

The NAWCC Ward Francillon Time Symposium: 38 and Counting

by Bob Frishman, FNAWCC, Time Symposium Committee Chair (MA)

On September 20, the 2018 NAWCC Ward Francillon Time Symposium will commence at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, MI, marking the NAWCC's 38th annual educational conference. The first was in 1980 in King of Prussia, PA, and, except for 2009, these yearly flagship events have offered NAWCC members the opportunity to meet for three days of in-depth presentations on key horological topics.

Named in 2003 for NAWCC Past President Ward Francillon (1928–2004), who provided the founding inspiration and who chaired the Seminar Committee for 15 years, these events harken back to the very first years of the NAWCC when our meetings were strictly educational, with no buying and selling components.

A complete list of the symposium locations and themes can be found on the following page and on the NAWCC site, and event summaries often appeared in the *Bulletin*. Each was organized by individuals in local chapters who devoted hundreds of volunteer hours. Subjects included "Pennsylvania Clocks" (1980), "New England Handcrafted Clocks and Watches" (1982), "British Horology: 1650–1775" (1985), "French Horology" (1988), "Railroad Timekeeping" (1996), "Vienna Regulators" (1999), "Horology and Science" (2004), "Electric Horology" (2008), and "Carriage Clocks" (2012).

Two of these events stand out as especially noteworthy international gatherings. In 1993 "The Longitude Symposium" took place at Harvard University,



Ward Francillon at the 1993 NAWCC 50th National Convention.

supplemented by a superb horology exhibit at Harvard's scientific instrument collection. Writer Dava Sobel attended, and her subsequent book *Longitude* popularized the John Harrison Longitude Prize story. Twenty years later, on the other coast, "Time for Everyone" was presented at Caltech, again with a roster of eminent international speakers, including a Nobel Laureate. This event was tirelessly shepherded by Jim Cipra, my predecessor as committee chair, who also helped arrange an unprecedented exhibit of rare Thomas Tompion clocks and watches at the venue.

Both conferences are precedents for my commitment to organize these historic conferences at famed cultural institutions. This

process began in 2016 at the Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library, founded by Henry Francis du Pont and home to more than 100,000 examples of American decorative arts of the highest quality. The museum mounted its first-ever clock exhibit to coincide with our symposium. At our 2017 event at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, two museum curators lectured on that world-class institution's horological holdings, including clocks not on view. This year's conference focuses in part on Henry Ford's little-known lifelong horological passion and collecting, reflected in the thousands of clocks and watches still in his museum's collections.

Beginning in 1984, after the NAWCC Museum received from New York University (NYU) a large portion of the James Arthur collection of clocks and watches, every symposium has opened with a

History of the Ward Francillon Time Symposium

1980	King of Prussia, PA	Pennsylvania Clocks
1981	Rockford, IL	Watches and Clocks
1982	Sturbridge, MA	New England Handcrafted Clocks and Watches
1983	Lancaster, PA	Pennsylvania Horology
1984	Hartford, CT	The Great Horological Transition: Handcrafting to Manufacture
1985	Portland, OR	British Horology: 1650-1775
1986	Dearborn, MI	Horology & Transportation
1987	Rochester, NY	Upper New York State Clocks
1988	Santa Monica, CA	French Horology
1989	Washington, DC	Public Timekeeping
1990	Houston, TX	The Evolution of Mass Production in Horology
1991	Fort Mitchell, KY	Midwestern Horology
1992	Cleveland, OH	Precision Timekeeping
1993	Cambridge, MA	The Longitude Symposium
1994	Toronto, Ontario	Canadian Horology
1995	Harrisburg, PA	American Tall Case Clockmaking
1996	Rockford, IL	Railroad Timekeeping
1997	Bristol, CT	Time and Time Again: Yankee Technology and Timekeepers for the Working Man
1998	Williamsburg, VA	Southern Horology
1999	Minneapolis, MN	Vienna Regulators
2000	London, England	1,000 Years of British Timekeeping
2001	Covington, KY	The Wristwatch-Timepiece of the 20th Century
2002	Boxborough, MA	Boston: Cradle of Industrial Watchmaking
2003	St. Louis, MO	The Torsion Pendulum Clock and Its Place in Horology
2004	Portland, OR	Horology and Science
2005	Houston, TX	Inventions and Inventors in American Horology
2006	Cleveland, OH	American Watchmaking II: From Craft to Industry
2007	York, PA	The Impact of Mass Production on the American Clock Industry
2008	Springfield, IL	Electric Horology
2009		(no symposium)
2010	Williamsburg, VA	On Conservation, Restoration, and Repair
2011	Hebron, KY	Ohio Horology
2012	Bloomington, MN	Carriage Clocks
2013	Pasadena, CA	Time for Everyone
2014	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	Beauty, Precision and Craftsmanship of French Clocks
2015	Houston, TX	Mechanical Music & Marvels
2016	Winterthur, DE	Clocks at Winterthur
2017	Boston, MA	Horology in Art
2018	Dearborn, MI	Cars, Clocks, and Watches
2019	Nuremberg, Germany	Time—Made in Germany

James Arthur Lecture. His original bequest in the 1920s included funding for lectures on "Time and Its Mysteries," and several of those were delivered and published at NYU. The roster of later NAWCC James Arthur keynoters also is on our website and includes such well-known experts as David Landes, George Daniels, Jonathan Betts, Ted Crom, Chris Bailey, Henry Fried, Seth Atwood, and Dana Blackwell. Robert Cheney will receive the honor this year.

Planning already is underway for the future. In 2019, for the second time our symposium will cross the Atlantic Ocean. The first was in 2000 when we convened in London, England, for "1,000 Years of British Timekeeping." Next year, in partnership with the Deutsche Gesellschaft Fur Chronometrie, we will meet at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg to learn about 700 years of German horology. Conferences already are being developed for 2020 in New York City: "250 Years of the Lever Escapement" and 2021 in Philadelphia: "Horology and The American Revolution."

Each symposium must raise sufficient funds, through registration fees, donations, and sponsorships, to cover its costs. The NAWCC supplies only advertising in our publications and advance seed money if needed, so member backing and attendance is essential. I greatly appreciate the encouragement I have received from participants and the NAWCC Board and staff. I am grateful, too, for the help of my committee members Dug North, Rick Merritt, and Katie Knaub. With education as a primary mission of our Association, the NAWCC Ward Francillon Time Symposium will continue to contribute to our status as the world's largest and, we hope, best nonprofit horological organization.