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Alberta
Guild of English
Handbell Ringers

The Peal

The Official Newsletter of the Alberta Guild of English Handbell Ringers



ALGEHR Discovery 2021 is being brought to you **Virtually** by the Lethbridge Discovery Committee. This is a wonderful opportunity to spend some time refreshing, renewing and rejoicing in the wonderful sounds of Handbells and HandChimes. Our clinicians have put together a wonderful schedule that will be suitable for all ringing levels. A description of each session is on the website which will include the chance for you to chat with the clinician and ask questions. Registration opens on **September 1st** and you will need to register in order to receive the link to the events. Due to the magic of technology, this event will be open to anyone, anywhere and you do not need to have a set of bells in front of you. Once you have registered you will receive an email with some suggested alternatives that you might have around your home that will assist you in having fun. The event will close with a virtual concert which will include recordings of the most recent *Fred Merrett Award for New Compositions* winners. We look forward to “seeing” you on October 15 and 16.

Any questions:
discovery@algehr.org

Save the Date!

Season of
Ringing
Oct 15-16, 2021

Our FIRST virtual
Handbell Discovery!!

Fall
Performances??
TBA

Please tell us if you
are headed back to
the concert hall!!

20th IHS
Nashville 2022
Aug 1-6, 2022

Click [here](#) for all
the details!!

Are YOU going?

Presidential Pandemic Ponderings

Dammit! Sixty thousand honeybees in the backyard and I've just been stung by a bumble bee in the flower bed. The joys of being a novice beekeeper. My sister and brother-in-law have kept bees for years – I blame them for my interest. My sister worked as a hospital accountant and was given the task of blending two positions into one and then making herself redundant. My brother-in-law was a graduate student in English Literature, studying the novels of Samuel Becket when I first met him. He sported long hair, a beard and smoked a pipe with one of those aromatic tobaccos (my sister soon put an end to that). But eventually he got a shave, a haircut, a suit, a tie and a job in a bank. After years of a making 'efficiencies' in the bank, aka firing people, he had had enough and took early retirement. He and my sister bought a cottage in a small village in England's limestone country, went off grid (that's a lie, they didn't) and started keeping bees and chickens and growing heirloom fruits and vegetables. My sister bought a spinning wheel and started knitting exquisite sweaters, throws, and scarves.

We inherited a hive last fall from our bee mentor who could just not say 'No!' to anyone looking to offload their bees. After successfully getting the bees through their first winter (you do have to mollycoddle them) we thought it would be plain sailing. It wasn't. I had not thought that we ('we' being Steve, the reluctant ringer, and myself) would have a hive of extremely aggressive bees. Yes, they do produce a lot of honey but for three days after obligatory hive inspections we cannot venture into our backyard without being stalked by guard bees, whether we're hanging out washing or doing a spot of gardening. No sitting on the deck drinking wine. Even our dog, Mabel, won't go outside after being stung in the butt and having a dying bee frantically buzzing in her tail. The situation has got worse; Steve developed a bee phobia. He goes pale and sweaty before hive inspections. I need him to lift the hive boxes which weigh about 40 pounds and even though I play G3B3 bells, I cannot lift them without help. The hive had to go to maintain his and my sanity. I advertised the bees for free, minus cost of the hive equipment. So, who wants a hive of excellent honey producing aggressive bees free of charge? No-one!

At present we are glamping in southern Saskatchewan. Steve remains calm – no hive to look at while sipping his beer. Before we left, our bee mentor rummaged through the hive to find the queen and whisked her away to a queenless hive. He sent me on a mission to purchase a new queen, hopefully a quiet gentle little thing who would radiate calm throughout our hive. Cost: \$45 for a queen plus two attendant bees in a little cage, and beautifully gift wrapped in a little box that could serve as a container for an expensive engagement ring. Except that it buzzed! To cut a long story short, the hive accepted the new queen graciously and hopefully we will have lots of baby bees, more honey and I will have a happy spouse.

So, a new ringing year is about to start even though the pandemic continues to linger. Don't forget to renew your **ALGEHR** membership at the end of this month! We need your support to help sponsor youth and adult handbell events, community music festivals, handbell education in schools and of course, **Handbell Discovery**.

This year's virtual **Handbell Discovery, Season of Ringing Virtually Together**, is scheduled for 15-16th October. **Fiona Miller** and her Lethbridge organizing committee have planned an innovative program featuring clinicians from across Canada. Some events will help us all get back to swinging bells in person again. A very special new workshop, the **Joan Schaufele Memorial Workshop**, will feature a session for beginning ringers.

The workshop has been very generously funded by **Megan Matthies**, Joan's niece, who wanted to remember Joan's passion for handbells. We thank Megan for her wonderful gift. **Handbell Discovery** will end with a concert of pre-recorded handbell music, including a musical tribute to **Joan Schaufele** and music composed by **Catherine Bevan**, this year's winner of the **Fred Merrett Award for New Compositions**. Please see the website (algehr.org) for more **Handbell Discovery** details. Registration will start on 1st September.

Please plan also to attend our Annual General Meeting at 3.15 pm on 16th October at the conclusion of the workshop sessions. Thanks to **Cliff Linton** and **Emmy Okazawa-Bortolin** who are working on a developing a new **ALGEHR** website which we hope to showcase at the AGM. And remember that we will also be looking for new **ALGEHR** Board members. The Board is a small group of handbell ringers, and we welcome anyone with enthusiasm, new ideas and new perspectives to join us. We will make sure that you have a mentor to ease you into position. Details on nominations will follow.

We will also be starting our second **ALGEHR** webinar series, **ALGEHR Rhythms**. Our first webinar in September, date, and title to be confirmed, will feature **Kath Wissinger**, a highly acclaimed US clinician and innovative music teacher, who will lead a workshop focusing on teaching new ringers which will be ideal for all but especially handbell directors in schools.

Finally, thanks to Emmy for her skill and effort in assembling **The Peal** this month.

Fiona

Fiona Bamforth
President, **ALGEHR**



Wow, that's one impressive queen bee! No wonder poor Steve has been terrorized!

And in the “life-goes-on” department...

While life during the pandemic continues to be challenging, handbell ringers are probably among the most resilient! Happy news from **JuBELLation** in Three Hills as they would like to share the NEW date of their original May 16, 2021 performance which did not happen:

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2021 at 7 pm.



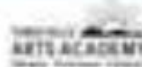
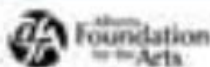
Amazing Grace
GOD'S GIFT TO US

A Community Service of Worship through Music
hosted by
Prairie Tabernacle
Sunday, May 16, 2021 at 3pm

Featuring JUBELLATION (Handbell) Choir
With Violin, Trumpets, Oboe, Cello and Timpani

Join us, or view the online service live streamed at
<https://www.prairietab.com/live>

Sun Oct 3, 2021



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~ Submitted by **Rhoda Murray**, Three Hills

Handbell Music Review

With such uncertainty about ringing, we want to offer a few new options for ringing this fall. "Hope", "Alleluias!" and "Grace" are all for written for small ensembles with piano. There are no shared bells! These three original pieces are written by Canadian composer **Erwin Stroobach**.

This music is different from many small ensemble music not only because it is original and more challenging but also because the music is like a duet between the ringers and the piano. Many ensemble pieces are arrangements of sacred hymn tunes at about a level 2 and often without piano accompaniment.

At **First United Church in Fort Saskatchewan**, we have a small ensemble (5 ringers) who have enjoyed the challenge of this music – especially the interactions between the ringers and the piano. We are looking forward to sharing this music in a live worship service! Erwin's ensemble from his home church, **Cambridge Street United in Ontario**, performed these pieces in a recorded concert with 4 ringers and Erwin on the piano.

Hope ~ F5 to C7 and piano

We all need hope right now so this is the perfect time for this original composition. It is great to have original quartet music at a level 3 and be written by a Canadian composer with an amazing piano part. The recurring theme is filled with hope and excitement and is contrasted by the ethereal sounds of the piano and LVs in the bells. This is one of those pieces that plays by itself musically with beautiful dynamics and ritards – filled with hope, passion and caring.

Alleluias! ~ 3 or 4/5 octaves and piano

This original composition is truly full of alleluias and rejoicing! At first glance, it appears to be just another 12-bell piece of music, but on further examination, it is filled with much much more! It feels more like a bell and piano duet than bell music with a piano accompaniment.

The music starts out with high energy shakes and marts! Although the music is written in 4/4, there are sections that feel more like 8/8. In the middle section, all ringers switch from their treble bells to bass bells. Bass bells use the singing bell technique while the piano is featured with a beautiful melodic section. The bells and piano then move to a rhythmic section. The piece ends like it began, full of energy and rejoicing.

Grace ~ F5 to C7 and piano

This original handbell music can be rung with 4, 5 or 6 ringers. The piece is in 6/8 time – different from his other compositions. The first time Susan listened to the music, she loved it! She was inspired and can hardly wait to share it in worship. The lilt helps the music flow and fills it with grace. This music fits any occasion, whether it is a sacred or secular setting. **Handbells etc** is thrilled the Erwin has composed this piece for a small handbell ensemble to ring during these stressful times.

~ Submitted by **Camille Ream**, **Handbells etc.**

It's September and Membership Renewal Time!

It's time to renew your ALGEHR membership!

It's been another difficult year for handbells and we have missed festivals, concerts, workshops and of course, **Handbell Discovery 2020** last fall. Despite this, I would like to remind you that your **ALGEHR** membership is still valuable and important. We are very fortunate in having wisely invested endowment funds which allow **ALGEHR** to finance awards for our members: the **Fred Merrett Award for New Compositions** and the **Symposium Endowment Fund Grant Program** which provides funds for individuals and ensembles for music, equipment, attending symposia etc. **ALGEHR** also supports the **Stan Morris Excellence in Teaching Award** and the **John Nelson Scholarship Award**, assists in sponsorship of youth and adult handbell events, community music festivals, handbell education in schools and the annual **Discovery** ringing event. Membership also provides you with the opportunity to keep abreast of local, national and international handbell opportunities. However, like all organizations we have administrative costs to cover - website costs, virtual meeting platform fees, software for managing finances and fees, and even the odd postage stamp. Your subscription helps us with these costs which as a Board, we are careful to minimize. However, your Board cannot just wave a magic wand to continue our important mandate. The projected budget for our 2021-2022 season is unfortunately very much in the **RED** and some projects may be in jeopardy. Our membership numbers are decreasing sadly, but handbells are still thriving in Alberta. Please consider renewing or joining **ALGEHR**. For more information, please contact me at president@algehr.org

~ Submitted by **Fiona Bamforth**, President

Introducing Your VP South, Margaret Dunkerley

I started bell ringing about 30 years ago with Carol Nelson. I was handed 2 bells and told to ring. I had some music training on the piano but nothing with bells. I had lots of fun and I got away from the kids for an hour a week. As time passed, I became more proficient with the bells and performing. I have rung with **Acclamation** choir in Calgary with **Carol Nelson**, then **Joan Schaufele**, then **Anne Hergott**. I have also played in a small group, **Vintage Bronze**, and a small group of **Acclamation**. We have performed all over Alberta and in BC. I have attended many of the **Classic Bronze** events and the **Handbell Discovery** sessions. I have also played bell trees which is lots of fun. I just want to play bells. I joined the **ALGEHR** board about a year ago as VP South. I will try and represent all ringers at the Board meetings.



Editor's Encore

No doubt you've all heard about new pandemic hobbies and past-times that have been (and are still being) discovered....from bee-keeping to anything to do with craft needles or maybe a new physical activity! So not to be left behind in this mad race to explore new passions or sour dough recipes, I acquired a new roommate because clearly I was getting way too much sleep and needed to donate my blood to worthy causes. (Ask me and I will show you my battle scars!) Her name is Kuma ("bear" in Japanese) and this Bernese Mountain Dog is now 4 months old and has transitioned from baby land shark to stubborn, mouthy teen velociraptor. So if I seem like a walking, bleeding zombie when I see you next, she might have something to do with that! Hoping you are all able to return to some semblance of your regular programming this fall – and looking forward to hearing all about those triumphant renaissances!!!

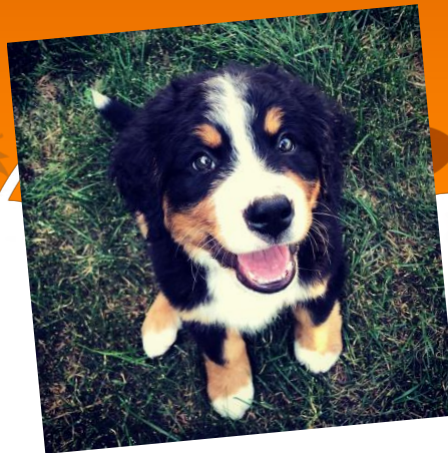


Photo credits: Fiona Bamforth, Rhoda Murray, and Emmy Okazawa-Bortolin

Contact your Board!

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Next Peal deadline!! Nov 15, 2021~ Please send me your submissions by this date!!!