

The MAINSPRING

A Monthly Publication from
Southwestern Chapter 15 of the
National Association of
Watch and Clock Collectors

Happy New Year!

I hope that everybody had a wonderful holiday season and is looking forward to the new year. My article this month is about using new resources, specifically, web and email options. The first of these is Chapter 15's new online dues renewal payment option on our website at www.nawcc-chapter15.org/Dues.htm. This page can also be reached from the Membership link on the website.

Web resources include our chapter website, www.nawcc.org, and www.awci.com. Our chapter website includes good information and links to information on buying, selling, education, research, horological aids, parts and tool supply sources, book and printed material sources, and other resources. A special free bonus to chapter members is the option to list your own horological-related website or organization under "Member Links". As of this writing, only four current members have taken advantage of this option. The NAWCC national website includes many more resources, including a members-only section that has reprint copies of every Bulletin from 1943. The NAWCC Message Board is an outstanding learning resource. Likewise, the AWCI website has great information for AWCI members.

I realize that many of our members use email on a regular basis, but not the web. Many email lists specialize in horological matters, most of them hosted by Yahoo! groups. Not surprisingly, the first of these is "Horology Matters" (finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/horology-matters). This independent group (431 members) tends to focus on watches and AWCI activities, but also covers other areas. My personal favorite group (717 members) is

"Clocksmiths" (tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/Clocksmiths). Members range from relative novices to experts. "Clocksgroup" (groups.yahoo.com/group/clocksgroup) is similar, but smaller (450 members) and has more of an international membership. Our own John Hubby is the owner of the Gustav Becker group (groups.yahoo.com/group/gustavbecker), with 327 members. I'm one of the moderators for Japanese Clocks (groups.yahoo.com/group/Japaneseclocks), with 136 members. All together, I belong to 15 different email groups relating to horology or miniature machining (with a focus on horology). All of these groups and any others recommended to me on our website are, or will be listed on our website under "Newgroups and Maillists" at www.nawcc-chapter15.org/Research.htm. For members who don't use the web but use email on a regular basis, I will also be happy to try and help them join an email list.

I hope that others will find some of these resources as useful as I have.

Mike Williams,
President

Welcome

Join us in welcoming new Chapter 15 member

Tim White
Austin, Texas

Treasurer's Report

Chapter Account		\$8,220.07
Expenses – Newsletter/postage	\$345.35	
Income – Dues	\$190.00	
Regional Account		\$4,463.60



What's behind a name?

Many of us know this clock as a Timby Solar Timepiece or Timby Globe clock, but what do we really know about the man who patented this clock? When and where did he live? What were his background and interests? Where did he

learn about clocks?

Theodore Ruggles Timby was born April 5, 1822 in Dover, Dutchess County, New York, and would have been 87 when he died in Brooklyn in 1909. His father was a farmer, and he was educated in the public schools, and somewhere along the way, he seems to have been awarded at least an honorary doctorate (LLD).

Since my knowledge of Mr. Timby was strictly clock-related, I anticipated finding a record of his apprenticeship with a clock maker or at least having worked in the clock industry. While I haven't found this type of record, what I have discovered is evidence of a person with keen observation skills and the ability to create solutions – evidenced by more than seventy patents for quite varied inventions throughout his life. Several of the patents were issued in 1907, when Mr. Timby would have been in his eighties.

The first Timby invention that I found mentioned was a method of raising ships out of the water for repairs (a floating dry dock). Although people saw the model and were impressed by it, at sixteen he was too young to pursue this idea, and it was later patented and brought into general usage by others.

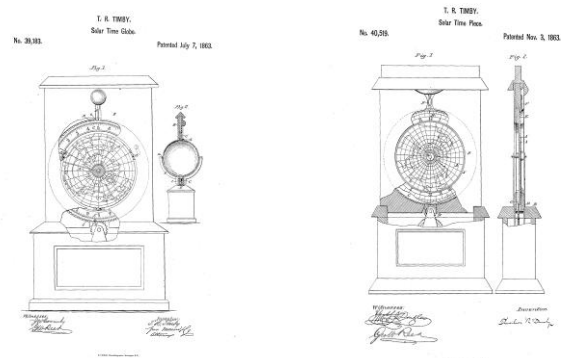
As you might expect, a patent search quickly revealed that this was not the last of his inventions; Timby's creative genius continued throughout his long life and ranged from improvements in basic household items such as sewing thimbles, needle cases, garden hoes and cook stoves to window locks and door ventilation.

But, his inventions didn't stop with these everyday items or the unusual clock that bears his name. In addition he held patents for railroad improvements including spikes and rails, springs, axles and wheels; processes and apparatus for aging wine and liquor, ripening and flavoring coffee, as well as evaporating brine and manufacturing salt.

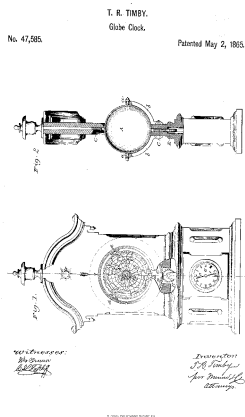
Although Theodore Timby was not a household name, in 1880 James Parton deemed at least one of his inventions worthy of including him in his *Book of Biography; or, Biographical Sketches of Eminent Persons of All Ages and Countries*. (Interestingly, while Timby's contribution was not of a horological nature, a biographical sketch of Chauncey Jerome was included for his clock making innovations.) The invention which earned a spot in the book and for which Timby is most widely recognized is the revolving turret used in the production of the early iron clad vessels used in the Civil War.

According to an entry in the 1920 Encyclopedia Americana, in his later years, Theodore Timby was a resident of Brooklyn, New York where he "occupied himself with various literary and other avocations, being especially interested in scientific and philosophical pursuits." While these pursuits included additional patents, they also provided us with a glimpse of Mr. Timby's reflections published in a 1902 book entitled *Lighted Lore for Gentle Folks*.

But now, back to the clock that started these musings...there were four patents for clocks: two in 1863 and two in 1865.



Neither of the 1863 patents include the lower dial found in the most commonly seen Timby clocks.



According to Brooks Palmer, the earlier clocks had flat tops. The later models have a case similar to the second 1865 patent. Only about 600 clocks were made; the movements being produced by L.E. Witing in Saratoga Springs and the globes were added by Gilman

Joslin, Boston map maker.

If you'd like to learn more about Theodore Timby or his clock, there are several articles in early issues of the Bulletin. You can also find information online from Wikipedia.org or by typing "Theodore Timby" in the Google or Yahoo search box

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NAWCC Chapter 15 website
<http://www.nawcc-chapter15.org>

January Program

Our next meeting is on Saturday, January 23rd, 10 a.m. The meeting will be held at Westover Hills Church of Christ located at 8332 Mesa Drive in Austin (across the street from Anderson High School). Mike Williams will present The World Wide Wonder.

One last reminder...

There has been a great response to our Chapter 15 membership renewals for 2010, but there are a few who have not yet sent in dues! Now it's easier than ever with the addition of a Chapter 15 website PayPal option mentioned on page one. Thank you for your continued support of our Chapter!

Chapter 15 Membership Application
 New Application / Renewal (circle one)
 Membership Dues are \$10
You must be a current and paid NAWCC member to join a Chapter.
You may be a member of more than one Chapter.
Please Print or Type

NAME: _____

SPOUSE'S NAME: _____

STREET: _____

CITY: _____

STATE/COUNTRY: _____ ZIP: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

NAWCC Member # _____

HOROLOGICAL INTERESTS: _____

_____ Please send my Chapter 15 newsletter by email.

Make Check Payable To: Chapter 15, NAWCC
 Enclose this application and check and send to:
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 1105 Lafayette Lane
 Pflugerville, TX 78660

Newsletter Editor NAWCC Chapter 15
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Save The Date

- January 23
Chapter 15 program
Westover Hills Church of Christ, Austin

- February 20/21
Dial Painting workshop
Pflugerville, TX

- Lone Star Regional
March 5th – 6th, 2010
Mesquite

- March 27
Chapter 15 program

Dial painting workshop

The dial painting workshop is scheduled for Saturday/Sunday, February 20/21. The cost for this two-day class will be \$65. If you have a painted metal dial in need of some TLC, or would like to increase your skills, this is your opportunity! We still have a few openings, so please contact Pat Holloway as soon as possible to reserve your space.

Did you know...

You can register online now for the NAWCC National in June at <http://www.nawcc.org/>? From the home page click on 2010 National > Register online (24 hrs/day, 7 days/wk) > 6/16/10 National 2010 > Register.