



Paul Ziller is an active member of the club along with serving as a Director. He and his wife Fern live in Huntley. They have one son and one daughter with five grandchildren.

Paul grew up on a farm in Reddick near Kankakee, Illinois. He grew up in a family with 9 boys and 1 girl. After hearing that, I told Paul I would like to meet his sister as she must be quite a survivor! He says she's in her late 60's and still milks dairy cattle each day. In his youth, the family moved to Huntley and was farming 550 acres including 500 hogs and 150 beef cattle. This was quite a farming operation during that time. They mostly farmed with John Deere two cylinder tractors including an unstyled G, 2 John Deere B's a John Deere A. They also had two Minneapolis Moline Twin Cities tractors. Paul recalls combining with a 6 foot model 12A combine and baling hay with a New Holland 66 baler.

After his father decided to stop farming, Paul worked for D & Z Trucking as a livestock hauler. After a couple of years of trucking he was drafted into the Army. While in the Army, he spent 19 months in Germany and was able see many other countries in that part of the world such as Spain and North Africa. After being discharged from the Army he went into construction working for Plote. He worked several years as a General Superintendent for the Plote Company before retiring.

Paul's first hobby tractor was a 1952 John Deere Styled G that he purchased in Missouri. He drove between 600 and 700 miles each way to pick up that tractor. I believe he said the front wheel was missing on that tractor when he picked it up. About three years later he picked up a John Deere Unstyled G. Six months after that, he and Fern were driving along and she wanted to stop at a garage sale along the road. After driving past the sale for a short distance, Paul turned around to keep harmony in the marriage. As they started looking around at the sale items he noticed a 1946 John Deere LA in the corner of the garage. As you can imagine, Paul ended up with that tractor. Of course, Fern was quick to take responsibility for that find and now considers that "her" tractor.

While collecting, Paul acquired a fondness for GP's and now has six. His first GP was a 1929 model and was located in Wyoming. To say that Paul doesn't mind driving long distances to pick up his new toys is an understatement. Paul states that the long trips allow him to see different parts of the country to which he enjoys greatly.

Paul has an extensive collection of tractors and equipment but, to name a few, he has a 1954 JD 70, 2 Styled G's, a 520, 820 Diesel (five bottom plow) and a 720 Diesel. He has some International's and a Case to name a few but we didn't have enough time in this article to capture everything.

Paul has attended every Heritage Tractor Ride since the first one. That would be 8 years times approximately 150 miles which equals a lot of miles on a tractor. Congratulations to Paul on that accomplishment. Paul enjoys the club activities, helping plan the events but most of all the people and the conversations he has with everybody. His favorite tractor is the 1938 Unstyled G.

When you have an opportunity, please stop by and tell Paul thanks for sharing his background with us.