

Larsen Tractor Museum  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
P.O. Box 830833  
Lincoln, NE 68583-0833

### Museum Hours:

Tuesday-Friday 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM  
Saturday 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM  
Closed Sundays, Mondays and Major Holidays

Phone: 402-472-8389  
Email: TractorMuseumArchives@unl.edu  
Web Site: <http://tractormuseum.unl.edu>

2012 Open House Saturday April 14th / 92nd Year Anniversary of the First Tractor Test

## Larsen Tractor Museum

### Mission Statement

To be the premier steward of advancements in agricultural technology through the development of collections, exhibits, and programs for public benefit.

### Board of Directors

Don Edwards, President    Roger Hoy, President-Elect  
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Russ Tooker  
Ron Yoder

### Museum Staff

Milford Hanna, Interim Director  
Lou Leviticus, Curator  
Luis Vasquez, Museum Collections Consultant  
Mark Nickolaus, Docent

### Nuts and Bolts Staff

Please relate your ideas and comments to us.

Julie Thomson, Editor  
[jthomson2@unl.edu](mailto:jthomson2@unl.edu)

2012 Open House Saturday April 14th 92nd Year Anniversary of the First Tractor Test

Newsletter 45 - Issue 1  
Spring 2012

# Nuts and Bolts

A publication of the  
**Larsen Tractor Museum**

## Friends of the Larsen Tractor Museum-An Update!

by Don Edwards

Many changes have taken place at the Larsen Tractor Museum. In February, 2012, Jeremy Steele resigned as the Manager of the Larsen Tractor Museum. Collections Specialist Luis Vasquez has been retained as a Consultant to assist with the operations of the Museum.

A major change in the operations of the Museum has occurred during the past year: The Museum has been under the management of the Friends of the Larsen Tractor Museum organization. During 2011, the management of the Museum was moved from the State Museum to the Department of Biological Systems Engineering of the University of Nebraska. This has been an excellent arrangement, which allows the Friends to focus on being supporters of the Museum. Our Friends role is to be supportive of the programs and operation of the Museum through financial and volunteer support.

To implement this transition, a new manager of the Museum will be hired. The position will be filled through the operations of the University and will soon be advertised. The current Board of Directors of the Friends is being asked to continue for one additional year to assist with the transition so that a refocus of the thrust of the Museum may occur. Friends will be called upon during this time and with the future programs of the Museum.

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

Larsen Tractor Museum Open House  
Saturday, April 14, 2012 from Noon to 5:00 p.m.

Friends of the Larsen Tractor Museum Annual Meeting  
Tuesday, June 5, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.  
Dinner, meeting & program; location to be determined  
Details of the meeting will be sent out later



Don Edwards with his tractor. ("Nuts and Bolts" Fall 2010)

Thank you for your continued support. You are encouraged to send in your 2012 Membership dues.



Student worker Steve Melvin on the Chinese tractor

## Our Chinese tractor: How it got here

by Lou Leviticus

How on earth did an old Chinese Tai-Shan end up here? I have been asked that enough times to think a little background will be helpful.

Most of the tractors I saw on the roads and in the fields at the times when I visited China (between 1982 and 1990) were of the two-wheel type with a small diesel engine. In the field they were used for tillage operations and for pumping and similar operations that required a belt drive. Engine power was generally up to 5 HP. Bigger Tractors (90% IHC inspired crawlers) were used on larger operations. The two-wheelers were also extensively used, with an appropriately designed sulky-type trailer, in all sorts of transport activities on rural roads. Therefore, they had one high-speed road-gear.

See Chinese tractor on page 2

## From the situation room

by Lou Leviticus (an unplanned article)

They told me a dozen times that we were going to have a newsletter again and that I had to write something in it. Of course I forgot, but our editor, Julie Thomson, finally caught me.

Well, here is my best effort at the moment. As you may all be aware, we have had quite a momentous time at the museum with significant personnel changes, which have also caused us to reorganize, reorient and re-examine where we will be going with the museum in the future.

As of now, Dr. Milford Hanna is our Director. All transactions and info will flow to him. The FRIENDS will be reactivated and as a first step we have the current Newsletter. All day-to-day activities are in the capable hands of Luis Vasquez. Some of you will remember him from the early days of the museum. He did work here when he was a graduate student at Morrill Hall.

That said, here is my news. Since there have been a number of actions taken with the collections, which did not involve the staffers/volunteers, it is now incumbent upon us to try and get the collection back to where it tells the real story of Tractor Testing in a coherent manner and retrieve items that were removed to be lent to other museums. The library is being re-examined and, where necessary, will be culled and reorganized. We are investigating the possibility of digitizing our collection of research papers and other significant publications and catalogues. In my opinion, this is a task we can try to organize in a manner that will allow our volunteers and other temporary helpers to perform this job.

As far as expanding our collection of Agricultural Machinery and Agricultural History, I have been collecting materials and websites of interest and historical value. The aim is to make these available in hardcopy and as website URL's for our members and the public.

Well, that's as much as I have to tell you right now. Please do not hesitate to comment.



Roger Hoy & Lou Leviticus at the 2010 Nebraska Tractor Lab Reunion



*Volunteer Roy Semin gives a tour of Larsen Museum and Nebraska Tractor Test Laboratory to a group from UNL Dining Services. The Museum has had several large group tours this year, including visitors from Kansas State University and South Dakota State University Agricultural Clubs.*



*Volunteer Jerry Kohl (left) talks with a tour group of South Dakota State University University students.*

## Chinese tractor from page 1

One day, Bruce Ribblett from Fresno, California decided to import Chinese tractors. He did not know too much about the technical requirements of developed agriculture, but he had heard about the Nebraska Tractor Test. He contacted me, as Director of the Nebraska Tractor Test Lab, about testing, and I went to see one of their larger models, a four-cylinder diesel. I found a number of problems, which, at my suggestion, deterred him from bringing them to the Test Lab for even an unofficial test. He didn't have this small model, but he assured me that he'd instructed the Chinese manufacturer to modify the unit so it could be tested.

When the tractor arrived here it turned out that they had just used the engine from the two-wheel unit and replaced the open sump cooler with a radiator, but omitted to provide a rear PTO, leaving the poor thing with an inaccessible side PTO, which also was not standard size. There were a few other problems, such as cylinder-head studs that were placed too far apart so that the head gaskets would pop every time max power was required from the engine. So the tractor was not much use and a waste of money to test.

Ribblett's company decided to leave the tractor here, and after our own Phil Dinges volunteered to fix it up (with quite some difficulty getting the head gasket from China), we have it now as part of our collection. I might stress that THIS IS THE ONLY CHINESE TRACTOR IN THE MUSEUM as far as we have been able to ascertain.

## Dear Friend of the Larsen Tractor Museum,

The Friends of the Larsen Tractor Museum provide financial and volunteer support for the programs and operation of the Larsen Tractor museum.

To be a 2012 Member of the Friends of the Larsen Tractor Museum is to provide support to a world premier museum of collections of tractors and information on the advancement of power as used in agriculture. Your support is essential since the Museum operates only on private contributions.

An Application Form is enclosed for your use in becoming a Member of the Friends of the Museum. Benefits of being a Member of the Friends of the Larsen Tractor Museum:

- \* Receive Museum Newsletter
- \* Invitations to all Museum Special Events
- \* Opportunities to support the Museum as a volunteer
- \* Free admission to the Museum and Special Events
- \* Fellowship with people from throughout the world who have similar interests
- \* To support a premier Museum
- \* To be a Friend of the Museum and to vote on issues effecting the operations

Don Edwards, President, Friends of the Larsen Tractor Museum

### THANK YOU!

*The Larsen Tractor Museum would like to thank our volunteers and student workers, who help in many museum areas: greeting guests and working the front desk, giving tours, helping with the reference library and doing archival work, helping with museum artifacts and restoration, taking inventory, entering data, constructing and maintaining exhibits keeping up the facilities, and providing transportation. We have volunteers that are mechanics, tractor drivers, welders, computer IT clerks, and carpenters. All of them share our enthusiasm for agricultural history and old tractors.*

### Volunteers:

|                     |                |                      |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Lillie Akumeh       | Don Edwards    | Liam Mullin          |
| Charlie Borscheding | Larry Ehlers   | Peter Mullin         |
| George Buss         | Elliot Henning | Mark Nickolaus       |
| Leslie Delserone    | Larry Hermann  | John Porter          |
| Roy Denton          | Don Johnson    | Marvin Rhodes        |
| Dale Dinges         | Jerry Kohl     | Roy Semin            |
| Phil Dinges         | Doug Kouzer    | "Smity" Darold Smith |
| Joey Dowding        | Connor Mullin  | Richard Sposato      |

### Work Study:

Jordan Krause  
Shelby Behrendt



*Volunteer Larry Ehlers (below) shows equipment to a guest from UNL Dining Services.*

