

MONMOUTH BRANCH NEWS



LLANDAFF AND MONMOUTH DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

Number 123 November 2020

Forthcoming Branch Events:

Branch AGM - 16 January 2021 at 1600 via Zoom. Pre-register here:

<https://www.llanmon.org.uk/contacts/2021-monmouth-branch-agm-registration>

All other Branch and Association practices and events are on hold until further notice due to Covid-19 pandemic.

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2021 Monmouth Branch AGM

You may remember that it was decided to hold the January 2021 Annual General Meeting of the Branch at Abergavenny. We would have enjoyed a ring on those glorious bells, joined together for our service in church, had a superb tea and then a formal/informal meeting. For some there might have been even more ringing and a glass of beer!

But sadly, the Covid virus has put paid to all that! We have decided to hold the meeting on the appointed day, and at a time consistent with what would have been, but communicated via telephone and the internet from the comfort of your own home, or indeed wherever you happen to be. So the meeting will be held on Saturday 16th January, starting at 4.00 pm. An agenda will be prepared and published on the web. The officer's reports will also be available beforehand.

The Branch Committee has already held a virtual meeting, and intends to hold another in December. Indeed the Association AGM was held digitally very successfully, and arrangements are already in hand for our Branch AGM. The technical arrangements are in the hands of the Association Master and Chairman. You will have to register in advance in order to take part, and details will be circulated in good time.

To register for the AGM, please complete the online form on the Association's website here:

<https://www.llanmon.org.uk/contacts/2021-monmouth-branch-agm-registration>

Links will also be emailed to members and made available via the Association's Facebook Group.

Peter S Bennett
Monmouth Branch Chair

Association Master's Mutterings

I'm writing this on the day that Wales has emerged from the two-week firebreak lockdown. The limited ringing that we've been able to do for service was suspended over the 17-day firebreak period as places of worship were closed. The return of ringing as we knew it at the beginning of the year seems a long way away but I am looking forward to ringing on Sunday morning, albeit on three bells and only for 15 minutes.

The re-establishment of ringing in South Wales, when we are able, is something that has been concerning me a great deal over the past few months. I am concerned that, for a variety of different reasons, we may find ourselves with fewer ringers than we had before the pandemic and that this will seriously affect the viability of many bands and our Association activities. I raised the issue with the Association's Management Committee (AMC) when we met online in back in September and we formed a small Task and Finish Group who have considered this matter further. We shall report back to the meeting of the AMC later this month but I would be keen to hear the views of members as to what the Association can/could/should be doing to ensure that ringing is sustainable in the long term.

The Association AGM was held online for the first time on 14 September with over 50 connections to the meeting, many with multiple people viewing – possibly the largest attendance we've had at an AGM for several years! The main items of business were transacted smoothly and it was good to welcome Andrew and Meriel Gainsbury as the new joint-Treasurers and to thank Phil Hopkins for his work in the role over the past six and a bit years. In addition, it was a joy to be able to award Honorary Life Membership to David Bounds (posthumously) and Bob Hardy. Honorary Life Membership is a very rare honour, and in both these two cases it is well deserved.

Back in August, many people will be aware that there was a serious accident in the tower at Llandaff. I will not go into details here but suffice to say that the incident highlights how important it is to have more than one person in the tower when work is taking place and, also, that accidents can happen to even the most experienced ringers. The scar on my ankle reminds me of this second point every time I take my socks off!

I attended the Central Council meeting on 7 September which was also held online for the first time. Reports of the business transacted can be read in the Ringing World for those who are interested but my main point would be that there is much good work going on which our Association stands to benefit from. These include plans for an enhanced mobile belfry, organised groups of helpers to support targeted practices, better engagement with church authorities (much in evidence through the pandemic) work with schools and youth groups and also support for University societies. I've been posting updates to the Association Facebook Group. The Council President is also consulting on the idea of a Direct Member Organisation for ringing, akin to organisations like the National Trust or Campaign for Real Ale. I've participated in a consultation session and the plans which are emerging sound very interesting. More detail will follow in due course.

The other news of today is of the positive steps towards a viable vaccine against Covid-19. Whilst there is clearly a long way to go, the initial news is positive. Let's keep our fingers crossed for a return to ringing in 2021.

Matthew Turner

Chairman's Chatter

Hello Would Be Ringers! I write "would be" on the basis that I anticipate that you are all keen to get back to your normal pattern and style of ringing as soon as it is safe to do so. We are aware of ringing taking place currently at just a few places, not least my own tower, but I have not been there yet as I'm carefully shielding myself. I'm encouraged to think that there will be a time when we can all freely and without risk return to normal ringing, and the usual programme of Branch events may resume.

However, there is a risk that there will be those ringers who will not return to ringing, and as I have pointed out previously, there has not been enough ringers in the Branch for many years, so the shortage may be acute. We shall have to turn our collective minds to extensive recruitment campaigns and training programmes, and the Branch Committee and Officers will develop proposals for these, which I hope many of you will support.

Peter S Bennett

Training Co-ordinator's Cogitations

As previously expected, due to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, the last Branch training event scheduled for Saturday 17th October did not go ahead, and neither will the one originally set for Saturday 19th December.

I have also now cancelled the annual training day in February as it is highly unlikely that this would be possible with the current COVID-19 restrictions, coupled with rumours of further lockdowns again in the first few of months of the new year.

As it stands, I don't know when it will be possible to run the next training event, and we will have to wait until the next Branch activity schedule has been put together before we will know when these will be.

In the meantime, I don't know how many of you might have heard about, or found out about, a series of talks and presentations that have been done by the Birmingham St Martin's Guild of Bell Ringers that have appeared on-line for people to use.

These are weekly talks or presentations that cover a very wide variety of ringing related subjects from Call Changes and Plain Bob Doubles all the way up spliced Maximus. Other topics outside of methods and conducting are also included which help to enhance the repertoire of the subjects available.

From the sample of presentations that I have seen, they are to be recommended for something to do during the coming months of dark nights and continued lockdowns.

These talks and presentations can be found on the St Martin's Guide web site at :

<https://www.stmartinsguild.org/teaching/training-and-resources/>

Andrew Phillips

News about the Branch Dinner

As it stands, the proposed Branch Dinner on 30th January is very unlikely to take place due to current COVID-19 restrictions, and if rumours are to be believed, we can't rule out the possibility of further lockdowns in the new year, which would definitely put pay to the dinner in January.

I am currently in discussions with the Three Salmons Hotel with a view to arranging a suitable date during the summer of 2021 as an alternative.

Hopefully by the time the summer comes around, COVID-19 restrictions will not be as tight and will allow more people to meet in doors.

At the time of writing, the current Welsh Government lockdown restrictions have made communications with the Three Salmons a bit more difficult as they will have been forced to close for two weeks, which is why I can't give an alternative date at present.

Hopefully I will have some more encouraging news to share with you in the next edition of the newsletter.

Andrew Phillips

Llanedeyrn Tower News

On Sunday 8th November at 9.30am a smaller than usual act of remembrance service took place in the grounds of St Edeyrn's Church. Sadly no bells were permitted, but we had a trumpet player for The Last Post and Reveille. Since March Bell Ringing has not been able to ring for some important occasions, but to have missed ringing on half muffled bells for an important service such as this shows the impact Covid continues to have.



After the latest national lockdown ended 3 of the Llanedeyrn bell ringers were in the tower on Tuesday 10th November and it was nice to hear the bells, feel the rope and savour the atmosphere of the bell tower once again. Ringing Room has served its purpose and we will continue to use, but there is no comparison and as a band we are becoming a little bored of it and want to return to the tower like all ringers. However whilst our two latest bell ringers Dee and Paula are not allowed in the tower using this alternative will continue on a Wednesday evening and we will make the best use of it.

Going forward Llanedeyrn will ring on a Wednesday evening and Sunday morning prior to the said Holy Communion service. Ringing on 3 or 4 bells is not the same as ringing on 6 bells, but it does help concentrate on your bell handling. As an observation this has been very good since we returned to ringing in the tower and even I am not stroking the cat as much (as Andrew, Matthew and Nick would tell me on a normal day!). I will record the band to show how their bell handling has improved across the board. Each time we have had to stop ringing and return we have no issues and it feels like riding a bike. As a new band we are limited in what we can do, but overall it's nice to try different things to spice up our ringing and it is good when other bands such as Rumney post videos and we mirror what they do especially with what bells we ring on to make the sound as nice as possible.

The band remains strong and passionate about ringing, but we long for the day when we can return to tower as a full band with our instructors and experienced ringers to further our advancement in ringing. Who'd have thought we would have missed that 1000 yard glare from Andrew after messing things up. But we do!!

Martin Gilbert

Newport Cathedral

It was reported on the Association's Facebook Group that ringing for Sunday service has restarted at St Woolos Cathedral. The ringers have been using different combinations of bells in order to maintain the necessary social distancing. Having 13 bells to choose from means that some interesting combinations are possible. On one Sunday the ringers reported ringing bells 1, 3, 5, 8 10 and 12 which must have sounded interesting.

Rumney Tower News

Our Sunday ringing continued up until the 2-week circuit breaker lockdown started and we plan to restart once it finishes. It's been really heartening to hear positive comments from our neighbours and members of the congregation as to our ringing.



Although we weren't able to ring on Remembrance Sunday, we made sure that the Union Jack was flown at half-mast from the tower flagpole on the day.

Sadly, the lack of practices has meant that the majority of the sweets and chocolates in the tower tin have had to be thrown out - further casualties of the pandemic! We won't be able to hold our traditional tower Christmas dinner this year either. We'll have to have a double celebration when we're able to meet together - hopefully in 2021!

Matthew Turner

Tredunnoch Tower News

Over the last couple of months, some of the ringers who normally gather at Tredunnoch for a Friday evening practice have been enjoying a virtual practice over the web. We converse via the Zoom application, which also has video facilities, and the ringing itself is done on Ringing Room. Both of these applications are "old hat" to those in the know, that is, those who are sufficiently computer literate to deal with them, usually younger ringers, but our group consists mainly of aged retired folk, and we have had to learn new skills. Thank you Jonathan for advising us!

Zoom is relatively easy to use as long as you have the correct meeting ID and Passcode, and can manage to switch your voice on properly.

The drawback with it is that we are limited to 40 minutes use, mind you, that's enough for most of us. I'd prefer to use Discord for communication, which is used by the South Wales hand bell ringers, but we have found that more difficult to install.

If you are in touch with a number of ringers by any system, and you would like to use the Ringing Room application, then all those who are to take part must find it on the web, then register, all of which is free. One member of the group has to "create a tower" with a unique reference number, which must be communicated to the others. This number is important, as on one occasion we found ourselves split between two towers! Not helpful!

Having assembled, the ringers are allocated a bell, or even two bells, which are sounded by pressing a key or keys. The whole ring of bells is visible on screen as sallies (when the bell is set at handstroke) changing to tail ends at backstroke. There are copious help notes available on screen, and ringing instructions may be given either by pressing appropriate keys, or verbally over Zoom.

Don't be afraid to have a go. There is no mechanical equipment to be damaged, you won't spoil your computer, and even if the "ringing" is horrible, you can have a laugh, and there's no public outside having to endure it!

Peter S Bennett

Trellech Tower News

Whilst social distancing has precluded bellringing activities, the opportunity was taken to rectify some longstanding problems associated with water ingress in the belltower. The work included external masonry repairs, provision of additional structural support to timber beams and reflooring of the upper belfry. Much of the problem has now been resolved and the residual rainwater that still enters from the very top of the tower is contained.

During this same period we have installed a ringing Simulator linked up to the Abel software. Although primarily a training aid, we have used the Simulator to allow us to restart our bellringing practice whilst complying with COVID restrictions. With all six bells tied and with no more than 3 ringers in the tower at any one time we are able to continue with practice sessions using the Simulator to 'ring' the non-manual bells. The system also allows us to arrange our

practice sessions at any convenient time during the week without disturbing the locals !

Nigel Morris

Tension? What tension?

It is generally accepted that you cannot push things around with a chain. The same is true of a bell rope, except on those rare occasions when, early on a Sunday morning, the ringing chamber is cold and damp, and the ropes are so stiff that the ringers resort to a competition to see who can hold the longest length of tail end upright from their clenched, cold, damp fists. What this means in practice is that the ringer only has any influence on what is happening to the bell whilst the bell rope is in tension. In order to understand how to apply this, consider first what happens to the bell. As the bell starts to move from the upwards pointing position, it is acted upon by two forces. One of these is the rope force, whereby the vertical downward force exerted by the bellringer is converted into a tangential force around the edge of the wheel, and the other is the gravitational force exerted by the mass of the bell. Because the bell is fixed in space at its axis of rotation by the bearings, it's convenient to think in terms of rotational movement. The rope force is fairly constant, and it exerts a rotational force which is the product of the tension in the rope and the radius of the wheel.

The second force is the force of gravity. When the bell is truly vertical its centre of gravity is directly above its axis of rotation. As soon as the bell moves slightly, there is a horizontal gap between the centre of gravity and the axis. Thus the mass of the bell can exert a gravitational force on the bell to cause it to turn, even in the absence of any rope force. As the bell rotates the horizontal gap gets bigger, so the gravitational force has more effect. This effect is greatest when the bell is horizontal, and as the bell moves from horizontal to downward vertical the gap gets smaller and the effect of the gravitational force reduces. After the bell passes the downward vertical position the effect of the gravitational force is to slow it down, so that it stops when upwardly vertical.

Whilst the bell is coming down from upward to downward it has a continuous rotational acceleration, which is translated into a linear acceleration of the rope. It is this acceleration which causes difficulties for the beginner. The beginner, having seen full circle ringing taking place, knows that the rope moves, but probably does

not realise how much it accelerates whilst being pulled. A point to recognise about my description of the mechanism, is that on all but the smallest of bells the effect of the gravitational force far outweighs the effect of the rope force. There is no need for ringing teachers to be able to analyse the mechanics (unless you find such things entertaining!) but an understanding of what is going on may be helpful.

When I was a learner, the standard advice given whilst pulling down, particularly at backstroke, was “keep a tight rope”, and I offer three suggestions why this is good advice:-

1. In the absence of rope force, the bell would rotate 358 degrees (say), and then come back 356 degrees (say) having lost a little of its energy in friction and air resistance in both directions, and it would gradually ring itself down. The task of the ringer is to input enough energy to overcome the energy lost by friction and air resistance, plus enough to make the bell ring more quickly or more slowly to enable changes of bell speed to produce rung changes. Indeed, to get the timing right in rounds without the complication of changes, the ringer puts a little energy into the movement at the start of each stroke and takes it out again towards the end. The putting in and taking out of energy can only occur whilst there is a rope force, which can only exist whilst the rope is in tension. The change of energy is work, and the measure of work is the product of force and distance. Hence, in order to minimise the force applied it is necessary to maximise the distance by means of a long pull.

2. All of the above applies equally to handstroke and backstroke, and you don't need me to tell you that the whole issue of catching the sally is significant. The second reason for having a long pull through is to help to catch the sally. In several sports, and I can think of golf, batting at cricket, or tennis, coaches look for the follow through of the hitting implement after contact has been made with the ball as an indication of the quality of the hit. So it is with pulling down at backstroke. A good follow through will not only aid the tricky bit of catching the sally, by ensuring that the sally is in a good position to enable it to be easily caught, but will also act as an indication of what went on before, that is, the backstroke pull.

3. Finally, time. Bells are rung typically at about 30 changes per minute, which equates to 4 minutes for an extent of Doubles, or 2 hours and 48 minutes for a full peal of 5040 changes. On this basis, each whole pull last for 4 seconds and a half pull for 2 seconds. So the 360 degree

movement of the bell in one direction takes place in 2 seconds, and for only about a quarter of that time will the ringer be actually pulling the rope down. That action is followed by about half a second when the rope is just falling, and then a final quarter second when the ringer can slow the bell with a check as the rope rises. Those specific periods of time are open to amendment by anyone who can measure and analyse such things, but my point is that the period of time during which the ringer can either pull or check the bell is very short. Thus the longer the length of pull, the greater the short period of time during which the ringer can deduce what is happening and take control of the bell. Instinct and good reactions are useful!

Hopefully these thoughts will explain to learners what is going on, provide their instructors and mentors with ammunition, and perhaps entertain everyone during our enforced campanological idleness.

Peter S Bennett

What have people been doing during lockdown?

Life up the north end has been very quite since March when ringing stopped, but life still went on. For me it was my garden, for growing veg and flowers and a few barbecues, also for relaxing in the sunshine and a lot of weeding!

I believe its been a good growing year with loads of runner beans, beetroot, parsnips, onions, swiss chard, courgettes, leeks, outdoor tomatoes called early girl and shallots. So as you can see, we have been busy!

I am hoping that very soon Llantil-io Pertholey will be able to start up having a practice again, even if its only with 4 people. Hope this goes a little way to help myself and fellow ringers get back to some sort of normality.

Gwyn Sayce

Cider-making during lockdown - Mike and Pip Penney have been busy making cider.

Pip describes the process as follows:

First - gather your apples from the orchard
Next place them on the conveyor belt to be taken up to the mill.
The apples are milled to a pulp which falls down under gravity onto a “cloth”.

The pulp is spread out and wrapped up in the cloth.

The cloths are stacked on top of one another to form a "cheese".

The cheese is pushed under the hydraulic press and the juice is squeezed out and pumped into tanks to ferment and later to barrels to mature.



Before



After!

Couch to 25K(m)

Following on from Peter Bennett's article about what I did in lockdown, I thought I'd give a brief overview of how Helen and I spent some of our

time during the original lockdown and the many months afterwards.

As you may remember, at the start of the initial lockdown, we were restricted to a limited amount of time per day to exercise. This was just enough time to allow us to do a circular walk from our house round Roath Park rec and gardens, and Roath Park Lake here in Cardiff. At least it gave us the opportunity to walk and see some green parts of the city, rather than having to walk around streets.

As time went by the time allowed for exercise increased, which meant that we could start going further afield looking for other green areas of the city which we could walk to from our home, usually in the form of circular walks. As some of you may know, Cardiff has some big parks alongside the river Taff in the form of Bute Park and Pontcanna Fields. These proved to be somewhat more substantial walks than the local lake walk, as we were able to pick several different routes to, from and around these parks. Slightly further away there is a circular 10K walk around Cardiff Bay which we would do occasionally, again starting and finishing from home. By this time, we were probably walking around 8 – 10 miles (13 – 16Km) per walk. So, having walked these parks for a few weekends on the trot, we started looking for other green areas of the city within walking distance of our house. It is surprising what other large open green and wooded areas Cardiff has at its disposal for walking in.

One such area took us further afield up towards the M4 with a walk along the old Glamorgan-shire Canal in a peaceful wooded area alongside what is left of the old canal, before then heading back down the Taff trail by the side of the river Taff into Cardiff. Other times we would walk up past Llanishen Reservoir as a means of getting to the lovely park gardens at Cefn Onn (which is also the source of the Nant Fawr stream that feeds into Roath Park Lake) before following the Nant Fawr trail through woodland down to Roath Park Lake. Both being circular walks around 10 – 12 miles (16 – 19Km) in distance.

For a change of scenery, we walked part of the Welsh Coastal path from Cardiff Bay to Penarth and then on towards Lavernock Point, which for those that don't know, is where Marconi first demonstrated that radio signals could be sent across open sea, by sending signals to and from Flat Holm. One advantage of walking this path was being able to collect plenty of Elder-flowers, which on arrival back home were

promptly used to turn into wine. The smell during the initial fermentation process is something to behold, and the resulting wine is fantastic. This return walk from home to Lavernock point and back was in the region of 16 - 17 miles (26 – 27 Km).

Since lockdown, we have also walked several other sections of the Welsh Coast path and have now completed all the sections between Newport (Tredegar House) and Sully in the Vale of Glamorgan, but not all by starting the various walks from home, as we cheated and caught the bus to Newport and walked back to Cardiff to go that leg of the coast path.

Other green areas that we found to walk in included Pengam Green, which was the location of Cardiff's first airport, but started off life in 1905 as an factory and launch field for airships designed and built by a local engineer called Ernest Willows, whose name lives on at a Wetherspoons pub on City Road. During WW II the airfield became a RAF auxiliary base where new Spitfires and Hurricanes would be flowing in, then dismantled and packed up in crates to be shipped to war zones overseas.

After the war it returned to a private civil airfield until 1954 when Rhoose became Cardiff's new airport, and the Pengam Green airfield was closed.

Having noticed some Elder trees in Pengam Green on earlier walks, we made a return visit there later in the year to collect Elderberries which went into making Elderberry wine, whilst the hedgerow between Penarth and Lavernock point was also a good source of Sloe trees. Just what Helen needed to make her Sloe Gin. All in all, we have done a lot of walking since the beginning of the initial lockdown and will continue to do so in the current and subsequent lockdowns, even though the weather will get colder and wetter. There are other green open spaces and woodland in Cardiff which are within walking distance for us to explore and re-explorer in the different seasons. We'll just need to get our leggings and gaiters out that's all.

Andrew Phillips

Lockdown Handbells Update

The past three months have seen further progress with our family handbell ringing. At the end of the last update we had just rung a quarter of spliced St Clement's and Plain Bob Minor. During August we were very fortunate to be able to have a week's holiday in North Wales

and were able to take the bells with us - handbells being much more transportable than tower bells! Whilst in North Wales we rang two quarters - one for VJ Day and another to allow Adam to score his first quarter of minor as conductor.

Back in Cardiff, Debbie conducted a quarter of Plain Bob Minor in memory of Colin Hewlett of Redwick. Into September and handbells took a bit of a back seat as school restarted but we managed to squeeze in a few practices here and there and did some theory to allow us to start practicing Oxford Treble Bob Minor. Whilst Adam had treble-bobbed the treble to methods previously, this was new territory in terms of his method ringing. As with the other stages, we started slowly and gained confidence in the plain course before ringing touches with Adam unaffected on 5-6 before moving on to touches which could be extended to form a 720. At the end of September we rang our first 720 of Oxford and topped it off with a 540 of Plain Bob. Note for the future - moving from treble-bob to plain methods in mid-flow is hard work!

At the end of September we scored our first quarter of Oxford Treble Bob and followed that up a week later with another, to prove the first wasn't a fluke and also to congratulate Gareth Erlandson on his ordination at St Asaph Cathedral. Gareth rang with us at Rumney whilst undertaking his ordinand training.

Over the past few years, the end of October has seen us undertake a pilgrimage to the Tulloch Ringing Centre for a week of intensive ringing and socialising with friends from Reading and the Channel Islands. Sadly, this wasn't to be this year but instead we had a "Not Tulloch" week. Our contribution to this week was five quarter peals including a mini-project to build up to ringing a silent and non-conducted quarter of Plain Bob Minor - a first for all of us. In addition, we rang a further quarter of Oxford and then moved into Kent. Once we'd ironed out the places over a few practices we successfully rang our first quarter of Kent at the end of October.

So we've certainly made progress over the past three months. What's next? Well, time to ring has proved harder to come by since school has returned so we may not do much until the Christmas holidays. Spliced Kent and Oxford is probably the next target with Norwich Surprise to follow after that. We often get asked about a peal but not all the band are suitably keen – yet!

Matthew Turner

“Llandaff Cathedral bell ringer breaks arm in accident”

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-53854807>

“Media reports facts accurately and in an understated manner” might be an equally valid headline...

I hope you'll forgive my taking space in the Newsletter to write this rather personal update; whilst I've posted a couple of times on Facebook, not everyone uses it. Sorry, too, if you've heard most of this before. Just turn the page and move on to more important things!

I hope, too, that its understood that I can only write about the personal effects of the accident itself rather than the cause(s) as it remains under investigation by the local authority and, thanks in large part to the emergency treatment received within the ringing room and at UHW, I can't remember too much about it anyway. This is without doubt a good thing from my perspective! However, what I can say is that I am as certain as anyone can be that this won't happen again to anyone at Llandaff and, most probably, anywhere else either.



Having spent six days in hospital, including two operations on my left arm, I left on 26th August determined to start my new teaching job on 1st September. Yeah, I know...nuts! Just about managed that as I was looking and walking like “Mad-Eye Moody” at that stage.

For the record, the official list injuries included:

- 1 x lacerated head
- 1 x open fracture of left humerus
- 1 x compound dislocated fracture of left elbow
- 1 x fractured sacrum
- 1 x fractured right scapula

I'm reasonably certain that my right index finger was broken too. I guess they had other priorities at the time! I'm also certain that soft tissue injuries hurt more than broken bones. How my skull, neck, spine, ribs, pelvis, legs and internal organs survived undamaged is hard to understand, even now; despite the injuries, I consider myself to have been very lucky indeed.



What have I learned?:

- I'm not indestructible.
- Two working hands/arms are useful.
- Morphine, Ketamine and "gas and air" work. All three together, combined with concussion, is "interesting" and explains the lack of memory about the accident.
- Even bad days are good days really.
- If you're going to have a traumatic accident, make sure that someone is with you and make sure that person has the character and personal attributes of David Moore; I shall be forever grateful to him. I promise not to do it again!

How am I now?:

In short, much improved. The medics say that I'm “mending but not mended” in terms of fractures and there's still some muscular and soft tissue injuries (shoulder, hips, left forearm, etc) to fully repair. Every day brings about an improvement and there's only been discomfort rather than pain since the operations. As I type this, I'm trying my first weekend without painkillers.

I had a target-list of things to achieve. Some (walking, making a cuppa, work, driving, wearing contact lenses again) have been ticked off. Others (playing



my guitars, riding my bike) are some months off. Ringing? I really don't know when I'll be able to. Or, indeed, if I'll be able to. If I am able to, it will be the last thing on my "To Do" list, not out of choice but because I have to be both practical and realistic.

Thank you to our fantastic NHS and to the emergency services who extracted me safely (and painlessly!) from the Cathedral over the course of a couple of hours or so. One air-ambulance and consultant surgeon, three fire engines and five ambulances seems excessive. Still annoyed that I didn't actually get to go in the helicopter. They didn't want to bring it close to the Cathedral in case it blew the windows in!

Family and close friends have been through the metaphorical wringer since the accident and this continues to be my biggest regret.

The BBC article ends by saying "He was said to be in "good spirits" after the incident." This was true (thanks to the drugs!) and continues to be the case thanks to everyone who's been in contact via whatever means; this helps keep me positive and progress on the road to recovery going in the right direction. You know who you are; thank you.

John Vesey
Llandaff Cathedral

Branch Master's Mutterings

I can't believe that we are now at the tail-end of 2020 - doesn't time fly whilst you're in lockdown! Having just come out of the two-week firebreak lockdown, it has been lovely to hear that some towers have resumed (Covid-compliant) ringing again.

Last weekend was the very enjoyable Association Quiz, which was held via Zoom this year. It was lovely to see so many familiar faces after so long and to catch up with people. I don't think my picture observations are very good but, thankfully, Adam was able to boost us in the Geography and Flags Rounds! Thank you to Matthew Turner for setting the questions and to Helen Philips for hosting the event.

At this stage, we don't know when things may return to "normal", but with talk of various vaccines we can hope for a better 2021 in many ways. The Branch Masters have been working as part of a working party to discuss and put together a Covid Recovery Plan to be considered by the AMC about how and when we can restart and various considerations that may need to be taken into account. Fingers crossed that it won't be too long before some of these plans are able to come to fruition.

In the meantime, stay safe, stay in touch and hope to see many of you in person during 2021.

Debbie Turner

Association Quiz - 14 November 2020

The Association Quiz was held via 'zoom' as, due to all the Covid restrictions, the 15 households that took part were unable to actually physically meet as a group. It started promptly at 7:00p.m. and was ably hosted by our Association Master, Matthew Turner. Helen Philips smoothly ran the technical side of things.

There were 10 rounds each lasting 5 minutes with a 5 minute break for coffee half way through. Each round's set of questions appeared on our screens and at the end of the 5 minutes promptly disappeared! This certainly kept things moving. The rounds ranged from the usual 'Where is this famous landmark' to the more unusual 'Red, white and blue Flags', to the very unusual 'Whose moustache is this'.

The winners were Ben Bateson and Rebecca Utting-Bateson (Rebecca originally rang at Mathern but they now live in Ross-on-Wye) with a score of 70. Many congratulations to them both!

Our thanks must go to Helen and Matthew for a very entertaining and brilliantly executed quiz. Hopefully by the time the 2021 quiz falls due things will have returned to normal and we can all meet up in person again.

Joy Kipling

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Another good source of information is the Association Facebook Group which is available here:

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

Thanks to following contributors to this Newsletter: Debbie Turner, Peter Bennett, Martin Gilbert, Pip Penney, Gwyn Sayce, Andrew Phillips, Nigel Morris, John Vesey, Joy Kipling.

THE DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER IS 1 FEBRUARY 2021.

Articles should be sent, preferably by e-mail, to Matthew Turner:

monmouthnews@llanmon.org.uk