MONMOUTH BRANCH NEWS

Llandaff and Monmouth Diocesan Association of Church Bell Ringers

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Dates for the Diary

9th Jul, 7:30pm (Usk)
Branch 8-bell Practice

11th Jul, 10am (Bristol Area)
Branch Outing

15th Jul, 7:30pm (Bassaleg)
Association S.Major Practice

31st Jul, 10:30am (Michaelston)
Association Daytime Practice

13th Aug, 7:30pm (Usk)
Branch 8-bell Practice

15th Aug, 7pm (Mynyddislwyn)
Branch Practice

17th Aug, 7:30pm (Caephilly)
Association S.Major Practice

28th Aug, 10:30am (Radyr)
Association Daytime Practice

10th Sep, 7:30pm (Usk)
Branch 8-bell Practice

16th Sep, 7:30pm (Penarth tbc)
Association S.Major Practice

19th Sep, 7pm (Ebbw Vale)
Branch Practice

FROM THE BRANCH MASTER

In March, we held a Branch practice at Usk. Philip Huxley kindly took charge of the ringing as I was unable to attend at short notice. 16 ringers attended, with a wide range of abilities. This allowed for plenty of call changes and other ringing, right through to Surprise Major.

There was no Branch practice in April due to Easter and the Association AGM occupying the available Saturdays.

May was a very busy month, with the highlight for the Branch being the Striking Competition.

Held at Mathern, the afternoon was judged by Chris and Joy Kipling from the Llandaff Branch. We had 12 teams competing overall, with 4 taking part in the Call Change section and 8 in the Method section.8 different towers competing is the most we've had for some years. And many teams showed progression, such as St Mellons entering the method section after winning the call change section last year. Nice to see Caerleon and Llantarnam back after a break in 2025

Call Change Results
1. Michaelston-y-Fedw
2. Shirenewton
3. Llantarnam
4. Rumney

Method Results
1. Newport
2. Mathern
3. Llantarnam
4. Rumney
5. Shirenewton (2)
6. Shirenewton (1)
7. Caerleon
8. St Mellons

The "Most Improved" cat prize was awarded to Caerleon (previous entry had 2 Branch ringers and this year, all were Caerteon ringers), and the cake competition was won by Vinnie from Rumney, with Pip Shaw taking second place. The cakes were judged by Prue, who embraced the role with great enthusiasm—thanks Lindsay.

My thanks also go to Mathern for hosting the event and to Karen, who does loads of work behind the scenes to support me.

The handicap system was also trialled and, interestingly, the two Shirenewton teams came out first and second. This will be expanded on next year with more information on the system being used to handicap the more experienced ringers.

Well done to everyone who attended, whether as a competitor or supporter. It was great to see so many people there. The Striking Competition remains one of the most sociable events in the Branch calendar.

Other Branch Practices

The Branch 8-bell practices continue to be well supported and are run by Helen Phillips, with occasional guest "in charge" ringers.

A rearranged quarter peal of Grandsire Triples for Simon Lockhart was successfully scored at Usk in March—many congratulations to Simon.

In April, I organised a daytime 8-bell practice at Usk. This was intended as a "moving on to 7 and 8 bell ringing" session for those who are putting time into both their own development and helping others. It proved so successful that I arranged a further session at Blaenavon in May. There will be more of these practices in future, although finding suitable dates and ensuring that our helpers' diaries are not overwhelmed remains a challenge.

Another practice in May focused on more advanced ringing within the Branch, with a Surprise Major practice held at Bassaleg. This was also a successful evening, with Core 7 and Standard 8 spliced rung successfully.

Association Open Day

The Association Open Day took place on the May Day Bank Holiday and attracted around 75 ringers throughout the day. 7 people managed to visit all 17 towers, and an impressive £1,192 was raised for the Bell Restoration Fund.

Although organised by members of the Monmouth Branch, the event was supported by ringers from all across the Association, for which enormous thanks are due. It was a tremendous effort by everyone involved.

The highest attendance was 52 at Llantrisant, while 46 ringers at Michaelston-y-Fedw was also very busy.

Tewkesbury Shield

The Branch also entered the Tewkesbury Shield, organised by Matthew Turner. Unfortunately, it was not our band's day, and we finished eighth out of nine teams.

However, the practices leading up to the competition were extremely valuable. They helped both the band and individual ringers to develop significantly, and at the final practice the band was scoring consistently well on Hawkear. Thanks to Matthew who has been organising our entry into this for a fair few years now.

Looking Ahead

The Pitman Trophy is at Llanedeyrn this year, where the Monmouth Branch will be represented by Newport and Mathern. We wish both teams the very best of luck.

Other upcoming events include:

- Training Day – July
- Branch Practice at Mynyddislwyn – August

Further details will be circulated nearer the time.

And news just in (as I wrote this) is the fantastic announcement that Pip Penney has been awarded an MBE in the King's birthday honours list - this is so well deserved. Pip has put so much time and effort into teaching handling and encouraging our young ringers through KIDS RING OUT. Many congratulations to her!

Anne Hayman
Branch Ringing Master

ASSOCIATION CHAIR'S CHATTER – AGM UPDATE

Firstly I want to say thank you to the two retiring Branch Treasurers, Jen Mundy and Phil Williams, who have done sterling work to keep track of branch expenditure and membership records for several years.

Our new Treasurer, Andy Muir, is well known to many of you, having been a member at Cadoxton, St John's Cardiff, and now at Rumney, and is a regular at the Daytime Practices. He's been attending AMC meetings for a while, so he has a good idea of how Association finances work, and the work involved with bringing together the Association's Accounts and membership records, although none of us imagined how long it would take to change the signatories on the Association bank accounts.

Steve Dutfield resigned as BRF Trustee, and his place has been taken by Adrian Clark, who brings a wealth of knowledge from his experience of the augmentation at Llantrisant.

The post of Public Relations Officer has remained vacant for many years, but I'm delighted that Rob Bruce has been elected Community Outreach Officer, responsible for raising awareness about bellringing in our local communities, providing support to towers who want to go about a recruitment campaign, and coordinating our recruitment efforts so that we can increase the supply of learners who can go on to be the tower captains, conductors and teachers of the future. Rob will also represent us at the Central Council meeting in September this year.

It won't have escaped your attention that the Church in Wales is taking Safeguarding very seriously, and the thought of having to manage it might appear quite daunting if you don't have any prior experience. The teaching of young people is vital to the future of ringing in South Wales and it's important that we provide an environment where young people feel safe, welcome and included.

As an Association, we are responsible for safeguarding at the events we organise, and your Ministry Area is responsible for what happens at your local tower. Meriel Gainsbury, the Association's new Safeguarding Coordinator, will be able to signpost you to appropriate resources or connect you to the appropriate people in the Church in Wales if you need further information or have any concerns. She will be demystifying safeguarding and promoting good practice through regular articles in the branch newsletters.

My own six year term as Association Chair comes to an end at the next AGM. It's been both challenging and rewarding. A lot has changed and yet I feel like there's still so much more to do. The role of the AMC is to provide the framework to allow the branches to deliver the best possible ringing experience for its members – if you think you have what it takes to continue that process please get in touch.

Helen Phillips

200 CLUB DRAW

March 2026

Prize	Number	Winner
£30	73	Kathryn Pegington (St Mellons)
£15	25	Lyn Marshall (non ringer)
£10	2	Peter Bennett (Newport)
£10	68	Andrew Phillips (Newport)
£10	95	Newport Cathedral

May 2026

Prize	Number	Winner
£30	119	Sian Howells (F&F)
£15	43	Caerphilly Tower
£10	19	Mike Richardson
£10	78	Helen Phillips (Newport)
£10	180	Llanedeyrn Tower

April 2026 - Double draw at AGM

Prize	Number	Winner
£60	86	James Leney (Shirenewton)
£30	5	Jenny Mole (Unattached)
£20	130	Mike Gunter (Llantarnam)
£20	113	Simon Lockhart (Shirenewton)
£20	42	John Vesey

NEWS FROM THE TOWER

Bedwellty

Regular Monday night practices have continued at Bedwellty, and we have been delighted to welcome new members into the band, including Sandra and Richard Kilby, who have just moved into the area from Northampton. Sandra and Richard are both ringing rounds and call changes, but are keen to do more ringing in the branch / association so look out for them at tfuture practices and do say hello.

We are also delighted to welcome Eunice Bell (yes that really is her name!) who is learning to ring for the first time, and attending regular tied practices at Bedwellty and St Woolos with Rob Bruce. Special thanks to the volunteers who have been turning up early at Bedwellty to “chaperone!” so we meet safeguarding guidelines.

On Easter Sunday 6 brave volunteers turned out to ring for our first sunday service, which followed on from well received carol service ringing back in December. It was great to hear the bells rung again for service after such a long break. Hopefully we can continue to build up the band and do more service ringing in the future.

In other news Helena Hyatt has begun training as a bus driver in South Wales. Congratulations to them, and everyone else .... look out!

Rob Bruce

Caerleon

Striking Competition

This year’s Striking Competition took place on Saturday 16th June at Mathern. Caerleon participated by ringing a plain course of Grandsire Doubles. Notably, this was the first time a complete Caerleon band entered the competition without support from ringers from other towers, marking a significant achievement.

Caerleon was awarded the “Most Improved” band and received the Cat Prize. The cake competition was judged by band member Lindsay Horth, who added to the occasion by dressing as Prue Leith.

Visitors to St Cadoc’s Belfry

In recent weeks, Caerleon has welcomed several visiting bands who have rung quarter peals at St Cadoc’s Church. One group, who rang a quarter peal of Cambridge Surprise Major on Wednesday 10th June, shared that their band comprises ringers primarily from East Anglia, along with members from Warwick and Cheddar. They regularly organise ringing weekends or weeks together and are currently based near Bream, ringing across the Forest of Dean and Monmouth areas. Last year, they were based near Wheddon Cross on Exmoor.

Proposed Mini Tour – Summer 2026

Karen Jones is organising a summer mini tour for Caerleon ringers during the school holidays. It is anticipated that the tour will include visits to two or three towers within the Netherwent Ministry area. Further details, including dates and locations, will be confirmed in due course.

Mother’s Union 150th Anniversary

To mark the 150th anniversary of the Mothers’ Union, Caerleon will be ringing in celebration of this milestone.

Karen Jones

Llanedeyrn

From March onwards we are ringing regularly with Blaenavon and continue to advance in Grandsire. It's always a pleasure to ring on the bells at Blaenavon and its good they come to ring at Llanedeyrn twice a month. We've had a few visiting ringers of late which is always nice and the open day to bell ringers saw 40 to 50 ringers in the tower in May. John has been in the tower servicing the bells and we still have the money to spend left to us by Rob Pearce. The bell ringers continue to be involved with church activities and this Saturday it's the Summer Fayre inside the church and in the grounds. The weather is looking good.

Amanda G makes the church look lovely with her flower displays, but it has been 3 years since we've had a wedding to ring for. Sign of the times with younger couples wanting the hotel experience rather than the traditional church service and then on to the hotel.

The training of all ringers is getting there, and John has been elected as senior trainer. He is also taking the practices at Blaenavon and doing an excellent job. Most ringers are advancing into Grandsire or PH on 5 and 6. John is doing monster call changes which test your concentration and, on a Sunday, we are preferring to ring for 25 minutes without stopping which is sounding much better than the start/stop approach.

With the support from Blaenavon the band has taught themselves to ring Grandsire and it's starting to sound genuinely nice. A couple of Blaenavon ringers are ringing at Llanedeyrn twice a month and Lee continues to hold a practice once a month at Blaenavon which is supported by Llanedeyrn.

The Unicorn pub is doing well, and they are great supporters of the bell ringers and of the church. Summer is here and it's nice to leave the tower on a Wednesday evening and the dark nights have disappeared for now.

Martin Gilbert

St Woolos

A busy spring program of ringing at St Woolos. Great to see weekly practices have regularly included 10 bell ringing, ranging from Grandsire Caters upto Yorkshire Royal. Seven quarters scored on Sunday afternoons with methods including Plain Bob, Stedman Caters, Cambridge and Lessness Surprise Major, and Grandsire Cinques. St Woolos ringers also supported quarters for Monmouth Branch ringers at Bassaleg and Usk. Notable first quarters included

- Helena Hyatt - first quarter on on the treble (Plain Bob Doubles)
- Rob Bruce - first quarter of Plain Bob Doubles as conductor
- Karen Jones - first quarter on the tenor since 1975, rung on the same bell at St Woolos!
- Simon Lockhart - first quarter of Grandsire Triples inside, rung at Usk

In May we hosted a Guides recruitment day at St Woolos, which was well attended, and resulted in one new teenage recruit, currently training with Peter Bray at Llanwern. Many thanks to Catherine for recruiting the guides from local troops, and to the helpers who helped make it a fun Saturday afternoon. Meanwhile we continue training for another young ringer, Matt Charlton, who is now ringing rounds with us on Tuesday night practice. Thanks to Andy Parry and Rob Bruce (both fresh from ART level 1 course in January) who have led the training practices.

A band from St Woolos competed in the branch striking competition, held in the lovely village of Mathern. Our band placed 1st so will go forward as one of four teams : Mathern, Cowbridge, Penarth and St Woolos, to compete for the Association Pitman trophy on 17th June. A number of St Woolos ringers also competed this year in the Tewkesbury Shield 10 bell competition, but placed lower this year, coming 8th out of 9 bands.

Recent weeks also saw a number of events involving St Woolos ringers to mark very special occasions. On 30th May a 5060 peal of Yorkshire Surprise Major was rung to celebrate a significant birthday (number redacted!) for Rob Bruce. This was my first peal of Surprise Maximus inside, and included many of the ringers I was with at Oxford University in the 1980's, as well as new ringing friends from South Wales. And on 13th June a peal of 5152 Lessness Surprise Major was rung at Bassaleg to celebrate 50 years since Helen Philips learnt to ring at the same tower (but on the old steel 6!). Congratulations also to Andrw Phillips who rang the tenor for his 400th Peal.

Finally, on Sunday 7th June, an association band rang a quarter of Grandsire Cinques at St Woolos. This was rung open to celebrate the memory of David Llewellyn, an honorary life member of the association, and much loved ringer in South Wales!

Rob Bruce

PIP PENNEY - KINGS BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST

We were delighted to hear that Pip Penney, who rings at Shirenewton in the Monmouth branch, is to be awarded an MBE for her “extraordinary services to church bell ringing and young people”. Most of you will know that Pip came late in life to ringing, yet has had an outsized impact on bell ringing since then, both here in South Wales, and across the world. Pip’s outstanding contributions to the bell ringing community include:

- **Founder and former chair of the Association of Ringing Teachers (ART).** Drawing on her experience as a physiotherapist, she developed structured training schemes, which turned teaching of bell handling into a proper, standardized physical skill. ART has now become the international standard for teaching bell ringing, with centres as far away as Australia and New Zealand.
- **The “Kids Ring Out” Project** : Pip founded this highly successful youth ringing group in South Wales, which won national awards for encouraging younger generations to get involved in bell ringing. Several members of this group are now running towers of their own and training more young ringers across South Wales.
- **Publications** : Pip wrote essential books and guides for learners such as “A Ringers Guide to Learning the Ropes” and “Teaching Tips”.

Helen Philips, said “Pip has changed the way people think about teaching ringing both locally and nationally, and continually challenged us to engage with young people to ensure that ringing will thrive into the future. As an association, we’re extremely proud that the significant impact she has made is being nationally recognised, to mark the King’s birthday.”

So lets all raise a glass to a real star of the Monmouth Branch..... and do remember to bow or curtsey next time you see her! Lol

Rob Bruce

BRANCH TRAINING NEWS

The date of the next scheduled Monmouth Branch half day training session is being moved from 18th July to the following week on Saturday 25th July between 9:30 and 12 noon.

This is mainly due to a clash of training sessions and then ringing for a special service at Newport Cathedral on the 18th July, which will likely involve a number of ringers who would normally helpout on the training sessions. So to avoid he course being short of helpers for the, the course date is being put back by a week.

The half day session on Saturday 25th July will be on Plain Hunt on 7.

But places for learners will be limited to 5.

I currently have some learners identified for the session from Abergavenny, but if are any others who would like to learn Plain Hunt of 7, then please contact me. First come first served.

As ever, these courses cannot run unless there are enough helpers to provide support for the learners.

Please let me know if you are able to helpout on the morning of 25th July.

I will aim use a central tower within the branch if I can.

The second half day training session is scheduled to take place on Sat 17th October.

At the moment I’m planning on trying to re-run the Introduction to ringing up in peal course that got cancelled last year.

Further details will be available closer to the date, and will be published in the next newsletter and via email messages for those that are signed up to the Associations email lists.

Andrew Phillips
MonmouthTraining@llanmon.org.uk

ASSOCIATION OPEN DAY – MONDAY MAY 4TH

After months of planning the open day had finally arrived, how was it going to pan out and was it going to be a success, only time would tell. The weather was kind to us which should have been a good omen.

17 towers along the M4 corridor had agreed to open their doors, with some providing refreshments.

The day started at 09.00 at Magor for registration, with breakfast rolls, tea and coffee available. The bacon and sausages being ably cooked by Simon Lockhart who kindly stepped in at the last minute, after the person who had previously confirmed they would do it dropped out.

We had approximately 75 ringers from all over the country arriving at some point during the day. Someone even came down from Dunblane on the overnight sleeper to grab a few towers. Only a handful managed to grab all 17 towers which was an achievement in itself.

There has been some very positive feedback and thanks from people attending, saying how well organised it was and how nice our bells were. Obviously, the highlight tower of the day was always going to be the new 10 at Llantrisant.

The day ended at 19.30 at Pen Y Fai another tower that the Bell Restoration Fund had given a grant to in 2025 to help with refurbishment of their bells.

Helpers and organisers still standing at this point went to the pub for a well-earned drink and discussed the pros and cons of how the day went.

Was the day a success, yes, the hard work and planning paid off as we raised £1,192.39 for the Bell Restoration Fund, met some nice people and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.

Would we do it again? Probably - but we would not be so ambitious with the area covered.

Anne and myself would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that made this day possible, you are too numerous to mention by name, but without you the day would not have been possible.

Pauline Morris & Anne Hayman

BELL MAINTENANCE GROUP UPDATE

During the first week of March the Bell Maintenance Group were involved with the reinstatement of Llantrisant's completely refurbished, retuned and augmented ring of 10. This took the whole week by the time the frame was constructed, the bells hauled up the tower, all the fittings bolted into place, the clappers installed and the ropes tied on.

We inspected the back six bells at Llanfrechfa on 17th April and tightened a loose stay, re-tied a rope and put penetrating oil on three crown staples. The front two which are hung below the back six were not inspected because the ladder leading up to them was unsafe. We also returned to Bassaleg to replace two leather washers; the two clappers are now tight. The oddstruckness on bells 6 and 7 were checked: 7 was evenly struck and 6 was within the limits of acceptability. The stairs which were hazardous with stone dust were swept.

On 15th May we checked the oddstruckness on bells 2, 3 and 4 at Caldicot. Bells 3 and 4 were found to be slow at backstroke; both have been corrected and are now evenly struck. In the afternoon we inspected the six at Penhow. We found a loose dingler because the top of the stay is too small, two wheels with chipped shrouding and three worn ropes. The fittings are very rusty.

On Saturday 6th June we once more held a bell maintenance course at St. Hilary when 4 aspiring steeple keepers had the chance to look at and then correct commonly found faults on bells.

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

NEWS FROM THE TREASURER

I was appointed treasurer for the whole association at the AGM in the middle of April. Since then we have been winding up the branch accounts and the branch treasurers should have this completed in the next few weeks.

I have contacted all the towers within the association with details of an estimate of the subscriptions due from your individual towers. This was based on the records of the names of members in each tower, which I also supplied.

Many of you have emailed me with details of members who have joined or left your tower and this has been very helpful. I have updated our records accordingly.

At present the association has received 27 tower subscriptions out of a total of 55 towers that I contacted. This represents a total payment of £1232 out of an estimated total of £2830.

For those of you that have not sent me an update of your membership I would be grateful if you could supply me with this information so that I can update our records.

In order to remind you the annual subscription rate agreed at this years AGM is £7 for adult members with a reduced rate of £5 for children under 18, students and those who are unemployed. It was decided that retired members should also pay £7 which is a change from last year.

My contact details:

- Email: treasurer@llanmon.org.uk
- Address: Andrew Muir, 18 Waterloo road, Cardiff, CF23 5AE.

Payment of Tower Subscriptions.

Preferably by BACS. Please include your tower name in the reference.

- Payee: Llandaff and Monmouth DACBR.
- Sort Code: 54-21-36
- Account Number: 45889872

If you would prefer to pay by cheque please make the cheque payable using the above details, and send it to me with details of which tower you represent.

Thanks to you who have already supplied me with an updated tower member list, and to those that have submitted the subscription payment.

Andy Muir

A STORY (THAT'S NOT REALLY) ABOUT DINGHY RACING

Andrew and I have been racing our 14 foot dinghy for 27 years. At our first National Championships we were 15th and in our most recent Nationals we were 24th.

So why do we bother? We're never going to win. You could be forgiven for thinking we're getting worse.

Firstly, competition provides us with a focus. Whilst we're not as fit or as strong as we used to be, getting ready for the Nationals means we put more effort into keeping the boat in great condition and practising the skills we need to do our best.

Secondly, by competing against top sailors we can learn from them – the lessons we learn on the water and in the coaching sessions afterwards mean that we're continually learning something new.

Finally, the Nationals is a great social event – being on holiday with 80 or so of our friends, getting to know new people, swapping tips on how to make the boat go faster. It's the first thing that goes into our diary for the year, and we've only missed once in 27 years.

And did I mention the free ice cream?

It's the same with striking competitions. (OK, we don't have free ice cream, but we do have cake and that's just as

good)

The real benefit of entering a striking competition is from the effort you put in beforehand.

Most of us are short of time on a practice night, every touch you ring is “for” somebody. We rarely ring something that we can all ring well just to focus on the striking, but it’s just as important and the competition gives you the excuse to make time.

The last piece of ringing just before a service is the one that everybody hears – wouldn’t it be nice to have a “party piece” that you know you can ring really well? That’s what your striking competition test piece is for.

If you record your ringing and play it through an app like HawkEar or BReNDA it will tell you what you can improve – it’s best if you each pick just one thing to work on - but it means you don’t have to have an “expert” on hand to be able to improve your striking.

But if you do want some help, your Branch Training Officers would be very happy to put you in touch with someone who could run a training session at your tower.

The branch striking competition is usually a really enjoyable day out – you get to hang around in the sunshine listening to some really good ringing and chatting to friends from other towers.

And when the results come through, somebody is going to talk about your striking – it’s not personal, they have no idea who’s ringing when, they’re just trying to give you feedback that will help you improve.

When Andrew and I enter a sailing competition, we don’t expect to win, but we look at the people around us – whether we’re doing better than the people that are normally just ahead of us – the satisfaction comes from doing as well as you think you can and knowing that you’re improving.

And there’s always cake!

Helen Phillips

BRANCH OUTING - 11TH JULY 2026

This year’s Monmouth Branch Outing will be to Bristol, and is open to all ringers.

With many thanks to the Bristol Branch for helping organise the towers, the confirmed schedule is:

- 10:00am - Bristol St Michael on the Mount Without (6)
- 11:30am - Bristol Cathedral (8)
- 2:00pm - Bristol Lord Mayor’s Chapel (6)
- 3:00pm - Bristol St John on the Wall (6)
- 4:15pm - Bristol Central / St Philip & St Jacob (8)

The towers are chosen to be achievable on foot. Final details will be confirmed by email before the day, and a suitable pub will be found for lunch once numbers are clearer.

If you’re likely to come, please let me know so that I have an idea of numbers - simon@slimey.org

Simon Lockhart

ASSOCIATION OF RINGING TEACHERS

The Association of Ringing Teachers (ART) is delighted and proud to congratulate Pip Penney on being awarded an MBE in The King's Birthday Honours List.

Pip was ART's first Chairman and the driving force behind the formation of the Association. Building on her work with the Central Council Education Committee and alongside other prominent ringers, she brought together a wealth of experience and expertise to create an accessible, inclusive, and effective approach to teaching bell ringing. Her vision and determination laid the foundations for an organisation that continues to support and develop ringing teachers across the country.

Congratulations, Pip. We are immensely proud of your achievement and grateful for everything you have done for bell ringing and for ART.

ART continues to build on the work that Pip started. Over the past year, we have upgraded many of our IT systems, making it easier for members to access resources and support. We continue to run training courses across the country, delivered by our dedicated team of volunteer tutors.

One of our most popular initiatives has been the Learning the Ropes Festival. A festival will be held at the Mancroft Ringing Discovery Centre this summer, with a further event planned at the Loughborough Bellfoundry in April 2027.

We also keep in touch regularly with those who have attended a course or have been enrolled by a trainee teacher through our Tower Talk communications.

We would like to thank all the Guilds and Societies that support their members in attending courses and developing the teachers of the future. We are also working closely with the Central Council to help recruit and train new ringers in support of its Ringing 2030 programme.

As the fifth Chairman of this growing organisation, I am proud of what ART has achieved. We are always looking to develop new initiatives to support ringers, and we are delighted to have more than 815 members who volunteer their time and expertise to encourage the growth and sustainability of bell ringing.

If you would like to know more about ART and its work, please do get in touch. www.bellringing.org

Neil Jones - ART Chair

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150 YEARS OF THE MOTHERS UNION

Jean Starr president of the Llandaff and Monmouth Mothers Union has asked if bells could be rung on Sunday August 9th 2026, at 1.50pm for 15 minutes if possible. This would be to acknowledge Mary Sumner Day, and 150 years milestone of the Mothers Union.

However any ringing on that day even if it's only rounds and call changes as part of normal service ringing that could be linked to this would be appreciated. An event will be created on bell board. Any ringing completed will be collated and sent to Jean a couple of days after the event.

Mothers' Union, is a Christian organisation, which began in 1876. Mary Sumner, the wife of a rector, was the founder and is dedicated to supporting families and giving a voice to disadvantaged women. Today we are an organisation of over 4 million worldwide.