

President's Message

It's been a week since the OGEHR Festival "It's About Time" in Kingston, Ontario. I am still smiling and humming the tunes. I am sure the committee had no idea how poignant the theme "It's About Time" would be when they first chose it. But it was definitely time for us all to ring together! And when we did, the sound was joyous!! As we wrap up the 2022/23 season I would like to take this opportunity to thank the entire OGEHR Board for all of their hard work this year. It has been a great year and we have accomplished so much. Special thanks for their years of service to out-going OGEHR Directors Mary Loree, Joan Bolam, Marg Merkley, Sona Khachikyan and Janis Cowie. We will miss you all and your collective wisdom.

In looking to the future, I am pleased to welcome Joanna Fleishmann and Jennifer Schafer as new Board members. Together with Joanne Gray, Helen Coxon, Rob Cairns, Nancy Bell, Kim Leitch and Dominique Moreau, this Board begins its new season in a strong position.

2023-2024 is shaping up to be the year of "Ringer and Director Development". For the first time in OGEHR history we will be offering a Director's/Leadership Course consisting of virtual and in-person sessions. We will also be opening up the virtual sessions so that ringers can sign up for individual workshops.

The questionnaire that was sent to our members in April showed us that many of our members want to connect with ringers and choirs in their areas. Discussions are already taking place between the Programs Committee and the Area Reps Committee to see if they can facilitate such connections.

I would like to wish everyone a restful summer full of family, friends, warmth, good food, and of course, music! As the song goes - "See You in September".

Lisa Kyriakides OGEHR President



Ontario Guild of English Handbell Ringers



PUBLICATION INFORMATION

SUBMISSIONS

Clapper Chatter welcomes your submissions. All submissions must be received by the following deadlines: September 30th (October issue), January 31st (February issue), May 31st (June issue).

FORMAT

Text in Microsoft Word and high resolution colour photos in .jpg format are preferred.

REPRINT PERMISSION

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ADVERTISING

Ad sizes and rates are available on request. Advertising must be submitted by the submission deadlines listed above. All final ad artwork must be saved in Adobe Acrobat PDF format. When preparing ads, use high resolution images and fonts, and set the Acrobat Preferences to embed the fonts and images at their original high resolution quality.

CLAPPER CHATTER EDITOR

Please send all submissions to: Andrea Gray — Clapper Chatter Editor at clapperchatter@ogehr.ca 613-286-7495

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MORE ON SUBMISSIONS

A newsletter thrives or dies based on its content, so we need your input! Do you have a concert coming up, a review of a performance just accomplished, a significant event in the life of your bell choir, or a favourite piece of music that you would like to recommend to others? Send it in! Anything is fair game (subject to editorial review). Accompanying photographs are encouraged, as they really liven things up.

> We want your feedback! Let us know what you like, or don't like, or would like to see, by e-mailing Andrea at clapperchatter@ogehr.ca

Submission deadline for the next issue: September 30th, for publication on October 15th.

2023 OGEHR Festival Snapshot



It's been less than a week since the Festival happened and we wanted to give you a sample of how much fun we had.







On Thursday, the committee arrived early and scurried around St. Lawrence College to get everything ready for our ringers' arrival. A team of Festival Friends took on the challenge of constructing the podium, others were busy setting up workshop rooms with bells, the ringing floor was laid out, registration bags sorted, marketplace vendors and auction items arrived, and Info Central was readied for many questions.

The Annual Meeting was held where Rob Cairns turned over the presidency to Lisa Kyriakides. OGEHR business was conducted and the new Board of Directors was installed. Two members

were awarded Honorary status: J.-C. Coolen and Joan Plume.

Then it was off to the main event – the first Massed Rehearsal. This year our Festival was opened by the Kingston Town Crier, Chris Whyman.

Rehearsals began with Rob conducting O Canada, then Kath Wissinger lead a number of mass pieces, followed by Lisa conducting Milele.





We were treated to two Mini Ring concerts that featured pieces by a number of groups. A highlight was a Bell Forest of 19 ringers organized by Cheryl McFarlane.

The Saturday night concert was a showcase for everyone to show off their hours of practice. Our audience of 130 really appreciated the pieces and the lively commentary by our Emcee, Patti Speck.

We'll have a fuller report in the September Clapper Chatter. If you didn't make it to Kingston, you missed a great time!

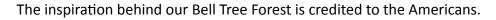
CALENDAR

Be sure to put June 5 - 7, 2025 on your calendar to attend the next Festival at Mohawk College in Hamilton, Ontario.

See you there!



The Bell Tree Forest sets a NEW record at the Festival for the number of belltrees performing at one time!





It was July 13, 2016, and along with several fellow Canadian ringers, I was in attendance at the Handbell Musicians of America (HMA), National Seminar held in Rochester, New York. The featured concert that day was *Barbara Brocker & Friends* performing on belltrees. Along with solos and duets performed by the renowned Belltree Master, Barbara and her performing friends played en masse arrangements in unison on belltrees. The sound was spellbinding. The visual, a captivating array of beauty and light. That one experience alone, brought "The Bell Tree Forest" into being!

The call for belltrees from the OGEHR Membership in August 2016 for our inaugural Festival in 2017 in Hamilton, resulted in ten trees, now affectionately referred to as the "Heritage Trees" - they were: Kathy Baer, Sandra-Jean Bedford, Barbara Cooper-Peaker, Lynn Boothroyd, Debbbie Fingas, Eleanor Mcdougall, Cheryl McFarlane, Barbara Neal, Judith Queen, Marjorie Slinn, and we were accompanied by J.-C. Coolen on piano with our piece:

This Little Light of Mine Composed by Harry Dixon Loes Arranged by Barbara Brocker Tree-O Publishing 2nd Printing

At the 2019 Festival in London, The Bell Tree Forest went all Noel with a Christmas theme and had nine belltrees: Kathy Baer, Sandra-Jean Bedford, Lynn Boothroyd, J.-C. Coolen, Debbie Fingas, Cheryl McFarlane, Dominique Moreau, Barbara Neal, heather nicholson, Ruth Pettis with accompanists Linda Wilson on piano, and Man-Yee Sun on added trombone. The performance was so well received it was trending on YouTube! The piece performed:

Christmas Triplets

Composer: Barbara Brocker and Jodie Bischof Publisher: Tree-O Publishing



(The piece actually does not have any triplets in the score... but rather three songs: Joy to the World, Away in a Manger & The First Noel.)

Con't...

However! Festival 2023 in Kingston proves the third time can indeed be a charm for something - such as breaking a record! Congratulations to the belltrees from across Ontario, including past-president Lynn Boothroyd now from Nova Scotia and our Guest Conductor Kath Wissinger from Virginia USA, who came together as eighteen Foresters ringing on strands of bells totaling 162 bells! Correspondence with Barbara Brocker in the United States confirmed we had surpassed the amount of belltrees known to have performed at one time in concert and therefore setting a new marker. HIP, HIP, HOORAY!

The celebrating Foresters performing were:

Sandra-Jean Bedford, J.-C. Coolen, Shelley Evans, Debbie Fingas, Connie Gallupe, Ken Gray, Bev Killen, Emily Li, Sharon MacDonell, Eleanor Mcdougall, Cheryl McFarlane, Debbie McMackin, heather nicholson, Barbara Peaker, Pam Stuart, Margo Tant, Linda Wilson, Kath Wissinger, our accompanist K.C. Cann on piano, and back by popular demand, as she is a crowd favourite... Man-Yee Sun on the added Bodhran Drum! Our piece was:

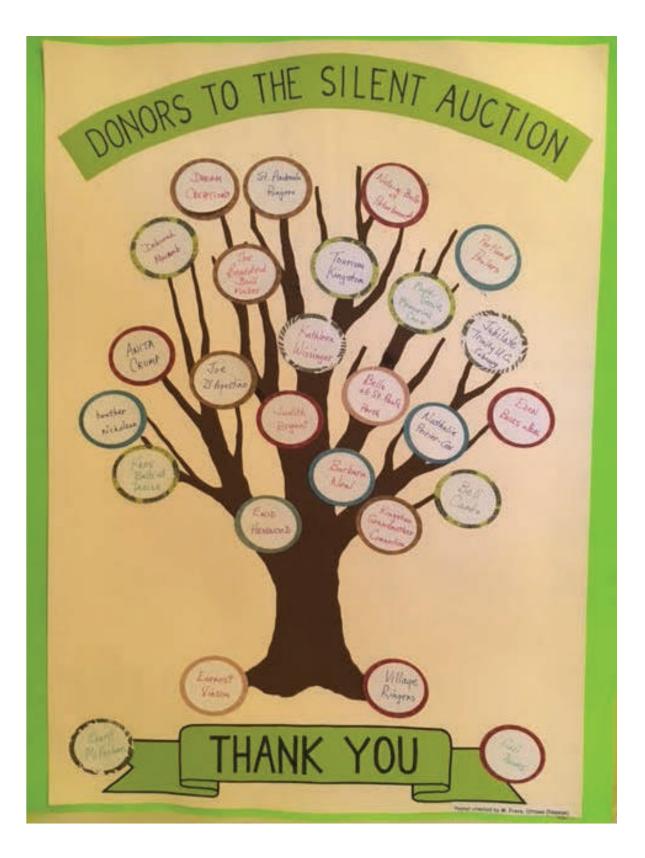
Brethren, We Have Met to Worship Composed by William Moore Arranged by Linda Lamb Hope Publishing Company

To participate in the Bell Tree Forest at Festival is to experience *FUN* within the spirit of performing together as a group, and sharing the joy of playing bells in this format. Belltree offers ringers new challenges and additional skills and growth, and a memorable adventure in performance.

Will you be joining us in The Bell Tree Forest in 2025?

Cheryl McFarlane, The Forest Ranger





OGEHR Course for Directors, Teachers, Future Leaders & Interested Ringers

Available 2 Ways: Full Course OR Individual Workshops

Full Course: FIVE virtual sessions (plus one optional) and ONE Cumulative In-Person Session

Virtual Sessions:

EH

Course Topic	Date and Time	Clinician
Basic Theory	September 30, 2023 9-11am	Rob Cairns
Handbell/Handchime Techniques	October 28, 2023 9-11am	Lynn Boothroyd
Basic Conducting	November 25, 2023 9am - 12pm	Dominique Moreau
Running Efficient Rehearsals	January 27, 2024 9-11am	Lisa Kyriakides
Choosing Repertoire & Assigning Ringers	February 24, 2024 9-11am	Lisa Kyriakides
Integrating Handbells/Handchimes Into Existing Classroom Programs (Optional workshop)	October 21, 2023 9-11am	Debbie McMackin

In-Person Session:

Course Topic	Date and Time	Location and Notes
Repertoire Masterclass	Fri., April 26, 2024 6:30-9:30pm	Aurora United Church 79 Victoria Street, Aurora, Ontario
Conducting Masterclass	Sat., April 27, 2024 9am - 4pm	Potential to billet with a ringer on Friday night to save \$

Con't...



Full Course Total Cost: \$250 – Must be a member of OGEHR

Included in this cost:

- 5 mandatory virtual workshops plus one optional one
- One evening and full-day in-person masterclass
- Snacks on Friday and Saturday, and Lunch at Saturday's in-person session
- Mentoring and feedback from clinicians throughout the year

Individual Workshop Costs:

- Virtual Workshops #1-5: \$25 EACH
 - Must be a member of OGEHR
- Virtual Workshop #6: \$25 for OGEHR members
 - \$30 for non-members
- Conducting Masterclass: \$65 Must be a member of OGEHR
 - Individual Cost to audit only
 - Saturday, April 27 (includes lunch)

Registration:

- Open in August, 2023
- Please watch the OGEHR website www.ogehr.ca and your emails for details!
- Full Course space will be limited so please register early

Need more information? Email programs@ogehr.ca





Terry Head Memorial Scholarship



While we didn't reach our goal of having \$7000 in the Terry Head Memorial Scholarship Fund after Festival, it now sits at \$5595.

Thank you to all who have donated.

To contribute to this fund please donate by going to Donations on the OGEHR website. Tax receipts will be given for amounts over \$10.



John-Charles Coolen

OGEHR Honorary Member



John-Charles Coolen

OGEHR's Honourary Membership is an award intended to recognize and honour an extraordinary commitment to handbells based on exceptional service to the Guild, and involvements with handbell ringing in general. It is reserved for individuals of the highest caliber who have made outstanding contributions to our community of handbell ringing.

It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you one of the most commendable recipients being honoured. To hundreds of Guild members, and to many ringers throughout provincial, national and international handbell communities, John-Charles Coolen has been a go-to oracle of campanology, a director, administrator, a teacher, clinician, con-

ductor, a mentor, and an overall bell-buddy friend. He further remains a fervent, life long learner of all things handbells himself! And wouldn't you know, this acknowledgement comes in the same year as J.-C. marks his 25th year directing handbells, and celebrates 34 years of happily ringing them ... meaning, often playing multiple bells all at one time in the octaves below D4! It would be next to impossible for anyone in handbells to not cross paths at some point with J.-C. He has a long reach, and a wide wing span of countless contributions, involvements, and connections... here are but a few mentionables:



- He served on OGEHR's Board of Directors as Membership Secretary for 13 years including being either a member or chair of *many* committees and working groups.
- He was Guild Vice-President and President, playing a significant role in the Guild's modernization.
- Served as OGEHR's Representative on the Handbell Guild of Canada (HGC), long before it became today's Handbell Musicians of Canada (HMC).
- He participated in every OGEHR Festival held since 1997, served on multiple Festival Committees, conducted Festival ringing divisions, Gold choirs, ringing tracks and taught more workshops as a clinician over the years then you could possibly ever shake a stick at! Have you ever attended an OGEHR Fall Workshop, Annual Spring Event, Playdates and/or any other Area Event in the province? If you did, I bet you saw J.-C. there!

Internationally, J.-C. remains one of the most connected, recognized, and respected Canadian handbell leaders and advanced ringers, by musicians and composers throughout America, AND from around the wider ringing world. I had dinner with Kath Wissinger recently, and she shared remembering J.-C. back when he was a spindly young man!

- He represented Ontario as District Coordinator for Area 2 of the Handbell Musicians of America (HMA).
- He has been an International Handbell Symposium Conductor and Conductor for the Massed Compositions Competition.
- He was Ontario's chosen Conductor for the Canadian Ringing Link. As a thinker and handbell visionary, he was one of the founding chartered members of The Bronze Foundation (BF), Greater Toronto's community auditioned handbell choir and 18 years as the BF's Music Director and counting!
- He established the Bronze Foundation Academy (BFA).
- He is a Co-Founder and Director of the annual "Ring-in Christmas!"
- During the time of the dreaded pandemic restrictions, J.-C. kept handbells moving by originating the North American Handbell Choir, a zoom choir of ringers from across Canada and the United States as an opportunity to continue ringing during the dark days of isolation. In fact, J.-C. kept approximately 100 ringers in his choirs connected and in ringing during those unknown and stressful times.

In conclusion, J.-C. has been an extraordinary OGEHR member who is a significant and unique thread in the tapestry of our Guild. His presence and devotion to ringing brings a constant and familiar component to the Guild and to our membership. His passion for handbells is infinite, while simultaneously being dedicated to finding opportunities for others to experience the magic of ringing!

Thank You for all you have done, and will continue to do for us!

Congratulations! "It's About Time!"

Joan Plume

OGEHR Honorary Member



Joan Plume

Joan became the music director at St. Matthew's United Church – Richmond Hill - (SMUC) in 1973 and started the bell choir in 1988 She has her ARCT and has taken several courses at Westminster Choir College, Princeton, NJ. She has attended many OGEHR festivals, Ringing Links, and International Symposia (IHS). She has been on the OGEHR board as an area rep, workshop leader, President, and Festival Coordinator. She has conducted at a couple of festivals. She was the Canadian conductor at the 10th IHS in Busan, Korea (2002) and was Chair of the successful 11th IHS in Toronto (2004). The choir has been involved in the tree lighting ceremony at Nathan Philips Square, Toronto, been in a movie (for which they still receive royalties!), a Hersey Kisses commercial and a British cartoon. She has been to Nova Scotia to lead and conduct a festival. She tutors new choir directors and ringers.

- 1973 earned ARCT from the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto
 - Director of Music at St. Mathew's United Church, Richmond Hill
- 1988 started 'Bells of St. Matthew's' Richmond Hill
 - over the years, attended summer course in beginning and advanced handbell direction at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey
 - Music Appreciation Course at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey
 - for several years, also conducted session in voice production and conducting at the Summer Institute of Church Music in Whitby, Ontario
 - Joan and husband Cliff made their home in Richmond Hill
- 1989 attended Kawartha Lakes, OGEHR festival in Peterborough
- **1991** on OGEHR Board as Central Area Rep 91-93
- 1993 attended 1993 'Limestone City' OGEHR festival in Kingston
 - director of Bells of St. Matthew's who played 'Song of Joy' in mini-ring (it is assumed that Joan attended the festivals that follow with all or some of her choir, 'Bells of St. Matthew's', Richmond Hill)
 - Workshop leader Read & Ring / intermediate
 - husband Cliff Festival Secretary/Treasurer 93-95
 - organized workshop for Central Region May 1/93
 - on OGEHR Board 93-95 as Festival Coordinator for 1995 'Forest City' OGEHR Festival in London
 - on OGEHR Board 93-95 as First Vice-President
- 1995 attended for 'Forest City' OGEHR Festival London
 - Festival Coordinator
 - Workshop leader Advanced Technique
 - active on Festival Committee for 1997 'Festival with Hart' OGEHR Festival in York
 - on OGEHR Board 95-97 as President
 - husband Cliff OGEHR Treasurer
 - began regular president's report in newsletter
 - promised that AM would be 'short and informative'
- **1996** conducted the Copper Choirs for the BC Guild of English Handbell Ringers festival in Abbotsford, BC
- **1997** attended Festival with Hart OGEHR Festival in York
 - on Festival Committee
 - Directed Tins
 - Workshop leader Advanced Technique and Multiple Bell Technique
 - husband Cliff Festival Secretary/Treasurer
 - on Board 97-99 as Past President
 - husband Cliff OGEHR Treasurer
 - director of two vocal and three handbell choir at St. Matthew's, Richmond Hill at this time
- **1998** attended Ringing Link festival in Saskatoon, SK
 - attended How the West was Rung, University of Western Ontario, London
 - conducted Tin Choirs
 - on OGEHR Executive 99-04 as Chair of 2004 International Handbell Symposium (IHS) in Toronto

Con't...

1999

- husband Cliff treasurer for 2004 IHS in Toronto for which he received Lifetime Achievement Award from the Handbell Guild of Canada (HGC)
- **2000** attended Ringing Link festival in Edmonton AB
- **2001** husband Cliff OGEHR Treasurer 01 03
- 2002 Canadian conductor at the 10th International Symposium in Busan, Korea
 - attended the Ringing Link OGEHR festival in Winnipeg, MB
- **2003** attended We Got Rhythm OGEHR festival in London
- 2004 Chair of 11th International Handbell Symposium in Toronto
- **2005** attended Bells Over Ottawa OGEHR festival in Ottawa
- 2006 attended 12th International Symposium in Brisbane, AU
- **2008** attended 13th International Symposium in Orlando, Florida
- attended Ringing Link OGEHR festival in London, ON
- **2011** attended the Ringing Link festival in Calgary, AB
- attended Good Vibrations OGEHR festival in Hamilton
- **2012** attended 15th International Symposium in Liverpool, UK
- **2013** attended Tribute: Back to the Future OGEHR festival in London
- 2014 attended Ringing Link festival in Winnipeg, MB
- 2016 attended 17th International Symposium in Vancouver, BC
- 2017 attended 18th International Symposium in Cairns, AU
 - attended United We Ring OGEHR festival in Hamilton
- 2019 attended Peace by Piece OGEHR festival in London

2020-23 • attended virtual OGEHR social group throughout COVID

2023 • plans to attend Its About Time in London, ON

More:

- bell experiences of Joan and her ringers:
 - Nathan Phillips Square Tree lighting
 - full length movie
 - Hershey Kisses commercial
 - British Cartoon
- Conductor and Workshop leader at a Festival in NS
- tutors new bell conductors

Cathie Banks

OGEHR Honorary Member by Mary Loree

This article is the final in a series to highlight and honour OGEHR members who have earned the prestigious distinction of Honorary Member between 1985 and 2020.

Cathie Banks was awarded the distinction of OGEHR Honorary Member in 2019. Cathie was presented with her certificate at the 2019 Festival and her celebration bell at a later date, as recorded in Clapper Chatter in February 2020. She was further celebrated and congratulated through an article by Marg Merkley in the October 2019 Clapper Chatter.

For this final past Honorary Member article, Cathie and I shared a conversation in which she

spoke of highlights of her handbell journey. The intent of the article is to share some of the often humorous details of Cathie's bell story.

In 1984 Karen Schuessler, music director at Centennial UC, London, was running a bell practice when Cathie happened to walk through the practice room on her way to a vocal choir practice. Cathie must have been intrigued, her interest piqued, and Karen saw potential because before Cathie could leave the room Karen had persuaded her to join the bell choir for a few weeks.

Cathie's bell journey had begun and developed as the weeks turned into months, years, decades.

After a year of practice, the Centennial choir attended the 1985 Festival in London, where Cathie met Susan Carscadden. Unknown to Cathie and Susan until the last minute, the two were responsible for organizing activities for the young people at the festival. A scavenger hunt through London met with great success, although Cathie wonders to this day how the parents would respond if they knew some of the items on the list or where the seekers were required to go!

Karen Schuessler left Centennial in 1992 to be music director at Wesley Knox, leaving Cathie as director the bells. When the two churches amalgamated in 2006, the Centennial bells moved to Wesley Knox, where Cathie and Karen delightfully found themselves making music together again. Karen informed Cathie that she would direct the 5-octave Wesley Knox handbell choir, with free reign.

It was Cliff Plume, OGEHR secretary/treasurer, who called Cathie to join the 1995 Festival committee, a committee that was to work so well that it stayed together to run the 2004 Toronto International Handbell Symposium. As the Adherent Tour Guide for IHS, Cathie entertained early arrivals and spouses of ringers. Several visits to Niagara Falls and a Blue Jays game were fun, but Cathie did not see any ringing at the festival. Little did Cathie realize that, over the next decades, she would become the OGEHR festival accommodation maestro, or that she would be the 2001 Festival Tin Choir director!

While teaching school full time and directing at Centennial and then Wesley Knox, Cathie also resurrected a handbell choir at Colborne St. and, true to form, stayed on as director for seven years. While there, she mentored an exceptional young ringer, Kennedy Kimber-Johnson. Kennedy, now an abundantly qualified composer, ringer, pianist and organist, rang the opening bell at one of the OGEHR festivals at age 14, and later assumed leadership of the Colborne St. choirs, including their handbell choir.

As an elementary teacher, Cathie convinced the parents to purchase handchimes for a junior level choir - the only one in London. The fortunate applicants, whose names were drawn from a hat, would eagerly show up for 7:45 a.m. practices. If they forgot, a phone call from Mrs. Banks to their home had them arriving tousled, but ready to ring!

To pursue her personal bell ringing Cathie, at Susan Carscadden's suggestion, attended Bayview Week of Handbells in Michigan most summers for 21 years. Cathie loved meeting ringers from 'all over' each year, and she loved Don Allured for his passion for the instrument and his pursuit of excellence.

Susan Carscadden influenced Cathie once again when she approached Cathie in 1997 to play in the quartet, 'Bellissima Ringers'. In this accomplished ensemble, Susan, the leader, was known as efficient and knowledgeable, as was Adam Guthrie. Nikki Atwell was the serious one and Cathie self-describes as the comic relief! The group recorded a CD in 2008. Cathie left the group in 2020, but Bellissima is still ringing beautifully.

Cathie's passion for handbells and her devotion to the handbell community is evident in the journey related above. Her willingness to take on and complete tasks to a higher standard is evident in everything she does. And she does it all with humour, goodwill and love. Thank you, Cathie.





Cathie Banks

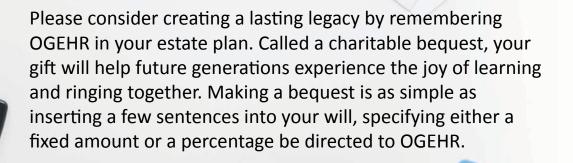


Memory Column

Because many friendships are formed over the years through bells, the OGEHR Board recently decided that a "Memory Column" should be incorporated into each issue of the Clapper Chatter. Please let us know if someone in your bell community has passed away and a bit about that person so that we can let bell friends be aware.

> Estate Planning

Honouring the memory of a loved one through a gift to the Ontario Guild of English Handbell Ringers (OGEHR) will create a lasting legacy. When a loved one passes, you may choose to have friends and family members make a donation to OGEHR in lieu of flowers. We will send you a list of names of those who contribute in memory of your loved one. To make your donation, please go to www.ogehr.ca/donate-now. A tax receipt will be provided on receipt of donation.





OGEHR Board of Directors as of June 1, 2023

(bracketed year after position or name indicates end of term)

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OGEHR Board Appointed Positions

Area Representatives – please contact Jennifer Schafer (areareps@ogehr.ca) for contact informationJanet McDonald East Representative ('26)Mary Loree Central West Representative ('26)heather nicholson Central East Representative ('25)Joan Bolam West Representative ('24)Jennifer Schafer Central Representative ('24)Vacant South Representative ('25)Shirley Reinders North East Representative ('26)Inactive North West Area

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 Andrea Gray Newsletter Editor ('24)

 Randy Mills Social Media Coordinator ('24)
 Kim Leitch Webmaster ('25)

Programs – please contact Lisa Kyriakides (programs@ogehr.ca) for more information Barbara Peaker Instrument Loan Program Coordinator ('24) instrumentloan@ogehr.ca Debi Sproule Music Lending Coordinator ('24) musiclending@ogehr.ca

Committees

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Janis Cowie

Randy Mills

Communications

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Joan Bolam

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Clapper Chatter