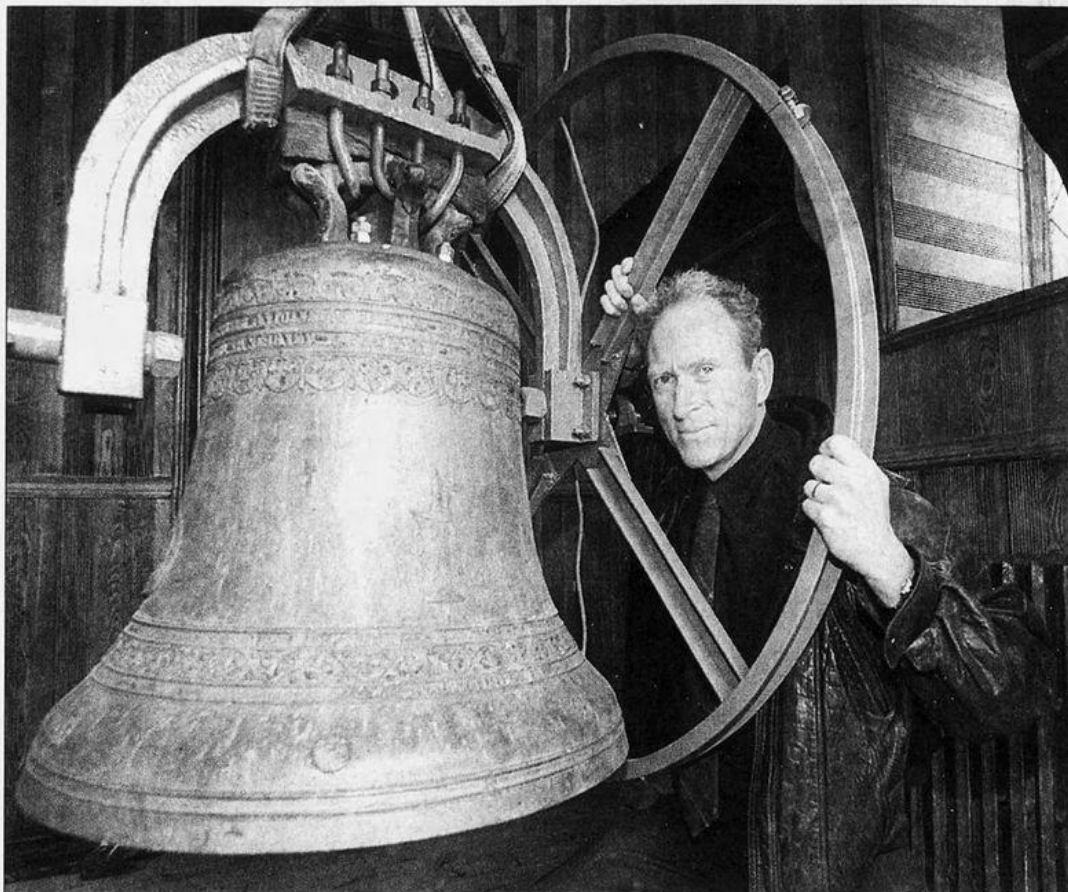


The Bell Tower at St John's was vacant for many years until April of 2001. Here's how a bell came to be installed. George Perley was a very prominent lumberman and politician in Ottawa. Some of his story has been told in past stories.

The story does confuse the date of building as 1912 was when St John's merged with Grace Church at the current location. The building was built much earlier and it was in 1912 that the name of the church was changed after the original St. John's building on Sussex burned down.



ROD MACIVOR, THE OTTAWA CITIZEN

St. John the Evangelist church rector, Garth Bulmer, said the bell, which was installed after a blessing Tuesday attended by about 25 people, is to be dedicated at this morning's 10:15 service.

Church to ring in Easter after 89 years

St. John the Evangelist church, built in 1912, has never had a bell, until now, writes Janet Hunter.

Never has a bell rung from the bell tower of St. John the Evangelist church on Elgin Street — until today.

In fact, no bell has ever hung in the tower, which was built in 1912 by George Perley, lumberman and a member of Parliament for 26 years.

A perhaps apocryphal story has it that Mr. Perley was willing to pay for the tower, which was dedicated Easter Day 1912, as long as it didn't have a bell in it. But Mr. Perley has been dead

for 63 years, and his wishes, apocryphal or not, no longer count. Today a bell will finally peal from St. John's bell tower.

The bell is a memorial to Elizabeth (Betty) and Sherwin (Robbie) Robinson, chosen by their family because it represents the couple's passion for music of all kinds.

"The love of their life was things related to music, and musical activities, and quartets, and my mother was even involved in a men's barbershop quartet," said the couple's son, Glen. He arranged for the memorial on behalf of his wife Vicki, sons Fraser and Toby, and sister and brother-in-law John and Patricia Lyndon, who live in Australia.

Mr. Robinson recalled that his father's sense of humour led

him to compose new lyrics for old tunes which he sang at special events and family gatherings with his wife accompanying him on piano.

Both the elder and the younger Robinsons were members of St. John's. The couple, who moved the family from Alberta to Ottawa in 1956 and were later residents of the Glebe Centre, died last June within three weeks of one another. Mr. Robinson was 83 and his wife 85.

The 360-kilogram bell was made in Le Mans, France, in 1906 by the bell-making company Bollée. It was installed that year at St. Léon de Westmount Roman Catholic Church in Montreal, where it hung until recently.

Garth Bulmer, the rector of

St. John's, said the bell, which was installed after a blessing Tuesday attended by about 25 people, is to be dedicated at this morning's 10:15 a.m. service. It should peal for the first time at about 11 a.m.

In future, Mr. Bulmer expects it will be rung Sundays at 10 and 10:15 a.m. and after the service. It will ring out at weddings and toll for funerals.

An inscription on the bell announces "Je m'appelle Antoinette Bertha," but no one knows the name's significance.

A Latin inscription declares: "Sing a new song unto the Lord, and His praise will always be on my lips."

The bell, which is almost 100 centimetres in diameter at its rim, cost about \$9,000 to buy and install.

