



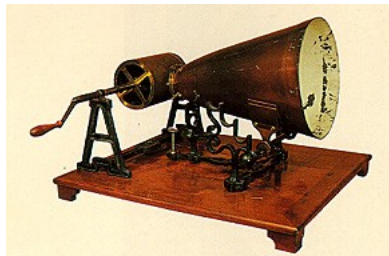
HANDBELL MUSICIANS OF AMERICA

ILLINOIS, IOWA, KANSAS, MISSOURI, NEBRASKA

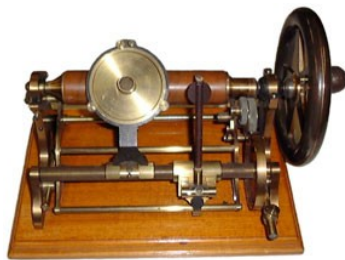
QUAVERS NEWSLETTER

JULY, 2016

Handbell Musicians
OF AMERICA



Phonautograph



Graphophone



Gramophone



Phonograph



Wire Recorder



Cassette
Recorder




CD Recorder



MP3 Recorder

RECORDING HANDBELLS

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ELECTED	ELECTED	APPOINTED
CHAIR: Patrick Gagnon 211 S Victor (P.O. Box 314) Hubbard, IA 50122 641.373.2972 TREASURER: Sharon Schmidt 28 Oriole Ct Naperville, IL 60540 630.369.9879 PAST CHAIR: Dolan Bayless c/o Kirkwood UMC 201 W Adams, Kirkwood, MO 63122 314.966.8167	CHAIR-ELECT: Kristin Kalitowski-Kowal 295 Town Center Blvd Gilberts, IL 60136 630.699.3802 SECRETARY: Kathy Leonard 1st UMC 612 Poyntz Ave, Manhattan, KS 66502 785.317.0598  Like us on Facebook Visit us on the WEB	COMMUNICATIONS: Pat Latshaw QUAVERS: KC Congdon WEBMASTER: Wendi Calkins-Levitt FINANCIAL ADVISOR: Stephen Swanson MEMBERSHIP TEAM: Beth Ann Edwards / Michael Allen EDUCATION: Debi Robey HISTORIAN: Open RESOURCE LIBRARIAN: Open

	ILLINOIS	IOWA	KANSAS	MISSOURI	NEBRASKA
Chair	Ben Hafner 18175 Dillon Ln Villa Park, IL 60181 630.696.6929	Lori Fenton 3213 45th St Des Moines, IA 50310 515.229.6712	Staci Cunningham 21370 Harper Rd Chanute, KS 66720 620.433.7223	Cathy Benton 2739 Autumn Run Ct Chesterfield, MO 63005 314.640.7053	Linda Ashley 9107 Meadow Dr Omaha, NE 68114 402.320.5312 402.397.9551 (h)
Treasurer	Open	Mary Lee Parks	Karla Denton	Suanne Comfort	Janet Chiocchi
Secretary	Beth McFarland	Donna Sprague	Open		Byron Jensen
Web	Wendi Calkins-Levitt	Wendi Calkins-Levitt	Wendi Calkins-Levitt	Wendi Calkins-Levitt	Janet Chiocchi
Other	<i>Events</i> Sharon Schmidt <i>Registrar</i> Kristin Kalitowski-Kowal <i>Chime Mentor</i> Diane Oster <i>Chime Coordinator</i> Aimee Legatzke Shelley May Hutchison <i>Food Coordinator</i> Anna Piro	<i>Historian</i> Tina Gehrke <i>Chimes</i> Aaron Hansen <i>Eastern Rep</i> Cat Walker <i>Western Rep</i> Yvonne Johnson	<i>Past Chair</i> Cherry Cox <i>Chimes</i> Shirley Myers	<i>Membership, St Louis</i> Sherry Boland <i>Chime Chair</i> Anne Miller Kathy Harrison Christie White	<i>Registrar</i> Deann Nicolaus <i>Chimes Coordinator</i> Nancy Youngman Jessica Kite Mike Allen Joyce Miller Angela Wright Natalie Radcliffe Charles Cohen



The Raleigh Ringers

David M. Harris, Director

8516 Sleepy Creek Drive • Raleigh, NC 27613

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A community handbell choir

Making recordings of handbells has been both a boone and a curse during my life.

I remember fondly doing another take of a very serene setting of "Coventry Carol" because the motorcycles drove by *again*, only to stop yet *again* because the lawn crew had just arrived to mow outside the sanctuary where we were set up.

I remember realizing that I was the one who forgot to leave my cell phone in the other room and that it was the calendar notification on *my* phone that was causing the feedback for the engineer.

I remember learning *very* quickly how to obtain mechanical rights from nine different publishers for a Festival/Conference recording which would ship in the morning.

I remember wincing in pain when I heard a D5 hit the brick floor during "Suo Gan," then re-wincing when I heard the recording later that day.

I remember the look on Karen Leonard's face when I tanked a passage in "Now the Green Blade Rises" for the fourth time. I also remember playing piano for "This Is My Father's World" for a great friend who was ringing a bell solo for the same recording, and then "ugly crying" with her when we finally heard it, and remembering that it was *perfect* on the first take.

I often think of all the handbell choirs that never get recorded and the vastness of that chasm that separates us.

I am reminded of how grateful I am to be a member of this great organization that over and over brings people together in a world that would otherwise tear us apart. Remember how important a thing we do when our ensembles come together to ring. We demonstrate the potential humans have for creating worth and beauty.

I wish you all perfection on your first take.

[Patrick Gagnon, Chair](#)



33 RPM



78 RPM



Compact Disc

Recording....That one word simultaneously brings excitement and so many questions! Here are a few things we have gleaned over the years:

RELAX! Unless you are going for a live performance recording, you have all the time in the world and there is no reason to put pressure on yourselves. It is perfectly acceptable to need multiple takes to capture it exactly the way you want it to be.

SPACE affects your sound. We used to squeeze into a small recording studio with a separate microphone for every two ringers. Guess what we discovered? We like the sound of playing in a larger space better. We like the microphone(s) to be placed farther from the actual handbell so that we capture the fuller, more developed sound that an audience would hear and less of the percussive clapper strikes in even the most legato passages.

MICROPHONES are not some magical answer. You can capture a fantastic recording with one well-placed microphone. If you have access to more, you will have more control to balance post-recording if you need it.

UNINVOLVED OBSERVER can be a helpful resource! Having someone musical who can sit in and listen as you record can provide you good instant feedback from an emotionally uninvolved vantage point.

NOISE is everywhere. It is important to choose a recording location that will al-

low you to eliminate as much of the outside noise as possible. Some of these things can be addressed by the location you choose to record – make sure there is nothing else happening in the building at the time and no busy street corners with traffic noises. (Can't help the location of your church? Try an early morning or late night time slot.) Some of the things we have added to our list are: turn off the AC/heat and blowers, unplug nearby drinking fountains, remove ticking clocks, wear "quiet" comfortable clothing, and it never hurts to put out signs in case of unscheduled visitors.

SCHEDULING can make a big impact. Recording in July with the AC off can get really warm really fast. It can be hard to concentrate and make everyone less patient. On the flip side, ringing handbells is hard work and we've never been too cold recording in the winter.

PLANNING is essential! On one level, planning what you want to record and the order of importance in which you want to record them in the given time frame makes a big difference in being productive. On another level, we have found it helpful to schedule recording sessions at regular intervals in order to capture the pieces we love before we put them away for the next concert repertoire.

LIVE performance recordings are always a little bit dangerous. Things that are completely out of your control can ruin a performance: someone might cough, a

child could talk, or a plane could fly over the building and seem like it is going to shake the rafters loose to name a few. But – the energy and life that your piece retains from being in front of a real audience can be magical!

BACK-UP your recordings and make sure that someone from your group remains in control of your recording files. It is pretty painful to put all of that time and energy into recording only to lose the files.

PERMISSIONS are important too! Don't forget to obtain the appropriate copyright permissions for your recordings! The type you need for making audio recordings is called a mechanical license. They are very inexpensive and can be obtained easily through the publisher.

One of the life lessons that will take you farthest in life is to keep learning. Even though Rezound! has been through dozens of recording sessions and released multiple CDs, we are still learning new things every time we record and from talking with other musicians. It is our hope that some of this will be helpful to others as well!

[Lauran Delancy](#), [Rezound! Handbell Ensemble](#)

On Behalf of the [Kansas State Choir](#)

"Don't play something you don't want recorded for all time" – Don Allured

My first experience with any sort of *real* handbell recording was at the Bay View Week of Handbells in 2001 under the direction of The Don. Not only was the concert recorded but we usually tried to record as much as we could during the run-throughs the day of. When the director is a perfectionist, recordings can be tough. And, if he is also the composer? Beyond tough. There is no acceptable room for error. I've learned that in a mass setting like that, if in doubt, omission is not a sin; a missed note is better than a late or wrong note.

I recall one year I was standing next to a woman who was there for the first time. It was one of the last years Don was at Bay View and was only conducting one piece; his, of course. This woman was a bit over her head on some pieces and she knew it. She was pretty flustered by the end of the week. She was doing her best and sticking with it, but the chance that she would make an audible mistake was high. Rather than end up recording something she would regret, she had resorted to turning her bells 90 degrees and just air bell on a couple of the trickier pieces.

If it's just one choir, you obviously don't have an option to skip over potential mistakes and trust that someone else will have it. If you're recording for the purposes of a demo CD or a CD to sell, a wrong note or wrong rhythm, or a technical issue, might mean going back to the beginning and starting all over. I participated in a vocal work a few years back that was being re-

cording by our local public television station but done so in a “concert” setting, i.e. we had a large audience. After one of the movements, which was mostly a vocal solo, the director was informed that there was an issue with an audio and it would need to be re-recorded. We stopped the “concert” right there to do that.

Beyond the pressure of the audio recording is the video recording. Ugh. I can’t say I ever enjoy watching myself ring. I’m in the 95% of ringers that never look like they’re having any fun. I swear I am! I admire the ringer who is able to ring, look at the director a lot, smile AND move (if appropriate). If you’re lucky enough to be able to stand by one of those people, you hope that a fraction of their energy rubs off on you. As part of Virtuoso, we had the opportunity to not only ring on the Raleigh Ringer’s concert, but we rang on stage **with** them. And of course it was all recorded. If you’ve ever seen them (find them on You Tube if you haven’t) you know that they have a great stage presence, both live and on video. While no one expected us to entirely match the *ease* with which they perform, just the sheer joy of being there doing what we were doing was hard to hide for any of us, even on the toughest piece.

Hopefully, most of the ringing situations you’re involved with don’t include the pressure of being recorded. It doesn’t mean we shouldn’t always try to present our best both aurally and visually so that the live audience we might have can appreciate our music as much as we do.

[*Lori Fenton, Iowa State Chair*](#)

In the May issue of *Quavers* we talked about “fixing what we hear” and ways to listen as handbell ringers and directors. I mentioned in my article that as directors we have to be the listening ear for the group, yet my ultimate goal is that my groups develop their own “listening ears.” I suggested that recordings are an excellent way to help ringers accomplish this.

Most of us are in situations where our performances are recorded. For my college handbell choir, all of our university performances are recorded by professional staff members. In my church, the services are all recorded. As a director I have access to these recordings and can share these with the ringers. I regularly do this and it is such a benefit for all of us. In addition, professional recordings and You Tube videos are readily available.

But what about recording rehearsals – how many of us do that on a regular basis? And if we do, what kind of equipment are we using – iPad, iPhones, other handheld recording devices? And if we aren’t recording rehearsals, what might we do to make that part of our normal rehearsal routine?

My husband is a retired band director who has a passion for sharing technology and other resources for music educators. He is the Education Specialist for The Sound Room in Chesterfield and the Technology Specialist for Nottelmann Music in St. Louis. He travels to conferences

and consults with music educators on ways to make technology work for them in the rehearsal room. Here are some of his suggestions:

MAKE YOUR RECORDING SETUP HANDY. Don't invest in recording technology that never gets used. Consider setting it up in such a way that when you are rehearsing, you can access it easily. Busy teachers/directors rarely take the time to go to the closet, connect mic cables, find the recorder, etc.

GET EXPERT HELP. He suggests that you find knowledgeable people to help you with:

- Designing a system with the products and components that work best for you.
- Installing the system so it sounds its best in your rehearsal room and is easily accessible in your teaching area. For example, are the speakers set up to send the sound directly to your students? Is the system placed in a way that invites you to use it often?
- Providing training how to get the best out of your system and to feel comfortable in using it. Who wouldn't want to record if the process was as easy as pushing a button, record, push another button, then play back!

USE QUALITY TECHNOLOGY. The whole recording/playback concept fails if the products you use are substandard.

For example, those dynamics that you work so hard to perfect in rehearsal will not be heard in playback when recording on your handheld devices. Use high quality speakers and amplifiers. PA systems, boom-boxes, computer speakers do not provide the level of detail and clarity to reveal the true level of your students' performances. Even residential hi-fi equipment from your local box store does not have the quality needed for rehearsal rooms. Bose Professional and JBL Professional are two top manufacturers that provide top performance and institutional-level durability.

- Microphones capable of recording ensembles at high volume levels with critical listening detail are a must. A stereo microphone such as the Audio-Technica AT-8022 or the Shure KSM 137 Stereo Pair provide outstanding and amazing results. The PreSonus Audiobox iTwo is designed to connect your microphones to your computer or iPad and comes complete with The Studio One Artist software and free access to the Nimbus cloud recording-sharing site.

If you would like any help in finding creative ways to use technology in your rehearsal space, feel free to contact him at: rbenton01@yahoo.com.

[Cathy Benton](#), [Missouri State Chair](#)

I do not have a lot of hands-on experience with the process of making a recording beyond the actual playing. I do have a couple of tips to share.

Page turns: keep them extremely quiet, otherwise they will be noticed.

Location: be aware of the surroundings and planned activities of the neighborhood of your recording site. We had to reschedule a recording session at a local church as the shopping center across the street was going to have a food truck event. We also had several retakes during our sessions due to motorcycles and noisy trucks rumbling down the street. There was a Distinctly Bronze event that had to have a tremendous amount of editing done to the recording as the mass transit train ran right by the conference center, about every 6 minutes or so.

Page turns: keep them quiet.

Permission: Get the proper permission from all music sources for license to record.

Ringin' space: remove all clutter. You don't want to set a bell down and clink against a stray pencil, mislaid mallet handle, or another bell or chime. I would even go so far as to checking your space on the floor. Is there a place that creaks? Make sure you try not to step there as you move around.

Did I mention page turns?

Making a recording can be a rewarding experience, especially when you get to share your love of performing music with

others outside of the live concert setting.

[Linda Ashley, Nebraska State Chair](#)



AT-8022
microphone

Shure
KSM 137



PreSonus
AudioBox
iTwo and
Studio One
Artists
Software

Upcoming Events

2016	EVENT	LOCATION	CONTACT
Jul 10-14	Handbell Camp	Heartland Camp Kansas City, MO	Handbell Camp
Jul 12-16	National Seminar Various	Hyatt Regency Rochester, NY	National
Jul 26-30	International Symposium	Vancouver, Canada	IHS
Sep 17 9a	Back to Bells 2016	St John's Lutheran Des Moines, IA	Beth Ann Edwards
Sep 17 9a	Back to Bells 2016	Missouri Baptist University St Louis, MO	Cathy Benton
Oct 8 9a	Back to Bells 2016	Raytown Christian Church Raytown, MO	Suanne Comfort

Upcoming Concerts



Hastings
College

