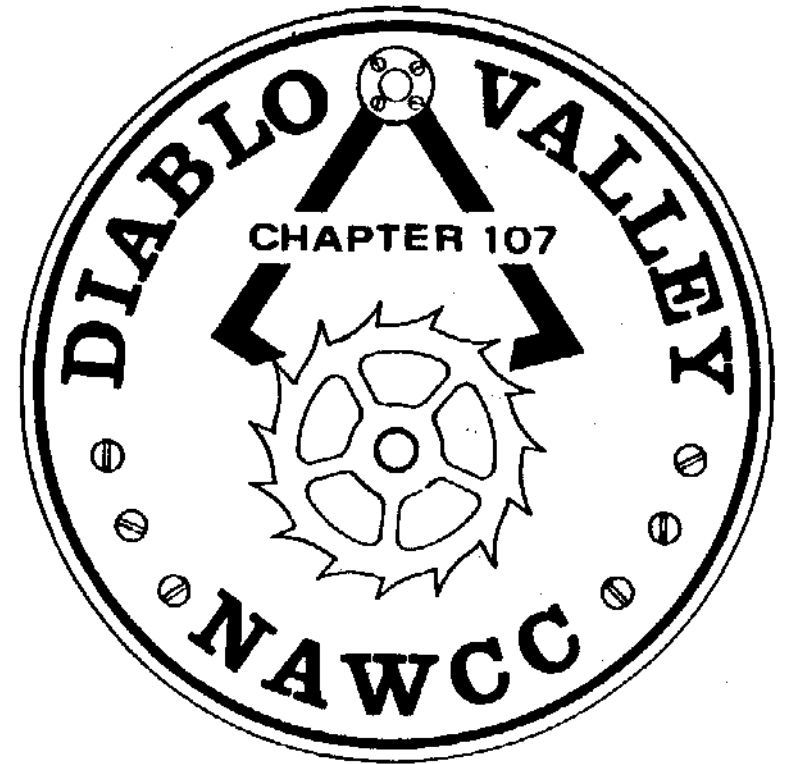


# BULLETIN



August 2008  
Volume 178

# DIABLO VALLEY

## Chapter 107

National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors

Chapter Established March 5, 1978

**"Accent on Education"**

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# Meeting Notice

## Annual Picnic and White Elephant Auction

August 10

Kochmann Home

(See page 15 for directions.)



Gather about noon. Barbeque will be ready about 1:00. Auction after lunch.

### Picnic



- The chapter will provide the meat, buns, soft-drinks, plates, cups, utensils, and so forth.
- Please bring one of the following based on the first letter of your surname:



A-E	Chips/dips/cut fruit
F-M	Dessert
N	Beans
O-Z	Salad or veggies

- It would help if a few people brought tables and chairs. We need tables for both the buffet and dining.



### White Elephant Auction



This is your opportunity to get rid of your horological excess and acquire lots of new treasures .  
No item is too humble for this grand affair.  
Contribute to the fun by participating  
All funds go to support the chapter.

## *President's Message*

Sorry I missed the June meeting. My wife and I had an opportunity to visit Branson, MO. While there we were able to spend one day at The National Meeting of the NAWCC. This was a real treat for me as it was my first "National." I would recommend it to anyone.

Thanks to Ron Bechler for his presentation on his "Introduction to Lathe Work." Ron has been willing to help with a presentation whenever asked, and it's very much appreciated.

John Stohr and I, along with Tom Kochmann, made a trip to Tom's Mother's home, to see where the annual picnic will be held. We met with the hostess, Ingrid Kochmann and her sister, Gisela. They gave us a "cook's" tour of her home, as well as the workshop and library of her late husband, Karl, who most of you know from the many books he wrote on clocks (especially cuckoos) and their repair.

As I understand, Ingrid, in the beginning, wasn't too keen on the picnic "idea," but Tom, with his silver tongue, convinced her it was a good plan and that the Chapter would be forever grateful – and we are.

So, remember to bring those unwanted treasures for the auction, and we will see you at the picnic.

*Dean*



Annunciation automaton from 19<sup>th</sup> century clock. Gabriel appears 10 minutes before the hour and goes away at the hour.

## *Editor's Page*

I am looking forward to the picnic and auction. Thanks to the Kochmann's for hosting it. I hope the instructions on page 15 are correct. It is always a good idea to check a map.

I recently visited the Afghanistan exhibit at the National Art Gallery in Washington. The only things horological were two ancient stone sundials, but they give me an excuse to recommend this extraordinary exhibit featuring treasures spanning two and a half millennia of Afghan history that were hidden from the Taliban to prevent their destruction. The exhibit will be coming to San Francisco soon.

As mentioned in my previous column, I plan to run a series of articles on items in the Chapter libraries. The article on F. J. Britten is the first. I hope you find it interesting. One of the things I enjoy most about writing for the *Bulletin* is that I never know what direction researching a subject will take. Often it is far from the original subject, and when I am done, I may not remember what lead me down particular paths. Looking for information on Britten's life on the web lead me first to two of his books that are available for downloading. Then a search of old NAWCC bulletins lead me to the poem on page 7 (NAWCC Bulletin 149). In the same issue I came across an article containing a list of patents issued to Rhode Island horologists. There I noticed several early patents dealing with electrical control of clocks that were assigned to the Synchronous Time Co. I then looked up the patents, which lead to a question in *Wait Don't Tell Me*. After all this, I still found almost nothing on the life of Britten. I could not even find his birth year or anything about his training. From his position with the British Horological Institute and his writings, it is obvious that he was well versed in historical and technical horology. Other than the patent assignments, I found nothing on the Synchronous Clock Co. If anyone can find information about either of these topics, I would greatly appreciate the reference.

*Price*

## FROM THE LIBRARY

Occasionally an author will produce a book that is so seminal to the field that it will not only continue to be printed long after his death, but it will actually be updated and remain the standard reference work. Frederick James Britten was the author of two such works.

*Old Clocks and Watches and Their Makers*, originally published in 1894 as *Former Clock and Watchmakers and their Work*, is composed of two major sections plus a glossary and hallmark information. One section traces the development of clocks over time. The other is a compilation of makers. There have been nine editions of this work with different people taking on the task of revising and expanding it. The most recent edition (1982) runs 700 pages and includes information on 25,000 makers who worked prior to 1875. This edition is available in the Chapter library. The 7<sup>th</sup> edition, which is probably the most commonly seen, covers makers active prior to 1830. It is considerably more compact (500 pages and on thinner paper). G. H. Baille one of the editors of the seventh edition published his own listing of 35,000 makers under the title *Watchmakers and Clockmakers of the World*. In 1976 Brian Loomes published a second volume of *Watchmakers and Clockmakers of the World* with an additional 35,000 entries. Both volumes are in the Chapter library. As Loomes points out in his introduction, even at 70,000 entries he could not consider these works to be comprehensive. (Those specifically interested in American clockmakers may want to refer to *The American Clock* by Distin and Bishop.)

Britten's other great work was *Watch and Clock Maker's Handbook Dictionary and Guide* first published in 1878. It has been through several major revisions and 16 editions. The most recent edition is from 1978 (460 pages). It is well organized and includes over 700 well drawn illustrations. While organized alphabetically like any dictionary, the articles are much more than definitions. For example, the entry for chronometer runs for over four pages. Unfortunately this book is not in the Chapter library. Copies are readily available through the internet. As with Britten's

other book, multiple editions are available including reprints. One looking to purchase a copy should pay attention to which edition is being offered. (I have both the 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> editions. They are very different. *ed.*)

In addition to his more famous books, Britten wrote on other topics including sundials and adjusting watches. His *On the Springing and Adjusting of Watches* and two early editions of the *Watch and Clock Maker's Handbook Dictionary and Guide* can be downloaded from the web at no cost.

Surprisingly there is little information available on Britten's life. He was the secretary of the British Horological Institute for over 30 years and died in 1913. If anyone has more information on his life, please, share it with the Chapter. The fact that the second edition of *Old Clocks and Watches and Their Makers* was reviewed in the New York Times in 1904 implies he was a person of some note. (The review is available online.)

The following poem appears in NAWCC Bulletin #149 (December 1970). It appears to have come from *Former Clock and Watchmakers and their Work*. It would be interesting to find a copy of the book to learn more about the poem and its context.

### WHAT WE DID TO THE CLOCK

(From F. J. Britten — 1894)

These lines will clearly show to you  
The many things we had to do  
To make the case look nice and bright,  
And cause the works to go aright.  
First we had to mend the case,  
Lacquer all the brass and face,  
Then fit a looking glass to top  
And fix it so's it shouldn't drop.  
A new plate glass the face door had,  
Because the old one looked so bad:  
Also to top two new side glasses  
And to the columns two new brasses.  
We had the case all nicely polish'd  
When the dirt had been abolish'd  
And then we had the hands to blue,  
Which left us but the works to do.  
We had to separate each piece,  
And then remove the dirty grease.

Likewise polish off the rust  
And then repair the holes we must.  
The pallets then we did replace  
The old ones would our shop disgrace:  
We made it strike the half hour, too  
A thing it never used to do.  
We fitted two new lines of gut,  
Then some clock oil had to put:  
Next we made it go to time  
Then sat down and wrote this rhyme.

Moral

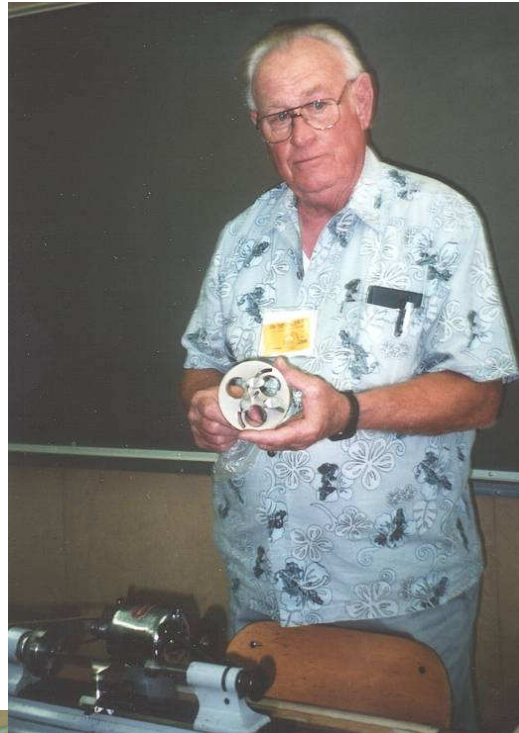
Now if you've one  
That you'd like done  
Don't hesitate, or doubt it:  
But send it down to Mr. Cave  
Which is the proper way to save  
All further care about it.



Lucy Hart

# June 2008 Meeting

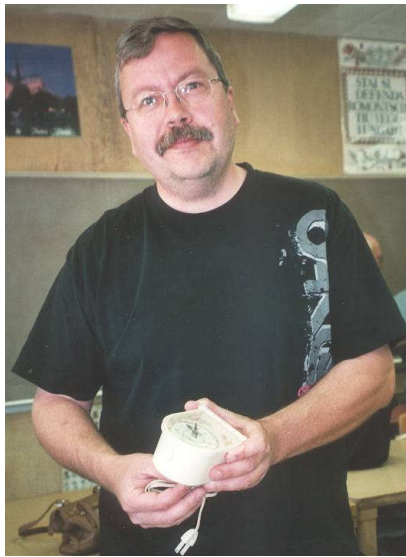
Photos by Sophia Gardner



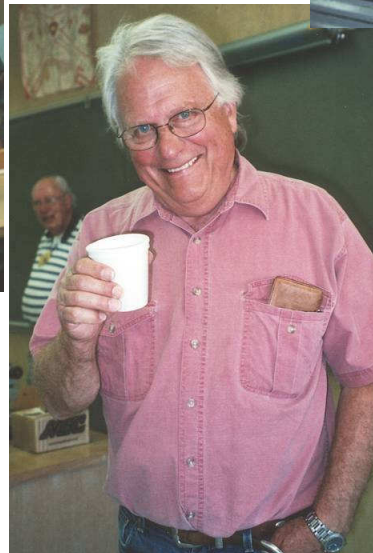
Ron Bechler (speaker)



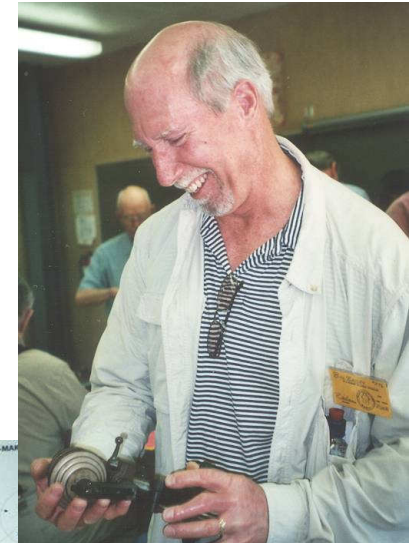
Tosh Yumae & Mike Kookan



Dan Edeen (above) & Dave Prinz (right)  
New Members



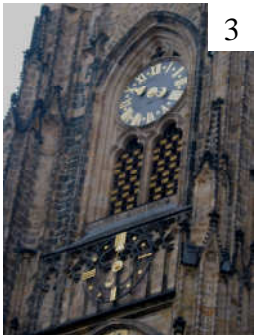
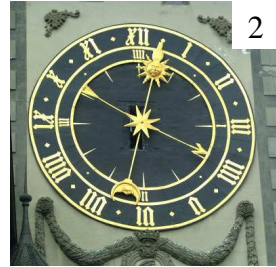
Tom Kochmann (left) with and Cindy & Nile Godfrey



Bill Bailey

## FAMOUS FACES

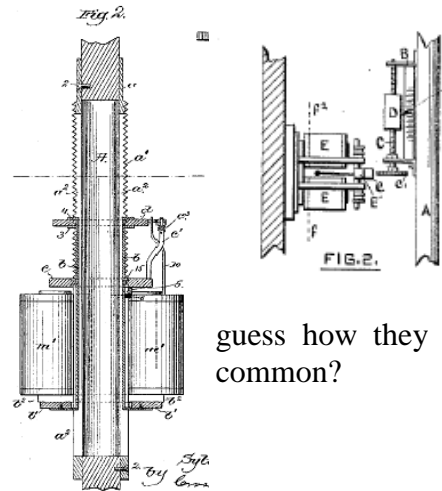
The ten clocks pictured below are world famous attractions in five European cities (two per city). Can you place each clock in its home city? Where can they be found within the cities? Each of these would be a good subject for a *Bulletin* article. Answers on page 13.



## Wait. Don't Tell Me!

What is an analemmatic sundial?

The clock at the right has two dials. Each has one hand. The upper dial is numbered 1 - 12. The lower is numbered I - III with two marks between the numbers. What is the reason for having two dials?

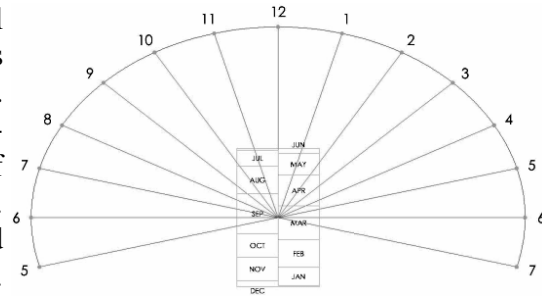


The drawings are from two 1886 patents dealing with remote electrical regulation of a pendulum. Can you guess how they operate and what they have in common?

The next full moon will be on August 17. How many years will it be before the full moon again occurs on this date? This cycle was discovered in 433 B.C. by the Greek astronomer Meton for whom it is named. The numbers of the years within the cycle are known as the *Golden Numbers* because the Greeks gilded them in a stone carving listing the dates the lunations (lunar cycles).

## OK, Now Tell Me.

An analemmatic sundial consists of hour points laid out on an ellipse. The gnomon is perpendicular to the plane of the dial and moveable. Its position is adjusted for the time of the year. Often the observer is used as the gnomon. By standing on the spot corresponding to the date, the observer's shadow points to the time.



The upper dial indicates the hours (hour hand) The lower one indicates the minutes (minute hand). The numbers I - III mark the quarter hours. The clock is identified on the next page.

The devices illustrated raise and lower weights on a pendulum to correct its rate. The one on the left, patent #337385, could be used to regulate a master clock. Electromagnets are used to turn a screw that adjusts the height of the weight. The other device, patent #337416, is to adjust the rate of a slave pendulum to that of the master clock. At intervals determined by the master clock, an arm is positioned so that depending on where the slave pendulum is in its period, it will turn a wheel that raises or lowers a small weight on the slave pendulum rod. In some ways, the second device anticipated the work of Shortt by nearly 40 years. Both of these patents and several others from that same year were assigned to the Synchronous Time Co., which curiously is listed in the patent information as being in Portland ME and Boston, MA. (Your editor was unable to find any information on this company. If you have heard of it, please, share what you know. ) The complete patents can be viewed at the Patent Office web site ([www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov)).

The Metonic Cycle is 19 years. The full moon will next occur on August 17 in 2027.

## MEMBER IN THE NEWS



Nile Godfrey with Sue, a fledgling hawk he rescued.

Photo - Doug Jorgensen

From *The Independent*  
June 12, 2008

## FAMOUS FACES ANSWERS

1) Westminster Abbey, London; 2) Clock Tower, Bern; 3) St. Vitus Cathedral, Prague; 4) St. Mark's Square, Venice; 5) St. Paul's Cathedral, London; 6) Anker Clock, Vienna; 7) Astronomical Clock, Prague; 8) Doge's Palace, Venice; 9) Clock Tower, Bern; 10) Schönbrunn Palace, Vienna.

## CHAPTER LIBRARIES

**BOOK:** The Chapter book library is located at **Classical Clocks and Antiques**, 1086 E. Stanley Blvd., Livermore. Contact **Nile Godfrey** (925-449-2127) for more information.

**VIDEO:** Chapters 107 and 5 share a DVD video library. Contact **Price Russ** (925-937-9231) for information.

**TOOL:** Contact **Walt Hubrig** (925-685-0260) or **Price Russ** (925-937-9231) for information on the tools and parts available for use by Chapter members.

There is no cost to borrow items from these collections.

## NOTICES FROM MEMBERS

(The Bulletin accepts notices from Chapter members for all items/subjects horological - wanted, for sale, giveaway, services, and so forth. There is no charge. All you have to do is supply copy to the editor.)

**CHAPTER #107 MEETINGS**

**Second Sunday of the Even Numbered Months**

Mart: 11:30AM  
 Chapter: 12:30PM  
 Board: after the Chapter Meeting

**Future Meeting Dates**

October 12, 2008	April 12, 2009
December 14, 2008	June 14, 2009
February 8, 2009	August 9, 2009

We want to keep our members coming to the chapter meetings on a regular basis. If you have problems with transportation to and from meetings, let a director or officer know so we can help you find a carpool.

**Only NAWCC members can participate (buy or sell) in our Mart. Be prepared to show your current membership card.**

Other NAWCC Chapter Meetings in Northern California		
Chapter	Meeting Address	Meetings
<b>De Anza #94</b>	Odd Fellows Lodge 20589 Homestead Rd Cupertino, CA	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday even months (except April)
<b>Monterey Bay #70</b>	Live Oak Grange Hall 1900 17th Ave Santa Cruz, CA	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday odd months
<b>Sacramento #71</b>	Sacramento Garden Center 3330 McKinley Blvd. Sacramento, CA	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday odd months
<b>San Francisco #5</b>	Boys and Girls Club 401 Marina Blvd. San Leandro, CA	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday odd months

**Directions to the Picnic**

***Ingrid and Gisela Kochmann***  
***4631 Stillwater Court***  
***Concord***  
***925-687-8252***

4631 is further down the street than shown by the online mapping services. Look for the palm tree. To alleviate congestion, you are encouraged to drop off bulky items and then park in the lot at the school on Thornwood Dr.

A. If coming from 680, take Treat Blvd. east to Clayton Road (about 4.8 miles). Turn right on Clayton Rd. and then left (second left) onto Thornwood Dr. Take Thornwood to Stillwater Ct. and turn right (fifth right).

B. If coming south on 242, take Concord Ave. east to Clayton Road. Go left on Clayton Rd. Continue two blocks past the intersection with Treat Blvd. and turn left onto Thornwood Dr. Take Thornwood to Stillwater Ct. and turn right (fifth right).

C. If coming from Ygnacio Valley Rd., take Cowell Rd. to Treat Blvd. and follow instruction "A".

D. If coming from the Antioch/Pittsburg area take Bailey Rd south to Springwood Way (second right past Concord Blvd.) Turn right onto Springwood and right on Thornwood Dr. (second right). Proceed one block then turn right on Stillwater Ct.



**Closing Thought**

**The repairman will never have seen a model quite like yours before.**

**Contributed by Joe Kanter**