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www.clockwatch.de

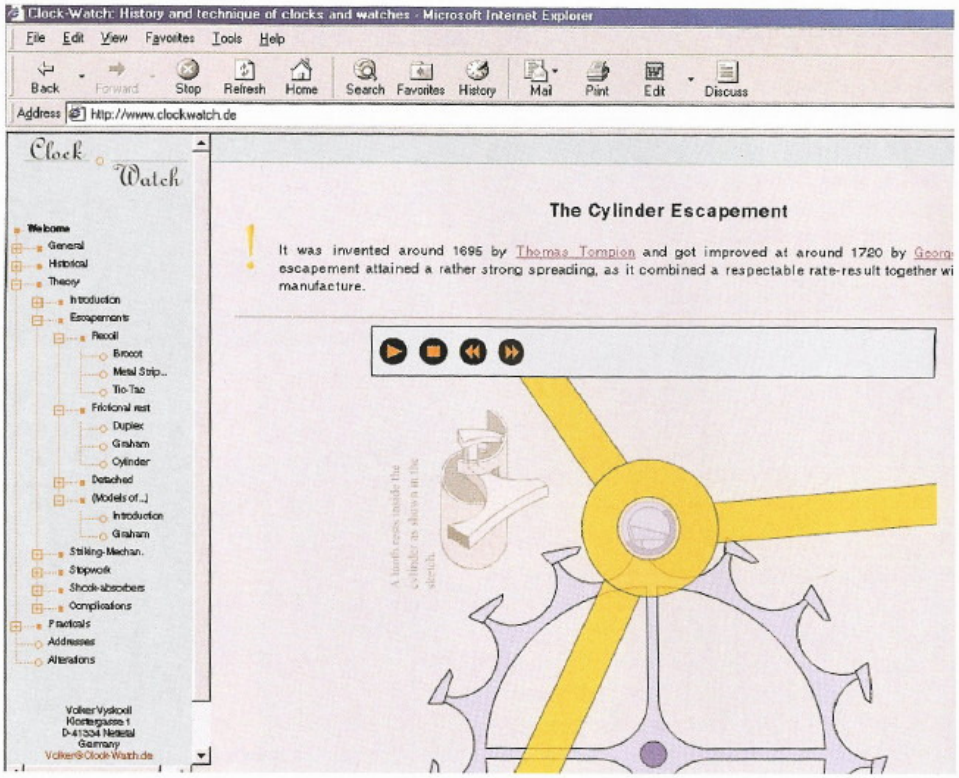
Making full use of animation, this comprehensive website may replace text books

IT IS ONE MATTER to review a book, artwork, a play, a movie or video. It is another matter to review a free website. There is an essential difference involved in the author/artist relationship with reviewers, customers and clients. The difference is commercial and begs the general question we (should) all ask of everything we buy: "Is it what I want and good value for what I will pay?". But we don't "buy" a visit to this website and therefore for review purposes it would be easy to simply suggest that you visit <http://www.clockwatch.de> to be your own judge and not waste further time with this review.

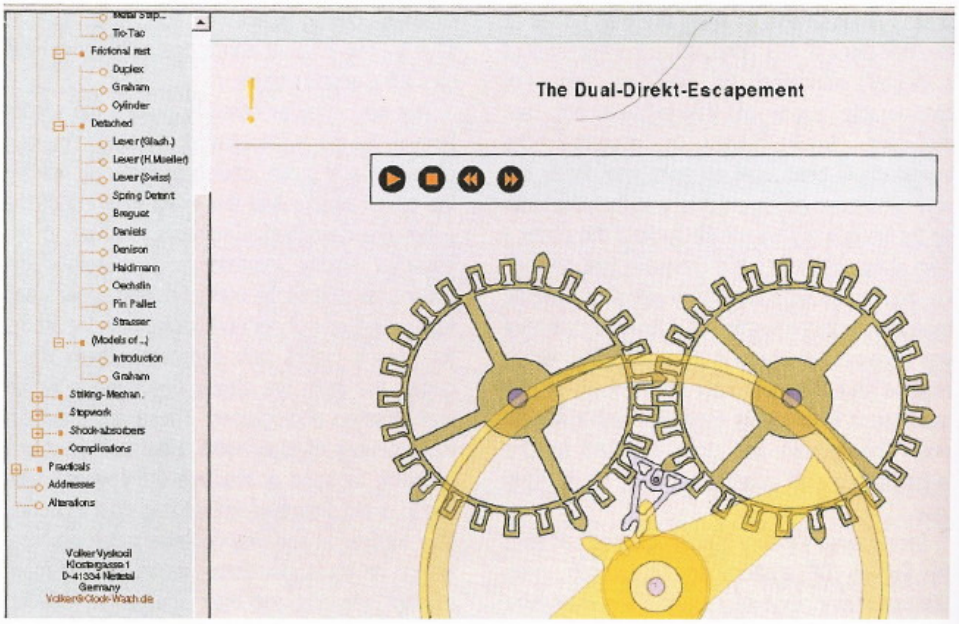
These days a very large number of the horological fraternity are internet-connected and, for these, a visit will be most rewarding. Therefore this is written primarily for those who aren't connected (in the hope that they might give it a try and see what they are missing) and secondarily for those who are connected (in the hope they might make use of a valuable resource).

ClockWatch is a website of wide horological knowledge and education. Its author is Volker Vyskocil. Also credited on the site are: Beat Haldimann, a graduate master-horologist from Thun, Switzerland, as an advisor, and Annette Challinor, as translator of the English language version.

There are some shortcomings in the translation, which are amusing rather than a weakness. They don't detract from the technical explanations and the historical material. When dealing with *Escapements*, for more common English terms such as "dead beat", we get the more accurately defining "frictional rest" category (which includes the Graham dead beat, the cylinder and duplex). The writing itself is not without its own humour. In any case, as monoglots, we should be forgiving.



A 'screen capture' from the animated drawing of the cylinder escapement. The shaped red buttons control the animation as for a video: 'Play', 'Stop', 'Rewind', 'Fast Forward'. The 'tree' on the left is used to 'navigate' to other 'pages'.



The action of the Oechslin Dual Direct Escapement used in the Ulysse Nardin Freak (see HJ, May p.162). This is one of eleven detached escapement types illustrated. Under 'Shock-absorbers' you can see the action of the INCABLOC® by simulating a lateral or vertical force.

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comprehensive coverage of the depthing tool that I have ever seen. Perhaps this is not surprising since Malcolm Wild has been producing excellent depthing tools for over 25 years! This most elegant tool is still essential to both clock and watchmakers and inextricably linked with wheels and pinions. The use of several of the more exotic, but still very useful, variants of the basic tool are well described.

A range of solutions to specific clock problems are fully covered, including making snails, racks and count wheels for striking work. Geneva stop work, equally applicable to clocks or watches, is extensively dealt with.

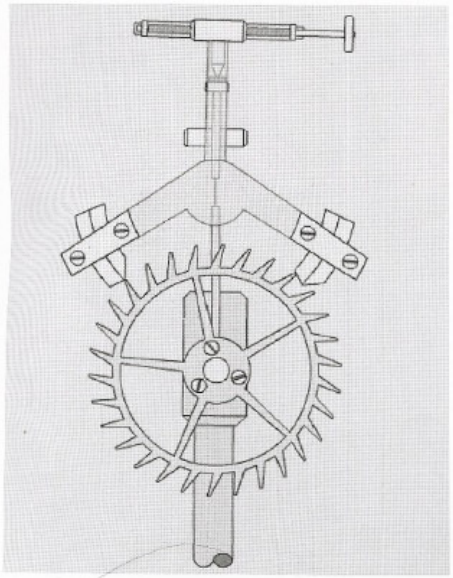
Much invaluable advice on cutting the more delicate escape wheels is given, including that for the chronometer escapement.

The book concludes with solutions to the problems of missing wheels and pinions, calculations for going and striking trains and pendulum replacement.

This book deserves the highest praise. I know that the author spent a great deal of time writing the text, taking the photographs and preparing drawings, let alone thinking it all out. His attention to detail is exemplary and the book is refreshingly free of errors.

Christmas is coming! Make sure that you have this book to hand for those winter evenings by the fire. I am sure that you will not regret it and will find it an essential reference source for successful future work.

Derek Pratt



The Strasser, impulsing through the suspension spring, is one of the less common escapements shown. The animation is most informative.

So what is this site about? It presents horological history, theory, design devel-opment, practical applications and, more than anything else, it is an educational reference site that can be easily browsed as one might open a coffee-table book at any page and find immediate interest.

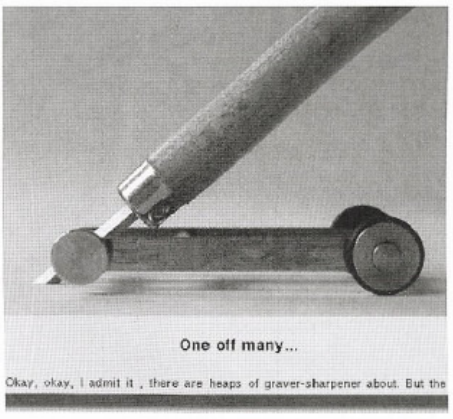
The ***Home page*** gives options of ***General*** (author, advisor, translator etc), ***Historical*** (all the trade mark symbols used to identify watch calibres, definition of the unit "second") ***Theory*** (an extensive section covering all escapements, strike mechanisms, stopwork, shock-absorbers, complications etc) ***Practicals*** (plans for making a graver sharpening jig).

In each of the technical windows (eg escapements, strike mechanism) full animated "working" drawings are provided (Macromedia Flash software is required) and is right up-to-date with the Daniels Coaxial and the Ulysse Nardin dual-direct escapement designed by Ludwig Oechslin, listed under their inventor's names.

Downloading the program is recommended even if the English translation requires some interpretation:- "In case you have the desire to study the content of these pages with[out] your provider having a grip on your wallet/purse, then here is something for you." The advice that ***Practicals*** are: "For the ones that would like to get their hands on themselves" has recently been revised.

Then follows a description of how to download the full program. More than this, there is a "DLM" (download manager) which, if run at a later time, will update your download files with changes and additions made to the original material at the home website.

Students and professionals alike will derive knowledge and entertainment from this site. Volker Vyskocil's work really illustrates how very well the internet can operate as a powerful, broadly based education medium. It is so thoroughly prepared that as a resource for the horological teaching institutions around the world it should surely be a candidate for some financial support from the industry.



If you would like to make this jig for sharpening and honing a graver, detailed drawings can be downloaded.

CLOCKWATCH is really an amazing undertaking of very special quality, visit it yourself and form your own opinion. Send a friend a card with the web address on it. What an economical present!

Martin Foster

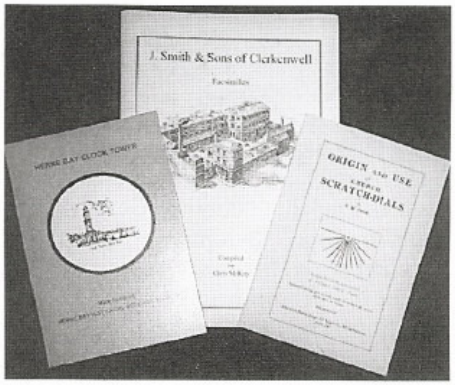
Small but Important

PIERHEAD PUBLICATIONS* produce a regular supply of interesting booklets and reprints of interest to horologists. It is well worth sending for its publication list.

Herne Bay Clock Tower, by Mike Bundock, is a 28-page A5 booklet poviding an account of a local landmark and incorporating a wealth of historical material. Commenced in 1836, the free-standing Herne Bay Clock Tower on the Kent coast, was one of the earliest in the UK.

Chris McKay's *J Smith & Sons of Clerkenwell* (70pp A4) starts with an illustrated description of a visit to Clerkenwell in 1851 and follows with reproductions of company catalogues of 1880 and 1910; a superb reference source.

Origin and use of Church Scratch Dials, is a reprint (16pp A5) of a useful 1935 booklet.



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