

BUSMEA BUZZ



Michael Zaugg and BU Chorale
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Greetings, Music Educators!

Welcome to the third and final issue of the BUSMEA BUZZ for the 2011/2012 academic year. Fourth and fifth year students are preparing to enter the field for student teaching in a few weeks, with second years heading out to student teach in April. Contained within these pages, I hope you will find some inspiration and helpful reminders about student teaching as you get organized to enter the classroom this spring or in the future.

As a fifth year, I am about to begin my final student teaching placement. As I have been preparing for my placement, I find myself remembering my first student teaching experience and thinking about how far we actually come as we move through the music education program at Brandon University. Although I can only speak from personal experience, I am sure that many other fourth and fifth year students will agree with me, while students in first, second, and third year will soon come to understand what I mean.

During my first two years of university, I alternately could not wait for and absolutely dreaded my first student teaching placement. I felt like I knew nothing going out into the field and that I would be a miserable failure. Of course, at the time, I was under no illusions. I knew that I could not play the trumpet or saxophone or oboe. I knew that conductors stood at the front of the band and waved their arms around, but I had no idea what to do with my own arms when I was asked to conduct. However, I

surprised myself when I realized just how much I actually knew about music and had to offer to the students as a teacher. I was glad that our first placement took place at the end of our second year, so that I was able to know for once and for all that the classroom is where I belong.

Since that placement, with every class I take or every professional development session I attend, I usually leave realizing I have more to learn than I thought when I walked in. This seems backwards, since when I arrived at Brandon University I thought I would be leaving in five years with all of the answers and secrets to being a perfect music educator. Unfortunately, this is not what happened, and I doubt very highly that I will be given all the answers before convocation in June. I have come to realize that I will never have all of the answers and that is okay. I have come to terms with the fact that I am going to make mistakes throughout my career, but as long as I learn from them and do not repeat them, I may still become a successful music educator. If we teach our students that failure is an uncomfortable but necessary part of growth and learning, then as teachers we must also accept this as part of our own growth.

I have been a member of BUSMEA council for three years, and the skills that I have learned from being a part of this group are invaluable. From organizing and dealing with the stress of a heavy work load to improving my communication skills, I know that BUSMEA has taught me many things that I may have had to learn the hard way after graduation, since these are concepts that are not usually taught in our regular classes. I have always believed in the values and ideals BUSMEA stands for, and I am proud to say that I was a part of such an amazing group of dedicated students. I hope that the work BUSMEA council has done this year has had an impact on you, our members, as we continually strive to enrich your educational experience at Brandon University.

My fellow council members have worked tirelessly to organize the numerous fundraisers,

events, workshops, each issue of the BUZZ, and the 2012 Da Capo Conference. I am so thankful to Emma, Claire, Janet, Erin, Lisa, Roberta, Carly, Leslie, and Dr. McCallum for their dedication and hard work on all of BUSMEA's endeavours. It has been a difficult year in many ways for all of us at Brandon University, and their unending enthusiasm and energy for every event that BUSMEA hosts has been greatly appreciated.



BUSMEA Executive council

In the end, I think each of us will figure out our own answers as music educators over our careers. Experience and practice will help us decide which strategies, activities, and methods work for us as teachers. If we remember to be patient and remember that there is always something new to learn to help us improve our teaching, we will all be just fine. I have enjoyed my time at Brandon University as well as the time I have spent as the President of BUSMEA. I am looking forward to beginning my adventure as a music educator, and I wish you luck on your adventures, whatever they may be, as well.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Shead

BUSMEA President 2010-2012

In Focus: Community Choir

A Community Choir Model: Women's Voices

by Andrée Dagenais

The purpose of a women's community choir is to bring amateur singers together, in this case, from our campus and from the Westman area for the sheer joy of singing, to share great repertoire, and contribute to the community with our performances.

A community women's choir is a wonderful, malleable and flexible ensemble. Bring your voice and enthusiasm and the conductor will take care of the rest. A community based ensemble exemplifies what team work and spirit mean. The skill-set and experience of its members will vary, but ultimately it is the desire to grow together and the collaboration of everyone that creates an enjoyable, educational experience. In a women's ensemble, there is no need to worry about finding male voices to balance the ensemble. In addition, this type of choir can function just as well with a small number of singers or with a large group of women. Add your voice to the mix, there is no stress related to fill a specific part the same way the musical works written for an instrumental ensemble require it. There is an abundance of women's choral repertoire whether the choir sings in unison or divides into two, three or four parts. In addition, being exposed to a variety of languages and accessing ethnic music (if that's your choice) makes your imagination take a little trip abroad every week. There is no piano available? We can sing a cappella. Singing without accompaniment makes us even more 'portable' when occasions to perform arise.

Whatever your reasons are to join a choir and whatever mood you are in, everyone is always in a positive spirit after singing together and everyone feels the satisfaction of the musical accomplishment. Being a physical, mental, emotional, spiritual activity, the act of singing re-energizes the entire body and spirit. Making choral music requires you to focus intellectually on music skills, and involves your breathing, voice and emotions. All these aspects enhance the health of human beings and, shall we say..... at very little cost.

The BU Women's Voices was created in 2003 to give further opportunities for students who loved choral music and wanted to be in a different type of ensemble from the two mixed choirs that we have here at Brandon University. Among several goals pursued, the Women's Voices has contributed to the community by performing at fundraising shows to support the Women's Center, the Grannies, Tree of Memories, for CBC Christmas Story readings, Singers Helping Singers etc... In an effort to continue to grow, the ensemble participated in the Brandon Music Festival. Over the years the ensemble welcomed music teachers, voice major students, experienced community singers, as well as instrumentalist majors who have the desire to continue to develop their vocal skills. The variety of backgrounds of our members enriches our choral experience. In addition, the interaction between music teachers in the city and BU Music Education students is inspiring to our students. The ensemble fills a niche for women who love to sing and can only make time for one rehearsal a week. For a couple of years, recently, Sarah Hall and I co-conducted the ensemble. This great collaboration allowed the ensemble to learn more repertoire and perform more concerts throughout the year. Co-conducting an ensemble is an interesting concept. Prior to each term, we meet to define the goals of Women's Voices and to discuss concert themes. We give ourselves lots of latitude in terms of our individual preference for repertoire. Every week, we share the conducting of the rehearsal and are part of the choir when not conducting.

We also share all the necessary tasks required for the production of concerts. Two minds harvest a full garden of ideas and resources. In a co-conducting approach students and choristers are exposed to a variety of rehearsal techniques and benefit from the strengths of the conductors. To rehearse in the presence of your colleagues keeps you on your toes(!) which is a very good thing.

The current format of the ensemble gathers four student conductors from the Advanced Vocal & Choral Techniques and Methods course. Every Tuesday night, a student is responsible for warming up the choir and each student conducts every week. I usually wrap up the rehearsal by conducting one or two pieces. The student conductors have been very well received by the BU Women's Voices. The student conductors learn from each other in a realistic environment (i.e. a true choral rehearsal as opposed to conducting a very small number of classmates). The School of Music students who participate in the ensemble learn from the instruction of their peers and from myself. The student conductors live up to the expectations of the choristers and progress every week. I truly enjoy being an observer of their growth and sharing with them my love of choral music.

Sing, Groan, Laugh

by Audrey Keeler, Hartney and Area Community
Choir Member

As with many choirs, our members are busy with families, volunteer work, careers, and with lending their hands to care for others in their homes and communities. But, on Thursday evening, the coin flips, and the focus is on the choir members. For a few hours, the evening becomes a 'sacred' time that they book off because of a need within themselves to move into the genre of music with other like-minded friends. Some plan for supper together at one of the local eateries, while others feverishly run children to events, make supper for their spouses or complete their hours at their jobs, all carefully timed to make their dash for the choir practice unimpeded. As the cars pull up outside the building, one watching wonders what brings them all together. There's varying ages, different backgrounds, amazingly different responsibilities and within the group a complete spectrum of musical knowledge and skills.

From one perspective it is the challenge to the mind and voice the evening presents. For her it is focusing on how the music reads, the dynamics in the pieces and the instruction that enables a person to forget all other worries or clutter in

their lives---just concentrating on the music and the satisfaction and pleasure of conquering the selection. For another it is the delight in having young people from the music department of Brandon University come and their willingness to share their enthusiasm and musical skills with such a diverse group. It is a true joy for the choir member to first meet these young adults and then over the years to see them become even more confident and skilled in their choir leadership. The infusion of energy, positive reinforcement and patience creates a feeling of love and gratefulness towards these young people who drive through quite miserable weather at times to urge us along to 'take a risk' that we will be able to create a sound that will be somewhat pleasurable to hear. For another person, who has the ability to play music for others, it is the joy in being able to take part as a chorister. That is the need that brings her to the choir---the joy in being able to further practice and develop her singing skills as part of a group. And for all of those present, it is a true workout---with beads of perspiration forming early on as our choir directors gamely lead us through the warm ups and desperate attempts to reach the highest note possible. Let the endorphins rage!!

Like every ensemble, the Hartney and Area Community Choir has shared many laughs.

Beyond knowing that one conductor was struggling with her stockings while waving her arms and keeping us on track during a performance---most of the 'funny' happenings are just impromptu sayings or events during the evening. It is hard to isolate anything specific as it really doesn't seem so funny if you were 'not there' to hear or experience it. The times of starting in the wrong places, hitting the absolute wrong note, singing the wrong words, not singing when you are supposed to, getting caught on a raised end of a nail at the Old English Church, singing a harmony line at home and knowing that your spouse is wondering what in the world you are singing, ---well, the humour just comes because of what happens each time.

Obviously, all the people who participate are there because of their love of music and singing. They enjoy meeting and greeting their friends, having supper out, and of course laughing and giggling like teenagers during the evening. There is no doubt that it is only the skills of the choir director that keep us on track and redirects us to the task on hand---but always---always---in a respectful and patient manner. Even though it is quite hard work for most of the members (never mind the directors), all depart at the end of the practice feeling happy and accomplished with a true sense of appreciation that there are people who are willing to come a distance to lead and accompany, and thus to enable our diverse group to form into a choir each year.

A Little Piece of Happiness: Directing the Hartney and Area Community Choir

by Roberta Matheson

“Man, do you know how embarrassing it would be to get lost in a small town like Hartney,” I thought as I was driving to my first rehearsal with the Hartney and Area Community choir. As it turns out, I did get lost. Due to nerves, excitement and uncertainty of what was before me, I ended up at the local hockey arena instead of the school. However, when I arrived at my destination, I was greeted by a wonderful bunch of women, eager and excited to sing.

The Hartney and Area Community Choir, rehearses once a week for about an hour and a half. We perform a variety of repertoire written in three parts. In an attempt to help our musicians develop and explore new areas musically choristers experience music they are not always familiar with. We have a goal to learn one song by rote for each concert. Our choristers HATE not having music, but they are finally accepting that they may not have a choice! They are now adapting, and are making their own notes and notations of what they are to sing.



Hartney and Area Community Choir

The Hartney and Area Community Choir began in fall 2010 by preparing for a Christmas Concert. Members from the community were looking for a choir director, and they approached Dr. Dagenais; she contacted me. At this point, I didn't know anything about Hartney, or even where it was. I had to choose music, and find an accompanist. Thankfully, everything worked out, and I have worked with the choir

ever since. Now, we love each other so much (or they put up with me enough) that we strive for two concerts a year – a Christmas and a spring concert.

Over the past three years, both the choristers and I have grown musically. I see growth in them, and they see it in me. We work together and encourage each other to develop to the best of our abilities. I have learned many things from this wonderful group of women. First, I have learned the importance of being confident. The ladies respond very differently when I have confidence. Secondly, I can always encourage them! No matter what I am trying to accomplish, they will respond to it if I approach it from a positive perspective. Finally, this choir has reinforced my love for choral music, and why I want to teach choir. I have felt exhausted, and overwhelmed by school and life going into Hartney rehearsals. However, leaving every rehearsal, I leave refreshed, excited, and even invigorated! This past January, I was so excited to be back, I honestly didn't stop talking for the first ten minutes, just sharing music and stories with these ladies!

The Hartney and Area Community Choir is one of the biggest accomplishments in my life. We have had wonderful moments many of which ended with all of us doubling over in laughter. I am so thankful that three years ago I took a risk and began working with this choir!

I Hart Hartney

by Janet Rankin

This year I was invited by Roberta Matheson to help with the Hartney and Area Community Choir while she was completing her student teaching placement. I was hesitant at first as I had limited choir experience and what little experience I did have was with elementary choir. However, I decided to jump in and try it, and it has been one of the best decisions I have ever made.

Once Thursday rolls around I used to find being stressed with school was fairly common! I now look forward to Thursday evenings; there is something about teaching these ladies that are so eager to learn and sing with me that just inspires me to teach and to continue with music. Simply stated, it just honestly leaves me feeling happy!

I have rehearsed and performed a variety of different repertoire with the choir including Christmas carols, songs by rote, and folk music. This opportunity has taught me so much about working with ensembles; I have learned a lot about working with members and observed what techniques get positive results. I have also learned to be a better leader and to feel confident in my ability; the choir now has confidence in me, and we all concede that confidence is very important! We worked this fall and did a Christmas concert that included choir works as well as individual solos, and it was a great success. This marked my first ever choir concert, a memory that I will have forever. We are now preparing for a spring concert that will happen on March 4th and I know it will be an amazing concert as well.

I owe these ladies a lot not only because of how fun they are to work with but also because of their dedication and their kindness. I feel I have had the opportunity to grow and learn a lot over the last couple months not only in my conducting but also in my teaching. It has been an exciting process and they are a great group of ladies that always arrive on Thursday nights willing to try whatever I throw at them! I feel the Hartney and Area Community Choir has been one of my biggest accomplishments. I am very thankful to Roberta for giving me the opportunity to work with the choir. An opportunity like this is wonderful, and it is even better getting to experience it with a great friend.

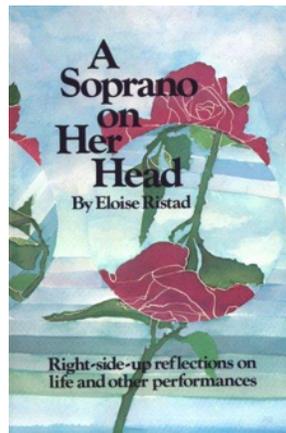
**Book Review: *A Soprano on Her Head*
Eloise Ristad**

by Janet Rankin

A Soprano on Her Head by Eloise Ristad is truly one of the best books I have ever had the pleasure of reading. Whether you are reading this book as a student, music educator, or performer there is relevant points for everyone to consider. Through the use of past experiences Ristad does a fantastic job of covering a wide variety of topics such as practice skills, performance skills, and dealing with nerves.

In the first chapter Ristad uses a personal teaching experience with a soprano where they incorporated movement and the singer landed up on her head; however her sound was amazing. When she was asked to stand back up in her normal singing position she went back to an old way of sound production that was troubling for her. Ristad outlines how our inner judges inhibit us in not only our nerves but as well as our muscle movements and mind. In later chapters she illustrates how personal experiences with students as well as her own practice have led her to believe that people have all different types of judges and sometimes our inner judges are often the most destructive. She also discusses how we cannot force ourselves to play with passion; we have to feel it in our own study of music first.

Ristad also discusses awareness in the practice room. Many times performers drill and drill things in our practice that are wrong, and if musicians were aware of what was happening or of mistakes they were making, they in turn would have to practice less because practice time would be better spent. Being aware of our “inner clowns,” as Ristad calls them, is also important; as musicians we are all going to make mistakes. It is a given. We just have to be able to accept the fact and simply laugh. We were all drawn to



perform because we found a common love of music, and we need to hang onto this and pass it along. So often we start to look at music as a job instead of reflecting on the love of music that originally inspired us.

Chapter five is an extremely interesting chapter, especially for educators. In this chapter Ristad outlines how we sometimes need to go outside the original lines in music education. The personal experience she described tells of how some of her students shut down when faced with the typical musical “rules.” Some students just learn differently and if we do not recognize this, negative feelings are directed towards music. Obviously we do not want to deter students from participating. Ristad also recognizes that sometimes students need a completely different method of learning or teaching. For example, she uses flipping the score so that they read it vertically instead of horizontally.

Another very important part of her book outlines the words we use to describe concepts or to teach our students. Our directions need to be easy to understand and follow as well as be engaging. Ristad brings to light how when students are “lectured at” they zone out. Educators at all levels need to keep music education enticing for students. Also, as performers we need to be aware of what is happening and be able to describe in our own words what is going on during our performance. If we cannot verbalize what happened with our performance, we cannot fix the problem. Ristad does an excellent job of stressing how important our muscle movements are and how muscles and the mind are often connected. By using our minds to visualize our muscle movement’s things suddenly become easier. The example Ristad uses is of a dancer that she worked with who was extremely winded after one piece she told the dancer to visualize every spot in the movement that she could breathe. After doing this a couple times the dancer was able to easily do the piece

without being winded. By simple awareness we can change how our minds and muscles work together.

Another important part of the book discusses how each person will be affected differently by a method or approach. What works for one student will not work for everyone. We need to be able to adapt teaching strategies and search for methods that will work for individual learners. As musicians we need to be able to accept this and not stress over the fact that we are not achieving what all our peers are. This idea was continued on to the chapter where Ristad discusses accepting failure and examines how sometimes knowing our problems too well can sometimes prohibit us. "When we give ourselves permission to fail, we at the same time give ourselves permission to excel." (Pg. 144) We try so hard to be perfect and succeed; however to learn we must fail and realize it is a part of life. Our inner judges often times heckle us and we somehow convince ourselves that we deserve this. When this happens we sometimes need to

have the courage to talk back to these inner judges. Ristad also outlines how we can end up actually enjoying our problems, hard to believe! "Problems, unfortunately, can be addicting. Like it or not, we take a certain amount of pride in the problems that distress us. Once we solve a problem, we find we have squeezed through the palings in the fence to face unfamiliar terrain." (Pg. 152) Nobody ever likes to try something new, it's frightening; however this fear of the unknown or change can often hang us up on our problems and make us like them. We can't be afraid to jump out of our problems because although it is scary we may discover something new that will be even more exciting.

Having control by letting go, achieving excellence by not even trying and being able to learn better just by simple awareness are all key concepts from *A Soprano On Her Head*. It extends beyond traditional music education and brings to light a new methodology that has easy principles for the learner, performer and educator.

Techniques Corner

Reflections on Music Education for Children with Exceptionalities

by Sheila Scott, PhD

For the past several years I have engaged in an educational initiative in which children from a life skills class at Riverheights School attend weekly music classes at Brandon University. This has been a tremendous learning experience for everyone involved including: children with exceptionalities, special education teachers, instructional assistants, and music education students from Brandon University. The following list summarizes what I have learned as I develop a music curriculum for children with exceptionalities, with an emphasis on individuals with autism spectrum disorders.

1. *All children respond positively to music.*

We often encounter the moniker "musical education for all children". As a music educator who has worked with children who have a wide range of exceptionalities, I believe that all children are capable of responding to music.

2. **RESPECT.**

Respect the rights of all children for an appropriate *education*, taking into account the special needs inherent to their exceptionalities. Provide opportunities for all children to engage as active music makers. Their smiles and laughter may touch your heart.

3. *Focus on children; not on disabilities.*

While it is helpful to have knowledge of how particular exceptionalities impact how children function within the culture of school, it is important that we interact with children as individuals irrespective of their diagnoses. When I first began teaching children on the autism spectrum, I chose materials for music class based on research findings about how these children make meaning within school environments. This quickly became a search for activities and materials suited to the needs and preferences of each child: for example, Gavin¹ has a strong sense of beat so we play drums; Monica likes to move so we play a variety of structured and unstructured games that incorporate movement.

4. *Emphasize student-centred learning environments.*

Given opportunities for personal exploration, students with exceptionalities outperform their teachers' expectations. Teachers and other caregivers are often surprised by the ways in which students with exceptionalities interact with music. For example: James invents his own ways to move expressively to music; Malcolm, who is mostly non-verbal, suddenly sings known songs in tune. It is within the flexibility of a student-centred environment that these propensities are revealed.

5. *Differentiated instruction benefits all students, not just those with diagnosed exceptionalities.*

The creation of positive educational environments for children with exceptionalities requires that teachers consider the learning needs of aural, visual, and psychomotor learners. Taking into account behavioural, cognitive, communicative, and psychomotor needs, educational experiences are carefully sequenced to maximize learning for all students while, at the same time, providing opportunities for students to explore their musical environments as individuals. Thus, effective intervention for students with exceptionalities is "effective intervention for all students" (Jordan, Schwartz, & McGhie-Richmond, 2009, p. 536).

6. *Music teachers are not alone.*

Through dialogue and the sharing of instructional strategies and information, caregivers (for example: parents, teachers, instructional assistants, and therapists) work together to devise Individual Education Plans to enhance learning environments for children with special needs. This provides an important support for music teachers who may consult these records to gain advice for how to include these children in music. It is helpful for music teachers to observe exceptional students in a variety of learning contexts, noting how other teachers and instructional assistants interact with exceptional children. These colleagues are often willing to assist music teachers in sequencing activities to meet the special needs of individual children.

7. CELEBRATE.

Celebrate the opportunities for children with exceptionalities to learn through music and for music teachers to learn from these children.

Note

¹All children's names are pseudonyms.

Reference

Jordan, A., Schwartz, E., & McGhie-Richmond, D. (2009). Preparing teachers for inclusive classrooms. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 25*, 535-542.

Da Capo 2012





An Interview with Michael Zaugg

by Roberta Matheson

From February 13 – 15, students at Brandon University were given many opportunities to learn from choral conductor, Michael Zaugg. Throughout the week, Mr. Zaugg worked with the elementary conducting class, led rehearsals of Chorale and Concert Choir; performed a voice master class, conducted a master class with the members of Advanced Vocal/Choral Methods and led a discussion on Music Education in Europe for BUSMEA members.

Michael Zaugg has diplomas in voice, conducting and music education, after studying for 6 years at the University of Basel and receiving further education at the University of Stockholm in Stockholm, Sweden. It was at the University of Stockholm where he received his official training in conducting and voice. He also participated in master classes, as well as studying dance, percussion and theatre. He began his career as an elementary teacher in Switzerland, and taught a variety of students, including high school. Mr. Zaugg is currently the Artistic Director of the St. Lawrence Choir (Montreal), Cantata Singers (Ottawa), and the Montreal Choral Institute. Mr. Zaugg is also a guest chorus master of the Montreal Symphony Orchestra.

In spite of his busy week, Mr. Zaugg sat down with me and answered questions I had related to his areas of expertise. After having worked with him on my conducting and choral techniques throughout the week, I was thankful to get the chance to talk about his perspectives of choral music, and conducting. We began by talking about why he does what he does. What is it that keeps Mr. Zaugg conducting and making music? There are many factors that influence his love of music. Most importantly, he loves being creative musically with other people. Secondly, his love of choral music became evident. Mr. Zaugg began describing how he loves researching music which includes looking into and learning the music on many levels. He loves looking into the fine details of choral repertoire, as well as researching new repertoire. Finally, Mr. Zaugg discussed the importance of being involved and present in the choral community.

Mr. Zaugg shared many experiences he has had throughout his life as a musician. His interest in music began as a child. His aunt was an opera singer, and she began influencing him at the age of seven. He became interested in opera music, attended opera performances and took lessons from about the age of twelve. As a singer, he participated in many youth choirs (such as the Swiss Youth Choir, and World Youth Choir), vocal ensembles with one person per vocal part, professional chamber choirs, oratorio choirs and, on occasion, gospel and jazz choirs. He mentioned that some of his favourite ensembles to sing in were chamber choirs of 16 – 24 members. Mr. Zaugg also mentioned that World Youth Choirs were wonderful experiences for many reasons. First, World Youth Choir had many talented singers, and the level of musicianship was encouraging. Performing in many locations around the world, such as Berlin, Tokyo, and Madrid, also made the experience more exciting.

Performing with the World Youth Choir was one of Mr. Zaugg's most rewarding collaborations. The 80 members of these choirs, the caliber of music they performed, and the guest conductors made each experience unique and rewarding. Other rewarding experiences in Mr. Zaugg's career were the final recitals of his degrees at Basel and Stockholm. He felt that they were wonderful experiences because they represented a collaborative effort of many people. All the people involved were trying their best in order to help him achieve his goal.

Throughout the week, Mr. Zaugg taught me many things as a musician, and as a music educator. Some advice he gave me while conducting was to do as little as possible. It was something new, and a little unusual to try. However, in attending a concert choir rehearsal, I was able to see in action. While

rehearsing Faure's *Requiem*, Mr. Zaugg was conducting, and barely moving at all. The choir kept singing, and did not fall apart without have a clear 4-beat pattern. When the choir reached the climax of the movement, Mr. Zaugg's conducting had slightly changed, but the sound of the choir drastically changed.

Mr. Zaugg had three other pieces of advice for music educators. First, he encouraged music educators to learn "our stuff." He believes that in order to teach effectively, we need to have good fundamentals (or a strong foundation on which to rely) to rely on. He encouraged music educators to have a broad musical basis that can easily be accessed. One significant fundamental includes learning as much music as possible, from a variety of sources. "Play, sing, drum, learn how to yodel," encouraged Mr. Zaugg. Listening to a variety of music is another way of developing a large musical base. He encouraged us to listen to many different styles - really listen - do not just have music on in the background of our activities. We must be aware of what is happening in the music.



Janet Rankin, Michael Zaugg,
Roberta Matheson, Emma Gordon

Mr. Zaugg's second piece of advice slightly contradicted his first piece of advice. He encouraged music educators to make music our own. In terms of conducting, he stated that the style of music should be reflected in our movements. We are supposed to get away from the traditional four-beat pattern, and have our conducting reflect the music being performed. He stated that getting away from the traditional patterns could only occur when the traditional patterns were confidently developed. The basics needed to be established in order to get away from them.

Finally, as music educators we were encouraged to go abroad if ever possible. Travelling enriches our musical abilities and our approach to teaching and performing music. Mr. Zaugg encouraged us to learn music, languages and styles abroad. Being immersed in the culture will help develop our musical abilities in a new setting.

Working with Mr. Zaugg was an incredible opportunity. Through his busy week, he helped students develop as musicians, and conductors. As I continue to reflect on our interaction, I am reminded of significant ideas that challenge my understanding of our discipline. We were fortunate to have had this fine choral music educator in residence and will, in the weeks and months to come, benefit from his strategies and inspiration.

Student Teaching Reminders from "Policies for Student Teaching in Music: Brandon University" and "Field Experience and Music: Guidelines and Evaluation"

by Jennifer Shead

As we prepare to go out student teaching, it is a good idea to remind ourselves of some of the important rules and regulations surrounding field experience. While you should read (or re-read) these two important documents published by the university, to save time, I have compiled what I think are some of the most important points to remember. Both are now available online at Brandon University's website (<http://www.brandonu.ca/music/policies/field-experience-policies/>), but if you have no idea what I'm talking about, they are what used to be known as "the pink book and the green book."

1. When you find out where you are going to be student teaching, it is a good idea to check out the school's website and the division's website. You will be able to find important information about the school's (and possibly the division's) mission statement, names of administrators and administrative assistants, and school programs and initiatives. You should also find out if there is a page dedicated to the music program at the school, maintained by the music teacher or teachers. All of this information may help answer some of the questions you have about the school, the division, and the music program without having to ask anyone.
2. Try to visit the school before your first day of student teaching, if possible. It will make you feel more comfortable on the day you arrive, and will give you a chance to meet your cooperating teacher and possibly some students! You can ask about things like:
 - school philosophy, school policies, school calendar, and daily schedule;
 - required reports and record-keeping, building floor plan, grading standards, and discipline procedures (ask for a copy of the school handbook if one is available);
 - the curriculum and specific skills to be covered during your placement;
 - the instructional materials and strategies that your cooperating teacher uses;
 - school expectations for students and information about your pupils and their classroom routines (ask if your school has a student handbook);
 - information about the community in which your school is located; and
 - school expectations for you in terms of dress, behaviour, etc.

“Student teaching is a significant step toward becoming a professional educator. You are, therefore, expected to demonstrate the attitudes and actions of a professional educator.”

If you are not able to visit the school before your placement begins, be sure to ask your cooperating teacher and/or an administrator these questions when you arrive.

3. Housing and transportation are the responsibility of the student teacher. If you are student teaching out-of-town, it is up to you to find a place to stay and figure out how you will get to school every day. Often, it won't be too hard to find someone to stay with. Ask friends, family, or colleagues if they know someone in that city or town who you can stay with.

4. Try not to be absent. If you are sick, make sure you call the school, your cooperating teacher, and your faculty advisor as soon as possible. If you are sick for more than two days, you will need to have a doctor's note. Absence is also permitted in cases of death in your immediate family or other extreme circumstances. Any days that you miss, you must make up, even if this means returning for a few extra days after the scheduled end of student teaching.
5. Being professional is important. Here is a good paragraph from “Policies for Student Teaching in Music” that talks about professionalism:

“Student teaching is a significant step toward becoming a professional educator. You are, therefore, expected to demonstrate the attitudes and actions of a professional educator. These include: conforming to your host school's rules and policies; extending basic rules of courtesy to teachers, pupils, school staff, and the broader school community; meeting the standards of dress, personal appearance, and professional behaviour expected of the staff at your host school; and placing school responsibilities ahead of personal wishes. During your student teaching you may

have access to confidential records and other highly personal information. You must safeguard such knowledge and use it for professional purposes only. Please exercise professional judgment about when, where, and with whom to discuss any aspect of your student teaching experience. Share any specific concerns about confidentiality with your cooperating teacher or your university supervisor.”

6. Refresh your knowledge about the code of professional practice of the Manitoba Teachers' Society. You must be an MTS member to go out into the field.
7. Refresh your memory of the responsibilities of the student teacher, the cooperating teacher, the principal, and the faculty advisor. There are links to videos about the roles of each person involved in field experience on the Faculty of Education page of the Brandon University website (<http://www.brandonu.ca/education/field-experience-2/>).
8. Make sure to contact your cooperating teacher and your faculty advisor well in advance of the beginning of your placement. Give them your contact information and ask them what their expectations are for formal observations, reflective journal writing, lesson/unit planning and preparation, and anything else you may be concerned about.
9. Get your schedule to your faculty advisor as soon as possible after you begin student teaching so that you can plan the times and days of your advisor's visits. Remember, your faculty advisor is your strongest advocate, so if any problems arise during your placement, be sure to contact your advisor right away.
10. Learn the students' names and start getting to know them right away. It will make relationship building easier and it helps to know all of their names when you begin teaching after the initial observation stage of your placement.
11. Become as involved in your school as possible. You are expected to participate in all of the extra-curricular activities your cooperating teacher is involved with within the school, but you may also want to take the extra initiative to help out with other activities.
12. Field experience is evaluated using written observation reports completed by both the cooperating teacher and the faculty supervisor, as well as a report in which the cooperating teacher and faculty advisor circle the student teacher's score for a variety of different aspects of teaching.
13. This one isn't in the documents anywhere, but I personally think it is a good idea to buy thank you cards before you begin your placement so that you aren't scrambling to find some during the final week of your placement. I don't fill them out until the night before my last day, usually, since I don't know what to specifically thank the principal, my cooperating teacher, and my faculty advisor for until I have spent five or six weeks working with them.

A Co-Operating Teacher's Perspective...

by Chris Darazsi - Teacher at École Regent Park, River East Transcona School Division

So you have your student teacher placement coming up. As if you don't have enough things going on, now you have to start thinking about that??? I mean, come on! There are juries soon, exams, ensembles, recitals...! But something to consider is this; nothing will prepare you better for your first few years of teaching better than your student teaching experiences. Your chance to literally practice

your trade under the constant guidance of an experienced teacher is invaluable. With that in mind, here are a few thoughts from a teacher who has been doing this long enough to have a fair bit of experience working with BU student teachers, but not for so long that I've forgotten what it's like to be in your shoes.

The first thing you need to understand, and this may sound cliché, but your placement is only what you make it. You can learn from any situation, good or bad. And sometimes you are going to learn the most from some of the smaller to medium sized programs where there aren't two dozen ensembles going on at all hours of the day. That is where you will have the most opportunities to ask a lot of questions. I'm not taking anything away from student teaching in a large program, but each situation requires a slightly different approach to maximize your learning. No two experiences will be the same and you (possibly in consultation with your Cooperating Teacher) need to take that initiative to figure out what will best prepare you for your first gig. It's these experiences that will influence your first few years of teaching, forming you into who you are going to be as a teacher.

As I said, no two student teaching experiences will be the same but that being said, I consulted with my friend and colleague Brady Gill (from College Pierre Elliot Trudeau) and we came up with a list of Do's and Don'ts for student teachers that apply to all student teaching situations;

DO be on time. Being late is never acceptable and arriving each day before your cooperating teacher (CT) is always a good idea. See if you can get a key to the band room and use that time wisely. Prep for the day, write your lessons out on the board for the students, sort through the filing cabinets of repertoire.

DO act professionally at all times. Remember, you are there as a teacher, not as a student. Even though you are likely closer in age to the students than you are to the CT, your goal is to become a teacher. Always act like one.

DO make sure that you are the best player in the band. You must demonstrate good tone, posture, and musicianship at all times. If there are students who play better than you, it will cause more problems than you know, so get back into the practice room! Also, use your voice to demonstrate often. It's faster than setting up your instrument, and encouraging your students to use their voices is always a good thing.

DON'T complain about how busy you are, it makes it look like you can't handle it. Think of this as a warm up for the real responsibility of 270 report cards, 25 emails a day, staff meetings, extra committees, assembly performances, trip organizing, fund raising, festival preparation, bus arranging, assessments, family obligations, and the dozens of

little things that your CT does that you don't even realize. All these things await you in your first few years of teaching. I remember when I was student teaching. I thought I had a huge amount of stuff going on. Crazy busy! But now I can tell you, it's going to get busier, and it's going to be for real when it's you that's the teacher. So while you're student teaching, take it head-on and run with it. Work hard. Harder than you think you need to. Both you and your students will benefit.

DO ask a lot of questions. I remember this was one thing I did NOT do nearly enough of when I was student teaching. I was quite content to teach my lesson plans and lead the ensembles through whatever music they were playing at the time. But now, when I look back, I see that there were so many things that I didn't prepare myself for. Follow these basic steps: 1) Think. 2) Ask questions. 3) Discuss with your CT. 4) Repeat as

“DO ask a lot of questions...
 1) Think.
 2) Ask questions.
 3) Discuss with your CT.
 4) Repeat as necessary.”

necessary. I encourage you to approach your CT at the beginning of your placement and ask if they would mind if you ask a LOT of questions because here's the deal; you may be working with a CT that probably doesn't think about WHY they do things the way they do. And they certainly aren't in the habit of verbalizing it (although many of us are near the point of talking to ourselves, that's for entirely different reasons!). They simply work intuitively, and unfortunately they will sometimes forget to explain the process to you unless you ask. No teacher I know will mind you asking specific and well thought out questions that show that you care about what you are doing and learning. Or even if it's a larger scale philosophical question about music education, bring it on. We love that stuff! Just please make sure that it's at an appropriate time, perhaps at the end of the day or some other predetermined time that's agreeable to both of you, but this is where you will learn TONS. While you are observing, make note about everything. Make notes first, ask questions later. Why did you clap that rhythm for them? Why didn't you? How do you keep the kids focused? Where is the line between teaching and rehearsing? How do you choose repertoire? How do you introduce a new piece of music to the group? Why did you start the class that way, or end it that way? Keep in mind that although we are more than happy to take student teachers because we feel that it is important to share our knowledge and help young music teachers be successful, it does take time and effort that could otherwise be spent doing our own work, so anything you can do to contribute to the program and help out the CT can be a win-win for both of you.

DO take every opportunity to get in front of the students. Teaching a class of Grade 6 beginners can be overwhelming in your first year of teaching but it's not a big deal when there's a CT in the room to guide you. And conducting a university Lab Band is nothing like conducting Grade 9's. So I encourage you to use your time student teaching to gain as much experience in front of the students as you can. Try things,

experiment, especially if you have multiple classes at the same grade. If something doesn't go well, quickly talk to your CT, make adjustments, and try again with the next class! Or, ask the CT to show you what they might do.

DO find a balance between emulating your CT and doing your own thing because what works for one teacher doesn't always work for another. Make it your own. You will learn valuable ideas and strategies that you can take with you and always keep in your "bag of tricks" but remember that your CT has a long-standing relationship with most of his/her students and sometimes that can make all the difference. DON'T get frustrated if you don't achieve the same results as your CT with a similar lesson delivery.

DO get to know your students as soon as possible. You may be thinking that because you are only in the school for six or seven weeks that it's a lot of effort to learn all those names for such a short period of time. By the time you learn them, your placement will be over! Not the case. Firstly, the students will feel that you actually see them as people and will appreciate and respect you that much more. They don't like to be called "hey you" any more than you do. And secondly, it will make classroom management WAY easier. When you can call a student by name from across the room, it makes no mistake that you are talking to that particular student. This will result in far fewer management issues and much more effective teaching/learning.

All in all, if you go in there with strong work ethic, an open mind, lots of questions, and a willingness to look hard at yourself and learn from your mistakes, you are bound to have an excellent experience. This is your chance to figure it out. Who are you as a teacher? What do you believe about what you are teaching? What do you want to teach them and what do you want them to learn? What is important to you? And while it will take years to figure this out, this is the beginning of a great career, and it starts now. I wish the best of luck to you and your colleagues.

Perspective: Road Trip to Da Capo 2012

by Nichole Anderson, NSU NAfME Vice President

Seven music education students from Northern State University in Aberdeen, South Dakota attended the Da Capo conference this past January. These students are all a part of their music education organization, NAfME (National Association for Music Education). We enjoyed being able to take part in this conference. It was very interesting for us to see how these events are run outside the United States.

Our members had a fantastic time attending sessions and networking with new people. The seven of us split up and attended as many sessions as we could. Due to the predicted weather forecast for the United States, we unfortunately had to leave the conference early. But, every session we attended was well worth it and our members were able to take away extremely valuable information. I personally wish we could have spent more time in each session!

Northern had one member in her third year, four in their second year and two in their first year of schooling. Although many of these students have not yet begun their education courses, they were able to enjoy the conference and get a step-ahead of their peers. After all, it is never too early to start gathering information, handouts and ideas!

We would like to thank Dr. Wendy McCallum, Jennifer Shead, and the rest of the BUSMEA council and members for being wonderful hosts while on our visit. You all did a fantastic job and the conference was wonderful. We cannot wait to return next year with even more members!

by Chelsea Kerbaugh, NSU NAfME Secretary

On January 20, 2012 seven NSU music education students embarked on a journey to Brandon, Manitoba, Canada to attend the annual Da Capo Conference. The Da Capo Conference is a Canadian music education conference held every year by professional Canadian educators. Here, they hold clinics on various topics of being a music educator and how to become more aware of current issues in the profession.

Most members of the group had never been out of the country before, so going to Canada was a new experience. The group toured around the lovely countryside of Canada and experienced local favorites.



NSU students enjoying the catered lunch

The group went to a local restaurant, Joe Beavers, serving authentic Canadian food. Also, the students were able to spend some time with Canadian music education students. They went to Brandon University and had a fun night of food and games with the local BUSMEA members.

Overall, the group had a lot of fun going to Canada and the conference. "The trip was well worth it!" stated sophomore music education major Chelsea Kerbaugh. "I want to go back next year and learn more about Canada's music education."



Da Capo Ice-Breakers evening



BUSMEA would like to give a big thank-you to all who make cookies for our Valentine's Day Auction: Dr. Symons, Dr. Simonot, Joyce Burba, Dr. McCallum, Dr. Wood, Dr. Scott, Dr. Chadwick and Joel Brennan, and to Devon McIntyre for being our auctioneer. Also, special thanks to our highest bidders, Dr. Zacharias and Jonathan Klassen!

Upcoming BUSMEA Events...

Dance Workshop

Do you think you can dance? Come learn about dance theory and learn some fancy foot work!

Presenter: Brian Toms

When: March 3, 2012

Morning: 10:30am-12:00pm, Room 2-02 Music Building

Afternoon: 1:00pm-2:00pm, Room 1-01 Ed Building

We want to Hear from You!

We would love to hear input on the sessions that interest you. How can we help further your musical knowledge? If you have any suggestions or comments please email BUSMEA at busmea@brandonu.ca

BUSMEA BBQ

Come join us for a bite to eat during the Brandon Jazz Festival.

Where: Outside the front doors of the Queen Elizabeth II Music Building

Da Capo 2013

Mark your calendars on Saturday, January 19, 2013 for next year's Da Capo Conference.

This edition of the BUSMEA BUZZ
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CONGRATULATIONS!

TO THE 2012/13 BUSMEA COUNCIL!

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