

The Story Behind Neochron

A conversation with founder Jason Watson, on lost rings, living trees, and giving objects a memory that outlives us.



Jason Watson, founder of Neochron.

Some ideas arrive in a flash. Others wait patiently for the technology to catch up. Neochron is the second kind — an idea Jason Watson first had in 2002, and spent more than twenty years growing into something real. The name says it plainly: neo, new; chron, chronological — a new way to keep the record of an object through time. We sat down with him to trace it back to its beginning.

It started, you've said, with two wedding rings.

"It did. When I married my wife Monika in 2002, I didn't want something off a shelf. I had our rings made by hand by an artisan jeweller, John Patrick. Mine was unusual — a heavy platinum and white-gold puzzle ring, which I've since lost. Monika's was the opposite: a delicate diamond band, and she still wears it with pride today.

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Where does that belief come from?

"There was a moment that sealed it. I was in my local, The Haven Arms in Ealing, West London. A man was standing at the bar next to me, pint in hand. As I ordered my drink he caught my eye and nodded at my ring. He said, *'Nice ring — can I take a look? All jewellery has a story to tell.'*

I handed it to him. He closed it in his hands and told me exactly where I'd bought it and how I'd come across it — a sapphire ring I'd found in Aurangabad, in western India, back in 1992, after visiting the ancient cave temples of Ajanta and Ellora. Who knows what history that ring already held before it ever reached me?

I never saw the man again."

And both that ring and your wedding ring are gone now.

"Yes. The sapphire, and later my platinum wedding band — both lost to time. And honestly, that's exactly what Neochron is about. If those rings had carried a Neochron code, then whoever found them could read their whole history — the marriage, the maker, the journey through India. An object with a memory can never really be lost."

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There's a Polish thread here too.

"Monika is Polish, and in Polish tradition husband and wife are buried with their wedding bands — the ring stays with you right to the end. I remember thinking: how extraordinary if the band could tell its own story. Not a line of engraving, but a code — a link — to the whole history of the marriage it stood for."

But the idea that really lit the fuse wasn't jewellery at all. It was bonsai.

"It was. My love of bonsai started in 1990, when I won a tree in a raffle in Italy of all places. It grew into a business — by 2000 I had two shops and outlets across the South East of England. And back in 1998, well ahead of everyone else, I built the first bonsai website with live

photographs. Customers would phone me up and reserve the exact tree they'd seen posted online.

If I'm honest, bonsai was the real catalyst. A bonsai is history made living — cultivated, shaped and handed down across generations. That idea of a living record passed from hand to hand... it stayed with me."

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So you had the idea. What stopped you building it in 2002?

"The technology didn't exist. I was an early, heavy adopter of the web, and I kept circling the same question: how do you give a physical object permanence and provenance? I researched it exhaustively, and the answer was always the same — with ordinary web technology, you simply can't. Servers die, links rot, companies vanish. Nothing lasts."

When did the answer arrive?

"Through a side door. I'd dipped a toe into Bitcoin — but it was never the money that gripped me. It was the machinery underneath: blockchain, and the realisation of how profoundly it could change the world. Then Ethereum came to light and everything clicked. I had no interest in the trading or the speculation. What captivated me — with no exaggeration, completely — was the *potential*. Here, at last, was a way to give a record permanence that no company or passing decade could erase."

And going from conviction to a working product?

"That was its own journey. At first the pieces wouldn't connect. I taught myself Solidity, dabbled with NFTs and smart contracts, but the technology and the idea I'd carried since 2002 stubbornly refused to meet. Then one day — I couldn't tell you exactly when — it clicked. I *knew* blockchain was the thing that could make it work. And once I started building the smart contracts in earnest, working through the development myself, the potential really began to shine through. An idea from a pub in Ealing was becoming code that could outlive everyone who touches it."

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So where is it all going?

"In ten years, I want a Neochron code to be as natural a part of an object as a hallmark is on silver. When a painting changes hands, a classic car finds a new owner, a rare bottle is cellared, or a bonsai is passed to the next generation — its story should travel with it, permanently, for anyone to read.

It starts with the people who feel this most: families with heirlooms, collectors, artists and makers who want their work to carry its truth forever. But it's bigger than any single market. At its heart, Neochron is about **permanence** — giving memory and provenance to the things we love, so that nothing meaningful is ever truly lost again."

And beyond the story itself?

"The story is the soul of it — but the same permanent record has real practical power too. A provenance you can't forge is also a foundation for security, for insurance, for trusted appraisal. Those doors are opening, and they excite me. But they all rest on the same simple idea: an object that can prove its own history."

A final, personal one. What would all this mean to you?

"The use that moves me most is the personal one. A tree I've grown, or a new ring made for Monika — to know it could carry its own story long after I'm gone. That's not a feature. That's the whole point."

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Jason Watson, founder of Neochron — turning a belief that "all jewellery has a story to tell" into a permanent record for the things we treasure.

Where Neochron Is Heading

The founder's story explains the soul of Neochron. Here's the machine beneath it — and why a permanent, forgery-proof record of an object's history is more than sentiment.

Every Neochron record is anchored on the Ethereum blockchain: an append-only, timestamped history that no server outage, company failure or passing decade can erase. That

single property — **provenance you cannot forge** — unlocks three practical frontiers:

1. Security & authenticity

A tamper-evident chain of ownership and provenance makes forgery and misattribution far harder. Each object carries a verifiable identity that can be checked by anyone, anywhere, without trusting a middleman — a decisive advantage in art, antiques and collectibles, where fakes and murky histories cost the market dearly.

2. Insurance

Underwriting and claims both hinge on one thing: reliable history. Neochron gives insurers a permanent, independently verifiable record of an item's provenance, condition and appraisals — reducing fraud, simplifying valuation, and making high-value pieces easier and fairer to insure.

3. Validation through appraisal

Neochron records expert appraisals and endorsements as permanent, typed entries in an object's history — a valuation that stays with the piece forever, visible to every future owner. Over time, an object accumulates a trail of trusted, timestamped expert judgement that compounds its credibility and its value.

The common thread: all three rest on the same foundation the founder set out to build — *an object that can prove its own history*. The emotional promise and the commercial promise are, in the end, the same promise.