

## YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW AT THE WEST COAST CLOCK & WATCH MUSEUM

- Ed Pasahow

The West Coast Clock & Watch Museum (WCCWM) has successfully completed its move to Vista, CA and has been attracting a number of visitors. The museum display at the recent regional meet in Del Mar, CA brought out-of-town NAWCC members to view the collection. This update describes the evolution of the museum, current status and plans for the future.



The Northwest Coast Council of Chapters and Pacific Northwest NAWCC members founded the museum in September 2000. The museum was originally located on the third floor of the Bellingham, WA Old City Hall. The city offered free rent and offered staffing and funds to get the museum started. The exhibit comprised less than 150 square feet and was designed as three department store windows. The museum stayed in this location for 15 years. Then Bellingham city government informed the museum that earthquake refitting and pressing funding shortfalls required that the city hall be closed for more than a year.

Museum officers started a search for a new home and made a national appeal for funds to finance the move in 2014. In the spring of 2015, Rod Groenewold, director of the Antique Gas & Steam Engine Museum (AGSEM) (<http://agsem.com>), offered to collaborate with the WCCWM and to house the museum in Vista. Board members investigated the AGSEM site and agreed to relocation.

Moving required packing all of the clocks, watches, and museum materials into a U-

Haul truck and making the 1300-mile trip south. Only a single casualty from the effort demonstrates the care taken in packing, driving, and unpacking—a small porcelain figure was damaged. The space the WCCWM occupies was constructed and equipped with satellite partitions for display. All of the 400 timepieces were installed in only three days. The grand opening was on June 18, 2016 in the AGSEM Assembly Building.

Members of the National Association of Watch & Clock Collectors Association Chapter 180, Friends of the West Coast Clock and Watch Museum, serve as museum docents, maintain the clock and watches, and continue to raise funds for a standalone home for the museum on the AGSEM grounds. Focus will remain on the collection as additional resources become available. Among immediate needs are space for two donated collections that will be displayed in the future and secure long-term storage for items not on display.

The museum vision is for a building with a four-dial clock tower, more display space, administrative and work areas, and storage. A substantial amount exceeding tens of thousands of dollars has been received, which is a start toward the total amount needed. The museum is a tax-deductible 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization entirely supported by the generosity of its donors. Additional information about the museum can be found at [www.wccwm.org](http://www.wccwm.org).



The collection features a variety of clocks and watches from US and European makers. An early clockmaker's bench displays an experimental S. B. Terry Company eight-day time-only marine-lever movement, ca. 1850, mounted on a Tweed of Boston mid-19th Century test stand along with other fixtures and components. An Aaron Willard Massachusetts Shelf Clock and an Aaron Willard Banjo Clock



are among the early clocks. A clock inspired by the dancer, Little Egypt who introduced America to belly dancing at the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, is especially eye catching with its burly guards as sidepieces. Other notable clocks include tall case clocks from the early 18th Century, two tower clocks, an entire menagerie of novelty animal clocks, and early Henry J. Davies Crystal Palace shelf clocks. Should your travels take you to Southern California a stop at the museum would be worthy of your time. The museum is open daily.

