

The Lydeard St Lawrence Bell Ringers' Bier Project

Rescued from the South porch by the bell ringers, the Lydeard St Lawrence church bier underwent a complete renovation. After years of neglect and an eleventh-hour reprieve from the tip, the bier was excavated from beneath the flowers vases and decaying plant oasis and trundled through the village to Westowe. There, the bell ringers – with time on their hands as it was Holy Week and therefore there was no ringing – set about restoring and repairing the bier.

The wooden frame was removed and cleaned, the leather straps were treated with saddle soap; the metalwork was cleaned and blackened with black lead grate polish; the wheels and handles were cleaned and restored. After a whole afternoon's work, the bier was then re-assembled.

On the bier, the words "J E Prout 1912" have been written on the frame. Does this name mean anything to anyone?

Traditionally, a bier was a stand on which a coffin or casket was placed and then wheeled or carried to the grave. During Christian funerals, a bier may be placed in the nave surrounded by candles.

The renovated bier was returned to the church and is on display near the children's corner.

The renovation team were Janet and Jim Bond, Paul and Paule Yeomans, Teresa Whiting, Toby Clempson, Larry Maxwell and Don Hobson.



The Bier, before work started.