

Collector Seeks Older Ornate Pumps

If you have an old hand pump in the basement or out on a scrap heap, don't throw it out. Old pumps are gaining popularity among collectors.

"Starting in the early 1800's, manufacturers really started making ornate well pumps," says Dave Wilson, Van Meter, Iowa. "By the 1920's and beyond, they became more and more plain. I collect the ornate, older pumps."

Wilson has been collecting hand pumps for more than 10 years. Today he has around 40 "wall" pumps, as well as numerous floor pumps. The wall pumps were used in homes to pump water into a reservoir on an upper floor. The more well-to-do the home, the fancier such pumps tended to be. Even well pumps could be ornate.

"If you look in some of the old catalogs, you will be amazed at how decorative they could be," says Wilson.

Most of his pumps are left the way he found them. Some are still waiting to be cleaned up. Their condition usually depends on whether they were left in a basement or dumped in a scrap pile.

"I have a friend who fixes them all up with new leathers and everything," says Wilson. "Most are not in shape to pump water without being re-leathered. The cylinder is often pitted and rusted."

Wilson is especially interested in pumps built by W. & B. Douglas, a Connecticut company, although he likes any ornate pump made in the U.S. He says that when it comes to collecting pumps, he's just a beginner.

"I know guys with 200 to 300 pumps,"



Photo Courtesy National Hay Tool Collectors Assoc.

Dave Wilson has been collecting old ornate hand pumps for more than 10 years.

says Wilson. "You have to go out East to find some of the really ornate pumps. Most of them never made it to the Midwest or West."

Wilson says pumps range in price from \$30 to \$40 on up, with some selling for \$300 to \$350. He has found most of his pumps at swap meets, on eBay and in antique shops.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Dave Wilson, Box 26, Van Meter, Iowa 50261 (ph 515 681-8559).



"Drum Horses" carried kettledrums during ceremonies for the Queen of England. Inspired by the beauty of those heavily feathered military horses, horse breeders have created a new breed.

Queen's Drum Horses Inspire New Breed

Historically, the term "Drum Horse" was given to large horses (17 hands or taller) that carried two kettledrums during ceremonies for the Queen of England. Inspired by the beauty of those heavily feathered military horses, 21st century horse breeders have created a new breed of Drum Horse that's on its way to become an official breed.

Specific long-term breeding is required, says Rebecca McKeever, secretary of the International Drum Horse Association. Shire or Clydesdales are bred with a Gypsy horse, and then bred to other Drum horses. The more than 300 Drum horses in the IDHA registry must be between 12 1/2 and 50 percent Drum.

They must be at least 16 hands and feathered, which refers to the long hair that hangs from the horse's cannon bone and covers the hoof. Drum horses also have very full manes and tails. And, of course, they are strong enough to carry more than 300 lbs. of drums and rider.

Colorful horses are the most desired. Bay and white or black and white spotted are traditional, but other brightly colored horses, such as silver dapple or palomino are also sought after. But all colors are accepted as Drum horses – solid or spotted.

"They are so amenable. They learn easily and move easily," McKeever says. "We want a riding draft horse."



Gerhard Malm's collection of bridle bits has grown to more than 800. Over the years he has published 3 books with photos and information about bits.

He Wrote The Book On Bridle Bits

FARM SHOW reader and veterinarian Gerhard A. Malm started collecting bridle bits in 1961. He was on his back delivering a breech calf when he noticed about 40 bridle bits lined up at the top of the barn wall. When he finished his work, he asked if he might purchase some of them. "Take them," the farmer told him. "They've been hanging there for more than 40 years."

Malm selected about 10 of the bits to begin a collection that eventually grew to more than 800. He also has about 600 copies of patents for bits, along with other collectables.

His bits' values range from \$100 to \$3,500 and are between 100 and 3,000 years old. The newer ones were made in the U.S. For example, Malm has a military dragoon bit from 1840 among his 15 military bits, which date from pre-Civil War to the end of the horse cavalry.

Older Chinese bits date back to the Han Dynasty (220 B.C. to 200 A.D.). When eBay first started, Malm purchased them through a New Zealand dealer. He was fortunate to get them, because about a decade ago China banned them from being sold out of the country. Malm says he gets \$300 to \$400 for his Chinese bits.

He also made connections with a dealer from Jordan for bits that date back to 1200 to 500 B.C. from northern Iran. They are sandcast bronze, and Malm has three of them, two with animal figures and another with a geometric design.

Some bits come with certificates of authentication, and Malm has a large reference library to verify bits. He collected only iron, bronze, brass and copper bits and avoided buying silver-plated bits because there are many fakes on the market.

One of his most memorable buys was at an antique business in a home near Fort McCoy in Wisconsin. He was told there were no bits, but noticed one hanging in a tree as he left. He bought it for \$4 and later discovered it



His bits' range in value from \$100 to \$3,500 and are between 100 and 3,000 years old.



Some bits come with certificates of authentication, and Malm has a large reference library to verify bits..



He avoids buying silver-plated bits because there are many fakes on the market.

was an 1857 dragoon bit worth \$400.

Based on his collection and friends' collections, Malm published three books over the years with photos and information about bits. He has 15 copies left of his last book, *Bits and Bridles: An Encyclopedia*.

Malm is 80 years old and has auctioned off many of his bits. He welcomes calls from people interested in bits, and he suggests getting additional information from the National Bit, Spur & Saddle Collectors Association (www.nbssca.org), which holds events and auctions in several locations.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Gerhard Malm D.V.M. (ph 785 945-6770; g8320m@embarqmail.com).

notes. Wood shavings are used for bedding. Because there are so few of them, registered Drum horses sell for an average of \$5,000 to \$10,000.

McKeever invites people interested in the breed to contact her and to check out the IDHA website, which includes information about upcoming feathered horse events in the U.S.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Rebecca McKeever, International Drum Horse Association, 33822 Bluff Dr., Coarsegold, Calif. 93614 (ph 559 676-7990; admin@DrumHorseAssociation.com; www.drumhorseassociation.com).