

LAND ROVER OWNERS' CLUB

OF GIPPSLAND
MARCH 2024 NEWSLETTER



GIPPSLAND LAND ROVER
535 PRINCES HIGHWAY, TRARALGON (03) 51721100
GIPPSLAND'S HOME OF LAND ROVER



Proud sponsors of the Land Rover Owners Club of Gippsland



LAND ROVER OWNERS' CLUB OF GIPPSLAND

P.O. Box 554 Traralgon 3844 Telephone 03 51721100 Club website lrocj.jimdo.com

Blakie says....

I've been offered some work with a dried fruit company. Just waiting for them to get back to me with some dates.

I was going to start a taxi service for seniors and call it Oldsmobile!

Sometimes, I shock myself with the smart stuff I say and do. Other times, I try to get out of the car with my seatbelt on.

Only 3 kinds of snakes scare me; big snakes, small snakes and sticks that look like snakes.

No matter how hard I try, I just never seem to run out of bad ideas.



Gascoyne River crossing, Western Australia, ca. 1958. (State Library of Western Australia)

This month's cover; Greg & Lois Rose's very first Land Rover; read about it in this issue



Thanks to everyone that attended the 'Series Land Rover Day' yesterday. I can't wait for the next one.

Land Rover Owners Club of Gippsland 2023-- 2024 Committee		
President	Alan Harlow	0419 530 117
Vice President	Neville Trimnell	
Minute Secretary	Tonee Harlow	
Treasurer	John Kerr	
Publicity Officer	Charlie Calafiore	03 5172 1100
Secretary	Charlie Calafiore	03 5172 1100
Events CoOrdinator	Alan MacRae	
Editor	Eric Shingles	03 56232 501
Property Officer	Jan Parniak	
4WD Vic Delegate	Neville Trimnell	
Webmaster	Alan Harlow	0419 530 117
Life Member's	Ray Massaro, Greg & Lois Rose, Charlie Calafiore,	

Don't Forget

Just a gentle reminder that the LROCG April Ordinary Meeting will be held on Monday April the 8th at Gippsland Land Rover at 8.00 pm.

Land Rover sales roaring ahead in 2024!

It's a case of Land Rover first and daylight second when it comes to a year-on-year Australian new car sales improvement over the first two months of 2024.

Up no less than 234 per cent at the end of February compared to the same period last year, key Land Rover and Range Rover models have taken huge leaps from a trickle of registrations in early 2023 to a relative flood so far this year.

For example, the Range Rover Evoque is up 1960 per cent, the Land Rover Discovery has increased 2100 per cent and the Range Rover Velar has grown from cumulative sales of just two units this time last year to 65 in 2024 (+3150 per cent).

At the same time, the brand's traditionally strong performers like the Land Rover Defender, Discovery Sport as well as the Range Rover and Range Rover Sport have taken big jumps for an overall number to the end of February 2024 of 1042, compared to 312 last year.

According to word from within the brand's retail network, improved supply has underpinned the rise but the cars being registered currently are fulfilling orders from well back in 2023.

Stock is said to have improved slightly for some models but the shipping of vehicles is "erratic" which means this Land Rover high could transition to a low in coming months.

And while Land Rover is roaring ahead the likes of Jeep is in the (relative) doldrums (-29.2 per cent), with key Mercedes-

Benz and Audi SUV and 4x4 models also down (GLE -54 per cent, Q5 -36 per cent).

Meanwhile, Land Rover's Jaguar sister brand is on the down-swing, moving just 581 cars to the end of 2023, a trend set to continue as it globally ends production of its petrol and diesel vehicles in June ahead of a fully-electric transition to kick-off in 2025.



Extreme V8-powered Land Rover Defender OCTA teased

Flagship Defender primed to be the fastest, most capable version of Land Rover's reborn 4x4 off-roader Land Rover has previewed a V8-powered flagship 2024 Land Rover Defender OCTA that's set to boast epic power and the 4x4 brand's advanced 6D Dynamic hydraulically-linked active suspension.

Posting a picture of a late-stage prototype travelling over rocky terrain, the new Land Rover Defender OCTA is tipped to be the fastest-ever Defender and LR's most capable SUV in the dirt.

Other than confirming the model name, few details have been released of the most extreme Defender yet.

However, Land Rover has confirmed it will come powered with the BMW-sourced twin-turbocharged 4.4-litre V8 rather than the old supercharged 5.0-litre V8 that powers the Defender V8. Under the bonnet of the larger Range Rover Sport SV, the same powertrain when matched with all-wheel drive and an eight-speed auto pumps out a muscular 467kW and 750Nm of torque (800Nm on overboost).

With that level of power, the Range Rover Sport SV is capable of a 0-100km/h dash in just 3.8 seconds, so the more off-road-biased Defender is also likely to post a sub-4.0sec time – even on grippier all-terrain rubber.

Ensuring it will go even further off-road will be the adoption of the 6D Dynamic chassis tech combining air springs with hydraulically-linked dampers that, without traditional anti-roll

bars, offers unmatched wheel articulation.

Featuring wheel-arch extensions that hint at broader tyres and a wider front and rear track, the new Defender looks like it might also ride higher than the current models for even greater off-road prowess.

Designed to see the Land Rover Defender go head-to-head with the recently refreshed Mercedes-AMG G-Class, it's thought the Land Rover Defender OCTA could be priced as high as £160,000 (\$A310,000) when it's unwrapped in the coming weeks.



Made in Geelong, fitted at Solihull

By Rob Weigl (Rob is a LROCV member)

The most powerful model Range Rover ever, the 2024 Range Rover Sport SV, made its public debut in the UK last July at the Goodwood Festival of Speed. Described as a more refined version of the previous generation Sport SVR, it's reported as "...the most all round broadly capable car in the world right now." While this hardly means we'll be seeing them on a David Murray trip anytime soon, if you do spy a fully optioned version around the wilds of Williamstown, just know that the wheels will have come from down the road in Geelong.

You may be thinking the old Alcoa factory had something to do with it - alloy wheels are so last century – carbon fibre is the future.

Carbon Revolution was founded in 2007 by a group of engineers and scientists based at the Deakin University Waurn Ponds campus, with the aim of developing and commercialising carbon fibre road wheels. Their first aftermarket wheel was available by 2009, before signing with their first Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) in 2015. Ford's US-only track-focused Mustang Shelby GT350R featured a stylish seven-spoke rim weighing an impressive 8 kgs, about half as much as a comparable alloy version.

The quest for car makers to reduce unsprung mass – that is, weight which doesn't affect the loading on the suspension – is one that is difficult to achieve but has huge benefits. Simply put, the job of a tyre is to stick to the road. The lighter it is, together with the rim, brake calliper and some suspension and steering components, the less it impacts the rest of the vehicle when striking a bump upwards and the faster it can be pushed back down thanks to lower inertia. Lower unsprung mass also usually results in better road handling and holding because of better tyre grip. Lower weight also improves efficiency – in an electric car that can be as much as 5% - 10% gain in range when using carbon fibre.

The process to make a carbon fibre wheel has evolved since those early days, with the intricate designs and challenges posed by the larger and larger wheels of today. Called High Pressure Resin Transfer Moulding, the first step starts by making what is called a "dry wheel" with sheets of carbon

fibre laid down in multiple stages before heating and applying low pressure to lock in the design. Then the rim is placed in a mould and subjected to extreme pressure to force out any air trapped between the sheets. Resin is injected at an incredible 700 psi resulting in high temperatures curing the resin into a solid unit. It's then withdrawn from the mould still at 120° C by robots before the finishing touches are made. The rim is machined, then passes through a 3D CT-scan before given a heat resistant coating then finally painting or just given a clear coat leaving the carbon weave finish exposed.

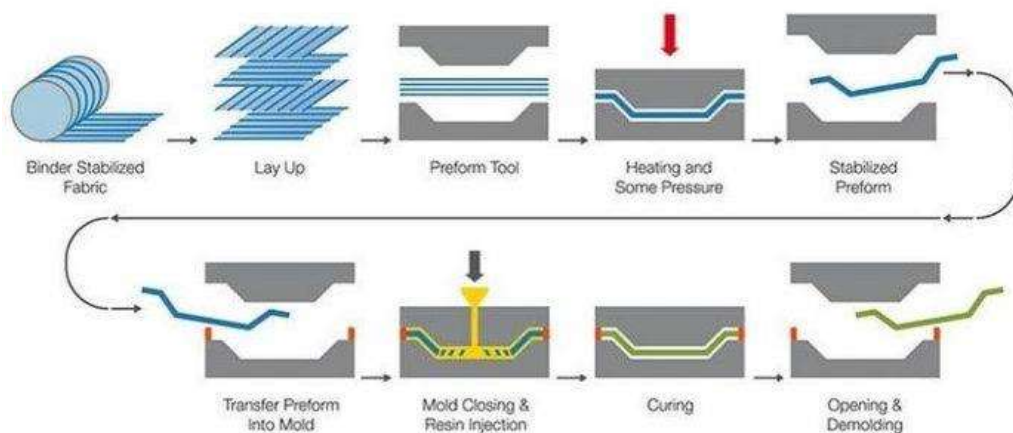


In 2018 Carbon Revolution supplied its wheels to Ferrari's \$438,000 488 Pista, helping it achieve 0-100 km/h in 2.8 seconds before maxing out at an impressive 340 km/h. Their fourth OEM was General Motors when it announced in 2021 the Corvette Z06 would be fitted with the technology.

When JLR was announced as their fifth OEM offering carbon fibre wheels, it was the first for an SUV. The performance flagship is the fastest Range Rover yet from JLR's Special Vehicles Operations division. Boasting 467 kW (626 bhp) from a BMW-sourced 4.4 litre V8 which features twin-turbos and mild hybrid EV tech, it can hit the freeway limit to Geelong in 3.8 seconds before losing your licence at 290 km/h. It's the obvious choice to take when the baby seat doesn't fit in the Ferrari. Rumour on the Bush Telegraph is that ARB will be offering limited accessories, the most popular being a

long-range tank to reduce visits to the servo – see their new catalogue due out 1st April.

The impressively designed massive 23-inch rims are an option on the Range Rover Sport SV shown to the motoring media for the first time in Portugal in February. Said to be 8.9 kgs lighter per corner, and with 8.5 kgs saved with carbon-ceramic brakes, that's an amazing 70 kgs shed. This drops the standard weight from 2560 kgs to a





comparatively lithe sub-2.5 tonnes. Fitted with Michelin Pilot Sport 4 tyres – 285/40 R23 at the front and 305/35 R23 at the rear – the First Edition also boasts active rear-wheel steering as standard.

One of the benefits of the carbon fibre wheels is the improvement in Noise, Vibration and Harshness (NVH) as noted by many of the journalists who sampled the car. Dr Ashley Denman, founder and Chief Technology Officer of Carbon Revolution confirms, “Due to its metal composition, aluminium wheels ring like a bell and transmit a great amount of road noise into the vehicle’s cabin. Conversely, our wheels are significantly lighter, stiffer, and due to being carbon fibre, possess far fewer acoustic properties.”

Just as well, as inside the plush interior “transducers” (speakers to you and me) can be optionally fitted into the backs of the front seats that transmit music to the body via vibrations. According to JLR, this allows passengers to experience what music would feel like at length without being dialled up to 11, as well as involving those hard of hearing who wouldn’t otherwise experience it. JLR engineers prefer to say the transducers ‘emit energy’ rather than ‘vibration’ as vibration is a bad thing. Echoes of 1987 and the controversial Energy Polarizer as fitted by Peter Brock, or is it just me?

To plan for the new model, rims for the Range Rover Sport SV started to come down Carbon Revolution’s new “Mega-line” early in 2023. As the facility ramped up, it reached averaged output for all existing customers of around 28,000 rims boxed throughout last year.

The only Sport SV variant launched so far, the exclusive First Edition, costs £180,000 (AU\$350,000) before options. Ticking the box for the fancy wheels will add \$13,360 – nice to know the carbon-ceramic Brembo brakes (normally an additional \$13,560) are chucked in for this collector’s edition - so let’s just call it a \$365K car with mudflaps, floor mats and a tow bar added. Not that it matters, as all are already sold, which includes 550 for the UK and the 600 allocated for the US market, where there was an enviable 50% take up rate for the carbon-fibre wheels. You weren’t aware of the exclusive First Edition? – that’s ok, as JLR sent out invitations to select clients (when did we stop being owners?) for reserva-



tion during the first year of production, before “regular” sales start. I think I’ll wait until the depreciation hits in five years’ time and then look out on Carsales.com.au for a bargain.

Disclaimer: Carbon Revolution plc appears on the Nasdaq (CREV) stock exchange with shares trading at USD\$9.87 at time of writing. The author does not hold any shares in Carbon Revolution. The author does however hold shares in several dilapidated Land Rovers which he is hoping to off load and hugely inflated prices to purchase one Range Rover Sport SV carbon fibre rim.

Jaguar Land Rover creates 250 new jobs

Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) has announced it is recruiting 250 new engineers to work at its facilities in the West Midlands. The roles – based in Gaydon in Warwickshire and Whitley in Coventry – would be dedicated to helping the firm develop its forthcoming range of pure electric vehicles which will launch by 2030, bosses said.

They aim to enhance the luxury car maker's expertise in battery cell chemistry as well as the associated hardware and software.

It follows a £250m investment in JLR's Future Energy Lab in Whitley.

JLR said some of the new roles would also involve improving the fast charging experience for customers.

The application process for the roles has now opened, the company said.

Its cell design manager, Freddy Gunnarson, commented: "This is an exciting opportunity for battery chemistry experts to help define the next generation of electrical powertrains."

The roles will be based at JLR's Gaydon engineering centre and its Future Energy Lab in Whitley, where it develops and tests batteries and electric vehicle systems.



Land Rover-Like Mega Truck Delivers 1100 HP To 40-Inch Tires For \$1.5 Million

It glides over rough terrain with 30 inches of total wheel travel.

If you think SUVs like the Ford Bronco and Jeep Wrangler are played out, opt for the new SV Rover by Scarbo Vintage instead. The company that built Ken Block's "Hoonipig" now has a high-powered bespoke off-roader that channels the classic Land Rover styling, yours for just \$1.5 million.

The SV Rover is available with a mid-engine supercharged V8 or as a battery-electric vehicle. The V8, which pairs with an eight-speed automatic with paddle shifters, produces 1,100 horsepower, fed by a 65-gallon fuel tank. The electric variant, with a 75-kilowatt-hour lithium-ion battery, makes 1,006 hp (750 kilowatts).

Handling the off-road work is an inboard pushrod suspension with 30 inches of wheel travel front and rear. It has selectable two- and four-wheel drive, a high- and low-range transfer case, and front and rear locking differentials.

The 40-inch tires, which wrap around 20-inch forged wheels, barely fit under the flared fenders, while the air ride suspension with user-adjustable height control keeps things comfortable. Four-wheel steering is standard, as are six-piston Brembo brakes with 15.75-inch (400-millimeter) carbon-ceramic rotors.

Inside the cabin you'll find a 12.3-inch digital instrument cluster and a 12.8-inch central infotainment system.

They're surrounded by Alcantara and billet aluminum accents alongside some other creature comforts like push-button to start, climate controls, power windows, and power locks. There are only two seats, but a generous cargo area behind.

Scarbo Vintage builds each SV Rover to order, with each costing \$1.5 million to start, according to Motor Authority. This is the builder's third model, following the SV F1 and SV RSR.



UK delivers 60 Tonnes of Land Rover Spare Parts to Lebanese Army

Yesterday on Wednesday 27 March, the British Ambassador to Lebanon Hamish Cowell oversaw the handover of 60 tonnes of spare parts and tyres for Land Rovers at the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) Logistics Base in Kfarshema. This contribution – worth £2 million – underscores the United Kingdom's commitment to supporting the LAF in their efforts to maintain stability and security.

The package of 225 engines, 737 brand new tyres, and essential Land Rover spare parts will facilitate the servicing, repairs, and maintenance of over 440 military vehicles. This will strengthen operational readiness, mobility and road safety for the Land Border Regiments.

Ambassador Cowell said: I am proud the UK is able to contribute to the Lebanese Armed Forces' resilience and operational readiness. The LAF plays a critical role, under the leadership of General Joseph Aoun, in safeguarding Lebanon and its people amid the prevailing challenges, especially with the ongoing cross border fighting in South Lebanon.

The equipment is vital for the operations of the Land Border Regiments tasked with securing Lebanon's borders and combating smuggling and terrorist activities.

The UK reaffirms its commitment to supporting the LAF and to strengthening Lebanon's security and stability.



Latest Chinese off-roader looks like a Land Rover Defender

The first model from BYD's high-end sub-brand may look like the Land Rover Defender but it offers an incredibly unusual feature that could help during floods.

One of China's most popular car companies has launched a new off-roader, sporting very similar looks to a Land Rover Defender and plenty of unique hidden features.

The Yangwang U8 is the first product to come from the new luxury sub-brand of BYD, and aims to compete with the likes of Lexus and BMW.

Whilst Yangwang will offer a wide range of cars, including an all-electric supercar that is set to launch later in 2024, their first model will be a luxury SUV that features a hybrid powertrain.

Wang Chuanfu, Chairman and President of BYD, stated that the new off-roader will be able to benefit from the technology developed by its parent company.

He explained: "The Yangwang brand will be the first to apply the cutting-edge technologies of BYD Group and offer excellent safety, performance and experience to customers, even in extreme driving conditions."

The overall shape of the Yangwang U8 looks similar to the Land Rover Defender 130, thanks in particular to its curved hips and large, flat bonnet. However, there are a number of styling elements that help the Chinese SUV stand out from the crowd. At the front, the U8 has a very ornate set of lights, which span from the bumper to very nearly the top of the bonnet.

Strakes also play a significant role in the Yangwang's design, being present on the wheel arches, door mirrors and rear quarter lights. However, the most distinctive feature of the Yangwang U8 is its ability to take on all kinds of terrain, including water.

Whilst it is not exactly designed to be a sailing

vessel, drivers who find themselves stuck in a flash flood can enter an 'emergency floatation' mode, which closes the windows and opens the sunroof to help keep the vehicle on the surface and the occupants dry.

However, in addition to helping drivers get out of a potentially life-threatening situation, the Yangwang is also able to sail along the surface at speeds of up to 1.8mph by spinning all four wheels.

A plug-in hybrid, the Yangwang U8 features a 2.0-litre petrol engine that works alongside no less than four electric motors, with one fitted to each wheel.

The whole powertrain produces up to 1,184bhp, enough for the bulky U8 to accelerate from 0-62mph in as little as 3.6 seconds and reach a top speed that has been limited to 124mph.

Currently, there are no plans to sell the Yangwang U8 in the UK, however, motorists in China will have to pay 1,089,000 yuan (around £120,500) to get behind the wheel.



Land Rover Defender 110 named most popular new car

The Land Rover Defender 110 is March's most popular new car on Auto Trader, accounting for 6% of all brand-new car enquiries despite accounting for only 1% of the platform's new car stock.

Jaguar Land Rover's Range Rover and Range Rover Sport are also on the top 10 list. The brands are converting the most advert views into retailer enquiries, generating almost

one-in-five enquiries so far this month.

Ian Plummer, Auto Trader's commercial director, said: "A visitor who looks at new cars on Auto Trader who then submits an enquiry, typically goes on to order and take delivery. "Since our new car metrics are growing at a pace that's ahead of recent sales data, we can expect to see a positive flow through into deliveries in the weeks ahead."

Wait times fall for Land Rover Defender and Range Rover Sport

Australia has secured more stock of the Land Rover and Range Rover SUVs after years of long wait times.

Wait times for the Land Rover Defender or Range Rover Sport are dropping in Australia after stretching beyond 12 months in the wake of the pandemic amid semiconductor shortages.

Both vehicles – which are Land Rover's top sellers in Australia – are coming to Australia in greater numbers from factories in Nitra, Slovakia (Defender) and Solihull, UK (RR Sport), with new-order times said to be reducing significantly. A Land Rover Australia spokesperson told Drive: "Both Range Rover Sport and Defender have been extremely popular vehicles in the Australian market.

"We are delighted that more supply is now being allocated to Australia, reducing the overall wait time for these vehicles to often less than six months."

The Land Rover Defender was the top-selling model in the 'large SUV over \$70,000' category in 2023, shifting 3846 examples – ahead of the BMW X5 at 3682 sales.

The Defender line-up was recently expanded to include the

'Hard Top' commercial version which deletes the rear seats for a larger cargo area, and the longer Defender 130 range which offers up to eight seats.

The Range Rover Sport tallied 2224 sales in 2023 – a 145 per cent uplift over 2022.

The improved delivery times also mean petrol variants of the Range Rover Sport are due ahead of schedule.

Land Rover Australia previously indicated petrol variants would launch for Model Year 2025 (MY25) – likely in late 2024 – however the six-cylinder P350 and P400 vehicles will now be available as MY24 models, along with the high-performance twin-turbo V8 Range Rover Sport SV.



2023-2024 Land Rover Discovery Sport recalled in Australia

A defect in the body of 60 Land Rover Discovery Sport SUVs could compromise the vehicle's structural integrity in a front-end crash. Jaguar Land Rover Australia has recalled 60 examples of the Land Rover Discovery Sport, citing a potential fault with a bolt used in the windscreen pillar structure. The affected vehicles are stamped 2023 and 2024 models. The recall notice, lodged with the Department of Infrastructure, says: "Due to a manufacturing defect, the right-hand side lower A-pillar frame mounting bolt may not have been tightened according to specifications "As a result, this

may lead to a reduction of structural integrity in the event of a collision. "In the event of a front-end collision, an impaired vehicle structure may increase the risk of serious injury or death to vehicle occupants."

Owners of the affected vehicles are encouraged to contact an authorised Jaguar Land Rover dealership to conduct repairs free of charge.

They can also contact the JLR Customer Relationship Centre at 1800 625 642, or send an email to crcau@jaguarlandrover.com

2020-2024 Land Rover Discovery Sport, Range Rover Evoque and Velar recalled in Australia

A pipe delivering oil to the engine's turbocharger could leak and cause a fire if it was not tightened correctly, according to the recall notice. Jaguar Land Rover Australia has recalled 361 examples of its Land Rover Discovery Sport, Range Rover Evoque and Range Rover Velar, citing a potential fault with the engine turbocharger oil delivery pipe. The affected vehicles are stamped 2020 to 2024 models. The recall notice, lodged with the Department of Infrastructure, says: "Due to a manufacturing defect, the engine turbocharger oil delivery pipe may not have been sufficiently

tightened. "As a result, the pipe may become loose over time and could lead to an oil leak into the engine bay and accumulate in the presence of an ignition source potentially resulting in a vehicle fire. "A vehicle fire could increase the risk of injury or death to vehicle occupants, other road users and bystanders, and/or damage to property."

Jaguar Land Rover advises owners of the affected vehicles will be contacted by the manufacturer, and are asked to take their vehicle to an authorised dealership where the hose will be inspected and replaced free of charge.

JLR appoints dedicated UK directors for its 'House of Brands'

JLR UK has appointed three new directors to each lead Jaguar, Range Rover, Defender and Discovery as part of its 'House of Brands' strategy. Alan Nicolson (pictured left), previously head of UK product marketing for JLR UK, has been appointed to the role of UK brand director, for Range Rover. He reports directly to JLR UK's managing director, Patrick McGillicuddy.

Nicolson has worked with JLR for four years and has led the company's product pricing, launch and commercial strategy. He has also spent time in JLR's central product team, and at the former PSA Group. Leonie Raistrick (pictured middle) will lead Defender and Discovery. She joins the business from Stellantis, where she was international brand strategy director for Peugeot. Raistrick was the winner of the Autocar Great Women Awards 2023 for marketing, recognising her work to shape Peugeot's global social media strategy.

Santino Pietrosanti (pictured right), formerly director of strategic partnerships at JLR, completes the leadership team as UK brand director at Jaguar.

McGillicuddy, said: "How clients view mobility and how they interact with luxury brands has changed vastly in recent years, so how we present our brands, products and services must also change.

"Alan, Leonie, Santino and I are united in our passion to position all of our brands in a cohesive yet distinctive way, to shape the company's future of automotive electrification de-



finied by modern luxury at all touchpoints of the client journey."

JLR revealed back in April last year that it would stop leading with the Land Rover name as part of its new House of Brands strategy.

It has also switched its official company branding to 'JLR', to remove reference to Land Rover, as part of a move which sparked corporate identity changes in dealerships.

JLR also recently announced it would be cancelling its move to an agency model and is instead refocussing its franchised model with an 'elevated concierge levels of client care'.

JLR had been working on the move to agency for over two years and was originally planning to move to a 'direct to consumer' model this year.

McGillicuddy said at the time the decision to move away from agency and focus on a refreshed franchised model was taken due to: "Internal and external challenges afoot, and the scale of change required to maintain a sustainable, profitable business."

Ineos Fusilier: Smaller SUV coming with electric, range extender options

The Ineos Fusilier may look much like the brand's debut model, the Grenadier, but underneath it's very different.

It rides a bespoke skateboard platform with a steel "top hat" and underbody, and aluminium doors and closures.

It will be slightly shorter and lower than the Grenadier.

Instead of BMW-sourced turbo-petrol and turbo-diesel engines, the brand's next SUV will offer electric power, as had been promised back in 2022.

Joining this, however, will be a range extender powertrain.

Ineos says it'll reveal more specific powertrain details and launch timings by the northern autumn (Sept-Nov) of 2024.

"As we developed this vehicle, we quickly concluded that in order to move towards decarbonisation but continue making cars that consumers want to drive, we need a mix of powertrain technologies," said Ineos chairman Sir Jam Ratcliffe.

"That is the reason we are offering an additional powertrain for the Fusilier, one that dramatically reduces emissions but has the range and refuelling capabilities needed.

"We're excited to bring our electric 4X4 to market but we are beginning to understand the clear limitations of battery electric in certain situations."

Though it appears as bluff and boxy as Ineos' other models, the company touts various design elements said to improve

aerodynamics. These include active grille shutters, chamfered edges and corners, and recessed door hinges.

As with Ineos' other model names, Fusilier is a military term – specifically, it's a member of any of several British army regiments formerly armed with fusils, a type of musket.

Like Ineos' other models, it's being developed with automotive supplier Magna, with the company promising "world-class off-road capability". It'll be subjected to a "rigorous" testing program on Austria's Schöckl mountain.

While Ineos Automotive's Grenadier and Quartermaster, are offered exclusively with petrol and diesel power, the company has revealed a hydrogen fuel-cell prototype of the former.

The company says its demonstrator proves the technology for a hydrogen-

powered off-roader is ready for production, but it says the refuelling infrastructure needs to improve before such a vehicle is commercially viable.



Ex-defence vehicles used by Australian public for commercial transport, recreation and sense of history

Walking through a dusty yard of ex-defence vehicles, Colin Werner talks through the roles each machine had in its previous life.

"This one was military police, you can see from the markings on the side," Mr Werner said.

"That over there was a patrol vehicle; you can see how it's set up — we've had ambulances too."

He is general manager of Australian Frontline Machinery (AFM), the sole contractor for the resale of Australian Defence Force (ADF) equipment, which

regularly auctions off ex-military vehicles to members of the public who have cottoned on to their practicality.

As he walks along a line of Land Rover Perenties, once the primary light vehicle in the ADF, Mr Werner explains that demand for the sturdy and capable four-wheel drive and other vehicles has increased dramatically since 2013.

"Over the last 10 years, we've certainly grown a community. We've sold thousands of vehicles," he said.

"People have even created their own businesses through the products that we sell, whether it's making canopies or whether it's restoring them."

A spokesperson for AFM said since 2013, the group's average market had grown to the sale of approximately 480 vehicles a year, as well as thousands of pallets of general equipment.

All vehicles 'demilitarised'

Mr Werner said AFM waited for each new release of vehicles from Defence.

"As the defence capability needs change, they bring on new vehicles," he said.

"When they bring those new vehicles on, and people are trained up, they release the old ones to us.

"We're getting Defence assets from around the late 80s currently. Whether we'll one day be offloading G-wagons (the current Australian Army transport), I don't know".

Each vehicle is demilitarised before arriving at AFM, with specialist equipment and weaponry removed by Defence before sale to the public.

Their service record, and whether they served in peacekeeping efforts across the Asia-Pacific, is also unknown to buyers.

Buying military history

Mr Werner said once auctioned off, the Australian-built Land Rover Perenties were mostly turned into campers or used for recreational off-roading, while larger vehicles and machinery were often used for commercial purposes.



"The most common thing I noticed is how passionate people are. It puts a smile on their face," he said.

"They like the fact that they're buying a piece of Australian military history.

"A lot of people have an adventurous spirit. Getting a vehicle like this gives them the chance to go out and get out into the bush. To go out and experience Australia like they wouldn't

have done before in their daily drive."

AFM marketing sales manager Tara O'Hara said as word of the company's auctions had spread, demand and prices had increased.

"We exist to assist the public but also to assist the Commonwealth," she said "With the sale from all of the assets, funds go back into the Commonwealth, and they can be used to purchase new assets, potentially."

As well as ground transport, AFM has sold former Navy vessels and aircraft and regularly sells a variety of smaller equipment and hardware.



Loud and hot

Locum veterinarian Campbell Costello works in remote and outback Australia and drives an ex-army Land Rover Perentie.

He said it had helped him travel to hard-to-reach communities on less-than-ideal roads.

"I'd fallen in love with this motor car before I became a vet," he said.

He said he grew up watching Bush Tucker Man Les Hiddins on television and knew he wanted one.

"It's taken me to cattle stations and Indigenous communities across the Simpson Desert a couple of times, up the Tanami, across the Kimberley in the Pilbara, all the way down to Adelaide," he said.

"They are loud, they are hot, and ... they're not for the faint-hearted, but they're a fantastic vehicle and I wouldn't drive anything else.

"I've had retired members of the ADF come forward and ask if they can show their kids this car, [saying] 'I want to show my sons that I was in East Timor and this is what I used to get around in'."

A long history

The use of ex-military vehicles by the public is not a new phenomenon.

Since World War II, trucks, troop carriers and American-made Jeeps have been used by the public, and are often favoured for their performance in rough terrain.

One such truck is owned by Paul Dekmetzian, vice president of the Victorian Military Vehicle Corps — a non-profit club run by ex-military vehicle enthusiasts.

His International MK 3 Blitz army truck was in service in the Australian Army for 20 years from 1964, before its previous owner, Billy Baird, purchased it at auction in 1984.

Mr Baird, a former soldier and Japanese prisoner of war,

drove the truck to deliver mail and supplies from Hay to Ivanhoe in western New South Wales, negotiating poor road conditions.

"The Cobb Highway was appalling, and he kept those communities going with food supplies and mail for many years," Mr Dekmetzian said. "I was attracted to that story, so I bought the truck and brought it to Melbourne, where I refurbished it and restored it."

Mr Dekmetzian said the truck was in a bad state before undergoing a full restoration, but that was not uncommon with former military vehicles.

"Military vehicles have got a great history in rural communities, where they have especially been used and enjoyed on farms," he said.

"Coming out of the army, these vehicles are in excellent condition, but the people that use them, often farmers, use them to the maximum that they can get out of them.

"They have a very hard life after the army — they come out fully serviced, and they come out looking good ... and then somebody buys them and puts them to work."

Through the restoration of the truck, Mr Dekmetzian hopes to keep the history of the vehicle and Mr Baird's service to his community alive.



Little Collins Street looking west from near Swanston Street Melbourne ~ 1950s.

Massaro Motors turns 50

Starting as an apprentice motor mechanic at the age of seventeen, Ray Massaro worked for Travally Motors, a local family-owned Chrysler Dealership with sites in Morwell and Traralgon. Ray was promoted to service manager by the then owner Rod Cook, a role he performed for 18 months, before the Cook family sold the business to concentrate on their farming and other interests. After the change of ownership, Ray found himself contemplating a major change of his own.

Ray was just 23 years old when he established his business, by purchasing a disused Shell service station and roadhouse on the corner of Princes Drive and Bridle Road, Morwell. He then secured a franchise with Chrysler. After some modifications to the property Massaro Motors was ready to begin trading in February 1974. They opened with three new cars for sale, all were Chrysler Valiants.

Ray's hard work paid dividends and the business grew quickly. Within two years, Massaro Motors had added Land Rover as a second brand with Chrysler and then Suzuki followed the year after. The agricultural side of the business was introduced in the late 70's with Kubota. During the 1990's Chrysler was phased out of production and replaced temporarily with Mitsubishi. BMW were added for a time, before Volkswagen became another flagship brand for the business.

Ray was instrumental in the formation of the Land Rover Owners Club of Gippsland in 1994.

Massaro Motors and Ray have been wonderful supporters and sponsors of the LROCG over the years.

Ray was awarded Life Membership of the LROCG in 2004.

Though no longer a car dealership, Massaro Motors are proud to be the Latrobe Valley's premier dealer for Kubota, Krone hay equipment, Digga, Burder, Farm Implements Australia, Hansa chippers, Silvan, John Berends, Trimax, Quicke, Bare Co and Suzuki motorcycles.



And who can't forget those spare wheel covers, they've been everywhere

Thanks for playing... Hard!

By Rob Weigl (Rob is a LROCV member)

For fans of the ABC TV show, Hard Quiz, the sign off at the very end, "Thanks for playing... Hard!" means the contestant is holding up a big brass mug accompanied by a huge grin on their face.

For club members that know me, they'll be aware that I'm a bit of a rivet counter when it comes to Land Rover history and trivia. Somehow the obscure facts and figures are etched in my brain – probably because of reading 4x4 Australia, Bushdriver & Overlander magazines as a teenager in the mid-80s. It certainly was far more entertaining reading about Tickford Station Wagons than studying times tables.

Like fellow Club members Eric Shingles, Craig Murray & David Murray we all know why a 38A is a second-gen Range Rover and a P38 is a WWII airplane. Not finding these details so exciting has been my long-suffering wife, Kellie. We've both had success in pub trivia teams and share a common delight watching Hard Quiz, which has been on-air since 2016.

The format of the show is quite simple. It works on the premise that everyone has that "one" topic or obscure subject that they know far too much about. Match up four such contestants and have them eliminated one-by-one over four rounds before you have a winner. As the ABC is taxpayer funded, the winner does not receive cash prizes or even gifts from the ABC bookshop, but a limited-edition brass mug. The host, comedian Tom Gleeson, is well known for his mocking comments towards contestants. It is all done in jest and is better received when contestants fire back witty one-liners.

For those who have never seen the show, a brief overview. The opening round sees each of the contestants being asked five questions on their expert topic. Buzz in and receive five points for a correct answer and lose five points for an incorrect one. In this Expert Round, if one of the other contestants manages to steal an answer on your chosen subject, they receive ten points.

The next round is called Tom's Round, where the host gives multiple choice answers to a question on a topic as obscure as Kidneys or Gold or Recycling. Everyone locks in their answer using a touchscreen, with points awarded for a correct answer. After this round the lowest scoring contestant is eliminated, with Tom asking, "What happened?". Usually they respond with a contrived excuse, before Tom exclaims, "You know what this means? Out!"

The third round, The Peoples Round (against the clock), is rapid fire general knowledge questions for around a minute. The elimination process continues as before, with the lowest scoring contestant walking out through doors at the back of the set. If at any stage during the elimination rounds the scores are tied, the host asks a question forcing a result. Known as a Hard Off, it's usually a closest to the pin type-question, where the closest answer results in the winner staying on.

The final round has the two subject experts go head-to-head in a five-question penalty shoot-out. This often has the most excitement and tension as contestants go at it with harder questions until a clear winner is found. If after five questions



Rob and Kellie pose with a cardboard cut out of Tom Gleeson

the scores are tied, there is a sixth question asked to find the true champion. If the scores are still tied, it goes to a Tom's Tiebreaker question back on Tom's obscure topic. The loser is then eliminated, graciously walking out before the champion hoists the trophy and looks down the camera and exclaims the tag line.

In the eight years the show has been on, there have been over 800 "expert topics" ranging from movie stars, Australian landmarks, rock bands, TV shows to the truly bizarre like microbes or the 1975 Australian Constitutional Crisis. It seems no topic is too obscure for someone to be passionate about. The last few years have seen automotive topics like the Mazda MX-5, Ford Mustang, Holden Commodore, even Indian motorcycles. Every time a car-themed topic came up, I would say to Kellie, I should go on this show with my knowledge of Land Rovers. And every time she would simply agree and say, "Yes you should." It then got to the stage where I said, you should put my name down to be a contestant, and she would wisely respond, "No, you have to do it yourself."

Now wind back to January 2023 when Kellie went to Sydney and I was still on holidays, so thought, "What have I got to lose?". I found the website, entered my details and my expert topic – Land Rover. There followed about four pages of personal questions ranging from "How did you get into your topic?", "What lengths have you gone in pursuit of your expert topic?" and even "What is something not many people would know about you?". They are looking for colourful responses or characters that would work well on TV – no good being there if you are shy or bashful.

There followed 14 general knowledge questions that needed

to be answered in 90 seconds before hitting the “SUBMIT” button. And that was it – my application had been sent. Besides the automated response that acknowledged my entry, I didn’t hear anything further until sometime in May. This email outlined the next stage of the application process being an online zoom quiz. Not surprisingly there were the usual challenges with any such meeting, but the 25 hopefuls on the session needed to be up for it. One of the shows researchers would ask a question, and everyone had to answer multiple choice within five or so seconds. It was deliberately fast paced. I think I got around 28 out of the 50 questions asked in the end. I’m not sure if that was good enough or not – some questions were deliberately hard - a 50/50 guess going the wrong way easily pushed your score down. After this stage we received an email which said passing this test was no guarantee of a spot on the show.

It was another month before I received an email asking if I could attend the ABC studios in Southbank on a Sunday afternoon in mid-June. Around 40 people of all ages and flavours were there. There was nervous chit-chat as we waited to be escorted in. The schedule of the afternoon was laid out before we were staged in groups of four. We were about to undertake a live quiz, radio station style, where you had to yell your name to buzz in. I don’t know if it was just the younger guys I was with, but I was always just a touch slow to yell out. Once the first person answered five questions correctly, they were eliminated to allow the others a chance. Even then I struggled to get into the contest, but eventually I was able to get three or four right. This was all while standing in front of the other hopefuls. Once this stage was finished, we then had to front up individually to a table where four of the producers and executives were seated. You had to talk about your topic for about five minutes explaining why you were so passionate about it. They must have done some research prior as one of the researchers knew a bit about classic Land Rovers. They asked particular questions like what you know a lot of, what don’t you know a lot of, and what have you done for study or research. Everyone there that day was supportive of each other, and they made the point that there was no advantage in remembering anyone’s topic, as you would not meet up with them on the night. The afternoon finished with some of us being asked to sit down with Bianca, the shows Contestant Producer who taped the interview asking more questions around the topic and those self-incriminating answers from six months earlier. The day finished with another reminder that this was still no guarantee of getting onto the show. They asked though if you could be available at short notice, if need be, for taping on a Wednesday or Friday night. Their aim was to give you several weeks’ notice before the due date. About two weeks later I had a congratulatory email that I had made it with a date of 11th August for filming. There was no backing out now!

They said use this time to freshen up on your topic and make sure you know as much as possible about it. I knew the way the Expert Subject round was framed by watching old episodes of the show. Some of the questions will be asked in such a way to allow other contestants a chance to steal – it is part of the show’s appeal. As much as you are excited or want to show off and buzz in early, if you don’t wait until the end, you’ll guess wrong. So, my strategy was to allow as much of the question to be asked before I was sure I knew

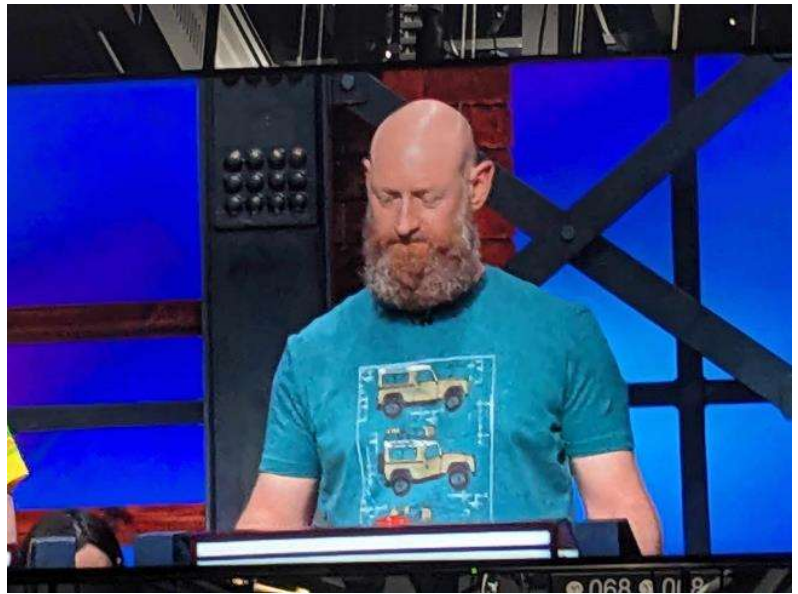


what was being asked. My other tactic, after reading online stories about other contestants’ time on the show, was don’t buzz in if it’s a Hard Off tie-breaker question. The reasoning is in most situations people buzz in and blurt out an obvious answer, only to be tripped up. I thought if I found myself in that situation, I would let the other contestant answer and see what comes of it.

I needed to complete some police checks and disclaimers around being taped and then another form confirming I understood the shows rules. I then needed to forward some footage or photos of my Land Rover activities. Fellow club member Murray Jones’ YouTube channel features a video clip of our three County’s crossing Nolans’ Brook near Cape York back in 2012. I was also asked to supply some conversation starters with Tom so there would be good rapport from the beginning.

On the day of filming I needed to be at the Southbank studios by 3:30PM. Here I met the other contestants - Georgina, Jonathan & Zoe. We were told not to tell each other what our topics were but to get know each other to get rid of any nerves. We were shown a video teaching us some of the shows do’s and don’ts, before being led to our private dressing rooms. We had to wear whatever we felt comfortable in. I had a cool Land Rover t-shirt which didn’t feature any overt branding (this is the ABC after all), but still had the unmistakable Land Rover shape. I kept the t-shirt covered until the last minute on stage. The two ladies went to the make-up chair a good 45 minutes before me. With a freshly trimmed beard from earlier in the day I was there literally for five minutes putting a fair amount of “matte sheen” on the top of my head! The time went fast, and before we knew it we were walking up to the film set. The whole time we were escorted and told what was about to happen – you couldn’t fault the staff making it all run smoothly.

We practiced leaving the podium and standing in the exact right spot for the cameras if we were to make it to the final round or if we were eliminated. For the magic of television some of the other contestants stood on small boxes so all our heads appeared to be the same height. It was here where Georgina revealed the official uniform of the Australian Diamonds netball team. No guessing what her topic was! We practiced our buzzers, were shown where there were monitors so we could check our scores as the game went ahead (but were told don't stare or look at it for too long!). Then the studio audience shuffled in – I saw Kellie and friends shuffle in. There was a crowd warm up guy who was revving the 150-strong crowd up and getting an exciting buzz happening. It's surprising that for a 30 minute television show, 90 minutes of filming, was needed. It was fast paced, but there were chances to have a breather along the way and for a quick make up refresh – apparently my beard needed constant attention behind the scenes so as not to distract on the screen! I'm not telling any tales out of class by naming the other topics – there was the TV show "Sex & the City", 1970s punk rocker Iggy Pop as well as the Australian Diamonds. I was in the fourth podium position meaning I would be introduced last, but would be greeted by Tom first. "Oh great", I thought. Tom bounded in, gave his opening spiel, and then the camera was on me. Gulp! They showed the film clip of the bonnet-deep river crossing before the banter about



Land Rovers and my job as a truck driver - there seemed to be a lot of questions asked. It will be interesting to see how it's all edited in the end. And then we were playing, Hard! So how did I go? By the time you are reading this it may only be a week or two before the episode airs on Wednesday March 20th at 8PM. Tune in (or catch up later via the ABC iview app) to see if I ended up a dud, or was able to Play Hard!
(If you missed the show, here is the web address to view it) <https://iview.abc.net.au/video/LE2231V007S00>

Land Rover Owners Club of Gippsland Ordinary Meeting

Minutes for meeting held on Monday 4th March 2024.
Meeting held at Gippsland Land Rover, Traralgon.
Meeting started at 8.04 pm

Welcome & thanks.

Alan welcomed everyone and thanked them for their attendance.

Attending; Ian Blake, Charlie Calafiore, Alan Harlow, Rod Catchpole, Loris Catchpole, Tonee Harlow, Terry Heskey, Brian Johnson, John Kerr, Heather Kerr, Alan MacRae, Helen MacRae, Bob McKee, Annette Fleming, Jan Parniak, Collette Parniak, Eric Shingles, Neville Trimnell, Liz Trimnell, Ken Markham, Sue Markham, Philip Croft, Christine Croft, Jessica Walsh,

Apologies; Ross Howell, Sue Howell, Ray Massaro, Greg Rose, Lois Rose,

Confirmation of Meeting Minutes:

Motion; That the February Club minutes be accepted as true and correct.

Moved by Rod Catchpole, Seconded by Ian Blake, Carried
Business arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.
Nil

Correspondence:

In:
FWDV Feb eNews.
Rudi Paoletti Jamieson Township Walk
Out:
Relevant emails received have been sent onto members.
Reminders of Club meeting email and text.

Future events list email from Alan MacRae.

Treasurer's Report: John Kerr

Questions of Treasurer

Nil

Motion; The Treasurer's report be received and approved,
Moved by John Kerr, Seconded by Bob McKee, Carried

Publicity Officer's Report: Charlie Calafiore.

Importers concerned about new government regulations. Prices will go up as electric cars are not being traded, there are 827 Teslas on car sales at the moment. In the USA there are mandates on the percentage of electric cars to be manufactured but can't sell them. Discussion on electric cars viability and batteries such as lithium issues in relation to fires. Range Rover Sport and Defender the biggest sellers; it's a towing market.

Editor's Report: Eric Shingles.

Hope you liked the Newsletter, Eric is always looking for more stuff. Thanks to those contributing.

Webmaster's Report: Alan Harlow.

The web site is up to date.

	Visitors	Pages
Aug	11	17
Sept	16	75
Oct	11	32
Nov	30	140
Dec	4	20
Jan	5	8
Feb	4	12

FWDV Delegate's Report: Neville Trimnell

Nil

FWDVP Regional Representatives; Greg Rose

Nil

Equipment officer Report; Jan Parniak

Has been a delay due to problems setting up meeting date so that audit can be done, (probably be done tomorrow ha ha.)

Past Events.

Friday 17th Feb.

Churchill coffee shop, John Kerr, Enjoyable morning in pleasant venue with a good roll up and nice cakes. Asked to leave at 12 or buy lunch.

February 18th.

FWD show at Lardner Park. See Greg's full report in the next newsletter.

February 25 to 27th

2 night trip to Pinnacles lookout. Led by Alan Harlow.

Camping on the Wellington River at Muttonwood campground. Day trip to the Pinnacles lookout.

Harlows, Parniaks, Howells, Markhams and Blakey attended. Good weather resulted in some swimming on the Sunday with the camp site to ourselves we enjoyed a great fire each night.

The Tamboritha road was rough but the Moroka road was good. The view from the Pinnacles was clear and spectacular. On our way back we stopped and walked into the Moroka hut even though the foot bridge was closed. The last stop for the day was the McFarlane Saddle camp ground which is the start of the main walk to Lake Tali Karn. On Tuesday we enjoyed a relaxing morning and headed home after lunch.

Events Coordinator's Report: Alan MacRae

Future Events.

* Friday 15th March, Coffee Meeting, led by Jan Parniak
Location will be; The Daily, 148 Commercial Road Morwell.
Meet at 10am

April

* Thursday 28th March to 2nd April, Alan Harlow
Camp hosting, if you're interested talk to Alan Harlow.

Tonee, Alan, Jan & Colette head to Murrindindi

Shaun Johnson is going to Wyperfeld.

Tag along welcome.

* May -July

Neville's planning a trip to Cape York in 2024 between May and July and would welcome company on the Cape part of the trip.

* November

Thursday 31st Oct to Thursday 7th November

Cup Week trip away. Rochester Riverside Holiday Park has been booked with several members reserving a site. Phone 0354841622

Individual roles.	Responsible
Booking site and group contact;	Alan MacRae
Organising Melbourne cup sweep;	Alan & Tonee
Quiz Tuesday	
Melbourne cup food co-ordinator;	Heather Kerr
Friday pm trip to	
Saturday Park Run 5km (can walk);	Wash?
Saturday breakfast booking	

Saturday tea at Hotel motel bistro; Sue Markham?

Sunday trip; Trimnells

Monday coffee booking—free day.

Tuesday site preparation; Group

Wednesday trip?

TBC on the trip.

Technical Matters:

* Discussion on timing belt change over scheduling for Discovery 4, consensus was 180k to 190k.

* Alan MacRae has provided Eric with information on Terry's car's governor to be placed in the next newsletter at the discretion of the editor.

General Business.

* 3 days with PV should be in the next Trackwatch. Something for members to look out for.

* LROCG 30th year celebration; any ideas?

Greg Rose had written a history which is on our web site. For the 20th, the ever generous Ray Massaro paid a few thousand dollars to have an excellent fully catered event at Huggetts Crossing. The date of the 20th anniversary trip was October the 12 2014. Huggetts was the site of the very first Club trip

Suggestions for the 30th year celebrations are as follows.

1 Daytime dinner type function Or lunch To be held around Warrigal Drouin area.

2 Club badges indicating 30 years eg 2014 till present

3 Use as a promotional opportunity in the press to increase Club numbers.

4 A Land Rover display at a venue or event.

5 Re-enactment of the first and 20th celebrations at Huggett's crossing.

6 New shirts, tops or jackets with a 30th year promotion.

7 Long service badges.

8 Place an article/add in paper celebrating Ray Massaro's 50 years in the business.

These ideas and any others put forward to be considered by members.

John Kerr to create budget for next 18 months so we may ascertain what Club funds could be spent on the celebrations.

* A big thank you to Rod for the travelling books he has offered to Club members and to Jessica for the magazines she has offered to Club members. Please take some home.

Reminders

* John and Heather Kerr and Jesssica Walsh are apologies for the next meeting.

* Rod Weigl will be on Hard Quiz on March the 20th, speciality Classic Land Rovers, it was filmed in August 2023.

Next Meeting:

Monday April 8th at Gippsland Land Rover, with a pre meeting dinner at the Morwell Italian Australia club at 6pm. RSVP to Bob please.

Meeting closed at 9:14pm.

I don't get why students are being asked to study maths until they're 18. I stopped studying at 16 and don't see what difference an extra 4 years would make....

7 out of 10 people have no clue how to calculate percentage. That's a whopping 95% !!!

Land Rover History

By Eric Shingles



1985 Land Rover 110 3.5lt V8 6x6

This 110 Land Rover 6x6 was listed recently on Greys on line, but failed to sell.

The civilian 6x6 Land Rover differs in many areas compared to the Perentie 6x6. The tender for the Project Perentie vehicles required that the vehicles being offered were derivatives of commercially available vehicles. JRA produced the Land Rover 110 6x6 for the civilian market to comply with the rules of the tender. The 110 6x6 is a very rare Land Rover. Only 50 are thought to of been built.

This one offered at Greys is believed to be the only one produced with the 3.5 litre V8 engine. It was built by Austral for ESSO Petroleum, Sale, and was painted in a distinctive Yellow. It features a parge water canon and the name Hawk marked on the sides. It looked to still have all of its fire fighting equipment still in tact. It was showing just over 14,000 kms.



Below; three pictures of the 110 6x6 when new



My First Land Rover

By Greg Rose



I purchased my first Land Rover in 1979. To put that year in context, The Knack were singing about "My Sharona", Rod Stewart was asking, "Da Ya Think I'm Sexy?" and Blondie had, "A Heart of Glass". "Alien" and "Mad Max" were two of the biggest movies. "The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy" was a best-selling book. Malcolm Fraser was Prime Minister and petrol and diesel were less than 30 cents a litre.

I had previously owned a short-wheelbase Toyota Land Cruiser, purchased in 1972, while living in Gippsland but sold it when I moved back to Melbourne for work. I had always wanted a Land Rover from when I was about seven years old, and my father brought home one that he used in his job. One of my favourite childhood toys was a blue Dinky Toys Land Rover, which I received one Christmas. Moving back to Central Gippsland it was time to buy my first Land Rover.

I purchased a Series III short wheel-base hardtop. Although not very old, it had been used and abused on a farm in the South Gippsland hills. The original 2.25 litre Land Rover engine had been replaced with a Holden 186 red engine. Swapping the Land Rover engine for a Holden unit was very common and with the appropriate adaptor plate, not particularly difficult. There were less common kits for Ford engines, various small V8s and even slant six Valiant engines. People were always looking for ways to make their Series Land Rovers go faster. When you consider the handling characteristics and braking ability, it was not necessarily a sensible thing to do.

Driving the Landy home the howl from the rear differential was deafening, the steering vague to the point of dangerous, the brakes existed in name only and it kept jumping out of gear. The body panels were reasonably straight but the paint was faded and scratched. Not a very positive start. I had originally been going to buy a neat looking Series II that still had the original motor and a capstan winch. In my ignorance

of things mechanical, I reasoned that the later model Landy would be a better buy. Fortunately, I didn't pay much for the Series III.

So, my education began. With the help of a Land Rover owning mechanic friend, who we ended up doing decades of trips with, we started on the most immediate issues. I had a nice new set of Sidchrome Whitworth and AF sockets and spanners and no skill. I got plenty of information from technical articles in "Review" magazine and a second hand repair manual.

Priority was the howling rear differential. That was dismantled and we rebuilt it at night over a week. The wayward steering was fixed with new tie rod ends and the seriously leaking steering box replaced. Brakes were overhauled and I discovered the joys of pumping and pumping the pedal trying to get rid of persistent air bubbles. That work took about a



month and the Land Rover was ready for an outing.

The tracks around Woods Point seemed like a good testing destination. I have vivid memories of descending a steep track with Lois trying to stop the gear lever jumping into neutral as we bounced to the bottom, the suspension was barely able to cope with the ruts and rocks. Going uphill was exciting too as the engine kept cutting out from fuel starvation. There also seemed to be a little too much exhaust smoke emitting from the tail pipe. But we had a fantastic time and lived to tell the tale.

The weekend away at Woods Point dictated the next phase of the Land Rover work. We were in the big job world now. The engine and gearbox were removed and over two months of evenings and weekends they were rebuilt. I learnt to hone bores, fit rings, clean off old gaskets and fit new ones without breaking them. I skinned knuckles undoing reluctant bolts and washed gear oil out of overalls. Finally, with the overhauled six cylinder 186 repainted in the correct Holden red, the gearbox and engine were reunited with the vehicle.



While we had the Landy in pieces we sanded back the panels and resprayed the whole vehicle. A swing out spare tyre carrier and bull bar were made by my mechanic friend. The interior of the Landy was in surprisingly good condition. I fitted the front seats from my 2 litre Ford Escort, I had Recaro seats in it. A C.B. radio went in and great luxury for those days, we put an Engel fridge in the back. It was very small, perhaps only 15 litres. I purchased it from T.V. Scott in Mafra. Some of you will remember Keith Scott, a long time LROCV member.

It was summer now and we headed off for a camping holiday in the Snowy Mountains and border high country. The Land



Rover successfully conquered Mt Pinnibar and other steep rocky tracks with no gearbox or engine issues. Driving on the recently dozed Cowombat Flat Track, a piece of tree root flicked off the driver's side front tyre and smashed up through the floor under my feet. Fortunately, the floor was bolted in, so I was able to remove it and persuade it back into shape with a hammer.

I knew nothing about running Engel fridges. At one of our camp spots we had shot some rabbits. With one baked in a camp oven for dinner, the decision was taken to freeze the remaining couple of rabbits in the Engel. Much to my amazement the battery was flat in the morning. Lesson learned.

It had been a fantastic three weeks away but there was still work to do. Shock absorbers were replaced with Gabriel units. A second battery was installed with a simple isolating switch. We had seen a short wheel-base Land Cruiser with a Flip Top Tent in Adaminaby. The front of the Toyota roof was hinged and "flipped" over the bonnet and was held up by a couple of poles off the bull bar. As the roof flipped over a tent was pulled up. The inside of the roof was lined with a mattress. You slept in the upturned roof and had standing room in the area behind it. Brilliant. The Toyota owner told us that the manufacturers did a version for short wheelbase Land Rovers. I got in touch with the company and arranged to have one fitted. The flip top was excellent with the one drawback that it was very heavy to push the roof back up to the point where gravity would take over and it would drop into place ready to be clipped down. We were to spend many nights, in all weathers, comfortable in the flip top tent. The bonus was being able to stand in the back section and change, wash, even cook on a little single burner stove if it was miserable outside.

The shorty took us on many adventures through the



Gippsland foothills and mountains. It took us to the snow for cross country skiing. In the warmer months it carried kayaks for some white water action. I used it on a few searches as a volunteer with the local SES. It suffered the indignity of being bogged often as we had some very wet winters. Recovery gear consisted of a HiLift jack, shovel and a Tirfor TU16 hand winch. We had the delight of rescuing a couple of bogged Toyotas with the nimble little Landy.

I still have the Tirfor winch and the HiLift jack but the shorty is long gone. We sold it and bought an ex West Australian mining company Series III long wheelbase (109) hardtop. That vehicle came with some nice modifications for long distance travel. We wanted more room for gear for the extended outback trips we were starting to do. We fitted a Range Rover V8 to the 109 inch. You could do that sort of thing back then.

Unfortunately, the chap who bought the shorty took it into Wonnangatta for its first trip and drowned it in a river crossing. I know it was retrieved but don't know what happened after that. I hope it still exists somewhere.



Gippsland History



The Sale Swing Bridge

The Sale Swing Bridge is located on Swing Bridge Drive near the South Gippsland Highway, Longford, 5 km south of the city of Sale, and spans the Latrobe River at its junction with the Thomson River.

The bridge was designed to be operated by a two-person hand cranking system. Currently, it is opened using a trailer-mounted hydraulic power unit.

As at 2023, the bridge opens each Saturday and Sunday between 3pm and 4pm, and on the second Wednesday of every month between 11am and 12 noon.



The bridge can swing in either direction, swinging 90 degrees to allow the passage of river traffic. Designed by John Grainger (father of Australian composer Percy Grainger), and built by local contractor Peter Platt for the Victorian Government Board of Land and Works it was the first movable bridge built in Victoria. Its wrought-iron structure, 45 metres long, pivots on a set of nine cylindrical cast iron columns filled with concrete. Construction began in 1880, and before opening in 1883, it was test loaded with 240 cattle.

The bridge was operated by a series of bridgekeepers until 1938, the last time the bridge was opened regularly. At its peak, the bridge was opened up to 20 times a day, allowing the movement of steamers between Sale and Melbourne. Between 1938 and 2004 it was only opened on three occasions. In 1953, a dredge needed to pass upstream to remove a tree which blocked river traffic. In 1963, it opened to allow the Tambo Lady to pass for the Municipality of Sale's centenary celebrations. The third time was in 1972 due to a request by the Traralgon and District Historical Society. While no major modifications to the bridge have occurred throughout its history, a number of maintenance operations have occurred.

In 1893, wider rollers in the central pivot mechanism were installed. In 1902-03, the winch was rebuilt and new bearer plates were installed. In 1925, 1933, 1953 and 1982 the bridge roadway timbers were re-decked. In 1980, traffic lights were installed. In 1982 all the metal was sand-blasted and repainted.

By the late 20th century, increased traffic requirements, included traffic for the off-shore oil and gas industry, resulted in the need for a new section of the A440 South Gippsland Highway, with new high level concrete bridges, crossing both the Thompson and Latrobe rivers slightly upstream of the swing bridge. The new Thompson River bridge gives 6.5m clearance for watercraft passing to and from the Port of Sale. Upon completion of the new A440 bypass, VicRoads commenced major restoration works on the swing bridge, beginning towards the end of 2003, and completed by the start of 2006. The northern abutment had moved over the years to-

wards the river, causing the bridge to be jammed for many years. This abutment had to be completely rebuilt.

Due to repeated traffic damage, the original criss-cross iron balustrade sections had been removed years beforehand. Amazingly, these were located in a VicRoads depot in Morwell. These were repaired or replaced by contractor Jarvis Norwood. Also repaired or replaced were the mechanical components of the bridge opening mechanism. A trailer mounted portable hydraulic power unit was constructed to enable the bridge to operate under power. Other minor repairs, such as re-decking and painting were also conducted. Upon completion of refurbishment, the bridge was swung by hand by Ann Synan, great-great-granddaughter of gatekeeper Eliza Ball.

Since the restoration about 2,500 tourists have visited the bridge each year

In April 2017 vandals lodged a block of wood in the gear mechanism, causing an axle to bend and the bottom roller beam to crack. The bridge was re-opened in July 2017 after a \$160,000 repair.

List of Bridge keepers; George Bailey 1884-1886, James Flint 1886, John Towner 1888-1891, Eliza Ball 1891-1893, John Towner 1893-1912, Tom Kivlighon 1912-1938

The bridge is listed as an Engineering Heritage National Landmark by Engineers Australia as part of its Engineering Heritage Recognition Program.



Gippsland History



Holey Plains

From 'Gippsland History' Facebook site
A post by Graham Peters

Probably the oldest continually family owned property in Gippsland.

Gippsland Mercury Tuesday 27 June 1882, page 3.

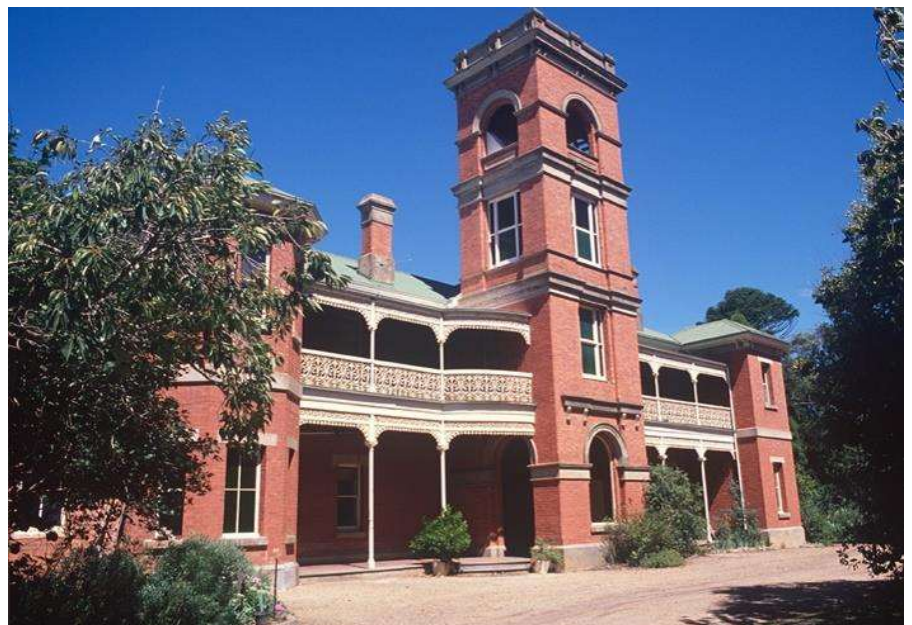
THE GIPPSLAND ESTATES, No. XIX.

HOLEY PLAINS, situated to the south of the Glengarry river, consists of about 14,000 acres in extent, about one quarter of which is freehold. The land is admirably adapted for pasturage purposes, and on the river flats is also suitable for cultivation, as on that part of the estate there is splendid deep chocolate soil, which would produce anything. Commencing my inspection I first took notice of the home paddock. The extent of this splendid piece is about 100 acres, all well cleared and watered by an immense water-hole about half-a-mile in length, and after which the estate is named. This waterhole in former years supplied the house with all the water required, but it is not now used for that purpose, only for watering the stock, and as a place for boating on, Mrs Crooke having a boat kept there. The paddock in question has been laid down with the finest English grasses, but unfortunately the dandelion has spread so very thickly that it is driving out the grass and clover. There is, however, some exceedingly nice picking for the horses and other stock depasturing on it. Amongst the stock in this paddock I was much struck with a nice chestnut gelding by Camel. There are some very handsome little Shetlands running about with the big horses, one little fellow being a very mischievous animal. The heavy stock on the station, consist only of one draught gelding, bred at Flinn's Creek, and a half draught; these two do all the work, and more are not required, as the owner does not cultivate more ground than is sufficient to supply the house with potatoes, it being found that the mayweed is a great trouble.

The only bull used on the estate is a white one, bred on the place; he is named Tulloch, but has not, I believe, ever graced a show yard. In a sty near the house are a few Berkshire pigs, two of which are exceedingly fat, one of them being so heavy as scarcely to be able to walk, and reminding one of the show pens at Islington. Going into the paddock on the other side of the house, one notices that here alone is a small property of it self, as its extent is somewhere about 750 acres, all splendid land, laid down with English grassland cleared of every stick, except at the top, where the draining is not yet completed, it having been found impossible to proceed with trench cutting during the past summer, the ground being so caked by the sun as to

be of almost an adamant nature. In this paddock I saw a mob of splendid young horses, mostly 3 yr olds, and nearly all by the station sire Camel. They all show plenty of quality with any amount of bone, considering they are principally thoroughbreds. About two-thirds of the lot have been purchased by Mr Baldock for the Indian market, and will shortly leave for Melbourne in order to be shipped to Calcutta. They have brought satisfactory prices, and ought to suit the Indian market capitally, as they seem strong enough to endure any hardships, and being well grown are up to cavalry weight, so that many of them will doubtless be purchased on arriving at their destination by the army remount agent. I fancied one bright bay gelding very much, he showing quality enough to grace a racecourse and I should not be surprised to hear of his being returned a winner over sticks. His quarters are very powerful and his arms, are strong enough for a draught horse. There were several others of excellent stamp, a chestnut also taking my eye.

Proceeding from this paddock to the hills, I had the pleasure of interviewing the matrons of the stud, as well as the two-year-olds and yearlings. The majority of the mares are by that good horse Prince William. Of those I interviewed I liked very much, a low lengthy mare, Flora by Ivanhoe from Filagree by Comrade. Another one that struck me as possessing very superior qualities was a grand looking chestnut mare; she has the quarters of a Clydesdale dale, hocks well let down, a fine round barrel game and blood like head set on to a capital neck well let into deep oblique shoulders. On enquiring her pedigree, I was informed that it had been mislaid. Unfortunately this is the case with the majority of the stock, no care having apparently been taken to preserve their lines is a great pity, and ought to at once be attended to, for if looks go for anything, there should be some few on the estate that would show well on any course. As this is the case "nicks" count for nought. All the two year olds and



A recent photo of the Holey Plains Homestead

Gippsland History



yearlings looked well and promise to further some more nice drafts to supply Indian demands The mares nearly all of which are in foal to Camel, are in excellent condition, and show that care is taken of them.

The stud horse Logic by Harold. from Filagree, who runs back in her lines to old Emigrant, the progenitor of most of our best racers, has been used on the station, but the only one now at service is Camel by Topsail from Fanny Davis by Camel (imp), from Princess by Gratis; Topsail by Surplice from Calm by Sheet Auchor from Whirlwind by Pantaloon; This is breeding equal to anything in the country, Topsail's pedigree having magnificent lines, with any amount of Eclipse blood running through his veins. The fact of his having begot Poetess the dam of Laureate and Homer, is quite sufficient evidence of his capability of getting really good racehorses. At present Camel is very poor in condition. He is a golden chestnut in colour, has a beautiful bloodlike head, with a splendidly crested neck which is capitally set on to deep shoulders; his arm has the strength of a draught, horse. He is well topped and has a good round barrel with great strength of loins. His hocks are let down and he generally has a lot of bone for a horse with such a fine pedigree. The great fault in him is a very short croup and unfortunately he seems to transmit this deficiency to most of his stock. Altogether I liked the old Gentleman and think he should have a better fate than that of station stallion.

There are but few cattle on the station, about 120 stores and 30 breeding cows. They all show plenty of quality, and when grass becomes plentiful will fill out into fine beef. The fat beasts have lately been sent to Melbourne where they fetched a highly remunerative price. The improvements consist of a grand stockyard; capitally laid out for a horsebreeding station, the ring for catching the youngsters being only of recent erection.

The garden occupies about 4 acres in extent and is filled with well grown fruit trees of all descriptions.

The fencing on the estate is chiefly post and rail, but on account of the severe fires on the run last summer, and which destroyed a great quantity of fencing, Mrs Crooke is now adopting the plan of wire fencing with a top rail; she hopes by this means to prevent such a calamity as occurred last-summer.

Before concluding this article I must mention that from one part of the estate, the Rock Hill paddock, on which is erected a nice residence, there can be seen one of the finest views to be obtained in all Gippsland. Although the atmosphere was hazy there was not the slightest difficulty in getting a glorious view of Sale, 17 miles distant of Lake Wellington, the Australian Alps, and the whole route of the railway line between Sale and Rosedale.

There is a large quantity of morass land on the station, but as it has a lot of water on it at present, it is almost useless as grazing land. There is plenty of water all over the estate, and this is one reason why the stock all look so strong and healthy.

The road from Sale to the station might very easily be improved if the Rosedale shire would lay out a few pounds at

two or three creeks, which must be very troublesome to travellers in wet weather.

The estate is now under the management of Mr E. J. Crooke, who is evidently careful in conserving the charge entrusted to him, as he leaves no stone unturned to make the most off the land, being determined to rather understock than overdo it.

A history of the Avon River

Briagolong film maker Geoffrey Benton is making a movie about the Avon River. The movie will be released on Saturday April 27 2024. The following article, written by Ben McArthur, was published in the Gippsland Times February 20, 2024.

Local Briagolong film-maker Geoffrey Benton is making a movie about the history of the Avon River.

"The idea came when I did a bit of research and found that nobody else has made a movie on the Avon River, and although I wasn't particularly interested in the topic at first, as I kept researching, it became more interesting," he said.

"Although I admit there's some suggestion that it may not be so, my story is going to be about why the Avon River is the fastest rising and falling river in the southern hemisphere, and until somebody comes up to me and proves me wrong, that's my story!

"You can stand on the bridge at Freestone Creek just out of town. At seven in the morning, when it starts to rain, there's nothing in the river, only stones. But 12 hours later, the river is full again." Mr Benton is working with a semi-professional crew for sound, editing, graphics and even utilises drone shots of the rivers origins, which are inaccessible to the public. "It's only until you see some of these shots that you realise what's in our backyard," he said.

But erosion is also a significant problem for the Avon River as cutting down trees and changing the landscape has significantly altered the river's course.

In fact, one government report from 1983 titled 'State of the Rivers' concluded that the land impacts 'could not have made a bigger mess of the soil of the country if its destruction had been carried out under supervision.'

Mr Benton said that erosion has caused the river to get wider, affecting farmers who have lost acres of their own property. "Too much water was running off the land too quickly, and the rivers responded by abandoning the old river courses and cutting new ones."

The movie, which aims to be released on April 27, will also cover the flooding events associated with the river.

Mr Benton, who is a former truck driver, has always been into storytelling and wrote short fictional stories; he got into filmmaking after moving to Briagolong in 2013.

He has made other local movies assisted by the Briagolong Community House, the most notable being *Through Gilio's Gate*, which tells the story of the Briagolong RSL and was shown at the Briagolong Film Festival.

"The community here is lovely; there's no better place than Briagolong!" he said.

Greg & Lois Rose came across these interesting vehicles on a vast sheep station in north western New South Wales whilst on a recent trip.

