

# The MAINSPRING

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

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## Save these 2014 dates

### April 26

Chapter 15 Annual Meeting  
10 a.m.-noon  
Proper clock cleaning techniques  
Ken Reindel and Jay Holloway  
Pok-e-Jo's - 2121 Parmer, Austin

### May 17

Chapter 15 Program  
10 a.m. -noon  
Program - Dulen Lee  
Pok-e-Jo's - 2121 Parmer, Austin

### June 17 - 21

NAWCC 2014 National  
Milwaukee, WI

### June 28

Chapter 15 Program  
10 a.m. -noon  
Program  
Presenter  
Pok-e-Jo's - 2121 Parmer, Austin

## Current Board Members

President – Ken Reindel  
[President@nawcc-chapter15.org](mailto:President@nawcc-chapter15.org)

Vice-President – Jay Holloway  
[VicePresident@nawcc-chapter15.org](mailto:VicePresident@nawcc-chapter15.org)

Treasurer – Don White  
[Treasurer@nawcc-chapter15.org](mailto:Treasurer@nawcc-chapter15.org)

Secretary – Pat Holloway  
[Secretary@nawcc-chapter15.org](mailto:Secretary@nawcc-chapter15.org)

Director of Programs – Gary Sertich  
[Programs@nawcc-chapter15.org](mailto:Programs@nawcc-chapter15.org)

## President's Message

Since our last Newsletter, we've seen our way through Spring Break 2014 here in Austin, TX. It has been a relatively cool, calm March from a weather perspective. We had a little hail late last week, but it was of the pea-sized variety and didn't last long. Some areas to the north and west experienced worse. Hopefully we can continue to receive some moderate rainfall. We are still in a drought, officially. I looked today and Lake Travis is still down at 627ft. This is about 50ft below normal. It is hard to believe, unless you drive by and around it. I long to see the Lake back to its previous levels!

Those who know me recognize that I am an early-riser. From somewhere around 5:30am until it is time to leave for work (somewhere around 8am), I build, assemble, pack and ship products (No. 6 batteries, 1930/1935 Frequency converters, synchronizers, clock winders, etc.). Some don't realize that every product in my online catalog is built, tested and shipped by me. It can be really tiring at times. But, it's the only way to enable and ensure life for the many wonderful vintage electrics out there, which need these products to function. I consider it a labor of love, and hope it is a worthwhile contribution to the many who cherish their clocks.

There are many others here in Chapter 15 who do much more. Those who work hard to assemble, publish, and distribute our Monthly Mainspring Newsletter are an example. I know it has to be tiring and thankless at times. But we greatly appreciate it because without it, the heartbeat of our Chapter would grow faint.

During one of my early Sunday morning "production" sessions, I heard a segment on the radio related to what makes humankind a unique species. The program speaker argued that the single most important thing we do as a species is pass along our knowledge to the next generation. If you asked someone on the street, he/she might have other opinions. But, if you step back and think about it, this is indeed quite true. All of the modern advances, which have extended life expectancy, quality of life and health, communication, entertainment, understanding of the Earth itself and the Universe above us, and just about every other area have come about by successive advances brought on by passing down the baton. We do this largely by documenting or recording the knowledge, then by teaching and guiding our youth.

A few years ago we redefined the Mission for Chapter 15 to include this as our central theme. Passing the baton of our knowledge is one of the most important things we can do! We've taken on the task through our monthly programs. Sometimes it is a lot of work, and it can at times be tiring, just like getting up early and building products is tiring, or publishing our monthly Mainspring can be. But it is the only way we can assure that the knowledge continues. *(continued on page 2)*

**President’s message** – continued

Some will say, “Hey come on, Ken, it’s just clocks.” Well, perhaps it’s much more than that. For some, it is education that improves one’s ability to earn a living. For others, a clock represents a special meaning having been passed down from a loved one and therefore it’s not just a clock; it’s now a special memory. Or, it can stir an interest that propels someone to a career in an adjacent (related) area, resulting in breakthroughs elsewhere. It might be shortsighted to view the impact of our education as “just clocks.”

Given the importance of it, we strive to provide the VERY BEST programs we can. Some of them are the result of decades of experience. That is not easy to find, and the knowledge is not easily gained. But we are open and generous with it because, after all, that’s part of what makes us human, and we want others to benefit from our learning and experience.

If you have a unique body of knowledge or experience and wish to share it, give us a shout. We would be happy to have you speak or, if you prefer, talk to one of us in Chapter 15 and we will be happy to present something for you from the knowledge you share. But for goodness sakes, bring it out into the open so others can learn from you, too. And NEVER underestimate what you have learned or its potential value to others.

This month we will hold our Annual Meeting at Poke Jo’s restaurant on Parmer Rd. in north Austin. We will be starting at 10:00 am. All in attendance are welcome to join us for lunch afterwards. We will be reviewing our Officer Elections (as we do every year), which will hopefully enable more participation for those wishing to serve as Directors in Chapter 15.

**Life IS Fair!**

This month we move from an Exposition in 1901 Buffalo NY, to 1904 St. Louis MO where the 1904 Olympics and the Louisiana Purchase Exposition were held. During the intervening years, Ingersoll continued to expand their market, moving from boasting of a London contract for one million watches in 1901 to a contract for two million watches in 1903.

**1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition or St. Louis World’s Fair**

The dollar watch industry continued to thrive between 1901 and 1904, with the Ingersoll brothers continuing to build on their “Watch that made the dollar famous.” Two page ads in the form of an article appeared in many publications of the time. These articles announce the following to the world: “At the great St. Louis Fair, which enshrines the glory of the world-advance, the official time is recorded by the Ingersoll mammoth watches – large models of the famous Ingersoll

At the Annual Meeting, we will also be reviewing our Chapter progress for the year. We will then be presenting an interesting program on cleaning, maintaining, and oiling clocks. Again, this one will be a confluence of decades of trial and error, experience and the school of hard knocks. Hopefully you can join us and pick up a few tips!

We will share more ideas at our Annual Meeting. We hope to see you there.

Treasurer’s Report	
<b>Chapter Account</b>	<b>\$7,535.99</b>
<b>Inc:</b> Dues renewals net of PayPal feeds	118.74
<b>Exp:</b> Newsletter	-10.46
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>\$7,644.27</b>
<b>Regional Account</b>	<b>\$3,763.60</b>
<b>Exp:</b> No change	
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>\$3,763.60</b>

**March program**

Ken mentioned in his message that we are committed to sharing our experience and knowledge, and our March program was certainly proof of that!

Ken’s presentation was built on many years of experimentation with a wide variety of clock oils. The program began with a brief explanation of the history, nature and chemistry of oils. This groundwork was very helpful as he then explained the pros and cons and various oils, including his experiences and observations when clocks would come back in for service years later. The program concluded with a demonstration of oil dripping, which was definitely more interesting than watching paint dry! Just ask anyone who was there.



(continued on page 4)

## An Inside Look

Last month we promised an “inside look” at one of our recent Spot-a-clocks, and thanks to Steven Draher, a transplanted Chapter 15 member, here’s a behind the scenes tour of the Wichita, Kansas, Sedgwick County Museum tower clock.

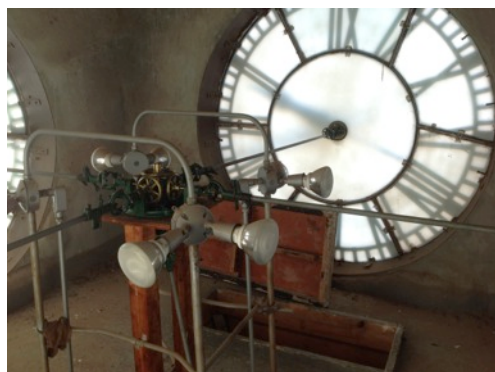
### *Wichita Sedgwick County Historical Museum Tower Clock*

In 2007 my job transferred me from San Antonio Texas to Wichita Kansas. As an active member of Chapter 15 of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors I started looking for the closest chapter to Wichita. I was in luck to find Chapter 63 based right here in town. I showed up to my first meeting and introduced myself as a clock guy. There tends to be two camps in the NAWCC, the “Clock people” and the “Watch people”. Chapter 63 is a nice mix of watch and clock interested members.

Back before I had moved, Chapter 15 was maintaining the tower clock in Lockhart TX. I was lucky enough to be part of the cleaning crew to prep the Lockhart tower clock for a public showing. The giant bell, the biggest clock movement I have ever seen and the rustic climb to the top captured my curiosity. So when my new NAWCC friends in Wichita asked for volunteers to maintain the local tower clock my hand jumped into the air. I was on the clock maintenance team instantly. John Richardson had been maintaining the clock for the last 25 years and he was looking for a new crew. We were going to get trained in oiling, cleaning and maintaining the clock. The clock was being oiled every 6 months and the hands every 3 months. The movement was moved down to the bottom of the tower after a lightning strike caused the big fire in 1981. The weights were removed and an electric motor now automatically winds the clock. The Seth Thomas tower movement has been beautifully restored.



I passed the clock maintenance training thanks to the patience of John Richardson. Poor John happened to be behind me when I gave in to the urge to the ring the bell and sing the Anita Ward song “Ring my Bell”. We got past that and the torch of tower clock maintenance was passed to me, and the rest of our chapter.



While I was at the NAWCC national convention in Kansas City I attended the Tower Clock chapter meeting being held that week. They are my contacts for any repairs that are beyond my skill set for the big clock. The only real issue we have had was a few years ago the counter weight on one hand on the north-facing dial came loose. The dial panes were removed to access the hand for repair and reinstall. The bell strike is disabled and is now broadcast on loud speakers electronically. The bell can still be rung by hand with the cable running down to the bottom of the tower.

While outside the museum during a time change I have had people tell me the time wasn’t correct. With a smile I tell them I will take care of that for them. The old wooden stair case spirals up the walls of the tower. The view up or down from the stairs can be a little disorienting so I just stay close to the wall and watch my step. The dial drive shaft routes up through gimbals and a gearbox with 4 output shafts to the dials. Observation doors at the top of the bell tower provide a wonderful view of Wichita. John used to take a picture of the city from the tower every time he went up there. I would love to find out where 30 years of aerial pictures taken from the tower are today. We will be up in the tower soon for time change and clock oiling. The Wichita City museum has more very nice clocks in their exhibits that the public gets to see but the tower clock is my favorite.



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## Life Is Fair!

(continued from page 2)

dollar watch – installed at the request of the Exposition management, and striking tribute to American ingenuity and democracy, and to what might be termed our national watch.” Not only had their watches made the dollar famous, they were now being touted as the national watch.

The 1904 ad from an Ingersoll sales brochure pictured on page 2 lists the models that Ingersoll had created with souvenir dials and cases to commemorate the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. Unlike the 1901 watches that all had the same souvenir dial, the 1904 watches were offered with two different dials: the Cascades pictured in the ad, or a flag pictured below. And two different backs: Jefferson-Napoleon pictured in the ad and the Cascades pictured below. It appears that they recognized that women visitors might also like a souvenir watch, as they added a ladies’ 6-size watch to the 1904 lineup. Once again, they offered an option with the less expensive, back-wind Yankee movement.

Things had certainly progressed from the Columbian Exposition where they had one kiosk to be used for display only, to Buffalo where their watches were sold at twenty booths, to St. Louis with a double-space display, huge signs and thirty selling booths around the grounds. While the ad above lists prices from \$9.00 a dozen to \$19.20 a dozen *to the trade*, the two page ad states that the watches sell at \$1.00 for the key wind models, \$1.50 for stem-wind-and-set models, and \$2.00 for an especially elaborately finished one. And as in 1901, if you weren’t able to attend the Fair, these souvenirs could be ordered directly from Robt. H. Ingersoll & Brother’s New York office.

Next month, a look at the San Francisco 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition where souvenir watches were big business. In fact, they were so big that they warranted an entire building known as the Watch Palace!

