



THE JAGUAR DRIVERS' CLUB OF NATAL

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NEWSLETTER July 2012

2012 Committee

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From the chairman's/editors desk.

The past year was a quiet one for our club. There were not many outings and enthusiasm seemed to be on the decline. At the AGM options for the club were discussed. The possibility of joining with another club or simply closing down was considered. However, those who attended the AGM were all in favour that the club should continue.

Steve Nell who has been our ever faithful editor for the past two years has had to stand down due to other commitments. Steve did a great job and his contribution will be sorely missed. To date there has been no offer from any of our members to take over. It is clear that finding a successor to Steve is going to be very difficult. As an interim it was suggested that we set up a website for the club.

Events, outings and other useful information can be found there and that will, to some extent, have to cover the gaps until our newsletter/brief is fully up and running again. I am very happy to report that the club web was up and running in just over a week. It looks great but to maximise the benefits it is up to our members to contribute. Some members have already sent in photos of their cars and these have been placed in the gallery. Some interesting articles have also been submitted by some of our members. Yes, it's certainly worth surfing this one. I must express my grateful thanks to John Austin Williams our webmaster for the great job he has done.

I guess everyone is now aware of the outing planned with the Rolls Royce/Bentley Club on 5 August. Then we are also hoping to have a significant presence at the Scottburgh Classic car show. This is for a great cause and thanks must go to our Patron Peter Fielding for his part in arranging this event. Details can of course be found on our web site.

You will notice a new club logo at the head of this page. Theo's son and his friend in the UK have spent days trying to develop a logo to represent our club. This is a great logo and admired by many but it is not yet cast in stone. It's possible that there might be some small changes. There are also those who prefer the leaper which was also considered, but more difficult to apply because it's not symmetrical like the growler. It does represent Jaguar and our club. We would greatly appreciate some feedback from our members.

We are also in the process of getting name badges made up for our members who have already paid their annual subs or indicated they intend to remain with the club. These will have the club logo on the LHS corner and their name on the right.

Bearing in mind that we are a small club we will be investigating the possibility of joining with another club and meeting with them on a regular basis at some fixed location possibly on a monthly or bi monthly basis.

This will be in addition to outings with other clubs e.g. the outing on 5 August mentioned above.

There should be a XK 150 coupe arriving shortly for new members Doug and Shalane Knox with her V12 "E" OTS

And, a short update on the progress on my 3.4 Litre MK 2.



From this.....



To this!

The start of the re-spray in BRG. The motor has been completely overhauled. New 6" wire wheels with stainless steel spokes have been imported. Large radiator and electric fan also installed.

Sadly I don't think it will be ready in time for our August outing. More next time!

Right now the most pressing issue is finding another editor. This is crucial for the survival of our club! To make the job easier a template has been developed and if we hear contributions from our members it will, for the most part, be a "cut and paste" job.

Please folks; surely there is someone out there who can help out?

We also need an events coordinator but this post is less serious to fill in the short term as that of the editor.

This news brief is just an interim measure until our new editor is found!

News brief contributors

While sifting through his cupboards I came across this great write up by the late John King. Very interesting!

This is indeed worth a read!

Autobiography

John King, Durban

My affinity for Jaguar cars began in 1947 in London where I was born (1939) and educated. On a bomb site were two semi derelict cars, an SS1 and an SS1 Airline and I would spend many contented hours sitting in them and making 'brmm, brmm' noises and wrestling control with the steering wheel of the stationary vehicles. I loved the shape and elegance of those elongated bonnets and especially the sinuous flowing lines of the Airline.

Occasionally I would cast envious glances at a locally owned SS100 driven by a good looking rake in tweeds and a cheese cutter cap accompanied by an incredible variety of stunning girlfriends... I had to have a car like that.

My father, recently returned from the war, kindly took me to the 1948 London Motor Show at Earls Court where my affinity for these superbly crafted motor cars turned to infatuation. The apparition that was identified as the XK120 roadster launched on the recently branded 'Jaguar' stand was excruciatingly beautiful and I was mesmerised.

Sad to relate, my eventual ownership of cars (cheap and second-hand) did not include any Jaguars. The first car I owned was a 1929 Triumph super seven on which I taught myself the arcane skills of the intrepid motor artificer by rebuilding the engine and refurbishing everything else.

Fortunately this somewhat mundane chariot was quickly followed by more inspired machinery; various MGs, a chain drive Frazer Nash, an Austin 7 and then a 13/70 and a 15/90 Marendaz, both of which were restored and rebuilt and extensively enjoyed thereafter.

Around this time I got to regularly drive a 1,5 litre SS Jaguar saloon owned by - a friend which was pleasant but uninspired motoring and very occasionally I had pleasurable drives in XK120s owned by other (more affluent) friends. Unbeknownst to me at the time, my future wife was swanning around the UK in a gorgeous Suede Green XK120 roadster, but we only met later in RSA. She loved the car of course and was loath to part with it when she left England.

A not uncommon sight during this period would be to see 'C' and 'D' types both on the road and in second-hand dealers' premises, would that I could have had the wherewithal to acquire one for, both the enjoyment of ownership (and with hindsight the investment potential which at that time was unexpected).

All through this period the inspiration of the many Le Mans and other racing victories added to the charisma of the Jaguar and the amazing natural aesthetic talent that William Lyons was able to inculcate in the design department was so significant that every new model was an exquisite apparition and a world leader in automotive design.

The launch in Geneva in March 1961 of the legendary E-type was the pinnacle of sublime creativity both in functional and aesthetic terms.

At the time I was employed in central London and had to walk down Carnaby Street twice daily to the studio. As the fashion centre of the Capital, all the young blades would congregate there with their E-types and mini-skirted model girlfriends and I must admit to a certain amount of envy I really, really had to have one of those cars, but my constrained financial circumstances precluded that dream at that juncture.

Visiting a friend at about this time, he invited me to drive his newly acquired (but second-hand) Mark 7. Leaving his house we approached a major highway filled with giant behemoths travelling at dervish speeds in both directions. However, silently cosseted in sumptuous leather, axminster and walnut, we patiently waited for a gap. Unfortunately I misjudged the silence of the engine and thought it might stall, so blipped the throttle in an encouraging way with disastrous results. We rocketed forward across the highway just miraculously avoiding all the vehicles which blared their horns (understandably). This was my first experience with an automatic transmission!

In 1963 I emigrated to South Africa and on arrival bought a TC MG (for R100! - those were the days!) followed by an 850 Mini, then an Alfa in quick succession.

Having met and married Shirley in 1964 we purchased my first Jaguar, a wonderful, beautiful, exquisite E-type roadster at the beginning of 1972. A 1966 4,2 litre one owner model, this was everything we both desired in a sports car.

This marvellous car we used as an everyday (and only) car and revelled in the performance, comfort and visual stimulus every single moment.

Then we bought a late 1971 4,2 litre XJ6 sedan to accompany the E-type in the garage and this car was a revelation of 'Grace Space and Pace' from the unerring creativity of Sir William's team, Air-conditioned opulence with silky smooth and adequate power through an automatic box, this car provided the perfect foil to the E-type's sporty character.

Eventually the XJ6 was supplanted by a sequence of a couple of Mercedes 280S sedans, a 450SLC plus a 1275E mini.

At the beginning of 1990 we purchased another E-type, this time a two-seater coupe in matching colour to the roadster, opalescent silver blue. Also a magnificent vehicle, but being somewhat hot inside in the Natal steamy summer I fitted an air-conditioner which proved very successful, and generally renovated the car in a mainly rolling refurbishment over the sixteen years we owned it. (Now in the possession of Gerry and Klaas Kramer in Johannesburg).

Most recently we've added a Porsche 924 as a stable mate to the E-type roadster and it is an ideal runabout.

The original E-type now in our ownership for 35 years has been an absolute joy and it continues to be a 'transport-of-delight'.

In the 1970s we would regularly use the E-type to travel from Durban to Kyalami to attend the 9 hour or grand prix races and at these times we could allow her to really stretch her legs as there was no speed limit on our good rural roads and minimal traffic.

We would also frequently leave the car outside the Edward Hotel on Marine Parade with the hood down whilst we spent the evening savouring culinary and bacchanal delights, and to return to find it still there and with its radio intact, a fact that today seems beyond belief!

The amazing thing is-the universal aesthetic appreciation that the car attracts. People of all races, both young and old, find it attractive and come over to tell us, which is very rewarding when you consider it's a 41 year old car.

I well remember Shirley and I visiting the Natal Midlands area to buy our Christmas tree many years back and driving to Durban with the hood down with this enormous conifer sharing the cockpit with us. It must have created a festive image which encouraged other motorists to convey joyous greetings throughout the journey, which added immeasurably to our Christmas spirit.

The indefatigable nature of a Jaguar to travel large distances very rapidly without causing weariness in pilot or passenger is a very important part of the charisma of these cars. We would often find that we had covered about 600km in what purported to be a pre-lunch Sunday drive, (for example Durban/Stanger/Greytown/Dundee/Ladysmith/Mooi River/Durban).

The other charismatic attribute to owning a Jaguar is the enthusiastic following that both old and new models attract. Fellow enthusiasts are not partisan about the various models but seem to embrace the whole marque equally. The suppliers that support the classic Jaguars prove that there is a massive international following which provides them with a profitable business making replacement components and assures us of continued and unprecedented availability of parts for our future maintenance and restoration projects.

As our roadster has still only covered 58 000 miles, has no rust {always garaged} and is in good fettle, we expect it to give us both many more miles of open air enjoyment in the incredible Natal climate - especially winter!

Forth Coming events

[Refer to our web site!](#)

www.jdcn.co.za

Other News

Congratulations to our Steve and Elsabe Nell who have become proud grandparent again. Lana Khloe born 12 noon 3 July and weighing 4 Kg. Mum and baby doing well.

Wanted and For Sale

1. For sale 1963 Jaguar MK 2, 3,8 Litre. Excellent condition with wire wheels, power steering, white. Heritage certificate. R 150,000 neg.

For more details contact:

Garth Mekisich
Garthm@wessex.co.za
031 265 2750
083 449 2764

2. Jaguar XJ 6 series one 1971 .4.2 manual excellent condition. Factory A/C and electric windows.

For more details contact:

Garth Mekisich
Garthm@wessex.co.za
031 265 2750
083 449 2764

Please remember to continue sending in your contributions, suggestions and comments and keep driving your classics.

Enjoy your Jaguar and your club,

Jack (the mac)