

# feature



**ROAD TO RECOVERY:** A charity tractor run helped Christine Creasy regain her confidence after beating breast cancer. D04/10/420.

## Christine back on track after disease

**A** LINE of tractors and breast cancer don't usually have anything in common, but for one woman they will be forever linked.

Christine Creasy, of Fressingfield, was diagnosed with breast cancer in February 2003 and, after an operation and radiotherapy, it took a fundraising tractor ride with 50 other women to help her regain her confidence.

Her involvement was accidental, she only heard about it after her husband Ralph was approached for permission for the tractors to cross his land.

Mrs Creasy was keen to take part when she heard about the tractor run, but then changed her mind.

Finally she did sign up and started to get sponsorship. "It really helped me," she said. "It helped me get my confidence again and it was good to give something back."

That something was £16,000, which the 50 women raised and has now been presented to Breast Cancer Awareness, part of Cancer Research UK.

Mrs Creasy, 62, was lucky to spot the signs of her breast cancer quickly, as she had read information on how to detect it.

She diagnosed the symptoms herself as she noticed dimpling on her breast, 21 months after one mammogram and 15



**TO** mark Breast Cancer Awareness month reporter **Kate Dennehy** talked to Christine Creasy, who beat the disease after being diagnosed last year.

months before her next.

She was supported through the treatment by her husband of 40 years Ralph, daughter Angela and son Alan and friends.

She said: "There were bad days – of course there were – but my husband was behind me and everyone was so helpful."

Talking to her you would never guess she had gone through the

ordeal of breast cancer as she is full of life as she tries desperately to get her one-year-old black Labrador Gemma to behave, and shouts at me across the garden not to be scared of the swans.

Looking at photographs of the tractor run in July, she smiles at her 1963 Fordson Dexta, as do all of the women who begged and borrowed the tractors to take them 18 miles across the countryside.

Six of them had also had breast cancer, while most of the others knew someone who had suffered from the disease.

Mrs Creasy said: "I have been horrified by the number of women who do not check themselves, it is vital."

Annie Chapman, of Pulham St Mary, organised the event, which was her husband John's idea.

She said: "I think Christine is amazing, it took a lot of courage for a lot of the women to take part."

Both expressed their thanks to those who took part and helped and those who supported the event and gave sponsorship money.

### factfile

■ **OCTOBER** is Breast Cancer Awareness month and women have been holding hold pink parties and other events to raise cash for the charity. Many have been wearing the distinctive pink ribbon, available from many shops, to support the charity.

Here are some reasons why:

■ **ONE** in nine UK women will develop breast cancer.

■ **EACH** year 38,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer.

■ **IT** is the second most common cancer death in women after lung cancer.

■ **IT** claims more years from women under 65 than coronary heart disease.

■ **IF** you are concerned about any issues relating to breast cancer please contact your GP.