

Standing the Test of **TIME**

Jacobs Jewelers Clock, Jacksonville's iconic timepiece

By Christi Elflein | Photography by Michael LeGrand

A walk down Laura Street in downtown Jacksonville is rich with history, sights and sounds.

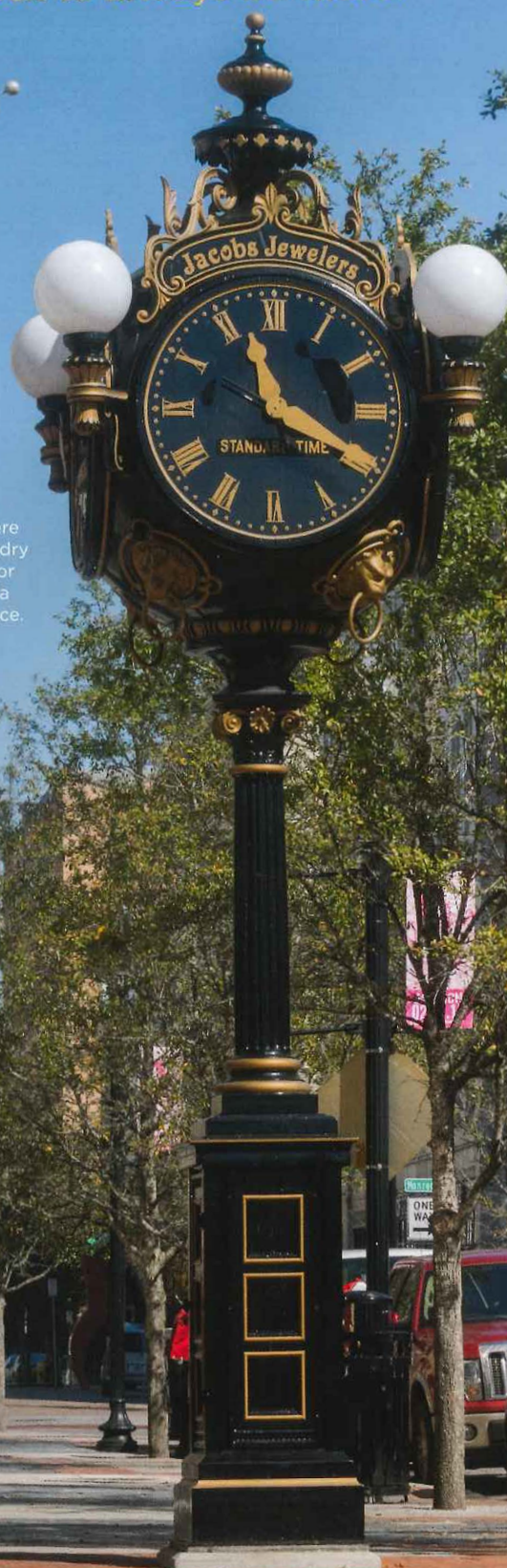
On the corner of Laura and Adams Streets stands the Jacobs Jewelers Clock. For over a century, its faces have looked out over the city of Jacksonville, providing a watchful eye on the time for its residents.

In 1901, the clock was made by the Seth Thomas Clock Company of Connecticut and purchased by Victor E. Jacobs for \$1,200. Jacobs Jewelers erected the clock in front of their location at the corner of Bay and Hogan Streets. Soon after, the Great Fire of 1901 devastated downtown Jacksonville, Jacobs Jewelers moved their business, and the clock, to Forsyth Street. In 1930, during the Great Depression, Jacobs Jewelers relocated their business and the clock once again to the corner of

"There will be a time someday when we're gone,
but we want the clock to always be there."

— Roy Thomas

The globe lights were
made at a local foundry
and added by Victor
Jacobs, making it a
customized timepiece.



Laura and Adams Streets, where they both
still operate today.

The owner of Jacobs Jewelers, Roy
Thomas, began working for Jacobs
Jewelers in 1960. He and his wife Delorise
bought the store in 1987.

Through prosperous years of expansion
and lean years of depressions and reces-
sions, Jacobs Jewelers has remained in op-
eration. It is the oldest operating jewelry
store in Florida and with the clock, has
become a landmark in our downtown.

The clock stands 15 feet tall, weighs 4,800
pounds and is made of cast iron. Only 100
clocks like it were made, and today only
about ten remain standing. The Jacobs
Jewelers Clock is different from the rest,



The clock was gifted to the city of Jacksonville by
Jacobs Jewelers.

however, because of its globe lights; which
Victor Jacobs added from a local foundry.
Its four faces can be seen from any
direction on the street and the four lions'
heads house the secret compartment into
the clock to service its movements.

In 2013, the Jacobs Jewelers Clock
underwent a much needed restoration
while Laura Street was under construction.
"It now has four individual electronic
movements and a GPS, so it resets itself
twice a day," says Thomas.

Jacobs Jewelers gave the clock, now valued
at approximately \$100,000, to the city of
Jacksonville. "There will be a time someday
when we're gone, but we want the clock
to always be there," Thomas says. "So by
doing that it guarantees it will stay where it
is... it keeps a bit of history." 🕒