

**Chapter 89 NAWCC**  
**March 17, 2018**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**Date and Location** The second meeting of our 50<sup>th</sup> year was held on March 17<sup>th</sup> at the Brunswick United #8 Masonic Lodge.

**Call to Order, Attendees** We had twenty-two members and guests present for the meeting. There were more clocks on the Mart tables than usual, including quite a variety of sizes and styles. Tim had brought in a luncheon of sandwiches, pickles, drinks, brownies + cookies. President Harry Hepburn called the business meeting to order at 12:40 pm.

**Guests and New Members** There were no new members this time, but Harry introduced guest David Swardlick from Portland, one of the co-owners of the property on Congress Street that includes the Seth Thomas street clock. David explained to the group the history of the clock and the building. The former Hay & Peabody Funeral Home has been renovated into a 15 room inn, The Francis, named after the building's architect Francis Fassett, with guest rooms and a small restaurant/bar called Bolster, Snow & Co.

Back in 1925 the clock had been installed in front of the funeral home to commemorate their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and it was a well-known fixture of downtown Portland for many years. It had fallen into disrepair and has not been working for decades. Through the organization Greater Portland Landmarks, the City has a preservation easement on the clock, so it cannot be removed or sold. The owners are working on fundraising to restore the clock, and David expressed their enthusiasm for Chapter 89's interest in taking on the project.

**Secretary's Report** The minutes from the January meeting were accepted as printed and mailed. Mark reported that Jim Powers, Linda and Chris Balzer, and Jim Lea had all provided info on the old newspaper photo from the Chapter archives. The picture showed Camden's Chestnut Street Church clock, made by E. Howard, and restored by the Balzer Family Clockworks in 1995. Standing behind it are Chapter 89's Mel Foley, Horace and Bob McGowan, and Camden resident Lyman Merrifield.

**Treasurer's Report** Assistant Treasurer Kathi Smith reported that as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, the bank balance was \$ 5522.78. Bruce has paid about \$500 for Chapter liability insurance renewal. This balance is within \$100 of our balance one year ago at the beginning of 2017.

**Announcements** Harry Hepburn presented the Ern Grover Award to Tim Martel. The Ern Grover Award was created to recognize members who have demonstrated exceptional service to Chapter 89. Tim has been closely involved in the leadership of the Chapter for a number of years as President, Vice President, and now Director, and has been extremely helpful in scheduling and managing the use of the Brunswick Masonic Lodge for our meetings, meals, and activities. His name is engraved and added to the plaque. Thank you, Tim!

**Upcoming Events** Paul Fournier reported on the progress during the first workshop back in February. He reminded everyone that the next workshop will be in April, continuing the restoration of the wood works clock. The label in the clock is from Daniel Pratt, Jr., but Paul said that the works may have been made by someone else – he suspects it could be a Cheney wood movement.

**50:50 Drawing** Dave Smith held the winning ticket in the raffle, and Mark vanLunen won the second drawing. Both of them returned the proceeds to the club – thanks!

**Show and Tell** Mark Van Lunen brought a large book on Marine Chronometers that he had acquired, and recommended it to anyone with an interest in these timepieces.

The business meeting was adjourned at 1:25.

**Presentation** Harry Hepburn gave a talk on Torrington wood works clocks. After Eli Terry became successful with his mass-production clock business, various other makers tried to get into the market by inventing variations of the design to avoid patent infringement. Norris North was the primary clockmaker who developed this pattern called “Torrington” (after the Connecticut town) where the rectangular wood plates and the wheel trains were arranged side-to-side in the case. Many of these clocks were in the common ogee case, but some were pillar and scroll or other mantle and shelf styles. The earliest ones were weight driven with no pulleys but pull-up cords similar to tall clocks. Harry brought three examples in different sizes of Torrington clocks, including a recently acquired clock with a ‘miniature’ movement. (There was some discussion that Harry may have ‘stolen’ this clock from an auction, but the accusations came from other auction-goers who did not recognize what the clock represented...) His three clocks were made by Isaac Packard, Rodney Brace, and Erastus Hodges. Hodges had taken over the North factory in 1831 and continued in business until the economic Panic of 1837, which signaled the decline of the era of the Torrington and other wood movements.



Harry Hepburn with his miniature variant of a Torrington clock



Tim Martel receives the Ern Grover Award in 2018