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Courtesy of Seaboard Weatherproofing & Restoration

Standing in front of the Irvington Presbyterian Church with its retuned 150-year-old bell and four new ones are, left to right, architect Walter Sedovic; church minister Rev. David Harkness and Jay Fiebich, general manager of Seaboard Weatherproofing & Restoration.

For Whom the Bell Tolls

How do you remove, retune and reinstall a 1,200-lb. bell from a church tower? This was the task facing the Irvington Presbyterian Church 10 months ago when members made the decision to restore the bell, which had not been used since the 1950s.

With the help of Walter Sedovic Architects in Irvington and the Seaboard Weatherproofing & Restoration, the bell was removed last February, brought to the Whitechapel Bell Foundry in England and, on Dec. 12, restored it to home on North Broadway.

"The exceedingly tall tower and its historic bell are tangible reminders of the influence and beauty the church has in the community. We're proud to be a part of the town and this project," Sedovic said. The church was designed in 1869 by James Renwick, architect of the Smithsonian Institution and St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City.

The Whitechapel Bell Foundry, one of only two bell foundries in England, is renowned for having cast the Liberty Bell and London's Big Ben.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime project," Jay Fiebich, manager of Seaboard Weatherproofing & Restoration, said. "This bell has not been heard from for nearly 50 years ... Working on a piece of history that is this substantial is very rewarding to us."