

Latest News 21/07/18

“Scouting for Real Men”

We are pleased to welcome back a regular entrant to our show and one which always attracts a great deal of attention. Alistair Constantine’s 1961 Ferret Scout Car manufactured by Daimler is certainly different from the more conventional motors on display.



In 1949, the British Army approached Daimler to upgrade its World War Two light armoured vehicles. Having previously designed the Dingo Scout Car, Daimler created the Ferret. The Ferret was a development of the Dingo design, but it had more interior space for the crew, and could be fitted with an optional small machine-gun turret.

It was built with unibody construction, this gave the Scout Car a low profile, a positive in battle, however the engine and transmission were located inside the body and the internal noise-level was high. The four-wheel drive Ferret had run-flat tyres which if punctured, held their shape long enough for the vehicle to drive at reduced speed. This was a great advantage in combat, as a Ferret suffering one or more punctures would not be incapacitated.

The Ferret was strong off-road, and because of its size and top speed of 58mph, excelled in urban environments. With a 130hp Rolls Royce B60 series inline six-cylinder petrol engine and a five-speed transmission. A selector allowed the driver to throw the whole gearbox in reverse mode. This enabled the Ferret to drive in forward or reverse in any gear. This, combined with rear observation ports, gave the driver the ability to reverse the Ferret quickly out of danger.



In battle or during armoured manoeuvres, three Ferrets were attached to each tank squadron. Each Ferret trio formed a reconnaissance troop which scouted forward of the heavy armour to locate an enemy’s position. Ferrets were used in the 1950s and 1960s in Aden for joint Anglo-Arab operations against border tribes. The vehicles also saw service in the Cyprus conflict and in Northern Ireland. The last major British use of Ferrets was in Operation Granby, during the 1991 Iraq War.



Over 4,400 Ferrets were produced from 1952 to 1971. The Ferret served throughout the Commonwealth and in up to 40 countries outside Britain, including Cyprus, Ireland, Malaysia, and Yemen. Retired from the British Army, some Ferrets are still active in various Commonwealth countries.

There are quite a few examples in private ownership at home and abroad, and there is an owner’s forum at

www. <http://ferretscoutcar.com/> . Should you feel the desire to own one yourself, a quick search on the internet yielded at least seven examples for sale.