

alabamaihwc.org



International Harvester Collectors • Chapter #23

ALABAMA

Spring 2020

First Chapter Meeting of 2020 Conducted Online via ZOOM



(Top row, left to right) president Randy Bodine, secretary/treasurer and director, Clay Nordan, director Joe Criswell, member Sylvan Dyer. (Second row left to right) advisor Robert Bodine, advisor Sherman Roberts and member Jane Roberts, director Charlie Grimmitt, vice-president Gary Bell. (Third row, left to right) director Conrad Bell, member Jana Bodine, director Jason Moore, member Brad Bodine, (Bottom row, left to right) director Buck Brown, member Terry Stripling, member Matt Bodine, member Kasey Bodine.

Next Meeting *Alabama IH State Show*

11:00 a.m. June 13, 2020

Wallace State Community College • Hanceville, Alabama

Randy's Ramblings

• President's Letter from Randy Bodine •

I normally don't title my "Ramblings", but if I did, this one would be called "Handshakes and Haircuts". We are living in an interesting time. I am sure every generation has said that at some point. However, when a handshake becomes a bio-weapon and you see men with long hair mullets (who would normally keep their hair short and tight) – these are interesting times indeed! I remember when I was growing up, I would go to the barber shop in Guntersville, Alabama. Actually, it was in a part of town several blocks south of the main town and creatively, everyone call it "Southtown". Dad would take Robert and me on Saturday mornings. It was a thrill to get to sit in the barber chair. He had to put a padded plank across the arms of the chair in order to get me up high enough to buzz off my hair. I didn't care what my hair looked like – I just wanted the piece of bubble gum that I got if I sat still while the barber buzzed it off. I also didn't have to worry about blowing a bubble and getting it stuck in my hair – what hair?

The Egyptians were the first to actually take a blade to their hair. Ironically, the last haircut I had was just before Jana and I left for Egypt. I had my



Robert and Randy looking sharp after a trip to the barbershop.



Ancient Egyptians gave us handshakes and haircuts, both of which are either taboo or potentially unhealthy today.

hair cut shorter than I normally would because I knew it would have to last until we returned from that trip. Little did I know that it would be the last haircut for almost three months!

The Egyptians were also noted for

their handshake, which dates back to the 5th century B.C. in Egypt and Greece. It was a symbol of peace to show that neither person was carrying a weapon. The shaking motion was an attempt to shake loose any concealed or hidden weapons. Unfortunately, COVID-19

can't be shaken loose but instead, transferred from hand to hand. Most of us were taught to "look the person in the eye and have a firm handshake". In parts of New Zealand, they touch noses, in Ethiopia, they touch shoulders, in the Congo, they touch foreheads. But, by far, the most common physical way to greet people around the world is the handshake – maybe until now.

Charles Allen, Bonnie Brannon and Sherman Roberts have been working with the "powers-that-be" at the City of Hanceville and Wallace State Community College, and they are all in agreement that the tractor show at Hanceville on June 13 will take place as scheduled – with no handshakes! Let me caution everyone to adhere to all the CDC guidelines along with the State of Alabama guidelines to keep everyone safe. Although this is our Alabama IHC State Show, we will not put up our iconic red & white striped tent in an effort to discourage close social gathering.

If hundreds of people can go in and out of Lowe's and Walmart, surely we can have a tractor show on a college campus in a big parking lot. We have plenty of room to spread out and not be close to each other. We will still have our meeting at 11:00 am but we will keep ourselves "socially distanced".

If you would feel uncomfortable being at the show, concerned that you might be exposed, are sick, have a fever, or an underlying health issue that makes you at risk, please don't attend the show or

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



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Non-Profit Corporation

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Ronnie Lott

Sherman Roberts

Due to the impact of the Corona Virus on American society in the spring of 2020, the decision was made to reschedule the first Chapter #23 meeting of the year, originally planned for the show at Wetumpka on April 4 and hold it at the annual Snead/CASE-IH show on April 18. The effects of the virus then caused the cancellation of the Snead show, so president Randy Bodine arranged for the meeting to go forward on the intended date, April 18, by making use of the internet technology that has been employed by many schools and businesses during the pandemic as a way of gathering in groups without endangering anyone with exposure to the virus.

**Minutes of AL Chapter #23
International Harvester Collectors
Meeting Online via ZOOM
11:00 a.m., April 18, 2020**

6 Directors present

Conrad Bell
Buck Brown
Joe Criswell
Charlie Grimmitt
Jason Moore
Clay Nordan

2 Advisors present

Robert Bodine
Sherman Roberts

12 Members present

Harold Beck
Retha Beck
Gary Bell
Brad Bodine
Hannah Bodine
Kasey Bodine
Jana Bodine
Matt Bodine
Randy Bodine
Sylvan Dyer
Jane Roberts
Terry Stripling

Once everyone had gotten logged into the ZOOM online meeting application and it was determined that a quorum was present, Randy was able to call the meeting to order as usual and he began the meeting with an invocation.

The first agenda item was Clay's report. He had no additions to the minutes as published in the recent newsletter and said that the chapter balance was now \$7611.32 following payment for the newsletter and some smaller expenses. He made a motion to accept the minutes, there was a second, and the motion passed.

He reported that our active member number currently stands at 312 following the addition of two new members recently.

Following his printed agenda, which had been distributed by email ahead of time, Randy welcomed the three new directors whose terms began on January 1 of this year. They are Buck Brown, Charlie Grimmitt, and Jason Moore. All three were with us for this meeting. Randy then thanked the three directors whose terms expired at the end of 2019 and then moved to advisor positions. These new advisors are Robert Bodine, Ronnie Lott, and Sherman Roberts.

Next on the agenda was a report from vice-president Gary Bell about the national Winter Convention that was held at Clemmons, NC, February 13-15 earlier this year. Gary reported that the convention was hosted by North Carolina chapter #42 and was a great success. He said that it attracted IHC members from all over the U.S. and that Chapter #42 had arranged for many good excursions and activities to keep their guests occupied and entertained. He also said that Alabama Chapter #23 had a good showing at Clemmons and that those who made the trip learned a lot about what it will take to host a successful Winter Convention sometime in the near future.

The agenda then called for a discussion of Winter Convention 2023, which had been a topic at previous meetings regarding hosting it and bringing it to the Huntsville, AL area. Randy reported that he had learned that Tennessee Chapter #9 intends to bid on the 2022 Winter Convention, so he suggested that we might want to postpone our time at bat for a few years.

No firm decision was made at this meeting but in the discussion, there was general agreement that putting a few years between TN Chapter #9 and AL Chapter #23 as convention hosts would probably be the best idea.

The topic then turned to the "B" Cotton Picker restoration project. Randy reported that some work on the project did take place in the early days of the virus crisis. Sherman Roberts, Leon Putman, Brad Bodine, and Robert Bodine found a day to get together at Bodine Farms and have put an initial coat of red paint on the tractor and cotton picker components. Randy said that it's now in really good shape. With this first painting completed, it's ready to be put back together, give it another coat of red paint, have decals applied, and get the finishing touches done. All that's holding things up is the limitations imposed on us all by the virus pandemic.

Next was a review of our chapter meetings that are remaining for the rest of the year. The second meeting of the year is intended for June 13 at the Hanceville show, which is also the host of the 2020 Alabama IH State Show.

Sherman Roberts offered what he knew about this show and said that at this time they intended for the show to be held at Wallace State as planned. He said that we may still be wearing masks and doing social distancing then, but no decision has been made to cancel at this time.

Randy suggested that since the show is held in a parking lot on the campus, we

could avoid putting up the big chapter tent as a way of preventing people from congregating in large groups and just have a tractor show and a meeting and try to enjoy the day, being mindful to all keep our distance from one another.

Our third meeting of the year had been scheduled for Fyffe in northeast Alabama on August 22, but a scheduling slip-up by the City of Fyffe resulted in two conflicts, first with the show at Lawrenceburg, TN, which many of our members attend annually and second, with the Russellville Watermelon Festival. Consequently, this third meeting of the year has been moved to Hartselle Depot Days on September 19, nearly a month later. It's also hoped that restrictions caused by the pandemic will have been loosened more by the time we have this meeting.

The final meeting of 2020 is scheduled for the show at Dothan's Landmark Park on October 17. Randy said that we haven't had a meeting at Dothan for a long time and that it is a great park and location, so he encouraged everyone to try to be there in October and bring a tractor.

Some discussion then ensued about the pending rescheduling of the 2020 Red Power Round Up at Huron, SD. Sherman said that he had heard from a reliable source that it could be moved to the weekend of August 8, 9, and 10 but no firm decision had been made yet. Randy then emphasized that it would definitely not be held in the month of June this year.

The final agenda item was a reminder to everyone that bids for hosting the Alabama IH State Show for both 2021 and 2022 remain open and anyone representing a show that is interested can contact Randy, Gary, or Clay at any time to let us know about their intentions.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

*Respectfully submitted,
Clay Nordan – Secretary Treasurer*

Financial Report

Net Assets, Apr. 2020 \$8854.08

Income

Dues Collected..... 55.00

Subtotal..... 55.00

Expenses

National Dues Paid 30.00

Newsletter 1267.76

Subtotal..... 1297.76

Net Assets, June 2020 \$7611.32

the meeting. Please stay home. Attend at your own risk.

again, but it's great to know we have the capabilities.

Our third meeting of the year was planned for Fyffe on August 29. However, due to a scheduling error with some of their vendors for UFO days, they changed the date of the show and the new date caused a conflict with other

Normally, I would tell everyone to bring a friend and as many tractors and displays as you can to the state show, but I'm going to have to leave that to your discretion for now. I hope you will all stay well and as many as can will join us in Hanceville on June 13.

Randy

2020 Tractor Show Schedule

Montevallo FFA (CANCELLED!)	April 4
Snead – JD Ag Supply (CANCELLED!)	April 4
Tuskegee (CANCELLED!)	April 4
Wetumpka (CANCELLED!)	April 4
Loxley (CANCELLED!)	April 11
**Snead – Case IH (CANCELLED!)	April 18
Houston, MS (CANCELLED!)	April 25
Moulton, Alex. Lumber (CANCELLED!)	April 25
Franklinton, LA (CANCELLED!)	May 1-2
Chalybeate (CANCELLED!)	May 9
New Market (CANCELLED!)	May 9
Tannehill State Park (CANCELLED!)	May 22-23
Point Mallard (CANCELLED!)	May 23
KY IH State Show (CANCELLED!)	June 5-6
Haleyville (CANCELLED!)	June 6
Moulton (CANCELLED!)	June 6
Summerdale (CANCELLED!)	June 6
**Hanceville, Alabama IH State Show	June 13
Cotaco – Soggy Bottom	June 20
NEW Hartselle – S. Flywheelers Rally	July 11
Fairview– (Hwy. 69 North)	July 11
Guntersville	July 18
Speake	July 25
Athens – Piney Chapel	August 7-8
Huron, SD – Red Power Round Up	August 8-10
Lawrenceburg, TN	August 21-22
Russellville – Watermelon Festival	August 22
Fyffe	August 22
Fairview– (Labor Day)	Sept. 7
Eagleville, TN	Sept. 11-12
Town Creek	Sept. 12
Inman, Georgia IH State Show	Sept. 18-20
**Hartselle – Depot Days	Sept. 19
Eva	Sept. 26
Winfield – Mule Day	Sept. 26
Centre – Fall Fest	Oct. 3
St. Florian	Oct. 3
Gadsden – Noccalula Falls G Roundup	Oct. 9-10
Harriman, Tennessee – IH State Show	Oct. 9-10
Cordova – Jean's On The River	Oct. 10
Falkville – Festival	Oct. 10
Shelby – Iron Works	Oct. 10
**Dothan – Landmark Park	Oct. 17
Jasper – Heritage Festival	Oct. 17
Wedowee	Oct. 17
Hartselle – Southland Flywheelers	Oct. 24
Greenville	Oct. 24
Jasper – Veterans Day	Nov. 7
Orrville	Nov. 14
Perry, GA – National Antique Ag Show	Nov. 19-21

****Alabama Chapter 23 Meeting at 11:00**


Show Books \$20

2018 Red Power Round Up Show Books can now be purchased at cost. Be sure to pick one up at the Chapter #23 meeting on June 13 at the Hanceville Alabama IH State Show.





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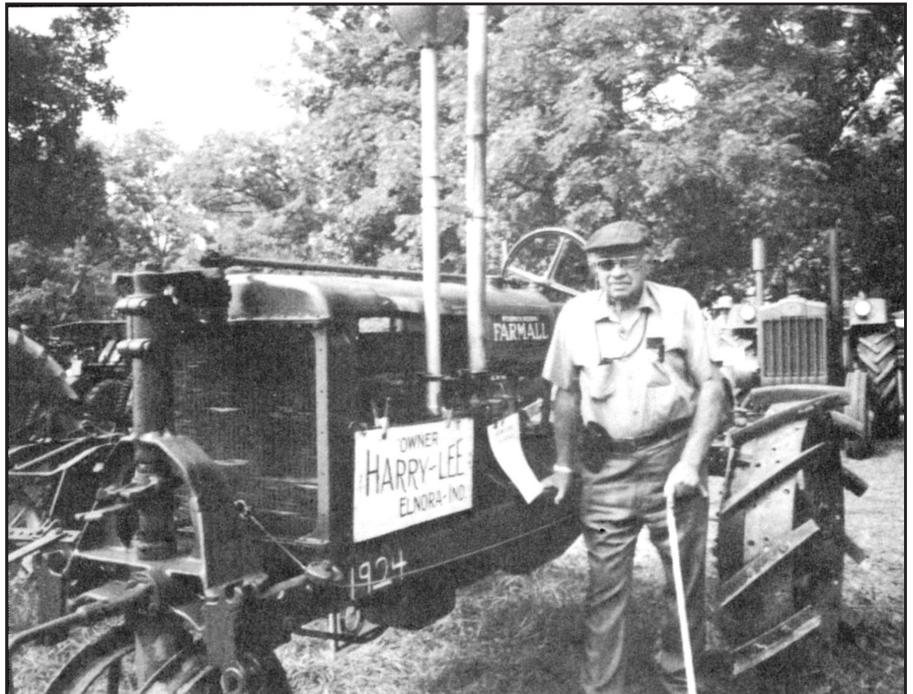
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FARMALL MEMORIES

Straight From the Man Who Was There

By Kenneth Sayre, Edgerton, Wisconsin – as told to Harry Lee

I thought I would drop you a few lines about a surprising and enjoyable acquaintance I met Labor Day weekend 1991 at the Rock River Thresher-ee in Edgerton, Wisconsin. The show was hosting the International Harvester Collectors and the 1991 Red Power Round Up. One morning as the show was just getting started, I was standing near my tractors that were on display and I happened to notice an elderly man looking at one of my tractors very closely. I walked up closer to him thinking that he might want to talk about the tractor, so we spoke to each other. He then asked me "Is this your tractor?", and I said, "Yes, it sure is." Then this man said, "I see it is one of the early Regular Farmalls, one of the first 200 built in 1924." And I told him, "Yes, it was." He looked it over very closely as to how original it was, (and he knew what he was looking at). He at this point told me that he was the first person to drive this tractor, and now I was beginning to get interested in talking to this man some more. He told me things that I already knew and things about the development of this tractor that I didn't know. He was interesting and enjoyable to talk to. He and I went in different directions looking at other tractors, and after a few minutes I got to thinking, maybe I should have asked this man if he would like to drive the tractor. So I went back to look for him, but didn't see him, so I let it go. During



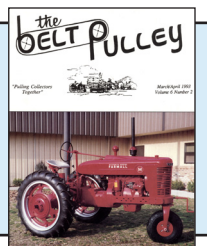
Former IH employee Kenneth Sayre with the tractor he first drove in 1924.

the summer of 1992 we kept in touch with each other, and made arrangements to meet at another show, and if he could, he would like to drive the tractor. He had already told me about his experience at the factory and how he came to be the first person to drive the tractor, Serial # QC 609. So, all spring and summer of 1992 I planned for another show in the direction of Edgerton. We finally met at the Northern Illinois Steam Power Club

Show in Sycamore, Illinois. I went to the show taking this 1924 Regular along with my Twin Engine Double Wide. Oh yes, this man's name was Kenneth Sayre, and he got there on Saturday, and we each were thrilled. So now we reviewed the story of this tractor again and I took his picture with the tractor. He is now 89 ½ years. He drove the tractor again through the parade very nicely. Evening came, and we had to part again, hoping we could get together again sometime. Now I want to back up a little to the first telephone call that I mentioned earlier. During this telephone conversation I asked Mr. Sayre if he could write a story of his experience working at the factory when this tractor was built and here it is.

Harry Lee Elnora, Indiana

This story first appeared in the March/April 1993 issue of a magazine called *The Belt Pulley*. Sherman Roberts brought a stack of issues he no longer wanted to our meeting at Hartselle in October of 2019 for anyone to take who might be interested. Larry Lemmond went home with this one and some time later sent in a recommendation that we reprint it for the benefit of any members who might be interested.



I graduated from the University of Wisconsin at Madison in June of 1923 and had a degree in agricultural engineering. I worked on my father's farm near Edgerton, WI until about December 1923. I then went to Chicago and applied for work at the I.H. Tractor Factory at 24th and Western Avenue. They soon called me to test and break in a first run of 200 Farmall Regular tractors. These tractors were hand built in a small corner of the huge 10-20 Factory. The man in charge was named Critic, and he was well-named. He was a hard driver and demanded quality work. It might be of interest to back-track and give an account of my background. I was born March 4, 1903. I was through grade school and high school at age 16, and graduated from the Ag Engineering Department at U.W. (University of Wisconsin) Madison in June 1923. Our family was machine minded. My father built a dam on the Yahara River which bordered our farm on the West and South. He built a six foot undershot waterwheel and geared it to be a 110 volt DC generator so we had electric lights when I was five years old. In 1914 the Janesville Electric Company ran a 110 volt A.C. line to our farm. So the dam and generator were abandoned. My father ran a steam-threshing, silo filler and shredding rig powered by a little 12 hp Rumely engine. He taught me to fire the engine and at age 12 I could keep up enough steam to run the thresher. Our first tractor was bought in 1919, a 12-25 Avery 2 cylinder with opposed pistons. It was rather crude with open gears and only 2 speeds ahead. However, it was durable and was used on the farm and for belt work for at least 20 years. We had several I.H. machines over the years. A roll McCormick wood frame shredder, two or three McCormick grain binders and a couple of McCormick hay mowers. My father died in May of 1934. He contracted pneumonia from plowing for a neighbor in a dust storm. I operated the farm and did custom work for others until 1971. I have owned many tractors from 1934 to 1971, including two cross motor Cases, an F-20 Farmall, Massey 101 Jr., D.C. Case, W.D. Allis, WD45 Allis, HD 5 Allis Crawler with Drott tilling blade. It also plowed using a 5 bottom 16" international plow. At this time a 5 bottom plow was very rare; it had to be ordered by the local I.H. dealer and was slow in arriving. The plow had a spring draw for trip and mechanical lift. It did a

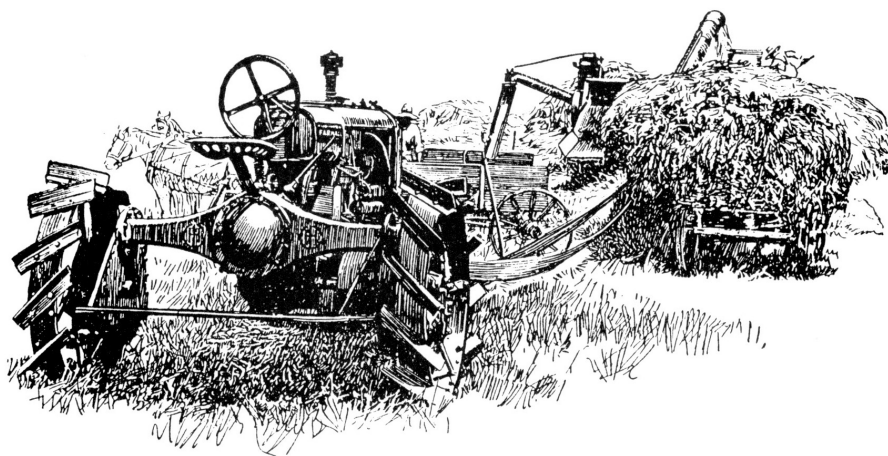
good job generally but heavy corn stalks had to be chopped first or it would plug up. I used the H.D. 5 for five years from 1949 to 1954. The last tractor I used was a '63 John Deere 3010. It went with the farm when I sold it to my son, Evan, in 1971. He used it until 1989. I attended the Rock River Thresheree on Saturday of the Labor Day weekend. I immediately noticed a large number of red I.H. tractors lined up for display. I started reading the data cards on each one, and presently arrived at a tractor with a card stating it was a 1924 Regular Farmall. I suddenly realized this was one of 200 tractors which were the first production run made to be sold. Here before me was a tractor I had driven 67 years ago. I was

Farmall Memories with Kenneth Sayre

the first one to drive and test this run of Farmalls. I examined the tractor carefully and it seemed to have been restored carefully to its original state. At that time Mr. Lee appeared and confirmed that the tractor was indeed one of four Farmalls known to exist from the original production run. The only parts that I could not remember were the two long pipes from the manifold extending some four feet upward. One was exhaust and one was air intake. I think these parts were shipped with the tractor and assembled

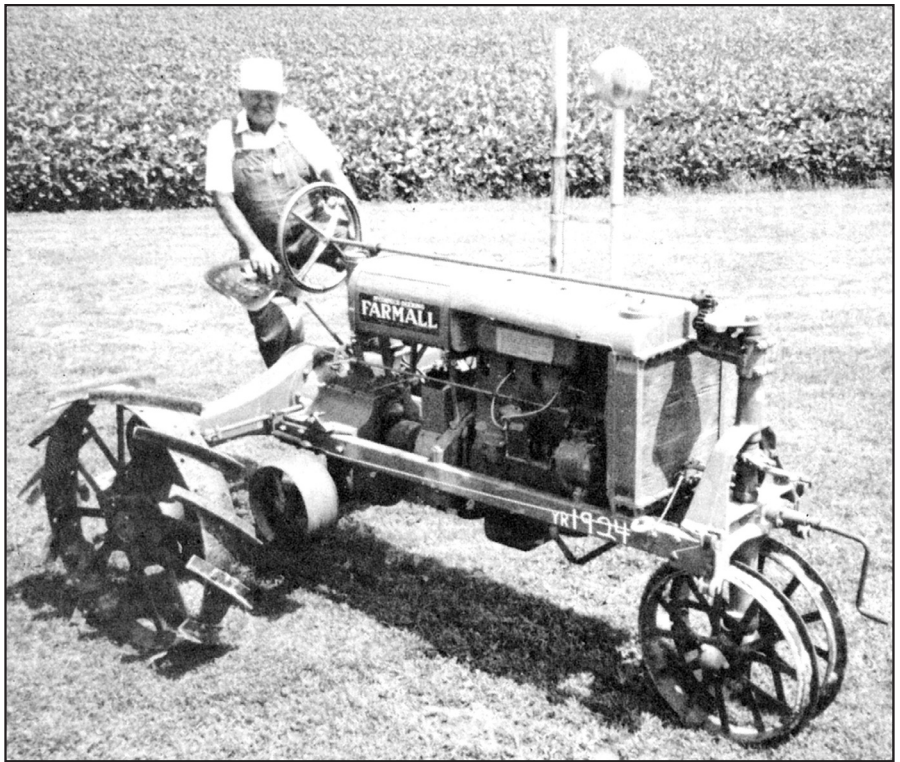
by the dealer on delivery. My only regret was that I did not drive the tractor again at least a few feet. This "reunion" was the highlight of many Thresherees I have attended. Those first 200 tractors were built on three sets of saw horses. First the frame rails were laid over two horses and all the components were bolted to the side rails. The engine came all assembled. I think they were small I.H. truck engines. The transmissions and rear axle assembly were put together on benches at one side of the work area. I think there was one foreman and two workers besides myself. They tried to finish two tractors every day but did not always make it. I did very little work on assembly, as I was kept busy breaking in the tractors in the big yard back of the factory. I had to run each tractor three hours around the lot dragging a 10-20 rear wheel fastened to the drawbar with a log chain. This made the tractor work a little. When it snowed three or four inches deep I could not pull the wheel as there were no lugs on the smooth steel rear wheels. I was continually getting stuck. I was instructed to turn sharp left and right so as to pivot the inside wheel and see at the right tension. Wheel trouble developed on the first tractors. The hubs cracked and failed. The engineers finally made a heavier cast steel hub which didn't break. The only other major trouble I remember was with the differential spider gear thrust washer. The first washers were steel on steel. They cut out at once. Then came steel on bronze washers. These were better but still didn't last long. Finally they used a ball thrust bearing on each side and the trouble stopped. By the time they had built about 100 tractors, most of the bugs were eliminated. After I had driven each tractor a minimum of three

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



hours and Mr. Critic okayed it, I drove the tractor to the paint department to be painted. If there was a previous tractor painted I drove it back to the shipping dock and drained the radiator. I discovered a shortcut through the drop forge plant. It was a welcome place as it was always very warm there and I was always cold. Chicago is the coldest place on Earth in winter as it is so damp when the wind blows off of Lake Michigan. The drop forge plant fascinated me as it was a spectacular sight to see a white hot bullet of steel pounded into a crank shaft in a matter of a few seconds. The showers of sparks looked like a fireworks display. I never stayed long there as I was generally behind in breaking in the next tractor. When the thrust bearings were replaced I had to break in the differential again to be sure it was okay. This took another hour or two. When I wasn't running a tractor I helped with the assembly. Mostly I linked up the clutch shaft with flexible coupling under the U shaped steel shield in front of the transmission case. One interesting facet of the 10-20 Factory was the engine breaking department. This was a large room with some 30 or 40 D.C. electric motor generators. A 10-20 engine was hooked to each generator with quick hookups for exhaust, water and gasoline. First the engine was run by this motor to break it in. After the proper time, the engine was fueled and it turned the generator in turn. Thus the generators furnished enough current to run the ones which were breaking in the newest engines. The whole unit was self-powered. In early May we finished the 200 tractors so I was out of work. Mr. Critic asked me to go out to Libertyville and help seed a golf course which some I.H. executives were building. I was given an old 15-30 tractor, a double disc and drag to fix up this large golf course. The job lasted about three weeks. The transmission on the old 15-30 gave out, and as we were nearly finished, I was told to go back to the factory for a new assignment. I received 50 cents per hour from I.H. We were paid in cash every other Friday. An armed guard stood by the paymaster.

As I was fed up with Chicago's climate and smog, I resigned and returned to my fathers farm where I lived until I was 84 years old. I then bought a home in Edgerton where I now live with my wife, Mary. In June 1991 we celebrated our 65th wedding anniversary.



Harry Lee's 1924 Farmall Regular. One of the first 200 off the line.

An IH Legend: Harry Lee of Elnora, Indiana

Any IHC member who attended a Red Power Round Up before 2010 would inevitably see Harry Lee and his tractors at the show, no matter where it was held. He was involved with farming all his life. He also had a national reputation involving the restoration of antique International Harvester tractors and the building of prototype tractors of his own design or from pictures.

He appeared along with his tractors on the covers of several national magazines, such as Red Power, Engineers and Engines, and Gas Engine Magazine. He had many friends throughout the U.S. and Canada. He was a charter member of the White River Valley Antique Association, established in 1984 in Elnora. One year during their annual show in September, Harry exhibited as many as 50 tractors from his own collection.

Harry Lee, 88, died at 5:07 pm. Sunday Jan 3, 2010 at Amber Manor Care Center in Petersburg, IN. Born June 2, 1921, in Knox County, he was the son of Elmer and Lucy (Whisman) Lee. He and his wife Geraldine (Cockerham) Lee ran and managed a trucking company in Elnora for many years.



Harry Lee at the wheel of his triple F-20, just one of several tractors he designed and built powered by more than one tractor engine and drive train.

Search YouTube for "Harry Lee Tractors" to view videos of his machines in action.

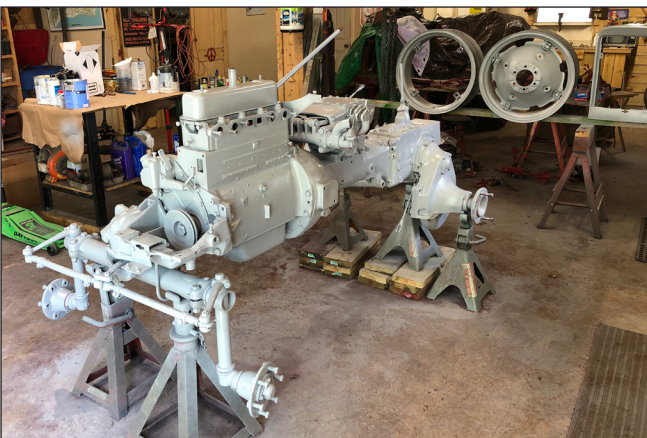
Raffle Tractor Restoration Underway




Cris Vaughn (#610) from Pensacola sent in these photos of an IH 140 that he is restoring for the South Alabama Antique Tractor and Engine Club. When he gets it finished, it will be the group's raffle tractor for 2021. We hope to have info about how to buy tickets in an upcoming newsletter.



The 140 dismantled down to the bare bones.



With priming complete, the tractor is ready for reassembly.



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Seeing Red

In Wilson County

I once owned a gleaming crimson hunk of International Harvester iron. But in a moment of poor judgment, I relinquished my dad's tractor – and my tangible connection to those who gather to admire this fine mesh of machinery and design.

As I roam the grounds of the James E. Ward Agricultural and Community Center in Lebanon, I taste bitter regret for my impulsiveness. Here, thousands congregate for the seventh annual Red Power Round Up on this hot July day. This event pulls together the 5,000-member International Harvester Collectors.

The fiery red tractors, lined up like furrows in a field, sparkle with personality, the result of countless hours invested by their owners – people like Johnny and Debbie Mitchell of Lebanon, the co-chairpersons who helped bring the national event to the South.

"In 1990, I was given a 1936 F-12 Farmall by a neighbor and close friend," explains Johnny. "I restored the tractor to better than new and then began showing it. The bug had bit." The Mitchells have now restored 3 tractors and are working on 12 more.

In 1993, Johnny joined others from all over the state to form the Tennessee Chapter #9 of the International Harvester Collectors. The next year he, Chapter #9 president John Patterson, and Wilson County commissioner Stratton Bone proposed Lebanon as a site for a future round up. "Lo and behold, we were selected for the site for the 1996 show," says Johnny.

For the Mitchells, being chosen meant two years of planning, including 10 days of "vacation" from their real-life jobs. The couple worked long hours – sometimes 20 a day – fine-tuning details.

Red Power Round Up July 25 – 28, 1996



Johnny and Debbie Mitchell of Lebanon coordinated the efforts of both the Wilson County and statewide tractor restoration groups in hosting the first Red Power Roundup to come South.

"I don't regret it a bit," says a weary Johnny on the third day of the four-day extravaganza. Then he grins and adds, "But when this is over, I'm going to bed."

Right now, he can take pleasure in knowing that some 600 tractors and 70 trucks from 32 states and Canada have rolled into town. About 15,000 spectators will stroll through the gates of the Ward Center before the event ends. Debbie coordinates the registration of 526 collectors from 48 states as well as England, Holland, Australia, and Canada, while Sue Vanatta, Lebanon Chamber of Commerce director, assists people with tourist information.

Events cram the agrarian pageant, including the "Parade of Power," where 229 beauties represent thousands of painstaking restoration hours. As each machine roars into view, gleaming in the summer sun, spectators see the variety and beauty of these iron labors of love.

On display are a smorgasbord of items of interest to tractorphiles: early stationary gas engines, collectible toy tractors, and rare

parts and tools.

Like Johnny, most Tennesseans involved in this hobby have a farm connection. And farm neighborliness prevails. For instance, when some out-of-state visitors were left without lodging, the Wilson County folks opened their doors wide. "Stratton Bone carried a couple from Illinois to his home," says Johnny. "I had people at my home, at my parents', my mother-in-law's, just all over the county.

"One thing about dealing with tractor people," Johnny adds, "we took a lot of checks, and we never got a bad one."

After all the headaches and hiccups, everyone involved remains close. In this age of computer friendship, I find comfort seeing technology from the past foster the nearly forgotten art of community.

The tractors roll into South Dakota in 1997, but for one brief, shining interlude, a wash of red and the rumble of power dominated the Tennessee countryside.

Just wish mine had been among them.

*The International Harvester
Red Power Round Up
comes South for the first time –
to rousing success.*



In 1996 I was working as an editor at Southern Living magazine. This was two years before Alabama Chapter #23 was chartered as a state chapter of IHC. I had joined the national club in 1993 and knew that RPRU 1996 was being hosted by TN Chapter #9 at Lebanon in July. I decided to do a story on the show for the magazine and made the trip to Lebanon. When I got there, I was introduced to Johnny and Debbie Mitchell, who became the focus of my story. With Debbie's help, I recently received a copy of the story and thought Chapter #23 members would enjoy reading it.

Following their highly successful show, Johnny became a national director in 2002 and was elected IHC national secretary the following year. As secretary, Johnnie enlisted Debbie's considerable organizational skills and together they formed an efficient team that served IHC until the end of 2010. Sadly, Johnny passed away in 2018. To her credit, Debbie has remained active with both TN Chapter #9 and the national club, serving as director and coordinator for the IHC Charitable Trust.

The Mitchells and TN Chapter #9 have been long-time friends of Alabama Chapter #23 and were of great help to us in our chapter's formative period in the late 1990's.

Clay Nordan



Billy Ferguson of the Piney Chapel community near Athens, AL joined Chapter #23 in 1999. In August each year, he has displayed his impressive collection of restored tractors at the big Piney Chapel show (only a mile from his house). However, the item from his collection that always attracts the most attention is his large bright red 1949 KB56 IH truck. We have gathered some good photos of the truck over the years and thought that members who have never inspected it in person would like to see what they have been missing.

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