

# WESTMINSTER

C O L L E G E M A G A Z I N E



*Carillon player Paul Musser '45*

**Still Ringing Out the Bells of Old Main**

Volume 24, Number 1  
Summer 2004

**Editor**  
Patrick S. Broadwater

**Senior Director,  
Advancement Administration**  
Mark A. Meighen

**Editorial Assistants**  
Sandra Chandler  
Carol Eberhart '94, M '04  
Joe Onderko M '00  
Dorothy Pollock '46

**Design & Production**  
Deborah L. Parady

**Printer**  
Lane Press, Burlington, Vt.

**Chair, Board of Trustees**  
George R. Berlin

**President**  
R. Thomas Williamson

**Vice President for Institutional  
Advancement**  
Gloria C. Cagigas

**Vice President for Academic Affairs  
& Dean of the College**  
Jesse T. Mann

**Vice President for Finance  
& Management Services**  
Kenneth J. Romig '85

**Dean of Students**  
Neal A. Edman

**Dean of Admissions  
& Enrollment Management**  
Doug Swartz

**President of Alumni Council**  
Ronald E. Hustwit '64

#### ON THE COVER...

Paul Musser '45 prepares to play the 35-bell carillon at Westminster's 2004 Commencement ceremony.

*Westminster Magazine* is published quarterly by the Office of Communication Services, Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pennsylvania 16172-0001. Inquiries should be addressed to the Editor. Phone: (724) 946-8761; Fax: (724) 946-6159; or e-mail: broadwps@westminster.edu.

Westminster College is related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through the Synod of the Trinity.

Westminster College does not discriminate, and will not tolerate discrimination, on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, or handicap or disability as those terms are defined under applicable law, in the administration of any of its educational programs, activities, or with respect to admissions and employment. In its employment practices, the College may consider the individual's support of the philosophy and purposes of Westminster as stated in the *Undergraduate Catalog*. Otherwise, Westminster does not discriminate, and will not tolerate discrimination, on the basis of religion or creed. Inquiries may be directed to the Equal Opportunity Officer, Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA 16172-0001, (724) 946-7247.

# WESTMINSTER

COLLEGE MAGAZINE

## FEATURES

### 12 Through the Roof

Westminster reports big increase in applications, freshmen as competition heats up.

### 15 The Chimes of Your Life

Friends of the Carillon aims to keep tower bells ringing for generations to come.

### 18 Majoras Rules

Westminster alumna appointed chairman of Federal Trade Commission.

### 22 Young or Old, Field Station Taking on Increased Role

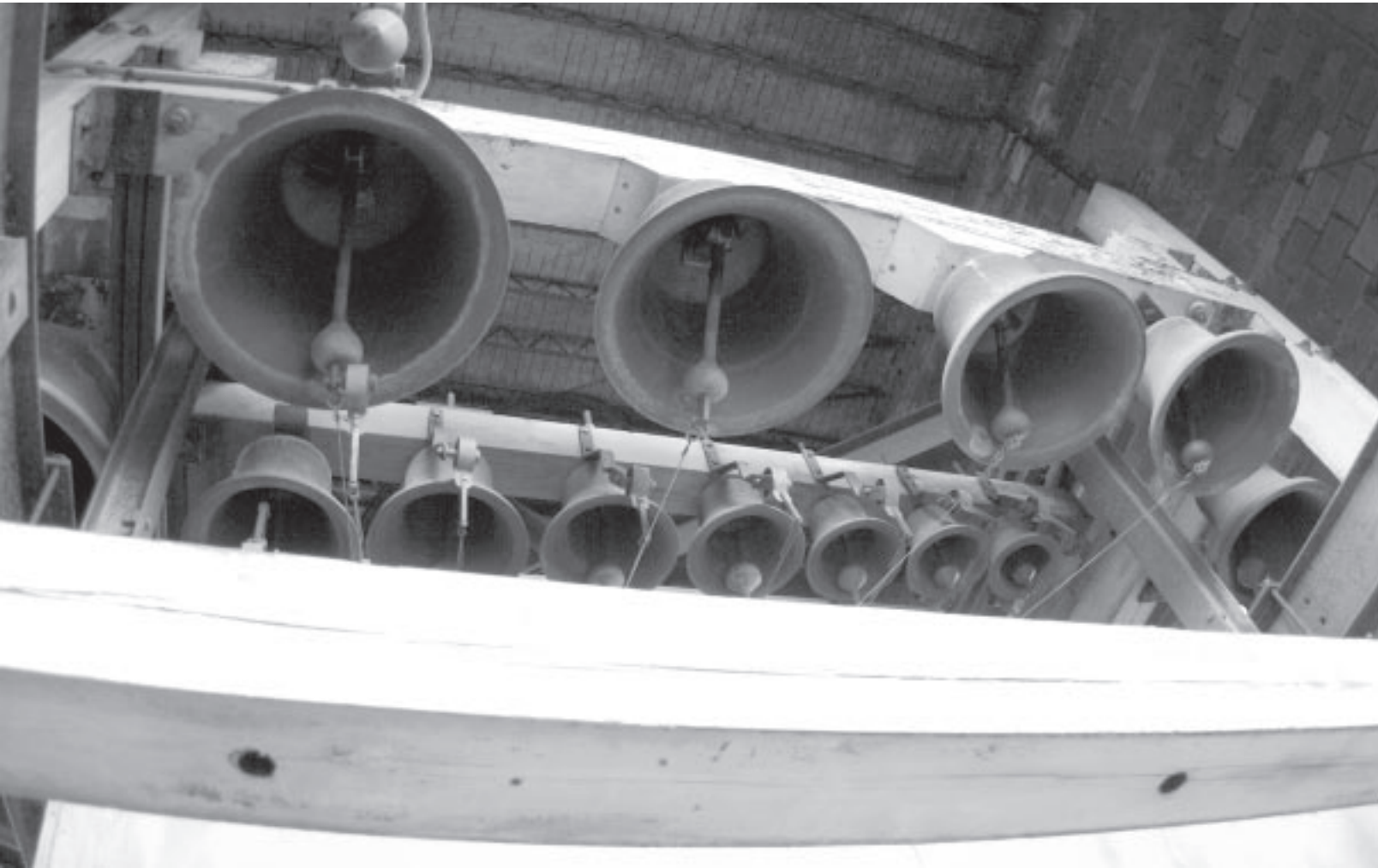
Outdoor Laboratory component includes College's "oldest academic building."



## DEPARTMENTS

IFC	Message from the President	10-11	Alumni News
2-6	Campus Update	24-32	Class Notes
7-9	Sports Update		

PHOTO CREDITS... Front Cover & Back Cover – Tiffany Wolfe



# The Chimes of Your Life

Friends of the Carillon aims to keep tower bells ringing for generations to come

*By Patrick S. Broadwater*

**B**efore he met the other love of his life, Paul Musser heard bells. The bells in Old Main Memorial, to be specific. ♦ “I was taken by hearing the bells at the conference,” said Musser, a 1945 Westminster College graduate who first heard the chimes ring in 1937 while attending the New Wilmington Missionary Conference. “The students played them for the conference and I thought that was real nice.”

His immediate connection with the melodic tunes seemingly floating down from the sky above kindled a lifelong affection for bells. As a freshman, he dove into the topic, choosing to write a research theme on musical bells. Although Musser was involved in the school band, during his first year at Westminster he was soon on the receiving end of an unexpected request. Music professor Donald **Cameron** approached Musser, a Bible/psychology/philosophy major, and asked if he'd be interested in playing the chimes for 15 minutes each evening, Monday to Friday.

"They couldn't get a music major up there, so he asked me," said Musser, who developed a repertoire of 75-80 hymns for which he rewrote music to suit the bells. "The wires were all rusted, the pulleys were tight, nobody had played it for a long time. I got up there with a can of oil and some rags and knocked the rust off it. The first thing I played was an Easter Sunday morning service."

That same year, Musser was sitting in the Chapel when inspiration struck again. This time, it was meeting Margaret (Peggy) **Newcomb** '45, who sat two seats away during compulsory chapel services.

"There was a gal between us, but she cut chapel all the time," Musser said. "So we were using the hymn book together a lot."

They began dating the following year and have been together ever since. So it was that two lifelong passions began for Paul Musser in the same year.

One can still find, 62 years later, undergrads discovering (or searching for) lasting love while the tower bells provide a pleasant and reassuring accompaniment from above. For nearly 70 years, the bells have resonated, producing for students a soundtrack of sorts of their time at Westminster, and for alumni, a nostalgic echo of days gone by.

The 1944 *Argo* made the bells the theme to its yearly chronicle, crafting a timeless valedictory to its routine:

*For all of us, when we are away, perhaps the one thing which will longest be close to our hearts, a real substance in our treasured memories, the one thing held truly typical of Westminster will be the Chimes.*

*The Chimes, the pulse beat of our college, have accompanied us through every experience here. Ringing out through the day and the dark, awakening us for our eight-o'clocks, faithfully reviewing each quarter-hour through classes, signaling the approach of dinner, and calling us out to an evening of "college life." They were understanding, and seemed to ring more slowly as we said good night to that certain someone; then later, more gently than ever, bade us goodnight and pleasant dreams. Again and again, we had our happy hearts made more light by the droning of the Victory bell, and we, the conquering Titans, laughed brazenly at the losers. But, then came the quiet of Sunday morning, and the Chimes invited us to the calm of the church, and to chapel in the evening. The Chimes and "Tell Me Why," ringing through the shadows and over the hills ... symbols of the Westminster we love.*

The fear of losing that special connection is what prompted Musser to start a group dedicated to recognizing and preserving

that relationship, the Friends of the Carillon. Over the years, very few students have been trained to play the bells and no students were learning to play when the group was formed last spring. The hope of the Friends of the Carillon is to raise enough money to fund an endowed scholarship, which would be given each year to a person or persons who would agree to play the bells during specified times.

*"You get much more color in playing by hand than you can if it's automatically done. That's like kissing through cardboard. It doesn't have any feeling."*

*- Paul Musser '45*

"What would Westminster College be like without our friendly bells?" Musser wrote to a small group of bell enthusiasts in the spring. "Through the years our gifts will continue to produce funds for many student players. We will make certain that our fight song and alma mater will never die."

The original 12 bells – known collectively as chimes – were a gift to Westminster from William and Mary **Duff** in honor of their daughters, Charlotte and Letitia. Originally crafted for Delaware-DuPont Estate Gardens, the bells were never installed there due to the Depression. The Duffs purchased the bells and presented them to the College on Easter 1935. In 1978, Katherine **Stewart** Armington '16, then a member of the Board of Trustees, presented 23 additional bells, bringing the total to 35.

The current 35-bell arrangement is known as a carillon, an instrument composed of 23 or more bells tuned in chromatic sequence. It is played from a console that resembles a simple organ, with batons (for the hands) and pedals (for the feet). The batons, like the keys of a piano, move the clappers (metal balls) that strike and sound the bells, which remain stationary.

At Westminster, the console is housed midway up the tower on the roof of Old Main, accessible by a small, iron, winding staircase. The bells are directly overhead. In the center of the bells is the "victory" bell rescued from the fire that destroyed the original Old Main building.

Carillons can be set to be played automatically – Westminster's carillon chimes automatically every 15 minutes from 8 a.m. until midnight – but electric mechanisms fail to deliver a variation of touch and thus a variation in sound, speed or volume that would be required for proper musical performance. Electrically operated clappers hit the bell with the same force each time, muting the range of each bell, which can be exploited by a manual player.

"The good part about playing by hand is you get more expression," said Musser. "If you have an electronic gizmo hooked up, you can't slow down or go softer. Softer is simply a lighter push. Harder, you get louder. You get much more color in playing by

hand than you can if it's automatically done. That's like kissing through cardboard. It doesn't have any feeling."

Musser and a few others, including Raymond Ocock '50, professor of music *emeritus*, continue to play the carillon manually for special occasions – Commencement, Homecoming, weddings, memorial services, even vespers. But it's not hard to envision a day when no one on campus is trained to play the instrument.

The physical act of playing the carillon isn't terribly demanding. Greater physical challenges often arise just trying to get there. Players must ascend to the third floor of Old Main, squeeze through a closet, up a set of stairs and out onto the roof, where they cross to the tower and head up the spiral staircase to the console. The console cabin is surrounded by a few open windows, and the player is exposed to the weather conditions. It's stifling in the summer and bitter cold in the winter, though a fan in the summer and heat lamps in the winter make it more comfortable.

It's not easy to find a carillon to practice on. The College has a practice console in the music department, which uses batons and tuned metal bars, instead of bells, so students can learn the baton movements without the whole neighborhood hearing their mistakes. Most active carillons are located in Europe, where the instrument originated. Fewer than 200 exist in North America. Thirteen are located in Pennsylvania, and of those, only two are located on college campuses – at Westminster and Penn State-Behrend. (Doug Gefvert, a 1971 Westminster graduate, is carillonneur at the Washington Memorial Chapel in Valley Forge.)

For now, when not trying to line up future carillon players, Musser will continue to play the bells when asked. "I just like to play," he said. He lives only a block away from Old Main, so after each performance, he walks home and checks in with his wife, Peggy, a music major.

"I say, 'Well, how'd I do?' and she'll say, 'About a B-minus,'" said Musser. "She listens to it and she knows when I slip up.

"But I've gotten an A several times."



*Ringin' Out the Bells in Old Main...Paul Musser is pictured playing the chimes in Old Main tower in 1943. The old console, then located at the base of the tower, was connected to only 12 bells. Twenty-three additional bells were added in 1978, forming a 35-bell carillon.*

*For information on the Friends of the Carillon, contact Paul Musser, associate member, Guild of Carillonneurs of North America, at 724-946-2114 or pmuss@earthlink.net. Gifts can be made to Westminster College, designated to Friends of the Carillon.*

*(Broadwater is editor of Westminster Magazine.)*



## Revitalization of Old Main Moving Forward

The preliminary phase of Old Main Memorial renovation has been completed, but the bulk of the project remains to be conducted during the next 12 months.

The \$3 million revitalization project to upgrade the building infrastructure, accessibility and general aesthetics began quietly in the summer. Bridges and Co., of Pittsburgh, which handled the renovation of Thompson-Clark Hall, was chosen as the contractor. The tower masonry was repointed and cleaned, while inside the building, some areas were remodeled and reconfigured to accommodate a reorganization of offices on the first floor.

To minimize disruption of educational and student programs, work will pick up again in mid-December and continue through winter break. The remainder of the work will be completed from May to August 2005.

With a 75-year-old electrical system still in place, electrical remediation is the primary focus of the revitalization project. Other improvements likely to occur include upgrading the heating system, possible installation of air conditioning to select areas, and the installation of an elevator on the east end of the building.