Rebuild of 80” Series I Landrover.

I bought this old Landrover in the early 1980s, it was in a poor state and partially stripped down, it is a 1952 80” wheelbase with the small 1600cc overhead inlet / side exhaust engine with second generation 4 speed gearbox plus 2 speed transfer box and de-selectable 4 wheel drive selectable by the later red and yellow stick knobs (rather than the 1940s ring pull type) but still fitted with an auxiliary power take off (pto) as standard, the front axle is the early type, but fitted with later wide leaf springs, the rear springs are the earlier narrow type, the headlamps are larger type of the 1950s, there was a choice of two bulkheads, both in poor state (to fit the small rounded dash panel which was missing) it came with a set of new tires and the option of a brand new ex mod engine block.

The vehicle was stripped to the bare chassis which was cleaned by a combination of scraping, wire brush, sander and needle gun, the rear cross member and rear spring hangers were repaired by cutting out rotten metal and welding in new, the gearbox cross member was well rotted so a new one was fabricated and fitted. The leaf springs were taken apart, cleaned and re assembled.

The rear axle was cleaned, the diff removed and checked, new wheel bearings were fitted, this normally would involve a large hydraulic press to force off the old bearing and tight fitting retaining ring, we managed by splitting the old retaining rings without damaging the half shafts, tapping on the new bearings, then heating the retaining rings cherry red and tapping them home with a length of pipe that just fitted over the half shaft, you only get one chance at this so you need everything to hand.

The front axle was also stripped and cleaned and the diff checked etc, it was treated to new wheel bearing, swivel housings, bearings and bushes, while stripping these down we discovered that the joints were the old tractor joint type rather than the later Hardy Spicer type, see picture.

The axles springs and chassis were all primed then given three coats of smooth black Hamerite paint.

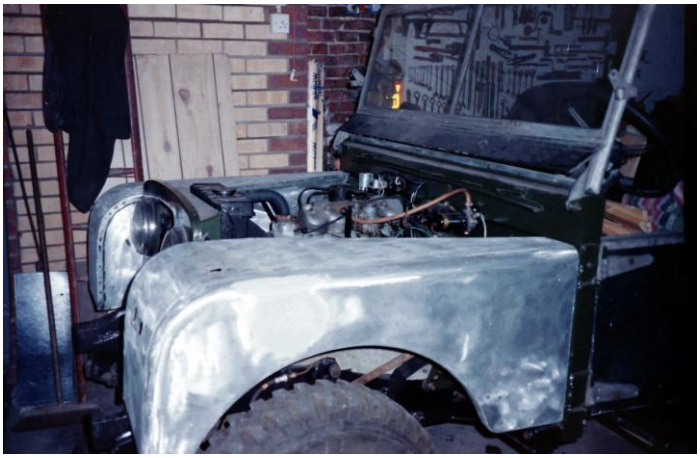
The original bulkhead was cleaned and measured, as at the time new ones were not available, a new outer frame was made using an 8’ x 4’ sheet of 2mm thick steel sheet and a borrowed guillotine and bender to form the box sections, the good centre section of the old bulkhead was cut out and welded into the new frame along with the outer section of the dash panel, the whole assembly was finished in primer them bronze green gloss (brushed on)

The engine was rebuilt using the new block and standard pistons, with the original cam shaft, reground crankshaft and new shells, the head was overhauled along with the carburettor, the engine was assembled and painted grey.

There was some concern with the gearbox as when the oil drain plug was removed about two gallons of water ran out, but once the covers were removed it became clear that as the water had leaked in the old oil had formed a white slime that coated all the moving parts and had not allowed them to rust, so it was a case of flushing out and filling with new oil.

The power unit was assembled with a new clutch and mounted in the chassis followed by the repaired bulkhead and a replacement front panel and radiator.

A new dash panel was made up to fit the bulkhead, and take a set of instruments and switches that were a close match to the originals, a new wiring loom was made up and fitted.



The correct lights were not available and we needed indicators that were not fitted in 1952 so the later lights were used at the front with small round trailer lights at the rear, a lot of the smaller electrical items and some wiring as well as temporary seats came from an old Morris Marina that we were scrapping at the time. The rear body tub, wings and doors were all stripped to bare metal, straightened where required, painted internally and fitted, the bonnet supplied with it turned out to be from a later 86” model so this needed to be shortened by 2” to make it fit (quite a lot of messing about)

Once all the bolt on panels were in place and sanded and the drop in doors and bonnet fitted correctly all the panels were spayed, first with acid based etching primer then coach finish primer and top coat followed by lacquer for an extra gloss. After fitting new a new brake master cylinder, all new slave cylinders and linings, new exhaust system and seats, following a few trial runs on private land, it was off to the MOT station, all be it with no door tops or tilt, it passed with no issues and I got back before it rained. The door tops were repaired with new slides, Perspex and handle access flaps, a new canvas tilt and frame was purchased and fitted ready for a trip out to a local car show.