



Ron and Julie Doll say the “wrench railing” they added onto their remodeled home is a great way to display old tools and farm parts that have become obsolete.



Ron arranged the wrenches between sections of steel pipe and welded them in place. Then he spray painted the railings black.

Porch Railing Displays Decades Of Wrenches, Tools

Five generations worth of old wrenches are on display for all to see as part of the railing on Ron and Julie Doll’s Perham, Minn., farm home.

Ron needed a railing on the east and west sides of the 145-year-old home the couple remodeled and he decided it was as good a place as any for the wrenches that had accumulated on the dairy farm. He had plenty of experience welding and, after cleaning the wrenches with a steel brush, he arranged them between sections of steel pipe. Once he was

satisfied with the arrangement, he welded them in place with 6011 welding rods.

“I primed everything, then spray painted the pipes red,” Doll says. Then he taped the pipes before spray painting the wrenches black.

Altogether he made 10 7-ft. sections of railing. Eight have the wrenches along with a few other old tools and even jacks and a pump handle. The other two are farm scenes he welded together. He finished it off with cow stall dividers for railings along the steps.

Doll doesn’t know what many of the wrenches were used for or how old they are. The farm has been in the family since 1868, and some wrenches may have come with ancestors from Germany.

He knows that a family member made one extra large wrench for old steel wagon wheels. He also discovered several antique Ford wrenches in the collection.

While Doll downplays comments about his artistic talents, he admits the wrench railing is a great way to display tools that have become

obsolete. It has also inspired relatives to contribute to future wrench art projects.

Among the donations is a 6-ft. wrench with a chisel on one end. Doll notes he’s not sure what he will do with it and other wrenches he received. But future plans include building a cabin on a lake lot, so there’s a good chance more wrenches will end up there.

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Old Gas Pumps Restored To Like-New Condition

FARM SHOW contributing editor Lorn Manthey recently decided to try his hand at restoring a couple old gas pumps that he rescued from a neighbor’s junk pile. “It didn’t occur to me when I started that restoring 2 rusty pumps would be more work than fixing up an old B Farmall, but that’s how it turned out,” Manthey says.

“I learned right away that the dead weight of that old 6 ft. tall Gilbarco was probably close to 400 lbs., and the shorter Wayne pump wasn’t much lighter,” Manthey says. “My hired man and I eventually wrestled them into the shop with the tractor loader, and that’s when the real work started.”

The red Gilbarco pump’s metal skin was rusted, its glass was broken, one panel had a huge gash and both doors were rusted shut. Manthey and his hired man spent the better part of 2 days removing the top and 4 panels, then another 2 days stripping the motor, pump, piping and meter from the frame. They needed 2 more days to remove the metal and insides from the smaller Wayne pump.

“I had the metal pieces dipped by a friend who runs a furniture restoration shop and that did a real nice job removing the rust and

paint,” Manthey says. “Then I sent them to a local painter who specializes in restoring cars. He sandblasted all the pieces, repaired the gashes, polished them smooth, then sprayed on 3 coats of paint. The final was clear-coat, so they really shine.” The frame was sandblasted, then re-finished with two coats of rust-resistant black.

Manthey took the frame, metal panels and meter to a pump restorer to finish the project. “I was going to put them back together myself, but after talking to the restoration shop I realized there were missing parts, some which he had and others that could be ordered,” says Manthey. The shop restored the meters, put new glass in the doors, replaced the door hinges, added missing chrome, installed new lights, the hoses, mounting arms and pump handle brackets. The 6-ft. tall Gilbarco received Texaco emblems and a new globe while the smaller Wayne pump was painted Sinclair colors with a Dino globe.

Manthey said the cost to restore both pumps was a little over \$2,000 each, not including time. “I think there’s a real benefit in doing a lot of the tear down, cleaning and painting



Rusted almost beyond repair, Lorn Manthey’s antique Gilbarco pump (red) and Wayne pump (green) were rescued from the scrap pile and restored to “like new” condition.

work yourself,” Manthey says. “If a person wants to buy a completely refurbished unit without putting any time in yourself they’re anywhere from \$3,200 to nearly \$4,000.”

Restored gas pumps are a nostalgic addition to any shop or garage, Manthey says. Removing the pump, motor and piping

reduces the weight by 50 percent or more, so one person can move them around if you have to.

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Pedal-Powered Corn Grinder

Philip Whitmoyer of Leesport, Penn., turned an antique, hand-operated shelled corn grinder into a pedal-powered grinder that he powers with a bicycle.

“I built it last winter, and it actually works better than I expected,” says Whitmoyer.

“Friends of mine have a hobby farm, and last year they shelled a good amount of corn that they asked me to grind for their grandson’s chickens. I already had the hand-operated corn grinder, which I only used occasionally at a local festival. It does a great job, but for any amount of grinding it’s really hard on my arms.”

After hand cranking a couple of bushels, he remembered that he had used pedal power more than 50 years ago to power his parent’s ice cream freezer. “I thought the same idea might also work with the corn grinder,” says Whitmoyer.

He completely stripped down an old bike

and replaced the fork with a length of 3/4-in. black pipe with a floor flange. The rear part of the frame is set on a wooden block with notches in it on both sides. He set the height so the pedals just clear the floor.

Next, he mounted a sprocket from another bike to the grinder via a 10-in. dia. plywood disc, in a way that doesn’t permanently alter the grinder and still allows hand cranking. The bike and grinder were then mounted on a 4-ft. long 2 by 10 board, aligning both sprockets. The chain had to be lengthened using part of the chain from the second bike as well. To make the contraption easy to move around, he added two wheels on front and a “handle” where the bike’s rear axle used to be.

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By converting his antique, hand-operated shelled corn grinder to pedal power, Philip Whitmoyer made grinding small batches of corn a much easier job.