



RoverNews

Natal Rover Owners' Association

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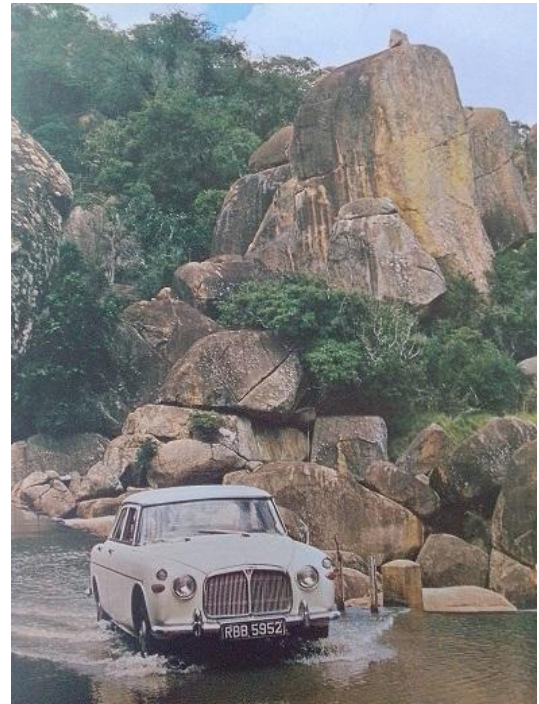
Greetings folks

Well, this year is rapidly drawing to a close. As we get older they seem to fly past! This one has seen so much disruption, both internationally and locally, that the year ahead is viewed with some trepidation.

Our club still continues to exist, despite having lost so many members over the past few years, but very few young folk are coming up to replace them. Perhaps some new energy on the committee might spark a bit more enthusiasm, so please consider putting your hand up at the AGM. We particularly would like to see more Rovers showing up at our outings. As you can see from a couple of the articles in this newsletter, there is still huge support for Rover clubs overseas.

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you all, and your families, a wonderful festive season, a MERRY CHRISTMAS, happy New Year and good health & prosperity in 2026.

Regards,
Rose



A photo I came across recently, in one of my old books, of a Rover P5 crossing the causeway at Maleme Dam, Matopos, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe)

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Saturday 7th February 2026

Annual General Meeting – venue to be confirmed. Please diarise.

SICK BAY

None that I'm aware of

NEW MEMBER

No recent membership applications

FOR SALE / WANTED/ SOLD

Niel is looking for a vehicle requiring a full restoration – something to keep him busy for a while. Please contact him if you know of anything suitable

OBITUARY



Valda North sadly passed away on 8th November, one day before her 90th birthday.

She was to have had a little party to celebrate, but landed up in hospital, where I went to visit her, only to be informed by the nursing staff that she had passed away an hour previously.

Valda was the very supportive wife of long-standing Rover Club Chairman, Rob North. She was also for some years actively involved on the Baynesfield Estate Museum Committee, and donated her impressive collection of vintage sewing machines to them.

Rob was also a very active committee member of the Natal Vintage Tractor & Machinery Club and Valda involved herself in all their activities.

For those who knew her and/or would be interested, I will attach a copy of the eulogy delivered by their three daughters at her funeral service.

RIP dear Valda, whom I valued as a dear friend for almost 25 years.

* * * * *

Forest Hills Classic Car Show

19th October

Sadly the weather was not ideal and so the turnout was very poor. John Booth and Ruan Swanepoel attended and sent a couple photos. John's blue & white Ford Escort shown below.



Vintage Motorcycle Show St Agnes Church Kloof October 2025

John Booth

Last year I was contacted by a friend of mine Alan to display my Mercedes next to his Armstrong Sidley at the St Agnes Church in Kloof. They were having their Fete day and wanted a few cars to promote their day. Alan and I are always willing to lend a hand by using our cars for good causes and to promote events. While I was there I was chatting to one of the church members Gavin and I mentioned I was also a member of a Classic Motorcycle Club of Natal. Then six months down the line I was asked to take my Mercedes along to Hillcrest High School for a few photos with some models. This was for their 'Feed the Baby Fund' and I got chatting to the dress designer Karen Monk. Her father was a long term member of our club. Anyway between Karen, Gavin and I we came up with the idea to investigate the possibility of hosting a classic motorcycle show at St Agnes church together with a Mods and Rockers Fashion show. Karen it turns out is also a member of the church.

I was then requested to meet with the minister of the church to outline what was envisaged. He was very keen for the show to go ahead. At the next committee meeting I presented the idea to the committee and they duly concluded that it was a good idea. The notion to expose our club to a whole new audience that would not normally visit our club was born. The next few months Chairman Jayson and I attended a few meetings to set the ball in motion. To be honest the Church did most of the work and we were tasked with setting up our bikes on show.

As a club we have not held a proper motorcycle show in many years, but what a resounding success it was. Some members dropped off their bikes on the Friday afternoon. Jayson kindly brought up the buried Indian which was a huge attraction. More bikes arrived on the Saturday morning and we had a total of just over 40 bikes. Deena, Graham and I numbered each bike to prepare for the public to vote for the best three bikes on show. Dave manned the magazine/book sales table and made a few sales. Jayson brought up his magnificent Daimler (Not a Jag) and Rolls Royce which were on display outside under a tree. The fashion show was a great success and a club member had his 1934 Levis 500 on the stage. Various ticket draws were done during the day by the church and people attending were winning all sorts of lovely prizes. Attendance was good despite competition from other events going on in the area.

There would be a public vote to vote for the best bike on show. The theme was to set a story or give the history of the club member's motorcycle. The winners of the best bikes on show by public were myself John Booth 1968 BSA Thunderbolt and sidecar, (I let Dawn go up and get the prize as she had done so much setting up the picnic theme). Second was Dale Maxwell with his Honda CBX and third was Vic Lotter with his Rhodesian Ridge Back. I must add that although my BSA was nowhere near concours condition what won the hearts of public was the story and picnic theme. I was told by many elderly ladies that it was such a romantic idea. People love stories and I think that this is the nature of this type of show where a good story will win the day.

What a great show this was. Hugely successful for us. We all had a fun day out, we gained a few new members and we got some great exposure for the club. Added to that we made some money. We look forward to next year's show.

Setting up the show on Saturday morning getting ready for the 9am start time



My BSA and sidecar with the picnic them set up



A nice variety of Motorcycles



Here is some more information on my BSA and the Mods and Rockers

1968 BSA Thunderbolt 650cc
Owner John Booth

If you were a biker during the late 1950's into the 1960's then you may have fallen into two distinct groups: The Mods and the Rockers. The Mods were fashion conscious and rode around on scooters like Vespa or Lambretta. They wore bell bottom trousers and flower shirts. The Rockers on the other hand rode around on anything they could find such as BSA, Norton, Triumph, Matchless or AJS. They wore black leather jackets, Doc Martin Boots and perhaps the odd chain.

This particular BSA 650cc would have been the ideal Rocker Bike. It was big, powerful and fast. You could quickly ride into a group of Mods bash a few heads and be off before they knew what had hit them. Fights were not uncommon between the two groups. The Mods were generally made up of bankers, clerks and such like occupations. The Rockers were the artisans, road builders and factory workers. You only ventured into each other's territories if you were looking for a fight. The Rockers also became known as the Greasers.

This BSA was shipped on the 7th July 1968 from BSA Birmingham England to Killerby's Motorcycles Umbilo road Durban. BSA stands for Birmingham Small Arms and they initially made firearms then bicycles and motorcycles. I found this bike on a farm in Richmond.

Dawn and I planned the picnic theme. We wanted something totally different and this is the write up that we put on the bike which certainly did attract the public vote

1968 BSA Thunderbolt 650cc and BSA Velorex Sidecar Owner John & Dawn Booth

It's the early 1970's and Joe has just ridden up the steep Field Hill on his first date with his girlfriend Suzie. Times are hard. Joe is an apprentice and is still paying off his BSA and sidecar that he bought in 1969 from Killerby's Durban situated in Umbilo Road.

Before leaving Joe thought a bottle of Paarl Perle and some Cheese Tangs would be enough for the day out. However his older sister Brenda is unimpressed and sends him off packing to buy a red rose while she makes him a 'hedge-hog' and some jelly in an orange while singing her favourite song Chirpy Chirpy Cheep Cheep.

At the top of Fields Hill Joe and Suzie start looking for a place to have a picnic. Joe immediately spots the lovely lawns near St Agnes church. By luck the minister is there and he politely asks, and gets permission to have a picnic on the church lawn.

They have a lovely day out and when Joe gets back home an inquisitive Brenda is waiting by the front door with her hands on her hips. "Well" she demands.

"Well I got a second date" says Joe beaming.

(To see what happens on Joe's second date you will need to wait for next year's show)

Winner of best on show competition
By Public Vote



*John and Dawn Booth
1968 BSA Thunderbolt Combination*

(Ed: Congratulations John & Dawn!)

At the show and in third place was this interesting Rhodesian made motorcycle, meant to be the only running example in the world





South Africa... the glamour bird eye... for the 1967 Ridgeback brochure.

Mention the Rhodesian Ridgeback to all but a tiny handful of local classic motorcycle enthusiasts and you'll be met with a blank stare, but the machine did actually exist and qualifies as Africa's only true production motorcycle. This is its story and that of the man behind it.

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHS: PATRICK MOORE



Heavyweight forks would have withstood the rigours of the outback. Danger's welding has an agricultural look to it.

Though details of his early life are sketchy, it seems that Terry Franklin came to what was then called Rhodesia during the 1950s, as an off-road riding instructor for the British South Africa Police's motorcyclist training facility. He was an experienced scrambles rider who, it's thought, spent some time working with the Rickman brothers in England. He wasted no time in having his trainees re-equipped with Matchless GBOCS bikes, in preference to, and far more suitable than, the road going twins with which they had been expected to ride dirt roads and footpaths.

His training methods were obviously effective, for some of his pupils went on to become successful dirt track racers and scramblers, and one seldom heard of police riders being injured or killed on their official motorcycles.

Around 1960 Terry left the BSAP to establish his own second-hand motorcycle business, Terry Franklin Motorcycles, in Salisbury. He, and colleague John Osbourne, founded the Bog Wheelers Scrambles Club, at the notoriously muddy airport track, with Terry helping as many aspiring riders as possible to start racing. In addition to importing suitable bikes he also brought out

the Rickman brothers and other stars such as British national champion Malcolm Davis, to demonstrate just how fast a scrambles iron could be ridden.

Terry is remembered as a hard but sporting rider who gave no quarter on the racetrack, but would always help a fellow competitor to get his bike to the start line. He also used his influence with the BSAP to get several of his young protégés out of trouble with the law! Phil Cummings remembers how his taking a shortcut through the veld, to avoid a pursuing constable, caused the latter to land in an undignified heap with his Matchless, at the bottom of a donga.

The infuriated cop threw the book at Phil, who had been riding an unlicensed bike on a public road. In desperation he turned to his friend Terry for help, to avoid a stiff fine. On hearing Phil's story Terry simply phoned the injured copper, with something akin to "Hello constable Fitzgerald, my friend Mr. Cummings tells me that you still can't ride cross country, how would you like me to talk to Chief Inspector Phillips about a refresher course?" All charges were immediately withdrawn...



Sound but in need of cosmetic overhaul.



Terry preparing to ride at a local ride some years in the 60s. Note the BSA in the background.

By 1967 Terry's business was well established, thanks to his winning way with customers, but the Rhodesian motorcycle community was experiencing a serious lack of new bikes, due to trade sanctions and currency restrictions. Terry's entrepreneurial instincts saw the opportunity to meet the demand for a simple, versatile and affordable machine that would appeal to commuters, commercial messengers, farmers and rural dwellers.

He and his team of hands-on experts and advisers Vernon Carter, Bob Fowle, John Hibbert, Thornton Hurst and an African welder called Danger, set to work. Details of their efforts are scarce, but they produced the bike's spine type tubular frame and Earles type front suspension, onto which a locally made glass fibre fuel tank and mudguards were fitted. Engines were South African sourced 98cc or 125cc Austrian built Sachs two-strokes, with the Italian made handlebars, levers, rims and brakes also being sourced fairly locally.

Vernon Carter recalls that around 55 were made, which certainly qualifies it as a production motorcycle, although it was actually named after a one-off racing Triton,

the 'Ridgeback Special' that road racers such as Ken Robas and John Love had ridden. Fittingly, Terry's bike was tortured by running two early examples nonstop for 24 hours around the Marlborough road racing circuit, where avoiding wandering cows helped to fine tune their braking and handling characteristics! All riders, bikes and bovinds involved survived intact, so the project went ahead enthusiastically.

Performance-wise the Ridgeback was predictably pedestrian, with just 8.2hp available at 6000rpm, although a few were raced in one brand events at the Bog Wheeler's circuit, as a publicity stunt. A suggested Ridgeback Championship never materialised, but these races led to the establishment of an entry level 'C' class for bikes of less than 200cc, which enabled several future champions to start racing affordably. A friend, Rob Hamner, who rode a farm Ridgeback, remembers that the front tyre fouled its mudguard on heavy suspension compression, so maybe that's why the Championship didn't happen, but as a road and trail bike it worked well enough.

Sales must have gone well however, because Terry's dedicated Ridgeback sub-division, the Rhodesian Motorcycle Corporation, was working on 250cc and 360cc prototypes for Police use, within a year of the original bike's launch in 1967.

Sadly the whole venture died with Terry in 1970, when he was killed, aged just 32, by a motorist, on the very day he had declared his intention of going into full scale Ridgeback production. His widow Chrissie sold off the remaining stock and, as no buyers came forward, wound up the Corporation. Phil Kinnear tried to revive a simplified version of the bike as the 'Winner' several years later, but could not obtain foreign currency to purchase the engines.

Three Ridgebacks are known to have survived, one a complete 125cc example, in Cape Town, another one with no engine in Zimbabwe and a unique example with telescopic front forks. One is rumoured to be in Britain's National Motor Museum and another one somewhere in Centurion. If Terry had survived then southern Africa might have been awash with his bikes, as it would have worked as well around local farms and suburbs as it did in Rhodesia, but this was not to be.

Necessity had mothered the invention of an effective enough little motorcycle, but fate terminated its development at a tragically early stage, when Terry died. Rhodesia lost an ingenious entrepreneur and his family and friends mourned the passing of a good man, whose examples of loyal friendship and short life well lived, were an inspiration to all who knew him. ■

My thanks to Alex McDonald, Mike Boon, Nigel Westwood, Phil Cummings, Peter Locke, Vernon Carter, Ben Van Den Berg and Peter Fowle for their help in writing this brief account. If any reader has additional information please contact me on admin@patrickmoore.co.za as I hope to produce a more comprehensive article in future.



Ridgeback outside its home at the Midvaal Motorcycle Museum.

Buried Alive for 50 Years

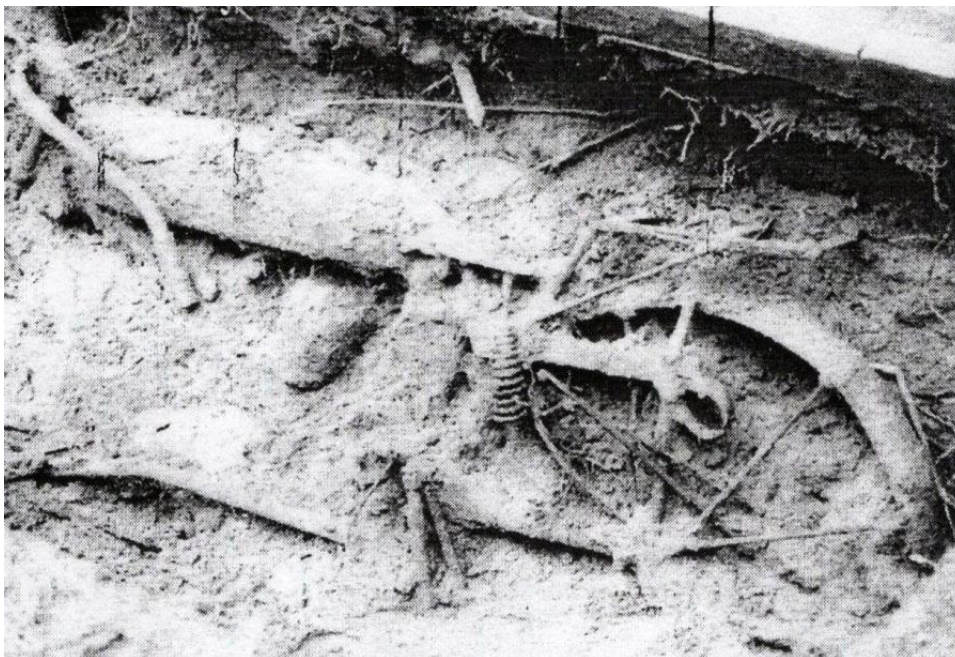
In 1934 a Durban family were devastated at the news that their son Arthur had been killed on his 1918 Indian VEE Twin motorcycle. Arthur (one of four brothers and five sisters) had been out riding his motorcycle but a fatal accident at the intersection between Moore Road and Gale Street Durban ended his life.

His mother asked the eldest son to get rid of all the motorcycles that Arthur had owned but this was not done. So in 1937 some three years after the accident she instructed the gardener to dig a big hole in the back garden. Two motorcycle frames and the complete Indian Vee Twin (very rare motorcycle today) were lowered into the hole and covered over. Standing close by and watching the whole final sad episode was the youngest son, 12 year old Dennis.

Over the years the family slowly dispersed a world war came and went and memories faded. In 1960 Arthur's father was the last one left in the house and when he passed away the family house was sold. Perhaps this would have been the end of the story if it wasn't for a series of interesting events.

In 1987, some 50 years after the bike was buried our former club chairman Jim was sitting in his office. He was approached by an elderly gentleman who turned out to be none other than Dennis. Dennis went on to explain the whole story about how his mother had buried an old Indian motorcycle in his back yard all those years ago. Now wait for it! When Dennis informed Jim the exact address where the bike was buried Jim nearly fell off his chair.....because that's where his brother in law lived!!

Armed with a map of the garden Jim and others began to dig. It was not long until they pulled out an old motorcycle frame, then another frame and other bits and pieces. Finally after much digging the 1918 Indian Vee twin appeared. Unfortunately it was not in the same condition when it was buried 50 years ago. After cleaning the bike and carefully sand blasting off the mud and rust, the bike was given a coat of red oxide. This is a very rare motorcycle indeed but it will never be restored. There is evidence of the crash where the handlebar had hit the tank.



The bike is now on permanent display in the club house of the Classic Motorcycle Club of Natal as a tribute to Arthur and Dennis. It is a reminder to us all of the fragility of life.

The Indian V Twin on permanent display at our club house



* * * * *

Year-end Lunch at Woodstone Restaurant, Howick

23rd November

We had a very good turnout for our final get-together of the year, with 15 of us sitting down to lunch. Good conversation and camaraderie made for a very pleasant outing.

Rosemary Payne and John Wheaton caught a lift with John & Dawn Booth. We were very glad that Kevin & Judy Diedrick were able to join us, and also Mark Gory, whom most members had not yet met. He moved down fairly recently from Gauteng to the Midlands, where he has established an up-market lodge in Caversham. Perhaps we can go there, as a club, for a Sunday lunch one day. He owns a P5 Coupé, still needing some restoration. Also there were Dave & Margrit Miller, Niel & Eileen Rasmussen, Fred Rascher, Chris Cardwell and ourselves, Clyde & Rose.



*L to R: Fred, Chris, Kevin, Judy, Dawn, Dave, Margrit, Rose, Clyde
Not shown: Niel, Eileen, Mark, John W, John B, Rosemary P*

Many thanks to Tony Cope for the following three articles

Roverfest 2025 at Weston Underwood, Bucks on Sunday 3rd August

Tony Cope, Sydney Australia

Roverfests are a relatively new addition to the Rover Club scene in the UK. Roverfests are a combined event supported by all the main UK Rover Clubs and held in the UK Midlands so, not dissimilar to all the Australian Rover Clubs Rove that is hosted every two years by one club in sequence state by state with one key difference – being in the UK Midlands most attendees throughout the UK can drive there for the day – and even if you live way up north in Scotland it is only about a six hour drive.

The first Roverfest was held in 2017 and I attended in my Rover 75 V8, and was only one of two there. Sadly my 75 V8 was for sale at that stage as I could only take one car back with me on my work relocation to Australia at the end of 2017 – and I had decided my Bentley Continental GT was the one to be shipped to Sydney. Although I did not sell the 75 V8 at the Roverfest I allowed a Kiwi to take it for a test drive as he had never driven a 75 V8 – more of that later. The 75 V8 did later sell to a Rover enthusiast in Essex who still has the car.

The second Roverfest was in 2022 but COVID travel restrictions made long haul travel challenging at that time.

And so on to the third Roverfest in August 2025, and pleasingly I had another UK based Rover to take to it, being the 2004 Rover 45 I keep in the UK. I had rejoined the Rover 200/400 Club as I now have two eligible Rovers, the other one being the 1994 Rover 216i Cabriolet ex Hong Kong I recently bought in Sydney.

The Rover Clubs that combine to create Roverfest are:

Rover Sports Register

Rover P4 Drivers Guild

Rover P5 Club

Rover P6 Club

Rover SD1 Club

Rover 200 and 400 Club

Rover Coupe Owners Club

Rover 600 and 800 Owners Club

Rover 75 & MG ZT Owners Club

Roverfest was very well organised with all bookings done electronically on line. On the Saturday there were self drive routes to points of interest prepared, and the camping area was open to set up tents and campervans. In the evening there was an optional dinner in the main marquee which I had booked for. I arrived mid afternoon and there was also a smattering of Rovers present with campers either setting up or relaxing watching the scene from their camping chairs. I originally planned to sleep in the back of the 45 but had been unwell the week before the Roverfest, and with overnight temperature of 14C forecast and not having a warm sleeping bag I chickened out and booked a local B&B.

Great catching up with attendees I knew including Eamonn Burnell and John Batchelor the Chairmen of the Rover P4 Drivers Guild and the Rover 200/400 Club respectively, as well as P4 enthusiasts Gary Nelson and Matt White who regularly post on the P4 Facebook pages. Also had a chat with the owner of the one off P5B Estate who showed me his photo album of all the work he had done to convert a tired P5B Saloon into a stunning Estate that Rover should have produced in the first place. Mind you, the newly launched Range Rover would have been the better choice if you wanted an Estate. Also caught up with Dirk Burrows of Boston USA who has a huge collection of Rovers stateside and is very active in Rover circles – I had been aware of him for decades and was great to meet him finally. Huge encouragement from Dirk to attend the US Rover Nationals usually held in the Boston area in February.

Always great to catch up with James Taylor who I first corresponded with when I was a student in South Africa back in the late 1970s by sending him photos of interesting Rover variants produced in South Africa such as the six cylinder SD1s which had the Marina 6 engine from Australia – and very different trim due to sanctions and local content requirements. And in the 2000s on my various business trips to China where I photographed Roewe 750s (including the Hybrids at the Shanghai Expo) and managed to get a few brochures for James. However the conversation this time was pontificating why the last year of P4 production went to steel doors, boot and bonnet – and the short answer is that there is no clear answer!

The main day was Sunday that dawned bright and sunny, and droves of Rovers arrived to park in their allocated club locations. By far the dominant groups were the P4s and the P6s, with the P5s being dominated by P5B Coupes. A smattering of pre-war Rovers and P3s too. What was pleasing to see a good turnout of SD1s however dominated by the V8 models. A very smart black 2400SD diesel and a 2000 were rare sightings – the 2400SD certainly sounded like a diesel when it came in, but nicely muted. The final count was over 300 Rovers!

I was very interested the post SD1 models as only the 825 and 827 models were sold in Australia between the SD1 and Rover 75. However in the UK there were 820 models as well, plus entire ranges of Rover 200s, 400s, 600s and the sublime two door coupe variants of the 800 series – very desirable.

It is sad the 200/400 Series of the 1990s were not imported into Australia. They are very stylish cars with much better quality than the SD1 and dare I say it, the later 25s, 45s and 75s post Project Drive where quality was being stripped out of cars as Rover was running out of money. At the time Jaguar Rover Australia (JRA) had spare import licences due to the poor sales of the SD1, whereas Honda was desperate for import licences so JRA did a deal direct with Honda Japan to create the unique to Australia Rover Quintet and later Rover 416i and Vitesse being 100% Japan built Hondas except for Rover badging and not related at all the Rover 416i being manufactured in the UK.

The 200/400 Series was by far the most successful Rover model range in terms of sales of almost a million. For example only 130,000 P4s were produced over 14 years. The 200/400 Series came in three doors including the hot 220i turbo Coupe version with removable roof panels, four doors with boot, five door hatches, a four seater Cabrio, and a Tourer wagon, with engines sizes ranging for 1.4l to 2.2l with diesel options too – a car for everyone's requirements! And having owned four (three Cabrios, one 45) so far they are great cars to drive – no wonder they sold like hot cakes!

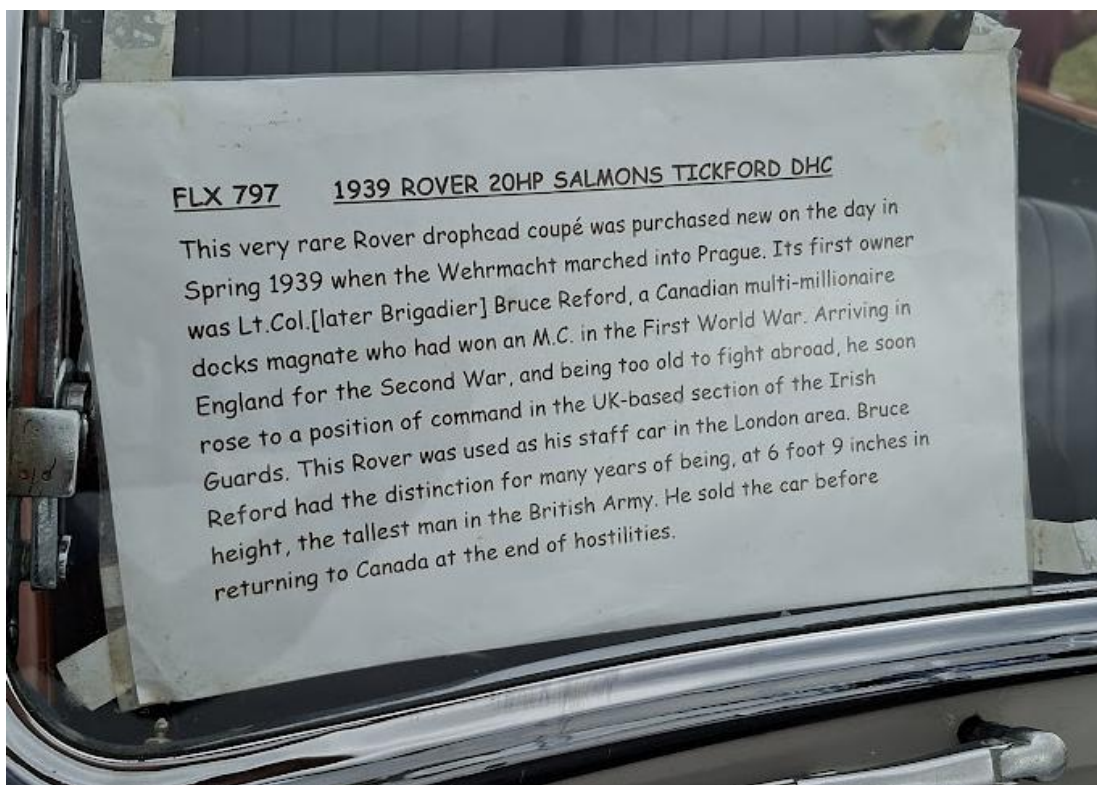
Star of the Rover 200/400 Club tent was a cutaway Rover 214i hatch prepared by Rover apprentices for the launch in 1989. The car cannot be driven as the brake discs and parts of the engine are cut away but it clicked over to 11 miles being towed up the field to the club tent. John Batchelor, who was a design engineer for the model, was kept very busy both explaining the design of the car and also answering many questions from the public.

So what about the Kiwi who drove my Rover 75 V8 at the 2017 Roverfest. At the Roverfest this year in the Landrover section was a Range Rover with a Waikato Rover Club banner, and the Kiwi was back – we had a great catch up chat. Back story is that his brother lives in the UK. Again great encouragement to visit New Zealand to take in one of their Nationals.

A great event of Rover enthusiasts – and a huge thanks to the organisers! So when is the next one – the official answer is when the organisers have recovered from this one – so watch out for the fourth Roverfest in three to four years time!

Some photos from the UK Roverfest





Marauder 75th Anniversary UK Run on Saturday 19th July 2025

Tony Cope, Sydney Australia

So what exactly is a Marauder? It is not a Rover Marauder but it based on a Rover Cyclops. And Marauders are celebrating their 75th Anniversary this year.

The Marauder Car Company Limited was a British car venture by ex-Rover engineers George Mackie and Peter Wilks. After successfully racing their single-seater Marauder racing car (called the Rover Special and built on a prototype P3 chassis) the pair left Rover in 1950 and formed Wilks, Mackie and Company to exploit their idea of a two-seater sports car based on the new Rover 75 Cyclops chassis. The design was largely the work of Peter Wilks and Spen King who, like Wilks, was a nephew of brothers Spencer and Maurice Wilks who ran Rover. In 1951 the company's name was changed to Marauder Car Company. Spen King was later famous for his involvement in many Rover products and in particular the P6 and Range Rover of 1970 that created a whole new class of SUV car.

Around 15 Marauder cars were made before a sharp luxury tax imposed on cars priced over £1,000 brought sales to an end and George Mackie and Peter Wilks rejoined Rover. Today 12 of the 15 produced are known, with the majority in the UK, one in Europe and the other in the USA. The missing three are not known to have been deliberately scrapped so who knows, one or two more may pop up someday!

Ian Glass has owned Marauder No.5 for over 46 years and he organised two 75th Anniversary events, the first being a UK Run reported in this article, and a Marauder Raid to Switzerland 12th to 19th August which I will be exercising my Rover 45 on. The UK Run was based at the grand looking Chesford Grange Hotel near Kenilworth, and being only fifteen miles from the Rover Works at Lode Lane in Solihull it was a regular haunt for Rover staff.

Saturday started off wet which was not the best weather celebrating open top sports cars! But soldier on we must and the three Marauders present lined up in front of the hotel together with Chris King and Andrew Wilks, sons of Spen King and Peter Wilks. Ian issued us with detailed route notes and as I had no real desire to be a solo driver and navigator in my 45 on a wet day on unfamiliar roads it was fortunate Richard Gelder was in the same situation so it was a pleasure being navigator in his very comfy 820i Manual.

The route took us in order firstly to an industrial estate and Sheds 10A and 10B in which was the then Marauder Car Company. Interestingly the Red Triangle Works restoring Alvises (or Alvii) was across the narrow road, and at the entry to the industrial estate was the Alvis Showroom selling restored cars. What was fascinating was a photo of the era with two Marauders visible, with one present on UK Run day and the other awaiting restoration.

The soggy convoy then retraced its steps back the main road, past Lode Lane, past 'seriously posh houses left and right' and to Chestnut House. When George and Rosmarie Mackie lived there it was called Chestnut Cottage, and sadly after the Mackies sold the house was demolished and a posh house was rebuilt and renamed Chestnut House. What the current house owners thought of the bedraggled bunch of rubberneckers standing outside their property would be interesting to know!

Next stop was Packwood House where Marauder No. 6 was photographed outside the gates for the 1951 Marauder Car Company Christmas card.

Then a drive by past the Forest Hotel where the plans for the Rover Special were drawn up in the bar and the actual car constructed in a lockup in the carpark in 1946/7. The Marauder was also designed in the bar and the car launched there in 1950. If only the walls could talk! Next was a

gated complex of flats that was the old Dorridge railway station yard and the first five Marauders were built there.

Lunch was at the very pleasant Hogarths Hotel in huge grounds. Fortunately the rain stopped during lunch and then brilliant sunshine allowing cars to be dried out and many photos taken, and lots of friendly chit chat amongst the attendees.

And the day culminated in a very social dinner back at Chesford Grange Hotel – great to catch up with other Marauder owners and long term RSR executives and members!

Having grown up in South Africa and now resident in Australia, and hence used to long distances, this tour reinforced how the UK Midlands was not only the epicentre of the UK motor industry, but how close all the manufacturers were – I am sure there were many friendly chats in various bars from competing companies – and of course a job offer or two to jump ship!

Before I wrap up I had the privilege of driving Jon Backhouse's (now Nick Long's) Marauder No. 10 way back in 1980 when I was visiting from South Africa. While it is not easy to get up to speed in London, even more of a challenge now, my lasting memory was the tension of having to edge so far out of intersections due to the very long bonnet and risking damaging Jon's precious Marauder by getting its front swiped off!

Huge thanks to Ian Glass for organising this event – as a long life Rover enthusiast and having worked as an engineering vacation student at Rover Solihull in 1976 I learned so much more in one day!



After Wilks and George Mackie left the Rover Company in 1950 to form Wilks, Mackie and Company to exploit their idea of a two seater sports car based on the new Rover 75 chassis. The first car was completed in mid 1950 and the cars were based on a standard chassis purchased from Rover which was then shortened and modified to reposition the engine. The steering and suspension were changed in detail and a remote control gearchange fitted. The freewheel was replaced by an overdrive. The body was built by Richard Mead and showed many P4 influences in its detail design. The cars were not a commercial success being too expensive and lacking in performance. In 1952 the last of fifteen cars was produced and the Company (by now the Marauder Car Company Ltd.) was wound up.

Twelve of the cars are believed to survive, one of which is the only fixed head coupe built, the remainder being two seat tourers. One of the cars was restored by George Mackie in 1983.

Both George Mackie and Peter Wilks returned to prominent positions in the engineering organisation at Rover.

Personal Experience and a Buyers Guide for Range Rover Evoque and Disco Sport Models

First Issue Jan 2024, Updated March 2025

Tony Cope 670

Introduction

This article was originally produced in January 2024, and while the article mentioned the problems with the 2015 onwards diesel Ingenium engines, the issues are now mainstream and I have updated this article to provide a DO NOT BUY recommendation of any JLR product (LR Evoque, Disco Sport, Velar, Jaguar XF and others) fitted with the diesel Ingenium engine from launch in 2015 to the updated engine in 2020, although the updated engine is also showing reliability issues.

When I returned from my expat work in late 2017 I had every intention, when settled in, to buy my first ever new car being a new generation Landrover Defender.

As we all know the launch of the new Defender was delayed for some years, and the little 1983 Rover Quintet I had, ex my daughter Jessica, and prior to that John Poole, was doing sterling service. For such a small car it was like a tardis and was a real load lugger while I furnished my house, and it undertook many tip runs too! At that time I had the Bentley Continental GT I had brought back from the UK, and as the Quintet was such a practical car being so easy to drive and park, it got used a lot more than the Bentley. The Bentley sulked and when one of the front air suspension springs failed it was moved on to pastures new after a costly full front suspension rebuild. A lovely car but I had scratched that itch!

Come 2020 I had given up on a new Defender. They had been finally launched but with only a four cylinder two litre diesel and the test drive was underwhelming – the engine struggled to move the weight and the optional roof rack the test car came with vibrated over 80km/h. Reports were already emerging (and reinforced by this updated article) that the four cylinder diesel Ingenium engines were failing, and just after my test drive it was announced the four cylinder diesels were being withdrawn from the market to await the six cylinder diesels.

So while I really enjoyed the Quintet I needed to get something more modern for work. While I contemplated (briefly) other marques I just could not stray away from Rover or Landrover products. The only relatively modern Rover was the 75 but it needed to be a wagon, and of the two that came up for sale while I was looking both had had hard lives.

So then what did the Landrover range offer? Before I moved overseas for work I had a 2003 Range Rover Vogue with the 4.4l BMW engine – superb machine but too bulky for city use. I then had a good look at a few Range Rover Sports but they are not much smaller than the full size Range Rovers so too big for my current needs.

I had to think what best suited me noting that with the children grown up I did not need or want a large 4WD for off road family holidays but something more suited to mostly city use – and so the search turned to the Range Rover Velar and Evoque models. As Velars are thin on the ground, and Evoques plentiful, the research then focussed on the Evoque range.

The Evoque Range

The first series (L538) of Evoques were launched in 2011 with options of a Ford Ecosport 2l petrol engine or a Ford Duratorq diesel 2.2l engine in two states of tune, and a six speed Ford Aisan automatic. Manuals and two wheel drives were available overseas but I do not think they were marketed in Australia. Innovative features were aluminium bonnet and roof, and composite front guards, and other initiatives to keep the weight down to around 1,650kg – much less than the 2,700kg of my 2003 Vogue!

While the bodywork was all new and very stylish, the running gear was essentially the same as the Freelander 2, Ford Escape, Mazda Tribute, and apparently included many elements of the Volvo XC60 – not surprising noting that Ford owned Landrover and Volvo during the development phase of the Evoque. And best of all (for me) was that it came with steel springs – I have had enough of air suspension failures in my

last two full size Range Rovers and the Bentley.

Models offered were Pure, Prestige and Dynamic. Most sold in Australia were diesels and early Pure diesels had a single exhaust with two exhausts for the Prestige and Dynamic. It appears petrols were not offered in Pure models in Australia (I am happy to be corrected) so all petrols had two exhausts and in the case of Dynamic the exhausts were large square apertures in silver in the rear bumper. Internally all models have a high level of specification, with better leather together with contrast stitching and a Meridian sound system in the higher specced models. Pures tended to have 18" wheels (but with options for 19" and 20"), Prestige 19" and Dynamic 20" as standard. Two options available for all models were black headlining and a full length glass roof.

Late 2013 brought the first major change when a nine speed ZF gearbox together with part time four wheel drive was introduced. The nine speed was developed more for the diesel to keep the engine in its optimum rev range, and the part time four wheel drive to incrementally improve economy in that normally the car is a two wheel drive with a lock up to four wheel drive when wheel slip was detected. Also a number of driver aids such as blind spot monitoring, adaptive cruise control, lane departure control and self parking were introduced.

Late 2015, with the introduction of Euro 6 emissions overseas, saw the 2.2l diesel replaced by the new JLR Ingenium 2.0l diesel. The Ford Ecosport engine continued for the petrol models.

Late 2018 saw the introduction of the second generation (L551) Evoque with smoother front and rear styling, and pop out door handles like the Velar. Ingenium petrol engines as well as options for mild electrification (PHEV) were introduced including a 3 cylinder 1.5l petrol engine.

In terms of body styles the 2011 launch models were 3 door (Coupe) and 5 door, with a Convertible launched in 2016. The Coupe was taken off the market in 2017 followed by the Convertible in 2018 so only 5 doors have been manufactured since 2019.

Euro 6 Emissions – the Ingenium Petrol and Diesel Engines

The Ford Ecosport petrol and Duratorq diesels are well proven long lasting engines, as is the Ford Aisan gearbox, and as time passes by it is being increasingly recognised that the first models with the six speed gearbox (2011 to late 2013) as the most reliable models. Both these engines comply with Euro 5 emissions.

The late 2013 nine speed box with the part time four wheel drive has had some reliability issues however the bigger issues with the late 2015 onwards Euro 6 Ingenium diesel engines are the diesel particulate filters (DPFs) clogging up with extended suburban running, soot in the oil damaging the engine internally including the timing chains, and oil dilution likewise causing internal engine damage. The contemporary view is that they are of a poor design in parts, use poor materials in part, and were rushed into production to meet Euro 6 exhaust emission legislation.

Euro 6 2014 exhaust emission legislation was introduced to many European (and other) countries from 2015 and it had a particular focus on diesel particulates. To reduce diesel particulates a high level of exhaust gas reticulation (EGR) is used together with a diesel particulate filter (DPF). However both these systems can and do fail to operate as designed, particularly if there is not enough open road running to allow regeneration, and allow diesel and soot to get into the engine oil with disastrous results. The petrol Ingenium engines suffered from timing chain problems similar to the diesel.

In late 2019 a redesign of the Ingenium engines addressed their known issues and although the engines are still relatively new, they appear to be more reliable.

Ultra Low Emission Zones (ULEZ)

London, and now many other UK and European cities, now have Ultra Low Emission Zones (ULEZ), and in the case of London it is effectively the area inside the M25 orbital – so covers London and many towns and villages in the surrounding counties. The London ULEZ only allows petrol Euro 4 2005 and diesel Euro 6 2015 cars to enter the ULEZ without paying a daily charge/fine of GBP12.50. This is in addition to the Congestion Charge in central London. This means that pre Euro 6 diesels are fined in ULEZ zones so somebody who bought a new diesel Range Rover Evoque in 2014 (and most Landrover products in the UK and Europe are

diesel) was fined from use in London less than two years later!

Service History

Key to any second hand car purchase is its service history. Unfortunately JLR has introduced on line log books so there are no paper logbooks in the cars showing where, when and what mileage the services were carried out. To get this information it has to be requested from JLR and printed off – and if a service is undertaken by an independent work shop the work may not be on the JLR system. However be warned – the Ingenium JLR service advise is that they only need servicing every 21k miles or 2 years (whatever comes first)! This is far too long both in time and distance and is recognised as a contributor to the high failure rate of Ingenium engines.

So What Model to Buy?

As mentioned earlier there is not a significant difference between the various trim levels so best to decide if you prefer petrol or diesel and then search for one in the condition you want. In my case I preferred petrol which apparently only was offered in Prestige and Dynamic models in Australia, I did not want the black headlining nor the glass roof, and was happy with a silver or white model – and there were plenty with my preferences to inspect. It did not take long to find a one owner fastidiously maintained 32,000km white 2012 (built late 2011) petrol Dynamic that ticked all the boxes.

I have now owned it for almost five years and covered a further 46,000km and it is the best modern car I have owned – fast (certainly quicker acceleration than my old V8 classic Range Rovers), quiet, comfortable, economical (35mpg on the open road), stylish, and so easy to drive and park – I am a total Evoque convert! The only slight negative is that the load area is on the small side with the raked roofline – but if I need more space I borrow my son Mitchell's Disco 3! In terms of log books I have the JLR service records printed off and got an old fashioned continuation logbook from an independent Landrover workshop, and all services and work are now stamped in the logbook.

Discovery Sport

I must make mention of the Discovery Sport – it is just a Range Rover Evoque with the same engine/gearbox combos described earlier with a more practical body (Disco Sports have only been produced as 5 door cars) in that the rear is much larger and many come with seven seats – but not trimmed to the same high level as the Evoque. So if you need more space and seats consider a Discovery Sport – a very practical option.

Summary

Many Rover owners wish to stay loyal to the Rover/Landrover brand but need a more modern car – in my opinion you cannot go wrong with a 2011 to late 2013 Evoque or Discovery Sport that has a good service history, and if you buy a 2014 model or later stick to the petrol engine models. Whatever you do DO NOT BUY diesel Ingenium engine models from 2016 to 2020 . A quick search of You Tube will reinforce this advice.

And the best part is that the early model Evoques and Discovery Sports are dropping in price to around the \$20,000 to \$25,000 range!



Many thanks to Roger Houghton for the following article

CLASSIC VEHICLES IN UK GAINING IN NUMBERS AND VALUE

By Roger Houghton (Member of the FBHVC)

Historic cars and motorcycles in the United Kingdom continue to grow in number and value, while providing a significant boost to the economy – estimated at £7.3 billion annually - and providing more than 34 000 skilled jobs. The survey reported that the average owner spent £4 567 a year on their vehicles, resulting in a total spend of £3.2 billion a year.

This is all detailed in the results of a recent national survey by the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC). The organisation classifies cars and motorcycles 30 years and older as “Historic” while those aged between 20 and 30 years are given the new classification of “Youngtimers”. One third of the surveyed participants owned a Youngtimer.

The survey, which is conducted every five years, is reputedly the largest and most comprehensive of its kind in the world. This year it received input from 19 900 owners, enthusiasts, businesses, clubs, and members of the public with the FBHVC representing 500 member clubs, 51 museums and hundreds of individual members enthusiastic about older vehicles. (In the UK this includes buses, coaches, lorries, agricultural machinery, military, or steam vehicles).

Unfortunately, the motor clubs in South Africa do not have the resources to conduct a survey of this nature, but here we have a serious problem with a depleting number of historic vehicles as many are shipped out of the country for sale. Unfortunately, this includes many of particular significance and thereby highly valuable.

It is nevertheless interesting to learn about the growth being experienced by the historic vehicle movement in the UK.

According to the Driver and Vehicle Licencing Agency (DVLA) the number of historic vehicles registered in the UK currently stands at 1 934 178. There are an estimated 690 777 historic vehicle owners in the UK (up from 683 967 in 2020), with 9.7 million people in the UK who would like to own an historic vehicle. It is interesting to note that 88% of the owners of these vehicles belong to a motor club, with 20% of club members attending 10 or more events in a year.

The estimated value of the historic vehicle “fleet” in the UK has risen from £25.8 billion in 2020 to £35.1 billion in 2025.

A total of 4.3 million people said they had attended an historic vehicle event in the past year – a 100% increase over the data in the 2020 survey.

The movement supports 2 700 specialist businesses, collectively employing 34 500 people, across maintenance, restoration, parts supply, museums, and events. Nearly half of these businesses now offer apprenticeship programmes to pass on vital heritage skills.

Despite their visibility, historic vehicles account for only 0,2% of all miles driven in the UK annually, with the average historic vehicle travelling just 837 miles a year.

The average age of owners of historic vehicles has risen to 66, highlighting the importance of encouraging younger enthusiasts. Encouragingly, the under 35s now show the most significant growth in interest in historic vehicles, while the “Youngtimer” category (vehicles aged 20-29 years) now offers an accessible entry point for new enthusiasts.

A total of 496 females participated in the survey. They owned an average of 2.4 vehicles each, with an average value of their collections being £60 971. Their favourite car brands were Morris, MG, Austin, Ford, and Triumph, while the most popular motorcycle brands were Triumph and Honda.

Respondents over 75 years of age said that Jaguar and MG are their favourite car brands, while Jaguar is also the most popular car brand among the Youngtimers, with 13% of total. It is followed by MG, Mercedes-Benz, Land Rover, and BMW. Ford is the most popular brand with those under 35 years of age. It is followed by Audi, Mazda, Peugeot, Mini, and Subaru.

The survey showed that in terms of Youngtimer motorcycles Honda was a clear winner with 20% of the total. It was followed by Yamaha, Triumph, Suzuki, Harley- Davidson, Kawasaki, BMW, and Ducati.



Stalwart NROA member, now living in the UK, Rod Moore – attending a car show over there.

The club's banking details:

Account name: Natal Rover Owners' Association

Bank: Capitec

Savings Account

Account No: 2337539616

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