



S.W. Chapter 15

The Mainspring

*A Monthly Publication from Southwestern Chapter 15
of the National Association of Watch & Clock Collectors*

April 2006

From the President

submitted by Jeff Beehler

Hello Members,

Well Kerrville is just around the corner and I am getting excited about it. It will be nice to see you all again. We are trying to put together more events throughout the year so we can be together more as a group. The upcoming Penman class seems to be going well and a total success.

It was good to see so many familiar faces at the Mesquite regional. We all had a wonderful time and I was blessed in meeting a long time phone and e-mail friend from New York, Joel Warren and his lovely wife Gayle. Joel is an inspiration to all Ithaca Calendar Clock collectors as he owns all the original tooling, machines and templates from the factory. He can reproduce anything for Ithaca clocks and can also make the entire clock including the upper and lower movements.

I would like to thank all the Chapter 124 members for being so friendly and helpful at their regional as we all had a good time. See you in Kerrville.☺

New Tri-Chapter Joint One Day Show in Waco

You are invited to our very first Texas Tri-Chapter Joint One Day Show in central Texas. Chapter 15, Chapter 124 and Chapter 139 will be hosting the One Day Show on Saturday, October 28, 2006. The location of the One Day will be at Knox Hall

directly behind the Texas Ranger's Hall of Fame Museum in historical Waco and very near the campus of Baylor University. This is right off I-35 at the Brazos River. There will be a large Mart area, educationals, and breakfast food served. More information will be forthcoming. Make plans now to attend. Contact Bill Andrle at (254) 829-1559 or e-mail dandrle@texnet.net for more information.☺

*Calling for volunteers
to help with unloading in
Kerrville. Contact Joe Giles at
(830) 755-8095 or e-mail
jgiles@gvtc.com
Unloading begins at 8AM
Friday April 21...
please be there to help.*

Mart Etiquette 101

submitted by Bruce Graham

One of the best things about the NAWCC are the local, regional and national Marts where we get a chance to visit with old friends, make new ones and find that treasure we've been searching for. Having observed from both sides of a vendor's table there are a few tips I would like to share with our new members.

It is necessary, educational and fun to look over everything that interests you at a show. Picking up and handling is expected and often a must, but as you do so with respect and handle it with care as if

it were your own. Your care is always appreciated. I usually ask permission to pick up and handle any item. Making verbal contact with the owner gives me an opportunity to ask questions regarding condition, price and history, or to inquire about other items on the table. Likewise I prefer to return an item directly to the vendor when I'm finished. Among other things this ensures they know I didn't walk off with the piece I was looking at.

I cringe whenever I see a buyer or vendor open a watch case with a pocket knife

With all fragile items, but especially watches we must avoid touching a movement directly. Touch could easily damage things such

as the a balance spring or it's pivot and the oils and salts from fingerprints can tarnish or damage the finish. This is especially easy to forget when pointing out interesting details to a friend or associate, but can be very time consuming or costly to remedy after the fact.

Another important area is opening a pocket watch case. To ascertain the value of a watch we must view the movement and any vendor should be happy for you to look it over. They usually are willing to help open the case for inspection. Opening and closing pocket watch cases is a skill that improves with repetition, but if a stubborn case back is encountered I usually just ask the vendor to remove or replace it. This is particularly a good idea if there is any indication that the case has been cross-threaded. Oh yes, and a pocket watch case that snaps shut should be opened with a proper case opener. I cringe whenever I see a buyer or vendor open a watch case with a pocket knife. ***This is definitely not the correct tool for the job and can easily leave a permanent scratch if used hastily.*** A proper case opener used correctly will not mar a case, and will make opening a tight case much easier.

Finally I encourage everyone to come out to the one-day and regional shows to spend time with friends and fellow collectors. Your attendance will help our local chapters make ends meet. Consider

setting up a table. You can clean out some of that horological clutter and make way for new treasures.☺

Upcoming Shows and Events

(watch our website for more details)

●April 21-22, 2006

***Great Southwestern Regional, Kerrville TX
Hosted by Chapter 15***

●May 6, 2006 and the following five consecutive Saturdays, in Boerne, Texas,
***Beginning Clock Repair Classes
Hosted and Conducted by Chapter 15***

●June 21 - 26, 2006

NAWCC National Convention, Cleveland Ohio

●August 18 - 20, 2006

All Texas Regional, Houston
Hosted by Chapter 139

●Coming this Summer,
***Gear Cutting Demonstration in San Antonio
Watch for more details***

●October 28, 2006

***Joint One Day Show, Waco
Hosted by Chapters 15, 124 and 139☺***

Beginning Clock Repair Classes

Classes are now planned in beautiful Boerne, Texas beginning May 6 and running for six weeks. The only cost to the student will be \$20 for the book. For more information contact the instructor Eldon Harris directly at cloctec@gvtc.com or (830) 249-2011.

Classified Ads

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Pocket Watch Repair

30+ years experience. Call (512) 826-8211 or e-mail brg404@yahoo.com for prices and free estimates. Special discounts for volume repairs. We also purchase pocket watch parts and material. Come by to visit our table at the Kerrville show to see our large selection of pocket watches for sale. **Bruce Graham.**

Watch Buying Tips

by Bruce Graham

Since we are collecting watches made well over 100 years ago here are a few tips to help you maximize your investment dollar and minimize your repair bill.

Buy complete watches. Buying partial movements to restore can be expensive when adding in the cost of a good case, hands, dial, etc. It's better to buy complete if possible.

Look for watches in their original cases, especially Howard watches. This is a touchy subject since watches and cases were often “married” by the jeweler when originally purchased. Plus, many gold and silver cases were scrapped during the Great Depression, so finding complete and original cases can be challenging. But an original case can make a big difference in price to a knowledgeable collector.

Look for watches with good dials. Metal dials can be refinished, but porcelain dials crack easily and can be difficult and expensive to replace. Some folks are now soaking the dials to remove the hairlines, so look closely since the cracks are still there.

Avoid buying watches with marks or scratches on the movements. This was sometimes an unfortunate consequence of the life of a watch as it was originally being used and serviced, but a slipped screwdriver or indifferent treatment during repairs can result in a scarred and less desirable movement.

Buy watches with their original hands. Nothing stands out worse than mismatches hands, or hands that are incorrect for the watch. Some

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Ball model hands are unique, likewise some Keystone watches and certainly early Howard hands. Again, the correct hands can make a big difference in price to a collector.

Make sure hunting case watches have their bezels. Its getting difficult to match up bezels to hunting cases, and expensive to get one made to order.

Look for excessive wear on cases. Its sometimes easy to overlook wear on gold filled cases when they are highly polished. But time and oxidation will make the wear stand out. Likewise, avoid buying 5 or 10 year Gold Filled cases. Look for 20 or 25 year Gold Filled cases, unless you like collecting New York Standard watches ;)

If buying fusee watches, make sure the chain is all there. Its possible to repair broken fusee chain, even make new hooks for the ends, but if a watch you re considering is missing the chain, or missing a significant length of chain, you might want to pass.☹

...one more reminder to bring "goodies" for the Hospitality Suite in Kerrville. Thanks.

Nominations for Officers and Directors are as follows:

President: Jeff Beehler

Vice President: Ted Orban

Treasurer: Sue Hansen

Secretary/Editor: Jerry Brazil

Director of Programs: Ron Davidson

Director of Education: OPEN

Director of One Day Marts: OPEN

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