



THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF WATCHMAKING

A **WOSTEP** PARTNERSHIP SCHOOL



British School of Watchmaking

AUTUMN 2025

WELCOME BACK TO BSOW

Since our last newsletter, 23 graduates have entered the industry, three new members of teaching staff have joined our team, 16 new students embarked on the one and two-year watchmaking courses and the polishing course is up and running.

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GRADUATION

23 students have graduated since our last newsletter; including the last class to sit the 1800-hr syllabus and the first cohort to complete the new Customer Service Watchmaker program. The transition between the courses went well, with both classes achieving average final exam scores of over 80%.

A special mention to the 2022-24 3000-hr class, who recorded the highest final exam average for the two-year course since BSOW opened its doors in 2006.



2023 1800-Hour



2024 Service Watchmaker



2022-2024 3000-Hour

EXPANDING OUR TEACHING TEAM

BSOW is delighted to welcome three new lecturers to our staff. BSOW alumni George Brown and 3000-hr graduate Edward Eves, who will both deliver watchmaking courses, and Simon Massey, who joins us as our polishing instructor. These welcome additions to the team allow us to extend our offering by delivering a second Customer Service Watchmaker course and the first WOSTEP polishing courses outside of Switzerland.



Ed Eves, Tom Keegan, George Brown, James Robinson, Simon Massey

WOSTEP DIFFERENT TECHNIQUES RELATED TO POLISHING

We are extremely proud to be the first WOSTEP partnership School to offer polishing instruction outside of Switzerland. Over the course of three weeks, our polishing instructor Simon Massey takes participants through various polishing techniques including sand and microbead blasting, lapping, grinding, felt polishing and final finishing on flat, shaped, cylindrical, concave or convex parts; culminating in a test piece.

To date, Simon is delighted to have awarded certificates to 20 brand and retail employees.

As well as welcoming external participants, all BSOW students also now receive an introduction to polishing as part of their watchmaking syllabus.

The great news is that in 2026 we will also offer a laser welding course.

For more information on this and to enroll on the polishing course please contact jayne.ward@bsow.co.uk.



CUSTOMER SERVICE WATCHMAKER

Preparations are well underway for the start of an additional one-year Customer Service Watchmaker course starting in January 2026 led by our lecturer George Brown. This will allow us to teach up to 16 Service Watchmaker students per annum and satisfy the demand for places not only from those currently working in the industry but also candidates looking to embark on a watchmaking career.

We are very grateful for the continued support of the George Daniels' Trust who have generously provided the tooling for the second workshop; and to HS Walsh for their careful delivery of the equipment.



CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF HOROLOGICAL EDUCATION AT BSOW

In 2026 it will be 20 years since the School opened its doors to the first 3000-hour class. To mark this achievement, we will hold a special anniversary celebration on 4th September 2026 at the Edwardian Hotel in Manchester which will replace the graduation evening usually held in February.

BSOW graduates and supporters are warmly invited to join us at this ticketed event. More information will be provided in the coming months.

Supporters & Graduates

2026 sees the British School of Watchmaking celebrate it's 20 Year anniversary. We'd love you to join us in marking this important milestone.

4th September 2026

**Raddison Edwardian,
Manchester**

Please let us know by email if you would like to attend this ticketed event and we will add you to our guest list.

admin@bsow.co.uk

DENZEL MARTIN

Current Service Watchmaker student and Christopher Ward employee Denzel Martin started his working life as a chef, but the high stress and long hours of restaurant kitchens led him to Timpson, where he excelled at watch repair and engraving. Moving to In-Time, he quickly progressed to movement exchanges and servicing vintage timepieces before a conversation with a customer which led Denzel to British watch manufacturer and BSOW supporter Christopher Ward. Christopher Ward were looking for a qualified watchmaker but recognising his potential they encouraged Denzel to apply to the School for the one-year course.

Memories of the assessment day are still vivid. Everyone seemed equally nervous but dedicated and despite some shaking hands in the workshop section he finished in the top eight. Denzel returned to Christopher Ward in a technician role and was grateful for the mentorship of BSOW alumni Rob Blacker, who gave him valuable insight into what to expect once at the School. The first time living away from his native Basingstoke was, he admits, a big adjustment. Finding somewhere good to live is vitally important he says and getting to know your classmates.

Expecting high standards, he feared the smallest mistake would see him ejected from his bench but it's a surprisingly level playing field - everyone needs help, even those who've been in the industry a few years – there's a lot of re-doing! At the halfway point, having comfortably passed the first three intermediate exams, Denzel is cautiously optimistic he can make it through to the end and looks forward to one day achieving the professionalism and experience of Christopher Ward colleague and senior watchmaker Max Paine.



AN INTERVIEW WITH GDET TRUSTEE MIKE BLAYNEY

Since 2019, BSOW has been fortunate to receive support from The George Daniels' Educational Trust (GDET). We sat down with GDET trustee Mike Blayney to discuss his relationship with George Daniels, the Trust's role and plans going forwards with BSOW.



Tell us about your relationship with George Daniels and your interest in Horology.

I met George quite by chance in 2006. I was living on the Isle of Man, working as an anaesthetist. I had recently completed a nut and bolt restoration of an old Jeep in my spare time. I had driven the Jeep to visit a friend, when a man I vaguely recognised wandered over the road to take a look. It turned out to be George Daniels, a man I remembered from an inspiring television documentary, entitled 'A Man of Time', that I had seen as a youngster. A visit to his workshop followed. We became friends; bonding over a shared interest in the development in precision timekeepers, all things mechanical, and a pint at the Grosvenor Pub. The opportunity to study George's amazing collection of historically important chronometers proved to be a real inspiration for me. Around 2008 George challenged me to make my own marine chronometer. At the time I did not feel that I had the necessary skills, but George's attitude was very much that if I committed to a decision to get the job done, I would find a way. Well, the decision was made, and I had to sell the Jeep to afford a Schaublin 70! George checked on my progress weekly but sadly died in 2011, before it was finished. I was determined to see the project through to completion and Roger Smith, whom I had met by this stage, was kind enough to provide invaluable support. After five years, the chronometer was completed. I was invited to enter it into a NAWCC competition in America which I won and the chronometer now sits in the

Clockmaker's exhibit at the Science Museum in London, of which I am extremely proud. I owe George a great deal, his friendship was life-changing and the chronometer project an incredible journey that provided an opportunity to develop many new skills and meet some extraordinary people.

How did you get involved with the Trust and BSOW?

Before he died, George had worked strenuously to create an educational Trust that would become a reality on his passing. He had witnessed the near destruction of British horology and wanted to bring everyone together to ensure its survival. He was passionate about education and wanted to support talented home students without means in four areas: horology, engineering, medicine, and building & construction. At the time, I had a significant role in postgraduate medical education, which combined with my relationship with George and interest in horology meant that I was delighted to accept an invitation to become a trustee when the opportunity arose.

Obviously, since the creation of the Trust continued efforts have been made to support horological education in Britain. Initial attempts to establish our own standalone horological apprenticeships had proved challenging and did not result in the outcomes we wanted. Recognising that the Trust was not, and would never be, properly resourced to assume the role of an educational provider, the Trustees decided instead to focus funds on the support of individual students, working with accredited education providers that offered quality-assured, full-time courses of horological study at Birmingham City University, West Dean College, and the British School of Watchmaking.

The Trustees felt that the WOSTEP 3000-hr course, run over a two-year period at the British School of Watchmaking, most closely matched George Daniels' skills and way of working, so we decided to offer financial assistance with tuition fees for independent self-funding two-year students. Over the years we have also been pleased to support the School with capital investment in equipment and tooling and were proud to be part of the School's move to larger premises in Stockport in 2020.

Last year you joined us for assessment day, how did you find it?

Very robust! As custodians of George's legacy, we have a duty to ensure we spend the funds wisely, so it was fascinating to witness the day first hand. It was tough for the students, but necessary to ensure everyone is at a certain level, especially when teaching smaller groups. I was very impressed with the process, it was very rigorous and objective.

The Trust has recently decided to extend support to students on the one-year course, tell us about that decision.

There remains a significant shortage of watchmakers within what is an expanding British watchmaking industry and the new WOSTEP Customer Service course is a major step forward to meeting the needs of the industry. Most of the places are taken by students fortunate enough to be sponsored by their employer, but the Trustees are keen to create life-changing opportunity for candidates without such support, who demonstrate drive and ability, but lack the necessary funds to access the training. It was George's wish to

support students demonstrating initiative and merit, but lacking the necessary resources to realise their ambitions, so that they might advance their education in, and further the development of the disciplines the Trust supports.

To this end we were very happy to fund the tooling needed for the second Service Watchmaker workshop and will now also provide means-tested financial assistance for one-year students, as well as those on the two-year course. BSOW offers high quality, efficient training which represents excellent value for money and hopefully we can widen the base of candidates able to train as watchmakers.

Looking further ahead, in partnership with BSOW, we will also be working with the charity Primary Engineer to develop and implement a pilot programme to train primary school teachers to deliver innovative and engaging educational programs to children, introducing them to watchmaking and the exciting careers that exist, hopefully planting seeds that will help watchmaking to flourish for years to come.

KEY DATES

Service Watchmaker Final Exam

10th, 11th, 12th December 2025

Application Deadline (2027 Service Watchmaker & Watchmaker)

1st July 2026

20 Year Celebration

4th September 2026

2026 will be a busy year for the School – for the first time we will run three watchmaking courses and alongside the polishing course, we will offer laser welding training. In September we will welcome graduates and supporters to our 20th Anniversary celebrations.

As always, if you'd like to get involved in what we do, as a supporter or a student, we'd love to hear from you.

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BSOW SUPPORTERS

As a registered charity all of the donations we receive are directed straight back into training and the expansion of the services we are able to offer. We thank all current supporters for their contributions which enable us to provide our services to the industry.

BSOW supporters not only contribute to our operation they also benefit themselves from reduced training costs, access to on tap employees via our fee paying students, networking opportunities with other major brands and prestigious retailers and also the ability to influence the future direction of the School and have input on our future courses.

If you have a business and would like to join our network of supporters, please get in touch. We always love to hear from new sources and discuss how we can work together to help better our industry.

BEAVERBROOKS

Berry's

BOODLES
1798

B
BREITLING
1884


BREMONT

BRUFORDS
1886

BUCHERER
1888

Charles Fox
1876

 Christopher Ward

DMR
DAVID M ROBINSON

FRASER HART


G. COLLINS & SONS


HAMILTON & INCHES
1866 ONWARDS

Harrods


HETTICH
JEWELLERS SINCE 1900

H.L. Brown
JEWELLERS SINCE 1861


HOULDEN
JEWELLERS OF EXCELLENCE

HUGH RICE
Family Jewellers Since 1971

John Pass
Jeweller and Watchmaker


JOHNSONS
Fine family jewellers since 1887

Keanes
Jewellers since 1948

LAINGS
SINCE 1840

Lynn's

LVMH
WATCHES & JEWELRY

MALLORY
Est. 1898

MARTIN & CO


Michael Jones Jeweller
EST. 1919


MICHAEL SPIERS

 MEMBER
The National
Association
of Jewellers
The Mark of Quality


PATEK PHILIPPE
GENEVE

Prestons

RICHEMONT

Robert Gatward Jewellers

ROGER W SMITH


ROLEX

Rudell
The Jewellers

SIGNET
JEWELERS

SWATCH GROUP

WAKEFIELDS
FAMILY JEWELLERS SINCE 1911

WALSH


 THE
WATCHES
OF SWITZERLAND
GROUP

WEIR & SONS
ESTABLISHED 1869