

When I started in the trade, watches basically just told time. When the first calendar came to our shop, we all gathered around the old master and witnessed the dismantling, explaining, and reassembling. It was just a date calendar and took about an hour past midnight to complete the changing of the date.

Then came the first automatic and again we witnessed and received an explanation on this new marvel in engineering. The same with the first wrist alarm watch. Finally, the combination of all three functions in one watch.

Fortunately, I was there at the inception of these new innovations and grew in knowledge and experience as the years progressed. Of course, the inevitable occurred with the addition of all these functions to the chronograph, which created a much more complicated watch, requiring a great deal of skill and experience.

Watch owners demanded a calendar with day and date but also with the ability to change precisely at midnight and not over an hour or so. This required more complications to achieve, such as levers, cams, wheels, pinions, and springs. There were many improvements on the automatic mechanisms over the years compared to the early ones.

If the Swiss were able to assemble 25,000 candidates for their watch classes and retain them until graduation, I sincerely doubt that they would be considered qualified and experienced enough to be entrusted with servicing the complicated, high-grade, and expensive watches being produced today.

As I was ready to conclude this dissertation, a customer entered my shop (absolute truth). He told me he was getting married and his fiancé was presenting him with a Baume & Mercier chronograph-calendar watch. He asked my opinion on this timepiece. I gave a par excellence recommendation on this watch, because it is a high-grade, complicated, and expensive watch. This incident reinforces my premise that I'm being exposed to more quality, complicated, and expensive watches than ever. Incidentally, the price was \$3,400. I sincerely doubt that he will be throwing this magnificent timepiece away when it needs service. But if he decides to discard it, I hope he informs me, so I can be there to catch it.

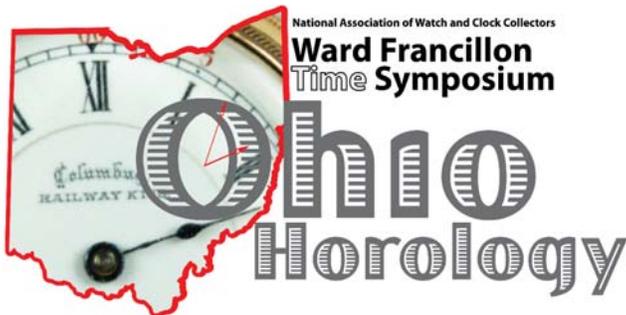


Apparently, the American psyche has been programmed to believe that watch repair is a thing of the past and no longer needed. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

I sincerely hope that our government and the rest of the world wake up and begin to recognize the seriousness of the shortage of watchmakers before it's too late.

As I stated in my previous article, "Time is rapidly approaching when you'll be lucky to say, 'I have a friend who knows a friend whose relative has a friend who knows a watchmaker.'"

Watchmaker Domenic J. Calzaretto at his bench.



October 20-22, 2011
Cincinnati Airport Marriott, Hebron, KY

Symposium information begins on page 376.

Off-Site Tour



**American Watchmakers-Clockmakers
Institute Training Facility, Harrison, Ohio.**

Tour includes the training facility,
research library, and museum.

Symposium information continues on page 441.