



NOTE from the BRHMS Chair



To all our BRHMS members!

I am a very proud Chair of your BRHMS Board, an exceptional group of people dedicated to helping BRHMS thrive and grow. The pandemic has challenged us, but we're raring to go, and have continued to work on your behalf.

We have held meetings in the last year to meet our organization's requirements and we look forward to our next meeting on August 28, 2021, in Canmore along the Bow River. This meeting will prepare the year's budget, review our past activities and plan for future endeavours. We are daring to dream about post-pandemic activities! If you have any ideas to share with the Board, contact any one of us; we would be happy to hear from you.

I'd like express a special thank you to BRHMS' new Newsletter Editor, Connie Yates. BRHMS members are fortunate to have seen Connie's creative talents in other areas (like in the bag designs or in the creation of our concert posters). Now we can enjoy her artistic hand in this summers newsletter.

Members are welcome to attend any of the Board meetings, so if you need to know details about how to get to the location, please just ask!

Annie Hergott

Chair,

Bow River Handbell Musicians Society (www.bowriverbells.com)

Conductor: Bow River Bells, Bell Epoque, Tributary Bells, Elbow River Bells

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BRHMS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Annie Hergott

Chair

Founding Board Member



My handbell passion started in the elementary music classroom, where I saw the joy and learning possibilities that this incredible instrument offered my students. I attended a first festival with the fantastic Stan Morris, who showed me that great expression and musical integrity could be expected from young ringers. Thereafter, I used bells and chimes in all my music classes, and added extra-curricular teams wherever possible. I was hooked. And my students LOVED handbells.

Determined to learn to ring myself, I joined master Joan Schaufele's 5-6 octave teams in Calgary, which expanded my handbell world immediately. I soon joined ALGEHR, attended national and local festivals and workshops, and started volunteering to learn more. Definite volunteering highlights for me were working on the planning committee for the International Handbell Symposium in Vancouver in 2016, as well as participating on the Interim Board for the inception of the Handbell Musicians of Canada.

My dream to expand the handbell offerings for adults in Calgary is becoming a reality. With the help of dedicated ringing friends, the Bow River Handbell Musicians Society (BRHMS) was born. I love conducting and pursuing musical excellence within this great art form. It is quite an achievement that we now have four adult teams in BRHMS. The dream continues, as I hope to start a teen and/or young adult group in the near future.

There is power, magic and joy in the creation of the handbell music we learn. Many of you already know about this magic, and the wonderful feeling of being in a team where every note absolutely matters!

Jim Winslett

Chair-Elect, Website,
Founding Board Member

Been playing handbells since 1994. Directed a group in Houston for 17 years. Married a Canadian and moved here in 2014. Citizen as of 2020.

AFOL (Adult Fan of Lego)
Avid roller coaster junkie (have been on nearly 900 different coasters in 15 countries)
Created and maintain several websites - including ellocoaster.com, jimwinslett.com, and the BRHMS website.



Lorraine Eger

Secretary

I have been in an adult show choir for over 20 years and also love acting!

Only started handbells a few years ago but am loving the challenge and the great people I have met.

Kim Dale

Treasurer

I started playing handbells after high school when my high school music teacher asked me to join the choir at my church (1982). Played for the year and then went off to University. When I was getting married I asked the music director at my church (same lady from high school music) to play at the wedding and she said only if you come back to handbells =) (1988) – Have pretty much played since then. I also play trumpet in the Cochrane Music Society's groups Band on the Bow and Riverside Jazz. Born in Calgary but lived in NS for most of my life – Followed my kids out here in 2017.



July 2021 Board Meeting at Bowness Park



BRHMS DIRECTORS AT LARGE



Celeste Carruthers

I still consider myself new to Bell ringing with only a couple years under my belt. I feel blessed to have found this organization and bringing the joy and love of music back into my life.

Wanda Costinak

Founding Board Member

My best bell moment was playing at the International Handbell Symposium in Vancouver in 2016. To play with 800 other ringers from around the world and challenge myself musically with international and difficult music was an experience I will never forget.

I am a K-5 music teacher with the CBE and am privileged to share my passion for ringing to my students every year. Ringing teaches teamwork, listening, co-operation, and musicianship – skills that change lives while enjoying beautiful music – simply divine!



Maureen Holmes

I picked up my 1st bell in 2009 at St. Matthew's United Church and haven't wanted to put it down since. This does make playing the piano and doing a few other things a little tricky. ☐

Ringing bells with BRHMS - with such a wonderful group of people has been so fulfilling and rewarding. LOVE, LOVE, LOVE!



Cristy Rouble

I've been playing bells for 37 years, starting at age 11 in Niagara Falls. I moved to AB in 2006 and mostly love it out here, but I still miss my family and friends in ON. And the lakes... definitely miss the lakes!! I was fortunate to be able to get hooked up with Acclamation at First Baptist in Calgary after my Niagara Falls bell director happened to be at the same bell conference in Edmonton as Joan Schaufele was. I love golfing (even though calling it "whack-a-ball" would be more appropriate), fishing, waterskiing and kayaking, and watching football, hockey and NASCAR.



Debbie Opinko-Brown

Founding Board Member

"After retiring from a very fulfilling career as a music and classroom teacher, I sought out a musical group that I could personally participate in. Meeting Annie and ringing under her expertise for the past five years has taught me that there is still much more for me to learn! Serving as a Director at Large on the BRHMS Board and managing the bookings for ERB performances, keeps me busy when I am not rehearsing my music!"

Connie Yates

I can be convinced to do anything! It was my piano teacher that introduced me to BELLS! (what ever they were?) When I am not playing bells, or sewing bell accessories, I love to play my Recorders SATB, Paint, create Fibre Art and digital paint (BRHMS concert posters).



Janet Zatka

Always wanted to play handbells and began when an opportunity arose in 2019. Began piano lessons at 7. I still continue with lessons as an adult student. Active with "Music Matinee". Retired in 2018 (CPA, CA) Mirko and I are empty nesters with two adult kids Love my garden flowers in the summer.



BRHMS *Bells* FAMILY

One of the challenges for BRHMS as a newly formed handbell organization was to find bells that we could use. This is not easy, as our handbell instrument is an expensive one! We can share though, that BRHMS is on its way to instrument independence!

Through the kindness of teacher Wanda Costinak from Chris Ackerman School, as well as Chellan Hoffman from Knox United Church, we were able to borrow bells and thus start our fledgling ringing society. After BRHMS was formed, we were able to continue borrowing school bell sets thanks to generous teachers who got their principals' permission to take the instruments out of their schools. We discovered that this became a win-win situation for all, as we offered, free of charge, to clean, fix and polish the bells in exchange for their use. Over the course of our many years of bell-borrowing, we fixed and polished at least 6 sets of bells from the schools. Many of these school bell sets were in terrible condition when we first took them in, so it felt good to send the bells back in top condition! In fact, once word got out, some teachers were begging to let us borrow their bells so they would get free maintenance and repair on them.

As soon as BRHMS was able, we purchased our first set of used bells. This set came from a private sale in Calgary, where a retiring teacher was selling her 2-octave set. It was a joyful day to finally have some bells! We named these the "BRHMS bells". This enabled us to have a set for performing in the community and allowed us to form the Elbow River Bells, which uses mainly 12-Bell music.

Miller *Bells* G#6 - C7

Shortly after, we purchased additional bells for our BRHMS bells set, a half octave from G#6-C7. These "Miller Bells" were donated to BRHMS from Fiona and David Miller. They've been a terrific addition, as they allow ERB to ring in a few different keys, without "stealing" bells from the other sets when needed.

New! Jim Texas *Bells* 4 octave set G3 - G7

Our next bells were purchased even though we weren't ringing at all. In the first spring of the pandemic, Jim Winslett heard the news that the 4-octave set of bells he used while conducting in Texas might be available for sale. We made a quick decision for Jim to purchase the set on our behalf (to be repaid), and the teams used them last fall. Of course, these are named the "Texas Bells".

New! Burk family *Bells* C4 - C7

Our final set of bells in our possession are indeed a welcome acquisition. We can ring without borrowing (and cleaning!) school bells due to the 4-year loan of the BURK family bells. These 3.5-octave bells include beautiful C and D3s! These bells came to us through ringer Maureen Holmes' efforts to share our BRHMS existence with the Burk family. The bells had been used at St. Matthew's and have a long history within the bell community in Calgary. Ruth Burk was one of the original teachers of handbells in Calgary. We have serviced them completely, and they are looking magnificent.

All these bell sets will be used by our teams starting this fall. We can't wait to hear them ringing again- especially the low 3s!!

The dream of our own equipment never ends though...Our next step is to find a way to purchase our own Malmark Chimes. Thanks to teachers like Wanda Costinak and Elaina Smith, we've been able to borrow these instruments too.



CHOIR SCHEDULES

All choirs meet at the Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd
408 - 38 Street SW



TRIBUTARY BELLS beginner - intermediate ringers
Thursday 7:15pm - 8:45



BELL ÉPOQUE intermediate - advanced ringers
Mondays (Time TBA)



ELBOW RIVER BELLS beginner - advanced ringers
rehearsals in NW Calgary
Thursday 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm



BOW RIVER BELLS advanced ringers
Mondays (Time TBA)

Ringers' Fee Information

BRHMS is an Alberta registered non-profit society and is a secular community organization. BRHMS must charge ringer fees to cover expenses and to gradually acquire our own equipment. Ringers' fees pay for the teams' rehearsal spaces, music, equipment (bells, chimes, foams, covers, mallets, binders, stands, tables), bell usage/maintenance costs, website, cleaning and Covid-19 supplies, concerts, concert rentals, bank fees, concert receptions, and more. To help offset BRHMS' starting expenses, your conductor has been volunteering her time.

All fees are determined and monitored by our Board of Directors, and this Board is responsible to report all expenses and spending to our BRHMS members at our yearly AGM.

The fees are dependent also on the number of ringers in each team, the length and number of rehearsals, and the individual team's music requirements and/or earnings. Therefore, ringers from different teams must pay different fees.

An estimated fee for the 2021-22 year will be available once we know how many ringers are returning after our long Covid hiatus. Exact fees will be confirmed at the start of our programs in September.

BRHMS also supports ringers who are in more than one group (the fees are less for the 2nd and 3rd team) Financial support and accommodations are available for any ringer who finds that the fees may restrict participation.



ELBOW RIVER BELLS STORY



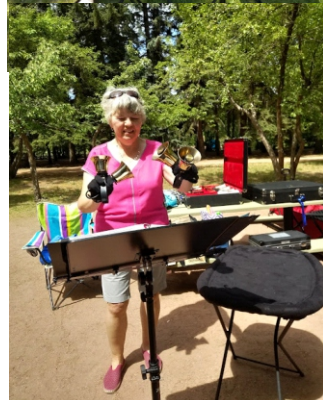
*by Annie Hergott and
Debbie Opinko-Brown*

After the BRHMS teams were forced to close in December of 2020, a few ringers asked if there was a way to continue rehearsing with our teams on-line. We started with our smallest group, the Elbow River Bells. This team was scheduled to perform in the spring, and we thought that it would be important to prepare their spring repertoire, as we simultaneously figured out Zoom and online music rehearsals. Since there were only seven of us, it seemed the right place to start.

We divided up the BRHMS bells, arranged for additional binders and music, and dropped these off at our ERB ringers' homes. There is no question that we enjoyed each other's company on-line, but sadly, the musical experience was frustrating at best. The procedure that seemed to

work best with this platform was having Annie play our 12-bell music on the piano with the ringers ringing their own parts while muted at home. This allowed for us to make music at the same time, but we were not able to hear each other. Many laughs were had after we rang an entire piece, and someone would discover they were ringing bells in the wrong key. As a director, Annie found it hard to watch the team ringing at slightly different times- always ending gloriously, but completely out-of-sync. She would do her best to share the emotion and tempo timing in her playing, only to hear from the ringers that it didn't matter... as the volume and speed would often change quickly and without notice through the computer. We had a lot of other challenges, such as various computer mikes not working, signing in difficulties, weird sound changes and the difficulties re-joining after our 40-min Zoom meeting limit was over.





Elbow River Bells Story (continued)

Based on these experiences and the feedback received from the ERB ringers, as well as the shortage of bells to share with larger teams, Annie made the decision that trying this with the other larger BRHMS teams was not feasible.

With news that our vaccines were underway and the Covid infection rates going down, we kept hoping that ringing in person in the spring would be possible. As we all know now, due to the AB regulations, and the church closure, Annie grudgingly accepted that we had to abandon yet another spring of music making.

Once the weather warmed up again and the restrictions were temporarily relaxed late in May, ERB was able to rehearse a few times at various parks throughout the city. Annie was hoping that once the restrictions enabled larger groups to meet, that all BRHMS ringers would be invited to come busk outdoors.

Unfortunately, up to this writing, we've not been able to gather. Hopefully there still may be time for a busking session or two once the extreme heat abates and the poor air quality improves. Annie will send an invitation to all of you if something gets organized. All ringers will be welcome to come join in (sight-reading is a laugh after so much time away)!

Some of you might be wondering if our on-line experience was worth it? While we did learn our individual notes for the various songs ERB performs for seniors, we were unable to rehearse for musicality or ensemble ringing, and the frustrations and pitfalls led us to abandon our rehearsals for good in April. Let's just say that we are SO LOOKING FORWARD to being able to ring in-person with each other this fall. That will be a joyous music-filled experience, notwithstanding our sight-reading skills!





Beautiful Circles Technique A request from your Bell Conductor-

Once we start ringing again after this crazy pandemic, we will be feeling our bell muscles!

To prepare, may I suggest you dance around your house while you move your arms in beautiful flowing backward circles? It might sound funny, but truthfully, it would be fantastic if you did!

Try these actions too:

Pick jars out of your cupboards and move them as if you're ringing!
When you comb or brush your hair, reach up high before coming down to your head!

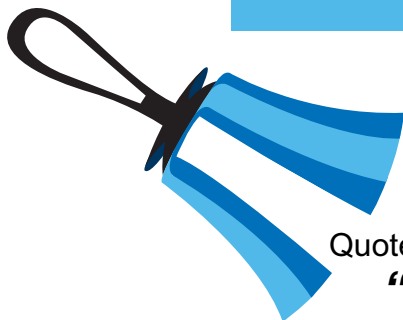
Smile contentedly while doing hard things!

Practice your "pleasant face" when brushing your teeth!

Breathe deeply and relax your shoulders while carrying your laundry or pushing a lawn mower!

Bell ringing and performing is all about looking as pleasant/energetic as the music sounds!

See you in September !



Quote by Tommye McClure Scanlin

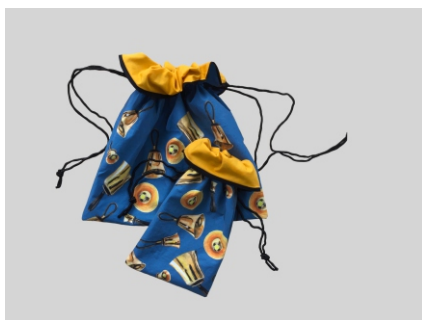
"You get there by going there"

BAGS for SALE

For anyone who
still wanted to
purchase a BAG!



Riverbags \$36.00



Mini drawstring \$12.00
Med drawstring \$15.00



email Connie for details
gcyates1@telus.net

**NEXT CONCERT**

As we've learned in the last 2 years, we should be tentative in our plans for our next concert. We WANT to say our next in person concert will be at the end of January in 2022, but there are too many variables yet to confirm this dream. We are planning for an explosion of WONDERFUL HEALING and CELEBRATORY BELL MUSIC whenever/wherever our next concert takes place.



As soon as we know, we'll be telling the world !

Just for FUN!
Guess how many

Bells !

are in this newsletter

email Connie with your number!
1st THREE people by August 31st
with the correct count will
WIN a PRIZE!
gcyates1@telus.net



NEW WEBSITE
thanks to *JIM Winslett*

Many thanks to wunderkind Jim Winslett for moving and creating a new website for us on a new platform. Jim spent many, many hours of the pandemic on this, and we are grateful for his patience and expertise.

Check it out, of course, at:

 www.bowriverbells.com 