



Chuck Witman's garden tool collection includes this unique lopper with a noose that hooks around a tree limb and cuts it as it rotates.

## Amazing Garden Tool Collection

When visitors tour Millbourne Gardens in York, Penn., they discover a nice bonus. In addition to wandering around 25 acres of beautiful garden beds, they get to see a huge garden tool collection put together by Chuck Witman over the past 40 years.

Witman, a nurseryman and contractor, started buying old tools at flea markets, auctions and other events. Eventually Louis Appell, owner of Millbourne Gardens, let him display the collection in a carriage house on the estate.

The photos of his collection, featured recently in *Vintage Tractor Digest*, showed some unique items. The oldest tool is a push mower built around the 1880's.

"One of my favorites is a pruning shears somebody made out of a tree limb that grew into itself to make a loop for a handle," Witman says.

He is also fascinated by the ingenuity of

some of the tools. One machine punches drainage holes in the bottom of a pot. A lopper has a noose that hooks around a tree limb and cuts it as it rotates.

Witman is also fascinated by a piece of hose that is likely over 100 years old.

"It's a piece of canvas with rubber inside and outside and fine wire wrapped around to hold it together," he says.

Many of the tools were skillfully forged by blacksmiths. Most are heavier than today's tools. Witman has used a few of them for gardening over the years, but notes newer tools are lighter and sharper.

Still, the old ones reflect ingenuity and craftsmanship. Tours of the garden and tool collection are free by appointment. Call Witman to set up a time.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Chuck Witman, 2495 Pine Grove Rd., York, Penn. 17403 (ph 717 880-5236).



Photos courtesy of Vintage Tractor Digest

His oldest tool is a push mower built in the 1880's.



Collection also includes hand-operated sprayers of all kinds.



Photo shows a small selection of Loren Myran's old bolt collection. He says he might have the world's largest collection of square-headed bolts.

## Old Bolt Collection Handy For Restorations

Loren Myran likes old equipment, but he hates using shiny new nuts and bolts for repairs or restoration, which is what got him started collecting antique fasteners. With more than 150 bins filled with old hardware, Myran thinks he might have the world's largest collection of square-headed bolts. He has hundreds of different types and sizes.

"I have more than 50 pieces of horse-drawn equipment, old Chevy cars and trucks, and IH tractors and implements," says Myran. "I needed a supply of bolts for them and bought a set of bins with unused but rusty old bolts at an auction."

That started his collection. He continues to

pick up boxes, buckets and cans of old bolts whenever he can.

"After people find out that I collect them, they'll drop off buckets of bolts their dad had saved from equipment he scrapped out," says Myran.

He notes that on occasion bolts go out as well as come in. "People know I have a supply if they need some for restoration," says Myran.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Loren Myran, 9440 32nd St. SW, Taylor, N. Dak. 58656 (ph 701 974-3644; lorenmyran@ndsupernet.com).

## Restored 1912 Sawmill Measures 52 Ft. Long

James Queen, Metamora, Mich., recently restored a 1912 Reeves 52-ft. long sawmill equipped with a giant 52-in. dia. blade. It sets inside a long, open-front shed he built using lumber cut by the same mill. He uses it to make specialty lumber for local customers, who often want lumber dimensions not available from other mills.

"I use it to saw walnut, pine, oak and cherry logs up to 24 in. in dia. and 28 ft. long. I've made beams for everything from timber framing to fireplace mantles," says Queen.

The mill came with a 52-ft. wooden track frame and a center-mounted blade. A wooden carriage rode back and forth to deliver logs to the blade. "The blade was originally driven by a giant belt and pulley system, which was probably powered by a water wheel or by steam," says Queen.

He removed the belts and pulleys and made a pto adapter, which lets him use his IH 756 diesel tractor to drive the blade. "The blade is hammered in a saucer shape and straightens out at 540 rpm's, which is my tractor's peak pto rpm speed," explains Queen.

The wooden track had rotted out, so he built a new steel track and a new steel carriage. The original carriage and husk frame came with lead babbitt bearings, which he replaced with pillow block bearings.

To feed wood to the carriage, he used big logs to construct an 8-ft. wide, 3-ft. high wooden "bunk" located outside at one end of the shed. The sawed lumber is stacked on a wagon parked at the other end of the shed.

It took Queen 8 mos. to bring the mill back to working condition.

"It was quite a project but it turned out



Sawmill's wooden carriage rides back and forth to deliver logs to a giant 52-in. dia. blade.

great," says Queen. "I use a loader tractor to set logs on the bunk and then roll them by hand onto the carriage. It carries the log to the blade using a drum/pulley and cable system. I also built a blower to remove sawdust from the shed. The bunk is held together with wooden pegs, which lets me scan the logs with a metal detector for any metal objects."

He says the 52-in. dia. blade can be quite intimidating. "Some people who see the blade spinning around for the first time get a little nervous. However, it's very accurate."

According to Queen, Reeves started building sawmills in 1879 and went out of business in 1912. "I bought the mill from a farmer who had bought it at an auction and put it on a trailer. He kept it for 21 years intending to restore it, but never did. I found the mill setting on the trailer in a corn field. The trailer had disintegrated so much that at first I didn't even know it was there."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, James Queen, 2752 E. Dryden Rd., P.O. Box 68, Metamora, Mich. 48455 (ph 248 758-8739; jimnpat2@gmail.com).