



MONMOUTH BRANCH NEWS

Llandaff and Monmouth Diocesan Association of Church Bell Ringers

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Dates for the Diary

- 20th Sep, 7:00pm (Llanedeyrn)**
Branch Practice
- 26th Sep, 10:30am (Michaelston-y-Fedw)**
Association Daytime Practice
- 9th Oct, 7:30pm (Usk)**
Branch 8-bell Practice
- 18th Oct, (TBC)**
Branch Training Event
(Ringing up and down in peal)
- 25th Oct, 7:00pm (Llantarnam)**
Association Quiz Night
- 29th Oct, 10:30am (Radyr)**
Association Daytime Practice
- 13th Nov, 7:30pm (Usk)**
Branch 8-bell Practice
- 15th Nov, 2:00pm (Blaenavon)**
Branch Practice
- 17th Nov, 7:30pm (Caerphilly)**
Association S.Major Practice
- 28th Nov, 10:30am (Bassaleg)**
Association Daytime Practice

FROM THE BRANCH MASTER

Since the last newsletter, we have had a Branch practice at Bedwellty in June, a Surprise Major practice at Bassaleg, a training session in July and a Branch practice at Caldicot in August. And I've also been organising quarter peals for those that ask, and when they don't, I arrange quarters of Surprise Major at Bassaleg and Usk.

Also of course the Branch 8 bell practices are held every 2nd Thursday at Usk.

Many will know that there is teaching of a new band going on at Bedwellty. We started with about 12 learners, but this has now pretty much stabilised at 6. They are doing really well with 2 now handling completely unaided, and the others needing standing by "just in case" We are being assisted by Steve Avery who it's great to see back ringing more regularly, as his work allows. Lisa Avery is also consistently there. So, a Branch practice there in June seemed a good idea. The weather was great and so we had fantastic views across the valley. Only 2 of the new learners were able to make it and we had 14 other ringers there, so a great turnout with 7 towers represented. We rang rounds up to Surprise Major and when we retired to the local pub, who were somewhat overwhelmed by us, we had a nice social evening sat outside. There was a quiz inside, so everyone was happy with us going outside I think.

There was a Surprise Major practice at the end of June which was at Bassaleg with 12 ringers there. We rang 4 different S Major methods, 2 lots of spliced and some Double Norwich too. It was a very productive practice, and I intend to run these every 2 months or so, at Bassaleg and Usk. The next one is end August at Usk.

July Branch day was a training day. Andrew had sorted a Plain Bob Doubles whole day course. Only a couple of ringers from the Monmouth branch were able to make the date, so Andrew extended the invitation to the Llandaff Branch too. I only did the morning and had very good reports from those who did the whole day. Many thanks to St Mellons and Michaelston Y Fedw for hosting the day so warmly. And to all the helpers for giving up their time, as always. And of course Andrew who manages the arrangements perfectly.

Back to the Branch practice format for August and this time, we were at Caldicot, another nice 8 in the East of the branch this time. Another well attended practice with 16 ringers. I was particularly pleased to see 3 ringers who had never been to a Branch practice before. We rang lots of Plain Bob, both Doubles and Triples but some of the more complicated methods were eluding us - it was quite warm though in our defence, but the nice weather meant we had another nice drink outside the pub.

Don't forget quarter peal fortnight is approaching at the end of October. Please try to organise quarters at both your own towers and others local to you, or not so local, if you prefer. There will be assistance available if you need support with extra ringers, conductors etc but let's have lots of "firsts" There will be an event on Bellboard, so please attach any successes to this. Please ask if you're not sure how

Advance notice of a Tower Open Day too on the Bank Holiday Monday 4th May. While this will be an Association event, the day is starting off in our Branch and we will be looking for stewards. The idea is for people outside the area to come and ring at some of our lovely rings of bells and also some of the not so lovely rings - there are many tower grabbers out there who we hope to attract and raise money for the Bell Restoration Fund (BRF). The BRF has been paying out, and promising, a lot of money recently, so it's time to start raising money again. The whole day will cost around the £25 mark, but individual towers will be possible if you see any on the list you need. Further details will be made available in due course.

Anne Hayman
Branch Ringing Master

NETHERWENT MA - A YEAR OF FIRSTS

As many will know, we have had quite the influx of new ringers over the last two years, all of whom are progressing really well. In the last six months, we have had a number of firsts:

1. Wayne, did his first quarter on the tenor, for St. David's Day.
2. Liam has done his first on the tenor, covering to minimus and on the treble, also to minimus.
3. James has done his first on the treble to doubles, at Redwick (more on that later).
4. Owen has done his first quarter, unusually we went for a QP of Call Changes.
5. For my own part, I have rang a couple firsts; Cambridge S. Minor and Plain Bob Major.

As we move into quarter-peal fortnight (or three weeks in our case), I have another nine firsts to get through. If you can help I would be most grateful.

If you are able to support please fill in this availability form: <https://forms.gle/Jh7Zs15mwpWSYpqK6>

Netherwent MA Quarterpeals - 2025

Date	Time	Method	Location	Focus
18 th October 2025	11:00	Plain Bob Major	Caldicot	Sam Kellaway, Lucy Bailey
18 th October 2025	14:30	Mixed Doubles	Nash	Owen, Covering
21 st October 2025	19:30	Mixed Doubles	Penhow	Brian, Covering
26 th October 2025	14:00	Triples	Caldicot	MA Band
28 th October 2025	19:30	Mixed Doubles	Shirenewton	Tathan, Covering
1 st November 2025	19:00	Plain Bob Doubles	Caerleon	James, Inside
2 nd November 2025	16:00	Mixed Minimus	Llanwern	Les, Covering
8 th November 2025	17:00	Mixed Doubles	Mathern	Liam, Treble
8 th November 2025	19:30	Cambridge S. Minor	Mathern	Mark, TB Hunt

Peter Bray

SAVE THE DATE

Association Towers Open Day

Monday 4th May 2026 (Bank Holiday)

Raising Money for Bell Restoration Fund

NEWS FROM THE TOWER

Bedwelty

Our small band of learners continues to progress with regular practices held on most Monday evenings, supplemented by extra handling practice at St Woolos. Many thanks to all the trainers and helpers who have given so much time to make this possible. Hopefully our progress will continue to the point when we can finally ring for a Sunday service or two in the autumn.

We were all treated to a lovely BBQ in July, hosted by Revd Rachel Nelmes at her new vicarage in Abertillery - held in the garage on a rare wet evening! It was wonderful to see the progress she has made in renovating the church and yard, in just a few short weeks, with the help of local volunteers! The church itself is a fascinating building, with only one major drawback - no bells! (Apart from one service bell high up on the roof which is currently seized).

Meanwhile, improvements to the bells at Bedwelty continue, with the stay on the 2nd already adjusted to make it less light-set. Our ringing room also now has a new rug, and a better sized cupboard, which should improve the ringing environment. Visitors are of course welcome to join us for our Monday practice nights, but always check first with Rob Bruce that we will be ringing. Also note that on September 8th the practice will move upto Mynyddislwyn - our first away trip for the band!

Rob Bruce

Caerleon



It's been a particularly busy and rewarding time for the Caerleon bell ringers, with our bells ringing out for both joyful celebrations and moments of remembrance.

We had the privilege of ringing for two weddings and a funeral, marking life's most significant milestones with the unique voice of St Cadoc's bells. In addition, we were delighted to ring for the Churches Together service, where we had a great turnout of ringers and were able to ring all eight bells—a wonderful sound that filled the air and lifted spirits.

We also took part in the Ring Out in Celebration of VE Day. On 8th May 1945, bells across Britain rang out as the nation celebrated Victory in Europe Day. Eighty years on, we proudly joined others across the country at 6:30pm to recreate that powerful moment in history. It was a poignant and moving tribute to those who gave their lives for the freedom we enjoy today.

Our Wednesday night practices continue to be well attended, and we're always happy to welcome newcomers. If you're interested in learning more about St Cadoc's bells—or would like to have a go yourself—please contact Phil Sergeant at phil.sergeant1@gmail.com.

It's a rewarding way to meet new people, learn a traditional skill, and help keep a valued part of our community life alive.

Phil Sergeant



Chepstow

In November last year, due to a work being done at Tidenham and other reasons, ringers from Caldicot and Tidenham joined up for a practice at Chepstow, we were joined by ringers from Lydney, Woolaston, Shirenewton, Mathern, Woolaston, Alvington and many more.

Since then the practice has grown into an unofficial inter-branch monthly 10-bell practice with ringers from the eastern part of the Forest Branch and the western end of the Monmouth Branch with around fifteen towers represented overall. The practices are well supported, for instance in September we had eighteen in attendance. Many of those who turn up, have done very little on higher numbers. It is nice to be able to provide the opportunity for ringers to do more on higher numbers. We have done everything from rounds and call changes on ten to plain hunt royal, with some Grandsire Triples with three cover for good measure.



Chepstow, as a historic market town, is well suited geographically for the ringers in the surrounding areas.

The practices are on the 1st Tuesday of the Month from 7:30pm, I run a beginners session for those who need it from 6:30pm. Remaining dates for 2025:

- 7th October
- 4th November
- 2nd December

Peter Bray

Llanedeyrn



Of late we have had the odd blip due to annual leave and work commitments, and I thought about suspending ringing during summer months, but we discussed as a band and continued ringing even if it meant 5 or 6 were available. August and September will continue to be difficult to maintain numbers and we have lost one trainee who is joining the Army in September. We have continued to support and be supported by Blaenavon and continue with learning Grandsire and whatever Mr Brown throws at us. We are also encouraging ringers who don't usually ring at other towers to ring once a month at Blaenavon which has seen satisfactory results and a lot of enjoyment. On our last visit we celebrated Emma's 50th Birthday after the practice and Craig put on a wonderful buffet.

So far this year there have been no weddings we've been asked to ring at, and the only special recent ring was for VE Day when the poppy cascade was rollout out from the tower.

Sadly Ann Rowe passed away who was a former Llanedeyrn ringer before the current band reformed, but she was always encouraging when we would see her in church. A quarter peal was rung in her memory on Sunday 10th August.

Andy Muir introduced his grandson William to bell ringing in August and John had him chiming a bell and ringing in the backstroke within minutes. He enjoyed coming to the pub afterwards more than ringing, but he did very well, and it was a pleasure to show him the tower.

The next Branch meeting is at Llanedeyrn on Saturday 20th September – 7pm until 9pm. If you have not been to the Unicorn Inn in a while, try it as it had a nice refurbishment.

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

Martin Gilbert

Llantarnam

Back in March after a successful quarter peal for St David's day, Jonathan Lewis suggested that once Anne had fully recovered after her hip operation we should attempt a ladies quarter peal. Llantarnam actually has more ladies than men ringing on a practice night so you would think this would be easy. It was surprisingly difficult to get 6 ladies all together at one time. Added to this, there was some doubt as to whether it would be possible as recently the 5th's rope has been occasionally slipping the wheel.

I decided that if we were to attempt this I wanted an occasion to ring for. While not rung on VJ Day itself (August 15th), I felt justified that we could dedicate it to remembering the 80th anniversary of VJ day. (If we were successful) Although the actual date of Victory in Japan is taken as August 15th 1945 this was when the Japanese agreed to an unconditional surrender, after the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima on August the 6th and Nagasaki on August 9th. The war did not fully conclude until the Japanese signed the formal surrender documents on board the USS Missouri on the September 2nd 1945.

Success! a ladies band quarter peal of 1260 Plain Bob Doubles in 39 mins with two conductors was completed on the 20th August. The band in ringing order was Karen Jones, Pauline Morris, (C) Jenny Mole, Lindsay Horth, Anne Hayman (C) and Helen Lewis. (The 5th behaved)

Since completion of the quarter peal we have our new ropes, whether they will improve our ringing or stop the 5th jumping the wheel remains to be seen, but they should be better than the old ones. They look nicer anyway.

Pauline Morris



Nash

As many of you will know, the Nash has only been ringable in the daytime due to electrical issues in the ringing room. Thanks to Joel, the electrician, he has installed some new lighting, including a new emergency light.

Peter Bray

Redwick

In June this year, Richard Jones a keen ringer decided to make a return trip to Redwick leading the congregation of Trinity Episcopal Church, Virginia USA, on pilgrimage to South Wales. On June 8th 2025, they joined us at Redwick to share in Holy Eucharist on the feast of Pentecost. Richard Jones, along with John Evans and the late Rev. Peter Cobb were instrumental in the rehanging and the augmentation of the bells at Redwick. Especially after many years of silence due to bomb damage in WWII.

So we welcomed Richard back with a QP (James' first on the treble) of Grandsire Doubles, thank you to Matthew Turner for agreeing to ring and conduct.

However, after the service there was somewhat of a history lesson about the great flood and of course our beautiful bells, especially those cast in the medieval period. Myself and Richard then gave our visitors a taster session. From only a few initially wanting to have go, it ended up being the whole congregation. I think it is fair to say that our American friends were quite in awe ringing a bell dating back to the 14th century.

Peter Bray



Shirenewton

On Friday 28th June the intrepid Shirenewton bell ringers headed to the Lincolnshire Wolds. The annual Summer Tour referred to as The Shirenewton TT (ten towers) is traditionally a weekend event headquartered around a campsite as a base (and hopefully near a pub), allowing more distant towers to be sampled than possible on a single day trip. With local knowledge from a local ringer from the Lincolnshire Guild (namely Ruth Smith nee Dunn - some of you will remember) we arranged camping in the field behind The Red Lion in East Kirkby. Starting on Friday late afternoon, with just 3 warm-up towers on that day's itinerary, an advanced party headed to the Collegiate Church of The Holy Trinity at Tattershall. One of the many benefits of ringing new towers is to visit unexpected architectural gems, and this was definitely one. Described as Lincolnshire's grandest perpendicular church, its massive construction was an early indicator of the wealth of this region in medieval times (and more of this to come). The six bells are rung from the ground floor at the west end of the nave with a massive draft of rope, but our ringers rose to the challenge no doubt assisted by the experience of handling Shirenewton bells when we ring from the nave at Christmas, New Year and Easter. One thing we noticed on entering the church was that a lot of the furniture and fittings of the church were covered in drapes. The local lady guides explained that Holy Trinity is a very important place for bats, with no other site in Lincolnshire known to support as many species, including breeding populations of Soprano, Pipistrelles and Daubenton's bat. The church has been part of the National Bat Monitoring programme (NBMP) for many years, with bat counts dating back to the 1980s. They also explained that King Charles had visited the church and had rung a bell – a skill I was unaware he possessed and not supported by a subsequent Google search. Maybe the ladies confused ringing with chiming – easily done by the uninitiated. Next we visited nearby Coningsby perhaps better known for its RAF connection and as home to The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. We rang the six bells and then moved onto our last tower of the day at Old Bolingbroke an experience particularly enjoyed by one of our ringers Sam Bolingbroke. Henry IV (Henry Bolingbroke) was born in the castle here in 1337. Much later the castle was a Royalist base in The English Civil War and was besieged by the Parliamentarians in 1643, and when the Royalists surrendered the castle was destroyed. The remains are situated just south of the church. The oldest bell of the six in the church is dated 1604 so could have sounded during the siege! We then headed back to The Red Lion for a convivial evening in our own dining room at the back of the pub.



Saturday was the main Tour date with 10 towers organised - all six bell rings. We started at Spilsby then headed to Halton Hologate then towards the coast at Wainfleet, south of Skegness. Essentially now we were visiting villages and churches strung along the A52 heading south towards Boston. Having rung at Friskney and Wrangle we had worked up an appetite and thirst ready for our lunch stop at The Bricklayers Arms, Old Leake. After a leisurely lunch we headed to the local church at Old Leake and thence to Leverton, Butterwick, Freiston (housing the oldest bell of the tour dated 1410) and finally Fishtoft, just outside Boston. There had been more architectural gems during the day but the best was still to come. Back at camp nibbles and drinks were consumed followed by an excellent BBQ to round off the day.



For Sunday we were to visit St Boltoph, Boston known locally as The Boston Stump to ring for the morning service. This is a truly awe inspiring Grade 1 listed building. It is the widest parish church in England, has the tallest to roof, and also one of the largest by floor area. The tower, which houses 10 ringing bells and a further 15 chiming bells for the clock, is 266 feet 6 inches (81.23 m) high, only surpassed in height by towers (not spires) of cathedrals (Liverpool, Lincoln and Westminster). The wealth to build such a structure in medieval times was

channelled through the church from donations and from indulgences. For those not familiar with indulgences these were schemes used by the Catholic Church at the time by which the indulgence (permit) was issued to reduce the amount of punishment after death one had to undergo in purgatory for (forgiven) sins. Initially this would involve in life a charitable work or pilgrimage, but the system became corrupted for money-raising on a substantial scale. The reaction to this pre-paid fast-track to heaven ultimately led to The Reformation. Licences to issue indulgences were issued by the Pope, and have an interesting link in Boston to Thomas Cromwell, Henry VIII's famous chief minister. In 1515, not too long after he arrived back in England from Europe, Thomas Cromwell was called upon to sort a problem the Guilds of the town of Boston in Lincolnshire were having with Pope Leo X: he was threatening to not renew their licence. These Guilds and thence the church received large sums of money from the people of the town and fen lands who wished to pay for the certain safety of their souls in heaven. Cromwell managed the task, and his skills in negotiating with the Papacy were brought to the attention of Henry VIII who wished to apply these skills to a personal problem (Catherine of Aragon). However, I digress. Having been met by two local ringers including Ruth, we climbed 198 steps to the ringing chamber. The vaulted ceiling of the tower visible in the church protrudes into the chamber, so that the only way to cross the ringing chamber is around the periphery. Ringers stand with backs against the four walls in a square, unlike the normal "ringing circle". With local help we manage to ring all 10 bells to rounds and call changes, and to Grandsire Triples with 3 covers. Before leaving it was possible to go further up the tower to the parapet and appreciate the stunning views. After our visit we headed back to camp for breakfast, following which we decamped and set off back to South Wales. In the evening held a post-Tour celebration was held in glorious sunshine courtesy of Mike and Pip Penney.

Mike Penney

St Woolos

Like most towers, summer brought some very hot ringing days and practice nights at St Woolos, making an extra fan essential! Despite the heat, ringing has been mostly well attended, with 12 bells often rung on practice nights, and quite frequently on Sunday mornings too! After being edged into second place by Rumney in the Monmouth Branch 6 bell striking competition, it was great to see St Woolos win the Association Pitman Trophy in July. We came first in a closely fought competition on a glorious sunny evening at Llancarfan, followed inevitably by celebratory beer in the pub garden! Spliced surprise major continued to feature on practice nights, helping us build up to a quarter of 7 core spliced surprise rung at Bassaleg by a mostly Newport band in August. Notable ringing on practice nights also included a short touch of 84 Stedman Triples rung to celebrate the 84th birthday of Peter Bennett on 17th June!



Notable firsts in quarters included

- Peter Bray - first Plain Bob Major inside
- Rob Bruce - first 7 core spliced surprise major (all the work) - rung at Bassaleg
- Andy Parry - first Maximus (Little Bob)

We achieved four 10 and 12 bell quarters over the summer, including two of Grandsire Caters and two of Little Bob Max by South Wales ringers preparing for the South West 12 bell competition in October. Preparations are now in full swing for this event, which promises to be a great day of ringing in South Wales. Nine bands are now confirmed entered, which means 108 ringers will be competing on the St Woolos bells, now improved by the addition of wooden clappers fitted this year in 11 and 12. Three evening maintenance sessions have been run to make sure the bells are in tip-top condition for the day. Meanwhile a full team is working on the catering, logistics, and of course beer supplies, to make the day enjoyable for all our guests! If you are available on the day and want to help out please speak to one of the organising committee who are recruiting stewards and helpers to work short shifts as volunteers throughout the day.

Another date to look forward to this autumn will be Saturday 8th November when the current Bishop of Monmouth, Bishop Cherry Vann, will be invested as Archbishop of Wales in a special 3pm service at St Woolos.

And finally, congratulations to Rowan and Becky who got keys to their first house in August. We wish them every happiness in their new home!

Rob Bruce

Trellech

We're still making steady albeit slow progress with our method ringing. The weddings we have rung for this summer have provided a good focus for improvement.

Trellech ringers turned up en masse to attend Daytime Practice on 30th May at Blaenavon organised by Jenny Mole. A very successful session which allowed everyone to ring something new and challenging. Three of us made our way from Abergavenny to Blaenavon on bicycles but not via the Tumble !

On 21st August, 6 of us rang at Magor, Redwick and Nash, again mixing in a bit of cycling in between towers.

Aside from the bells, the ringing band at Trellech continue to regularly help with ground maintenance work at St Nicholas church.

Nigel Morris

Tredunnoc

Since I took over running practices at Tredunnoc, with lots of support from Peter and others, we have continued to welcome about 10 ringers, from various towers, to most Friday evening practices. Some are learners, some returners to ringing, some improvers and some much needed and appreciated experienced ringers. We have moved our learners on from bell handling skills to Mexican Wave and Nervous Breakdown, our improvers are tackling Grandsire Doubles and Bob Doubles inside and we have rung Stedman and St Simons, although not very often.

All this would be easier if we had a few extra ringers each week, so if you would like to join a friendly mixed practice you would be very welcome between 7.30 and 9.00pm on Fridays at St Andrews Church, Tredunnoc, NP15 1LZ.

The link to the details of the bells is here <https://www.dove.cccbr.org.uk/tower/13682> and if you would like more information I would be happy to talk to you on 07846 916 224

Philippa Shaw



Usk

We are delighted to report that, during August, new clappers have now been fitted to our 7th and Tenor bells. These are replacing the original 100 year old clappers that had since lost counterweights and so had been more difficult to strike accurately.

The Tenor clapper is wooden shafted and so we are expecting to see improvement in the 'go' of the bell as well as improving the tonal quality and correcting the odd struckness.

Phil Pratt of Avon Ropes Ltd, assisted by Barry Hayman, Rob Bruce, Andy Parry and Andrew Phillips did an initial survey back in May to ensure the clappers would be the right dimensions and would fit in, characteristically, with the other bells; before manufacturing and fitting earlier this month.

We are looking forward to enjoying the new sound in the months and years ahead!

Philip Huxley



CUMBERLANDS WEEKEND

L&M DACBR host The Society of Royal Cumberland Youths, during the weekend of 10th to 12th July for their Annual Country weekend. This turned out to be the hottest weekend of the year so far.

For those that don't know, The "Cumberlands" is a non-territorial ringing society, made up of ringers from the UK and overseas, founded in 1747 and based at St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, London.

Abergavenny was the nominated central point, with peals being attempted at 19 towers within an hour's drive away.

Unfortunately the weather had a detrimental effect on the number of successful attempts but 12 peals were scored ranging from Cambridge Surprise Major to Spliced Cinques and Maximus. There was also 1 hand bell peal rung on Sunday afternoon.

Saturday was a mini tour for those not peal ringing with Mynyddislwyn and Bedwelty the venues in the morning and open ringing at Abergavenny in the afternoon. The weekend concluded with an evening meal and social at Abergavenny Community Centre.

As it was such a lovely evening the meal and quiz were held outside in the courtyard. Sometime during the evening a handbell quarter peal of Dust and Debris Treble Place minimus was rung.

Everyone appeared to have a good time and where peals were 'lost' it is likely the 'Cumberlands' will return to try again. There were lots of favourable comments on the bells and locations.



Pauline Morris

200 CLUB DRAW

May 2025

Prize	Number	Winner
£30	176	Meriel Gainsbury (Llandaff)
£15	49	Fred Jackson (Llandaff)
£10	67	Rosemarie Ballard (Redwick)
£10	166	Mandy Berry (ex Rumney)
£10	163	Carole Russell (Caerleon)

June 2025

Prize	Number	Winner
£30	78	Helen Phillips (Newport)
£15	31	Marie Swidenbank
£10	182	Pauline Morris
£10	127	Margaret Matthews (Rumney)
£10	75	John Evans (Redwick)

July 2025

Prize	Number	Winner
£30	154	Debbie Turner (Rumney)
£15	86	James Leney (Shirenewton)
£10	61	Nick W Jones (Bassaleg)
£10	70	Angharad Jones (Rumney)
£10	160	Barbara Haydn Jones (Magor)

ASSOCIATION FINANCES – WHAT'S ALL THE FUSS ABOUT?

Hopefully you'll have heard by now that we're working on a proposal to merge the Branch bank accounts into the Association's Accounts. The Branch and Association treasurers, together with the AMC, have been working together to make this transition as smooth as possible.

Why are we doing it?

Banks are charging around £8 per month for small societies accounts – whilst the Monmouth Branch hasn't been affected yet, it could cost over £100 per year for each account – that's 14 people's membership fees just to pay the bank charges for your branch. To put this in context, in a typical year, each branch spends £150 to £250.

We want the branches to be able to focus on delivering things for ringers – this change will need fewer volunteers and allow us to streamline our admin.

How will it affect me?

If you pay your subs directly to the Association (or if you're the person paying the subs on behalf of your tower) you'll need to pay it into a different bank account.

If you're a member of the Monmouth Branch, and you're currently claiming a senior members' discount, I'm sorry but the Monmouth Branch is going to propose that their membership fee structure is brought into line with the Llandaff Branch, and you're going to have to pay an additional £2 per year – that's 4p per week. If you are concerned about this, please speak to me.

Will the branches still be able to run things as they see fit?

Pretty much, yes. Over the next couple of months we're going to define what will be paid from "Association" funds and what will come out of the branch budget, and then we're going to agree with the Branch Committees how we set the budget for the year.

If either branch has an exciting project that will benefit ringing in the Association as a whole, we're keen to support it.

What else can we look out for?

We've realised that a lot of members don't really know who does what in the Association, how membership can benefit them, and what financial support the Association gives to local projects.

Look out for a leaflet that explains how it all works and the benefits of membership, a poster telling you what you grants are available to improve ringing in your tower, and another leaflet explaining what the Association offers to you, depending on your own level of experience.

The Association has produced a full set of FAQs concerning the proposed changes, which can be found on the website here: <https://www.llanmon.org.uk/members/finance-consultation> (you'll need to be logged in)

Helen Phillips
Association Chair

SAVE THE DATE

Association AGM

Saturday 18th April 2026

Venue: Michaelston Y Fedw

ANNUAL REPORT EDITOR REQUIRED.

This role would be suitable for someone with an eye for detail and interest in what's happened in the Association during the year. The format of the report is set from year to year with only minor changes to the content.

The work on collating the information mainly runs between late October and the beginning of March when the report has to be ready to go to the printers. Although it is worth noting any deaths that have occurred during the year to be able to ensure all the Obituaries are received.

You need to be computer literate, but don't need any sophisticated programmes. The report is essentially a WORD document. During the preparation stage EXCEL can be useful if an .xls document is received. The tables in the report are produced using WORD tables. Adobe Photoshop is also used to modify or extract information from images received.

If you are interested in editing / helping to edit the 2025 Annual report please contact secretary@llanmon.org.uk or annualreport@llanmon.org.uk for more information.

Pauline Morris

BELL MAINTENANCE GROUP UPDATE

In June the BMG helped re-instate the 6 re-bushed clappers at Llantwit Major and a second Bell Maintenance course was run at St. Hilary.

In July it was Porthkerry's turn to have their 6 re-bushed clappers re-instated. The BMG inspected Cadoxton-juxta-Neath's bells and returned to Neath to replace missing nuts and bolts. Please see the Llandaff Branch Newsletter for further details.

We do 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 its best to help.

Joy Kipling
bmg@llanmon.org.uk

RWNYC BIRMINGHAM 2025

In July, Team Cymru returned to compete in the RWNYC 2025 in Birmingham. Team Cymru is a group of young ringers who are aged under 18 and are mostly from the Llandaff and Monmouth Association. This year we competed in the 8-bell Call Change section for the first time so it was a step up in terms of the competition.

We met early at Cardiff Central train station to get a train to Birmingham for the day. Our first tower was St Paul's in the Jewellery Quarter which is a 10-bell tower in the centre of Birmingham. Then we went to St Martin's in the Bullring which is the famous 16-bell tower. Three of our team rang call changes on the 16 and one of our team was very happy to be able to ring the tenor! All of us had the unique and enjoyable experience of ringing on the 16 as these opportunities don't come around very often.



Then we got a train to Erdington for our competition ringing slot at the 8-bell tower of St Barnabus Church. In our competition piece, we had to ring to Queens, Kings and have at least three bells leading. We were all quite nervous as we hadn't had managed a practice when all eight of us were available however, we were quite happy with our ringing

when we got out of the church. Our last tower of the day was Erdington Abbey which is a 8-bell tower not far from our competition tower.

Finally, after a long day we had the results at the Bullring. Even though we came fifth, we were all so proud of the progress we had made from being a six-bell team to being an eight-bell team when most of us don't have much experience ringing on eight. After the results, one of our team was invited to ring Littleport 16 with others from the competing teams which was a great experience for them.

Unfortunately, this year we had to say "goodbye" to our conductor of Team Cymru, Adam Turner, as he is now too old to compete. We will miss him in next year's competition! Overall, the trip to Birmingham had made us closer together. Not just as teammates but as friends.

We would like to say a big "thank you" to Debbie and Matthew Turner, our team leaders, for organising everything to do with the competition and helping with the ringing for us. Team Cymru will return in Nottingham next year for the RWNYC competition. See you next year!

Catherine Turner

10 BELL OUTING - SATURDAY 26TH JULY

As July and August are the months when people traditionally go on their hols, I arranged a 10 bell practice day in place of the monthly 12 bell practice. This was similar to what we did in 2024 and is partly to assist surprise Major ringers on their route to Maximus by ringing some Royal (and Caters). The other reason is of course to have a good day out and hopefully have some good ringing as well.

The first issue is that you will know that we are not exactly over blessed with handy rings with 10 bells in south Wales. So inevitably, some traveling was needed and also a ring of 8 as there wasn't enough 10's in easy reach! So our tour took us to St Mary's Brecon (8) followed by Brecon Cathedral (10) and after a leisurely lunch after the early start, Abergavenny (10).

The weather was excellent as was the ringing; we had spliced surprise Major at St Mary's and then Grandsire and Stedman Caters, followed by Cambridge, Yorkshire and London Surprise Royal at Brecon Cathedral and again at Abergavenny. The highlights of the day were the glorious drives through the Brecon Beacons, the interesting ascent and descent to and from the ringing room at Brecon Cathedral, the London Royal we were able to ring (a real achievement) and the lovely pint afterwards at The Kings Head in Abergavenny. Thank you for coming along, hope you enjoyed it.

Chris Kipling

CAERLEO PRACTICES

Yes, I know I've left off the last letter..... but that's the way our recent practices have been – one ringer short to make all the difference between being able give people that go at ringing a touch inside or hunting the treble to a touch or not.

I know we're not the only tower which has this 'problem' but it is making me think that we could do with a list of 'willing volunteers' who could be called upon to help out at towers on a practice night if asked. That extra one would make all the difference at Caerleon.

However, we, like those in some other towers, still try to make the best of every practice and people who attend regularly are making steady progress. There are some who regularly go to other practices during the week to help them improve but, even then, they might only have one go at what they are trying to improve on. I think patience is the word at the end of the day – but it's still frustrating!!

Jenny Mole

BRANCH TRAINING UPDATE

The Monmouth Branch training session in July, was a useful and successful combined course covering an introduction to Plain Bob Doubles using Nervous Breakdown & touches of Bob Doubles. This was held across two towers during the day at St Mellons (am) and Michaelston-Y-Fedw (pm).

There were very few takers for places on either course from Monmouth Branch members, so places were opened up to Llandaff Branch members so that there were sufficient numbers to allow the courses to run.

Lunch was a bring your own picnic, but with the option of a refreshments at the Cefn Mably Arms, Michaelston-Y-Fedw between the sessions.

Thank you to the students and helpers for making both sessions enjoyable.

The next Monmouth Branch course on the **18th October 2025**, will be a **learning to ring up & down in peal** course. The last time this course was run in September 2024, it was well attended and well received, with students finding it very helpful, so much so that they hoped it would be run again in the future. So here it is again.

The Monmouth Branch monthly schedule for the year has the October training session listed as a half day session, but given how successful the July training day was with sessions in both the morning and afternoon, I'm going to see what interest there is in doing the same again in October for the ringing up and down in peal.

That doesn't mean that students and helpers need to attend both sessions if they don't want to. People can attend either morning, or afternoon or both as it suits them, but I need to have a suitable balance of numbers in the morning and afternoon to be able to run both sessions. If I don't, then there will only be one session, based on a first come first served basis.

Please contact me via the Google forms to register as a student or helper at <https://forms.gle/PsRrQ5rXooDWJyBZA>

If you are unable to access the registration via the Google form, then please contact me via email and provide me with the following information

- a) You want to be a **student** on **learning to ringing up & down in peal** (AM or PM or Both)
- b) You are able to be a **helper** on the course (AM or PM or Both)

The tower(s) for the training session(s) will depend on participants and availability of suitable rings of bells for ringing up and down. I will try and make the tower(s) as central as possible for students and helpers on the course, but can't guarantee it.

Closing date for course entries is Sunday 5th October 2025

Andrew Phillips
MonmouthTraining@llanmon.org.uk

MONMOUTH BRANCH QUARTER PEAL FORTNIGHT

A reminder that our branch will be holding a quarter peal fortnight from 25th October – 9th November 2025.

This is a great opportunity to organise some special quarter peals to help members of your band achieve their first quarter, a first in method or even a first as a conductor. The aim is for as many members in the branch to ring quarter peals in as many church towers as possible. Those who can, could even organise handbell quarters if they wish to do so.

Bands with enough capable ringers will be encouraged to arrange their own quarter peals. If you would like to ring a quarter peal but don't have enough capable ringer in your tower, please let us know and we'll find a band/tower for you to achieve your goals. Please can you also let us know if you are available to help other towers if they are short of ringers.

Please can you then submit the achievement to BellBoard under Monmouth Branch Quarter Peal Fortnight.

Wendy Reilly - 07950352477 / wendy.reilly1962@gmail.com
Anne Hayman - 07884392955 / annejones5040@gmail.com

OBITUARY - ANN ROWE

11th May 1945 – 20th July 2025

Ann's casual question to Richard in the summer of 1994, "Do you fancy coming on a coach trip to Loughborough to see a bell being cast?" appealed to the engineer in him and he said, "Yes." They came on the trip on 24th August and the rest, as they say, is history.

Ann and Richard then learned to ring on the restored and augmented bells in St. Edeyrn's Church, Llanedeyrn and became part of the local band. In those early days they also went to Monday practice nights at St Augustine's, Rumney and made good friends there. Six of those friends rang a quarter peal on Sunday 10th August at St Edeyrn's in thanksgiving for Ann's life.



Ringling soon became a hobby which Ann and Richard could enjoy together and it took them to many places when they went on days out on tower grabs. They also went on ringling courses within the Monmouth Branch and, in August 2004, they went on one at The Fire Ring, Hopton Heath, Shropshire with Barbara Gordon and me. Needless to say we had a great time and while we were there I was privileged to conduct Ann's first and, I believe, only quarter on a tenor.

If you start to analyse Ann's ringling achievements you will see that, for quarter peals, she definitely favoured Grandsire Doubles and she often veered towards ringling the treble or the second – leaving Richard on the tenor. She was quite selective about the towers she rang in as well – Llanedeyrn, Rumney and Caerleon featured highly in her quarter peal list. She rang her first quarter on the treble at Llanedeyrn on 12th August 1999 with Richard ringling the tenor.

In later years Ann was finding it increasingly difficult to climb ladders and stairs into ringling rooms. So she and Richard began attending the Monday night practice at Llanishen where they made new friends but Ann had to wean herself off Grandsire as that was a method not rung in that tower and she had to face Bob Minor – for which she had her own adjective! On 1st September a quarter peal was rung at Llanishen in Ann's memory by those who rang there regularly with her on a Monday evening – the slight delay in this timing was to allow people who wished to ring in it to get back from their holidays.

Finally, there's one thing that I will always remember about Ann's ringling..... If I said it to her once, I said it a thousand times – "Keep your backstrokes in". Well, Ann you don't have to worry about those now but we hope you do dream of the happy days you had ringling. God bless.

Jenny Mole

ASSOCIATION QUIZ NIGHT

Saturday 25th October - Doors Open 6.30, Quiz Starts 7.00 prompt

Llantarnam Church Hall, NP44 3BP

Quiz Entry £3.00 per person, (suggest no more than 6 per team)

Pay cash on the night or by bank transfer to Monmouth Branch of Llandaff & Monmouth Church Bellringers

A/C 05017750 - S/C 51-61-02

Please put ref: Quiz and your name

Bring your own Picnic! Prize for the most innovative team table in terms of Food and Decoration.

Tea / Coffee/ Soft drinks provided

New for 2025 Tower Bingo (instead of a raffle) - £2.00 per entry (person not team) - Donation of prizes welcomed

Entries by 15th October to secretary@llanmon.org.uk

PLACE NOTATION PUZZLE

Work out the methods using the place notation.

Work out the lead-end order

Rules for place notation:

- X = all swap, places.
- Numbered places means, everything else swaps and the bells in the numbered positions stay where they are. For example, the two lines are done for you.
 - 5 means the bell in 5th stays where it is, everyone else swaps.
 - 1 means the bell in lead stays where it is and everyone else swaps.
 - X - All swap
 - 16 - The bells in lead and 6th stay where they are, and everyone else swaps.

Plain Bob Doubles

Place	1	2	3	4	5
5	2	1	4	3	5
1	2	4	1	5	3
5				1	
1					1
5					1
1				1	
5			1		
1		1			
5	1				
125	1				

Lead-end order: _____

St. Clements College Bob Minor

Place	1	2	3	4	5	6
x	2	1	4	3	6	5
16	2	4	1	6	3	5
x				1		
36					1	
x						1
36						1
x					1	
36				1		
x			1			
16		1				
x	1					
12	1					

Lead-end order: _____

Peter Bray