



Above: Gill Holgate handing out a pair of spectacles to a lady with poor sight, as part of her Rite to Sight project. All the Holgates are very involved in humanitarian aid. Right: Kingsley ensconced in the luxurious Land Rover Disco 4 cabin. Although he still misses the Defender's familiar cabin, the Disco 4 is way more comfortable, says "King".



foot, the hand-brake wedged against your left calf – Defenders will always be part of our lives, we love them.

"Look around you, Hugh. On this expedition there's an old 130 long-wheel base TD5 that has spent seven years on various journeys in the footsteps of famous explorers – she became part of a book and a documentary. There's even a little canvas-top 90 shorty that's doing the mapping for Garmin and, as part of the convoy, the old battered Grindrod-branded Africa Outside Edge TDi that now carries the mosquito nets, libraries, soccer balls and a PA system that's used at the Boundless soccer games. She's joined by an old green TD5 double cab that's loaded to the hilt with expedition supplies."

But Hugh won't give up. "Be honest, how are the Discos really doing?" he niggles. "Can they really do the job or will you go back to Defender?" I call expedition photographer Mad Mike over and ask him to flip open his smashproof laptop, on which there are hundreds of great expedition visuals. "Here's the proof, Hugh – have a look at these ..."

He can't believe it – pics of the Discos piled high with equipment, boulder hopping over high mountain passes in Lesotho, carrying kit for community days, ploughing through soft sand, wading through rivers, lying sideways in gooey mud on the Angolan border, bouncing over Mopani-pole bridges in first gear low ratio, and being scratched and bruised as we follow the overgrown old cattle trail from Nxai Pan to Pandamatenga. More than three months of tough expedition work already behind us and they haven't missed a beat.

I nudge Hugh in the ribs. "We've earned it my friend. No more backache – you flick a switch and the air suspension rises, flick another and you're into high or low ratio, twiddle a knob and you're into rock crawl, mud ruts, sand or gravel. You can even move

over to command shift; third is great, it eats up the soft Kalahari sand tracks; just click off the DSC and idle along at low revs which means you don't chow diesel. When it comes to doing a bit of towing and recovery work, she's a demon."

We've never had it so good, and in keeping with the exploration nature of our journeys, we've now nicknamed the two Discos Livingstone and Stanley ...

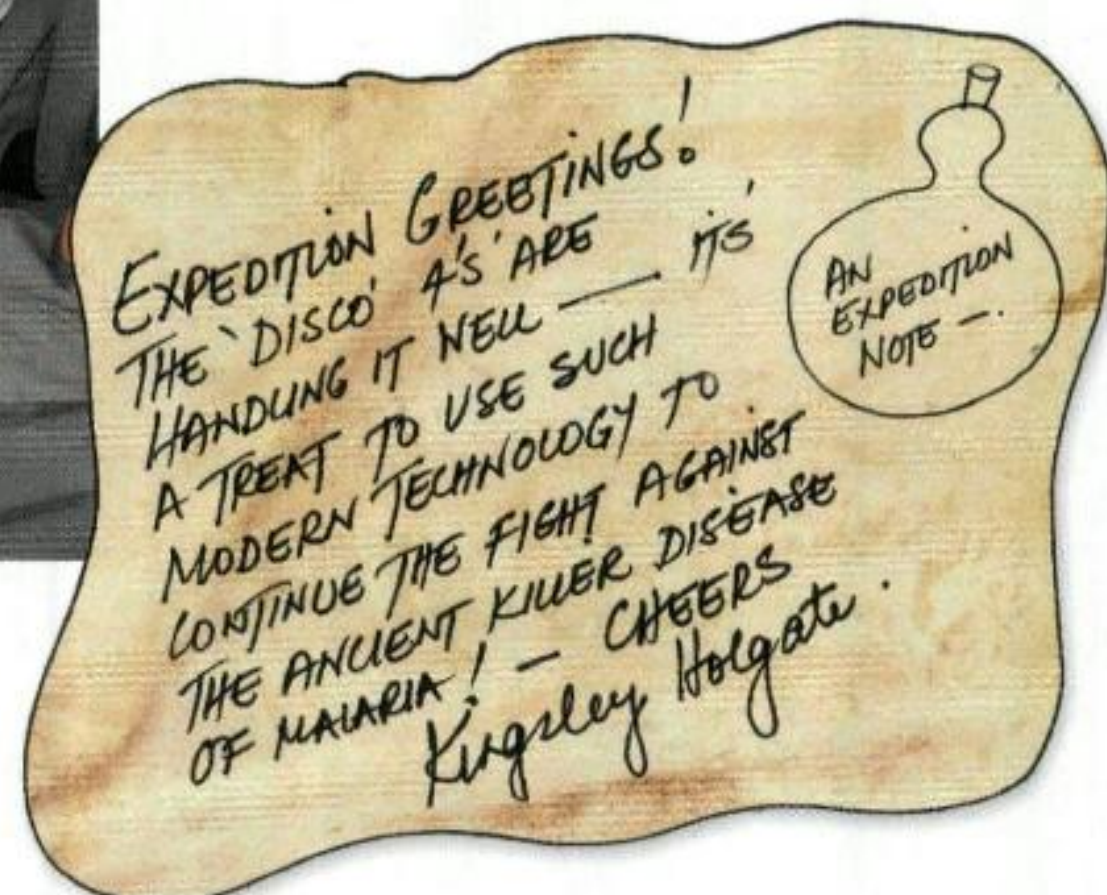
The next day I hand Hugh my Disco keys. "Here Hugh, you've got Livingstone for the afternoon." I squeeze behind the wheel of the old Defender 130. There's that old familiar smell and feel, the grunt and growl of the engine and the pitch and roll as we make our way forward along a rutted track through flooded pans. It's not 20 minutes and Hugh's excited voice comes over the radio: "Wow, boss," he says, "now I understand what you mean ... You're right – Discos can certainly do it!"

Kingsley and his team crossed the Sperrgebiet to end the expedition at the mouth of the Orange River, having completed close to 60 000km of hard expedition work in their Disco 3s on an extremely tough route that encompassed the Namib, the central Kalahari, the mountain passes of Lesotho, heavy flooding in central Africa ... and much more.

"At times we had the water level just below the breather snorkel, had them on their sides, had them in the mud winching from Mopani tree to Mopani tree," Kingsley reminisces. "We drove them exactly as we did the old Defenders. The only thing we didn't do was jump onto the bonnet from the roof rack as we used to with the Defender!"

"We didn't have a single problem with the Discovery, and people find that very interesting. Here you have a state-of-the-art vehicle that's proven to be able to take on Africa, and succeed."

We didn't have a single problem with the Discovery, and people find that very interesting. Here you have a state-of-the-art vehicle that's proven to be able to take on Africa, and succeed



#### Going for 4

The Holgates are never stationary for long, and on 25 April they set off again, this time departing from the Lesedi Cultural Village in the Cradle of Humankind on the United Against Malaria Expedition that continues the exceptional work already done through the preceding One Net One Life campaigns.

Based on the positive experience with the Discovery 3 last year, the new expedition "Goes Beyond" and features a duo of latest Discovery 4s for Kingsley and Gill, and their son Ross and wife Anna.

It's a firm affirmation of the vehicle's off-road prowess that the new, even more sophisticated Disco 4 was the immediate choice for Land Rover South Africa and Kingsley for the 20 000km journey.

"United Against Malaria is a fast expedition, covering a lot of ground in a relatively short time," Kingsley says. "And in order to achieve this, we need the right kind of vehicles. Life marches on. We need to move with the times, and what the Discovery does is take a lot of the sweat out of an expedition."

Despite being early in the journey on the first leg into Mozambique, the Disco 4 has already impressed the crew with its engine has demonstrated its dramatic improvement in performance, low-down torque and fuel economy.

"This is our first expedition in the Discovery 4, and it may well be the first to take place worldwide for the latest model," Kingsley enthuses. "It's fantastic that we're using the latest in modern technology to fight an ancient disease." ●