



Lethbridge Handbell Discovery: "Drumming by the Bridge??"

This year's edition of Handbell Discovery was a wonderful success. Many people were willing to travel to the south of the Province to find out what Lethbridge had to offer. We had amazing ringing sessions with small groups and massed choirs, session with hand chimes and sessions spent sitting on the floor learning how to encourage our elementary ringers. One of the highlights was a session on Taiko Drumming and the drummers also participated in our closing concert. At their first drum roll I think we all thought they were going to raise the roof. It was fabulous to see and hear all the ringers at our closing sharing concert, especially all of the youth ringers who participated in the weekend.

Many thanks go to our clinicians, to those who participated and to the fabulous committee who put it all together.

I look forward to seeing you all in Fort McMurray in 2011.

Fiona S. Miller

Lethbridge Discovery Coordinator.

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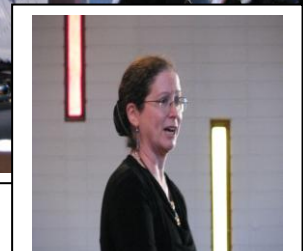
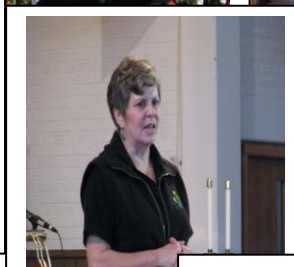
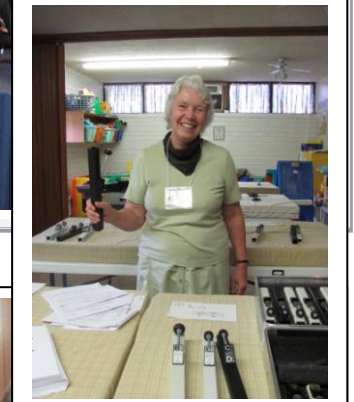
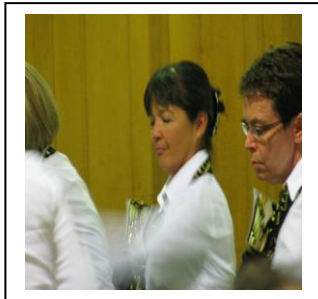


Discovery Photos by E. Okazawa-Bortolin

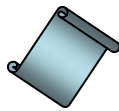


Celebration of New ALGEHR Banner

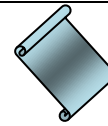
ALGEHR's new banner was unveiled at the Lethbridge Discovery ALGEHR board meeting in October. This beautiful quilted banner was designed and created by Joan Schaufele. Besides her talent for sewing and quilting, many of our members will recognize Joan from her extensive involvement in the Alberta bell community. Joan is currently the Handbell director at First Baptist Church in Calgary, was a 2010 Discovery clinician, and also serves on the ALGEHR Board. Thanks Joan!



Photos by E. Okazawa-Bortolin and A. Hergott



Greetings from the President



By now I am sure that you all know I have taken over the position of President from Peter Bortolin. I would just like to thank him for all his hard work while he presided over our Organization. Under Peter's steadfast leadership the Board accomplished many things and helped to ensure that ALGEHR is still a very active and viable Provincial Organization. He has left me a very large pair of shoes to fill. It is my hope that I will be able to continue many of the projects that he started; including the completion of the review of our Policy and Procedures' Manual.

As I step into my new position there are a couple of people who have left the Board and some new members who have accepted the challenge to join us. Heartfelt thanks to Emmy Okazawa-Bortolin, Robyn Tyrrell, and Lori Teneycke. We appreciate all the time and commitment that you have given to ALGEHR. To Joan Schaufele and Melanie Grant, welcome aboard. It will be fun getting to know you.



Peter Bortolin (Past President) and Fiona Miller (ALGEHR President)

For those of you whom I have not met here is a brief bio to let you know where I am from:

I was born and raised in Glasgow, Scotland. Since 1981, I have been ringing or directing two choirs at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church and at Gilbert Paterson Middle School, both in Lethbridge. Both of my adult children and my husband also play handbells, keeping it all in the family. We have frequently been seen playing quartets amid raucous laughter as we try to avoid each other. During the day I teach "English as a Second Language" to middle school-aged immigrant children. My main passion in life is Scottish Country Dancing and I travel throughout the North American Continent teaching at various workshops and conferences. This also helps to indulge my other passion of travel. I have been a member of the ALGEHR Board since 2006, most recently as the secretary.

Christmas is the main time of year when the handbells are really kept ringing. Have a wonderful season.

Fiona S. Miller

What did YOU do with your Canada Day long weekend?

I hope you relaxed. I hope you caught up on your to do list. I hope you watched fireworks, laughed with family and friends, or read a good book.

The group I spent my weekend with experienced ...pain, fatigue, and frustration...

Whatever it was you did, I am fairly certain that the group I spent my weekend with experienced a fair bit more pain, fatigue, and frustration over the course of the weekend than the average person. There's a good chance that we got a whole lot less sleep. And it's a matter of fact that we did spend the vast

majority of our waking hours doing the exact same thing nearly constantly for four days.

The crazy thing is: I wouldn't trade all of that suffering for anyone's barbeques and beach parties if you tried to pay me. I don't think any of the other thirty-six handbell ringers who were with me in Edmonton that weekend would make a swap with you either, because we all gave up our weekends for one common purpose. This driving passion was summed up perfectly by Kevin McChesney, our personable and perseverant guest director, when he stopped rehearsal, silently swept the room with his gaze for a long moment, and then emphatically hung three words in the air: "Isn't music great??"



Where were we? At **Classic Bronze** (one of Canada's premier mass ringing events, held in Edmonton at Concordia University College). Who were

we? Thirty-seven advanced ringers from across the country, with five to forty years of experience each, and a very deep love for what we do. The weekend certainly wasn't an easy one, but the skills we developed, the musicianship we gained, and the experiences we shared were worth every sore muscle and blister.

“Isn't music great?!”

The weekend kicked off early Thursday afternoon, and as ringers trickled into Concordia's atrium to register, word of some bad news began to spread. An announcement confirmed it: Kevin McChesney, composer and director extraordinaire, and Classic Bronze's weekend clinician, had been the victim of an expired passport, and was delayed in Colorado by a day. Fortunately, though, the attendees at the



conference included several experienced directors, who stepped in and worked with the group through a challenging few hours of rehearsal as we assembled our music as a group for the first time. The general consensus that evening as we

all peeled ourselves away from the tables was that it really was for the best that

Flounder and flail?

Kevin didn't have to hear us flounder and flail through those first few attempts. Friday was a new day, however, and Classic Bronze's dedicated ringers wasted no time on luxuries like sleeping in, showing up ready for first downbeat at 8:30 sharp. A new face was at the front of the group, too, ready to give that first downbeat, having managed to renew his passport in near-record time. Kevin McChesney's blend of charisma, skill, and musical insight propelled us through hours of rehearsal with incredible efficiency and effectiveness. That's not to say that it was easy! Our repertoire included level 5 pieces, death-defying runs, cutting edge techniques, and complex changing meters. The coffee provided during the breaks was much-needed, and some of us went through an awful lot of medical tape and gloves, but you could



tell from the smiles that remained on the faces of the ringers throughout the day that we were there with a purpose, and that we knew that the hard work would pay off.



How do you take a group of thirty-seven ringers and transform them from individuals responsible for a few notes each into a coherent, multi-octave instrument in

a matter of a few days? That is a very good question, and you would have to ask Kevin McChesney, and not me, because even after having participated in the Classic Bronze weekend, and having been a part of the transformation, I am still astounded at how he



accomplished this feat. But by Saturday, the group was actually beginning to sound like a group. We were all encouraged to slip away from the tables at some point during the day, to stand back and take in the full effect, and it was truly

a visual and auditory spectacle. Something that stuck with the participants was the way Kevin taught us to move. “The basic stance for a handbell choir,” he told us as he held up his fingers and began to wave them back and forth independently of each other, “should look like this: **Like a curtain blowing.**” A handbell choir standing with one foot slightly forward fatigues less quickly, is more relaxed, and has more freedom to move. This became apparent indeed when you watched the group from a distance. That single revelation made a big difference for a lot of us who were unaccustomed to standing and moving in that way.



As Saturday came to a close, we had one last event planned for the day: a group supper at a nearby Italian restaurant. And what a supper it was! The restaurant graciously accommodated our large group, and served us one of the most incredible meals imaginable. The humour and camaraderie ran high, the pasta was marvellous, and a wonderful evening was had by all in what we looked back on as one of the high points of our weekend. We





could scarcely believe our time was nearly over. The formidable two-and-a-half days of rehearsal were complete, and all we had left now was the dress rehearsal and the concert. This meant that the best was yet to come.



had died down, performers and listeners mingled together in the afterglow of the music. Hugs were exchanged, tearful smiles shone, and heartfelt thanks were given. Once the dozens of bells had been packed up and the audience had trickled away, we all said our goodbyes, and were on our separate ways once again. One comment Kevin had made in the final performance followed us, though. He talked a little to the audience about how, in his career, the countless weekend workshops all begin to bleed together in your memory after a while. He's been to so many cities and worked with so many ensembles, he can't possibly remember all of them by now. But, turning back to face us, he paused, and then said with utmost sincerity, "But this is one group and one experience I will never forget."

Our excitement climbed as the sun did the same on Sunday morning. The dress rehearsal lasted for a few hours, which seemed to be barely enough time to run through things a couple of times each, and do some last-minute polishing. We ate our lunch together, gathered outside for



a group photo to commemorate the event, and then congregated out of sight in a back hallway while crowds of people and TV crews filled the atrium's seats in anticipation of the performance. As two o'clock approached, Kevin joined us to give a final word of encouragement, and then we filed out, ready to begin the concert. The program that had seemed so lengthy just a few days ago flew by at an unbelievable speed as we poured every ounce of energy and earnestness we had into this exquisite music that seemed to capture the range of the musical experience, from the mystical and the heart-breaking to the pyrotechnical and the breathtaking. In what seemed like just a brief moment, it was all over, and there we all stood holding the final chord, gleaming bronze held high, hearts pounding, eyes riveted to Kevin as he held those final notes as well as our emotions on the tip of his baton, visibly savouring that last moment before releasing the pure sound into a palatable silence that seemed to bring time to a halt.

We'll never forget either, Kevin.

By Alyssa Michaud



Participants in Classic Bronze 2010

The silence didn't last forever, however, as the enthusiastic audience was eager to praise the breathless ringers for their efforts. After the applause

Debbie Rice Visits Saint Sebastian School in Calgary!

By: Sandra Kudyba and Emmy Wyatt
(Grade 6 Students at St. Sebastian School)

One foggy morning, Tuesday October 19th, 2010 to be exact, all members of the St. Sebastian Handbell Club woke up early with excitement. For today we were doing a Handbell workshop with Ms. Debbie Rice. We came in at 7:50 am ready for an awesome time. As we walked in, Mrs. Stankowski our music teacher introduced us to Ms. Debbie Rice and we began.



Ms. Rice handed everyone a piece of paper that was called the Westminster Chimes. After a few practices we had our notes memorized. "Now that you know this song we will work on some techniques." Ms. Rice told us. Some of the new techniques she taught us were the tower swing, martelato, pluck, shake and many more. Once we reviewed all of the techniques we had a little

break to have our snack and juice. We all talked, laughed, joked and thought how lucky we are to be getting the chance to work with Ms. Rice. After snack, it was right back to work!

We then played the Westminster Chimes with all of our new techniques. It sounded great! Ms. Rice taught us a few other pieces and left us with some great tips for ringing. The time went by so fast that before we knew it, it was time to go back to class. Our brains were absolutely filled with everything we had learned, and it was a great experience for all of us.



Sophia Della Rosa with her ribbon ornaments.

How do you make a handbell ribbon ornament?

By: Sophia Della Rosa (Grade 6)

Well known director Debbie Rice visited our school in October and lead us through a workshop that included the use of ribbon ornaments for the handles of our Handbells. We all thought the ribbons added a very special look to our ringing. We decided to make a set of ribbons for each handbell. Here's how we did it.

Materials needed for one handle ornament: 1 elastic hair band, scissors, 4 ribbon, and fray glue.

1. Cut the ribbons all the same length.
2. Fold the first ribbon in half and put your finger through the loop at the top of the ribbon.
3. Put the elastic behind the ribbon. With the loop ready in front of the elastic, take the bottom pieces and put them through the loop. Pull the ribbons tight.
4. Repeat for all of the ribbons then glue the loose ends so they will not unravel.

We used Advent colors (1 pink, 3 purples) for our ribbons but you can use any colors you like. We made a second set in our school colors (red and yellow). We thank Debbie Rice for showing the decorations to us.



Ringing Link 2011 Poster Contest

The organizing posse of the **World's Greatest Indoor Handbell Round-up** would like to thank all the students who submitted artwork during the recent RL2011 Poster Contest.

It was a tough decision, but we are pleased to announce not only ONE, but TWO winners who tied for FIRST PLACE!! They will share in the \$150 prize that was offered to all Albertan students who entered this competition. Our judging panel has decided to combine the artistic talents of BOTH winners to create one promotional poster that will soon be unveiled and posted online at www.ringinglink.ca.

The Peal is proud to introduce these two young artists, Nicole Gervais and Angelina Hajji, to the ALGEHR membership. We hope this is but the start of a long ringing career for them!

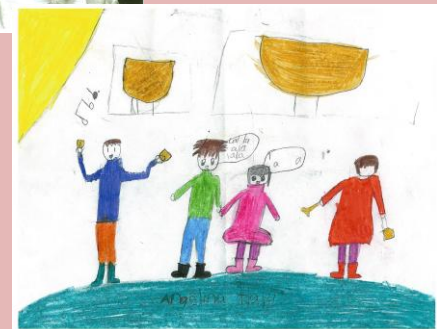
I am 12 years old and in grade 7 at St. Elizabeth Seton School. I started handbells in grade 6 with Ms. Hergott at Monsignor Neville Anderson School. I really enjoyed my time practicing with my handbell group and it was really fun performing for the school and our parents. It was exciting when we got to perform at the Jubilee two times. I really miss all my friends in the handbell group. I also enjoy art, swimming, basketball and riding my bicycle.



Thank you,
Nicole Gervais



Angelina Hajji is eight years old. She is a grade 4 student at Colonel J. Fred Scott School in Calgary, AB. She is just beginning to play handbells. In fact, she had not played a handbell when she created her poster. Angelina enjoys drawing, singing and playing games. She is also an enthusiastic music student.



We are looking for volunteers to help with the Ringing Link 2011. If you love bells, and want to join the happenin' Ringing Link Committee, check out our website at: www.ringinglink.ca

HANDBELL NEWS



HANDBELL CONCERT NEWS

Quarter Notes'



Festive Season Concert

Quarter Notes & Friends

Featuring guest handbell choir:

Earl Grey Elementary School

Saturday, November 27, 2010 at 7:00 pm
St Andrews Presbyterian Church (Lower Hall)
703 Heritage Drive SW, Calgary, AB

Tickets: \$10 (adults), \$5 (students/seniors)

YOU KNOW YOU WANT TO GO!!

2012 Liverpool International Handbell Symposium

Mark your calendar now. Keep in mind that the Olympics will also be in London, England that summer... so you may want to book early! If you're interested, contact the ALGEHR board about wanting to go, so they can make a Canadian group plan, and help you with the application. If you are interested, see <http://www.symposium.hrgb.org.uk/> for more details!

TEACHERS' CORNER



Do you have any teaching ideas that you would like to share?

- *Funny stories?
- *Embarrassing mistakes with happy endings?
- *What has worked well with your students?
- *How do you manage teaching bells in the classroom?

Let's share them!
Send your ideas to peal@algehr.org

Do you have a spring concert you would like to publish in our next Peal?
Send a quick Email any time to:
peal@algehr.org

Notes  from the Editor

It was great to meet more of you at the terrific Lethbridge Discovery. I do hope to see you all at the July 2011 National "Ringing Link" in Calgary as well. The stampede spirit of the city will be infectious; the perfect place to enjoy some great ringing and celebrating! Make sure you book early though, as the city sure gets busy at this time (The SAIT accommodation information is at www.ringinglink.ca)

Thanks again to all of you who offered articles and pictures, concert dates and news for this Peal.

If you have any information or ideas and would like to submit them for the next Peal, please send your thoughts/articles to peal@algehr.org by March 31. The Peal is published 4 times a year (April, June, September and November).

Let's continue to celebrate and share our Handbell Happenings!

Anne Hergott

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SEE YOU THERE!

*****Calling all artisans and craft-lovers!!*****

Are you an artist or perhaps you making jewelry or other creative crafts? The Ringing Link 2011 is looking for YOU! We hope to showcase local artists and talent during this national event and would love to hear from you. Please see www.ringinglink.ca for more details.

Advertisement Opportunities:



We would be happy  to include an advertisement for your business in our Peal Newsletter:

\$12.50 -eighth page

\$25.00 -quarter page

\$50.00 -half page

Please Contact peal@algehr.org for more information.

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