



MASTERPIECES OF YESTERDAY

by Henri Bonnet

When does a wristwatch become a work of art? Visual art always elicits an emotional response from its beholder, and leaves few people indifferent. Certainly, one may marvel at sophisticated technology, but art has an undeniable universal appeal that crosses cultural boundaries. As such, a quality wristwatch may indeed become a unique art form. It always encompasses technology of the highest order, as well as incomparable aesthetic refinement.

Unlike other timepieces, a wristwatch can be worn on one's wrist and admired often, even when not necessarily checking the time. Distinct from some other forms of visual art, a wristwatch serves an important utilitarian purpose, which is to help regulate one's daily activities, given that time is a person's most precious asset. The Greek and Roman master builders clearly understood the impact of art on the common man, and endowed their architectural masterpieces accordingly.

Art is a language that can represent power, beauty, and strength. Some religious institutions have made good use of art to invoke feelings of awe and devotion. Swiss and early American watch manufacturers went above and beyond the mere requirements of technology, and exquisitely decorated their watch movements, though they were visible only to the watchmaker. Art is often used to symbolize value, pure and simple, or to represent the value for which the object in question was created in the first place. It makes sense, time being man's most valuable possession, that the implements for its measurement be appropriately treated.

This applies to clocks as well as to watches. An art object possesses intrinsic value not only because of its visual appeal, but primarily for what it stands for, and for the quality of the craftsmanship that went into its creation.



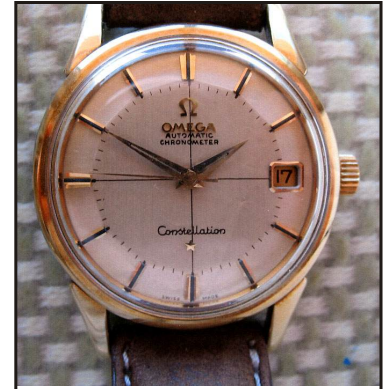
A 1963 Piaget Protocol. It is not only a refined and elegant wristwatch, but it is equipped with the famous, ultra flat Piaget 9P caliber, regulated in five positions. By a clever play of contrasting textures between the gold dial and the gold hands, there is no sacrifice in legibility. Notice the slightly curved case for outstanding comfort.

When a superlative art object defies any possibility for improvement, it becomes a true masterpiece. Fortunately, for the watch collector there are still a few wristwatches that fit that description. Such wristwatches are truly the result of inspired creativity, worthy of the great masters of the past. Just as the renaissance, in the fifteenth century, has been a period of unparalleled and prolific artistic creativity, the years between the early nineteen forties and the late nineteen sixties were the golden age of the wristwatch. To this day, certain timepieces of that period were not, and never could be replicated, let alone surpassed. How do you surpass a Rembrandt, a Raphael or a Michelangelo?

When no one can add, subtract, or alter anything from a work of art, without utterly destroying the unique spark that made it what it is, it becomes a true masterpiece. Like in any such art work, it is impossible to consider any



A 1958 Jeager Le Coultre Memovox calendar automatic. It is elegant enough to be worn for many occasions and is equipped with JLC caliber 825 featuring the loudest alarm mechanism in any wristwatch. This particular timepiece was made for Gubelin, the Tiffany of Switzerland. Few pristine examples of it are still available today.



A 1960 Omega Constellation chronometer calendar automatic. This wristwatch is equipped with the wonderful 550 series Omega caliber, featuring a micrometric regulator and adjusted in five positions. The attractive pie-shaped dial made this wristwatch in high demand at the time, and even to this very day.

single element of its design and composition without considering the successful blending of all elements, including the shape, size, proportions, and even the weight of an outstanding wristwatch. It isn't even a matter of taste. One may prefer a particular wristwatch over another, both of which may fit my definition of a masterpiece. Such a timepiece not only imminently fulfills the utilitarian purpose for which it was conceived, but it rejoices the soul and

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

By Mike Schmidt

A major goal of chapter 190 is to provide educational opportunities in horology. We continue to do this through the monthly workshops, the monthly programs and the offerings of NAWCC-Field Suitcase Workshops. In the near future we will be offering a lathe tools workshop and a dial restoration workshop. All this education is supported by our "CHRONO TIMES" with the many fine articles from our members.



Presently the NAWCC offers 12 four day repair workshops and 4 two day workshops for all who would like to learn or improve their repair skills. A beginning wristwatch repair workshop class is now in the planning stage.

This year we offered a beginning clock class FW 101. This March class is now full. I have begun to accumulate a list of names for a fourth FSW 101 class, possibly in the fall.

Please contact Mike Schmidt email EagleCreekClocks@msn.com if you wish to be included in this workshop.

A FSW 102 is offered for August 13-16 (Time & strike Barrel clock with Rack /Snail) coordinator Laurie Conti: 805 813 2216 email Remember_the_clock@me.com

A FSW 103 is offered for November (Introduction to Chiming Clocks Course) coordinator Paul Skeels: 805 525-325 email plskeelsatty@roadrunner.com

The chapter marts have improved over the past four months. Our members and friends have been bringing some really nice horological offerings, and sales have been good. The chapter electronic bulletin board has helped promote the mart and attendance. To post on the chapter Electronic Bulletin Board contact Mike email Eaglecreekclocks@msn.com.

We will all miss our good friend Jim Ingersoll. We celebrate his life of 86 years.

Jim was a long time member of Chapter 75 and a founding member of Chapter 190.

I will remember him most for his good humor and enthusiastic support and encouragement for Chapter 190. Many of us have a clock or two and possibly an antique that we purchased from the Ingersolls Antique shop in Camarillo. We all wish to express our sympathy to the Ingersoll family.

The Greater Los Angeles Regional of 2010 was a great success. The two days of rain did not seem to stop the attendance from pushing this Regional into the number one position of best attended Regional in the country. Congratulations to Ray Brown and the whole GLAR crew for putting on such a great show.

The Show & Tell the past months has been outstanding. The topic for this month will be to share a GLAR purchase or bring an alarm clock or two to add to this month's program on "Alarm Clocks", of course anything you wish to share is always welcome

See you at the meeting. *Mike*



Happy Birthday

Dan McKinnon, and Akhtar Mir,

Tales From the Bench

by Ferdinand Geitner

To clean or not to clean, or how to clean

An interesting problem confronted me last month when I was called to a customer's home to examine a clock which had stopped working after 25 years (by my standards a relatively new clock). The oldest clock I ever worked on was from 1565.

Often the customer's description over the phone is rather vague and one has to be prepared for anything but this was definitely different, a "completely" wooden clock. (see photos)

The Designer / Artist created a functional work of art where **everything** was made of wood, no metal pivots for less friction or bronze bushings hidden in the wooden plates. Even the nuts holding the plates together were threaded, hexagonal pieces of wood.

Custom built, this work of art presented a unique problem. It had accumulated dust and grime on the working tooth surfaces resulting in excessive friction. One cannot just dismantle it, drop it in some cleaning and rinsing solution to remove every contaminant and oxidation. So, how do you "clean" the wooden clock gears? The usual method of cleaning wood is to use special oils or wax to wash away contaminants, debris and to feed or replace the natural oils, reinvigorating the wood with natural luster.



On a clock, you don't want oil or wax on the gear teeth because it will collect dust and create friction.

I could not just wash the parts in soap and water which could warp the wood, not a desirable condition in a precision clock. Using chemical cleaning solutions and rinses would remove the natural oils and dry the wood making it hard, brittle, and rough, creating friction.

Another problem, wood is a porous structure and soaks up any moisture like a sponge. If any cleaning solvent is not completely removed it will affect the finish and chemistry of subsequent applications.

After talking to Cabinet makers, wood carvers and wood refinishers I still had no answers as there were conflicting opinions in determining the type of wood it was and customary treatments vary with wood type.

This requires thinking and research (hard work), but as with any problem there is a solution. I found it on a website for Museum Conservation Supplies. A special sponge impregnated with "very fine" abrasive material which gently removes foreign deposits from wood without affecting its chemistry. A labor intensive process as one has to manually clean between every tooth, but the safest and least destructive process.

The next problem is friction! How do you reduce the friction of the wooden pivots in the wooden bearings???. One can not "Oil" the bearings as the liquid would expand the wood, not a desirable effect on pivots.

The solution was to apply a small amount of graphite powder onto the wooden pivot surfaces (similar to the type used on locks) The graphite imbeds itself into the pivot and bearing,



providing a very nice, smooth, slippery surface. One has to be careful in limiting the application to just the bearings and pivots because the powder stains the wood surfaces black and would be an unsightly mess on the plates etc. And, of course, never lubricate the gear teeth.

The clock runs better than ever.

Continued from page 1

spirit of its owner. A unique experience provided by no other personal object. When one examines a true horological masterpiece, one does not only appreciate the aesthetics of its creation, but through it, one becomes keenly aware of the irreplaceable value of time itself. There are no doubts that the Swiss deserve much credit for being the great masters of the wristwatch golden age. The photos represent several examples of Swiss horological masterpieces. ■



A 1950 Le Coultre automatic. This is a rare small size square wristwatch equipped with an automatic movement. This particular model was made especially for the American market. It competed with similarly shaped, but hand wound, Hamilton Elgin and Illinois wristwatches, which were quite popular at the time.

NAWCC BITS & PIECES

by Ken McWilliams

GLAR

The Greater Los Angeles Regional was held February 5th and 6th in the new Pasadena Convention center. We held our breath when we heard the weather forecast, but like the Postman, rain & gloom didn't deter the clock and watch collectors.

These are preliminary numbers, but should be very close. A total of 355 tables were sold and 1,186 people attended, including 275 visitors. This was the highest attendance of any regional in the U. S. during the past 12 months. An unqualified success, and it was all accomplished by unpaid volunteers from chapters 75 & 133.



NAWCC Website

Last month I told you about the ability for members to access articles from every Bulletin ever published. Well, they have added to this resource by including videos from their library. These can be viewed on your computer free of charge. They are .flv files, like those on YouTube.com, so the quality isn't the best, but the information is still viable. As of this writing, there are about 48 videos, with more being added as they get permission from the authors.

Ventura Chapter 190 people

By Robert Gary

Ed Armstrong



Ed Armstrong is a native Southern Californian, being born and raised in the San Fernando Valley. A product of the public school system, Ed received his Bachelor of Arts degree in finance from Cal State Northridge. He then made a career in financial services and real estate appraisal for over 45 years.

Ed's interest in clocks came through his long time love of antiques. He remembers always wanting a school house style clock, with "Regulator" printed on the glass. His dream was realized when he found the perfect clock in an antique store in Ventura. As Ed says, "The rest is history". Ed was hooked. His favorite style is the American regulator, of which he now owns four.

To Ed, the Eli Terry pillar and scroll was the "holy grail" of clocks. Having one in his home was his goal. Ed also longed to own a really nice tall case clock. After many years of searching, he found the perfect clock; an English movement in an American made case from the era of 1790-1810; it is a time and strike.

Ed learned of the NAWCC, and Chapter 190 in particular, when he saw an announcement in the local paper of an upcoming chapter meeting at Ventura Collage. He and his wife came as visitors and left the meeting as members!

Ed, and his wife JoAnn, attended The Greater Los Angeles Regional for the first time this month. Although neither bought any clocks to add to their collection, they had a great time and we enthralled by the hundreds of impressive clocks available. ■

Some Faces From January's Meeting



Remembering a Friend



Jim Ingersol 1924 - 2010

Jim was raised in American Fork, Utah, and spent summers herding sheep on the family ranch. In high school he was the Utah state champion sprinter and his class valedictorian. During WWII he served with the U.S. Army Air Force in England as a tail gunner, flew 35 combat missions over Germany, and had to bail out of his plane when it was shot down over Belgium.

Jim married Annette Bailey in the LDS Logan Temple on July 29, 1949. After their marriage they moved to California where Jim completed his education at the University of California at Berkeley. In 1953, Jim and Annette moved to Oxnard where he was employed as a principal in the Oxnard Elementary School District until he retired in 1985.

Jim's retirement years were busy: he traveled, enjoyed his beloved home in Camarillo Heights, and tended to his trees, bees, and other agricultural interests. He also learned to repair and restore antique clocks and furniture. With his wife he operated Ingersoll Antiques in downtown Camarillo from 1975 to 2007.

Jim was devoted to his family and was extremely proud of his five children, eighteen grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. He was a wonderful husband and father and will be greatly missed. Jim leaves this life having enjoyed many good friends, lots of great experiences and the adoration of his family.



Ventura Chapter 190's Annual Antique Clock and Watch Mart

By Ernie Jensen



Make sure you have April 18 marked on your calendar. That is the date for Chapter 190's Annual Antique Clock and Watch Mart, and much more. This year we will be adding items other than just clocks and watches. In some families, only one person is a clock or watch person and this year we hope to have something of interest for everybody. We will be including antique collectibles such as jewelry, pottery, music boxes, and maybe a few old radios or phonographs. The only requirement that we ask of our sellers is, if they bring antiques, at least 60% of sellers items must be horology related.

The Mart will be at the Commemorative Air Force Air Museum again this year. We have moved the date up one month as more planes will be available for viewing and some lucky person will get a ride in one of the vintage WWII Airplanes. (a \$300.00 value) Each attendee will get a ticket with their registration for the door prize drawings. Besides the vintage airplane ride, we will also have many other great prizes.



Plan on making a day of it. Don't miss spending a little time in the museum, it's great! Check out the museum on their web site, www.warbirdalley.com.

We will have a number volunteer security people and we can help by watching your table if you want to take a stroll through the museum or ride in the airplane.

Bill Fox will be there with his "TOP DOG". The price is right and the dogs are mighty tasty. We will have carts and helpers for loading and unloading.

The middle of April means great weather, not too warm and not too cool. Our goal is to provide for an enjoyable day for everyone. See you there! ■

Welcome New Members



Michael Everman
from Santa Barbara

The next Meeting & Mart for Chapter 190
is February 21, 2010

Sellers may start setting up at 11:30

The Mart is open from 12:00 til 1:15

The Meeting starts at 1:15

PROGRAM

"Fascinating Alarm Clocks"

Presented by Kim St. Dennis

Clock collectors often overlook alarm clocks.

This program may change your mind.

SHOW & TELL

"Bring a watch or clock from GLAR
or an alarm clock"

This month's Mini-Workshop will be
An open workshop.

Any subject is open for discussion,
any clock, watch or tool may be brought.
George Antonarelli will start this months
workshop with "Tools" Do you have some
favorites, share them at the workshop

The workshop begins at 10:30 am. Free to members



CLASSIFIED PAGE

This page is dedicated to advertising for Chapter 190 members. It is, of course, free to members.

SERVICES OFFERED

The Montecito Clock Gallery

Restoration, repair, sales of clocks and watches.
Ferdinand Geitner, mbhi, owner and operator
Now located at 1187 Coast Village road, unit 10a
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Monday through Saturday 10:00 to 6:00 pm.

Tel. 805-650-8800

FOR SALE

WATCH REPAIR TOOLS & MORE!

I will have a huge selection of watch repair
tools and other items from my latest estate
buy at the Chapter 190 meeting.

Dave Coatsworth

dave@daveswatchparts.com

WANTED

URGENTLY NEEDED, VISIBLE ESCAPEMENT MOVEMENT

French type-platform escapement (no pendulum)
Winding hole spacing of 38.9 mm, (1.53")
Repairable, other details available on request.
Bob Reichel, welchdoc@yahoo.com **Ph: 1-206-364-7374**

- SALEM CLOCK PART -

Need a warning wheel for a 3" diameter Salem ship's
strike movement. I might be willing to buy an entire
working movement or something in between.

Please contact:

Virginia Norwood **Tel: 310 455-3028**

Antique French 2 or 3 dial calendar clocks.
Antique English 2 or 3 gear-train skeleton clock.

Loren Miller, **Pacific Coast Clocks**
4255 E. Main St., No. 15, Ventura, Ca.
Located in Firehouse Plaza (Main St. & Telephone Rd.)
Tel. 805-650-8800

- Chronometer -

Hamilton 21 Marine Chronometer in running condition, with
inner box and gimbals; outer box not essential.

Please contact: **Giorgio Perissinotto**
E-mail: giorgio@spanport.ucsb.edu

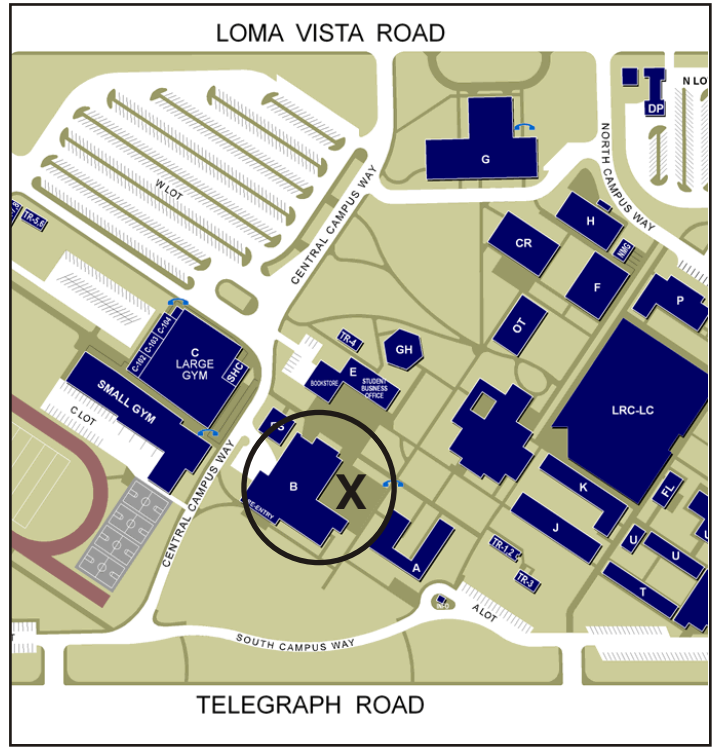
- Watch Repair Tools -

I'm just starting out and need just about everything.
I would prefer to purchase an entire collection of old
watchmaker's tools.

Please contact:

David Clarkin **Tel: 805-988-4384**

The Chapter 190 meetings are held the third Sunday of each month. (No meeting in December)
We will meet in the cafeteria on the Ventura College campus. The cafeteria is located in building "B", east of the gym and athletic field.



Hope to see you there!

February 2010 Issue

FEB 21
NEXT MEETING

If Undeliverable return To:
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 Northridge, CA 91325

Chrono Times