

FUNDAMENTAL TONE

Newsletter of Area I, Inc.

American Guild of English Handbell Ringers

Atlantic Provinces, Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont

Volume XXI, No. 1

Winter 2007

AGEHR Area I Officers

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*Other Officers are listed
on page 2.*

Notes from Nancy

It seems like ages ago since the **National Seminar**. So much has happened in Area I since that July event. Your Board has continued to work diligently to ensure the vitality of AREA I, and make sure that you have a variety of events to attend to meet your needs.

Those who attended **Family Handbell Camp** had a great time. We are presently looking for a new venue and new leadership for that event, so if you can assist in either of those two areas please let me know.

The **Skill Building Workshop** was held on Oct. 14th at the historical First Church of Christ Congregational in Groton, Connecticut. What a wonderful, fun day of learning. Under the skilled leadership of Andy Wallace, Jean Degan and Jane Nolan, the growth in the skills and confidence of those attending was remarkable. I extend a heartfelt thank you to the host group, the gifted clinicians, and the ringers who accepted and met the challenge.

This fall and winter bring even more learning opportunities. By the time this reaches you, the **High School Ring Out** will have been completed. Our youth will have had the distinct privilege of learning under the skilled direction of Nancy Cappel. The following weekend will see Jane Anderson directing the third **Adult Ringers Weekend** participants in a unique sight reading experience at the picturesque Mt. Washington Hotel. Our **Area I Directors' Seminar** will be held the first weekend in February in Nashua, NH. Kath Wissinger will be the featured Clinician, and there will also be a wide variety of class offerings and reading sessions designed to meet the needs of directors. The Level I Directors' Certification Exam will also be administered.

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Visit the Area I web site at: **www.agehrarea1.org**

NOTES FROM NANCY...

Looking ahead, plans are progressing to ensure a wonderful **Festival/Conference '07** at the University of Rhode Island. The repertoire is listed on the Area Web site; keep checking for more information and the registration packet. The educational opportunities will be extensive, and there are plans to provide significant support for newer ringers in order to make this event exciting for them. Don't forget, there will be Bradford Scholarships available for choirs attending Festival/Conference for the first time.

Spring will be full of State ringing events. The **Massachusetts Spring Ring** (formally known as the *Merrimack Valley English Handbell Festival*) will make its debut this March.

I encourage you to visit www.agehrarea1.org for more information about these events, and all aspects about Area I.

Your Board is researching ways to reinvent and upgrade the **Guild Store and Lending Library**. Did you know that we are presently the only Area that is still running a Guild Store? If there are things that you feel absolutely should be available from the Store, or you are interested in helping with the Store, please let me know.

If you would like a mentor as you enhance your skills as a handbell director, someone to work with your choir on specific skill areas; or are interested in borrowing a set of chimes to enhance your educational program, or want to know more about the Guild and services Area I provides, I encourage you to contact your State Chair, or the appropriate Board member. Find contact information for these individuals in this issue of the Fundamental Tone or the Web site. If you would like to volunteer to assist with Guild activities or programs, or have an interest in serving as the Maine, Rhode Island or Canadian Province Chair, I would love to hear from you (chair@agehrarea1.org).

I am sure you join me in welcoming Jennifer Cauhorn, the new Executive Director of AGEHR. It will be exciting to envision our future with her.

I appreciate your continued support and enthusiasm. We will soon be looking for individuals to run for the Board. I encourage you to contact me if you have an interest in running for a Board position and to consider accepting nomination for an office if approached by the nominating committee.

Keep ringing!!!! 

Nancy Reynolds, Area I Chair

Additional Area I Officers

Appointed Officers

<i>Festival/Conference Chair</i>	Sue Henderson (978-851-3024) fcchair@agehrarea1.org
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<i>Bradford Scholarship</i>	Debra LeBrun (978) 486-3245

State/Provincial Chairs

<i>Atlantic Provinces (Canadian)</i>	TBA canchair@agehrarea1.org
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<i>Maine</i>	TBA mechair@agehrarea1.org
<i>Massachusetts</i>	Patrick Gagnon (978-851-0513) machair@agehrarea1.org
<i>New Hampshire</i>	Co-Chairs: Pat Anderson (603-673-9940, x-167) Tomi Solzman (603-774-3547) nhchair@agehrarea1.org
<i>Rhode Island</i>	TBA richair@agehrarea1.org
<i>Vermont</i>	Jerilyn Bergdahl (802-425-2177) vtchair@agehrarea1.org

State Reports

CONNECTICUT

Connecticut held its first annual (hopefully!) **Repertoire Reading** session on Saturday, September 30. The event was hosted by Shari Lucas and the First Church of Christ, Congregational in Middletown, and Jean Degan was our clinician for the day. There were approximately 30 people in attendance, and attendees read through 25 pieces of music, including the Massed, Tins, and Coppers music for Festival/Conference '07 and some of the High School Ring Out music. Keep your eyes open for the date for next year's event!!

Suzanne Stottlemeyer and The Stone Church Ringers of Groton hosted the **Area I Skill Building** workshop on October 14th. Led by clinicians Nancy Reynolds, Andy Wallace, Jean Degan, and Jane Nolan, a group of about 30 people worked on basic ringing skills and at the conclusion of the day played through two of the massed pieces for Festival/Conference '07, using all the skills they had learned throughout the day.

Upcoming concerts taking place in Connecticut during the next few months include:

Merrimack Valley Ringers will be performing at the Faith Lutheran Church, 1120 Silver Lane in East Hartford, on December 3 at 4:30. The reception after the concert will include recipes from all around the world and will offer those in attendance the opportunity to meet and speak with the musicians. The admission fee is one nonperishable food item for the needy and a free will offering.

Shoreline Ringers, Connecticut's newest community ensemble, will be in concert on Sunday December 10 at Colchester Federated Church, 60 South Main Street in Colchester at 4:00 p.m.

New England Ringers will be performing at Bethany Covenant Church in Berlin on Saturday, December 16, at 4:30. A free will offering will be received, and there will be a reception following the concert. The church is located at 786 Mill Street in Berlin.

Shoreline Ringers will be performing their second Holiday Concert at 7:00 p.m. on December 16 at Union Baptist Church on High Street in Mystic, CT.

Annual Superbell Concert, January 28, 2007, at the First Church of Christ, 250 Main Street in Wethersfield at 4:00 p.m. There is no admission fee, but a free will offering will be received.

Connecticut Spring Ring, April 28, 2007, at Valley Community Baptist Church in Avon, CT, and since the Area I Festival/Conference will be so close to us this year in Rhode Island, we expect a large turnout as we are planning to focus on the Festival/Conference music. 

Susan Wilber, CT State Chair

MASSACHUSETTS

This is an exciting time to be the chairperson for Massachusetts! I have been lucky to meet many ringers and directors at past events and in two community choirs, and am honored to represent them to the board. As this is the first report I have written, I will comment mostly on things that are upcoming 2006–2007.


The first plenary event for Massachusetts will be the first annual **Massachusetts Spring Ring**, to be held at Tewksbury Memorial High School on Saturday, March 31, 2007. Repertoire will be representative of Massed, Bronze, and Tin pieces for the upcoming Area 1 F/C. The conductors for the event will be Karen Leonard and Ed Henderson. This event was for nearly twenty years the Merrimack Valley English Handbell Festival. Since I am Choral Director in Billerica, and have a handbell program as part of the curriculum, we may seek in the future to move this event the few miles down the road to Billerica Memorial High School, beginning in 2008. It is also my hope to begin an annual fall skill-building workshop for Massachusetts
(continued on page 4)

STATE REPORTS...

sets. This is an event that Trinity Lutheran Church in Chelmsford, MA, would be willing to host, and for which I would be excited to plan classes and procure teachers, etc.

I am in conversation with Laurie Hunter of Trinity Church (UCC/Baptist) in Northborough, MA, about starting a bell program in her church. She has temporary access to a three-octave set of Schulmerich bells, but I would like to find her a set of unused bells. As there are many unused handbell sets in Massachusetts, it will be a goal of mine to find ways for them to become used. It is my hope either to mentor the musician in churches with unused sets, or to unite the bells with people like Ms. Hunter who are enthusiastic about starting a program, and will eventually look toward purchasing a new set of bells. I have made inquiries at three other churches about similar exchanges, all of which are tentatively optimistic.

Massachusetts continues to be home to three of New England's community handbell ensembles, the **Back Bay Ringers**, the **Merrimack Valley Ringers**, and the **New England Ringers** (who will open the 2007 Area 1 F/C). All three of these choirs present a varied concert season, each this December in collaboration with a local choral group: the Merrimack Valley Ringers with the Merrimack Chorus on Dec. 2, the Back Bay Ringers with the Boston Choral Ensemble on Dec. 8, 10, and 15, and the New England Ringers with the Treble Chorus of New England on Dec. 19.

These three choirs, among others, will be the featured groups at the first annual **Boston Handbell Festival**, held at Old South Church on May 15, 2007. 

Patrick Gagnon, MA State Chair

NEW HAMPSHIRE

The Freedom Ringers from Trinity Baptist Church in Concord, NH, will be performing in Newton, MA,

December 1, 2006, at Evangelical Baptist Church at 7:00 p.m. The Freedom Ringers will also be performing at Trinity Baptist Church, Concord, NH, for their annual Christmas concert along with the Trinity Christian School vocal ensemble. Tomi Salzmann is the director of the Freedom Ringers and is the New Hampshire Area I Co-Chair along with Pat Anderson. If there are any other exciting things happening in NH please let Tomi know at tomiringem@gmail.com! 🖊️

Tomi Salzman, NH Co-Chair

VERMONT

Planning is underway for the 26th annual **Vermont Spring Ring**—Marble Valley Rings - to be held in April 27th and 28th, 2007, in West Rutland, VT. Monica McGowen, director of **Twin Cities Bronze**, will direct. The host committee has been formed: Karen James, chair and registrar; Ellen Wakker,

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The collage at the bottom includes: a large handbell on the left, a handbell frame in the center, a handbell book titled 'Healthy Ringing' on the right, a handbell mug in the foreground, and a pair of gloves on the right.

Jeannie Cushman, facilities; Carole McClure, Bobbie Fillioe, and Diane Chartrand, hospitality; Linda Maness and Diane Chartrand, publicity; and Diane Chartrand, Directors' Workshop. Karen James, registrar for the event, has been working with Linda Lamb and others to provide on-line registration. We realize that not all directors have access to a computer, so this will be a year of transition to find out if this change is cost effective and to evaluate the directors' response to this major change. It seems as though a new tradition has developed: naming our individual Spring Rings, thus 'Marble Valley Rings' this year!

The **Vermont Music Educators Association** graciously invited us to participate in their annual conference October 19, 2006. A committee of three Vermont handbell directors; Carolyn Harris, Marilyn

2007 AREA V Composition Contest

COMPOSERS!

Area V is proud to announce
a new composition contest!

Requirements include:

- Original 2–3 and 3–5 Octave Composition (both versions must be compatible)
- Chimes / Other Instrumentation Optional
 - AGEHR Level 3 Difficulty

Contest Rules available
upon request (include SASE) from:

Mr. Kerry Remp
10086 Hillcrest Road
Kirtland, Ohio 44094
or via email at:
kremp@att.net


Submission deadline is March 3, 2007.

Winning Composition will be premiered
at an Area V festival and published
by AGEHR Publishing in 2008.

Sink and Jerilyn Bergdahl, decided to concentrate display materials on addressing how handchimes can be used in the classroom to specifically address the State of Vermont and the National Standards for Music Education. We will provide lesson plans, assessment strategies, demonstrations and encouragement to Vermont educators. This is a great opportunity to promote the art of handbell and handchime ringing in our state.

Upcoming Vermont Events:

The **Vermont Directors' Roundtable** will be held on January 20, 2007 at the United Church in West Lebanon, NH, with Averill Tinker as host. Itinerary for the day will include reading through Spring Ring '07 repertoire in the morning and Area I Festival/Conference repertoire in the afternoon under the direction of Karen James, Phil Brown and Jerilyn Bergdahl.

There will be **Think Spring Mini-Rings** in several places in the State during February and March, 2007. 

Jerilyn Bergdahl, Vermont Chair

Ringling Link 2008

The Handbell Guilds of Canada and the Ontario Guild of English Handbell Ringers warmly invite you to be a part of Ringling Link 2008, Canada's National Handbell Festival to be held July 2–5, 2008, at the University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario.

The "Link-Letter" will give you a few preliminary details about Ringling Link 2008. It is available at <http://www.handbell.ca/RingingLink>. Please feel free to pass this information to any handbell enthusiasts that you know. Future Link-Letters will be issued via e-mail when more details are available.

Contact Ringling Link 2008 at ringinglink2008@yahoo.ca if you need any further information.

We hope to see YOU in London in 2008! 

Sincerely,
Heather Keith
Coordinator, Ringling Link 2008




Hope you all had a great summer—seemed so short! There were some very hot days, so hope you found a cool spot just like the one you will find at F/C '07 in the Ryan Center at the University of Rhode Island. The Center, which opened in 2002, has many amenities, the most important of which may be the fact that it is air conditioned. Please note that this fact has been verified multiple times!!!! Check out the Ryan Center news release at <http://www.uri.edu/news/release/html/02-0620.html> for more information.

Our massed directors will be Bill Mathis and Michael Helman and the conference committee is already hard at work to ensure you each have a wonderful experience. Our opening concert will feature the New England Ringers, New England's premier ringing ensemble. Visit their Web site for more information—www.newenglandringers.org.

The repertoire was included in the last *Fundamental Tone* and directors' notes may be accessed on the Area I Web site. Additionally, information regarding registration rates is included in this *FT* as well as the Area I Web site.

Jane Nolan will be serving on the FC '07 Committee as Dean of Education. In this role, she will be recruiting clinicians for the event. As always, we encourage past clinicians to volunteer again and new folks to contact Jane if they are interested in participating as a clinician. New ideas are always welcome! Keep checking the Area I Web site and future editions of the *Fundamental Tone* for more information.

I look forward to welcoming you all to Rhode Island in 2007! 

*Sue Henderson, Chair- Elect, Area I
Festival/Conference Chair '07*



Rehearsal Notes

...from Bill Mathis

In general:

- As much as possible, memorize beginnings, endings, and tempo changes
- Exaggerate dynamics
- Practice the bar before and bar after key changes
- E-mail me if you have any questions at whmathis1@aol.com

In specific:

TINS

Festive Exaltation

We'll really want to utilize the difference between *LV* and *R*. For instance, in ms. 6, C6 plays an eighth note, then an eighth rest, then another eighth note. Let's use this piece as a learning/teaching time for clean damping.

If you're playing with 4 or 5 octaves, you can double the upstemmed notes in mm. 17-26.

Notice that means when there's a printed C6, C7 should play its octave double.

Be sure to use the martellato technique from just a few inches off the table, and play those notes at the marked dynamic level.

Fantasy on St. Anne

Two important things to "learn into" this piece:

1. Martellatos need to be right together, and if our hands and

ears get used to hearing them that way, we'll be more likely to do it when there are LOTS of us trying to get together.

2. In much of this setting, the melody appears as the top note of a series of block chords. Please be sure that the melody sings out over its supporting harmony.

Tuya Es la Gloria

It would be lovely to have some

options available to us when we get together. If you have a guitarist or a flutist, and they would like to bring along their instruments, we might try out some combinations. And some gentle Latin-sounding percussion will add some good ambience, too.

If you're using chimes in mm. 27–35, be sure to note which pitches are bells and which are chimes, and figure out how they're going to get played.

MASSED

Psalm 9

The tempo is truly as marked—that means that a quarter note is at 180!

In ms. 33, accent the G5 on beat 3, so we start off the melody in a pretty obvious way.

4–5 oct. ensembles can double the bass line in mm. 32–41, (continued on page 8)

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UPCOMING APPEARANCES

2006 HOLIDAY CONCERTS

Sunday, Nov. 26, 4:00PM	Rogers Center for the Arts Merrimack College • North Andover, MA Admission \$12 (in advance), \$15 (at the door) Children & Seniors \$8 (in advance), \$10 (at the door)
Saturday, Dec. 2 and Dec. 9	Bells of Boston Faneuil Hall Market Place • Boston, MA Time TBD; admission free
Sunday, Dec. 3, 4:00PM	First United Methodist Church 26 Church Street • Greenfield, MA Freewill offering to benefit the church
Saturday, Dec. 16, 4:30 PM	Bethany Covenant Church 785 Mill Street • Berlin, CT Freewill offering to benefit the church
Sunday, Dec. 17, 7:00PM	First Church of Christ in Longmeadow 763 Longmeadow Street • Longmeadow, MA Suggested donation: \$10; Students \$5, age 6 and under free
Tuesday, Dec. 19, 7:00PM	With The Treble Chorus of New England Rogers Center for the Arts Merrimack College • North Andover, MA Admission TBD

Would your organization like to present an NER concert? Contact us at newenglandrings@aol.com, or call us at 978-851-3024. Host venues are currently sought anywhere in New England for Spring and Summer 2007.

REHEARSAL NOTES...

77–125. And the treble line mm. 93–125.

Carol of the Bells

Really exaggerate the dynamics, especially the quick *cresc.* and *dim.*

The scale passages will be all the more effective if they're damped cleanly—that is, every eighth note, convenient or otherwise! This will be every bit as true for you in December as for all of us together in June.

Fanfare Celebration

This tempo isn't as fast as you might think. I'd suggest a metronome check as an antidote to panic.

The shakes in the first few bars are just an eighth note long. Ring on beat 3.

Marts and Mart-lifts must be executed from just a few inches off the pad. And be sure they're really together on beat 4.

March Triumphale

In the section beginning at ms. 25, notice the dynamics are marked to bring out the melody.

In ms. 49–56, marts should be played *mp* rather than *mf*.

Please learn both treble options in mm. 72–78. We'll try several options when we're together. This will be a great time to listen for things that work differently in massed ringing.

In ms. 89, *molto rit.* mustn't be felt as "slow down a lot," but as "look up a lot." The ending will be most effective if it's well together. 🎯

Report of Festival/ Conference '07 Chair

Music selections were posted on the Web site and also used at Family Handbell Camp in August (thank you, Linda). Rehearsal notes have been received from Bill Mathis and requested a second time from Michael Helman. They will be included in the next *Fundamental Tone*.

A site visit to URI is still in our future but not yet scheduled. The final proposed budget is complete and was distributed at the September 2007 Board Meeting.

A logo has been selected (thank you, Bill Noss) and pricing obtained from one vendor for tee-shirts. A second vendor has yet to respond but has indicated interest in the job.

We have almost a full slate for the conference committee—still trying to nail down our equipment manager. Karen Leonard had indicated she would head up that task but due to other June 2007 commitments, cannot be in charge but is still willing to assist in obtaining equipment.

Thanks (again) to Linda Lamb, the registration packet will be available online in mid-January. We are also coordinating with Debra LeBrun to link it to our existing Access database, which will be used by our Dean of Education, Jane Nolan.

Susan Henderson, Chair Festival/Conference '07



Festival/Conference '07 Conference Rates

	<i>Early</i>	<i>Reg.</i>
Single	\$325	\$345
Double	\$287	\$307
Chaperone—non-ringing	\$170	\$190
Commuter	\$190	\$210

Directors' Seminar 2007

Area 1 welcomes Kathleen Wissinger to New Hampshire. The seminar will be held on Friday - Saturday, February 2-3, 2007 at the Sheraton Tara in Nashua New Hampshire.


Join Area 1 directors, ringers, and our special guest Kathleen Wissinger for a weekend of learning and fellowship. This seminar will focus on the musical needs of Youth Choirs and building musicianship in rehearsals.

Course offerings will include:

- Repertoire reading with Kathleen Wissinger
- Repertoire reading—secular
- Repertoire reading—sacred
- Meeting the needs of a diverse learning population in a children's ensemble
- Creative use of handbells in worship

- Ringing across the table: teaching techniques for a 3–5 octave choir – beg/int/adv
- Conducting master classes—beg/int/adv
- Director's Certification – Level 1
- Teaching proper ringing technique to beginning ringers
- Running a “musical” rehearsal—Children's/Adult beginner/Advanced
- Chimes in the general music and Sunday school classroom: an Orff approach
- A final plenary session with Kathleen Wissinger in the grand ballroom!

Registration is now available online at www.agehrarea1.org.

For more information please contact Patrick Gagnon (machair@agehrarea1.org) or Griff Gall (education@agehrarea1.org). 



Scholarships Available for AGEHR Area I Festival/ Conference '07


AGEHR Area I, Inc. established the Elizabeth Bradford Endowment Fund to provide scholarship assistance to encourage choirs to attend their first Area I Festival/Conference. Here are the rules for choirs applying for a Bradford Scholarship.

- Choir Scholarships for AGEHR Area I Festival/Conference are available to Area I handbell choirs who are attending their first AGEHR, Area I Festival/Conference. Please be aware that the scholarship awarded will only pay a portion of the registration fee for Festival/Conference.
- A choir will be defined as a performing group of 7 or more ringers.
- Preference will be given to those choirs having at least 75% of their members planning to attend the Festival/Conference.
- Prior attendance by a director or a single member of a choir will not preclude eligibility for this scholarship.

- The choir must be a member in good standing in Area I.

You must fill out a registration form for Festival/Conference in its entirety and pay a \$100 deposit per person prior to the Festival's early bird deadline.

Applications must be postmarked by February 15, 2007. You will be notified of our decision by March 15.

Complete directions and application form can be found on the AGEHR, Area I Web site at www.agehrarea1.org/Pages/scholarship.html. You may also contact the Scholarship Chair, Debra LeBrun, at debra@lebruns.com or 978-692-1309 for an application form. 

*Debra LeBrun,
Elizabeth Bradford Endowment Fund Chair*

Rhode Island Handbell Workshops— New Format, New Events

On September 30, thirty ringers gathered at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in East Greenwich, RI, for the first of this season's RI Handbell Workshops. This new format was enthusiastically embraced by the registrants. Entitled "Repertoire Reading Plus...Skill Building," the session was led by master teachers Andy Wallace and David Warfield. Each clinician conducted 10 selections and chose two specific titles to teach specific aspects of technique and musicianship.

During the morning break, members of the Jubilate Ringers of St. Luke's Church, provided coffee and snacks.

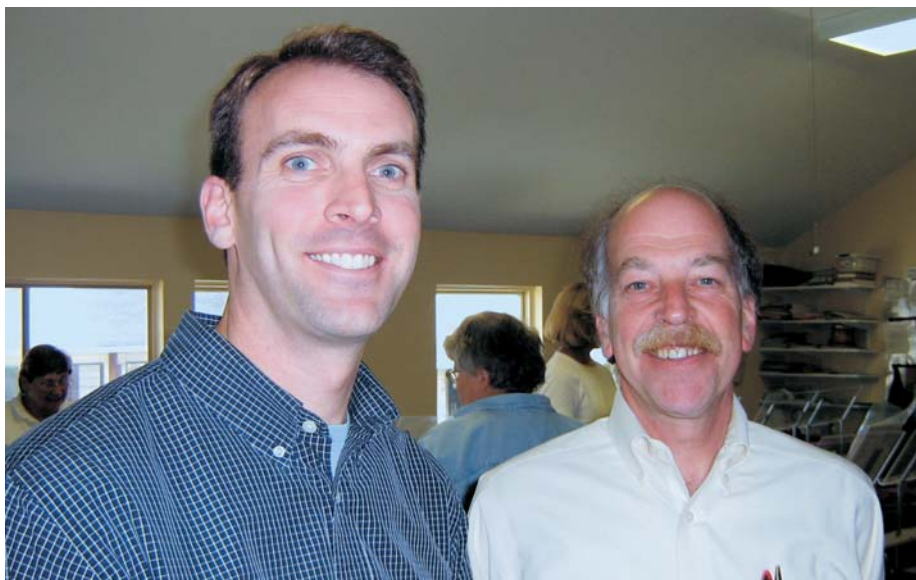
The second event in this workshop series will follow a similar format and will be held on February 10, 2007, at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Pawtucket,

RI. Ed Henderson and Dan Moore will be the clinicians. Registration is \$10.00 per ringer, and music from the session will be for sale at a substantial discount.

The third event in the 2006–07 RI Workshops will be the 1st Annual RI Handbell Invitational

Festival Concert, on Saturday, April 28, 2007. Massed ringing selections, under the baton of Dan Moore, will be chosen from the Area I Festival Conference repertoire. Participating choirs will be invited to perform solo selections. Location TBA. 🗝

Submitted by Dan Moore



Workshop Clinicians: Andy Wallace and David Warfield



Ringers at the RI Handbell Workshop, September 30

New Members

Please welcome our newest members to Area I:

Flora Major, Norwalk, CT

George Harvey, Essex, MA

Maria Kerr, Longmeadow, MA

Marc Liberman, Portland, ME

Ruth Reed, New London, NH

Nancy Newton,
Westmoreland, NH

Beverly Davis, Wolfeboro, NH

Deborah Kirsch, Newport, VT

An Open Letter

It is 1972. I am told that I must go to a bell concert in a nearby town. I don't know anything about bells. I've heard of them and think they are a gimmick but everyone is so enthusiastic that I go to the concert. I am thrilled with the sound; it is gorgeous but my enthusiasm is short-lived. The ringers played with joyful abandon but without control, without dynamics, without damping. I wonder, where is the music?

The art of handbell ringing has come a long way since 1972. It's an amazing story of achievement and growth. I've enjoyed wondrous performances in my travels and marvel at the enrichment

that handbell involvement brings to the lives of ordinary people. The learning process can be wonderfully exciting. Everyone starts as a beginner, of course, but becomes more and more expert as knowledge and skill is gained with good teaching and time. There's much to learn and great reward in doing so. If there are experts in your midst, take advantage of them. At the beginning, you probably don't even know what you need to know! Go to Guild events, learn what you need to know. Attend bell festivals, they are for learning, whatever your stage.

Directors, it is not quite the same directing bell choir as a

vocal choir. Are you aware of the Mentoring Program that is available through Area I of the Guild? There is a great deal to learn and I have occasionally been surprised to find well qualified music educators and/or church musicians showing signs of not having learned much about handbells as an instrument or about the special art of handbell ringing. Gaining this knowledge will make directing bells far more enjoyable for all and enhance the quality of music the choir makes. It is time well spent to teach sight reading skills if this was not learned long ago, in school. Ringers who must circle

(continued on page 12)

Handbells for the Holidays!

Holiday Greetings Cards

Send your holiday greetings handbell-style this year! Our attractive new 5" x 7" cards are sure to bring a smile even to non-ringers' faces. All cards come in packs of 12 with matching envelopes.

Candlelight Bell Card: A tranquil image, a burning candle reflecting in a bell casting, adorns this card. Inside: *May Your Holiday Season be Melodious and Bright.* Red envelopes.

5229 Candlelight Bell Holiday Card, pk of 12 \$4.95

Angel Bells Card: Original artwork of three angels singing to fill the air with music decorates this unique holiday message: *May the Voices of Angels Ring like Bells Throughout Your Holiday Season.* Gold envelopes.

5231 Angel Bells Holiday Card, pk of 12 \$4.95

"SleighBell" Card: This fun and playful card is definitely one of a kind! Santa rides on his "sleighbell" on his way to deliver toys to all the children! Inside: *When what to my wondering eyes should appear, But Santa riding a bell with his nine Reindeer! Merry Christmas!* Green envelopes.

5230 "SleighBell" Holiday Card, pk of 12 \$4.95

Handbell and Handchime Ornaments

Our beautiful golden handbell ornaments are guaranteed to bring joy to ringers in the holiday spirit. Perfect as gifts as well! Handbell Ornaments ship and store flat, then can be opened into three-dimensional ornaments for your tree. Chime ornaments do not open, but will make a fantastic addition to the festivities!

5872	Handbells and Staff Ornament	\$6.00
5876	Handbell Christmas Tree Ornament	\$6.00
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Happy Holidays!

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AN OPEN LETTER...

all their notes green or red may never get beyond ringing their green and red circles on the right count. On the other hand, musically literate ringers can feel like real musicians. There is great reward in learning what there is to learn. It's wonderful to have the technique to make the beautiful and varied sounds possible with bells, to have volume control for expressiveness, to ring with others at the level of an art form—WOW! It's an incredible experience especially if one has never been able to be part of a musical group until joining a bell choir.

Think about the following and beware, take care:

**AVOID DAMAGING YOUR BELLS
AND HURTING YOURSELVES!
TAKE TIME TO LEARN HOW
YOUR BELLS ARE MANUFACTURED
AND ASSEMBLED.
KNOW THE LIMITATIONS OF
YOUR BELLS!**

All bells are not the same. Learn the differences and what to

expect from the different makes of bells. Of our three major bells, Whitechapel, Schulmerich and Malmark, the first rings the hardest; the latter rings the easiest with the brightest sound. I have rung all three types but know the most about Malmark so the suggestions below are based upon the characteristics of that bell. Because Malmark bells tend to ring the easiest of all three popular bells, ring with ease for the best sound. Ring as hard as you do other bells and you will over-ring and make an unpleasant, harsh sound.


Look inside your bells, notice different style clappers. The bigger the bell, the bigger the clapper head. As the bells get smaller, so do the clapper heads. Also, the surface of the clapper heads is soft on large bells and harder as the bells become smaller. This is true for mallets, too, and why we have different mallets for different ranges of bells. Ring a solo using the same hard mallet for all three octaves of bells and you risk cracking the casting. You

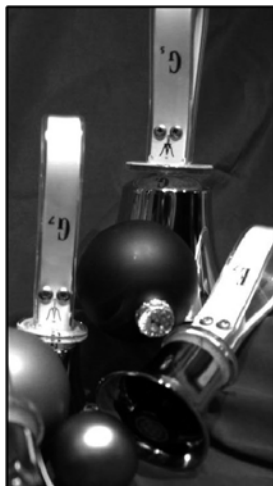
also risk cracking a casting if you start a martellato motion over your head for dramatic effect and slam the bell down hard into the foam. Do a martellato by bringing the lip of the bell into the foam rather than the complete casting and you can actually break apart a Malmark bell. When polishing your bells always support the bell on the foam. Do not hold the bell in the air and rub around the casting as you chat with your friends! This can loosen the mechanical workings of the bell. Learn to do bell strokes and techniques properly; have a copy of the notation booklet published by the Guild available to use as a reference. There's no need to guess, experts have worked out the proper and safest methods of performing techniques and explanations are clear.

Taking the time to learn more about the handbell instrument, availing yourself of resources and educational opportunities, and learning about the unique characteristics of your particular set of bells will enhance your ability to make beautiful music and experience the versatility of this art form. If you are a director, helping your ringers learn how to read music with greater proficiency will increase their comfort level and help them to experience the joy of being true musicians.

May you all enjoy happy ringing.

Beverly Simpson

P.S. FLASH: I have just learned that this year there will be an Area I Directors' Seminar designed specifically to meet the educational needs of directors. Read more about it on the Area I Web site. 



Ring in the Holidays

back bay ringers

griff gall, artistic director

Celebrate the holiday spirit with Boston's premier handbell ensemble and the Boston Choral Ensemble.

Enjoy music by Bach, Britten, Prokofiev plus familiar holiday favorites.

Friday, December 15, 2006

8:00 PM

Church of the Covenant

67 Newbury Street

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Tickets available at the door:

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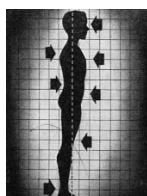
Students with ID \$5.00

www.backbayringers.org

Where do you stand?

Part 2 Posture.

No, I'm not asking about politics. I'm talking about your feet again. When you ring, do you stand "at attention," with your feet together? Have you noticed that you need to move your feet to turn pages or make bell changes? Why risk losing your balance in the process?



Standing "at ease" is important for bell ringers. Your feet should be at least a shoulder's width apart, so that you can shift side to side for your sharps and flats. If you've taken a bell weaving course, you've heard that it's ideal to keep your bell, hand and hip in line with the space where you table damp. If you twist to reach a bell, you might ding it on another bell, and you run the risk of twisting your back.

As we ring, we also lean forward, especially for page turns, and for reaching chimes. The bigger the bells, the more forward and back weight-shifting is needed. If your feet are parallel under you, your back is doing all the leaning and reaching. The solution is to step one foot forward of the other by about a half to whole foot length. Lately I have tried starting with my foot forward on the side of the first bell I ring, just to give them equal opportunity to be the "best foot forward."

When you are well balanced on your feet, everything above should line up nicely. Hips are centered over your feet, and shoulders are above your hips. What about your head and neck posture? Can you see your music if you are standing up nice and tall? Lighting,

glasses, distance to the music, and line of sight to the director are variables to consider if your neck gets tired when you ring. Rather than my fancy no-line bifocals that require too much chin-up posturing to focus, I find the fixed-distance reading glasses from the drug store work better.

Do your shoulders get tired? Do you bring the bell to your shoulder to damp, or your shoulder to the bell? If you tend to be round shouldered, work to keep your flexibility stretching back. Your shoulders and arms will also fatigue, and be at risk for aches and pains, if your elbows get away from you. This is true for elbows going too far forward and for "winging" out to the side.

The rewards for good ringing postures are energy efficiency and injury prevention. You'll be rewarded with more energy to enjoy the music! 🖋️

Jeannie Cushman
Special Needs Liaison

Bells for Estonia

I have been encouraged to write regarding a handbell project for the International School of Estonia. I became involved in this project when their school processed a grant for a teacher exchange program last year and I was blessed with hosting Karolina Sepp for two weeks. While she was teaching in my music room at the Bristol Consolidated School, she fell in love with the bells. Together we are dedicated to making a two-octave set happen for ISE.

We are both doing fund-raising projects throughout this school year to that end. BCS has scheduled a rockathon for October 20–21 and several benefit concerts.

Unfortunately, a new two-octave handbell set is just under \$5000. Our deadline is April. I will be flying to Estonia for two weeks to work with students at ISE.

The world of bell ringers is a world of people dedicated to the education of bells. Perhaps there is someone out there who would be willing to make a donation to this project and help us see its potential. If so, donation checks should be made out to *BCS-handbell fund* and sent to Bunny Stanley, c/o Bristol Consolidated School, 2153 Bristol Road, Pemaquid, ME 04558.

If there are questions regarding this project, I can be reached at bstanley@u74.k12.me.us or at Bunny Stanley, 599 Crummett Mountain Road, Somerville, ME 04348 (phone: 207-549-5187).

Thanks so much for all your help. 🖋️

Bunny Stanley

Coming Events

Merrimack Valley Ringers, December 2, 2006, with the Merrimack Chorus. Contact: Karen Leonard.

Merrimack Valley Ringers, December 3, 2006, at 4:30 p.m. at the Faith Lutheran Church, 1120 Silver Lane in East Hartford, CT. Contact: Karen Leonard.

Back Bay Ringers, December 8 and 10, 2006, with the Boston Choral Ensemble. Contact: Patrick Gagnon.

Shoreline Ringers, December 10, 2006. Connecticut's newest community ensemble will be in concert at Colchester Federated Church, 60 South Main Street in Colchester at 4:00 p.m.

New England Ringers, December 15, 2006: with the Treble Chorus of New England on Dec. 19. Contact: Ed Henderson.

New England Ringers, December 16, 2006, at 4:30 p.m. at Bethany Covenant Church, 786 Mill Street, in Berlin, CT.

The Vermont Directors' Roundtable, January 20, 2007, at the United Church in West Lebanon, NH: Contact: Averill Tinker.

Annual Superbell Concert, January 28, 2007, at the First Church of Christ, 250 Main Street in Wethersfield at 4:00 p.m.

Directors' Seminar, February 2–3, 2007, at the Sheraton Tara in Nashua, New Hampshire.

"Repertoire Reading Plus...Skill Building," February 10, 2007, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Pawtucket, RI: Contact: Dan Moore.

MA Spring Ring, March 31, 2007, to be held at Tewksbury Memorial High School. Contact: Patrick Gagnon, MA State Chair.

Vermont Spring Ring, April 27–28, 2007, in West Rutland, VT. Contact: Karen James, Registrar.

Connecticut Spring Ring, April 28, 2007, at Valley Community Baptist Church in Avon, CT.

1st Annual RI Handbell Invitational Festival Concert, April 28, 2007, Contact: Dan Moore.

Boston Handbell Festival, May 15, 2007, at Old South Church, Boston, MA. Contact: Patrick Gagnon, MA State Chair.

Festival/Conference '07, June 28–July 1, 2007, at the Ryan Center of the University of Rhode Island. Contact: Sue Henderson.

Ringling Link 2008, July 2–5, 2008, Canada's National Handbell Festival at the University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario: Contact: ringinglink2008@yahoo.ca



Ringers Wanted

New England Ringers, Inc., dedicated to achieving musical excellence in handbell ringing, is always seeking skilled ringers with a high level of musicianship and a love of performing. NER rehearses every other Sunday afternoon from 2:00 to 5:30 PM in Greenfield, MA, September to June, and performs about a dozen times a year, most often in New England. Repertoire is primarily advanced ("bronze level") and secular. If you are interested in exploring the possibilities of joining NER as a regular ringer and can commit to our rehearsal and performance schedules, or if you would like to be considered as a substitute ringer, send an email to newenglandringers@aol.com, or call the director, Ed Henderson, at 978-851-3024.

Photos from the *High School Ring Out*

The Area I High School Ring Out was held Saturday, November 4, at the Wheeler School, Providence, RI.
Photos by Dan Moore.



The *Fundamental Tone* is published four times a year (on the first Monday of February, May, August, November) by Area I of the American Guild of English Handbell Ringers, Inc. Deadline for submitting information for publication is the 18th of the month prior to publication. It is distributed from 3 Sarasota Av., Nashua, NH 03060. If you would like to place an advertisement in the *Fundamental Tone*, contact Ruth Bowers (<Ruth.Bowers@comcast.net> or call 978-922-8137).

Advertising rates: Full page: \$80.00 (7" x 9.5"); Half page: \$50.00 (7" x 4.5"); Quarter page: \$30.00 (3.25" x 4.5"); Eighth page: \$20.00 (3.25" x 2.2"); Business Card: \$10 (3.25" x 1"). The preferred format for an ad is a .jpg file.



Deadline for next issue:
JANUARY 18, 2006

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