

# Bells to ring sweeter song

In the area around Christ Church Cranbrook, Sunday has always been synonymous with the sound of bells.

More specifically, it signals the music of the carillon and during summer months, there's a carillon concert each Sunday afternoon with crowds of listeners relaxing on the shady lawn near the church.

The music seems to emanate from the tower as if by magic.

No musician is in evidence, and the bells themselves are heard, but not seen.

Yet, recently, for a brief time, the actual bells were the center of attention. Some 35 new ones were installed in the tower. The larger ones were hauled up the side of the tower by wire cables. And even though it was a carefully planned operation by experts from the Mt. Iron Works Inc. of Detroit, there was still a level of excitement as each bell moved up the side of the tower wall.

The heaviest was over 500 pounds—far from the largest in the carillon, which is 2,000 pounds. The total weight of the bells in the tower is a whopping 35,000 pounds.

The new bells, a gift of the Grace Booth Wallace family, the one that gave the original carillon in 1928, were made by John Taylor

& Company, LTD. of England who also made the original ones.

New techniques in shaping will produce bells with better tones that will also blend better than the older ones.

The new carillon was heard for the first time when 100 carillonists from around the country met at Christ Church for the Congress of the Guild of Carillonists June 16-18.

The carillon, with a total 50 bells, will now rank with the finest in the country.

When the congress met in June, many of the nationally known musicians took a turn at the console and two pieces especially commissioned for the occasion debuted. These made possible by a grant Michigan Council for the Arts, were written by Milford Myhre and Ronald Barnes.

Contrary to the popular idea of the bell moving and hitting the clapper, it is the clapper which moves while the bell remains stationary. A wire from the clapper is attached to the playing console in the bell tower. When the buttons, handles, of the console are pushed, the bell is rung.

This summer, the bells of Christ Church will have a purer tone and a richer sound.



Workmen keep close tabs on the progress of the bell's ascent to the tower.

Thursday, July 20, 1978

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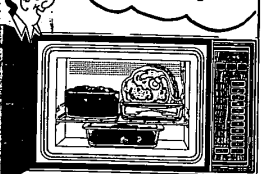
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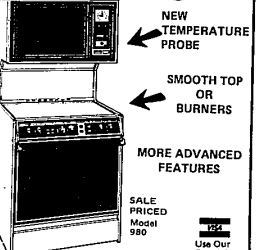
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