



How to Wind (or not) a Grandfather Clock

By Mostyn Gale

I got a call one day last November, “Can you come look at my grandfather clock? The cable has become tangled.”

I arrived at the customer's home at the arranged time and was shown the clock. It was a grandfather clock alright, but this was no ordinary grandfather clock. Immediately obvious from a quick glance at the cabinet, this was a unique design. It was only about 12” wide, 9” deep, but about 7 feet tall. The pewter dial, a bit aged and dirty, was small with only one iron hand. I knew it had to be old. On the corners of the dial were numbers; 1, 7, 7, and 8. It was not obvious to me at first but I soon came to realize that they stood for the date of manufacture, 1778, two years after our independence!

The maker's name was also engraved on the dial, “N. (Nathaniel) Dominy.” Turns out that the Dominy family, from East Hampton, NY, were a very crafty

family and several generations of the family were clockmakers and cabinetmakers. They worked in eastern Long Island from the 1730s to the 1830s.

This clock has been written up in the book “With Hammer in Hand” by Charles Hummel. The book chronicles the works of this interesting family. My customer had a copy that I was able to look at. The book was written for the Winterthur Museum in Delaware. One of the Museum's most popular displays is the original workshops of the Dominy family.

After taking the hood off, my neck already getting tired from looking up, I asked the owner if they had a small step ladder or stool I could use. Fortunately, they did because the clock was secured to the wall and I



did not want to be moving it.

My first look at the brass framed movement revealed an interesting “upside-down Y” style. It had a very different winding mechanism, one that I had never seen before, and the proverbial rat's nest of cable that I did expect.

The driving weight cable (brass in the photo) was wrapped around a wood drum that looks like a large sewing thread spool. There was another cable (steel) that I presumed was also supposed to be wrapped around this same drum. Somehow, this steel cable had slipped off the drum and became caught and tangled between the drum and the movement frame.

An hour and a half later, and after some partial disassembly, I was able to get the cable unraveled and wrapped nicely back onto the drum. The other end of the steel cable was tied to a large iron bolt. It turns out that this clock is supposed to be wound by pulling down on the bolt. This unwraps the winding cable from the drum and simultaneously winds the weight cable.

The two cables are wound in opposite directions on the same spool – a very simple yet effective method as long as they don't get tangled up.

All in all, this was a great experience. I am not sure how the cable got into such a state, but after a little effort I was able to get the clock and the customer back into a happy condition again. I also got to see and work on a wonderful piece of history and learn about a new (to me) clock design. ■



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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

By Mike Schmidt

The Chapter begins this New Year with 115 members, all the bills paid, a small reserve and an optimistic outlook for 2010. We all look forward to the meetings, programs, workshops, and special events that come with being a member of NAWCC and Chapter 190.

The beginning of a new year provides us all with many opportunities and choices. We thank all of you who have become new members and thank all of you who have renewed your membership for 2010.

The winter meeting mart in November was a great success. Sixty members and guests attended with much trading taking place. Vice President Ken McWilliams commented, "You can tell when you have a good mart by the noise level" The donated horological library sold 33 books for \$846. We still have a lot of very nice books to be offered at this months' meeting along with a good assortment of clocks and watches.



2010 DATES TO REMEMBER AND ACTION TO BE TAKEN:

February 5 and 6 - Greater Los Angeles Regional: This yearly event is a must for clock and watch collectors. It is the best regional in the country. There will be two days of mart and scheduled workshops. Please make your reservations for tables & admissions. I guarantee that you will see something at this Regional that you have never seen before. Also, remind your friends that Saturday February 6th will be open admission for the public. The cost is \$12.

March 12-15 FSW 101- (Four Day Beginning Clock Repair Workshop) "Introduction to Basic Time and Strike" The Coordinator is Ken Young 818 353-0918 email krybob@hotmail.com This workshop is filling up so please sign up soon.

April 18 - Chapter 190 Annual Mart: This year will be a special event on a new date with some new ideas to be introduced. It will be at the CAF WWII Air Museum, Camarillo Airport.

Chapter 190 is a legal non-profit entity for its members. A financial report is available to all members at chapter meetings or by written request. Chapter members are invited to attend Board meetings or ask questions about Board business or Chapter policy.

The Show & Tell the last several months has been outstanding. Thank you all for bringing so many interesting clocks, watches and horological items to share. The topic for this month will be to share a favorite watch or clock and a good story. Of course, anything you wish to share is welcome.

See you at the Meeting

Mike



Happy Birthday

Katherine Demny, Sylvia Griswold, Rock Newton,
Virginia Norwood, Lex Rooker, Zaki Salahuddin, Beverly Schmidt,
Paul Skeels & Ken Young

Tales From the Bench

by Ferdinand Geitner

Note: This is an elaboration of an article that Ferdinand previously wrote for Chrono Times.

“Normal” Regulation on a Bulova Ladies Watch

I'm constantly pointing out to students that one should never take anything for granted and was reminded myself of this fact by a very simple ladies Bulova wristwatch. It just stopped and the balance was a little sluggish. After taking it apart, cleaning, assembling and lubricating it, the balance had a lively amplitude. I placed it on the timing machine and that's when the warning bells started to go off! I had a little trouble finding the right rate, but the machine seemed to finally lock onto a frequency that could be the beat count of this particular model.



The next morning I checked the watch and it was way off time. So much so that I thought it had stopped and I examined it carefully in various positions but the balance oscillated at a healthy amplitude without missing a beat. I left it on the bench while I finished other jobs and soon realized that it was losing almost 10 minutes an hour. Due to the configuration of the dial, an oval shaped dial with large chunky batons, it was hard to tell exactly.



My first instinct was, “the Hands are slipping,” I checked the motion work for obstructions and low friction on the cannon pinion but all was well. Just to make sure I tightened the cannon pinion a little more (too much can break teeth).

Timing was still terrible!!! I examined the hairspring again in case I missed some rust spots which would weaken it and therefore slow the watch but it looked like new and had the right curves and shape. (On some older small clocks hairsprings were made of copper alloy and some material would be removed and softened by

cleaning solutions, slowing the balance wheel).

The balance wheel was the right size and the screws on the rim looked right for the year of this model. One can get the correct number of oscillations for most watch calibers from horological or manufacturer's literature or one can count teeth and pinions and calculate, but I would not recommend that on a watch (very small teeth).

So, by trial and error, I removed two screws from the rim and left it overnight. Some improvement. I removed two more screws and it improved to ½ an hour per day. After removing a total of six screws, it was finally within the regulating range of the regulator.

How does a watch with all the (seemingly) right parts get so far off? The timekeeping of a watch escapement depends on the relationship between the hairspring and the balance wheel. Replace the hairspring with a weaker one and the watch will lose time. With a stronger one it will gain. Replace the balance wheel with a heavier (fitting into the space) one and the watch will lose time. With a lighter one and it will gain. The conclusion must be that someone installed the wrong parts to this watch.

In another instance I was given a pocket watch for repair from a collector who purchased it from a dubious source. After close examination, I found it had all the parts, but could never function with the pallet installed. It was the wrong part and could not correctly interact with the escape wheel (wrong size and angles). Some unscrupulous person just put a part in the watch to make it look as if everything was there and was just not running.

“Never take anything for granted!”

BREAKING NEWS

Just as we were about to go to press, Mostyn Gale announced that he will be bringing a collection of very desirable clocks to the mart this month.

They were a donation to the charity organization UTU, which is run by a friend of his. (UTU is dedicated to the Aids problem in Africa.) All proceeds go to the UTC charity foundation.

Some of the clocks are:

A French crystal regulator, A small mystery clock, An early 1800s banjo clock, An Ansonia mantle clock, An Ithaca Calendar clock and A small musical chime clock.

Here is an opportunity to improve your clock collection and contribute to a worthy cause.

Another very interesting clock will be at the January Meeting/Mart. It is a very old Dutch clock with a crown wheel escapement.



THE WATCH OF THE FUTURE

by Henri Bonnet

When quartz timepieces first burst into the horological scene in the early eighties, they were advertised as "The watch of the future". Quartz timepieces soon flooded world markets and nearly caused the demise of the mechanical wristwatch. Now that the future has arrived and after having accumulated more than my fair share of "Watches of the future", which lie inoperable at the bottom of a shoe box, I cannot help but long for the past.

The typical quartz timepiece with a beat frequency rated in kilohertz can reach an accuracy of a second per year, while a good mechanical timepiece may, at best, be accurate within seconds per day. Can the human brain comprehend an accuracy, of a second per year, let alone make practical use of it?

Most quartz timepieces require a battery that needs to be replaced promptly upon exhaustion under the penalty of leakage. This has been the cause of the complete and final demise of several of my quartz wristwatches. This, of course, assumes that the proper battery for, say, a five year old watch is still to be found.



A quartz wristwatch can be purchased for anywhere between two to two thousand dollars or more. Either way, they suffer from the same shortcomings: future battery availability, battery leakage, and movements that can seldom be repaired. In other words, a quartz timepiece at any price is nothing more than a disposable item with a relatively short future, if any.

I know of no thirty year old operable quartz wristwatch that have become a collector's item and can be worn daily by its owner. One needs only walk into any watch show and look around. How many vintage quartz timepieces are offered for sale? By comparison, even humble timepieces from the thirties or forties, will reasonably keep time well beyond my ability to tell the difference, from a practical viewpoint, between its accuracy and that of the best quartz wristwatch on the market.

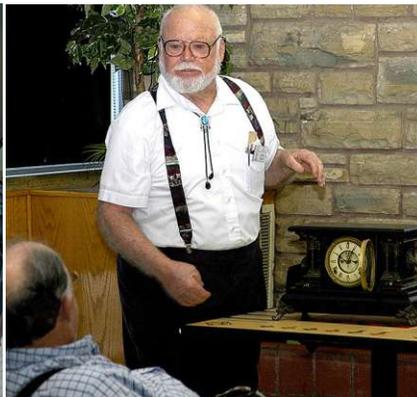
In addition, my humblest mechanical wristwatch can be adjusted, if needed, and will never need a battery, let alone be ruined by one. Even a modest wristwatch from the thirties or forties can readily be repaired, which means that it will keep on telling time indefinitely. It is entirely conceivable, as is the case today, that quartz wristwatches will be worn by most people in the future.

The question is, does the nice quartz wristwatch you received as a Christmas gift have any future? One cannot but come to the inevitable conclusion that the true watch of the future is really the watch of the past. What do you think? ■

A Chapter 190 Pictorial Review of 2009



Laurie's workshop at the Dudley House on case repair. The clock that the chapter restored is in the back.



Dutch Friou, a frequent contributor at show and tell.



Jim Chamberlain and Ferdinand Geitner examine a repaired clock hand.



The pre-meeting workshops are well attended.



Ferdinand with intense observers.



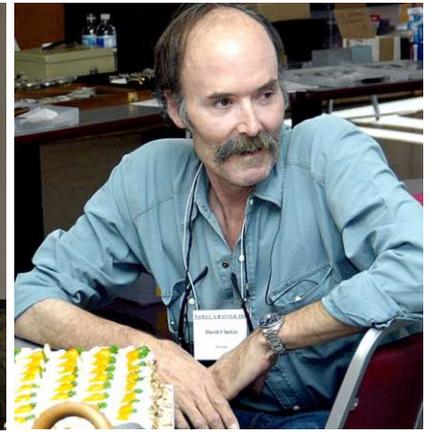
Jorge Montoya, Dave Coatsworth and Mike Schmidt, just hanging out.



Ernie Jenson pleads his innocence, but the jury isn't buying it.



We have always had excellent live programs at our meetings. This one on watches, was by Henri Bonnet.



Dave Clarken celebrates his 29th birthday with us.



Giorgio and Ferdinand at one of the pre-meeting workshops.



Dave examines clocks brought by visitors, Gene and Jan Corriden from Santa Cruz. (Now 190 members)



Laurie Conti shares a treasure she acquired at the Arcadia Mini Mart.



Susan Gary's tablet she made at the reverse painting workshop.



Members look at the reverse painted tablets brought to the mart by Jim Chamberlain.



Mostyn Gale and Mike Schmidt, discussing their plan for attaining world piece.



Chapter 190's Mini Mart at the Camarillo Airport.



The Greater Los Angeles Regional

ONLY WEEKS AWAY.

THIS IS ONE OF THE LARGEST WATCH AND CLOCK SHOWS
IN AMERICA. MARK YOUR CALENDAR, DON'T MISS IT!



FEBRUARY 5TH (NAWCC MEMBERS ONLY)

FEBRUARY 6TH, OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

**AT THE NEWLY RENOVATED
PASADENA CONVENTION CENTER**

SEE WEBSITE FOR INFO

WWW.NAWCC-GLAR.COM

A GREAT NEW RESOURCE

by Ken McWilliams

Some of you may have received an e-mail from the NAWCC concerning a new resource that is available to its members. It is indeed a very valuable reference resource for collectors, repairmen and general interest.

Basically, every article from every Bulletin ever published is now available on line, free of charge, to NAWCC members.

There is also a Bulletin look-up index to help find articles on a given subject or author. It will search all of the Bulletins and give you a list of the ones that have information on your subject, by issue number and page number. You can use the list to retrieve the article(s) from the past issues resource. (Unfortunately, there isn't a print function for the results, you will have to write them down by hand or cut & paste to a word processor.)

The Bulletins are sorted by decades starting with the 40's and continuing to the present. There is a table showing the issue number range by decade for easy selection.

To use this resource go to www.nawcc.org and log on. (You must have an account to use this resource. All that is required for an account is your member ID no., an e-mail address and a password that you make up.)

After logging on, go to the "Publications" tab and select Bulletin and look for "Past Bulletins (members only)."

I have to warn you though, it doesn't always go smoothly. Many times I had to go through the routine several times to find the "Past Bulletins (members only) tab. That's the key, once found all goes well.

When you retrieve the article that you want, it is presented in Adobe reader. You then have the option to save or print the article. This is a new resource and some glitches are to be expected. I have found missing or unaccessible articles and ones that were continued and the continuation of the article was not there. All in all, this is a very welcome resource. ■

Welcome New Members



Alan & Pamela Martin
from Lompoc

The next Meeting & Mart for Chapter 190
is January 17, 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

"Dutch Staartlokken Clocks"

Presented by Bill Robinson

*The Dutch "Tail Clocks" were made between 1800 & 1880
in the Friesland region of the Netherlands.*

SHOW & TELL

"Bring a watch or clock with a good story"

CHAPTER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Wristwatch Collectors- Many NAWCC members keep asking me for a series of workshops on wristwatch repair. A dialog has begun with 7 interested members and the NAWCC education committee. If you are interested in repair classes or a dialog, send me an email. EagleCreekClocks@msn.com

FSW 101- (Beginning Clock Repair) Introduction to Basic Time and Strike March 12-15
Coordinator -Ken Young 818 353-0918 email krybob@hotmail.com



This month's Mini-Workshop will be

An open workshop.

**Any subject is open for discussion,
any clock, watch or tool may be brought.**

**This is an open forum workshop and will be an
excellent opportunity to learn and share knowledge.**

Ferdinand Geitner will be the moderator

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

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

We are in the Market for an Ansonia
"Admiral" crystal regulator.

Chapter 190 members Gary & Joan Benoit
clockworksunltd@sbcglobal.net

- 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

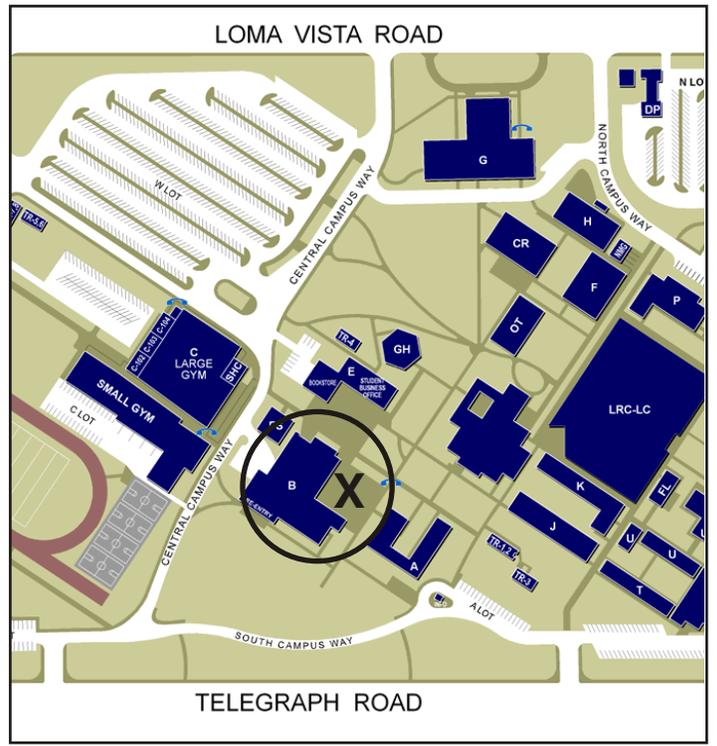
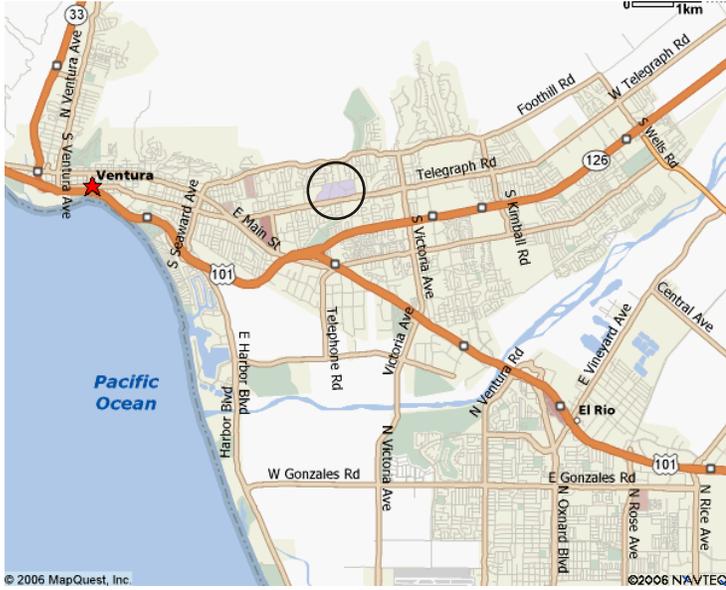
- Watch Repair Tools -

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!

January 2010 Issue

JAN 17
NEXT MEETING

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