

Jay Russell used old horseshoes to sculpt this Cinderella carriage pulled by a single horse.

Farrier Turns Horseshoe Pile Into "Art"

In more than a decade as a farrier, Jay Russell, Caldwell, Idaho, accumulated tons of used horseshoes. Then one day in 1998, he was hit with a bolt of creative lightning (or something like that) that woke the artist in him. He decided to use those old shoes to sculpt a horse.

Russell nailed his first set of shoes on a horse at the age of 13, when his dad told him \$12 was too much to pay to have a farrier shoe his old horse. That was in 1965.

In 1986, after about 15 years as a dairy farmer, he decided to try something different. Since he'd gained some proficiency at trimming hooves and shoeing horses, he decided to make his living as a farrier. Russell's records show he's been under nearly 20,000 horses since he became a professional.

When he started working on his first sculpture, he spent hours cutting out old nails and bending, straightening and fastening shoes together using measurements made

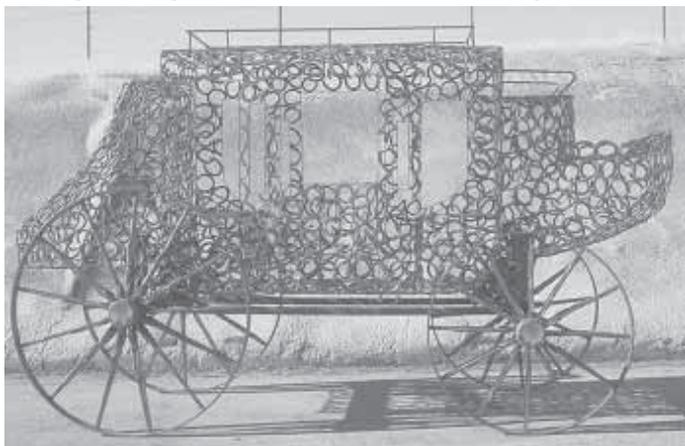
from a stallion owned by his wife, Shannon.

"I've never had any formal schooling as a farrier or as an artist," he admits. "I've gone to a lot of shoeing clinics and extension classes to learn more about taking care of horses. But my only training as an artist is my own experience."

He finished his first horse sculpture in November, 1998. He figures it took him about 80 hours to put it together, not including the time it took in cutting the old nails out of the shoes. Russell figures that first horse used about 1,000 lbs. from his old shoe collection.

Since then, he's made five more sculptures - all lifesize - including a Cinderella carriage pulled by a single horse. He's currently working on the six-horse team that will pull a stagecoach he's already finished.

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He's now working on a six-horse team that will pull a stagecoach he's already finished.

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Rare Sheep Breed Ideal For Spinning

One of the rarest breeds of sheep on earth are the CVM/Romeldales, with fewer than 2,000 head in existence.

Developed with hand spinners in mind, CVM stands for "color variegated mutant" and Romeldale is a breed created in the 1900's. The Romeldales were selected for high yield, uniform white fleeces and superior carcasses to other whiteface breeds. When two spotted lambs showed up in a breeder's flock in the 1960's, he crossed them to form the basis for the CVM breed.

"The fleece is every bit as soft as Marino and Rambouillet," says Chris Spitzer, an Ohio CVM/Romeldale breeder. "The really cool part is that you can have 10 gray animals, and when you shear them, you see as many as five different colors on a shaft of wool."

Spitzer is no amateur when it comes to evaluating wool for handspinning. When she decided to expand her handspinning hobby to raising sheep, she wanted the best breed she could find. She proceeded to buy and process more than 60 fleeces from around the country to find what she was looking for. It was love at first spin when she discovered CVM's. The fleece has a staple length of 3-4 1/2 in.

Spitzer is now one of only 18 breeders in the country, and when contacted for this article, reported only 8 animals available for sale among the other 17 flocks. This number will increase after spring lambing; however, numbers continue to be limited due to tight restrictions on registration. All animals must be traceable to the founding flock.

Bred ewes go for up to \$800, and rams start at \$500, according to Spitzer.

CVM's would seem perfectly suited for small, intensive breeding flocks. Not only are they excellent out-of-season breeders, but they also frequently produce healthy twins,



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weighing from 10 to 13 lbs. each. Rams weigh in at 225 to 275 lbs., and ewes weigh from 140 to 175 lbs. Fleece weights range from 6 to 12 lbs. and sell for as much as \$20 to \$25 per lb. direct market to spinners.

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Lament Of A Box Wagon

By C.F. Marley

My time has passed. I'm broken-hearted
Many who knew me have long departed
I don't look like much we're all agreed
Ain't nobody, nowhere, can fill my need.

No brawny husker now can boast
50 bushels by noon - more than most!
Picking corn was the biggest part
Unloading it also worked the heart.

Long before today's machine
I, the box wagon, with scoop board, was queen.
It was thump, thump, thump on frosty morn
As my bump board caught big ears of corn.

Drop the scoop board, then begin
Scoop off the corn and go again
Back to the field is where we went
For 50 bushels more my husker bent.

No tractor there to chug up front
Big loads of corn made horses grunt.
Now 8-row cornheads set the pace.
It saddens me I have no place.

Few men could match his honest toil
Now he rests down in the soil.
But I'm still here. I can use the rest.
Just remember this: I could test the best.