

SAN JOSE MUSEUM OF ART



Video | Winding a Historic Clock

Do you know what time it is? Or even what day? Time seems to meld into itself these days, but at SJMA, we are watching the clock—the clock tower, that is!



Video | Another Look of the Clock Tower

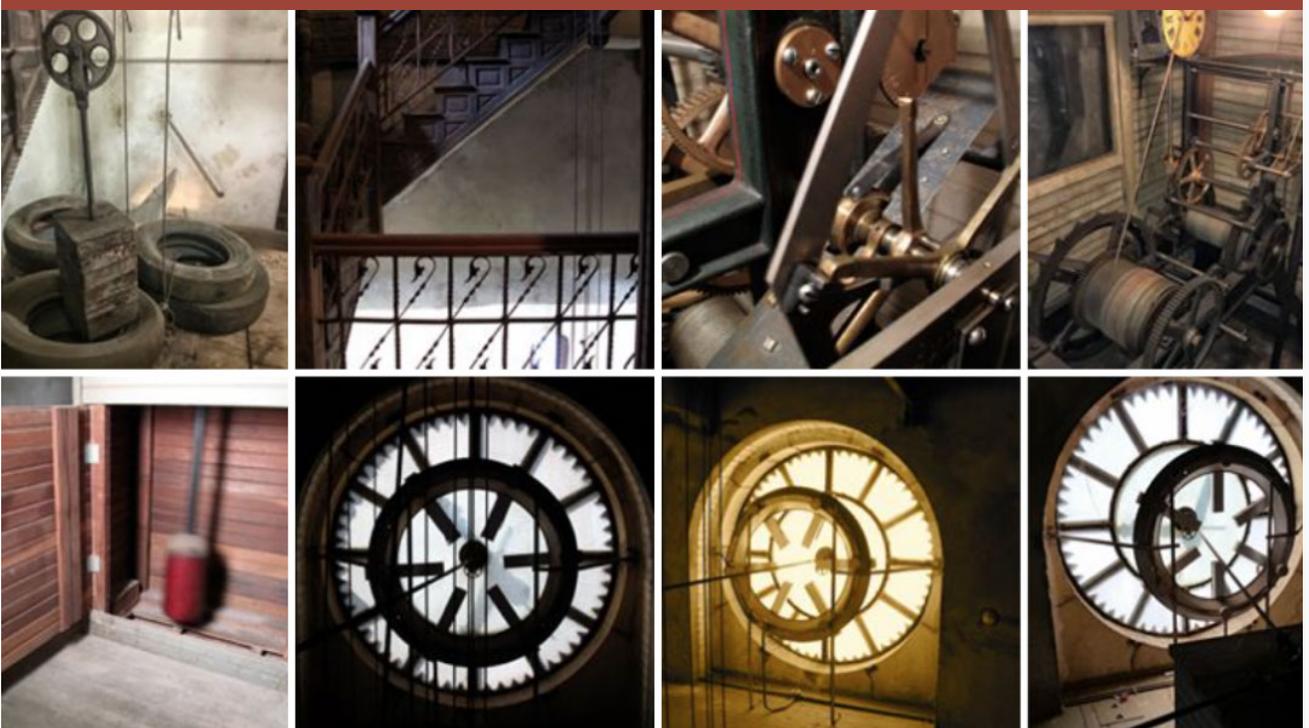
San José's historic clock, manufactured and installed by Danish clock-maker Nels Johnson himself in 1909, was originally part of the City's first post office and library. The so-called Century Tower Clock was designed to last 100 years, hence the name, and it instantly became an iconic marker of downtown.

The clock has survived turbulent times for over one hundred years, including the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. Thanks to the Museum's dedicated staff, who wind it weekly and care for its maintenance, the Century Tower Clock ticks on. We hope this symbol of San José's enduring history provides a sense of comfort, solace, and continuing perseverance in the face of our current crisis.



Photo Album | Historic Images

The San José Museum of Art is housed within two buildings—a Richardsonian Romanesque historic building, originally a post office built in 1892, and a new addition that opened in 1991. The building suffered little damage in the 1906 earthquake, but alas, the original clock tower and steeple were destroyed. During 1908-09, James Knox Taylor designed and built a new shorter tower for the building. In 1909, Nels Johnson personally installed one of his Century Tower Clocks which is still in use today. See the photos [HERE](#).



Behind-the-Scene Photos | Inside the Clock Tower

The clock is powered by gravity. The simple mechanism is operated by 500-pound weights suspended from cables that descend two stories. A hand crank raises the cables and their weights when the clock is wound every 3-4 days. The bell is housed in an adjacent compartment and was manufactured by McNeely and Company West in Troy, New York, in 1908. The clock is one of only five Nels Johnson clocks known to be in existence and one of the two that has not been converted to electric power. See the photos [HERE](#).



From Our Partner | Museum Replicated

Our friends at [Legoland Discovery Center Bay Area](#) built a mini-replica of our historic building for their Miniland!! Some fun facts about this Lego replica: it took 31 hours to design it and 101 hours to build it. The replica includes 6,650 Lego bricks and weighs seven pounds!

Thank you for being part of our community

We are patiently waiting for the day we can welcome you back into the building. Until then, please follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#). Tell us what you want to see or hear. Tag us with [#ShowMeSJMA](#) or email us at info@sjmusart.org.

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