

THE JADE CLOCK



*A Project Constructed by Members
of the San Francisco Gem & Mineral Society*

THE STORY OF THE JADE CLOCK

By
Helen Stiles Chenoweth
and Ted Bhend

*The following members planned and carried
out the construction of the Jade Clock:*

THEODORE H. BHEND
GEORGE RANDOLPH
HENRY H. REINECKE

aided by the following (listed alphabetically)

MORTON J. BACHRACH	CYRUS K. DAM	VIRGINIA HERING
PAUL R. BAER	HUB DAFOE	WALTER HOBBS
CHARLES E. BISHOP	RALPH DOTTER	RALPH E. JOHNSON
LEON BURTON	MEL DREFKE	OSCAR H. MERWIN
AMBROSE CANZIANI	J. G. ENNES	GEORGIA PAINE
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	ROBERT N. HARDENBROOK	

The jade transparency which forms the cover background came from a large jade table belonging to L. J. Bergsten.

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PRINTED BY ARTS & CRAFTS PRESS
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

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By Helen Stiles Chenoweth

SAN FRANCISCO GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

San Francisco Gem and Mineral Society members are making a jade clock.

Why a jade clock? Time is that precious thing that so many of us waste. Time never stops, never turns back; it is impartial to all of us. We squander it, try to hold it back and yet it passes on to the eternity of yesterday. We cannot make one second of time ourselves and yet we *can* make the instruments with which time is reckoned—clocks!

Time was when the hour was noted by shadows and stars, with sundials, water clocks and hour glasses. The first real clock was made late in the 10th century. In the fabled town of Nuremberg, shortly after the discovery of America, lived Johann Coeuleus who in 1511 wrote: "Every day produces more ingenious inventions. A young man named Peter Henlein creates works that are the admiration of the leading mathematicians, for out of iron he constructs clocks with numerous wheels which, without any impulse and in any position, indicate time for forty hours, and strike."

Wood and the assortment of materials used in making clocks runs the gamut from iron, brass and costlier metals through tortoise shell, rock crystal, ivory, enamelled metals, snake skin and glass, with jewelled embellishments worth a king's ransom. The making of clocks has always meant designs and plans, precision, and many days and years of complicated work. Wood carvers and carpenters, die and tool makers, lapidaries, painters, etchers, and rock buyers, collectors and plain every day rockhounds have been concerned with the making of clocks. Research shows that clocks have been made of many materials by many different people under all sorts of conditions but we have not unearthed one line of information that tells of a group of amateur gem and mineral society members making a clock of jade! This clock of the *San Francisco Gem and Mineral Society* is made of ideas and mathematics, of sweat and tears and some mistakes, from exquisite jade contributed by many people. It is a clock made from history and precious memories and the fine, precise work of many people in the Society. It may well be within the span of our Society's members, *the only jade clock in the world!*

Two members of the Society put their heads together and planned the jade clock. Alden Clark is Lapidary Vice-President of the Federation and Ted Bhend is former Curator of the San Francisco Society. Our story starts with Bhend and his inspiration for the project. As a boy Ted Bhend remembers his father talking about clock and watch factories in Switzerland. His father was apprenticed for seven years to a clock making factory at a weekly wage of 10 cents. He never received any benefits from this stipend because Ted's grandfather collected his salary. After two years Mr. Bhend decided that he'd learned all they were going to teach him at the factory and



Drawings for clock case by George Randolph (right). Leon Burton (left) made the numerals from Randolph's patterns and Randolph carved the hands. Wooden clock model by Ted Bhend.

PHOTO BY TOM VANO

he quit. As soon as he was of age he left for America and went to work for the Studebaker Company building buggies. In his spare time he gathered fine woods and materials for inlays and told Ted that he was going to make a grandfather's clock "of great beauty". The idea fascinated the young boy but he waited in vain to see the finished project. Ted's father died, but he left behind him an idea and a hope that stayed with Ted through the years.

Charles Goelz, his mother's brother, born in Oberlinngen, Germany, came to

this country at the age of 16. He renewed Ted's interest in clock building. Among many other jobs, Charles Goelz was a carpenter and wood carver. After he retired he had several assets for his hobby, his love of rocks as a miner and his understanding of woods through his carving. He combined his talents and became a builder of clocks with several handsome grandfather clocks and a dozen or so novel clocks to his credit before he died.

He started with a clock plan that he found in a science magazine. The plan was

