

The MAINSPRING

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

Plan to join in a celebration of
Fantastic Facts about Chapter 15

Saturday May 14th 10:00 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Coker United Methodist Church
San Antonio TX**

Schedule of events:

Mart

Program *A clock by any other name: a
guide to clock identification*
Jay Holloway

Lunch and Annual meeting

Workshop *Soldering essentials*
Ken Reindel

**Fun, Friends and Food (and a mart table!)
– all for one low price of \$15 per person**

Upcoming events

April program on Saturday, April 16th (please note the date change to avoid a conflict with the Easter holiday). Ken Reindel will be giving us a brief history of Westclox as well as a look at some of their clocks through the years. You won't want to miss this program!

On Saturday, May 14th, we'll have our annual meeting and one day. There will be no additional meeting in May.

June 8 – 12th will be the National Convention, and **Saturday, June 25th** will be our regular monthly program.

Plans are being made for a self-winding clock class, hopefully in July. Stay tuned for details.

March program – It's for free! A look at horological prizes and premiums

On March 26th, Pat Holloway presented a program on the use of clocks and watches as prizes and premiums. The program began with something we've all seen through the years, ads in a comic book that offered enticing prizes including a variety of watches. From there, we took a quick trip through Ursula Metsker's wonderful book, *Time: A Premium*, which also brought back many memories of saving labels or UPC symbols, which when combined with just a few dollars, would earn us a wonderful watch or clock.

After this brief look at the familiar, we traveled back in time to the late 1890s to find that many companies utilized horological items as sales incentives. Around the turn of the century, Waterbury and then Ingersoll both sold huge quantities of watches that were used as premiums. Many of the early offers didn't include the brand of the watch, merely referring to a man's or woman's gold or silver watch.

In addition to being used to increase product sales, we also learned that some clocks and watches were offered as incentives to increase circulation of magazines and newspapers. In fact, one member shared that he has a Gilbert mission style clock in his collection that had been used as a prize for selling subscriptions to the Chicago Tribune. (If anyone has any information on this offer or similar ones, please let Pat know and we can all work together to build an *It's for free – Part 2* where everyone can share what they've discovered.)

During the program, Pat shared catalogs, trade cards and various other ephemera used for some of the promotions. These included materials used to encourage purchases such as United Profit Sharing catalogs and Wrigley gum wrappers with the coupons printed on the back, while others were used as an incentive to people for selling the products, including Cloverine Salve, Domesart Candy, Autocrat Tea and Coffee and Lion Coffee. There was even an early S&H Green Stamp catalog with a couple of pages

Treasurer's Report

Chapter Account	\$7,541.09
Regional Account	\$4,363.60
Donation to Ch. 124 - Regional	(100.00)
	\$4,263.60

of horological items. Reading over the Larkin Company catalogs, letters and coupons revealed a two-pronged approach – to encourage both sales and purchases.

Seeing the pictured items gave us a little insight into the large number of tambour clocks and small Gilbert figural clocks we come across at the marts! And reading the 1909 catalog description of a cuckoo clock provided some humor, as it read, “A handsome, unique, fairly accurate wall timepiece...” Not exactly a ringing endorsement!

The program concluded with discussion around the U.S. economy at the time of these promotions, how much volume was generated by the offers and whether the reduction in these marketing methods might have impacted the clock industry. Almost everyone was able to share memories of cereal box offers, shopping at stores that offered premium stamps and pasting the stamps into to booklets. Thanks to Pat for this interesting program!

Restoration of a 1927 Style 1 Baby Ben Alarm Clock

Conclusion

By Ken Reindel

Last month, we finished restoring and polishing the case. This month, the story continues...

Turning now to the front bezel, we realize we have substantial repair work to do. First, there is a leg missing. Second, there is damage to the bezel itself. We start by detaching the riveted finials from the bezel. To do so, we use a Dremel tool and carefully grind away the rivet heads which makes quick work of the disassembly.



Not much repair work can be done to the front bezel until the nickel is removed. The nickel is a very tough barrier and impedes any smoothing or reshaping that must be done. Using our MetalX nickel stripper, the nickel is removed.



Why not use the pressure blasting approach? The blasting willpeen the thin brass which makes it very difficult to buff

later, also will anneal the surface and possibly distort it. Since there is no rust involved with a brass bezel, and the nickel is thin, the stripper works wonders. Shown here is the brass bezel after strip. You’d never know it ever had any nickel on it. Now we’re ready to roll.



Working with Style 1 Baby Ben bezels can be a challenge because they are in the 0.012” thickness range. Style 1 and 1a Big Ben front bezels are much more workable at 0.018” or more, especially the earlier steel Style 1 Big Ben bezels. For the Style 1 Baby Ben bezels, it is possible to be too aggressive in sanding out nicks and scratches from the soft brass and sand right

Chapter membership

If you’ve not yet renewed for 2011, please take a few minutes to complete and return the form below, or use the PayPal option found on the [Chapter 15 website](#).

Chapter 15 Membership Application
New Application / Renewal (circle one)
Membership Dues are \$10

You must be a current, paid NAWCC member to join a Chapter. You may be a member of more than one Chapter.

Please Print or Type

NAME: _____

SPOUSE’S NAME: _____

STREET: _____

CITY: _____

STATE/COUNTRY: _____ ZIP: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

NAWCC Member # _____

HOROLOGICAL INTERESTS: _____

____ Please send my Chapter 15 newsletter by email.

Make Check Payable To: Chapter 15, NAWCC
Enclose this application and check and send to:

Pat Holloway
1105 Lafayette Lane, Pflugerville, TX 78660

through it! We've learned the trick is to rely minimally if at all on the sandpaper when removing dings and dents. Most of the forming must be done without sanding. This means that some small imperfections may be left, but most of these can be softened significantly by buffing so that they are hardly noticeable. The layer of nickel plating doesn't do much to "fill in" any imperfections. In fact, it has a tendency to exaggerate them. The quality of the result is in the surface preparation as is often the case. In extreme circumstances, we have resorted to using the same method as described for the rear bell cover—solder paste and multiple layers of copper. Again this is much preferred over grinding away the defects with sandpaper or other means.

After all imperfections are corrected, the bezel is presented to the buffing machine. It is important to use a backer block with the thin bezels or the wheel will have a tendency to grab and throw the work piece. The photos show the result after buffing. For now the dark buffing compound is left on the surface as a preservative until just before we are ready to nickel plate it.



From a stock of previously prepared Baby Ben replacement legs we select a matching pair. We now machine the legs and



the top finial (loop) to accept a 2.0mm screw as shown here. All finials, setters and keys are then ultrasonically cleaned and

put into the tumbler for 24 hours. They come out all shiny and ready to plate as is shown. The ring is not shown because it was removed from the process. It responded well to tumbling and did not require plating. The front bezel and finials are then nickel plated. While that is happening, the alarm set paper is cleaned and reconditioned, or if it is illegible for whatever reason, a new one is fabricated. As soon as the plating is completed, the front bezel is reassembled. The results are shown below.

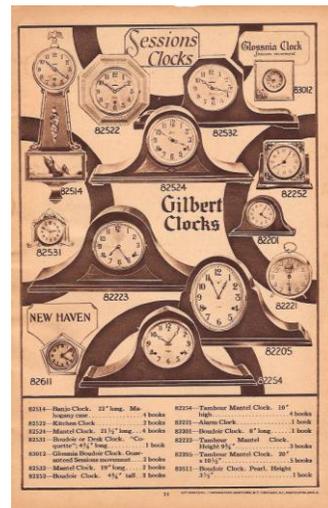
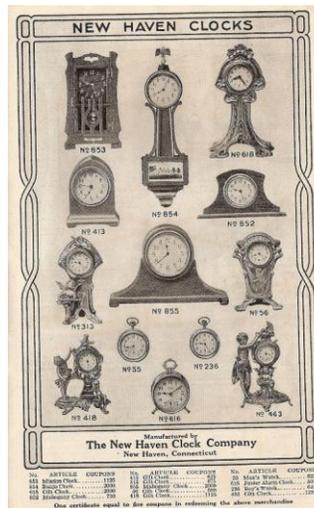


Following the assembly of the front bezel, the screws are reconditioned and plated. This is testimony to attention to detail. If the clock case is reconditioned and replated, the screws must also be reconditioned as well or they will look horribly out of place and detract from the quality of the restoration. Restoring the tiny screws can be time consuming since each one must be filed, reslotted, and finished as shown, then replated.

But the result will be well worth the effort.

It's for free!

"Premium" Clocks



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Date Change

Please notice the date changes of our April and May meetings. Due to conflicts with Easter and Memorial Day weekends, our monthly and annual meetings will be held earlier in the month. See additional details on page 1 and mark your calendars now!

Save the Date

- April 16, 10:00 a.m.
Westclox – their history and clocks
Ken Reindel
1105 Lafayette Ln, Pflugerville
- **May 14, 10:00 a.m. to 3 p.m.**
Annual meeting, one-day, workshop and program
Coker United Methodist Church
San Antonio
- June 8 – 12
National Convention
Overland Park, KS
- June 25, 10:00 a.m.
Chapter program
- May – Make plans now to attend our **annual meeting on Saturday, May 14th**. This year's event is shaping up to be even bigger than last year's with a mart, program and workshop you won't want to miss! All this on top of fantastic friends, fellowship and food! Watch for more details in the April and May issues of *The Mainspring*.
- June – Don't miss this year's National Convention June 8-12. What better chance to attend the National Convention and to meet up with your friends from across the nation. Take advantage of the proximity and the opportunity to drive to beautiful Overland Park Kansas – no more excuses about having to ship that clock home!