



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.

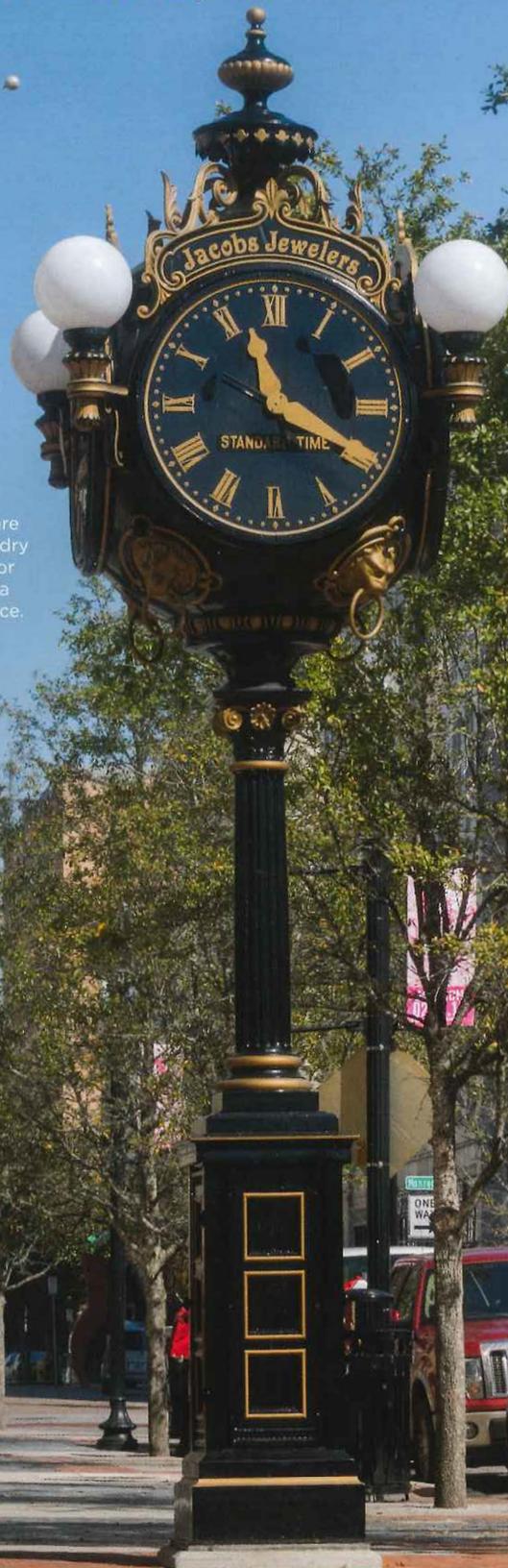
On the corner of Laura and Adams Streets stands the Jacobs Jewelers Clock. For over a century, its faces have looked out over the city of Jacksonville, providing a watchful eye on the time for its residents.

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

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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 recessions, Jacobs Jewelers has remained in operation. 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.”