

Lafayette clock moved, finds home in Dayton

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USA TODAY NETWORK

DAYTON, Ind. – Three years after the purchase and descent of the clock from the top of Lafayette’s Hour Time Restaurant, it will continue to tell time after moving a few miles southeast to a new home in Dayton, just east of Lafayette.

The clock, which sat on top of Hour Time Restaurant for more than 40 years, was moved Dec. 20 to a lot on the Koehler Brothers Nursery and Landscaping after being purchased a few months prior by landscaper and clock expert Lorne Koehler-Marsh. Up until its move, the 18-foot, 9-ton clock sat in a Holiday Inn Express parking lot, moving shortly to the adjacent Harley-Davidson parking lot in Lafayette as it awaited its journey.

Koehler-Marsh’s father, Ron Koehler, who owns the property where the clock now sits, helped orchestrate the tedious, intricate move that involved the Dayton marshal shutting down traffic for the afternoon and taking 2½ feet off of the clock’s roof to get it on a trailer and able to pass safely under power lines.

Then, once things were secured and the journey began, the clock traveled 6 miles per hour to Dayton, across the interstate and through a few back roads — to avoid any power lines — toward Dayton until it reached Koehler Brothers Nursery and Landscaping. Only two tree limbs were harmed in process, Koehler said.

Koehler spent all of Saturday, Dec. 21, taking the clock off the trailer and starting work to reassemble the part of the roof that was removed.

All in all, moving the clock from Lafayette to Dayton went “pretty quick,” Koehler said. He’s done much longer moves.

It wasn’t the first time Koehler had helped move something of that size from a different location to Dayton — previously moving a historic general



The Hour Time clock sits in the lot of Koehler Bros., at 3120 Dayton Road, on Friday in Dayton. The clock, built in 1910, sat atop the Hour Time Restaurant for decades. NIKOS FRAZIER/JOURNAL & COURIER

store to his property from Burrows, Indiana, 41 miles away.

He’s also in the process of moving and reconstructing a historic schoolhouse and log cabin close to Dayton Elementary School on College Street.

Eventually, Koehler said he wants to construct a small “village” of historical buildings surrounding the nursery and landscaping stores, a place inviting visitors to step back in time and see history firsthand.

“It takes time to do it,” Koehler said. “It’s neat, and a lot of these things (historical buildings) are sitting somewhere destroyed, vandalized or burned to the ground. It’s nice to have an area that’s unique to save them. And we can just keep adding to it.”

The clock will be a part of that plan as

well. Koehler-Marsh previously told the J&C he remembered eating at Hour Time only once, but loved passing by the gigantic timepiece, due to his fascination with ornate clocks. This eventually led to a lifelong hobby and collection of high-end, antique Black Forest clocks.

The clock dates to 1910, built in Leicester, England, and originally sat on top of a train station in Rochdale, England. It came to Lafayette in 1977 after hotel and Hour Time owner Roy Meeks purchased it at an auction in Los Angeles for \$8,000, to go with an upscale restaurant and convention center. When it was shipped to Lafayette, Meeks said it arrived in boxes and sacks of parts.

Now that it permanently sits on Koehler’s property in Dayton, the clock

will eventually be attached to a not yet constructed four- to six-story stone tower made of European stone that will tell time and feature animated wooden figurines moving on the half hour and hour. Koehler-Marsh plans to open a clock workshop at its base.

Construction on the tower and adjacent clock shops might begin as soon as 2021.

“We’re just doing fun things and trying to save historical buildings,” Koehler said. “The clock will be neat, and will cater to people all over the U.S. who love clocks.”

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