

City of Rockingham - Civic Bells

The City of Rockingham Civic Bells are located in the top of the tower at the City of Rockingham Administration Centre.

The bells were acquired from England, and are maintained and rung by members of the Rockingham Civic Centre Bellringers Association. Following an initial proposal in March 1993 to install bells in the Civic Centre Tower, the ring of eight bells was commissioned on 5 October 1996.



City of Rockingham

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City of Rockingham's

Civic Bells





Origin

When plans for the City of Rockingham's new Civic Centre were published in March 1993, local resident and bellringer Ron Chapman wrote to Mayor Laurie Smith suggesting that a ring of bells be installed in the proposed tower.

The Chief Executive Officer, Mr Gary Holland, investigated the feasibility of the idea with a firm of bell founders in England.

Following discussions in Western Australia and England, Ron Chapman and prominent Perth bellringer Laith Reynolds, presented a formal proposal to install a ring of bells in the Civic Centre tower. At an Ordinary Council meeting in June 1993 Council decided to support the placement of the bells and launched a public appeal to assist in funding the installation.

The metal frame to house the bells was constructed by a Rockingham engineering company and local bellringers assisted with the final installation of the bells. The Civic Centre bells were formally commissioned on 5 October 1996 during the Australia and New Zealand Association of Bellringers Festival held in Perth.

The Bells

Laith Reynolds liaised with the English bell founders to ensure that a suitable set of bells was assembled to meet the specific needs of the Rockingham Civic Centre tower.

Bells 5 and 6 were cast in 1926 by bell founders Gillett and Johnston and came from the tower of St Paul's, Canonbury, in North London. The six larger bells from the St Paul's tower were installed in Christ Church, Claremont, WA in 1988.

Bells 3, 4, 7 and 8 were cast in 1990 by Whitechapel Bell Foundry in London from metal donated by Laith Reynolds as part of the St Martin-in-the-Fields/ University of Western Australia Bicentennial Project.

Bells 1 and 2 were cast specifically for the Civic Centre tower when it was decided that a ring of eight bells, rather than six, was required.

The eight bells are hung in the traditional English configuration for "full-circle" ringing.

The inscriptions on the eight bells are:

1. Whitechapel Foundry (London, England) Donated by H & B Developments PTY LTD - October 1996
2. Whitechapel Foundry (London, England) Donated by Savoy Estates PTY LTD - October 1996
3. Whitechapel Foundry (London, England) Donated by Taylor Woodrow (Australia) PTY LTD - October 1996
4. Whitechapel Foundry (London, England) No inscription

5. Gillett & Johnson (Croydon, England) Dedicated to the memory of Gladys Evelyn Cooper (1911 - 1987) & Arthur John Cooper (1907 - 1992) "Summoned by the Bells" - October 1996
6. Whitechapel Foundry (London, England) Donated by Port Kennedy Resorts PTY LTD October 1996
7. Whitechapel Foundry (London, England) Provided by the people of the City of Rockingham - October 1996

