

RINGING TRACKS, WORKSHOPS AND CULTURAL CLASS PROGRAMME

22nd INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM, ABERDEEN 2026

Information about the Presenters and Clinicians is at the end of this Booklet

There are FIVE sessions, two on Wednesday 5 August and three on Thursday 6 August

If you wish to take part in a **Ringling Track** (Symposium Choir) there are **four** to choose from; details are below. Please note that if you select a Ringling Track, you will NOT be able to attend ANY other workshops or classes, as the tracks meet for all five sessions. Tracks A, C and D will perform in the evening concert on Thursday 6 August. Track B is 'relaxed' and will perform only if participants wish to.

RINGING TRACK A (Advanced)

KEVIN MAZIMAS KO (Hong Kong, HAHK)

Kevin graduated with a Masters of Arts in Music Composition from Hong Kong Baptist University in 2003 and a complete Masters in Church Music Degree at Concordia University Wisconsin in 2004, and also obtained his Doctor of Philosophy in 2013. He was a handbell conducting student of Dr. William A. Payn. He also upgraded his handbells composing skill with Arnold Sherman and polished his handbells performance technique with Dr. John Behnke (AGEHR).

He has been invited to be a clinician at the events which were held in Singapore, Taiwan, Canada, United Kingdom, USA, Germany, Indonesia, Australia and Malaysia. He founded the 'Hong Kong International Handbell Olympics' in 2001, an annual bench-marking competition event, and also the annual Christmas event 'Ringling by the Candlelight' in 2015 with the Hong Kong Elite Youth Ringers. He has composed and arranged over 80 pieces of handbell music, some being published with publishers in the United States, available at Jeffers Handbell Supply.

Kevin is currently the Artistic Director of Hong Kong Asia Institute of Handbells and Hong Kong Bronze. He is also a handbell soloist who performs internationally as well as the Malmark Handbells Inc. Hong Kong representative. He is the Artistic director of The Embellishment Handbell Ensemble and founder of the Hong Kong Elite Youth Ringers.

RINGING TRACK B ('Relaxed' Intermediate/Advanced)

KEITH ROWLAND (UK, HRGB)

Keith Rowland started ringling in 1987 with Hamilton Ringers. He was appointed Team Leader in 1992. The team ringling 5 octaves of Whitechapel bells, played locally and nationally, and represented HRGB at the 1998 International Symposium in Japan. He now directs Rowland Ringers Ensemble, ringling 5 octaves of Malmark bells and chimes, and is the joint conductor of the South East Region Bell Orchestra. He is a past Chair of the South East region of HRGB and represented the region at the National Executive Committee. He was a frequent visitor to events in USA including Distinctly Bronze, and organised and ran the HRGB National Residential Ringling Week and initiated UK Bronze. He attended several International Symposia including Birmingham in 2000, Orlando in 2008 and Hamamatsu in 2024. He is the current Chair of HRGB, and is part of the organising committee for the 2026 event in Aberdeen.

RINGING TRACK C (Intermediate)

MALCOLM WILSON (UK, HRGB)

Malcolm Wilson was a founding member of Dunblane Cathedral Handbell Ringers, and has directed their multiple groups for the past 39 years. He initiated the use of Belleplates in Falkirk schools. He was national Membership Secretary of HRGB, manages HRGB national social media presence, was first Chairman of the Scottish Regional Association of HRGB, and was conferred Honorary Life Membership of HRGB. He is a composer/arranger and member of ASCAP. He was massed ringling conductor at the International Handbell Symposium in Edmonton, Birmingham, Toronto, Liverpool, and Vancouver, and he has delivered handbell presentations, led ringling workshops and been massed-ringling conductor for many groups and events in Britain, as well as in other parts of the world. He founded Celtic Clapper Creations, an online store featuring his handbell-inspired designs on a range of merchandise. He initiated and co-organised the annual National Ring in Praise Handbell Seminars for Church Musicians for 25 years, the first four HRGB National Residential Ringling Weeks 1997-2003, and the Scottish Schools Ring events for 21 years. He was founding director of Scotland's national handbell ensemble, Celtic Carillon.

RINGING TRACK D (Intermediate)

GILLIAN ERLBORN (USA, HMA)

Gillian Erlenborn is the conductor of Handbell Choirs at Westminster Choir College of Rider University. Gillian also serves as the handbell choir director at Middlebush Reformed Church in Middlebush, New Jersey. She can be found at various state and national conferences speaking about the benefits of handbells in the music classroom. Gillian is an alumna of Westminster Choir College, where she earned a Bachelor of Music in Music Education and a Master of Arts in Teaching. She is proud to serve on the National Board of the Handbell Musicians of America.

SESSION 1 WEDNESDAY 5 AUGUST (p.m.)

1.1 – 1.4 Ringing Tracks A B C D

1.5 Camp Fire Songs

Emily Franks (UK, HRGB)

Guiding and Scouting is present in some form in over 150 countries worldwide but originated in the UK in the early 1900s. Come and join in a 'traditional' (albeit indoor) British Girlguiding/Scouting campfire. Meet new people and learn some songs while upholding guiding values of inclusivity in a safe space. You do not have to be good at singing, in fact the poorer your voice the more authentic the experience! - this will be fun, with optional actions.

1.6 Rhythm First: Unlocking Latin Grooves in Handbells

Kathryn Jurado (USA, HMA)

Explore how foundational Latin rhythms - and simple movement inspired by Latin Dance - can transform your handbell playing from precise to truly expressive. The groove is what brings music to life! Through engaging, movement-based activities, participants will internalize patterns through movement and latin percussion, and apply them directly to handbell techniques and ensemble performance. No dance experience required - just a willingness to move, feel the pulse, and play!

1.7 Discovering Singapore's Handbell Music for the Young and Persons with Special Needs

Damien Lim (Singapore, HRSG)

Handbells in Singapore is anchored in YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, particularly in Schools: both in Mainstream Schools & Special Education Schools. Learn about the ways that we run our handbell programs in schools (and special education school), and learn about the contents & materials we use, and methods of engaging the students, teachers and community. Come and be prepared to share ideas.

1.8 Shaping Every Shade of Sound - Mastering the Delicate Touch: Confidence in Every Note

Nozomu Abe (Japan, HRJ)

The ringing technique introduced here is essential for achieving dynamic contrast in musical bell performance. After confirming the spring adjustment methods recommended by each handbell manufacturer, he will introduce a ringing technique that allows you to freely control dynamics from pp to ff, achieving a musical and pleasant sound. A key point of this method is that even beginners can master it easily in a very short time. He is keen to share this ringing technique with conductors and ringers alike, as it is something even a complete novice can master with ease in next to no time.

1.9 'A Peculiar Holiday Entertainment'

Dr. Alan Hartley (UK, HRGB)

The art of tune ringing on Handbells is practised worldwide but its origin lies in England in the early 1700's. As handbell ringers we all promote the benefits and enjoyment of tune ringing, but what do others think about it and what are the 'back stories' behind what the audience may see? This workshop will provide information that may surprise you!

1.10 North-East Scots Language (Doric) and Culture Workshop

Charley Buchan (Scotland)

An exploration of the culture of north-east Scotland. Participants will have the opportunity to understand where the 'Scots' language came from, to learn some of the local Doric dialect, and how this informs the north-east culture through music and beyond.

1.11 Preparing for Performance

Tim Willetts (UK, HRGB)

There can be a real difference between the way we feel when we are playing music in the safety of our rehearsal room with no-one listening, and performing music on the stage in front of a large audience (or even a small audience!). What does "performing" do to us and what can we do to help prepare ourselves to play confidently and well in front of an audience and achieve a musical performance?

1.12 Behind the Baton**Debbie Rice (Canada, HMC)**

A conductor's role is to provide leadership through conducting to communicate rhythmical accuracy as well as musical interpretations. Let's go behind the baton with tips for drawing the music out of your performance.

1.13 Traditional Chinese Paper Cutting**Alice Lee Oi Shan (Hong Kong, HAHK)**

Paper-cutting is a traditional art. It uses paper to show cultural ideas by cutting shapes with scissors or knives. This art includes many themes, such as home decoration, good wishes, New Year blessings, weddings, birthdays, and prayers.

In this hands-on workshop, each participant will make two paper-cut pieces. One will be in the traditional style, and the other will be a special Bell Style design created by the teacher. Join the Chinese Paper-Cutting Workshop and explore the beautiful traditional art!

SESSION 2 WEDNESDAY 5 AUGUST (p.m.)**2.1 – 2.4 Ringing Tracks A B C D****2.5 Ceilidh Dancing (Scottish Country Dancing)****Ruth Cantlay (UK, HRGB)**

The class will give you a taste of two or three Scottish dances. Scottish country dancing can be quite formal, but there is a fun element to all the dances we will be doing, and they are frequently danced at Scottish weddings.

2.6 Music in Motion: Easy ways to add visual interest to a performance with layers of movement**heather nicholson (Canada, HMC)**

Handbells are a visual art form, and there are simple ways to add excitement and polish to a performance. This workshop will explore easy movements and ideas that anyone can apply to make the music look as wonderful as it sounds. We will explore ideas for starting and stopping a piece, picking up and putting down bells, malleting, and more. There won't be any crazy dance moves, and you won't have to get your heart rate up. But you WILL get lots of ideas for a variety of ways to take your performances from pretty good to amazing and memorable.

2.7 Canadian Folk Songs**Patsy Andrews-Vert (Canada, HMC)**

This workshop will allow participants a first glance, and sight read, at a collection of Canadian Folk Songs arranged for handbells/handchimes by Canadian arranger and composer, Craig Cassils. This collection was published in the Fall of 2021 by From the Top Music Publishing Co. and features Level 2-3, 3 octaves arrangements of Canadian Folk Songs from all over on a journey to Canada, complete with pictures, history, geography and music!

2.8 Ringing by Numbers – Not for the Fainthearted!**Philip Bedford (UK, HRGB)**

Any level of music can be played from traditional number notation. Even Benjamin Britten composed in a version of it. TAKE THE CHALLENGE. Come and play some of the more difficult two and a quarter octave handbell number music - and be very surprised. It is so satisfying, especially four-in-hand.

2.9 Hungarian Heritage & Harmony: A Cultural Journey with Bells**Márton Germán (Hungary)**

Join us for an interactive exploration of Hungarian culture! We will dive into Hungary's unique heritage, taking a fun look at our language and traditions. For musicians, no Hungarian journey is complete without Zoltán Kodály. We will briefly explore how the famous Kodály method fits the nature of handbell ringing. Furthermore, there will be an introduction to an upcoming international handbell program in Hungary, sharing insights into its development and goals.

2.10 North-East Scots Language (Doric) and Culture Workshop**Charley Buchan (Scotland)**

An exploration of the culture of north-east Scotland. Participants will have the opportunity to understand where the 'Scots' language came from, to learn some of the local Doric dialect, and how this informs the north-east culture through music and beyond

2.11 Before You Ring**Mark Walland (UK, HRGB)**

What to look for when confronted with a new piece of music and what some of the symbols and ‘funny words’ mean.

2.12 Becoming Team Players Through Critical Listening**Debbie Rice (Canada, HMC)**

Critical listening represents an area of essential skills that directors and ringers navigate together in order to become a stronger team. Attendees will participate as ringers exploring how to create the best group sound, execute dynamics, highlight melodies and shape musical phrases.

2.13 Origami Crane**Noriko Musha (Japan, HRJ)**

This class will teach participants how to fold one of the most traditional and well-known forms of Japanese origami: the paper crane. Together, we will fold as many cranes as we can and bundle them at the end to create a *senbazuru*—a string of one thousand cranes. In Japan, cranes have long been considered a symbol of good fortune, and it is said that folding a thousand of them (meaning “many”) will help one’s wishes come true. With prayers for peace, we hope to create this *senbazuru* together.

SESSION 3 THURSDAY 6 AUGUST (a.m.)**3.1 – 3.4 Ringing Tracks A B C D****3.5 Ceilidh Dancing (Scottish Country Dancing)****Ruth Cantlay (UK, HRGB)**

The class will give you a taste of two or three Scottish dances. Scottish country dancing can be quite formal, but there is a fun element to all the dances we will be doing, and they are frequently danced at Scottish weddings.

3.6 Handbell Olympics**Debbie Rice (Canada, HMC)**

So, you didn’t qualify for a 2026 Olympic team? No worries. Join the Handbell Olympics! The Cowbells and Doorbells will compete in handbell games. Participants will not improve ringing skills; however, no bells will be harmed during these games. Shhhh, a “Clapper Caper” mystery will close this session!

3.7 Bring the Ring: Bringing the Notes Off the Page**Brenda E. Austin (USA, HMA)**

You’ve learned the notes—wonderful! Now it’s time for the next step. This class focuses on transforming accurate ringing into beautiful, expressive music. While working through handbell repertoire, we’ll explore how to bring out the musicality within each piece, helping ringers move beyond “just playing their two notes.” Together we’ll develop strategies for shaping phrases, listening more globally to the ensemble, and creating performances that feel cohesive, musical, and deeply satisfying.

3.8 British Church Bell Ringing**Judith Frye and Alan & Wendy Walters (UK, HRGB)**

An introduction to Change Ringing as you would hear from church towers around Britain. Some easy to remember changes you could ring on handbells and then a way of showing how changing the sequence of bells gives the characteristic sound.

3.9 Get to Know Us - The Importance of Online Presence – Websites (using Weebly)**Damien Lim (Singapore, HRSG)**

Websites are an integral and very basic part of digital marketing. You could be charged a fee for a professionally designed and corporate-maintained website, or you could DIY your website for your group or yourself, and even manage it from your phone while on the move. Using Weebly is absolutely free and easy. Come with your laptop with WIFI connection for a quick DIY session, and create a baseline for your new website.

3.10 World Peace starts with your handbell choir: how values-based group music making changes lives for the better	Katrina Gordon & Susie Dingle (UK, HRGB)
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This is an interactive talk/discussion followed by a Question and Answer session.

Topics covered will be: Values-based leadership; Being explicit about your values; Agreeing on your values; Neuroscience of a values based approach; Neuroscience of inclusion; The role of joy; Music-making as an offering/an act of service.

3.11 How to Flirt	Stevie Berryman (USA, HMA)
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It's about more than smiling. Learning your music is just the first step in an engaging performance. Once you've learned the notes, there's a nonverbal language you should master to truly captivate your audience. Demystify the art of connecting with your listeners using some surprisingly simple changes. "All performance is flirtation."

So...how's your game? Cheeky title aside, this class brings laughter to that vital and terrifying part of performing: connecting with your audience. With a slide deck that uses the internet's least-reliable source of information (WikiHow) Stevie goes through the dos and don'ts of flirtation and applies those lessons to performance soft-skills. Topics include things like "Stop Being Boring," "Smile! No, Not Like That," and "What's in Your Kit," and the class concludes with a lab portion for attendees to put into practice the skills they have learned.

3.12 Expressive Conducting – Exploring Musical Nuance through Laban's Movement Language	Emily Li (Hong Kong, HAHK)
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This workshop is designed for experienced conductors who wish to explore greater musical nuance through the application of Laban's Movement Language. Participants will experience Laban's eight basic efforts through guided body movement and apply these concepts to handbell music excerpts, examining how weight, time, space, and flow shape expressive conducting gestures. The session focuses on translating musical intention into clear, effective non-verbal communication that encourages confident, musical ringing and deeper ensemble responsiveness. Examples will be drawn from the symposium repertoire.

3.13 Cross Stitch – Wooden Bell Ornament	Kate Worthington (UK, HRGB)
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Stitch yourself a wooden bell ornament to display. You will be provided with the wooden ornament, threads, a variety of patterns to choose from (or you can design your own), scissors, needles and ribbon. Full instructions will be given so you can be a complete beginner or advanced stitcher.

SESSION 4 THURSDAY 6 AUGUST (p.m.)

4.1 – 4.4 Ringing Tracks A B C D

4.5 La danse canadienne-française (French-Canadian Dance) Emmy Okazawa-Bortolin (Canada, HMC)
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Most people might know that Canada is a very multicultural nation. Some might also know that our second official language (after English) is French. Our rich history and past gave us not only this beautiful language but all the glorious culture that makes up any ethnic language. One small aspect of this culture is French-Canadian dance and in particular, "la gigue". This workshop offers a brief history and introduction to the significance of la gigue and folkloric dance as they contributed to the development of Canadian culture and commerce. Expected Class outcome: Participants will learn some basic steps and techniques of giguing as well as other French-Canadian folk dances.

4.6 Object Lessons	Stevie Berryman (USA, HMA)
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With some imagination, ordinary objects can become excellent tools for teaching key concepts of bell-ringing concepts like stroke, grip, posture, and weaving. Come ready to play, and you'll learn how to bounce, catch, and juggle your way into advanced ringing skills! Participation and movement are encouraged in this high-energy/high-rewards class featuring some of Stevie's favourite games chosen from years of teaching handbell ringing with a unique, play-based method.

4.7 Classic American Pops: Bringing Timeless Favourites to Handbells Kathryn Jurado (USA, HMA)

From the golden age of American songwriting to beloved holiday favourites, classic American popular music offers a rich and engaging repertoire for handbell ensembles. From toe-tapping swing to holiday cheer, participants will explore excerpts inspired by iconic titles including Singin' in the Rain, Dream a Little Dream of Me, Christmas Don't Be Late (The Chipmunk Song), Blue Skies, and music from A Charlie Brown Christmas.

4.8 Traditional English Four-in-Hand Ringing Fiona and Robert Willis (UK, HRGB)

Experience the basics of traditional English Four-in-hand ringing using only 12 bells. Attendees will learn how to put a basic 12-bell set together, a suggested method for marking up staff music and try ringing from marked staff notation.

4.9 Iceland: Land of Fire & Ice Karen J. Sturlaugsson, assisted by Arnar F. Valsson (Iceland)

Iceland: Land of Fire and Ice, but also music!
Come and learn about a country of contrasts. An introduction to the history and culture of Iceland.

**4.10 Touch of Tartan: The Story, Craft & Modern Wear of Highland Dress
Chelsea Hawthorne (on behalf of McCalls Highlandwear, Scotland)**

A relaxed and engaging introduction to the world of Highlandwear, designed for those discovering tartan for the first time as well as those with a growing appreciation for it. This session brings the story of tartan to life, from its rich cultural roots to the craftsmanship behind a traditional kilt, and how Highland dress continues to evolve in a modern setting. Attendees will have the opportunity to see and feel garments up close, explore how outfits are styled for different occasions, and gain a real sense of how Highlandwear comes together. With plenty of opportunity for questions and conversation throughout, the session is informal, interactive, and designed to give a genuine, memorable insight into Highlandwear in a way that feels both accessible and inspiring.

4.11 I'm in Charge? – Help! (Beginner's Conducting & Leadership) Aidan Fozard (UK, HRGB)

In this class we will explore the role of the conductor. We will learn how to accurately beat simple time signatures while enacting dynamic and tempo changes, and creating musical nuance. Beyond the physical, we will explore how to prepare, structure and lead a rehearsal to achieve musical success.

4.12 The Art of Arranging Pop Music for Handbells Nick Hanson (USA, HMA)

Pop music is an enjoyable genre that is rhythmic, energetic, and an overall fun addition to a concert's repertoire. However, the constraints inherent to the handbell instrument can make arranging these pieces for handbell ensemble rather challenging. This class includes tips for bringing pop music to the page while maintaining the integrity of the source.

4.13 Making a Korean style Knot Bracelet Nara Song (Korea, KHA)

Traditional Korean knots have been used for hundreds of years to decorate clothing, accessories, and gifts. They are beautiful and also symbolize good luck, harmony, and connection. You will create your own bracelet to take home.

SESSION 5 THURSDAY 6 AUGUST (p.m.)**5.1 – 5.4 Ringing Tracks A B C D****5.5 Latin Dance: Rhythm, Movement and Cultural Connection
Cheyla Marrero & Linnette Rodriguez (USA, HMA)**

This interactive workshop introduces participants to the fundamentals of popular Latin dance styles such as salsa, merengue, and bachata. The class focuses on basic steps, rhythm, coordination, and cultural context, creating a fun and engaging environment for all experience levels. Participants will explore how movement and rhythm connect

across disciplines, enhancing musicality, timing, and expression; skills that directly complement ensemble performance, including handbell ringing. No prior dance experience is required.

5.6 Ringing Musically – Beyond the Notes

Emily Li (Hong Kong, HAHK)

Handbells are a highly dynamic instrument closely connected to the ringer's body. This workshop is designed for ringers and conductors of all levels who wish to explore musical expression through greater awareness of mind and body movement. Through guided exercises and musical examples, participants will examine how physical awareness, listening, and intentional motion influence tone production, phrasing, and ensemble blend. Concepts are scalable from foundational skills to advanced refinement, allowing each participant to discover new possibilities for producing a more expressive, musical, and confident performance.

5.7 Echoes of Hungary: Sight-Reading from Rock to Folk Operetta

Márton Germán (Hungary)

Join us for a unique sight-reading session that explores the rich and emotional musical landscape of Hungary! Our main focus will be a beautiful, dynamic medley from "János vitéz" (John the Valiant), Hungary's most beloved folk operetta by Pongrác Kacsóh. This piece will challenge our ensemble with exciting stylistic shifts - from a heroic march to a playful flute melody, ending with a deeply emotional, tear-jerking ballad. (Level 3+)

Time permitting, we will also read through "Gyöngyhajú lány," (Pearls in her hair) a legendary Hungarian rock ballad (covered worldwide by the Scorpions as White Dove).

Come and experience the passion of Hungarian music through the bells!

5.8 So you can play four-in-hand? What's next.....?

Emily Franks (UK, HRGB)

Four-in-hand is easy when you only have dynamics to contend with, but what happens when you come across staccato notes, or key changes? This class will teach you how to navigate common handbell techniques whilst playing four-in-hand. We will cover key changes, accidentals, malleting, thump damping, shaking and ringing at the same time, martellato and how to progress to Six-in-hand.

5.9 Symposium 2028 Get Exploring Singapore – Symposium 2028

Lyn Yap & Damien Lim (Singapore, HRSG)

SINGAPORE: An Island-City-State. With a land size of 780sqkm, we are smaller than New York City, half the size of London, and smaller than Tokyo. And we managed to squeeze 6.1 million people in it. Alright, you get it! But what have we to offer? We are a small nation that packs a big punch when it comes to offerings in the arts (handbells especially), economy, welfare, education... and yes! FOOD. The International Handbell Symposium comes to Singapore in 2028. So, what has the symposium to offer, in addition to what can you do in Singapore as a visitor?

5.10 Touch of Tartan: The Story, Craft & Modern Wear of Highland Dress

Chelsea Hawthorne (on behalf of McCall's Highlandwear, Scotland)

A relaxed and engaging introduction to the world of Highlandwear, designed for those discovering tartan for the first time as well as those with a growing appreciation for it. This session brings the story of tartan to life, from its rich cultural roots to the craftsmanship behind a traditional kilt, and how Highland dress continues to evolve in a modern setting. Attendees will have the opportunity to see and feel garments up close, explore how outfits are styled for different occasions, and gain a real sense of how Highlandwear comes together. With plenty of opportunity for questions and conversation throughout, the session is informal, interactive, and designed to give a genuine, memorable insight into Highlandwear in a way that feels both accessible and inspiring.

5.11 What to expect when performing in a professional theatre

Derek Nance (USA, HMA)

Do you have the opportunity to rent a professional theatre for your concert? Have you been hired to perform on a concert series? Are you performing with your local orchestra? For many handbell musicians, the chance to perform in a professional venue does not come too often. This class will prepare you for the moment that opportunity comes your way! We will discuss the extra layers of planning that these performances require and what to be prepared for on the day of your performance. Participants will leave with the vocabulary to talk about their lighting and sound needs to a professional crew, and an understanding of the work flow within the venue. While specific union regulations will differ depending on the country you are in, the general principles are the same everywhere.

5.12 ACCOMBells – instant fun bell chordal accompaniments to community singing

Suzanne Maslen OAM & Henrik Hogg (Australia, HSA)

Participants will be singers and/or accompanists to a fun session of popular songs accompanied by a chordal tapestry involving chordal chimes rather than guitar chords or ukuleles.

The class will be run at two levels – one very basic, with regular chords as notated on the provided song tunes – the second learning how to play along to new music using figured bass/tab notation. The difficulty is based on your ability. Everyone is welcome to join.

5.13 Drawing Celtic Knots

Elena Koponen-Baikie (UK, HRGB)

Learn how to draw Celtic Knots using a grid. Celtic knots are made up of interlacing and endless lines which symbolise eternity and the cycle of life. We will practise a few easy designs first using pencils and squared paper. Then you can choose to decorate a bookmark or a greeting card. There will be several templates to choose from or you can create your own design.

CLINICIANS AND PRESENTERS at the 22nd INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM, ABERDEEN 2026

AUSTRALIA Handbell Society of Australasia

Suzanne Maslen (Kevinwood Bells musical director) is a physicist who researched the physics of sounds made by bells, presenting a paper on this topic at an acoustic conference in St Petersburg, a pianist who has performed concertos with Symphony orchestras in Western Australia, NSW and Queensland and the choir director of numerous community choirs.

Henrik Hogg is studying composition at the Conservatorium of Music, Sydney University, and rings with Kevinwood Bells. Composing for handbells, celeste and piano is his newest work – “Duck in a Pond”. He has an upcoming orchestral premiere in September of 2026.

CANADA Handbell Musicians of Canada

Patsy Andrews-Vert received a Bachelor of Music Education from Brandon University (Brandon MB) in 1984. She also holds an Associate in Flute Performance from the Western Board of Music (1986). Patsy has taught students of all instrumental music levels in both Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Canada. She is retired from teaching in South-Central Manitoba, but continues to work in the school system teaching whatever she is given. She is an active clinician, adjudicator and conductor in handbells, band, and Speech Arts. Patsy is a Past-Chair of the Handbell Musicians of Canada, and President of the Manitoba Guild of English Handbell Ringers. She directs the Trinity Lutheran Handbells in Starbuck MB and plays with the quartet Ring Out! based in Winnipeg MB.

heather nicholson has been ringing up musical adventures across North America since discovering handbells in 1992! A founding member of three bell choirs and a small ensemble in the Toronto, Canada area, she has performed and taught at local, regional, national, and international handbell events (including the 2004 Toronto Handbell Symposium) – always ready for the next challenge, concert, or last-minute ringing adventure. Known for her energetic and expressive solo performances, heather loves combining creativity, movement, and musical storytelling to bring handbells to life. She produced a CD of small ensemble handbell music in 2009 and has three published solo handbell arrangements through AGEHR Publishing (HMA), From the Top Music, and Sonology Music.

Beyond the ringing table, heather spent more than 10 years as Editor of AGEHR's *Clapper Chatter* newsletter and currently serves as the provincial Central East Area Representative and a Director-at-Large for Handbell Musicians of Canada.

Emmy Okazawa-Bortolin was born in Japan, but immigrated to Canada as a child and grew up bilingual (Japanese-English) in Ontario. She moved to Québec City for university and “became” Québécoise, absorbing all that was French-Canadian. Like a sponge soaking up all the incredible culture and history of this region of Canada, she learned how to play spoons, finger weave, dance reels and speak French like a local. She continued this fascination in Alberta where she taught French Immersion while training and performing with a francophone gigue troupe, La Girandole. This was incidentally a very artistic time in her life as she also met her first handbell in Alberta. Since 1984, Emmy has been a ringer, soloist, clinician, adjudicator, director and massed conductor at events in the USA, Singapore, Canada and at IHS Liverpool. She has served on local, national and international handbell Boards since the early 1990s and organized

the 2nd IHS Edmonton in 1992 as well as several regional and national handbell festivals. In her free time, she teaches fitness, music and plays jazz clarinet in a swing band.

Debbie Rice is the artistic director for the Handbell Society of Edmonton, Alberta. In 2024 she was awarded the International Handbell Laureate Award in Japan while representing Canada as conductor. She has served as mass conductor for previous symposia in Australia 2006 & 2018 (Inaugural Handchimes), United States 2008, Japan 2010 (Festival Choir) and Korea 2014 (Youth). In addition to symposia, she has adjudicated and conducted in 25 countries. Debbie holds membership in two Guilds: Handbell Musicians of Canada and Handbell Musicians of America as an Honorary Life Member (the Guild's highest honour). Her administrative positions included serving as National President for HMA where her board transitioned into a new form of governance. In her role as a former Executive Director for the International Handbell Committee, we officially welcomed Hong Kong and Singapore into our community! She has also been a university professor and faithfully served music ministries.

Handbells and handchimes remain a lifelong passion as she continues to bring this instrument into new communities. Her 2027 international tour partnering with WITTE Travel will explore Poland and Czech Republic.

HONG KONG (Handbell Association of Hong Kong)

Alice Lee Oi Shan has been studying handbells with Ms. Emily Li since 2002 and is now a member of the Hong Kong Handbell Academy Belltastic Ensemble, actively performing in Hong Kong and overseas. She has attended the International Handbell Symposium since 2008. For 17 years, she established and conducted her school handchime and belleplate choirs, achieving outstanding results in inter-school handbell competitions every year. She has also served as a workshop clinician many times, including workshops on Chinese fan-painting, Chinese knots, and paper cutting..

Emily Li is an internationally respected handbell soloist, conductor, educator, and composer with over three decades of experience in advancing the art of handbell performance. Born and raised in Hong Kong and now based in Canada, she has appeared as a performer and clinician across Asia, Europe, and North America, engaging diverse handbell communities worldwide.

She is the Founder and Artistic Director of the Hong Kong Handbell Academy, a leading institution in handbell education, where she has been instrumental in cultivating artistic excellence and shaping generations of ringers. Under her direction, the Academy's ensembles, including the Hong Kong Youth Handbell Ensemble, have earned international recognition for their high performance standards and innovative programming.

Renowned for her expressive artistry and insightful pedagogy, Emily integrates movement-based approaches to deepen musical understanding and communication. A frequent conductor and clinician at international festivals and symposiums, she is dedicated to inspiring ringers and conductors to pursue expressive, collaborative, and meaningful music-making.

HUNGARY

Márton Germán is a founding member and the artistic director of the Szironta Ensemble, established in 2009. He creates the ensemble's handbell arrangements and develops its repertoire to actively promote the art of handbell ringing. Additionally, he serves as a director of the European Handbell Committee and manages PR and international affairs for Szironta and its umbrella association.

His musical work is deeply rooted in researching handbell techniques and chamber ensemble practices, with a strong focus on sharing this knowledge. A professional in the media industry with degrees in economics, education, and communications, Marton enjoys travelling, exploring Central and Eastern European music, and studying Slavic culture. Currently, he is spearheading efforts to secure Hungary's official representation within the International Handbell Committee, aiming to expand continental Europe's presence alongside the UK. He is deeply committed to integrating the Hungarian handbell community into the global movement and is thrilled to share his cultural heritage at the International Handbell Symposium.

ICELAND

Karen Janine Sturlaugsson was born in Massachusetts, USA of Icelandic descent. She grew up in a musical family and started playing trumpet and piano from an early age and played in bands, orchestras and handbell choirs. She graduated college with degrees in music and mathematics. In 1987 Karen moved to Iceland. She has taught brass and ensembles and been the assistant principal at the Reykjanesbaer Music School since 1999. Currently Karen conducts

the Reykjanesbaer Music School Handbell Choir, Lúðrasveit verkalýðsins (an adult community band in Reykjavík) and LV Big Band. Karen received the Order of the Falcon from the Icelandic president in June 2022.

JAPAN (Handbell Ringers of Japan)

Nozomu Abe founded the Kobe YMCA Bell Choir in 1980, initiating his career in handbell music. A board member of the Handbell Ringers of Japan from 1986 to 2021, he also spent 30 years as Kansai Chapter Director, contributing significantly to regional performance standards. Internationally, he was invited to conduct mass ringing at the International Handbell Symposiums in Exeter (1988) and Birmingham (2000), performing his own arrangements of Japanese folk songs. In 2010, he chaired the executive committee for the 14th International Handbell Symposium in Osaka, leading the event to a successful conclusion. Currently, he is dedicated to training the next generation at the Osaka College of Music and Kobe YMCA. The four recordings released by the Kobe YMCA Bell Choir are well regarded for their musicality.

Noriko Musha began ringing handbells the year after HRJ was founded, marking the beginning of nearly five decades as a ringer. Since 1996, she has participated in every International Handbell Symposium and has contributed to planning and operations for the past Symposium hosted in Japan. This year, she will join HRJ members in Aberdeen, presenting a Japanese culture class and sharing her ORIGAMI workshop with ringers from around the world to fold for world peace.

SOUTH KOREA Korea Handbell Association

Nara Song is a conductor of the Hallelujah Church in Korea. Due to the influence of her father, who was an art teacher in high school, she grew up exposed to various aspects of Korean art and won an award for painting and making at a prestigious competition.

SINGAPORE Handbell Ringers of Singapore

Damien Lim trained as a military and theatre percussionist, and Yamaha Electone musician; Damien is Founder and Music Director of the MINISTRY OF BELLZ. "Music" has led him to perform, teach & adjudicate in 20+ countries.

Damien is a Fellow of the London College of Music (UK). He holds a Master of Music (Performance) from the University of West London – London College of Music (UK), a Master of Music (Leadership) from the National University of Singapore – Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music and was recently awarded the title of Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa) by ATU in 2022, for his work in handbell music development in Singapore.

Damien directs advanced handbell teams at 5 schools and is consultant for 9 other school ensembles. A believer of creative excellence through handbell music, he contributes actively to the development of handbells in Singapore: through his tireless work with students, youths, persons with special needs and is Music Director with the ExtraOrdinary Light Orchestra. His motivation is to be "purposeful in pursuit of excellence". Damien is the Executive Director of the HRSG. www.damienlim.weebly.com

Lyn Yap is the President of HRSG and is recently retired. She is involved in editing and research for various organisations on a voluntary capacity, in the areas of disability and dementia studies, and creation care. She is extremely excited to welcome ringers from all over the world to the inaugural IHS in Singapore.

UNITED KINGDOM Handbell Ringers of Great Britain

Philip Bedford is currently living and ringing in Canterbury, England; handbell music composer, International Symposium Massed Ringing Conductor and Workshop Clinician since the 3rd Symposium in 1988 and through the following 22 years. With his brother Don he published 28 books of handbell music ranging from 4 books for 1½ octaves in number notation, 7 books for 2¼ octaves in both staff and number notation, 5 books for 3 octaves and 5 books for 4 octaves only in staff notation, and a dozen individual 5 octave staff notation pieces composed by Philip, all now on line and in the Public Domain. He has come out of symposium retirement to dare you to share his love for traditional number music.

Ruth Cantlay has been ringing handbells for over 30 years and is the musical director of Jordanhill Parish Church Handbell Ringers in Glasgow. She is currently the secretary of the Scottish Regional Association of HRGB. She has conducted at several Scottish Regional events, and has attended many of the International Handbell Symposia. Ruth ran two similar workshops in Osaka in 2010 and prepared a similar workshop which was run at the Symposium in Liverpool in 2012.

Aidan Fozard has been ringing handbells since he was 9 or 10. Aidan is a handbell conductor, performer, educator and event organiser, including as part of the organising team for this event and the organiser of the National Residential Ringing Week. Aidan is the Musical Director of the 35 member HRGB East Anglian Regional Team. With 3 rows of English bells spanning around 7 octaves, it is one of the largest advanced groups in the UK. It is a non-auditioned community group that meets monthly before performing a series of concerts in the spring. Aidan is a regular conductor and educator on a breadth of topics for HRGB National events and has done the same at HMA events. As a ringer, Aidan is a member of the Royswood Bronze trio and is well known for his Belleplate solos. Aidan aims to make quality performance and musicality core, while also having fun!

In the world of work, Aidan is a senior IT service management consultant, forming and leading virtual teams, turning over rocks and running towards the fires.

Emily Franks has been a handbell ringer pretty much since she was born as both her parents played. She learnt the four-in-hand style when she was 9/10 years old and played regularly in a 12-bell team from a few years later. Three years ago, her team of three ringers became a team of two and branched into 8 bell music and the complexities it brings.

Emily has been in Girlguiding (UK) since she was 5 years old. She is a qualified Brownie Guider meaning she helps 7–10 year old girls try new things and learn life skills while having fun and building their confidence week by week. She has taken part in campfires for 20 (and a bit years) from a Rainbow (age 5-7) to now leading fire songs with members of all ages in the Guiding community.

Judith Frye learned to ring as a student 50 years ago. Currently she is Tower Captain at Dunblane Cathedral, Training Officer for the Scottish Association of Change Ringers and a Tutor for the Association of Ringing Teachers. She rings handbells with Dunblane Cathedral Handbell Ringers.

Alan & Wendy Walters have both been ringing church bells for over 50 years and first met in a church tower at University. They have been ringing handbells for 40 years and formed the Alton Handbell Ringers in 1991, which Wendy leads.

Katrina Gordon (composer) and **Susie Dingle** (conductor) are co-founders of the social enterprise caithnessmusic.com which promotes community group music making for health. Since 2012, they have been taking an explicit, values-led approach to facilitating group music making in their wee corner of Scotland. As well as working with the Caithness Handbell Ringers, they also run weekly rehearsals for choirs, orchestras, swing bands and brass bands, open to all ages and abilities. Katrina has completed an MSc in Mindfulness Studies, researching Music and Mindfulness.

Dr. Alan Hartley is the son of the founding Chairman of Handbell Ringers of Great Britain. He is a past Chairman of HRGB, and past Chairman of the International Handbell Committee. He led the Organising Committee for the International Handbell Symposiums in Birmingham (2000) and Liverpool (2012). He is now the Archivist for HRGB.

Elena Koponen-Baikie is a Finn who has lived in Scotland for over 30 years and as well as handbell ringing, enjoys various traditional crafts. She has always loved the logic and geometry of Celtic Knots and has lately started using them in her crochet work.

Mark Walland has been ringing handbells for the last 53 years and is getting the hang of it at last! He is a member of 4 different teams varying from duets with his wife Sue to the East Anglian Regional Team. In the 7 years before his retirement he worked at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry.

Tim Willetts is a teacher and education adviser. After discovering the joy of handbells in the 1980s he rang bass bells for years before realising that a conductor's baton weighs less! He has been Musical Director of St Lawrence Chobham Handbell Ringers and Kirdford, Ifold and Plaistow Handbell Ringers Association (KIPHRA) since 2002. He has played bells and conducted bell groups in many countries. In 2005 he was invited to become Musical Director of the East Anglian Regional Handbell Team, and the Founding Director of the Northern Bell Orchestra. His school handbell groups achieved distinctions in their LCM Handbell Ensemble Exams. From 2014 to 2023 he was Chair of the Handbell Ringers of Great Britain – and he is currently Executive Director of the International Handbell Committee.

Fiona and Robert Willis are a married couple with a combined experience of over 60 years' handbell ringing off table, in hand, peal ringing and four-in-hand both from number and staff notations. In 2024 they represented HRGB at the International Symposium in Toronto as members of *Tor Bells*, playing traditional Sea Shanties four-in-hand with Robert's parents, Jane and John. As a couple they have performed both off-table and four-in-hand as '*Beauty and The Beast*' – We'll leave you to decide who is who! Fiona is one of the four conductors of the HRGB South West Region Handbell Ensemble founded by Robert before he moved on to direct the Exeter Youth Orchestra. Fiona and Robert were prominent clinicians at the UK National Youth Music Camps for 13 years, each teaching a group of 10-12 teenagers how to ring a bell - right through to a concert ready performance of a piece at the end of the week after only a few hours

tuition. In addition to Handbell Ringing and Orchestra work, Fiona and Robert are a Primary School Teacher and an NHS Server Analyst respectively, volunteering with Scouts and Squirrels (4-5 yr olds) in what little spare time they have. **Kate Worthington** owns Lakeside Needlecraft and the business has been running for 12 years. It specialises in cross stitch but also sells needlecraft items for all crafts. She have been stitching for over 20 years and was very lucky to be able to turn her hobby into her full time job. She enjoys all kinds of stitching and particularly loves stitching nature, birds and Quaker style designs.

SCOTLAND Guest Presenters

Charley Buchan was born in Fraserburgh, North Aberdeenshire, and brings over 20 years' experience as a north-east Scotland cultural practitioner and project manager, along with over 10 years as a Secondary School teacher to his role as Doric Language Development Worker with the Elphinstone Institute, at the University of Aberdeen. He has a continuous Doric thread that weaves its way through both his professional and personal work and was Director of Fitlike Records for 7 years. Charley features regularly in the Press & Journal (P&J) 'Doric Corner' feature and is an active volunteer with the Tarves Heritage Project in Tarves, where he now resides.

Chelsea Hawthorne represents McCalls Highlandwear, a family-run Scottish business established in 1887 and now proudly spanning four generations. With a long-standing reputation for quality, craftsmanship, and expertise in Highland dress, the business has remained rooted in tradition while continually evolving for the modern wearer. She's passionate about making Highlandwear feel easy and approachable, whether someone has grown up around tartan or is coming to it for the first time. Chelsea works closely within the family business and plays an active role in how customers experience Highlandwear today. A big part of what she enjoys is helping people feel comfortable and confident in what they're wearing, and showing that Highlandwear can work in lots of different ways, not just the traditional ones.

Through sessions like *Touch of Tartan*, it's less about a formal talk and more about sharing the story behind it all. From the history and craftsmanship through to what it actually feels like to wear, the aim is to bring it to life in a warm, down-to-earth way and give people something they can really connect with.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA Handbell Musicians of America

Brenda Austin is in demand internationally as a conductor and clinician, known for her dynamic, energetic approach to connecting musicians through handbells. In 2019, she joined the editorial team at Hope Publishing Company in Carol Stream, IL, and in 2023 she was named Music Director for Embellish Handbells. Under her leadership, Embellish was selected as one of the premier ensembles to perform at Handbell Musicians of America's Pinnacle in 2025. Before joining Embellish, Brenda served as Artistic Director of the Detroit Handbell Ensemble beginning in 2016. She has also served as Director of Music at First United Methodist Church in Eaton Rapids, MI, since 2003.

A prolific composer and arranger, Brenda has had more than 120 handbell and sacred choral titles published since 2015. She is highly sought after as a clinician throughout the year and has conducted at numerous festivals and workshops, including HMA's Distinctly Bronze and the Bellprints International Handbell Competition in Hong Kong.

Stevie Berryman lights up festival podiums with her humour, creativity, and ability to draw moving performances out of ringers at any skill level. She is the director of the Handbell Ensemble at Trinity University and the Artistic Director of River City Ringers in San Antonio, TX. Stevie was a co-founder and Artistic Director of the acclaimed Houston Chamber Ringers in Houston, TX, and of Rocket Bells in League City, TX. She has previously directed many different church ensembles in Virginia and Texas. She wears the titles of handbell clinician, arranger, and educator but is best known for her imaginative and immersive concert programming. Stevie has a particular passion for teaching beginners how to ring, and her innovative, play-based methods have made her a sought-after educator and clinician at area, national, and international handbell festivals. She and her husband Paul are co-owners of Truly Horrible Things, a snarky card game company, even though her mother always told her that no one would ever pay her to be sarcastic.

Nick Hanson After receiving his BA in Music (with a concentration in handbell performance) from Concordia University, Irvine, California, Nick has been teaching at The Potomac School in McLean, Virginia, for the past 25 years. At Potomac, he teaches six classes to students between ten and nineteen years old. He also serves as the handbell director at a Presbyterian Church in Alexandria, Virginia.

Nick is a sought after faculty clinician and conductor throughout the world, having led events, classes and workshops in England, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, Taiwan and the United States. Most recently he conducted the esteemed handbell event, Distinctly Bronze, in 2025. In 2022, The Potomac School recognized Nick with the Bill Cook Excellence

in Teaching Award, and he was featured in the Arlington Magazine article 'Teachers We Love' in 2023. He is a published writer in the national US handbell magazine *Overtones*, serves on HMA's Bells in Schools Committee, has over 100 pieces composed and arranged, and is co-host of the podcast *Two Tacos High: A Handbell Podcast*.

Kathryn Jurado is a musician with over 30 years of performance experience, 20 years of nonprofit volunteer work, and a lifelong dedication to church music ministry. She is a respected leader in the handbell community as both a ringer and director. She serves as Director of Handbells at Landon School in Bethesda, Maryland, where she leads ensembles in grades 5-12, and is the Handbell Editor for Alfred Music and Instrumental Editor for Jubilate Music Group. Originally from Puerto Rico, Kathryn holds Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from the University of South Florida. As a freelance oboist and private teacher, she has performed with orchestras, musical theatre, and opera companies in central Florida, appeared in *La La Land Live*, and performed alongside artists including Ray Charles, the Irish Tenors, and Hanson. A sought-after clinician and conductor, Kathryn continues to lead festivals and events across the United States, inspiring musicians of all levels. She is passionate about developing expressive, musically confident ensembles through educational and engaging rehearsal techniques.

Cheyra Marrero has been involved in Latin dance since the age of 12. She has participated in various dance groups, performed alongside musical artists, and shared her knowledge through teaching in school settings. She has also been part of similar workshops at past symposia, bringing both cultural perspective and hands-on experience to her sessions. In addition to her artistic background, she is a professional designer and team leader who enjoys creating engaging and welcoming learning environments.

Linnette Rodriguez has been ringing bells since 1989. She has not missed a Symposium since 2004 and has helped offer the Latin dances workshop in Symposiums in Australia (2006), Japan (2010), and Canada (2016). She has played bells in over 25 countries and loves sharing the art of handbell ringing with friends from all over the world.

Derek Nance is a professional technical director and stage manager who works primarily in the western United States. He has worked both concerts and theatrical shows at Lake Tahoe Shakespeare and Idaho Shakespeare, as well as working behind the scenes with the Reno Philharmonic. As a handbell musician, Derek is also one half of the duo that brings you concerts live on the internet from the Handbell Musicians of America National Seminar every summer.