

PANTS & BARKS

MAY '89



Journal of the HANTS & BERKS ROVER OWNERS

Officers of the Club

* CHAIRMAN & COMPETITION SECRETARY	Colin Gross, 16, Thurlstone Road, Ruislip, MIDDLESEX HA4 OBS	0895-638957
* SECRETARY	Gary Hodgson, 5, Beckham Lane, Petersfield, HAMPSHIRE GU32 3BU	0730-67146
* TREASURER/ MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY/ NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION	Roger Pattie, Firhill Cottage East, Whitchurch, OXFORDSHIRE, RG8 7HQ	07357-2884
* RIGHTS OF WAY OFFICER	Steve Kirby, 244 Staines Road, Twickenham, MIDDLESEX TW2 5AR	01-894-3961
* CO-OPTED MEMBER	Malcolm Whitbread,	01-751-4369 (Answerphone)
SCRUTINEER	Hugh Glossop, 80, Windmill Road, Mortimer, BERKSHIRE RG7 3RJ	0734-333409
ROVER RESCUE CO-ORDINATOR	John Dowdeswell, 7, Pannall Road, Gosport, HAMPSHIRE PO12 4PP	0705-581970
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Steve Kirby, 244 Staines Road, Twickenham, MIDDLESEX TW2 5AR	01-894-3961

Note:- * denotes committee member.

"Hants & Berks Rover Owners" is a member of the ARC (Association of Rover Clubs), the RACMSA (RAC Motor Sports Association) and the Association of Central Southern Motor Clubs.

CHAIRMAN'S PAGE

Last month I stated in this column that the HBRO would continue to operate as it always had done, allowing vehicles that don't quite meet the ARC competition regulations to enter events run under HBRO permits. Unfortunately I was wrong in assuming that the ARC would allow its member clubs to continue running events held under their own permits as they wished. The letter that you should have received with your copy of the 1989 ARC yearbook explains what is happening. Don't forget to cast your vote, preferably at the EGM, or by post using the stamped, addressed envelope provided with the letter. If you abstain, or don't vote, then you will have no excuse if the HBRO takes a course with which you disagree.

EDITORIAL

I have been trying to come up with some ideas on how we can involve the juniors/children etc. that are "in" the club. Many turn up for events and green Lane trips but there's nowt for them in the magazine. The following ideas have occurred to me to involve the 'juniors':-

- (a) Do a drawing for the cover of the newsletter,
- (b) Write an article.

Drawings could be of anything vaguely relevant, a vehicle, a landmark or a country scene, perhaps. The articles would be about club or allied events; it's up to you to encourage them. Adult members of the club would then vote on which is the best of each, taking age etc. into account, and a prize could be awarded at the end of the year. How about it?

..... message coming in, Allan Tew has bent his big red Rangy! Rumour has it that at an AWDC Safari, Allan broke an axle housing and the wheel came off. This is the first recorded instance of damage to this vehicle (apart

from his tree-felling activities!). Shock Horror Scoop! At the same meeting, Hugh Glossop came fifth in class (well done Hugh) and didn't break anything. This is the first recorded instance of no damage occurring to his vehicle during a race. Murray Walker impersonators please line up here.....

Apologies to those who had some inverted pages in last month's P&B. Tom Andrews has given me a dispenser that spits out one of each sheet ready for me to grab all the pages together and drop them into the jig for stapling. I no longer handle and hence check each sheet individually so some get missed.

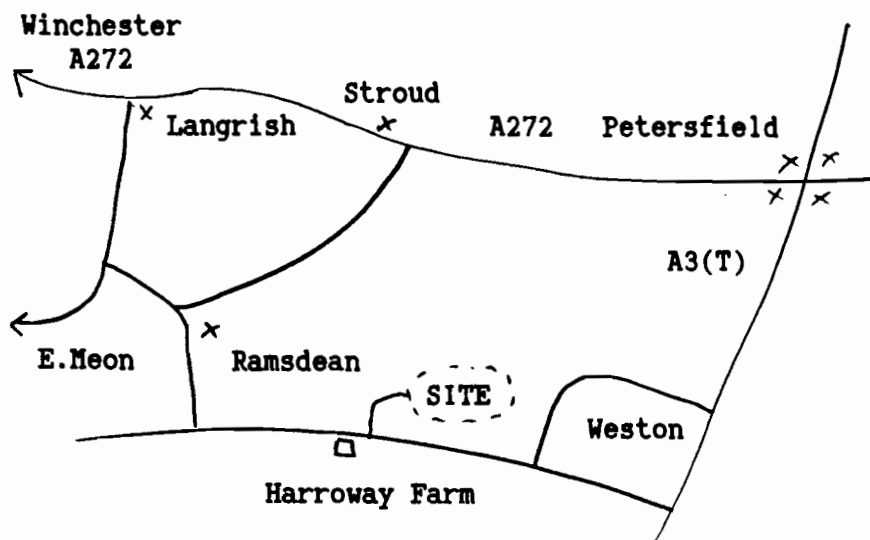
Club Rally to be held at Harroway Farm
near Ramsdean, HANTS. May 20/21

This event is for everyone. On Saturday there will be general setting up and possibly a green lane trip. In the evening there will be a social gathering in the barn with a barbeque; food & drinks (alcoholic & soft) will be provided at reasonable prices although you can bring your own. There will be skittles, darts etc. and videos. On Sunday there will be a small trial, a driving test, a gymkhana and a few other surprises.

The site is suitable for tents and caravans. £1 per person. Water and limited toilet facilities are available.

There will also be a bring-and-buy (car bits only!) plus green road trips for those interested.

HARROWAY FARM SITE (Map reference:- Sht.197 SU715216)



The HBRO's RTVs continue to be well supported with 23 competitors from Hants & Berks and Anglian turning out in fine weather to Ham Lane, near Petersfield, Hants. This trials site has a reputation for being somewhat of a mud-pit, but a period of good weather left it just right for a trial with large areas of dry grass and soil, with a bit of mud when needed to add to the fun! As usual, I won't try to describe the sections, you should have been there!

Roger Pattie was the secretary of the meeting with Malcolm Whitbread, Colin Gross, Nick Jennings and many others present acting as marshals. There wasn't much towing required, but when it was needed, the big guns came out with yours truly needing a double-header! For some people, the trees kept getting in the way; notably Alex took a while extricating himself, fortunately with trivial damage whilst another tree homed in on my right front wing. Apart from that, we all had a jolly good time.

Results:-

Class 1.

1st	Geoff Thaine	21	2nd	Steve Barnwell	27
3rd	Dick Corking	35		Paul Benwell	37
	Dave Osborn	42		Ian Piggott	47
	Liz Corking	49		Gary Adderson	50
	Malcolm Adamson	57		Roger Brown	59
	Ashley Ward	63		Roger Pettit	??

(Scorecard lost)

Class 2.

1st	Steve Hazell	39		Tony Mottram	Retd.
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Class 3. No entries.

Class 4.

1st	Alex Waugh	40	2nd	Steve Kirby	47
3rd	Gordon Baron	61		Chris Noel	67
	Tony Mills	69			

Class 5.

1st	Gary King	29	2nd	John King	29
3rd	Richard Stewart	29		Allan Tew	45

Note:- When scores are the same, the order is determined by the competitor with more clear rounds.

Steve Kirby.

GREEN-ROADING NEWS

Steve Kirby, Rights of Way Officer
(Member of The Byways & Bridleways Trust)

You may have been wondering about the "Notices" wedged into the events page last month. I have received 'comments' by a rather round about route regarding some of our activities. Although HBRO was asked by Hants CC Surveyors merely to keep off the bridge at the Western end of the "Dentist's", (Mapledurwell & Up Nately RUPP 35, U245) the ARC and the AWDC made the whole road into a voluntary restraint area. Unfortunately, I was unaware of this. The problem is that whenever mention is made of a restriction on the Dentist's, I just think of the unsafe bridge which crosses the Basingstoke Canal.

The second point was that some readers from outside of the club have interpreted a sentence in one of the green lane reports to mean that the group drove along a footpath whereas they were stopped from committing this by a walker. That sentence clearly used the word "tried". There was a slight confusion as to the correct track to take as is often the case when confronted by a foison of routes in the middle of a wood. Maps of a larger scale than the usual OS maps may be necessary. Read on.....

If you are serious about green-laning, you will probably want to buy some maps and get them "marked up"; that is, highlight the locations of RUPPs and Byways in such a way that they can be located quickly.

Let's look at the maps themselves first. The obvious choice is to go for the Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale "Landranger" series. These show the various rights of way symbols in red. For greater detail, including the often very useful field boundaries, you can get the 1:25,000 "Pathfinder", or Second Series OS maps. The rights of way symbols are shaped differently and are in green. Unfortunately, a set of these maps to cover both counties completely will set you back £100 or so! You may have to select your purchases carefully, but personally I rate these higher than the Landrangers.

Earlier, I mentioned highlighting. This is best done with a "highlite" or other fluorescent marker pen. The colour

I prefer for this is yellow as the rights of way markings are in red or green (depending on the scale of the map) so you won't want to obscure them with a marker of the same colour; and blue tends to be too heavy to see through. I use orange for county boundaries. You can look at my maps any time, at club meetings, to see where the hard to find lanes are; many are lost in the "clutter" of detail.

Britain's Shortest RUPP?

There is a report on the green lane trip of 13/3/89 elsewhere in this issue. One of the highlights was to visit what I believe to be the shortest RUPP in the country. (unless, of course, you know different!) It is Four Marks RUPP 24. On the map, it's not even long enough to have a Right of Way symbol on it; so it doesn't show up well on any OS map. Gary and I came across it by chance whilst looking at the Hants Definitive Map. It's a fully surfaced road but the four vehicles we parked in it for a couple of minutes on Sunday half filled it. On my survey form, I've given it only one grid reference, SU687337. We didn't have the means to measure it, but I guess it's about 50 to 60 metres long (short?).

Steve Kirby.

The Great Undriven RUPP mystery.

At least twice a week I get a letter from Hants or Berks CC or from LARA on some rights of way matter or another. I've been getting a lot from Hants CC recently requesting info on use of RUPPs that are in the process of being reclassified. In a surprisingly large number of cases, a group of lanes is quoted for which I have no survey forms and hence no proof of use. Recently, I've had enquiries about RUPPs in Ashley, King's Somborne, Nether Wallop, Kimpton, Thruxton and Shipton Bellinger, but have little or no forms for these areas. If any members use lanes in these areas and haven't sent in forms, please let me know and I'll send you the map references for you to check up on. If we can provide evidence of use directly from the user in these instances, we might stand a better chance of retaining these lanes. We've got to work as a team on this important issue.



Green Lane Clearance - 5/3/89

Five vehicles descended on the Queen's Head pub at Selbourne with a total of seven people equipped and ready to spend all day clearing one lane.

We left the Queen's Head at 10am in convoy to where the lane started. Once on the scene we set about deciding who was going to do what. James Wallis had the only chain-saw, the rest of us were on bow saws. It was quite a mess since it had been over a year since the hurricane, so the brushwood had entangled itself around the main trunks.

Due to the poor position of the lane - a drop down into a field on the left and a nearly sheer bank going up on the right - all the debris had to be dragged along the track and stacked where we could find a space. At this point I would like to point out that anybody walking this track would have to go up the steep bank, which although very slippery was the only way round.

Gary Hodgson and the others carried on moving the brushwood back to the clearing, whilst I helped James on the chain saw. The main trunks were very heavy even when cut up, so we all had to strain to move them to the clearing. Once cleared we could pass along to the next tree which only needed a ten foot section cut out to make it passable. After this one it was only small bits to clear so we set about driving the remainder of the track. The only diversion was to go around a solid mass of tree - slightly muddy, woops! Gary needs a tow - we carried on along the track up to Priory Farm where we found the way blocked. When Gary approached the farmer about proceeding onward through the farmyard, he found him in the middle of milking and being good public relations people, we declined to proceed any further but to retire after a hard days work.

The day was organised by Gary Hodgson who had contacted the Council for permission to clear the lane. Thank you Gary for the organisation, to James for his chain saw and to everybody else for turning up to help.

Andy Muchmore.

PHOTOS opposite and overleaf by Andy Muchmore.

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Green Lane Trip, 13/3/89

For the sake of a quick decision as to where to meet, the Viabes layby in Basingstoke was chosen. On the way there I had a quick look at the Crockford's Lane fiasco area! An additional fence has been erected across the road preventing use by horses and pedestrians as well as vehicles! I have sent yet another strongly worded letter to HANTS CC and this has been passed on to the appropriate departments. No-one seems prepared to take the developers on regarding this quite illegal blocking of this lane to ALL users! But I digress.

Eight vehicles turned up and were split into two groups. I led Dave Ridden, Steve Olden and Mike Cunningham out to the West and around to the South. We had a very pleasant trouble free drive during which we visited what I believe to be the shortest RUPP in England, certainly in Hants or Berks. It's so short, it doesn't even have a RUPP symbol on it; I know of it's existence only because Gary and I came across it whilst looking at the Definitive Map!

We ended up in Water Lane just south of Alton. This is the lane that James Wallis reported on a while back but I didn't identify it as such until we were committed. Half way along a difficult stretch, we met six or seven vehicles coming the other way! This is actually a very rare occurrence; we could have done with it being somewhere easier! The others said that they weren't from a club, but were just out driving from Sussex. All the vehicles were competition equipped SWBs with roll cages, so clearly must belong to some organisation. We found out later why they denied it. We backed up to a wide bit to let them pass and we proceeded. The road is indeed very hard going and as James said before, you are unlikely to get through without sustaining some damage. At one point you drop into a gully at an angle with the vehicle resting on the bodywork and it doesn't come out unscathed. The only actual hold-up was due to a low fallen tree which we could all get under except for Dave Ridden's safari roof on his LWB Station Wagon. After a lot of sawing and pulling in various directions with Steve Olden's winch, we managed to pull the trunk up the bank of the sunken road and secure it with rope. The rest of the lane from there was easy. We were travelling the road to the North, if you try it Southwards it is very much more difficult. At the North end, you have to turn right onto Caker Stream Lane as the track going straight on is a bridleway. Masses of SAT tyre marks on the bridleway clearly showed that the other group we met had driven along it. No

wonder they didn't want us to know what club they belonged to! It's people like that who give the hobby a bad name. I've got a photo of them but I'm not sure if a registration number shows.

Steve Kirby.

Green Lane Trip, 2/4/89.

As I had intended to visit some of the lanes around the Eastern end of the Ridgeway, I chose a meeting place near Aldworth, called Four Points, just to the West of Streatley. Possibly as a result of bad weather, only three vehicles turned up although I was expecting Nick Jennings to join us later. Richard Hill-Venning and son John came in a V8 One Ten and Janet and Lionel Clarke with Mick Clark (No "e" and no relation!) came in an 88" soft top. I was the third in my Range Rover. The first byway was surfaced and the second obstructed by parked cars. A letter is already on it's way to the Council about that. The third was quite a surprise. I would have thought that most lanes in this area would be driven at least once a year but this one had escaped for several years by the look of it! A tree trunk, a good six inches or more in diameter, lying across the track just broke in half when we tried to move it. How long does it take for a trunk that thick to rot through like that? Several years, I'll bet. We found many that size and condition along the route and none offered much in the way of resistance to removal. Beside this track we found Grim's Ditch, an ancient earthwork dating back two thousand years or more, still showing clearly in the trees. We took a good two hours to clear the lane.

On the next lane, we nearly went the wrong way. The RUPP went through a gate and across a field with absolutely no visual clues as to the right route. Fortunately, the highly detailed Pathfinder maps came to the rescue by showing the route in relation to the field boundaries. The gates appeared to be chained up but in fact opened without trouble and so did not constitute an obstruction.

We continued in a Northerly direction to cross the Ridgeway and pass the site of a Roman Temple at Lowbury Hill. There's not much to see but a hump in the ground, unfortunately. We then crossed the Fair Mile Roman road and proceeded to Blewburton Hill and made a petrol/shop stop in Blewbury. The rain had stopped and the Sun had come out by

this time, thank goodness. We then came South again and then West and stopped by a railway bridge with no railway! (A victim of the Beeching axe, no doubt!) Whilst studying the maps, we heard Nick calling on the CB so we directed him to where we were. We then went North and South again beside the Atomic Energy establishment at Harwell and took a few minutes out to visit Scutchamer Knob, an ancient mound in the trees beside the Ridgeway. A little further along there is a gate in the Ridgeway fence which is the entrance to a RUPP to East Ginge. This takes some finding but it's worth it. The RUPP crosses Grim's Ditch again about 100m from the gate. From East Ginge we drove East on long stretches of the Icknield way and finally ended up back near the old railway! This was a bit of a zigzag round and round route, but the countryside is so pleasant there and we didn't duplicate our route. The final leg back South to the Ridgeway underpass at the A34(T) is clearly shown as a RUPP but is almost too narrow to walk, let alone drive! So we finally made our way back West to the A34(T) and home..... a round trip of 143 miles for me; count yourselves lucky most of you live so near to the "lanes".

Steve Kirby.

Of UCRs and Wobbly Tables.

What's Kirby rambling on about now? My attempts to clarify the issue of rights of way on UCRs (Unclassified County Roads) have taken another blow. It's rather like trying to correct a wobbly table. You trim a bit off one leg to correct an error and it's *still* wrong! Tony Kempster, at the ARC meeting, and Dave Cuthbert, in a letter, have both informed me that the LARA Code of Conduct, issued to all members last month, is not necessarily correct in stating categorically that all UCRs carry vehicular rights. Some counties do not accept this. Until I can find out just which ones, be careful if you stray outside Hants or Berks (who, as far as I am aware, do accept that UCRs carry such rights.)

Finally, (I hope) the Romer I showed you last month, has it's border calibrated in something other than degrees. I've no idea where my original came from, but as I use only the 50,000 and 25,000 grids anyway the rest is there only to give you something to hold onto and to stop the thing being so small that it would get lost!

ASSOCIATION OF ROVER CLUBS LTD.

Main Sponsor: Land Rover Parts & Equipment

Patrons:

Tom Barton, O.B.E.

Major B. Hervey-Bathurst, O.B.E.



Reg. Office and Hon. Secretary:

G.R. Day, 10 Highfield Road,

Bagdale, Rochdale, OL11 5RZ

Telephone: Rochdale (0706) 30200

31st April 1989

Dear Member,

As you may be aware Kingsdown will not be attending the 1989 ARC National Rally hosted by the Yorkshire Rover Owners Club. Reasons for this are many and varied and not all came out at the recent ARC AGM where feeling ran high over this matter.

Part of the reasons which didn't come out were that Kingsdown were not prepared to sponsor the event they were initially asked to. Other sponsors were more than willing to provide assistance that Kingsdown would (or could) not provide. Over and above this one event it also includes a full 12 months sponsorship of the ARC, provision of eventing material, provision of plant and equipment for site preparation and sponsorship for your individual Club run events throughout the rest of the Year. This is being done by Land Rover Parts.

In addition to this, as a service to ARC members they will supply, at costs equivalent to (or possibly below) 'trade prices' Genuine Land Rover Parts at the event. They will be available from the Land Rover Parts Artic and back up trailer on site and a direct link, a 'VOR' system, to cover the whole weekend is being set up between the site and the Land Rover Parts warehouse facilities. This should give a better parts availability system than has ever been prepared at any event of this nature no matter where it was held. Also it will be backed up and channelled through Albert Farnells, Land Rover dealers well known and respected throughout the North. There will also be facility to manufacture, on site, brake pipes damaged in competition.

The Association hopes that this does give a benefit better than that ever provided before and trusts that you will, for your own Club events in the future take advantage of the offers available through sponsorship by contacting your local authorised Land Rover dealer and finding out what can be available to you.

Copies to: All member Clubs ARC

PLEASE INFORM YOUR MEMBERS THAT THIS FACILITY WILL BE AT THE 1989 ARC NATIONAL RALLY, Hosted by: YORKSHIRE ROVER OWNERS CLUB



Association of Rover Clubs Ltd.
Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England No. 1806788

ARC AGM
March 18th 1989

The meeting was held as usual in the Presentation Suite at the Land Rover factory in Lode Lane, Solihull, Birmingham.

There were long discussions on an assortment of items that don't concern us directly so I won't go into them all here. The main topic of concern was again the matter of non-Rover vehicles. However, this definition has been extended one stage further. Hitherto, a "Non-Rover Vehicle" was a foreign one, such as a Suzuki; but now, any vehicle that does not fit the rules is deemed to be a non-Rover vehicle.

Questions were raised from the floor as to whether any clubs still allowed non-Rover vehicles to compete. The Anglian representatives admitted that they did. That club was given an ultimatum to declare it's intent to stick to the letter of the rules or to leave the ARC and were given until the first ARC meeting after the Nationals to decide. (The date quoted for this was June 10th although the ARC newsletter states June 24th!) The HBRO has some non-compliant vehicles in it's ranks, but as these have not been seen in HBRO competitions for some time, the matter was not raised at the meeting. As you are no doubt now aware, we are taking action to put our house in order one way or the other before further contact with the ARC.

Other items discussed:-

* We were introduced to the editor of Land Rover Owner who informed us that the new ARC Yearbook, published by LRO, was being sent to those who had placed orders. You should by now have received your complementary copy either by post or by hand at club meetings. The club has had to pay £1 each for these but the committee felt that as the club's funds were quite healthy, we could afford the luxury of giving each fully paid-up member a free copy.

* We were all reminded that one of the benefits of being in the ARC is that we can use Land Rover's trade names, logos etc. Some clubs, it appears, have separate agreements with LR Ltd., but it is possible that these may be rescinded and replaced by one overall agreement via the ARC. This would prevent any non-ARC club from using LR Ltd.'s trade names or logos in club names, badges, documentation etc.

* Are you a 101 fan? A 101 owner's club has been formed and ARC membership has been applied for. Their admission will be discussed and possibly voted on at the next meeting.

* Land Rover Ltd., sponsors of the Nationals, have refused to let Kingsdown Ltd. have a trade stand at the Nationals. Kingsdown have sponsored many an ARC event, including the Nationals, over the years. Most ARC members present expressed disgust at this treatment of one of the sport's great supporters. The reason given was that LR Ltd. did not want any other major parts manufacturer at the event. (LR Ltd. are sponsoring the ARC to the tune of around £7000 this year.)

* Do you have any vehicle insurance problems? The ARC hope to have an insurance adviser at the next EGM. Questions in advance please to G.R.Day, Hon. Sec. ARC., address in the yearbook.

* Steve Barnwell, a member of the Anglian ROC and well known to this club, has been accepted onto the ARC scrutineering committee.

ARC Nationals, 1989

As members will have read in previous newsletters, this year's ARC Nationals are to be held at Rudding Park in Yorkshire from the 26th to the 29th of May. It's too late to enter now but if you can put up with a long drive, then go along and watch!

The Nationals is an enjoyable social/competitive weekend. Those who have been before know what to expect but if any members require further information, then please contact Roger. (Address/phone number inside front cover.)

ASSOCIATION OF ROVER CLUBS

I was surprised, and a little disappointed, to read that the Hants & Berks Rover Owners are contemplating withdrawing from the Association of Rover Clubs. Although I accept that as a fairly nonactive member, my views are not too important, as the person who got us to join the ARC in the first place, I hope the Editor will allow me some space to put forward my views.

Although no club should live in the past I feel I should start by looking at the origins of the club. It was formed in 1983 as a club for Rover Saloon (particularly P5 3/3.5 litres) owners. The founder at that time had no idea that anyone could get enthusiastic about a Land Rover (thinking about it logically, who can blame him?) and so did not know of the existence of so many other Rover and Land Rover Clubs, or of the existence of the ARC.

According to my research the 5th member was a Land Rover Owner, one H Glossop, and by the end of the meeting I joined at (the 2nd I think) we had 13 members of whom 3 owned Land Rovers, and a further 3 joined at the next meeting (of these at least 3 are still members, I don't think many of the others are).

One thing that the founder had given no thought to was using a trade name, and trade mark, without permission. On enquiring about this I discovered that BL, who it was at the time, did this through the ARC. I knew about the ARC and felt joining was the right thing to do in any case as it included all us Land Rover owners with the others. Before going into why, it is worth considering the reasons for joining, or forming, a Rover club in the first place.

Part of it (and a very important part) is social, in that you get to meet other owners. This in turn should lead to a pooling of information, both on how to repair the vehicles and where to get parts from, then we come to competitions.

This I think is one of the most important features of the club, and although it took several years to get off the ground, the way the club has developed since has, I feel, proved me right. Of course in Hampshire competition is already available, in the form of All Wheel Drive Club events amongst others. I have entered these in the past, and enjoyed them, but found that my chances of winning in an ordinary Land Rover were virtually nil. I think we all agree that overall the Land Rover is the best all round 4X4, but only the most blinkered would not see that when it comes to a trial the light weight of, say, a Suzuki

EASTER IN DRAGON LAND.

will give it an advantage on nearly every section. This means that to have any success at a multi-vehicle event you need to be a particularly skilled driver (or the opposition need to be particularly inept, may be that's why they tip over!) but in a Rover club event, you are up against similar vehicles, so that driver skill has a far larger part to play.

If the Hants and Berks went any vehicle, I fail to see what advantage it offers over the AWDC, apart from being a bit cheaper.

Being in the ARC offers other advantages, in particular multi club events, although regrettably few HBRO members seem to take advantage of these, but I'm sure most who have have enjoyed them. The foremost of these is the Nationals, a massive gathering of Land Rover enthusiasts from all over the country, and abroad. Another event is the Majors trial, which saw some H & B members entering, and the War of the Roses, also with some of our members, albeit as members of another club, but perhaps we could field a team of our own next year.

Additionally many events throughout the country, whilst not specifically inter club events, are open to all ARC members. This means that if you are away on holiday you may well find an event nearby you can join in, it happened to us in Yorkshire, and your Chairman has just enjoyed (I hope) a weekend with the North Wales Land Rover Club.

This is just scratching the surface of what we get out of being in the ARC, I gather the Chairman is going to go into it more deeply, but what will we get out of leaving it?

We will throw our doors open to non Rovers. Big deal, do we really want to be overrun by hordes of yuppies in Suzukis? We will be able to use Rover based specials in competitions. This I suspect is the crux of the matter. There can be little doubt (at least in my mind) that some aspects of ARC vehicle regulations are a bit inconsistent, but we are not alone in thinking that. Already one possible modification to the rules has been submitted, whilst another HBRO member has tried a complete rewrite of the rules. Of course all this will take time, and I am talking years, but lets give it a chance, we will have no influence to change things once we've left.

Surely, given all the options, it is better to stay in the ARC and keep all its advantages, whilst trying to change things, than to take on the All Wheel Drive Club at their own game, and so disappear completely.

Dave Cuthbert
(aka Red Leader)

Because we didn't want to overwhelm our hosts, the Easter visit to take part in a camping weekend and trial with the North Wales Land Rover Club wasn't published in Pants & Barks. Instead the word was passed round at the Hind's Head pub meets, and at the recent Ham Lane trial. As a result five caravans were due to make an appearance at the Arenig site over Easter, which fitted in nicely with the numbers that could be accommodated by our hosts. So here is the story of the weekend.

The weather for Good Friday may have been forecast as 'not very good' but I knew that it wouldn't reduce the Bank Holiday traffic, so at 6am I set out from Ruislip bound for Arenig, in Snowdonia. The idea was to beat the traffic past Birmingham, and to meet the other HBRO visitors at the camping site. Unfortunately two hours after leaving home I had only managed 16 miles, and was stuck in a traffic jam caused by an accident on the M1. Once free of the jam the only hazard was the weather. Torrential rain twice slowed the traffic to 30 mph (at least everyone had the sense to slow down) and the gale force head winds kept most caravans well below 50 mph on uphill stretches. The advantage of having such a small, light caravan soon became clear as the Rangle hauled its load North-Westwards. Once onto the M54 the sun came out, and after a slight problem of finding petrol around Shrewsbury (bypasses obviously bypass the petrol stations as well) I headed on into the Tanat Valley. This may only be a B class road but from past experience I knew that the road was wide enough for small caravans, and the scenery as the road ascends the Tre-rhiwarth pass is fantastic. Don't try this route however with large caravans or low power to weight ratios, it really is a classic, and steep, mountain pass as the road climbs up a ledge cut into the side of the mountain.

After a steep descent into Bala there was only the trip around Llyn Celyn to make before I arrived at the site. Total journey time was 6 hours, including the 1½ hours lost on the M1.

On arrival I found that the site was, as we had been warned, somewhat primitive. It may have been just an old, muddy quarry on the side of Arenig Fawr, but the view was fantastic. Once the caravan had been parked it was time to help our Drivelling Dragon (Red Leader, alias Dave Cuthbert) to erect his tent. Since the quarry had a rock base the tents had to go on the mountainside, the only problem being the

gale which was still raging. When we finally got the tent up it promptly started to tear itself apart, so down it had to come. Since Dave had arranged the visit for the HBRO there was only one sensible course of action, and the Dragon moved into my caravan. T'was a good job I had brought the caravan or else it would have been two of us to sleep in our vehicles.

After I had met the North Wales crew, and had had a quick look at the trials site, I set out with the Dragon to visit the Bala Lake Railway. This was achieved in yet more heavy rain, but as the sun reappeared for the drive through another scenic valley, we set route for Blaenau Ffestiniog. A brief stop allowed us to watch one of the Ffestiniog trains depart before we returned to the campsite. That evening was spent in the company of the members of the North Wales Land Rover Club. This group really know how to arrange a good weekend, there was a barbecue (in the hailstorm and gale) complete with a beer tent, and entertainment from Kelly's Heroes.

Saturday morning was spent helping to prepare the trials site. Dave Kelly was busy setting out the trial, whilst the rest of the members made gaps in stone walls, and tried to prepare 'roadways' to allow the competition vehicles access up the mountainside across the numerous peat bogs. The NWLRC are obviously lucky to have a farmer who is so keen to see them, and who doesn't mind them preparing the site in this manner. Fortune smiled on one member when his vehicle slid onto a stone wall alongside a stream. Not only did the wall stop his descent into the stream, but even though a rock pushed the gearbox forward the engine fan only took a small bite out of the radiator core. It didn't even leak!

While some of the NWLRC members continued with the site preparation in the wet and windy afternoon, the Dragon and I returned to Blaenau Ffestiniog to visit the Llechwedd Slate Caverns. Blaenau Ffestiniog was the world centre for slate production, and now one of the mines/quarries is open to the public. A descent was made by funicular railway into the deeper parts of the mine. Here, 400 feet below the surface, the visitors are given a guided tour showing how slate was mined and explaining about life in the mines and township during the peak production years. At the deepest point on the tour there is a large lake that forms a control level for the mine pumping system. It's hard to credit that at its peak the mine extended down a further 500 feet, through 6 more levels of slate caverns. The second part of the tour involved a trip on a more conventional railway. The

passenger trucks being hauled into the mountain behind a small battery powered locomotive. This time the tour guides explained the mechanics of slate production, finishing the tour with a demonstration of slate splitting and cutting. By the time we had looked around the surface exhibits three hours had passed by, so it was back to the campsite. Saturday night was cold and very windy, but at least the rain eased off. As the night progressed it became more and more windy. Those who had managed to erect tents during the day had to put them away just after midnight and resorted to sleeping in their Land Rovers. Some people swore that their caravans had moved during the night, not a good omen for the weather for the trial.

Thus it came as a surprise that as the trial started on the Sunday morning the sun came out and the wind dropped to nothing. Thirteen sections were driven that day in very pleasant weather. The starters consisted of 3 specials, and 13 other vehicles, all of which attempted the same RTV style sections. Those of you who like tough RTVs would have been well catered for, but with a little sense from the drivers the sections were nondamaging. Only twice did I stop my Range before completing a section to avoid finishing gates that I considered a little too tough for my vehicle. What the competitors had to remember was that the same sections were being used for both RTV and Special vehicles, and several of the RTV vehicles were almost Road Taxed trials motors.

Trying to describe all of the sections would be pointless, but they occupied a large proportion of the site (which was probably about 2 square miles in area) and contained all types of surface. Each section had twelve gates, and they were often over 200 yds in length, with nice wide gates. As the vehicles crossed the softer areas of the sections they would often break through the grass 'crust'. Following vehicles would then be left floundering in raw peat bog, often up to bonnet level; but recovery was always on hand. The rotation of running order was strictly enforced to ensure that everyone had a chance to drive sections before they became impassable, but even so there was often a late runner who would pass the point at which all the others had become stuck. As the day went by we drove up and down the mountain, often with competitors having more problems between sections than on them. Several vehicles even had to be winched between sections. The Dragon's chariot became wedged on top of a large rock when he lost his way and drove outside a section. That took almost 20 minutes of 'High Lift' jacking to get him off. Another competitor dented his sump in the

rock field section. This section occupied an area the size of a football pitch on the side of the mountain. It was covered with rocks, ranging from football size, up to the size of a single bed. The start and finish gates were in gaps in the stone wall, whilst the other gates were up to 100 feet wide and scattered around the field. At first sight it looked impossible to find a route through the rocks that wouldn't damage my Rangle. After about 20 minutes I had found a very twisty route, and being first on that section I had to prove that it was feasible. My score of 'Clear' for that section showed that it was not only possible, but that I had a good memory for a route. The trick had been to find, and then drive, a route that kept the wheels on high points to keep the diff casings away from trouble. Other drivers didn't have such good memories for route finding, and several vehicles came to grief stuck on rocks. Luckily no serious damage was done. When the results of the days trialing were announced I had managed third overall, not bad for an automatic Range Rover when its up against V8 Land Rovers. The General Grabber Mud Terrain tyres had shown their worth on the soft terrain, and had survived the rocks without damage, a fact which the NWLRC members appeared to note.

That evening was spent with yet another barbecue, entertainment being provided by Kelly's Heroes again. When I finally turned into bed at 2am the party was still going on. Judging by the appearance of the Dragon on Monday morning it had been a very good party.

After watching the NWLRC members practising their winching (in preparation for the War of the Roses competition) I departed from Arenig on Monday lunchtime. The return trip was made via Llangollen in order to find petrol, which is in short supply in the Welsh mountains. As my Rangle travelled back down the M6/M1 it drew strange looks from other travellers, probably due it being covered in half a peat bog. The journey home took 5 hours, during which time I reflected on a marvellous weekend. The scenery was superb, the trial fantastic, and the company couldn't have been better. The only disappointing note was the lack of HBRO members. Of those that said they were going, only I actually arrived on the site. Next time the invite may well go to members of the other club with which I am involved. They at least are more reliable.

Colin Gross.

Opposite top: Colin in a Welsh bog!

Opposite bottom: Red Leader (Dave Cuthbert) also in the bog but now without the dreaded bull-bar!



BIRTH OF A HYBRID

The date, early February 1988, the place, Mark Smith Rovers, Bicester, Oxford.

This was to be the start of the building of my Comp/Safari racer, something I had been working towards over the past few years of Land Roving.

Mark Smith had acquired a 1971 Range Rover with a completely rotted chassis at the rear, by the spring cups. Could it have been brought about by reversing into the sea with a boat trailer, I wonder? Anyhow, upon inspection the mechanics of the vehicle seemed reasonable so a deal was struck, which involved the chopping off, of the body, the supply of another chassis and the delivery of both, to my parents house. Here it was installed in their double garage awaiting my attention.

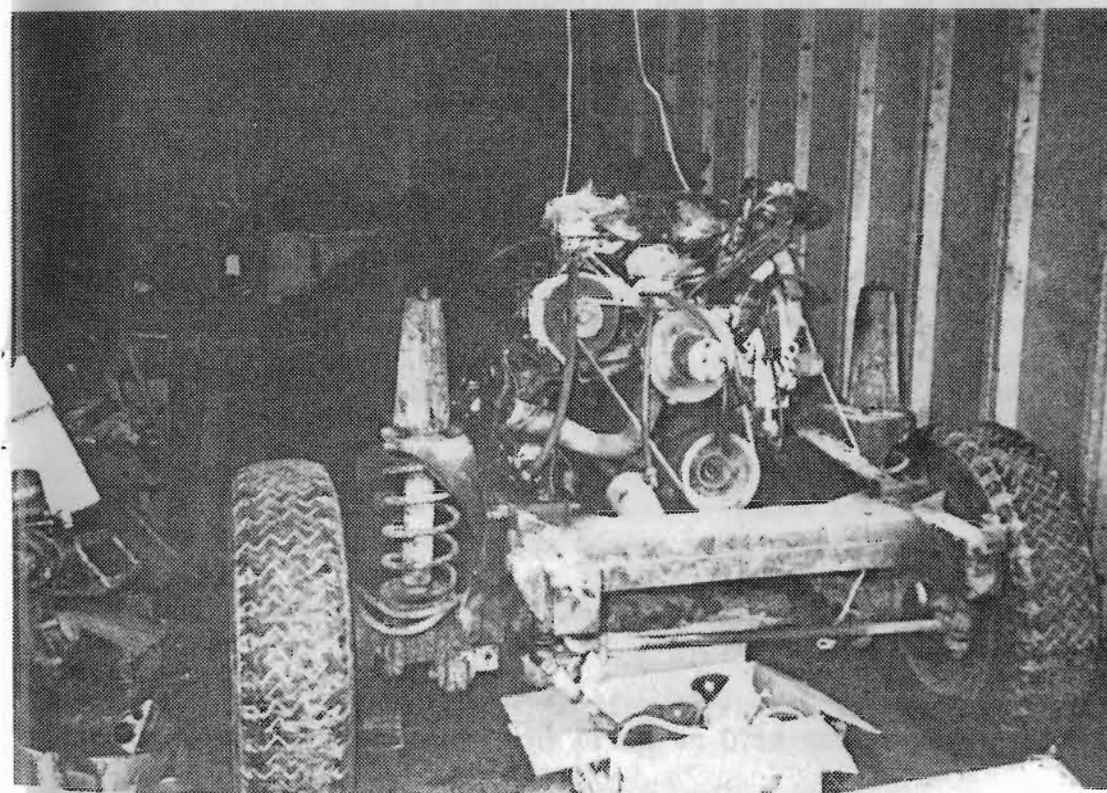
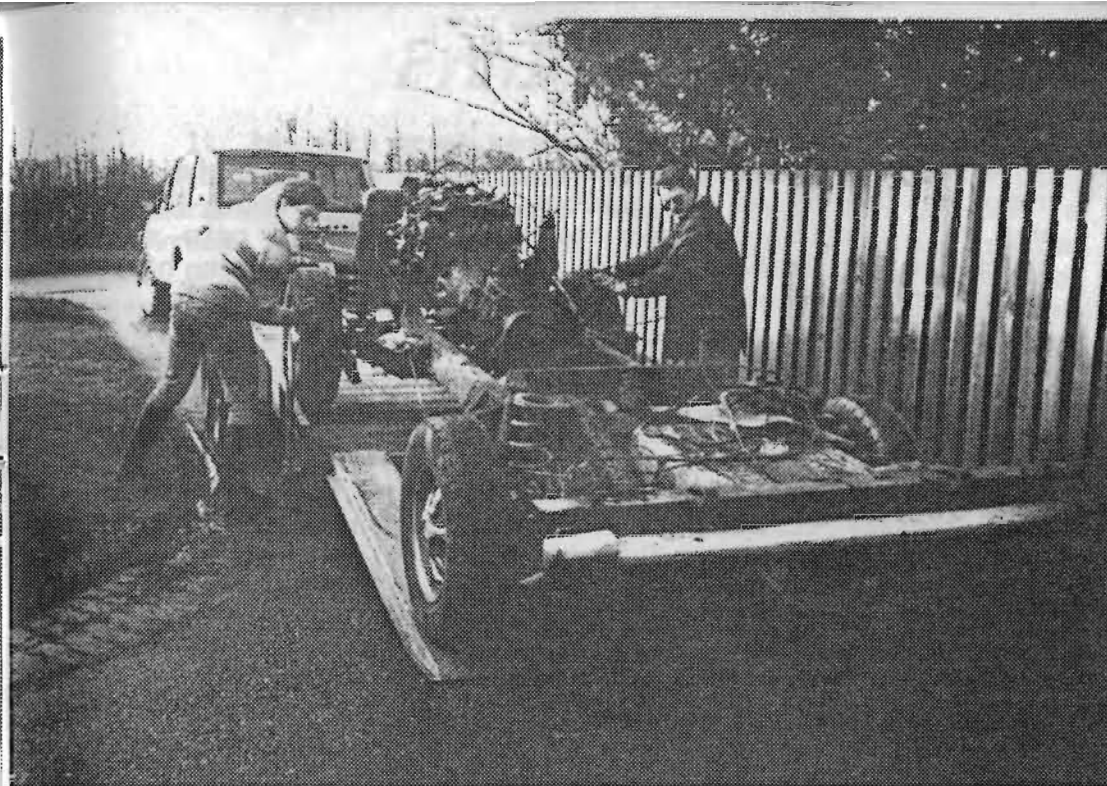
At this time I was living in lodgings at Kingsclere, and intended to build the racer in a lock up garage which I owned in Tadley. Because this garage is only a single one I needed space to work on the racer, hence my parents garage!

The first job entailed the removal of the remaining floor, bulkhead and front inner wing panels. This was achieved with an angle grinder, so starting the soon to be expanding pile of scrap metal!

When this was completed I hired a trailer, loaded up the rolling chassis, and contacted Andy Smith.

Now, Andy just happen's to have a Kew high pressure washer, and it was about time he gave me a demonstration of it's capabilities. Needless to say when the chassis was put in the lockup it was sparkling clean.

Lionel, the owner of my local 'The George and Dragon', had kindly let me have the use of one of his outbuildings to store the good chassis in, giving me chance to descale it and cut off the unwanted outriggers and rear overhang.



F.W.D. MOTORS

Back to the rolling chassis, the next job being removing the engine and gearbox unit in one piece. This was duly carried out and the unit was loaded onto my friend's box trailer, which was to be stored in his garage until needed, Thank you John.

I was then left with a rotten chassis, sat on two axles of which, I removed complete with radius arms and rear links, the chassis then being chopped and joining my pile of growing scrap!.

The time had come, to bolt all the parts back onto the good chassis residing at the pub, so this had to be brought to the garage. The day was decided and I had persuaded Peter, the owner of the house where I lodged, that it would be a fulfilling experience to give me a hand. In other words, I needed someone to hump the chassis around and hold it up in the air, whilst I did the technical process of wielding the spanner!.

The day in question started by taking the trailer around to the garage and collecting all the scrap, to be dumped at the local tip. Now, every time we got out of the car it absolutely poured down, and I mean poured, we both looked like a pair of drowned rats.

We then shot down the pub to pick up the chassis, and as it was lunch time we forced ourselves to partake in a much needed liquid lunch and drying out? session.

As we sat there mulling over the price of Lionel's ale, the weather took a turn for the better, and the sun came bursting out, so giving us the lift to collect the chassis and go back to the garage. Upon arrival you guessed, the sky darkened and proceeded to deposit all it's contents over us.

Part two of this article should appear next month.

This article and it's associated photos are the copyright of Richard Stewart, 1989.

It is with great regret that I have to announce that F.W.D.MOTORS are closing down. This is due to Land Rover Ltd. withdrawing their franchise because they don't have a showroom. The HBRO would like to thank the managing director Bob Grigg and all his staff for their co-operation and generosity in sponsoring several of this club's competitions. The trophies and prizes that F.W.D.Motors donated have greatly enhanced the club's standing. Most of the staff will be absorbed into the saloon car side of the business at another location. Best wishes to all.

FOR SALE

* 3.5 litre P5 Coupe. J reg. Auto, S/S exhaust, 83k on the clock! Engine and gearbox OK but chassis, brakes etc. not too good. No tax or MOT. Very cheap. Any offers? Buyer collects. No split. Phone Michael Webb at Stubbington on 0329-662765

* Rover 90 Parts:- Engine, good chassis, good rear springs, excellent fuel tank, prop-shafts, full front suspension unit, steering box, full dashboard, Smith's heater, radiator and good front grille. Plus full aluminium body kit comprising boot, bonnet, doors and other odd items. No reasonable offer refused. Contact Dylan Smith on 0732-822236. Sevenoaks, Kent.

WANTED

* Tailgate gas struts for Range Rover. Mine have gone droopy! Please phone Steve Kirby on 01-894-3961.

* PHOTO'S of my Land Rovers in action:- WOW 293 (later ACC 445A), OEY 366S and KOM 682, "TOBY". Phone Dave Cuthbert on Colwyn Bay 0482-534417.

* Truck Cab & Windscreen frame & Tailgate for 88".
Phone John on 0895-33568.

* Truck Cab, very good condition for SrsII/III Land Rover.
Phone Mark Jones at Gerrards Cross on 0753-887871

DRAGON'S DRIVE

News from the Hants & Berks Rover Owners' North Wales Correspondent

Again the main event to report this month is a trial. Nothing special this time, just a straight forward RTV. I was particularly looking forward to it, as unlike our more usual site Firestone SATs were not the ideal tyre, something more supple being needed. One experienced trialler was even looking for a set of Avon radials to borrow, even my Goodyear Xtra Grips could come into their own, although they were getting a bit short of tread.

There was only one snag, there was several inches of snow! SATs rule again! This did not prevent an excellent days trialling, although had the double disadvantage of not having seen snow for nearly three years, and being on almost bald tyres. I was not actually last, but I certainly did not live up to the promise I had shown at the previous event.

Overall however the day went very well, getting a field of 16 through 13 sections, finishing in time to hold the prize giving in daylight, despite being a short winters day.

I recently had a chance to help the *Safari Recovery* team with rally recovery for the *Skip Brown Rally*. I had to sign on by 7 30, luckily only an hour from home, but the vehicle with me had come from north of Manchester, and had been on the road since 4 30. It was another 2 hours before the first car was due.

Eventually 180 vehicles came past, as they were at minute intervals, plus delays, you can imagine how long it took. However we were in a good spot, not only seeing cars at our bend, but we could see them further along the stage going back along the other side of the valley. There was just one car to tow out of the stage when it closed before a three hour break until we had to be on station again for a second attempt at the stage. By now the light was fading and it was soon dark, as a result several vehicles rolled on the other side of the stage. Fortunately there were a number of spectators there, so they were recovered by them, but it took a long time. We could not move of course until detailed by the stage commander over the radio, before which he would close the stage, obviously he would only take that action if a vehicle were blocking the stage, and causing danger to other competitors. None of ours were in that position though, so we just sat and watched. An interesting day, from which I got home at 10 30.

Red Leader

FOR SALE

Note that small ads are free but please let me know when a sale is complete so I don't keep printing an out of date ad each month. Please help potential customers by quoting location and dialling code in your adverts. Thanx.

Commercial Adverts:- £1 per 1/4 page per issue or £10 per 12 issues. Due to layout considerations, consecutive publication cannot be guaranteed. (Add 50% if continuity is essential.)

* Firestone Super All-Traction (SAT) Tyres.

7:50 x 16, 6 or 8 ply. £45+ VAT. Delivery can be arranged at extra cost. Phone Mark Jones at Gerrards Cross on 0753-887871 for more information.

* Land Rover Bits.... Hard top (c/w safari rear door) for LWB, £175. 4 LWB rims with tyres, £15ea. Bonnet, £10. Roof rack with ladder for LWB, £60. Phone Mark Jones at Gerrards Cross on 0753-887871

* Used Tyres:- Two Firestone Town & Country M+S Radials, slightly worn. One Avon Ranger II crossply, half worn. Phone Jeff on 01-898-2120.

* Range Rover Clutch Bits. Disc and pressure plate, new. £90 Phone Mike Cunningham on 0252 (Fleet) 626693.

* Land Rover Engine, 2 1/4 Petrol. complete with ALL ancillaries except oil filter housing. 35,000 miles. Good, quiet, oil-tight unit. Redundant after diesel conversion. Any sensible offers around £100. Phone Chris Baldwin on 096-274-269 (Winchester)

* Bolt on Roll Bar for Truck Cab Land Rover, complete with 4 Cibies and 2 Halogen spot lights. Two rotating orange beacons for cab roof, plus 1000lb electric winch. Contact Mr. Perry at home on Romsey 884237 or at work on Southampton 824802.

* Land Rover Ila bits. LWB axles with good chrome, steering box, two 7:50x16 tyres, two 6:00x16 tyres on wheels, front wings. Plus Srs.III bonnet and loads of odds and ends. Phone John on 0895-33568

* Mobelec Magnum contactless electronic ignition unit for Rover V8, £25 Phone Steve on 01-894-3961.

FOR SALE

* 1958(ish) Series One 88" Land Rover. Breaking for spares. Chassis in very good condition. No engine but all body panels and mechanical bits available. Phone Roy Michael on Eastleigh 611491.

* Range Rover Bits:- Pair Front springs £5. Dog Guard VGC £30, several 50mm Ball Hitches, £2 each, Set rear light protectors 90% complete, £20. Contact Nick Jennings on 0734-471258 (home) or 0734-471528 (business). Caversham, near Reading, Berkshire.

* Truck Cab for SWB Land Rover. Possible swop for hard top. Phone Roy Michael on Eastleigh 611491.

* Alex's up the Maypole Offers.....

Austin Allegro, 'S' Reg. Body still sound, engine still smokey, (new cylinder head included in sale) still no MOT, tax or log book, still only £35. Delivery service still available. Do not miss this exciting offer!

New Land Rover door handle and lock assemblies complete with two keys. (driver's side) Genuine parts. Series II or III. Surplus stock. 50% off list.

TYRES:- One Goodyear Super Hi-Miler 750x16. Five various 185R14 (Suit Transit, etc.). Two various 560x13. One 'Remould' 520x13. Four various 155R13.

Any offers? All very cheap as I need the Garage space. Phone Alex Waugh on ODIHAM 704872.

* Four used Tyres on White SWB rims. Two Avon Traction Mileage 600x16. Two Firestone Town & Country 600x16. All with loadsa tread. Offers to Dave Catlin on 0329-46235 (Fareham)

* Series One 88" Comp Safari Racer. Full roll cage and crash bars all round. Radiator in the back. Engine has recently been reworked but has no clutch and still needs to be refitted. Gearbox OK. Needs work on brakes. Meets ARC specs. Has been raced successfully by another HBRO member but now offered for sale at a giveaway £300 by Hugh Glossop, in Mortimer, Berksire. Tel: 0734-333409. Also available, one 6:00 size Firestone SAT as new. Offers?

* Hybrid Land Rover bodied Range Rover, 100" Pickup. SATs on Range Rover wheels. Trialled only once. Road legal. Taxed. MOT till November. £3000. See article in this issue. Phone Richard Stewart on Tadley 07356-77834, Hants, for details.

EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

* Green-lane trips will be as shown below. (Usually the second Sunday of the month). The rights of way officer will usually be present to indicate rights of way on the maps. It is recommended that those involved obtain current maps of Hampshire and Berkshire.

* Second Wednesday each month, Noggin & Natter at the Hind's Head, Aldermaston. (From 7:30 p.m.)

May 4th Be with you.

May 7th Green lane trip. Phone Steve or Gary.

May 10th Extra-ordinary General Meeting to discuss and vote on ARC affiliation. At the Hind's Head in Aldermaston, Hants. Opens at 7:30 p.m.

May 20/21 Club Rally to be held at Harroway Farm, near Ramsdean, HANTS.

This event is for everyone. There will be a social evening with a barbeque, food & drink, skittles, darts etc. along with a small trial, a gymkhana a green-lane trip and a few other surprises. The site is suitable for tents and caravans. Water and limited toilet facilities are available. See article elsewhere in this issue for further details and a map.

*** PLEASE can you let Gary Hodgson know if you intend to go to the above rally. This won't be a binding contract! He just wants a rough idea of how many will be there.....

May 26-29th Nationals at Rudding Park, Harrogate, Yorkshire. Details also in last month's issue.

June 24th? ARC meeting at the Land Rover factory in Solihull

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