



Land-Rover SIIA

Run by Tim Bulley
Owned since March 2012
Total mileage 40,540
Miles since August 2015 report 186
Latest costs none



Clockwise, from top left: awaiting the Brooklands start; dodging wildlife; Jono on the maps; Pétre's DS kept the Land-Rover company en route; Bulley on typically reserved and understated form



LANDIE BECOMES A CHARITY CASE

I first met Phil Wall just over a year ago. He was introduced to me by my friend Richard Eyre, who had invited me to listen to Phil's idea for an event where he'd ask classic-car owners to lend their pride and joys to people who would pay top dollar to drive them in a rally. It sounded nuts – I thought it unlikely that owners of Ferraris, Maseratis and Astons would volunteer to let complete strangers loose in them.

Then I met Phil, who is one of the most captivating individuals that I have ever encountered. He is driven by a powerful personal cause. Nineteen years ago, on a trip to an orphanage in Johannesburg, he met Zodwa – an 18-month-old toddler with HIV. He formed a bond with her where others had not been able to and tried to adopt her.

To cut a long story short, the adoption failed, but he and his wife Wendy resolved to improve the lives of children orphaned by HIV. Nineteen years on, their organisation, WeSeeHope, is more than your everyday charity. Through its Village Investors Programme, it

seeds small amounts of capital into communities to kick-start businesses, and trains young people in skills and enterprise, enabling them to have a sustainable future.

I found his approach inspiring and clearly so did others. Now in its second year, the Hope Classic Rally has grown from 40 cars to around 50, with 100 drivers and passengers including me, my mate Jono and SVR 35H. This year's drive was from Brooklands to the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu.

The night before the off, we arrived at Brooklands and parked up alongside the likes of a Ferrari 250GT SWB, an XK120 and a Gullwing. The dinner was great fun and gave us an opportunity to meet some of the other participants. I sat next to Steven Baert and his friend Dieter Pétre, who had driven from Paris in Dieter's Citroën DS. This was to be the car's first outing since its restoration.

My friend and neighbour David Ball was also participating in his 550 Barchetta, and had kindly donated his 456 and Lotus Esprit for others to drive. The sound of 50 cars starting up was nothing short of musical, then we got in line behind Dieter's DS with David's

Lotus following us, and filed out onto Brooklands' famous concrete, sounding our horns as we went. Before long, we were out in the Surrey Hills, following some twisting lanes. Jono was doing a sterling job at navigating and, even as two E-types overtook us, we were happy bouncing along at 45mph.

Fifty-odd miles later, we turned down a single-track lane to arrive at our lunch stop, The White Horse at Priors Dean. The field in front of the pub was transformed into an amazing display of classics. In the rally marquee, we ate a fine BBQ lunch while listening to a live jazz singer. There I met Rachael, whose husband had won a competition that Dunhill had been running for clients. They had been given one of the E-types to drive and were having the time of their lives.

As Jono and I checked the route for the final leg to Beaulieu, Ant Anstead from TV's *For The Love of Cars* came over and was very complimentary about SVR. I knew that he was a big Land-Rover fan but, in the context of what was surrounding us, I told him that he was being very generous with his remarks, to which he responded by asking me if I wanted to swap cars.

"What are you driving?" I asked, and he pointed to an ex-Duncan Hamilton Jaguar XK120.

I was having such a fun day out with SVR that I wanted to complete the rally with her, but Jono was clearly keen, so I thought about it and told Ant that, because I was an owner-driver on the event, I wasn't insured for the XK. He suggested that we grab one of the organisers, but someone shouted to start our engines and it was time to go.

Back on the open road, SVR and the DS were leading a group that consisted of the SWB and Gullwing, plus a Ferrari 275GTB, a Daytona and the two E-types. Each time we reached a straight, we waved them on, enjoying the sound of the engine note as they roared past. Spectacular views on the run past Winchester gave way to the heathland of the New Forest, the convoy slowing every mile or so to give way to the famous ponies.

Bang on 2pm, we arrived at Beaulieu to the delight of museum visitors, who were able to enjoy this eclectic display of historic vehicles. After a welcome afternoon tea, we heard from two of WeSeeHope's supporters, who spoke about a trip to Uganda where they had seen the charity's work first-hand.

Talk moved to what more we could do to help. Phil Wall gave us the answer when he drew the day to a close. The event had raised £300,000, including a generous contribution from a donor who'd agreed to match whatever was raised in Friday's auction.

Phil had brought together a group of people who shared a love of classics, to harness their energy to help children in desperate need. His request was to spread the word, so please, if you'd like the opportunity to drive your dream car – or better still, if you have a classic and you'd be happy to put it to work – do get in touch with WeSeeHope (www.weseehope.org.uk). You'd be saving lives and you'll have enormous fun doing so.

THANKS TO

- Jono Lye for navigating – and being understanding about the XK120



Leaving Brooklands ahead of Ball's Esprit