Monthly
News & Updates

National Association of WATCH & CLOCK Collectors, Inc.

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NEWSLETTER

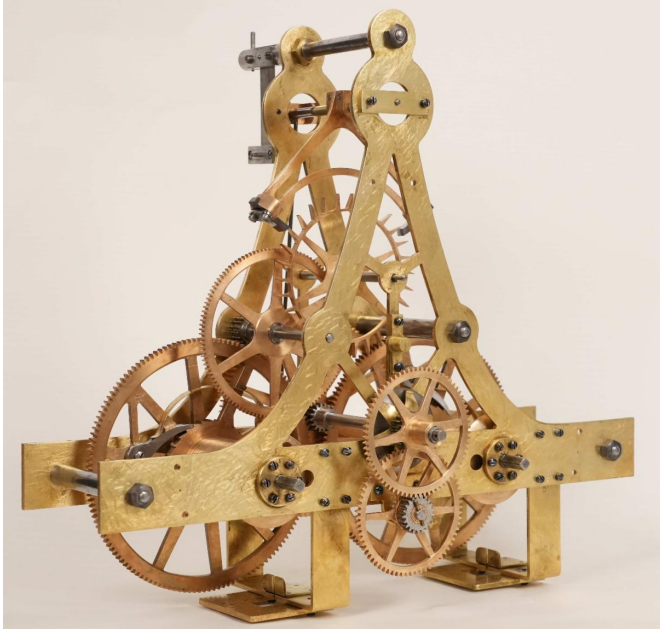
March 2025

February was a busy month for us at the NAWCC, and we were delighted to see that visitor numbers at the Museum continue to rise. January's figures were up by 40% over last year's numbers, and the trend continues with more coach tours and group bookings for the months to come. Much of this upswing is due to our admissions and store manager, David Ganse, for his proactive approach to staffing the front-of-house and promoting our Museum at the Pennsylvania bus tour conventions.

The Museum collections continue to grow and improve with recent donations. A fabulous example by James Arthur (1842-1930) arrived at the end of 2024 and was conserved by Don and Sonny, who regularly work together on Museum displays and conservation projects. For those who aren't familiar with Arthur's work, he was an avid collector of clocks and watches. His collecting inspired some of the unique clocks that he created. He used the resources that he had at his machine works to make designs that do not follow the well-trodden paths of traditional clockmaking.

This example has a very elegant and nearly symmetrical layout to the train. The wheels are cut from bronze, and every component is hand finished, using a process known as curling. An interesting feature of this clock is the abundance of screws used. There is no mechanical need for six screws to secure the bushings for the great wheels, but Arthur did things his own way, and

this was absolutely in line with his precise approach to machining and construction.



1902 James Arthur clock movement, Museum catalog no. 2024.14.1.

Work continues behind the scenes to improve the functionality of our website and so please do be patient as there may be momentary downtime this month. Plans for the National Convention are coming together well, and we continue to add details of the attractions on offer in June on **natcon.nawcc.org**.

As ever, I hope that you enjoy this newsletter and that you will be in touch with any feedback or comments.

—Rory McEvoy, Executive Director

2025 Crafts Competition

NAWCC members are invited to enter their handiwork in the annual Crafts Competition at the National Convention in York, PA. This competition showcases the best in horological craftsmanship, from restorations to original creations.

Click Here to download the entry form.

Entry submissions received: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on June 20 at the York Expo Center

Judging: 9:00 a.m.-Noon on June 21

Awards: announced at 3 p.m. on June 21 in the Crafts Competition area at the York Expo Center

People's Choice Award: presented at the Convention banquet on June 21 at the Wyndham Garden Hotel

2025 NAWCC National Convention

June 19-22
York, Pennsylvania

Largest Watch & Clock Show in America!

Workshops, Tailgate Event, Museum Open House, Live Auction, Lectures, Buy/Sell/Trade Mart, Crafts Competition, Luncheon, Banquet

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Explore YORK
yorkpa.org

Convention registration and event details are available at

natcon.nawcc.org

This Month in Horological History

with Thomas Stocker, Librarian & Archivist

March 8, 1904

On this day, George Steele Tiffany received US patent numbers 754397 for an electric clock and 754398 for a temperature-compensating torsion pendulum. The invention was conceived as one electric clock but applied for as two separate patents.

Tiffany set up the Tiffany Electric Manufacturing Co. in 1907 to produce the Tiffany Electric Clocks, which were marketed directly to jewelers. The clocks were simply presented as electric clocks with no springs, no weights, no cleaning, and no oiling. Tiffany did not market the clocks as "Never-Wind" until the company moved to Buffalo, NY, in 1911 and then later changed its name to the Tiffany Never-Wind Clock Co. in 1917. The new name was a marketing scheme in itself, since many Americans had fears about the

new power source. Advertisements of the day called the Tiffany Never-Wind Clock "the first fundamental advance in time keeping in 300 years" that eliminated the "nuisance of clock winding."

Master Class in the Ancient Art of Enameling

May 5-9, 2025
NAWCC School of Horology

Join master enamelist **Nikoloz Gamkhitashvili** of Lithuania for a five-day intensive enameling workshop.

Discover: Cloisonné on silver; cloisonné on silver foil; polishing and finishing; plique-à-jour enameling; use of a kiln, hand tools, and polishing equipment; safe practices.

nawcc.org/education

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A Closer Look in the School

with Ken De Lucca, Education Director

Recently, my good friend and clockmaker Bill Willey contacted me about an interesting issue concerning a Gilbert clock of his, shown here. His clock had a very unusual *fan* or *fly* in it.

But what is that thing called that slows down a strike train so you're able to count the number of times a hammer hits something like a bell, rod, or wire gong? In the *Watch & Clock Encyclopedia*, Donald de Carle calls it a *fly:* "The governor or controller of the speed of a chime or strike train." In *Britten's Watch & Clock Makers Handbook Dictionary and Guide*, it states, "The fly is in fact a fan blade opposed in the air through which it moves by a force proportional to the square of its velocity." There's no listing of just *fan* in Britten. Based on the above research, it seems the term *fly* is used more commonly in the UK and Europe, while the word *fan* is more commonly used in the US.

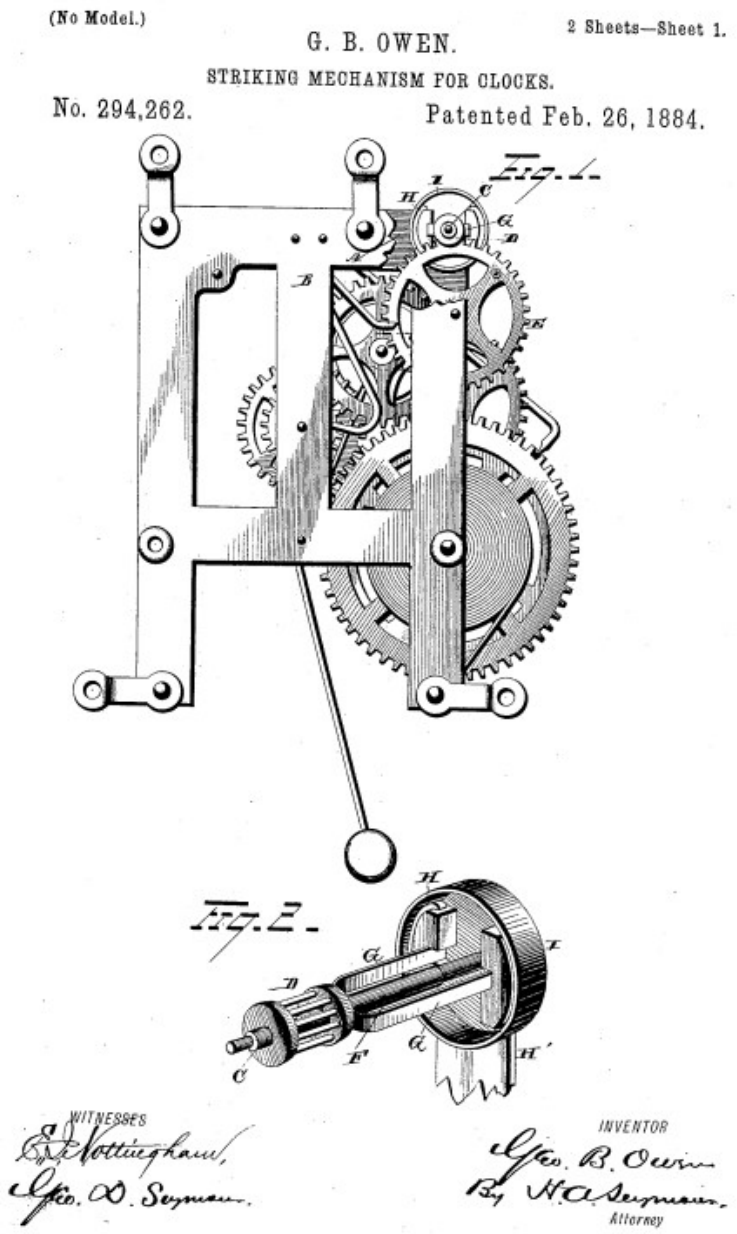
My friend Bill’s clock did not have a fan or fly, but a kind of cup riveted to one plate and that was all. This is what got me started on this research quest and looking in the School's storage bay of old movements.

Out of all the Gilbert clock movements I have, only two have the cup that Bill was referring to. You can see the best one we have in this photo. Bill also provided some information from another source that listed the US patent number 294,262.

Thomas Stocker, our Librarian and Archivist, was quick to send me that patent. The image below best represents what the fan mechanism should have looked like. Invented and patented by George Brassett Owen, who at one time was the owner of the Winsted Clock Co., later purchased by William Gilbert.

As Owen explained in patent 294,262, “Instead of employing a fan on the fan-arbor, which device has almost universally been adopted in strike-movements, and is objectionable and defective, owing to the fact that it is not uniform and constant in its operation, I dispense with the fan altogether, and on the fan-arbor secure a delicately-constructed governor, which has the effect of insuring a regular and constant motion to the striking mechanism, and thereby secure results impossible to be attained by the devices heretofore employed in the manufacture of clocks." Owen’s patented fan is made of spring-arms with small weights that conform to the shape of the cup they rotate within, as shown in Figure 2 in the patent image.

My friend Bill was able to get a bit more information about Owen’s special type of fan from *The Best of J. E. Colman: Clockmaker*. Colman believes these fans were used in the production of Gilbert clocks; however, he also states, “I’ve averaged seeing better than one per year over a period of years.” So, the fan was certainly a lesser-used enhancement by the Gilbert Clock Co., but one that has proven to be a satisfying research project!


(No Model.) 2 Sheets—Sheet 1.

G. B. OWEN.

STRIKING MECHANISM FOR CLOCKS.

No. 294,262. Patented Feb. 26, 1884.

Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

WITNESSES

INVENTOR

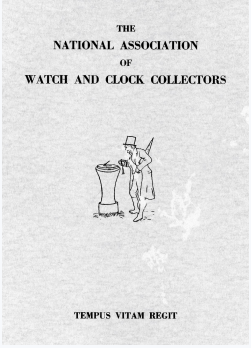
Geo. B. Owen

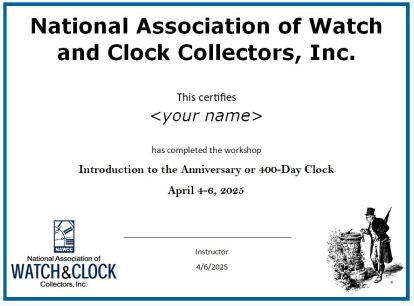
By H. A. Seymour, Attorney

Have You Seen This Fellow?

This dapper gentleman hides in each issue of the ***Watch & Clock Bulletin***, waiting for sharp-eyed readers to find him. His name is Tommy Ticker, and he's been a part of the NAWCC for many years.

As you peruse the next *Bulletin*, keep a sharp eye out for his image as shown here. If you manage to discover the sneaky fellow, email editor@nawcc.org with your name and his location, and your detective skills will be noted in the following issue.





Mr. Ticker appears larger than life in an exterior wall mosaic on the Poplar Street side of the Museum.

He has traveled the world via the front cover of the *Bulletin*, making his debut there in the June 1946 issue.

Tommy Ticker also graces official NAWCC certificates, including those acknowledging successful completion of workshops at the School of Horology.

Teaching Clocks

In February, the hearty crew of Ken De Lucca, Rory McEvoy, volunteer Bill Forney, Thomas Stocker, Janelle Soash, and Sam Gradel moved five clocks from the Museum to the School for their new role as an important teaching tool. During the Rack-and-Snail/Tall Case Clock workshop on March 14-16, participants will make a simulated house call using the clocks. They will remove the hood, disconnect the weights, and examine the movement in place and then out of the case with the dial and seat board still attached. Hands-on experience with "living clocks" in cases is an excellent supplement to the work participants will do with bare movements throughout the workshop.

On the Clock at the NAWCC

Congratulations to Sonny McClain, Facilities Maintenance and Gallery Attendant,

who is celebrating his second work anniversary this month.

Thank you for all you do!

The Horological Habit

Whether you're taking a class at the School of Horology or working at your bench at home, our aprons are a great fit!

With two spacious pockets and adjustable straps, these 100% cotton aprons now come in a wider variety of colors: royal blue, black, hunter green, stone, navy, and coffee.

Visit the online **Museum Store** for aprons, books, gifts, and more. NAWCC members receive a 10% discount!

Time to Learn

Register online for an NAWCC workshop:

School of Horology (Columbia, PA)
March 14-16, 2025: Rack-and-Snail Striking and an Introduction to the Tall Case Clock

March 22-23, 2025: WS-117 Using the Micro-Lathe for the Beginner

April 4-6, 2025: Introduction to the Anniversary, or 400-Day, Clock

April 28-May 2, 2025: Watchmaker Master Class with Philippe Narbel

May 2-4, 2025: Foundational Repair Skills I

May 5-9, 2025: Master Class in the Ancient Art of Enameling

May 17-18, 2025: Introduction to Gilding on Clock Tablets

June 18-19, 2025: Introduction to Antique Clocks

June 28-29, 2025: WS-120 Using a Micro Mill for the Beginner

Traveling Workshop (Shalimar, FL)
October 23-25, 2025: F201—Lathe Skills for the Clockmaker

Participants enjoyed the American-Style Time/Strike Movement Workshop on February 7-9 at the School of Horology: (l to r) Sam Gradel (School Coordinator), William Pulg, Jeremy DuBois, Thomas Dinger, George Orestis, Jim Richmond, Joe Moslow, Ron Lambert, Thomas Holmes.

Thomas Holmes (left) brought his wonderful 18th-century James Gibb clock, made in Scotland, to the February American-Style Time/Strike Workshop. This is a musical clock that plays up to six tunes on 12 bells. Although all necessary repairs were not completed during the workshop, Ken De Lucca, Education Director (right), was able

to help guide Tom through a few repairs and get the clock a bit closer to final operation.

Each month, you will receive more updates and the inside scoop on the latest events, exhibits, classes, and more.

Warmly,

National Association of Watch & Clock Collectors

Help us share time with everyone.

Donate Today

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