School of Horology

Five-Year Plan

2024-2029

Context

The NAWCC is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization. Its School of Horology is one of only four institutions that provide a part-time course in horology in North America. There are around nine providers of full-time watch servicing training, and of these centers, only one provides clock repair training (Gem City College, Quincy, IL). The NAWCC's School is unique in its connection with the National Watch and Clock Museum.

Introduction

The NAWCC School of Horology is undergoing a renaissance. In 2020, the building was closed while it was surveyed for radium contamination and was shut down for over a year before the site was cleaned. Once the building was certified free from contamination, the downstairs area was painted and re-floored. The remaining student benches were refurbished and teaching recommenced under the stewardship of Ken De Lucca, our Director of Education.

Ken is a retired academic with training in horology from the NAWCC School and the West Dean College, in Chichester, England, where he gained a prestigious postgraduate diploma in the restoration and conservation of antique clocks. His commitment and determination to see the School survive has been phenomenal.

In August 2024, thanks to a generous donation, we were able to hire a School Coordinator to learn from Ken and to help him continue to enlarge the curriculum. Another significant donation is being used to improve the student learning experience and to develop part of the building for use as a maker space with milling machines, lathes, cleaning equipment, and a woodshop, where past students can repair and/or make clocks.

Figure 1. Ken De Lucca introducing the mechanics of an American-style timepiece.

The NAWCC has also significantly invested in the School by apportioning operating funds and grant awards to refurbishing the roof, brickwork, and interior spaces. A new watchmaking studio is being built, funded by the NAWCC. This classroom is equipped with eight fully adjustable student benches to accommodate different heights for optimal comfort and accessibility.

The next steps in the School's expansion will need additional support from members and friends who are committed to preserving and passing on horological skills to future generations. We invite you to join us on this journey by contributing financially or in-kind to the vital work being done in the School.

Current Workshops

Our workshops deliver the relevant theory through classroom teaching and handouts to inform the student's work at the bench.

- Introduction to antique clocks: (1-day or 2-day)
- American-style time and strike (3-day)
- Rack and snail – English-style tall clocks (3-day)
- Pivot polishing and bushing (3-day)
- Wheel and pinion cutting using the tabletop milling machine (WS-119) (2-day)
- Introduction to the micro lathe for the beginner (2-day)
- Using a micro mill for the beginner (2-day)
- Basic clock knowledge for the Museum professional (1-day)
- Introduction to the anniversary or 400-day clocks (3-day)
- Introduction to wristwatch servicing (3-day)
- Introduction to pocket watch servicing (3-day)
- Mentorship

Workshop Fees

- 1-Day $260
- 2-day $695 (NAWCC member) $820 (nonmember)
- 3-day $850 (NAWCC member), $975 (nonmember rate)
- 4-day $1250 (NAWCC member) $1375 (nonmember)
- 5-Day Workshop: $1,350 (NAWCC member), $1,500 (nonmember)

Workshops in Development

- Chiming clocks
- Clockmaking and the micro lathe
- Conservation of antique clocks

Teacher Fees

To date, teachers are offered $500 per day plus travel and accommodation. We are extremely grateful to our visiting teachers who have waived this fee to support the rebuilding of the School of Horology.

5-Year Objectives

Year 1: August 2024 – December 2025

- Fully modernize the five classrooms
- Develop a full clock curriculum
- Conduct three workshops each calendar month
  - One watch, one clock, and one machining
- Convert the loading dock area into a maker's space
  - Commission the Schaublin 102 lathe
  - Commission the Elgin horizontal mill
  - Fit 2x Sherline lathes and mills
  - Bandsaw, table saw, chop saw, routers
  - Appropriate dust extraction
  - Hearth area with extraction
- Ensure that the building is fully repaired, secure, and weather-tight
- Continue to train and develop teachers
- Develop a Museum conservation program of workshops
- Begin the process of gaining state accreditation

Years 2–4: 2026–2028

- Establish a full year's curriculum
- Integrate the Museum to enhance the teaching of history and working with heritage pieces
- Gain state accreditation for providing vocational courses
- Increase staff to include two teachers each with either watch or clock specialism, a technician, and an administrator
- Provide regular five-day courses
- Continue routine investment in current tooling

Long-Term Ambitions: 2029 and On

Our approach is always is to regularly assess progress in developing the School and look critically at student feedback and numbers.

- Provide world-class training in servicing, restoring, and conserving watches and clocks
- Develop both one- and two-year programs for watch and clock servicing
- Work collaboratively with other horological organizations and local education providers
- Provide appropriate industry-recognized certification through collaboration with AWCI (clocks and watches), SAWTA (watches), and WOSTEP (watches)
- Demolish the loading dock area and build across the existing parking lot to gain two floors and repurpose some of the less functional areas of the building, gaining around 3,000–4,000 square feet of teaching space

Year 1 Activity:

August 2024 - December 2025

Desired Outcome

To run three workshops per month: one watch, one clock, and one machining

Watch-Servicing Studio

PROJECT	COST
Floor/ceiling outlets to power the student workstations	**NAWCC capital expense**
Kitchen units in cleaning/store room	**NAWCC capital expense**
Overhead camera at the teacher's bench	**$600**
Flat-screen monitor and HDMI splitter x2	**$1,300**
Timing machines x4	**$800 (Chinese) / $9,000 (Swiss)**
Water resistance testing equipment (basic vacuum & water testers)	**$3,000**
Adjustable standing table	**$3,000**
TOTAL	**$6,400 / $14,600**

Clock Workshops 1 & 2

PROJECT	COST
New chairs x22	**$15,500**
LED lamps x9	**$2,500**
Overhead camera	**$1,200**
Flat-screen monitor and HDMI splitter	**$650**
TOTAL	**$19,850**