

Farm Machinery Preservation Society Ltd.

Est. 1968



Magazine No. 169
March 2024



F.M.P.S

Committee, Officers, and Editor

Terry Angland (Chairman)
Elm Barn
Hartest
Bury St Edmunds
IP29 4JN 01284 830034
07867 334084

Brian Mansfield (Vice Chairman)
17 Queens Road
Sudbury
Suffolk
CO10 1UH 01787 375321

Bob Feaver (Treasurer)
19 Raynsford Road
Gt. Whelnetham
Bury-St-Edmunds
Suffolk
IP30 0TW 07531 642032

David Hunt (Committee)
Brazenhead Farm
Gt Bardfield
Braintree
Essex
CM7 4PT 01371 810314

Mark Cracknell (Committee)
Grove Farm
Great Henny
Sudbury
Suffolk
CO10 7LT 07753 522756

Rebecca Bushell (Secretary)

email : Officers and Committee

fmpsarchive@yahoo.com

Ken Bailey (Committee)
May Cottage
1 Oaker Hill
Ridgewell Road
Gt. Yeldham
CO9 4RG 07702202311

Arthur Catling (Committee)
The Bungalow
Lower Road
Westerfield
Suffolk
IP6 9AR 07810 618931

Bryan Mills (Committee)
4 Sycamore Close
Haverhill
CB9 9DT 07967 366344

David Cope (Committee)
42 Bucklesham Road
Kirton
Suffolk
IP10 0PB 07497 514769

Paul Ewers (Committee)
Uplands
Sunnyfields Road
High Garrett
Essex
CM7 5PG 07765 675914

John Southall.
(Magazine Editor Membership Secretary)
4 Tye Lane
Willisham
Ipswich
IP8 4SR 07340 781621
fmps.magazine@btinternet.com

Honorary Members

*Mike Laflin
John Couch
Colin Cracknell*

Cover Picture.
Fairbanks at our Crank Up
2023

From the Chair

March 2024

This year we are hoping to run a similar number of club meetings, visits and events to last year. We have enclosed a provisional programme with this magazine for local members and hope to stick to it as much as possible. For members further afield we have updated the web site with our events and we are happy to post a paper copy on request.

Our two main events are again our Crank Up at the end of May and the Great Henny Working Weekend at the beginning of October, and we have arranged Tractor Road Runs to accompany both as well. Our May club meeting will also be at Woodhouse Farm Rivenhall

We also have another provisional evening booked at Coopers Farm, Lawshall at the end of June. Sustenance provided and, bring your tractor if you can.

Our visits this year are to the Hertiage Museum at Earls Colne in the Old Hunts Factory in March and Thelnetnam Windmill in July. For our Club Meetings at Halstead Town FC we have booked speakers for the April, October and November.

Also, we will promote two further Tractor Road Runs as usual: Dunmow in May, Waldringfield in August.

As well as posting our events, visits and talks on the website we still hope to post reminders on our Facebook Page and attempt to send email reminders at the appropriate time.

I think the photo competition and the calendar supplied with last December's magazine was a success. Please let me know

what you think? We are going to give it a rest this year but we can restore both competition and calendar in the future if enough people want it.

This year we have also been asked to attend a few local events organised by other clubs and societies. The idea is we take along a couple of tractors and a few stationary engines. We also take our gazebo with our merchandise and membership forms to publicize our society.

If you would like to come along and bring your exhibit you will be very welcome, just let me know, a text will do. You will get in for free and be able to look round the event, chat to a lot of interesting people and there are usually some free provisions. You will also be helping promote the society. We have: Langford Museum of Power-Transport Fest in March and Country Fair in July, Rivenhall Millennium Fete also in July, Polstead Art Weekend in August, Essex industrial Archeology Group (Coggeshall) in September (14th) and Cressing Temple Apple Day in October.

In the last magazine I asked for more help in running our society and we have had a positive response to the job adverts. We could, however, do with some more 2-hour Marshalls. If you can spare a couple of hours either before or during our events to help with set up or the running of the event please let me know and I will add your name to the list of volunteers. There is no pressure and you only be asked to help when it is convenient to you.

Terence Angland

From the Editor,

Magazine 169 March 2024.

Welcome to 2024, no doubt all of the Christmas and New Year celebrations are long forgotten and all thoughts are very much on the coming months with better weather with some shows and rallies to look forward to.

Those of you who have already paid your membership subscriptions will have noticed the insurance cover we provide for static exhibits has changed this year; we looked around for suitable insurance cover and eventually were able to find a policy with Walker Midgley which met our (and your) needs at a more competitive price therefore they have our business for the year.

Walker Midgley Insurance Brokers may be known to many members as they can provide insurance for classic and vintage tractors and, we know several of our members already have their tractors insured with them. With this fact in mind a question was raised at the recent AGM asking if we could perhaps approach Walker Midgley and maybe, just maybe, negotiate a discount for members given the fact we have just given them our business, equating close to £2000 for the club insurance. Watch this space for answers but, if it does happen then it could be next year before we see any progress but, this is of course another benefit of being a member of the FMPS knowing we are working on behalf of the membership.

On the subject of membership:- membership renewals are looking good but, we still have a significant number of you who are still to re-join the Society for 2024. Take this as a reminder to dig out the cheque book and sign up for the year.

ESSEX AND HERTS AIR AMBULANCE

The FMPS favoured charity is the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance which we support from the monies raised from our Working Weekend in October as does the Stebbing Tractor run which is a FMPS supported event in May.

One of the helicopters used is:-

THE MD902 EXPLORER

Max speed: 150mph

Height: 3.66 m

Length: 11.84 m

Rotor Diameter: 10.31 m



Our MD902 Explorer is housed at our Earls Colne Airbase and leased from Specialist Aviation Services (SAS). This twin twin-

turbine light helicopter flies at around 150mph, which is essential for our time-critical operations, and it has the ability to access areas inaccessible to land vehicles.

The MD902 is a versatile aircraft providing ease of access to the rear cabin, enabling our pre-hospital care doctors and critical care paramedics to bring the hospital to the patient. Produced by MD Helicopters, the MD902 Explorer features the NOTAR® (“no tail rotor”) anti-torque system, which significantly improves safety in confined spaces and produces very quiet operation and a smooth ride.

This is your last Magazine!

Well, it will be for those of you who have not yet renewed your membership for 2024.

As always membership renewal has peaks and troughs, when the December magazine, with the membership renewal form enclosed, dropped on members doormats a few days later my Postman was struggling to ram all of the FMPS envelopes through the door. Then, it goes quiet until the week between Christmas and New Year when again there is a flurry of activity, (not to mention membership forms coming in old Christmas Card envelopes, complete with glitter!)

January is generally a steady month for renewals just a few each week with a minor peak around the AGM.

February can be busy (and has been this year) because, I assume Rally entry forms begin to arrive and suddenly there is a need for an insurance cover note.

Have you renewed your membership?

Membership forms available on our website
www.fmps.org.uk

Eleventh Annual Stebbing Vintage & Classic Tractor Road Run 12th May 2024



As ever, we, the organisers being David Hunt, Mac Beanland and myself, Dick Hughes, are hoping it will be our biggest yet starting and

finishing at ***Brazenhead Farm, Little Bardfield CM7 4PT.***

Each year the turnout has become larger, last year it amounted to over 80. The route took us through the villages of Great Bardfield, Wethersfield, Shalford, Stebbing & Lindsell with considerable sections down byways and across consenting farmer's fields. Even after so many years, we are still finding tracks & trails we have never before driven over to maintain everyone's interest.

The entry fee is just £10

Additionally, we ask participants to raise money for Essex & Herts Air Ambulance through either a donation or sponsorship. We also get support from the villagers along the route with collection buckets. **Last year we raised over £11,000** for the charity. Entry forms can be obtained from myself by emailing

dickhughes63@btinternet.com

So, if you haven't taken part before we would love to have you join us; please get in touch!

Dick Hughes

Sixty Years of Change in Agricultural Engineering Dealerships

From Martin Day, our most prolific contributor. ed.

During the Christmas period I met up with a long-standing friend, an agricultural engineer and his son David, now in his mid-twenties whom I have known since he was a baby. He had always had academic inclinations and it was no surprise that he had obtained a degree in electronics, but what was a surprise, was his current employer, an agricultural engineering dealership. His role satellite navigation and electronic management controls technician. He explained the importance and use of satnav in the operation of agricultural machinery and the use of electronics across the full range of modern agricultural machines, without it they simply would not function. He is a key player in a modern dealership which has large purpose-built buildings equipped with multiple powered work aids (lifts, work platforms, diagnostic equipment etc.) a full range of manufacturers special tools and of course superb lighting with a workshop heated to a comfortable working temperature! Not forgetting online information systems linked directly to the manufactures computers.

Put two old men together and the inevitable happens, they begin to reminisce! This was exactly what happened, David's dad and myself began to recall and discuss the immense changes that have taken place in the agricultural engineering workplace in the last sixty years, using as our terms of reference a dealership known to us both situated in the home counties. Still operating today, but having adapted and changed over the years to meet and fulfil the requirements of the modern farmer, now with multiple operating centres across five counties.

The company had commenced trading in the mid 1800s, hiring out steam tackle and the men to operate it. By the early 1900s the company had a thriving business embracing ploughing engines, threshing tackle, and steam rolling (some 32 sets of tackle and 13 steam rollers).



This wasn't to last and by 1945 the management were concentrating on setting up and developing a business selling and servicing agricultural machinery from their five-acre site. As the directors had correctly identified, they were facing a changing marketplace.

By the late 1950's steam had gone, bar one steam roller parked amongst the second-hand machinery, but strangely not for sale. Most of the ploughing sets, threshing and bailing kit and steam rollers were sold whilst a good price was still achievable the remaining few going for scrap. The operators were given the option to purchase any of the equipment at scrap value, the price of a ploughing engine £35-there were no takers. One of the drivers who continued with the company told me that they regarded steam tackle as dangerous, dirty and hard work, being glad to leave the era behind them, pleased to be moving into the 1960's.

The company's (they were now known as a dealership) premises were as they had been for many a year. The Engine

Shop where ploughing engines, road rollers and general engineering had been undertaken, now still equipped with its Ruston diesel engine and line shaft, for powering lathes etc. and full welding facilities was used for all general machinery repairs including a wonder worker of metal, a Norfolk blacksmith specialising in all aspects of forge work, plough set up and repairs.

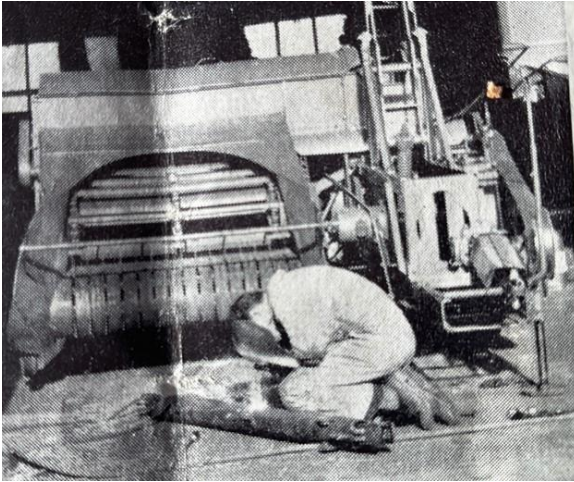
The Drum Shop, no longer used for threshing drum repairs and servicing, was now configured to meet the needs of the manufacture of the latest farming must-have purchase, bespoke grain drying units and in particular the design and manufacture of grain elevators and conveyors. The driving force and foreman of the unit being a former ploughing engine driver who had adapted and shown immense talent for this area of work.

The works' hooter (a ploughing engine steam whistle, now air powered) mounted on the end of the building ridge controlling breaks and day end etc. The only pedestal grinder outside the Engine Shop was located here and if needed, fitters (the title of technician not yet in use) had to walk across the site to use it. A building new to the company a World War Two Nissan hut, home to tractor repairs! The only Company provided equipment a valve facing machine, two trolley jacks and two electric drills and an ex-army engine crane. An adjacent concrete pad some 30 x 30 metres displaying the stock of used tractors for sale, Fordson Majors, both diesel and E27n. David Brown, several Field Marshalls (asking price £40) and Internationals with a selection of Track Marshalls.

The Combine Shop was a second-hand steel framed corrugated steel clad unit, lit by a meagre six strip lights. Heating being provided by a Salamander paraffin heater, a metal container of some ten gallons of paraffin/waste oil ignited

and operating as an unguarded, barely contained flaming mass, exhausting directly into the workshop, together with a coke stove, Health and Safety not a consideration.

The stock of special tools provided by the company, gas welding equipment, no arc welder, walk to the Engine Shop, use the welder there or borrow the portable unit, an ex-army manual engine crane and one Wolf half inch electric drill! The combines being worked on at that time were Claas SF, Massey Harris 726 and 780 and Massey 701 balers. New Holland 68 and 78 balers were just beginning to take hold. It was still a regular practice to reduce the table width of Massey 780 combines traded in, from 12-foot cut to ten foot to enable them



to pass through the existing gates of the potential smaller farm customers.

The Stores (still to be renamed the Parts Department) and a small workshop dedicated to the newly emerging

horticultural machinery market made up the remainder of the building units. Most deliveries of parts and smaller items were made by the British Rail, Scammell Scarabs making multiple daily deliveries, the remainder by the Royal Mail, not a courier's van to be seen.

Company transport was twenty six, hard used fitters, vans and pickups, Austin and Bedford. Machinery movements were by a

Ford Thames Trader artic, a converted tipper with unmodified vacuum brakes, which were unable to fully cope with the addition of the trailer brakes. So, could and did, if used heavily run out of vacuum and therefore brakes and a Bedford rigid lorry which was loaded at the rear by driving tractors up reinforced wooden planks - the same planks being rested on the side of the load bed to back drills and wider equipment onto the lorry - dangerous, yes, but never questioned, an industry norm!

The office was a large extension to the existing house, in which the Managing Director's mother still lived. The office staff (all women) were collected from the nearby town each day in the Company's Bedford Dormobile. We calculated in excess of 50% of the remaining employees travelled to work on either push bikes or motorcycles. Each workshop having an area set aside for parking. Those traveling by car just parked in any convenient spot in amongst the new and used machinery the cars, a mixture of late 1940's/50's models, with only three new cars, a Mini, Ford Cortina and a Vauxhall Victor.

King Charles may be convinced that reed bed sanitation is the way forward, it's not, this formed the basis of waste disposal for the whole site, all waste, was piped under the road to a large lagoon/reed bed, extremely aromatic in the summer and supporting a colony of very large rats all year round.

The employee total was of the order of one hundred, a large proportion being from the two local villages where everyone was related, the joke being, upset one employee and half the workforce wouldn't talk to you.

Although only sixty years ago a totally different working philosophy and environment from today's, the working day then, 07:30 to 18:15 (now 08:00 to 17:00)! The annual holiday allocation ten working days. How times have changed. No mention then of computers, to the younger employees Diode was a glamour model to be admired in the popular magazine Parade!

Progress and development in the farming and agricultural engineering industries over the past sixty years has brought about immense change in all aspects of working beyond anything we could have thought of at the time.

We finished by discussing which one tool we would have liked back then, taken from today's many offerings, we both decided, definitely, the cordless angle grinder!

Many thanks Martin for this most interesting and informative article.

I am sure we have members who could add to this with knowledge and experience gained throughout their working life in agricultural engineering of farming, we would love to hear from you. As always, send what you have, I can always tidy up any spelling or grammar and make it good for inclusion in this magazine.

Editor.

Club Visit on the 16th March Earls Colne Heritage Museum

Earls Colne Heritage Museum is located in The Old Water Tower of the former Atlas Works—the R.Hunt agricultural machinery foundry, which was pivotal to the development of the village from a purely agricultural to an industrial village in the 19th & 20th centuries.

Founded in 2005, the Museum is home to artefacts from the Neolithic to the 21st century and is also a centre for village historical and family research.

Since re-opening, the Museum is actively re-engaging with the village and beyond, with a programme of walks, talks, school visits and liaison with other museums.

A current conservation activity is to digitise a unique collection of local newspaper cutting archives covering over 100 years of Earls Colne history since the late 1800's.

The Atlas Works and the Hunt Family



Robert Hunt, a travelling millwright, settled in Earls Colne in 1824. His first workshop was on the Green, next to the Baptist Church. His son, Reuben, took over the business in 1855 and developed it into a major exporting

company with customers all over the world.

The Atlas Works expanded as Reuben Hunt took advantage of the demand for reliable farm machinery – rollers, harrows and hay rakes – and the hand operated grinding and cutting mills which had been the firm's original stock-in-trade.



Hunt's Houses in Foundry Lane

With the expansion of the business came a need for housing to accommodate the growing work-force. The first terrace of cottages opposite the Atlas Works premises was built in 1872, soon to be followed by others in Hay House Road, Queens Road, Burrows Road and High Street. By 1915, the firm had provided 120 new houses and seen its work force grow to almost 300.

After the Second World War, during which the firm specialised in the production of munitions, attempts were made to diversify its products by partnerships with other firms.

However, with the demand for traditional farm machinery decreasing, more drastic changes were required. After 1985, a series of mergers with other companies led finally to the closure of the Earls Colne premises.

Your Visit:- March 16th 2pm

Find the Museum CO6 2SZ

Club Visit to Thelnetham Mill.

31st of July. 11am

It promises “not to be missed”. Just to whet your appetite here is a little history of the mill.

History of Thelnetham Mill



The mill in its heyday 1905

Joseph Hodgkinson's 1778 map of Suffolk shows that a windmill already existed near to the current site on common land close to Thelnetham Fen at that date. Local records show that this was a post mill owned by William Button and that he decided to replace it with a tower mill, early in the 19th century. Tower mills were “new technology” and had been built elsewhere in Suffolk during the late 18th century

but not in the Diss area. The existing mill was sold on, dismantled and re-erected in a field off Sandy Lane in Diss where it existed until 1902.

Construction of the new mill was started in July 1819 and the mill was first set to work on Christmas day 1819. At the time of construction it was the only building for several hundred yards around. It was built with cloth sails and continued to work in this format during the 1820's.

The industrial revolution increased the availability of cast iron and facilitated changes to mill technology during the early 19th century. In 1832 William Button decided to refit the mill with “Cubitt’s Patent Sails”, a cast iron windshaft and a fantail to turn the cap and sails into the wind automatically. There is evidence that the milling machinery was altered internally at this time. The mill remained in the Button family until 1862 when it was sold to Robert Peverett, a local miller. It was subsequently sold by auction in 1884 to Henry Bryant who modernised it and by 1892 had introduced a portable steam engine driving a pair of stones on the ground floor of the mill for days when the mill was becalmed. In 1914 the steam engine was replaced by a Hornsby oil engine.



Derelict in 1979

Government flour restrictions introduced in 1916 put an end to the mill’s most profitable trade and in 1920 Henry Bryant sold the mill to Alphonso Vincent, a retired millwright from neighbouring Blo Norton. He carried out some repairs to the mill which by then was down to two sails as a result of accidents and poor maintenance. Alphonso died in 1932 and the mill passed to

his son George Vincent who moved to the mill and lived in an old lorry converted into a caravan and in the mill itself. He tried to keep the mill together but it deteriorated further from that

date. On his death the mill was sold for residential purposes but not converted and in 1979 was purchased by a group of mill enthusiasts.

Thelnetham Tower Mill 2000



This group commenced restoration of the mill in 1980. The new cap was fitted in 1983, followed by new sails in 1985 and the restoration was completed in 1987. The mill that can be visited today is the result of this restoration. Thelnetham Windmill is now one of only four preserved tower mills in Suffolk and one of the few windmills in East Anglia in full working order.

This promises to be a great visit and, the Hornsby engine should be fired up.

Find the mill at Thelnetham, Diss IP22 1JS

31st July 11am

Refreshments will be available.

Facebook

**The FMPS Facebook Group is thriving
with 300 members.**

*If you have a
then the FMPS*



*smartphone, a laptop or PC
facebook group is for you.*

A facebook private group was created almost two years ago which gives members the opportunity to join and immediately communicate with each other. Information, questions, comments, for sale/wanted can be posted only by members of the group.

Recent posts have a wealth of information about upcoming events, plenty of pictures of events members have visited and even some video to share with every member of the group.

Search facebook and find “The Farm Machinery Preservation Society” and look for the “Join” button. Suitable applicants will go to an Administrator who will approve it if you have a genuine interest in what we do. Not every facebook group member is a member of the FMPS but this does not mean they are not welcome if they have something to share we might find interesting.

Join NOW

For Sale and Wanted

You will of course notice this time we have absolutely

NO FOR SALE or WANTED

All a little strange given we have the hobby we do, I can guarantee each and every one of us a barn, workshop, shed, front room or kitchen with treasures we no longer need that have past the “I might need it one day” date, probably twenty years ago !

These are exactly the treasures you could be advertising.

I personally have had great success from advertising in this magazine after all, you are reaching out to almost 300 like-minded people and of course it will cost you nothing. Remember, it's not just items for sale; it can be the search for that last elusive part to finish a restoration or, can be for information, if you have a question about your machines, put it in the magazine, between all of the members there will be someone who has the answer.

The next magazine is due out in June:- go for a little Spring cleaning in your shed and see what you can turn into ££££s.

Email me with items:- fmgs.magazine@btinternet.com

Or, post to the address on the inside front cover.

Editor



**Gipping Press are proud
to print this publication**

-
- A scenic photograph of a lavender field at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the purple flowers. In the foreground, an open book lies flat on a wooden surface, with the lavender field and sunset scene appearing to be printed on its pages.
- **DESIGN**
 - **PRINT**
 - **LARGE FORMAT**
 - **MAILING**
 - **SCANNING**
 - **PROMOTIONAL GIFTS**

Tel: 01449 721599

Email: enquiries@gippingpress.co.uk

www.gippingpress.co.uk

2024

FMPS Meetings/Visits/Events

**Meetings at Halstead Football Club CO9 1HR
8pm (unless otherwise stated)**

**March 16th 2pm
Visit to Earls Colne Heritage Museum
Earls Colne CO6 2SZ**

**April 24th
Talk by Essex and Herts Air Ambulance Trust**

**May 12th
Stebbing Tractor Run
Brazenhead Farm, Little Bardfield CM7 4PT.**

**May 22nd
Visit to new club facility
Woodhouse Farm Rivenhall CO5 9DF**

**May 26th
Tractor Run
Woodhouse Farm Rivenhall CO5 9DF**

**May 27th
Crank Up
Woodhouse Farm Rivenhall CO5 9DF**

**Always check the WEBSITE www.fmops.org.uk
and our Facebook page for meeting updates.**

**This magazine is also available to read on the
website along with back copies for past years**

Deadline for next Magazine input:- May 15th 2024

Club Badges Available



**Cloth Badge
£2.50
Plus £1.50
Post/packing**

Promote your Society

Available now, these fine quality woven and metal badges. The woven badge is 90mm diameter. The new updated, top quality, metal pin badge is 25mm and just £4.00. plus £1.50 post/packing



**Contact our Chairman, Terry Angland
bentonbrewery@gmail.com (preferred contact)
Or phone: 07867 334084**