



Tick Talk - Chapter #33 N.A.W.C.C.

November 2025

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE TORONTO CHAPTER OF NAWCC

MEETINGS ARE AT The Neilson Park Creative Centre

56 Neilson Drive in Etobicoke

President's Message



Hi folks

September was a busy month for the Chapter. Thanks are extended to Chapter members Doug Thomson, Emil Cocirla, Jeff Crouch and Jien Yang who represented us at the Toronto Timepiece Show, a two-day extravaganza held at the Meridian Centre in North York.

Our regular September meeting was held on September 21. Over 60 members and guests attended the meeting, and the mart was quite active. I enjoyed making a presentation on automata and was encouraged that we had to add more chairs in the room to accommodate those interested.

Russ Smith researched a remarkable display to accompany the presentation. In addition, there were some real live automata displayed.

Our November 16 meeting is at the Nielson Park Creative Centre. As usual, the meeting will begin at noon. There will of course be our mart, and the schedule is available elsewhere in this Tick Talk.

Remember, there is a silent auction available for you to sell one or two items rather than using a full table. There is no cost for sellers for the silent auction or mart tables. The silent auction works this way. Fill out a bid sheet with your name and indicate the amount of money you'd like to receive for the item. The bid sheet is placed next to the item. Bidders add their bid amount on the sheet. Bidding may rise (as in a regular auction) and even exceed the seller's price.

At the end of the auction, buyer's and sellers meet at the auction table. If the bidder has met or exceeded the bidder's price then the seller is obligated to sell the item to the bidder and the bidder is, of course, obligated to pay the seller.

If, however, the seller is willing to sell the item for the bid price that is under the set price, this can be negotiated and a deal struck if both are in

agreement. Try this out and see if it works for you!

Everyone will be interested and can learn from our presentation at the November meeting. Ryan Lynds will be showing us how to buy and sell watches online and how to build an online presence. This is information that is extremely relevant and pertinent to all of us whether we are watch or clock enthusiasts and whether we are buyers or sellers. We are very indebted to Ryan for offering to share his knowledge with us and I am sure you won't want to miss it.

For our display for the November meeting, we invite you to bring along your favourite horological item (clock, watch, tool, book, whatever). As an enthusiast we often lose insight as to what our fellow enthusiasts enjoy and value. Sharing our interests will help us broaden our awareness of horology and enable us to find others who have similar collecting interests. We strongly encourage you to participate in this display.

I will close with a reminder that this is our last meeting for the calendar year. You can pay your dues for 2026 at the desk at the meeting or avail yourself of the e-transfer mentioned elsewhere. Our Chapter has had the same dues (\$35) for all of this century so in spite of

rampant inflation, elsewhere, we are the best bargain in town.

Looking forward to seeing you at the meeting,
Cheers,

Bob



50/50 Winner Donald Patrick



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FOR OUR NOVEMBER MEMBER DISPLAY PLEASE BRING THAT FAVORITE CLOCK, WATCH, TOOL, BOOK, ETC TO SHARE WITH OTHER MEMBERS

Meeting Agenda Sunday November 16

11:30 Dealer setup

12:00 NOON Mart and Silent Auction opens

1:15 Silent Auction closes

1:20 50/50 Draw / Member Display

1:30 Buying and Selling Watches & creating an online presence by Ryan Lynds

4:00 Meeting closes

Upcoming Chapter 33 Meeting Dates

Sunday January 25, 2026

Sunday March 29, 2026

Sunday May 3, 2026

Sunday September 20, 2026

Sunday November 15, 2026



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A SPECIAL INVITATION FROM OTTAWA CHAPTER 111

The Ottawa Valley Watch and Clock Collectors Club, Chapter 111 cordially invites you to attend.

"Coffee Clutch " with some of the Ottawa chapter folks. This is a meeting by Zoom with members from other clubs chatting, discussing, and sharing ideas and your success or frustration with work on clocks or watches. It's conducted in a friendly format and people find it very satisfying and helpful. It was initiated by Ottawa executives a while back and it's showing to be very popular.

The meetings are coordinated by Paul Sonnichsen who serves as Secretary of the Ottawa chapter.

It starts at noon every Tuesday and is only for one hour. Please give it a try. You may actually enjoy it and learn a thing or two.

If you would like to join the Zoom Meeting, here are the coordinates:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87474802762?pwd=Bfz56hUAGtJsVuglNs5XETisfaLYOZ.1>

CHAPTER 33 E-TRANSFER NOW AVAILABLE

Chapter 33 members are now able to pay membership dues through the convenience of e-transfer.

This is a payment method many members have asked for and we are happy to announce that you can now pay your membership dues by sending payment to chapter33.nawcc@gmail.com.

We want to thank Bill Keel for working to set this up and hope you can take advantage of this when renewing your membership.

CHAPTER 33 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

If you haven't done so, we encourage members to renew their membership by paying your 2025 dues.

Membership dues cover a full calendar year January to December.

Payment options are:

- e-transfer by sending to chapter33.nawcc@gmail.com .Please include your name, email address and phone number in the comments section of the e-transfer.
- In person at a Chapter 33 meeting
- Mail a cheque payable to Chapter 33 Toronto

For payment by mail,
please send your payment for \$35.00 (Canadian dollars) to:

EMIL COCIRLA
3253 FOLKWAY DR.
MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO
L5L 2A1

Please make cheques payable to: CHAPTER 33 Toronto





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Lest We Forget





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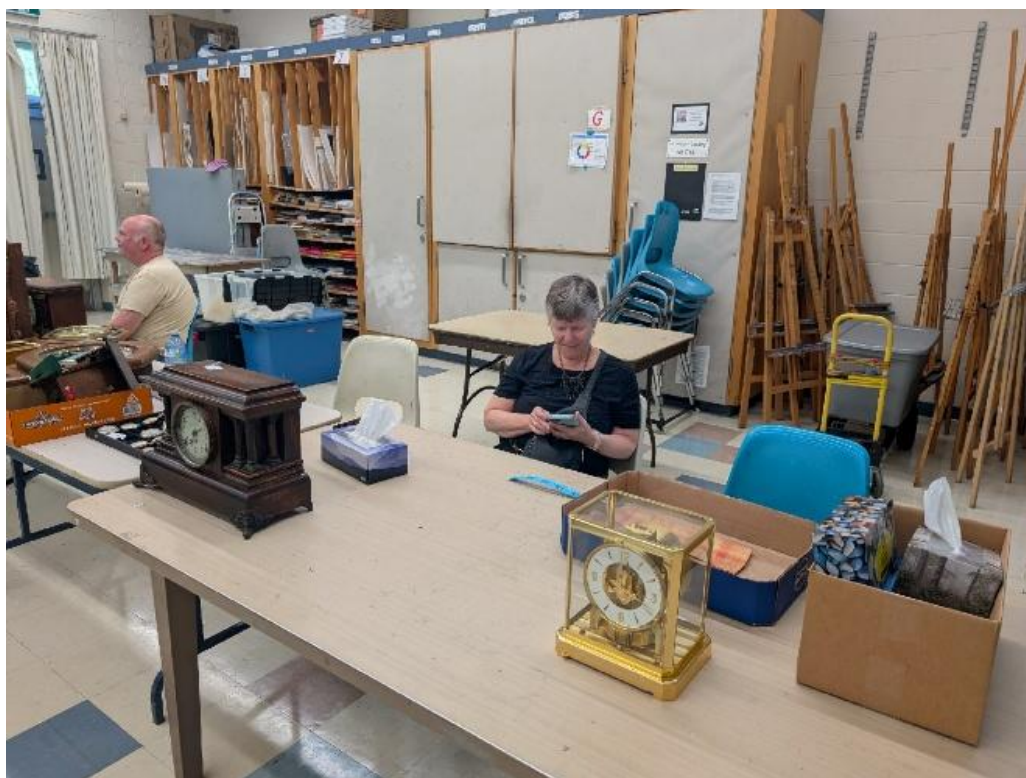
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September Mart





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Automata

By Bob Pritzker - Chapter 33

Bob's presentation, "*Automata*," provided an insightful journey through the history, evolution, and cultural significance of automata—mechanical devices designed to move and act as if alive. The Bob began by defining automata as "*moving devices having a concealed mechanism, so they appear to operate spontaneously*." This definition framed a fascinating exploration of humanity's enduring fascination with imbuing inanimate objects with life.

Historical and Mythological Origins

Since ancient times, the idea of lifelike motion and artificial life has captivated human imagination. Early myths reflect this fascination:

- The **Greek legend of Pygmalion and Galatea** tells of a sculptor whose statue was brought to life.
- **Asian traditions** recount stories of painters whose portraits came alive.
- In **Jewish folklore**, the story of the **Golem** describes a creature made from clay to serve its master.

These stories reveal a universal human curiosity about creating life from the lifeless—a curiosity that eventually inspired real mechanical inventions.

Early Automata

The first recorded examples of actual automata date back over 2,000 years to **Heron (Hero) of Alexandria**, an ancient engineer who designed early mechanical devices powered by steam, water, and air pressure. Centuries later, in the Middle East, **Ismail Al-Jazari** documented over 50 mechanical inventions in his seminal work, "*The Book of Knowledge of Ingenious Mechanical Devices*" (circa 1206 CE). Among his notable creations was the **elephant clock**, an elaborate water-powered timepiece symbolizing multicultural cooperation and mechanical ingenuity.



Advances in the Renaissance and Early Modern Europe

The invention of the **mainspring in the 15th century** revolutionized the design of clocks and automata by enabling smaller, portable mechanisms. During the 16th and 17th centuries, **German goldsmiths** in cities like Augsburg crafted intricate automata that served both as entertainment and status symbols among European nobility.

An example highlighted in the presentation was the **Diana clock**, made around 1610 and now housed in the Yale University Art Gallery. The clock depicts the Roman goddess Diana on a chariot drawn by leopards, combining artistry, mythology, and advanced mechanical design. Such pieces were often used as diplomatic gifts, representing cutting-edge technology of their time.





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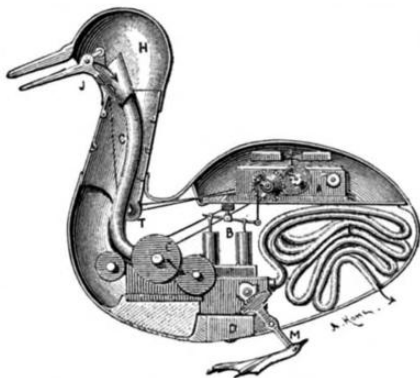
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The Genius of Jacques de Vaucanson

The 18th century witnessed extraordinary innovation with the work of **Jacques de Vaucanson**, a French inventor and artist known for his lifelike automata. His creations included:

- **The Flute Player** (1737): a life-sized shepherd capable of playing twelve tunes on a flute.
- **The Tambourine Player**, and most famously,
- **The Digesting Duck**, which mimicked the processes of eating, digestion, and excretion through a series of intricate mechanisms containing over 400 moving parts in each wing.



INTERIOR OF VAUCANSON'S AUTOMATIC DUCK.
A, clockwork; B, pump; C, mill for grinding grain; F, intestinal tube; J, bill; H, head; M, feet.

Although Vaucanson's duck contained an element of illusion—a hidden compartment that simulated digestion—it captivated audiences and inspired future generations of inventors to pursue greater realism and complexity in automata.

Pierre Jaquet-Droz and the Singing Bird Box

Building on this tradition, Swiss watchmaker **Pierre Jaquet-Droz** created some of the most sophisticated automata of the 18th century. Among his innovations was the **singing bird box**, invented around 1784–1785 in Geneva. These small, ornate boxes contained miniature birds that sang and moved through a complex system of cams, bellows, and whistles powered by clockwork motors.



Some singing bird boxes were crafted into luxurious forms, such as a pair of **gold, jewel-encrusted dueling pistols** that sold for \$5.8 million. Jaquet-Droz also designed larger humanoid automata, including "*The Writer*," capable of inscribing text and now displayed in the Neuchâtel Museum.



Automata in Japan: The Karakuri Tradition

In Japan, automata evolved along a distinct path under the name **karakuri ningyō**, meaning "mechanical dolls." These devices, powered by springs, pneumatics, and hydraulics, performed complex movements such as tea serving or archery. One of the most famous examples is the **arrow-shooting boy**, created in the 1820s by **Hisashige Tanaka**, who would later become known as the founder of Toshiba. Karakuri automata were prized by aristocrats and the shogunate as symbols of refinement and innovation.



Automata in the Modern Era

By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, automata became fashionable collectibles among wealthy Europeans. A notable example from this period is "*The Magician*"—a French automaton from the 1920s that performed lifelike conjuring tricks.



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The art of automaton making never completely disappeared, and a few modern masters continue to advance it. One of the most remarkable contemporary creators is **François Junod**, whose work blends traditional craftsmanship with modern technology. His 2010 masterpiece—a mechanical figure of **Alexander Pushkin**—can write 1,458 unique poems, each accompanied by an original drawing, demonstrating an extraordinary fusion of art, engineering, and artificial intelligence.



From Automata to Modern Robotics

The presentation concluded by linking historical automata to today's **robots and androids**. What was once the realm of myth and curiosity has become integral to modern manufacturing, medicine, and daily life. As automation technologies continue to evolve rapidly, the line between mechanical artistry and artificial intelligence grows ever thinner. The future may well see automata—now in the form of intelligent robots—playing an increasingly significant role in human society.

Conclusion

This exploration of automata highlights not only the technical ingenuity behind these creations but also their enduring reflection of human imagination and ambition. From ancient myths to mechanical marvels, from clockwork birds to writing robots, automata have always represented humanity's desire



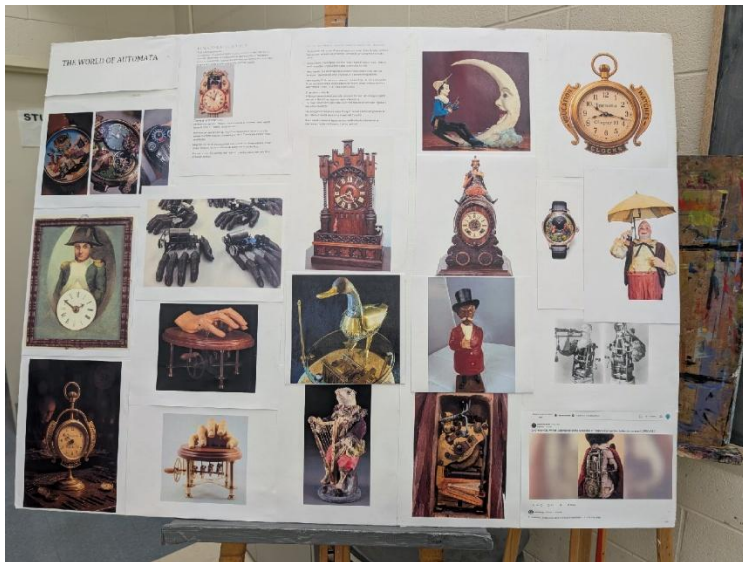


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September Member's Display





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Classifieds

WANTED: Pequegnat 15-Day Double Spring Time Only movement with cast iron bracket, to fit Moncton or Regina wall clocks. Will buy with or without pendulum, hands, etc.

Contact: Jeff Crouch Text or call 705-888-5597 or email jcrouch@rogers.com

For Sale: Stark lathe made for Waltham clock and watch factory.

Included with the lathe are a three jaw chuck, ten collets, a drill chuck on the tall stock, and a dial inductor. The compound motor is variable speed with reverse speed. Mounted on a 2in hard wood table. (Photos below) Asking \$1400.00

For info, please call Joe Romano at 905 736 4525

Email trespade@hotmail.com

Buying: Watches and Clock Collections. Large electric master clocks and parts wanted. Watchmakers tools.

Contact: Harold Steurer 905 450 6211
haroldsteurer@rogers.com

WANTED: Watchmakers tools: lathes, watch cleaning machines, Jewelers sets, staking sets etc. Also looking for Clock repair tools

Contact: Rudy Bonilla 905-348-1621
rbonilla@sympatico.ca

Buying and Selling: Affordable vintage watches and pocket watches.

Ryan Lynds- Georgetown

littlekingwatches.com 905-515-8612

Something to add? Contact us at:
Chapter33toronto@gmail.com





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Member Services

We are often approached by folks looking for someone who can help them fix a watch or a clock they have. At Chapter 33, we have a lot of talented folks who may be able to help you out.

Do you provide a service? Buy or Sell? Drop us a note at Chapter33toronto@gmail.com and tell us about it. We'll feature your ad in the Newsletter as well as our club Internet site: www.TorontoChapter33.ca

Service Your Watch or Clock

John Rocha - Cambridge ON

joaorocha73@yahoo.com

519-620-3723

Rob Poolman – Hamilton/Grimsby

robsantiqueclocks@bell.net 905-407-0360

Clock repair instruction

Ron Metcalfe - Brampton ON

rmetcalfe1048@rogers.com

Halmo Jewelers

Mark & Cheryl Halmo –

Watchmakers/Gemologists

140 Queensway E. Simcoe ON N3Y 4Y7

PH: 519-426-3948 FAX: 519-426-2582

Mechanical and quartz watch repair with many vintage parts in stock. Clock parts including Hermle and some cuckoo clock parts.

www.halmojewellers.com

Glass Tablet Restoration/Reproduction

Dennis Burgin - Oakville ON

dennis.burgin@sympatico.ca

Glass Cutting/Bevelled Glass

Ben Orszulak - Grimsby ON

ben.orszulak@gmail.com

Roman Dial Restoration/Repainting

Dennis Burgin - Oakville ON

dennis.burgin@sympatico.ca

Gear Cutting and Precision Machining

Ben Orszulak - Grimsby ON

ben.orszulak@gmail.com



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Our meeting location is now at the Nelson Park Creative Centre.

The meetings will be held from 12:00 noon to 4:00 PM

The Centre is located at 56 Neilson Drive in Etobicoke close to HWY 427 & the Gardiner Expressway QEW





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NAWCC TORONTO CHAPTER 33

IS PLEASED TO BE AT THE SUNDAY
ANTIQUE MARKET

PLEASE LOOK FOR US

416 410-1310 | info@sundayantiquemarket.com

the SUNDAY ANTIQUE MARKET

HOME ABOUT US NEW LOCATION WHAT YOU CAN FIND CONTACT & VENDOR INQUIRIES [STAY IN TOUCH!](#)

THE SUNDAY ANTIQUE MARKET

(Formerly at St. Lawrence Market)

Next Show: Sun. November 2, 2025

At the SMALL ARMS INSPECTION BUILDING
1352 Lakeshore Rd E, Mississauga, ON L5E 1E9
SHOW HOURS: 9.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.
FREE Admission and Parking!

UPCOMING SHOWS 2025

At the SMALL ARMS INSPECTION BUILDING:

9.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.

November 16, 2025 | November 30, 2025