



"My problem is finding enough room," says Kent Gordon who bought a warehouse to store part of his collection.

SO FAR HE'S GOT 140 OF THEM

Equipment Dealer Collects Old Cream Separators

By Anton Riecher

Not many people collect old cream separators because they're heavy, difficult to restore and they have little value as antiques. But Kent Gordon, Palestine, Texas, has 35 separators in his home and more than a hundred more in a warehouse he bought to house his collection.

Gordon says his goal is to collect one of every model ever made. "My problem is finding enough room."

Hand-cranked cream separators became common on American farms about the turn of the century, providing a sanitary way to separate cream from raw milk. The typical design was a cast iron frame and many interlocking gears, topped with a gleaming tinned bowl to hold fresh milk.

A farmer either sold the cream produced by the separator to a nearby dairy or saved it for the family table, Gordon says. "For years, the only thing creameries would buy from small farmers was cream. It was easier to transport cream without spoilage than raw milk."

Homogenization ended the usefulness of individually owned separators by the mid-1950's. Companies like DeLaval and Sharples that once specialized in the devices have moved on to other products.

Gordon, 43, is a farm equipment dealer. He grew up on a farm and has always been fascinated by farm machinery. He acquired 30 separators at flea markets and auctions before he discovered that there's an association for cream separator collectors. "Cream Separator News", published by Paul Dettloff of Arcadia, Wis., is the official newsletter of the Cream Separator Association. Arcadia also played host to about 30 collectors during the association's first conven-

tion in September, 1987.

"A friend and I drove up to Arcadia in a pickup intending to do a little collecting along the way. "I had 30 separators by the time I got to the convention," says Gordon, noting that by the end of the convention he had another 10 separators and was forced to rent a second truck to get his treasures back to Palestine.

Gordon's den is reserved as a place of honor for his rarest finds. His Swedish-built Tor separator is so rare none is known to exist in any other collection. He also owns a Vestifalya separator, made in Turkey, and a Solo-Lanz, origin unknown.

Gordon purchased a small warehouse when his collection threatened to overrun the house. Filled with fully restored floor and table models, Gordon's warehouse is as neatly arranged as an old-time separator dealership. He says that some people still seek him out for working machines, including a woman recently who wanted to separate goat milk.

Paul Dettloff of the Cream Separator Association, who owns 187 separators himself, says there are 65 serious separator collectors in the U.S. and Canada. He has written a book on separators, called the Cream Separator Guide. It sells for \$7.45. A one-year membership in the Cream Separator Association, which includes a subscription to the quarterly newsletter, costs \$7.50.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Paul Dettloff, Cream Separator Association, Rt. 3, Arcadia, Wis. 54612 (ph 608 323-3047 or 715 985-2432).

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FARM SHOW

Ag World

Editor's Note: Most of what goes into Ag World stems from story ideas sent to us by readers. This special section of FARM SHOW touches on the lighter side of farming and ranching — everything from human interest stories, to unusual hobbies, to unique things farm families are doing for fun or profit.

If you've read or heard a good Ag World type story you'd like to share with others, send it to: FARM SHOW, Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044.



Dawson puts a wooden seat and a steering wheel in each barrel car.

22 FT. LONG AND PULLED BY A 3-WHEELER

"Circus Train" Built With 30-Gal. Barrels

Thirty gallon herbicide barrels equipped with wheels and hitched together end to end make a great "circus train" when pulled by a 3-wheeler or garden tractor, says Kelly Dawson, Almont, N. Dak.

Dawson, who takes his 22-ft. long "circus train" to parades, family reunions and neighborhood picnics, has built six kiddie-sized barrel cars, painting each one a different color - red, orange, blue, metallic purple, green and yellow. He decorates each barrel with signs, tinsel and balloons. "Each barrel holds one child weighing up to 75 lbs., or two smaller children," says Dawson, who has won prizes in local parades for his entry.

Before working on each barrel, Dawson triple rinses it to eliminate chemical residue. Then, using an air chisel, he cuts out a 16-in. wide hole that extends from the bottom to the top rib. He covers the sharp edges of the hole with lengths of split garden hose, and welds a bracket for sign poles to the

front of each barrel.

To build the seat, Dawson bolts 2 by 4's to each side of the barrel and runs a 1 by 8 across them. A 1 by 12 is used for the backrest. He made a moveable steering wheel by heating a length of pipe and bending it into a circle. He welded a 1-in. wide flat iron with a small hole in its middle across the wheel. It fits over a bolt welded to the barrel.

The next step is to fit each barrel with a hitch pole - running from front to back - made from 1-in. sq. tubing. He equips both ends of the pole with hitches. Short stub axle shafts extend out either side and are fitted with 7-in. tires with steel hubs.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Kelly Dawson, RR 1, Box 14, Almont, N. Dak. 58520 (ph 701 622-3592).