



The 2010 Ward Francillon Time Symposium

by Mostyn Gale

The 2010 Ward Francillon Time Symposium was held on October 28th – 30th in Williamsburg, VA. This was the first Time Symposium I have attended, but I thought it was an important topic since we are in the process of restoring the Seth Thomas tower clock in the Santa Barbara Courthouse. Williamsburg is, as you may know, a town given in large part to historic preservation. It was a superb location for the topic of the Symposium – Conservation, Restoration, and Repair.

The keynote speech was given on Thursday night at the DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Museum by John Watson, the Conservator of Instruments and Mechanical Arts for the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. John set an excellent tone for the rest of the symposium and got us thinking about how we approached any restoration effort. He said that conservation and restoration do not have to be mutually exclusive opposites from which we must choose. They can overlap in a process called restorative conservation; i.e., restoration while maintaining historical evidences. He posed this challenging question; if over time, you replace various pieces of any old artifact, say a clock or watch, eventually, you have replaced most of it. Is it still the original artifact? How representative is it of what used to be? Is it still as valuable as the original? And why? (He pointed out that this discussion has been going on at least since the time of the ancient Greeks.) See an interesting discussion of this at:

<http://www.productiveflourishing.com/the-ship-of-theseus-and-personal-identity/>

Obviously the answer to that question is highly dependent on what the artifact is, how unique it is, and how important it is. Many of the kitchen clocks we work on are not very unique today, but might they be in another 100 or 200 years? And what about the Santa Barbara courthouse Seth Thomas tower clock? Two considerations are very important to be able to answer these questions; (1) what is the history of this artifact, and (2) what are the set of cultural values that we have that influence our thinking about the value of things? Time has a way of changing one's perspective. Think about all the things in Williamsburg – houses, kitchen utensils, furniture, tools, etc. Would these have been considered valuable to the

people of the day? Certainly not as valuable as we consider them to be 300 years later. And, why do we consider them valuable; partly because of the events that took place there that were so foundational to the country that we love today.

So, one conclusion that I take from these thoughts is that it is important to understand the history of an artifact and its nature, i.e., its design, its uniqueness, the circumstances of its creation, and maker. Preferably, we do this before we irreversibly “tear into” a restoration project. On a practical level, what this means to me, is that for the Santa Barbara tower clock, I will be preserving all of the old pieces, for example the worn sprocket that we have replaced and identifying them as original or replaced, so that future generations can easily understand what was original and what was not. Conversely, if I replace the spring on a kitchen clock, I may not retain it and mark it as the original. I say, may not, because 300 years from now will someone else be able to know that the “new” spring I put in was not the original?

After the keynote speech, we were able to tour the museum and see many interesting items as well as some displays specifically set up to understand the techniques used to preserve, restore, and decipher how they were made. There were some very interesting historic clocks, one tall case clock made by the famous Thomas Tompion (pictured left).

The next day, Friday, was filled with talks about the restoration of artifacts. Jon Brandon, a furniture conservator from Maine, talked about the restoration of a tall case clock made by Edward Moulton in 1840. Rick Vogt, a furniture preservationist in Virginia, talked about how important it was to collaborate with other experts in any restoration effort. Part of the reason for this is that none of us knows or can know all about all the aspects of these objects, i.e., history, design, construction and restoration techniques. We also heard George Thomas, a watch restorer from Maryland, tell us about his restoration of a watch that was made around 1530. And we heard from William Todd (Virginia), who restored a tower clock in Guyana.

In the afternoon we had a little free time to explore on our own, to visit the Dewitt museum again or whatever we wanted. I went back to the museum for a bit but also

(Continued on page 3)



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E-Mail For Newsletter:
internut@socal.rr.com

Web Site:

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

By Mike Schmidt

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL!



I thank all of the many members and friends who have shared in the work, gave donations, and supported Chapter 190 this past year. I wish you all the very best,

Congratulations to all of the Students who have completed the October FSW101.

Instructor Ray Marsolek, Assistant Instructor Lex Rooker, Class Coordinator Giorgio Perissinoto, Students: Alan Bloore, Larry Leal, Tom Ferkel, David Poucher, Ron Weiss, Ron Kubitsky, and Sue Hill. This is the 15th Field Suitcase Workshop offered and completed by Chapter 190. A special thank you to Ray and Alvina Marsolek, this is their 11th trip to Ventura County to provide these exceptional classes for NAWCC members.

I have received some interest from the NAWCC members for another FSW 301 "Introduction to Basic Pocket Watch Repair" workshop and a 5th FSW 101 "Introduction to Basic Time & Strike- the American Kitchen Clock" workshop. If you have interest in these or any other workshops please contact Mike Schmidt. 805 988 1764 or email eaglecreekclocks@msn.com.

The program for this Sunday will be presented by Ray Marolek. Ray is a special friend to Chapter 190 and all NAWCC members. The program will be on "Vienna Regulators", a favorite subject of Ray's. Please come and welcome Ray and Alvina Marsolek.

The Workshop for our Sunday morning meeting will be led by Robert Gary and Ferdinand Geitner. Robert will demonstrate how to set up and photograph clocks and Ferd will demonstrate how he photographs watches. You are welcome to bring any clock or watch repair questions for sharing in the workshop. The coffee will be on early.

This newsletter and this month completes your Chapter's 4th year. Please continue your support with a membership renewal for 2011. And for all who read and follow Chapter 190, we have plenty of room for new memberships. Your support and membership is what fuels, (gives us the juice), for all the creative work that takes place with the newsletters, programs, website, marts, meetings, tower clock projects, scholarships, and educational opportunities. 2011 will be another very interesting year for 190.

See you at the Meeting, *Mike*



Happy Birthday

November

David Clarkin, Ferdinand Geitner,
Jim Gilmore, Ernie Jenson,

December

Gene Corriden, George Dubois, Dutch Friou,
Gary Girod, Bill Robinson, Daniel Weiss

(Continued from page 1)

toured Williamsburg quickly. I was able to see William and Mary College, as well as some of the historic reenactments of colonial military maneuvers (*photo below*).



In the evening we were able to hear more talks about a new skeleton clock being built by Mark Frank with many complications. We also heard from Mark about the history of Big Ben and some of the personalities that were involved. Both of these were very interesting. If you would like to see the progress on Mark's incredible clock go to:

www.my-time-machines.net/my_current_project3.htm

On Saturday, more talks about restorations; one very interesting one was the recovery and restoration of a clock from the USS Monitor that was brought up from the bottom of the ocean. This vessel sank in 1862 off the coast of Virginia during a battle. The clock is now in the Mariners Museum in Newport News, Virginia.

All in all, this was a very valuable time. I learned history, I learned techniques and materials, I learned some philosophy on preservation and restoration, and I got to make some new friends and acquaintances and talk with people with similar interests. If you are thinking about going to one of these in the future, I highly recommend it. ■



The Dewitt museum

The Good Old Days of the Chronometer

by **Henri Bonnet**

The nineteen fifties and sixties undoubtedly were the heydays of the Swiss wristwatch. Swiss watch manufacturers competed among themselves to produce the most beautiful and accurate wristwatches possible. The culmination of their efforts resulted in some truly superlative timepieces known as wrist chronometers.

A chronometer is a high quality wristwatch, built from the finest materials, which has been carefully adjusted to run with utmost precision. This additional step, following its final assembly, is known as regulation. The purpose of regulation was to adjust a wristwatch to keep time with as much accuracy as technologically possible.

Once regulated, such wristwatches were submitted to an independent Swiss government accredited testing agency, which would award a chronometer certificate to those timepieces which successfully passed their test. However, regulating a wristwatch to chronometer standards was not a simple task. It could be performed only by exceptional master watchmakers with extensive experience. Such specialists were rare and highly prized by their organizations. They were known as regulators. Even for those highly skilled craftsmen, regulating a wristwatch to chronometer performance was a lengthy and painstaking task.

The regulator had to diagnose minute flaws in the manufacture, assembly and running of a timepiece, which could adversely affect its accuracy. The regulator's objective was to eliminate those flaws, or make one flaw compensate for another, in order to end up with a wristwatch as precise as possible. That task entailed disassembling the movement, correcting tiny imperfections, and reassembling it multiple times, until satisfactory results were obtained.

The master regulators even competed among themselves and were awarded prizes for top accomplishments. They were highly respected within their companies and by the watch industry as a whole, and were treated accordingly. Their names were well known in horological circles, and some of them actually became famous. In Switzerland, watch manufacturers could submit their chronometer quality wristwatches for testing to the *Controle Officiel Suisse des Chronometres*, simply known as COSC. Other accredited agencies called Bureau Officiel de Controle de la Marche des Montres, (*Continued on page 4*)

Continued from page 3

also known as BO's could perform the task as well. Geneva, Bienne and Le Locle were some of the major BO locations. In order to qualify as chronometers, such wristwatches had to be of strictly approved quality. They had to have been manufactured and assembled in Switzerland as well as stamped with a serial number.

In the fifties and sixties the cased wristwatches were submitted for testing, rather than the movements alone. They were tested in five positions as well as subjected to three widely different temperatures. The entire process took about ten to fifteen days. To qualify as a chronometer, a timepiece had to be accurate to within -4 +6 seconds a day. Following successful performance, a wristwatch was awarded the coveted chronometer certificate by the testing agency.

In addition, the word "chronometer" could now legitimately be displayed on its dial. However, it must be remembered that such certification only indicated that a timepiece performed within approved chronometer standards at the time and place of its testing. Once worn on the wrist, a wristwatch would normally be subjected to a whole array of additional unpredictable conditions, such as shocks and magnetism for example. Obviously, such exposure could adversely affect its accuracy.

Even though a chronometer's original precision could not always be maintained in the long run, chances are that its overall performance over the years would by far exceed that of an unadjusted timepiece. This is true however, provided that subsequent servicing of the wristwatch was performed by a competent and conscientious watchmaker.

A chronometer certificate was also the best guarantee of overall quality of a timepiece. Of course, the mere production of chronometers was good advertising for their manufacturers, suggesting high quality for all their timepieces. Obviously, chronometers did cost more than their unregulated counterparts.

Nowadays in Switzerland, over one million wristwatches a year are submitted for chronometer certification. Not only is the manufacture of chronometers done with high precision automated machine tools, the testing process itself has been highly automated and computerized as well. Currently, only uncased movements are handed in for testing. They are submitted without any special regulation, other than the adjustment normally performed as part of their final assembly. The wristwatch movements are scanned in

batches by high resolution high speed cameras, controlled by sophisticated computers. They are subsequently awarded batch certification, rather than individual certificates. Those rejected are returned to their manufacturers for further action.

A few companies such as Breitling, for example, submit all their wristwatches for certification, while other manufacturers submit only a portion of their total production.

Finally, one must not confuse a chronometer with a chronograph. A chronograph, sometimes (incorrectly) known as a stopwatch, may also be of chronometer quality, and so designated on its dial. For a wristwatch aficionado, the mere possession of a good Swiss chronometer from the fifties or sixties, is one of the most gratifying experiences one can have. What do you think? ■

This Omega Constellation chronometer dates from the sixties and remains a highly coveted timepiece by watch lovers.



This Omega co-axial automatic chronometer dates from the nineties and had initially been produced in limited edition.



This Omega De Ville automatic chronograph is also a chronometer, (as shown on its dial), with a co-axial escapement.



Tales From the Bench

by Ferdinand Geitner

Family matters

It can be a challenge when visiting family members out of state and a casual question is asked, “could you fix this clock while you're here?”

Far away from my workshop, no precision tools or materials, and only someone's household tools (which I consider from the Stone Age), requires a lot of thought and improvisation, as you'll see. This does not give one permission to provide inferior service. The average collector and hobbyist usually does not have the facilities available, but with the right know how (FSW Classes) a lot can be done. It is amazing what can be done with tools and materials found in today's household environment.

The clock was a nice little French 8 day desk clock. I was told that on winding, the Key had reversed hard across someone's fingers. That was actually good news as it suggested that the mainspring was still intact. The bad news is that on this style of case, a drum, one cannot remove the movement without removing the winding key, and with the ratchet not functioning, it is practically impossible to unscrew the winding key from the barrel arbor. (Almost impossible, that is.)

One can put a thin, hard piece of steel through the hole of the set knob towards the barrel arbor, find the ratchet wheel, and lock it against the plate or anything nearby. If the hole is too small, one can try to find the ratchet wheel through the slot in the bottom of the case for the pendulum. Then unscrew the winding key (after a few try's to determine the right direction).

Then, we have to remove the bezel and that's another thing. There is a gap around the edge, but it does not pull out straight as some do, there are no screws to be seen around the side which is another method for securing French bezels. Does it unscrew? It turns a little but does not unscrew. One has to turn and pull forward as it is a “bayonet” fitting (see picture, right.) To sum up, check carefully before trying too hard and damaging the piece. Now we can remove the movement and inspect the damage.



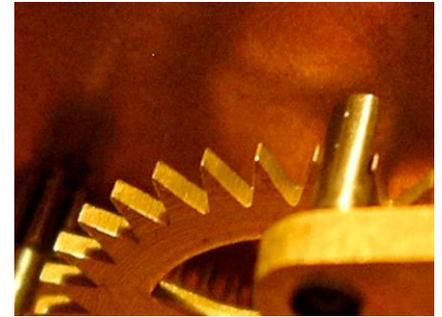
The unusual escapement caught my eye. From the picture you'll see that it seems to be a brocot escapement, but Brocot escapements have forward tilting pointed teeth this one has teeth that point straight up with an angle both sides turning it into a recoil escapement.

After inspecting the faulty click, it became apparent that it had been repaired before with a piece of watch mainspring that was riveted onto the broken click. The click and spring were originally made from one piece. Notice that the repaired

spring broke at the same spot. The previous repair provided me with some pre-drilled holes, so I filed the heads off the rivets (a nail file would do) and pushed them through to the other side with a hard needle, removing the piece of broken mainspring with it. Then, I had to find some suitable spring material, so I dismantled an

old ballpoint pen and straightened a part of its coil spring (a very durable elastic material) to feed through the existing holes of the click, bending and securing it to push the click with sufficient tension into the ratchet wheel.

Done! I can now hand the clock back with confidence, though completed under duress (sorry, I mean under stressful circumstances.) ■



CHAPTER 190 PEOPLE

Tom Beard

by Kris Clarkin



Tom Beard joined the NAWCC and Chapter 190 a little over a year ago yet his interest and knowledge of clocks and watches are clearly something acquired over a life time. In fact, when it comes to timepieces, he was “bitten by the bug” at an early age from his father, a long time watch and clock collector. They came to share a special interest in watches and small mantel clocks (think crystal, Waterford etc). His father unfortunately passed away before they discovered the NAWCC. Tom however found the association through an ad in the newspaper and joined about a year ago. While he has yet to take a FSW class or attend a Regional, he attends the monthly meetings regularly. A few months ago he established an auction at the meetings. He looks for deals on watches and clocks at Thrift stores, flea markets, swap meets etc (especially enjoying purchases from the uninitiated that “don't know what they have and sell cheap”) so that he can buy items for song and in turn auction them off where all proceeds are donated to the chapter. Sweet.

Not being conversant in watch and clock jargon nor the nuances of collecting, I found that Tom's ease and facility with watches, clocks, manufacturers, characteristics, components, sales, company histories, qualities, what parts were used by different manufacturers in what pieces, what's good, what's bad, knockoffs etc exceeded my ability to take it all in while taking notes over the phone. I cannot do justice to the information provided. (But, did you know that the quartz for a quartz watch is cut at 98.6 ° F for if the crystal temperature changes, it affects the time? Or, that the dial is an especially good indicator for a watches overall quality? I certainly didn't.) Suffice to say that Tom should probably give a seminar on collecting.

Some of the most prized pieces of his collection are from his family; a Waltham pocket watch which was his father's, a Hamilton which was his grandfathers, a small carriage clock with a bubble paperweight and a particularly nice old Seth Thomas. He also especially loves small mantel clocks (in the ~2 inches wide by ~5 inches tall range).

While time and timekeeping seem intellectual or cerebral to some, it also seemed visceral to Tom; something essential for life like breathing.

Tom began his life at “the baby factory of the 7th Day Adventist Hospital in Glendale,” so dubbed due to the number of baby boomers being born at the time. He lived in the San Fernando Valley and Hollywood growing up. He spent two years studying electronics before joining the Naval Air Wing, a land based F14 program in 1972 stationed at Miramar. There, he put his education to work as he concedes, “he wasn't much of a sailor.” Tom joined several training cruises (takeoff and landing practices etc.) in the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand and Tasmania. Being on a U.S. Naval ship that crosses the equator, a time- honored ceremony takes place; the transition from pollywog to shellback. This involves elaborate preparations by the “shellbacks” (those who have crossed the equator before) to ensure the “pollywogs” (those who are about to cross the equator for the first time) are properly indoctrinated. All pollywogs, even the Commanding Officer if he has not crossed before, must participate. Tom was no exception, becoming a shellback en route to “almost the bottom of the world.”

After Tom's time in the service he spent the next thirty one years as a Communication Technician for Edison. He will be retiring Sept 5 of next year. He's looking forward to being a “lazy person, staying up late, watching TV” and having more time to devote to digital photography. Yet another entire realm of collecting small mechanical items, Tom collects digital cameras too.

Tom is single and lives with his three cats, in Ventura. When I asked Tom if I had omitted anything that he could think of, he offered that he is “cute, adorable, has baby blue eyes, is fun to be with and adheres to truth in advertising.” May I add that he is a colorful individual and I suspect a very good addition to Chapter 190? ■

**The next Meeting & Mart for Chapter 190
is October 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

“Vienna Regulator Clocks”

Presented by Ray Marsolek

***If you are a fan of “Vienna Regulators,
you don't want to miss this program.***

SHOW & TELL

“Clock or watch projects”

CLASSIFIED PAGE

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

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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

- 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.

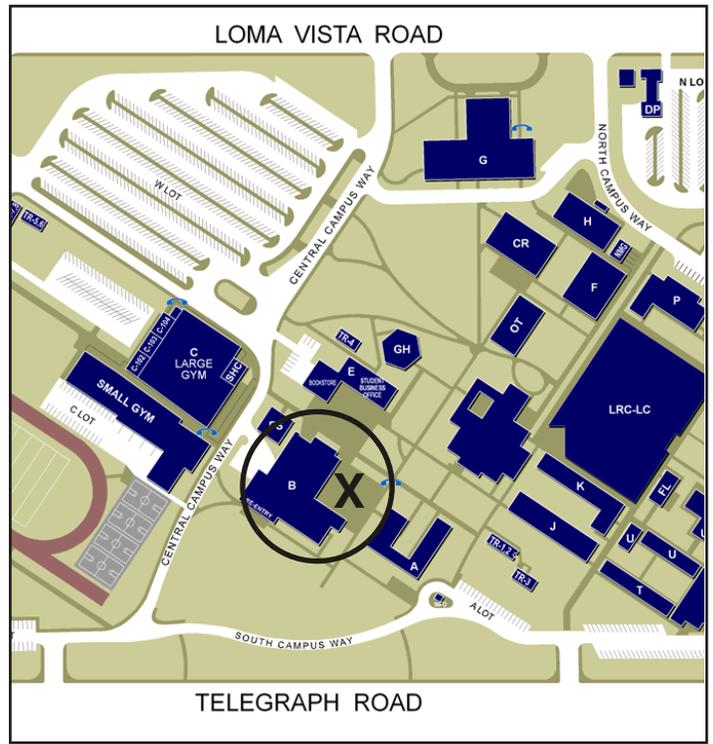
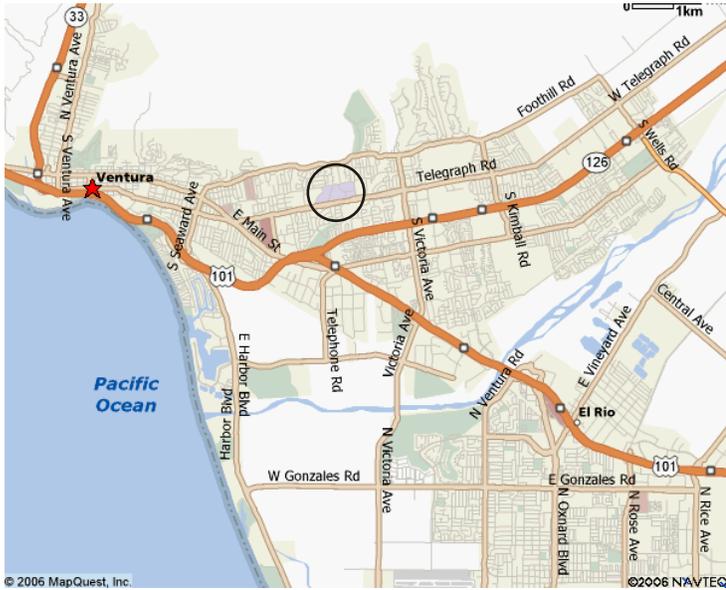
Please contact:
David Clarkin Tel: 805-988-4384

I need a few watch item,

- (1) 18 size Howard staff for Series III...(Coles Escapement)
- (2) I have the collet for an Adams & Perry watch...needs hairspring and stub to fit in balance cock, or someone to replace what is missing and give the timepiece a good cleaning so that it runs correctly, without breaking the bank!

Dan Weiss (Pennsylvania 190 member)
Contact: (215) 725-5463 • dweiss17@verizon.net

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.



November 2010 Issue

NEXT MEETING
NOV 21

THIS WILL BE THE LAST MEETING OF 2010
THERE WILL NOT BE A MEETING IN DECEMBER
NO DECEMBER NEWSLETTER EITHER.

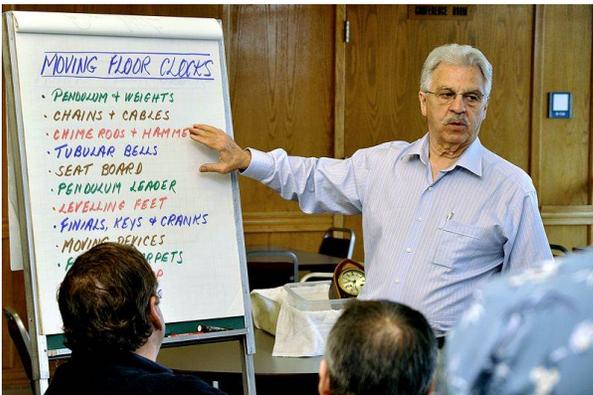


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THE EXTRA PAGE

FACES SEEN AT OCTOBER'S MEETING

Photos by Bill Robinson



The following are future courses that may be offered to those who are interested, and have the required prerequisites, for the year 2011.

FSW- 102 Time & Strike Clocks with Spring Barrels
Jan. 21-24 Coordinator- Giorgio Perissinoto- Phone 805 637-9810
Giorgio@spanport.uscb.edu

FSW- 302 Fundamentals of Wrist Watch Repair
Jan. 28-31 Coordinator- Zaki Salahuddin-Phone 654-8552
phoenix@cimm.net

FSW- 200 Fundamental Skills for Lathe & Clock Repair Course Part I
Feb. 25-28 Coordinator- Giorgio Perissinoto- Phone 805 637-9810
Giorgio@spanport.uscb.edu

FSW- 201 Fundamental Skills for Lathe & Clock Repair Course Part II
May 20-23 Coordinator- Giorgio Perissinoto- Phone 805 637-9810
Giorgio@spanport.uscb.edu

FSW- 103 Introduction to Chime Clocks
Apr. 29-May 2 Coordinator Laurie Conti-Phone 805 813-2216
Remember_the_clock@me.com

FSW- 202 Lathe II Clock Repair Course
July 29-Aug. 1 Coordinator- Alan Davis- Phone 805-659-7148
Jesoda.1@netzero.net

FSW- 104 Introduction to weight and Fusee Driven Clocks
Sept 9-12 Coordinator Paul Skeels-Phone 805-525-7325
piskeelatty@verizon.net

This month's Mini-Workshop
will be an open workshop.

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

Ferdinand Geitner

will open this month's workshop with
"How to photograph watches"

The workshop begins at 10:30 AM. Free to members