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Alberta
Guild of English
Handbell Ringers

The Peal

The Official Newsletter of the Alberta Guild of English Handbell Ringers



HANDBELL DISCOVERY 2022

on behalf of the Alberta Guild of English Handbell Ringers



at St. Albert United Church
October 14/15, 2022

Join fellow ringers or explorers for a day and a half of sessions that will answer your questions about handbells and their use in classrooms, communities, and churches. For more information and to register go to

<https://www.algehr.org/events>

Are You Ready for This??
Handbell Discovery is back in person!!!

After three long years, our annual handbell festival is back IN PERSON!! Don't miss out on this great chance to catch up with handbell musicians from across Alberta.

Teachers - with a Youth Stream being offered, this is the perfect time to fire up your young ringers for a new exciting year!

Directors and Ringers - come for a technique refresher or to learn something new!

With massed ringing and breakout sessions, there is something for everyone! The event will close with a sharing concert which will include recordings of the most recent **Fred Merrett Award for New Compositions** winners.

Can't wait to see you
October 14 and 15!

Any questions:
discovery@algehr.org

Save the Date!

Fall Into Ringing

Oct 14-15, 2022

Our first post-covid
in-person

Handbell Discovery!

Register [here](#)

GivingTuesday

Virtual Concert

Nov 29, 2022

fundraising@algehr.org
for all the
deets!

Classic

Bronze/Copper

July 5-8, 2023

More info coming
very soon! Check
both algehr.org and
Facebook!

Presidential Ponderings

I have just returned from the *International Handbell Symposium* and *National Seminar* series in Nashville. Fellow Board members, **Betty** and **Judy** were also in attendance. While the number of ringers was fewer than usual for an international event, just over 300 souls, it was refreshing to be ringing together again. Sadly, there was little representation from Japan, Singapore, Korea and Hong Kong. The nine music selections, one from each country, were varied but all enjoyable, and none too challenging for the average ringer, particularly as you could skip the difficult bits knowing there would be several ringers playing the same position as you. It's always interesting to see differing conducting styles from the various directors. Difficult to know what my favourite pieces were, but all enjoyable. **Betty Radford's** winning Canadian composition, *Mosaic*, directed by **Lisa Kyriakides**, drew a lot of compliments. Attending the National Seminar series may marginally improve my competency in handling syncopation and those bizarre time signatures, and I also gained some insights in how to organize a community choir and choose music selections. Not something I had ever thought about before. The downside of the symposium was the getting there and back and the venue, but that's another story. (It's actually on page 6 lol...)

The end of the summer is sadly approaching – there is so much to squeeze into so short a time that lots of things, like **ALGEHR** affairs, have all taken second place to gardening, camping with and without grandchildren, and a new puppy. Never has grandparental care been so easy: walk to DOG Beach, return for Grandpa's buttermilk pancakes, bike to DOCK beach for hours of messing around in the water, bike to Ice Cream store and playground, return to campsite for supper, dispatch grandoffspring to parental tent, return to DOG Beach for final de-bounce for three dogs, retire for well-earned gin and tonic.

Congratulations to **Betty Radford** on being awarded the 2022 *Fred Merrett Award for New Compositions* in two categories. Her compositions, *Musings* (a level 3 piece for 5 octaves) and *Fleeting Moments* (a solo piece), we hope will be premiered at *Discovery 2022*.

ALGEHR's major achievement over the summer was to finalize the Rental Agreement documents for the Alberta Guild Collection. This was a lot of work and many thanks to **Emmy** and the rental subcommittee for dedicating so much of their precious time to this task. The subcommittee members were **Lucy Graham, Tammy-Jo Mortensen, Carol Chernishenko, Margaret Dunkerley, and Rhoda Murray**. We now have rental documents ready to distribute to any handbell choir wishing to rent all or part of the collection. We also need to remember that fundraising efforts are still needed to raise the remaining \$18,000 toward the purchase price by March 2023.

Don't forget to register for *Discovery 2022*. This year's event is at St. Albert United Church on 14-15th October and starts with a choice of two sessions on Friday evening followed by a welcome reception. Rehearsals, breakout sessions and the final concert are scheduled for the Saturday. **Lorna Walker** and her organizing committee have put together an event which will have something for everyone. More details are available on the **ALGEHR** website (www.algehr.org). Please plan to attend!

Our AGM will take place during *Discovery 2022* (Saturday 15th October from 11.45 – 1.00 pm). If you are not able to attend Discovery in person, there will be an option to attend by Zoom. This is an opportunity for all members to hear **ALGEHR's** achievements and challenges over the past year and have your say into what **ALGEHR** should be doing to promote handbells across the

We are planning to change the Membership structure with elimination of the Ringer Membership category. If approved, this will require a change in the bylaws and will be implemented in September 2023. More information about this change is included in this edition of ***The Peal***.

This is also the place to invite members to join the **ALGEHR** Board. We will have vacancies for 2022-2023. As President, I can honestly say that while all Board members have handbells as an interest, each one brings a different skill to make the Board run smoothly; willingness to tackle document writing and proofing, event planning, money management, wizardry in IT, or just as important, plain old common sense and good humour. Each new Board member is assigned a mentor so be assured, that if you volunteer, you will not be thrown into the deep end! Thanks for considering.

Next year is the 40th anniversary of **ALGEHR** – yes, we are 40 years old. We are planning some special events to celebrate. More details to follow.

Fiona

Fiona Bamforth
President, **ALGEHR**



News and Updates

Looking for new Ringers in Spruce Grove and in Edmonton!

The handbell music ministry of **St. Andrew's United Church in Spruce Grove** has openings to welcome new ringers in September 2022. As our current choir is comprised of ringers with several years experience, we are seeking individuals to join us who also have previous ringing experience or who can offer a strong music background (if you can read music proficiently and are interested in trying a new instrument this opportunity is for you!). We rehearse every Sunday 7:00 - 9:00 PM from mid-September through mid-December. We make music as a team so a firm commitment to regular rehearsal attendance is required. We respect Covid protocols as necessary to keep everyone safe and healthy. Our goal is to share our music with the Church and the Parkland community in the coming months. All performance dates are negotiated with our ringers prior to booking. We invite you to visit our Facebook page to get a better idea of what we do. If you or someone you know is interested, please email **Juanita Pickerl** at ljpickerl@shaw.ca.

Robertson-Wesley United Church in Edmonton has openings for two experienced handbell musicians, beginning September 2022, for the **Robertson-Wesley Ringers**. The R.-W. Ringers is one of Edmonton's premiere church ensembles, established in 1979 by then Director of Music, **Bruce Wheatcroft**. The R.-W. Ringers perform regularly at the church (services and concerts), in the community, and has travelled internationally. The thirteen-member ensemble rings a 5-octave set of Malmk bells. Please contact: **Dr. Allan Bevan**, Director of Music: (780) 482- 1587 ext. 230 (voicemail); or music@rwuc.org.

Need extra chimes or bells?

As most of you know, **ALGEHR** has acquired a large collection of bells that used to belong to Concordia University of Edmonton. While most of the collection will be used for the next 8 months by one renter, there are chimes and bells still available to rent this year.

- Full sets or add-in sets Schulmerich MelodyChimes. You could rent 5 octaves of chimes or add on octaves to your existing chimes.
- Three octave set of WhiteChapel Handbells. The renter must have experience/knowledge about WhiteChapels.

Concerts, concerts, concerts...!!!

The **Bow River Handbell Musicians Society (BRHMS)** held their first concert in a few years on June 13, 2022. It was a celebration of music and community. Ringing for the first time without masks, the ringers excelled and rang with joy and jubilation. It was amazing performing for the receptive and enthusiastic crowd, even on a night with a massive rain storm. What JOY to ring again and share bell music! All four teams in **BRHMS** performed, showcasing the wide variety of arrangement possibilities. There were Duets (**Tributary**), a small 12-bell ensemble (**Elbow River Bells**), a 4-octave intermediate team (**Bell Époque**) and a 4.5-octave advanced ringing team (**Bow River Bells**). **BRHMS** teams will be on the stage again in January. If you are interested in learning more or ringing with **BRHMS**, check out <http://www.bowriverhandbells.ca/>. A new adult beginner team is starting this fall so we especially welcome new ringers!

~ Submitted by Annie Hergott, Director, **BRHMS**

A loyal and talented friend: Carl Engstrom

September 12, 1937 – August 10, 2022

Carl Engstrom, beloved husband of **Mrs. Ruth Engstrom** and father of Calgary ringer, **Warren Engstrom**, passed away suddenly at home in Lethbridge. Born in Wetaskiwan, AB, Carl received a B.Ed. from the University of Alberta and taught 10 years at Wetaskiwin County before moving to Lethbridge where he taught Gr. 4 at Lakeview School from 1968 to 1993. He was involved musically playing piano and organ while being an active member of University Drive Alliance Church, Evangelical Free Church and First Baptist Church. He directed the bells at First Baptist and also composed handbell arrangements. As a ringer, he played in duets and quartets and enjoyed attending handbell festivals across AB and Canada.

Carl served the **ALGEHR** Board for several terms in a variety of roles (Secretary, Treasurer), but will be remembered for his kindness and willingness to help out whoever needed it. Whether it was faithfully transporting bells to weekly rehearsals from schools to churches, sending music scores from Lethbridge to Kuwait (where **Lucy Graham** was teaching) or looking after a friend's house during their absence and even moving things into a new house before the owner arrived home, you could always count on Carl to be there.

Carl was a person who worked quietly behind the scenes and someone who kept his word. If he accepted to do something, you knew he would get it done. Besides bells, he was involved in Kiwanis and was always volunteering at the Kiwanis Music Festival and in particular, the handbell classes, of course!

This is a [link](#) to his funeral service that included a performance of Carl's "Rhapsody", an original handbell composition. He also wrote an arrangement of "O Canada" that was composed for Coalhurst Elementary School while Lucy was teaching there in the 1990s.

A gentle soul and a true gentleman, Carl will be dearly missed by his family and friends. **ALGEHR** thanks Carl for his faithful service to the Guild over the years and offers sincere condolences on his passing.

~ Submitted by **Lucy Graham**



IHS Nashville ~ Not the music but everything else: a personal diary

30 July

Steve (the reluctant ringer) celebrates his 70th birthday. The earliest birthday greeting I have ever given him: off to the airport at 3.30 for a 6.00 am flight from Edmonton to Toronto. I heard so many bad things about flying, I thought I should leave early. Arrive in Toronto on time, smooth trip through US Immigration and then a wait for the Nashville flight which was 45 minutes late, 60 minutes late, 90 minutes late, 120 minutes late and then cancelled. My travel buddy, **Betty Radford**, and I spend a very late evening in the Days Inn in Brampton anticipating a 3.30 am start for a flight to Nashville via New York. Isn't that in the wrong direction?

31 July

Wide awake at 3 am, yippee, another not-so-bright early start. Our airport cab arrives at 3.15 am. No one on the streets of Brampton and we are at the airport by 3.45 am, along with seemingly half the city of Toronto, waiting for Security to open. It opens at 4.15 am and the crowd surges forward. At New York's LaGuardia airport, we find that the Nashville flight leaves from Newark airport, a 45-minute cab ride away at a cost of \$200, cash only. Betty and I scramble in our wallets to pay the driver who was seriously lacking in both interpersonal and driving skills. How many of us carry that sort of cash around?

We finally get to Nashville and here we are at the Gaylord Opryland Hotel and Convention Centre, only 24 hours late and missing most of the first day. This resort is an example of American corporate opulence. A giant hotel complex, conservatory, artificial lake, restaurants, convention centre, and waterslide resort all under a giant glass roof. What is the carbon footprint of this place, air conditioned to a temperature that requires me to wear a sweater? Betty and I decide to catch the last two seminars, even though I am almost hallucinating from lack of sleep. I desperately try to keep awake to hear about how to run a choir rehearsal and organizing a handbell choir, both given by **David Harris**. Afterwards, Betty and I decide to find supper and have an early night. Finding supper is extraordinarily expensive. \$20 will buy you a skinny sandwich, a croissant and a bit of fruit. Forget the bottle of wine.

01 August

Second day of seminars – good, I feel livelier than yesterday and attend three excellent workshops: **Ron Mallory** (music theory – I guess it's never too late to learn), **Michael Glasgow** (conducting and awkward rhythms), **Kath Wissinger** (syncopation anxiety – definitely suffer from that). In the afternoon, I take a hot short walk to a nearby mall to see if there is a cheap restaurant, convenience store and a bottle of wine store. Nope – back to the hotel for another exorbitantly expensive supper.

02 August

First day of ringing together! The hotel and convention centre are impossible to find your way around - firstly it's massive and secondly the signage is terrible. It's full of lost people asking you how to get to various venues. Eventually manage to find the way to where I am supposed to be and then get lost on the way out. The day is long – nine selections plus the Symposium choir. That's a lot of ringing but I enjoy it. The air conditioning is far too enthusiastic – I slip out at breaks to get my body temperature back to normal. In the evening we go to the Grand Ole Opry – not my cup of tea but I guess you have to soak up the local ambience. A bunch of mediocre to good live country bands, a lot of flashing lights, loud noise and no, I didn't see Elvis. At least I've been there and got the photo to show it.

03 August

More ringing, I'm not getting quite as lost in the music or the venue as yesterday. In the evening we have done eating minimal meals out of expensive eateries and head to a Ribs joint on the edge of the previously mentioned mall. I beg **Bob and Judy AtLee** and Betty to let me eat outside, regardless of flies (fewer than the average Alberta campsite). Actually, the ambience, if not the food, was quite acceptable.

04 August

I'm getting into the swing of this handbell music. The directors and music are diverse and awesome. Today we have a free afternoon. What to do – a trip to the Parthenon (not the real one but a good replica), Hop Off bus trip to downtown Nashville or just chill? We decide on the latter. I go to the pool (it's OUTDOORS) for a lazy swim. A warm pleasant afternoon but note to self - no point in bringing the e-reader when you don't have the reading glasses.

05 August

Ringling in the morning, followed by photos, and by more ringing. After a solo concert, it's 6.45 pm. My plan is to buy a sandwich, take it back to the room and have a quiet evening going over my music. However, we meet up with Bob and Judy AtLee and **Alison Wood** with her mobility scooter and think we might splash out at one of the less expensive (LOL) restaurants here. We decide on a do-it-yourself burger joint, one we all know. It was closed – what burger joint in a hotel is closed at 7.00 pm for heaven's sakes?? A second eatery is way over the other side of the hotel and no idea what elevators were close by. We find an elevator - what floor do we want? We get on at level 2 hoping to go down to level 1. Wrong! Up to level 4, doors open and close and we head up to level 6, doors open and close, down to level 5, doors open and Engineer Bob takes charge – directing the waiting minions not to press the buttons to summon the elevator. He's assertive! We find the restaurant, and it's a one-hour wait for a table. That's a long time so we head to a sports bar opposite – a half-hour wait. We settle for this. Apart from the freezing ambient temperature, the food is quite acceptable and the evening mostly redeems itself. I had thoughtfully brought my sweater; my travel buddy, Betty, just shivered.

06 August

Final day of ringing, dress rehearsal, Concert and Gala. First session is a rehearsal for the Symposium choir, a bit early for my brain despite adequate caffeination but the director (**Alex Guebert**) seems reasonably pleased (OMG, he looks so young!). Why at my great age do I still feel nervous about concert performances given that there are about 299 other ringers there? The concert seems to go well and it's over! Except for the Gala. I really don't do these things well – I try and hide behind my plate and avoid drawing attention to myself. That's just me. Betty, as the Canadian composer, is applauded throughout the Gala evening; I am so proud to be with her. **Lisa Kyriakides**, the Canadian director, is also among the celebrated individuals.

07 August

Bye-Bye Nashville! The flight to Toronto is only two hours late which means it's on time. Another night in a relatively inexpensive airport hotel and agree with Betty that the amenities are not much different from the Nashville hotel. Betty and I part company at Edmonton airport. If you're looking for a travel buddy, I recommend Betty – she will buy you Smarties and understands that you absolutely have to have the first caffeinated coffee in the morning.

~ Submitted by **Fiona Bamforth**

It's September and Membership Renewal Time!

It's time to renew your ALGEHR membership!

It's been another challenging year for handbells and we have missed festivals, concerts, workshops and of course, **Discovery 2021** in person 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. Recently, there are some changes that have been approved by your Board.

Proposed changes to **ALGEHR** membership

- Currently, there are two categories of **ALGEHR** membership:
 - **Regular members** can participate in all **ALGEHR** events, vote at member meetings, receive communications on **ALGEHR** matters, including **The Peal**, and stand for election to the Board.
 - **Ringer Members** must have an association with a current Regular or Life Member. Ringer members have most of the privileges of Regular members but are not entitled to vote matters and cannot stand for election to the Board.
- The Board has passed a motion to discontinue the **Ringer Member** category.
- Two new categories will be implemented: **Senior Members** and **Student Members**.
- Criteria for **Senior/Student** membership will be confirmed later.
- **Senior** and **Student Members** will have the same benefits as current **Regular Members**. However, **Student Members** under 18 years of age will not be able to vote.
- **Senior Members** and **Student Members** will pay a reduced fee.
 - Using a projection on current fees, with Regular Member fees at \$42/yr and Senior/Student Member fees at \$22/yr, we anticipate that the revenues from fees will be largely unchanged if Member numbers remain the same.

We will review the membership fee as the costs of managing the Society are increasing. In Sept, a survey will be conducted asking for Member feedback on these proposed changes.

The change in membership structure will require approval by a vote at the AGM in October, but Please contact me at president@algehr.org to voice your opinions. Since this change requires a change to the Society bylaws, it will not be implemented until September 2023.

~ Submitted by **Fiona Bamforth**, President

Editor's Encore

Some of you may have already experienced “back-to-school” in some form or other by the time you read this, but I’m sure all of us are both anxious and maybe a tad nervous about what the new season will bring. We hope to welcome you all back to “regular programming” at **Handbell Discovery** in St Albert. Most Albertan ensembles are finding themselves back to familiar rehearsal routines and performance plans. Consider this your personal invitation to participate in this year’s **GivingTuesday Virtual Concert** on **Tues, Nov 29!** Although most of us may be headed to “in-person” concerts now, the idea is to continue in a virtual format to allow for as many groups to take part, regardless of in which end of the provinces (AB and SK) you may be. Make sure to email me at fundraising@algehr.org for all the deets!!!

Special thanks to all who submitted photos for this **Peal** and apologies for not being able to share them all – your humble Editor has been painstakingly (and even through an extended power failure this week!) churning out this issue, holding her breath that her antique 10-yr-old Mac would not implode at any given moment before its completion. iOS, storage and software challenges galore, I hope to have more photos in our next edition.

Photo credits: Facebook

Not to be Missed!

Mon, Oct 3, 2022 @ 7:30 pm: Ring Out! ~ Calgary’s inaugural fall concert featuring many local ensembles ~ Donation at the door, children under 12 free,
Fish Creek United: 77 Deerpoint Road SE, Calgary

Sat, Dec 3, 2022 (time TBC): Christmas Celebration ~ Edmonton’s **Jubiloso!**
St Timothy’s Anglican Church, 8420 145 Street NW, Edmonton

Contact your Board!

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Emmy Okazawa-Bortolin	Past-president	pastpres@algehr.org



Next Peal deadline!! Nov 15, 2022~ Please send me your submissions by this date!!!