

# The MAIN SPRING

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

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## Save these 2017 dates

### February 12<sup>th</sup>

6:00 p.m. – NAWCC Webinar  
*Renaissance Man: The Extraordinary Life and Times of Benjamin Banneker*  
Clayton Tongate

### February 18<sup>th</sup>

10 a.m. – noon: Pok-e-Jo's on Parmer  
Program – Jay Holloway

### March 18<sup>th</sup>

10 a.m. – noon: Pok-e-Jo's on Parmer  
Program – Jason Soule

### March 19<sup>th</sup>

6:00 p.m. – NAWCC Webinar

### April 1<sup>st</sup>

9 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
Staking and Jewelling workshop  
Windermere Clubhouse  
Pflugerville TX 78660

### April 8<sup>th</sup>

10 a.m. – noon: Pok-e-Jo's on Parmer  
Program – Steve Tibbitts

### April 23<sup>rd</sup>

6:00 p.m. – NAWCC Webinar

## Current Board Members

President – Jay Holloway  
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Vice-President – Ken Reindel  
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Treasurer – Don White  
[Treasurer@nawcc-chapter15.org](mailto:Treasurer@nawcc-chapter15.org)

Secretary – Pat Holloway  
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Director of Programs – Gary Sertich  
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## President's Message

Dear Members and Friends of Chapter 15,

February is here. The month filled with hearts and candy as we celebrate Valentine's Day. Our monthly meeting falls on the same week as Valentine's Day. We hope everyone has a great week and we finish it with a fun and informative program.

As noted, Chapter 15 was busy in January with the 400-day clock class, two of your Chapter officers leading a case refinishing class for Chapter 21 in Denver and your Chapter Secretary leading a reverse glass painting class for Chapter 124 in Grapevine TX. We even found time to have our monthly meeting lead by Pat Holloway on the use and history of the dropping of the time ball that we associate with New Years.

We have set two more dates for training this year in April and May. On April 1st we will have a training class to learn the proper use of staking tools and jewels. The jewels lean toward the watch maker and the staking tool program works for clock and watch repair. Next we follow on May 6th with a clock case refinishing class. Both classes will be held at the Windermere Clubhouse in Pflugerville TX. Please put the dates on your calendar and sign up to gain a better understanding on how your clock case was made and the ways to maintain it in good condition.

We want to thank everyone who has already renewed their membership. If you have not yet renewed, please contact Pat Holloway to update you on our records.

Finally, we had planned on selling one of our donated clocks this month but we had a friend of the club who made our club an offer we could not refuse – which is good. And we still have another clock to sell. We will bring the second clock to the meeting for us to determine how to move forward in selling it.

Just remember that February 18th is our next meeting and we will see you there.

Jay

**April 8, 2017**

**Chapter 15 Annual Meeting and Officer Elections**

**Program: Black Forest Clocks**

**Presenter: Steve Tibbitts**

*If you are interested in running for one of the Chapter positions, please contact any of the current officers.*

## Sharing your skills

As Jay mentioned in the President’s Message, several Chapter 15 members were involved in workshops, both locally and for other Chapters, during January. Chapter 15 has a long history of sharing knowledge and skills through programs and workshops as evidenced in these activities. We tend to take these opportunities for granted, but each of the first two workshops had attendees from out of state. Neither had a nearby Chapter that offers workshops.

There are already two additional workshops scheduled for the first half of the year: April 1<sup>st</sup> will be jewellery and staking and May 6<sup>th</sup> will be case refinishing. Who knows, perhaps the May class will provide the opportunity – or incentive – to finish a restoration project to enter in this year’s National Craft Contest?

### January 7 – 400-Day Clock workshop

Chapter 15 got an early start in 2017 with a one-day, 400-day clock workshop on January 7. This was a joint effort with the Capitol Area Watchmakers and Clockmakers Guild. Despite a frigid start to the day, there was a packed house with about 20 attendees. Fortunately, there were three instructors, and others who pitched in as needed, to ensure that everyone received the necessary support.

Attendees ranged from experienced clock and watchmakers to those with minimal repair experience, including many who had very little exposure to 400-day clocks. One attendee even traveled from North Carolina to take advantage of this workshop! The class was a great opportunity for everyone, regardless of their experience level, who had a 400-day clock that needed attention. In addition to the wonderful learning opportunity, there was plenty of camaraderie and shared experiences.



### January 14 – Case refinishing workshop - Colorado

The sharing continued on January 14<sup>th</sup>, with Ken Reindel and Jay Holloway leading a one-day case refinishing workshop in Colorado. Like the 400-day workshop, there was an attendee who traveled from out of state to attend the class!

### January 28 – Reverse glass painting workshop - Grapevine

After our Chapter meeting on January 21<sup>st</sup>, we wrapped up a month of sharing with Pat Holloway leading a two-day reverse glass painting class in Grapevine for seven students. Nine were registered, but two were unable to attend due to illness. Everyone seemed to enjoy the class and several discovered some hidden artistic talents.



Ken and Jay at the Colorado workshop.



Two of the finished tablets from the Grapevine workshop.



Treasurer's Report	
<b>Chapter Account</b>	<b>\$7,956.58</b>
<b>Inc</b> Dues and clock sale (\$500)	605.00
<b>Exp</b> Newsletter and insurance (\$500)	-507.60
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>\$8,053.98</b>
Regional Account	<b>\$3,213.60</b>
<b>Exp</b> Donation to 2017 Nat'l door prizes	-100.00
	<b>\$3,113.60</b>

## Upcoming Events

### February 12<sup>th</sup> – NAWCC webinar – 6 p.m.

This month's webinar will be on "The Extraordinary Life of Benjamin Banneker." Banneker was an early American clockmaker, as well as a man of science who created an almanac and assisted with surveying some of the surrounding area. You may sign up for upcoming webinars online at:

<http://net.nawcc.org/NAWCC/Events/NAWCC%20Webinars.aspx>

### February 18<sup>th</sup> – Chapter 15 Program

Jay Holloway will give a presentation on French horology. He will discuss the advances in French clock and watchmaking and their influence on horology around the world.

### March 18<sup>th</sup> – Chapter 15 Program

Jason Soule will be our presenter. Watch next month's newsletter for more information on his presentation.

### March 19<sup>th</sup> – NAWCC webinar – 6 p.m.

The presenter will be Bob Frishman.

### April 1<sup>st</sup> – Workshop – 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Joint CAWCG and Chapter 15 workshop. This class will cover jewellery and staking. It will be flexible so individuals can spend the entire time on either topic if desired. Location is the Windermere Clubhouse located 16800 Gower in Pflugerville.

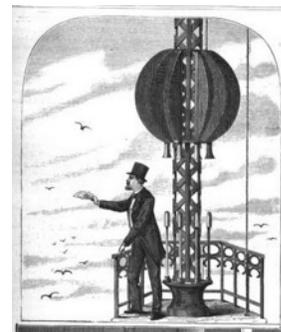
## January Program Recap

In keeping with New Year traditions, Pat Holloway kicked off 2017 with a program called "**Who Dropped the Ball? The History of Time Balls in America.**" The program began with a short video on the dropping of the Times Square ball to welcome the new year. This familiar tradition began December 31, 1907 to welcome 1908, and has become so ingrained in our thinking, that most people erroneously believe that the time is marked when the time ball reaches the bottom of the pole rather than when the drop begins.

The primary function of time balls is to enable navigators aboard ships offshore to set their chronometers without bringing them ashore. The first time ball in America was installed in 1845 at the Naval Observatory in Foggy Bottom (D.C.) The observatory and time ball were moved in 1893 and can still be seen on Observatory Hill in D.C.

From the east coast, to the west, Pat then discussed two early chronometer makers in San Francisco who founded observatories and time balls to offer accurate time service to ships in the area. One of the time balls had quite a journey, moving from a couple of early locations to Pioneer Park (location of Coit Tower), to the Ferry Building then to the top of the Fairmont Hotel, where it was dropped until 1937. The abandoned ball was discovered during renovations, and ended up on board the ship *Balclutha* before finally landing at the current location in "The Waterfront" exhibit at the Maritime Museum.

Time ball signals originally came from nearby observatories, but with the expansion of telegraph lines and usage, signals were soon sent by telegraph. In 1878, a time ball was mounted on the Western Union building in New York. This ball was designed by George Phelps, who worked for Western Union. This engraving and an extensive article on the time ball appeared in *Scientific American*.



Despite the primary function being to set chronometers, time balls were installed in cities all across America, some apparently regardless of proximity to an ocean. One example was a time ball on the campus of Doane College in Crete, Nebraska, 500 miles from any large body of water. In these cases, the time ball served as an accurate form of public time, with people setting their watches and clocks by its drop each day at noon.

Although the Times Square New Year's time ball tradition is the best known today, it was not the first time ball dropped to welcome the new year. As early as 1902, the Washington time ball was illuminated by a scarlet, electric light as it was dropped at midnight. In 1903, all of the government hydrographic office time balls were dropped at midnight decorated with flags and electric lights. This tradition continued, but no other celebration has been as well-attended, nor continued for as long as the Times Square event.

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## Spot a clock



This time ball was spotted by Pat and Jay Holloway at the National Watch & Clock Museum in Columbia PA. This type of time balls was found in jewelers' windows as well as at depots. Time was transmitted over the telegraph lines, and the ball dropped at noon (1 p.m. in England), just as the more visible time balls atop tall buildings.



*Pictures left and below are from the NAWCC Museum collection search.*

