

The Howard Banta Alarm Clock Chapter



Chapter 178 of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors

www.acc178.org

2008 Volume 1



The Price of Gasoline

Texaco was started in 1901 as the Texas Fuel Company with just 12 employees. With so few employees the folks worked often round the clock. At some of the locations drinking water sold for 10 cents a cup and oil went for three cents a barrel.



As you ramble on through
life, brother,

Whatever be your goal,

Keep your eye upon the
doughnut,
And not upon the hole.

In this Issue

Its hard to keep up with 'Alarm Clock Peter' as he travels over Europe looking for more great finds. This issue has a full article on Peter and his alarms.

We're also pleased to continue our series with Ken Reindel and this issue is dedicated to bushing work.

And of course, more great article 'shorts' submitted by you, our members.

Presidential Election

It takes commitment and dedication to take on the responsibility of this office.


No, not the President of the United States .

We're talking about President of the Howard Banta Alarm Clock Chapter. If you would like to be considered for the office please read how to proceed on page 2 in the 'President's Corner'.

Dues Due

Oops! Have you forgotten to pay your dues?

To ensure uninterrupted newsletters mail your dues (\$15.00) in the envelope enclosed to our Treasurer Mike Wilson.

 These images kindly submitted by Steve Berger of TimeSavers.

Officers and Contacts

Alarm Clock
 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

One of the best Special Interest Chapters and Chapter Newsletters for the NAWCC has been the Howard Banta Alarm Clock Chapter. Over the past few years it has been my proud pleasure to serve you as its President and help to establish it with the help of Mary Maier, Mike Wilson and many participating members to be the best, and only, Chapter specifically dealing with alarm clocks.



I believe now is time to pass the presidency torch to another HBACC member to keep the freshness and vitality of the Chapter and its newsletters at their peak. I will continue to be valuable member of the HBACC, assisting Mary, Mike and the new president whenever and wherever needed.

If you are interested in throwing in your name for the upcoming vacancy, please contact Mary Maier either by email or snail mail by July 15th so that we will have time to conduct an election by possibly the next newsletter.

Thank you,

Vince Angell

You are receiving this newsletter much later than normal. If only our day jobs didn't get in the way of our lives! My apologies to all you members out there for the issues being late.

- the Editor -

Cleaning Tip



Those neat little Micro Fiber cloths are great for cleaning up a clock lens - no lint. Best of all when they get dirty you can just throw them in the washing machine!

They're often given away free with new eyeglasses but they're also sold in many drug stores.

Clock Auction In Sedalia, Missouri

This was my first experience with a clock auction. Sedalia is a two hour drive and we arrived thirty minutes late. The facility was about the size of my church auditorium with clocks hung and displayed on both sides of the room. It was a two day affair so the items were moving pretty fast. The volume of the PA system was about 50 db too loud and the seats were spaced close together. Because my wife and I arrived late I seated my wife and I stood up front to the side. Alarm clocks weren't listed but to my surprise when we walked in they were selling boxes of them. I bought six boxes of them and one sold as a stand-alone for a final price of \$180. In total it came to 39 alarm clocks. I think if I get five of them going I will have more value than what I paid for them. I could only stay two and half hours, but I think I did pretty well at my very first auction.

Jim Davis

Buyer Beware

Don't get too excited when you see an alarm clock - one that you simply must add to your collection. I didn't have the New Haven pictured below in mine. What I really wanted was one with the 'pie crust' bezel. The dial looked great, the case was nice. It would make a



perfect addition to my collection. Must have it - Got it! The minute it arrived I realized that I got too anxious to have this clock. No wonder I didn't have it. Someone put a New Haven dial on an Ingraham clock. Be sure to study these buys. Even a seasoned collector

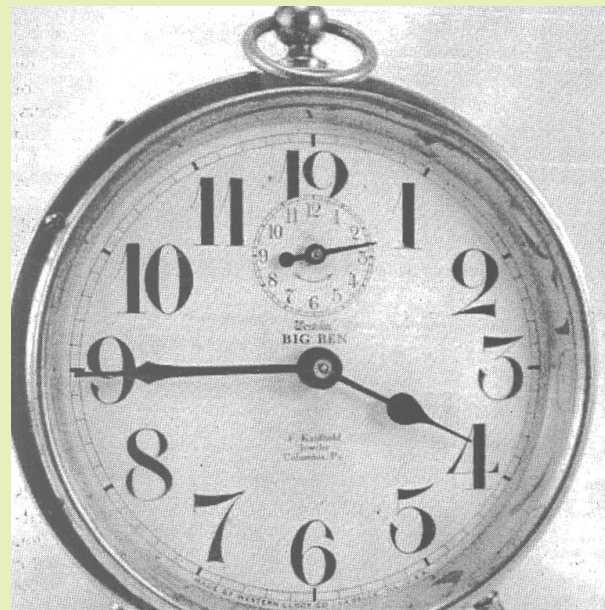
makes mistakes. I'll put an Ingraham dial on it and bring it back to its original condition. If I would have studied the top ring, shut off and legs I would have known it was an Ingraham. After all, it is in my book!

Be Careful
Dennis Sagvold.



Donation to Museum From HBACC

In our last newsletter an update was given on the donation of a Westclox to the NAWCC Museum by the HBACC. As described, the face of this alarm advertises the Columbia, PA Jeweler's store and was kindly donated in the chapter's name by our President, Vince Angell.



Big Ben returns

(Columbia Ledger submitted photo)

The National Watch and Clock Museum is proud to announce that a slice of Columbia has returned home. Recently, the Howard Banta Alarm Clock Chapter of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors (NAWCC) donated an early 20th century Westclox "Big Ben" alarm clock to the National Watch and Clock Museum.

The clock's dial is marked "F. Kauffheld, Jeweler, Columbia." and was acquired by NAWCC member and Howard Banta Chapter President Vince Angell of California who found it in an antique store in Pennsylvania in 2000.

Angell and his wife did some research on the jewelry shop, and discovered that the building that housed the jewelry shop no longer exists.

For years, Angell had talked about donating it to the National Watch and Clock Museum to be put on display for all to see as a local advertisement for the town and to finally live in the town where it belongs.

The National Watch and Clock Museum acquired the clock from Angell on behalf of the Howard Banta Alarm Clock Chapter late in 2007.

"We felt that it was very important for the museum to accept this clock on behalf of the people of Columbia and to ensure that it is preserved and accessible for everyone" said Noel Poirier, Museum Director of the National Watch and Clock Museum.

The clock, now exhibited in the museum's Jewelry Shop exhibit, can be seen by visitors during normal museum hours.

April through November the museum is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 4 p.m. Summer hours include Monday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. December through March hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Discounts are available to seniors, students, AAA members and groups of 10 or more. Groups of 10 or more are encouraged to call ahead. For more information, directions, or general museum information, call 684-8261 or visit www.nawcc.org.

'What Is It?' Continues

From Last Issue Jim Davis wrote:

Has anyone seen this clock before? I'm trying to get more information on it. I think it's related to the tape measure clock. Can you or someone tell me who makes it? All it has is "made in USA patented 1563431, 1709146 and 1848520. When did it come out? The clock and alarm works and you have to set the day of the week and month manually.

*Thank you,
Jim Davis.*

We are pleased to have additional input from fellow members;

The domed clock that is shown I have in my collection and it may have been made by Lux but the movement in that clock is a Westclox movement and that is where it resides in my collection. That same movement was used in several Westclox models including Shelby and Black Knight. Also the same basic movement was in the very common Bingo and other models of the 30's and 40's.

An interesting aside is that domed clock must have been a part of some larger unit because there are three extra holes in the bottom for mounting. The fact that this is a manual calendar clock, ie the date must be changed manually daily, leads one to wonder what the purpose of the clock was. I have seen a number of these over the years but do not know what they were for.

Dick Vigal

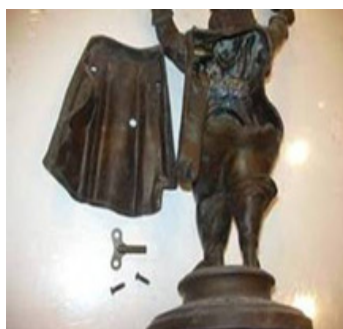


The Market Place - Sell It In The Newsletter!

I have the case to a clock I'm told is called the 'English Bell Ringer'. The figure held a bell in his left hand for the alarm. I'm including pictures of one that's complete. I'm hoping someone can help me find a movement as mine is missing all the parts. My statue is missing everything inside.

Please contact Vince Angell with any information for Don DeMarcus and the Bell Ringer Parts.

Vince Angell phylathome@hotmail.com



Sessions "MAJOR" Model Alarm

Having recently moved to a new home I'm in the process of disposing of the various remaining clock restoration projects I have been collecting for years.

One of these projects, aimed at restoration of a Sessions "MAJOR" model alarm, resulted in the collection of a mover's book carton full of Sessions alarm clock movements, cases and parts plus a lesser number of other alarms. It was my fond hope at the time that I would eventually complete the project, which I now realize is not going to happen.

If there is some one in the chapter who is interested in acquiring this box of parts, I will ship it to the person who can name their own price.

Regards,

Tom Mullett
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419-645-6651
tommullett@AOL.com

GREETINGS FROM ALARM CLOCK PETER

At August end the largest mart for old clocks and watches is held at the German clockmaker school in Furtwangen, Schwarzwald (also known as the Black Forest). The school is actually in the building next to the German Clock Museum in Furtwangen.

For every mart, I've organized an alarm clock collector gathering on Saturday evening in my hotel. All together I host about twenty collectors from Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Austria. People share photos and interesting pieces and of course many stories. The next meeting will be held Saturday August 30th in Furtwangen. Shown here

are some photos of the last gathering. Every year I get the same room in the same hotel. There are wooden shelves over my bed where I display all the alarm clocks I find at the mart for the final photograph (lower left). You can see, my annual visit to the Black Forest makes for a very successful collecting vacation.



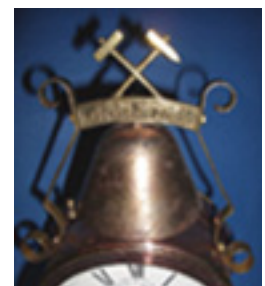
Getting together and talking about our great finds at the mart.



I'm including images of a few of my favorite alarms. The image below is of two German Mineworker Alarm Clocks. Because some of my family members a few generations back were mine-workers, I really enjoy these pieces. One alarm is from Kienzle Schwenningen, Black Forest. The maker of the other is unknown.



Myself (on right) and two collector friends at the 2007 mart were I had a table to sell and trade old alarms and catalogues. We do have great fun at these marts and as you can see, Beer is the beverage of choice in the Black Forest.



I like the old alarm clocks from the Friedrich Mauthe Company (FMS) Schwenningen, Schwarzwald (German Producer) 1844 - 1975. They made beautiful alarms such as the Bobby Alarm Clock and the Jack Bull. As you can see these are

beautiful alarms with animated dials. Mauthe exported worldwide. The company won the Golden Medal at the 1900 Paris World Fair, won again at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, the 1896 World's Fair in Stuttgart Germany, the World's Fair of 1903 in Athens and again in the

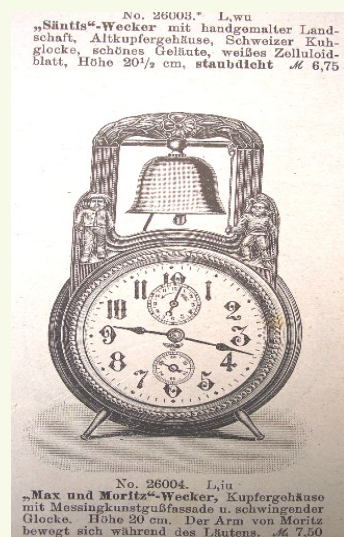


Ad for the Chiming Alarm Shown Below.

A very rough translation is;
Nickle plate over a copper case, decorated with four chiming bells. This is the only chiming alarm clock in existence!



1904 World's Fair held in St. Louis. Mauthe was the largest manufacturer of German clocks between the years of 1904 and 1975. Unfortunately the company was not able to keep up with the changing times and fell into bankruptcy in 1975.

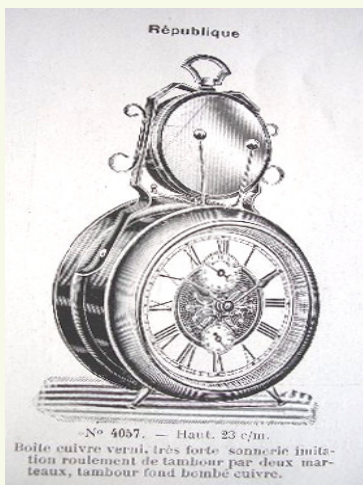


I'm still looking for the two pieces shown in old ads at left and bottom left.

I hope you enjoy a few images of my collection shown at right. Back home, when the topic of my collection comes up and visitors see my displays eight out of nine women ask 'And who dusts for you? Oh your poor wife!' But this is my collection, more than 1000 alarms. So it is only fair that I do the dusting!

Best of wishes and happy hunting!

Alarm Clock Peter



Members Write In

Fellow Member Bill Meehan writes in about Ken Reindel's article of Issue 2, 3 and 4 of 2007 on Restoration of a Baby Ben Movement.

Some comments on Ken Reindel's excellent series on restoring Big and Baby Bens: Page 6 in Volume 4 of the newsletter. These comments are aimed at those members who are new to our hobby (or profession).

On the worn pivot holes, especially the center or minute wheels use a KWM boring tool set to be sure this is accurately centered. I have seen some where the minute hand may drag on the dial or the glass when this is not done. In Westclox the pivot holes are even more critical than other makes.

As to pallet pins, they sure are not easily replaced so I must disagree here. They are usually secured in the spelter metal moldings and once they get loose, they make trouble. (see page 7). Larger ones, as in the old-time Big Ben, can be cemented in with one of the "Krazy Glues" on the market if you can get them perfectly upright before the glue sets. This will work if the pallet assembly is clean and thoroughly dried out first. If it doesn't, you will have to resort to the faithful "junk" box (which is not really junk anymore).

Back to Page 6, alarm set shaft assembly: The larger washer on the underside of the top plate can be overlooked and lost as it is usually stuck to the plate by old grease or oil.

Bill Meehan

And Ken Replies

Bill is right on all accounts except, you know, I can't buy into using KWM bushings or tools. It's for the reasons he states, among others. As discussed in this Issue's article, I have found these to be completely insufficient to do miniature alarms. Of course, it could be argued that someone did one and it worked OK. No question. But when you do a lot of them, you begin to see the folly of it.

On all miniature clock holes, you need to file the wear back to center before opening the hole for rebushing. Then broach open to the desired size, but not until the hole is filed back to center.

I've used glue to fasten replacement pins for the Westclox Big and Baby Bens, but not Krazy Glue. The stuff dissolves in certain solvents. I'd rather use either JB Weld or silver epoxy, which are both impervious to almost everything and blend in with the color of the cast metal. But oddly, you can also solder the pins if you use solder paste and a hot air pencil. I've done this on multiple occasions with perfect results. The trick is to keep the temperature just high enough to melt the solder and no more. If not careful you'll melt the metal along with the solder. Most folks don't have a hot air pencil and solder paste, but if

you do, they're great.

I believe the pallet pins are very difficult to replace for the novice or someone practicing the art periodically. Once you get the hang of it, it's not too bad; but there are definitely easier things one can work on! One of the reasons is that the pins are crimped eg flattened inside the cast metal. Pulling them out is very tough because you have to rip through the cast metal to do it. But they generally come out ok. You have to be careful not to loosen the cast metal button or you'll be gluing or soldering that too.

Bill's right about the little washer and you have to take care not to lose it for all the reasons Bill states.

Keep the comments coming!

Another point to keep in mind with Baby Bens is that often the escape pallet and escape wheel holes are worn to the point of needing attention even if they don't look oval. They don't tolerate much wear before misbehaving. And keep in mind a little wear in each is cumulative when you look at the close tolerance of that escapement.

Kindest Regards,

Ken

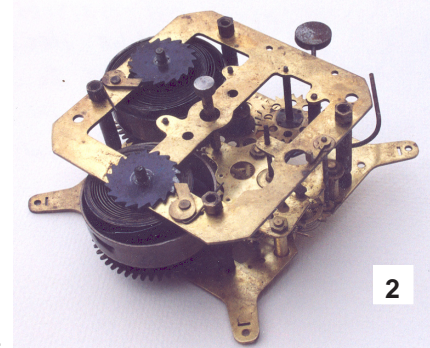
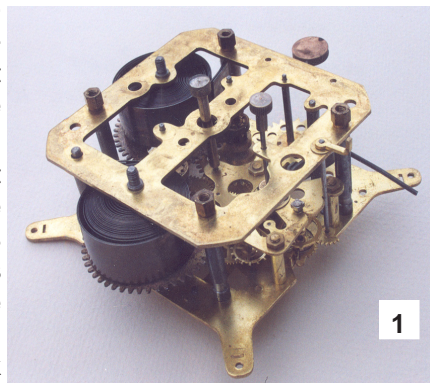
Inside Your Session Alarm

Shown here are two different Sessions alarm clock movements that may be found within cases with the same face. The case is marked 'Patented Dec 31, 1912'.

Image 1 shows a movement winding to the left. Note also that this movement has open mainspring barrels. The click is located outside the movement. In this case the winding knob has to be on tight so the click won't slip off the ratchet wheel.

Image 2 shows a movement with the click attached to the mainspring gear and there's no mainspring barrel. This movement winds to the right.

The only difference in clock case housing these move-



ments is the correct winding arrows are displayed by each winding shaft. I believe movement (1) is the older.

Dennis Sagvold.

Korner

Ken's

Bushing Alarm Clock Plates**

by Ken Reindel*

Smaller clocks, such as alarm clocks or miniature bracket clocks, were generally manufactured with thin plates. An argument can be made that these represented the “cheap clocks” of the era. While low cost was often a factor in the design of these clocks, it is important to note that many of these “cheap clocks” have lasted almost 100 years by the time they limp their way into our shops for repair or restoration. By now, holes are worn and the clocks are in need of numerous bushings.

Almost every clock repair person owns some kind of bushing tool. Different types are available from multiple manufacturers. Most all of them are intended for use with either KWM or Bergeon friction-fit bushing systems. The fundamental principle is the same: ream open a worn hole, size bushing to pivot and plate thickness, press in, broach hole to fit pivot.

In our experience, these bushing tools and systems are not always suitable for alarm clocks. The press in bushing system assumes sufficient area between the walls of the bushing and the plate in order to provide a reliable friction fit. As the plates get thinner, this available friction area vanishes and the reliability of this fit becomes very questionable. See Figure 1.

The other challenge we face with many of these clocks is short pivots. Fitting bushings that extend well beyond the plate, to assure good friction contact, risks the pivot “tunneling” into the new bushing which will tend to prematurely seize up the train. In Westclox units, the pivots are very long, so maybe here we can use the friction method?

Well, not really. I remember story years ago from a good friend and associate in the business of alarm clock repair. He described the repair of a Style 2 Big Ben with a somewhat embarrassing ending. The customer called after receiving the clock (it was shipped via USPS) complaining it didn't work. When the returned clock arrived, my friend was shocked to find that a bushing he had installed had popped out during shipment and was rattling around inside the clock case!

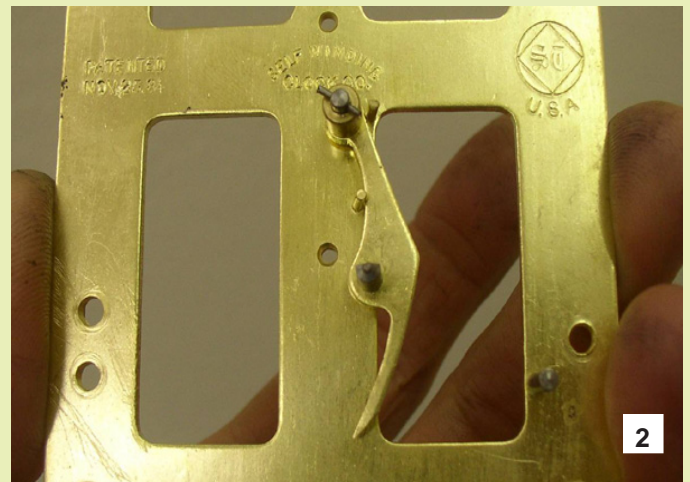
I have seen friction fit bushings “work” their way out over time. I haven't had one fall out, but I have had them unseat and move noticeably. No harm came to the clock in this example but the movement of the bushing was unsettling to

say the least. Again, it happened in an eight day time train with thin plates (about .040” thick as I recall).

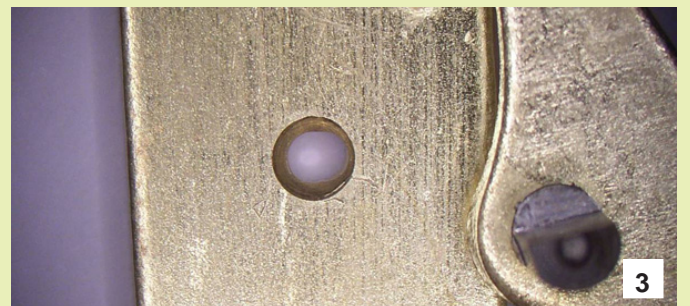
Quite frightening when we consider how many bushings we



Comparison of commercial and custom made bushings
 Left Bushing is from Bergeon.
 Center Bushing is from KWM.
 Right Bushing is custom made.
 All have the same hole size.



This figure shows the second wheel front whole in need of bushing. A clock rather than small alarm is used for this demonstration for clarity of mages.



A close-up of the second wheel hole in need of bushing is shown here. Remember that its important to file the hole to its original center if its at all oblong in shape.

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

(**) Originally presented May 2008 to Chapter 15 of the NAWCC as a Power Point presentation on Bushing Techniques.

install in these clocks.

What furthers the challenge is that the center wheel and main wheels are subject to customer abuse. Clocks can be put back on the shelf and in the process the knobs and keys banged against the shelf or bed stand. I've seen friction fit bushings on these arbors knocked loose; creating a time bomb that costs the main wheel several teeth and destroys the center wheel pinion. In general, friction fit bushings are a recipe for trouble in alarm clocks.

So how do we proceed?

There are those that believe in closing holes. I think this practice yields horrifying results on thin plates—or ANY plates for that matter—and should be avoided at all costs. The repair does not allow closing of highly elongated holes and even in the best case is short-lived. This is not fair to a customer who spends perhaps hundreds of dollars to have a prized miniature clock repaired.

There is another approach that will work, and will work remarkably well.

In his book "Practical Clock Repair," page 26, Donald DeCarle describes a system that can be adapted for alarm clock repair that is very reliable. It requires a watchmaker's lathe and watchmakers staking set (which many of us have for our clock work already) and a little practice. It comes very easily with practice. The only problem is, if you're like me, once you learn it for alarms, you may never go back to using press in bushing systems again—for any of your clock repair work!

By the way, I recommend DeCarle's book to anyone endeavoring in clock repair. His book will teach you the fundamentals of making every basic part in a clock train. The techniques and principles are an absolute MUST for the novice and experienced professional. It is an old book but is a must read.

In his book "Top 300 Trade Secrets of a Master Clockmaker," JM Huckabee describes an adaptation of the method described by DeCarle. Huckabee describes use of this method for rebushing early American kitchen clock movements. The point is, this method is not new. In fact, it is probably one of the oldest methods of rebushing, practiced by craftsmen for centuries. It has one very significant advantage over press in bushings: the finished bushing is nearly invisible to the naked eye if done correctly. I have had clock repair folks look at plates rebushed by me, and say, "You didn't put any bushings in this plate!" I find that to be a very flattering reaction, actually. But then, I have to explain the method to them!

So what is the method?

I'll endeavor to describe my adaptation of this method which I use for ALL clock restoration, with very few exceptions. My KWM bushing tool, once proud on the bench, is now collecting dust on the top shelf, out of sight and reach probably forever.

- Article Continued Next Issue...

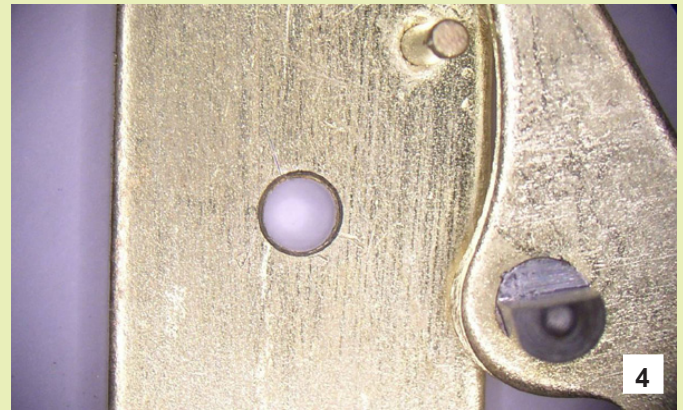
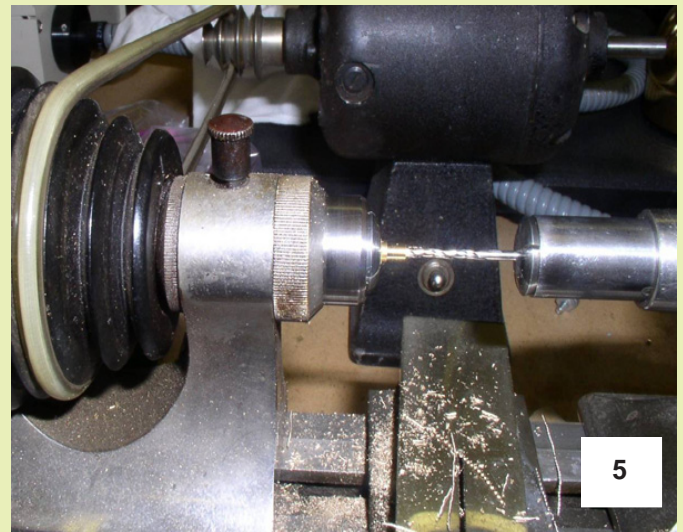
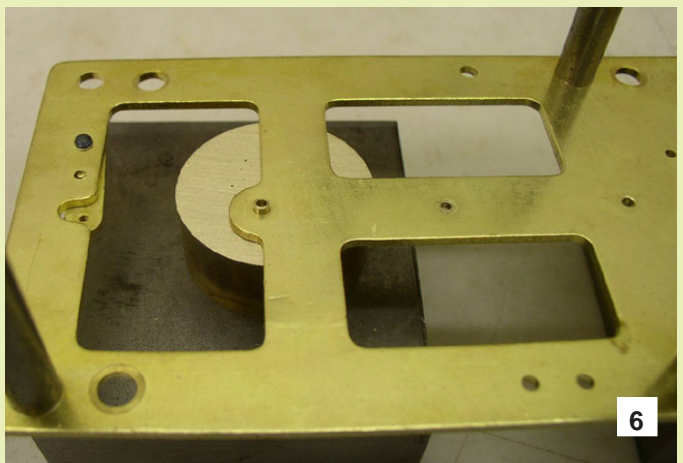


Image here shows the hole filed to center and broached.



Shown here is an image of turning up a sleeve on the lathe.



Shown here is the setup for installation of the bushing sleeve.