



Times-News/Ronda Wertman

Original Tiger Tractors manufactured in Keyser were a featured attraction of the annual Founder's Day celebration.

Tiger Tractors featured at Keyser Founders Day

KEYSER, W.Va. - Tiger Tractor owners from across the country were in Keyser last weekend for the annual Tiger Tractor Meet at Keyser's Founder's Day celebration.

According to Framer's Gallery owner Darlene Frederick some 70 people were contacted about the Tiger Tractor, which originated in Keyser. The small Tiger farm and garden tractors were displayed as part of the Upper Potomac Vintage Auto Club Antique Car and Engine Show.

The Tiger Tractor was manufactured exclusively in Keyser from 1948 to the early 1960's and had been forgotten by many until the auto club sponsored the first ever collectors meet. Since that time, member David Frederick has researched the tractor, compiling a 110 page book on the tractor's history including parts information and photographs.

The operation to produce the Tiger Tractors began in the

Piedmont Foundry and Machine Works owned by the Smith Brothers. In a corner of the Piedmont shop, local workers Mr. Smith, Mr. Strosnider, Paul Johnson and Earl Anderson worked on a proto-type from a sample tractor.

Production began in 1948 and in 1949 moved to the Klots Throwing Company silk mill building on Mozelle Street in Keyser. A fire at the Mozelle Street plant, later halted production, forcing the Tiger Tractor Corporation to a new factory located on the current site of the Clary Street Developmental Center.

On Nov. 9, 1955, the Tiger Tractor Corp. filed for trademark designation with the U.S. Patent Office and Nov. 1, 1955 was designated as a registered trademark and patent.

However, following financial troubles the corporation filed for bankruptcy in 1963 and 1965 bringing an end to what was once know as "America's Finest Small Tractor"