

# Bell Restoration – A Case Study from Wauchope

## The Angelus

The practice of commemorating the mystery of the Incarnation by reciting certain versicles, three Hail Marys, and a special prayer while a bell is being rung at 6am, 12noon and 6pm.

The Angelus is rung after Pentecost Sunday to Easter Sunday, except Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

Bell Sequence:  
(X = ring – = Pause)

X X X –  
X X X –  
X X X –  
X X X X X X X X

## Regina Caeli Laetare

The Marian antiphon used at the conclusion of the hour of Compline during Paschalide..... also been used to conclude Angelus during the same season.

The Regina Caeli is rung from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday.

Bell Sequence:  
(X = ring – = Pause)

X X X –  
X X X –  
X X X –



The Bell on arrival at our workshop.

The bell was transported to our workshops where the restoration began. Some steelwork had been fabricated onto the cast iron headstock in a crude attempt to extend it, this detracted from the overall look so was removed. It was then necessary to fabricate 2 new steel beams to support the bell when it was reinstalled in the tower.

The headstock and clapper were carefully removed and sent off to be stripped of rust and paint, they returned with a fresh coat of primer ready for the 2 part epoxy.

The bell was cleaned in house with an abrasive blasting technique using glass beads; these are so small they have the appearance of bakers' flour. This process gently cleans the bell without removing or disturbing any of the substrate. The Wauchope bell was heavily decorated so great care had to be taken not to damage any of the detail.

The steelwork associated with the bell received 2 coats of 2 part epoxy enamel; this gives a tough hard wearing surface and will serve well for many years to come.

Approached by the congregation of Our Lady of Lourdes RC church in Wauchope, we were asked to undertake the restoration and automation of the church bell which was housed in a contemporary steel tower for hand swinging.

It was requested that the bell should automatically strike the Angelus, together with tolling for funerals, weddings etc.

On completion of the restoration, the bell was returned to Wauchope and placed in the church on public display, a rededication service was held giving the congregation a chance to view the bell up close before it was returned to service.



Bell during blasting process

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## Re-installation and benefits



The finished bell

3 weeks later the bell was reinstalled in the tower and the connections made for the automated ringing.

An addition to the ringing apparatus was a muffle. This is an electro mechanical device which swings a piece of leather between the hammer and the bell; this muffles the strike and traditionally was used in times of mourning or to indicate a clandestine marriage! I'm not sure what it indicates in Wauchope.



Securing the clapper upon installation

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