



Empire Tractor Newsletter

Volume 28 Number 1
Jan. – Apr. 2020
Issue #80

The Empire Tractor Newsletter was founded in 1992 by Carl Hering who became intrigued by this unusual farm tractor and started looking for others with a similar interest. With the help of Prince Stevens, who had been keeping a list of known Empire tractor owners, the first Newsletter was published and mailed to forty-seven known tractor owners in January 1993. Our mission statement is simple:

The Empire Tractor Newsletter is published three times a year and is available to anyone owning or interested in the history and preservation of the 1946-1949 Empire tractor. Our goal is to provide our readers with the information needed to correctly restore and preserve this unique farm tractor. We welcome any information pertaining to this tractor and provide an avenue to exchange information among members.

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The Empire Tractor Newsletter is published three times a year and can be ordered by sending:

1 Year \$10.00 US or \$11.00 Foreign
2 Years \$20.00 US or \$22.00 Foreign

Empire Tractor Newsletter
5862 State Rt. 90N
Cayuga, NY 13034
Phone 315-246-7788
Email: info@empiretractor.net

From The Editor: We have a whole lot of neat things to talk about as we send you our 80th issue of the Newsletter. With your continued support we will “motor on” and start work on the next 80 issues.

To say our 20th Annual Empire EXPO was a success would be an understatement. We had a record of 27 tractors with members coming from all over the US, Canada and even South Africa. We honored Lola & Carl Osterbaan for attending every Empire EXPO to date. Our guest speakers were great. Check out all the details later in the Newsletter.

I didn't think this Newsletter would ever end with all the photos and stories sent in by you, our members. Very much appreciated. And keep them coming. The history section is extensive this time along with details on the Love 3-point hitch as used on the Empire. Now to get on with the news...

SS EMPIRE HERITAGE

This is another “different” Empire story that I think is real interesting. Hope you will like it as well.

The SS Empire Heritage was built in 1930 by Armstrong Whitworth & Company in Newcastle-upon-

Tyne in Northeast England. The ship actually started life under the name of Tafelberg, a 15,000 ton steam tanker owned by Christian Salvesen & Company of Edinburgh and used by Kerguelen Sealing & Whaling Company of Cape Town, SA. It was used in South Africa as a whale factory ship until January 28, 1941 when it was hit by a mine and beached at Porthkerry. A year later with the War effort needing all the ships available, the wreckage was re-floated and taken to Whitmore Bay to be salvaged. She was repaired, updated, re-

purposed, renamed the Empire Heritage by the Ministry of War Transport and returned to service in February 1943. An unintentional casualty of war in her first life, she would fall foul of a more pointed and specific attack



in her reincarnation. In early September 1944, she was enroute from New York to Liverpool carrying a heavy cargo of war supplies including Sherman tanks, half-tracks and trucks.

By 8th September, she was 15 miles northeast of Malin Head and it was here her journey would end. She was torpedoed by the German sub U-482. Two torpedoes struck and she went down fast with her heavy cargo along



with the loss of 113 men. An escort ship, Pinto, attempted to rescue the survivors, but was also hit and sank in the same attack. Survivors from both ships were picked up and rescued by HMS Northern Wave and taken ashore at Londonderry.

The wreckage of the Empire Heritage today is of great interest to scuba divers and is located just off Malin Head, County Donegal, Ireland. She rests at a depth of 70m and in waters which are generally of very good visibility. The wreck is broken apart but generally accessible, including her final deck cargo of Sherman tanks and other military vehicles, some of which are tumbled onto the adjacent seabed.

Are there any scuba divers out there? I'm sure this would be an interesting wreck to explore.

NEW MEMBERS – NEW TRACTOR FINDS – CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP

Amanda Hess
Non-Member

440 Poole Rd., Hedgesville, WV 25427
Empire #5905

Reggie Ross
Member #504

3670 Shady Groove Rd., Clarksville, TN 37043 731-499-3571
Empire #6380 & #6294 (**Both New Finds**)

JB Stollfus Member #609	147 Halltown Rd., Paradise, PA 17562 Empire #6252	717-629-4574
Joe & Jen Venth Member #610	19 Dolphin Way, Riverhead, NY 11901 Empire #6378	631-816-1308
John S. Wilusz Member #611	519 Birch St., Bayville, NJ 08721 No Empire yet	732-910-9118
Harland Wood Member #552	253 Pine Grove Rd., Middletown, NY 10940 Empire #5305	845-283-0450
Ed Pruss Member #612	8352 N. 95 th St., Longmont, CO 80504 No Empire yet	303-489-8002
Larry Proulx Member #598	299 Hodge Pond Rd., Griswold, CT 06351 Empire #6050	860-608-2461
Stephan Barker Member #613	51 Evelyn Ct., Manorville, NY 11949 No Empire yet	631-882-7378
Andre Deckers Member #614	213016 10 th Line, Amaranth, ON L9W-0G4 Empire #6208	519-942-5241
Bert Koekoek Non-Member	228 Burford-Delhi Townline Rd., Norwich, ON N0J-1P0 Empire #5498 (New owner from estate auction.)	
Thomas Heikkia, Jr. Non-Member	7831 209 th St. North, Forest Lake, MN 55025 Empire #5750	651-343-9038

Here's giving our New Members a warm WELCOME!!



Membership Numbers: It has been a few years now since we gave you an update of our membership numbers. As you can see, we have been holding around the 200 mark which is good based on the small number of tractors that have been found. At last count, the number was about 425 Empire tractors. For a small club like ours this is great. As we move into our 27th year of the Newsletter, let's be sure we hold, or better yet, improve on these numbers. Your continued support will get it done. Thank you.



Year	← Issues Mailed →			Member Total
	USA	Canada	Foreign	
2006	381	55	13	150
2011	468	58	17	181
2012	506	62	14	194
2014 (4 issues)	718	97	14	207
2015	543	86	22	217
2017	503	76	27	202
2019	524	78	31	211

While looking through some material relating to Empire Tractor Corp.'s history, I came across some information showing the relationship between Willys-Overland Company, Empire Securities, Inc. and Frank Cohen that is quite interesting. It's known that Willys-Overland invested in Empire Tractor Corp. but this information explains how it all came about. I hope you can get the gist of all this as it's a little hard to follow.

Reorganization of:
THE WILLYS-OVERLAND COMPANY
And
WILLYS OVERLAND, INCORPORATED

To the Holders of Bonds, Creditors (including Those Who Have Assigned Their Claims to Empire Securities, Inc.) and Stockholders of the Willys-Overland Company:

Pursuant to the Plan of Reorganization of the Willys-Overland Company and Willys-Overland, Incorporated, dated July 24, 1936, as amended by Amendments dated August 11, 1936 and August 26, 1936 (hereinafter referred to as the "Plan"), which was confirmed by the United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, Western Division, on August 28, 1936, the holders of Preferred and Common Stock of Willys-Overland Company have certain rights and privileges, and the holders of its Bonds and unsecured claims (including creditors who have assigned their claims to Empire Securities, Inc.) have certain privileges, to subscribe to stock of Willys-Overland Motors, Inc., the New Company organized pursuant to the Plan.

Information describing such rights and privileges has been sent by the Trustee of The Willys-Overland Company to all persons whose names appear on the Trustee's records as being persons entitled thereto.

(page 1 of 2)

Any bondholder, creditor or stockholder of the Willys-Overland Company and any other person entitled to subscription rights or privileges, who has received such information or who desires further information, may receive the same by communicating with DAVID R. WILSON, TRUSTEE of the Willys-Overland Company, Toledo, Ohio or with E. H. ROLLINS & SONS INCORPORATED, which has been authorized by the Court to assist in the distribution of such information, at its offices at 2410 Grant Building, Pittsburg, Pa.

Subscription rights and privileges EXPIRE AT 3:00 P.M. Eastern Standard Time on October 2, 1936

DAVID R. WILSON
Trustee for the Willys-Overland Company
Toledo, Ohio

September 22, 1934

Empire Securities: *In 1932 George Ritter, Ward Canaday and H. J. Leonard organized a company called Empire Securities, Inc. They launched it as a holding company to process claims against Willys-Overland Company, which had gone into receivership. In 1935 Empire Securities offered to buy up all the Willys-Overland Company bonds that were due two years earlier in 1933 so they could reorganize the company. In October 1936, Empire Securities successfully rebirthed the Willys-Overland Company as Willys-Overland Motors, Inc., and became the largest shareholder. Several years later the Empire Securities founders used Willys-Overland stock to partly fund a business deal with a man named Frank Cohen.*

As a Side Note – Empire Securities continued to be the largest shareholder of Willys-Overland Motors, Inc. through 1946 with Ward Canady as President of Empire Securities and Chairman of the Board of Willys-Overland Motors, Inc. through 1946.

Frank Cohen: *In the late 1930's Frank Cohen, a former insurance executive/wall street executive/promotor/ industrialist, had developed some kind of business relationship with the folks at Empire Securities. By 1940 Cohen was offering Willys-Overland Motors a chance to invest in Cohen's new venture, Empire Ordnance, a company primed to supply war-time materials to our foreign allies.*

Frank Cohen began his adult life in 1916 by obtaining a PhD with the intent to teach business. (His thesis argued for the novel idea of an annual wage for employees of seasonal businesses). Deciding to put his own ideas into action, he left academics to focus on business. During the 1920's and through the early 1930's Frank amassed a respectable fortune.

Then, in May 1940, he sold all his other businesses and launched Empire Ordnance, a company primed to supply war-time materials. To help finance the company, he encouraged the Empire Securities founders to invest in Empire Ordnance and join the board of directors. Canaday, Leonard and Ritter agreed to join the board and invest 200,000 shares of Willys-Overland stock and \$120,000 in cash, in a complicated transaction.

Through the summer of 1940 the ordnance business proved to be difficult. For reasons that remain unclear, Canady, Leonard and Ritter severed all ties with Empire Ordnance, while Frank Cohen gained full control. To raise additional money, Cohen used a more traditional route to start the company: he sought straight investment from several investors, raising \$130,000. Soon after that investment, Empire Ordnance landed \$20 million in British Government contracts, with a \$5 million advance.

By 1941, according to the Pittsburg Post-Gazette, Empire Ordnance owned 14 subsidiary companies that operated six plants and one shipyard (for the construction of Victory Ships). Empire Ordnance manufactured guns, armor plate, optical instruments, recoil mechanisms and much more. According to former Congressman Charles West, by November 1941 Empire Ordnance had already garnered \$70 million worth of contracts. In fact, it was Charles West who claimed he'd helped secure many of these contracts, but after Empire failed to pay him his commission, he decided to go public and sue them.

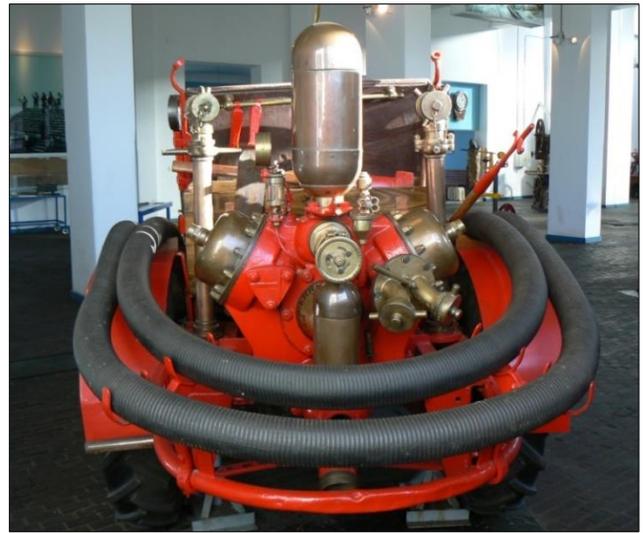
Now, this story gets complicated quickly as Cohen's means, at least in part, for securing contracts appears to be time honored: he put someone powerful on his payroll so contracts could be directed toward his company. In fact by the mid 1940's, Senator Harry Truman (later President) was investigating Cohen as a war profiteer.

Cohen Launches Empire Tractor Corp.: *In 1946 Frank Cohen founded Empire Tractor Corp. In an effort to utilize existing factory capacity no longer needed after the War, he came up with the idea to build a small farm tractor. This tractor would be exported to foreign countries to help them farm more efficiently and get badly needed food back on the tables. In exchange for exporting this tractor and not competing with US and Canadian tractor companies, the US government would provide Empire, at very low cost, war surplus materials to build this tractor. In a short period of time, after developing four pilot models, the Model 88 Empire would emerge as the production model (followed shortly by the Model 90).*

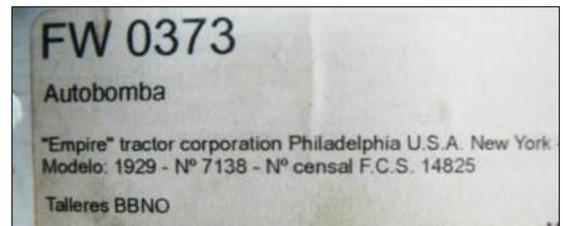
The first tractors were shipped to South Africa with many orders from other countries quickly to follow. The government run United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) would order over 1,000 tractors (not all were shipped) with many sent overseas to Poland, France, China, Mexico, Greece and other countries in need of farm equipment. Argentina would give Empire the largest order for over 7,000 tractors but only about 4,300 would be shipped. That is another story, but in the end, Empire would declare bankruptcy in 1948 with most assets being sold in 1950.

Thanks go to Dave Eilers of www.ewillys.com for his help with the above article.

I received an email from Ricardo Roberti from Argentina which included three photos of the Empire Fire Pumper we found in Argentina back in May 2015. Ricardo wanted to be sure we knew about this Empire and to pass along these new photos of the pumper as it is today. The story of this Empire is a fantastic one, which we told in the Sept.-Dec. 2015 issue of the Newsletter. Long story short, this rare and unusual Empire was saved and restored through the efforts of Sergio Riera and members of the



Volunteer Firefighters of Laguna Paiva, Santa Fe Province in Argentina. The tractor now resides in the showroom area of the firehouse for all to see and admire. If you'd like all the details and more photos of this unique Empire, see Newsletter #67. I'd be glad to send or email you a copy. It is well worth the read and I want to thank Ricardo for the updated photos.



As a follow up to Clint Dixon's article in the last issue of the Newsletter, I thought I'd show you some close-up photos of the Love hitch as designed and used on the Empire. These photos are taken from



Empire #5760 which had the original 3-point hitch on it when purchased back in 1992. The only parts not original are the 3/8" hydraulic lines from the pump to the control valve and control valve to oil reservoir. Copper tubing, 3/8", was originally used randomly routed to each destination. The flex hoses shown are an exact duplicate of the original. The basic design and many parts used on the Love hitch for the Jeep were also



used on the Empire unit. We have found that nearly all the Love hitches seen on the Empire have been the same with no differences between them other than modifications made by the owner. In most cases this was modifying the lift arms with extensions.

It's also interesting that the only advertising we have come across for the Empire 3-point hitch was done by Bernstein Brothers out of Pueblo, CO. (See Newsletter #78 for details.) The Company also had an address listed in an advertisement for the Empire at 3730 Main St., Philadelphia, PA only a short distance from the Empire Tractor Corp. factory. It was here where you were directed to send your money to order an Empire for \$695.00 and another \$149.00 if you wanted the optional Hydraulic Power Pack as it was called. The one and only ad I have showing the 3-point hitch option advertised, was in the New England Homestead about 1952. There had to be a lot more advertising done as this magazine only covered New England. I have yet to find any but maybe someday more will turn up.

If space allows I'll put some copies of rough drawings with dimensions in the Tech Section of this Newsletter.

Thanks to Jim Heaslip, our long time member from Hagersville, ON, we have a really cool advertisement to show you taken from the September 2019 Farm Collector Magazine. I've been able to reduce the size down to a point where it can be shown here on one page rather than the two pages as received. This advertisement started out as an 11"x 17" front and back cover of an undated Empire sales catalog. I've retyped the wording on the left side of the page so you can read it. It tells a short history of the Empire reaper, mower and grain drill. Most interesting though, is to note the kind of advertising that was done by the company back in the early to mid-1800's showing the early settlers and Indians riding their horses. It appears the Indians were

doing the work and the settlers were observing the New Empire working. Jim has also sent me other similar Empire advertising which I'll try and show you in a future Newsletter.

THE NEW EMPIRE

In 1861, John Frederick Seiberling, along with several others, started the Excelsior Mower & Reaper Co. in Doylestown, Ohio, to build a new mower and reaper that Seiberling had invented.

The machine, with a dropper to leave the gavels of grain so they could be easily tied into sheaves, was a success and the company prospered.

Despite that success, Seiberling soon withdrew from the firm and developed a new-and-improved reaper that he called the "Empire," which he produced on a small scale.

Meanwhile, the old Excelsior company fell upon hard times. In 1880, its assets, including a factory in Akron, Ohio, were liquidated. Seiberling bought the old Akron Excelsior plant where, by 1890, he employed 300 men and turned out nearly 3,500 Empire mowers and reapers and a similar number of Empire grain binders each year.

During the financial panic of 1896-1897, the Empire Works went under, and Seiberling was forced to make an assignment of everything he owned in probate court. Seiberling died on Sept. 3, 1903.

J.F. Seiberling's two sons, Frank and Charles, later started the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., which incorporated on Aug. 29, 1898.

This advertisement comprised the front and back covers of an undated Empire sales catalog submitted by Calvin Whitaker, Pendleton, Indiana. FC

Farm Collector periodically reproduces some of the most spectacular advertisements used to promote farm equipment and farm products in days gone by. To submit a vintage advertisement for possible publication, send it to: Iron Age Ads, Farm Collector, 1503 SW 42nd St., Topeka, KS 66609; or submit high-quality digital images by e-mail: editor@farmcollector.com

26 SEPTEMBER 2019 FARM COLLECTOR WWW.FARMCOLLECTOR.COM SEPTEMBER 2019 27

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Thanks, Jim, for keeping the "Empire" material coming my way. Jim and his son, Guy, have a great museum of tractors, specializing in Hart-Parr along with all kinds of old farm implements and equipment. If you are ever in the area of Hagersville, Ontario, be sure to give Jim a call at 905-512-6711 and let him show you around. I can tell you from experience, it will be worth your time.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Upcoming Shows of Interest: This section is free for members to use if you would like to advertise a local event that might include an Empire or two. Just drop me a line, send an email or give me a call, and I'll insert the information for you. A small amount of detail can also be included.

What	When	Where
Florida Fly-Wheelers Empire Dinner Party	Feb 19 2020	North Port, FL
Florida Flywheeler Engine & Tractor Show	Feb 20-23 2020	Fort Meade, FL
Willys Reunion – Spring meet	May 15-16 2020	Aurora, OH
Haldimand County Collectors Tour	May 20-22 2020	Hagersville, ON
New York Pageant of Steam	Aug 13-16 2020	Canandaigua, NY
21st Annual Empire EXPO	Aug 13-16 2020	Pinckneyville, IL
Willys Reunion – Fall meet	Sept 11-12 (?) 2020	Fulton, MO
22 nd Annual Empire EXPO	Aug 25-28 2021	Portland, IN

Our Annual Florida Fly-Wheelers Dinner Party will be held at The Olde World Restaurant located at 14415 Tamiami Trail (Rt. 41) in North Port, FL, (941-426-1155) on Wednesday, Feb. 19th. Plan to arrive about 5:00 with dinner served about 6:00. I need to give the restaurant a count so PLEASE call me at 315-246-7788 if you can attend. This is always an event everyone looks forward to.



The annual Willys Reunion – Spring meet is being held at the Bertram Inn in Aurora, OH where more than 100 Jeep vehicles are expected. Our Empire tractors are always welcome so let's show them a few this year. For all the details contact Bob Christy at 330-715-5310 or email to: bob@willysreunion.com.

The annual Haldimand County Vintage Equipment Tour is being held on May 20-22. Over 30 collectors will be exhibiting their collections at 6 locations near Hagersville. There is so much to see and do so plan to attend if at all possible. For all the details call Jim Heaslip at 905-512-6711 or email to guyh@w.jheaslip.com.

21th ANNUAL EMPIRE EXPO

By the time you read this, Empire EXPO 2019 will be history and we can start looking forward to our 21st Annual EXPO in Pinckneyville, IL in 2020. Our hosts this year will be the American Thresherman Association, Inc., located at State Hwy. 154, 127 & 13 Pinckneyville. The show dates are August 13-16, 2020. The GPS location is 711 Fairgrounds Road, Pinckneyville, IL. Empire will be one of the main features along with Oddballs and Orphans.



This will be the 61st Annual Steam, Gas & Threshing Show put on by the Association, so it's safe to say they know how to put on a great event. Just to give you an idea, daily attractions will be Horse, Steam and Tractor Powered Plowing, Wheat Threshing, Wood Veneering, Saw Milling, Shingle Making, Blacksmithing, Veneer Mill, Baker Fan, Miniature Models displays and Tractor Activities. This, along with displays of Stationary Gas

What:	<u>21st Annual Empire EXPO</u> Held in conjunction with the American Thresherman Association. <i>61st Annual Steam, Gas & Threshing Show</i>		
When:	August 13 - 16, 2020		
Where:	711 Fairgrounds Rd., Pinckneyville, IL 62274. Junction of State Hwy 154, 127 & 13.		
Lodging:	Fairgrounds Inn 1520 South Washington St DuQuoin, IL 62959	\$80.00 (2 Queen or King)	618-542-5000
	Super 8 Motel	DuQuoin, IL	618-542-4335
	Budget Inn Motel	DuQuoin, IL	618-542-5014
Camping:	On grounds Camping	Pinckneyville, IL	217-273-9793
	North Town RV Park	Pinckneyville, IL	618-077-0324
Banquet:	Saturday August 15 th at Alongis Restaurant 18 W. Main St., DuQuoin, IL 62832 618-542-24681 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM Cost is \$18.00 each		
Questions:	Carl Hering 315-246-7788 or email to info@empiretractor.net . American Thresherman Assn. 618-318-0745 or 217-844-2318		

& Steam Engines, a Large Flea Market to look over, Corn Shelling and a display of Vintage Lawn & Garden tractors will be plenty to do and see. And for some of us 'car guys' an Antique Auto Show & Swap Meet will be held on Sunday for all cars 50 years or older. Plenty of food vendors will be on hand and the American & Southern Railroad will be offering Steam Train Rides. A good clean interesting show the whole family will enjoy. Also check out the American Thresherman website at www.americanthresherman.com for much more information.

We have a block of rooms set aside at the Fairgrounds Inn at the great rate of \$80.00 plus tax, which includes breakfast, for a King or Queen room. CALL NOW for reservations to 618-542-500 and be sure to mention Empire Tractor Club. We have also listed a couple of other nearby motels you might want to consider.

Our banquet will be on Saturday evening from 6-8:00 at the Alongis Restaurant just a short distance from the Fairgrounds Inn. This is a neat old place that has been family owned since 1933. We will have our own private room and dinner will cost \$18.00 each. You will not want to miss this fun evening.



Please make your reservations early and plan to join us for our 21st Annual EXPO in Pinckneyville, IL in August.. This is one of the largest shows in the Midwest and large crowds are expected each day. A perfect place to show off our Empire tractors.

RECAP OF EVENTS

Without a doubt, our 20th Anniversary Empire EXPO in Kinzers, PA was one of the best ever. We set a record with 27 Empire tractors on display and members coming from 14 different states plus Canada and



South Africa. The weather was a little damp on the first day, but the week turned out to be great overall. We had our own large tent with plenty of room to set-up our registration area and parts display as well as have room to hangout.

This year was our 20th Anniversary EXPO, we had a special wall plaque that was given to anyone who brought a tractor to the meet and another plaque for any member who attended. In fact, I believe we also signed up three new members who recently purchased an Empire. Three tractors were actually sold at the show this year. Here is a list of the attendees who attended this year's EXPO: (Hope I have not missing anyone!)

Harland & Jean Wood	Middletown, NY #4976 & #5913	Gary Fletcher	Hudsonville, MI	#5177
Bruce & Doris Hering	Rotterdam, NY	Carl & Ceph Hering	Cayuga, NY	#4
Phil & Chris Eastwood	Somers, CT #5034	Steve & Lena Carey	E. Stroudsburg, PA	#6252
Adam & Fran Scott	Phila., PA #5919	David Hering	Cartersville, GA	#6209
Carl & Lola Osterbaan	Coral, MI #5996	Ed & Lucy Osterbaan	Mecosta, MI (guests)	
Roger & Ann White	Brighton, CP #4955 & #5184	Tom & Betty Crummer	Millbank, ON	
Norm & Sharon Roes	Milverton, ON (guests)	Dudley Diebold	Roxbury, CT	#5632
Wm McDowell	Solebury, PA #5369	Brian Mann	Sickleville, NJ	#5653
Harry & Nancy Matter	Halifax, PA #6306	Taylor Matter	Halifax, PA	#6070
Willie & Vivienne Naude	Centurion, SA	Matthew Naude	Centurion, SA (guest)	
Harold & Cynthia Foskett	Woodstock, VT #5950	Vince & Irene Nealen	Owensboro, KY #6378ឤ	
Jimmy & Brenda Rogers	Frankford, KY #5254	Kevin & Sharon Gervais	Dresden, ON	#6553
Warner Caines	Frankford, KY	Don & Janet Gordon	Milford, MA	
Steve Swanson	Phoenixville, PA	Martin Crowl	Harrisburg, PA	#6602
Richard Egger	Dunnville, ON #5305	Bob & Mindy Christy	N. Canton, OH	#5886
Gene & Beverly Gangwer	Rossville, IN #5640	Brian Wilson	Wonder Lake, IL	#2933
Ken & Ellen Rabineck	Louisville, KY #5620	John Neidig	Evansville, IN	
J. B. Stollfus	Paradise, PA (new member)			

We had a few members come in early in time to help us set up: Harland Wood, Adam Scott, Roger White, Dave Hering and a couple of others. Starting the next day, the tractors started rolling in and by Friday evening, I believe all were in place. What a great opportunity to see this many Empire tractors in one place at one time. On display were the only two Model 88 tractors known to exist in North America. Brian Wilson had his newly acquired #2933 and I had #4. It was interesting to compare these two tractors and note the many differences. I

believe we also had three tractors with the Love 3-point hitch. A new feature this year was to hold a couple of Tech-Sessions so members could discuss the details of the tractor. The first session got skipped somehow but the second session on Friday was very well received and our plan is to do this again. Thanks to all who offered



their in-put. We'll try and organize this a little better next year. A parade was held each day and almost all participated in this event. This was a great chance to show off the Empire to many who had never heard of the brand. Good Amish food was plentiful and affordable around every corner. No one lacked for nourishment for sure. The railroad was running all day long with several shuttle tractors transporting people from the parking areas to the show grounds. It was a well-organized show and very busy all day long. One large building housed all kinds of antique cars and trucks. There was never a lack for something to do and see. A special thanks needs to go out to Brian Mann who was in charge of keeping our group on the straight and narrow. Job well done, Brian.

Adam Scott had his Empire hooked to a threshing machine on a couple of different days where it performed very well and surprised a lot of folks. The parade each day was well attended with nearly everyone



participating. It was quite a line-up of Empire tractors going down the track.

Friday evening saw 61 persons attending our banquet held at the historic Revere Tavern in the same room that we used back in 2011. Our banquet is the high-light of the week so it was great we could again use the Revere Tavern for this event. One big surprise was the fact that the same waitresses who served us here back in 2011 were working with us this evening as well. I don't recall her name but she was quite short and who can forget the photo of her standing between John Neidig and Warner Caines! We were hoping to duplicate this photo again this year but John disappeared before we could get it done. Warner was game though as you can see in one of the photos. After a great family-style dinner with all trimmings we had the opportunity to introduce our first time EXPO attendees along with our special guest speakers. Jimmy Rogers told us his Empire story which started back in 1995 with the



purchase of the first of four tractors he would restore over the next few years. All were done to perfection with two now on display in the Keystone Antique Truck and Tractor Museum in Colonial Heights, VA. Thank you Jimmy, for a most interesting presentation. This was followed by Bob Christy, our new member from OH,



telling us the story of how he dragged this old Empire out of a barn in upstate NY about a year ago. Bob is a Jeep guy who puts on the annual Willys Reunion in Aurora, Ohio each year and thought it was about time he owned an Empire. A most interesting story of how the Empire was finally made to run and the

fun times he's had with it since. We also need to give Bob a big "Thank You" for providing us with many of the fine photos you see here of our EXPO.

The next part of our program found us honoring Carl & Lola Osterbaan from Coral, MI for attending every one of our 20 Empire EXPO events that we have held to date. This is quite an accomplishment when you consider our EXPO is moved to a different part of the country each year. Carl & Lola have been great spokespersons for



our club over the years, and continue to help us out each year at our EXPO. A "Special Thanks" go out to Carl & Lola for their continued support. Where does the time go?

When it came to the Long Distance award it was no contest this time around. Roger and Ann White brought not one, but two Empire tractors all the way from Brighton, CO. Even though Roger & Ann were visiting relatives



in the area, to bring two Empire tractors about 1,700 miles is quite a feat. Dave Hering brought his Empire nearly 800 miles from Cartersville, GA. And how can we not mention Willie & Vivienne Naude coming all the way from South Africa to be at our Empire EXPO? Even though they have family in New Jersey, Willie had planned this trip carefully so they could attend our EXPO in Kinzers and have an opportunity to show their grandson, Matthew, what an Empire tractor was all about.

The last, and totally unexpected 'award' was given to me by brothers Bruce and Dave. They called it the Golden Crank

Award which was an old hand crank painted in gold paint presented to me for my work in putting on the EXPO each year. Thank You!

A big thanks most of all to everyone who took the time to attend our EXPO and make it the great success that it was. We hope everyone had a great time and I look forward to seeing you all in Pinckneyville in August.

FROM OUR READERS



Reggie Ross, our long time member from Clarksville, TN has bought himself another couple of projects for sure. Reggie bought Empire #6294 & #6380 at auction in Springfield, TN back on Aug 3rd. One tractor runs, the other is set-up. Both tractors are 'new finds' which is always a plus. Reggie says he got lots of extra parts as well. It appears the one tractor was used to pull with as you can see by the large rear tires. If you are ever in the Clarksville, TN area be sure to give Reggie a call at 731-499-3571 and stop by for a visit. Reggie is planning to bring two

tractors to our EXPO in Pinckneyville in August.

Rick Jones from Blissfield, MI sends along a note with a photo of his Empire at a local meet. His note reads as follows:

I wasn't able to make it to the big show in PA but I did represent our mark at our local Tractor Cruise In last Friday night. Yes, I live near a town that is Hick enough to have a Tractor Cruise In just like the car guys. We even had a Band! The city of Blissfield has a downtown area that is only one block long complete with a Barber Shop right out of the Andy Griffith Show and the whole nine. We had a good showing of 63 tractors of various colors and brands but I had the only Empire at the show! (I guess that the rest were all out east. LOL!) I had a good time. Not one old farmer knew what kind of tractor it was and we had lots of conversation about it. I even made a couple of new tractor buddies to swap stories with. I can't wait to read about how the show in PA turned out and sorry that I missed it!



Rick

Thanks, Rick, for the note and we appreciate your contributions to the Newsletter. Rick resides in Blissfield, MI can be reached at 734-735-6060 or email to arickjones8@gmail.com.



Steve Rosenboom from Pomeroy, IA sent along this photo of Empire #3692 that he recently purchased at an estate auction not far from home. It sure looks like he got a pretty nice tractor. Thanks, Steve, for letting us know about your recent purchase and we look forward to seeing you at our EXPO in August.

Water–Water Everywhere! For three of the four days of the show no less! We’ve all been there. Dave Hering, along with several other members of his local Gordon County Antique Engine & Tractor Club was attending the 1st Annual Georgia National Antique Agriculture Show in Perry, GA. The show was held at the Georgia National Fairgrounds in Perry where they were showing anything ag related: including livestock, tractors, machinery, implements and vendors, along with a huge car show and flea market. As you might imagine, the Empire was quite a hit and drew alot of attention from those who braved the weather. Overall it was a successful show and plans are in place to attend again next year. Dave resides in Cartersville, GA and can be reached at 913-908-6955 or email to dave@dchering.com. As you may know, this Newsletter would not be possible without his assistance in printing and mailing each issue to us.



Marlin McCormick is the proud owner of Empire #5220 as you can see during the annual 4th of July parade in DeWitt, IA. Marlin purchased his tractor last year at our Mt. Pleasant EXPO after a Jeep friend suggested he needed something different in his collection. Marlin is planning to attend our EXPO in Pinckneyville and we look forward to seeing him there. Marlin resides in DeWitt, IA and can be reached at 573-248-5749. Thanks, Marlin, for sending along the photo.



This is one cool story and I want to thank Dan and Marie Robinett for sharing it with us. How often do we hear about a couple using an Empire tractor as their wedding day vehicle? Only one other time has this happened and that was when Kevin and Sharon Gervias from Dresden, ON were

married on June 12, 1999. That story can be found in the January 2000 issue of the Newsletter. Since Marie is such a good writer I’ll let her tell you their story.

It all started with a tractor, every good story does, right? Dan Robinett saved pictures of tractors he liked from a calendar and posted them to his garage wall as inspiration for future purchases. Some of them he was familiar with, but not all.

One picture of a red Empire really caught his attention. As soon as he started researching the Empire his excitement grew. He loved tractors. And his fiancé, Marie, loved Jeeps. Here was the perfect symbol of their union! He couldn’t get it off his mind and started scouring the marketplace for his next tractor.

As we all know, Empires are not easily located. Yet fate brought more than Dan and Marie together. Dan found a restored Empire nearly sitting in his back yard! It was all but a done deal when Dan and the Empire met for the first time. Not only was this rare find available, it had two seats! Dan made room in his garage and as a surprise for his future bride, he bought her a “Jeep tractor” for their wedding.



On 27 July, 2019 the Empire was parked in the field and feeling right at home amid the old restored buildings at the Boone Monument Village in Marthasville, Missouri. Following the wedding the Jeep lover and the Tractor lover joined together on the Empire as one and jauntily bounced into the sunset- the epitome of happiness. Just a guy with a bride on his favorite new tractor, blazing along to make history as the second couple married with an Empire taking center stage at their wedding. What more could a couple ask for to make it a perfect day?



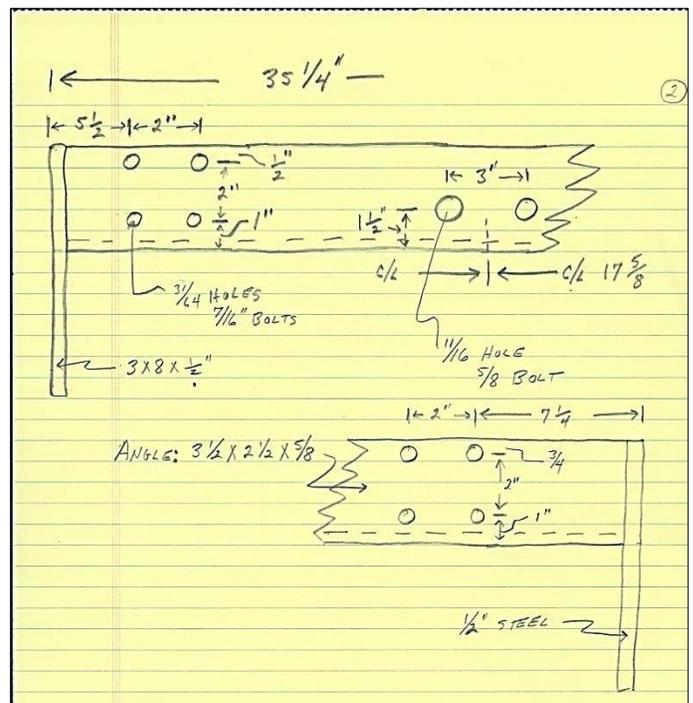
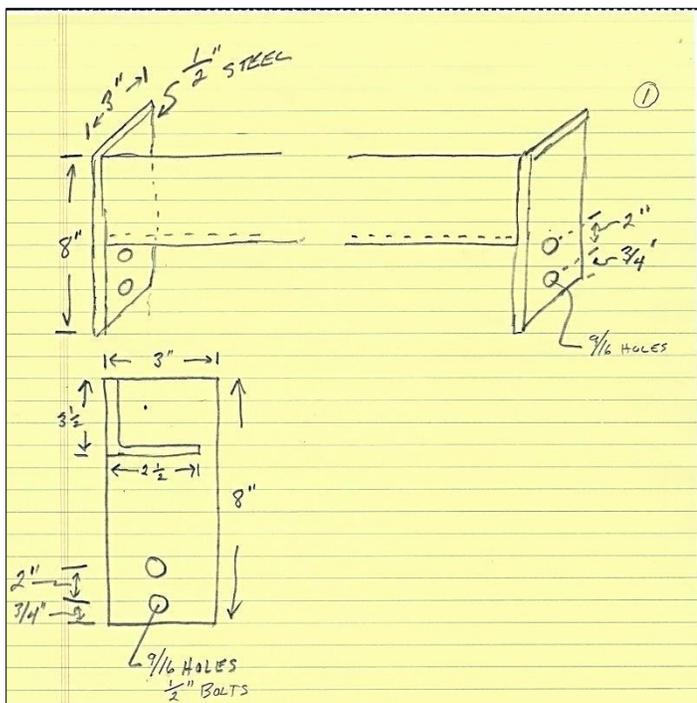
Dan and Marie Robinett

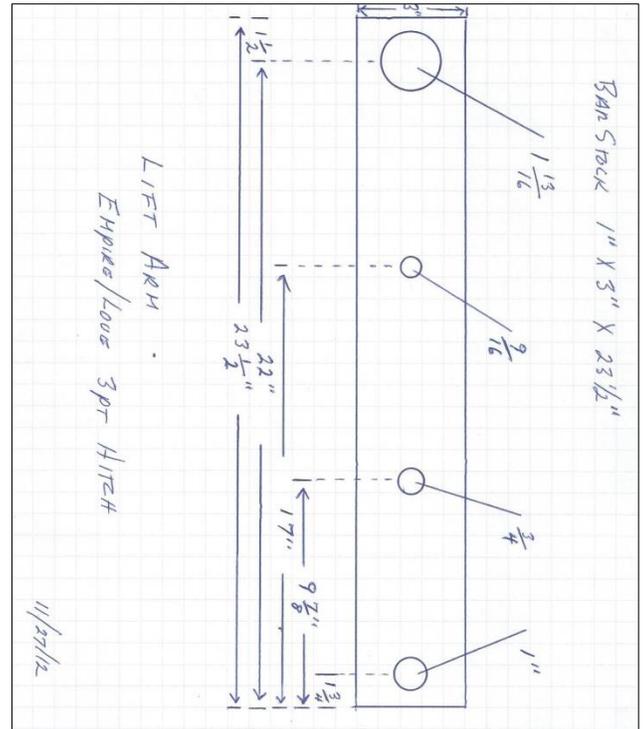
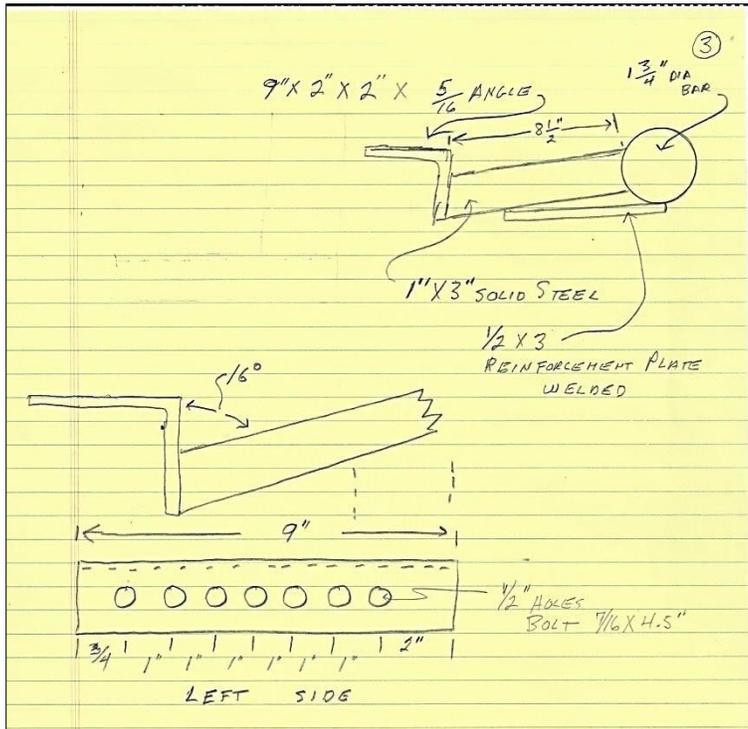
What a story! We certainly wish them all the best in the years ahead. I know they have plans to attend our EXPO in August and I look forward to meeting the couple then. They reside in Auxvasse,

MO and can be reached at 573-261-1849 or email to rock.it.marie@gmail.com

TECH SECTION

We are taking the space this time around to show some actual deminsions of the Love three point hitch as used on the Empire. These may be of help to those of you considering building their own to match what was used the Empire. They may be a little hard to read but hope they will work. If you have any questions and need to verify any of the dimensions, please give me a call and I will try to help. I can also email close-ups of photos if that will help.





The above figures came from an 'unmolested' hitch and we are sure they are correct. A good many 3-point hitches we have found on the Empire have been modified by owners over the years. Hope this information is of some use to you.

BUY – SELL - TRADE

Doug Carter from Huntsville,

OH has decided it's time to sell Empire #5607.

Doug did a frame-off, from-the-ground-up restoration taking two years to complete the project. It has the original rebuilt engine, new tires, radiator, brakes, head lights, gas tank, wiring harness, clutch and high quality automotive paint. Doug and his tractor were featured on the front page of Vintage Tractor Digest in 2018 with eight pages of coverage inside. If you are looking for a top quality Empire all ready to show, this is it. It

even includes a five bow canopy. Doug is asking \$12,000 OBO for this Empire and he can be contacted at 440-840-5538 or email to decarter@windstream.net.



Jason Watkins from Lake Placid, FL needs to find

a new home for Empire #5247. The tractor is fairly complete but would need some parts to restore. It has been stored inside for a number of years and could be restored or used for parts. The engine does not run and would need work. They are asking \$600.00 for this Empire. You can reach Jason at 863-441-4614 or email to jrwatkins30@gmail.com. for more details.





. How about an extra seat for your Empire? And better yet the price is right – it’s FREE! Bill Gibson has an extra seat that I’m sure someone can use. Call Bill at 417-439-5307 or email to wlgibson@gmail.com. Bill is from Shell Knob, MO.

MORE – FROM OUR READERS

Jimmy Johnson from Clarksville, TN sent along a photo of him and his Empire in the Veterans Day Parade on November 9th. Over 150 clubs and organizations participated in this special event. Jimmy’s comment was “The Empire did great and made this “Old Army Vet” proud to be an American. Thanks, Jimmy, and we hope to see you and Barb in Pinckneyville in August.



It appears we have an artist in our midst! Rachel Williamson, wife of Bud Williamson whom you may recall buildt that beautiful ¾ scale Empire tractor a couple of years back, sent sent along a sketch she did this past summer while at a tractor show along with this note:



When I was in school I loved to draw, but after I graduated I never really had time to sit down and doodle. I had been feeling crafty just before the Pioneer Power Tractor Show in Eagleville, so I decided to buy a sketchpad and some sketching pencils. I told Bud I was going to try something out and practice drawing and he said why not draw the 1947 Empire that he had taken to the show. In between looking at all the new treasures rolling into the show and visiting, I sketched out what you see here. Not my best work but I tried and included as much detail as possible.

Many thanks, Rachel, for sending along the sketch and story. We look forward to seeing you folks this summer. Bud and Rachel reside in Christiana, TN. (Your turn next issue Bud.)

NOTES & MISC



We are finally getting to the end of this Newsletter that turns out will be the largest to date. I want to THANK all of you who sent in photos and stories as this is what makes our Newsletter special. Please keep those photos and stories coming my way.

- + We will be changing the phone number used on our website and other materials. From now on, please use 315-246-7788 for all phone correspondance. You can also text using this number. This is my cell phone, and I will always answer or return your call . Email works well using info@empiretractor.net.
- + Please check the lower left corner of the envelope for your Expiration Date and send in your dues promptly.

Wishing Everyone A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

‘Til next time... Carl