Subject: Gruen Mystery Dial
Posted by lovinwatches on Thu, 22 Jul 2021 00:38:39 GMT
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Model name: Unsure
Type: Mystery Dial
Period/date: Unsure// maybe 50's?
Gender: Male

Case Maker:
Case Material:
Case Serial: J63809
Case Style no: 068

Caliber:215R
Movement Maker: Unsure
Movement Serial: Unsure

Bracelet:Unoriginal Spiedel expansion

Other info: Dial is almost like a "pan". Ball hour marker and spoon shaped hand that curves over the ball. The gold plate on top has posts drilled into the crystal. I wasn't expecting such a small movement is a rather big case. Please let me know if any other information is needed. Thank you.

File Attachments

1) IMG_4780.HEIC, downloaded 676 times
2) IMG_4769.HEIC, downloaded 624 times
3) IMG_4770.HEIC, downloaded 572 times
4) IMG_4781.HEIC, downloaded 594 times
5) IMG_4773.HEIC, downloaded 613 times

Subject: Re: Gruen Mystery Dial
Posted by Case on Thu, 22 Jul 2021 03:51:32 GMT
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Hi lovinwatches—welcome to the Gruen forum! That is an interesting model you have there, one I've not seen before. The movement offers at least one advantage: abundant parts available! Hoping others can help identify the model.

Subject: Re: Gruen Mystery Dial
Posted by lovinwatches on Thu, 22 Jul 2021 19:28:30 GMT
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Thank you Case, glad to join the forum. Gruen made some very unusual pieces with 'dots' that I

really like. The watch runs great but I will service it eventually. Still great to know there is an abundance of parts available for it. I've seen one ad for a different but similar model (same dial, hands, and crystal). I don't know if this is a recased version of that or not, but I would assume not as the dial feet go directly onto the case and the case seems to match everything. (It was an ad under the 1950's section, it was not labeled though sadly.) Cheers!

Subject: Re: Gruen Mystery Dial
Posted by Barney Green on Thu, 22 Jul 2021 21:12:15 GMT
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Hi lovinwatches,
I guess that this is the other version:

This ad is from 1957...

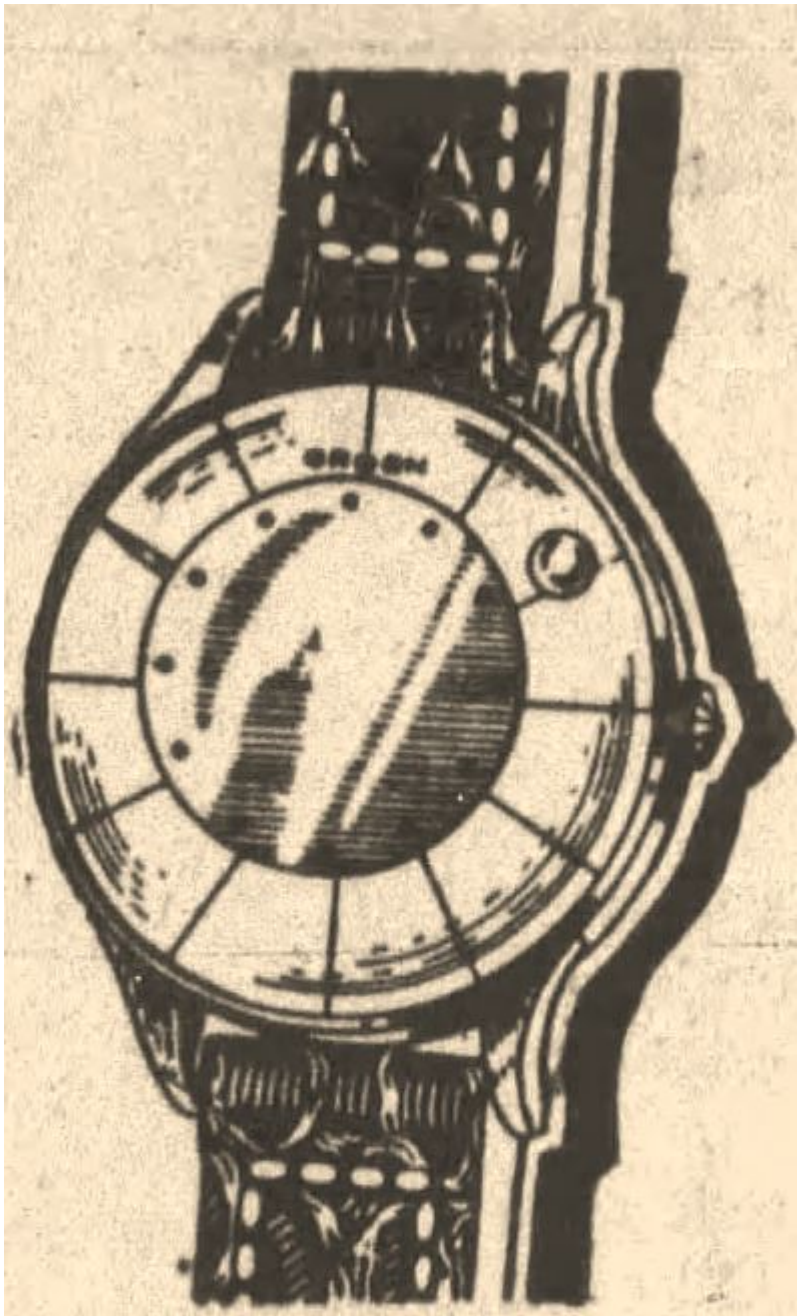
Your watch came a year later, first advertised in 1958 as far as I know.

Barney

File Attachments
1) Gruen Mystery dial 1957.JPG, downloaded 3257 times



2) Gruen Mystery dial 1958.JPG, downloaded 3174 times



GRUEN
17 Jewels

$67.50

$1.25 a Week

Subject: Re: Gruen Mystery Dial
Posted by lovinwatches on Thu, 22 Jul 2021 23:05:54 GMT
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Barney thank you! That is the other one that I did see. May I ask where you found this advertisement? Is it in one of the Gruen books? Also at this point was Gruen not naming models? Thank you so much for the picture it is nice to see the original ad as well as confirm that it is a genuine Gruen!

Subject: Re: Gruen Mystery Dial
Posted by Barney Green on Fri, 23 Jul 2021 06:21:32 GMT
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It is a genuine Gruen, no doubt. It is pictured in the so called "Masterbook" or "Catalog" as one of the last strap watches, it carries the number 036 for 1036. So it has been the 1036th model between late 1922 and 1957 which Gruen released. The last in this book is number 058 and it is believed that the photo collection in this book lasted until the sale of the original Gruen company. This is also a proof that the model existed already in 1957.
Beside the two versions of the books, which are copyrighted, so I could not post photos from there, I found this watch only pictured once in an advertisement in a local newspaper, "The News-Palladium" from Benton Harbor, Michigan. It is a jewelers ad from "Fox's" advertised in a clearance sale in the July 29, 1958 issue. Again this fact shows that it is an "older" watch, first issued before 1958.
The other mystery dial from the full page ad is Strap 996, so indeed 40 models earlier and should have occurred late 1956. There is also a third mystery or floating dial Gruen model pictured in "the catalog", it strangely does not have a number (appears between 011 and 012), this one should have a caliber 220. Caliber 220 was not introduced before 1959, so this watch does not really belong there and must be seen as a successor to yours.
And you are perfectly right, at this time Gruen named their models. But the Masterbook/Catalog did not have the names and the only advertisement I own does not name the watch either. So at this moment I do not have one for this particular model.
This is what I like most about Gruen: thousands of mysteries to be solved...

Subject: Re: Gruen Mystery Dial
Posted by Case on Sat, 24 Jul 2021 03:27:29 GMT
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surprised they didn’t stick. Perhaps just lost in the changing of the guard?

Subject: Re: Gruen Mystery Dial
Posted by lovinwatches on Sat, 24 Jul 2021 04:13:31 GMT
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Wow Barney, thank you for all of that information! You've given more than I would have found in a lifetime :lol: . There are a lot of mysteries around Gruen for sure and they have a lot of really neat models. I think I got too used to Hamilton's and how much information can be found on them lol. Is the book you have still available or is it out of production? Thank you!

Subject: Re: Gruen Mystery Dial
Posted by lovinwatches on Sat, 24 Jul 2021 04:19:40 GMT
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It was a great deal of great information! I agree they do have a neat look to them and it is sad that more aren't like this... But I guess that makes them more unique! The only other watch I can think of that is similar is the Lord Elgin Saturn.

Subject: Re: Gruen Mystery Dial
Posted by Barney Green on Sat, 24 Jul 2021 12:47:13 GMT
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It appears that both versions are out of print meanwhile. Look out for

Mike Barnett: "The Gruen Watch Catalog" (remastered)
Roy Ehrhardt: Gruen Guild Master Book (worse quality pictures)

Both are showing the same base material, but be aware prices will be very high, if you can get hold of a copy.

Subject: Re: Gruen Mystery Dial
Posted by lovinwatches on Fri, 30 Jul 2021 01:26:50 GMT
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Thank you again Barney!
