# Throng Times



Newsletter for Chapter 190 of The National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors

January 2012

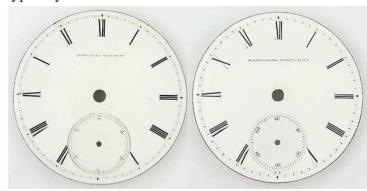
### A Fake Elgin G. M. Wheeler

by Dave Coatsworth

Take a quick look at the two watch movements pictured below. A pair of Elgin G. M. Wheeler grade movements made in 1869 and, judging by the serial numbers, probably within a few months of each other, right? But, wait. Take a closer look and differences can be observed. Could Elgin have really made these two movements within months of each other? The answer is 'no.' One is a genuine Elgin G.M. Wheeler (left) and the other is a 'Swiss Fake' (right). This one just happens to be one of the better fakes produced in Switzerland in the last third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is good enough that a beginning collector may be fooled into thinking that he or she is buying a low serial number Elgin. Taking a closer look at these two movements can provide a considerable education in what to look out for when buying American watches from this era. We will soon see that the differences are significant.



Let's start by examining the top plate more carefully. Other than the serial number, all of the wording is the same and is in approximately the same location. However, note that the engraving on the true Elgin is more finely done. Swiss fakes generally have a more hurried engraving, although this one is fairly well done. The second thing to notice is the color of the movement. The Elgin has a true gilded appearance whereas the fake has a washed out color. This color is also typical of Swiss fakes. Next, note the slightly different shape of the barrel bridge. The case screw on the Elgin goes all the way through to the pillar plate, whereas the screw on the fake is threaded into the top plate. Finally, notice that the regulator pins have been moved closer to the edge of the movement in the fake. On the other hand, some details have been faithfully copied, such as the blued regulator and the typical pie shaped Elgin hairspring stud. Also, everything has been spelled identically and correctly. These details are not typical of most Swiss fakes. Often the name or city have been changed slightly, such as 'Waldham' instead of 'Waltham' on Waltham fakes or the name changed such as 'G. M. Weeler' instead of 'G. M. Wheeler' on Elgin fakes. The movements are almost exactly the same size, being within 0.1mm of each other in diameter. The jewel settings on both movements are fake. The jewel screws on the fake are larger than on the Elgin and larger than typically seen on American movements.



Next, let's turn our attention to the dial. Note that the both have the correct period name 'National Watch Co.' and both are single-sunk. On the surface, they appear to be identical. However, look closely at the seconds bit. The seconds bit on the Elgin is a separate piece that has been affixed with shellac. The seconds bit on the fake is simply a depression in the enamel. This is readily confirmed by removing the dial. This time saving measure is commonly seen on Swiss fake dials.



After removing the dial, we are faced with an obvious difference. The view under the dial is very different. The view under the dial of the fake almost looks more like that of the Waltham model 1857 than it does the Elgin, giving the impression that this particular maker may have been producing fake Walthams before turning to Elgins.

Continued on page 3

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### PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

By Mike Schmidt

A new year always presents some new and wonderful opportunities for NAWCC members:

The NAWCC "NATIONAL CONVENTION" this year will be held in Pasadena, June 13-16. Check out the NAWCC Website, "Mart Highlights" or Mart website www.2012 NAWCCCONVENTION.com to make your reservations. There will be a public day of attendance for all of our friends on Saturday, June16th. The last time the National was in California was 1986.



In support of the "NATIONAL CONVENTION" Chapter 190's Board of Directors has decided to forego this year's April "Seaside Annual Mart & Show". We will resume the Annual Mart & Show in 2013.

By popular demand "Lex's Boot Camp" will be held Saturday, January 21st at the Historic Dudley House Museum (N. Ashwood & Loma Vista). This will be an animated visual review and lecture on the theory of time trains and motion works. (9:00- 3:00) \$12 and includes lunch. Make reservations with Laurie Conti 805 813- 2216 or email Remember\_the\_clock@me.com

The "BISNO SCHALL GALLERY" at the Santa Barbara Courthouse will soon be opened for viewing. You can follow along with the recent progress of the Seth Thomas Tower Clock Project at www.BisnoSchallgallery.com.

The program for this month's meeting will be given by Bill Robinson "Briggs conical pendulum clock as manufactured by E.N. Welch." The rotary pendulum clock made in the 1870's is a very rare and unique clock.

The Sunday morning meeting workshop will begin at 10:30 am. The beginning topic for this round table discussion was provoked by email discussions between several members about the quality of clock movements. "In evaluating the quality and value of clock or watch movements what criterion should we use? Is it accuracy, durability, repair ability?" These workshops are open for all to bring their clock and watch repair questions. Come stump the experts and have some fun. The coffee will be on early.

Come join us for a great lunch and fellowship next Sunday. See you at the meeting.

Mike Schmidt

## Happy Birthday

Mike Everman, Sylvia Griswold,
Richard Henderson, Virginia Norwood,
Tom Rementer, Lex Rooker, Zaki Salahuddin,
Beverly Schmidt, Paul Skeels, & Kyrt Triffet.

### Continued from page 1

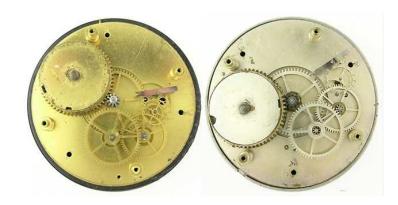
Of course, a consumer would never see this, so no point in bothering to fake this accurately. One similarity to note is that the maker of the fake has taken the time to stamp the serial number on the pillar plate. This detail is not typical of Swiss fakes. Finally, note the absence of escapement sight holes in the fake.



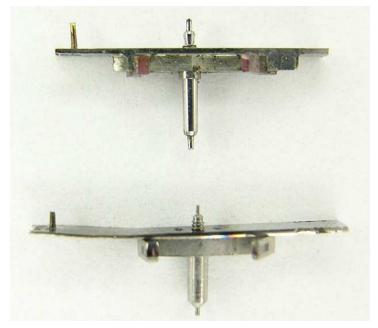
Now, let's begin to disassemble the movement. First we will remove the balance cock and examine the balance assembly. Underneath the balance cock of the Elgin, we see the full serial number and a patent identification. On the fake, we simply see one digit of the serial number — a '5.' The balance assembly also shows some differences. Note that the balance screws on the fake have simply been placed evenly around the wheel, whereas those on the Elgin have been placed with some attempt at balancing the wheel. The balance is fully cut on the fake, which is unusual on fakes. Typically they will be uncut or partially cut. The Elgin has the expected 'D' shaped roller jewel. The fake has an oval jewel more indicative of a Swiss movement.



Removing the top plate and looking underneath it reveals additional differences. The Elgin has a full serial number and another patent mark. It also has the serial number on the potence. The fake has a faint serial number under the top plate but nothing on the potence. The potence itself is rather crudely made compared to the Elgin. Finally, note that the Elgin has the 'improved' cutout for the mainspring barrel, allowing the barrel to be removed without removing the top plate.



Inside the movement, we see that the trains have been laid out in a similar manner. The milling in the plate is not as nicely done on the fake as on the Elgin. The escape wheel has 3 spokes instead of 4. The Elgin has a patented safety pinion on the center wheel assembly. The fake has a solid pinion with no safety feature. The pillars are shaped differently and have a slightly different spacing. The pallet lever looks different. The one on the fake is made of a rather flimsy strip of metal, which is easily bent and it is longer. The Elgin's pallet lever is much sturdier. Also note the different mounting of the pallet jewels where the fake's jewels look more like the sandwiched jewels we would see on the Waltham model 1857. The fake has a threaded pallet arbor where the Elgin's is riveted.



The production of fakes is one way the Swiss attempted to compete with the industrialization of watch making seen in America in the later third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Some, like the example in this article, were fairly well made and may have fooled the original buyer and may continue to fool the novice collector today. Most were more crudely made and fool only the most ignorant buyers.



### George Daniels, a Rare Visionary

by Henri Bonnet

I think that no quality horological publication can afford to ignore the passing of George Daniels, some six weeks ago, on the Isle of Man, UK.

George Daniels was the most important horologist since Abraham Louis Breguet. So, here is my contribution toward memorializing Mr. Daniels.

For those of us who believe in the indestructibility of the mechanical watch, George Daniels has to be, by any measure, our Patron Saint. He passed away on October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011 at the age of 85, leaving behind him a legacy that will serve horology for decades to come, perhaps even

centuries. Raised in poverty in a suburb of London, he attended night school at Northampton Polytechnic, but was largely self taught, and eventually became a master watchmaker in his own right. He began his career by restoring priceless Breguet carriage clocks and other such timepieces from Napoleonic era that belonged to museums or to wealthy collectors. George Daniels believed in the pure art of watch making where quality and performance supersede all other considerations. Above all, he never doubted the future of the mechanical watch. During his lifetime he painstakingly made over thirty five watches of his own design, fabricating every single component by hand from scratch, including screws, gears, springs,

pallets and jewel stones, levers, hands and dials, using raw materials and simple hand tools. No one else in living memory even came close to accomplishing that feat. He was convinced that a mechanical watch could be made to keep time not less accurately than its electronic counterpart, and he succeeded in meeting that goal.

Over thirty years ago George Daniels achieved what the major watch houses of Europe are still trying to accomplish today. Namely, to build a lubricant-free escapement in a watch that would require no periodic servicing; George Daniels did that by using only tried and true materials and methods that have proven themselves during the past two hundred years. Over a period of twenty years he tried to interest the major Swiss watch manufacturers in the benefits of the co-axial escapement he had invented in the mid-1970's, but to no avail. It took another visionary, such as the late Nicholas G. Hayek, then chairman of the Swatch Group, to mass produce and market the co-axial escapement. In 1999, Omega began offering the co-axial escapement in its DeVille wristwatches series, in a limited edition. Today, practically all Omega wristwatches are co-axial. They now number into the millions, and perform beautifully. Without the need to periodically lubricate the escapement, a wristwatch would not need to be serviced every three to five years in order to continue keeping good time. (See my article of Feb 2008 on the co-axial escapement). This is especially important in our day and age due to the dire shortage of experienced watchmakers, to say nothing of the hassle and cost involved. The co-axial George Daniels invented in the mid-1970's was the only new viable mechanical escapement since Thomas Mudge invented the lever escapement in 1754. Of course the Swiss version of it has had by now over 200 years of development, and understandably, most watch manufacturers were reluctant to part with it, even for an admittedly better, but relatively unproven alternative.

Dr, Daniels received numerous international honors and awards during his lifetime, including a CBE (Commander of the British Empire) from Queen Elisabeth

II. It is fair to say that George Daniels has been a catalyst in the revival of the mechanical wristwatch, following its near demise in the 1970's due to the proliferation of inexpensive quartz timepieces. George Daniels wrote several important horological books, one of which explains in minute details how to build a watch from scratch with raw materials and simple hand tools. However, it is neither for the amateur nor for the faint hearted. Even an accomplished and experienced watchmaker will find it difficult to replicate the beautiful watches that George Daniels has built during his lifetime. George Daniels was as rare a phenomenon, as Abraham Louis Breguet has been in the 1800's and early 1900's. I

believe that the coaxial escapement, with improvements thereupon, is destined to carry the modern mechanical wristwatch into the next century and beyond. Among the few major innovators of mechanical horology, George Daniels indeed stands as one of its giants.



George Daniels in his workshop



Two Omega wristwatches that incorporate George Daniels Co-Axial escapement design.



### **Santa Paula Clock Tower Progress Report**

by Paul Skeels



The Santa Paula Odd Fellows Lodge houses the 1906 Seth Thomas Tower Clock that was renovated by Chapter 190 in 2008. Although the clock has been running well, the tower itself has a history of significant water intrusion during the rainy seasons. This water has not been content to stay within the tower, but finds its way down into the main building. Many of you will recall seeing evidence of water damage to the second floor ceilings in the main Lodge room.

In 2011 the Odd Fellows applied for a City permit to renovate the clock tower itself. After several months the permit was granted. A contractor, Merit Sheet Metal of Oxnard, was selected, and work started in November, 2011. The work began with the erection of a five story scaffold from the sidewalk to the dome of the tower, followed by the removal of the tower's original copper-colored sheet metal roofing shingles, the decorative trim, the deteriorated wood framework for the four clock dials, the finials, and so forth. Then the entire exposed tower was wrapped with a waterproof roofing paper. We were fortunate to learn that stamped sheet metal shingles of exactly the original design and size are still manufactured by a supplier in Texas.

As of this writing, the new shingles are installed and will soon be followed by the new sheet metal bezel assemblies for the four dials. As far as the 1950's – era plastic dials are concerned, the painted Roman numerals have been touched up and a new 46" diameter ½" thick opaque white plastic backing has been fabricated and installed behind each dial to improve the final appearance and the effectiveness of the backlighting. The four sets of motion works behind the dials were completely disassembled, cleaned and lubricated. New aluminum hands were fabricated, painted and fitted with counterbalances. The hands were installed on January 2 and we expect to activate the clock when the work on the dome is complete in about a week.

There is no doubt that these improvements will solve the water intrusion problems and preserve the tower, building and Seth Thomas Tower Clock for many more generations. The Odd Fellows once again thank the members of Chapter 190 for their past assistance.

### **EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

"Clock Boot Camp" Saturday, January 21.

This will be a visual, animated theory and discussion on the American Clock Movement. It will be a one day workshop at the Ventura "Dudley House Museum." Make reservations with Laurie Conti 805 813- 2216 or email Remember the clock@me.com

### The following workshops will also be scheduled for 2012:

**Sherline Lathe Workshop** - Advanced tool making. (Date to be determined)

**F510 Clock Camp I**- This is 2 day course for students who have completed the F101 and 102and want a Refresher course of that material

**F511 Clock Camp II-** This is a 2 day course for students who have completed the 103 and 104 and want a refresher course for that material

FSW 102-Time & Strike with spring Barrels and rack/snail striking

FSW 302- Beginning Wristwatch Repair. A 4 day workshop offered January 27-30, 2012 coordinator Weber Wang 626-336-2870 email: weberwang@hotmail.com 1 opening remains.

The following FSW Workshops are scheduled for the NAWCC NATIONAL in Pasadena:

FSW 101 Introduction to Basic Time & Strike-The American Kitchen Clock- 4 day workshop June 11-14

FSW 301 Introduction to Basic Pocket Watch Repair-The American Pocket Watch 4 Day workshop June 11-14

FSW 501 The Repair & Replacement of an American Strip Recoil Escapement 2 day workshop June 13-14

> FSW 502 The Atmos Repair Course-3 day workshop June 12-14

Contact Pam Tischler <u>FSWprogram@verizon.net</u> for registration or information

Suggestions for chapter 190 workshops, demonstrations, or programs are always welcome. Contact any board member with your ideas. by Ralph Napolitano

Ralph Napolitano



I was born in the 2<sup>nd</sup> term of the Eisenhower administration in west-suburban Chicago. I came from a very blue-collar background, my father being a union meat-cutter, and my mother a hairdresser. We were far from wealthy, and yet, I never remember being in need. I attended Roman Catholic grade school, and then transferred to the public schools. My father and younger brother were both very athletic, and therefore, sports were always a priority at our house. I attended undergraduate studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and then completed my education at the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Medicine.

No one in my family was especially "handy". Yes, my father was a blue-collar guy, but he didn't have any interest in carpentry or special projects. So, the desire to tinker with things wasn't really a part of my upbringing.

In 1980, I bought about 6 European regulators from a farmer, a friend of my uncle, about 100 miles from where I lived in Illinois. My mom's cousin had an acquaintance from the NAWCC who repaired, bought, and sold clocks. He was in his 70s; I was in my early 20s, but we became friends; and he convinced me to join the NAWCC in the 1980s.

I completed my medical training in suburban Chicago in the late 1980s, and moved to the northwest suburbs after I started practicing. I always had wanderlust to travel, and was praying for something to bring me out west, but none of my immediate family has ever left the nest in Chicago. In 1990, I met my future ex-

wife at church, who had just moved from the San Fernando Valley to Chicago for a job promotion. We were married in 1991.

While visiting my wife's family in the San Fernando Valley, we went house hunting, but the housing prices were more than double that of Chicago. One day we took a ride to Santa Barbara. My wife's sister, from LA, encouraged us to stop in Camarillo to look around. We drove around and picked up a few local real estate magazines. To our great surprise, the market in Ventura County was almost exactly the same as Chicago, which we felt gave us the green light to move.

We came to Ventura County in 1992, where I stayed until my divorce in 2001, at which time I moved to Santa Barbara. My ex-wife and I agreed that she would keep the clocks; I really didn't have anywhere to put them. She was and remains a great person (especially for putting up with me for 10 years!) I visited a few Chapter 190 meetings several years ago, but my living situation at the time did not allow for wall clocks. I moved back to Camarillo in 2004, and in 2010 I visited the 190 mart at the Camarillo Airport. I rejoined the NAWCC, after being inactive for over 15 years, and also joined 190 in 2011. Since the mart at the Ventura County Fairgrounds, I have been fortunate enough to collect 3 grandfather clocks and 20 wall clocks. I've never really been interested in watches, or any other clocks other than Vienna regulators, because that's what I was initially exposed to. Although most of my collection remains VRs, I've been fortunate to obtain several Asian and American contemporary clocks, which I've really come to enjoy.

I have learned so much since I've joined 190. I have NO commercial interest in clock repair; however, I do want to learn as much as possible. I enjoyed the FSW 101 class in Santa Paula in October '11, and look forward to the FSW 102 class in '12. I wanted to thank the club for taking me under its wing, especially Giorgio Perissinotto, Ernie Jenson, Mike Schmidt, Ken McWilliams, Dutch Friou, George Antinarelli, George Gaglini, Paul Skeels, Jim Chamberlain, and Lex Rooker. I've obtained wonderful clocks from Giorgio, George Gaglini, and Dutch. Lex was gracious enough to spend many hours with me building a clock work-site (gratis), which has been very helpful. I'm considering my first mantle/shelf clock and maybe even an electric clock. Watches...I'm not so sure...maybe a pocket watch or two. I've also enjoyed getting to know Bill Hogan, whom I met on Craig's List. Bill has sold me over 10 clocks, and has repaired a few others with excellent results. I'm glad to hear he just became a member of Chapter 190.

Thanks to everyone in the club. This is quite a special place.

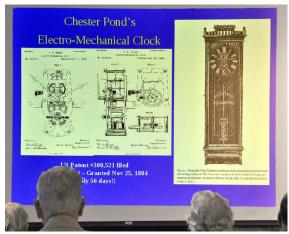
### THE EXTRA PAGE

# FACES SEEN AT OCTOBER'S MEETING Photos by Bill Robinson













The next Meeting & Mart for Chapter 190 is January 15, 2012

Sellers may start setting up at 11:30 The Mart is open from 12:00 til 1:15 The Meeting starts at 1:15

### **PROGRAM**

"Briggs Conical Pendulum Clock"

Presented by Bill Robinson
"A rare opportunity to see and learn about this rotary pendulum clock made in the 1870's"

**SHOW & TELL** 

Any item you would like to share"

### This Month's Mini-Workshop

At 10:30AM,

"Evaluating the quality and value of movements" This will be an open forum, moderated by Paul Skeels

THE WORKSHOPS ARE ALWAYS FREE!



William & Caroline Hogan from Moorpark, Ca



### **CLASSIFIED PAGE**

This page is dedicated to advertising for Chapter 190 members. It is, of course, free to members.

### = SERVICES OFFERED =

### The Montecito Clock Gallery

Restoration, repair, sales of clocks and watches.

Ferdinand Geitner, mbhi, owner and operator

Now located at 1187 Coast Village road, unit I0a

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e-mail: theclockgallery@roadrunner.com

### The Tic Toc Shop

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Repair & Restore all American & Swiss watches.

12 years as a Rolex technician. We maintain a complete shop with all the latest equipment.

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E-mail: jorgemont2001@netzero.net

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In business since 1977.

Sales and Restoration of both new and antique clocks. Repair of all types of mechanical clocks. *Loren Miller* proprietor.

4255 E. Main St., No. 15, Ventura, Ca. 93003 (Located in Firehouse Plaza at Main St. and Telephone Rd) Monday through Saturday 10:00 to 6:00 pm.

Tel. 805-650-8800

### FOR SALE =



### BEAUTIFUL 3 WEIGHT VIENNA REGULATOR.



# Watch Repair Tools & Morel

I will have a huge selection of watch repair tools and other items from my latest estate buy at the Chapter 190 meeting.

Dave Coatsworth dave@daveswatchparts.com



# MicroSet Timers for Clocks and Watches

Precision electronic timing tools for clock and watch repair with many unique features. Prices start at \$250. Full information is on the website:

www.WatchTimer.com Mumford Micro Systems 3933 Antone Road Santa Barbara, CA 93110 (805) 687-5116

### = WANTED ----

### **URGENTLY NEEDED, VISIBLE ESCAPEMENT MOVEMENT**

French type-platform escapement (no pendulum)
Winding hole spacing of 38.9 mm, (1.53")
Repairable, other details available on request.
Bob Reichel, welchdoc@yahoo.com Ph: 1-206-364-7374

Antique French 2 or 3 dial calendar clocks.

Antique English 2 or 3 gear-train skeleton clock.

Loren Miller, Pacific Coast Clocks
4255 E. Main St., No. 15, Ventura, Ca.

Located in Firehouse Plaza (Main St. & Telephone Rd.)

Tel. 805-650-8800

### - Chronometer -

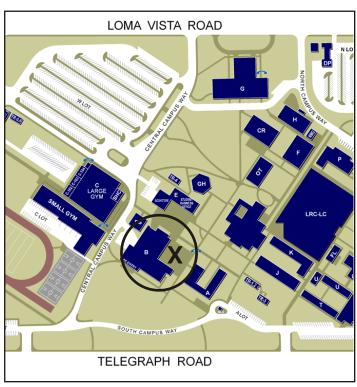
Hamilton 21 Marine Chronometer in running condition, with inner box and gimbals; outer box not essential.

Please contact: Giorgio Perissinotto

E-mail: giorgio@spanport.ucsb.edu

The Chapter 190 meetings are held the third Sunday of each month. (No meeting in December) We will meet in the cafeteria on the Ventura College campus. The cafeteria is located in building "B", east of the gym and athletic field.





January 2012 Issue

# NEXT MEETING JAN 15



If Undeliverable return To: 17738 Superior St. Unit 21 Northridge, CA 91325

Chrono Times



### **MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

For Ventura & Santa Barbara Counties Chapter 190 of the NAWCC

COUNTILES INE	W RENE	WAL	
	PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY	Y	Date:
			Date:
Name: (First) (Last)			Phone:
Street address:	City:		_ State: Zip:
E-mail:	Birth Day: (Month)	(Day)	NAWCC # Membership in the NAWCC is requir
Person to contact in the event of an emergency: Name:		P	hone:
What i	is your clock/watch in (Check all that apply)	terest?	
☐ I collect clocks ☐ I collect watches ☐ I have a		clocks $\square$ watches	and have repaired a few as a hobby.
<ul> <li>I have studied □ clock □ watch repair via books, videos attending classes. I repair clocks mostly as a hobby.</li> <li>I have a well equipped shop and can repair most □ clock I have an extensive knowledge of clock/watch design, functechniques. Most repairs are for pay.</li> </ul>	many type	es of movements. I	eks ☐ for over 5 years and am familiar with repair clocks for pay and as a hobby.  of ☐ clocks ☐ watches and have a very r history, models and value.
why do you want to be a member of Chapter 190?			
		7	
Would you like to volunteer in helping Chapter 190	achieve its goals?	Yes, how car	I help?  \( \text{No, not at this time} \)
Membership in Ventura chapter 190 of the NAWCC requires that and Clock Collectors. If you are not a member, you may join on send you an application.			
Chapter dues run from January 1st to December 31st. Annual d	ues are \$25.00 for immedia	ate family.	
Please make checks payable to;	Family membership dues \$25.00 Membership includes spouse and other family members.		
Chapter 190 NAWCC		nbers names.	dise and other family members.
Mail this form & check to:			
Ernie Jenson			
25 Norma Ct, Camarillo CA 93010			
Signature	•	-	do not have to be a NAWCC member ember to chapter events.
	FOR CHAPTER USE		
Date received Amount recei	ived \$	Member	D number;
Added to mailing list. Date Me	embership card sent.	Date	
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