



Chapters 75 & 190 May Join in Landmark Clock Restoration Project

By Ken McWilliams

A few weeks ago Mike Schmidt and myself were asked if we would be interested in restoring another public clock. Being the gluttons for punishment that we are, we naturally responded to the call.

The clock is one that is well known to Southern Californians. Historically known as the Dreger Clock, named after it's maker Andrew Dreger, but better known as the "Knott's Berry Farm" clock. It was made over 70 years ago. The clock stood in Andrew's front yard in Long Beach until his death. It was then moved to Knott's Berry Farm where it resided for over fifty years.

The great grandson of Andrew Dreger, Glen Frank, while driving by Knott's last summer, noticed that it was missing from its usual spot by the ticket booths. No one seemed to know what happened to it so Glen made it his quest to find the old clock. After much searching he finally located the clock, in of all places, eBay.

To make a long story short, Glen, along with The Buena Park Historical Society acquired the clock and have accepted the challenge to have it restored and placed on Beach Boulevard in Buena Park. The full story can be found at their website www.DregerClock.org.

This is where we come in. Mike and I went to the storage facility in La Mirada, where the clock now resides, and met with Glen Frank and Dean Dixon. Dean is the curator of the Buena Park Historical Society. We had a good first meeting and took a lot of photos of the clock. After reviewing the photos and discussing the project, we gave Glen and Dean a preliminary cost and conditions for our chapters to restore the clock. The two main conditions were that we would manage the complete restoration project and that it would be done locally.

On the evening of March 10th, the Board of Trustees of the Buena Park Historical Society voted to engage Chapters 75 and 190 for the restoration of the Dreger Clock. A formal letter to that effect will be sent.

The Clock

The clock is a one of a kind, created by Andrew Dreger over a period of five years. It has three clock faces and one blank face. There are a total of nineteen dials. Face one shows the local time, face two shows the local time and the time of twelve cities around the world, the third dial shows the local time, month, day of the month, day of the week and the moon phase.



The clock as it is today.

The clock is driven by a single small AC motor. The motor drives a master minute arbor. All time and calendar functions are derived mechanically from the minute arbor through gearing, chains, pins and cams.

The clock is made from steel, brass, wood and glass. It appears to be in good overall condition considering it's age.

The Project

In order to take on this restoration project we will need the following:

1) *A place to work on it.* The minimum area required would be about the size of a two car garage. The ideal location would be somewhere between the San Fernando Valley and Ventura to minimize travel for people working on the clock. Look for the best cost vs location tradeoff. This is our top priority as time is running out at the storage place.

2) *Volunteers.* If you would like to be part of this historic project or know of a place to work on it contact:

Mike Schmidt 805 988-1764 • eaglecreekclocks@msn.com

or

Ken McWilliams 818 718-8300 • internut@socal.rr.com

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

By Mike Schmidt

Chapter 190 has almost completed the membership renewals for 2008. Thanks to all for your support.

The First Annual Mart is well under way with Chairman Wayne Callaway and the Mart committee, organizing and planning for this great event. We have sold many of the 60 available tables. Do not miss out, make your reservations soon.

The Dredger Clock (Knott's Berry Farm) street clock project for Chapter 75 and 190 may soon be a reality. Ken McWilliams and I will have more news, photos and information to present at our regular meeting. The restoration process will be very interesting. If you would like to be part of this Historical Restoration, please let Ken and I know. We will need helpers from our two chapters.

The FSW 201 Lathe class scheduled for June 6-9 is filled. We still have a few openings for the FSW 200 Fundamental Skills class scheduled for April 11-14. If you would like to attend contact Coordinator Mike Schmidt 805 988 1764 Email EagleCreekClocks@msn.com.

The workshop for Sunday March 16 at 10:00 AM will be "Pivot Straitening and Polishing for clocks and watches and a discussion on watch and clock pivot polishers".

The program for March will be "The History of Quartz Watches" presented by Ken McWilliams. Ken always puts on a great program and this is one of the best. I am a clock collector and I have viewed the program at Chapter 75 with many other clock collectors and we found this program to be extremely interesting.

Stewart Unger, a long time member of the NAWCC, passed away in September 2006. His estate has asked the NAWCC to assist in selling his horological items. There are approximately 800 items from his Manhattan shop, "Time Will Tell" and his personal collection. These timepieces will gradually be up for sale over the next 10-12 weeks. The proceeds of the sale after expenses go back to the estate to be distributed according to his will. The NAWCC School of Horology is a beneficiary in the residual of the estate. The timepieces, primarily watches, are available for sale on eBay under the NAWCC account. Some are very unique and one-of-a kind. To locate these items, go to eBay and click on "advanced search". Then select "items by seller" and enter the seller's ID nawcc.org. Some Chapter 190 members have successfully bid on some of these items.

The Show and Tell for this month will be Quartz Watches, Items from Stewart Unger estate auction and any other interesting Clocks and Watches.

See you all at the meeting.

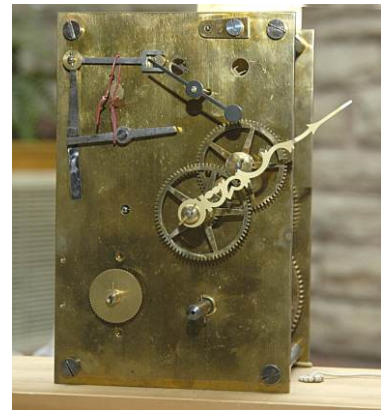
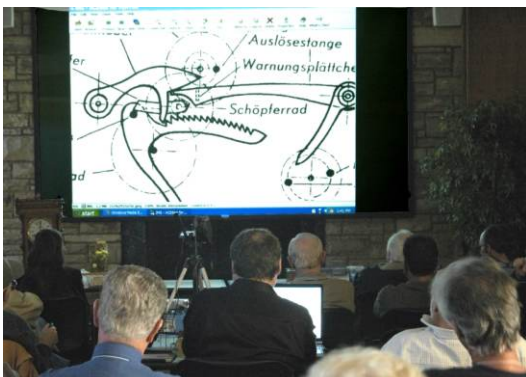
Mike



Happy Birthday

**LAURIE CONTI, ALAN DAVIS,
ROBERT GARY, RICHARD GLENN, PAUL MEDER,
JORGE MONTOYA, TONY MOSS, TOM MUSSELMAN**

Faces from our February Meeting



BUYING A NEW WRISTWATCH

by Henri Bonnet

This is a two part article, describing how the average person might go about purchasing a new quality men mechanical wristwatch. Part 1 treats appearance related issues, while part 2 will discuss technology and sources .

How to purchase a new quality men's wristwatch is a question that I have been asked numerous times by family members as well as by friends. Although I instinctively know the answer to that question, explaining it to others is something else altogether. For the purpose of this article, I will concern myself solely with brand new wristwatches, since purchasing vintage timepieces requires considerably more knowledge, not normally available to the average buyer.

Before one is ready to make a purchase, it is very important for the potential buyer to determine how he intends to use his wristwatch. The ultimate satisfaction with his purchase may depend on that. Will it be an "everyday" timepiece, a dress watch, or a sports watch, to name but a few possibilities. For our purpose, lets assume that the potential buyer wants a nice quality wristwatch for every day use that would also be attractive enough to wear as a dress watch. Lets further assume that, within reason, the purchase price would not be the primary consideration and that the buyer has no intention of buying a new wristwatch every few years.

There is no question that appearance is a decisive factor in the purchase of a wristwatch, be it by a knowledgeable person or a novice. So lets first review issues of appearance and later on, look into aspects of technology. Appearance is largely determined by the design of the dial and that of the hands. The wearer wants to enjoy looking at his watch when he checks the time. Although appearance can be very subjective, it is a good idea not to be overly influenced by the fashion of the day. The "safest" way for a careful buyer to purchase a wristwatch for long term use, as far as appearance is concerned, is to opt for understated elegance. A judicious choice in this respect would go a long way to guaranteeing that the wearer will not get tired of looking at his watch five or even ten years from now.

The dial, as well as the hands, not only need to be appealing to the wearer. Those two together should make it easy for the owner to tell the time even at a casual glance. This is achieved to a great extent by the shape and contrast of the hands against the dial. This can be accomplished by a clever play of colors and texture between the two. The hour markers are less important in that respect, since the relative position of the hands alone is sufficient for most people to tell the time by. A dial with simple index markers rather than numbers

(arabic or roman) will do the job very nicely. The less crowded the dial is, the better the legibility. In this case, the old saying: "less is more" is entirely justified. The hour and minute hands themselves, whether luminous or not, should nevertheless be substantial enough to be easily perceived against the dial. The seconds hand, whether central or subsidiary, can be quite slim but preferably of a contrasting color.

Many of the quality timepiece manufacturers show only their name and sometimes their logo on the face of the watch. There is really no need for extra information which could just as well be imprinted on the back cover of the wristwatch if at all. The exception here is if the information is pertinent to a particular model such as "chronometer" for instance. Terms such as "automatic," "waterproof" or "antimagnetic" need not appear on the dial .

I believe that a date window is very useful in a wristwatch and a day of the week window as well. If both are present they should appear one next to the other in a common window. Such a display makes their reading more intuitive.

Next, lets look at the shape color and material of the case. Obviously, a gold case may look better in a dress watch but it doesn't necessarily have to be eighteen carat gold. Fourteen carats will do just as well if available. Although gold plating is of much better quality these days than it once was, a solid gold case is likely to keep its appearance better in the long run and well worth the extra cost. Stainless steel may be quite attractive but a combination of gold and stainless steel "cheapens" the appearance of a watch .

White gold is not as good a choice as stainless steel since the difference in appearance between the two is hardly distinguishable and white gold is easier to scratch not to mention the additional cost. As for the crown it should not only be attractive but it should be of a shape, size and accessibility so as to allow for easy winding and time setting. Deeply knurled crowns are to be preferred. The company logo may appear on the crown as well.

Now lets talk about the size and shape of the case. Whether the case is round or square is largely a matter of individual choice. I personally like well proportioned square cases. I believe that, with few exceptions, fancy, oval, tonneau, or excessively belabored shapes should be avoided. Pleasing proportions go a long way to make a wristwatch attractive .

An excessively large wristwatch worn on a small wrist looks ridiculous. An appropriate size would be in the vicinity of 33 mm for a round case and 26 mm for a square case. Rectangular cases are attractive only if well

Continued on page 5

proportioned. A 26 mm by 30 mm case is a good choice. Curved cases are fine if only slightly so.

Another important aspect of the case is its thickness. The case together with the crystal should be around 8 mm for a self winding watch and around 6 mm for a manually wound one. A case thickness in excess of 10 mm may look unattractive, especially as a dress watch. Another aspect of the case is whether or not it should include a transparent back. In my opinion a transparent back is no more than "frosting on the cake" and has very little if any usefulness.

Finally, does the case need to be waterproof? I believe that it is quite important for the case to be waterproof even though this is not always possible in certain square case wristwatches. The movement is likely to be better protected even if the watch is never immersed in water.

Now, let's look at the bracelet or strap of the watch. Is one better off having his watch fitted with a leather strap or a metal bracelet? This is to some extent, a personal preference but wearing comfort plays a large role in the selection. I find a leather strap (except for alligator) the most comfortable and the most versatile. Leather straps are relatively easy and inexpensive to change. My objection to alligator or crocodile straps is that they are often very stiff and thereby uncomfortable not to mention their high cost. If a leather strap is used a simple regular buckle is much more comfortable than the deployable type. The buckle may sometime display the manufacturer's name or logo as well.

If a metal bracelet is purchased, it is preferable that it not be an integral part with the case, so that a leather strap could later be substituted if so desired. One may also find watches fitted with composition rubber straps. The problem with such straps is that they do not last very long, and some have a tendency to stretch. A rubber strap often seems to "cheapen" the appearance of a watch. ■

The second part of this article, to be published next month.



Do you know where this clock is located? Robert Gary has been photographing public clocks in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties over the last few months. We will be using them for an upcoming article in the Chrono Times.

If you come across a street or tower clock in your travels, photograph it and send it to the editor or give it to any of the 190 staff.

In 2006, long after my father's death, we came across his New York Standard 18 size 7 jewel pocket watch, serial number 77,483, in a three-hinge open face silveroid case. It was in great cosmetic condition except for a cracked crystal and a broken minute hand. The roller jewel was missing and the top balance jewels were cracked, although the early dial was nearly mint and the case showed no signs of abuse. There were no initials, other engravings, or watchmaker's marks.

I vaguely recall my father, Warren Skeels, bringing out the watch years ago and saying that it belonged to his father or grandfather. His father, Walter B. Skeels, had been a jeweler and optician. His grandfather, Benjamin F. Skeels, was born in England to a family of farm laborers who migrated to Iowa in the 1870's. Benjamin later served as Sheriff of Buena Vista County, Iowa. The big New York Standard would have fit him just fine.

Eventually someone dropped and broke the New York Standard. Styles and tastes change and the Skeels men probably did not think it was worth paying to have the watch repaired, but kept it for sentimental reasons. Last year I decided it was time to attempt a restoration. Several Chapter 190 members have had a direct or indirect involvement in the process.

Dave Coatsworth, who specializes in crystals and other pocket watch parts, supplied a very thick beveled NOS glass crystal. I found a pair of NOS hands on-line. Ferdinand Geitner taught Chapter 190's Basic Pocket Watch Repair class last May and his instruction gave me the encouragement to attempt the more difficult repairs.

Correct roller and balance jewels turned up in Dick Henderson's "magic box" of watch parts that he acquired years ago at a garage sale. I learned to use shellac to secure the roller jewel into the roller table. Dave Coatsworth provided a mainspring. About that time Larry Smith sold me a vintage L&R watch cleaning machine. After being cleaned, reassembled, oiled - with a Bergeon watch oiler that David Clarkin kindly donated and wound, the New York Standard ticked, probably for the first time since the early 1900's.

However, it gained twenty-five minutes a day. Since the hairspring was fine I added a couple of balance screws (from Dick's "magic box") and installed some timing washers from a vintage set that I bought on-line. As I write this, the watch now gains about two minutes a day. Changing a couple more timing washers will soon correct the problem.

In conclusion, and thanks to many Chapter 190 friends, the Skeels men's heirloom New York Standard pocket watch is running again. ■

Editors note: Paul sent me this article describing the restoration of his pocket watch, but the real story here, is the value of being a member of 190 and the expert help and friendships that grow from it.

INLAND COUNTIES FAIRE

Chapter 81 of the NAWCC announces
it's Watch and Clock Fair (Mart)

Saturday, April 12, 2008
9:00am to 1:00pm

Palomares Park Senior Center
499 East Arrow Highway, Pomona, CA

Free coffee & donuts till 9:00
Lunch - \$3.00 (Chilli dogs, chips & Drink)

Admission - \$7.00

For info contact Al Umbrello
Home: 626 339-8129 • Cell: 626 824-8825

The next Meeting & Mart for Chapter 190

Will be March 16, 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 History and Development of Quartz Watches"

Presented by Ken McWilliams

Ken will cover the evolution of quartz watches, the impact they had on mechanical watches, how they work and why they sometimes don't work.

SHOW & TELL

"Quartz Watches"

Items from Stewart Unger estate auction

Welcome New Members

Akhtar Mir, Judith Girod,

Tom Mussleman



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.

Glen Webb

By George Gaglini



When Glen Webb became a member of the United States Armed Forces, he was stationed at Camp Roberts here in California. One week-end he decided to spend some of his time off in Santa Barbara and Ventura. He lost his heart in Ventura and decided New Mexico would have to get along without him. That was in 1955.

He moved to Ventura after the service and became a firefighter for the City of San Buenaventura Fire Department. In his eighteen years there, he held down practically every position settling finally into the one he really loved, Firefighter/Engineer. In the meantime he met Mr. Howard Mitchell, an experienced Ventura area clockmaker, now deceased, who became his mentor for clock repair. Mr. Mitchell taught Glen everything he knew about clocks until Glen could handle repairs on his own. Mornings, at coffee, they discussed their clocks and helped each other on difficult or unusual ones. They were friends and clock-lovers, sharing information with excitement and patience. Sound familiar?

Glen and his wife Flora brought up five children, four of whom currently reside in Ventura and one in Irvine. Now, he gets to spend time with his 13 grandchildren. One of them, a teenager, is lucky enough to be re-building, with Grandpa, a 1968 Mustang. When it's done it will look and run as well as the 1956 Chevy El Camino Glen has re-built for himself.

For years Glen, like so many of us, traveled from Ventura to Chapter #75 until, to his delight, Chapter #190 was founded. Now he is a proud member of Chapter #190.

CLASSIFIED PAGE

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

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

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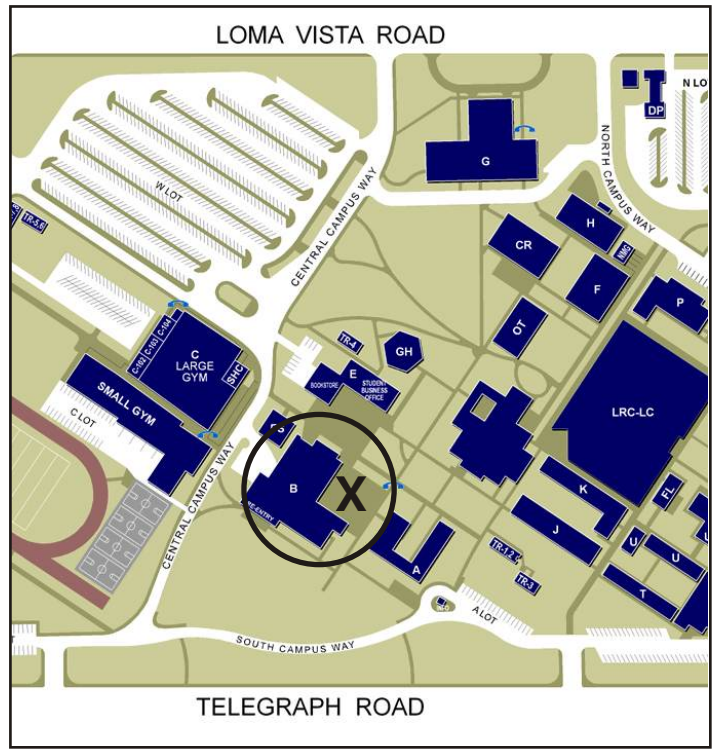
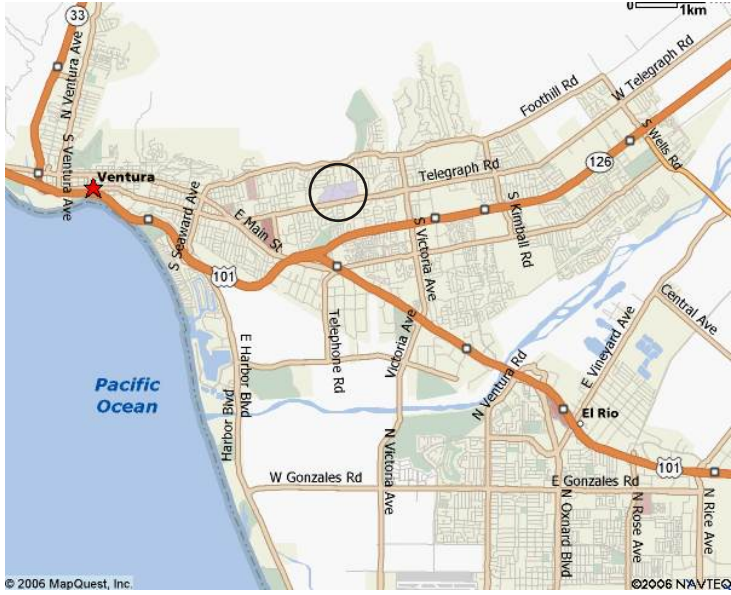
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The Chapter 190 meetings are held the third Sunday of each month. (No meeting in December)
We will meet in the cafeteria on the Ventura College campus. The cafeteria is located in building "B", east of the gym and athletic field.



Hope to see you there!

March 2008 Issue

MARK 16
NEXT MEETING

Chrono Times
 If Undeliverable return To:
 17738 Superior St. Unit 21
 Northridge, CA 91325