

Motorcycle Parts Table

In the last issue, FARM SHOW featured a glass-topped table made from old wrenches and auto parts. Soon after we came across Erik Warner, who made a similar table using old motorcycle parts.

Erik drives a recycling collection truck in Little Falls, Minn., and he's always surprised by what people throw away. He frequently "rescues" old parts and turns them into something useful.

"I found a wheel rim and three Harley Davidson mufflers," he says of his most recent project. "I was going to make some kind of bicycle and was staring at the parts. That's when I noticed the bolt spacing on the mufflers matched the outside measurement on the rim." He took the rim to an aluminum welding shop to have mounting tabs attached. With the addition of a stock glass table top from Pier 1 Imports and a little polishing, he turned the parts into the classic motorcycle table.



Erik Warner used a wheel rim, 3 Harley Davidson mufflers, and a glass top to make this table.

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"Gas Tank Furniture" Brings Back Childhood Memories

Butch Soehnen got a big surprise when he opened a large box last Christmas – a piece of unique "gas tank furniture" made from a fuel tank off an old Allis Chalmers WC tractor. But this was no ordinary gas tank – it was from his dad's first tractor.

"It was a very early WC, probably a 1934 to 1937 model," says Soehnen. "I remember riding on a grain drill behind it, and also helping my dad mow hay with it. There's still a dent on the side of the tank where I hit it with the crank when it refused to start. I was only 8 or 9 years old.

"My brother found the gas tank in some bushes. He and a friend of ours took the tank home and did a nice job of turning it into a beautiful piece of furniture. The tank is bolted on top of a 4-legged metal stand that rides on caster wheels and has a large wooden storage shelf near the bottom and large Allis Chalmers decals. It'll make a nice addition to my game room," says Soehnen.

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Butch Soehnen received this Christmas present from his brother. It was made from the fuel tank off an old Allis Chalmers WC - his dad's first tractor. Photo below shows Butch as a kid on the same tractor.



Jim Rodenberg turned this 1948 Allis Chalmers G tractor into a barbeque grill that runs under its own power.

Self-Propelled Portable Tractor Grill

Jim Rodenberg of Grand Rapids, Minn., really likes Allis Chalmers tractors. He also likes to barbeque. So he combined both interests by making an Allis Chalmers barbeque that runs under its own power.

"It gets a lot of attention at shows and community events. Some people even ask if it was factory built," says Rodenberg.

He started with a 1948 Allis Chalmers G, which was designed with a rear-mounted engine and transmission and an arched pipe frame on front for increased visibility. Attachments, such as a cultivator, could be belly-mounted on a toolbar between the front and rear wheels. He unbolted the frame and the front axle, and then built a new frame with brackets to support the grille. He also installed a used front axle that he bought at

a salvage yard.

He used 14-ga. steel to build the grille, which measures 2 ft. in dia. by 3 ft. long. The draft is controlled using a pair of slide-type vents in the grille and spring-loaded caps on exhaust pipes on front of the tractor.

"I take it to shows and community events all the time. The first time I used it was at a party for guys in my shop, where we grilled 20 New York strip steaks," says Rodenberg. "The Allis G is getting to be a rare tractor, so I left the tractor's original arched frame and axle intact so I can bolt them back on if I want to."

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Many years ago motor oil came in tall glass bottles. In recent years the bottles have become more valuable.

Glass Motor Oil Bottles Grow In Value

Many older FARM SHOW readers remember when motor oil came in tall glass bottles sealed with everything from corks to crimped lids or spouts. If you've got any tucked away in the shop, garage or attic, it might be worth digging them out.

At a recent Kovels auction, one bottle netted \$1,375. However, it was a rare 1-gal. Mobil Oil Filpruf bottle with a gargoyle trademark, metal spout and wire holder. That high price was the exception, according to Kent McCullough who has written and illustrated three books on glass motor oil bottles. Typically, the most valuable bottles are in the \$200 to \$300 range such as the Texaco 574 bottle that sold for \$209 at the same Kovels auction.

"About 98 percent of the bottles are in the \$20 to \$75 range," says the Lawrence, Kan., collector and author. "The Owens Illinois Glass Company made the majority of bottles. Styles changed from year to year."

Before the use of glass, oil was poured from open, steel pitchers so customers weren't sure if they were getting the right amount of oil or if it was new, clean oil. Glass bottles were used from about 1910 to 1934 when sealed steel containers were introduced. Glass was used again during WW II when steel was needed for the war effort.

The biggest problem with glass bottles was that buyers weren't sure if the oil came from the distributor or was filled at a local station. Bottles were sold in cases and the intention was that bottles be sent back to the distributor to be refilled. As the number of cars increased, that became difficult to do.

"A lot of re-refined oil was sold in bottles," McCullough notes.

Mobile made the best effort by topping the bottle with a heavy aluminum lid that had a special fitting and attachment that ensured only the distributors could fill the bottles. Some states required seals to indicate bottles held an accurate measure of oil.

The glass bottles often chipped hitting the



Bottles were sealed with everything from corks to crimped lids or spouts.

engine block, and they were tall (about 18 1/2-in. with a 3-in. diameter base) so they tipped over easily.

McCullough, who recently sold off his huge Texaco memorabilia collection, started collecting 25 years ago when he was an insurance salesman who traveled extensively. He spent evenings visiting antique stores and going to flea markets and garage sales, eventually amassing a huge collection of glass oil bottles from the U.S., South America, Canada, Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

McCullough's books are currently out of print, but he would love to talk to interested collectors.

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