

RICHARD BENNETT



Richard Bennett (B.Mus.Ed, M.Mus.) was born in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan (1960) and grew up as an “air force brat.” At the age of 12, after bouncing around Canada, he entered Middleton Regional High School, in Nova Scotia, where he quickly acquired a deep appreciation of music under M.W. Harvey. Middleton would have to wait 8 years while Richard finished his schooling in Summerside, P.E.I., graduating from Three Oaks High School in 1978 before attending Dalhousie University.

Mr. Bennett holds a Bachelor of Music Education Degree from Dalhousie University (1982) and a Master of Music (School Music) Degree from the University of Calgary (1996). He has served on numerous curriculum development teams at the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Annapolis Valley Regional School Board. He is an active member of the Nova Scotia Band Association, a former member of the CMEA Board of Directors, and a Past President of the Nova Scotia Music Educators' Association.

He completed the Wind Band Conducting Programme at the University of Calgary in 1992 (including studies with Vondis Miller, Glenn Price, Jeremy Brown, Craig Kirchoff, Stanley DeRusha, John Paynter, David Whitwell, Timothy Reynish, and Frederick Fennell). In addition to his school bands he has, at various times, conducted the West Nova Scotia Regiment Band, the Acadia University Concert Band and Wind Ensemble, the Acadia Summer Winds, the Nova Scotia Youth Wind Ensemble, the Nova Scotia Junior Youth Wind Ensemble, as well as the Prince Edward Island Senior and Intermediate Honour Bands. During the summers he often instructed at band camps including the South Shore Music Camp and Acadia Band Camp. Mr. Bennett has also adjudicated at music festivals in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Saskatchewan and is often invited to guest conduct and give clinics throughout Atlantic Canada.

Mr. Bennett was Director of Bands at Middleton Regional High School, a position he held from 1982 - 2015. He taught instrumental music to students in grades 7 through 12 and directed the Beginner, Junior, and Senior Concert Bands as well as the Junior and Senior Jazz Bands. Out of some 10,000 “non-contractual” hours of rehearsals came concerts, trips, clinics, guest appearances and many profound musical experiences with 1000 or so students of “MRHS.” Personal highlights include performing at Vimy Ridge (2001), the inspiration of Michael Colgrass’ remarkable graphic notation work (2009, 2012) and being witness to countless “lightbulb” moments. He is most proud of many students expressing gratitude for “not just teaching us music but for teaching us about life.”

In his spare time he enjoys playing trumpet and flugelhorn with the “Annapolis Big Band.” He enjoys arranging for brass ensemble, concert band, wind ensembles, jazz ensembles, and orchestra (his “MacGillivray’s Cape Breton” was performed by Symphony Nova Scotia several years ago). He’s been known to really let his hair down as composer/arranger, keyboardist and “horn player” with his “Wednesday Nite Guys” free

improvisation sessions or conducting the pit orchestra for a local school musical. If there is pen and paper nearby he might dash off a quick cartoon and he has even dabbled in dinner theatre. If you can't find him he's in the woods with his camera.