

The 29-in. long thresher is built from galvanized steel, brass, and aluminum.

## EXACT IN EVERY DETAIL

# “Mini-Thresher” Model

Photos of an old 1930's Minneapolis Moline Special thresher were all that Ray Rahn, Rosemount, Minn., needed to make a scale model “mini thresher” that's exact in every detail.

Rahn built the 29-in. long by 10-in. high thresher from 22-ga. galvanized steel, brass, and aluminum which he used for the pulleys and belt tighteners. Vinyl seat covering was used for the belts. His “mini thresher” took first place honors at county and state fairs last year.

“I had wanted to build a mini thresher for many years,” says Rahn, who grew up on a farm. “One day on a trip to Arizona I happened to see a Minneapolis Moline Special sitting alongside a Kansas road. I took several photos of it, then on the way back from Arizona I took more close-up photos. It took 400 hours to build. I used a mill and lathe and made my own sheet metal brake to bend the metal. The feed conveyor is hinged just like on the real thresher so it can be folded up for transport. A set of cam-operated brass twine cutters are mounted on top of the conveyor. The cam shaft arrangement was the most difficult part to build.”

The thresher's 12-in. long blower can be swung from side to side and raised and lowered by a pair of thumb screws at the rear of the machine. There's a brass ladder on

back that was designed to let the operator climb on top of the thresher. The telescoping hitch is built just like the real one and can be extended by pulling a pin. “Extending the hitch allowed the operator to move the thresher in the field without having to fold up the feed conveyor,” says Rahn, who used brass chain and slats to make the feed conveyor chain. There's even a straw rack inside the machine.

According to Rahn, the first Minneapolis Moline Specials were built with an unloading auger that dropped grain through a pair of tubes into sacks. “I remember as a kid watching my dad and another operator take turns filling sacks. Later the company switched to truck-loading augers like the one on my model. The grain elevator unloaded into a dump bucket. As soon as grain filled the bucket, it dumped its load into the unloading auger. It kept track of the number of dumps so that at the end of the day you could figure how many bushels had been threshed.”

Rahn made the thresher's wheels by cutting off the ends of 2-in. dia. steel pipe. He used brass rod to make the wheel spokes and axles.

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## REPLICA OF OLD DEERE “D” TRACTOR

# “Tractor Mailbox” Built From Junk

“It sure catches everyone's eye. Even our Deere mechanic was impressed with it,” says Darrel Cheney, Hunter, Kan., who used junk parts to build a replica of an old Deere “D” tractor, then mounted a mailbox on front.

Cheney and his brother Mike built the 36-in. high “tractor mailbox” two years ago as a Christmas gift for their parents. “I always liked the style of old D tractors. The first ones had a spoked flywheel, but no exhaust pipe. My replica is based on models that were built two or three years after the first ones came out. I used a photograph and a model that I saw to build it. My neighbor Joe Zachgo helped me. I plan to apply Deere decals to the sides of the tractor.”

Cheney used an old LP gas cylinder to

represent the engine block, an old fuel tank to form the hood, and a piece of evaporator coil out of an old refrigerator as the radiator. The 32-in. tall rear steel wheels were removed from an old manure spreader and the 18-in. tall front wheels from an old threshing machine. The steering wheel is a spoked pulley off an old cream separator.

Cheney mounted a spoked flywheel on the left side of the tractor and a belt pulley, removed from an old Massey 27 combine, on the right side.

The tractor rests on a concrete slab. Cheney used anchor bolts to secure the rear wheels to the concrete.

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## “Honey, Will You Run Into Town?”

By Sheila Champlin

Just as I was leaving the farm for my weekly grocery shopping trip, my husband said, “Hey, Honey, pick up a bag of eartags while you're in town.”

“O.K.,” was my self-assured reply.

“You know what I want, don't you?”

“Sure thing,” I answered confidently.

“Those cute little plastic things you punch in their ears?”

“That's right,” he said. “Buy enough for 40 head.”

Now, I've gone with my husband many times, and all he does is glance at the shelf of eartags and grab a bag. So I'm thinking this should be a lot easier than going to town for machinery parts about which I know nothing.

So I went to our local farm supply store and started looking up and down aisles until I found eartags. The entire length of the counter was loaded with hundreds of bags of different kinds of eartags. By process of elimination, I found the right section with cow tags.

A clerk came up and asked if I needed help. I told her I needed eartags for 40 head.

“They only come in multiples of 25,” she said. “Do you want 50?”

“Yes,” I replied, calmly.

“Do you want them prenumbered, blank or with special logos printed on them?”

“What are special logos?” I said, trying not to reveal my consternation.

“Name and breed, pregnancy test information, year born and animal numbers, separate family ownership, etc.”

“Give me prenumbered tags,” I said, hoping I sounded like a veteran dairy wife.

“Do you want them numbered 1-25 and 25-50 or non-sequential numbers?”

I wasn't real sure what non-sequential numbers were, so I said, “1-50 sounds good.” That, I figured, should be the end of the question ordeal. How wrong I was.

“Do you want numbers on one side or both sides?”

“That's a \$1,000 question,” I declared!

But then inspiration struck. “What do most farmers buy?”

“It's about equal,” was her non-helpful answer.

After some thought I said, “Give me numbers on both sides.”

Then she threw another curve my way.

“What color do you want - black with white print, white with black print, orange, red, blue, green or yellow?”

“White with black print should look good on black and white cows,” I responded, pleased that I could make this weighty decision so readily. Every woman knows how important color coordination is.

“What size numbers do you want? They come in sizes 1/4-in. to 1 1/4-in.”

“Better give me the largest numbers,” was my quick response.

Just as the sun was about to set, the clerk handed me a bag of ear tags and quickly took them back, saying, “I almost forgot, do you want plain or insecticide eartags?” She stated how the insecticide tags cost more; however, most farmers say they work great in controlling horn flies, face flies, ticks, house flies and stable flies. I deplore face flies and pink eye, so I said “Give me the ones with insecticide.”

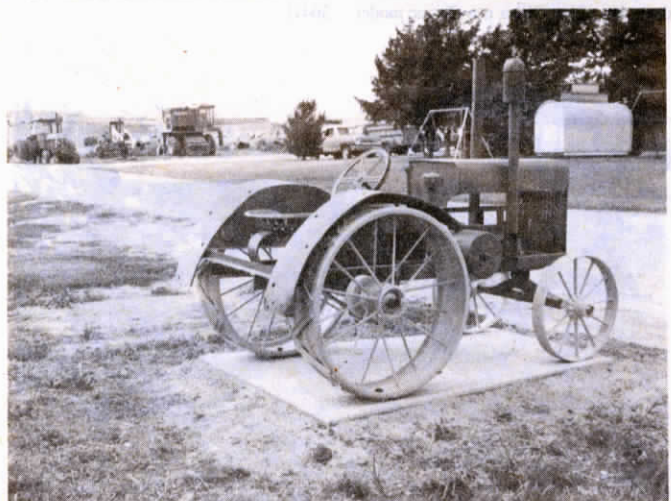
I grabbed my precious eartags and thanked the clerk quickly and started for the checkout counter.

“Wait a minute,” she called, “you need an applicator for the tags. We have them in five different styles - plastic, stainless steel, fiberglass, nylon and . . .”

“Hold it,” I said firmly. “The applicators sound as complicated and varied as the eartags. I'll send my husband into town if he needs one.”

By the time I arrived back home that day, I was ready to hang every one of those tags on my husband's nose. But being the nice person I am, I reconsidered. After all, he hasn't had much of a problem with face flies recently.

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