

Issue #41

THE PLOWSHARE

History for John Deere Collectors



JOHN DEERE

JOHN DEERE'S
FAMOUS PRODUCT
TRAIN MARKETING BLITZ:
POWER TRAIN '66



Film, print and radio advertising promoted the Power Train '66.



Welcome to the May edition of *The Plowshare*. This issue is about anniversaries. Forty years ago John Deere Canada opened a new headquarters in Grimsby, Ontario, Canada. Fifty years ago John Deere unveiled the Power Train '66, the largest agricultural product introduction in company history to that point. It featured some small iron, and some big iron. Well, big in its day.

The model 5020 tractor set the pace for Deere to really spread its wings with a big horsepower, row crop chassis. Boasting almost 140 hp, it was huge back in 1965, which meant that a farmer/rancher could pull larger equipment to cover more acreage in the same number of hours in the seat.

While I have a great fondness for two-cylinder tractor design, it was the New Generation of tractors that I cut my teeth on. I remember watching those multi-cylinder engines run through the fields as a boy, and later working on the 10 and 20 Series as a young mechanic. Being from the upper Midwest, there weren't too many farmers running the large frame row crop tractors. Farms were still in the 80-500 acre size range in my area. And whether it was a family operation or hired men, they operated multiple tractors to cover the larger sized operations. The day a 5020 rolled into the shop I fell in love. Everything — and I do mean everything — was just so much larger than I was accustomed to working on with the 3000 and 4000 Series tractors. Check out some features of the 5020 in the 1969 film "The Weather Beater." (See link below)

My first 5020 experience was replacing the brakes and differential for a customer. This tested both me and the shop's equipment. This unit was obviously used for tillage only — it was weighted to the hilt and equipped with duals on the rear. The shop equipment we had was designed for this tractor's smaller cousins. After successfully removing the duals I began to remove the axles and wheels as a combination per the common practice in our service department. The wheel mover jack that was designed for this operation quickly proved too small for the job. This is when we decided to use a forklift to manage the task. From then on it was obvious that it was big for a reason. The 5020 gave me a great education. I imagine many of you learned similar lessons from the wide variety of product introduced on the Power Train.

I look forward to seeing you on the show circuit this summer!

Keep your hand on the throttle and your plow in the ground.

BRIAN HOLST

*Historical Equipment Manager,
Deere & Company*

 [Check out the video here](#)

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JOHN DEERE'S
FAMOUS
PRODUCT
TRAIN
MARKETING
BLITZ:



POWER TRAIN --- **'66**

It is one of Deere & Company's most iconic advertising images: Chicago Burlington & Quincy Railroad's diesel locomotive No. 307 rounding a bend in the tracks pulling a long line of flatcars carrying shiny new Deere agricultural machinery. It was August 1965, and the locomotive at the head of more than 30 railcars starred in the company's new-product introduction called Power Train '66. At nearly three-quarters of a mile long and carrying more than a million dollars worth of equipment, Power Train '66 traveled across the continent to show off John Deere's new offerings for 1966.



 [View the full photo gallery](#)

THE LONG GREEN LINE

At the time, Power Train '66 was Deere's largest new product introduction ever, and the volume of new products called for a train. Joining the Long Green Line that year were four new tractors and 43 new implements. There was a tractor model for practically every size farm. The 53-hp 2510 tractor was touted as the best-equipped row-tractor for the smaller farmer; the 1020 and 2020 tractors boasted the best medium-horsepower tractor design then on the market; and if a farmer wanted even more horsepower, right there in front of him was the 132-hp 5020 tractor, the world's most powerful standard tractor at the time. The new implements included planters, tillage tools, loaders, a hay cuber, a baler and an orchard and grove sprayer. It was a line of implements designed to widen farmers' choices and to meet an expanding array of agricultural needs.

HAVE YOU HEARD?

The train was a massive spectacle, but the company was backing that up with more-prosaic and useful marketing. Deere printed a 96-page, full-color product catalog and mailed 650,000 copies — one to every American and Canadian farmer with a gross income of \$10,000 or more. Special regional editions of the company's iconic magazine *The Furrow* were published to highlight the performance of the new equipment in the field. This North American advertising campaign complimented localized product introductions, traditionally called John Deere Days, and hosted by U.S. and Canada dealerships. The 1966 John Deere Days unveiled the new product line in a film customers were unlikely to forget. Although promotional films, often starring Hollywood actors, had been a traditional feature of John Deere Days, the 1966 version starred the John Deere product line.

◀ *Model 2510, 3020 and 4020 tractors are loaded onto the Power Train in August 1965.*



STOP, LOOK, AND LISTEN

The film followed the coast-to-coast journey of Power Train '66, using the visual and auditory power of the train's journey to drive home the power and efficiency of the new products. Backing up the film were promotional kits the company sent to dealerships, with banners, posters, product literature, placards, and mobiles, all keyed to the iconography of the American railway system and designed to get customers to "stop, look, and listen" to what was new for 1966. It would not have been uncommon to see a sales clerk wearing a Power Train '66 engineer's cap and neckerchief when greeting customers. Advertising specialties were everywhere: Deere Day attendees walked away with free Power Train '66 promotional pillow-pack convenience kits, combination yardstick livestock prods, ball point pens and key tags.

▲ Columbia Records produced a vinyl LP exclusively for Deere dealers. Called "Songs with a Railroad Ring," the album was a collection of railroad-themed American folk songs performed by leading artists of the day such as Johnny Cash, The New Christy Minstrels, Percy Faith, Pete Seeger and Bob Dylan. The \$3.95 album was offered to customers for \$1.00 through Deere dealerships. It wasn't the first time Deere had wowed customers with a new-product introduction, and it would certainly not be the last, but it was the first to become a marketing legend, and it carried the message that here was a company proud of its products and proud of its customers.

Model 1020 and 2020 tractors were featured at John Deere Days and in advertising. They featured "a full array of big-tractor features at a price within easy reach." ▼



JOHN DEERE LEADER ADDRESSES GATHERING OF THE GREEN

On March 16, 2016, Michael J. Mack, Jr., Group President, John Deere Financial Services, Global Human Resources and Public Affairs, helped kick off the semi-annual Gathering of the Green conference in Davenport, Iowa. Here is an excerpt of his remarks.



MICHAEL J. MACK, JR.,
Group President,
John Deere Financial
Services, Global Human
Resources and Public
Affairs

Good evening, everyone. It's a privilege to be here in a sea of green and yellow to be a part of what can only be called a celebration of irrational loyalty.

John Deere enjoys a sense of affinity and loyalty from its various constituents that may be unparalleled compared with other companies.

No doubt, I am now speaking to a group of people who define the profile perfectly. Some of you have traveled cross country, or may have come from far parts of the world, to attend this event.

You do so because you want to and because it's something you feel committed to.

That just does not happen at many other companies.

John Deere is all about long-term relationships — not only with employees but also with customers, dealers and of course, collectors.

These relationships span years, even decades, and sometimes generations.

Two years ago, we asked customers and collectors — possibly many of you — how you came to be connected with John Deere.

The results were pretty awesome:

- 74% said they were second- or third-generation customers;
- 19% were fourth-generation customers;
- And — it gets better — 5% said they were fifth-generation customers!

Survey results:



**SECOND- OR THIRD-
GENERATION CUSTOMERS**



**FOURTH-GENERATION
CUSTOMERS**



**FIFTH-GENERATION
CUSTOMERS**



How many companies can say that?
How many other companies have been
around long enough to even have multi-
generational customers?

I know something about this from
personal experience.

My father was the director of the Product
Engineering Center in Waterloo from
1971-1987. He had design responsibility
for worldwide agricultural tractors and
diesel engines. At the family dinner table,
it was normal for us to talk about tractor
drawbar power, final drive pinion design,
and engine torque rise.

That's another reason I jumped at
the chance to be here tonight. If you
think about it, a vintage tractor show
is something like a new-product show.
The only real difference is the age of the
product. I've had the good fortune to be
involved in many product intros during
my career.

The 1972 product show was a memorable
one for me. Amid much fanfare, in 1972
John Deere introduced the Generation II
tractors in Waterloo. Generation II was
characterized by the Sound Guard body,
the first truly successful integrated tractor
cab. The Generation II tractors offered

other innovative features such as a Quad
Range transmission and Deere's new
Perma-Clutch, a wet clutch that would
last virtually the life of the tractor.

But what about the brand itself? What
is it about John Deere and its brand
that inspires such affinity and loyalty —
rational or otherwise? In the lingo of brand
management, we say our brand is fairly
narrow — so it does not become diluted
— and also exceptionally deep.

It stands for something.

I believe the strength of the company,
its identity, and its brand begin with



our **Purpose**. Technically, Deere's higher purpose — which you see spelled out from time to time — is committed to those linked the land. But I submit that's only part of the story, a means to an end. Our real purpose is what that commitment leads to.

What it leads to — helping feed a hungry world and provide shelter for its inhabitants — **is a goal that stirs the soul**.

In my view, we should never take that higher purpose for granted or for a moment believe that it doesn't have great emotional effect on people. Many groups — employees, customers and enthusiasts — associate with John Deere because they relate to this noble purpose.

And I strongly suspect that includes many of you here tonight. But that's only one part of the story. Each one of you adds something unique and special to the John Deere brand.

Through your passion for Deere, and your continuing interest in its affairs, you add your own stamp — perhaps imitated, but never really duplicated, by anyone else.

It's you transforming John Deere, making it part of your life, and adding memories that are uniquely your own.

It's the part of John Deere that you own, and no one else can.

Together, we have an important responsibility — celebrating the past

while continuing to evolve for the future. And, let's be realistic — if a company doesn't grow and prosper, doesn't evolve in other words, neither does its history.

Paradoxically, a company's ability to survive and thrive for such a long time — similar to a living organism — reflects its ability to keep some things unchanged — such as values, in Deere's case — and yet also be able to adapt to changing business environments, technology, threats and opportunities.

IT'S YOU
TRANSFORMING
JOHN DEERE,
MAKING IT PART
OF YOUR LIFE,
AND ADDING
MEMORIES THAT
ARE UNIQUELY
YOUR OWN.

industrial equipment, or snowmobiles, or lawn tractors.

It's the same spirit that John Deere moves forward with today.

Just think of it: 50 years from now, someone will look back at a 600-hp 9RX tractor and say to himself — "I remember when the John Deere dealer in our town delivered our 9RX, and how it changed the way we farmed. I sure would like to find one of those to restore."

Exactly how, when or where this will happen we can only guess. But we can safely bet that it will!

So, you see, our past and our future come from the same place; from people like you, and like me, who evince such a passionate degree of loyalty for our company.

It's because of your devotion to Deere, scouring fence lines, swamps, and abandoned buildings to find that rare John Deere tractor — or tracking down your father or grandfather's tractor that was sold 40 years ago.



Each generation evolves. It's why some collect two-cylinder tractors, and others prefer the New Generation. Others love

Thank you again for being associated with this amazing event, and for coming to the Quad Cities to celebrate all things John Deere.





JOHN DEERE CANADA CELEBRATES GRIMSBY HEADQUARTERS

John Deere Canada is celebrating the 40th anniversary of its Grimsby, Ontario, headquarters this year, and there's a lot to celebrate.

The Canadian subsidiary is growing faster than ever before, says President Mike Blonski. When he arrived at what was then John Deere Limited in 2007, the company had five business units and the president's job included sales & marketing.

Grimsby is still headquarters for five business units, but provides corporate services to another five John Deere business units in Canada, and Blonski has his hands full just being president. The five units that make up John Deere Canada ULC are the Ag & Turf Sales and Marketing Branch — Canada; Construction & Forestry Sales Division — Canada; the Eastern Canadian Regional Parts Distribution Centre; John Deere Reman-Edmonton; and John Deere Financial.

The company was reorganized and reincorporated as John Deere Canada ULC in 2011 to position it for even more growth.

The growth opportunities are the result of technology, both in John Deere equipment and that integrated into business processes, and Deere's global growth, Blonski says.

Technology allows Grimsby to be a hub of shared services for other business units, consolidating back-office functions like

accounting and human resources, and to collaborate with John Deere locations around the world.

Deere's high-tech machines require people with technical expertise to help dealers learn to provide customers with more-sophisticated service. The technology also calls for more training, and Grimsby has a training center that can accommodate the biggest John Deere machines and includes a television studio to create distance learning resources.

"The business has changed a lot, and in the last 10 years, the pace of change has really accelerated," Blonski says. Even the geographic reach of John Deere Canada has changed. Its Parts division serves 300 or so dealer locations in Canada, but also several hundred dealer locations along the U.S. eastern seaboard as far south as Maryland.

The Grimsby headquarters has expanded, too; in 2011, the company opened a 96,000-square-foot addition to the parts distribution center.

Grimsby manages the changing business and the daily work with a staff of just under 200 people, about 15 percent of John Deere's total employment in Canada.

There are always changes, Blonski says, but the people at John Deere Canada remain grounded in the John Deere values. And the eye-catching white concrete building, with its view from the office center north across the John Deere water feature and Queen Elizabeth Way and across the western tip of Lake Ontario to the skyline of Toronto, retains the character that made it a great new headquarters building in 1976.

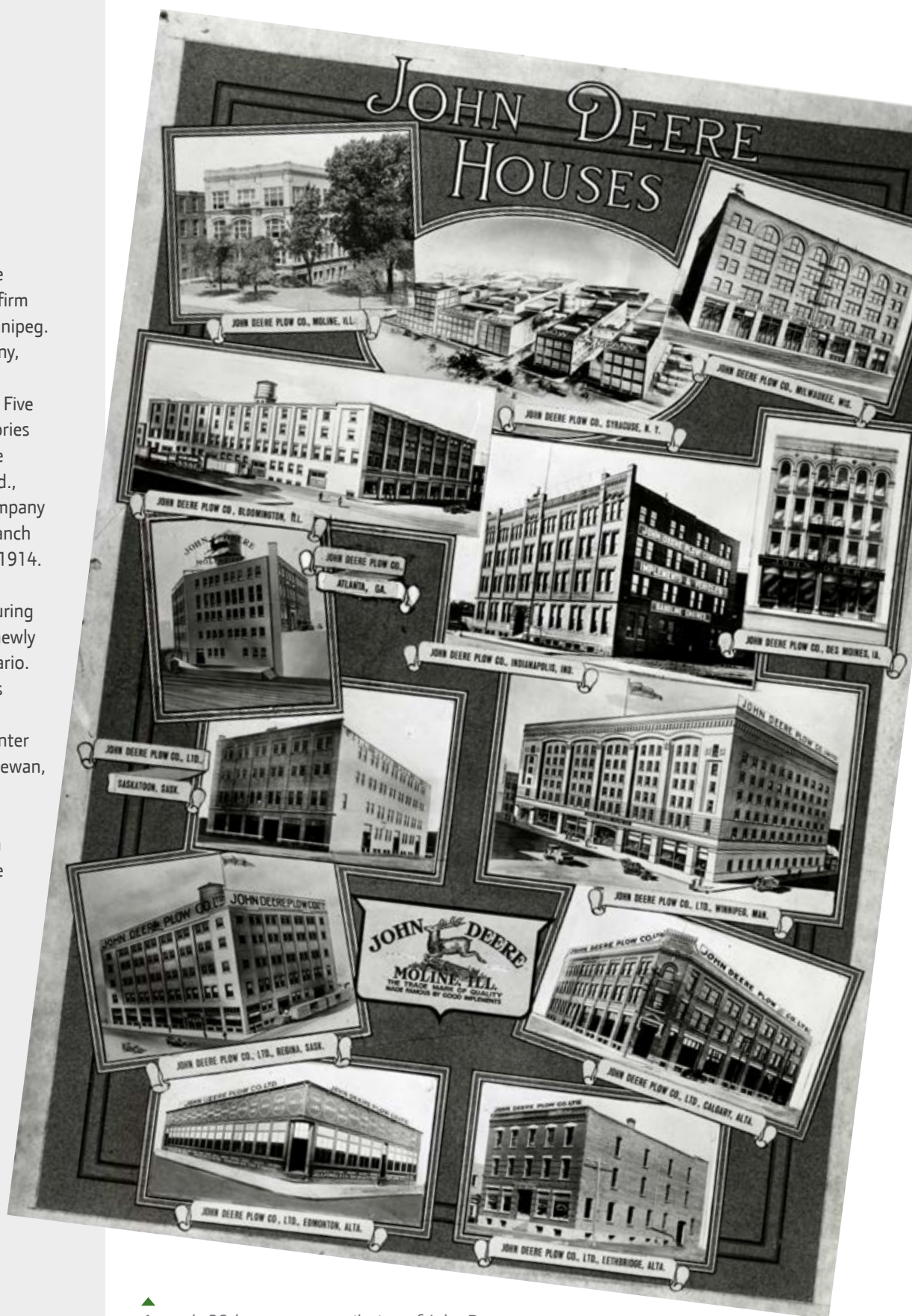
CELEBRATE THIS SUMMER

On Saturday, June 25, 2016, John Deere Grimsby is teaming up with three John Deere collector groups to celebrate Grimsby's 40th anniversary. The show will feature a variety of events and activities for all ages, including:


- A large display of vintage John Deere tractors and equipment
- A working blacksmith from the John Deere Historic Site
- An exhibition of equipment from 1976 to recognize the opening of the Grimsby office
- Opportunities to learn about the history of Grimsby from the Grimsby Historical Society Archives

ORIGINS OF JOHN DEERE CANADA

Distribution of John Deere plows began in Canada in the 1870s, shipped through the firm Westbrook & Fairchild in Winnipeg. The John Deere Plow Company, Ltd., a Deere subsidiary, was formed in 1907 in Winnipeg. Five years later two branch territories were created, the John Deere Plow Company of Calgary, Ltd., and the John Deere Plow Company of Saskatoon, Ltd. A third branch was established in Regina in 1914. In the meantime, John Deere acquired the Dain Manufacturing Company, which included a newly built factory in Welland, Ontario. A new sales organization was created in the 1940s, and a modern parts distribution center was built in Regina, Saskatchewan, in 1972. When John Deere Limited Headquarters was built at its current location in Grimsby, Ontario, John Deere was celebrating nearly 100 years of doing business in Canada.



▲ An early 20th century compilation of John Deere locations included branch houses in Canada.



**Choose from
The Long
Green Line of
John Deere
Equipment**



FROM THE ARCHIVES

*Rear page from the 1966 Long Green
Line catalog. More than 650,000 copies
were distributed to United States and
Canadian farmers.*