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By Henry Bury
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A little piece of Bob Peake's business has found its way into many Quinte-area homes over the past 48 years.

That is the satisfaction the 74-year-old owner of Bob Peake Wood Products is taking with him into retirement.

"Very few things came in this shop that we couldn't make and everything that left here is in someone's home and building," he said Thursday.

Peake figures about 75 per cent of homes in this area have something that was manufactured at his wood shop on Sidney Street just north of College Street — everything from windows, kitchen cabinets and trim to mouldings, fireplaces and door sills.

The Lemoine Street resident has decided to take it easy after operating his business since 1957.

"I'll be 75 next month and 48 years is a long enough time to run a business ... it's also hard work and it's time to relax," he said.

There has been a beehive of activity at his two-acre property this week in preparation for Saturday's auction sale to liquidate all of his business assets. The sale starts at 9:30 a.m. with auctioneer Doug Jarrell.

"Most of the machinery is already sold to two buyers," he said.

The one buyer will start a moulding business in Napanee while the other will launch a kitchen cabinet door operation on Stirling Road.

On the auction block Saturday will be some production equipment, two rental homes on the property, several storage sheds, the large wood manufacturing shop and a "very large" quantity of lumber and mouldings.

The two-acre property itself will be sold at a later date, he said.

Peake got his start in the industry working for someone else.

He was 14 when he joined Tatham Construction Company and learned construction and millwork while on the job.

Just after turning 27, he decided to open his own woodworking business.

"It was a big move back then from working for somebody else to starting my own business. But obviously it turned out OK after a lot of hard work," said Peake.

He remembers buying the old barn and a small piece of property at 482 Sidney St. from a farmer who was living on site and adding more land to his operation over the years.

"If I recall, there was only one house across the road on Sidney Street when I bought the property. I

could see the 401 from the business," he said.

As well, former builder Charlie Lambert had a private landing strip for his plane behind Peake's property that is now West Park Village.

Peake's business has also grown in different directions over the past four decades and employed up to 10 people at one time.

He started out doing millwork for schools, churches and commercial buildings and then branched out into manufacturing windows for residential homes. He switched to producing

kitchen cabinets and then manufacturing countertops, cabinet doors, handrails and mouldings and trim for both new and older homes.

"For the past 15 years, we have been doing strictly kitchen cabinet doors and mouldings and trim for new homes using everything from oak, cherry and birch to maple, pine and ash. We also reproduce mouldings for older homes," he said.

Betty Peake said her husband deserves some time off after almost 50 years in business.

"It is bittersweet," she said. "Forty-

eight years is more than some people's lifespan. It's quite an accomplishment to have run the business for that amount of time and have earned the respect of the customers. It's time he moved on and pursue other interests," she said.

Peake agreed.

"It's been a great run and now it's time to take it easy."

He is not giving up working with wood entirely.

"I took up the hobby of relief carving two years ago and I plan to carve up a storm in retirement."