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# The Peal

The Official Newsletter of the Alberta Guild of English Handbell Ringers



## Introducing your New VP South!

When I was a little girl, I wanted to take piano lessons. My Dad said no because he was forced to take piano lessons as a child and hated them. After my husband passed away, when I was the ripe age of 58, I began attending St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Calgary and I purchased my first piano. Audrey Johnson, (Mount Royal Conservatory) agreed to take on this older, novice piano player and I took lessons for two years. As luck would have it, in 2018, a very generous benefactor donated a seven-octave set of handbells and chimes to St. Andrew's and they were looking for members to begin a handbell choir. Eagerly, I signed up. Our former music director, Cody Obst, told me I would have to see if I made the cut.

~cont'd p. 6

## And what are YOU doing this summer?

“Here the Pearl. Hear We Ring”

Unless you've been living under a rock or marooned on an island somewhere, hopefully you will all have heard the sad news that the **2020 International Handbell Symposium (IHS)** in Hong Kong has been cancelled. It has not been a positive time for our dear friends in HK with political unrest and uncertainty and now with the COVID-19 situation, other ringing colleagues and their events in Asia have been seriously impacted. Perhaps some of our readers might even know of folks whose lives have been affected in one or the other.

~cont'd p. 3

## Coming to a podium near you...

### Spring Concerts

April - June 2020

Time to enjoy the fruits of all those long rehearsals – see pg. 7 to catch a performance near you!

### Youth Festivals

March - April 2020

Encourage our youngest musicians and future ringers in their annual youth festivals! Details [here](#).

### National Seminar

July 13-20, 2020

Check out all the details and plan your trip to Orlando [here](#).



## Presidential Ponderings

Welcome to the March edition of the *Peal*. Thanks as always to **Emmy Okazawa-Bortolin** for putting it together and politely reminding me that I am required to make a contribution.

I like to think that I am slowly getting to grips with holding the ALGEHR tiller. But definitely not on my own – lots of help required from other members of the Board. Something of a learning curve for both **Sharon Vogrinetz** and myself was to submit financial documents for the Alberta Registries Society and the CRA Registered Charities before the December deadline. It was a relief to find that for one multi-page document in tiny font, we only needed to complete 4 out of the 10 pages. We are so fortunate to have Sharon as Treasurer – I am awed by her attention to detail, knowledge of society finances and her ability to add up seemingly immense numbers in her head.

**Annie Hergott**, Emmy Okazawa-Bortolin and **Lucy Graham** continue to navigate me around awards, website, membership and provincial handbell events. **Fiona Miller** is at the helm of *Discovery 2020* to be held in Lethbridge 16-17<sup>th</sup> October and we are fortunate in having **Jayne Martin** and **Patty Geddes** keeping a weather eye on regional activities.

The Board met at the beginning of February which gave us an opportunity to plan the 2019/20 budget and start thinking about encouraging ringers to join or renew their ALGEHR membership. How can we make membership a real benefit to youth and adult ringers in schools and the community? We are involved in organizing handbell events, providing some financial support to music festivals across the province, and ALGEHR awards may encourage composers, assist handbell choirs, recognize excellence in handbell teaching and support ringers to attend national and international events. I think one of our goals should be to **increase our visibility as handbell advocates**. Obvious targets to do this are the *Peal*, and again thanks to Emmy's efforts in this respect. We also have social media, the website, and maybe we should make a personal appearance at music festivals to promote ALGEHR. As a small organization in a geographically large province, this could present a challenge, but with many hands on deck, not an unobtainable goal.

And I have not neglected those 14 ALGEHR boxes/bags which I inherited (my diplomatic baggage) and which are still occupying space in our front room, along with a grandchild's high chair, the blue recycle bags, secure in a Perspex box to keep Mabel, Ruggles and any number of loaner dogs from retrieving the last molecules of dog food from cans, three volunteer squashes from the garden maturing on the floor, a mycolog culture approaching the end of its useful life sprouting the odd mushroom, a bunch of paintings never hung and four unopened boxes of my late ma-in-law's heirloom china. Last week my better half left on a trip to visit his old Dad. In my glorious solitude, I decided it was time to tackle the 14 boxes. But first, the paintings went on the walls – with no discussion from him about the best place to hang them. And we had never opened the boxes of china which have been occupying floor space had since 2006 (yes, really). I said we didn't need a 16-place setting complete dinner service. When was the last time you drank tea from a bone china teacup with a too-small ornate handle, remembering to slightly curl the little finger? Besides which, I don't know 16 people to invite to dinner, let alone serve them a four-course meal at a dining table which seats six. He said you know there are actually three sets of china in those boxes, all very heirloom, none of which can ever leave our possession. End of argument - to avoid marital discord I never opened them – until last week. And I was quite wrong, the china is perfectly lovely.

So, the ALGEHR boxes – I made a start, but I think the saga has to wait for another *Peal* edition. I have found some interesting memorabilia. Who went to **Ringing Link 2011** in Calgary – remember the red neckties, and Emmy cajoling as many people as possible to go to the Stampede to see the newly-wed William and Kate? If you missed getting the necktie, there are 16 left! As a novice ringer (which means a slow learner ringing since 2005), I am going to learn plenty more about Alberta bells in the 1980s and 1990s, but I sense it might just be the moment to consider a bit of shredding – I promise not to do so without consultation! More to follow – anything you ever wanted to know about ALGEHR is on the floor in our house.

Fiona

Fiona Bamforth, President



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## Summer 2020 (cont'd from p. 1)

It certainly is quite a unique situation that most handbell musicians in Alberta have never known – a Symposium year (when normally **Classic Bronze** is postponed until the following year) with no Symposium. But never fear, our neighbours to the south are still holding their annual summer event – **Handbell Musicians of America National Seminar** – July 13 to 20 in Orlando, Florida! Of course Canadian ringers are welcome to attend with their HMA membership and pre-registration is already in full swing. **International Music Camp** at the Peace Gardens is offering their annual handbell sessions July 5 – 11, July 7 - 13 and July 25 – 28. Click [here](#) for more details. So any ALGEHR member who might be “bored” and unsure what to do this summer, these are but two major events to consider!

## Deadlines, deadlines.....!!!!

Did you know....that the **2nd International Handbell Symposium** (1992) held right here in Edmonton was such a success that the surplus generated from this event was invested in an endowment (the Symposium Endowment Fund or SEF) of which the annual interest provides financial support to individuals, bell groups or event organizers for projects that support the Alberta Guild’s mission statement?? The five categories under which one can apply are of equal value and weighting – International Symposia, Provincial workshops or programs, capital purchases, outreach and scholarships.

So if you’ve been dreaming about adding another octave of bells or chimes, attending an event or even just getting your group started, check out the details [here](#) as the deadline is March 31, 2020!

Also, to all those budding composers, the deadline for the **Fred Merrett Award for New Compositions** is also March 31, 2020! Get all the info [here](#).

## Ask me about my debut at Carnegie...

Some of you might recall a once-in-a-lifetime experience that several ALGEHR members had just before Christmas. It was none other than "[The Great Christmas Ring](#)" at Carnegie Hall in the Big Apple!!! At the risk of some major self-promotion, here are some pics to give you a taste!



Believe it or not, if you're feeling a little jealous, there are already plans for ANOTHER incredible opportunity this November 2020 at Carnegie Hall...contact [peal@algehr.org](mailto:peal@algehr.org) for more details!

## Remembering Lynn Lowe (July 25, 1934 ~ February 8, 2020)

Lynn was born in Edmonton and grew up on a homestead. After being commissioned as a Salvation Army Officer she served in several communities in Alberta and BC before ending up in Lethbridge. She met and married Gordon and raised their two children in the Lethbridge area. Lynn attended the U of L as a mature student and gained an education degree with music as her major. She was valedictorian of her class.

During her 17 years of teaching for Lethbridge District 51 Lynn introduced handbells to her students and also formed an adult choir. Her students performed at the Kiwanis Festival every year and constantly excelled.

Bells were a huge part of Lynn's life and she devoted hours to playing and directing. Lynn was one of the early members on the ALGEHR Board and served for ten years between 1986 – 1996. She was an amazing supporter and mentor to the whole Southern Alberta bell community. Lynn's gentle encouragement and fighting spirit will be deeply missed.



## Celebrating Carol (Schellenberg) Bergum

If you've been ringing bells in the Edmonton area since the 1980s, chances are you will know Carol Bergum or even knew her when she was still Carol Schellenberg. Of course, being Rufus' daughter, bells have always been part of her life probably before she could walk! All kidding aside, this weekend Highlands United Church will be celebrating her 25 years of service directing bells and ensuring that there is always glorious music to accompany their ministry. If you are in Edmonton, please feel free to drop in at 11:45 am (after service) to enjoy a pancake brunch in her honour!  
11305 64 Street NW not far from Concordia University of Edmonton.



*Thank you, Carol and congratulations!*

## Introducing Your VP South (cont'd from p. 1)

The first night, I chose a C5 bell and turned to Cody, who was standing beside me and asked him which note it was. With a huge smile on his face, Cody announced that C5 was middle C! Well, I did make the cut and I continue to learn under the excellent tutelage of both Lori Teneycke and Annie Hergott; my mentor both inside and outside of our newly minted **Kaleidoscope Ringers**.

Learning how to play the piano taught me the notes but I now prefer playing handbells. Never having played on a sports team before, I am thoroughly enjoying the camaraderie of playing with others on a handbell team. Even though each of us are only responsible for a few notes; aside from Warren Engstrom, who could probably play all seven octaves by himself; it is so aesthetically pleasing when we all come together to play a piece of music. It is like joining all of the pieces of a puzzle together. I have learned that although I can enjoy listening to fellow musicians who play notes before or in tandem with my notes; I cannot count on them and I have to be ready and responsible for my own notes. During one Sunday service, my neighbour, who played the same notes; only one octave lower, happened to zone out for a section and did not play any of her notes until the next page turn. I had become so accustomed to playing my notes when she played hers, that I didn't play mine either. Lesson learned!

After my first practice, Ida du Toit, took me under her wing, brought me home and taught me the basics. Armed with clips and a pencil, she taught me how to mark my notes for each piece of music and how to turn my pages with ease. She also taught me how to count; identify measure changes and the importance of continuing to count throughout an entire piece of music; even when I was only playing a few notes, in order to play my notes at the right time. I used to get so excited when my note was coming up that I would jump the gun and come in early. Also, who wanted to wait two full beats for a half-note or four beats for a whole note when we could just get on with it! Lori and Annie honestly do have the patience of Job when it comes to me and handbells. Annie encouraged me to attend **Classic Copper** last July and Handbell Discovery last October. It was so wonderful to meet ringers, both novice and experienced, from all over the world and to share the wonderful music of handbells.

~ Jayne Martin, VP South

## Introducing Bells Angels

FINALLY! Another ensemble who is not camera shy! Although there are 3 ringers missing in this photo, this exceptional group of Calgarians are proud to use and learn with some of the chimes that were purchased as part of the SEF grant they received.

They rehearse once a week and perform every couple of months. Welcome to the ALGEHR family and great job putting your grant funds to such good use! We look forward to hearing more about your ringing experience so far and why you are so hooked on it. (Hint, hint...)

~ Photo credit: Annie Hergott





## Editor's Encore

So have you ever wondered what happens to Past-Presidents once their official presidential baton has been duly passed off to the new incumbent?? Well, when we all saw how proficiently our Fiona 2.0 had taken on her new duties, this pair of "ex-prezes" enjoyed a girls' getaway to celebrate! Think these shots say it all! Special prize for anyone who can correctly identify where Annie showed off her Kaetlyn Osmond moves...and if you enjoy any of the photos in this issue, please Better still, share yours as well! My fav around is our youngest up-and-coming **Quick-Study-Eddie** who rings with **Tributary Bells** in Calgary and who is already learning to do 4-in-hand!!! Can't wait to see what else he will be doing soon!

let me know!  
this time



### Not to be missed! (Send me your performance dates to be posted here)

Sat, April 18, 2020 @ 7 pm: *Jubiloso! Bells of Concordia*, St Timothy Anglican Church, Edmonton

Sat, May 9, 2020 @ 7 pm: *Let The Bells Ring Out #5*, Gilbert Paterson School, Lethbridge

Mon, June 8, 2020 @ 7 pm: *Bow River Handbell Musicians*, Temple B'nai Tikvah, Calgary

### Contact your Board!

Fiona Bamforth	President	<a href="mailto:president@algehr.org">president@algehr.org</a>
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Emmy Okazawa-Bortolin	Past-president	<a href="mailto:pastpres@algehr.org">pastpres@algehr.org</a>

**Next Peal deadline!! May 15, 2020 ~ Please send me your submissions by this date!!!**