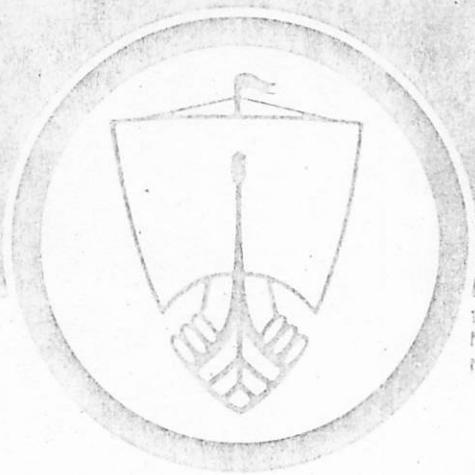


# ROVER OWNERS' ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA



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We wish all of our membership Happy Holidays and hope that they all have a very prosperous new year. With regard to the Newsletter, we've only been able to manage five issues during 1973 and hope that we will be able to get at least six issues out in 1974 and also improve our format and the depth of the attention to our memberships problems and needs. However, it is most important to remind the membership that it is really the responsibility of all to make the Association and the Newsletter meet our needs. At this point, we would like to thank all of those members who have contributed assistance, advice, and articles to the Newsletter. Unfortunately, there has only been participation by a relatively small number of the membership. The number of and quality of the various issues of the Newsletter is directly related to the participation by the membership. We welcome any bit of information, personal experience, or advice that a member has regarding his/her Rover/Land-Rover vehicle. We would also like to mention that we can accept black and white photos to accompany any article by a member. Hopefully, with this issue we will see how well we can incorporate photographs into our existing format and determine what changes need be made in the future to accommodate them. Our article on the new Dunlop Denovo tire which is now offered as an option on the 3500 series Rover should, if no problems arise, be accompanied by a photograph of the 3500 so equipped.

We would also like to acknowledge thanks to Mr. William Post Hubert of Atlantic-British Parts, Limited for offering to print all future volumes of the Newsletter at cost at their own printing facility. We hope that the Association may be able to collaborate with them successfully in the future. If everything works out as planned they should be responsible for the printing of this edition of the Newsletter. We have also learned that Atlantic-British has both an East-Coast and a West-Coast facility for Land-Rover owners. Their Eastern headquarters is at: Box 109, Burnt Hills, New York, 12027, phone: (518) 399-8453; Western headquarters is at: Box 91, Valley Center, California, 92082, phone: (714) 745-4429. They indicate that they import and supply parts only for the Land-Rover. They do not sell vehicles or do repairs, although they recognise the crying need for facilities such as those

For those members who have ordered various specialty items and accessories from the Association for their Rover or Land-Rover do not despair. Any items which we indicated in the recent past as being out-of-stock are still out-of-stock. We have had the Secretary of the Headquarter Club investigate the problem with the Rover Sales Aids people and he has informed us that the whole system of distribution of these items is in the process of change and we will be notified when they are again in a position to supply. Additionally, still no word on the soon to be announced replacement for the 3-litre, P-5 model which is now officially out of production. This model started as the 3-litre in 1958 and the 3½ litre V-8 engine was introduced in 1967. More recently, whenever British-Leyland management felt the design had reached the end of its useful life more orders would come flooding in.

Land-Rover Owners Respond: In response to the letter in last month's newsletter we have received a number of letters from Association members. The following is an excerpt from a letter to us by Norman F. Lewis, Jr. of Golden, Colorado:

Bebe Platzner's Land-Rover problems don't seem to be usual. I've known of people having problems with new Land-Rovers, but much of this is due to improper handling by dealers and shippers. Land-Rovers have to be broken-in - they can't just be driven right away in any "normal" manner. Careful break-in can generally mean long life for most major components. Dealers and/or shippers often don't care how they treat new vehicles. I've seen them driven flat out with no more than twenty miles on the odometer! My 1965 "88" has 112,000 miles on it, with not much more than normal maintenance, including transmission overhaul, valve jobs, clutch replacement, hydraulics overhaul and other such maintenance. My 1957 "88", which was obtained this past summer, was in poor condition when bought, but careful and methodical restoration is bringing this Land-Rover around to being a very good second car. In spite of much abuse mechanically it was fairly sound, except for needing a valve job, brake shoes, and new rear axle seals and bearings. Land-Rovers are not "perfect" nor are they the answer to everyone's 4WD needs, but I personally wouldn't own anything else, except possibly a Range Rover!

On the other hand, we received the following letter from Dick Siskind of Baltimore, Maryland:

I just received the latest newsletter and I was amazed at the similarity in the plight of myself and Bebe Platzner of Texas and the problems we both share with our Land-Rovers.

In the past 10 months I have had to have all of the gaskets and seals in the transmission/transfer box replaced, the windshield washer replaced once (the new one doesn't work either!), the paint is chipping off, and the seals in the slave cylinder for the clutch disintegrated while I was in heavy traffic leaving me without a way to shift gears. One of the chronic problems is the car's propensity to leave puddles of oil wherever I park.

At first, the dealer seemed unable to come to grips with the problems. They seemed to make the situation worse rather than better. All of that changed, however, when I responded to a letter from British Leyland Headquarters in New Jersey asking me if the warranty work for the 1000 mile checkup had been performed to my satisfaction. You can imagine the bitterness of my first response. As a matter of fact they sent me a reply almost immediately and they said they would talk to my dealer about the situation. To my surprise, the dealer called me up at work and with an air of urgent politeness asked me to bring the car in at my convenience. Since that time the man in the service department has really put himself out for me. He fixed the leaky windshield; he repaired the poorly fitting terminal to the fuel flow solenoid; he has repaired the clutch; and tomorrow, when I take the car in for its 12,000 mile check-up, he will repair the handbrake and the windshield washer. However, this is a little hypothetical. I bought the car for the same reasons that Bebe did. I gave up my Volvo for it in fact. And I must say that I am somewhat disappointed that it can't withstand the rigors of Baltimore. At the moment, the car is running quite smoothly. However, I was considering trading it in and going back to a Volvo or an Audi. I think that if there are any more problems with my Rover I might just get rid of it and save myself the aggravation.

Again, I register my disappointment in the so-called "world's strongest vehicle" and I hope that I never have to cross a jungle or desert in it without having a repairman with me.

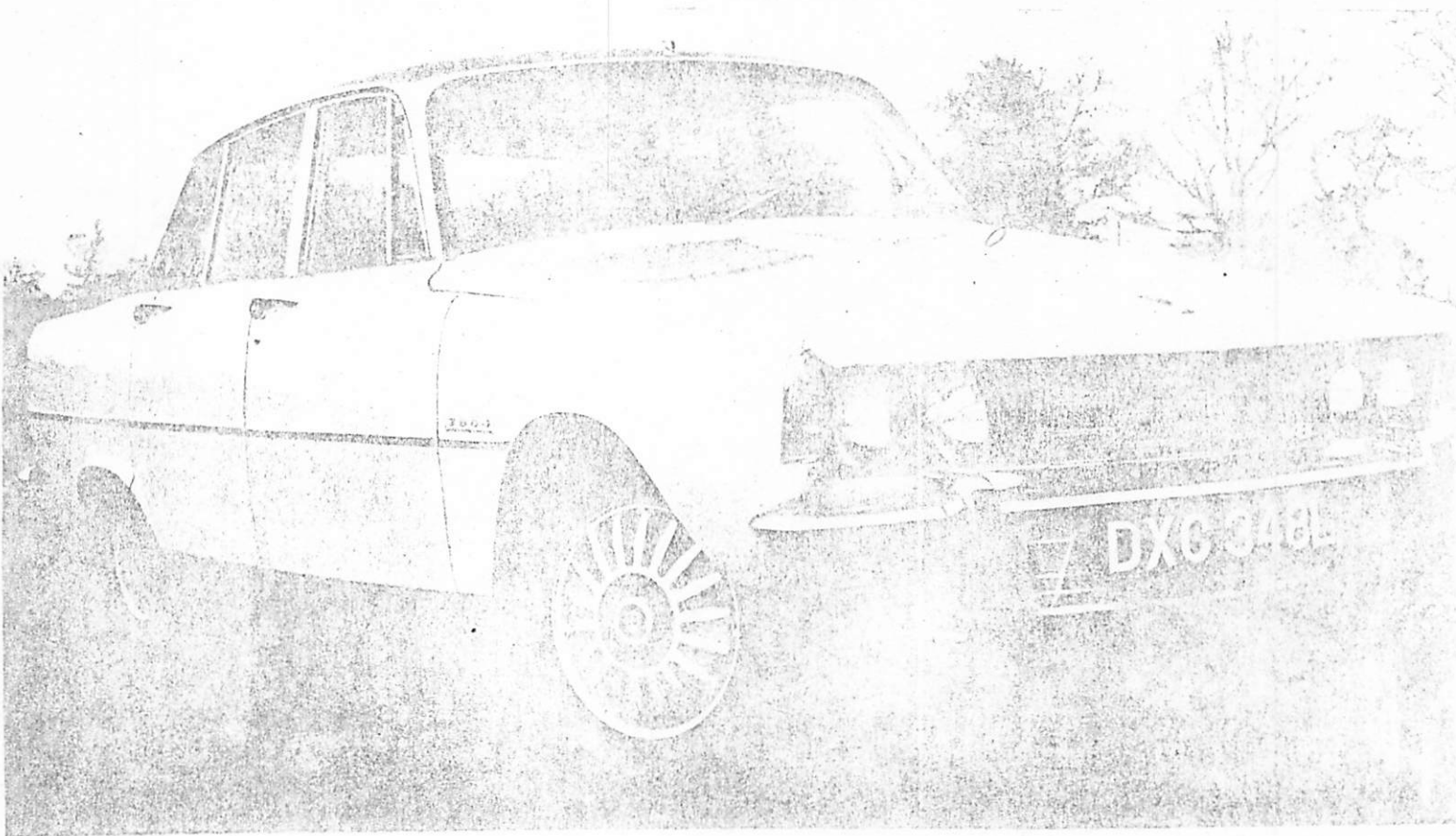
Land-Rover Owners Respond: It does appear from the above letters that the dealer sales and service particularly has been one of the main problems with the Rover, as it has been with most British cars. Dealers alone cannot be held responsible, however, since proper support must also come from the factory and its distribution network. It can certainly reek havoc on a dealer who has to make enormous amounts of warranty work and is given little assistance or economic rebate from the factory and distributors. The Rover 2000 suffered this type of problem to a great extent in this country. There is also the problem on the dealer side of selling just about every car under the sun. This has been particularly notorious with the dealers selling British cars. How can adequate service and an adequate parts inventory be provided when a dealer handles everything from MG to Triumph to Jaguar to Austin to Rover and maybe even Volvo, Fiat, and a few smaller marques thrown in as well? Hopefully, the British will see fit to organize their operations somewhat better; the letter from Mr. Siskind indicates that maybe they've started making some attempt in that direction.

Used Rovers and Land-Rovers: We can't help but note the large disparity in prices between second-hand Rovers and Land-Rovers. The greatest factor for this, no doubt, is the specialty nature of the Land-Rover as a 4WD vehicle whereas there are quite a few substitutes in the market for a sporting, economical four-door sedan. We've noticed that it is extremely hard to find a second-hand Land-Rover for less than \$2000 to \$3000 unless one goes back to one earlier than a 1967 model. Even more appalling is the condition that many of these are in. An enthusiast might be willing to pay these prices were the vehicle in generally sound condition, but certainly not when they have been greatly abused. The rather limited supply of second-hand Land-Rovers gives the buyer little alternative but to shop patiently. With the Rover 2000's, however, the price situation is precisely the opposite, particularly on both coasts. In areas like the New York Metropolitan Area where the supply of second-hand Rovers is particularly great as compared with buyers for those same cars it even gets to seem pretty ridiculous. We've seen 1968 Rover 2000TC's in good to very good condition change hands regularly in the price neighborhood of \$350 to \$500. For an individual who enjoys maintaining his own vehicle it is hard to imagine a more economical situation than purchasing a second-hand Rover.

Further Improvements on the Rover 2200 and 3500: Both the Rover 2200 (previously 2000) and the 3500 are still selling strong in England and Europe. In addition to the hood, grille, and trim alterations that were made in 1972 Rover has introduced an entirely new line of colors for both cars. We can assure you that all the colors are in good taste and bring the car up to date somewhat. The important news is that the 2000 series has been bored out to 2200cc. This has been accomplished by increasing the bore from 3.375 in. (85.7 mm) to 3.563 in. (90.5 mm); the stroke remains the same at 3.375 in. The increase in displacement was largely necessitated by European emission controls. The compression ratios on both se and tc models is 9:1. A somewhat larger fuel tank of 15 Imperial gallons (up from 12 Imperial gallons) is fitted to increase the driving range. Also, a pre-engaged type starter is fitted to both the manual transmission models as well as the automatic version.

Rover has made another first by offering the new Dunlop Denovo "Failsafe" tire as optional equipment on the 3500. This option is said to cost somewhere in the vicinity of 150 pounds Sterling. One gets 4 instead of five tires - because of the Denovo's rather unusual properties - and special wheels designed for the tire. The revolutionary aspect of the Denovo is its ability to be driven in a deflated condition for up to 100 miles at speeds up to 50 M.P.H. The characteristic of being able to run in a deflated condition has been achieved by a number of basically simple ideas. (1) The tire was designed to be run in a deflated condition instead of re-designing an inflated tire and then providing it with deflated properties. (2) A low-profile design was used in which the relationship between the widths of wheel rim and tire tread is such that, when deflated, the narrow rim and broad tread combine to form an automatic centralising and stable unit. (3) To ensure a

Rover 3500, cont'd: coherent structure, with the tire deflated, the tire beads are designed to remain in contact with the rim in the same way they would if the tire were inflated. (4) The vehicle weight and cornering loads are transmitted through the rim edges to the tire tread. (5) The destructive internal friction which normally builds up in a deflated tire has been considerably reduced by the inclusion of a special lubricant which comes into action when deflation occurs. The lubricant has a multiple role: To reduce friction; to seal, temporarily a high percentage of normal punctures; to create a vapor at about 4 or 5 lb. per sq. inch pressure which partially re-inflates the tire; to act as a heat transfer system from hot spots to cooler areas of the tire. The wheel itself has been subject to considerable development and consists of a simple, divided, two-piece unit, the two sections being held together and sealed by eight nuts and bolts. Power-assisted steering is necessary when used in conjunction with these tires due to the increase in steering effort during parking maneuvers when the tire is deflated.



Currently, member Norman Lewis, Jr. is compiling some of his personal Land-Rover data and information to be included in a future edition of the newsletter. Included in this data is parts interchange material on the Land-Rover which should be of interest to the membership.

Member Stanley Blesker of Brooklyn, New York has conducted extensive modifications to his Landy "88", series IIa. He intends to include details together with photographs of some of these in future newsletters. Additionally, Stanley is currently in the process of having a special set of wide wheel rims made up for his Land-Rover since he uses the vehicle for a great deal of beach work. Stanley is also involved with insurance and is in the process of trying to work out with insurance companies a policy for those specialty car owners that have a great deal of extra equipment or labor invested in their vehicles which would not be reflected in damage or loss payments by the insurer based upon Blue Book market value. Such a policy would certainly cost more, but he feels would be worth it to those vehicle owners with virtually one-of-a-kind vehicles.

Ropes and Tackle: The following is an article published by the Headquarter Club regarding the use of the proper rope and tackle by Land-Rovers in various club rallies; the author is Anthony Ward, Honorary Secretary of the Breckland Land-Rover Club.

I agree that it is desirable as Dr. R. Winch suggests that recovery vehicles should have hard tops and other protection but I cannot see this put into universal practice. The disease is poor tackle and this seems rife in many clubs. A Land-Rover can give a straight pull of about 1,000 lbs. and a snatch pull will treble this with ease, yet we will see old pieces of old gate chain; undersized and rotten rope; knotted rope; hooks and shackles of doubtful origin; all universally unmarked. There is also the crude and disgraceful practice of bending ropes to the spring hangers of Land-Rovers which may well have been designed to cut through even a good rope. Bad tackle and ignorance are the disease - cure this and the protection of the towing vehicle is of secondary importance.

No seaman would consider bending his cable to an anchor without a proper eye, so no Land-Rover should attempt trials without proper towing rings (part no. 267950) forward or a draught pin (part no. 234662) aft. Knots weaken a rope by 50%. Tow ropes should have an eye spliced in each end with a thimble to spread the strain and be shackled to the disabled vehicle and the tow pin unless the thimble is large enough to accommodate the tow-pin. Capstan ropes should have an eye splice in the working end. All hooks, shackles, and similar items must have a safe working load above the total weight of the vehicle and should be marked as such. They should also generally exceed the 3 w 1 of the rope. If a defective rope breaks it will possibly cause injury. Flying shackles are potential killers. We must not fall into the same trap as the owners of lorry ropes and general working gear as this is often in a dangerous state. Good tackle cost money but cost must be secondary to the potential saving of life and avoidance of injury. Tramp steamers may have rusty sides but no British ship goes to sea with defective anchor cable.

Much time has been spent investigating suitable ropes and I have had a great deal of help from British Ropes, Ltd. and the following is taken from their information:

Nylon 3 strand BS 3977 24mm dia. swl 2000 lbs. Breaking strain nearly 12 tons, elastic, 20% extension under load.

Terylene - 2 inch circumference with block and tackle giving about one-third of the above loading. Very difficult to splice for beginners.

Polythylene Monofilament (corline) 24mm dia' swl 30 cwts; low extension but weakens if left in a hot situation (eg coiled around a bonnet-mounted spare wheel) recovers when cool.

Polypropylene, a hairy white rope, smaller sizes, often brightly colored. 24mm dia. has swl 38 cwts and possibly a better buy than Corline.

The only natural rope I have been able to buy without difficulty is sisal but to give the equivalent of the above-mentioned ropes it would need to be of  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches circumference!

When using a block the pull is doubled and the rope size can correspondingly be less. A "Handbilly" which has one double block and one single gives a treble pull. Very few of our members take the trouble to use blocks which would avoid overloading capstans and reduce the risk of breakages.

A warning about old chain which, because it may be obtained easily, is a great temptation. In cold weather it becomes brittle as its work hardens. If you are determined to use a chain make sure it is annealed - don't risk half a chain through your windscreen.

Drum winches when tended carefully and fitted with a wire rope are as safe as anything else but, as soon as the ends of broken strands can be seen, dump the wire and ensure that it is not used again. Check all end fastenings to avoid accidents. For direct traction it is recommended that man-made ropes, mentioned above, be used and in the case of polythylene and polypropylene use rather larger than 24mm. Capstan operators are recommended to use "Viking Braidline" and if you invest in blocks the size may be reduced but the overall length needs to be greater. Failing this terylene, polypropylene, and polyethylene in that order, but do buy from a reputable source such as a marine store as these people are knowledgeable. Blocks and shackles must be well above the rope in working strength. Avoid hooks and don't use material obtained from a scrapyards.