



George's 'apprentice' carries on tradition

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items bequeathed to Roger from George Daniels' workshop, Daniels lived at Riversdale Estate, Jurby Road, Ramsey.

There is also George Daniels' old workbench which takes pride of place in the cottage along with some of his old sketches.

'It is quite an honour to continue his legacy,' said Roger during a tour of the business.

'George showed phenomenal attention to detail and inspired generations of watchmakers, his influence was incredible,' added Roger.

Roger has helped to inspire others by putting a series of instructional films on YouTube.

Roger receives inquiries from all over the world including the fast-growing Chinese market and wife Caroline takes care of the administrative side of the business.

Roger said he may be travelling to China later this year as part of a promotional tour involving Sotheby's.

He said the top auction house is planning to sell the personal collection of clocks and watches amassed by George Daniels in a one-off 134-lot auction scheduled to take place in London in November.

Daniels invented the coaxial escapement which is seen by many as the greatest development in horology for hundreds of years.

That is why 35 of the Daniels watches are being made - linking in with the 35th anniversary of that landmark invention.

Roger Smith first met Daniels in 1987 when he was a student at the Manchester



RELAXING: Roger Smith and his dog Mac enjoy the Manx countryside

School of Horology and the watchmaker was there to give a lecture.

Inspired by the talk he spent the next seven years perfecting the 30 or so different disciplines involved in creating a truly handmade pocket watch.

An invitation followed to work with him in the Isle of Man on the now legendary

Daniels Millennium series of 50 watches.

Attention to detail is key for Roger and his team. 'It's not about volume it's all about taking the time to deliver top quality work.'

Roger said George Daniels was always keen to promote the island as a 'centre of excellence' for horology and he is happy to continue that for years to come.



GEORGE DANIELS: Shortly before his death he approved the design for the series of watches bearing his name being developed by Roger Smith



ATTENTION TO DETAIL: It's a hive of activity as Roger Smith and his team of skilled staff work on the unique hand-crafted watches which are bought by wealthy customers from all over the world. Clients pre-order watches with a deposit before they are even made. Roger says he is helping to continue the growing reputation of the island as a centre of excellence for horology. The 35 Daniels watches will be individually numbered and logged

Isle of Man Examiner BUSINESS NEWS

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£170,000 watch made in the island



Horologist Roger Smith is producing just 35 of these hand-crafted timepieces and many have already been snapped up in advance



EXPERTISE: Roger Smith, left, has an international reputation for his handmade watches. In this rare picture he is photographed with his mentor George Daniels who died last October

ISLAND watchmaker Roger Smith is preparing to deliver the first of 35 handcrafted watches each worth a cool £170,000.

The so-called Daniels watches mean something extra special for Roger who learnt much of what he knows from his mentor, the legendary George Daniels who died last October.

The new series of watches mark the culmination of a special collaboration between Roger and his mentor.

Roger told Business News that just weeks before he died world-famous horologist Daniels had given the 'thumbs-up' to the design of the new watches.

'This meant a lot to me that George had approved these watches and he trusted me and the team here with the project,' said Roger.

Just 35 are to be produced and Roger said many have already been pre-ordered by wealthy clients across the world including Asia and America.

The customers seem prepared

EXCLUSIVE
by **Duncan Foulkes**

to wait years for their watches and have left deposits for their purchases.

Business News was given a sneak preview of the first Daniels watches – worth more than a Rolex – at Roger's workshop in the north of the island.

Parts of it are in 18 carat gold and have been painstakingly made by Roger and his team of five other watchmakers at the rural base.

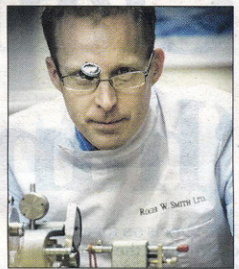
These are busy days for Roger, 42, who is also working on a growing order book for his own 'R.W. Smith' models which are made at the rate of about eight pieces a year.

He has advance orders for these watches which can cost between £72,000 and £85,000.

Business is so good Roger is planning to take on an extra member of staff.

And on a personal note his wife Caroline is due to give birth to their first child in June.

Some customers travel from across the globe to pick up their personal timepieces in person. 'It's



SKILLED: Roger Smith at work. The 35 Daniels watches, which cost £170,000, including VAT, were given the thumbs-up by George Daniels just weeks before he died

all part and parcel of the experience and they enjoy coming in person,' said Roger. The business is tucked away in a quiet, sleepy corner in the north. From the outside it looks like a normal cottage with a garage. But inside it's a hive of quiet controlled activity. And there among the equipment and machinery are

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