

Power From The Past

Summer 2023 Newsletter EDGTA Branch 240
Editor Rose Tidwell Graphics and layout Charles Bub

Power From the Past
PO Box 18438
Tucson, AZ 85731
nftnaz@gmail.com

2023 Events

JANUARY

2 Monthly Meeting
21-22 Welton Show (17-23)

FEBURARY

6 Monthly Meeting
11 AEDGE&TA Glendale Show
11 Cruise BBQ & Blues show Oro Valley Oro Valley Marketplace
25 Culver's Tucson East Broadway

MARCH

3-5 Club Social Drew Harrison's Farm
Hayes
6 Monthly Meeting
11 Chuckwagon Event Sam Hughes School
10-12 EDGE&TA Apache Junction Show
18 Marana Founder's Day Par. and disp. Marana

APRRL

1 Chevy Showdown at Desert Diamond Sahuarita, Az.
3 Monthly Meeting
15 Oracle Oaks Festival Oracle, Az.
Dwyer
21 Kellond Elementary Sock Hop Tucson, Az.
22 Rodders at PCC PCC DT Campus
Hoyte/Perkins

MAY

6 Annual Meeting El Camino Baptist Church

JUNE

5 Monthly Meeting
9/10 Willcox Ranching Festival Willcox

JULY

3 Monthly Meeting (canceled)
4 Benson Parade Benson, Az.
22 St. David Pioneer Days St. David School
29 Mustang Mtn. Church Whetstone

AUGUST

7 Monthly Meeting

2023 Events continued

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SEPTEMBER

4 Monthly Meeting

9 P rickly Pear Jamboree

15-17 Santa Cruz County Fair

Vail Preservation Soc

Sonoita, Az.

OCTOBER

2 Monthly Meeting

14 Marana Fall Festival

20-22 Helldorado Days

TBD

Tombstone, Az.

NOVEMBER

6 Monthly Meeting

Memorial Engine Show

TBD

DECEMBER

2 Christmas Dinner/Meeting

2 Benson Christmas Parade

9 Huachuca City Christmas Parade

TBD

TBD

Huachuca City, Az



Helldorado Days 2022



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Welcome our Newest Members

Mark Jensen

Everett Hayden

Ron & Sue Privette

2023 Election Results

President Gregory Skaggs

Vice President Zane Parker

Treasurer Jerry Hayes

Secretary Rose Tidwell

Safety Officer Julia Davis

Engine Chair Lyle Rasmussen

Board Member Virgil Schmidt

Tractor Chair Charlie Bub (non board member)

Volunteers Needed!!!

Help get the club trailer to events

Serve up some ice cream

Make some rope

Host an event

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Newsletter Gets New Editor

by Charlie Bub

Rose Tidwell has volunteered to edit and publish the Power From the Past Newsletter. Rose joined the club last summer with her husband Charlie.

Rose grew up on a small family farm in Illinois and as a practical matter learned to operate a tractor at young age. While the farmhouse was sold to others the land is now farmed by relatives.

The Ferguson TO20 she drove as a child would look like a toy if parked next to the machinery that is being used today.

Rose spent most of her career doing research at the Washington University School of Medicine in Saint Louis, after a brief stint in the coal mines of Southern Illinois.

Rose is living in Whetstone staying busy with sculptures, yoga, tractors and gardening.

referred to locally just as Thresherman's, is still going strong today with two shows a year. So you could say we grew up together as this became an annual family pilgrimage where I would find my way onto many a tractor seat.

The main show and the bigger of the two is held the third weekend of August (something I have memorized.) It always begins with a tractor parade through our small town of Pinckneyville, Illinois on Wednesday evening. And for me that includes lots of familiar faces of family and friends. The second smaller show was added sometime later and is in October. It focuses more on harvest and the making of apple butter and cider.



Editor's Note

About the time I was born, my hometown hosted their first old engine and tractor show. Run by the American Thresherman's Association, often

The August show gives you so much to see. From Thursday-Sunday you will find ropes being made and ice cream

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being churned by old engines along with 800-900 entries of tractors and engines. Thursday- Saturday in the evening are tractor pulls and on Sunday antique cars are on display.

They have about 10-12 steam tractors used for various demonstrations: sawmill, veneer mill, shingle shaping and other farm tasks from the early days of mechanized farming.. Visitors can observe threshing and grinding of grain by both steam as well as by horse or mule.

The event site has fields for demonstrating the machinery from the past. A huge Case steam tractor trailing black smoke pulling a gang plow with a crew of 8 ready to engage the shanks. Enthusiastic spectators in golf carts running alongside documenting the action is something I strongly associate with the show. On another side of the field an ancient gas tractor is pulling a plough. Looking in still another direction a team of horses pulling a plough.

Each day, at noon, during the event, the steam tractors blow their whistles as they did in their heyday. Good memory and something I look forward to. And nowadays you can even find proof of these things on YouTube.



Other things to see is a defunct steam tractor engine that has been sliced in two to show the labyrinth of pathways the steam travels.

And I remember what I think of as a treadmill for mules. It is an inclined chute, with a conveyor floor for the mule or draught horse to propel for work.

And they have a very large gas engine they fire up that came out of a ship. There's a dynamometer operating to gauge the horsepower on the tractors.

Another hobby group often displays their scaled down replica engines (1/8 scale as I remember.)

To navigate the acres of displays you will find all types of vehicles going about with no clear paths to follow, golf carts, lawn tractors, homemade tractors, full size tractors and steam tractors all finding their own way about.



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While I think of it as a very impressive show, and the only Midwest show I have ever attended, maybe I am biased. As I have gotten to know several of our members from the Midwest, none have heard of this event.

When I mention Illinois, the tractor show they all know of is the Half Century of Progress Show in Rantoul, Illinois. This show takes place every other year and this is the year for it so I have now added it to my bucket list as it takes place the weekend after Thresherman's and is about 4 hours away.

On their website they claim to be the premier working vintage tractor show of the U.S. and I have been convinced to rent a golf cart for this one. As I have been writing this I have found a number of resources online listing the many shows that take place across the country. You could spend part of your summer traveling from one show to another in the Midwest. A good online source 'antiquetractorblog.com/events/' which sadly did not have my hometown show on their calendar.

Maybe you should add one to your bucket list, there's a good chance you will see something you have never seen before.

Updating Website

Our club website will be updated in the near future. The current site was designed about ten years ago and has become a little stale.

All members are invited to send photos from recent events or their collections. We hope to revitalize the classified section, so please feel welcome to post a for sale or want advertisement.

Items should be related to the club's purpose; old engines, old tractors or other closely related items.

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Celebrations

Thanks to our care
person, Ruth Perkins



Fred Bennett
Mark Bott
Chuck Clegg
Darrell Dwyer
Sandy Hoyte
Seth Hoyte
Ryan Matson
Carole
Rousseau

JUNE

Jerry & JoBeth Hayes
Larry & Deanna Kastens
Mel & Ruth Perkins
Lyle & Cheri Rasmussen
Leroy & Paulette Welch

Teri Bessler
Charles Bub
Mike Culp
Jamie
Davenport
Julia Davis
Jim Fieber
Allen Goodman
Jim White

JULY



Pam Bennett
Mike Bessler
Thelma Christie
Steve Christie
Justin Christie
Jeannie Clegg
Susan Culp
Zane Parker

AUGUST

Sonny & Gail Clark, Jr.
John & Joyce Levensgood
Jim & Jayne Levensgood

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Sorrows

Let's take a moment to remember the ones we have lost since the last newsletter.

Lloyd Baker 1940-2022

Neil Bourgois 1937-2023

Ken Brown 1941-2023

Darren Day 1962-2021

Adrian (Tiny) Dixon 1941-2021

Loren Fiehtner 1949-2021

William Harnack 1943-2022

Gene Mills 1944-2023

Wayne Stevens 1935-2022

Bobbi White 1931-2022

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Thanks to Larry Kastens for sharing this story with us and to Richard Ochoa and Linda Mills for filling in the details. Rose Tidwell

Gene Mills (1944-2023)

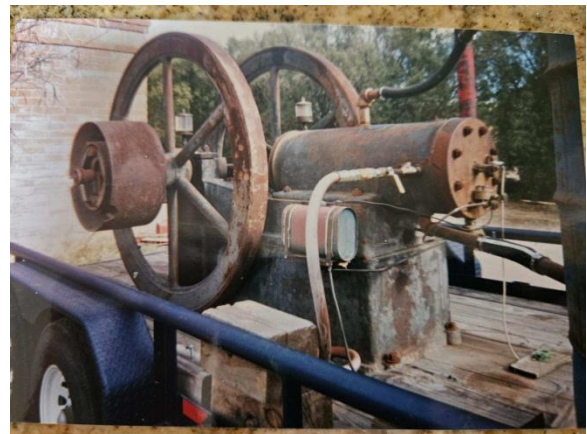
It's not certain when Morris Eugene (Gene) Mills, Jr first joined our club, but he was a close associate with the other railroad men of the club in the 90's. This included Jerry Alexander, Jim Hawley, Gary Huffine, Jerry Lawrence, Gary Sandve, and Woodie Widero. At sometime he began a relationship with Linda Phillips, who was our secretary from May 1998-May 2001, then she took over as vice president from May 2001-May 2003. Some of you may remember their wedding. It was in 1998 in a simple ceremony in Tombstone, during the Helldorado days event within the club's display area. A first for the club.

I remember Gene as a deep thinker and a slow talker but what he had to say was always succinct. According to his widow, Linda Phillips Mills, his slow talking is likely what got him the nickname of 'lightning' at work.

At one time Gene owned eighty acres of farmland near Mammoth, AZ

Gene was also close with another railroad man, Richard Ochoa. Although there is no recollection of Richard ever being in the club, he was familiar with several of our members through the years when we had our display at the Pima County Fairgrounds.

Knowing Gene was on the lookout for an engine, Richard told him of a large flywheel engine sitting idle in Mexico where he had some connections. Soon Gene and Richard were making plans to investigate.



In 1996 they found the engine on a ranch near Arizpe, Sonora where it had been used to power a wheat mill along with other equipment by way of a line shaft and leather belts. The rancher,

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Gilberto Braun Munoz, Sr told them it had come from a fishing vessel in Guayamas, Sonora along the Bay of California that had been in operation during the 1920s. In the 50s it had been brought to his ranch. This was a large, 1909 25 horsepower single cylinder Fairbanks-Morse type N hit and miss engine with large flywheels, about 6 foot in diameter, to the sides. A two story adobe building had been erected around it for protection. Gene and the rancher soon reached an agreement. Gene would give him \$1000 for the engine and another \$1000 to remove it from the building with a \$500 deposit. Another trip to plan.

Gene and Richard returned towing a trailer rated at 14000 lb and found the engine parked outside the building. They also came armed with the usual; come-alongs, ramps, jacks, pipes, etc and worked out a plan to get it onto the trailer. Not an easy task, this took some time. The rancher, whom they had yet to see, showed up by the end of the work. Once they settled up, they turned for home.

The plan was to cross at Naco, south of Bisbee, then on to Tucson. Concerned with the weight of their load the plan was to take it slow. And slowly they did

go. Richard remembers some of the steeper grades where they crept along about 7-10 mph.



Once they finally reached the crossing at about 11 p.m. their next challenge, the custom agents. Richard handled the negotiations on the Mexican side. They needed some convincing that this was not a cannon or some antiquities. Gene was happy to describe to the agents the intricacies of their flywheel engine. They also pointed out that it had come from the U.S. and was now returning 'home.'

It was about midnight when they finally crossed the border. Gene was finally and happily free to bring his new acquisition home and shared his joy with the U.S. agents. They arrived back in Tucson about 3:30 in the morning.

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While the engine was free, there was still some work needed. Valves and parts to be machined

But he was good with engines and soon had it up and running.



His knowledge was a big help to me in diagnosing a problem I had at one of our Helldorado Days. I was displaying a Fairbanks-Morse engine that suddenly quit running. The valve spacer between the arm and valve had worked its way free. When I got that spacer back into place the engine started back up and was running again just fine. He was a good man and passed earlier this year.

Larry Kastens and Rose Tidwell