

The Story of a Lifetime Companion

My Rolex; My Passion.®



Jeffery R. Creasey

*My Rolex;
My Passion.*©

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The Story of a Lifetime Companion

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My Rolex; My Passion
JEFF CREASEY

*Dedications to three;
My Father
and the two most important
women to me:
the one who bore my children,
and the one who gave me my life.*

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The Rolex Deep Sea Special

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Six hairs past a freckle...on my 5513



Prologue Passion Awakens

It's my belief that in the life of almost every young boy there comes a moment, a realisation, when he first becomes vividly aware of the passage of time. What was previous to this moment an umbral concept, something that just happened almost like a blur, after is revealed in the full light of the Sun.

Perhaps simultaneously but if not, very soon thereafter, he notices the timepiece. Probably on the wrist of his mother or another caregiver or in the hands of a grandfather who intentionally 'pops' the lid open for the pleasure of his young astonished and gleeful charge, he will either go on to utilise them to keep his life more structured and manageable, to 'take them for granted'; OR, he will develop a lifetime fascination with these wondrous and ingenious devices.

Count the present author the possible head of the latter group. From the earliest memories I can muster, the wristwatch has had me in it's mysteriously magnetic clutches. I LOVE these things! They have so many redeeming and attractive qualities. They come in every imaginable, conceivable design (if you can't find what you want, conceive/design it!); they are available in every price range, every size, colour, shape, weight, construction material, just about everywhere you are or go. They are portable;

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you can get a watch made for virtually any purpose and take it with you when you engage in that activity.

They may perform myriad functions, now many far more than telling time. Anyone may be involved in the pursuit of this interesting “past time” (pun intended!) from small children to the centenarians among us, any (as opposed to both) sex, fat or thin, tall or short, stupid or smart, handsome or ugly. Truly universal in appeal, this is a love that is pervasive and all-encompassing. It is a ‘crossover’ interest, with application in and to virtually every human aspect of existence and every mortal endeavour.

As the pages to follow will illuminate, my involvement has been and continues to be a source of immense gratification. Watches, in particular one very special brand of watches, have become a way of life for me. From my first conscious blink of each day to the last sentient breath before slumber I am aware of the timepiece with which I am falling asleep.

Deep contentment has always resulted from the knowledge of the fact that on my wrist is one of the most beautiful, desirable, rugged, well made, longest lasting timepieces ever conceived of or manufactured.

Since I was sixteen years old I have had the extreme, the undeniable, the irreplaceable feeling that can come from only one type of watch taking up permanent residence on your wrist. You see, that is when I finally took possession of the object of my dreams, my hard and long fought and won prize, the apple of my eye; it’s when I brought home my Passion.

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[The Rolex Deep Sea Special](#)

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Chapter One *The Special Club*

Since the first time my father showed me his wristwatch: the champagne coloured elegantly simple dial with slash markers and no date. Devoid of numbers. A secret. Only those “in the know” would be “in on it.”

It was round, of course. Father was a simple if somewhat sophisticated man. Solid middle class British stock. Proud of his five sons. And he didn’t hide it. Fact is, he wore it like a suit of armour.

I was only small; small enough to sit comfortably on dad’s lap. He taught me time just like he taught my brothers before me; traditionally. With hands and numbers and a “face” and a “sweep” second hand. We usually had to wind our watches. And take them off to wash our hands, take a bath, a swim, a bike ride, a...heck, just about anything.

You see, it was since way back then, that’s how long I’ve loved watches. All kinds, really. The more traditional, the more lovely to my eye, but I certainly have a special love for the unusual also (the author has a circa 1957 Hamilton Pacer with champagne dial, seen above; it even says “Patent Pending” on this dial!). My real passion however, is

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reserved for the 5513. I deeply love and regard this form. Every quality, each contour of this iteration of the “modern day” wristwatch that is attractive to my eye, is embodied in the 5513.

The “oversized winding crown” with “man sized” flutes. The black bezel insert and shape of the silvered numbers almost perfectly flush with but showing through its ebony-like surface. The slight convexity of its acrylic crystal. The “Mercedes symbol” as it is so often referred to, embedded within the hour hand. Later, after my Submariner’s first bracelet change (which cost more than the original cost of the entire watch, bracelet included), it even had a “Flip-Lock” expandable diver’s clasp on the buckle!! How cool was that!!

The proportions! Like the icons in every field of human involvement, there are the ICONS of things. The shapes are particularly intriguing to me. The Volkswagen “Beetle”. The Brogue shoe. The “Brilliant” cut round diamond. The five spoked automotive wheel. The triple pointed “star” of the Mercedes-Benz. The list is long, recognisable, not immutable; always changing, but NOT endless. It refers to a quality that becomes unique, endearing, enduring.

These icons evolve and become more apparent with time. They are even added to. They require time, many of them, to become the “icons” they become. Some, however, are simply “right” from inception.

It takes a myriad of factors combined to create such symbols. Sometimes the most minute and seemingly insignificant change or difference alters the presentation so spectacularly that without it, the impression created to form its status as an icon vaporises.

It may be a “man thing”. As women seem to love shoes, men seem to love watches. Wristwatches certainly seem to be number one here though pocket watches have their own following. Among all watches though, nothing has achieved the status of the Rolex Oyster. There are far more expensive watches and certainly better ones. They come in a mind boggling variety and as many styles, types, prices and tastes as there are people to wear and admire them. But none, not any other one comes even close to the recognizability and desirability of the Rolex wristwatch.

Every Rolex watch ever made eventually finds a home. Most are spoken for before they are even made. They make what they sell and they sell everything they make. These are expensive exclusive and uniquely available and desirable wristwatches, every one. They may be “in the system”; the retail sales/dealer system, for a very long time comparatively, but Rolex are master marketers and they control their distribution and marketing expertly. (This became evident when I discovered that the Rolex watch purchased for and worn since by my Mother from 1976, was actually manufactured in 1959!!).

The Rolex Submariner, first marketed to the general public in 1953 as the model 6204 iteration, captures the essence of this iconic status. Though the Oyster case had been invented in 1926, the Submariner was the very first wristwatch of its kind introduced as a dedicated diver’s watch. It evolved rapidly as competition at the time was fierce. The 5512 chronometer was introduced in 1959 followed by the non-chronometer 5513 in 1962. With the 5512 the Oyster case was redesigned to include protective shoulders for the winding crown which was now a larger, triple locking screw down affair. This attribute alone went far in nailing down the iconic shape and form I speak of.

Although as Rolex diving watches go, the 5513 was NOT the first or best or most significant from a production standpoint or really, as far as watch people are and were concerned, very significant by any measure they cared to truck out (heck, it is not even considered ‘Vintage’ by most measures), it was certainly the most significant Rolex for me: it was MY ROLEX.

And, as it would turn out, MY PASSION.

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Chapter Two A Passion's Seeds

"Jeffery, don't you think you've wound that enough?" she said in a stern but almost always loving tone. Mother wanted to avoid a repeat of the past but ever looming disaster.

"The man at the store said it shouldn't hurt it as long as I don't go longer than three minutes of winding..." I said with as much confidence as I could muster after what I'd done. But the man also said the watch was likely defective, a bit of information I neglected to repeat to Mom since I didn't want it to possibly reflect on her choice of watch or our ability as a family to pay for a better one. I was, after all, only five years old, had just learned to tell time recently and we had many mouths to feed in our family.

That first watch, with what I've always felt was possibly a defective winding mechanism or spring and retention system, looked a bit awkward on my wrist anyway. But I had fallen in love with it! It was square, gold tone, a black dial, gold hands and gold gilt print. Slash gold markers everywhere but the 12, 3, 6 & 9; a classic and I've since discovered extremely desirable arrangement. A separate "seconds" dial above the six. It was beautiful then; I still think it's beautiful today. Dressy, but beautiful. Why a five year old found it so special is in retrospect a complete mystery.

I remember first seeing it in the jewellery case at Westbrook Woolco department store. (This is the same jewellery counter from which I bought the “white” pearl and “black” pearl “promise” ring ten years later, which I would give to my future and still wife and companion of forty years-she still has the ring too!). I was small enough to see almost directly into those (adult) waist-height displays. The shiny, sparkling offerings looked even better from that vantage. The watches were on a rotating carousel and I remember I even had to wait for the one I loved to come back up and around to the top so I could show it to Mom.

But I am the second youngest of five brothers. At that time my youngest brother had just been born. And while most of the time the rest of my brothers and I could be found in the toys aisle, at that particular juncture in my young life I was mesmerised by the vast array of methods used to illustrate the same concept-telling time. I was keeping Mom and the baby away from the rest of the boys. At about age four I had become fairly proficient at telling time with hands on a dial with numbers and all of the different watch dials were a source of constant amazement. However, this was not good timing!

Note here that I said I was keeping Mom and the baby away from the boys. Well, I was keeping Mom from something else anyway. The baby on the other hand, he was quite interested in what I was doing. He was ogling those watches too! At first I thought it was just the carousel and the movement around and around...

After a few visits to this department with Mom and I, he had figured out what I was on about! Jay had started to look at the watches too! He couldn't talk yet, but he was amazed...as amazed as was his big brother.

This realisation happened very quickly for me and I fuelled Jay's fantasies as much and as often as possible. This experience has happened often for me. (I have created many **watch monsters**. Everywhere I go I create in others the desire, the passion if possible, to own a Rolex watch. Oh-oh. My first digression). It explains much of what has happened since in my life and family with respect to Rolex watch ownership. These stories will unfold in due course.

Though I showed it to her that day, we came back on another day, just she and I, so I could take a closer look. I got the watch for my birthday. But it was a manual wind. I was a bit over-exuberant, perhaps. The next watch would be different.

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Mom, never one to miss an opportunity for humour, said “How will you know how long you’ve been winding if the watch is not set yet?”

“I wind your Grand-Baby clock (See “Appendix-A”) for three minutes every three days, Mom. Besides, I have a clear view of it right there on the mantle. Don’t worry Mom, it won’t happen again.”

It hasn’t. I still have, amongst many others, the two watches in question. The “new” one, a round gold-tone BALFORTE with a white dial and arabic 12, 2, 4, 6, 8, & 10, dagger markers, hands and a separate seconds dial above the 6, is in parts. It is still in my possession and truly broken at present. It has been abused, neglected, stored, stolen and recovered, lost and re-found, never serviced or attended to and is now in more than a few pieces. It will not run without a good deal of likely non-worthwhile service. Fifty-one years. But there is more, much more.

This watch, (replete with broken plastic crystal) did not last as long as the first Timex I got. It I got a few years after the second Balforte and it was the closest thing I could find, at a much lower price point, to my Father’s BENRUS Three Star SELF WINDING. It is a silver-tone TIMEX SELF WIND. Arabic numerals are found only at the 12 & 6 of the champagne coloured dial with centre seconds and dagger markers (mostly). It is very roughly self-winding at present and will run for only a short time if unworn and hand-wound, but this watch and the one I got after it had absolutely eventful lives.

This is not the only old Timex I have that still runs without ever having been serviced. (Not that I am making any sort of a positive case for not servicing watches-just that servicing costs are high if the watch is not worth servicing. The economics must always be considered.) These are/were good watches, all. It would be nice, by this logic, to keep them nice by extending their life and making sure they are serviced. This is not always possible of course; many things such as this, when dealing with issues of sensitive nature, simply cannot be prolonged in a practical and cost efficient manner and must be allowed to rest.

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Such was the case with my first dog, cat, turtle, guitar, drum set, bike, motorcycle, car, van and yes, even my first watch.

My Father's BENRUS, with it's champagne dial and arabic 12, 2, 4, 6, 8, & 10, luminous green and gold dagger hands, luminous green small button-style markers and beautifully styled decorative case lugs, still runs and keeps good time but must be manually wound, as the self-winding rotor sits externally taped to the back of the signed, marked case back. These are artefacts of my inquiring, analytical mind; I ripped them apart to discover their internal secrets and then found it impossible to reassemble many of them! The separate compartments of "Turtles" candies box house my childhood collection.

This one however, though in pieces and interminably uncared for, still runs well! It must be manually wound of course, but I am astonished that it is happily ticking along! This 'CF 1', 17 jewel mechanism is fine and still running very smoothly. It is a well made, high quality watch that served my father very well over many years. He was a pilot (although he gave it up when he married) and was well aware of the necessity of a good watch so he did know quality when he saw it. His budget was always very limited. Although unusual perhaps, the choice he made to buy a Benrus has been affirmed and vindicated simply by longevity. I have no idea what this watch may be worth monetarily but this hardly matters. The watch will remain in my care, custody and control for the rest of my days anyway.

It is the type of watch that is likely worth having a good watchmaker peruse with a loop. I have just such a person in mind

Ernie
Creasey's
BENRUS
Three Star
wristwatch..
.still
running!



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Chapter Three Pedagogical Zeitgebers

It was learned from a young age that in order for watches to “run” they had to be “driven”, thus “wound”; I did not like most solutions to this problem starting with taking the watch off and winding it or having a battery to keep dry and clean. We all know why; the relationships and habits and mannerisms we develop tend to evolve around what things we do, utilise in doing them and will tolerate about how, when and why we do them.

As an aside, but certainly as an important piece of information, I have learned that the main reason for making a movement that winds itself is not for convenience. The reason self winding was developed was to keep the winding mechanism fully wound thus ensuring a constant tension on the mainspring and therefore more accuracy in power delivery. Self winding makes the mechanical watch more accurate. Accuracy was an honoured goal for Rolex since it was first awarded a certificate of accuracy (normally given only to marine chronometers) in 1914 by London’s Kew Observatory. In 1931 Rolex invented the very first self-winding rotor mechanism, the forerunner of all automatic mechanical watches that have followed.

For a good while now I had been wearing what I thought was an extremely logical and simple solution to the whole issue, just such a “rotor self-winder” , in two very nice looking silver-tone and then gold tone Timex pieces (still have them both). They did cost a fair deal more (proportionally, as Timex’s go) than the other watches I had owned to date, but the freedom from having to remove, wind/set & wind, re-strap and readjust (it all seemed so unnecessary and frustrating sometimes); this was well worth this

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additional cost. Also, I chose the same type of bracelet as Father had for his Benrus; a “Fixo-Flex” and later a “Speidel” bracelet; both were metal and expandable. Either had everything you could ask for; comfort, ease of adjustment, removal and replacement, extreme flexibility, durability, almost indestructibility...did I mention comfort? Almost nothing to dislike? (Or the words my good friend & Toyota Master Mechanic Salim Hirji would very much later use to respond to my admonition that I ‘liked my car; “What’s not to like?!” The first time I’d heard it put that way.)

Although I was a high school student, then in grade eleven, my work was playing the drums in a rock and roll band. This was something I had been doing professionally since I was in grade seven. Two of my brothers also were in the group; Jerry the middle one and bass player extraordinaire and Jim (James) the second eldest and owner of the six month younger 5513 to my own Passion.

Yes, I had named my watch, though no one, no one knew. No one. Ever.

My Passion. My Rolex. And no one but I knew her name. But she was mine and I seldom, if ever let her out of my sight.

From the day I had been pushed into “Jewels by Kangas” in Chinook Centre Mall, before it was a covered mall structure and looked at these marvels before I was out of my stroller, I had been mesmerised (this, a word I have used, will use, and tend to use a lot, as with most things appropriate). It was my father and my brothers but also others who were first interested in these baubles and they would show them to me and “Oooooohhh” and “Ahhhhhh”-but it would soon become me, with my knack for seeking solutions to problems that affected me greatly and personally, my “analytical” mind and my relentless pursuit of knowledge and perfection, who would become obsessed with these little machines that you could wear on your wrist.

This incredible yearning had started before I could form the sentences to explain the desire or concept!! I can recall pictures in my mind from my very earliest memories of watches of the day. There were many of course,

two in particular being the Hamilton Pacer/Hamilton Ventura Series and the much later 1970/71 Hamilton Pulsar, which to my eye looked disturbingly but poetically like our circa 1950's Viking television screen with the blond coloured wood enclosure.

That incredible watch, which came out when I was in grade 10, marked the first wristwatch with no moving parts! This marked a moment which made me go "...Mmmm..." as Arsenio Hall used to say. There was already a pretty regular FREE clock without need of winding OR batteries that kept right on going every single day, day after day. It's called the Sun. I could think of several others right off the top of my head. Furthermore, it was most probably false. Do elementary particles NOT move??

What made wristwatches so alluring was possibly the fact that they were little mechanical marvels which reproduced the overall effects, or at least what matters to we humans of this movement of the Earth around the Sun and the Moon around the Earth. The machine does this by interpreting this motion in a measured and very precise, orderly fashion.

Because this little machine can do this job so well, it is a small miracle. To fashion so many precise tiny shapes, wheels, gears, springs, screws, hooks, hammers, tiny forks, claws, thicknesses, sizes, tines; the whole engineering and design process as well as final manufacturing and the culmination in the "wound" mainspring usually driving a balance wheel which drives a shaft on a gear, which drives a cog in the gear, and it is set "just -so..." that the individual pulsations from the hand will somehow end up equivalent to or dead on the rate of the celestial motions that our circadian rhythms become so heavily dependant upon to regulate our bodily functions. Technically, if not actually, a second should be approximately, very inaccurately, the same as a human heartbeat.

It's close anyway. So close on average that it is almost the accepted standard rate of counting. The actual cells involved in doing this are doing this "counting". And though some may find this a bit of a leap, sleeping affects counting. We are all machines, after all. Complex and interwoven-there are many systems working in concert to sustain our lives. Ask Dr. Oz.

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This is a deep subject and one that I have both pondered long and hard and even contributed to the knowledge base about. It is dear to my heart and I am presently and still involved in its' in-depth study.

It was a hot, dusty, breezy day on the Western prairies as I plied my way through the traffic on my way East. I had to get to Chinook Centre, buy some drumsticks and a batter head for my snare drum (which had finally given up last night, unusually but luckily during the last song of the last set of the night's performance), get to "Jewels By Kangas" and give him some more cash and play with my Passion for as long as possible, then get all that stuff back home on my bicycle, re-head the snare, tune it, repack it, repack the van, get ready with the guys and start driving to the gig tonight in Rockyford. The bicycle ride was hairy; I had to go the 'back-way', which meant through the military Currie 'barracks', through Altadore, over the old Glenmore dam, up and down hills, through Chinook Park and on to Chinook Centre. I just said "OVER THE OLD GLENMORE DAM"... to just say it like this as another step in a series of steps, belies what an experience, an absolute barrage of sensual overload, riding a bicycle precariously across this old, narrow, one lane "bridge" (the top edge of a hydro-electric dam, above the spillways) actually was. You just really have to do it yourself sometime!

It was like this most weekends during my teens; busy that is. My brothers and I were together a lot. Far more than most families, I would say. Since we were so close in age (Mother gave new meaning to the words "...pregnant and barefoot in the park...") we were almost always in a group that went everywhere as a unit. I remember in my very young youth, spending hours on end in the Woodward's store grocery department's "Kiddie-Koral"-a separate room replete with a couple of trained "baby-sitters" who at the time were nothing more than older kiddies in need of 'Koral-ing'! In later years they got a television in there for Saturday morning cartoons. Bugs & the Road Runner with Wil. E. Coyote, Elmer Fudd, Tweetie Pie & Sylvester; we were pretty tame until age 3 or so.

When we got older we wandered a bit more. Though we always seemed to be at the malls for a reason or a specific purpose, I think the main reason was entertainment. Time seems to be a subject d'jour for such gatherings and regular time review was done every Saturday shopping trip. Why do I remember this crap? Anyway, as we began to wander, we began to go into more and more stores. When we were young, The Kangas store was way off the "beaten path" we never went way up there without parents. But as time passed the mall evolved and it was "joined together" North to South- there was initially a road between two stores, but as things evolved the road was closed, disappeared; the mall grew and was eventually "covered."

This was part of a much larger national and international trend of opening and building new and newly converted "covered" shopping malls. I'm told and I've heard and read this trend was first brought to parts of Calgary, if not first to all of Canada, by a man named Gelmon. His name adorns plaques on several of his buildings. Mr. Gelmon was and is a business man and property owner and developer in Calgary and Vancouver, as well as many U.S. cities. He is broadly regarded as having helped pioneered the development of covered malls in several North American cities. Later, newspapers told us he single handedly and with the help of his two lawyer sons, brought the Domino's Pizza franchise operations to Canada by purchasing the Canadian licensing and franchising rights. His ownership of these operations and subsequent sale of these rights for an extremely tidy profit did his family proud and well. I asked him through channels to adopt me more than once, not that I even wanted a new father, but I digress. (However, the subject may be worth revisiting: perhaps both subjects...)

It was during these frequent visits to these stores and merchants in the shopping centres of Calgary that we were all exposed to the many new products that were becoming available throughout the post war years and from the fifties to the eighties, very feverishly in the Alberta area in general and Calgary specifically. This was and IS "Oil Country" and oil means money. Chinook Centre was and is a "World class" shopping centre and we frequented it as did most other Calgarians with their newfound riches. As it grew, the Kangas store moved down to the main floor into a more accessible position. It was closer to both the Music stores and the Woodward's store Mom and Dad were so fond of.

The first music store in the Southwest area of the city that I can remember spending time in was Scott's Music, which at that time was literally two blocks from our senior high school, although I first started going there in grade seven or when I was attending

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junior high at a different school. I bought my first “professional” trap drum set there; a black sparkle “Trixon” five piece kit from Germany.

About a year and a half later, when I found that the Trixon’s, although very nice, simply could not cut the life of a professional drumset, they were traded in on a brand spanking’ new five piece set of marine pearl, “Buddy Rich Signature Series” Rogers’s drums. These were truly professional grade drums with a complete set of Avedis Zildjian Cymbals. I hadn’t finished “personalising” obviously; a second bass drum was ordered almost immediately from a different outfit, Bob Ingles Music, and the waiting commenced. You saw this trend earlier; a little longer than 1 1/2 years and two different locations before this single drum finally arrived.

Bob Ingles’ Music, with branches in Chinook Centre and downtown Calgary, was a shop that got a lion’s share of our business which over the years had become quite substantial in the scheme of things. There was a guy there named “Vic” who gave us super-good deals because we were some of his best customers. As he moved from store to store we followed him, but Chinook was convenient, and that’s where we had met him, his “competition” was there and we had lots of other stuff to do there, from “Radio Shack” component stops, to clothing store visits (such as “Tip Top Tailors”) even as a performance group, to get “outfits” to wear on stage for the “special” gigs.

Ultimately as a drummer, the best shops for me seemed to exist in far off places usually either the United States or Vancouver. I continued to buy extra hardware, custom ordered and built, and quite literally boxes of “pre-rolled” drumsticks from “Drums Only” in Vancouver. Much later Ray and George Ayotte and “Drums Only” got me my custom built Ludwig drums which, again, I not only still have (as with most of my drums & other valuable acquisitions) but value highly and cherish. (Of course, the Ayotte brothers of Vancouver area and their percussion family developed their very own brand of Canadian internationally acclaimed drums and percussion instruments, AYOTTE PERCUSSION. I wish both my oldest son, Isaac and I could afford sets of their incredible, highly sought after and desirable masterpieces. Again, digression.)

Certainly, far more time was spent in such places as “Musicland” owned by our good friends the Young family, whose oldest son Rob was much before this the first keyboard player in our “band”, a classically trained piano player turned keyboard wizard who

could reproduce most sounds he heard. We spent many long hours in music stores and rehearsal rooms and that was kind-of our “home” store, if you will. Music and the instruments that we all played to make it was a constant in our lives. We listened, practiced, researched, studied, rehearsed individually and as a group; in short we worked and worked very hard. As we played, we worked. It was immense fun, but it was hard, all-consuming work.

Father, who was with us evenings and weekends most of our lives, was a multitalented and multifaceted man. Apart from having a very stable desirable position at a major oil and gas concern in the downtown towers (he was a trained, papered and well educated accountant with several professional designations), he dabbled in other businesses and enterprises on his “own” time mostly for his family. Our father, Ernie, was also our manager and ersatz booking agent, for many years.

We boys were musicians. All of us. We all played at least two instruments, some of us many more. We all sang, and not just whining and shouting; we were trained and practiced professional vocalists. We all played sports from football to karate. Jim and I both have multilevel black belts in karate, and that’s the tip of the iceberg. Some very early memories involve lugging guitars all over the neighbourhood and beyond to drummer’s houses—drums were “too hard to move.” Mmmmmmm. Bingo! Guitars were a pain in the ass anyway. Besides, I checked it out and this next fact sussed it. Drummers got something called “doubling fees” which meant that because they were so hard to move set up and repair, drummers got paid DOUBLE! Of course, this only applied to unionised musicians, but we were all in the union—we had to be in the union in order to play the many gigs we did at licensed establishments. They serve booze; most of us were underage. We all had to shuffle off to the kitchen or out of the cabaret during breaks. But we ate and drank free. Usually in the kitchen, but FREE—and as much as we could want.

I rode straight into the music store so I wouldn’t have to lock up the bike. I was late. Lazy ass brothers couldn’t get up and give me a ride! I work hard every night too!! Probably much harder since I helped set up, sound check, flail my freekin’ arms and legs around in different directions forcefully for some five or more hours, knock down, load

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out, pack up, and since by then I'm SOOOO frikin' wired I have to DRIVE home (yes, I had a 'Learner's Permit'), so you slobs can sleep...

AAAARRRRGGGGG!!!! as Charles Brown would say.

"I need three pairs of 'Regal Tip 5B'...and please ROLL 'EM!!!; I am in a BIG hurry!" I said to Kendal Young as I went to the drum skins at the rear of the store. (Roll 'em, refers to a process whereby each stick is physically rolled one-by-one along the floor to assess how straight and true it is...a somewhat essential factor as it relates to balance.)

"No problemo" said Kendal in his usual half ironic half cheerful way on a Saturday. Where r'YOU goin'?" expecting me to help him.

"Snare head finally busted last night..."I muttered, as I finally got there and started looking for the one I needed.

"Should have lots of those" he said confidently. But, half way through the rack already and so far unsuccessful, I wasn't quite so sure. Unfortunately, although because our relationship was very close (we always gave these boys our first crack at business) they didn't often have what a drummer needed. They were really a "music" store and also did guitars and amplifiers, but very inexpensive drums and accessories were the norm here. I was a professional drummer, playing frequently six nights a week and holding down a full time student work load plus a full time job. I needed professional gear. I was willing to pay for it-sometimes more than I needed to since I would rather order it at full price and wait than go to their competitor. They needed the business and I didn't need the hassle.

"IT'S NOT LOOKIN' GOOD OVER HERE, DUDE!!!" I said in an extra-loud voice so Kendal could hear me from the back of the store.

“Don’t tell me that!!” he cried out, almost in fear! I had certainly pre-warned him of possible impending bodily harm if this situation ever occurred! Perhaps he was remembering my fiery Italian temper. Perhaps it was the fact that I was now a green belt in Tae Kwon Do. Perhaps it was the fact that I could play the drums for eight hours while singing the highest harmonies and not get winded. Perhaps it was the size of my biceps as I gripped the drumsticks while....

“HERE’S ONE!” Kendal yelled as he came running out of the back of his shop which he had apparently slipped by me and into as I was seizing...

“The sticks?” I said ignoring him, which I was sure I would hear about almost immediately.

“Almost done. Asshole. That was thirty pair?” he said back to me, expecting to get a rise out of me.

I said “Put them on my account along with the head. My cash has to go elsewhere today-ll come in Tuesday and pay it all off. What’s the total damage?”

“Six thousand four hundred” he said deadpan.

“Great. Will you take Visa?” I said, knowing well the next time I’d see him he’d be telling me a different story. I didn’t listen to his answer. I was off to the next store. In my mind I was there already, though my front tire hadn’t started turning yet. Ya know, if it weren’t for the fact that Mr. Kendal Young, Senior wore a Rolex Air King, why I probably would have just...

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Chapter Four THE Coolest Wristwatch EVER

I brought my bike and pack inside the front of the store carefully. It was, after all, a JEWELLERY store, kinda like a china shop; me with ass-length hair, a mesomorphic muscular and stout 5'9" build a full pack and a bicycle IS like a bull in a china shop.

There were only a few browsers there on a mid afternoon Saturday as it was very nice outside but I had business to conduct. Mr. Kangas was in the back behind the wall and I couldn't see him; the lady at the front, a shocked look on her face, came rushing up to see what I could possibly want. She must be new here.

We both spoke simultaneously, quite by accident. She said "How may I help you?" and I said "Is Mr. Kangas in today?" A little disconcerting and unexpected for both of us. We got over it.

"YES,..." she said as she turned and out he walked as he simultaneously said "Hello, Mr. Creasey! I haven't seen you for over a month!" He walked directly to the Rolex counter, removed a key, went back into the rear, came out with a green & gold two-tone box in hand and placed it on the counter in front of me. He knew why I was here. She

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could only watch us in some amazement as her new boss put what she surely knew was one of the finest things in the store in front of this unlikely suitor.

“I was getting a little concerned...” he said with the beginnings of a wry grin on his lips.

“Sure you were.” I said. It had been more than a year since I had wandered into his store and made a pact with him. It was when the store was still on the upper level and the deal had started before they had moved. He was getting concerned?!!!!!? HAH!! When that store moved I was the concerned one!! I had already given him what for me was a small fortune of extremely hard earned money. Every month before the move and since I had been coming into his store as frequently as possible whenever I could spare the money and giving him ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five dollars-whatever wouldn't leave me too short for drumsticks, heads, spare parts, repairs and other payments.

I remember the day I finally “took the plunge” so-to-speak-when Mr. Kangas said to me “You've been coming in here for years. I've watched you get big enough to wear one of these watches. When are you going to make a decision to go ahead with buying one for yourself?”

I looked at him and said “If I buy a watch, I want a good one. A very good one. One that looks like it might want to make me coffee in the morning...”

He said “I think the watch you like the best is the one you always ask to try on, every time you come in here. And you keep on coming back. For years, it hasn't changed and you haven't changed. Certainly, the watch hasn't changed. I think you may be in love with that little stainless steel anchor and red rope and little red seal that comes with it!”

“You're talking about that extremely expensive Rolex Submariner, aren't you?” I said, sheepishly.

“Yes, of course” he responded without thinking. He was looking straight at me when I looked up from my hands. I muttered “How could I possibly pay for it? I play drums in a rock and roll band. I'm a high school student. I work part-time in a dry-cleaning store otherwise. My cash flow is low.” My laments were being noticed by this sensitive man

who had watched my yearning grow into a virtual obsession over many years. He wanted to find a “win-win” solution for us both.

“Can you do without it for a while?” he asked, in a truly inquisitive way?

“I’ve done without it all my life so far...” I said, with kind of an inquisitive manner myself. I didn’t know what he was talking about. Remember, I was fourteen. The world of “big finance” had so far eluded my young mind. I was a physicist not a financier!

“Please elaborate...” I said in my most sophisticated tone. I was trying to wrap my fourteen year old brain around the slightest possibility that this nice man might somehow make it possible for me to own possibly the coolest wristwatch I’ve ever laid my eyes on (until then, anyway)!!

He laid it out. “We could put the watch on ‘Layaway’” he said, waiving at his big safe at the back. “You give me a small monetary deposit now, say twenty dollars.” He grabbed a sales receipt book. No computers in those days-he started writing. “We make a ‘contract’”...

No need to explain contracts to a professional unionised musician.

“ARE YOU SERIOUS??” I said, with complete, utter awe. “You can do this??”

“Of course!” said old man Kangas, as if somehow he thought I should know this as well. I seemed to know everything else to him, I’m sure. Look, I try not to come across as arrogant but I can’t help it sometimes. I don’t suffer fools lightly. Etc.

“Would I have to leave the watch here and pay for it for a while, or something?” It was a good guess and the proverbial “catch” I knew was there somewhere.

He said yes.

“How much would I have to pay you?” This was sounding too good to be true. Y’know what Dad always said about things that sound...

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“Look here. You are a nice boy. I trust you. You are smart. You are honest. I see how you handle expensive stuff. You respect other people’s property.” This was not news to me. But it was nice to hear someone say that they noticed these qualities about me.

He had apparently noticed as I showed others who came in the expensive solid gold Rolex “Day-Date” with round, ‘brilliant’ fully cut diamond-set bezel and dial markers and the new “Bark” gold finishing technique that made the watch look like a gold coloured tree branch with links in it. Not my cup-of-tea, but certainly, it was solid gold after all!! I could SELL these things!! I’m sure it gave him butterflies to let this long haired early teenaged kid play around with the most expensive watch he had in his store! I’m also sure it was a physical relief when I finally gave it back and let him put it up in his display unscathed and no worse for the experience. I wonder if my dalliances with those other watches and potential customers ever actually resulted in sales for him? I never asked.



“But how much?” I repeated.

“You’ve been coming into my store since you were in a stroller pushed by your beautiful mother, all your brothers, your cousins, beautiful family!” he waxed poetic about his own memories of my memories!! “Maybe SHE wouldn’t remember, but I REMEMBER!!” he went on, now, I think concentrating more on the nice MOTHER than the nice family!

“And, how much?”

“For you, anything you like!” he said. I almost fainted.

When I got my composure back, I managed “You realise that could take forever...” I said, excited but now beginning to comprehend the responsibility of this obligation.

“Not forever. A while. Even a short while. You are young. You clearly want this watch.”

“Can I visit?” I said, with a tone that suggested that he should try to stop me.

“Of COURSE not” he said without missing a beat. It’s one of the reasons I liked him.

“Here’s my first twenty bucks. Where do I sign?”

“I’ll make you a receipt to keep together with the others you will get each time you make a payment. Keep them in a safe place since they are your proof that you have given me this money. I have copies, of course. I would never cross you either.” He did not have to say that to me; I knew.

I have to say that when that store closed upstairs, the first time I went there was no signage indicating a move or location change. The first thing that came to mind was that someone had crossed HIM!! Thank goodness it was there next time I went.

So began a lesson learned and never forgotten. In fact, many lessons were learned from this whole exercise. And, I’m still learning and refining all of them today and passing as many as possible on to future generations. Let’s see. There’s:

-delayed gratification;

-anything worth having is worth waiting for;

-you get what you pay for;

And another that would forever change my life;

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Jeff Creasey*

How to SELL.

Old man Kangas could SELL;

And so on, and so on, and so on...



*1993 Model 16713 LN
Rolex GMT Master II*



Chapter Five Soda Pop Watch

“Torrey, if you don’t buy this watch, I’m going to buy it!” I exclaimed into the pay phone from Market Mall just outside of the “People’s Jeweller’s”. It was 1984, and I was talking to my workmate Torrey Taves, 1983 AEtna Canada “Rookie of The Year”. I was the national “runner up” in that competition. Big deal, eh?

Though one of my best friends, perhaps my greatest motivator and yes, even a bit of a foe in a way, Torrey was and is definitely one thing in particular: as good as Jeff Creasey! Maybe better, at least as far as he thought, thinks and could and can prove.

“Jeff, do you think I would have asked you to drive all of the way out there and look at the watch for me if I didn’t WANT the watch BADLY?” he said, almost with pain in his voice.

“No, Torrey, I guess not.” I knew what he was asking me to do. He had just made it clear and I had just clarified it for myself.

“What about the price! How can they sell it for that! It must be priced wrong!!” Torrey said, again with the excitement returning. He had earlier today RUN into the office downtown with the story of how he had just stopped in to that jeweller on a whim the

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night before on his way home and the GMT Master had a price tag of \$945.00 on it. This was less than 1/2 price as far as I new and I hadn't seen them below \$1200.00 for years. I saw a possible opportunity to get myself a GMT Master with "Pepsi" bezel insert just like the one my brother Jim had scored in so unlikely a way so many years before...

"Look, I don't know or care how they can sell it for that. I'm going to buy this watch. If you wan't to buy it from me in a couple of days, great."

That was NOT enough for Torrey.

"Jeff, I know how you are with Rolex watches. YOU'RE BUYING THIS WATCH FOR ME, NOT YOU, O.K?" he said, I felt expecting that his next move would be to ask me for one of those "contracts" that professional unionised musicians use...

"YAH, YAH, YAH... I'm buying TORREY a ROLEX...good grief..."

So thus began my "accidental pursuit"; my embryonic passion of Rolex collecting, buying, selling, fixing, servicing, improving, holding and cherishing Rolex watches. With this particular act, I guess I even got into 'charitable giving with Rolex's' briefly but found it a bit high end for my tastes at that time at least.

Torrey came up with the money the next morning. I didn't ask. About anything. Not where from, how, what instead of, who from...

But WHY did Torrey have to have a Rolex GMT Master?

Well, you see, Jeff wore, nay, wears a Rolex Submariner. He doesn't scuba dive.

But Torrey IS a pilot. And surely, a pilot MUST wear a Rolex GMT MASTER.

End of story. Was Torrey not a better salesman than Jeff? Was Torrey not the ROOKIE OF THE FREEKIN' YEAR??? Did Torrey not BEAT JEFF for first place nationally to win ROOKIE OF THE YEAR??

And doesn't Torrey deserve what Jeff deserves?

And Jeff does have a very lovely watch. And, well, so should Torrey. And so, well, so does Torrey. And then, all was good in the universe.

That particular watch now resides on the wrist of Barbara and Torrey Taves's eldest son Cameron. Torrey's Rolex tradition has extended into his second generation as it has with so many others in my "string" of influence, if you will. Second, and even some third generations are now taking root.

My grandchildren Owen and Logan are keen students of and observers of time. Though my very own eldest son Isaac shares none of my passion for wristwatches, even he has an interest in pocketwatches, which I must admit to never having developed a more than passing fondness for. Isaac's eclectic collection of wristwatches, like so very many of the things that Isaac is involved in, is hysterical. He is also a professional musician, a businessman, promoter, manager, agent and many other things. He should be a standup comic.

One thing he has taken to doing after shows played in bars he oversees, is to collect the watches that have been lost, discarded, left behind or otherwise have come to be found on the floors and tables there after the patrons have vacated and no lost and found claims have been filed. I was recently given the opportunity to peruse the wares. Upon my visiting he announced "Dad, I have a watch collection too..." I was dubiously impressed by further inspection. Mostly, it is a tangle of black plastic straps and silver buckles. This is his proudly declared "watch collection." Every once in a while though (Isaac is perhaps the farthest thing from stupid there is) one comes across a piece that is truly worthy of having in a genuine collection. He shows them to me now much more regularly since I told him the "Field & Stream" stainless steel waterproof model (it has a screw in case back!) I extracted for my own was likely worth a few hundred bucks. I was carrying it around in one of my cars as a "change-out" for any gold or partially gold Rolex I might be wearing if I have to do anything physical. However, it was so very nice that my nephew Akimo took a shine to it and I gifted it to him in trade for HIS discard (a "ROOTS Regatta Chronograph-not a really BAD watch at all!). And life goes on. I

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have since, fixed and returned that one, reacquired it and put it to very good personal use!

When the People's Jeweller's in Chinook Centre carried Rolex watches, way back when I was in my teens and buying my first good watches, they also had a pretty good selection of the "Tudor" line of Rolex watch for a less expensive, but still very desirable choice. They were and are excellent, having a "full-blown" Rolex Oyster case, but then they contained a movement purchased from another Swiss watch consortium. The design and fitment is entirely Rolex, however.



Since our twenty-fifth wedding anniversary in 2001, my wife Toni has worn a Ladies Rolex Oyster Perpetual Date with smooth bezel, arabic 2,4,6,8 & 10 and a "Jubilee" bracelet in all steel, but her first Rolex was a Tudor Princess Lady Oysterdate with matching Oyster steel bracelet. She was nineteen years old and I had worn my Passion since February 28, 1973, in March 1974 when I gave Toni this very special gift to match it. It's not a bad "match" to the Submariner for its' day and we still have all original papers (even the bill of sale), box, case and bag. It cost \$ 200.00. We paid \$

180.00, as the “list” was \$ 235.00 but they were clearing old stock. Yes, of course we still have it, fully reconditioned.

Three years after I got mine, my Mom turned fifty in January 1976, a milestone. My father thought it fitting, as did I, to get her a Rolex; a steel & gold (ROLESOR) Oyster Perpetual Date, which is being serviced only this month as it is regularly.

Two and a half years before this (1973), my second eldest brother Jim turned 21 and got a 5513. Also due for service, it was bought about five months before I took delivery of mine but I had actually bought mine one and a half years before this as price goes. My Father paid \$ 275.00 for Jim’s; it had gone up in price over two years and seems to have done so most years since, but still below retail at the time. I WAS a “preferred customer” already at sixteen!



These stories, they go on and on and on and many will be told in this tome.

People see a Rolex on your wrist and if they are at all interested in watches, a conversation is started. It often initiates with the obligatory subject matter concerning authenticity; Rolex is now the singularly most imitated and replicated design form certainly in all of wristwatch history, but perhaps in all of history. Period.

However, it hasn’t stopped them from producing more than 2000 wristwatches of the authentic variety EACH DAY (“fakes” are thought to be produced in numbers at least ten times this big)-this production consistently rivals that of any other mainstream wristwatch manufacturer.

Even with such concerted effort and attempts to undermine their chokehold on this extremely popular and ubiquitous involvement, Rolex has continued to thrive and grow

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as a leader in the field of horology and wristwatch development and manufacture but mostly they excel at marketing and promotion of their products.

Frequently, even if another displays or expresses no interest whatsoever in watches, if I want to start a conversation with someone, a cheap (arguably, anyway) and easy way is with my Rolex.

So, Torrey had seen my watch almost the first day we had met. It was December 1982 and Cordell Darling, one of my mentors and a fine co-worker had introduced us in the Mayfair Place offices of The Excelsior Life Insurance Company. Cordell had just brought Torrey “on board” as I had just been brought “on board” by Ted Smith in this very same office not two and a half weeks earlier. This term would be heard a whole lot in my life as an insurance and investment salesman and advisor, especially in the next ten years or so. Torrey and I became fast friends instantly. We were both eager, hungry, bright, ambitious, good looking (well one of us was), had young families, were well educated and above all wanted to do better than each other.

We were having lunch I recall when he first drew my attention to his recognition of my Passion.

“That’s a pretty nice looking watch. Is that a Rolex?” he said, reaching across the table to TOUCH her!!!

I recoiled in horror! “YES!” I said, as I moved back in my chair instinctively. Nobody lays their hands on my Passion without permission!

“What do you know about the Rolex?” I inquired snottily, as if to shut the conversation down, or at very least change the subject.

“I think that’s a ‘Submariner’, that’s what” said Torrey, kind of half-sure of what he was saying.

Time to have some fun.

“Yah?” I said, tauntingly. “How old do you think it is?”

“It looks pretty new. I’d say it’s not more than two years old. Did you get it when you graduated?” he fished, looking for a reason or occasion somebody like me might come to have a nice watch like that.

“Not even close!” I squealed, ‘cause I loved to beat Torrey so. A good guess for a two year old watch since I was twenty seven and I had graduated from university at twenty five. “Try again.”

“You got it for your twenty first birthday?”

“Nope.”

“Eighteen?”

“Fraid not...”

“WELL?!” he asked, a little irritated by now.

“Ah...you wouldn’t believe the truth anyway...”

“IT’S NOT A FAKE...???”

“Does it LOOK like a FAKE???”

“No...then WHERE DID YOU GET IT???”

“I bought it from a Native Canadian on eighth avenue and first street...”

“C’MON YOU JERK...!”

“I TOLD ‘ya...”

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“One last time...”

“Okay...I bought it for myself. When I was fourteen. It took me two years to pay for it. I took delivery of it when I was sixteen. My wife, mother, two brothers and a number of friends have them too.”

“Yah sure. Now where did you get it. Did you inherit it?”

“SEE????????!!”

“You weren’t serious about the fourteen thing?” he quizzed?

“Dead serious.”

Back then, a “fake” was perhaps more of a rarity than a real Rolex, but both were rare. It was easy to tell the difference. Today, without removal of the case back, it can be virtually impossible to discern an authentic watch from a replica. Some replicas are so excellent that the cases are being used to house relatively high quality Swiss and Japanese watch movements. They are also good watches! But one must be extremely aware. They are NOT Rolexes! The bracelets especially, fall apart and are frequently very hard if not impossible to repair to wearable condition, especially if you are unfortunate enough to lose a part or two. There are copious numbers of absolutely unwearable replica Rolex watches gathering dust in drawers and boxes because their bracelets cannot be repaired for any reasonable amount of money compared to the overall initial cost of the replica. Yet in today’s world, even though the ‘real McCoy’ is produced in record numbers to meet never before seen demand, these replica producers have flourished (producing from ten to fifteen times as many as the astounding numbers of authentic Rolex watches coming from Geneva.

The lack of quality extends to far more than bracelets for replicas, however. One watch maker at least has referred to the ubiquitous Chinese innards as “Heart Attack Movements” because they give the watchmakers heart attacks if they have to try to work on them. They simply fall to bits. (This description is credited to Mr Andre Affolter owner and craftsman of “The Swiss Watch Clinic” in Calgary).

“Why would a fourteen year old buy a Rolex watch?” Torrey queried.

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“Why would you care?” I said, in order to finally change the subject. But it came up again and again. Like me, when Torrey got something in his head...

It’s always been hard to sell the story without some emphasis. (And although Ted Smith our manager and “boss” said you had to sell the sizzle, not the steak-well, I’m vegan...)



*BIRKS ETERNA MATIC 3000 which
belonged to Ernie Creasey*

Chapter Six Pecking Order

When Jim turned twenty one years old, as I've said before, my parents bought him a 5513 virtually identical to mine except for the price, the time of purchase and the inscription on the back. Toni's Tudor was purchased in between these acquisitions in 1974 for her nineteenth birthday and then no more Rolexes until Mom's in 1976. Why?

Well, it was because my dear Father got a whole bunch of "passes" in the Rolex financing area of estate planning. It worked something like this.

The subject was unborn until I gave it birth. John was already twenty-one when I entered into my contract with Mr. Kangas. I was not in actual possession of my watch until 1973, when John was already going to be turning twenty-three. First hook off for Father.

Then it all started with me. I bought my own Rolex. I had it at sixteen. Didn't really need another one at twenty-one.

Then Jim. Well, he GOT a Rolex at twenty-one. Then Mother. (If you put Toni in there, she was second, but, she's not, we're not and who's counting?) at age fifty. However, what happened with the middle son, Jerry?? He turned twenty-one in nineteen hundred and seventy four-he should have gotten a Rolex BEFORE Mother.

Well, you see, Jerry's first wife Marni had bought him a brand new Seiko gold tone date watch for his twenty-first birthday and Father was once again off the hook for a second

time. Feeling flush from his Jerry 'save' and knowing he had one "in hand" from MY previous purchase, Father decided to go "all-out" and get Mother the gold & steel model of "Date" (this is in steel and 14 Kt gold and it is thus designated "Date" rather than "Datejust") non-chronometer women's Rolex with Jubilee bracelet and "American" buckle.

Then, the Dry Cleaning business (another "side" business Dad had entered into for his sons that had grown a head of its' own) perpetually sucking sewer water, the rock and roll business waning, the oil and gas business boring, Father once again decided that when youngest brother Jay turned twenty one in 1981, he could ill afford to buy him a Rolex of the type he wanted.

What Jay was asking for was the mother of all Submariners of the day; the Rolex Submariner "Sea Dweller." This watch had just been updated to a third iteration when Jay turned 23 and he could wait no longer since he was a S.C.U.B.A. diver! So he bought himself one too.

In 1973, Rolex was still sold in several high end jewellers in Calgary and Mappin's was one of them. People's Credit Jeweller's had somehow amalgamated with this Eastern store and Mappin's was a relatively new player in our community, but they occupied the same physical stores in places. They were going through changes and as they did sales would take place often unannounced.

Jay had been visiting a very well-read man in the downtown store who would become the manager and move to the Chinook store later; his name was Mr. Doug Sinclair. Doug was a watchmaker by trade and would later have his own consultancy called "Tower Watch and Clock" which he operated from his home after retirement. He would do appraisal and minor repair work for me in the mid to late 1980's but certainly I had met him and knew him back then.

Quite unknown to me, Jay came home with a Sea Dweller and put it away without showing it to anyone for some time. As I learned recently, he had bought it "on sale" also, for 20% off of \$1,250.00 or \$1,000.00 ; not too bad for a watch that's into the low five figures today by most measures and certainly no reason to be embarrassed for purchasing it!

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Since Jay was my youngest brother and the last of the obligations for Father under the “Rolex-per-Son-at-Age-21” pledge he had made some decade or so earlier, Dad had ‘escaped’ with the purchase of only ONE watch for ONE son at age 21 and ONE watch for one wife at age 50. Two Rolex watches out of a potential six. Not bad! Since he really wasn’t much into watches himself, he never got one for himself so he bought only TWO Rolexes, total. I’m usually fairly happy with ANY deal for which I can get away with only shelling out one-third of it’s potential monetary damage! Dad was a darned GOOD accountant!

Oldest brother John, still without a Rolex in the mid-eighties, was relieved of that painful condition by sister-in-law Brenda who got him a Cosmograph Daytona manual winder for a gift. This watch, now a collector’s piece, is one of the models that’s currently pulling in prices in the low \$40,000.00’s on international websites. His is pristine; he hasn’t worn it since its’ last major service. He has all his original stuff.

To the best of my knowledge, Jerry, my middle brother, still doesn’t own (or care to own?) a Rolex as he approaches his sixtieth year. He has more sons than any of us at four, plus one daughter. If he has any aspirations, or if his kids do, they’d better get after it.

“David was trying to call you Jeff, did he reach you?” Ted asked me through my wired earpiece as I drove south toward my next afternoon appointment. Ted Smith had been speaking to me about something else entirely when he interjected.

“Yes. You know I wear a Rolex, right?” I asked Ted, who really didn’t care about watches.

“Who doesn’t?” he said in an almost smarmy manner.

“LOTS of people don’t...” I replied, going on; “Well, he’s been looking for one like the one I told him I’VE always wanted and now says he’s found one. He wants to ask me some questions about it.”

“Is he buying a Rolex now too? First you, then Torrey, then David. How much is this watch?” said Ted, who was a little concerned, since although we were all three kind of

'star' salesmen for him, he did have to sort through financial issues with us regularly. With me however, Ted seldom had problems and this had hit a bit of a nerve. I had my Rolex an entire decade before I met him; there seemed to be some implication that he had somehow helped 'yours truly' acquire expensive taste...

"He says he's found one for about \$4,500.00." I was referring to a steel and gold Submariner with blue dial and bezel insert, which would have normally been in the seven to eight thousand dollar range in the early nineteen nineties. Further, I was ignoring his self-serving remark and moving on with the point at hand, and he knew it...

"FOURTY-FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS!" yelled Edward G. Smith into my ear. "PLEASE TELL ME YOU WOULD NEVER PAY THAT MUCH FOR A WATCH! YOU'RE TOO SMART FOR THAT, AREN'T YOU?"

"ME?! NEVER TED!" I exclaimed back at him. Little did HE know...

"I bought my watch for \$220.00, remember? A very long time ago, remember?"

"Yah, that's what I told David" said Ted. Yes, sure it is, Ted.

David got the watch. I'm not sure what he paid in the end, but he's shrewd if nothing else. And he is definitely not nothing else!

David, whom Torrey had pursued when a sales manager in around 1985, was/is my brother Jerry's first wife Marni's little brother. I watched David grow up from the time he was in grade seven and I in grade ten.

In 1987, Torrey, David & I had gone 'rogue' and left 'the fold'. We started our own insurance and investment brokerage offices named "The Family Financial Planning Group Inc." We thrived, grew, reached fifteen agents, lasted three and a half years or so and did quite well.

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It was a brief stint but a learning experience that couldn't have been purchased if you'd been looking and you'd found a seller. I learned one thing for sure. PARTNERSHIPS, whether corporate or personal, usually simply DON'T WORK.

In 1990, I had gone back into 'the fold'; Torrey had abandoned the sinking ship with David in his jet stream earlier in the year. Both went to management offers with insurance companies, Torrey in Winnipeg, David first in Calgary then in several other cities including Edmonton. David is still in the financial services business like his father, Art, before him in British Columbia, but now on the big island.

Torrey went back to being a pilot in the early 1990's and has never re-entered the financial services industry. Though we seldom see David except at family extended gatherings such as funerals and weddings, we still see the Taves family socially.

Torrey replaced his GMT Master with a newer model GMT Master II but I am sceptical. Although Torrey has expensive taste, his standards are sometimes questionable. I'm not convinced, as Torrey travels the world in his occupation, that he didn't just pick up a fake on his journeys so he could meet the fatherly estate gifting deadline for his first son.

Since it's a sensitive issue I've never broached the subject. Surely Torrey would never expect to be able to fool ME...

Chapter Seven Rolex in the City by the Bay

“You know, Toni, it looks almost as if we could WALK to this place from here!” I said excitedly as I looked at the map of downtown San Francisco, California. The year was 1984. I had won “a bar-b-q and \$1,000.00 worth of steak dinners” in a sales contest. I had a bar-b-q. I did not eat steak dinners-neither did my family.

I remember having said, for about the third or fourth time to Ted Smith, “Could I please substitute the prize for something else?” when I had won this minor contest in early 1984. He said “Look, why don’t I just give you \$1,500.00 and you can do whatever you’d like?”

Thus, Toni & I were in San Francisco. We’ve been back. What a lovely city. One of the reasons it was picked, besides that, is that it had at that time the only “Official” Rolex Factory Authorised Certified Service Centre for the Western Region of the United States.

You see, about an entire year earlier, the “luminous dot” on my bezel had simply broken off. I could still see the broken end stuck in the hole. I was heartbroken, but never more so than when I was told that this was going to cost some two hundred dollars to replace the entire bezel insert AND, and this was the worst part, they couldn’t tell me how long it would take but they would have to send the watch away to Toronto! (Things are different now; a bezel insert costs around \$85.00 or so. The loss of Submariner

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luminous bezel dots is certainly not rare. Though it's been repaired twice on this watch since, in retrospect I'm not sure I was ever quoted the correct price!)

So, it remained unfixed. I had taken it to a number of different non-Rolux shops for opinions on how one might 'jimmy-rig' a repair until I could afford to fix it properly, but all were too intrusive and improper and certainly wouldn't do in the long run. Since I'd been told it wouldn't likely HURT anything to leave it a while, that's what I'd done. This was a 'last chance' scenario.

The building was old, red brick; a "high-rise" with the Rolex Western Regional Service Centre, USA, on the eighth floor if memory serves (and it may, for this issue, not). Even the elevators were old. Lots of brass. There were many frosted glass doors with black lettering, woodwork, old carpets. It was classy but old. As most old buildings with inadequate ventilation do, it smelled distinctly musty and very 'close'.

I entered the main glass door that said "Rolex Service Centre, Western Region" where a counter was placed not far inside. A white lab-coated service technician (because that's what his frock said) greeted me in a stern, businesslike manner. I approached him and took my watch off, placing it on the counter between us.

From the moment he uttered his first word I could tell he was European, probably German; "Hello. How can I help you?" he said, with absolute absence of emotion. It was as if he was on his guard; not very friendly. I noticed immediately that he, like many watchmakers I've met, was not wearing a watch. Likely hard to do such demandingly dexterous work encumbered by straps and bracelets, I've often said to myself.

"My Rolex is broken. It's been like this for a year or so. I've been reluctant to send it away to get it repaired. I don't know what it would take-is there any way that it could just have the luminous dot replaced without the whole bezel insert piece? That's kind of expensive. I don't have a lot of money. I called on the phone a couple of weeks ago. I'm from Canada. Did I talk to you?"

“OH, YES!” he said, now with an entirely different tone. “The gentleman who wants to see if I can do it for you quickly” said the technician, whose name, after all of these years, has sadly escaped me.

“I told you I would have to look at the watch” he said.

“And here it is...” I gestured, pushing it across the counter to his waiting hands.

“I’m glad you could make it!” he welcomed. “Are you staying in San Francisco long?”

“Just five days...” I said in an anticipatory way, hoping he would deliver an acceptable verdict. I had not come all this way just to see this incredible, historic and beautiful city (that just made this trip justifiable. After all, what twenty nine year old heavily indebted husband and father of three big sons with ravenous appetites and ever increasing clothing and school needs could account logically for a trip to another country to fix his Rolex so he didn’t have to send it away and be without it for any time at all, in unfamiliar places and hands!?)

Oh my LORD do I digress at times.

“How long do you have right now?” he asked in a matter-of-fact manner reminiscent of an old friend asking if he could just take a minute to change his clothes before we go to lunch.

“I have about an hour right now. My wife is downstairs walking around the shops out on the front street. I really just came to see if I needed to leave it with you for a day or two and I could come back in a few days and pick it up. Do you think it needs a whole new bezel insert?” I said, wondering what this obviously well schooled and worldly experienced horologist had whirring around in the cogs and gears of his clock...

“Can you leave it with me for about an hour?” he said in what I could now tell was a Swiss-German accent. I was certainly interested in hearing what he could do for her in an hour. I said “Are you just going to look at it?”

“For an hour? I like food, but I’ve almost finished my lunch already.”

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he said with a widening grin, the first time I'd seen any teeth in his mouth. "I was planning on repairing the watch!"

"But, how much will it cost? Will you have to replace the bezel insert? What is involved?" I fired off with increasing urgency and rapidity, as if to indicate that although interested, I was clearly concerned that the job would be done properly as well as affordably.

"A new bezel insert won't be necessary. I can get the broken stem out and replace the luminous dot. It is a pressure fit, but if you want it fast and you want it to last I can give it some legal and legitimate 'help'." He said this in an almost caring and apologetic manner. I was now beginning to detect some feeling from this analytical and detail-oriented, studied craftsman; he was finally revealing, through his mannerisms and speech patterns, the way he had softened the tone and timbre of his voice, the inflections at the ends of his sentences, as if inviting me to participate in the discussion. This was a man who was trying to gain my trust. Through years of experience, he had detected that I was obviously nervous. It was NOT what he at first had suspected—a rich kid with rich parents using a trip to the city on the bay in another country to maybe score a new Rolex, maybe fix his old one, maybe...

"How much will it cost?" I said with hesitation in my voice. To do things slowly usually cost a lot for a Rolex. To do them FAST...

I had brought \$400.00 with me expecting to have to replace the bezel insert and considering the exchange and thinking a rush job might take 3 or 4 days, not an HOUR!!...

"I think \$80.00 will do it" he said.

"EIGHTY DOLLARS?!" I blurted out loudly too close to this gracious man's face for even my own comfort!

"I know this is San Francisco, but what have you been having for lunch?" I asked facetiously. "How can you possibly do it for that?"

"I could charge you more!" he shot back almost before the 'that' stopped.

"No, that's GREAT!!" I said. "Do you want the money now?"

"Not necessary. Go find your wife and have lunch. Don't rush. See some things. I'm here until four-thirty. Usually even later. Come back, take a look pay then."

"I'll be back at around 1:30 P.M. if it's all the same to you?" I partially said in an asking way, since I didn't want to rush him, but I wanted my watch back.

"Jeff...it's O.K. to call you Jeff?..I will not say the words 'Trust Me.' My father said to never trust someone who says that to you right after you just meet them. But please, I work here. You have a receipt. This is a Rolex depot. I have a dozen or more of these in the back right now. Please, relax, enjoy the sights, your wife, your trip. Let me do my job. The longer you leave it the better it is. It is in very good hands. I like to test the watch afterward and the more time the better. Now go."

Another lesson learned and remembered and still being refined to this day. And another fine teacher and salesman.

Chapter Eight *Formative Days*

University was hard. This is the most all-encompassing and aptly descriptive word I can use. There are many very bright and some incredibly brilliant people there. Much more so than I could ever hope to be. My major, at our institution declared after the completion of the first year, was 'Astrophysics'. The second time I went (I went first in 1973 but dropped out due to emotional overload; it's a long story...), in 1976 (when I was still 20) I decided due mostly to 'peer pressure' to 'minor' in 'Nuclear Physics'. This is what my transcript shows. I fell short of second class honours overall by less than 2/10ths of a GPA (Grade Point Average). When I graduated, my wife Toni and I had two children, a mortgage, a car payment, etc. In short, we had all the responsibilities of a full blown family and had for many years already. The people I graduated with, and there were precious few in this particular field, well, they were all students. Even the only other one who was also married and had two kids, lived first in fully paid for rental accommodations, then in private married quarters on campus, then in half a duplex which his wife's parents paid for. No jealousy or envy or hindsight-remorse or anything like that is intended as the point here. Really, I just wish to give the reader some insight into how absolutely crazy I must have been to have done what I did. Why the hell did I not take engineering or something with which I could have obtained a high paying job quickly??

Many times I have been told I should have gone into medicine, but...digression...

Anyway, university certainly had one thing: an absolute and abominable dearth of **watch** anything. Not that I had time for anything more than scrubbing and polishing my own Rolex with the insane work load, fatherhood, husbandly duties, martial arts, dry cleaning work, etc.

About once a week there was a lady with tables who would set up in McEwan Hall outside the entrance to the lunch cafeteria. At first it was coincidental, but after I knew her schedule I tried to come in when she might be there to look at her selection of gold and silver jewellery and other trinkets. (Of course it also depended on whether I had any money to eat or drink anything that day-it was a balancing act.) Many were hand made but she had some imported pieces and others she bought from different suppliers. She seemed to be the only one that ever knowingly commented on my watch.

"I see you here quite a lot. Are you interested in anything special?" she asked about the third or fourth time I made it to the front of the pack to see her stuff closely.

I need a chain to hang an 'Italian Good Luck Horn' on" I said, adding "it's gold in colour"

"How big?" she said motioning with her fingers pinched at the end of an outstretched arm.

"That's the thing. It's fairly big." I said holding mine out with an indication of about five centimetres in length. "I don't want a dainty little chain or a great big chunky one but I'd like it big enough to possibly put something else on it as well."

"I think what you want is a 'box link' chain. They are very strong for their size and are not all that expensive either. Not that that's a problem, is it?" she hazarded.

I looked at her with a raised right eyebrow. I said "It isn't!?"

She said "That's a pretty nice watch..."

This was way before Arsenio Hall. Mmmmmmm...

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“Look, I have a wife and a child and two jobs and a very heavy course load and no money...I don't know what my watch has to do with anything!”

“A Rolex, right? Expensive...” she observed. She was correct of course, but perception is a deceptive mistress. If she only knew. She would come to know over the course of a couple of years. I ended up getting that chain (yah, you guessed it) and a number of things for my beloved (same). I only ever knew that lady by a first name which I cannot recall, but she also allowed me to pay for these things over time without any interest.

Trust is the biggest and most important aspect of sales.

After graduation, within two weeks, since Alberta was in a ‘Boom’ at the time, I was offered a number of jobs without interviews. I had a job within one month of graduating, in the oil, gas and coal industry.

The job was particularly uneventful as far as my passion was concerned. Mostly I was stuck at a drafting table and in a machine and fabrication shop for a very small (comparatively for the era) wireline services company's vehicle to do downhole oil, gas and coal well logging. It was boring (no pun intended) and tedious work but interesting from a design aspect. Certainly, I learned a great deal about metals of all types. How they feel, cut, drill, melt, weld, solder, bend, shape, flatten. What most of them look like and even smell and taste like. What they do to your hands when you work with them. I learned how to weld using three different methods. Strengths and how metals interact and act together is also an area of interest to me. Which ones work best for what purposes. Which ones are naturally beautiful and which ones ugly (almost none!).

In Canada, at least in Western Canada, in 1982 the National Energy Program was all the buzz at the pop and coffee machines (water coolers of ‘yore, then replete with donuts!). For all the wrong reasons. Like so many things (make that ALL things) national in Canada, it means something which has been concocted in the hallowed halls and towers of the great Eastern cities of ‘lore to be foisted on the West to take

away their prosperity and perceived God-given good fortune-the obviously free falling 'manna from the heavens' of proverb and song (French, likely). Far from obvious, for it is virtually never flaunted or worn on their sleeves, the fortunes of western Canadian energy industry entrepreneurs is won on the backs of long fought toil and sweat filled battle in the fields, wells, pits, mines, tailings ponds and pipelines of many very hard working and almost silently stoic upper middle class working folks in the Western provinces. Many have made their new homes here in the last fifteen or twenty years having completely uprooted their families for a better life out west. Many of them have found it.

The Liberal government of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, certainly the most PASSIONATE of Canadian prime ministers I can remember in my lifetime and perhaps ever, had put the brakes on the BOOM and turned it into a BUST faster than a speeding 45 magnum bullet. We (corporate Alberta) didn't even have a chance to blink let alone change course or strategy to adapt to these new 'rules'. What it meant for me, as well as a virtual province full of energy related industries, was no more work or jobs.

This has been a historical pattern in Western Canada since there have been non-indigenous, non-connate, freshly incarnate Western settlers in this land, especially European and especially French. For some reason, if there is money being made west of the Quebec border, somehow the federal government will figure out how to take away a chunk of the profit and exercise their disgusting, predictable pitiful rapine. If the government is Liberal and that action is taking place west of the Ontario border they will leave virtually nothing for the western survivors who brave on there after the mass exodus.

This has happened historically a number of times with a number of scenarios specifically but the generalities are always the same and Western Canadians, the real ones, know them well. However, this is a book about a different subject although the tone of the tome needs some background at times; I will politicise no more here. Suffice to say this marked a juncture in my life (and the lives of many others in these parts...oh, the stories to be tapped!!) requiring swift and narrowly focused redirection.

As it happens, quite coincidentally, I had enrolled in a three day 'weekend business seminar' which started the day after my last day of work, about how to start your own small business and make money in a few quick and easy steps which I could really ill

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afford to go to but needed more than ever. Again, if not for the help of family and friends it would not have been possible. My brother Jim gave me his credit card to pay for the course. Though I paid him back two weeks later I will never be able to repay the benefits derived from

the gesture overall.

The course was not all that helpful as would be proven over time but the people met and relationships make such things worthwhile. One individual stands out. He was a 'banker' from Toronto who had never been west before and was taking this course at the behest of his banker father in order to learn more about potential small business clients for banks. The first time he saw me I could tell he knew how much my suit was worth, what type of shoes I was wearing and above all what was on my wrist. This was before I had made any money and the watch was out of place.

We were at the first break of the first day and he sauntered over to me after spending a few minutes with each of the two best looking women in the room.

"Is that a Sub.?" he asked with nonchalance.

"Yes..." said I, expecting more as always. "Are you familiar with the Rolex?"

"I have one just like yours except with a date." he said, now more engaged. "Dad said it stays home while I'm out here."

"Doesn't trust you?" I asked while trying to manoeuvre into a position which would allow me a view of what was on his wrist. Unsuccessful.

“Guess not. Got it for my 21st birthday. Best to leave it there anyway; I don’t like to have to explain where it is all the time. Besides, my being here is a bit of pedagogy for recent personal transgressions.” He didn’t elaborate and I’m not sure I needed him to. I would find out I didn’t.

“Do you like to socialise?” he asked matter-of-factly, “I got to Calgary last night, am staying in this very Hotel and know really few people here. I have a couple of friends and relatives here but haven’t reached them. Wanna go out after the class?”

“I would most assuredly have to discuss that with my boss...” I trailed off, as the session was beginning and there would be more time for discussion later.

And so, yet another conversation with a stranger started with my Rolex. I simply have lost count of them over the years. This one led to one significant thing that had to do more with my impetuosity than the watch’s lack of, or possession of any special characteristic, as would be learned. This fellow did get hold of some friends and relatives and we did go out for a drink. Of course, I don’t drink. So we went to his cousin’s friend’s place for a little homier atmosphere. One thing led to another and as luck would have it one of these guys who had had a bit too much to drink noticed my Submariner and a slightly altered and undesired (on my part, at any rate) conversation ensued:

“Is that one of those fake Rolex’s?” one of the attendees of this ersatz fete slurred, while leaning over my seated friend in front of his standing, wobbling, dripping self, almost dousing my friend with his beer. I cringed at the thought of ‘getting into it’ with this obviously semi-inebriated poor fellow. Worse was the embarrassment he seemed to be bestowing on his compatriots, especially his by-now somewhat reddish, also sort-of cringing significant other, who was partially hiding behind her girlfriend and also her own hand. It seemed as if she knew I was about to shut this guy down and that this was no fake.

I said “Let me see your watch.” I was calm, almost serene. Maybe too calm

He slowly took off his, well I don’t recall just what it was, and it doesn’t much matter because it wasn’t to be long for this world; he handed it to me. I took it in a studied and

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courteous manner. I looked closely at the dial to see if it was a 'ticker' or a 'clicker'-one way to tell whether watches are electric/analog or mechanical movements throughout. I didn't really care. I had PRESAGED this outcome, surely, by my cool-as-a-cucumber demeanour!

I tossed the watch, underhand but good and hard, at the nearest solid wall.

Parts flew helter-skelter and willy-nilly. The watch was definitely deceased. The bracelet, what was left of it, was attached now at only one end of the watch case with one spring-pin.

There was a pained but increasingly angry look on my newly minted enemy's face.

I obligingly, and without a further word, removed my Passion from my left wrist.

With a deft toss, I let her fly over my right knee in the same general direction as the first throw, with the same theatrical gusto if not the same force.

My Passion hit the wall HARD. She fell to the floor in a heap. It was not a SOFT thud with which her mass hit the hard linoleum of the basement suite's cheap flooring but when I lifted her into my hand she was in ONE piece and she was TICKING!

I won the battle.

I never saw that guy again after that week nor did I care to...but the lesson learned began when, several months later, I awoke to my watch having stopped ticking in the night. An inspection showed that some minute particles had become dislodged from whatever pieces of the mechanism they originated on and travelled through the voids in the watch-works and the lubricants to become re-lodged in the gears and/or the pivots of the wheels and axles. There had been enough interference to stop the wheels from turning and the watch, thus, from ticking. The watchmaker said that the particles were simply the byproducts of mechanical 'wear-and-tear'-of the daily running of a watch's inner mechanism. He had seen it many times. No shocker at all.

His exact words, I recall, were: "Even Rolex's break now and then." Well, that may be so, but in my experience that happens way less often than more often. I would certainly know.

The 'repair', as it were, was less than twenty dollars as I recall. Just a little compressed air and re-lubrication, but it was essentially a new watch again as it always is after a Rolex Official Factory Authorised and Warrantied (generally for 1 or 2 full years on what they've done, except stuff that's longer) Service. This was just a tune up, as the watch had just had its' full service a couple of years prior and they surmised that the watch was (and is) in pristine condition.

This is much more than a service in that traditional sense. This will be alluded to further in other sections of this book but suffice here to say that the Rolex Certified Factory Service is as important as the watch's themselves. Each watch is completely disassembled, partly to check each piece for wear and damage and partially to clean them all thoroughly before examination, adjustment and exacting, meticulous re-assembly.

I'm no watchmaker, mechanic, smith, technician, designer, or anything else with formal training or education in this field. By the strict definition of a "horologer" or one who "studies time and the measurement of time", I have been one all my life. A more open definition of the word has it encompass the art of 'making' clocks and watches, but a horologer never really even has to have seen or conceived of a watch or a clock! Indeed the study and measurement of time is a thought experiment, nothing more nothing less.

At university in second year astrophysics laboratory called "Modern Physics", we did a lab experiment called "The Equation of Time." It was AWESOME. It required that we break up into 'teams' of two or three and construct devices to allow us to record the travel of the sun across the sky at a specific time each day for as long as possible, meaning as many months as we could squeeze in before the end of the semester in the spring (this started in September, a full year course ending in April). The array of devices the teams came up with was extraordinary. I only wish I had pictures! They all had devised a machine of sorts to field some concise and accurate manner of recording, with a simple pencil mark made at the exact same time each day several days per week, the position of a projection of the sun's actual disk onto a paper recording sheet on their device (Note that this is a GROSS generalisation. Some devices even used photosensitive

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cells to record the light track!). This allowed the observers, over time, to trace the motion of the sun described in the sky onto a piece of paper!

With this information so recorded, one can very carefully and accurately measure this inscribed graphic shape and reduce this shape algebraically to determine exactly what mathematical “equation” is described by this motion! The graphic shape referred to is a ‘figure eight’ with a larger loop at the top and smaller at the bottom so it’s elongated and distorted when viewed from the south looking north extrapolated over the whole year at this latitude. This figure of eight can, of course, be described precisely with algebra. It is called an “analemma” curve. This algebraic equation, so formulated with empirical, observational data from evidence compiled using the proper “scientific method”, is named “The Equation of Time.” Indeed, more accurately and precisely, it is the relationship between the ‘apparent’ noon time (at which time the Sun is on the meridian of longitude of that place every day) and the ‘mean’ time (the time shown by the clock). By applying the amount of this ‘correction’ for any given day as compared to the ‘mean noon line’ on the day, the ‘correct’ time at that moment on that day can then be determined. Pretty cool, eh?

I’m not a pilot, but I do possess a more than in depth understanding of TIME and it’s basic measurement. This is why the Greenwich Meridian of Longitude, or the Prime Meridian, and Greenwich Mean Time, the namesake of the GMT Master means so much to me, and why I have a 16713 (1993 manufacture, ‘pristine’ condition) daily wearer. Of course, it’s a GMT Master II...

This particular experiment, of the many done over the courses taken at university in many subjects, made the most sense of all to me. It graphically illustrated what was happening with our heavenly bodies and why we tell time the way we do. And it made me appreciate all the more what a fantastic accomplishment the keeping of time by a collection of whirring springs, gears, levers and wheels in a little metal (or plastic, or any number of materials) case on your wrist is!

Chapter Nine Changing Times

May 10, 2011 was a sad day for me. This was the day I found out for certain, from the proverbial 'horses mouth'...my big brother had sold his pride and joy.

He found a buyer in the United States that fell in love with his Daytona Cosmograph. This fellow paid a cool \$28,000.00 (or even more; I really have no absolute here; it's a closely guarded family secret, you know) U.S. dollars - pretty good for a watch for which his wife (my sister-in-law) paid only a very small fraction in the mid nineteen-eighties. Hell, it's excellent. More than twelve times as much.

There was indeed emotional attachment no matter what was said and it was heavy. Hate to admit it, but though slight, even I had some attachment to this watch, having taken it in for its cleanings and adjustments on many occasions for him as it was often difficult (read impossible!) for him to get it there. Besides, I was going anyway.

Someone in Texas, apparently a dealer or collector, had procured a very good buy on this watch. He knew it so well the money had been wire transferred to their account within a few hours of them agreeing and apparently before the watch was sent to the buyer. The astute chap likely made his own \$10,000.00 plus profit from a potential buyer in Dubai or some such place before he even made the deal (of course this is all bitter speculation borne of disappointment). He was aware of his potential additional upside.

Many iterations of this particular model of Rolex, with its manually wound movement and non-screw-down push buttons for the stopwatch functions and resets, have become so

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highly sought after that prices commanded on world markets have become totally disproportional. These models simply would not sell when first introduced into these markets, nor for many years afterward.

The now well known example of the “Albino” Daytona that once belonged to the legendary “Old Slow Hand” Eric Clapton, the famous rock and roll guitarist (remember Cream?) and a contemporary of many of us, is an excellent example of what has occurred, though an unfair one given its’ particular pedigree. When it sold at auction for just over \$505,000.00 it was the highest price paid at auction for ANY Rolex to that date! Revealing...there is a lot to know about that deal! Certainly, that price point has been eclipsed now by an early precursor of this very type of wristwatch-a chronograph chronometer.

Though I always liked the idea of a stop watch inside my wristwatch, or complications in the far broader sense of the terminology, my big brother’s (the reader may have gathered he doesn’t want me talking about him) Cosmograph Daytona just never seemed quite robust enough for me. It was almost dainty compared to my Sub. Compared to Jay’s Sea Dweller, it looked like a toy and compared to today’s “Sea Dweller Deep Sea” it is positively mid-sized. However, it was a real Rolex, perhaps the realest of all that we had in our midst, and the most expensive by almost double, even back then. But also back then, family dynamics were very different and big bro. and I who are now somewhat closer were much less so then. The Cosmograph was trapped in the centre of a clan of relative watch ignorers not lovers. I really didn’t even get to see it until I finally got to insure it a little while after it was finally brought to light within the greater family (these are big secrets-they are expensive so nobody wants to let-on they have this kind of buying power. This secrecy has extended to my brother’s reticence to be included in this book). So whenever anyone got another Rolex it seemed to remain a secret for a while, sometimes years, until somehow the news got leaked and the cat got out of the proverbial bag, or the crap hit the fan, or...or something like that...(I guess one might question this particular familial “closeness” after all...)

Yes, somehow the Rolex legacy has continued in our extended family even with the myriad resistances and pitfalls encountered...

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I did ask his youngest son if he likes watches...his unfortunate but somewhat predictable response was "Yes..."I really didn't know what to say to him and I don't know whether to ask HIS big brother and my eldest nephew, big brother's eldest son , whom I'm pretty close to also (sheesh...)

The youngest nephew has three girls. Even the eldest and his wife have two girls now. That makes for an astonishing total of five granddaughters and no grandsons for my eldest brother and sister-in-law so far and it's conceivable, even very likely that there will be no more of either sex after the last baby.

We'll just have to work on getting them more Rolexes I guess. The many, many girls in that family...they are overrun with girls, so since this seems to be a mostly male thing so far, maybe they'll be spared somewhat, that is until some Creasey GIRL stuck on Rolexes comes along down the road sometime. It won't be MY direct progeny, that's clear.

If I can help in any productive way I'll do my best. The fact that he ever had a Rolex at all (or even the idea to have or get one) is sufficient testament to the help I have perhaps already been. What I think is best is if I simply be a good brother, watch his back whenever possible and maybe keep my eyes open for another Rolex. Or maybe not...oh, well.

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Definitely NOT my brother's Cosmograph "DAYTONA"
From The Norbert Brinkhaus Collection

Chapter Ten Rolex Magnetism

When I leave the house just about any time of the day without my watch on, I know in short order and I'm going to go back for it. I'll explain. It hasn't happened often but it happened the day I went out to buy some new toilets at the local Home Depot. It was a busy day, I was dirty and tired, my 16713 was on a winder on my desk and I had taken off my work watch to wash the filthy thing. My intent was to put it back in the pouch, that in my "Murse (Man Purse)," followed by the usual 'Rolex Draping Ritual.'

Okay. I'll tell you about this brother Jay conceived logical (and usefully practical) method of putting a bracelet attached wristwatch onto your wrist and over the hand with the very least likelihood of additionally stressing the metal and stretching it unnecessarily, but maybe later. I want to also interject here that this additional elaboration is true and was not originally intended to be an inclusion in this book. The long winded explanation was thought necessary because my friend "Bob" still couldn't understand this chapter after several slighter revisions.

I'm usually quite punctual or I at least notify of impending tardiness, but if a long time is expected to elapse, I will try to reschedule. Additionally, I am very mindful of other extant conversations. Oh, that others were as respectful of my time.

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This very day, in order to block an attempt to monopolise the attention of another with whom I was already conversing, I started a conversation with a complete stranger over her Rolex (a pristine 19 year old gold & steel Datejust with fluted bezel, Jubilee bracelet with brushed all-steel buckle and polished sides, a white dial with gold gilt crown at twelve plus Roman numeral markers and gilt lettering; her husband, I learned five minutes later, had a men's version of the identically featured watch). She must have been around my age, but obviously was eminently more sophisticated and "upper crust", if you will.

With such a nice watch on, you'd think she would be more mindful of time in general if not that of others. I must have been either invisible or looking suspiciously like I was collaborating with the clerk on the computer rather than being tended to by her. This lady was preparing to "butt in" unceremoniously as if I was simply not there. But I used the opportunity and the Rolex watches in our presence to thwart the attempt.

When he came up, essentially at the end of a rather long interchange between his wife, the store clerk Caroline, and myself, I'm quite sure he had suspicions from his tenor, his demeanour, his facial expression and his breathing patterns, that he was on the possible brink of losing his wife, his watch, their watches, their wallets, none of the above, all of the above, or worse!

But when we parted, we were almost fast friends! We had discovered common friendships, acquaintances and interests. They knew I was writing this book.

This all happened in under five minutes! Because of a watch!

Here I will spell it out for Bob (you know who you are).

I liked her watch, is all. That's why the conversation started; that and her obvious disregard for the very thing this lovely timepiece was designed for, that is to keep us punctual. She was using MY time with impunity.

This watch, however, the Rolex watch, most often speaks volumes about its wearer! How much has been written, is understood intrinsically, about the people who wear the Rolex

brand? A great deal, I dare say, most of it better and more than I could ever assume to be able to. These things cost money!

Everyone knows. They cost a lot of money-more than most people would ever pay for a watch. If you can wear a real Rolex on your wrist and pay your bills month after month and keep your house and stuff and not ever think about having to sell your watch...on a little larger scale, if other members of your family also wear these mysteriously costly but mystically desirable watches without undue stress or hardship on your lifestyles, well...you must be doing something right...

Also on this very same day, first thing in the morning as it turns out, I ended a conversation with another person, the first meeting ever with her; she was not a complete stranger...

We had a pleasant conversation (hopefully to be continued!). At almost the very end of our meeting we were discussing the details of how our next meeting was going to happen. I suggested that, since I am an author and write a lot of stuff about my life in my works, I should simply e-mail her book manuscripts to date and it would provide her with a quick overview and at least some cursory insight.

Then the fateful question; "What do you write about?"

This always elicits a conversation in and of itself and to truncate this I referred directly to the present writings...

"Ooooooo...I love Rolex watches..." came the dreamy reply from the doctor. "Well, that is I have a Rolex watch that I got for my 21st (? I think, I missed this because of a random noise) birthday, and I don't wear it..."

"I collect Rolex's..." I said as I showed her mine, the 16713 I was wearing, for the first time.

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“Oh, now THAT’s a PRETTY watch...” she spoke almost right into my watch like a microphone as it was directly in front of her face.

This story continues...for Bob, if you were talking about this story, you are clearly nothing more than a bit of a pervert in sheep’s clothing...oh, SORRY, did I say pervert? You surely remember our little discussion about pens and swords, don’t you Bob. Perhaps not entirely a criticism directed solely at you, Robert...

I’m emailing this to her now, as it’s 04:21 and I’d like to catch at least an hour or two’s sleep today. I hope she reads it...

Yes, I got my couple of hours ‘catnap’ and sent the copy. And so much more-I even made a coffee. Talked to my regular doctor. Lots.

There have been some ‘monsters’ created in this whole endeavour also. ‘WATCH MONSTERS’. I am one, obviously. However, some are FAR worse than I am (the degrees are astonishing....look on the internet. One Hong Kong collector’s picture of his extremely large fish bowl literally overflowing with specifically, Rolex Submariner Sea Dwellers of all assortments, ages, all serviced and running perfectly, all in good to pristine condition...sheesh!!) And this does create other issues. Like, where does one keep so many high end, expensive, desirable timepieces? They cannot (or should not) really be kept under one’s bed. Safes, alarm systems, insurance ‘Personal Articles Floaters’; all necessary and sometimes complex areas of concern for the collector of anything of any value, let alone things that are expensive, desirable, easily converted and marketable, imminently portable and transportable...

A solution which is hard to thwart and one that I’ve always practiced, is to have a larger number of very safe places to keep things. A thing cannot be quickly and easily taken if a thing cannot be found. Interestingly, my system is so complex that I, myself often don’t know exactly where any given piece is at any given time...a puzzle in need of the principles of Heisenberg to break the code of location. Yes, well I, am a trained, degreed undergraduate astrophysicist (with a minor in nuclear physics; I could booby trap the damn things too! I suppose that would be cruel)...

Another issue is the age-old one that accompanies almost all mechanical machinery, especially that constructed primarily of metal. If it is designed to have moving parts in normal, functional operation, then it should be moved regularly (or at very least every so often) in order for this very normal function (for which it is specifically designed) to remain optimally functional. Life's little "Catch 22", if you will. There have evolved many possible solutions for this too, again none of which I am particularly enamoured. Another subject which is ongoing and needs revisiting. Jim Dawes likes to call many of these solutions "Toys for Big Boys". Hell, Jim calls almost all of the wares he deals with toys for big somebody...

Rolex watches often find me too; it is not always the other way around.

I've found that when the subject of watches comes up in any way whatsoever within earshot, the subtopic of Rolex watches is close to follow. This happens anywhere in the world that I may find myself in said circumstances. It's awesome, really. So easy to strike up a conversation with complete strangers. Anywhere. In virtually any language. Believe me it's happened and many more times than once. As an example, a conversation ensued with a swiss convention waiter in a hotel restaurant in Montreux, Switzerland, who happened to be wearing a 5513 just like my Passion.

In my earlier years I would not travel with a real Rolex on my wrist; too dangerous. This never stopped me from noticing them on the wrists of others though. It struck even me, with so varied a background as my own, as rather odd that someone with such a job would wear such a watch. It's funny how our preconceived prejudices and notions taint our views of reality. My thought was "How could a waiter afford a Rolex?"

Well, this waiter, I found out after a brief conversation, as with virtually all hoteliers, waiters and service industry professionals in Switzerland had advanced post-secondary education in the field. He spoke, wrote, understood and read five languages fluently and brought in an almost princely sum compared to similar employment in Canada. However, his Rolex came from his father! Surprisingly, it was not because he lived in Switzerland-my research showed that at the time (1987 and again in 1993) Rolex watches were MORE expensive in their native country than across the sea in my own home town by about 8%!

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Toni's half sister Marie lives in Ontario. She is very close considering they only met in their middle life and they live so far apart physically. We had known Marie and her husband Al a long time before the subject of Rolex watches arose. To my surprise Al has a Rolex also. It had been neglected for a very long time but after a while of talking about these things in passing, one year Al volunteered that he was going to dig his watch out to "finally" have it looked at by a professional. He wanted to see what it needed so that he could wear it again. I'm in the process of following up with him to check the progress of that project. He had the watch entirely reconditioned recently but it had no bracelet. I've sent him a new, perfect leather strap. Steel bracelets which are "period-correct" are scarce. It came with one which has disappeared into the abyss and the search is on. We'll see what happens...

I've known Michael Schroeder since Grade Seven. He and his twin brother Tom became extremely close to my brother Jerry and I quickly and remained so through high school and into university. Both of them majored in physics there as did both Jerry and I together initially. Michael achieved a Master's degree in Physics; Tom went in an entirely different way and took divinity after his undergraduate degree. Toni and I are still acquainted with Michael and his family and we see them on occasion. Since Michael and I had known each other forever he certainly knew full well that I had the watch I wore and all about the many Rolex watch nuts that had come into existence since. He did not really ever indicate an inordinate desire to own a Rolex; I don't ever recall him speaking to me about them with any real interest or at any length. Imagine my surprise (and delight!) when out of 'left field' Michael phoned me with a request one day about seven or eight years ago.

"Jeff, do you think it would be possible for you to go with me down to the Rolex dealer to look at watches with me? I've decided it's time for me to get one for myself..." Mike said in a sort of formal way considering how long we've been close.

"Well, yes, of course. You know I'd love to do that! Do you have anything particular in mind? I mean, do you know what you'd like to have?" I said with building excitement.

"I've always loved your GMT Master" he said without missing a beat. He'd given this a lot of thought, I could now tell. Way more than I ever imagined he would have. But why

would I ever have thought differently? This fellow was and is one of the deepest of deep thinkers I've ever known. He is one of the brilliant people I spoke of.

"I'd like it with an all black bezel though. Although I like the looks of yours with the red and black, I really love the way the Submariners look with the all black bezel but want the additional functionality of the 24 hour hand."

"Mike, let me call them and see if they have what your looking for in stock. If not I could ask them to get one in. The trip won't be unproductive then."

The arrangements were made and we met at the premises of Brinkhaus Jewellers after hours where my good friend Michael was given both preferential service and price on the wrist adornment of his dreams; a 16710 with the new improved "TripLock" winding crown of the Submariner class (a massive improvement) and a black bezel insert. It looks classic! I know he was and is pleased with his decision though I haven't discussed the whole issue any further with him. He is very considered however and never makes a move without first seeming to know all probable outcomes. Like a good physicist.

Certainly Michael was and is one of the most meaningful, perhaps mostly because of the complete surprise this was to me, of the converts in my circle of influence. He had been exposed possibly almost the longest to this obsession of mine and had never really given any sort of indication that he was developing the type of fondness that would grow this way. To develop a yearning that manifests ultimately in parting with very large sums of money in what the vast majority of others would consider an entirely illogical and unreasonably unjustifiable manner.

Now, let us be perfectly clear here. Most of these individuals are very intelligent, reasonable, logical, practical; successful in their OWN RIGHT. Kind of makes you think that WE (watch, especially Rolex nuts) know something that YOU don't know, HHHHHMMMMM?? Though I've encountered a surprising number of unlikely individuals who seem to have, or think they have a Rolex watch somewhere in their family's midst from a time in their past, (and some of these people have actually produced them to show me!), another large number have made huge sacrifices just for the almost initially surreal experience of buying your own first Rolex wristwatch (or, I'm told, receiving one as a gift, the most common arrangement I've come to realise).

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Yes, he is a big catch for my master mission of wiping out crappy timepieces while simultaneously instilling and nurturing a love for fine ones. He is by no means alone in this however.



Chapter Eleven The Blue Auction

To my eye, the most pleasing combination of colours, shapes, curves, geometry and sheer overall design prowess must belong to the Rolex Submariner Date in Rolesor with Lapis Lazuli dial and blue coloured bezel insert. This is a truly lovely watch. Around seven or eight years ago after looking for many years for this exquisite timepiece one was finally located in an unreserved auction at a government customs brokerage clearing house through a newspaper add. It was only curiosity at first, but I decided it would be a good excuse for a Saturday morning motorcycle ride.

The organisations that do this work seem frequently to be near airports as goods are purportedly intercepted by the customs inspectors when duties, tariffs and/or taxes are unpaid by the sender or intended recipient, or when something else may be amiss. They often have some very interesting offerings. Why anyone would go to the trouble of getting a watch this far and not consummating the deal is beyond my belief, frankly. It boggles the mind. Especially a watch as exclusive as this one. There simply MUST be some 'funny business', as Mom would say, involved...

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My intent was to arrive at the customs brokerage a little early; a good idea for a chance to examine these wares more closely. It was getting more overcast as I wheeled into the parking area on my cruiser and found a good place to park for an early and quick exit. The lot was much more crowded than I had expected and I was not my intended kind of early, as far as all of the cars indicated. This was a surprise to me. Did this portend unforeseen issues?

It was not until I got registered for the auction and made my way into the main hall where the viewings and eventual auction would happen that I began to realise that people were standing back a little from me. I had taken a shower before coming and had not ridden behind any hog, cattle or chicken transports, nor had I ridden through a landfill. I could not detect, upon more intent awareness any sort of deleterious odour, anything amiss, nor could I see anything visibly apparent when I looked for such in the mirror, front and back, in the washroom. No toilet paper stuck to my boots or hanging from my waistband behind me like a long white contrasting tail on my black outfit. All I could surmise is that people were taken aback by the full set of head to toe riding leathers and full face helmet I was sporting. It WAS the only bike in the lot, but MY GOD!

Upon getting to the Rolex display at the viewing area there were only three lots of Rolex watches two of which were of little interest to me at the time. I looked at them briefly as ALL Rolex watches (maybe ALL watches!) have at least some redeeming features and qualities. However I was growing increasingly impatient with the young couple in front of me with their loud demeanour and obvious, (by their too loudly delivered and easily overheard inaccurately described play by play of the next watch's features) inadequate knowledge of watches, auctions and what the heck they were doing here. It was at that point likely mainly for the entertainment but I could tell somehow they had come prepared for the unexpected or perhaps just some thrills.

The line was moving more quickly then and my darting, anxious eyes fell upon the prize the newspaper ad had promised...the fabled "Lapis Lazuli"-the intense rich, deep azure the likes of which I have not seen since and hadn't before that, gleaming it's sapphire allure through the case wantonly (yes, watches CAN apparently seem wanton to men)...My thought was that it would make a lovely addition to the collection but I'd

been to auctions before. In a single word: unpredictable. I knew my limit for this watch and had firm principles. I STILL have firm principles. I would not go over \$6000.00 for this watch though I knew full well it was worth considerably more. But therein lies the point, you see.

This was only in the early 2000's and this was what looked like a new 16613 which had replaced the 16803. It had a new, solid bracelet (but I don't recall it having solid end links!-I'm checking on this) and had literally never been worn or even touched much. All original stickers, plastic film coverings, bezel protector for shipping, seals and holograms...all intact and present. I didn't understand how this watch could have even survived with these sorts of circumstances. To the best of my knowledge, most of these Lapis dials were phased out in the early 1990's. How was this still a new watch? Though I held it in my hands for a minute or two the most they would let me do with it was set the time and wind it briefly. There were many in line and the auction attendant behind the cases knew less than nothing about what he was doing or why.

This particular iteration of the venerable Submariner is highly desirable and feverishly sought after by certain collectors. As with the other materials from which all Rolex parts are manufactured, only the very finest raw materials are selected, indeed invented for the purpose at hand.

Virtually all Rolex pieces and parts are produced from solid chunks of the raw material of choice. These dials are not silk-screened, painted or dyed blue. To manufacture these dials and others of similar materials, a very thin slice of Lapis stone is cut with a diamond cutting blade and glued onto a very thin metal dial disk. This is then polished with diamond powder. They are fragile and easily fractured and broken. A fall from average wrist height to a hard tile or concrete floor would apparently "send the dial to the heavens(!)" (as I was told by Rolex technician "T").

There is a much more comparatively ubiquitous (yet still scarce to the pre-owned market) version which is also essentially no more. The 16803 if found in good to excellent condition, is available with a manufactured blue dial and bezel insert. These are ALSO now virtually collector's pieces, though they are considered far more wearable than the "LL", "Lapis" or "L squared" (as I have nicknamed these Lapis Lazuli models) Submariners like the one I was there to view at the auction.

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Technically, Lapis, as it is known in the geological community, is a rock not a mineral, since it is an agglomeration of other various minerals. Primarily a mixture of Lazurite, Pyrite (the infamous “fool’s gold” of ‘yore), Calcite and Diopside, with included impurities of various small amounts of others, they are found in limestones of crystalline composition which have resulted from a process of geological rock formation known as “contact metamorphism”. Specific circumstances for the formation of a precious stone. Rarely encountered in nature, even the name “Lapis Lazuli” is thought to originate from a variety of words and languages: a number of words meaning “blue” such as “azure” which means “heaven”; Latin gives “lazulum” originating from Arabic “lazaward” and Persian “lashward”, both resulting in the “Lazuli”. Latin gives us “Lapis” meaning simply “stone” which for THIS stone (and as any Astrophysicist worth a penny would know) is named after it’s likeness to the heavens because of its’ COLOUR, a brilliant deep blue given off due to the Sulphur content of the Lazurite. Often it has veins, speckles, small flecks of yellow-gold from the Pyrite or even streaks of white from Calcite and others. Lapis is categorised as “semi-precious” as stones go...the deep colour and extreme durability are the key reasons it is sought, but there are many others. Mainly, it is UNIQUE. One of a kind. No two alike. Like PEOPLE. They have their own identity, personality (if the reader will allow the author this wide berth for poetic licence...).

This is what makes them so valuable, desirable, sought after. Indeed, so SCARCE!

[For the purposes of Rolex dials and bezel inserts, too many white inclusions of any type, but mainly streaks of light colours, are considered undesirable. \(Many thanks for much information additionally to Patricia Jean Martin, “The Magic of Rocks and Stones- Lapis Lazuli -2006”, Controversial.Com, et. al.\)](#)

Since this is not prose about geology I’ll elaborate further in this regard only as necessary and as it applies to the use of this beautiful substance in Rolex watches specifically. Mention is worthwhile in the interests of completeness of the use of this fine material in ritual, occult practice and folklore. From the excellent source above as well as a number

of others it is learned that the rock was used by kings as talismans and amulets and as a sharpening stone for swords as it was thought to render the sword bearer invincible and invulnerable in battle. It was used to fashion the seals used for documents throughout Persia and Assyria because of its' great qualities of endurance and hardness. It rates between a 5 and 5.5 on Moh's scale of Mineral Hardness. At this point I think maybe you should look up further properties you may be interested in because I need to get on with the story. Suffice to say this is a NICE FRIKIN' WATCH!!

Whoa...back to the auction. Before the viewing I had selected a seat for accessibility and visibility as well as ease of hearing. Most frequently for lectures and such, which I have attended many of, I will select a front row seat for these reasons. This time I had a helmet and riding jacket to find a temporary home for and there was a second row far left of stage seat by a wall with a pillar behind which a nook provided a perfect helmet and riding jacket nestle.

I took that seat as I usually would do but this time with renewed purpose and remained thoroughly bored and simultaneously mystified at the ongoing proceedings. These idiots clearly had too much time AND money on their hands. This was not looking good. Prices were pretty high for things I could relate to; I had little idea about the things outside of my purview (which is fairly large and diverse). When the jewellery came up I was much more comfortable with where the prices were and it confirmed my theories and fears at that point. Diamonds are a bit of a specialty of mine also and I'd looked at their selection which was tempting but not my focus. They were reasonable; I decided to wait for the watches. When the first Rolex came up, I didn't bid. It was a gold Day Date with a President's bracelet and everything else. Garish. It was driven up over \$10,000.00 within three minutes. Here we go, I thought. I actually can't remember if it was finally a thought or if I actually uttered the last comment for that lot in my "outside voice"... IDIOTS!!! \$14,700+!!!

Yikes!! This sucked...Next up was another run-of-the-mill, brand new Datejust in Rolesor again with all papers. I was so pissed off at the first one, the second one came and went so fast I was asking the person next to me what happened. I don't even remember why. Don't care. The one I was there for was up. Focus, Jeffery.

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“Can we start the bidding for this lovely Rolex Submariner with blue FACE at \$1000.00?” said the soon to be confirmed jackass at the lectern. FACE?! GAWD!

I looked directly at him and said, firmly “\$1000.00...” to which he said “The bidding has opened at \$1000.00, thank you...Do I hear \$1500.00?”

He was looking around, but the noise was muffled. Someone bid \$1500.

“Do I hear \$2000.00?” said the jackass, looking now directly back at me with his gavel in the air strategically and theatrically.

“Yes, \$2000.00...” I said firmly and I confirmed with a nod.

Well, that peaked some more interest, simply because I put in a second bid, I guess. There must have been over 100 people in and out into the hallway leading into that room by then. I was coming to the realisation that these people were intent on what MY, little old MY next move was!

WHY?? I wondered? I am NOT tall. I think I’ve said how tall. I am not particularly large, or loud, or noticeable. (In fact, I’ve been buying watches at Brinkhaus Jeweller’s for over 20 years now, have bought, well, quite a few and tend to hang around more than most people. I have even had long conversations with the owner’s wife/partner, a long story not finished yet, and I recently had the opportunity to ask her who she thought I was. She didn’t know. I even gave her hints. No clue.)

There were a few more in the bidding now, a definite bad omen. The price was climbing quickly. I was staying in it but was pouring gas on a rising flame. Then I noticed them. The young couple whom had been holding me up at the viewing. They had jumped in at about \$3500.00 or so. Now, it was mainly four of us, driving to \$4000.00.

Then it came. The dude and his girlfriend were enjoying this! Like hunting, eh? By the time it got to \$4000.00 there were three of us left in the chase. It was me who bid the \$4000.00.

And that is where the bidding stopped.

“Do I hear \$4500.00?!” he said for the third time, this time with a little desperation in his voice.

The auctioneer was looking directly at ME. I was NOT going to bid against myself! It then became abundantly clear why this little man was looking at me with such disdain in his eyes. I could NOT believe what happened next. This little TWERP actually VERBALISED his thoughts!! In a room with over 100 people in it this JACKASS attempted to pit ME against his other bidders!

“Come on now, folks. YOU’RE NOT GOING TO LET THIS GUY INTIMIDATE YOU, ARE YOU?!?!?”

He was talking about ME!!! To a ROOM FULL OF STRANGERS!!

This guy did not know me from Adam!

Now, I played drums professionally in a rock and roll band, while singing into a microphone (this kind of tends to attract attention to one’s self!) for 17 years+... Crowds do not embarrass or scare me, they do not intimidate ME, and above all, little insignificant jackasses with microphones and captive audiences DO NOT intimidate me...I am a trained martial artist, always ready for confrontation, ANY confrontation. Mental, physical, verbal...

“I CANNOT BELIEVE YOU JUST SAID THAT!” I said OUT LOUD and LOUDLY from a comfortable seated position. I did not want to intimidate. I was trying to steal this jackass’s watch! I did not, as I was PINING to do, even put my crossed leg down and lean forward for effect!

“Come on now folks...” he continued. “This is a BEAUTIFUL watch. IT is worth FAR MORE than this. THIS FELLOW KNOWS THIS!!”

AAAAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRRRGGGGGGGGG!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Now I was ANGRY.

I let the bidding war commence. The two others went at it. But they started at \$4100.00 not \$4500.00. Back and forth, all the way up. “\$4500.00, do I hear

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\$4500.00??" the twerp grinned, looking straight at me. I just grimaced back at him while shaking my head back and forth harder and yet harder with each painful step.

The young dude, I think, bid \$4500.00. I said unreservedly and very loudly "UNBELIEVABLE." You know, for the people.

They started to snicker, that room full of people. The snickers were growing louder as was the murmuring. People were crowding into the room from the surrounding hallways. This was ENTERTAINMENT for them!

The jackass kept up the momentum at my expense. "See people, even when he does NOT bid, the others here are beginning to realise maybe he knows something THEY don't!"

Well WELL WEELLL!!! So, what now? "I don't think I've mentioned that this watch features the highly collectable and sought after Lapis Lazuli Dial..." exclaimed the twerp, trying to show ME in particular and the room in general how extensive his knowledge was.

I knew this was now a write off as far as my original plan was concerned. Even though I would gladly have paid \$6000.00 for this watch, I WAS NOT ABOUT TO GIVE THIS GUY THE SATISFACTION OF SEEING THESE MORONS UNWITTINGLY EXTRACT CASH FROM MY WALLET BECAUSE THEIR 'GIRLFRIEND' THINKS THIS WATCH IS "REALLY PRETTY!!!"

"OR NOT!" I virtually yelled back at this guy on cue.

Well, at least I cast SOME doubt...

Again, the bidding started, this time with gusto. At \$5000.00 I shouted "SLOW DOWN, PEOPLE!!!"

There were now about seven people, as far as I could tell, in on it. But the young buck had too much money, not enough brains and too much testosterone. He just had to have the watch. The auctioneer kept looking in my direction. I had stood up at \$5250.00,

gathered my things and walked SLOWLY to the FRONT of the hall, across the front to the other side, up the other side to the rear and stood there.

At \$5500.00 I let out an entirely audible sigh. "The auctioneer said "I thought you were leaving!"

I said, again out loud "People, this guy is PLAYING YOU!"

It was 'Bonnie and Clyde' who pushed it to \$6000.00.

"NOW I'M LEAVING. YOU FOLKS ARE CRAZY. YOU SHOULD DO YOUR HOMEWORK BEFORE COMING TO AUCTIONS."

"What makes you think they haven't?" said the smarmy little man at the front.

"It's PAINFULLY obvious!" I blurted back instantly..."I came to buy a watch not a piece of collateral for a new motorcycle." With that several others began to leave too. The auction was not even half through but the entertainment was walking...

I was the only one in the parking lot when I left...me, my bike and the cars. I wasn't hanging around to see what the thing finally went for. I had written it off at \$4000.00. I may even have actually paid more than \$6000.000. I'm still looking for this iteration though I have quite a few nice watches, even a 16713 which I wear most of the time. I actually found a 16803 but I've sold it. It was NOT Lapis Lazuli. Just blue. Still, a beautiful watch. I sold it because I had already BOUGHT a Rolex that week! I couldn't justify keeping TWO new (to me) Rolex watches of this value from three purchases made within ONE WEEK. I'm NOT a rich man. WEALTHY yes; RICH no.

Thanks to my good friend and business associate Jim Dawes, I have since learned that during the same era that produced Lapis dials, Onyx (I knew) and even Meteorite (I did NOT know!) dials were made. Yes, those things that fall from the heavens and make it to earth in some sort of solid, recoverable rock form. METEORITE!!

Fascinating!!! With my particular background, even more so than probably anything I've heard of before in this regard.

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I may just have to change my focus!

Oh well, I guess I'll just keep on hunting...



Also from the collection of Mr. Norbert Brinkhaus
Beautiful, no?

Chapter Twelve We are Watchmakers, ALL

In 1802 a chap named William Paley (1743-1805) published his seminal work entitled “Natural Theology, or Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity collected from the Appearances of Nature” (and as you can see he promptly died three years later...SHEEESH!...I sure hope that doesn’t happen to me...I’m writing ten books right now...WHO(?) will finish them if I’m DEAD??

Anyway, this Paley guy was on to something and finally expressed it better than anyone else had. Others like Fontanelle (1686) before him were notable in identifying the following vital concepts, but it was Paley who laid it out most effectively and understandably for we plebes. In a stark break from the norm, I’ll refrain from MAJOR DIGRESSION here as I am going to refer the reader to a far more comprehensively involved work on this and many related concepts which I am presently writing but will soon finish. This I do so I may focus on this present matter at hand and will do in due course within the next few paragraphs.

Here though, for the purposes of the present discussion, I am referring to another of those, what I consistently like to (I think) accurately identify as “thought experiments”; this one is entitled “The Watchmaker Argument”.

This is an analogy which consists of the direct and specifically contrived comparison of some natural phenomenon, ANY natural phenomenon, to a watch. Interesting. In this

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case the argument supports a basic premise in natural theology's "argument from design". This has been and is regularly used in teleological presentation to support the existence of God; to further support as evidence for this the intelligent design of all that we see and know. The known universe is just the culmination, the product, the major evidence of this intelligence of design.

As it is argued by some, this very intelligence of design renders this intelligence of design possible and by inference proves the existence of such a designer. How could such a complexity of design exist without the existence of an intelligent designer?

Well, as others, me included, are not only quick to call attention to and also to provide conclusive PROOF for, intelligence and complexity of design as we interpret such ordered structural displays in nature, can happen quite independently of design "intelligence". There are countless examples of incredible complexity in systems and the resultant complexity of system behaviours and ongoing chain effects on surrounding systems; consider as an off-the-top-of-my-head example, weather systems. Complex weather systems develop ultimately from their embryonic components. Simple breezes which grow into winds, then into gales, and into ...(Google Beaufort scale)... Soon we have a hurricane off the coast of Miami. Thus, a VERY complex system with apparent "intelligent design" which may be shown to have formed DIRECTLY from the breeze blowing over a lake in cottage country somewhere...

Another. Ever seen a fractal? I could write a book on fractals. I MAY write a book on fractals! What the heck...

Look, order and purpose exist and are continuing to develop and evolve everywhere in nature, the result of mindless chaotic behaviour of increasingly complex natural processes. I could get into further and more complex detail on this; this fact alone PROVES ITS OWN POINT!! Increasing complexity of discussion and word use to describe more and yet still more complexity of word use and discussion of the complexity of this matter and the words used to describe it...all originating from basically... NOTHING.

It's a complex subject. Why do I speak of it here? This concept is obviously tailor-made for a device as elegantly complex and at once as incredibly simple and manufactured

precisely for the singular purpose for which it is used. The watch is germane to this argument. The argument is germane to the existence, use, fascination with and wonderment that is the timepiece. The argument and concept mesmerise me.

And here, I will direct you for further elaborative contemplations and musings to another of my works entitled “Life’s Ceaseless LOSING Battle with ENTROPY” in which a more thorough discussion of ‘Chaos Theory’ and further ramifications of complex dynamical systems behaviours is pondered ad infinitum...

This subject which speaks of complexity from many viewpoints is so very basic to the principles employed by watch conceivers, designers, manufacturers, producers, distributors, marketers and purchasers collectors and appreciators of timepieces. These are all complex machines, these analogue timekeepers. Mr. Hans Wilsdorf, the founder and creator of even the WORD Rolex as well as the concept and company itself, was an innovator, prolific creator and almost continuous filer of patent applications for new and ever more complex improvements for these leaders in the horological industry. Examining the records, these came fast and furiously, as these things go, for many years and are still flowing with varied rates. Though they were far ahead of any and all competition in the horological world, Rolex continued to improve and innovate as if driven to by imaginary overlords. Intelligent design, indeed! There could be absolutely no doubt by an impartial observer of such a development that at least Rolex as a watch is ABSOLUTELY both the result of and (initially) it absolutely necessitated an intelligence of design.

If one is looking for support for the Watchmaker Argument, the historical development for Rolex reads like a textbook example of just how the development of these particular complex dynamical systems certainly show demonstrable evidence of a necessity for an intelligent designer!!!

Try Growing a Submariner Sea Dweller in a flower pot! (I’ve been looking for seeds forever; good luck with that...I’d try for the “Deep Sea” strain myself...)

As one will hopefully discover with further study, this argument is elegant, reasoned, practical, sensible, downright destined to be the proper way things are...

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EXCEPT, as Richard Dawkins uttered, Paley's argument is "as mistaken as it is elegant." It is, despite it's beauty absolutely incorrect! I'm certainly in Mr. Dawkins' corner in this.

Just because a thing presents at this time as complex to an observer does NOT make it the result of an intentional, reasoned, predestined and planned "intelligent design" assembled by an "intelligent designer". End of story. It has been proven. I will stop short of writing "Q.E.D." because I have not actually DONE that here, only discussed it. Again, a very important and even worthwhile inquiry, a salient argument and, I think, necessary foray into another thought experiment. The reference provided above also delves more deeply into Dawkins' thoughts and refutals with respect to Paley's work as well as Darwin's input and others. I'm enjoying writing and researching it; when it's done I hope the reader will seek it out further.



Chapter Thirteen And Time Marches On

Speaking of intelligent design and it's polar opposite, Brother Jim and our late cousin Kim had a very close relationship despite a significant age difference. Cousins Kim, the oldest, Kerry and Yuri grew up close geographically and emotionally involved with us. Kim was the closest to my brothers and I due to his age and his peer group and he had a number of friends who were also our neighbours and friends. Jim and Kim 'hung around' like brothers, not cousins; they were together a lot and went places as a pair as often as not for years. Once when together at a soirée, they ran across a rather unique situation. This is how it was related to me. The result was the same regardless of exactly how the events actually transpired.

While at a party together, cousin Kim (according to him) approached Jim with a proposition. "Can you lend me \$200.00?" Kim asked Jim (which was the first odd point since normally that would likely have transpired the other way around!!)

"What for?" came the inevitable reply.

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“Could you just...I just need a couple of hundred...this guy wants to borrow it from me and I’m a little short...I think he wants to buy some...you know, some...”

“Yah, yah, but why YOU?” said Jim, wondering what Kim actually had in mind? They knew each other well. Jim knew there was something up...

“Why don’t I just lend him the money if it’s so important to you...why is it so important to you?” asked Jim apparently trying to extract more detail...

I was told they both talked to the guy (maybe!). In the end it was Jim who produced the seemingly paltry sum in light of the spoils...a Rolex GMT Master, with a “Pepsi” bezel insert of red and blue. Apparently this lovely, sturdy, ‘forever’ type of collateral was given up in favour of a far more transient and fleeting gratification. Again, unbelievable. A ROLEX!?!?

To get HIGH!!! IDIOT! But Jim, he scored! I simply could not believe my ears or eyes when I saw the watch. Kim was not too pleased but he knew the score. Talk about intelligent design from virtually nothing.

Jim started to use the GMT Master for his daily wearer, ostensibly because it had a date. Of course, his 5513 got relegated to his jewellery box. It had already been worn for many years and had stood up like a trooper through thick and thin. Jim had to replace its’ bracelet, but he didn’t believe too strongly in the philosophy that one needed to spend copious amounts of cash to ‘service and maintain’ one’s watch since his had performed so well with only ONE service for so long!

‘If it ain’t broke’; don’t fix it.

So say many; so believed Jim, it seems. Anyway, he had become, through lucky ‘good planning’, the first in our family and in our Rolex ‘tribe’, to own two Rolex watches!

This unfortunately came at the detriment of his 5513, which had essentially suffered the watch equivalent of being “ridden hard and put away wet”.

It was never intentional, really. It just happened. I didn't like the fact that his 5513 had "disappeared" and the GMT Master took its place mostly because I was never privy to where she was. I was also concerned about letting her sit unserviced for so long. She's a machine, let's face it.

BUT, anyone who has ever worked with machines; spent great amounts of time and effort getting to know them, their nuances, their 'idiosyncrasies'; personification perhaps, however they behave like they have personalities. Like they have 'minds', feelings, methods of doing their particular functions that may even range to revenge! Ask anyone! I'm not alone in thinking this way. Really. REALLY.

Anyway, Jim obviously felt only so much this way. He loved (and loves) his Submariner. It was his first Rolex, after all! Who doesn't ALWAYS love their first! James, but to throw her in a box after so many years of abuse without even so much as a thank you!?

YOU CAD!!

sorry. just a watch, i know.

O.K. Jim had now scored a second Rolex to never get serviced!

AAAAARRRRRRGGGGG!!!! It was a nice watch, Jim. They are both nice. I gave up the jealousy thing in my youth in favour of a more reasoned approach. I reasoned that I really should have that GMT Master. I was the watch nut. I was the Rolex watch nut. I only had one Rolex watch. I could now afford more than one Rolex watch; perhaps many more than one. I could afford to service and maintain both Rolex watches also.

None of this reasoning got that watch onto my wrist.

I didn't care so much about that really either. But it bothers me about his 5513. That much I could do something about. One day.

Jim wore the GMT Master for quite a long time. This is a story to be continued as there is much more to be told, but for now I'd like to interject that our uncle Stan, their father, has always loved watches too. Though Kim flirted with the idea, Kerry never showed an excessive interest, though he loved watches enough to always have at least one good one. Though nothing was ever really said too loud, Yuri suddenly presented

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with a TUDOR PRINCE OYSTERDATE, the Submariner Tudor which looks for virtually all intents and purposes like a Rolex Submariner Date. We didn't really see it very much but he didn't get to develop a long relationship with it. The watch, its box, papers, the whole 'shooting match' (as they say 'round these here parts) was stolen from his room during a house breaking and burglary. It's a cryin' shame. Yuri had received this beautiful timepiece from his two brothers Kerry and Kim for a gift on a special occasion. Nice gift. Special gift.

The discussion broached in the introduction to this book discusses the 'icons of things'; icons with the very precise specific proportions, minute details and design nuances that combine to create an appearance which takes on a greater meaning as the sum total of all of its components.

Notice the subtle differences between the 5513 and the 79090 (the Tudor's reference number). The bar markers at the 3, 6, 9 & 12 of the 5513s have been replaced by a date window replete with 'Cyclops' at 3 and large triangular markers at the 6 & 9 & 12. The Submariner Date Rolex is very close to this Prince Oysterdate and except for the markers at 6 & 9 and the words and different emblem (no Rolex 'Coronet' for the Tudor: it gets a shield) on the dial, it is hard to tell the difference if those are covered up leaving only wording or some even more obscure cues.

They are indeed subdued styling hints yet noticeable immediately to an only cursorily trained eye. They in fact share cases and crowns, bezels and crystals, hands and even bracelet pieces of the period of manufacture (strictly, the Rolex upgraded to genuine sapphire crystal). The case backs, bracelet buckles and especially the dials harbour more distinct differences and are signed by Rolex as a Tudor, identifying the watch immediately for what it is. It is in the movements, the hearts of the machines themselves; here the vastly different workhorses beating within the protective shells of these two watches embody the major contradistinctions.

Aside from these externally invisible differences the Tudor and Rolex Submariner wristwatches have only very minor differences which become noticeable only upon

slightly closer inspection than one might normally engage in when observing a watch on a stranger's wrist, for example. Only if you are close enough to notice the name inscription or the triangular shape of the Tudor's six, nine and twelve markers will a casual observation yield a definitive identification. The Tudor is often mistakenly identified as a good replica!! Which to many Rolex aficionados, it is, of course, but again, digression...

Brother Jim is strictly unimpressed with this Tudor; perhaps ALL Tudors! He won't even acknowledge it IS a Rolex!! Of course, Jim has an authentic Harley Davidson Fat Boy. I have a very similarly appointed bike with almost the identical look and feel of his, however mine is a genuine Kawasaki!! It is a real motorcycle and not just "Jap'Scrap" as most "Harley Owner's Group" (H.O.G.) members would testify. I, we must not deny these objects exist as they are virtually antique, either my motorcycle or the watch, simply because they are not up to our personal opinion of some standard, must we?! On this note, though, I rather adore the Prince Oysterdate. It IS a Rolex, every bit as much as the Ford may be either a Ford or a Lincoln. A Toyota or a Lexus. I could go on and on and on....

My current 1993 Rolex 'Tudor' Prince Oysterdate, a reference 79090, is a splendid absolutely pristine and almost perfect example of this reference. Only very subtle differences and nuances DO change the look substantially but it is also very accessible and easy to establish reasonable assurance of authenticity. This watch which I currently own, will perhaps one day find a home on my cousin Yuri's wrist I hope and he'll have to acknowledge that this one, mine, has had a complete "Technical Revision and Restoration Overhaul" as well as having had virtually all pertinent pieces, such as links in the bracelet, etc., fixed serviced or outright replaced. It even has a factory warranty and an appraisal for insurance purposes. There will be a period of breaking in the watch's freshly cleaned lubricated and replaced worn parts. Essentially a painstakingly re-created for all reasonable intents and purposes, new watch!

Speaking of insurance, as an aside, my wife Toni is simply uncomfortable with most of the deals I make which are quite important ones, and she's incredibly calculated hoping that we are all done by the time she is informed. Maybe it's out of place. Toni does not like to spend money or buy "big ticket" items. She knows a fair amount about Rolex watches in particular since she has also worn one or another since she was a teen. She is

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usually acutely aware of the “goings-on” of this watch collector. Hell, this ‘many fine things’ collector. As may be seen in my book “COLLECTING as an OBSESSION”, I am a collector of a number of fine objects and each of these collections has been building for many long years. Collecting of fine things in pristine condition is expensive and valuable in almost every case I can think of. Collections of virtually everything, if certain criteria are met, may be begun and managed over a long period and turn into a collection instead of a gathering together of many examples of the object d’jour, willy nilly; collections tend to appreciate in value.

From widgets to garbage cans, collections of fine widgets in pristine condition are exceedingly valuable (of course I state such things without prejudice). I have always endeavoured to collect such items as are desirable to a large number of people and are at once rare and expensive, unique and unavailable. The diametrical opposite of ubiquitous. I like to say these items are scarce. Knowing the details is everything. Having a good memory is PARAMOUNT. We must all endeavour to be more capable I think. It’s something to consider, right?

Anyway, the “Pepsi” GMT MASTER that Jim wore for years got LOST. Near the garbage cans as near as they could determine. Bad bracelet pin likely. It was insured and was replaced with a black and red bezel GMT II; an absolutely beautiful one.

Another story begins here as it was this watch, which now belongs to our middle son Nathan, which resided on this author’s wrist for nearly fifteen years. It was beautiful then, it is now. A lovely watch with a sassy character all its’ own, it was this Rolex that received the most positive comments from casual observers everywhere it was recognised.

Ever since the original watch (the loss of which resulted in my eventual ownership of this GMT Master II) with its’ Pepsi bezel, opposite the black and red one of the new replacement, Jim has yearned for another Pepsi GMT. The nickname with its’ obviously ubiquitous recognition and instantly relatable familiarity, the visual impact of the watch as a whole in contrast or harmonising beautifully with other accoutrements or attire, the original watch has gained almost cultish desirability. Even poor examples of the model fetch handsome prices on secondary markets worldwide.

Another very intriguing fact about the GMT Masters and even certain Submariner models, is that the all steel older versions of the same evolutionary strain of models are considerably more expensive, sometimes by crazy margins, than the Rolesor, or steel and eighteen karat solid gold "two-tone" models. The original prices of these different iterations of the same watch completely belie the future valuations. The model 16713 owned by me is a 1993 example of the version and was purchased for only \$4,300.00, a price which was higher than I might have paid with a little less carefree attitude. An all steel version I own of different vintage but identical design to the black and red bezel'd beauty described above, is easily worth several thousand dollars more. The original prices of these watches were very different with almost exactly the opposite pricing of each, except that the Rolesor model is now over \$12,000.00 new (\$12,080.00 plus taxes retail)!

(The book compiled and simultaneously published with this one is a "Coffee Table" picture book-all of these watches or examples of them are pictured within it's beautiful simulated leather bound covers. do explore this lovely addition to any Rolex collector's library. Please.)

On a very recent trip to splendiferous suburban Victoria, British Columbia, on the truly magnificent Vancouver Island, occasion led myself and my now thirty five years betrothed to a shopping mall. As is often the case, rapid separation of the two of us due to different modus operandi led to a brief encounter with a complete stranger (named Terry Carlsen he said) who happened to be sporting a Pepsi bezelled original GMT Master...

"Sorry, but I can't help but notice your watch...could I take a little closer look?" I said, always cautiously, but ever upbeat and positive. It's a FUN subject for me!!

"By all means...I'm surprised you noticed it!" replied this startled fellow, who was between cellphone calls.

SURPRISED I NOTICED IT?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?

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This I had never heard before! “What?!?” I exclaimed in disbelief, almost too fast to hide my own surprise!

He said, “In all the years I’ve owned this, you are one of only a small handful that recognise it for what it is...a REAL Rolex...”

A little game I like to play is to guess the date or at least the year of manufacture of any Rolex I encounter. “That’s a mighty long time for so few to have recognised it...do you lead a sheltered life?” I asked cheekily, for having just met him. I made him to be approximately my own age plus or minus five years or so.

“That’s a 1978 or so, am I right?” I surmised from all factors considered.

“Man, you DO know your Rolexes” he said. “It’s actually from the early seventies...a gift from my wife.” He was then fully engaged in OUR conversation and stopped playing with his phone with a serene calmness and excitement all mixed together in his eyes. He surrendered to the moment and let the hustle of his obviously busy existence WAIT.

“You’ve kept it in good condition...do you service it regularly?” to which he swiftly replied “Yes, every five to seven years. The bracelet was replaced but nothing else major has ever been needed.”

A bit more pleasant conversation and we were both on our respective way never to meet again most likely. But another stranger convert and newly discovered secret Rolex votary....



Chapter Fourteen *Rolex Anti-Magnetism*

The Rolex MILGAUSS is an interesting study for any watch enthusiast. The history alone is worthy of note, but it has more diverse credentials than those attributed to its prowess in the area for which it is designed.

By its very nature and by design but for various ends, this watch is RARE. It also, in its latest and most subtly gorgeous iteration, the 116400 GV, is my new favourite wristwatch.

G, standing for Glace, and V for Verte, or literally “Green Glass” or “Green Crystal” when referring to watches, this watch is extraordinary in much more than just its looks. Observe the winding crown. Take a side vantage point to do this. You can immediately

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see that the case is significantly thicker than most wristwatches. As with virtually everything else Rolex does, there is a specific reason for this.

The MILGAUSS is one of the only production wristwatches to be built with TWO cases—an inner one and an outer one. The winding crown is in what seems to be perfect proportion for the size of the case side. Rolex could easily have achieved this by installing their already essentially perfect TripLock Submariner Deep Sea winding crown. But in inimitable fashion, they designed a newly conceived and executed TwinLock winder fitted specially to the new MILGAUSS series as well as other models for which it can be used as an upgrade to the older TwinLock crown. Another masterpiece, it is a precisely wonderful forethought, a coup for the designers and irresistible—simply as pretty on this particular watch as anything masculine could ever be. Again!

A statement in simplicity, this minimally complicated horological beauty is a non-date but extremely advanced movement. It is wondrous in its' dichotomous presentation of complexity and austerity. The heart beating within its 904 L stainless steel shells is of the most advanced design yet offered, employing a blue "Paracrom" hairspring, the fine oscillator which is unaffected by magnetic fields due to its alloy constituents (referred to as paramagnetic). Rolex made it blue in deference to the historical tradition of reserving this blue colour for the most accurate of watch drive hairsprings developed.

The inner case referred to above is constructed of a soft ferromagnetic metal and is called a Faraday Cage after the physicist that discovered the principle for which the device was developed. The cage essentially protects whatever is within it from surrounding magnetic fields; they are prevented from penetrating the cage due to its construction, method of assembly and geometry with respect to the field and the cages' contents. Again, pretty frikin' cool, eh?

The electrification of industry and then of society in the "western world" of Europe, North America and then onward to the whole globe was a rapid and monumental watershed for humankind. Simultaneously the scientific community which was specifically involved with this pursuit required tools of their trades which underwent invention and development in lockstep with this process. Tool watches of the highest

order and quality being a specialty of Rolex, the company accepted the challenge of this community of scientists to create a timepiece which would withstand the incredible rigours placed upon it by extremely high magnetic fields. These fields were the result of the new and massive machinery devised to harness, produce, generate large quantities of and distribute this newly discovered commodity; **ELECTRICITY**.

I could get into this here, you know. When you coil wires around metal cores and spin them around within a housing of permanent magnets, electricity is generated. So are much more powerful magnetic fields, as the necessity for permanent magnets is only for the electrical power generation and the magnetic fields are generated by the rotating core of coiled wire if one does the reverse and pushes or runs a current through that same coil of wire. You see, the generation of electricity is done by producing this current with the coils by forcibly spinning them within the magnetic field by pouring, from great manufactured heights, large volumes of water down a long large diameter, high volume pipe to drive a "turbine wheel"...

This generates electricity; it also makes extremely powerful magnetic fields around the wires! Well, if you work around such fields and you wear a mechanical wristwatch (the only type available until 1956/1957 with the Hamilton Pacer's introduction!), if the field is at around 60 - 70 Gauss, the watch will run erratically. This is because the components within (which are magnetically susceptible) will become "magnetised"; they will develop magnetic fields of their own! This causes attractions and repulsions between the individual component parts which inevitably will cause the mechanism to run faster. This can reach a point where the watch will literally shake itself apart! If the field strength and flux density of the environment run to as much as 975 to 1000 Gauss, the hairspring could be slammed against the movement innards like a screen door in a gale force wind (depending, of course, on what it is comprised of!)...

Thus, **THE MILGAUSS!!** These people needed robust, durable, accurate, but above all running timepieces. The MILGAUSS, by definition, will withstand and keep accurate time in field strength ranges and magnetic flux densities of 1000 GAUSS or less, guaranteed. This is a CHRONOMETER and a damn fine one at that.

On May 16, 2011, in Geneva, Switzerland, at Christie's Auctions' "Important Watches" auction, a telling event took place for many reasons. Aside from netting the

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sale of the most expensive Rolex wristwatch ever sold (on record), a field of eighteen MILGAUSS vintage watches were sold. \$1,163,746 United States dollars were surrendered for the 1942 Rolex Reference 4113 “split seconds” Chronographe Antimagnetique-one of only twelve ever manufactured, making it’s rarity nothing less than extraordinary. While I could wax eloquent about this watch, the MILGAUSS is the watch at hand. Digression just might be the topic of yet another future tome...

I said the watch was rare. The early ones languished on the shelves of dealers for interminable times, as did a number of the other Rolex models introduced early on. The ones that were bought agglomerated no particularly intriguing provenance such as that associated with many of the Submariners, Explorers and Cosmograph Daytona models of the day. (No, Eric Clapton is NOT a Physicist, although Dr. Brian May is! In the same discipline as the present author has his formal education; Astrophysics. Incredible guitar player and singer, too!!)

These watches are commanding staggering amounts at sales and auctions around the world and the trend seems to be upward. Only specific watches will do this appreciation so rapidly and there are very special criteria involved in the whole determination process, but the big picture is clear.

Watches, and in particular Rolex wristwatches, as well as Patek Phillipe wrist and pocketwatches, are good investments by almost all measures I know of! I add I am a lettered and qualified investment advisor and spent twenty-five plus years advising on investment portfolios for my clients. Successfully. I sold my practice and retired. ENOUGH!! Diversion, leave me be...

The field of eighteen vintage MILGAUSS had no pronounced or notable provenance to speak of. Yet they fetched prices ranging from a low of just over \$25,000.00 to \$178,778.00 including buyer’s premium. They have since been maintaining their ability to bring in high amounts at auctions and sales. For watches that cost around \$500.00 to \$700.00 when new, that is phenomenal appreciation in anyone’s books. Because they were bought and required by only a few. By design and by necessity. They are RARE because they are VALUABLE and they are VALUABLE because they are RARE!

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The 116400 GV on my wrist has made a verifiable (but obviously only theoretical) appreciation of as much as \$3,200.00 in the six months that I have owned it. At the price I paid, granted a very specially low one, this represents an increase of a raw 48 % in six months or a whole hell of a lot more per annum. This is confirmed by a Christie's auction result of a month ago. It is NOT for sale, however. It has also, even though there is no date, no gold, no diamonds...received the very most compliments of any watch I've ever worn. Yes, I'm counting...

Show me a mutual fund that's done that in forty five years. They are a dime a dozen. Something more rare? Antiques? Perhaps, but beware...becoming an expert is as time consuming as finding pieces of actual value. Most antiques are furniture and wearing an armoire is not convenient, desirable or fun. Show me real estate. It is becoming rare and they aren't making any more of it. It cannot hold a candle to these rates of appreciation. Show me, comparatively, anything...

These are not just jewellery, just keepers of time. They can be the family jewels, quite literally...

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Chapter Fifteen The 5513

I will always remember March 2, 1973, for more than just because NBC-TV debuted "Midnight Special." Hell, I played that night and missed that show anyway, though I know it happened.

No, the most memorable thing I did that day was to take delivery of my Passion.

I recall I had gone into the jewellery store on February 28 as I frequently did midweek to make a payment and had spent an inordinately long time there for a "school" night...but I was essentially finished school and taking only clean up courses to get requisite credits. Midweek was always much less intense from a time-crunch perspective. I didn't care much and I was going to be rehearsing later that night anyway.

There were an unexpected number of people there and that allowed me more time and incentive to play with and show off this wonderful almost surreally beautiful treasure I had so diligently kept an almost two year vigil for.

I was running short of time and took advantage of a lull in the customer crowd to get the owner's attention and beckon him to prepare to take my payment of \$20.00 cash and back my watch...

Mr. Kangas came to the counter and placed the box, open, on MY side of the showcase, across from him but directly in front of me. I reluctantly removed the watch from my left wrist, removed the tags, anchor and spare links from the box, and slowly, lovingly, placed the 5513 back into the box followed by the accoutrements. I placed my folded \$20.00 bill into the box on top of the watch, snapped the lid shut and shoved it across the counter to his waiting hands.

He was looking at me with an almost sympathetic expression on his face. It was as if he could almost feel my pain.

"You REALLY want this watch, don't you?" he uttered.

I looked back at him with a look of what must have seemed to HIM like I thought HE might have an extra head. I was truly, UTTERLY dumbfounded. The British would say GOBSMACKED!

"WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST CLUE???" I spontaneously erupted. "I've been coming in here for almost TWO YEARS paying you WHATEVER I CAN and you would question my motives??"

With that, on cue and simultaneously as if he'd been planning it for some time, he shoved the box back into my hands forcefully and exclaimed "Then take it!"

"SERIOUSLY?!? I haven't finished paying for it yet!" My payment of tonight, by my figuring, brought the total I'd given him to \$220.00. For a watch that cost \$265.00, I was pretty sure...

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“As far as I am concerned, it is yours. You have earned it. You have paid enough for me. Wear it proudly.”

The look on his face now was more akin to joy! I have since experienced what he must surely have been feeling many times. It is the immense satisfaction one can obtain only by giving. Freely, openly, with absolutely no expectations preconceived or formed afterward. My own feelings on this subject are strong and have formed a basis for my beliefs, attitudes and actions in my life for many years now.

“So THAT’S IT? It’s DONE?” I couldn’t get this quite yet. “You mean I can TAKE THE WATCH HOME NOW?!”

“Yes. I will write you a receipt for tonight and further write ‘PAID IN FULL’ on the bottom.”

It was not enough for me. “Could you do something more?” I asked him. “Could you engrave the date I will pick it up on the back? I NEVER want to forget that day. Could I pick the watch up Friday, engraved? I don’t have time or anywhere to put the box and things right now. Is that O.K.?” By this time I was overwhelmed. Aside from being in a hurry, I didn’t want to rush anything right then.

“There will be no problem getting that done for you. Are you SURE you don’t want to take it tonight?”

“No, I’m NOT sure of that!” What a question!! “I think a few more days to get it right won’t hurt!” I had been thinking about this day for a LONG time...I just wasn’t expecting it for a few more MONTHS!

As I would learn later, there is an actual saying that I heard that perfectly describes what makes this so special. “MAKE EVERY OCCASION A CELEBRATION”. Harry Demmons, I learned from you too!

It was very hard to concentrate on anything for those ‘in-between’ days. I planned everything very carefully so nothing would screw it up.

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And so began a love affair “in earnest.” I finally had what had taken so long and had required such commitment to get. This exercise has been repeated many times over in my life for many different applications. The principles are unwavering. The lessons endearing, essential. My late Father was correct and luckily I was a quick study in these regards. He has never failed me in his advice, in the import of his direction. Yes, a love affair “in earnest”? This is my Father’s very NAME! Ernest William Creasey. So “Ernest” was HIS direction it was nothing short of his NAME!! The name is derived from Old English and means “intent”, or “vigour”, both of which Dad had in abundance. The word is derived from Germanic “ernst” and means roughly “earnest” from the English or honest and trustworthy.

And THAT is FRIKIN’ cool TOO!

My Passion stayed very close to my actual physical person for a very long time. It was my companion for so long I would often not realise the very special place it held in the eyes of so many other individuals I would encounter in my travels. It was not until circumstances in my family would arise such that the occasion for me to become the second brother to own more than just one Rolex existed. I took full advantage of this occasion of course.



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Brother Jim had incurred some trouble in his business life which necessitated a rather sizeable injection of cash in order to avoid unpalatable and unsavory financial and other consequences that also involved modes of transportation amongst other fun things.

The amount was virtually equivalent to the value of this exquisite GMT MASTER II which had been paid for by insurance to replace the aforementioned lost "Pepsi" bezeled GMT MASTER. However, it had been upgraded at order to the newer GMT MASTER II which was almost exactly \$ 375.00 plus taxes MORE than the replaced model.

For Jim this might as well have been \$3,750,000.00. The watch was kept by the dealer from which it was ordered for lack of the difference in these two values. A paltry but temporally insurmountable deficit in the scheme of things at that time for Jim. And now, he would even have to forfeit his wheels if something didn't break for him.

Well, what are brothers for.

I vaguely knew the details of the watch stuff. I vaguely knew the details of the truck stuff. I vividly knew what was being asked of me.

"Jeff, I PROMISE I'll get it back to you as soon as I can..." Jim implored as I sat down to coffee with him, money still concealed within my jacket pocket.

"What makes you think you'll be in any better financial shape any time soon, Jim? I've had to BORROW this money myself, on my CREDIT CARD, at a stupid rate of interest, just to get you CASH like you said you needed. I've got bills, a wife, kids, responsibilities..." I was going to give him the money, I just wanted him to know it didn't grow on any of the trees in MY YARD, either. But I had a plan, not ready to hatch quite yet then, that would make his end of this thing a whole lot less painful if he went for it, which he did in the end. But it took years...

I knew the dealer well. He was against my plan. I knew my wife would have been. But it had many facets and they were all pointed toward a master plan. I did have to take precautions though.

"This is a LOT of money, Jim..." He knew this. It's why he needed to ask ME for it. He was no happier than I was about it. But it was HIS debt and I was NOT my brother's keeper...

"Look, I had to BORROW this money. I don't have this kind of cash sitting around waiting for me to lend it to brothers and friends..."

"Yes, I know..." He knew... BUT...

"No. I don't think you DO know." I was about to show him.

"I've taken the liberty of photocopying each of these \$100.00 bills, Jim, to make sure we BOTH know how much money this is!"

It had actually taken me time and effort to copy them all, laying them out, front and back, so as to get ALL serial numbers...It WAS a LOT OF MONEY!

"Oh, _____!!!" What a JERK you are!" Jim was NOT HAPPY!

"Why? Because I want PROOF?" I didn't think I was a JERK. I was THOROUGH.

Jim, however, had different ideas about my approach.

"You know, I don't need your GESTAPO TECHNIQUES!!!"

"Pardon me?" I said, incredulous.

"NEXT THING YOU'LL ASK ME FOR IS AN I.O.U!!" Jim choked out, clearly becoming less amused by the second.

"How did you GUESS??" I had NOT thought of this!! But since he was mentioning it...

"Why not? It's more than I can hope to get back anytime soon. You NEED this because you DON'T HAVE IT. Sure, SIGN THE PHOTOCOPIES!" I suggested. "That will be sufficient. We'll both remember these were REAL \$100.00 BILLS!!" I was less

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amused also. I was NOT even a NAZI let alone GESTAPO!!! Good Gawd. A little excessive, don't ya think, Jim?

Anyway, bitterness and resentment can be twisted around into sweetness and acceptance with the right attitude and enough effort and time to make things right. Always consider the worst and plan for it, but hope, even PRAY, for the best...

Jim signed the papers. "I WILL pay you back...MARK MY WORDS!" he said with the determination of someone who MEANT what he was saying. I knew the enormity of the task though. He needed to be released from the debt somehow, with dignity. I knew how, but it would take time. He had lost too much, too fast and was hurting. I didn't want to add to HIS pain, but I didn't want too much of my own, either. And I had three sons, each of whom needed a Rolex when he turned twenty-one years old. Thankfully one liked pocket watches, did not wear wristwatches, was (and IS) my firstborn, and because of all of this I could pledge him one of my truly collectable non-wearers...my 1939 Rolex "Golden Egg" Rotor Self-Winding with "Explorer-type" Coronet-3-6-9 dial Oyster Bracelet and beauty aplenty... He wasn't gonna wear it anyway, right?

Jim did try, almost immediately, to start paying me back. Within three weeks he had paid back \$200.00 cash, which represented a little under five percent of the total debt. At that rate, with no interest, at one payment per month, it would have taken 1.7 years. BUT, this was not going to happen. No regimented repayment schedule means no regimented repayments. That was the last and only attempt I saw. These were not fun times for any of us. But clouds clear, sun shines and life goes on, right?

After a few years of being reminded by the dealer that there were carrying charges accruing for the storage of this paid-for GMT MASTER II with only the difference plus a small additonal fee to get it released, and knowing full well he could simply not justify wearing a brand new (then) \$5,500.00 watch on his considerably less wealthy than before wrist, Jim and I made a deal and I sprung the GMT MASTER II from it's languishment. This coincided with my need for another Rolex anyway, and it became my daily wearer for a good long time, as I've in an earlier chapter related. Son Nathan

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wears this watch with great satisfaction. He knows some of its' history; this book will clarify the whole thing..



Chapter Sixteen *Sub for the Pacific*

Another Rolex monster in the making has come to my attention again with no prior warning or even feigned previous interest. An individual with vastly more financial resources than my own has seemingly, rapidly and possibly hopelessly (based on extremely recent remarks!) caught a hint of the 'Rolex BUG'.

This developed at light speed when compared to any of the others I've witnessed. My first whiff of the possibility was only about a week ago and it was not even taken too seriously until virtual panic seemed to set in for my cousin, this fine fellow's wife, who seems now to be trying to broker a deal to get him at least one and now possibly even TWO Rolex watches!! Really, though watches as a topic always come up in anything more than brief conversation with most anyone, Marek had never shown much interest further than casual acknowledgement that watches indeed exist and he indeed owned one.

My wife has in more recent years developed an extremely close relationship with my first cousin Debbie. She lives in Vancouver, but we see and remain closely involved in the lives of her family regardless. This is mutual to some extent, as efforts are expended in both directions to stay connected. Debbie's second husband, Marek is this fine fellow.

As I write this, Marek and Debbie are somewhere in Europe. I lost track of exactly where they are physically a few days ago in Paris. However, the Rolex Diety is alive, well and ubiquitous in Europe. I know this from experience and recent reinforcement of the fact by my closest living naturalised ersatz Frenchman, Dr. H. Jack Ruitenbeek, one of my oldest and closest friends, who now resides near CERN and near Nyon, Switzerland (but actually in France). While he was in Geneva two months ago and whiling away some time in the airport, he text messaged me a picture of himself with a ROLEX sign clearly showing directly behind his head.

Apparently Debbie reports that Marek's whiling has been partially carried out within the walls of Rolex dealer's shops! In EUROPE no less!

It began with rambling incoherent reports that Marek, of all unsuspected people, was looking at "Rolex watches, silver, with a date, nothing too big, fancy, no yellow gold, no diamonds, but something 'spectacular'" nonetheless... Mmmmmmmmmmmmm...

At first no requests, then a number of them. Could I look at some watches for Marek? What is available? How much do they cost? When can he get one?

Well, having been a salesman for soooo long, these sorts of requests are painfully akin to putting the proverbial 'cart-before-the-horse'...

My first response had to be "Slow down...what do you see that you like? What have you seen that you like?" But communicating with jet-setters on-the-wing in a far away local, by electronic means, is not conducive to slow, rational, considered thought. And this is what is needed by any neophyte foraying into such a complex and potentially expensive field. Heck, it took me literally years to pick a good watch and then two years to pay for it once I had!! (This last part wouldn't be a new issue though; this tome tells it all...)

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Talk started heading in the direction of a Datejust in all steel. Like I am some kind of "Rolex Store". Sheesh. I collect them I don't stock them. So through channels I found them one in a heartbeat...a 2002 Rolex Datejust Reference 16200. Absolutely beautiful. Sent them an email...in Europe. Came a brief reply...

"Can't see the picture too clearly. The watch LOOKS good..." The reply exhibited no PASSION. So I pulled out the 'big guns' since I had no idea what he had actually looked at or liked for that matter. The exquisite "FROGGY" 50th Anniversary Submariner Date you see above was the first picture I sent them. Another reply.

"...this is the one Marek really likes.so if you can get this watch with a BLACK SURROUND instead of the GREEN, I think this is the one." (Capitals for emphasis, as always, are the authors'.) I was half expecting this, of course. Froggy's are an acquired taste. I was forced, by honour, to point out that it was just this GREEN SURROUND which made this particular watch "spectacular". Well, now they were not "...fully opposed to green..." but "...black would be better for business..." and how much was this watch anyway?

All very interesting since this froggy is now a collector's edition, especially if it is brand new and unworn. But watches, especially mechanical self-winding watches, are made to be worn. They are not COINS good for looking at ONLY. They do not DO NOTHING. Next was the Submariner WITH the BLACK SURROUND, which by this time Debbie knew was the bezel. The response? "Yes this is great but NOW, since I made such a "big deal about green" that Marek would like to see them BOTH and make a decision..." and "...what were the prices?!?!?!?"

This saga has no end yet, as do any of the stories herein contained. They seem to get born and live a life of their own. My greatest hope is that none of them end, ever. It would be nice to see many new Rolex love stories get born, live their lives and age gracefully along with their owners and their families.

In late September 2011, my love was “cleaning up” my desk and had the occasion to move many of the accumulated treasures atop it to several boxes for transport and ostensibly sorting in another room. As usual, that room turned out to be my basement office into which I seldom venture these days, preferring brighter surroundings with better views, cleaner air and better company.

I did recently get close to sorting earlier this month, October, but I was stopped in my venture by another digression as I’m prone, by way of previous copious example, to, excessively.

This diversion as it turns out was my BELFORTE, the beautiful but heartbreakingly short-lived watch I received for my sixth birthday. I picked it up without thought really, as I’d done countless times before. Naturally, I tried the winding crown wistfully, with a predetermined outcome in mind. It only took two winds...

It WOUND. It was not overwound anymore! This motion had been done so many times in the past and the winder would only turn about half a revolution against spring tension. But this time, I was able to wind the mechanism!

Fifty years old! And less than ten dollars originally! This little beauty seems to have ‘healed’ to a certain extent all on its’ own! I certainly doubt its’ ability to take any shocks or keep any sort of time that could be considered even marginally accurate, but even to be able to sit there on my desk or in a box and TICK, to pulsate with a RYTHM; this is a miracle of sorts in and of itself!

You know, I think cleaning and sorting in the dark dreary dungeon can wait....

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Jay's SEA-DWELLER



Chapter Seventeen Obligations Fulfilled

Our third born son Simon is an artist. Now thirty and married very recently to a wonderful yet to be watch converted girl, he also sports a Rolex Submariner non-date (reference 14060) when not working. He loves his watches also and has many, including several of those pictured in my accompanying Coffetable Picturebook (available separately and well worth the additional investment! Seriously.).

Simon is also an athlete. His work is physical and mostly outdoors. But he also, in addition to owning his own landscaping and yard maintenance company, is a physical trainer and as are most in our extended family, a multi-talented and proficient martial artist. He has a collection of very robust and durable as well as reasonably priced watches which are used most frequently, but his Rolex ownership has a story worthy of note for it differs greatly from my own.

As an artist, Simon's sensibilities differ from mine. His first watch purchase, of his own volition and by his specific request, was the exquisite BULOVA Marine Star in gold and steel which is seen here alongside his not yet mentioned twenty-first birthday gift. It was NOT; repeat NOT a Rolex. Note how very similar these two watches are; the bracelets especially.

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When Simon was around a few months younger than twenty-one, he announced without prior discussion and to no fanfare, that he had "...never seen a Rolex that he LIKED THE LOOKS OF (!!!)" (my emphasis)! Well...I'd heard a lot of stuff in my day up until then, but that one pretty well TOOK THE CAKE! As I would later admonish to my aforementioned cousin Debbie about her husband Marek having the possibility of NOT liking a Rolex Submariner Date wristwatch, and I quote "It is IMPOSSIBLE for a red blooded MALE to "not like" a Rolex Submariner Date wristwatch. Not if the male has a PULSE."

I stand by those words. And the present story has rendered my opinion vindicated in the strongest of terms. Sans the date, which Marek insists on having "...for business..." of course.

My response to Simon's announcement was subdued, considering. "What type of look do you find attractive?"

"Well, I REALLY like the looks of the TAG HEUER" said the artist. He had been looking and I knew that. He produced a catalogue. He flipped open the pages to the chronometers and showed me several. "This one I like the most, but I like them all."

I was also not surprised. I LIKED THEM TOO!! However, I was NOT impressed. Nor was I amused. How, HOW could my own GENES have uttered those words!!? HOW??? Oh well. I won't ever know because I never asked. I acquiesced. Thus the TAG HEUER which sits with the beautiful BULOVA aforementioned, pictured, side-by-side, herewith.



When I related this story to Norbert Brinkhaus at that time owner of my main certified Rolex dealer, he was surprised but serendipetously had just bought a number of these very watches, which they did not normally carry or have. He brought several out to select from which he had hand picked with Jim Daves to sate the artist's whims. The one you see pictured, an electric-hearted model, was the concensus pick among us. Simon was thrilled and wore it with enthusiasm for several years.

So, how, pray tell, might that scoundrel Simon have come into possession of a Rolex Submariner Reference 14060? He veritably turned up his artistic nose at this incredible icon of design prowess on his young, foolish, impetuous twenty-first birthday now, didn't he? Well, it was a circuitous route in the end.

When middle son Nathan turned twenty-one, I was already in possession of the GMT Master II with black and red bezel, the result of my pact with brother Jim. Since Isaac had been given my stored 1939 Rolex Golden Egg (since he doesn't wear wristwatches), I also had managed to duck the first son's big purchase since I had already begun collecting as well. It is easier to give away something you already own, right? This meant I still had my 5513 which I had serviced and put on a winder since I started wearing the 16710 GMT Master II. Thus when Nathan turned 21, he got my 5513. A second major purchase ducked!! HEY!!

I love Rolex watches and I love buying them TOO! But these things are expensive!

However, I was now on a mad search for at LEAST one more Rolex, for I knew Simon's day was looming large and I certainly didn't expect the THIRD reprieve I recieved when

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Simon declared Rolex watches...dare I say it? He basically called them...UGLY!! That's right! When an ARTIST says that they have never "...seen one that I liked the LOOKS of...", what they are saying is that whatever 'one' is, it is UGLY!!

Anyway, I said AT LEAST one more Rolex...I wanted my 5513 BACK!! I didn't know how, but I was determined to have her back. She had lived a long life of excellent service and deserved better than young impetuous men wielding her around on their arms showing her off! That had been MY place. She had been my FIRST!

Don't we all love our first the best?

I love many of my watches: the GMT Master II's; the MILGAUSS GV; the 1955 Bubbleback; the Submariner, Sea Dweller, Deep Sea; the list goes on and on and I could and will list them elsewhere. However, my 5513 is pristine, exquisite and MINE...ALL MINE!! She has had two "affairs" though. I forced her. I won't complain. The first was with Nathan, as described briefly above. The second, well it went like this.

Though I had given my Passion to son Nathan I never stopped looking for a replacement for it to "trade" Nathan for my 5513 BACK. It wasn't long before a diligent and intensive search yielded a Submariner non-date in the updated version which had replaced the 5513 and it's contemporaries. The model 14060 has a sapphire crystal and a number of structural modifications and improvements but it is still a non-date Submariner and looks almost identical with extremely subtle variances.

My mandate was to fill this requirement by the time Simon was approaching twenty-one in order that I could have the newer watch given to Nathan (and that trade made) and my Passion would be freed-up for Simon at his twenty-first. Still not ideal, but a great "stop-gap" solution to my looming and expensive dilemma. I was not finished looking in my mind anyway. Did I mention that I love ROLEX watches?...

Well, I was all done on my end and I had the Rolex for Simon as I knew I'd promised MYSELF. And then, Simon didn't WANT the Rolex that wasn't going to cost me any more cash right then. NOOOOOOOO.....

HE wanted a TAG HEUER!! And that meant buying a new one of course! Guess what? They're not inexpensive either!! Except that my guy had quite a few that he kind of wanted to get rid of...

So Simon got the TAG, but he knew I had the Rolex. It was just sitting in my safe or on my winder now...

It was about two years that passed during which time not a lot of mention of watches was made, really. There were a couple of special occasions for which Simon wore the Rolex, but this was initiated by me because I have always felt that mechanical self-winding watches should really be worn. I have several, heck many, that don't get much wearing (including a couple that have never been worn) but even all of these get a regular stint on a mechanical winder.

Simon has friends though. Lots of friends. I know at least a few of them like watches though none has ever come up with anything like an authentic Rolex. Only recently at Simon's wedding this past October, one of his oldest friends, Sachin, was caught wearing a conspicuous Breitling which turned out to be a fake. But it was nice to see he is at least aspiring to the idea of better things. I'm quite sure most if not all know and knew of the Rolex fetish I have displayed openly over the years and certainly they knew of Nathan's watches as well. That is quite another story, perhaps for another tome and time. Digression. Sorry. My mind wanders.

Simon, as did all of our boys, worked out in our basement regardless of where he lived as we have always had sophisticated exercise equipment. Simon, however, still works out in our basement at least three times each week unless working, sick or out of town. A creature of habit. Like his Mother and both of his brothers. Like the most habitual of creatures I've ever had the extreme fortune to have been exposed to and the man Simon was a birthday present to, having been born the very same day; February 12. His paternal Grandfather, my Father, Ernie. You could set your WATCH by him!

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It was during one of these morning sessions, for they happen virtually always in the early morning, that I was down talking to Simon about a number of things. As I recall, he was 24 at the time. The conversation was not about watches, but he turned to that subject by saying something to the effect of "...oh, and I've been thinking and I'd kind of like to have that Rolex now."

Sort of without missing a beat and "matter-of-factly." Almost as if he figured that I knew this was coming. Which, of course, I DID.

My response to this was also subdued, but this time less so. "And that would mean I would get the TAG HEUER back?"

In a heartbeat came the reply "WHO SAID ANYTHING ABOUT MY TAG?!?!?!?"

I have heard this since from my Mother, referring to the Hamilton Ventura Pacer shown way back at the beginning of this book. When I first procured that dazzler Mother was the first to try it on. She said "Gee whizz Jeffery, I think I'd like to HAVE this watch!"

I said "So you'd like to TRADE ME YOUR ROLEX FOR IT?"

She uttered the exact same phrasing... "Who said ANYTHING ABOUT MY ROLEX?!?!?!?"

Flabbergasted.

A long while back (I think I asked to be reminded) it was intimated that I would relate the procedure which in our inner circles has become an ersatz ritual for putting a metal bracelet equipped wristwatch on one's wrist in the least deleterious manner.

One who intends to put a watch with a metal bracelet on one's wrist is well advised, for reasons related to the ultimate preservation and extension of the life of this bracelet, to

follow a certain protocol when installing this bracelet on one's wrist. If this is done "willy-nilly", without thought or planning, and rapidly with force wherever necessary, the bracelet will stretch. Rapidly. Sometimes, ALARMINGLY so. If the bracelet consists of a soft metal such as solid 18 Kt. gold, it will stretch so fast it will require regular replacement of at very least some links every ten to fifteen years upon regular servicing. I said solid 18 Kt gold. Expensive repairs and not even WATCH repairs...TOTALLY cosmetic. It begs LOTS of questions in MY mind, at least. I'm just 'sayin...

The watch installer should find themselves with their watch intended arm extended forward with waist level held bent elbow, palm facing UPWARD, fingers pointed and aligned with intent.

Grasping the ROLEX watch or ANY metal banded watch (fully accepting that, sadly many, even some Rolex wristwatches bear OTHER than metallic fastening appurtenances) by the case sides with index finger, middle finger and thumb of the opposite hand and dangle said bracelet down, around and OVER the outstretched intently pointed and aligned fingers of the watch intended arm. Slide the dangled item toward the intended wearing arm's crook't elbow up to the point on the wrist at which it is intended to ultimately reside.

Some souls prefer to leave the process here, buckle the watch. For the rest, rapidly rotate the wrist below the draped piece to the desired favourite wearing position of the wearer/installer (assuming they are one and the same). It helps to maintain a grip on the case but use you judgement. Slide the gripping hand now to the buckle, locate the clasp, position it comfortably and fasten it SECURELY, please!

Voila! A freshly installed and secured, less stretched, seemingly more content metallic watch accoutrement replete with YOUR intended installed beautiful wristwatch!!

*Thus is carried forth the ROLEX DRAPING RITUAL, aforementioned.
Leastwise, in these HERE parts, that is!*

As I AM one, it is necessary, I feel, to address the possible ROLEX AFICIONADOS who just may read this terribly tacit tome.

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I have generalised on many occasions in this book by saying such things as certain watches “share cases” or have similar looks. Since I am a student of such esteemed experts as James M. Dowling, Jeffrey Hess, Martin Skeet, Nick Urul, Modani, ET ALL, I of all people know this type of statement begs clarification. There is much difference TECHNICALLY. My love of Rolex wristwatches leads me to panegyryze about them to the obvious detriment of accuracy, mostly because this is a STORY. It is not, was never meant to be, and will never amount to an exhaustive technical treatise on them.

When such things are stated, I am absolutely aware that what is really being said alludes to style and form, characteristics of them, rather than actualities concerning them. They look the same!! (Or very similar.) A TUDOR Prince Oysterdate Submariner could pass for a ROLEX Submariner Date of the same era whether or not the CROWN SHOULDERS are squared, rounded or pointed!!! Of course only an untrained eye would accept these things at face. Most people will remain blissfully unaware, and rightly so, of the differences in minute details as case thicknesses and such things. I however, am TOTALLY aware.

Continue to enjoy, please!

Please do not judge my detailed knowledge of these timepieces by the story told in this book. I did not set out to write that book as better people have done that already. Nobody else seems to have told a STORY though! Not that I’ve seen. This approach is in my opinion rather BORING!

I am a classically trained scientist. There is no need to point out virtually nefariously presented detail here. Relax. Take a moment. Do not write letters or become indignant.

Chances are very good that I already know. I am open to honest, constructive evaluating of my work, certainly.

The correct attitude and approach would be appreciated and will reveal volumes about intent. Hey, If you just want to display your own intelligence, write your own book! I’d like to read it! Please, and certainly correct errors, point out inaccuracies, make like a

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cyber-person and check my spelling and grammar (HAH!). Please allow me at least some poetic license for the STORY though, O.K?



Sea-Dweller DEEPSEA



Chapter Eighteen Hunting for Rolex

In several different iterations and beautiful combinations the Reference 116613 and its historical counterparts has had a special place in this book and my life. Recall the spectacular Lapis Lazuli dialled Submariner Date in Rolesor to which much of a chapter was devoted earlier. Well, cousin Debbie's spouse re-enters this story here. After considerable contemplation, a request was made.

"The one with the black face..." said Debbie as she tried to find the words to describe his final choice.

"DIAL, Debbie..." I corrected her yet again.

"And the BLACK BEZEL!" she exclaimed, with a degree of pride in her tone. Her mastery didn't go unnoticed or unregarded.

"Excellent!" said the condescendingly toned present author. "Now you are really getting it!"

Another Rolex watch “monster” in-the-making. “When he gets back into town on the fifteenth, he wants to know pricing on that one.”

“An incredibly splendid wristwatch and an excellent choice. Are you sure you don’t want to see some diamonds on it?” I teased, but to no avail.

“No diamonds!” she screamed, as if to warn me. “He doesn’t like gemstones in his watches! It just isn’t good for business!” Here, I admit I’m paraphrasing. She was, however, nothing if not emphatic! I had stopped paying attention. My mind had turned to acquiring one of these beauties at the best possible pricing. And, it was most likely going to have to be brand, spanking new and in the box replete with all accoutrements.

“I’ll put some feelers out.” I knew these specific limitations curtailed my market severely anyway. I would be shopping for new Rolex watches and there are only a few choices. I have made the major choice there long ago. This would be more specialized and focused. I would be looking for possible older versions of the same watch which may miraculously have survived until now as a last example of the Reference for that iteration, or year, or “older stock.” Even odd watches floating around different outlets and cities in the “system.” These are few and far between. The search would be short.



I rapidly sourced the three baubles pictured. The one on the far left has fully cut “brilliant” diamonds of high quality at 1,2,4,5,7,8,10 & 11. It costs several thousand dollars more for this reason than the other two. All are the same watch except for

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extremely minor things, all artifacts of updates, upgrades and model detail changes. Number markers, bracelet/buckle upgrades and prices are the most salient differences-all entirely cosmetic and insignificant in the overall scheme. They all sport the identical Superlative movements. The prices are the major distinguishing point. The diamonds are terrifically priced, understated, extremely elegant and almost unnoticeable. At least it would be nice, despite initial rejection, to give a choice and show it to him.

A couple of calls and emails for ultimate clarification yielded a clear verdict. Speaking directly to the ultimate wearer for only the third time since the initial positive indication that he wanted a real Rolex, it was made abundantly clear, after seeing the picture, that he did not want diamonds!

If they were free, I might have put forward an argument for them. So be it. No gems. He was very specific. "I would like the 116613 LN, without diamonds." Cannot be more direct, eh? From chaos to order. WAIT A SECOND HERE!! WRONG BOOK!! Wrong subject. Wrong process. Wrong DIRECTION!!!! Please read my book "Life's Ceaseless LOSING Battle with ENTROPY" for clarification-this is BACKWARDS CHAOS THEORY!! At least my direction was now crystal clear.

"So how should we do this?" he said. We were in different cities, he travels almost incessantly, lots of logistics to sort.

"I will not compromise your warranty..." said I. "There are a number of good ways. I will buy it for you in your name and my wife will bring it to you IN PERSON. I would feel safest if we did it like this."

"There are two choices for the watch. The newest iteration costs exactly \$ 508.00 more than the virtually identical watch really, except primarily for the buckle and the hour markers and dial details!" I implored. "What do you think? New or old?"



“They are BOTH brand new, right?” he accurately pointed out.

“Right, of course...” I affirmed. “And because of this...”

“I should just get the lowest cost one...” he, again accurately and as expected surmised (he is a consummate business person). “What’s the price again? I’ll cut you a cheque and send it by mail, as I leave tonight for out of town.”

Brevity dictates this entire story not be told; there was at least one major diversion, the “Froggy” 50th Anniversary Submariner Date pictured and spoken of above. That one is mine. Though these haven’t really ‘appreciated’ since release in the true sense, brand new ones are increasingly scarce. This is where it starts. I had one at the beginning but failed to excite enough to solicit a deposit.

They are pictured together. The Froggy is mine. I mentioned that already. When I called to put a deposit on the Rolesor, I discovered the lack of any new Froggy’s is becoming

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chronic. A check of sources across Western Canada was fruitless; Canada and system wide yielded the same result. No NEW Froggy Submariners available at present. Not even the newer version, with the green dial on top of solid 18 Kt gold, which is more money but again, just as scarce!

A cheque for the full amount arrived in my mail within three business days of that Friday conversation. He was SERIOUS. The watch was already laid away as I knew what the verdict was ahead of time from intuition and experience. A small refundable deposit to make someones' dreams come true? No PROBLEMO!

Brinkhaus was paid a joyous visit; the watch was bought and paid for. I took delivery on that next Wednesday following our conversation and Toni flew there Saturday, eight days after the final decision and payment. The delivery of this exquisite 16613 LN (this was the second most recent iteration, recall) was made to my cousin, as the ultimate recipient was still out of the country until the Wednesday following. By the time he returned home, the watch was there, Toni was home and all was very well in our ever expanding Rolex Owners Group (my instantaneous invention: at present I know of no such group but would not be surprised if such existed!) and our previously to this quite closely knit fabric of high end wristwatch lovers.

Debbie telephoned to thank me and to wax eloquent about the beautiful timepiece and my getting it for her and Marek in what surely must be considered a very worthwhile (if somewhat round about) manner of buying anything let alone a high priced Rolex. Doing so this way was a good financial move as well as was proven. Though most would never consider doing things using such a method (thankfully for me) one may reduce up front expenditure substantially.

I wish to emphasize that no one is being ripped off here. There is a lot of money exchanging hands. Every party involved is satisfied and happy. I am doing a lot of the footwork without compensation. The discount is both justified and justifiable.

These are much more than just timekeepers or jewellery. As previously mentioned they are investment grade, high end watches and ALSO jewellery. Many of them actually APPRECIATE in value with time as has been pointed out previously. But most are not bought for this reason...

No, the real reason is as follows, spoken only half in jest, by the ultimate wearer when he tried to describe to me how he felt when he first wore his new 16613 LN...

"I have ARRIVED..." he stated with only half a tongue in one cheek.

"You arrived a long time ago, Marek...you just didn't know what time it was when you got there until now" I said.

I cannot say that I feel as though I have "ARRIVED" anywhere else but where I am. I do feel a tremendous sense of wellbeing, of calm and confidence, when I look at the time. Anytime. Anywhere. It is especially awesome to tell the time from the dial of an authentic ROLEX.

I can hardly wait to actually see the watch on Marek's wrist; to see the look in his eyes. THAT is my reward. I've received this prize many times and it is astounding and incomparable. I yearn for it and seek this prize in such places as potlatch. Or as in paying it forward. I find it cleansing, exhilarating. Almost a complete renewal of sorts. I am not making a sale or trying to persuade another against their own instincts or way of thinking. This is PURE JOY. A cleaning out of the mind for the sake of making another mind more joyful and hopeful and confident.

Or as in "Nenmatsu Osoji"...as the Japanese say and do...the "Big Cleaning"; the same feeling for my soul I get whenever I help another soul to feel well, to be built up, to feel special. To get rid of the things we don't need and give to others that they might need or utilize them. Not that anyone needs a ROLEX. Or that I can afford to give them



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away!! However, my goal is always improvement of circumstances. Better arrangements for all concerned. A healing of sorts for all. A total, incredible, "warm fuzzy..."

Yah...maybe I DO feel like I've arrived someplace else...





Chapter Nineteen *Simply Inappropriate Fakes*

One starkly evident realization I've developed over the years and which has been alluded to previously is the sheer number of broad and deep misconceptions that seem to permeate our society. Most have roots in belief structures which, if scrutinized, cannot stand up to inspection.

This is a big issue where Rolex wristwatches in particular are involved. Many times when the identification of the presence of such a watch is confirmed, the immediate assumption is made that the bearer of the culprit "must be rich!" or something. Frequently, certainly in my case ALWAYS, nothing could be more ridiculous or too much more false.

I've had people who are otherwise clearly far more well healed than the present author make such, really, well...stupid comments about my own choice of timepiece. Irks the living daylights out of me. It was once suggested by a person whose car was worth more than my house that I should be literally GIVING my watch to him out of charity (he

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was equally obtuse about other issues, but I digress again). Further, this same chap had just purchased a “Ulysse Nardin” at a higher price point than the Rolex on my wrist! WHY?? Why did he NOT buy the flipping ROLEX?? I just don’t get it.

Some of the arguments made FOR wearing imitations and NOT authentic articles of any type, especially wristwatches, are simply absurd.

“Wear the fake when you don’t want to damage your real one.” Ridiculous. I can assure you that any real Rolex will take much more punishment and come through shining, than ANY replica! Over and over I am forced to prove this. I have simply stopped trying. It is genuinely no use-not only can these advocates of falsehoods and innuendo not afford to purchase a real example of the marque, they will never experience the quality of the real one in real world situations. Fools. Their losses!!

“Fakes are better or better value than real ones...” Great. Get a fake. Silly. This is false. Lies, all lies. Why would you want to immitate the pieces of crap?

“Real Rolex watches are poor timekeepers.” Prove this one and I may buy you a new fake, electric watch so you can be on time. Free!

The arguments are as poorly constructed as the phoney timepieces they not only support and advocate for, but they are meant, obviously, to peddle more phoney Rolex timepieces. A circular solution for a circular argument. Fitting. A little like the New “Democratic” Party. Yah. “Democratic” for sure people. Still waiting for the democrats to show? So far all they have here are decidedly the UNdemocrats. Whatever they are!!

Estimated as said before at between ten and twenty times the annual production of AUTHENTIC pieces (which is just under one million!), there are copious quantities of junk Rolex imitations hitting the streets. In sheer number, with the genuine article being made in staggering quantities in and of themselves, this is almost overwhelming, but they must be selling most of them or they would quit making them!!!

I have a small collection of imitation Rolex watches also, as just about everyone I meet seems to. Most came to me free. A couple I paid FAR too much for, like many people have. Also as with virtually everyone I meet, they cannot be worn for the most

part. The bracelets, no matter what the quality level, seem to simply fall to pieces. On the rare occasion the fake is being worn, unless it is new or close, it is usually easy to tell it is not authentic due to its' condition; poor. If it IS new or is seldom worn, it may be excessively difficult to tell this; usually they look real and pristine. This is a clue also. A real Rolex in similar circumstances will usually not look so GOOD.

The only failsafe way to tell these days is to remove the caseback and have a watchmaker peruse it. If there is any plastic inside, BINGO. It's FAKE. There are even some extremely good replica movements in circulation, though they cost more than most. The best require experts to make an accurate call. However, when they get this good, they are often not really bad watches of their own accord!! Except for the poor bracelets and construction marring the works...

If it is real, this will compromise the seals and the watch will require a service to do it justice upon reassembly. A slippery slope. It is never advisable to buy a Rolex without really knowing how unless you go to a certified reputable AUTHORIZED ROLEX DEALERSHIP/RESELLER.

People, please. They are NOT REAL!! If you want a Rolex, save your pennies or go make a deal with a Rolex Vendor and put one on LAYAWAY!!

There is, as with everything, an abundance of information on the world wide web...the internet has it all. There are many good sites and a whole massive population, it seems, of Rolex aficionados. I couldn't possibly do the subject more than cursory justice in a book like this one. There are a couple of pictures below of a few of the replicas on and from the internet but I will not attempt a definitive analysis about them here. I could never do a better job of the pictures, so here are someone elses. Absolute credit will be given the owner of the pics as soon as I trace where I got them from!! I'm on the internet a lot! Suffice it to say that REAL is REAL and FAKE is FAKE! Anyone should be firmly convinced of the authenticity of something before parting with the money but it is exceedingly difficult if not virtually impossible to do this quickly with many items being counterfeited today. The individuals doing the peddling are trained and practiced. They give new meaning to the term "Flim Flam Man". I have been fooled myself (though usually NOT with watches!) in spite of my efforts to be equally so for the "Good Guys".

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If the proper channels are always followed and we are not driven by emotion, excitement and even greed, most of us will be certain we are getting what we expect and are paying for in any event. The goal is a good watch for a reasonably affordable price, not an excellent watch for next to nothing. Remember that and we all should be better off.

As you may see, telling the real from imitation from the cues and clues which are easily accessed and available externally is a very tough job. Trying to estimate the magnification ratio of the date window Cyclops simply by looking at it or the length of the constantly moving second hand with respect to the dial markings; these are typically the areas which have been worked on the most and hardest and most successfully by the expert counterfeiters...we consumers have little hope of getting this sort of activity right



enough times to be totally confident of our judgements.

There are many who try however. Most sell fakes, they don't buy them...

As these pictures illustrate though, it's easier to discern a more specialized watch's authenticity by what the replica has NOT got; the upgraded case thickness of a real Sea Dweller 4000 is a dead giveaway. However, if the dials were those of Submariner Dates and no additional subterfuge had been attempted here, it would have been an even more complete counterfeiting job. They would have been much harder to tell apart and to positively identify the replica. Very tricky bussiness. I have never let myself become too embroiled in the issue.

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I very simply buy real, genuine, authentic watches of any brand, direct from reputable sources and do my own due diligence.



Never, never trust a stranger...

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[\(Credits for the above excellent photographs go to the exquisite work of Dr. Peter McLean Millar and his extremely instructive August 2006 article “REAL-REPLICA SEA-DWELLER COMPARISON” which anyone may find on the wonderful World Wide Web...\)](#)



I could simply not have done a better job of illustrating these differences than Dr. Millar. Not likely anyone could have really. That link is interactive on the e-book to Dr. Millar's website.



Chapter Twenty Simply Awesome Reals

I became mindful probably too late but nonetheless long ago, that conversations about Rolex watches and such can easily deteriorate into so much hot air and gasconade! This is never one of my goals or intents, but it happens regularly and without warning. Always aware of this, I am ever trying to alter the direction of these exchanges so some point is had or progress made (as with THIS one). It almost seems expected that someone do this because “That’s a pretty nice watch!” always assures a response of some sort.

Loquacity being an obvious weakness, a loss for words about Rolex watches (or most anything, I’m told) is never an issue. Quite the contrary. My interactions are best when either brief, or by myself (that is no one was with me when the converstaion about

watches started with someone else, usually a stranger). Mindful as well of just how very tedious the subject is to most everyone WITHOUT a bit of a passion for it, my initial intent is to test the waters to see just how very interested the other party really is.

I am awed by the massive resurgence of interest in mechanical wristwatches in recent years. My fascination has never waned but I was always aware of the oddity of my affliction. I have had at least two people, both complete strangers, younger males, probably upwardly mobile...cross crowded public areas more than ten paces in distance, to comment on and take closer looks at my black and red bezeled GMT Master II. That is not the only Rolex I or someone close has worn that has received comments; just the only one to get noticed from so far away and move people to take action nonetheless!

To continue the previous thought Rolex watches are certainly not the only watches that are benefiting from this incredible waxing of adorations anew concerning these wonderful arm decorations. There are so many new watch brands and ideas coming out one is truly boggled.

As expected then this has given rise to renewed necessity for highly skilled, trained and experienced watchmakers-not something for which trees are grown. They take time and skilled teachers, specialized in their fields of particular endeavour to develop and hone. This is no longer a skillset confined to the storied borders of historic, bucolic European villages peppered throughout the mountains of Switzerland, Austria, Germany, et al. This is a WORLDWIDE phenomenon now. There are even excellent horological institutions in the United States which offer state of the art and science courses of instruction. Since there have been for many years this will appear a slightly misguided observation especially in light of the fact that the all time high number of schools was reached some time ago and has declined substantially to the current number. However, it is the re-emergence of and renewed interest in this area that I refer to. Watches are becoming a subject d'jour, so-to-speak.

And women. They are also becoming much more than cursorily involved. In every possible vestige of the industry art and profession of horology, the finer sex has pervaded. Good on them too! They are adding incredible depth and insight as expected to what was once primarily the purview of males and their ilk...

Watches. They complete me.

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So, Mr. Jim Dawes called me up the other day as is his bent due to my affliction; nay, addiction, and asked me if my interests ran to the more eclectic and ultra-collectible/rare in timepieces. If there was any room in my collection for an electric Rolex.

And you thought Rolex had as its' raison d'etre; (GADS!! More FRENCH?!) MECHANICAL self-winding (to-boot) watches!

Powered by a mainspring, NOT a BATTERY!

Enter: The OYSTERQUARTZ.

The ROLEX OYSTERQUARTZ DATEJUST below is the anomaly of which I speak. This example of the Oysterquartz Datejust in Rolesor with the special quartz series only Oysterquartz Jubilee bracelet

is an exquisite illustration colloquial of the early quartz watch era and most idoneous of the unique quartz marque (to use as many 'q' words as I could think of in one sentence without looking conspi'q'ous...even if I had to modify a few to my liking!!).

I said I'd like to see it (which I was doing when this poor picture was snapped). And that I'd only ever seen two in forty years, only one for sale years ago and yes, I would have room in my collection for the commensurately correct price.

Also as almost always, the other business I had would have to be done anyway and I knew at least one person who was interested in possibly purchasing such a watch; I decided to gamble.



Right. Some GAMBLE this. I have seldom gambled without calculation for when I have I most frequently have lost.

To me this is a no-brainer.

The Rolex quartz series of watches originated with the accelerating of the electronics age. The first patent for an electronic or more accurately an electromechanical watch was issued to them in 1952, but the first actual commercially produced watch was introduced in nineteen seventy. The watch, the Beta 21, was shared by Rolex and twenty other Swiss brands. This common movement (Ref 5100) had 13 jewels and an

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8000 Hertz quartz oscillator introduced by a consortium started in 1962 known as the "Centre Electronic Horloger."

The Reference 5100 was introduced by Rolex in 1970 and only 1000 Beta 21 units were produced as agreed. The forerunner of "ETA", or "Ebauches SA", manufactured the mechanical movement parts and the quartz oscillators. With its early and extensive experience with the ingenious BULOVA ACCUTRON of 1960 (for which a 360 Hertz tuning fork was first developed by Max Hetzel), that traditional but progressive watchmaker built the hand-driving micromotor for the production models. This was a horizontally mounted miniature pendulum vibrating at 256 Hertz and identical for most purposes to the one in the original Accutron. It allowed the second hand of the original Beta 21 to circulate in a smooth, non-stepped motion around the dial in stark contrast with today's second-stepped motions and even more smoothly than a mechanical "hi-beat" movement of that era; a strange sight!

The Ref. 5100 Rolex was NOT in an Oyster case. Named the Quartz Date 5100 and with identifying markings of only "ROLEX" and "QUARTZ" on the dial, the caseback was a snap-on affair with two alignment pins and a rubber gasket seal. It was not and could not practically be made to be "waterproof;" only "water resistant."

Since the Oyster wristwatch case was invented and introduced to the world in 1926, Rolex had been building a solid and specialized reputation for WATERPROOF WATCHES. This fact, and also that Rolex was forced (with this watch) to use a movement which was being utilised by 16 other firms, had the venerable Rolex Watch Company in an almost indefensible position as far as their long fought convictions were concerned. However, after the fulfilment of their contract, things changed.

Rolex withdrew from the consortium and abandoned the 5100. Development of the OYSTERQUARTZ proceeded full bore. This resulted in what are considered by many to be the most elegant, over-engineered, finest quartz movements ever produced: the 5035/5055 (Date/Day:Date). It also, far more importantly, allowed them to develop the Oyster case for it.

But why stick with the Quartz watch at all?

Electronics brought about timekeeping accuracies simply unobtainable by any traditionally manufactured and contrived mechanical means. No matter what mankind can come up with through machinery manufacture, there is no way it can hold a candle to MOTHER NATURE.

As it turns out she has ensured that mineral crystal matrices (in fact all rigid physically elastic materials) naturally vibrate with very specific harmonic frequencies which are not only measurable, but if the conditions environmentally are suitable and an electric current is applied, the frequencies are extremely, extremely precise. Exactly 32,768 vibrations per second (or Hertz) for the quartz crystal. These vibrations are divided down within an electronic oscillator circuit to eventually drive, through various means, a second hand around the watch dial in very precise one second measured intervals.

An exhaustive description of the concept and workings of piezoelectricity is beyond the scope of this book, as is the discussion of the reason a resonating material is best shaped like a tuning fork. Since this information is also readily available to any interested party I won't elaborate much further here except as appropriate and to refer specifically to the Rolex solution to these issues, which were and are extremely elegant. They have rendered the Rolex quartz watch a desirable and unique timepiece for any serious aficionado but especially for any real Rolex collector!

Now, I am perhaps one of the first to point out this is not the expected way for Rolex. The elegance and complication of a completely mechanical analog watch or clock movement and escapement powered by mechanical spring pressure as opposed to one powered by voltage vibrating a crystal matrix, which then mechanically drives a mechanism powering that same mechanical movement...

When the battery is substituted for the spring and winder, well...there is something very significant changed. The way Rolex took it upon itself to adopt this format of timekeeping and adapt it to the Rolex way of making wristwatches significantly differently and uniquely ROLEX...well, no other watch company could have accomplished the outcome Rolex ultimately achieved.

The first movement of the first Oysterquartz contained a slab-shaped quartz crystal oscillator with a vibration frequency four times that of the original Beta 21, and advanced thermister temperature control for thermal tolerance. It was never submitted

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for various reasons to the institute for chronometer certification. It does not, thus, bear the famous Rolex dial proclamation... "SUPERLATIVE CHRONOMETER OFFICIALLY CERTIFIED". Another extremely rare iteration indeed.

Ultimately, after the initial couple of versions, was born the incredible Mark II Rolex Oysterquartz. For purity of the frequency of "note" produced and harmonics control, it contained a tuning fork shaped quartz crystal. Most salient here is the word OYSTER! Of course, this is the determining factor. The Rolex Oyster case. Splendid.

Let alone the fact that Rolex solved the ubiquitous omnipresent "temperature variation dilemma" suffered by all oscillator driven timekeepers with a special thermister circuit which increased accuracy enormously.

Never mind that the case and bracelet are machined from solid blocks of the purest of the solids from which they are made to extremely exacting tolerances, that the crowns and case backs screw down, like submarine hatches.

Forget the fact that they are ROLEX.

They are extremely accurate, they are eye pleasing and they are real Rolex watches.

Get one while you still can find one...



Chapter Twenty Two Precious Memories

George was my “Best Man”. He has been a fast friend of many of my family members since they have had friends and I still hang out with him. Very cool and excessively salient aspects of our friendship are depth and longevity. Deep lasting loving personal relationships are a specialty of mine.

He also was instrumental in the introduction of this special concept called time to Isaac. When Isaac turned Five years old, he received for his gift from George a beautiful book. Contained within that book was (and, as it turns out is) a lovely TIMEX wristwatch!

Several pictures are included to reduce overall suspense.

This little watch really never got worn but it was used... extensively. The design predates political correctness and the great feminist movements. The ‘milder’ shade of powder blue that I find more than slightly reminiscent of the first Ford Thunderbird Convertible I ever saw that wasn’t BLACK, could nowadays be worn effectively by either gender, as likely as not. When Isaac was coming up it was clearly for the boy. The girl’s was pink.

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Furthermore, Isaac would never have worn a little blue “belt” with a “clock” attached on his wrist...too restrictive! He is now and always has been first and foremost a drummer. It is hastily added that his muse is and was always so...but my own wristwatch had found an ideal home on a cymbal stand early in my life and my unwavering trapdrum setup allowed for a permanent “second home” if the reader will allow. In later life and even now when playing TAIKO drums, my watch is seeking a much longed for perch! I have small leather pouches to carry them in my pockets.

The wonderfully designed little TIMEX was very useful nonetheless as it taught the handler to “read” the dial in a “BEFORE” and “AFTER” manner. It even demarked the “quarters”. It was and is a great watch which still runs like a top and may always because it has been taken care of!

This is why I don’t travel with a ROLEX on my wrist very often. Or while wearing sharkskin shoes. Think on this.

So, Isaac learned to tell time traditionally on a cool pale blue and red black white and silver TIMEX watch but in reality on a digital clock!

Isaac doesn’t like the details. Just the facts, sir/ma’am. No fights. He’s built like a bear anyway, as well as not being a pushover.



A GRIZZLY bear! But he is as nice as the day is long and he has a bigger heart.

Anyway, he quite literally growled at me when I asked him how old he was when he received the gift or whether it was a Christmas or a Birthday present!! It's existence however, may be owed to none other than my long ago betrothed.



Without popping the caseback, which I am always loathe to do to a working watch not requiring immediate service, a cursory examination reveals a genuine rubber strap with chromed endtips of steel MADE IN ENGLAND and a base metal case with a stainless steel caseback.

The book is Canadian, but I know not where the manual winder itself was constructed...it takes a wind, holds and uses it like new. Only a few winds to full, but still, it runs and keeps time. Thirty one years old! Amazing to me.

TIMEX has always amazed me, in fact. Takes a Lickin' and KEEPS ON TICKIN'! ROLEX really may also deserve such an amazing accolade. They have searched for but not found their own and still they miss the mark. LEXUS caught it then let it go!!! The RELENTLESS pursuit of perfection. How adept, appropriate, AWESOME.

It is ROLEX that has "won" at the overall game. All things considered, they are the ones to be compared and measure up to. ROLEX has succeeded in becoming, if not the

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only universally recognizable luxury brand of wristwatches, then certainly the most readily so. ROLEX is the “brand to beat”.

I know, since I write a lot, that I could easily keep writing this book for a very long time. It is a sincere hope that you have enjoyed this foray into my life with watches. They are a hobby to be certain. They are indeed a PASSION.

My Passion.



Chapter Twenty One Precious Vintage

Though it could easily be said that the present author is a SUBMARINER “NUT”, I am also enamoured of the MILGAUSS and the GMT Master II. Vintage Rolex watches have grabbed my fascination in recent years to be sure. My very first vintage Rolex, a 1939 ROLEX PRECISION “GOLDEN EGG” ROTOR SELF-WINDING, is still one of my most treasured and intriguing. Though I have owned it for more than twenty years and have done a fair deal of research on it, never have I seen another one in the “flesh” and not even a picture in a book (or anywhere) with an original metal factory matching Oyster bracelet! This is a rare watch! I can only guess what it might be worth but it’s not for sale. It is on the left above.

It could only be considered mid-sized today. But with respect to the vast majority of the present fad of CLOCK-sized wristwatches it is really quite small, comparatively. This makes the prized possession 1955 ROLEX OYSTER PERPETUAL OFFICIALLY CERTIFIED CHRONOMETER, my first authentic “BUBBLEBACK”, positively tiny!! It is on the right above and is a marvel of mechanical engineering and watchmaking prowess.

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This was manufactured (as has previously been mentioned), in the year I was born, 1955. It has undergone a complete and painstakingly undertaken restoration overhaul by an extremely seasoned watchmaker. So pristine are the innards and impressively constructed are it's components, in such condition is this machine that it moved this vastly experienced artisan and technician to actually write me a descriptive and explanatory letter, essentially, of appreciation for allowing him to be "the one" to work on it!! He considered it a "privilege". Now THERE is a WATCH NUT!!

It is now far too valuable to ever part with. To ME. To HIM, even. The letter veritabily glowed and gushed with pride of his obviously heartfelt workmanship. And proud he deserves to be.

This watch occupies "first dibs" on one of my Rolex watch winders. It runs with an incredible accuracy of plus or minus some ten seconds per month!! Of course, these are controlled conditions and it is not worn (or abused!) in any way, but it could be! It also has an original matching metal Oyster bracelet, but it is expandable! It is SPRING-LOADED! And it has rivets holding the links successively together, rather than the more modern (and better looking!) pins. Today, only a small man or a woman would look



proportionally correct wearing it.

There is no mammonism here. I hope the reader can see that wealth has become a secondary, even non-existent pursuit. The watches develop 'personal', individual traits in the minds of the collector. Though they remain essentially static, they are indeed unique, every single one! They do run, but cannot do so alone. The original owner, I like to fantasize, was likely a doctor or lawyer or some such professional in need of consistently



accurate and at once durable timekeeping he could rely on. He obviously chose right. So why is it called the funny name the "BUBBLEBACK"? Why do YOU think!!? Just look at the distended back of this 1955.

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It brings me to my next favorite vintage Rolex, the 1952 “SEMI-BUBBLEBACK”. Not quite so bulbous a back, don’t you know!

Resplendant dressed with its’ vintage leather watchstrap, it bears the chronometer certification of the day but NO SCREW DOWN CROWN. It has the infamous “SUPER OYSTER WINDING CROWN”. But more, as does the “GOLDEN EGG”, it has an ersatz “Explorer Dial”. Traditionally, from the time of the original EXPLORER watch made famous by New Zealander Sir Edmund Percival Hillary on his May 29, 1953 first successful summit of Mount Everest with his Sherpa Tenzing

Norgay of Nepal, this configuration of dial numbers and markers has loosely been referred to this way. A large Rolex Coronet at the 12 position with arabic 3,6 & 9 and several varieties of other markers, harken to this arrangement even if the dial being



referred to was manufactured long before the actual “EXPLORER” model reference was even issued.

The SUPER OYSTER WINDING CROWN bears closer elucidation. This was a very special but historically short-lived footnote in Rolex development. Special in the same sort of way that the quartz watches are special. Perhaps I’ll say “different”.

Rolex, it should be mentioned here, is said to be notoriously uncooperative in sharing corporate information. In spite of the apparent barrage of information and DISinformation concerning everything Rolex, it seems whatever has become general public knowledge has either been carefully released by the company itself, or it has been painstakingly ferreted out over time (and with much attained experience) out of the nooks and crannies of the newsworld’s underground.

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I hasten to add this is conjecture as well as unbiased and without any prejudice. I have no experience here. I have never spoken to nor attempted to communicate with Rolex or anyone. About anything. I am one of the ferrets!

It is or at least it was said that the Rolex OYSTER winding crown, the one that screws down, is (heaven forbid)...ugly!!

Also, that it is hard to use! Thus one might easily forget to screw it down! Thus rendering it really, useless!

So vociferous was this sentiment in the late 1940's, apparently, that the powers-that-be at Rolex made a corporate decision, after producing that ugly virtually useless device since 1926 (ultra successfully, I might add), to develop a winder that did NOT screw in; it PRESSED in. Thus, it could be wound without the terrible burden of unscrewing it first, and it would never fail. It would, if serviced and cared for properly, never leak!

Between 1949 and 1953 a limited number of these beautiful specially signed crowns were manufactured and they are becoming extremely and increasingly extinct.

Why? Because this is NOT POSSIBLE, that's why!

This experiment ended in spectacular and definitive demonstration that a pressure fit must be held under pressure to prevent the possibility of leakage. And without fanfare, to prevent embarrassment, Rolex simply "swept them under the rug", so-to-speak.

(To their immense credit, Rolex was simultaneously continuing development on the soon to be developed, spectacular, TRIPLOCK winding crown soon to be fitted to the most waterproof watch ever developed...)

However, let's get back to what's good about them. These crowns are gorgeous if you like crowns! And they do work.

Exceedingly well! They are for most purposes quite sufficient. But in time they loose their fit. They would have to, wouldn't they?

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Also, those that haven't been replaced as part of maintenance or regular servicing and which are still attached to a worthwhile watch, are definitely scarce.

And the value of such a watch is unlikely to fall.

Not necessarily the case with every watch, but most at least maintain their value. Such as the ROLEX Air King or the Pepsi GMT Master, both pictured in much earlier chapters. Especially if they have period-correct metal Jubilee bracelets...



*A "Rolex Canada Only" factory issued GMT Master "Pepsi" bezel and all, with an ORIGINAL Jubilee Bracelet FROM THE FACTORY!!
From the "Norbert Brinkhaus Collection"*

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Epilogue Simply Unbelievable...

A very strange but very true thing happened to me just as I was preparing to finish this book up, just this week.

I took a phone call (on his day off), from one of the young chaps, also a professed and budding watch lover (who sports a rather large two tone replica Bvlgari) who both cuts my hair and more importantly gives me hot towel shaves. The call is accompanied on his end by an introduced telephone friend. It seems his friend has found or indirectly purchased a watch. Well, the story went like this.

I don't know this fellow at all and the barber I've known maybe a little over a year. Several of the barbers in this shop do shaves and I have had shaves from several. You might say I'm a bit of a hot shave slut. It is a dying artform though. And only a very few practitioners seem to remain in our neck of the woods anyhow. Arrg.

So the friend was put on the phone and I was told he had purchased a storage locker at auction. Okay. It had high end stuff in it like a quad and a high volume pressure

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washer for semi-tractors and some jewellery. Okay. And some furniture, a gold chain worth many hundred dollars and a watch. A Rolex watch. In a box in a storage locker.

Right.

“I can tell you that I cannot say a word about it without looking at it.”

“Of course...” said the friend on the phone.

For expedience, because I was indisposed and simply could not prolong my pending disbelief, he was instructed to my location within an hour or so. He arrived with a friend. A friends' friend with a friend. Curiouser and...

Business was conducted outside at the end of my driveway outside of the autos, even. This was informal! He handed the watch to me and a quick perusal without a loop told me little. A loop revealed much though.

A Rolex dial is essentially perfect. This Datejust in Rolesor with a Jubilee bracelet, gold diamond set dial, slash markers and large coronet at twelve, was in almost pristine condition. Under ten power magnification, the edge discrimination and precision of placement of such things as the coronet and the marker/diamond settings is stunning and striking. The length of the second hand is of particular note. It comes all the way out to half way down the smallest of second markers at the outer circumference of the dial. The “J” in the word “DATEJUST”. It must be correct and was. All marks, letters, slashes, boxes...everything is perfect. Under ten to fifteen power, I have never seen a perfect replica.

It seemed at first blush as if it had not been worn much. I guessed it to be a 1990 right there. Just a guess. I said 1988 to 1993 out loud. (A check the next day confirmed 1989-1990 manufacture). It was also said aloud about how beautiful an example it was. I am an honest man and I took it this is the reason I was initially consulted.

I told him I thought it was real. I also said I wanted to see it with the back off of it. That I would not remove it. That my friend Andre Affolter at the Swiss Watch Clinic would do it, the next day. We arranged to meet there at two thirty on Tuesday.

When he showed up there he had brought yet another friend; his four year old son, who seemed hell bent on trying to break one of Andre's glass display cases! Was this also a forewarning? The boy, lord bless him, had to be warned by the shopkeeper, and that even before daddy, to stop his tirade!

With the back on, my skills render me as adroit as anyone at discerning a replica, even a good one (we are not always correct), but I will not compromise the seal of a Rolex unnecessarily. Authentication is a necessity.

With his spectacle mounted loupe and a handheld, he announced that he thought at first look that it was real. My first vindication.

As always, Andre gave us the obligatory "...you know the deal..." talk about removing backs on any watch let alone one of these. Maybe he can tell you that. He took the watch into the back with him for about two minutes.

When he came out the back had been removed, replaced with two threads down, and displayed as such.

With a loving artisan's touch, he carefully placed the watch crystal down onto the glass countertop and removed the back with a grin properly placed on his lips.

The lid was held approximately perpendicular to the horizontal movement and he motioned with his nose, yes his NOSE, to look into the watchworks.

We both, the dude and I, and even his excited but unfortunate floorbound kid, we all tried for a glimpse; I could see it clearly though thanks to the watchmaker.

Authentic. A genuine Rolex. In a FRIKIN' storage locker!! Now the questions start in my head!

So, I tell the guy, honestly, what I think it's worth, how much it likely would cost to replace, what it likely cost new. His eyes glazed over. Great.

"But how much would YOU pay me for it?" came the inevitable query.

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“WAY LESS THAN IT IS WORTH” I said, rather emphatically, attempting to remove the glaze.

“How much is that?”

“\$1,500.00...” I said, without a blink. The glaze was still present.

“Are you sure you can’t go \$2,000.00?” he whined.

“Yes!” I answered.

“Look, I do not need any more watches. I have to sell this if I buy it. Quickly. You get the drift?” He didn’t appear to be listening.

“You have a son. You should read my (unfinished) book. You should keep the watch.”



Guess what. That’s mystery man’s wrist below with this beautiful watch on it.

“\$1,750.00! That’s it!”

“\$1,800.00 said friend. Again I said NO emphatically! Again he proved he had crap in his auditory canals.

This was Tuesday afternoon. He had paid Andre.

I said “I’ll give you \$1,800.00 but not until Friday as I have \$400.00 only now. Agreed?” WE SHOOK ON THIS DEAL!

Now, I believe I bought this watch, but to make sure I went to the bank the next morning and got the cash. I phoned him.

“I have the money for your watch in my pocket in cash right now. Where can we meet?”

“Well, uh, Jeff, um, uh, I have some bad news for you on that...” Here we go, right? This garbage I had heard before.

“You sold the watch, RIGHT!?” I exclaimed.

“No, no, no, I didn’t SELL it yet...”

“YET!?” I asked pointedly. What a PUTZ. Oh well, easy come easy go thought I. But the next part floored me (and confirmed my suspicions about his character!).

“No, I took the watch in to Brinkhaus and the guy told me it was worth way more than you said...about twenty two thousand...”

“WHAT!?! Who? What’s this person’s name? I know everyone at Brinkhaus!! There is no possible chance this is true!” blurted I.

And wait for it. Wait for it...

“Uh, I can’t remember...”

I slurred out “Weak!!” and laughed.

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"Do you expect me to believe that?!!!" I queried in the worst possible tone.

"I know essentially EVERYONE at Brinkhaus!!" I continued.

"Yah, and the guy's gonna give me \$8,500.00 for it and he gave me a deposit!!!" persisted this obviously confused fellow.

"I'll call you right back" and with that I called my good man Jim Dawes to accuse him of scooping me!

On his private line.

"Lies, all LIES..." said James Dawes. "I would never buy one of those." No such story or sequence of events transpired at that establishment. It's not WHAT you know, it's...

So I phoned dude back.

Now, "He doesn't work there, he was just there and made an offer to me..."

I had better start looking around diligently again. The last hot towel shave I had there, may have been the last one there...

I contemplated not relating this last anecdote at all but it really happened and I am still trying to come to terms with why...

Oh look...my phone is ringing...with a "Blocked Number"...

That, at this time of day on my private line, usually means Jim Dawes about another watch he's come across that I might be interested in...most likely another Rolex...

I have to go now....

Please look for others of this series and my other writings.

So much to say and so little time.

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- 2) [Professional shots by Nate Creasey, Indelible Photography, Calgary Alberta Canada;](#)
- 3) [Mr. John Putnam of Cool Vintage Watches.com](#)
- 4) [Mr. Norbert Brinkhaus and everyone at Brinkhaus Jewellers.](#)
- 5) [My iPhone and own cameras, mostly...](#)

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A Very Special Thank You...

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Thank You also to Apple Computers, The Apple Store and Steve Jobs, wherever you are...

Corollary (Hah!)

There will be other writings on this subject as there is enough material already for another tome of at least these proportions. Only for Rolex lovers, I'm sure. For example, Norbert Brinkhaus has shared info about Rolex Canada and the early days that only he would know; many other current events have come down, past events have been recollected but not conveyed hereby and there are continuing stories to relate as THIS story is a never ending one, thank goodness! I sincerely hope the reader has found some common ground and enjoyment here. Please, keep enjoying! Down with REPLICAS!

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Appendix-A

What happens when you boil an Oyster.

We asked an independent lawyer to witness this experiment.

This is the report he wrote afterwards:

"On behalf of Montres Rolex SA, of 3 Rue François Dussaud, Geneva, I the undersigned, Robert Rieder, Geneva Lawyer, certify that I went to the studios of a photographer.

"There, I met the head of advertising and the chief of the mechanical department of Rolex.

"They explained that they intended to photograph an experiment consisting of immersing a normal production gold Rolex Oyster Perpetual chronometer in a receptacle filled with water, which would be heated to boiling point, without any deleterious effect whatsoever to the watch.

"I did in fact see that with the aid of a bottle of propane gas, the water was heated in the receptacle until it boiled (a thermometer in the water read 100°C approximately). After 10 minutes boiling, the watch was removed from the receptacle and I was able to



see that the watch functioned perfectly."

Signed M. Robert Rieder. Obviously, nobody in his right mind would want to boil his Rolex.

So what does it all prove? Simply that a Rolex is virtually indestructible. And that the year it takes our craftsmen to build each watch is time well spent.

That year starts with the

making of the Oyster case, which is carved out of a single, solid block of 18ct. gold or surgical stainless steel. This requires 162 separate operations.

Into this case is fitted a hand-tuned, rotor self-winding movement which is so accurate that it has been officially certified as a Chronometer.

Even the winder is special. It's a patented Rolex invention, which actually screws down onto the Oyster case. Inside it's sealed for extra protection.

The craftsmen who build Rolex watches are naturally very proud of their work. And so are the men who wear them. Men like Jackie Stewart and Thor Heyerdahl.

Our watches have survived all sorts of incredible experiences. You may never want to boil your Rolex. But if you ever get into hot water, it's nice to know it can take it.

Owning one is almost as satisfying as making one.


ROLEX
of Geneva



Pictured: The Rolex Datejust. Available in 18ct. gold or stainless steel, with matching bracelet.

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Mother's Grand Baby Clock on her mantle

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JEFF CREASEY

Author's Biography

Jeffery R. Creasey, BSc., is a born and raised fierce Western Canadian. He has lived in Alberta all (but the first four months!) of his eventful life. Born fourth in a family of five boys to an Italian mother and an English father, he grew up ready and able to fight for what he believes in. An accomplished martial artist, drummer, musician and classically educated scientist and inveterate reader, his interests are diverse. He writes about many. He retired at fifty from a lettered and successful career in the financial services industry of twenty-seven years. Hobbies include motorcycles, fine automobiles, downhill skiing, collecting (of many fine things), investing, real estate, writing books and spending valuable time with his two vibrant grandsons. A graduate of The University of Calgary (Astrophysics 1980) and numerous post graduate studies, he, his wife Toni and their three adult sons live, work and play in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains in Southern Alberta, Canada.

Wristwatches are ubiquitous and a crossover interest for and of the masses.

A fully interactive electronic book is in the final stages of construction at this writing along with a brand new website. Coming, a beautiful full colour COFFEETABLE PICTUREBOOK. A true lover can never see enough exquisite watches...

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I remember the day I finally “took the plunge” so-to-speak-when Mr. Kangas said to me “You’ve been coming in here for years. I’ve watched you get big enough to wear one of these watches. When are you going to make a decision to go ahead with buying one for yourself?”

I looked at him and said “If I buy a watch, I want a good one. A very good one. One that looks like it might want to make me coffee in the morning...”

At this conversation’s conclusion a pact was formed which would last almost two years...and would nurture a lifelong *PASSION*.

My Rolex; My Passion© *The Story of a Lifetime Companion*, is the personal record of the birth and subsequent growth of the fascination of a young boy which evolved into the obsession of a still young grandfather. This has continued more than forty years. A number of stories and anecdotes are related through this engaging, sometimes humorous, but always entertaining and informative novelette.

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