



Dulci Tomes

Newsletter of the Carillon Society of Australia

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Dulci Tomes is published biannually in Autumn and Spring by the Carillon Society of Australia Inc (CSA).

Deadlines: Submissions for publication must be received by 21st February for the Autumn/Winter issue and 21st September for the Spring/Summer issue. Please send materials or contact the editor directly via email to tho.mas.pl.au@gmail.com

Opinions expressed in *Dulci Tomes* do not necessarily represent those of the Editor or those of the Carillon Society of Australia.

Editor: Thomas Laue. Photo by Thomas Laue (2024, Sydney)

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President's update following CSA General Meeting in Bathurst, 2024

Isaac Wong, Honorary Carillonneur, University of Sydney War Memorial Carillon

The Society met on 23 November in Bathurst for our third and final general meeting of the year. It was a perfect spring weekend with a good turnout of members, and we also welcomed two new student members, Yvette Middleton and Francis Dorman, who have been learning the carillon with Wendy Murphy.

After a most pleasant and productive meeting at the Abbott Room at All Saints Cathedral, we had a picnic lunch under the carillon tower while listening to the members' recital.

Jen Roberts then gave a wonderful talk about tuning and why it is important for carillonists and their repertoire selections. It was such an engaging lecture on a topic that can be complicated and often puzzling – we loved it so much we have already requested part 2 for our next meeting!



CSA group photo in front of the Bathurst War Memorial Carillon (photo by Peter Bray)



Jen Roberts' lecture on tuning with demo of different tuning systems (photo by Isaac Wong)

Later in the afternoon, Mel Bray followed up on the successful launch of her book *Australian Carillonists* in Canberra earlier in 2024, with a history talk at Bathurst Library.



Mel Bray giving a talk about her book *Australian Carillonists* at Bathurst Library (photo by Isaac Wong)

Wendy and Jen joined Mel on a panel discussion about their journeys with the carillon and their visions for the future.

After a long day of activities we finished with drinks and dinner at a local pub. Some of us met up again the next morning and spent a few hours at the vast Mayfield Garden in nearby Oberon.

It was a most fun gathering, and I thank everyone who attended in-person and online. ☺



A visit to Mayfield Garden in nearby Oberon (photo by Isaac Wong)

Sydney Carillon Meets Sydney Philharmonia Choirs

Veronica Lambert, Carillonist,
Sydney University War Memorial Carillon

What possible intersection could there be between these two organisations, you may well ask?

The story begins 20 years ago when my son was a student at a Sydney high school with an excellent music department run by Mr Chris Shepard. Chris was very keen for parents to join in various school choral events and just in time before my son finished school, I joined in a performance of *Carmina Burana* held in the Sydney Town Hall. I clearly remember rehearsals where we learnt the music each week, note by note. Not having had any other musical performance experience since mid high school years myself, I rather enjoyed that event and when my son finished school I looked around to see what else was available around town. I had two key requirements: preferably no audition and not a huge time commitment. Sydney Philharmonia Choirs' then yearly *Messiah* performance popped up. No audition required

to join in — perfect. I remember the first rehearsal on a hot November evening and being absolutely astonished that all the hundreds of choristers except I knew the music perfectly, months before the event. It was a huge learning curve; a massive work that I had never seen in performance, and I only barely knew of the Hallelujah chorus. Having done that first *Messiah* in 2007 an invitation to join the newly formed Festival Chorus of Sydney Philharmonia Choirs came along. My thinking then was that this was not an ideal time for me as my next child was sitting HSC examinations the same year, but the conductor we had for *Messiah* was so talented and such fun that he would soon be snapped up by some overseas organisation, and if not now, I would miss out.

That was now 16 years ago, and Mr Brett Weymark OAM is still the fabulous conductor and artistic director of Sydney Philharmonia Choirs. I am so grateful to have been part of the Festival Chorus for all these years. It has led to life long friendships, the thrill of performing in the Sydney Opera House for four events most years, a huge expansion of my musical knowledge and always great fun. Works we

have covered in those years are many of the famous Requiems (Mozart, Verdi, Brahms, Dvořák and Fauré), Bizet's *Carmen*, Karl Jenkins' *The Armed Man*, Vaughan Williams' *Sea Symphony*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Haydn's *Creation*, Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, Bernstein's *Candide*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, Handel's *Saul and Israel in Egypt* as well as *Messiah* now every second year, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* and *Ode to Joy*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*, Berlioz's *Te Deum* and many, many more.

But there is more to this story - there was a time that Sydney's globally well known Isaac Wong



Isaac Wong (second from left) and Veronica Lambert (centre)

was unable to fully engage with the carillon and I felt that joining the Festival Chorus would be a good thing. My gentle nagging eventually saw Isaac join in 2017. It only took a couple of years for Isaac to put his hand up for the strenuous process of auditioning. He was immediately accepted for the prestigious Symphony Chorus which sings with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and is conducted by the likes of Simone Young, Donald Runnicles, Sir Simon Rattle and Masaaki Suzuki. I have felt like a proud mother watching Isaac's progress through the ranks of Sydney Philharmonia Choirs and he sometimes get to perform with the super elite Chamber Singers that is comprised of only 30 singers. For comparison, the Festival Chorus has 350 singers.

Just recently, Isaac had a Sunday carillon recital and quite a large contingent of Symphony Chorus members came along and were thrilled to be introduced to the carillon.

There is still more to this story of connections. Our delightful colleague at the Sydney carillon, Daniel Guo, who along with being a high school mathematics teacher and carillonist is also a super talented pianist who has a double degree in Music Performance and Science from UNSW, and is also involved with Sydney Philharmonia Choirs. Daniel's mother is a member of the Festival Chorus and Daniel heard that a repetiteur or accompanist was needed in 2021. The COVID years saw him being called in on an occasional basis, but he auditioned. Since 2022, he has held this position and he is a most valuable member of Sydney Philharmonia Choirs' staff. It is rather special at rehearsals to hear him play so magnificently for us. Daniel started playing carillon with Jeff Davis at UCLA Berkeley and when he came back to Australia he had lessons in Sydney and has been playing carillon for graduations and recitals and other events since 2016.

I would be preaching to the converted here about the benefits of participating in music of any kind. As fabulous as we all know it is, playing the carillon can be a rather isolated experience, so if anyone is thinking of joining a choir I can only highly recommend adding choral singing to your weekly routine. It is great to be part of a like minded community, it is good for your brain, posture, concentration, breathing and organisational skills. It is also quite wonderful to be involved in the entire rehearsal process, where in almost all cases unknown music evolves week by week with rehearsals and eventually becomes a great musical experience. During the long COVID years when our rehearsals and performances were severely disrupted and mostly cancelled, many of my singing colleagues said to me that they already knew they enjoyed our singing, but it took those years of disruptions for them to realise they actually "needed" it.

If you have enjoyed choral concerts as an audience member then multiply the thrill and enjoyment by about 100 — this gets close to the feeling of being part of the concert. It really is quite magical. ☸



Veronica (second from left) with other choristers

Thoughts On Arranging Pop Music

Daniel Guo, Carillanist,
Sydney University War Memorial Carillon

Once in a while, the students and staff of Sydney University realise that the carillon exists, and we get a few song requests. This is the beginning of one from the recent Open Day – Taylor Swift’s *Cruel*



Cruel Summer (Taylor Swift): Opening

Summer (winner of Best Melody Award in 2009):

It’s an idiomatic pop vocal line, but not quite what we would want to play. There are simply too many fast, repeated notes in the melody. Therefore the harmony must be sparse, stifling any attempt at musicality or the possibility of an interesting arrangement.

Yet we must cater to popular tastes because we are public musicians, building community and playing accessible, appropriate songs for the masses. At the same time, we should strive for a high standard of musicianship and promote the art of the carillon – to write and perform an arrangement that is sensitive, musical, and suitable for our instrument.

Here are three ideas to consider when arranging pop music.

#1. Suitability – Listening to the Original

The first request I got for Open Day was the song *360* by Charli XCX. You can find it on YouTube. (Though, if you don’t know what this means – brat – then you probably won’t enjoy it.) My initial thought on having to play it is summed up by Homer Simpson: “If something’s hard to do, then it’s not worth doing.”

With pop music, I find that it’s important to start from the original, rather than a written-down piano arrangement, because it’s already changed so much to get there in the first place. The electronic/club feel of Charli XCX will not translate well onto the bells (challenge: prove me wrong), and it is so fast, unmelodic and bassy that any attempt at playing it will drastically change the original sound. Then we get



Toto (Africa): Iconic piece, perhaps overplayed, but still a banger

those quizzical responses from listeners: “Hey, is that [name of song]? But it sounds weird.” We don’t want to be weird.

#2. Simplicity and Catchiness



Never Gonna Give You Up (Rick Astley)

Then, what makes a suitable pop song for the carillon? Well, if there is a recognisable melody, it should work. Even better if the melody and harmonic rhythm is slow, because we actually have an opportunity to do some arranging. (An excellent example of this is Simon & Garfunkel's *Scarborough Fair/Canticle*, arranged by Thomas Laue, and featured in the CSA Book Club #1).

The whole point of playing a pop song is because it's popular. To be successful, it must have been catchy, so our arrangement can foreground that feature of the original, whether that be the melody, the lick, the bass line (perhaps transposed up) — whatever helps the audience recognise it.

#3. Too Much Repetition is Boring

The appeal of pop is built on repetition, just like folk-song. We hear the Verse-Chorus formula and get hyped up for the return of the Chorus. But the carillon lacks different lyrics, the timbres of the voice, a backing band, and all the other cool and expensive things a pop musician has. So we have to think about variation, contrast and musical interest, and use the elements available to us: dynamics, range, tempo, texture.

Perhaps Verse 2 can be played in a different register, or faster, or with more expressiveness than Verse 1. Perhaps Chorus 2 has fuller harmonies than Chorus 1, and the Bridge can be in a completely different feel. By varying the verses and chorus, we get that overarching contrast-tension-release that is at the heart of any quality musical work. It also makes us classical musicians feel a bit better about playing pop music.

Conclusion

Lastly, don't forget that a lot of pop music is so ephemeral. In a way, I am glad I might probably never play *Cruel Summer* again, but I still play *Love Story* every Valentine's Day (OG Taylor is best Taylor — happy to debate you). We can spend our energies on the songs that are timeless, the ones we love from our youth, the ones we can play again and again. ☸

From "Up Over" And All Around The World: Suzanne Magassy, Traveling Carillonneur

Dr. Andrea McCrady, Dominion Carillonneur at the Peace Tower Carillon in Ottawa, Canada

Do you remember your first experience with the carillon? Was it love at first sound? In an interview with *The Canberra Times* in 1988, Sue Magassy described her initiation. "Just for a laugh," she replied to a newspaper advertisement in 1979 asking for people to learn the instrument admitting that she "had seen it being played before, and it just didn't do much for me." Nonetheless, she received some introductory lessons from John Gordon in 1980 and was completely hooked. She loved playing for people, and "just wanted to be good enough." She buckled down and began practicing many hours three times a week. In 1987 she confessed to a reporter that it took her six months to "get her hands and feet together," and a year's preparation before she dared a "half recital."



Magassy playing for friends at National Carillon. Unknown photographer, copy provided by Grace Chan

Recognising her isolation in Australia, she decided to seek out instruction from carillon colleagues across the world. By 1988 she had already been overseas four times to international conferences. Beginning in 1989, she sought intensive training sessions with Milford Myhre at the Bok Tower in Florida and performed a special recital on 1 February 1989 to mark the tower's 60th anniversary. As Sue wrote in the *Dulci Tomes* October 1989 edition, "It will not be my last

visit to Bok Tower Gardens — music, friendship, and beauty abound.”



GCNA Springfield 1987 congress: Wylie Crawford, Sue Magassy, Gordon Slater. Copy sent by Sue Magassy to Gordon Slater, 1987 (Dominion Carillon Library)

Following the 1987 GCNA congress in Springfield, Illinois, she described her crammed itinerary in a letter to Gordon Slater: “My travels were full of adventures. Also, Milford and I had a ball in England with Alan Berry [Taylor Bell Foundry director] for a week — he outdid himself in the hospitality field! Then Ulla [Laage] in Denmark. Then back to Florida & Bok, then Janet [Dundore] & all the Philly [Philadelphia] ones, Maryland, Cincinnati (a story in itself), New York State, and a wonderful final three days in Virginia at Luray’s 50th Anniversary. Milford & I both gave recitals on the opening day and had a ball with David Breneman and the people connected with administration. Super end to everything.” The “Cincinnati story” was later described to a Canberra Times reporter: “A mini-tornado hit the carillon, knocked down trees, injured the regular carillonist who was listening to her play from outside the building and left her stuck in the dark for 20 minutes. She had only played one piece.”

I first met Sue at the 1982 World Carillon Federation Congress in Løgumkloster, Denmark, and thereafter, our paths crossed often at various WCF and GCNA events. In 1988–89, I served as the director of a small hospital for the Hill Tribe communities in the “Golden Triangle” of northern Thailand. Before returning to North America, I swung down to Australia to visit medical and musical friends in Sydney and Canberra. Sue came up to Sydney to meet me and introduced me to a friend who played the alphorn!



Magassy & Alphorn

We then drove down the scenic coast and over to Canberra. As we were arriving, Sue explained that she had dropped off her ailing elderly cat at the vet’s prior to departure and needed to pick him up. I sat in the car as she went into the clinic, only to see her emerge in tears, carrying her deceased cat bundled in a blanket, which she handed to me. Remember – this was well before email or cell phones, and the vet hadn’t been able to reach her with the sad news. Somehow, Sue managed to drive home. Her husband Alby was also away, so she asked me to dig a small grave in the backyard, where we gently laid her beloved pet to rest.

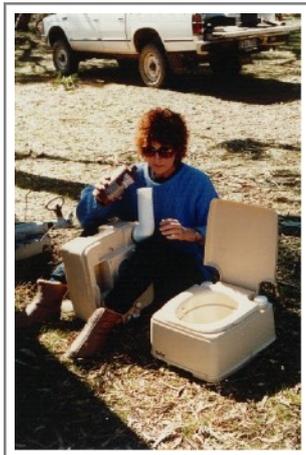


Magassy at base of
National Carillon,
Canberra

We all appreciate the therapeutic value of music, so the next day we immediately went to the carillon. Sue showed me the practice keyboard and played some pieces on the tower keyboard. While I hadn't touched a carillon in two years, I pulled out some familiar scores from her filing cabinet and gave them a try.

We were both outdoor enthusiasts, so Sue packed up her gear, and off we went to the Snowy Mountains, where they had a caravan spot. Our neighbours were a wombat snoozing in a nearby gum tree, and of course, kangaroos bounding by. It was late September, so spring was just beginning, and the nights were cool.

We next headed off for Kosciusko National Park and took the Skitube up to Blue Cow resort, where it was still winter, with skiers cruising down the slopes bounded by snow gums. What a fabulous trip!



Magassy camping in the
outback

Throughout the decades, Sue provided grand hospitality to foreign carillon visitors, assisting with their itineraries, connecting them with music friends and carillon colleagues, taking them on excursions outside of Canberra, and much more. Milford Myhre remembers a time he was trapped in the Canberra tower elevator after a practice session for several hours. Sue returned to play a scheduled wedding and had to climb up the stairs in a hurry, then contact security to release him.

Upon my return to the United States, I too went straight to the Bok Tower to study with Milford and refresh my carillon skills. In 1990 I moved to



McCrary & Magassy at Blue Cow

Spokane, WA to practice family medicine for the US Indian Health Service and play the beautiful Taylor carillon at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist. I next met Sue at the 1990 WCF Congress in Zutphen, the Netherlands, where she, Ulla, and I shared hotel lodgings – “party central!” Sue again described her European itinerary in a letter to Gordon Slater:



Zutphen 1990: Magassy, Reg Walker, Peter Langberg

“Well, I had an absolute ball starting in Amsterdam (and finishing in Amsterdam about 6 weeks later) after my 2 weeks in the US. Todd [Fair] was just wonderful to me. He and I were together at his flat for all that time, with me having a few excursions to play elsewhere... Many carillon people came and stayed a night on their way out of Amsterdam – it was like having a continual conference! We saw Bert &

Raylene [Gerken] often... Milford & Sally [Warner] & Maud [Keldermans], the Pointers, Andrea, etc., etc... I went to Berlin to play, loved the carillon (it's BIG), went to Denmark to play twice stayed with Ulla and Inge later, heard the Queen Fabiola Competition... went to Ghent, Mechelen, Antwerp, Bruges, played half dozen recitals in Holland and visited England and had a great few days with Alan B. & Chris, who were also in Zutphen. I also had super lessons with Todd – I need to go back there for more – his style of teaching obviously suits me and made so much difference to some problems.”

In 1993 both Sue and I were attending the WCF Executive Committee congress planning meeting in Lyon, as well as participating in the Dijon Carillon



Bruges: Magassy, Albert & Raylene Gerken, Todd Fair, Bernard Winsemius

Festival. As we boarded the train to Dijon, we had a temporary moment of panic – I had purchased tickets for the journey, but not reserved the designated seats (extra charge). The conductor was about to kick us off at the next stop, but I pleaded our ignorance and he relented. It was on that voyage that I realised what a tight budget Sue was on, since she confessed that she didn't have the extra cash on hand. It was a big relief to arrive at our destination.

Indeed, Sue financed her trips out of her own pocket, occasionally receiving a stipend from Rotary International, and depending upon the honoraria from her recitals and the hospitality of her hosts. In 2000, Sue wrote to Gordon and Elsa Slater, “There have been virtually no jobs here; we only earn about \$5000 Australian, and the carillon has been closed for more than two months out of the blue.”

Lisa Lonie (Philadelphia host) commented that Sue's “shoe-string budget” was more like a cobweb! She recalled an amusing episode: “Sue needed to get to downtown, and at the time Paul [Lisa's husband] drove a city truck to/from work. In order to save the couple of bucks for the train, he drove her down in his truck, but in the back seat, lying down so no one would see he was transporting a non-employee in a city-owned vehicle. The truck was very small (almost a clown car). Sue was sandwiched in the back seat because Paul, being so tall, needed to put the driver's seat all the way back. They howled laughing all the way down the expressway.”

Julianne Vanden Wyngaard (Grand Rapids, Michigan host) remembers a small package of extra clothes delivered to her home in advance. Dave Johnson (St. Paul, Minnesota host) described her arrival, “...clutching in one hand a small bag that seemed to contain nothing more than an extra halter and pair of shorts, toothbrush, nail file

and comb, and in the other hand a sheaf of papers: her music (copied, folded, annotated, curiously taped or pasted, often somewhat mangled) and dozens of messages and travel instructions... She took over one's house and one's life... we did not choose aggressively to defend ourselves once she arrived, and – here is the magic – we missed her immediately when she was gone.”



Magassy at St. John's Cathedral, Spokane

Gordon Slater hosted her in Ottawa in 2001, remarking that she insisted on sleeping in their (finished) basement for the novelty of it. Several hosts described Sue's love of cats. George Matthew (Vermont host) said Sue took many photos of [George's wife] Sherri's cats, and Sherri learned a new word: the Australian term for much loved cats is "moggies." Then there was Sue's memorable "carillon excuses" T-shirt – "It's too hot; it's too cold; the music blew off the stand; the light is in my eyes, a moth flew up my nose, etc." – alas, no one took a photo of it.

Somehow she continued to cross the globe to North America and Europe, attending the WCF and GCNA congresses in the 1990s and early 2000s, and was particularly proud to be the first non-North American to pass the GCNA Carillonneur

exam in 1997. When she lost access in 2001 to the Canberra keyboards, she practiced her music on her kitchen table. Upon learning this, in 2004 Sally Slade Warner (Cohasset, Massachusetts) and a group of North American carillonneurs banded together to convince Phillips Academy, Andover, MA, to release its unused Taylor practice keyboard, which they shipped to her. Sue bequeathed this keyboard to Astrid Bowler, who later gifted it to Grace Chan.



Phillips Academy practice keyboard in Australia.
Photo by Grace Chan

I had the pleasure to host Sue in Spokane in 2002, delighted for the opportunity to return her hospitality. As usual, her repertoire included a mixture of carillon compositions, classical selections and her excellent arrangements of popular tunes, designed to appeal to a wide audience. We then had a blast touring through the Selkirk Mountains of Idaho and Montana.



Magassy at Snakepit Restaurant, Enaville, Idaho

The warm friendship between Sue and her North American carillon colleagues was so strong that she requested that her ashes be scattered at the base of the Bok Tower, which her husband Alby honored. Jeff Davis (Berkeley, California) described Sue as “a con-

stant delight,” and congenial laughter inevitably enriched her visits. Wylie Crawford remembers a GCNA congress presentation when she welcomed the attendees saying, “Greetings from Up Over” while holding a big map of the world upside down.



Magassy in Selkirk Mountains, Idaho

In 1994 Sue wrote to Gordon Slater about her tour plans, “[It’s] too exhausting – why do I do it? Well, I love it all and would happily travel six months of twelve if earning a living was not a problem! Wouldn’t it be super to start at 20 and visit eventually every carillon in the world?”

Malignant melanoma cruelly cut short this quest in 2008, as she was preparing for yet another North American tour.

In loving memory,
Andrea McCrady
November 7, 2024

Photo credits: all photos courtesy of Andrea McCrady, except where otherwise noted in captions. ☸



Magassy at Cooper Pass, Montana

Update On Book On Australian Carillonists

Melissa Bray, CSA Executive Member

Since the last edition of Dulci Tomes, my book on Australian carillonists has been released and I've been delighted in the interest it has generated, not just here in Australia but also around the world.

The book contains profiles of 20 Australian carillonists and tells the story of how each of them came to play the carillon, where their journeys have taken them so far, and their vision for the future of carillon in Australia. For some, the calling was prompted by a newspaper advertisement, while others have always known they wanted to play the carillon.

I've been asked to include in this article some information around the promotion I have done for the book, which has included talks, interviews, social media and bookstores, so here it is.

I launched the book at Regatta Point in Canberra on 23 June. It was beautifully sunny but a cold winter day and from the venue you could see across to the lake to the National Carillon. I was delighted to have around 100 people attend, including carillonists Astrid Bowler, Vikki Jacobsen and Julie Wright from Canberra, and Wendy Murphy and Denise Garland from Bathurst. Wendy and I interviewed each other, then all the carillonists joined me in signing books at the launch, saying they 'felt like rock stars' (it was a lot of fun!). We also enjoyed a carillon-related morning tea with items including cupcakes decorated with bells, Toblerone bars and bell-shaped shortbread.

It was also wonderful to have some special guests at the launch, including Joyce Howe whose husband George Howe OAM was one of the first Canberra car-

illonists and he played for 33 years. David McKerral and his family also joined us. David's mother Jill Forrest AM was head Sydney University carillonist, and she was president of the Carillon Society of Australia from 1996-2007.

I did some media promotion around the launch, and I was delighted by the level of interest there is in finding out more about Australia's carillonists. I did radio interviews with ABC Afternoons and 2CC's Sunday Roast as well as newspaper interviews with the Canberra Times, RiotACT and City News.

I was also really pleased with interest in the book from Canberra bookstores including those in the Parliamentary Triangle – at the National Library, Portrait Gallery and Regatta Point, as well as the Book Cow in Kingston, PaperChain in Manuka and Pop Canberra in Braddon. I made the book available on Amazon Kindle too, but it is interesting that most people are after paper copies of the book, so I've been posting copies to people around Australia and the world.



Collage: images of some of the carillonists from around Europe who have copies of the book on Australian carillonists.

Given it was Lili van Beeumen from Belgium who had inspired me with her book "Waarom een beiaardier, beiaardier is geworden" ("Why a carillonist became a carillonist") that she released in 2023, I took some copies of my book with me when I

went back to Mechelen in July 2024. CSA President Isaac Wong also took it with him when he did his trip around Europe in 2024 and he did a wonderful job taking and sharing photos of world-famous carillonists world holding copies of my book.



Book signing at Bathurst Library
9 November 2024
(photo by Anne Grantham)

I have been truly amazed by the interest in the book from all around the world and am delighted to say that copies are now sitting in homes, schools, offices and carillons across the following countries: Australia, Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.

On 9 November I did a book talk at the Bathurst Library which included an interview with Bathurst carillonists Wendy Murphy and Jen Roberts, which was a lot of fun. Then the three of us, as well as Sydney

carillonists Isaac Wong, Ted Grantham and Lucy Koe and Canberra carillonists Peter Bray and Vikki Jacobsen all sat at a very long table and did book signings, which was another chance for us all to 'feel like rock stars'.

I have set up a website for the book, www.AustralianCarillonists.com which includes photos and links to the media coverage.

And in amongst all the promotional work I've been working on a second book that has recently gone to a couple of publishers, so hopefully I'll be able to tell you more about that one soon... ☺

Auld Lang Syne

Vikki Jacobsen, Canberra Carillonist,
National Carillon Canberra

Welcome to a new column in Dulci Tomes, where we will bring you some interesting highlights from previous newsletters.

And what better way to start than by celebrating the birthday of Australia's longest serving carillonist, Edward (Ted) Grantham, who turned 80 in late 2024. Ted started playing the carillon 63 years ago (in 1962) and is an honorary carillonist at the Sydney University War Memorial Carillon.

Below is an excerpt from the 1969 newsletter, Carillon News, featuring the programme for Ted's assessment recital. He obviously passed with flying colours. ☺

A TYPICAL TEST RECITAL IN SYDNEY

When a Sydney carillon student feels he has made sufficient progress to dare play publicly, he offers a test recital which is listened to by suitable judges.

Here is Mr Ted Grantham's programme a few years ago:-

- (1) Hymn: O Come all Ye Faithful.
- (2) Folk-song: Ilkla Moor (Yorkshire).
- (3) Carillon Composition: "Prelude" from "Four Experiments" by Alex Burnard.
- (4) Classical Piece: "Prelude" from "Sonata X" for violin and figured bass, by Corelli.

All these compositions were (except No. 3) in the student's own arrangement.

Vale Joan Chia (29th March 1938 – 6th June 2024)

Astrid Bowler, Senior Carillonneur, National Carillon
Canberra

My earliest memory of Joan goes back to the 1950s when my piano teacher entered me in the pianoforte section of Eisteddfods such as City of Sydney, Railways Institute, St George etc. I remember the feeling of utter defeat whenever I saw that Joan or her younger sister Phyllis were entered in the same section as me. I didn't stand a chance of winning.



Joan studied at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music where she gained her Diploma (DSCM). She was offered a position in the Piano Department of the newly formed Newcastle Conservatorium as a fill-in but which saw her there for nine happy years. During that period Joan also had some “timeout” to study at the Juilliard School in New York.

This life-transforming experience led to her being offered a position by Ernest Llewellyn at the newly established Canberra School of Music. Arriving in 1969 to join the Keyboard Department, Joan was immediately involved in a variety of performance op-

portunities ranging from soloist with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Canberra Symphony Orchestra and the Royal Military College Band, Duntroon to chamber music for Musica Viva and duos with Alan Jenkins. As a Lecturer in Keyboard at the School of Music, Joan was responsible for courses and workshops in Piano Pedagogy with a special interest in training Studio Piano teachers.

In 1980, Joan, with the guidance of John Gordon, Carillonneur at Sydney University, became a Carillonneur at the National Carillon, Canberra, giving solo recitals as well as performances in partnership with brass and military bands. In 1985, I also became a Carillonneur at the National Carillon, Canberra so our paths crossed again. Before the National Carillonneur of New Zealand, Timothy Hurd's appointment as Director of the National Carillon in Canberra in 2001, there were further carillon studies and performances in Wellington, New Zealand, Indiana, USA and the Netherlands Carillon School in Amersfoort.

Over the years, Joan trained many carillonists, oversaw—with her colleagues—workshops and many social functions with visiting carillonists from Europe and the US as well as serious meetings, often with her husband, Len Fischer, in their home about the future of the carillon. Joan was a member of the Carillon Society of Australia from its start in 1981 and between 1992 and 1998 she was Newsletter Editor of the CSA.

Joan was the first Asian woman to become a carillonist in Australia; she was also the first woman in the country to release a carillon album, “Essentially Australian”, in 1996. She released a second album, “Christmas Bells”, in 2017.

Joan's retirement in 2013 was completely unexpected. Joan was a brilliant musician and the carillon world will miss her. ☹