Is the Tower ever open to the Public?

Members at the Donor level and above can view the Founder's Room on one of four tours conducted each year.

1. Founder's Room
2. Chao Research Center (Archives)
3. Maintenance Workshop
4. Anton Brees Carillon Library
5. Carillonneur's Studio
6. Keyboard Room
7. Carillon (60 bells)

Architect: Milton B. Medary (Philadelphia)
Purpose: To house the carillon; serve as a centerpiece for the Gardens; the private use of the Bok family
Built: 1927-1929
Height: 205 feet (62.5 meters)
Weight: 5,500 tons (5,000 metric tons)
Structure: Steel frame with brick walls; outer facing of pink and gray Georgia marble and Florida coquina, a limestone of shell and coral fragments
Foundation: 118 reinforced concrete piles, 13-24 feet (4-7 meters) underground with a concrete cap of 2.5 feet (0.8 meter)
Sculpture: Lee Lawrie (New York City); herons at the top, eagles at the base of the bellchamber; all sculptures were carved on-site
Colorful Grilles near the top: Ceramic tiles designed by J.H. Dulles Allen (Philadelphia)
Brass Door and Wrought-iron Gates with Birds: Samuel Yellin (Philadelphia); depicts the Biblical story of Creation
Inscription under the Sundial: This Singing Tower with its adjacent Sanctuary was dedicated and presented to the American people by Calvin Coolidge, President of the United States, February 1, 1929.

Bellfounder: John Taylor Bellfounders, Ltd. (Loughborough, England)
Size: 60 bronze bells
Bell weight: Smallest bell at 16 lbs.
Largest bell at 11+ tons (10+ metric tons)
Total of 63+ tons (57+ metric tons)

Adaptations for carillon of melodies or of music written for other instruments have been made by the recitalist, except for those arrangers identified by the following:
* Anton Brees

Announcing the hour strike:

9:00 I Wonder As I Wander Appalachian
9:30 Come, All Ye Children Spanish, Castilian
10:00 Deck The Halls Welsh
10:30 Pat-a-pan French
11:00 We Three Kings John Hopkins, Jr.
11:30 Now It Is Jul Again Scandinavian
12:00 The Holly And The Ivy English
12:30 Angels We Have Heard On High French
1:00 CONCERT
2:00 O Desired Day Catalan
2:30 Sweetest Night Of All Flemish, 1728
3:00 CONCERT
4:00 Come, All Ye Shepherds Bohemian
4:30 Gabriel's Message French, Basque
5:00 O Little Town Of Bethlehem Louis H. Redner
5:30 Let All Mortal Flesh French, Picardy Keep Silence
Saturday at 1:00 p.m.
Live performance by Elisa Tersigni

Classical Pieces Arranged for Carillon
Gymnopédie no. 1  E. Satie 1886–1925, arr. G. Slater
Pavan Belle, Qui Tient Ma Vie  Th. Arbeau 1519–1595
Prelude to Suite 1 for Cello  J.S. Bach 1685–1750
Sons de Carrilhoes  Joao T. Guimares 1883–1947

Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas
Chanukah  Traditional Jewish, arr. Richard Giszczak
In dulci jubilo 14th century German
I know a Rosetree Springing 16th century German

Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas
Chanukah  Traditional Jewish, arr. Richard Giszczak
Selections from Ludus Modalis  G. D’hollander b. 1965
Spring Morning – Layers – Accents
Movie Magic
Tale as Old as Time from Beauty and the Beast  A. Menken
Pure Imagination  Bricusse & Newley, arr. J. Lory-Moran

Saturday at 3:00 p.m.
Live performance by Elisa Tersigni

Selections from Ludus Modalis  G. D’hollander & 1965
Spring Morning – Layers – Accents
Movie Magic
Tale as Old as Time from Beauty and the Beast  A. Menken
Pure Imagination  Bricusse & Newley, arr. J. Lory-Moran

Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas
Chanukah  Traditional Jewish, arr. Richard Giszczak
In dulci jubilo 14th century German
I know a Rosetree Springing 16th century German

Sunday at 1:00 p.m.
Historic Recording by William De Turk

English Carols
Ding Dong Merrily on High  Welsh
Here We Come a Caroling  English
Deck the Hall in 7/8 time  English
O Christmas Tree  German
Pat-a-Pan  French
Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella  French
While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks  Irish

American Carols
O Little Town of Bethlehem  Louis Redner
Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head  Appalachian
I Wonder as I Wander  Appalachian

French Carols
When the Shepherd Goes to the Field  Angels We Have Heard on High
He is Born, the Divine Christ Child

Carols
On This Day Earth Shall Ring  German
We Wish You a Merry Christmas  English
and a Happy New Year!

Sunday at 3:00 p.m.
Historic Recording by William De Turk

European Carols
Ding Dong Merrily on High  Welsh
Here We Come a Caroling  English
Deck the Hall in 7/8 time  English
O Christmas Tree  German
Pat-a-Pan  French
Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella  French
While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks  Irish

19th Century Carols
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing  F. Mendelssohn
O Little Town of Bethlehem two versions  L. Redner

Traditional Christmas Hymns
O Come, All Ye Faithful  Adeste Fideles
On This Day Earth Shall Ring  Piae Cantiones

A Tradition of Excellence

Elisa Tersigni began playing carillon six years ago, when a friend introduced her to the instrument.

She has studied carillon at “Soldiers’ Tower” (University of Toronto), Canada and at the Royal Carillon School in Mechelen, Belgium.

In addition to playing recitals in Canada, she has performed in Belgium, England, Japan, and the United States.

This year, she completed her Carillonneur exam through the Guild of Carillonneurs in North America.

When she’s not playing carillon, she studies rare books as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC.

Elisa plans to study and perform recitals at Bok Tower Gardens in November and December 2021.

Elisa Tersigni
Singing Tower Carillon Fellow

Anton Brees (Antwerp, Belgium) served as our first carillonneur from 1928 until his death in 1967. Named in his honor, the Anton Brees Carillon Library is the largest and most comprehensive carillon library in the world.

Milford Myhre retired in June 2004 after 36 years as our carillonneur. He obtained his musical training at the University of Nebraska, the University of Michigan and the Royal Carillon School “Jef Denyn” in Belgium. President for both the GCNA and the World Carillon Federation, he has performed on three continents during his distinguished career of more than 50 years.

William (Bill) De Turk was director of carillon services from July 1, 2004 to October 31, 2011, after serving as assistant carillonneur and librarian since 1993. A native of the Philadelphia area, he received a bachelor of music degree cum honore from Heidelberg University in Tiffin, Ohio, and master of music degree in organ performance from the University of Michigan.

Geert D’hollander was named Bok Tower Gardens’ fourth full-time carillonneur in October 2012 and is one of the finest in the world. He has studied piano, chamber music, choral and orchestral direction, fugue, and composition at the Royal Conservatory in Antwerp, Belgium, and carillon at the Royal Carillon School in Mechelen, Belgium. He has taken first prize in more than 30 international competitions for carillon or composition.

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