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Cub Restoration Business Started Small

Rod Landrum and Patrick Hendley got their start in the antique tractor business when they decided to restore a Farmall Cub together. Landrum, a self-described jack of all trades, was going to do the work while Hendley covered costs and helped out as needed. Finding parts was a problem they soon turned into a solution.

“I started buying parts off the internet before we decided to find our own parts tractor,” recalls Landrum. “We found a junker Cub, paid \$650 for it and winched it onto our trailer. I cannibalized what I

needed and started listing parts I didn’t need.”

Soon Landrum was sending parts to buyers from New York to Texas and Colorado. Before he was done, he had sold more than \$1,200 in excess parts. He then put the restored Cub up for sale.

“I had about \$1,200 in it and sold it to a guy in Texas for \$3,750,” recalls Landrum. “Not counting my labor, we more than doubled our money on the tractor and nearly doubled it on the parts tractor.”

It was one of three restored Cubs he has sold to Texans after posting them to Craigslist

Dallas. “It’s been a good way to find a buyer,” says Landrum.

Finding tractors to fix up can be more difficult, although that’s changing as people learn about his interest. “I’m always looking as we drive around our rural area,” he says. “I’ve had several calls asking if I’d be interested in buying theirs.”

His one rule of thumb is the engine must run. “I don’t rebuild engines,” says Landrum. “If they don’t run, I’m not interested.”

He counts himself fortunate in finding several “barn” tractors, older tractors left sitting. He picked up one Cub with a belly mower. He doubled his money on the tractor and sold the mower for \$150.

“Some may look bad, but if I can fire them up, I’ll buy them,” he says. “I put in new fluid, plugs, wires, coil, brakes, and more if needed. I get them sandblasted, repaint them and put new decals on. It’s amazing what that’ll do.”

In the middle of his Cub purchases, he and his partner found an older John Deere. “It was a good buy at \$1,500,” says Landrum. “We restored it, painted it, and sold it for \$3,000.”

An offset Farmall B that ran like a top caught Landrum’s attention. He did the usual restoration, including converting it to a 12-volt system with a new alternator and coil. When his friend shared a picture of a tractor with a farmer’s wife’s side seat, Landrum got another idea.

“We cooked up a concept for my grandson

Marshall,” says Landrum. “I added a second platform, steering wheel, and seat. The steering wheel was freewheeling. I used it to teach him to drive.”

To give his grandson’s the same feel and look, he ran the steering rod to an eyebolt mounted to a plate above the front wheels.

He admits the project took more time than his usual restoration. In addition to the wheel and rod, he needed seat supports, springs, support base brackets, and seat belts.

“The base support bracket was the biggest challenge,” says Landrum. “They usually rust out. I ordered one that came from China, but the holes were off, and I had to redrill them. I also had to fabricate the second platform to fit on the left side.”

A key point for Landrum was that the steering wheels be at the same height. This required notching the post base to fit around existing bolt heads on the transmission cover. He also shimmed it to lift it slightly to match the OEM post.

While he has no plans to sell that tractor, he has done a second identical one. The second B with dual seats and steering, plus one that is an OEM single seat are ready for sale.

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Farm Accident Led To A New Business

Viola Graber was a young Indiana farmwife with young children when her husband died in a 2002 farm accident. “The loss was devastating at first,” says her son Martin, now 26, “but we’re from a strong family that offered plenty of support. Mom sold the dairy farm and moved us in with her parents so she could work in her dad’s furniture shop for income. She learned upholstery from a neighbor lady and began refurbishing older chairs and couches.”

When her father, Henry, began making custom chairs and furniture frames, Viola handled the finishing and upholstery for items they sold in small volumes to the local community for several years.

“Grandpa Henry passed away in 2008 and in 2009 Mom married Bennie Graber, who quit his construction job to help with the furniture business,” says Martin. “Mom and Bennie got more serious and decided to expand by offering sofas, chairs, ottomans,

and other living room items to the wholesale market. “We set up a sales department and now have about 60 different accounts.”

Currently, five Graber family members work in the business along with 15 other employees who form the company known as Country View Furniture. Martin manages day-to-day operations, his sister Vera runs accounting, Bennie heads the frame department and Viola runs the upholstery cutting department.

“We cut all of the frame wood ourselves and buy metal frames and springs from a supplier,” Martin says. “We do all the upholstery cutting and finishing and then ship floor models to stores. Customers can buy floor models or select custom items using a range of fabric swatches.”

Martin emphasizes that all their furniture is made one piece at a time and hand-crafted to high-quality standards. “Unlike a lot of name-brand furniture, we don’t use foam

slabs, plywood, or sinuous wire springs. We make our heavy-duty frames out of solid hardwood, use steel coil springs, solid steel mechanisms with steel reinforced joints, and use high resiliency foam to ensure a durable, long-lasting piece of furniture.” That attention to quality and detail has paid off for the business.

“Before Covid, our lead time for product delivery was 6 to 8 weeks, but then consumers got government money and orders came in really fast,” says Martin. “Our suppliers, like a lot of others, couldn’t deliver, which led to backlogs. We’re about 40 weeks out on orders now and hope to get back to ‘normal’ within a year.”

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Country View Furniture, 8659 N 1000 E, Odon, Ind. 47562 (ph 812-636-5024; www.countryviewupholsteredfurniture.com).



“We make our heavy-duty frames out of solid hardwood, use steel coil springs, solid steel mechanisms with steel reinforced joints, and use high resiliency foam to ensure a durable, long-lasting piece of furniture,” says Graber.

How To Get Started With Pastured Poultry

One of FARM SHOW’s favorite online forums is hosted by the American Pastured Poultry Producers Association (APPPA). Recently, Sarah, a new member, asked how to build a chicken tractor. We thought APPPA member responses might help FARM SHOW readers who are thinking of pasturing poultry themselves.

The APPPA member forum is a great resource on any number of pastured poultry topics. A \$50 per year membership is like hiring a troop of experts with real-life experience.

Mike Badger with APPPA quickly responded with suggestions of variables to consider, like whether she was interested in broilers or layers and what breed. He also provided a link to APPPA plans at <https://apppa.org/shelters>.

Some responders were almost as new to pastured poultry as Sarah. Matt was in his first year and recommended John Suscovich (Vol. 45, No. 4) style shelters as “easy to build, and super easy to move.” He built 10

of them holding 30 birds each.

Susan suggested Sarah consider the weather, as some shelters like the Salatin (Vol. 16, No. 4) style might be too hot in Southern states. She emphasized ergonomics and efficiency when considering a shelter style and recommended the APPPA website for videos, as well as the YouTube channel www.youtube.com/c/ampasturedpoultry. She then recommended hooped pens as her favorite.

Garoleen described starting with a cattle panel hoop house, moving to a covered trailer, and finally a Prairie Schooner (Vol. 42, No. 4).

Another option is to go to the FARM SHOW website archives to search pastured poultry. You’ll find more than 40 articles.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, American Pastured Poultry Producers Association, P.O. Box 85, Hughesville, Penn. 17737 (ph 888-662-7772; grit@apppa.org; www.apppa.org).



Prairie Schooner chicken tractor being used by a forum member.