


Sometimes you find a really unusual tractor right in your own backyard. John Wood brought his Massey Ferguson 35 Utility tractor to our Ohio State Massey show this summer. Not only had I never seen an industrial tractor configured quite like this, I had never met John who only lives about a quarter mile away. I could tell that it was some type of pallet tractor, but beyond that, I didn't have a clue. So, I stopped by to visit with John to get the story on this pristine condition, all original industrial tractor.

**MASSEY
FERGUSON 35**

SPECIAL US



John told me that several years ago, he had worked on a raisin farm in California and that this tractor was specially modified to work in that operation. This led to the most obvious question of how did he get from Ohio to a raisin farm in California?

“Several years after my father passed away, my mother got together with a guy, Jim York, she had dated in high school, who ended up in Fresno, California.

They got married in November of 2008. He already had 440 acres of almond trees, so he bought an 80 acre raisin vineyard in the fall of 2010 and I moved out there in the summer of 2011. Jim’s son and daughter-in-law moved down from Oregon at the same time and Margie Fay and I worked in the farming operation together. In 2013, he sold the almond ranch and bought two more raisin vineyards. One was

96 acres and was about a mile up the road from the original vineyard. The other one was right beside the original, it was 100 acres and had been owned by Kenny Shinkawa. The forklift that I now have was originally used on Kenny’s vineyard.”

I knew that John was a medium-to-heavy duty truck mechanic by trade, so I assumed that was his major involvement in the California raisin farm. An

GARY HEFFNER’S INTERVIEW WITH JOHN WOOD

SE UTILITY TRACTOR



operation this size certainly must involve a lot of equipment and machinery. As it turned out, he was responsible for twelve tractors, five forklifts, five trucks, two sets of grape harvesting equipment, several sprayers plus discs, rototillers, wagons and trailers.

When asked when he first encountered this unusual tractor, John told me that he first saw it sitting behind a house on the farm and it looked like it had been there for a while. The farm owner wasn't sure when it had been used last. "I had never seen a machine quite like it and I like stuff that's a little different. Since we had an abundance of equipment on the farm, I was able to acquire it and eventually hauled it back to Ohio. I made several trips back here and hauled stuff—mainly tractors—I had picked up every trip."

USING THE TRACTOR IN CALIFORNIA

John mainly used the tractor to move stuff around outside his shop in California. However, they had newer lifts that were used in the day-to-day repair operation. Several years earlier, Kenny Shinkawa's father Hideo, had used it extensively in the farm's operation. Its main use was in conjunction with the raisin shaker that blended the wetter raisins with the drier fruit. Also, the tractor was used to pick up specially designed pallets full of raisins.

HARVESTING RAISINS

I asked John to explain a little about the raisin harvesting process. "After the sugar content is up to 22%, a crew comes in and cuts the vines that the grapes are on so they

will start to dry out. About ten days later, a special harvester is run thru the field and the grapes are laid out on a long sheet of paper to finish drying. The paper is laid down between the rows by another specialized machine. About ten days after that, they are picked up and put in the bins to be shipped to the packing house. Every single bin has 4 samples taken out which are tested at the packing house. They are then cleaned, boxed and ready for shipment to stores."

I have visited several winery's and found it most interesting to watch the mechanical harvesters during the fall season. The first time Sue and I saw mechanical grape harvesters in action we were very surprised to see what made its way into the wagon. Bird's nests and their byproducts, in addition to lots of leaves and other debris, went right in with the grapes.

The company's owner assured us that all of that "extra stuff" would be filtered out. Since raisins are "field dried" grapes, I assumed that the grapes would have to be picked with much greater care.

John can describe how these harvesters work but I'm sure that it would be really interesting to actually watch the process in person. It is apparent that raisin growing and harvesting can only be done in a warm and dry climate.

After the 2015 harvest season, John's stepfather decided to sell the farm and John moved back to Ohio. When he moved back, he brought several pieces of equipment with him, including his favorite, the Massey Ferguson 35 Utility tractor with the very unusual raisin pallet mover. He still uses the tractor to move items around in his shop. John says, "It really comes in handy." *LQ*



The raisin harvester as it approaches the end of a row. It removes the grapes and spreads them on a paper between the rows to dry in the sun.

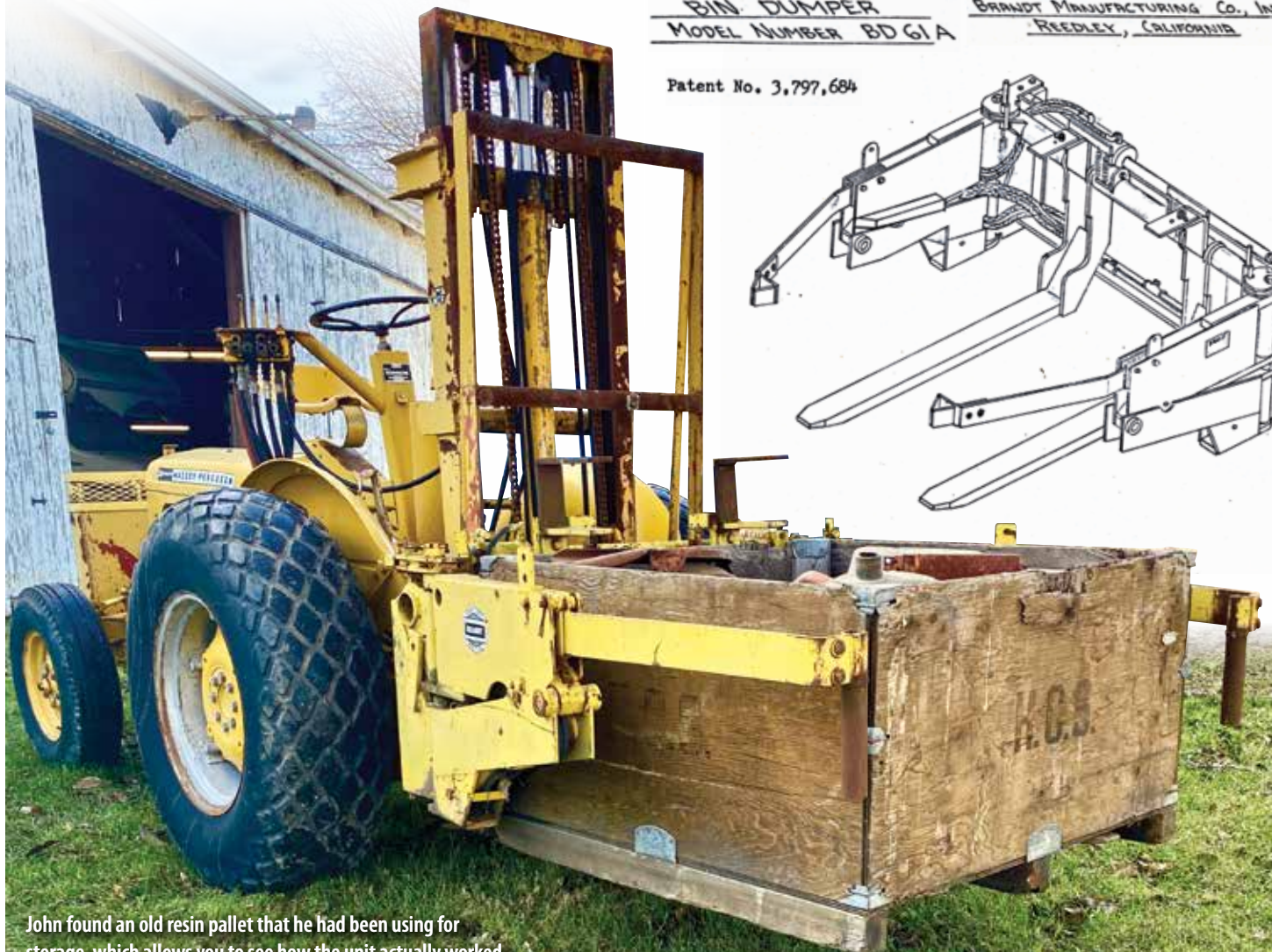
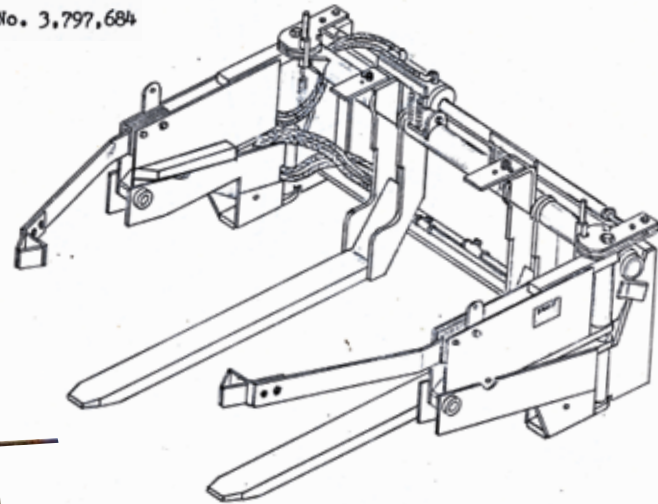




BIN DUMPER
MODEL NUMBER BD 61A

BRANDT MANUFACTURING Co., Inc.
REEDLEY, CALIFORNIA

Patent No. 3,797,684



John found an old resin pallet that he had been using for storage, which allows you to see how the unit actually worked.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON FORKLIFTS

Locating specific information on this machine proved to be difficult, even though the company manufacturing tags and serial numbers were still on John Wood's machine. I checked with several friends who were collectors of Industrial Tractors to see what I could find out. No one had ever seen a forklift that was constructed in quite this configuration. However, for readers who are seriously interested, I think the following information, supplied by Robert Sybrandy will prove most informative.

Massey Ferguson's Industrial Division in Wichita, Kansas built and sold forklifts assembled from MF Work Bull 202 and 204 tractors. There is no record of MF building forklifts from MF-35 Utility tractors, but up-fitters like Harlow in Grand Rapids, Michigan have been building forklifts from tractors including Ford, Ferguson and Massey Ferguson since the 1940's.

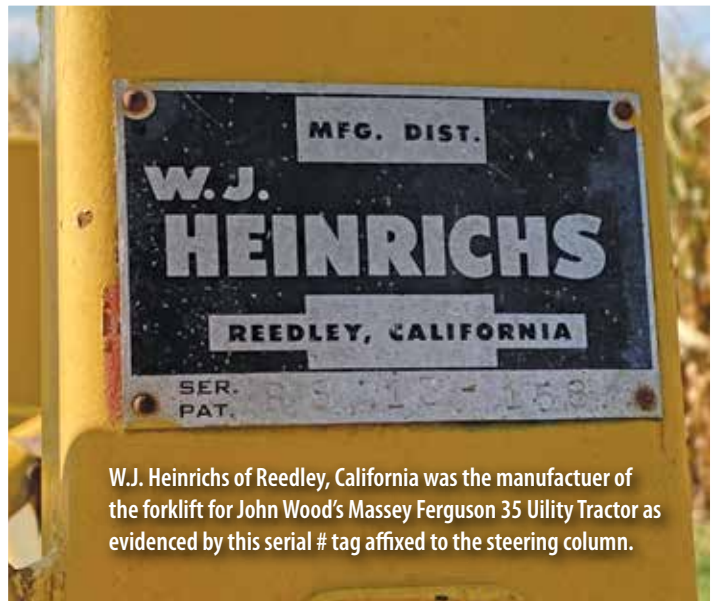
Fabricators in the orchard and grove areas of the United States, including California, Michigan and Florida built forklifts and other specialty equipment for fruit and nut growers. The 35 Utility forklift was built by W.J. Heinrichs, the same company that built the raisin tray attachment for one of the following: Reedley Forklifts of Reedley, CA; Brandy Mfg. of Reedley, CA or Wiggins Lift Company Inc. of Oxnard, CA. The forklift mast is similar to those built by Wiggins. Many of those forklifts are lighter weight and not equipped with the heavy counterweights that the MF and Harlo forklifts came with, such as the counterweights on front of MF Work Bull 202. These counterweights are mounted on a telescoping frame that can be extended for additional leverage.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MF BUILT FORKLIFT AND THE 35 UTILITY FORKLIFT

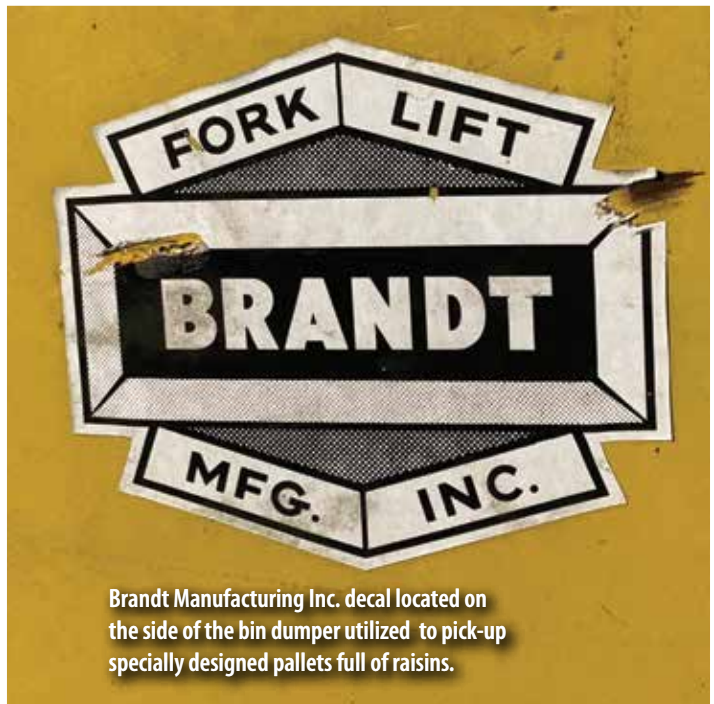
The steering column on the MF built Work Bull 202 is fully enclosed, while the 35 Utility forklift is not. The chain and sprocket drive assembly connecting the forklift steering column to the tractor steering column is supported by a base under the forklift steering column on MF built Work Bull forklifts, while the one on the 35 Utility forklift is supported by an adjustable leg in the middle of the assembly. The chain and sprocket steering assembly on the MF built Work Bull does not cover the Tractormeter or tachometer, while it does on the 35 Utility forklift. The gear shift levers on the MF forklift are extended to allow the operator to change gears from the forklift seat. The shift levers on the 35 Utility forklift are not extended and it does not appear they cannot be operated from the forklift seat.

The non-skid tread platform on the 35 Utility forklift bends down forming a vertical panel which appears to support the platform while the platform on the MF built Work Bull stops and is open behind the tractor gear shift levers and supported by a frame attached to the transmission and differential housings.

Massey Ferguson built Industrial loaders and tractors use AICO hydraulic



W.J. Heinrichs of Reedley, California was the manufacturer of the forklift for John Wood's Massey Ferguson 35 Utility Tractor as evidenced by this serial # tag affixed to the steering column.



Brandt Manufacturing Inc. decal located on the side of the bin dumper utilized to pick-up specially designed pallets full of raisins.

valves like those on Davis loaders, backhoes and other equipment built by Midwestern Industries of Wichita, Kansas and jig formed steel tubing hydraulic lines while the 35 Utility forklift uses all rubber hydraulic lines and a control valve made by a different manufacturer. Midwestern Industries produced the Davis line of industrial equipment and was purchased by Massey Ferguson in 1957 to become Massey Ferguson's Industrial Division.

The hydraulic pump and filter for MF built Work Bull forklifts are housed in the heavy duty front bumper enclosure on Work Bull tractors while the pump and filter are mounted in front of the grill on the 35 Utility forklift.

MF built forklifts had a padded seat with a raised backrest while the seat on the 35 Utility forklift is the steel pan seat that came standard on the MF-35 Utility tractor.

