

Lone Star Times



National Association of Watch & Clock Collectors~Chapter 124

“an educational group dedicated to preserving & understanding horology.”

October 2014 Volume 30 Number 3 Current Membership: 464

Chapter of the Year 2013 – 2010 – 2005 – 2001 – 1998 – 1996

www.chapter124.org

President's Message

Dear Chapter 124 Members and Friends

Chapter 124 had another successful One Day Meeting and Mart on August 2nd at the Founders Building in Grapevine, Texas – and started off with coffee, donuts and a lively old-fashioned Mart. Approximately ten tables were set up for members to sell watches, tools and clocks of all kinds. Our planned educational was cancelled at the last minute, so **John Acker**, **Evelyn Slough** and **Tim Henz** updated the members on upcoming chapter events. A barbecue lunch was served with all the fixings and a good time was had by all.

We had good representation at the **All Texas Chapters Regional** in Houston this year. Our Chapter 139 friends put on a great show with excellent educationals, a tower clock exhibit and a very successful Silent Auction.

On September 7, 2014, Chapter 124 held its “Annual Picnic.” Everyone met at the Greene clubhouse and had a great time. Pulled Pork, sausage, soft drinks and water were furnished by the chapter and members brought delicious side dishes. Several enjoyed swimming and volley ball. We had 35 members, families and friends to attend. **Phil Gregory** donated a book to be given as a door prize and **John Evans** was the lucky winner. Thanks to **Pam Tischler**, **Evelyn Slough** and the many volunteers who helped in making this a wonderful picnic.

Please check out the Education section of the website for details on classes offered for the rest of 2014. **Tim Henz**, our Education Director, is busy working on educational offerings for 2015. As soon as we are able to secure the dates from Grapevine for the Founders Building, the schedule will be added to the website. Please check regularly for class updates as they fill up quickly.

The Lone Star Regional is scheduled for March 6th and 7th, 2015 in Mesquite at the Mesquite Convention Center, and the theme for the exhibit is **Vienna Regulators**. A guest speaker, **Steve Nelson** will be giving two lectures **Works of Horological Art – the Magic of Viennese Mechanisms** and **Pivot Restoration**, you will not want to miss these. On Thursday prior to the

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regional **Mike Dempsey** will be conducting a **Hairspring Class**. Additional details on the exhibit and additional lectures will be revealed in the December newsletter.

Please make plans on attending our next **One Day Meeting** and Mart on **October 4th, 2014** at the Founders Building in Grapevine. You will not want to miss the educational **by Stanley McMahan** titled **Oscillator Theory**.

Sincerely,

John Erickson
President



Upcoming Classes

Unless otherwise noted, all classes/workshops are held in the Founders Building, 701 South Main Street, Grapevine, TX 76051. For information regarding registration or other questions about classes offered by Lone Star Chapter 124, please contact Tim Henz, Education Director, 817-453-0502, or go to the Education page on the Chapter website (www.chapter124.org) and register on-line.

October 25-26	Introduction to Clock Collecting	Lex Rooker, Instructor
November 22	Open Bench Workshop	Mark Vozar, Coordinator
November 14-17	FSW F301 Intro to Basic Pocket Watch Repair	Lehr Dircks, Instructor Bill Andrie, Coordinator

Welcome New Members!

Jeremy Cleghorn	Wolfe City	TX	Barry Conklin	Grapevine	TX
Oscar Delgado	Granbury	TX	Ed Markham	Waxahachie	TX
Warren Pierce	Allen	TX			

Upcoming Events

October 4 **One Day Meeting & Mart – Founder Building – Grapevine, TX**



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Chapter 124's Advertisers



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Got Time?

Join Us at
chapter124.org

*National Association of Watch & Clock Collectors
Lone Star Chapter 124*

APPLICATION/RENEWAL FOR LONE STAR CHAPTER 124, NAWCC

An educational group dedicated to preserving and understanding horology.

Complete and send with applicable check made payable to: Lone Star Chapter #124

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THE CLOCK IMPRESARIO: CHAUNCEY JEROME

—PHIL GREGORY

Previous articles have reviewed Eli Terry and Joseph Ives. This article introduces clock production's most colorful character: CHAUNCEY JEROME (Fig. 1).

Jerome was born in Connecticut in 1793. He was bound at age 13 to apprentice for eight years to a house carpenter. During a slow winter when he was 18, Jerome convinced his master to let him work for four months for a man making clock dials. Thereafter, he continued to work in the clock industry in the winters, until he married at age 21. He then worked for others as a house carpenter until the winter of 1816, when he went to work for Eli Terry (of all people). Seth Thomas had been making cases for Terry's new shelf clock by hand, but Terry was determined to automate the process as he had for manufacture of clock works. Jerome helped set up the machinery and benches until spring when he left to start his own clock company. He made his own cases, but bought parts from Terry, including movements, dials, weights, glass and tablets. Terry must have taken a

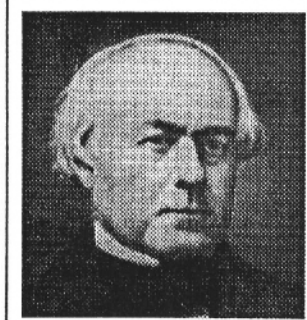


Fig 1. Chauncey Jerome, c1850.

real liking to Jerome since the Terry factory did not often sell parts to competitors.

In 1821, Chauncey sold his home to Terry for 100 clock movements and moved to Bristol. There he bought a home from George Mitchell ("the most powerful business man in town") for \$2,500,

to be paid off in three years by the supply of 307 *Terry Patent Clocks*. In 1824, he started a new factory determined to avoid Terry's patents by using a movement adapted from Chauncey Boardman's tall case clocks. The resulting clock was about 4ft. tall, called a dwarf tall clock (Fig. 2).

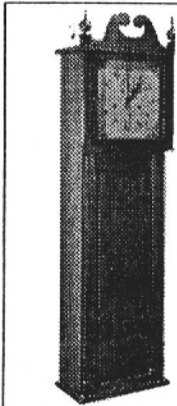


Fig 2. Dwarf tall clock, c1822.

Jerome is thought to have made 200 of these cases. He had Chauncey Boardman alter tall clock movements to fit the dwarf cases. Few are in existence today.

Production soon changed to a shelf clock that was 6 - 8 inches taller than Terry's. Its movement, called a *groaner*, was so named either because of the noise it made, or the noise the repair person made when working on it.

Business prospered. Jerome gave up attempting to avoid Terry's patents and began using what became known as the number 5 movement. Whether he paid Terry is unknown; however, the business supported building a handsome home in 1832.

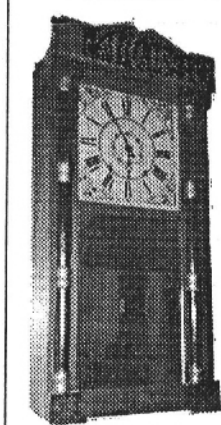


Fig 3. Bronze looking glass clock

In 1827 Jerome had invented a new case style that took the market. The *Bronzed Looking Glass* clock (Fig. 3) included a mirror with painted columns and splat similar to popular furniture styles of the period. It was less expensive to build than the pillar and scroll. Interestingly, to reduce costs, mirrors soon were replaced by paintings.

Business continued to grow until the depression of 1837. Jerome was near bankruptcy. Desperation caused him to invent a 30-hour brass-gear clock, which was smaller than wooden geared clocks. Selling for about half the price, the 30-hour brass was an instant success. The case style soon evolved into the familiar "OG" (Fig. 4). The brass works permitted over-water shipping. By 1842, Jerome began considering export to England.



Fig 4. Jeromes & Co. ogee.

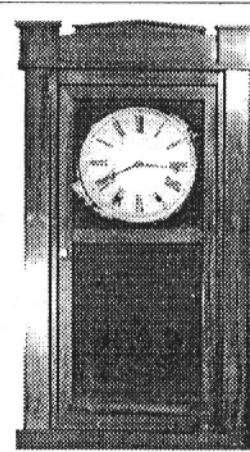


Fig 5. Waterbury Clock Company's clock in Jerome's patented new case, c1864.

The first two shipments were seized and purchased by English customs officers because they thought the clock were undervalued for duty purposes. The instant cash flow was a businessman's dream. Jerome responded by preparing more shipments. News spread, so that by the late 1840s, others were producing similar clocks and selling them at home and abroad. Even with competition, Jerome manufactured half the clocks built in the US by 1850.

In 1855, Jerome was approached by P. T. Barnum, the circus showman, with a proposal to merge their firms. Why Jerome agreed is not known, but it was a disaster. The firm filed for bankruptcy in 1856. Jerome was financially ruined and never recovered. He moved to a rented apartment and went to work for the Gilbert Clock Co. He didn't give up, however. He designed and patented another new case style (Fig. 5), which was licensed to Gilbert and to the Waterbury Clock Co.

In 1866, Jerome moved to Illinois and became superintendent of a small clock company. It failed. He returned to New Haven, where he died in 1868. Chauncey Jerome lived through turbulent and exciting times and contributed greatly to development of the American clock industry.

Author's Note • Pictures and material for this article were excerpted from NAWCC BULLETIN #15 by Chris Bailey. A copy of this BULLETIN may be borrowed from NAWCC's Library. Its 131 pages are full of very readable material and pictures. We are indebted to Chris for his research, which is very well documented, and for his writing style.

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