



Red Leaf Pianoworks
a composers' collective

Martha Hill Duncan
Susan Griesdale
Beverly Porter
Rebekah Maxner
Janet Gieck
Christine Donkin

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Red Leaf News

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An Interview with Beverly Porter

How and when did you become interested in composing music?

I'd been teaching piano since I was 12 years old (my first victims – er, students – were my younger sister and cousins) but came to composing much later. Shortly after moving to Kingston, Ontario, Queen's University started a Bachelor of Music program and asked me to teach piano. Although I was already an experienced and successful teacher I hadn't had the opportunity to get a university degree. I thought it would be great to enroll as a part-time student, all the while continuing to teach and raise five children. First year composition was a required subject. My instructor encouraged me to continue my studies and I won the BMI prize for composition for my 3rd year work. It took me six years to finish a 4 year degree. In 1996 we bought our first computer and I invested in the music writing software Rhapsody and then later Finale. I've been printing and publishing my own music ever since.
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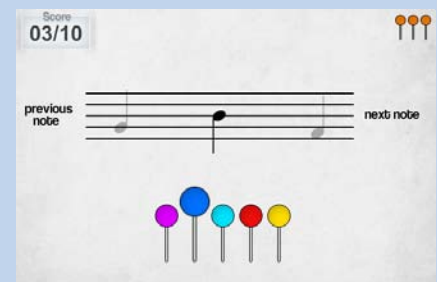
Bev with Kara, one of her "four-footed, furry kids"

Welcome to Tonic Tutor!

Students learn best when they are having fun – that's the whole idea behind Tonic Tutor, a new online program specifically designed to supplement private music instruction. Students can develop essential skills (such as ear training and note reading) by playing entertaining games on any computer that has internet access (such as at home or in your studio). Since no two students (and no two teachers) are exactly alike, Tonic Tutor's games can be tailored to complement any teaching style and a wide range of student levels.

Curious? Sign up for the Game of the Month Club - it's completely free! You and your students will have full access to one game each month. Plus, if you sign up before October 1st, you'll also have free PERMANENT access to the Ladybug Game, which tests students' ability to recognize intervals by ear – definitely useful for any student that is taking an exam.

Tonic Tutor was created by Red Leaf composer Christine Donkin in collaboration with web developer William Ratke. Check it out at www.tonictutor.com!



(continued from page 1)

You're one of the original members of Red Leaf Pianoworks. How did it all get started?

In the spring of 2007 my friend Martha Duncan and I began to explore the idea of sharing advertising expenses and when Susan Griesdale joined us a few months later everything began to come together from choosing a name to finally getting our website up and running. We gave our first presentations the following summer. Around that time, Martha met Rebekah Maxner while examining for RCM and asked her to join us. During the past year we've been joined by Christine Donkin and Janet Gieck – so we are now six - each with our own musical voice and other talents that add to the vibrancy of the group.

Tell us a little about your books.

A few years ago, I collected some "Bug" titles with the idea of writing pieces that suited them. It took a while but by last summer I had 9 solos and a duet written and published the book called **Lady Bug and Friends**. There is a variety of styles and rhythms including jazz (*Jitterbug*); blues (*Lady Bug Sings the Blues*); tango (*Shutterbug*); ragtime (*Doodle Bug*); boogie (*Bug-a-Boogie*); and latin (*Don't Bug Me!* - a duet in which both players want to play primo). There's also *Lightning Bug*, *Humbug's Hoedown*, *Do Bed bugs Snore?*, *Fashion Bug* and *Snuggle Bug*.



My newest collection is called **Clowning Around and More!** It's a collection of pieces written over several years. There are different styles – Character, Impressionistic, Jazz, Ragtime, Romantic and an arrangement of a French Christmas carol from the 17th Century. The levels range from Elementary

(*Thistledown*) to Intermediate (*Clowning Around*) and the challenges are both musical and technical.

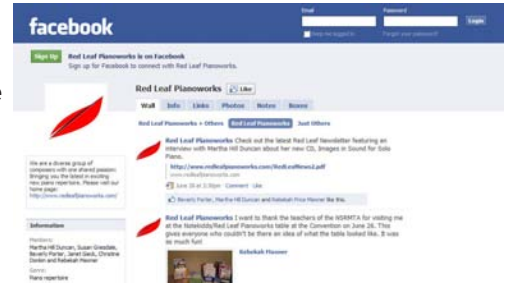
What keeps you busy when you're not composing?

My children are now grown with their own families and there are 8 grandchildren. We laughingly say that as they left home we replaced them with four-footed, furry kids and have had a variety of dogs and marmalade cats over the years, most recently Irish Setters (which inspired the *Red Dog Rag*) and a Golden Retriever. ♦

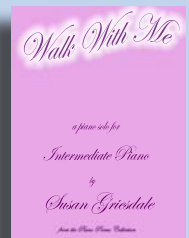
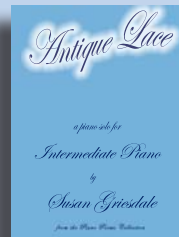
You can find more of Beverly Porter's music at www.redleafpianoworks.com.

We're on Facebook!

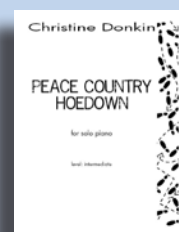
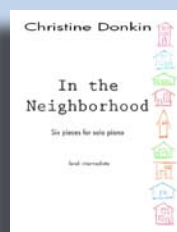
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New Intermediate Solos



Susan Griesdale's Piano Poems, written for teens and amateur adult students, consist of a series of dreamy tonal works, constructed within key and placed around the grades 5 to 7 level. For those students who are aching to play some of the great standards, like the first movement of the *Moonlight Sonata*, or *Für Elise*, these pieces offer a stepping stone. They give students the chance to work on musical flow and direction with attention to balance and voicing, so important in the Romantic style. There are four currently available – *Lavender Dreams*, *Walk with Me*, *Antique Lace*, and *Forgotten*. Look for *Soliloquy* and *Love's Promise* coming soon!



Christine Donkin's latest work for intermediate students includes *In the*

Neighborhood, a collection of six pieces ranging from grades 4 to 6, and *Peace Country Hoedown*, a light-hearted recital piece that's perfect for nimble-fingered students (grade 5).

Bug-a-Boogie

Beverly Porter

Piano

Lively ♩ = 160

1

mp

5 1 2 1

1

Detailed description: This system contains the first four measures of the piece. The tempo is marked 'Lively' with a quarter note equal to 160 beats per minute. The music is in 4/4 time and B-flat major. The right hand features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with slurs, while the left hand plays a steady bass line of quarter notes. Fingerings are indicated with numbers 1, 2, and 5. A dynamic marking of *mp* is present. A hairpin crescendo is shown over the final two measures.

5

2

mf

5

Detailed description: This system contains measures 5 through 8. The right hand continues the eighth-note pattern, and the left hand maintains the quarter-note bass line. The dynamic marking changes to *mf*. A hairpin crescendo is shown over the final two measures.

9

f

Detailed description: This system contains measures 9 through 12. The right hand plays a series of chords and eighth notes, while the left hand continues with the quarter-note bass line. The dynamic marking is *f*. Brackets are used to group the bass line notes in pairs.

13

1

Detailed description: This system contains measures 13 through 16. The right hand features a melodic line with a slur over measures 14 and 15. The left hand continues with the quarter-note bass line. A hairpin crescendo is shown over the final two measures. Brackets are used to group the bass line notes in pairs.

Bugaboogie

17

mp

21

mf

25

f

poco rit. ⁵/₂

29

a tempo

rit.

p