

The Complete Laplander History

Volvo – Cross-country vehicles – real darlings!

Volvo and 4x4, absolutely not a taboo! At the latest with the report on the new Volvo 850 ALL WHEEL DRIVE in the last issue of VOLVO-FAN we pointed out that Volvo, generally seen, had it out with all wheel drive in motorized vehicles. In the LKW (truck) sector the project began quite early thanks to the customer Swedish army. What resulted is often unknown, even by hardcore Volvo fans. “What? That’s a Volvo?” or “Even I can put a Volvo label on a Pinzgauer.” This or similar was also heard from visitors who, on the occasion of the big VOLVO-FAN meeting in Buochs/central Switzerland in August '95, examined the various “Laplander”-Volvos. Nevertheless they existed, the Volvo offroaders. In general these front-steered vehicles are called “Laplander”, no matter if they are genuine Laplanders or if they are one of the models which followed (signified only by a model number).

Already in 1937 the Swedish army gave the commission to develop a middleweight off-road truck. Basing on a three-axled - the biggest caliber of these times Volvo-utility-vehicle program – a 6x4 called TVA emerged. The final version was called TVB. A supporting axle with smaller front wheels in front of the radiator helped this off-road truck to conquer even deep ditches. As propulsion unit the TVA/TVB was given a 7.57 liter Hesselman-six cylinder engine. In the early '40s the vehicle was turned into a cab forward, on which the second rear axle was also powered. This truck was produced as an artillery-towing-unit called TVC 6x6.

In 1943 the first 4x4 with a passenger car character came along

The first all-wheel driven vehicle with passenger car characteristics was built by Volvo in 1943, basing on the Chassis of the legendary PV800, which was usually bodied as a taxi (cab). This offroader, called TVP, was offered for almost 20 years. It goes without saying that once more the army was the most important client. The six cylinder gas engine performed 80 hp (DIN) with an engine volume of 3.67 liters. The post-war model of the years '53 – '58 was kept as TP21. 720 units left the factory in Goteborg. In the year 1955 three specific specimen were produced to try a launch into the civilian market. This carriage had a kombi-body with six windows. One of these was shipped to Greenland, another, probably the only survivor, still belongs to a collector in Copenhagen. In the late '50s new development commissions came from the Swedish military. The army head of staff was looking for a replacement of the Jeep-Willys, which they brought to

Sweden via Scania-Vabis. Nevertheless the conditions were made, that the new offroader is forward controlled, not too heavy, can carry 8 persons and of course has good off-road abilities. The result finally was to be called "Volvo-Laplander". Chief constructor Nils-Magnus "Mäns" Hartelius set to work. Though in the '50s long (engine-) hoods were in fashion, it was not hard for him to design a cab forward. This meant a lot of space in the interior, at reasonable outside measures, as well as a better view while driving off road. The construction based on a LKW (truck) ladder frame with leaf spring suspended solid axles.

Much adopted from "Buckel", "Amazon" and the 140 series

To keep costs low and to ease future spare part supplies, Hartelius tried to use as many standard parts as possible. That's why the interior of the Laplander resembles in many aspects the ones of the "Buckel" and the "Amazon" of which the engine (B16, B18 and later on B20), the Gearbox as well as many axle components were overtaken. The instruments are equal to those of the front-steered truck "Snabbe" (see VOLVO-FAN No. 2/96). A spindle-steering (lead screw/Spindellenkung) offers the advantages of a higher stability compared to a snail-roller bearing steering (Schnecken-Rollenlenkung). For off-road driving the four speeds gearbox is equipped with a low gear ratio (reduction) because of lacking free (running) wheel hubs/naves the front wheel drive can be engaged while driving. And watch out! : This happens automatically during an emergency brake in the lower rpm! Additionally the differentials of front- and rear axle can be locked. The Laplanders excellent off-road capabilities are highly appreciated still today, especially by Swedish off-road specialist, since they are still able to be brilliant compared to far more modernly equipped rivals in off-road competitions.

In 1961 the Laplander was ready for serial production

In 1959 a small test production was started (L2304), officially called the Laplander, unofficially being nicked as "Valpen" (Greenhorn, Puppy, Whelp). Actually the serial production of the final version started two years later. None of these prototypes was tested by the military, as the whole responsibility lay in the hands of Volvo – strictly spoken in the hands of Mäns Hartelius. Only when the first experiences with the prototypes were made, the pre-series (L2304) was given to the armed forces for deeper examinations. These prototypes varied from the final version in details like the front part and the use of the B16 engine instead of the B18 used in the L3314.

A spectacular test platform

Two of the altogether 91 2304 models varying outfits went through a hard and sometimes also spectacular test program. Including a trip from the North Cape (Norway) down to South Africa to proof their capabilities in the snow covered north as well as in the sultry/steamy jungle. After a successful launch the serial

production of the model Laplander L3314, equipped a little more powerful than the pre-series with a B18 engine with 68 hp (DIN) instead of the B16 with 60 hp, came to motion. The tires paid an important contribution to the excellent off-road capabilities of the Laplander, compared to other models of these times. Måns Hartelius gave commission to the Swedish tire manufacturer Trelleborg to develop a low pressure tire in the size 8.90-16 on 6,5x16 with higher flanks and a bigger air volume than usual in these dimensions. So a lower pressure could be driven. That's why the vehicle didn't really tend to get stuck on loose ground.

The L3304 – a special design for the army

The model L3304 was exclusively manufactured for the Swedish army. It was the "Panzerabwehrkanonenträger 9031" (anti-tank-gun-carrier). The vehicle was literally blown aside when the recoilless cannon, mounted on the base of a L3314, was fired. Because accidents have been recorded, in which the vehicle flipped to the side, a strong rollbar was installed. The exact amount of the army version L3304 produced stayed classified.

Civilian models

Now the time had come that, after successful serial production, the Laplander was allowed to take of his uniform and could also be sold internationally as a civilian vehicle. First of all in Sweden construction companies, power supply companies, fire departments and other communal services were interested. The latter because it was especially useful for street-cleaning and snow-ploughing purposes. Thanks to a p.t.o. various additional aggregates could be mounted, for example fire engine- or hydraulic pumps. For the various engagements as fire engine, search & rescue- and service vehicle innumerable versions appeared: single- or double-cabins with flat decks, with awning decks, as chassis with a cabin for boxes. Highly satisfied with the capabilities of the Laplander the Swedish army considered to develop more modern variations. For example the L3314 was converted into an amphibious vehicle for engagements as pioneer- and command-vehicle. Once in water the L3314 was driven by a tip-out propeller, which was powered from the standard B18 engine. Despite successful tests this project was cancelled for a time. Volvo did not continue until the development of the next generation of off-road vehicles.

Always very popular and successful

In England the Laplander competed successfully with the front-steered Land Rover, and the Norwegians were also keen on the L3314. One Laplander is delivered for evaluation purposes to the army of a – for means of discretion – not named country in the Middle East. The army general was so enthusiastic about it, that refused to return it after the testing period. He didn't want to miss it in future parades. Generally it is allowed to say that the Laplander in great numbers served in the Swedish and Norwegian forces, and does so still today. Because of

his missions for the UN in the typical white color with the blue UN logo it became well known all over the world. The L3314 version of the Laplander with a total weight of 2450 kg was built until 1970. The L3315 version varied from the above mentioned model only concerning the total weight (2610 kg) and that it was only produced until 1959.

Along came the C202

A modified version, now called C202 (with a more powerful B20 engine, improved gearbox, changed front part and reinforced door locks) was developed in the mid-'70s. The production started in 1977. During the '70s the inquiries of potential customers, who didn't have special requirements and who considered the higher costs for the latest, highly developed version as justified, continued.

Production in Hungary

In the first half of the '70s Volvo received numerous orders from Hungary, among others from the Hungarian transport company Hungarocamion. In this context, discussions about a possible production of a Volvo-model in Hungary came up. The result of these negotiations was the decision to build a modernized version of the Laplander in Hungary. Because Volvo's own production capacities in Sweden were completely needed for the production of the C303 – it was ordered in great numbers of the Swedish army – the choice fell on the four cylinder version C202 with disengageable front wheel drive. In these times the production of Volvo 4x4 vehicles was still marginal, so no additional production facilities have been provided. Those who are nowadays getting down to the problems of restoring a Volvo C202 inevitably comes to the conclusion that none, neither chassis nor body, could be of Swedish origin, for matters of rust prevention are non existent! Stefan Keller the Laplander connoisseur from Switzerland can merely be wrong as he assumes that the C202 was built in Hungary without exception. He comes to these conclusions at the moment, while he is restoring his own C202. Furthermore no one in Sweden can tell in which production facility the C202 should have been built.

Multi Purpose

The C202 was, like the L3314 before, used for various purposes. In Sweden this variant was usually equipped with a soft-top. But hardtops have also been sold, for example as command vehicles. Among the versions for the civilian market was also a Pickup, which was usually used for the transport of light goods, for snow removal and garbage disposal in community services. The production of the C202 ended in 1981. In Switzerland according to the type descriptions it was allowed to be driven with a passenger car or van (driving-) license.

The Volvo C300 series – the real kings of cross-country

At the end of the '60s the army once more knocked on Volvo's door, inquiring for a successor of the Laplander, and once more Mäns Hartelius got in charge. He decided to follow the same concept, just in a bigger size. The army desired more space in the interior, a higher load range and a stronger engine combined with even better off-road capabilities. A number of Laplanders was tested. Meanwhile the weak points of the predecessor were analyzed. Already in 1967 the first design studies, bearing the title 4140, were held. One Laplander was used as a rolling test object. Because of the infantry wishing a truck for person transport for the means of no longer being dependent on towing vehicles for their bicyclists (! *lol* by Martin), already in the beginning a 2-3 axle construction was considered. Even a 8x8 was to arise. In 1972 a pre-series of 61 pieces of two-axled model was produced, but still with a B20 engine, which was replaced later by the six cylinder B30 with 125 hp (power unit of the Volvo 164). The most significant differences to the old Laplander, or respectively the C202, are, besides an edgier appearance, a better off-road reduction and portal axles. The gained ground clearance in combination with good approach/departure angles (45° on front and rear) secured the new 4x4 Volvo excellent off-road abilities, which were highly appreciated by the army as well as foreign customers. Nevertheless the "new one" became more than a ton heavier than the original Laplander. If you then take the high air resistance of the steep front into consideration, you won't be surprised that the C303 was not a really agile vehicle. The C stands for cross-country, the 3 for a three liter engine and the 03 for three tons of total weight. The C303 was not only equipped with the same engine as the deluxe-sedan Volvo 164, the gearbox was also identical. All of the sixcylinder-Laplanders (C300 series) were equipped with permanent all wheel drive, thereof also existed two 6x6 versions, the models C304 and C306. The differences between the latter were varying axle distances. The two-axled version, codename 4141, reminds of a wider issue of the Laplander. This model was also built of more or less the same parts. The longer and also wider three-axled version seemed considerably bigger than the predecessor, and was internally called 4143.

Volvo research centre in Strängnäs

The most important technical difference between the new C300 models and the Laplander was the above mentioned portal-axle. In this construction the hub-reduction was set in a way, that the axle lay above the wheel-centre. Two advantages resulted, a solid construction and a high ground clearance – both were significant for the excellent off-road capabilities. After the pre-studies, simultaneous to Volvos own research centre in Strängnäs (a small town between Stockholm and Eskilstuna), a deep theoretical and practical examination of the raw sketch took place, undertaken by the Swedish forces. The point that the whole model was exclusively constructed to fulfill the army's requirements and

the army itself found out that all the requirements were indeed fulfilled, was unique. The intensive test program confirmed the practicability of the concept in general. Though details like windows and doors were changed. In every respect the new offroader generation was more robust. The C300 was produced in several basic versions, fulfilled a series of military actions and was also sold in small amounts to civilian customers. In our opinion the reason why just a small number of Laplanders was used for civilian purposes was the high price. In Switzerland a C303 cost 54.000 CHF in 1976. A press release of Oct. 10, 1976 by the both Volvo importers of these times Fritz Haeussermann in Effretikon/ZH, and Automobiles Volvo SA in Lyss said that the first delivery of a total of 4600 ordered by the Swedish (?) army was made in the end of 1974. The development took more than nine years (!). The civilian version in its two- and three-axled versions was also available in Switzerland through the regular distributors. The two basic models had a payload of 900 kg with the two doored (?) model and impressive 2.7 tons with the three-axled. The Swiss expected to receive the first delivery of C300 models by the end of 1976.

Enormous climbing abilities

On solid ground the new Volvo-offroaders were able to manage ascent grades of up to 60%. The sideways stability was also enormous. Inclinations of 40% were no problem. The passenger space in the back contained seats in driving direction. Behind the passenger space was an additional loading space. The backseat could be folded down, in order to load the complete vehicle. Also interesting is the content of a press release of April '74 by the two Swiss Volvo-distributors concerning the oncoming launch of the new Volvo-offroader series. A literal quotation: ["Both versions have all wheel drive and can be used in different types; a basic version for the transportation of goods. A Volvo six cylinder gas engine, B30, with a power of 128-DIN-hp and a maximum speed of 110 km/h is mounted in both models. At the moment the actual model of these of these off-road vehicles is successfully employed by Finnish and Swedish UNO-troops in Cyprus and at the front in the Middle East. The new Laplander or "Puppy", how the vehicle is called still today, will be available in two versions."]

The basic model of the C300 series was the C303. This denomination was only used for the two-axled version with the (closed) sheet-steel hardtop-body. As known, this model was built in a military (project 4141) and in a civilian version which was whit colored and had no roof hatch (project 4180). A special version (project 4151) with a kick-/backstrike-free anti-tank-gun was also developed for means of defense. It bore the military name "Panzerabwehrkanonenträger 1111" (anti-tank-gun-carrier 1111), and was used as a replacement for the Volvo L3304. The two-axled version of the C304 was only delivered as a "naked" chassis for military and civilian use and was, with its heavy axles, used to built ambulance- and command-vehicles. In the civilian sector it was used as a fire engine, and in huge numbers as small, yellow flatbed truck in the Swedish road-maintenance administration. The three-axled C304 (project 4143) was used for the same purposes as the C303, whenever the higher payload was needed.

Opposing the other versions, the C305 was a “real” LKW (heavy-duty truck), with heavy axles, a higher total weight, more powerful gearbox, higher axle-reduction and a load-deck. This version was produced for the longest time, until 1984, while for the lighter versions the game was up in 1979. Well, Volvo never forced the construction of off-road vehicles in this (size-) class. Later on the steadily growing offers of concurrency products from foreign countries also came into play. The need to compete in this field wasn’t given in the foreground. The above mentioned C300 versions weren’t the only variants tested by Volvo Truck. Several other projects among the C3-series were discussed and built as functioning prototypes.

The almost unknown fact

For the collectors of odd all-wheel driven vehicles the Laplander stays a rarity. However, thousands of these excellent vehicles are paying their duties all over the world. One more new initiation was started, when the Swiss truck company Saurer, located in Arbon at the Lake Constance, tackled a new off-road vehicle project in which Volvo-engines (2.4 liter, 90 hp) were assigned. But indeed not more than a dozen test vehicles were built. The new master in the house of Saurer, Daimler Benz, already had his own off-road vehicle assortment running.

What was Peter Monteverdi’s role in the project?

On principle the off-road vehicle project with Volvo-engines didn’t originate from the Saurer AG itself, but from the Monteverdi AG, the very small producer of luxury sports cars and off-road vehicles. This task was taken very serious by Peter Monteverdi, the principal, the subject of off-road vehicles started to fascinate him, him the former racing pilot and high performance-car constructor. Even before his “Sahara” offroader came to production in 1979, he already had brought to paper an open, light offroader which concurred to the Land Rover. The press release of Feb. 13, 1979 included, among others, the following words: [“Dear Mr. editor, if on this year’s “Genfer Automobilsalon” (big European car exhibition in Geneva) from 1st of March till the 11th, more people will crowd at the Monteverdi stall than before (and this ought to mean something), so do we have to confess that this is our own responsibility. For we arrange two premieres in one: “urbi et orbi” (one for the city and one for the world). The Monteverdi Military 230 M is as new as a vehicle can be. Peter Monteverdi developed it for a big, powerful Swiss syndicate that decided to produce an off-road passenger car in a military and a civilian version for inland distribution as well as for export. If your reporter’s and adventurous blood helter-skelter falls in love with this robust and as well elegant “Kübel” (bucket), we feel sorry to have to tell you that the one exhibited in Geneva for the time being the only one. But we’d gladly take you onto the waiting list, and inform you as soon as the series is being produced.”] Until this “Geneva Salon” in 1979 Monteverdi’s Path was quite sticky. That was when Peter Monteverdi got in touch with Saurer. The Swiss truck constructor showed interest in producing such a vehicle, which Monteverdi under no

circumstances wanted to build self directed. The duty-chart of Saurer's "Gruppe für Rüstungsdienste" (GRD) (armament services division) was sent from Arbon to the constructor in Binningen, so the Sketches could be adapted to the requirements of the Swiss army regulations. Subsequently Monteverdi and Saurer came to an arrangement concerning the technical aspects on the one hand, but on the other hand differing financial interests led to a cancellation of the negotiations. Meanwhile Monteverdi's connections to customers in the Near East made an Arabic country show serious interest in this alternative to the Land Rover. Then in fall 1978 Monteverdi was surprisingly ordered by the GRD. In the capital of Switzerland a disappointing announcement was made to the constructor: "There is no need for a military version of the »Monteverdi Safari«." In this very moment Monteverdi presented them the blueprints of the off-road passenger car, now called "Military 230", which was in the process of development. His GRD-negotiation-partners drew back into an adjacent room. About half an hour later they returned and presented Monteverdi a surprisingly fast made decision: Monteverdi's project will be taken into evaluation subsequently, and should be delivered to Bern until January 1st, 1979. Now the contract between Surer and Monteverdi was made offhand. The prototype of the Military 230 was completed in Binningen in January 1979 with only a small delay. The vehicle was liked in Arbon, so the purchase of the second prototype which was at the moment in construction was decided. Once more the Arabs stayed empty handed. But the specialists of the GRD received the military prototype for an examination by hook and crook. The Military 230 was exclusively designed as a vehicle of purpose, for hardest off-road use, but anyway due to its neat style clearly bore Monteverdi's signature. The number 230 was according to the axle distance. The Military had a box-frame chassis which was developed by Monteverdi himself, the front- and rear- solid axles were mounted on it with leaf-springs, and the reductional gearbox included an (dis-) engageable four wheel drive. Another feature was that the doorless body including rollbar and folding top was mounted with bolts onto the chassis. The whole body was – except the engine hood – built of plain sheet-metal, only curved in one direction, for maybe necessary reparations could easily be done. Floor and foot space had a rubber coating, so that the vehicle could without care be entered with dirty boots. Exposing edges were also rubber protected. The cooperation with Saurer went on. During the year 1979 Monteverdi also developed a civilian version of the 230 model (titled 250 Z); even a 14-seated front-steered version (model 260) arose as a byproduct which in the appearance came pretty close to the Laplander. According to a contract Saurer took over all three prototypes constructed by Peter Monteverdi including the blueprints and know-how for further developments. The goal of the very capable truck producers at Lake Constance was: mass production... if possible also for the Swiss army.

Special facts about the Laplander

A very special version of the all-wheel unit basing on the Laplander was built in 1977 in commission of the Copenhagen airport-operator. The Danes desired a

fire engine which could, regardless of any type of ground condition and other difficulties, be brought to the place of action, could carry a crew of 3-4 men, and should be able to carry 5-6 tons of equipment and being so powerfully motorized that a sports car-style acceleration was possible. The enterprise Sommer Teknik A/S, a subsidiary company of the Volvo importer for Denmark took care of developing such a vehicle. Ole Sommer, not unknown even beyond the borders of Denmark due to dozens of self-constructions, took a chassis of the Laplander C306 and replaced the Volvo engine, which was certainly not a weak one, by a 5.5 liter Jaguar-engine. "The V12 fitted like a glove into the chassis", Ole Sommer announced, "We managed the task of combining the powerful engine with an automatic transmission of General Motors – a perfect solution. " Ole Sommer ascertained the support of Volvo's and Jaguar's developing engineers, who highly appreciated participating. At 3250 kg the super-fire-engine of the Copenhagen airport is just a little bit heavier than the serial C306. The equipment was 2500 kg, a payload which the vehicle bore with effortless ease. The carriage was able to, as proved in several test drives, accelerate (almost) Porsche-like and could be brought to a maximum speed of 155 km/h. Well, 287 hp are not a trifle. This truck is the favorite toy of the firefighters.

Adventure ride in a "Terrängbil": Abroad in a Volvo C202

It is noisy. The body vibrates. It is sensible to cross-winds. It flounders on cobblestones. The brakes are moisture sensitive. The handbrake only grabs the hinge/shaft and in extreme cases only affects one wheel. Well, these were first of all the drawbacks I had to recognize on the Laplander C202, the Swedish off-road-dinosaur. Now I can concentrate even more on the positive aspects of this extraordinary vehicle which, last but not least, dominate by far. In an off-road course within the scopes of a 4x4 event I tried to get in a closer touch with the Volvo. I came pretty close in a softened gravel pit with knee-deep mud here and there. For digging yourself out – Mark you! By oneself – the good approach/departure angles of 38°/39° paid credit and on hilltops with an break-over-angle of 134° you are in a much better situation than a lot of other, even more modern offroaders. With a life weight of 2 tons you can easily bring a C202 across places where others need a lot more run-up ... or just get stuck. The motorization with a B20A with 82-DIN-hp is not very luxurious but still enough. The 2 liter engine proved enough elasticity, though the gears should be shifted properly. In addition to the four speed gearbox it has an off-road reduction in a relation of 2,39:1 – differential locks are not at hand. But I didn't even miss the in segments where vehicles with smaller wheels already had to engage them. The fuel tank should have more capacity, 46 liters are a little scanty, because in the end you'll need 14-18 liters. Compared to other vehicles of this category the C202 offers a lot of space. Since this car is just a well dimensioned chest/box in this front-steered version. This care is made to turn into a camper! To enter you have to be a little agile, the car is high-boarded (that's where the ground clearance of 46 centimeters come from) but it's got holds to grab. The sitting position is good, the elbow room maybe a little bit scarce, but must be accepted,

for the engine is placed in the centre of the car and so conditions the placement of the seats. You sit higher than in a VW-van and so have a better far sight. The all-wheel drive is engaged by a key, this can also happen while driving, as long as the wheels are spinning with almost the same revolutions. This works, like the engagement of the p.t.o. (winch !), through an ingenious system of three small clutches which keep the vacuum, generated by the engine, through magnetic valves on a constant level and which respond precisely. Nevertheless this only works with the engine running. The reduction (-gear) is engaged manually and is synchronized, when doing so the all-wheel drive is also engaged automatically. The spring-suspension is surprisingly comfortable; the heating-system is like in all "sweden-cars" excellent. The brakes have conventional drums and work, like in the Volvo 144 or in the later "Amazon", after the 2x3 principle. It has two separate braking-power-intensifiers (-amplifiers?) and two brake-circuits which both affect the front wheels and one of the rear wheels. If one of the circuits breaks down still three wheels are braked. You may call him a good working horse, the Laplander, and on free tracks even a snappy trotter – I achieved 116 km/h on the Autobahn.

Text: Wieslaw Fusaro Pictures: Teli Psarras

The Laplander as a sportsman

Even in motor sports the Laplander wrote positive history, though after the end of production. Already in 1982 two blue C303 versions successfully participated in the monster-rallye Paris-Dakar and collected in the corresponding category important experiences for the following year. In the year 1983 it finally happened. The two teams of the Volvo truck division participated once more in the Rallye Paris-Dakar. One of the teams, after 10.000 km of desert race won in the class: trucks up to 10 tons. This very vehicle, with the Swedish license plate number DWD-795, is now standing in Heinz Linninger's Volvo museum in Goteborg. Further of a green C202 is said to have successfully participated in the Rallye Tunis-Dakar. Nowadays the Laplander is very often used for off-road events in Nordic (European) countries, first of all of course in Sweden, where it is mostly successful. It is always a joy to see these cross-country oldies dominate over competitors of modern times. We were told from Down Under that even in Australian cross-country events the Laplander gives an excellent impression.

The parts-supply for the Laplander

The spare part supply for the Volvo offroaders is pretty well through the insider circles. Fortunately there are companies which specialized in Volvo-Terrängbilars, because original parts, if still available, cost a fortune. So Teli Psarras knows of a heat protector shield, which is made of a 2 mm steel-sheet costs exorbitant 367 DM (180 Euro). Shame on you! The Swedish army now sells their older models to private hands. But most of these vehicles go directly to the hands of the part dealers. Good addresses for parts in Sweden are the

houses Altyco Parts AB in Skogas, or Sten-Åke Gustavsson, Storgatan 10, Falköping, and Tarräng-Axel of Partille in the vicinity of Goteborg. Close to Skövde even a garage exists which specializes in new bodies for the C303 models. In our readers territory the Swiss Stefan Keller in Sittersdorf/TG and the German Teli Psarras Autospritzwerk in Neuss developed to some sort of Laplander popes. Whoever needs advice best calls one of these.

A word on the numbers of pieces in Switzerland

Stefan Keller has researched as well as he could, the number of Laplander Volvos sold in Switzerland, with the help of Mr. Gehri of Volvo- Truck Switzerland, exclusively for VOLVO-FAN. According to him 37 copies of the C202 have been sold. The C303 is an absolute rarity. Obviously a total of three has been disposed on Helvetian territory. One of these is still engaged in Entlebuch/LU at the bakery of Erwin Hofstetter. The other two have been distributed by the Volvo truck dealer Borcard in Matran/FR. One of these is still located in their own garage, use as an accident-pickup(?)-vehicle. The number of Laplanders a.k.a. L3314 sold in Switzerland was much bigger. The company Häussermann Volvo Automobile AG in Zurich and Effretikon still uses two of these vehicles for their internal services (e.g. snow removal). Stefan Keller has listed the owners of Volvo Laplander models he knows. Officially 22 are owning one of the old L3314/L3315. The number of known C202 owners is 17 at this time, and the ones having a C303 just two.

Are there any other Volvo-offroaders?

Yes, of course. Besides from the first versions of the '40s, mentioned in the beginning, which were a lot bigger than the Laplander there were in principle direct predecessors. We have also mentioned them in this title story. But now a little more information. When the military recognized its need for a higher mobility, Volvo was approached with the desire for the development of a spacious all-wheel driven passenger car, which could also be used as a mobile radio station. The project, which Volvo received for the first time in 1943, was handed over to Mäns Hartelius, who we learned to know as Mr. Laplander on the preceding pages. He came a short time earlier from Svenska Flygmotor (the later Volvo Flygmotor AB) in Trollhättan to Volvo. The light TVP (Swedish abbreviation for: "off-road-person-transporter") was the first Volvo sketch drawn in Mäns Hartelius own responsibility. The taxi (cab) body of the PV801/802 introduced in fall 1938 was for free, in other words was perfectly suitable to be equipped with the radio equipment an additional folding seats. In the contrast to the original PV801/802 all doors were front-mounted, and the features were "army-style scanty". In 1945/46 a total of 210 TVP models were produced which the Swedish army officially named "off-road vehicle m/43" or "radio personnel transporter m/43". The TVP served in the Swedish army until the '60s. In the late '40s Volvo started working on a succeeding model of the TVP. The basic model, a passenger transporter/radio car, was built after the same scheme as the TVP – a

light truck frame with all-wheel drive and a modified taxi body. Compared with its predecessor the TP21 (or "cross-country passenger car 21") was a lot more progressive. Great store was set by the improvement of the off-road capabilities. This was achieved by a shortened axle distance, a reinforced frame, bigger tires and the construction of effective differential locks. Because the rear part reminded of a fat pig, this model received the nickname "Sau" (sow), but it united satisfactory off-road abilities and a comfortable accommodation of two radio operators which made it perfectly fit as a convenient command vehicle. The TP21, motorized with a side-steered Volvo-ED-sixcylinder with 90 hp, was an extremely straight mechanical construction. The next representative of the next generation was the TL22 it was the first genuine, Volvo built light off-road truck – later on developed into the small, all-wheel driven front controlled military truck. The TL22 was a very small model with a metal deck only capable of 1500 kg payload, regardless of its three powered axles and the sturdy appearance. The external resemblance to the TP21 (not at last the front part) was the only equivalent to the preceding model. Also a two-axled version of the TL22, the TL11 was developed. This type was designed as a supporting (equipment-) vehicle for airplanes and was only produced in small numbers. During the last few years several private initiatives (especially in Sweden) constructed off-road vehicles out of any type of Volvo passenger cars. The most impressive representative of this species must have been the "8ig Swede" a monster vehicle with a Volvo-Duett-body and gigantic tires practically capable of rolling passenger cars into the ground. Last year in Vallakra a high legged Volvo 245 with off-road chassis and all-wheel drive could be seen.

Special thanks to all friends of the Laplander

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