



Bits & Pieces

PO BOX 390, ASHBURTON 7740 **DECEMBER/JANUARY 2014/15**



Neil McKenzie's 1935 SP Sunshine header

**Meetings are held on the FIRST Wednesday of each month at 8pm
in the K88 Room at The Plains Museum**

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Mike Donaldson, Murray Ball, Bernie Bradley,
Peter Butterick, Barry Quantock, David Breathing**

President's Report

Dear Members,

November the 5th we had a great time viewing Pearce Watson's DVD which I enjoyed and many other club members thought it was a great night of early history on the Watson family. It was also good to see the tractors and ploughs working the pastures by some of our club members.

Our Next meeting will be held at Gilbert Donaldson's Racecourse road starting at 7.30 viewing his large range memorabilia.

We will have a browse around there for a while and proceed onto Cliff Begg's place down Racecourse road a bit further towards town. There we will view Cliff's collection of cars and tractors. We will have a short meeting and some supper.

Hope you all the enjoy Christmas and New Year have great times with family and friends.

Thank you to all members for your support this year.

Regards Peter McMullan

Ashburton Show 2014

31st October and 1st November were Ashburton show days, Friday a bit cool, but Saturday was nice and warm with good crowd numbers.

The club once again had its usual sites by the main gates on Sea Field Road. This year's theme was Grain and Seeds, which worked quite well for the club. The stand started with the plough followed by the grubber, and drill. Over the other side was the hay gear a sickle bar mower, hay conditioner, and baler.

The harvesters had a row to themselves, up front was a SP Sunshine, a MH clipper, a Allis Chalmers tow behind, a SP MF header and a MH silage chopper. These machines were all matched with tractors of the same period, and looked good with the warri as the back drop.

The site was a credit to the club, and thanks must go to John Hall and John Stewart who convened the show this year. Thanks to the members who supplied gear and the people who helped set up and pack up.

Who would have thought that in 2014 the most common combine at the show would be the SP Sunshine with two being in attendance, both looked as if they could be put into work tomorrow without too much trouble. Also on display were two very original IH 8' disc drills of 1930's era good to see.

From the Editor



David Brown Cropmaster

David Brown struck up a friendship with Ulsterman Harry Ferguson in 1933 giving him an interest in the production of tractors. Harry had just completed building a prototype of a revolutionary light weight tractor incorporating his brilliant patented hydraulic system.

David Brown recognized the marketing potential of the unit, formed a business alliance with Ferguson and arranged to provide the necessary capital to put the tractor into production. The new tractor, to be known as the Ferguson A type would be manufactured in an old warehouse in Yorkshire.

In 1936 the Ferguson A Type was launched at a time when the British farming economy was still reeling from the effects of the great depression, and banks were hesitant to lend money for tractor purchases. A farmer wishing to purchase a Ferguson A Type would be obliged to also invest in a range of matched Ferguson implements as traditional tractor trailed implements were not compatible with the light weight tractor.

A total of 1350 Ferguson A Type tractors were built between 1936 and 1939. The first 250 built were powered by a Coventry Climax Series E, 4 cylinder side valve engine. Most of the remaining was powered by a David Brown engine of 2010cc developing 22HP at 1400 rpm. The new engine was based on the former Coventry Climax engine but the cylinder had been increased. An improved air filtration system was also incorporated.

Owing largely to the depressed British economy production of the

Ferguson A Type was halted in 1939 after a mere 1350 units were built. By this time the relationship between the two industrialists had soured.

Harry Ferguson took his patents across the Atlantic and joined forces with Henry Ford in the US. The Ferguson System reappeared in late 1939 in the American built Ford 9N tractor and in the British Ferguson TE series.

In the meantime, David Brown had been designing and testing an all new innovative tractor powered by a 4 cylinder petrol – kerosene OHV engine which was claimed to develop 35 hp, as opposed to the 20hp engine in the Ferguson Type A. A new 4 forward speed gearbox and an inbuilt centre mounted PTO shaft were also new features of the new tractor which had not been available on the Ferguson.

The new David Brown named the Vak 1 (vehicle agriculture kerosene) was released at the 1939 Royal Show in Britain. It received rave reviews from the British farming press and orders poured in. The tractor looked stunning in its bright Hunting Pink colour and farmers warmed to its streamlined appearance. But storm clouds had been gathering over Europe and on September 3 1939 Britain was plunged into World War 2.

The David Brown Factory at Meltham was converted to military production and only a limited number of VAK 1 tractors were assembled. As part of their contribution to the war effort, David Brown Tractors Limited was encouraged to enter the crawler tractor field, and in 1941 the British Air Ministry issued the company a contract to produce 185 track-laying air field tractors. These were to be based on the agricultural wheeled VAC1 model.

David Brown Cropmaster

By the way of interest in classic bureaucratic style and following the delivery of the tractors, the Air Ministry decided it did not in fact require the crawler tractors after all. This followed complaints from RAF Wing Commanders about damage the crawlers were making to run ways. The ministry paid David Brown to take back and convert the crawlers to wheeled tractors, which were more suited to towing aircraft and other air field duties.

A batch of around 100 crawler tractors were then custom built for the Royal Engineers. These were powered by 40hp Dorman Diesel engine and designated the DB4.

Reportedly a number were used in the Normandy landings, where they hauled armaments and supplies up the beaches that had been unloaded from landing craft.

At the termination of hostilities in 1945, the VAK 1 agricultural wheeled tractor was superseded by the VAC1A. The updated model was given only minor technical improvements, but with a readily identifiable new radiator grill.

On April 21st 1947 with the release of the VAC1C it was the most comprehensively fitted out British tractor of the period. Standard equipment included 3-point linkage, PTO shaft, belt pulley, dual upholstered seat, full lighting, electric start, variable wheel track widths, six forward speed gear box, foot and hand operated clutch, bonnet side panels, under seat tool box, turning brakes and an operators manual.

During the production life of the Cropmaster (1947-1953) numerous variants were introduced, including a tricycle row cropper, a narrow

vineyard version, a tug tractor, the Super Cropmaster and the Prairie Cropmaster aimed at the North American market.



A diesel VAD Cropmaster was introduced in November 1949. When the VAK petrol-kerosene engine was first developed, the design engineers built rigidity and strength in to the block for a future diesel motor. The diesel Cropmaster was an instant success, ease of starting, economy of running and high torque characteristics.

The David Brown Trackmaster introduced in 1950 was a crawler adaption of the VAC Cropmaster, powered by the same petrol-kerosene engine, the diesel version came later that year. Trackmasters were equipped with controlled differential steering and a six forward speed gear box. The petrol-kerosene and the diesel both had a drawbar pull of 8500lbs at 2mph.

This performance is similar to the IHT and TD6 crawlers. A total of 59,800 Cropmasters (excluding crawlers) were produced by March 1953. They were replaced by a range of 25 and 30 series tractors, which lacked the character of the Cropmasters having basic tin work, an economic production decision.

Just for Fun: Central Otago Policing

3) A young woman was pulled over for speeding. As a Central Otago Cop walked up to her car window, flipping open his ticket book, she said, I bet you are going to sell me a ticket to the Central Otago Police Ball. He replied Central Otago Police

don't have balls. There was a moment of silence while she smiled, and he realised what he had just said. He then closed his book, got back in the patrol car and left. She was laughing so much she couldn't start the car.

Just For Fun: Central Otago Policing

1) A Central Otago Traffic Cop was watching for speeders but wasn't getting many. Then he discovered the problem; a 12 year old boy was standing up the road with a hand painted sign reading RADAR AHEAD. The officer then found a young boy down the road with a sign reading TIPS and a bucket full of money

2) A motorist was mailed a picture of his car speeding through a speed camera in Central Otago with a fine of \$160 included. Being cute he sent the police a photo of \$160.00. The police responded with a photo of handcuffs.

South Canterbury Day Trip

Dear Members

On the 19th of November 32 members and friends met at the Hotel Ashburton and set off for another great day organised by John Hall. We met at a turn off south of Timaru and proceeded in convoy to our first place of Ross Rathgen at Esk Valley. We were escorted around by one of their staff Mr Horsnall.

He showed us around their large seed dressing plant where they put through about 4000 tonnes of seed annually. Sitting outside was a brand new Ford 450 HP pivot steer tractor with a Horsch cultivator hooked on behind. After that he showed us one of their Dairy sheds which was quite impressive with its concrete roof trusses and walls. It's rotary shed housed 64 cows. The layout of the shed with curved roof was finished off well. Struan did a great job taking photos all day which will be up on the website.

The next place was a stopover around the corner with the new \$22 million cover cow barn which we looked at from the road. There was a John Deere outside the barn with tracks pulling a large Salford disc and tine cultivator.

While on our travels we saw a pivot steer Stieger tractor with a blade on front and a mole plough on the back that was working in a paddock.

Next stop was lunch at Guy Wigleys before we viewed a traction engine truck and a traction engine where Guy took members around the yard letting them steer it on their own. There was a tin mill and an International 3072B twin steer truck in shed as well. Guy gave us a run down on their farming operation as well.

At Waimate we went to look at cars this time and not tractors. In Kerry Sullivan's shed we viewed a 67 Mustang, Falcon Futura, Fairmont, Ferrari 328, and others. Outside there was Landrovers and old farm machinery around the paddock and along the garden. It was well laid out with some of the machinery for sale in the next door paddock.

We then headed to Sam Small's place and we were greeted by IH 826, 1066, and a V8 IH tractor, Case 2670 4WD and other items of interesting plant. They had a large workshop to service all their own tractors.

Our second to last stop was at Alan Linton's place where he has the only IH 403 Hillside Combine. On starting the combine Alan showed us what a Hillside combine does. I thought he was going to put the combine on its side. The combine would travel around the hills harvesting grain by keeping the machine level. It had a series of hydraulics rams on all sides to keep it level while harvesting.

While looking over the combine the clouds decided it was time to open up and wet us but there was a shed we could stand in while Alan gave us a run down on their operation.

Last stop of the day was to the Makikiki Hotel where we could digress on our day out before we sat down to an enjoyable meal

Trevor Begg thanked John Hall on organising another day away for all our club members to enjoy. The hotel management thanked us for stopping over.

Thanks John for a good and enjoyable day out. Looking forward to the next one.

Peter McMullan.



Notice Board

UP COMING MEETINGS

The December meeting is our shed visit night, we are going to Gilbert Donaldson's 366 Racecourse Road meet on site at 7.30 pm Wednesday 3rd December, we are then going to Cliff Begg's place afterwards for supper and a meeting.

The February Meeting will be in the K88 room as usual.

UP COMING EVENTS

6&7 December Lake Coleridge Open Day

13 December Tractor Trek

14 March Mayfield A&P Show

21 March Methven A&P Show

Tractor trek 13th December 2014

Meet at Pannetts Dairies on Pannetts Road; be there at 9.30am sharp. Follow Mitcham Road to Thompsons Track Corner, then on to Pannetts Road. Please wait outside Dairy shed until we are joined by Willy Leferink (owner) who will show us around. It is 20km from Ashburton, so work out how long it will take you to get there. We will be trekking around the Barhill area (Highfield farms), finishing at Holmeslea Farm near Rakaia.

\$5.00 per head for BBQ, numbers required.

Enquiries to Cliff Begg on 0272627111 or 3085985

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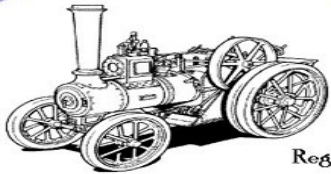
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