

The Wisest Counselor: The Enduring Appeal of Classically-Crafted Timepieces

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“Time is the wisest counselor of all.”

-Pericles

At first glance, Marc Frankel appears to be your typical Long Islander. He's lived there his whole life, has the trademark accent that actually doesn't make him say "Lawn-Guyland", makes several trips to Fire Island in the summertime, and went to "the city" for college—The Cooper Union, to be exact. But to a certain niche community, he's a big deal: he's the owner of Long Island Watch, one of the most trusted and beloved online watch stores on the Internet. And Frankel just isn't in it for the money; he's been a lifelong watch fanatic.

"I remember my dad winding his Datejust when I was a kid," Frankel reminisces. "I still have his watch to this day."

What makes Frankel's store unique is that he doesn't sell Rolexes or Tag Heuers or Richard Milles; he's an authorized dealer of more affordable, enthusiast-centered brands, like Seiko, Orient, and Sea-Gull. "I'm very particular with what watches I decide to carry," Frankel stated plainly. "I just don't wanna be like other big online watch stores like Jomashop, because to them, watches are just a commodity. I want to sell timepieces that I stand by."

He even owns his own watch brand, aptly named "Islander Watches." Most Islanders, as Frankel calls them, are homages to recently discontinued or otherwise popular watch models and styles, respectively. For instance, the first Islanders Frankel sold in 2019 were improved recreations of the Seiko SKX, a popular dive watch that the Japanese watchmaker discontinued earlier in the same year. Because the watch was so ubiquitous and popular with watch modifiers and the community in general, Frankel easily sourced all the parts and manufacturers he needed from China. The parts of those Islanders are even interchangeable with the original model.

While Frankel could hypothetically make any watch he wants, he knows that straying too far from convention would only hurt his income. "I just want my watches to be well built and to

sell well,” he added. “I don’t want to worry about something going wrong with them down the road, or to just not make me any money.”

A notable example of Frankel’s conservative approach to his business is when he declined to make an Islander with a mechanical chronograph movement, which essentially functions as an in-built stopwatch on top of telling the time. While designing watches is effortlessly cut and dry for Frankel, making an Islander that comes with that type of movement and stays within the brand's price range—all Islanders cost less than \$900—would be impossible to execute. Nearly all mechanical chronographs are very expensive due to their complexity, with essentially all of them costing over \$1,000. The only real exception is the Seagull ST-19, a Chinese-made, manually wound mechanism that’s a slightly altered copy of a Swiss movement from the 1950s, which only costs around \$150 new. Frankel sells many watches with this movement, but despite this, he refuses to make an Islander that houses it. “I simply know too much about the production of the movement to be confident in using it,” he said in a collaborative YouTube video with another watch-oriented content creator. “I’m not close enough to the factories in China to know I’ll always get Grade-A movements...I’d rather just stick with my Seiko movements because they don’t have different degrees of quality.”

How is Frankel’s store able to thrive in the age of smart tech? The reason anachronistic timepieces still exist and are still relatively prevalent is a multi-layered story. Logically, everyone in the future would be wearing a smartwatch given how useful they are in comparison to the average analog watch. Even the most expensive Rolex currently produced, the aptly named Pearlmaster, displays only the date and time, something that any smartwatch could do for a fraction of the Rolex's five-figure price tag. The consumers of the world, from the most impoverished people to the 1% of the 1%, admire the smartwatch for its functionality, relative

ease of use, and versatility. A smartwatch can track your heartbeat, provide navigation, play music, receive and answer phone calls and texts, and even order pizza, all from your wrist. Despite its ubiquity, owning one is a status symbol, an indirect signal that you value modern, minimalist-oriented technology that'll make your life even easier in the age of smart tech. So why would anyone bother to buy any non-smart timepiece at all?

In the past decade, the smartwatch, particularly the Apple Watch, has not only become one of the staples of everyday life but also one of the most popular watches in terms of sales; in 2019 alone Apple sold 31 million of their smartwatches, and even managed to sell 12 million of them in the same year it was introduced in 2015. As a result, most would expect the “old world” of wristwatches, from Casio to Rolex, to fade away, considering that an Apple Watch can do essentially everything a normal person would ever need, while an average analog timepiece only gives the time and possibly the day and the date.

But, surprisingly, this is far from the case. While the current watch “community” is a niche, it still exists and, for the most part, has a robust membership. On Reddit, r/watches, the main forum for traditional watches, has 1.7 million members, and other forums, such as WatchUSeek, have new threads created every second. Further, lots of these members don't just own a Rolex or a Casio F-91w; collectors and fans of all shapes, sizes, and interests congregate in these spaces. Many enthusiasts are interested only in Soviet timepieces, while others may only collect vintage Seikos from the latter half of the 20th century or Chinese-made homages to popular luxury models. Some even appreciate the handy nature of smartwatches, even if it's blasphemy among most in those communities.

The reasons these people commit so much time—and more often than not, substantial amounts of money—to the world of old-school watches are varied and numerous. Some fans

view traditional watches in a romantic yet illogical light, a reminder of the “good old days” of fine craftsmanship and man-made precision, where deep sea divers depended on their Submariner to time how long they’d been under the waves. Others enjoy the hard science and designs of watchmaking, taking joy in how elegantly sophisticated yet rugged an average mechanical watch is. More still simply appreciate them because they’ll never be outdated, in the way a Series 1 Apple Watch is now. Most are a mix of the three groups, and all appreciate these aspects in some way.

The characters within this community come from all backgrounds. Some sell and trade watches, either through the aforementioned forums or their own storefronts. Others are influencers within the community, making watch-centric YouTube videos, articles, or even memes. A majority, though, are simply enthusiasts, showing their love for traditional horology on social media or enthusiast-oriented sites and forums.

Even though the modern world of analog timepieces is still alive and kicking, it's a largely male-dominated hobby. While there are a few female watch influencers on YouTube and other social media platforms, most enthusiasts are older, richer males.

According to a 2017 survey done by British insurance company Homeprotect, male Rolex owners also outnumbered female owners by two to one. The average Rolex owner in the UK was a 68-year-old man who lived in the southern part of the country, reflecting the distribution of wealth that's defined the nation for centuries. They also were more likely to live in suburban London, and about 20% of Rolex owners had either "manager" or "director" in their job title.

Omega owners were also analyzed in another Homeprotect survey, and while the average age of an Omega owner was substantially younger at 44, they still were, on average, married

men. They also lived in greater London and worked in finance in some sort of managerial or directorial role, similar to their older, Rolex-owning counterparts.

The reason why so many enthusiasts dislike smartwatches varies from collector to collector. Marc Frankel for instance, feels that they could spell the end for his business, as he makes a living through selling traditional watches. “It’d be the downfall of me and everything I do,” he said in a video with a fellow YouTuber. “It’d be the end of my business.” Others feel that the Apple Watch is just an extension of smart technology, or that their disposability and planned obsolescence make them unwise investments.

While essentially all modern consumer electronics are arguably designed to be useless after a few years, a traditional wristwatch, particularly mechanical wristwatches, can and will outlast its original owner as long as they’re properly maintained and serviced. In other words, a Rolex Datejust from 2015 will be far more capable of performing all its intended functions in 50 years than an Apple Watch from the same year, simply because Apple refuses to update or integrate their products past a certain point. Rolex doesn’t have this problem because, as one could surmise, the Caliber 3235 movement that lives inside it doesn’t require software updates. Even when the watch breaks or otherwise needs a service, it’s far easier to find a reputable watchmaker who’ll ensure a timepiece is fully functional rather than an iFixIt store or an equivalent establishment that would be willing to work on something antiquated.

However, the world of traditional watches isn’t necessarily free of controversy. Many established watch brands can get away with ethically questionable business practices. The Japanese watch brand Seiko, for example, has been simultaneously discontinuing their beloved affordable models and replacing them with updated versions that are substantially more expensive, while still having quality control issues such as misaligned dial parts and dust under

the crystal. Many enthusiasts on r/Watches and other enthusiast forums suspect that Rolex is intentionally limiting their production to create artificial scarcity, as all the models people want are notoriously hard to get; to even get a chance at purchasing a Submariner, you have to prove to your Authorized Dealer—stores like Watches of Switzerland or Tourneau—that you’re a loyal customer by purchasing less desirable but still very expensive watches that you’ll never wear.

Many of these companies also don’t recognize the importance of appealing to younger buyers, especially more affordable brands. Even though their customers won’t be around forever—and in most cases, are in their autumn years—many of these brands refuse to be truly savvy regarding their marketing, shirking the Internet in favor of sponsoring sports events or obscure organizations. The global website of the Japanese brand Orient is indicative of this problem. While it is their main site and it’s possible to view their catalog, it’s not actually possible to buy any of their timepieces from it; one can only do so on their website made specifically for the user’s region, which isn’t directly linked anywhere on Orient’s global site. The descriptions in the catalog also exhibit a lack of care, as it seems that the company wrote the descriptions in Japanese and put them through Google Translate. For instance, Orient wrote that a limited edition variant of one of their sports watches “depicts a mystical radiant earth that plays tribute to the depth and beauty of nature, sea and forest”.

But on the other end of the spectrum exists Swatch. While their plastic quartz timepieces were a hallmark of the 1980s, the watchmaker made a meteoric comeback in early 2022 when they collaborated with fellow watchmaking company Omega to release the MoonSwatch. A bio-ceramic tribute to the wildly popular Speedmaster—the first watch to go to the moon on the wrists of Buzz Aldrin and Neil Armstrong—Swatch and Omega came back into the public consciousness by selling a variant of the so-called “Moonwatch” for only \$260. According to its



annual report, Swatch sold more than a million MoonSwatches in 2022, a statistic made even more impressive by the fact that they're only available at a select few of the company's brick-and-mortar stores. As a result, people swarmed and even fought one another outside Swatch's physical retailers when the MoonSwatch first came out.

While Swatch's achievements are impressive and are indicative of how traditional watchmakers can still be wildly successful, they still lag far behind Apple. Their contribution to the watch industry has been so successful, in fact, that it easily outsells the entirety of Switzerland's watch industry. As mentioned previously, Apple sold approximately 30 million watches in 2019, while the Swiss watchmaking industry as a whole—from Rolex to Swatch—sold about 21 million.

Smartwatch ownership is especially prevalent amongst millennials and Gen Z. At the same time, traditional watches are sold mainly to baby boomers and older generations, according to Deloitte's Swiss Watch Industry Study.

For decades, the world of modern horology was dominated by the traditional wristwatch. While its basic forms and functions varied, they were largely independent devices that didn't rely on external tech. While some exceptions existed, like the Seiko T001-5019, the famous "TV watch" worn by Roger Moore in "Octopussy," which came with its own signal receiver, and Timex's Datalink, which allowed people to synchronize a calendar to a digital watch via a Windows application and a CRT monitor, most wrist watches were fully autonomous and didn't require another device to fully function.

While those timepieces had useful supplementary features, they weren't vital to their operation. This is unlike most smartwatches, which require a smartphone running an operating

system from the same manufacturer that can also communicate with the watch, and therefore can perform a majority of the functions that a typical phone can.

The smartwatch's origins trace back to 1972 when American watchmaker Hamilton released the world's first digital quartz watch, the Pulsar. While it only displayed the time, it was a revolutionary piece of technology, with the first commercially available one costing the modern equivalent of \$14,000 when it was released.

Its price made it a true luxury watch, and its appearance on the wrists of Jack Nicholson, Elton John, and Gerald Ford cemented its reputation. Despite its high price and coveted status, the Pulsar was an impressive battery drainer, requiring a new one multiple times a year since it used LED diodes to display the time. The diodes required a relatively large amount of energy to function, and one of Hamilton's prototypes, which had an always-on display, drained its battery within 20 minutes. Resultantly, an LED watch could only display the time if its owner pressed a button.

Two years after the Pulsar's debut, Japanese electronics maker Casio began producing their first digital watch, simply called the Casiotron. Unlike the Pulsar, the Casiotron could display the date, and also automatically know how many days were in each month (put more simply, it knew that February has 28 days, April has 30, etc). Additionally, the Casiotron used an LCD screen, which drained the battery at a far slower rate than the Pulsar's LEDs.

Even though the Pulsar started out in life as a luxury timepiece, the technology required to produce LEDs became cheaper throughout the 1970s, and by the end of the decade, most consumers saw LED watches as disposable and archaic, overshadowed by more efficient LCD digital watches. By 1978 Texas Instruments was producing a Star Wars-themed LED watch costing the equivalent of just \$60, a 90% decrease from the original Pulsar's price. While one

can still buy modern interpretations of LED watches, with Hamilton even remaking the Pulsar with an LCD/LED hybrid display, most enthusiasts feel that they're gimmicky and inferior to LCD digitals.

On the other hand, Casio's subsequent watches, like the digital F-91w and the analog Duro, cemented the company as a mainstay of budget watchmaking; their timepieces are famous for being available to buy for well under \$100 and last for decades.

While Switzerland had tried to capitalize on Hamilton and Casio's success with their own digital and quartz watches throughout the 1970s and 80s, their first industry-changing contribution to the development of the smartwatch came in 1999 in the form of Tissot's T-Touch. Made by one of the oldest and most affordable Swiss watch brands, the T-Touch had an analog-digital screen that worked in conjunction with a capacitive crystal that detected when its user touched its crystal. It allowed them to view certain data on the digital face based on what part of the crystal they touched, such as current altitude, temperature, the weather, a compass, an alarm, and a stopwatch. As Estelle Fallet wrote in "Tissot: The Story Of A Watch Company," "The T-Touch is the synthesis of the latest technological developments...more than a watch, it is a piece of technical prowess...thanks to its tactile function, it is unequalled in its user-friendliness."

The T-Touch wasn't the only major smart-adjacent watch to hit the market. Fashion brand Fossil came out with a digital watch called the Wrist PDA in 2003, which, as the name implies, was a personal digital assistant that could be worn on one's wrist, complete with most of the functions that came with one. Wired.com went as far as calling it a "Dick Tracy watch", a nod to the comic character's futuristic timepiece.

But the first smartwatch that captured the public's interest was the Apple Watch. While it wasn't the first modern smartwatch—independently funded smart timepieces had come out before—the Apple Watch was the first to work with other Apple products. Given that Apple sold 231 million iPhones in 2015, and more than 1.5 billion since the device's introduction in 2007—according to Statista—it's easy to understand why so many iPhone users see the benefit of having a wrist-mounted companion to their phone.

However, there have been home-grown attempts to bridge this gap between traditional watches and smartwatches. Tissot's modern T-Touch, for instance, can connect with its owner's phone to notify them of incoming calls and new text messages, on top of all the other features mentioned earlier.

Luxury watchmaker Hublot also makes a smart variant of their flagship watch, the Big Bang. Made of either titanium or ceramic, the Big Bang "e" has Google's Wear OS, which is simultaneously compatible with both iOS and Android. It comes with a sapphire-covered 390 x 390 display, along with navigation, Google Pay, and basic fitness tracking. But as Digital Trends pointed out in a 2021 review, the Big Bang e "has a lower technical specification than the \$300 Mobvoi TicWatch Pro 3...you can buy 17 of them for the same price as the Big Bang e, and still have some change left over."

Additionally, Tag Heuer, famous for their involvement in motorsports, also produces a smartwatch, aptly named the Connected. While it has the same operating system as the Big Bang e, it's more fitness-oriented, having a compass and a heart rate monitor, along with a "Sports" application that tracks swimming, cycling, running, and even golf. Its owner can even display their own NFTs on its screen.

Even though Swiss watchmakers are capable of making smartwatches that earnestly compete with Apple, Samsung, and Google, many watch enthusiasts don't see the appeal. As mentioned previously, collectors enjoy their non-smart watches because, on their own, they'll never need to update or replace them as long as they're properly maintained. While these luxury smartwatches have the attention to detail and craftsmanship of heritage watchmakers, it could be argued that they exhibit the worst attributes of both traditional and smart watches: a high MSRP combined with the impermanence and planned obsolescence of consumer technology. However, there have also been efforts to curb this problem.

The most notable example is the French electronics maker Withings. In addition to making devices such as blood pressure monitors and Wi-Fi scales, the company has its own line of smartwatches that are much more faithful to traditional watches than its competitors. Their timepiece, called the ScanWatch, is capable of tracking its owner's heartbeat, breathing, sleep patterns, and steps while having a classic design that evokes the simple and clean designs of mid-century dress watches or prototypical dive timepieces, depending on the model.

"Out of all the smartwatches I own, my Withings has the longest battery life," says Michael Compeau, a Cleveland-based watch collector. "I get about four months from a single charge."

Compeau owns more than 400 timepieces, many of which puritan enthusiasts would eschew. "I have about 70 Nautica models, most of which were sold in the EU or Italy but never in the USA, along with some 'unconventional' smartwatches," he said. Compeau's journey into the watch-collecting world began when he was about seven years old after his father explained the workings of his timepiece, a Wyler Incaflex from the early 1950s. "I was in awe of the tiny

gears and the balance wheel in the movement, and I was so impressed that I got a dive watch for Christmas.” Compeau’s father’s Wyler remains in his collection to this day.

Compeau’s story is one of many; to many enthusiasts, their love for modern horology is passed down from their elders. As mentioned previously, Marc Frankel’s love for watches was partly inspired by the timepieces his father owned. This love for timepieces is often cyclical, and parents often pass down their hobby to their children, allowing family members to bond over a common interest.

In the age of the internet, this mutual love for timepieces extends to social media platforms. Countless social media users of all backgrounds and wealth share their collections with the world, and some have gained a sizable following.

One of the more popular influencers is James Lacroix, the owner of the Instagram account @godwatcher. Lacroix has a collection few can afford, including Rolexes and pieces from Audemars Piguet.

“I grew up in New Orleans, and when my brother finished school he got to choose a \$10,000 two-tone gold and steel Rolex Submariner as a graduation gift,” he reminisced. “And when I graduated, I chose to get an all-green Submariner.”

But when Lacroix went to sell his watch three years later, he’d learned that it had doubled in value and soon discovered how a handful of brands—namely Audemars Piguet, Patek Philippe, and of course, Rolex—were great investments.

“And in that course of time I fell in love with watches in general,” Lacroix remembers. “I loved the different movements, the community, the buying experience, everything.”

Lacroix stands out in the watch community due to his savvy nature with younger enthusiasts. Unlike many other—and usually older—popular influencers in the community, he

shares current memes on his story and discusses finance and general self-improvement in a way younger people can appreciate. He even does free giveaways of desirable luxury watches, giving away Omegas and Tudors as a way to attract people to his page.

Younger people deep into the hobby of watches are relatively few and far between. By its very nature, it can be very expensive, to the point where it's not only socially acceptable but expected to call timepieces costing well over \$500 "affordable". With a few exceptions, like Casio, \$100 usually doesn't allow for a reputable, well-built watch from a legacy company. Consequently, most younger people don't have the means to invest in multiple expensive timepieces due to their limited disposable income.

Mark Sosman bucks this trend. Despite his age, the 20-year-old Swiss-Israeli teacher's assistant has a very respectable collection, which includes pieces from Timex, Tissot, the microbrand Zeppelin, and Mido, with his most recent acquisition being a sports watch from the lattermost brand.

"Obviously having access to less money is an obstacle; I can't buy as many watches and my collection doesn't grow as fast," says Sosman. "But on the other hand, I consider my watches carefully—if they're not presents—and spend a lot of time thinking about them. As a result, while my collection doesn't grow fast and certainly is not filled with flashy pieces, I appreciate every single watch I own."

Like many enthusiasts, Sosman's love for watches came from his family, but unlike Marc Frankel or Michael Compeau, Sosman's interest derived from his brother.

"As a kid, I got my first watch from my brother," he remembers. "I remember him showing me how the luminous paint on the dial and hands worked, and then I also got a proper watch at the age of 12. I looked into watches out of curiosity and saw that they all had different

styles, and as I grew I learned more along the way. I also had a grandfather figure who ran a watch store, and I can say that his interest and passion definitely rubbed off on me.”

Like most young collectors, Sosman doesn’t have many friends who share his hobby. “I mostly collect for myself,” he says. “I usually don’t run into any others from the community much.” He also feels isolated from other watch consumers as well.

“On one hand, you have people who only see watches as investments, and on the other, those who only value them as a status symbol. I think it’s important to remember that we like watches not because they’re good investments or are precious art pieces, but because we enjoy and appreciate them...it’s a very personal hobby.”

But for Ethan Williams, his need for watches is purely practical. A Lieutenant in the U.S. Marines, Williams can’t afford to be distracted while on a mission and isn’t allowed to carry any devices that emit any sort of receivable signal.

“If I wore an Apple Watch or even a standard Garmin, I could give away my position,” Williams says. “I could endanger everyone on my team.”

Williams is a military man through and through. Even though he’s a Reservist, likes wearing Danner’s Marine Rat boots, has a regulation haircut, owns several field-used historical firearms, and is the grandson of Korean War and World War II veterans. After seeing films such as “Saving Private Ryan” and “Top Gun”, along with playing copious amounts of “Call of Duty” when he was younger, he knew that he wanted to serve his country.

Williams’ watches reflect this dedication. All of them are purpose-built, spartan tools meant to survive anything and everything. While he does own a well-worn G-Shock DW6900 and a battered Mudmaster, his two most worn pieces are an automatic Marathon MSAR (Medium Search and Rescue) dive watch—which he actually bought from Frankel’s store—and



a quartz Sangin Kinetic II Pilot. Even though Williams wore the Marathon almost every day for over two years, he prefers the Sangin.

“It’s just way more accurate because of the quartz...I got frustrated with how inaccurate the mechanical Marathon could be, and it’s more fragile than a quartz. If it broke, I’d be out of luck, since bases and FOBs don’t exactly have on-call watchmakers. The Kinetic also doesn’t reflect any light because it’s DLC-coated and the company that makes it was founded and is operated by fellow Marines.” Williams has also considered buying a Garmin Tactix, which uses different frequencies than standard Garmin watches but doesn’t like their high price tag. “They’re, like, \$1,600, so screw that,” he laughed.

Williams’ history with watches goes back over a decade. When he was twelve, his father gifted him a Vostok Komandirskie, a Russian-made military watch whose current iteration has been in production since before the fall of the Soviet Union. While Vostoks are bare-bones and industrial compared to Swiss and even Japanese watches—lacking many of the basic features found in even budget mechanical watches—Williams loved the timepiece, wearing it for years until he eventually replaced it with a gunmetal Citizen Eco-Drive. Even now, another twelve years later, the Komandirskie’s hand-wound movement runs flawlessly.

“I also like to borrow my grandpa’s vintage GMT Master II from my dad,” Williams added. “My grandpa and I were really close, and I feel like a part of him is always with me when I wear it...I wore it to my cousin’s wedding last year.” Williams also owns his grandfather’s Citizen Chrono Time, which he frequently wore before passing away in late 2014.

Williams, Sosman, Lacroix, Compeau, and Frankel all have one thing in common: connections that caused them to get into the hobby of watches. While the journeys they had varied from person to person, the connections they had with their loved ones motivated them to

invest their time and money into a surprisingly multifaceted hobby, with its own characters, schools of thought, and subcultures. It has a seldom-seen quality that makes a hobby genetic in nature, being passed down from one family member to another over the course of generations.

While passing down smart tech isn't anything new, it largely happens out of necessity instead of being a "part" of someone you love. Many toddlers and children often use their parents' old tablet for their own entertainment, and while they might thank their parents for doing so in the future, it's not romantic and personal in the same way that receiving a loved one's old timepiece is. It's much harder to associate a person with a smart device than it is a watch, simply because a timepiece is much more of a signifier of the kind of person someone is, as Sosman explained. A lot can be inferred about someone based on the watch they wear, and the qualities someone might find endearing about a relative or loved one become inherently tied to whatever timepiece is on their wrist.

Watch journalist Bradley Jones wrote for watch news site Worn and Wound that "if any watch, expensive or not, is worn regularly then it becomes an enduring part of a person more than any other item of clothing ever will. More than a hairstyle, more than a pair of glasses, more than a car. Other than a person's own unique character, face, and your own personal relationship with them, there's nothing tangible that represents an individual more than a piece of jewelry that they chose to wear every day."

One of Frankel's earliest memories, for example, is his father winding his Datejust. The connection Frankel made between his father and his watch makes it more than just a collection of moving gears and parts; he has positive memories of being around his father, helping him out with the family business—a hardware store in "the city"—while the elder Frankel wore his

Rolex. Consumer technology, and most other objects for that matter, simply don't create that association, because they aren't an always-present representation of who that person is.

Watches can even have this special quality wholly separate from loved ones, having a personal touch that tells a story. Paul Newman's Rolex Daytona, for example, has an engraving on its caseback, which simply reads "Drive Carefully, Me.," a reminder from his wife, actress Joanne Woodward, to take it easy while he was racing. Many vintage watches found on eBay are also engraved with their original owner's initials or a date that was important to them, usually when they bought or otherwise received the watch.

While it's easy to assume otherwise, the modern world of watches, while relatively obscure, is impressively virile. Between forums, news sites, social media influencers, and successful online watch stores, the appeal of traditional watches has not been snuffed out by the might of Apple. Their supposedly anachronistic movements and functions only embolden those who buy them, wanting a reliable time-telling implement that doesn't need to be replaced every two years. The romance and craftsmanship that's inherent to Swiss watchmaking still appeal to people of all ages and socioeconomic standing, from rich investors to young adults finding their place in the world. The timepieces elders pass down to their young remain a hallowed practice in countless families. The world of traditional watches is here to stay, and while Apple might make a technically superior device, they'll never be able to truly replace the experiences so many people have with an old-fashioned, Swiss-made, mechanical watch.

## **Interview Log**

1. Marc Frankel, Owner of Long Island Watch, 6/29/22, over-the-phone interview  
Subject: Experience running LIW and owning a microbrand  
Contact: [sales@longislandwatch.com](mailto:sales@longislandwatch.com)
  
2. Michael Compeau, Enthusiast, 7/1/22, Discord  
Subject: How Compeau got into watch collecting  
Contact: [mike.compeau@gmail.com](mailto:mike.compeau@gmail.com)
  
3. James Lacroix, Owner of @godwatcher, 7/14/22, Discord  
Subject: Experience running a watch-oriented Instagram page  
Contact: @godwatcher (Instagram), 921490099944968222 ([Discord ID](#)),  
lacroixjames70@gmail.com
  
4. Mark Sosman, Enthusiast, 2/7/23, Instagram  
Subject: Being a younger watch enthusiast  
Contact: [markabraso@gmail.com](mailto:markabraso@gmail.com)
  
5. Ethan Williams, Marine Reservist, 4/4/23, phone  
Subject: The usage of traditional watches in military applications  
Contact: [lieutew@gmail.com](mailto:lieutew@gmail.com)

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