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[www.chimes.cornell.edu](http://www.chimes.cornell.edu)

[chimes@cornell.edu](mailto:chimes@cornell.edu)

(607) 255-5350

Marisa Piliero LaFalce '96, Editor

## **NEW! The McGraw Tower All Chimes Recording Studio!** **Alan Erickson '03, '04**

Well, not quite, but recording Cornell Chimes concerts is now a regular occurrence in McGraw Tower. The chimesmasters have enjoyed recording many of their concerts on a newly installed compact disk (CD)-recording system this spring.

After two years of planning and discussions by the current chimesmasters and the Chimes Alumni Advisory Council, efforts finally paid off in November, when the first "non-professional" CD was recorded. The original project scope included installation of a complete system including microphones, amplifiers and recording equipment. But upon further study, and the success of a project by the Statler Hotel to have the regular chime concerts play inside the hotel lobby, we determined that it was possible to reduce the scope and tie into an existing system. If you have not visited the Statler Hotel recently, next time you are on campus, please stop by the hotel lobby during a chimes concert, you will be pleasantly surprised!

For many years, there has been an amplifier and microphone in the belfry of McGraw Tower that is used to broadcast the bells on a speaker at the School of Veterinary Medicine, so that our far-Eastern campus residents can hear and enjoy their music too.

The Statler Hotel connected to this system to provide high quality sound in their lobby. After this discovery, and a couple of additional months of research with the help of Rich Johnson '80, a



*The Tascam CD/RW-4U compact disk recorder/burner shown here, and located at the playing stand level, connects to a microphone in the tower belfry. With the flip of a switch, chimesmasters and compets can record their concerts onto a CD, and later review to improve their playing skills.*

CD-recording system, inside McGraw Tower, was purchased and wired into the existing Vet School system.

The primary purpose of the CD-recording system is for chimesmasters to improve their performance skills by hearing what their playing actually sounds like. The system also allows chimesmasters to keep archives of special events for personal use or sharing with family and friends. Recording systems are often found in bell towers with instruments played regularly by professional bellringers. Our recording system is high quality and easy to use. However, the current system will not replace the hiring of a sound engineer with professional recording devices to produce the Cornell Chimes CDs available for sale, due to sound-balancing and copyright regulations. We are also integrating the CD-recording system, on a limited basis, into the annual chimesmaster competition. We hope that the competes will be able to improve their chimes playing, and better understand their coaches' comments, by hearing recordings of their concerts.



We would like to extend a special thanks to the many alumni and friends of the Cornell Chimes, who support the program through annual gifts to the Monica Novakovic Chimes Program Endowment and the Cornell Chimes General Fund. Your generous gifts made the purchase and installation of this recording system possible. Thank you for your continued support.



*Sweetheart Concert 2004. Clockwise from top: Bob '66, '75 and Sue '67 Feldman dance to a love song, Kenny Lim '05 and Lisa Ngai '05 perform a duet, and a heart-ly decorated playing stand!*

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## Chimesmaster's Corner

Catherine Jordan '03, '05

In the latest issue of *Connecting With Cornell* magazine, a quarterly publication from the Office of the Vice Provost for Research, the Cornell Chimes were featured as their "piece of tradition" article. Cornell student Ritwik Rastogi '05 was quoted in the article, "I like the chimes and all, but it would be cool if they could play different kinds of music. They should try playing rap songs; I want a break from the classical stuff." His comment has recently sparked much discussion among the chimesmasters about what kind of music is appropriate for the Cornell Chimes, and the role that pop music could play in our repertoire.

We frequently get requests for rap and pop music, and generally, we have to say, "I'm sorry, we don't have much pop music in our files." It's often suggested that we should update our files to be more current. Depending on the way in which a visitor expresses this sentiment, I am sometimes offended. The music snob in me often thinks, "If you want Justin Timberlake, listen to the radio. If you want real music, come to the tower." However, there is a place for pop music in our repertoire. If a piece of music has a solid melody line, is playable and pleasant on our instrument, and the rest of the campus would appreciate hearing it occasionally, then it is a welcome addition. The coming months are likely to bring an effort on the part of the current chimesmasters to arrange some new music and "update" our repertoire a little bit.

In other news, the annual chimesmaster competition is drawing to a close. Our numbers were down slightly this year, with twenty-five compets trying out. After the first four-weeks of practice of the "Jennie McGraw Rag," "Alma Mater," and "Evening Song," the remaining compets auditioned silently for me. I accepted the "Fabulous Five" to the second round of the competition, during which they play eight out-loud concerts with a chimesmaster as a coach, followed by four judged concerts to show the current chimesmasters what they can achieve. As the judging period begins, we are hearing beautiful music at their morning and evening concerts, and we are excited that we will be welcoming some new chimesmasters in just a few weeks.

Another project for me this semester, as Head Chimesmaster, has been setting concrete guidelines for

dealing with special requests from campus groups. We have had a recent flood of requests for songs, bell tolling, and colored clock faces. The tower is the architectural-symbol of Cornell University, and the chimesmasters have had a long-standing tradition of keeping the tower and bells from becoming a political entity, so we have to be very careful how we honor these requests. Once we toll the chimes long and low for one cause, it is very difficult to refuse another cause that may be equally as worthy. As a result, tolling is reserved for certain events of national or university-wide importance requested by the Office of the President. Similarly, we have to refuse requests to change the clock face colors. However, we are happy to play a single song for campus groups, provided it is at an appropriate time of day, will not interrupt a nearby event, and a chimesmaster is available. We have been lucky to participate in the life of the campus in this way.

Sniff... sniff... and so it is with a little nostalgia that I finish writing this, my last "Chimesmaster's Corner" article. I am passing on the reigns so that I can focus on my final year of graduate school studies. Many thanks to Marisa LaFalce, David Yeh, Jen Lory-Moran, and chimesmasters past and present for all of their support. It has been a wonderful time being Head Chimesmaster these last two years and getting to know the Cornell Chimes and campus a little better. But then again, it will be nice to be able to spend a little less time in the office and a little more time in the practice room. And then there's that arrangement of "Stairway to Heaven" to finish up...

### Top 10 Visitor Song Requests for 2003

10. Everything I Do (from *Robin Hood* movie)
9. Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring
8. Fur Elise
7. Happy Birthday
6. Music of the Night
5. Hey Jude
4. Piano Man
3. Ode to Joy
2. Canon

*And the #1 most requested song for 2003*

1. Here Comes the Sun

Runners up: Yesterday, *The Muppet Show* Theme, Oh-Bla-Di, Davy



## ...Alumni Notes

It has been a long, cold winter in Ithaca this year, and everyone on campus is eager for spring to arrive. But we have been getting glimpses of the tropics via email updates and postcards, from **Karen Kamprath '05**, who is studying abroad in Costa Rica this semester. For a natural resources major and bird lover, Costa Rica has been a fascinating living and learning experience for Karen!

Speaking of writing, we've enjoyed receiving online articles from **Grace Jean '00** who continues to write music reviews for the *Washington Post*. Grace, we haven't heard those concerts, but you paint such a beautiful picture we almost feel that we were there!

**Lauren Marino '02** is still working as a Compliance and Regulatory Specialist with Manning and Napier Advisors in Rochester, New York. Although she hasn't been down to the Cornell Chimes recently, she is still busy with bells. She writes, "I've been keeping busy with work and practicing the carillon at the University of Rochester. I was asked to play for U. of R.'s commencement this year, so I really have to start putting in a lot of practice time!"

We are delighted to welcome **Keith Jenkins '93** and his wife Stephanie '98 back to Ithaca! They recently returned to town when Keith accepted a librarian position in Mann Library. Keith has been playing one concert a week this semester, and the chimesmasters are delighted to meet the man behind the many wonderful original compositions that they play regularly. Both Keith and Stephanie also pursue other musical instruments as well; Keith was recently featured on a local radio

program for his chimes and accordion playing and Stephanie recently performed a benefit concert on the organ. Welcome home!

And on the home front, we welcomed Sue '67 and **Bob Feldman '66, '75** back to Ithaca in February and in time to participate in the annual Valentine's Day Sweetheart Concert on February 14! Bob has been traveling about once a month for work, and those trips often take him to the Detroit, Michigan area. The up side is that he enjoys visiting with **Judy Ogden '71, '75, '77** in nearby Ann Arbor, whenever he goes.

A few weeks after Bob and Sue's visit, **Melody Hung '03** returned for a weekend. **John Hoare '56, '57** writes that he is looking forward to returning to his cottage on Seneca Lake this summer and hopes to make a few trips over to Ithaca and McGraw Tower while he's there.

While we didn't see her in person, we were pleased to receive a new arrangement from **Jane Park '97** last month. Jane, we hope that you will visit Ithaca and play it in person some time.

**Dick Lee '41** is also actively composing music and working on his next CD and book: "Transparency in Song, Vol. 3." Visit his website at [www.DickLeeMusic.com](http://www.DickLeeMusic.com) to hear his music and download sample sheet music. He's looking forward to seeing everyone at the top of the tower!

As **Alan Erickson '03, '04** wrote in his article on the recording system, the Cornell Chimes concerts now play in the Statler Hotel lobby. But perhaps the trend will catch on and you'll begin hearing them play in other lobbies around the globe...our dear friend **Bill**

**Sibal '64** is the class correspondent for his fellow Hotel School classmates, and over the holidays, he sent each one a Cornell Chimes CD! With Hotel School alumni working all over the world, who knows where you may here the Cornell Chimes playing next!

Remember that alumni chimesmasters and friends are always welcome in the tower. So if you are planning to return to campus, as the weather turns warmer, please let us know. We would love to see you!

### Stay connected with alumni throughout the year...

Join the chimes alumni email list-serve! A list-serve is basically just a "list" of people's email addresses (in this case chimesmasters' email addresses). When a message is sent to the address of the listserve (chimes-alum-l@cornell.edu), the message is sent to all the people subscribed to the list. When a reply to a message is sent to the listserve, the response is sent back to the entire group.

This is a wonderful way to stay connected to the Cornell Chimes community as people can read discussions among chimesmasters and need only join in if they wish.

If you are interested in subscribing, your email address has changed, or you have additional questions about this list, email current chimesmaster Alan Erickson, at [are4@cornell.edu](mailto:are4@cornell.edu).

## Phyllis Dittman McClelland '43

It is with great sadness that we report that Phyllis Dittman McClelland '43 passed away on February 7th after a battle with cancer. Throughout her lifetime, Phyllis has touched countless individuals through her passionate spirit and loving heart. She has made an indelible mark on the Cornell Chimes program, its chimesmasters, and friends, as the first official woman chimesmaster and through her dedication and love for the Cornell Chimes. Her impact was beautifully summarized by student chimesmaster Kenny Lim '05:

“Although I have never personally met her, the fact that we speak of her all the time in our tours, that senior members of our Advisory Council never fail to mention her name when reminiscing their years as chimesmasters, and that her name is practically in almost every book written about the chimes, has made her a figure that is so dear to the Cornell Chimes and to me as a chimesmaster. She has, and will always remain a part of our great big family.”

Many will remember Phyllis, her involvement with, and devotion to the Cornell Chimes in different ways. Her love for the bells was passed on to her daughter Lane '70, '73, '74. The two women shared the tradition of the chimes in a special way as the only mother-daughter chimesmasters. Her Cornell classmates (1943) honored her, the first official woman chimesmaster, with the tuning of a bell in her name for the McGraw Tower Renovation and Chimes Refurbishment project in 1999. Many are grateful for her leadership on the Chimes Advisory Council, which brought the tuning project to fruition. And we will never forget Phyllis' extraordinary energy with which she played the bells each time she returned to campus and climbed the tower's 161 steps; her own choreographed dance in front of the clavier, hitting low notes with her knee!



*Phyllis performs a tune in June 1998, on campus for her 55th Cornell reunion.*



*Phyllis, along with David Yeh and Betty Allen '45, enjoys the Cornell Chimes Rededication Celebration, November, 1999.*

A memorial service celebrating Phyllis' life was held near her home in Holland, Pennsylvania on February 21. Unable to attend in person, Dick Lee '41 and his wife Laurie, sent his reflections of Phyllis from their undergraduate years; David Yeh, Allegra Schafer '99 and Grace Jean '00 read them at the service. Dick's words concluded, "I propose that we delete any reference in today's service that assumes Phyllis to be late or long gone. Phyllis is very much an active presence in our midst, even while we celebrate a fitting memorial to her." And at the reading's conclusion, Dick's words rang true, as the hour bells chimed, signaling that yes, Phyllis will always be truly present in our hearts.

Phyllis collected hundreds of bells (fortunately smaller than the Cornell Chimes) throughout her life's travels. Her family invited friends to take one of her bells home with them, to remember Phyllis by. One of these bells will be placed in the Cornell Chimes Museum, on the sixth floor of McGraw Tower, as a physical symbol of her legacy. Please be sure to look for it the next time that you are visiting the tower.

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## Adopt a Chime

Robert L. Feldman '66, '75

If you are a Cornell alumni chimesmaster, or friend of the Cornell Chimes, you probably know the true meaning of that line from the Albert Smith, class of 1878, poem, "I wake at night and think I hear remembered chimes." Like me, you may even occasionally dream about the chimes. If so, you may be suffering from CWS, or Chimes Withdrawal Syndrome.

But read on, I think I've found a cure. There are hundreds of chimes in the United States, in churches, colleges, and municipal buildings. Chances are there is one near you, played regularly, irregularly, or not at all. If it is played, the players, often called "chimers", may have no knowledge of other chimes, and own a very limited collection of music. You can help out, by "adopting" the chime. Here is an example.

I have adopted an 11-bell chime at the Unitarian Church in West Newton, Massachusetts, about a half-hour drive from my home. It is played every Sunday before and



*Bob Feldman '66, '75 and Rich Johnson '80 perform a Christmas Eve concert on the 21-bell chime at the Unitarian Church in Winchester, Massachusetts.*

after services by a group of volunteers. With help from members of the church congregation and the staff, I:

- Sanded down the water-damaged playing stand and refinished it, making it look like new.
- Installed a horizontal strike bar and adjustable turnbuckles in the cable, which make the instrument much more playable and musical.
- Located additional chime music.
- Joined the staff of chimers, playing once a month.
- Encouraged other people to become chimers.
- Arranged for an inspection of the whole system by the McShane bell company, the original foundry. (Fortunately, the chime turns out to be in good condition.)
- Convinced the church to purchase a cabinet and table for the playing area, and to make the window operable so that you can hear the bells better when you play.
- Suggested the church consider an annual maintenance budget for the chime.

These are just a few possibilities. None of this is rocket science, and it has been very rewarding for me, in terms of continuing to play a chime, seeing an improvement in its playability, and encouraging new chimers.

As a result of the recent Boston Road Tour by the chimesmasters in October, I have also made contact with the 21-bell chime at the Unitarian Church in Winchester, Massachusetts, a town near Boston. Rich Johnson '80 and I were invited to play before their service on Christmas Eve. I have provided additional music to them, and they have expressed interest in enhancing the playability of their instrument, including the possible addition of foot pedals. (There are none now.) Rich and I now have a standing invitation to play there anytime.

You too can adopt a chime and enjoy the results. First, locate a chime nearby your home. You can find a database of bell instruments on the Guild of Carillonneurs Web site at [www.gcna.org](http://www.gcna.org), under the link "Information about carillons and other bells." You can search bell instrument locations by city and state and find a phone number or e-mail address. Contact the chime and let them know that you are affiliated with the Cornell Chimes and would like to meet with them. When you do, you can discuss common interests and let them know there are many chimers in the country with similar interests. The likelihood is that they will be

eager to have you play their chime, the first step to overcoming CWS.

As time progresses, work with the chimers to compile a list of possible improvements. You may even be able to undertake some of these improvements yourself. For others, you may need outside assistance. Feel free to contact me (email: rlf4@cornell.edu) for ideas and advice, or for names of companies that do bell maintenance or sell chime music. No matter what level of involvement you choose, you'll find your Chimes Withdrawal Syndrome diminishing!

### Duets for Diplomats...

Elena Poptodorova, Ambassador from the Republic of Bulgaria to the United States visited Cornell in February. Of course a visit would not be complete without a trip to McGraw Tower. So the Ambassador made the climb for the 1:10 pm concert, accompanied by Gligor Tashkovich '87. She was impressed and surprised when the chimesmaster played the Bulgarian National Anthem, arranged specially for her!

### Arrangements for the Cornell Chimes...Notes from the Chimes Advisor Jennifer Lory-Moran '96, '97

We frequently receive arrangements from alumni chimesmasters or players at other chimes, and it is always exciting to see what new pieces have arrived in the mail (or even via email). However, occasionally we get arrangements that we must revise for one reason or another. With so many busy schedules, it can take quite a while before a chimesmaster has the opportunity to rework the arrangement, so I would like to include a short list of guidelines to help arrangers create compositions that fit our musical notation style.

For All Pieces:

- ♪ All of our music is written in the treble clef. We have every note from low C to high A, with the exception of the low C#.
- ♪ We do not separate the notes played by the foot from the notes played by the hands. Everything played by one person is all written on one staff.
- ♪ Pieces written in C, F, B<sup>b</sup> and E<sup>b</sup> sound particularly good with our tuning and tend to fit well on our instrument. Please consider including tempo markings and dynamics. They are especially helpful when the person playing is not familiar with the piece.
- ♪ Many chimesmasters have started using music writing software like Overture to conquer problems with legibility. Another advantage to using software is that it is much easier to make changes later on. But you do lose that personal look when music is not written by hand. Just keep in mind, if we can't read it, we can't play it!

For Duets:

- ♪ Be extra vigilant of two players playing the same note at once (ouch!) or in immediate succession.
- ♪ We notate duets using two staves — one for the person playing the top, one for the person playing the bottom — joined with a brace at the beginning of each line. We don't write the parts out on two separate sheets of paper, so that the two players can follow both parts simultaneously.

These are the simple rules that we follow in notating our arrangements. For inspiration on writing arrangements that are playable and appropriate, I encourage everyone to read Dick Lee's timeless essay "Chimes and Campus" which is contained in McKeown's book *The Cornell Chimes*. We look forward to seeing what you have arranged!



*The notes of the Cornell Chimes.*

*Do you remember this view? Come and join us, and enjoy it again in person!*

Cornell Chimes alumni and friends are invited to visit us in McGraw Tower during Alumni Reunion Weekend, June 11-13; we have an exciting array of Chimes events planned:

**Concerts:** Friday at 8:45 a.m., 12:00 p.m., 6:00 p.m.  
Saturday at 10:40 a.m., 12:00 p.m., 6:00 p.m.  
Sunday at 10:40 a.m., 12:00 p.m.

**Open House:** Saturday from 12:00-2:00 p.m. Refreshments will be served for those who climb all 161 steps. Chimesmaster alumni are always encouraged to return and play the bells!



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Cornell Chimes

Division of Student and Academic Services

Cornell University

B07 Day Hall

Ithaca, NY 14853-2801