

Lancaster Carriage

(Continued from Page C21)

back together again and were married last December.

Back on track again, Bob retraced his carriage maker's 'apprenticeship' of sorts giving full credit to Jake Zimmerman for his training. Zimmerman, who now lives in the central part of the State, 'taught' Bob how to build carriages.

"Any time I ran into a question on how to do something, I'd go up the road to see Jake. Sometimes I was up there two times a day," he said.

Building his own carriages was almost a necessity of the trade, Bob explained, citing the fact that new Amish buggies he had purchased fell apart in one season. So, he began to make his own, designed to withstand the load and the miles travelled each summer driving tourists around Lancaster.

"I've easily driven over 25,000 miles myself," said Bob leaning against one of his 'home-made' Amish buggies.

In 1974, the Lancaster Carriage Works moved from a Lancaster apartment to the large house Bob had purchased in Leola. In time, the carriage making business expanded, soon commanding almost the entire downstairs.

With 80 percent of his work involving new carriages and only 20 percent in restoration, Bob has created his own masterpieces and saved vehicles that others termed impossible to restore.

He pulled out a photo album with pictures of an old fire hose cart from Lakewood, New Jersey. In a transformation rivaling the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a beautiful butterfly, Bob showed how they took an almost unrecognizable heap of wood and metal and painstakingly salvaged the cart for the fire company.

"It's as fragile as an egg," Bob said, "and they won't be fighting fires with it any more." But his pride in the cart, originally manufactured by Wirt Knox Manufacturing of Philadelphia, reflects his delight in his accomplishment.

The fire company, he said, plans to enter it in an old fire fighting equipment competition sometime during the second week of September.

His most difficult restoration job, however, was not the fire hose cart, according to Bob. A Portland cutter he restored holds that title.

The type of carriage that Bob builds predominately is a common spring wagon. But he has allowed his imagination and physics background to run wild on occasion.

One of his pieces which he calls a gentleman farmer's cart was designed to fit a specific horse. It was built for a woman who planned to take the horse and cart to the Devon Show.

"This was the 1978 show," said Bob, "and ours was the only newly made vehicle to take a prize. The judges kept insisting that the cart was a restored Austrian vehicle, and awarded it fifth place."

Going over the cart like a proud creator, Bob pointed out the five foot long side springs, the shafts which are independent of the body of the cart, and he demonstrated the adjustable foot rest for the people riding in the back.

To add to its uniqueness, Bob explained he enclosed a metal frame within a routed-out wooden frame. The cart also was adorned with over \$1000 worth of brass screws, nails, and nuts.

The Hermans spent their honeymoon delivering another one of their creations to Acadia National Park in Maine. They were contracted by the Savage family to build a two-seat open carriage to use on the 60 miles of trails in the park.

Their carriage joined the other antique carriages in the DuPont collection on the island of Bar Harbor — the first new vehicle on the island in over 70 years.

"The wheels were proportioned perfectly to carry the load, all the while fitting with the look of the carriage," described Bob. "There was 1/4 inch deviation from front to rear in the running gear," he said, his physics background coming into play in designing a

Named president elect

UNIVERSITY PARK — Robert C. Bealer, professor of rural sociology at Penn State, has been elected president-elect of the Rural Sociological Society. Founded in 1937, the Society serves a worldwide membership of rural sociologists in research, teaching, and extension.

Bealer took office during the Society's annual meeting held August 20 to 23 at Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

Prior to this, he has served on the Society's policy development committee, its publication committee, and

carriage with as smooth a ride as possible.

Recently, Bob said he has also started designing his own springs.

Bob is a perfectionist, said Sandy, and it's reflected in his work.

Although he was careful to keep the secrets of the trade well concealed, he did point out that each vehicle is painted in a series of steps. At least five coats of primer is applied, with each layer sanded to a smooth finish, followed with as many coats of paint stroked on with a skull that defies any one to find a brush mark. The process takes months in some cases.

Now that the carriage business is getting stronger, the Hermans have stopped driving regular tours from a local restaurant parking lot. Instead they schedule tours by appointment, offering five different tours covering between 3 and 12 miles. With the tours taking from a half hour to a half day, the reimbursement for horse and driver starts at \$5.

When they're not behind the horse, the Hermans are either busy in the shop or with the horses. Sandy gives riding lessons and trains other peoples' horses. She said she hopes to become involved with local 4-H and church groups, teaching the young children the fundamentals of horse care and driving.

As their business continues to become recognized throughout the United States and internationally, someday a Lancaster Carriage vehicle will join the ranks of Brewster, A.T. Demarest & Co., or Rogers & Twentyman & Co. in the realm of the collector.

the governing council.

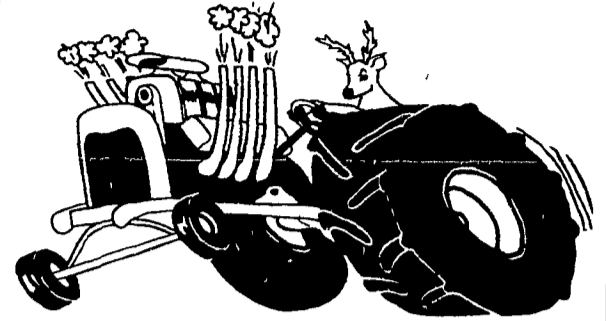
Bealer served two terms on the editorial review board of "Rural Sociology", the society journal, and was editor-in-chief of the journal from 1973 to 1975.

His interests center on metasociology—the application of sociological theory to research and the continued significance to rurality in American society. He has published and written extensively, having been involved in over 150 papers, articles, reviews, and monographs.

Bealer was appointed to the Penn State faculty in 1958. He received both the undergraduate and master's degrees from Penn State. The doctor of philosophy degree in sociology and anthropology was awarded by Michigan State University in 1962. He was promoted to full professor in 1968.

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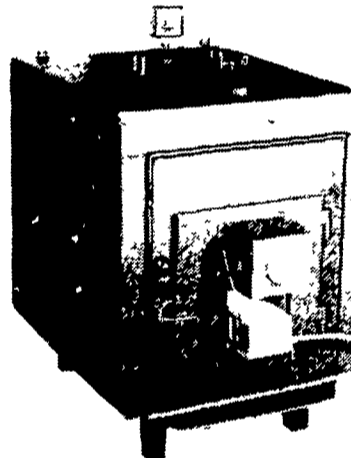
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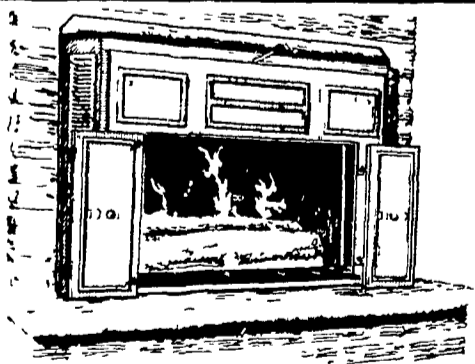
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