

Tuxedo Park Magazine

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www.tuxedoparkmagazine.com
Issue # 107

TUXEDO PARK GRANDFATHER CLOCKS

TUXEDO PARK 1890'S

Tuxedo Park Design Studios

In 1582 Galileo Galilei, the 'father of modern science', was at prayer in Pisa Cathedral. Noticing a swaying chandelier that the lamplighter had lit, he was struck by inspiration. He began to time its swings, comparing them to his own heartbeat. Galileo noticed that regardless of the width of the arc it followed, the time taken for one complete swing was the same. Having recorded his findings, he mused on them for some years in search of an application. Eventually he concluded that if the swing of a pendulum could be integrated into the workings of a clock, it would be the most accurate ever made. For the rest of his life Galileo, with the aid of his son, experimented on producing such a timepiece. Unfortunately, despite all his noteworthy achievements, he was unsuccessful in this task and died before it could be realized.

Seventy years later, the noted Dutch astronomer Christian Huygens was searching for an accurate design for an astronomical clock. He knew that precise timekeeping was vital for accurately predicting the movement of stars and planets. Inspired by Galileo's ideas and experiments, he concluded that the inclusion of a pendulum was the key. In 1656, he produced his first successful design by hitching a pendulum to the existing workings of a clock. Accuracy was increased from fifteen minutes a day to one minute, revolutionizing clockmaking forever. Later versions of this design further improved this to only ten seconds, a level of accuracy previously unheard of. The German theoretical physicist Arnold Sommerfeld, himself a legendary scientific pioneer, described Huygens as 'the most ingenious watchmaker of all time'.





GRANDFATHER'S CLOCK IN TUXEDO PARK

The long, carpeted hallway, wrapped around the third floor of my grandfather's estate home in Tuxedo Park many years ago. There was an imposing looking Grandfather clock at the end of the hall which always impressed me as foreboding, until the chimes bellowed the hour, which made it foreboding and scary. We always visited him for two weeks at Christmastime. Our bedrooms were in an old paneled chamber in the oldest wing of the home, on the same floor as the grandfather clock. Our windows overlooked the formal gardens where now, ice-draped encased shrubbery, leaned down beneath the weight of the December snow.

Just off of our bedroom was a small children's library, where a cozy fire danced in the corner fireplace that was decorated with nursery rhyme themed tiles. The large windows glanced over the lake that was being coated with a new fallen clean white snow. Brand new ice skates sat near the hearth ready for the next morning's enjoyment on Tuxedo Lake.

We could hear the grandfather clock chime as our door was opened by Kate, our grandfather's house keeper since we could remember. Hot chocolate with warm candied cookies greeted our tired senses and rejuvenated our excitement of being on the estate once again.

Upon getting ready for bed, we approached the high four poster beds, needing a step-stool to climb beneath the heavy quilted coverings. We fell asleep to the chiming grandfather clock, the sound of the crackling log fire in the next room, and the scent of late-night holiday cooking preparations, which permeated the grand home from the estate kitchen.

The anticipation of Christmas, and our new skates, woke us early, and sent us quickly downstairs to a hearty breakfast feast. Among the chatter and elated moods, we could hear the grandfather clock bellowing the late morning hour, which motivated us all to get ready for sledding and skating on the lake. There was an exhilarating cold nip in the air, the sky was gray and over cast, with tiny flakes drifting down through the air.

As evening drew near, we walked back to grandfather's house, where we found the main fireplaces lit and welcoming. As the warm comfort over-took the chill of the afternoon from us, we reveled in the mood of the festivities before us, and the comforting feeling of belonging to a time-honored tradition with all of its antiquities that stemmed from it...including the old grandfather clock.

Grandfather clocks & timepieces during the Gilded Age

Grandfather clocks have become famous and iconic for their symbol of status and elegance. Grandfather clocks were considered luxurious and prestigious items throughout history, often found in affluent homes, palaces, and grand estates. Owning a grandfather clock was seen as a symbol of wealth, refinement, and a testament to one's appreciation for fine craftsmanship. Grandfather clocks are often passed down through generations, becoming cherished family heirlooms. Their enduring appeal and ability to stand the test of time contribute to their fame and enduring popularity.

There are numerous famous grandfather clocks for various reasons. Some clocks are famous for their clock makers, some for the features they have, while other clocks have historical significance or became famous by being featured in a TV series or movies. "Premier Clocks" have picked 5 grandfather clocks that are famous for different reasons.

The first known example of a grandfather clock is attributed to English clockmaker William Clement in the late 17th century. Clement is often credited with introducing the long pendulum and anchor escapement to clockmaking, which allowed for increased accuracy in timekeeping.

While the exact details of the first grandfather clock are not definitively known, the development of longcase clocks can be traced back to this period. These early clocks typically featured wooden cases with long pendulums and brass weights, housed in tall wooden cabinets. They were designed to provide accurate timekeeping and were often considered luxury items owned by the upper classes.

It's worth noting that there were earlier forms of domestic clocks that influenced the development of grandfather clocks. These include bracket clocks and hooded clocks, which had similarities in terms of design and mechanisms. However, the specific term "grandfather clock" came into common use later, around the 19th century.

Tuxedo Park had numerous grand homes which held some of the finest grandfather clocks in the world. Some of the clocks were brought over from Austria and Switzerland. Several homes held clocks from the famous Swiss clock maker, Abraham-Louis Breguet. The title of the most famous clock maker is subjective and can vary depending on different criteria, such as historical significance, innovation, craftsmanship, or overall influence on the field of horology. However, one name that is often regarded as one of the most famous and influential clock makers in history is Abraham-Louis Breguet.

He was an exceptional Swiss watchmaker from the late 18th and early 19th centuries. He is renowned for his ingenuity, precision, and invention of numerous horological advancements. His innovations include the development of the tourbillon, an escapement mechanism that counters the effects of gravity, as well as the creation of exquisite and highly complicated timepieces.

Breguet's creations were sought after by royalty, nobility, and prominent figures of his time, and his legacy continues to inspire and shape watchmaking to this day.

The oldest known grandfather clock company is the Lenzkirch Clock Factory (Uhrfabrik Lenzkirch) of Germany. It was established in 1849 in the town of Lenzkirch in the Black Forest region. The company initially produced a wide range of clocks, including wall clocks, mantel clocks, and grandfather clocks. Although Lenzkirch faced financial difficulties in the early 20th century and eventually closed in 1932, its legacy remains significant, and antique Lenzkirch clocks are highly sought after by collectors today.

Tuxedo Park magazine

The Butler, the housemaid, & the grandfather clock

From... "Tuxedo Park Tales & Legends"

Straddling a glacial rock formation, once stood a palatial home with cornered gardens and statues that gazed out over the sweeping view of Tuxedo Park. This home belonged to a railroad reorganization expert and towered over several other grand homes in the park whose turrets and gardens seemed to flow never-ending in an ethereal manner toward a fairyland of splendor. The Autumn of 1929 promised a magnificent season for the owners of this home. Several debutante balls were scheduled within the Tuxedo Club, hunting and fishing were to be planned around fine dinner parties and court tennis matches, and the Tuxedo horse show was going to be another highlight of the season.

The family of this fine estate had recently hired a new butler to aid in the household's busy autumn season. The hustle and bustle also required an additional maid who was brought up from Manhattan on the train and retrieved from the Tuxedo Train Station at the same time as the butler. The lively activity of this social season brought the maid and butler together quite often, and it was clear there was a strong attraction between them.

Romantic interaction between staff members was strictly forbidden in many households of that time period and monetary social scale.

The third floor of the mansion housed an Edward John Dent, English long-case grandfather clock. A valuable gift from one of the owner's railroad partners. The clock had the image of a train on the crown of the clock with a billowing train engine in the background of the face of the clock.

Continued next page



The butler and the maid, desperately trying to hide their love for each other, would communicate with love letters they would leave for one another within a secret drawer the maid had found one day when polishing the clock.

The household staff was preparing for a dinner party one Tuesday October evening, when suddenly the household staff was ordered to stop the preparations and return to the servants quarters.

All festivities were cancelled and cars could be heard throughout that night driving up to the great door to meet with the owner of the estate. Throughout this very mysterious mood, all was eerily quiet in the park.

...The stock market had crashed. The most severe financial crises had occurred, and the world was in shock. The following months determined a more precise devastation on the scales of financial destruction.

Homes were being emptied, items were being sold, and many homes were being auctioned. The chandeliers that illuminated Tuxedo Park stopped glittering, and like stars slowly being covered by clouds, disappeared from view one by one.

The servants of many homes were let go, including the butler and maid from the railroad owner's estate. His family was forced to sell many of their luxuries, including the grandfather clock.

Several decades passed, and although the estate had remained in the family, and survived the great depression, it was eventually sold.

The new family was thrilled to be part of this magnificent place called Tuxedo Park, and attended many auctions to furnish the home with period pieces, including, an old grandfather clock.

Legend has it, that when the clock was being repaired and brought back to life by a local Horologist, there was a small drawer discovered. Upon opening the drawer, there was a letter found...a love letter. Dated, October 29th, 1929, the letter was yellowed and frayed, and written on house stationery with an address at the top of the parchment paper. The address was the same as the home. The maid and the butler had used the house stationery for their secret letters. They missed this one amidst all of the commotion of the crash and their being dismissed.

A love letter had traveled through time, within a time clock...to return home again.

The home is long gone, but the silhouettes of the garden's once patterned grandeur can be glimpsed in the perennials which still bloom from time to time amidst thorns and root invaded stone walls. On very still afternoons you can almost imagine the opulent world that graced this space, and the love letter that stood the test of time.

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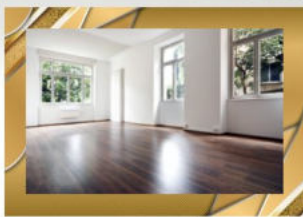
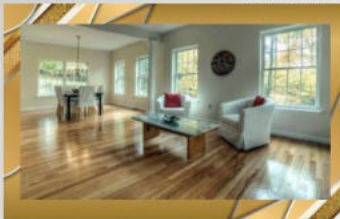


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The disappearance of J.P. Morgan's pocket watch worth over ten million dollars...

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A masterpiece watch that was unparalleled at the time was made for the US financier but has since fallen into obscurity. A peerless feat of craftsmanship unrivaled anywhere in the world, the pocket watch made in Coventry befitted the highest standards of JP Morgan.

The American financier and banker's taste for the finest workmanship had led him to look beyond London and New York for his 'grand complication'.

In 1909, he paid renowned Coventry firm J Player & Son about £1,000, around twice the cost of a house in the UK at the time, for the feat of micro-engineering. With two large round face dials front and back, the pocket watch did far more than tell the time. The owner could map the stars or even chart a ship with the smart device of its time. Despite having once been the property of J.P. Morgan, its present whereabouts are unknown. J. Player & Son was the name on the rear face of the masterpiece as its creators. It was highly complex and it took four years to make. Over the following decades there would be others but it was unmatched at the time.

"The 'astronomical watch' had a dual purpose. As well as being a classy statement, it was increasingly important in a society that made appointments, ran factories and monitored working hours. London was the UK's main watchmaking center, but Player & Son had built up an enviable reputation despite being the trade's only company outside the capital. With such a pedigree, Morgan looked to the Coventry firm for his timepiece, which was the most complicated in the world at the time. The double-faced device packed in features including an annual calendar, times for sunrise, sunset, moon rise and moon set and kept the wearer informed of tidal levels and star constellations. The high-end spec also included a one-minute tourbillon - a mechanism to increase accuracy by negating gravity, that was visible through an aperture.



The back dial face featured the company legend Player & Son alongside the name of the city the masterpiece was produced in - Coventry. The March 1909 edition of The Horological Journal notes of the watch:

“So far as is known, the watch is believed to be unique, for although many of the actions shown have been frequently made before, both singly and in various combinations, no other watch has combined such a variety of different mechanisms. It should be stated that not only is it remarkable for its complexity, but the workmanship is carried out in the best possible manner. It has been made expressly to the order of an American gentleman, who is an enthusiast in complicated horological productions, and what is perhaps rarer, has also the taste and appreciation for fine workmanship. The watch had so many features, It had two sides and it had a grandfather mechanism, similar to Big Ben or a grandfather clock which chimes. You could use it to chart a ship.”

Morgan’s ultimate timepiece is thought to have been sold after his death in 1913.

The head of the watch repair department at Tiffany & Co. in New York, is said to have owned the watch in the late 1940s.

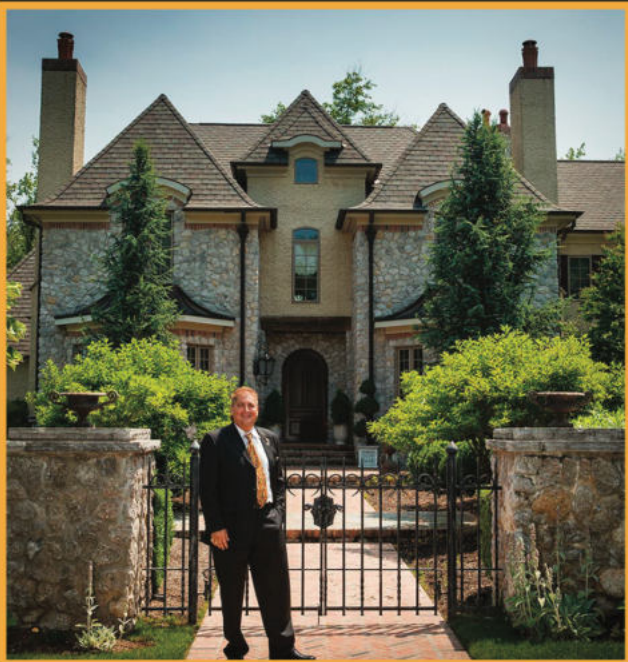
An iconic masterpiece owned by an iconic legend, somewhere out there is the watch that is truly timeless.

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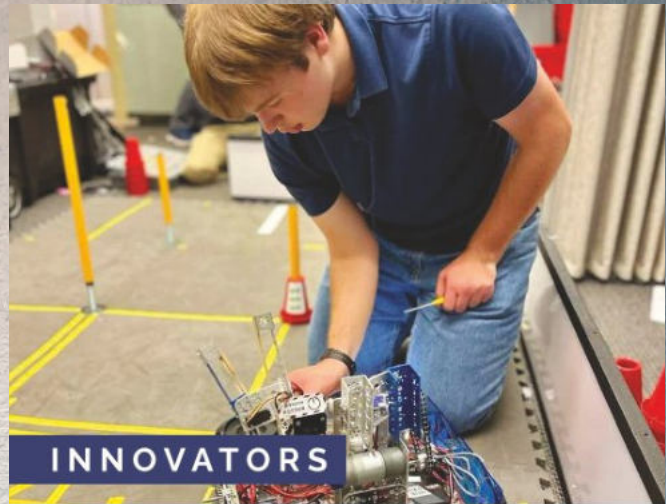
Smart Learning: How AI Resources Reshape Student Success

At Saddle River Day School, we know our teachers love their students, and we know they love teaching. We witness their regular, meaningful interactions with each of their students, we see the passion they have for sharing knowledge as they inspire lifelong learners, and we know the difference their personal attention makes in our children's lives. We benefit from low student: faculty ratio and the SRDS culture of differentiating instruction so that Saddle River Day School students receive instruction that is flexible and can be personalized to them. But, according to Sonny Arcot, AI Automation Consultant and Founder and CEO at The Arcot Group, SRDS educators have also expressed the wish that they could find the time to make each child's educational experience even more individualized to them.

This is, of course, what Artificial Intelligence has been designed to do; help busy professionals manage their daily tasks in a way that allows for them to prioritize their most meaningful responsibilities. In the case of SRDS teachers, this means using AI to help them generate and present lessons, and grade papers, tests, and projects, leaving more time for our dedicated educators to put our children first. The Arcot Group, in conjunction with Arcitech.ai, their software development partner, has designed a learning management AI tool in response to feedback from Saddle River Day School teachers that will help them optimize their instructional time each day while ensuring each child's educational experience is tailored to their own individual learning style, interests, and the speed with which they take in knowledge.

Basic information about each child will be provided to the AI learning management tool, including the child's interests and/or hobbies. As students proceed through lessons that have been generated by their teachers and then taught to the AI tool, questions, problems, and stories will be presented to the students using examples that are relevant and interesting to them.

continued next page



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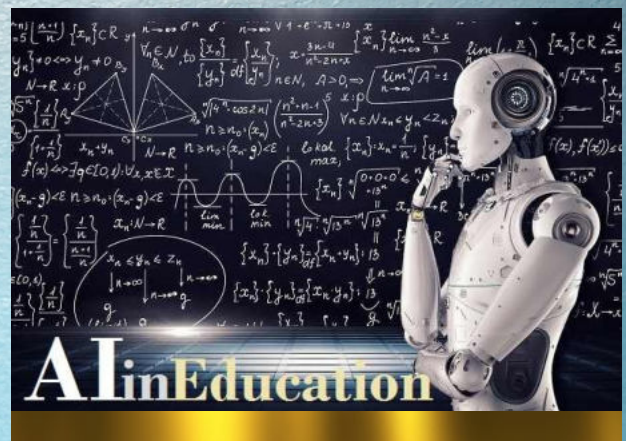
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Imagine solving a word problem about the speed of a soccer ball instead of a train traveling from Chicago to Boise. Or budding marine biologists learning to calculate volume based on the capacity of a fish tank, or literature students learning to analyze poetry by dissecting sonnets about Taylor Swift instead of a summer's day.

An AI Assistant will not only be available to help students complete their assignments but will also track their speed and accuracy, providing a real time assessment of their comprehension and proficiency. This kind of immediate feedback will enable classroom teachers to provide targeted instruction in order to increase their students' fluency. Assignments will be graded based on rubrics that designate their unique characteristics, standards, and specifications. Rubric criteria can be adjusted to accommodate each individual child.

Teachers at SRDS who have been trained in the new learning management tool have immediately seen the value and have begun to ideate additional applications for the technology. To this end, the Center for Technology & Computer Science will be hosting an international Teacher Training on campus this summer. Teachers from all over the world are invited to visit SRDS to experiment with the ways they can integrate Virtual Reality and Artificial Intelligence into their classrooms and curricula. These teachers will have the benefit of their cohort of teachers so they can share new ideas, applications, and best practices. It is indisputable that AI and VR technology will change the way our children access and acquire knowledge. In fact, they already are. It's up to us as parents and educators to provide them with guidelines and parameters for using these new tools ethically, responsibly, and efficiently. Sonny Arcot and the administration at SRDS are building this framework to support our children in the present, even as they are propelled into their future.



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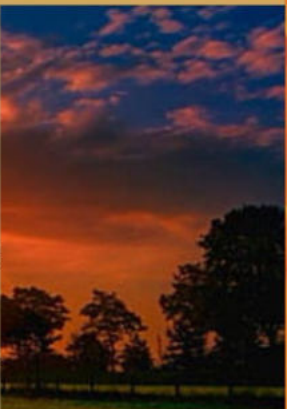

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