VENTURA COUNTY
Chrono Times
Established 2006 Newsletter for Chapter 190 of The National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors July 2008

An Austrian Table Clock

by Bill Robinson

Photos 1 and 2 show the case and dial of a 30 hour, spring driven, three train quarter strike (grande sonnerie), Austrian (Viennese?) table clock.

The name on the dial is "Benedikt Murhammer: IN WIEN". This is probably the clock-shop retailer and not the clock-maker. The white columns and decorative urns are probably alabaster while the applied "buttons" seem to be mother-of- pearl.

According to Peter Heuer and Klaus Maurice, who authored the book "European Pendulum Clocks" (1988: Schiffer Publishing Ltd.), clocks of this type were made in Austria around 1830. Individual pieces of the case were made in batches and then assembled by the case maker, or sometimes the clock maker, into many different combinations.

The more expensive varieties included automaton figures on the dial.

Photo 3 shows the front of the movement with the center motion work and all of the chime and strike regulating mechanism. The quarter-strike rack and snail is on the right and the full-hour strike is on the left, resulting in a full grande sonnerie strike on two coiled gongs attached to the inside of the case behind the movement. The edges of two spring wells, stationary open cylinders attached to the front plate, can be seen protruding from the edge of the movement at the extreme right and left. The three driving springs were contained in these stationary wells.

PHOTO 2

PHOTO 3

PHOTO 1

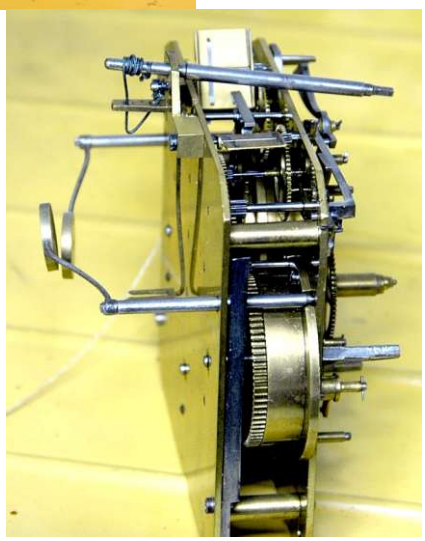

PHOTO 4

Photo 4, shows the pendulum suspension is a simple thread or thin cord rather than a suspension spring. The pendulum is adjusted by wrapping the thread around a shaft which protrudes through the dial. At center-right you can see a spring well from the side. The toothed driving gear rotates independently of the stationary spring well.

These 30 hour clocks have not been as popular as the larger 8 day, weight driven, grande sonnerie wall clocks. Nevertheless, in my opinion, they are very interesting clocks that deserve more attention. ■

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

By Mike Schmidt

By any standards the first six months of 2008 have been interesting and challenging for all of us. As we cope with some of the new realities, we can reflect on all of the things that are really important to us. One of the things that I always find important is education, and developing skills. Chapter 190 and the NAWCC seek to provide opportunities to help us in developing and adding to these educational skills.

The newsletter has announcements for some of the Field Suitcase Classes FSW that are being offered, and there is an all day workshop scheduled for November. We also have a new area in the Chapter Website called Education. Check it out!! It has lots of information and great photos. Chapter 190 is blessed with so many qualified educators. They are very willing to help with questions, guidance and encouragement. If you find an area of horology that you would like to be explored with classes, workshops or programs please let your Board members know about it.

This new chapter is still evolving and as we find out what the membership needs are, we improve the format of the meetings. We have found that the Sunday morning workshops have been extremely well attended. The round table workshop, with all levels of expertise has been very successful. We have all benefitted from the experiences and knowledge presented. The workshop for Sunday July 20th at 10:30 AM will have two topics; "Erratic Timekeeping" and "Lack of Duration of Automatic Wristwatches." The discussion will be led by Ferdinand Geitner. Bring your clocks, watches, knowledge and questions.

The program for Sunday July 20th will be "The Three Arts; Art Nouveau, Arts & Crafts, and Art Deco". The program will be presented by Jeanette Barcroft. Jeanette will discuss the influence of the arts on early 20th century case design.

Battery wrist watches. If you have battery watches that are no longer working, here is an opportunity to get them running again. The problem may be a simple fix. Most likely the mechanism has stopped working due to a minute speck of dirt or lubricant. Ken McWilliams will perform his Magic. Bring your wrist watches and Ken will bring his "CYLONIC TESTER" to bring your watch back to life. Your watch will require a good battery to keep on ticking. The price is right "Free". This is a rescheduled event from the June meeting.

The Mart and Lunch will be from 12PM until 1PM with the program starting immediately after.

Remember, you never know when or what you are looking for, or not looking for, will appear? Bring something to sell or trade at the Mart

See you all at the meeting. Mike

Happy Birthday

Paul Barina, Sue Brown, Jim Cash, David Dvorak,
Mike Schmidt, Kathi Sheffrey, Kim St Dennis

Tales From the Bench

by Ferdinand Geitner

Unusual Striking/ Chiming Clocks

Clocks can be put into three basic categories. Time only, with one set of gears driving a pendulum or platform escapement. Time and Strike, one set of gears driving the pendulum and one separate set of gears driving the strike mechanism, released at correct intervals by the time train.

Then, there is the popular quarter chime movement with three separate sets of gear trains. The Time gear train releasing the quarter chime gear train every fifteen minutes and, depending on the design, either the quarter train or the time train releasing the hour strike.

There are also some ingenious designs, from 1700 to today, where clever mechanics manufactured a quarter striking or chiming clock with only two sets of gear trains. Some French Morbier clocks and an early Italian clock from about 1760 strike the hour on a large bell and the half hour on a smaller bell with a change over mechanism for two hammers (Photos ***A***)

It offers a challenge to the Repair Person who has to establish the method of how switching from chime to strike or hammer to hammer is achieved before dismantling the clock. Often the movement has been assembled incorrectly or parts have been removed by a previous repairer and one has to establish the function of every lever before dismantling. .

The picture from the Italian clock show two sets of cams on the count wheel. One determines the number of strikes the other on the back moves a lever in and out to change from one Hammer to the other striking on different bells. The count wheel has additional cams for the quarters so alignment is more critical.

Another picture shows a German movement with a lever being moved by the minute wheel, changing from one hammer striking quarters on one bell to another hammer striking the hours on a larger bell and two separate snails for one rack with two tails. (Photos ***B***)

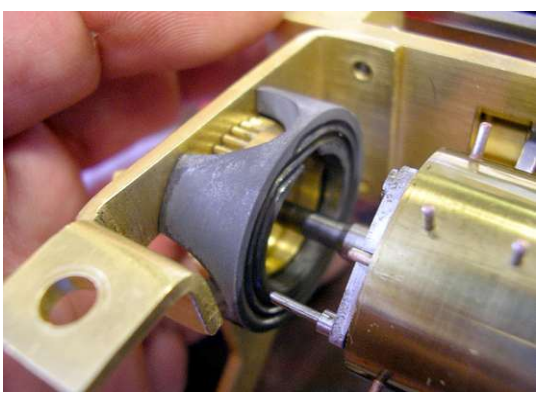
Another picture shows a complex change over mechanism on a Chiming Cylinder which plays a tune and if actuated changes to strike the correct hour. (Photos ***C***)

It would take several pages and many more pictures to describe the functioning of each mechanism in detail but maybe these will rouse your curiosity. ■

Photos “A”

Photos “B”

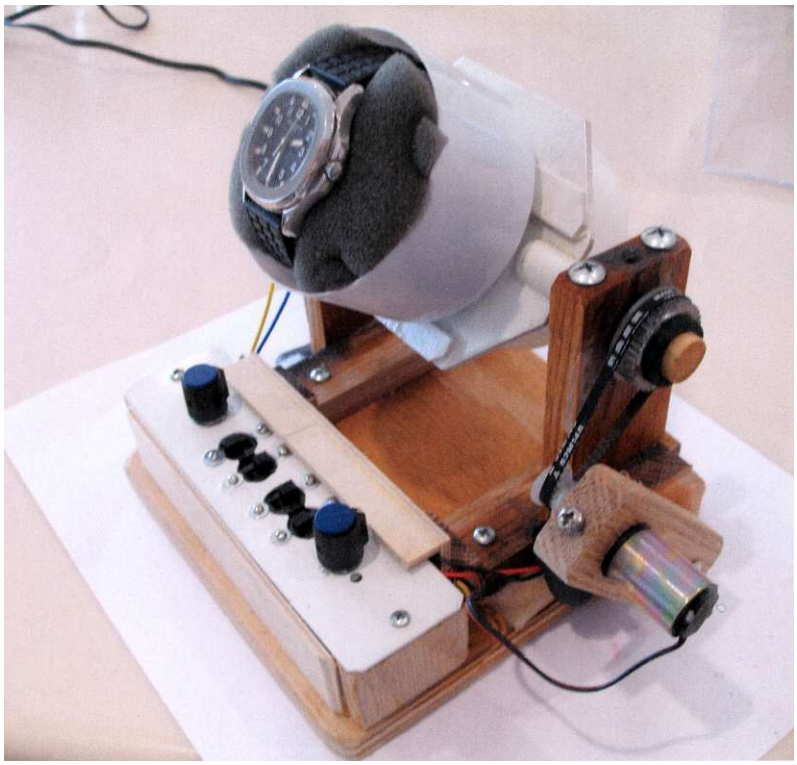
Photos “C”



Watch Winders For The Avid Collector

by Henri Bonnet

For most of us avid collectors of wristwatches, there is no doubts that we like to wear each and every piece that we purchase. This is the primary reason that led us to buy the timepieces in the first place. In the past, most people were quite satisfied with owning only one watch at a time. As wristwatches were often given as birthday or anniversary presents, it was not unusual for people to own several quality wristwatches, all in excellent running condition. Since most people wear only one watch at a time, the unworn watches were simply placed in a drawer, and for all practical purposes, forgotten.



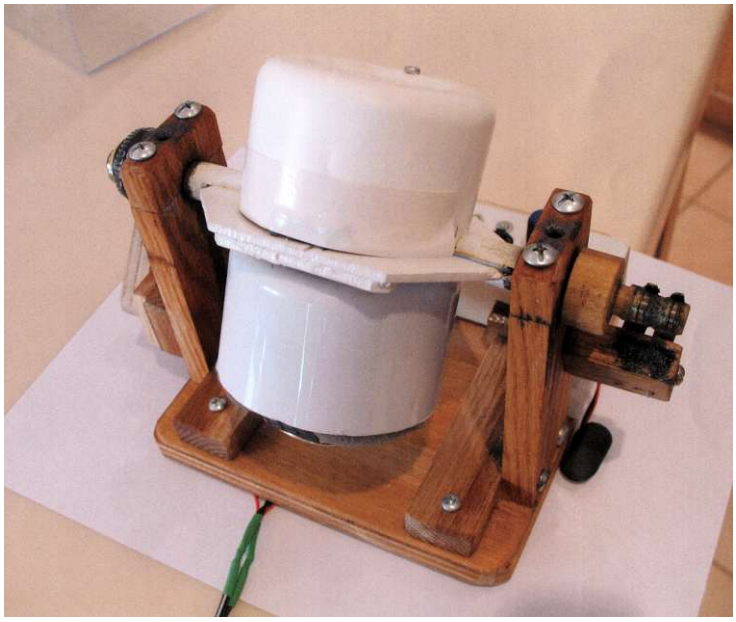
During the past two or so decades we have witnessed a renewed interest in mechanical timepieces. The reason for this is not entirely clear, but it would not be unreasonable to suggest that in our world of "disposable anything", a quality self winding mechanical wristwatch gives us a feeling of permanence in an era of rapid obsolescence. Be as it may, I do believe that quality mechanical wristwatches are here to stay. This is especially fortunate for us mechanical wristwatch collectors since this resurgent interest in mechanical timepieces also extends to vintage wristwatches which happen to be my primary interest. A quality mechanical wristwatch is designed to be worn, and placing it in a drawer for a long time may adversely affect its timekeeping accuracy.

To help remedy this situation, a variety of watch winders have appeared on the market. They are available in various designs effectiveness, quality and prices. In this particular article I will not discuss regular watch winders which simply rotate automatic wristwatches in order to wind them. Instead I will review the design and function of two particular watch winders of my own invention. The first one, which is the subject of this article, is designed not only to wind a high grade, self-winding mechanical wristwatch, but also to help keep it running on time. The second device, which will be the subject of a future article, is designed to wind timepieces which are not self winding. Personal experience has shown that high grade self winding wristwatches, which keep excellent time when worn on the wrist, have a tendency to gain or loose time when wound on a regular watch winder. The longer the wristwatch stays on the watch winder, the more significant the discrepancy in its timekeeping is, as compared to the same wristwatch being worn on the wrist. It appears that this situation is caused by the regular watch winder itself which rotates the wristwatch in a single plane. Although a quality regular watch winder keeps the watch sufficiently wound, it fails to replicate the wrist motion of the wearer, for which the watch has been adjusted to at the factory in order to keep good time.

Most high grade mechanical wristwatches are adjusted to multiple positions at the factory (usually 5), precisely in order to approximate the wearing condition that the watch is subjected to on the owner's wrist. A timepiece designed and adjusted to work accurately in a horizontal position, such as a marine chronometer for example, will most likely not keep good time if placed in a vertical position. The same principle applies to mechanical wristwatches. This being the case, an infrequently worn high grade self winding mechanical wristwatch wound on a regular watch winder, will need to be reset by its owner each times he decides to wear it. This is in spite of the fact that this is precisely what a watch winder was designed to prevent in the first place. This is the condition that the multi-axis watch winder, which is the subject of this article, is designed to mitigate.

Resetting a simple time and date mechanical wristwatch is usually not a problem, but complicated timepieces must be reset by certain sequential procedures. Such procedures may become cumbersome, time consuming, as well as annoying to the watch owner when his intention is simply to remove his watch from the watch winder, place it on his wrist and expect it to be on time, just as if it had been worn continually.

Resetting a complicated wristwatch may entail risks to the watch if its owner doesn't remember the exact sequence in which to reset the time, date, day of the week, moon phases, and the likes. This is very likely to occur



with an infrequently worn complicated timepiece. If the owner needs to retrieve the owner's manual each time he wants to wear his wristwatch, he may try to reset it from memory, do it wrong, and thereby damage his expensive wristwatch. The automatic multi-axis watch winder not only will keep a self winding wristwatch adequately wound, it will also help keep it running on time.

I built the proof of concept prototype in my garage (see photos) totally out of components already available to me and made no attempt at improving cosmetic appearance. The cup watch holder is designed to rotate the watch in two perpendicular planes simultaneously, resulting in a compound motion more likely to approximate that of a wrist. The rotation in each plane is individually adjustable as to speed and is also reversible. The motion is provided by a single gear head micro-motor or by two separate motors depending on the specific embodiment. One or multiple wristwatches may be wound simultaneously depending on the particular version. Electrical power is supplied by a 9 volt battery or by a 120 volt adapter. The various controls can be either hard wired or electronic, depending on the particular version. If the controls are electronic, various functions could be programmed regarding direction of rotation, duration and speed. Over winding is eliminated by built in provisions in all self winding wristwatches as well as by the controls of the watch winder itself. The automatic multi-axis watch winder has been in continuous operation for over six months now, with excellent results and without a single failure.

Although I have applied for a patent for my multi-axis watch winder, I decided to place it in the public domain. Even if a patent is granted, it too will be placed in the public domain. This being the case, any watch winder manufacturer interested in the technology may produce the multi-axis watch winder without restrictions. As a result, I, as well as other avid watch collectors may be able to purchase the device on the market at large, which is my ultimate goal. ■

JUNE MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

If you were not able to make the June meeting, here are some of the highlights to let you know what you missed.

June Mini Workshop: The subject was "Fusees"- The discussion was on how they work, different types and how to do repairs. The 1 ½ hour discussion was held prior to the regular meeting and was well attended. Thirteen members and guests participated. The discussions were led by Bill Robinson and George Antinarelli. There were many interesting European and American type Fusees presented. We plan to revisit this interesting subject in a future workshop.

June Meeting: The results of the Annual Mart were presented to the members. The Mart Committee reported 65 tables sold, 266 attendees and $1,117.40 earned.

Chapter 190 is sponsoring a FSW 200 "Fundamental Skills for Clock & Lathe Preparation" for September 12-15, a FSW 101 "Beginning Clock Repair" class for October 11-13, a FSW 301 "Basic Pocket Watch Repair for November 7-10, and a one day workshop for November 1st on "Dental Techniques used in clock case repair"

June Program: The meeting on Fathers Day consisted of a "Photo Review" of the Annual Mart and activities of our chapter's first year and a half. Bill Robinson our Chapter photographer put together a wonderful montage of candid photos from the Annual Mart held at the CAF Commemorative Air Museum in Camarillo.

Show and Tell: Discussion and presentation of Fussee Watches and Clocks.

A special Fathers Day door prize went to the Father with the most children. The winner was Dutch Friou. He is the father of five daughters.

Why Worry?

In life there are only two things to worry about, either you are well or you are sick.

If you are well, there is nothing to worry about.

If you are sick, there are only two things to worry about, either you get well or you die.

If you get well, there is nothing to worry about.

If you die, there are only two things to worry about, either you go to heaven or you go to hell.

If you go to heaven, there is nothing to worry about.

If you go to hell, you'll be so busy shaking hands with all your friends that you won't have time to worry.

Chapter 75 of the NAWCC

Presents The

2007 Watch & Clock Mini-Mart

(The Mart is Open To Current Members Of The NAWCC & Their Guest)

OVER 70 TABLES
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CONSIGNMENT TABLES
CLOCKS
WATCHES
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SOFT DRINKS
SNACKS
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SUNDAY, JULY 27, 2008

"The Biggest Little Mart Around"

Still a few tables available, but hurry, this is always a sellout

Mart Director: Toni Moss

Phone: (818) 407-1474

E-mail: tdolls@aol.com

ADMISSION: $5.00 ***TABLES: $10.00***

The next Meeting & Mart for Chapter 190 is July 20, 2008

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

"The three arts; Art Nouveau, Arts & Crafts, and Art Deco "

Presented by Jeanette Barcroft

This will be a very interesting and enlightening program as Jeanette shows us the influence that 20th century art had on our clock case designs.

SHOW & TELL

Art Nouveau, Arts &Crafts, Art Deco, Clocks and Watches

Welcome New Members

Thomas Schmidt

From Santa Barbara

Ventura Chapter 190 people

Each issue of our newsletter will feature members of our chapter with a short biography or some of their horological interests to help us get to know them better.

Loren Miller

By George Gaglini

Born in Pennsylvania, Loren made California as his home at an early age. He completed his education here with a Bachelor of Arts degree in World History from California Lutheran University.

He went on to become a credentialed teacher and from 1998 to 2003 worked as a Licensed Real Estate Broker.

His love of clocks continued to grow and he opened his first clock shop in Thousand Oaks called "The Timepiece." He later changed the name to "Pacific Coast Clocks," and moved to Ventura's Firehouse Plaza on Main street where his state of the art retail clock shop still thrives today.

Loren is a long time antique collector with a special passion for French clocks. In addition to retail sales, he operates a full-service clock repair and restoration shop. His beautiful store, with its attractive displays of clocks of all sizes, shapes and ages, has become a familiar sight to Main street travelers and others across Ventura County.

Loren has been a NAWCC member since 1975, and became a charter member of Chapter 190 when it was founded in the fall of 2006. ■

Will Rogers once said,
Things ain't what they used to be,
and probably never was.

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
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Loren Miller proprietor.
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Tel. 805-650-8800

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Five Tubular Bell Hall Clock.
Eight feet tall with three inch full columns on a solid mahogany case. Gold-plated dial with hand painted moon phase indicator. Recently professionally serviced.
Runs & Looks Perfect. $5,000
Call George Gaglini **805-647-6463**

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French type-platform escapement (no pendulum)
Winding hole spacing of 38.9 mm, (1.53“)
Repairable, other details available on request.
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Tom McKnett
805-444-6383

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4255 E. Main St., No. 15, Ventura, Ca.
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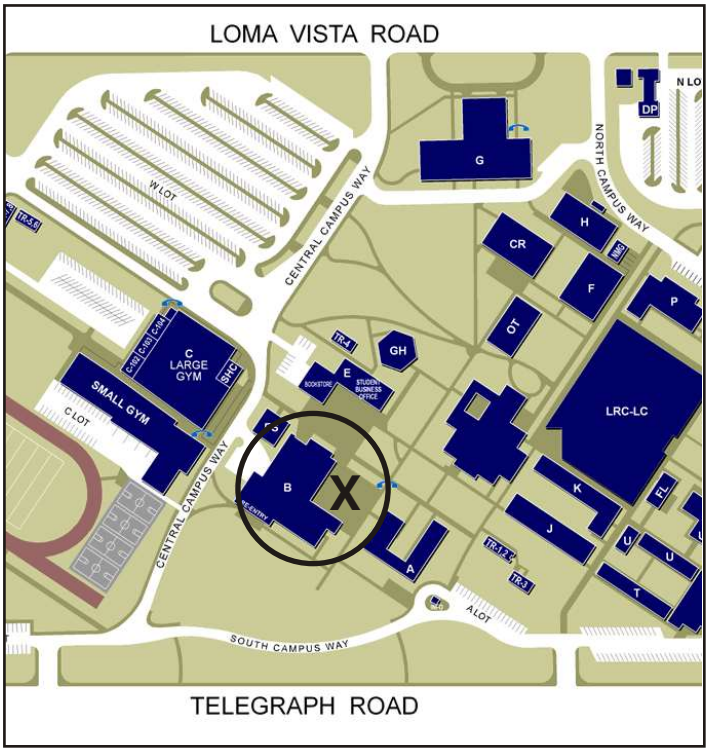
Tel. 805-650-8800

- 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**
(I'm teaching in Spain so there is no local California phone)

- 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!

July 2008 Issue

NEXT MEETING

JULY 20

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