



# The Fairlead

Volume 7, Number 4

November/December 2002

## From the Director's Chair

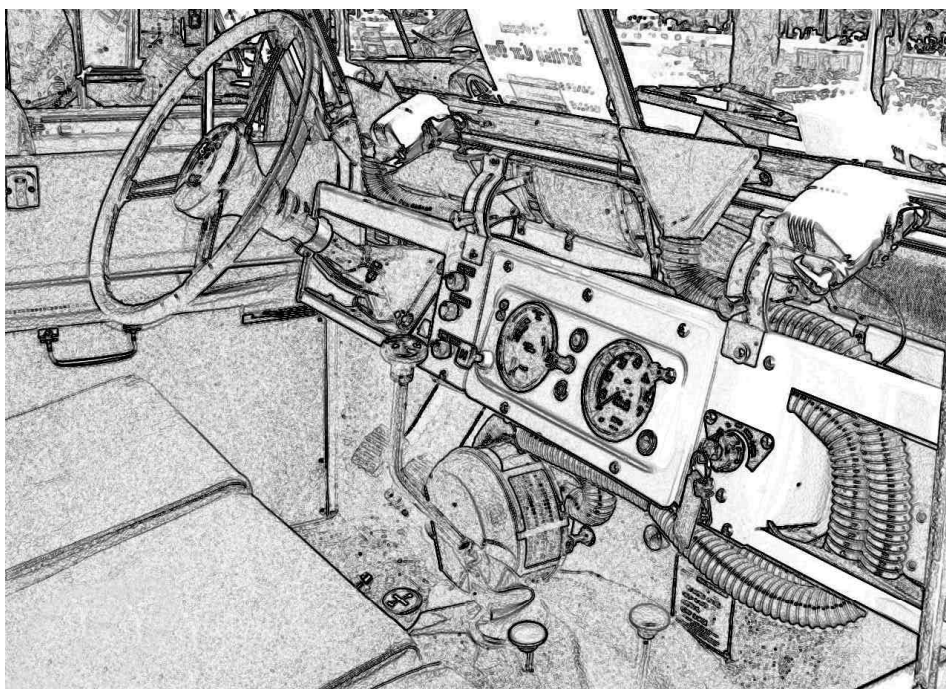
*By Tom Bache*

If you haven't been to a club event recently, I feel bad. We have been having a great time and for some reason we haven't been able to coax you and your family out. Between club events, car shows, informal shop days and other family obligations we have been home only 2 weekends since Labor Day. It has been sort of crazy, but we are having fun.

In review, we had the picnic and a couple more photos from that are included here in the newsletter. Some people need very little to be amused, others were just having a good time with friends. See the photos and see what I mean.

The Fall trials event was held in Robesonia, some new sections were added and some of the originals were retired. More new ones are to be opened in the spring, this allows us to have a "new" course every event. This type of event is about the best way to try out your Rover and also learn how it performs. We try to include as many types of natural obstacles as possible. If you aren't into the challenge aspect, come and watch as person and machine are put to the test. There are very few places in this part of the country you could drive to and find this level of excitement. Next one will be in March, 2003.

Several of us went to the UK this Fall, more about that later. We had typical Brit weather except on Sat, but when we really needed a good day, the sun was out. From



now until the Sept 2003 annual club picnic, we will be selling tickets for a drawing for one round trip ticket to the UK in time for the Fall 2003 Sortout. Tickets are \$1.00 or 6 for \$5.00. You may assign your tickets to someone if you don't make the picnic, but the winning ticket must be present to win. A free trip to

England is at stake so join in. Even if you might not be able to go, please support the effort, as we hope to do it again and it may be your turn next time.

And finally, review the calendar of events. Note the date for the Jan 2003 AGM, as always we hope to

*continued on page 7*

### In This Issue...

**Fall UK Trip****In The Garage****Virginia is for Rovers****Club Picnic Photos**

# Fall 2002 UK Trip

By Tom Bache

Got an email from Peter Goundry, he would be flying back from Australia and into Heathrow the same day Jeff and I were to arrive. As a matter of fact, only 15 minutes before hand so he handled the car rental to get us up to Birmingham and we met him and his uncle at the Avis compound. He knows me well by now and rented my favorite car in the UK-Vauxhall Astra Estate. Peter wasn't thinking about my preferences, he was mindful of the luggage situation. As it was, we just squeezed it all in. I should explain why my choice isn't a Land Rover. By most accounts the Land Rover isn't a car, in fact it caused no end of problems when first introduced as there wasn't a category for it in the British Motoring Law. So as a "car" this little estate is a gem. Loads of cargo room (see the latest haul), rides well, scoots, and is decent with fuel, all while hauling people and all manner of Land Rover flotsam and jetsam.

We stopped by and collected UDF from Liveridge where it got another engine transplant. The diesel installed last year ran well, but was very tired and just didn't have any power. Last spring we had our own lane on the other side of the white line, commonly referred to as the shoulder! 10 MPH over some of the hills in Yorkshire convinced me, and so we now have a petrol engine. Some sort of an ExMoD mongrel, 5 bearing for sure but 2.25 or 2.5 is still a mystery. I can tell you it will do 75 MPH ( it has O/D) and have pedal left over. Besides that, I think it actually gets better fuel economy than the old diesel.

Friday Peter was coming back from the North and Jeff and I were headed south. First up was Ashcroft to collect a converted t-case. While Jeff was inside, I was tinkering with a loose wiper motor, the drippy rain had set in, and at least one good wiper is convenient! Then we headed south to Dagenham to pick up



*Frogs Island*



*A nice old AA Rover.*



*UDF full of the spoils of the day.*



*Peter and Tom with their treasure.*

another O/D I contracted for. Before we left, Peter had warned us that traffic could be bad and going around the east through Dartmoor is risky. When the M42 hit the M25 ring road, the westbound traffic was backed up for three miles for construction delays and I grinned at Jeff and commented that we weren't going back that way to get over to Maidenhead.

After we made our stop we realized that traffic had increased significantly (4PM) and we weren't likely to make it Dunsfold. Put it off till Monday, just try to get around to west side for the night and meet my friend Richard Hughes. We were to go to the Sortout with Richard and meet Peter there as well as Mike Ladden, Paul Shumway and Chris Velardi and his wife. Over the next 4 hours I was painfully reminded why I have two vehicles with automatic transmission as we hit stop and go traffic for 30 miles! Near the end I was trying to shift without the clutch, I just couldn't push it in anymore. If you live in an urban area, you know what a problem this can be.

One of the adverts for the Sortout mentioned that foreign visitors should call ahead. In the past, we had always got in for free for this reason, but why to call? I did so the day before we left and was presented with the opportunity to not only get free admission, but enter an hour early and park on the show grounds next to the Old Sod's "office." We were in before many of the vendors and had a chance to prowl the grounds and make some purchases. What a coup!

The weather held up nicely, met up with many Series One Club members and started amassing the pile you see in the photos. And as per custom, some of the stuff had to be dismantled to get it into the vehicles. Out came the trusty tool kit that lives over there and we managed to stuff it all in. PU cabs, D90 door tops, 101 door bottoms, 101 fuel tank (huge at 32 gallons) hoop sets with canvas, tailgates and the list goes on. Jeff and I learned another lesson, don't leave

too early as there are still bargains while the vendors are loading to head home. We visited one pitch where everything was 2BSP including a complete Series trans and t-case. How to haul it was a problem, so we had to pass it by. Another group was still packing and Jeff found one of those elusive spacer plates to use when a PU cab is mounted on a 88"-his for only 5BSP! We helped another bunch load a trans into a trailer and then bargained down a S111 power brake unit and the dual tank switch valve with all the plumbing. Sometimes they would rather sell it off than take it home. You never know what you will find.

Dinner found us all (except Chris and the Mrs, they were headed to Ireland) in Birmingham, gathered around the table swapping tales of deals and places to get more stuff.

Sunday saw Peter, Jeff and I headed north to collect 2 new rear springs and two half shafts for Series One. The wind had started to move in, already the coastal areas were having

problems, ships were being grounded, etc. We had superb directions and arrived 15 minute ahead of time arranged. I quickly found out it was a complete rear axle! Astra to the rescue! We loaded the whole thing along with the springs and off we went. All for \$60 BSP! Famous Four had two halfshafts for 100 BSP so this was a steal, and you know what spring costs more than 30BSP I can tell you. UDF's rear springs are original, and while not bad, they are sitting a little lower that I would like. New ones will sort that nicely. Anyway, at the owner's suggestion we looked over the list of other items he had on offer and came away with some nice dash bits and switches. He and his son are to build a trialler and have no need so the parts will live on in someone else's Series One.

By now the wind was really howling and at times, was all Peter could do to keep the car in lane. By the time we reached Birmingham again, it had let up, and even some sun occasionally. While the lads went

off to the Birmingham Motor Show, I went to spend the afternoon at Halford's-their version of Pep Boys. My plan was to do a bit of tinkering and could run in and out as many times as needed for bits and pieces. Peter had escorted me there so I would know the way and before they left, we all went inside the place. I moved over to the counter and asked for a set of spark plugs, distributor cap and wires for UDF. After several minutes analyzing his computer the clerk says they only have the plugs in stock. I was a bit miffed and said out loud, "I bet they have it here and don't even know what it is". The clerk showed us the rows of dist. caps and the very first one I picked up says "applications: Land Rover."

One for me. The plugs were the equivalent of \$30 USD for 4 and that seemed a bit steep. So Jeff and Peter left me to it and I began my shopping. I found the application cards and they did indeed have the common sparkplugs for \$10 USD, more like it I thought. Still no wires and

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they wouldn't let me root around behind the counter where all the wire sets were just to see if they had them. Out I go and install the first lot. The horn was not honking so, back inside for a simple single electric horn. Same clerk says, they only have air horns now. I ask what about the poor guy that just needs one for inspection? A quizzical expression and then a flash about the dist. cap fiasco and we are shown the horn dept. Sure enough, he hands me a pair of chrome plate electric ones. I spy a smaller package on the bottom shelf and ask what that is. Low and behold a single tone horn and only \$15.00 USD! Still a bit over priced but my options were rather limited so out we go to make further repairs.

They didn't have a feeler gauge so no sense and messing with the points and no gap tool for the plugs either so we had to trust the maker. They did have genuine Waxoyl in 5 litre cans so we brought one of those back to the US. It even comes in black. I have done the most damage I can do, I drive over the petrol stand across the circle and they also have a carwash. I ask if the equipment can do the Land Rover and since it wasn't a soft top, in we go. It hasn't been washed in two years I have had it, and probably not for some time before that either, so we got the "deluxe" wax and all. Not sure how much the wax did for the paint but the scrub brushes took off most of the green that was starting to grow on the roof.

Next is Mickey D's (yes they have them too) and onto Peter's Mum's house to wait for the guys. I run into and out of the local grocery store for some items and then home. I remove the side bench seats, which are more in the way and not needed, sort out some items and then inside. When Peter gets back he tells me I have lost my phone. I hadn't noticed, but when the store clerk found it had his mobile # taped to the back and they rang him up. Retrieved it the next day and it had broken the display on impact. No phone is a bummer. At least it is Sunday and only

one more day of travels and we will be with Peter and he has one. I don't walk around with one here normally, like others do, but over there it is a lifeline. Since we are on the move most of the time, it makes getting directions, and getting in touch with friends, etc. just so much easier. I have even called back to the US if I found something of interest.

Another problem to sort later.

Monday, we head over to the staging area where the trailers, Land Rovers, parts and other stuff is collecting to be loaded into a container in the coming weeks. Park UDF with a list of wanted repairs (those new springs and new bushings while your are at it

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*The horn was not honking so, back inside for a simple single electric horn. Same clerk says, they only have air horns now. I ask what about the poor guy that just needs one for inspection? A quizzical expression and then a flash about the dist. cap fiasco and we are shown the horn dept.*

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please) and then we head south. Next stop is Frogs Island 4X4. They have just moved 2 weeks ago, so we are the first Americans to visit the new facility. In fact, they are still moving into it. Nice roomy shop, nice customer area, really 1st class compared to some of the places we have been. Not the cheapest, but you get what you paid for, same as with Blanchard's. Nice tour with Eddie Prescott, and then we are off to Dunsfold. We collect the wing and bonnet for UDF I left by mistake last Spring, some other things for people here in the US and then start looking for a B&B. We pass through some nice old towns that look to be right out of the tourist book and I must remember to go back this direction again. Peter and Jeff remembered how

to get to the same place we stayed at in April, and we luck out, they have a couple of rooms left. I had been calling several chain hotels and they were all fully booked. Dinner and then crash, we have to be up early to make the flight back. I was charged with the wake up as I also had the alarm clock. Guess who forgot to set the clock back on Sunday?? What was intended to be 6AM, was now 5AM. Too late, already woke Jeff, hope he doesn't notice. So we had a nice drive, with little traffic for once, Peter deposited us at the door of Terminal 4, Heathrow and drove off north, with Jeff's newly acquired 1989 collection of LRO;s still on the roof where he left them by mistake. They were road rash by the time Peter heard them fall off and circled back to find out what it was that fell off on the M25. By now, Jeff and I had consumed all the sinus pills I had, I had a cold when I left, Jeff was getting one as well. He and I made do with hot drinks and the package of tissues I still had. An early flight and it was my turn to be searched before boarding the plane. Even the airline food was good this time.

Epilogue. Sound like fun? Want to go? Next Sortout will most likely be in the first of April 2003. Search [www.oldsodburysortout.co.uk](http://www.oldsodburysortout.co.uk). Start saving your spare change for a ticket and the odd bits you know you will find. You can also buy chance tickets on our drawing for one R-T ticket to England in time for the Fall 2003 event. Do get your passport in order now and be ready to go. Airline specials are announced all the time. Most of the spring travel ones won't come out till March, but you never know and if a deal comes up, you will want to jump on it. I suggest the Thursday (leave Wed eve) to Monday, you only miss three days of work. You get two days to visit any of the establishments that tickle your fancy and then on Sat the big auto jumble for just Land Rover parts. Sunday gives you a day to be a tourist and figure out how you are going to pack all that stuff you bought. Monday you get home at a decent hour. ●

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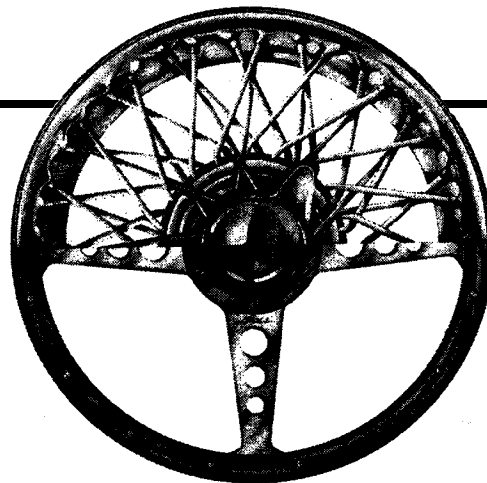
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### **Club FRS Frequency**

Channel 7 sub 5

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## In the Garage

By Tom Bache

When I last visited with you, I was working on Bitsa2a, my 86" off-roader. I did get the glass in, have had the top off and enjoyed some open air motoring. Was a great thrill to drive with the screen down but find I needed goggles as the wind bothered my eyes above 10 MPH. I did get to MAR, drove the trails system a bit, but managed to jamb up the trans on a failed hill climb out of the creekbed. More repairs coming. While I have it apart, I have pulled the head and found what I feared all along, a blown head gasket. I am having the head completely reconditioned, injectors tested, and will get a larger cooling fan. Then I expect to be finished, except for the bumper. After having looked around a bit, I am going to try to invent one myself to fend off obstacles and also mount a winch. I don't care for some of the commercial units, they protrude out too far and are too

expensive for my budget. We shall see what comes of it.

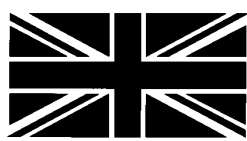
I have been giving Jeff a hand, he is within striking distance now of being finished. Some last minute welding, finish out the wiring and then the rest of the body panels and he is ready for the road. Evan's needs a steering box swap, should be doing that soon. He has a complete parts vehicle to snitch it from. If anyone needs any Series parts, post Evan an e-mail and see what he has left. Engine and many body parts are amongst the available. The Rover is here at my place if you want to come for a look.

I am going to Canada to collect another 86" SW. Possibly for another project. Was thinking to build one to O.E. appearances, but some subtle updates. I have been admiring other peoples handiwork and hope to pirate some of their ideas. Land Rovers are good for that. No limit except your imagination. My quandary is the 86" SW is rather rare as it turns out, so what to do, all out

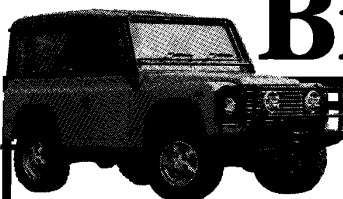
reconditioning to my best efforts, or just go for it as I did with Bitsa2a, and build what I like. Bitsa2a only has 11 original parts left anyway, so I don't feel bad. The next one isn't in hand yet, so time will tell what it will be good for.

A couple of months ago, we rewired the 109 belonging to the Michaels'. It was a group project, four of us did most of the work in one day. Total of 30 hours were expended for this worthy task. If you have an older Rover with original cloth braided wiring, think about replacing it. Corroded wires, open splits in insulation, loose connectors all will contribute to problems. It isn't always the fault of Lucas that your Rover isn't cooperating.

If you have a project you want to take on, call some of the club members to give you a hand. The more, the merrier. If I didn't like to work on vehicles, I would buy a faceless Japanese car. Every task I get into gives me an education. And you can always count me in for a free lunch. ●



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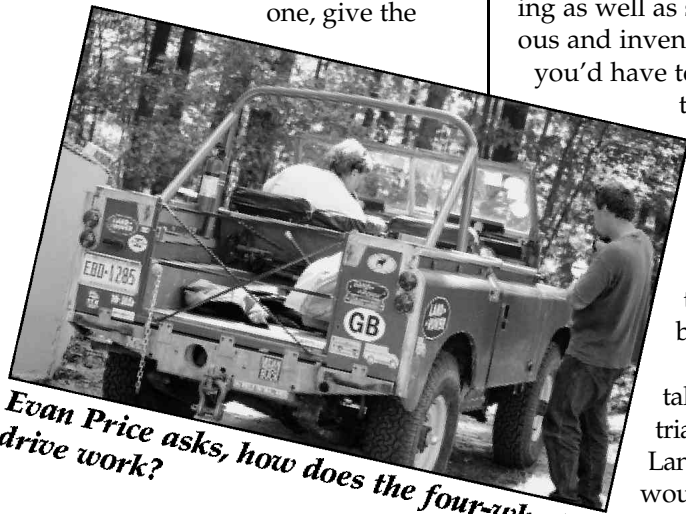


## Director's Chair

*continued from page 1*

have our indoor flea market, so clear out the garage, make a pile and bring it in. Also planned is a Feb off-highway weekend at Spruce Creek Cabin. This time we expect to spend the whole weekend at the cabin, but is limited to the first 20 people-total.

So, if you are bringing anyone, give the



*Evan Price asks, how does the four-wheel-drive work?*

head count when you sign up. Many of you have been there before and aware of the limits of the facilities. Details about dining, etc will be announced at the AGM and if the list of perspective attendee exceeds the limit, we will have a drawing by numbered ticket to be fair. After that is the Spring Trials at Robesonia and the 2003 year will be well underway. This will be two driving events in two months.

I would like some volunteers to organize an off-road event for later in the year. Still hoping we can return to the Pine Barrens. Anywhere else you would like to go? What would you like the club to do? Won't happen by itself. Let's keep the adventure going. Read your newsletter and mark your calendar. ●

## Does The Car Make The Driver Or Does The Driver Make The Car?

*by Will Meyers*

I have only had my Land Rover for about two years now but I've been into British cars for, lets just say, over 20 years. The company of the British auto enthusiast, I have found, has always been friendly and inviting as well as somewhat adventurous and inventive. For example, you'd have to be adventurous to

take a recently purchased 69 MGB, that's burning so much oil you have to add oil twice as often as gas, all the way to the everglades and back, right?

And some of the tales I've heard about the trials and tribulations of Land Rover ownership would, I'm sure, well surpass that Florida trip on the adventurometer. Which brings me to my hypothesis. I believe that one must possess a certain mentality to even think about owning a Land

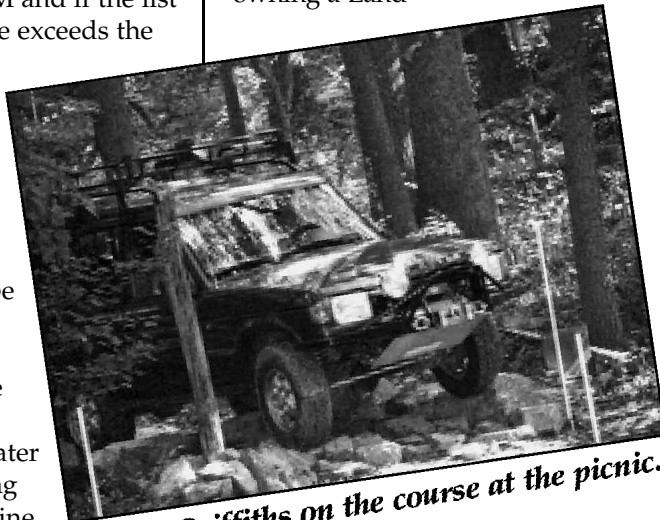
store, to get toilet paper and milk, until there is already a foot of snow on the ground, just to have an excuse to go out and play, the Land Rover driver is prepared for the challenge before him and is ready to overcome whatever obstacle may come his way.

So is it really the Land Rover who's performance is legendary or is it the driver who's abilities have made the Land Rover legendary? I mean what would happen if you put a Series IIA in the hands of the average, change the oil at Jimmy Lube kind of person and sent them out on a muddy, tree studded trail where they had to get from point A to point B? Chances are they would get stuck, lost or break something that would prevent them from completing the objective. Now, that person is certainly not going to blame the failure on themselves, it has to be the vehicles fault. Get it now? So where does that leave the reputation of the vehicle?

In the marketing world it is said that for every positive experience with a product or service, a person will tell two to three people about it. But for every negative experience, a person will tell nine people about it. So one can see how quickly the reputation of a product can deteriorate. MGs weren't really all that unreliable, were they?

Now if we take the average Land Rover Driver, put him on the same course and he gets stuck, lost or breaks something, chances are he will be able to figure out how to use his vehicle to get to point B. The solution may involve half a roll of duct tape, some wire and rope but he will have made it to his destination and, if you ask him, he wouldn't have been able to do it without his Land Rover. ●

*This column represents the humble but accurate opinions of the editor and not necessarily the views of the ROVERS Club members or their pets.*



*Trevor Griffiths on the course at the picnic.*

Rover. And, for the most part, there is a measure of ingenuity and inventiveness that goes along with that mental state of being. Therefore, given the proper conditions, such as traversing a river with a 4,000 pound vehicle on a rickety log bridge or waiting to go to the grocery

# Calendar of Events 2003

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Jan 5</b>     | <b>AGM at Land Rover West Chester.</b><br>Start at 11AM with indoor swap meet for Land Rover parts, bring your own lunch and drinks for noon, 1PM is AGM, 1:45 is instructions for proper hand signals for off-highway driving. 2:10 is presentation by Land Rover West Chester.  |
| <b>Feb 15-16</b> | <b>Winter fun at Spruce Creek Cabin.</b><br>Limit is 20 people. Sign up will be at the AGM, if attendees exceed the capacity, then we will draw tickets. If you have been here in the past, you can appreciate the varied terrain and the limits of the cabin's facilities. Cost to attend will be \$30, this covers the maintenance of the portaloos and heat for the cabin. |
| <b>March 22</b>  | <b>Set up for trials at Robesonia.</b>  |
| <b>March 29</b>  | <b>Spring Trials at Robesonia</b><br>New sections and driving skill tests. Competitive fun in your Rover. A full day of driving action, new prizes to be awarded this year. 9AM start time, be willing to rotate as a marshal and lend a hand.  |
| April 5          | The Sodbury Sortout - <a href="http://www.oldsodbury.co.uk">www.oldsodbury.co.uk</a> .<br>Largest Land Rover swap meet held. Time to plan ahead. Ask Tom for info   |
| <b>April 12</b>  | <b>Shop Day.</b><br>Clean out the Rover and get ready to ride. Second try for wayoyl applications. Tom Bache's house. Start at 8AM  |
| <b>April 26</b>  | <b>Our Annual Trek to Assateague</b><br>Camping on the beach in the Maryland State campgrounds. You need a special permit to drive the beach. Best camp dinner/campfire is always here. Join your friends.  |
| May 3rd          | Del. City Antique truck show.<br>Enter your Rover, spend the day in historical Delaware City, take a tour of Fort Delaware on Pea Patch island. Call Tom for details.   |
| <b>May 17</b>    | <b>Off-highway Driving</b><br>At either Rauch Creek ORV Park or Paragon. Choice can be decided at AGM, plan ahead now.  |
| <b>June 14</b>   | <b>Shop Day at Tom Bache's house.</b><br>Projects not yet finished or new ones to do, bring it over.  |
| July 26          | Summer fling in Sunbury - To be confirmed   |
| <b>Sept 7</b>    | <b>Annual Club picnic at the Bache's.</b><br>Ever expanding driving challenges on our dedicated course. Treasure hunt for younger Rover members and the bike trial. Bring your dish to share, drinks and dessert. Theme to be announced. Winning ticket to be drawn for free trip to the UK in time for Fall Sortout.   |
| Oct3-5           | MAR near Fork Union, VA- <a href="http://www.roav.org">www.roav.org</a> for details. Very worthwhile event.   |
| <b>Oct 24-27</b> | <b>Fall Sortout trip.</b><br>Our lucky winner will have a round trip airfare to the UK in time to attend this event. Start saving your money and get your passport-you may be a winner their are deals to be had.   |
| <b>Nov 2</b>     | <b>Fall Trials at Robesonia</b><br>Longest running biannual Land Rover event in the USA. Starts 9AM   |
| <b>Dec 6</b>     | <b>Shop Day-Baches</b><br>Always a great time to swap stories, lend a hand. We do lunch out and is well attended.   |
| Addendum         | There is lots of room for more events and we don't have data for events that may be going on elsewhere with other clubs.<br>Please forward the info to Will the Editor at: <a href="mailto:wilsworld2@aol.com">wilsworld2@aol.com</a> — Share the fun.  |



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# Virginia Is For Lovers (of Land Rovers)

**MAR Mid-Atlantic Rally 4th-6th October 2002**

by Steve Hoare

The MAR (Mid-Atlantic Rally) is ROAV's (Rover Owners Association of Virginia) annual event and is the largest and oldest Land Rover gathering in the USA. (300+ vehicles/ 10th year) The event is held on private land (Pearl's Pond), adjacent to the James river, just south of Charlottesville, Virginia. (Thomas Jefferson & James Madison country for history buffs, GPS co-ordinates N37 43. 469 - W 78 23-699 for tech buffs).

This event appears to be a common "target" date to complete stagnant projects, general preparation and servicing vehicles. We were no exception. Our '49 80' was sporting new springs, fuel tank, cylinder head, valves and generous helpings of oil and grease. Many local Series II's had major surgery and "shake-down" trips before the long haul to Virginia... not all vehicles made it - did they Jeff Wilson?!!

Regular checking of the ROAV website ([www.roav.org](http://www.roav.org)) ensured that the registration form was sent in and local lodging booked well in advance. Most people camp on-site but early October evenings can be chilly and the threat of Hurricane/ Tropical depression "LiLi" sealed the plans... hot water, heated room and a mattress were order of the day.

The nearest "hotel" to the event is the Fork Union Motor Lodge. As in previous years the car park is void of Land Rovers for 51 weeks of the year, then within hours every available space is taken, Land Rovers marking their spot by dropping sizable chunks of mud.

The hotel is "cute" in its own way. Older bedroom facilities and features like a fly swatter hanging from a nail give a Series Land Rover chic quality. However, all the hotel's misgivings are forgiven at 7:00am each morning when the diner opens and coffee/tea are served in vast quantities (by carafe) and a full hot breakfast can be had for \$2.95 (approx. £2.00)!

Still at home final preparations were under way and it appeared that

Hurricane/Tropical Depression "LiLi" was either going to blow through Friday evening or move further west.

Our tow vehicle (Range Rover LWB) was serviced for the trip with new suspension air bags, shock absorbers, track rod ends and steering damper.

(This also doubled for inspection/MOT readiness).

The evening before departure and the last of the supplies were picked up, gas tank topped off etc... then the Range Rover dash warning lights started to light up.

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Getting home and checking the fault codes, it appeared we were suffering from low fuel pressure. Not good when about to embark on a 700 mile roundtrip towing an 80'.

Checking over the fuel pump connections/relays and ECU, voltages etc. nothing seemed obviously out of order, but the vehicle re-started and the fault codes extinguished.

Calling the local dealer the following morning I requested if it would be possible to check the vehicle over (fuel pressure etc.) and complete the annual inspection at the time. Land Rover Willow Grove were outstanding. "Bring the vehicle over straight away and we'll take a look." Within an hour the vehicle was inspected and the advice was that the fuel pump "maybe" on the way out. As such, the service guys made up a "care package" of new pump, wiring harness etc - just in case! If I didn't need the stuff I could take it back. (With all the horror stories one reads

in magazines and on the Internet it was very nice to experience genuine Land Rover Service. Three cheers to Land Rover Willow Grove).

As the event is held during the school year it has always been necessary to take the kids out of school for a few days. As such, we always try to visit/do various "historic" or educational activities. Having headed south we stayed the night in Harrisonburg, VA (several hours north of Fork Union). The following morning, (Friday) we deposited the trailer & 80" at the Fork Union motel and went off to explore the Mitchie Tavern. Mitchie Tavern is an old colonial tavern with traditional fare and associated stores. (It was maybe just my luck but the two items I picked up in the "print" shop were "Made in the UK" or Ivyland, PA - two miles from where we live).

Having had a the traditional lunch, (served by a waitress in period costumes) we headed back to Fork Union, via Haddon Ferry, one of only two remaining "poled" ferries in the U.S. Unfortunately the ferry was not running due to the drought conditions and the James river being so low. Maybe next year. Another "call back" will be "The Waltons" house where the TV series was filmed. As we stood by the river you could imagine the fragile silence being broken by - "Good night, John Boy!"

The weather was perfect. Sunny with puffy clouds and temperatures in the 80's. Arriving at the event it was clear that enthusiasts had started setting up camp earlier that morning. Camp chairs were already randomly scattered and vehicles were already muddy. Registration had totaled 346, (approx. 300 vehicles). Having "checked-in," door tops (and in some cases cabs and hard tops) came off and we hit several "moderate" trails.

Returning to the campsite suitably daubed in two tone mud (red and gray), we noticed that the list of Land Rover carnage had already started. Several rear quarter panels and rear Discovery II bumpers had gone "south!" Various people had already ventured out onto some new" trails where even a D4 Caterpillar dozer had been buried.

As campfire & stoves fired up

with multiple derivatives of chili & beans we sneaked off to the local restaurant. There was no escape, "Oh you must be with the Land Rover group," said our waitress as we shuffled our muddy hiking boots under the table. (Yep, Land Rovers certainly dominate all the area eateries, gas stations and convenience stores).

Meanwhile back at the campsite various individuals were heading out for night runs on the trails. (Justification for fitting auxiliary Hellas and other spotlights).

Saturday morning and the storm had missed us completely. Various competitive events were under way, designed to appeal to most tastes and skills. Teeter-totter, blind-folded obstacle course and the start of the multi event "Aluminum Man Triathlon." Even the kids had model building and coloring contests - and if the events didn't appeal then there were always the trails.

As the morning progressed more vehicles returned from "doing battle" on the trails. One Range Rover had the misfortune to crack both front and rear axles on rocks in the river. A convenient lunch break allowed the axles to dry off and the cracks to be epoxy glued. Within 30 minutes the Range Rover was back in action!

Also, a Series IIA 88 had a front brake hose severed by a loose tree root. The vehicle completed the trail by clamping off the brake hose with vice grips and topping off the brake fluid reservoir. This same vehicle (with 3 wheel brakes) was later seen rescuing a Freelander that had become totally immobile in the river with a blown CV joint. The scene of a Freelander being unceremoniously dragged from the river and loaded onto a trailer being towed by a Series IIA 88 gave the local "paparazzi" a field day!

(Take note anyone reading in Lode Lane. Simple field repairs enable the Land Rover legend to complete a journey).

A wide variety of vehicles had turned up, spanning 1949 to 2003! (Even a few non Rover vehicles such as Jeeps and G-wagon managed to sneak onto the trails). One lucky person had a new 2003 Discovery "on-loan" from their local dealer as their

ordered vehicle had not arrived. The vehicle appeared to perform admirably on some of the advanced trails, returning to the campsite unscathed but suitably adorned with mud & tide-mark.

A quick break for lunch and the RTV event started. Six sections had been laid out on the island.

Numerous vehicles entered the RTV, from FC101, Discovery, Range Rover, Series vehicles, including my 80. The

back riders gave the "waiting line" a side show of the "wild west" - firing blanks and chasing off the "bad guys".

Results of the days events were announced, together with some "life time achievement" awards given out to various members of the host club. The award being a very suitable model of a ROVER safety bicycle.

Unfortunately the junior members of our party had been drained by a very active day, so we missed

## **MAR Results:**

### **Aluminum Man :**

1st Larry Michelon/ Alex Maiolo

2nd Mike Boggs/ Aaron Manis

(Note: Catherine Boggs (21) and her 12 year old brother finished the grueling event in 5th place. Catherine being the only female entry).

### **RTV:**

Short wheel base (90): Mike Boggs

Long wheel base (109): Quintin Aspin

### **Blind Fold Race:**

1st: Catherine Boggs (Driver), Mike Boggs (Director). (3rd year winner).

2nd: Larry Michelon (Driver), Alex Maiolo (Director).

80 would have cleared all six sections except for aggressively straddling a tree that caused the passenger door to swing open and clobber cane # 8 on the last section - next year!!!

Returning to the campsite and more "fish" stories were being passed around. Mike Boggs had broken his shifter on his Defender 90, various roof racks had been used to prune trees and Ron Brown had broken the rear seat in his Discovery! (That mishap deserves a separate story). As the sun was sinking, final dinner preparations were being made in the main Marquee. Meanwhile, on various campsites individuals cleaned off the days grime by using their new camp showers etc, (all quite civilized). Being already "dressed for dinner" it was an ideal time to browse the vendors (more than last year), then join the queue for dinner. (Barbeque chicken, ribs, beans, corn bread and brownies for desert).

The evenings entertainment started with a string band under the Marquee. Then during a brief intermission a pose of western style horse

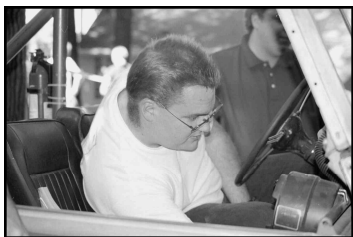
the traditional after dinner auction. Heading the convoy back to the Fork Union motel, the 80 hit the tarmac, shedding mud at every bump! Having headlights behind the grille is not the best for night-time illumination.

Having the headlights tinted with mud gives the light spread and penetration similar to a candle in the wind!

Sunday morning arrived with a chill in the air and all the vehicles covered in condensation. The diner was not mobbed at 7.00am, obviously the previous days antics and evening festivities had taken a human toll! Sunday's events at the campground included a Slow-race, Land Rover Jousting, Best ROVER dog trick, best expedition vehicle, least likely to make it home etc. Unfortunately we had lunch plans with a relative in Sterling, VA (near Washington DC) so after breakfast we loaded up and headed north.

In short, a great event... and we didn't need the fuel pump after all, but we bought it anyway. ●

# Annual R.O.V.E.R.S. Club Picnic



◀ *How do you start this thing?*



▲ *Tough competition on the bike trials. L to R, Samantha, Avery, Lisa, Andrew and Alex Meyers at the starting gate*

◀ *Tom coming out of the ditch.*



◀ *Bill Schofield ready to tackle the bike trials course.*



▲ *Have it your way. We love to see you smile.*



▲ *Alex Meyers on course.*



▲ *On the teeter-totter, future Land Rover driver training.*



◀ *Patiently? Waiting for lunch.*

## The Back Page

► *A little help navigating the course at the club picnic.*

▼ *The first snow of the season, Crocky's looking forward to lots of snow this winter.*



### R.O.V.E.R.S. Email List

If you aren't already a member, the ROVERS email list is a forum for technical discussion, club announcements and off-road opportunities. If you would like to join, send an email to our moderator, Tom Bache at [tbache9248@aol.com](mailto:tbache9248@aol.com).



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**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**