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Bobcat Finds a Home at the Smithsonian

The Smithsonian's [National Museum of American History](#) recently acquired 56 cubic feet of records from Bobcat Co., which agricultural equipment and is based in North Dakota. This donation includes corporate records relating to American manufac development. Housed in the museum's Archives Center, these papers join the museum's extensive collection of agricultural, these records is scheduled to be on view from Nov. 30 through Jan. 17, 2010.



Craig Orr, archivist with the museum, examines some of the Bobcat materials.

Bobcat Co. originated as Melroe Manufacturing Co., a Gwinner, N.D., family-ow 1947. The original compact loader was invented by Louis and Cyril Keller, who Rothsay, Minn. Based on a request from a local turkey farmer, the brothers set and more maneuverable. After a few prototypes, a move to North Dakota and a three-wheeled Keller loader went into production in 1958 as the "Melroe self-pr model, it was branded the "Bobcat" skid-steer loader, because of its "tough, qui ability to turn within its own length. This single product became so successful th while adding several other machines to its product line.

"Bobcat Co. of North Dakota represents the ingenuity and innovation of Americ; the museum. "These records contribute to the better understanding of American

The Bobcat Co. records focus primarily on production, marketing and advertisin They span a period from the 1940s to the present and illustrate the progression of a once-small, family-owned company that emerged as an industry leader. The donation includes photographs, product literature, advertisements, employee newsletter drawings, scrapbooks and audiovisual materials. The collection also contains notes on a 1985 trip to Japan where employee learned about Japanese manufacturing and engineering techniques, some of which were implemented in Bobcat factories. These papers are available for research and complement the Archives Center's agricultural holdings, which include the Everett Bickley Collection, the William C. Kost Farm Records and the Southern Agricultural Oral History Project.

"Equipment industry experts have called Bobcat a national treasure, and we are pleased the Smithsonian archivists agreed that our materials should be preserved for future generations," said Leroy Anderson, marketing communication manager anc Bobcat historian.

The National Museum of American History collects, preserves and displays American heritage in the areas of social, political cultural, scientific and military history. After a two-year renovation and a dramatic transformation, the museum shines new lig on American history, both in Washington and online.

To learn more about the museum, check <http://americanhistory.si.edu>.

For Smithsonian information, the public may call (202) 633-1000, (202) 633-5285 (TTY).

[Click here](#) to visit the Bobcat section of the Smithsonian Web site.

For additional photos, visit the Bobcat [Public Image Library](#).

For more historical photography, including images of materials included in the Smithsonian collection, [visit the collection](#) on the Public Im

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