



CELEBRATING MARY
WITH MUSIC

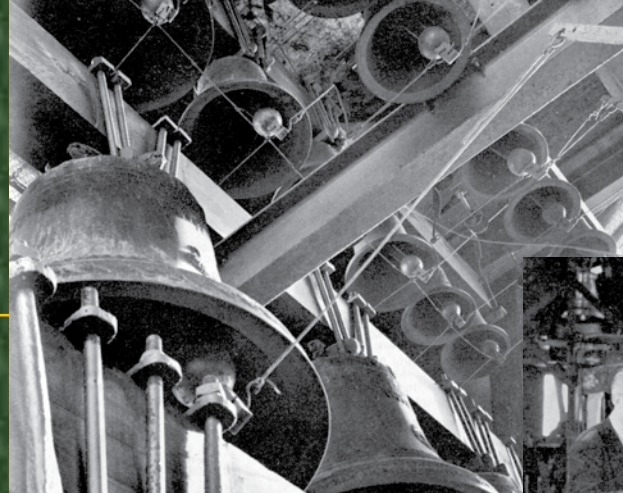
HISTORIC CARILLON

AT THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL SHRINE

On June 23, 2009, the Miraculous Medal Shrine in Philadelphia, PA will be a stop on a tour of local carillons for the 67th annual Congress of the Guild of Carillonneurs in North America. Why would this group stop at the Shrine?

The Shrine is architecturally and musically famous because it contains the fourth oldest carillon in North America, with bells made by the world renowned Paccard Foundry in France. Since its installation over 100 years ago, visitors to the Miraculous Medal Shrine in Philadelphia, PA and neighbors who live in its shadow are serenaded frequently with music coming from the carillon tower above the Shrine.

What is a carillon? It's a musical instrument, generally housed in a tower, which is composed of at



LEFT: View from below some of the middle-size and smaller bells.

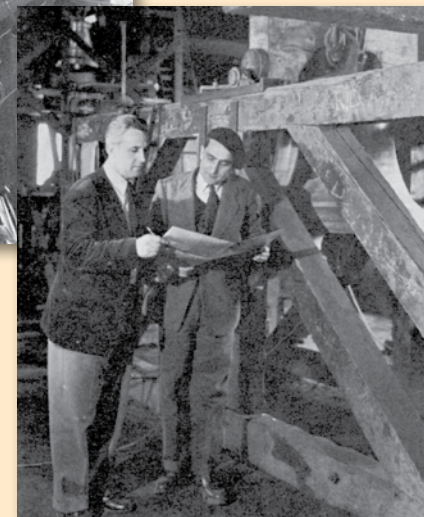
BELOW: Arthus Lynds Bigelow (left) discusses bell making with Alfred Paccard in the foundry located in Anancy-le-Vieux, France.

least 23 bells. A carillon is played by striking a keyboard with the fists and by pressing the pedal keyboard with the feet.

The construction of the Shrine's bell tower that houses the carillon was completed in 1899. The parishioners of a nearby parish run by the Vincentians decided that the Shrine should have a bell tower and carillon. They were encouraged to pledge money as memorial offerings. One parishioner, Margaret Ellen Maguire, pledged \$5,000 from an inheritance she received from her father. She stipulated that the monies were to be used exclusively for the carillon.

In 1900, a carillon of 26 bells was ordered from the famous Paccard Foundry in France. The bells were blessed on March 25, 1901, the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin. The bells were officially played for the first time on Easter Sunday, April 7, 1901.

These bells are dedicated to the memory of Margaret's father, John Maguire. The largest bell weighs 3,300 pounds; the smallest weighs 30 pounds. The bells are artfully decorated. Eleven of the bells are inscribed with the names of saints; the remaining fifteen bells are named in honor of the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary.



The carillon was silent for many of its first 40 years. There were problems with the mechanical workings of the bells and there were many upgrades and experiments with new electrical and various mechanical systems. The silence was broken in 1945 when Arthur Lynds Bigelow, an engineer and carillon expert, came to the Shrine and offered to repair the carillon. He also proposed enlarging the carillon to 47 bells. The installation of the bells and new keyboard were completed in 1952. The new carillon with 47 bells was publically played on June 15, 1952, with Bigelow as the carillonneur.

We invite you to stop by if you are in the Philadelphia area on June 23 from 10 AM to 12 PM to hear the magnificent sound emanating from these historic bells. Janet Tebbel, the Shrine's carillonneur, will be at the keyboard. The carillon is also played every Monday from 5 PM to 7 PM.

ABOVE: The Miraculous Medal Shrine's 125-foot bell tower is topped by a 14-foot bronze statue of Mary Immaculate.