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Time & Exploration: Earth, Sea & Space



Next month will mark the grand opening of our newest exhibit at the National Watch & Clock Museum in Columbia, PA. Learn how mankind has used the art of Horology to travel and explore our world. **Opens April 23, 2009.**

Dear NAWCC Member,

This issue highlights how much has changed over the past hundred years in the world of horology, including the wristwatch as an accessory for men; this essential part of the male wardrobe was once highly controversial. Wristwatches are featured in films and television for their own sake, as you'll read below. Also see the sidebar at left for NAWCC programs and opportunities, as well as the date of our upcoming museum exhibition.

Enjoy!

NAWCC School of Horology Celebrates Lincoln's Birthday



School Director Jim Michaels, arrayed in Civil War garb, poses with SOH student Jim Gray

As a special treat, students at the NAWCC School of Horology were visited on Thursday, February 12 by a formidable bulwark of the Union cause: School Director Jim Michaels, clad in historically accurate Civil War garb, and armed to the teeth with a period-style sword. Michaels, a longtime Civil War reenactor, spent the day repairing watches dating from that time period in celebration of the bicentennial of President Abraham Lincoln's birthday.

On February 27 the new School of Horology Watch Technician program graduated its first class. The new four-week program is a stand-alone course, separate from the accredited diploma program.

Registration is underway for the May 2009 Watch Technician class. For more information about this program and others, click [here](#), or view the entire school Spring/Summer schedule via the link on the left sidebar.

School Schedule: Spring 2009

The NAWCC School of Horology has begun its Spring/Summer Workshop series, as part of the Continuing Education Curriculum. Click [here](#) for the complete list of courses offered this year.



Lasser's List

A Hamilton Collector
Must-Have!

From Pocket to Wrist: How "Girly" Watches Conquered the 20th-Century Watch Market

**Lasser's List-The Hamilton
Watch Company Serial
Number Listing**

by Dr. Howard Lasser

Published by the
NAWCC, Inc., © 2009.
200 pages, 5.5" x 8.5",
spiral bound.

Member price \$21.56 (plus
tax and shipping).

The years of work Howard
Lasser invested in this
project have resulted in the
most complete Hamilton
serial number list compiled
to date!

Supplies are limited. Order
yours today at

www.nawccstore.org

**Library News: 2009
Winter Silent Auction
Continues**

The NAWCC Library is
currently holding its annual
winter silent auction. This
auction is for books that
have never been used as
lending copies at the
library.

The list of items to be
auctioned, and the bid
sheet, are located in the
February issue of The MART.

Lost your MART? It's
available online at
nawccmart.org.

The Library will be
accepting bids until March
31st. For more
information, contact
ndyer@nawcc.org.

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1920's Newspaper Cartoon Pokes Fun at Wristwatches

Though clocks were not a new invention in the 16th century, by the early 1500s the first fully portable (but not very accurate) timepieces began to appear. These were carried, either in the hand, or in a pouch or pocket. One of the first people known to have worn a watch on the wrist was the noted French mathematician and philosopher Blaise Pascal (1623-1662). He allegedly attached his pocket watch to his wrist with a piece of string.

Portable watches made in subsequent years were carried, worn as pins, or were worn suspended by chains or cords. Watches specifically adapted to the wrist made rare appearances as early as the late 1500s. Queen Elizabeth I is said to have been given one.

In the mid-1800s, watches worn on the wrist made more frequent appearances when jewelers and watchmakers began creating gem-encrusted timepieces for royalty, though at first only women wore them.

Despite the continuing feminine association, the concept of the wristwatch gained acceptance among the military due to the increased need for accurate timekeeping as warfare became more mechanized. The ability to read time with a quick glance was critical in battle. A lost pocket watch or broken watch chain could prove disastrous to the military commander.

By World War I, military organizations began to request "strap watches," an alternate term intended to distinguish these watches from the supposedly effeminate "wristwatch." They became especially crucial to fledgling aerial combat operations. As demand for "strap watches" in warfare grew, more rugged timepieces were introduced.

Nevertheless, wristwatches did not see widespread public use until the 1920s. Before that, men still tended to regard the wristwatch as inherently feminine. After World War I, that perception slowly began to change. But it was a long process.

Yes, Your Honor

"In 1919, a year after the end of World War I, a lawyer was arguing a point of law in court when Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis noticed that the lawyer was wearing a wristwatch. The judge halted the lawyer in mid-sentence and asked him if he served in the war. When the lawyer responded he had not, Judge Landis ordered him to remove the watch, admonishing him that it was inappropriate for non-veterans to wear a wristwatch.

"Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis was subsequently appointed the Commissioner of Major League Baseball to clean up the sport's image after the "Black Sox World Series" scandal in 1919. This involved "Shoeless" Joe Jackson of the Chicago White Sox and seven of his teammates. Landis ruled baseball with an iron fist from November 12, 1920 to November 25, 1944."

--Frederic J. Freidberg, "The Illinois Watch"

By the early 1940's men's wristwatches had lost their feminine connotation, though they were still believed by some to be a passing fad, much less respectable than the traditional pocket watch. Heavy use of the men's wristwatch during World War II finally earned it a ubiquitous ranking in American culture.

In 1914, when a wristwatch was shown at an exhibit in Switzerland, it was called "just a passing fancy." Today, this "passing fancy" is the number-one jewelry item in the world. About 80 million watches are made around the world each year.

Horology in the Media



Tutima watch featured in *Righteous Kill*

Film Producers Sue Watchmaker over Product Placement Deal

The makers of Al Pacino's recent movie [Righteous Kill](#) are demanding payment for filming a close-up of the Tutima wrist watch worn by the actor in the film.

The short film sequence, lasting three seconds, is allegedly worth \$80,000. That's the claim of film producers Millennium Films, who have filed a claim to Los Angeles County Court against watchmaker Tutima. Millennium's claim states that they delivered on the deal to show a three second close-up of the watch on Pachino's arm in [Righteous Kill](#), but the \$80,000 promised for the shot apparently never came.

The watch company is also being sued by the film's producers for an additional \$1500, in recompense for additional advertising fees allegedly promised by Tutima.

Hit TV Series [Heroes](#) Inspires New Interest in Watch Collecting



The villain of Heroes is a former watch repair technician, whose inability to restore a specific watch has driven him to insanity; his father is a full fledged clockmaker. And the character even chose his supervillainous alias, "Sylar," by basing it on the supposed brand name of a (fictional) watch company. The twin worlds of horology and superheroes seem to have collided.

The predominance of clock, and watch-related themes (and props) on the current TV hit series Heroes has resulted in a recent surge of interest among collectors of TV and movie merchandise, as fans of the TV program seek watches that emulate those depicted on the show.

At least one dealer has appeared on watch-collecting forums and message boards devoted to the show, offering a [facsimile](#) of the infamous "Sylar" wristwatch, specifically, a modified Hamilton Khaki Field Mechanical with a custom face that matches the one depicted in the picture above. According to promotional material released by the Heroes writers, the infamous Sylar watch is "100 years old, and German."

Had they been more careful with their research, they might have noted that wristwatches of that type weren't all that common in 1909, particularly those with modern cases and luminescent dials.

Will NBC and Universal Media Studios/Tailwind Productions, the makers of Heroes, respond to demand by creating their own licensed replica of the much-sought-after Sylar wristwatch?

Only time will tell.

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