

## Hefty G Now A Hot Collector's Item

If you like old Allis Chalmers G tractors, you'll really like the Hefty G, which was manufactured by Holtan Axle and Transmission Company, Juneau, Wis., in the 1970's. Edward Koelker, who owns 10 Allis Chalmers G's, also has two Hefty G's.

"The Hefty could do things the old G couldn't," says Koelker. "It has a 3-pt. hitch at the rear and another in front of the engine block. It also sits up higher and is over all taller, longer and heavier. But it was the gearing that really set the Hefty G apart.

"They made the Hefty G primarily for cultivating and spraying, so none of the gears were very fast. In the lowest gear, it can go so slow you can hardly believe it. I can set it at 1,000 rpm's, get off, walk backwards and beat it."

The 6-speed transmission offered a first gear rated at only 0.84 mph while 6th gear topped out at 8.07 mph. For

really slow work, the Hefty could be ordered with an optional creeper gear with speeds as slow as 0.2 mph.

The rear engine tractor featured a rugged 2 by 4-in. box beam frame versus the pipe frame of the regular G. It was available in a standard 121.5-in. frame and with a 16-in. extension. The Hefty was powered by a 27 hp, Continental Teledyne, gas-fueled engine built by Renault.

The standard Hefty offered two specialized ptos with one live at engine speed and the second synchronized with ground speed. Hydraulics were provided by a 5 gpm, 3,000-psi pump.

Overall height, ground clearance and tread adjustment varied across four models. Ground clearance varied from 18 to 27 in., and tread width varied from 40 to 108 in. on the G18, G22 and G27. A fourth model, the Hi-G offered up to 48 in. ground clearance. Variations allowed



Hefty G looks somewhat like an Allis Chalmers G tractor, but was manufactured by a Wisconsin company. "There aren't many around any more," says Edward Koelker, who owns two of them.

an operator to match tractor selection to preferred bed or row widths. Available implements included a rotary mower, various cultivators, snowplow, sprayers, mid-mount blade, precision seeders, rotary tiller, plow and transplanter.

Prices ranged from around \$6,000 to

\$7,000, depending on model and options.

"They were a good running tractor," says Koelker. "There aren't many around."

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## Having Fun With '59 Caddies

Elvis would have liked this. There are a lot of things you can do with a '59 Cadillac, or at least such is the case for Roger Gutschmidt and his friend Dale Donat. The pair was inspired to transform seven different junkyard '59 Caddys (for parts) into a collector's dream of pink Cadillac fun.

Gutschmidt, of Gackle, N. Dak. did most of the work on his farm, while Donat, a collector from Spearfish, S. Dak. offered up suggestions, some physical help, and financial compensation.

After locating the rusty, beat up base units in junkyards, they completely restored one, using the other units for parts. They painted it pink and, with all that chrome, Donat had a perfect parade car.

Yet, the pair hated seeing what was left over go to waste, so a couple of years later they turned the back end of one of their "parts cars" into a flashy couch, and then converted the front end of the another parts car into an equally unique Pink Cadillac desk.

"There were a few challenges in these projects, but Dale is a real optimist and he encouraged me," Gutschmidt says. "The cars we started with were real wrecks so the sheet metal needed to have dents taken out. You had to be able to visualize what it was going to look like, and get creative in problem solving.

"The couch and desk each took a lot of thinking and planning," Gutschmidt says. "The first thing we did (for the couch) was crudely cut off the rear end with a cutting torch, about 6 in. to a foot further than where the final cuts would be. We did the same for the desk on the front end."

They used the original back seat for the couch, but positioned it in place of the trunk and had to cut and shape the seat so it would nicely match the shape of the bumper. They also reupholstered the seat with fabric from a restoration company, matching what an original Caddy would have looked like.

The pair's '59 Cadillac front end desk is especially loaded with chrome, since it has both a bumper and a grill. All of these parts had to be re-chromed.

The desk includes about 1 ft. of the front end of the hood, and about 2 1/2 ft. of the fender so that the front half of the wheel well is preserved. To make it more portable, the tires (with hubcaps) just lean loosely on the inside of the wheel wells.

"We made sure there were no sharp edges anywhere that we cut the metal. For the desktop, we installed a removable piece of 3/4-in. plywood with black Formica on top - it sits in a ledge just behind the hood, and ahead of the fender," Gutschmidt says.



Roger Gutschmidt and Dale Donat covered ted seven different junkyard 1959 Cadillacs into a collector's dream of pink Cadillac fun. Photo above shows a Cadillac couch.

Since power converters were deemed too expensive, the most challenging aspect of making the desk was devising a way to have working headlights. They chose to install small 110-volt bulbs inside the original lenses, which in itself was a feat. Their solution was to strengthen the lenses by covering them in duct tape, and then delicately sandblasting a 1 1/2-in. hole in the back of each of the four headlights.

"They look like real headlights that way," Gutschmidt points out. "We didn't want it to look fake."

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They turned the back end of one car into a flashy desk.

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## "Drive A Tractor To Church"

Last September 25 farmers who are members of the rural Elk Creek Lutheran Church of Hale, near Osseo, Wis., drove their tractors to church.

It was part of the church's first-ever "drive a tractor to church" harvest worship service.

"It allowed us to celebrate the agricultural heritage of the church, which over the years has changed a great deal with the disappearance of dairy farms," says the Reverend Terry Lorenz, the church's pastor. "At one time there were up to 57 families in our church who were dairy farmers. That has decreased to one dairy farming family and a handful of small, diversified farms."

"During the service, people talked about farming and shared stories about tractors and their farming memories. Afterward, one farmer even gave folks rides on his hay wagon."

Most of the 25 tractors were older models, passed down to sons and grandsons by fathers and grandfathers in the congregation. However, there were some newer models,

too, some of them quite large. One farmer drove 16 miles to get to church. It took him 70 minutes to make the trip.

Reverend Lorenz asked a couple of parishioners who farm, Henry Filla and Kellen Nelson, to speak during the service.

"It turned out to be sort of an appreciation day for farmers and a way to talk about farming with some of the people who are getting farther removed from farming," Filla told a reporter from The Country Today newspaper. He raises buffalo on his farm near the church. "It gave people who don't get to be around tractors a chance to feel them, look at them and think about them."

By the end of the day, another "drive a tractor to church" event had been planned for next year.

"This year, the farmers congregated at several neighbors' farms and anywhere from one to eight tractors drove together to church at a time. Next year they plan to meet at one central point and then all drive together like in a parade," says Reverend Lorenz.



Photo courtesy Scott Schultz, The Country Today

Tractors lined up outside Elk Creek Lutheran Church on the first annual "Drive A Tractor To Church Day".

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