

MAKING FUN OF TIME—*Men Who Grew Up to Become Kids*
By J Blair Brown

The little tike was curious. He'd seen the timepiece in his home for years now. Although he wasn't quite sure of the concept of time, he was most interested in its constant ticking of the clock. *Why does it make that sound? Where does the sound come from? Why do the pointed things keep going round and round? Why do they move so slowly?*, he wondered.

On one particular afternoon, his curiosity got the better of him. He needed to know just how this clock worked. He decided to investigate. Within minutes the clock and all its parts were strewn across the floor. From that moment he was hooked on time.

He was just four years old.

Rick Stanley has come a long way since that day, over fifty years ago, when his parents walked in on him and what was formerly the family clock. Since then, his childlike curiosity has piqued even greater. So while life got in the way of his dissecting of timepieces, it certainly hasn't diminished his fascination with time...or the making of it.

His attraction for knowing just how things work eventually led him to the study of mechanical engineering, the study of how things move, how they're designed, what makes them (dare I say?) *tick*. Rick would go on to graduate from the University of California, receiving a degree in the subject. That degree has been paramount in providing for his wife and three children.

While Rick worked hard inside and outside of the home, one son, Vince was watching.

Like Father...

Vince Stanley grew up to watch his father intently. He'd study his father's design theory and methodology and all types of tools needed to make his timepieces. He would help modify the design and make custom parts – anything to be a part of the process of clock-making. He had become a prime student.

Eventually Vince would go on to study mechanical engineering in college, obtaining his Bachelor's degree. Yes, Vince was bitten by the same inquisitive virus that had overtaken his father decades earlier, perhaps more so.

Vince developed a passion for woodworking and metalworking—skills that would come in handy in creating timepieces. So while Vince would go on to work with an international corporation, he'd come back home to work with his father on more timepieces, applying these new skills to an old concept.

With Rick's experience in clock making, and Vince's skills with wood and metals, along with each bringing his own passion to the craft, these two men would eventually stretch the boundaries much further than even they could have imagined.

Not Your Grandfather's Clock

The two opened a small workshop, which would eventually become Stanley Clockworks, a small two-man operation located in Millville, PA.

In the beginning of their venture, Rick and Vince would cater to the locals and just about anyone who would stop by with a beaten and tattered clock in need of repair. They were eager to assist their friends and neighbors, but would eventually realize that their goal of creating non-traditional, themed timepieces was not being nurtured.

Restructuring the workshop to devote all their time to building the clocks they wanted to build, they fostered a "what if" attitude. *What if we stretched the clock laterally and built it that way? What if the public could view the mechanisms in order to see the inner workings of the clock? What if we built a clock around a particular theme? What if children could experience the clocks up close and personal? Would it create an interest for them?*

Equipped with a newfound enthusiasm, they set out on a journey to both entertain and educate the public in the science of time – and an even larger challenge of making time fun.

Themed Timepieces

At Stanley Clockworks, each timepiece is a one-of-a-kind creation, surrounding a particular theme. For instance, the Walking Clock, a most creative and colorful of all the timepieces, stands at 9 feet high and weighs over 300 lbs. It's the only timepiece of its kind in the world. Able to view each working mechanism of this innovative timepiece, it stretches some 24 feet long and "walks" nearly 2,800 miles per year.

With 12 real shoes walking to and fro on the clock's "boardwalk," and taking over 13 million steps per year, one finds a definite influence of Dr. Seuss in its creation.

Another extraordinary creation is the Timber Clock, which takes one back to the Renaissance time period. Standing 10 feet high and weighing over 700 lbs, it boasts two large rocks as part of its inner workings, which are weighted perfectly to maintain accurate timing. With the inner workings visible to the viewer, this clock is topped with a large tower bell, circa 1800's, adding to the clock's flair and individuality.

The Water Clock, at over six feet high, resembles a chemistry tube-within-a-tube and is operated by two fish tanks. The outer tube of the clock features the "hour" of the day,

while the inner tube represents the “minutes.” With different colored water in each tube, the time of the day is quite visible from any angle in the room.

The list goes on and on, from the Train Clock, Teeter Totter, Domino Clock and many more.

One would never guess that this unsuspecting, out-of-the-way workshop in Millville, PA, boasts endless possibilities to the human imagination – simply through the ancient concept of time.

So do yourself a favor: log onto Stanley Clockworks’ website at www.stanleyclockworks.com and let your imagination take flight.

At Stanley Clockworks – it’s all about time.

For more information on Stanley Clockworks, log onto www.stanleyclockworks.com.