

A Musician In Our Midst

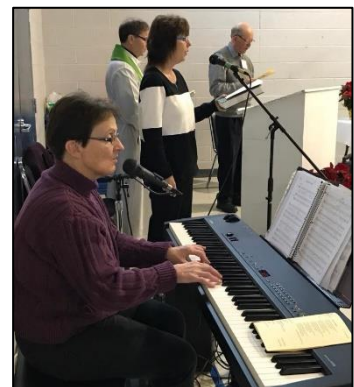
Mary Hanson



A lady with a “hidden talent”? Not truly so with Carleton-North York’s **Mary Hanson**, Co-editor of the NBSRT magazine “*Reflections*”. Mary is an accomplished musician and can often be seen at St. Gertrude’s Roman Catholic Church in Woodstock, playing piano, singing at weekend masses, helping with music at prayer services at Carleton Manor, or even, playing the piano at dinner meetings of the Carleton and North York NBSRT.

Mary grew up in a family (second youngest of seven children) where there was an appreciation for music. Her mom and older sister played the piano, as did some of her aunts and uncles, and one of her brothers. Mary began piano lessons when she was in Grade 4, and she continued with formal lessons until she started Grade 9. Music lessons were interrupted for Mary as she concentrated on playing sports at Southern Carleton School and Woodstock High School, where she graduated in 1972.

Further training in music and music appreciation took place when Mary attended Teachers’ College and UNB from 1972 to 1976. She especially credits Professor Robin Bayley at Teachers’ College with teaching the basics of music instruction for the classroom, learning to teach and play the recorder and ukulele, and music composition. While at TC and UNB, Mary taught herself the guitar; a good instrument to have in your “bag of tricks” as an elementary classroom teacher. All of these skills and techniques were used when Mary taught music classes at Nackawic Elementary School. Mary helped with



classroom choirs at Nackawic Elementary, was involved with school musical drama groups, and coordinated a violin program started as an enrichment project at the school.

In addition to Mary's involvement at her school while actively teaching, she was also involved in the NBTA at the local and provincial levels for most of her 33-year teaching career. Her university credits include Bachelor of Teaching, and Master of Education from UNB, and Principal's Certificate (1999). She taught grades K to 8 during those years and was Vice Principal at both Nackawic Middle and Nackawic Elementary during the last 10 years of her career. Mary retired in June 2009.



Tuesday Night Singers - Christmas Concert

Throughout all this time, music and singing have been very important pursuits for Mary. She is involved with music at her church, leading two groups of singers and musicians. She enjoys singing with the *Tuesday Night Singers*, under the direction of Peter McLaughlin. Mary also sings with Choral Fest choirs, focused on large classical compositions. The last concert for *Choral Fest* was held in the fall of 2019 in Saint John, before the COVID-19 pandemic shut down all choir activity in the province.

Since retirement Mary continues to be involved in local, provincial, and national organizations. Besides responsibilities at her church, Mary is on the Board of Hayward House Mental Health Recovery Centre in Woodstock. She is on the Board of the New Brunswick Choral Federation, and nationally, she just completed a six-year commitment to the National Council for Development and Peace-Caritas Canada, situated in Montreal.



Rehearsing at Choral Fest

When the pandemic restrictions are lifted, Mary is looking forward to singing again with friends in a choir, making music, having fun, and lifting the spirits of both the singers and the audience.

If you have an idea for a *SPOT Light Feature*, contact Larry Farrell: farell@rogers.com