

# From the Editor



I'm sure I'm not the first to wish you, the readers of *Horological Times*, a Happy New Year, but I'm going to do it anyway. Happy New Year! Here's to 2024!

Just typing that number, though, seems weird. The year 2024. Such a number seemed so far off to someone like me, born in 1977 and raised in the 1980s and 1990s. I'm sure it did for many of you, as well.

I'm sure many of us envisioned, either through books we read or television and movies we watched, that 2024 would bring us things like jet-powered flying cars—such as *The Jetsons* or *Back to the Future Part II*—or androids designed, disguised and walking around society as humans, à la *Blade Runner*.

By the time 2024 rolled around, many of us probably thought we'd have lunar space stations located throughout the galaxy, we would have settled Mars, and that there would have been so many advances in technology and our way of living that even someone from the 1980s or 1990s would not recognize the world in 2024.

But here we are, with 2023 in the books and 2024 starting, and while there have been many, many advances in technology, medicine and other arenas—including horology—throughout the years, there have been just as many things that are similar to years gone by that the world doesn't feel totally different.

Much the same could be said for horology. There have been many advances throughout the years, be it in timing and cleaning machines, or in how timepieces are crafted themselves. But even despite the many changes through the years in horology, be it electronic, digital or quartz watches and clocks, smart watches, Fitbits, cell phones, etc., there has always been a constant—mechanical watches and mechanical clocks, and the need for people to not only know how they work, but how to service them. I think that constant—the need for watchmakers and clockmakers—will always be there when it comes to horology, as well, no matter the century, decade or year.

Look at video gaming systems and the changes that have occurred through the years, for instance. It has grown from game systems with games featuring rudimentary block and stick figure graphics—the Atari 2600, for instance—to current systems such as the Sony PlayStation 5 or Xbox Series X from Microsoft, which have games with graphics that rival live-action movies. And, while the newest systems might currently be the “it” things in the retail world—like smart watches were at one point—the older gaming systems are still just as popular, still fetch a pretty penny on places like eBay, and are highly sought after by collectors and fans alike.

Sounds quite similar to mechanical watches and clocks, doesn't it? Even down to the reissuing of “retro” or “vintage” model lines, of which both companies in the video gaming and watch industries have been doing the past few years.

And, just as there is a need for individuals with the technical know-how to refurbish older video game systems, and to fix the current ones when they have hiccups, there is still a need for watchmakers and clockmakers who can find their way around an old Hamilton wristwatch, or a Sessions clock, in addition to the newest and latest timepieces hitting the market.

So, come 2054, we might have flying cars, we might have conquered Mars, and we might have human androids walking the streets. The world will likely look a little bit different than it will this year—that's just the natural progression of life.

But there will still be some constants from the past and present day, even in the future—10, 15 or 30 years from now.

The need for horology—along with those who understand it and can service the instruments that measure time—will be one of those very constants.

You do not need a crystal ball to see into the future when it comes to that.

**James Sprague**  
AWCI's office manager  
and managing editor  
of the *Horological Times*



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