

LOOK TO !

ISSUE 148

June 2020



**Mother Nature's bells
in the Parish of Ystradowen,**

**Newsletter of the Llandaff Branch
of the L&M DACBR**

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Newsletter Submission

The deadline for the next edition is **15th August 2020**

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EDITORIAL

Although we currently can't ring our man made bells Covid 19 has not stopped Mother Nature producing masses of gorgeous bluebells this spring. So it seemed fitting to replace the front cover's customary picture of a church which in the present lock-down we are not allowed to enter, with a photograph of nature's bells spotted earlier this season while doing my daily permitted exercise.

This copy will be an on-line version only as printing and distribution of hard copies at the moment is problematic to say the least! I will extract any important articles and include them in the next printed edition.

Despite all the restrictions imposed because of Covid 19 resulting in no ACTUAL ringing the Branch correspondents have still been busy. Although there is a dearth of events upon which to report they have come up with lots of clues to names of UK cities and some have even sent news of what is going on in their particular tower during the lock-down. Congratulations and thank you to you all!

To reflect the present situation, the focus of the Newsletter has been tweaked towards entertaining rather than informing. So to this end I have introduced a new feature called Clues around the Branch. There will be a £10 prize for the winner. Please see page 13 for all the t's and c's . There are also two crosswords courtesy of Bob Hardy and a table top quiz kindly supplied by David Jacklin (answers on pages 26 and 27). My grateful thanks go to you both.

Enjoy!!

Joy Kipling

NOTES FROM YOUR BRANCH CHAIRMAN.

Well, none of us saw CV19 coming I'm sure! Your Officers had been very busy towards the end of 2019 putting into place a hopefully interesting and varied programme of events to take us through 2020. It seems to me unlikely that we will be resuming ringing at any time soon, so we will just have to roll everything out in 2021 instead. So for now, we'll just have to get used to the new normal - social distancing, Zoom meetings, follow my leader in the supermarkets and 16kg bags of flour! It's a strange world for sure but keep safe, enjoy your walks in what has been a prolonged period of lovely weather and I look forward to seeing you all again before too much longer.

Sadly, we must report 4 deaths, David Bounds from Llantwitt, Nic Treharne and Bert Thomas from Cowbridge and Christine Lucas who rang at Whitchurch, Llanishan and Rumney. Full obituaries will appear later and no doubt we will be able to arrange proper Memorial Services when ringing is able to resume.

2019 Annual Reports. If you've not received one and would like to, please get in touch.

Chris Kipling

ASSOCIATION MASTER'S MUTTERINGS

For a number of reasons, this is a very strange Master's Mutterings to have to write. Most obviously, the Covid-19 pandemic has curtailed all ringing activities since the Government imposed a lockdown on 23 March. At the time of writing it is not certain when our ringing activities will be able to recommence. Therefore, I have little ringing-based activity to draw your attention to.

Secondly, we were unable to hold our Association AGM that had been scheduled for the end of April. As I explained in my last Master's Mutterings, I had planned to retire as Master at the AGM but all the Officers will remain in post until such time as we can hold a meeting.

With the cessation of ringing activities, it's really important that we all make an effort to keep in touch with the other ringers in our towers and in the wider ringing community. When the lockdown is eased and when it is safe to allow ringing to start again then we will need all the ringers we have. It's important that we keep in touch with ringers, particularly those who may be more recent recruits, to ensure that, when the time comes, they're still engaged with ringing. In my own tower, we set up a

WhatsApp group to help us all keep connected and we've started having a weekly Monday night "virtual pub" held on Zoom instead of our practice night.

I know that other towers are taking advantage of some of the new technology that has emerged over the past weeks. I would certainly recommend ringingroom.co.uk to all towers and bands. This is a bit like the Abel simulator in that you can "ring" the bells using a keyboard but it allows multiple ringers to join in rather than ringing with a computer. It's a bit tricky to get used to but, when approached in the right way, is great fun (particularly when it all goes horribly wrong!) and a great way of keeping in touch. I've been fortunate to join in with a couple of different groups over the past few weeks and to catch-up with ringers that I wouldn't normally ring with that often in the tower.

There have also been great strides with handbell technology. Whilst we're fortunate in that we've been developing a handbell band at home, not everyone is in the same position. Fortunately, several new pieces of technology have emerged in the past month which allows handbell ringers to ring together and there is a group in South Wales which has been 'meeting' regularly to use these.

The Central Council has been thinking about a "Ringing Returns" campaign which both plans for our return to the tower but also focuses on what ringers can be doing during the lockdown period. There are lots of good resources that are available online that we can use to keep both our ringing skills up to date and learn new skills. There are several good videos on things like "how to learn a method" and "conducting touches of spliced" available on the Association of Ringing Teachers' YouTube channel at:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/ringingteachers>

Another good way of keeping in touch is to join our Association Facebook Group. This has been very active over the past couple of weeks with various "Guess the Tower" competitions, pictures of past ringing events and general discussion. The Group is available at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/LlanMonDACBR/>

Finally, I hope that everyone keeps safe and well and I look forward to ringing with you again in due course

Matthew Turner
May 2020

DAVID BOUNDS 1955 - 2020

David was born in Cardiff on 7 March 1955 where he lived until he moved with his family to Llantwit Major in 1963. He was a choir boy at St Illtuds, Llantwit Major before learning to ring when he was 11 years old and remained a faithful ringer there for most of his adult life.

David rang his first peal at St Brides Major, being Grandsire Doubles, on 31 January 1970 conducted by Tom Petty. He went on to ring 120 peals between 1970 and 2012, with all but 6 of these rung for the Llandaff & Monmouth Association.



He conducted 32 peals, including a peal of Doubles at Cadoxton comprising 148 methods/variations in November 1984. At the time it was a record but later rule changes by the methods committee of the Central Council revised this to 134

methods/variations, as recorded in the Association peal records, nevertheless a great achievement by David. Another highlight was a peal of Stedman Caters he organised at St John Cardiff in April 2003 by a band of past and present Llandaff Branch officers.

David was elected as a member to the Association in 1969 and served as Llandaff Branch Secretary between 1981 and 1982. He was also the Association Ringing Master from 2010 until 2012 and then served as Association Chairman from 2012 to 2015.

For many years, David organised and ran the Association Minor Practice, which started life as the Vale of Glamorgan Minor Practice back in the 1970s with his friends Peter Mayle and Geoff Morgan. David was also a great supporter of Branch and Association practices. With his friendliness, good humour and encouragement he was always ready to help less experienced ringers. Over the years he taught and helped many ringers including his daughter Ffion to develop, whether by standing behind or ringing.

In 2018 David took over as Tower Captain at St Illtuds from his good friend Peter Mayle and was proud to be involved with the recruitment and training of new band members for Ringing Remembers many of whom have become regular tower ringers.



The Llantwit Major band with the Ringing Remembers recruits 2018.

Llandaff and Monmouth Diocesan Association of Church Bell Ringers

He encouraged the use of the simulator system in the tower and was always keen to take the band forward.

Following an initial career with National Power, David retrained as an IT consultant working for the National Museums of Wales and latterly for the National Health Service at Llandough and Cardiff until his retirement in 2015. Aside from ringing, he was also a keen walker, gardener, rugby fan and enjoyed nothing better than driving his MGTF at track days. He also liked to travel both home and abroad often joining practice evenings or Sunday ringing. While on holiday he rang at Washington, Dublin, Wellington and Inverness Cathedrals as well as many churches in Wales and England.

In late 2019, David was admitted to Heath Hospital with a ruptured appendix, when unfortunately, further investigations indicated the presence of cancerous bowel tumours. David bore his illness and chemotherapy with customary great fortitude and positive manner, but unfortunately passed away peacefully at home with his partner Hilary on 22 March 2020.

As a consequence of the social restrictions imposed by the Covid 19 pandemic, the funeral at Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium was attended only by immediate family, but many of his friends were there in spirit some ringing what ever form of bell came to hand. The intention is that a memorial service and celebration of his life will be held in due course to acknowledge the great contribution he made to ringing within the Association and particularly at the Llantwit Major tower.

Our sympathies and condolences go out to all his family, particularly Richard and Ffion and his partner Hilary at this very sad time. We will always remember David as a great ringer, a great friend and a great person. He will be sorely missed by all of us.

Andrew John & Hilary Evans

POEM FOR DAVE

You left this world too early Dave,

So sad to say goodbye

But God has called you now my friend

To that tower in the sky.

He needs another teacher

*To teach the ringing art
You have the skills and expertise
So now you must depart.
Tonight those heavenly bells will ring –
Your welcome to the skies,
You'll bump into Mike Thomas too,
He'll want to ring Surprise!!
So, even though you've left this life
And we have lost a friend,
You'll have some different bells to ring
And different ropes to mend.
Old ringing mates are waiting
'cos they've been a ringer short,
They'll have you ringing Stedman Cinques,
Please do give us a thought.
Alas, we will be struggling
To get back into rounds
There'll be no-one to guide us back,....
We'll miss you, David Bounds!*

By Andrea Kane-Akers

NEWS FROM AROUND THE BRANCH

Cowbridge, Llanblethian and St Hilary

We were all profoundly saddened with the heartbreaking news that David Bounds, Nic Traherne and Bert Thomas BEM had died. As we could not attend their funerals due to covid 19, at the time of Dave's funeral, those who could, rang hand bells at home and at the time of Nic's funeral the tenor bell was tolled in tribute to them both. At the time of going to press we have yet to arrange a tribute for Bert.

As a result of the social distancing regulations our bells have been silenced, just as St Hilary belfry was restored to good working order. C'est la vie.

On a positive note the lock down has provided some benefits. We are all enjoying the cacophony of bird songs without the noise of traffic and overhead aeroplanes. In fact a mother duck has been spotted strolling through Cowbridge High Street with her ducklings following obediently behind her.

Several of our band have been encouraged to embrace technology and keep in touch with family and friends through zoom calls. Dilys has become an excellent dissectologist and can punch out 1,000 pieces without too much trouble. Our dendronologist has been enjoying time with his transplants and is encouraged that his Sequoiadendron giganteum is flourishing while his Fagus sylvaticas are enduring squirrel nibble. We have been very fortunate that the weather has been good and we can spend time pottering or sitting in our gardens. Our thoughts are with families without gardens, people living alone, those who are ill and those enduring the sadness of bereavement.

From our ringers to you all we extend our very best wishes. Keep healthy and safe.

HB

Llanishen

Some late news from us:-

Julian Parker suggested that we should ring a date touch on 2nd February, that being a palindromic date and as we had Evensong for Casndlemas that day it seemed like the ideal opportunity.

2020 is two extents of Minor plus a 580. He arranged the 580 himself with all the Little Bob in the first half and then we could relax with just the Plain Bob to go St Isan Llanishen, Cardiff

Sunday, 2 February 2020 in 58m (3-3-20 in Eb)

2020 Minor (3m)

580 Spliced Plain & Little Bob, 1440 Cambridge Surprise

- 1 Peter J Giles
- 2 Andrew T Potter
- 3 Frederick B Jackson

- 4 Alex G Saunders
- 5 Roger S Harpole
- 6 Julian C Parker (C)

Rung for Candlemas prior to Evensong and also as today was a special palindromic date - 02/02/2020. Longest length - 2.

Roger Harpole and Julian Parker

Penarth and Sully

Penarth & Sully ringers are all well and have all been keeping in touch via Zoom meetings on Wednesday evenings in lieu of our practice night. These have normally started with a go on "ringingroom" with varying levels of success, followed by a quiz and then general chat.

Julian Parker

CLUES FROM AROUND THE BRANCH

UK CITIES

If you know of anyone in your band who is not online and would like a copy of this quiz please let me know on 01 446 772726 or 07 773 729506 and I will sort out a printed copy for them.

F after the clue denotes a FACTUAL clue. All the rest are cryptic or word puzzles
N.B. Some clues share the same answer!

Caerphilly

- 1) Sounds like a capital overseas place to live. (7)

Peter Jones

Cowbridge, Llanblethian and St Hilary

- 2) Half French sweet including direction plus digging implement minus both ends.
(7,3,4)

- 3) Mixing had rum outcome. (6)

Susan Davies

Llandaff Cathedral

- 4) A nice straight line. (5)

Meriel Gainsbury

Llantwit Major

- 5) City where the Pink Panther lives? (6)

- 6) All ship shape here (7)

7) Ring it quick (7)

Hilary Evans

Neath

8) A "twin" seaside city with an Indian style former royal palace (8,3,4) F

Theresa Edmunds

Penarth and Sully

9) Messed up Graham. (6)

10) Eccentric crossing. (9)

11) Former deal, origin unusual. (6)

12) Old large apple. (4)

13) Grown-up boy, treasure and the Queen are united here. (10)

14) A president, a car and a colour shade share my name. (7)

15) Known for my tales and a popular ringing method which isn't really backwards. (10)

16) Sounds like we've finished, with Queen Elizabeth the First's astrologer. (6)

17) Turkish acid bird. (4)

18) The cathedral in this city was founded as a Monastery in 655AD at Medeswell. (12) F

19) Building the Cathedral in this city began in 1880, the first Anglican cathedral since Salisbury in 1220. (5) F

Julian Parker and other Penarth ringers

Pontypridd

20) King Arthur might have dined here. (10) F

Cheryl Lavington

Radyr

21) Which is the only city to feature in the list of 9 British railway stations with only 3 letters in their names. (3) F

Andrew Gainsbury

St. Brides Major

22) Bath bun maker becomes capital academic (6)

Chris Thorpe

St John's Cardiff

23) One Cardiff hospital or ten in Pembrokeshire (2,6)

24) Where to see Elgar's statue in this place by a river crossing (8) F

Bob Hardy

Whitchurch

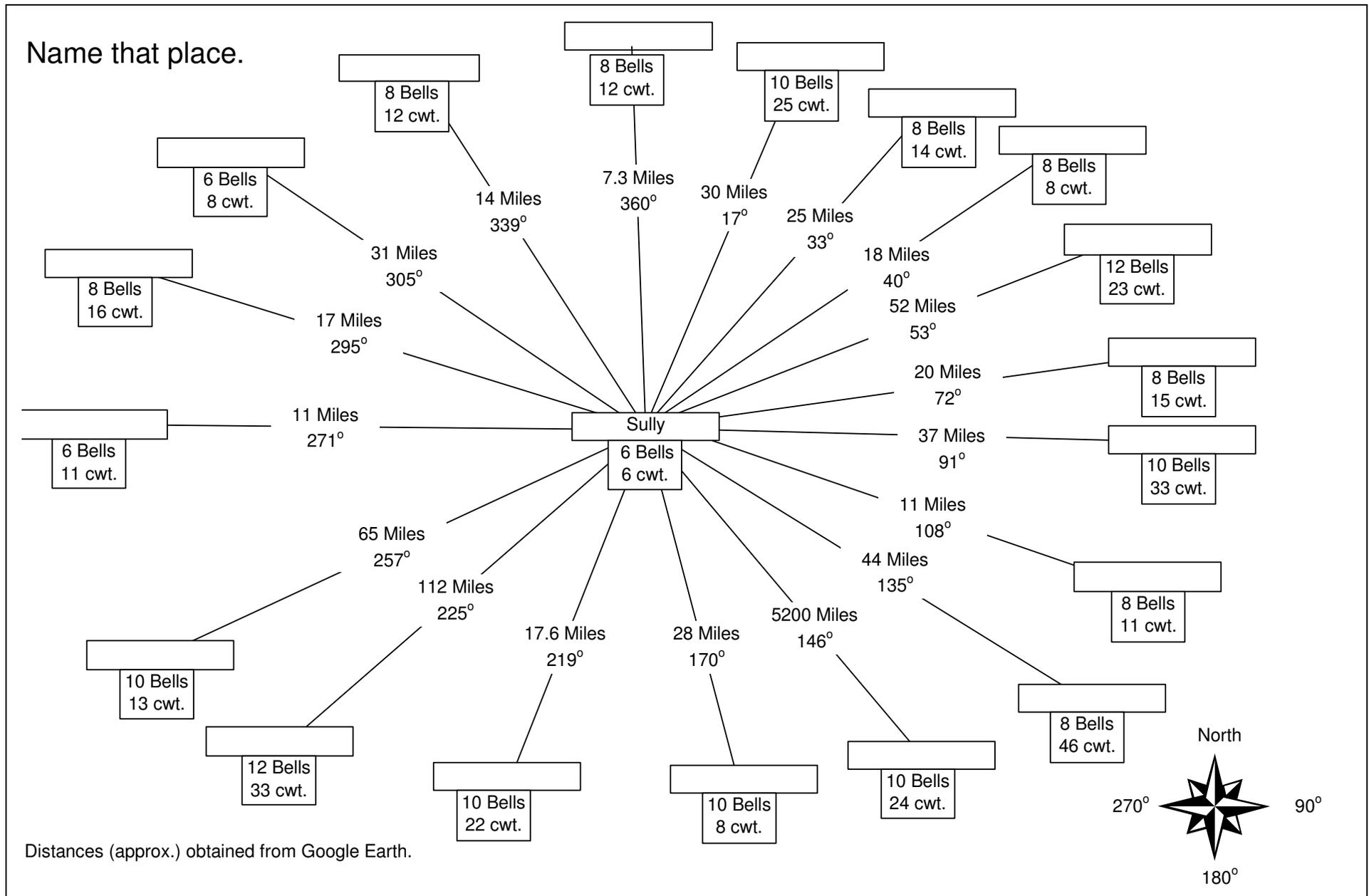
25) A hundred and an everyday story of country folk setting. (9)

Lynne Workman

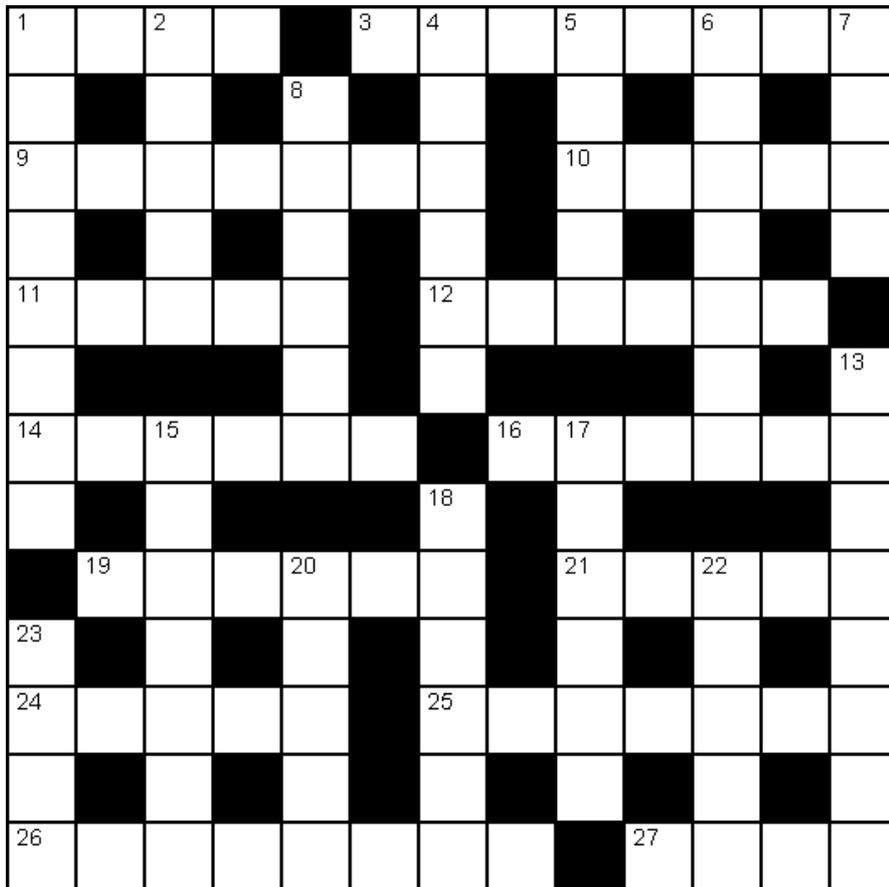
RULES

- 1) This competition is **only** open to Llandaff Branch members but not Kiplings.
- 2) Entries must be received by 30th June 2020. Email (see page 2) or post.
Telephone for my postal address using either number at the start of this quiz.
- 3) There is a £10 prize for the winner.
- 4) Those entries with 25 correct answers will be put in a hat and the winner drawn.
If no-one gets 25 correct answers. then the winner will be drawn from those with 24 correct and so on.
- 5) The draw will take place on 1st July 2020.
- 6) The winner will be notified by email or phone.

The name of the winner plus the answers will be printed in Look To No.149.



Quickie Crossword



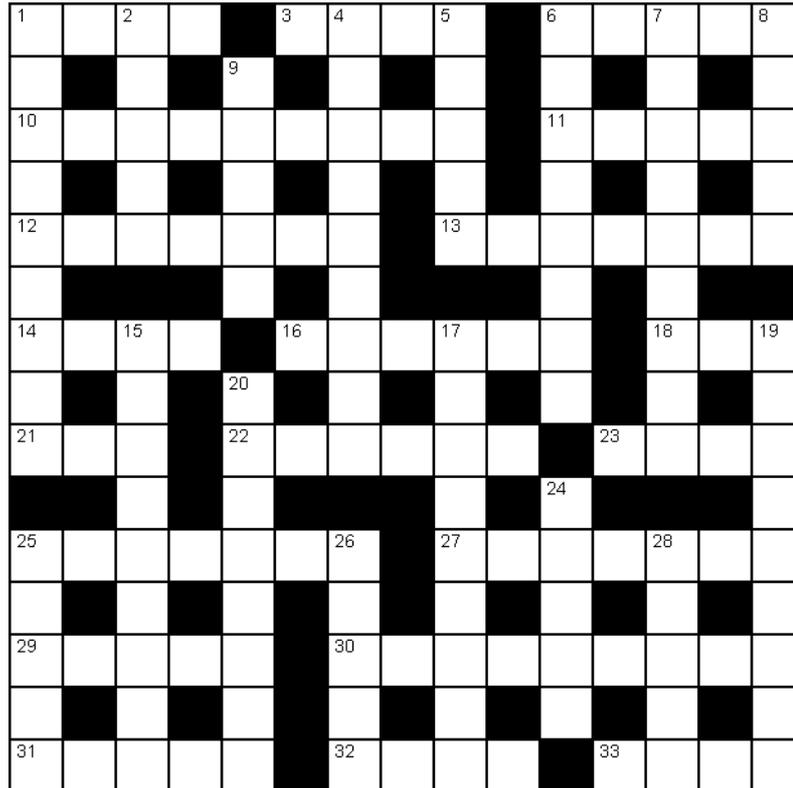
Across

- 1 Groups of tennis games (4)
- 3 Not extravagant (8)
- 9 Keep back (7)
- 10 Birds or flying toys (5)
- 11 Not behind, in front (5)
- 12 Signified agreement (6)
- 14 Put up with (6)
- 16 Playground equipment (6)
- 19 Not often (6)
- 21 Urge forward with force (5)
- 24 Expenses (5)
- 25 Getting larger, naturally (7)
- 26 Answer (8)
- 27 Not straight (4)

Down

- 1 Comes up from under water (8)
- 2 Flavour (5)
- 4 Removes dirt (6)
- 5 Fully undressed (5)
- 6 Female parents (7)
- 7 Ready money (4)
- 8 Shopkeeper (6)
- 13 Light at the end of the day (8)
- 15 Puts on clothes (7)
- 17 Newspaper worker (6)
- 18 Pictures (6)
- 20 Party with music (5)
- 22 An award (5)
- 23 Visible reminder of old injury (4)

Cryptic Crossword



Across

- 1 Being lazy, lied dreadfully (4)
- 3 River with double existence (4)
- 6 Attempt a piece of writing (5)
- 10 I rag ruler about deviating from normal expectations (9)
- 11 The scope of terrible anger (5)
- 12 Mercia must be destroyed before a country is formed (7)
- 13 Took into account that we dig, he collapses (7)
- 14 Two people maybe or just one thing (4)
- 16 Locations where fine material is included in afterthought (6)
- 18 People of fashion and great weight (3)
- 21 Head or crazy person (3)
- 22 Have troublesome Slav as servant (6)
- 23 Chopping the head off Oscar leaves an unsightly mark (4)
- 25 I'd dream about being greatly respected (7)
- 27 Have a small injury so withdraw from the race (7)
- 29 Intensely disliked head-dress on the little fellow (5)
- 30 Carthorse performed for musicians (9)
- 31 Saddlery (not red) is imperfect, unfortunately (5)
- 32 Persuade someone to accept the monk's accommodation we hear (4)

- 33 Two dimensional accommodation (4)

Down

- 1 I'm into it, a poor substitute (9)
- 2 Popular general admits being above average in size (5)
- 4 Sly labels become parts of words (9)
- 5 Warder's propellor? (5)
- 6 Oh dear, lies told boldly are admitted the soonest (8)
- 7 Man-made tiny chest is extraordinary (9)
- 8 Give up or bring in (5)
- 9 ... a profit once more (5)
- 15 Meditates about how one made a guess (9)
- 17 Putting a school group in charge of a learner is characteristic of ancient world cultures. (9)
- 19 No threats developing from this direction (5-4)
- 20 Commonplace and ordinary, just like Monday to Sunday (8)
- 24 Command a proper arrangement (5)
- 25 All that's left as she collapses (5)
- 26 Entrances in avocado or soft pink (5)
- 28 Add up not quite all but still get the full quantity (5)

200 CLUB WINNERS

Editor: No report received.

CLAPPERS FOR CARERS



As per the majority of the population I have been trying to do my bit at 8 p.m. on Thursday evenings to thank the NHS and other key workers. I have been ringing handbells outside my house. I have slowly been getting to grips with rounds on 4 bells with accidental call changes thrown in for good measure. The neighbours don't know the difference so I'm quite safe there - they are not judging the ringing. When I finish my performance I'm not sure if my neighbours are giving me a round of applause or continuing their applause for the NHS, probably the latter. In the end I will probably be able to ring Plain Hunting by Christmas.

Alwyn Lewis

LOCKDOWN HANDBELL ANTICS - COUCH TO 5K

This article gives a first update on the lockdown handbell antics of the St Malo Road handbell band in Cardiff as we take our first steps on our handbell project that we've loosely titled "Couch to 5K", after the NHS-sponsored running programme, inspired by the idea of a series of small steps towards a larger goal.

With the coronavirus pandemic resulting in a complete cessation of all ringing and other activities (choir, bands etc.), our attention naturally turned to the boxes of handbells that have lived in the study for some years. We are fortunate to have access to two sets of bells:

Set 1 – a Mears set of 8 with a tenor of 15 in C which were beautifully refurbished by Bernard Stone a few years ago. These are lovely bells with a beautiful sonorous tone and have been rung for several peals and numerous quarters but are on the heavy side for small hands.

Set 2 – a Shaw's set of 12 with a tenor of 11 in G with an additional flat 6th to give a variety of options. These bells belong to the Llandaff & Monmouth Association having been presented by Fr John Hughes and are in good condition. The flat 6th gives a ring of 8 with tenor sized 8 in C and we found that a handy size for ringing with small hands and these quickly became our preferred ring.

The contestants

Matthew, aged 42 from Cardiff. Has done "a bit" of handbell ringing in the past including numerous quarter peals of Plain Bob and Kent Minor and Major for example but not a lot recently apart from on the annual Llandaff & Monmouth handbell days and the Reading trips to Tulloch. Averages slightly less than one handbell peal a year. Can put some bobs in.

Debbie, age undisclosed from Cardiff. Learnt to ring handbells soon after we returned to Cardiff in 2004 with Matthew and Peter Bennett. Debbie is a confirmed trebles ringer and has rung numerous quarters of Plain Bob and Kent in the past but nothing recently. Has rung a single handbell peal of Bob Minor in 2008.

Adam, aged 13 from Cardiff. Whilst Adam is very competent on tower bells, he had not done a lot of handbell ringing until the project started. He did some handbell ringing on our last visit to Tulloch and could ring any pair for Plain Hunt on 6.

Catherine, aged 9 from Cardiff. Probably the most enthusiastic contestant! Catherine started ringing handbells on our last trip to Tulloch and could ring any pair for Plain Hunt on 6. Catherine is still learning to handle a tower bell and hadn't done any method ringing previously.

Progress so far

We created a BellBoard event to help us keep track of progress here:

<https://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/event.php?id=12908>

We started off by re-acquainting ourselves with the basic concepts of handbell ringing such as holding the bells correctly, and getting them to strike consistently and

accurately. We then launched into plain hunt on 6, each practising the three different pairs and, to push ourselves a bit, also had some attempts at plain hunt on 8.

Thereafter, a few different strands have emerged. Adam being older, more experienced in method ringing and having a later bedtime has made rapid progress. With Adam ringing the tenors we started ringing some plain courses and touches of Plain Bob and Grandsire Doubles – just get the feel and rhythm of ringing changes on handbells with methods that we were all familiar with. Stage 1 – a 120 of Plain Bob Doubles – was completed on 21 March.

There then followed some serious work with squared paper and writing out the 5-6 pattern for a plain course of Plain Bob Minor. After a few goes, particularly of moving into and out of the 2/3 position, Stage 2 – a 180 of Plain Bob Minor (3 homes) was rung on 25 March. What we now needed to do was consolidate this and so Stage 3 – a 360 of Plain Bob Minor (6 homes) was rung on 29 March.

At this point we had to break the news to Adam that, in order to ring a longer length, we'd have to introduce a lot more leads where he wasn't ringing a coursing pair. Back to the squared paper again and the 5-6 pattern for the standard Wrong, Home, Wrong (WHW) touch was written out and examined in forensic detail. We then launched into the standard 120 called Wrong, Home, Wrong, Home and with plenty of stopping and starting again (a great advantage of handbell ringing over tower bell ringing!) and determination Stage 4 was completed on 4 April.

Again, what we now needed to do was consolidate this learning and we did this with Stage 5 when a 360 of Plain Bob Minor (called WHW three times) was successfully achieved on 7 April. This was rung on the day of David Bounds' funeral. David had been Chairman and Master of the Llandaff & Monmouth Association over the years as well as contributing a huge amount to ringing in South Wales. It was good to remember him with a footnote to this Stage 5 performance.

Our attention now turned to extending the number of changes as well as consolidating the WHW pattern for Adam. We found that just ringing the standard 120 touch when we had a few spare moments was good practice to keep it in our minds. On 13 April we completed Stage 6 with a 540 of Plain Bob Minor called WHW single H single H. The look of disappointment on Adam's face when the penultimate single was called after he realised we were in the plain course meant that some encouragement was needed in the final course!

Just as I've put the finishing touches to this article on 16 April, we successfully completed Stage 7 with a quarter peal of Plain Bob Minor which was Adam's first in hand at the first attempt. He rang really well all the way through and was delighted when rounds came up at the end.

With Catherine, progress has inevitably been slower as we've been having to teach her the fundamentals of method ringing but we've consolidated plain hunt on all

three pairs as well as introduced plain hunt on 8 with her on the trebles. However, she's done some serious homework with the squared paper and written out the trebles (1-2) pattern. We explained the relationship between the two bells and what happens when the treble leads as she did not know about dodging or lead ends. Over the past few days we've started introducing Bob Minor a lead at a time – another advantage of handbell ringing over tower bells.

Training tips

Our experiences over the past few weeks have helped us make the following observations which may, or may not, be helpful for others.

Firstly, pick your time for handbell exercise carefully - we found that a morning session or first thing after lunch to be best.

Secondly, and linked to the above, we found that long practice sessions are unproductive. A good 10 minutes when everyone is focused is much better than a pre-bedtime 30 minutes!

Thirdly, small chunks of practice work really well. We found that a short touch every now and again, particularly if suggested by one of the less-willing contestants, was very productive.

Fourthly, repetition, repetition and repetition. Ringing the same thing over and over again, particularly to get the three patterns of Plain Bob Minor (coursing, opposites and 2/3) completely set in stone is really beneficial.

Finally, don't underestimate the power of bribery. We've discovered that all four contestants will ring for chocolate or an alcoholic drink and, fortunately, the Easter Bunny recently provided us with plenty of handbell-ringing currency.

Future plans

Future plans are focussed around getting Catherine into ringing the plain course of Bob Minor consistently and getting her familiar with the three patterns; and for Adam, the challenge now is to get him to ring a different pair for Bob Minor and then some consolidation with perhaps another quarter or two before moving on.

Will we ever get to 5K? Well, maybe or maybe not but it's good to have a target in mind and something to focus on. Importantly, we've found handbell ringing to be a lot of fun and something different to occupy ourselves during the current unsettling times.

Matthew Turner

EVAN DAVIES - THE FIRST MASTER OF THE ASSOCIATION

One of the things you feel when wearing the Association Master's badge is the weight of history. 125 years is a long time for any organisation to sustain itself and this is due, in part, to the many talented ringers who have worn the Master's badge during that time. However, I've often wondered about Evan Davies, the first Master of the Association and who he was. After a few hours of research it appeared that he was something of a remarkable figure. A number of sources have been consulted in trying to piece together this article including The Ringing World, Bell News, Church Bells and the personal notebook of John W. Jones.

Evan Davies was born on 28 May 1859 in Carmarthenshire. He trained as a school teacher at Trinity College Carmarthen and was appointed a teacher at the Williams' Endowed Schools in Caerleon in 1881, being appointed Master in 1885. In 1881, the five bells that had been in the tower at Caerleon and which had been unringable for some time were taken down and recast into a ring of six by Warner's of London. It is not clear whether Evan learnt to ring at Caerleon or if he had learnt prior to coming to Caerleon but his brother, William, was also a ringer at St Nicholas Pier Head in Liverpool.

The dedication of that ring of six bells took place on 15 December 1881 and was reported in the edition of Church Bells dated 24 December 1881. According to the article, "the service and prayers used in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, and more recently in Llandaff Cathedral, were adopted and used with much approval." The article also lists the names of the ringers who rang for the dedication as follows:

Caerleon Ringers—B. A. Cuthbert (conductor), 1; G. W. Harding, 2; T. Povall, 3; E. Davies, 4; W. Williams, sen., 5; W. Dowle, 6.

Newport Ringers—J. Wreford (conductor), 1; W. Wreford, 2; B. Combes, 3; W. Maxfield, 4; W. Martin, 5; D. Thomas, 6.

John W Jones' notebook records that call changes were rung. "JW" as he became known, learnt to ring in Caerleon shortly after the dedication and was taught to ring by Evan Davies. JW went on to become an influential member of the Association and much could also be written about him. The notebook records the rapid progress made by the Caerleon band following the dedication:

"Jan 8th 1882 Singles were rung successfully 5, 6 covering.

April 30 1882 A Plain Course of Bob Doubles rung

Dec 15 1882 Course of Grandsire Doubles rung for the first time on open bells

Llandaff and Monmouth Diocesan Association of Church Bell Ringers

Wednesday February 21 1883 120 Grandsire Doubles rung for the first time by the following – W Templar 1 H Shearer 2 W H Arnold 3 H Phillips 4 J Waters 5 E Davies 6

March 21 1883 Plain Course of Stedman Doubles rung on handbells

March 23 1883 Plain Course of Stedman Doubles rung on the tower bells

May 28 1884 First 720 of Grandsire Minor rung. Davies' 25th Birthday.

Oct 26 1884 First 120 of Stedman Doubles rung on the bells by Rees, Weston, Jones, Davies, Green, Williams.

Dec 15 1884 Annual Meeting. Addition of two trebles suggested.

Whit Week 1885 Warners estimate arrived – 7 cwt @ 5/12/- £39-9-0 Fittings 10-0-0
Total £49-9-0

Nov 25 1885 First 720 Kent Minor rung on the bells

April 18 1886 Two new trebles ordered.

May 26 1886 McKenna and Haley of Warners took the pitch of the bells.

July 28 1886 2 new bells arrived and taken up into the Bell Room Aug 7 by E Davies and T Green

Aug 10 1886 2 trebles chimed for the first time

Sunday Aug 12 1886 Rounds on the 8 for the first time & on the 15th course of Grandsire Triples

Sunday March 13 1887 First ¼ peal of Grandsire Triples, J W Jones took the tenor.

Sunday Nov 4th 1888 Rang 6th to a ¼ peal of Grandsire Triples, my first ¼ inside.

Dec 18 1889 First ¼ peal of Stedman Triples rung on the bells. I rang the 4th.”

Evan was clearly an enthusiastic and capable teacher. In the edition of Church Bells dated March 3 1883, the following report appeared:

“On Wednesday, the 21st ult., the following ringers, whose ages range from 10 to 14, rang their first peal of 120 Grandsire Doubles, with the 6th covering, in 5 mins. W. Tamplin, 1; A. H. Shearn, 2; W. H. Arnold, 3; H. Phillips, 4; J. Waters, 5. Tenor 7 ½ cwt in B flat. The peal was conducted by Mr. E. Davies, under whose tuition these youths have been for about eight months.”

On 12 January 1889, a milestone was reached when the Caerleon band rang their first peal. The details of which were recorded in the edition of Church Bells dated 25 January 1889 as follows:

“On Saturday, the 12th inst., Taylor’s Six-part peal of 5040 Grandsire Triples was rung in 2 hrs. 47 mins. Romulus Le Vesconte, 1; H. Sheam, 2 ; Evan Davies (conductor), 3 ; W. H. Arnold, 4; Lot Stafford, 5 ; J. W. Jones, 6; Frank Green, 7 ; H. Evans, 8. Tenor, 7 ¼ cwt., in B flat. First peal by all the band, and first peal on the bells.”

Over the next few years the Caerleon band established themselves as the premier band in South Wales and Evan Davies was clearly an enthusiastic force in this and in the subsequent establishment of the Association. A longer article will be written at some point as to the state of ringing in South Wales in the years before 1893 which led to the Association being formed but it is no surprise that Evan Davies was elected as the first Master of the Association.

Away from ringing, Evan Davies was married for many years and his wife’s sad death in 1914 was recorded in The Ringing World. He had a son, Claude, who was also a ringer and fought in the trenches in the First World War. Claude later moved to Liverpool and became Secretary of the Liverpool Branch of the Lancashire Association. Claude Davies was also a schoolteacher and died in 1941.

In 1924, Evan Davies retired as Headmaster of the school in Caerleon and decided to return to Carmarthen. The Ringing World records the Association AGM held on Boxing Day 1923 as follows:

“Next F. Atwell made a presentation to Mr. Evan Davies, of Caerleon, who is about to leave the neighbourhood for his old home at Carmarthen, after serving 43 years as a schoolmaster as Caerleon. It was Mr. Davies who brought change ringing into that part of the country, and brought about the restoration of Caerleon bells by getting five old ones recast and augmented to a ring of eight. He taught everyone there to handle a bell, and the first peal was rung on the bells by all 'first peelers,' including the hon. secretary. The presentation took the form of a record of all peals rung by the Caerleon Society bound in book form, which also include the peals of the Llandaff and the Llandaff and Monmouth Diocesan Association. An umbrella was also presented to him.”

Sadly, Evan Davies did not enjoy a long retirement as he died on February 11 1929. His obituary, written by J W Jones, was published in The Ringing World dated February 22 1929 and is copied here in full as it gives a lot of detail about Evan’s life and interests:

“Mr. Evan Davies, of Caerleon, passed away on Monday, February 11th, at his native place near Carmarthen. He was buried at Llanllwch Parish Church on Friday, the 15th, the Vicar, the Rev. T. Thomas, officiating, assisted by two lecturers from

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Carmarthen College, where Mr. Davies had been trained for the scholastic profession.

Among the mourners were Mr. William Davies (brother), of Liverpool, who for many years had charge of the bells of St. Nicholas' Church, and also Mr. Claude Davies (son), who is now branch hon. secretary of the Lancashire Association at Liverpool.

Owing to ill-health during the last few years the late Mr. Davies had not been able to take any great part in ringing, but his love for the bells was, to the last, as great as when he came to Caerleon quite a young man. Caerleon at that time had five old bells. The tenor (11 $\frac{3}{4}$ cwt.) was cast by R.P. 1685, the other four by the same founder in 1660. The bells were all split at the crowns or parted from the waist, and the woodwork was in bad condition. Canon Edwards, the Vicar, applied to the governors of Williams' Charity, and at length succeeded in obtaining a grant of £150. A meeting of the parishioners was then called, and a committee formed. The appeal was well responded to, and the old bells were sent to Messrs. Warner and Sons, London, on October 7th, 1881, to be replaced with a light ring of six; The dedication and opening took place on December 15th, 1881, the ringing consisting of call changes only.

Mr. Davies then formed a band and started change ringing. A 720 of Minor was rung on the bells for the first time on May 28th, 1884. In 1886 the six were increased to eight by adding two trebles, the work of hanging the bells being done personally by Mr. Davies. Progress was made in Triples ringing, and the first peal rung the following Jan. 12th, by the local band, Mr. Davies being the conductor. During the same year peals were rung in the Kent and Plain Bob Major methods. Stedman Triples was practised, and often for the Sunday services quarter-peals were rung.

The question of forming a diocesan association resulted in the selection of Mr. Davies as the first Master on October 13th, 1893, and he was re-elected in 1894 and 1895. He was not a great peal ringer, but had taken part in about twenty peals, including the first peals on the bells at Caldicot, St. Woolos' and All Saints' Churches, Newport.

For forty years he was headmaster of the Williams' Endowed Schools, Caerleon. He was an ardent worker for the Church in Wales, especially in the Llandaff diocese. He also acted as choirmaster of Caerleon Church for 35 years. Mr. Davies was a recognised authority on the history of Caerleon, and was honorary curator of the Museum of Antiquities for over 30 years. He was also an authority on ecclesiastical law, and at the time of his death was engaged in writing a comprehensive history of the Church in Wales.

On his retirement from the scholastic profession a few years ago, he was the recipient of a high tribute from old boys of the school in all parts of the world."

Day trips to West Wales are a family favourite and so we decided to take a trip to Carmarthen and see if we could find Evan Davies' grave at Llanllwch. On arrival we found a very pleasant country church on the outskirts of a small village. The churchyard is relatively small and the children quickly found Evan's grave in the south-west corner. Evan is buried in the same grave as his father, David Davies, with a simple stone giving dates of birth and death. It was good to be able to pay our respects to the first Master of our Association.

Matthew Turner

DIARY

The Diary has been cleared due to Covid 19 restrictions

For news of any change to the above and other information, please sign up to the Association Mailing Lists at:

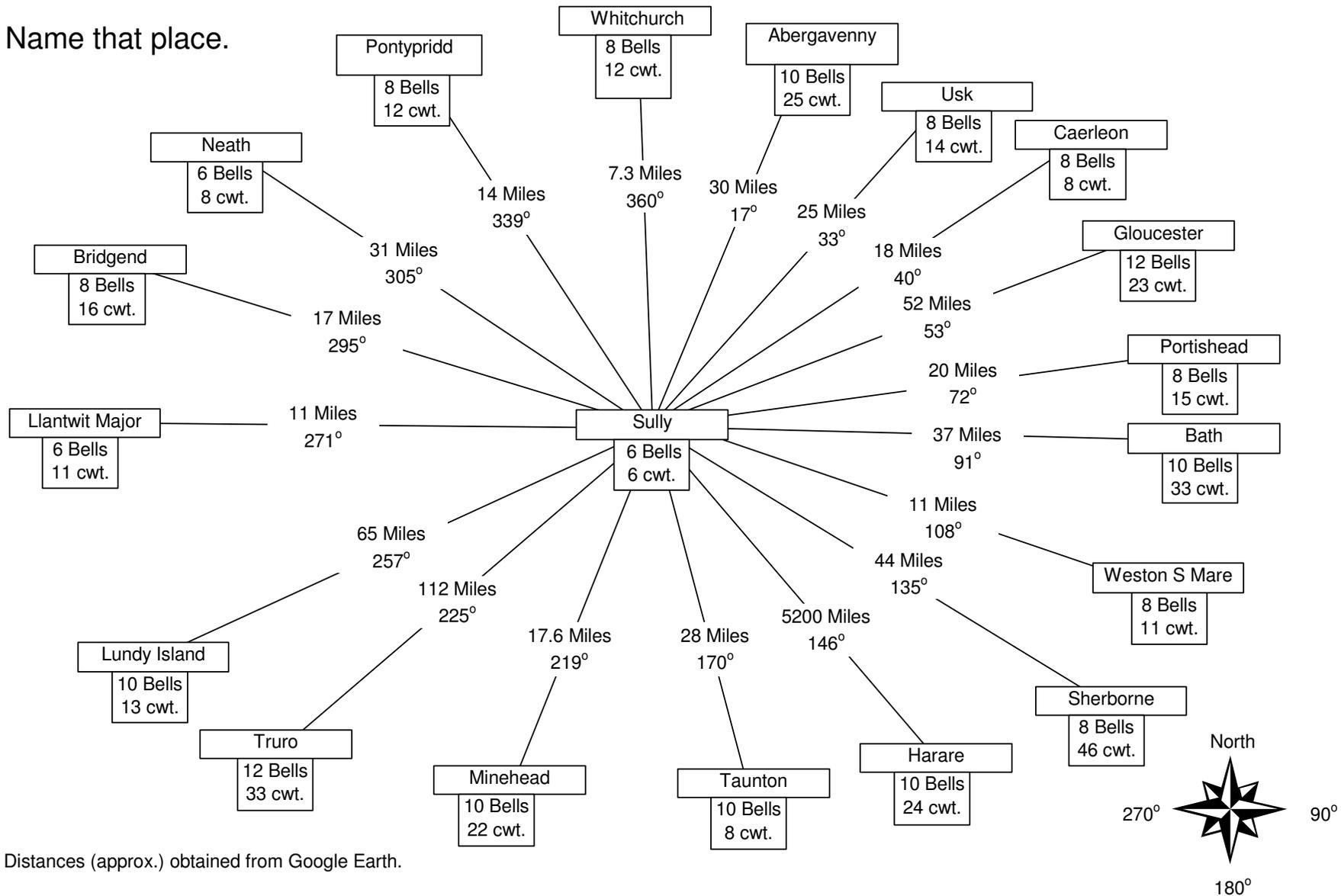
[https:// www.llanmon.org.uk/ mailing-lists](https://www.llanmon.org.uk/ mailing-lists)

There is also a very active Association Facebook Group available at:

<https:// www.facebook.com/ groups/LlanMonDACBR/>

Quiz and crossword answers below.

Name that place.



Quickie Answers

Across: 1 Sets, 3 Economic, 9 Reserve, 10 Kites, 11 Ahead, 12 Nodded, 14 Endure, 16 Seesaw, 19 Seldom, 21 Impel, 24 Costs, 25 Growing, 26 Response, 27 Bent.

Down: 1 Surfaces, 2 Taste, 4 Cleans, 5 Naked, 6 Mothers, 7 Cash, 8 Trader, 13 Twilight, 15 Dresses, 17 Editor, 18 Images, 20 Disco, 22 Prize, 23 Scar.

Cryptic Answers

Across: 1 Idle, 3 Isis, 6 Essay, 10 Irregular, 11 Range, 12 America, 13 Weighed, 14 Item, 16 Places, 18 Ton, 21 Nut, 22 Vassal, 23 Scar, 25 Admired, 27 Scratch, 29 Hated, 30 Orchestra, 31 Sadly, 32 Sell, 33 Flat.

Down: 1 Imitation, 2 Large, 4 Syllables, 5 Screw, 6 Earliest, 7 Synthetic, 8 Yield, 9 Again, 15 Estimated, 17 Classical, 19 North-east, 20 Everyday, 24 Order, 25 Ashes, 26 Doors, 28 Total.

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