

The GMK-Fancher Clock Company

By George Mueck

Historical Background

After several years of discussions Gottfried Kieninger and George Mueck decided to start the GMK Clock Company to manufacture handcrafted grandfather, grandmother, wall and regulator clocks in North America. The year was 1972. The place was Aldingen, in the Black Forest. The name GMK stands for George-Gottfried-Mueck-Kieninger. The company was incorporated in 1975.

Their first project produced the Limited Edition of “The Royal Canadian Mounted Police Centennial Floor and Wall Clocks” created by The Larsens of Canada by Appointment to the Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

The first GMK clock line consisted of 8 models – Model 103, 105 1010, 2010, 4030, 4031 and 4032. The international furniture and clock designer Moon Choi designed the floor clocks to the vision of George Mueck and Herbert Nahlik. GMK floor clocks featured only the large Kieninger H series weight driven, solid brass triple chime clock movement with solid brass moon-dials, shells and lyre pendulums and tuned brass chimes, produced by Kieninger in the Black Forest. The cases were manufactured locally to the specifications of GMK.

The cases offered specially tuned chime boards and handcrafted clock cases of solid walnut, mahogany, cherry and pine. The cases were hand rubbed to a French polish that included the back panel of each case.

1975 to 1977

In the first year GMK sold nearly 1,000 clocks to clock shops in the U.S.A. and Canada. In the spring of 1977 GMK created the Lincoln Heritage Collection of 500 clocks for the jewelry stores owned by Mr. Lincoln White of Salt Lake City with stores in Utah and California. The clocks were delivered in September to 20 stores.

1978

GMK was introduced to the Fancher Furniture Company in Salamanca, N.Y. by John Murphy. George Mueck met with Len and Brian Erickson and after a series of meetings the decision was made to proceed with the creation of the finest handcrafted floor clocks ever offered to the public, anywhere. This was the beginning of the creation of a series of heirloom clocks that captured the hearts of clock collectors in the U.S.A., Canada, the Black Forest and Europe.

Fancher, as one of the leaders of fine furniture makers in the world, had the ability to handcraft clock cases that included the features of yesteryears, which were not now available on floor clocks made by any other manufacturer in this century.

- Clock Crowns – 1 1/2” double thickness
- Side Door Each cabinet featured two mitered and dowelled side door, for easy access viewing of the Kieninger solid brass weight driven triple chime clock movement.
- Back of Cabinet- Each cabinet is completely finished including the back. The back panel provides the access to the Kieninger clock movement.
- Dial Plate Frame & Door – Each cabinet contained the classic features of a 3/4 “ dial frame plate, a 1 1/2” door with wooden glass retainers and coordinated solid brass hardware-The designs added the last touch of quality to these handcrafted heirloom clocks
- Beveled glass, four panels for the treasured look
- Solid hardwood posts with co-coordinated crown design
- Book matched and hand finishes inside and back cover of clock case
- Individually handcrafted base boxes, veneered for a perfect grain pattern
- With decorative panels of solid hardwood to enhance the touch of quality
- 1” Foot levelers under each corner

GMK-Fancher created a collection of twelve new models:

Leicester Model 101-C: Cherry Veneers and Solids with “Olive Ash Burl Accents”

Eastbourne Model 102-C: Cherry Veneers and Solids with “Olive Ash Burl Accents”

Salzburg Model 103-C: Cherry Veneers and Solids with “Olive Ash Burl Accents”

Oxford Model 104-C: Cherry Veneers and Solids with “Olive Ash Burl Accents”

Shenandoah Model 105-C: Cherry Veneers and Solids with “Inlay and Brass Accents”

Lafayette Model 202-O: Oak Veneers and Solids

Innsbruck Model 203-O: Oak Veneers and Solids

Melrose Model 301-M: Mahogany Veneers and Solids with “Inlay and Brass Accents”

Devon Model 302-M: Mahogany Veneers and Solids with “Burl Overlays”

Diplomat Model 304-M: Mahogany Veneers with “Brass Accents”

Beaufort Model 401-W: Walnut Veneers and Solids with “Inlay and Brass Accent”

Canberra Model 601-R: Rosewood Veneers and Cherry Solids with “Inlay and Brass Accents”

Special Paint Finishes were added in the subsequent years. Model 103 “Marble, Model 104 Hand –Painted Raised Chinoiserie and Model 102 “Gold Trim. They were sold Limited Editions to clock collectors.

GMK- Fancher then released “The Victoria Registered Limited Edition – MCMLXXX” which was created for the discerning collector who is not only looking for a floor clock that would pride any home, but also an investment for the future – an heirloom in fact. Each “Registered Limited Edition” clock combines the designs of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which was perhaps the richest period in the history of floor clocks – with the highest standards of craftsmanship available. The collection was sold prior to release and caused a sensation with

clock shops and collectors. Marty Pratt designed the clock, together with Brian Erickson and George Mueck.

GMK-Fancher also introduced two other exceptional floor clocks that never reached production: The Imperial Model 305M and “The Prince Albert Registered Limited Edition” to follow as the successor to The Victoria (Victoria and Albert). It also produced two Models of Vienna Regulators that are still today unequalled in quality, workmanship and design.

In Closing

GMK-Fancher Clocks made a major impact with clock collectors in the U.S.A., Canada and Europe. While every dream must end, ours however left a legacy of what can be done by those who seek excellence and love fine clocks

For more information please feel free to contact George Mueck, drgem@sympatico.ca