ringers - just over 1kg).



September into October has been quite quiet, with a number of ringers away enjoying holidays or, in some cases, work commitments.

So much so that our only representatives at the Association Quiz on 25th October were Joy and Chris. They joined the St. Sannan's Cannons (great name!) with 2nd place in the quiz and a win for the 'best dressed table' which included Joy's Chocolate Swiss roll cannons.

Closing this quarter's news brings us to 9th November, and the moving sound of half-muffled bells on a damp, Remembrance Day morning. Llanblethian was strangely atmospheric, with 11 ringers quartered in such a small tower and lit only by battery lights. At Holy Cross, ringing began at 10.30 and paused for the 2-minute silence before recommencing for the duration of the Remembrance Parade from the Town Hall to the Church. Another heartening turnout of ringers, 14 in total, aged between Charlie at 13 years and Mike at 86 years.

*Lest we forget*

***Elaine John***

## **Llandaff**

We have continued to make progress at the Cathedral, being able to ring on all 12 bells on more occasions. Our newer ringers have enabled us to do this and have considerably improved our ringing in rounds on 12. Learning to ring on 12 bells is a considerable skill and not easy. We have rung on 10 or 12 bells on 11 Sunday mornings and on 7 occasions rang all 12. On the other 2 Sundays we rang on 8. While we have concentrated on improving our ringing in rounds and call changes, we have rung at least Grandsire Triples almost all Sundays and on 2 Sundays we rang Grandsire Cinques as well as Caters on another. With the help of visitors from Northamptonshire, we rang Cambridge Surprise Maximus on a Sunday, which was the first time in the method for some of us since before the pandemic. Our ringing for Remembrance Sunday with all twelve bells half muffled was particularly moving.

Our practices have also been well attended with an average of 15 attendees and never less than 11. Our newer ringers have also extended to ringing Bob and Grandsire Doubles on the Treble and inside, as well as Plain Hunt. This extended to 9 and 11 at the beginning of November. We have also rung touches of Cambridge and Yorkshire Major as well as London and Bristol Surprise Major, including on a few times Double Norwich, and Little Bob (on 10). To maintain our skills in method ringing, Fred Jackson has arranged a further successful practice at Radyr at the invitation of Andrew Gainsbury for more advanced ringing.

We enjoyed a good day's outing to Brecon at the beginning of October, for which Caroline Barratt has prepared a separate report. Special ringing has included the service of Collation and Installation of the Revd Kate Harrison as Canon Chancellor of the Cathedral and the Revd Anne-Marie Renshaw as Archdeacon of Morgannwg at Evensong on Sunday 21st September. We have also had 2 visiting peal bands in October who both rang successful peals of Cambridge Surprise Maximus. There have also been more weddings than usual in the Cathedral, for which we are grateful to those who rang the Ellacombe chime. Finally, the period before Christmas is a busy one for events and services in the Cathedral, so we are planning a meal out for a Tuesday evening when we are not able to practise.

***Bob Woodward***

## **Llanishen**

We continue to practice on Mondays with numbers in double figures, sometimes with the return of three university students. Donna Jones from Preston now spends a lot of her time with daughter Hilary Brown (Newport ringer), just up the road from the tower, and so we see her most weeks. Catrin Thomas is a new adult learner currently getting into rounds, and we are still regularly joined by Bob, Mary and Neil.

A quarter peal in memory of Ann Rowe was rung on 1st September, involving some of those who rang with her here. In three methods, it included a nine-bob extent of Reverse Canterbury, probably not her favourite!.

Lilly and Leigh from St Mellons successfully trebled and covered to Bob Doubles, conducted by Andy, in their first attempts at a one-eighth peal in September. Unfortunately, Leigh's first attempt at a quarter peal never got off the ground, thanks to TFW cancelling a couple of trains up from Queen Street and so leaving one of the band stranded. There was further disappointment a week later when what would have been Lilly's first quarter dissolved around five minutes from the end. No contribution from us this year to Branch QP Fortnight: perhaps it should be longer?.

Two weddings have been chimed for since I last put pen to paper, and Lilly got her first tower grab in at Whitchurch when it hosted the Association Daytime Practice.

Pleased to see that Leigh finally got to ring a quarter at her first attempt, at St Mellons, where she started ringing. She frequently attends both St John's Cardiff and Llanishen practices, so it pays to ring around!.

Enjoy the Christmas festivities and good ringing in 2026.

*Roger Harpole*

### **Llantwit Major**

We have very little news to report this quarter.

Thursday practice evenings are well attended by the local band and on occasions visiting ringers join us which is of benefit to all as is their friendship.

Julie has made good progress and is now confidently ringing call changes and plain hunt. Louise has now grasped the concept of bell control and is ringing rounds and call changes on the third. We have a new additional female member to the band, Chris who has rekindled the art from her youth days. Consequently, we have increased our female members to 7, so here cometh the "Llantwit Girl Band"!

Very few requests have been made for wedding ringing but we are always available when needed. The bells are rung for Sunday morning services without fail. This Sunday 9th November is especially poignant as the muffled bells are rung before the Remembrance Service.

A reminder that Thursday evening is our practice session commencing at 7.30. Everyone is welcome but please notify Hilary Evans if you wish to attend.

*Sue Gordon*

## **Sully**

Practices continue on Thursday evenings thanks to the support of our regulars. We manage a blend of ringing plain hunt and Plain Bob for the 3 learners, together with several touches of something more advanced. Recently we've rung St Augustine's, St Jude's and Antelope Doubles, Double Court, Primrose Surprise, Kent & Oxford Treble Bob and Forward Minor. The Williams family ring with us most weeks and it was nice to hold a practice at their tower at Porthkerry and try out the newly re-bushed clappers.

We've had six quarter peals since the last report. Five have been of Surprise Minor as part of Peter Bennett's initiative to cultivate ringing Spliced Surprise, including the less familiar 6ths place methods. I do like the fact that this is a true Llandaff & Monmouth Association activity with a "half and half" band. We also rang a half-muffled quarter of Doubles on Remembrance Sunday and included in it was a 240 of Stedman generated by Penarth ringer, David Greenaway. Full details of all these performances are available to view online on BellBoard, two of which were part of Branch Quarter Peal Fortnight.

*Julian Parker*

## **Cadoxton**

There have been 2 peals since the last issue. 26 Sept mixed doubles with Jack Disley from Coity on the tenor. It was his first peal on the first attempt, well done Jack. 01 Nov again mixed doubles, this was a sponsored peal in aid of Ty Olwen Hospice at Morriston Hospital. Sunday service ringing continues weekly, as does our Wednesday night practices.

*Yvonne John*

## **Merthyr**

It was with great sadness that we heard of the passing of Fr. John Hughes on 04 Sept following a short illness. John was an active member of the association for many years. He served as an assistant priest at St Tydfil's for a period following his retirement from full-time ministry. He also rang with the local band, so it was only fitting that on 07 Sept, we rang a quarter in his memory. On 16 Oct, we had a visiting band from Gloucestershire called the Midweek Dodgers. Practices continue to be hit and miss due to low numbers. Visitors are always welcome but do contact me before travelling in case of cancellation.

*Yvonne John*

## **Newton Nottage**

It has been a wonderfully busy few months for our bellringers, with a host of visitors, events, and one highly anticipated anniversary celebration!

Over the past few months, we have been delighted to welcome several young visiting ringers to the Tower and are thrilled to have recruited three more into our group! It is a real pleasure to practice alongside them, and their progress has been excellent. Thanks to the support of our friends Yvonne, Andrew and Rebecca, we are all improving too, now regularly ringing Grandsire, Plain Bob, and Bob Doubles.

This year marks the 200th anniversary of Porthcawl's founding, and to celebrate this historic milestone, a group of visiting ringers (including our much-valued team member Andy) rang a quarter peal of Doubles in tribute. It was a truly fitting and memorable way to honor the occasion.

In September, we said farewell to two highly valued members of our parish community, David and Father Jonathan, who moved to their Neath parish. David has been one of our longest-serving bellringers, and his departure will leave a significant gap in our band, not just in experience but in friendship, leadership, and dedication to improving the ringing skills in our group. Over the years, David has faithfully supported our practices, ringing for weddings and festive services and has coordinated all the maintenance needs of the Bell Tower. During his steady leadership as our previous Tower Captain, he helped to train and encourage new and experienced ringers alike. We have all valued and benefitted tremendously from his friendship, and he will be deeply missed. We hope that he will continue to ring with us whenever he can!

As we continue our Monday evening practices, we are looking forward to the Festive season, starting with ringing for the Darkness to Light service on Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> November at 6 p.m. We will be ringing for several other services during December too, but Christmas morning ringing is always the highlight, especially as it is followed by the traditional Christmas Day swim (for those brave enough to swap the bells for the icy waves!).

We wish you all a joyful and peaceful Christmas.

*Rhian Mulligan*

## **Pontypridd**

We continue to hold regular practices on Wednesdays with our 3 learners making good progress under expert tuition. For the more experienced among us, we continue to be supported by ringers from other towers who enable us to extend our methods repertoire. Notable events:

Visitors from the Yorkshire Association rang a quarter peal of Belfast Surprise Major on 27<sup>th</sup> August, and on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, the Northampton branch of the Peterborough Diocesan Guild rang a peal of Dereham Surprise Major.

Yvonne organised a Quarter Peal in memory of the late Fr. John Hughes (Tower Captain at Pontypridd during the 1980s) on 14<sup>th</sup> September.

We also hosted the Branch 8 bell Practice in September, which yielded a good turnout.

As we hurtle towards the Advent Season, we aim to ring for The Christmas Fayre on December 15<sup>th</sup>.

Tempus fugit.

***Cheryl Lavington***

## **Coity**

Very brief news from Coity ringers this season, but we have had some personal celebrations with Special Birthdays in the tower. Congratulations to Jack reaching 18 years and Philippa reaching 50 years!

Also a congratulations to the proud grandparents, Chris and Andrew, on the birth of their 1st grandchild.

Our ringing news - we are proud to have rung 1/2 muffled for Remembrance Sunday with a beautiful tone on the bells to mark the day

We are glad to have welcomed Visiting ringers who have enjoyed their experience with us and look forward to ringers from the 70s, that is the decade, spending time here.

Our new ringers are coming along very well and are quickly becoming part of the team. If we get one more young ringer, we in Coity will be able to have our very own young ringers team!

We're lucky to have Joe Hallett, an experienced ringer, join us in the tower, which is really helping us to fulfil some lovely ringing on practice nights.

We continue to ring on Wednesday practice night and Sunday mornings for the call to worship. Please contact Philip for further information: 01656 729617

***Philippa Coulson***

## ***Association Clothing***

*We are pleased to say Association Clothing is now available to order. See the website for the order form.*

<https://www.llanmon.org.uk/association/association-clothing>

*Or contact Yvonne John for more information – [clothing@llanmon.org.uk](mailto:clothing@llanmon.org.uk)*

*or Tel: 07779 925015*

# Llandaff Branch 8 bell practices

These practices continue every month (1st Monday of the month) and have been moving further around the branch. Attendance varies month on month, so do the variations of ringing, but always stretching those who attend. Thank you all for your continued support. The December practice will be at Radyr on Monday, 1st. All welcome

## BELL MAINTENANCE GROUP UPDATE

This quarter has been very atypical. In September, half the group were away and the other half checked over St. Woolos' bells in readiness for the S.W. striking competition on 11th October. This was not an 'official' BMG inspection.

Once again, in October, the BMG did not meet. This time, half the group were not well enough to climb over a frame and crawl beneath bells, so the proposed inspection of Shirenewton had to be postponed at the last minute.

On November 14th, the BMG went to Shirenewton. Please see the Monmouth Branch Newsletter for further details.

If any member of the L. and M. has a bell maintenance query or would like their peal of bells inspected (free of charge) then please do get in touch with me and the BMG will do its best to help.

***Joy Kipling***

[bmg@llanmon.org.uk](mailto:bmg@llanmon.org.uk)

# Brecon Ringing Outing

Blustery Storm Amy dawned on Saturday, 4th October, as if the weather itself wished to take part in our ringing outing. Walking through Brecon was a windswept experience, with ringers leaning at improbable angles to stay upright. Nevertheless, a brave and breezy band assembled, determined that neither rain nor wind would dampen their enthusiasm. Warm thanks are due to Ali Robinson and Christine Thomas for organising the event so efficiently and for their optimism in proceeding despite the challenging forecast.

## **Tower One – St David’s, Llanfaes**

Our first stop was St David’s, Llanfaes, a deceptively spacious church whose six bells provided a bright and welcoming start to the day. Under Bob Woodward’s calm and capable captaincy, the band rang Grandsire Doubles, Stedman Doubles, Call Changes, Bob Doubles and Plain Hunt on Five. The sound carried cheerfully into the blustery morning air, setting a fine tone for the day ahead.

## **Tower Two – St Mary’s, Brecon**

We then proceeded to St Mary’s, Brecon, an eight-bell tower where Meriel led the band with characteristic skill and good humour. We were joined by Paul and Kath Johnson, whose support and experience were greatly appreciated. Inside, the ringing was harmonious; outside, the storm began to subside. The repertoire included Rounds, Yorkshire Major, Plain Hunt on Five, Plain Hunt on Seven, and Stedman. A moment of unexpected amusement occurred when a mystery visitor appeared, joined in for a course of Stedman, and only afterwards realised he had arrived on the wrong day, to the great amusement of all present.

Lunch was enjoyed at the Cathedral café, with thanks to Ali Robinson for organising.



## **Tower Three – Brecon Cathedral (St John the Evangelist)**

Our next venue was the magnificent Brecon Cathedral, home to ten bells and a superb acoustic. David Moore kindly led the ringing here, and it was truly a highlight of the day as the tower itself is reached via a series of twists, turns, and a string of guiding lights, giving the ascent a sense of adventure. Once aloft, we enjoyed Rounds and a spirited Grandsire Triples, both beautifully executed. By this stage, even Storm Amy seemed to pause and listen appreciatively.

### **Tower Four – Llanfeugan Church**

The day concluded at Llanfeugan Church, a charming and unspoilt setting for our final ringing. This elegant eight-bell tower, under Dorothy Morgan's leadership, was shared with a few discreet bats in the belfry, who courteously kept to the tower steps.

By now the weather had calmed, and our ringing reflected the serenity of the evening: Rounds, Call Changes, Plain Hunt on seven, and Cambridge Minor all rang out clearly and confidently.

It was a day that began with bluster and ended in sunshine - a memorable, well-organised and thoroughly enjoyable outing for all.

### **Acknowledgements**

Our sincere thanks to all who took part:

Andrew, Caitlin and Meriel Gainsbury, Cian Pippen, Dorothy Morgan, David Moore, Clare Grevin, Ali Robinson, Diana Cann, Caroline Barratt, Christine Thomas, Marie Carson, Bob Woodward, Paul and Cath Johnson, Fred Jackson, Clive Moncrieff and Geoff Stickland.

Thanks again to Christine & Ali for cooking up a storm of organisation and the four ringers who captained each tower with such effortless breeze - namely Bob Woodward, Meriel Gainsbury, David Moore and Dorothy Morgan.

*Caroline Barratt*



## **ALWYN LEWIS'S CUMBRIA TOUR 1<sup>st</sup> - 5th SEPTEMBER 2025**

14 ringers, mainly from South Wales, made the 280-mile trip up to Shap near Penrith for the first of 19 towers on this year's tour. This 6 was followed by the 6 at Bampton before we continued north for another hour to our hotel near Wigton. This establishment has recently changed hands, and the new proprietor made a memorable impression on the group, rapidly earning the nickname 'Basil'. We will be chuckling over his antics for many years to come. The hotel was clean, despite all the building/decorating work going on, and the food was good, although he went through three chefs during the week. There was just the faintest hint of chaos on the other side of the kitchen door.

Alwyn organised the week as four mini tours: days 1 and 5 were based either side of the M6 between junctions 38 and 39, to the west on Monday and the east on Friday; day 2 was Carlisle, day 3 was Whitehaven, and day 4 was a southeast loop to Kirkby Stephen.

Day 2 started with Basil ordering us to fill one table before starting another. It was a good job we all got on. We rang a good touch of Stedman at the first tower, Wigton (8cwt 8) and scored Norwich and Ipswich at the 6.5 cwt 6 at Thursby. Lunch was at Brampton where we enjoyed touches of St. Clements and Double Oxford despite the ropes on 4, 5 and 6 being somewhat elastic. On to see Hadrian's Wall, a remarkable testament to Roman builders before reaching the last tower of the day, the fine, easy-going 21cwt 12 at Carlisle. Plain Hunt



cinques was achieved in style and we relished the chance to try out different combinations of bells ending our time here with 3 good leads of Bristol on the back 8. Following the group photo, which the local ringer kindly took for us, most of the group patronized the nearby Bordo Lounge for supper. Our journey back to the hotel was peppered with road closures and diversions. Thank goodness for sat. navs.! Back at base Basil was waiting for us, waving his pre-order form for breakfast.

The group outside Carlisle Cathedral (Bob Woodward missing having left to visit relatives).

Wednesday dawned grey and very wet. Breakfast was a lesson in being precise with ones pre-order as the smoked salmon arrived without the expected scrambled egg. We rang at 5 towers during the day starting with the 13.5 cwt 8 at Aspatria which boasts an interesting half-step stairway to the trap door leading into the tiny, airless ringing chamber. On to the delightful 5cwt 8 at Moresby where the bells were cast from the old 21cwt 8 from St. John's, Cleator Moor, the surplus metal paying for the installation and tower improvements at Moresby. Following lunch we enjoyed ringing the lovely 16cwt 12 housed in the very grand Georgian church of St. James, Whitehaven. The ringing chamber is memorable for two things; a pair of broken tenor clappers mounted on a plinth in the middle and an extremely comfortable white leather sofa in one corner. The Plain Hunt cinques went so well that we rang it twice. On then to Hensingham ((13.5 cwt 8) where the rope spider has a bat (plastic) hanging from it. Half a course of Superlative was the highlight here. The final tower of the day was Arlecdon where there is a loud 14.25cwt 8. A bit of sound proofing in the ringing chamber certainly would not go amiss. Supper was savoured in a Cockermouth curry house before being greeted by Basil and his flapping breakfast sheet upon our return to the hotel.

Thursday was our last full day in Cumbria and we experienced our 3rd chef of the week - our 1st breakfast with hot baked beans! Our first tower was Great Salkeld where we met up with Barbara Fewster and her brother.

Here the doorway to the belfry is half way up the ringing chamber wall but as it did not have a door all the conductors had plenty of practice at being town criers. En route to Appleby we all got stuck in a lengthy traffic queue caused by roadworks. Our fretting about being late was unnecessary as the key never materialised despite Alwyn's best efforts to contact the local ringer. So, on to Brough, the world's heaviest ringable 4 at 17-1-24. We rang all sorts of exotic methods here such as Erin, Bristol and Double Court Minimus none of which were helped by the tenor's stretchy rope. Lunch was enjoyed at Kirkby Stephen unlike the 8 bells which we found difficult and unrewarding. We finished the day at Greystoke which has a smashing 7.25cwt 6 where Norwich and a touch of spliced Kent and Oxford were the highlights. The font cover was a 3D work of art made entirely of felt and depicting all manner of garden creatures, leaves and berries. 4:15p.m., and ringing was done for the day so most of us wended our way to the highly rated Oddfellows Arms at Caldbeck for a jovial pint together sat in their sunny beer garden. Having discovered that Basil and his family had flown off to sunnier climes for their holidays that morning we anticipated dinner with interest. It was excellent; food was plentiful and hot, service was speedier than our first dinner there and there was no Spanish Inquisition over supposedly unpaid wine bills! The group was in high spirits by the time Alwyn produced his now famous quiz. We split up into 3 teams and the brainy team who won the general knowledge round came last in the shipping forecast location round resulting in a draw for 1st place. As usual it was a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

And so our final day in Cumbria dawned bright and sunny, while the aromas of breakfast mingled unappetisingly with those emanating from the emptying of the cess pit. Our first tower, Orton, took about an hour to reach down the M6 where we again welcomed Tim Hollinghurst. Here a good touch of 5-spliced Major was scored before hanging the ropes on the much-admired arachnid rope spider. We spied 3 bells hung in a wooden frame at the back of the nave but sadly there was no explanation as to their history. On to Sedburgh, a fine 15.25cwt 8, where the ringing chamber would benefit from some sound deadening material on the walls and floor. We said goodbye to the Woodwards and Tim before heading off to Dent, an 8cwt 6 where we rang a touch of St. Clements Minor amongst other methods. The rope spider here was made from plumbing fittings - very novel. The tour ended in The Stone House Tea Rooms, Dent where we sampled delicious cream teas, sandwiches and homemade mushroom soup all washed down with teas, coffees and a pink milkshake!

A lovely way to end a memorable, well-organised and happy week with great company, good ringing and lots of laughter. Thank you, Alwyn, for a super tour!

*Joy Kipling*

# Association Quiz



The 2025 Association quiz hosted by Llantarnam Ringers was held on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October in Llantarnam Church Hall. There were 48 people in attendance making a total of 8 teams and representing 14 towers.

Phillipa was a superb Quiz master and kept the evening running at a smart pace. In between quiz rounds Jonathan had devised a tower bingo game which was used to replace the raffle.

The winners of the Quiz were the Llantarnam Legends, with a score of 72 points out of the 99 available with St

Sannans Cannons a close 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The theme of the evening, was a bring your own picnic and people really entered into the spirit of this. There was a prize for the most innovative table which was won by a team made up from new ringers and their helpers who have only been learning to ring since

January, St Sannans Cannons (Bedwellty)



Other team names were, Mad Hatters, Happy Anniversary, Confuseddotcom, White Rabbits, Mixology and Madwellty.

It was a very enjoyable evening and £119.00 was raised for the training fund.



Thank you to everyone who came from the Llantarnam Ringers. See you in 2026.

Pauline and the Llantarnam Ringers.

## The 2025 Central Council AGM and Ringing Roadshow

The Association has the right to send 3 representatives to the Central Council of Church Bellringers (CCCBR) AGM each year – so what’s it all about and how does it benefit us? The Council aims to create a vibrant community of ringers, with bell ringing widely valued as an enjoyable mental and physical exercise and unique performing art, which enhances the life of both community and church.

Members come from all over the world. The AGM is a great opportunity to swap ideas and be inspired – share the challenges we’re all facing, and how to overcome them.

### **Ringling 2030**

The key focus of the council is on a project called “Ringling 2030” - what do we need ringling to be like so that it will flourish in the future, and what is our role in making sure that happens?

Lots of us learned to ring as teenagers, but it won’t have escaped your notice that these days most of us are 60 or over. For ringling to have a future we need to find new ways to engage with young people.

The Council is looking at ways of creating awareness of ringling among young people – using mobile belfries, working with the Scout and Guide Movement and supporting lesson plans in schools. Ringling draws on so many different aspects of the curriculum, whether that’s maths, science, music, or history; if we can provide teachers with good quality materials that support their teaching, it’s a great way of raising awareness of ringling.

Initially, they’ve focused on supporting the Year 6 Science curriculum but there are more in the pipeline, and they are looking for volunteers to trial the lesson plans in schools.

Keeping young ringers engaged when they leave home to go to University is another challenge, and Tristan Lockheart from Rumney is involved in the design of a Young Ringers’ website and efforts to support university ringling societies.

The highlight of the Ringling World AGM was the report from the National Youth Contest – 37 teams of young people entered and 950 people were involved in total – it was hugely successful and a great advert for ringling as an activity for young people.

### **Safeguarding**

If we’re going to encourage young people to take part in ringling, we need to assure their parents that their children will be safe and encouraged to thrive.

The Church in Wales has been working closely with the Safeguarding Team at the Central Council on the design of their “Safeguarding for Bellringers” course – in contrast to England, we have a common approach across the whole of Wales, and the scenarios used to help people think about how to deal with safeguarding issues have been written by bellringers with safeguarding expertise rather than being based on Sunday School or Choir situations that might not be relevant to us.

If you're a Tower Captain, I'd encourage you to sign up for this course – I think the team are still learning about ringers and ringing, but the most valuable part is the opportunity to discuss real life situations with other ringers and safeguarding specialists and how we might handle them in future.

### **How we organise ourselves for the future**

Like many other Associations, it's becoming increasingly difficult to find volunteers to get involved in leading and organising ringing. The structures that worked really well when our ringing societies were formed over 100 years ago might not work so well today when people have busy lives and competing interests.

The Bedfordshire Association is similar in size to our own, both in terms of the number of members and the geographical spread of towers. Linda Garton gave an excellent presentation on how they had looked at the way they were organised and what they were trying to achieve as an Association in the wake of Covid, and the changes they had made to make the Association more effective – certainly food for thought!

### **Future impact of church closures**

Another “hot topic” is how we plan for future church closures – it seems inevitable that in the future there will be fewer active churches, and the rings of bells that are important to us may not necessarily be in churches with thriving worship communities.

The Central Council has provided advice on how to identify if a church is at risk of closure, and we've used that guidance in deciding whether to award significant grants from the Bell Restoration Fund. They have also advised ringing societies to carry out an audit of their “ringing estate” – to identify the churches at risk, the bells that we would want to save, and what we might do to save them. This is one of the things the Association Management Committee will be looking into shortly.

### **Ringling Roadshow**

Every couple of years, there is a Ringling Roadshow that runs alongside the Central Council meeting and is open to anyone. As well as a chance to talk to the Central Council workgroup leaders in more detail about their work, there were exhibition stands from most of the major suppliers to ringing. The L&M was well represented, with the new treble for Llantrisant on one stand, a wheel for Llantrisant on another stand, and Barry Hayman from Newport helping out on the Avon Ropes stand – again, a great opportunity to talk to people about new developments in technology. Several mini-rings were available to try, including “Peals on Wheels”, which is the latest mini-ring available from Matthew Higby and relatively easy to ring – I'm hoping that we'll have that available in the Association during the summer next year.

***Helen Phillips***

***Association Chair***

# 200 Club Results

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> August

Prize	Number	Name
£30	128	Cyril Sedgebeer (Rumney)
£15	185	Kevin Musty (Aberavon)
£10	129	James Davies (Llanwern)
£10	114	Helen Barrie (Cowbridge)
£10	181	Llanedeyrn Tower

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September

Prize	Number	Name
£30	175	Allan Hair (Friends & Family)
£15	38	Jon Hiscox (Llangybi)
£10	124	Jane Dumount-Jones (Rumney)
£10	130	Mike Gunter (Llantarnam)
£10	11	Barry Hayman (Newport)

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> October

Prize	Number	Name
£30	30	Barbara Hull (Magor)
£15	65	Andrew Hurd (Caerphilly)
£10	20	Sheila Denison (ex Newport)
£10	189	David W Jones (Cowbridge)
£10	39	Donna Jones (Friends & Family)

# Association Website Services

## Mailing Lists

If you haven't already done so, please consider subscribing to our various Mailing Lists to keep in touch with what's going on. Choose as many or as few as you wish:

<https://www.llanmon.org.uk/mailling-lists> See the note at the top of the form about changing existing subscriptions of you wish to.

## Members Contact Details and Preferences

If you haven't already done so (or wish to update previously provided information), please help us to help you by providing your contact details and preferences for receiving the Annual Report, etc.:

<https://www.llanmon.org.uk/members/updated-members-details>

**Details provided will be used solely for Membership Admin and matters personal to you regarding your Membership. They will not be used for routine contact or mail shots, etc.** That is the role of the Mailing Lists.

Any questions then please ask!

**John Vesey, Webmaster, Llandaff & Monmouth DACBR** [webmaster@llanmon.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@llanmon.org.uk)

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# Save the Date!



Save the Date  
Association AGM  
Saturday 18th April 2026  
venue: Michaelston Y Fedw

*Save the Date*  
*Tower Open Day*  
*Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2026*

Some of you will be aware that Anne Hayman and Pauline Morris are organising a tower open day to raise funds for the BRF. The tower route has nearly been planned and will include towers from Magor to Llantrisant. (18 in total) We will be looking for volunteers to help man these towers on the day so if your available and willing to help please contact either Anne at [annejones5040@gmail.com](mailto:annejones5040@gmail.com) or myself, [pauline.p.morris@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:pauline.p.morris@hotmail.co.uk)







# **WANTED: NEW BELL RINGERS!**

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 **Help Keep Our Bells Ringing for the Future**

**With so few new ringers currently in training, our team is at a turning point. To keep this beautiful tradition alive in our parish, we *urgently* need new recruits!**

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  -  **All ages welcome**
-  **Friendly, supportive, relaxed training**


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**If you've ever wondered what goes on up there — or know someone who might — get in touch!**

 **Contact: Rhian Mulligan**

 **Email: [newtonnottagebellringers@gmail.com](mailto:newtonnottagebellringers@gmail.com)**

**Or join us for a colourful, cheerful look around:**

 **Mondays, 7:45 p.m.–9:00 p.m.**

**Become Part of Something Special**

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