



A Special Birthday celebration for composer Fred Merrett. See page 4 for more!

Photo: Juanita Pickerl



Re-Discover the Joy of
Ringing Handbells

Saturday, October 18, 2014

First Baptist Church
1614 5 Avenue South
Lethbridge, Alberta

For more information check out
the website:
www.algehr.org
or e-mail:
discovery@algehr.org



Spectacular Ringing
around the province!



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

June 2014

Summer is finally here and for most of us another bell ringing season is over. I hope that it has been a fun and enjoyable one for all of you.

For those of you who still want more don't forget that the HGC (Handbell Guilds of Canada) **Ringing Link** conference is happening in July. There are still a few spots available so why not come and join the ringers from coast to coast as we have a "Dickens of a Ring"?

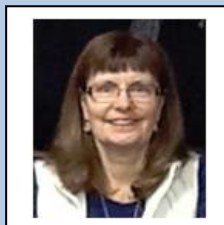
Our Provincial Conference is being held in Lethbridge this **October 18th** so please mark your calendars and come to "Re-Discover the Joy".

Check out the information and registration form with this PEAL and also on-line.

I hope that your summer is everything you hope for. Safe travels and best wishes,

Fiona

president@algehr.org



STILL WANTED!!

Are you as good a ringer as you are with **book-keeping**?

Would you like to be our New Treasurer? Please?? ALGEHR desperately needs someone to volunteer to help with the Treasurer portfolio on the Board starting in the fall.

No bell experience is necessary, but knowing about what we do might help.

Contact president@algehr.org if you (or someone you know) are interested.

Congratulations to our winner of the Fred Merrett Award for New Compositions:

Composer **Betty Radford** won in two categories this year with her "Song Birds" (Category A) and "On the Boardwalk" (Category C).

We look forward to hearing their debuts at "Re-discover the joy!" on October 18.

Come and join us in Lethbridge

Re-Discover all the joy that you have enjoyed while ringing handbells!

Saturday October 18, First Baptist Church

The day includes two sessions for **young ringers**, which will culminate in a mini concert just prior to lunch so that we can all enjoy listening to what the future holds.

There will be two full practice choirs, advanced and beginners, to help all you **conductors** out there to hone your skills.

There will also be two levels of **Mass Ringing**, "Read and Ring" sessions, "Bells and Chimes in the Classroom" and "How to Select Your Music" sessions. Included in the day, of course, will be our annual meeting. This will give you the opportunity to be a part of the future of ALGEHR.

We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you in Lethbridge.

Lethbridge Re-Discover Committee: discovery@algehr.org



ALGEHR NEWS

ALGEHR Symposium Endowment Fund (SEF Grant)

ALGEHR offers grants to help encourage the art of bell ringing in Alberta. Check out our website to see if you or your program is eligible.

Website QR code



Facebook QR code



New Treasurer Needed!!

If you would like to get involved with ALGEHR, this would be an easy way...if you know something about book-keeping that is!

Please contact president@algehr.org if you're interested at all. We can answer any questions you may have!


ARE YOU INTERESTED IN PLANNING A BELL EVENT?

ALGEHR would like to support any person(s) willing to organize a bell event, festival or workshop. These events are an excellent way to encourage the development of bell ringing and an opportunity to increase membership and interest in our Albertan handbell community. Not to mention, they are a lot of fun!

We can help you!

Contact president@algehr.org or see our ALGEHR EVENT ORGANIZER POLICY on our website www.algehr.org for further information!

Advertisement Opportunities:

We would be happy  to include an advertisement for your business in our Peal Newsletter. Please contact peal@algehr.org for more information.

The Fred Merrett Award for New Compositions

If you're interested in entering next year's composition competition, see www.algehr.org for more information.



Fred Merrett surrounded by friends and family, May 2014



Fred and Amy Merrett

Photo: Juanita Pickerl

Special Events involve a community. A special Thank you to Robertson-Wesley Church for the use of the Church's Memorial Hall; Leonard Davidchuk for all the set up and then helping in the kitchen which was captained by Clara Dyck; and Joan Schuafele (First Baptist, Calgary), Juanita Pickerel, Tammy-Jo Mortensen and Lynda Stockyl (Robertson-Wesley, Edmonton) for helping make sure all copies of Fred's music were legal. Thanks too, for those who did come to play, especially Carol Bergum and Bob deFrece, who were jet-lagged from recent trips. Another heartfelt thank you to Morna-June Morrow, who despite the fact that she is awaiting surgery and planning Ringing Link, booked her plane ticket within minutes of being asked to write a greeting to Fred. She wrote it, but brought it herself. Her presentation was a really special extra gift for Fred.

Fred Merrett Celebration

By Juanita Pickerl

On Saturday, May 17th, a group assembled at Robertson Wesley United Church in Edmonton to honour the 90th birthday of Fred Merrett. This included friends from across the handbell community - former students, colleagues and community ringers – along with those from Fred and Amy's personal circle of friends.

A varied repertoire of Fred's published music was rung by the ringers in attendance. This included Fred's award winning 'The Merry-Go-Round' right up to and including Fred's most recent publication, 'Majestic Vista – a tribute to Canada'. Surprise guest Morna June Morrow, in from Manitoba just for this event, shared her remembrances of Fred's influence on handbell ringing in Canada.

Videos of various handbell presentations of Fred's choirs were shared while the guests enjoyed a lunch including a delicious birthday cake. It was an honour to spend an afternoon ringing Fred's music, see him doing so well and wish him all the best on reaching this milestone. Sincere thanks to **Alison Wood** for arranging this lovely afternoon.

Who is Fred Merrett? You ask?

By Alison Wood

There are very few people who have had a greater effect on the Canadian Handbell Fraternity than Fred Merrett, and indeed he is the only Canadian to be named a Life Member by all the Canadian Handbell Guilds! **Of course, what stands out to all ringers in North America is the number of handbell compositions and arrangements** penned by Fred Merrett. Fred Merrett's accomplishments in the handbell world are too numerous to list really. However, several highlights can be mentioned, including:

- thirty-eight years teaching handbells in the schools and educating teachers
- twenty-five years from 1980 to 2005 in which he instigated and became Coordinator of the week of Handbells at the International Music camp
- conducting the 4.5 octave Bronze Harmony Handbell Choir for the twenty-one years directly after his retirement from the school board
- adjudicating many handbell festivals and giving countless workshops
- being the Massed Ringing Conductor at the International Handbell Festival in Vancouver during Expo 86, and two of the International Symposia - Korea in 1990 and Edmonton in 1992
- serving as President of the Alberta Guild of English Handbell Ringers from 1988 to 1990.

Edmonton Youth Festivals 2014 Report

Submitted by Wendy Hoskin

We held three morning youth festivals with 18 choirs participating, including two chime choirs. This involved 13 schools. Debbie Rice was our adjudicator and did a wonderful job of encouraging and work shopping with each choir. Our massed ring piece was 'Campano Sonos' by Kathleen Wissinger. This piece uses lots of different techniques and everyone seemed to like the choice. Debbie was able to adapt the techniques for chimes. I was very impressed with all the students' performances – from beginner to experienced. The choirs were attentive, responsive and well behaved and seemed to really appreciate the whole experience.

Handbells at the Oliver Community Festival!

Amid the food, fun, family activities, art, sales, vendors etc. there will also be a ton of entertainment at the Oliver Community Festival from 10-3 on Sat. June 7. The festival takes place on 102 Avenue between 121-124 Streets in Edmonton.

See the Facebook page or the web site "search Oliver Community Festival" for more info. The Nova Bells play from 10:30-10:45 and the R-W Ringlets Handbell Quartet play from 10:45-11:15 at Robertson-Wesley United Church (10209-123 Street).

Pipes and Peals!

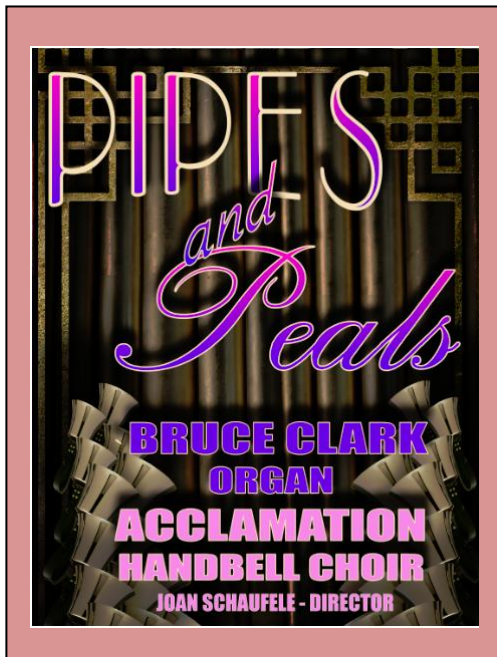
By Susan Hilbrecht

This is the way we chose to describe our spring concert at First Baptist Church in Calgary on June 1st. The "Pipes" were the 100 year old **Casevant** pipe organ played by **Dr. Bruce Clark**, church organist. The "Peals" were Acclamation, the senior handbell choir at First Baptist.

Dr. Clark played several Bach preludes and fugues as well as other wonderful organ songs. He even invited the children to come to the platform to see the organ "up close and personal" and to assist him in one of his songs.

We rang our favorite pieces from the year's work, from *Dance Jubilee* to *Capriccio* to a grand finale of *Majesty*, which included piano and organ. If you have never heard additional instruments enhancing the sound of the handbells, you have really missed out! You wouldn't think that a mandolin, a guitar, a tambourine, and a couple of drums would mesh very well with a few octaves of handbells, but the pieces came out in spectacular fashion and the crowd loved them!

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Pipes and Peals continued from page 5...

And it was a crowd! Attendance was around 475 and they contributed handsomely to the coffers of the First Baptist Church CILC program. CILC is the Calgary International Learning Centre, which aids many of Calgary's immigrant population in learning and speaking English.

If you're in Calgary over the summer, check the First Baptist Church website and see if one of the handbell ensembles will be adding to the Sunday morning service. They will be fun to watch and hear and, as an added bonus, the church has some very good teachers/preachers who will keep you awake and interested!

We wish you all a great summer, and much eagerness and energy when you gather with your choirs and groups again in the fall.



Photos: sent by J. Schaufele



JUBILOSO! BELLS OF Concordia, Concordia Choir and David Yates (Didgeridoo)

Concert Review by Alison Wood

After close to fifty years of attending handbell concerts all over the world, one would think it would be difficult to come up with something unique and new. **Jubiloso! Bells of Concordia** and their director, **Debbie Rice**, proved that wrong at their concert on March 29 at the Tegler Building of Concordia College. **Didgeridoo player David Yates** of British Columbia, was the featured artist, and played a number of different didgeridoos with skill, musical finesse and humour on several pieces written for handbells and didgeridoo. I found it interesting that both pieces written just for those two instruments were by a North American composer. I thoroughly enjoyed the compositions and would love to hear them again, but for me they sounded contemporary and did not convey the feeling of Australia as I thought they would! Instead, I thought of 21st Century interest. This is not meant as criticism, it is just an observation.

The performance of "Night" by Graeme Morton, composed at the behest of Carmel Daveson for use at the 2006 International Handbell Symposium, *did* channel Australia for me. **The Concordia Choir**, about to leave for a tour of South America with their director, Joy Berg, joined Debbie, David and Jubiloso on the choral parts of the piece, producing clear tone, a strong musical line and delivering the haunting melody as if it was written for them, while their director added the rhythms on Aboriginal sticks. It was a fine rendition of a piece, originally written for a handbell event, that is now so highly regarded by Australia that it is about to be included in the next printing of the Australian music textbook for students.

Other highlights for me were the two pieces sung by the choir, both of which were beautifully and confidently sung. We are lucky to have student choirs of that calibre in Alberta, and I am sure they impressed their South American audiences.

Les Miserables Medley on bells has always been a personal favourite of mine, and I enjoyed this performance although my tendency to visualize everything was a bit distracting in the final "March of the Angry Men" as in my mind I watched several Valjeans running up the aisle at breakneck speed with the tempo at which it was played.

Another favourite was yet another composition by one of the Jubiloso ringers, **Betty Radford**. Betty began composing for handbells in the last few years of retirement from teaching music in Edmonton Public, and she has become quite a prolific and proficient composer for this idiom.

Continued on page 8



Jubiloso! Concert Review continued from page 7...

Betty Radford's pieces demonstrate knowledge of and sensitivity to handbells with their special characteristics, abilities and requirements as a musical instrument. Four of Betty's pieces have won composition competitions in the last two years. This recognition is certainly justified because all her compositions, including this arrangement of Jupiter from The Planets, stand out for the masterful way in which she chooses the bells for each section, effectively uses all bells in all octaves, skillfully applies the techniques for articulation that have been invented through the years to vary the sound and mood of the bells, and creates genuinely lovely pieces that appeal both to the ringer and the audience. Perhaps I am becoming too sentimental as time and my age advance, but I often have to work to keep my emotions in check when I hear fine new pieces by Canadians, as I have always wanted to see more Canadian compositions for handbells. The quality of Betty Radford's work gives great hope for the future.



Jubiloso tried a number of new ventures this year and is playing off-campus more often. I would strongly suggest keeping your eyes and ears "peeled" next year so that you don't miss any of their new ventures.

It will be hard to replicate those particular pieces, because skilled didgeridoo players are not plentiful in Canada, but who knows what they will offer us next? I look forward to finding out!



Soundings

Spring 2014 Update

From co-chairs Nikki Attwell and Anne Hill

Time marches on, and we are now just over two years away from **SOUNDINGS—Music of Our Lives and Our Land**. The Vancouver Convention Centre will be the site for the 17th International Handbell Symposium, welcoming as many as 1000 ringers from around the world! What a thrill it will be for **BCGEHR** to host this event on behalf of Handbell Guilds of Canada!

You've heard many times, in many places, that there will be many opportunities for you to be involved. First and foremost, we want to encourage all Canadian ringers to plan to attend! We are setting our goal for the Canadian contingent at 200 registrants! If you've always thought attending an international symposium was out of the question, for any reason, we'd like to reassure you on the following common objections:



An international symposium is much too expensive for me to consider attending.

There's no doubt it requires a much larger financial commitment to attend an international symposium than it does to attend a national or provincial festival. But Canada has not hosted one since 2004, and it could easily be 2030 or beyond before we do again. Attending the Symposium while it is in "our own backyard" makes the most sense! Secondly, did you realize that if you start now and put a mere \$40 a month aside, you will have saved enough to cover your registration fee? That's less than "A Latté a Day!" Build your plans to attend the symposium into your family's vacation plans for 2016 to lessen the impact of the hotel stay and make the most of a visit to one of the world's most beautiful cities.





The music will be far too difficult for me.

Most of the repertoire will be in Level 3 to 4 range, and unlike a national or provincial festival, you won't have the choice of Bronze, Copper or Tin levels in which to register. However, the music will be available for purchase almost a year in advance of the event, so you will have lots of time to study and learn it. And even if you feel some or all of the selections will be beyond your capability, you can still find ways to play. Some Canadian ringers who attended the 2012 Symposium in Liverpool were relatively new ringers. Strategies such as playing only the even beats, or the first beat of each bar, or just not playing sections that are clearly too difficult to manage, will allow you to participate in the mass ringing to the level at which you are comfortable. You will likely be surprised at how much you are able to accomplish! The key, however, is to be honest and realistic about your abilities, know what you can manage and know when it is time for you to modify your playing. You won't be alone!



Start planning now to attend. Get your choir or group to join together with some fundraising ideas. It will be an event you don't want to miss!



Composition Contest

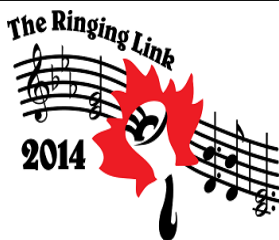
Deadline for submission has been extended!

The deadline for submission of scores to HGC's competition to choose Canada's selection for the 2016 International Handbell Symposium in Vancouver has been extended to **SEPTEMBER 1, 2014!** Please take advantage of this extension to make sure any composer or arranger you know is informed.

The Symposium's theme of "**Soundings: Music of Our Lands and Our Lives**" especially as it relates to the exploration of our history and first nations heritage, and a focus on environmentalism and sustainability, gives a great deal of scope for composition.

Honouring the ancestors of this land, including the aboriginal ways of knowing and being within an environment, has encouraged us to explore the many complementary ways that First Peoples' cultures and environmental sustainability intertwine and connect within community. We hope that the sounds of our lands and the lives of our peoples will be shared through the massed ringing compositions chosen for IHS 2016. **The information package can be downloaded from www.bcgehr.com**

**Canadian Handbell News!
Ringing Link: This summer!**



A Dickens of a Ring!
JULY 2-5, 2014 | WINNIPEG, MB

The Manitoba Guild of English Handbell Ringers invites you to attend the 7th National Ringing Link Conference of the **Handbell Guilds of Canada** at the **Victoria Inn, Winnipeg, Manitoba, from July 2-5, 2014**. The Manitoba Guild is basing the event on Charles Dickens' memorable and well-loved novel, "*A Christmas Carol*". Instead of being visited by the Spirits of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come, we will explore Christmas music of the Past (pre-19th century), the Present (19th century Victorian era of Dickens' time), and Music Yet to Come (20th/21st centuries). The massed ringing directors: Anne Hill (Victoria), Stuart Sladden (Winnipeg), Monica McGowan (Lakeville, Minnesota) and Emmy Okazawa-Bortolin (Calgary) have chosen delightful music ranging from the 16th to 21st centuries.

Individual workshops will be given by the massed directors as well as J.-C. Coolen, Susan Galloway, Heather Keith, Jan Nordstrand, Camille Ream and Susan Stevenson covering such topics as: Ensemble Ringing, Bell Trees, Music in Motion, Matching Sounds Across the Choir, Rhythmic Ensemble, Personal Practice Tips and Strategies, Change Ringing, Hands on Hand Chimes, What They See is What They Hear, Beginning and Advanced Conducting, Handbells with Orff instruments; Handbells with Church Choral Music, Read and Ring sessions with mixed repertoire (Christmas, non-Christmas, Sacred, Secular), warm up sessions as well as maintenance sessions on Malmark and Schulmerich handbells and chimes.

Mini-concerts will include solo, ensemble and full handbell choir performances and the Victorian Christmas Banquet will feature wonderful surprises musically, visually and appetizingly!

Registration includes:

- Wednesday Opening Ceremonies and all conference sessions
- Refreshment Breaks
- Thursday breakfast and lunch
- Friday breakfast, lunch, banquet
- Saturday breakfast, lunch
- Ringing Link 2014 T-Shirt

Thursday evening will be an opportunity to visit Winnipeg's Historic Forks, where the Red and Assiniboine Rivers meet – a wonderful place to visit, shop and eat. See the imposing National Museum of Human Rights, the only Canadian National Museum outside the Capital region of Ottawa, walk across the Louis Riel Esplanade and explore historic St. Boniface. Or perhaps you might enjoy an evening with friends or family or take in some other sight-seeing such as Assiniboine Park and Zoo with the Leo Mol Sculpture Gardens.

Saturday afternoon will feature a concert program open to the public with all the massed directors leading all participants in massed ringing of Christmas music from the Past, Present and Yet to Come. It promises to be a **Dickens of a Ring!** Please consider joining other handbell ringing enthusiasts next July!

Watch for further information coming to you through Provincial Newsletters and later on the website. Registration details will be coming out in early December. For further information, kindly contact Co-Chairs:

Patsy Andrews-Vert
P. O. Box 29
Starbuck, Manitoba
ROG 2P0
(204) 735-2423 patavert@pmcnet.ca

Morna-June Morrow
27 Rochester Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3T 3V6
(204) 269-0208 m-jmorrow@shaw.ca



Notes from the Editor:

Hello ALGEHR members! A special thank you goes out to those who submitted articles and pictures for this Peal.

Attached with this June Peal is the registration form for ALGEHR's annual Discovery. Named "Re-Discovery," (October 18, 2014, in Lethbridge), this event will offer some new opportunities for all ringers; including a youth strand and a chance for conductors to work with practice bell choirs. Mass Ringing sessions and other topics complete the workshop offerings.

It's still not too late to join the **Ringling Link 2014** this summer in **Winnipeg**. What would be easier than making your Christmas music plans in July?

Remember to keep some time in your 2016 summer free for a glorious week in beautiful Vancouver (July 26-30), 2016! Canadians are so fortunate to have an International Symposium scheduled for our country in the summer of 2016. The **IHS 2016 in Vancouver** will be a fantastic opportunity for us to experience bells in an international environment and learn from experts from around the world. Imagine participating in such a large event so close to home! I'm starting to save for it now.

How about you?

Happy Summer to all of you!

Anne

Visit us at our ALGEHR Website: www.algehr.org

DATES TO REMEMBER

Ringling Link 2014

July 2 – 5, 2014
Manitoba, Canada

International Music Camp:

July 2014
North Dakota, USA

<http://www.internationalmusiccamp.com/>

Korea International Symposium 2014

August 5 to 9, 2014
Jeju, Korea

Handbell Discovery 2014

Saturday, October 18, 2014
First Baptist Church, Lethbridge, AB

Vancouver International Symposium 2016

July 26-30, 2016
Vancouver, BC

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president@algehr.org

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pastpres@algehr.org

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vpnorth@algehr.org

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vpsouth@algehr.org

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peal@algehr.org

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membership@algehr.org

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composer@algehr.org

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sefgrant@algehr.org

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member3@algehr.org

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member4@algehr.org

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member5@algehr.org

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web@algehr.org

The Peal is the official Newsletter of the Alberta Guild of English Handbell Ringers.