

ROVER P5 CLUB MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 2018 ISSUE NO:198

# TAKE FIVE

  
**KEEP  
CALM**  
THE STORY OF  
ROVER'S  
SHADOW  
FACTORY



HISTORY LESSON • LOVING A P5B • IOE ENGINE REBUILD • BID & BOUGHT • DEMISE OF BRITISH TOOLS • SHOW REPORTS



**WHERE ARE  
THEY NOW?**



**REAR SPRING  
HANGERS**



**HEADING NORTH  
IN A ROVER**



**ROVER P4, BUT  
NOT YOUR USUAL**



**KEEPING A  
PROMISE**



**ORDER YOUR CLUB REGALIA NOW  
AND BEAT THE CHRISTMAS RUSH -  
SEE PAGE 20**



*Six litres of Rover?*

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Whilst care is taken to ensure that the *Take Five* magazine is as up-to-date and accurate as possible, no responsibility can be taken for any errors or omissions contained herein. Furthermore, responsibility for any loss, damage or distress resulting from adherence to any advice, suggestions or recommendations made available through this magazine howsoever caused, is equally disclaimed by *Take Five* magazine.

Cover photo: Stu Bennion

**Well it has been a very good season for classic vehicle enthusiasts, we have had exceptional weather and I hope you have had the opportunity to get your car(s) out in the sunshine.**

## Chairman's Chat

We have noticed some sharp increases in the prices asked for our models of cars over the past year and I can never quite conclude if this is a good thing or not. As an owner it is nice to consider the value of your vehicle increasing, but I always worry that will prevent some of the people from being able to buy such a car. I thoroughly enjoy the social side of our club and some of the stalwarts of the social side may not have become owners if the price was high. I will state here that also includes me! I don't think I would be buying my car if I had to pay a price in the region of what it is insured for now. That makes me so glad I have my car and can cherish my ownership. I have her now at the most presentable I have ever had her, since we met way back in 1989. In the last year I finally got some white-wall tyre trims, which I believe set this colour scheme 'off to a Tee'. Of course like all there are small jobs still to be done, but each time I see this car I smile with a warm-heart and love the fact she is mine. But it frightens me slightly to think of the value and what would happen if I had to replace her. Perhaps that is a sign of my older-age!

Still, whatever state your car is in I hope you had a good season and have your sights set on what you will be doing next year. There are many out there who are still improving their cars and some who may not yet be on the road, so to you I say congratulations on your effort and you will reap the benefits of your endeavours when you glide serenely along those sunny roads with a satisfied smile knowing your effort brought this about.

So, we have had our AGM, this year at the Oxford Bus Museum - see page 8. The turn-out was 'modest' but I accept that the AGM is not the most exciting thing to attend. However your committee are seeking ways to encourage attendance at this necessary event. This year the venue was The Oxford Bus Museum is a transport museum at Long Hanborough, West Oxfordshire. Those who did not attend missed a very good venue. We concluded the official business just after lunch and so had the full afternoon to enjoy the museum, the entry being paid as part of our AGM, so it cost the members nothing to visit the museum. The exhibits include a historic preserved horse-drawn tram, motor buses, coaches. It is also home to the Morris Motors Museum, which charts the story of how these classic British cars and commercial vehicles which were produced at Cowley. This was full of history of the company and many, many stories and information as well as Morris cars on display from various years of their production. What I particularly noticed was a lovely old picture from 1903 which showed the Morris motorcycle production (similar starting to Rover), and in the centre of the picture is a young boy, ...early teens at best, who was working in the works; The caption said he later became the chairman of BMC in 1952. Little bits like that always fascinate me, the social and personal histories bring history alive.

Now we are looking forward to Christmas, so get those hints in to your family and friends on what you need for you and your car, after looking at the clubs regalia pages.

**PLEASE NOTE;** there are changes to the ordering of items since the retirement of Chuck Berry, who has done sterling work for us all over recent years, a big thank you from this club. Chuck is retiring from his 'real work' and so needs some time to sort non-Rover matters. We all wish him (and Mary) well, as they restructure their home and lives. So please be sure to use the new form and new address so as not to disturb Chuck and perhaps more importantly, fail to secure your order. So its welcome to Eddie Halling, our new Regalia officer. Currently the parts side is suspended as we have no volunteer to cover that work; if you feel you could assist please let me (or any committee member) know.

In my region we always hold a 'post-Christmas' meal as a good social focus and that allows partners to join-in, in a non-car event. If there is one in your region please consider joining it. If there is not, why not suggest to others and start one. The P5 Forum could be a useful tool for that. Or put a note for publication in *Take Five* and see if there are others near you who might enjoy a similar event after the next edition is published. Anyone who would like to join the Sussex meal is welcome to, so just contact me and I'll let you have relevant details. Ours is usually early February or late January, after the Christmas festivities have subsided.

Oh! And that inhibitor switch... It turned-out that 'the monkey' that put the switch back last time pushed the spade connector on without engaging the metal spade part, so the plastic-outer sheath was holding it rather than the metal tabs, so when the wires got hot and the '60+ mph winds' blew under the car, that connector slowly came loose" ....'That Monkey' (who was me) has now put the connector back on properly and all is well again. I now hold a brand-new 'genuine' Lucas inhibitor switch, ready for future use!

Happy Christmas and happy Roving.

Ray (Chairman P5 Club)

## Editor's usual little Xmas bit

First and foremost may I wish you all the happiest of Christmas's and a prosperous, healthy and happy 2019.

I hope Santa and his little helpers bring you everything you have hinted to your other half about and if not, there is always the January sales.

I would like to take this opportunity to especially thank, in no particular order, all those regular contributors to *Take Five*: Geoff Arthur, Martin Robins, Glenn Arlt, Eddie Halling and Trevor Colebrook plus of course everyone who has taken the time and trouble to send me their articles, thoughts and photos over this past year - it is very much appreciated.

You might have also noticed the continued change in content of *Take Five*. I have been attempting to get it a little more mainstream, covering other Rover marques and motoring related articles. As the response from members contributions has been encouraging I will continue along this particular road. I am of course always open to suggestions, continued contributions and offers on ways we might improve *Take Five*, from any club member.

My word, this is beginning to sound like an acceptance speech at the Oscars!

So without further ado, I hope you enjoy this latest edition of *Take Five*, sat by an open fire, surrounded by family, relaxing after a great Christmas dinner, with a drink of choice in hand. Personally, I couldn't think of any better way to while away an hour, or two.

Merry Christmas!

## An article to submit?

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**CLUB WEBSITE:** [www.roverp5club.org.uk](http://www.roverp5club.org.uk)

**CLUB FORUM:** <http://roverp5.proboards.com>

**MEMBERS ONLY FORUM:** A section for club members ONLY can be found on the club forum. The password is **CRIMBO**

**CLUB FACEBOOK PAGE:** [www.facebook.com/groups/829593293787052/0](https://www.facebook.com/groups/829593293787052/0)

## A very warm welcome to the following new club members

MR A PATTON	RENFREWSHIRE
MR S HAYWARD	MIDDLESEX
MR A COLLINS	HERTFORDSHIRE
MR E MARTIN	NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
MR A BREEN	KENT
MR G PRITCHARD	ESSEX
MR J TIERNEY	KENT
MR P NEWLAND	WALTHAM CROSS
MR L WEBBER	WEST SUSSEX
MR R NEW	KENT
MR P BLISS	IRELAND
MR M BENNETT	AUSTRALIA
MR G JANCEY	EAST SUSSEX
MR J SINGH	KENT
MR K CAREY	FALKIRK



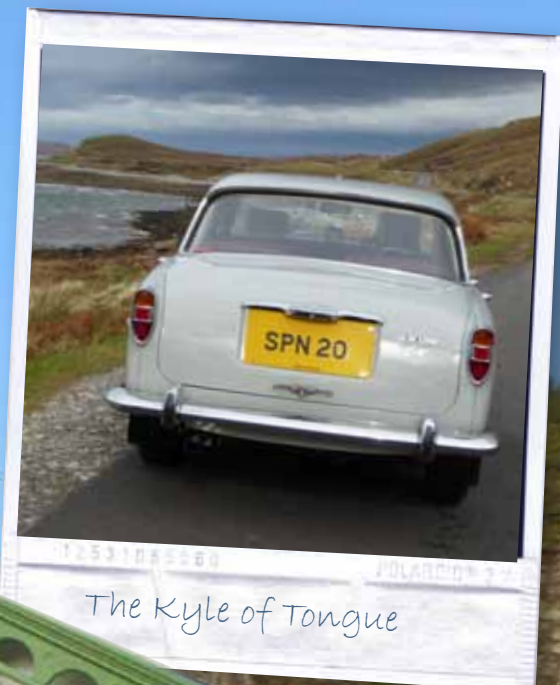
# Heading north again.

by George Parker



Old Royal Station Ballater









magnificent Georgian house designed by William Adam and finished in 1743. Now in the care of the National Trust for Scotland.

On Monday we set off, heading north east, taking the scenic route over the Cairngorms to Braemar and then on to Ballater, passing on my way Abergeldie Castle and stopping for a photo. Abergeldie Castle is a typical Scottish tower house built in the sixteenth century near the river Dee and now home to the 21st Baron Abergeldie. In 2016 there was unprecedented flooding in the area and the force of the water running in the river was such that the banks were eroded and the castle threatened with collapse. The Baron had to get out quick and there were frantic efforts to save the castle, fortunately successful and he was able to return to his lovely home (probably very draughty in the winter).

On to Ballater and another photo opportunity outside the 'new' Old Royal Railway Station, which was at the end of a branch line from Aberdeen and used by the royal family until 1966 when they were visiting Balmoral. Unfortunately the station was destroyed by fire in 2015, which is why it looks new and fresh.

From there we went on to Pitmedden Garden near Oldmeldrum, a regular September visit and looking as lovely as usual and then on to Wemyss House near Tain, the best B & B I have ever stayed in and being in a remote location perfect for over night parking for a classic car. On Tuesday we headed off to Durness, had lunch at the Whale Tale (love the name!) in the Balnakiel Craft Village, also home to Cocoa Mountain where I stocked up on chocolate and then along the A838 to Tongue. The A838 is mainly a single track road with passing places, which makes for an interesting and sometimes nail biting drive. In recent years a scenic route has been developed in the Highlands called the NC500.

The LEDs are brighter but draw far less current and I now tend to drive most of the time with the headlights on, the logic for that being that with the majority of cars on the road having lights on those that do not have become less visible.

Since last years trip I have replaced all the brake rubbers, shock absorbers and PAS and fan belts, so she just purred along and stopped very well when necessary. I also replaced the half inch heater hose that runs to the rear heater, except I used wire

reinforced hydraulic hose, that I had to cut with a hacksaw - will not have to do that again! With 143000 miles on the clock I have done more miles in her than any other vehicle that I have owned. When I purchased her in July 1975 she had covered just under 15000 miles and the cost of the petrol on this trip was nearly a third of what she cost all those years ago.

The first two nights of the holiday were spent at Ballinluig and on Sunday we went to St. Andrews and then to the House of Dun in the Montrose Basin, a

*Between Braemar and Ballater with Abergeldie Castle*





The NC500 is a 516 mile scenic route starting and finishing in Inverness and taking in the north coast of Caithness and Sutherland where the views are spectacular. It has become very popular with camper vans and other tourists, but the infrastructure is struggling to cope and some of the drivers are not clued up on the etiquette of driving on single track roads.

From Tongue we went down the A836 to Altnaharra, more spectacular views and still single track. Altnaharra, in the winter, is often the coldest place in Britain. From there we went on to Lairg and Bonar Bridge, which is sometimes mentioned in The Sun when they are featuring vulgar place names!

Wednesday and Thursday were spent near Dornoch in Sutherland with just local trips and visiting friends and I met Paul who has recently bought a very low mileage and lovely P5b coupe in Admiralty Blue with Silver Birch roof. Paul has also joined our club - welcome!

On Friday we set off south down to Fort William and then through Glencoe and on to a hotel near Penrith - Another Place The Lake, only six miles from the motorway but away from the road and very suitable for a safe overnight stay.

Saturday was just a quick blast back down the motorway and we were home by 4pm, plenty of time to give her a good wash followed by a polish the next day. She had done just over two thousand miles and performed perfectly, we had had a lovely week away. Last winter I fitted a reversing camera with the monitor in the glove box that was very useful. I have already started to book for next year.



# Repair: Rear spring hangers

By Alvin Jenkin from ROVERDRIVE, THE MAGAZINE OF THE ROVER CAR CLUB OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.

The rear mounts of the rear springs on the P5 Rover are rubber and as such harden and perish with age. This became evident on my car when I went to change a rear wheel using the standard body jack, and the wheel did not leave the ground due to the rubber on the mount coming away from the metal component. The mount on earlier cars was part number 504543. Fig 1 shows a mount after over 50 years of use.



Fig 1 Rover P5 Rear spring mount

Scotts Old Auto Rubber have the part listed at \$95 plus GST on an exchange basis. I contacted them and they advised that they no longer provide this service, because few people were returning the old parts as part of the exchange and they had no metal components to send to the UK to get new rubbers vulcanised onto.

I thus went looking for alternatives, and my local Autopro was able to supply universal rubber mounts that appeared to fit the bill. They are listed

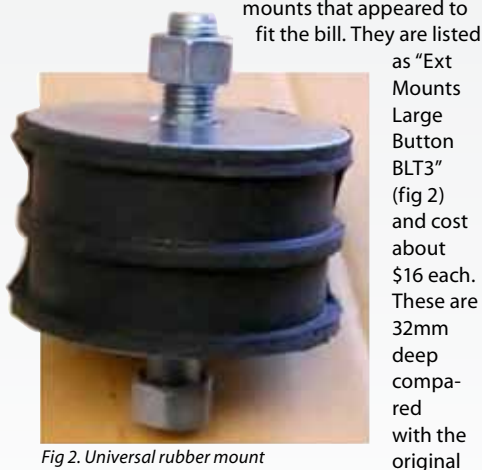


Fig 2. Universal rubber mount

as "Ext Mounts Large Button BLT3" (fig 2) and cost about \$16 each. These are 32mm deep compared with the original rubber being 30mm deep and this requires some compromise in setting them up. They are fitted with M10 bolts and nuts which fits well with the mounting holes for the original 3/8 UNC bolts and nuts.

## The following is the process for replacing the mounts.

1. Loosen the nuts on the road wheels
2. If working on the driver's side spring mount, drop the spare wheel carrier to facilitate access to the inside bolt of the mount
3. Lift both sides of the car body so that the centre of the rear bumper is at least 620mm above floor level and place on stands (it is necessary to lift both sides so that bolts into the spring will remain aligned)
4. Remove road wheel, support the axle with a jack and remove shock absorber from bottom mount.
5. Remove the 4 nuts from the rubber mount on the spring.
6. Lower the axle to disengage the spring from the spring mount and remove the mount.
7. Clean any remnant rubber from the metal triangle of the mount. The rubber can be cut away with a hacksaw and the mount cleaned using an angle grinder.
8. Drill a 10mm hole on each side of the mount 10-12 mm from the apex of the mount. (this is a compromise, ideally the new rubber mount should be located centrally on mount, but the extra 2 mm of depth of the rubber mount would result in the completed mount not fitting in the inverted V fitting on the chassis)
9. Cut 8mm off one bolt of the new universal rubber mounts and ensure that the nuts can be run onto the thread.
10. Attach the universal mounts to the metal triangle using the shortened bolts (Fig 3)
11. Replace the modified mount on the car. The new mounts will fit into the mounting slots in the inverted V and can be tapped home with hammer before tightening the nuts.
12. Fit the spring to the bottom bolts of the mount by jacking the axle until the bolts engage in the holes in the spring (note that if you have not kept the body level as in step 3 above you will have great difficulty doing this).
13. Reattach shock absorber and road wheel.
14. After the full weight of the car is back on the springs, loosen the top nuts on the mount and tap the mounts further home and retighten the nuts.

Fig 3: The completed mount ready for fitting



# ROVER P5 CLUB • TREASURERS REPORT

*The directors present their report with the financial statements of the Company for the year ended 31 July 2018.*

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY: The company's principal activity during the year continued to be a classic car club in respect of the Rover model P5 motor car run for the mutual benefit of its members.

DIRECTORS: The directors shown below have held office during the whole of the period from 1 August 2016 to the date of this report.  
D J Lee • P J Madden • P McKay • G E Moorshead • M Newton • H K Berry • R E Pickett • D J Dallimore • E Halling

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

APPROVED FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD: *P J Madden, Director; 25 September 2018*

## BALANCE SHEET

31 July 2018

	2018		2017	
	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS	349		522	
CURRENT ASSETS	63,568		65,283	
CREDITORS				
Amounts falling due within one year	(13,252)		(12,355)	
NET CURRENT ASSETS	50,316		52,928	
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	50,665		53,450	
CREDITORS				
Amounts falling due after more than one year	4,639		3,816	
NET ASSETS	46,026		49,634	
RESERVES	46,026		49,634	

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

for the Year Ended 31 July 2018

	2018	2017
	£	£
Turnover	20,964	22,956
Cost of sales	17,721	19,782
Gross surplus	3,243	3,174
Administrative expenses	7,142	5,843
Operating (deficit) surplus	(3,688)	(3,968)
Interest receivable and similar income	80	82
Surplus before taxation	(3,886)	4,165
Tax on surplus on ordinary activities	-	-
Surplus (deficit) for the financial year	(3,608)	(3,886)

*For further information on the annual report please contact the Club Treasurer, Peter Madden.*



## Hidden Gems Oxford Bus and Morris Motors Museum

As well as over 30 buses on display, there are other numerous exhibits adding a period feel: exhibits include a historic preserved horse-drawn tram, motor buses, coaches and a wide selection of artefacts including bus stops, ticket machines, timetables, posters and staff uniforms, as well as lots of fantastic photos illustrating public transport history through the ages. Visitors can enter several of the vehicles and there are often free vintage bus rides.

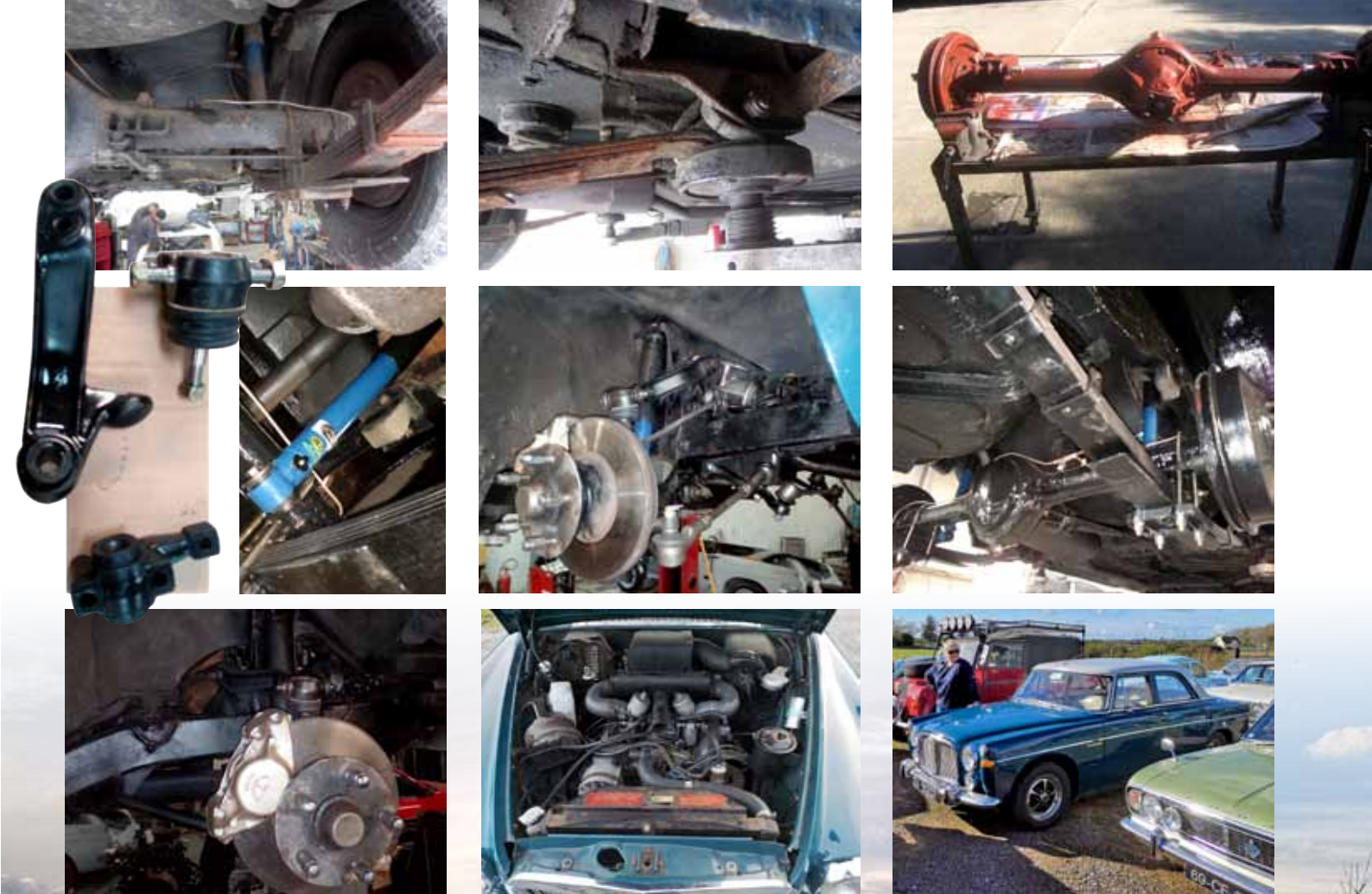
The Museum has also been home to the Morris Motors Museum. In addition to the impressive display of vintage Morris vehicles representing the earliest to the last, you will see all kinds of memorabilia. There is also a marvellous collection of 40 vintage bicycles, including some pre-Rover 'Starlings'.

The Museums are open on Sundays, Wednesdays and Bank Holiday Mondays throughout the year.  
Adult (16+) £5 each Child (3-15) £3 each Family (2 + 2) £13

Main Rd, Long Hanborough, Woodstock OX29 8LA. T: 01993 883617 [www.oxfordbusmuseum.org.uk](http://www.oxfordbusmuseum.org.uk)







By Paul Bliss

**I had always loved the P5B** and had been on the lookout for one for some time, after finding this one I decided to buy it knowing that it had been neglected a little on all the suspension and running gear but still drove well and it had always been garaged so was a good base to start .

I new that there was a lot of work to do and Many part's to change and refurbished and it would have taken myself way to long to do so I had already found and spoken to a guy called Michael Lyons who owed and ran a classic car restoration garage in West Clare , so after taking the car to him we went through the car and made a list of everything that would be needed and I ordered everything from J R Wadhams, who I found very helpful.

After a couple of weeks the part's arrived , (only part I ordered online was a Lucas solenoid which fixed the hot start issue ) and I then dropped the car and part's to Lyon's garage and left them to carry out all the work.

I now over the next year will clean and restore where necessary the interior but within keeping the age/patina of the car . I will also do the same to the engine bay over time, I feel that the car should represent a 47 year old car and keep it's history of life intact and to be enjoyed by others .



# Bid'n BOUGHT this ROVER

A pictorial  
story  
of a not  
so recent  
purchase.

By Peter Van De Velde.

Part Eight



*...I use the  
Rover for my  
private trips  
now..*

Once the seams sealer hardened, I sprayed paint the rims with grey/silver paint. It needs to be done this weekend as winter comes early. The Rover now has a

little rest as I was offered a (modern) company car. In Holland you need to add a certain amount of money to your income if one uses a company car privately. To avoid that I use the Rover for my private trips now. I cleaned up my garage and bought a set of wheel trolleys so now my Rover can be parked in the garage which gives a peace in my mind.

The Rover now can be moved easily from the garage opening.

I do miss driving the Rover on a daily base but on the other hand enjoy the advantages of a modern car like better lightning, better window wipers and fuelling up once a week instead of every other day. The Rover coped well and was very reliable and was one of the few classics used on a daily base. This was caused by a change of road tax regulations. Only saw sometimes a Citroen DS and a Volvo Amazon.

I finalised the rims by spraying them first with wheel silver and then black and gave them a fresh set of winter tires. Winter still has to come! I need to find some centre caps.

*The Rover  
coped well  
and was very  
reliable...*



Also fitted a battery cut off switch so joy riders and thieves have more work to steal the Rover. It offers a little more certainty. The one I fitted has RC controls by a key fob. I fitted it in the boot so it is another obstacle for thieves or joy riders.

*... fuelling up  
once a week  
instead of  
every other  
day.*

*...joy riders  
and thieves  
have more  
work to steal  
the Rover.*





*..with help of the acetylene torch it came loose quickly.*

Above & right: Part of the planned conversion to left hand drive. I changed the seals of the left hand drive steering box.

The arm was tight and with help of the acetylene torch it came loose quickly. Then disassembled the steering box using the WSM.

1. I more or less copied the tools used in the WSM to replace the spool valve O-ring. It worked well.
2. The small two piece seals took a fair amount of time to fit as the new O-ring pushed the white ring out of the chamber
3. I fitted the 2 x 30 bearing balls with petrol jelly.



I also assembled the steering box of my project rover. This was a modified steering box and blue 'U' shaped hydraulic seal was fitted.

After assembling the boxes I disconnected the power steering hoses from my daily Rover and connected these to the steering boxes in order to test these. The boxes feel OK, no leaks. It not a test under load but I was curious to find if the boxes leaked as some of the seals are easily damaged during assembly.

**More in the next issue**



# Where are they now?

**Rover P5s and P5Bs captured on film in 2011, 2012 and 2013.**

*By Eddie Halling*

These cars were captured on film at various locations in Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire and London, mostly in 2012 and 2013. You might own one of these fine cars or know someone who does. They might have even changed hands in the intervening five or six years, who knows.



## DHJ 408C

was seen on 21st May 2011 parked at a show alongside a white coupe. The only clue in the picture as to where the show was can be seen on the De Havilland sign attached to the building in the background.

At a classic car rally in the beautiful grounds of Kimbolton School in Cambridgeshire on 14th July 2013, **AEW 950B** was spotted with its doors lying open in the hot sunshine.

**431 XPA**, a splendid two tone green P5 was on display at the Flitwick Town classic car show in mid Bedfordshire on August 2013.



**RUC 349L** a white coupe with a burnt grey roof was seen travelling south in Regent Street, London on 7th March 2012. This car was used by a broadcast journalist at the time and appeared in several television programmes featuring him and the car.



Four cars seen together at a classic car show at Deene Park near Corby in Northamptonshire on 8th September 2013 were **RAN 71L** a Nightfire Red saloon, **HVG 375L**, a Silver Birch over Bordeaux coupe, a Bordeaux P5B bearing the number plate **64-**

**LFL 477L**, a black P5B with what looks like a flag post in the front and centre of its bonnet, is parked up next



to a Bordeaux P5B saloon **TEX 849L**, which was displaying our club sticker in its windscreen, at the Luton Festival of Transport show on 10th June 2012.

On July 2013 a Silver Birch over Admiralty Blue coupe, **EXC 729G** was seen in a car park at Brampton in Cambridgeshire.



**47-ZS** and a black P5B saloon **NEW 681**. It looks like another nine P5s of varying types are parked behind and alongside these four.



# The demise of British tool makers


 **From comments on the club forum by Kevbacon:** I have now disposed of the tool stock I had other than a few bits on the dreaded Ebay. I've kept some for my own use although I have four large tool chests already and two garages with tools hanging on the walls. I've still sent a lot of stuff to the scrappy. Years ago I almost had a stand up fight with a firm who sent a skip full of old tools to a scrap yard, yet I see now why they had to.

It's the same reason that there is now only one (or possibly two) firms left in this country who make tools rather than just import a load of old tat, stick a label on it and flog it cheaply. The reason is that with few exceptions Joe Public won't buy quality. When I was an apprentice I was taken to a tool merchants, by my old man who was an engineer and later by my foreman and shown what tools to get. At the time I inwardly cursed both of them, because all were expensive and my wages weren't that high. I still use a lot of those tools, I might have lost a few over the years, I probably bust or cracked a few sockets but the majority are still in my box and not only do they still get used but I enjoy using them.

I tried selling English made tools on my web site. It was almost impossible to source them but those I could, didn't sell in any quantity. Most phone calls (as well as walk in customers in our store) started off with the same two words "how much" and usually ended with some comment about how you could buy even the tools that were unique to us, everywhere else cheaper. I remember one guy who'd seen cheap deep impact BSW sockets in his local Aldi!

Some other phone calls were from dreamers "I've just bought a £40,000 vintage Bentley and am looking for cheap Whitworth sockets for it"


I have a mate who races bangers, he told me that often the cars he races (after stripping off parts he sells to finance his racing) are rotten, usually beyond any possibility of repair and have usually been for sale for a long time without a buyer. Yet 'enthusiasts' will often berate him for what he does to the vehicles. It's been emotional.

 **Warwick replies:** When I got my driver's licence in 1968, Dad replaced his 1955 FJ Holden and gave it to me. He suggested that I buy some tools, and in those days in Australia there was one obvious choice; our very own Sidchrome. They were as good as the best from anywhere. When I rebuilt the Holden engine the following year, I lost one of the smaller open-ended spanners and had to buy a replacement. Years later, Dad was demolishing the old brick rubbish incinerator in the backyard (they were no longer allowed) and he found my spanner. It must have been tossed into the incinerator along with the newspaper onto which I'd scraped all the oily dirt and crud off the engine block all those years ago. The chrome plating was blue, but it was otherwise undamaged. It must have been through many fires. I still use that spanner today. It looks exactly the same.

Other spanners that I've bought since have rust spots coming through the chrome. Not the 50 year old Sidchromes.

In 1968 I also bought a set of locally made Stanley screwdrivers in a moulded plastic case. They cost \$30. I still use those today too. I've just checked the inflation calculator and was stunned to find that the value of that in today's money is \$365. About 18 years ago, I bought a similar Stanley screwdriver set as some of the original Phillip's head drivers were worn. These new imported screwdrivers also cost \$30. (\$47 in today's money). These 'new' ones have rusted through the chrome plating, just from exposure to the air. The originals have not.

The problem as I see it is this. Once upon a time, the free market gave us huge benefits. Manufacturers constantly strived to produce the best products at the cheapest price possible. The makers of poor quality products didn't survive. However, a decade or more ago, we reached the point at which the rubbish was so cheap that if it broke or wore out you could simply replace it. This drove the quality manufacturers out of business, so now it is often difficult to buy a quality product if you wish to, because they no longer exist.

 **Kevbacon:** I've sold Sidchrome, but only secondhand, and then only pretty large stuff. Impressive quality and a nice 'feel' to it.

I had one supplier approach me some years back. I was offered 'British' Whitworth spanner sets in leather tool rolls. The price fell between the DIY type spanners I sold then and the professional quality British or German ones. The samples arrived, the spanners looked very familiar, in fact they were identical to the cheap DIY ones I sold, imported and reasonable quality but in no way professional quality and I didn't sell them as such.

When the rep came in again, order book at the ready I tackled him saying that he has assured me that these were British when in fact they were identical to the cheap and cheerful spanners that I already had apart from the equally cheap and cheerful tool roll.


"The reason is" he replied "is that the tool roll is British". I doubt it was anyway and certainly didn't justify the price difference.

It reminds me of some tools we had demonstrated in boxes marked "Made in England". I would always use and test all tools before offering them for sale, the sockets split or gave out at 150 Ft/lb or so and were just carbon steel. The rep told me that the boxes were genuinely "Made in England".

A genuine true story. I used to run a market stall and sold tools from it. A pal was a wholesaler, he showed me some hacksaw blades, I tried them but the ones I ended up with were total junk. My mate didn't want them back, I tried one on a bit of steel and all the teeth ended up in a pile on the floor, they would cut wood but very slowly.

I had a bet with my mate that I could sell them on the stall and made up a big sign reading 'Hacksaw blades, useless, 10p each or ten for a pound'. The first customer asked what the sign meant, I told him it meant what it said, the blades were useless, you could put them in the frame upside down and they'd actually cut (or rather not cut) pretty much the same. I showed him a proper Sandvik bimetal blade for two quid but he said he could buy twenty of the others for the same price. By this time we had an audience and I explained that twenty or even a hundred of the cheap rubbish blades would not cut as much as the Professional quality ones I had on the stall. The man still bought ten, so did the next guy and the next even though I told everyone not to come back moaning that the blades were junk because I was telling them that they were before they parted with their money. I sold the lot. I didn't sell a single decent blade and I had not a single complaint.

There's nowt as queer as folk.

 **Warwick:** I suppose the whole thing is a product of the age in which we now live. Why do you need good quality tools? Or any tools for that matter? If something needs to be repaired, you don't need tools to fix it, you just throw it away and get another one. Sad really.



## Watching the Detectives

A quiz perpetrated by Trevor Colebrook

In this second quiz, I challenge you to identify the geographic location which is most closely associated with the crime dramas featuring these fictional characters.

### Quiz Two. The Locus

Example: Jim Taggart.....Glasgow

**Jules Maigret**

.....

**John Rebus**

.....

**Aidrian Monk**

.....

**Vera Stanhope**

.....

**Salvo Montobiano**

.....

**Theo Kojak**

.....

**"Piet" van der Valk**

.....

**Thomas Magnum**

.....

**David Starsky**

.....

**Robert Lewis**

.....

Did you match the detectives with their usual location?  
Jules Maigret - Paris, Theo Kojak - New York, John Rebus - Edinburgh, "Piet" van der Valk - Amsterdam, Aidrian Monk - San Francisco, Thomas Magnum - Hawaii, Vera Stanhope - Northumberland & N Tyneside, David Starsky - Venice Beach & Los Angeles, Salvo Montobiano - Sicily, Robert Lewis - Oxford.



# HOLD THE PRESSES!

OUR VERY OWN 'NEWS HOUND', MARTIN ROBINS AND MOTORING HISTORIAN, GLENN ARLT.



## Spencer Wilks a life well lived

Glen Arlt, Hagerty Historian

of automotive fame. Like many others, he also served active duty in the British military during the Great War, attaining the rank of Captain.

Five years after marriage, he took on management responsibilities of the Hillman Motor Company alongside John Black, after his father-in-law passed away. (NB - The Auto Machinery Company was one of William Hillman's previous enterprises.)

In 1928, when the Rootes brothers purchased Hillman, John Black left for employment at the Standard Motor Company, and Spencer Wilks left for a position as works manager at Rover Company in late 1929. By 1930, he was joined there by his younger brother, engineer Maurice Wilks, who proved a

Martin Robins asked me to pen something about Spencer Wilks, and very kindly provided notes handwritten by one of Wilks' grandsons. Spencer Wilks had 3 grandsons and 4 grand-daughters. I was also able to peruse Grace's Guide Information and other information to flesh out the story of this man's life, well lived.

Wilks was born in 1891, son of Thomas Wilks who was Director of a Leather company, and Jane Elizabeth Lovell. Never completed his training to become a solicitor, therefore he certainly was not qualified to practice. His training was interrupted by the commencement of the 1914-18 war, so did not have a career as a solicitor.

By 1916, he married Kathleen Edith Hillman, youngest daughter of William Hillman

more than able compatriot over the decades. A true definition of a team.

By 1934, despite the depression, Rover returned to profitability and Spencer Wilks was appointed Managing Director. During this time, Wilks began to move Rover cars up-market, which proved to be a wise move. He well understood that trying to compete directly against Ford and Austin was a fool's errand, as evidenced by Studebaker's efforts to compete against Ford and Chevrolet in the US, ultimately leading to its demise.

During World War II, Wilks was very busy overseeing the running of the Rover Company, which made components and engines for the Mosquito aircraft among other 'war effort' jobs. It is understood the "Secret" underground location was sited near Kidderminster not Solihull as far as I am aware.

Maurice Wilks' wife (not Spencer Wilks' wife) knew one of the director's wives at Power Jets, the Rover Company became involved in the development of Whittle's jet engine between 1940 and 1942. Apparently at the Government's request, this work was traded off to Rolls-Royce in exchange for small turbine engine development.

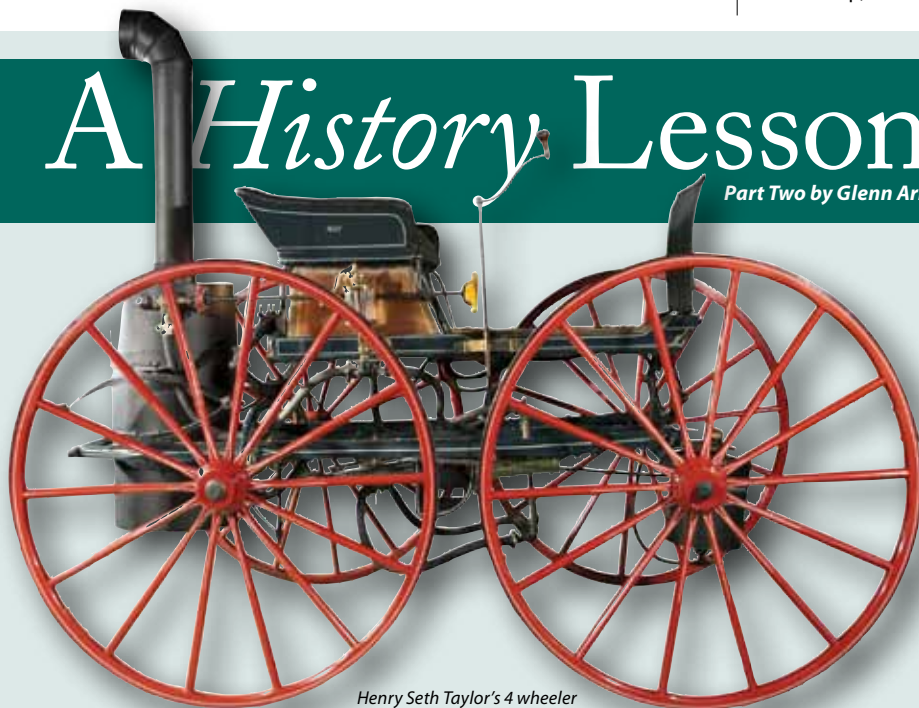
This directly resulted in the famous Rover Jet -1 prototype of the early 1950's, literally the first drivable gas-turbine automobile in the world. Further development continued into the early 1960's, culminating in actual production of small industrial gas-turbine engines, and very nearly the first production automobile with such a power plant. This prototype car instead became the Rover 2000 with conventional four cylinder engine, and later also the 3500.

One mustn't forget the Land-Rover devised in the late 1940's by the Wilks brothers; Maurice had earlier purchased a surplus Willys Jeep for use around his farm in Anglesey. Though in rather deplorable condition, with spares difficult to come by, the Jeep proved to be useful. (Land-Rover always had a hyphen between the two words until lately.)

The Land-Rover was jointly conceived by the brothers on holiday in 1947. Maurice remarked that if they could not do a better job of building a vehicle than a Jeep, then they should not be in business!

## A History Lesson

Part Two by Glenn Arlt



Henry Seth Taylor's 4 wheeler

### Who invented the automobile?

Not forgetting America's neighbours to the north; the very first Canadian automobile could be described as Henry Seth Taylor's four-wheeled steam buggy which he unveiled at the Stanstead Fair in Stanstead, Quebec, Canada in 1867, the year Canada became a nation.

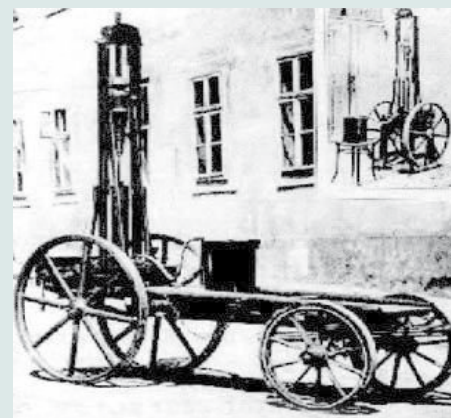
As a rather alarming (at the time), but now rather amusing aside; like Cugnot, Taylor forgot to add

brakes. So, two Frenchmen actually had the first two motorized vehicle accidents, first in 1771 (driving through a brick wall after losing control and being unable to stop; thankfully with no human injuries) and the second in French North America. Taylor's vehicle ran out of control going downhill and crashed, luckily, also without any human injuries.

I won't make any wise-cracks about French drivers, okay? Have you seen the average American driver busy texting instead of driving lately?

Now it's settled that a Briton invented the automobile instead of a Frenchman, German or American, let's go on to the first internal-combustion car, since this is the means by which the vast majority of all cars ever built thus far are powered.

You're in for a surprise, here, dear readers.



Siegfried Marcus' self-activated benzine motor

In 1864, Austrian named Siegfried Marcus invented, built and drove a benzene fuelled internal-combustion engine vehicle small enough to be considered an automobile, in Vienna.

Because Marcus was Jewish, the Nazi's "rewrote" history ignoring his contributions after the annexation of Austria, so he's often forgotten even



Other important factors in the genesis of the Land-Rover were Rover being left with a massively expanded factory plant available to them; a shortage of steel to build cars; and difficult government trade policies.

The first conceptual sketch was apparently done by Maurice and his brother Spencer in the sand of Red Wharf Bay. The sales prospects and thereby profitability of such a vehicle was self-evident to the brothers, given the fact that the Jeep was so useful, and yet U.S. Dollars were impossible to come by for the importation of the vehicles in peace time. Plus, other commonwealth nations obtain and trade in Pounds Sterling to buy vehicles, but not Dollars.

Aluminium was selected for the body construction, since it was more available than steel at the time; the Rover four cylinder automotive power plants were initially used out of necessity. Not so!

It might have been initially conceived by brother Maurice, but Spencer Wilks had to face the board of directors to request funding for development and tooling up plant facilities, thereby shepherding the vehicle through to production.

At the time, it was considered to be quite a risky undertaking. Clearly, however, the decision made was correct, since by 1951, the Land-Rover was out-selling the Rover automobiles two-to-one!

Sadly, looking forward nearly seven decades, we see that Rover automobiles are no more, but at least Land-Rover is still with us.

By 1957, Wilks, became Chairman of Rover, a well-deserved promotion if ever there was one.

Some other family remembrances include the fact that before and after retirement Wilks was always smartly attired. He was a devoted father and grandfather and also very fond of his horses and dogs.

Another family remembrance is how there was a tennis ball suspended just precisely in the correct spot to touch the windscreen when parking, enabling the family motor car to fit within the garage without bumping into the all-important implements kept there, such as his prized workbench, vice and etcetera.

During his later years, after retiring from the Chairmanship of Rover in 1962, his favoured motor-car was a Rover P5 followed by Rover 2000 after the demise of his wife. However, he always kept a Land-Rover to drive to the beach or for other activities.

Even when retired in 1967, aged 76, Spencer remained a non-executive director and was appointed President of Rover Co. Do not know when the non-executive directorship ended prior to him becoming President. Maurice succeeded him as Chairman of Rover, up to the time of his too-early death in 1963.

In 1971, Spencer Bernau Wilks received his well-deserved final rest, aged 79 years old. Indeed, a life well lived.

## J K Starley was the son of the founder of Rover and nearly lost his life in 1911. Always smell the coffee! *Martin Robins*

**A report in the Birmingham Weekly Post on 25 February 1911 stated:-**

*"Mr JK Starley, director of the Rover Co, Coventry, says that at the recent Edinburgh Motor Show he sold a motor-car to Hutchison and the young man after informing him that his family were having a party to celebrate the parent's silver wedding gave him an invitation to become one of the guests. Mr Starley was, however, unable to go."*

**Why does this have any great significance?**

Well, a fortnight earlier there was a report on the Silver Wedding Party of Mr Charles Barrett Hutchison. There were twenty guests at the party and fourteen of these took coffee at about midnight and were taken ill. Mr Hutchison and Mr Clapperton, a local grocer who supplied the coffee, expired a few hours later after suffering intense agony. The authorities subsequently discovered a quantity of arsenic in the remains of the coffee in the coffee pot. There was no trace in the utensils used to prepare the coffee, or in any part of the home or the stock of coffee in Mr Clapperton's shop. Mr JJ Hutchison, the son, was present at the party and a warrant was issued for his arrest. It was reported that to evade arrest, the son committed suicide on Guernsey, by taking prussic acid.

today. (It should also be noted that Anti-Semitism was prevalent in Germanic, Russian and central European nations even in the 1800's and earlier; not just during the Nazi era. This may also help explain the lack of early publicity about this automotive pioneer).

Marcus built another internal combustion passenger car in 1873. It was displayed at the Vienna International Exhibition.

He was also the unheralded inventor of many other automotive firsts often attributed to others; the magneto ignition; the carburettor; and electric motor more advanced than others in his day (1864); a transmission; and an electric lamp (1877), five years before Edison.

In 1888, Marcus put his new magneto ignition into yet another new car he built and ran.

The first American internal-combustion car was the Kerosene-fueled vehicle built by a George Brayton, in 1873. He was a Christian Pastor residing in Racine, Wisconsin. The 2-stroke car may not have been a 'sale success'; but it was built and ran. It counts.

Conventional knowledge indicates that the first automobile was developed by German Karl Benz in 1885. This was the Benz Patent Motorwagen, fueled by the liquid fuel hexane.

Oddly enough, Gottlieb Daimler and Karl Benz both patented their own liquid fueled internal-combustion engine vehicles in two different cities on the same day in 1886 - January 29th.

Daimler's first motorized vehicle in 1885 was the first internal combustion motorcycle and his slightly later four wheeled automobile was more advanced than the Benz Patent Motorwagen, which only had three wheels and far slower running engine.

As virtually all readers will already know, the Daimler and Benz companies merged in 1926 and the "make" of car beginning that years was Mercedes-Benz. Unfortunately, their claim to be originator of the automobile is in error. (Your author reflectively ducks under his deck.)

Electric cars. Bonus information, due to the resurgence of interest in electric cars in the current day (no pun intended):

The first practical electric car was a three-wheeler invented in France by Gustave Trouve' which ran on Paris streets in April 1881.

The first ever American electric was invented and driven by Iowan William Morrison of De Moines in 1890. Electric cars were destined to stay city-cars for 115 years from inception, until about 1996 when the American

GM EV1 two-seater went into limited production. With a maximum range of about 90 miles and governed top speed of 80 miles per hour, an electric could finally be considered a commuter car, not just a city car.

The first reasonably long-distance multi-passenger electric car widely available to the public was the Japanese Nissan Leaf introduced in December 2010. It's the world's biggest selling electric car to date, and US production began in 2013. Initially with a maximum range of about 75 miles and top speed of 92 miles per hour, it was considered a true commuter car, not just a city car. (Your author's 2016 Leaf has an 84 mile official range and the newest cars have a 151 mile range).

### So, here follows the timeline of the true invention of what we call the automobile:

**The first real car** was built in England, powered by steam, in 1858. (Rickett)

**The first American car** was built in 1859, also powered by steam. (Roper)

**The first internal-combustion car** was built in Austria in 1864. (Marcus)

**The first internal-combustion American car** was built in 1873. (Brayton)

**The first electric car** was built in France in 1881. (Trouve')

**The first automobile manufacturer** in 1889. (Panhard)

**The first American electric car** was built in 1890. (Morrison)

**The first American automobile manufacturer** began in 1893. (Duryea)

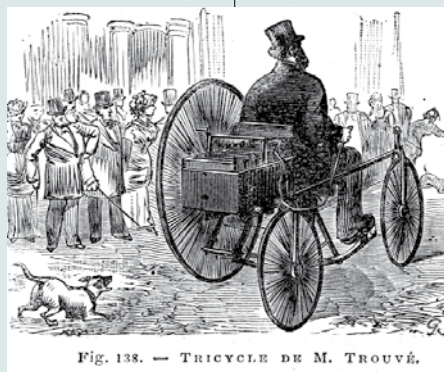


Fig. 138. — TRICYCLE DE M. TROUVÉ.





During the mid 1930's, the possibility of a Second World War with Germany was looking more and more real, in anticipation of this the British Government began its rearmament programme and the "Shadow Factory

Scheme". The Shadow Factories were to implement additional manufacturing capacity for the British aircraft industry, they would live in the shadow of the aero-engine specialists, but would contain the same type of machinery and produce the same products to the same standards as the parent company.

In April 1936 the Air Ministry approached Rover, who by now was a well established company employing a few thousand people. The proposal by the Air Ministry was that a new factory would be built by the Government but ran by Rover at Acocks Green, Birmingham. Rover would initially produce parts for the Bristol Aeroplane Company's Mercury and Pegasus radial engines, used in many of the RAF's planes at that time. Acocks Green was given the title Rover No.1 Shadow Factory, production was to start at low level and increase to full production in the event of war. Rover No. 1 Shadow Factory started production in July 1937 with deliveries to Bristol starting immediately.

By April 1939 all hope of peace with Germany had disappeared, Hitler's invasion of Poland had marked the start of the Second World War. The Shadow Factories were put into full production and once again the Air Ministry approached Rover. The Air Ministry had already made the plans for a second Shadow Factory for Rover, it was to be built on 65 acres of requisitioned farmland north of Solihull, the new Shadow Factory would manufacture complete Bristol Hercules radial engines and employ a workforce of 7,000 people. The new Factory was designated Rover No. 2 Shadow Factory. At three times the size of Rover No.1, it was imperative to begin work at Solihull immediately in order to reach the completion date. Construction began in June 1939 and the foundations laid a month later, it was during this time Rover took the opportunity to purchase 200 acres of agricultural land adjacent to the new site - a long term move that would pay dividends for Rover's expansion for the future. Rover No. 2 Shadow Factory produced the first components for the Hercules engines 7

months after construction of the new factory begun, the first machined parts were completed in January 1940. The first completely built Hercules engine made by Rover was tested in October 1940.

In May 1940 all car production at Rover ceased, within a month of this, production had switched to airframe components and engine

parts and assembly. The body erecting shops were also converted to wing construction for Lancaster and Bristol bombers. Rover did however retain a service facility for its vehicles being used for war business. Up until this point in time, Rover's Shadow Factories were reaching production targets on schedule, but all this was about to change. On the nights of the 14th and 15th November 1940, the city centre of Coventry was almost raised to the ground during two nights of heavy bombing from the Luftwaffe. Rover's St. Helens plant north of the city centre was so badly damaged that production was halted indefinitely.

Rover could not suffer another blow like this, and so dispersal production was implemented, disused cotton mills further north in Lancashire and Yorkshire were converted into production plants. Rover continued to expand its operations, and by 1942 operated 18 factories, six of which were "Shadow Factories" owned by the Government. Its own workforce of 3,780 staff were complimented by an additional 20,000 members of staff employed in the Shadow and Dispersal Factories and contracted work for the Air Ministry.

On the 7th June 1941, Major Bulman, Director of engine production for the Ministry of Aircraft Production (MAP), informed Rover's managing director Spencer Wilkes, that a location for Rover's

new Dispersal Shadow Factory had been approved. After the severe bombing on Coventry the previous year and the almost complete destruction of Rover's St. Helens factory, the location of the new factory was to be located underground. This would make it almost impossible for the Luftwaffe to bomb the site, as it would be invisible from the air. A total of 27 sites had been considered before the final decision was made. The site chosen was Kingsford Country Park at Blakeshall Common, near Kinveredge, north of Kidderminster. The new site was designated "Drakelow Underground Dispersal Factory", this was later changed to Rover No.1D Shadow Factory (D=Dispersal), and was intended as a back-up and feeder plant for Acocks Green (No.1 Shadow Factory) and Solihull (No.2 Shadow Factory).

Sir Alexander Gibb & Partners were appointed to the project as consulting engineers and were responsible for the design of the underground factory. Sir Alexander Gibb (12 February 1872 – 21 January 1958) was a Scottish civil engineer with an impressive resume. In 1916 he was appointed Chief Engineer of Ports Construction to the British Army in France, with the rank of Brigadier-General. In 1918 he became Civil Engineer-in-Chief to the Admiralty and the Admiralty M-N scheme, one of his major projects. Then in 1919, he became Director-General of Civil Engineering with the new Ministry of Transport. In 1921 he left government service and became a consulting engineer, founding Sir Alexander Gibb & Partners in the following year. This grew to become the largest civil engineering consultancy in the United Kingdom and was involved in large-scale projects all over the world.

To maximise the stability of the underground factory and ensure maximum efficiency could be achieved when fully operational, the design was kept simple, a grid system accessed by four, 16ft wide main tunnels with 19ft wide inter-connecting smaller tunnels known as galleries. At its longest section the tunnels would measure 0.6 of a mile and the width of the complex almost the same, with a total floor space of 284,931 square feet, connected by 3.5 miles (5.6km) of tunnels.

The grid design meant the structural integrity of the complex would not be compromised if hit directly by a bomb. It would also greatly reduce the loss of human life, only certain sections of the complex would be destroyed if hit, with multiple entrances it would also be possible to mount a rescue if needed with out fear of the rest of the factory caving in, production could also be restored quickly.

Once the design was approved the next phase was to begin the excavation of the tunnels. The preferred company for many of the Governments construction projects during the war, were Robert McAlpine & Co. Unfortunately due to their own success and involvement in so many other building projects, they were unable to undertake the work of excavating Drakelow. With McAlpine out of the question the task was then offered to John Cochrane & Sons, who had estimated the entire job would cost £238,000 and take a year to complete.



Rover Co., Drakelow - Works Council 1946



Rover's St Helens factory, bombed in 1940.





As the first construction workers arrived at Drakelow it was already evident that due to the scale of the project, and the amount of workers required to carry out the work, that travelling to and from the site each day would be a problem. Most people in the 1940's did not possess a car and public transport was also limited and costly. The initial solution was to bring in the workforce by trucks and buses from nearby villages and towns, as the work increased and more personnel were required hostels would be built to house the workforce. Construction commenced at Drakelow in July 1941, Hancocks "Swiss" Village (Rock houses carved into the sandstone), which sat above the construction area had long since been abandoned, as had most of the buildings at ground level. Those that remained were demolished to allow work to commence on the tunnel entrances, and to provide site access. Gelignite was used to blast the entrances of the four main tunnels into the surface rock. Once this was done the task of extending the tunnels to a depth of 8,066ft began, on completion of this, work would begin on the connecting galleries, this would require a further 8,928ft of blasting. Tunnel 2 was the first to be excavated followed by Tunnels, 1, 3 and 4. The explosives used for blasting the tunnels were Polar Amon No.2 and Polar Saxonite

No.3 supplied by Nobel Explosives of Scotland. Initially blasting was going well and on schedule, however one small detail had been overlooked. When blasting the entrance to the connecting galleries, the tunnel lost its shape, this meant that to keep an even connection to the main tunnels, additional brickwork would have to be installed. To remedy this small oversight, the entrances to the galleries had to be cut by hand with the use of pneumatic chisels to a depth of 6ft. Sir Alexander Gibb & Partners were not happy with this oversight and informed Rover on 6th October 1941, that the galleries may have to be reduced 4ft in width to ensure their structural stability. The advice was noted but not acted upon.

Within a month of Sir Alexander Gibb & Partners warning, tragedy struck. On the 31st October 1941 a section of roof collapsed whilst blasting in Tunnel 1. Mr Harry Depper and two of his colleagues were caught in the blast and sadly lost their lives. Sir Alexander Gibb & Partners once again questioned the structural stability of the tunnels, and informed Rover on 14th November that changes needed to be made to the overall layout of the tunnels to make them safe. Later that month the changes were implemented, the distance from the galleries to the main tunnels were increased and cross sections modified. The galleries were now self supporting.

On the 14th October 1941, just eight days after Sir Alexander Gibb & Partners first warning to Rover, the Director of engineering at the Ministry of Aircraft Production, Mr Brian Colquhoun had stated that the first 50,000 square feet of space would be completed at Rover No. 1D Shadow Factory Drakelow on the 10th February 1942, and that final completion of the complex would be on 4th July 1942. The dates could possibly be achieved but were optimistic given the recent setbacks and tragic deaths. John Cochrane & Sons, original quote of £238,000 to complete the project was also seeming as optimistic as the completion dates, by this time the costs were in excess of £500,000. Work continued regardless and conveyors were installed into the main tunnels to speed up the process of removing rock and blasting debris.

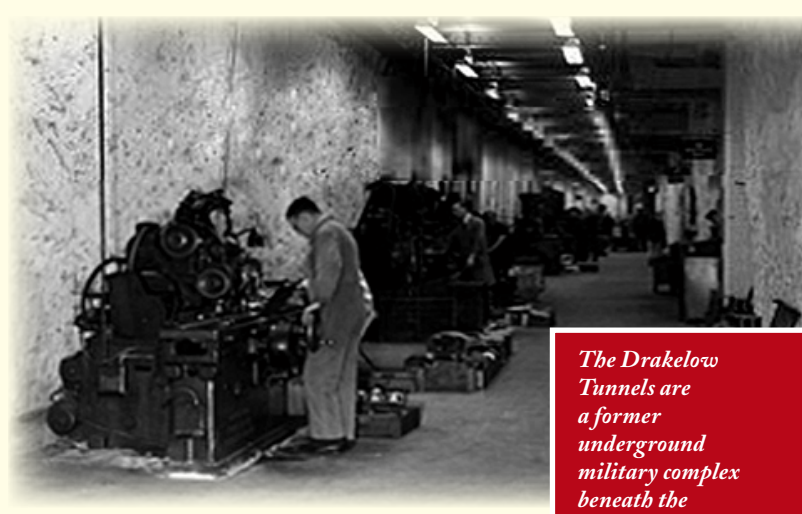
Not long after the conveyors were installed tragedy struck again, a further four people were killed. The first was a Mrs Mary Ann Brettell, who was accidentally run over by a dump truck belonging to John Cochrane & Sons whilst outside the tunnels, she died not long after due to shock. The next two deaths were that of two construction workers, after a long hard day in the tunnels they decided to ride the conveyor belt out of the complex, unfortunately they didn't manage to jump off in time and became entangled within the machinery and subsequently died of their injuries. The last reported death was that of Mr. Eric Harold Newman, Mr. Newman was the Security Officer for Goods In & Out, whilst riding his motorbike out of the complex after finishing for the day, he was accidentally struck down by Mr. Wilkes, the coach driver that brought the workers to and from the Tunnels each day.

By now the number of onsite personnel had increased so dramatically, that the bus and truck convoys that had brought the workforce to and from Drakelow, was proving far to inadequate and expensive, petrol rationing also caused problems. The solution came in the form of on site working, the current buildings that had been erected were to be adapted into accommodation blocks or dormitories as a temporary solution, until a purpose built hostel could be completed. This became know as the "Camp Hostel". On the 28th November 1942 the first dormitories were ready for use. For married couples, 36 houses had been requisitioned in nearby Stourbridge. On the 5th April 1943, the purpose built "Blakeshall Hostel" was completed. The "Blakeshall Hostel" was divided into 15 dormitories that could accommodate 334 people, in addition to this another building was built adjacent to the Camp Hostel, this housed a Sick Bay, Canteen and Social Club (This building in now the Kingsford Pub), to cater for the needs of the on site workforce.

On the 9th September 1943, the Camp Hostel was visited by the Fleet Air Arm who had plans to transform the hostel into an officer training centre, however these plans were not executed, this is down to the fact that the United States American Air Force (USAAF) also had plans for the hostel. On the 21st December 1943 the U.S. Air Force IX Tactical Command and 318th Station Complement Squadron took control over the Camp Hostel without warning, two days later the Air Ministry took charge of the hostel in an official capacity on behalf of the Americans. The Camp Hostel was now designated U.S.A.A.F. Station 509.

In early March 1944 the former Camp Hostel had been turned into a Radio and Cryptography School for U.S. Military Personnel, with a permanent staff of 110 instructors. Not long after the 6th June 1944 (D-Day), the former Camp Hostel was further transformed into a Teletype School for U.S. Forces, this was short lived though, on the 22nd August 1944 the Teletype School was relocated to Oxfordshire. The day after this, all water supplied by Rover from the tunnels was stopped. As was all of their responsibilities to the other remaining surface buildings, this was now to be handled by the Ministry of Works who would officially take over on the 21st November 1944.

The Blakeshall Hostel was officially closed on the 15th February 1946. In 1954 it was reopened by the Ministry of Health as a research institute, sadly no date has yet to surface to indicate when the Ministry of Health vacated the Hostel. Today the Blakeshall Hostel is the Kingsford Caravan Park.



Rover No. 1D Shadow Factory Drakelow was completed ahead of schedule, although no definitive date is known. In the eight months it took to construct Drakelow, some 4,455,00 cubic feet of sandstone were removed from Tunnels 1-4 and the connecting galleries, a further 1,620,000 cubic feet of earth was removed outside the complex to provide access for vehicles and surface buildings. The final cost of the project had well exceeded £1,000,000, and also taken the lives of seven people.

Rover who had not been notified in advance of this, were then informed that they were to vacate these buildings and cease all activity and maintenance of them immediately. Water and steam produced from within the tunnels however, were still to be piped into the buildings until the 23rd August 1944.

**Next issue: PRODUCTION COMMENCES - ROVER AND THE RAF MOVE IN - 1942-1945**

*The Drakelow Tunnels are a former underground military complex beneath the Blakeshall Estate north of Kidderminster, Worcestershire, covering 280,000 sq ft (26,000 m2), with a total length of around 3.5 miles (5.6 km). They were originally built as a Second World War shadow factory, and were developed during the Cold War to be a fall-back government centre.*





## Pembrey Country Park Model Engineers Autumn Rally

The Llanelli and District Model Engineers hosted its annual autumn rail and road steam rally at Pembrey Country Park in Llanelli over the weekend of 29th and 30th September 2018.

As always, this year the rally included a large number of exhibits from all over the UK and Ireland including steam, diesel and electric model trains running on their ground level and raised tracks in the park, all giving rides to the public. On the rally fields



there was a huge gathering of miniature steam traction engines, lorries, vintage and classic cars, military vehicles, commercials, tractors, farm machinery, motorcycles, classic bus trips, fair rides, trade stands, chainsaw carving, wood turning and other craft stalls

Amongst the very large display of classic cars were a small number of Rovers. Only two P5Bs though, my own black P5B saloon, KRO 563G and a Silver Birch over Admiralty Blue P5B Coupe, BWD 538J. A very nice blue SD1 Vanden Plas

EFi, B998 BGF was parked nearby, as was a two-tone green Rover P4 90, UCY 646. Also present were three very nice Rover P6B 3.5 litre saloons, one in white, PTH 1K, one in blue, TCH 573L and a green one JPB 506N. Nice to see all these Rovers in one place.





# Letters to the Ed'.

## The continuing saga of not so well parked wipers....

Dear Ken

You rightly complained about our Blue Rover P5B which was shown at the Dowty Headquarters in the February 2017 *Take Five* magazine as having a wiper blade not in a horizontal position. You have since complained about the White P5B we own at the Burton Dassett 'Iron Lady' Shoot. The White Rover has never had a problem with wipers not horizontal and they are not standing proud at Burton Dassett. We have recently taken the vehicle to a prestigious country estate where the wipers are all present and correct.

Kind regards, *Martin Robins*

Hello Martin,

Good to hear from you. Sorry to be critical of such nicely presented vehicles. The issue about wiper blades being not correctly set/installed on P5s and other early Rovers where there is a parking position has become a bit of a bug-bear to me. Far too many mechanics and owners do not understand just what the Rover system is and why they "come off" the windscreen and how the ramps are set up. I don't know why but when I got my P5 back in 1964, I soon found out just how the system worked and just how tricky it can be to get the ramps and arms on the wiper arms set correctly, probably because I have a perfectionist attitude.

What I did find was that to successfully locate those two arms/legs that run up the ramps, located at the pivot points, I had to get some steel Allen key bolts (4/40 UNC) so that I could really tighten the clamping load. I also had to make new, wider, clamp plates to properly trap the two sides of the legs and prevent them coming out from under the clamp plates. Since carrying out these modifications I have not had to reset the arrangement more than once in 30 years. One of the problems I found as well was that the two screws used to clamp the plates (which were 4/40 UNC from Rover or Lucas) were chromium plated brass with Phillips heads and which too readily "cammed out" damaging the head without getting additional clamping action.

Just about everyone here in Australia, in the various clubs I have become involved, simply don't understand what Rover were trying to achieve and end up with the wipers sitting on the windscreen frame. They either don't ask or those that they do ask don't have a clue.

It is from this experience that makes me rather sensitive to the lack of attention to detail of many owners, it is not that the wipers should be "horizontal" but that they should clear the windscreen frame and then sit on the small rest lug on the driver's side and the central scuttle for the passenger's side. When at rest the wiper blade really should only just touch the rest lug and the central scuttle die casting. They should be almost clear from the paint work to keep any silicone polish away from the blades as that will cause streaking on the windscreen.

Once again, good to hear from you,

*Ken Burrows, Australia*

Having just returned from the National Rally at Exmouth at the Imperial Hotel I write to congratulate Curly Newton and all involved for arranging such a friendly and informative event.

My wife and son (a classic car enthusiast) are now pressing me to book Harrogate for next year!!

Subsequent to our trip I have had cause to contact several other Club Officers regarding my P5's AC mechanical fuel pump and their help has been most willingly given.

Thank you all,  
*Geoffrey Simmons*

*Ed'. Many thanks Geoffrey for taking the time to send in your letter, the contents of which are very much appreciated by all that run your club and especially, I am sure, by our Club's Devon contact, Curly Newton.*

*It does take a lot of planning to get such an event together and even then, there is always a slight worry 'on the day'.*

*But clearly it did go to plan and everyone I spoke to had a thoroughly good time. Curly's comment can be found below.*

Hello everyone,

The Rover P5 National 2018, Exmouth. : I intended to write this note earlier but with one thing and another I didn't manage to, so here goes.

A big thank you to everyone who attended the Rover P5 National Rally at Exmouth in September 2018. I think it turned out to be a very successful rally and enjoyable for most. The venue was good, the weather was lovely and all the cars were really excellent to see. A big thank you to David Dallimore for the write up on the rally and a thank you to Ian Hartnell for all the photographs he provided. The rally was well supported by members of the Rover P4 Devon Club who put up and dismantled gazebos, organised parking for the rally as well as many other tasks. A big thank you to them and everyone else involved.

The Imperial Hotel were very helpful with the food, drinks, accommodation and the loan of tables for the event. The staff went that extra mile, so I am very grateful. I have sent an email thanking them.

There were members from France who were planning to attend, but due to family illness could not make it. I hope things worked out for them and all is better. There were members from Holland, Scotland and Malta who came to the rally and we were very pleased to meet them. A lovely photo at Kingswear Station in the last magazine with Mike and Josie from Scotland and my wife Jill, in the seaside pose!

I would also like to thank the committee for their help. I hope a great time was had by all and look forward to next years Rally at Harrogate, organised by Ken Pick.

Best wishes, *Curly Newton.*

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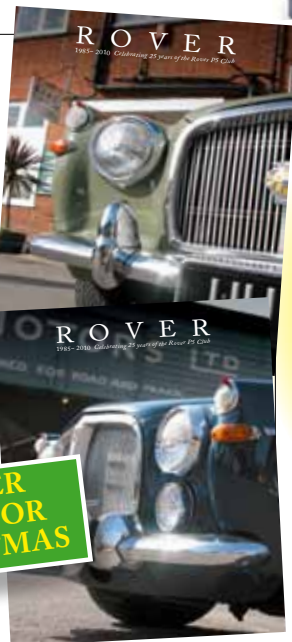
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## Keeping my promise

Referring to the article on page 29 in *Take Five* October 2018, Freddie Hogg's 1973 Rover P5B saloon PGU 536L, which is a lovely unrestored model and a credit to him, and all the better for keeping his promise.



I am attempting to keep my promise to a deceased good friend by finishing his restoration to a Rover P5B Coupe.

Strangely, I thought that I recognised the registration number of Freddie's car. But when I checked, my car registration number is PGU 565L. I wonder if these cars were together in the same dealership before purchase back in 1973?



My car still has a little way to go before being as good as Freddie's. Unfortunately I have found that there are many items missing before I can complete the restoration that was started in 1996 !

*Jeff Baker*





# How to Approach an IOE Engine Rebuild

## Might be of interest to 3 litre owners

**Ever wondered where to even begin with rebuilding the tired old engine in your Series One? I have. There are plenty of self-help books on the topic but, none of these really give any help with diagnostics. I turned to Ian Cox who is part owner of one of the best workshops in the industry. He kindly put his thoughts to paper. Below is his advice on rebuilding a 1956 2L.**

For 1956 you should have a "late 2 litre" unit. This means you will have a full flow oil filter and a rear crank oil seal. Your block will have water between all the cylinders and depending on exact date should have the larger 7/8" gudgeon pins and threaded flywheel with removable ring gear.

All of this makes for the best of all the Series one engines - so far so good.

The first thing with any rebuild is to see what you've got. It's pointless for example taking off the head and rebuilding it only to discover much later that the block is cracked. Start by stripping the unit down to its bones. If you are not used to engine rebuilds then it is a good idea to keep all the parts from particular bits of the engine separate and labelled - plastic ice cream tubs are good for this. Be aware of the general condition of things as you go. Too many people tear things apart and destroy the evidence of problems which then go unnoticed and come back to haunt them later.

Examples are - evidence of water, oil leaks, signs of overheating, evidence of water or dirt in the oil. I normally discard any non-Land Rover parts (odd bolts, star washers, etc) at this stage because I know what should be where. If you are less confident then keep everything and discard the rogues on reassembly. Once the unit is stripped and given an initial clean, then its condition can be assessed. Start with the obvious and serious stuff - cracks. Late 2 litres are not bad for cracks but check for a curved crack underneath the front core plug or a straight one along the water jacket "ridge" again under the front core plug. Less common but more serious are cracks in the valve chest behind the camshaft - check for signs of water in the oil. Check also the cylinder bores, especially number 4, for a straight crack from the bottom of the exhaust valve seat and extending down the bore. Heads very rarely crack but have a look on the face anyway.

Having done all this you can look at wear. It is a common misconception that if for example the bores are slightly worn then this can be attended to and the rest of the unit will be O.K. These engines are quite well matched and all the components wear at about the same rate (with the exception of the cam and followers - more later). If the block has ridges in the bores you can catch a finger nail on then it is a safe bet that the crank will need grinding and the valve guides will need

replacing and the cam will be worn out, etc, etc. Check over all the major components and get a "keel" for how worn the engine is. Most of this checking can be visual (such as timing sprockets) or done by feel (such as valves and guides) but the bores and the crank journals should be measured. This will tell you if anyone else has had a go at the engine before you and will assist in getting the right size parts.

Bearings for the late 2 litre are available in all sizes up to 0.060". Pistons are also available up to 0.060" but large sizes are more expensive. Cylinder liners are available for very worn or damaged bores.

Now is the time when you must decide what sort of unit you want to end up with after your rebuild, or to put it another way, what your budget is. Pretty much every part is available. For these engines from us and many parts from other suppliers also so it really comes down to balancing cost against end result.

A fully rebuilt unit ready to fit into the vehicle will cost £2500 from us, about £1200 of that is parts, the cost is machining work, cleaning and assembly. It is often possible for the DIY rebuilders to produce a reasonable engine for around £1000 providing the base unit wasn't too bad.

If you are going to do your rebuild in stages then now is the time to oil up all the bits you are not going to need for a while and put them away somewhere safe.

The stages I would suggest are:

**Stage 1** Block, crank, pistons & rods.

**Stage 2** Exhaust valves, cam & followers, timing chain & sprockets, timing cover.

**Stage 3** Oil pump, sump, flywheel & housing, front pulley, oil filter & housing.

**Stage 4** Cylinder head.

**Stage 5** All extra bits (manifolds, carb, dynamo, starter, clutch, etc).

Overall: Use new circlips, lock tabs, split pins, gaskets and seals throughout the engine without exception.

**Stage 1** You will need to decide on a rebore (recommended) or just a hone and re-ring. Bores are always worse than they look because they do not wear equally all the way around. It is normal for one of these engines to require

0.030" bored out to clean up. If a bore is damaged or there is excessive wear, then liners can be fitted to return to standard bore size. Exhaust valve seats have a habit of cracking - if they are cracked then replace them. The original seats will cope with unleaded fuel if they are in good condition and the vehicle is not driven hard for long periods. If the valve guides are worn, then replace them also and definitely if the seats are to be replaced. Remove the 4 large core plugs, flush the block out thoroughly and fit new core plugs. The block can be refaced if the face is damaged or distorted. The crank should be reground unless it is really good - even small marks will reduce the life of new bearings dramatically. Normally less material needs to be removed from cranks than you might think. A crank has to be really bad not to clean up with a 0.010" grind. The 7/8" small end do not wear badly and as long as the new gudgeon pin is not slack in the bushes then they can be left alone. To cut the cost down it is sometimes possible to use a good second hand set of oversize pistons and bore the block to suit using new rings, pins & circlips. Always fit a new rear crank oil seal and fill it with high temp grease as per the manual.

**Stage 2** The cam and followers on these engines are their weak point and it is very likely that all these components are in bad shape. All the parts are available but are not cheap. As long as the cam lobes are not badly worn then the cam can be re-profiled and reused but the followers must be carefully inspected. The followers are hard chrome faced and that has a habit of wearing through, leaving a sharp edge of chrome pushing against the camshaft and machining it away. Check the faces of the followers in a strong light. If there is a dark line visible across the face of the pad, then the follower should be replaced. Note: followers must not be refaced in the same way as rocker arms - this removes the chrome coating and they last about 2 minutes!!! The follower shaft wear badly also and these should be replaced. The cam bearings can normally be re-used provided they have not picked-up on the cam. New exhaust valves are a good idea but a good set of second hand ones may be refaced at a pinch.

Valve springs are normally line to reuse. Fit a new timing chain. Check the tensioner assembly - wear here will reduce oil pressure. You will need to temporarily lit the flywheel housing and flywheel in order to set the valve timing.

**Stage 3** The oil pumps do not normally give much trouble on these engines. They are a gear type pump and as with all gear pumps the maximum leakage actually occurs around the end of the gears. I normally strip the pumps for cleaning and reface the upper part of the body (the large flat face on top of the gears) - this can be done in a good lathe. The gears should be inspected and if damaged should be replaced. New gears are like hens teeth but good second hand pumps are easily found. The bush in the Aluminium gear can be replaced if badly worn as can the spindle post but this is not normally necessary. If the strainer is damaged, then fit a new one - they are available and cheap.

Early type flywheels have integral teeth and these are normally badly worn. The only option there is to machine the teeth off and fit a shrunk-on replacement gear. Later flywheels have shrunk-on gears from new but ironically these hardly ever wear and should not need replacing. If the clutch surface is grooved or has surface cracks and signs of over heating then it should be refaced, otherwise a good rub with some medium emery will suffice.

Be sure to use the correct bolts and lock washers when reassembling the oil pump, flywheel & housing. Fit a new pressure relief valve ball also and a spring too if it shows signs of wear.

**Stage 4** Cylinder heads give very little trouble on these engines. All that is usually required is a good clean-up, cut the valve seats, lace the valves and reassemble. Do check the fit of the valves in the guides however and if there is wear then the guides should be replaced. Be sure to correctly fit new valve Stem seals and note that once the valves have been installed in them they cannot be removed without wrecking the seals. Retire the head if the face is damaged or distorted, otherwise just clean up.

The rocker shaft assembly should be stripped and cleaned. The rockers will probably need



refacing and the shaft will probably need renewing although the rocker bushes do not suffer badly and can normally run again. The pushrods should be inspected for the formation of "nipples" on the rounded end - these can be carefully ground off but a new set of pushrods is cheap and probably a better bet.

Reassemble all parts with the correct fasteners and lock plates etc. Make sure all head bolts are in good condition and tighten to the correct torque, including the two long studs that hold the rocker shaft also. Fit a new thermostat as a matter of course and check the water pump for any signs of roughness in the bearings or leaks from the drain hole underneath. The choke light sender plate may well be badly corroded - we have new ones but you will need to rejuvenate your old switch unit. These are simple and once carefully stripped and cleaned they normally work just fine.

**Stage 5** This is what we refer to as ancillaries. Inlet manifolds give no trouble, neither do the front pulley damper units so clean and refit both.

Engine mount brackets can be refitted with the correct lock tabs and new mounting rubbers should be used. If the water pump shown signs of leakage or roughness then fit a new one now - it is a lot more difficult in the vehicle. New radiator hoses are a good idea for the same reason, also a new fan belt. Early type "flat" fans have a habit of cracking where the blades cross over one another. Check this since losing a blade is a frightening and dangerous experience.

It is a good idea to fit a reconditioned Carburettor at this stage (or rebuild your own) since they have a habit of running rich and this causes "fuel wash" in the top of the cylinder bores resulting in rapid bore and piston ring wear - not good for a new engine. A badly worn distributor is no good either, the spindle will move away from the points causing a variable spark and erratic running. If in doubt fit a rebuilt unit. Starters and dynamos are easy to diagnose the condition of - they either work or they don't! Exhaust manifolds have a habit of warping away from the block in the centre and ultimately cracking. They are also notoriously bad on the exhaust pipe studs.

If yours is bad, then reface and re-stud it or fit a reconditioned unit.

And that's about the lot! There is no great mystery surrounding these engines provided you work methodically, follow good engineering practice and the workshop manual then a good job will result. We can supply any and all the parts that you may need, together with reconditioned sub-assemblies (such as oil pumps and rocker shaft units) and reconditioned ancillaries such as starters and carburettors.

Have fun and don't be afraid to ask if there is anything I can help with.

Ian M Cox  
www.coxandturner.co.uk

Cox and Turner Engineering have been in operation since 1992. Ian Cox is responsible for the machine shop and is a Series One Land Rover specialist. Martin Turner is an experienced engine builder and a recognised expert on Fordson Tractors.

# International ROVER Meeting Austria, Styria May 23-26th 2019



## The ROVER Club Austria is pleased to invite you to the International ROVER Meeting on the occasion of its 30th anniversary.

As the venue for the anniversary event, we have chosen the "Schilcherland" - also called the "Styrian Tuscany". Here lies the origin of the famous rosé-coloured wine, which is also known as the "ruthless-grape" and the "green gold", as pumpkin seed oil is often called. Due to its central location, the city of Eibiswald is an ideal starting point for all the activities that we will organize for you during the meeting.

Therefore, we would like to introduce you to our program. We are looking forward to welcoming many international and domestic guests in Styria and especially to a reunion with like-minded people.

### Place/Region: Eibiswald and the „Schilcherland“ (Southern Styria)

Accommodation: comfortable \*\*\*+Hotel with wonderful Paradise garden and Pool, alternatively: fortunate, well-tended bed and breakfast, resp. \*\*\*\*Hotel ca. 10 km / 6 Miles away

### Preliminary Program:

**Thursday, 23 May:** "Get together" in the afternoon at the "Klöpferkeller" Hotel in Eibiswald; dinner at a "Buschenschank" (traditional wine maker inn situated in wine yards)

**Friday, 24 May:** full day tour to Piber with the stud of the famous white Lipizzaner horses of the Spanish Riding school of Wien and to Red Bull-Ring in Spielberg (Ride with your own car on the racetrack in planning). Dinner at the Hotel "Klöpferkeller" in Eibiswald

**Saturday 25 May:** full day tour to Stainz incl. visit of the Seed oil mill in Herbersdorf, including a ride on the historic steam train, „Flascherzug“; Gala evening in an elegant atmosphere.

**Sunday, 26 May:** After breakfast ride to Austria's highest wine-growing village "Kitzeck im Sausal" along the south-Styrian wine-road to Graz. Farewell after Lunch

### Cost:

ca. 760 euros for 2 persons including 3 nights in double bed room in \*\*\*+Hotel, program description, entrance fees, ride at the Red Bull race track, 3 lunches, 2 dinners, Gala evening, excludes drinks.

Parking spaces for towing vehicles and trailers available, tours with road book and destinations for satnav devices, enjoyable special tests for drivers and cars, track also suitable for older vehicles.

Open to all vehicles of Rover-brands, Landrover, Range Rover, Rover-Mini, MG-Rover and all vehicles with a Rover-engine (e.g. TVR, MG GT V8, Morgan +8 etc.

**Contact:** Ing. Andreas Oberweger, Polluxweg 22/1/26, 4030 Linz  
T: +43 (699) 11615562 E; andreas.oberweger@liwest.at



## A few screen shots of an early Mk1 P5 featured in the background of the 1974 film 'Earthquake' which is set in Los Angeles, starring Charlton Heston and Ava Gardner.

The Rover is seen just 'post quake' amongst loads of other crushed and smashed 1950's & 60's American cars - it was surprising to see, given their rarity in America and for the fact that it's also in RHD - you can see the glove box & handle through the rear screen opening, on the left of the car!

Eric Rice.







# Geoff's Jottings

**One of the forgotten heroes of the Rover Motor Company is Peter Wilks.** Whereas his uncles Spencer and Maurice Wilks are often referred to, Peter seems to have been largely overlooked in

most books and articles yet his role was in many ways just as important. The main reason for this was his early retirement due to ill health in July 1971, a very crucial period for Rover and his untimely death the following year at just 52 years of age. Peter joined the Rover Motor Company in 1946 and together with George Mackie and Spencer (Spen) King were part of the new engineering talent required to take the company forward. The three of them decided to build a single seater racing car based on a prototype P3 chassis and experimental IOE four cylinder engine. The car competed quite successfully and is still in existence today albeit with a much more powerful engine. Peter is probably most remembered for some time away from Rover undertaking his joint venture forming the Marauder Car Company in 1950. He did this with George Mackie and the car was largely designed by Peter together with Spen King, another Wilks family member who stayed on at Rover. The Marauder was effectively a two seater touring car based on Rover P4 running gear and initially produced as a Model A with 80 BHP then later as a 100 with 105 BHP. During the two years that the Marauder was in production the UK government decided to increase purchase tax on luxury goods and this applied to cars costing over £1,000 resulting in the Marauder becoming unsaleable at over £2,000 compared to its initial price of £1,236. There were fifteen Marauders produced before the venture was terminated and George Mackie was immediately taken back on by Rover. A Rover dealer, Jack Gethin had helped with the Marauder project and Peter next worked there as service manager before being eventually rehired by Rover in 1954 as production manager at Rover Gas Turbines. In 1956 he returned to the car side of the business as assistant chief engineer and by the end of the 1950s he was chief engineer of passenger cars. It was his passion for innovative engineering that ensured the P6 was such a ground breaking car despite this making it more expensive to produce, a risk that paid off with good sales and profits yet it sold for 15% more than its nearest equivalent, the Triumph 2000. When Maurice Wilks died in 1963, Peter was appointed as the new technical director and was driving forward development of new engines, the P6BS sports car (eventually likely to be badged as an Alvis), the Rover 4000 (P8), the P9 and the Range Rover. It was Peter who reluctantly agreed to break off from other projects including a new 5 cylinder OHC engine and look into the possibility of re-engineering the Buick V8 to Rover standards. This was at the request of MD William Martin Hurst (another Wilks family member) and once he had, he became an enthusiast for the idea. After the upheaval of mergers and takeovers in the late 1960s, Peter had overseen the successful engineering of the new Range Rover and was now working on the P10 that soon morphed into the SD1 before his work and life were cut short. If he had lived on it is unlikely he would have allowed the cost cutting that plagued the final version of the SD1 and so separated it from the engineering excellence of its predecessors. Here is a



tribute to him from Motor Sport in 1971: "We recall being granted an interview about the light-alloy Rover V8 engine by Mr. Wilks on the eve of his summer vacation. In fact, he was flying that very afternoon to join his holiday yacht. Where? At Monte Carlo, so that he could watch the Monaco Grand Prix. Wilks is a quietly-spoken, modest engineer of rare ability, who is essentially a keen driver and a motoring enthusiast in the true meaning of this sometimes loosely-applied term. It is sad that he has had to retire at the age of 51."

**Vehicle taxation and legislation has been problematic** and frequently harmful to the UK car industry almost since day one of motorised transport. At the time of writing this, Jaguar Land Rover has introduced short time working and factory shut downs citing shambolic government policies as a major factor. The Red Flag act was one of the first impediments to progress in a literal sense as between 1865 and 1896 any motorised vehicle had to be preceded by a man on foot waving a red flag. Its repeal was as a result of widespread disregard and the move from external to internal combustion engines. Various taxes have been applied to vehicles over the years but from 1940 purchase tax was the blunt instrument with a starting rate of 33.3%. This was doubled in 1942 to 66.6% and in the following year raised to 100%. After the war, the rate was dropped to 33.3% but at times higher rates applied to luxury goods and the Marauder fell into this category for motor cars as it cost over £1,000 and attracted a 66.6% tax. Purchase tax was applied at the completion of manufacture rather than the point of sale as with VAT so was particularly hard on businesses and has been credited with ending many ventures. The rates having varied

over the years settled at 25% until being replaced with VAT as a requirement of our membership of the Common Market in 1973. VAT was set at 10% but so as not to miss out on revenue, the UK introduced a "Special Car Tax" of 10% and then VAT was added on top taking the combined rate to 21%. Currently if you buy a new car you will pay 20% VAT and a year one VED charge of up to £2,000 depending on the CO2 emissions. In addition, if the vehicle costs more than £40,000, as do most Jaguar

Land Rover products, you will pay an extra £310 each year for the following four years before it settles to the standard rate of £140. During the period when we were told that diesel was good and petrol was bad, there were taxation advantages in buying a diesel but now it is the other way round as the inevitable results of harmful pollutants from diesels are taking effect. My clean, modern petrol powered car comes from the "Petrol Bad" era and attracts a £540 annual VED rate, £400 each year more than it would if it was newer; my Land Rover Discovery is from "Diesel Good" but still costs £315 so I have no conscience at all running several VED exempt cars as well having paid my fair dues. An average gallon of petrol now costs a record £2.37 and then attracts £2.63 of fuel duty and a further £1 of VAT taking it to £6 so we can all feel a warm glow as we make our contribution to keeping the economy afloat when we drive our P5s around. That's all for now folks.

Geoff Arthur E: w.g.arthur@btinternet.com

*Any opinions expressed in this column might be those of the author and should not be assumed to be those of the Rover P5 Club. (I don't like to think about how much tax there is on motoring. Ed)*





# SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

These photos have TWELVE differences. Some easy, some difficult, some almost impossible. The answers can be found overleaf.





# Rovers under the Hammer

*Update from an article on page 26 of the last issue.*

By Eddie Halling

Two Rover P5Bs were in the sale at the Brightwells Classic Car Auction in Leominster on Wednesday 26th September 2018. The usual huge crowd of enthusiasts descended on the auction house to see a very large assortment of classic machinery come under the hammer on what turned out to be a gloriously sunny day.

Lot 153 in the catalogue was a well presented 1970 Rover P5B Saloon with a guide price of between £10,000 and £12,000.

LXC 680H in Silver Birch with a Mulberry interior came complete with an MOT until July, 2019, a file of history receipts and other papers, manuals and a bundle of old MOT certificates. It had been in single family ownership until May 2017. The car showed a mileage recording of only 58,000 miles. This same car was offered for sale at the same



catalogue was another well-presented car, this time a Burnt Grey over Silver Birch Coupe, with

auction house in July and failed to reach its then guide price of £9,000 - £11,000. Although the guide price had increased for this auction, the car failed to sell again.

Lot number 13 in the

Buckskin interior, RRO 633M. The guide price for this car was £15,000 - £17,000 reflecting its condition and the fact that it was a coupe. This car was registered August 1973 and must be amongst the last of its type to be built by Rover and had covered 84,000 miles since registration. Four previous owners were recorded for the car. It had recently been fitted with a new power steering box and has an MOT certificate until August 2019 with no advisories recorded. This Rover also failed to attract a buyer on the day and remains unsold.



**Remarkably this vehicle has history** dating back to when it was first purchased by Chief Air Marshall of the Royal Air Force (Sir Edward Chilton) who purchased the vehicle as part of his retirement in May 1971 and subsequently owned it until his death in 1992. During his ownership (where the first 100,000 miles of the vehicles genuine 120,000 were covered) Sir Edward Chilton was very particular with the vehicles maintenance and ensured that it was recorded correctly. As a result an extensive history file accumulated over the years which includes 2 full service books, extensive invoices for all work that has ever been carried out on the car along with every single MOT certificate dating back to the mid 1970's. Gareth Davison





# Heritage engineering apprenticeship cleared for Government funding

The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs are delighted to announce the Heritage Engineering Apprenticeship has been granted.

The original course, the only one of its kind in the UK with Ofqual accreditation, has a greater emphasis on preserving basic engineering skills and practices, to include options for heritage aviation, heritage marine and steam as well as road vehicles. The removal of any age criteria for the course opens it up to older students, particularly those looking for a second career or former service people wanting a career in civilian life.

The improved course has been created by a panel of restoration businesses and training providers to ensure the skills taught are those needed for the historic sector and these have also been "future proofed" by including a number of specialisms currently not available, such as Trim and Coachwork. Plans are being made to add these at a later date and the funding announced today will also cover these options.

The level of interest in the course has been tremendous and the Heritage Skills Academy that has been running the course from The Federation's dedicated facility at Bicester Heritage has seen significant growth in numbers of employers coming forward and particularly the number of people wanting to do this apprenticeship and make a career in historic vehicles.

Heritage Skills Academy Website: [heritageskillsacademy.co.uk](http://heritageskillsacademy.co.uk)

## ROVER P4 DRIVERS GUILD NATIONAL RALLY 2019

Main event on Sunday 24th at Newby Hall near Ripon, North Yorkshire.

On the Saturday there will be an opportunity to take part in a road run in this spectacular part of Yorkshire, and in evening a dinner at a hotel in Harrogate, open to members to stay for up to three nights at discounted rates. [www.thersr.co.uk](http://www.thersr.co.uk)

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By James Taylor

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## Promotional Car Register

Interested in seeing your car in the classic car press, on television or films, or even used in other promotional classic car event work?

Contact me with details of who you are, where you live in the country and importantly exactly what model of Rover you have.

**Eddie Halling, Promotional Car Registrar,**

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**T:01269 592926 E: [register@roverp5club.org](mailto:register@roverp5club.org)**





# STANDARD LOOKING 110 UNTIL YOU LOOK UNDER THE BONNET



A 1962 110, bought as a 'rescue job' for £550 via eBay around nine years ago, at a time when I was purchasing many rough cheap P4s and getting them up to being either roadworthy or at least viable running driving projects for others to continue with, essentially saving cars from the banger boys

**By Ian  
Portsmore  
& The Rover P4  
Drivers Guild**

This burgundy 110 was languishing in a shed on a farm in Shropshire needing a fair bit of work. The car had at some point in the past been prepared for banger racing and then saved and put back together, with a terminally ill Rover 90 engine and 95 non-overdrive box, which whilst they ran (just) and moved under their own power, they were beyond economical repair.

In reality the car itself was beyond economical repair also, but owning enough spares to replace pretty much anything and being able to do all the work myself the project was taken on anyway. Much work/welding/fettling was carried out to make the car solid and safe once again over a period of several months, which left the question of drivetrain replacement.



I had owned two V8 conversions previously and was interested in making this one a V8 conversion also. Whilst the P4 may appear to be an 'oddball' car to be fitting a large V8 to, the design in reality lends itself far better than most to the conversion. The enormous separate chassis and the same brakes that also stop



a not far short of 4,000lb P5 Mk3 3 litre Coupe from over 100mph make for an excellent base. By chance a complete, fully rebuilt Chevrolet Corvette V8 engine with six speed manual gearbox appeared on eBay for only £2,500 and I was the only bidder. This is essentially the same engine as is used in the Ferrari Red 100 that appeared at the National

Rally a few years back, but with a carburettor instead of fuel injection. This engine was not a difficult conversion as the physical size was not much greater than a Rover V8. With forward swept tubular exhaust manifolds there was sufficient clearance to retain the original steering box, and the sump hump cleared the central steering bar. After not so long the engine was rebuilt to my own specification to increase efficiency, torque and power.

At this stage of development of the vehicle a heavy duty front anti roll bar was in place, a 3.54 P5b diff utilised, the dampers refilled with slightly heavier fluid and 7/8" P5b rear wheel cylinders employed. Coupled with vehicle weight reduction of around 400lb pulling up sharply from over 100mph at a drag strip was accomplished with ease. The car was fun to drive and with a high efficiency, high compression engine and a 0.5 ratio sixth gear it would return 32mpg on a regular basis, whilst being quicker over a standing quarter mile







than a Ferrari Testarossa. The car also raced around Mallory Park in this guise and showed up a pair of 1990s V8 Ford Mustangs that were also in attendance, along with a lot of other modern cars.

After a few years of driving to shows and race tracks in this specification the need to go quicker was looming, in order to embarrass purpose-built race cars as well as quick modern road cars at the drag strip. The 'small block' Chevrolet engine was replaced with a 1960s design 385 series Ford engine rebuilt by me to my own specification. Fitment needed several engineering solutions to be attended to, as dimensions of the engine block were considerably larger than the previous GM unit. The bulkhead within the confines of the vertical reinforcement ribs was moved rearwards by 3" to make room, the steering box was replaced in favour of a modern Ford rack and pinion sitting on a fabricated steel subframe, mounted to the original steering box/idler mount points on the chassis. The exhaust manifolds were hand made tubular items at the expert hands of Tony Laws Exhausts in Leeds. You will have witnessed their handiwork if you've seen the long, swooping exhaust manifold under the bonnet of 'Bluebell'. These 31" length tubular manifolds feed into a twin 3" system with four silencers to keep noise to a minimum, mostly for the neighbours' benefit..... The leaf springs were no longer able to cope with the increased torque, causing a squirming sensation at the rear. So the decision was made to fabricate and install a competition rose jointed five-link axle location with coil springs replacing the leaves, as would commonly be found on a professionally prepared Mk2 Ford Escort rally car, or most drag cars.

The differential was sent away to XS 4x4 diff specialists where a KAM Differential 2.83 to 1 ring and pinion were fitted in a pegged case, with a Quaife Automatic Torque Biasing differential unit in the centre (like a limited slip diff but better). The pegging places an adjustable brass slipper block against the back of the crown wheel and prevents it being distorted or pushed away from the pinion in high torque situations.

All round QA1 re-valveable racing shocks from Summit Racing in America tuned for the road are now fitted with 900lb front Camaro springs and 250lb rears. The 900lb springs, whilst sounding harsh, still only give a 325lb wheel rate due to the wheel rate being bottom arm distance ratio squared x actual spring rate, with the P4 bottom arm ratio being around 0.6 at the centre of the spring. Rear wheel cylinders have been increased to Rover 90/75 1" items, giving the car the ability to pull up alarmingly quickly from over 120mph, whilst still retaining front brake bias at the point of lock up on a wet or dry surface. Despite the car being heavier with the iron Ford big block than with the smaller Corvette engine, the all-up weight of the vehicle is still around 300lb lighter than a standard 110. Needless to say there are a whole raft of other additions, improvements, changes and upgrades to make the car run as well as it does, whilst sticking to the road like glue, too many to list here without filling multiple pages.



Two pairs of original steel rims were sent off to Alonze Fabrications in Scarborough who are a wheel banding specialist, and came back 20mm wider on the outside and 30mm on the inside, which still fit within the confines of the original rear arches. One pair now wear a pair of wrinkle wall rear drag slicks and the other are shod with 225/80 r15 rear tyres for the road. Whilst the gearbox is now a 3-speed auto with no overdrive the car still achieves 20mpg on the road thanks to 13:1 static compression, tall axle gears and tyres, and a killer multi spark per firing stroke ignition system. The car has been built to be a road car rather than a race car and as such the engine is in a relatively mild state of tune and is very driveable regardless of journey type or distance.

The car is not driven at its limit for two reasons:

- The car leaves the start line at ¼ throttle to protect the current 'weak link' halfshafts, and rpm is limited to 4400 due to the pump-up effect of the hydraulic cam followers on a cam with aggressive opening ramps. Having said that, this 110 is still doing the quarter mile in 11.0 seconds and crossing the finish line at 123mph, which is a comparable time to a 2006 Bugatti Veyron. In English 0 to 60mph is in the threes, and 0 to 100mph is 7 seconds dead. Future upgrades are to fit tougher custom-made half shafts to the rear axle.
- Solid lifters have been fitted already in the engine to achieve higher rpm but have not been to the race track yet due to a bad back on the part of the owner, and half a step of high speed compression damping is to be removed for increased comfort on journeys.

The ethos with this 110 during the last nine years was always to have a P4 with a V8 conversion with the necessary updates and upgrades that still looked original without making the car look like a 'hot rod' or race car, including retaining the standard ride height. I think the P4 has beautiful lines and factory paint colours already, and indeed the car is very popular at shows and race tracks for appearing still to be original from the outside, and has won a couple of trophies and two national magazine features along the way.





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reliable through my ownership  
and has required minimal repairs.  
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TT Motors in Chelsea. Last service  
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(1of3)

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- brightwork has been next on  
list e.g. bumpers need re-chrome,  
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**Rover P5/P5B Saloons and  
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restorations or MOT failures,  
anything considered, please call  
with details, can collect, also new  
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## PARTS FOR SALE

None

## PARTS WANTED

**Bonnet** in good condition for  
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# THAT DAY IN... DECEMBER

## 21st

**1958: Easy victory for de  
Gaulle** General Charles de  
Gaulle is elected President of  
France with an overwhelming  
majority.

**1988: Jumbo jet crashes onto  
Lockerbie** A Pan Am jumbo  
jet with 258 passengers on  
board crashes on to the town of  
Lockerbie in Scotland - hundreds  
are feared dead.

## 22nd

**1972: Survivors found 10  
weeks after plane crash**  
The Chilean Air Force finds 14  
survivors two months after their  
plane crashed in the Andes.

**1989: Brandenburg Gate  
re-opens** Berlin's most famous  
landmark, the Brandenburg  
Gate, opens for the first time in  
nearly 30 years.

**1974: Heath's home is bombed**  
Terrorists bomb the home of the  
Conservative leader and former  
Prime Minister Edward Heath

## 23rd

**1956: Jubilation as allied  
troops leave Suez** The United  
Nations Emergency Force takes  
over in Egypt after British and  
French forces withdraw from  
Port Said and Port Fuad ending  
the Suez Crisis.

**1964: Beeching to leave  
British Railways** Dr Richard  
Beeching who instigated major  
and controversial changes to the  
rail network will quit, says the  
government.

## 24th

**1962: Bay of Pigs prisoners fly  
to freedom** More than 1,000  
men taken prisoner at the Bay  
of Pigs invasion of Cuba return  
to the United States in time for  
Christmas.

**1968: First astronauts orbit  
Moon** The Apollo 8 spacecraft  
and its crew of three astronauts  
become the first manned space  
mission to orbit the Moon

## 25th

**1952: Queen makes first  
Christmas speech** British and  
Commonwealth listeners hear  
the Queen's first Christmas  
broadcast since her accession to  
the throne.

**1977: Silent film legend  
Chaplin dies** Charlie Chaplin,  
the comic genius of silent films,  
dies at his home in Switzerland  
at the age of 88.

**1991: Gorbachev resigns as  
Soviet Union breaks up**  
Mikhail Gorbachev, leader of the  
Soviet Union for almost seven  
years, steps down from office.



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## SCOTLAND

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T: 01324 714406  
E: p5tgc@aol.com

## SUSSEX

• **Ray Pickett**  
T: 01903 208604  
E: picketts@ntlworld.com

## WALES (NORTH)

• **Glyn Davies**  
T: 01244 543978  
E: glyn-123@hotmail.co.uk

## WALES (SOUTH)

• **Eddie Halling**  
T: 01269 592926  
E: eddie.halling@btinternet.com

## YORKSHIRE

• **Ken Pick**  
T: 0770 697 9552  
E: onepick@outlook.com

# Club Social Meets

## BRISTOL & WILTSHIRE

• *The Cross Hands Hotel, Old Sodbury.*  
Occasional extra meeting at Brent Knoll.  
Last **TUESDAY** of the month.

## CORNWALL

• *Joint events with Devon during summer.*

## DEVON

• *The Blue Ball, Clyst Road, Clyst St. Mary, Exeter, Devon.*  
Third **TUESDAY** of the month at 12 noon.  
If requiring food, please call 01392 218655.

## DORSET & SOMERSET

MEET ALONG WITH P4DG  
• *The Old Thatch, Wimborne BH21 7NW.*  
First **MONDAY** of the month

## EASTERN

• *The Fox Public House, Bury St. Edmunds.*  
Third **WEDNESDAY** of the month.

## HAMPSHIRE

• *White Swan, Mansbridge Rd, Southampton SO18 3HW.*  
Second **FRIDAY** of the month.

## HOME COUNTIES

• *The Ely, London Road (A30), Camberley, Surrey GU17 9LJ.* First **TUESDAY** of month.

## KENT

• *Four Lymes, Hawley Rd, Dartford, DA1 1PX.* 3 miles from M25 J18 & A2 Dartford Heath Exit. Last **WEDNESDAY** of month

## LONDON & SURREY

• *OCT-MARCH at Silvermere Golf Club, Redhill Rd, Cobham KT11 1EF*  
APRIL-SEPT at Brooklands Museum  
Second **TUESDAY** of each month.

## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

• *The Overstone Arms, Ptychley, Kettering NN14 1EU.*  
First **TUESDAY** of the month.

## MIDLANDS (NORTH)

• *Cheyney Arms, Rearsby Lane, Melton Mowbray LE7 4XE.*  
Second **TUESDAY** of month from 6pm.

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## SUSSEX

• *The Jack & Jill Inn, Brighton Road, Clayton, Sussex, BN6 9PD.*  
Second **WEDNESDAY** of the Month.

## WALES (NORTH)

• *Wheatsheaf in Mollington on the A540.*  
Second **WEDNESDAY** of month.

# Overseas Contacts

**SWEDEN** • **Carl Gustaf Olsson**,  
Hyregatan 4 S-211 21 Malmö, Sweden.  
E: cgo@compaqnet.se

**HOLLAND** • **John Koster**, 'S-Gravenweg  
131 2 911 BH NIEUWERKERK AD USSEL  
E: jmdkoster@planet.nl

**AUSTRALIA** • **Warrick Ravell**,  
E: wassarov@tpg.com.au

**NEW ZEALAND** • **Adrian Chandler**,  
15b Hollis Place, Brightwater 7022,  
Nelson, New Zealand.  
E: pac1946@hotmail.com

# Other Social Meets

## READING, HOME COUNTIES

James Taylor  
T: 01491 201580.  
• *The Highwayman, Exlade St, Checkendon.*  
First **THURSDAY** of the month.

## HULL & EAST YORKSHIRE

**P6 Owners Club**  
Philip Robson  
T: 01377 241324.  
• *Tiger Inn, Lairgate, Beverley.*  
Third **WEDNESDAY** of the month.

## NORFOLK & NORWICH Rover OC.

Peter Cane  
T: 01508 470575  
• *Caistor Hall Hotel, Stoke Road, Caistor St. Edmund, Norwich, NR14 8QN.*  
Last **TUESDAY** of the month.

## DEVON (North)

• *Swan Inn, Bideford, North Devon Sports & Classic Car Club.* Third **FRIDAY** of the month.

## EAST SUSSEX P4 Guild, RSR, JRC, P5C

Richard Bryant  
All Rover owners welcome  
• *The Squirrel, North Trade Rd, Battle TN33 9LJ*  
Second **TUESDAY** of the month.

## HAMPSHIRE, ROVER OWNERS' GROUP

Eric Rice  
T: 02392 230255  
E: eric\_rice@btinternet.com

## GERMAN, HAMBURG BRITISH CAR MEETING

Königliches Proviantamt Bahrenfelder  
Chaussee 49 22761 Hamburg. P5 Club  
members welcome. www.british-cars.de  
• *Third TUESDAY of the month.*

## SCOTLAND (Clydebank)

Tom Willson  
T: 01389 874792  
E: tmj.wilson@virgin.net  
P6 Rep Glasgow area welcomes P5 Club  
• *West Park Hotel, Great Western Rd, Clydebank.* First **WEDNESDAY** in the month.

## THE YORKSHIRE ROVER CLUB

Dave Perrins  
T: 01274 579949  
E: perrinsdave@gmail.com

# Technical Information

**SERVO/3.5 LITRE/ELECTRICAL**  
**Geoff Moorshead T: 0127 637130**

## MECHANICAL

**Gus Ellis**  
Mon-Thur 8.30-10pm  
Sat-Sun 10-12 noon **T: 020 8842 3219**

## INTERIOR/SEATS

**David Lee T: 023 8069 3416**

**Forum, for general information and includes technical sections:**  
<http://roverp5.proboards.com>

## MAGAZINE CONTACTS

### MAGAZINE - BACK ISSUES & DELIVERY

**Geoff Moorshead**  
18 Rowans Close, Farnborough,  
Hampshire GU14 9EJ. T: 0127 637130  
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### CARS & SPARES FOR SALE/WANTED ITEMS & ADVERTISING SALES

**Peter Madden**  
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### MAGAZINE EDITOR & PUBLISHER

**David Dallimore**  
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E: editor@roverp5club.org.uk

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### CHAIRMAN

**Ray Pickett**  
Kenneggy House, 91, Upper Brighton  
Road, Worthing BN14 9HZ  
T: 01903 208604  
E: chairman@roverp5club.org.uk

### CLUB SECRETARY

**Mel Newton**  
5 Lady Winefredes Walk, Great Billing,  
Northants NN3 9EE. T: 01604 407139  
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### MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

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### TREASURER, CARS & SPARES FOR SALE/WANTED ITEMS & ADVERTISING SALES

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### OVERSEAS REPRESENTATIVE, ADVERTISING OFFICER & DVLA REGISTRAR

**David Lee**  
65 Ormond Close, Fair Oak,  
Hampshire SO50 8FG. T: 023 8069 3416  
E: international@roverp5club.org.uk

### CLUB REGALIA, PROMOTIONAL CAR REGISTER & INSURANCE VALUATION OFFICER

**Eddie Halling**  
3 Newtown Close, Penybanc,  
Ammanford, SA18 3TX.  
T: 01269 592926  
E: regalia@roverp5club.org.uk

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### CLUB SPARES

**Position vacant. Please contact the club Chairman for further info.**

### EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR & REGIONAL REP CO-ORDINATOR

**Paul McKay**  
54 Colne Ave, Millbrook,  
Southampton Hants SO16 9PB.  
T: 02380 321687  
E: events@roverp5club.org.uk

### MAGAZINE, INTERNET & FORUM

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### MEMBERS

Geoff Moorshead	Mel Newton
Peter Madden	David Lee
Eddie Halling	Paul McKay
Ray Pickett	David Dallimore

### CLUB HISTORIAN

**James Taylor** T: 01491 201580  
E: roverjames@btinternet.com

Those who run a pub meet are listed separately so if anyone wishes to hold a social event that's not listed here, then please don't hesitate to contact me.

**REGIONAL REP CO-ORDINATOR: Paul McKay. T: 02380 321687 E: repcoordinator@roverp5club.org.uk**



*Had a lovely day driving yesterday clocked up around 150mils, with all new running gear including some refurbished parts, shocks new tires etc driving like a brand new car.  
Paul Bliss*

