



# MONMOUTH BRANCH NEWS

Llandaff and Monmouth Diocesan Association of Church Bell Ringers

Number 138 • September 2024

## In this Issue

- 1 From the Branch Master
- 2 News from the Tower
- 6 Rumney and friends visit to Tulloch
- 7 Ringing World National Youth Competition
- 8 200 Club Draw
- 9 Training Update
- 9 Fun with Bells
- 10 Chairman's Challenge – Update
- 11 Llantarnam and Friends Tower Tour
- 12 10 Bell Outing
- 12 2024 Association Budget Summary

## Dates for the Diary

**12<sup>th</sup> Sep, 7:30pm (Usk)**  
Branch 8-Bell Practice

**16<sup>th</sup> Sep, 7:30pm (tbc)**  
Association S. Major Practice

**27<sup>th</sup> Sep, 10:30am (Llanfrechfa)**  
Association Daytime Practice

**10<sup>th</sup> Oct, 7:30pm (Usk)**  
Branch 8-Bell Practice

**19<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2:00pm (Michaelston)**  
Branch Practice

**21<sup>st</sup> Oct, 7:30pm (tbc)**  
Association S. Major Practice

**25<sup>th</sup> Oct, 10:30am (Llanedeyrn)**  
Association Daytime Practice

**25<sup>th</sup> Oct, 7:00pm (St Woolos)**  
Association Quiz Night

**14<sup>th</sup> Nov, 7:30pm (Usk)**  
Branch 8-Bell Practice

**18<sup>th</sup> Nov, 7:30pm (tbc)**  
Association S. Major Practice

## FROM THE BRANCH MASTER

Since the last newsletter, we have had various quarters and training sessions organised

We had a Cambridge Minor practice at Bassaleg and a quarter of Yorkshire S Major and 2 of Grandsire Triples, all containing a first of some description. I aim to continue with these so please do let me know if you want a dedicated practice or a quarter organised - it doesn't matter what you want to ring, just let me know and I will do my best, although don't forget, you can also organise your own, just let any of the Branch Committee know if you need assistance?

We have had quite a lot going on around the Branch in this last quarter

In June, both Llantarnam and St Mellons held very successful outings organised by new or returning ringers and Blaenavon held a Church Open Day

We had a Branch practice at Llantilio Crossenny - this was attended by 16 people representing 5 towers, sadly none of the Crossenny ringers were able to come, and apart from Gwyn, Pip and Mike (+ 3 visitors) all the ringers came from Newport / Cardiff. We rang Doubles, Plain Hunt on 7 and went up to Yorkshire Major with much in between.

In July, there were open days at Caldicot, Blaenavon and Llanwern (using our brand new banners) and with Caldicot also hiring a mini ring from the Central Council, part funded by the Branch. Teaching new recruits has started there now and also Peter is teaching at Llanwern

There was also a Grandsire Doubles course based in Llantarnam - I wasn't there but heard good things, mainly due to there only being 3 students so they all had a good crack.

In August, there was a branch practice at Llangybi. My thanks to Barry for oiling them before we rang, it made such a difference to the go of the bells. We had 15 ringers there but only 4 towers represented. We rang rounds / call changes, mexican wave, doubles, plain hunt on 7, Grandsire Triples, Stedman Triples and Rutland Surprise Major. It was a good practice with everyone bar Barry (who'd already done a full day working on his engine) going to the pub next door afterwards, an important part of ringing. There were many different conversations going on in the room, probably all ringing related!!

Finally - please make sure you are signed up for Branch Communications and Training Communications as a minimum. If you are reading this, you are already signed up for Branch newsletters!!

**Anne Hayman**  
*Branch Ringing Master*

# NEWS FROM THE TOWER

## Caerleon - St Cadoc

### CAERLEON IS UP-SKILLING!

Following the tower AGM in July, Caerleon ringers have made a few changes to their regular Wednesday evening practices.

Firstly, they now meet from 7 – 8.30 p.m. to accommodate those who travel from/to Newport by bus. The practice is also run by various people nominated by the Tower Captain, Phil Sergeant.

Secondly, because of illness and other regular commitments, there are now fewer 'locals' who are members of the tower and attending the practice night each week. However, this is giving us a chance to concentrate on up-skilling with those who can still come. This has led us to .....

### A GRANDSIRE PROJECT

For three Wednesdays, with three specific ringers, Phil, Karen and Sandra, we have concentrated on plain courses of Grandsire Doubles. Phil and Karen could already ring a plain course of Bob Doubles, Sandra could do plain hunt on 5 off any bell and could treble to plain courses of Bob Doubles and Grandsire and had done dodging practice.

The ringers who could already ring Bob Doubles have adapted to 4/5 dodges instead of 3/4 ones. We concentrated on them learning the course of the 3<sup>rd</sup> bell and, last week, they both managed that with very little help.

Sandra hasn't been able to attend on Wednesdays for a while but is now back. A little while ago I'd given her a print out of the plain course of Grandsire and asked her to learn the 'path' of the 3<sup>rd</sup> bell – trying to ring the fast and slow rhythm in her mind and picture the 'line of work'. She did her homework! At the Association Daytime Practice at Tredunnoc at the end of July, Sandra, with a little bit of help, rang Grandsire off the 3<sup>rd</sup> for the first time. Her smile afterwards said it all. Since then she has been able to come again to Caerleon on Wednesdays and is progressing well and gaining confidence.

I and the 'learners' are extremely grateful to Lindsay Horth, Stephen Taylor and Peter Bray for their patience and encouragement with 'filling in' or 'standing by' while Phil, Karen and Sandra take their turns on the 3<sup>rd</sup> bell. And Caerleon bells are smiling with happiness at Grandsire being rung on them again – that was always their method in years past.....

*Jenny Mole*

## Ebbw Vale - Christ Church

### 🔔 Chair's Challenge - submitted by Cerys Gibbs 🔔

Many thanks to everyone at St Martin's in Caerphilly for hosting myself and Margo at your practice night a few weeks ago (we're both still "learning the ropes" from the Ebbw Vale tower).

We had a lovely time ringing call changes and trying out the Ellacombe. Also the chocolate tub passed around was a real treat on top 😊

### 🔔 Chair's Challenge - submitted by Mark & Margo Lewis 🔔

We have both been supporting our Tower Captain with Belfry Maintenance. Mark has a real head for heights and was very keen to support - supervising/ buddying when bell maintenance was needed, tower clock maintenance and also fitting/removing dampeners on the clappers. Margo, not quite as keen with heights but none the less she was eager to assist with adjusting the rope lengths by learning how to unthread the rope from the wheel and then the re-threading, plus lots of cleaning above and below the bells - those spiderwebs get everywhere!





Ring-wise, over the last few months, the new band have been consolidating their Plain Hunt and call changes, as well as ringing up and ringing down. We've also been pitching in/Bristol fashion and spent some time on 'miss and catch' practice, as well as also making some good progress with 'dodging' in a 'rolling dodge' practice evening.

The Tower Captain has recently introduced a rather fun new method and the team are enjoying learning Bastow Little Bob Minimus.

EVCC Ringers would like to take this opportunity to thank all the supportive visiting ringers who've been a huge help to us all during the last few months. We all very much appreciate your time, support and advice.

If anyone would like to join us for a practice night please do reach out to us, everyone will always get a warm welcome and the offer to join us for a pint and a chat afterwards

**Margo Lewis**

## Llanfrechfa - All Saints

The new ropes have now been fitted at Llanfrechfa, the old ropes were fitted in 1999 so lasted well. We are very pleased with the help to fit the ropes given by Barry and Anne Hayman and Richard James.

Dai and Melanie Jones our new ringers have progressed well. They can ring rounds, call changes for Services and are learning plain hunt. We are thankful to visiting ringers who have made teaching practices possible and Rev Canon Jenny Mole for her teaching skills.

**John Hopkins.**

## Llanedeyrn - St Edeyrn

Visiting bands have continued to ring at Llanedeyrn over the last few months and there has been a steady increase in weddings. Our next wedding is on 30<sup>th</sup> August. We also said goodbye to Rob Pearce who was a former ringer at Llanedeyrn who passed away recently. 6 of the band rang at his funeral and a quarter peal was rung to remember Rob. Wednesday night practices continue and often with all 11 of the band in the tower. Sunday services are always covered and there are at least 8 ringers available even over the summer period. The church had a quiz night in the Unicorn pub and the bell ringers came second. The local support was amazing and takings on a Monday evening were as much as a busy Saturday night. The landlady was overjoyed, and the next quiz is planned in September. The success of the Unicorn pub continues and its great the church and ringers have an excellent relationship with the landlady and all the staff.

John continues to maintain the tower and is passing on his knowledge to David and Dan. We will soon replace 2 more ropes and our tower fund is looking healthy and is managed by Sam our treasurer. Thanks to Matthew for splicing a rope for us.



Sam and Paula recently attended the St Mellon's ringing trip and had a lovely day out. Soon we will say farewell to Georgia who is heading to University in Exeter. She has been a brilliant member of the band and will be missed. Hopefully we will see her on the odd weekend and during holidays.

At a recent raffle supported by our bell ringers £1,058 was made, which will go towards the restoration fund. Our bell ringers continue to do so much for St Edeyrn's church and remain committed to fund raising and supporting the church. One of the recent activities was tidying up the church grounds, inside the church and the dreaded temporary toilet + cutting back in the carpark. Paula adopted a commonwealth grave and a local historian on the back of this presented two frames with postcards and the history of William Jones



Thomas. The postcards are beautiful. Below is the presentation to Mother Tina on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> July.

Overall things are looking exceptionally good at Llanedeyrn, and we remain committed to ringing and letting others ring at this lovely ancient church.

*Martin Gilbert*

## Michaelston-y-Fedw - St Michael

The Michaelston band continues to make steady progress. It was great to see two bands entering the call change section in the striking competition, ringing rounds with a little assistance from Rumney ringers. The band has also rung for the Bishop's visitation to the Ministry Area and were pleased to have a chat with Bishop Cherry afterwards. There was also ringing for the installation of a new team vicar to the Ministry Area.

As well as in the ringing chamber, there have also been improvements at the other end of the rope in the belfry. Many thanks to Barry Hayman and Rob Bruce for providing a full set of readings from the odd-struckness meter. As a result of this, we were able to see that the two trebles were both very odd-struck but also struck much quicker than the back 6. In addition, the 6th is very odd-struck but the design of the headstock makes adjustment difficult. To remedy these problems, we are again grateful to Barry Hayman for helping us adjust the odd-struckness on the two trebles, which do have clapper adjusters fitted. Barry has also manufactured some weights to help slow down the swing speed of the two smallest bells. Initial feedback is that this has helped hugely. Barry has also made another weight to fit to the 6th with a view to helping the oddstruckness. Many thanks to Barry for his time and expertise.

## Netherwent Ministry Area

On the 14<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of July; open days at the two towers of Caldicot and Llanwern were respectively held in conjunction with local community events.

### Caldicot

On Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> July 2024, Caldicot was celebrating 50 years of being made a town. Thus, a summer fayre was held in the grounds of Caldicot Castle; showcasing local groups, from choirs and music ensembles to arts and crafts, local history and more. Obviously, ringing is no exception. Given the proximity to the church, we decided to not only have a mini-ring at the fayre, but also open the church tower for people to come have a look.

Throughout the day, we had a steady stream of people coming to have a go on the mini-ring, as well as up in the tower. As you'd expected it generated quite a bit of interest. By all accounts it was a very successful day with lots of happy smiling faces. The day was finished off with a QP of Grandsire Triples, conducted by Nigel Williams. Nigel, was the ringing master at Caldicot in the 1980's.

There were sixteen volunteers locally and from across the association who came to support the event. A huge thank you to each and every one of you who supported the day. However, I would like to give a particular thanks to:

- Andrew Phillips for sorting out the CCTV in the tower and display boards.
- Simon Lockhart for organising the mini-ring.
- Beryl Pugh, for the support of the church.
- Steve Drowley, event and church support.
- John Vesey for loan of the banners.

### Llanwern

On Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> July 2024, Llanwern was holding its annual village fete. I was approached by the local organisers if we could organise some ringing for the fete. So we decided to hold an open day at Llanwern, a very similar format to the previous week at Caldicot. The idea was for people to come and have a look at the bells, watch them being rung, and of course have a go at some backstrokes.

Despite the church being half a mile from the village institute (where the fete was being held), and the weather being very typical for Wales. It was very well attended by the by folks from the village and the new housing development.

Again, I would like to say a big thanks to the local ringers, the Church, and the local community who supported the event.

## Closing Remarks

The open days have been very successful. In total, we have six new beginners between the two towers; three at Caldicot and three at Llanwern. All of whom are progressing really nicely, most of them are under the age of forty. In addition, a ringer who rang Cambridge Surprise Major in the 1980's has come out of the woodwork, his son is learning to ring.

Since the open days, we have been averaging eleven at a practice with a high of fourteen, comprised of local ringers and beginners alike from across the ministry area. We even managed a touch of Grandsire Doubles at Llanwern on a practice night. If everyone turns up at Caldicot – we even enough for some Plain Hunt Triples.

As things stand, with the influx of beginners and returning ringers from across the ministry area, we have decided to have two ministry area practices per week:

- Caldicot: Tuesdays 7pm – 9pm
- Llanwern: Sundays 7pm – 9pm

The format of the practices is the same at each practice, the first 30mins or so being purely focussed on bell-handling, and a more general practice from 7:30pm.

Thank you to everyone for your support.

**Peter Bray**

## Newport - St Woolos Cathedral

It's been another busy summer at St Woolos, Cathedral Newport. We have been delighted to welcome both visitors and locals who have boosted our numbers at times, including one Tuesday night when we managed half a course of Yorkshire Royal! Our own taught learners have continued to progress, now regularly ringing rounds and call changes on upto twelve, and Josh Booth rang his first quarter peal in June, covering to plain bob doubles. This followed his celebrated achievement covering in the St Woolos band that won the branch striking competition at Tredunnock in May!

Our Sunday afternoon quarters saw more first quarters, including Jane Craddock - Bristol major, and Rob Bruce first London minor. Plus two quarters of 4 spliced surprise major. July saw St Woolos repeat our striking competition success by winning the Association Pitman trophy in a closely fought contest at Llanedeyrn.

Special congratulations to John Deer and his wife Kim on birth of their lovely daughter Enfys, (which is Welsh for rainbow) born on 17<sup>th</sup> June. This is the second new baby born to St Woolos ringers in as many months, so perhaps there is something in the water here in Newport?!

Rob Bruce also won a unique national prize award from the Central Council for ringers new to bell maintenance. After 12 months working with the Association Bell Maintenance Group (BMG) I can really appreciate the huge importance of this work, and the award really belongs to the original volunteers, Joy & Chris Kipling plus Barry Hayman, who had the vision, and have given up one day every month, to make this group a leading national example of bell maintenance. Joy even produced a wonderful bell cake and (non-alcoholic) bubbly to celebrate the win!

Autumn holds a lot more to look forward to now. Our tower will be demonstrating ringing for the national open doors event on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September. Then on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October we are holding a tower day outing to Herefordshire, which will include memorable 10s at Hereford Cathedral and newly augmented Ledbury, plus two splendid 8s, and lunch at top reviewed pub "The Bunch of Carrots". (Please contact Rob Bruce if you are interested in joining us for the day).

Newport will again host the association quiz night on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October, which is a very fun evening, so get your teams together now and start training! This will be followed by the St Woolos tower dinner on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November. Big thanks to Gemma Wheeler, for organising both these events, after the highly enjoyable evenings she arranged for us last year!

We also hope to get more 10 and 12 bell ringing into our Sunday afternoon quarters for the autumn. Organisers can find it hard to get enough ringers together on the same day to ring on 10/12 so please give them all the support you can, as we try to progress our ringing on higher numbers too.

**Rob Bruce**

## Rumney - St Augustine

It's been another busy period for the Rumney ringers since our last contribution to the newsletter. The main news is that work has started on redecorating our ringing chamber. The old stained and crumbling paint was scraped off the masonry in the spring and the walls have been left to dry out for a few months. In the last few weeks, a breathable primer has been applied and we're waiting for the work to start on the final top coats. Then we have the woodwork and the carpet to replace. A long job but it will be worth it in the end!

Ring-wise, our main news has been our visit to the Tulloch Ringing Centre in May. A separate report appears elsewhere but we would wholeheartedly recommend a visit. Many thanks to Debbie Turner for all her work organising the week. As a result of the concentrated practice, several of our band members have become more confident in their chosen methods and everyone has progressed. At our practice night we are now tackling a full range of Doubles methods as well as Plain Bob Minor, Kent Minor and Cambridge Minor. We also have 4 people who are learning to handle a bell. Monday nights are very busy!

We entered a call change band and two method bands in the branch striking competition and were pleased to win the call change section and to be placed second and third in the method section. We also competed in the Pitman Trophy competition at Llanedeyrn in July and were placed fourth.

In the last couple of weeks we took advantage of a free slot on a Thursday at Michaelston to hold an 8-bell practice. Most of the Michaelston ringers were on holiday but most of our band were available and we were pleased to be joined by four friends from St Mellons too. As a result we had a busy 8-bell practice which gave us the chance to ring call changes on 8, plain hunt on 7 and Grandsire Triples.

Looking forward, a "ring and ride" day is being planned around some local towers and plans have been made for an outing to Swindon in November.

**Matthew Turner**

## RUMNEY AND FRIENDS VISIT TO TULLOCH



Ever since I was 2, I have been extremely lucky and grateful to go to Tulloch Ringing Centre in the Highlands of Scotland nearly every year. Tulloch is a special place because it's where people come together for bellringing, games, walking and socialising! It has 2 sets of bells; a 7cwt ring of 12 bells and a brand new 3cwt ring of 8 bells. Although the bells are light, they don't feel like it. These bells are great for learners as they are easy to ring, always available and just lovely in general. Tulloch Ringing Centre is based on Tulloch Farm which has lovely walks along the River Spean, plenty of accommodation on site and most importantly (for me) a games room with pool, table tennis, table football and a younger kids area.

My family and me organised a trip to Tulloch for our Rumney band and we invited some ringing friends to come along to support us. We thought we would go to Tulloch to help our band progress with different aspects of method ringing using the two rings of bells and the simulator. On Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> May we all headed up to the Highlands. Some drove, whilst others took the train to Edinburgh and hired a minibus to Tulloch.

Over the week, we rang 19 quarters and a peal as well as many practice sessions on different numbers of bells. As a result of these practices and longer periods of ringing there were a grand total of 27 firsts! Angharad Jones, Kathryn Pegington and Liz Ferrand all rang their first quarters. Anne Hayman, Jane Dumont-Jones, Lesley Sheppard all rang their first quarter of Reverse Canterbury and Margaret Matthews rang her first quarter of Reverse Canterbury since 2006! Catherine Turner and Wendy Reilly rang their first quarters on 12. Also, Chris Barrett, Sarah Barrett and Jane Craddock rang their first quarters on 12 since 2010, 2012 and 2017 respectively! Sue Bradshaw and Jane Dumont-Jones both did their first quarter of Minor. Catherine Turner rang her first quarter of Grandsire Doubles inside and her first quarter on 10. Andrew Phillips conducted his first quarter of Reverse c



Canterbury. Daniel Barrett rang his first quarter of Plain Bob Doubles inside. Adam Turner rang his first quarter of Norwich Minor. Kathryn Pegington rang her first quarter as cover. Sue Bradshaw rang her first quarter on 8. Catherine Turner achieved her first peal which was also the first peal on the new set of bells. Finally, Wendy Reilly rang her first peal on 8. In these 19 quarters and peal we also rang the first quarter and first peal on the new set of bells.

Even with all the quarters and practices going on we still managed to have a day off to go to Inverness Cathedral. We had a general practice there and some of us rang a quarter of Grandsire Triples afterwards which allowed us the opportunity to ring at the most northerly church with bells in the world.

Every day we had a communal lunch in the Ringing Centre and sometimes had dinner together. The first night dinner was hosted by Anne Hayman which consisted of a wonderful chicken curry and veggie curry. One night we went out and had a meal at the local pub which is just 15-minute drive down the road from the Farm. After the meals and occasional quarters or practices in the evening we would play games including Logo Board Game, Bingo and Uno! On the last night we had a barbecue at Rannoch Cottage provided by the Turners and Barretts. After the meal, we had prizes with sweets provided for different firsts, supplied by the Barretts. We also figured out who had rung the greatest number of quarters and this went to Matthew Turner who did 15 quarters and won a bottle of beer. Also, the person with the greatest number of firsts was Catherine Turner who won a pack of Scottish cards.

This trip was a real experience of bellringing, socialising and walking round the Farm. The Farm really is something special that you will never forget when you visit. So thank you to everyone who helped with lunches, dinners and making snacks. Thank you to Matthew and Debbie Turner for organising the ringing schedule and the entire trip. A big well done to everyone as everyone achieved something that they should be proud of! Finally thank you to Helen McGregor and Peter Bevis for the use of the Ringing Centre! We'll definitely be back!

*Catherine Turner*



## RINGING WORLD NATIONAL YOUTH COMPETITION



For the first time in 13 years, the Llandaff and Monmouth Association entered a team in the Ringing World National Youth Competition. The competition is an annual bellringing competition for those who are aged 18 and under that is organised by the Ringing World. It is the largest event for young ringers in the UK. This year there were 36 teams involving over 300 young ringers.

I had seen write-ups of the event in Ringing World over the years and had heard such fantastic reviews of the event from friends whose children had taken part from other areas of the UK. I currently organise, on behalf of the Association, termly ringing events for "Young Ringers" and thought it would be great if we could enter a band (with those who were 18 and under) from South Wales.

This year the event was hosted by the Ancient Society of College Youths in London. Over 300 children took part from all across the UK and over 130 additional volunteers were involved throughout the day in addition to the Team Leaders, Families and Supporters of each team. We entered our team "Cymru" in to the 6 Bell Call Changes and as it turned out we had a 50-50 split of representation from both branches!

We were drawn to ring in the afternoon at St James, Garlickhythe, which are a really easy-going ring of bells which

were cast for the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. We were also allotted a “mini-outing” style route of towers across London to ring at with some of the other teams who had entered. We were able to ring at St Dunstan in the West, St Michael's Cornhill, St Mary-le-Bow, Christchurch Spitalfields and St Olave's Hart Street. St Mary-le-Bow, was the headquarters for the day and as well as being able to ring on the famous “Bow Bells” (one of our team was especially delighted to be given the opportunity to ring the tenor!) the band were also able to have a try on the mini-rings and simulators set up inside and outside the church. One of the non-ringing parents even had a go on the simulator and did a fantastic job – maybe a future ringer?

Once we had completed our day of ringing, we headed to St Paul's Cathedral for the group photo of all the teams on the steps of St Paul's and then the all-important results. It was so awe-inspiring sat there, with all the youngsters in their team tops, waiting eagerly for the results in the magnificent St Paul's Cathedral. We waited tentatively for the results. We knew we had rung well and had done the best we could, but having never entered before, we had no idea what to expect. So, we were absolutely delighted and overjoyed to find out that we had come 2<sup>nd</sup> in our section!

We all had such a fantastic experience and are eagerly looking forward to the next one! Many thanks to the parents who came to London and supported the band on the day and to the Association Committee for their support.

**Debbie Turner**

## BELL MAINTENANCE GROUP UPDATE

This summer we only visited Newton Nottage in June as our meeting date coincided with that of Garry Barr's funeral to which most of the BMG went. July found us at Llantwit Major in the morning and Coity in the afternoon. For further details please see the September edition of Llandaff Branch's newsletter, 'Look To'. We did not meet in August, holiday time!

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 our best to help.

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

## 200 CLUB DRAW

### June - Sun 23<sup>rd</sup> at Bassaleg

Prize	Number	Winner
£30	154	Debbie Turner (Rumney)
£15	164	David Slater
£10	55	Yvonne John (Cadoxton)
£10	93	Sarah Purnell (Llantarnam)
£10	48	Frances Younson (St Woolos)

### August - Sun 18<sup>th</sup> at St Woolos

Prize	Number	Winner
£30	195	John Deer (Newport)
£15	124	Jane Dumont Jones (Rumney)
£10	141	Jon Prince (Usk)
£10	179	Tim & Chris Taylor (Cardiff)
£10	119	Sian Howells (Friends & Family)

### July - Thu 25<sup>th</sup> at Llantarnam

Prize	Number	Winner
£30	159	Phil Williams (Coity)
£15	61	Nick W Jones (Bassaleg)
£10	50	Jackie Jones (Bassaleg)
£10	93	Sarah Purnell (Llantarnam)
£10	47	Chris & Joy Kipling (Cowbridge)



# TRAINING UPDATE

The Grandsire Doubles course was held at Llantarnam on Sat 21<sup>st</sup> July 2024.

This was attended by 3 students and several willing helpers, with the course being tutored by Peter Bennett. Thank you to Llantarnam for the use of the bells and to Peter for running the course, and not forgetting the helpers for turning out to make the course a success.

Looking forward to the rest of 2024, there are two further Saturdays in the Branch calendar that have been set aside for training events instead of Branch Practices. These are: -

- **21<sup>st</sup> September** - An introduction to rising and lowering in peal
- **16<sup>th</sup> November** - New Learners get together (similar to November 2023)

I will send out an email about six weeks before the date using the Llandaff & Monmouth Mailing lists with the course type and request for students and helpers.

If you want to receive more information about training courses, then PLEASE make sure that you signed up to the Llandaff & Monmouth website emailing lists for the Monmouth Branch, especially the "Monmouth Branch Training Communications".

Website address is <https://llanmon.org.uk/mailling-lists>

Whilst you're there signing up for "Monmouth Branch Training Communications", how about also signing up for other Monmouth Branch communication lists as well.

**Andrew Phillips**  
***MonmouthTraining@llanmon.org.uk***



## FUN WITH BELLS



Would anyone be interested in having a fun Christmassy morning or afternoon in November?

Learning Christmas tunes

Hand bells and tower bells available

Venue and date dependent on interest

Email [secretary@llanmon.org](mailto:secretary@llanmon.org) by 30<sup>th</sup> September if interested with preferred date and where you are located

Helpers will also be needed

I will also be looking for set/s of hand bells that tower/s would be willing to lend

## CHAIRMAN'S CHALLENGE – UPDATE

I learnt to ring as a teenager, and Peter Bennett encouraged me to get involved in organising my own ringing and events for the St Woolos band at a young age. I enjoyed the challenge and seeing other people enjoy the events I'd organised, and it was great for my Uni application too!

Behind the scenes in our Association, lots of effort goes into creating a programme of activities that give us the opportunity to try new things, get to know each other, and have fun.

At the moment, most of this effort comes from our more experienced ringers (and we're not getting any younger!) but it doesn't have to be this way.

If you think association events could be more fun, and you've got an idea for something different, let us know and we'll help you promote it – the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Saturdays of the month are generally free of Association events.

If there's something you've always wanted to do, go ahead and organise it!

It doesn't have to be a ringing event – one of the aims of the Association is "to provide a forum for fellowship and discussion among ringers" – social events are a great way of doing that.

When I launched the Chair's Challenge at the branch AGMs, I was delighted that a few people have picked up and run with the idea.

Quarter peal attempts have been arranged, special practices with a pub lunch afterwards, tower dinners, and people have been to other tower practices – even when they've been on holiday – even in the USA!

Andrew and I particularly enjoyed joining the St Mellons band on the first tower outing they'd arranged for themselves, and we're looking forward to ringing in a quarter peal attempt that Catherine Turner has organised.

When Andrew Gainsbury organised a "Walk and Ring" in July – it was lovely to meet ringers that wouldn't necessarily have come along to a branch practice and see Marina Thomas run a ringing session for the first time.

Now that the summer holidays are over, I'd love to see more of you organising social events, or ringing events that help you and your band to learn new things. If you need help on how to make the arrangements, or who to ask to help, get in touch with your branch officers or Harriet Moncrieff – they'll only be too pleased to help... as long as you're the one doing the legwork!

I look forward to seeing what Chair's Challenge submissions are going to be in this newsletter, and to see more of them in the coming months. There will be prizes awarded at the AGM for the best effort.

**Helen Philips**

### Chair's Challenge 2024



**Why don't you...**

**... organise some special ringing.**

**... arrange a tower outing.**

**... do something fun with your ringers.**

Do three special things, tell us all about it, enthuse others and be in with a chance of receiving the Chair's Challenge prize.

Helen Phillips  
L&M Chair

## LLANTARNAM AND FRIENDS TOWER TOUR



Earlier this year when in the pub after a Llantarnam practice, Jonathan suggested that it would be nice to have a Llantarnam outing in June and asked if I would be prepared to organise it. I initially asked who would be interested in attending and the feedback was really positive. I contacted all the tower correspondents for each of the towers we had agreed to visit and they were all very accommodating arranging to meet us at the times we had requested.

I arranged lunch at The Bridge Inn and got menu choices from everyone so when we arrived for lunch the order was already being prepared.

As this was my first tower tour which I organised I felt that it went well and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day out. I would be more than happy to arrange the next one which I hope would be at the end of the year. This was my first Chairs Challenge for 2024.

On Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2024 eleven ringers who regularly practice at St. Michaels and All Angels went on a ringing tour to four churches on the Herefordshire border. The purpose of the tour was to experience ringing at different towers and to enjoy a day out.

We met at our first tower at 10.00 a.m which was St. Bridget's Skenfrith. This was a ring of six bells which were cast by Thomas Rudhall in 1764. To access the ringing room we had to walk up a beautiful oak staircase then through a trap door. A few members of the group also went to look at the bells where Barry gave us a talk on the mechanics of how the bells are rung. We rang a mixture of different methods as well as rounds and call changes.

We then moved on to St, Nicholas Church in Grosmont. This tower also had a ring of 6 bells. The ringing room was very spacious and had a few armchairs for seating and small tables which we all thought was a lovely idea. The band really enjoyed ringing at this tower.

Next we went for lunch at The Bridge Inn in Kentchurch. This pub had a lovely riverside setting, good and very food. We stayed in the pub nearly two hours chatting !

After a relaxing lunch we had two more towers to visit. The third tower was St. Mary's in Kentchurch. This was a ground floor ring also with 6 bells. Jonathan took the opportunity to take some aerial photos with his drone.

Our final ring was at St. Michael's and All Angels Church in Ewyas Harold. This was also a ground floor ring with 6 bells.

Overall the ringing during the day included a mixture of rounds, call changes, Bob Doubles, Grandsire Doubles and Stedman Doubles.

**Karen Jones**





## 10 BELL OUTING

On Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> August a group of about 25 set out to do some 10 bell ringing. The background to the day is that quite a number of people have said that the leap from 8 bell ringing to 12 bell ringing was too big a step, so a day of 10 bell practice was arranged at the St Mary's churches at Abergavenny, Chepstow and Lydney. It wasn't all about ringing though, we had lunch at the appropriately named The Bell Hanger at Chepstow (a Spoons), and afternoon tea and cake at Taurus Crafts just outside Lydney.

Ringling ranged from plain hunt on 9, Grandsire and Stedman Caters, Yorkshire and Cambridge Royal and we were able to dust off 2 touches of London Royal as well. Every touch came round (eventually!) and there was a cheerful atmosphere throughout the day with everyone seemingly enjoying it. Thank you to Harriet and Pauline who helped with the organisation of the towers.

*Chris Kipling*

## 2024 ASSOCIATION BUDGET SUMMARY

At the Association AGM on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April, we made a brief presentation on the funds held, how some funds are ringfenced for specific purposes, our spending proposals for this year and most importantly what funds are available for members to access. The Association has two funds.....

### General Fund – for daily running of the Association

- £12k (as of the end of 2023)
- Membership paid to the branches
- Branches pay levies to Association based on membership numbers

### Bell Restoration Fund (BRF) – solely for contributions towards restoration projects

- A Registered Charity
- £75.6k as at end of 2023

The General Fund is split down into 4 separate 'pots'....

Fund	£	Purpose
Unrestricted	2,548	Day to day running of the Association
Insurance Reserve	2,500	For replacement of the Association's assets in lieu of paying an insurance premium
Tudor Edwards legacy	5,000	to fund the Belfry Maintenance Group (BMG) from 2024
Training Fund	2,037	Donations raised for training and associated activities
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,085</b>	<b>(as at end of 2023)</b>

There is routine and exceptional expenditure from the General Funds....

### Routine Expenditure

- Day-to-day expenditure from the Unrestricted fund (£950 budgeted in 2024)
- PR expenditure from the Unrestricted fund (£250 budgeted in 2024)
- Bell Maintenance Group from the Tudor Edwards legacy (£1,000 budgeted in 2024)
- Training expenditure from the Training Fund (£350 budgeted in 2024)

### Exceptional, one-off grants

- Simulator installations – 2x £250 expected in 2024
- Mini-ring visit – 1x £500 expected in 2024

The aim of the 2024 budget is to focus on spending where it delivers most benefits....

- Promotion – “Learn to ring in Wales” website
- Training and recruitment events, including grants for simulators and mini-rings
- Continued support for Bell Maintenance Group
- Reduced expenditure on reports and library
- Funds moved to higher interest accounts

If we are successful in achieving these aims expenditure will go up.....

- Total Expenditure budget 2024: £3,550
- Levy income: £1,538
- Deficit: £2,012
- Branch Levy frozen for 2024
- Review at end of year with branches to agree future levies
- May lead to branches increasing membership fees

### **What support is available to YOU?**

We are keen for members to make use of funds to further the causes of the Association, therefore the following funds are available

#### **Training and recruitment fund**

- Mobile belfries - grants for 50% of hire cost up to a maximum £250
- Simulator – grants for up to 50% of the costs of installation
- Possible support towards other recruitment or training events

#### **Bell Restoration Fund**

- grants for the purpose of maintaining or improving bell installations
- able to consider other bell tower improvements that would assist ringing

#### **Bell Maintenance Group (BMG)**

- No direct funding, but able to access support via BMG visit

#### **Possibility to consider other funding that promotes ringing**

- If in doubt speak to us!

Hope you have found this of use, and if you think there is any way we can help with any funding, please feel free to contact us!

**Meriel and Andrew Gainsbury**  
***treasurer@llanmon.org.uk***