



The Curious Practice of Saving Time

It is the first Sunday morning of November here in Indiana. I awakened as usual--just before the sun was up. I was surely a rooster in my previous life. I tend to get yearning for roosting at dusk with odd desires to vocalize even sans shower at the dawns early light. Having been reminded by not only my wife, but social media, the TV, emails and from thoughtful friends, my clock had “fallen back” an hour from the “leaped forward” spell it incurred the second week of March. I did feel rested because I had roosted shortly after darkness. For a brief sleep puzzled moment, I groggily wondered why the clock read an hour earlier than what I expected. Shortly, the reason struck. The time was the same ...the clock was not.

Ben Franklin is sometimes credited was the originator of the daylight saving time. This was a consequence of a satirical piece he wrote in 1784 while taking leave of the pretty Parisian ladies of haute socie'te'. He merely suggested Parisians should change their sleep schedules to arise at daylight thus saving money by not burning candles. He suggested nothing about rolling the clocks time back and forth.

The concept of Daylight Savings Time that is now generally used around the world is credited to George Hudson. Born in London in 1867 he moved with his family to New Zealand when he was 16. There he continued his boyhood interest in Entomology. In 1895 he proposed the concept we call Daylight Savings here...and Summer Time there. His motive likely was to provide more daylight hours to collect bugs in the evenings It is satisfying to know that he was successful in providing the largest collection of collection of insects in New Zealand.

The first nation to utilize Mr. Hudson's concept was the German Empire, and its ally Austria and had nothing to do with bugs. They turned clocks ahead by one hour on April 30, 1916—2 years into World War I. The rationale was to minimize the use of artificial lighting to save fuel for the war effort. The practice was quickly

adapted by other fighting nations for the same reason. Thus the “civilized” nations of world saved money so they could invest in ways to kill one another.

At one time in my living there were some positive benefits of clock manipulation. During the summer I could venture later to hit a golf ball or I could enjoy longer putterings in the garden after work. Now aged and in retirement the only benefit gained is I am not as concerned with the grandkids going to school in total darkness. Even this has a trade off. With less hours of daylight in the evening they are inside earlier. There they find opportunity to spend more time with reading books and doing studious homework... or unfortunately, become glazed and glued to the one eyed monster, TV.

These days I simply ignore the changing clock. I live instead with the shortening and lengthening of the days –the passing beauty of seasons in company with my friends the roosters and the rest of God’s furred and feathered creatures.

Don Adams

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