

OHIO ROVER

Autumn 2024

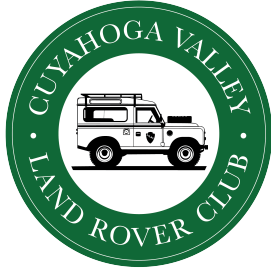


CVLR Campout

Recent Events

Rover Around Ohio:
Scott Scooter Wickham

Rover Projects



Ohio Rover

AUTUMN 2024

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Cover Photo: CVLR summer camp aerial shot with drone by Mike Nizami

Back Cover: Gene Paulin's P38 sits proud at the summer camp out

Out the Alpine Window

DJ Harvey

As 2024 ends we mark the first full calendar year of Cuyahoga Valley Land Rovers. We've had several successful meetups this year. The big hits have been the ice cream social, the summer camp out, and the covered bridge tour. New friends and new connections have been made both locally and beyond. A newsletter has been compiled and presented to the world. The meetups have allowed for a variety of people with different vehicles and goals to participate in ranging from social gatherings, pavement excursions, and off-road adventures. I have met some amazing people in this group, and I know there are countless more wonderful individuals and stories that need to be shared. It has been an exciting privilege to organize meetups and bring people together to celebrate our enthusiasm for Land Rovers.

Organizing meetups is not easy. It takes a considerable amount of effort, energy, and planning. But the effort is worth it! I express my deepest gratitude to all those who have participated this year in any shape or form, as well as to those who wanted to participate but were unable to do so. I understand that other priorities often take precedence over rovers! The time I've dedicated to CVLR activity and membership growth has been supported by some fantastic rover enthusiasts in the North American space beyond Ohio, and I am deeply grateful for their guidance and mentorship.

Another milestone of the year is our invitation to become members of the Association of North American Rover Clubs (ANARC) at the social club level. As one of the newest clubs in North America our experience and community has been noticed and our experiences have been shared with other rover enthusiasts from across the continent.

I look forward to 2025 for our group. We will again be taking advantage of the wonderful opportunities found here in Ohio and within the region including a second camp out, a bridge tour in the fall, and a winter trip to West Virginia. I hope to see the same faces I've seen this year as well as meet more of our group members who may not have ventured out to a meetup. Please know you are invited to join in the camaraderie and friendship we share because of the vehicles we enjoy.

Please enjoy this newsletter and thank you for being wonderful members of the Cuyahoga Valley Land Rover Community.

Happy Holidays, Happy New Year, and Happy Roving!

Cuyahoga Valley Land Rovers Summer Camp Out!

Story: DJ Harvey Photos: DJ Harvey, Gene Paulin,



Located along the northeast Ohio border, Southington Hunt Club is home to more than 1500 acres dedicated to the pursuit of outdoor firearm training and off-road vehicle use. On the first weekend of every month, the Hunt Club doubles as “Southington Offroad” (SOR) and hosts camping and off-roading for 4x4 vehicles. These weekends are well attended by 4x4 enthusiasts mainly comprised of Jeep owners. Southington Off-Road was once called Jeep Skool (pre 2012) and has played host to various Land Rover related events in decades past.

On July 26-27, 2024 the Cuyahoga Valley Land Rovers convened at Southington Offroad for a private Land Rover only weekend. This was the first overnight event and campout for the group. A volunteer team from CVLR worked with the Southington Off-Road owners to set up the event and navigate facility use. The final cost to attendees was 65\$ per truck which could be paid in cash at the event or

purchased in advance online via an Eventbrite registration webpage. The attendees’ costs went directly to Southington Offroad to cover the cost of the staff, facilities, campsites, and trails. The remaining balance of the venue was covered by anonymous sponsorships.

The weekend weather was perfect. When the gates opened at 4pm the temperature was warm but not hot and with low humidity. The sky was blue with the occasional white clouds rolling by. I pulled in the gate shortly after 4pm and immediately found myself behind the first attendees to arrive: Dave and Kris Whaling from Pennsylvania. They came prepared in their black RV and matching black Discovery 2. The camp host, Cheryl, met each driver at the check-in cabin and directed the attendees to the campsite. The campsites are laid out in a large oval with at least twenty sites between mature deciduous and coniferous trees. Each site had





electrical hook ups as well as fire pits and a nice flat area for ground tents. Several yards to the west of the campsites is a large outdoor pavilion with picnic tables that seat at least 50 people. A plastic child's play set flanks the pavilion to entertain children that come to SOR off-road weekends. To the east of the campsites is a brick modern bathhouse split for men and women with well serviced toilets, sinks, and hot showers. Just beyond the pavilion the beginning of several trails

can be found. As the club members arrived Friday afternoon tents were set up, tables laid out, firewood collected, and pleasantries exchanged among the attendees. Southington's owner Dale came by in his gator to greet the attendees with camp host Cheryl and to make sure everyone was comfortable. Dale and Cheryl visited and shared stories of prior land rover events in decades past. After the club members had settled and camps were set up, an evening trail ride kicked off



the event. A one-mile loop through sand, mud, and up a rocky climb led to the upper rim trail. The climb up the hill allowed the drivers an opportunity to test their vehicles abilities to climb up steep, unstable, and off camber ground. Once every rover had reached the top of the climb we caravanned back to camp on the upper rim trail with occasional stops to take photos along the rim overlook. The evening ride lasted about an hour. Once back to the check-in cabin the first-impression smiles could only be

matched by the group's eagerness for dinner.

A group dinner was shared under the cabin's large porch where hot dogs and burnt hamburgers were grilled. After dinner, Kris Whaling graciously offered to handle cooking for the next event (no doubt spurred by my suboptimal management of the grill temperature)! Following dinner and homemade brownies provided by Kris, the crew sauntered back to the campsites where Tom Martin had prepared a roaring fire. Camp chairs soon found themselves circled around the fire pit where stories of past adventures and dreams for upcoming trips were shared. Two more rovers rolled in while the group sat around the fire: Mike Nizami's LS swapped disco and his Range Rover Classic driven by his friend Carlos Aveilis. In total eight rovers and ten campers attended: Tom





and Cora Martin and their L322 Range Rover and G4 Discovery, Gene Paulin and his P38 Range Rover, Mike Nizami and Carlos Aveilis in the LS swapped Discovery and Range Rover Classic, Dave and Kris Whaling and their Discovery 2, Aaron Bucco in his classic Defender 110, and DJ Harvey in his Discovery 2. The campfire served as an excellent place to congregate and engage in great conversation and camaraderie that lasted past 11pm.

The night was quiet and peaceful. The sleeping temperature was comfortable and there were minimal bugs. The morning sun rose but did not heat up the tents due to the tree cover at the campsite. Morning birdsong was a welcome greeting. Everyone supplied their own breakfast

but before long grills and fire pits and eggs and coffee were shared among attendees. Following breakfast a driver's meeting was held at 9AM. In addition to guidelines for safe driving, gifts bags were provided containing clubs shirts, notepads, pens, coffee mugs, and an event sticker. The group then set out to prepare their trucks for the trails as well as dedicating ten minutes to campsite litter clean up as a sign of appreciation for our hosts. As the trucks lined up to hit the first trails, the property owner and camp host personally greeted the group with a fly by in Dale's gyrocopter!

The attendees then hit the trails starting with a repeat of the lower and upper rim trails conquered the night before. This gave an opportunity for everyone to practice and reinforce the previous night 's experience. Once up the prior evening's climb, confidence was established and the upper rim trail was tackled. A couple of trucks with more experienced drivers detoured off the upper rim trail to the backwoods trails. Meeting back up at the cabin the crew then ventured to the southern half of the park to visit the lake (see the cover photo). Several trucks took a more challenging route that involved moderate mud, rocks, climbs, and descents. At the lake the rovers drove to the water's edge where the drivers and passengers had a snack break and photo op. Mike Nizami had a chance to deploy his drone for some great shots of the rovers. We then drove to the sand dunes where sand driving technique instruction and tips



were able to be shared as the sand attempted to capture a few rovers. Near the sand dunes various vehicles attempted hills climbs of varying difficulties. Once the hill climbs were completed the drivers and riders were ready for a late lunch. The summer heat finally set in and several drivers were ready to make the drive home or to other weekend activities after eating.

With lunch completed and several attendees on their way home, the stragglers Tom and Cora Martin, Mike Nizami, and DJ Harvey were not ready to call it a day and they revisited additional trails in the “Back Woods” where plenty of mud and challenging trails were found. Winch recovery was performed more than once to recover the discoveries and range rover

classic. After a few hours of trails, mud, and recovery the remaining vehicles returned to camp to pack up. Tents, chair, and flags were put away, the trash was placed in the dumpsters and a final sweep of the grounds was made to ensure the venue was left better than we found it. The first club campout was by all measures a success, with the group experiencing group meals, campfires, and trails of varying difficulties that challenged both beginner and experienced drivers. The more challenging trails were left unattempted this trip. Cuyahoga Valley Land Rovers is already in talks with Southington Offroad for a repeat event in 2025. We hope to see you next year at the Cuyahoga Valley Land Rover Campout!

Rover Around Ohio

Scott Wickham + Winston

An Original Fort Pitt Rover

Story: DJ Harvey Photos: Scott Wickham and DJ Harvey



The Fort Pitt Land Rover Group (FPLRG) came to life one evening in 1996 at The Mighty Oak Bar when three friends celebrated the acquisition of Scott's first Land Rover. The name of the group was scrawled on a bar napkin and the "group" in the name was intentional because "everyone uses the name club!" Scott's 1972 88" Series III was found on the side of a hill in McKeesport, PA by the late Jon Humphrey. With the help of the late Russ Wilson and Scott's father, the four of them loaded the series onto a tow dolly and towed it with Jon's Range Rover Classic to Scott's family business at the time, Scot Automotive. Scott's Series III now complimented Jon and Russ's rovers to create a trio of rover enthusiasts and owners.

The path that led Scott Wickham, also known by many in the Land Rover community as "Scooter", to rovers started as a young man while he worked as a professional bicycle mechanic in Verona, PA. Born in Pittsburgh and raised around cars, Scott's childhood provided a healthy dose of mechanical ingenuity and technical skills. Scott's grandfather owned a scrapyard and a Nash Motors Dealership near Oakmont, PA. Nash cars were the first to offer seat belts in the US, with a factory option in 1949. Scott's father is his namesake and was also a business owner, having his own inspection station named "Scot Automotive, Repair, and Welding". Scott began wrenching at age 7 and he discovered a natural talent for mechanics and engineering. He quickly developed a love for all things mechanical. In high school Scott began working at a local bicycle shop that allowed him to leave school at noon during his senior year. In addition to mechanics, Scott developed a keen interest in both photography and



writing. After high school Scott continued work as a professional bicycle mechanic and on an unassuming day in Verona, PA, Scott's passion for Land Rovers was revealed.

On a 1990's early summer afternoon Scott came across a right-hand drive bronze green 1967 Series IIa 88" with a tan soft-top parked on the side of a two-lane street near the bike shop. Scott was captivated by the vehicle and approached to examine every detail. He recalls noting the double-sided lug nuts and the idle control for the power take off. What

perplexed him most was whether the shift pattern was the same or reversed to a left-hand drive vehicle. While transfixed on the vehicle the owner approached introducing himself as Russ Wilson. Russ recognized a future enthusiast and gave an invitation: "want to go on a trail ride later?" Scott excitedly replied "of course!" After work the two met up and Scott led Russ to a trail on the edge of town where they got stuck twenty feet into the trail. Scott became doubtful of the vehicle's capabilities however Russ had a few tricks up his sleeve! After engaging four-wheel drive and low range the series rover climbed up and over every obstacle on the trail. A lifetime friendship blossomed that day. Russ and Scott met frequently after work to discuss and wrench on the series rover. That summer Russ invited Scott to join him at the Ottawa Valley Land Rover Club's Birthday Party. The two traveled to Canada together with another Land Rover

enthusiast, Jon Humphrey. Jon caravanned with the duo in his mid 1960's 109" series rover. The event was highlighted by rovers, beer, campfires, and the particularly notable arrival of a Scottish enthusiast, Mike Liodice, who bounded into the event to the music of bagpipes. Scott was bitten by the rover bug on the streets of Verona but his enthusiasm was cemented at the Ottawa Valley Land Rover Club Birthday Party. After Scott later acquired his first Rover the trio of men established the FPLRG.

Scott's 1972 Series III needed a major overhaul to become road worthy and the trio of friends, with Scott's father help, were up to the task. The rover was given new life with the aid of the shop, the purchase of a MIG welder, and the use of an old Apple computer to access forums and connect with enthusiasts around the country. Inspired by Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom, Scott gave the Series a

Zebra paint job. With the looming Land Rover 50th anniversary at Greek Peak in Cortland, NY approaching in 1998, the truck was made ready for the event despite a rear main seal oil leak. Scott and his father trailered the series behind their Ford F250, where the pair enjoyed the event (and undoubtedly marking the territory everywhere they went from the oil leaking out of the bell housing wading plug!). At the conclusion of the event, Scott's confidence in the Series was solid. He drove the rover home to Pittsburgh with a case of





oil in the tub while his father followed behind in the F-250.

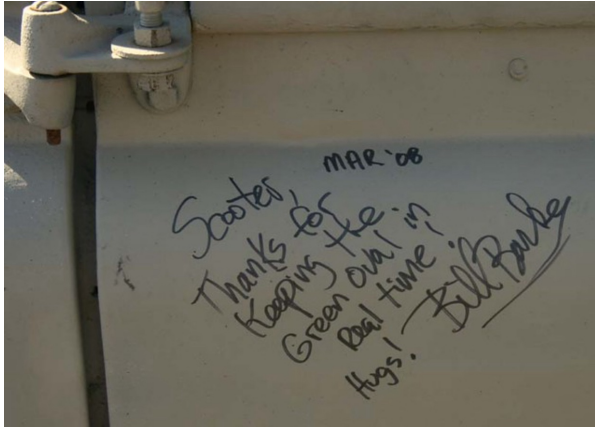
The rear main seal leak was repaired and the “ZebraTruck” visited countless events over the ensuing years including multiple trips to Ottawa Valley Land Rover club events and the Mid Atlantic Rally in Virginia. Friendships were made with other enthusiasts well known in the community including Mark Love of Pennsylvania and Bill Fishel from Ohio. As the FPLRG community grew, the accumulation of stories had amassed into a library of memories and adventures. Ask Scott about how he and Bill met Mark Love (you can hear the story on the Centre Steer Podcast #139), or about the time Scott and Bill went to Wellsville, OH, or about the time Scott camped next to Bill Burke, and you will hear riveting stories that capture moments of Land Rover history.

Scott’s collection of Land Rover’s grew after the purchase of a 1986 grey market range rover classic. Scott boarded a Greyhound bus from Pittsburgh to bring the range rover home from Boston. The range rover underwent extensive modifications including shortening the wheelbase to 90”, reusing the original mechanicals of the range rover, installing

a Defender 90 front end, a series tub/rear end, a series split windshield, and a sand glow paint job. The build took a year and a half. The modified Rover’s debut (and build completion) was at an early 2000’s Mid-Atlantic Rally. The truck went on to carry Scott and friends to multiple club and national events.

In the 2010’s other life demands took precedence, and Scott’s rovers enthusiasm became dormant. More practical vehicles for daily life were needed. The FPLRG soldiered on with the energy of established and new members including the late Dave Carroll, Cory Anderson, Harold Bisel of Jagspeed Motorworks Ltd. and “Freelander” Johnny Kostuch of The Centre Steer podcast fame. With the world slowing down during the global pandemic Scott’s enthusiasm for rovers blossomed once again after a coworker suggested Scott check out a Land Rover Defender Facebook page. Scott and his wife Michelle were on the hunt for a new fun vehicle when Scott found Winston, a 1986 right hand drive ex Royal Air Force Ninety. After two trips to WV to collect the vehicle and all the spare parts, Winston made a new home with Scott and Michelle in Pittsburgh. The truck is well apportioned with a 2” lift, upgraded





radius arms, a replaced rear cross member, a winch bumper, and a front skid plate. The truck came from the factory with a 2.5L diesel engine that had been replaced with a 200tdi by Glen Coyne in the UK. However, to import the vehicle, the original engine had to be swapped back. After a year of ownership Scott purchased a 200tdi to do an engine swap. Once again, another deadline loomed on the horizon to complete the build: the Land Rover 75th anniversary celebration at Greek Peak. Like the refrain from a favorite song, completing the Rover build in time for the Greek Peak event flooded Scott with memories of the 50th

anniversary celebration he attended with his father. Winston was trailered to NY where Scott and Mark Love drove every trail available. Memories are like diamonds, and the Ninety Winston was the living embodiment of this at the Land Rover Greek Peak Diamond Jubilee.

Winston and Scott were recently spotted at the Black Friday event hosted by the Cuyahoga Valley Land Rovers at Southington Offroad in Garrettsville, OH. Several of the FPLRG members were in attendance and new rover enthusiast friendships were made. Meeting and talking with Scott is like peering into a time capsule of rover history with the name of familiar people and events. The principal theme that weaves its way throughout each story is the decades of interpersonal friendships, adventures, and a commitment to each other. Be sure to keep your eye out for Winston in 2025 and when you see the Ninety be sure say Hi to Scott!



Recent Meetups and Events

July:

20th: British Car Day Hudson-Cleveland: Northeast Ohio British car show

Attendees: Tom and Cora Martin (G4 Disco) , Eric and Kelly Brown (D1) , Gene Paulin (P38), DJ and Naomi Harvey (D2 and L405)

We gathered in the morning for coffee, donuts, and to see the British vehicles.



26-27th: CVLR Camp Out at SOR

Read about it in this newsletter!

August:

23rd: End of Summer Ice Cream Social: Country Maid Ice Cream, Richfield, OH

Attendees: Eric Brown (D1), Cindy Malixi, John Sandoval who is visiting from Sydney Australia and club member of Range Rover Club of NSW (L663 110 – in Australia), Mark Shock (L663 90), and DJ Harvey (LR4)



September:

7th: Coffee and Rovers:

Coffee at Heartwood Coffee in Hudson, OH followed by trail riding at SOR

Attendees: Mark and Peggy Francetic (Series 3), DJ Harvey (LR4)



October:

5th: Land Rovers and Covered Bridge

Tour of Northeast Ohio: 14 of the 19 bridges in Ashtabula County OH were visited

-Read about it in the next newsletter!



Upcoming Events:

November:

29th: Black Friday Rovers at Southington: gates open at 9. Meet for check-in and coffee/donuts, hit the trails at 10! Bring a radio, warm clothes, lunch, and a recovery point!

Cuyahoga Valley Land Rovers

Member Rover Projects!



It's not just a cliché! Check out some of the projects going on in our neck of the woods. Do you have a project not listed? Let us know!

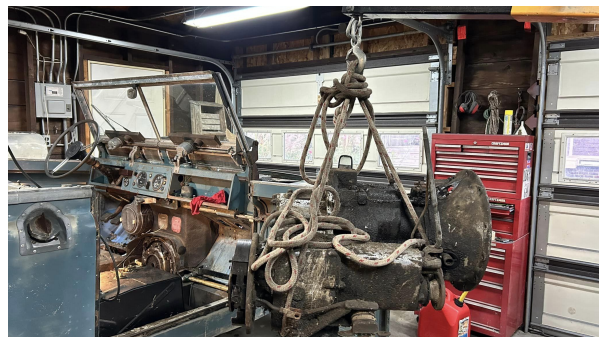
Ryan Deiwert: rebuilding a Discovery 2 and doing an LS swap



DJ Harvey: working on a chassis swap for a Land Rover Series 3 88"



Steph Hronek: started a refresh on a Series 2a gearbox and transfer box



Tom and Cora Martin: bits and bobs to their completed chassis and engine swap on their NAS Defender 90



Mike Mossman: recently completed the rebuild of a Land Rover Series 3 88"



Mike Nizami: rebuilding a classic Defender 110



Gene Paulin: repairing the chassis on the Discovery



Jim and Julia Thomasson: rebuilt the engine on their new Range Rover Classic



Dave Whaling: rebuilding a Land Rover Series 2



Special Note:

CVLR want to extend a special Thank you to Cheryl and Dale at Southington Offroad who were amazing and gracious hosts and provided wonderful support to the club at its inaugural camping event.



