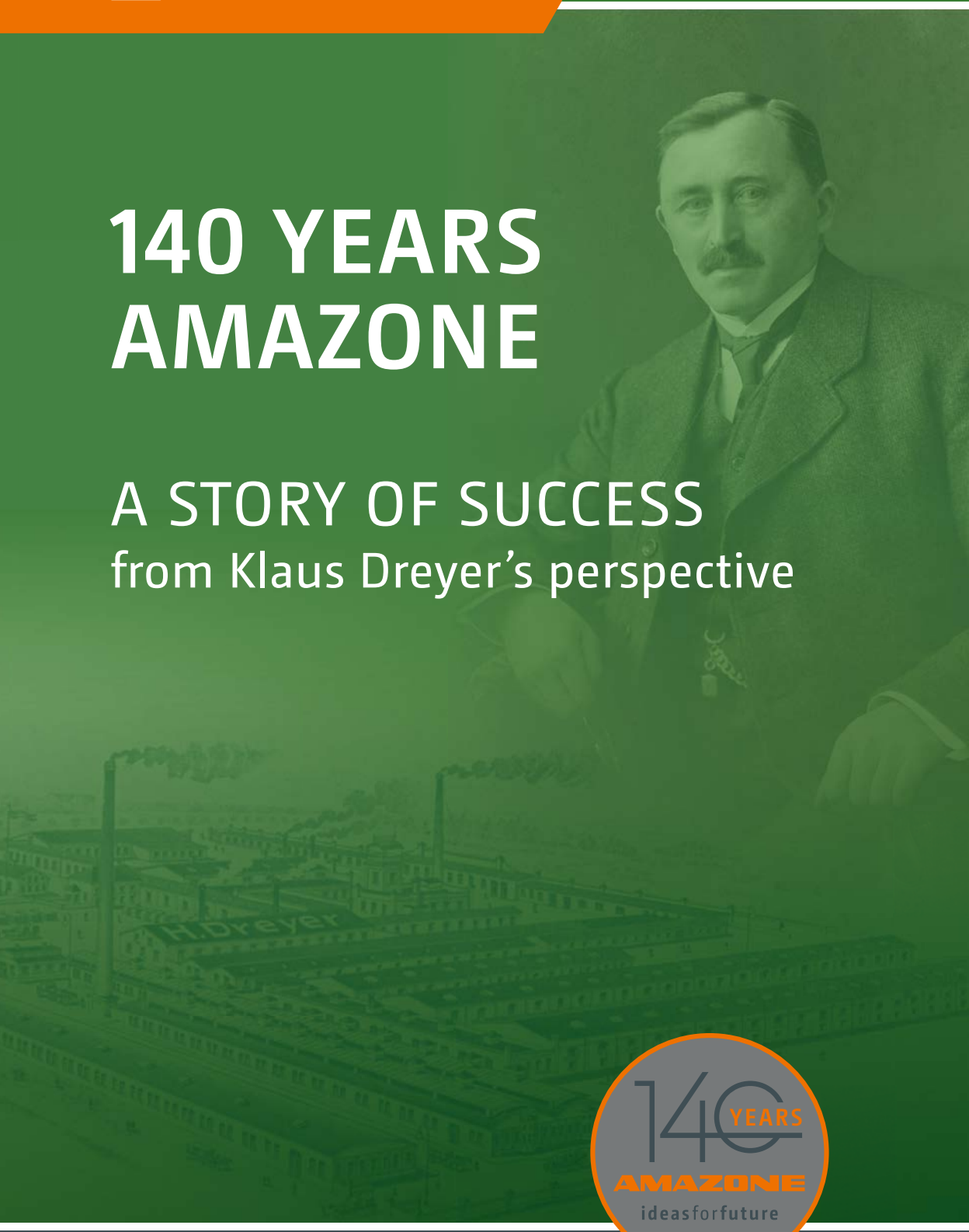
AMAZONE

140 YEARS AMAZONE

A STORY OF SUCCESS
from Klaus Dreyer's perspective



140 YEARS
AMAZONE
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„Amazone“

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140 years of AMAZONE – A STORY OF SUCCESS from the perspective of Klaus Dreyer

I would like to take the 140th anniversary of AMAZONEN-WERKE as an opportunity to look back on the past decades and the impressive development of the company. My cousin Heinz and I were very fortunate to be able to play a major role in shaping the last 65 years together.

AMAZONE bronze statue in front of the ACTIVE Centre at the main plant in Hasbergen-Gaste

The reasons for the extraordinary development of AMAZONE are manifold. Unfortunately, my cousin passed away in the spring of 2023 – I would therefore like to highlight the most important events within the company from my perspective.

In November 1957, my cousin Heinz and I were dealt a heavy blow when Heinz's father, who was the sole managing director of AMAZONEN-WERKE at the time, suddenly died. As my father Erich, Heinrich's brother and partner, had already been killed in action in the final days of the Second World War, the company no longer had a managing director.

During this time, the company found itself in a difficult position. The financial circumstances were extremely tight, production was outdated, the product range unattractive, the administration was backward, and sales were inadequately organised. Added to this situation was the newly established second plant in Hude, which was inefficiently structured and had not yet been completely paid for. Only the image of the AMAZONE brand was still intact and the name enjoyed a good reputation.

After the death of Dipl. Eng. Heinrich Dreyer, the two heiresses, my Aunt Lieselotte Dreyer and my mother Erna Dreyer, decided that the company should be run by the

eldest son and not by a stranger. From today's perspective, this was certainly a good decision, but it was also a bold and risky move at the time.

Although Heinz and I had not yet completed our education, we were both to join the company immediately. My cousin Heinz had already completed his degree in Mechanical Engineering at the Technical University of Munich, but was still working on his doctorate thesis. I had also completed my degree in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Applied Sciences in Cologne, but had then started a commercial apprenticeship at Cramer in Leer.

So we abandoned our current plans and both took over the business in Gaste on 1 January 1958. We divided up our tasks early on. My cousin Heinz took over the development of our product range and I took over administration, sales and production. We were faced with the situation that the market share of AMAZONE fertiliser spreaders, which was very important to us, was declining sharply because so-called centrifugal spreaders had been conquering the market since the mid-1950s. We played only a minor role in seed drills and manure spreaders. The market share in potato harvesters, which at times accounted for some large numbers, had also fallen sharply.

From the right: My cousin Dr Heinz Dreyer and I

A renewal of the product range was therefore urgently required, but, at the same time, AMAZONE also needed a significant modernisation of the entire company. I initially focussed on the important areas in sales, administration and production, which, as already mentioned, were in great need of an overhaul. My cousin Heinz succeeded in launching very successful products onto the market with the development of the ZA twin-disc spreader and later with the D4 seed drill and the DMC large-area seed drill. Together with my efforts to streamline production, improve the organisation of the administration and ensure effective sales, we set AMAZONE on a new path to success.

Production

As my cousin concentrated heavily on development from the outset, I was initially faced with the task of modernising both production and the administrative organisation in Gaste, as well as strengthening sales. Unfortunately, the existing production was very inefficient at the time and was managed by three foremen who had been working in the same way for decades. None of them had any idea of modern production. Neither a crane nor a forklift truck could be found in the entire factory.

The material, which was delivered by lorry, had to be unloaded by hand. Staff from Production were also assigned with this task. For example, workers from fertiliser spreader assembly had to unload the material manually and take it to the warehouse. Every sheet, every bar of steel, flat iron, the wood for the drawbars – even cast parts such as gear wheels and cast hubs were treated in this way and placed by hand on the shop floor or on shelves in the magazine. A number of non-stackable wooden transport crates were available for transporting the semi-finished parts. Most of the parts, however, were transported in empty paint buckets by handcart and placed directly at the respective workstations or in the warehouse.

The first step was to switch the entire logistics to a system with forklift trucks and stackable crates. I designed these boxes myself and they were manufactured directly in our factory. Initially, this process entailed a major investment and a huge change

in the mindset of the employees, but over the years it also resulted in significant savings in working hours and physical labour.

The pleasing exception to all this was the training workshop. It was run by master craftsman Karl Sindt, who provided exemplary training. Although he was very strict, he taught the young apprentices (now trainees) a huge amount and enjoyed a high reputation. He was also very open to new ideas. Together with him, my cousin Heinz and I, we put many new ideas into practice and produced new prototypes of our machines, as well as jigs and tools for production.

Our training workshop around 1980

Production in the forge was getting on in years. The forge had six forging fires in which the steel parts were heated and forged by hand on an anvil. There was a pneumatic hammer for larger parts, but it was rarely used. A two-metre-high gas plant was available to generate gas for the welding and flame-cutting gear. This gas plant was actually protected from excessive pressure by safety valves, but one day it exploded and the top cover flew through the roof of the hall with a huge bang.

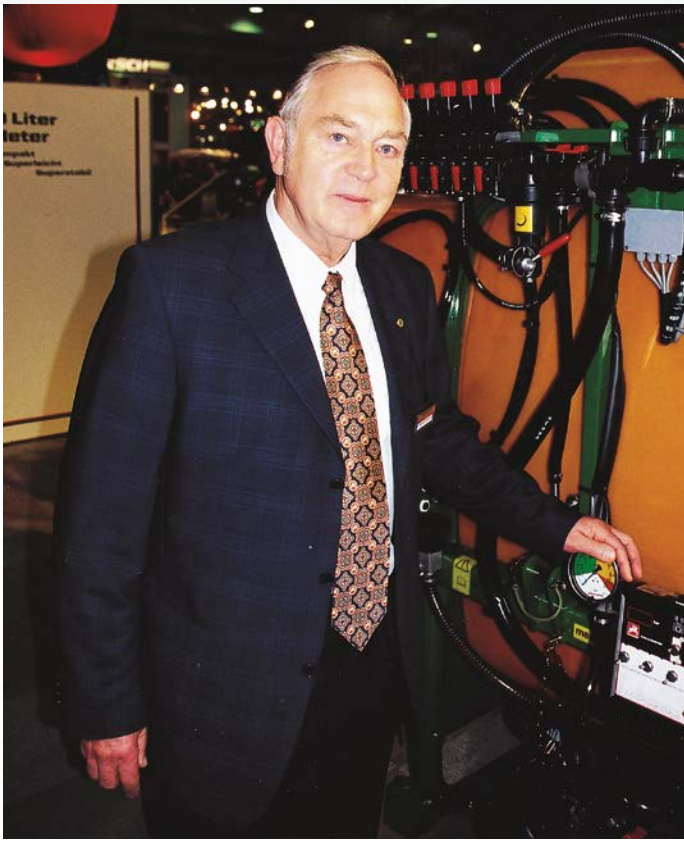
Fortunately, the explosion caused only a big scare and left a large hole in the roof. Nobody was injured.

Our forge around 1970

Forging by hand in front of open fires no longer had a future at that time, nor did the in-house production of welding gas. Eventually, the forge fires were abandoned and the individual parts were produced more cheaply using the company's own tools. Today, the hall that we still call the forge houses the machining and sheet metal forming tools along with part of the robot welding systems.

When I started at AMAZONE, the production of augers for our auger fertiliser spreaders, of which we produced around 250,000 in total, was something very special. The auger for this spreader consisted of a tube wrapped in a triangular profiled bar. The rods were stored by hand in a length of six metres in the cellar under the tool shop in the south-west of the forge and were wound onto the tube of the spreader auger by two employees on a lathe in a rather laborious process. The corresponding lines were pre-drawn, which of course took a lot of time. To simplify this work, I converted an old lathe together with the head of the training workshop. As a result, wrapping could be carried out easily and very accurately by one employee, saving time. The manufacturing costs fell to a fraction and the economic return on the spreaders improved significantly.

For the simplest tools, which worked on the eccentric presses, there was a toolmaking shop, which, however, did not really deserve its name at the time. There was only a drill, a steel plane (Schepping) and a simple grindstone. I then hired Mr Bönig as the new operations manager. A qualified engineer who previously trained as a toolmaker, he had gained professional experience in agricultural engineering and had most recently worked for Cramer in Leer. Together with him, I single-mindedly drove forward important projects to modernise production. My plan worked out because, thanks to his training, he designed very complex



Dipl. Eng. Karl-Wilhelm Wiendieck

and sophisticated punching, forming and cutting tools for our presses, which significantly improved our productivity. He continuously modernised our tool shop and later had it relocated to a larger hall. This development continued with Dipl. Eng. Karl-Wilhelm Wiendieck, who I later hired as Mr Bönig's successor. Mr Wiendieck started his career at AMAZONE in 1955 as an apprentice in Gaste.

After a break, during which he studied at the University of Applied Sciences in Cologne and worked as an engineer in Lengerich, I brought him back to AMAZONE in 1968 as plant manager. Among other things, he constantly drove forward the rationalisation of the production, built up our plastics department and planned our new KTL paint plant.

Self-manufactured plastic parts

Our toolmakers themselves were then, and still are today, introduced to the higher demands through targeted training and further education. Today, our tool shop is equipped with state-of-the-art lathing, grinding, milling and eroding machines. They enable computer-aided production according to design drawings, making it possible for AMAZONE to manufacture, modify or renovate even the most complicated punching and cutting tools and even injection moulds for our plastics department.

Under my leadership, AMAZONEN-WERKE has developed into a company with highly specialised production expertise and a high level of vertical integration for our industry. Both toolmaking and expertise in the individual production areas played an important role here. Then as now, the requirement is that we must be able to manufacture our products not only to the highest quality, but also at marketable prices. This internal knowledge makes us very fast and flexible when it comes to new developments and also lets us constantly compare costs with external suppliers.

Expansion of that vertical integration

The expansion of our vertical integration philosophy began with the fact that we were looking for a way to employ our staff during a downturn to avoid having to make redundancies. I realised right from the start that a large part of our workforce was highly qualified, which may also be due to the fact that we trained many of them ourselves. Then I remembered that we were using a lot of hydraulic cylinders in our machines. The thousands of ZA spreaders alone have two each. Together with

our plant manager, Mr Wiendieck, I then calculated what a cylinder would cost if we produced it ourselves. In terms of machinery, we were now ideally equipped for in-house production – we even had several automatic bar lathes with which we could machine cylinder tubes and pistons from round bar.

The calculation ultimately showed that we could save as much as DM 10 per cylinder by producing the cylinders ourselves. That was a considerable cost reduction at the time. After I asked Mr Wiendieck whether he would be confident enough for us to manufacture them ourselves, he was immediately enthusiastic. So we finally started to build a significant proportion of our specialised cylinders ourselves. For our fertiliser spreaders, seed drills and sprayers, the number currently amounts to over 100,000 units per year. Since the 1990s, a separate department with clean room conditions (dust-free air) has even been established for this purpose.

Hydraulic cylinder production

We have also familiarised ourselves with the technology around plastics production and have started production at our plant in Gaste. I remember a VDMA conference where I was sitting next to a manufacturer of plastic injection moulding machines. After a lengthy conversation, he gave me the idea that AMAZONE could also manufacture plastic parts itself. Shortly afterwards, I sent a drawing of our bellows for our seed drills, of which we need over 100,000 per year, to the manufacturer and asked him to provide me with a calculation. The result was impressive: AMAZONE was actually able to save a lot of money by manufacturing the products in-house. I do not need to mention here that Mr Wiendieck was also directly interested in this project.

Our toolmakers worked hard and after a while everything was working as it should and the colleagues involved were rightly very proud of themselves. The only big challenge was that I had chosen the most difficult product from our range of parts, the bellows, as it is injection moulded as a whole and the base of the bellows is then punched out. It is then not demoulded normally, but must be blown out, which requires a lubricant spray and the necessary compressed air to loosen the bellows. This process took a long time, but production ultimately ran smoothly. Over the years, Mr Wiendieck has acquired a very extensive knowledge of plastics production, even working long into the evening. I am eternally grateful to him for that to this day. Without his active support, we would not have been able to set up our plastics department and, thanks to this in-house production, we have since gained a lot of important expertise for the development of new components and saved a lot of money.

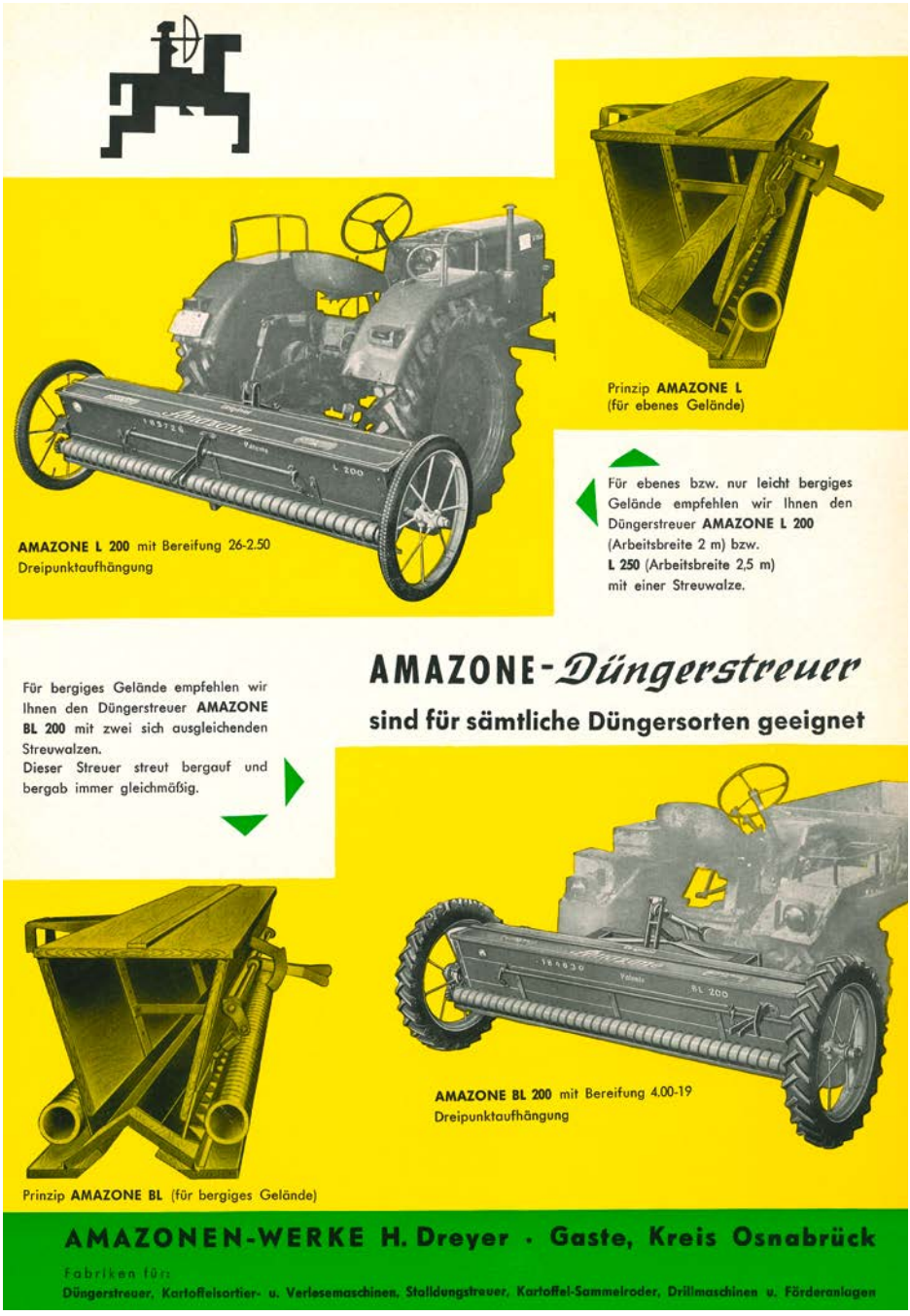
Seed housing made from plastic

Another example, namely the seed wheel housing on our seed drills, clearly shows how much progress we have made by entering the field of plastics technology. Before we made this part ourselves, we bought it at a high price from a specialised company in Damme. After the injection moulding process, the supplier had to remove

the housing individually from the device by hand and place it on a cooling mould in order to obtain the correct shape. In our tool shop, we then built an injection mould that could inject two housings at the same time, which then automatically fell out of the mould and no longer had to be specially treated. We then redesigned the seed wheel housing so that it no longer needs to be fastened with screws, but can be inserted into pre-punched holes with moulded hooks, where it finally locks itself in place. It has also been fitted with a slot into which the shutter slide can be inserted. The result was an incredible saving: and on a 3-metre seed drill, 21 times over. From then on, our designers were encouraged to "think in plastic". In other words, they started thinking about how to make parts not only lighter and more corrosion-resistant, but also more cost-effective, right from the design phase. This has worked very well for many components so far.

Plastic injection moulding tool from our own tool shop

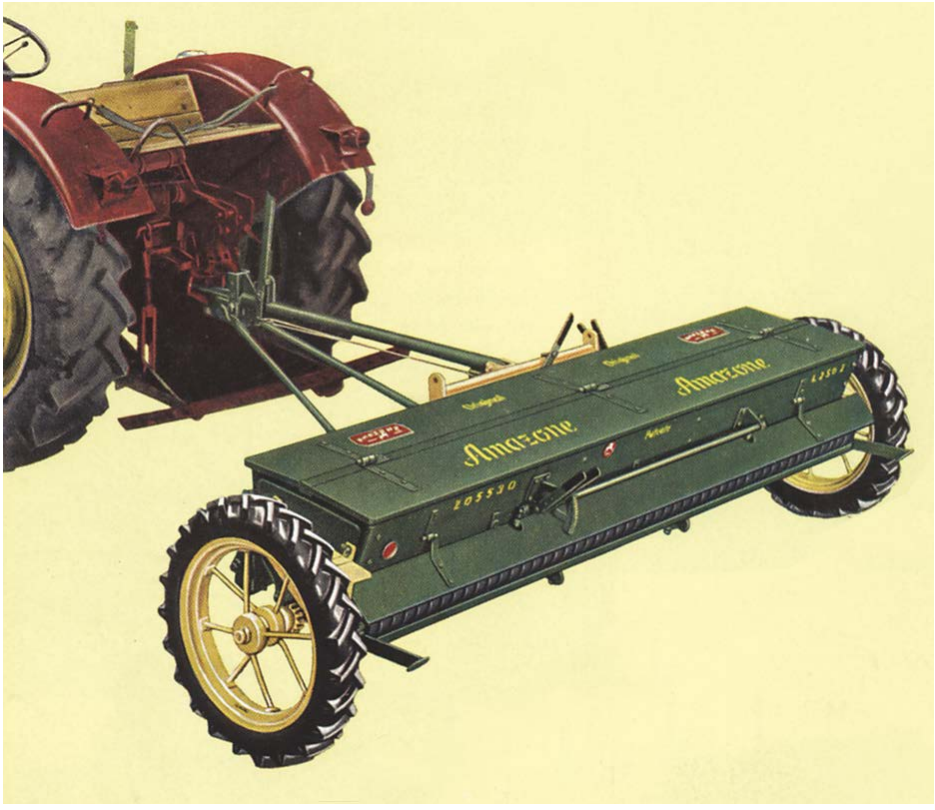
Today, I think we are one of the few mechanical engineering companies to have such a high level of vertical integration, operate our own plastics department and also manufacture the tools required in production ourselves. This alone gives us great flexibility and important advantages over the competition.



L 200 fertiliser spreader brochure from 1961

Expansion of the existing product range

During my first few years at AMAZONE, I realised that I could not concentrate solely on production, administration and sales, as there were also weaknesses in the product range that were jeopardising the company's positive development. In the box spreader segment, for example, which still played an important role for AMAZONE, we had lost a lot of market share. During this time, cheap versions of "Rauch" and "Schieferstein" and even "Fritzen in Coesfeld" came onto the market, which were sold for around 300 DM each and took our market share from our auger fertiliser spreaders. As a result, I also decided to go among the designers and develop a cheaper version. The result was our L-series auger fertiliser spreaders. It started with the simplest 2-metre L 200 spreader, continued with the BL 200 double-auger spreader and ended with the LZ 200 twin-spreader, each of which was available in



L 200 fertiliser spreader

a 2 metre and a 2.5 metre version. These inexpensive versions of our traditional auger spreaders, a simple wooden box with stamped sheet metal end pieces and simple, additionally purchased small iron wheels, were sold by the thousands and helped us regain our old position in the box spreader market. In the 1960s, we sold over 45,000 fertiliser spreaders, 35,000 ZA centrifugal broadcasters and over 10,000 auger spreaders in one year.

In the 1980s, I then took the opportunity to expand the agricultural machinery division to include the amenity sector. One day, our French partner, Mr Dezort approached me and asked whether we at AMAZONE would be interested in producing the "Groundhock", imported from America. This was a grass mower of which he was selling over 100 units per year up to that point and the manufacturer of which did not want to continue development. I then got a personal introduction to the machine and tried it out on our green spaces. The mower worked very well and, in my opinion, had great potential for other European markets with a few improvements.

A parade of grass mowers

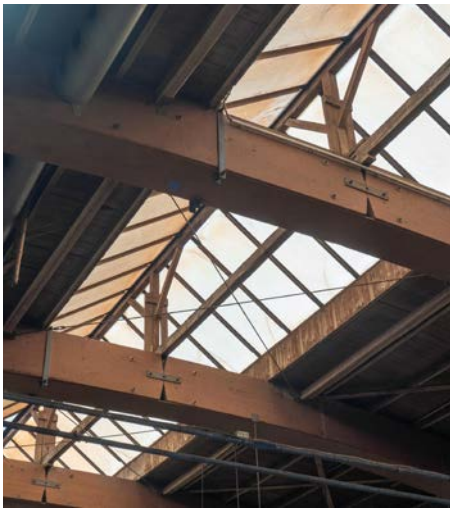
Without further ado, I decided to take over the production of this machine and so the "AMAZONE Groundkeeper" was born, with a new production site in Forbach (France). Our plant manager on site at the time, Mr Wilfried Schomäker, then revised and further developed the design of the machine within a very short period of time. Alongside the self-propelled "Profihopper", the "Groundkeeper" is still a key product of our subsidiary in Forbach today.

Modernisation and expansion of the plants

The development of a successful company also includes the regular modernisation and expansion of its sites. As a rule, we have looked far into the future when selecting our sites and ground area planning and have always planned for long-term expansion. As AMAZONE can look back on a long history at the Gaste site in particular, many of the buildings here were in need of renovation or were simply too small. However, conversions and extensions had to be carried out without interrupting production.

One day, Mr Wiendieck told me that we would have to demolish the large carpentry workshop that my grandfather had built around 1910, as the roof truss construction was already badly warped. He saw no possibility of repairing the construction. This would have meant moving out of the hall, however, which in turn would have meant building a temporary one for the transitional period. It would have been difficult to find a suitable space for this purpose and moving the production from the large hall would have been an enormous effort.

So I came up with the idea of replacing the existing, warped truss construction with an additional one with glued wooden trusses. To do so, we had to erect steel supports on the inside wall of the hall on which the glued trusses could be placed. Once these were able to support the roof, we were able to remove the old trusses with the chainsaw.



Roof construction before (left) and after (right)

This task was carried out piece by piece so that the entire repair could be carried out without interrupting operations. The hall now has much more daylight overall and I am proud that we were able to save this work by my grandfather. This part of the company is now over 100 years old and now houses the boom welding shop with several welding robots.

We later modernised the neighbouring hall in a similar way. It was previously only partially occupied by a timber drying plant and the production of wooden spoked wheels. It currently houses our training workshop, the toolmaking shop, the electrical workshop and the jig construction department, as well as an attractive social wing with cosy lounges, washrooms and locker rooms. The hall was given a modern glass façade on the outside.

Administration and finances

With our engineering degrees, my cousin and I both had a purely technical education. In our new role at AMAZONE, however, we were also confronted with commercial and administrative challenges in particular. A big problem awaited my cousin and I as soon as we joined the company. Back in my uncle Heinrich's day,

an authorised signatory called Hoffmann tried to blackmail him. He threatened to report the handwritten and incorrect stock accounting to the tax office if Heinrich did not respond to his demands. However, my uncle made the only right decision and dismissed him without notice. However, Mr Hoffmann then actually turned to the tax office with the allegations. By the time the officials investigated the matter, however, my uncle Heinrich had already died and Heinz and I, as his successors, could hardly help the inspectors. The former authorised signatory Wilhelm Thies, now retired, refuted all the accusations with good arguments (and a smile on his face), whereupon the tax office, to our great relief, closed the investigation. For my cousin and me, however, the accusations and the painful experiences were a lesson for life.

Mr Hoffmann was succeeded by Dr Meyer, who had been employed by my uncle Heinrich. I then tried to optimise the administration with him. However, this was a difficult endeavour as we had very different ideas. Among other things, he refused to purchase a crane and a forklift truck for the company. He wanted to invest in a system from IBM to modernise the administration. I rejected this because, firstly, the system was very expensive and, secondly, I was very concerned that our employees would be overwhelmed by IBM and the rigid organisation.

We also failed to reach a consensus on many other issues, whereupon Dr Meyer realised the consequences after about six months and resigned of his own accord. I then got to know Dr Friederichs and hired him as his successor. That was a great stroke of luck for both AMAZONE and I, because in addition to his good technical expertise, he had a very quick grasp of things and particularly outstanding people skills. To this end, he has always been highly committed and intensively involved in the company. Among other things, he successfully negotiated the purchase of our production facility in Forbach. It was also thanks to him that we were able to acquire Bara in France on favourable terms in 1988. We had thus set two important milestones for our export business. However, Dr Friederichs also stood up for the company in critical situations.

The "FG 1" management team at the time of the company's 100th anniversary, 1983: from left: Dr Rolf Friederichs, Klaus Dreyer, Willy Meyer, Dr Heinz Dreyer, Dr Franz Scharmann

The "FG 1" management team in 1999: top row from left: Dr Bernd Scheufler, Christian Dreyer, Justus Dreyer, Wilfried Schomäker, bottom row from left: Friedhelm Brömstrup, Klaus Dreyer, Dr Heinz Dreyer, Bernd Gattermann

The "FG 1" management team in 2010: from left to right on the machine: AMAZONE Managing Director Dr Justus Dreyer, Dr Stephan Evers (Production and Quality), Managing Director Christian Dreyer and Dr Rainer Resch (Research and Development).
From left to right in front of the machine: Prof. h.c. Dr Dr h.c. Heinz Dreyer, Ludger Braunsmann (Controlling), Andreas Hemeyer (Sales and Customer Service) and Klaus Dreyer.

In one case, the cartel office investigated an alleged offence against competition laws at a foreign subsidiary, and AMAZONE was faced with a heavy penalty. Thanks to the efforts of Dr Friederichs and the very convincing evidence he presented, however, the accusation was refuted and fortunately only a warning was issued. Overall, we developed a very close and trusting working relationship over 30 years, during which we made many important decisions together for the benefit of the company.

Another authorised signatory that my cousin and I could rely on was Willy Meyer, who had already completed an apprenticeship at AMAZONE under the company founder Heinrich Dreyer. When I joined the company, he already had many years of professional experience, was very flexible and managed the purchasing and HR departments. He very quickly adapted to the management style of Heinz and myself, the "young Dreyers", and became a mainstay of the management team. In addition to the people mentioned above, Dr Scharmann joined the AMAZONE management team in the 1960s as plant manager of our Hude site and member of our FG1 management team.

In the beginning, there were no computers in the administration department. Invoices, order confirmations and delivery notes were typed out on a typewriter. The discounts to be taken into account were also calculated on a calculator with a hand crank and then entered manually in the invoices or deducted from the final amount. Outgoing orders for materials were also made by hand using a typewriter and wages were paid out in cash in a pay packet. That may be hard to imagine today, but it was a reality back then.

In the course of modernisation, however, AMAZONE could not avoid working with computers. However, I didn't want to overburden our employees, but rather take them on this journey slowly. The first investment was therefore a simple typewriter with a data carrier on which the 20 most important articles could be stored and then called up as required, e.g. when writing an invoice. That was very well received. A short time later, an invoicing machine arrived, into which the individual items could be inserted in the form of cards, which were then listed with prices when invoicing. The next step was another invoicing device, which also integrated into other departments such as work planning. This system had

all the articles with prices and discount rates entered in the memory and could print out all the necessary documents at the same time. This went on until we, together with Kienzle and the active support of Mr Schomäker, developed and introduced a complete programme for the company that could automatically create any document, from order confirmations to delivery notes and invoices. This was the start of an integrated IT organisation at AMAZONE and we were already very advanced compared to many other companies. Our employees have always experienced these developments at first hand, they themselves helping to shape them and it has thus slowly grown into the modern organisation it is today. Fortunately, we never had a serious crash or interruption, as was repeatedly the case with other companies.

By the same token, however, the financial aspects were not always rosy, of course. At one time, for example, the financial situation at AMAZONE was very tense for several months. At that time, we paid larger bills with bills of exchange (written promises to pay between two parties). Fortunately, this situation changed again as business improved, until we finally chose the more favourable short-term payment method and were even able to pay with a discount.

A few years later, our financial circumstances had stabilised to the point that we actually kept incoming bills of exchange, sometimes in the millions, in our own safe so that we would not have to pay additional interest/discount costs. Since the banks had put us under a lot of pressure in the early days, we were always cautious about external financing. Together with Dr Friederichs, I relied heavily on solid finances and calculable risks, which allowed AMAZONE to develop continuously, even in a turbulent industry such as agricultural machinery, where there are always ups and downs. Many companies in our industry, on the other hand, have repeatedly got into serious difficulties or had to file for insolvency. I now see it as one of AMAZONE's key strengths that we are now in a position to essentially finance our investments ourselves.

Strengthening sales/internationalisation

Another major strength of AMAZONE is its current distribution network with many outstanding importers and trading partners.

After I joined the company, we had a more national orientation and only gradually gained a number of strong partners abroad, for example, in: Denmark, Sweden, Norway, the Czech Republic and Italy. We hadn't planned to do business in Denmark at the time, but then Bröns approached me. Anna Hamann, the managing director's wife, was the driving force behind the start of the collaboration. She called me and expressed her interest in our machinery and that she would like to distribute them for us in Denmark. However, our Dr Meier was of the opinion that entering the market would be unattractive due to the strong local competition. However, I liked the Hamann family, Because, amongst other things, I realised that they had chosen the AMAZONE products specifically and out of conviction. In addition, Anna Hamann was not so easily dismissed. So, despite Mr Meier's reservations, our collaboration began. Jeppe Hamann, Anna's husband, then organised several demonstrations with our seed drills and was very successful. We still work very closely with Bröns today and my decision to work with them has definitely turned out to be the right one.

Simon Brown

Of course, it was not always possible to find suitable sales partners in the various countries and so, as a result,

the idea to put in place our own subsidiaries grew. And so with no other obvious choice, we decided to set up our own sales company in the United Kingdom in 1983. Our local importer at the time had entered a major phase of weakness and we used this opportunity to take our machine distribution into our own hands. For the initial set-up and organisation, I also travelled to Lambourn Woodlands myself, where we first started the business on a disused former military airfield called Cuckoo Copse. Together with Rod Baker, the former sales manager of our importer, I travelled around England for several days to find suitable sales partners. I hired Simon Brown as my first employee and gradually more and more qualified colleagues joined me so that business developed quickly and very positively in those first few years. Simon Brown is still working for us today. He has worked very successfully for AMAZONE over the past decades with great passion and commitment and is now Managing Director of AMAZONE Ltd. Mr Brown is one of many other long-standing employees and managers in our AMAZONE family who have played a key role in the international success of the company.

Michał Wojciechowski

Our business in Poland started through our employee Mr Holtkamp's contact with the chemical company BASF, which supported various projects. Mr Holtkamp initially worked for us in the patent department and then moved to the sales department to drive the business forward in Eastern Europe. In the end, a collaboration was established in which 10 farms were equipped with AMAZONE machinery and fertilisers from BASF. This project was very successful and the individual companies were impressed by our technology. On one of these farms worked

Michał Wojciechowski. He approached us after the project and expressed his interest in setting up AMAZONE machinery sales in Poland for us. He impressed with his commitment and expertise and gradually managed to make AMAZONE known in Poland with machine demonstrations and a good instinct for the right partners. He is still working for us today.

The Czech Republic is another interesting example of our internationalisation. There had been a purchasing organisation there since 1948, which was responsible for the centralised procurement of goods and raw materials for state-owned companies. The manager at the time had high standards and only did business with a few western companies. After several meetings with Mr Holtkamp, I managed to put AMAZONE in a good position and finally convince them completely of our products. We were also supported at the time by Jan Wotawa, an employee who was responsible for agricultural engineering at the ministry. After reunification in 1989, he set up his own company, UNICOM, and gradually built up the local AMAZONE sales organisation.

I am very happy that I have found such reliable, committed and competent employees in many countries who have taken on the distribution for AMAZONE. However, I have also made personal contacts and secured valuable orders for some major projects. At the SIMA agricultural machinery exhibition in Paris, for example, I met the director of the major US company "New Idea" at the stand of our local representative, Bara. I was able to convince Mr Hank Rempel, with whom I later became friends, that it would be advantageous for his company to distribute our fertiliser spreaders in the United States. It took a while before we reached an agreement, but then "New Idea" finally purchased around 5,000 fertiliser spreaders from AMAZONE within three years.

Another important milestone was the acquisition of new trading partners in Austria, after we had converted our sales organisation there from an importer to a strong network of dealers. Together with our local factory representative Heinz Obermayr, I travelled to every single dealer during these days to convince them personally of the AMAZONE products – all of us in the team did very well, because our local market shares increased steadily from then on and are still outstanding today.

In addition to the existing markets, opportunities to acquire interesting orders through the supply of projects were always arising, thus permitting me to conclude an important business deal in Algeria in the 1970s. To convince the partners there of our quality at AMAZONE, I showed the representatives of the state purchasing authority our factories and flew to Algeria myself. That paid off straight away, because I was able to secure an order worth millions, with fertiliser spreaders that filled 18 wagons at the Hasbergen railway station. In addition, 800 D7 seed drills in 4-metre working width from Hude were also loaded.

View of the loaded wagons at Hasbergen railway station

Advertising and exhibitions

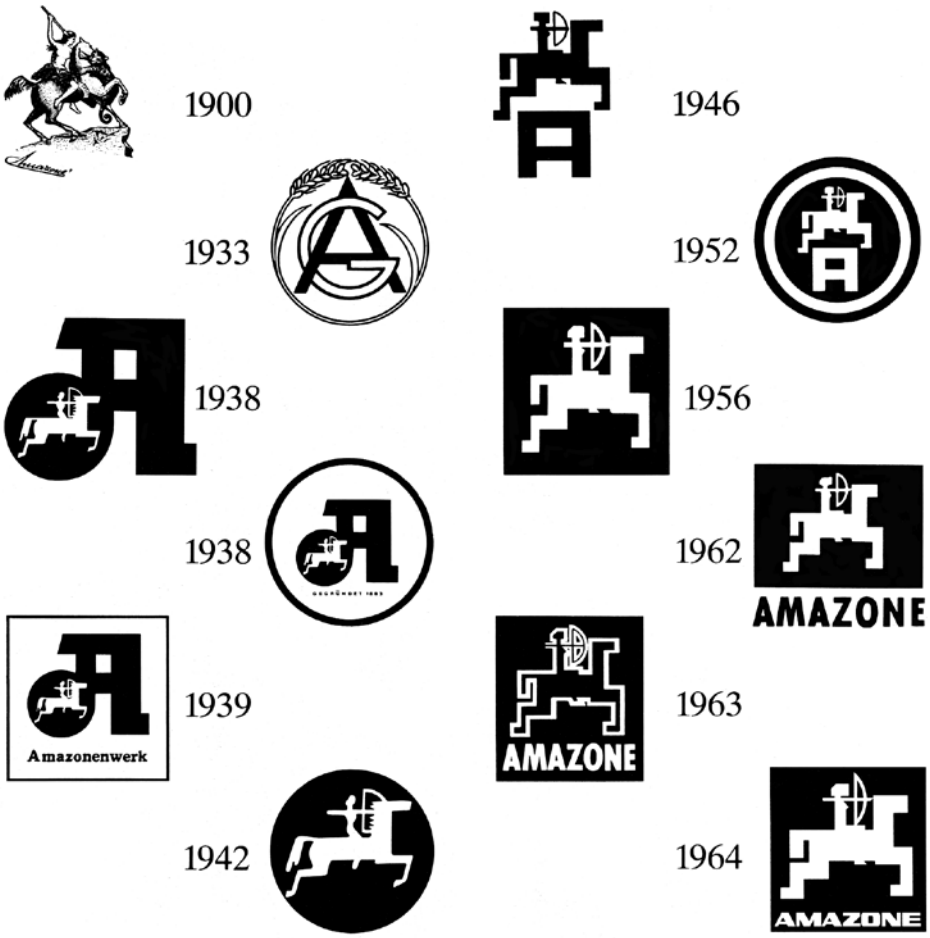
Since I joined AMAZONE, I have been involved in advertising. First alone and then, after a few years, together with our new sales manager Friedhelm Brömstrup. Like his father, he completed an apprenticeship with us and was subsequently taken on as a permanent employee. His talents became apparent early on, particularly in sales. After a few years in various roles, I finally asked him to take over as head of sales.

We have worked with various external graphic designers to design our printed materials, mainly with Mr Vogel, a graphic designer/artist from Osnabrück. Together with him, I not only developed our current company logo, but also designed numerous adverts for various agricultural weekly newspapers. The highly artistic drawings were, and are, eye-catching in every respect and were effectively placed and publicised.

ZA-F twin disc spreader advertisement

Current AMAZONE logo

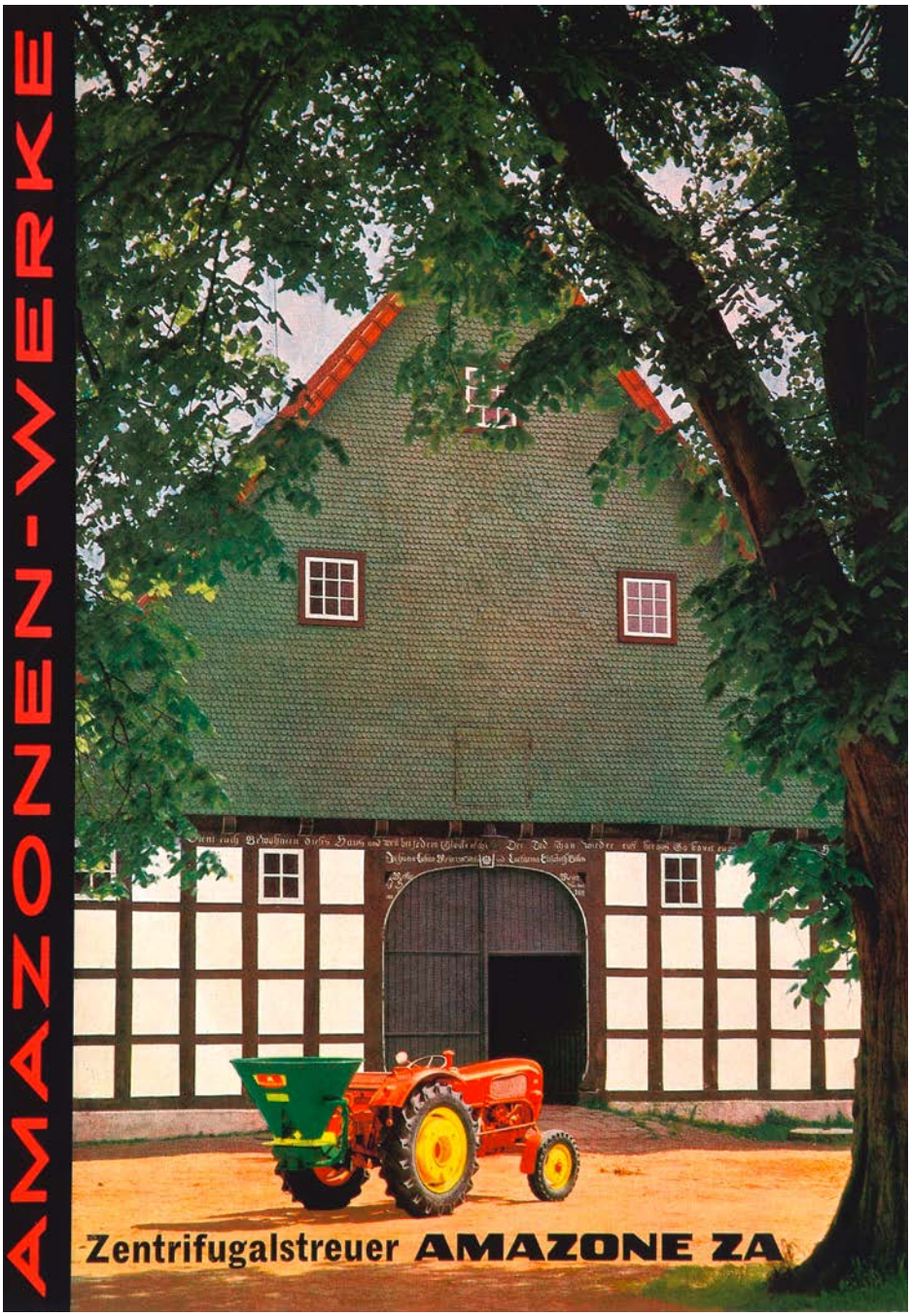
The AMAZONE logo, like the company itself, has undergone continual development over the years, and my uncle Heinrich did not have much influence on the graphic artists and designers during his lifetime. Each of them always realised their own ideas, which meant that the logo changed again and again. When I finally joined the company, I decided that there should only be one



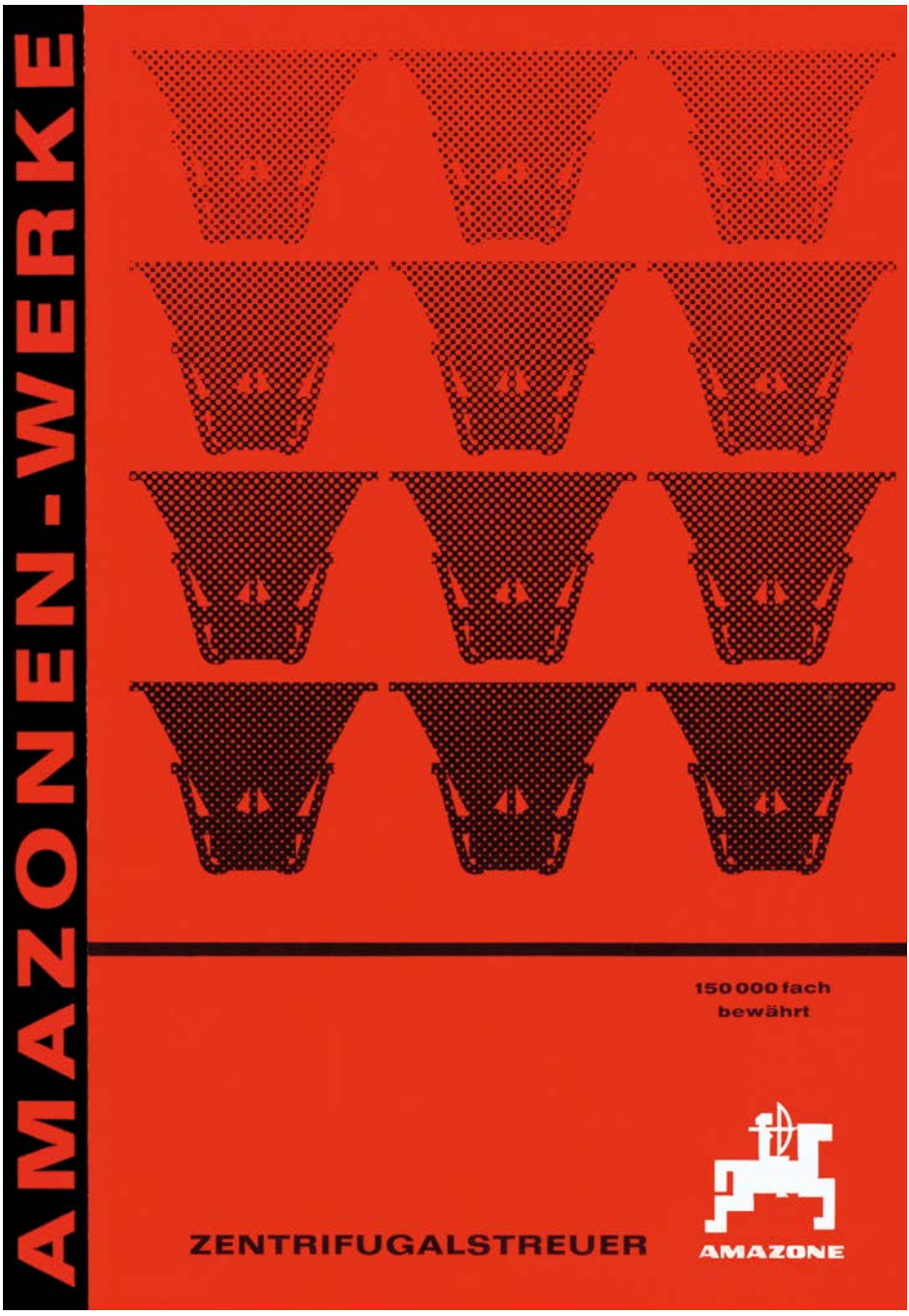
Logo development from 1900

version of the logo from now on. Together with Mr Vogel, we succeeded in achieving this goal.

Initially, the AMAZONE rider in the logo was on a red background, which was changed to the current orange colour for aesthetic reasons. For me, this orange colour represents "the rising sun" while our machines shine in the "green of the well-nourished plant".



Front cover of AMAZONE ZA centrifugal broadcaster brochure

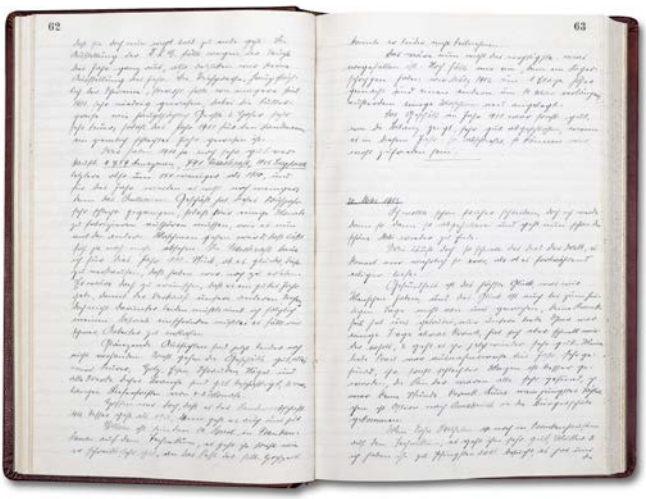


Front cover of ZA brochure in the style of Andy Warhol

I also played a decisive role in the design of our brochures. In many places, I was not only significantly involved in the development of the layout, but also wrote the texts and occasionally even took the necessary photos of the machines myself. At the beginning I hired a professional photographer but the coordination for the field photos proved to be repeatedly difficult and so I started photographing the machines myself when necessary.

The advertising industry tends to be a highly competitive field, and there are many opinions both inside and outside the organisation on how best to approach it. However, the response from our sales partners to our advertising material has always been extremely positive. A brochure for our ZA, which we designed in the modern style of Andy Warhol, is still considered by many experts to be one of the most innovative and appealing in the entire industry.

I have also written various books, such as "The History of BBG", "Works of Art in Agricultural Engineering", "Encyclopaedia of German Agricultural Machinery", "1,000 Fertiliser Spreaders" and "Unforgotten Agricultural Engineering", the most important and comprehensive of which is the chronicle of our company.



Extract from the handwritten diary of AMAZONE founder Heinrich Dreyer

My grandfather's handwritten history, which was written in old German script (Sütterlin) until 1934, served as the basis for this chronicle. I translated them into High German and have been adding to them ever since.

Logo of the AMAZONE Museum

Maintaining the tradition and history of AMAZONEN-WERKE

Right from the start of my career, I was particularly committed to the history of AMAZONE and its development. A lucky coincidence came to my aid as, during one of my tours, I saw that one of our employees was burning paper from folders in a furnace. There were numerous folders in a wheelbarrow. I went to him and looked at what he was destroying and found that it was historical documentation from AMAZONE and other companies that was very interesting both technically and graphically. So it was very lucky that I arrived in time and that not many documents had yet been burnt.

The employee was asked to empty an entire cupboard to make room for current files. Some of the documents to be disposed of were around 100 years old and had been collected by the company founder Heinrich Dreyer himself.

I immediately stopped this act of destruction and instead ordered the items to be brought to my office. That was the birth of our archive. In fact, it not only contains all the documentation on AMAZONE products, but over the years more than 50,000 documents from the entire agricultural machinery sector have been added.

These archives are extremely diverse and valuable. I keep receiving very fascinating historical documents, which are not only archived, but also digitised for all interested parties to see on our website www.landtechnik-historisch.de which provides information on many individual companies. It gives me great pleasure to see that the website is accessed around 30,000 times a month on average and therefore attracts a great deal of interest. The presentation of historical agricultural machinery from all over the world is a matter close to my heart.

View of the AMAZONE Museum

2022: Opening of the AMAZONE Museum on the Wambergen estate with Ruhrstahl tool carrier (built in 1954)

In addition to the archived historical brochure material, I have collected historical machinery both from AMAZONE and also from our competitors, which I exhibit in our factory museum on our Wambergen experimental farm in Hasbergen-Gaste, as well as having some on the Plenter farm in Leeden, and which document the technical development of AMAZONEN-WERKE in an unforgettable way.

Among the historical machinery on display is an extremely rare "Ruhrstahl tool carrier", which is fully equipped with an AMAZONE auger spreader and an AMAZONE seed drill from the 1950s. It gives me great pleasure to see that both the museum and our website attract a considerable number of visitors, which keeps the interest in our history and the development of agricultural machinery alive.

Exhibitions

AMAZONE was, and still is, represented at many exhibitions in the agricultural machinery sector and was one of the first companies to present its machines at the "DLG Exhibition". My grandfather started to show there in 1893. Today, this exhibition has become AGRITECHNICA: the largest agricultural machinery trade fair in the world. Our stand there currently covers over 2,500 m², there are around 150 employees on site to explain our machines and answer visitors' questions (for comparison: at the smaller shows in Germany and Austria, the stands are approximately 500 m² with a stand staff of 6 employees from sales and distribution). Being close to customers and meeting them at eye level is particularly important to me at shows. Every single visitor to our stand is equally important to us and should be made aware of this fact. That's why I still stand at AGRITECHNICA myself out of conviction, to talk to as many visitors as possible.

However, the majority of agricultural fairs were held outdoors, just as they are today. When I joined the company, there was a very impressive AMAZONE pavilion, which was mainly used for the DLG exhibition. Our pavilion was very beautiful and made an excellent impression, but had the major disadvantage that setting it up was a huge effort. It was also too large and too expensive for the numerous regional exhibitions, so it was not used at all for these events. Following a suggestion from me, we finally built our own AMAZONE exhibition unit for the smaller shows, which can be set up within an hour. It is still in use today. However, due to its age and the volume of show visitors, a second modern trailer has now been added.

In general, our exhibition presence has constantly evolved over time, just like the company itself. The larger the company grew, the larger our show stands gradually became, as naturally more and larger machines were exhibited as the product range expanded. While we started out producing seed drills in a working width of 3 metres, we now produce seed drills up to 15 metres. During this growth phase, I worked closely with the advertising department (which became the marketing department in 2000) to ensure that our stand was modern, but always appropriate and not overdone. It was always important for the customer to have a clearly recognisable, unambiguous AMAZONE identity and a uniform appearance of the

company in all markets. Our subsidiaries and our other product brands such as BBG (Bodenbearbeitungsgeräte Leipzig) or Schmotzer are also always taken into account and presented. With the growing internationalisation, the number of show appearances worldwide has also continued to increase. Naturally, our subsidiaries and importers receive active support from our main plant in Hasbergen-Gaste in the areas of sales and marketing.

In 1999, my cousin Heinz and I received a certificate of honour at Agritechnica for our 40 years of successful entrepreneurial activity and innovation in agricultural machinery. We also received four silver medals for progressive new developments. I am still very proud of that today.

Four silver medals and the DLG award given to Dr Heinz Dreyer and Klaus Dreyer on the occasion of their 40 years of successful entrepreneurial activity, 1999

Our exhibition tent in the 1920s

Our exhibition pavilion in the 1950s

Our first exhibition unit from the 1960s, which is still partly in use today

Our current exhibition unit since 2012

Recruitment of employees and managers

Recruiting talented employees and managers is crucial for any company to achieve its goals and ensure long-term success. It is an ongoing process that requires commitment, resources and time. Of course, a bit of luck is always part of it.

As I have already mentioned in many places in my story, I was not always successful in selecting our managers. However, I can say that I often had the right feeling. After all, it's no coincidence that many colleagues have been part of the AMAZONE family for decades, just like me. Jeppe Hamann from Denmark and Jan Wotawa from the Czech Republic came to us more or less of their own accord. With others, such as Simon Brown in the United Kingdom or Dr Friederichs, I had a good instinct and recognised their potential early on.

From my point of view, I have a deep understanding of the requirements of the various positions in the company and identify candidates not only on the basis of the necessary professional qualifications, but also look at whether they embody our corporate culture and values. In my opinion, the latter in particular is unavoidable.

In the case of our plant manager Mr Wiendiek, for example, I already realised during his training at AMAZONE that he is as talented as he is qualified and simply fits in very well with our company. After completing his apprenticeship, he went on to study mechanical engineering and later worked for another company, so when we needed him, I simply approached him directly to recruit him as a plant manager.

I felt the same way about another very deserving employee, Mr Meise, who started his career in our company as a clerk. After he had proved himself excellently in our accounting department, I promoted him to head of Accounting and Finance and later also to head of Human Resources, where he worked very successfully and reliably for the company for many years.

Public image and corporate culture

When my cousin and I joined the company in 1958, AMAZONE was one of many manufacturers with an annual turnover of 10 million Deutschmarks. In the decades that followed, many important names disappeared or were taken over by larger companies. During this enormous consolidation process in the agricultural machinery industry, AMAZONE had to focus and reorganise itself time and again.

As one of the owners of the company for over 60 years, I have played a key role in ensuring that the AMAZONE brand and our products are perceived positively and recognised around the world. My responsibility to be an ambassador for the company myself was and is very important to me. As at trade fairs, personal contact with customers, dealers, importers and employees is very important to me and has always been a particular concern. I have helped to establish, maintain and expand many contacts myself. In this way, I was always close to the action and was able to experience our customers' and partners' judgement of our products and service for myself. This is extremely important, especially if you want to continuously improve

Here I am opening the AMAZONE Sales, Parts and Service Centre in Harworth on 4 September 1990 together with Dr Friedrichs

and develop your company. In addition, not only business relationships but also many friendships have developed in the course of my work. Fortunately, my family was always very understanding and did everything they could to support me in my endeavours.

Today, AMAZONE stands for innovative and high-quality agricultural machinery, but also for continuity and reliable partnership. This is a particularly valuable and essential asset in times of major change such as those we are experiencing today.

In the course of my many years in business, I have travelled to countless countries on all continents. I was accompanied on most of the trips by the responsible factory/country representative of our company. Together we visited the most important trading partners and local farmers. Our partners were always very happy when I visited them, often together with my wife, and we were able to meet important

My wife Malu and I with the employees and their families at the celebratory event to mark the 30th anniversary of AMAZONE LTD Harworth (2013)

sales partners and farmers. We have often succeeded in bringing the spirit of the AMAZONE family to even the most remote places.

When our partners from Germany and abroad visited us at our factory in Hasbergen-Gaste, I always greeted them personally whenever possible. I often received particularly important sales partners and their employees the evening before and invited them to a meal together. I was able to show them the special features and strengths of AMAZONE production at first hand during factory tours, which I was also very happy to conduct personally.

I also represented the company at official events as one of the managing directors and I also performed many honorary functions. I was on the board of the LAV (Agricultural Machinery and Farm Tractor Association), on the collective bargaining committee of the employers' association and on the board of the employers' liability insurance association. I am also a member of all local

associations such as the shooting and singing club, cultural and tourist organisations and sports clubs. It was and still is very important to me to attend important events in person.

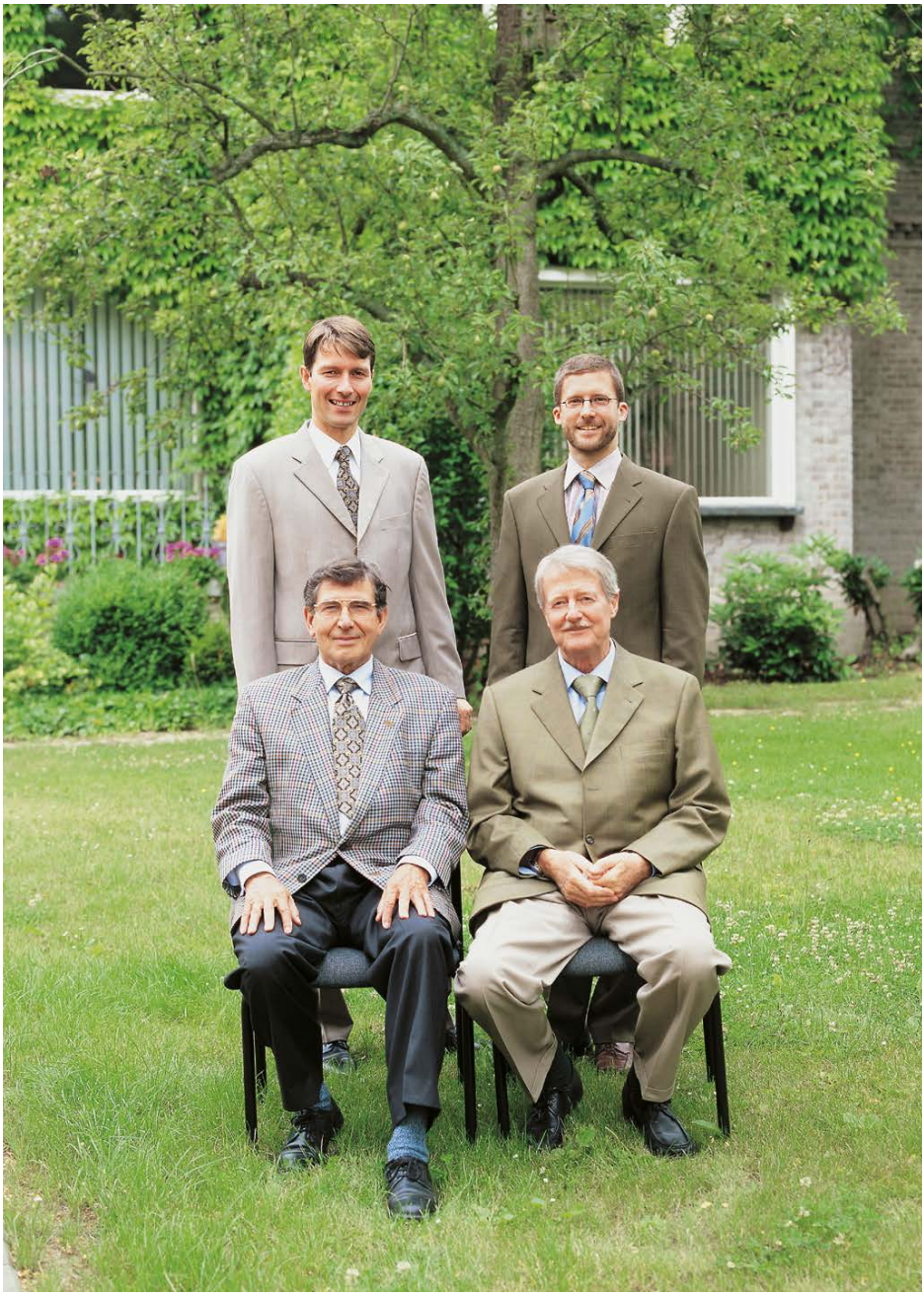
I have always maintained a good relationship with politicians and public administration bodies. Conversely, AMAZONE was also a regular point of contact for visitors from both local and high-ranking national politicians. It was always important for me to have an honest exchange at these meetings. I have always taken the position that our company also makes a contribution to society and the common good.

Of course, I always had an open ear for the trade unions and took a clear stance on many issues, which of course didn't always please them.

However, I have not only represented AMAZONE externally, but have also had a lasting impact on the corporate culture internally. My commitment to open communication, personal interaction and the cultivation of traditions have had a lasting influence on the company.

It is very important to me that all employees feel comfortable and see themselves as part of the AMAZONE family. I have always had an open ear and was able to sort out any weak points and problems during my daily tour through the corridors of the administration and in the production halls. I like to personally greet as many employees as possible with a handshake. I was able to talk to them again and again and, of course, to also have private contact. Not only do I want to be close to my employees, but I also want to express how important each person is to me and how much I value everyone's work.

My path as an ambassador for AMAZONE is still as fulfilling today and enriches me both professionally and personally.



Christian and Justus Dreyer, the fourth generation,

behind their fathers Klaus Dreyer and Dr Heinz Dreyer (1999)

Succession

As it is always important to think about the future of AMAZONE and so I started looking for a suitable successor for myself in good time. Together with my wife Malu, we familiarised our three children with AMAZONE at an early age. They have all been involved in the company from childhood and have the AMAZONE genes instilled in them.

Our second son Christian finally decided to join the family business in 1994 after completing his studies and gaining first some work experience. On 5 May 1999 (shortly before my 65th birthday), I handed over the management of AMAZONEN-WERKE to him. Today, the company is managed by the fourth generation of the Dreyer family. My cousin Heinz also succeeded in handing over the management to his son Justus in 2004, after he had completed his doctorate in Hohenheim.

Today, Christian and Dr Justus Dreyer work closely together and are continuing a family history steeped in tradition in the fourth generation.

From left: Joint Chairmen of the Board and owners, Christian Dreyer and Dr. Justus Dreyer (2023)

At the end of my story, I can summarise by saying that the company was not in a good state when we took it over in 1958. AMAZONE only became a successful company thanks to the developments of my cousin Heinz in combination with my work on streamlined production, well-organised administration and effective sales.

Of course, this also includes the performance and commitment of our many dedicated and qualified managers and employees, who have made AMAZONE what it is today: an internationally active company for agricultural and groundcare machinery with over 2,500 employees at 9 different production sites and 10 international sales offices. The annual turnover of more than 800 million euros speaks for itself and the company looks forward to a positive future under the management of the fourth generation, Dr Justus and Christian Dreyer.

Our AMAZONE team at Agritechnica 2023 in Hanover

Some milestones of the last 140 years

1883	Founding of the company by Heinrich Dreyer
1891	Development of the "AMAZONE" grain cleaning machine
1894	First plough (cart plough)
1910	Development of the first "Federkraft" potato sorter
1912	Renaming of the company from MASCHINENFABRIK H. DREYER to AMAZONENWERK
1915	Patent application for the Michel auger fertiliser spreader
1942	First S 42 potato harvester
1949	First AMAZONE D1 seed drill
1956	Construction of the first AMAZONE branch in Delmenhorst-Hoykenkamp
1958	First AMAZONE ZA twin disc mounted spreader
1964	First AMAZONE D4 modern tractor seed drill
1969	First AMAZONE S 400 crop protection sprayer
1970	Opening of the subsidiary in Forbach (France)
1972	The new, highly-successful AMAZONE D7 seed drill
1979	First AMAZONE KG rotary cultivator with "on-grip" tines, new AMAZONE ZA-F mounted spreader up to 15 m

1980 New AMAZONE ZA-U mounted spreader up to 24 m

1983 First fertiliser spreader test hall in the world, founding of own sales company AMAZONE Ltd in Harworth (Great Britain)

1987 First AMAZONE ED precision seeder

1989 New AMAZONE ZA-M mounted spreader up to 36 m, new AMAZONE UF mounted field sprayer, takeover of BARA in Méré (France) and therefore our own sales organisation

1991 First FT front tank for the mounted sprayer

1992 First UG trailed sprayer

1993 First Primera DMC direct seed drill with chisel openers for direct, mulch and conventional sowing

1995 First AMAZONE AD-P pneumatic mounted seed drill

1998 Takeover of BBG Bodenbearbeitungsgeräte Leipzig, including the S trailed sprayer and the SF self-propelled sprayer

2000 Catros compact disc harrow

2002 First Cirrus trailed cultivator drill

2003 New UX trailed sprayer

2006 First Citan large area seed drill in up to 12 m working width

2007 EDX precision air seeder with Xpress grain singling and placement system

2009 New Cayena and Condor tine coulter seed drills in up to 15 m, the new most modern, state-of-the-art fertiliser spreader test hall in the world

2010 New Pantera 4001 self-propelled sprayer

2012 New UX 11200 trailed sprayer

2013 New ZA-TS fertiliser spreader up to 54 m, new AMAZONE Cayron plough

2016 New Cataya conventional drill combination

2016 Purchase of the Vogel & Noot plough production facility in Mosonmagyaróvár, Hungary, new Cayros semi-mounted reversible ploughs

2017 New Ceus tine & disc combination cultivator, new Centaya pneumatic harrow-mounted seed drill

2018 AMAZONE Group takes over SCHMOTZER Hacktechnik

2020 First Precea precision air seeder

2021 New AMAZONE Tyrok 400 semi-mounted reversible plough

2022 New Teres 300 mounted reversible plough, new Cobra-2TX trailed shallow cultivator

2023 New Cirrus 9004-2C Grand large-area seed drill, new Tyrok 400 Onland semi-mounted reversible plough, new Precea-TCC trailed precision seeder, new ZG-TX combi spreader, new Pantera 7004 self-propelled sprayer

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140
YEARS
AMAZONE
ideasforfuture

I would like to use the 140th anniversary of AMAZONEN-WERKE as an opportunity to look back on the past decades and the impressive development of the company.

My cousin Heinz and I have been very fortunate to have played a major role in shaping the last 65 years together. There are many reasons for the extraordinary development of AMAZONE. Unfortunately, my cousin passed away in Spring 2023 – all the more reason for me to highlight the company's most important events from my perspective.

Klaus Dreyer

Dr Heinz Dreyer

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