

## Design & Construction Forum

### Ave Amici L. Papirius Cursor

A Letter From L. Papirius Cursor

[Moderator's note: The following letter bore no return address. The Forum presents it as received.]

*Ave Amici*, (Dear Friends)

I was delighted to find the design for the Transparent Window dial by M. Taudin Chabot in your number 1-3. The diptych pattern of this dial submitted by Frederick Sawyer stimulated me to build a small model to see how the dial might appear.

The original design for the dial was a stained glass window. I was pleased to find that my model dial became an attractive free-standing sculpture. I hope you agree.

This model is easy to make. Trace the drawing onto clear plastic, leaving some extra space at the bottom for mounting. The lights can be colored if you like, but it is not necessary. The numerals must be painted on the outside and upside down as shown in the drawing.

Fold the plastic down the 12 o'clock line so it forms a right angle, and pin it to the corner of a receiving surface. This can be anything handy that has one square corner. This surface will receive the shadows. Place a mark on the surface at the reading point.

I have a computer, so I printed the HPGl file included with the digital edition on overhead transparency film



and colored the lights with the special felt-tipped pens needed for transparency film.

I cut the plastic just outside the solstice curves for a more attractive final shape. If you decide to do this, make the mounting pin holes first. The plastic is difficult to align after the corner has been cut out.

The original dial pattern was drawn for latitude 40 north, and my villa lies at latitude 25 north, a few leagues north of the *tropicus aestivalis*. Thus, I needed to tilt the entire dial 15 degrees toward the south to adjust it to the original latitude. Unless you live near latitude 40, you will have to adjust the dial as well. If you live north of latitude 40 the dial will tilt north, or forward.

If you have the ability to produce your own pattern, I suggest you calculate the dial for a latitude 15 degrees north of your site and mount it with the 15 degree compensating tilt. This will produce the graceful lines of a sundial leaning to confront the sun.

Valete,

L. Papirius Cursor

I don't think the writer is really Lucius Papirius Cursor. Do you know who Papirius Cursor was? And what he did? (Answer next issue)  
- Moderator