

# 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 4

## In this Issue

We are pleased to continue the Ken Reindel series in this Issue. Included here is the first half of his article on restoration of 'A 1927 Style 1 Baby Ben Alarm Clock'. This article describes from nuts to bolts a complete restoration project.

We're also pleased to present an article from on-going contributor Dennis Sagvold on *Westclox's Clock of Tomorrow*.. This alarm is credited to Ellworth Danz, one of Westclox's notable designers.

Finally, still doing last minute shopping? Turn to 'Sell it in the Newsletter' and you might find the perfect gift. Read on..there are more surprises inside.

## MY NEW YEARS RESOLUTION

By  
Roger Royal

New Years is the time  
To make resolutions;  
To learn from mistakes  
And workout solutions.

To all of the troubles  
You've had in the past,  
The trick is to make  
Resolutions that last.

Diet and exercise  
Come into mind,  
As some resolutions  
That get left behind.

So my resolution  
Should come as no shock,  
I resolve to keep seeking  
That rare alarm clock!

Good luck in keeping all your resolutions  
in the coming New Year!



Image kindly submitted by member Robert Hensley

## 2007 Greater LA Regional

If you are planning to attend the 2007 GLAR in Pasadena this February, please stop by and say hello. Vince and Phyllis Angell will again set up a great alarm clock display promoting the Howard Banta Alarm Clock Chapter #178.

Be sure to get a free ticket for raffle prizes. The drawing is to be held on Saturday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> at 1:00 pm. No need to be a member to participate in the drawing for alarm clock related prizes but you do need to be present to win.

Looking forward to seeing you.

**Officers and Contacts**

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 Chapter Newsletter: Quarterly  
 Annual Dues: \$15.00

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**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

**President's Corner**

In the first President's Corner I discussed that the future of the this chapter was not only in the buying and selling of alarm clocks but also in our love of alarm clocks and the sharing of knowledge for all others who might have an interest in what we love.



Recently I received a request from someone that found our chapter site on the Internet and through that she emailed me. She was attending Boston University and had an interest in knowing that there were people that had similar interests in alarm clocks. She had a special desire to get some background on alarm clocks with snooze alarms. Not knowing anything about that subject I decided to send an email to all members of the chapter.

As you can see in the 'Share the Knowledge' supplement on page 7, two of our members immediately emailed her with probably more information than she expected.

Both Bill Stoddard and new member Richard Vigal took the time to share with her many interesting thoughts on the subject.

This is how we should strive to "share the knowledge". Not only does it help others in their search for information but it also gives what others cannot give – a look into what we perceive as our interests and loves.

Please take time and read this supplement. You too can possibly learn something.

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 -

The 2006 Silver Dollar Regional

by Vince Angell



Great Darche Electric Alarm Clock display at this summer's 2006 Silver Dollar Regional in Sparks, Nevada. Interesting part of display was that the background is the storefront of the Darche Electric Alarm Clock and Novelty Store in Chicago, Illinois about 1915. Background was made from a scanned postcard supplied by HBACC member Carol Lussy. Carol is also a family member of one of the original Darche founders, Eugene Darche.

Thank you Carol.

Not only did the convention in Sparks have a noteworthy display of Darche alarm clocks, this was the Convention that had more HBACC members than any other Convention of the year. Attending members included: Mary Maier, Robert Schug, Lou Gentry, Bob Linkenhofer, Nile Godfrey, Jim Gilmore, Sara Coleman, Jack and Clydine Gridley, Tom Tognetti, Bob Peischl, Dave Hong, Vince Angell and new members Richard Vigal and Bob Ballard.



Member Robert Schug displays one his great Ansonia alarm clocks he had for sale.



Great selection of alarms at the convention.

Southwest California Regional

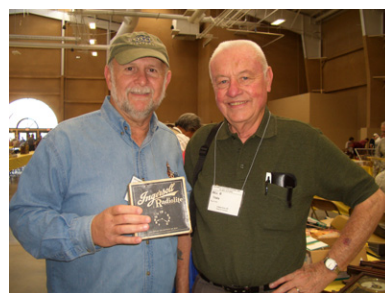
by Vince Angell

This last November Phyllis and I attended the Convention in Del Mar, California. This is just south of San Diego and is held at the ever famous Del Mar Raceway. Many great stars of the 1940's and 1950's graced this fabulous raceway and to this day some of the streets are still named after some of those that frequented the venue such as Jimmy Durante Boulevard and also buildings with stars names such as Bing Crosby and Bob Hope.

The convention was held in one of the newer buildings and had approximately 300 tables. Unfortunately for us alarm clock collectors and clock collectors, more than 65% of the tables were selling watches. This is the largest percentage of watch sellers I have ever seen at one regional event. Let's hope this is not a trend for us alarm clock collectors.



Member Verlyn Kuhlman proudly shows this great International alarm clock. There are keys that have designated countries and with a push of the key it gives an audio announcement of the time.....Great novelty find Verlyn.



Vince Angell poses with member Bill Triska showing his new acquisition. An alarm clock box for an Ingersoll "Radiolite".

All he needs to find now is the clock that goes in it.....Anyone have one?



**HBACC MEMBER RECEIVES AWARD**

HBACC member, Bob Peischl recently received the prestigious Silver Star Award from the National at the 2006 Silver Dollar Regional in Sparks, NV. Bob is one of only 64 NAWCC members honored with this award. The Silver Star Award is given to members who have made an outstanding contribution to the Association in the advancement of horology.

Congratulations Bob!

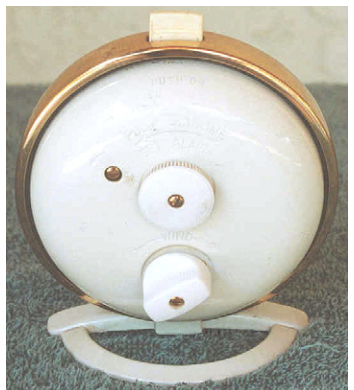
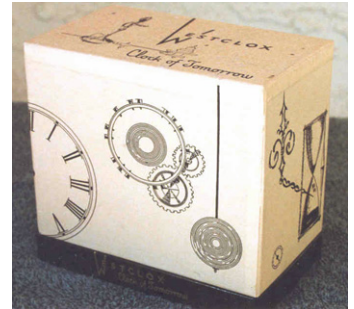
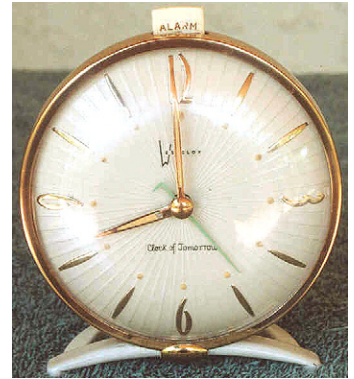
**Westclox's Clock of Tomorrow**

By Dennis Sagvold<sup>1</sup>

The Clock of Tomorrow is an exceptional based clock in my legged clock collection. Westclox went all out on this clock to make it futurist for when it was designed. At first glance, one wouldn't put this alarm in the Big Ben series, but it is. The modern design, as described<sup>2</sup> in the Tjarks and Stoddard article was one of the first projects taken on by Ellworth Danz – a notable designer at Westclox.

The box is 6" high by 6" wide and 3-5/8" deep. As is seen in the figure below the lid and bottom display beautiful graphics. The 'Clock of Tomorrow' logo on the box outside is black lettering against a white background, while the narrow inset ledge inside the box has text is gold font against a black background. The inside of the box even has a white satin base – an elegant addition to the packaging.

The "Clock of Tomorrow" measures 5-3/4" high has a white finished case trimmed in gold colored metal. The numerals and hands are also gold colored. The hands and hour markers are luminous with a sunburst design white dial. The alarm set hand is distinctive in alarms of the day – a simple 'L' shape. Top knob on back, pull and turn left to set time, leave in normal position and turn left to set alarm. In this alarm, the winding knob works both the time and alarm springs, quite an innovation for the day. For the alarm knob on the top - simply push for on and push again for off. The 'Clock of Tomorrow' has a convex plastic lens. "Clock of Tomorrow" – what a fitting name for the very beginning of the space race.



March 20, 1951 E. R. DANZ CLOCK Dec. 162,523 Filed Sept. 8, 1949

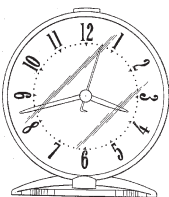
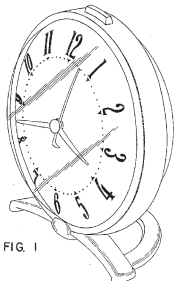


FIG. 2

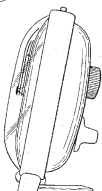


FIG. 3 INVENTOR. ELLWORTH R. DANZ BY



FIG. 4

Richard E. Banta ATTORNEY

<sup>1</sup> Sagvold, Dennis (2004) Legged Alarm Clocks, Schiffer Books .Atglen, PA

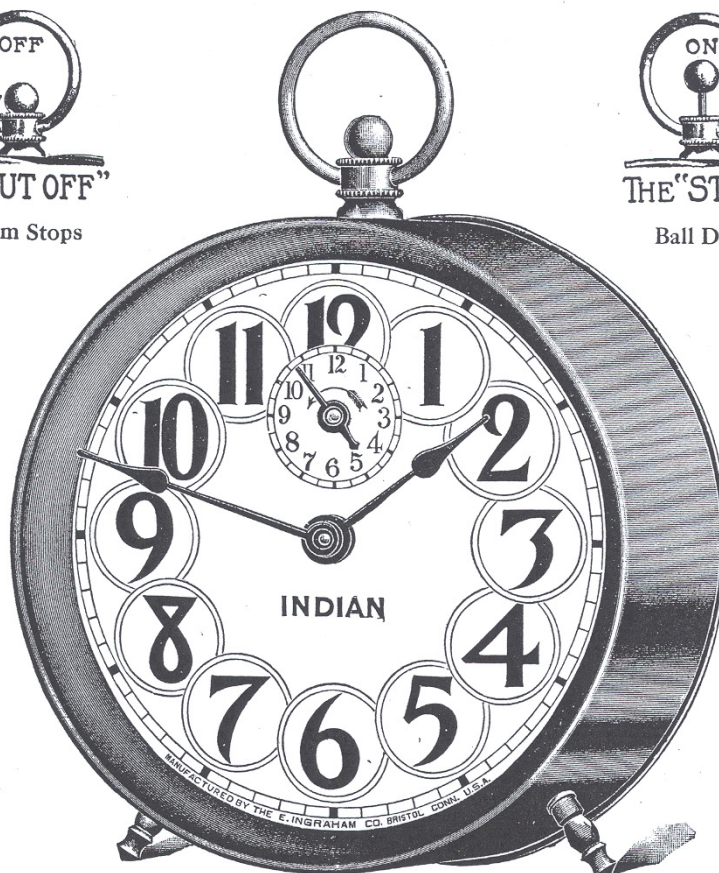
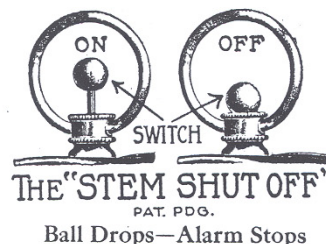
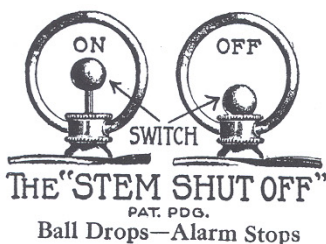
<sup>2</sup> Tjarks, Richard & Stoddard, Bill (2005) "History of Big Ben and Baby Ben Wind-up Alarm Clocks, Howard Banta Alarm Clock Chapter Newsletter, Volume 1 & 2



# THIS IS THE INDIAN

"The Clock With The Bell Inside"

Stem Shut-off




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All jobbers handle  
Ingraham Clocks  
Order The Indian  
from your regular  
jobber.

---

THIS CUT ACTUAL SIZE OF CLOCK

Diameter of case 4½ inches. Nicked and highly polished. Bell enclosed within the case Alarm is released by raising ball on stem. Alarm is stopped by pressing ball down

(SEE CUT AT TOP)

Every clock is thoroughly tested before it leaves the factory and is warranted a first-class timekeeper

Packed 50 clocks in a box, each clock in a separate pasteboard box

Name printed on dial case lots without additional charge

## THE E. INGRAHAM COMPANY

BRISTOL, CONN.

Ads From Yesteryear

kindly submitted by Dennis Sagvold

**SANTA'S ALARM CLOCK**

By  
Roger Royal

Christmas was coming  
At Santa's workshop  
And with billions of presents  
The work never stopped.

The elves were all busy  
Packing the sleigh  
For Santa and Rudolph  
To go on their way.

There were candy canes,  
Hoola Hoops, dollies and blocks  
And for those in the club  
There were rare alarm clocks.

But Santa was tired  
From all of the stress  
So he crawled into bed  
For a Christmas Eve rest.

The elves tried to wake him  
In hundreds of ways  
But 'twas Santa's alarm clock  
That saved Christmas Day!

**The Market Place - Sell It In The Newsletter!**

**Wanted**

Gilbert Clock Company  
"Thin-larm"  
Any Model

Contact Vince Angell  
916-952-4961  
phylathome@hotmail.com

**For Sale**

Ansonia Peep-O'-Day  
With rare Black Dial.  
Original Key  
Ticks but does not run.  
\$50.00

Contact Vince Angell  
916-952-4961  
phylathome@hotmail.com



**Best of Holiday Wishes**



Very Happy Holiday Wishes  
from fellow member Rodney  
Lewis in Australia.

And welcome to new members  
Jan and Jo Barker from  
Victoria Australia.



GREETINGS.  
TO ALL AT CHAPTER 178  
*Merry Christmas  
and a  
Happy New Year*  
from Rod Lewis.  
AUSTRALIA.

**For Sale**

1951 Roy Rogers  
Animated Alarm Clock  
Runs for a short time.  
Alarm spring OK



\$45.00

Contact Vince Angell  
916-952-4961  
phylathome@hotmail.com



Share Your Knowledge

Here is a good example of someone l@@king for knowledge and HBACC members stepping up to help. Thank you Bill and Dick for taking time to help a young college student."

Hi there,

I'm a journalism grad student at Boston University, and I'm doing a piece on the history of alarm clocks. I was thrilled to find your chapter and that there were so many people who took a similar interest in alarm clocks. If you have any time and could give me some background on where your particular interest came from, I would be very much appreciative. I'm primarily focusing on alarm clocks with snooze buttons, and where that originated, but any information or insight you have would be fabulous! Thank you so much!

Have a wonderful weekend,

Brie

Dear Brie,

My name is Bill Stoddard, and I have been interested in Westclox alarm clocks since I was a boy (I am now 51 years old). When I was a boy and stayed overnight at my Grammy and Granddaddy's house, they had a style 5 Baby Ben (made from 1939 - 1949) that they let me use. When I was about 6, my grandparents gave me a style 2 Baby Ben (made from 1927 - 1932). I took it apart and when I tried to put it together, I asked my Dad to help me. I remember him cutting his finger on the mainspring as we tried to wind it back into the barrel. I don't remember what happened to the clock after that! GE made the first snooze alarm, it is shown on this web page:

http://www.telechron.net/eod/7h241.htm

The above page is part of a Telechron history web site that my friend Jay Kennan created:

http://www.telechron.net/main.shtml

On my own web site, clockHistory.com, here is the history of the Westclox snooze alarms (called Drowse by Westclox):

http://clockhistory.com/westclox/products/electric/drowse/index.html

You might also be interested in the history of the world's most famous alarm clocks, the Big Ben and Baby Ben. An outline of their history is on this web page:

http://clockhistory.com/westclox/products/ben/index.html

They made a series of models, first sold in 1910 and continuing until the present. Here is a brief overall history of alarm clocks:

http://clockhistory.com/alarClockHistory/index.html

Good luck with your article, and please let me know if I can be of more help.

Yours truly,

Bill Stoddard

Thank you so much! You have been helpful indeed. I'm sorry to hear about your dad's finger, I will no longer take my digital alarm clock, sans springs, for granted. If you have any time, and could answer a few more questions, I would truly appreciate it. Do you remember what the alarm clocks used to sound like? Was it much different than they are today? Do you know what your grandparents' used to wake up before the Baby Ben clocks became prevalent? What type of alarm clock do you use today, for your own purposes? Also, in general, do you find that you are interested in these clocks because they are little pieces of history or because you like things that they kept things orderly? You must be very punctual with all of the clocks around!

Thanks again!

I hope that you're having a wonderful day,

Brie

Brie,

Before small alarm clocks became popular in the 1880's, many people used the alarm on their shelf clock (a wooden cased clock typically about 22 - 24 inches tall). Many of these were 8-day clocks, but you would wind up the alarm every night. There was no alarm shutoff, and so when the alarm rang, it did not stop until it ran down. These alarms were very loud.

For many years, alarm clocks rang on a real bell. From the 1880's through the 1920's, alarm clocks with one bell on top were very popular. The Big Ben alarm clock was originally designed in 1908, and one of its major new features was that it had a bell on the back. In fact, the entire back of the clock was a bell. That way, a larger bell could be used on the alarm clock, giving it a louder ring. My grandparents always used Big Bens and Baby Bens because they were married about 1925, and Big Bens had been commonly available since 1910, and Baby Bens since 1915.

In 1932, Westclox introduced their “Chime Alarm”. It had the advertising slogan “First he whispers, and then he shouts”. When the alarm rang, it was at first a gentle ding—ding—ding sound. After about a minute, if the alarm was not shut off, it started ringing faster.

In 1949, Westclox introduced the “Moonbeam” alarm clock. It first flashes a light on and off. If that doesn’t wake you, it sounds an obnoxious buzzer after 15 minutes. My personal alarm clock today is a reproduction of the original Moonbeam. You can see some on this eBay page:

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http://search.ebay.com/search/dll?query
=moonbeam+alarm+clock&MfcISAPICommand
=GetResult&ht=1&ebaytag1
=ebayreg&srchdesc=n&maxRecordsReturned
=300&maxRecordsPerPage=50&SortProperty
=M etaEndSort
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I have always liked clocks, ever since I was a little boy. I can’t say for sure why I like alarm clocks, I think I got started because of the collector’s and historian’s urge, which seems to run in my family.

Yours truly,

Bill \_\_\_\_\_

Hello,

My name is Dick Vigal and I am a new member to the Alarm Clock Chapter but not new to alarm clocks. You mention doing a piece on the history of alarm clocks and I can only wish that I had become interested in them when I was your age. I do not consider myself an expert on this subject but I am a collector and I can say that alarm clocks go back many years and I know that I have some in my collection that are from the Civil War period though I do not believe that snooze features such as you are interested in existed at that time. I do have clocks that have an Intermittent alarm that merely rings for a time then shuts itself off and repeats that process. The New Haven Clock Company made an Intermittent Alarm and the earliest patent date I have seen for that clock is Nov 29, 1898. I think there was a race on to develop what would later become known as a snooze alarm around that time. As an example of that I have a Waterbury Spasmodic Alarm and the earliest patent date on that clock is Mar 15, 1898. There were many novel alarms at that time but not in this category. My original pursuit in alarm clocks was in the Western Clock Company, later Westclox, and the Big Ben had a form of snooze alarm in that it featured sliding levers on the case which would give the user the option of a steady alarm or a repeating alarm but here again it was quite primitive and if the owner slept through the first barrage of sheer frightening noise from a bell that encompassed the whole back of the case then he or she was never

going to get up that morning. In the case of the Big Ben I have read of models with a patent date of 1908 but have never seen one. The earliest I have is dated 1911 and shows patent dates back to 1902. The repeating feature was patented Nov 17, 1908 so you can see that all of that initial technology was being produced in the 1890 to 1910 period. I regret to say that my son has borrowed my digital camera and I will not have it for the next several days otherwise I would provide you with pictures of the few clocks I mentioned above. I will try to remember to do that when he returns the camera. In the meantime I wish you well on your project and hope this small bit might help some,

Horologically,

Dick Vigal

### Clocky Updated

A few newsletters ago we introduced you to a very unusual alarm clock : The Clocky®.

“The alarm clock that runs away and hides when you don’t wake up. Clocky gives you one chance to get up. But if you snooze, Clocky will jump off of your nightstand and wheel around your room looking for a place to hide. Clocky is kind of like a misbehaving pet, only he will get up at the right time.”



At that time the manufacturers were still in the preliminary stages of development and are soon to announce when the Clocky can be purchased. All indications are that they will be available the first part of 2007.

If you are interested in knowing when and possibly ordering the “Clocky” you can check it out on the web at [www.nandahome.com](http://www.nandahome.com).

