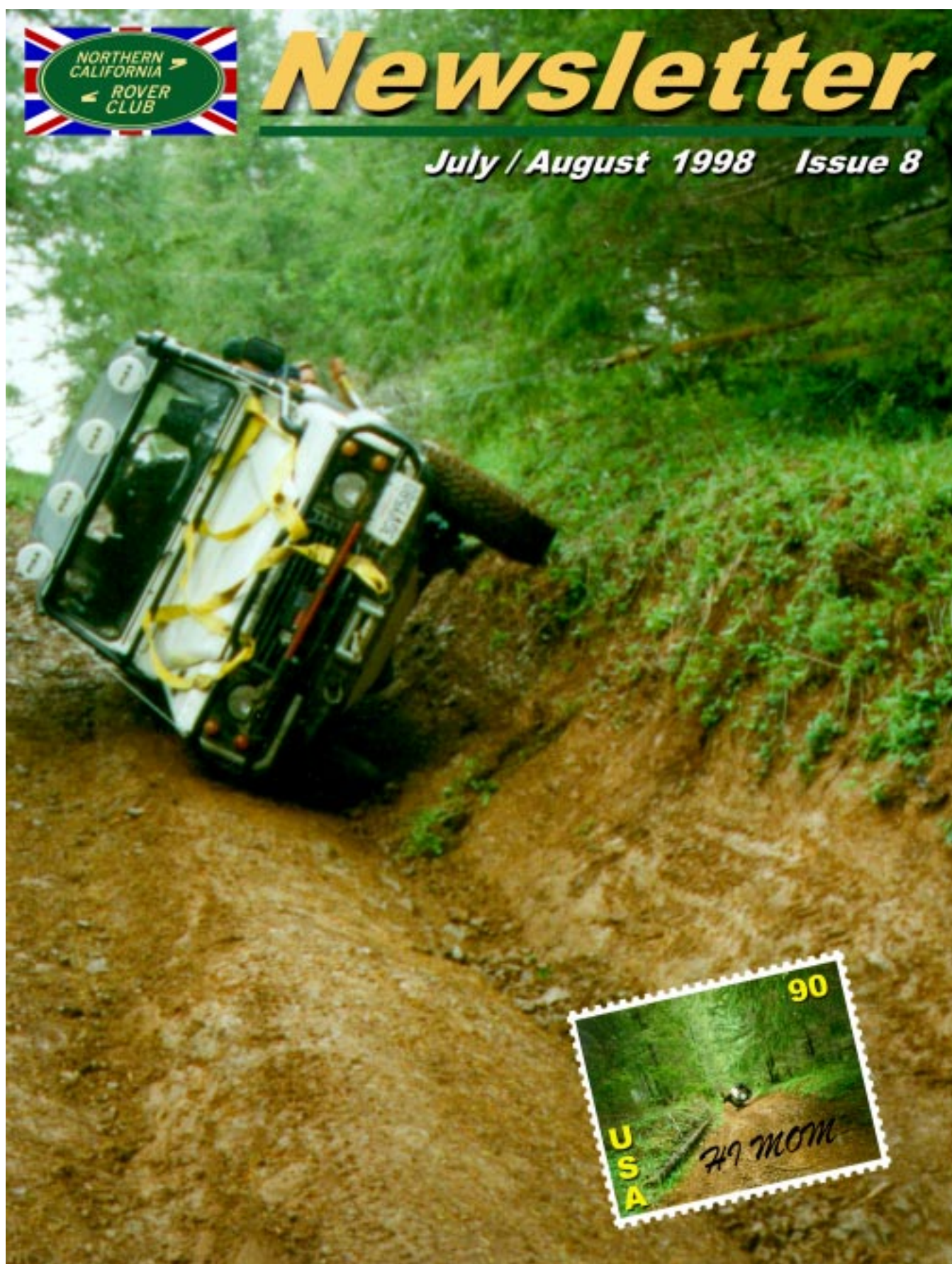




Newsletter

July / August 1998 Issue 8



Club Information

Any correspondence should be addressed to:

Northern California Rover Club

P.O. Box 14961

Berkeley, CA, 94712-5961

Members are strongly encourage to submit articles, notes or letters for publication.

Club Decals

Additional club decals are currently available for \$4 each. The decals are approximately 2 inches by 4 inches and bear the club logo as it appears on the newsletter cover. To obtain additional decals please forward a letter with a mailing address, number of decals desired and a check for the appropriate sum to the club address.

Newsletter Back Issues

Newsletter back issues may be obtained on an as available basis for \$2 each. The \$2 includes postage.

Membership Application

A membership application form is located on the rear page of each newsletter. Please feel free to copy this form for anyone you may know who is interested in joining the Northern California Rover Club. Application for membership need not be made using the application form. Membership application should include: Name, Mailing Address (inc. zip code), Telephone Number, Type of Rover owned

Officers

Current club officers are:

President: Bruce Bonar
Vice President: Ben Smith
Secretary: Mehdi Saghafi
Treasurer: Jeremy Bartlett
Member at large: Morgan Hannaford



Meeting minutes:

- Jeremy covered correspondence received. In particular a rather funny and confusing letter that may be posted in an upcoming newsletters for a member to decipher and explain to the rest.
- Rovers North will be doing a write up on our club in the near future in their newsletter.
- There were 12 members, 3 teams of two vehicles, from NCRC whom attended the Pacific North West Team Trophy challenge.
- Members are encouraged to send in pictures of their rovers to be published in the newsletter.
- The club will be moving to word more advanced planning for events, so trip announcements are not done in the last minute fashion.
- Nomination for the club award were made. See Club Awards on page 4 for details.
- Fil Figueroa shared some pictures from the Red Rock trip that will be featured as a trip report in the next newsletter.

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Cover Photo:

During the PNWTT competition, Ben Smith helps Ben Mitchell right his D90 on a stretch of the road in the Tillamook State Forest in Oregon.

This was not a Special Task. ☺

Calendar

The following events may be of interest to club members. If you know of any events or wish to lead fellow club members on a trip please contact one of the club officers or send information to the club PO Box. If you are only wanting to make informal contact with other members for a small trip and do not want to lead a fully sanctioned club event you can list your trip under the "Non-Club Events". Get out there with others and have fun!

PLEASE NOTE THAT OUR CLUB MEETING ARE BEING FORMALIZED AT THE 3RD FRIDAY OF ALTERNATING MONTHS (EVEN MONTHS). LOCATION WILL ROTATE OCCASIONALLY. THIS IS PART OF AN EFFORT TO BETTER PROVIDE NOTICE AND OPERATION OF CLUB ACTIVITIES.

UNTIL LOCATIONS ARE FORMALIZED CONTACT MEHDI 510-595-3934 OR JEREMY 510-540-8630 FOR MEETING LOCATIONS AND DETAILS.

NCRC EVENTS

August 21 NCRC Meeting 8:00 PM

August 22-23, Blue Lakes-Deer Valley Trail. Between Hwy 4 and Hwy 88. An opportunity to do some moderate boulder crawling and trail running in the high Sierra followed by a stream side camping for those staying overnight. Contact Jeremy 510-540-8630

October 3-4, Pass area. Suitable for all vehicles and all levels of experience.

Oct 17-18 2nd Annual Sierra Fall Colors Expedition. Downieville-Gold Lakes-Sierra Buttes. Expedition type trip in the Yuba River Area (see page 5 for info)

October 23 NCRC Meeting 8:00 PM

October 23, 24, & 25 Urban Adventure. Rovers in San Francisco.

November 7-8, First NCRC Anniversary Rally / 50th Land Rover Anniversary Rally in Mendocino National Forest.

Dec. 18 NCRC Meeting 8:00 PM

Early January 1999 Mud Run. Probably between Willits and Ft. Bragg.

July 3 - 9 1999 1st annual NCRC Summer Expedition. Black Rock Desert, Nevada & environs

July 31 - August 1st 1999, High Sierra Trip.

August 1999 Blue Lakes

September 16 -19th 1999, White Mtns-Owens Valley. From the Owens Valley near Mt. Whitney to Death Valley. 3 or so days of "weekend" travel over scenic roads and moderate off-road trails through some dramatic scenery.

October 1999, 3rd Annual Fall Colors Expedition

WEST COAST NON NCRC EVENTS

September 4-6, The 22nd Portland All British Field Meet, saluting Land Rover, will be held over the Labor Day weekend at The Portland International Raceway (PIR), Portland, Oregon, USA. Friday and Saturday night, numerous Land Rover owners will be camped out in the infield at PIR in a beautiful grassy clearing surrounded by trees. Saturday morning begins the display part of the meet. As before, vehicles in any condition are enthusiastically welcomed. Expected among the more than 125 Land Rovers are a 101 Forward Control, a Land Rover ambulance and several Dormobiles. An additional highlight of the event (for those poor souls who don't own a Land Rover) is the off-road jungle course where rides in a new Land Rover product will be provided by Land Rover of Portland. Those of us who own our own Land Rover will be able to conquer the off road jungle course on Saturday night and Sunday. Sunday morning is also the time that the PCRC prepares and serves breakfast for the assembled club members and guests. Registration information or directions may be obtained from Gord'n Perrot, Pacific Coast Rover Club, 10537 Interlake Ave. North, Seattle, WA 98133. (206) 361-5766.

September 13, Palo Alto Field. Meet on the soccer field across from Stanford shopping center.

April 24 & 25 1999 Mendo V

May 15 & 16 1999 Pacific Northwest Team Trophy Challenge

September 4-5 1999 Portland ABFM

September 12 1999 Palo Alto Field Meet

NCRC Awards

The NCRC Awards were handed out at the club picnic at Hollister SVRA. The Woody, which is given to the club member having the worst luck with their Land Rover yet persisting in its ownership was awarded to Jim Russell (the only serious competition was Tom Walsh). Jim received the award in recognition of his historic combination of drowning is 88", badly breaking his leg while moving a log out of the way of his vehicle, and finally blowing his head halfway along on his recent trip moving back to Seattle. On hearing of news of the award (it was awarded in abstentia) Jim stated: *"Now, of course, I would like to thank all the little people. Sure, they are scum but we all need someone to walk on, and this great honor simply wouldn't have been possible without them Wish I could have made the awards ceremony."* We all wish Jim better luck next time. (For the club members who don't know the story, the "Woody" is made from the remains of the log that broke Jim's leg.)



The Gnarlciissus, which is given to the club member with the most cosmetically striking Land Rover was awarded to Tom Walsh for his highly modified Discovery (known as the Light Brigade). The nominees included Bruce Bonar for the first D90 with chrome wheels, Armando Nieto, John Hong for his roofless red shockless Rover (the shockless monster??) or was it the Naked 109?, Rick Larson for his project D90, Daniel Oppenheim for Kermit, and Eric Cope (BUBBA). There promises to be a lot of nominees for this next year, so get out that carnuba wax or the sledge hammer.

Club Picnic



Members of the N.C.R.C. met on July 11th at Hollister State Vehicle Recreational Area for the club picnic and awards ceremony. Most people arrived just after 10am although members appeared and disappeared all day. The club awards, the Woody and Gnarlciissus, were awarded just after lunch. After a morning of socializing under the shade of the large oak near the obstacle course a few groups spread across the trails to try some of the local challenges with varying degrees of success. Approximately 30 members showed up throughout the event and all appeared to have fun. The club plans to hold a social picnic again next year, and possibly a second one later this year.



Upcoming NCRC Tour of the Sierra Buttes and Lakes Basin 5

This expedition-style 4x4 tour will explore the northern and higher elevations of the Sierra County gold country. We will cross various drainages of the Yuba River, climb (by vehicle and on foot) the Alps-like Sierra Buttes and circumnavigate the well named Lakes Basin. What does "expedition-style 4x4 tour" mean? Good question... we will be on dirt roads and trails of varying condition, with 4x4 low range recommended on much of the route. Diff-lock for coilers: maybe. Locking diffs: definitely not. Panel damage: unlikely. Pinstriping? Well, it could be one of the souvenirs you bring home, but nothing major (more likely on Day 2).

Day 1 Saturday, October 17 ~ Meet in Downieville on Hwy 49 (el 2899', pop 350, 50 curvy miles north of Nevada City) adjacent to the confluence of the Downie and North Yuba Rivers. Be fueled and provisioned, ready to roll at 10:30 sharp. We will air down later. Note that there is only one gas station in town, so plan your arrival time accordingly. There are small parking lots on either side of Hwy 49 in town, and we'll meet in the town park adjacent to the old mining equipment (Downieville is SO small, you won't miss us). Our convoy will wind approximately 12 miles up Hwy 49 to Sierra City (el 4400') where we will hang a left, air down, engage low range and take a deep breath. In the next five miles we will climb an old mining road that switchbacks up an exposed south face to the base (el 7939') of the Sierra Buttes. Plan on an early lunch there allowing time to stretch legs and, for those who wish, to climb the 1 mile trail to the breathtaking lookout at the peak (el 8591'). After lunch we will convoy several miles on a gravel logging road to Packer Saddle where we pick up the Deer Lake OHV trail for slow going to Summit Lake and a run down a rocky gulch to Gold Lake. We will drive the perimeter of Gold Lake on a combination of rocky OHV trail, paved road, and Forest Service double track. The route from that point to our lakeside primitive campsite (elev 6500'+) is still TBA at press time.

Your not-so-fearless leaders envision an afternoon finish time on Saturday that will allow for recces and side trail exploration, fishing or canoeing, trying one's hand at watercolors, mountain biking, whatever. A night run is also a possibility.

Day 2 Sunday, October 18 ~ At press time, Sunday morning is envisioned to be 4x4 trail exploration in Gold Valley, Pauley Creek and Butcher Ranch drainages.

The convoy will then depart the Basin via switchback descent to Sierra City, via Packer Saddle to Bassetts, or possibly Forest Road 93 to Union Flat. General info: Given the date of this trip, weather is a major wildcard. An early (light) snowfall in the weeks prior to the trip does not necessarily cancel it; however, a forecast of inclement weather for the weekend definitely would (have you read the Donner Party Story?).

The route sheet provided here is provisional, and hasn't been confirmed on the ground. A package of map, updated route sheet and local history will be handed out to participants in Downieville. The Club's safety inspection and liability waiver will be handled there as well. Monitor CB channel 7. The usual level of mechanical/recovery self-sufficiency and convoy rules/courtesy (don't leave a junction until you see the Rover behind has made the turn) are strongly recommended.

Bay Area (San Rafael) to Downieville is about 200 miles via Hwy 80 and 49. Have made it in 4hrs in Trip (D110), but took a bit longer in Watusi (I1A 109). Latecomers can catch us at the Buttes.

(Provisional)

Route Sheet NCRC Tour of the Sutter Buttes and Lakes Basin Oct 17-18 '98

Location	Direction	Mileage (Leg / Total)	Latitude (Deg / Min / Sec)	Longitude (Deg / Min / Sec)	Elev.	Trip	Comments
Downieville Street	Hwy 49 North CROSS ROAD	0.0 / 0.0	39 33 37	120 49 44	2893		Passing left (cross) fork of Hwy. 49 in town. Road leads through logging camp.
Sierra City John Galt St.	LEFT	0.5 / 0.5	33 56	38 07	4179		
Butte St. John Galt St.	LEFT	0.1 / 0.6	34 00	38 01	4274		
Sawtooth Ladwell	RIGHT	1.0 / 1.6	34 00	37 08	4651		End of Packer! Re-group, Air Down.
John Galt	LEFT	0.8 / 2.4	34 23	39 22	5052		
John Galt	RIGHT	0.5 / 2.9	34 34	39 40	5200		Keep air 4 wheels in the turn, or air down to "jump".
Rebelio Shaw	RIGHT	2.2 / 5.1	35 03	40 26	6479		Look at the view!
John Galt	RIGHT	0.5 / 5.6	35 16	40 04	6768		Below OHV trail
Trailhead Packer	PAVE (APPEND)	1.1 / 6.7	35 42	39 14	7939		Look? 1.5 mi (400') more to Sierra Buttes looking?
John Galt	RIGHT	1.1 / 7.8	35 16	40 04	6768		END OHV TRAIL
John Galt	RIGHT	1.9 / 9.7	36 21	40 14	6719		
John Galt	LEFT	0.5 / 10.2	36 42	39 55	7011		
John Galt	RIGHT	0.2 / 10.4	36 51	39 59	7070		
John Galt	RIGHT	0.2 / 10.6	37 03	40 04	7102		
Packer Saddle	STRAIGHT	0.1 / 10.7	37 10	40 01	7027		
John Galt	RIGHT (?) (APPEND)	0.5 / 11.2	37 36	40 08	7132	TBA	BEGIN OHV TRAIL
Summit Lake	RIGHT	2.6 / 13.8	39 42	40 30	7060		BEGIN DESCENT OF Rocky wash
John Galt Gold Lake Saddle	RIGHT	1.1 / 14.9	40 15	40 01	6417		Run OHV trail OHV CAMPING
John Galt Gold Lake Hwy	TBA (APPEND)	2.1 / 17.0	39 40 53	120 38 28	6555	TBA	PERMIT @. RARE Boulders. But TBA



Technical Information



D90 Spare Tire Hood Mount Installation

By: Jeremy Bartlett

So you own a D90 but you're jealous of those Series vehicle owners that can carry their spare tire so stylishly on their hood ☺. Well help is at hand from Land Rover itself. There are genuine hood mount kits sold by Land Rover. These kits are part numbers STC7633 (steel rim) and part number STC 7686 (alloy rim). I've never seen one of the kits for the alloy rim, but I believe the only difference is in the rim "clamp" which will have to be smaller (and taller?) for the smaller hub access hole in the alloy rims. The parts are not carried (to the best of my knowledge) by dealers in North America but are readily available from the UK. Note that the kits differ somewhat from the hood mounts used for the Series vehicles. While the latter might be workable for a steel rim equipped Defender running narrow tires, I wouldn't recommend it if only because the rim mount is not as secure and the cross bracing used in the kits isn't present in the Series set up. Also the D90 kits come with a solid hood brace (that fits holes already in place on the hood) which is a lot more secure than the existing folding brace or that on the Series vehicles.

I decided to install the hood mount because I wanted a bit more flexibility in how I carry spares, and because I decided to purchase a 2nd set of directional tires (Michelin XCLs) that, ideally, require two spares, a left and right. With so little space as is in the rear bed of the D90, this left my last option for a 2nd spare location as the hood. The discovery that Land Rover made a hood mount kit specifically for the D90 tipped the scales on that decision.

I'm not going to laboriously describe the specific installation of the mounts since they come with reasonably good instructions (in mostly pictorial form). What I describe here is an over view of the installation with a few observations that aren't pointed out in the instructions or points where I think some improvement can be made.

Extra Bits

Before you rush out and start the job make sure you realize there's no going back to stock here!. You will be drilling a number of small and not so small holes in the hood.

On the subject of drilling, Photograph 1 shows the installed reinforcing plates on the underside of the hood.

There is a central one and two side ones (one of the side ones is just visible to the right.) Use a rat tail file to smooth out the drill holes as shown. Also note the THICK block of wood on which the file is resting. Being lazy I used that as a backing to drill into from the top rather than remove the entire hood to do the drilling (the Defender hoods are more of a pain to remove than the Series hoods). This

prevented me from drilling into engine components. So, obviously its possible to do the job this way but it is riskier than following the full instructions and removing the hood. Clean up all the swarf afterwards; you don't want it getting into connectors and the like.

Photograph 2 shows the installed rim bracing/mounting plate from the underside (this is screwed rather than riveted in place like the bracing plate. While most of the kit can be put together from only the parts supplied, I'd recommend purchasing a few longer (1/2" long) 3/16 rivets. In a few locations, particularly the rear of the bracing installation, I found that the rivets supplied weren't quite long enough to get a good secure grip.

Photograph 3 shows the final product (the rivets are shown



in bare metal, I've not yet applied touch up paint to the heads to make the finish look a bit tidier). The rubber mounts keep the sidewall off the hood itself while the black



D90 Spare Tire Hood Mount Installation



metal rim "clamp" in the center actually slides down on top of the rim once it's placed over the protruding "brass" finish poles and is screwed into place.

The Final Catch

One of the biggest omissions from the kit directions is that once you've installed your hood mounted spare, the weight of the wheel is going to prevent the hood release catch from releasing. The solution to this is very simple but there's an additional modification necessary. The solution is to remove the spring loaded catch from the hood (photograph 4). This is unscrewed, using the nut at the top. I keep mine in the center console box in case I ever want to reinstall it; if there's no spare tire on the hood, it just takes a minute or two to screw it back in and make the hood a bit more secure. The problem now is you have nothing to hold your hood down! Therefore you have to install external hood latches (sometimes referred to as military hood latches). These are shown in photograph 5. These can be fit in any area in the forward part of the hood as long as the reach and tension are good. As with all other drilling and mounting, when you're installing these measure several times before you drill. Estimate the location of the catch and latch so that the latch will be under slight tension when it is actually mounted. Otherwise the latches will be loose and defeat the purpose. This is a matter of judgment because you don't want them so tight that they're difficult to connect or pull themselves from their mounting bolts. By the way... do use small bolts and decent size backing washers rather than sheet metal screws; screws will tear out. Also check you can easily reach under the wings/fenders to install the nuts on the bolts at your selected locations BEFORE you drill the holes!



If you do decide to install a hood mount on your D90 I'd not recommend carrying the spare on it at all times for three reasons. 1) It does cut down on visibility somewhat, although not as much as I expected. 2) The additional weight (and vibration) would probably cause increased stress wear and tear (the D90 hoods are not as sturdy as their Series predecessors. 3) It's a lot more difficult to open the hood.

Mine has served its purpose rather well. I do notice that if I'm carrying a hood spare for any length of time it is necessary to occasionally retighten the restraining bolts holding the rim clamp in place, so be forewarned.



Technical Information



Replacing 2.25 Rollers

By: Mehdi Saghafi

After doing a routine maintenance and tune up on my 73 SIII, I ran the wrench over the exhaust and intake manifold nuts. They were loose. As I tightened the nuts, I began to think how much more quite the engine will be. And this is where it all began. Now I could hearHear the other noises from the engine...

After test driving the car, I could hear tapping from the engine bay. One that is usually associated with a bad valve adjustment. I had just adjusted the valves and rechecked them before putting the valve cover on, but I guess I needed more practice. As I listened more carefully, the tapping was not a regular as you would expect. If it is a bad valve adjustment, it should have a rhythm and be RPM dependent.

A few days later, I went back and rechecked the valve clearance. Valve # 7 was loose. I adjusted it. Next day driving to work, there was the tapping again... So I posted the tapping question to the mendo_recce email list and there came Bob Bernard's diagnosis. Bad ROLLERS!

What is a roller, I asked. Bob explained that it sits on the cam and below the tappet. The push rod then sits on the tappet. If the roller gets stuck or develops a flat spot, depending on the position of that spot when the cam is pushing on it, you get performance variance. So when I adjusted my valve with roller's "OK" surface on the cam, then my adjustment was too loose for when the flat sides is on the cam, and hence I had my irregular tapping. The course of action was to remove the head and check the rollers. I asked for help and Vance Chin

offered to help without really knowing what was in store for him. I also received another email from Bob. It read:

*"Hi Mehdi,
I forgot to mention that the out of round roller can do damage to the cam. So when the roller is out you need to climb up and look down the hole, watch the cam closely then have someone turn the engine slowly with a crank. Look real close at the backside of the high dwell of the lobe as it starts down. I've seen damage there. Probably from the bouncing of the egg shaped roller.
Good luck with it.
Bob B"*

Are you getting a better picture now?

Ben Smith emailed these directions:

"Steps to get the head off (for 2.25L):

- 1. Drain coolant*
- 2. Remove air filter.*
- 3. Removed heater adjusting wire (if present)*
- 4. Remove/disconnect the coolant lines that connect to the head (2 on top and one below)*
- 5. Remove 3 nuts holding valve cover on and remove valve cover.*
- 6. Remove the banjo nut for the oil line on the rear corner of the head.*
- 7. Remove the 3/5 small bolts securing the rocker arms to the head.*
- 8. Remove nuts and bolts holding the manifolds to the head (about 9) and push assembly to the side.*
- 9. Remove the head bolts (4 or 5 are holding down the rocker arms) 20 or so in all.*
- 10. Lift out the rocker arm assembly. It will go "sproing" if you are not careful*
- 11. Removed the 8 push rods and *label which one*





Technical Information



9

Replacing 2.25 Rollers

went where *.

12. Get the head off. Sometimes I have had to use a screwdriver as a lever to get it free via the front left side corner. To get the rollers out:

13: Remove the 8 small bolts that should be safety wired in.

14: Pull out the sliders

15: Use a magnet to fish out the rollers.

Ben

Addendum to Ben's Excellent instruction:

Put the valve cover on the bench, then when you remove the rocker arm assembly, you invert the rocker assembly, and insert the same three bolts into the cover from the top. This will stop the thing (assembly) from sproinging apart into pieces.

Another thought is to spray something (WD40 or Locktite or Coke etc.) to dissolve some of the rust on the manifold bolts days before the project. They may come off easier when you get to them.

Bob B"

Using a hoist, Vance and I removed the head with the manifolds and the carburetor attached. Bob was right. There was a out of round roller (pic 1) and there was a damaged 2.5 L cam smiling below it. (pic 2) There was some discussion trying to figure out why it happened. We hand cranked the engine and saw the oil flowing nicely. So lubrication was not a problem. At the end we figured a not hardened enough roller was to blame! So I ordered a new 2.5 L cam, all new tappet/rollers for the engine (8 in all) and new push rods, since a



couple of them had some round score marks in them. With some gaskets and new oil pan seals, the cost was under \$500.

We also removed the oil pump and checked it against the specs for gear clearance. It was perfect. We also placed a magnet in the oil pan to capture the shavings from the next unknown source to be!

Assembly was the following Saturday and was the reverse of the disassembly ☺ We washed the sides of the tappet with a solvent to remove the green coated material on it, and made sure that it would move with ease within its housing; however we did not remove the coating from the bottom of the tappet where it sits on the rollers. We figured it would have less friction and reduce the possibility of the rollers not turning and developing a flat spot when we start the car. We also did not apply a cam lube to the cam. We poured about two quarts of 10-40W into the 8 openings and hand cranked the engine with the spark plugs out to get the oil flowing to the cam before starting the car.

The Land Rover repair manual was clear enough to follow, but not very well organized. . I had heard that the 2.5 L cam can be set up a bit differently to get more HP out of the engine, but did not bother to look into it. It was fun working on it, and thanks to Vance much easier. It was great having him there to help. (I still owe a few hours to his neighbor's shop, to help them clean it and take a load to the Urban Recycling Center, the dump. ☺)



THE DEAL WITH DEALERS

By: Jeremy Bartlett

No this isn't about buying a new Land Rover or talking with that white suede shoed used car salesman for that "Toyota Land Rover" he's got on his lot. This is information about the service end of dealerships. It might help those of you who own newer Land Rovers approach dealers more knowledgeably and, hopefully, effectively or at least give you some peace of mind.

People and Positions--There are several layers of responsibility involved in servicing your vehicle. These are the typical people involved:

Service Advisor - This is the person you deal with most, the one who meets you at the service drive, schedules your "appointment", telephones you with results/questions, discusses the bill with you, etc. Unfortunately service advisors' knowledge of automobiles varies widely. Some may be former technicians; others barely know what a spark plug is after years of work in the automotive world. This means that you may or may not get effective information from or through the advisor, so you may have to ask more questions or try to talk to additional people.

Dispatcher - The dispatcher is responsible for the daily scheduling and tracking of work at the level of the mechanics. They serve as go-betweens for the mechanics and service advisors. Not all dealers use dispatchers; in many cases this position is also part of the service advisor's duties. You will not likely ever have any interaction with the dispatcher but knowing the steps in the ladder might help you figure out where decisions are made.

Technician (and Apprentice) - These are the people who used to be known as mechanics. Now days most dealers also have at least one apprentice in their shop due to the rapid growth in Land Rover sales. The shop (even non-union shops) has a foreman who is the senior technician and may or may not work on vehicles on a routine basis. Few Land Rover technicians have more than 5 years 'Rover experience, although many have significantly more on other marques. Land Rover business has grown rapidly over the last four years leaving the service departments looking for experience technicians and stretched to their limits (is the 3 week wait for an "appointment" familiar?).

Detailer - These are the fellows who wash and clean your car. Cleaning up the vehicle is not performed by the technicians (except for basic removal of greasy fingerprints). Dealers have separate "departments" for that work and they interact with the service advisor just as the technicians do.

Service Manager - This is the person responsible for running the service department. Their responsibilities will vary from dealer to dealer. Most customers have no interaction with them. They are, however, the person who usually enters the picture if there's a major problem or complaint. They

are the first stop on the decision/responsibility trail for resolving customer complaints about service or vehicle performance.

Costs -- How are service costs determined? Service costs are typically done on a fixed price basis. In other words, particular jobs are estimated by both Land Rover and independents (for example Chilton's guidebooks) to take a given number of hours. You are quoted and usually billed for those hours. If the job takes more than that time, you will never know about it (unless it delays return of your vehicle). What happens is that either the dealer, or more typically the technician, eats the cost of the extra hours. The technician is paid at X dollars an hour but is paid only the estimated hours of the job they're doing. This is known as the flat rate system. If the technician gets the job done quicker than estimated, they are still paid the originally estimated number of hours times their rate (effectively improving their hourly rate). If it takes them more time.... well, better luck next time for them. This encourages quick work; however, quick can be either efficient or sloppy. There is some penalty for sloppy work. If you return your vehicle with a complaint about the work and the foreman or other authority agrees that it is the fault of the technician, then the technician is usually not paid for the time to redo the work. The flat rate system is not used in all shops but there is usually some variation of it in place. Union shop techs are typically hourly even when they're not busy but may either get the advantage of the flat rate bonus if they are quicker than estimated or may have some form of incentive scheme for quicker work (either per job or per time period). A similar bonus scheme may apply to some non-union shops that are straight hourly rather than flat rate. Land Rover is rumored to want all of its dealers/centers to move to an hourly system. This may be because they perceive the quality problems of the flat rate system as outweighing its benefits.

Warranty and Good Will -- As with most manufacturers, Land Rover now has fairly extensive multi-year warranty coverage. This is quite different from the days when Series owners who purchased their vehicles new owned their problems as soon as they drove their vehicles off the lot. Some people believe that LRNA pays dealers better for warranty work than customers pay for similar jobs. This is not true. Warranty work is, as a rule, less lucrative for all involved on the dealer's side. Furthermore, some of the accounting and incentive/penalty schemes that LRNA has in place for dealers contribute to significant variation in how dealers tend to approach warranty complaints. Basically, dealers with high warranty service records are financially penalized by LRNA. But, those with high customer satisfaction are rewarded. Therefore, there is a

trade off between warranty work and customer satisfaction. How a particular dealer chooses to approach this will partly effect the ease with which any warranty claims you might have are handled. If you're unhappy you can always try another dealer (if the distances aren't too bad) since warranty work can be performed at any location.

When your vehicle is out of warranty you are expected to pay for repairs yourself even if the problem is an issue that is a common failure while in warranty. There are cases, decided on a case by case basis where the dealer will extend coverage outside of warranty, effectively absorbing the costs (or a percentage thereof) themselves. This coverage comes under the label "Good Will". This usually only applies to vehicles relatively close to the limit and is done at the dealers' discretion. There are no guarantees of this, of course.

There are also gray area limitations to how a dealer can approach a warranty complaint depending on the description of the complaint. For example, if you tell the service writer that the front crank seal is leaking and you'd like it replaced and they dutifully write that on the repair order, then that's all that may get done. On the other hand, for the same complaint, if you tell the service advisor that the engine is leaking oil and they dutifully write THAT down, then you could end up with a larger amount of work been done, depending on what's actually leaking. The more general complaint leaves more discretion on the part of examining authorities as to what ought to be fixed. Some problems that are not noticed or complained about may still be fixed but there are vague limits to what a dealer can "self authorize" as a warranty repair.

Service Quality -- There is a down side to being general in the description of problems. If you describe a problem too generally it may not be fixed because it cannot be located or the exact nature of the complaint cannot be duplicated. "The engine makes a noise" ... is not a particularly helpful remark. This is where a good service advisor is useful because they will prompt you for as many details surrounding a problem as possible or necessary. As a general rule give as many details as possible if you're describing driveability or performance problems. This is critical for intermittent problems. If your service advisor has the automotive smarts of a doorknob you'll have to be particularly aware of details to pass on yourself. As a rule, to parody our President, "if you're not asked, tell". It very rarely happens that the technician working on the problem has direct contact with the customer. This has some benefits for the peace of mind and effectiveness of the technician; however, one of the disadvantages is loss of detailed information. It is not uncommon for a problem to be solved when the technician actually has the opportunity to discuss the symptoms face to face with the customer. If you think it would be helpful you might want to offer providing information directly to the technician, although this may not be encouraged by the service advisor or the

technician (especially if they think your just out for a tirade). So why does the quality of work done on your vehicle vary? Well, each time you take a vehicle in any technician may receive the job, unless it's a repeat complaint, in which case the last person to work on it usually gets it back. Now, of course different technicians have different strengths, weaknesses and experiences, so you could have exactly the same job done and get different results.

Scheduling -- There are a number of scheduling events throughout the service day that can make a critical difference to the time work on your vehicle is completed but which you will be completely unaware of. "They've had my vehicle 3 days and still haven't fixed it!" Ever heard this or experienced it? Probably. Here's a few ways this disaster can come about. Unfortunately there's little that you can do to change this.

Work on your vehicle will typically not be started the moment it's dropped off. Most dealers are fully worked most of the time so the left over work from the last day will be finished off before new work is begun. Then the priority of the jobs will be decided by the dispatcher. If a job before yours goes badly or there is a lot of warranty work discovered or a lot of additional work authorized (for example the discovery of low brake pads) then the start of your job is delayed. I've seen jobs delayed by a couple days.

Odd as it may seem, most dealers carry only the more commonly used parts (which still amounts to a fairly large amount). So if you've got an unusual problem (or even something not that unusual) there's a good chance the part will have to be ordered. The technician determines what parts are required after examining the vehicle. This involves a trip to the parts department by the technician and time spent interacting with the parts personnel, who are not infrequently overloaded (there are significantly fewer parts people than technicians). If the part is going to be ordered then that request has to get out to the central parts supply by 2:00 pm. If it doesn't go out by then, well.. that's another day's delay (these orders are referred to within the service organization as VORs which is short for Vehicle Off Road... not the same meaning as most of us would apply to it though). These rushed parts don't get in until about 10 am to 11 am the next day. Sometimes they're even later; sometimes they're the wrong part, and sometimes they're defective. If the technician has been pulled onto another job (almost guaranteed) by then, then there will be a delay before he can return to your vehicle. If the job's a long one then your looking at yet another day.. Presto.. 3 days. Now, if its an intermittent problem...it might not be fixed because of the guess work involved. Of course there's lots of less complimentary reasons a job might not be correctly performed (sloppy or inexperienced work, failure to check work, for example) but even on a trouble free job there's a not uncommon reason why a vehicle might be held for 3 days.

Email from Benjamin Smith

On June 27, Land Rover North America invited Land Rover enthusiasts to their corporate headquarters in Lanham, MD to celebrate 50 years of Land Rover. Land Rovers arrived by the hundreds. Out front, on a small mound, LRNA had placed two Land Rovers: a green 1998 Range Rover, mk II and an early Series I 80". The visiting Rovers parked all over, but unfortunately on pavement. Officially about 260 Land Rovers showed up. At noon I went around and counted which ones had showed up and came up with 193.

6	Series I
12	Series II/IIA 88"
8	Series II/IIA 109"
7	Series III 88"
2	Series III 109"
5	Land Rover 110s or Defender 110s
14	Defender 90 Soft Tops
19	Defender 90 Station Wagons
73	Discoveries
28	Range Rover Classics
16	Range Rover, mkII
4	Other

And even that doesn't describe the diversity of Land Rover that showed up. The other category was for 2 Range Rover/ Series hybrids, a Series III Shorland Armored Car (complete with machine guns!) and a Series IIB Forward Control. The Series I's consisted of an 80" Soft Top, an 86" a 1952 Woody Station Wagon (though I think this was a replica), a 1951 80" Soft top, a 1952 80" Hard Top and a 1957 88" Hard Top. There also was a Series III Carawagon that had been a NATO command car. The Carawagon had been recently shipped over from the UK. It had only gotten out of the container 48 hours previous to the event.

As is to be expected with Land Rover owners, they spent most of their time admiring each others Rovers and talking. LRNA put on a number of activities to instruct and entertain people. At their HQ LRNA has an extended test track to show off the abilities of the Discovery and Range Rover. Unfortunately, only LRNA drivers were allowed to drive, but they spent all day taking people around. The course had your standard hill climb, wading, and side slopes. The impressive bit of the course was that it had one side slope of about 35 to 40 degrees. Just watching one wondered if the Rover would tip over. They never did, but it looked like they should.

There were also buses over to Land Rover University for tours, a timed driving course and off road driving instruction. The tour explained the key points of Land Rover Centres and how they are decorated to create a universal theme. Opportunities were made for people ask mechanics questions. A whole pile of technical services and other such bulletins were left out on a convenient table.

Unfortunately, nothing all that interesting was in them. No explanations of Disco drive line clonk. The tour ended with splitting the group into 2 and play tic-tac-toe with Land Rover questions. Mostly easy ones—multiple choice. "What does BMW stand for?" "Where are Land Rovers built?". However they did not like it when I disputed one of their questions.

"All Land Rovers have:

- a) Part time four wheel drive
- b) Full time four wheel drive
- c) Permanent four wheel drive
- d) All wheel drive."

The official answer is that all Land Rovers have full time four wheel drive. I guess that little yellow lever on my Series III, and on about 1,000,000 other Land Rovers that were build for the first 36 years of Rover that engages 4 wheel drive, or the Series I 86" and Series III Lightweights that only had 2 wheel drive, never existed. It was not liked when I brought up these arguments that there was no one answer from their list. I was told "We are Land Rover, and we are right." Revisionist history I guess. My team still won and I got a LR University T-shirt.

Outside the driving course was simply to drive a Disco through some cones for time. You were penalized 5 seconds for every cone that you hit. Nothing is that easy—There was a naturally a twist. A steering box from a RHD Disco was put in the LHD Disco that was used on the course. The effect is that the steering is reversed. So you have to turn the wheel right to make the Disco turn left. Very strange. And very amusing to watch people try.

The off road course that they let you drive was fairly interesting. Muddy with a hill climb, deep ruts, steep descents, and a deep wade. A D90, two Discos, a Range Rover, mk II, and a Camel Trophy Disco were the choices. Each Rover had a Camel Trophy driver as a co-pilot giving people pointers, two of which were Tom Collins and Daphne Greene. Needless to say, I waited in line to drive the Camel Disco so that I could try out that 300 Tdi Diesel. A very nice engine and lots of torque at tickover speeds.

The day ended back at the LRNA HQ with awards for the oldest Rover. It went a 1951 80" that spent 40 years as a working vehicle on a Yorkshire farm. Quintin Aspen drives it on heavy off-roads and it looks like a Rover that is well used. LRNA also gave out Land Rover flags to clubs that had good turnout of members. Such clubs included the Rover Owners Association of Virginia, the Blue Ridge Land Rover Club and the Mostly Metro Land Rover Club.

One thing that I brought away from the event is that LRNA seems to want to have contact with clubs. Many of the corporate people were claiming that they were going to the ANARC 50th Event in Greek Peak, NY. Maybe one day one or more of them will come to a NCRC trip.

Member Profile



Daniel and Julia Oppenheim first test drove a land rover on a snowy day in Stratford-on-Avon, England in 1995. It was a brand new 1995 hunter green D110. Later, Back in the States, they found a pristine 1965 Ser IIa 88" Safari Station Wagon in San Diego, restored by Doug Shipman. and they bought it. Named "Kermit", Daniel has been using it as a daily driver. "Kermit" has been to Mendo, Paradise, and Big Sur twice, with many weekend camping trips with his car top tent.

Recently "Kermit" was sent to Africa for a second time, its 1st time was with its first owner, an anthropology Prof. from San Diego State who drove it in Zimbabwe studying elephants. While there, "kermit" bragged so much about Northern California and NCRC that a 1964 Ser IIa 109" Ex-military RHD Safari Station Wagon and 1972 Ser III 88" diesel, "Savanna", followed him back to California. Daniel claims that he needed the 109 because with all the custom aluminum cabinets, sink, and refrigerator. in the 88", there was no room for the 3 kids, but we all know that is just another excuse we come up with to buy another Rover!)

On a personal note, Daniel Oppenheim coaches business leaders, conducts seminars and facilitates off-site retreats for executives. Daniel keeps busy by being active in his 3 kids lives, plays a lot of racquetball, tap dancing, struggling with yoga, camping, and hiking. And he can finally say, "Go Broncos!" without hanging his head. Daniel's partner, Julia Ten Eyck, is a mediator, attorney and child advocate, writer, teacher, yoga practitioner, triathlete, and mother. She also enjoys gardening, camping, music, mystery novels, and, of course, travel and 4-wheeling! Julia also grew up in the mountains of Colorado, but has called San Francisco home since 1979. Together they recently completed a 10-week trip Rovering around South Africa.

Trip Report

"Kermit" goes to Africa

By: Julia and Daniel Oppenheim



We gleefully arrived in South Africa for the Land Rover 50th Anniversary Golden Jubilee Tour, after eighteen months of dreaming, planning and intense preparation. Weeks before, we had loaded our 1965 Series IIa 88" Safari wagon, "Kermit," onto the Majestic Maersk in Oakland, California and watched as she sailed out to sea, bound for Hong Kong, Singapore, then Durban, South Africa. Now, reunited again, we eagerly awaited the start of the Tour.

March 15th was the ceremonial send-off. No less than 65 Land Rovers of all shapes, sizes and vintages were in attendance. Eight Series I's, all so nicely refurbished, dozens of Series II's, IIa's, and Series III's in every configuration imaginable. Hard tops, no tops, soft tops, tropical tops, kitted-out for camping, expeditions, concourse, and town driving. Every stock Land Rover color, some less than standard shades, like lemon yellow, and even zebra stripes. Then there were the "Big Dogs" — the D110's. Probably 25 of those. There were Forward Controls, the Series IIb, and the first Freelander in South Africa. Land Rover of South Africa cosponsored the event with Vodacom, hosting a reception with champagne and orange juice. Kermit drew an unusual amount of attention, perhaps because no other vehicle had traveled so far to get there. We were so glad that we spent the time and effort to do it up "right." There is no possible way to convey the euphoria that we felt pulling away, around a turn, and seeing nothing but more of the greatest 4X4 by far behind and ahead of us, off into the horizon.

The sheer excitement and international diplomacy of the Tour's start and send-off lingered, as we made our way to our first stop, in Gwala-Gwala, a veld-school north of Pretoria in the Transvaal. Several times on the route, we stopped by the roadside to reconnoiter and quickly drew an

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audience. Groups of kids would gather on the tops of hills to wave and stare. Once, when we stopped, we were passed by a woman and two children in a wooden cart pulled by two oxen, in sharp contrast to the convoy of Land Rovers.

We arrived in Gwala Gwala and set up our first camp in a nearby field. Then we gathered for a tree-planting ceremony and a pre-dinner welcome. In his opening remarks, the proprietor and host of this remote camp said, "There is a 'golden thread' that runs through all Land Rover owners, no matter their country of origin." We have already begun following that Golden Thread on this journey.

After dinner — a massive braai (featuring wart hog and puff adder, no less) in the camp boma — we eagerly participated in a "traditional" Gwala-Gwala ritual. One at a time, those brave souls who dared stepped to the edge of the roaring camp fire, belted down a capful of mapoche (vuurwater) and shouted out "Gwala Gwala!" We were the first volunteers for this ritual, and unflinchingly threw back the first taste of international bonding. Later in the evening, our host, Ina Cotton, presented us with the half-full bottle of remaining brew. We were deeply touched to receive this symbol of the Golden Thread. We felt truly welcomed and accepted, by a community, a people, a country.

We departed Gwala Gwala after a refreshing night's sleep and hot shower (an experience we would come to cherish as the Tour carried on). Before settling in for a day behind the wheel, we hiked through the lovely tall African grasses to the top of a nearby hill, for a panoramic view of the campsite and valley and hills beyond. We were already in awe of the stunning diversity of plant and animal life in this beautiful land.

Hoping to sight our first wild game on the way to Kruger Park, we were breathless with excitement and anticipation. We were traveling in a convoy of about 13 vehicles now, in buddy groups of three or four each. Still a thrilling sight to look in our rearview mirror and see Series I's, II's, III's, and early and late-model Defender 110's, all rolling across the luscious lowveld landscape.

We entered Kruger through Orpen Gate and proceeded to Satara Camp. We immediately wondered whether the 2 meter high fence around the campsite would really keep out any hungry predators. We were awakened the next morning by the sound of two of the 1500 lions in the park roaring to one another, marking their territory — an unforgettable and chilling sound. We felt our presence there to be incidental to the wild and ancient rhythms playing themselves out around us.

That morning, we were on the road by 6 a.m., in search of game. The defining moment came early in the day. We rounded a turn and saw four giraffe standing in the trees, with about 30 impala. Suddenly the giraffe broke into a run. Then the herd of impala followed. As we say marveling

at this sight, wondering what had caused them to flee, a herd of almost 20 elephants came crashing out of the trees, trumpeting as they ran. There were several young one among them, including two babies, holding tight to their mothers' tails with their trunks and toddling along behind. Bringing up the rear was a huge bull, ears fanned wide. This was not to be our only elephant sighting, but as our first, it was a breathtaking event. One runs short of superlatives in describing the wonder of seeing these magnificent creatures in the wild.

One afternoon, we saw a most gruesome and compelling sight. We had stopped on a bridge to study some crocodiles floating in the river. Several other folks had gotten out of their cars and were looking at something next to the bridge. That "something" turned out to be the bloated (and smelly) carcass of a water buffalo, dead for several days and washed up against the bridge. A huge croc was nudging and gnawing on it. The carcass had no head and catfish (baubles) were swimming in and out of it, also feeding on the remains. As the catfish swam out, the croc was there waiting to gobble up the fish. We had never seen a more graphic example of the food chain in action.

Lacking air-conditioning in our Series IIa, in the 40 degree C heat, we were often compelled to retire to the shade of the campsite in the afternoons, while the air-conditioned D110's continued their roving in the park. Still, during our week in Kruger, we saw a remarkable variety of wildlife: more elephant, hippos, buffalo, white rhino, lions, many baboons, zebra, wildebeest, duiker, porcupine, and dozens of different bird species. Seeing and experiencing these creatures in their natural habitat, one gets a sense of their true nature, that cannot be conveyed when one encounters them in a zoo. We were also struck by the variety of family systems and patterns within the animal kingdom. Diversity is the way.

We had been on the road but a week, and it seemed like a month, we had seen so much, with eight more glorious weeks to go. We were with the greatest group of people we could ask for, all knowledgeable about the African bush, helpful and continuously warm, even in their poking fun at the American way of life. How odd that we had come to represent "America" here.

Our next stop after Kruger was Hlane Royal National Game Reserve in Swaziland. The best way to describe our experience in Hlane would be to share how our first day there ended — we showered together under the stars. Not just any stars, but stars we had never seen before, being that we were in the southern hemisphere. A primitive yet totally effective "donkey" boiler (heated by a wood fire) heated the water for this open-air ablution, and the closeness that was a perfect end to this rejuvenating day. After four days of breakneck big-game viewing, we finally had a chance to catch our breath.

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N o r t h e r n C a l i f o r n i a R o v e r C l u b

T r i p R e p o r t

Not that our days in Hlane were uneventful. Early in our Hlane outings, we rounded a turn on a narrow dirt road and encountered a huge white rhino staring us down. When he lowered his head and rubbed his horn on the ground, Daniel quietly shifted the car into reverse, hoping that we would not have to test our backing-up speed against the rhino's forward gears. After five or so tense minutes, he finally trotted off into the bush. Later, we came close to being charged by an angry young bull elephant who was unhappy that we interrupted him drinking at a water hole. The following day, we hired a guide to take us on a walk around the park, where we encountered a mother rhino and her young, not 10 meters from where we stood, frozen in our tracks.

After two days, we departed Swaziland and headed back into South Africa and the Natal coast. We encountered a detour from the highway that put us on a dirt road for several kilometers. The dust was becoming a challenge. As soon as we hit dirt, we had to close all of the vents and windows, no small sacrifice when it is 40 degrees C and we had no air-conditioning. Even so, the dust seeped into everything, especially the "kitchen" cabinet.

The border crossings into and out of Swaziland were uneventful. The officials did not bat an eye at the fact that we had a "foreign" vehicle. Julia bought cold drinks from the "Hamburger Hut" at the border. There was a white man working there, probably the proprietor, who looked like what we in the U.S. would call an aging hippie. He asked about our trip and where we were from. When we said we were from America, he said, "Better to be barefoot in Africa than have a million bucks in the United States." Perhaps we would come to agree.

We next spent two wonderful days in Mkuze Game Reserve, a small park tucked away in a valley in the hilly lands south of Swaziland. The park had a lovely tree-shaded campground and — wonder of wonders — a swimming pool, where we spent a refreshing afternoon beating the heat and socializing with our fellow travelers. We also enjoyed a short walk in a very magical fig forest, full of monkeys and trumpeter hornbills. Then, having seen the lowveld, the highveld, and game galore, we headed for the coast, to Mapelane. On the way, we stopped at a roadside stand and bought 10 of the juiciest sweetest pineapples we had ever tasted. Pineapples on board, we sped off down the road, running with the "Big Dogs," the D110's, when suddenly Julia cried, "The car is on fire!" Sure enough, acrid black smoke was pouring from the dash. Daniel quickly pulled over, grabbed the fire extinguisher and gingerly opened the hood, expecting flames, but saw nothing. Smoke continued to billow out of the dash. Five screws later, off came the dash. A 12-volt plug that Daniel had wired up to recharge the cell phone had shorted out, causing a fire behind the dash, melting the ground wires.

A quick field repair to clean up the remains of the fried wires, bind off the loose ends and wipe the carbon off the dash, and we were on our way again. Now we knew what other LR owners had described as "using insulation as a fuse."

In Mapelane, Daniel rewired the melted connection. We swam and played in the glorious waters of the Indian Ocean, ate Mapelane Medley (a tasty concoction created by Julia), made love on the beach, and visited an old lighthouse, tended by a man who owned a Land Rover (that connection enabled us to get an impromptu tour of the lighthouse.)

One of the most magical experiences we have had is looking at the southern sky. We began to search nightly for the Southern Cross. To our amazement, we could also easily find Orion, which we also see regularly in the northern sky. Camping in the bush, away from any artificial light, the Milky Way is always fully visible and wondrous. We made many wishes on shooting stars. Leaving Mapelane, we began to be concerned that Kermit had started to consume mass quantities of oil. After contacting another Land Rover owner who gave us someone's name who gave us someone else's name, we separated from the Tour to search for a solution to our car troubles. We finally reached a wonderful man named Peter H., who formerly owned a Series IIa, identical to Kermit. Peter met us in Greytown, took us back to his farm, served us proper tea and ran a compression test on Kermit's engine. He was so excited to see the spitting image of his old vehicle, that he took us to his wife's office so that she could also see the car. Tears came to her eyes when she saw "their" vehicle again. Peter diagnosed Kermit's condition as a leaking oil ring and recommended a fuel additive. The Golden Thread continues to weave through our journey. >From Greytown, we headed to Pietermaritzburg, where we stopped at Forsdicks, the Land Rover dealer. They were welcoming and gracious and performed tests that confirmed Peter's diagnosis. The bad news was, we had a blown oil ring, which could only really be repaired by pulling the engine, or at least a cylinder, a 2 or 3 day job. Out of the question. However, we were told that we could continue to drive and keep adding oil as needed. We rejoined the Tour in Durban, and camped in the middle of the city on the rugby fields at George Campbell Technical School, a most unusual venue. Forty-five or so other Land Rovers, all members of the KwaZulu-Natal Land Rover Club, joined us for a braai and celebration that night. Next morning, we showered in the school locker rooms and gassed and fueled up for the next leg of the journey, into the wilds of Lesotho. Awakening to the sounds of traffic, horns, sirens and people shouting was quite a contrast to our most recent experiences in the bush and on the beach. We were escorted out of Durban by our KwaZulu-Natal friends and the widest variety of Land Rovers that we had yet seen, in another fantastic and festive

convoy. We camped on a farm outside of Pietermaritzburg, before heading on to Lesotho. Next morning, we broke camp early for the long trip into Lesotho, via Sani Pass (elevation 2874m (9400 ft.)) We had seen pictures of the panorama of the pass in Land Rover Owners International. They don't do justice to the awesome splendor and challenge of this ascent. The steep dirt road through Sani is the only passage from the Natal region into this mountain kingdom. There is a tavern at the top, the Sani Top Chalet, advertised as "the highest pub in Africa." No doubt this is true. We toasted our arrival with brandy and scones at 10:00 a.m., and breathed the rarefied air. That night we camped by the Orange River, near Koma-Koma Bridge, one of the few flat places in Lesotho. In order to get to the camp, we had to cross a flooded drift, a slightly harrowing experience as the water was up to the tops of the wheel wells and the strong current threatened to push the vehicles off course. Everyone did an admirable job of navigating the way safely across. The following day, we forged our way deeper into the mountains of Lesotho. A truly magical place. Everywhere one looks there are magnificent vistas, peaks beyond rocky peaks, deep valleys and rushing rivers. And the stillness and silence that one only finds in the high mountains. We drove only 100k that day, crawling over three major passes, and it took us a challenging 7 and a half hours. The driving was not technically difficult, but the roads changed so quickly, and there was no barrier between us and the sheer drop-offs on either side. One lapse in concentration could have been fatal. Kermit was in 4-wheel-drive low 1st or 2nd gear all day, leaning up to 35 degrees side to side. A rock-and-roll ride, to be sure.

That night we slept at Seshlabatebe National Park. Our accommodations were a comfortable lodge, with a few luxurious rooms (by recent standards), a bath with hot water, a communal kitchen and dining room and a lounge furnished with comfy overstuffed chairs and a fireplace. As it had started to rain, we sat in the lounge, warm and dry, with others of the group, journaling, reading, repairing CB radio equipment, and resting after two hard days of driving. Mother Nature entertained us with indescribably exciting lightning storms, and later, as the clouds cleared, millions of diamonds in an ebony sky. >From Seshlabatebe, we descended back into South Africa, with barely enough petrol, and entered the Transkei.

Perhaps our greatest challenge each day was to continually let go of the day before. Each moment was so chock full of new sights, new faces, new smell, subtle differences in climate, landscape, wildlife. To stay open to it all, love it, and then release it so as to be totally available to the next unique experience, that was our test and our gift.

Our first stop in the Transkei was Mbolompo Point, a small and remote beach on the Indian Ocean, albeit a very different

Indian Ocean than we saw in Mapelane. Colder, rougher, rockier and still refreshing. As we made our way towards out campsite over green hills and past drying corn fields and thatch-roofed rondavels brightly painted in pastel blues and yellows, fifty or more of the village children ran out to greet and marvel at the spectacle of a dozen Land Rovers rolling across their land. They ran along side the cars for 3 or 4 kilometers, all the way to the beach, begging for sweets, money, cigarettes, matches and jobs. As we set up camp, they all stood in a group and watched. Eventually, most of them departed. A few remained the entire time we were camped there, hopeful and curious. >From Mbolompo Point, we moved on to Shixini Point, an 8 hour drive on fairly decent dirt roads. There, we spent an entire morning gathering sea shells, which were abundant, and lovely. These days of sun and leisure on the Wild Coast From the Transkei, the Tour moved on to Addo National Elephant Park. As we drove around this 20,000 acre reserve, we got a small taste of what early inhabitants must have witnessed. There are well in excess of 265 elephants in this small park, and they are everywhere. It is hard to describe the feeling of bouncing along these rough roads in an antique Land Rover; we did not feel that it was 1998. We were truly blessed to see these wrinkled, gray, odd-shaped "ballerinas" of the bush in their natural environs, to appreciate their personalities and observe firsthand the magic of their interactions. Leaving Addo, we traveled south again, to Tsitzikamma Coastal National Reserve. By now, Kermit was consuming up to 10 litres of oil a day. We realized that we could not continue the Tour under those conditions, and began to examine our options. One of the CapeTonians on the Tour contacted his mechanic in Cape Town, and located a replacement engine for us. We left Tsitzikamma with the intention of driving straight through to Cape Town to have the engine either rebuilt or replaced. Near George, we changed our minds and decided to take our chances in Oudtshoorn, our next stop on the Tour. As we passed through George, we stopped at the Land Rover dealer, and learned of Salty's, a Land Rover mechanic in town. We paid Salty's a visit and met the owner, Greg Larmour. Still in search of a new engine, we drove on to Oudtshoorn and headed straight to Swartberg Land Rover. There, we met more people of the Golden Thread. The most terrific group of salesmen, parts manager, and general manager, took us under their wing, inspected Kermit, helped locate engines and replacement cars for sale, even inspected a Series II 109" for us. Meanwhile, we had spoken again to Salty's, and Greg agreed to pull apart, diagnose and even rebuild Kermit's engine, if necessary. So, Daniel drove Kermit back to George, and left the vehicle in Greg's capable hands. Greg quickly discovered that the new high-performance K&N air filter fitted to Kermit months before our departure was wholly inadequate to withstand the wilds

Trip Report

— and dust — of Africa. So much dust entered Kermit's engine as to actually create an oily sandpaper effect in the cylinders. Greg's machine shop re-sleeved and re-bored the engine, installed new pistons, bearings, valve-stem guides, the works. Then he and a friend, Gordy, replaced the engine. All of this took a record three days. We salute these two dedicated and hard working guys. Meanwhile, our friends at Swartberg Land Rover had loaned us a '95 Disco (5 litre automatic with A/C and CD player) while Kermit was being repaired. Consequently, we were able to squeeze in some sight-seeing and play in the midst of our automotive woes. We rode ostriches, crawled through Cango Caves, even accompanied the rest of the Tour on their descent to Die Hel, the isolated valley in the Little Karoo where three families of Boers hid from the British in the 1800's, and lived undiscovered for 150 years. We had not expected our adventure to include such a long stay in Oudtshoorn and George; nevertheless, this turn of events added an element of reality to the trip and gave us the opportunity to meet some of the most generous people one could imagine. The Golden Thread weaves on. With Kermit running smoothly again, we left George and drove west through the Garden Route to rejoin our touring comrades in Arniston, the sleepy fishing village on the Cape coast. We pulled into the caravan park after dark and were greeted with cheers from our friends. Julia had hidden a bottle of Cold Duck in one of the cool boxes, and we toasted Kermit's new engine and our resourcefulness, then fell into bed, exhausted. Next morning, we arose early to make the pilgrimage to Cape Agulhas, the beautiful but unassuming southernmost point in Africa. Then we traveled along the coast to the lovely town of Gansbaai. Primarily a fishing town, Gansbaai enjoys the distinction of having the highest number per capita of Land Rovers in all of Africa, and perhaps the world. Last year they held their first annual Land Rover festival, drawing 140 Landys of all vintages, models and configurations for a parade through town. The good people of Gansbaai rolled out the red carpet for us, including a boat trip to "Shark Alley" (behind Dyer Island), a wine and seafood hors d'oeuvres reception, whole fish to braai, a trip to the Danger Point Lighthouse with a breakfast of pastries, orange juice and champagne afterward, and finally gifts to take with us. The incomparable hospitality of Gansbaai was a highlight of the Tour. After camping for almost six weeks, it was a shock to arrive in the metropolis of Cape Town. Shopping malls, rush-hour traffic, dinner shows, IMAX, aquariums, restaurants, people — quite a change from hiking, bird-watching, big game sighting, cooking over a fire and sleeping under the stars in the mountains and on the seashore. Those members of the group who lived in Cape Town and the

surrounds left us temporarily to spend a few days in the comforts of home. The rest of us pitched camp in the Sandvlei Caravan Park in Muizenburg, near the shores of False Bay. After settling in, we all headed in different directions to explore our new locale, in the rain and drizzle. We cruised the antique shops in Kalk Bay, took in a dinner show in a very bohemian theater/pub/restaurant/backpackers' hostel. We also took Kermit to a very reliable local Land Rover mechanic for some fine-tuning. That night, back at the camp, the Cape Town Land Rover Club hosted a braai in our honor. Once again, it was Land Rover heaven. The next morning dawned clear and sunny, for some long-overdue sightseeing. Ignoring recommendations that we see the Aquarium, we opted to get out and enjoy the sunshine and take in some scenery. We drove out to the ocean and along the rugged and beautiful coastal highway, towards Cape Point, and back up the other side to Simon's Town and Boulder's Beach, where we sought out the famous penguins that reside there. Once again, we were charmed by the magic of seeing these familiar creatures in their natural habitat. Leaving Capetown, we drove through some of South Africa's beautiful wine country, stopping at a small winery for wine tasting and buying. We camped that night in a pine forest just outside a lovely country town, and then journeyed into the Cedarbergs. There, we camped under the shadow of the Wolfberg Cracks, awoke early the next morning, and set out on a relaxed but challenging hike to the top. After weeks of vehicular travel, our bodies had become unaccustomed to strenuous exercise. Eventually, though, we found a rhythm, and easily made it to the top. That night, back in camp, there was a potjie contest among all the members of the Tour. Everyone's carefully guarded secret recipes started appearing on campfires as early as 2 p.m. Then the dishes were presented for round table judging, on a table fortified with steel sand tracks to support the hot heavy pots. We had a jolly blind taste test, and later, around the campfire that night, the wine flowed freely and the jokes got ribald. After a sound night's sleep in the chilly mountain air, we broke camp again the next morning and set off for Wuppertal and the western seashore. We traversed several gorgeous passes and green valleys, stopped in Wuppertal long enough to buy shoes, made our way through Clanwilliam and past Lutzville to the Atlantic coast. We camped on the beach near Skulpbaai. No ocean swimming here without wet suits. After leisurely breaking camp the next morning, we headed north for a splendiferous drive along sandy roads towards Island Point. The scenery was magnificent — rocky lagoons, untouched beaches, deep white sand. Every member of the Tour got stuck at least once. We discovered the remains of a whale skeleton, a

dead sea lion, and a baboon skull. That night, the cold coastal winds drove us to invent a new configuration for our canvas rain tarp. Anchoring our rectangular contraption in the shape of a triangle, we set the gas stove in the back of the car and re-heated potjie leftovers. We ate by Hella red-light in the warm front seat of the Landy, leaving the still and quiet confines of the car only for the warmth of the comforter in our cozy tent. After six days or so on the beautiful and cold west coast, we and several other members of the group decided to depart the Tour and drive inland to Namaqualand and Springbok. Although we missed the beauty of the spring flowers, we enjoyed the spectacularly rugged terrain. We discovered the Spingbok Caravan Park, along with our travel partners. Great hot showers, an ice cold pool and even a patch of green grass on which to sit. We once again experienced the joy of clean, dry sheets and comforter, a simple pleasure we will never again take for granted, after weeks of dusty roads, sandy camp sites and rain and fog. Warm, dry and well-rested, we headed back to the coast the next day to rejoin the Tour in Port Nolloth. When we arrived, the sun was shining. As we dined on a lunch of crayfish and prawns, the fog came in and stayed. Later, on the way to the caravan park, Daniel discovered a great bakery, where he bought darn near one of everything, including a whole chocolate cake. That night, we had a "let's get out of the drizzle party" in John and Hillary's bungalow. The next day, Friday, May 1st, we left the wet of Port Nolloth and the coast, bound for the Richtersveld, the arid wilderness stretching northwest to the Namibian border. Our first glimpses of this stark, barren, wide-open, rocky desert were a shock. The landscape stood in such dramatic contrast to the wet, green coast where we had spent so many of our recent weeks. We drove across the park to the Orange River, along the South Africa/Namibia border. We had camped on the Orange River in Lesotho, at its source. There, it was clear, chilling, and turbulent. Here, near its mouth in this dry land, it was wide, bordered by smooth, water-sculpted volcanic rock, brown with silt and refreshingly cool. Our second day there, we set off on a challenging drive to the far side of the park, with Tour members Tina-Marie and Gerhart. The sandy, rocky passes reminded us of "old times" in Lesotho. We were returning from our rough ride when Gerhart's radiator started leaking. Tina-Marie, then 6 months pregnant, was also feeling uncomfortable on the rocky roads. The men did a field repair, adding a second hose clamp to the bottom of the radiator using a "healthy" one from Kermit, and safely cable-tying Kermit's radiator hose. Wisely, we were also carrying extra water, which proved to be necessary to get their Series III back on the road. It was a good lesson for us in the importance of the

"buddy system." But for our parts and water and Daniel's mechanics, they would have been stranded. When we rolled into camp after dark, some two hours late, everyone was relieved. Several members of the Tour were planning to leave the next day and so the farewell party carried on well into the night, with much laughter and merriment, and great stories. Underneath it all, though, was the sadness that the Tour was coming to an end and that many new friends would be parting. When we began this amazing journey, we had no preconceived notions about what percentage of our nine plus weeks in South Africa would be spent on the predetermined Tour route, and what time, if any, we would spend exploring on our own. Every moment of the Tour was great, due to the brilliant planning by the Cottons and Brian Hogg, that maximized the Tour group's exposure to the wonders and beauty of this great country. We also thoroughly enjoyed those brief times when we departed the prescribed route and sought out new sights and unexpected experiences on our own. We chose to leave the Tour a day early, so as to pick up an extra day in Pretoria to conduct business and make shipping arrangements and preparations for our return home. We left the group in Vioolsdrift, on the Namibian border, headed south to Springbok and then east to Augrabies National Park. Augrabies is a stunning place. Driving across the desert, one sees only miles of sand, rocks and boulders. Then suddenly, there is the sound of roaring water and a steep ravine parts the earth before you. The contrast between the desert landscape and torrential river and thundering falls is breathtaking. When we first saw the falls, it was sunset and there was a rainbow in the mist rising from the gorge. It was our friend, the Orange River in yet another of its guises. Augrabies is also a nature reserve with a beautifully run caravan park. We found ourselves wishing that we had more time to spend there, hiking and exploring the rugged terrain around the gorge. We left the next day, sadly, with a promise to return one day. As we pushed on through Kuruman and Vryburg, and on into Pretoria, it became more and more challenging for us to be completely here. The land remained beautiful, the opportunities for adventure numerous, and part of us naturally was distracted with preparing for our departure and return to the U.S. Finally, we arrived back at the Cottons' home in Pretoria, where we had started all those weeks before. Brian and his fiancée Shelley were there to greet us and feed us a fantastic "welcome home" dinner. It's great to be back, and we don't want to be back.

We did it. We completed the Land Rover 50th Anniversary Golden Jubilee Tour of South Africa. It was magic. Suffice it to say, we all had a ball. We already miss our new friends, the land, the adventure, the lifestyle.



Dr. Drip



Gentle Rover People,

This past May, Dr. Drip finally managed to return to England for the Association of Rover Clubs Annual Rally at Eastnor Castle in this, the Land Rover 50th Anniversary Year. <reverently bows head>

Dr. Drip landed at Manchester Airport and picked up his teeny Fiat Punto rental car then headed over to the local Costco to load up on film, beer (Thweakston's Old Peculiar and Boddingtons), canned goods, juice and water, and BISCUITS! YUM!

Then off to John Foers' shop to check on the baby, the IbeX body/frame that I purchased several years ago and had gathered a delicate patina whilst in storage in the garage of Mother Foers'. All was well and Mr. Foers was rather delighted to see that I was still alive and not a figment of his imagination.

Next stop, Maddison's 4x4 owned and run by Steve and Wendy Maddison in lovely Thirsk in N. Yorkshire to say howdy and start the ball rolling on the "big" parts order.

After a night's rest, it was off to MVS to look at their surplus Military Vehicles. YIKES! This place (located on a closed airfield) had hundreds of ex-MOD (Ministry of Defense) series and defender rovers, several dozen 101 Ambulances and many other military vehicles. I had a lovely test drive in a 101 ambulance doing laps around the old runways.

Next a visit at P.A. Blanchards - while this was certainly not on the scale of MVS (nothing else is) I had a pleasant chat with the owner, Peter Blanchard, and saw some lovely ex-MOD 109s being prepared for export to the US. They had about 50 vehicles for sale but no 101s.

I stopped at Paddocks toward the end of the day, most of the staff were madly taping and addressing boxes for shipment. I picked up some catalogs and price lists and a strip of Withworth sockets. When I asked if I could use the restroom, I was asked if I "was a priest"...hmmm...I replied "certainly not" and was shown to the facilities. It seems the mens restroom walls are rather thoroughly covered with photoGraphic tributes to the female form.

Next, off to the big enchilada, the ARC!

This year's event was spread over 9 days instead of the regular 3 day Spring Bank Holiday weekend and meant the pace would be much more leisurely without having to choose which race to attend and which to miss. I also

got to catch up with many friends and familiar faces from previous ARC rallies and made some new friends.

Although I have not yet attended a Billing event, people who have attended both tell me Billing is for shopping and the ARC is for racing.

The most interesting trade stand this year was the Dunsfold stand - a huge tent filled with all sorts of ancient genuine Land Rover parts. Exquisite browsing and also very educational. Had several nice chats with the owner, Philip Bashall and his chaps. There was also a tire vendor from Wales and a photo of one of their vans in shown below with "Welsh" names for the major auto parts.



There are various racing events, the CCV Trial, the Comp Safari, Team Recovery, Timed Trial, Winch Recovery, RTV Trial.

The Comp Safari is perhaps the closest thing to an "unlimited class" vehicle competition and there are some very highly modified Rovers in competition. I've included a photo of a rover "catching some air!"





The opposite end of the spectrum is the RTV trial. (RTV standing for "Road Tax Vehicle" a.k.a. "Street Legal" or Daily Driver.) It is fun to see many "normal" rovers being used in challenging yet non-damaging competition.

While I didn't see any of these stretch 6 wheel Range Rovers in competition, the photo below is but one of many of the interesting conversion rovers at the rally.



Being a member of the 101 Forward Control club, I camped in their section and visited with many of the members and their fine 101s. There are opposing schools of thought regarding 101 ownership in England. With petrol over \$4 a gallon many 101 owners, though reluctantly, are selling off their 101s in the face of prohibitive operating cost. On the other hand, with a pool of only about 2000 vehicles and worldwide collector interest, there should still be strong market.

Mid-week, I slipped away for a few days and stopped by Steve Maddison's again and also visited Keith Gott's Land Rover dealership as well as John Craddocks.

Keith Gott's is about the same size as Blanchards but with more civilian rovers in the mix. They also had about a dozen 101s including 2 very nice radio bodies. YUM!

Craddocks was okay, I guess you could say Craddocks is kinda like the Microsoft of the rover parts business - I am pretty sure it is the largest parts dealer and like Microsoft it is rather tough on the smaller suppliers. I did see several stripped 101 bodies and also 2 109 tropical roofs in the trash bin. <sob - sniff>

After the ARC rally, I stopped by the Dunsfold Trust and had a brief tour and picked up 2 Land Rover Forward Control winch assemblies. These things are damn heavy

(150-200 lb.?) and I was a bit concerned about the wee Fiat Punto but decided that the tires bulging more than usual was just my imagination. There were also still a couple of Judge Dredd 101 conversions around the lot.

Next it was back up to N. Yorkshire and Maddison's to wrap up the "big" parts order and start loading the container. I spent about a week there and got to know Steve, Wendy and the lads quite well. Great folks and a great help in getting my container loaded. Steve located a cheap TDi D90 pickup for me and we parted it out for the IBEX. It was quite exciting to finally load my Ibex body into the container (using the winch on Steve's IBEX) on that rainy English day.

With a sigh of relief, we sealed the door to the container and soon the truck appeared and took it away...

Dr. Drip

Epilogue - Six weeks later, the container arrived without complication and it's contents now lay scattered about my backyard and in my garage.

Classified

FOR SALE: 1965 Ser Ila 88" Safari Station Wagon.

One of the top 5 examples of this model in the US. Complete professional restoration on rust-free California truck. Pastel green over limestone roof and wheels. Rebuilt 2.25 liter engine, showroom quite; new brakes, Ser III booster, rebuilt rear diff, McNamara manual rear diff locker; rebuilt steering, heater, transmission, new heavy duty springs, OME shocks, all new Smith gauges, 2 bbl Weber conversion, Pierce manifold, new fuel pump, new windscreen wiper motors, new wiring harness, twin fuel tanks with factory switch over kit, Ser III radiator, military spec oil cooler and 5-blade cooling fan, rear Salisbury axles, 16" wheels, new BFG All-terrains, Dual Optima batteries with combiner, Hella reading lights, electronic ignition, Fairy overdrive, three 12 V outlets, locking bulkhead storage units, new galvanizing throughout, perfect body, new front/rear glass, rear custom mounted dual jerry can holder, deluxe bonnet with spare tire carrier, New window channels with new weatherstripping throughout, mud flaps (front and rear), new Ser III hi-top front seats, four newly upholstered rear factory jump seats, new head-liner and complete door panels, custom installed cassette deck and CB in locking front cubby box, custom rear mounted Hi-Lift jack.

This truck is in better than new condition. No expense was spared (receipts exceeding \$31,000) Won best of marque at Del Mar British Car Show and twice at Palo Alto Show. This truck is versatile, and reliable for use as a daily driver, or on African safari. Price includes custom roof-rack (14 gauge double-dipped galvanize) and roof-top tent, made of rip-stop nylon and aircraft tubing. All receipts and pictorial history available.

PRICE: \$27,500. CONTACT: Daniel Oppenheim (415)282-5500, daniel5@best.com.

Mechanics & Parts & Service

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The following list contains parts suppliers and mechanics who support and work on Land Rover and Range Rover vehicles. **This is not an endorsements list.** Before using particular vendors or mechanics we suggest you talk to fellow Land Rover and Range Rover owners regarding their experience and recommendations. Please contact us with any businesses or updates you would like to see added to this list.



P	Parts
S	Service
D	Dealer
NV	Newer Vehicle
OV	Older Vehicle
AA	After-market Accessory
ABA	After-market Body Armor

British Northwest Land Rover Co.

[S, P, OV]

1043 Kaiser Rd. S.W.
Olympia, WA
tel. 206-866 2254

British Pacific [P]

3317 Burbank Ave.
Burbank, CA
tel. 800-554-4133

Carpenter Rigging [AA, ABA]

222 Napoleon St.
San Francisco, CA 94124
415-285-1954

Cole European [D, S, P]

2103 N. Main St.
Walnut Creek, CA
tel. 510-935-2653

DAP Enterprises, Inc.

86 Clinton St.
Springfield, VT, 05156
tel. 802-885-6660

Euro Parts, Ltd [P]

1910 Prospect Ave.
East Meadow, NY 11554
tel. 800-274-4830

Great Basin Rovers [P, AA]

342 West 1700 South
Salt Lake City, UT
tel. 801-486-5049

Hubacher Cadillac and Land Rover [P, S, NV]

#1 Cadillac Drive
Sacramento, CA, 95825
tel. 415-460-4600

RAB Motors/ Land Rover Marin [D, S, P]

540 Francisco Boulevard West
San Rafael, CA
tel. 415-460-4600

Roverland [S, P]

San Francisco, CA
tel. 415-648-0885
service and parts for newer vehicles

Roverland Parts [P, NV]

2038 Village Point Way
Salt Lake City, UT 840093
tel. 801-942 7533

Rovers North [P]

1319 VT Rt. 128
Westford, VT
tel. 802-879-0032

Safari Gard [ABA, NV]

41095 Fig St.
Murrieta, CA 92562
tel. 909-698-6114

Land Rover San Jose [D, S, P]

4040 Stevens Creek Boulevard
San Jose, CA
tel. 408-246-7600

Scotty's [S, OV]

(Chevy conversions)
tel. 510-686-2255

Shamrock Services [S, NV, OV]

Robert Davison
15195 Arnold Drive
Glen Ellen, CA 95442
tel. 707 935-3605

West Coast British [S]

190 Airway Blvd.
Livermore, CA 94550
tel. 510-606-8301

XKs Unlimited [P]

850 Fiero Lane
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
tel. 1-800-444-5247
xksunltd@aol.com

Atlantic British [P, OV]

Box110. Rover Ridge Drive
Mechanicville, N Y 12118
tel. 800-533-2210

Badger Interior Coachworks

[soft tops and interiors for Series and Defender]

Christopher Laws
259 Great Western Road
South Dennis, MA 02660
tel. 501-364-2680,
fax 508-760-2281

Britalia [S, P]

2210 San Pablo Avenue
Berkeley, CA
tel. 510-548-0240

British Bulldog Spares LTD.

[P, NV]

394 Kilburn St.
Fall River, MA, 02724
tel. 888-874-3888,
fax 508-674-5025
bulldog@meganet.net

The British Car Company [S]

Corte Madera
tel. 415-927-2995

British Motor Car Distributors [D, S, P]

901 Van Ness Ave.
San Francisco, CA
tel. 415-776-7700