



Horologica

Contributors this issue are Tom Spittler and Fortunat Mueller-Maerki.

Member submissions are needed! Share reviews and announcements of new and interesting books, websites, digital media programs, periodicals, exhibits, and all else pertaining to horology. Please send contributions to the editor at ddelucca@nawcc.org or NAWCC, Inc., 514 Poplar St., Columbia, PA 17512-2130, c/o the Publications Dept.

How the Watch Was Worn— A Fashion for 500 Years

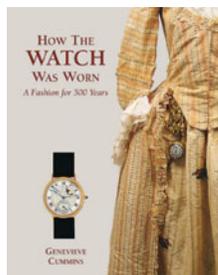
by Genevieve Cummins
Published by Antique Collectors Club,
Woodbridge, United Kingdom,
c. 2010. Hardcover, 272 pages with over
1,000 illustrations; full color. \$85 plus
postage. ISBN 978-1-85149-637-2.
May be purchased from nawccstore.com

About 500 years ago people started carrying timekeeping devices as part of their attire, so it is a bit surprising that until now there has never been a publication dedicated to the question of how to wear a watch. Thanks to the Australian author, Genevieve Cummins, and the British publisher, Antique Collectors Club, that void has been filled.

The book will be formally launched in a special exhibit at the 2010 National Convention. Cummins is the author of the definitive book on watch chains (*Chatelaines—Utility to Glorious Extravagance*, 1994, Antique Collectors Club, 311 pages, out of print), horological accessories that take a prominent position in this new title as well. She takes a much broader view in her second book, going beyond just the object of the watch chain, and examining all the ways in which watches can be worn. In 13 chapters she explores all aspects of the watch as a fashion accessory, covering various watch forms and watch attachments, including various styles of chains and fobs, pouches and pockets, brooches, wristbands, rings, watch guards, watch belts, pendant watches, cufflink watches, etc.

The core of the book is over 1,000 images (most are in color, and many

are in large format) illustrating historic watches with appropriate period dress. These include historic images as well as many newly created photographs combining historic costumes accessorized with appropriate watches and chains. Separate chapters are dedicated to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the eighteenth century, and the Regency and Victorian eras. There are special sections on subjects such as watches for dolls, accessories to store the watch at night, and—the last chapter—the development of the wristwatch as a fashion accessory.



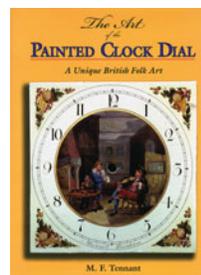
While this book obviously will appeal to the horological collector with a special interest in the decorative arts aspects of watches, it also offers much new material to other, broader horological enthusiasts. By showing watches in their proper context of people and clothes over the ages, it offers countless tidbits of information of the role of watches (and timekeeping) in a broader societal context.

This book is an unusual, but most welcome addition to the horological literature, proving once again how multifaceted learning and studying horology can be.

Fortunat Mueller-Maerki (NJ)

The Art of the Painted Clock Dial

by M. F. Tennant
Published by Mayfield Books,
Church Land, Mayfield, Ashbourne,
Derbyshire DE6 2JR, England,
c. 2009. Hardcover, 8.5" x 11", 351
pages with 730 illustrations; 517 in
color. \$121.75 plus postage. May be
purchased from Merritts (U.S.),
ph. 1-800-345-4101.



For those who are not familiar with the background of the literature on painted dial longcase clocks, we begin with a brief overview. Three authors dominate the subject: Brian Loomes, Mary Frances Tennant, and John Robey. Loomes' pioneering work was *The White Dial Clock* (1974), which he followed with three more editions; the last was *Painted Dial Clocks* in 1994. Tennant's first book was *Longcase Painted Dials* in 1995, and this book under review is her latest. Robey has not written a book dedicated to the subject but covers it well in his *Longcase Clock Reference Book*, a two-volume set. He has plans to publish a second edition in the future. Loomes has no plans for a fifth edition.

Tennant is an artist who has dedicated much of her life to the restoration of painted longcase clock dials. During that time her late husband and son photographed the dials she restored to a professional standard for her reference, and she recorded vital information such as the type of false plate, if any, and the names and markings on the dial and false plate. Those photographs—over 700—make up the bulk of this book.

The book is organized chronologically by maker. The first two interesting chapters cover the introduction of art to horology and the origins of painting on clock dials. Then, the first painted dial makers, Osborne and Wilson of Birmingham, England, make up the next 80 pages of the book.

I was surprised to find Osborne and Wilson were only 19 and 17 years old when in 1772 they started their business of making painted

clock dials in Birmingham. Thomas Hadley Osborne, the 19-year-old, was probably backed by his widowed mother Ann, who was the daughter of the noted Birmingham clockmaker, Humphrey Hadley III. In fact, after reading the book I believe a good case could be made for Ann Osborne being the mainstay of the company, possibly even a painter. After the Osborne and Wilson partnership ended in 1777, it was Ann Osborne who was listed in the Birmingham directories in 1779. She was listed, sometimes along with her younger son James, until 1812 when she seems to have died and her son James takes over the firm. No evidence of the Osborne firm exists after 1812.

Other Birmingham dial makers follow Osborne and Wilson.

I found chapter 11, "Painted Clock Dials Sold by Birmingham Factors," to be very interesting. Tennant's research revealed that some of the signed false plates in fact had dials painted by other recognized dial painters. A prime example is the Nicholas family; another 10 names are mentioned in this chapter. This information greatly muddies the water, but it does expose the fact that these factors (merchants) would go to the expense of having an iron false plate case with their name on it. They would then buy dials from Birmingham dial painters and sell them as their own to unsuspecting clockmakers. In this way the factors would get repeat business. Some of these dials were sold as far away as America, so the clockmakers would have no idea of who actually painted the dials.

Much new information is presented in chapters 12 and 13. For example, chapter 13 is "Dialmakers in Southern England." The book concludes with an excellent chapter on Scottish painted dials.

More than any of the other books on the subject, I think this book is the best one to reference. It is a must for dial restorers, who sometimes have to fill in missing details on a dial; chances are they will find an example of what is missing in this

book. I have already used it to find an Osborne dial with an automated windmill in the arch. The colors of the dials illustrated in the book are very accurate—something that is not easy to do in today's publishing.

Although expensive, the book is well worth the money.

Tom Spittler (OH)

A Comprehensive Listing of All Wristwatches with Alarms

by Leonhard Beitl

Published by the author (Vienna Austria), c. 2009. Hardcover, 676 pages; 30 cm, full color. Approx. \$275 (U.S.) plus postage. ISBN 978-3-200-01646-0. May be purchased from leo.beitl@aon.at

Portable timepieces with alarm functions predate the invention of the wristwatch since alarms were already one of the sought after complications in pocket watches. Therefore, it is not surprising that alarms were added to wristwatches soon after their invention. This book gives the honor of being the first to an Eterna brand wristwatch with alarm exhibited at the Swiss National Exhibition in Bern in 1914. Alarm wristwatches had their biggest boom years in the 1950s, launched by the Cricket model by Vulcain of La Chaux-de-Fonds.

The author is an Austrian collector enamored with that niche of horology, who has assembled a collection of over 900 different models of wristwatches with alarms. The core of this book is the alphabetic (by brand name) section of 474 pages describing these 900+ watches. Each one is shown in natural size (or bigger) from the dial side; a substantial number also show images of movement, case back or side views. The amount of descriptive text for each model varies from one line to a few paragraphs, and always includes dimensions, plus whatever data the author found in his decades of research. In some cases, this includes technical details, patent numbers, or specific

descriptions of the alarm component in the movements. The author includes reproductions of various related ephemera items (e.g., advertisements, patents, or instruction manuals).

A general historic overview of the subject (22 pages) and a short article on pocket watches with alarm function (12 pages) precede the brand documentation. Following the documentation is a 95-page section devoted to a facsimile reprint of a series of nine articles by Bernard Humbert, which were originally published between 1958 and 1963 in "Schweizerische-Uhrmacher-Zeitung" (the German language edition of *Swiss Watchmakers Journal*). Each article deals with a specific caliber (3x Vulcain, and one each by Schild, Roamer, Langendorf, Le Coultre, Pierce, and Cyma), which include clear movement schematics and detailed disassembly and servicing instructions. An 8-page table with the technical data of the 76 known calibers of wristwatch alarms and a 41-page index conclude the book.

This is clearly a reference book, and not a book for reading, or even for casual browsing. Given that this is a reference book, the language barrier for the wristwatch alarm aficionado who does not read German is relatively unimportant. The illustrations, the caliber drawings, the dimensions, the production numbers, etc., which form the core of this publication, are comprehensible without knowing the language.

Weighing 3.8 kg (over 8 lb), and at a U.S. delivered price of above \$300, this book obviously is not a casual purchase for any collector. But for the dedicated wristwatch alarm freak, it is a "must-buy," because there simply is no other publication available in any language providing the same amount of detailed information on the subject.

Fortunat Mueller-Maerki (NJ)

