

60 years of harvesting history



This autumn saw the unique sight of a 60-year old CLAAS SF combine returning to its original purchasers to work alongside their latest LEXION 8700TT.

The CLAAS SF was sold new to Lord Forester of Willey Hall in 1962 by John Corfield, one of the founders of MORRIS CORFIELD who will be celebrating their 65th year of being a CLAAS dealership in 2024.

In 1965 the SF was sold on and Barrow Farm has since run an impressive 25 CLAAS combines over the intervening 60 years, culminating in the arrival of a new LEXION 8700 TT for this harvest.

Having changed hands a number of times, the CLAAS SF was eventually bought back by MORRIS CORFIELD in June 1988 and has been stored in a shed at the dealership ever since.

“It had always been my intention to restore the SF,” says MD Norman Duppa, who still has its original log book, “but I never quite got around to it. It made an appearance at an Open Day in 2013, but it was when I got it out again, when Olly Harrison visited us during his combine challenge in June, that I decided it was time to do something about it and to celebrate its 60th anniversary in style.”

Despite its age, the only major work that Norman had to do to the SF was to fabricate a new base for its 3.0m cutterbar which had rotted. Other than that, apart from replacing a few belts and work to the header guards, it fired up first time.



Norman Duppa with the SF combine

“It’s been a great project to get involved with. I do enjoy a bit of ‘proper engineering’ such as this and being faced with a challenge, which normally, if you sit down and think about it, there is often quite a simple solution.

“It was a very proud, but rather dusty, moment when I fired it up and put it to work alongside the new LEXION.”

Launched in 1952 and originally called the HERCULES, the SF was the first self-propelled combine to be produced by CLAAS and remained in production until 1962, during which time 19,456 were built.

By comparison to its 1.25m threshing drum, 60hp Ford engine, 3.0m cutterbar and costing in the region of £1,600, the rather more expensive LEXION 8700TT has been specified with full CEMOS AUTOMATIC, 4D, AUTO CROP FLOW, AUTO SLOPE, has a 35ft 1080 CONVIO cutterbar and is powered by a 626hp Mercedes Benz engine. It also boasts a very comfortable, air-conditioned cab!