

Association Nut Huller

1975	<p>Elwin Foote, a member of the MNGA since 1963, built an unconventional black walnut huller. A farmer and neighbor, Mr. Katz, assisted with the welding and cutting of an old water tank. Inside they installed a shaft that connected to a PTO for a power source. The shaft incorporated paddles that were covered with portions of an old tire. Elwin ran the nut huller for himself and neighbors who wanted to remove the hull from black walnuts for another 5 years before he passed away in 1980. After that his son, David, worked the nut huller for another 6 years until interest or nut production wained.</p>	
1986	<p>David contacted Alan VanAntwerp with an offer to donate the huller to the association for member use. The association accepted the donation and the huller was picked up by Duane Rufenacht. Duane stored the huller for the association.</p>	
2009	<p>Dick Wolthuis told Frank Radosa about the huller when Frank was looking for a way to hull Carpathian walnuts. The huller looked promising, but it looked too powerful for the fragil nut. Frank found another way to removed the husks that proved better for Carpathian nuts.</p>	

2011

At the fall 2011 meeting of the MNGA, hosted by Frank Radosa, members were reacquainted with the association huller. A small group of interested members stood it up and looked it over. Tom Latterner, a new MNGA member at the time and with the help of other members, loaded it into his van with plans to see if it would work. He took it home; made some repairs to damaged parts; hooked it up to his tractor PTO; and found the speed that would hull and not crack black walnuts.

Tom invited members to see a demonstration of the association huller on October 23rd. Dick Wolthuis, Dennis Strahle, and John Hohman attended the demonstration. All were amazed at the design of the huller and the number of nuts that had been put through the machine. The tractor was started and Tom proceeded to hull walnuts at a rate of a bushel in 5 minutes. Pictured from left to right is: Dick Walthuis, Dennis Strahle, John Hohman, and Tom Latterner.

To see the association huller in action, click there to see a [YouTube video](#).

