

# MADE IN AMERICA

Clock and watch manufacturing used to be big business in the United States. Today a couple of specialized, limited-production watchmakers are aiming to bring the prestige back to this side of the Atlantic.

BY ELIZABETH DOERR

## BOZEMAN WATCH COMPANY

When Christopher Wardle founded his luxury watch brand in 2003, he decided to establish it in an unusual location. He didn't choose his native Michigan home, the picturesque hills of Switzerland, or even another European country, but instead favored a place known for grazing cattle and rugged outdoorsmen: Bozeman, Montana.

Setting out to create his **Montana Class Watch Collection**, Wardle decided no other attitude could be more sought-after than the rugged, yet refined state he has called home for 20 years now. Thus, the **Bozeman Watch Company** set its sights on bringing the standards of global watchmaking excellence together with the spirit of the American West. With classic Swiss-inspired designs and Swiss-made movements, American attitude and Old World precision manufacturing, the Bozeman Watch Company is a unique whole created of many different parts.

Wardle doesn't hesitate to explain that his timepieces represent a balance between engineering and design—a concept cleverly underscored by the company's distribution policy: These limited-edition watches are solely available at the company's downtown Bozeman store, through the company's website and at various other outdoorsy venues.

"The revival of respect for artisanship and fine craftsmanship is fueling consumer interest in mechanical timepieces that was briefly lost in the 20<sup>th</sup> century," Wardle says.

Bozeman Watch Company's genuine leather straps are hand-stitched by a saddle maker in Montana and have waxed edges like tack and saddle gear. This is particularly attractive on the **Sidewinder**, a limited edition of 100 pieces with a silver-colored dial and 100 pieces with a black dial, retailing for \$6,500. The Bozeman Watch Company issues no more than 300 timepieces every year.

Contact: John Tarver Bailey, Phone: (406) 585-0062;

Email: jtbailey@bozemanwatch.com;

Website: www.bozemanwatch.com



SIDEWINDER / BOZEMAN WATCH COMPANY

## RGM

"It's always been my dream to make my own movement. That's the heart of the watch." Roland Murphy could not have summarized his career in a more efficient way when he spoke those words.

Originally from Maryland, Murphy discovered his natural talent for working with his hands while attending a vocational school. It wasn't long before he constructed his own clocks. He advanced his skills further in the realm of watch and clock movements at Pennsylvania's Bowman Technical School and the famed Wostep program in Neuchâtel, Switzerland. A few years in the late 1980s with one of the industry's biggest names taught him the rest of what he needed to know about the watch business. In 1993, he called **RGM** to life.

A few elements form the golden thread that connects each of his timepieces: An innate understanding of high watchmaking, a deep appreciation for it and a love of the hand-created art known as *guilloché*.

"Because RGM is small, each watch has its own special appeal. They are not just commodities pumped out of a factory that changes ownership every five years. I may not have a 150-year history with a famous name, but I have high-quality watches," Murphy says. Seven years ago, Murphy embarked on his own movement—the first serial watch mechanism manufactured in the United States since before World War II. Last year, Murphy proudly introduced **Caliber 801**, a classic movement in the tradition of America's greatest manufacturers. Caliber 801, along with the watch that encases it, can be customized to the wishes of the client in terms of decoration, plating and other elements since RGM makes fewer than 350 timepieces per year. Caliber 801 is available in a limited edition of 25 pieces per year, with the standard stainless steel model featuring a hand *guilloché* dial retailing for \$7,950.

Contact: Roland G. Murphy, Phone: (717) 653-9799;

Email: rgmwatch@aol.com; Website: www.rgmwatches.com



CALIBER 801 / RGM