

## 2007, OUR FIRST YEAR

By Ken McWilliams

The first year of the NAWCC Ventura chapter 190 is about to conclude. All in all I would have to say that it was a very successful year. We, your board of directors, have achieved all of our goals and then some. The enthusiasm and support of our membership is what made us succeed and is what encourages the board to work even harder to keep it growing. We will all take December off, recharge our batteries, and get ready for an even more ambitious 2008.

Lets review our first year in pictures.



JANUARY • The first mart is underway.



JANUARY • Mike greets members as they sign in at the first meeting



FEBRUARY • Relaxing at the Mart

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## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

By Mike Schmidt

Wow! What a year for Chapter 190. Our first meeting in January started with 66 new members. As of November we now have 90 members.

The chapter has completed two Field Suitcase Classes in 2007 and has scheduled a full class in January for the FSW 200 Fundamentals Skills for Clock & Lathe. This class filled very quickly. Another FSW 200 class is to be scheduled in April. If you desire to attend this class please contact Paul Skeels(805 25 7325) or Mike Schmidt. (805 988 1764).



The October watch workshop had a very successful beginning with 6 members attending. The discussions of watch questions and answers involved all attendees participating with our Director of Education Ferdinand Geitner. The next workshop will be at 10:00 a.m. prior to the November meeting. The main topic will be the proper use of staking tools. All watch and clock members are invited to attend. This topic will help all who do clock or watch repairs. A similar clock workshop is planned to start with the January 2008 meeting.

Our program for November is "Lathe's for Watch and Clock Repair" and will be presented by Ray Marsolek. The program will feature different Lathes, Jewelers and Micro Lathes and the important place of each in horology. The various attachments will also be presented and discussed. Ray Marsolek a member of NAWCC since 1975 has taught at the NAWCC School of Horology, and is presently a field suitcase instructor.

*The November meeting and newsletter will be our last for 2007.*

I wish to personally acknowledge and thank everyone who have given their time, knowledge and money to support the Ventura County Chapter 190 this past year. People who collect clocks and watches are very good people.

The show and tell for November will be "*Unique Time Pieces.*" Whatever you think is unique.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS, see you at the meeting.

*Mike Schmidt*

P.S. Enclosed in the newsletter is a renewal application for 2008

## Happy Birthday

**Nov - David Clarkin, Dave Coatsworth, Ferdinand Geitner,  
Jim Gilmore, Ernie Jenson, Fred Raach, Bob Roan, Frank Zalusky**

**Dec - George Dubois, Dutch Friou,  
Gary Girod, Bill Robinson, Andrew Samuels**



(Continued from page 1)



FEBRUARY • Ferdinand preparing for his program on "Unique Pocket watches"



MARCH • Bill Robinson's reverse fusee for Show-n-Tell.



MARCH • Lux clocks from Ken McWilliam's program "The history of Lux Clocks" Other members brought many more for Show-n-Tell.



APRIL • Our first NAWCC Suitcase Class "Basic Watch repair"



APRIL • We got our first look at the Santa Paula Tower clock.



MAY • Seth Thomas was the Show-n-Tell theme, and many were on display.



MAY • Dave Coatsworth shared his double dial calendar Seth Thomas.



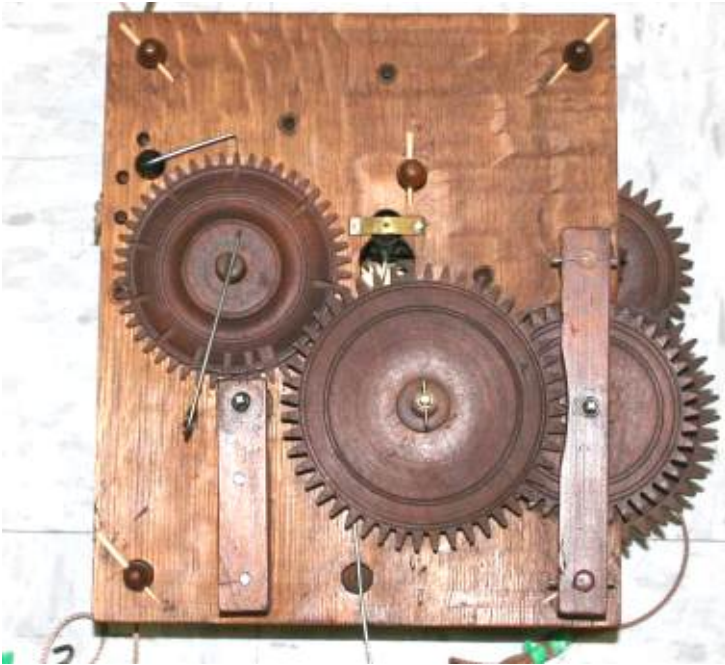
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*JUNE • Starting to file in for the meeting & program.*



*August • Jim Chamberlain presented a program on Vienna Regulators.*



*JUNE • Wood movement from Bill Robinson's program "Wood Works Clocks"*



*September • Teacher and students, NAWCC clock repair class.*



*JULY • Henri Bonnet demonstrated his homemade watch cleaning machine.*



*OCTOBER • Our chapter presented a clock show and program at the dedication of the renovated tower clock at the Santa Paula Odd fellows hall.*

Well, that pretty much wraps up 2007, let's all try to make 2008 an even better year. If you have any ideas for projects, programs, or workshops let us know. ■



# THE TOURBILLON PARADOX

by Henri Bonnet

Most mechanical wristwatch aficionados could hardly help but notice the pervasiveness of tourbillons, in the recent offerings by major manufacturers of mens wristwatches. We see wristwatches fitted with double, as well as multi axis tourbillons, even with so called flying tourbillons. What exactly are tourbillons and why their recent proliferation in contemporary men wristwatches?

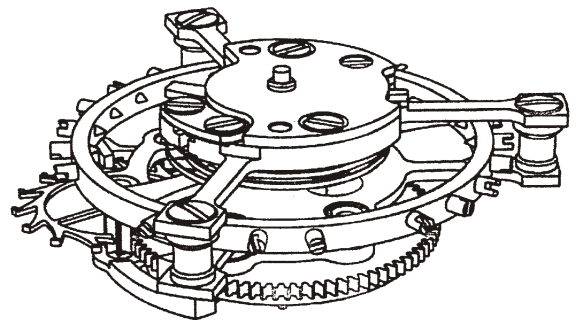
Abraham Louis Breguet, perhaps the greatest watchmaker of all times, invented the device in 1795. In Breguet's time wristwatches did not yet exist and pocket watches were affordable only by the wealthiest gentlemen of the period. Pocket watches were carried in a waistcoat pocket, and as such had to function all day long in a vertical position. Machine tools were very primitive by today's standards, so the pocket watches of that era were essentially hand made. This being the case, precise control over the geometry of the timing components was all but impossible. This was especially true for the manufacture of the balance wheels which were all, to a certain extent, out of poise. Of course an out of poise balance wheel, rotating in the same vertical plane for hours on end, will induce certain tendencies detrimental to good timekeeping. (A result of the effects of gravity.) Corrections to the poising problem could be achieved, up to a point, with tiny ballast weights, screwed around the periphery of the balance wheel. When that proved insufficient Breguet came up with a solution, the tourbillon. (which means whirlwind, in French)

How does a tourbillon work? By placing the entire escapement mechanism of a pocket watch in a cage, and rotating the entire assembly once a minute in a vertical plane, Abraham Louis Breguet had hoped to average out the nefarious effects of gravity on the balance wheel. The result would somewhat reduce the gravitational errors detrimental to good timekeeping. Breguet was right and his tourbillons greatly improved the accuracy of the pocket watches that he produced. However, is a tourbillon likely to improve the timekeeping function of a wristwatch, especially one of recent manufacture? Let's examine this proposition. Every mechanical wristwatch already comes with its own "tourbillon", its called a wrist. A watch carried on the wrist of the wearer cannot help but assume a multitude of positions that would be virtually impossible to duplicate by any built in mechanical means, even by a tourbillon. So, obviously, a wristwatch that is being worn, already benefits from random positioning, and as a result out of poise errors of the balance wheel are thereby automatically averaged and mitigated. In addition, with today's highly sophisticated machine tools, balance wheels are routinely mass produced, with poising that could hardly be improved upon, leading to the conspicuous absence of poising screws in many of today's balance wheels.

Given all of the above, is it reasonable to assume that the addition of a tourbillon to a contemporary wristwatch is likely to improve its time keeping function?

Actually, the addition of a tourbillon produces no measurable effect on the accuracy of a wristwatch, and may even be detrimental to it in the long run. Here is why: The simple answer is that the tourbillon adds more moving parts to a wristwatch, resulting in additional friction. The increase in friction works against the accuracy of a watch, as we all know. And here is the paradox, since the early days of watchmaking reducing friction has been one of the primary and most difficult goals of the watchmaker, and it is still so today. The top watch manufacturers are spending fortunes on new escapement designs and new materials in order to accomplish just that. Then why do contemporary manufacturers add tourbillons to wristwatches when they do not contribute to correcting gravitational errors at all, but actually add friction, which in turn is detrimental to their accuracy? The answer can probably be summarized in one word, profits.

With today's computer controlled advanced machine tools, it is much easier to manufacture a tourbillon than it was in Breguet's time. The actual cost of producing tourbillons today is relatively small compared to the profits resulting from their sale, which are simply spectacular. Actually, anything that can be drawn by CAD (Computer Aided Design) can be manufactured by a computer controlled machine tool. As a result, the design and manufacture of a tourbillon, no longer is the engineering feat it once was. So, considering the extravagant cost of a tourbillon equipped wristwatch, is it any wonder that we see them grow like mushrooms in the wristwatches offered to us by the major manufacturers of today? Now, watch buyers will have to spend considerably more money for something that is quite useless at best, when the actual device was originally meant to improve the working of a pocket watch in the first place. Sure, a brand new tourbillon equipped wristwatch that has recently been adjusted at the factory may initially work quite well, however it must be appreciated that the same watch without it would work just as well, if not better. Few watchmakers will deny that the fewer moving parts in a watch movement, the more likely it is to be accurate in the long run. The best proof of that is to look at a typical railroad grade American pocket watch. They still run with remarkable accuracy eighty years later, using a minimum of moving parts and without being equipped with a tourbillon! Last but not least, does anyone of you personally know of a watchmaker in your area, qualified to service, let alone repair, a tourbillon? Below is a drawing of a typical tourbillon. ■



## The NAWCC F101 Suitcase Class



This is the F101 class, from left to right, Mike Schmidt, Dave Kelly, Steve Mott, Laura Conti, Richard Henderson, Dan McKinnon. Sitting, David Clarkin, Paul Skeels, Coleen Godwin and Mostyn Gale.

Join in the fun and make sure you are in the next photo by signing up for these workshops.

### The next Meeting & Mart for Chapter 190

Will be November 18, 2007

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

### “Lathe's for Watch and Clock Repair”

*Presented by Ray Marsolek*

*The program will feature Jewelers and Micro Lathes and the part each plays in horology*

#### SHOW & TELL

*“Unique Time Pieces”*

*This includes anything that you think is unique.*

## 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.

### *Bill Robinson*

By George Gaglini



Bill Robinson, pictured above making adjustments on the Santa Paula Odd Fellows lodge tower clock, has been interested in clocks from early childhood. His grandmother had a long case clock that captured his imagination. As they have for so many of us in the world of clocks, those early impressions became permanent.

With advanced degrees from the University of Michigan, Bill pursued a career in education specializing in Mathematics. His forty-five year career has taken him to educational facilities in many locales including Mexico City, Tennessee, Long Beach, California, Santa Maria, and finally to Ventura where he taught mathematics at Ventura College.

Around the mid-sixties, Bill decided he could afford to buy an antique wall clock and join the NAWCC. It wasn't long before he was disassembling, repairing and adjusting all types of clocks in his growing collection. His mechanical skills were evident as a boy when he built his own bicycle. Later, they were directed toward the sophisticated movements of Vienna Regulators and other complex timepieces. Today, though not in the clock repair business, Bill has the knowledge and expertise of a veteran clockmaker.

He is a Board Member of Chapter#190 and Chapter #75. At a recent Chapter #190 meeting, he presented a program on early American wood-movement clocks that was informative, entertaining, and evidenced his passion for detail and accuracy. His fortunate math students surely must be reaping the benefits of those attributes long after leaving his classroom.

Today, six years into his retirement, Bill is immersed in the world of Computers and music as well as clocks. (He recently had to miss a Chapter #190 event because of a prior opera commitment.) Even with building his own computers and tuning up his clocks, Bill still generously contributes time and expertise to the NAWCC, Chapter #190, Chapter #75, and several special projects. ■

Welcome New Members

Giorgio Perissinto,  
Ray and Alvina Marsolek



# CLASSIFIED PAGE

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

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## SERVICES OFFERED

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### ***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

Montecito (one block from old site)

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Serving All of Ventura County

Precision Repair - Service - Restoration

Grandfather - Wall - Mantel - Marine Clocks

House Calls • Packing & Moving

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e-mail: [theclockgallery@adelphia.net](mailto:theclockgallery@adelphia.net)

**Jorge Montoya**

### ***Complete Watch Service Center***

Repair & Restore all American & Swiss watches.

12 years as a Rolex technician. We maintain a

complete shop with all the latest equipment.

**(562) 531-0545 • (562) 688-6171**

E-mail: [jorgemont2001@netzero.net](mailto:jorgemont2001@netzero.net)

### **PACIFIC COAST CLOCKS**

**In business since 1977.**

Sales and Restoration of both new and antique  
clocks. Repair of all types of mechanical clocks.

*Loren Miller* proprietor.

4255 E. Main St., No. 15, Ventura, Ca. 93003

(Located in Firehouse Plaza at Main St. and Telephone Rd)

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

**Tel. 805-650-8800**

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## FOR SALE

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### ***Ingersolls Clocks & Antiques***

**STORE CLOSING SALE**

**30% off everything!**

50 Clocks

1 wt Vienna's, Mantle, Wall, Long Case and more.

Open Thurs, Fri, & Sat 10:30 to 4:30

62 Palm dr. Camarillo, Ca

**(805) 484-8813 - (805) 482-9936**

### ***Magnificent Herschede***

***Five Tubular Bell Hall Clock.***

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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**

***Small lathe*** with some attachments and 20 collets. \$275.00

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**

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## WANTED

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### **- Chronometer -**

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

Please contact: Giorgio Perissinto

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

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

***Antique English*** 2 or 3 gear-train skeleton clock.

Loren Miller, **Pacific Coast Clocks**

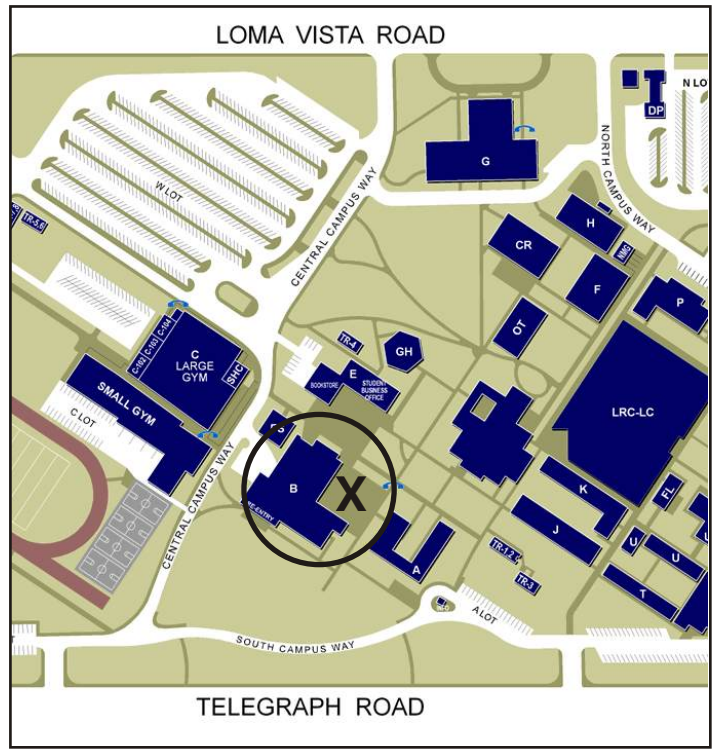
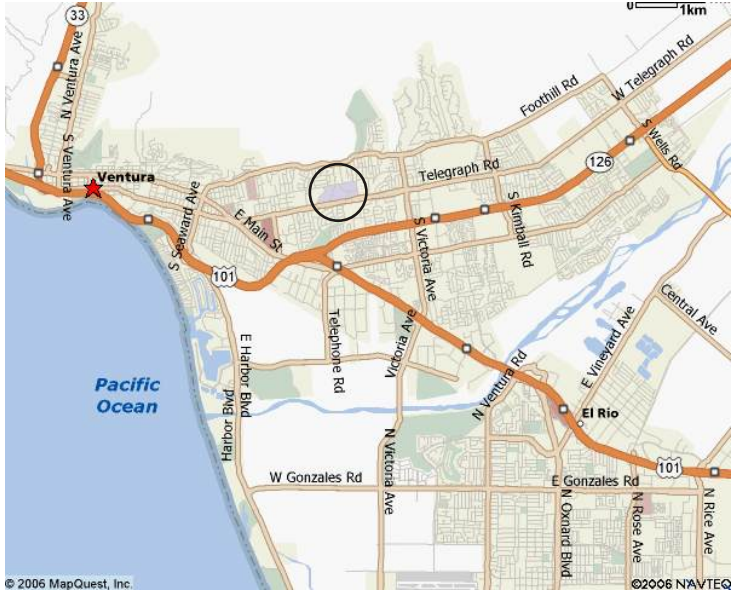
4255 E. Main St., No. 15, Ventura, Ca.

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

**Tel. 805-650-8800**



**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!*

**November 2007 Issue**

**NOV 18**  
**NEXT MEETING**

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