

Heart of America Chapter

Midsummer Report, 1961

Dear Chapter Members:

As is the custom, all good things have to come to an end, and so it was with our vacation; but we have many remembrances of the wonderful time while it lasted and these will carry us through until the next time. Perhaps this sounds familiar. To tell the truth, these are the exact same sentiments that have been echoed at the last several Chapter Meetings...they always end too soon, we can't wait until the next one, but we have plenty of new ideas to work on and try out.

LET'S LOOK AT THE FUTURE----

As everyone knows by now, the National Convention is to be in California July 5th, 7th, and 8th. To quote a letter from the Secretary of Southern California Chapter; The first and most important thing is that as many of you as possible be here. We realize that for many of you, California is a long way off. We who live here made it though, and so can you. (You may not believe it, but a Native Californian is one of the rarest living things!) California has a unique characteristic all of its own--- nothing out there, with few exceptions, originated here...it had to be imported from somewhere else in the Country. That is true with the tremendous collections of clocks. Nowhere else will you see Early American (most of us can afford to buy the good eastern clocks), Japanese oddities (we have easy access to these), and European rarities (somehow these come direct to California bypassing the easy grasp of the big Eastern Collections) as you will see on the West Coast. Although there are not as many collectors as the East boasts of, the collections on the West are just as big, just as rare, and as a whole, better displayed. To be short, the West really has it.

Quoting again; "While we expect to have the largest exhibit of any Convention so far, we still need your favorites to make it even larger. We will have plenty of room, so don't be bashful!" The offer has been extended to send exhibits to them, fully insured, and they will be properly tagged, and you will be represented even if not in person. But note all of you who have things you want to buy and have to sell something in order to get it in: "We also expect to have an enormous Mart, and your items will be part of it, so bring everything! There will be Mart attendants to help you." Don't sell these boys short. The West has some of the best salesmen in the World...else how would they get so many people "going West" as the saying goes. They know how to sell, and can do a real job for you if you will only send them out your "for sales" and the prices you want. Better still, go out yourself and take them along and let the "boys" really show you in person how they operate.

As for the icing on the cake, besides all the other attractions they are planning, "We are going to have lots of prizes for drawings, contests, and other things...because everyone likes to win!" See what I mean, these boys are real salesmen...they can almost make you "see" the excitement and enjoy the fun already, and it still is yet several weeks till Convention Time. Your Secretary has been there, and can tell you for a fact that you will see things, enjoy yourself, and meet some of the most hospitable people in the world, more so than anyplace else in the World. Isn't this a grand, big, old free Country? Where else could we have so much fun?

STILL LOOKING AT THE FUTURE, BUT IN OUR OWN BACKYARD----

August 13th, the Second Sunday of August, will find us all meeting at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Richard Camden, 9814 Kentucky, Independence, Missouri. There will be a map as to the easiest routes to reach their home in the August Report, as well as full details of the Meeting. They have opened their home to us both for the Meeting that day as well as an Open House. So please mark your calendar now and make your plans. The summer will be drawing to a close, and everyone will want to show off their new acquisitions. There will be ample room for exhibits so bring along the new, rare, unusual things you have added and "share" them with all of us. That is the fun of collecting.

OUR PRESIDENT REPORTS---

Our Secretary finds himself with a lengthy Report this month so will make my remarks brief. As all of you know, our August Meeting will be held at the home of the Camdens. Unfortunately for the Bruers we will not be in attendance--we hope to be enjoying a well earned vacation. I know all of you will enjoy the hospitality and the nice clocks you will find in the Camden's Home.

We haven't as yet retrieved some of the members who failed to reinstate themselves when dues were due and payable this year. Also, our Secretary informs me we have some interested collectors on the verge of joining but who as yet haven't made the final decision.

Our Secretary found some beautiful clocks while on vacation, mostly all calendars, and these, added to the ones he already had, makes an outstanding group of calendars. I would like to advise everyone to see these clocks the next time you are up this way.

I know all of you will have a fine Meeting and we will be thinking of you.

Bill Bruer, President

CHUCKLE CHUCKLE---

"Nothing is ever all wrong. Even a clock that's stopped is right twice a day."

SPEAKING OF TRAVELING---

Once more the Traveling Chapter is on the go. In the past two months, Mr. Walking reports that he has acquired over 60 new clocks, and had a wonderful vacation in Colorado. He managed a visit to Hagan's Clock Manor and reports that this is a wonderful place to really lose one's self. The Vandervort's are planning a trip to the West during the Convention, and we are anxiously awaiting their early report of how things go. The Ervin Smith's have just returned from a vacation to Denver, and the Bruers are busy planning one that same way. We, the Wagner's, have returned from the East and the many outstanding collections that-a-way including that rare collection of the National Secretary, Earl Strickler. Calvin Peck and family returned from their trip through Fort Scott, Kansas, and reported seeing a wonderful collection there. As for Mr. & Mrs. Bryant, they had a ball in Arkansas seeing the sights and collecting. To make a long story short, everyone has been so busy seeing and going, that they find it nearly impossible to write to anyone. We do have fun...don't we!

AS FOR OLD REMEMBRANCES---

Mother's Day, May 14th, was indeed a day to be remembered. Our Meeting began at 8:10p.m. that lovely day with over thirty members present including guests from Excelior Springs, Kansas City, and other points. Mr. Bruer presented the new blackboard to our Chapter which was made and donated by Mr. Ervin Smith, who was unavoidably detained from making this Meeting. Mr. Bryant will present the Program at our August Meeting, the next coming meeting. Since he missed the previous meeting and the discussion as to the proposed repair of the Twin Tower Clocks of the Fidelity Bldg., he inquired as to the results of the Committee's Report. Mr. Bruer ably summed it up as follows: 1st, it was extremely hard to get to the clocks; 2nd, the damage done to the clocks in removing different parts so that the new elevator motors could be put in was extensive; 3rd, the Building was to be sold and the new owners might want to electrify the clocks, if they even want to keep them; and 4th, the twin towers each had a separate clock and it's almost impossible to keep them running together. In short, at this time, the job needed seems to be almost prohibitive.

During the course of discussion, someone came up with the crack that you had to be a little nutty to really gain the full benefit from collecting such crazy things as clock and watch collectors collect, to which the immediate spontaneous reply was:

"You know why we are all here---because we are not quite 'all-there'." Volunteers were called upon to provide door prizes for the coming meetings, and the Camden's offered to have the next meeting--the August Meeting--at their home, as well as the Open House that Sunday. The drawing for door prizes that day found the following lucky winners: Mrs. Williams, Mr. Dickinson, Mrs. Wegner, and Mrs. Carroll Thomas. Mr. Blair had brought along the discarded handsaw blades he has from his shop that can be used to make verges, etc. The members were happy to get them and appreciated his generosity very much.

But the Program this time was most interesting. Mr. Bruer had recently had an accident at work and seriously burned his one hand, arm, entire side and leg, and part of his back. It was painful for him to even move, let alone assume the leadership of such an active Chapter as we have. But regardless, that day he went through the complete procedure of bushing a wooden works clock without dismantling it. He showed the members the complete bushing procedure, and the tools he had made to make the job so simple. He makes it look so easy. We are very appreciative of the ideas and suggestions he made that day, and hope the members will find it useful in their repair work. The hostesses that Meeting were Mrs. Motley and Mrs. Bryant. It was surprising the number of "seconds" and "thirds" the members returned for, the many varieties of cookies, cupcakes, and the coffee that these ladies had prepared. Its easy to see why Mrs. Bryant listed as her hobby, Cooking. Also the Motleys deserve a "thanks" for the coffee and coffee urn they provided, as well as the pictures of the April Meeting which we hope will appear in the August Bulletin, as do the Thomases whose pictures of that May Meeting will also appear. Talking about having fun, we sure have been having it. The Westerners are going to have to go some to beat our Chapter Meetings.

FORSALES---

Mr. Dale Henry has acquired numerous convex round glasses to fit in the bezels of clocks or for repairing broken alarm glasses, and is offering them very reasonable. Sizes range from 1-7/8 inches to 6-1/4 inches in diameter and he has them in all sizes inbetween, all round glasses convex in shape. He also has several extra cone shaped 30-hour weights similar to those which fit in OG and Pillar 30-hr. weight clocks. They weigh from 2-3/4 to 3 lbs. Contact Mr. Dale Henry, 5444 Neosho, Kansas City, Kansas.

NOTES ON SOME FAMOUS WATCH AND CLOCK COLLECTIONS

by R. F. Perotti

In the East, beginning with New Hampshire, at Georges Mills, N. H., is the Collins Museum of Clocks, displaying the Clarence D. Collins collection of clocks. Here can be seen a "visible escapement Terry", also a Daniel Gale calendar clock, invented by him in 1865 and considered to be early in American horology for this type of clock. At Boston, Mass., there is an excellent collection of clocks and watches at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, including a fine group of Simon Willard clocks. In nearby Waltham, at the Waltham Precision Instrument Company (formerly the Waltham Watch Company) 221 Crescent Street, is the Franklin Dennison collection of watches. This collection was formed by Franklin Dennison, son of Aaron Dennison, founder of the Waltham enterprise, and was bequeathed to the company in 1934. The collection comprises 373 watches, some dating back to 1585; in it is a dumb (no ball) repeater, made by the celebrated Daniel Quare. The collection is the third largest in its field and is valued at \$250,000!

The American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass., possesses a collection of early American watch papers. The Essex Institute at Salem, Mass., displays a very fine collection of clocks, including the collection of clocks and watches formerly owned by Charles Mifflin Hammond; in the exhibition is a Silas Hoadley, a "watchman's clock" made by Aaron Willard, and a good selection of Seth Thomas clocks. At the Berkshire Museum, Pittsfield, Mass., is the watch and clock collection of Dr. Willis I. Milham, professor of mathematics, astronomy, horologist and prolific author--his most notable work of horologians being TIME AND TIMEKEEPERS, first printed in 1923. Dr. Milham was

also an outstanding authority on puzzles; in 1955 he presented his collection of puzzles to the Franklin Institute of Philadelphia, together with his books on puzzliana to the Institute's Library, a gift that helped to form what is probably the greatest collection of literature on this subject in the United States.

The American Clock and Watch Museum is located at Bristol, Connecticut, and is devoted exclusively to American horology. Its purpose is to preserve and display examples of American clocks and watches, memorabilia of their makers and to record horological history. Nearby, in Terryville, is the Eli Terry, Jr., water wheel built in 1824 to operate the shop of Eli Terry, Jr., for whom the town is named. The massive wheel is sheltered and opened to the public under the auspices of the Bristol Museum.

In New York, in addition to the Morgan-Hearn-Morociani collections of clocks and watches at the Metropolitan Museum of Art; the James Arthur collection of clocks and watches is on display at the Gould Memorial Library on the campus of the New York University at Washington Heights in the Bronx. Here is a fine display of American clocks made by William Clagett, Aaron & Benjamin Willard, David Rittenhouse, Thomas Harland, Daniel Burnap, Eli Terry, Silas Hoadley and others, and, of course, the famed collection of watches. Together with these collections are others on sundials, mathematical instruments, watchmaker's tools, watch papers and some rare horological books. In New York too, are several of the famous Seth Thomas tower clocks, it was that company who made the Colgate Clock on the Jersey side of the Hudson River and known as the biggest clock in the world. The minute circle of this clock is fifty feet in diameter and the hands weigh one ton each. The company also made the clock on the Paramount Building in Times Square, the clock in the tower of the Consolidated Gas Company on 14th Street, and the Grand Central Station clocks.

At the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia is what is believed to be the best horological library in the United States, the Institute has been gathering books on clocks and watches since 1826; recent notable acquisitions have included a group of early works bequeathed by G. W. Cook, books on dialing presented by H. E. Gillingham, numerous books and pamphlets were given by H. E. Gilpin, and Robert Franks, Joseph Sternfield and various other members of the National Association of Watch and Clock collectors have made recent contributions. At the University of Pennsylvania Museum in Philadelphia, in its American Section on Arts and Industries, are some noteworthy early American clocks, including some made by David Rittenhouse and Aaron & Simon Willard. David Rittenhouse was an astronomer, scientist, and early American clock-maker. He was born in 1733 and in 1769 in order to observe the transit of Venus he constructed what was probably the first astronomical observatory in America. He made two famous orreries, surveying and astronomical instruments, and clocks, only about forty of his clocks are in existence. The Willards need no introduction here, as they are already well known.

In Washington, D. C., at the Smithsonian Institution (National Museum) several hundred watches are on exhibition, together with a fine collection of early and modern sundials. The watches are nearly all examples of early American watches and include a Luther Goddard (circa 1809), one of the first watches manufactured in the United States of which only six are known to exist. The Institution also possesses watch No. 1 made by Howard, Davis & Dennison, a company that later became the Waltham Watch Company. The watch was made in 1850 and was the first model made by that company, about "30" size and designed to run eight days using two mainsprings. Watch No. 1 was Mr. Howard's personal watch, but it was not put into production. However, a 36-hour English lever type was developed and by 1853 nearly 900 watches were made of this model.

Not too far north of Washington, at Columbia, Pa., is the Strickler Museum of Horological Antiquities, Mr. Strickler being the editor of our own wonderful Bulletin. The Strickler Museum is presently featuring the Horolovar Collection of Old and Unusual 400-day Clocks (1890-1910), each clock having some unusual feature. The collection includes two clocks with duplex escapements, one operating on a combination of a torsion and helical spring and others with especially designed compensating pendulums.

Still farther north, at Newark, New York, on display at the public Library in that City, is the Augustus L. Hoffman clock collection. Here can be seen another "visible escape-ment Terry", two early lantern clocks, an ornate Friesland, some pillar and scroll clocks and two unusual Japanese clocks. In New York state too, in Middletown at the Mitchell Inn, is the Mitchell Inn Collection of Clocks.

At Pittsburgh, Pa., in the Carnegie Museum the H. J. Heinz collection of watches is on display. The prize item in this exhibition is a gold enameled musical watch with animated figures by an unknown manufacturer but believed to be of French or Swiss origin. The face of this watch is an enameled woodland scene with a village in the distance, the human figures, in vari-colored gold, are activated when the mechanism is set in motion...a woman grinds a barrel organ accompanied on the tympani by a boy in the foreground and a boy and girl dance to the music. At Dearborn, Michigan, is the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village. At the Museum we find Mr. Ford's famed collection of watches and throughout the Village are many items of early Americana, including many clocks.

In Chicago are two of the most noteworthy watch collections. At the Art Institute of Chicago is the fine collection of Paul M. Chamberlain, author of IT'S ABOUT TIME, and horologist par excellence. Here are displayed many rare and prized watches, including a musical watch made by Breguet. At the Chicago Science Museum is the James W. Packard Collection of Unusual and Complicated Watches. This is the collection willed to the Horological Society of America (Indianapolis, Indiana) and was on display at the Smithsonian Institute but was removed to the Chicago Science Museum during the War for safekeeping where it is still on exhibition. The watches in the Collection comprise the highest technological skill and precision ever attempted in watchmaking. One of the watches in this collection was made to order for Mr. Packard and cost him nearly \$16,000. although it is housed in a simple gold case.

A most unusual and complicated watch in this Collection is an astronomical watch made for Mr. Packard by the Patek, Phillippe & Company of Switzerland, manufacturers of high grade watches. The watch is in an open face case, the face containing five separate dials, the largest dial for the regular hours and minutes, a dial to indicate the Moon's phase and the month of the year, a dial to show at what time of day the sunset will occur, a dial with three hands, one indicating the day of the week, the other the day of the month, and the third hand designating the seconds. The fifth dial shows at what time the sun will rise.

Thus this watch not only tells the regular time, that is, mean solar time--the time we go by, but also true solar time or the time that might be told on a sundial. The difference between mean and true solar time and their calculation is called "Equation of Time" which this watch automatically performs. Time's equation is shown on the largest dial and an extra minute hand, with a "sunburst" symbol, indicates it. At the back of the case of this watch, on an inside cover-aperture, is a celestial chart exposed showing 500 stars according to magnitude; this chart is used to designate star-time or sidereal time. The watch was made for Mr. Packard in 1922, and in this day and age it might well be considered an antique in comparison to what the modern aeronaut might need on his flight to the Moon!

Here in Kansas City, in the Venetian alcove at the Nelson-Atkins Art Gallery and Museum is a display of four enameled watches. They include an 18th Century French watch delicately enameled in blue, green and other colors with a miniature of a regally looking lady; an 18th Century Swiss watch in the shape of a cross richly enameled in various colors; a 19th Century Russian watch in a gold case enameled in blue with a diamond border; and a 19th Century French watch in the shape of an egg enameled in green and gold. In the Burnap Room is a calendar clock made by Bernart Seale, Dutch, and made about 1700. In the American Wing is a grandfather clock, made by the first great American clockmaker, Simon Willard. It was made expressly for Mary Hill of Sherborn, Mass., whose name appears on the dial. In this room also is a Washington clock made in France shortly after the Revolutionary War.

