

# Board seeks historic bell's return

"We are really looking forward to the display. It's been around since the 1800s and it's an important part of our history," Hall said.

The belfry in which the bell was suspended can be seen from Commissioners Rd., in front of the now-closed school. It's shaped like a wishing well.

When Thompson toured the area of the missing bell with police Wednesday morning, she found fragments where whoever was taking the bell dropped it.

"There are two chunks of it that have broken off. You can see where it hit the lattice structure," Thompson said. "That part is as big as my hand and it's very heavy."

The school board as well as the Friends of Brick Street Cemetery hope whoever took the bell was hoping to preserve it and will give it back knowing that it's in capable hands.

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MORRIS LAMONT The London Free Press  
**Former principal Lynn Thompson and David Bell look over a piece of the bell that was stolen from the Brick Street School in London. The stolen bell is shown at right.**

played in front of the school.

The Thames Valley District school board closed Brick Street school in June, and will be putting it up for sale next month, a board spokesperson said.

Because of the bell's historical value, the school board has given it to the Friends of Brick Street Cemetery, a group that's preserving the heritage of Brick Street — now known as Commissioners Rd. West.

"We are restoring the Brick Street Cemetery, but because

the Brick Street school and Brick Street church have closed, the cemetery is the only thing left with the name 'Brick Street,' so we want to create a heritage display that details the history," said David Hall, chairperson of the Friends of Brick Street.

Brick Street was so named until about 40 years ago because of the many brick factories along it. Many of the homes in older parts of London were made with the yellow bricks that were made in those factories.

## KATE DUBINSKI

The London Free Press

A 197-year-old bell has been stolen from outside a south-end school.

The bell, originally made in 1817 and used into the 20th century to call children in to class at the Brick Street school, was taken sometime overnight Sunday.

"It's very sad. This was is a part of history that has gone missing," said Lynn Thompson, who last year was the principal of the Brick Street School.

"I just hope that someone was taking it to preserve it without knowing that we'd already made arrangements for the bell."

It's believed the bell weighs between 90 kg and 135 kg (200 lbs to 300 lbs).

The bell was originally made to be used in the Old Brick Street school when it was built in 1817. A new location for the school was built in 1893 and the bell was put on top of the building and was used to call children in daily.

In 1954, when the latest incarnation of the Brick Street school — this one at 393 Commissioners Rd. West, near Wonderland Rd. — was built, the bell was dis-