



Friends of the Lester F. Larsen
Tractor Test and Power Museum
P.O. Box 830833
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(402) 472-8389; Fax (402) 472-8367

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Dr. Bill Splinter is back at the helm of the Larsen Museum following his March 8 heart bypass surgery. He claims and seems to be recovering well. We are glad to have him back and we only hope he is not doing too much too soon. Our cautioning comments seem to have little effect.

The Massey-Harris 'Pony' raffle is under-way as a fund raising activity this year. This follows last years successful raffle of the Allis W C 'Woodpecker'. See the attached leaflet for details and feel free to post it for notice by potential ticket buyers. Dr. Earl Ellington is coordinating the raffle effort and arranging to have the 'Pony' and ticket selling at special tractor shows and events including the State Fair. Tickets may be purchased by mail addressed as listed in the letterhead.

Lester F. Larsen Memorial donations have been received by the Museum as suggested by his family. They may still be sent either directly to the Museum or to the University of Nebraska Foundation identified for the Museum.

An informational brochure about the Larsen Museum is being prepared by a committee chaired by Dr. Norman Tooker. We believe it will help generate interest and support.

Museum Visitations are increasing as the word spreads and as the exhibits have developed. The E.A. Olson donation of many valuable antique hand tools, added to those collected earlier, are nicely developed in a special side room display. Also, a special area for antique animal powered implements is attracting attention. But the main feature of the Museum is the tractors and related items.

Development of the Larsen Museum will be a continuing process, the costs of which are totally dependent upon private imputes. There is no tax base budget. We point out that such support may be "in-kind" donations of services or equipment, such as tractors or implements which may be either used or sold. Such donations to the Friends of the Larsen Museum are tax deductible. (Money is also quite acceptable!)

Museum hours are Monday through Saturday 9:00 to 12:00 A.M.. Other visitation times may be arranged by calling (402) 472-8389.

E-Mail address recently established is: tractormuseum2@unl.edu

Antique Tractor Auction - May 6, 10:00 A.M. in North Platte - Herman Zalud is retiring and selling over 175 units plus various parts.

Bob Kleis, President

Board of Directors

Robert Kleis, President - Earl Ellington, Vice President - Glenn Hoffman, Secretary - Shirley Trauger, Treasurer, (Exeter) - Leonard Bashford
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John Smith (Scottsbluff) - Norman Tooker (Ralston) - Dale Vanderholm - (Ex-officio - James Estes - Louis Leviticus - William Splinter)

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

We have re-organized the antique hand tool exhibit. Additional shelves have been added and all shelves are now covered with a special, non-reactive liner. All of the hand tools, many of which date to the 1700's, have been cleaned and entered into a listing which documents as much of the history as we can determine from various sources. The hand tools have been organized according to function, household items, woodworking items, etc., and displayed in an open way so that they can be readily seen. The more we work with this exhibit the more we appreciate the efforts of Professor L. W. Chase and Professor Chauncey W. Smith in bringing together these items, which were displayed for many years in the machinery laboratory in the Agricultural Engineering building.

In addition the blacksmithing display, which had been put together by Professor Runnels, has been located above the hand tool exhibit. Again, each item is being documented and signs will be added. This is an unusual display in that it is not just a exhibit of items made by students over the years, but it is instructional in that the various steps required to repair a plow or cultivator share, make a chain, make a pair of tongs, make a bolt, make a chisel or a cleaver are all shown in sequence. We believe this is a unique display and will be very helpful for those wishing to revive blacksmithing skills.

We have made a change in spaces, moving the curator's work area to the former dynamometer room. Luis Vasquez, our graduate student in Museum Studies, is the person who is documenting, cleaning, and if necessary, repairing our individual items. His assistantship is funded by the G. W. Giles Endowment.

We were also fortunate in receiving the original till-plant unit with which Professors Hurlbut, Schnieder, Wittmuss and Lane developed the idea of planting directly into the previous row, eliminating stalk cutting, plowing, disking, harrowing and listing. The frame was donated by Russ Poyner of International Harvester and the sweeps are the originals. The machine is the prototype which Leonard Fleischer used to develop and manufacture the Buffalo Till Planter. Other manufacturers followed the idea and today the plow is obsolete in Nebraska and several surrounding states. The planter was donated by the Shure family of Humphrey, NE.

This piece fits nicely with our exhibit sequence which starts with an IHC two bottom sulkey plow and a Chase two row lister, representing the conventional planting system, followed by a Chase sweep plow, the first conservation tillage implement. The sweep plow was developed in the '30's in response to severe wind and water erosion throughout the great plains. It introduced conservation tillage for small grain. The till planter was developed to provide cover for row crops such as corn. Not only did it decrease wind and water erosion, but the stubble captured snow during the winter. The final benefit was savings in fuel and equipment costs.

Stop by and see our displays.



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M. H. PONY RAFFLE

Tickets \$1 each (Minors and Students)

Adults 6 tickets for \$5

24 Tickets plus a one year membership in the
Friends of the Larsen Museum for \$20

Drawing to be held on January 16, 2001

at the annual meeting of the Friends

No need to be present at the drawing

Come and get tractor and drive it home

(If you win)

FACTS ON OUR FORDSON 'F' TRACTORS

We need your help
by Lou Leviticus, Curator

We have a problem in identifying the age of our two Fordson 'F' tractors. We initially intended to make one complete tractor out of the two units we have. But we are reconsidering, because we need some more information first. That is where we hope that some of you may help us out.

One unit (let's call it A), we learned it was a 1922 model, is lacking all its ignition parts which were stolen several years ago when the tractor was exhibited at the Nebraska State Fair. This tractor also has the special fenders which were made, as the literature states, to "reduce sinking of the tractor wheels and provide stability in case of a rearward overturn". It also has the continuously operating belt pulley which was offered as an accessory in the 1920 model tractor book.

The other tractor (let's call it B), is a 1920 model, does have its original ignition system, but its manifold intake system is cracked in several places and it has zero compression. In addition, someone cut out the wheel rims between the lugs, apparently in order to improve self-cleaning in sticky soils. It also has a pulley which can be engaged and disengaged.

In all the literature I have seen on this tractor it is mentioned that the Fordson did **not** have a governor, at least up till after the 1926 model was tested (Test # 124). From the test reports of the 1930 tests (173 and 174) it is clear that "Ford's own governor" as well as a Robert Bosch magneto were installed.

The problem with tractor B is that it has a very large vertical housing on the right side of the engine behind the radiator, attached to the location where the original distributor was located. This housing, which is as high as the top of the engine, contains a governor (apparently the one mentioned as "Ford's own") and distributor. However, it does not have a magneto. It uses the same coil box as the 1920 model. The distributor is connected to the same lever which controls the timing on Model A and which is also depicted in all the tractor manuals. The governor part is directly connected to the throttle lever on the one hand and to the carburetor system on the other hand, as a governor should be. The carburetor looks similar to the "original" one, but is different in several aspects.

In addition there is the question of the belt pulley. Nowhere in any of the Ford books can I find a pulley which can be disengaged as optional equipment. When did such a pulley appear? Did Ford make it or was it another manufacturer who supplied it? This tractor seems to be an amalgam of a 1920 model plus 1930 model innovations. We would like to get your ideas and opinions on this if you have heard of other cases like this. We also want to learn if we are all wrong in our assessment.

You can call us at 402-472-8289, Fax us at 402-472-8367 or write to us at the address on the letterhead. Thanks in advance, Friends.