

IN TIMES SQUARE

Luchsinger column brought memories of special clock

Last week I wrote about Margaret Luchsinger and the celebration of her 102nd birthday. She was featured in a video by WTMJ-TV and I wrote a bit about that special day.

That column brought back memories of a very special clock that had been in the Salick for well over a century, and now has a special place in the archives of the Watertown Historical Society's collection in the famous Octagon House.

So, today I'll write about that clock and why it is so unique.

The clock, now over 160 years old, was featured in a Watertown Daily Times article by Margaret Clifford Krueger, one of the owners of the Times for many years and for decades a regular contributor to the newspaper's many quality features.

Margy's feature on the clock was one of those topics and I'll borrow from her work as part of today's column.

Margaret Luchsinger, a fourth generation owner of Salick's Jewelry Store, related to Margy back in the 1990s that the family had offers to buy the clock many times over the years but "we couldn't sell it. We always felt it belonged in Watertown."

The clock was for many decades featured in the display windows of Salick's Jewelry Store but has not been on display for decades. Margaret and her husband Sam donated the clock to the historical society some years ago.

So, what makes this clock so special? Well, it's over 5 feet tall and is one of only two in the entire world, according to a Daily Times article back in 1920. The other is in Germany and the late Joseph Salick — a pioneer jeweler and founder of the local store — was in Germany as an apprentice and saw the clock.

He was fascinated enough by it that he decided to make a replica by hand. This was back in 1864, barely 28 years after Watertown was first settled by Timothy Johnson. Joseph was the great grandfather of Margaret Luchsinger.



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Normally clocks of this unique type required winding by a key or other device but not the Salick clock. The movement in this one is in the pendulum and there's a special mechanism that runs on the motion of the swing and the face is actually in the pendulum.

There's more Watertown connections. The frame for the clock was made by the late John Keck, a pioneer furniture man from Watertown. The brass furnishings on the exterior of the clock resemble the sun and were cast by Joe Miller a local pioneer gunsmith. He also made the brass eagle on the top of the clock. There are several figures on the clock and they were painted by a man identified only as D. Straw.

Joseph Salick was a native of Westphalia, Germany and when he came to America he opened the jewelry store here



COURTESY KEN RIEDL/WATERTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The old Salick Jewelry Store front with the unique clock seen in the window. Right in front of the store on the right side is Joseph Salick. The other two men are unidentified.

in 1853. It was located at 1-3 Main Street, now the entrance to the Rock River Walkway in downtown Watertown. John Salick was succeeded in the business by his son, Charles J. Salick. In 1913 John E. Salick joined his father. Sam and Margaret became associated with the business in 1946 and became the owners in 1955 upon the death of her father. They sold the business in the 1980s to Roland and Terry Straka and in 1996 the business was sold to Paul and Susanne Bradow who continue the business today as Bradow's Jewelers.

Clock/

from A4

Over the years the store has had four locations. The store opened where the Blue Butterfly (formerly Fischer's Department Store) is now located. It moved across the street to 1-3 Main Street some years later and then moved to 310 Main Street in 1933 and to its present location at Third and Main streets in 1943.

An up to date photo of the clock was not available to me but my hope is to take a photo of the clock as it now sits in the Historical Society collection and hopefully it can get reproduced here. Stay tuned.

TLS

IN TIMES SQUARE

A short return visit to the famous Salick clock

I received a lot of positive feedback on my recent columns on the 102nd birthday of Margaret Luchsinger — and from

that topic on to the famous Salick clock.

Several people asked if there was a better photo of the clock and

Watertown historian Ken Riedl assured me there was. Then — bingo! — a day later the photo below arrived in my “in” box on the computer. Ken is simply invaluable when searching for an historic photo or article.

This photo gives an idea to how large the clock actually is. If you have occasion to visit the Octagon House this summer, look for the clock. It's on display there in this beautiful cabinet. Make it a point to visit

I did find a Salick's advertisement in a 1902 issue of the Daily Times which was published near

Christmas.

Items listed as perfect Christmas gifts included:

First floor — jewelry, watches, silverware, art goods, cut glass, fine china, novel-

ties, musical instruments, stationery, etc.

Second floor — toys, dolls, books, games, etc.

Basement — wooden toys, sleighs, doll carriages, go-carts, express wagons, etc.

So you can see back over a century ago, Salick's was almost like a department store. But, as retailing changed, the store, like so many others, decided to concentrate on its primary business and that was jewelry.



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WATERTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY/CONTRIBUTED

The famed Salick clock at the Octagon House.

Palm Beach, Fla.

As many readers of this column know, the club was owned by Marjorie Merriweather Post, heir to the Post cereal fortune, and for some years the wife of Joseph E. Davies, U.S. diplomat and a power broker in Democratic circles who was a

all the other amenities, like food, beverages, etc.

Anyhow, the Trump article said his re-election back in November fueled the value of this much in the news property. Professionals estimate the property and buildings have a net worth of \$368 million