

RESEARCH REPORT by Mark Randell

Here are some more enquiries from member that I have been able to research on the internet as well as from my own resources.

Modra Cultivators

Last year Carlo Didiano (the Grey Fergie man) asked what we know about small rotary hoes made by the Modra family. It turns out that A.O. Modra was involved in the glasshouse tomato industry, manufacturing steel glasshouse frames, rotary cultivators, fumigators and other equipment. The factory was at Hardy Street, Underdale and was active in the 1960's. Figure 1 is from a government document and Figure 2 shows a Modra Cultivator on display at the Roseworthy Agricultural Museum. Have we got one in the club?



Figure 1 Small Cultivator similar to a Modra (or perhaps an example)



Figure 2 Modra Cultivator at Roseworthy Agricultural Museum

Mystery Item from Frank Berra

Frank produced this intriguing piece of cast iron labeled Matador which he given by a friend who can't identify it. It is incomplete, as it is just the handle of a nail puller. The handle slides on the missing part and can be hammered forward or backward to extract a nail (see Figures). It was made in Germany by a tool making company which commenced at the turn of the last century and is still in production.



Figure 3 Mystery item from Frank Berra



Figure 4 The name embossed on the mystery item



Figure 5 Mystery solved



Figure 6 The Matador Factory in 1908

More Mystery Items from Ray Bailey and the Prospect Hill Museum

(1) Ray has turned up another oddity: it is crudely cast and doesn't have any wear surfaces or machining. Perhaps it was never put into use. Apparently there are several more at the Prospect Hill Museum which Ray curates. I am stumped at the moment but will keep looking in catalogues etc, especially at Stamp Batteries (see Figure 8), overhead gantries and other rolling devices.



Figure 7 Some sort of roller from Ray Bailey. Any clues?



Figure 8 A relict Stamp Battery from USA with "rollers" a bit like Ray's example

(2) The next item puzzled us at a recent shed day but it reminded me of my rope making machine and this hunch proved correct!



Figure 9 Prospect Hill Museum's rope spacing device as shown in the next figures



Figure 10 Hawkeye Rope Machine and rope spacer



Figure 11 Rope "wrench" as advertised on EBAY – exactly the same as Ray's mystery item

Conclusion

As usual I enjoy queries and challenges from club members so please feel free to ask at any time. More articles are planned for later editions of Tappet Chatter.

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