

PENNSYLVANIA CLOCKS

Good day everyone,..it's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania lays claim to much fame--a fame of universal type--one can prove in almost every field that Pennsylvania leads or has led, in thought, production and distribution of any and all products at one time or another. That goes for clocks! All kinds of clocks. In early days, Pennsylvania excelled in their manufacture and production, simply because the clock-making gentry of Europe settled here. Pennsylvania was the clock kingdom of America in colonial days. The best craftsmen worked in Philadelphia and there was a public appreciation of fine clocks. William Penn kept some beauties in his home at Pennsbury Manor. Independence Hall--at one time our State House--had a magnificent clock. In that day, the clockmakers of note, whose forbears had learned the trade in the Old World, were good enough not to import parts from their native England or Germany, but made them themselves. They were literally engineers, like locomotive designer Baldwin. And even today, although clock-makers depend sometimes on a Peruvian mahogany, excellent bronze castings are produced at founderies in Pennsylvania, especially for clocks. We still have craftsmen and hobbyists who spend months in the turning out of fine grandfather clocks. The early Pennsylvania clocks were known as "tall-case clocks". The name, grandfather's clock, didn't come along until Henry Clay Work, a Chicago printer, moved to Philadelphia and in 1872, published a song, "My grandfather's clock was too large for the shelf, so it stood 90 years on the floor!" He also wrote, by the way, "Father, dear father, come home with me now,

the clock in the steeple strikes one." --Note, only after he had seen Pennsylvania's fine masterpieces!---I'd surmise that the tradition of having a fine clock in a home comes from the frugality of the Pennsylvania Dutch, who had a rage about keeping track of their time and money--a waste of both was considered sinful--therefore, a home had to have a good clock. I must admit to having a Black Forest cuckoo clock near my bedroom--one can be driven cuckoo in the middle of the night from the bell-ringing, and in this case--a little man who comes forth to the tune of the "Happy Wanderer". Although I am awakened nightly by this clock, I marvel at the workmanship of it--as I marvel at the genius of those early Pennsylvanians who wrought such beauty in time pieces. In the modern day, like Mr. Work 100 years ago, Chester's Bill Haley has reminded us of the fact that civilization "Rocks Around the Clock"--and so it does. So, in the same tradition today, the wrist-watches produced in Pennsylvania plants are another of our great products--some of the best in the world--reminding that craftsmen of yore are still among us.

This is Pete Wambach. It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.