



JOHN MACKIE, VANCOUVER SUN 10.09.2014

"VANCOUVER - Thirty-seven years after it was erected at Cambie and Water, the Gastown Steam Clock has gone silent.

In fact, it isn't even there anymore.

On Wednesday morning, a city work crew lifted the local tourist landmark off its pedestal and onto a semi-trailer. It was then driven to the city's works yard, where it will be refurbished.

"It's kind of sad to see it moving from the site after 37 years sitting here," said Ray Saunders, who designed the clock. "But they own the clock, and want to restore it and refurbish it. They didn't want to do the work on the sidewalk."

The 74-year-old Saunders can understand why — he's been constantly repairing it on the street, rain or shine, since it was unveiled on Sept. 26, 1977. Saunders was out Wednesday directing the city crew, and will be working as a "supervisor and consultant" on the restoration.

"They're doing some things to it to make it more reliable," he said. "It's all overdue stuff, should have been done a few years ago. Now it'll be done and it'll be reliable and accurate."

Two panes of glass will be replaced in the restoration, and the mechanical parts that load the metal balls in the clock will be repaired. The "steam manifold system" will also be redone, and reinsulated, by the "steam man" who originally built it, **Shane Blackmon.**"