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<p style="text-align: center;">Calendar</p> <p>May 3</p> <p>GPS Meeting at the Galway Town Hall</p> <p>7:00 --7:30 Social Half Hour</p> <p>7:30 --8:00 Business Meeting</p> <p>8:00 Program</p>	<h2>May GPS Update</h2> <p>By Bonnie Donnan</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Table of Contents</p> <p>Page 1</p> <p>May GPS Update</p> <p>Page 2</p> <p><i>Those Doodlebug Years</i> By Tom Cwiakala</p>	<p>Our April meeting was an impromptu discussion of memories of past springtime and Easter family customs and celebrations. Thanks to Mary Lynn Kopper for stepping up and leading the discussion when our scheduled speaker couldn't make it. The May 3rd meeting will be a program by local author and historian Tim Starr on Saratoga County Inventions. I think that many of us will be surprised by the diversity and number of our county's patented creations.</p> <p>Voting on officers for the 2010-2011 year will take place at our May 3rd meeting. Phyllis Keeler, chair of the nominating committee, will still accept nominations from the floor before the vote.</p> <p>Our annual members' picnic will be hosted by Ann and Ray David at their home on Lake Road on Monday June 7th at 6:00 p.m. See Carolyn Baxter to sign up for what you wish to bring so we don't wind up with 23 potato salads. If you can't attend the May 3rd meeting, please Give Carolyn a phone call at 882-6634 during the month of May regarding your food item. Please bring a folding chair so we can relax outdoors in the anticipated beautiful weather. We will be holding our annual auction after the meal, so start gathering interesting items to donate for this fundraiser.</p> <p><i>Upcoming events in May needing volunteer participation are:</i></p> <p>*May 31 Memorial Day Parade and Festival in the Park. The parade starts at 10 a.m. at the Firehouse, and concludes with a ceremony at the school. Winning essays in the contest sponsored by GPS will be read by student authors. GPS will be selling publications and Watering Trough Ornaments in the Park 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.</p> <p>* Flower barrels throughout the Village will be planted before Memorial Day, and will need watering through the season. Many of our volunteers who signed up last year lucked out due to our soggy summer. If you are kind enough to sign up, we can give you a list of the barrel locations.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Onrust Boat Project</p> <p>The Onrust boat project, the subject of one of our programs, and the successful product of some of our members' volunteer labor, continues a mission of history and heritage. The boat will be docked at the Water's Edge Lighthouse Restaurant in the Mohawk on Freeman's Bridge Road May-October 2010. The goal of the project is to complete the interior quarters below deck, some of the work to finish the crew's quarters in 17th century style, some to prepare the ship for Coast Guard certification. A GPS system, fire suppression equipment, additional lighting, and life-saving equipment such as a motorized inflatable lifeboat, although not available to a 17th century crew, need to be acquired to comply with 21st century regulations. Once certified, the goal is operate the Onrust as a passenger vessel for educational programs on rivers and coastal waterways. Financial help is needed to accomplish this. If you wish to donate, send to: New Netherlands Routes, Inc. PO Box 1710, Schenectady, NY 12301.</p>
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Those Doodlebug Years

By Tom Cwiakala

Another aspect of small scale dairy farming in Galway back in the 1930's, 1940's and 1950's that I believe worthy of preservation is the transition by farmers from horses to tractors. This, for the most part, took place in the first half of the 40's decade. The farmers didn't exactly drop the reins and climb aboard a new Fordson, Farmall, Allis Chalmers, Massey Harris or what ever make tractor. These tractors meant a large investment and some of the farmers did not embrace the thought of taking on a bank as a business partner, although it was obvious that a lot more

land could be cultivated when using tractors instead of horses.

Well now, what do we do if we want to mechanize but don't want to go for that big price? Why, you buy an old junk truck and a few parts and build your own tractor. I don't know who built the first one or where it was built but around here these homemade tractors were called "Doodlebugs".

Some farmers built their own doodlebug and some bought one from someone who built one and was willing to sell it and build another. They were a popular substitute for a tractor in this area in the 1940's. In most cases, they were built from old automobile and truck parts. A four cylinder engine was best for its gasoline usage efficiency while the truck rear end being better suited for heavy load pulling and the traction of the larger wheels and tires.



The automobile body was removed from the frame from the dashboard back (plus the front fenders) and the frame was cut shorter. The truck part used was the rear end with wheels and tires. This rear end was secured to the automobile frame with heavy U bolts. Springs were eliminated and a draw bar was welded to the rear of the cut off frame at the right distance from the ground for efficient pulling of implements. A second standard transmission was added in series with the transmission of the base automobile. Sturdy braces and supports had to be welded in to support the second transmission and the proper drive shafts and universal joints had to be made up and installed. If the fuel tank was located between the firewall and the dash board with the gas cap just in front of where the windshield was, that part was done. If the automobile engine was equipped with a fuel pump and fuel tank in the rear, then a fuel tank was usually secured under the seat. The junked automobiles and trucks used were from the 1920's and 1930's, and were built on rugged frames. Most of them had standard three speed transmissions and wheels with wooden or wire spokes.

The two transmissions in series were needed to obtain the slow ground speeds required to pull the various farm implements. The implements back then such as the hay mowing machine, the reaper, corn cutter/binder, hay rake, manure spreader, were powered from the wheels. I recall a combination of first and third gears a good working speed. For reverse, one transmission had to be in one of the forward gears and the other in reverse. Both transmissions in reverse produced a slow forward speed.

When switching to doodlebug power the draw poles that were used with a team of horses had to be cut off short (or replaced)

with a shorter one and fitted with steel plates drilled for a hitch-pin. I recall that being a time consuming job. I also recall the mowing, raking and hauling hay getting done faster, but the old horse drawn mower, designed for slow towing speed, needed more lubrication for the bearings and they would run hot. In my experience, my Dad would ride the mower and lift the sickle bar over stones and on corners while I drove the doodlebug. Many a time my dad would shout over the noise of the doodlebug engine "**SLOW DOWN**".

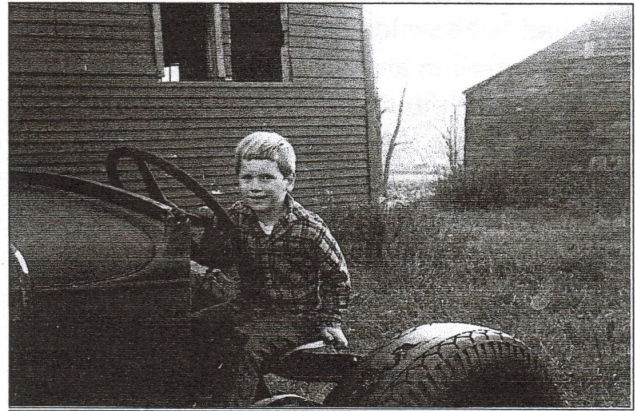
The doodle bugs worked quite well with the dump rakes and even better when the side delivery rakes came out. Of course the travel time to and from the hay fields was reduced considerably. Those steel wheels on the wagons and other implements really got noisy and bumpy when pulled at higher speeds on dirt roads. This was overcome by adapting the axles and hubs to take automobile rubber tired wheels.

There were some disadvantages with these doodlebugs such as when a wet area is encountered in a field, there was sometimes a traction problem whereby the doodlebug would get stuck.. A team of horses would have no problem in situation and walk right through. Some means of a spark suppressor was needed when pulling the wagon load of hay into the barn, while this was definitely not needed with horses. My spark suppressor was a tin can placed over the vertical exhaust pipe. One definite advantage the doodlebug had over the horses was in harrowing. Walking behind a set of harrows pulled by a team of horses was very tiring and dusty while pulling a set of harrows with the doodlebug was much faster, much less tiring although still dusty.

Then there was the time and money spent driving to the gas station to fill up that five-gallon can to keep the doodlebug running rather than just feeding the horses oats and hay that was raised on the farm. I have no photographs of the doodlebug that I worked with but Milton and Jan Lendl have a good photo of the doodlebug that Milton worked with and through their courtesy, I have included it in this article. This doodlebug, Milton said was purchased, but he built other doodlebugs before graduating from high school.

He built one using the original automobile rear end and wheels with knobby tires. I recall the time Milton and I were headed out to one of their back fields on that doodlebug. When we got to a wet spot we got stuck. Milton got those knobby tires spinning and threw mud at least fifteen to twenty feet in the air. We decided to set the throttle, put the doodlebug in reverse and put our shoulders to the front. I don't know what gear that second transmission was in but when we pushed, the doodlebug came out and took off so fast that we couldn't catch it. It finally stopped when it got hung up on a rock.

Did my Dad think the doodlebug was a great idea? I don't think so because shortly after I went into the military, he got rid of the doodlebug and got himself a team of good old reliable work horses. I'll bet he enjoyed that nice quiet ride on the mowing machine being pulled by his horses. Plus not having to hang on to the seat to keep from being bounced off and not having to keep shouting "**SLOW DOWN**".



Galway Doodlebug 1963
Editor's Collection