

# Timepieces of Famous Historical Figures

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NAWCC San Jacinto Chapter 139

# James Dean



*Gold-filled "Standard USA" pocket watch, with Elgin movement (circa 1889)*

- Considered his "Lucky Charm", since he acquired it in New York in late 1951 just as his acting career started to take off.
- Became one of his most treasured items, which he insisted on wearing in his films such as 'East of Eden'.
- Sold at auction for \$42,000 in June 2013.

# Charlie Chaplin



## *Left-handed Rolex Oyster in Stainless Steel (circa 1945)*

- Notable not only for having belonged to Chaplin, but also for its rarity as one of the few left-handed models produced by Rolex during this period.
- Retailed by Asprey, London and signed on the round white dial, with black Arabic chapters and hands.
- Sold at auction for \$51,250 in April 2013.

# Mahatma Gandhi



## *Zenith pocket watch with alarm complication (circa 1910)*

- A gift from India Nehru, who was to serve as Prime Minister of India from 1966-1977.
- One of his rare material goods and accompanied his daily life, notably signaling his prayer times thanks to its alarm function.
- Sold at auction in March 2009 for \$1.8 million as part of a lot comprising his famous round spectacles, a bowl and dish as well as a pair of leather sandals.

# Sir Winston Churchill



*Breguet N° 765, minute-repeating split-seconds chronograph*

- Known as “The Turnip”, the watch was originally purchased in 1890 by Churchill’s uncle (the 8th Duke of Marlborough).
- He used to take it back to Breguet to get it cleaned. After the Second World War, he took it back to Breguet in Paris and Breguet sent it back saying the service was complimentary in recognition of what he’d done.

# Albert Einstein



*Longines tonneau-shaped 14K yellow gold wristwatch, with 14K yellow gold buckle (1929)*

- Presented to Professor Albert Einstein on February 16th, 1931 in Los Angeles.
- Sold at auction for \$596,000 in October 2008.
- Longines watch that has fetched the highest price ever at auction.

# Franklin D. Roosevelt



*Tiffany & Co. 14k gold triple-calendar wristwatch with Movado movement (1944)*

- Given to President Roosevelt on his 63rd and last birthday by his son in-law.
- The watch reportedly was worn by FDR at the Malta and Yalta Conferences in 1945.

# Steve McQueen



*Heuer Monaco 1133b  
Chronograph, square faced,  
blue dialed, steel sport's  
watch (1970)*

- Screen worn by Steve McQueen during filming *Le Mans* (1971).
- This model was specifically chosen by McQueen from a selection of chronograph timepieces supplied in 1970 by Jack Heuer.
- Sold at auction in 2012 for \$799,500.



# Queen Victoria



*Patek Philippe pendant, key wind in yellow gold with blue enamel (1851)*

- Purchased by the Queen at the 1851 Great Exhibition in London's Hyde Park.
- Same exhibition where Patek Philippe introduced its revolutionary keyless keyless winding system.
- Currently housed at the Patek Philippe Museum in Geneva.

# John Dillinger



*Hamilton 12 size gold-filled open face pocket watch, 17 jewel movement (1939)*

- Carried by Dillinger when he was gunned down by the FBI outside the Biograph Theater in Chicago on July 22, 1934
- Cleaned and repaired sometime prior to 1943 and carried by Dillinger's brother-in-law for a further 35 years.
- Offer for auction in December 2012 and passed in at \$41,825.

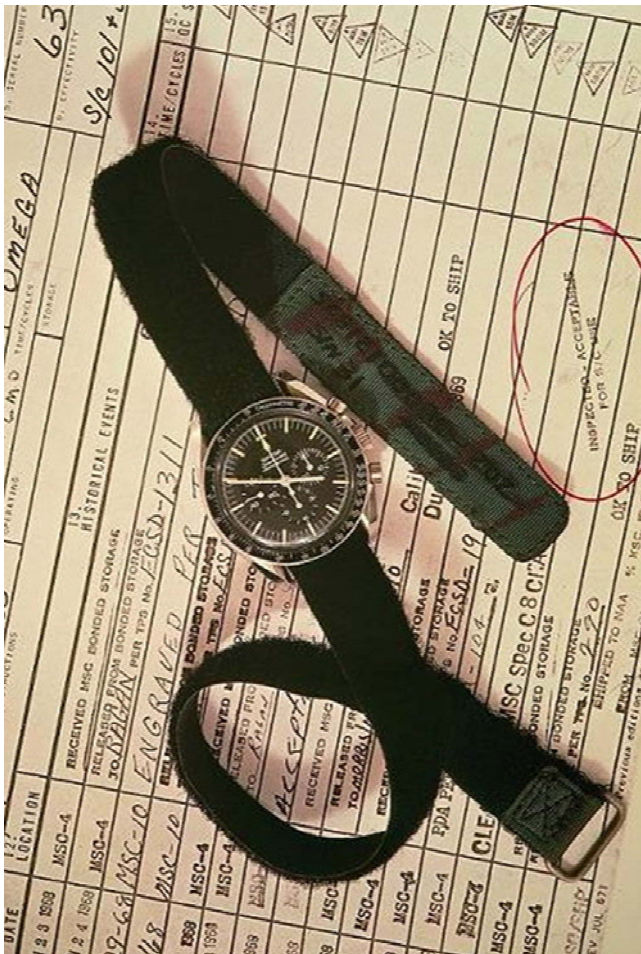
# Sir Edmund Hillary



## *Rolex Oyster Perpetual (1950)*

- Rolex was one of the sponsors of the 1953 Everest Expedition.
- It was not a gift, but rather a watch for Hillary to wear during the expedition and then to return to Rolex for extensive testing after the descent.
- Currently housed at the Beyer Watch and Clock Museum in Zürich.

# Buzz Aldrin



## *Omega Speedmaster ST105.012, Calibre 321 (1966)*

- NASA selected Omega based on rigorous testing. Other brands tested were Longines, Rolex and Hamilton.
- Aldrin's watch was the first worn on the lunar surface. Armstrong left his own Speedmaster in the Lunar Module as a replacement for the in-cabin timer which had malfunctioned.
- Its current whereabouts is not known.

# Antonio López de Santa Anna

*Miniature grandfather clock, sterling silver and with a fusee pocket watch movement (c. 1750)*

- As a boy, Santa Anna was an acolyte of the main priest at a catholic church in the central part of Mexico.
- The miniature grandfather clock was a gift to Santa Anna from the father when he joined the military.
- Santa Anna carried the miniature grandfather clock all through the various battles.

# Bonus: Chapter 139 Trivia

Chapter 139 was awarded a Charter from the NAWCC in 1986.



When Ben Fulbright filed for the charter, he asked that the numbering system be temporarily withheld and that this new chapter be granted the chapter number **150**.

*Anyone want to guess why we wanted that number?*

# References

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- <http://forums.watchuseek.com/f2/historical-figures-their-watches-522780.html>
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