

Some pictures from Alan & Helen MacRae's trip to the Dunsfold Land Rover Collection in England



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1966 Land Rover 110" Air-portable Gun Tractor Prototype
 Chassis number: 110-1
 Registration number: VXC 100F
 Engine type: 3.0 6cyl Petrol
 Gearbox type: 5 Speed
 Vehicle spec:
 This odd prototype was one of three built as a private venture by Rover as an air-portable gun tractor. It was also designed to tow a power-driven trailer with the 105mm Field Gun behind that – a Rover take on the old Morris 'Quad' which towed an ammunition limber and the 25-pound gun. These prototypes were in Rover military engineering at the same time as the 88" Half Ton and the 101" Forward Control.
 The MoD eventually awarded a contract to Land Rover but it was for the 101" Forward Control rather than for this vehicle, and the project for the 110 Gun Tractor was eventually stopped in 1968. This is the first of the three and differs slightly from the only other survivor which is number two. The gearbox is a Turner 5 speed and it has two transfer boxes to enable trailer drive in low box. We acquired our vehicle from Land Rover in 1972 where it had been in use as a gang mower. We drove it home and from that day on we consider it to be by far the worst Land Rover to drive of any we have experienced.
 A full restoration was carried out in 1994.



1966 Prototype Half Ton 'Lightweight' military evaluation vehicle
 Chassis number: 24125945
 Registration number: PYY 577D / 21 BT 85
 Engine type: 2.25 Petrol
 Gearbox type: 4 Speed
 Vehicle spec:
 This is one of the first prototypes of the Half Ton 'Lightweight Land Rover. It is one of six built in 1966 for MoD evaluation and all were extensively modified as the trials progressed. Our vehicle initially carried the service number 00 SP 15 and then 21 BT 85. It was sold at the MoD sale at Ruddington in August 1983 and was later painted blue.
 Somewhat used and abused, it came up for sale on an internet auction site in 2008 and was acquired by us. There is very little on the body or chassis that is similar to the eventual production models. The chassis and bulkhead required extensive restoration caused, we think, by wading and sea trails early in its military career but we were able to save and re-use the body panels. We think this is probably the oldest Half Ton on the road today.



1991 Challenger Prototype
 Chassis number: JUNO01
 Registration number: None
 Engine type: 2.5 Gem 2 TDi
 Gearbox type: 4 Speed
 Vehicle spec:
 This is one of three Challenger Prototypes built in 1991. The idea was to have a common platform for all vehicles in the Land Rover model range.
 The chassis and cab are based on the Discovery 1 and the body is hand made to fit the 114" chassis. The vehicle was the only military-style pick-up made although it is really only a mock-up and never intended to be driven – even the sills are made of wood! The other two were civilian station wagons. On this vehicle the door tops and windscreen are removable to create a low silhouette vehicle.
 The engine is a prototype of the 300TDi Gemini 2 (although the air cleaner was never made) and the gearbox is a Range Rover 4 speed automatic. The axles are Discovery to Camel Trophy specification. Electrics are 12V and 24V.
 This is the only surviving Challenger – the other two were crushed.



1967 Series 11A 88" Buick V8 test-bed for the Range Rover
 Chassis number: 8884/2158
 Registration number: BXC 975G
 Engine type: 3.5 V8 Petrol
 Gearbox type: 4 Speed.
 Vehicle spec:
 This 88" is totally unique. It has a prototype V8 Buick engine fitted by Land Rover in 1967. The registration number is later than the vehicle build date as it ran around on trade plates prior to registration. It is one of three test-beds built for mileage testing with the V8 prior to its installation in the new Range Rover. It still retains the Series 11A crash gearbox but uses high-ratio differentials. It has larger brakes all round and radial tyres for high speed safety.
 After its trial days were over it went to the test track at Gaydon where it towed a surface friction trailer for many years. At this stage it was fitted with a station wagon hard top and was painted Masai Red with the roof painted in Sahara Dust, which was apparently a paint scheme trial.
 Since acquiring it, we have completed a ground-up restoration and decided to finish the vehicle as it was in the late 1960s. The light blue was never a Land Rover production colour but the three test vehicles were all paint assessment cars as well. The other two cars were broken up, making this the sole survivor of the vehicles that played an important role in the development of the Range Rover.