



A man of time

HILARY CATON

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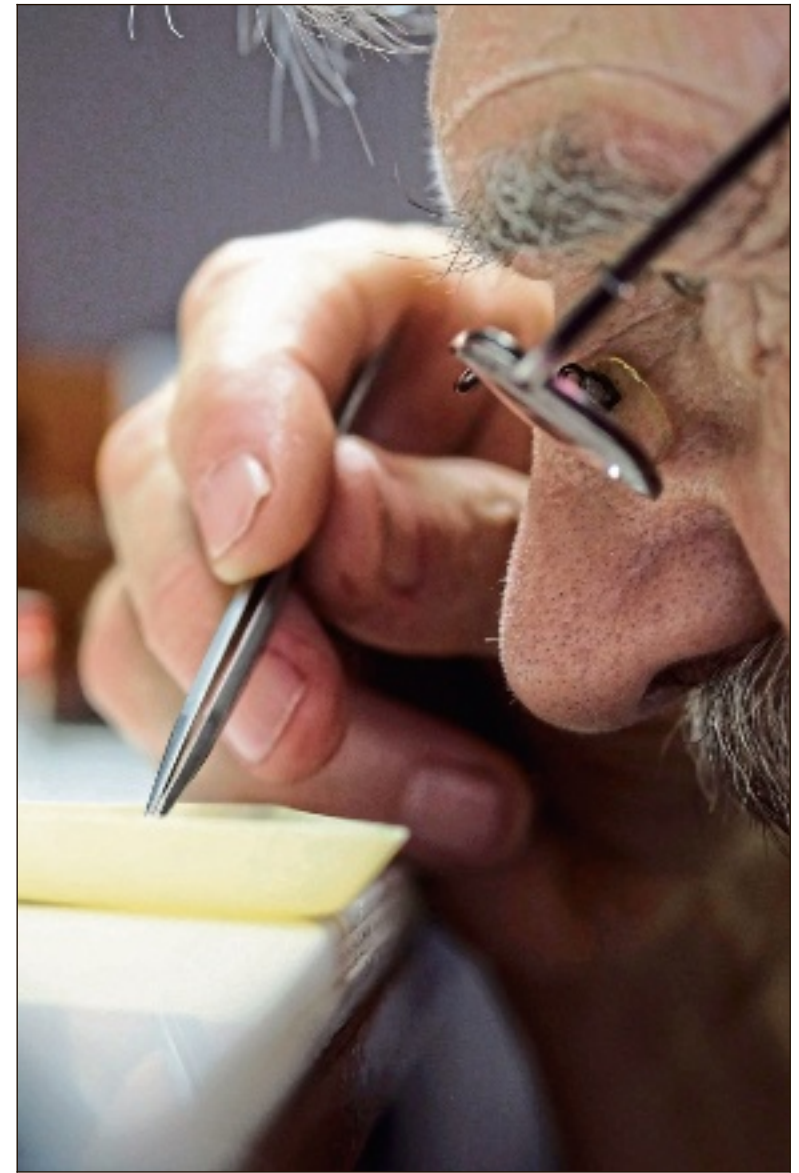
Watch repairman Shane Ede is hunched over a 1960s IWC Schaffhausen wrist watch in his apartment on Triller Avenue in Parkdale, his eyes mere millimetres away from the most intricate portions of the watch, placing small pieces back where they belong. He's trying to fix its stem, the component which allows the owner to wind the watch to the correct time. This is what he does seven days a week. The 69-year-old hunkers down in front of his desk in his bedroom for hours at a time engrossed in repairing everything from pocket watches to mantle clocks and everything in between.

He's Shane the watch whisperer and has been for the past 41 years. From antique Rolexes, to Omegas to Swiss Military watches, if it's broken, chances are Shane is the man to can fix it. Up until four years ago, he got the majority of his business from dealers, but that all changed when a customer wrote a glowing Yelp review. Since then the referrals just kept rolling in.

"It just took off. Kaboom! Thousands of people found me on the internet," Shane said. "People have sent (watches) and travelled here for me to fix watches from India and Venezuela who said they'd found me online. It's bizarre. "The irony of this isn't lost on Shane. He calls his business a "dying hobby" that is as traditional as a shoe cobbler. And yet he's found a way, albeit accidentally, to thrive in the modern, digital age with the help of watch forums and reviews found on the internet for those who know where to look. "Isn't it wild?" he says laughing. He started out fixing watches as a side gig while he taught English composition for business students at Ryerson University in '76.

He was an apprentice to an older watch repairman in the city after he took in a clock for repair for his mother. Six months later he opened his own home business and never looked back. "All of sudden 10 years has gone by then 20 years and all of a sudden I really know what I'm doing now, all of a sudden my fingers are like a ballet. You can almost watch them do their job and that takes over," Shane explains. "I don't know how to describe it. It's something that's just too much fun."

Shane Ede is breathing new life into an old trade, thanks to the internet



Photography by Justin Greaves

