



# The Bytown Times

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## NOVEMBER MEETING

Our November Zoom meeting was attended by twenty-two members. While small in number, the group was enthusiastic!

### Feature Presentation

Our feature presentation was the video "**What's So Unique About Canadian Clocks?**" which was created and narrated by the late Jim Connell. Jim was the acknowledged expert on Canadian and Canadiana clocks, having amassed an exceptional collection of those timepieces, many of museum quality and interest. He was the author of several books and co-author of others with the late Jane Vakaris. Jim even served as a Director on the Board of the NAWCC.



Jim Connell

Jim's presentation featured pictures of many clocks and gave stories of the makers and the unique features in the case and movement design.

He began his story with clocks from Quebec and focused on case styles that were unique to that province. Of particular interest were tall case clocks with a tapered waist—something he hadn't seen made anywhere else. Cases of this style were made with exotic woods in major centres such as Montreal and Quebec City, while country makers copied the style using common woods with faux wood grain paint. Jim goes on to discuss key Quebec makers such as John Hanna, Martin Cheney, the Twiss brothers and others.

Jim's story moved on to the Maritime provinces and finally Ontario. He noted that most clocks made in Canada to the mid 19th century were individually made and hand finished, with cases made locally and movements often imported from the United States. Nevertheless, he did show images of some unique features of movements made in Canada.

Jim moved on to the factory made clocks of the two Canada Clock Companies, the Hamilton Clock Company and, of course, the most successful of all industrial clockmakers in Canada, The Pequegnat Clock Company.

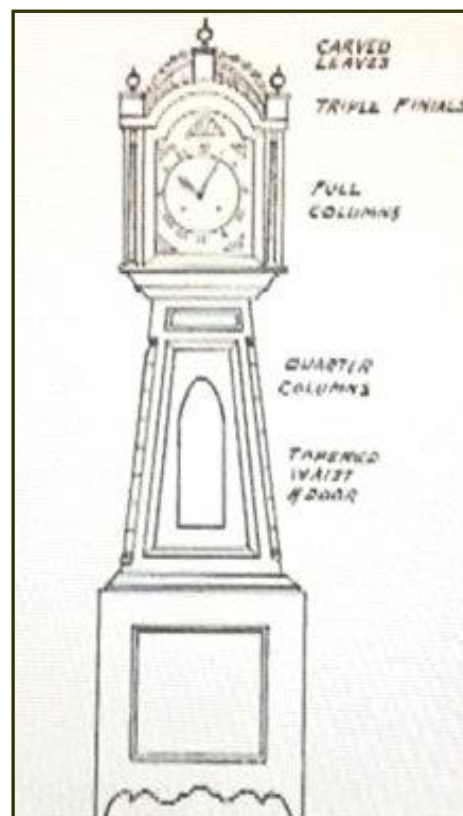
Jim's presentation includes references to many unique stories such as the copper dial on a Jordan Post clock, the etched glass tablets of the Hamilton Clock Company and the tower clocks of George Hess.

Jim's presentation is too detailed for this brief summary, but may be seen in full through the club's website or on YouTube at [What's so Unique about Canadian Clocks - YouTube](#)

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The Distinctive tapered waist of early Quebec tall case clocks

**Our next meeting:**  
**Sunday, Jan. 23, 2022 at 1:00PM**

\*\*\*\*\*

**"The House of Wonders"**  
(A '31 silent film about the Elgin Watch Co.)

**Trash and Treasure Mart!!**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Show and Tell**  
**Anything Horological**



## CLUB EXECUTIVE AND OFFICERS

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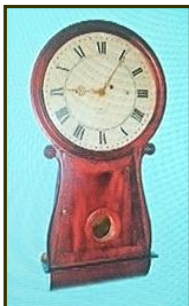
**Education & Workshop Chairman:**

## NOVEMBER MEETING (CONT'D)

### From P. 1



Unique clocks  
with tapered  
waist



An unusual  
Cheney case  
style



A unique  
Cheney Banjo  
case style



Jordan Post's  
truly odd  
copper dial



The dial and movement of a one-of-a-kind  
Twiss-made tower clock from  
Sainte-Scholastique, Quebec



(NB. All the pictures from Jim's presentation were from screen grabs off the Zoom video and are therefore not high quality.)

### Show and Tell



Tom's Seth Thomas Clock  
with brass topper.  
Photo courtesy: Tom Clifford

**Tom Clifford** told an interesting story about a Seth Thomas clock in his collection. While perusing the collectibles in an antique store, he espied a couple of interesting mantle clocks. One was a Pequegnat and the other a Seth Thomas with a visible escapement. He was torn, but opted to purchase the Seth Thomas as it was visually more appealing. The shop keeper was curious...why choose the Seth Thomas and not the Pequegnat? Being new to the hobby and not knowing the Pequegnat story, Tom explained that he liked the look of the Seth Thomas. It was only later as he learned more about Pequegnat, that he realized what he had missed. However, he didn't feel particularly bad especially after talking to Dan Hudon about it, Dan reflected that Tom had picked a better quality clock!

Tom went on to point out the brass horse topper sitting atop the clock. He purchased the casting separate from the clock and noted that clock toppers were an old custom that few collectors pursue. He noted that you can often find such toppers hidden away in antique shops at reasonable prices.

**John Deland** showed a badly damaged Pequegnat clock dial. Typical of many Pequegnat clocks, the dial was painted on galvanized sheet metal and the paint had peeled. In an attempt to correct the problem, some earlier repairer had coated the dial with something resembling nail polish! Now John was stuck with finding a solution. As no one could offer any advice, John said he would bring up the question at the next Tuesday Coffee Clutch meeting.

(NB. The Coffee Clutch meetings are open to everyone to discuss repair issues and solutions!)



John's damaged  
Pequegnat dial



## TREVOR BEATSON – AN UPDATE

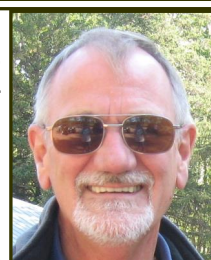


Trevor's Year Going Clock in its new case made of Ebony and two types of Mahogany



A close-up of the dial of Trevor's Year-Going Clock

In the last issue of the Bytown Times we told the story of Trevor Beatson, a Calgary-based clockmaker. At the time the article was written, Trevor was finishing work on his year-going clock. The clock mechanism was working and going through final adjustments but Trevor was waiting for a carpenter friend to complete the clock case. At last, his patience was rewarded with the delivery of a beautiful case.



Trevor Beatson

The case is made from Honduras mahogany, African mahogany and ebony. Trevor made the brass parts of the columns.

Gary Fox

## TWO NEW BOOKS!!

In my November 2021 Editorial, I mentioned my belief that our members have developed an incredible wealth of knowledge about different aspects of horology and that this information can be lost if no effort is made to document it. Maynard Dokken is definitely doing his part!

### Westclox Offshore



Westclox Offshore  
Maynard Dokken

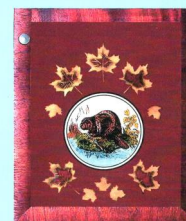
### Westclox Offshore

In August 2021, Maynard published a companion text to his 2016 volume *Westclox Spring Wound Clocks*. This latest book, *Westclox Offshore*, documents Westclox timepieces produced in Australia, Brazil, China (Hong Kong and Mainland), Germany, Japan, Mexico, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Scotland, South Africa and Taiwan. The book is hard covered with 140 pages of coloured and black & white images of the clocks (dials, movements, hands and more). The pictures are crisp and detailed. This is an important text on its own but essentially completes the Westclox story started in the earlier book. The book is available from Maynard for **\$56**.

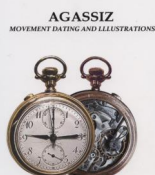
### Canadian Clockmakers

If you have the Varkaris and Connell book *Early Canadian Timekeepers* and/or the Burrows book *Canadian Clocks and Clockmakers*, then Maynard's second book is a **must** purchase. While it does cover some previously documented ground, *Canadian Clockmakers* stands alone in documenting clocks and clockmakers of a more recent vintage, including companies such as ARO, Artcraft, Breslin Industries, Craftique, Fleet Time Co. and many, many more—upwards of sixty companies. This hard covered book has over 240 pages, many in full colour. This is an essential book for any collector of Canadian and Canadiana clocks, especially newcomers to the hobby who want to go beyond the clocks from the traditional companies such as Twiss and Pequegnat. The book is available from Maynard for **\$78**.

### Canadian Clockmakers



Canadian Clockmakers  
Maynard Dokken



Agassiz  
Movement  
Dating and  
Illustrations

Maynard  
Dokken

And let's not forget Maynard's other book, *Agassiz Movement Dating and Illustrations*. It is still available for \$14.

If you are interested in more than one book, Maynard will consider a discount. **You can reach Maynard at.....**

[Canadianaclocks@rogers.com](mailto:Canadianaclocks@rogers.com) or (613) 829-1565

## A MAIN WHEEL REPAIR



Fig. 1: The damaged teeth on the strike side main wheel

The main wheel on the strike train of a Pequegnat clock had been damaged when the main spring broke, and all the 86 teeth were worn on one side and bent. (**Figure 1**). In addition, the second wheel got hit hard, and the lantern pinion was reduced to pieces, as shown in **Figure 2**!

I knew the lantern pinion could be repaired, so the first thing I did was to look for a replacement main wheel. I have a box full of main wheels but they all had 84 teeth. Therefore, I had to find an original Pequegnat wheel so the clock could run again.

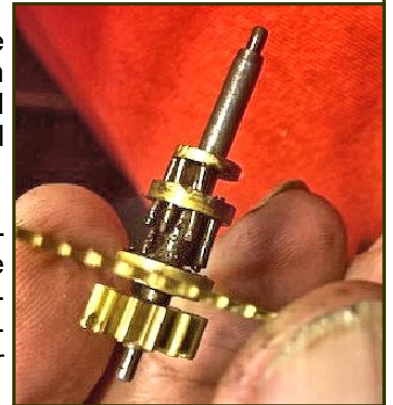


Fig. 2: The damaged lantern pinion

Unfortunately, after putting a post on our club Facebook site, after contacting Allan Symons at the Canadian Clock Museum, after putting a request on Kijiji and talking to Ben Orszulak in Toronto, nobody knew where to find such a wheel. There were two solutions left: have a new wheel made or try to repair the wheel by turning it over and straightening all the bent teeth.

I opted to pursue the repair option and decided to tackle the repair myself, as I had done once many years ago.



Fig. 3: All the parts that had to be removed from the wheel

The first thing to do was to take the shaft and ratchet off – generally riveted on the back - and remove the click and click spring that would have to be reinstalled on the other side of the wheel. (See **Figure 3**)

Then, with the wheel flat on a hard surface, I hit every tooth with a light weight hammer to flatten them and make them slightly longer. (**Figure 4**)

Using a cutting wheel attached to a rotary tool, I reshaped the teeth and cut them to be evenly spaced. It took many hours and patience. (**Figure 5**)

Although the teeth were not as perfect as new ones, I figured they would mesh with the second wheel which now had a restored lantern pinion.

After reattaching the ratchet and the click with its new spring, it was time to put it all together and test the repair.

It was very disheartening to see the movement stop after a few seconds. It took a while to figure out that the second wheel shaft had been bent when the spring let go originally. After straightening it, the good old Pequegnat (**Figure 6**) ran well and was returned to its owner. It was quite a challenge but a truly satisfying experience.

**Georges Royer Ph. D.**  
**NAWCC**



Fig. 4: Flattening and elongating the teeth with a light hammer



Fig. 5: Reshaping the teeth with a rotary tool



Fig. 6: The repaired wheel in place and the clock running like new!





## ***WHY HAVE A PROFESSIONAL SERVICE YOUR CLOCK?***

As NAWCC members, we believe there are mainly two reasons for having your clock professionally repaired. The first and primary reason to repair a clock is that it is treasured. The clock has special meaning for the owner, perhaps an heirloom from a dearly departed, or there's an emotional attachment to the clock such as growing up with it or one like it in the family home.

Heirlooms and nostalgia are the primary reason to have a clock repaired because the client sees the value in paying for a professional repair. It's not about resale, and the cost of the service is not compared to the resale value of the clock. It's about shared history and perhaps the desire to pass it on to someone special.

The second reason is the repair, restoration, and preservation of collectible clocks. These clocks command a high value, but only if they are authentic and function correctly. Such clocks require their movements to be restored and the cases preserved or restored as dictated by their condition. Preservation is the first choice, but often the condition of the clock requires Restoration. Of the two approaches, Preservation is preferred as refinishing the case can actually reduce the clock's value.

These two reasons are why the NAWCC exists, and why we work hard for our members and their friends and clients. We seek people who deeply care and respect their clocks and feel they deserve professional care and attention in return. The last thing we want to see is someone tinker with their clock, with little experience or tooling, and unintentionally damage it to the point where its true value is difficult or impossible to restore.

At the NAWCC, we, as a Guild of associated members, bring a lifetime of training, experience and investments in specialized equipment which we combine with the very best in materials and techniques to bring valued timepieces back to health. We are here to help!

### ***Why are so many clocks NOT worth professional servicing?***

First, we must acknowledge that clocksmithing is a dying practice. There are few practitioners coming into the trade, and clients and collectors find it increasingly difficult to find qualified craftsmen. Many clocksmiths are lifetime hobbyists who take on the work full-time as a post-retirement career. These clocksmiths, many are NAWCC members, represent most of the clocksmiths in practice today.

The excellent technologies of mechanical clocks, which evolved even prior to the industrial revolution, have been superseded by inexpensive, more accurate and reliable digital products. Even before the digital revolution, mechanical timepieces were rapidly being displaced by the new technology of AC clocks that ran by counting the frequency of the household line voltage.

So, along with Dictaphones, Gramophones, Typewriters, Linotypes and a million other fine mechanical products, mechanical analog clocks have become obsolete along with an accompanying decline in clocksmiths.

All one needs to do is surf the web for a few minutes to find hundreds of mechanical clocks for sale at very low prices. Most of these show the signs of age and their mechanisms are tired and worn out.

It is very tempting to buy a clock from eBay or an estate sale and call on a clocksmith to see if they can get it going. The hope is the cost of this exercise will somehow be in line with the purchase (or resale price) of the unit. Unfortunately, that will rarely be the case.

Most clocks are not actually rare or of high value, and there is a veritable plethora of them for sale. On-line services such as eBay, Kijiji, Marketplace, MaxSold and others have brought them all to the surface to compete for the sale. There are thousands of them available at bargain-basement prices. Unless you happen to find one that is extremely collectible, the chance of making any money on reselling a clock is almost NIL, though notable exceptions exist such as some Canadian clocks which do command a higher price in the market. But to find these, you really need to know your stuff; this is the domain of serious collectors.

**John Deland**  
**Horologist, Antiquarian Technologist**  
**613 769-6226,**

## CLOCK MUSEUM NEWS

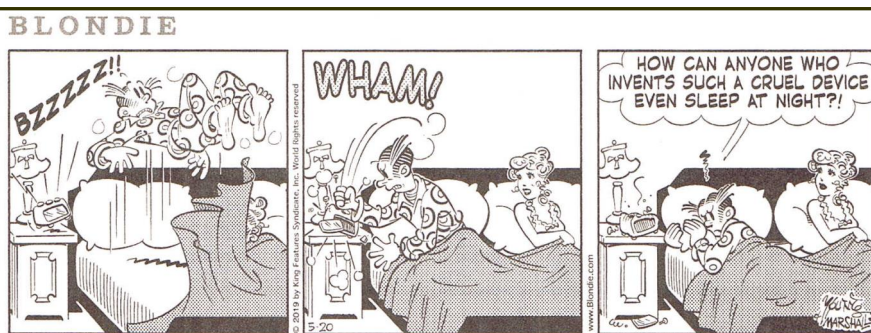
### Some 'Timely' Newspaper Cartoons

For more than a decade I have been watching for newspaper cartoons that have fun with 'time'. The subjects by many cartoonists include alarm clocks in general and the semiannual time change in the spring and fall. They are normally in black and white, but colour was used typically on Saturdays.

I cut them out, scan them, and put them in a WORD document with my own caption. Each one is then printed and mounted on foam board. The twenty-seven (so far!) are located in several areas of the Exhibits Room for museum visitors to see. Most of are placed on the wall below some magazine advertisements in the main Westclox Canada display. Below is a 'distorted' view along that corridor.



These cartoons often bring smiles for visitors young and old, so I have chosen eight of them for your entertainment in this column. Different cartoons will be provided in future columns. Enjoy!



**Does your alarm clock scare you every morning?**  
(Young & Marshall, King Features Syndicate 2019.5.20)

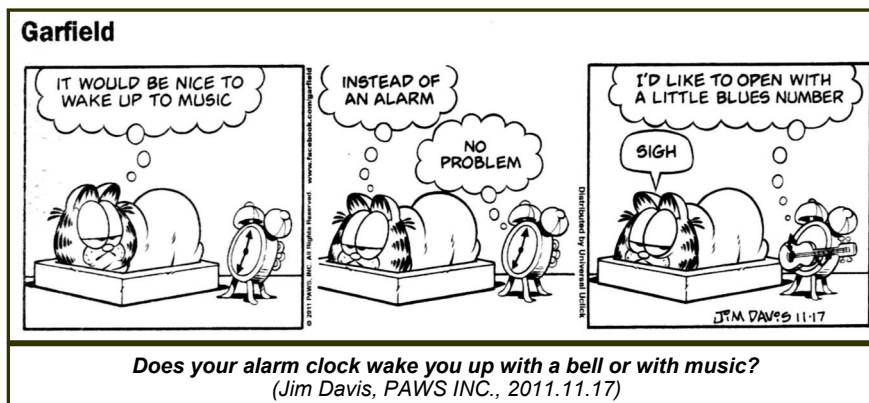
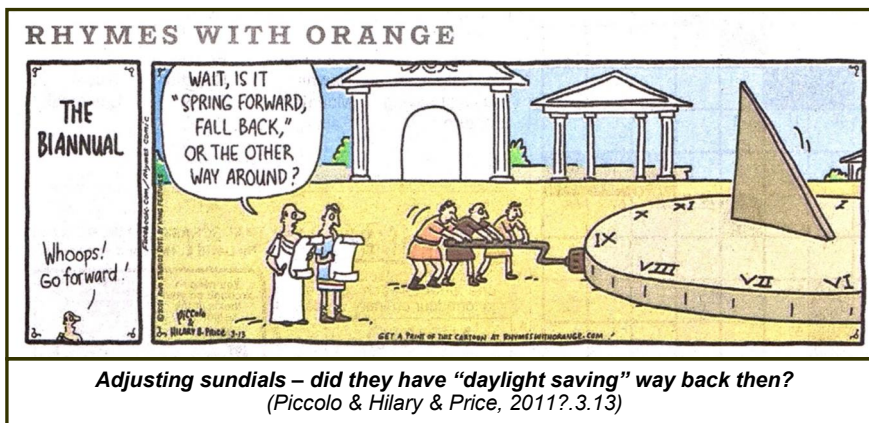
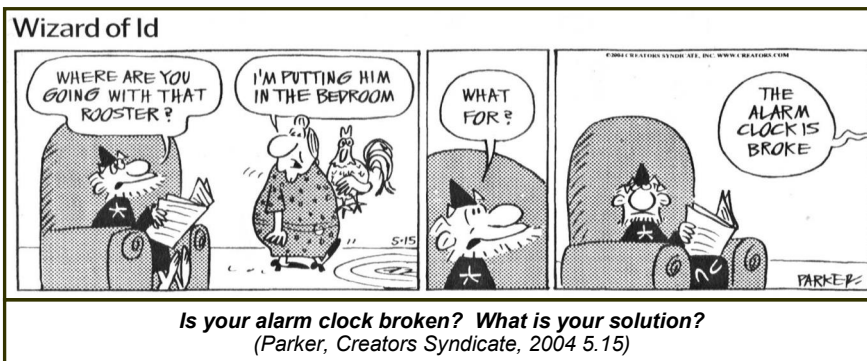
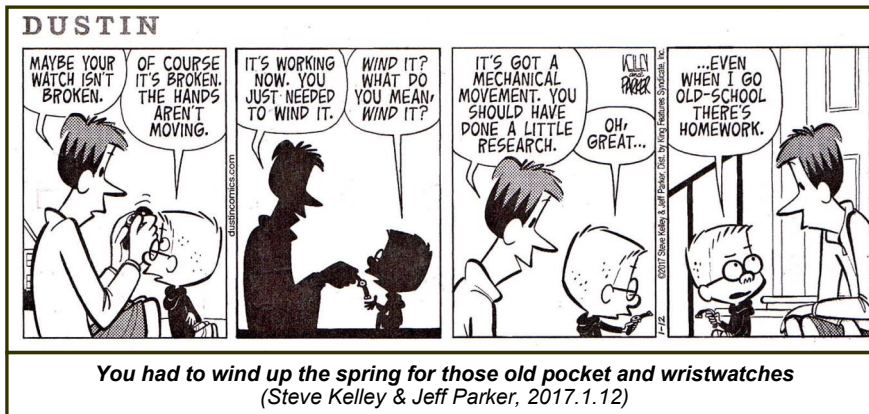


**Is your mom an old school analogue timekeeper?**  
(Scott & Borgman, ZITS Partnership, 2019.7.9)

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## CLOCK MUSEUM NEWS (CONT'D)

From P.6



Cont'd P. 8



## CLOCK MUSEUM NEWS (CONT'D)

From P. 7

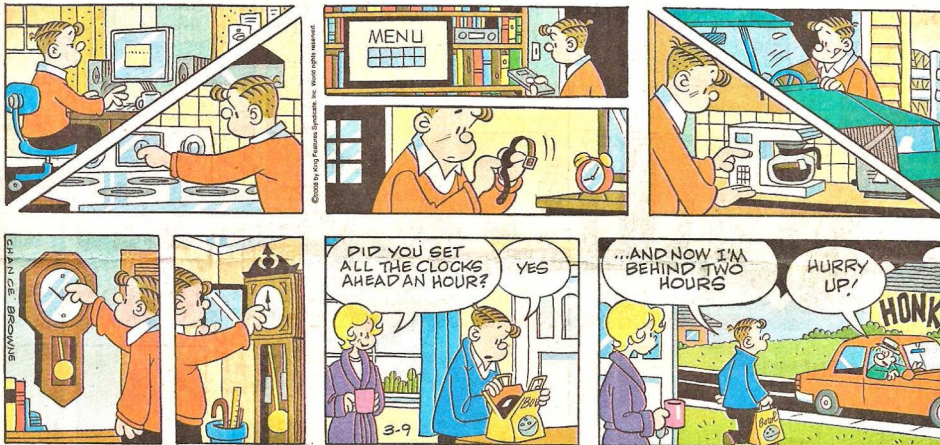
### The Other Coast



**Garage Sale Blues: Ever buy a clock at a garage sale?**  
(Adrian Raeside, Hairy Dog Productions, 2005.7.23)

### HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN AND GREG WALKER



**How many clocks do YOU have to adjust every spring and fall?**  
(King Features Syndicate, 2008.3.9)

**Allan Symons, Curator**  
**The Canadian Clock Museum**

## GILHOOLY'S RECIPE



**GILHOOLY'S**  
**ANTIQUES & COLLECTIBLES**  
A unique collection of everything old  
set in a historic 1834 coach house.

26A APPLE STREET

TEL: (613) 498-0487

### Gilhooly's Recipe

To clean and restore wooden surfaces to the original finish.

Mix and shake well, in a screw-lid jar, equal parts of:

- mentholated spirits
- turpentine
- raw linseed oil (add a little malt vinegar if available)

Apply and clean wooden surfaces with 0-0-0 (fine) steel wool

Use cloth to wipe away years of grease and grime – renewing the original surface.  
(REPORTEDLY USED FOR THE ROYAL FAMILY)

We visited an antique dealer around 20 years ago and received this recipe for cleaning old wood surfaces. I have used this recipe several times with amazing results. We even used it on the lower case of the Twiss grandfather clock when we did the 'Phoenix' restoration project.

The comment at the bottom of the recipe shows that the recipe may have been used for articles owned by the Royal Family. Given the results that can be obtained I would not be surprised that the claim is true.

'Mentholated spirits' is actually Methyl Alcohol which can be purchased at Auto Parts Supply stores. It is commonly used to add to the hydraulic brake lines of 18 wheelers to avoid freeze-up in the winter! We have also tried with success various types of hand cleaners like Gojo which is gentle but effective.

**Ray Springer**



## THE REMARKABLE JOHN LESLIE

### (A story from Ottawa's past)

John Leslie was arguably the longest-running and most well-known jeweler in Ottawa's early history. Born and raised in Aberdeen, Scotland, he immigrated to Canada and originally settled in Quebec where he is thought to have apprenticed with Montreal jeweler, Robert Hendry. A short time later, he relocated to Bytown (renamed "Ottawa" in 1855). It is possible that Leslie arrived in Bytown as early as 1827 based on a dated watch paper from his shop. Oddly, a notation in one of his later advertisements indicated that his business was established in 1845.)



A watch paper from Leslie's Bytown shop in 1827



John Leslie's shop. While it was probably one of the two located on Sparks Street, the specific address isn't known

In 1866, he moved his shop to 27 Sparks Street, then ten years later relocated to 62-64 Sparks Street. According to his advertising, he sold gold and silver watches and provided repair service. In addition to this, he sold a myriad of other items such as silverware, opera glasses, thermometers and leather goods.

Over the years, Leslie hired many apprentices, several of whom went on to carve out lucrative businesses for themselves. Some of these watchmakers included Edouard Gaulin, Alexander Routh, John Wilmot and William Young.

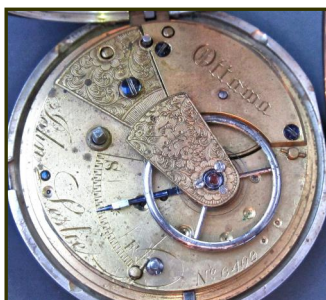
So successful was John Leslie in business that in 1878 he set about building a home

for his family that was designed by well-known architect James Mather. It was located on Theodore Street in Sandy Hill and was named "Kininvie" in honour of his ancestral home in Scotland. After his wife's death in 1896, the property was sold to the Liberal Party of Canada for their leader and newly elected Prime Minister, Wilfred Laurier. Today, Leslie's home is known as **Laurier House** and is open as a museum.



John Leslie's home, now known as Laurier House

Leslie passed away peacefully in his home on November 19, 1895 at the age of 92 years. Perhaps the best summation of Leslie's character was written in the Ottawa Journal on the day of his death: "Methodical and attentive in business, reliable in statement, unassuming in manner, and never taking part in public matters, Mr. Leslie has always been looked upon as a man whose word was his bond and whose goods bore the mark of standard quality." His son, James, continued to run the business for about two years, then sold it to Henry Birks and Sons. Birks continued to conduct business from the 62 Sparks Street location until 1900 at which time it was moved to the north side of Sparks.



This watch was sold in Leslie's shop at the time of Canada's Confederation. It is hallmarked 1867-68 and has a chain fusee movement with an English Lever Escapement

Gary Fox

## ***JANUARY MEETING TRASH AND TREASURE MART***

### ***It's that time again!!***

Dig out those boxes and bins of clocks, watches, tools, parts and ephemera...  
All the stuff for which you have no longer have any use  
and  
Get ready to make some money

**Our Sunday Meeting is our Trash and Treasure Mart!**

### ***Here's what to do....***

- Take a picture or two of each item you want to sell
- In 25 words or less, describe the item, ***including your minimum price,***
- Give your preferred contact info (so a buyer can connect with you), and
- send this to Don Purchase, our live video mart manager!!!

[DonPurchase25@gmail.com](mailto:DonPurchase25@gmail.com)

Don will show the images of each item, describe them and make the sale.  
All you have to do is make money.... or maybe spend a bit!!

### ***EDITOR'S CORNER***

Another year bites the dust and we are still battling mightily against Covid. We can only hope that the rampant Omicron infections will lead to the herd immunity for which we have all been waiting so patiently (or not)! Until then, we will continue to get along with Zoom meetings!



My hearty congratulations to Maynard Dokken for the publication of his two latest books. Did you know that he has another in the works? He is an inspiration to me. Which reminds me, I have a half finished book sitting waiting for attention, not to mention a possible book about the first watchmakers' school in the United States (if only I could get away to the archives in LaPorte, Indiana!)

As usual, this issue of the Times owes a lot to our many contributors including: John Deland, Georges Royer, Ray Springer and Allan Symons. A special thanks to Trevor Beatson for sending the pictures of his recently cased year going clock and to Tom Clifford for a picture of his Seth Thomas clock and topper.

**Gary Fox**

### ***PRESIDENT'S CORNER***

The New Year has begun and we are thankful that we have Zoom as a platform to host our meetings.

Your Executive are currently planning for this year's set of meetings and would like to solicit content from you, our membership. That means each and ever one of the members of this Club! We would like you to step up to the challenge of presenting at one of the five meetings this year. You don't have to be an expert on a topic, rather you can present on topics like your personal collection of clocks; the layout of your workshop; tools you find indispensable; horological videos you've found useful; auctions you attend in search for items; plus topics like the logic behind gearing ratios, wood vs steel vs brass movements, chimes etc. The sky is the limit.

Please consider your contribution to the club this year and how your efforts can keep your club current and of value to its members.

**Don Purchase**

