

Historic Farm Equipment At Pasto Museum

UNIVERSITY PARK — A favorite stop at Penn State's Ag Progress Days is the Pasto Museum of home and farm implements. Visitors can enjoy more than 150 historic and rare items donated by alumni, faculty and friends of the College of Agriculture in the museum, which is open only during Ag Progress Days or by appointment.

"This is an educational museum so visitors are free to turn the cranks and move the levers to see how these implements really work," says Jerome K. Pasto, associate dean emeritus of the college and curator of the museum.

New this year are a split-hickory buggy and a set of three cast bronze cow bells donated by J. Edward Stouff, a dairy science alumnus and retired farmer from Downingtown. Also new are a home tin canner donated by former dean of the college James M. Beattie and a shoulder-carried grass seeder donated by J. Darwin Braund, a distinguished alumnus of the Department of Dairy and Animal Science and director of

dairy and livestock research and development for Agway, Inc.

"The split-hickory buggy is quite interesting because of its construction," says Pasto. "Because the frame was made with hickory that was split with the grain instead of sawed across it, the buggy is stronger and lighter than most. Made in the 1920s or 30s this model would have been more expensive than other types, costing perhaps \$45 instead of \$35. In those days that was a significant difference. It is an over-the-road buggy to be drawn by one horse and built for two passengers and maybe a child. It has a folding top and would have been used for going to church, visiting or going into town."

The set of bronze cow bells, complete with leather straps, is also unusual. Pasto says each is a different size and tuned to a musical cord so that as the cow moved, the tone would be quite pleasant. The bells were probably made in Switzerland and were useful to farmers in mountainous areas where farmers not able to see from field

to field could locate their cows by sound.

"The tin canner comes from former Dean Beattie's home," says Pasto. "It's about three or four times the size of a regular can opener, clips onto a table and puts lids on cans with a hand crank. The tinned produce would then be processed in water to preserve the contents. Tin canners were widely used in the 1920s and 30s but after that, tin became too expensive and home canners turned to reusable glass containers."

Darwin Braund's gift of a grass seeder was made by the Goshen Sweeper and Sowing Machinery Company in Goshen, Indiana. It is

activated by stroking a leather thonged bow. The seeder has a seed bag attached and a circular tray with flanges on it that flings out the seed as the farmer walks across the field and strokes the bow.

"People donate to the museum because they realize it would be far more satisfying to them to know that their valuable home and farm implements still in good condition will be restored, cared for and enjoyed by many," says Pasto. "Some like Edward Stouff have had their farm in the family for over 100 years and want to preserve some of the old things. He has given between 30 and 40 items

over the past several years including a homemade farm sled made in 1890 by his grandfather for hauling farm produce over the snow."

Because of the many donations, the Pasto Museum has become a real window to our farm heritage. It was initiated by Pasto and built by contributions from the College of Agriculture Alumni Society 10 years ago. The collection began with a donation of historical hand tools and items for the farm, given by the late Russell Dickerson, an associate dean emeritus of the College. Agway put up the structure at cost and Republic Steel donated the outside metal panels and roof.

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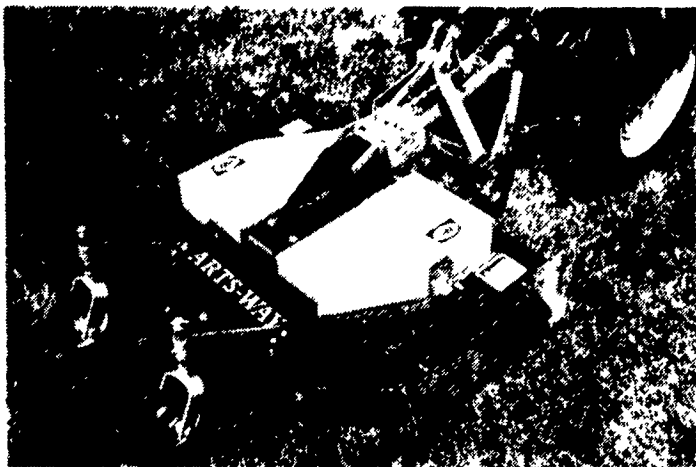


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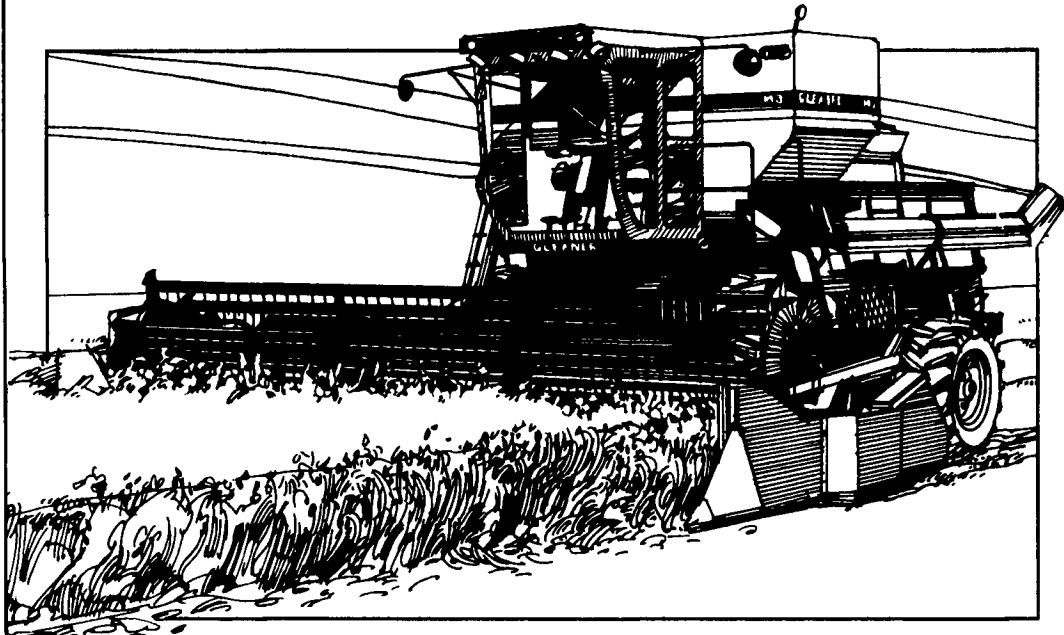
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