



San Jacinto Star



**A newsletter for and
about members of San
Jacinto Chapter 139 of the
National Association of
Watch and Clock
Collectors.**

Editor – Pat Holloway

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President's message

Having been a member of NAWCC Chapter 139 for only about 2½ years, it's a real honor to have been elected to lead the group as your Chapter's President. It's a big responsibility, knowing that many members have so much financial investment in horology, and most have also invested their hearts, which is even more meaningful. That puts me in a group of peers, although my financial investment is not yet outrageous. As you should know, Shaun Clarke, another relative newbie has accepted the VP position. In addition to having the patience to work on watches, he's a really capable guy. Nita Mixon has taken on the role as Chapter Secretary and is already showing her expertise in handling her responsibilities. I'm really pleased to have these two as new officers. Avin Brownlee is staying in place as treasurer (THANK GOODNESS). We continue to have strong leadership from Directors Marcus Bush and John Trego who vacated their positions, and I am certain that Becky Bush, our former Secretary, will be working harder than ever to keep Marcus in line. And Marcus, in this President's role you're certainly a hard act to follow. Other Directors who keep us in line are Darrah Artzner, Joe Mixon and Tim Glanzman. Pat Holloway handles the newsletter and Joe Mixon coordinates our Field and Chapter Courses. To all who support the Chapter, you have my heartfelt thanks. All of you continue to carry me.

The year is shaping up to be a good one. We're financially strong, having enough money in reserve that we could host a Regional that's ruined by a hurricane, and come back to host another Regional the following year. That's a necessity in this area. We successfully added five more years to the contract with the Marriott for our Regional, locking in really good room rates. Also, we're beginning to grow the Chapter's collection of supplies and tools. That's especially important for our Technical Sessions each month when someone needs a special tool, it might just be in the room for use.

Other important aspects of our Tech Sessions are the show and tell items and technical demos. If you have something to show, bring it! We've had some really interesting, and sometimes puzzling, items shown. I think Ben Fulbright is being given a run for his money on unusual items brought in by Albert Rambaud. If you want to share your knowledge and techniques with others, let me know. We'd love to see how you repair watches or clocks.

One of my desires during my term is to come up with some method for outreach, especially to people under 50. If you have some ideas, I'd love to hear them. I have a few, and of course they take time and effort. Some may involve local colleges - I'm still thinking about it.

Finally, as VP, Shaun Clarke will be the Mart Chair for this year's Regional. He'll need help in this role and we always have volunteers. If you have something in mind that you'd like to help with, please give him a shout. The "It's for free table coordinator" position is fun. Also, we have several clocks needing restoration of some sort for the silent auction. If you're so inclined, please take one, two, or three home with you so they can be completed by mid-August. We'll

have some watches in the auction as well, so if you have something you'd be willing to add, it would be greatly appreciated.

I hope we can look back on 2015 and say, "Yes, that was a good year." With help, we'll be able to do just that. Thanks for letting me stand at the helm for a short while.

Sincerely,
Drew

Getting to know...

As Drew mentioned in his message, although Shaun Clarke hasn't been a Chapter 139 member for long, when called upon, he willingly stepped forward to serve the Chapter. Following is a brief message from Shaun. "Fate is an interesting thing. In late 2013, I was given the opportunity by my company to relocate with my family from Perth, Australia to Houston. The opportunity to join Chapter 139 and become part of a passionate group of horologists has been a highlight.

I have developed a fondness for watches (and particularly American pocket watches) over the past ten years. In Perth, I was fortunate to attend a three-year community college watchmaking program under the tutelage of enthusiastic and committed instructors. My classmates came from various backgrounds and I was inspired by the younger members apprenticed to watchmakers who will take their skills forward to the next generation.

My passion for pocket watch restoration is threefold; an appreciation for the "miniature machines" that have survived and still operate as originally designed, the tangible connection to a personal history through the timepiece, and a desire to preserve the art and skills of the watchmaker (and clockmaker).

Chapter 139 is fortunate to have a strong membership base that exhibits a willingness to help others and share knowledge. My personal thanks to the Chapter Officers, Directors and Special Project Team for all the hard work they put in to make the Chapter a success. I know the group is looking to attract new junior members, and I am committed to supporting recruitment and ongoing education efforts.

Finally, I am excited to work with the membership on the All Texas Chapters Regional from August 20-22, 2015. Being new to the chapter, I appreciate all assistance offered and will be looking for your support in making the 2015 as successful as previous years."

Educational events

Thanks to everyone who supports the Chapter's many educational offerings with your attendance and willingness to share. Although there are several photos included below, there are many more posted on the Chapter website. Many thanks to our photographers and to Darrah Artzner who posts them for everyone to enjoy!

January Tech Session

It was a good start to 2015 when about 25 members braved the cold rainy weather to attend the first Tech Session of the year. We welcomed Jeff Parker, a new member from Florida.

Marcus Bush opened the session with an announcement that the Chapter has been asked to restore a tower clock in the Heights area. Several members visited the clock to see what it would take to make it run again. Pictures of the clock can be seen on the Chapter website.



As usual Ben Fulbright came up with some good "Show and Tell" items. He passed around a screw polisher and polishing pads. Tim Glanzman brought a beautiful French carriage clock, circa 1800, with the original red travel case. It's very unusual to see a case like this in such good shape. Tim could not be talked into donating it to the Chapter Auction in August.

Ben said that Wayne Denham was restoring a miniature blind mans clock for the auction. Jeff Parker brought a Hermle bracket clock that he purchased at an auction in Florida. He felt sorry because no one had bid on it. Now he needs some help in getting it to run again. He came to the right place. Darrah Artzner showed off his beautiful new Rockford Special Railway private label pocket watch that he received for Christmas.



Drew Lundgren did a good job presenting the hands-on program on replacing gear teeth. Several members took turns sitting at the table to take a turn.

Statue Refinishing Class

- Nita Mixon

Our 1-day statue refinishing class was a great success. There were 9 students attending. Jay Holloway and his wife Pat taught the class. Jay explained in detail what we were going to be doing in the class.



1. Make sure statue was stripped of paint and clean.
2. Prime the statue with gold paint (See Del's statue pictured left.)
3. After paint is fully dry take your paintbrush and liberally apply the (in this case) van dyke brown oil paint.
4. Take your mop head paintbrush and start removing the van dyke brown paint until you get the "bronzed" look you want.
5. When the paint is dry spray the statue with a sealer.

This was a great class to attend and Jay & Pat did a great job. If there were any questions or problems Jay would answer the question or help the person with their problem. When the class was finished everyone was well on their way to a completed statue to take home!



Drew Lundgren displayed his artistic talent on an interesting clock case.



Mary Lou Leason had an opportunity to try some statue repair techniques before refinishing.

February One-Day

The cool weather created a chipper mood for close to forty people attending this One Day Show. New member, Brian Nielsen joined the group and soon found something he could not live without. The Chapter also welcomed Dan Mauldin and his dad, Hugh.

Using one of Brian Martin's clocks as an example, Ben Fulbright talked to the Chapter about the five points of valuing clocks and watches. The insurance/replacement value being the most expensive, factoring the time it would take to find another clock or watch of the same type. Retail value (shop price) would come next. Wholesale

(clock show prices)/auction and or /bulk buys would be the next grade item. Of course if you purchase a collection of clocks or watches or distressed items you would give a lower amount per item. This would be an amount that satisfied both the seller and buyer. The relative difference between each pair within the five valuations is perhaps as much as 100% and as little as 10%.

Ben also spoke to the group about promoting the NAWCC and our Chapter. He recommended leaving some of your old *Bulletins* and *Marts* along with current national and chapter membership forms. As you go antiquing or to resale shops, leave these items and tell them about the organization. If someone shows an interest in the organization, follow up with a phone call or e-mail and invite them to the next local event.

Marcus Bush expressed the need for members to step up and present a program for the Tech Session or One Day Shows in 2015. If there is some clock or watch related program you are interested in please let one of the officers know.

There was also discussion as to whether the Tech Session should be held in the months of February, May and November when our One Day Shows are held. Everyone seemed in favor of keeping the Tech Sessions as a regular event the second Saturday of each month.

Greg Graham thanked everyone for contributing so many clock related parts for a school art car project. Donations are still very welcome. He promised to keep us posted with pictures as the project advances.

There was some confusion as to the time factor of the Chapter dues. Marcus said that the yearly memberships are due every January. (If you haven't renewed, there is a form on the last page of the newsletter.)

John Trego announced that the new officers for the Chapter would be voted on at the business meeting after the February One-Day Show. Drew Lundgren has willingly accepted the nomination of President, Shaun Clarke as Vice President and Nita Mixon as Secretary. Avin Brownlee has agreed to remain in office as the Treasurer. If you or anyone you know is interested in holding an office as Director please step forward. All Chapter members are encouraged to attend this meeting.

February Tech Session

This was a very active session where plenty of ad hoc events took place. There were several members with show and tell items. Some of which were not photographed, as the activity was brisk. Mary Lou Leason had completed her statue-refinishing project and received some assistance putting all the components back together (photo below).

Tim Glanzman gave an excellent presentation on ultrasonics and cautioned several times that one should never



turn one on unless it is full of liquid. He also demonstrated how to test whether the

transducers, the things that produce the ultrasonic waves, are working properly. He noted that turning on an ultrasonic and hearing a buzz does not mean that any of the transducers are working but an easy to perform aluminum test will verify it. Tim also stated that he gets good parts containers at a Dollar Store rather than spending the big bucks that are associated with ultrasonic accessories. Thanks Tim!



Kitchen Clock Repair Class

Back by popular demand, the February Kitchen Clock Repair Class was very well attended. And if the feedback and smiles on the attendees' faces were any indication, it was another very good class. For proof, check out the shots below as well as the many more pictures on the website.

Thanks to all of the instructors who gave of their time. One of the students said it quite well:

A big thank you to all involved in development, presenting and mentoring at the Kitchen Clock Class this weekend. It is obvious delivery of these classes takes significant commitment, and it is truly appreciated.



March Tech Session

The March 14th Tech Session was so busy and interesting that no one paused long enough to take pictures. How busy was it??? Well, judge for yourself:

- Darrah Artzner brought in a Lange & Sohne Luftwaffe pilot's wristwatch that he is restoring.
- Edward McDowell shared how he manually machined click springs, and his progress.
- Albert Rambaud brought in a Seth Thomas #2 pendulum shipping support block.
- Shaun Clarke brought in an Elgin pocket watch that he restored for the Regional's silent auction.
- Tim Glanzman showed a Bulle clock with cut glass globe.
- Drew Lundgren demonstrated a step-by-step on installing a main spring barrel hook.

You never know what you might see or learn at the monthly Tech Sessions. Everyone is welcome and the upcoming dates are listed later in the newsletter.

Buying a Watch in the 1880s

Although we're not sure of the source, the following story was recently shared by a couple of members who thought others might find it interesting. After reading the story, we thought you might also like to learn a little more about "the rest of the story."

If you were in the market for a watch in 1880, would you know where to get one? You would go to a store, right? Well, of course you could do that, but if you wanted one that was cheaper and a bit better than most of the store watches, you went to the train station! Sound a bit funny?

Well, for about 500 towns across the northern United States, that's where the best watches were found. Why were the best watches found at the train station? The railroad company wasn't selling the watches, not at all. The telegraph operator was.

Most of the time the telegraph operator was located in the railroad station because the telegraph lines followed the railroad tracks from town to town. It was usually the shortest distance, and the right-of-ways had already been secured for the rail line. Most of the station agents were also skilled telegraph operators and that was the primary way that they communicated with the railroad.

They would know when trains left the previous station, and when they were due at their next station. And it was the telegraph operator who had the watches. As a matter of fact, they sold more of them than almost all the stores combined for a period of about 9 years. This was all arranged by "Richard", who was a telegraph operator himself.

He was on duty in the North Redwood, Minnesota train station one day when a load of watches arrived from the East. It was a huge crate of pocket watches. No one ever came to claim them.

So Richard sent a telegram to the manufacturer and asked them what they wanted to do with the watches. The manufacturer didn't want to pay the freight back, so they wired Richard to see if he could sell them. So Richard did.

He sent a wire to every agent in the system asking them if they wanted a cheap, but good, pocket watch. He sold the entire case in less than two days and at a handsome profit. That started it all. He ordered more watches from the watch company, and encouraged the telegraph operators to set up a display case in the station offering high quality watches for a cheap price to all the travelers. It worked!

It didn't take long for the word to spread and, before long; people other than travelers came to the train station to buy a watch. Richard became so busy that he had to hire a professional watchmaker to help him with the orders. That was Alvah. And the rest is history as they say.

The business took off and soon expanded to many other lines of dry goods. Richard and Alvah left the train station and moved their company to Chicago -- and it's still there.

YES, IT'S A LITTLE KNOWN FACT, that for a while in the 1880's, the biggest watch retailer in the country was at the train station. It all started with a telegraph operator: Richard Sears and his partner Alvah Roebuck! Bet You Didn't Know That!!

But, the story doesn't end here. Darrah Artzner shared a link to a Hennepin County (MN) Library site that includes a 200-page 1892 catalog from A. C. Roebuck, Importer and Wholesale Dealer in Watches. The title page provides some very interesting information. This company was located in Minneapolis, Minn. President was R.W. Sears, Sec. & Treas was A.C. Roebuck. The company was incorporated, and paid up capital was listed as \$75,000. Not too shabby for a telegraph operator and a watchmaker! Their terms were quite liberal – they would ship free of charge, with no money down, any watch in their catalog. If the customer was pleased and decided to buy the watch, they merely paid the cost of the watch to the express agent. If the customer was not pleased, he would return the watch to the express agent who returned it free of charge to the customer. Moreover, all customers who paid in advanced received a valuable prize with *each* watch that was ordered and paid in full in advance. Prizes listed in large, underlined font included a sewing machine, double barrel breach loading shotgun or a set of harness – each valued at \$40! Of course, the next sentence – in smaller font – “or some other valuable present, and no present cheaper than a Five Year Gold Filled Chain, or other article of jewelry of equal value” and a further caveat that the \$40 prize was for the first order received every Monday morning, accompanied by cash in full.

Most of the catalog pages were used for advertising and marketing ploys, including many pages of testimonials. A small percentage actually pictured the available watches, watch chains and jewelry. There were also several pages that pictured the company's various departments. Apparently this was a successful tactic, as the following picture and text are from an early Sears, Roebuck & Co. stereoview.



No. 8 WATCHMAKING IN THE JEWELRY DEPARTMENT.
SEARS, ROEBUCK & CO., Chicago, Ill.

Early Sears, Roebuck & Co. stereoview photo and text from its reverse

No. 8 WATCHMAKING IN THE JEWELRY DEPARTMENT.
Sears, Roebuck & Co., Chicago, Ill.

The story of Sears, Roebuck & Co., is the story of a watch, because the nucleus of this great organization was a simple little time-piece which first interested Mr. Sears in merchandising, and finally led him into the mail order business. From the very beginning our jewelry department has been one of the largest in the institution and it has been one of the most popular with our millions of customers. It has been our policy to bring any of the luxuries of life within the reach of those in modest circumstances, and our efforts in this direction have been signally successful in all those lines commonly found in a jewelry store. We have undoubtedly been responsible for a wonderful change in method in the jewelry business, we have compelled manufacturers and dealers generally to modify their selling plans, so that today it is possible for men and women to secure watches and rings and other articles of this character at a lower price than ever before. We have been selling everything in the jewelry line at a reasonable price, a price carrying but a small margin of profit. All those lines of merchandise which represent articles not actually needed by the average individual have always paid large profits to business men selling them, and probably no one line has yielded the profits which have come from the selling of jewelry. We have placed jewelry on the same plane with necessities, offering watches, rings and diamonds, silverware and all these allied lines at the mere cost of material and labor, with the same uniform margin of profit added that we add in departments which sell necessities. This policy has made this the largest jewelry store in the world. The stereoscopic view herewith gives you a view of one corner of this department showing a score or more of watchmakers at work. Thousands of our customers who purchase jewelry from us prefer to have us handle their repair work when any is necessary, and as a result we find that we have to maintain a large repair department for their accommodation.

The early catalog carried watches by reputable makers such as Hampden and Paillard Non-Magnetic watches, and cases in a wide variety of styles and prices by Dueber and Boss. Through the years, many well-known watch companies made private label watches for Sears. Darrah Artzner generously provided the following pictures of some watches made by Illinois and Rockford for Sears, Roebuck.



Interstate Chronometer – 23 jewel



Plymouth 18 size, open face



Plymouth 16 size, open face



Plymouth 0 size



Thanks to everyone who provided information for this piece. If you'd like to learn more about "the rest of the story," additional information can be found in three very interesting Bulletin articles: *Watches to Riches: R. W. Sears and A. C. Roebuck*; December 1987 by James W. Gibbs; *Richard Warren Sears and His Watch Companies – Part 1*; October 1990 by William F. Meggers, Jr.; *Richard Warren Sears and His Watch Companies – Part 2*; December 1990 by William F. Meggers, Jr.

Upcoming events

Mark your calendars now and make plans to attend these upcoming events.

➤ April 11	8 a.m. – noon	Tech Session Mini-session – “Assessing Pocket Watch Problems” by Shaun Clarke
➤ May 9	8 a.m. – noon	Tech Sessions
➤ May 16	8 a.m.	Chapter 139 One Day Show Grace Community Church 1021 Campbell Rd, Houston 77055
➤ June 13	8 a.m. – noon	Tech Session
➤ June 17-20	Varies	2015 National Convention Chattanooga TN
➤ July 11	8 a.m. – noon	Tech Session
➤ August 20-22	Varies	All Texas Chapters Regional Houston Marriott Westchase 2900 Briarpark Dr, Houston TX
➤ October 22-24	Varies	Ward Francillon Time Symposium Mechanical Music and Marvels Houston Marriott Westchase 2900 Briarpark Dr, Houston TX

*Location: All Tech Sessions and classes are held at Turn-Key Coatings, 8411 Rannie Road, Houston, Texas 77080 (just off of Hempstead Highway / near Bingle). Fellow member and company owner, Tim Glanzman, donates the space

San Jacinto Chapter 139 – Renewal/Membership application

If you are a member of NAWCC and would like to join with other collectors and your friends as a member of San Jacinto Chapter #139, please complete the form below and return along with \$10.00 dues to Avin Brownlee, Chapter 139 Treasurer, 426 Overlook Drive, Friendswood TX 77546. Please make checks payable to San Jacinto Chapter 139. A spouse/significant other who is also an NAWCC member can join for an additional \$5.00 per year. If registering your spouse/significant other, please include their full name as well.

Membership is concurrent with the calendar year, and renewals are due each January.

Name: _____

Spouse/significant other name (if also registering): _____

Mailing address: _____

Email address*: _____

Phone Number: _____ NAWCC membership number: _____

New membership / Renewal (Please circle appropriate choice) Number of Years? _____

*To reduce time and expenses, all newsletters and Chapter 139 correspondence will be distributed electronically to members with email addresses.