



This selection of Ford Series 40 tractors consists of Ertl's 8340 (1/16-scale), ROS's highly unrealistic 7740 (1/25-scale), Imber Models' 6640 (1/32-scale) and Ertl's 8240 (1/64-scale).

Bottom: Wil Zoetekouw's huge collection of Fordson, Ford and New Holland toys and models contains around 1000 pieces and fills an entire room in his home.

Display of affection

There's a very good reason why Dutchman Wil Zoetekouw has a website called fordtractorcrazy.com. It reflects his incredible enthusiasm for the Fordson and Ford tractor brands, not to mention other associated companies, but just as importantly acts as a useful database for his breath-taking themed collection of scale farm models. And it looks every bit as good in the flesh as it does online, as David Pullen discovered during a recent visit.

THE FIRST FARM TOYS Wil Zoetekouw remembers playing with as a child were his brother's Britains Ford 5000 and 6600 tractors. However, after visiting the Landbouwminiaturen Club Nederland's (LCN) annual farm model show, which was held at the time at Wageningen in Holland, a short distance from his home, he progressed from being an enthusiastic carpet farmer to a full-blown collector at the tender age of eight.

One of the first models Wil bought as a collector was the yellow Autoway version of Britains' four-wheel drive Ford 7710, simply because it was similar to the Ford 6710 his father was using at home on the family farm. Initially, he collected toy and model tractors of all types, brands, scales and ages – basically whatever he could find and liked at the time. However, in 2004, after realising he could never realistically afford everything that was on the market, he decided to become more selective and





1: Most European collectors prefer 1/32-scale, but Wil also likes the big blue stuff in 1/16-scale from Ertl and Scale Models. He's got a fine collection of late Ford and New Holland era tractors.

2: New Holland tractors and combines of the late 1990s onwards are well represented, but Wil has recently decided that he's not going to collect models of new tractors produced after about 2011.

3: The earliest model in Wil's collection, a Fordson F tractor made by Arcade in the 1920s, right, with Danbury Mint's much more recent (2000) Fordson F in 1/16-scale. The box in the background contains a Fordson F tractor whisky flask made by Ezra Brooks in the USA in the early 1970s, but the whisky has long gone!

4: These plastic Ford 8600 and 9600 toy tractors were made by the Processed Plastic Company and were only issued in the USA. Wil also has a red version in his collection.

5: Galanite of Sweden and LKE Prods of Denmark both made plastic Ford models in the 1970s, the former producing a 5000 in 1/43-scale and the latter a 6600 in 1/32-scale. These are some of the different colour variations that exist.

6: Wil couldn't find a scale model of the Ford 4000 he learned to drive when he was younger, so he commissioned Dave Purdue of DBP Models to produce this 1/32-scale custom-built item. It is the favourite tractor in his entire collection.

concentrate on just the Ford and New Holland brands and companies that have been associated or merged with them over the years.

This wasn't a hard decision to make and was influenced by Wil's childhood memories of the Ford tractors operated by his father. The Zoetekouw family had a tradition of running blue machines and the first tractor Wil drove was a Ford 4000 at the age of 10. His father has now retired and the farm has been sold, but the family retain a New Holland TL90A. Wil has forged a successful career in the building industry, but he's not severed his links with agriculture completely and breeds pedigree Belgian White Blue cattle with his father.

Some of the farm models that Wil collected before he started to specialise on one theme remain on display at his parent's home, but many have been sold over the last nine years to help fund his burgeoning Ford collection. This now numbers about 1000 pieces and takes up a whole room in his house.

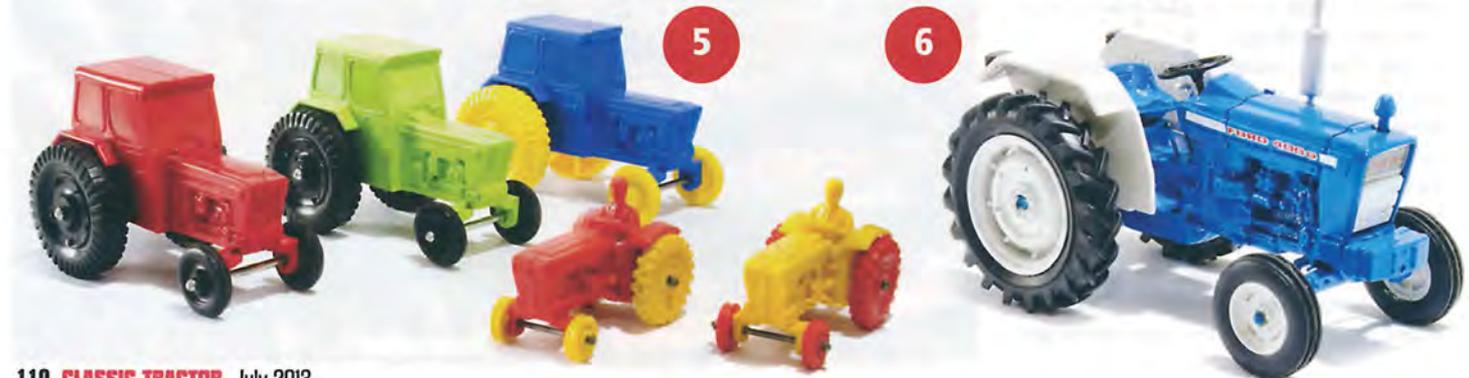
The collection contains a breath-taking array of Fordson, Ford and New Holland tractors in all ages and scales, right up to 1/8th. Wil also collects model tractors from related brands such as Versatile, County and Roadless as well as

New Holland combines, balers and other items of equipment. He even has a model aeroplane with Ford branding.

Wil says it has become increasingly difficult to find shops in Holland that stock farm models so most of his items have been obtained from toy fairs, specialist dealers and the internet. Many have been sourced from the USA – Wil has been over there six times – although due to work commitments he hasn't yet been able to attend the massive National Farm Toy Show that's held every year at Dyersville in Iowa.

More recently he's broadened the scope of his collecting activities to include original sales literature on the agricultural products of Fordson, Ford and New Holland and associated brands. He only began collecting sales literature about four years ago but has already amassed about 2000 brochures on full-size machines. Wil's paper collection is now a very useful resource and has enabled him to gain a better understanding of the history of Ford and its associated companies and what they've produced over the years.

Unlike many collectors Wil regularly displays parts of his



7: Wil also collects New Holland equipment. The very rare plastic New Holland 370 Hayliner baler in the foreground was made by Bourbon in the 1970s and is joined here by SpecCast's Super 66 baler and a tiny 1/64-scale New Holland baler from Ertl.

8: Wil's collection of Fordsons includes RJN Classic's excellent New Performance Super Major, left, and a 1/25-scale Fordson New Major/Power Major by MIW in Hong Kong. The MIW Major is commonly known as Empire Made because of the engraving on the mudguard.

9: The 1/16-scale Versatile 935 that Scale Models made for a New Holland dealer conference at Boston in Massachusetts in 1990 is shown beside the 1/32- and 1/64-scale versions that Ertl produced for Toy Farmer magazine.

10: The full range of Ford 7810 tractors issued by Universal Hobbies including the 25th anniversary Silver Jubilee, second right, and chrome Tractor World Show, far right, limited edition versions.

11: Probably based on a Ford 971 or 981, this 1/12-scale model was built in 1958 by US firm Hubley. It features Select-O-Speed, a working three-point linkage and a three-furrow plough.

12: Gottman Toys, which specialises in producing 1/16-scale models of pulling tractors, commissioned SpecCast to make this limited edition tractor with New Holland styling.

collection at farm model shows. Recently he's staged themed displays of Versatile tractors, New Holland combines and a history of Fordson and Ford tractors, the latter using only models in the larger scale of 1/16th.

So what does the future hold? Well, plenty more of the same, it seems. Wil is currently developing his new website – www.fordtractorcrazy.com – which, in addition to providing him with a helpful database of the models in his own collection, will hopefully prove to be a useful and interesting resource for other like-minded collectors.

When it's complete he's planning to put a copy on a tablet computer and hopes this will reduce the risk of buying doubles in the future. Currently Wil has uploaded pictures of about 700 models from his collection, along with scans of many of his sales brochures. He thinks he has about 300 more models still to add, but uploading these may be delayed as he's currently planning his wedding which takes place during the summer.

Due to the vast number of new farm models that keep appearing Wil has decided that he's no longer going to try and keep pace with the latest releases. He says he's not going to collect the latest New Holland tractors with the numbering system that reflects the tractor's horsepower as he feels other than the decals the miniature versions are identical to their predecessors. Instead he plans to concentrate on tracing the older models that he knows are missing from his collection. Currently Wil has 75 items on his 'wanted' list, but he knows that this list is incomplete and he expects it to grow and not diminish in the future. He accepts he will probably never own an example of every model of a Ford tractor that has been produced, but that's still his ambition and is all part of the fun of farm model collecting.

