



VINTAGE TORQUE

December 2010

**Wishing You a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
with Good Health and Great Rallying in 2011
AGM Presentation Newark 2010**



Peter presented cheques to Jessica Hiscocks of EACH, for £2,500, proceeds from Stradsett Rally, and Chris Donaldson of the E. A. Air Ambulance for £1,095, proceeds from the Road Run. The Working Weekend made £211 for Swaffham

Rural Life Museum. The Chairman and Secretary each gave a comprehensive report that together with reports from the Treasurer and Membership Secretary indicate that our club is thriving. Thanks were given to Sir Jeremy and Lady Bagge for the continuing use of Stradsett Park and farm. The existing committee were re-elected together with two new members. Then followed a very interesting talk about EACH by Jessica who was delighted about our donation and she explained that less than 16% of donations were directed towards running costs. About 40 members attended.



Stradsett Working Weekend

More on page 2



Ricky Kemp from Yaxley Peterborough winner of the Best Stationary Engine with his Petter M

Tracks & Steel Wheels

Malcolm Bush on an International BTD8



Sandringham Show

Matthew Hoy from Nordelph with his 1964 International that he restored.



Working Weekend, Stradsett Update Tracks & Wheels page 2	Sandringham Pages 3	Increased Mechanisation by WN Ridgefarmer pages 3/4/5	National Ploughing Finals Page 5	Hilgay Show page 5	Chairman's Chat & Membership Matters Club Events & Contacts Pages 6/7	Mid West Trip by Darren Tebbitt pages 8/7
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The Working Weekend 2010 at Oak Farm Stradsett, organised by Malcolm Mycock

Once again the Working Weekenders had an enjoyable time ploughing all but 9 acres of 'a 35 acre field of rubbish' (quote by Peter) at Oak Farm. 1st timer Chris Martins was pleased to have help from various people including Andrew Webster, in setting up his Ransomes TS42 plough pulled by his Winget no42 horticultural tractor. He said, 'it was a good and enjoyable day for ploughing and I'm looking forward to next year.'

There were 13 present on Saturday and 17 on Sunday. £211 was collected for Swaffham Rural Life Museum.



Alan Newman



Neville & Andrew Websdale



4th Annual Tracks & Steel Wheels Day at Foulsham for the Big C by Malcolm Bush



Front page shows Malcolm Bush on the International with Clive in the background. Picture above shows the view from Malcolm's seat.

It was held on Sunday 10th October was a lovely sunny day. It was organised by Neville and Sally Websdale with lots of help from friends. It was very successful with lots of spectators enjoying the 17 tractor outfits ploughing, plus 6 Ransomes Crawlers, starting at 9.30am and working until 3pm. I was lucky to be able to use for the day an International BTD8 and cultivator that was transported and loaned to me by Terry Myhill, who also loaned a Caterpillar D4 and Duratrack plough to Clive Slaughter. Many thanks to Terry but as for him, he spent the day chatting to friends, which is what he does best! A final thank you to all the people who donated the raffle prizes; the final amount raised was £1,280 that went to the Big C Centre at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital. A very good day was had by all and we look forward to next year, which won't be long!

Auctions

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Collective Auction of Vintage Tractors, Vehicles, Machinery & Spare Parts at

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Stradsett Park Vintage Rally 1st & 2nd May 2011

Yes folks, Stradsett is less than five months away and your entry form is enclosed with this edition of "Vintage Torque". Last year all sections were fully booked at least 6 weeks before the event so please do not delay in completing and returning it. Some members delayed last year and were disappointed. Entries will be taken on a first come first served basis.

We are again 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 for £2500.00 to East Anglia's Children's Hospices, EACH, as the proceeds from Stradsett 2010

We have made a few minor tweaks to last year's successful, if cold, format. Sir Jeremy Bagge has nominated The East Anglian Air Ambulance as this year's charity.

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.

Andrew Hunt contact 01366 388907 mob: 07802969822

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The attractions at this show are numerous, offering a wide range of interests for the whole family and it certainly draws the crowds. After an early drizzle on Saturday morning the sun came out making it another weekend to remember. Clive and Julie Richardson hosted a good line up of stationary engines, complemented by full size and scale models of steam engines, and 44 tractors, the oldest entry being a rare 1939 Case RC Styled owned by Gordon Carson. The winner of the trophy for Best Stationary Engine, donated by Clive and Julie, was selected by a member of the public. Clive is shown presenting the trophy, to Chris Petty for his 1924 Petter Acorn Top powering a Bamford BR2 pump.

On display at Sandringham, bought in 1944 in a severely frost damaged state and owned by Graham Turner who re-stored this 1929 Ruston Hornsby BPR Hp 4.5 engine no: 156027 Petrol/paraffin. Sold by Tily & Brown (Ruston Agents) 21st Dec. 1929 in West Sussex used until 1960's in a chaff shed.



Ruston Hornsby BPR by Graham Turner

I started my life in December twenty nine,
And as you can see I'm still doing fine.
I stayed on a farm for some sixty five years,
On cold days my starting took blood, sweat and tears.
I work for my governor in the chaff shed,
Till the farmer decided to have electricity instead.
Put in the barn where all the rubbish was stacked,
One freezing cold winter my water jacket it cracked.
So it's off to the auction for me to be sold,
I made 300 quid, or so I was told.
My new owner stripped me with the utmost of care,
Then it's off to the workshop for a welding repair.
When he rebuilt me he cleaned every part,
Until finally finished I was ready to start.
A shiny clean paint job, and new transfers too,
Now it's out in the sunlight, and I feel just like new.
Thanks to my owner I'm still going strong,
And I'm here on the rally field where I belong.

Increased Mechanisation by W.N Ridgefarmer

In my previous articles we have seen how my parents utilized a policy of high amounts of hand-tool work, hours of labour and an almost manic adherence to the perceived rules of good husbandry practices to maximise the income that could be made from farming a small acreage in the 1960's era. They did not farm their land in this way in isolation however. These techniques were a combination of what they had learned from their forebears and from observing the operations that were being used by our neighbouring farmers. This life-style methodology can be seen clearly, in retrospect, as not being much of a change from the farming practises of the previous century. If you look at the implements that we were using behind the Standard Fordson at the beginning of this decade they were conversions of the types of equipment that would have been pulled by a pair of heavy horses. Indeed it was held by one of our close neighbours that for the early spring work like harrowing, seed-drilling and corn rolling that you couldn't beat the use of a horse and so he kept his old Shire just for these purposes! But this was the "swinging sixties" and the times they were "a" changing (as the old cliché goes). Not just in terms of the culture of society - no there were other subtle changes happening as the sixties decade wore on.

These things directly affected us at Wereham and I believe they affected all of the hundreds of small farms throughout the length and breadth of the British Isles. For instance there was the weather. I can clearly remember in the early part of the decade that there was a much more pronounced difference between the seasons of the year. The winters were cold and snowy (1962!) and the summers were sunny and warm (mostly!) March cold winds dried away the wet of the winter and you could get on the land with the manure sower. Autumns held onto the sunshine as long as they could and we would be picking our "Majestic" variety of main crop potatoes behind the Ransomes spinner well into October. When the rains came in November/December it wasn't bad enough to stop us from knocking and topping the sugar beet (by hand of course!), and getting them put into the heap before the win-

ter proper set in. But, as the years went on there was a definite blurring of the seasons and we found that we couldn't get the potatoes up quickly enough to give us time to harvest the beet.

There were other changes which affected us just as they did others involved on commercial activity. Television advertised shiny things that everyone began to desire. Isn't the same thing going on in China at this very moment? People didn't want to go to Hunstanton on a Sunday afternoon on an Ariel 650cc Red Hunter motorcycle with a Watsonian double-adult sidecar anymore. Oh no, they wanted a brand new Ford Anglia 105E or even a Consul Cortina Estate with bench seat and column gear-change (any of this seem familiar to you the middle aged reader??) This had, of course only one end result which was that the cost of wages went up. We could no longer get the cheap casual labour to help us with the intense operations. The traditional source (of the villager's housewife) was also drying up because of the tendency for them to opt for factory jobs instead of land work. I could go on and on with this theme and completely lose the point of these articles so I'll stop there with the reasons why increased mechanisation came to us at that particular point in history.

Increased Mechanisation continued next page

I will, instead go back to the viewpoint of how it affected us and in fact how it actually began. There was an exact point where the decision was taken by my father to increase our direct use of machinery and I can tell you how it came about. We had changed the petrol/t.v.o. Nuffield for a diesel engined International B250 in about 1963 because of the economy of the fuel and there was a lot less messing about when you were starting on a job of work. These Bradford-built units were good pullers despite their relatively small size but



Then my uncle would cart the crop to the hale (earth-protected heap) using this B275 International (which replaced the earlier B250 we had).

were never-the-less a fairly basic machine (for instance they did not have a live P.T.O. and had only one hydraulic trailer tapping). However the B250 was quite adequate for pulling the Ransomes potato spinner and the Gyco sugar beet ploughing-out sled (which we used to like because it laid the beet over nicely for picking up with the hook on the end of the topping blade - when at last you mastered the rhythm of "pickup, chop and throw to heap" that is!) You see, there wasn't, at that time, a need for a more complex prime mover or indeed for increased pulling power. The other main function at beet harvesting time, which was to round up the heap at the beet pad and to clear up the soil left from the cleaner/loader, was carried out by our old E27N with its Horndraulic fore end loader. Up until this point we had no requirements to change these items of equipment. But that was all about to alter and in such a rapid and dramatic way.

We used to carry out almost all of the jobs on the farm ourselves at that time - this was done via a combination of hand-work and the relatively simple machinery that we owned. All the ploughing, spring work and drilling, tractor hoeing - even the straw was dealt with by us, we used a Claas buncher because Dad said that bunches were better for use on the potato hales for storage prior to the onset of winter. There was the odd

occasion when we were getting a bit behind with our land work where Dad would ask Mr Armsby of Boughton to do a bit of drilling or



Later on we bought a new Leyland 384 and a second-hand Ferguson potato harvester, also a single row machine but this time it was a bulker. These harvesters required three hydraulic tappings on the tractor.

similar works for us, but by and large the whole of the range of tasks were undertaken by ourselves except for one thing.... The Combining. This function of the harvest was carried out by a contractor from Stoke Ferry. This was in fact a quite common practice for farmers to use contractors for their combining of grain crops - certainly a lot of our neighbours did. Traditionally the corns were cut by binders and the shocks put into stacks for threshing by the steam engines (then later on by Field Marshall tractors) and threshing drums and associated tackle. This activity was carried out by specialised agricultural contractors during the winter or early spring when the other farming tasks were at a minimum. Naturally this traditional harvesting method persisted from its heyday at the turn of the previous century and right through to the period just after the Second World War. Then came the advent of combine harvesters.



This is the hale being built. My dad is placing forkfuls of spuds onto the top of the heap to maintain its correct shape. The trailer is a Wheatley

Clearly the investment of capital into these machines was not going to be possible for farmers of a modest acreage - no, the obvious buyers of the early Massey Harris combines were the contractors who had previously operated

the touring steam threshing outfits. There was, however, a growing problem to this system of getting ones corn cut - a fly in the



Massey Ferguson spud harvesters suffered from not having enough room on the circular table to pick all the potatoes off before the spoil was returned to land, this resulted in some of the crop being lost!

ointment that kept on getting worse as the sixties strode on. Up to the 1950's there were hardly any farms that did not have some livestock of some sort on them - they generated muck to use as fertiliser, produce milk, butter, cheese etc., for sale at the farm gate and hams for the table and rashers with the eggs!

But change happens and many farms were going out of animals. There were factors like the creation of the Milk Marketing Board and a devastating outbreak of foot and mouth disease which exacerbated this decline – but once started it quickly became a race to remove meadows and cattle yards and increase the arable production of the land. Therefore increasing amounts of corn crops were being planted. It is in the nature of things that he who pays the piper calls the tune and so it came to pass that the larger farmers would monopolise the combining contractors. This resulted in our bloke from Stoke Ferry always leaving the smaller acreages to receive the benefit of the Massey Bagger until last! This used to infuriate my father! He would go to the red phone box in West Dereham (we had yet to experience the joys of having our very own telephone in the bungalow at Wereham!) and call up the contractor to admonish him for not turning up at ours when the conditions were just right to get the corn cut. I used to sit outside of the phone box in the Cortina with its doors shut, but even so I could still hear Dad "explaining" to the contractor exactly what he thought of him! That is how I came to learn the ignoble art of mass swearing! Only half of the words he used were in my dictionary in the bedroom that night! (The others were secretly discussed in the school playground in order to gain some idea of what they could possibly mean – much sniggering ensued!) The problem for us was that if the corn harvest was late we would struggle to get the potatoes picked before the time arrived to begin the essential sugar beet harvesting. You see, the beet was our main cash crop and as such the income from them was far more important to us than that of some of the other crops. It boiled down to a decision as to what could be done to speed up the harvesting of the wretched spuds.

The 4th Hilgay Vintage Country Show was another new one for me this year and I must say what a pleasant and interesting show it turned out to be. Held in support of the village church there was something for everyone including a dog show. All sections were well supported with a nice variety of side stalls and awning displays. One event not seen at other shows and drawing a lot of attention was the '100 years of Farming' demonstration. This proved very entertaining as it covered most jobs in agriculture as they used to be with women dressed with their old-type bonnets and hessian aprons picking potatoes, then on to the riddling machine and into the 1cwt potato sacks. The display also included various types of horse drawn ploughs etc and 'Harvesting

Mum and Dad agonised over this problem for ages. Then one day an advert appeared in the Agricultural section of the EDP newspaper – "FOR SALE: A Wuhlmaus potato harvester, only used on small farm in Southery". My Dad struggles to read out the manufacturer's name (they were an East German company) – he pronounced it Wool-er-mouse! We went and saw it that evening and had a deal for this one row bagger which had the "luxury" of a flat tin roof to keep the rain "or the gals who hev to pick orf the stones an' clods an' tops an' stuff" – (as quoted by the vendor). How the acquisition of this machine changed our whole way of life – must be saved for the next instalment I'm afraid because my missus is getting tired of typing up what she calls "another load of your old squit". Readers, you judge for yourselves!

W N Ridgefarmer



The Wuhlmaus potato harvester pulled by a non-live drive Nuffield 10/60! Shame it was a bagger because we emptied the sacks of spuds into a trailer when we got to the headlands!

Throughout the Year' from sewing corn with a Fiddle to the Reaping and Binding machines and on to the Threshing Drum, Elevator and Bailer. Each stage was explained by the commentator, including the householder keeping a pig in a sty, which gave rise to a few smiles on faces.

Cliff Smith



Ploughing Results
Vintage Ploughing
Champion Robert Butlin;

60th British National Ploughing Championships 9/10 October 2010



British Horse Ploughing Champion James Elliott; **National YF Ploughing Champion** Ian Brewer; **David Brown Ploughing Champion** George Watts; **Ferguson Ploughing Champion** Gwynfor Parry; **Horticultural Ploughing** Peter Cotton

In a celebration of 60 years of British Ploughing around 200 of Britain's top champion ploughmen competed on a 250 acre prime site provided by H R Bourn & Son. just opposite the Lincolnshire Showground. Two busy days were packed with competitions for conventional and reversible ploughing; four types of vintage ploughing classes, crawler ploughing and of course magnificent heavy horses. The competitions were complimented by agricultural machinery demonstrations, local and national companies, a wide variety of trade stands, vintage machinery displays, country crafts and steam engines making for an interesting day out.

Pictures by Malcolm Bush



CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

The dry weather of June and July seem a distant memory since the endless rains seem to be never ending. However, here we are into the winter months where we can get into the garage, garden shed or, heaven forbid, the living room and work on our various projects in readiness for next summer. I personally have had a change of direction as after losing our daughter last March I have been left with an MGB GT sports car that is partially renovated. So to keep memories of our daughter alive, my son and I are working to have it ready for the Stradsett Rally.

Please don't forget that the club doesn't close down for the winter so do come along to the evening meetings and bring a new friend along as this is the ideal way to 'break the ice' and introduce them to the club.

Well, time to sign off now but not before I wish you all a cheerful and enjoyable Christmas and look forward to seeing you in the New Year. **Peter**



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 16th:

Bart Keeney, The B.K. Museum

January 20th:

Dr Paul Richards, Victorian Lynn & Savages Engineering



February 17th: Jim Bacon, Talking Weather

March 17th: David Grimes: Memory Lane

I do hope that you will enjoy the speakers I have arranged for you this winter. If you have any special topics you would like to hear about or if you know someone who gives suitable presentations, please contact me, Shane on 01485542034 or speak to me at the meetings so I can make sure the evenings are covering the topics that you want to know about.

Membership Matters

Hi to you all

Well it's time again to reflect on 2010, Stradsett rally, road run and the ploughing weekend all of which have given 3 charities funds to achieve new things in 2011. Many of you have taken part in other rallies and I know from what's been said that you had great time.

Now to the real reason for my chat in this magazine. Its time for the membership fees to be sent to me ready for next year, there are no changes to any of the fees, that's something you don't hear very often enjoy being part of this great team.

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.

Well this is the time I now 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
01366 388907

14 The Paddocks, Downham Market,
Norfolk PE38 9JA

Chris



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



For Sale

1947 Lister 1.5 D & Bentall Griss Mill, 4'6" Belt £100

Contact Pat Clark 01760755471

"Lister D" Engine, plus 4-wheel trolley.

Bought initially by Fred Rickard of Bourne Lincs, 2nd July 1950, it was used to run his grain elevator.

The 2nd. owner was a woodsman (cannot remember his name) at Ropsley, Nr. Grantham as a back-up engine for his saw bench. I bought it when he retired in 1980, and unfortunately owing to me starting up a new business I have been unable to give it the care it deserves. Hence the reason I now wish to sell it.

Offers to:
Brian Suiter, 25, School Lane, Silk Willoughby,
Sleaford, Lincs. NG34 8PG Tel.
01529 304400



Club Clothing



There is limited stock at 'old' prices so order now to get ready for 2011 rallying and the beat VAT rise.
Short sleeve Polos: £11

Baseball Caps at £5.70 Sweat Shirts £15

Short Sleeve poplin shirts £15, Jackets need to be ordered. Blank or completed, laminated Log Sheets can be made to order.

Telephone Viv 01553 617653 to place your order.

Road Trip Across the Mid-West

continued from back page

tors leaving the small show- we had hoped to visit that day if time had permitted.

Day three however, was far more productive and enjoyable: with a visit to Walter and Bruce Keller's private collection at Forest Junction near Appleton.

Their collection is large, featuring in excess of 600 tractors: 400 John Deere's, 100 Minneapolis Moline's and the remainder are lesser known U.S. makes such as Gibson, Avery, Silver King etc.

The exhibits are immaculately presented in seven dust free barns, which are a credit to Walter and Bruce's dedication.

John Deere's make up the lions share of the collection because it is a brand close to the Keller's heart: for they ran the John Deere dealership in town from 1926-83.

But what makes this collection extra special is the actual tractor examples it contains, for the Keller's specialise in finding rare models from short production runs and tractors with low serial numbers.

Incredibly they have over 40 John Deere's, which are, first builds!

What's more they also own a few specific derivatives, which are genuine factory built one of ones! Tractors you will not find anywhere else in the World!

We had only a few hours to tour the collection, but it is a place where even a whole day would not have been enough.

One barn houses the 100+ Minneapolis Moline collection.

Among the rare brands is this interesting Avery Ro-trac- its front wheels simply swing to change from four-wheel to tricycle configuration.

That evening we made our way back to Madison and chose the Old Country Buffet restaurant for our evening meal, however we were confronted by the cash register on entry?

"Pay on entry Sir and eat as much as you like!" You never go hungry visiting Uncle Sam!

To be continued in the March issue of Vintage Torque

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Editor

I would like to say 'thank you' to all the people who are contributing to this newsletter and helping to make it an interesting read. The deadline for the March 2011 newsletter is February 11th 2011. Do you have an interesting story or project to tell me about?? Or do you have a good photograph that I can scan? Please send me, by post or email, 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



A fine pair of Shires at the 60th National Ploughing Championships.



Gordon Carson joins the committee with the role of Publicity Officer. His experience is in building and double glazing for over 20 years and he has several tractors. He has been a club member for 5 years.



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.

Road Trip across the Mid-West. Part 1 By Darren Tebbitt

In June, Malcolm Bush, Terry Myhill and myself visited the U.S.A on a tractor enthusiast's trip that would see us cover seven states, and put 2498 miles on our hire car in just 18 days!

Shortly after I returned from my last trip to the States in 2007, Malcolm Bush expressed an interest in joining me if I ever went again.

At that time I had no immediate plans to return, but things changed in 2008 when I bought a John Deere model D and needed parts from across the pond.

But late 2008 saw turmoil in the World's money markets and Sterling went into freefall, dashing hopes of a summer 2009 vacation.

Thankfully, by Autumn 2009 exchange rates had stabilised to the point that planning a trip could begin. At this point Terry expressed an interest in joining us, adding that he was willing to be our driver.

The die was cast, Terry would drive, I would be navigator and Malcolm would enjoy the view!

Surfing the web for museums to visit and shows to see, we decided late June was the ideal time to go: because it enabled us to visit both the John Deere and International tractor Expo's as well as fitting in with our farming schedules back home.

On Saturday 12th June we flew from Heathrow on an eight-hour flight to Chicago's O'hare- from the busiest airport in the World to the largest! In Chicago, we caught a short internal flight to Madison- the capitol of Wisconsin - the dairy state renowned for it's Cheese.

However, although we made it to our flight in time our luggage did not! Furthermore, as we had arrived on the last flight of the day, we would have to manage without our cases until the morning!

Apparently, delayed luggage is quite common when flying out of 'O' Hare- where the logistics of luggage transfer leave a lot to be desired!

More hiccups at Madison meant we were not reunited with our cases until 4pm the following afternoon, by which time we had been away from home for 38 hours, and were badly in need of a shave! Hitting the road that evening, we made good progress north- covering the hundred miles to our hotel in good time, and meeting on our way trac-

Walter Keller with his 'unique' experimental GP wide-tread: featuring powered wheel track adjustment, built in 1929. Walter bought this tractor in rough condition in 2002 for \$172,000.



Keller's shed 1 of 8



Malcolm enjoying JD barn no.2



Terry finds the 1st 830 built, in the 'big tractor shed'

Experimental 4 cylinder model L that didn't see production.



Amongst the rare brands is this interesting Avery Ro-trac; its front wheels simply swing to change from four-wheel to tricycle configuration.



Continued on page 7 column 1



Editor: Mrs Vivien Gray

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