

# The Howard Banta Alarm Clock Chapter



Chapter 178 of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors

[www.accl178.org](http://www.accl178.org)

2006 Volume 2

If you recognize this cover of the latest catalog issue of TIMESAVERS it is because it is the cover of the original box for the "America" alarm clock by The Western Clock Company in La Salle, Ill. in about 1915.

Steve Berger, owner of TIMESAVERS and long-time member of the Howard Banta Alarm Clock Chapter, has been using covers of alarm clock boxes for years on the front of his catalogs. If you have never seen this catalog it might be time to contact TIMESAVERS at

[www.timesavers.com](http://www.timesavers.com)

or call him at 1-800-552-1520 to get your copy. Not only do they have many regular clock parts but have in stock many alarm clock parts such as hands, springs, winding keys and set knobs.



"Worldwide Distributor Of Clock Repair Material"  
 Orders: 1-800-552-1520 International Orders: 480-483-3711  
 Fax: 1-800-552-1522 International Fax: 480-483-6116  
 Email: [info@timesavers.com](mailto:info@timesavers.com) Web Site: [www.timesavers.com](http://www.timesavers.com)

## Next Issue..



Our fellow member, Rod Lewis from Australia when in the United States this year stopped by at the National in Cleveland Ohio. He's pictured below at our Chapter

#178 table along with Phyllis Angell. We'll have a full set of great photos from the National in the next Issue.

Stay tuned...



## Upcoming: August 27 & 28 2006 Silver Dollar Regional

The 2006 Silver Dollar Regional will be held at the Nugget Casino and Hotel this August 27th and 28th in Sparks, Nevada. Sparks is just 2 miles outside of Reno, Nevada. Over 200 tables of antique clocks and watches will be available. [L@@@k](mailto:L@@@k) for Registration Form in the April issue of The Mart.

Both Frank Del Greco, Chairman of the NAWCC, and Jim Bland, Director of Marketing, will be the honored representatives from the National.

For more information and a Registration Form, please go to

[www.silverdollarregional.org](http://www.silverdollarregional.org)

**Officers and Contacts**

Alarm Clock  
 Chapter Newsletter: Quarterly  
 Annual Dues: \$15.00

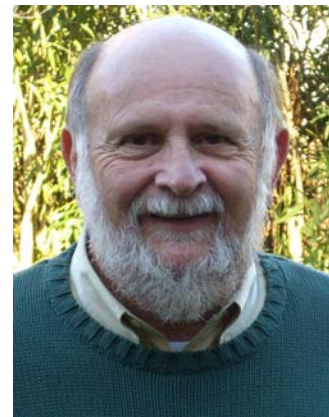
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 saraandmary@sbcglobal.net

**President's Corner**

Having just returned from the 2006 NAWCC National Convention in Cleveland and talking to many attendees, I can say that while the Howard Banta Alarm Clock Chapter is not the biggest chapter in the NAWCC most people are aware of the chapter and say that its newsletter is one of the best, if not the best, in the organization.



**Sell it Through the Newsletter**

Every member may submit one ad per newsletter. This includes a *Wanted to Buy* or *Wanted to Sell*. The newsletter comes out at the beginning of March, June, September and December.

**Author Instructions**



All are encouraged to submit articles for publication in the *Alarm Clock Chapter* newsletter. Please include your name, address and phone number with the article. Although certainly not a complete list, suggestions for topics are:

- Specific alarm clocks or manufacturers
- Unique design - movement or case
- Special methods of cleaning
- Descriptions of interesting repairs
- History of a manufacturer
- Helpful tips on repair

Photos along with the text are always appreciated. Please email to the editor at:

saraandmary@sbcglobal.net

or send article on computer disk (MS Word) via snail mail

Mary Maier  
 530 Staples Avenue  
 San Francisco, CA 94112

The success of our newsletter is attributed to the contributions and willingness of chapter members and non-chapter members to share their knowledge and expertise to the publication. With these contributions and our Editor, Mary Maier, we have a vehicle to possibly make this the #1 publication for the alarm clock collectors in the world.

We have seen in recent issues articles by Ken Reindel on miniature Ansonias, John Kuraoka on digital photography, and Robert Hensley on his "Quest" for those two alarm clocks beginning with a "Q" or "Z". There have been other features that have been added such as "The Poet's Corner" and "The Market Place" giving our readers a first chance at purchasing alarm clocks.

The key to a successful Newsletter are the contributions of the members. I am now asking for your personal articles, articles that you have found, photos from your collection or Regionals attended, alarms for sale, upcoming events, new sections for the newsletter or anything that might be of interest to our members.

If you need help with any of these, please contact Mary Maier or me.

Thank you,

Vince Angell

Many thanks to Phyllis and Vince Angell as well as Sara Coleman for their help in formatting, organizing and typing up articles as well as suggestions on layout.

the Editor -



**Review of the 2006 Arizona Sunshine Regional**

The Arizona Sunshine Regional was a great success! This was due, in part, to the fact that in late March it is sunny and warm in Arizona while the rest of the country is shoveling snow. The regional sold out of all of its 160 plus table and the buyers and sellers were in a very good mood. The regional more than made up for the lack of high priced items with the volume of less expensive items. There was a nice cross section of alarm clock offerings for beginners to advanced collectors. The entire feeling on the sales floor was 'I am here to have a good time' - and it was contagious to everyone in the room. Everyone seemed to be in a very positive place.

We were very lucky to have been selected by the NAWCC Board to test the guest 'Escorted Tour' program. It worked very well and, as was reported to National, we hope that it will become a regular opportunity for all regionals to reach out and gain new members. Please check out the review in the Bulletin and potential for trying similar programs in your own groups.

Mike Wilson





The Market Place - Sell It In The Newsletter!

What Is It ?



Seth Thomas Clock Company miniature Cottage. Ca. 1880. 30 Hour time and alarm. Time spring needs replacement. Needs mirror. Great rosewood case. Stands only 9-1/2" tall with great original label marked Thomaston, movement marked Plymouth Hollow and two other labels that are hard to read. Comes with probably the original pendulum and key.

\$110.00

Vince Angell  
 phylathome@hotmail.com

Not much is known about this unusual alarm clock other than the included directions to set the alarm. It is a rather small clock at only 2-1/2" in diameter. It has no glass and is a 30 hour back-wind alarm clock. I do not know if it is American or Foreign. Solid brass case with a finely made pendulette movement.



The following are the hand-written instructions that came with the clock:

- "To set the alarm for 8.
  - Set Dial lever at "S".
  - Set plain hand at 12.
  - Set ball hand at 8.
- Turn hands with center knob at Hour of day desired.
- Set top lever to "A"

If anyone has ANY idea what this is, please email me at [phylathome@hotmail.com](mailto:phylathome@hotmail.com)



"Indian" alarm clock manufactured by the E. Ingraham Company of Bristol, Conn. Plating worn but still mostly shiny. Both springs are good. Runs for a short time. Probably needs a little oil or cleaning. Has all its original keys and hands.

\$25.00

Vince Angell  
 phylathome@hotmail.com

Thank you,  
 Vince Angell



## Alarm Clock Peter

by Uwe H. Peter<sup>(1)</sup>

In Germany, all traders know me as “Wecker-Peter”. In the Netherlands my name is “Wekker-Peter”, and in France “Reveil-Peter”. You can just call me “Alarm Clock Peter”.

I am 46 years old. At first, I collected old pocket watches from the time before 1780. I started to become interested in old pocket watches in 1990. Since 1995, I also collected old table alarm clocks. I lost the interest to collect old pocket watches because they were too



expensive and I am not a rich man. I have to work for my money, so I sold my pocket watch collection from 2000–2003 and began to collect only old alarm clocks. I spend a lot of time looking for them. I visit antique markets in Germany, and on my many travels, I searched for and bought old alarm clocks in Turkey, China, Poland, England, France. I buy them also worldwide on the Internet and in the USA and Australia.

I am a member of the German Cooperation of Collectors of old clocks and watches. I am also a member of the Netherlands Cooperation. I make 4 exhibitions/shows during the year in the Netherlands. I only sell my alarm clocks when I have double pieces. I sell them on the market or make exchanges with other alarm

clock collectors. I also make two exhibitions/shows in South Germany (Black Forest) every two years. Many antique traders from France bring me old alarm clocks to the markets in South Germany.

Every year, I make a poster with pictures of old alarm clocks I search for my collection. I give these posters to many antique traders in Germany, the Netherlands, and France. They help me find them. So, I will get any alarm clock after the next alarm clock.

You and your collector friends can send me questions about old German alarm clocks. If I can help, I will do it. I have many, many catalogues from German alarm clocks from 1870 to 1920 (Junghans, Crossed Arrow, Mauthe, Kienzle, Gustav Becker, Lenzkirch, BADUF). Often, I can help other collectors identify their old German alarm clocks (find the manufacturer, etc).

Note From Vince Angell:

On a sad note, Alarm Clock Peter was a very good friend of Wolfgang Braun and has reported that Wolfgang passed away earlier this year. We will all miss Wolfgang and his wonderful collection and his restorations of German alarm clocks. At one time Wolfgang considered Alarm Clock Peter as the greatest collector of alarm clocks in Germany. This is hopefully just the start of some short articles from him. He would like to share his knowledge and collection with all that have a passion for collecting alarm clocks.



<sup>(1)</sup> This article was kindly edited by Vince Angell



**Korner**

Ken's

*Restoration Projects*  
**Miniature Ansonias**  
**and**  
**Waterburys**

by Ken Reindel\*

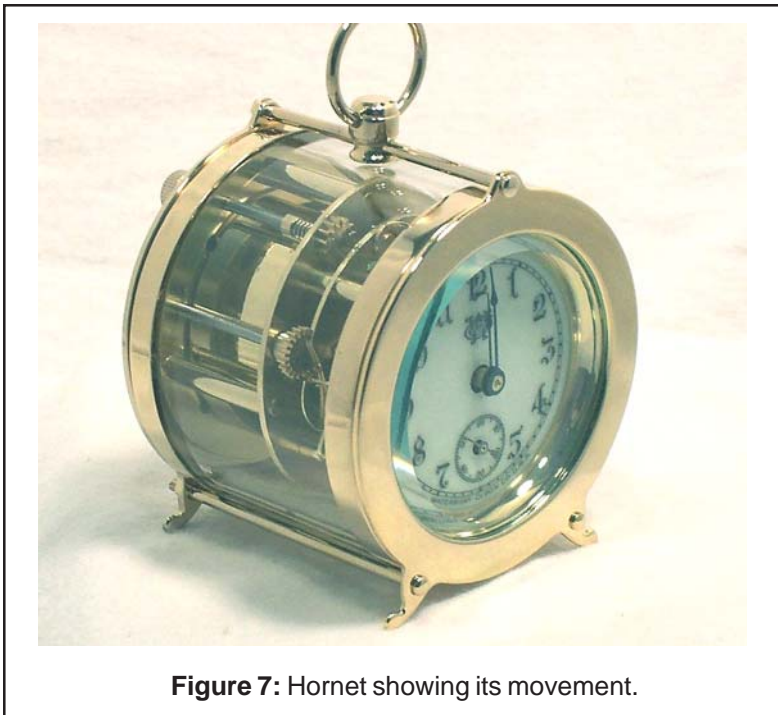
- (This article is continued from Volume 1, 2006)

Both the Spider and Wasp were gold-plated with a glass sleeve, and the movement can be seen through the glass. The Fang is the same clock as the Spider, but without the see-through case. All are fitted with a beautiful beveled lens and enameled dial. Generally, these clocks have been referred to me as Hornets and obviously there is some understandable confusion over identification of the different but very similar models. Adding to the confusion is that the Hornet and Fang are listed as having jeweled movements. I've not personally encountered any jeweled Spider or Fang movements as of this writing. Shown here are two Spiders that were subject of recent restorations.

As with the Ansonia Bee, getting power from the mainspring to the center wheel is a big challenge in these clocks. It's the source of 75% of the problems encountered. However with the Hornet, things are complicated by the very large mainspring, at least large in relation to the main wheel, transfer pinion, and third wheel. The



**Figure 6:** Hornet Front.



**Figure 7:** Hornet showing its movement.

mainspring barrel and spring take up more interior volume than the rest of the movement. The mainspring itself measures in at 3/4" x 0.012" x 92".

Real trouble starts when an 8-day mainspring fractures. The mass of

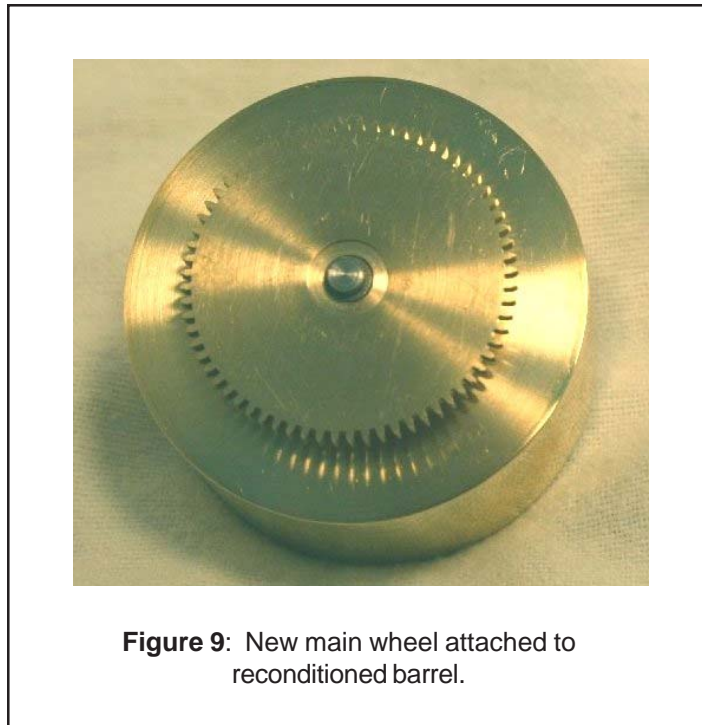


**Figure 8:** Waterbury main wheel damaged by the sudden uncoiling of a fractured mainspring.

the spring, the inertia in the uncoiling, and the fragility of everything around it add up to disaster. Shown below is an example of the main wheel from the Waterbury pictured in Figure 8, victimized by a broken mainspring. The "kick back" created by the uncoiling mainspring crashing into the sides of the barrel damages not only the main wheel, but also bulges the thin barrel at the hook which causes interference with the movement pillars. In extreme circumstances, this force can distort the barrel to the point where the lid no longer fits securely. We've seen third wheel pinion leaves bent by this force as well.

(\*) Ken Reindel is the owner of Ken's Clock Clinic found at <http://www.kensclockclinic.com>

After spending hours reconditioning a barrel, it is important to exercise extreme care with the replacement mainspring (fortunately these are available!). We wind and unwind the spring on a winder at least 10x to identify potentially defective springs that might fail soon after being fitted into the clock.



**Figure 9:** New main wheel attached to reconditioned barrel.

Last but not least, the Waterbury ratchet and click are examined carefully. If either of these fails in an assembled clock, the results will be the same as in the case of a broken spring—another day or two in the machine shop. We don't hesitate to replace or recondition both of these. It's cheap insurance.

**Restoring a Spider Case.** The case on a Waterbury Spider is made up of a complicated sandwich of brass rings, collets, plates, and bolts, and a glass sleeve. Some of these components are shown in Figure 10. Figure 11 shows the "holy grail" of how to disassemble the case. The top bolt was manufactured with the bolt staked to the center ring assembly, after the bolt had been passed through the upper hole in the front bezel. The result is an assembly that cannot be taken apart which makes it impossible to restore correctly. We've found the best technique is to grind off the front dimple. Afterwards, the bolt is chucked in the lathe, trued and center drilled, then tapped with a small tap such as a 1-72 or possibly a 2-56. A new "dimple" is fabricated with a threaded tail much like a screw but with no slot in the head, shown here assembled for polishing. This allows reassembly later, after all the parts have been restored. The resulting repair is invisible.

After filling pits in the case parts with copper, each part is either tumbled or machine buffed to luster (depending on the size and delicate nature of the part). A nickel flash is applied, immediately followed by a heavy 18 karat gold brush plate. There simply isn't anything like the finish of gold plating on a Waterbury Spider. It is difficult to avoid the gold if significant pitting has to be filled with copper, although we have seen some nice restorations done by polishing and lacquering the

Once the spring is fitted in the clock, we take great care to inspect that the tail of the spring is well fastened to the hook (actually a rivet in this case). While a slipping mainspring tail won't destroy the power train, it might just cost us a few hours of disassembly and repair of a fractured spring or damaged hook. However, if it lets loose when the spring is fully wound, it WILL do major damage.

After taking care of fabricating a new main wheel (and possibly transfer pinion and third wheel pinion, if necessary), the next step is inspecting the movement for wear. Usually, these 8-Day Waterburys will have severely worn lower main wheel bearings. Yes, bearings—these clocks utilize a special bearing that combines the pivot hole of the center wheel with the pivot hole for the main wheel, a part that is riveted to the plate, making it difficult to fabricate and replace.

The transfer pinion holes are almost sure to require attention as well. Every 8-day Waterbury double-decker I have seen had transfer pinion holes that were worn to the point where the gearing locks up. It's amazing that some of them still run—barely. The transfer pinion is affixed between the plate and a bridge, so care must be taken in rebushing these holes—but only after any wear is polished out of the transfer pinion pivots.

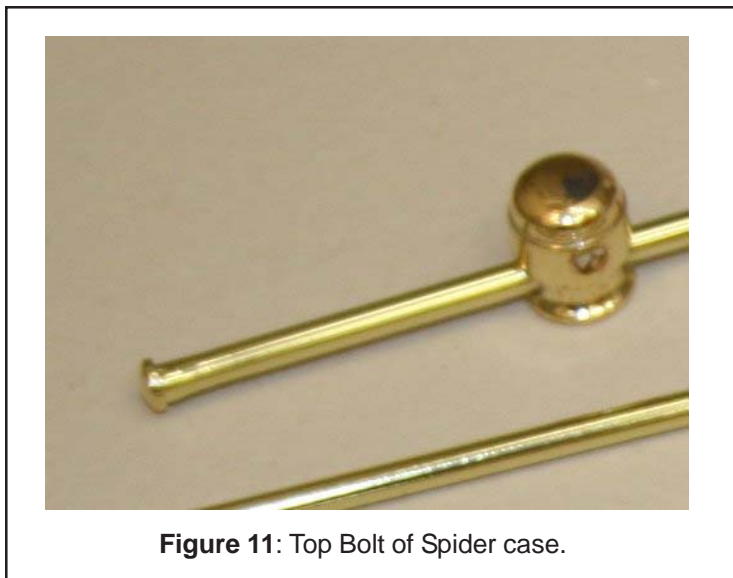


**Figure 10:** Waterbury Spider case parts.

brass base metal (if it is in good condition) instead of gold plating. However, it just isn't quite as nice as the gold.

The final finish on the movement is of interest. After cleaning and repair work, parts are brushed with a high-quality metal

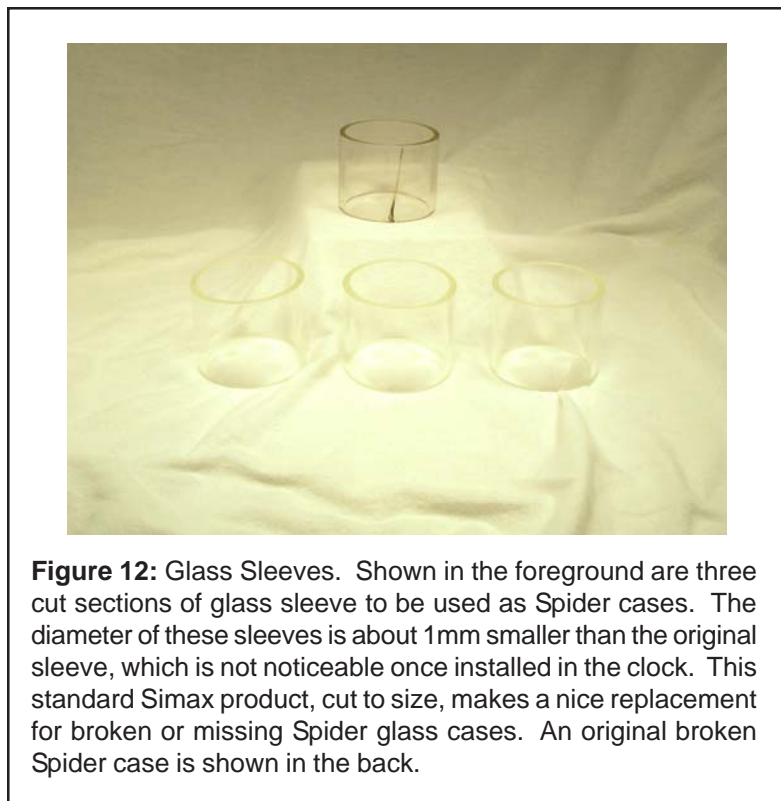
polish such as Flitz polish. The edges of the movement plates are polished to a high gloss, as are the pillars (which are turned in a lathe while buffing them) along with the mainspring barrel. Most of the internal parts of the movement do not appear to have been gold plated with the exception of the main wheel barrel (due to its massive size).



**Figure 11:** Top Bolt of Spider case.

Of all the heartbreaks encountered with the glass-cased Waterburys, nothing is more disappointing than a broken glass sleeve. Although no one to our knowledge sells replacements for these sleeves, there is a way out. Simax borosilicate glass tubing can be purchased in the broadest selection of shapes and sizes from Friedrich and Dimmock in New Jersey. See their website at

[www.fdglass.com/store](http://www.fdglass.com/store).



**Figure 12:** Glass Sleeves. Shown in the foreground are three cut sections of glass sleeve to be used as Spider cases. The diameter of these sleeves is about 1mm smaller than the original sleeve, which is not noticeable once installed in the clock. This standard Simax product, cut to size, makes a nice replacement for broken or missing Spider glass cases. An original broken Spider case is shown in the back.

They were willing to cut a 5 ft section of tubing to the size we needed, but there was a \$150 minimum sale charge. The other difficulty was that we needed to grind the ends of the sleeves to square and parallel. Presumably it's difficult to expect a glass cutter to hold tolerances needed in clockmaking.

Shown in Figure 12 is a broken Waterbury glass sleeve, and the cut replacements in the foreground. Unfortunately, we haven't found a source for glass with air bubbles and ripples as was the case with the vintage glass. Simax glass is literally a laboratory grade, crystal clear, flawlessly beautiful product.

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We hope you have enjoyed the first of Ken Reindel's articles that are found under the header 'Ken's Korner'. We are truly delighted to provide this new section to the newsletter.

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## Corner

Poet's

### Alarum On A Winter's Morning

By  
Laverne Frith

It's an early Monday morning true enough, much to much for the civilized to begin their day. But the sudden shock of that clock that won't stay at bay, sounds and sounds and sounds, such resounds. Its alarums of morning continue until you throw back the covers and rise to shut its mouth, putting feet to a chilling floor, uttering the first cuss words of the day, all the while knowing that the act will be played out again and again, through the whole of winter, like a bad habit.