

## His Old Lawn Mower Is An Eye-Catcher

Among his large tractor and walk-behind mower collection, Jack Force of Canton, Penn., has a red 1940's mower that always gets a lot of attention.

"The Sensation is one of the rarest ones. I've only found a photo of one other Sensation," Force says. "The one I have was built with wood wheels during World War II."

In addition to the wheels (which were replaced with rubber wheels) the mower deck is also wood, reflecting the lack of metal available during the war. The mower was made by the Sensation Lawn Mower Company started by Howard and Rosemary Phelps in Ralston, Neb., in 1944.

"Another unique thing is that on the right side bar is a tube that is the gas tank. That's definitely unusual," Force says.

The wide tubular-frame handles adjust back and forth and can be folded down. It appears that there were guards on the front and back.

The mower was among a large collection Force purchased from another collector that filled three 20-ft. trailers and three pickup beds.

Force notes that he hasn't found a lot of information about the Sensation, but knows that his mower was built early because of the direct-shaft engine located over the mower blades. Later it was replaced with a Briggs engine and a belt to drive the blades for better speed control.

Sensation mowers were considered commercial mowers and preferred by landscapers and gardeners for their durability.

It's in very good condition, Force says. He proudly displays it with the rest of his collection in a 70 by 100-ft. pole barn.

"I have no idea about its value," he says.

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Sensation mower originally came with a wooden deck and wheels, reflecting the lack of metal available during WW II.

## Metal Models Educate About Early Agriculture



After running out of room for his collection of full-size antique tractors, John Poch began making metal models that replicate a variety of old-time equipment.



His favorite piece is a 1/8-scale, 110 hp. Case steam engine. Models are neatly displayed inside a 20 by 40-ft. barn.



John Poch admits that he started making metal models for a simple reason.

"I ran out of shed room," he says, after collecting/restoring 30 full-size tractors, including 22 steel-wheel tractors. "Models don't take up much room. I enjoy putzing around and I like to stay active."

Since retiring in 2010, the New Holstein, Wis., resident has created 100 models that replicate a variety of equipment built in 1930 and before.

"I started with 20 Case items, because I followed a book that had measurements," he says. "It's stuff most people don't remember because it's 100 years old."

His favorite piece is a 110-hp. Case steam engine, because the real ones are so rare and massive. Poch built his model at 1/8-scale so it is 21 in. wide, 33 in. long and 19 in. high.

He made models in a variety of scales, starting out big at 3/4-size with his first model of a McCormick-Deering W-30 he made in 1988, followed up by a McCormick-Deering No. 8 plow. Because of the space they took, he only made eight large models before gradually moving down to 1/16-scale. Most of his 72 models are in his favorite 1/8-scale. They don't take up much space, but aren't

so small that they are difficult to make, he explains.

Poch uses 1/8-in. steel and 6/32 bolts to piece his models together, along with some welding. Those pieces can add up, like the 97 pads he put on a chain for a crawler model.

"I do it to my own standards," he says, and estimates measurements from photos and based on models he's already made. Initially, he painted them, but now he prefers to keep them in their natural steel state, which reminds him of black and white photos of old equipment.

The models are neatly displayed in a couple levels of his 24 by 40-ft. barn, that also includes a 12 by 20-ft. workshop. Poch cuts all his pieces except for the wheels, which are shaped by Schuette Mfg. and Steel Sales, where he buys his steel.

"I like to share the hobby. Most people don't remember early powered agriculture," he says, so he enjoys having the opportunity to educate them through his models. He invites people interested in his hobby to contact him.

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## Toy Collector Does Business Worldwide

Jason Dalton received his first pedal tractor on his first birthday. He started collecting farm toys when he was barely old enough to talk, and by the time he was 11, the Ertl company recognized him as having the world's largest collection of 1/64-scale toys. That 1/64-scale collection now has more than 8,000 models and he runs his hobby as a full-time business.

Dalton says he never really considered collecting an obsession, it was just something that he really enjoyed. "We're always told to enjoy our work, and I thoroughly enjoy all aspects of farm toys, whatever brand, size or color they are."

Dalton says he owns at least one of every 1/64-scale toy ever made, along with a huge collection of other toys such as 1/16-scale IH models and 1/32-scale 4-WD tractors. He keeps them in original packages on racks in more than 50 brand-specific cabinets.

For nearly 20 years, Dalton's been buying and selling "toy equipment" around the world, keeping unique and one-of-a-kind models in his collection and selling others.

Dalton points out that he has many prototype toys and several models with imperfections. For example, a plain white box on

one shelf holds a Big Bud prototype toy sent by the manufacturer for company approval. Dalton says the tractor was the wrong color and the box didn't have identification, so it's one-of-a-kind and quite valuable. Other unique items in his collection are painted the wrong colors or packaged in the wrong boxes.

Toy collecting is a huge business worldwide, says Dalton. He has nearly 60,000 followers on his Facebook page. Many of them are or have been customers and closely watch Dalton's posts for information.

Dalton started selling toys as a high school freshman in 1995, placing an ad in Toy Farmer magazine to sell 20 of his unused "extra" toys. His first customer bought half of them. Within a few years he was setting up his own toy shows and running ads in Toy Farmer every month. He's sold toys by direct mail catalogs and on eBay, in addition to his own website.

Today his website and his Newton, Iowa "storefront", built new in 2017, offer thousands of items from 8 different manufacturers. Dalton is proud of being a 20-year-dealer for Ertl and SpecCast, two of the industry's most respected brands. He's also considered the go-to guru for value and historical infor-



Jason Dalton has the world's largest collection of 1/64-scale toys - more than 8,000 models in all. He also owns a huge collection of 1/16 and 1/32-scale 4-WD tractors.

mation on 1/64 scale toys.

He gets calls and emails all the time asking about the value of this or that toy, and says he's glad to help people out because interest helps build the business for everyone.

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