

The Mayo Clinic Carillon

In recognition of the important part that art has had in the Mayo Clinic environment since the original Mayo Clinic Building was finished in 1914, *Mayo Clinic Proceedings* will feature some of the numerous works of art and architecture displayed throughout the buildings and grounds on the Mayo Clinic campuses.



Many stories regarding the workings of the Mayo Clinic carillon, its carillonners, and the particulars of its bells have been published over the years.^{1,2} Thus, when I met with Mr Jeffrey Daehn, current bell master, I asked him if there were any new details that he could share. As we walked up the 96 steps (he's counted them to confirm) to the bell tower, he imparted many interesting tidbits, and he even provided some myth-busting! Current publications on the carillon credit its existence to Dr Will Mayo, and purport it to have been inspired by experiences he had while visiting Belgium. Mr Daehn noted this might be partially true but said that there is more to the story. His research reveals that additional credit should be given to a local minister, Reverend G. P. Sheridan, who desired bells for his downtown Congregational Church and sought financial support from the Drs Mayo. Mr Daehn noted that Dr Will supported funding the carillon, but only if it was located in a public place that would belong to the entire community of Rochester. Several options were considered, including the hill behind Saint Marys Hospital, but the Plummer Building was under construction at the time and seemed like the best selection. Mr Daehn noted that Dr Plummer was not in favor of this addition, but in true Mayo fashion, a committee was formed and the Plummer Building was chosen

(personal communication, February 9, 2015). Without the vaulted bell tower on the top of the Plummer Building, the face of Rochester would certainly be changed. Could Rochester residents imagine no quarterly chimes or regal music ringing out over the downtown plaza?

Mr Daehn, who has developed callouses on his hands from playing the instrument, also shared that since the bells don't have stops like other keyboard instruments, the composers of carillon music consider the reverberations of the bells in the way they compose, and they intentionally build the reverberations into the harmonies. He also said that the famous bell dedicated to "The American Soldier" was originally cast as being dedicated to "The American Soldiers," but Mayo had the "s" removed (personal communication February 9, 2015). Please listen and enjoy a short sample recording of Mr Daehn's 4:45 PM Concert from February 9, 2015 ([Supplemental video](#) and historical research available online at <http://www.mayoclinicproceedings.org>).



The Mayo Clinic Carillon is located on the top floor of the Plummer Building in Rochester, Minnesota.

SUPPLEMENTAL ONLINE MATERIAL

Supplemental material can be found online at <http://www.mayoclinicproceedings.org>.

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1. The Rochester Carillon, <http://mayoweb.mayo.edu/sp-forms/mc1100-mc1199/mc1176.pdf>. Accessed February 6, 2015.
2. Dedication of the "New Clinic" Building and the Rochester Carillon: Celebrating 85 Years: 1928 to 2013. <http://intranet.mayo.edu/charlie/heritage-days/files/2013/07/Klein-PlummerBuilding-Carillon3278648.pdf>. Accessed February 11, 2015.

