

THE **WEALD**  
FOUNDATION



## **Military Heritage Sustainable Skills for Life**

*Instructional Lesson Plan 5*

Willys MB 'Jeep'

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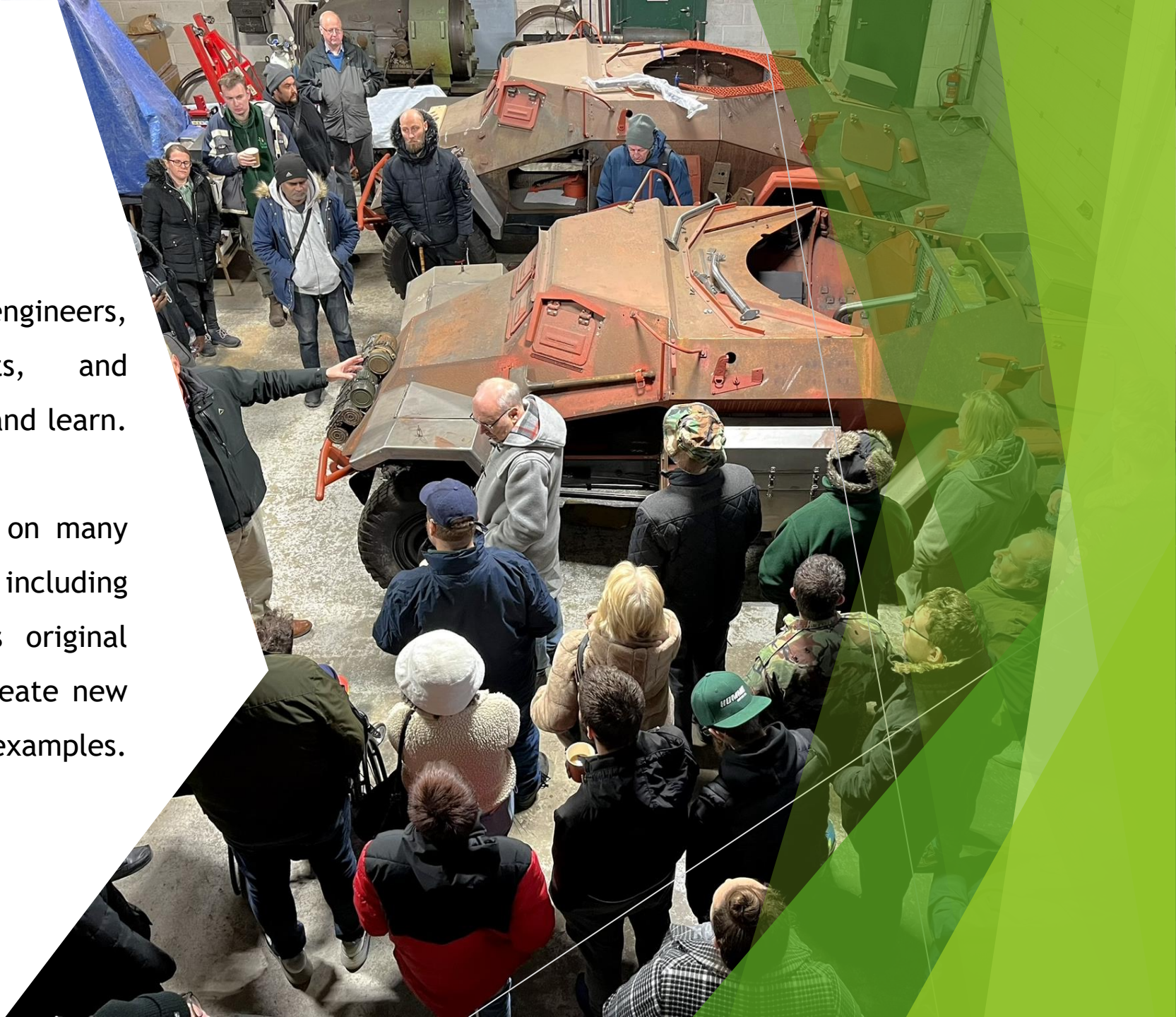
**Who are we and what we do?**

The Weald Foundation is a charitable organisation established to preserve, restore and maintain historic military vehicles from both World Wars, and to educate the public about their history.

Our unique line up of rare and important military vehicles that we have rescued is considered to be one of the finest working collections in the world.

At the Weald Foundation, schools, engineers, historians, modellers, enthusiasts, and collectors come together to discover and learn.

We have carried out extensive work on many types of armoured fighting vehicles, including tank restoration. Our team sources original components and, where necessary, create new parts from the original blueprints or examples.



Our research into the history of every vehicle in our collection provides unique authenticity to our work.

We strive to understand each vehicle's story, where and when it was assembled, its role in combat, and the story of the people who operated them or fought against them.




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# **Skills and Development through Military Heritage**

**Providing Sustainable Skills for Life**

A group of people holding hands in a circle, symbolizing unity and support. The image is partially obscured by a white semi-transparent box containing text. The background is a mix of green and white geometric shapes.

At The Weald Foundation people are given an opportunity to experience first-hand our working environment, meet staff and see the restoration process in action. Our aims:

- To bring people from different geographical and ethnic backgrounds together in a structured, supportive environment and to help break down barriers and create change.
- Re-engage people with education, employment or training and help them to gain skills.



The main objective of The Weald Foundation charity is 'Education'.

We have offered Apprenticeships and successfully assisted individuals in secure employment.

We are an ASDAN-accredited provider offering accredited qualifications.

Military Heritage is our focus





Willys MB 'Jeep'

One of the most iconic historic vehicles of World War II is the **Truck ¼ ton 4×4** better known by its nickname 'Jeep'. This little vehicle was and is so common its origins and details are largely ignored except by the many thousands of collectors that collect and own one.

In 1940, the US Army requested industry to provide a small general-purpose four-wheel drive vehicle. Several trials and offers proceeded but by late 1941 the design of the **Truck ¼ ton 4×4** was standardised. The outcome is often referred to as having been designed by committee as it comprised of a Willys L134 "Go-Devil" engine, Spicer four-wheel drive and Ford bodywork.



Ford GPW during assembly at Ford Factory - The Henry Ford Trust



Ford GPW during assembly at Ford Factory - The Henry Ford Trust

Willys Overland Motors Inc. were awarded main contractor status, primarily because of their then modern and reliable 60 HP L134 “Go-Devil” engine. Production of their standardized version of the **Truck ¼ ton 4×4** with their model number **Willys MB** started in November 1941 at the Willys plant in Toledo, Ohio.

To increase production contracts were also placed with Ford. These contracts stipulated that they would use the Willys Go-Devil engine and follow Willys drawings. Also, Ford had to diversify production, so Ford manufacturing took place at six different assembly plants across the U.S: Dearborn – Michigan, Louisville – Kentucky, Chester – Pennsylvania, Dallas – Texas, Richmond – California and Edgewater – New Jersey. Willys supplied approximately 3,000 chassis to get things going. The Ford model was known as **Ford GPW**.



Ford GPW during assembly at Ford Factory - The Henry Ford Trust



Ford GPWs waiting to be shipped at Ford Factory - The Henry Ford Trust

The power of the U.S. industry can be seen with the numbers produced up to the end of the war in Europe in early May 1945. Willys starting in November 1941, produced about 336,000 of their **Willys MB**. Ford starting in February 1942 produced approximately 260,000 of their **Ford GPW**.

Ford also produced nearly 13,000 of an amphibious variant, the **Ford GPA**, known as the “Seep”, a small version of the **DUKW** amphibious truck.

In total during the European war about 610,000 “Jeeps” were manufactured. Additional deliveries in 1945 amounted to about a further 40,000. Of these some 50,000 Jeeps were delivered to the Soviet Union.





President Franklin D. Roosevelt - 18 January 1943



Jeep being cleaned after crossing a river - Germany, 12 March 1945



Jeep fitted with a 30 cal. machine gun - Germany, 16 March 1945



Jeep on test platform - 11 May 1943



Jeep boarding transport ship - England, June 1944

A photograph of a Willys MB 'Jeep' in a workshop. The jeep is olive drab with a canvas top. It is parked in a garage with other vehicles in the background. A semi-transparent green overlay covers the right side of the image, containing text. The text is in a light green color. The jeep's front grille, headlights, and tires are visible. The background shows a dark interior with some equipment and a white wall.

# Restoring the Willys MB 'Jeep'

The History and Research of our vehicle.

# Restoration of the Willys MB 'Jeep'

Our Willys MB 'Jeep' was acquired on impulse on an auction in the late 1990s that promised a very complete and original vehicle.

The chassis number of the Collection's Willys MB is 361128 and the date of delivery was 9 September 1944.

The next image shows the Willys Jeep when it was auctioned and before restoration.





Weald Foundation Willys MB 'Jeep' when it was auctioned.



When it was purchased by the Weald Foundation, it was bedecked with every optional extra – radios, antennae, Browning 30 cal. medium machine gun with pedestal mount and Parachute Regiment insignia including a Pegasus shield on the bumper.

The vehicle has undergone a comprehensive overhaul. As there was no evidence of the radios having been originally fitted, or that it had a Browning .30 cal. fitted during its operational service, all of these very interesting and desirable objects were stripped, leaving a basic and original Willys Jeep without a heritage.



Weald Foundation Willys MB 'Jeep' at the present.

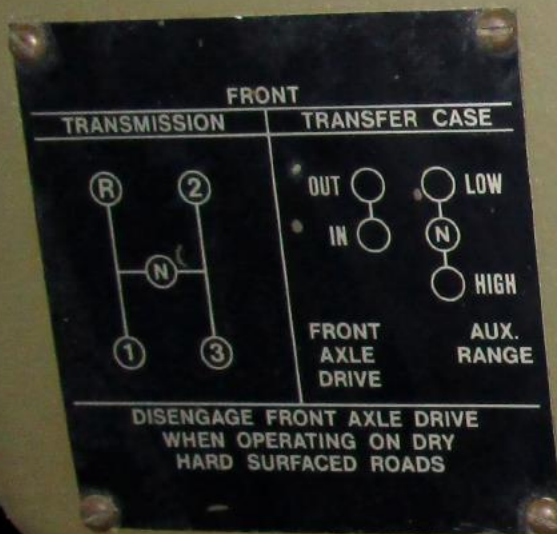


Weald Foundation Willys MB 'Jeep' interior at the present.

We still face several challenges. The previous owner changed the original 6v starter for the more reliable, yet incorrect, 12v option. Two data plates are not original, and originals are infinitely more desirable.

We have applied no markings or insignia to the jeep given its unknown heritage. We have been told on several occasions that there is no central register for these vehicles, but we have subsequently found that the **Royal Logistics Corps** hold records of all vehicles that served under the **British Army**. Our search for the missing history is now heading in that direction.

Of all the vehicles we have in the collection the Willys MB 'Jeep' is the most pleasant ride, the least complicated to operate and the most exhilarating to drive.



**WILLYS**

**NOMENCLATURE**                      TRUCK 1/4 TON 4x4

SUPPLY ARM OR SERVICE                      ORDNANCE DEPT.  
 MAINTAINING VEHICLE                      WILLYS MB \_\_\_\_\_

MAKE AND MODEL                      \_\_\_\_\_

SERIAL NUMBER                      \_\_\_\_\_

GROSS WEIGHT                      \_\_\_\_\_ LBS.

MAXIMUM PAYLOAD                      800 LBS.

MAXIMUM TRAILED LOAD                      1000 LBS.

DATE OF DELIVERY                      \_\_\_\_\_

PREScribed BY SERVICE CONCERNED

OCTANE RATING OF GASOLINE                      68 MIN.

S.A.E. GRADE OF OIL BELOW 32°F USE DE 10W S.A.E.

S.A.E. GRADE OF OIL ABOVE 32°F USE DE 30 S.A.E.

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PUBLICATIONS                      PARTS LIST SNL-G \_\_\_\_\_

OPERATORS MANUAL                      TM 9 \_\_\_\_\_

MAINTENANCE MANUALS                      \_\_\_\_\_

TM 9- \_\_\_\_\_

**CAUTION**

MAXIMUM PERMISSIBLE ROAD SPEEDS  
IN THE FOLLOWING GEAR POSITIONS

TRANSMISSION IN	TRANSFER CASE IN	
	HIGH RANGE	LOW RANGE
HIGH	65 M.P.H.	33 M.P.H.
INTERMEDIATE	41	21
LOW	24	12
REVERSE	18	9

TO DRAIN COOLING SYSTEM: OPEN RADIATOR  
DRAIN COCK LOCATED ON HOSE FITTING AT  
LOWER LEFT SIDE OF RADIATOR AND  
CYLINDER BLOCK DRAIN COCK ON  
RIGHT FORWARD SIDE OF ENGINE.

Weald Foundation Willys MB 'Jeep' data plates.

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# Contact Information

If you require more information about this Military Heritage project, or about skills and learning opportunities at The Weald Foundation.

Please contact Dr Patrick Tierney, Chief Military Heritage Officer

**Email:** [patrick@wealdfoundation.org](mailto:patrick@wealdfoundation.org)

**Mobile:** +44 (0)7595 893 899