

## Memories of Massey Come Rolling In



Sherrill Heys was staying at a farm bed and breakfast in northern Iceland when she saw a sight worthy of a photograph.

It was a landscape photo of horses near an outbuilding of a farm settled amongst some rolling green hills. The picture was taken last June but it came to mind on Saturday when Heys was reading *The Expositor* online and noticed a story about the upcoming series on Massey Combines Corp. in Brantford.

"After reading the article I thought I would send you this photo," she wrote in an e-mail. "I thought it was 'pretty cool' at the time. "I know when I took the photo of the horses in the background it was only then I realized there was a MF tractor sitting right there." She was, in her words, "totally blown away," as she never, ever imagined seeing anything like that in Europe.

Heys is one of about 20 people making a contribution to the Massey series by way of e-mail, phone call or, in a couple of cases, visits to *The Expositor* office on Henry Street. Kent Callan was another contributor.

"To say that Massey was a good place to work would be an understatement," he wrote in an e-mail. "It was the best place for me starting off in the Verity Works as a young man in the maintenance department as a maintenance helper in 1973. "I got an apprenticeship as a machine repair machanic, now a millwright, in 1975 to 1979." The diversity of machines and manufacturing processes gave him a great experience and he also worked with some fine role models, including veterans of the Second World War, who gave him a strong foundation and work ethic.

"I was told back then to listen up, do the job right the first time because some day you will be teaching someone this trade," Callan said. "That has come to be very true. "When you talk about teamwork or working as a team, I know the word was invented at Massey's." He still misses the people and the work that he did.

Ralph Heather, of Paris, recently finished a new piece of artwork for his solo show in April at the Waterford Old Town Hall Gallery. It is called *Massey Retires*, and is an original woodcut print in

scrap pine taken from his deceased father-in-law's workshop. His father-in-law was a post-war immigrant who worked at Massey in the 1950s and retired after working there for 30 years. The woodcut is a way of honouring his father-in-law and illustrates how farm equipment gets used to its fullest potential until it one day just stops, can't be started again and is left in the field where it once worked. The piece will be part of Heather's show, Rural Detours.

Dave Nicolle sent me some memories by way of e-mail as well and he too included a couple of photos. You'll read more about Nicolle's memories later this week but it's important to give proper credit where it is due. Nicolle sent me the picture of that magnificent machine that appeared on page A3 of Saturday's edition of The Expositor. He described it as a one-off combine that he was in charge of back in 1983. Nicolle sent a second photo as well. A row of tractors that look an awful lot like the photo of the tractor Heys saw in Iceland. Thanks to all of those people who contributed their time and expertise to this series. It has been quite an experience.