



PROBUS Club of Central Edmonton Newsletter

September 2022

Editor: Ken Hoffman

Website: www.probus-central-edmonton.com

Email: probus.cent.ed@gmail.com

Sept 20 - Bianca Chambul

Bianca Chambul, bassoonist in the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, talked to us about her instrument and her career. The following bio information was extracted from the ESO website.

Born in Toronto, Bianca Chambul appointed by a panel to be the Principal Bassoon of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra in June 2019. Bianca has performed with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Hamilton Philharmonic, Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, Toronto's Tapestry Opera and in many other events. She has appeared as competition winner with the Rice University Chamber Orchestra (2019), the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra (2013), and the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra (2011).

In April 2019, Bianca completed one year of her Master's degree at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music in Houston Texas, under the tutelage of Professor Benjamin Kamins. She obtained her performance undergraduate degree in 2016 at the University of Toronto, studying with Eric Hall. Bianca received the William and Phyllis Waters Graduating Award and was on the University of Toronto music faculty as a sessional bassoon instructor for the 2017 winter term.

One of her favourite bassoonists is Sergio Azzolini, especially his Vivaldi CDs with the ensemble

L'Aura Soave Cremona on period instruments. His work has served as inspiration for Bianca to learn to play historical bassoons.

She spoke about her past, why she took up the Bassoon, hiring by ESO, and making reeds.

She became interested in music as a child. She did not start with the bassoon. After seeing the movie Fantasia, she became interested in the Bassoon. This interest was reinforced when she obtained a recording by Canada's best bassoonist.

While taking her Masters, a fellow musician advised her to audition with the ESO. The process she described was quite different from what we likely experienced. A nine-person panel was behind a large screen. The challenge was compounded by the travel she faced. She had auditioned for the Texas Symphony, then returned to California, where she was taking further training, only to be asked to get to Edmonton for the audition.

She competed with seventeen people. Typically, there are three or more rounds to an audition. She arrived at the



audition at 9:00 am. The order of the eighteen participants was determined by drawing number, she

was first. The first round was made up of 4 classical pieces, one of these she had never played. With help of YouTube and a couple of run throughs, she went to meet the challenge. With two others, she successfully moved on the second round, again going first. This round included several pieces.



During the competition, she stumbled on a small part of one piece, much to her surprise, a voice came from behind the screen and asking if she wanted a do over. At this point, I will note that she she was not premitted to communicate with the panel. She replayed the piece. She now looked forward to the next step in the process. To her complete surprise she was hired.

She next spoke to us about making her own reeds, apparently good quality reeds are not avaiable in North America. This was followed by playing three songs including two from Fantasia.

The presentation was impressive. Even though this was her first experience at public speaking, she was enthusiastic and engaging.

Sept 27 – ETS Kathleen Andrews Transit Garage

We visited the Edmonton's new Kathleen Andrews Transit Garage. Shawn and Jason were our guides. It should be noted, that this is only one of the 4 bus garages operated by Edmonton Transit. It houses both diesel and electric buses. We started a with a brief presentation on the workings of the transit system and on the Garage. Facts on the Garage include:

- Footprint is 412,688 square feet
- Overhead doors are 14.0 feet high
- It can store about 300 buses (City fleet is about 800)
- Construction started in 2016 and completed in 2019. It began operation in February 2020
- The Art on the top of the building (53°20 – 40'N) models the mountainscapes from across the world on the same latitude as the garage.
- 400 hundred city staff work in it.
- Of the 400 hundred about 120 are mechanics
- Drivers work shifts, the first shift starts at 4:15 am. There are shifts that go to 2:15.

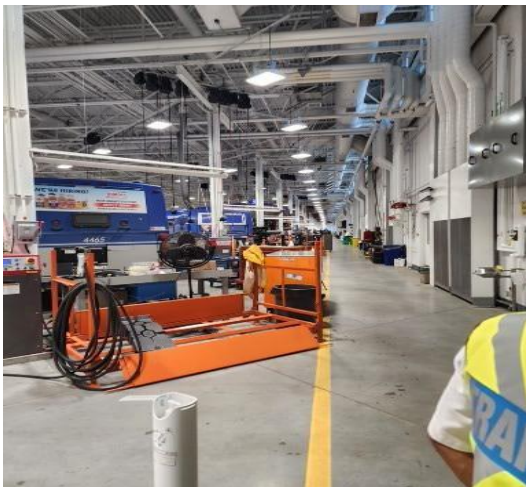
We were provided with more interesting facts and experiences though a handout and answers to the numerous questions we asked. Hopefully, the following pictures will provide good impression of the Garage:



The entrance area of the Garage. It contains access to the garage and offices areas.



These are the massive generators that are available if a power outage is experienced.



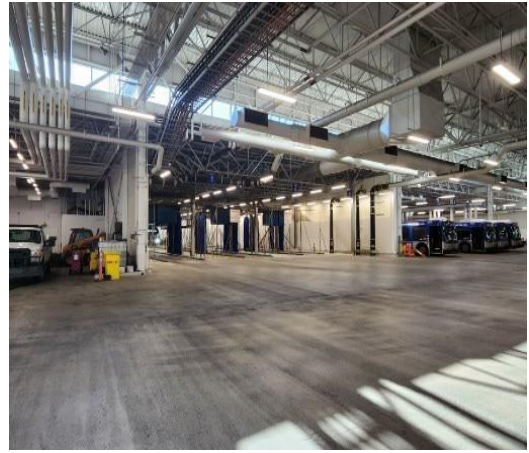
This shows one of the rows are repair bays on the garage. It also displays the length of the interior.



Picture of the parts room. To help manage them they use a computer system. They purchase conventional buses from one company – fewer parts. Electric buses are bought from a different company.



Picture of storage area for tires.



Wash bays for buses. These bay are used frequently in the winter. To the right are the some of buses that await maintance.



A tow vehicle halling a "dead" bus. In this picture he is decoupling it. It will be taken from here into the garage for repair.



This is a picture of one of the charging devices (pantographs) which drops from the ceiling to the top of a bus. It is one of the many unique features of the state of the art garage.



This is one of the electric buses connected to a charging station. Each bus had six batterys, each weighing about 2,600 hundred pounds. Four under it and two on top. Batteries are leased by ETS, so that if one fails it will not need to spend \$70,000 on a replacement. Buses are charged each day. They try to avoid fully discharging a bus, since it takes several a hours to charge it.

Conventional buses cost about \$700,000, electric about \$1,000,000 and fuel cell \$1,300,000. The City has four fuel cell buses. None of these buses are assigned to this garage. The scheduling of drivers and buses to routes and times is complex task. Also, they need to be able to react quickly to sudden road closures, and breakdowns.

The building is much more than the storage and repair centre. It has a second floor that is not used at this time. It is likely that the control centre that is currently down town will be moved to it. The basement houses more facilities for drivers, plus City departments that include ETS security staff. Jason and Shawn were engaging knowledgeable guides. They spent almost 2 hours with us answering many questions. We also benefitted from the knowledge of the head of the parts department. All in all, it was a very good tour.

Well, its and with is PROBUS month – no coincidence, and stay safe



PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the 2022 International Day of Older Persons highlights how the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing inequities and intensified their negative impacts on the lives of older persons;

AND WHEREAS, Edmonton is committed to growing a city where people of all ages and abilities can thrive as active and engaged community members;

AND WHEREAS, today, there are over 400,000 members in approximately 4,000 PROBUS clubs worldwide supporting the wellbeing of seniors;

AND WHEREAS, the City of Edmonton honours the work of Alberta PROBUS Club volunteers to support healthy bodies and minds in our city's local retiree community through inclusive social activities;

THEREFORE I, MAYOR AMARJEET SOHI, DO HEREBY PROCLAIM OCTOBER 2022 "PROBUS MONTH" IN EDMONTON, ALBERTA'S CAPITAL CITY.

Dated this 1st day of October, 2022

A. Sohi

Amarjeet Sohi
MAYOR, CITY OF EDMONTON

