

NEWSLETTER

July 2018

Billing Land Rover Show

Strictly speaking the Land Rover show was at the end of June and finishing on Sunday the 1st July but as I did not do a write up it in the last newsletter I thought it would be a good idea to start off this newsletter with it. I'm sure many of you will be aware that the Billing Land Rover show was the original Land Rover show started many years ago (20?) by LRO magazine. After several attempts to take the show elsewhere to a bigger and better site the organisers finally lost the use of the Billing Aquadrome as the main showground for the show due to the owners wanting to put more mobile homes on the site. As the off road course was actually on the other side of the river and includes the lakes and mud run for which it is most famous for, the land owner decided he wanted to continue the tradition of running a Land Rover show at Billing so he came up with his own version of the show and named his the Land Rover Experience Billing.

The central part of the show where the trade and club stands were was the first field you come to as you came down the road onto the site with the adjoining fields being used for all the other campers. Our club pitch was pretty much in the centre of the field with the Freelanders club next to us and an off road club with their lifted and brightly coloured discos and landies opposite us. There was about 6 of us there over the weekend with Jon doing his marshalling duties on the off road course and Marcus turning up for each of the 2 days. What was noticed was that we were the only response group there with all the other clubs being purely Land Rover/off road clubs. At the end of the rows were the trade stands, perhaps not as many as there could have been but certainly enough to keep people interested with several people buying more bits for there Landies myself included. In the field above us there were several challenge vehicles racing around the field and going over various obstacles including an old lorry. It looked like they were racing but they were taking people for rides in them.

Unfortunately as we did not have our flags with us and only the A boards with all the pics on so our stand did not really stand out amongst all the others. Although for me there was quite a bit of interest shown in my RR with one guy telling me he owned 11 Land Rovers! and an Esarco, the story was that he went to buy the VM diesel engine only to be told by the owners wife that the vehicle that it was in had 4 axles on it. Some people have all the luck don't they.

Near the end of the day Jonathon arrived in his 6x6 110. I must admit it did look very smart with it's new paint job and new set of wheels and tyres (all 6 of them!). Just a shame about the engine and gearbox combo.

When all the activities had finished and before it got too dark an attempt was mad to form the longest convoy of Land Rovers and hopefully get in the Guinness Book of Records. It really was quite a site seeing all the various models of Landies of all configurations from old to new, smart to highly modded, to good old every day drivers. Not sure of the numbers but if you look in the various Land Rover mags they did actually set a new record for the longest Land Rover convoy.

Later on in the evening we got friendly with a group who were quite near to us and it transpired they had brought along some little radio controlled 110 Landies. The next moment we were having a little competition to try and drive these little Landies over a miniature off road course. This was great fun as the little Landies were very robust and certainly off road capable with their large off road tyres and supple suspension. The detail on them was very impressive.

We went back to our stand to see the off road club with all the lifted Discos and Landies had decided to turn all their LED lights on and when I mean all of them, there stand was lit up like Blackpool Illuminations.

Up bright and early (as usual for me) and after having a walk round the main field came back to have an early breakfast only for Adam to offer me one of his excellent bacon butties (thanks Adam they were very tasty).

Now that Jonathons 6x6 was on the stand it did draw more people on to our stand, not surprising really as it was the only 6x6 Landie at the show.

I had a chance to go round the off road course with Marcus in his Disco which was much appreciated but as we missed the mud run the first time we decided to go round again. We chose what we thought was the best line to take but we still got managed to get stuck. I think this was due more to the size of tyre on Marcus disco than anything else. Still good fun and thanks for the ride Marcus.

It was a very enjoyable weekend and it would be interesting to see how the show develops as the true successor to the Billing Show has moved to Kelmarsh and one of the Land Rover magazines has already mentioned this in the later edition of their magazine.

Newton Longville Fun Day

As a thank you for the work we put in on the LRM Off Road Driving day and the Brackley Carnival Mark Stoppes of Experience the Country had offered to let us have a go on his Segways and the reverse steer Disco. After a brief chat and a coffee in his reception room we went outside to see the Segways for the first time. We weren't allowed to just jump on them and go so one of Marks female assistants gave a talk and short demo on how to ride a Segway. It was obvious by the way she was calmly standing on it and the next thing she was wizzing round us that she was very experienced at it. It was suggested that the speed was kept down to 4mph and if she felt we were confident enough she would increase the speed to 12mph.

There weren't enough Segways for all of us so some had to sit down under the tree and watch the first ones go slowly round the field which was entertaining. After the first lot went round a few times it was time to change over. How do you describe a Segway?. Basically it is just two foot pads between two wheels and a tube coming up from in front of the pads to a handlebar a bit like a bicycle handlebar. To go forward you lean forward and to turn left you pull the handlebar to the left and right to go right. As these were the off road Segways they had the large tyres with chunkier treads. After going round the field a few times it was decided that we were all confident enough to have our speeds increased. Now this was fun!. I was really enjoying this. I'm sure the rest of the group were but I was having so much fun myself I didn't really have a chance to see how the others were getting on!.

Next it was onto the reverse steer Disco. After a short Break we moved up to the next field where a nice white Disco one was parked up and laid out in the field was a simple course made up of cones. Not sure who went first but it did look entertaining when whoever was driving was having to constantly turn the steering wheel in the opposite way to what you expect to avoid hitting the cones. After we all had a go I think nearly all the cones had been knocked over at some point. I didn't do quite so well with the reverse steer Disco but we were all very impressed with how well Sallys daughter did.

To achieve to reverse steer Mark had taken a gearbox from a gang mower and mounted it between the bulkhead



and steering box. In the gangmower this would be 1 to 3 gearing to spin the cutters faster but when mounted in the Disco it was mounted the other way round so it was a 3 to 1 so that is 3 times the amount of steering compared to normal. This was what I thought made it more difficult as you were having to do an excessive amount of correction with the steering. I think most of us knocked over the cones at some point but the most impressive driver out of all of us was Sallys daughter. She was very calm and collected and didn't knock that many cones over. We just had to remind her to steer correctly when taking her driving lessons the following week!

Relay for Life

This was another one of our car park marshalling duties but for a worthwhile cause as it's for a cancer charity. As it's on a Saturday I unfortunately could not attend but I believe we had a good turnout for this event. This one was held at the sports facility at RAF Halton so it is the nearest one to us but there were others being done elsewhere, the next nearest one was at Oxford which we were also asked to help out but could not due to too short notice. While not a 4x4 event it is good to get involved in some worthwhile causes and get our name out in the public. If we get involved in in doing a bit of recovery/ general helping out so much the better.



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