

**MANITOBA GUILD OF ENGLISH HANDBELL RINGERS
CELEBRATES ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2015
(1995-2015)**

On April 8, 1995, in Starbuck, Manitoba, fourteen handbell choirs from southern Manitoba gathered to make music. Although the primary purpose of the event was to provide an opportunity for handbell enthusiasts to network and have fun, something bigger came out of it. At the gathering, the assembled people decided that a handbell guild should be formed. Rev. Ron Vert of Starbuck was elected President of the newly-formed MANITOBA GUILD OF ENGLISH HANDBELL RINGERS (MBGEHR). Associated Manitoba Arts Festivals' Quarterly Newsletter, Vol. 16, Issue 1, Fall 1995.

And what has happened during the ensuing years? The MBGEHR has hosted two Handbell Guilds of Canada National Ringing Link Conferences in 2002 and 2014. Some Guild members have conducted workshops not only in Manitoba but across Canada and in the northern USA. Some Manitoba members have been massed ringing directors at Canadian, American and International Handbell Symposia. Easel-backed music binders, gloves, polish and polishing cloth are available from the MBGEHR Market. Annual Spring Ring concerts draw in the interest of enthusiastic audiences and much more. The Guild has established its own archives in the Manitoba Government Public Archives. And, you have thrilled audiences with your ringing performances!

So what better way to reflect on the past two decades but to carefully research and write down the fascinating story of handbell ringing in Manitoba. At the September 12th Workshop, a 144 page book, entitled *The First Twenty Years 1995-2015* will be available for purchase. Information on the formation of the Guild, its Constitution and By-Laws, Provincial Executives, Executive and Annual General Meetings, all Individual and Choir Memberships, History of Handbells in Winnipeg and Manitoba Rural Churches, Schools and Community Choirs, privately owned sets of bells, workshops and Read and Ring sessions, annual Spring Ring concerts, *Ringers' Roundtable* newsletters and monthly updates, Manitoba Guild Christmas Choir, the *Chime Crime* saga of November 2004, the MBGEHR Lending Library, DVD, CD, VHS and Recordings available on loan, the Guild website, bestowment of Honorary Life Members, Winnipeg Music Festival Handbell Classes (1968-2015), the MBGEHR Trophy, the Provincial Archives, National Ringing Link Conferences, International Peace Gardens Handbell Camps, Youth Handbell Camp, and other miscellaneous information with regard to Handbell Happenings in Manitoba – all are included! Plus a couple of dozen coloured photographs will help tell the story of . . .

