



The Dunsfold Collection

A NEW MUSEUM

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Dunsfold may be just a small village in Surrey but it has a big place in the history of Land Rovers.

It was here that in 1968 the late Brian Bashall founded a small country garage which, due to his interest in the Solihull product, soon became known as Dunsfold Land Rovers (later simply DLR). Before there was much interest in the history and heritage of Land Rover, Brian began collecting rare and unusual versions of the Land Rover. This interest must have been in the family DNA as Brian's son Philip followed in his footsteps by continuing to run the business as well as expanding the collection of vehicles. Philip was soon to become a widely respected expert on this subject and has helped many enthusiasts over the years. DLR became the go-to place for spares, repairs and advice, particularly for early and unusual vehicles.

With most of the collection of vehicles being in store, it was at the very popular Dunsfold Open Weekends when enthusiasts obtained the chance to view



the amazing display. However Philip had a wish that the vehicles, together with the vast archive of drawings, models, books and promotional material should be safeguarded for the future. The first

step towards this was in 2014 when the Dunsfold Collection became a registered charity managed by a board of trustees consisting of Philip Bashall, Richard Bedall and Gary Pusey.



Around 2020 Philip felt the time was right to close DLR as a working garage and parts supplier. Of course DLR would be greatly missed by all who used its services but what was to follow would turn out to be a great project. With the help and support of a number of people, Philip and the trustees started to transform the garage buildings into a fantastic permanent Land Rover Museum.

The culmination of all this work was on Sunday, 11 June 2023 with a grand official opening. This was for invited guests who had worked on the project or supported it by subscribing to the Friends of Dunsfold Collection.

A very nice sunny day saw about 120 enthusiasts gather at Dunsfold for a first view of the museum and I am sure that like me, everyone was amazed and impressed to see the change from an oily workshop to a clean and bright museum full of all sorts of Land Rover history.

About 25 vehicles are fitted into the



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building together with numerous display cabinets full of memorabilia and items hanging from the walls. But we must remember that there are a further 100 interesting vehicles in storage elsewhere. The intention is to rotate the collection at times to give a different display.

On this opening day it was also interesting to walk around the car park and see the variety of Land Rovers which the visiting guests had arrived in.

Understandably the museum does not have the resources to open on a daily basis but they will be welcoming pre-booked groups for tours so I am sure that a number of our area reps will gather their members and organise a trip to Dunsfold. You will not be disappointed.

The official opening was just the next step and they will continue to need our support. For more information on the collection or to support by making a donation or joining the friends of the collection see www.dunsfoldcollection.co.uk.

