

Chapter 89 NAWCC
March 18, 2017
Meeting Minutes

Date and Location The second meeting of our 49th year was held on Saturday, March 18th, at the Brunswick United Masonic Lodge #8. Members and guests arrived for coffee and conversation during the social hour, and a good-sized Mart this time took up several tables.

Call to Order, Attendees The Lodge kitchen volunteers were not able to prepare a luncheon for this meeting, due to an injury. With some last-minute ingenuity, VP Tim Martel arranged to make available a selection of sandwiches from a deli nearby in town. The food was very good, and everything worked out nicely, except that Tim Martel was not able to stay for the meeting. President Harry Hepburn called the business meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

Guests and New Members Guests this time included Dave Roberts from Chapter 8 in Massachusetts, who attended with John Paynter and helped with his presentation. Also, Phil Carthage introduced Larry Curtis from Waldo, who is involved in his local historical society and is interested in watches.

Secretary's Report The Minutes from our January meeting were approved as written and mailed out by Mark.

Treasurer's Report Bruce reported that he is still having trouble with the Chapter computer and software programs, but that there is approximately \$5000 in our account.

Announcements Harry and Jim Lea explained the new raffle fund-raiser that Jim had brought to the January meeting. A jar that contains some lengths of clock chain can be examined (not opened!) by anyone who wishes to make a guess as to the total length, in feet and inches, contained in the jar. Guesses will cost \$1 each, and there is no limit to the number of chances that anyone can take. The actual result will be revealed at our November meeting, and the proceeds will be divided 50:50 between whomever has the closest guess (without going over) and the Chapter.

50:50 Drawing The first place drawing was won by Cal Morgan, who generously donated his winnings back to the Chapter. This inspired Dave Roberts, holding the second-drawing ticket, to keep only part of his prize and donate the rest. Thank you to both!

Show and Tell John Paynter had attended the Florida Mid-Winter regional meeting, and had found an interesting iron-cased time and strike movement with a balance wheel escapement. The clock was labelled "Reliance Automatic Lighting Company", and the strike side of the clock turns on and off a heavy electrical switch. John suspected that the clock looked like a New Haven manufacture.

The business meeting was adjourned at 12:45.

Program: Several members gave mini-presentations

- A) John Paynter brought some large diagrams to explain and discuss Suspensions for pendulum clocks. He drew examples of single spring and double spring suspensions, the older silk thread

arrangement, and also the “trapeze” mechanism often found on cuckoos. To maintain best function, suspension springs that have any kinks or bends should be replaced.

John mentioned that pendulum wobble is a common fault with clock adjustment. He stressed that to maintain the smoothest pendulum action, the crutch loop or pin must be horizontal, and perpendicular to the plates, with no binding of the pendulum rod or stick. If the pendulum is of the style that has two hooks on the hangar, these must be exactly at the same height. If the suspension has blocks, the top block must not wobble in the slot of the post – it should be a slip fit. John also suggested that a straight wire, not a taper pin, should be used to hold the top block in the post slot.

- B) Tim VonReyn demonstrated the process of re-silvering dials, using a commercial kit. He made a dial-holding plate with a center post, onto which a small block could be placed with 400 or 600 grit wet/dry paper to turn by hand radially to remove the old silver from the dial. Dampened cotton balls are used to rub the first powder compound onto the dial until a grayish color appears on the brass. After rinsing, the second compound is rubbed on, with final strokes in a radial direction, then a final hot water rinse removes residues. Tim also discussed the processes of restoring the numerals and chapter markings. There was some discussion afterward on the advantages of a lacquer coat over the silvering. Some people mentioned an artist fixative and then a spray matte lacquer in several light coats.
- C) Mark Beever talked about putting pendulum clocks “in beat”. He discussed what this means in the physical action of the escapement, and what it sounds like to us. We want to hear marching music, not syncopation. Methods of adjusting the beat were explained for different types of verges, including the strip pallet with crutch wire, and the newer friction-fit verge and crutch assemblies. Some tall clock movements have a knurled adjusting disc at the end of the crutch to aid in beat adjustment. Larger movements may have two adjusting screws on the crutch to move the pendulum rod and lock it in position. If the repairer gets the beat very close while the movement is level on a test stand, then when the clock is back in the home, the owner can fine-tune the beat by shifting the case.
- D) Harry Hepburn gave a talk on the history of Quaker iron-plate clockmakers in Maine. There were several Quaker communities in Maine in the late 1700’s, particularly the Berwicks and Vassalboro. Paul Rogers is probably the best-known of these clockmakers; he was a blacksmith who lived in Berwick until he was 66 years old. Abner Rogers was another who made shelf clocks and tall clocks between 1803 and 1809. Other makers included John Tabor, and Reuben Rattick (active from 1817 to 1827). Humphrey Pike was making mirror clocks and lyre clocks in Saco around the 1830’s and 1840’s. There was some discussion about methods, and it is thought that the cast iron plates probably had holes roughly punched into them when made. Then, brass plugs were riveted in place, and the brass drilled to obtain finer pivot holes.



Harry Hepburn showed an early example of a Quaker iron-plate tall clock, and a Paul Rogers dial.