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THE ROVERS NORTH NEWS

Series I, II, III Official Land Rover Parts Distributor for the United States and Canada

"All the news that's fit for Mud!"

It Takes a Land Rover

By Jeffrey Aronson

[The Rev's. Lou and Joan Mattia are missionary priests for the Episcopal Church in central Tanzania, in the Diocese of Mpwapwa. They are Directors of a Christian Training Center in a remote mountain valley 10 km outside the small town of Mpwapwa. Thanks to Gene Page, Micanopy, FL, for alerting us to this story of making a difference - with the help of a Land Rover - ed]

Twenty years ago, civil engineer Lou Mattia, and his wife, Joan, lived in Fairfax, VA, fairly certain of the course of their lives. A young seminary student from Uganda had become active in their local Episcopal



Church and had asked congregants to help him establish his ministry upon his graduation from seminary. The following year, the Mattias joined a group visiting Uganda; the tail end of the Idi Amin regime was a dangerous and unpleasant time to enter Uganda, but the Mattias were moved by the experience and returned the following year. In an interview

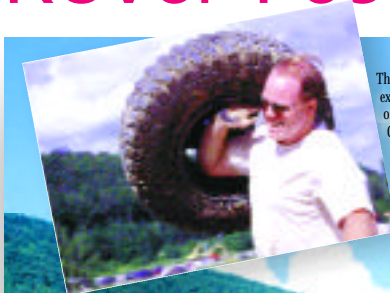


in September '99 in the Gainesville [FL] Sun, Lou Mattia recounted how "we learned it's a very rich culture. The people there were extremely warm and embracing." In 1985, the Mattias both enrolled in Virginia Theological Seminary and were ordained in 1988. They served in



Virginia and moved to Gainesville in 1991. In January 2000, they made another move - this time to Mpwapwa in central Tanzania to help establish a seminary. Before they departed, they spoke in supporting churches from Florida to Pennsylvania "in hopes of raising the money to buy" Continued on page 14.

Rover Fest at Killington!



That's not a Firestone exchange - it's part of the "Muddy Oval Challenge". Tires mounted on wheels call on muscle power as well as willpower.



RoverFest was a family affair... as the Bogg's Family will attest



By Jeff Aronson

It took months of planning and a lot of hard work, but RoverFest 2000, held August 19-20, in Killington, VT, came off spectacularly. The event attracted 170 vehicles and hundreds of enthusiasts from as far away as Madison, WI, and Norfolk, VA.

My trip started less spectacularly. Unable to leave early Friday morning as planned for the 7 hour drive, I joined several thousand vacationers

and commuters on Rte. 1 and the Maine Turnpike on a sunny Friday afternoon. There may be worse ways to travel in a Series IIA than clogged highway travel, but I haven't learned them yet. As I crossed into southern Maine and New Hampshire, I battled with thousands more vacationers and commuters. Finally, the traffic eased in western New Hampshire and southern Vermont. I managed to get within 20 miles of Killington before the rain began and I had to put the top back on the QE I. By the time the

extra traffic and the weather delays had stretched the time for the trip, the sun had set and the darkness on this moonless night had become complete. That enabled me to miss the signs for the event and drive some additional distance before I realized I had gone too far.

The Killington Resort sprawls over an area about the size of Rhode Island and encompasses several ski mountains. Finding the "Grand Hotel" on a dark road in a dark night Continued on page 14.

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Ask Rovers North

No Automatic Manual

Q. I recently purchased a 1996 Discovery. I love the vehicle but the dealership did not have the Owner's Manual. Do you know where I can find one?

A. Land Rover only produces Owner's Manuals for approximately two years after the vehicle production run. My suggestion would be to look in Hemmings Motor News for businesses that specialize in used automotive publications.

Thank you.
Dave Sangerhausen, Ext. 229



Long FC 101 crank handle used to help illustrate correct hand grip & rotation in a clockwise motion. Series handle will be shorter.

Smartly Handled

Q. I did not realize I could hand crank the engine in my Series IIA. I have heard that this can be dangerous, so I have yet to try it. Do you have any suggestions before I give it whirl?

A. Hand cranking can be dangerous if you are not paying attention to the proper procedure. Many people have received a broken hand or a thumb from improper hand cranking. Most people make the mistake of starting to hand crank with the handle in the 12 o'clock position and placing the handle between the webbing of the thumb and forefinger. Hand cranking in this manner is the worst thing you could do. If the engine misfires, (which is common during hand cranking) the full force of the misfire will kick back on the crank handle, and subsequently against the person's hand.

If you would like to give it a go, this is what I would suggest.

Ensure the ignition is **OFF**, the gearbox is in neutral, and the transmission brake is set. Install the hand crank and rotate the crankshaft until the hand crank handle is in the six o'clock position and there is engine compression resistance against the handle. Set the engine controls. For example, if you normally have to use the choke, set the choke to the proper position. Turn the ignition **ON**. Grasp the crank handle while keeping the handle out of the webbing between your thumb and forefinger. Quickly pull upward on the handle. Repeat the above steps until the engine starts.

Thank you.
Dave Sangerhausen, Ext. 229

In The Clutches Of Corrosion

Q. I recently inherited a Series IIA 88" Land Rover. It has been sitting for 10 years and I'm trying to get it on the road. I was able to get it started, but I am unable to put it in gear. No matter what gear I try they all grind. Is the clutch or maybe the slave or master cylinder not working?

A. It sounds to me as though the clutch is stuck to the flywheel. This is a common occurrence in vehicles that sit for a while and would also explain the gear-grinding problem. If you have an open area in which to drive the vehicle, you can try to break it free by starting the vehicle with the transmission in 4th gear. With the engine off, place the gearbox in 4th gear, depress the clutch, and then start the engine. Keep in mind that once the engine starts, the vehicle will begin to drive off, so make sure you have plenty of room in front prior to starting.

The clutch will usually free up on the first attempt. If not, try it a few more times always keeping the clutch depressed. With the clutch depressed, the load of the pressure plate is taken off the clutch and the only thing holding the clutch and flywheel together will be the built up corrosion. The torque from the engine should be enough to break the corrosion bond of the two components.

Thank you.
Dave Sangerhausen, Ext. 229

A Likely List

Q. I purchased and installed new leaf springs about a year and half ago. Since that time I have finished the restoration and have noticed that the vehicle has started to lean to the left when viewed from the rear. I'm a bit troubled by this since the springs are brand new and the vehicle has never been driven. Are the springs defective, or did I do something wrong?

A. One of the worst things a Series Rover can experience is extended times sitting idle. This leaning problem is common on vehicles (with old or new springs) that are not driven on a regular basis. Most of the time the problem can be corrected by swapping the springs from left to right. However, the best fix is to install a new set of springs once you are ready to regularly drive the vehicle.

Thank you.
Dave Sangerhausen, Ext. 229

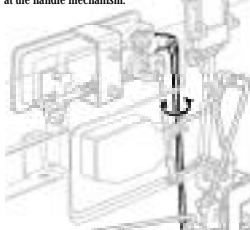
Too Latched

Q. I own a 1994 Range Rover LWB. Sometimes, when I try to open the driver's door, I have to pull the handle all the way out before the door unlatches.

At other times I have to work the handle in out before the door will unlatch. Is there a simple solution to this problem or is the latch mechanism wore out?

A. Most of the time we find that the problem lies with the rod connected between the handle and latch. This rod is a turn-buckle-type and can be adjusted. In this case the rod needs to be shortened. If you remove the

Looking from inside a Range Rover door at the handle mechanism.



interior door panel you can see the rod running between the two mechanisms. Disconnect the rod, shorten it a few turns, reinstall it, and check operation. If the latch/handle is still difficult, repeat the procedure until operation is to your satisfaction.

Thank you.
Dave Sangerhausen, Ext. 229

Weights And Measures

Q. I own a 1997 Defender Station Wagon and am interested in towing a trailer. The trailer does not have brakes and weighs 2,000 lbs. According to the Owner's Manual the maximum allowable weight I can tow using a trailer of this type is 1,650 lbs. This seems awfully light to me. After all, the unladen curb weight of the Defender is almost 4,000 lbs. Do you know if these statistics are correct, or if there is anything I can do to increase the towing capacity?

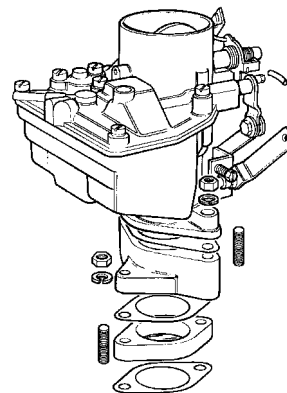
A. I was able to verify the same towing statistics that you provided. Therefore, we can assume they are correct. There is nothing I can recommend to increase the vehicle's towing capacity to accommodate the trailer you wish to pull. You may want to move up to a trailer with brakes. This would increase your capability to 3,500 in the High transfer range.

Based on my experience here at Rovers North, this type of question is very common among various Land Rover owners. While Land Rovers are indeed heavy and have plenty of pulling power; many other factors have to be taken into consideration when it comes to pulling a trailer. The first is stopping ability. What I am reminded of here are the strongman contests where you see a person pulling a freight train engine by a rope clenched in their teeth. Sure the person is able to get the engine to roll, but are they able to stop it? Similarly, you may be able to pull a much heavier rolling weight than that of your Rover, but is your Rover capable of stopping the weight/momentum within a reasonable distance. This is especially true if you are driving a Series Rover or a U.S. spec. 110 which has drum rear brakes. Also, there are vehicle-handling characteristics that are effected when a trailer is attached. Vehicle weight transfer is changed during acceleration or braking when up to 350 lbs. of trailer tongue weight is pressing down on the rear of the vehicle. In addition, cornering, even on long steady highway-type curves can be dramatically changed.

Thank you.
Dave Sangerhausen, Ext. 229

Tech Tips - Zenith Carburetor Woes

By Mike Searfoss



We often get calls from Series Rover owners with Zenith carburetors. They came standard on later Series IIAs and Series IIIs, but over time have appeared on a number of different model Rovers. You will find the Zenith name stamped on the bottom mixing bowl, when viewed from the left fender.

The symptoms include a sputtering car, or the need to pull the choke out in order to get the car to idle. Adjusting the mixture screw seems to make no difference in the way the engine runs; resetting the timing doesn't help either. Don't be discouraged - this is an easy fix that can be resolved in about an hour using a piece of glass some fine grit wet/dry sandpaper, and penetrating oil.

The problem arises over time as the carburetor's float chamber can take on a warpage from engine heat. This warpage exacerbates a problem with milling defects. What results is an incomplete seal and an air leak, disrupting the air-fuel mixture into the carburetor. Here are the parts you'll need and the steps to rectify this problem.

Tools and Parts:

- 12" x 12" sheet of strong glass
 - 3 sheets of wet/dry sandpaper 160-180 gm.
 - 1 can penetrating oil
 - 1 ea. carburetor rebuild kit # 605093
 - 1 ea. small pick (for removing cotter pins)
 - 1 ea. small screwdriver (flat head)
 - 1 ea. 7/16ths box end wrench
 - 1 ea. can brake cleaning spray (it dries and cleans better than carburetor cleaner)
 - 1 ea. 6in ruler with millimeter designations
- First, remove the carburetor. Drain the remaining gas into a container (not on the grass) and remove the cotter pins (two each) from the linkage. Disconnect the spring from the top housing. Now separate the top of the carb from the bottom by removing the four screws. Now, flip the top over and separate the emulsion block from the top

continued on page 3



cover. To do this, remove the float, the two screws, and the needle (float) guide. You will also have to remove the throttle linkage by removing the nut and the c-clip, and pulling the throttle linkage out of the top. The last piece you have to remove is the accelerator diaphragm making sure not to loose the small spring. This is located on top of the top cover and is held with three small screws.

Now that you have the carb disassembled you are ready to "lap" all three mating surfaces. This is where you will need the piece of glass, penetrating oil and sandpaper. With the sandpaper on the glass spray the sandpaper with the penetrating oil. Now take one of the carb plates making the mating surface down, and sand them in a circular motion. Do this until the surface is flat and free of any warpage and/or milling marks. You will know when you have achieved this when surfaces are all shiny from your efforts, rather than a combination of shiny and dull. All three pieces should be sanded in the same manner. Once finished, spray each piece with the brake clean, making sure that none of the jets or airports are plugged.

Once the pieces have dried it will be time to reassemble the carb. First, attach the emulsion block to the top cover, (making sure the gasket is installed correctly) install the float, and set the float level to 32mm. Now you can assemble the top and bottom halves, hook up the linkages and reinstall the accelerator diaphragm. Then, install the throttle linkage. Once the carb is installed, prime the fuel pump and start the vehicle. With the engine running, set the idle so the mixture can be adjusted. Turn the mixture screw in (clockwise) until the engine starts to stumble. Once this happens, turn the mixture screw out (counter clockwise) until you reach max RPM. Now you can set your timing and readjust the idle. Congratulations! You have completed a carb rehabilitation that will make your vehicle perform properly.

Tech Tips -

Eliminating Stalling - Air Gap and Base Idle Settings on the Land Rover EFI V8

By Mike Searfoss

We receive many calls each week from shops and owners complaining that the vehicle idle is not steady and/or it stalls when coming to a stop. This can even occur when they have completed a basic tune up. Often, we will ask about "setting the air-gap" and "setting the base idle?" If these are unfamiliar steps to you, they may be the root of your problems.

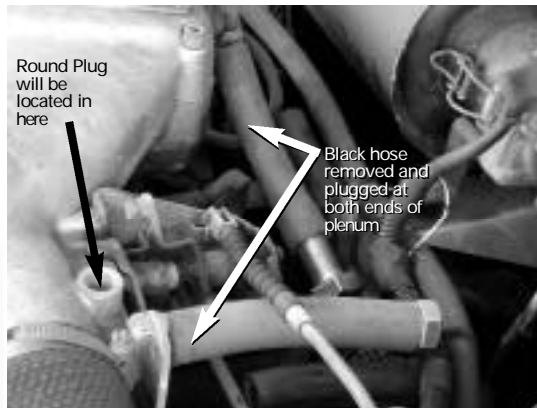


Distributor with dust cap removed and feeler gauge inserted

Air Gap

These two steps are as important as changing the spark plugs. To set the air gap you will have to remove the distributor cap, rotor arm, and the dust cover by removing three screws. (Be careful not to drop the dust cover screws, they are real

small and you won't be able to find them.) Set your feeler gauge, **which must be non-magnetic** (most people use brass or plastic), to .010. On the distributor shaft you will notice what looks like a wagon wheel. Turn the engine by hand until one of the wagon wheel spokes aligns with the eye of the pick-up mounted to the distributor base plate. Insert the feeler gauge. Does it feel loose? If yes, loosen the two screws holding the pick-up and adjust the gap to .010. Once the proper gap is achieved, tighten the pick-up screws and reassemble the distributor.



Base Idle Step #1

First, at the top of the throttle body you will notice a small round plug. If it's not already removed, you will need to drill a small hole in the center of the plug. Once the hole is drilled, insert a small self-tapping screw into the hole. Using a pair of needle-nose pliers between the screw head and the plug, pry the plug out of the

throttle body. With the plug removed you will notice an Allen head screw, whose adjustment you will tackle after step #2.

Step #2

Find the black hose connected between the side of the throttle housing and the rear of the plenum. Disconnect this hose and plug both ports. While you have the hose off the plenum chamber, spray a little brake or carb cleaner into the plenum and with a brush, scrub out any carbon that might have accumulated in the chambers.

Step #3

Start the engine, and with the proper Allen wrench adjust the idle RPM by turning the screw clockwise to decrease RPM or counter clockwise to increase RPM. The base idle should be set at 525 +/- 25 rev/min. Once this is done, turn the engine off, unplug the ports and

reinstall the hose. Now you should set your timing to 6 +/- 1 Before Top Dead Center.

The car should now idle smoothly at rest and run cleanly when coming to a stop. If you have additional questions or problems, call Rovers North at any time.

Thank you,
Mike Searfoss, ext 225

Employee Profile

Arthur Patsouris

When you hear Arthur Patsouris explain it, the distance between classical humanities, archaeology, family restaurants and Land Rovers is not that far at all.

Rovers North's newest staff member, Arthur Patsouris, grew up in Norwich, CT. If you're of a certain age in that area, you might well have dined at Dino's - and it's likely that Arthur, or someone in his family prepared your meal or served you. Arthur graduated from George Washington University in Washington, DC, with a degree in classical humanities and a concentration in archaeology.

He returned to Norwich and for 21 years ran the family restaurant - an eon in the restaurant industry. His interests in the classics extended to his automobiles; a succession of old Jaguar sedans and MG Midgets followed.

Arthur's interest in Land Rovers began when he would see them as a college student in Washington. When he returned to Connecticut, he regularly attended the British By The Sea auto event; "I would catch the show and see Rovers show up. "A friend who worked as a farrier had a

109" diesel used for his work, and we struck up a conversation at a Norwich shop. That's when I really began to search one out."



Finally, in 1989, Arthur purchased his first Rover, a '69 late Series IIA Bugeye. As Arthur remembers, "the car had sat on the lot of a dealer who once sold Land Rovers. He always had few on the lot and a friend suggested that I might look at it. It had a snow plow on the front, and not much else to recommend it, but I bought it on the spot. That started my association with Rovers North, too. I bought mine on the spot - and learned the hard way what Rovers were all about!"

In 1996, Arthur sold that Land Rover to enable him to bring over a 109" pickup tow truck from England. As someone who "loves the utility and the adaptability of Land Rovers, Arthur is now installing a Mercedes Benz 5-cylinder diesel ["it was given to me, free!] engine. A German manufacturer has a conversion kit that will permit me to use the standard Land Rover transmission. I had to source the flywheel, which came from a G Wagen distributor." His goal is to have it

completed for the ROAV Mid-Atlantic Rally in Virginia in early October.

Although Arthur admits that he's "not much for originality on British cars," he notes that as a Rovers North customer for over 15 years "I've gone the initial price shopping direction, but in the long run, you can't beat the Genuine Part route. "It's refreshing to see a company so dedicated to maintaining quality. In the food service, you'd see the impact of lower quality immediately - and so did your customers. It's terrific to work with Genuine Parts."

As a Series owner, Arthur said "the learning curve of the new products has been a challenge, but I had worked on a friend's '91 Range Rover Classic over the years and had come to see many similarities in engineering concepts with Land Rovers. Initially, I had shied away from the ECU-based generation of drivetrains, but that's quickly been eased as I learn more about the vehicles."

Arthur lives in St. Albans, VT, with his wife Deanna, and young children Dino and Alexa.



The Long, Long and Winding Road

By Eric Evans

[Correspondent Eric Evans, Naples, FL, has worked in the theme park, live event and television industries. When he began with Landscape Florida, a full-service, outdoor landscaping business, he left the warmth of Florida in February, 2000, to purchase an ex-MoD 109" from Rovers North -ed.]

6:00am, Naples, FL: A balmy southwest Florida fog hovered low as I brought my car to a stop below one of an endless line of parking lot lights. I could smell the thick musk of the nearby wetlands mixed with the stinging scent of jet fuel, as I



looked back to see light breaking through the palm trees and illuminating my solitary vehicle. I lumbered down the jet way, boarded my flight and left on schedule.

Destination - Vermont.

Shortly after take-off, I reached into the seat back in front of me to examine the airlines' route map. It was the first time I had considered, visually, the great distance I would have to travel to return home. This would also be the first indication of what lay ahead.

My body could sense the bitter cold just by looking out my 737's window at the crisp, white landscape as it approached Burlington International Airport. There was snow everywhere - on the ground, on the trees and increasingly in the air. I hadn't seen this since I lived and worked in Alaska.

The cab ride to Rovers North lasted about 25 minutes and my driver, an elderly life-long resident, made the short trip a pleasure. Most helpful were her hints on which local roads to use at the start of my journey, heading south. We were so preoccupied by conversation that we drove right past my Westford destination - Rovers North. I can pick out the front wing of a Series truck on an Outback Steakhouse commercial, but I drove right passed an entire field of Land Rovers without seeing a one? Go figure - perhaps my vision was affected by the cold.

Upon arrival, I was greeted by a handful of happy dogs that helped me find my way to Mark Letorney. He showed me around the shop, parts warehouse and garage and we eventually wound up in his office. When all the necessary paperwork was complete, Mark presented me with the military release papers, an original military issue workshop manual and the keys to my 1966 Ex MoD 109". The last time I recall being that excited was when I got the keys to my D90 a few years back.

We headed downstairs to the garage (I could have spent days in that garage) for a quick, Rovers North introduction to my new truck.

Having never driven a Series truck, my lesson would be a long one. Mark went through all the features and functions (yeah, it's a long list to a D90 owner) of my apparently pristine specimen. According to Land Rover records, she came off the assembly line on May 24, 1965 and since that time had only accumulated 37,227 miles. Rovers North made a few changes for me, including: seat belts, reverse lamp, new seats, an 8:1 head, new carburetor, new ignition and a cab top. After taking me down to the corner gas station for a complimentary fill-up, Mark snapped a quick photo for me and I began my long trek home.

The second sign of what I was in store for occurred within minutes of leaving Rovers North. I had followed my new friend, the cab driver's, advice on the shortest route to the interstate and had just reached maximum speed. I was fiddling with the dual electric windshield wipers when I suddenly found myself being overtaken by an entire "wide load" convoy of manufactured homes! This was going to take some getting used to.

Progress was most certainly not the name of the game that first day. Snow, darkness and a neophyte driver made sure of that. I made it as far as White River Junction, VT [only 110 miles - ed.] and decided to play it safe and get some sleep - of which I needed much of after lugging my full length hoop set and canvas top up three flights of stairs to my hotel room.

The following morning I woke to the sound of a tourist bus loading up with kids, presumably on a ski trip. As the bus pulled out of the way, I got my first aerial view of the new beast. A short while later, I braved the frigid temperature, expecting trouble. To my amazement the engine turned over and was running before I could get my hand off the starter button. What a machine! However, I was so cold I feared the day's drive and couldn't wait to arrive to a more moderate climate.

I made my way south past Brattleboro, Springfield and Hartford and eventually wound up in Darien, CT. Having graduated from Darien High School and not having returned since leaving for college, I decided to make a quick stop. Talk about deja vu - nothing had changed, not in 13 years. After a quick lunch at an old hangout, I headed out for my next big challenge - The mean streets of New York City.

As I made my way out of Connecticut and entered the outer realm of the Big Apple, I realized that something else had remained the same for the last 13 years. Everything was under construction! Friendly New Yorkers pointed and laughed as they passed me on the Cross Bronx Expressway. I guess sight of a tourist bouncing around violently and swearing at every pothole was amusing to them. I got a beautiful shot of the city from the George Washington Bridge and then disappeared into the vast expanse of the New Jersey Turnpike. Actually, the Turnpike was one of the more peaceful parts of my trip - its well maintained and recently paved!

I spent the evening of my second day somewhere in Maryland. This is the portion of my journey that sort of becomes a blur. For the next two full days I made my way down the East Coast. I passed through Washington, D.C. thinking "boy,

wouldn't it be nice to get a shot of the MoD in front of the Washington Monument or the White House." I then considered the possible security response to a camouflaged military truck in front of Bill's house and decided to continue on. Besides, it would have taken a half a day out of my "schedule." I was battered by freezing rain in two consecutive states and was nearly crushed by several 18-wheelers who didn't notice that I was only doing 50mph until they were right on top of me. I am not proud of this, but at one point I actually considered calling it quits and climbing aboard the "Auto Train" in Virginia. Charleston, SC was a welcome sight. My back was aching from the bouncing around, my neck cracking was every time I turned my head and my legs had been asleep for so long I forgot they were there. One of my best friends from my career with Disney World now lives in Charleston and I jumped at the opportunity to spend a night on the town with him (we took his car.) I had traveled for four days and made it from Burlington, VT to Charleston, SC. Having felt that I had indeed made significant progress, I decided to look at the map. Mistake. Take a look at the east coast on a map. I was beyond my halfway point, but not far beyond it, not for four days of traveling. I was now depressed.

The next evening I faced the anti-climactic moment of the trip. I passed through the brief section of I-95 that cuts across Georgia and hit the Florida State Line. First came the "yes, I'm in Florida, finally", followed by the "but I live as far south in the state as you can go and its on the opposite coast." Yes, arriving in Florida was a good thing, but I still had a long 12 hours of driving to go. I decided to get the "other coast" issue out of the way first and at the same time avoid the traffic nightmare that is Orlando. Just outside of Jacksonville, I cut across I-10 to I-75 and turned south. The temperature was much more agreeable than where we had started this drive and the MoD was still running beautifully. I ended up my marathon fifth day in Ocala, just north of Tampa.

I woke up the next morning excited, ready to get home. I found myself counting the exit numbers from the 60s to the 50s and slowly down to my exit - 16. The last three exits were the longest part of the entire drive. I wanted to scream "just get there already!" When I finally stopped and parked at home I fell out of the truck, sat on the curb and stared, contemplating my feat. Six days of driving at 50 mph in a 34 year-old military

Land Rover. Wow. Hoochie, as she is now called, has never returned to the interstate. She is driven almost daily around town and has spent several thrilling days in the Florida Everglades mudding and swimming. It has run flawlessly since its purchase.

I want to extend a special thanks to Rovers North and to all those who offered

assistance along the way. Could you do it? Absolutely, but only in a Land Rover!

1672.7 miles in a 34 year old Ex-MoD Land Rover 109!



Map background ©2000 Rand McNally



ATTENTION ex-MoD owners!

Any Rovers North Military 109 owners [with the heater control between the seats] that have purchased an ex-MoD vehicle from us, please note: we now have laminated dash graphics available free of charge, illustrating the correct operation of your heater. Please notify us if you would like one of these and we will ship it to you free.



Shifting Gears

By Scott Preston

[Scott Preston, Yarmouthport, MA, has been a Land Rover enthusiast for many years; his most recent Land Rover is a Series IIA on a Designa coil spring chassis. But just when his wife, Elly, was due to deliver their first child, Harrison, had to shift gears in a hurry. Read on -ed].

The Sunday before my wife, Elly, was due at the hospital, my gearbox decided to bite the dust. I begged Chris Laws, the owner of Badger Engineering, a Land Rover interior shop in S. Dennis, MA, to let me



use his shop and keep out of the weather. I figured that as I had just completed building the whole truck a year ago and it had a removable cross member... so no big deal, right?? Well,

when that started to go downhill fast. I found out that when you galvanize a new chassis, you bolt the removable crossmember in place so the frame doesn't twist from the heat. However, you don't necessarily clean off the bolts that hold the crossmember on afterward. So, they are just about impossible

to get off by hand or without an impact wrench. After spending a whole hour prying off one bolt, I quickly decided to remove the gearbox the old fashion way and pulled out the seats and seat box.

On the other hand, all the bolts being new meant everything came apart quickly. I disconnected the header down pipe, the driveshafts, disconnect the speedometer cable and pulled out the overdrive. I used the shop engine hoist and quickly got the gearbox out of the truck and on the bench where the real fun started. Did I mention that I have never pulled apart a gearbox before?

A few friends gave me some ideas of what the problem might be and they were right. I had broke the 2nd and 3rd synchro-mesh units and the spring clip on the mainshaft, sheared the locating pins on the end of the shaft and broken the bronze sleeve into two pieces. In addition to replacing all the broken bits, I decided to replace all the seal, gaskets, and bearings in the gearbox and transfer case.

I called Mike at Rovers North and he helped me identify all the parts I needed as well as some I didn't know I needed. Peter Janney, a Land Rover enthusiast and Bay State Rover Owners Association



officer, gave me reassuring advice that the gear box only goes together one way and to stand it upright in a bucket while disassembling and reassembling it. This small tip made a huge difference with aligning all the gears. I also used a cardboard box to label the mainshaft and layshaft so I didn't confuse them.

Once I got the parts in, my biggest problem was setting the float on the mainshaft. The new bronze sleeve was very tight and I had to drift it on and off with a rubber mallet every time. I tried to reuse the mainshaft in the beginning because the only problem with it was that the pins had been sheared off. Forget it!!! I couldn't get those pins out to save my life. The new ones even had to be drifted in!!! I now own a very expensive clutch alignment tool.

Setting the float was pretty straight forward in the shop manual except that I had to buy a \$100.00 worth of extra shim washers and whack on and off the bronze sleeve with the



mal-

let. What a sight!

Changing the bearings at the end of the gearbox wasn't easy either. Those snap ring clips are huge and getting them in and out was a bear! Once the bearings were replaced and the float set, and I stood the gearbox case on end in a big bucket and dropped everything in. It really did only go together one way! Thank God!!!

I torqued everything down and did the ever-amusing "shifter fork dance." I have taken the forks in and out a few times and it just never gets easy. Once again, I got the engine hoist out, and with a hand from Denis Nault, lined up the transmission with the engine. I bolted in the driveshafts, exhaust, and seat box, and took it for a ride around the parking lot to see if it worked. Thankfully it was all good.

All told, it took 34 hrs from the time I started to disassemble the Rover until I drove it home. I don't think it was too bad considering I never took apart a transmission before. Not to mention that while I was working on the Rover every time I heard the telephone ring I thought that Elly was calling me to say that it was time to go to the hospital. Now that's pressure!

In honor of the gearbox replacement, and my son's birth, I bought him a tiny Land Rover cap as his first article of clothing. It shouldn't take him too long to learn the shift pattern on a IIA. Now, Elly and I have to learn to shift gears and become parents! 🍀

[Dana Ferenc, Atlantic Beach, FL, attended her first-ever off road event in Maine during June, 2000. Her impressions of 4x4 vehicles had been tainted by her boyfriend's endless problems with a mid-'80's Jeep Wagoneer, so we hoped that this Downeast Land Rover Club event would convince her of the delights of off-roading. Here are her first impressions -ed.]

I'm hooked!

For the first time I have experienced the capabilities of Land Rovers off road and met a few Land Rover enthusiasts. On June 24, 2000 the Downeast Land Rover Club held a club gathering on 269 acres of land in central Maine that included off-roading, rock climbing and a hilltop barbecue at the end of the day. As many of you may have deduced, I am new to the idea of off-roading and, for that matter, the idea of Land Rovers. Jeffrey Aronson, the editor of the Rovers North News, and I had worked together on other projects and I had listened to him prattle on endlessly about Land Rovers. To shut him up, I finally accepted his invitation to experience Land Rover's and write about my first impressions of off-roading.

Rule #1 - Listen to your Wife

The day began with Jeff introducing me to various club members and their vehicles. Talk about overwhelmed with information. Everything seemed to

in one ear and out the other. Jeff was telling me about the different engines, suspension and all those things that this chick knew nothing about. I met the club president and founder, John Cassidy, who also served as one of the marshals for the event. John drove his wife's 98 Discovery but because "the car's for sale and my wife told me not to scratch or dent it up", he took it only on the afternoon greenlane run.



Mike Smith's Warren, ME, engages the air lockers on a Defender 90 to scramble up a rockstrewn stream bed at the DELRC Fall Meeting

Rule #2- Don't Choose Favorites!

At 10:00 a.m. it was time to pull out and test the vehicles and driving skills on an extreme course. Before we left I was encouraged to ride in different

Rovers and see what each one had to offer. Ed Bear, an avid Land Rover enthusiast and owner, challenged me to choose my favorite vehicle at the end of the day. I had a feeling that I had no right to judge the vehicles since I really would have no idea what I was talking about. At the end of the day I did come to the realization that all the vehicles have special characteristics that made them unique in their own way and those unique characteristics include the drivers [see Rule #1 above].

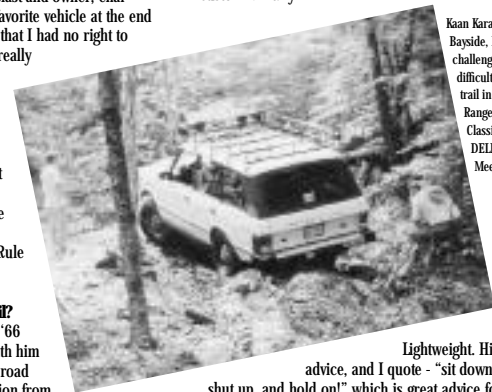
Rule #3- Where's the Trail?

I rode first with Jeff in his '66 Series IIA. I had ridden with him before but never in an off-road situation. My first impression from Jeff's Rover is that both driver and Rover are die-hards at keeping things original - no special amenities like clean seats without duct tape, carefully-packed containers of off-road necessities, or a winch. My second impression was that this miserable road we were traveling must also be part of the off-road trail. I quickly discovered that this was a foolish question because we were just on the road out to the starting point.

Six Range Rovers, Defenders and Land Rovers took the extreme trail. I had enough of Jeff's Series Rover early on, so I jumped in with Mike Smith, the founder of East Coast Rover, who was driving Ed

Bear's heavily-optioned Defender 90. I asked Mike why there were not many women drivers. Mike said that he thought many times women may have a sense of intimidation of off-roading because of the large number of men in the sport; "it is surprising because as an off-road instructor many times women were better drivers because of their lack of preconceptions about what off-roading is about."

Next, I rode with Ed Bear, Stratton, ME, in his custom Military



Kaan Karakaplan, Bayside, NY, challenges a difficult rock trail in his Range Rover Classic at the DELRC Fall Meeting

advice, and I quote - "sit down, shut up, and hold on!" which is great advice for an inexperienced off-roader like myself. I did have a hard time with the "shut up" part. Ed's Rover is highly modified [Range Rover 3.5, coil spring chassis conversion, front/rear lockers and winches, sill protectors -ed.] and looks as if it can go anywhere. Indeed, as the trail progressed to a 250-300 ft. rock climb, it did go anywhere.

Now I jumped into the highly-modified [300 Tdi, 5-speed, full time four wheel drive, coil sprung frame, front/rear lockers, winch, custom rollbar] '71 Series IIA of Chris Komar, an off-road enthusiast, Land Rover Experience instructor, and a mechanic with East Coast continued on page 13.



Restoration of King William

By David Pound

[David Pound, Stowe, VT, loves his Defender 90 as much as his family, but something was missing in his life. He began the restoration of a Series II last year and chronicled his efforts in the Rovers North News. An expatriate and graphics designer, David continues the story of his RHD '59 Series II '88 named "William" ed.]

WLM 945, the name on his registration plate, now lies in piles all over my basement floor, totally stripped from its rusty chassis. Business commitments and home improvement responsibilities, such as painting the house (whoever invented the Wagner power painter should be given a medal), have slowed the progress on my Series II. However, I did manage to complete all necessary repairs on that major headache of rot and wear - the bulkhead.

The bulkhead of WLM 945 was in bad shape; both footwells were rusted-through and many holes were either drilled or sawn through the metal in



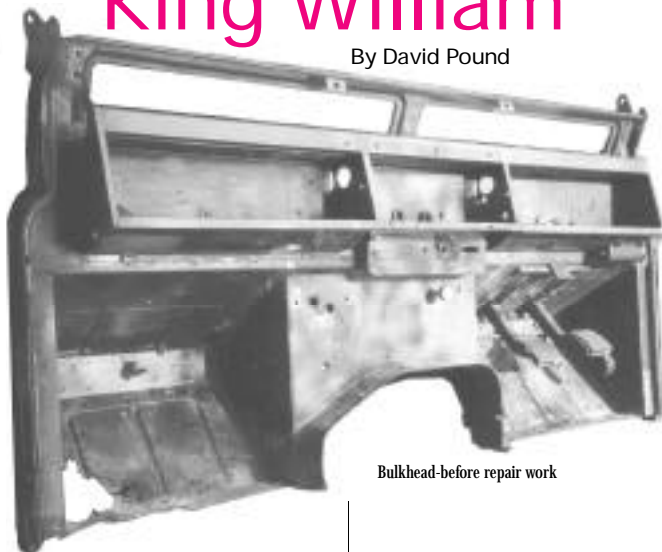
Typical rusted-out hole in the footwell.

order to accommodate later additions. For strength and safety, the bulkhead must be strong and secure. As with the frame, it's one of the few steel pieces in the Rover assembly, so corrosion can, and often does, rear its ugly head.

Removing the bulkhead turned out to be easier than I had originally feared, owing to the fact that it was secured in only four places: on each bottom side, one large bolt connected the chassis outrigger to the bulkhead, and on the tunnel side of the footwells connections were made to a bracket which attaches to the chassis. Along with the above items, the steering mechanism and wiring all had to be removed. I left the pedal assembly in place at first and disassembled them once the whole bulkhead was out of the vehicle. When you are ready to remove the bulkhead make sure you have help as this item is not only heavy, but awkward to maneuver around the chassis.

Once removed, I disassembled all items that were connected to the bulkhead, such as pedals, instrument panel and umpteen seemingly unnecessary bolts. The naked bulkhead was then loaded in my D90 and taken to Rovers North where Mark Letorney gave it the "once over" and suggested the various parts that were needed to restore it. In my case, I needed two new toe boards (RNF003 and RNF002) and two new door posts.

I used the 18 3/4" posts (CHAS 17 and CHAS 18),



Bulkhead-before repair work

since my bulkhead door posts were only rusted at the bottom [Rovers North does supply 25" door posts if required]. Other bulkhead pieces, such as kick panels and center tunnel sections, did not need replacement on this Series II, but fortunately Land Rover still manufactures, and Rovers North carries, those items. The quality of toe boards and door posts were immediately apparent; with the toe boards being galvanized, I should not have to fear corrosion for a long time.

I decided to have the bulkhead sandblasted so that all the parts could be welded on a clean surface. It was also a good way of getting rid of decades of surface rust and grease. Once sandblasted it was on to the most challenging part of the bulkhead repair, that is, to make sure all unnecessary holes were marked to be filled at the welding stage. I had to do



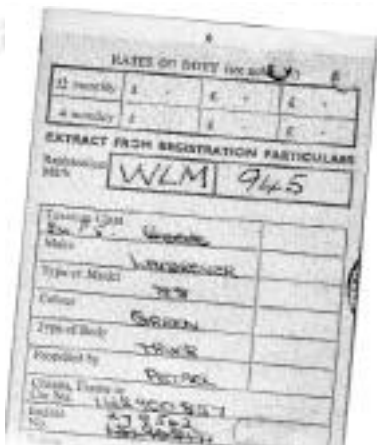
Bulkhead-after repair work

a lot of research of old factory photos, and examine other Series II's, to make sure I was filling the correct holes. An aftermarket heater had been installed so additional holes had been drilled close to the original Smith heater holes. Also, large 2 1/2" holes were made through the shelf metal in order to accommodate the wider hoses of this

neater. All of this had to be corrected as I'm seeking a historically accurate restoration. I used a red grease pencil to circle all the holes I needed to be filled and set off for the welding shop. As mentioned in my last article, I am very lucky to have a true artisan as a local welder. I am very impressed with his ability to perform tasks with both steel and aluminum. It is so important to do your research and find a welder with experience and talent. By the time you have arrived at the welding stage you have invested a great deal of time and money; you don't want that to be wasted on a bad job.

My bulkhead came back from the welding shop looking like new. All holes were filled as requested, certainly a credit to my local welder. One important thing, make sure you keep the old rusted out footwells, you may need them as a template if you need to find

locations for foot dimmer switches and the like. Lastly, because of the bare metal state of the bulkhead a coating of etch-primer finished things off until its final bronze green paint.



"Those are as rare as rocking horse manure."

Parts for a Series II defy the usual ease with which Series owners find Genuine Parts; since this model was in production only from 1958-1961, many parts unique to that model went out of production. For many Series II owners, the answer lies in installing parts from Series IIAs - rarely a difficult swap. However, I've been determined to keep my Series II a complete Series II. So last June, I joined thousands of Land Rover enthusiasts at the

Land Rover Owner International - sponsored rally at Billing in England.

At Billing, I asked a Land Rover enthusiast from Yorkshire whether he knew of a source in England for rear Sparto lights for my Series II. "Those are as rare as rocking horse manure", he replied. He was right; while I had a great time in England, I could not find a set at the event.

However, as a result of my previous article in the Rovers North News, I received an email from a gentleman living in southern Vermont. It turned out he was the original importer of WLM 945 and he had old parts and documentation of the vehicle, if I cared to pick them up. I didn't have to be asked twice and made a trip to Manchester, VT (about 2 hours from me) the following week.

Awaiting me where old photos of WLM 945 in England in the early 70's; it was like seeing an old friend from the past. The original registration documentation and invoice were also right there. And over in the corner could be seen a box of bits that the original owner no longer needed. I looked through the box hurriedly, old switches and breather caps, various bulbs and wait! Could it be? A full set of Sparto rear lights! "You should keep those, they're quite rare", said the previous owner. "Like rocking horse manure", came my reply.

With the bulkhead finished and the exterior rear lamps on hand, I'm now psyched to begin the reconstruction process. My wife would like the basement back, too. Perhaps the trip to the British Invasion in Stowe in September will motivate me to set aside design work and complete WLM 945 soon.



Billing 2000 - LR's in the UK By Les Parker



[Les Parker, Cadyville, NY, has worked at Rovers North for 5 years and owns a 109" ex-MoD soft top, a '60 Series II under "slow restoration," and a '67 Series IIA 88" ex-MoD.]

What I did on my summer vacation "is a tale told by schoolchildren worldwide. Mine consisted of a recent sojourn to what is reportedly the largest ever gathering of Land Rover vehicles, their associated paraphernalia and of course, the Roverphiles (like you and me) their friends and families, all set in the green and pleasant land of Northamptonshire, UK, on the weekend of July 21-23 2000.



A Defender 130 Crew Cab is quite versatile, but this bicyclist might have found the most unique use.

After an uneventful flight from Mirabel Airport in Montreal, Canada to Gatwick Airport, near London UK, a four-hour trip north took me to visit my family in Lincoln, in rural Lincolnshire. It had been about a year since I had last been home. For my companion, Debby LaBombard, a U.S. citizen, it provided a great introduction to the best part of England. We stayed overnight in Lincoln and enjoyed the majesty of Lincoln Castle and Lincoln Cathedral; they looked even more spectacular at night.

The following day, still suffering from the effects of jet lag, we traveled the fairly direct route to Northampton and saw a sample of the delights to come, a few variants of Series vehicles and the more common (not in the USA) Defender. A rather shy example, with the badges of a local utility company. Hi-cap crew cab and workshop attached, took exception to being photographed. Perhaps we interrupted their break? So we moved swiftly on before we were treated to the wailing of the local constabulary siren.

Around mid-day we exited the A45 at the Billing off-ramp and drove into the usually serene facility

called The Billing Aquadrome. However, during the two weeks of late July, there is a vast transformation from serenity to utter mayhem when the Greater Roverphile (a.k.a. the "Anoraks") Nation flocks to the shores of the lake and pastures of Greater Billing in Northamptonshire. The organizers had planned for over 20,000 visitors from all over the world. From the crowds I saw, it looked like the organizers had done their sums correctly.

For my companion Debby, this trip not only introduced her to the culture of Great Britain but also to the phenomenon known as "The Land Rover Event". Most of the thousands of people who were in attendance on Friday had planned many months before to use this week as part of their annual holidays (vacation time); some had arrived either the previous week or had plans to remain for the following week to enjoy their excursion to the fullest.

I was amazed at the size of the crowds in attendance and the whole place buzzed with excitement. For Land Rover restorers, the vast array of used or NOS (new old stock) parts was beyond belief. Not long into the day we bumped into a familiar face from Vermont, David Pound, a Rovers North News contributor, and his family. As he described his purchases for the restoration of his Series II, I became certain he would have to repack his suitcases so he could carry all the materiel he bought on his travels.

Rovers North had arranged to share a stall on the area adjacent to the main arena, courtesy of Eddie Priscott, proprietor of Frogs Island 4 X 4. Also in our immediate vicinity was Chris Brown of Brownchurch (London, UK) fame. Between us, we represented a vast well of off-road equipment knowledge and experience.

My "work" while there was to introduce and promote the NRP stainless steel exhaust system in England, as Rovers North is the exclusive distributor of these systems worldwide. No sooner had we made our introductions to Eddie and his staff than we had visitors to our stand. The reception we experienced during the week-end was friendly and positive, especially the unique Catalytic Y Pipes that we had on display, so the time sped by remarkably swiftly. The weather was perfect, a balmy +80F and the pleasant surprise, for both Debby and myself, there was a distinct lack of flying, biting insects - a definite plus, in our opinion!

Friday evening we retired to our hotel, ready

for an early start on Saturday, reportedly the busiest day of the event. The local hostelry was also full to the seams with folk of like intent, although unbeknownst at the time of planning our trip, there was also an Elton John concert. Due to these elements there were hordes of people wherever you ventured; still it made for some introductions and conversations other than the weather!

Saturday morning dawned with a dramatic change in temperature; the skies were overcast and sweaters/woolies/jackets were definitely the order of the day. With the assistance of Eddie and Richard of Frogs Island, we were all ready for the hordes of Land Rover enthusiasts to descend on us for another day. Again, the size of the crowds, so much greater than North American events, just overwhelmed you.

The day remained overcast with low cloud, enough to stop the British Army's crack parachute team, The Red Devils, from giving the awaiting crowd the benefit of their enthralling display. However, being the out and out enthusiasts that we are, we were not deterred by this small inconvenience. The Show continued brilliantly with displays by the various clubs, organizations and businesses; sadly, due to some organizational misunderstandings, the winching demonstration sort of fell by the wayside, much to my disappointment.

I also watched in envy as hordes of trials participants and off-roaders enjoyed the challenges of the courses while I worked behind the booth. During the less busy times I meandered around the vast acreage of trade stands, meeting some longstanding friends and acquaintances, also perusing the goods for sale. I could only marvel at the diversity of the goods on offer, from (in my humble opinion) absolute recyclable material not really fit for sale, to many new take-off parts and some new line accessories. Some great deals will become available from Rovers North; watch out for our Specials and Rovers North News issues for new lines and also some "hard to find" and NLA parts, both new and used.

Towards the end of the day, with events on the off-road course coming to an end, the Main Arena once again became bustling with folk looking for "input" of new products and information to satisfy their quest for the ultimate idiosyncratic Land Rover vehicle. During this time we bumped into Pam



The sight of 101's is always special to Land Rover enthusiasts.

Nelson from Kalamazoo, Michigan among some other folk from the western side of the "pond".

So the day came to a close, unfortunately our lodgings were not in the immediate vicinity, thus we had to take an early departure and miss the Bar-b-ques, camp fires and general letting down of ones hair that occurred on Saturday evening.

Judging by the faces that we encountered on Sunday morning, we missed a tremendous event. At least we had a goods night's sleep and could face a full English breakfast; the mere mention of fried eggs made a few friends' faces turn green at least a natural Land Rover colour).

Sunday was on the same par as Saturday. Once everyone had regained their composure, they found the skies had brightened up a bit. With this, the atmosphere of the event changed, depression seemed to lift and some of the stall holders on the trade stands decided to become market traders. The crowds flocked to see how many bargains could be had. I suppose reloading all that wonderful Land Rover material onto their trucks was too much for them. Their benevolence came shining through, selling their goods and chattels at bargain basement prices. There certainly were many contented folk late Sunday evening as we packed up our stall and bade our farewells to our friends from Frogs Island 4x4, Mantec, Safety Devices and the many other makers of fond memories during our all too short visit to the Billing site.

Since our return, we have learned of organizational changes that will occur for Billing 2001. Hopefully matters will sort themselves out for next year so that once again the thunder of EP90 dripping vehicles of the Best 4 X 4 marque can be heard in the generally tranquil green belt of Northamptonshire, UK.



Baby Land Rover enthusiasts start early with the basics. Maybe he can find the rest of the parts from vendors at Billing!



The UK Camel Trophy Owners Club always put on award-winning displays.



The new coveted Rovers North Sightings Mug

Some readers know that the Sightings feature gets compiled at the Editor's office on Vinalhaven, an island off the coast of Maine. Recently, our postmaster left the island after only one year; a postal worker, handing me yet another package of Sightings from alert readers, let me know that she saw the connection between the volume of Sightings and his departure. It was just too much work.

So, on a nice summer day, I'm once again pouring through the mailbags to sort out the flotsam from the Mug winners. With Land Rover images everywhere these days, we wanted to recognize as many of you eager Sighters as possible. Congratulations to all the new Land Rover owners who join us each issue.

As always, it's important for you rookies to review the rules for Sightings - and it wouldn't hurt if some veterans would take a look again, too.

Rule # 1 - All Sightings receive recognition and our appreciation, but not necessarily a mug. We reward only those Sightings that capture the unique qualities of Land Rovers and their owners, and display them in a unique way.

Rule #2 - If your Sighting does not really surprise you, it won't surprise us, either, and you won't get a mug. We're delighted, but not surprised, that Land Rovers appear in British television programmes, British publications, films with British themes, and shows and publications about Africa. You shouldn't be surprised, either, and should consider looking for other ways to get a coffee mug.

Rule #3 - At an ever-changing date before publication, we close off the Sightings. If we've mentioned the Sighting in an earlier issue, we won't mention it again. If you're new to the family of Land Rover enthusiasts, you may not have seen your Sighting in an earlier issue.

Rule #4 - We're not outfitting your kitchen. If you qualify, one mug per Sighting per issue.

Rule #5 - Sightings that are Land Rover references in books go to our Literary Land Rover editor for mention, but only when space permits.

Rule #6 - Pst... if we can't read your name and address because of atrocious penmanship, we can't recognize your Sighting nor send you a mug. Pst... E-mail submissions - remember we can't send a mug by e-mail. Send us your real name and shipping address, too.

Rule #7 - Grudgingly, very grudgingly, the Editor admits he might make an error. Let me know if you think you've been jobbed, but all decisions of the Editor are final.



SIGHTINGS

Television loves Land Rovers. ***Steve Schumacher, Deforest, WI**, watched "3 minutes" of American High and is pretty certain he saw "4 guys cruisin' in a Defender 90." Only the two sliding windows and a door top identified the car. Steve admits he "didn't see any outside shots of it, but I didn't want to watch it any longer either." But Steve could not pull himself away from a Hostess Ding-Dong commercial, in which a rhino feels that the spare tire on a Land Rover he's pursuing is a snack cake. The rhino hits the tire up front and asks, "Where's the cream filling?" Advertisers know that Land Rovers help sell products. Even though L. L. Bean has signed on with Subaru to produce a designer version of the Outback, ***Charles and Laura Altosmis, Greensburg, PA** noted the use of a Defender as a prop on several pages of the Fall catalogue. So, too, did ***Bill Rice, Columbus, GA**, who also pointed out that the wing of Series Rover appears throughout the same catalogue.

***Bud Brown, Temple, PA** noted that Orvis put a 109" SW on the cover of its Summer 2000 catalogue. Now that's a way to draw in readers. An unusual use of a Defender as a cover car is on the Draper's & Damon's "ladies fashion" catalogue. A model in a frumpy, coordinated outfit stares at a map while leaning against the hood of a clean, white Defender. "Imagine my amazement," wrote ***Mark Paradis, Lebanon, NJ** - imagine our's when we saw the cover!

***Nick Jacobs, New York, NY**, noted that the latest Merrill Lynch VISA affiliate card reward catalogue includes a 2000 Range Rover for only 3,000,000 points! Lesser point totals would garner a go at the Land Rover Driving School at the Equinox or Land Rover Gear Luggage. ***J. Mitchell Stockdale, Evergreen, CO**, spotted a Bud Light commercial featuring a Series III Limestone 88". It's the best thing about light beer, that's for sure. **Harry Drabik, Hovland, MN**, found that Herrington's catalogue features - once again - a scrub brush for washing "a Suburban, Expedition or Any SCU/Minivan," but chooses the show the brush in action on a Discovery! Land Rovers appear in the likely places. The July issue of Journal of Military Ordnance is sold at the Barnes and Noble in Portsmouth, VA, where **Jim Wolf** spotted a nice article on the aptly named "Wolf" Defenders. And in unlikely places - Wolf also noted that a new Series II Discovery was in the background of an advertisement for Autopilot, an online service for the Hampton Roads, VA area.

***Staci (age 13) and Sarah (age 12) Adriansen** fear for their father, who they report

has not won a mug for his previous Sightings. They came up with some of their own, and the lyrics on a Country Grammar album do mention, prominently, a Range Rover - though not for reasons likely to bring a smile to Land Rover's marketing department. The remaining lyrics would be unlikely to make Tipper Gore's favorite hits collection, and we'll have to pass on them, too. Staci and Sarah also noted that Ashley Judd's Eye of Beholder movie features a Range Rover. **Robert Sedivy, Richmond, VA** watched a 1975 Lina Wermuller film, Swept Away, which featured a bright blue Range Rover at a southern Italian port, "presumably to suggest the yacht owner's good taste as well as their wealth."

It's been a rainy summer in parts of New England, and **Mike Madden, Laconia, NH**, found a photo in his local newspaper of a Discovery Series II "surfing" down a street alongside Lake Winnepesaukee. As Mike asks, "where is the Navigator or Explorer, or even the Sportage or RAV4?"

Two surfing fans, one on the West Coast and one on the East Coast, caught a RHD Series II or early Series IIA SW in the July Surfer magazine. A great photo of Randy Rarick driving his Land Rover accompanied the article. Thanks to ***Maurice Patrykus, Los Angeles, CA**, and ***Aniece Ingram, Rowayton, CT**, for noting how important the Land Rover was to the story.

***Mike Knapp, Shoreham, VT**, found a political cartoon by Vermont's own Jeff Danzinger on the travails of Tony Blair. It has Blair using a Series Rover as a soapbox to hype himself. As Mike wrote, "it seems that at least those cartoonists with their fingers on the pulse of current events realize that the Land Rover is still the quintessential icon of Britain." In other news, **Jan Staller, New York, NY**, found a photo in the New York Times of a Defender 110 set up as a speaking platform for Uganda's president [see rule #2].

If you had your choice, would you select a 1965 "Landrover Range Rover Station Wagon" or a 1988 Lamborghini LM 002 Sport Utility? **Bruce Burnham, Salt Lake City, UT**, notes the Kruse Auction catalogue offers one of each. What kind of car is that first one, though? Finally, for a "lyrical Sighting," **Bill Rice, Columbus, GA**, wrote "It's from an old Housemartins song off of their album 'The People Who Grinned Themselves to Death.' The song is 'I Can't Put My Finger On It.' The 'anti dumb-rich-kid song' includes: I should've done his Land Rover To let him know I'd been. Instead I wrote 'F' off" on the dirt across his screen.

I wish I'd let them know that I was here. A drop of arsenic in the wine, Sulphuric acid in the beer. This charming ditty was part of Bill's heroic, and successful, effort to land a coveted Sightings mug. As Bill wrote, "Not to start out by being ingratiating, but as an aside, I've chatted with you a few times (Downeast '95, maybe somewhere else too—probably British Invasion '97). Drove (and still do) a marine blue SIIA 109SW. Enjoyed meeting you and love the QE I—your utilitarian series owner perspective always makes me laugh. I will assiduously avoid making any rash statements like "please send my mug to . . ." like I did last time I sent in a Sighting, several years ago. The implicit scolding I received for that bit of impetuosity has kept me from sending a sighting in for years now. Rejection's tough to face. But I'm now older and wiser and understand that the whole thing's a crapsheet, so why not have a go?"

Surely he doesn't think that compliments about my Land Rover guarantee a mug! Rumors that I will be driving the mug directly to his home in Columbus, GA are entirely without merit.

Winners

- William J. Rice, Columbus, GA**
- Mark E. Paradis, Lebanon, NJ**
- Bud Brown, Temple, PA**
- Mike Knapp, Shoreham, VT**
- Maurice Patrykus, Los Angeles, CA**
- Aniece Ingram, Rowayton, CT**
- J. Mitchell Stockdale, Evergreen, CO**
- Nick Jacobs, New York, NY**
- Steve Schumacher, Deforest, WI**
- Charles and Laura Altosmis, PA**
- Staci and Sarah Adriansen [?]**



All Land Rovers should be this happy! Bob Raffensperger's Dormobile sporting a smile at Rovers North.



Dear Rovers North,

Really enjoy the Newsletter. However, in the article on propshafts, you did not mention one of the most important points - to make sure that the u-joints are properly "indexed." Correctly assembled, the u-joints should be dead in line with with each other - no other position. In other words, they would lie parallel to each other in a line.

The slip joint marking is a good idea; however, most old Rovers have been apart a few times in their lives and not always reassembled by competent mechanics.

Fred Sisson
Norcross, GA

[Good point, Fred. When I had to replace the u-joints on my rear propshaft for the article, I did not disassemble the shaft at the splines. It can be easier to maneuver the shaft, however, if it is apart -ed.]

Dear Rovers North,

On a trip from Wisconsin to Alabama this past April with my '92 Range Rover and trailer to pick up a horse-drawn beer wagon (imported from England where it hauled beer on city streets until 1999), I picked up some bad gas in southern Illinois.

When I got down to 1/4 tank north of Nashville, it lost power and the engine soon was sounding very bad. It was late at night and I was in the middle of nowhere but found a lonely convenience store/gas station so I filled up the tank and added some dry gas. Then I retired for the night in the bench seat of my "Rover motel."

In the morning, it fired right up and idled smoothly, but I drove several times around the lot before proceeding on my trip. Since the "Check Engine" light was on I looked in my book and found a Rover dealership south of Nashville, about 70 miles away. I drove there and arrived early before they opened, but in a hard, pouring rain. The dealership was a Land Rover Centre, a beautiful lodge in a very well-to-do area. I guess I should have washed my Range Rover before I left

the farm as I left quite a lot of Wisconsin soil in the parking lot. They were very nice people as they agreed to look at the Rover right away, despite the comment on the mud left in my parking space (I did get a shovel and broom and cleaned it up).

The Rover checked out OK, an oxygen sensor went off which could have been a result of the bad gas. As I was leaving I asked if anybody famous lived in the big houses with the gated and arched driveways so close to Nashville. "Oh yes, Waylon Jennings just lives across the road and Alan Jackson lives a little ways down the road - he drives two Rovers." Now correct me if I'm wrong, but doesn't he do the Ford commercials? Maybe he knew something before we all did! By the way, the Rover did fine the entire trip despite the horse wagon being a bit heavier than I thought. It ran great up and down the hills of Tennessee and Kentucky. Sincerely,
Chris Nestor
Melrose, WI

[Alan Jackson did sing about how life was better in a Mercury, so maybe you're right, Chris. It's good to know that your Range Rover performed so well and that Land Rover Centres will help a traveler in need -ed.]

Dear Rovers North,
Just received the latest Rovers North News. As ever, it is excellent, informative, readable, and

witty. It is a welcomed bit amongst the bills and offers for new credit cards.

However, in the middle of your Spring Selections, you tease us Series owners with an item I've been looking for, for many months - box section doorsill protectors. You offer them for the modern models only! Life's so unfair.

I noted in the February '99 issue of Land Rover Monthly that in one article a featured

Land Rover had a set of 4" sill protection bars. Basically, they look like sections of a typical Series front bumper, galvanized and bolted to the frame outriggers. They replaced the flimsy alloy modesty skirt panels beneath the doors and between the wheel wells. I wrote the English firm mentioned in the story [R. J. Harvey] but got absolutely nothing in return.

I'm wondering if a set of the things you offer could be adapted to fit a Series Rover. My only other option would be to buy two new galvanized bumpers, have them stripped, shorten them, cut off the standard brackets, fabricate and replace new brackets, and then have the bumpers regalvanized. It's possible, but a lot of work. This is the same frustration for bull bars for the front end. No one that I've found makes one specifically for the Serious Rovers. They all have a vertical member smack dab in front of the narrow headlamps. Unacceptable! I suppose I could simply fit a set of the military bumper overriders and be done with it.

My own Series IIA is currently at Cooper

Technica to be fitted with a soft-top - thanks to Rovers North. The tropical road will go into storage for a bit. But you know how one thing leads to another. Well, the truck is now in the middle of a complete and major brake job. It didn't start out to be a complete job - just to check why it was pulling violently to one side (a failed front wheel cylinder lubed the drum very effectively). But of course, one brake thing led to 40 other brake things.

In the meantime, I'm driving David Cooper's own Series III. Apart from the fact that it looks like the wrath of God and that several bearings appear (audibly) to be about to go south, the vehicle is quite perky. His engine is a bit bigger than mine is, but I think the main reason for this unexplained perkiness is the fact that his has an electronic ignition unit. I think I'll need one of those soon. Cheers,
Glenn Shriver
Chicago, IL

[Rovers North has explored fabricating protective sills, or rock sliders, in place of the cosmetic sills for the Series Rover, but the positioning of the underseat gas tank in an 88" makes it a dubious proposition. The dimensions of the tank would demand that the protective sills be enormous. And if they were sized to the gas tank, they would interfere with ground clearance while off roading. Rock slider or box sill protectors work on the Defender vehicles because the gas tank sits in the rear. They may be some custom fabrications for Series vehicles out there; let us know if you've found a successful assembly.

As for electronic ignitions, they can enhance the spark of a Series vehicle, but they also have no adjustment; when they fail, they're toast. If your own distributor is sound [no wobble at the shaft], if it has properly adjusted points, and if it's timed correctly, your car will run as "perky" -ed.]

First Impressions

Rover. We climbed up the treacherous mound with no problem - which I could not believe! My impression when talking to Chris was that he has been off-roading since he could reach the pedals.

Rule #4 - Off-roading is about patience, experience, scratches, dents, and the occasional broken part.

This rule was put to the test for a few drivers on this part of the run. Ian Cook, Warren, ME, served as a marshal on this part of the course. He showed tremendous patience in guiding everyone's Rover from one boulder face onto another. He had a view of the rocks and could tell people what the best next step should be. Kaan Karakaplan, a Range Rover Classic owner, and Marty Amedeo, owner of a '97 Discovery, both traveled to the event from Long Island, NY. These guys drove eight hours to test their driving abilities. Not only do these two have skill they have amazing amounts of patience and enthusiasm, also.

Rule #5 - You Shouldn't Do What You Don't Want To Do

Several owners generously offered me the opportunity to drive the rest of the trail before lunch, but I was reluctant at that point because of what I saw at the beginning of the extreme trail. Chris Komar said that was fine and there was no pressure to drive. That was when Rule #5 came into play - You should not do what you do not want to do, especially in off-

roading. I was lucky to be off-roading with a group of guys who knew what they were doing. They knew how to get themselves and others out of trouble, and put no pressure on anyone. I advise any first time off-roaders to follow my example when given the chance - find an active club and join them on their runs to learn how to off-road, or take an off road instruction course from a certified instructor.

Rule #6 - Follow the Advice of Your Marshals

During a lunch break a few more Rover fans joined the group. Julie and Peter Rosvall drove their '72 Series III from Wolfville, Nova Scotia convoying with Ben Pooley in his 1982 ex-military Series III 109 from Lockport, Nova Scotia. Jesse Ware, York, ME, showed up in his '93 Defender 110 NAS. Fortified with more vehicles and a great lunch, we began the greenlane trail run. When everyone was about to pull onto the trail, Jeff offered to let me drive. I received enough coaxing from him and decided that I should give his Series IIA a try. I had driven a manual transmission before, but on straight Florida roads, never on Maine trails. Okay, I'll admit I was nervous and I did stall just a few times. Once I started, I then felt a sense of excitement until I made it to a short rock climb that unnerved me. Jeff had me drive downhill, jumped over to the driver's seat and got us over this first obstacle. Then, I stepped back into the driver's seat and that was it - my point of becoming hooked to the sport. I made it through a challenging corner of thick mud, with Jeff guiding me ("Where's the power steering?" I asked). I was so pleased I grabbed the CB and screamed, "Don't worry guys, Dana's still back here!" It was quite the

accomplishment and my adrenaline was pumping. At the next corner the mud was even thicker than the previous turn and the Rover sank to its frame. Chris Komar winched us out and we continued along the trail. I never thought that going so slow could be so much fun!

Rule #7 - Never Underestimate Your Rover Just Learn Its Limits

At the gathering we did take a few more runs where I drove with a few Rover owners of the new vehicles. There was one rock climb that many club members wanted to test themselves. I went up the rocks in the modified Series IIA with Chris driving and once with Marty in his Discovery. At one point I said to Marty "Your not going to make it up this!!" The Rover seemed so large and awkward to make it up the rock. Marty definitely proved me wrong.

Rule #8 - Go Off-Roading

Many of the rules I covered in this article may make me sound like I have had Land Rover experience before this gathering. Actually, I was just lucky enough to have my first Rover experience with a great group of men and women who were patient and informative. Despite the differences in age and type of Land Rover, the drivers shared a strong enthusiasm that is common among most Rover owners. This enthusiasm is contagious and is not limited to the male genes. I hope this article gives you - female or male - the impetus to take advantage of that urge to give into the immense rush and go off-roading, in a Land Rover, of course! 🐾

Top Dog Photo Contest!



Here's how the contest goes, first you have to decipher what Land Rover vehicle our friend here is sticking his head out of. Then you must send your answer to RN accompanied with your own dog-in-Rover picture. To win you must guess correctly, and send a photo as unique as your Rover is. If it's the most unique and it meets the photo quality standards of our art director, you will receive, none other than, a stainless steel Rovers North thermos! All photos submitted become the property of Rovers North. Winning photos will be published at a later date. Good Luck with the contest.

Tanzania

continued

a Land Rover for transportation." As Joan Mattia noted in the interview, "there's only one paved road in the country." I tracked Lou Mattia down through the Internet at his in-laws in Frenchville, PA, just before his departure for Tanzania, and asked him about his choice of vehicle. "We'll be looking for a Land Rover around Mpwapwa, where we'll take up our duties. I've been told that trying to import a new one is expensive, so we'll be looking for a used one within the country. Other missionaries recommend that the best way to find one is to get there and look around. I'm hoping that someone leaving the country will want to sell one." In Tanzania, Lou heads up a diocesan school of 100 for students interested in ordination as well as lay ministry. "We want to train and equip leaders for the church. We also want to travel and lead continuing education to villages, which is the real reason for the Land Rover." "We're also looking to establish an institute for church development in the country, providing consulting and maybe exchanges between the United States and Tanzania. We hope to bring doctors, dentists, and other professionals for volunteer medical and development work." Lou Mattia noted that the Land Rover's reputation for durability and toughness is alive and well in East Africa. They have spoken with Land Rover owners in Africa and the United States to determine which model will serve them best, and Lou does not sound afraid of maintaining the Rover himself. Lou describes Tanzania as "beautiful, rugged, and very poor. People are mostly subsistence farmers and have little if any cash. Average salaries for those who have employment is about \$25 a month. It has been very dry for the last couple of years so even the crops have not been very good. But people are generally surviving from what they grow and seem to be happy. The roads are absolutely the worst. Rutted and rocky. We have found that we need a vehicle very, very badly because of the need to move around to get supplies or to begin our ministry. The school is 6 km from our house up a road that looks like a creek bed. In fact, we cross two rivers to get up to the top. Land Rover enthusiasts would love this. Getting around to all the villages is equally difficult. A few kilometers can seem like forever when you're bouncing up and down." Living conditions at their first home in Tanzania fall below the standards of comfort which they experienced in

able to study at night! On Tuesday the building engineer picks up all the electrical supplies in Dar es Salaam." Some of their students are sponsored at an individual cost of about \$240 per year. "That has helped so much we can't describe. We have bought food, 5 more mattresses, performed a few critical plumbing repairs, and paid teachers salaries for August. This program of scholarship is our lifeblood." For Lou Mattia, the highest recommenda-



tion for a Land Rover came from a Tanzanian. "[Bishop] Simon Chivanga confirmed that the Land Rover would be the best vehicle for us. This is a nation of 100,000 miles of dirt road. We saw a photo of a Land Rover being pushed through this huge rut - the roads can be that bad. Simon's recommendation of a Land Rover was based partly his own experience and his own preference." [If you would like to contact Lou and Joan Mattia you may send them letters at PO Box 2, Mpwapwa Tanzania, or e-mail them at mattia@maf.org. If you're interested in assisting the Mattia's, you can do so through their NY office: The Episcopal Church Center, Mission Personnel, Attn: Rebecca Sang, 815 Second Avenue, New York, NY, 10017. If you would like to contribute, please identify your donation as "Mattia-Land Rover." -ed].

Rover Fest

continued



The Iron Man Competition required muscle and dexterity. This tire change was only part of the challenge.

seemed hopeless until the complex poked its way out of the gloom. Two terraced lots looked filled with Land Rovers of every description, from Series I's to 101 Forward Controls to the latest Range Rover 4.6's and Discovery Series II's. Although some

enthusiasts camped in the parking lot at the event site, I welcomed the event hotel after a long day.

Saturday dawned bright, cool and glorious, and the day went up

from there.

Rovers North established a "Muddy Oval" competition, which included a mini-Camel, tire changing and transporting timed event, and a tough "feely-meely" box to identify Rover parts. The 4 x 4 Center, Williston, VT, set up and operated the trials course at nearby Bear Mountain. The challenging course utilized the mogul-laden hillside to create a descent-oriented course with many tight turns and twisties. Water seeping up to the surface made some portions slippery and muddy, only adding to the enjoyment. East Coast Rover, Warren, ME, brought over their teeter-totter which tested every enthusiasts' knowledge of the balance of their Land Rover.

The organizers had established green lane rides and more challenging off-road rides. Both

continued on page 15.



A Defender 90 traverses a ski trail on Bear Mountain.

Land Rover Heaven

by The Rev. Louis J. Mattia

Where do Land Rovers go when they get old? Why Tanzania, of course! While many visitors have come to see the magnificent animals in some of the world's finest game parks in this East African paradise, they may have missed one of the truly African phenomenon, Land Rovers of every shape and variety caravaning across the open wilderness.

When people begin to age and retire they want to go where it is warm and where they can engage in their favorite activities like golf, fishing, or perhaps just sitting on the veranda and enjoying the view. So Land Rovers are no different really then we are. They want a nice warm place where they can enjoy their favorite activity, bumping over impossible roads with a smile on their rugged front grills. While Land Rovers might enjoy an occasional jaunt on asphalt roads, they long for the great outdoors. In fact, there is no better great outdoors than the African landscape. Mount Kilimanjaro, the Ng'orong'orong Crater, the huge Serengeti game reserve, the vast range lands of the Massi warriors; these are the true homes of the Land Rover.

In Tanzania it is possible in a brief outing to see a broad spectrum of makes and models of Land Rover. The oldest one we've seen is over 40 years old, an old Series I pickup that plies its way around town. The next oldest is a 1974 Series III which is driven by a British doctor, Dr. Rachel Tarling, who lives next door to us in Mpwapwa in the central region of the country. This wonderful old gem of a Rover had seen a full life of faithful service in Ireland before it was wrecked. Students at Tralee Regional College in southwest Ireland restored it in 1994 putting in a new 2.5 liter naturally engine along with new electrics and other repairs. It was donated to the St. Luke's Medical Center and has now "retired" to Africa. For nearly 5 years now it has continued to work in charity giving Dr. Tarling lifts to and from clinics and villages. Many lives have been saved and improved by its unwillingness to seek the comforts of an easy retirement. At

this time, the most populous among the Land Rovers is the 110 Defender Station Wagon. They seem to be everywhere, old and new, going up and down the byways. White is the favorite color, a good choice to mute the African sun which can cause real heat problems in a darker skin color. The 110 is also spending a lot of time touring game parks. It doesn't mind the hoard of human beings who climb all over it and even sit on the roof. No, it just takes the jostle in great humility and patience. At least it gets its admission paid (\$30) into the park every day to see the animals. People somehow feel safe in the Defender, even when lions are close by. Sometimes they will get out of the car and stand near the animals. This is not recommended, but people tend to relax around this strong and dependable car and they feel somehow less vulnerable. Safari companies always search for good, used Land Rovers. You really can't take an official safari in anything else.

However, it is not all fun and games here in the porini (Swahili for bushcountry). Work must still get done. So we can't forget to mention the 110 Defender 200 Tdi pickup. Godfrey Tarling has one next door to go along with his wife's Series III. He serves as a building engineer for the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Mpwapwa. He has built clinics, churches, classroom buildings, and many other facilities in the past 6 years. When his truck arrived it was brand new; apparently it sought more opportunities than Europe could offer. It arrived as an adventure seeker, being young and full of energy, but it now wears the scars of heavy work and many close encounters with the difficult and unpredictable terrain. One day, for instance, it ran into a four-foot hole on the side of the road and the front axle was buried up to its bumper. Another day, when it was ferrying a survey crew up to 6,000 foot Mount Kiboriani without any road at all, it ran under an overhanging tree limb. The cab roof is still bent and scarred but it hasn't slowed it up any. The Defender accomplished a marvelous feat of off-roading one day when a road crew had blown up a long stretch of mountainous road, leaving boulders everywhere on the path. Using its winch and a lot of driver ingenuity, the Defender moved the boulders out

of the road to make way for a larger delivery truck carrying cement bags to make it up the mountain. Like any older beast of burden, the Rover remains strong as an ox even though it suffers from a little arthritis in its joints.

They say that Land Rovers will last forever. We believe that is true. With a supply of spare parts they can keep on going even in the most remote parts of Africa. Timing chains can be changed under a tree almost as easy as changing a tire. Many missionary, charity organizations, and government officials depend on them for their life and work. They are not a machine but are part of the extended family.

Yes, sometimes, on rare occasions, a Land Rover will be crippled and sometimes, after many years of service, it will be laid to rest. But where else in the world could you expect an old car to take a prominent place in daily life even after you couldn't move it anymore? Here in Tanzania, those Rovers have found their final reward parked in front of houses and buildings for everyone to see them. No they are not hidden from site or taken away to some junkyard; they rest where they served, right next to their owners so they can forever be revered as elder statesmen. Over time their parts may be borrowed to help other Rovers make it through a tough time. But in this way you could say they keep on living and giving to others.

We invite you to come to Tanzania and see for yourself that what we are saying is a true report. And, whenever you see a Land Rover disappear from your home area, remember it has only done what all Land Rovers must do; it has gone to its great reward in Africa.

The Rev's. Lou and Joan Mattia are missionary priests for the Episcopal Church in central Tanzania, the Diocese of Mpwapwa. They are Directors of a Christian Training Center in a remote mountain valley 10-km outside the small town of Mpwapwa. They are hoping to buy a Land Rover for their work and are accepting donations through their NY office.



Gainesville. "We have had a bit of a shock really as [when we] settled in. It's very different to live in a rural area of Africa. Our house needs a lot of work, and appliances, but we have electricity and we have a telephone next door at the home of another missionary couple from Britain. The water only runs in the middle of the night so we really need to put in a tank to collect it then use it later. Also the house needs to be painted in the inside very badly and the cement floor would be much better if it were painted too. The curtains are very strange colors and the curtain rods are the British system so they need "hoods" to cover the rods, which we would have to have built here. The bathroom toilets are rusted down to the metal and they leak a little." Conditions at their school should give all North Americans pause. "The school itself is really run down. The saving feature is that it sits in a lovely mountain valley up high where it is cool and green. It has solid buildings but they will need new electrical work to meet the codes to be connected to the national electrical grid. This is really important for the future of the school. It is also historic, having been built in the 1880's." Presently, the Mattia's report that the 30 students studying with them are thrilled, not only with their coursework, but with the fact that "they are so excited about getting electricity installed that they applaud each time we give an update. They simply want to be

Rover Fest

continued

proved highly entertaining. Largely, the green lane rides seemed to be ski-cat or trail access road routes. They were highly scenic with wonderful vistas, and some fine climbs and descents. The off-road routes included mountain bike and hiking routes which, because they were thinly disguised stream beds,



Dorrest Harvey's freshly refurbished Series I 86" includes the radio-toter provided by East Coast Rover

were quite muddy in spots from recent rains. When I took my Series IIA on this run, I found myself in the middle of Range Rover Classics, a FC 101, some Defender 90's, and another IIA 88" just up from Pennsylvania after an owner restoration. It was the owner's first trip and off-roading in their "new" Rover. Rover Fest 2000 was the brainchild of the West Connecticut

Land Rover Club, under the leadership of Mike Ladden, Pat Macomber, Chris Velardi, Ed Messenger, and a host of other volunteers. The event also drew upon the resources and support of dozens of other clubs throughout the US East Coast and Canada. It was a worthy successor to the ANARC's 50th Anniversary Rally at Greek Peak, NY, two years ago, attractive to families and newcomers as well as veteran event participants. We're ready to return!



By Jeffrey Aronson

Driving back this August from RoverFest 2000 in Killington, VT, I convoyed with George Bull and Joanna Cameron, Effingham, NH, behind their well-used, very original Series IIA. As we wound around the back roads of Vermont and New Hampshire, we noticed that the tall, narrow, square look of the classic Series Rover contrasted with the melted-plastic-on-a-stove look of contemporary cars. It takes a sharp eye to tell a Daewoo from a Hyundai, but toddlers will point to a Land Rover and distinguish it from ordinary cars.

It also takes all your other senses to drive a Series Rover. Smell, sound, light, vibration and taste are all required to use a Rover daily; indeed, you will become acutely sensitive to all sensations around your Rover. You will come to believe that every woodstove burning is your car smoking, every house light reflecting on your windshield is an electrical problem, every truck coming up behind you on the highway is your propshaft falling off the car. Even after 10 years of driving the QE I, I cannot shake the assumption that the odd odor or sound is not my Rover in trouble.

So, as I trailed behind George and Joanna, I became very concerned when strange, flaky objects flew into my open-topped car. I was convinced that these represented a catastrophe in the making. Were pieces of the engine disintegrating? I looked ahead with concern, and then noticed George and Joanna sharing food, which looked suspiciously like peanuts. Sure enough, they shelled them and Joanna threw the empty husks on the ground - so she thought. Once tossed out of their open car, they flew up in the air/flew and landed in my car. Fortunately, they had only a small bag to share and the assault ended within 15 minutes.

Much relieved, I continued on my way. At 45-55 mph on two-lane roads, we had the perfect cruising speed and conditions for these cars. Since I was alone in my car, I also had plenty of time to daydream. A wonderful commentary from the British magazine *Thoroughbred and Classic Cars* ran through my mind. An editor suggested that "to fully appreciate idiosyncratic British cars, you need a flair for pointless traditions, scornful disregard for bad weather, and a pronounced madness. Owning one becomes a way of life - you'll never be the same again."

What a great way to approach ownership of a Land Rover. Whether we're talking about Birmabright fenders on a Series Rover or wood-accented trim on a Range Rover, we must admit that these are 'pointless traditions' to the average man. Rover owners know why light weight matters on an SUV, and even Mercedes owners respond to wood and leather trim, but we must admit that millions of owners do just fine with overweight SUV's and bland, vinyl interiors. All Land Rovers, from a Series I to a Discovery Series II, allow their owners to share a 'scornful disregard for bad weather.' Of course, a Series Rover requires a scornful disregard because the bad weather outside can become the bad weather inside, too. The 'pronounced madness' is self-evident if you're using a Series Rover on a daily basis - the combination of noise, vibration and

maintenance seems indecipherable to the general public. Nor can everyone understand why Discovery owners buy cars from dealers who might be hundreds of miles away, or why Defender owners become maniacal about their cars.

In addition to the adherence to tradition, scoffing at the weather and pronounced eccentricity, denial is always part of British car ownership. I know this first hand, for in addition to the '66 Series IIA, I use a '78 MGB and a '78 Triumph Spitfire for what I'll call 'daily transportation.' A common usage of that phrase would include reliability, comfort, convenience, long periods between recommended maintenance, and practicality. In Land Rover circles, that's called 'zero tolerance.'

When asked about reliability of these cars (remember, the sports cars benefited from British Leyland quality control), I assume a Presidential air and suggest, "it depends on what 'reliability' is." When calling for assistance, or even a tow truck, I follow the lead of Vice President Gore and respond that I'm not certain if I actually made the call, and anyway, there's "no controlling authority" at work. If truly pressed, then Governor Bush's example - "I don't really want to talk about it, it's in the past" - permits selective amnesia.

As for the Land Rover, I've been reminded that when I see Land Rover friends at events, my response to their question, "How's it running?" is always "No problem." Apparently, many enthusiasts have ceased to believe me.

Not long ago, a friend asked me to help him purchase an older car which would serve as a rental on the island. We went off island in the Land Rover to a very-used car dealership along Route 1 in Maine. In order to explain to my buddy what I might look for, I opened the bonnet of the Rover to suggest how to read engine leaks, examine engine oil, and judge overall maintenance by the dreaded P.O. [previous owner]. We left the bonnet open while we tested other cars. Mike Seaman, a mechanic at East Coast Rover in nearby Warren, saw the QE I and pulled in to the lot, assuming he'd have emergency work to do. I suggested huffily that there was "no problem" and sent Mike on his way.

You see, it all depends on how you define 'problem,' or whether I need to answer the question accurately, or whether it's a part of my past that you have no right to judge. Perhaps I should start saying, "No comment."

I woke up from this reverie in time to make the turn from Rte. 4 to Rte. 104, following George and Joanna into the back side of New Hampshire's Lake Region. Within an hour, I left them at the

Behind The Steering Wheel



turnoff to their home, right near the New Hampshire-Maine border. And, no, you don't need shots to enter Maine if you've been in New Hampshire.

As I filled the gas tank on the QE I one day, a bystander in an American pick-up truck asked me "what kind of mileage do you get in that thing?" I replied that I get 19-20 mpg on the highway, and 16-18 mpg in town. He was stunned. "I could barely get 10 mpg in my old Jeep," he replied.

It reminded me that Land Rover once had to pay attention to gas mileage. When the first Land Rovers appeared in 1948, Great Britain still rationed petrol and taxed it heavily (even today, 70% of the cost of petrol in the UK results from taxation). Like other nations in postwar Europe, fuel economy mattered, whether because of the high cost of fuel or the purchase taxes exacted on higher capacity, less economical engines. Generally speaking, engines under 2 liters were taxed less than their higher counterparts. The upshot was that British cars could not defy the laws of physics; they had to be reasonably sized [to weigh less] and engineered [to extract the most horsepower from smaller engines]. Manual transmissions ruled - no room here for power-robbing automatics.

It wasn't until 1941 that an American car, the Nash 600, advertised a combination of range and economy; a 20 gallon gas tank would take the 30 mpg car 600 miles. Clearly, it did not start a trend. When World War II ended and auto production resumed in the US, mileage ranked near safety in consumer interest; two-tone paint jobs and 'road-hugging weight' mattered much more.

By the '60's, not much had changed. With gas between 25-35 cents per gallon [did I just date myself? -ed.], gas mileage between 6-10 miles per gallon didn't bite the wallet very hard.

In its heyday, my '66 Series IIA must have delighted the good folk who ran the old Mobilgas Economy Run. Those balloon-foot drivers received much ridicule from the Sports Car Graphic, Road & Track and Car and Driver writers whose advice I considered as gospel truth. Generally, an American Motors [see Nash] Rambler, or some similarly underpowered car won each year; Ramblers won from 1961-1964. The driver would extol the virtues of coasting, deceleration, brakeless slowdowns, and, of course, Mobilgas. None of this did a lot to sell cars, though.

Daily use of my Land Rover means that I've become very familiar with the range of the 12 gallon tank (I'm including the filler neck, too). Since I tend to fill up often on my working trips, I've become all too familiar with the rise this year

in gasoline prices. What used to be a \$16.20 fillup became a \$22.20 fillup in rural areas; on my home island, it's now a \$25.92 fillup.

As we go to press, the Lundberg Report, an oil industry newsletter, reported that the weighted average for all grades of self-serve and full-serve gasoline was roughly \$1.62 a gallon, an increase of nearly 30 cents from the same period a year ago. In early September, the national weighted average price of gasoline, including taxes, at self-serve pumps was \$1.5734 for regular, \$1.6699 for mid-grade and \$1.7552 for premium. For full-serve, prices were \$1.8896 for regular, \$1.9798 for mid-grade and \$2.0560 for premium.

In rural parts of North America, cars of any sort cannot be luxuries alone; they are necessities for work, family and leisure. No effective public transportation network exists to supplant the automobile. We have little choice but to feed the beast. Europe's geography and commuting patterns mean that people often travel fewer miles than their North American counterparts, but their total cost of operation still exceed ours. For example, have you ever seen ads for tires in British Land Rover magazines?

We can, however, be thankful that we're not in Europe where gas prices have historically been high. In July, 1998, when US average prices for premium gas ran about \$1.10, Dutch drivers paid \$4.00 per gallon, German drivers around \$3.50, French drivers around \$3.20, and British drivers paid about \$3.40 per gallon. This July, Dutch drivers paid \$5.00 per gallon, German drivers around \$4.30, French drivers around \$4.10, and British drivers around \$4.00. By September, prices throughout Europe surged to over \$5.00 per gallon and widespread protests captured the world's attention. In Sweden, the Finance Ministry received over 80,000 protesting the high fuel taxes, that in a country normally tolerant of a high taxation rate.

Europeans have long endured prices that would have Americans in open rebellion, but many Land Rover owners are starting to feel the pinch as gas prices rise rapidly this fall. Frank Gampietro, Schaumburg, IL, an occasional correspondent to the Rovers North News, called me this summer to note that as gasoline prices rose in the Chicago area to over \$2.00 per gallon, he felt forced to question the desirability of his '94 NAS Defender 90. He loves the car, his third Land Rover, but the fuel prices were just becoming too much. As Land Rover continues to deny NAS owners the Tdi diesel option, the challenge of owning a V-8 powered Land Rover will only increase.

You have to pay attention at gas stations these days. In Woodstock, VT after RoverFest, George, Joanna and I pulled into a gas station where one isle was already occupied by a Discovery and a Series III, both from Massachusetts. Imagine, all 4 pumps taken over by Land Rovers! I hardly ever see even one Land Rover at a gas station. When I went in to pay, out of habit I said to the mechanic, "I have the gas on the Land Rover." He looked out the window at the four Rovers, turned to me and replied, "You're going to have a large bill." We settled on which Land Rover and I continued on my way.

Land Rover
Snaps



Fall 2000
THE ROVERS NORTH NEWS

Series I, II, III Official Land Rover Parts Distributor for the United States and Canada

"All the mares that's fit for Maud!"

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Fred Sisson, Norcross, GA, tows his 1938 Morgan F-type "Tryke" behind his "modern" '67



Bob Rafensperger's Dormobile showing off his immaculate restoration and teak wood bumperettes.



A robust 67 year old farmer from Quebec, CN proudly displays his agricultural spraying unit.



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