

H. Moser & Cie.

The legendary watch brand, H. Moser & Cie

Teamwork since 1826.



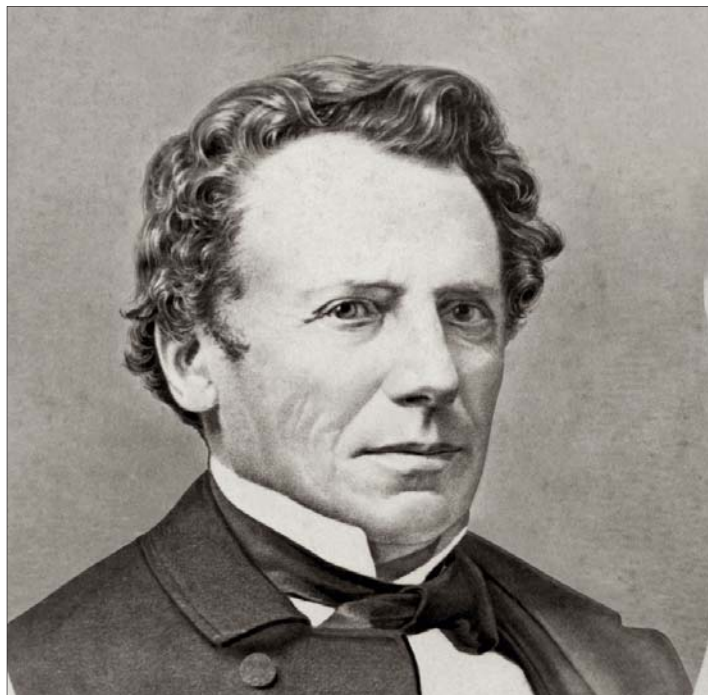
Straumann Double Hairspring escapement – two balance-springs to compensate for errors due to the force of gravity.

In 1826, towards the end of his apprenticeship and a period spent as a journeyman, Heinrich Moser contemplated where and how he might build a successful future for himself. In fact, his aim was to introduce the manufactory method of working based on the principle of the division of labour in his home town of Schaffhausen, and to establish a small watch factory for this purpose. However, the Town Council at the time declined his proposal and awarded the honorary office of town watchmaker to another individual. Moser emigrated to St. Petersburg, in Russia, where he founded the trading company, “H. Moser & Co.,” at the end of 1828. From this company name, Moser also developed the company signature in cursive script, which was almost always supplemented by a medallion. Until about 1918, with rare exceptions, the company name in Cyrillic and/or Latin script, as well as the medallion, remained the standard signature on all the watches marketed by Moser’s watch companies, whether sourced from its own production or from outside suppliers.

In 1829, he established a watch factory in Le Locle, which manufactured



The Moser Schaffhausen AG watch factory.



Heinrich Moser (1805-1874) – founder of the H. Moser & Cie brand.

the pocket watches for his businesses in the European and Asiatic regions. By 1831, Moser was also able to open a branch in Moscow. Another astute business decision was the establishment of further branches in Nizhny Novgorod and in Irbit – at the time the most important trade fair venues in Russia. The house of Moser thus had a presence in both of the Russian administrative centres, as well as at central trade fair venues.

Little by little, Heinrich Moser overtook the old-established businesses as well as the firm’s newer competitors. Within just a few years, he was selling watches to Japan and China, Persia, Turkestan, Siberia and Kamchatka. By around 1845, he had become the undisputed market leader in the whole of Russia, dominating the watch trade there. He had even established business links with Paris.

His only son, Henri Moser (1844-1923), showed little interest in the watch business, much to his father’s displeasure. As a result, they went their separate ways in 1870. On the death of Heinrich Moser in 1874, his second wife, Fanny,

inherited all his business interests and the watch factory in Le Locle. She had no desire to accept the responsibility, however, and in 1877 she sold the entire trading business to Johann Winterhalter and the watch factory in Le Locle to Paul Girard. In both transactions, she included conditions in the contracts to ensure that all the successor companies would continue to operate in perpetuity under the brand names of H. Moser & Cie. or Heinrich Moser & Co., in accordance with her husband’s instructions. All of the enterprises passed into

other hands in this way. The only son of Heinrich Moser, Henri, had no male offspring, and the name Moser also died out in this family.

The original brand of the founder, “H. Moser & Cie.,” was once more registered internationally by Dr. Jürgen Lange in 2002. Moser Schaffhausen AG was launched jointly with representatives of the Moser family. Today the great-grandson of Heinrich Moser – Roger Nicholas Balsiger – is Honorary Chairman of the Board of Directors. The company returned to the international watch arena, in the autumn of 2005, to mark the bicentenary of Heinrich Moser’s birth.

The new watches that have been developed by H. Moser & Cie over the last three years add a hint of understatement to their traditionally classic and elegant appearance, and, entirely in keeping with the tradition of the establishment, utilise mechanical movements designed in-house and executed to the highest quality standards. It goes without saying that these movements, which incorporate a cornucopia of technical innovations and offer high customer benefit, can only be found in watches from H. Moser & Cie.

We have now come full circle, and, as the great-grandson expressed it so poignantly in an interview: “I find it very moving that we are now in a position to make Heinrich Moser’s return to Schaffhausen as a watchmaker possible 200 years after his birth.”



The first interchangeable escapement module for H. Moser & Cie wristwatches.