



– SPRING/SUMMER 2023 –

Message from the Director

The next
50
years



Greetings Friends and Supporters of Willard,

Willard House and Clock Museum's 50th Anniversary (actually the 52nd due to Covid) is now behind us after a year of diverse programs from puppet shows and musical performances to 19th century magic and lectures on horology. Every effort was made to strike an interest for everyone from the very young to the "comfortably mature". Sprinkled among some of the new younger visitors was a spark seen in their eyes, as a child-like

fascination was unearthed prompting mom or dad to a return visit to take pictures, ask for a repeat discussion of another room or object, and nearly always, advice on how to further encourage a budding new interest for their child.

The 2023 Annual Appeal launched in last November exceeded our goal of \$75,000. We thank you, our members and friends for that success! These funds pay a small portion of our operating expenses which include utilities, routine care of the 18th century house, property and barn, caring for our priceless collection of Willard clocks and of course, staff payroll.

The Endowment - The Lifeline For Non-Profits

"And now", as Paul Harvey used to say, "For the Rest of the Story". The balance of the expenses not covered by our Annual Appeal and any additional programing, special events or the horrid unexpected expenses like a crashed computer network, an oil burner or a



water pump giving up at the worst possible time, are all paid for by the proceeds generated by our endowment account. Limited use of endowment proceeds is the dependable life-line which powers most non-profits.



Our endowment was established by the founders, Dr. and Mrs. Robinson nearly fifty years ago and it remains our engine for existence. So, what's the problem? The last few years have been treacherous to even the most conservatively invested endowments as a world-wide pandemic was followed up with the Russian invasion of Ukraine setting the stage for the first land war in Europe since WW II. One look at your 401K tells you exactly what non-profits are experiencing all over the world, and it's not good.

Supporting The Field of Horology

Willard's Board of Trustees with fiduciary responsibilities for the museum are strongly committed to planning the financial future for The Next 50-Years and towards that end want to double the corpus (the money invested) of the current endowment over the next five years. To do this will require hard work, generosity and a demonstration of the importance of preserving the

Willard homestead, workshop and acreage, and the importance of teaching the forgotten science of horology and its solitary role in nearly every scientific discovery ever made.

The Strategic Need To Expand The Museum Endowment

As we move beyond the Annual Appeal to phase two, our emphasis will be the future, specifically, our endowment. Our endowment is the engine to supply income for special projects, events and education. Given the financial headwinds of the market, our focus on rebuilding our endowment becomes all the more imperative.

Future meetings of the Trustees and discussions among our membership will determine the final plan. I hope you will join us on this journey.

robert@willardhouse.org

[Make A Tax Deductible Donation Here](#)



2023 National Association of Watch & Clock Collectors National Convention

July 13-16, 2023

Museum Director Robert C. Cheney and Development Director Robert (Bob) Gierschick will be attending the **NAWCC National Convention** in Lancaster, PA this summer.

Both would enjoy saying hello to Willard members living in the area or anyone attending the meeting. Willard will have a presence in the Mart area which promises to be vast.

Send us an email at Robert@willardhouse.org or call Robert at 413.245.7017 and we can give you our coordinates in the Mart Room! Join us and say Hello!

Reading Corner

A New Masterwork from Paul J. Foley Now Available

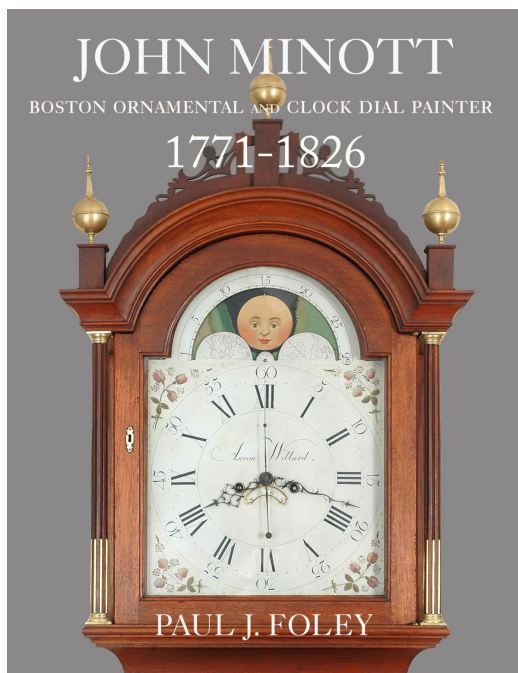


Fig. 33. 12 inch Auron Willard tall clock moon dial signed 'J. Minott / N. 222' on rise.

32 John Minott

Museum Trustee Paul Foley's latest book is now in print and available through the museum shop. The monograph features stunning photography of John Minott's ornamental painting work, featured on the dials of Willard's eight-day clocks and new details of this important ornamental painter's life.

A labor of love, Paul meticulously catalogued any available Minott dials for 30-

years, and painstakingly captured the important details. For the first time, Minott's life and work is examined through his beautiful finished dials, the numbering systems and Paul's extensive look into his busy life in that important clockmaking area of Boston and Roxbury.

It's worth repeating, the serious student now has the added details necessary to provide important historical connections between clockmaker and a local prolific dial artist.

Paul's latest work is a worthy and highly valued addition to any research library. (RCC)

[Order Your Copy](#)



Willard Visited by Scientific Instrument Society As Part Of Its Long Study Tour To New England and the Boston Area

On May 18th, the museum had the pleasure of hosting the Scientific Instrument Society (SIS) as part of the group's week-long tour. Nearly 40 guests from parts of the US and six other countries enjoyed guided tours by Robert C. Cheney, Sarah Mullen and Bev Snow.

The trip was an opportunity to see and learn about historic collections and sites across Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Connecticut. The society had nine stopovers ranging from the Harvard Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments, Harvard College Observatory, Dartmouth College Collection of Scientific Instruments, and the American Precision Museum, to the Hartness-Porter Museum of Amateur Telescope Making and Stellafane, Peabody Museum History of Science and Technology, Yale Collection Studies Center, and the Mystic Seaport Museum.



Formed in South Kensington, UK in 1983, the society "aims to further knowledge and appreciation of scientific instruments of all types - their origins, development, manufacture and use from antiquity to the present day."

(Left) Robert Cheney visiting with Sara Schechner, Director of the Collection of Historical and Scientific Instruments, Harvard University

[Learn More About SIS](#)



Museum Launched April Fun In Celebration of Simon's 270th Birthday

Simon Willard was born on April 3rd, 1753. His birthday was celebrated during the entire month of April. Here is how we celebrated him.

Free Museum Admission During April

Kicking off the festivities, the museum offered free admission starting April 1st. This was made possible by a generous donation from **Gaudette Insurance** of North Grafton.

In addition, we held a birthday party on the grounds on Saturday, April 1st.

Grafton Public Library Clock Scavenger Hunt

The museum partnered with the Grafton Public Library on a special clock scavenger hunt, at the library. First through sixth graders were invited to find clocks of various types including a Benjamin Willard eight-day clock and Aaron Willard Jr. steeple clock. Participating children turned in a check list and received special glow-in-the-dark sticker highlighting the museum's collection.



CLOCKS for KIDS

"We were thrilled to provide an interactive, DIY program for youth this month celebrating our partnership with Willard House and Clock Museum!" says Library Director, Beth Schreiber.

A Special Drawing for Scavenger Hunt Participants

The museum held a special drawing as part of its Clocks for Kids program. The museum and gave away a restored shelf clock to a lucky winner in late May.

Richard Potter's 19th Century Magic Show

Willard hosted Richard Potter's 19th Century Magic Show on Friday, April 21st.

"Willard is pleased to welcome back Robert Olson as Richard Potter to amaze our audience with his marvelous feats of magic. Robert has made it his life's devotion to study and perform as Potter and his passion shines through", said Cheney.

Wearing 19th century costume, veteran magician, Olson, brought Richard Potter's 1800s magic to the audience, using original and recreated props (cards, coins, ribbons, and boxes) as well as costumes and the language that was used during that period. Fun was had by all!

The performance was made possible by the generous financial support of **Millbury National Bank**.





WHCM Showcased The Gravestone Girls At The Grafton Public Library

After a hiatus of a few years, the Gravestone Girls returned to Grafton with a fascinating presentation.

“Welcome to the Graveyard” examined the reasons for cemeteries, focused on the interesting history of Grafton and explored the Willard family connection.

Led by founder, Brenda Sullivan, “Welcome to the Graveyard!” was a 90-minute illustrated ‘virtual tour’ chronicling cemetery art, history, and symbolism. From colonial New England burial grounds of the 16 & 1700s, through the nation-wide rural cemetery movement of the 19th century and into 21st century locations, Brenda explained why we have cemeteries and gravestones, why they look like they do and how styles and art have evolved over almost 400 years.

The presentation was filled with a wide variety photographs of original gravestones and burial grounds from Grafton - all visited by Brenda.

Intriguing and humorous, the audience of nearly sixty thoroughly enjoyed the talk.

Learn more about the Gravestone Girls [here](#).



Events



Come to Willard for a special star gazing event with NASA volunteers.

Telescopes will be deployed on the Willard grounds. Chat with professional astronomers and astronomy enthusiasts.

July 26th, 7:00 - 9:00 PM



Enjoy a lawn car event with the Minute Man Ford Model A Club. Nearly 20 restored Ford Model A's on display.

August 19th, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM.



Plan Your Visit

Museum Summer Hours:

Open Thursday- Saturday

Tours: 10:30am and 2:00pm

Large groups by appointment only

Sunday - Wednesday and
all national holidays: Closed

Museum Fees:

Members FREE

Adults \$10

Seniors 60+ \$9

Kids 13 plus: \$6

Kids 12 and under: FREE

Veterans and First Responders: FREE

[Sign Up For A Tour](#)

Thank You Sponsors and Donors

The Willard House and Clock Museum is very grateful for the generous support of the following corporate and personal donors. At Willard, we try very hard to maintain a high level of programming throughout the year and without outside support, this would not be possible.

If you or your business wishes to support the programs, donations of any size are welcomed and go to continued and new events here at Willard.

[Please Donate](#)

If you would like to learn more about special events or customized corporate or foundation programming, please contact: Robert@willardhouse.org Thank you.

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Willard House & Clock Museum**

-The Center of Early American Clockmaking-

WHCM is a 501(c)(3) non-profit museum

