

For John Seal

Time on his hands . . . so Allan makes a clock!

Easton man's achievement

MR ALLAN Brockbank found he had time on his hands after retiring five years ago, so he decided to pursue his life-long interest in clocks and cabinet making.

He began by buying old clock movements and building new cases for them, but a year ago he set up his own workshop and has just completed his first grandfather clock.

"This one I have made completely from raw materials. The others are old clock movements I have put into new cases, but I got more interested and decided to make the parts myself," said Mr Brockbank, of 9 Church Street, Easton-on-the-Hill.

Workshop

But before he could start making a clock he had to learn more about the subject, which he has done from books. He also had to make his own workshop.

"An awful lot of time was

By
Martin Feekins

spent making the tools and equipment," he said.

Mr Brockbank's first attempt at clock making was an ambitious one. The movement is made of brass and steel and the cabinet is oak.

But the most outstanding feature is the perpetual calendar built into the mechanism. It is designed to count the correct number of days for each month and also to take account of leap years.

Having made the tools for his workshop and spending nine months making his first clock, he now has bigger ideas.

"I am now starting a second one and it will be quicker and better. The new one will be a striking and chiming clock and will also have a perpetual calendar.

Mr Brockbank worked as an engineer for Peter Perkins, in Peterborough, until he was 69, and he was also a past-president of the Welton Valley Art Society. But recently all his time has been taken up by clocks and cabinet making.

"Most of the methods I am using are those used by the old craftsmen, not those used by modern mass production.

"I think that it is important that the old crafts are maintained and kept going, and I think they will be. The value of mechanical clocks is going up and up all the time."

Capital

Anyone thinking of taking up the craft of cabinet making or clock making even as a hobby like Mr Brockbank needs quite a lot of capital behind them.

"It would cost not less than £600 to set up a workshop, but it would depend on how much you make yourself and how ambitious you are," he said.



Mr Allan Brockbank with the grandfather clock he built from raw materials and three other clocks for which he made new cases.

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