



## The Gift of a Lifetime

by Henri Bonnet

Have you ever faced the dilemma of deciding what present to give, for an important occasion, to someone you love? From the mid-thirties to the mid-seventies, a nice wristwatch was often the gift of choice for birthdays, graduations, weddings, as well as retirements. Nowadays, when one can purchase a quartz wristwatch at a drugstore for a few dollars, this practice seems to have diminished if not outright disappeared. In the past three or four decades, I have heard of people receiving a camera, a computer, a hi-fi, even a car, or a trip to Hawaii, for their birthday or graduation, but seldom a quality wristwatch. One particular aspect of gifts of that nature is that they are essentially "perishable," if not downright "disposable." It is a fair assumption that none of the above mentioned presents will outlast a quality mechanical wristwatch. This is the reason why good mechanical timepieces are often passed on from father to son. They eventually become heirlooms, unmatched by any other gifts, regardless of price.

The satisfaction, and indeed, the joy of checking the time on the same wristwatch that your dad or grandfather wore, is beyond description. A good mechanical wristwatch can be purchased for an astonishingly wide range of prices, starting from a modest expenditure, all the way up to a small fortune. The large variety of types and styles makes timepieces ideal gifts for a multitude of occasions; a slim gold wristwatch for a businessman or a lawyer, a chronograph for an aviator or a sportsman, a complicated wristwatch for a scientist, a rugged and waterproof timepiece for an adventurer or a sailor. There are even wristwatches made especially for doctors and nurses, and the choices go on and on. It is difficult to find a more versatile and satisfying present



than a quality wristwatch. Those of us who were fortunate enough to have received such a gift, know the feeling very well. For ladies, there is virtually a limitless choice of fancy and elegant wristwatches. Many of those would be fit to wear at a gala, to enhance even the most elegant evening gown. Lastly, for those of us who appreciate classical horology, a professionally restored vintage timepiece could not be more appropriate. Few gifts can express love, friendship, appreciation, and gratitude better than a well chosen timepiece.

A wristwatch can easily be engraved to commemorate the occasion for which it was offered. Inasmuch as it fulfills an important practical need, a properly chosen timepiece will be admired time and time again by its lucky recipient. The gift of a good wristwatch is always welcomed and I have never known anyone to scoff at it. Such a present almost always becomes a very personal item to its owner, and will often be cherished for a lifetime. Time itself has always been recognized as a person's most precious possession. It is no coincidence that since they were first created; timepieces have been among the favorite gifts of royalty. Kings and nobility alike were among the first and principal sponsors of horological art. Over the years, they have commissioned some of the most exquisite timepieces ever crafted. Fortunately for us, nowadays one needs not be a king or a prince to be able to afford the price of a great timepiece. Still in a quandary about the choice of a nice present for someone dear to you? Just remember, that those emperors, monarchs, aristocrats, and even your good old dad, couldn't be wrong. Give a nice quality wristwatch to someone you care about and you'll never regret it.

What's more, the lucky recipient will love you for it. Can anything be better than that? Think about it! ■

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## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

By Mike Schmidt

The "Bisno-Schall Gallery" Santa Barbara Courthouse Clock Room is moving forward with all the planned elements coming together very nicely. The bells are hanging and the historic night sky is in place. The strike and chiming trains of the clock have been cleaned and are being assembled. The murals are getting their final touches. The lighting and electrical are to be installed and completion of the Gallery is now within sight. For updates and photos go to [www.bisnoschallgallery.com](http://www.bisnoschallgallery.com)



Chapter 190 continues to provide horological educational opportunities for all NAWCC members. For this current year we have offered nine NAWCC Field Suitcase workshops. By the end of this month, we will have completed six workshops with three remaining for the balance of the year. Our third FSW 301 Pocket Watch Repair Workshop scheduled for June 24th is presently full. The three FSW workshops remaining for year this are:

**FSW 201 *Lathe II Skills for Clock Repair***. This is a 4 day workshop offered July 29 - August 1. Coordinator Alan Davis 805 659-7148, email: [jesoda@attn.net](mailto:jesoda@attn.net)

**FSW 101 *Beginning Clock Repair***. This is a 4 day workshop offered October 7-10. Coordinator Ralph Napolitano 805 509-2530 email [ralphnapolitano@msn.com](mailto:ralphnapolitano@msn.com)

**FSW 104 *Introduction to Weight & Fusee Driven Clocks***. This is a 4 day workshop offered Nov 11-14. Coordinator Paul Skeels 805 525-7325 email [plskeelsatty@verizon.net](mailto:plskeelsatty@verizon.net)

A future workshop to be offered, if there is enough interest, is the **F502 "The Atmos Repair Course."** If you are interested, please send me an email to [Eaglecreekclocks@msn.com](mailto:Eaglecreekclocks@msn.com)

If you have an interest in a workshop or horological subject, please make your interest known to me or a Board member. You can find all of the Field Suitcase Classes with information presently offered on the NAWCC website. If you do not see a subject covered, please let us know.

Congratulations go to all of the students who completed the May **FSW 201 "Fundamental Skills for Lathe & Clock Repair,"** Instructor Ray Marsolek, assistant Lex Rooker, and students: class coordinator Giorgio Perissinotto, Frank Huttlinger, Dan Kirker, Larry Leal, Dan Mckinnon, Ron Maricich, Jean Markevich, Bob Parsons, and Steven Schechter.

The Sunday morning workshops are free and open to all: 10:30AM. There will be a discussion on clock bushing tools led by Paul Skeels, and at 11:30 AM watch repair led by Jorge Montoya. If you want to learn or get some help with a repair problem this is the place to be. The coffee will be on early.

See you at the Meeting *Mike*



## Happy Birthday

Mat Bonaccorso, Darral Jones, Harry Larson,

Tom McKnett, Jean Markevich, Giorgio Perissinotto,

Kurt Triffet, & Glen Webb

# FACES SEEN AT MAY'S MEETING

Photos by Bill Robinson



## CHAPTER 190 PEOPLE

by Robert Gary

### Dan McKinnon



Dan McKinnon was trained as an aeronautical engineer, serving 3 years in the U.S. Navy, then putting in more than 20 years in Seattle with the Boeing Corporation. His longest stint was as a Field Service Engineer, specializing in operating the B52, at Air Force bases all over the USA.

Liking to work with his hands, Dan has enjoyed stained glass making and silver-smithing as hobbies, but clock making has been his favorite hobby. Dan designed and made his own silver jewelry for a number of years. Dan moved to Southern California from the Seattle area in 1967 to be employed at Aero Spacelines in Santa Barbara operating the famed Guppy aircraft transporting Apollo space hardware to Cape Canaveral. He then sold real estate in Santa Barbara for over 40 years

He had long dreamed of owning an antique school clock, but his first clock was a German time and strike, given to him by a friend. He joined the NAWCC in the late 1980's. Dan doesn't collect any specific style or make of clock, preferring instead to collect "what interests me." He has taken the F101 - Introduction to Basic Time & Strike...The American Kitchen Clock Field Suitcase Workshop through Chapter 190, and is currently enrolled in the upcoming Field Suitcase Workshops F102 - Time & Strike Clocks with Spring Barrels, and F301 Introduction to Basic Pocket Watch Repair: The American Pocket Watch.

Dan is a chapter 190 founding member and can be seen regularly at our meetings. ■

The next Meeting & Mart for Chapter 190  
is June 19, 2011

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

We will have two short programs this month.

#### "Manage your Assets"

Presented by Robert Gary

Robert demonstrates a software program for  
managing your collectables.

#### "Photos from the April Seaside Mart"

Presented by Bill Robinson

### SHOW & TELL

"Your favorite Clock, Watch or Tool"

Welcome New Member

Kurt Triffet  
from Ventura



In Memory of David Clarkin



David passed away unexpectedly Tuesday morning May 24th, 2011 at his home in Oxnard, California. He is survived by his wife, Kris. A memorial "Celebration of life" service was held at the Montecito Country Club, June 4th, 2011.

# Tales From the Bench

by Ferdinand Geitner

## The Poop Clock

I know, it sounds like an ugly cheap clock but it's actually a work of art. Why Poop Clock? From the pictures one can see it's modeled on the back of an old Galleon Ship with the sailor standing at the wheel. It can be classed as a French industrial clock that has mechanical animations with many different motives; very popular in the late 1800's.



In naval architecture, a “poop deck” (not what you're thinking) is a deck that forms the roof of a cabin built in the aft (rear) part of the superstructure of a ship and comes from the French word for stern, la poupe (Latin puppies.) Thus, the poop deck is technically called a stern deck, which in sailing ships was usually elevated as the roof of the stern or “after” cabin, also known as “poop cabin.” In sailing ships, with the helmsman at the stern, an elevated position was ideal for both navigation and observation of the crew and sails.

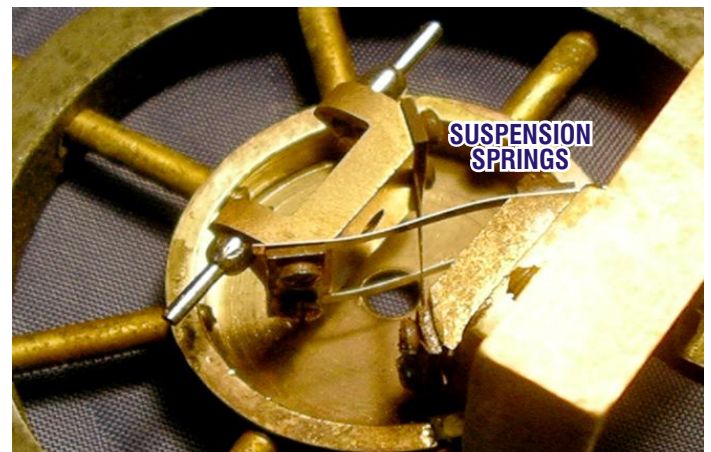


This clock is very well built and one of its main attractions is the sailor holding the ships wheel, which is at

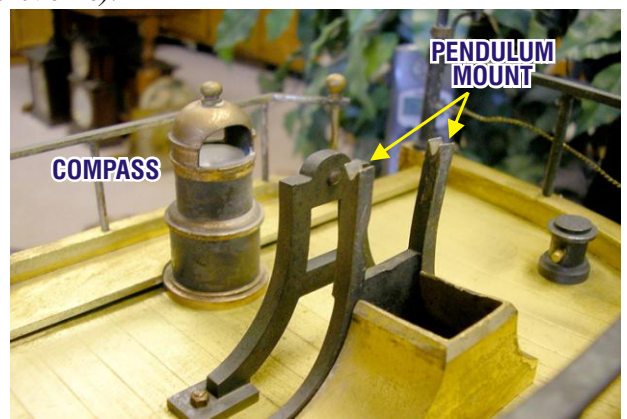
the top part of the pendulum, and swings gently right and left in sequence with the lower part of the pendulum. The sailor and the wheel rotate around the center of the ships wheel. The suspension spring is three crossed springs like French or American statue swingers and is hidden inside the ships wheel (see picture.) In the dome, in front of the sailor, is a compass that actually works!

The French movement has a Brocot escapement with less escape wheel teeth than usual, and a longer crutch engaging the lower part of the compound pendulum. An interesting observation is the regulating bob at the lower end of the pendulum because it has a left hand thread. That means when one regulates the clock in the “familiar” way, turning to the right for faster and left for slower, the bob moved in the opposite direction consistent with a compound pendulum (which needs to be longer to go faster.)

When the clock came in for restoration, the ships wheel, the base that supports the sailor, and the suspension unit was badly cracked and split due to someone dropping something on top of the clock. The frame that holds the pendulum unit was twisted.



Some of the most difficult work is the matching, or antiquing, the parts that needed brazing (which totally discolors the metal). But with chemicals and temperature treatments almost any color can be archived. A good source of procedures is *“The Colouring, Bronzing, and Patination of Metals”* by Richard Hughes and Michael Rowe (ISBN 0-8230-0762-6).



# Clockmaker proved that with time, anything's possible

by Beverly Kelley

*This article was originally published in the Ventura Star, July 17, 2000. It is re-printed here with permission of the author. Beverly Kelley is a professor at Cal Lutheran College. George Gaglini obtained the authors permission and passed the article on to us to use in our newsletter.*

Have you ever heard that "time wounds all heels?" For some of us, however, the "what-goes-around-comes-around" clock doesn't tick-tock as quickly as we'd like.

That goes double for John Harrison, an obscure carpenter who serves as the subject of an international best seller, "Longitude: The True Story of a Lone Genius Who Solved the Greatest Scientific Problem of His Time," as well as an international miniseries which aired last January in Britain and last week on A&E.

Harrison, a lower-class Yorkshireman, found himself at odds with an assemblage of snooty scientists (largely astronomers and their allies in the British Navy) who constituted the seemingly omnipotent Longitude Board. Although Harrison was able to hurdle every obstacle in perfecting his marine clock, he was never able to personally prevail over the gaggle of so-called gentlemen who arbitrarily kissed-off documentation of his achievement and who insisted on relocating the finish line whenever it appeared Harrison might pocket the prize.

Harrison's tale actually begins on Oct. 22, 1707, as an imperious Adm. Clowdisley Shovell attempts to plow his fleet through a pea soup fog off the coast of England. Shortly after gibbeting a seaman (who had the cheek to challenge his calculation of the ship's position) from the yardarm, Shovel ends up ushering four ships squarely onto the Scillies rocks and dispatches 2,000 mariners to a watery grave. This singular act of stupidity galvanized England, and in 1714, the British Parliament coughed up a reward of 20,000 pounds (equivalent to \$5 million today) to anyone providing a practical method for calculating longitude at sea.

In our wonderful world of global positioning systems and computer navigation, we forget that Columbus, Vasco de Gama, Magellan and Drake were steering half-blind. While any experienced 18th century sailor worth his salt could figure latitude by noting the length of the day or the height of the sun, longitude was a real puzzler.

Although Isaac Newton had already theorized that longitude could be determined by knowing the time, even the most expensive watches of the day gained or lost as much as 15 minutes in 24 hours. As a result, ships could be shifted hundreds of miles off-course.

The scientific establishment assumed that the answer to the longitude question would be found in the stars. But no scientist, including the best minds at Oxford and Cambridge, was able to devise an astronomical method both reliable in any weather and simple enough for seagoing navigators.

Enter John Harrison and his "anything is possible" credo. Harrison might have mouldered in obscurity had not Rupert Gould, two centuries later, painstakingly brought each of Harrison's complex timepieces back to life.

Gould understood and appreciated talent. He once asked the youngsters in his radio audience to tightly shut their eyes and report what they saw. Most saw merely darkness. The ones who conjured up uncommon images, he explained, would become our next inventors, painters, engineers, musicians, and writers. They couldn't help seeing, as Antoine de Saint-Exupery once put it, the cathedral in the rock pile.

The creative among us, however, pay a high price to exercise their gifts. Harrison was no exception. As Oscar Wilde quipped in 1891, "The public is wonderfully tolerant. It forgives everything except genius."

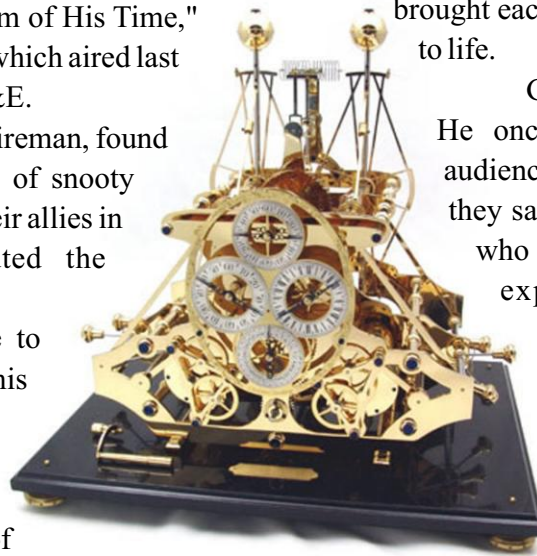
Thomas Kuhn, who wrote "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions" in 1962, might attempt to explain the establishment's 43-year resistance to Harrison's ideas in terms of an impending paradigm shift. Since scientists usually work from a shared set of assumptions, when a visionary comes along and tries to shake up those assumptions, the proponents of the prevailing paradigm must battle tooth and nail, lest they be left behind.

Yet as 19th Century English biologist T.H. Huxley reminds us, "time, whose tooth gnaws away everything else, is powerless against truth."

John Harrison lived to see truth win out. It took, nonetheless, the intervention of George III and a special act of Parliament to defang his detractors on the saber-toothed Longitude Board.

And it took time.

You'd think a clockmaker would know about that. ■



# 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  
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(805) 565-9097

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House Calls • Packing & Moving  
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e-mail: [theclockgallery@roadrunner.com](mailto:theclockgallery@roadrunner.com)

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Monday through Saturday 10:00 to 6:00 pm.

**Tel. 805-650-8800**

**NEW**

**JIM CHAMBERLAIN IS CLEANING  
HOUSE AND WILL HAVE ISSUES  
OF THE BULLETIN AVAILABLE AT  
THE JUNE MEETING. THE  
COLLECTION STARTS WITH THE  
DECEMBER 1963 ISSUE.**

### **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](mailto:dave@daveswatchparts.com)

## FOR SALE



### **MicroSet Timers for Clocks and Watches**

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(805) 687-5116**

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### **- Chronometer -**

Hamilton 21 Marine Chronometer in running condition, with  
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Please contact: **Giorgio Perissinotto**

E-mail: [giorgio@spanport.ucsb.edu](mailto:giorgio@spanport.ucsb.edu)

### **- Vienna Regulator Movements -**

I have 3 empty Vienna Regulator cases, two  
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long case, ideal for a single or double  
weighter. Looking for movements, etc.

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Email: [ralphnapolitano@msn.com](mailto:ralphnapolitano@msn.com)

### **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.

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**Antique French** 2 or 3 dial calendar clocks.

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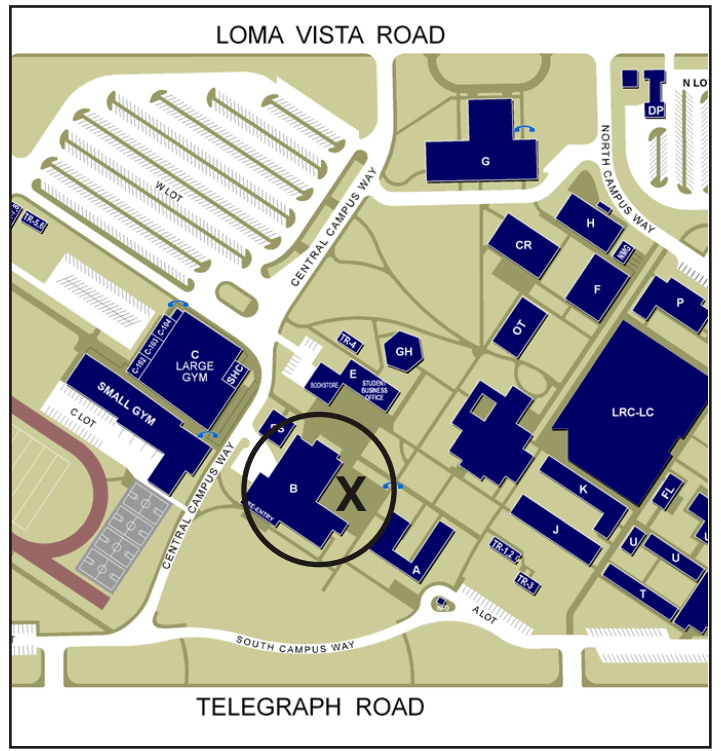
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Located in Firehouse Plaza (Main St. & Telephone Rd.)

**Tel. 805-650-8800**

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.



**June 2011 Issue**

**NEXT MEETING**  
**JUNE 19**



**Chrono Times**  
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