



VINTAGE TORQUE

December 2009



**Merry Christmas Everybody and a Happy New Year
with Good Health and Great Rallying in 2010**



Our Group's Stand at Newark 2009



Report on page 2



AGM Presentation

Sir Jeremy Bagge presenting cheques to; on the left, Diane Rowe representing The Norfolk Hospice, Tapping House for £3,500 being the proceeds from Stradsett Rally; and on the right Mary Dunn, representing the East Anglian Air Ambulance for £1,591, being the proceeds from the Tractor Road Run. Sir Jeremy also received a cheque for £223.40 for St Mary's Church being the proceeds from the Working Weekend .



National Ploughing Championships

James Elliot's winning pair. Report on Page 4



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The Newark Vintage Tractor and Heritage Show November 7th & 8th 2009

The organisers anticipated that this show would be the best so far and they were not disappointed. The exhibits were of a very high standard and the facilities provided were excellent. Two days of entertainment, memories, education and a range of good food brought the outdoor season to a fitting close. An extended rare and native breed section combined with a wide range of country craft demonstrations provided an interest for everybody. This year a total of almost 900 exhibits were accommodated mostly undercover. A huge marquee measuring 180 metres in length housed 14 NVTEC club exhibits together with 153 International Harvesters making a vast spectacle for visitors to enjoy. Members from our club provided one such exhibit which the public seemed interested in. In addition a varied range of classic/vintage cars, commercials and military vehicles also attracted much interest from the visitors.

On the first morning of the show there was an auction of memorabilia, spares and vehicles supported by brisk bidding. On the Sunday morning Old Sodbury's Agricultural Vintage Sort Out filled one of the outside rings and there were many browsers and buyers. Also on Sunday morning a Service of Remembrance was held, followed by a minutes silence. It was heartening to note that almost the whole showground came to a respectful silence and even more poignant when the odd person who did not pause in thought was soon reminded by others to show respect. A show that was well staged provided something for everyone and needed more than a day to fully enjoy.

Ted Gray

front page pictures showing Ralph Thompson's winning Jaegar, the club stand with Paul Pearman's 1948 Ruston Hornsby, Malcolm Bush's John Deere and Stuart Bailey's Fordson

Swanton Morley Tractor & Bygones Rally 2009 by Cliff Smith

This rally was a new one on my list of rallies to attend and I must say what a pleasure it was! I had been asked several times to exhibit with them and this year I decided to give it a try. The rally has only been going for a short time but by the support it received it could be on for several years to come. Being held on the Village Hall Sports Ground made it an Ideal venue for a function of this type. Some 40 plus stationary engines, 30 plus tractors along with a grand turnout of vintage cars and commercial vehicles (especially on the Sunday) all made it into a very well supported event. Various side-stalls and a 2-day car boot sale, several craft stalls sited in the village hall and a small area at one side for the children's amusements gave something for everyone to enjoy. A good sized show ring was provided for exhibitors to parade their machines and provide continuous activities over the weekend.

The layout was, I thought, something that other events might take notice of with the health and safety rules of today. All exhibitors caravans, tents, caravanettes etc (no awnings or vehicles allowed) were arranged around the outside backed up to the hedge, then a roped-off roadway for emergencies, with the vehicles and engines fenced in a pen in front proved a successful arrangement. A licenced bar and entertainment was in the hall on Friday and Saturday evening with a restaurant providing breakfast and various meals throughout the day at a reasonable cost. The rally organisers generously gave exhibitors some vouchers for tea and coffee. This rally, along with the Tractor Road Run was held to support the Village Hall and

other charities. Aided by a good team of stewards and supporters it is one that I think has a good future and one that I shall hopefully be visiting again. Well done to you all! One thing that the organisers might like to consider for the future is to improve the directions from the main roads and locally, which might help both exhibitors and visiting public alike.



A.G.M. 2008 Report and Presentation

The chair welcomed approximately 36 members and number of guests, including Sir Jeremy Bagge, Diane Rowe (Tapping House), Mary Dunn (EAAA) and Steven Blyth (DM Carnival Committee) to the meeting. The meeting was preceded by a minutes silence following the demise of George MacDonald.

A number of presentations were made including a cheque to the value of £3500 to Tapping House (Proceeds from Stradsett Rally), a cheque to the value of £1591 to EAAA (Road Run) and a cheque to the value of £223.40 to St Mary's Church Stradsett (WWE). It was noted that the total dona-

tions to charity in 2009 reached £5322 the highest annual donation so far. The vintage class trophy was presented to the club by Steven Blyth following the success of the club exhibit at the Downham Market Carnival. Sir Jeremy was presented with a framed image of an aerial view of the Stradsett Rally as a thank you for the use of Stradsett Park for club events. Apologies were received and the previous minutes accepted with no matters arising. The chair reflected on the success and increased attendance at the winter meetings and summer visits and noted how important these are in terms of recruitment of new

The special theme at the 2009 annual Holbeach Vintage rally was single-furrow ploughs and arguably had the best turnout in recent years for this section. Arranged around the small marquee, with the exception of the Lanz, all other tractors were drawn in forwards so as to not take the emphasis away from the ploughs, and the overall impression was very colourful. Elsewhere, some last-minute tweaks in the layout generally found favour.

In regard to the theme section, motive power including a rare Ferguson 1010 model, Lanz, Fordson, Caterpillar, David Brown, BMB, Ransomes, Trusty, Anzani, Winget, Gunsmith & Barford. Most of these had either conventional, reversible or two-way butterfly ploughs from their equivalent manufacturer, and inside the marquee, a large display of horticultural ploughs was on display.

Opposite the theme, more horticultural, model and by-gone displays were arranged within a walk-in area. Between the two a walk-way led down to the stationary engines, which this year were arranged in an L-shape. We had a considerable number of Petters and Listers on display, but also some rarities including a lovely French-built Bernard, Ideal with corn-mill, and extremely rare carrot-hopper Ruston PT.

This led back up the craft area, where we had three marquees plus a number of outside gazebos in support, and so on past the military/emergency vehicles to the classic cars. Here, three lines of vehicles were on show, my favourite being the convertible green Ford Zodiac. This was superbly presented.

As usual, under the stewardship of Jimmy "The Brick", the military and commercial section was very well supported with Hedger Transport featuring no less than nine vehicles, Alec Ford three and Jack Richards two. Richard Robinson showed his Volvo F88. However, my favourite was the newly restored Dodge K-series in Pauls & White Animal Feeds livery, which won the cup at Stradsett, closely followed by the Dennis Lancet bus.

Moving across to the tractor section, there were still some 30 or so machines on show despite others being on display in the theme section, Downing's trade stand and Holbeach Marsh Preservation Society's area. The Matbro is now starting to take shape with tin-work being present over the engine, and it was good to see my cousin's early Fordson E27N with hand-lift on steel wheels seeing the light of day after around three decades of barn storage, albeit in new ownership.

The two full-size steam engines were both rollers. I suppose you could call them cousins, the smaller and earlier one being an Aveling & Porter built in Kent, the larger being the youngest steam roller in preservation, an Aveling & Barford built in Lincolnshire. Close to the ring-side were the motorcycles.

Ring entertainment included the Spalding Ambassador Marching Band who it has to be said were very good. The tractor starting demo can hopefully be expanded to take into account veteran machines another year, and the egg-throwing competition and tractor handling antics returned for another outing. With a small fairground and more trade stands, it was overall a very successful show, and we can announce that we will be back on 19-20 June 2010.



AGM Report *continued*

members. He also commented on the success of the Stradsett Rally together with other club events and how much the club enjoyed participation in the Stradsett Garden Show and Downham Market Carnival. He concluded by thanking Sir Jeremy and Lady Bagge for the use of Stradsett Park for our events. Finally he thanked all committee members for their hard work and also the general membership for their support and enthusiasm during the year. The secretary thanked Peter on behalf of the club for his hard work and enthusiasm during the year. It as noted how fortunate the club had been in terms of weather for our events with many other organisations falling foul of bad weather and flooded land leading to cancellations and poor attendance in some cases. Members were reminded of the need to continue to

be vigilant regarding health and safety issues at all events. Finally the secretary outlined some of the developments achieved during the year aimed at improving the benefits of club membership.

The treasurer tabled audited accounts for 2008 and explained in detail the financial position of the club and also the background to each report contained within the document. There were no questions from club members regarding the financial position of the club. The treasurer also explained in detail the need to increase membership fees as published in Vintage Torque (September 2009). The membership secretary thanked members for their help during the year. It was reported that the membership had reached 398. As no nominations were received from members the existing committee was appointed for 2009/10. The meeting closed following a presentation by Diane Rowe on the work and financing of Tapping House. The club was sincerely thanked for the donation received.

59th British National Ploughing Finals, Soham near Ely, October 10th & 11th 2009

Horses and tractors competed in these finals to provide over 14,000 visitors with an amazing show of skill .

Colin Bowen became The British Reversible Ploughing Champion with 2nd place being taken by Peter Alderslade and 3rd place by 17 year old, first time competitor, Steven Bowen. The British Conventional Ploughing Championship was won by Simon Witty for the 5th time. Colin Bowen and Simon Witty will both represent England at the 2010 World Ploughing Contest in New Zealand next April. Peter Alderslade and Steven Bowen will represent England in the 2010 European Reversible Ploughing Championships in the Republic of Ireland.

In the National Young Farmers classes the only woman entry of the show, 19 year old Deborah Watson, won the classic and vintage class with the overall National Young Farmer's Champion Ploughman title going to Donald Tonkin..

The National Vintage Champion title was won by Richard Ingram in the hydraulic ploughing class, and the Vintage Trailed Ploughing class was won by Michael Watkins. They will both represent England in the European Vintage Ploughing Championships in Scotland next October.

14 pairs of horses were entered in the Oat Seed Furrow Work class which was won by James Elliot. They attracted many admirers who appreciated the skill of the handlers and the beauty of these



powerful horses. looking magnificent with their shining, jingling brasses.

Pictures by Reg Fletcher

"BACK THEN IT WAS ALL ABOUT HUSBANDRY"

The old quote goes "They were the swinging sixties" etc. etc. Well certainly from the point of view of our popular culture, language and the socio-economic climate the 1960's were the subject of continuous and quite rapid change. However this phenomenon did not seem to fully extend to those stalwart souls who were engaged in the business of farming a small acreage during that particular period and especially within the context of mechanisation.

No siree, we few, we indestructible few, we pedantic and tired out few, stayed gallantly and persistently on with the techniques and mantra that we had learned from our forebears in the 1950's (or 40's or indeed even earlier!) Sorry, I seem to have lapsed into cynicism in that last long sentence but I can promise you that farming the averaged size acreage during the sixties decade was jolly hard work, because I experienced it at first hand. I grew up on a small mainly arable farm in Wereham, Norfolk. My earliest memories span back to 1959 and when we moved from Wereham farm in 1970 it was to another holding in the next village but this was of twice the size. Our total holding was expanded again half-way through the 70's with the purchase of more land in the village of Fincham. However, back in the 60's the method of making a living from smallholdings and the like type of business was by concentrating on good quality husbandry. A great deal of handwork (hard graft!) was needed to be utilised in addition to what mechanisation was available at the time - the "concept" of total power farming did not come along until much later.



Before going any further I feel that I should explain something. The trigger to cause this piece of journalistic rubbish to be borne (from some blank pieces of Tesco's best quality lined jotter!), was the club's working weekend at Stradsett held this autumn. This was a most enjoyable event and the ploughing was on a nice bit of sandy land near The Foldgate Public House. A good soil type to score up your vintage ploughing kit - turns over a treat with the furrows left with that polished patina, especially rewarding when using a Ransomes 2 furrow TS59J complete with YL (mark two design) bodies. On the Sunday at Stradsett, whilst pausing to munch on my sarnies, I had the chance to look at the exhibitor's equipment and this afforded me the opportunity to reflect a bit on the kind of stuff being used by these stalwart folks as it would have been employed originally. Like for instance how my father used to farm with similar machinery as indeed did our neighbouring farmers. There I was verbalising these reminiscences when along came this woman called Viv Gray - "Hoi yew, that stuff yore chewin over orta be put in the club magazine". So you see that is how I ended up with this chore of writing down my memoirs.

Back Then it was all about Husbandry *continued*

Don't get excited mind - cos there int no raunchy stuff ever happened to me! Well maybe there was just an odd thing or two - still we'd better get back to the subject matter of the 60's.

In order to make the small acreage pay its way my Dad would always attempt to carry out as much of the work ourselves and avoid having to spend out on Contractors. This policy led to two main strategies:- 1) The acquisition of our own tractors and machinery and 2) The high importance of good quality husbandry including handwork or alternative techniques to avoid the necessity to resort to spraying or additional artificial manures or chemicals. There's an interesting irony lurking in here, that is the supposedly modern ideology of "greenness" and "organic-ness" is not necessarily such a recent concept as one might think. The basic fundamentals of business are all wrapped up in this scenario. Try to cut down costs as best you can, produce as much end product as you can, to the quality that your customers expect and thus maximise one's profit - with enough aside for reinvestment in more equipment or land. Sounds simple doesn't it?

For openers, let's examine the tractors that we used, starting at the issue of size. When you look at a B250 McCormick International, a Nuffield 10/60 or a Fordson E27N (which were the three main movers that we had at Wereham) and compare them with a modern average sized tractor you cannot but ask yourself why were the tractors of the day so small? Well, astonishingly enough, the answer lies with the humble horse (or indeed equally with other draft animal teams such as oxen, mules etc.) At the beginning of man's quest to mechanise his farming of the land those early pioneers constructed implements out of a mixture of wood and steel. They needed to be pulled by horses and hefted/controlled by the man or men who walked or rode behind. It was a natural consequence of this unassailable fact that the replacement mechanical version of the horse (the vintage tractor) would initially be of a not dissimilar proportion -

especially in view of the reluctance to change the basic sizes of machinery being utilised.

When you think about it the early trailers were no more than tumbrels or farm wagons with their horse shafts taken off and blacksmith-made draw-bars fitted instead! In the early years of the 60's that is exactly what my Dad used for all of the straw carting, beet collecting, manure transport etc., etc. We did not have the "luxury" of a second hand Wheatley 2 ton hydraulic tipping two wheeled trailer until halfway through 1963. Machinery was a crazy mixture of 'towed behind the drawbar' types or mounted on the 3 point linkage - this really being the case for most of the 60's decade. When Harry Ferguson invented the system of draught control for mounted tractor implements he designed the whole range of implements (and in fairness the tractors to pull them) around the size of the machinery current at that time, i.e. in the 30's and 40's, so therefore the Ferguson system implements again had a tendency to influence the continuous adoption of implements of that particular size. Ploughs, cultivators and potato spinners and so on all had to be man-handled onto the hydraulic arms of tractors - thus limiting the weight and cumbersome-ness that could be tolerated in machinery offered by manufacturers. Then there was the factor of traction - grip if you like - where larger furrow sizes or greater potato harvester weights could simply not be pulled along by the almost universally available general purpose tractors of this period which were of course basically all just 2 wheel drive.

Wow - there's turning out to be much more to this subject than I thought and quite frankly lots more I would like to share with you (if you would like to read it that is).

Tell you what - I'll break off this diatribe at this point, be like Eastenders and serialise it for you! Haven't even got started on our ploughing techniques and why they were important to husbandry! If you can stand it (!) more next time. All the best W. N. Ridgefarmer

Stradsett Park Vintage Rally 2nd & 3rd May 2010

Yes, it's that time of year when we suddenly realise that Stradsett is less than five months away. We are also holding admission fees so will still offer 'A great day out for a family for a fiver.'

By the time you read this we will have presented a cheque to The Norfolk Hospice Tapping House for £3,500 as the proceeds from Stradsett 2009.

Your entry form is enclosed with this edition of 'Vintage Torque'. Last year all sections were fully booked 6 weeks before the event so please do not delay in completeing and returning it. Entries will be taken on a first come first served basis.

We will retain last year's format, with some minor tweaks, and the nominated charity is The East Anglia's Children's

Hospices EACH.

If you have any ideas, suggestions or offers of help please do get in touch. If you have not attended before, our website has a good selection of photo's from previous years to give you a feel for this magnificent setting.

Looking forward to meeting old friends and new.



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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

The year races by and with good fortune with the weather this has been a very busy summer. Looking through the diary, the club has organised or assisted in some eight events. It is very encouraging to see these events being well supported as it shows the club is very vibrant although we are living in uncertain times. As you can see from the AGM Report the club has also been very successful with its fund raising for various charities. When you think about it we are very lucky we can enjoy playing at our hobby and at the same time provide entertainment for ourselves and

others whilst raising funds to help others possibly worse off than ourselves. It's with these thoughts in mind that we think of family gatherings as we indulge in Christmas merriment and not forgetting those that have 'conked out' for the last time.



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Peter



Membership Matters

Hi to you all

Well it's time again to reflect on what 2009 has given us, Stradsett rally, road run and the ploughing weekend all of which have given 3 charities funds to achieve new things in 2010. Many of you have taken part in other rallies and I know from what's been said that you had great fun.

As Andrew pointed out in the September issue of Vintage Torque membership fees(excluding the insurance component) have not changed since 1995. He also discussed the background to the committee proposal to increase our fees to £1 above National. At the National meeting in October it was agreed to increase their fees by £2. Our AGM also approved the committee proposal to increase our fees, which means all membership categories have increased by £3. New fees are shown on the renewal form inside this issue.

At this point it's perhaps worth reviewing some of the benefits of NVTEC membership:

- 8 top quality magazines (4 Vintage Torque and 4 Vaporising) delivered to your door.
- Group meetings with speakers and the chance to mix with like-minded people
- Group events including rallies, working weekends and road runs.
- £5 million pounds worth of public liability insurance.

All I now have to do is wish one and all a very happy Christmas and prosperous new year. To all those people who have lost a loved one we will be thinking of you.

Email : membership@nvtec-ea.org.uk



Chris

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For more Vintage News and Views go to our web-site www.nvtec-ea.org.uk



George MacDonald



November 5th saw the passing of a much respected and long serving club member. George was one of the 'characters' of our hobby with an encyclopaedic knowledge of matters vintage.

For many years, up until 2005, he provided the commentary at Stradsett in his own inimitable style. Many folk learnt a great deal from George as he was always willing to offer advice. He was held in high regard throughout the vintage world and renowned for his own forthright, and on occasions, non negotiable views.

The last time I saw George he was involved in a couple of his favourite pastimes. The first was with a microphone in his hand at Casterton acting as a guide on one of the trailers touring the working weekend. The second was at our last group meeting before his death, as a member of the audience winding up his good mate David Grimes.

The passing of George has left a void that cannot be filled.

Andrew Hunt



Club Clothing

Short sleeve Polos are in stock: £11

Baseball Caps, new stock at £5.70

Sweat Shirts, limited stock at £15

Short Sleeve poplin shirts, limited stock at £15

Jackets need to be ordered especially

Blank or completed, laminated Log Sheets can be made to order.

Telephone Viv 01553 617653 to place your order and arrange delivery and to enquire about other possibilities for club clothing.



WINTER MEETINGS at Ryston Park Golf Club along the A10 on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7.30pm. Members and guests are very welcome.

December 17th:

Lt. Cdr. Peter Harvey RNR: Wisbech Port

January 21st:

Andrew Ingram: Wisbech 1902-2000

February 18th: Colin Holwell: David Brown Tractors

March 18th: David Grimes: Basket Full of Memories

*Shane would like you to contact her if there are any special topics you would like to hear about or if you know someone who gives presentations such as we have.
01485542034*

Editor

In the last newsletter was an article about an Essex family wanting to make a little boy happy by seeing the grandfather's much loved 1956 Ferguson tractor restored. I wonder if anyone took up the challenge? As winter draws on now is the time to retreat to the workshop with such a project and make preparations for the next rally season. When I talk to people on the rally field I am constantly amazed at the lengths they go to in order to restore a piece of machinery, whereby ensuring that all is not lost to modernisation. It must be so satisfying to finally arrive at a rally to 'show off' a long-running project. If you have undergone such a project can I ask you please not to forget to take 'before -and-after' photographs and record details of the work you have done and then, of course, to let me have the story to print in this newsletter. It doesn't have to be a winner, just a labour of love and skill and perseverance that you would like to share with other people. Yes, it's nice to receive a trophy but there can be only one winner and that result is dependent upon the judges view which isn't necessarily other people's view. So if you are rightly proud of your exhibit but you don't win a prize, join the many others and reap personal satisfaction from contributing to a good exhibition on the show ground and a job well done!

Thank you to everyone who has sent me articles for this issue. I really value your contributions so please keep them coming. Remember advertising is free to members and Log Sheets are available, blank for you to complete or I can do it for you. Also club clothing, see page 6 for details. Phone, email or write to me or just catch me at a rally or meeting.
Viv

Any views or opinions expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the NVT & EC East Anglia Group.

NVTEC East Anglia Group

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The deadline for the March 2010 newsletter is February 15th 2010. Please send me pictures, notes and write-ups to Laurel Bank, School Road, St Germans, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE34 3DR Or call me and I will take down details over the 'phone. I look forward to hearing from you. Viv

The Working Weekend 2009 at Oak Farm Stradsett, organised by Malcolm Mycock



Matthew with Charles & Frank Heading: 1942 Case with Ransom Motrac plough



Andrew Websdale: Old Grey Fergie & Ransomes TS59 plough



Jim Brown: 1963 Super Dexta & Ransomes Robin plough



Daniel Mycock: 1950 Allis Chalmers Model B & Oliver plough



Michael Waters: 1957 Fordson Major & Ransomes TS82 plough



David Askew: Fordson E27N & Ransomes Trailer plough



Neil Ayres: 1956 International & Howard Trailed Rotorvator



George Kidman: 1954 Fordson Major & Ransomes High Major plough



Barry Ayres: 1952 John Deere 820 & J.D. plough



Gavin Chapman: 1961 Dexta & Ransom 2-furrow plough



Julie Webb: 1954 TEF20 & Ferguson 2-furrow plough



David Giles: 1949 Fordson E27N & Ransomes TS59 2-furrow plough



Alan Creasey: 1956 International B250 & Ransomes TS 2-furrow plough



Neil Houghton: 1960's International B275 & Massey Harris plough fitted with Ransomes YL bodies



Lovely weather ensured that the 22 tractors ploughing their way across the field at Oak Farm had a good time, raising £223.40p for charity. However, it wasn't all plain sailing as an Allis driven by David got stuck in deep furrows, *see picture left*. Not to worry as half a dozen people rallied around and it was soon manhandled out. By the end of the weekend 95% of the field was ploughed bar the headlands and it was drilled the next day. At the AGM Peter mentioned that there was now a good crop of rape growing on the field. 'Well that's because it was ploughed right' was Malcolm's comment who ended by saying, 'It was a brilliant weekend, let's do it again!' Sadly, he is still waiting for 2 people to pay! Come on chaps, pay up!



On the left is Malcolm Mycock with his 1957 Ferguson 35 & Ferguson plough.



Below: At Hilgay, Peter Caley's Drum with Peter and Colin Russel working hard for many hours. *Picture by Malcolm Bush*



No wonder Colin needed a sleep! Many thanks to them for their efforts. *Malcolm Bush*

