TIMEPIECE
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Crowdfunding to restore important Vulliamy

by Jayne Hall

A thoroughly modern fundraising method is being employed to help restore an important Vulliamy clock which is almost 200 years old.

The clock, at St Luke's, West Norwood, was built in 1825 at a cost of £357 and is the first 'flatbed' turret clock in the UK.

Vulliamy came up with this new and revolutionary way of laying out the mechanism of his turret clocks following a trip to the Continent. It quickly became a common feature in the industry as it enabled the clockmaker to dismantle the clock one arbor at a time.

Other refinements of the clock are the pinwheel escapement with Vulliamy's design of self-levelling pallets and a two second pendulum with heavy bob, both ensuring an accurate performance.

Benjamin Lewis Vulliamy (1780-1854) was official clockmaker to George IV, William IV and Victoria and, as such, his clocks were substantially more expensive. However, he boldly claimed they would outperform and outlive the cheaper alternatives.

Unfortunately the clock at St Luke's stopped several years ago and now, after many years of neglect, needs a complete overhaul, the fitting of new automatic winding, remote monitoring equipment and reglazing and repair of the four dials.

The £35,000 project is being led by James Nye, Chair of the Antiquarian Horological Society. Already £16,000 has been raised. The Church Buildings Council has donated £4,000, the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers £2,000 Antiquarian Horological Society £1,000 and local sponsors £9,000.

James is now hoping the horological community will dig deep to help raise the remaining £19,000 and has come up with a very modern method of raising money.

Crowdfunding has gained in popularity over the last few years with 'lots of people' being encouraged to 'donate smaller amounts' to worthy causes online.

The four dials are in a poor state of repair.

James explained: 'We have already had a good response to the launch of the JustGiving/Crowdfunding site. It has pleasingly attracted support from four members of the Vulliamy family.'

But it's not just about the size of donations but the actual number of donors that is important.

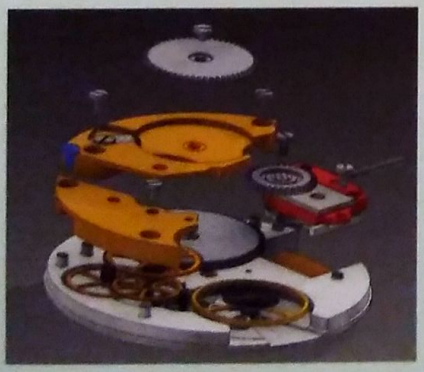
He added: 'I am really trying to get some momentum going. We have an Heritage Lottery Fund bid in preparation, but it will be all the stronger as a proposal if I can demonstrate widespread support.

If you can help go to:
www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/stlukesclock/
Any questions:
james.nye@theclockworks.org

The flatbed Vulliamy movement hasn't worked for several years.

'The crowdfunding site has already attracted support from four members of the Vulliamy family'

New openwatch movement - a huge opportunity for watch manufacturers



An exciting new development has been announced in the watchmaking world. You can read all about it on Page 2.

Introducing openmovement

Christian Dannemann

A huge opportunity for watch manufacturers

We are all familiar with various movement manufacturers and how the watch industry is split into companies that use in-house movements and those that use 'off-the-peg' movements.

The in-house area isn't that well defined, as lots of manufacturers claim to have their own calibres but use standard movements (usually ETA), that they claim to have modified. For the watch buyer this is a cloak-and-dagger operation, made to confuse. and to make them believe that they are buying a watch with a true in-house movement.

Time for some openness and for a totally new approach to movement design. Five Swiss watchmakers have got together to develop an open-source construction for a watch movement. The plans for the components will be freely available and anyone can use them to make the movement or parts for the movement. There is no copyright and no royalty to pay. This will also enable schools to use the plans to teach their students and watchmakers to make parts to repair such a movement without any problems. More likely they will be able to choose parts from a pool of manufacturers once this design approach takes hold.

The first movement coming out of this project is the OM10 – a manual wound movement, 30mm diameter, sub-second at 6 or 9 o'clock, with a later automatic winder option, beating at 25,200 bph, with 50 hours of power reserve and a date with quick-set function. The construction will allow a manufacturer to finish the movement to chronometer grade if he wishes to do so.

Further projects are the OM20, with a smaller diameter (25.6mm), a central second, and a base movement that is constructed in a way that it will be easy to add further complications later, such as a chronograph or other features.

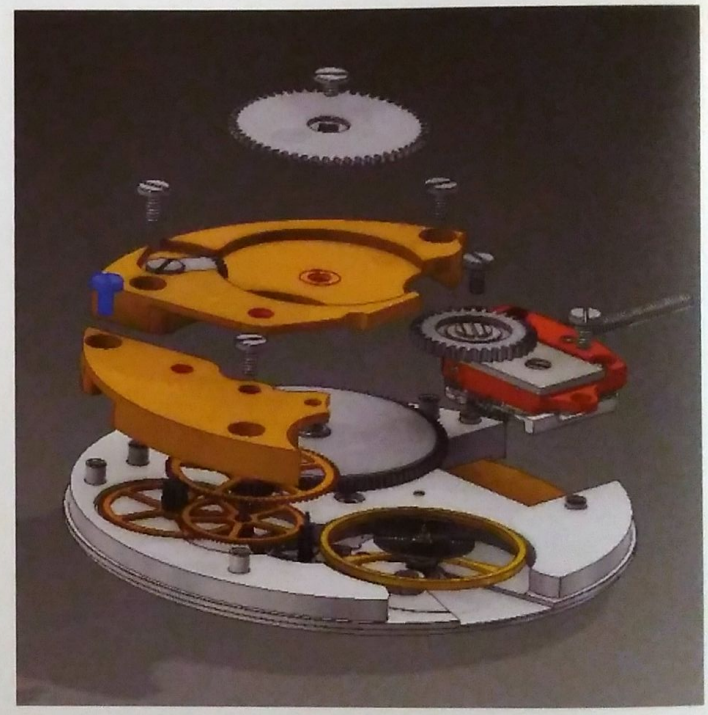
Once the development of the OM10 is complete, detailed construction drawings will be released and the manufacture of construction kits will begin. This will enable even small watch manufacturers to build a watch with a unique movement, that is not off the ETA peg, but something that is much more interesting for the watch buyer.

One can imagine that movement manufacturers all over the world will use the construction drawings to make complete movements in various grades for the watch industry.

Roman Winiger, President of openmovement, says: 'I am fascinated by the idea that a watch restorer in a hundred years time will still have access to the plans of the movement, and will thus be able to make the replacement for a worn part with ease. The restorer will become a bearer of the knowledge, which will continue to live through him.'

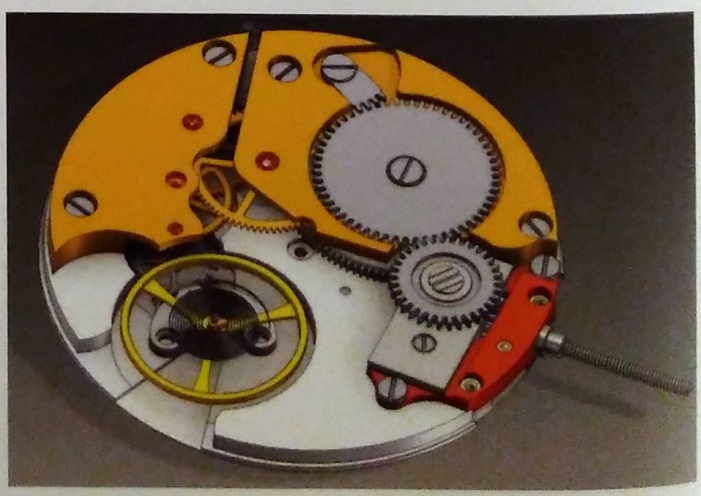
This is a vision that goes far beyond just having an open source movement, but to make a piece of watch history that will stand out from anything we have seen so far. Currently all the knowledge about a movement is held with the manufacturer and it will stay there until it is finally lost. The openmovement movements will be able to live on for hundreds of years with the ability to be reproduced to the exact original specifications.

Looking at the first version of drawings you can see that even though the OM10 is simple, it does not lack finesse. No wire springs to be seen anywhere and the separate assembly for the



A modular view of the OM10. Note the separate assembly for winding/setting, which will allow further extensions to the movement.

The OM Committee – Roman Winiger, David Olafsson, Marion Mueller, Cedric Auberson and Philipp Wittwer.



A simple construction of timeless elegance.

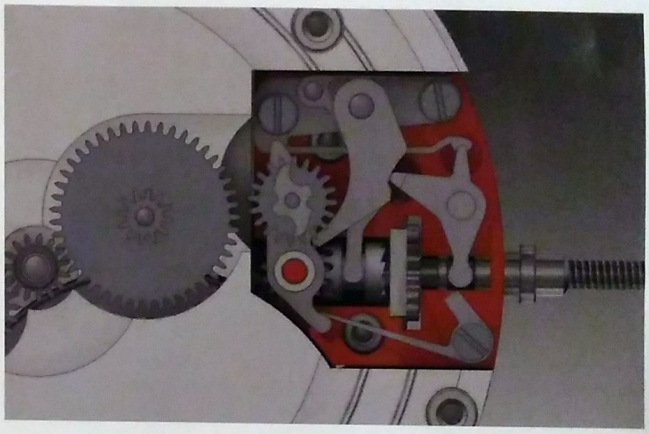
winding/setting mechanism will allow easy extension of the OM movement range in the future. The movement is fairly thin and elegant and has all it takes to become a true classic. The bridge shapes and the click in the images below are placeholders at the moment. The final shapes will be determined in a group-orientated process. All registered openmovement supporters will be notified as soon as the shapes are agreed.

This is a huge opportunity for watch manufacturers that have been hit by the Swatch embargo as they can not use ETA movements any more. openmovement will allow them to use something of timeless elegance, and choose a manufacturer of their choice, rather than having to go with what a manufacturer can offer them.

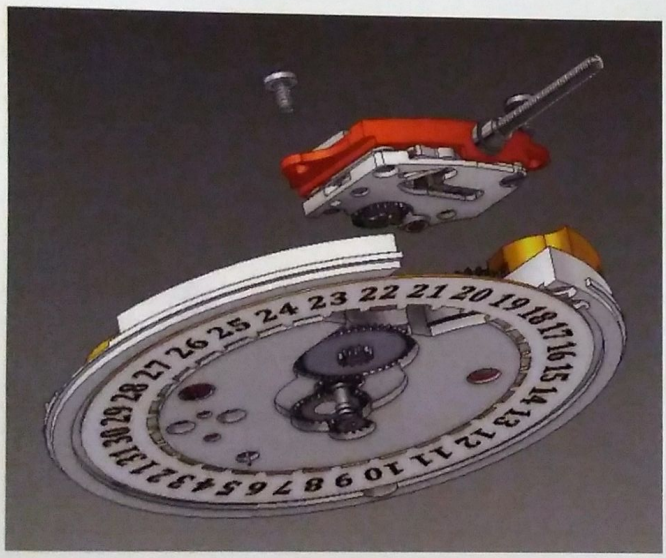
The keyless works. Two notable construction details here: firstly, no wire springs but a nice machined setting lever spring. Secondly, an effective quick-set date construction that will work reliably

Over time new contributors will emerge and add more and more open source additions to the base movement so that, in the long run, we might see anything from triple date movements to three register chronographs.

The quick-set mechanism with the date ring in place.



The keyless works without the date ring.



The modular keyless works allow future modifications.

If you feel that this is a positive step in the right direction, please support openmovement by becoming a member at:

www.openmovement.org/?mitmachen

TIMEPIECE Letters

Parts wanted

I live in New Zealand and have a Doxa 40 or possibly an Omega 40 L travel clock which I think was given to my grandmother in 1932.

It is presently with my clock repairer for some repairs and he needs to trace some parts – a stem, a clutch wheel and a winding pinion – and I wondered if any Guild member could help.

The clock movement is 2 1/4 inches in diameter and I have included a photograph, see left.

I would be grateful to hear from anyone who might help me to restore this family heirloom.

Thank you in advance.

Tim Seay
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Please send submissions to:
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Windsor, Berks, SL4 5QR
Email: editor@bwcmg.org
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