

# The Line Shaft

*The Official Newsletter of the*

**NORTH JERSEY ANTIQUE ENGINE & MACHINE CLUB**

April 2015



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Secretary: Jeff Brooks

(973) 997-5284

**Our Web Address: [njaemc.org](http://njaemc.org)**

*Founded on October 15th, 1979 by: Arthur Goble, Fred W. Westbrook, John Snook, Roy Bischoff & Lewis Quince*

The March 12th meeting was held at the administration building with 25 members attending.

A vote was taken and accepted to buy 150 ceramic cups with the words FAIRGROUNDS 75TH ANNIVERSARY embossed on each, to be sold through the summer months when the shed is open for various events and during the Fair.

A discussion was made on taking the 55 gallon drum train and putting advertisements on them from local businesses. The advertisement would be on 1'x2' placards bolted to each car. Each business would pay approximately \$250.00 per car.

May 2nd...Lusscroft Farm needs engines and related items for display. There may be some plowing available to members.

Of note: the Memorial Day parade in Branchville (May 25, 2015) is in need of additional hay wagons. Please call Blace or Jeff if you have a lead.

Floyd Ribe won the 50/50 and contributed the money back to the club.



The MTA's 14th annual **SWAP MEET & MILITARY VEHICLE SHOW** will again be held at the *Fairgrounds* on **April 18th and 19th**...it would be appreciated if you could bring a tractor, truck or engine. Call Jeff Brooks to "enlist": 973/997-5284!

**We are still looking for someone to step up...and become an officer.**

Please take a few moments and think about the club and what its meant to you in the past and perhaps it is time to give something back. Any questions or thoughts should be directed to: Dave Betts (973) 303-1994 or Chuck Klim (973) 948-7458 or any of the current board members, whose phone numbers are above.

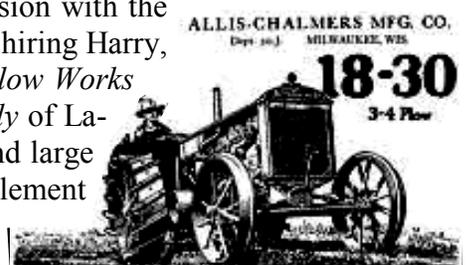
*Our next meeting will be at 6 PM on April 9th at the SHED...  
weather permitting!*

## Allis-Chalmers



The company that would eventually become Allis-Chalmers was founded in 1847 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin under the name *Reliance Works*, and manufactured flour millstones, portable mills, shafting and water wheels. *Reliance Works* was purchased by *Edward P. Allis & Company* in 1861 and expanded into the manufacturing of reciprocating steam engines, steam pumps, blower engines for blast furnaces, reversing engines for rolling mills, air compressors, mine hoisting machinery, centrifugal pumps and in 1886, the first triple expansion pumping engine. In 1901, the **Allis-Chalmers Company** was formed thru the merging of the *Edward P. Allis Company*, the *Fraser and Chalmers Company*, the *Gates Iron Works* and *Dickson Manufacturing*. Besides sorely needed capital \$, these new companies brought an even wider line of products to Allis-Chalmers, including additional mining equipment (Fraser & Chalmers), gyratory crushers and cement making machinery (Gates Iron), and sugar mill and coal mining equipment (Dickson). The recession of 1903 put the new company into uncertain financial straits, however it continued with expansion; acquiring *Bullock Electric Manufacturing Company* and entered the steam and hydraulic turbine/electric motor-generator business, dominated by GE and Westinghouse. A-C, still financially shaky, was now considered one of the high technology companies of the early 1900s, having also added blast furnaces, smelting equipment, skip & slag cars, boilers, hydraulic accumulators, valves, and conveyors to its portfolio...plus it was a “VALUE ADDED” early adopter in also supplying consulting, erecting and training services to its end-user customers. Expansion through acquisition would become the hallmark of A-C, now considered a conglomerate, throughout the 20th century and brought with it an “ever widening” line of products. In 1912, the financially strapped company was restructured and renamed the **Allis-Chalmers Manufacturing Company**. General Otto Falk, formerly of the Wisconsin National Guard, and a prominent Milwaukee businessman, became president and shifted board majority and authority away from Wall Street and locally to the more hands-on Milwaukee business community.

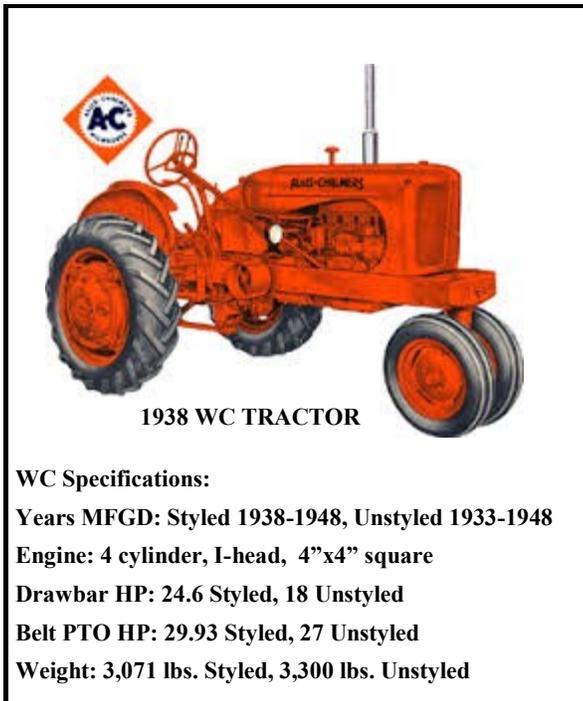
One of Falk’s first acts was to steer the company toward the manufacture of agricultural equipment...and remarkably it was done in-house and without the usual acquisition of someone already in that field. In 1914 efforts began on the development of a farm tractor, but it wasn’t until 1919 that they were able to bring a competitive 3-bottom model to market. The domination of Fordson and Farmall and the lack of a full line of implements and “weak distribution” slowed the companies market penetration to a crawl and by 1927 it was only 6.8% of the companies sales. Enter Harry Merritt, hired away from the newly formed *Caterpillar Tractor Company*, and made Chief Executive of the A-C Tractor Division with the aim to breathe new life into the barely profitable operation. Shortly after hiring Harry, A-C acquired *Monarch Tractor* of Springfield, Illinois and *La Cross Plow Works* of LaCrosse, Wisconsin and followed up in 1931 with *Advanced-Rumely* of LaPorte, Indiana. With *Monarch*, they picked up a crawler tractor line and large machine technology, with *La Cross*, an extension to their plow and implement line and with *Advanced-Rumeley*, their OILPULL technology, threshing & harvesting machines and more importantly...**24 factory branch operations and 2,500 dealers**. A-C now had what it was missing, a substantial “retail outlet” for its growing line of agricultural equipment and products. Also to Harry’s credit was a color change. In 1929 he changed their drab look to the now famous Persian Orange. Also, in the late 20s A-C collaborated with *Firestone Rubber* and introduced rubber tires to the industry, improving tractive effort and fuel economy for the farmer. A slow starter, rubber tires would become the industry standard by the 1930s. In the early 30’s they purchased the rights to a line of motor graders built by *Ryan Manufacturing* and went on to manufacture and market them as A-C Speed Patrols. Also in the late 30’s, A-C began a redesign of their crawler equipment to accommodate the *General Motors* 71 series of two-cycle diesel engines.



An Allis-Chalmers tractor advertisement in *Farm Mechanics*, circa 1921.

Remarkably, the Tractor Divisions profit picture began to change for the better and proved to be a lifesaver for the perennially “poor” parent company. Division sales rose from next to nothing in 1927 to 60% of the

corporate sales by 1930 and actually carried the corporation through the GREAT DEPRESSION.



The 1940's brought the death of General Falk, a major loss to the growing conglomerate, and World War II, where it was a "major player" in the Allied victory. Allis Chalmers would rank 45th in the US in production of war materials (that's up there with the big boys), producing large bore cannons, motor/generators, turbines, artillery tractors, amphibious vehicles, etc...but unfortunately none of its Tractor Division products were included and these were "put on hold" till wars end. A-C would lose ground to manufacturers who continued to build their wheel and crawler equipment for the military or domestic farming usage. The minimal profits allowed for war-production and a massive post-war strike did not help either.

The 1950s and 1960s saw a slow resurgence of sales in both its farming and particularly in its crawler equipment line, where its technology was decades ahead of the competition. Equipped with torque converters and sealed/oil-filled undercarriage components since 1940, plus the addition of the *Tractomotive* crawler loader attachment in the late 40s and, as always aided by the "purchase" of the *Buda Diesel Engine Co.* (a replacement for Detroit Diesel), *Laplant-Choate* (scrapers), *Simplicity* (lawn and garden tractors) and *Gleaner Manufacturing* (self-propelled harvesters). Caught in a price-fixing/bid-rigging HEAVY ELECTRIC CARTEL scheme, along with GE and Westinghouse in 1960, their name was somewhat tarnished. Possibly the corporations technological high point and a return to prominence in the electrical field occurred in 1965 when they built "BIG ALLIS"., the *Ravenswood No. 3 Power Plant*, a giant power generator located at 36th Ave. and Vernon Blvd. in Queens NY. The worlds 1st MILLION-KILOWATT generator...big enough to serve 3,000,000 people. At the time it was built it was the world largest steam energy generating facility and is still operational today, producing 20% of NYC's electricity. It's main fuel is natural gas! In 1966, with 27 plants, 35,000 employees and an **incredible 1,000 PRODUCTS** they hit their high water mark, with sales of \$860 million and profits of \$26 million. Of the total sales, 28% came from construction equipment and 30% from farming. From there it went straight down hill.

The late 1960s thru the 1980's was a time of attempted WALL STREET takeovers, profitability in 1970, a recession in 1970-71 that left A-C on the ropes, a joint venture with *Fiat* of Italy to distance themselves from a failing construction equipment business and a joint-venture with Siemens AG & AEG Telefunken of Germany to reassert itself in the steam turbine, electrical transformer/transmission field. The 1970s Farm equipment sales were never better, but took a sharp "nose dive" in the 1980s. Double-digit inflation, high interest rates and the 1982-1985 recession would finish off A-C. They would struggle on, often in name only, and finally, with 34 employees remaining., closed the West Allis, WI office in 1999.

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Today the A-C logo can be found on a line of garden tractors manufactured by *Briggs & Stratton Yard Power Products* and retailed thru their *Simplicity Tractor* dealerships...the same *Simplicity* that Allis-Chalmers formerly owned.

**Allis-Chalmers was a classic example of a company that could not decide what business it was in.**

**In 1985 the business effectively imploded as the Farm Equipment Division was sold to K-H-D of Germany (now AGCO), the Construction Equipment Division was sold to its long time joint-venture partner Fiat SpA of Italy and the Electrical Division was sold to joint-venture partner Siemens AG of Germany.**

**If your head isn't spinning it should be!**



# MARKETPLACE

**For Sale: Wheel Horse Lawn Tractor...needs motor work , no attachments,  
\$200.00 or BEST OFFER...Call Danny H. 862/266-7362**

**For Sale: Allis-Chalmers 410 garden tractor w/36" rear tine rotor-tiller...10 HP Kohler, shuttle drive...runs, but needs work!  
\$250.00 or BEST OFFER...delivery available...Call Dave Betts 973/303-1994**

**For Sale: Steam bent ash plow handles, \$30.00 a pair  
Call Bruce Mitchell 973/702-1012**

**For Sale: McCormick-Deering Farmall Model A 1944  
Call John Stickle 862/397-3782**

**For Sale: 1952 Ford 8N w/grader blade & York Rake, asking \$2,500.00  
Call Jim Dunlap 973/219-9694**

**Wanted: Manuals & Parts for Witte 6-HP horizontal diesel  
Call Andy Mackey 862/432-1552**

**Wanted: Front dozer blade for 1953 Huber M180 Road Maintainer  
glenn\_hermel@excite.com or 201/787-3275**

**For Sale: 1920ish IH 1-bottom steel wheel pull behind plow, \$100.00  
Call Jeff 973/997-5284**

**Wanted: Small boat trailer for 12' fishing boat  
Call Dave 908/303-1994**

*A donation to the club would be appreciated  
if the item is SOLD!*

## Dustless Blasting

Eco-Friendly On-Site  
Blasting

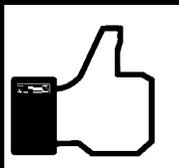


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