

Of Jaguars... and others

Article and photos by John Constable

John Constable provided this article, triggered by Darryl Simpson's spread in the November issue of the Chronicle. John says: "It has prompted me to write this account of my 75 years of motoring (1946-2021) when I first acquired a provisional driving licence and started flirting with Jaguars. Since then, I have owned and driven over 100 cars of various makes and horsepower." The article is a veritable who's who of the racing fraternity and the amazing cars that John has been fortunate enough to own.



Allard K1

My first Jaguar was not, in fact, a Jaguar at all but a SS, which was a 4-cylinder standard special with side valve engine - a horrible car with a long bonnet, narrow windscreen and a 3-speed gearbox. This was followed by a 2,5 litre which was not much better.

The first Jaguar was a 1946 1,5l with wire wheels, followed by a 2,5l and a 3,5l. There was also a very nice looking 2,5l and 3,5l DHC and in addition a SS sports, also 2,5 and

3,5l. They were much admired, being beautifully appointed and often referred to as a Jew's Bentley.

These beauties were followed by the XK 120 and the Mark 7 and I was fortunate enough to be at the launch of both these cars at the Earl's Court motor show. I tried to

place an order for the XK120 but was not able to do so as all these cars were being exported to the USA. So, I finished up buying an Allard K type, which was later part exchanged for a J2 Allard with Cadillac engine.

I eventually raced this car, not very successfully, at Goodwood race circuit when Stirling Moss was driving Cooper 500s. At about this time, I was fortunate enough to be invited as a guest of the Daily Express, who were one of the sponsors for the Grand Prix at Silverstone, where I had the enormous pleasure of watching the likes of Fangio Ascari and Prince Behra battling it out and Fangio winning the race.

The outcome of all this was that I decided to get more involved in motor racing, but, as I was not financially well off enough to do so, I decided to become a Marshall,

prompted by a very good friend of mine who was just forming the Jaguar XK register. To become a Marshall, I had to join the British motor racing Marshall's club and go for extensive training at various circuits in different parts of the country. To get fully involved with racing and club events, mostly at weekends in various parts of the country, I decided to join a number of clubs including Bentley driver's club, Jaguar's driver club, Aston Martin owner's club, Alvis owner's club, MG car club, Alfa Romeo motor club, the Brooklyn society, Bugatti owner's club and 750 club.

By attending and marshalling for the various clubs at race meetings all over the country, I was fortunate enough to meet and get to know a number of the drivers of the day including Mike Hawthorne. Stirling Moss, Roy Salvadorie, Ron Flock-



Alfa Romeo GT Junior



MG Magnette



Aston Martin DB6 Vantage and Jaguar XK 140 fixed head



Aston Martin DB 5



1930 Austin Chummy



Bentley MK 6 racing at Daily Telegraph all comers race Silverstone



Park Ward DHC at BDC Kensington Gardens



Jaguar MK 2 3'8 Coombs



MK 6 Bentley and Derby Bentley 3,5 DHC

art, Peter Collins, Jim Clarke, Robin Hamilton and others of equal repute. There was a lot of competition in the various clubs, but the camaraderie and friendship was tremendous and we, as Marshalls, were often invited by the drivers to their various pits.

By this time, I was fortunate enough to purchase a Jaguar 140, fixed head and was invited on a number of occasions to join the Jaguars driver's club to Le Mans for the 24-hour race. We were invited by the French division of the Jaguar Drivers club to drive our cars around the circuit, but not all at the same time! We were always

entertained lavishly by the French and I also had the enormous pleasure of being invited by Robin Hamilton, who had entered his Aston Martin as a private entrant for the race. An occasion I will never



Allard K2 Cadillac Engine



UPCOMING EVENTS

Our events are still at the mercy of COVID restrictions so, while we do endeavour to keep to our programme, please check regular updates nearer the time.

JANUARY

Wed 5 Jan	Film Night - Early Dakar	20h00
Wed 12 Jan	Wednesday Talk: Matt Kreeve - Porsche Outlaw	20h00
Sun 16 Jan	Far North Rally	09h00
Wed 19 Jan	Midweek Meander - Wynberg Park	09h45
Wed 19 Jan	Wednesday Talk: Wayne Harley - What makes Museums Different	20h00
Wed 26 Jan	Wednesday Waffle - Informal Drinks	20h00
Sun 30 Jan	Natter at Timour Hall - Concours d'Elegance	10h00

FEBRUARY

Wed 2 Feb	Film Night - Tatra	20h00
Sun 6 Feb	Veteran Run & Dixies Breakfast Run	08h30
Wed 9 Feb	Wednesday Talk: Bev Jacobs - DJ	20h00
Wed 16 Feb	Midweek Meander - Wynberg Park	09h45
Wed 16 Feb	Wednesday Talk: Gareth Crossley - Crossley & Webb	20h00
Wed 23 Feb	QBM & Wednesday Waffle - Informal Drinks	20h00
Sun 27 Feb	Natter at Timour Hall - Motorcycles	10h00

Note: Clubhouse will be open for all Wednesday night events with Covid protocols in place. Events may be accessed online as well.

forget as I had a bird's eye view of everything that was happening inside and outside of the pits.

I had, by this time, bought a DV6s series 1 Aston Martin with Vantage engine and manual transmission. Being a member of the Aston Martin owner's club and doing a lot of marshalling for them, I was invited to join the race committee and helped to organise the intermark challenge races between Aston Martin, Jaguar, Porsche, AC and Ferrari at Silverstone, Brands Hatch, Snetterton, Oulton Park, Thruxton, Donnington, as well as various hill climbs.

The XK Register of the Jaguar's drivers club was flourishing, and I got to know some of the drivers

including John Quick, John Harper, Simon Phillips, David Preece, John Pearson and several others. On the occasions when I marshalled for the Bugattis owners club for their hill climbs, at Prescott, I was able to meet other drivers such as Hamish Moffatt and Rivers Fletcher who were regular competitors.

During my 75 years of motoring, I have also been lucky to own and drive very many cars including my very lovely Derby Bentley 1935 3,5l DHC and Mark 6 Bentley 4,25l which I entered for the Daily Telegraph all comers race at Silverstone for classic cars, together with my Mark 7 Jaguar and MG Magnette and I was able to finish the 7-lap race.

I have also been the proud owner of a Rolls Cloud 1, which was part exchanged with a 1933 Hooper bodied 2025 Rolls, a 1929 Lagonda 16-80, Alvis 1964 series 1 TD21 Park Ward drophead coupe, Jaguars Mark 2 2,5l, 3,5l, 3,8l Coombes special competition model, MGs of various ages and models, the first being a 1933 J2, the last being a MG magnet, 3 Alpha Romeos 16 GT Juniors and a 2l Spider.

