

The Best of...

Fourth in a Series



**Tractors of the 1950's**

## We Look Back with Nostalgia on 'Modern' Tractors of the '50's

IN SOME ways, the 1950's were a quiet time. There were, of course, conflicts both at home and abroad—there always seem to be some of those. But folks were putting their shoulder to the wheel, trying their level best to make a good life for their families.

On TV and radio, we enjoyed the likes of Arthur Godfrey, Milton Berle, Lucille Ball, Red Skelton and Jack Benny. Among our favorite shows were *Gunsmoke*, *Wagon Train* and *Maverick*, not to mention *The Life of Riley*, *Ozzie and Harriet* and *The Honeymooners*.

We were productive and happy at work. Our goals were to produce more and better goods. Whether it was home appliances like dishwashers and electric mixers...clothes made of new-fangled fabrics...cars with fancier designs and automatic transmissions...or new medicines—our energy and ingenuity were devoted to *making improvements*.

Agriculture was no exception. There were bigger, better tractors and research into ways to increase crop yields. New tractors were everywhere. In the fields of

farmers who had until recently used teams or driven on iron wheels, you could now see bright new tractors capable of getting more out of each acre, faster.

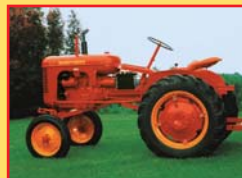
Although it was hard to imagine then, the second half of this century would see the arrival of giant tractors that had cabs with air-conditioning, radios and satellite communications. Now we look back with nostalgia to the days of the “modern” ’50's tractor. Despite all the innovations and advances of the ’50's, riding a tractor in those days was still a lot like riding a horse.

We were out in the weather. Hot, cold, wet or dry, we had to bounce along sitting on an often uncomfortable “saddle” made of metal. Even so, with this *The Best of Tractor Talk*, we pay tribute to a few of the “Tractors of the 1950's”. They represent a halfway point, not only in the century, but between the teams of yesteryear and the high-tech of today.

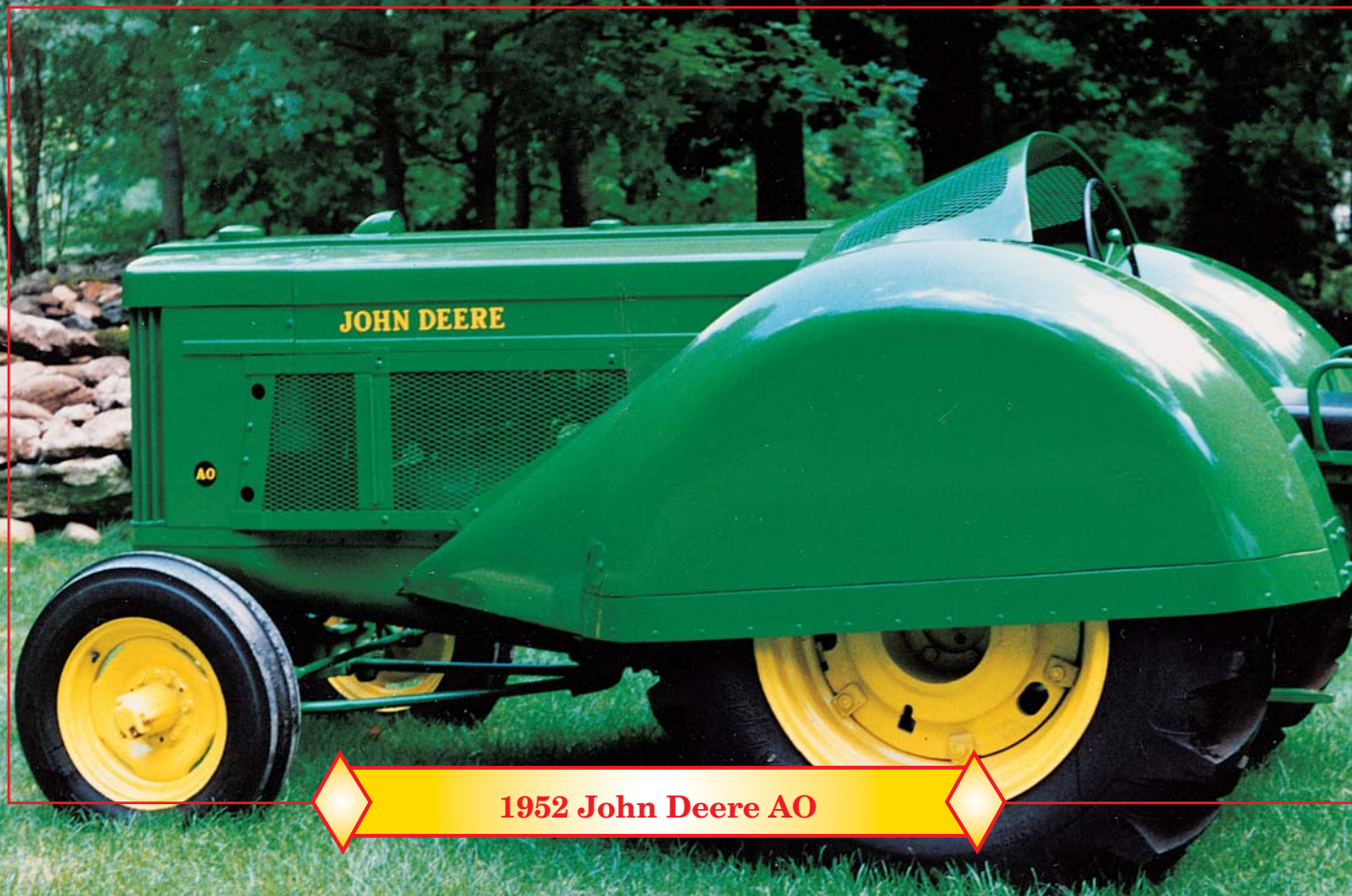
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**Can You Name These '50's Tractors?**  
(answers inside)



**1952 John Deere AO**

## John Deere AO

1936-1953

### *Selected Facts (Approx.)*

Length: 124 inches

Height: 52 inches to radiator cap

Weight: 4,093 pounds

IN 1936, the good folks at John Deere created a tractor especially for fruit farmers. Billed as the “John Deere Model AO for Grove, Orchard and Vineyard,” this popular little tractor remained in production until mid-1953.

The dreary economy of the Depression years had created stiff competition between tractor manufacturers to create models tailored to farmers’ specific needs, and with the AO, John Deere did just that. The AO (the “O” standing for “orchard”) was a variation of the Model A. The A had been introduced 2 years earlier to address the needs of farmers with small- to medium-sized farms.

Everything about the AO made it ideal for work in orchards. Small and compact, with separate wheel brakes instead of a single one, it could maneuver easily around trees. Its low driver’s seat and steering wheel saved farmers a lot of crouching and ducking, and its large metal shields prevented branches from getting caught in the wheels.

Over its 17 years of production, the AO experienced some minor cosmetic changes, ultimately resulting in the “space age” look of the 1952 version pictured above.

**Tractor Puzzler 1:** With what company did John Deere collaborate to produce crawler tractors? (*answer on inside back cover*)

## Outstanding Orchard

I was attracted to this 1952 John Deere AO when I spotted it for sale in a magazine ad promoting an auction in Coopersville, Michigan. It caught my eye because there were only 12 serial numbers between it and an AR I already owned and had restored.

There were no light brackets on the tractor when I purchased it in June of 1986, and finding original old stock for replacements wasn’t easy. My wife spent many hours on the phone tracking down the necessary parts. When she finally located them, she gave them to me as Christmas gifts. Now I have a wish list of parts.

The restoration was finished in time for me to show the AO at the Two-Cylinder Club’s John Deere Expo in 1987. Held in Waterloo, Iowa, over 800 miles away from home, this expo celebrated 150 years of John Deere.

My wife will tell you that once I was bitten by the restoration bug, there was no turning back. It’s an itch I have to scratch. —*Mike Twiss, Milton, Ontario*



**1950 Farmall H**

## Farmall H

1939-1952

### *Selected Facts*

Weight: 5,550 pounds

Bore and stroke: 3-3/8 x 4-1/4

Engine speed: 1,650 rpm

THE FARMALL H was one of the handful of tractors that replaced Farmall's F series around 1940. The H, which featured modern "styling" courtesy of designer Raymond Loewy, filled the niche previously occupied by the Farmall F-20.

The gasoline version of the H had a vertical, four-cylinder engine that produced 24 horsepower at the belt and 19 horsepower at the drawbar. Rated for two plows, it could pull a maximum of 3,600 pounds.

The Farmall H was similar to the Model M, except it had a smaller engine. The H was also less expensive than the M and, perhaps for that very reason, it was considerably more popular.

The Farmall H featured a five-speed transmission (including a transport gear good for a brisk 16 mph) and a sliding hub for easy rear wheel adjustment. The model was also available in a high-crop version.

After a total production run of 391,000 tractors, International Harvester replaced the H in 1952 with the powerful Farmall Super H.

**Tractor Puzzler 2:** What was Farmall's answer to the Ford-Ferguson three-point hitch? (*answer on inside back cover*)

## Heirloom International

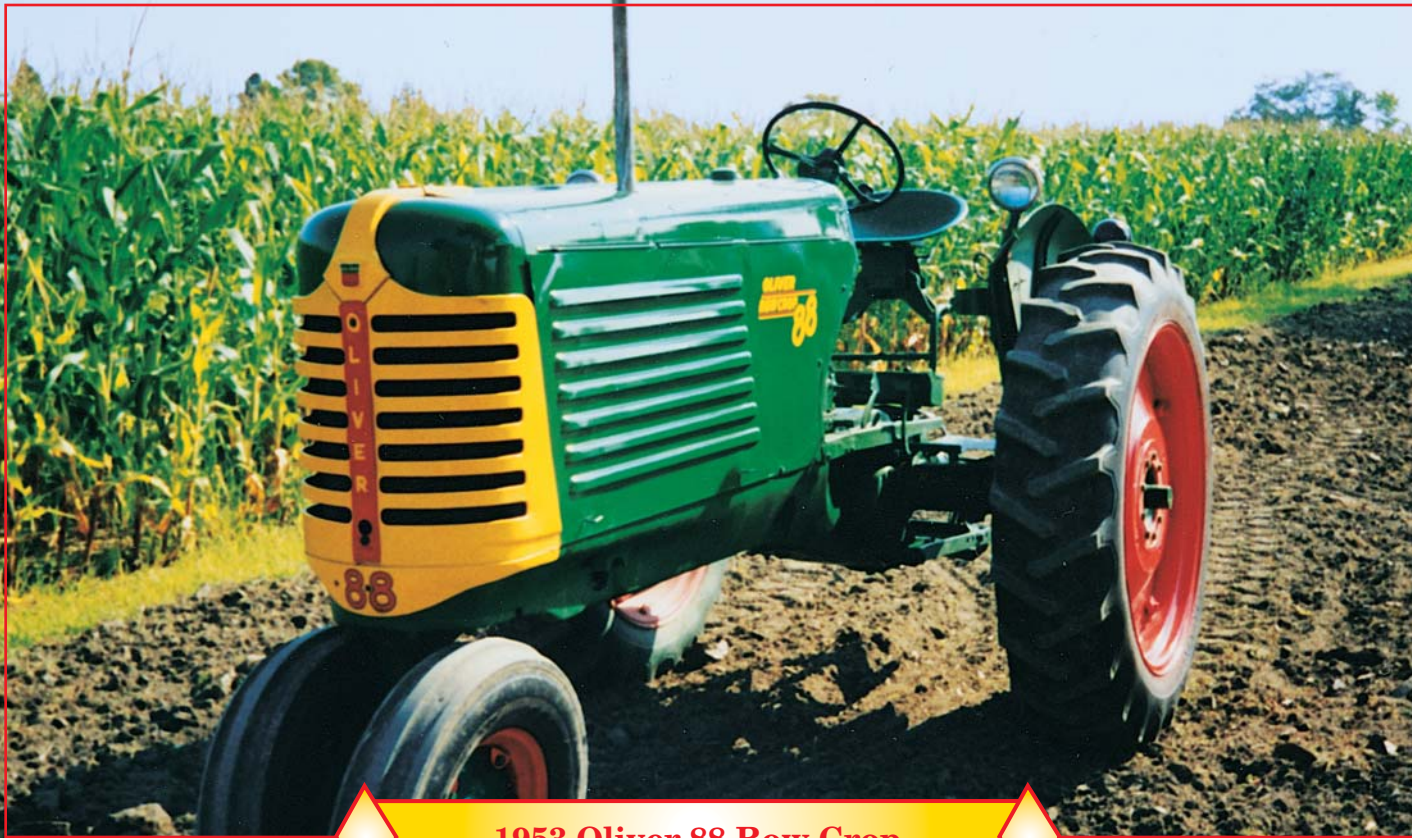
My grandparents, Devoe and Ruth Watkins, purchased this 1950 International Farmall H second-hand in the early '50's. It was used on their grain farm until 1989 and came to me through my grandmother's estate when she passed away.

My father, Stanley Holderman, who has helped me with 15 previous restorations, also helped with this one. The tractor had been well cared for and was in running condition. We disassembled it to the castings and replaced seals to stop the many leaks that the old tractor had. It was then completely sandblasted and repainted.

Although my work as a deputy sheriff leaves me with little spare time, we finished the project in only 3 months.

Of all the tractors I have restored, this one has a special place in my heart because it's been in the family so long.

—Larry Holderman, Warsaw, Indiana



1953 Oliver 88 Row Crop



## Oliver 88 Row Crop

1948-1954

### *Selected Facts*

Plow capability: three or four

Weight: 5,285 pounds

Maximum pull: 5,173 pounds

THE OLIVER 88 was the first of three models rolled out in 1948 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Oliver Corporation. The other two tractors in the “Fleetline” series were the 66 and the 77.

The Oliver 88 boasted a six-cylinder engine that operated at a speed of 1,600 rpm. The motor had a bore and stroke of 3-1/4 x 4 and a displacement of 231 cubic inches. An alternative kerosene/distillate version of the 88 was replaced in 1949 with a diesel model.

An innovation available on the 88 was independent PTO. Oliver had introduced live PTO in 1946, and the three Fleetline models were the first wheel-type tractors in America to offer this useful feature. In addition, starting in 1949 all three tractors featured Oliver’s “Hydra-Lectric” hydraulic system.

Farmers purchasing an Oliver 88 could choose from a variety of wheel configurations, including standard tread, adjustable wide-front and high clearance. Oliver also offered the 88 in industrial and orchard versions. The company replaced the 88 in 1954 with the Super 88.

**Tractor Puzzler 3:** What was the first Oliver tractor to feature pneumatic tires? (*answer on inside back cover*)

### Prize-Winning Oliver

I am 16 years old, and this 1953 Oliver 88 Row Crop was my second restoration project. Grandpa bought this tractor from its original owner in the mid-1960’s. In 1997, he sold it at his farm auction, and I was the buyer.

The restoration took 9 months to complete. The tractor ran pretty well, but the engine needed a complete overhaul. After taking the engine apart, I discovered that the block and head were both cracked and needed to be replaced. Other than that setback, the project went smoothly.

In August of 1998, I entered my tractor in the National FFA Tractor Restoration Project competition. I was proud to be named the winner and awarded the grand prize of \$2,500!

—Jared Bryan, Berne, Indiana



**1953 Ferguson TO-30**

## Ferguson TO-30

1951-1954

### *Selected Facts*

Engine: Continental four-cylinder

Height: 51-3/4 inches

Weight: 2,843 pounds

WHEN Henry Ford and Harry Ferguson ended their 8-year partnership in 1946, both men decided to go it alone in the competitive tractor-building business. While Ford Motors continued in the industry for several decades, the smaller Harry Ferguson Inc. lasted only 7 years.

During this brief period, Ferguson came out with a number of dependable tractors. The TO-30 was one of them. Built in Detroit, it replaced one of Ferguson's first-ever ventures, the TE-20, which had been produced in England.

At the Nebraska Tractor Tests, the TO-30 rated at 1,750 rpm on the drawbar and 2,000 rpm in the belt, while horsepower was rated at 19.26 and 27.96, respectively. Its four-cylinder, I-head engine used a 3-1/4- x 3-7/8-inch bore and stroke and featured a six-volt battery as standard equipment. The TO-30 had forward speeds of 2.9, 4, 5.5 and 11.48 mph.

Production of the TO-30 continued for another year after Ferguson merged with Canada's Massey-Harris in 1953. Under the name Massey-Ferguson, the new corporation would be competitive in the tractor market for years to come.

**Tractor Puzzler 4:** What flower inspired Case's "Persian Orange" tractor paint? (*answer on inside back cover*)

## Fair Ferguson

My grandfather, Herb Gietzen, purchased this 1953 Ferguson TO-30 new after having seen it on display at the 1953 Michigan State Fair.

In 1988, the tractor was passed on to my father. When my father passed it on to me in 1990, it was still in really good condition. After 35 years of part-time farming use, it still had all four original tires. I also have the Ferguson three-point grader blade that was purchased with the tractor.

Working on the restoration part-time for about 3 months, I replaced all the seals and gaskets. Then my friend, Dennis Hansen, removed the dents from the sheet metal and applied the custom-mixed gray paint.

Since the restoration, the Ferguson has been making the rounds of antique tractor shows and is used occasionally for hay rides.

—Tom Gietzen  
Dansville, Michigan



1955 Farmall 200

## Farmall 200

1954-1955

### *Selected Facts*

Weight: 3,541 pounds

Bore and stroke: 3-1/8 x 4

Engine speed: 1,650 rpm

IN 1954, International Harvester replaced its Farmall Super C with the new Farmall 200.

The 200 featured a four-cylinder, I-head engine with a 3-1/8-inch bore and a 4-inch stroke. The transmission offered a choice of four forward speeds: 2-1/2, 2-7/8, 5-1/8 and 10-5/8 mph.

At its Nebraska test in April 1955, the Farmall 200 demonstrated belt muscle of 22 horsepower. At the drawbar, the model 200 produced 17 horsepower, and in the “maximum pull” test, this “can do” tractor hauled 3,166 pounds.

During this period in the growth of the tractor industry, user needs and producer innovations developed rapidly. As a result, many models enjoyed only a brief production life before the pace of change made them “yesterday’s tractor”.

Thus, after a history of only 2 years, the Farmall 200 was replaced in 1956 by the more powerful Farmall 230.

**Tractor Puzzler 5:** Who is credited with building the first practical gasoline tractor? (*answer on inside back cover*)

## Not Just For Show

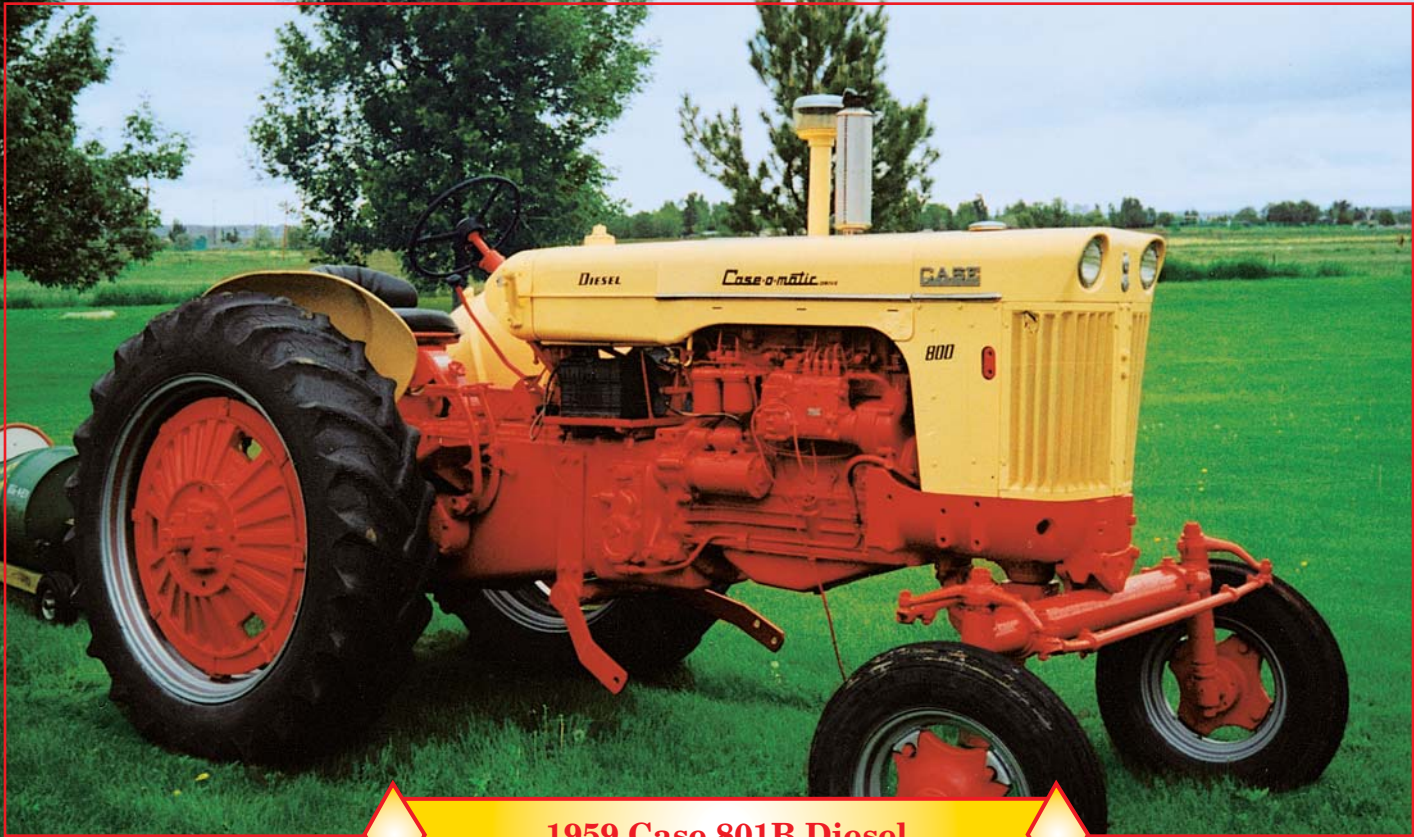
I am a senior in high school, who first got interested in restoring tractors while helping my dad with his projects. We collect and restore the smaller old Farmalls like this 1955 Farmall 200 we purchased in Missouri.

This one needed quite a bit of work. The engine was worn out, the rear end leaked oil, and the sheet metal was pretty well beat up. First I rebuilt the engine and put in new seals. Then I straightened the sheet metal. After sandblasting the tractor, I gave it a new coat of red paint. The restoration took me about 5 months to complete.

Dad and I are members of the International Harvester Collectors Club and the Sandwich Early Day Engine Club. We have a lot of fun showing our tractors at club events and participating in parades.

This one’s not just for show, though. Every fall, we use it with a two-bottom plow to turn several acres.

—Ben Eipers, Sandwich, Illinois



1959 Case 801B Diesel

## Case 801B Diesel

1957-1959

### *Selected Facts*

Weight: 6,935 pounds

Engine displacement: 267 cubic inches

Engine speed: 1,800 rpm

THE Case 801B Diesel was one of the many '50's-era tractors that saw only a brief production run. Case introduced the model in 1957, had it tested at Nebraska in 1958 and built the last one in 1959.

The 801B boasted a Case-made, four-cylinder diesel engine with a bore and stroke of 4-1/8 x 5. This powerful motor produced 50 horsepower at the drawbar and 54 horsepower for belt work.

Like all of Case's 700, 800 and 900 series tractors, the 801B came with the company's new "Case-O-Matic" transmission, which featured a torque converter drive with a lock-out option. In its Nebraska test, the 801B pulled 7,888 pounds—but with the torque converter engaged, that figure was increased to 7,963 pounds.

The 801B was available in a number of versions, including a Western Special and a Rice Special. It was nearly identical to the gasoline-powered Case 811B, which the company offered in 1958 and 1959.

**Tractor Puzzler 6:** In what year was the first diesel tractor tested at the Nebraska Tractor Test Laboratory? (*answer on inside back cover*)

## Classy Case

When we first saw this 1959 Case 801B Diesel up for auction, we liked the newer squared look. It was different from the older Case models and had a limited production.

We couldn't stay for the auction, so our son, Dave, bid for us. He was able to get it for \$300—a real deal!

It took us a couple of years to round up all the parts needed for the restoration, plus the wide front end. It came with just a single front wheel. The correct head gaskets were the hardest to find.

Dave, who had gotten us interested in Old Iron, put in a lot of hours helping us with our first restoration while working on his own project.

For shows and parades, the Case is used to pull a custom-built "barrel train" to give rides to children. It's great fun!

We're members of the Wind River Fly Wheelers Antique Tractor and Engine Club.

—Bob and Lila Stark  
Riverton, Wyoming



1954 John Deere 70



## John Deere 70

### 1953-1956

#### *Selected Facts*

Height: 65.6 inches

Speeds: Six forward gears, one reverse gear

Price: \$3,000 (1956)

LETTERS as model names gave way to numbers for John Deere in 1952. That's when the most popular tractor model in Deere's history, the B, was finally replaced by the 50. At the same time, the A was replaced by the 60, and 1 year later, the G series became the 70.

The 70 quickly established itself as a tough, powerful row-crop tractor. Besides offering a choice of three engine types—gasoline, “all fuel”, or LP—it was much more powerful than the G had been. In fact, it was an amazing 18% more powerful with the “all fuel” engine, and even more so with the gasoline or LP engine. At the 1954 Nebraska Tractor Tests, Deere's first-ever row-crop diesel set a new fuel economy record for row-crop tractors: 17.74 horsepower hours per gallon with a maximum belt load of 50.4 horsepower.

Also in 1954, the 70, 60 and 50 became the first row-crop tractors equipped with optional, factory-installed power steering. John Deere pioneered this with a system that used built-in hydraulics to control the steering column.

**Tractor Puzzler 7:** Why were horse teams used with the first steam tractors of the 1870's? (*answer on inside back cover*)

### Welcome Workhorse

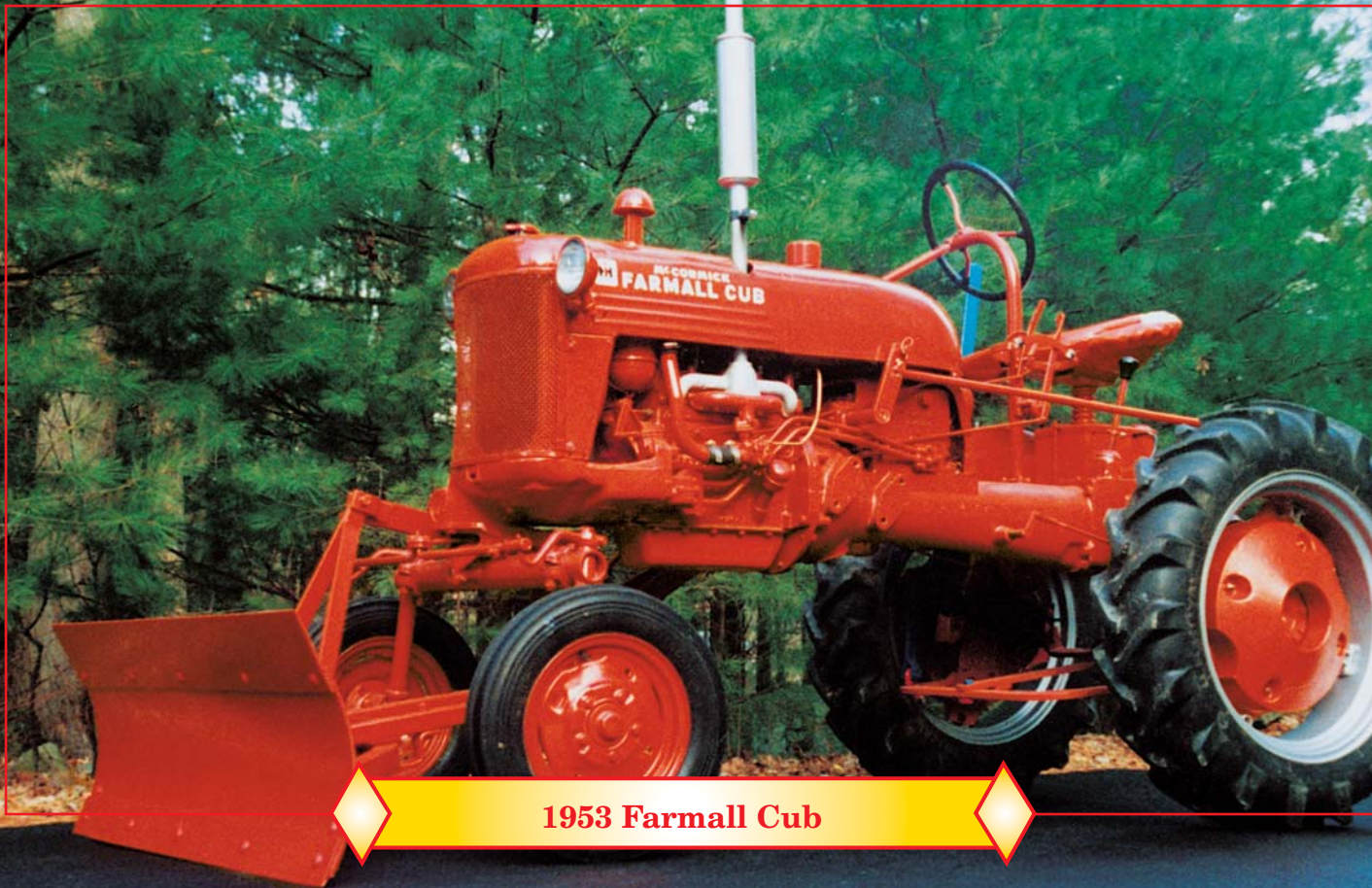
In March 1993, a friend told me about this 1954 John Deere 70. When I first saw the tractor, it was sitting in a field covered with 6 inches of snow. The engine was locked up, and the rest of the tractor was rusted and looked to be in very rough shape.

I purchased it for \$300, but because the rear wheels were also locked up, I had to have the farmer pull it out of its resting place with a four-wheel drive tractor. I covered it with a heavy canvas and lit a propane heater to melt the ice in the rear end.

The complete restoration took 3 years. I enjoyed traveling around Illinois and Indiana looking for good original parts. The battery box is the only part that's a reproduction.

We cut and bale hay with our 70. My wife, Diane, drives it pulling a Super 68 New Holland baler, while my 12-year-old daughter, Ashley, and I ride the rack.

—Corey Tavenner, Ludlow, Illinois



**1953 Farmall Cub**

## Farmall Cub

1947-1979

### *Selected Facts*

Engine: Four-cylinder, L-head

Bore and stroke: 2-5/8 x 2-3/4

Maximum pull: 1,600 pounds

THE CUB was the smallest of the Farmalls—indeed, the smallest tractor ever produced by International Harvester.

During its production life, the Farmall Cub changed only a little. Originally weighing just 1,477 pounds, later improvements increased its heft to 1,895 pounds. Similarly, its original engine speed of 1,600 rpm developed into 1,800 rpm by the mid-'50's.

The Cub was always most popular with truck farmers and other small-acreage growers. With 9 horsepower at the drawbar, the little tractor could handle one 12-inch plow. It featured an offset engine and drivetrain to allow for superior visibility, a benefit that helped make the Cub a favorite with another segment of the population—people with large lawns.

The Farmall Cub holds the record for the longest production run—more than three decades. In all, hundreds of thousands of Cubs rolled off the International Harvester assembly line.

**Tractor Puzzler 8:** In what year was the last distillate-fueled tractor tested at Nebraska? (*answer on inside back cover*)

## Pretty and Proud

I got interested in Old Iron the stormy day I drove friends to a club meeting in my four-wheel-drive. I ended up staying, and the rest is history.

I first bought a wood corn sheller for \$1 at an auction. It was the best dollar I ever spent! Now I have a garage full of projects waiting.

I bought my 1953 Farmall Cub in 1996. As I removed, cleaned and painted the tractor's parts, I stored them in my living room so they wouldn't get dinged up. It was a great day when I started putting them back on the tractor.

The trick with painting the tractor was knowing which of its colors were authentic. For example, the implement arm was blue. I wondered why anyone would make the arm blue and proceeded to paint it red. I was later enlightened by members of the IH club that the arm was supposed to be blue!

Painting is what I enjoy most. A tractor takes on a new personality as the rust comes off and the original colors go back on.

—Karen Pajak  
*Accord, New York*



1953 Ford NAA Golden Jubilee

## Ford NAA Golden Jubilee

### 1953-1954

#### *Selected Facts*

Engine: Four-cylinder, I-head “Red Tiger”  
Speeds: Four forward gears, 3.1 to 11.6 mph  
Weight: 2,841 pounds

THE FORD MOTOR CO. began celebrating its 50th anniversary by introducing the NAA model tractor in January of 1953. Nicknamed the “Golden Jubilee 1903-1953”, it was known simply as the Jubilee. The anniversary tractor was a slightly revised version of the 8N model, which Ford had been producing since 1947.

The Jubilee was a “first” in one major respect. At the 1953 Nebraska Tractor Tests, it introduced Ford’s new “Red Tiger” engine, a four-cylinder, valve-in-head engine rated at 2,000 rpm in the belt and 1,750 rpm on the drawbar. At 2,000 rpm, it produced 31 horsepower. Also, a new vane-type hydraulic pump replaced the old Ferguson System pump and was relocated to the right rear of the engine.

Production of the Jubilee lasted only slightly longer than the anniversary year it was built to commemorate, as an era was ending. Ford had been a one-tractor company since 1917, when it formally branched out from auto manufacturing. But in 1955, it introduced its 600 and 800 Series tractors, a total of five new models in all. This made Ford a viable competitor in the tractor market from that point on.

**Tractor Puzzler 9:** What colorful feature did Case offer on a small number of tractors in 1976? (*answer on inside back cover*)

## Tractor Tribute

My father, Robert E. Pifer Sr., purchased this 1953 Ford Golden Jubilee in 1996 to restore and show. A long-time member of the Ashtabula County Antique Engine Club in northeastern Ohio, his goal was to have the tractor ready for the club’s annual meet on July 4, 1997.

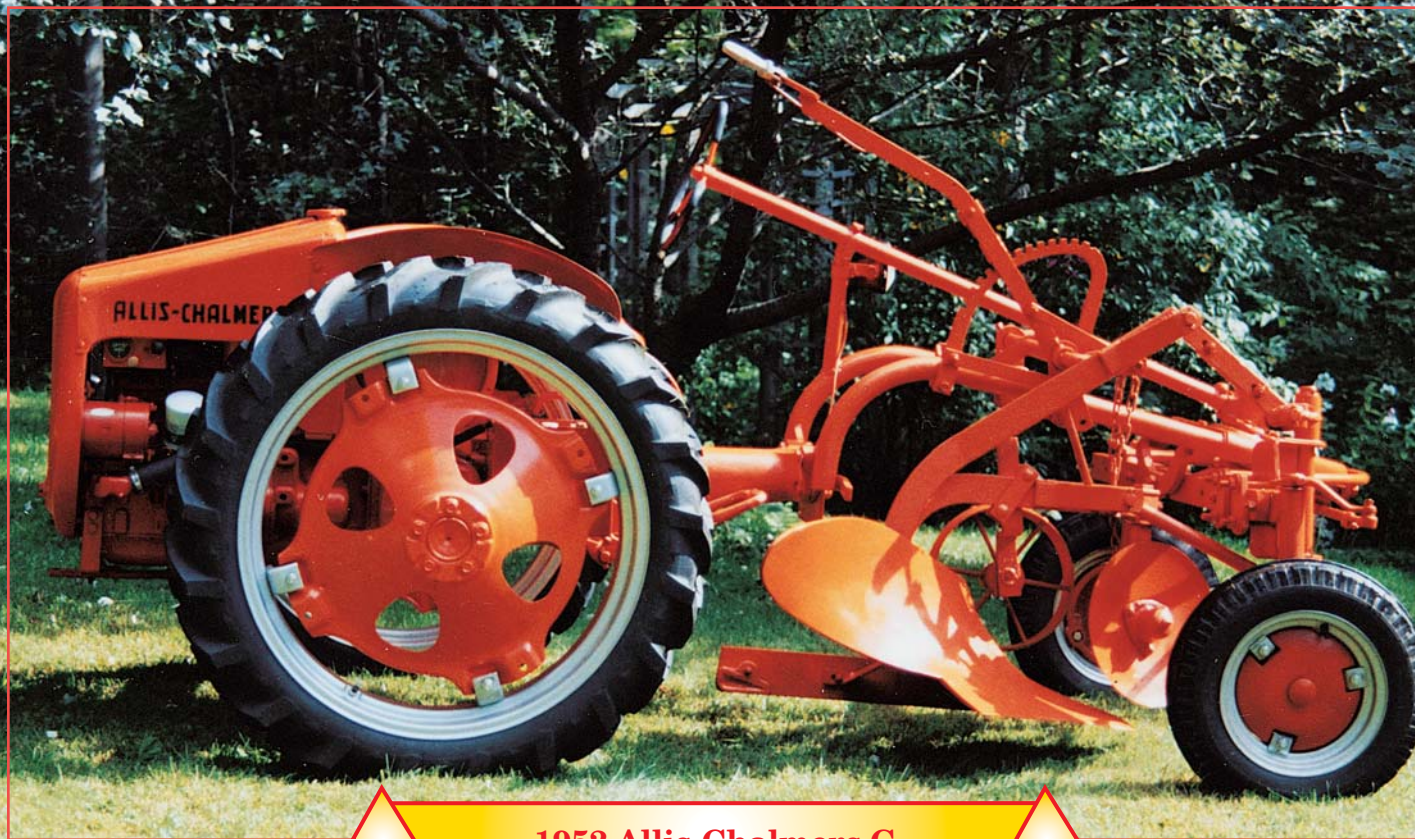
Sadly, he passed away shortly after starting the project. I decided to finish the restoration myself and to show it in his honor.

A local Ford tractor buff, Bill Laughlin, and I went over the tractor from front to rear mechanically, putting in any new parts that were needed. The engine was re-sleeved, and a new head was installed. I was able to find an original manifold. The left step was rebuilt with a toolbox underneath.

Billy Watson, a neighbor, applied a professional paint job to complete the restoration.

My father would be pleased with the attention given to detail on the project, and I was proud to show it in his honor on the 4th of July.

—Gordon Pifer  
Conneat, Ohio



**1952 Allis-Chalmers G**

## Allis-Chalmers G

1948-1955

### *Selected Facts*

Horsepower: 10.33 belt, 9.04 drawbar

Weight: 1,549 pounds

Price: \$900 in 1951

A NUMBER of tractor dealers were bewildered when Allis-Chalmers introduced the G in 1948. After World War II, many farmers were clamoring for big, powerful new machinery, but the G was only slightly larger than a riding lawn mower. Soon, however, it became popular on small farms and nurseries for precision planting, seeding, fertilizing and cultivation.

Everything about the G was unique. Tiny even for a small tractor, it introduced a new design principle, featuring a rear-mounted engine and an open frame. Special implements could be attached to the frame, giving the driver an unobstructed, close-up view of his work. At part throttle, its four-speed transmission could slow the tractor to an amazing 0.75 mph for close cultivation of delicate crops.

The G was out-of-the-ordinary, even to Allis-Chalmers. Instead of being built at its tractor plant in West Allis, Wisconsin, the G was manufactured at the company's Gadsden, Alabama plant, which specialized in cotton pickers, mowers and electrical equipment. Allis-Chalmers didn't produce an engine small enough, so they used a Continental AN-62 engine.

**Tractor Puzzler 10:** What is a "pony engine"? (*answer on inside back cover*)

## A Genuine Gem

In 1996, my wife, Nancy, and I visited the Hale Matoon family in Chelsea, Vermont to see their collection of antique tractors. Right then, I knew I wanted to restore a tractor myself.

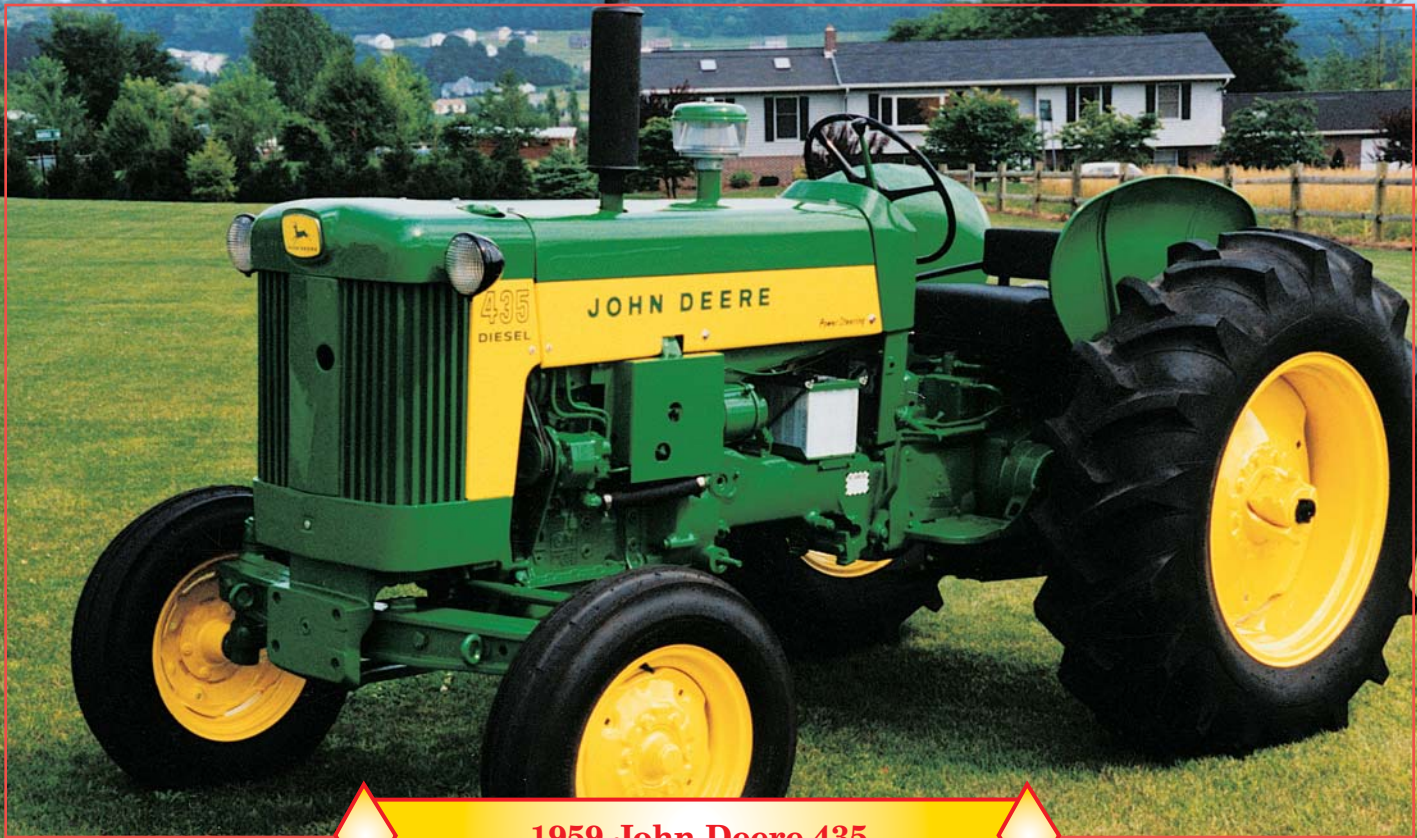
I had the chance to buy this 1952 Allis-Chalmers G from a neighbor a short time later. I didn't even know he had a tractor—it had been inside a barn, and he asked if I knew someone who could work on it. So I bought it.

The G came with a sickle bar and a land plow. Three of the four tires were original. The only parts it needed were a new battery and a switch.

I started restoration in May 1998. My goal was to have it ready for June parades. After tearing it down, stripping off the paint, repainting it piece by piece and reassembling everything, it was ready.

This tractor is so unique that most people in the area have never seen one. I enjoy the parades because they give the tractor the exposure it deserves.

—Richard Lockerby, Chester, Vermont



**1959 John Deere 435**



## John Deere 435

1959-1960

### *Selected Facts*

Height: 71.5 inches

Speeds: Five forward gears, one reverse gear

Weight: 4,101 pounds

WHEN the John Deere 435 diesel row-crop utility tractor arrived in 1959, it helped mark the end of a sacred era. The 435 had a two-cylinder engine, as did every Deere tractor for over 40 years. However, in 1960 the company acknowledged farmers' needs for more power by introducing a new series of four-cylinder tractors.

During its short production life, the 435 did distinguish itself, though. It was the first Deere tractor offering the option of a 540 or 1,000-rpm Power Take-Off (PTO) shaft. This was a fortunate development, as the Nebraska Tractor Tests had just recently added the 1,000-rpm PTO horsepower standard. The 435 subsequently became the first tractor tested there under this new standard, chalking up a maximum PTO output of 32.91 hp.

Even though the 435 has a two-cylinder engine, some folks do not consider it a "true" two-cylinder tractor. The engine, made by General Motors, had evenly spaced power strokes. This set it apart from other two-cylinder engines, which fired on a "180-degree/540-degree" schedule. Nevertheless, the 435 is remembered as one of the last of a distinct breed of Deeres.

**Tractor Puzzler 11:** How much horsepower did the John Deere 8010 (introduced in 1959) produce? (*answer on inside back cover*)

## Worth the Work

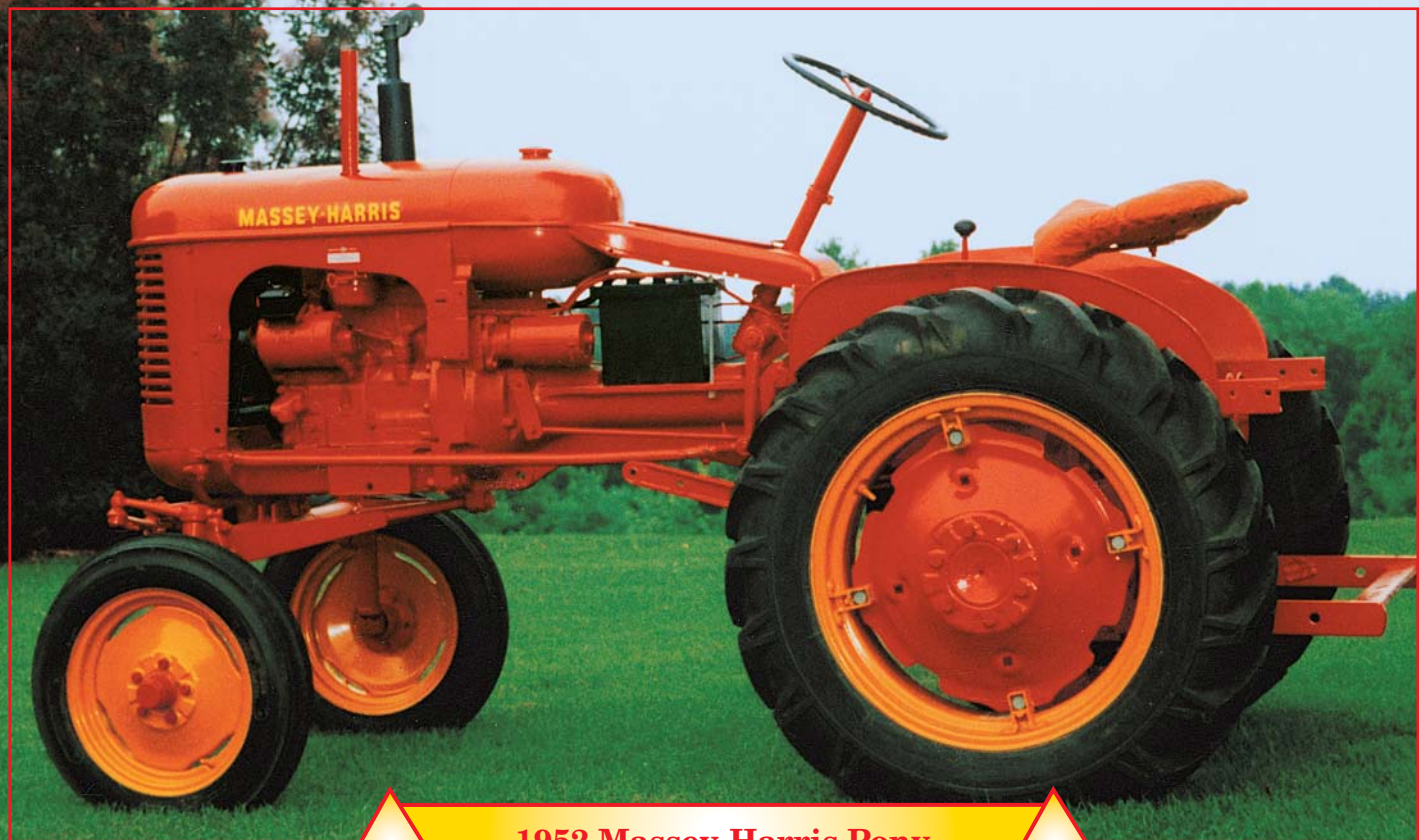
As a member of the Nittany Antique Machinery Association in Centre County, Pennsylvania, I exhibit at its semi-annual shows.

I've been restoring antique tractors and farm machinery for 18 years, and each piece holds a special place in my memory.

I trucked this 1959 John Deere 435 all the way from Louisiana in March of 1997. Restoration of the two-cylinder, two-cycle diesel tractor took about 8 months. Many of the parts were missing and what was left was in sad shape. Every bearing and seal needed to be replaced.

Those of us who restore Old Iron know that the pleasure and satisfaction of saving something destined to obscurity in a junk pile is well worth the many hours of labor invested.

—Lee Pressler  
*Port Matilda, Pennsylvania*



**1952 Massey-Harris Pony**

## Massey-Harris Pony

1947-1954; 1957

### *Selected Facts*

Engine: Continental four-cylinder

Carburetor: Marvel-Schebler TSV-24

Weight: 1,890 pounds

MASSEY-HARRIS tractors have been called “the pride of Canada”. When it was introduced by the Toronto-based company in 1947, the Pony would soon live up to that description. The smallest Massey-Harris yet, it also became one of the best-selling of its class.

The Pony was designed especially for small farms, where it not only cultivated, but performed many light duties. At the Nebraska Tractor Tests, the Pony produced 10.38 belt horsepower and 8.36 horsepower at the drawbar. It was also rated at 1,800 rpm and carried a 2-3/8 x 3-1/2-inch bore and stroke. Three forward speeds of 2.74, 3.59 and 7 mph were provided, and an Auto-Lite electrical system was featured.

By 1954, over 27,000 Ponies were built, which is only about 2,000 less than the Allis-Chalmers G—its popular and well-known competitor—over the same time period. After Massey-Harris merged with Harry Ferguson, Inc. to become Massey-Ferguson, another 122 Ponies were produced during a short run in 1957.

**Tractor Puzzler 12:** What Italian tractor manufacturer did Massey-Ferguson buy in 1960? (*answer on inside back cover*)

## Bartered Beauty

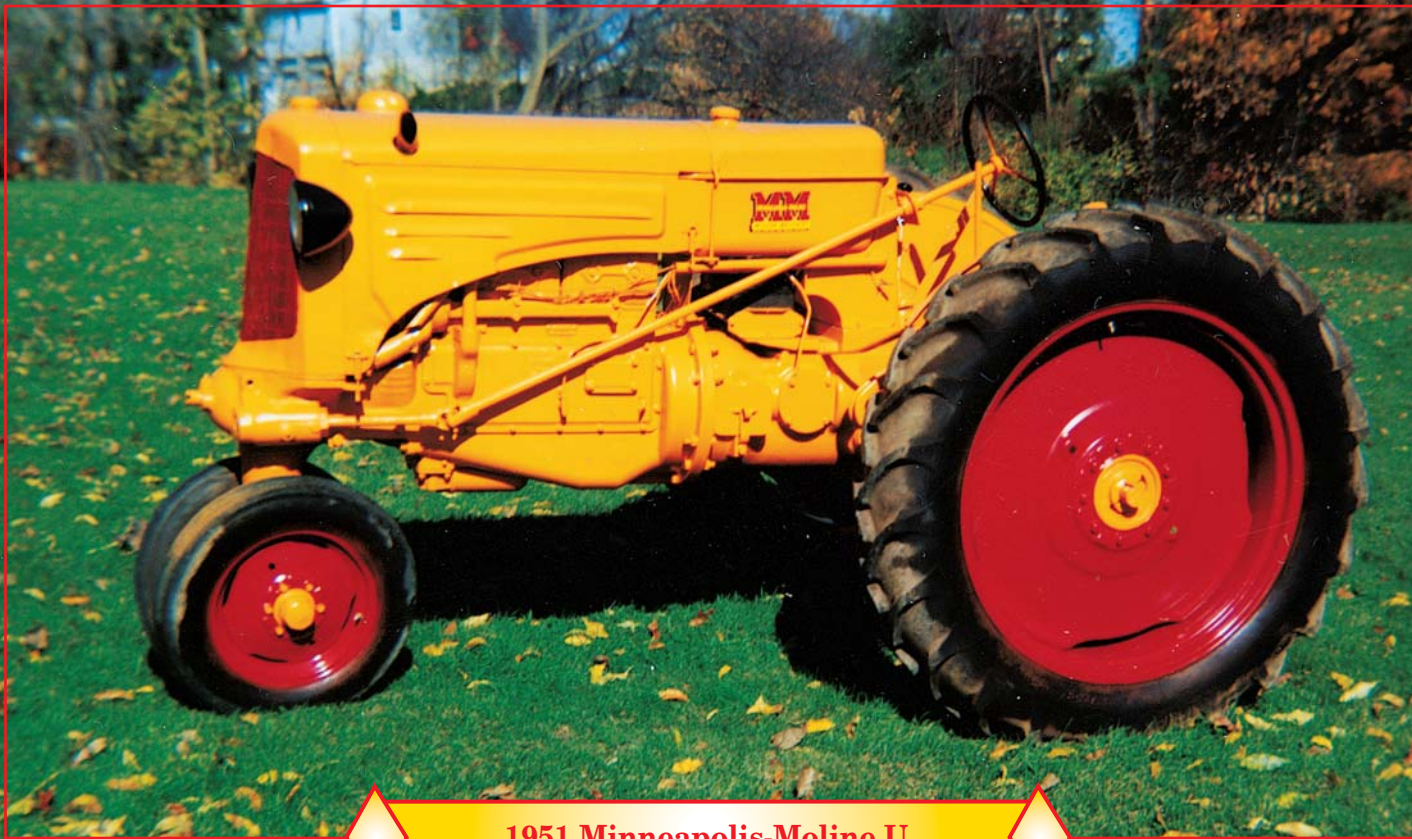
I came into possession of this fully restored 1952 Massey-Harris Pony in what my wife, Mary Ann, calls “the trade of the century”.

About 5 years ago, I answered an ad in a local newspaper from a man in Great Falls, who was looking for a riding lawn mower. Having one to sell, I contacted him, set up a meeting and loaded up my Gravely riding mower.

When I saw this tractor at his place, I asked him what he’d take for it. He said he’d trade it for the lawn mower, but that he wanted \$300 cash in addition.

The Pony now pulls a wagon around for chores at Meadowbrook Farm, where we raise miniature horses and donkeys along with sheep.

—*Michael Gimble*  
*Warrenton, Virginia*



1951 Minneapolis-Moline U

## Minneapolis-Moline U

1938-1957

### *Selected Facts*

Engine: vertical, in-line, four-cylinder

Bore and stroke: 4-1/4 x 5

Engine speed: 1,275 rpm

MINNEAPOLIS-MOLINE introduced its standard-tread row crop U tri-cycle in 1938. The U featured an overhead-valve engine with a five-speed transmission. With 38 horsepower at the belt and 31 horsepower at the drawbar, the U could easily handle three or four 14-inch plows. In its May 1954 Nebraska test, the tractor weighed in at nearly 6 tons and achieved a maximum pull of 4,953 pounds.

In 1941, the U became the first factory-built tractor to be offered in a version that ran on liquefied petroleum gas. In addition, the company produced the U in a diesel version starting in 1953.

M-M offered U customers a complete line of compatible mounted and pull-behind implements. Another option was a long right-hand axle that allowed the rear tread to be adjusted to 52 inches. This feature was particularly useful in harvesting beets.

The U cost under \$1,000 when it first hit the market. Within 10 years, the price of this popular tractor had nearly doubled.

**Tractor Puzzler 13:** What agricultural equipment company acquired Minneapolis-Moline in 1969? (*answer on inside back cover*)

### Missed His M-M

In 1954 when I was farming full-time, I purchased this 1951 Minneapolis-Moline U. I used it in my operation until 1971 when I stopped farming.

During those years, I overhauled the tractor, and cleaned and repainted it. Although I had intended to keep and eventually restore the tractor, a friend admired the U so much that he almost begged me to sell it to him when I quit farming. I let it go with the stipulation that when he no longer wanted it, I would have the opportunity to buy it back.

Three years later, when he sold his farm, I purchased the U. It had been repainted, but not to my standards. So I sandblasted it to the bare metal, then primed and painted it. The engine needed a valve job and a tune-up.

I was happy to have the tractor back and pleased with the results of my restoration.

—Harlan McCall  
Savanna, Illinois



1955 International 300 Utility

## International 300 Utility

1955-1957

### *Selected Facts*

Weight: 4,413 pounds

Engine speed: 2,000 rpm

Maximum pull: 4,379 pounds

IN ALL BUT a few details, the International 300 Utility was identical to the Farmall 300, the general purpose row-crop tractor that International Harvester produced between 1954 and 1956.

The International 300 Utility featured a four-cylinder, I-head motor. The IH-built engine had a bore of 3-9/16 and a stroke of 4-1/4. An energetic machine, it produced horsepower of 41/37.

In its advertisements for the 300 Utility, International Harvester emphasized a feature known as Torque Amplifier. In effect, it gave the operator the option of two speeds for each gear. As a result, the 300 boasted 10 forward speeds and two reverse. The tractor could reach a top transport speed of nearly 17 mph.

A low, standard tread model, the International 300 Utility was valued as a “chore tractor”. It was great for hauling loads around the farm and could “pinch hit” at plowing and planting time when needed.

The company replaced the model 300 in 1957 with the International 330 Utility.

**Tractor Puzzler 14:** What caused the destruction of the McCormick factory in 1871? (*answer on inside back cover*)

### First Time's a Charmer

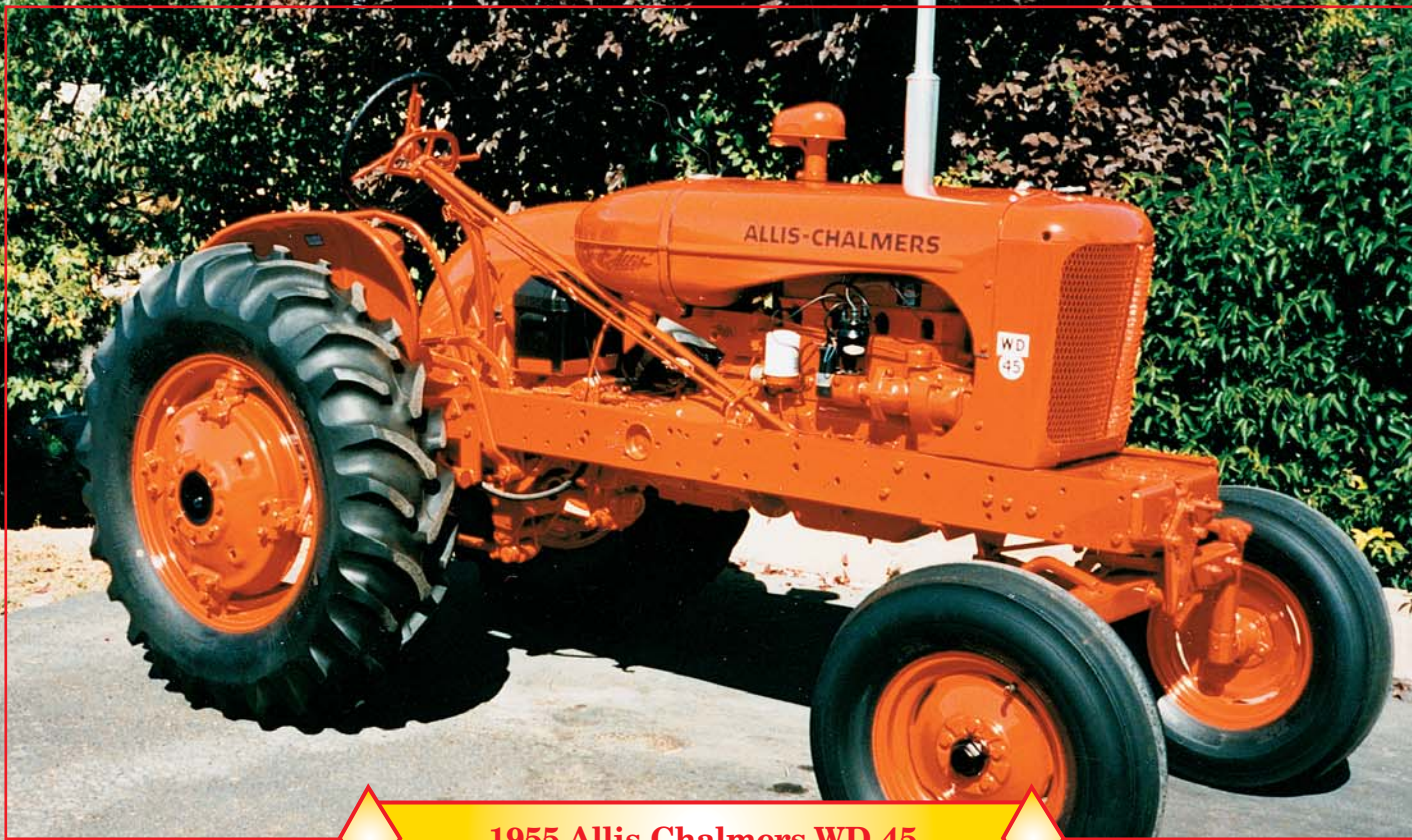
Although I don't farm for a living, I grew up on a farm and have always loved tractors.

I had owned this 1955 International 300 Utility for 15 years, and it was in need of a major overhaul. This was my first restoration project, and it took longer to complete than I had anticipated.

The tractor was first completely disassembled. Everything was beadblasted, rebuilt or replaced, then reassembled. It took me over 2 years of working nights, weekends and whatever spare time I could find. Just buffing the stainless steel lettering took 11 hours!

This great little tractor has power steering, live hydraulics and PTO, torque amplifier, full lights and fast hitch with traction control. I've also restored the tractor's original Model 34 loader. I had it finished and back on the tractor in time to push the snow around.

The tractor will see light duty year-round as well as an occasional tractor show. —Jim Waide, Avon, New York



**1955 Allis-Chalmers WD-45**



## Allis-Chalmers WD-45

1953-1957

### *Selected Facts*

Engine: Four-cylinder; six-cylinder (diesel)

Weight: Up to 4,285 pounds

Price: \$2,380 in 1956

IF ONE TRACTOR could be named the “golden boy” of the Allis-Chalmers family, it would probably be the popular WD-45. No competitor in its weight or power class could match its pulling performance and reasonable price, and grateful farmers bought over 90,000 of them.

The WD-45 arrived in 1953 with no fanfare. The successful WD row-crop line had been in production since 1948, but was gradually being “out-horsepowered” by competitors. Allis-Chalmers quietly created the WD-45, which looked just like its predecessor but packed much more horsepower: 43.21-belt horsepower as opposed to 34.63.

In 1954, farmers were overjoyed when the revolutionary “Snap-Coupler” hitch made attaching implements a breeze. Yet with its increased power, the WD-45 soon outgrew its WD-sized mounted implements. “Big Capacity” implements were thus developed—including four-bottom semi-mounted plows and larger wheel-type disk harrows—which gave outstanding field performance.

**Tractor Puzzler 15:** In what year did Allis-Chalmers manufacture its first tractor? (*answer on inside back cover*)

## Sweet Allis

I was born and raised on a farm in Emerson, Iowa. Having spent many hours on a WD, I’ve always had a passion for Allis-Chalmers tractors. In 1985, my very good friend and neighbor, Aca Kelsay, gave me his 1955 Allis-Chalmers WD-45, which I had always admired.

Working on and off in my body shop, I had my “Sweet Allis”, as she is lovingly nicknamed, totally restored to her original beauty after several months of painstaking work. The restoration involved straightening all the metal work, stripping off the old paint, block sanding, priming and applying 2 gallons of enamel.

Sweet Allis and I attend tractor shows together and participate in parades. Quite a beauty, she has won many awards and turns heads wherever I take her.

—Fritz Larson, Atascadero, California

# Tractor Buffs Have Their Say

“After the restoration is finished, the scrapes, cuts and headaches are soon forgotten.” —*Larry Mortensen*  
*Weslaco, Texas*

“I really don’t think you can own just *one* restored tractor.” —*Charlie Meek*  
*Spring Hill, Tennessee*

“Once we completed the project and turned the ignition on and the motor fired right off, we got this feeling of tremendous accomplishment.”  
—*Ricky Moorhous and Ed Crawford*  
*Lawtey, Florida*

“Restoring that hunk of rusty metal was more than a challenge—it was an act of love.” —*John J. Clow Jr.*  
*Centreville, Maryland*

“Because it was the first tractor I learned to drive on, restoring it was like revisiting my childhood.” —*Dan Hughes*  
*Roanoke, Indiana*

“If fixing that old tractor was like baking a cake, then riding it around the property was the frosting!” —*Clyde Curnow*  
*Healdsburg, California*

# Now, Let's See *Your* Tractor!

IF you haven't yet sent word to *Farm & Ranch Living* about *your* Old Iron project, we'd sure like to hear from you! We're looking for stories about all kinds of tractors—rare tractors, prize-winning tractors or simply the tractor near and dear to your heart...you name it.

Whatever your story, please remember to send along a good clear photo or two of the tractor (before and after restoration if possible). We can't print everything we receive, but we're always looking for more material.

One day you may find *your* tractor in the latest issue of *Farm & Ranch Living*. And who knows...it just might make it all the way to the next edition of *The Best of Tractor Talk!*

If you'd like your material back, just enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope. Thanks! Mail stories and photos to:

**"Tractor Talk"**  
**Farm & Ranch Living**  
**5925 Country Lane**  
**Greendale WI 53129**

## Tractor Puzzler Answers

1. The Lindeman Manufacturing Company
2. The two-point "Fast-Hitch", introduced in 1953
3. The Oliver Hart-Parr 28/44 Industrial
4. The wild poppy of California
5. John Froelich, an Iowa thresherman, who first used his machine in 1892
6. 1932 (it was the Caterpillar "Diesel")
7. They provided the steering
8. 1956 (it was the John Deere 720 All-Fuel)
9. A special Bicentennial paint job
10. An auxiliary gasoline engine used to start a main diesel engine
11. 215 horsepower
12. Landini
13. White Farm Equipment
14. The Great Chicago Fire
15. 1914

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