



# XK Gazette

Digital Edition

The Monthly Magazine of the XK Club

December 2018 Number 255





# Family **fortunes**

**Chris and Lotte de Groot** look back at their amazing experience on the Gran Premio Nuvolari

Photographs by Fabian Galluchi and Gisella de Groot

**B**ack in 2013, my wife and I visited the Mille Miglia with our XK 120 and met a really nice Italian who informed us about the Gran Premio Nuvolari. Smaller in scale than the Mille Miglia but, as he explained, a really nice rally. We thought about it, and in spring 2014 we subscribed and hoped for a starting place. If you subscribe on time and you have a pre-1970 car with FIVA card, you'll be able to get one – and it's a starting place for an unbelievably great rally.

After driving it three times with my wife, the plan came up to drive it this year with our daughter, Lotte. She turned 21 in September, and we thought it would be a nice final stage of her upbringing. So, my wife and I more or less invited her for the rally, and expected an instant yes. But, it took some gentle persuading to get her into the car. Daughters of 21 do have a mind of their own...!

Thursday afternoon started with the 'waiting for the Gran Premio' programme, which means documents and technical control. This control was at Palazzo Tè: as soon as you park your car between all these unique machines, you step into another world. You take your documents and your camera, and walk through the Palazzo (museum) with its beautiful rooms from one registration



- Top: "Right turn!" Lotte points out the way ahead to her father
- Above: lining up to take the start in the centre of Mantua – Nuvolari's home town



desk to the other registration desk. It was the most beautiful registration location that we have ever experienced. I must say that our daughter was impressed with that.

Following the documents control was the technical control, where there was also the possibility to do some timed tests. These are used during the rally to set up the classification. After the controls, there was champagne and canapés with sponsor Eberhard watches right in the centre of Mantua, followed by a dinner at Piazza Erbe. A dinner at a beautiful square with beautiful white covered tables and delicious food under the stars. What an atmosphere, really Italian! Yes, our daughter started to like the rally. And we hadn't even started...

On Friday morning, all participants gathered on the Piazza Sordello according to start number/year of build. Because our car is 1954, we had a nice spot on the square. Around us were a Fiat from 1924, a number of Bugattis – including my favourite Type 35, wow! – Alfa Romeo 6C 1750 Zagato, 1900s, Giulia TZ, SVZ, Lagonda, Bentley, Ermini, Alvis, etc, etc. Also some 10 Jaguars participated, including the XK owned by our Italian friend.

I did the final fiddling on the car while my wife and daughter went through the roadbook. A serious business – they took more than enough time to go through it. The start was at 11:00am on Piazza Sordello between hundreds of spectators. We drove over a podium where the mayor, the police, Miss Italy and everyone else who is important was present.

After the start, you are going to drive like Tazio Nuvolari did – the real Nuvolari way. Normally, I drive fast in my competition-prepared Alfa Romeo Giulia Super, with which we have covered some 60,000 rally kilometres. But in Italy it's different. When you are driving the Gran Premio Nuvolari for the first time, you drive more or less decently along with the traffic. But you are soon being overtaken by fellow rally drivers – sometimes where it's not possible to overtake...

After experiencing that in our first year, we'd started to join in with this style: push the horn and overtake when you shouldn't; pass a line of cars at a traffic light and go to the front; stick out



• Top and above: father and daughter cross the start line in front of the Palazzo Ducale, where various local dignitaries flagged them off



● Left: the route showed off the amazing Italian countryside as well as visiting cities such as Siena (below and bottom), where crowds welcomed cars into the Piazza del Campo



your arm and say, “I’m driving the Gran Premio Nuvolari, can you let me pass?”; then thumbs up and go! Later you realise that the colour of the traffic light is not important. When it’s possible, go!

In doing so, it helps that the police also drive alongside the rally cars, with up to 20 motorcycles and five cars. They secure crossings, conduct the regular traffic and clear the road. They more or less take over the route and you regularly have a police car or bike before you. Our daughter was really impressed – “Dad! Is this allowed, is this possible?” Yes, it’s possible.

At the end of the day we also followed a police bike to the dinner location, which was very special. He really cleared the road for us rally drivers. The Dinner Express, as we called it afterwards. An amazing experience.

The second day started at 7am, and the route of 500-plus kilometres went through Tuscany. We can be brief about the landscape: *fantastico*! My daughter and I really enjoyed the



scenery and the typical Italian villages. The beauty of this rally is that because of the bol-arrow (tulip system), the navigator has plenty of time to look outside the car.

On the first day, there were a lot of spectators, both along the route and in the villages at checkpoints. The Saturday was absolutely fabulous, too. Everywhere there were people to wave, to applaud, waving with the Italian flag, and shouting *bravo* – everyone was excited.

We had checkpoints in villages with stands, finish-bows, stalwarts who tell the whole story about your car and push the microphone under your nose. But also hostesses who offer local products: glasses of Prosecco, cheese, bread rolls, cantuccini with dessert wine, bottled water, even warm snacks. The car-crazy, enthusiastic Italians make this such a great event. You feel a tiny bit like Nuvolari himself, a driver from another time, with all those people waving along the road and in the villages.

The fact that you are driving in such a beautiful classic car in this Italian setting gives you an incredible feeling. In addition to the villages are the checkpoints in the larger cities such as Arezzo and Siena – fantastic. In Siena, the checkpoint is in the middle of the Piazza del Campo! There you drive between a ‘hedge’ of a few hundred people.

But why are the Italians such petrolheads? Not only men, but also women, young and old, grannies with granddaughters, are waving at you and are excited when you pass. From an Italian lady, we learnt that their parents took them to along the routes of rallies and races to learn waving and applauding to the *pilotas* (drivers). Nice, right? She also took their children to learn to wave at the *pilotas*.

On Saturday night, there was a luxurious dinner in the Grand Hotel Rimini. Everyone grabbed his (or her) nice suit (or cocktail dress with high heels) out of the impossible small trunks and looks very chic. In the garden, we were welcomed with oysters and champagne and all sorts of other small bites.

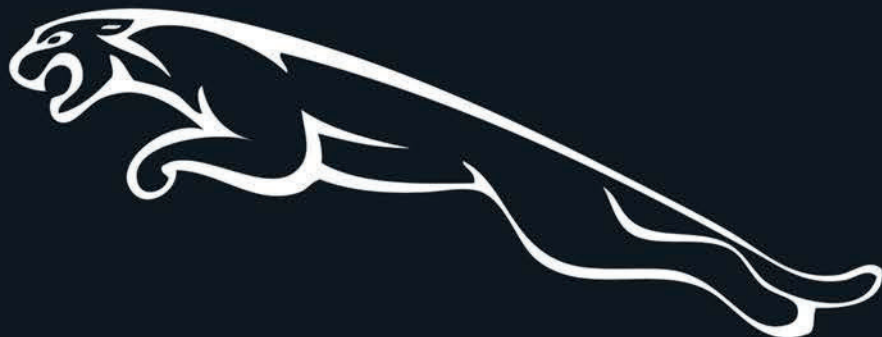
Sunday, 7am, and the route goes back towards Mantua. How do you get a classification with the simple bol-arrow/tulip system without further route checks? This requires the time testing, where you have to drive a given distance in a given number of seconds. On the start/finish line is a wire connected to an electronic system. The fanatics practise a lot at home and have equipment in their car that helps count down to zero. We saw a Swiss team testing and they told us that they calculate the time to between 0.01 and 0.19 seconds.

I asked our daughter if she would like to drive part of the route. She started smiling and I handed over the wheel. She drove some 50 kilometres and did five or six tests and two checkpoints. It's very nice to see your daughter driving and smiling behind the wheel! Later on, when we approached Mantua, I also let her drive the XK over the finish line, which she did with a big smile on her face. I must say we had a wonderful three days together in the car. A really nice father-daughter experience.

The finish in Mantua was marvellous – just



● Top: tackling a hairpin in the walled city of Urbino – a hillside location that's a World Heritage Site



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like the start, there were hundreds of people in the Piazza once again. After a total of 1,100 rally kilometres, we parked the car and relaxed on a terrace. Looking back, it is very, very special to drive a rally with your daughter. As she concluded, driving in Italy is like stepping into a movie. “How am I going to explain this to my friends?” she said.

In 2014, my wife and I agreed to drive the Gran Premio Nuvolari once. But, in days, weeks and even months after our first Gran Premio Nuvolari, we were still impressed with what we experienced and decided to drive it a second and third time. After missing one year, we also wanted our daughter to experience that feeling.

With such a route, such an perfect organisation, friendly co-drivers and so many enthusiastic and applauding people along the route, we think we’ll be back for one of the coming years. A kind of addiction, you could say. And the XK? It performed for the fourth time very, very well. What a beautiful car and what a beautiful engine!

### **Lotte's story**

My dad mentioned and asked it several times: “There is this rally in Italy and it’s out of this world, you have to come with me!” If you know my dad, he exaggerates sometimes when he’s excited. Was I going to have even half as much fun as he had? Eventually I said yes, and that was the start of an unforgettable weekend that words can’t describe, but I’m going to try.

Friday started magically at the Piazza Sordello. Everywhere you looked, there were beautiful classic cars. Rare marques such as Bugatti and Amilcar, and the more ‘usual’ cars such as Porsche 356s or Jaguar XKs. Which are not usual



- Above right: passing through Arezzo and (right) pausing at a control. The navigation was via tulip notes, which meant that the co-driver could enjoy the scenery

- Right: pausing at a control in Arezzo. The navigation was via tulip notes, which meant that the navigator could enjoy the scenery





at all, but in that setting they were.

After the start, I was instantly amazed at how many police officers were standing at each corner in each village we passed. In the Netherlands, we say the police are your friends. But in the south of Europe, the police are generally seen more as something you obey. The fact that these people with a lot of status were stopping cars (full of people going to work, friends or somewhere else) so we wouldn't have to stop for 10 seconds was breathtaking.

In every village were also a lot of volunteers. If you think about a lot of volunteers, think twice that amount and you're

still not even close to how many people were helping us to go in the right direction, handing out delicious treats from that area, making sure we started every test on time, etc.

There were also a ton of people just watching all the cars come by. There were people standing at each square, street, and village corner. But also in the middle of nowhere and in front of their own houses. And these people weren't just your average classic-car lovers. People of every age were standing on the side of the road cheering, shouting and applauding. There were mothers with their toddlers, children with friends and a lot, and I mean a lot, of grandmothers and grandfathers. It is beautiful how one rally can bring so much people together and bring so much joy to so many different people.

Finally, I want to say this. Friday night we experienced something my dad and I now refer to as The Dinner Express. Around 40 kilometres (25 miles) before the end of the rally day, a police officer on a motorcycle passed us. But in contrast to all the other policemen on motorcycles who overtook us, he pointed to his back tyre. The classic car in front of us, which was also driving the Nuvolari, sped up and followed said policeman. We also followed, and the classic cars behind us did as well.

The policeman stopped other normal cars on every roundabout so we could go first. He made cars drive on the right side of the road so we could pass easily. On a small single carriageway he made the cars on both sides of the road stand still in the grass so we could drive at 70kph past them. At traffic lights he wouldn't slow down, but he'd run a red light and just toot to other cars and point that we were following him. Because we were going so fast, we also caught up with other rally cars. That resulted in a long line with only beautiful cars that were also driving very fast.

After those impressive 40 kilometres (25 miles), we arrived at the biggest and most fancy buffet I have ever seen. The Dinner Express was a whole experience in itself and words will never do it justice. 🍷



• Top: the Jaguar tackles a timed test in Ferrara.

Along with the regularity sections, the tests decided the final order

• Left: a proud moment – Lotte drives the XK across the finishing ramp in Mantua after a memorable few days

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Johannes Schilcher (Dip. Mech. Eng.)  
Managing Director  
+420 603 574981  
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Frank Berger  
Head, Sales & Communication  
+44 7770 687465  
fb@lynxmotors.co.uk

**Lynx**<sup>®</sup>  
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For North American enquiries, [lawrence@bespokebritishsportscars.com](mailto:lawrence@bespokebritishsportscars.com)

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# XK Gazette

July 2018 Number 250





# Happy birthday, **XK!**

**James Page** looks back at a memorable weekend of cars and stars at XK70



Jaguar enthusiasts from around the world descended upon Shelsley Walsh for the XK70 celebrations on 9-10 June. The famous Worcestershire hillclimb proved to be the ideal venue: the 1000-yard course was kept busy with competitive runs, parades and demonstrations of historic cars; the paddock was full of great Jaguars; and the tented village hosted a range of attractions.

Two historic XK 120s from Jaguar's heritage fleet took pride of place at the head of the paddock. NUB 120 – the car in which Ian and Pat Appleyard enjoyed so much rallying success – was joined by the record-breaking 'seven days and seven nights' fixed-head coupé in the first two wooden shelters, with both cars being paraded up the hill on several occasions.

Marque specialists pulled out all the stops in their support for the event. Eagle's incredible line-up of 20 cars included a Speedster, Spyder GT and Low Drag GT, plus the 1964 Series 1 E-type that was used in the Kingsman sequel *The Golden Circle*. Eagle boss Henry Pearman made a number of spirited runs up the hill in the much-modified 1967 E-type in which he and Gordon Cruickshank won the 1989 Pirelli Classic Marathon – beating such stars as Stirling Moss along the way. Pearman later joked that he should have picked up some sort of award for leaving the longest tyre marks away from Shelsley's start-line...

Also among Eagle's line-up was an ex-Peter Whitehead Lister Knobbly – complete with ex-works D-type engine – the XJ220C that won its class at Le Mans in 1993 before being disqualified on a technicality, and the very first Group C XJR6 –



- Far left: the XK 120 of Hans Jud sweeps through Crossing
- Top: there are few finer motorsport venues than Shelsley Walsh. Even better was the fact that the weather played ball...
- Above: Kevin Zwolinski hustles into Bottom Ess *en route* to winning the XK 140 class



- Left: definitely getting into the spirit of the weekend!
- Below left: Nicolas Bert won the Sports-racing class in his HW Alta
- Below: Jaguar legend Norman Dewis was a very welcome visitor



Pearman boldly demonstrated chassis 185 up the narrow hill.

Classic Motor Cars was another to support the event in strength. Boss Peter Neumark brought the ex-Lindner/Nocker Lightweight E-type, which was joined by PWT 846 – the XK 140 FHC that was cruelly, and incorrectly, disqualified from the 1956 Le Mans 24 Hours. CMC also showcased OKV 1, the famous ex-works short-nose D-type, and the unique Pininfarina-bodied XK 120 that it unveiled at Pebble Beach last year following a mammoth restoration.

Chris Ward was on hand to drive JD Classics' well-known and much-campaigned semi-Lightweight E-type – 1196 WK, chassis number 850486. The Essex-based company also bought to Shelsley Walsh JWK 651, the ex-works, alloy-bodied, competition-prepared XK 120 that was entered for both Le Mans and the Mille Miglia in period. Alongside that was WOO 38S, the XK 150S FHC that JD built in 1998 specifically for fast-road/rally use, plus the ear-splitting ex-Bob Tullius Group 44 IMSA XJ-S and the ex-Jim Swift XK 120.

Kevin Zwolinski, Guy Broad and Grahame Bull were all on stellar form during Saturday's hillclimb. All three broke the 40-second barrier – as did Peter Smith in Hexagon's XK 120 – with Broad's XK 120 FHC quickest after the first timed runs in 38.02s. Zwolinski held a slide into Bottom Ess during his second climb and went on to win the XK 140 class in his oft-campaigned FHC with a best of 38.94s. Broad topped the 120 class and, with

a time of 39.28s, Bull did likewise in the 150 class, in which Chris Keith-Lucas and Paul Skilleter were also going well. Skilleter had even entrusted his FHC to Chris Ward early in the day, the historic ace dipping under 40 seconds on his first effort.

Ward put in a sensational first timed run aboard the JD Classics E-type, the crisp exhaust note echoing around the Teme Valley as he flashed across the line in 33.02s – quite possibly the fastest Jaguar time ever posted at Shelsley Walsh, and comfortably good enough to top the E-type class. Unfortunately, the hill bit back on his second run, when Ward clipped the inside bank at the challenging Crossing left-hander. The car was flicked across to the outside bank, along which it ran for some distance before thankfully dropping back on to the tarmac on all four wheels.

Classicfabs boss Jimmy Stewart had travelled down from Scotland and was rewarded by winning the Jaguar-engined class in his bright-orange XJ Coupé (41.36s). The Sports-racing class attracted an impressive variety of cars, from the highly modified SS100 'Old Number 8' to Pendine's Gomm-bodied XK 140, but Nicolas Bert took the laurels in his HW Alta-Jaguar (37.71s). The awards were sponsored by Moss Europe and presented by Chris Capes, Jaguar Programme Manager.

Away from the competitive action, Willie Green was giving regular passenger rides in Clive Beecham's D-type. The ex-works, ex-Ecurie Ecosse XKD 603 was kept very busy over the

weekend, Green expertly blating it up Shelsley Walsh and providing one of the event's aural highlights (see page 15 for a first-hand account!). Another came from a pair of XJR-15s, their 7-litre V12s echoing through the trees.

At the other end of the scale was the stately but deceptively brisk progress of L420 YAC – the Daimler DS420 limousine that is the final XK-engined car ever built. Another car to be supplied by Jaguar's Heritage Trust, it wafted off the line as commentator Jeremy Wade noted that it was surely heading for "quietest time of the day".

Wade was on supreme form behind the microphone, keeping spectators entertained and informed throughout proceedings. As the noise from the Pratt and Whitney engines in the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight's Dakota faded into the distance, he noted that they sounded "almost as nice as an XK" and later wondered whether Philip Porter would join the dance demonstrations in the courtyard: "If you haven't seen Philip dance, you've missed one of life's rare treats..."

Former XK, C-, D- and E-type racer Peter Sargent was making his first trip to Shelsley Walsh and was joined by Nick Lumsden – nephew of Sargent's former co-driver and partner, the late Peter Lumsden. The evergreen Norman Dewis, who turns 98 in August, was on fine form and a popular presence in the paddock, while Pat Quinn – daughter of Sir William Lyons – enthralled the audience in the XK70 Theatre with tales of her adventures aboard NUB 120.



- Top right: Pat and Michael Quinn entertain the audience in the XK70 Theatre
- Right: Pat's former mount – NUB 120 – prepares for another run up the hill
- Below: the 'seven days and seven nights' XK 120 leaves the start-line in the Saturday-afternoon sun





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• Above: live jazz music kept everyone entertained  
Right: XKs wait to tackle the hill in what must be one of the most atmospheric of paddocks  
Below right: cars came to Shelsley from across the world  
Below: spectators at Crossing enjoy Saturday's hillclimb



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## Jaguar-Ersatzteile, Wartung und Restauration

### RESTORATION XK 120 OTS, 672'282, CLARK GABLE



*Clark Gable & Suzanne Dadolle, 1953*



*MDU420 Concorso d'Eléganza Villa d'Este, 2016*

#### Significant Details of MDU420



*Original picture*



*Reconstruction of boot rack which was lost after restoration*

#### Front of Car with Badges



*Original picture*



*Badge Bar with correct badges after restoration*

#### Bonnet with Louvres



*Original picture with louvered bonnet, also visible bracket for previously fitted bonnet belt*



*Restoration of bonnet*



*Bonnet after restoration*



*Engine bay after restoration with bracket for bonnet belt*

#### Proof and history



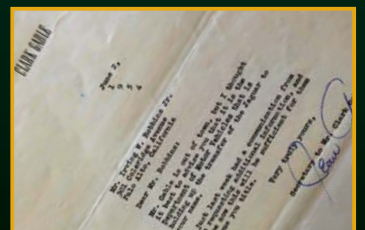
*Original documents as checks and correspondence of Clark Gable*



*Clark Gable driving in Cornwall with MDU420. Already with boot rack but without louvres. The bonnet was then held down with leather belt. Gable returned the bonnet to the factory to have louvres retro fitted*



*Original chassis plate*



*Letter of Clark Gables secretary to Mr. Irving, 2<sup>nd</sup> owner of MDU420*



- Left: Chris Capes and Philip Porter present Guy Broad with his award for winning the XK 120 class in Saturday's hillclimb
- Below: French Jaguar Exclusive XK convoy makes its way back down the hill
- Bottom: XKs were joined at Shelsley by other XK-engined models plus more recent Jaguars

One of the biggest audiences of the weekend gathered to hear former Jaguar chairman Sir John Egan recall his time with the company. Egan spoke about the challenges that were involved in keeping it going, its growth during the 1980s, the relative merits of GM vs Ford when it came to a potential takeover, and the craftsmanship that was available in the Midlands.

Edd China was another popular draw, the former *Wheeler Dealers* presenter talking to Philip Porter in the courtyard about his new challenge: the restoration of an E-type for YouTube series *Built by Many*. Le Mans legend Richard Attwood was also at Shelsley Walsh, and after being interviewed was one of many folk watching the ex-Basil Davenport Spider II having its transmission rebuilt in the paddock. The custodians of the Shelsley special had it all back together in time for Saturday afternoon's demonstration runs.

Paul Michaels' history with Jaguars goes back to the early 1960s, and fittingly Hexagon had a trio of XKs on display in the tented village. CKL Developments was there, too, with a range of E-types and XKs, the latter including a 1949 alloy-bodied 120. Not far away, ladies were having their hair done in a 1940s style in the Glamour Parlour, while live music had people dancing. At the end of one song, the singer admitted that the band had added a couple of choruses to see who'd get worn out first – the band or the dancers. He admitted that the latter won the day.

The support of *Club* members from far and wide was spectacular and much appreciated. The Swiss and French contingents arrived in style and proudly paraded up the hill, and XKs were joined by swathes of other XK-engined cars, plus more recent XK8s and F-types.

Sunday's prize-giving included the Aubrey Finburgh Trophy for the most original XK, which went to Mark Boxley and his XK 120 OTS, chassis 673694. The Bryan Corser Trophy for the 'spirit of XK' was judged by James Fraser of JD Classics and awarded to Ken Johnson for his XK 120 OTS, chassis 660682. Eagle's Paul Brace selected Jon Martin's Series 1 to receive the Turner Prize for 'essence of E-type', saying of it: 'A red 3.8 coupé, all flaps open and a windscreen dense with splattered



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# The **XK Club** at 20!

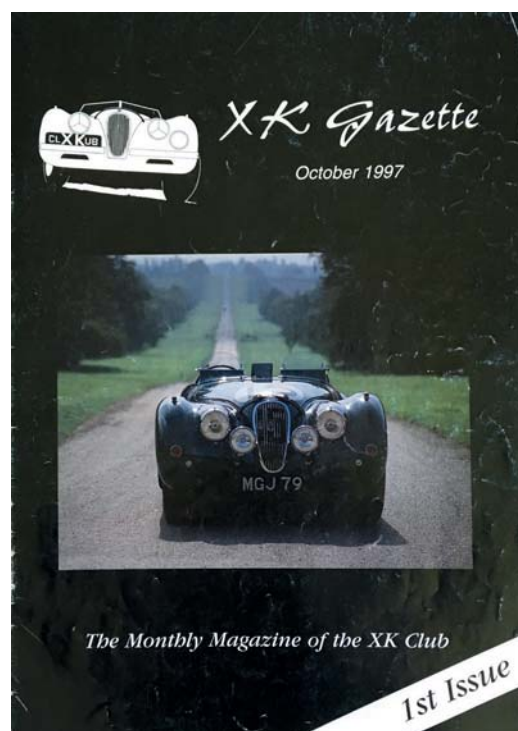
**T**wenty years ago, Goodwood was yet to host its first Revival, Tony Blair swept to power in the UK, Thrust SSC set the first supersonic Land Speed Record and Oasis were at the height of their fame (or should that be infamy?) with the release of *Be Here Now*. If 1997 doesn't sound all that long ago, much has certainly changed.

In October came the first edition of the *XK Gazette*, and now here we are at issue 240. Within that maiden effort was a call to members who might have old Tan panels so that the trim could be used to patch the seats on Jaguar's highly original '7 Days and 7 Nights' XK 120 FHC. The question was also posed as to whether any 'standard' drum-braked 150s were ever built, and a 150 FHC for restoration was advertised for £5500...

There was a feature on 660041, the very special XK 120 that, in 1950, became the first Jaguar to finish the Le Mans 24 Hours. We paid a visit to engine tuner Les Trafford, Terry McGrath reviewed the Australian XK scene and Paul Skilleter brought news of his latest project – an XK 150 FHC.

The *Market Observer* column would certainly have been very different back then – and not only because the number of sales was much lower than in today's frenetic schedule. At BCA's February auction, a restored XK 150 FHC sold for £20,055, while in the same month Brooks fetched all of £24,725 for a similarly rebuilt XK 120 OTS. In April, the same auction house did manage to achieve £42,750 for what was described as a 'corker' of an XK 140 DHC. Even so, it seems that any XK had to be particularly good if it was to command more than £30,000. It's worth noting that there was one particularly significant auction result that year – at Christie's Pebble Beach sale in August, an unrestored D-type, XKD 537, made £608,700.

Over the years, we've been regaled with adventures from XK owners all over the world. Neil Donnan drove his XK 140 from London to Sydney then, later, across most of America, while Philip Haslam's XK 120 has covered thousands upon thousands of miles on international rallies. Getting out there and enjoying XKs has always been at the heart of what the *Club* is all about, from 1998's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary tours onwards.



- Top: a line-up of cars representing each country that took part in the amazing XK60 celebrations
- Above: issue number one of the *XK Gazette*



LE MANS PIONEER

The first issue of The XK Club magazine was published in 1988. It was a small, black and white publication, about the size of a newspaper supplement. The cover featured a large photograph of a Jaguar XK100, with the words 'LE MANS PIONEER' printed in bold, capital letters. Below the photo, there was a short article about the car's history at the 24 Hours of Le Mans. The magazine was edited by Les Trafford, who was also a member of the XK Club. It was published by the XK Club, which was founded in 1987. The magazine was a quarterly publication, and it was the first of many that would follow. It was a small, but important, publication for the XK Club, as it provided a platform for members to share their stories and experiences. The magazine was also a source of information for new members, as it contained articles about the club's history and activities. The first issue of The XK Club magazine was a landmark publication for the club, and it was a testament to the dedication and passion of its members.

**XK Specialist**

**LES TRAFFORD**

LES TRAFFORD is a well-known figure in the XK world. He has been a member of the XK Club for many years, and he has been involved in the club's activities for a long time. He is a passionate enthusiast of XK cars, and he has a deep knowledge of their history and mechanics. He has written many articles about XK cars, and he has been a frequent speaker at XK Club events. He is also a member of the XK Club's technical committee, and he has been instrumental in the development of the club's technical resources. Les Trafford is a true expert on XK cars, and his contributions to the club have been invaluable. He is a man of many talents, and his passion for XK cars is a source of inspiration for many of the club's members. He is a true ambassador for the XK Club, and his dedication to the club is a testament to the power of passion and commitment.

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**AN AUSTRALIAN OVERVIEW**

**Terry McGrath reviews the XK scene down under...**

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- The first issue included an indepth feature on the first Jaguar to finish the Le Mans 24 Hours, plus specialist visits and news from abroad

Twenty years is a lot to cover in a few pages, so we've picked out a milestone celebration to look back on before shining a spotlight on some of the 69 members who've been with us since day one.

### The most ambitious Club event – so far...

In 2008, 600 XKs from around the world descended upon Goodwood to celebrate the model's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. To kick things off, there was a 60-car tour that, over the course of 11 days, took everyone through the Yorkshire Dales, the Peak District, the Cotswolds, Wales and the South Downs. Not only that, they stopped at Sir William Lyons' former home, Wappenbury Hall, and also visited Jonathan Heynes – son of William.

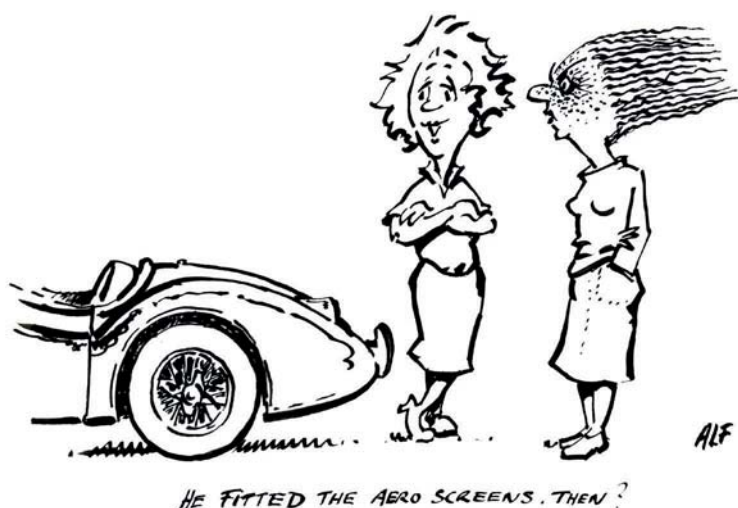
At one point, the group was even deliberately split into two. 'Total chaos was my aim,' wrote Philip Porter. 'Half had one Cotswold route and the other half another. Both routes kept crossing so that we ended up with the two groups doing, in effect, a series of figures of eights between them!'

Remarkably, everyone survived, and at Goodwood for the main event, there was – among other attractions – the largest-ever collection of Ecurie Ecosse cars in one place. Panel discussions included the likes of Sir Stirling Moss, Murray Walker and Norman Davis, and there was an unprecedented group of Jaguar sports-racing cars. The ex-Duncan Hamilton C-type (XKC 004) was at Goodwood alongside no fewer than 15 others. The prototype D-type (XKC 401) was also there, as





- From top left: the late Ian Furness leads a convoy on XK60; an XK car park in south Wales; gathering at Ripley Castle
- Left: the latest ambitious addition to the *Club* calendar is the Round Britain Coastal Drive



- Renowned motoring artist Alan Fearnley has painted everything from 1930s GP titans to '50s sports-racers, and even contributed a superb set of cartoons to the *XK Gazette*

was the Le Mans-winning XKD 505, plus Jaguar-engined racers from Cooper, Tojeiro and Lister. A Diamond Charity Ball took place in Goodwood House and there was even a 1950s fashion show.

Since XK60, of course, the equally ambitious Round Britain Coastal Drive has been held – for E-types in 2016 and XKs this year – but the pressure is on to make next year's XK70 celebrations at Shelsley Walsh even bigger and better. With a competitive hillclimb planned, plus demonstration runs, live music and the aim of attracting 700 XKs, it's certainly looking good so far!

### Still going strong – the class of '97

During the *Club's* first few weeks, members joined from Australia, Hong Kong, the USA, Zimbabwe, the UK and all across Europe. Dozens of those are still with us today, so it seems only right to put them centre-stage...

#### Fred Ljone

I've owned my 1956 XK 140 FHC since 1977 and have done five Monte Carlo Challenges. I've probably covered 200,000km in it, and it's still my preferred means of transport for long business trips, equipped the way an active enthusiast might have done in its prolonged lifespan. Twenty years' membership, running a register of XK cars in Norway, representing the XK Club in our country – and even sleeping twice in the founder's



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guest room – has all been a joy never experienced in any other international classic car organisation.

Among so many memorable trips, the one I choose to highlight is meeting the participants of the 2009 XK Club Fjords and Mountains Tour of Norway at Gudvangen and escorting Philip Porter and the tour organiser in his beautiful XK 120 FHC along the scenic back road down to Ulvik, Hardanger, from where my family originated.

### **Nick Wilkins**

I've had LWK 799, 1951 RHD chassis 660926, for 20 years, rallied it, raced it, used for *XK Club* events. It's the perfect classic car, and the *XK Club* is not far behind! The picture is from an XK race at Croft in 2016.



### **Peter Lindvall**

In 1997, coming back to Sweden after spending six years in the USA, I was looking for a classic English sports car, preferably a



Big Healey. Then I saw her! Hidden in the corner of a local car dealership, advertised as an 80% finished project. I was totally blown away, how hard can it be to make her perfect? Well, it took three years but the 17 years after that have been pure joy. Starting the project in 1997, I needed a network in the UK to find parts. Guy Broad told me about the newly started *XK Club*. I joined and have been a happy member since.

### **Paul Mellenger**

I own two XKs. The first is an XK 140 OTS that was purchased back in 1968 when I had graduated from high school. The second is the XK 120 FHC that came into my life in the mid-1970s. Both have been restored to a show-driver condition and have been active in Jaguar Club Concours, the Keels & Wheels Concours in Texas and the All British Car Day shows.



### **Ole F Schmidt**

My XK 120 FHC is chassis number 680428S. For me, the most satisfying activity with the car has been to renovate it as close



## **Jeremy Wade** THE XK FANATIC



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"I really can't believe it is twenty years since I penned my first ad for the XK Gazette! Time has flown by and XK 50 seems like last year and we will soon be celebrating three score years and ten of our favourite motor cars. Sadly we have lost good friends along the way [and some members are now so old that they have lost their members] but the XK Club goes from strength to strength and is supported by a mature and well developed industry. This has resulted in many people driving their XKs more than ever and enjoying the plethora of events available to us. Long may it continue and congratulations to Philip, Julie and the team on reaching another landmark. Long may they continue!

Don't dismiss the above 150 as just a very pretty Fixed Head Coupe in Sherwood green looking lovely on new body colour wires with Vredesteins all round. Indeed it has been beautifully repainted and rechromed recently whilst the interior has been retrimmed in suede green with matching carpets and a new West of England cloth headlining. All jolly nice I hear you say but so what?

The really important thing about this XK is the provenance. It is the factory prototype, Chassis number XB 1001, and was used by the works experimental department until it was invoiced to works driver and double Le Mans winner Ivor Bueb! This is a great opportunity for any serious Jaguar collector to acquire a significant ex works car that is well documented and featured in numerous publications. At £140,000 it is roughly half the price of a "new" E type being resurrected today!"



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as possible to its original state. All of the small details have received my attention. Even the Oddie nuts have been retained. For this, I've found that it has been a great help to read the *XK Gazette* with all the articles where the experts have commented on various topics. In 20 years, almost all technical aspects have been covered well.

Concerning my favourite memory from an *XK Club* event, it goes back to December 1, 2007, when we were participating in a dinner at the House of Commons. Julie Porter was going to hold a welcome speech for all of us, and she had very carefully consulted each table to gather relevant information about the guests. Surprisingly, at our table all the gentlemen started their motoring career with a Morris 1000! This was going to be a good basis for great fun the rest of the evening – it was not only Jaguars that was the subject as much as Morris 1000s!

### **Tony Occleshaw**

I have been a member of the *XK Club* from the very beginning and have enjoyed reading the magazine. I have had my 140 now for 22 years and it's my pride and joy. One day, when I retire, I will be able to attend lots more events!



### **Alan Harris**

Having been interested in classic cars for many years, I bought my first XK as a restoration project in 1993 – an XK 150 DHC, registration JFO 456. The car was on the road by 1996 and with the creation of the *XK Club* in 1997 I joined immediately.



One of the very first events I attended with the car was XK50 at Donington, and indeed the car is recorded as attending in the list compiled by David Bentley and printed in issue 13 of the *Gazette*, October 1998.

In the early days of ownership, work got in the way of using it but with retirement approaching in 2006 it was time to venture out. As a start, Mary and I took part in The Reivers and Highlands Tour 2006, which we enjoyed immensely. One of the early enduring memories is the welcome that we received from other tour participants, some of whom had been on many *Club* tours before, and the great friendships that were made and which last to this day. Since that early outing, we've taken part in very many club tours – notably XK60 and XK65 – also including both UK and European tours.

We completed over 35,000 miles in JFO 456, which has recently been sold and replaced with a right-hand-drive XK 150S DHC that has joined its other three XK 'friends' as part of my car collection. It's difficult to only own one, isn't it?

Membership of the *Club* transcends all walks of life. Ownership of the cars brings together like-minded owners for their mutual benefit and sheer enjoyment of their passion. We would not have made such wonderful friends over the years without participating in *Club* events. It has been a very enjoyable 20-year journey.

FRANK TURTLE

DEAR LOUISE

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR LETTER OF THE 17<sup>TH</sup> JULY REGARDING ORIGINAL MEMBERS OF THE XK CLUB. SORRY I DO NOT USE E-MAILS AS I AM 93 YEARS OLD AND NOT INTO THESE NEW COMMUNICATION METHODS.

MY JAGUAR XK 120 WAS FIRST REGISTERED IN 1951, AND I HAVE OWNED IT <sup>SINCE</sup> 1970, IT WAS ORIGINALLY MODIFIED FOR CLUB RACING IN 1955 BY 'MURKETT BROTHERS' A JAGUAR DEALERSHIP IN HUNTINGDON, WHO FITTED A 3.4 (S) ENGINE COMPLETE WITH TRIPLE CARBS, WHICH IT RETAINS.

WITH REGARD TO THE XK CLUB, THE THING I LIKE AND APPRECIATE IS THAT IT CONCENTRATES PURELY ON XK 120, 140 & 150 CARS, NOT LIKE SOME CAR CLUBS WHO COVER THE ENTIRE RANGE OF MODELS. I HAVE ENCLOSED A PHOTO OF NMA 820 WHICH I AM CARRYING OUT SOME LIGHT RE-FURBISHMENT ON AT THE MOMENT, SLOWLY DUE TO AGE. HOPE THIS HELPS, LOOKING FORWARD TO ANOTHER 20 YRS.



- Above: Frank Turtle's modified XK 120, which he's owned for 47 years, and the inspiring letter that he sent telling us about its refurbishment

### **And finally...**

In his introduction to the first issue of the *XK Gazette*, Philip Porter wrote this: 'Our aim with the magazine is to cover many aspects of XK ownership and history. You cannot please everybody all the time, but I hope there will be plenty to appeal to most people most of the time. If not, you must let me know because it is you we want to please.'

That's as relevant now as it's ever been, so feel free to get in touch with your stories of epic drives, restoration updates, history-based articles or just a celebration of you and your XK. With the boom in historic motorsport as well as the current proliferation of rallies and tours, there have never been as many ways to enjoy our hobby. Who knows what we'll be looking back on in issue 360 or 480?

For now, though, here's to the next 20 years.



A fabulous 1969 Aston Martin DB6 Volante recently restored by ourselves for a body and paintwork restoration including extensive structural corrosion issues, due to be exhibited at the **Hampton Court Palace Concours of Elegance** in its original colour Amethyst.



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Current projects are an Aston Martin DB5 colour change to Silver Birch, a 1958 Aston Martin DB Mk3 Drophead complete nut and bolt restoration to concours, a Series 3 XKE for a concours nut and bolt restoration and a 1973 Ferrari Daytona for a major exterior body and paintwork restoration.



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### 1955 Jaguar XK140 Roadster

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# XK Gazette

The Monthly Magazine of the XK Club

August 2017

Number 239





# Round Britain Coastal Drive

After a successful debut last year for E-type owners, this time it was the turn of the *XK Club* to tackle the Round Britain Coastal Drive. Forty cars left the National Motor Museum on 12 June, with some planning to do the entire route and dozens more dipping in and out along the way. Eighteen days later, they had Beaulieu once more in their sights. Nearly 4,000 miles had been covered, taking in Cornwall, Wales, the Lake District, Scotland, Yorkshire and down towards Cromer – birthplace of Malcolm Sayer.

The atmosphere was superb throughout, with the crews enjoying visits to specialists such as event sponsors Classicfabs and JD Classics, plus CKL. Then there was Dunbeath Castle, Llandudno, the Applecross peninsula – the highlights just kept coming. SNG Barratt again lent its support, as did Jaguar Land Rover – which supplied a back-up vehicle – and Vintage Tyre Supplies.

Perhaps the best way to tell the story, however, is via the intrepid folk who took part. They spoke to Malcolm McKay at the Beaulieu finish...

## Patrick Hanratty

Patrick set out with the intention to make the most of it, and he certainly did, visiting as many castles and cathedrals as he could along the way as well as completing each day's route: "I've had a wonderful time," he exclaims. "We had glorious weather, and I was particularly struck with how incredibly friendly people were, asking questions, giving us thumbs up, they really loved it."



"Driving this route, you understand what a beautiful country we live in: beautiful beaches, glorious lakes, wonderful sweeping roads in Scotland. I took my car into Castle Mey at the top of Scotland, I visited Caernarfon, Culloden, Cawdor, Bamburgh Castle. I drove around Loch Ness – blue sky and blue water."

"There are so many memories – in the Highlands, *big* mountains, narrow roads, no traffic; in Norfolk and Suffolk, little flint villages and a Norman church in almost every village. The visits were very interesting, JD Classics, CKL, Twyford."

"I've only had the 120 for four months – I've got

• Top: the essence of the Round Britain Coastal Drive – a glorious view across an XK bonnet, in this case Philip Porter's 120 FHC, sunny skies and the wonderful coastline. This is Slapton Sands in Devon

• Above: Murray Walker was on hand to flag everyone away from Beaulieu on the first day

a 150 as well that's rally-prepared, but I wanted to test the 120 – it went very well!"

## Malcolm Davies and Roger Miles

Malcolm and Roger had a special reason for travelling together – Roger sold the XK 150 DHC to Malcolm two years ago: "We've known each other 30 years and both work in the crane industry, so we've mugged our corporate contacts all around the coast," laughs proud Welshman Malcolm. "We've raised over £6,000 and added £700 more today [the final stage]. I've really enjoyed the group going around together, we're all geeks, with a passion to do it, and come from all walks of life. I had stents a few weeks ago, this has been a good test for them – especially when we chased some lads who threw a can of Coke into the car!"

"The Jaguar has been brilliant. Before setting off I had new calipers fitted because they were sticking, and changed to bucket seats with the squabs raked, and seat belts – they proved very comfortable. I kept a diary of the driving experience. Best was the run to Ullapool: 'A great driving day – going down to Ullapool it felt as if we were floating. Can driving get any better than this?' The skies were clear, there was no rain, you just needed music to start up as a soundtrack. Then



the next day was just as good! I've been joking that the car did 40mpg – that's because Roger paid half of the petrol!"

"I only had the car for a year," recalls Roger, "and I regret selling it. I will buy another, I'm looking for a 150 FHC. Doing the RBCD was particularly special for me because I knew one of the fundraisers for Prostate Cancer UK, who died of the cancer two months ago."

## Guy Soden

Guy drove the entire route in by far the oldest car on RBCD, alloy-bodied 120 OTS 660047, registered 120 JAG. "It used to be a racer and I've had it for 15 years," he explains. "This is its longest single trip, but it's done many. All the way round we've been fixing it at the side of the road. I've had friends co-drive on different stages, with my wife joining me for the final sections. I asked one friend which day he'd enjoyed most and he said, 'The day we had to fix your car' – the top hose had split and we repaired it at the roadside! We also managed to get the tracking sorted during the event."

"The rough roads in Scotland damaged the exhaust. Jimmy at Classicfabs worked really hard to patch it up when we went through Fort William. We ended up arriving at the Plockton hotel at 11pm – after the most amazing drive in the low



- Top: Richard Worts sent us this lovely shot of Nick Haigh's XK 140 at Land's End. The Pastel Green FHC joined the event for the stages that went from Exeter to Penzance and then from Penzance to Bridgwater
- Above left: day three dawned bright and sunny, with the participants lined up outside Trereife House
- Left: this was typical of the incredible scenery that everyone enjoyed in west Wales



- Above: with little traffic and great roads, the spectacular Scottish Highlands provided a stark contrast to the busier sections that the crews faced 'down south'
- Above right: Andy Waters was kept busy every day
- Right: a fine group gathers at John O'Groats, ready to tackle the East Coast *en route* back to Beaulieu

evening light. If the exhaust hadn't broken, we'd never have had that great experience! As we drove on around Scotland, the rear silencer split. So we called Jimmy and he fabricated a complete new system overnight – we drove back across to Fort William and he fitted it. What brilliant service!"

### Andy Waters, ace mechanic

One of the heroes of the 2017 RBCD was Andy Waters, who shared 'mechanicing' duties with Peter Stant of SNG Barratt. Peter did the first few days before handing over to Andy, who did the middle section before Peter took over again.

"I had made what turned out to be a bad decision to change my 120 FHC to electronic ignition a few days before the start," says Philip Porter. "Because the parts were so late being supplied, we did not have time (inevitably!) to thoroughly test it out. All was well on the way to the start at Beaulieu but gradually the engine started misfiring more and more over the next few days, until by the time we reached Ayr, I was driving a very sick motor car. No fun.

"Local member John McAleese kindly lent me a replacement distributor with all the necessary bits (my own old distributor was supposed to have been put in the boot but was not!) and Andy not only fitted it but set it all up to very good effect. From thereon, the car ran beautifully and was, once again, a real pleasure to drive.

"Like Peter, Andy worked tirelessly from early morning and often into the evenings sorting a variety of problems. One car was almost fully restored during the event and kept the chaps very busy! We had never met Andy before but were all very impressed with his attitude, experience and ability. His company is called CBR Motor Bodies and is based at Hednesford, just north of



Birmingham. It is good to have companies one can recommend in an ever-increasing number of locations."

### Jack Bacon, Prostate Cancer UK

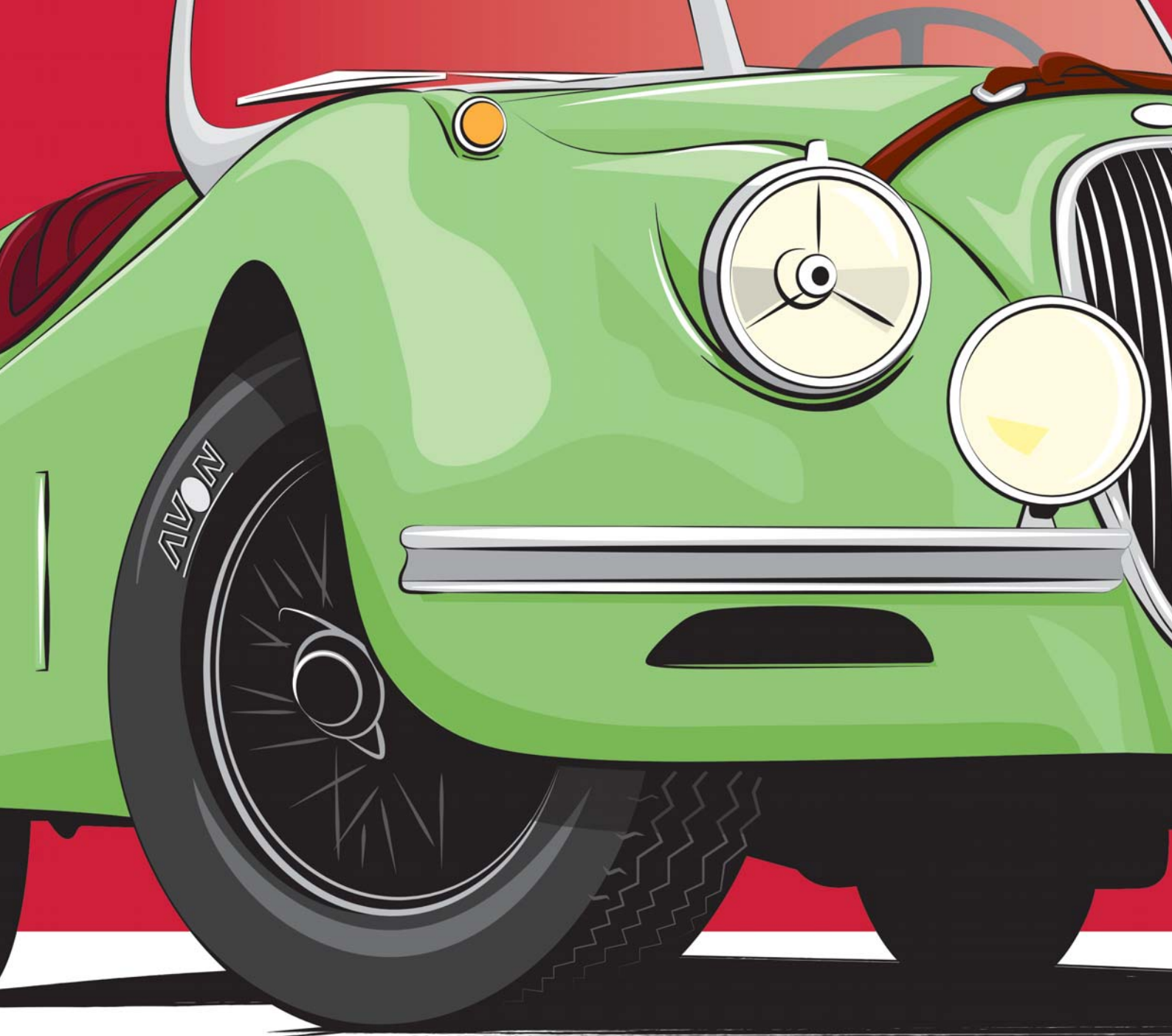
Jack has been one of the prime movers in linking the charity with the Round Britain Coastal Drive: "As a fund-raiser, I was given the task of trying to raise awareness among men via the motoring market. A few days later, out of the blue I received a phonecall from Philip with this brilliant idea, which has now raised an incredible £100,000. Everyone in my office thinks I'm amazing!

"With the XK event, we've managed to get the charity more involved, getting our volunteers out on the route, arranging extra press reports. Our main aim is to increase awareness of the cancer, which mostly affects men over 50 but is also affecting younger men too. The event is perfect. I was riding with Philip one day and we were in a queue – the guy in the car next to me asked what we were doing. I told him about it and he asked if we had any leaflets – of course I did. 'Give me a pile of them,' he said, 'I'm just going to my golf club, I'll put them out there.'

"That sort of thing is invaluable to us: it makes my job so much easier. And of course I hugely enjoyed the event. I'm from Cornwall originally, so when I was navigating Philip there, I pretended I knew my way, taking us down a tiny, narrow, overgrown lane near Mousehole, as close to the coast as possible. I was lucky, we did eventually come back out onto a proper road!"

### And this is what it's all about...

Twelve years after first being diagnosed with advanced prostate cancer, Douglas Baker was starting to feel desperate. Having been through rounds and rounds of treatment, including three bouts of chemotherapy, his doctor



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## Round Britain Coastal Drive



told him the cancer had spread to his lymph nodes and liver, and become resistant to all available drugs: "There wasn't anything left that he could offer me. I've tried to never worry about my condition and just get on with life, but that was one of my low points – I was in hospital four times in five months."

That was when his doctor suggested taking part in a clinical trial. Dr Joaquin Mateo (right, with Douglas) and his team at the Institute of Cancer Research were trialling a drug, Olaparib, which is used to treat women with ovarian cancer who have a certain DNA mutation. Dr Mateo identified that Douglas also had this mutation, which put him in the third of men with advanced prostate cancer the team predicted would respond well.

A year on, scans show that the tumours in Douglas's lymph nodes and liver are shrinking, and his energy has returned, with minimal side effects: "I even went on holiday to Spain with my

family, which I didn't think I'd be able to manage again. I've been very lucky – even if that seems like a funny word to use."

This trial was funded in part by the generosity shown by those on the Round Britain Coastal Drive, and Douglas was visibly moved when he spoke about how overwhelmed he is: "What an incredible thing these kind people have done for someone they've never even met. I will be forever grateful, I really will. Whatever happens with me, I know that this work will help someone else further down the line – that's my main aim."

In 2016, prostate cancer took the life of one man every hour in the UK. Thanks to everyone who supported RBCD, Douglas wasn't one of them. It means that Prostate Cancer UK can save thousands more men like him, funding the improvements in diagnosis and treatment that are needed to stop prostate cancer in its tracks once and for all.



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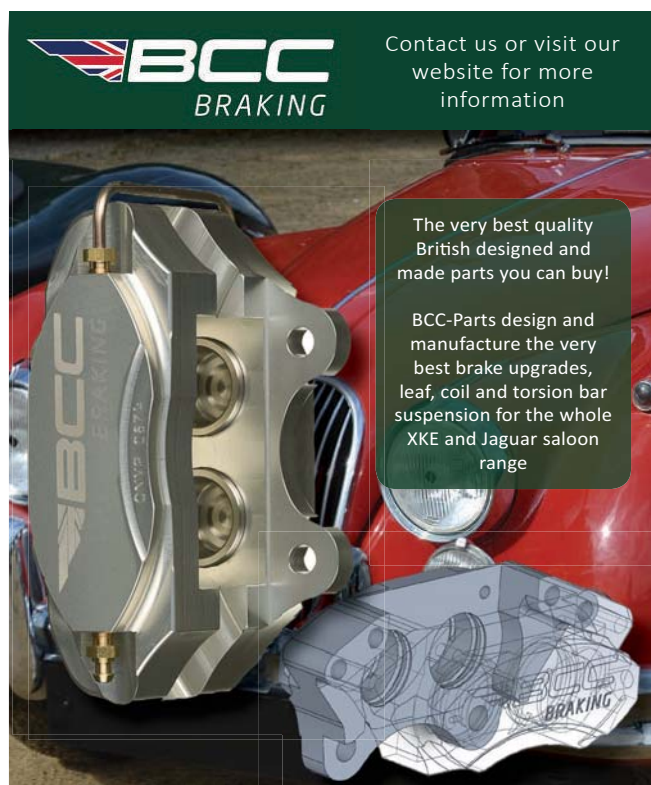


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# The **Legendary LTs** **Part 3** by Bob Knynenburg

**L**T2 was acquired by Charles Hornburg and shipped to the United States in August 1951. Its first driver was Argentine Jorge Malbrand, and it was painted British Racing Green for its debut at Elkhart Lake on 26 August. Malbrand (who competed with race number 135) could have won but, due to a spin, finished second in Class C. He was fourth overall, though, averaging 79.3mph.

During the race, which was attended by a crowd of 35,000 spectators, it became clear that the Jaguar's cooling capacity was insufficient and the radiator needed to be upgraded.

For LT2's next outing at Reno for the Nevada State Cup on 21 October, Hornburg invited Bill Norwood Breeze to drive. Breeze had been racing a white XK 120 OTS during 1950, competing against Phil Hill in his XK 120 (chassis 670138), but unfortunately crashed LT2 after 16 laps and broke his collarbone. His pregnant wife was watching



- Above: Jorge Malbrand in the XK 120 'LT2' at its debut race at Elkhart Lake on 26 August 1951. He finished fourth, after surviving a spin

- Right: Bill Breeze subsequently took over from Malbrand and boasted previous XK 120 experience, having raced his white example during 1950



from the roadside and Breeze decided shortly thereafter to retire from competing.

Due to Breeze's accident, LT2 didn't attend the Palm Springs race on 28 October 1951. Instead, it was rebuilt during the winter and was finished in time for 1952. There is a lot of confusion about

- Above: LT2 looking pristine prior to Breeze's outing in it at Reno in 1951. Breeze is pictured in the cockpit, preparing for the Nevada State Cup

- Below: sadly, this is how Breeze's race came to an end. The Jaguar is looking somewhat less pristine, and Breeze was lucky to escape with only a broken collarbone





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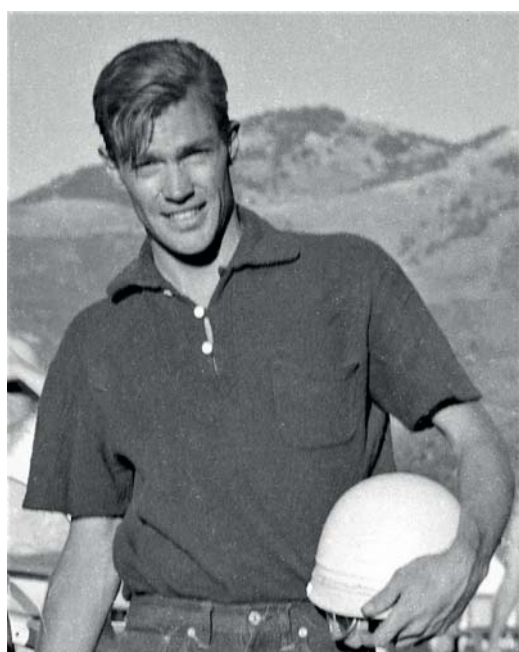
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- Left: Breeze receives first aid from officials following his accident. The Jaguar subsequently spent the winter of 1951/'52 being rebuilt in time for the next season of racing
- Below: in April 1952, Sherwood Johnston drove LT2 in the Del Monte Trophy at Pebble Beach. He finished seventh despite the fact the car was suffering from overheating
- Below left: Charles Fifield starting racing LT2 in October 1953. His wife was Marjorie Buell, whose brother Temple was also a racing driver at that time

the participation of LT2 that year. It is clear that Sherwood Johnston had been invited by Charles Hornburg to take the wheel, but which races he actually attended with LT2 is not 100% clear because he continued to race with other cars – in particular his own 'XK 120 Special'. Note that LT2 is sometimes described on the entrants' lists as an 'XK 120 Special', further contributing to the overall confusion. The present listing for LT2 on [www.racingsportscars.com](http://www.racingsportscars.com) is therefore incorrect.

In summary: Sherwood Johnston raced on only two occasions with the Hornburg-entered Jaguar XK 120 LT2 in 1952 – the Pebble Beach road race in April and the National Golden Gate races in San Francisco in May. In all other races, he competed in his own XK 120 Special. The exact reason for this small number is unclear but, as



we will see later, LT3 also raced only twice that year. Apparently Hornburg started losing interest in the cars and put his cards on the new C-type.

Johnston finished seventh at Pebble Beach, after which the LTs received a thicker-cored radiator and 'wings' to the bonnet to enable the radiator to fit. They even removed some radiator grille vanes on LT2 in an attempt to solve overheating. In addition, but not related, a small piece of leather was fitted between the screen and the mirror cowl. In San Francisco on 31 May, Johnston was eighth overall and fourth in Class 3. His races that have been reported in 1953 do not relate to LT2.

## **LT2 moves to Colorado**

After San Francisco, Hornburg sold both LTs. We assume that LT2 was sold in the period June to August 1952 to Whipple Jones, a pioneer of the ski industry living in Aspen, but no formal evidence has yet been found. LT2 stayed in Colorado for two decades (1952-1973) and could be rightfully named the 'Colorado' XK 120 LT.

Sports car races were held through the streets of Aspen from 1951, always around mid-September. There is ample proof that LT2 participated for the first time on 14 September 1952, driven by Jones. In the *Aspen Daily Times* of 18 September 1952, we read: 'Twenty-six cars raced over the 2.2-mile course with the leaders hitting speeds of one hundred miles an hour on the straight-away. Although the cars ran all at one time, the drivers competed only against

# The **Legendary** LTs



other cars in their same class. In Class One for cars with a large engine capacity, Kurt Kircher of Denver ran away from the field in his Chrysler Allard. Alec Thomson of Denver was second and Whipple Jones, of Aspen, driving a modified Jaguar, was third.'

It is likely that, early in 1953, Charles Fifield of Denver acquired LT2. Some sources mention a Mr Ledger of Denver acquiring the car, but no proof has been found so far. Fifield, a well-known member of Denver society, started racing with LT2 in October 1953.

At around this time, LT2 received a new 'C-type style' nose section, possibly an attempt to eliminate the overheating problems that had been encountered throughout the car's life. We don't know exactly when the front section had been modified, but it must have taken place between September 1952 and October 1953. The body had been resprayed in white and the wire wheels became dark red. Paul Skilleter believes that the car received the new nose 'as early as 1955 after accident damage', but there is unequivocal proof that it was in fact completed two years earlier.

The nose modification had apparently been done by Ledger and Co of Denver, as stated by Ron Kellogg (Kellogg Auto Archive) and Paul Wigton Jr. No confirmation has been found yet, but a photograph exists of LT2 with modified nose section, most likely in a race at Denver Naval Air Station on 25 October 1953. Although this wasn't an official SCCA event, it nevertheless was the first appearance of the modified car. The body looks newly painted and we notice a large air scoop under the radiator grille, probably in an attempt to solve the overheating problems once and for all.



- Left: given the backdrop, it's assumed that this picture is from Denver Naval Air Station in late 1953. The new 'C-type style' nose is clearly evident, and could have been intended to improve cooling
- Bottom left: Hoskins at the wheel alongside Margaret Kircher – the Hoskins, Kircher and Fifield families knew each other well. Note the addition of a second aero screen, which was made in 1955

## **Racing results in 1954**

### **Aspen Road Races, 19 September 1954**

In late 1952 or early 1953, Charles Fifield obtained an Allard from Jon Johantgen that had won the 1952 Aspen race, powered by a Ford (Mercury) flathead. Fifield replaced the flathead with a Cadillac engine and won the 1953 Aspen race. A year later, Fifield participated again in the Aspen Road Races, this time in his white RHD Jaguar XK 120 LT2 with race number 41. He won the over-1500cc class.

### **Torrey Pines Road Race, 27 November 1954**

The second race by Fifield was at Torrey Pines, California. The entrants list of the last SCCA race of the season shows the name of Alan Hoskins first, followed by that of Fifield, as joint drivers of the 'Jaguar Silverstone'. Hoskins and Fifield competed in the fifth race as number 54. Interestingly, the entrants' list refers to an engine of 3800cc, which supports other information that the Jaguar engine had received larger pistons to obtain more power. Results of the race are unknown.

## **Racing results 1955**

In the overall ranking of the SCCA 1955 championship, Charles Fifield finished in joint seventh place with his Jaguar LT2 'Silverstone', although there are only a limited number of races reported for him in LT2 (of which only one race was part of the SCCA Championship).

### **Pebble Beach, 17 April**

Fifield took part in the Del Monte Trophy race at the SCCA National Pebble Beach, finishing fifth overall and second in Class CM. This race took place in pouring rain.

### **Buffalo Bill Hill Climb, 25 June**

Fifield attended the Buffalo Bill Hill Climb at Lookout Mountain, which was a national SCCA event for the first time that year. He drove LT2 in Class C Modified, finishing first overall and also first in class, beating two other Jaguar specials. He also became National Hill Climb champion that year. Note that various cars that were owned by his brother-in-law Temple Buell Jr also attended that day.

### **Denver Naval Air Station, 12 July**

Like the year before, Fifield attended a race at Denver Naval Air Station – also known as Buckley. Unfortunately, no results have been found yet.

In September 1955, LT2 ran in the Cheyenne Races with Alan Hoskins at the wheel. There is a photo showing Hoskins and Margaret Kircher sitting in the car. Kircher – a Swede, born Margareta Johansson – was a regular judge of concours d'elegance in Aspen. She was married to fellow Swede Kurt Kircher, who was born in 1918 in Malmö and graduated as an automotive engineer from the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm. Together with Charles Hughes, he developed the Hughes-Kircher Special in 1953.

Fifield probably kept LT2 in 1956 and 1957 but there is no data available to verify this. He died in 1960 at the age of only 33. Later, owner Chris Jaques mentions that the car he bought in 1974 had anti-tramp radius arms fitted to the rear axle and

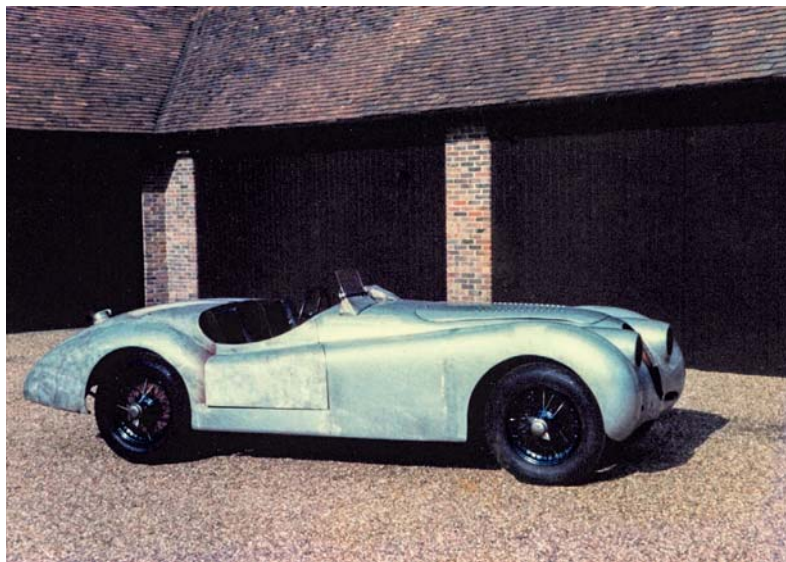
- Right: Chris Jaques acquired LT2 during the 1970s, and later had it fully restored. When this photo was taken, an original-style front end had been fitted

a 'welded-up' differential, which are normally indications that the car has been used for hill climbs. Fifield also fitted Iskenderian camshafts and high-compression pistons of a larger diameter to further increase power output of the now 3.8-litre Jaguar engine.

### Wigton family takes ownership

According to Paul Wigton Jr, the car was bought from Fifield by his parents, Paul and Adrienne, around 1957. The Wigtons owned a car repair shop in Brighton, about 30 miles north of Denver. Both Paul Sr and his wife raced the car until about 1965 when Paul Sr bought a Formula Junior Cooper.

The Wigtons modified LT2 with a heavy tubular rollcage and replaced the original Jaguar engine for a small-block 283cu in Chevrolet V8 powerplant because Jaguar parts were expensive and hard to come by. It is not clear what happened to the original Jaguar engine. Paul Wigton Jr later told Chris Jaques that the original aluminium bucket seats from LT2 had initially been given away but, after Chris met up with him in 2003, he was able to recover the seats and reunite them with the car.



Some other parts, such as the specially drilled dynamo and related pulley were also returned, and LT2 received aluminium Borrani wheels to replace the tired Dunlop versions.

Adrienne drove LT2 in the Preliminary Continental Divide race for ladies on 5 September 1960 at the Continental Divide Raceways in Castle Rock, finishing second of three female participants. Note that the 1960 race results mention a Jaguar engine for LT2, which is incorrect. The Wigton family still has photos of the car shown with rollcage and side exhausts.

On 28 July 1963, she drove LT2 in the SCCA Regional race at the new Aspen Raceway. In a later race that day, it was also driven by Danny Collins. On 16 August, Stirling Moss drove the car when he was invited to Continental Divide Raceways and signed the tail of LT2 in the presence of





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## The **Legendary** LTs



● Left: The freshly restored LT2, sporting the registration JSV 482, pictured with Jaguar legend Bill Heynes at his home in Warwickshire

Mr and Mrs Wigton. There is no further evidence that he ever raced LT2, as some sources indicate.

### **LT2 goes back to England**

When the car was no longer used for racing, the Wigton family had LT2 stored in a greenhouse at a plant nursery in Denver. Stephen Langton, a well-known racer and dealer, found the Jaguar there in 1973. He bought the car from the Wigtos for \$5500 and brought it back to the UK. At that time, LT2 still had the Chevrolet engine installed. An XK 140 unit with C-type head was with the car and was fitted before shipping to the UK.

Once it was in the UK, Langton agreed to sell the Jaguar to another dealer living in South London. He paid a deposit and collected the car. Langton retained the five special alloy wheels, the aluminium radiator and most importantly the chassis plate, as insurance against non-payment of the balance. This was the last he saw of the buyer and the car!

LT2 was then taken to Classic Autos in Hertfordshire, with instructions to restore its original 1951 frontal design with an alloy XK 120 nose section, replacing the 1953 modified 'C-type' front. Before the modification had been completed, the customer 'kidnapped' the car from Classic Autos's premises! A few months later, he took it to Chris Keith-Lucas of Lynx Engineering in Kent, who was unaware of what had happened with the car, in order to finish the restoration and bring it back into running order.

While visiting Lynx in 1976, Chris Jaques saw LT2 and learned that Keith-Lucas was (also) having difficulty obtaining payment for the restoration work he had done. Keith-Lucas indicated that he thought it might be possible to arrange a deal to buy the car and, by arranging a settlement with all four parties involved, that's what happened. Jaques took it to his home and stored it, with the chassis assembled but the body separate, until restoration began in 1984.

By coincidence, a short while after the acquisition and through a mutual friend, Jaques met up with Stephen Langton, who told him about the original LT2 parts he still had – including the all-important chassis plate – and that payment to complete the sale had never been received. He generously gave these to Chris to be reunited with the car.

During the final part of the restoration, LT2's original Lockheed twin-leading-shoe self-adjusting brake system (not available for standard XK 120s in 1951) was completely rebuilt. A new ENV differential was fitted to replace the 'welded-up' hill climb version of Charles Fifield. Over the years, Jaques has gathered sets of different ENV crownwheel and Pinion ratios – at Le Mans, for example, the 3.27 'long ratio' was installed, allowing the driver to take full advantage of that circuit's long straights.

The UK DVLA allotted the car registration JSV 482, but a short while later this was changed to the very appropriate CJ 120. In 1988, during the final stages of the rebuild, Paul Skilleter had invited Jaques to show LT2 to Bill Heynes at his home in Warwickshire. Heynes remembered the LT cars being built alongside the C-types at the Jaguar factory and provided various other bits of interesting information.

For the next 10 years or so, the car was used on the road but then, in 1998, the Jaguar Enthusiasts Club launched a racing series for XKs and Jaques decided to enter the car. He duly won the overall championship in 1999 and 2000. In more recent years, LT2 has been invited to many other events such as the Goodwood Revival Meeting, Classic Le Mans and Le Mans Legends races, the Monterey Historics and the Pebble Beach Concours.

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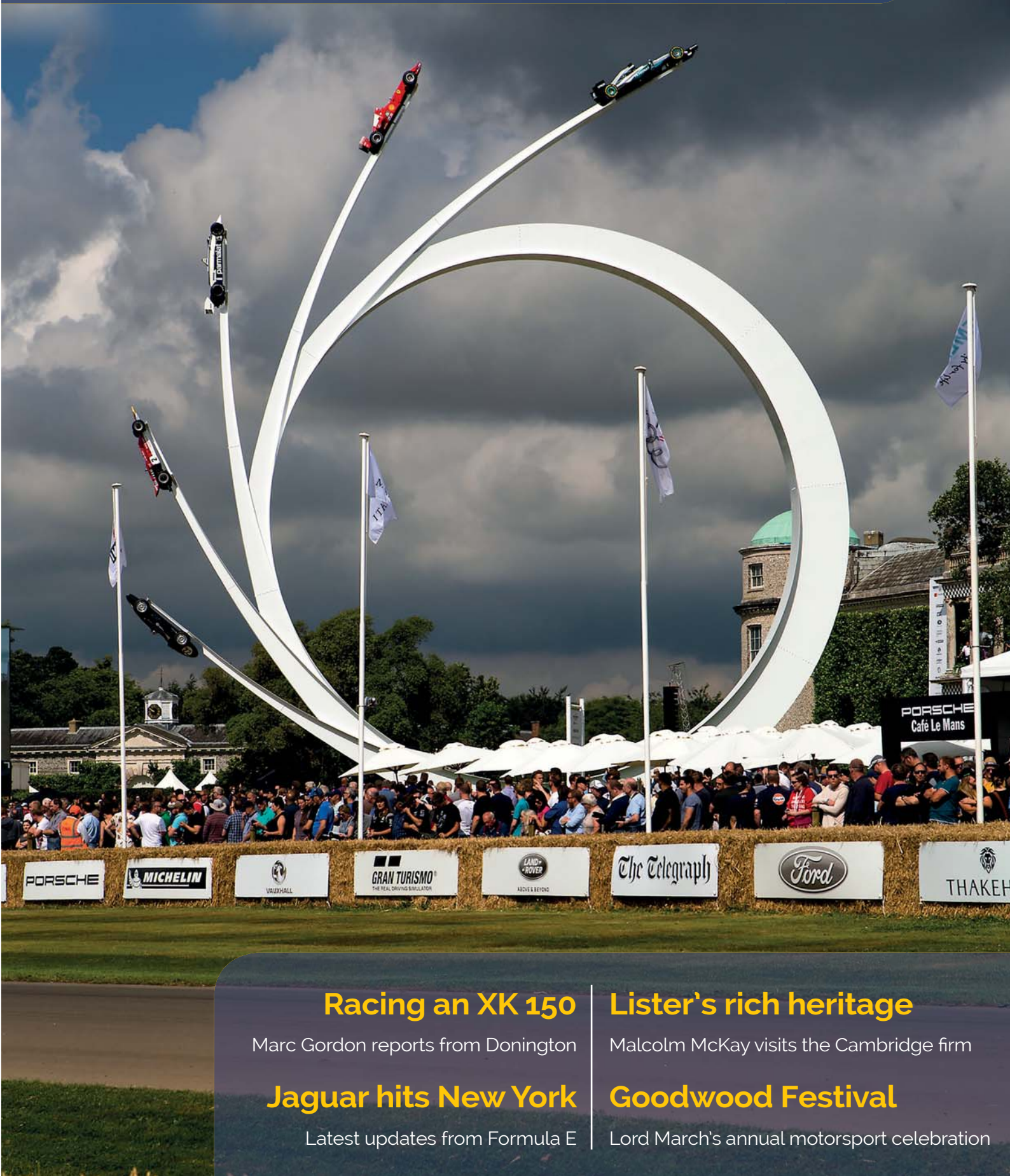
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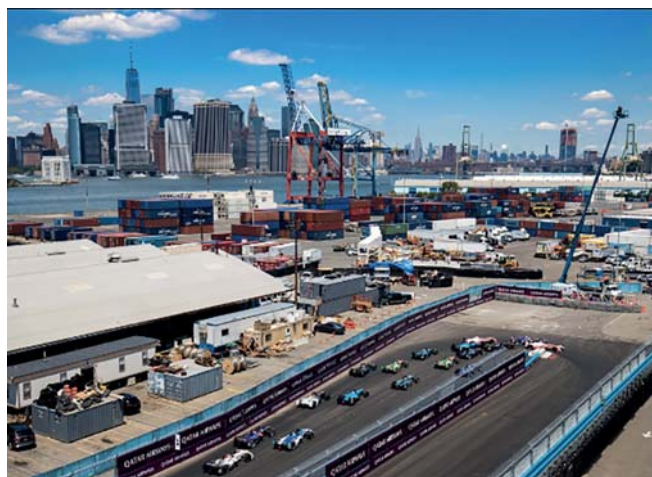


- Graeme and James Dodd put in a dominant performance in the Jaguar Classic Challenge at Brands Hatch on July 1. Their E-type finished 45 seconds clear of Jamie Boot's similar car after 22 laps. Costal Michael was third, while Paul Kennelly was first of the non-E-types, coming home 11th in his XK 150 – one of four that took part. Roger Cope was 14<sup>th</sup> in his Mk1, Ben Eastick and Karl Jones were 15<sup>th</sup> in their D-type, and Iain Rowley and Roger Woodbridge 18<sup>th</sup> in their XK120. The Dodds had qualified on pole position and set fastest lap in 1m 44.851s. The race was part of the Kent venue's Superprix meeting, which also celebrated 50 years of Formula Ford (pictured).

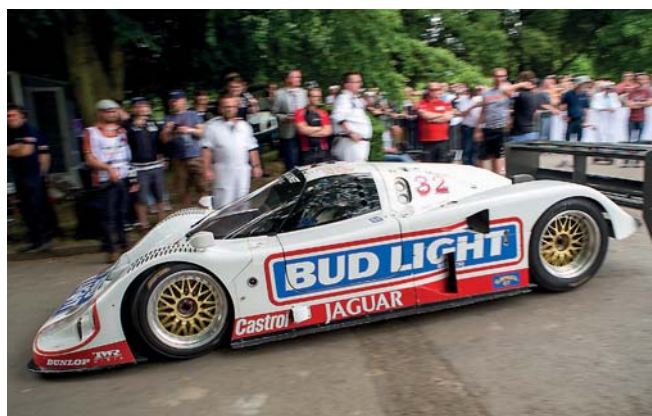


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- DS Virgin Racing's Sam Bird won both rounds of the Formula E double-header in New York on July 15-16. In the opening stanza on the Saturday, he pipped Jean-Eric Vergne by 1.3s, while Panasonic Jaguar Racing's Adam Carroll finished 10th and his team-mate Mitch Evans was forced to retire. In the second race, Felix Rosenqvist followed Bird home, with former Formula 1 racer Nick Heidfeld third from a rapidly closing Pierre Gasly. Carroll was 11th, while the unfortunate Evans once again failed to finish. The series was set to conclude on July 29-30 in Montreal, and BMW has announced that it will be entering it next season.



- Jaguars were much in evidence during the **Goodwood Festival of Speed**, held from June 29-July 2. Among those to take to the famous hill were the ex-Michael Head C-type, MDU 212, plus the 1957 Le Mans-winning Ecurie Ecosse D-type. Eagle boss Henry Pearman piloted a Group C XJR6, while the ever-committed Justin Law set the weekend's fastest time aboard an XJR12-D. Running in Sunday's timed shootout, Law posted a best of 46.13s to edge out Jeremy Smith's Penske. Many thanks to Mike Cole for the supplying the photographs.



# LISTER **REBORN**

by Malcolm McKay  
Photos by Fraser McKay

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While engineering work continued, car production was then dormant until 1986, when Laurence Pearce set up Lister Cars Ltd in Surrey to build 200mph Jaguar XJ-S models, leading to the 7-litre V12 Lister Storm, with much input coming from George Lister Engineering.



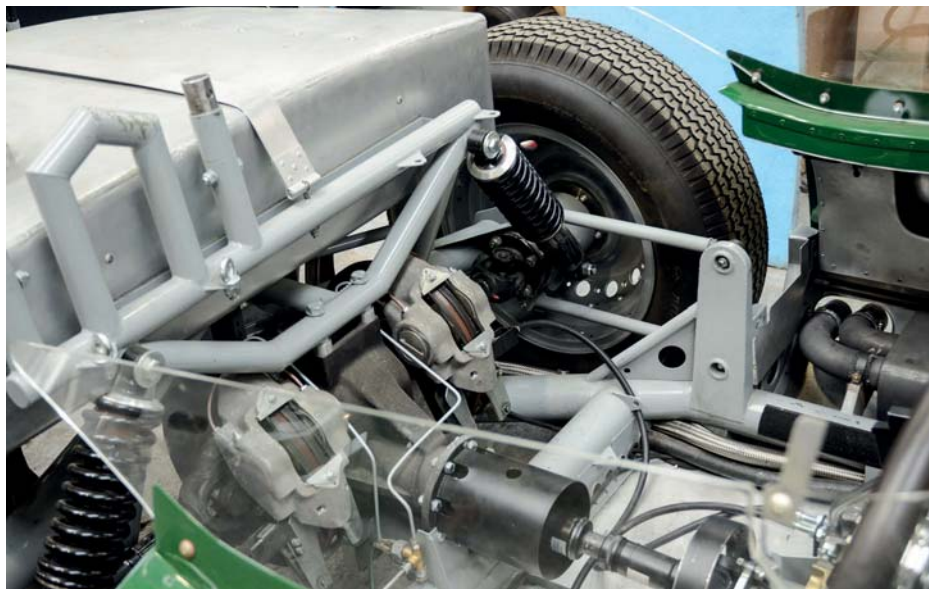
- Top: clothed in exquisitely hand-beaten aluminium bodywork, crafted over the original 1950s bucks in Somerset, the continuation Lister is built by the same company still manufacturing a large percentage of its component parts

- Above: in front of a chassis under assembly and a customer car in for work, Lister factory director Mark Hallam explains to Malcolm McKay the philosophy of authenticity that pervades Lister production

Back in Cambridge, Brian Lister marked his company's centenary in 1990 by reviving Lister-Jaguar production and making four 'Centenary' cars. Closely involved at that time, alongside many employees who had built or remembered the original Lister racers, was young engineer Mark Hallam, who had been apprenticed to Brian Lister in 1986. Mark is now the director in charge of the factory and is a keen advocate of car production.

The current revival of that is down to son/father Lawrence and Andrew Whittaker, who visited the factory in 2012 when restoring an original 'Knobbly' and saw the potential. Proprietors of the Warrantywise Group, they purchased the Lister Motor Company and George Lister Engineering, and commissioned the new Knobbly in 2014 to commemorate 60 years of Lister Motor Company.

Visiting the Lister factory today, one is immediately struck by the authenticity and history that is wrapped up in this remarkable company.



drawings and on original jigs. That was key to Lister's success in period – it didn't have to make do with the nearest commercially available component. If a unique specification was better, it could be quickly prototyped and manufactured in-house. The Lister rear axle, with central diff casing and de Dion tube, is a case in point and gave the Lister a clear advantage over the live-axle D-types: it is still made in-house, and fitted with disc brake calipers purpose-made by Crosthwaite & Gardiner.

"We sell a lot of spares – authentic parts, trailing arms, steering parts. There's enough demand that we aim to keep a stock of parts now, especially the ones that racers tend to bend or break. We work with a number of race preparers that our customers use, such as CKL, JD Classics, Gary Pearson and Valley Motorsport."

The cars are as near as possible 100% British-built, and Mark has no interest in changing that, even though Taunton-based aluminium body

Though premises have changed, this company has always been in or around Cambridge and many of its staff have worked, or will work, there for a lifetime. The car department is intertwined with the engineering company, with just a low screen between the row of Knobblys and the state-of-the-art CNC machines and historic lathes and other machinery.

"We use the old jigs and maintain authenticity by building the cars and components using the original methods," enthuses Mark. "We do now argon-weld the chassis and purge the inside for longevity, but we make changes only where it is essential. Most of the cars are sold to racers, with FIA papers. We have staff who have been with the company nearly 50 years, having served their apprenticeships here, and keep in close contact with retired employees who built the cars and still live locally. Three people are working full-time on the cars, in addition to the welder, the sheet metal worker and the machinists who we call on when required from the engineering business."

Time and again, the capabilities of George Lister Engineering come to the fore: so many components are made in-house, to the original

- Top: a very short propshaft takes drive to the Lister-exclusive differential housing and de Dion rear axle, all of which is made in-house except for the brake calipers

- Above: the 3.8 engines are built up in-house using reclaimed original blocks, fitted with wide-angle D-type head from Crosthwaite & Gardiner, and sandcast Weber carbs from D-type Developments

- Right: Graham 'Curly' Hutton has worked at Lister for more than 50 years and is overseeing car production: here he looks at steering/suspension issues on a car fitted with a wet-sump engine





- Left: side by side with historic car production is a busy modern engineering factory using state-of-the-art CNC machines to produce components for a wide range of industries
- Below: the cars are built as closely as possible to original specification, including dynamo charging and 5/16in anti-roll bar

fabricator Adrian has two years of orders and cannot make them any faster. "It's great because the whole market is thriving at the moment," says Mark. "All the quality guys are flat-out. It takes 500 hours to make the front and rear body sections and it's a work of art."

There are no original factory records of the cars built in the 1950s, but they have been very well documented. "Brian Lister used to say that there were more built outside the factory than inside – they only built around 50 cars at Lister," explains Mark. "We do sanction cars built outside the factory, but only if they are dimensionally the same and show the same build quality, and a known history. Last year we had the original, first prototype in: it had gone to CKL for race preparation and they found the chassis was bent. We put it back on the jig, straightened it and cut out some thicker tubes that had been welded in, so it could be rebuilt as original. Two old employees still live locally who'd actually welded it when new, so we got them in to check it."

At £295,000 plus VAT for a customer-spec Knobbly, the Listers look remarkable value compared to Jaguar's new XKSS. "It takes around four months to build a continuation car, if we have all the parts to hand," says Mark. "Some things, such as tyres and fuel pumps, are hard to get at certain times of year, when racing demand is high."

The simple, light and effective Lister chassis is made from seamless 14-gauge steel, of 3in OD; the de Dion axle tube is made of 12-gauge steel. The fuel and oil tanks at the rear are made in-house and foam filled as original; fuel cells are an option.

'Period-correct' is the mantra that runs through as much of Lister's current production as is realistically achievable. In response to my comment that I had seen a very much thicker anti-roll bar on a Lister at Sam Thomas's workshop in January, Mark laughs: "We fit a 5/16in anti-roll bar, as that was what was fitted in period – it's a hard spring steel so it's stiffer than it looks. We build to the period specification – it's up to the customer then if they want to develop it further."

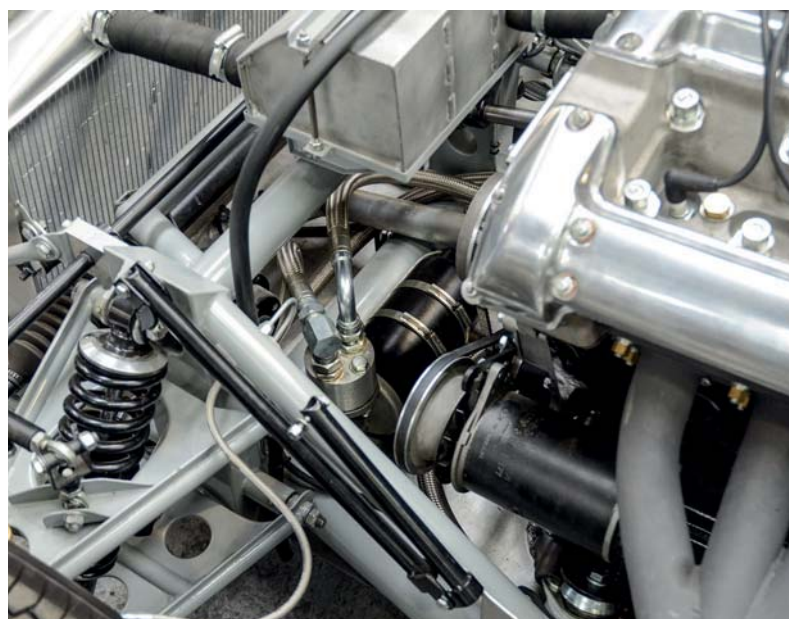
"The Lister uses a left-hand-drive Morris Minor

steering rack, turned upside down. There are reproduction racks available but the quality is not good, so we buy original ones wherever we can find them and refurbish them ourselves. One item that we have re-engineered is the front stub axles. MGA ones were used in period, but we now engineer them out of EN24T steel, machine them, harden them, grind and crack-test them, all in-house."

The engines are built by Graham, a highly experienced engineer with an infectious enthusiasm for his work: "We keep a stock of original 3.4 and 3.8 engine blocks, buying pre-1960 blocks in whenever possible from owners or scrapyards. They are chemically cleaned and realigned. The rest of the engine is new – we buy new wide-angle heads and the dry sumps from Crosthwaite & Gardiner, along with new D-type gearboxes. The Webbers are newly made but we don't buy the off-the-shelf items unless the customer specifically requests them. Ours are sandcast units supplied by D-type Developments and are much more historically accurate. In fact, we are looking at taking over the machining of these carburettors ourselves."

"We use a lip seal conversion from Guy Broad on the rear main bearing, Kent cams, Arrow crank and rods. On the dry-sump system, the standard oil-pump drive is adapted to drive two pumps, scavenge one side and pressure the other. We have a semi-retired guy who sources and rebuilds the original Smiths gauges for us."

'Curly' (another Graham) has worked for Lister for 50 years and is now semi-retired. "I started at 15 on a five-year apprenticeship," he recalls. "It was



all fag-packet drawings back then, make it first and draw it accurately afterwards. Car production had ended, but I was machining kingpins and steering arms for cars that were still being raced. We've made so many things over the years – there was a magnetic hovercraft that ran on a track on the Fens, plastics for ICI, panels for aircraft, parts for helicopters and airships...

"We were in Abbey Road when I started, in a row of buildings almost like lock-up garages, with two old oil-fired cast-iron heaters that the guys used to toast their sandwiches on, and hang their overalls around to warm them up. There were three forges, and three blacksmiths doing architectural work, making wrought iron gates for the Cambridge colleges. That's a lost art now – the company has had to move with the times."

Joe fits up the cars and is clearly enjoying the responsibility. He has just designed new shorter top wishbones for a customer who wanted negative camber – the original spec was slight positive camber. Apprenticed to Curly, he is hugely respectful of his boss: "He's a massively clever bloke," exclaims Joe. "I'm trying to drain as much knowledge from him as possible before he retires!"

I remark on the quality of the welding on the new wishbones, and am introduced to welder Tom, who has completed one year's apprenticeship: seeing the work in such capable young hands bodes very well for the future.

"We have put one car through IVA, which was an interesting exercise, and we will be doing



more," says Mark. "No sharp edges are allowed, so we have to make the oil and fuel caps flush. The same rule applies to the cockpit, so all the switchgear is flush. We have to fit a collapsible steering column, extra mirrors, lights and twin roll hoops. We've even developed unboltable rear light clusters. To avoid the need for wipers and demisters, we put a low deflector instead of the windscreen. The silencer is crucial – noise levels have to be below 98dB, which is difficult to

• Above: the D-type gearbox (£25,000 new from Crosthwaite & Gardiner) and non-flush switchgear are giveaway features of a race-going Knobbly

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- Left: original machinery is used in the Lister car production: here Joe works on a front chassis tube, closely watched by apprentice Toby

achieve because the all-aluminium body acts as a resonator.”

In the case of the dark green car pictured, one of two road cars built so far, the customer has specified that many of the changes for IVA are reversed before delivery. Another has just come back from the bodyshop and is being fitted up; the customer has supplied a wet-sump engine and E-type gearbox, but ground clearance under the sump is the subject of further friendly discussion between Lister and the customer. Two more road cars are on order and the future is well mapped out.

“We’ve recently launched the 1959 Costin-bodied car,” explains Mark. “It was designed by Frank Costin and is more aerodynamic. The chassis and running gear is basically the same, and we plan to build 10 in 2018-’19: we’re starting the first one already and there will be both road and race versions. We have three Stirling Moss Lightweights to do – they are the specification of

the works cars, of which just two were built originally: the customer cars were heavier. They use a lot of magnesium parts – the body, sump and bellhousing and the chassis is made from 16-gauge tube instead of 14. It wasn’t available, so we had to have 14-gauge honed out! There’s quite a weight saving. It was launched at the RAC Club last year.

“The 1957 car doesn’t survive – it was possibly rebuilt into one of the 1958 cars. We’re planning to build a replica; there are no original drawings, but several of the original guys who built them are still alive and remember the details well. One, Ken Hazelwood, even remembers lying inside the footwell and measuring the gaps as the car drove, assessing stresses and flexing. Ultimately we’ll do the flat-iron cars too, and Lawrence is thinking about doing a modern take on a Lister.”

Eight cars have been completed so far. The first took 12 months to develop, since when there have been two years of production: it will take until 2019 to build the cars currently on order. “Customers like to see their car being built from start to finish,” says Mark. “It’s a niche market and it’s vital to retain the quality. We could have sold more if we made them quicker, but we are determined to get them right.”






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# Coventry's **Hidden Gem** by James Page



Even if you were to drive numerous times along School Road in Bulkington – less than 10 miles from where the famous Browns Lane factory used to stand – you’d be forgiven for not having any idea that it was home to a leading Jaguar XK specialist. If they took the sign off the front, you could even be standing right outside and still be none the wiser.

But don’t be fooled by what looks like a standard terrace of red-brick two-up, two-downs. If you’ve seen the Beatles’ film *Help!*, you might remember a sequence where John, Paul, George and Ringo each walk through a door of four modest adjoining houses – only for the interiors to have been knocked into one vast space. Leaping Cats’ premises is the automotive equivalent of that.

Wander through the front door and the reception is in the ‘living room’ to your left. Keep going down the hallway and through the back room and, instead of exiting into a garden, you’ll find yourself in a huge workshop that stretches across the back of six houses in total. It is four full-length workshops deep and roughly the size of a football pitch, while there’s a separate store in which to keep the smaller components they produce. Any number of XKs can be fettled, finished or restored here. It’s a hive of activity, all carried out to the background noise of panel-beating.

It all started because of Scotsman John Brown’s passion for XKs. The Motherwell native was an apprentice fitter with a company that made overhead cranes, but in the evenings he worked at a local garage in order

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• This is ‘Jaguar Lane’, where a lot of the panelwork is finished off. When we visited, there were examples of XK 120, 140 and 150 being fettled. The car in the foreground was having its new boot lid fitted. All of this activity and workshop space is tucked away behind an unassuming frontage of red-brick terraced houses!

to learn about motor mechanics. He gained experience with all sorts of cars, from Alfas to MGs: "Anything that came in, we fixed..."

He became a mechanic with the Weston Park race team, then hooked up with Graig Hinton, who had a firm called Classic Cars of Coventry. John eventually ran it for him, and the company was a genuine 'one-stop shop' that could do everything from parts to trim and painting. It dealt with Jaguars of all shapes and sizes, and was comfortably able to deal with bespoke builds. Perhaps the most memorable of those was when it was approached by the studio making Indiana Jones film *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. They'd been unable to buy or hire a suitable Mercedes, so instead Classic Cars took a Jaguar MkIX chassis and fitted it with a suitably modified MkV body. Worth remembering the next time you watch that memorable sequence where the bad guys try to squash Indy between a truck and a 'Mercedes'.

From there, the pair formed Leaping Cats and, in 1982, Brown took over as the sole owner. He maintains that the business side of things was never intentional – he never set out to turn this passion into a living. But that's what happened, and it's been going strong ever since.

Just how strong becomes apparent once you start exploring the Tardis-like premises. Mark Leach has been with the company for eight years,



- Anthony Ward hard at work on a heavily modified XK 120. It was having its pipework fitted for the power steering

- The walls at Leaping Cats are packed with patterns from which to create fresh panels. Note the apt sign, too



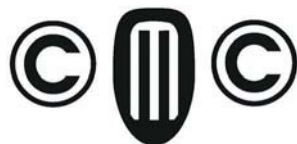
- Lead-loading being carried out where the scuttle meets the front wing and the bonnet. Not as easy as it was being made to look...

- Luke Terry gets to work creating a complete door for an XK 120 OTS. Leaping Cats can also supply just the outer skin

having previously worked in historic motorsport on cars such as Lotus Cortinas and Elans. At that time, he concentrated mainly on engine work, but now he does a bit of everything. When we visited, he was busy with a Canadian XK 150S OTS that had been a long-term rebuild project. The owner wasn't sure whether he wanted to sell it, leave it in the UK or ship it back to Canada. Predictably, after travelling over to give it a try courtesy of a tour of Scotland, he's decided to have it shipped across the Atlantic so that he can use it there.

It's been fitted with a five-speed gearbox, power steering and disc brakes from an XJ6, and modifications are part and parcel of what Leaping Cats does. As with so many specialists, they've noticed a move away from unused concours





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queens towards usability – cars that can be taken on a lengthy tour and which will be reliable and pleasurable to drive.

As if to prove the point, it's being worked on next to a gorgeous XK 140 FHC that had been restored here and which is back for servicing. The company tends to look after cars that it's done a lot of work on, and again this one is fitted with power steering, a five-speed gearbox and disc brakes all round. Inside, there's a bespoke cubby hole behind the front seats, extra gauges and – in a delightfully eccentric touch – the starter button from a Spitfire. The Supermarine version, not the Triumph...

Walk into the room on the left, and Anthony Ward is applying the final touches to a modified XK 120 OTS. Power steering is being fitted, with the pipework running around the front of the engine and a pump being discreetly hidden away low on the nearside of the engine bay. A heat shield will protect it from the exhaust manifold. The engine boasts triple Webers and a different pedal box has also been fitted plus other modifications so that the finished article comfortably fits its tall owner, but the most striking aspect of the build is the all-aluminium body.

This is something that Leaping Cats has plenty of previous experience with. It's built an all-alloy XK 150 OTS for a customer in the Netherlands, with all the panelwork being created in-house. The suspension was also done in-house, and the owner specified Brown's own design of tilting bucket seats. Then there was an all-alloy XK 140 FHC – the first time the company had taken on a coupé, having previously created an open XK 140 for Brown himself. That car picked up a pair of awards at the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the famous Jabbeke highway in Belgium.

Behind the area in which Ward is working on the XK 120 is a small engineering room, kitted out with lathes and pillar drills. This where the more intricate parts are made, such as hinges, brackets and spacers. Walk across from there and you come into the panel-making section. This part



of the business came about by accident, when the demand for panels became overwhelming. With suppliers unable to keep up, Brown and a couple of others from Leaping Cats went to Contour Autocraft, where they were given further guidance on how to create quality panels for themselves. They're now able to offer an extensive catalogue of parts for all XKs.

Original body panels are hanging all around the workshop to use as patterns, and Luke Terry is busy making a door for an XK 120 OTS – a job that takes a total of three weeks. Terry admits that he's only just picked up the art of aluminium welding, but you'd think that he'd be doing it for years by looking at the finished article. Elsewhere, inner rear arches are being created and there are fly presses all the way down one side.

Keep walking past those and you'll come to the 'wheel room'. Leaping Cats is still very much a family business. John remains heavily involved, while his daughters Lynda and Tina take care of much of the day-to-day work. And in the wheel room you'll find Lynda's son, 26-year-old Jake, who's busy shaping front wings. To create the entire thing, complete with headlamp nacelle – which is made from a single sheet – can take two and a half weeks.

"They didn't let me loose on these until the last couple of years," he says

#### **Clockwise from top**

- Jez Locker, assistant tool-shop engineer, on the engineering department's lathe. This is tucked away at the back of the premises
- Proprietor John Brown has this C-type replica to which he's fitting a coupé top – when time allows, that is...
- There are now three generations of the Brown family working here – this is John's grandson, Jake, on the English wheel



with a smile. “Hughie Payne has worked with the company on and off over the years, and he came back to teach me how to form larger panels.

“A bootlid for an XK 120 is hard work because of the shape at the rear. An XK 140 one is reasonably simple. I tend to do them five at a time, which takes about three days in total. If it’s quiet, I’ll make up bits and pieces so they’re ready for the next time we need them. My missus doesn’t understand how I sleep so well. I said to her that she wants to try doing this all day! My hands are only just getting used to it...

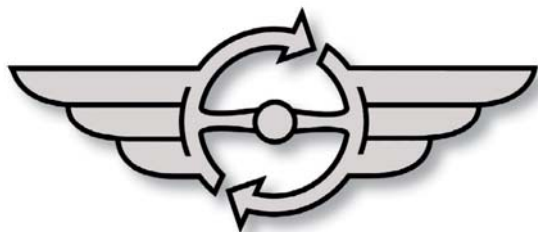
“This is all I’ve ever done, though. I left school in 2008, had a couple of weeks off and I’ve been here ever since. I wouldn’t go anywhere else – it’s family.”

Working your way back towards the front of the building brings you to Jaguar Lane, where stripped cars are receiving whatever bodywork is needed. An XK 140 FHC is being treated to a spot of lead-loading, while either side of it are a 120 and a 150. There’s also Brown’s own replica C-type, which has a coupé roof but tends to drop to the back of the queue when there are so many customer cars to deal with.

In all, 18 people work here and each of them is most certainly being kept busy. A number of famous XKs have been through Leaping Cats’ door – such as the ex-Leslie Johnson alloy-bodied 120, JWK 651 – and you can see why. The only things that they don’t do on-site are trim and spraying, but both are farmed out to local firms. There’s an encouraging mixture of experience and youth, too, which bodes well for the future.

- This XK 140 is another build that involved various upgrades. It was in for a service, and featured everything from disc brakes to a Spitfire starter button!

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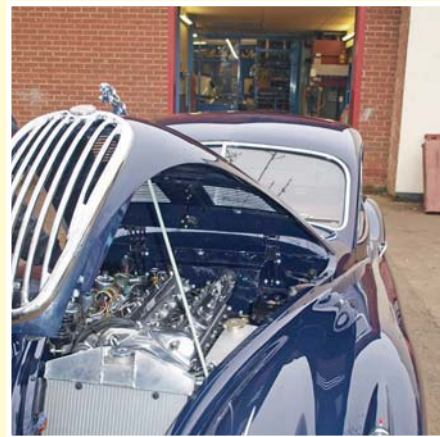
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# XK Gazette

The Monthly Magazine of the XK Club

July 2017

Number 238





# XK Club Weekend 2017 by Simon Johnson

The Club's Saturday activities commenced with a splendid array of XKs of all models basking in the sunshine overlooking the impressive Château Impney Hotel, just outside Droitwich in Worcestershire. A full complement of E-types mirroring the XK crowd was also enjoying the beautiful garden setting of this Grade II-listed 19<sup>th</sup> Century house, built in an elaborate French style. The team managed to book the sunshine for us all and a pleasant breeze was blowing. This is more than can be said for the previous evening, when the Club gazebo met an unfortunate demise in high winds and rain! Not to worry, all had been rectified by the time we arrived mid-morning.

Club members certainly seemed to be enjoying themselves, mingling among the motors on the lawn, admiring the well-kept gardens and grounds of the château, having a civilised lunch on the terrace or simply taking it all in with a nice cold pint! The relaxed atmosphere fitted well with the best of the British climate. I had a good look around the large display of cars and although all were lovely, one XK which caught my eye was Paul Whitfield's immaculate Carmen Red/Biscuit 140 DHC (above).

The Club team got everyone's competitive juices flowing with a friendly competition. This was comprised of a multiple-choice Jaguar-themed quiz and a 'guess the part' photo quiz featuring parts from both XKs and E-types. In addition, our motor racing knowledge was probed with the layouts of several famous circuits. Brian Windle was ultimately victorious, heading home with his chosen copy of one of Philip's publications.





Thank you all very much for a great weekend. This was the first such event for my wife and me and we really enjoyed ourselves. Luckily, the main day (Saturday) stayed fine and was sandwiched between two rainy days. The Sunday run was superb – the route through the Malverns and the Wye Valley was beautiful, followed by a great barbeque.

We were lucky enough to have a hotel room overlooking the front lawn at Château Impney, which gave me the opportunity to take this bird's eye view of the cars. Thanks once again for all the hard work: we're looking forward to XK70.

**Paul Whitfield**

This was followed up with the awards ceremony, with David and Mary Watson receiving the prize for highest XK mileage in 2016, Mike Griffiths and Sylvia Percy receiving the prize for the furthest travelled to Club Day (UK) and Chris and Gisella de Groot receiving the prize for furthest travelled to Club Day (overseas).

Our overseas members are invaluable and add another dimension to the *Club* Day, bringing stories and experiences from farther afield. It would be great to welcome even more in 2018 – you never know where you might bump into people. Indeed, I recently had dinner with several Swiss members who had been present last year, since I am living and working in Basel for 12 months.

A parting treat was organised for us as the afternoon's activities drew to a close – a run up the château's famous hillclimb course. Although not conducted at competitive speed, a convoy of classic Jaguars is always fun to be a part of. It certainly gave us a flavour for what it must be like to head up there in full race mode!

Thanks are due to *Club* member Guy Spollon and his staff at Château Impney for providing us with such a nice setting for this year's meeting. We must also thank our sponsors for supporting the day: MWS looked busy all day, Clayton Classics had a lovely little display in front of the château and Listers Jaguar of Droitwich showcased the very latest F-types on a few charges up and down the driveway. Full marks to Julian Barratt for driving a return journey to Bridgnorth to fetch a new core plug for one member, whose original piece parted company from his engine on the motorway on Friday night!

Finally, thank you to Philip, Julie and the





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whole team from *Club HQ* – the event was once again a great success and provided the chance to catch up with some familiar faces as well as meet new members. The *Club* has always come across as having a friendly atmosphere, which is no more apparent than on the Saturday *Club Day*, and this was only half the fun!



## Hotwiring an XK and the *XK Club Weekend*...

by Chris de Groot

*A story about VSCC camaraderie and the friendly and very professional help of Twyford Moors*

Gisella and I have visited several *XK Club* weekends, which we find one of the nicest outings with our XK. As we live in The Netherlands, we usually leave on Thursday morning. We drove via Belgium to Calais in France, where we took the ferry to Dover. Then to Hook House Hotel in Hook for our first night.

As I'm also a member of the VSCC, we thought it would be nice to visit the Thursday evening pub meeting in the Phoenix Inn, just a few miles from Hook. It would be our first meeting with the VSCC. When we arrived with our XK 120SE, we were made most welcome by VSCC members and had a nice evening. There were several beautiful cars, from an Alvis Speed 20 to an AC, several Austins, Bentley, Bugatti, etc.

At about 10pm, we started our XK to return to our hotel. I drove forward, turned the wheel and the engine stopped. Permanently. No electricity, no power, no lights, no starter, nothing. I opened the bonnet and looked. Nothing. A few members also looked at the XK, but none of us saw anything strange. Then guessing: batteries died, red master switch broken, broken cable, etc. Soon one of the members came with a Voltmeter and checked both batteries. 12 volts, complete full. The conclusion was that probably the red master switch was broken. Somebody arranged a jack, I lifted the XK, Gisella brought me a mobile for light and tools. I crawled under the XK and disconnected the red master switch and mounted both cables together. Dirty but happy, I assumed everything would work as it should. But no. Then further investigation with the Voltmeter and trying other things. Time flew while investigating and an hour passed.

At that point Richard, one of the VSCC members, mentioned that we had been trying for more than an hour with seven people, to get a Jaguar running and still failed. He concluded that we all failed the Jaguar stealing and hotwiring test!



After another 15 minutes of searching for the root cause, Bill Cooper found the problem and hotwired the XK the correct way: and it started! Yes, the engine ran! But, still no lights. So, how could we get to the hotel? Richard suggested a small convoy with his Alvis in front with his lights on, me in the middle with no lights and a Bentley following me also with his lights on. This small train managed to drive us to our hotel. Gisella and I thanked the VSCC members for all their help and support, and off they went. It was a really good feeling of camaraderie.

As I was more or less becoming the hotwiring specialist, I managed to start the XK within a minute on Friday morning. Bill had already called Twyford Moors in Clanfield, Hants, and they were willing to look at the XK. So we drove through the countryside with a hotwired XK. Ian Mills received us very friendly, introduced us to the staff and offered us coffee. I explained the problem and they started to investigate and find the real problem. After some time, Ian informed us that the problem was found and they started repairing it. Root cause was a misfit of the dynamo wires, which caused melting behind the fuse box. After repairing and fitting the wires correctly, the XK was again fully operational. Job very well done in a short period of time.

What has led to the problem? Electrics have been my greatest nightmare, but I'll try to explain. After fitting a new dynamo last year, the wiring should have been adapted to the new situation. This was not done, or not done in the right way, so excessive current had melted the parts behind the fuses.

While the XK was on the ramp, Ian also gave me two tips for adjustments about the underside of my XK, perfect. They also checked the oil, cooling, etc. After a last chat with Ian we drove to Stanbrook Abbey, our hotel for Friday and Saturday night.

When we look back, we were helped in such a friendly and professional manner by the VSCC members and Twyford Moors. A big, big thank you to both of them. We also look back on a very nice *Club Weekend*!



**Dear Louise,**

Congratulations on organising such a splendid weekend at Château Impney. It is always a pleasure to catch up with old friends and meet new ones. And what brilliant weather on Saturday! Olivia and I thoroughly enjoyed ourselves, even to the point of not minding the soaking we got on Sunday.

And when we got home, what joy of joy, a new edition of the *Gazette* with advanced news of XK70. Can you please reserve a Platinum Package for us?

Thanks again for a great weekend.

**Neil & Olivia Donnan**

**Dear Philip and Julie,**

A double thank you to you and your Team, especially Louise, for the super XK Weekend at Château Impney and the XK Charity Round Britain Coastal Drive.

We have enjoyed both events enormously and in particular the XK RBCD that attracted so many XK owners we had not met before. A great fund-raising event that was also very pleasurable. We had great driving opportunities, challenging routes and excellent company. What more could we wish for other than to spread the word, through the *XK Gazette*, to other members about how much enjoyment they can also have with their cars by taking part. XKs need to be driven and used for fun, as that may be why we have them!

Thanks again and we look forward to XK70.

**Nigel and Janet Randal**

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# Manners Makyth...Jaguar Parts

by James Page

The leap from dry-cleaning to the motor trade isn't an obvious one to make, but that's exactly the path trodden by David Manners 40 years ago. When he was struggling to find a new exhaust for his Daimler SP250, he ended up having one made by a client of his. As it turned out, a lot of fellow Daimler enthusiasts were having the same problem. Manners ended up having a further 100 made and sold them all within a month. That was the point at which he realised that he might be in the wrong business.

From there, Manners built a company that now sells spares for everything from Jaguar XKs to Mazda MX-5s. The way in which he expanded it, however, was a far cry from his Daimler-only beginnings, during which he went to extreme lengths to get himself established. "He kept breaking Darts in the early days," says Simon Oughtibridge, who's been with the company for 33 years. "There are stories of him going out on Christmas Day and getting bits off cars while his dinner went cold! And he went around British Leyland and Austin-Rover dealerships, buying up all their unwanted stock of parts. For them, at that time, it was all just taking up space. There were piles and piles of this stuff, and he used to have lock-ups and storage everywhere. Then we found this place."

'This place' is just off junction two of the M5, west of Birmingham – Manners moved in during 1997 with an opening ceremony that included contemporary *Top Gear* presenter Quentin Willson. The front of the building houses a smart reception area with customer counters and an open-plan sales area – overlooked by an impressive leaping cat in honour of Jaguar – but the really interesting stuff is housed out back in a labyrinthine store that contains parts for the various marques and models. And it is quite a variety: Manners may have started off dealing with Jaguar and Daimler, but that has now expanded considerably.



- The premises on Wolverhampton Road, into which DMG moved in 1997: it's regularly been extended since, and will soon need to be enlarged once again
- Now 75, David Manners still chairs DMG but day-to-day running of the business is in the capable hands of daughter Kate, who has helped out since childhood



This time, though, there was no going out on Christmas Day to break cars. In 2000, David Manners Group assumed control of Abingdon MG Parts Ltd after buying out the other shareholders. As well as MG components, it also supplies parts for Triumph and Mazda MX-5 – the latter now



#### Clockwise from top left

- David and Kate "a few years ago"...
- There's seemingly mile upon mile of shelves and racking in the stores: some of it, such as this in the Jaguar area, looks suitably period
- The engineering department contains many patterns, including these for dashboards: among the ones hanging up are MGA units

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Jaguar XK150 FHC 1958 - £92,750



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Jaguar XK120 race car - £120,000



Jaguar XK150 FHC for restoration

boasts an enormous fanbase and is backed up by a burgeoning club. Two years before bringing Abingdon into the group, Manners worked with London-based Mini Spares Centre to form Mini Spares Centre (Midlands). The final string to the DMG bow is the Morris Minor Centre (Birmingham), which had been established in 1981 and was bought out by Manners in 2011.

"The Jaguar side of thing is the mainstay of the business," says Oughtibridge. "That's the biggest, then Mini and MG, and they're followed by Morris Minor and MX-5. The biggest grower is the Mini market, but the Jaguar one just keeps growing quietly. It's still a current car-maker, so a new model then becomes a secondhand model, and then there's a demand for parts. So, we look at something like the XK8 and decide what to stock for those."

Manners himself remains chairman of DMG and can still be found in the office most days. Or rather, he can't, because he was recently kicked out of that room – in the nicest possible way – to make way for the marketing department. As you might expect of someone with his vast experience, he's still very involved in purchasing, but since 2011 the day-to-day running of the business has been handled by his daughter Kate. One of her main projects has been to bring together the four parts of the company so that they work as a more streamlined whole rather than individual sections. It's a job that has involved rationalisation, as well as investing in areas such as research and development.

That's far removed from the 1990s, when she used to earn a little bit of pocket money doing odd jobs around the place. The one that stayed with her is sorting through the one million keys that her father had just bought. "For years I had to take keys out of the large butter boxes they were in," she later said, "and put them onto the boards that are still up the back of the warehouse now. I get a shiver every time I go into the archive room and see them there, many still in the original butter boxes!"

Each of the models for which DMG supplies parts enjoys a huge following, and that's something in which the company gets heavily involved. When we visited, they'd just hosted a Morris Minor Open Day and were due to have a Mini evening. They work closely with the various owners' clubs, supporting events as well as organising them – even if they can't make it to the event itself, they'll often send a goody bag. At the time of writing, they're also raising money for the Primrose Hospice in Bromsgrove by raffling off a Morris Minor that has been restored by Fuzz Townsend of Car SOS fame.

But it's the Jaguar side of the business that remains by far the biggest, with a stocklist that covers everything from XK 120, 140 and 150 to E-type, Mk2, XJ6 and even 'moderns' such as XK8 and XF. "We were the first company to become a European Jaguar Parts Distributor without being a dealer," says Oughtibridge. "We have access to more than 178,000 Jaguar parts, but stock perhaps 25,000."

That gives DMG an all-important connection to Jaguar itself, and its inventory covers genuine Jaguar parts, plus OE and aftermarket. "That means that we can have three or four versions of some products to suit people's budget," explains Oughtibridge. "Previously, there had been no consistency – an oil filter, for example, could be from Unipart or Jaguar. We created a system where people get what they want."

Oughtibridge admits that there are Jaguar parts that are difficult for even Manners to find, such as XJ6 Series 2 door mouldings, but one major advantage that the company has is the ability to manufacture parts on-site. Deep within the building lies the Engineering Department, which is brilliantly old-school and an unexpected find among the rows and rows of carefully organised parts. The lathe, press and pillar drill all look period-correct, while the metal shelving units are packed with patterns and dies.



- The ability to manufacture components on-site is a definite advantage. Note the radius arm tooling in the centre – DMG makes hundreds every year
- The engineering department also makes body panels for most of the models that DMG caters for; more specialised components such as gears are farmed out to specialists
- Leaf springs and radius arms arranged in the stores: the latter are among the components made in the engineering department
- Smaller components are kept in colour-coded trays: there are thousands of these throughout the storeroom





Dave Baker and Ian Brown work there, making everything from Jaguar Mk2 floors and jacking points to E-type radius arms. "There are four types [of radius arm]," says Baker, "and to make all four types is just one job. We do maybe 500 different jobs every year."

In a nice link to the way in which David Manners himself got started in the business, Baker has an original Daimler Dart grille as a reference for when he needs to make one of those, plus a Dart header tank. "We need to work out the costs [before we manufacture something]," he says, "but with the header tanks we do maybe 20 per year – and you just can't get them. I was at a show once and a guy there had a Dart with the bonnet open. I happened to be looking at the header tank thinking how many of them I'd made, when he said that it was original. I had to tell him that it wasn't..."

"If there's demand, we'll make something," says Oughtibridge. "We might do a run of 50-100. Things like oil-pump gears we'll send to a specialist. Panels and non-moving parts, we'll do here. We've just had our third batch of Daimler oil-pump gears done. It never ends, we're constantly making stuff."

The expansion of DMG has meant that its building has already been extended – on one occasion so that even more Jaguar and Daimler stock could be housed – and there are plans to extend the stores yet again. It's a sensible strategy when you consider that moving an operation such as this into bigger premises would be a mammoth logistical challenge.

This is one of those places where the sales staff would quite likely choose 'parts numbers' as their Mastermind specialist subject – these are folk with immense experience, and even on a quick walk through the office you'll notice that they're surrounded by catalogues and reference material. Their area of the car park also includes a number of classics, and that's always a good sign. What started as a sideline for a businessman who was into dry-cleaning has become a thriving family business that should be in fine shape for another 40 years.

#### **Clockwise from top left**

- The sales office has been tweaked over the years, and the Jaguar side of things now has its own reception desk for enthusiasts to use
- It's not all about the oily bits: the bright reception area houses everything from Jaguar models to umbrellas and holdalls
- A Daimler parts book tucked among XK manuals in the sales office: Manners started off selling Daimler spares alone, and went to extreme lengths to source them
- Simon Oughtibridge has been with the David Manners Group for 33 years: few people know the ins and outs of the business as well as he does
- A touch of inspiration in the sales office; as impressive a following as the MX-5 has, a big Mazda badge probably wouldn't be so evocative



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# The Royal Windsor **Jaguar Festival, May 6**

by Roger Gage photos by Nick & Chris Gage

In the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the Prince Philip Trust, the Jaguar Enthusiasts' Club were invited to organise a parade of Jaguars through the streets of Windsor and into its iconic castle, which would celebrate the Jaguar marque and raise funds for the Trust.

To launch the weekend, on Friday evening there was a social Champagne reception in St George's Hall, attended by HRH The Earl of Wessex, who mingled with the guests before delivering a most engaging address.

On Saturday, some 1200 Jaguars lined the Long Walk on display, providing a magnificent spectacle for the thousands of visitors who thronged the park. Owners brought their cars from across Europe and Scandinavia, including groups from Germany, France and Holland. There were even some enthusiasts who had flown from the USA and Canada to participate. Valuable financial support came from sponsors including Jaguar Classic, Millers Oils and Meguiars.

At the heart of the event was a 240-car cavalcade, which included many owners with their pride and joy, mixed with some of the most significant cars in Jaguar's history. The cars drove through the streets of Windsor along roads lined with the public, into the Castle and past Prince Edward, the Earl of Wessex. The tone was set by Michael Quinn, Sir William Lyons' grandson, driving the awesome and completely unique XJ13 and delighting the crowds with each blip of the throttle.





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The earliest model was a 1929 Austin Swallow driven by John Gallon, who is as old as his car. There were 12 pre-1950 cars, a rare sight these days. All models were represented, including C and D-types. Cars were presented in decade order but even the end held surprises, as the beautiful XJ220 had the crowds cheering. The final car was the fabulous Jaguar XKSS Continuation from Jaguar Classic (right), a fitting end to an amazing spectacle.

The start of the parade had been slightly delayed as a figure on horseback rode through the Castle grounds and approached. Our Queen came to see the cars and speak to a number of the drivers: an unexpected event which made the day very special.

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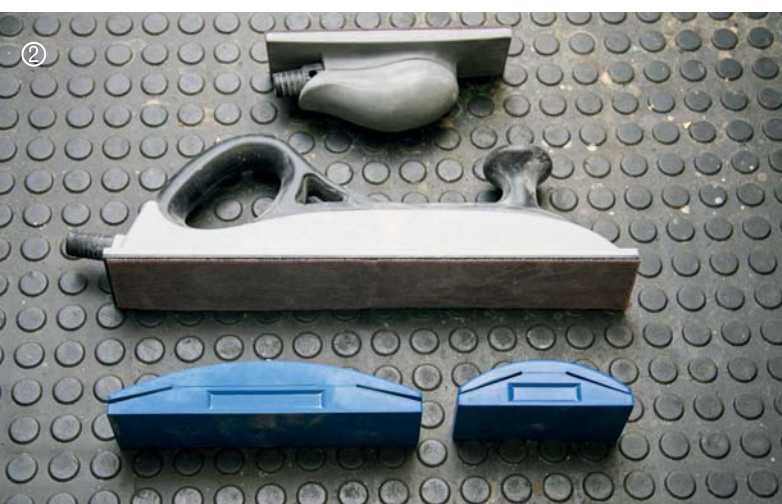
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# ROADSTER REBORN

My 120 OTS Home Restoration Part 10, by **Trevor Jipson**



## Introduction

Previously I have explained how I reconstructed the bodyshell and doors of my 1954 XK 120 OTS. In the next three parts (10-12) of my report, I will describe how I went about the preparation and painting of the car's bodyshell and other body panels.

## Approach to Painting

One of the key objectives I had set when commencing this project was that I would do as much of the restoration work myself as possible, given the limits of my competence and the range of equipment and facilities available to me. Therefore, although I was aware of the critical importance of the quality of the paintwork to the appearance of the finished car, I decided that I would undertake all of the preparation and painting myself. After all, I had successfully painted a number of cars before and I was reasonably confident that I could, with care and patience, achieve an acceptable result on the XK.

Without access to a professional paint spraying booth, I had little choice but to do all of the preparation and paint spraying in a modestly-sized garage. This of course raised a number of problems that would need to be managed if I was to complete the work safely and to the required standard. Addressing these problems significantly influenced my approach to the preparation and painting stage of my project.

## Providing a safe working environment

One of the more serious problems to be addressed was how to provide a safe working environment during the paint spraying work. I had done most of my previous paint spraying under a very large carport, where good ventilation made this less of a problem. Trying to spray significant quantities of paint in a modestly-sized garage would be very different. I therefore adopted a number of measures in an attempt to address this problem. These included the use of:

- \* A cellulose based paint system
- \* A low pressure turbine based paint spraying equipment
- \* An air fed visor

Although I made the decision to use a traditional cellulose paint system, I was aware that the alternative two-pack paint systems provide a more durable finish and, if applied in the right conditions, also achieve a better finish straight from the spray gun. However, the cellulose paints available today have the advantages that they are less toxic than isocyanate two-pack paints; they are very quick drying, which is important when working without a proper spray booth; and they are essentially the same as the paint used by Jaguar at the time my car was built.

There were several reasons why I decided to use a turbine-fed, high volume, low pressure (HVLP) paint spraying system instead of the conventional air compressor that I had used for all my previous paint spraying work. First, I was led to believe that HVLP spray guns create less environmental contamination than conventional high-pressure spray guns, although having now used them I'm not so sure. Second, since I intended to use an air-fed visor, which requires a substantial supply of compressed air to function effectively, I would be able to use my main air compressor to perform this function, leaving the turbine to provide the air for paint spraying. Finally, the turbine system feeds warm air to the spray gun and therefore doesn't suffer from the annoying problem of water contamination sometimes encountered when using a conventional compressor.

My decision to use an air-fed visor was based on many years of experience with other less comfortable and less effective equipment. If used correctly, an air-fed visor provides not only respiratory protection but also protection of eyes and face. With the equipment that I used, visibility was excellent with no fogging of the visor and no nasty odours from the paint or

the compressed air feeding the visor. The only inconvenience I found with this type of apparatus is the hose connection between the compressor and the filter/regulator, which is attached to a belt worn around the waist. This hose can cause a tripping hazard and does rather annoyingly tend to get tangled up with the hose feeding the spray gun; but these are relatively trivial issues given the outstanding benefits of this equipment.

#### **Providing adequate lighting**

Another very challenging problem for me was how to provide sufficient lighting for the preparation and paint spraying activities. Again, this had not been a problem when spraying under a carport with good natural light, but when working in a garage I knew that the normal ceiling-mounted fluorescent lighting would not be sufficient for critical panel preparation and painting activities. In an attempt to improve the situation, I installed additional fluorescent lights, including some at a lower level and also obtained a number of portable lamps. All of this additional lighting did provide a significant improvement but, when eventually put to the test during the spraying work, I found that the lighting was still barely adequate in some areas.

#### **Achieving a clean environment**

Ensuring that the garage environment would be sufficiently clean for the spraying activities was another problem that I needed to address. The garage interior was already reasonably clean, with painted walls and a temporary hardboard covering over a tiled floor. However, it was also very well stocked with the usual garage paraphernalia, so I decided that the best that I could do would be to undertake an extensive campaign of tidying and cleaning, then hang polythene sheeting from the ceiling around the entire garage. This would reduce the risk





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of getting dirt into the wet paint and would also contain the large quantities of dust inevitably generated during the painting process.

From my previous experiences with paint spraying, I was also aware of the problems associated with flying insects which have a habit of touching down on freshly-painted surfaces and then crawling through the wet paint, expiring only after they have become firmly embedded in the surface. This isn't an easy problem to resolve and all that I could come up with as a solution was to hang some old net curtain over the partially-opened garage door when painting was in progress. Despite my efforts, I'm afraid that flies still managed to get in, but I like to think that I had at least kept their numbers down.

#### **Working around the weather**

Finally, there was the problem that without the ability to control temperature and humidity inside the garage, I would have to confine this work to the summer months when ambient conditions were suitable. This didn't cause too much difficulty although I did, on occasion, have to alter my planned sequence of working to suit the weather.

#### **Preparation for Painting**

In my previous report, I explained how I lead loaded some of the joints made during the construction of the body. This had been a good first step in the body preparation, but there were still a large number of imperfections that I would need to correct before the car was ready for painting.

The approach to body preparation that has worked well for me in the past comprises the following basic steps:

1. Lead loading for welded joints and for contour correction in locations where heat distortion isn't likely to be a problem.
2. Polyester filler (two-part) directly onto bare metal for correction of significant imperfections
3. Polyester stopper (two-part) over bare metal or painted surfaces for correcting minor imperfections.


I undertook all of the main panel preparation with the body mounted on the chassis and with the doors and bootlid in place, as some minor discrepancies in the surface alignments between these panels and the main bodysell would need to be corrected by the use of filler or possibly by lead loading. The bonnet was also fitted at some stages during the preparation works, although the surface profiles of this and the adjacent panels required very little adjustment.

With all panels in place on the bodysell, I went round the whole vehicle locating and marking the imperfections that would require correction by the application of filler. Then, working in one location at a time, I abraded, cleaned and degreased the surface at each imperfection before applying the filler. For a fully reconstructed body incorporating many panel repairs, this is very long job but must be done properly if a good result is to be achieved.

In addition to the correction of panel surface defects and alignment faults, I also checked the fit of body trim items including the windscreen frame, radiator grille, headlamp spears and rear



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lamps, to identify any areas where significant reshaping of the panels was required. Fortunately no major reshaping was found to be necessary.

Inappropriate use of polyester body filler to disguise sometimes serious defects has given this very useful material a bad name. However, the use of thin layers of good quality filler as a means of correcting minor surface imperfections is, in my opinion, entirely acceptable.

Shaping hardened polyester filler is much easier than shaping the lead applied during lead loading, but it is still very time-consuming. It is therefore advisable to use the minimum amount of filler possible, even if this means that several applications are needed in order to obtain the required profile. I have found that purpose-made metal applicators are best for applying filler paste to flat surfaces, whereas more flexible plastic applicators or suitably-profiled applicators are better when working on curved surfaces.

For shaping the hardened filler, I used a range of coarse body files and sanding blocks of various lengths and profiles (pics 1, 2). Throughout the filler shaping stage, I used the abrasives dry and wherever possible used sanding blocks with the provision for connecting a vacuum cleaner. This not only keeps down the amount of airborne dust, but also reduces clogging of the abrasive paper or mesh. For convenience, I used abrasive papers and fabric meshes that use a 'Velcro' type system to attach them to the sanding blocks. However, I have found that this arrangement creates a rather soft backing for the abrasive mesh/paper, which does not achieve the level of accuracy required when finishing flatter panels.

With all of the more significant imperfections corrected (pics 3-6) the next stage in the work involved painting the entire bodyshell with an etch primer, which is necessary to ensure good adhesion between the paint and the bare steel. Most etch primers are also suitable for use on aluminium surfaces, which are more prone to problems with poor paint adhesion than steel.

### The Paint System & Sequence of Working

Having decided that I would use cellulose paint for the finishing coats, I needed to apply compatible materials for the primer and undercoat. Back when cellulose paint was in more common use, it was easy to buy all of these paints and associated thinners from a single manufacturer, which was of course a good way of ensuring compatibility. This is not so easy today and, no doubt like others, I had to rely on the paint suppliers' assurances about the compatibility of products from different manufacturers. As far as I can tell, this seems to have worked out well for me on this occasion, but I have encountered some problems with the compatibility of different paints in the past and, although this type of problem can usually be spotted quickly and appropriate action taken, it sometimes only shows up at a much later stage.

For the application of the paint and other finishing materials, I used what I believe is the conventional sequence of:

1. Etch primer



2. Seam sealer
3. Undercoat
4. Stopper (outer panels only)
5. Undercoat
6. Guide coat (outer panels only)
8. Top coat

In practice, it is normally necessary to repeat stages 4-5, the stopper-undercoat cycle, many times as further minor imperfections keep turning up. In extreme cases, it may even be necessary to return to the filling stage if serious faults are identified during the later stages of the work.

The sequence in which I had planned to spray the bodyshell was: underside, inside (engine compartment, cabin and boot) and finally the outside although, for convenience, I actually primed the front wings and front bulkhead first, while the body was still on the chassis (pic 7).

When spraying large items like the bodyshell in separate sections, it is necessary to completely mask off those parts of the body that are not being



sprayed at the time. This is a very tedious and time-consuming job, but must be done diligently to prevent overspray from contaminating parts of the body that have either already been painted or have been prepared awaiting painting.

In order to paint the underside of the car, I needed to remove the body from the chassis and raise it to a sufficient height to provide the access needed for paint spraying. I therefore had to design a suitable lifting and bracing system, which would enable me to achieve the required lift safely and without damaging the relatively flimsy structure of the XK OTS bodyshell. The solution I adopted was to lift at two points, using bespoke beams with

high-level bracing between the A and B posts.

I used the splash panel fixing points in the front bulkhead side frames to attach special brackets for the front lifting beam (pics 8-9), and the seat belt anchor points adjacent to the B-post to attach further brackets for the rear lifting beam (pic 10). For the bracing between the A-posts and the B-posts, I made a pair of struts, the front ends of which I attached to the front bulkhead using the windscreen side pillar mounting holes adjacent to the A-posts, and the rear ends I attached to the rear lifting beam mounting brackets that were fitted to the inside faces of the B-posts (pic 11).

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# XK Gazette

The Monthly Magazine of the XK Club

June 2017

Number 237





## LETTER FROM AMERICA

• XK 150S parked regally in front of Classic Showcase

### Travels with Lucille: XKs at Classic Showcase

by Paul McNabb; photos by Paul McNabb & Tom Krefetz

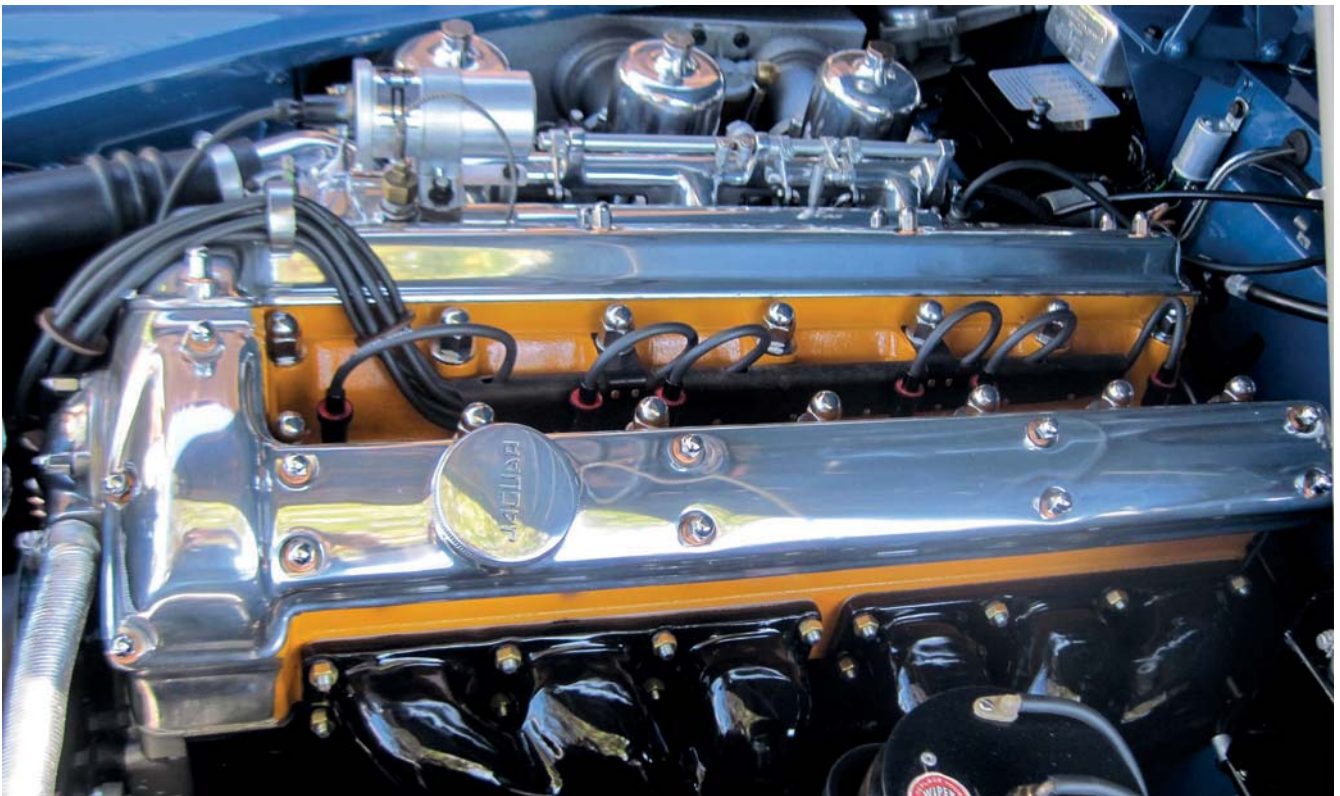
My wife jabbed me in the ribs, demanding I turn off the annoying ring of my cellphone alarm. The time on my bedside clock read 4am. Awakening sometime during a warm shower, I realized today was going to be a good day. Lucille, my XK 150 DHC, was in a cranky mood as she warmed up, but as we hit the 101 at 5am, her temperament improved. The early start was necessary to beat the Los Angeles traffic as we headed south from my home in Oxnard. The Jag rumbled effortlessly in the cool, dark morning air; turning 2000rpm at 70mph. At 8am, I pulled up at the 40,000 square foot facility of Classic Showcase in Oceanside, CA ([www.classicshowcase.com](http://www.classicshowcase.com)).

Owner Tom Krefetz gave me a quick tour of my project for the day and then hurried off to tend to several projects as the business day began. Tom is a hands-on kind of guy, something very important when dealing with top-of-the-line restorations. This was my third or fourth visit to the facility, as I have reported





- 3.4-liter S
- Boot in immaculate condition with tools and spare
- Telltale pumpkin head and triple carbs



on other projects, so I knew my way around a little.

I began with a visit to the back, where the paint and body work is done. An XK 150 DHC, very similar to mine, was in the early stages of a concours-level restoration. Back towards the front of the shop, I passed through the engine shop, where several finished builds sat covered with plastic to keep out the dust until installation, and the interior shop where patterns of originals were being used for new projects to insure perfect fit. The staff at Classic Showcase pride themselves on doing every bit of the work possible in-house, so they can keep a close eye on quality. About the only items sent out are chrome and cad plating, as California has strict controls on how this work is done due to emissions. I was seriously distracted

by a two-owner 1980 Porsche 911SC coupe in light blue, but eventually managed to get to work snapping shots of not one but two incredible XKs.

The first was a seriously beautiful 1958 3.4-liter XK 150S OTS in Cotswold Blue with Red interior, chassis T831795DN; originally delivered with a cream exterior and black interior. This car was owned for 20 years or more by Phyllis Ann Armstrong of Denver, Colorado, before being sold at Auctions America in Fort Lauderdale, Florida where Tom picked it up. Readers may view pictures of the car pre-restoration on the [www.xkdata.com](http://www.xkdata.com) site, indexed by chassis number.

Present owners are David and Patti Reed and rumor has it that Patti picked the new color combination. If that information is correct, she's a genius! When I posted a shot of this stunning Jag on my Facebook site, I received over 140 likes and 8 shares of the car the first day it was posted. This car was the result of a complete and comprehensive Show Car restoration: the motor, interior, chrome and paint, everything redone to perfection. I was lucky enough to



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- Red interior really sets off Cotswold Blue
- Satin black XK 120 parked in front of Classic Showcase
- Period-correct Texas license plate

ride with Tom as he performed the first shake-down cruise with the 150S. The old Jag pulled strong through the neighborhood near the shop, but Tom did note a few items that would need attention back at the shop; always the case with a complete frame-up restoration. This car will be finished in a few days, with plans to show it through the summer in JCNA-judged events.

The second car for the day was no less impressive, a 1951 XK 120 OTS in a more traditional Black with Tan trim; chassis 671318.





Tom found this car in Texas, selling long-time client, Marco De La Barrera of Guadalajara, Mexico, on a concours project. The period-correct Texas plate was a nice touch on the finished project. This car showed with a strong presence, something about the combination of a glossy black exterior contrasted with the leather interior, minimal chrome and wide whitewalls.

Apparently, others agreed with me. The 120 was entered in one of the pre-eminent shows in southern California, the La Jolla Concours, and took first place in a class of nine perfectly-restored cars. Readers may take a look at pictures of the event and cars by visiting [www.lajollaconcours.com](http://www.lajollaconcours.com). This car will also compete during the summer in the JCNA events.

I managed to finish by noon and head back north before any colossal traffic jams occurred in the afternoon. Yes, today was a good day.



## Clockwise from top left

- Spotless engine bay on prize-winning XK
- Tan interior really set off by black paint
- Judging at La Jolla Concours
- Interior shop insures a perfect fit
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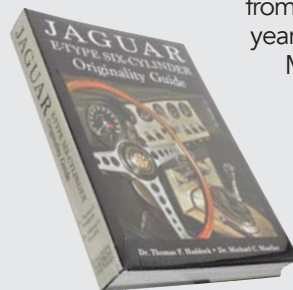
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