



Friends of the Lester F. Larsen
Tractor Test and Power Museum
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Enclosed is a copy of the informational brochure about the L.F. Larsen Museum. Thanks to Chairman Norman Tooker and his committee for developing this and to Bill Splinter for arranging the layout and production. We believe this will help inform people about the Museum and develop interest. If you have occasion to distribute copies please request them.

A major current activity of the Friends of the Museum is the raffle of the M.H. Pony. This is being coordinated by Chairman Earl Ellington through a several member committee. Ticket sales are progressing well through visitors, mail, and special gatherings including the Camp Creek Threshers Show, swap meet, a North Platte auction, and Deer Creek Sodbusters Show. Coming up are the Old Trusty Show (Clay Center), The Husker Harvest Days, and the Nebraska State Fair. If you haven't yet bought your tickets please do so and spread the word.

Many antique tractor books are on display at the L. F. Larsen Museum and may now be purchased at regular price providing the Museum with some profit. They make excellent gifts for or from family and friends.

There is not yet a general public awareness of the existence of The L. F. Larsen Museum. Visitations are increasing somewhat, but often as a result of rather accidentally discovering it. Our "Friends" group members can be helpful in spreading the word and encouraging individual or group visitation. It is open week-day forenoons and by phone call arrangements, at other times.

Eight selected Museum Tractors will be exhibited at the State Fair Aug. 25-Sept. 4. There will also be the Raffle Tractor and a ticket sales table. Stop by, and if it is about 11:30 A.M. there is likely to be an opportunity to drive a tractor in the noon time parade of old tractors.

Antique Tractor and equipment auction enthusiasts, not already on Nixon Auctioneers mailing list, might want to be added. Address is P.O. Box 531, Wakefield, NE 68784 or phone 800-535-5996. Big sales coming up: Aug. 19; in Council Bluffs; Aug. 25-26 in Cylinder, IA; Sept. 16 in Albert Lee, MN; and Sept. 30-Oct. 1 in DeSmet, S.D.

Next meeting of the Friends of the L.F. Larsen Museum is October 17, at Chase Hall. In the meantime, we hope to see many of you at the State Fair and the Museum.

Bob Kleis, President

P.S. Due to several snags and schedule complications an article by our museum Curator, Dr. Levitius, is not available for this newsletter. His item will reappear in the next newsletter. RWK

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ANTIQUe TRACTOR DATA BOOKS
Through the L.F. Larsen TT and P Museum*

H9326	Massey Tractor Data Book	\$ 11.95
H9329	Vintage I.H. Tractors	19.95
H9332	Farm Machinery; Practical Hints---	12.95
H9334	Unusual Vintage Tractors	19.95
H1296	A Guide to A. C. Farm Tractors	14.95
H0593	Full Steam Ahead; J.I. Case Tractors and Equipment 1842-1955	19.95
H9313	Caterpillar	19.95
H1294	John Deere Tractors 1918-1994	14.95
H9286	I H Tractor Data Book	11.95
H9254	Minneapolis-Moline Tractors	13.95
H9167	Massey Tractors	21.95
H0397	A Guide to Hart-Parr, Oliver and White Tractors 1901-1996	14.95
H9137	What Was That? A Compendium of Little Known and Mostly Forgotten Tractors 1930-1960	7.95
H9305	Deere and Companies Early Tractor Development	12.95
H0119	The Agricultural Tractor 1855-1950	15.95
H0981	Farm Tractors 1950-1975	17.95
H1195	Farm Tractors 1975-1995	19.50
H9270	Vintage Ford Tractors	29.95

* Nebraska residents add 6½ % and \$4.25 to the price for shipping and handling by mail.

Numerous other historic tractor books are not stocked, but may be ordered and provided promptly as desired - Phone (402) 472-8389 in the forenoon for information.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

While visiting Florida recently I stopped in to visit Fred Chase, son of L. W. Chase, the founder of the tractor test program. Fred is still golfing in his nineties although he says he doesn't lose golf balls anymore as they do not go out of sight.

Fred gave me a book for our museum library titled "Farm Machinery and Farm Motors" authored by J. B. Davidson and L. W. Chase and published in 1908. This is the first text to define the newly developing profession of Agricultural Engineering. The book is especially valuable as it includes notes and comments by Chase.

The opening chapters describe the major advances in agricultural production brought about through the development of farm machines utilizing animal power to replace human effort. There is a description of the early devices used to measure the draft capability of animals and the draft requirements of machines. (We display these devices in the Larsen museum collection).

Next follows a discussion of tillage machines including the modern single and two bottom sulky plow with foot lift. The text tells us that the draft of a sod plow with coulter is 3.524 lbs/Sq.in., compared to 4.453 without the coulter. Disks, harrows and other tillage equipment follow.

The next chapter is on seeding machinery. The authors do not just describe equipment but they show extensive historical research in the development of the ideas leading to mechanization. The lead-in to this chapter describes the early seeders used by the Chinese and Assyrians. This historical development is used for each area of the book and shows that the authors had a depth of understanding of developments over time.

The section on harvesting machinery begins with the early development of the sickle and leads through the sequence of ideas leading to the reaper, the binder and the threshing machine. Today's combine is mentioned only as a new development in California. The corn binder and haying equipment is discussed in detail.

The authors then discuss the cost of owning farm machinery, which they recognize as a consequence of mechanization. A list of 17 essential farm machines including a gang plow, corn planter, binder, mower, wagons and a buggy came to an alarming total of \$924. Therefore they recommended that the equipment be housed to increase its useful life from five years to 12 years.

There is extensive coverage of the horse as a work animal. It is an excellent coverage of the importance of musculature and the expected performance of the animal. There is comparison of the work capacity of man vs. the horse and they include other animals as a source of power such as the dog.

There is an excellent chapter on wind machines covering design details of the windmill in various configurations.

Steam engine design and operation is covered in considerable detail. This is an excellent source for those restoring or operating steam tractors. Gas, oil and alcohol powered internal combustion engines were obviously new developments and the primary consideration is for single cylinder auxiliary engines which would be used around the farmstead.

Electricity on the farm was very new and the book covers such mysteries as the workings of the light bulb. It covers basic electricity and design of electric motors.

Traction engines (the word "tractor" had not yet been coined) are described extensively, primarily with steam power although there is some discussion of internal combustion powered machines. At this stage in the introduction of the internal combustion engine to power farm tractors they were facing the problem of reversing the tractor. Friction drive systems were seriously considered (an example being our Heider tractor) and clutches and gearing were just being introduced (our example being the 1912 Minneapolis Ford tractor).

This book serves as an excellent addition to our museum library, which also includes copies of all tractor tests, including the Winnipeg plowing contests held from 1908 to 1913. The book itself is quite fragile but we were surprised to find that it is still in print under the title "Farm Machinery--Practical Hints for the Handyman". Anyone interested in obtaining this book as a source of enjoyable reading, or as a reference for the operation of old machines such as threshing machines or steam engines may purchase one from the Larsen museum for \$20, which includes sales tax and postage.



W. E. Splinter