

2010 Volume 4  
December 2010

The Howard Banta Alarm  
Clock Chapter NAWCC

# *The Howard Banta Alarm Clock Chapter*



*Chapter 178 of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors*

**OUR MEMBERSHIP YEAR RUNS FROM January 1 to December 31  
IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN CHAPTER 178**

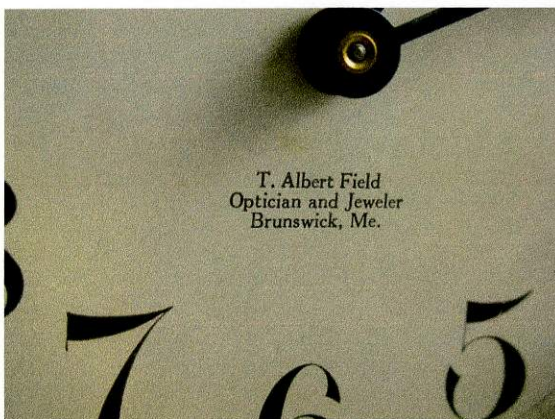
Look for the renewal form in this newsletter and return it to Treasurer Mike Wilson along with a check for \$15.

## **Editor for the newsletter**

We could use an editor for this newsletter. As president I took over the job when Mary Maier could not do it anymore.

It would be nice to have another member step forward to help out the Chapter.

If you can help in this important job please contact me at [rlink3@juno.com](mailto:rlink3@juno.com).



**Vince Angell's Big Ben alarm with label of T. Albert Field, Optician and Jeweler.**



The focus for this edition of the Howard Banta Alarm Chapter newsletter is alarm clocks with the dealers name on the dial. There is also an article reprinted with the kind permission of the Antique Trader magazine.

## 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's newsletter. Please include your name, address, e-mail address and phone number with the article. Although certainly not a complete list suggestion of topics are:

- \* Specific alarm clocks or manufacturers
- \* unique design- movement or case
- \* Special methods of cleaning
- \* Descriptions of interesting repairs
- \* History of manufacturers
- \* Helpful tips on repair

Photos along with the text are always appreciated. Please e-mail to the editor at:

Rlink3@juno.com

Or send article on computer disk (MS Word) via snail mail to:

Robert Linkenhoker  
7186 Calico Circle  
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## President's Corner

### President's Letter for December 2010

I received pictures from Dennis Sagvold, Robert Hensley, Vince Angell, Glen Chambers and Joel Zautner of clocks with dealers names (if you sent pictures and I forgot to mention it please forgive me). Time and space precluded using all the pictures but they are appreciated and many will be used in the future.

On another subject my wife and I attended the Ward Francillon Symposium in Williamsburg Virginia this year. What a wonderful experience it was too. The theme was 'Conservation, Restoration and Repair'. It's interesting to consider these three phrases as related to our common hobby.

**Conservation:** The act of preserving, guarding or protection from loss, decay, injury or violation.

According to the museum people at the symposium they practice conservation over restoration on many pieces, for instance if a rare item is acquired by the museum they may decide to halt any further deterioration of the piece but not do any repair so that the item remains in a state of arrested decay. The argument is if the item is restored to it's original working state much historical data may be destroyed.

**Restoration:** A putting or bringing back into a former, normal or unimpaired state or condition. This may be performed on selected items, particularly ones for which there are numerous examples. In this case the item will be brought back to a condition where it will perform it's original intended function, say keep reasonably accurate time, the clock or watch finish would be brought back to it's original luster and finish and the piece would appear if not new at least in a state that is usable and presentable.

**Repair:** the act, process or work of repairing, restoring to a sound or good state after decay, waste, injury or partial destruction. This of course would be much like a watchmaker or clockmaker bringing a movement back to usable condition without bothering to improve on the case finish, just do the work that is needed. If you missed the event it is your loss and you might want to consider attending the one in 2011. Check the Watch & Clock magazine for time and place

Lastly I want to remind you all we will have a chapter meeting at the Greater Los Angeles Regional in February and invite any at the show to attend.

Till next time: be well, keep on collecting those alarm clocks have a **fabulous Holiday season.**

Bob Linkenhoker

As a retailer of alarm clocks if you purchased a specific number of items (I believe this was a case in most instances although it may have been more) the manufacturer would place your business name and address on the dial. These aren't really that rare but are interesting as they can be a way of determining Jewelers and other retailers in various cities across the country. I have never seen any of these with foreign addresses but they may exist and if so do you have any? This month we will feature pictures of some of these pieces with historical data when it is available.

Editor

This picture and related information was sent by member Glen Chambers:

Westclox and Western history. By Glen Chambers.



At the

North West Regional Mart in Spokane during the month of May 2010, I purchased 3 Big Ben peg leg alarms needing some T.L.C. for a very reasonable sum.

Two of them have since been restored to good

working condition and grace my collection but the third commanded my special interest with an inscription on the dial as follows, Wm. Konick. Jeweler. Corvallis. Or.

Thinking this might be worth investigating, I e-mailed the Benton County Historical Museum in Philomath, asking for any information they might have on this business.

In reply, I have been informed that William Konick established his Jewelry store in Corvallis in 1913 and it continued to operate after his death in 1974. In 1964 Alvin Konick made plans to remodel the store but died in 1967. Then Jean and Robert Konick continued with the store until it closed in 1984

The founder, William Konick was born in Novgorod, Russia on August 14<sup>th</sup>. 1884 and immigrated first to the East coast in 1905 then moved to Corvallis in 1913. He died at age 90.

Because of the history attached to this clock and the kindness of Mary Gallagher, Collections manager of the Museum, the clock has been restored to good working order and is at this time, being offered to the museum for display.

Chapter member Joel Zautner sent the following three pictures. The first an Ansonia with label: A.F. Froeb & Co. Terre Haute, Ind.

name on them.

Ansonia Racket Strike Alarm

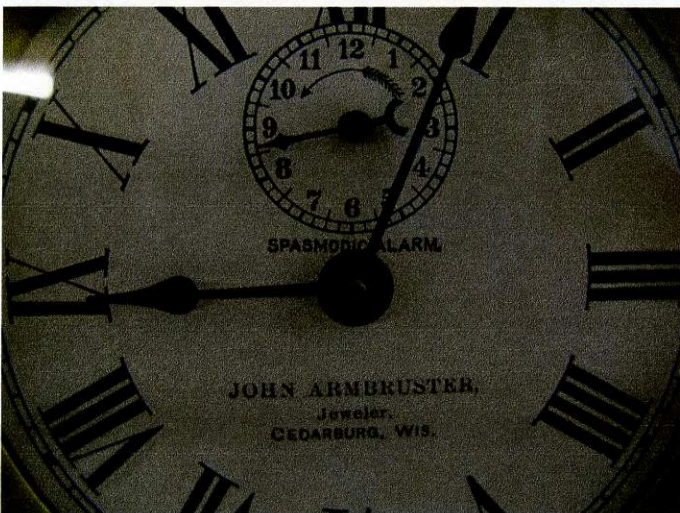
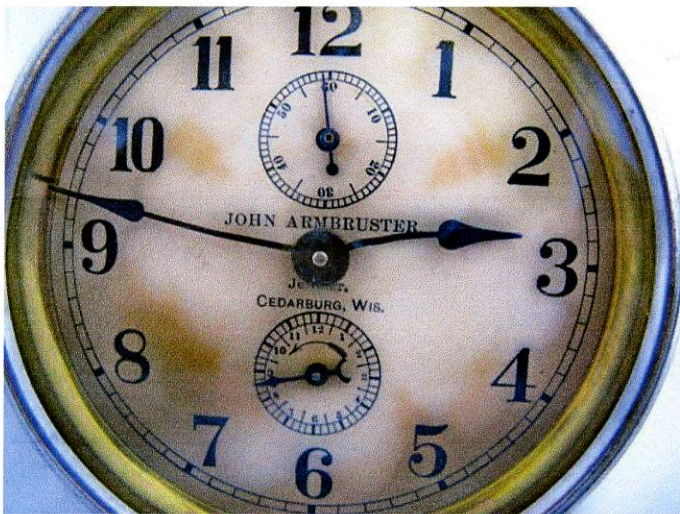


Indiana records show that Albert F. Froeb was born in 1857, married to Eleanora Rottman in 1883. They had 5 children and Albert was still alive in 1930 for the census. No records could be found on his company except he was a jeweler and sold watches, clocks and jewelry.

The next two are Waterbury alarms both with the label:

John Armbruster  
Jeweler  
Cedarsburg, Wis

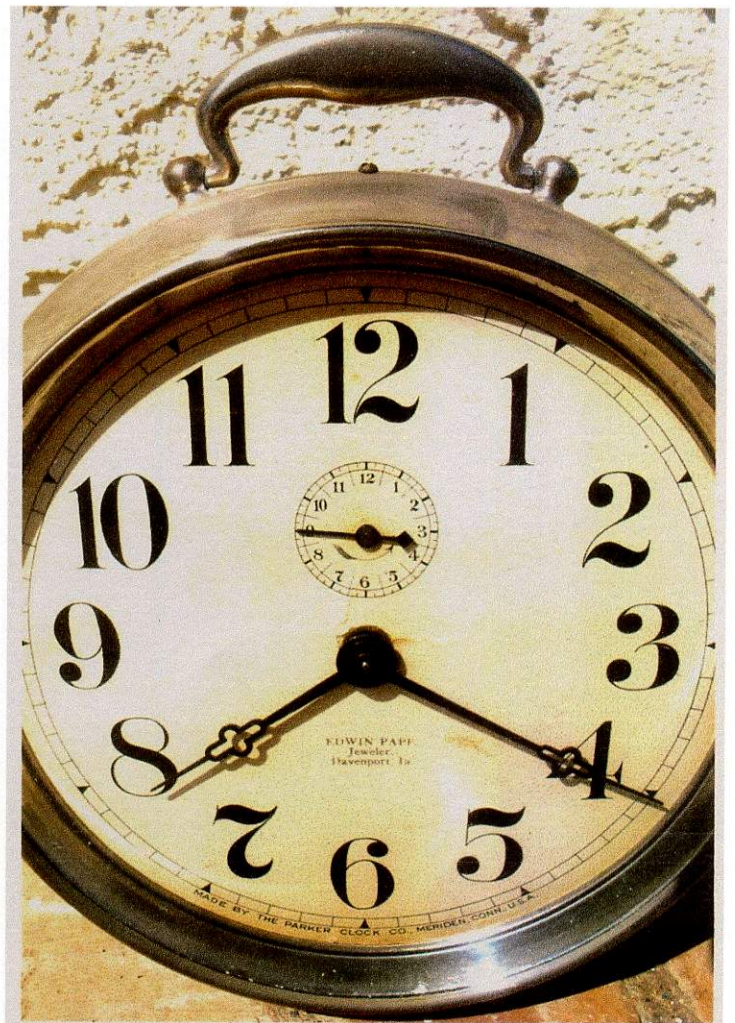
The 1930 census list John Armbruster as born in



1. A Parker alarm with label "Edwin Pape Jeweler Davenport, Ia."

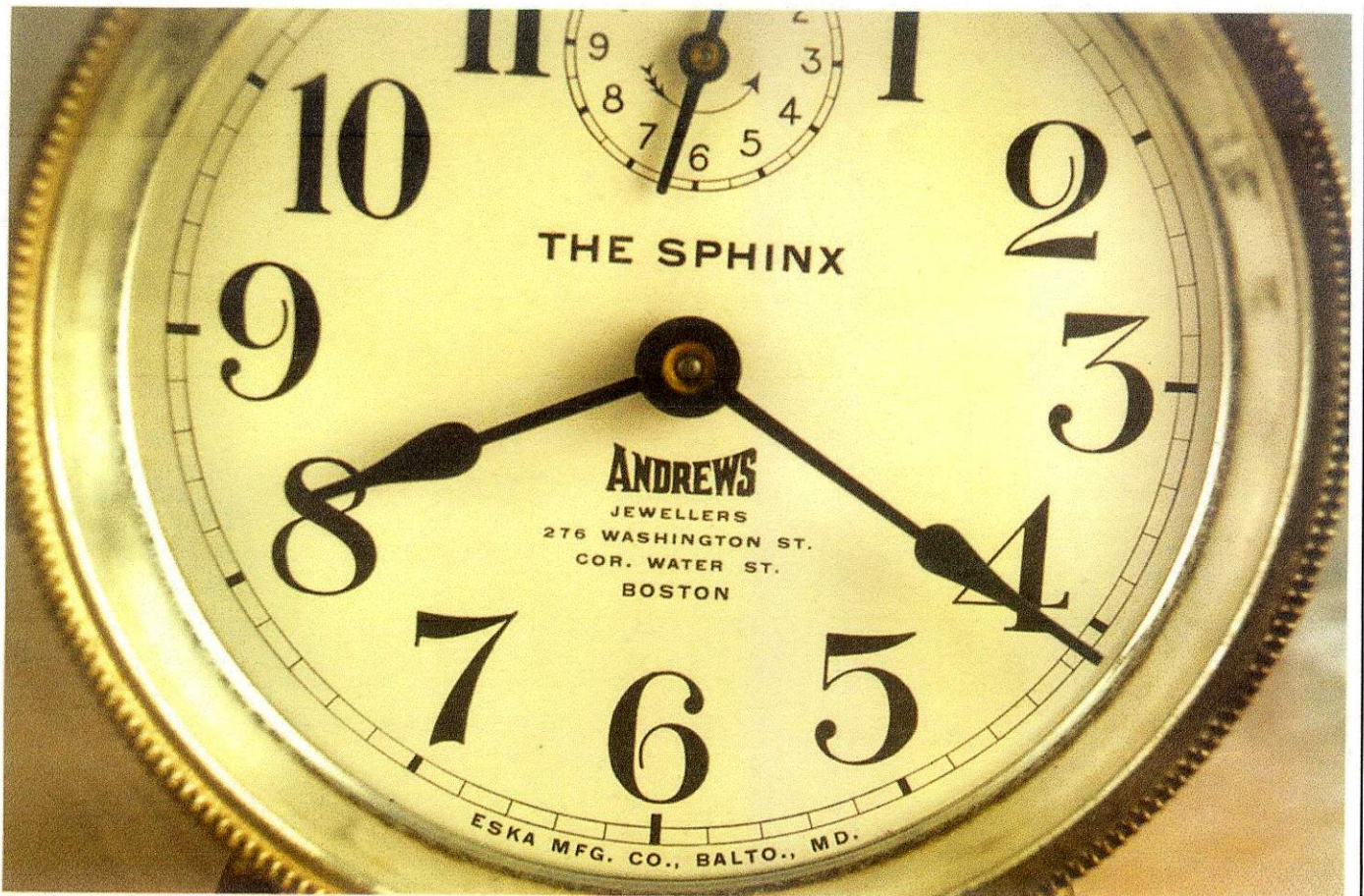
Edwin Pape was born in Davenport Iowa on May 1859. He is listed in the 1920 census as a Jewelry proprietor and in the 1930 census as retired. He and his wife had one son Walter who was listed in 1900 as a watchmaker.

No further information could be found on his business.



Germany in December 1861, a Jewelry store proprietor with his son John S. Armbruster Jr. as a clock repairman in Cedarburg, Wisc. He, the elder Armbruster, was listed in 1900 Census as a watchmaker.

This next picture was sent by Dennis Sagvold author of "Legged Alarm Clocks"



Dennis also sent a picture of a clock with the makers name of ESKA Mfg. Co. Balto., Md. with label:

Andrews  
Jewelers  
276 Washington St.  
Cor. Water St.  
Boston

The only information that could be found relating to the label was in the 1930 census. A Charles Andrews who was 61 years old and listed as a watchmaker.

However the ESKA Mfg. Co. search turned up the article shown on the next page. This was taken for a 1915 American Explorer magazine and since this is a lesser known clock manufacturer, ( or did they have one of the better know manufacturers make the clocks and put their name on the dial? ) the information is included for your information.

Editor's note: I have received a number of pictures of labeled clocks and space has not allowed me to put all of them in this letter. I wish to thank all that sent items and I will be using some of the ones not published here as fillers in upcoming issues.

Also even though I could not get information on many of the companies listed due to time and access constraints those in the cities of the businesses may be able to get further information through their local libraries , Chamber of Commerce or Historical Associations.



## IMPORTERS MISCELLANY



*Food Products, Flour, Lumber, Leather, Bazaar Articles,  
Novelties, Cotton, Jewelry, Toys*

### RETAIL JEWELERS IN CONVENTION.

More than 1,000 members attended the 10th annual convention of the National Retail Jewelers' Association of the United States, which was recently held in New York City. Nearly 75 manufacturing concerns in the jewelry, silverware and allied lines were represented by exhibits. The most notable exhibit was what was called a "Jewelry Fashion Display." The wax models wore gowns which were furnished by one of the large department stores and the jewelry was supplied by one of the leading manufacturers. One model wore a light evening gown in green and white which was adorned with a pearl necklace containing 58 perfectly matched pearls valued at \$600,000 and declared to be the most beautiful necklace in the country. The other ornaments included a diamond collar valued at \$18,000, hair ornaments worth \$2,600, pins valued at \$2,000, and a corsage ornament worth \$15,000. On the second model a dark evening gown was draped and the jewelry displayed included a diamond chain valued at \$3,200, a beautiful lavalliere worth \$4,500, and a pearl necklace with an estimated value of \$35,000. The third model wore a dark travelling suit and was adorned with a small pearl chain valued at \$2,800 and a brooch worth \$700. These gems bore ample testimony to the high degree of originality in skill and workmanship which has been attained by American jewelers.

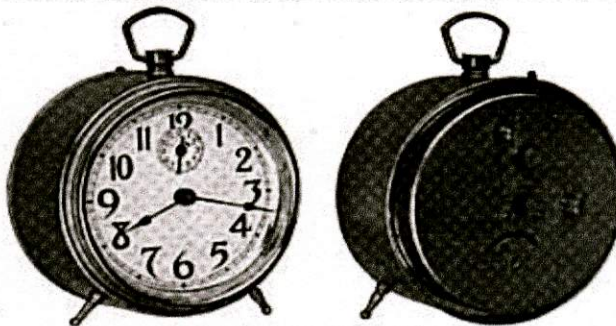
Among the resolutions adopted by the association was one to the effect that the trade and quality mark on jewelry should be placed on the body of the article instead of on the swivels or clasps, where if these pieces were broken off the identity of the article and mark indicating its quality would be entirely lost.

An important feature of the convention was the formation of a Fashion and Publicity Bureau composed of members representing the manufacturing, wholesale and retail classes of the trade for the purpose of carrying on a national publicity campaign to aid in the sale of jewelry.

### ESKA BACKBELL ALARM CLOCK.

The Eska Manufacturing Co., Baltimore, Md., is putting on the market a backbell alarm clock that can be sold at retail for one dollar, allowing the dealer a liberal margin of profit. The backbell is only one of many features that characterize the Eska clock. The clock stands six inches high. The case is made of hand-drawn brass, heavily nicked and highly polished and is seamless. The big backbell has a long, loud alarm with a clear tone that will not fail to arouse the soundest sleeper. The alarm may be shut off at will by means of the shut-off attachment at the back of the case just above the bell. The movement is standard, made of high grade materials, and is scientifically constructed. Among the details of construction which insure efficiency and wearing qualities may be mentioned polished steel pivots, correct pin escapement and hardened steel balance shaft. Each clock is carefully packed in a strong, attractive individual carton. There are fifty clocks in the case. In case lots the dealer's own name and address or trade style can be imprinted on the dials of the clocks which affords him a unique and inexpensive advertising medium as well as a liberal source of profit.

The policy of the company has been from the beginning to stand by its product to the last degree and with this object in view, a printed guarantee and price tag is attached to each clock, which not only relieves the dealer of any responsibility on this score, but likewise assists materially in making the sale to the consumer. The plant has a capacity of 3,500 clocks per day and has been running full force due in a large measure to the large export orders that have



ESKA BACKBELL ALARM CLOCK.  
*Front and rear views. Clock stands 6 inches high. Alarm may be shut off at will.*

been recently received from all over the world. The company also makes the Eska watches, which are sold at retail in the United States at 98 cents. These watches are made up in nickel, gold and gun metal finishes, in both plain and fancy engraved cases. Like other Eska products, the watches are backed up by a strong guarantee.

### SHOE BLACKING.

The Everett & Barron Co., Providence, R. I., manufacturer of the well-known U. N. O. Shoe Blacking, is now putting on the market a 10-cent package of paste polish known as "Trilby" Shoe Cream. This shoe polish is packed in the company's unique and convenient self-opening tin, which opens like a watch case by simply pressing the sides. The cover is hinged to the tin, cannot fall off and closes as easily as it opens. This shoe cream, which cleans, preserves and polishes in one operation, put up as it is in this convenient way, makes an attractive and salable article for the dealer.

The Everett & Barron Co., which manufacture an unusually complete line of high grade shoe dressings, maintains two laboratories in the United States and Canada, where expert shoe polish chemists are constantly experimenting with a view to perfecting its products.

The history of petroleum in the present magnitude of its production, extends back scarcely 60 years. A tabulation which has lately been issued by the United States Geological Survey shows that, beginning with 1857, the United States has contributed between 50 and 60 per cent. of the world's yield during this period, up to and including 1914. Russia is credited with 29 per cent. of the yield. This leaves less than 12 per cent. for all other countries. The total figures in barrels for the United States and Russia are, respectively, as follows: 3,335,457,140 and 1,622,233,845.

This article appeared in the July 21, 2010 edition of the Antique Trader. It is reprinted here with their permission. The Antique Trader can be contacted at [www.antiquetrader.com](http://www.antiquetrader.com)

Collectors always find the time ...  
to scour shows for vintage alarm clocks

### **Debra Tobin**

“Tick tock...tick tock.” For some reason, this is one of the most vexatious and tumultuous sounds that send an unnerving chill up many spines. Some people often bury their heads in a pillow to escape the monotonous sounds and some even throw this object across the room. Not only is the “tick tock” so annoying that it drives you absolutely crazy and sends your blood soaring to the boiling point, but add the blaring sound of the alarm into the equation and there’s a disaster waiting to happen. Yes, it’s the sounds of the every day alarm clock that got the adrenaline running and led to many nights of restless sleep for people in earlier days. While these may have been annoying and troublesome sounds, we must admit we all need an alarm clock to wake us in the morning.

Alarm clocks date back to Plato (428-348 BC) who used what was considered to be a water clock that had an alarm similar to the sound of a water organ. Although there are records showing the use of many clocks considered to be alarm clocks, the first mechanical alarm clock was designed by Taqi al-Din of the Ottoman Empire in 1559. However, New Hampshire native Levi Hutchins created the first mechanical alarm clock in the United States. Made to only ring at 4 a.m., he made this alarm clock for his own use in 1787. Sixty years later, Antoine Redier, a French inventor, was granted the patent for the first adjustable mechanical alarm clock.

Alarm clocks have many purposes other than waking us during morning hours. They are often used for naps or as a reminder of something coming up during the day such as meetings or breaks. A basic vintage alarm clock is similar to other clocks other than it has an extra hand that is used to set the time to activate the alarm. The obnoxious sound of the older style alarm clocks was achieved by a clacker moving back and forth between two bells or between the sides inside a single bell. The clacker got its motion from a main-spring driven gear.

Although many considered the alarm clock to be annoyingly loud, production was in high demand in the United States until the onslaught of World War II. Like most consumer goods during war time the production of alarm clocks ceased in the spring of 1942. Due to a discerning shortage of alarm clocks, production resumed two years later. This was due in part to older clocks wearing out or breaking down, causing workers to be late or miss their scheduled shifts in jobs crucial to the war. Overseen by the Office of Price Administration, clock companies started producing new clocks, some with previous or pre-war designs and some with new designs. Soon the clock industry became known as the first “postwar” consumer goods to be made before World War II ended.

During the 1940s the radio alarm clock was invented by James F. Reynolds as well as Paul L. Schroth Sr. However, the Office of Price Administration remained in control of the regulations as well as the pricing.

Throughout the years, alarm clocks have changed (for the better, of course). While some of us still use the loud and obnoxious alarm clock from days of our past, others have resorted to the soothing sounds of the digital alarm clock. The digital alarm clocks feature a radio alarm or beeping or buzzing alarm, which allows the sleeper to awaken to music or news rather than the blaring sound of bells ringing. Most digital alarm clocks also have a snooze button which allows the sleeper to catch a few more winks before rising for the day.

Vintage alarm clocks are still in demand by many collectors. Alarm clocks of every kind and style can be found at Scott Antique Markets in Ohio and Georgia. Shoppers will find every name brand and style from Westclox to Waterbury clocks, as well as many other designs. Terri Osborne and Kathy Stantz of Mansfield, Ohio are two antique vendors who collect and sell vintage alarm clocks at the Ohio market. Little did

these two women realize that a little day trip to an estate auction would soon change their career path and lead them into an unforgettable adventure of the past.

Although the two women have only been dealing in vintage alarm clocks for a short time, they have over 2,800 alarm clocks in their collection. Most were purchased at the estate sale and date back to the early 1900s. According to Osborne, 90 percent of the clocks are in working condition. On their first trip to an auction the women hauled away 200 clocks. They were soon invited back and bought the whole "kit-and-caboodle" according to Stantz. Their final "haul" consisted of alarm clocks, travel clocks, mantel and anniversary clocks for a grand total of 2,700 clocks. Not bad for a day's worth of work.

Most of their clocks sell from \$10 to \$40. Osborne said, "A lot of people buy just for the look or to add to a current collection, but we find a lot of people purchase to actually use the clock on a day to day basis." Why do people collect vintage alarm clocks? Osborne added, "To use, but it can certainly become addictive!"

According to the women, Westclox and Waterbury clocks are very popular with collectors. Osborne added, "I can't really say one is better than another but it really is hard to beat the reliability of a Big Ben by Westclox. They are made to last!"

The Big Ben alarm clock movement was first patented in 1908 by the Western Clock Manufacturing Company (known as Westclox after the company shortened its name to Western Clock Company). The movement has a bell back design, which means the bell mechanism is inherent or essential to the clock's case.

The Big Ben was first marketed in 1909 and was the first alarm clock advertised nationally with ads in the Saturday Evening Post. Westclox soon became a name well-known throughout the country, associated with only the finest-quality alarm clocks. Westclox, the trademark of the company first appeared on the backs of the Big Ben clocks in 1910.

Big Ben and other "Ben" alarm clocks are synonymous with the 13 ½ ton bell in the clock tower of Britain's House of Parliament. The bell was named after Sir Benjamin Hall, London's Commissioner of Works in the late 1850s.

Be sure to look for Osborne and Stantz at the Ohio Scott Antique Market with their many "vintage" alarm clocks and other collectibles. Whether it's a Big Ben, Baby Ben or other design or style of alarm clock, you are sure to find it at Scott Antique Markets.

For more information on Scott Antique Markets, visit our website at [www.scottantiquemarket.com](http://www.scottantiquemarket.com) or call 740-569-4912. ■





*Above, these are just a few of the different designs and styles of vintage alarm clocks in Terri Osborne's and Kathy Stantz's collection*



*Spare parts are a plenty for vintage alarm clocks at the Scott Antique Markets.*



*Dealers Terri Osborne and Kathy Stantz maintain an inventory of more than 2,800 alarm clocks. Most of their clocks sell from \$10 to \$40.*