

Cranking up the New Year

Good weather, good friends, good food highlight January 1 antique tractor show at Berry farm

By GARY STEWART
Editor of The Herald

Most people usher in the new year with some sort of tradition.

In Cherryville it's the New Year Shooters.

For others, it's fireworks or a big party to count down the final seconds of the old year and bring in the new.

For most sports fans, it's a day of watching football bowl games on TV.

For almost everyone, it's a day for eating the traditional good luck New Year feast of pork, greens and peas so they'll enjoy a year of good health, greenbacks and change.

For the past two years, members of the Gaston Antique Machinery and Textile Restoration Association (GAMTRA) have started the New Year's Day Crank Up, a New Year's Day antique tractor and engine show at Tom Berry's farm in the Dixon Community south of Kings Mountain.

And it's quickly becoming a tradition.

Saturday's show featured 68-degree weather, 28 antique tractors, 22 antique gas engines, and well over 118 people looking at the equipment and getting a living history lesson from exhibitors who have spent years researching and building their machines.

GAMTRA members got the idea for the show a couple years ago as a way to get

together during the winter. Their show season, which includes Cotton Ginning Days in Dallas, runs from May-October.

"A lot of people get cabin fever," says Tom Berry's son, Tommy, one of the organizers of the club and a past president. "So a couple years ago three of us got together and decided that we'd like to do a show in the winter. We thought, 'well, nobody works on the first day of the year' so we set it for January 1 - rain or shine, sleet or snow."

Fortunately, the group has gotten excellent weather the first two years.

Exhibitors and visitors don't have to do without their traditional New Year's meal either. Tom Berry saw to it that they got their fill of pinto beans, ham hocks and collard greens.

GAMTRA meets once a month and club members attend approximately 16 shows during the summer in the Carolinas, Tennessee and Indiana. Every state has about 8 to 10 shows a year, Tommy Berry noted.

"It's like a circuit," he said. "We go to shows at the same time and same place every year. We go to Indiana to the biggest show in the world."

Many tractor enthusiasts use the shows to build a network of contacts for parts, and many use them to buy, sell or trade equipment.

"It's like a show and swap meet," Tommy said.

Exhibitors came from



Cleveland, Gaston, Lincoln and York Counties for Saturday's show. Unlike most of the big shows around the land, it was mostly a show for the spectators.

"We do a little buying and selling, but it's mostly a get-together and an excuse to see friends in the winter time. Some we won't see again until spring," Tommy Berry explained.

Most of the tractors on display were from the 1939-65 era, but some of the gasoline engines dated back to the very early 1900s.

Ray Medford of Gastonia, a retired Gaston County educator, brought his restored 1916 International

Harvester Mogul engine which he basically built from scratch over a 9-year period.

"It was the Cadillac of it's time," Medford noted. "Mules would pull it anywhere on the farm and operate all type of machinery such as corn shellers, saws, stationary hay bailers, you name it."

The engine originally ran on kerosene, Medford explained, but he runs it on gas now.

He found the engine in Cabarrus County, and it was completely disassembled.

"It took me nine years to restore it, and I worked on it pretty hard for a year and a

See Crank, 5B

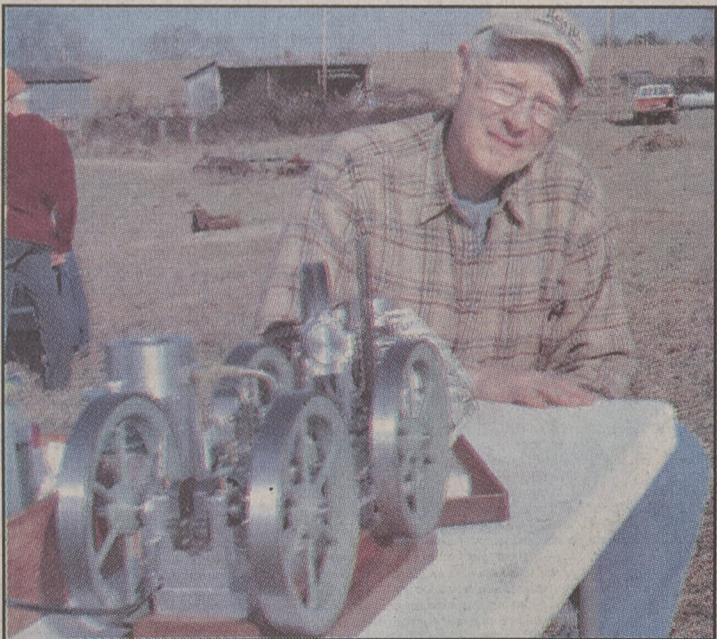


Restored antique tractors line the pasture at Tom Berry's farm near Kings Mountain for Saturday's second annual New Year's Day Crank Up. Left, Tom Berry stirs a large container of pinto beans for a traditional New Year's meal.

Photos by Gary Stewart



W.C. Helms, above, of Lincolnton shows off his 1914 domestic water pump that he restored at Saturday's New Year's Day Crank Up at the Tom Berry farm near Kings Mountain. Right, retired engineer Doug Kelly of Lake Wylie is pictured with a scale model of a Snow 1905-08 era pump.



Photos by Gary Stewart

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I.R.S.

INVENTORY REDUCTION SALE

CARTER AUTOMOTIVE

3 DAYS ONLY!

YOU PAY THE \$10.40 I.R.S. SALE FEE, THEN TAKE ON THE PAYMENTS ON ALL PRE-OWNED VEHICLES IN STOCK* PLUS WE'LL GIVE YOU A \$500 I.R.S. REFUND*

PLUS! PAYMENTS AS LOW AS \$99*

AT CARTER AUTOMOTIVE YOU KNOW OUR MOTTO

EVERYBODY RIDES!!

WE GUARANTEE WE'LL GET YOU FINANCED OR WE WILL PAY YOU \$100.00 NOBODY IN SHELBY CAN BEAT THAT AND WE KNOW IT!!! GET PRE-APPROVED BEFORE YOU SHOP BY CALLING

CALL RIGHT NOW! 704-471-2627 CALL RIGHT NOW!

<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;">THURSDAY</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.5em; margin: 0;">JAN 6</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">8:30AM-6:00PM</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;">FRIDAY</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.5em; margin: 0;">JAN 7</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">8:30AM-6:00PM</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;">SATURDAY</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.5em; margin: 0;">JAN 8</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">8:30AM-4:00PM</p>
--	--	--

Bring your trade title and or payment book. Be prepared to take immediate delivery. All sales finance managers, and sales staff along with selected lending institutions will be on hand to assist you with your vehicle purchase.

With over 100 quality pre-owned cars, trucks, SUV's and minivans, our facility just wasn't designed to handle all this inventory... there will be MILLIONS of dollars in inventory disposed of!! All years, makes & models must go! So shop early for best selection.

DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY

CARTER

AUTOMOTIVE

1010 E. Dixon Blvd. • Shelby, NC

704-471-2627

(Across The Street From Wal-Mart)

*OAC

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dress your bedroom in the latest style!

Loopylu's

LUXURY LINENS FOR LESS
114 Cone Street Cherryville
(Behind Medical Center Pharmacy)
Monday-Friday 9:00-6:00

Jim Long, Inc.

Air Conditioning & Heating

"Quality You Can Trust"

HEATING **LENNOX** COOLING

Serving Gastonia Since 1953

(704) 865-8829

726 East Third Ave., Gastonia