

LONG SEARCH ENDED IN SUCCESS

He Tracked Down His Dad's 1946 Farmall H

By Cindy Ladage

Have you ever wondered what happened to Grandpa's Farmall 560? Are you still looking for your uncle's long lost Ford 8N, or your dad's first tractor? If so, you're not alone. Jon Kinzenbaw of Williamsburg, Iowa, founder and CEO of Kinze Manufacturing, started his search for his father's 1946 Farmall H during the early 1980's.

Kinzenbaw has collected many tractors over the years, but the one he wanted to find the most was the first one his father ever owned. Eugene John Kinzenbaw, or Jack, as everyone called him, purchased the tractor after returning home from World War II. In the fall of 1945 Jack bought the family farm and applied for a permit to purchase a tractor. As a veteran he was given the first chance to buy a new tractor from the local dealer. He ordered the Farmall H in the spring of 1946.

Jon was introduced to the tractor early on. He says he can remember riding on the tractor with his dad when he was only four years old. "By the time I was nine years old, Dad had an off-farm job so I did the plowing and everything."

They used the tractor to plow, disk, harrow, and plant on their 160-acre farm. "One tractor did it all until sometime in the mid 1950's," says Jon.

Jon says his father liked to tinker. He made a throttle for the tractor - a vertical lever with a squeeze grip on top - that extended as high as the steering wheel, making it easier for Jon to reach. He also bolted a 3-in. wooden block to a hinge so that his young son could reach the clutch from the seat. When Jon was 9, the block was removed and hung in a shed. Another identifying factor about the tractor that Jon remembered was the rubber knob on the shifter - it had his father's initials, EK, engraved in it.

By the mid 1950's, the family was farming with two tractors - the H and an old Farmall F-20. One day the F-20 blew up, so in 1956 both tractors were traded in for a Super M. In 1962 Jon got his first job working as a mechanic for the dealer they had traded the loyal H to. Rumor around the shop was that the old H was somewhere in the county.

Jon's father died in 1982. By the early 1980's Jon had started collecting a few Farmalls. When he asked around to see if anyone knew where the 1946 Farmall H might be, no one had a clue. "We thought the tractor was lost forever and assumed that the old homemade throttle had been removed," says Jon.

By 1990 he had collected more than 100 tractors, but still had no luck in the search for his dad's first tractor. He spent hours driving around the country checking back lanes and lots in search of the tractor. Partially giving up, in 1992 he bought a 1946 Farmall from someone down South. "I was going to restore it, because it was as close as I thought I'd ever get to dad's Farmall," he says.

About this time, his 11-year-old son Jonathan became a 4-H member. For his county fair project, together father and son set out to restore and repower a 1970 Cub Cadet. While they showed it at the county fair it rained cats and dogs, and Jon found himself inside a building viewing the other

4-H exhibits. He was drawn to a photo exhibit where one photo in particular caught his attention. It was of a rustic tractor sitting in the weeds with the sun setting behind it. The tractor was a Farmall H. "This crazy throttle was sticking up. At that time, it hit me like a ton of bricks. This rascal had the same Goodyear tires. The seat itself was the right seat. All those things clicked, and I was positive that I had spotted dad's old H."

Jon went in search of the exhibitor, Tanner Towe. He found the boy's mother and asked if the tractor was for sale. She told him that it belonged to Tanner's father who was out of town. However, she said he would probably sell the tractor.

The next Saturday, Kinzenbaw and his 14-year-old daughter drove out to look at the tractor and confirmed that it was indeed the one his dad had owned. The next day he asked Mr. Towe how much he wanted for the tractor. He held his breath, knowing that to him this particular tractor was worth almost any price. Mr. Towe said he would like \$400 or \$500. Kinzenbaw offered \$400, and Towe took it.

Monday, Kinzenbaw and the kids hooked a gooseneck trailer up to their pickup and went to retrieve their family heirloom. They used a loader to pull the tractor out of the weeds and winched it onto the trailer. As instructed by Mr. Towe, Jon made the check out to Mrs. Towe. She was excited by the surprise.

Then he told them, "I've got something here that I want to put on the pedal." He went to the pickup and pulled out the wooden block that he had saved for so many years. "I would've last put this on 38 years ago," he said, then stuck the pin in and flipped the block into place.

The importance of the situation quickly dawned on the Towe family. "So this was the first tractor you ever drove," said Mr. Towe. Jon affirmed this. "Everyone got a big kick out of it," he says. "I thought I should give him the other \$100. On the spur of the moment, I gave the check to Tanner and said to call it a finder's fee. The boy's eyes lit up and got as big as saucers."

Once the Farmall H was home, Jonathan and his father set about their next big 4-H project - rebuilding the engine.

Kinze keeps an extensive collection of about 125 tractors stored in a 340-ft. long shed. The tractors are stacked two deep to make more room in the shed. When the floor level of the shed was full, Jon had to stop buying tractors because there wasn't any more room. He solved the problem by building a rack and hoisting one row of tractors above the other. He has most of the 15 different models of Farmall H's made between 1939 and 1953, and every Farmall F model made after 1929.

Red Power magazine sponsors an ongoing search seeking the highest and lowest serial numbers on the International series tractors. Last year, Jon decided to check an H model that he uses on a water wagon and was amazed to find that it had the serial number 391728. The last serial number made was 391730, so he's now searching for 391729 and 391730.



Jon Kinzenbaw and his son, Jonathan, pose with the restored 1946 Farmall H.



Jon Kinzenbaw's tractor collection is stored two-high in a 340-ft. long storage shed.

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Can Crusher Powered By 1/2 Hp Motor

By Bonnie Heidtke

For \$6 and a few spare parts, Ernest Rowe built a powered can crusher that mounts under a bench in his garage.

The Fountain, Minn., farmer's machine consists of a couple old 15-in. car tires (with wheels and hubs) and a "space saver" spare tire, all powered by a 1/2 hp electric motor and V-belt pulley.

He simply bolted the wheel hubs to a 2 by 12-in. plank which he then mounted to a wall of his garage. The two tires turn tight against each other.

Next Rowe spot welded the rim of the space saver spare to the wheel on the right. He runs a large V-belt around the small spare tire to turn the two wheels.

He built a plywood bench over the can crusher and feeds cans down through a small hole in the top.

To stop moisture build-up on the tires causing them to slip, Rowe screwed 10 4-in. braising rods every 12 in. around the treads.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup,



Two "space saver" spares are powered by an electric motor.



Rowe feeds cans through hole in plywood bench.

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