

In 1998, the Land Rover, one of the most famous cars in the world, celebrated its 50th birthday. But not many people know that the success of the Land Rover was a surprise.

*What happened in 1998?*

*Was the Land Rover expected to be successful?*

The idea for the car came from two brothers. They lived on a small farm in a place a long way away from anywhere. They wanted a cheap, but strong vehicle to travel around their farm. And so, they copied the design of the American car 'Willy's Jeep.'

*Who had the idea for the car?*

*Where did they live?*

*What sort of car did they want?*

*What did they copy?*

This was just after the second world war. At that time, the British car industry had problems. In Britain after the war, people did not have enough money to buy cars, so the Rover car company decided to use the brothers' idea.

*When did this happen?*

*What was the problem with the British car industry?*

*What was the name of the car company that used the brother's idea?*

Cars were usually made of steel, but this metal was very expensive at this time. Rover used aluminium, which was cheaper. There was a lot of aluminium because war planes were made of it. The design of the first Land Rover was very basic and uncomfortable, but strong.

*What were cars usually made of in those days?*

*Was it cheap or expensive?*

*What did Rover use?*

*Why was there a lot of aluminium?*

*What was the design of the first Land Rover like?*

The car was first shown to the world at the Amsterdam Motor Show in 1948. The Land Rover was an instant success. It was perfect for farmers and construction companies because it could go to places where no other car could go.

*When was the car first shown?*

*Where was the motor show?*

*Was it a success or a failure?*

*Who liked it?*

*Why did they like it?*

Customers loved the car and Rover made a lot of money. They listened to their customers' ideas though, and made changes to the design. Three big changes happened in 1958, 1972 and 1983.

*Did the Rover Car Company make a lot of money from the car?*

*Did the Land Rover stay the same?*

*When did big changes to the design take place?*

The Land Rover became more comfortable and safer. It could still though take you over fields, up mountains, into rivers and across deserts.

*What happened to the design of the car?*

*What could it still do?*

Nowadays millions of people prefer the Land Rover 'Discovery' and 'Freelander' to Toyotas and Jeeps. The brothers who came up with the original design would never believe it!

*Do many people still prefer the Land Rover to other makes of car?*

*What are the names of the latest types of Land Rovers?*