

Twenty Five Years and Counting

“In 1989 Fremont Hoover put an article in the Red Power Magazine and Gas Engine Magazine to get in touch with people interested in helping start a Collectors Club. Clyde Berkshire and Fremont were both directors on the board at Northern Indiana Power of the Past in Winamac, Indiana. They decided if IH was featured that would be the time to have a Red Power Round Up and invite collectors to come.”*

When Kevin and I were at the first Red Power show July 19-22, 1990 in Winamac, Indiana we sure never thought the club would last 25 years. Everyone was so happy about all the IH people getting together to form a club. It just seems like a dream now, that three days in 1990, just 5 years after Tenneco bought International Harvester tractor division we were having our first IH collectors club show. If IH had not been sold would we be celebrating 25 years, probably not. Collectors signed up as members, directors and officers were voted on and we were on our way. Fremont Hoover was the new president with Clyde Berkshire as Vice, Howard Lord as Secretary, and Randy Sottong as Treasure. A formal motion was made to organize the club as “International Harvester Collectors” was made by Mark Clements.

At the November 17, 1991 directors meeting directors Mike Androvich and Harry King were selected for the new Chapter Committee. The board decided that to have a RPRU a chapter was needed to oversee the show. Missouri applied for the 1st chapter and wanted to have a RPRU in Boonville, Missouri in 1993. After Winamac there were shows in Wisconsin (1991) and Ohio (1992), both were very good shows.

In 1992 Chapter 2 of Northern Illinois came up with an idea to have a Winter Convention. At the July 25, 1992 directors meeting a committee was formed to watch over the new Winter Convention to be held in Elgin, Illinois on Feb 26-28, 1993. They were Larry Eipers, Kelly Birkey, Clyde Berkshire, Fremont Hoover and Howard Lord. I remember the vendors having items for sale that I have never seen again. There was a lot of really good memorabilia for sale at the early shows. They were the 1st show to have tours and seminars with one tour going to the CaseIH Plant in Racine, Wisconsin. At this show the club had 2,226 members.

Harvester Highlights got its name at the March 29, 1992 meeting in Fort Wayne, Indiana and Fremont Hoover was the first editor. Mike Androvich became president for 1993 and Mike and wife Linda took over as editors for Harvester Highlights. Kevin and I took over as editors in January 1998.

The first annual all IH Consignment Auction was held in Pontiac, Illinois at the Central States Threshermans Park November 9, 1996. The auction was the brain child of Wayne Withers from Chapter 2 Northern Illinois and this was approved at the directors meeting on June 29, 1996. What an auction it was with flashlights used to complete the auction with no electric in building.

One of the winter conventions that won't be forgotten by us old guys was the 6th Annual Winter Convention in Omaha, Nebraska on March 5-7, 1998. A blizzard hit about the middle of the banquet and lasted into Sunday leaving around a foot or so of snow. Most attending didn't get to leave until Monday when the roads were cleared. In 1999 no chapter wanted to have the winter convention so the national directors sponsored it at the Holiday Inn Airport Convention Center in Rock Island, Illinois. The national board has also sponsored the national IH auction in Troy and Macon, Missouri just to keep it going.

It has been a fun and fast 25 years for the IH collectors club. One of our main objectives was to save IH history and I feel that we have done that. Will we make another 25 years, who knows, we didn't think we would make it this far.

Darrell and Kevin Darst
Editors of Harvester Highlights

*Taken from The First 10 Years by Howard Lord Jan 2001