

5  FIFTY YEARS OF THE BEST 4x4x4

LAND ROVER



50 *years* OF ADVENTURE



# 50 years in the global business



In 1948, the original Land Rover was launched as the 'go-anywhere vehicle'. It was a bold claim, but even the most optimistic company executive could not have predicted just

how far the original, utilitarian concept actually *would* go. Fifty years on, the name Land Rover has become the accepted synonym for all-terrain capability, a name known and revered in some of the most remote places on the planet, often because it needed one to get there. Land Rover has conquered the world, something no dictator ever managed.

It is still with the quest for the unknown that the Land Rover name is most readily associated, which is why, on the following pages, we meet two buccaneering people for whom a Land Rover is an indispensable tool of the trade, a means to a far end of the earth.

And yet – for a vehicle conceived as a workhorse, the Land Rover has become incredibly glamorous. No self-respecting Hollywood producer should be without a Range Rover, and nothing offers a better embodiment of the gung-ho spirit of adventure than an ancient, stripped-out Series 1 complete with a few battle scars. Here, to celebrate the first half-century, we offer a selection of Land Rovers in elevated company and roles its creators would not have anticipated. ■



Above: Adam Faith, 'Budgie' to you



Above: suitably equipped, a Land Rover can even fly. Right: on the set of *Saving Private Ryan* with director Ian Bryce





Left: fit for a queen, and made by Royal Appointment ever since

Right: Jennifer Saunders, this time in stout British company



Above: a Land Rover takes to the water. Later models would be able to travel under it



Above: Nick Berry – the East End boy done good



Left: Winston Churchill, at last fully equipped to fight them on the beaches



### SWEDEN **LARS ERICSSON** Surveyor and smoker

**L**ars Ericsson takes a deep, therapeutic puff on his pipe. The bowl glows momentarily bright orange, a welcome nugget of warmth and comfort in the freezing expanse of the Swedish interior. It can be minus 35 out here, but Ericsson – stout boots, several pairs of trousers, big jumper, hat, gloves and a beard – doesn't mind. He loves the Great Outdoors. He'll sleep in the Discovery if necessary.

He's a surveyor, but he is not to be confused with the man who levels your new garage floor. He'll do such work, but is much happier when required to take himself off to the middle of nowhere and then work out

exactly where he is with astounding precision, using a combination of laser-based surveying tools and GPS positioning kit. 'We are not dealing with the truth here, but we try to get as close as possible,' he says. Does to within a millimetre sound near enough?

He has done work for the Swedish railways, plotting the precise course of existing track to an accuracy of 1.5mm per kilometre so that modifications can be made. More onerously, he has been involved with the laying of new lines, which are usually built starting at both ends simultaneously. He puts his pipe back in his mouth and taps the tips of his index fingers together: 'They must meet in the middle,' he explains. Obviously, but obviously not easy judging by the calculations involved. 'This makes my brain boil,' says the man who specialised in mathematics.

But Ericsson is at his best when 'part surveyor, part archaeologist'. In the early 19th century the King of Sweden had the whole

country surveyed to establish once and for all the borders of people's land. With the passing of time, inheritance and the growth in population, the land has become divided, and disputes inevitably surface.

Now Ericsson, the swashbuckling surveyor, steps in. Using original maps, he can re-plot the boundaries of old, and now he is as likely to resort to his spade as his optical instruments. Often, under the soil, he can find a *röse* or two, the small stone piles used by his forebears to mark out the land. 'It is so exciting, following in the footsteps of the great surveyors,' he says of this curious collision between high-tech and the dust of history.

But were these ancient surveyors really that accurate? They used rulers and giant wooden dividers after all. He pushes the pipe back in his mouth, the lighter sparks, he stokes up the tobacco and indulges in a deep, reverential puff. 'Oh yes, they were good,' he says. 'They were *very* good.' ■



**P**aul Flaherty was in the SAS for 16 years, so he's no softy. But even he, a man who has roughed it in some of the world's most hostile terrain, admits that the desert is 'frightening'. He talks of 'environmental awareness', by which he means not stuff about taking your litter home but the dangers that lurk in the landscape. He can even produce a chart showing how many days you can survive at a certain temperature with a given amount of water. Some of the numbers are quite small.

We head out from Flaherty's headquarters in Dubai for about 30 miles. Road gives way to scrubland, and scrubland to rolling sand dunes. To one side is the unforgiving expanse of a gravel plain, to the other, mountains. He views it all as a giant assault course.

This year, on behalf of the United Nations, he organised the World Peace Games' opening Desert Marathon, a gruelling 220km endurance event by foot and mountain bike

and with a bit of abseiling thrown in.

Flaherty now runs North Star Expeditions, a desert driving and survival school aimed mainly at corporate clients. 'All part of management training,' he says, disturbingly. But don't worry, he's not so military that you'll be told to get your hair cut and then, when you've had it cut, get it cut again. 'We're not putting people through a commando course. You can't take a bloke out of an office and put him through *that*. He wouldn't last very long,' he says, though only slightly reassuringly.

Our host guns the engine to keep momentum in the soft sand – an essential desert driving technique slightly alien to those used to going gently on difficult surfaces – and stops among the dunes. As with military exercises, preparation is all. 'Head into the sand not knowing anything, and within five minutes you're lost,' he says, which is why his fleet of Discoverys is equipped with GPS navigation systems. Otherwise, they're standard. 'We

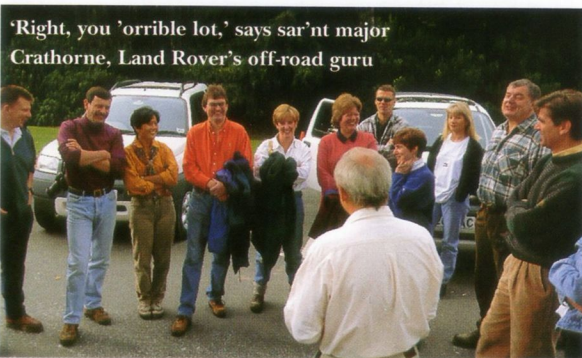
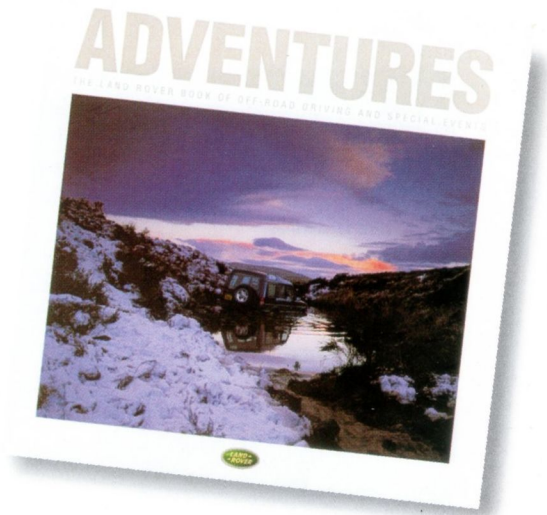
## DUBAI PAUL FLAHERTY Bronzed adventurer

didn't bother with bull bars,' he explains, 'because there aren't any bulls in the desert.'

The air conditioning has been on. Opening the door is like opening the door on a giant furnace. The air is still, the desert silent, and the intense, dry heat beats into your brain and distorts your sense of perspective. Stand still for a few minutes and the heat of the sand creeps up through your boots and fries your feet. It's good to know this bloke also trained as a medic, because by the time the photograph is taken we've nearly had it.

Respect. 'The thing *I* really respect,' says Flaherty, 'is the forces of nature.' ■

# Take part in the adventure of a lifetime



'Right, you 'orrible lot,' says sar'nt major Crathorne, Land Rover's off-road guru

Some of the world's most memorable overland expeditions have relied on Land Rover. Now Land Rover is relying on you. Owner/drivers are required to take part in the renowned Adventures programme, a series of stunning expeditions designed to exploit the abilities of the best 4x4xFar whilst stretching your imagination.



Land Rover's Adventures programme can be thought of as a roving, multinational convention for restless spirits. It is not to be confused with a mere owners' club – there are no membership formalities, for example; the qualification for getting involved is simply that you own one of Solihull's vehicles. So perhaps in that sense it's one of the most exclusive motoring clubs in the world.

And the world is where it's at. Inspired by the all-conquering capabilities that have established the marque's reputation, Adventures offers the sort of mind-expanding travel experience that a Land Rover makes possible.

As a result, it attracts people from the world over as well, people drawn together by the innate desire to push the limits of personal exploration and turn what might otherwise be a mere holiday into the event of a lifetime.

Since when did you consider driving to the jungles of Belize in Central America to investigate the temples of the Maya? Or retracing the gruelling route of Hannibal's victorious army from Spain to Italy via the Pyrenees and Alps? Did you ever imagine

that you could explore the ancient desert kingdom of Jordan overland, reserving amongst your accommodation a couple of nights with the Bedouins under the same star-spangled sky that captivated Lawrence of Arabia? Bet you didn't.

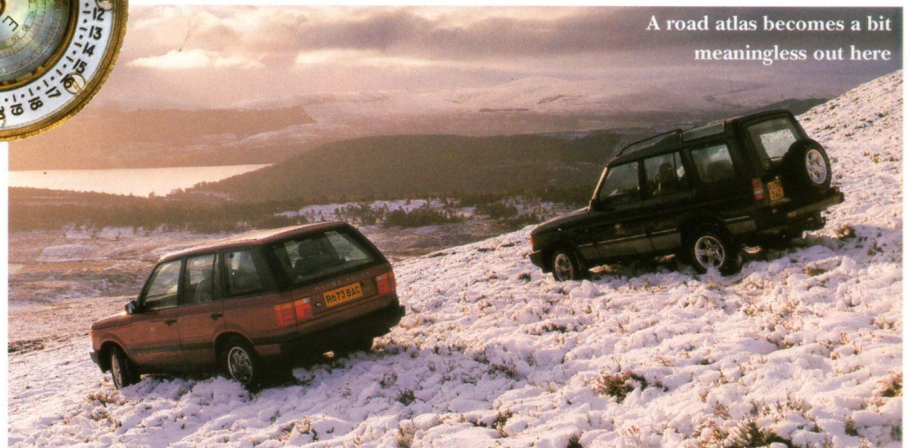
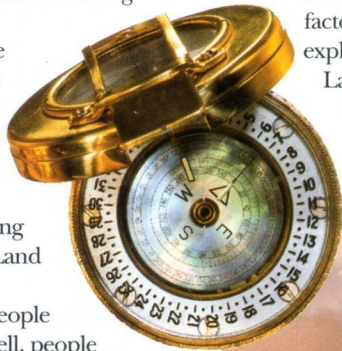
There are 17 events in the annual Adventures calendar, ranging from a VIP tour of Land Rover's famous Solihull factory to a nine-day expedition exploring Australia's Red Centre.

Land Rover Adventures embraces other healthy outdoor activities such as fly fishing and features events tailored to families.

Then again, you might prefer just to drive across the Atlas mountains instead...

If you've never ventured into the rough before, you might like to tackle the 'Jungle Fever' day at the factory's own training ground under the expert direction of Roger Crathorne, Land Rover's off-road guru. He'll soon knock you into shape while revealing, in complete safety, your vehicle's astounding capabilities.

All you need to get involved with Adventures is a Land Rover. Oh, and a dose of pioneering spirit, of course. But we can assume you've got that, can't we? So all you have to do now is ring the number ■



A road atlas becomes a bit meaningless out here



# Celebrations take to the road

Other companies might celebrate 50 years of market leadership with a commemorative clock. Land Rover, however, is sticking to what it's famous for and produc-



Range Rover Vogue 50

ing commemorative versions of its iconic off-roaders. These Collector's Edition Land Rovers are finished in striking Atlantis 'micatallic' paint, which changes from blue to green depending on the light conditions,

and feature unique refinements. The Collector's Defender V8 50 boasts, for the first and only time, the 4.0-litre V8 engine with automatic transmission, while the Discovery Anniversary 50

is enhanced with a host of special features that are not available on the standard vehicle, and never will be. It is also available finished in White Gold. The

Collector's Range Rover Vogue 50 is an uncompromised expression of the original Range Rover philosophy, trimmed in luxurious

leather and host to every conceivable feature, including a rear TV and video system. Land Rover Collector's Editions are truly landmark vehicles. ■

**For more information about  
Land Rover products call**

**0800 110110**



Defender V8 50



Discovery Anniversary 50