

# DUNSFOLD DIARIES

With Philip Bashall

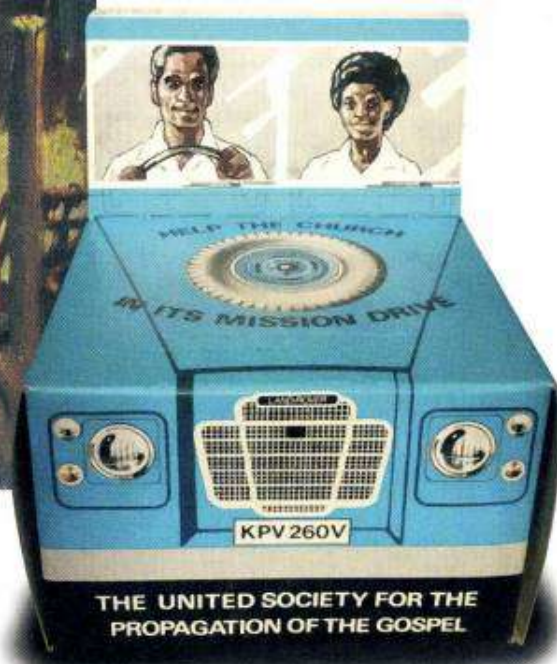


#### Left and below:

Painting of a Series I 86 by Terence Cuneo was used on a 1950s brochure; fold-together charity collecting box makes clever use of the Landy's shape

#### Facing page from top:

'Blueprint' of a 1970s Range Rover would have hung in a BL dealership; Freelander sketch is signed by key LR personnel; 1950s advert from a trade mag



## Home Decoration

Fancy something Land Rover-related to hang on your wall at home? Philip has a few suggestions

**O**NE OF the consequences of being involved with the Dunsfold Collection is that I'll often receive an enquiry about a Land Rover that someone owns, or a request for some other kind of information. Occasionally the message is a bit more intriguing, and something I've noticed happening more and more often is that a relation is clearing out a deceased family member's home and they've come across Land Rover material that they don't know what to do with.

I was recently contacted by a chap who had a Range Rover 'blueprint' to dispose of. It's not actually a real blueprint but a promotional piece of artwork issued by Unipart in the 1970s, mounted on blockboard, and it would have hung in the sales manager's office in a British Leyland dealership. At least one other blueprint design was made, this one depicting a

Rover SD1, and there may have been others. They're pretty rare now.

This chap wanted to sell it and asked me what I thought it was worth. I replied that I had no idea; all I could tell him was what I personally would pay for it if it turned up on eBay and I had a bit of cash in my PayPal account. Such things are almost impossible to value. But we agreed a sum and when the blueprint turned up at my office I was amused to notice that whoever drew it has given it a touch of the Gerry McGovern - the roofline has a noticeable downward slope, very much like the current Evoque and Velar!

Over the years, Land Rover has produced a lot of promotional display material although, oddly, it didn't really do much in the way of posters until the 1980s and '90s. That's despite using some brilliant illustrations for the brochures of the 1950s and '60s, by some

truly skilled artists. The best-known of these is Terence Cuneo, primarily an industrial illustrator who did a lot of posters for British Railways - older readers may remember that his artwork featured on the covers of Triang-Hornby model railway catalogues too.

Cuneo paintings hardly ever come up for auction and are extremely expensive when they do - we're talking tens of thousands of pounds - but he did some gorgeous work for Series I and II brochures, which are more affordable, if no longer cheap. The painting above, showing an 86in Series I pulling a hay trailer in a farmyard, is typical and it was also used for postcards. Cuneo was famous for incorporating a tiny mouse in his railway paintings as a kind of secret signature but I can't find it in the Series I painting, even though it would have been right at home in the farmyard setting!



I'll come back to Land Rover brochures in another column, because they're such a vast subject, but I can't resist mentioning the charity collecting carton, pictured left, which I found flat-packed in a big collection of brochures that I bought recently. It folds together from a single printed sheet of cardboard and is cleverly designed to make good use of the boxy lines of a Series III. It was produced for a church missionary organisation spreading the gospel in Africa and has nothing to do with Land Rover, but interestingly the registration number on the front is a genuine one and it was issued in 1980 to a gold Rover SD1 2600.

Original brochures are far too nice, not to mention expensive, to cut up for their artwork these days but another source of nostalgic illustrations is the old magazines found in junk shops or antique centres. Magazines such as Country Life often carried full-page adverts for Land Rover and they look great when framed. You can buy repro versions at autojumbles but a complete, original magazine is unlikely to cost more than three or four quid from a junk shop.

Old copies of motoring magazines such as Autocar or The Motor will give you a greater hit rate for this kind of advert but sometimes you find them in unexpected places. I have a Land Rover supplement that was given away with a trade magazine called British Engineering &

## "One source of nostalgic illustrations is old magazines"

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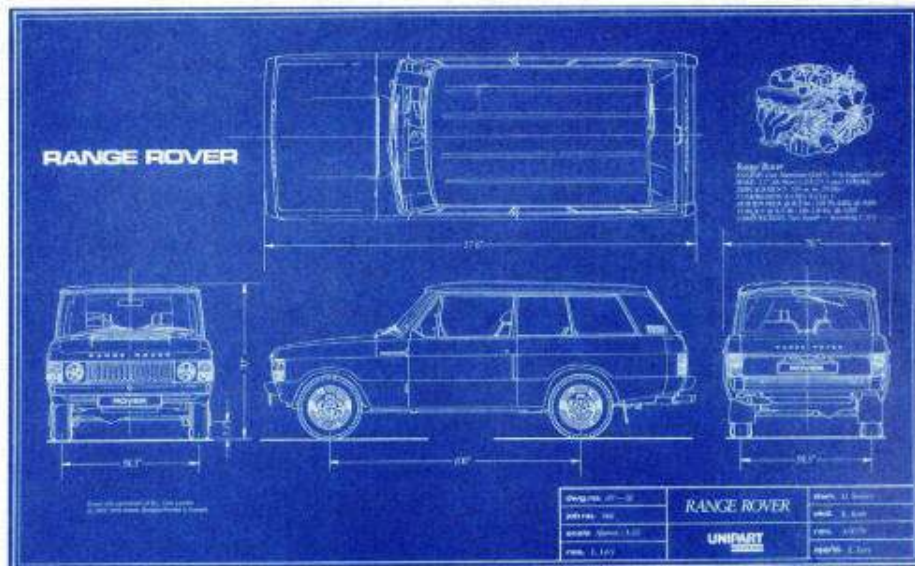
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Transport in November 1959 and it's entirely dedicated to adverts from Land Rover's suppliers. Among them is a wonderful ad (left) for Sparto sidelights, taillights and flashers, as fitted to the Series II when it was launched. Sparto lights were only used for a few years and are now quite rare and sought after, so the advert really appeals to the anorak in me.

Artwork of a different kind started to appear from Land Rover in the 1990s. As the company tried to freshen up its image, it went back to using illustration again. The first handbooks for the P38 Range Rover had beautiful coloured drawings by motoring artist Bob Freeman, and there was a limited edition print of a P38 styling sketch by its designer George Thomson. This was followed a few years later by the sketch – more of a caricature, actually – that was produced to celebrate the Freelander Fifty 50 Challenge.

vehicles, two of which visited 50 countries within 50 days, crewed by Land Rover employees. When the Dunsfold Collection acquired one of these vehicles, it came with a framed version of this print that's been signed by lots of key personnel.

Naturally, prints like this can be hard to find, especially if they were only presented to insiders at the factory. But it's amazing what turns up for sale these days, 20-plus years later – after all, one man's unwanted inheritance is another's treasured collectable.

**THE DUNSFOLD COLLECTION** is not yet open to the public but is hoping to establish a permanent museum. You can help make that a reality by becoming a Friend of the Collection for an annual subscription of £35. Visit [dunsfoldcollection.co.uk](http://dunsfoldcollection.co.uk) to find out more.