



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

SOCIETY OF CARILLON ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

WINTER 2009

TWO NEW CARILLON STUDENTS TAKE LESSONS

GRETA JOHNSON

I originally became interested in taking carillon lessons because I knew a student who had previously taken lessons from Dr. Tam. The student had spoken highly of Dr. Tam and suggested that I take lessons. I also thought that it would be something new and fun for me to try while I spend my time at Iowa State. Because I am a 4th generation Cyclone, Iowa State is important to my family. I grew up hearing about the various parts of campus, including the campanile. Taking carillon lessons would be the perfect addition to my own history at

Iowa State.

Growing up playing piano, I anticipated that playing the carillon would be similar. I was surprised to find out that it, in fact, is much different, providing a challenge for me. The first time I played in the campanile, it was an intimidating thought knowing that the music (mistakes and all) were being projected throughout campus and beyond. That idea quickly went away after playing in the bell tower a few more times. Learning to play the carillon provided with me a new interesting fact about myself along with



Final Student Concert: Fall 08
L-R: Greta Johnson, Robert Urbatsch, Rhaechel Ohge

a new appreciation of the signature landmark that resides on Iowa State's campus.

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CARILLONNEURS HAVE FUN CHOOSING MUSIC

Dr. Tam, the current carillonneur enjoys picking out music for special holidays and occasions. In addition to Christmas music during the noon recitals the week of dead week, she also picked out music for Halloween. This year's selections were: *The Addams Family*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Marionette's Funeral March*, *This is Halloween*, *Monster Mash*, *Bach: Toc-*

cata in D minor, and *Danse Macabre*.

As it turns out, past carillonneurs have also enjoyed playing amusing music. Dr. von Grabow liked to play *Hi Ho, Hi Ho*, *it's off to work we go* on the first day of class each semester. "It's a little weird humor thing I play..." von Grabow said. He also played *Snowride* in April, just

to see if anyone was listening.

Former carillonneur Bruce Eberle enjoyed arranging pop songs. "Beatles Songs, especially", he claims. "I just might make someone's day".

Lastly, two unique songs from Ira Schroeder. "One

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HOW MANY BRICKS ARE ON THE EXTERIOR OF THE CAMPANILE?

According to an email dated 5/21/01, University Architect A. Dan Morton reports an estimate of 21,600 bricks on the exterior. Since the bricks are 3-4 deep, the total number bricks is probably 3 times that much.

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"YOU CAN NOT PLAY THE CAMPANILE!", SAID VON GRABOW, TUGGING ON HIS PIPE. "THE CAMPANILE IS A TOWER!"
IOWA STATE DAILY, 1984

ENJOY THE NOON CONCERTS EVERY WEEKDAY 11:50-12:10 ON THE WEB

<http://www.music.iastate.edu/feeds/carillon/>

EXCERPTS FROM THE PAST

When I envisioned creating the Society of Carillon Alumni and Friends, I knew that I wanted to make sure all past alumni were kept up to date on Carillon Events. In planning this edition, I also realized that reminiscing and sharing past history might also be of interest to the group.

The Parks Library, which houses the Special Collections Department on campus, happens to have boxes of historical information on the carillon and campanile. My lunch break did not come close to offering enough time to read through all the information compiled through the years. I found many funny and amusing articles, along with much history. The material should provide plenty of fun and entertainment in our bi-annual newsletter for many years to come. Today I give you a couple of small notes of history I found interesting. I hope this leaves you eager for more interesting articles in the years to come. Amy

Campanile Goes Modern

“It stopped short” – but started again.

Iowa State’s campanile clock, which began ticking in August 1899, was stopped last month while workmen installed an automatic apparatus to eliminate the necessity for 60 minutes of hand labor.

The old winding system, which included a 1200 pound weight hung in the tower, was conceded to be a hazard to the safety of student workers employed to pull the weight.

The Alumnus of Iowa State: March 1939.

Carillon

Every day during the college year Iowa State students are ushered to their eight o’clocks by the music of hymns of every Christian faith from Stanton Memorial Carillon. Again at 1 p.m. the bells ring out with a brief concert.

These twice-a-day musical interludes, as well as longer concerts during Commencement, Veishea and other special

occasions, have been played since 1931 by Ira Schroeder of the music department.

News of Iowa State: Spring 1956

Campanile Sounds Downtown

Transmission of the sounds of Iowa State University’s campanile bells to central business district took place for the first time today. Loudspeakers caring the sound of the bells are mounted on the municipal electric plant. The bell tones are transmitted to the loudspeaker over telephone lines.

The \$1200 project to carry the bell sounds from the campus to the downtown area was approved by city council in December.

Today’s concert included the sounds of the daily 1 p.m. campanile recital.

Ames Daily Tribune: January 1, 1971

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: JULIE HART

My name is Julie Hart and I was a carillon student at Iowa State from 1997-2002. One of my favorite things about carillon lessons was the occasional field trip to visit another carillon. Carillons are quirky instruments, each with their own sound, number of bells, and feel to the keyboard. The campanile towers that contain the carillons have their own peculiarities, from cramped, creaky spiral staircases to beautifully furnished playing cabins. A visit to a new carillon is likely to be full of intriguing surprises.

Dr. Tam was selfless enough to ar-

range our field trips, which required piling into a van with five or six college students, driving several hours, and once, spending the night in dorms. She did all this with unwavering enthusiasm and a sense of humor. During my 5 years of study, we visited carillons in Des Moines, St. Paul, Rochester, Lawrence, and Omaha. We met and played for Albert Gerken, a composer who was also the carillonneur at KU Lawrence. Almost every student at ISU played one of Gerken’s pieces at some point, and playing in front of him was a daunting experience.

It was the field trip to House of Hope church in St. Paul that ended up playing a role in my future. The carillon at House of Hope is situated in a tower at the top of a spiral staircase, and the view of St. Paul, the cathedral, and the state capi-



1995 House of Hope
Field Trip

Paul, the cathedral, and the state capi-

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NEW CARILLON STUDENT REFLECTIONS CONTINUED

RHAECHEL OHGE

Going into my freshman year, I was a little hesitant on what to expect. I heard about the carillon class, and I thought it sounded really interesting. After my first lesson, I was fascinated by the instrument. It did take quite a while for me to get used to playing, because I have very minimal piano background. I was very nervous for our concert on Friday, but after I played, I just felt really good about my accomplishment. It's such a weird thought to think that I have played

songs for the whole Iowa State University campus to hear! It's also really fun to tell my friends about how I get to go up into the campanile and play. They are very jealous of me. I am definitely continuing with taking lessons this next semester.

Each student is given the task to create a project about the carillon. It's a pretty broad subject, but it allows you to be pretty creative! I chose to do an informational video about the carillon/campanile. I actually learned quite a bit from this video, and it was very fun! I believe Tin-Shi said it may be posted up

on the carillon portion of the music department's website, if you want to see it! I absolutely love playing the carillon, and I am very glad I heard about this class!

CARILLONEURS MUSIC CHOICES CONTINUED

morning last spring the strains of *Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen* rang out across the campus from the carillon bells in the campanile. Not unusual, except that it was final week, and caril-

lonneur Ira Schroeder was having some ironic fun with test bound students".

Additionally, the first song he ever played on the Iowa State carillon was

on the first day of fall quarter, 1931: *Hail, Hail, The Gang's All Here.*

Excerpts from Special Collections Department - Parks Library

HOUSE OF HOPE CONTINUED

tol from the playing cabin is spectacular. The day we visited we were given a tour by Dave Johnson, the resident carillonneur. As usual, it was a successful field trip filled with camaraderie



2001 House of Hope
Field Trip

and fun.

It was later, after I graduated and moved back to the Minneapolis area, that I considered contacting Dave again. Carillons are few and far between; the instrument at House of Hope was one of only two in the state of Minnesota. I hadn't put much thought into continuing with carillon past college, but I missed playing and wondered if Dave might be receptive to me using the instrument in the off hours.

I attended a few concerts at the church and one day I lingered afterward to speak to Dave. He remem-

bered me, and, better than just allowing me to play, asked me to moonlight as carillonneur when he was out of town. I've been fortunate to have the opportunity to keep up my carillon skills and play the occasional concert, and I feel lucky to have fallen into such an ideal arrangement. One of these days I may even take Dave up on his offer to coach me for the GCNA exam and earn the official carillonneur title.

ALUMNI MEMORIES

From Dr. Tam's students:

Your Favorite Carillon Memory:

The first time I actually played the real carillon.

Erin, 2005



Trip to St. Paul Carillon.

Emily, 2002



Everything.

Erica, 1999



The VEISHEA we made cookies and the campanile costume.

Julie, 2002



Playing "The Washington Post March" with my friend Debbie during VEISHEA 02.

Ryan, 2002



Sitting up among the bells late at night with my sweetie.

Vanessa, 1998



Definitely a great & unique experience, from learning the technique to the final class performance.

Christine, 1999



Meeting my future wife, Vanessa, because her lesson immediately followed mine in the Fall of 1996.

Michael, 1994, 1996, 2003



Road trip to St. Paul, MN to visit House of Hope Presbyterian Church carillon.

Jeff, 1998



Playing the Carillon during the VEISHEA celebration in 2003.

Jeff 2003



WHAT IS
YOUR
FAVORITE
CARILLON
MEMORY?

Playing "Holy, Holy, Holy" on the carillon. It was a piece I arranged for the carillon as my final project.

Along with that, I took a few friends with me so they could see the carillon and hear the debut. I really enjoyed playing for them, and we also climbed up to see the bells, and as graduating seniors, we really enjoyed reminiscing about our time on campus from the bird's eye view.

Robin 2005

Help me keep this section going in our newsletter. Email abrandau@iastate.edu with your favorite carillon memory!

ISU SOCIETY OF CARILLON ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

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MEMBER LIST

The Alumni Association will no longer post member lists or contact information for Society groups on the Alumni Association website. Our group will use the newsletter instead. Contact Amy at abrandau@iastate.edu if you would like the contact information for a carillon alumni or friend.

2000s

Rhaechel Ohge '12
Jeremiah Evans '10
Matthew Markland '09
Amy Bainum '08
Ashley Zappa '08
Megan Harvey '07
Erin (Borcherding) Kramer '05
Robin Niehaus '05
Sarah Luko '04
Jeff Fuhrmeister '03
Chris Herman '03
John Dostart '02
Julie Hart '02
Nikki Westphal '02
Amy (Sponheim) Brandau '00

1990s

Erika Schmidt '99
Jeff Osterchill '98
Vanessa (Thompson) Pawlovich '98
Scott Bents '97 '99
Michael Pawlovich '94 '96 '03
Eric Wittrock '92

1980s

Alan Younkin

Margaret (Girton) Harding '81

Debra Schiel-Larson '81

Melanie Felton '80 '85

Joel Reitz '80

Denise (Reynolds) Koncelik

1970s

Karen (Meyer) Campbell '79

Edward Arp '78

Ervin Mussman '77 '83

1960s

Kay Runge '69

1950s

Mary Jean (Stoddard) Fowler '56 '57

Friends

Jan Breitman

Margaret (Kirschman) Doe

Katherine Fowler

Michael Golemo

Jennie (Pickford) Gromoll

Ellen (Fletcher) Hunt

Karen Knapp-Danielson

Tin-Shi Tam

Catherine (Hauser) Woodson