

Historic Church + School Bells

BELL PRODUCTION + AVON'S TOWN'S BELLS

Special Performance by the Hand Bell Choir, Avon Congregational Church

MONDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2017 @ 7:00 PM START

AVON SENIOR + COMMUNITY CENTER

635 West Avon Road, Avon, CT 06001

Avon residents may not see them, or even hear them, but they are there - historic church and school bells with quite interesting historical connections! Our presentation will discuss how the school bell, formerly located in the cupola of the Huckleberry Hill School, was saved and installed in Pine Grove Elementary School's courtyard.

Historically bells were used to summon worshipers to service, to call school children to class, to sound an alarm for a fire requiring a bucket brigade or to gather townsfolk for the dissemination of important information. Church bells were also rung at weddings, funerals, services and holidays such as the Fourth of July!

We will explore the history of other church and school bells in Avon as well as the foundries from which they were cast. The very production of the bells is amazing from the pouring of the molten metal into molds to the precise machining and fine tuning required to get the proper tones. There are many types and sizes of bells, depending on their intended purpose.

The West Avon Congregational Church bell was cast by the Doolittle Foundry in Hartford. Local churches with historic bells include Avon Congregational Church whose bell was rung so hard to celebrate the end of the Civil War in 1865 that it cracked and had to be taken to Troy, New York to be recast.

Janet M Conner, Head of the Special Projects Committee of the Avon Historical Society will present this program. Mrs. Conner attended William Patterson University before working in several engineering firms. She has been an active volunteer with the Society since 2012 and the Stanley Whitman House since 2010 with membership in the Association for the Study of Connecticut History and the Connecticut Historical Society.

SPECIAL FEATURE: The audience will be treated to a very special performance of winter-themed music by the eight-member Hand Bell choir from the Avon Congregational Church under the direction of Leslie Kohnke-Nicholson. These hand bells have been used for many years at the Church. We hope to see you there to wish you all the joy of the holiday season!



The old school bell used at Huckleberry Hill School from 1929 until 1977. It was relocated to the Pine Grove Elementary School in 1991.