

CHAMPION 'PUNKIN' CHUNKIN' MACHINE

"Cannon" Shoots Pumpkins Nearly A Mile

A year or so ago, we featured a pumpkin catapult built by Hugh Mommsen of Rice Lake, Wis., (Vol. 21, No. 6) We were impressed by Mommsen's giant machine but it turns out we hadn't seen anything yet.

Recently, a group of rural inventors from Morton, Ill., - the "Pumpkin Capitol of the World" - built an air-powered cannon that shoots pumpkins nearly a mile at speeds of up to 500 mph.

"We built it four years ago to compete in the World Championship 'Punkin' Chunkin' contest in Lewes, Delaware," says Chuck Heerde, one of five inventors who built the air cannon. "We broke the world record in '96 with a toss of 2,710 ft. and, again last year, with a toss of 4,491 ft."

The air cannon was built out of the frame and running gear of an old cement mixer. The gearbox, chain and turret off the cement mixer are used to rotate the barrel up to 360 degrees. The barrel was made out of a 1,500-gal. air tank. It was extended 80 ft. with steel girders.

I-beam outriggers fitted with hydraulic cylinders steady the cannon for firing, while hydraulic lift cylinders off an old dump truck raise and lower the barrel.

The cannon fires on compressed air (no explosives are allowed in world class competition) from the 1,500-gal. air tank. Exact pressures needed to launch regulation-size 8 to 10-lb. pumpkins is a secret, notes Heerde, adding that the builders consulted with a bal-

istics expert on some details of construction.

It has been reported that the men plan to eventually break the sound barrier with the cannon, but Heerde says they've been told that may not be possible.

"Our next goal is to shoot a pumpkin one mile," he says. "That's probably more realistic."

If you'd like to know more about the World Championship "Punkin' Chunkin'" contest, visit the contest's Website at: www.punkinchunkin.com.

For more information on the World Championship pumpkin air cannon, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Parker Fabrication, 501 East Courtland St., Morton, Ill. 61550 (ph 309 266-8413).



Cannon fires pumpkin with compressed air from a 1,500-gal. air tank.

Unusual Corbitt Semi Draws Interest At Shows

If you're a Southerner, you're probably more familiar with this rare classic semi truck than your Northern neighbors since it was manufactured in North Carolina.

Stanley Hogg, Worthington, Minn., has learned a lot about Corbitt trucks since he found his 1951 Corbitt G 101 T22 semi tractor in a junk yard in New Castle, Wyo., in 1986. It had first been used as an over-the-road tractor to pull a 30-ft. freight trailer, then as a lumber truck with the frame lengthened and the 5th wheel removed.

To restore the truck, he rebuilt the frame to its original 137-in. wheelbase. He pulled and rebuilt the 330 cu. in. Continental gas engine and 5-speed Clark transmission. He replaced the original 18,000-lb. differential with a larger, 22,000-lb. differential. He

completely rewired and repainted the cab. The work took three years.

Since then he's shown it at a dozen antique truck exhibitions from Spokane, Wash., to Boston, Mass., to Greensboro, N.C.

As for the history of these rare trucks, they were produced by the Corbitt Truck Company, Henderson, N.C., between 1910 and the mid 1950's. That's when the company liquidated its assets. The trucks followed production of Corbitt buggies in the late 1800's and a crude Corbitt automobile in the early 1900's. The Corbitt company also went on to build farm tractors similar in design to the Cockshutt in the early 1950's, most of which were exported to other countries.

Although the total number of Corbitt trucks built is unknown, the company had its best

year in 1946 when it sold over 600 units. Five basic models were available with variations. The trucks were either diesel-powered, mostly using Cummins engines, or gas-powered, mostly using Continental engines.

While there were few notable engineering innovations packed into the trucks, they were known as exceptionally well-built. They were also known as a great value, priced comparably to a Federal but well below a Mack, a White or a Diamond T.

Fewer than 100 of the trucks remain in existence and not enough of them ever change hands to gauge exactly how much they've



Stanley Hogg poses with his Corbitt semi.

appreciated in value.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Stanley Hogg, P.O. Box 152, Worthington, Minn. 56187.

Giant Pickup Is A Real "Monster"

"We've had tremendous response from kids, which is who we had in mind when we built it," says Don Frankish who, along with his friend Kevin Weeks, built a "monster" truck that really looks like a monster.

Called "Jurassic Attack", the truck is shaped and painted like a Triceratops dinosaur. The men started building the truck around the frame of a 1998 Ford custom GTS pickup. It took about eight weeks to complete.

The 11,000-lb. rig is powered by a V-8, 563 cu in., 1,300 hp SCJ Ford alcohol-burning engine. Its 110-lb. fiberglass shell was cus-

tom-built in St. Louis and painted in Calgary. Five-ton military axles are fitted with regulation 66 by 43-in. flotation tires. The truck is 11 1/2 ft. high from the ground to the tip of the horns.

The men took the truck to 20 monster truck events all over North America last year, including the USA Motorsports tour where it placed 14th out of 80 trucks.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Don Frankish, Box 365, Foremost, Alberta, Canada T0K 0X0 (ph 403 867-3971; Website: www.jurassicattack.com).



"Jurassic Attack" was built around the frame of a 1998 Ford custom GTS pickup.

Wood Playground Digger Great Fun For Kids

Kids love this playground digger that works just like any other child's digger except that it's made from Western red cedar wood. It weighs only about 18 lbs., making it easy to move from site to site.

The base supports a swivel-type seat and measures 16 in. square. The bucket as well as two arms that support it are made out of aluminum.

"It's light enough that you can easily haul it around anywhere your kids want to go," says John Lee.

Sells for \$149 including S&H.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, John Lee, Cedar Furniture, Inc., Rt. 4, Box 262A, Windom, Minn. 56101 (ph 507 831-0040).



Digger weighs only 18 lbs., making it easy to move from place to place.

World's First Electric Drill

Here's a photo of the world's first hand-held power tool, an electric drill made by the German company, Fein, in the late 1800's.

The prototype was built in 1885 by two Fein mechanics who were faced with the task of drilling a large number of holes by hand. At the time, small electric motors were just beginning to arrive in Germany from England.

"The two mechanics took one of these small electric motors, fitted it to the drill chuck shaft, and produced an electric hand drill that got the job done," a company historian wrote.

Company founder Wilhelm Emil Fein saw the drill as an "opportunity to open up new ground in the field of electrotechnology," the story continues. Fein and designer Otto von Kellenbach worked together to produce the world's first production electric hand drill. It weighed 16 1/2 lbs. and could drill through steel 0.1 in. thick.

The drill was so successful it was soon followed by improved models. For example, the first electric drill with aluminum components, which improved power/weight ration, was



First electric drill weighed 16 1/2 lbs. and could only drill through steel 1/10th in. thick.

introduced in 1900. In 1901, a drill with reduction gear followed. In 1903, a drill with three speeds was produced. Between 1910 and 1914 high-performance drills with overload clutches were introduced.

One of Fein's first production electric hand drills is on display at the Deutsches Museum in Munich.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Fein Power Tools Inc., USA, 3019 West Carson Street, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15204 (ph 412 331-2325; fax 3599).