



British Horology Times

NAWCC CHAPTER 159

News FROM CHAPTER 159

Our membership stands at 152. That's down a little, but our treasury is in good shape and we are still in a solid position to deliver three very fine newsletters each year to our members.

By the time you read this our Florida meeting will be history. Robert Olson was scheduled to discuss fusee watches. We will have two more meetings this year: at the southern Ohio regional Roger Gendron will share his experiments with a verge and crown wheel escapement with a bob pendulum, and at the national convention in Anaheim CA our formal annual meeting will be held. I encourage all members to attend the convention. During my term as president over the next three years, I would like to see two improvements to our chapter and I'd like to hear your opinions and find volunteers. First I'd like to see our chapter create and maintain an Internet web site. I envision a site that provides contact information for getting in touch with officers and other interested members,

and some general information about our chapter and British horology. I also envision placing excerpts from our newsletters there. We might even consider a mart of some sort. The second addition I'd like to see is a database of our members, complete with interests and contact information so that members can connect to share their hobby and help out one another. This database could be part of our web site or handled separately.

Let me know what you think about these ideas and whether you would care to volunteer to make these happen.

Finally, our chapter is sponsoring a 2-week tour of stately homes in England. It will focus on National Trust homes filled with clocks and watches, as well as museums and other places of interest to us. The homes also feature some magnificent gardens. We still have openings available but we leave mid-May so if you are interested or want more information and an itinerary please call me as

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EDITOR'S CORNER

With sadness, Doug Cowan sends the following obituary:

Sonya Spittler, wife of Tom Spittler, passed away on December 23, 2001. She was instrumental in forming the British Horology Chapter and was chapter historian, hospitality leader at meetings and much more. She was co-author of the recent book *American Clockmakers and Watchmakers*. Her warm, energetic personality and her willingness to make things better no matter what the challenge were hallmarks of hers. Sonya is greatly mourned by all who knew her. Tom asks donations to the NAWCC library fund in memorium.

-Doug Cowan

Our sympathy goes out to Tom. Sonya Spittler was a happy and gracious lady. We will not be seeing her any more.

-Paul Odendahl

HENRY - Part 4

Abridged from *The First Henry*, copyright © by The Royal Archivists. Used with permission.

Paul Odendahl (LA) spins a tale of 17th century Henry's time in the New Model Army in Scotland and how he later made new friends in England, nourishing his interest in clockmaking. He set his sights on an apprenticeship under Edward East but found that achieving that goal was rough going. On 16 April 1654, Henry made a final sales pitch to Edward East. Would it work?

One month went by since Henry's job application with Mr East. Then another month. Henry was now 22 years of age. After the third month he began to wonder if he should formulate a new plan. He did not suffer from worry because work at the forge was going at full pitch and he had been allowed to travel to Buckinghamshire with Mr Tompion in connection with some new work that had developed there. In addition to this Henry was finding it pleasant to spend some time with young Margaret whom, he had to confess to himself, was blooming into a very pretty girl.

Then on 16 August 1654, four months to the day from the time of Henry's last talk with Mr East, the Master showed up in Ickwell Green. This time he had come, not to see Mr Tompion, but to accept Henry as apprentice. Mr East had not been idle all this time. He had accumulated a list of clients who would be delighted to have their clocks *kept* and he told Henry that he was to be the keeper. The negotiated charge for weekly keeping was to be 12s per year payable every 6 months. The owner himself was re-

sponsible for winding any 30 hour clocks he might have.

Henry was beside himself, first with joy and then with excitement and finally with anticipation. It all happened so fast that it wasn't until the end of the work day at the forge, when Henry was riding Nellie back to Bedford House, that the misgivings came upon him. He realized that he would be leaving Bedford House and the Buffingtons, leaving the Tompion father and son and, yes (it stirred his heart to think on it), that he would also be parting from Margaret Tompion.

When Henry arrived at Bedford House he learned that Mr East was there and in conference with Major Buffington, and that Mr East was staying the night. The next morning Mr East, in possession of his famous smile, told Henry,

"I shall expect you to come to work at my shop at 8 o'clock on the morning of 22 August (1654). Your term will be six years. I will provide room and board at my home for you. You will work six days a week from 8 in the morning until 7 each evening. I will teach you the art and mystery of clockmaking. If, at the end of your first six months, I find that your work and your habits are acceptable to me, I will pay you twenty pence at the end of each month during your apprenticeship. You in turn promise to be a diligent and obedient worker and to stay with me for the duration of your apprenticeship. Sign the paper right here."

Henry signed.

There were several things that Henry did not know. For example, it was not told him that the twenty pence per month was highly unusual and that it was a factor negotiated by Major Buffington who required that he, as Henry's guardian, would provide the twenty pence per month to be paid through Mr East. Neither was it said that another twenty pence per month would be given to Mr East for the expense of sheltering Henry at his home. ("I will not," Mrs Buffington had told Mr East, "have Henry sleeping under a workbench in your shop!")



So, on the morning of 21 August 1654 Henry began his travel to

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the great city of London. Just as he had done 5½ months earlier except this time he had more than hope. He was going to be an apprentice to a clockmaker! And this time he was not riding Nellie. With the help of Mrs Buffington, Henry had arranged to make the journey in the daily mail coach. It was a rough ride and it reminded him of the journey from Moffat to Carlisle but he found that he had time to reflect and plan. Also this time he had belongings. Mrs Buffington had seen to that. To her, belongings meant clothing and she had packed up many of the things that Henry had acquired during his stay at Bedford House. For his part Henry let Mrs Buffington know that he would like to take his old New Model boots, and he did.

On that morning, between breakfast and the leave-taking with the Buffingtons and their servants, Major Buffington drew Henry aside:

“Henry, this is a milestone for you. You are now going off to be on your own. I am exceedingly proud of you and I know that some day you will reach your goal. There will be rocks in the road you travel but remember that I expect you to go around or over them. I ask one thing of you and that is that you not forget us. We shall always be your friends.”

He continued, “Now with your independence comes responsibility. You must take care of yourself. Starting now. For your travel to London last March I gave you coin. But not this time. I shall pay the coachman in advance for your fare. I shall give you no money. Partly because I do not want you to feel that you have to pay back anything to me later. As to taking care of yourself, I have no doubt that you can do that. You did it in the New Model and you can do it in London

– albeit in a different way.”

Henry did not say anything, nor was he required to. They re-joined Mrs Buffington at the carriage and Henry had his last ride with Nellie, although he didn't know it. In Bedford they met the mail coach and when the coachman spoke briefly with Mr Buffington and when he had lifted Henry's bag to the roof and assumed the reins, he was ready. Henry waved from the coach and the Buffingtons, arm in arm, waved back and watched as the coach with its four horses sped away. Nobody dared notice the moisture around the eyes of all three of them.

Settling back in the coach Henry began to reflect. He thought about the pleasant times at Bedford House, about the Tompions and the forge, and happily about young Margaret. He even thought about the Sergeant, Scotland and the New Model. He also began to plan. Keeping clocks for Mr East was a start. What were the other clockmakers in London doing? He knew about some of them from Mr Tompion. Charles I had interest in clocks, but what about Cromwell? Would the art suffer under him? What comes after Cromwell? What was happening on the continent? Henry was 22 and he knew that his future was opening and that the road was a long one. Little did he know that the first “rock” would present itself tomorrow.

Promptly at 8 o'clock on the morning of 22 August 1654 Henry tried the front door of Mr East's shop on Fleet Street. It was locked. Henry did not find out until later that Mr East lived upstairs and at that moment was in his bedroom gnashing his teeth. Mr East had hardly slept that night. At about half after eight Mr East opened the shop

door and beckoned Henry to enter. If Henry had expected a cordial welcome he didn't get it. Mr East looked harried and sleepless and didn't bother with any social niceties.

“Go at once to Benjamin Hill's shop. I have turned you over to him.” He scribbled an address on a slip of paper and handed it to Henry. Then he opened the shop door and fairly pushed Henry out.

Once out on the street, Henry didn't know which way to go, but with some local help did find his way to Hill's shop. On the way he began to wonder if this was the way people behaved in London.

Bewildered would describe Henry's feelings at this point. He was put to work filing in Hill's shop but nobody offered any explanation about what had happened or about what was going on. Hill had two other apprentices but since talk was not allowed Henry worked in silence and wonderment.

This went on for a week and on 29 August 1654, at midday, Mr Hill came into the shop, went directly to Henry and said,

“Henry, stop work.” Henry's heart sank.

“Go immediately to Mr East's shop. He wants you there at once. I have turned you over to him.” Henry had noticed a messenger entering and leaving the front of the shop.

Henry made the walk to Mr East's shop in a mental fog. “What's next?” he thought.

The East shop door was unlocked and Mr East was behind the counter, all smiles, and he came out to greet Henry and offered his hand.

“Welcome to my shop,” he said. “How was your journey?”

“That was last week and it was very pleasant, thank you.”

Mr East pretended only to hear the last part.

"Come, I'll show you to your bench.

There were no other apprentices. Mr East showed Henry a post and wanted Henry to make three more just like it; told him that he was to begin his "keeping" duties day after tomorrow; asked him to come upstairs for a meal at 8:30; stated that if he needed anything to ring "that bell on the wall" three times, pause then three more times; and then Mr East left.

Alone, Henry said to himself, "Odds fish, he is behaving as if it is the 22nd of August, whereas I'm certain it is the 29th."

London was certainly not at all like Bedford, Ickwell Green, Peebles or any other place Henry could think of.



Historians will record the date of Henry's first day of apprenticeship in Benjamin Hill's shop in London. And the basic fact of his change of apprenticeship to Edward East. What is hidden in the mists is the reason for Edward East's behavior from the 22nd to the 29th of August, 1654. We can speculate but we will never know.



Henry the "clockkeeper" busily started his apprenticeship with Edward East and stayed busy. He was told that he must follow a schedule of attending to clocks outside of the shop (*keeping*) on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. He was to do shopwork on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and Saturdays were to be spent on doing whatever Mr East thought was needed depending on how the work went. Mr

East's horse was to be Henry's transportation whenever the keeping was too far away to walk.

Mr East provided Henry with a small goatskin satchel and in it he placed three sizes of screwdrivers, pliers, a file, a rag for cleaning and a rag for wiping, and a bottle with a wire in the stopper containing Mr East's own brand of "fish oil". It was an oil he made himself, the secret of which he would reveal to Henry in due course.



Henry's screwdrivers

Henry had to learn his way around London and he had to discover its customs and dangers. His first lesson was on the street when his trouser legs were spattered as he ignored the cry "Gardy loo!"¹ from above.

One of the clocks that Henry was to keep, and the one that Henry was most proud of was the clock in St Paul's Cathedral. Henry liked the walk up Fleet Street and made his own ceremony of mounting the cathedral steps, passing through the hushed calmness of the nave and

¹ "Gardy loo!": a corruption of the French "Gardez l'eau!", used when slops were about to be thrown out of a window into the street.

then making the long climb up the stairs to the tower where he had to invade the territory of the pigeons who put up a stubborn but losing battle on each visit. Henry did more than wind, clean and oil — he looked and studied, much like he did in the New Model in Scotland but now he understood what he was looking at and he could relate the clocks he saw to the work he did in the shop.

Second in order of pride for Henry were the clocks at the Palace. He visited there once every week and sometimes more often if need be. There he rode the horse and was given a special stall. He entered through the kitchen and oh! what smells greeted him. He eventually perfected his timing so the kitchen help, always with an oversupply of food, encouraged him to tarry for a meal with them. Always there was ale and rum, but Henry did not take the rum for it stays too long on the breath.



At one house in the middle of London, well within walking distance of Mr East's shop, the owner, Lord Fanshawe, was a member of Parliament with whom Henry had conversations which ranged from the work of Parliament to the work that Henry did. After his first four visits there, Lady Fanshawe, requested that Henry change his schedule to another particular day of the week which Henry could gladly do. Thereafter Henry found that Lord Fanshawe was never present on that day. Lady Fanshawe greeted Henry pleasantly, over-pleasantly perhaps, and each time Henry was treated to a glass of sack² and some little thing to

² Sack = the French "sec" from "seres" = sherry



Lord and Lady Fanshawe attending an entertainment in the Palace.

eat. She hovered about as Henry went on with his work, chatting pleasantly but distractingly in her sexy French accent.

One day as Henry had finished the keeping, Lady Fanshawe gestured for him to be seated and asked,

“Will you have another sack with me?”

Before he could answer she was pouring. They sat comfortably for a bit and Henry could notice that she was an attractive woman, although some years older than he was. She sat in such a way that her ankles were clearly visible and her profile was in the best light.

“Come,” she said at length, “I will show you a clock that you have never seen. It is a fairly new one from Mr East and I wind it myself but I would like you to care for it.”

With that she took him into her bed chamber. Henry couldn't help but admire the small brass clock on her bedside table and he also couldn't help but ad-

mire Lady Fanshawe as she stooped over it. He perceived that she was a voluptuous woman.

She sat on the edge of the bed and held out her arms to him.

“Come sit by me, she said.

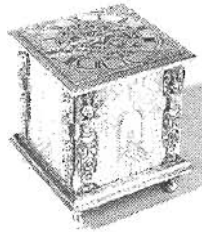
Henry felt something stirring within himself. He sat and shortly he was lying with her next to him. Then he sank into blurred happiness. The combination of spirits and beauty overcame him. How much time elapsed Henry didn't know. Her words startled him back to life:

“Oh mon Dieu!, he's supposed to be in Parliament all day!”

Then she scrambled up and primped herself saying to Henry,

“Sit there and work on that clock!”

Henry heard her voice downstairs greeting Lord Fanshawe.



Lady Fanshawe's boudoir clock

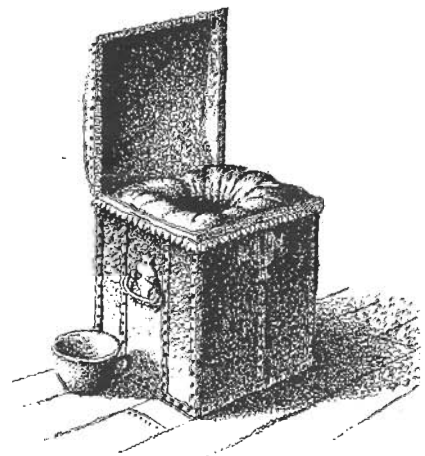


Henry had settled in very well at the East establishment. His room was a very small closet-like cubicle just off the kitchen with nary a window, the luxury of one chair, a small table and a couple of pegs on the wall for clothes hanging. The sanitary conditions were modest compared to Bedford House where there were lead pipes carrying water and where effluent was drained into a cess-pit in the cellar, but at least at the Easts it was not necessary to dispose of it by tossing it out of a window. The Easts had a close-stool and

chamber pot for their use. Henry had a standing cup and shared a chamber pot. There was a wash bowl and pitcher. The Easts could afford a laistow man who periodically came and emptied the various containers. As to bathing, Henry used one of the public baths when he could afford it or when he needed it, both of which seldom occurred simultaneously.

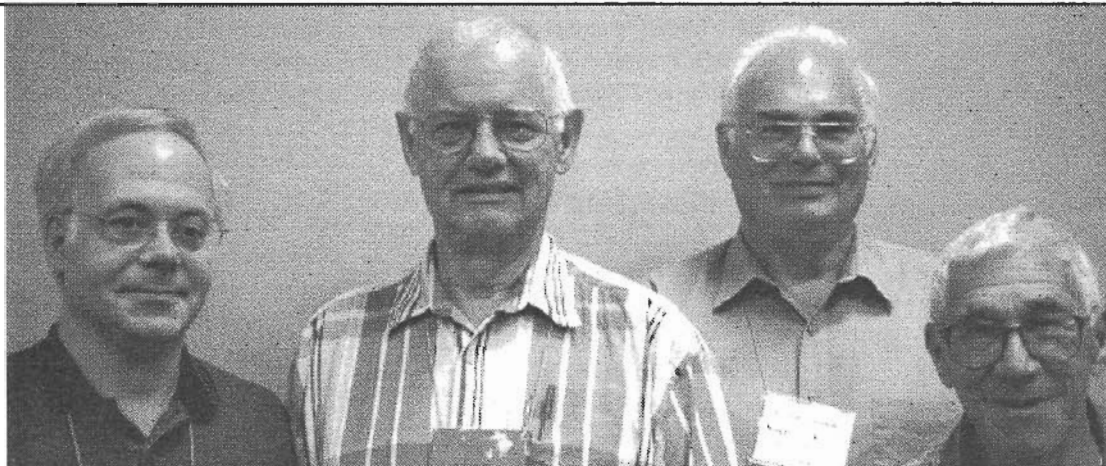
One day in 1656 Mr East came in from the street and was just bursting with news.

“Henry,” he exclaimed, “you have come along at the right time in history. I have just been at the Fromanteel shop and learned of a new development over in Holland. He thinks it so important that he has sent John over there to investigate. Word is that a Mr Huygens, Christiaan Huygens, has developed a new type of regulator which vastly improves the accuracy of a clock. Mr Huygens is not secretive at all about his invention. He calls himself “Monsieur de Zulichen” — why we do not know. At first we thought it to be two different persons but we now know it is one man with two names.”



Close stool and chamber pot from the East household

To be continued



Chapter 159 officers, l to r: Frank Del Greco, Lee Yelvington, Ken Johnston, Bernie Pollack

Your officers were invited to tell us a bit about themselves. Here is what they wrote.

Frank Del Greco, President

Besides being your new president of Chapter 159 I am also president of Lake Erie Chapter 28 and a national director of NAWCC. I also joined the NAWCC membership and publicity committee in late 1999 and am focusing my efforts there in member retention.

That sounds like a full plate but I also work for a living. I am a technology manager for The Lubrizol Corporation, a \$1.8 billion fluids technology company, where I am involved in process improvements in the operations division. I began at Lubrizol over 27 years ago after graduating from Case Western Reserve with a BS in chemical engineering.

I collect English lantern and brass dial longcase clocks, as well as English pair case watches. Recently I have begun adding English tower clocks to my collection, the latest acquisition being a very compact quarter-striking tower clock with countwheel strike.

When not involved in horology, I enjoy woodworking.

I met my wife, Joanne, at Lubrizol 14 years ago and we were married a year later and live in Novelty Ohio which is a rural township east of Cleveland. Joanne was just promoted to vice president of the corporation. When not working, she grows English shrub roses.

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Lee Yelvington, Vice-President

I and Phyllis, my wife of 48 years, have 5 children and 9 grandchildren. We are both from Miami Florida. I retired from IBM in 1991 after 36 years of many middle management positions in the Field Engineering Division including a two-year assignment as Region Manager for Australia-New Zealand.

I have been a member of NAWCC since 1970, am presi-

dent of Carolina Chapter 17 and chairman of the National Program Committee.

My prime interest is antique grandfather clocks and I have a clock business in Raleigh North Carolina specializing in them.

*Lee: 103 Blowing Rock Ln., Cary NC 27511,
919-851-3073, itsabouttime@mindspring.com*



Ken Johnston, Secretary

I was working in the aircraft industry in Coventry England when a fellow student took the time to show me what lay beneath the simple plain exterior of an English pocket watch. I was hooked. Since then I have been interested in them and in recent years this interest has become almost a passion. While in England I actively pursued this interest (I was a member of the AHS in 1964) but when I came to America in 1967 my interest lapsed. By that time I was married and we had three children.

I worked in the aircraft industry on Long Island NY as a structural engineer until I retired in 1995. We moved away from the cold winters and high taxes to New Bern, North Carolina and I took up my interest in horology again. My primary interest has not changed and I have accumulated an extensive collection of books from which I get great pleasure. It is unfolding the history, the life and times of the creators of the watches that sustains my interest. I have watches that I bought in my student days, over 50 years ago, and they are still revealing their secrets to me. Besides British Horology Chapter 159, I am a member of the Old Dominion Chapter in Williamsburg Virginia and the Horological Science Chapter. I was registrar/treasurer for the Millennium Seminar in London in October of 2000.

*Ken: 2006 Williamson Dr., New Bern NC 28562,
252-635-6431, horology@newbernnc.com*

Continued, please see OFFICERS, page 8

UNWIND

Paul Odendahl (LA) discovers a different way of looking at the relationship between you and your clock.

I never thought of it until I saw the sign. Funny how you go along doing the same things in the same way (like brushing your teeth) and regarding things in the same way (like your automobile as a purring object of beauty). Your auto is not a thing of beauty. Well, maybe it is but only incidentally. It is really a marvelous piece of machinery that makes you the most mobile human that ever was. Or, it is a horse. The modern equivalent of a horse and you are a twenty-first century cowboy.

So the sign made me think. It was talking about drinking, munching, relaxing and enjoying conversation with pretty girls. But that's not what lit up in my brain.

"UNWIND" the sign said as I walked by. So I stopped and gazed at it. And I thought about it. I took a picture of it.

You see, it was nicely framed behind glass and hanging on a first floor passageway. Hard to miss. And it was in a hotel at the February 1998 Florida Regional Clock Meeting. Not far from the sign in the hotel was a room full of clocks and those mechanical clocks that were running — were all unwinding!

Come to think of it, my clocks at home that I keep running, are unwinding. Yours too.

We wind; clocks unwind. Do clocks really "run"? No, they unwind. Clocks are audible but



we don't talk to them. Well, I mean, I have been caught saying a few choice words to some of my clocks but we are not having a conversation. Clocks "tell" the time. We "look at" the time (or listen).

So that's what I never thought of before I stopped at that sign. We and our clocks wind and unwind. Clocks tell; we see or listen. We look at each other. We trust each other. We are good for each other.

Is it any wonder, then,

that we and our clocks have such a pleasant and rewarding relationship?

There are NAWCC chapters called *Keywinders* and *Winders*. Would it be too much to suggest that there be an *Unwinder* chapter? With clocks as members? And a noisy, triple fusee 30-day runner as president? ☺

Paul Odendahl, editor and publisher of your newsletter has such a love for clocks that sometimes he is driven to curious observations.



This is the caption that was under the sign

OFFICERS, from page 6

Bernie Pollack, Treasurer

I am an Emeritus Professor of Plant Breeding (vegetables) and Genetics from Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, and am ex-chairman of the Department of Horticulture and Forestry at the same University. I did all my undergraduate and graduate work at Penn State, beginning in 1938 (forestry no less), and received my PhD in Horticulture in 1953, genetics and biometry my major and minor. If you are wondering why it took me so long, I did interrupt my education for almost four years to serve in the US army Ordnance in Europe and the Pacific during WWII.

After finishing my graduate degree I served on the faculty in the Department of Horticulture at Penn State for seven years doing plant breeding research. In 1960 I joined the faculty at Rutgers where I spent 25 years teaching and advising at the graduate level, doing plant breeding research and a good deal of adult education. In the 1970s I spent most of my vacations in West Africa training Peace Corps volunteers on how to help a village feed itself. I even managed a sabbatical leave in 1978 and spent 6 months in West Africa collecting indigenous eggplant and dry rice species.

My Rutgers research resulted in many publications and 10 or 12 new vegetable cultivars and hybrids. In 1985, at age 65, I decided to retire. The field of genetics was moving so fast into "genetic engineering" that I felt I would have to be retrofitted to continue and I just didn't like the idea. I threw in the sponge and moved to California.

My clock interests began in 1978 when a colleague convinced me to join NAWCC and New Jersey Chapter 25. I really didn't do much with clocks until I moved to California. I floundered

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soon as possible at 440-338-8261 or fdelgreco@aol.com The cost per person is \$1700. That does not include your airfare to England and there is a \$391 supplement for single occupancy in the hotels. It's going to be a fantastic tour!

-Frank Del Greco

around a bit collecting this and that and finally narrowed my interests to time recorders and electro-mechanicals. I find the printing mechanisms, linkages and synchronization of clock time to printing wheels more challenging than just plain clocks. I have over a hundred time recorders, watchman's clocks and electro-mechanicals in my collection and my favorites are those made by Gledhill-Brook, an English company that sold out to Simplex in 1964. I haven't added many more in the last few years because my wife threatened a divorce if I brought any more home.

I am a passionate member of NAWCC. I help teach clock repair classes at my home Chapter 136 and I also belong to Chapters 69 (local chapter), 78 (National Electrical), 133 (Western Electric), and 159 (British Horology). In 1998 I started the Industrial Time Recorder Chapter 175 and am still its president.

I used to play a lot of golf but have cut that way back, have a very large vegetable garden and work on my time recorders. At my age I shouldn't even be buying green bananas, yet I have committed myself to be Publicity Chairman for the NAWCC National Convention to be held in Anaheim California in July of this year. I guess I will be in clocks until I expire.

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NEXT MEETING

Friday April 5, 2002, 2PM
at the Southern Ohio Regional, Drawbridge Estate,
Ft. Mitchell, KY (Near Cincinnati). Check program.



MART

MART ADS are free to members and should pertain to British or Anglo-American horology.

Killian Robertson wants Irish horological items including watches, clocks of any type, papers, ephemera or anything else relevant to Irish horology. Phone 336-725-7251 or email kcbpr@aol.com

WANTED by **Doug Cowan**, big English boardroom clock with 8 bells and 5 gongs. Not a black one, please. Phone 513-771-0556.

WANTED by **Doug Cowan**, early (ca 1700) English pair cased watch by Windmills or with unusual dial treatment - 6 hour dial, differential dial, etc. Phone 513-771-0556

FOR SALE by **Doug Cowan**, about 40 back issues of AHS Journal in good condition. Phone 513-771-0556.

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AN APPEAL FOR NEW MATERIAL

HELP!

The box of new articles for publication is almost empty. We need new material now. Please help. Technical or human interest, whatever you have stored in your

mind. Put it on paper and send to: Frank Del Greco, 13730 Braeburn Ln., Novelty OH 44072. Thank you - we need help.