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WIDE VARIETY MAKES FOR AN INTERESTING HOBBY

They Go Hog Wild Over Hog Oilers

The Howard Rotary Ball Bearing Oiler. The Talbot Lennox 'Rub Hog Or Die.' The Swine-EZER.

What do those bizarre names have in common? They're all brand and model names of hog oilers. The contraptions were widely used from the early to middle part of this century to control flies, lice and mange on hogs. Hog oilers came in a variety of shapes and sizes, but they all had a reservoir for oil that got spread on hogs when they rubbed against the devices. Occasionally oil was medicated; more often than not farmers used a blend of crankcase oil and kerosene.

With improvements in herd health, use of hog oilers became much less but they've become collector's items. Hog oilers can now fetch as much as several hundred dollars apiece compared with original retail prices of as little as \$7.

Bob and Louise Coates of Deerfield, Wis., are one couple that's gone hog wild over hog oilers.

They began collecting hog oilers 10 or 15 years ago after seeing one - without knowing what it was or what it had been used for - at an antique gas engine show in Illinois.

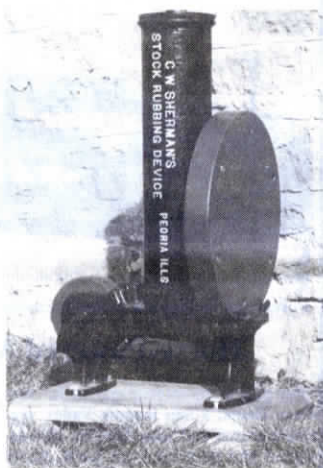
"We now have one of the largest, if not the largest, collection of hog oilers in the U.S. with over 120 pieces," says Bob Coates. "We don't know of any hog oilers that were made in foreign countries. So we're interested in them as purely American farm antiques."

Others may be interested for aesthetic reasons since collectors often paint oilers bright colors to resemble ears of corn, watermelons, billiard balls, etc. In fact, about 50 of the Coates's hog oilers have been exhibited at the Madison Art Center, Madison, Wis., and the Kamerick Gallery at the University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, in the past couple of years.

Since the Coates's began collecting hog oilers, they've become somewhat of an authority on them. Partly, that's because Louise has done patent searches on hog oilers - over 150 patents were granted - in researching a book about hog oilers that the couple plans to write.

Here's a sample of hog oiler history the Coates's have uncovered:

- Of all the places in the Midwest where hog oilers were made, Peoria, Ill., was the hot bed of hog oiler creativity with 10 to 12 brands coming out of the city in the early 1900's.



This rare "Stock Rubbing Device" is a hog greaser instead of an oiler.

- One of the earliest and most popular brands of hog oiler was the Rowe made in Galesburg, Ill. It was a vertical bar with tri-pod base and oil canister on top. Stood about 30-in. tall and was manufactured from the early 1900's through the '30's.

- Another of the most popular and now most sought after was an oiler that had 'Rub Hog Or Die' inscribed on the side. Made by the Talbot Lennox company of Marshalltown, Iowa.

- One of the rarest is a hog greaser instead of an oiler. Called the Stock Rubbing Device and manufactured by the Sherman company, Peoria, Ill., the greaser is an 18-in. dia. wheel attached to the side of a column. The Coates's have one of the only ones still known to exist.

- The Harvard Ball Bearing Hog Oiler out of Fremont, Neb. It was a big ball that sat inside a cup-like base and rotated in any direction on three ball bearings. Poorly designed, according to Coates.

- The Swine-EZER from the Lisle Corp., Clarinda, Iowa. It looked like a pot-belly stove. It stood on three legs and weighed 125 lbs.

Dozens of others were manufactured, and the Coates's hope to complete their collection with one of each.

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Bill Riley, head of the newly formed National Hoof Trimmers Association, leans against the one-of-a-kind hoof-trimming truck that he built (see story below).

THEY PREDICT A GROWING NEED FOR THEIR SERVICES

Hoof Trimmers Form National Association

If you're a dairy farmer, you know how invaluable the services of your veterinarian or DHIA are to the success of your operation.

But did you know there's another group of specialists that believes their services are going to be equally as important to you in the future?

"The way government regulations are moving dairy farmers toward total confinement, we believe it'll be essential for every dairyman to have the services of a good professional hoof trimmer," says Bill Riley, head of the newly formed national Hoof Trimmers Association.

The group began meeting informally three years ago. This summer, they held their first formal meeting at Strum, Wis., with 55 members present. By the organization's next formal meeting in January 1996, projections are that membership will be at least 100.

"It's educational, a pool of knowledge more than anything," says Riley of the group whose average age is 28. The group focuses primarily on dairy cows.

For example, a new hoof disease of greatest concern to Riley and the organization is strawberry hoof rot, or hairy wart, a highly infectious virus whose symptoms are a large hairy wart resembling a strawberry on the hoof. Certain strains of the virus have recently become resistant to treatment with tetracycline, which was previously effective against it.

"It's a virus that originated in Europe and has become real prevalent in the U.S. in the last four years," he says. "If it's treated

properly by cutting out the wart and packing the hoof in Venice turpentine and iodine crystals it can be eliminated. But I'm sure that some dairy farmers are unaware of it and that it's costing the industry millions of dollars a day in lost production."

While U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations and natural hoof diseases are two things the new organization is concerned about, there are others as well.

One is the new hormone, bovine somatotropin (BST). Injected in cows to increase milk production, BST is being marketed under the trade name Posilac by Monsanto Co. Other big chemical companies are near to marketing their own BST products as well.

"BST just blows the heels right off those cows," claims Riley. "From a hoof trimmer's point of view, dairy farmers are a lot better off without it." The association may even take an official position against BST at its next meeting, Riley speculates.

(Riley runs a hoof trimming school in Sulphur Springs, Texas, where students receive intensive one-on-one instruction in hoof trimming techniques. Tuition is \$1,500, and the average student can learn the tricks of the hoof trimming trade in six days.)

Meantime, the Hoof Trimmers Association is busy planning regional organizational meetings as well as a quarterly newsletter.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, W.S. Riley, 1005 Georgia, Sulphur Springs, Texas 75482 (ph 903 885-7769).

Hydraulic "Layover" Hoof Trimming Chute

"My customers are professional hoof trimmers, and once they've seen my hydraulic layover chute in action, nothing else will do," says Bill Riley about his state-of-the-art pickup-mounted chute.

Riley perfected the chute two years ago. It corrals cows, picks them up, and then lays them over on their side for trimming - all in about 3 1/2 seconds. He's since sold 23 units to hoof trimmers all over the U.S.

"It's designed to take all the heavy manual work out of it for the trimmer and to be easy on the animal at the same time," Riley says. "It's made to be operated by one man standing in one position."

Mounted on a pickup chassis with the box removed, Riley's chute is custom-built to the size of pickup and is config-

ured differently for right and left-handed operators.

The chute is big enough to "fit any cow," Riley says.

It's made out of 2-in. tubing and sheet metal and is completely hydraulically operated. This includes pull-ups, or belly bands, front and back gates, and stabilizers to keep the chute from tipping. Four hydraulic cylinders are necessary to operate the chute. They're tied into one central valve behind the pickup cab.

The whole system runs on D.C. power. Price of the chute, including hoof trimmer's medications, wraps, blocks, tools, etc., is \$12,500.

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