

INSIDE: UNRESTORED
1968 VW 1500



plus

Narraghmore Tractor World Record, Newcastle Indoor
Classic Show, Tipperary Vintage Show & Lots More!

IRISH VINTAGE

JUNE 2018

Scene



ALFA RESTORATION PART 2

CAPRI GT XLR



IRISH MK1 1600 RESTORED TO ITS ORIGINAL GLORY

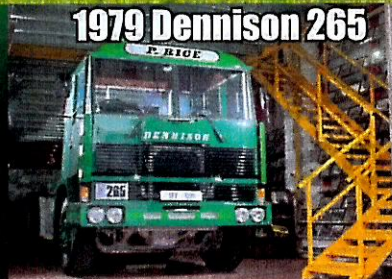


FORD 4000
CLASSIC BLUE FORD
IN THE SAME FAMILY
FOR 30 YEARS



THE DIY PROJECT
CO LOUTH MF135
RESTORED BY ITS
ORIGINAL OWNERS

1979 DENNISON 265



1962 BIANCHI BERNINA



REGULARS

- CLASSIFIEDS
- LAID TO RUST
- PASTIMES
- RETROSPECT
- MODEL SCENE
- & LOTS MORE

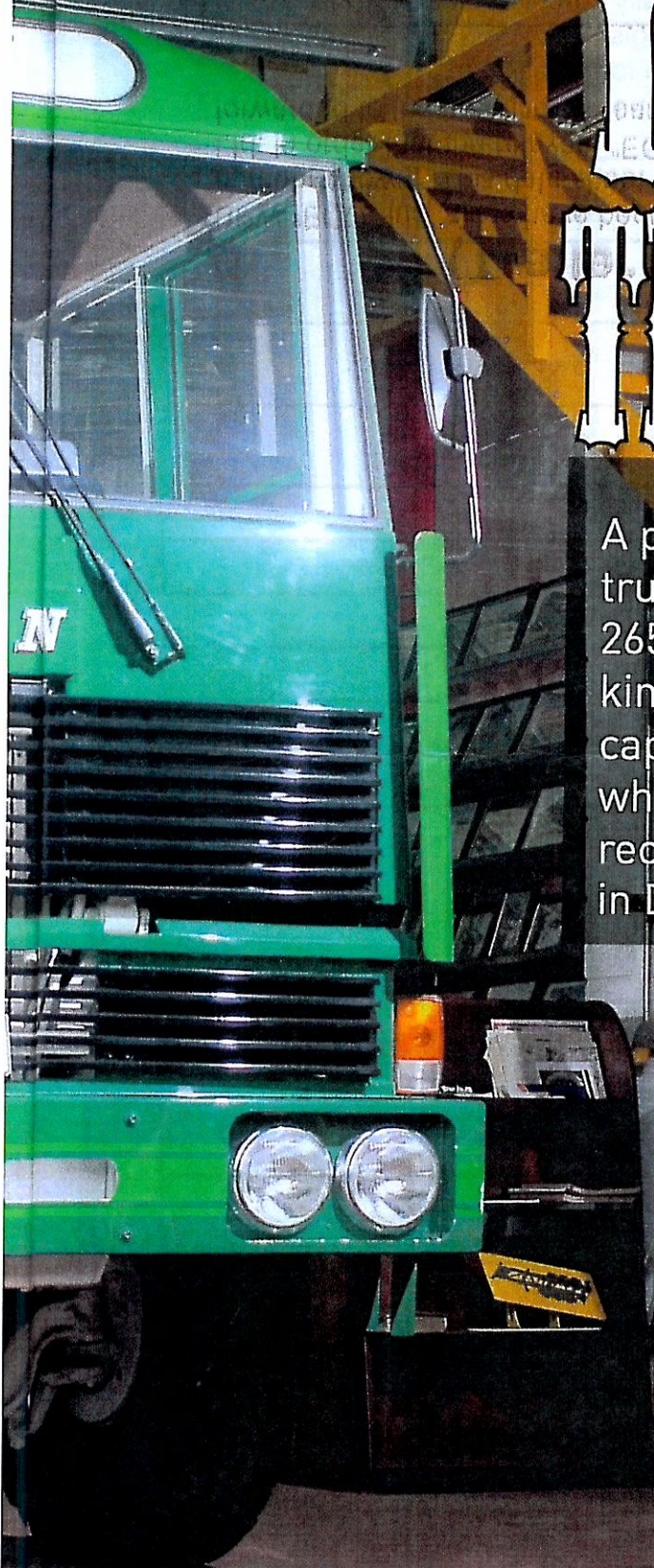
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TIPPING THE BALANCE

Words & Photos by Andrew Pollock

A product of the only Irish foray into truck manufacturing, this Dennison 265 is thought to be the only one of its kind, a double-drive tractor unit with the capability of switching to a rigid tipper when required. It's been restored in recent years, and now has pride of place in Dennison's own collection.



The history of Dennison has been recounted in the past in these pages, but to briefly recap, in 1964 George and Jim Dennison founded Dennison Brothers, and their first trailers were manufactured that same year. Business boomed over the next ten years to the extent that Crane Fruehauf had bought out the truck trailer section of the business by 1976, leaving George's design and business talent scouting around for a new challenge. A stab at truck manufacture was settled upon, with a dedicated premises being set up in Rathcoole on the outskirts of Dublin city, from where the first Dennison-badged truck rolled out the following year. While there's an 'obvious' crossover between trailer frames and truck chassis, Dennison's wisely gathered together dependable sources of the other major components of the trucks – overseen by a former design engineer from ERF, the cabs were sourced initially from the long-established Coventry body-builder Motorpanels, and later Finnish truck manufacturer Sisu, while engines were primarily Rolls-Royce Eagle diesels with Fuller transmissions (some Gardner engines were also used). Over the course of the following four years over 250 Dennison trucks were manufactured in various configurations, before the truck-making division was shut down and the company returned to trailers once more, a sector that they still lead to this day from their production facilities in Naas and in Lancaster in England.

The beautifully-restored example you see here is one of the finest Dennisons surviving, and not only for its stunning condition – not only was it the 100th of their trucks built, but it's one of only two of their clever dual-purpose tipper/dual-drive tractor units ever built, and the only one that ever used its tipper system as intended. IZY 595 was ordered by Pat John Rice of Co. Louth in late 1978, for the haulage of sand and gravel – a haulier all his life, Pat John had started out in his career, like many in the area, driving for Greenore Ferry Services, and later hauling concrete supplies from the port to the cement plant in Platin in Drogheda. Having used English lorries up to that point, this Dennison 265 was to be the first (and only) truck that Pat John would buy brand-new in his career, and so it represented a significant outlay at the time. It's dual-purpose design is unusual to this day, basically a dual-drive tipper truck with an easily-removable tipping body that could then see use as a tractor unit – there was one other such Dennison built for Wall's construction in Dublin, but the order was changed during its production to remove the tipping body function, so making IZY 595 the only one built that fulfilled both roles in its working career.

Pat John's son, Seán would be known to many as the organiser of the popular CRV Truck Show held in Dundalk each year (watch out for a report on the 2018 event in our next issue), and he can still remember clearly getting the day off school to go collect the new Dennison with his father. Its collection was delayed as Dennison's had asked to hang onto the new truck long enough to display it at that year's Spring Show at Dublin's RDS, where it was the centre of attention on their stand as the 100th Dennison truck built.



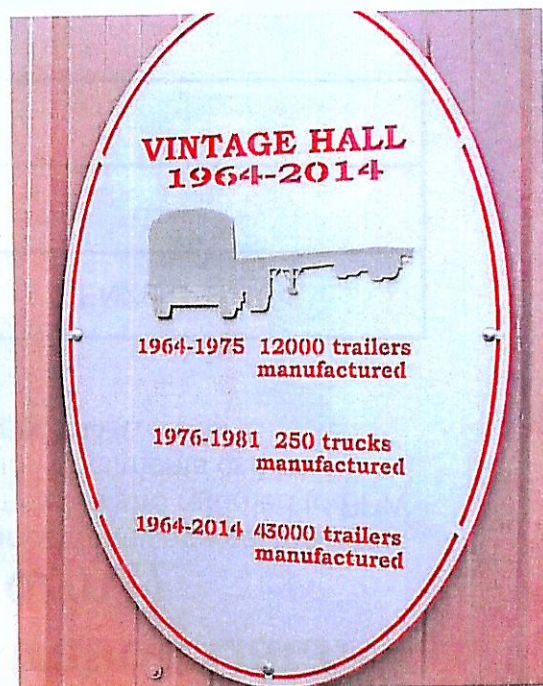
Two of a kind - David Dennison with IZY 595 and its sister double-drive at last year's CRV Truck Show in Dundalk. In fact, Sean Rice now owns the blue former Wall's truck, and we will look at that in a future issue.

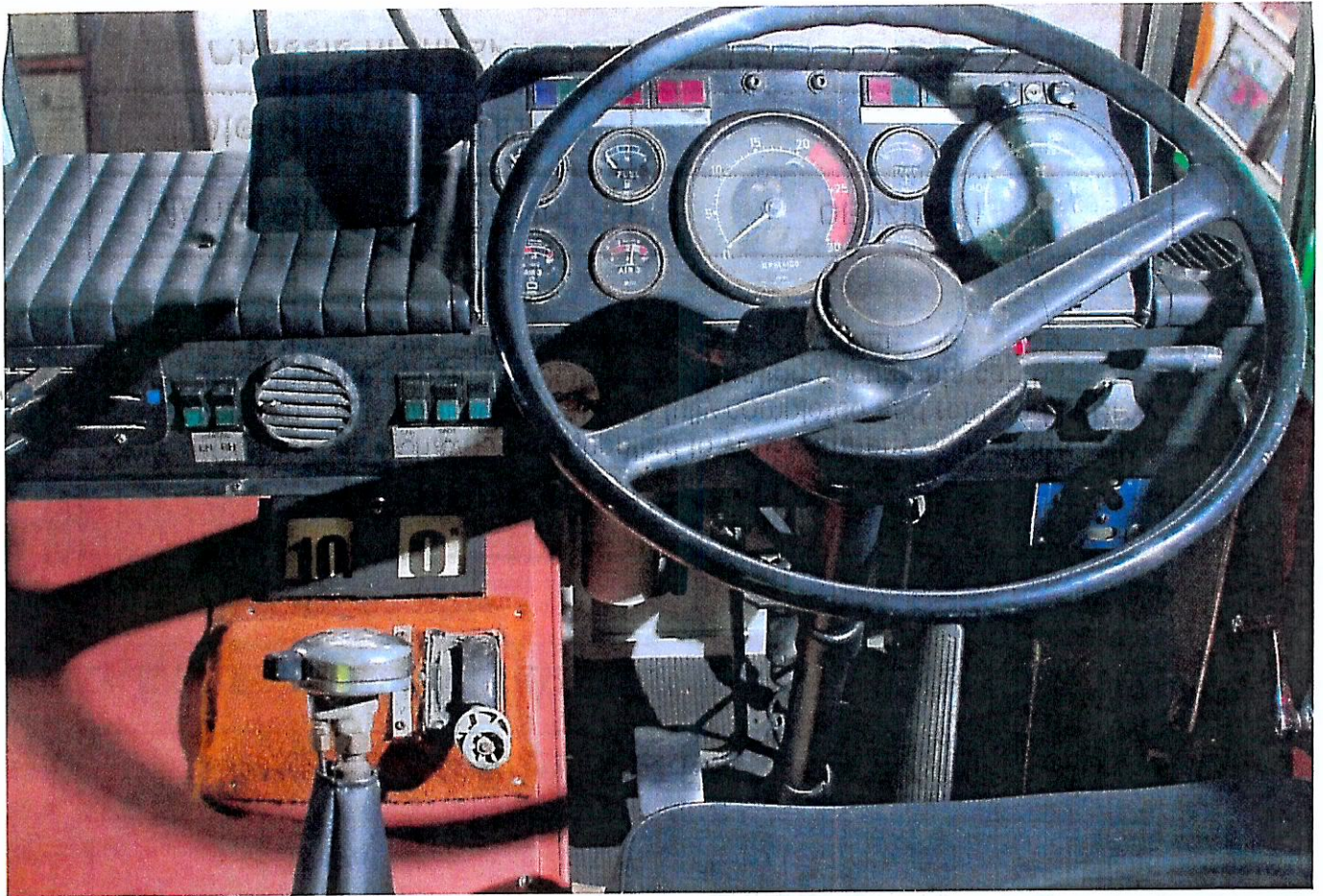


The twin rams look out of place on a tractor unit, until you realise that this unique truck was actually designed for dual purposes, coming with an easily-detached tipper body from new.



The archive of information on the company is extremely impressive, stretching back over fifty years to the earliest days of the business.





Inside and out, this truck's refurbishment has had impressive results. We're sure this view will bring back memories of the many ex-Dennison drivers out there.



The 100th Dennison built shares its home with a very impressive archive of photos and documents relating to the company's long history in trailer manufacture, as well as its short but notable foray into trucks.

119' in other parts of the country. ΕΣΟΒ: η, συλλογιστική προσέγγιση και το
 υπηρεσιών φρονιά. Την αυτή ομάδα μπορεί να γίνει συμπόσια και ταμεία το ΕΣΜ
 ΕΣΜ ΕΣΟΒ: η, άχρηστο μέσο προς επιδίωξη το λοιπό κοινωνικό ενδιαφέρον της χώρας.

Equipped with the 265hp turbocharged Rolls-Royce Eagle with nine-speed Fuller crash gearbox, the green beauty served Pat John Rice well until it was traded in for a second-hand Scania 111 at McNeill Commercials in Newry in 1986. From there, the Rices lost touch with the truck, but it lasted long in Sean's memory, and in the early 1990s he made efforts to track it down. However his enquiries through official channels bore no fruit, and for several years Sean's enquiries went nowhere. However, having eventually got a lead that it had gone to Donegal, in the mid-1990s he eventually tracked it down to AS Ballantine's quarry. "I rung them and got talking to the boss man, and he said 'you're only after missing that lorry, it's gone out of here only two or three months'" Sean explains. "I asked who got it, and I was glad to hear that George had got it. I was dreading to hear it was gone away to the scrapyard, and it would have been gone forever."

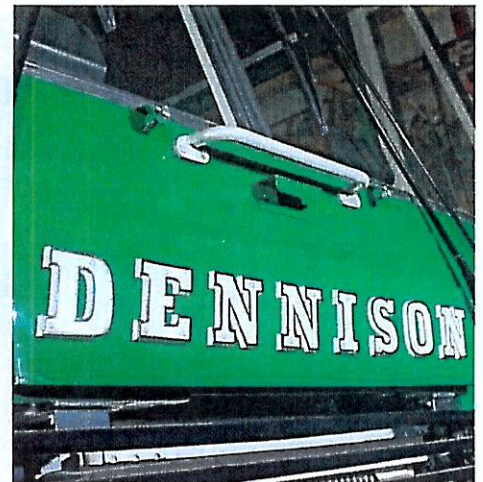


The 265hp Rolls-Royce Eagle diesel was powerful for its time, a straight-six turbo that powered through a nine-speed Fuller gearbox.

The George in question, of course, was none other than George Dennison himself, who had also tracked down this historic truck in order to preserve it for the future, for different, but equally worthy, reasons to Sean. Having stored it away for about ten years or so, the truck was restored in the UK in recent times, and today is proudly displayed not only at the occasional classic lorry event, but mainly at Dennison's own 'vintage hall' at their premises in Naas, where it shares its home with literally thousands of photographs and documents relating to Dennison's past and heritage. Not only that, but as you'll see from the photos, the hall is also home to some historic trailer models and even some other old vehicles from the Dennison family's past. Not open to the general public, it was a privilege for me to check out this great facility, and I'd like to thank the Dennisons for the access. It's good to know that such extensive records are being kept of Ireland's one and only truck manufacturer.



The square-edged Sisu cab was something of a plain Jane in appearance, but boasted ample glass area and use of interior space for a user-friendly experience for the driver.



Out of the 250+ Dennison trucks built, up to forty are thought to survive, although not all in this kind of condition. It's still an impressive overall percentage of the production run, and an indication of the esteem in which this Irish brand were always held in by members of the haulage community.

Sharing the vintage hall with the truck is a 1973 Mini Moke bought by the family in London in 1976 for £1,000. Having provided plenty of fun for both the older and younger members of the family it was laid up in 1980, only to be reawakened in 2007 for a full restoration. Visible behind it are notable trailers from Dennison's past, including the first trailer they built, one of two sold to Thomas Gallagher of Derry for £325 in 1965 and used for hauling fertilizer from Richardson's in Belfast to their plant in Derry. Also on display is the company's first sliding skeletal trailer for containers, an area that's now a speciality of Dennison and their most successful type of trailer by far.