



## **Houston All Texas Chapters Regional**

This year's All Texas Chapters Regional in Houston was once again an exciting Regional, with great people, loaded tables in the Mart room, an abundance of programs and silent auctions, as well as the ever popular "It's for Free!"

Looking over the items that were gleaned from the "It's for Free!" events, it seems maybe we should have a contest to find out who made the best use of their finds, or maybe an exhibit of items created from the bits and pieces. Perhaps this would be an incentive for some of us to actually refinish that case we picked up, practice bushing that plate, polishing pivots or replacing broken teeth, or the million other things we thought we could do with our treasures. In the meantime, we can look at that little (or not so little!) stack of goodies and remember what fun we had at the 2010 All Texas Chapters Regional!

### **My Little Treasures:**

#### **the continuing search for unusual clocks**

By Bob Rasmussen

Being fairly new to clock collecting I still try to look for unusual or uncommon clocks at the NAWCC regional marts. Don't get me wrong, I do like the popular clocks as well like the Vienna regulators and the early American shelf clocks such as carved column and splats. In fact it's very hard for me to pass up any clock because quite frankly I LOVE CLOCKS! Now, you watch guys and gals out there please don't feel slighted because my wife Karen is the watch person in this family, but she didn't want to write an article so bear with me.

At the recent Houston Regional, I was particularly looking for an International Time Recording (ITR) slave clock to go with my ITR

master (self winding clocks and master electric clocks are my new found passion, at least for the time being....). I was looking specifically for Ben Fulbright's table because he had mentioned at our annual meeting in San Antonio that he had just acquired some electrics and was going to bring them to the Houston Regional. I memorized where Ben's table was from the map in the lobby and as soon as the mart opened I made a mad dash over to his table.

Sure enough I found what I was looking for, an IBM (successor to ITR) slave clock that according to the label on the back came out of Sam Houston State Teachers College in the 1930's. I grabbed the clock and started to negotiate the sale when Ben pointed out that he had some other very unusual electrics that I should look at. I thought to myself "Ben, you are evil, tempting me like that; Karen will kill me". Of course I flicked that guilty conscience off of my shoulder like a bug, without a second thought, and went directly over to what looked like your typical 400 day anniversary clock. Ben explained that these were Tiffany Never Wind clocks. "Never wind?" I asked. Indeed these were clocks with self winding torsion pendulum movements invented by a man named George Steele Tiffany in 1901. Imagine the excitement people would have when they realized that they would never have to wind their anniversary once a year again! Of course that was just a little sarcastic, but this was high tech for its time.

Now, I'm normally not a big fan of anniversary clocks, but Ben did have two other clocks that I first thought were electric slave clocks but they too were self winding torsion pendulum clocks. One was made by The Niagara Clock Co. and the other by The National Magnetic Clock Co. (NMCC). I was completely hooked so I purchased the NMCC clock and decided to do a little

investigation. Now as a side note; I love to use Google when I do research and usually am very successful, but I was coming up short on the NMCC research. A quick conversation with Pat Holloway reminded me that the NAWCC has all of the Bulletins scanned and available online now. They have a simple search tool that enables you to search similar to how you would use Google. Sure enough I found a very good article by Leonard Brenner (TX) in the February 2006 bulletin titled "A History of George Steele Tiffany Clocks." The following history is taken from that article.

George Steele Tiffany was born in Chicago in 1872, son of Joel and Margaret Tiffany. In 1894, George invented an improved version of the Telautograph, which was the forerunner of the present-day fax machine. Between 1901 and 1923 he was granted 42 patents of which only two were related to clocks. In 1901, he filed a patent for two inventions, one for the electric clock operating as a torsion pendulum clock and the other for a temperature compensated pendulum for the torsion pendulum clocks. In 1907, Tiffany began marketing his clocks under the name of The Tiffany Electric Manufacturing Co., NY directly to jewelers which was the common practice back then.

All of these models were double contact, which provides for an electric impulse near the end of each direction of rotation of the torsion pendulum. I won't be 100% sure how these work electrically until I take mine apart, but imagine you're a kid spinning around in a rope swing. Just as you un-twist, your friend gives you a little spin that helps you twist back up. In the clock, each cycle of twisting up and down engages a coil that gives an impulse to the clock mechanism and advances it 1/5 of a minute or 12 seconds. This is how the single contact "Never Wind" mechanism works. On the double contact models this occurred at the top and bottom of each rotation. The coils run off of 4.5 volts DC, or three D size batteries as does mine.

In 1911 Tiffany moved his company to Buffalo, NY. Tiffany began selling the cheaper

single contact model 1100 movement. This is the movement that is in my clock. The model 1100 would be used for the next 18 years and would prove to be the most successful and least expensive of all models made. Tiffany had worried that dealers and customers were either unfamiliar with or afraid of electricity, so in 1917 the company changed its name to Tiffany Never-Wind Clock Co. This proved successful and helped to increase sales. At some point the company decided only to produce a more expensive model 2000 and dropped the model 1100. Tiffany Never-Wind Clock Co. would eventually become the Cloister Clock Co. and they decided to produce only the model 1100. The company went through several changes in the next couple of years going from Cloister Clock Co. to Niagara Clock Co. to eventually the National Magnetic Clock Co. all of which produced the model 1100 movement. National Magnetic Clock Co moved to Dunkirk, NY in 1930 and continued in business up until 1959.



My National Magnetic Clock Co. clock

<b>Treasurer's Report</b>		
<b>Chapter Account</b>		<b>\$7,579.63</b>
Beginning balance	7,669.19	
Expenses: Newsletter/postage	119.56	
Income: Dues renewal	30.00	
<b>Regional Account</b>		<b>\$4,363.60</b>

## September Program

Make plans now to attend our September 25<sup>th</sup> program when Gene Galbraith will present



the program “A Bird Cage Turret Clock - The restoration of a Thwaites & Reed 1850 tower clock.” The meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. at the Southwest Museum of Clocks and Watches, 101

East San Antonio Street, Lockhart Texas. The Museum is located just across from the beautiful, historic Caldwell County courthouse.

## Field Suitcase Workshops

By Mike Williams  
President

I recently had the opportunity to participate in my second NAWCC Field Suitcase Workshop (FSW). For anybody who doesn't know about these, they are fairly intense and professional 2-4 day classes that go into detail on the particular subject. For example, due to time constraints, our local chapter's and local AWCI guild's beginning clock repair classes have covered not much more than clock movement disassembly, assembly, and cleaning. FSW 101 also covers straightening teeth, arbors and pivots, lantern pinion repair, tightening loose wheels on arbors, and calculating time train beats per hour, among other topics. These classes are open to anybody, although students who are not NAWCC members pay higher tuition.

Local NAWCC chapters generally organize Field Suitcase Workshop classes, but anybody can choose to be a Class Coordinator. The Coordinator enrolls the students, collects the tuition, locates an appropriate classroom, pays any classroom rental, and schedules the class with the Field Suitcase Workshop Administrator. The Coordinator Incentive Program allows Class

Coordinators to receive free tuition. A Coordinator who enrolls eight students in a class may take that class free as the ninth student if they have met the course prerequisites—a VERY nice incentive! The Administrator confirms the date and assigns an instructor. The instructor travels to the class site and conducts the course. The NAWCC trains and certifies every instructor, and each has years of repair experience. There is a class size requirement of seven to nine students for each class (more can be enrolled if the facility is large enough and a second instructor is available). The F301 Basic Pocket Watch Repair Course has a minimum of seven students and a maximum of eight students.

Field Suitcase Workshop courses are listed on the NAWCC website at <http://www.nawcc.org/index.php/field-suitcase/courses>.

Chapter 124 recently hosted the FSW 200, Fundamental Skills for Lathe & Clock Repair Course Part I and will host FSW 201 (Part II) in May, 2011. Chapter 139 is hosting F105, 400-Day Torsion Pendulum Clocks, September 9-12, 2010. Other classes currently scheduled and within a reasonable driving distance include four classes at next year's national convention in Overland Park, KS: F101, Introduction to Basic Time & Strike...The American Kitchen Clock; F301, Introduction to Basic Pocket Watch Repair: The American Pocket Watch; F501, The Repair & Replacement of an American Strip Recoil Escapement Course; and F502, The Atmos Repair Course. Of course, more courses will be available if a class coordinator and administrator are able to put one together.

These classes offer wonderful opportunities to any serious student of clock or watch repair, but who can't attend long in-residence classes out of state. In addition to short classes regularly offered by your chapter, these more intensive classes are great training opportunities. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about these or other training opportunities, or if you are interested in teaching a class, or if you are interested in taking a class on any clock or watch subject.

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### **Save The Date**

- September 25<sup>th</sup> 10:00 a.m.  
A Bird Cage Tower Clock – The Restoration  
of a Thwaites & Reed 1850 tower clock  
Gene Galbraith  
Location - Southwest Museum of  
Clocks & Watches  
Lockhart TX
- October 23<sup>rd</sup> 10:00 a.m.  
The “Key” to Discovery: a Long and  
Winding Road (Watch keys)  
Pat Holloway  
Holloways’
- November 13  
Annual Chapter 15 Potluck  
Holloways’

### **Something to think about...**

The theme of this year’s Houston Regional exhibit was clocks and watches obtained from NAWCC members who are no longer with us. Each piece was accompanied by a card that included a brief description of the watch, clock or tool, who the piece had come from and who had loaned the piece. Although the exhibit was not extensive, looking at each of the pieces and reading the cards made me think – how many of us have obtained a clock, watch, book or tool from an NAWCC member who is no longer with us? Perhaps even a member we never knew? How many of us joined because an NAWCC member shared their love of horology with us, and how many more have benefited from tips or information, renewed enthusiasm, encouragement or friendship from other members? All this musing leads me to ask...When was the last time you shared your love of horology with someone?