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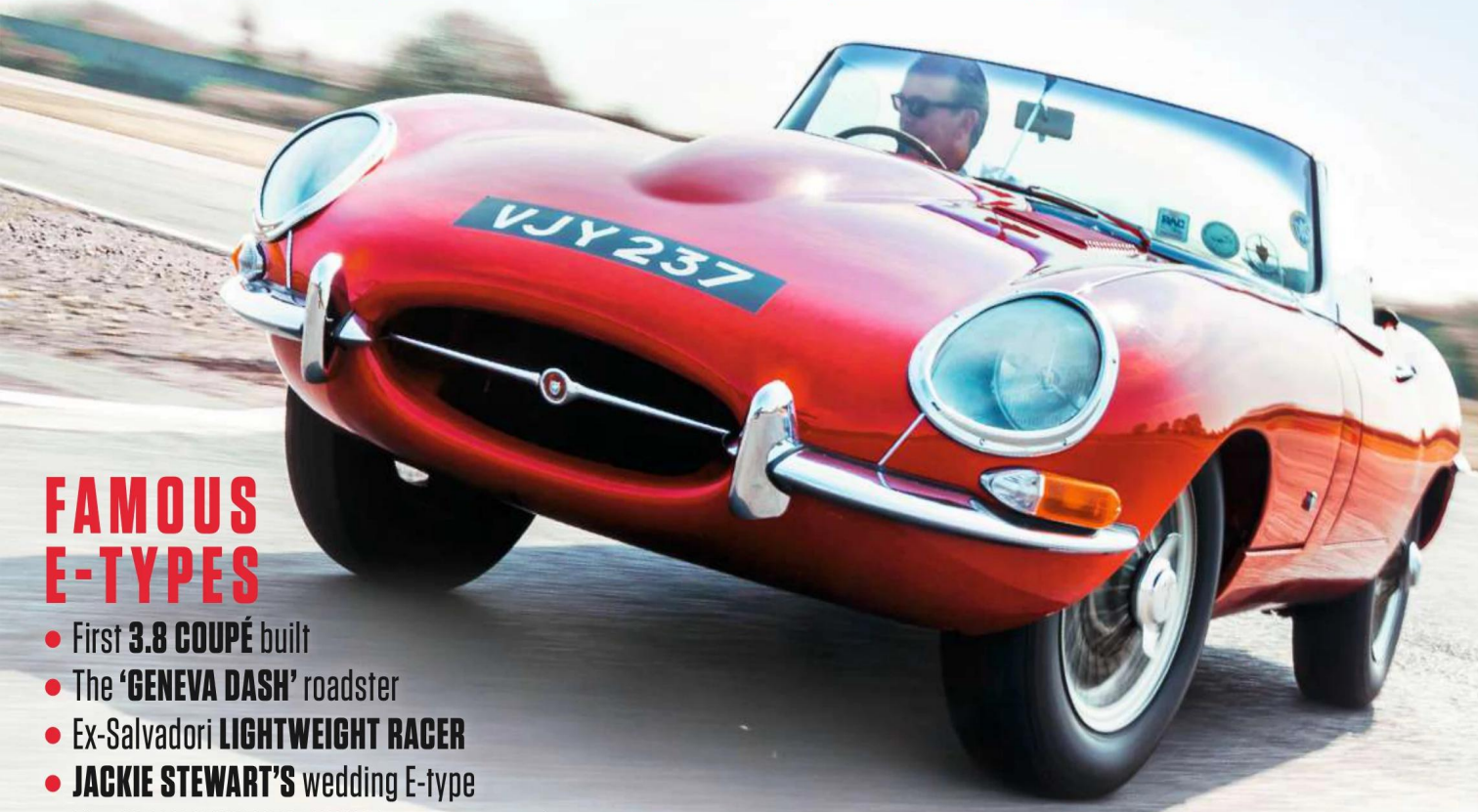

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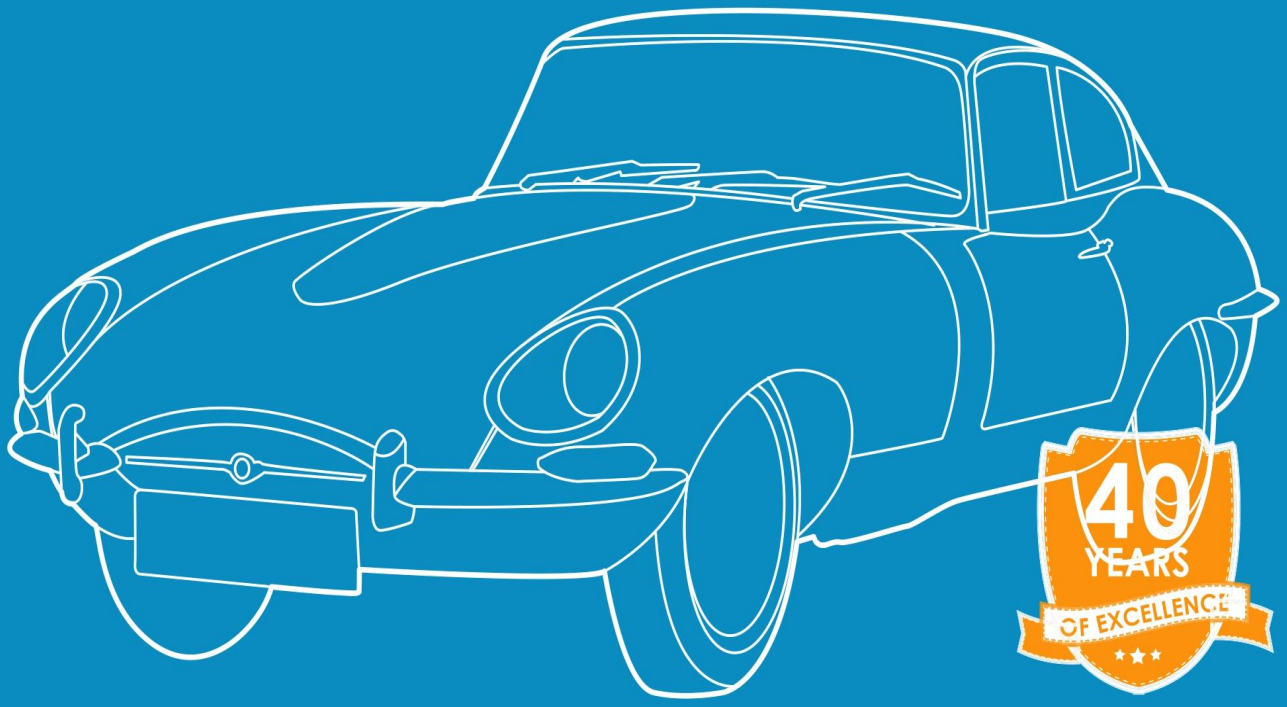

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Welcome

Compiling this greatest hits of Jaguar E-type features from the the *Classic Cars* magazine back catalogue has been a blast

As you can imagine, I've driven a huge variety of cars in the line of duty, and I've enjoyed pretty much all of them in different ways. But when I was ready for a change of car seven years ago there was only one choice to blow my life savings on – a Jaguar E-type Series 1 fixed head coupé. Its combination of breathtaking looks, heart-pumping performance and brain-tickling mechanical design had me hopelessly under its spell. Countless road trips, events – and yes, hours spent in the garage – later, I'm still besotted.

There really is nothing quite like this very British icon, created by a company and a country at the height of its pomp. Its powers of seduction had stars of film, sport and music begging Jaguar boss Sir William Lyons for the chance to jump the queue of eager buyers. And 55 years later the E-type effect is undiminished – I can barely stop for petrol without someone paying the car a compliment, sharing their own E-type anecdote or, if they're under a certain age, bounding over to ask if they can take a photograph with their phone camera.

Classic Cars magazine has featured countless E-types in its 43-year history, from the earliest surviving development car to the rare aluminium Lightweight racers, and we've covered some fascinating stories including trans-European adventures, a twin test with an ex-Le Mans D-type race car, the remarkable life story of a Series 2 in the words and pictures of each owner, restorations, celebrity owners, great discoveries and more. It was all just sitting there, deep in our archive, gathering dust like a long-forgotten classic in a darkened barn.

Dragging open those old filing cabinet drawers and rediscovering our best E-type stories has been huge fun, and bringing our favourites back to life to create this compilation feels like the completion of a restoration project. I hope that you enjoy reading this book as much as we've enjoyed putting it together, but I must add that it comes with a health warning – these beguiling cars can prove highly addictive.

Phil Bell, editor

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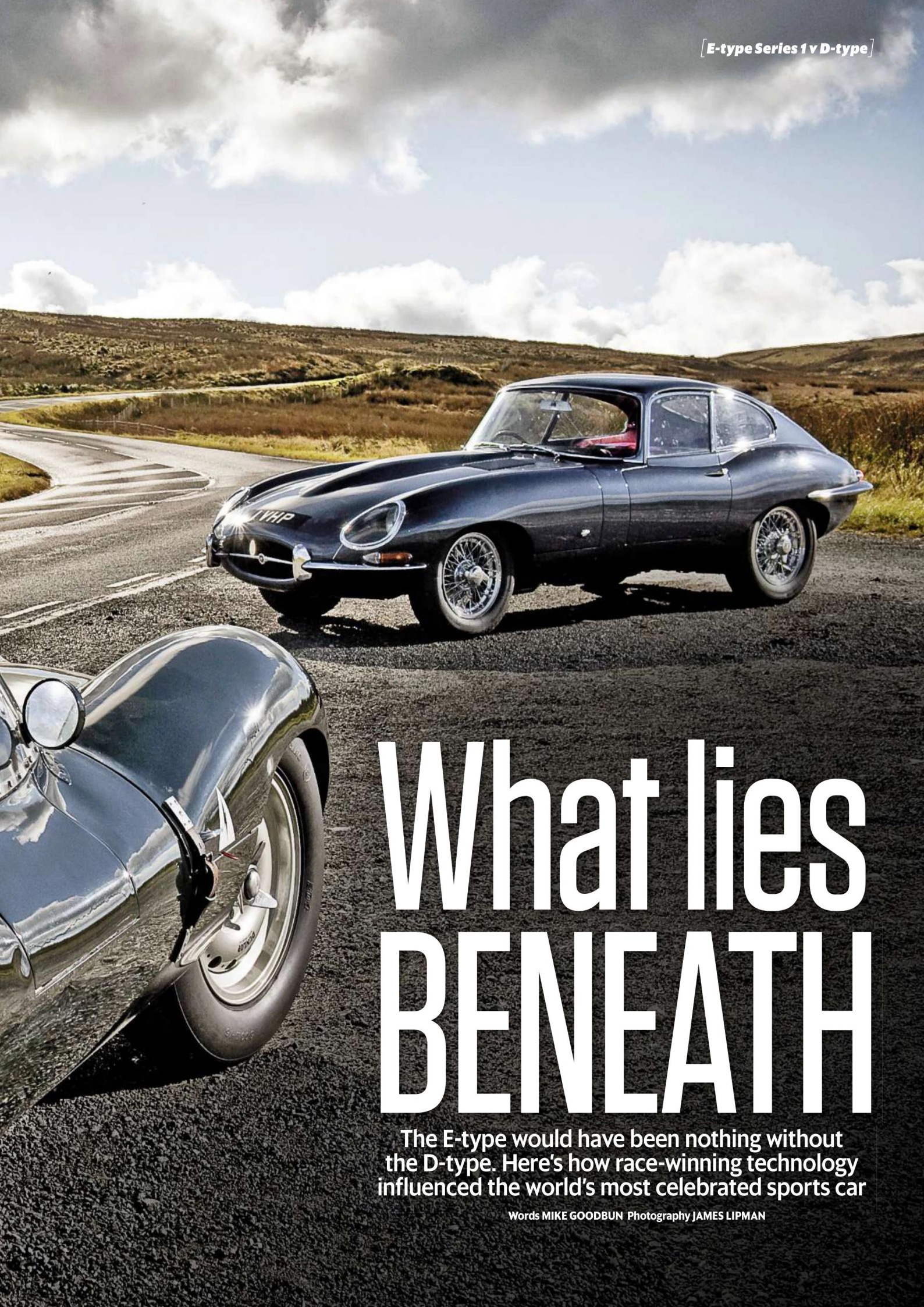


What lies BENEATH

The E-type would have been nothing without the D-type. Here's how race-winning technology influenced the world's most celebrated sports car

Words MIKE GOODBUN Photography JAMES LIPMAN

Rear bodywork comprises fuel tank, spare wheel and tail fin

D-types flowing rear lines evident in roadgoing E-type

Family likeness is unmistakable, not least around the trademark 'leaping cat' rear haunches

It could have been so different. Had Jaguar not spent a decade chasing glory in the world's toughest races, there's no way the E-type would have lived up to its 'most advanced sports car in the world' fanfare. Instead of Jaguar revealing a daring aerodynamically-shaped projectile at the Geneva show in March 1961, the XK150's successor would undoubtedly have been more conventional and distinguishable from precisely none of its rivals. And we certainly wouldn't be here today, almost 50 years on, staring dumbfounded at the icons before us. Look closer and you'll find that the D-type and E-type are fascinatingly similar in detail too.

Our subjects are two of the most historic chassis you'll find – OKV 1, the first works racing D-type, chassis number XKC 402; and 1 VHP, the first right-hand drive production E-type coupé, chassis number 860001. Both are owned by Classic Motor Cars (CMC) director Peter Neumark, whose team of Jaguar specialists in Shropshire meticulously restored them in 2001.

The Opalescent Dark Blue E-type was completed on July 10, 1961 but not supplied to Henlys in London until August 28 – Jaguar drip-fed the first cars to eager owners, prioritising big names who would attract publicity. As a demonstration vehicle for the Piccadilly dealership this car must have hosted some famous names in its red hide bucket seats.

The £2196 E-type (£2097 in Open Two Seater form) could sell on looks alone, but Jaguar knew the serious motorist would insist on engineering pedigree too. So for the man who buttered his toast with valve-grinding paste and took his coffee with a shot of 20W-50, the firm didn't hold back on talking up the car's motor sport breeding in its launch advertising. 'No more famous background can be found anywhere than that which lies behind the Jaguar "E" Type G.T. (Grand Touring) Models. Developed from the famous "C" Type and "D" Type Sports Racing Cars with their illustrious records of successes on the race tracks of the world, the "E" Type G.T. models are presented as elegant and luxuriously appointed road vehicles having an outstanding road performance and incorporating very many features derived from the vast store of experience gained in international competitive events.' D-types were built to win the Le Mans 24-hours and did so three years running from 1955-57, also notching up scores of victories elsewhere. But how similar is an 'E' to a 'D' in reality?

Even comparing the E-type in coupé form to the open, tail-finned, short-nose D-type, the family resemblance is unmistakable. The proportions, the haunches, the way the bonnet and door shut lines are resolved, the open grille mouth, all translate from one car to the other.

You can trace the E-type's styling origins right back to 1953 and a magnesium alloy-bodied prototype that bridges the C-type and D-type racers called the XK120C MkII – often referred to as the 'light alloy car'. Inspired by Alfa Romeo's Touring-bodied 1900 Disco Volantes, Malcolm Sayer effectively took the perpendicular lower halves of the C-type body and wrapped them beneath the car, creating elliptical wing shapes. He massaged the upper surfaces to suit, with more enveloping wheelarches, and replaced the upright koala-nosed radiator grille with a horizontal elliptical opening. The body also incorporated monocoque production techniques in place of the C-type's spaceframe design.

‘I relax and try not to think about the accelerator attached to someone else’s £4.5 million car’

What’s so remarkable is that the E-type was years away from conception, let alone production at this stage and neither the ‘light alloy car’ nor the D-type was explicitly designed as a forerunner for the car, yet the resulting body shape barely differed from them – there was an inevitability about its look, hurried along by the natural momentum of Jaguar engineering development. It was born, not designed.

Aerodynamicist Sayer used mathematics and a mechanical calculator to determine the E-type’s shape and plotted every body contour in full on a sheet of paper – techniques gleaned from a German in an Iraqi tent.

The 1954-57 D-type’s styling refined that of the experimental car and the run-out XKSS introduced details such as a full windscreen and bumpers that would feature on the E-type. The ‘D’ and XKSS cemented the template that would ultimately shape the ‘E’, but two development models played crucial roles in the transition from race to road.

E1A was the first all-aluminium-bodied E-type prototype, built in 1957, and its unadorned first-effort form is remarkably close to the production

Genesis of the E-type

1953 XK120C MkII Experimental 3.4-litre ‘light alloy car’ hits 178mph at Jabbeke in Belgium with Norman Dewis. Styling points to future E-type.
1954-56 D-type short-nose 250bhp 3.4-litre semi-monocoque sports racer. Works car wins 1954 Reims 12-hours. Offered for sale to privateers from 1955 – Ecurie Ecosse wins Le Mans in 1956.
1955-56 D-type long-nose Slippery bodywork for six works cars, 285bhp wide-angle cylinder head 3.4 and 3.8 engines. Le Mans winners in 1955 (works) and ‘57 (Ecurie Ecosse).
1957 XKSS Sixteen D-types converted to road specification, eligible for Sports Car Club of America races.
1957 E1A 130mph 2.4-litre aluminium bodied E-type prototype runs for the first time in May 1957.
1960 E2A Fuel-injected three-litre alloy-engined prototype built for American Briggs Cunningham. Raced at 1960 Le Mans 24-hours by Dan Gurney and Walt Hansgen.
1961-64 E-type 3.8 Production E-type coupé and roadster debut at Geneva motor show in March 1961.
1963-64 Lightweight E-type Twelve all-aluminium-bodied, 320bhp-plus fuel-injected alloy-engined roadsters built for customers. Modified bodies later include low-drag coupés.
1964-67 E-type 4.2 Torquier 4235cc engine and all-new all-synchromesh four-speed gearbox introduced.
1966-70 E-type 2+2 230mm (9in) longer wheelbase, 50mm (2in) taller coupé with rear seats offered as a more accommodating alternative to the existing two-seat 3.8 and 4.2 production models.
1968-70 E-type S2 Open-headlamp styling adopted in order to satisfy export markets features a larger grille mouth and raised bumpers with rear lights on ‘trailer board’ below.
1971-75 E-type V12 New 5343cc V12 replaces six-cylinder engine on all but a handful of Series 3s, based solely on 2+2. Roadster outlives coupé by a year.

car's – the body curvature flatter, more subtle, and less enveloping than the heavily contoured 'D'.

E2A, a 1960 Le Mans 24-hours entrant with Briggs Cunningham's team, again hinted at the E-type's general body form and donated one of the E-type's most distinctive features – the full-length bonnet bulge. Originally powered by a 3.0-litre all-alloy XK engine, E2A's bonnet was relatively flat between its shoulders, but when a 3.8-litre unit was installed for racing in America the centre section had to be cut out to clear the induction-side camshaft cover. A shapely bulge was riveted on to E2A, but became a feature of the pressing on the production car. The new addition's panel strengthening properties would not have gone amiss with engineers such as William Heynes.

With prolific clues to the E-type's shape in circulation, it's surprising it looked so other-worldly at Geneva. But although the shape should have been familiar, it was brave for a road car. This was also the year when the three-year-old Austin-Healey Sprite lost its bold 'Frogeye' look for a more conventional lamp-at-each-corner style and Triumph's newest effort was the Giovannni Michelotti-styled TR4 – pretty, but far from avant garde.

The E-type's design embraced advanced construction techniques developed on the D-type, in turn cribbed from the aero industry. Although monocoque technology wasn't new, it was more suited to high-volume saloon car product lines such as the Morris Minor (from 1948), Mini (from 1959) and Jaguar's MkI saloon (the Coventry firm's first unitary-bodied road car, launched in 1955) than a limited-run sports car. Sir William Lyons anticipated building only 1000 E-types, but 14,640 Series 1s were built over eight years.

And designing a stressed shell with a roof to hold it together is a very different discipline to designing one without. If you want your sports car to handle, and handle predictably, you need torsional rigidity, but you don't have much left if you chop the roof off.

The D-type's stressed core is a riveted and welded assembly of 18-gauge magnesium alloy panels – front and rear bulkheads define the longitudinal upper parts of the passenger compartment, bridged by a skin with central reinforcing bar and sections cut out for the occupants. Deep sills frame the tub's lower half between the wheels, connected by the floor and transmission tunnel.

Running from the back of the transmission tunnel in to the engine bay is a tubular frame carrying the engine and front suspension. This was an aluminium alloy structure welded to the body on the first six cars built in 1954 – OKV 1 is one of the few D-types surviving in this form – but to make it easier to repair, subsequent cars featured a lightweight steel frame bolted to

1954 Jaguar D-type

Engine 3442cc, in-line six-cylinder, dohc, three twin-choke sidedraught Weber 45 DCO3 carburettors, dry sump lubrication **Power and torque** 255bhp @ 6000rpm; 248lb ft @ 4500rpm **Transmission** Four-speed manual, rear-wheel drive **Steering** Rack-and-pinion **Suspension** Front: independent, wishbones, torsion bars, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar. Rear: live axle, twin trailing links, transverse torsion bar, A-brackets, telescopic dampers **Brakes** Discs front and rear, servo-assisted **Weight** 875kg (1929lb) **Performance** Top speed: 173mph (1954 Le Mans); 0-60mph: 5sec **Fuel** consumption 10-11mpg (racing) **Cost** new £na (production launch price £1895 plus taxes) **Value** now £4.5million

Enclosed E-type coupé is civilised by sports car standards but structural similarities to the racing D-type make it a snug-fitting GT


Duncan Hamilton and Tony Rolt drove this to second at Le Mans in 1954


D-type's 3442cc XK uses a modified XK140 cylinder block with a C-type cylinder head

'The E-type's construction techniques were developed on the D-type, cribbed in turn from the aero industry'

the alloy tub. A forward opening bonnet and a tail section with spare wheel well and fuel tank complete the body.

It's the removable frame that stops the D-type (or E-type) being considered a full monocoque by anoraks like me. If the 'D' was a true monocoque there would be far fewer duplicate chassis claiming the same identities today, that's for sure.

E1A shows that Jaguar thought about aluminium construction for the E-type, and it seriously considered glassfibre too, but for cost and strength reasons the production car's body is steel. Take the hard-top off one of the 12 all-aluminium Lightweight E-type racers built in 1963-64 and you can almost see it banana.

As with production D-types, the E-type's steel frame is bolted to the body, but it stops at the front bulkhead. It looks identical but is different in every dimension and assembled in three parts rather than one – again to aid repair. Jaguar racing specialist Chris Keith-Lucas explains why it's such an elegant solution on both cars. 'It's exactly how you'd fit an engine into an aeroplane wing. The intelligent thing about it is you can hang the engine off the same assembly as the suspension so you don't need two huge steel rails. You lighten the structure no end.'

The E-type roadster officially weighed in at 1118kg (the coupé at 1143kg), only 20 per cent more than the stripped-for-action 875kg D-type. That's extremely impressive considering the difference in accommodation levels between the two.

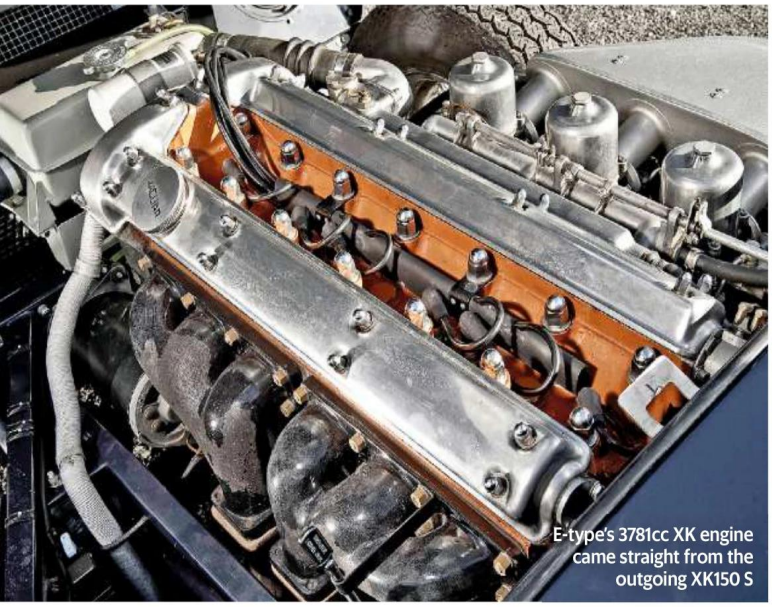
To pop the flyweight door of the D-type open I reach inside and fumble for the catch, stick my finger in and pull the pin as if arming a hand grenade. As I step over the half-height sill, trying not to lean on the fragile bodywork, the door is so light that it flaps against my flailing limbs before snapping shut.

Once in, I sit low, feeling secure behind the wraparound wind deflector with the peaks of the front wings and bonnet bulge dominating the view ahead. With my back resting against the thinly padded rear bulkhead, the big wood-rimmed three-spoke steering wheel is a full arm's stretch away, Stirling Moss style, and there's generous leg room in the bare alloy-panelled footwell. It's sparse and functional yet surprisingly comfortable.

The E-type's sills may be lower and the heavier steel doors happier to stay ajar once I've pressed the button and pulled on the conventional chromed handle, but there's still a similar knack to threading myself inside without scuffing every trim panel in sight.

That drilled three-spoke wood-rimmed wheel with chequered Jaguar logo at its centre is one of the classic car world's most evocative pieces. It diverts my attention from a functional interior that's nowhere near as bold as the exterior, even with the bejewelling effect of the aluminium

Bucket seats and aluminium console unique to 3.8 E-types



E-type's 3781cc XK engine came straight from the outgoing XK150 S

console trim. Although the wheel is adjustable for reach it sits closer to my chest than the D-type's, and there's much less space around it for my thighs. There's also less room in the footwell, an issue with flat-floor cars built before June 1962.

Before clicking these two cars' keys and thumbing the starter buttons, I think about what lies beneath their beautiful louvred bonnets. Dominating the engine rooms are variants of the legendary iron block/alloy cylinder head twin-cam XK powerplant that debuted in the 1948 XK120. The D-type's 3442cc unit is based on a production XK140 cylinder block, crankshaft and connecting rods but sports dry-sump lubrication, three twin-choke Weber 45 DCO3 carburettors and a big-valve version of the C-type cylinder head giving more than 250bhp at 6000rpm. It's mated to Jaguar's first all-synchromesh four-speed gearbox by a triple-plate clutch and has no need for a flywheel.

Firing up the D-type is disarmingly straightforward once warm, with just a ching from the starter motor before the XK catches and settles straight into a busy idle. First gear engages with the lever near horizontal, its shift action meaty and short-throw; the clutch won't tolerate being slipped, but first gear is tall so I have to choose between nibbling away at forward motion until I'm able to let the pedal up fully, or summon thousands of revs and slither away in a shriek of noise from the twin side-exit pipes and Dunlop racing tyres.

With huge carburettors and aggressive camshaft profiles it doesn't like motoring sub-3000rpm, popping, crackling and hesitant to accelerate when cold. But warmed-up it screams to the redline, pulling ferociously as an intense blare rips through the air.

The four-speed gearbox always shifts faithfully, although its synchros aren't infallible and it responds best to blips of throttle to ease the transition from one ratio to another without any unpleasant graunching. I'm more than happy to oblige.

By contrast the E-type carried over the straight-port 3781cc engine from the 1959-60 XK150 S, with three 2in SU HD8 carburettors, a wet-sump oil system and a claimed 265bhp at 5500rpm, mated to the XK150's ageing three-synchro, four-speed Moss gearbox.

Whereas the D-type's engine is almost solidly mounted in five places, the E-type only has three main engine mounts plus a short stabiliser bar. The freedom of movement is meant to add refinement, but makes the E-type feel looser than the 'D'.

Its XK purrs rather than snarls into life, revs sweetly and is happy to pull cleanly from as few revs as I choose, but my rate of acceleration (startling for the time) is limited mostly by the closeness of my relationship with the Moss

'First gear engages, then I slither away in a shriek of noise from the twin side-exit exhausts and Dunlop racing tyres'

Bob Blake mocked up the E-type's coupé shape in the Competitions Department. Malcolm Sayer refined it for production

'box. This car's is exceptionally slick and honey-like, but even that won't be rushed. I find I must be patient and deliberate if I want the synchros to do their job properly. The all-synchromesh unit of 1964-70 cars is unanimously favoured.

Both cars' engines are straddled by near-identical suspension set-ups with unequal-length double wishbones, torsion bars and telescopic dampers – all of which are direct evolutions of the C-type's. They're so similar that unwitting D-type restorers have occasionally tried to fit E-type parts; but even if their front track widths are both 1270mm (4ft 2in), the D-type's rear track is 50mm (2in) narrower than the front. The back is where you'll find fewest similarities – the E-type's wheelbase is 150mm (6in) longer than the D-type's at 2438mm (8ft), and their rear suspensions are completely different.

The D-type's live axle was as old-hat as the E-type's independent set-up was modern and innovative even when new. Comprising a transverse torsion bar, telescopic dampers, upper and lower spring steel trailing links per side and two A brackets for axle location, it's a surprisingly heavy assembly. Outboard brake discs contribute undesirable unsprung weight too. Keith-Lucas says, 'The D-type has a tendency to jump around on anything other than smooth surfaces and that's why Listers with de Dion axles and inboard brakes ran rings around them.'

1961 Jaguar E-type S1 3.8 coupé

Engine 3781cc, in-line six-cylinder, dohc, three sidedraught SU HD8 carburettors **Power and torque** 265bhp @ 5500rpm; 260lb ft @ 4000rpm **Transmission** Four-speed manual, rear-wheel drive **Steering** Rack and pinion **Suspension** Front: independent, wishbones, torsion bars, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar. Rear: independent, fixed half-shafts, lower links, radius arms, twin coil-over telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar **Brakes** Discs front and rear **Weight** 1143kg (2520lb) **Performance** Top speed: 152mph; 0-60mph: 7.2sec **Fuel consumption** 20mpg Cost new £2196 **Value now** £250,000 (owner's estimate)

He's right. The stiffly sprung 'D' fidgets about near-constantly on these sinuous lanes, darting from crest to ditch, but the more I try to wrestle it with the quick rack-and-pinion steering, the more unruly it feels. Better to relax, and try not to think about the accelerator linkage attached to someone else's £4.5million car. With time, familiarity brings trust. Guiding, not fighting, is the answer.

It was E2A, the D-type/E-type development hybrid, that put Jaguar's thoughts on independent rear suspension fully to the test. No Jaguar had it before 1961, but the E-type's – which was actually developed for the MkX saloon that was launched later the same year – would underpin models including the XJ into the mid-Nineties.

Colin Chapman-style lateral thinking saw fixed-length driveshafts doubling as upper links on E2A, with aluminium uprights connected to X-shaped box-section steel lower wishbones, while twin coil-over-damper units tied the whole assembly to the body. A major advancement, for racing at least, was inboard disc brakes – not only was unsprung weight reduced, but pads could be changed through a hole in the boot. They tended to get rather hot though, and heat up the differential, necessitating ducts above and below the surface of E2A to direct air over them.

The box-section wishbones were replaced with a tubular design located by radius arms

First E-type coupé and first works D-type share much, including current owner

for the 'E', with the whole assembly in a rubber-mounted cradle. Why? If you want to change the differential ratio in E2A everything has to come apart, so the E-type's removable cradle makes such jobs simpler. It's a quieter setup too, if at the expense of dynamic sharpness.

It makes a huge difference on the road, with superior traction, wheel control and ride comfort to a live-axle XK. It's softly sprung, with a gentle understeering bent that rewards well-mannered driving and still stands up to scrutiny today, but it's not a car that immediately gives the driver confidence to press on hard, and nor will it take kindly to sudden mid-corner trajectory realignment.

'The E-type rewards well-mannered driving but doesn't take kindly to sudden mid-corner trajectory realignment'

Both cars sport four-wheel Dunlop disc brakes, but the D-type's are as complex as the E-type's are simple. Developed jointly by Jaguar, Dunlop and Girling for the 1953 C-type, the D-type's alloy calipers incorporate six pads per front wheel and four per rear wheel, each with its own hydraulic piston. The front and rear systems are hydraulically independent, with servo assistance for both ends coming from a gearbox-driven Plessey pump. The faster you drive, the stronger the available braking power – until you lock the rear wheels. On production D-types you'd always have some assistance even without the pump's help, but on works cars a modification meant all braking ability disappeared should it fail or if you locked up. That scary thought focuses my mind, but they are magnificent in use – powerful with a pleasingly firm pedal to stand on.

The E-type's small two-pistons-per-wheel set-up, shared with saloons such as the Mk2, feels woefully inadequate by contrast. Pedal travel is long, and then the braking power feels just about strong enough, but there's little more in reserve and they're highly sensitive to road conditions. Of course, they're easily uprated, so it's little surprise that many owners do just that.

The E-type evolved with every passing month and year, its criticisms were addressed at each stage in its development and its legend grew stronger. The D-type's race-bred influences genuinely run through it – you can still see, touch and sense them even today – but Jaguar rightly stopped short of trying to make the 'E' its roadgoing equivalent. A harder, tougher, E-type might ultimately have been more thrilling, but it wouldn't have sold so well.

Sir William Lyons' 1000 became 72,520 – we need say no more.

Thanks to: *Peter Neumark and Alastair Duncan, Classic Motor Cars (01746 765804, classic-motor-cars.co.uk); Chris Keith-Lucas, CKL Developments (01424 838250, ckldevelopments.co.uk)*

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FULL BLAST

Forty years after Jaguar test engineer Norman Dewis made his legendary trans-Europe dash to the E-type's launch at the 1961 Geneva show, *Classic Cars* repeated the drive in the same car

Words PAUL WALTON Photos GUS GREGORY


77 RW

'Norman caught the 10pm ferry before setting off at full blast into the French countryside'

Speeding across France's great plains

In good company on board the cross-Channel ferry

The farming plains of northern France – wide, empty, desolate. Looking either to the left or the right doesn't release any information as to where I am and only an occasional sick-looking tree breaks the never-ending green grass and burnt brown soil of this rich and fertile land. Like the sky above, the roads that cross this bleak landscape seem to stretch to eternity and boredom can set in easily, especially when peering into a dark that's illuminated only by a pair of feeble headlamps. Modern cars with their radios, CD players and satellite navigation can give a little comfort, but I have none of this. I'm in a 40 year-old Jaguar E-type with one of the most famous registration numbers in the model's history, so what I get instead is just the constant steady roar of its beautifully restored six-cylinder engine for company. Forty years ago this very car, a British Racing Green example used for the E-type's development, completed a similar journey. Driven by Jaguar's chief test engineer, Norman Dewis, it had to get to the 1961 Geneva Motor Show as fast as possible, and that didn't leave any room for stopping. So while I know I have a hotel room to look forward to, Norman didn't. After passing the plains, he would drive on through the night, eventually reaching Geneva where the car, registered 77 RW, would impress the crowds with its performance. Put quite simply, the E-type legend started right here. With this famous car now restored after years of neglect, and it being 40 years exactly since his amazing journey, we do our own midnight run, trying to recreate Norman's adventure.

I rap on Norman's Shropshire home door and wait a moment. Seconds later, it opens and the door is opened by a man who I know is in his early eighties but looks two decades younger. 'Oh, hullo,' he says, his eyes as bright as the last time we met. 'It's you. Come on in.' I walk into his house, carefully lowering my head as I pass through the low door, knowing I'm going to hit it on the way out. And I was right.

'So you want to know about 77 RW and my trip down to Geneva?' he asks, regarding our phone conversation earlier in the week. I nod, looking for any references to his former role in his living room. There is none. 'Yeah, it was quite a trip, quite a trip.' And he's right. The Jaguar E-type had to be good. The preceding XK family had been a beautiful series of cars, favourites with movie stars and racing drivers alike and they made the company a major force in sports cars all over the world. However, the XK150 was old-fashioned by the end of the Fifties and Jaguar's boss, William Lyons, was clever enough to know a new model was needed, even pulling out of racing (where the company had been so successful) to concentrate on a replacement. In 1957 Jaguar designer Malcolm Sayer created a small two-seater sports car that was heavily influenced by the fabulous D-type, the four-times Le Mans winner. Called E1A it was built and tested to get the shape right for the new model and develop the independent rear suspension that the E-type eventually used. Although it was much smaller than the production car, it was undoubtedly an E-type with the long tapered rump and oval mouth. Jaguar's experimental department built a car with the definitive E-type shape in 1959. It was the first of many prototypes heavily tested by Norman Dewis, Jaguar's chief test engineer. Each one was literally driven to destruction. Jaguar's production department at Browns Lane finished an E-type on February 24 1961 to the kind of standards it would have to reach when it finally entered production. This, the second car built (the first was destroyed after miles and miles of the harsh concrete motorway – or *pavé* – testing in Belgium) had the third chassis (number 850003) and the fourth convertible body. Painted in British Racing Green with a Suede Green interior, it was soon given to Norman Dewis and driven hard around the MIRA testing ground for brake development and at some point registered in Coventry. Like all of Jaguar's fleet, it was given an easily memorable registration that would become synonymous with the early Jaguar E-type legend – 77 RW. The leading two motoring magazines in the UK (*Autocar* and *Motor*) were each given an example at the beginning of March 1961 to ensure extra coverage before its launch, set for March 15 1961. *Motor*'s testers were keen to see whether it would reach the company's claims of 150mph on Friday March 3, so they took the car to the long, straight autostradas of Italy. It was there that *Motor*'s writer, George Bulmer, bumped into Ferrari driver Ritchie Ginther in Modena. Unable to refuse this great driver, he let Ginther drive 77 RW and the little Californian came back impressed. Crucially, Bulmer managed to reach the magic 150mph mark and 77 RW returned to Jaguar a week later in preparation for more brake testing – it wasn't part of Jaguar's launch plans. On Tuesday, March 14, Jaguar's public relations manager Bob Berry drove a gunmetal grey fixed head coupé (registered 9600 HP) down to Geneva in preparation for the launch. Another engineless car would be on the show stand while 9600 HP gave rides to the public to show the car's performance. However, things weren't that simple.

I ask Norman when he first heard about the problems in Geneva. He leans back in his chair and thinks back 40 years. He talks as if he were still there, as if he could still see the people involved. 'On the Friday (the show opened on the Thursday) Bob Berry phoned Bill Heynes (Jaguar's vice president for engineering) and said that there was so such demand for demonstrations that there was already a list of 200 names and he couldn't cope. Bob asked Heynes "Can we have 77 RW and Norman come out?" I was at MIRA at the time – Frank Doyle the track manager came out onto the track and waved me to stop. He said, "Heynes has been on the phone – can you get back to the factory, they need you there."' He takes another sip from a cup of tea and continues, 'I went back to see Heynes and asked what the problem was. He said I had to get 77 RW out to Geneva as quick as I could and help Bob. All my testing gauges were in but he just said, "ask the fitters to strip it". So that's what we did.'

With more than 500 miles to cover, Norman collected a few things from home and drove directly to Dover, through the middle of pre-M25 London, to catch the 10pm ferry, before setting off at full blast into the French countryside. Through Calais, past Reims, past Dijon, turning right just before Lyon before heading

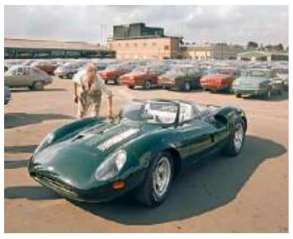
NORMAN DEWIS – JAGUAR'S LAST ACTION HERO

Norman Dewis was Jaguar's experimental chief test driver and developed every Jaguar model from the MkVII to the XJ6, from the D-type to, of course, the E-type. He joined the company in January 1952 from Lea Francis after a request by Bill Heynes, Jaguar's vice-chairman for engineering. The first thing Heynes asked of Norman was for an honest opinion of the C-type. 'I said it was bloody awful,' says Norman. 'The oversteer was bad – you only had to sneeze for the back end to step out.' Much of the work that resulted in the D-type was done with a C/D hybrid which Norman used to reach 179mph in 1953 at Jabbeke.

Norman turned his attention to the E-type after Jaguar stopped racing. Norman had two cars for development by early 1961 – 77 RW and 9600 HP. With the Geneva show not far away, Heynes said he needed the two cars to be given to magazine journalists to test, despite Norman's protests that they were in the middle of brake testing. Norman feels the resulting report on 77 RW was too harsh. 'When George Bulmer did the maximum speed of 150mph, he criticised the brakes. He should have said the car was still on brake development.'

Norman was once almost tempted to go to Ferrari as test engineer. However, after talking with his wife, he turned the offer down. 'Sometimes I wonder how I would have shaped up,' he says. 'For a while I thought I should have gone, but there's no use looking back.'

After 50 years connected to Jaguar, he wouldn't have it any other way.



over the Alps, crossing the border and eventually reaching Geneva at ten next morning. He did it in one swoop without stopping, except to fill up or give his legs a rest from the confined cockpit of the car. When he eventually reached Geneva, 77 RW was once again in demand by the press because there wasn't an open top version at the show. The car soon joined 9600 HP on a small test circuit to the south of Lake Geneva. It was a closed road made up of a hillclimb and a couple of straights – ideal to show the car's performance both in acceleration and braking. 77 RW was, without doubt, the sensation of the show. Not only was the E-type a beautiful svelte sports car, but it had the performance to match; performance Norman (driving 77 RW) and Bob Berry (using 9600 HP) used to their full advantage.

As he talks about the test circuit, he begins to smile, especially when I ask about the duel between the Jaguar drivers and the other manufacturers there. 'I don't know who started it,' he tells me, the passage of 40 years failing to diminish the excitement of those heady days blasting round the track in this great car. 'But unbeknown to Bob and me some bright clown decided to get a stopwatch. He came over (I think he was a Swiss bloke) and said, "Le Jaguar is very queeck – you are the queeckest up the hill." The Mercedes drivers heard about it, as did Ferrari, and they all tried to go quicker all day, every day. But the Jags were always the fastest.

'The problem was,' he chuckles, 'these guys were coming out for a demonstration ride but we forgot they were there. We'd do a rear-wheel spin at the start, then go as quick as we could up the hill, over the top then down the other side. Some of these poor devils had never been in a sports car; their knuckles were white and their toes were back, right back out of fright, especially when we went past the braking point of the Mercedes drivers with their drum brakes. I could see them thinking, "The car isn't going to make it," then I'd bang the brakes on. Nobody could believe the car could stop so quickly then accelerate so fast. I said to Bob, "We're not being fair to them – I wouldn't want to sit in the car with us doing this" and Bob replied, "Yes I know, neither would I."'

'The E-type was beautiful but had the performance to match'

The two cars went round and round, up and down, over and over again for ten days. Yet they never broke down or gave any problems, and at the end of the show with their work done, they returned to Coventry under their own steam. Dewis wrote a long report on the two cars' condition after such an exhausting ten days – it was the final information needed in readying the E-type for production.

But that wasn't the end of 77 RW's work – after the excitement of Geneva it was back to MIRA for both car and Dewis. Although the E-type was officially launched, there were always more developments to be made and April found the two of them in tests to improve the heater. The car stayed with Jaguar for another few months, both as a press car and test hack, before being sold in 1962. It was always presumed to have been crushed, yet 77 RW survived, albeit in a neglected form.

With the 40th anniversary of the E-type's launch and Norman's trip coming up in 2001 the car was restored and plans made to recreate his trip. Would it be as easy 40 years on, or would there be several modern day problems along the way? There was only one way to find out.

Our journey to Geneva starts at MIRA on a bright March morning. Used by companies to test new cars, it offers complete secrecy from the outside world, but it's just a collection of tracks and roads. It was here that Norman Dewis pounded round and round in a series of early E-types, including 77 RW, so it's fitting that the car should be shown here for the first time after its six-month restoration and that this was to be the start of our 600-mile journey to Geneva.

I'm taken onto MIRA's banked circuit by one of Jaguar's test drivers, Ivor 'The Driver' Cook. I ask him whether the track had changed much since Norman's day. 'No, not at all,' he replies, accelerating through the gears, 'it's still the same, except there wasn't Armco to keep you from flying off the banking. There were just wooden posts and rope.' As he talks, we hit the banking and without warning, the car is at a 45 degree angle, with Ivor above me and only the sky beyond him and the black tarmac rushing closely beneath me. Quite disturbing. Yet the view is very evocative; the banked circuit curves round in front of the gorgeous curved bonnet as I peer through the narrow screen – this is what Norman saw day after day as he sped round the never-ending track. He must have felt loopy by the end.

It's time for me to get going – I've a ferry to catch. I open the driver's door – the sill is high, leaving only a small gap to gain entrance and a great deal of pushing and pulling of my legs is needed to get in. Why did I have to wear such big shoes?

Inside, it's actually very comfortable – the driving position is spot on. The large wood-rimmed wheel and pedals are the perfect distance away, as long as you're not over six foot – which would be a squeeze. The beautifully trimmed leather seats don't seem to offer much back support – we'll see what kind of state I'm in at Geneva.

The rest of the interior is very racing inspired – there are swathes of aluminium on the gearbox tunnel and middle console, and a long line of toggle switches beneath the four minor dials. It's a contrast to later series E-types which have a much more Seventies feel with big rocker switches and lots of vinyl. It is a beautiful place to be. I feel like a fighter pilot as I turn the key and hit the starter button. The engine lazily turns over, sounding – dare I say it – almost agricultural before suddenly firing and

On the mountain roads to Geneva – the newly rebuilt engine was trouble-free

Following in Norman's tyre-tracks across the River Ain just outside Geneva

Hood down as often as possible – it's not water-tight in heavy rain

77 RW – A LUCKY ESCAPE

Unusually for a pre-production car, 77 RW wasn't crushed. When it was no longer used as a press car, it was sold on and eventually bought in 1968 by antique furniture dealer Michael Killgannon. 'I did drive it a bit quick,' he admits, 'and the police often stopped me two or three times a night. Eventually late one night in 1969, I hid it in the garage and told the police I'd sold it.' It wasn't until the E-type's 30th anniversary celebrations in 1991 that Michael drove it again, 'I wanted one day to have the job done properly.'

That time came in 2000 when friend Norman Dewis convinced him it should be restored. Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust curator Tony O'Keefe and Norman went to see it. Says Tony, 'The body was rotten – it would have snapped in the middle if both ends were lifted – but the mechanical parts were saveable.'

Specialist restorer Martin Robey found all sorts of differences between this car and a production E-type and had to take over 1000 photographs to help with the reassembly. Today, 77 RW is one of the JDHT's most important cars.

Armco has replaced the old ropes and wooden posts at MIRA

Feeling right at home on MIRA's high-speed banking

settling down to a smooth, fruity rasp. This is one of those few occasions when just starting the engine turns out to be a real occasion. All classics should be like this.

Grabbing the same gear knob Norman used, I find first and head for the coast. The cruise down to Dover is uneventful and I am soon driving onto one of P&O's ferries. As I squeeze out, a large bus lumbers up behind, all air suspension and hydraulic wheezes. Once it stops, its cargo of 50 passengers wanders past 77 RW and stops to admire this great-looking car, whether they are 50 and could remember E-types when new, or teenagers. This E-type effect happens over and over again on our trip.

After a gentle two-hour cruise we sail into the port of Calais. In 1961 I would have shown my passport, but in the Euro-friendly 20th century I just cruise straight through customs seeing nobody. I head down the sliproad of the A26 towards my first stop at dusk and like most French motorways, it seems deserted. Heavy traffic on the UK's roads kept me in third, but the French national limit of 130kph (90mph) means I can, in the quietness, try to push the car a little more. I squeeze the accelerator a fraction, and the action of my right foot sends the rev-counter needle climbing round to 3500rpm before I change up to fourth to a steady speed of around 85mph. The growl grows louder and the engine effortlessly picks up speed, seemingly having as much torque as a Scania truck. The car appears steady, stable and safe at speed and I know there's more to come, but with tiredness setting in and the fact that it's a newly restored car, I back off – we still have a long way to go. At St Omer, about 30 miles south of Calais, I turn into the hotel carpark. As I climb into my extremely comfortable bed, a thought occurs – Norman would still be travelling now, still thundering through French country roads, frightening 2CV drivers as he expertly overtakes them, probably waving a little Union flag as he did so. I realise I come from a generation of softies as I pull the sheets up to my chin.

Morning finds me lowering the roof so I can hear that delicious six-cylinder engine even better. It's the original – all the way through its life as a test car, it had many engines shoved into the front but somehow it ended up with E-type engine number one. I head back onto the motorway. damaging myself for life as I twist and turn over to the passenger side of the car to pull out the toll ticket (I really don't think the handbrake should go there). As the barrier rises, I roar away using the light clutch to my advantage. The gears can be a little awkward and practice is needed to complete a clean shift – as soon as the car starts to move you need to change up to second otherwise the gearstick won't budge without clashing metal. Once mastered it's amazing to use. and although not particularly fast, is extremely smooth.

It's here that the plains of northern France begin to unfold in front of me. The A26 is a monster of a road; it goes on seemingly forever, twisting and turning its way through huge tracts of northern France and over lonely plains. I have only the occasional British lorry for company, which I toot the horn at and wave to with a suitably gloved hand. We all need friends.

The landscape is changing for hills and trees by the time we've sped to Troyes. I've covered 300 miles, and the car is still running well, with healthy oil pressure and a low water temperature. It points out just how Jaguar (as well as Martin Robey Ltd who restored the car) got it right. Norman had no recollections of the car misbehaving in any way when I spoke to him about his trip. Amazing, because it wasn't a fully productionised car, but a semi-prepared test hack. I reach hotel number two (sorry Norman) at Bourg-en-Bresse close to the French/Swiss border after a full day of driving.

After yesterday's motorway driving, today I'm following the exact route Norman took. Leaving Bourg-en-Bresse, I immediately head upwards because I will be travelling over the edge of the Alps. I am slightly worried about this part – will the car overheat, and how will I cope with the weighty steering as I bend and twist my way towards Geneva? As it turns out I have nothing worry about – the temperature needle never moves and the car is easy enough to thread around the hills. Not heavy, but I'm aware there's no power steering fitted, and muscles I didn't know I had suddenly start screaming after a few really tight hairpins. But there's great feedback as I use all that engine torque and power through the corners; get it just right, and it feels like I'm gliding round the bends.

Onwards and upwards I head, zooming through tiny sleepy villages teetering on the edges of cliffs, and charging over deserted bridges spanning terrifying drops that disappear into the early morning mist. The rain is pouring now, but the three tiny wipers do their best, unlike the roof. Water is streaming into the cockpit through gaps and I now have one very wet leg.

Eventually Switzerland is in sight and as I race up to the border control, blipping the throttle as I change down, I fumble for my passport and am waved through. And that's it – I'm in Switzerland and on the outskirts of Geneva. This is the first time since the 1961 show that the car has been here. A chill runs down my spine. Or is it just a drip? I enter the town centre and slowly make my way to the edge of the beautiful lake that dominates this city. I park in front of the Parc des Eaux-Vives, a large house and garden where the E-type was officially launched before the start of the motor show 40 years ago, and where William Lyons stood proudly next to 9600 HP. Today the park is quiet, the rain dispersing tourists; back then it was busy with journalists jostling for better views.

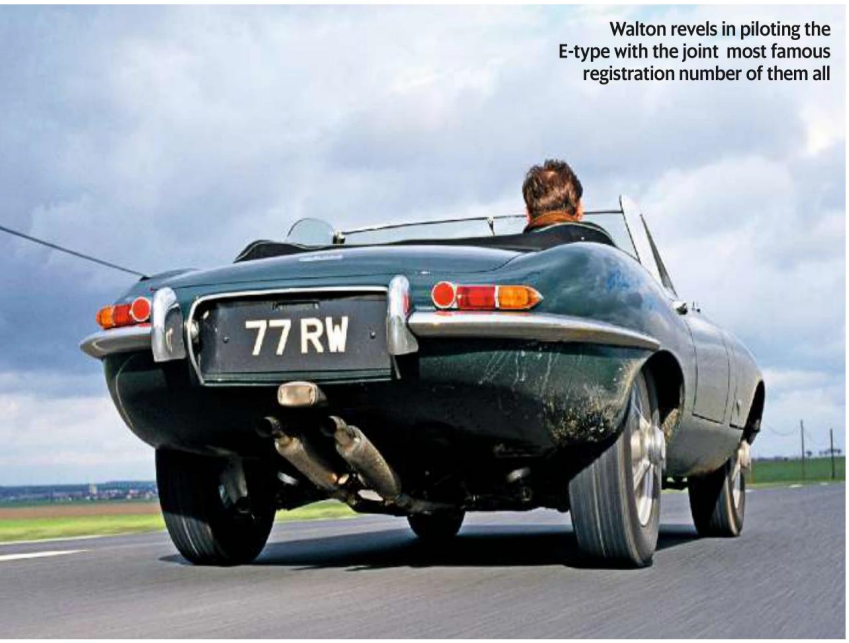
It's been a long journey, but I feel better than after a similar trip in some modern cars thanks to a mixture of the car's comfort and the adrenaline it generates. As I wander off to stretch and dry my legs, a group of tourists stop to stare at 77 RW, which is quietly cooling after its long journey. Once again this old test hack that somehow missed the crusher is the centre of attention, just as it was 40 years ago, right here in Geneva.

1961 Jaguar E-type

Engine 3781cc inline six-cylinder, triple SU HD8 carburettors **Power and torque** 265bhp @ 5500rpm; 260lb ft @ 4000rpm **Transmission** Four-speed manual, rear-wheel drive **Brakes** Dunlop discs all round **Suspension** Front: independent by transverse wishbones, torsion bars and anti-roll bar Rear: independent by lower wishbone, stressed articulated hall-shafts and trailing link with coil springs, anti roll bar **Weight** 26881b (1219kg) **Performance** Top speed: 150mph; 0-60mph: 7.1 sec **Cost new** £1480 **Values now** £67,500-£150,000

Thanks to: *Howard Davies, Tony O'Keefe, Jo Bingham, Stuart Jackand Mark Kingdon from the Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust; Martin and Craig Robey from Martin Robey Ltd (012476 386903); Michael Kilgannon and, of course, Norman Dewis.*

Journey's end at Eaux-Vives – for both Walton and Dewis



Walton revels in piloting the E-type with the joint most famous registration number of them all

Comfortable cabin's aluminium console has a whiff of D-type racer about it

Dunlop Aquajet - the right tyre for your E-type

A ground-breaking car deserves a ground-breaking tyre. Jaguar chose the rain-defying, road-hugging Dunlop SP Sport Aquajet as the original-equipment radial for its astonishing E-type. And, thanks to Vintage Tyres, you can do the same today.

Built to exacting modern standards, with advanced high-quality rubber compounds, the Aquajet performs better than ever, but retains its period good looks. Aquajet Man wishes the same could be said of him.

Available in 185VR15 and ER70VR15 (205/70VR15) sizes, the Aquajet can be fitted to steel or wire wheels, tubeless or with inner tubes and is available direct from Vintage Tyres.

Vintage Tyres also stocks a wide range of E-type tyres from brands including Avon, Vredestein and Michelin. We have everything from 640-15 crossply tyres for early E-types to super-sticky Avon CR6 ZZs for fast road and racing use.

Vintage Tyres is your E-type tyre specialist.
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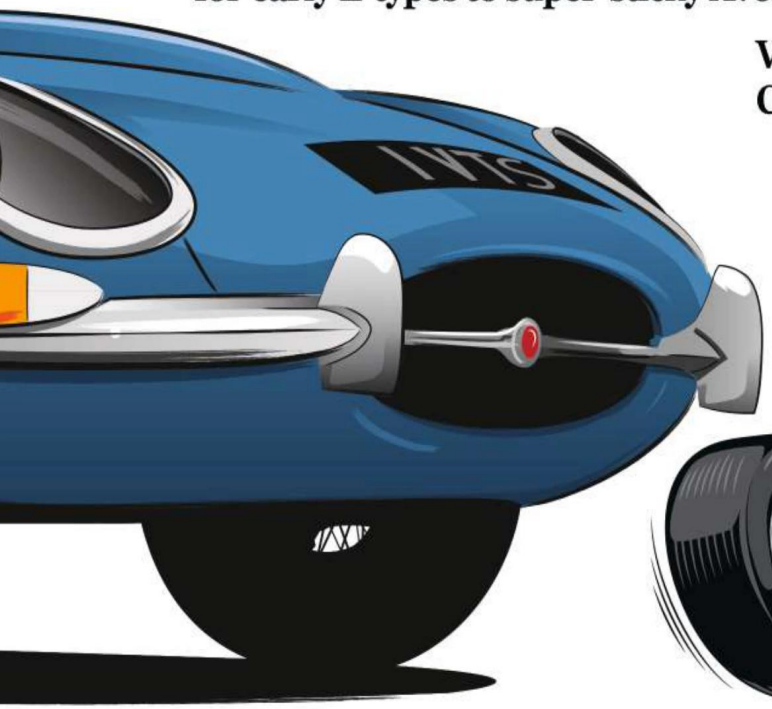

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JAGUAR 3 TYPE

The E-type market is pulling in three different directions. It's time to park preconceptions and find out whether original, restored or modified is best

Words JOHN SIMISTER Photography TIM ANDREW

Low-mileage twin-cam six has been carefully maintained

Worn but wonderful interior speaks to you from the past

1964 roadster oozes unrestored originality

I am confused. Really confused. Here are three Jaguar E-types, all of them my favourite sort (Series 1 roadster), all of them created as 3.8s. All are different, although the difference is more in what they represent than in the way they look. History weighs heavily on these cars, and it has affected them in very diverse ways.

Yet they are still proper E-types, all of them. They all have potent XK straight-sixes, sleek and capsular bodies and a brassy blare to their twin tailpipes. They all glide over bumps as an E-type should, structures free of shudders and race-car rigid. Any one of them would make its driver feel special. I genuinely love them all.

So, what's the difference? All three were practically the same when new, bar the colour, but time treats different cars in diverse ways, as later brains and hands add their efforts to those of the factory. They get modified or have the marks of time's passage expunged, or both. Different people will have different opinions on how their E-types should be – even those for whom factory-correct specifications and fittings are vital will have subtly different takes on how that should be achieved. So here, swishing through Sussex's Ashdown Forest are the following variations on a seemingly common theme.

The Golden Sand car is a 1964 example that, no doubt thanks to its life to date in hot, dry US states, has survived with no corrosion. The interior wears the trim with which it left Brown's Lane and the mechanical parts have stayed similarly wedded to the bodyshell. Only the paint has changed – it had a respray in 1971 because an early metallic stands little chance of surviving the Californian sun.

This is an original, unrestored E-type, which you could almost term a timewarp were it not so up-to-date in its health and fitness. No cobweb-strewn relic, this – it's fit, fast and raring to go.

Few E-types survive the years so unscathed. More often they are restored at some point – sometimes beautifully, sometimes badly. Many past E-type rescues have been a bit of both, with shiny paint emphasising the curves but covering much filler and bodgery as fast bucks were sought. But so high have values soared for the best E-types that nowadays the rebuilds tend to be done properly. The point here is that, despite the cost of full E-type renovation, you stand a fair chance of recouping the cost if you sell.

Our black car (XSJ 493) has had a thorough restoration. It was not done in its entirety by one restorer as a 'turnkey' project, but rather by several specialists with final, and recent, assembly by its owner, who now has it for sale at Eagle E-Types. That Eagle deems it suitable for sale in its showroom shows it must have been restored superbly, but by definition that means it's not an original car.

This 1962 car has the aluminium-covered dashboard and centre console that ran through until September 1963, the dished footwells fitted from early 1962 and the recessed rear bulkhead introduced later

‘It’s a timewarp car, but no cobweb-strewn relic – it’s fit, fast and raring to go’

that year for extra legroom. The wheels are wider with fatter tyres and the fronts cover bigger brake discs and calipers. It was originally a left-hand-drive import from the US – this made it an excellent, fairly rust-free basis for restoration.

All of which is fine, because the result is a fabulous car. But what has gone is the feeling of driving exactly what Jaguar built. Can you really tell the difference between a well-preserved original and an expertly restored example? Or is it just prejudice triggered by a car’s history?

This brings us to our third car. Eagle E-Types is well known for restoring cars to perfection and enhancing them to modern levels of performance, handling, braking and convenience. Some customers go further than others, depending on their views of what an E-type should be in the 21st century. At what point, then – if at all – does an Eagle cease to be an E-type? When does the experience lose its authenticity? And most importantly of all, does it really matter?

The Owner: Bryan Smart

Bryan owns an immaculate 1961 roadster, a flat-floor car whose driving position is wholly unsuitable for a man of Bryan’s tall stature. He’s a stickler for originality, though, and wouldn’t dream of modifying his car to a dished footwell and a scooped-out rear bulkhead. Knees a-kimbo and head in the airstream it has to stay, then.

His car, however, is a restoration rather than a time-warp. ‘It was done in the early Nineties when people were less meticulous about correctness. It didn’t have the right hoseclips, for example. What is most important to me about a restored car is that the bodyshell has to be rust-free and dimensionally correct before you do anything else. With that basis you can then get as close as you can to the original car’s feel, although I didn’t go as far as fitting crossply tyres.

‘The pleasure is in the 1961 feel. I love the Moss gearbox, the character, the precision, the first-gear whine. My E-type has astonishing refinement in its ride, the lack of noise, vibration, harshness, knocks and whines. I like to think it feels as it did in period.’

Would he prefer a completely original car to a perfectly restored one? ‘To be honest, I’d incline towards the latter, but with as many original-stock parts used as possible. With an original car you can’t protect the body properly, so in effect you can’t really use it. Mine has been etch-primed, stonechip-protected and wax-injected.’

And what of any modifications? ‘I’ve had my car fitted with Koni dampers, which take a little of the softness out of it, but they were often used in period so I think it’s acceptable. Modifying a classic car can be fine if they cry out for it, but the E-type doesn’t.’

A full-house Eagle can have fuel injection, huge wheels and lots of carbon fibre, but that could be taking things too far. Otherwise, the company has four core specifications, although specific cars might have their own variations from these. Our 1964 Dublin-registered test car, number 29, illustrates the point. It's nominally a SuperSport – below it lie the Classic, the GT and the Sport – but as well as the SuperSport's enhancements, such as an enlarged engine capacity, it has electric power steering and recirculatory air conditioning.

It takes Eagle much longer to build one of its E-types than it ever took the factory. Partly that's because of the restoration work inevitably required on the structure, partly it's because Eagle incorporates several structural reinforcements including an extra membrane inside the sills, and partly because the fit of the panels – they are sourced from Martin Robey and individually fettled as required – is extraordinarily perfect.

No factory E-type was as smooth and even in its gaps and alignment. You don't notice it at first, but then you realise why an Eagle E-type looks like an expertly re-touched photograph made real. Reflections along the flanks appear unbroken, and the whole car appears carved and smoothed from a solid billet of steel. It's amazing what a cumulative effect this attention to detail can create. Not that the factory's efforts were poor; they were generally better than many restorers manage to achieve, even if the factory fitters didn't spend a week on the bonnet alone in the way that Eagle does.

So which of these three E-types is the most appealing – original, restored to original specification, or re-interpreted for the modern age?

It's starting to rain as I reach the halfway point of my first road loop in the Golden Sand car. It has two modifications – a better electric cooling fan and Koni dampers. The brakes are standard – discs all round – and so are the wheels, with their relatively narrow Michelin XAS tyres.

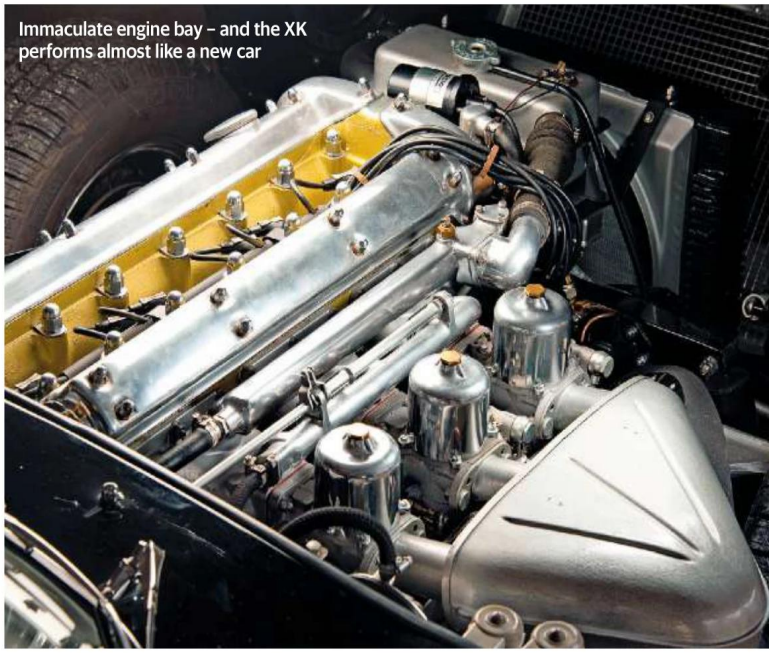
According to a story in American magazine *Sports Car International* in May 2004, this E-type was ordered in 1963 by Llewellyn Earle Romak after he'd driven his dentist's coupé version. Romak waited six months for delivery and was ready to pay the $5300 purchase price, but then he got back trouble so his friend Amato Carmignami bought it instead. Romak bought it from him in 1971, at which point the E-type got its repaint and a new hood. Later, Earle Romak's nephew, Kevin Romak, gained custody and looked after it meticulously, with a thorough engine tune and those Konis in 1988 – there are also plenty of bills from before and since.

It's been in concours events and has covered fewer than 77,000 miles. It is one of the few E-types in the world never to have been apart and many of its nuts, bolts and screws were last tightened at Brown's Lane.

Sitting in its lightly cracked but entirely respectable interior puts you in touch with another age. All the surfaces are the ones first caressed on delivery day in 1964, the switches, levers and steering wheel all installed on the factory line. That's a feeling you can't get in a restored car. They say a car is original only once, and to feel that originality is very special.

Restored 1962 E-type delivers plenty of thrust – and in a useable form

Restored car's new interior delivers showroom freshness



Immaculate engine bay – and the XK performs almost like a new car

'They say a car is original only once. To feel that originality is very special'

Trouble is, with originality can sometimes come decrepitude. When it's simultaneously important and decayed, originality can become the force that stops a car being used – at which point the car starts to die, unless that originality is sacrificed for the pleasure of being able to use a renovated car once again.

It hasn't happened here, though. This is a fully fit E-type, whose bucket seats are supportive and enveloping, whose panels fit and move as they should, whose mechanicals are in tip-top shape, and whose triple wipers, right now, are sweeping vigorously. The engine is a crisp, revvy thing – as a 3.8 should be, with a fully authentic, sharp-edged blare from the exhausts. The Moss gearbox is one of the charms of an early E-type, easy and satisfying to use when you've learned its ways and particularly musical in its unsynchronised first gear. As for the ride, it's just right on the Koni Classics – they suit an E-type very well. The narrow tyres keep the steering light at low speeds, and bar a touch of stiffness around the

The specialist: Eagle E-Types

Paul Brace, Eagle's engineering brain, is proudly showing me Eagle 29's carbonfibre cold-air duct. 'You can't force too much air into the SU carburettors,' he's saying, 'so there's a bleed-off here at the base of the air box.' It's typical of the detail development he's carried out, along with the suspension changes developed with his intuitive feel. Henry Pearman is the business side of the operation, whose E-type enthusiasm is obvious and highly infectious. 'We're doing Eagle number 32 now; we've been very busy.'

Eagle's method of creating its cars has changed a little since the first one in 1997 though, with donor cars from dry US states now forming a more economic basis because they need much less metalwork repair. Eagle already has several such cars stashed safely away awaiting their chance for a rebirth, but the bodies will still be completely stripped and strengthened before the rebuild begins, after which the build process is that of a virtually brand-new, handbuilt car, all completed as per how the customer wants it to look and feel. Original parts can be re-used if the customer so desires, such as a complete but aged and therefore patinated interior, 'We'll make an E-type into whatever the client wants.'

Despite Eagle's core business of creating updated E-types, Pearman and Brace are highly sensitive to the appeal of originality. If a car is unmolested and viable 'as is', especially if it has an interesting history, then it goes into the showroom with just whatever remedial work it needs.

Meanwhile at the other end of the spectrum, work continues apace on the build-up of a rather lovely, one-off evocation of the infamous Lightweight Lindner-Nöcker racing coupé wrecked at Montlhéry in 1964...

Overbored 4693cc XK gives 315bhp amd 362lb ft of torque

Modern stereo and bespoke high-back seats improve useability but won't please purists

straight-ahead the steering's response is precise and natural. This E-type tracks true in bends, flows beautifully and is altogether a lovely thing. I am deeply in love with this car.

See how history makes you want this car? The unbrokenness of the story, and its record of human interaction with this actual car; the knowledge of the past life this car has spent in this form. It is what it is, not a recreation of what it was. It should continue to be used and enjoyed and looked after, a process which might cause further small changes with time but won't compromise the continuity.

Drive this E-type and you're not gaining a taste of what life in a 150mph (or so) sports car was like – you're part of what this particular sports car still is like, in its full and unexpurgated form. Few of us can be so lucky as to own such an E-type though, because there are hardly any left.

So maybe we make a virtue of necessity, acquire a nicely-restored one, and make up for the lack of an unbroken link with the past by making sure it's as good as an E-type can be?

During the restoration it's very tempting to make small changes – wider wheels, bigger brakes, better cooling. Why not? The latter two address what are perceived as weak points, and they make you more confident in your car and so more likely to use it.

Our black 1962 example is like this, as described earlier. It has some minor maladjustments of latches, but Eagle will sort these and any other imperfections before sale. This is a restoration, a beautiful restoration, which hasn't had a chance to settle down and bed in since completion. Eagle will finish the job, making it 'Eagle Endorsed' and close to perfect.

As it is, however, it shows how a well-restored car can feel and how it differs from an original. The light blue interior might not be to everyone's taste but it looks a beautiful re-trim. The view under the bonnet is equally lovely. It's hard to imagine how any E-type could be more pristine. All signs of age have been expunged – it looks like a new car.

Does it drive like one? Almost, but not quite – and the way this particular car has been restored is the reason why. Nor does it drive quite like the original car just sampled. It's something else again.

Lap two of the impromptu Ashdown Forest circuit reveals a very fruity-sounding exhaust system, a loud bwaaaaap the dominant voice up to 3500rpm, after which the resonance calms down. It's a racy note but not quite how an E-type should be. Nothing wrong with the way this car goes, though; it's crisp, punchy and properly quick, with a satisfying snicketiness to its Moss gearbox.

However, it doesn't move along the road with quite the same degree of litheness that the gold car possesses. The ride is firmer and the steering is sharper, thanks to the wider tyres, but the effect is slightly spoilt by a steering rack both stiff in its action and suffering from play around the centre. Eagle boss Henry Pearman says this is typical of a poor-quality rack fitted during a conversion to right-hand drive, a failing he says he will soon remedy.

Modernised 1964 E-type offers panel fit unrivalled by Jaguar originals

'All signs of age have been expunged from the restored car – it's like new'

The other factor to make it feel right is to revisit the way the seats have been stuffed. The backrests' centre sections lack lumbar support, while the outer bolsters are too thick and unyielding, so you drive in a hunched, ache-inducing posture.

You can tell this car has generated plenty of admiring glances since its restoration, but has never been properly shaken down and fettled. It hasn't settled into life and motion; it has been about owning, not using. It deserves more, and will get it.

Eagle E-type number 29 is quite clearly designed to be used. It has been developed to feel a certain way – that way, clearly, does not mirror how a standard factory E-type feels, or felt, but is a thoroughly modern interpretation of the original E-type idea.

Not everyone, for example, gets on with the Moss gearbox, and some people don't see why they should have to make such an effort when a modern alternative makes for an easier life. Does that detract from the E-typeness? Yes. Does that mean the five-speed conversion, with its tough, modern Ford MT75 internals in Eagle's own casing, is a bad thing? Absolutely not. It's your choice.

The same goes for this car's electric power steering, which takes the effort out of manoeuvring those 225/60 R15 Pirelli P7s. As for the engine's enlargement to 4693cc, this gives 315bhp at 4700rpm and 362lb ft of torque at 3600rpm. It's achieved by a slight overbore and a more significantly lengthened stroke, and the result is an engine rather less revvy than a 3.8 and less sweet if you try, but with truly bursting biceps. It pulses menacingly at idle, big valves and high-lift camshafts admitting and expelling hefty slugs of gases, and the soundtrack becomes fiercer as the torque squirts the E-type out of Eagle's HQ and up the road. There's a very large-bore exhaust system here, with true November 5th

Jaguar E-type Series 1

Engine 3781cc, six-cylinder, dohc, 12 valves, three SU HD8 carburettors **Power and torque** 265bhp @ 5500rpm; 260lb ft @ 4000rpm **Transmission** Four-speed manual, rear-wheel drive **Steering** Rack-and-pinion **Suspension** Front: double wishbones, torsion bars, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar. Rear: double-wishbone geometry with driveshaft as upper arm, paired coil-spring/damper units, anti-roll bar. **Brakes** Discs all round, inboard at rear **Weight** 1206kg (2659lb) **Performance** Top speed 149mph; 0-60mph 7.0sec **Fuel consumption** 20mpg approx **Cost new** £2036 (1962), £1830 (1964) **Values now** From £67,500-£175,000

'The idea of an original car in fine fettle is massively appealing'

sound effects on each throttling-off. 'We can calm it down if the buyer wants us to,' says Eagle's engineering guru Paul Brace, and judging by the looks we're getting that might be wise.

You feel plenty of accelerative force – 0-60mph is claimed to be despatched in under five seconds – and similarly powerful retardation force from brakes enlarged all round and assisted by a higher-power servo. Overtaking is just an ankle-flex away, fifth-gear cruising is showing 37mph on the speedometer for every 1000rpm. These are long legs. But the other forces are alien to the E-type aficionado, both in their reduction and their redistribution.

That steering feels darty at first, almost as if the response quickens once past the centre, but with no weight build-up to match it. Eagle's modified steering arms and front suspension geometry play a part here, making this E-type almost unnaturally keen to turn until you recalibrate yourself. Then you realise you are gauging cornering forces not by steering effort and information but by the messages received via the ultra-supportive seat and your inner ear – just like in a modern car.

It changes the whole E-type driving interface, as does the light, easy gearchange, whose wide movements across the gate contrast with the Moss's narrow-gated precision. This shift requires no thought and planning, as does the light clutch with its definite bite and slight over-centre action. These are modern control feelings, which some will love because it makes driving an E-type easy, and some will not love because it makes driving one too easy. The firm, tightly-damped ride feels modern, too, on the stiffer springs and Eagle-specific dampers.

Getting an E-type to this standard of quality, equipment and ability is very expensive – at the time of our test in 2013 around £350,000 for a SuperSport. Nor will the other two cars be cheap after the Eagle endorsement process; Paul Brace says £195,000 for the original car, £175,000 for the restored one.

So which which is the best, then? The Eagle E-type? Objectively, yes – it's the fastest, easiest to drive, best-built and best-equipped. But it's also furthest removed from its Brown's Lane birth. How much that matters is a good guide to the sort of classic car buff you are.

I prefer an E-type to be as its creators intended, with minimal sensible improvements to make regular, enthusiastic use viable. They build on what it is rather than changing it.

Taking that line of thought further, the idea of an original car in fine fettle is massively appealing, certainly more so to me than a complete rebuild can ever be. Again, others will disagree. The fact is all three are fabulous, and anyone considering E-type ownership should examine cars of this standard if only to set a template by which to judge others.

However, the one I'd take home is gold and its left-hand drive bothers me not in the slightest. But if you disagree, that's fine too.

Thanks to: *Eagle E-Types, East Sussex, 01825 830966, eaglegb.com*

Cars shown:

left: 1974 JAGUAR E-TYPES SERIES 3 V12 ROADSTERS
Upgraded and fastidously restored late model with red factory hardtop. Black. Commemorative model. One of the 50 final bespoke editions in fantastic condition

below: 1963 JAGUAR E-TYPE S1 3.8 FIXED HEAD COUPE
Completely unrestored Californian example. One owner from new and covered just 56,874 miles
1966 JAGUAR E-TYPE, S1 4.2 ROADSTER
Magnificently restored 4.2 Roadster with fabulous upgraded specification

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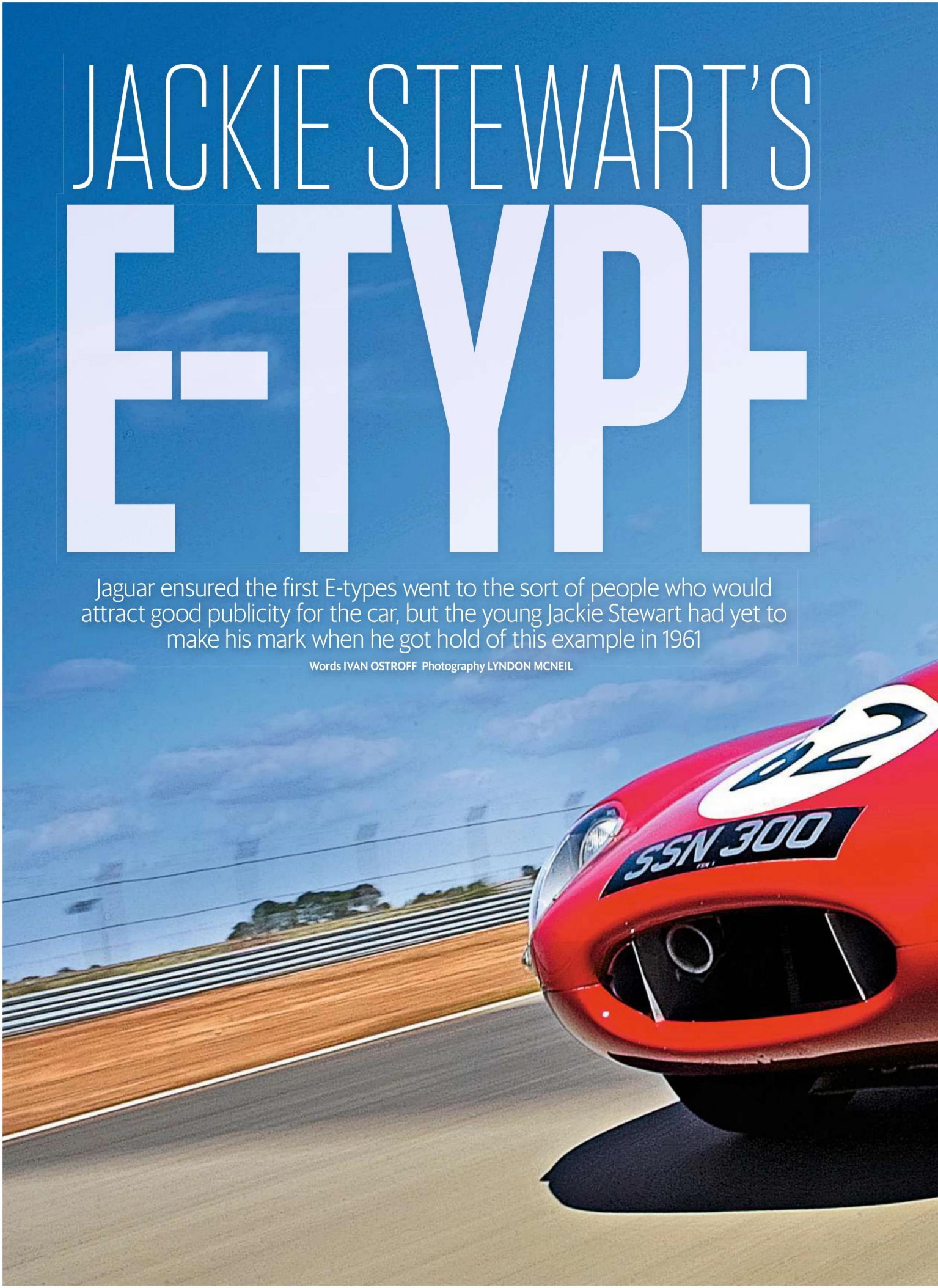
JACKIE STEWART'S E-TYPE

Jaguar ensured the first E-types went to the sort of people who would attract good publicity for the car, but the young Jackie Stewart had yet to make his mark when he got hold of this example in 1961

Words IVAN OSTROFF Photography LYNDON MCNEIL

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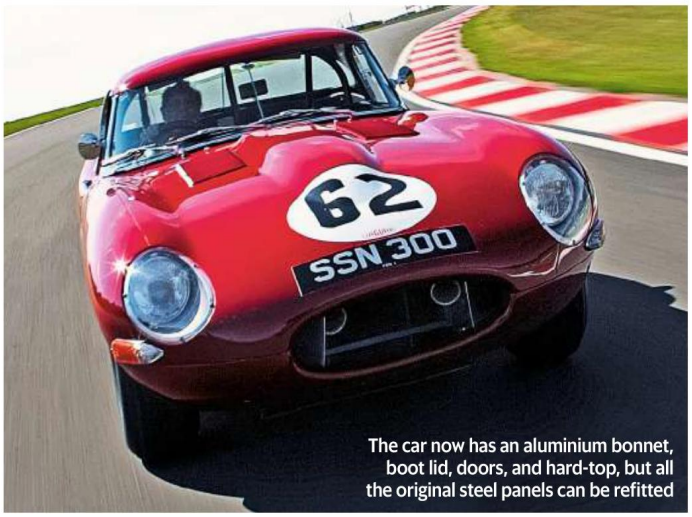
Stewart E-type was built to racing spec as per a period Jaguar handbook



The car now has an aluminium bonnet, boot lid, doors, and hard-top, but all the original steel panels can be refitted

The car retains its original steel tub and, as in period, races without a full roll cage

When the E-type was first announced Jackie Stewart's family owned a Jaguar dealership covering Dunbartonshire and part of Argyllshire. This and the fact that his brother Jimmy was a Jaguar works driver helped secure the Stewart family an E-type demonstrator in November 1961 at a time when most people who wanted to buy an E-type were finding it incredibly difficult to get hold of one. FSN 1 was a red roadster and had been prepared for Jimmy to race. It was also the car that featured in a *Sunday Times* magazine supplement and Pirelli advertisements at the time.

'I had never driven anything nearly as exotic when I first drove this car – to me it was simply *Star Wars*,' recalls Stewart. 'The E-type was probably the most spectacular mass-produced road car ever built. The impact of its looks combined with its performance and roadholding overshadowed all the more expensive and exotic cars of the time. No car had the symmetry, excellent lines or sheer beauty of the E-type.

'It was a very intoxicating car and you became the centre of attention wherever you drove it. The car was a huge attraction to regular motorists and racing drivers alike. It wouldn't matter if the roof was up or down or the hard-top was fitted – wherever you parked it was like bees around a honey pot.

'I was courting my future wife, Helen, and I recall letting her drive it – she did 100mph in it, which in those days was a high speed.'

Stewart chalked up his first two victories in FSN 1 at Charterhall on October 7, 1962, and had two more wins at Rufforth on April 13, 1963. He came up against Willie Green in one of the Charterhall races, who remembers, 'I think it was my second race in a Turner Climax, and I had never been beaten up until then. But this young Scottish bloke with a red E-type that belonged to his brother turned up. The front was all taped up to prevent it from collecting stone chips, so it was clearly a demonstrator, and I remember that the registration was FSN 1. Jackie just disappeared – he was astonishingly fast. Unfortunately my car lost a wheel so I had to retire, but I would never have caught him anyway. He began to get very famous soon after that.'

Stewart won again at Charterhall on April 28, 1963 and went to Ouston on June 23, putting the E-type on pole. It developed a misfire after the first lap, so he came into the pits. He opened the bonnet and discovered a plug lead had come off; after re-attaching it he climbed back in and rejoined the race in last position. By the end of the final lap he had caught the leading Porsche RSK, overtaken it and won the race. Stewart entered FSN 1 into the five-hour relay race at Oulton Park on September 28 and won yet again. Stewart and FSN 1 had never been beaten.

David Murray of Ecurie Ecosse had witnessed Stewart's performance at Charterhall and offered him a drive with the team. Jimmy Stewart had set some quick lap times in the Jaguar at a test day at Oulton Park, so Jackie went out to try to equal his brother's times – but he was much faster and broke the lap record for an E-type. That performance and Stewart's victory in the relay race at Oulton Park filtered through to Jaguar, where racing boss Lofty England arranged a trial with John Coombs in the factory-backed works Lightweight E-type, registered 4 WPD, at Goodwood.

'I don't think Coombs wanted me,' says Stewart. 'Historically he always had big-name drivers like Graham Hill, Roy Salvadori or Jack Brabham. He didn't like to have young drivers because they crash cars, but I had the test because Lofty was aware of my other performances; I was winning everything in F3 at that time.'

'Ignition on, fuel pumps on, press the button and six big cylinders burst into raucous life'

Stewart was on his way to becoming one of the greatest ever racing drivers, but his association with FSN 1 ended late in 1963 when the car was sold to Eric Liddell, a prominent club driver in Scotland. Liddell also won a number of races in the car, including the last race held at Charterhall. Stewart was on pole in the Ecurie Ecosse Tojeiro Buick, with Liddell second fastest in the E-type (now re-registered SSN 300 because the Stewart family retained the FSN 1 number). Stewart set the fastest lap but then retired, so Liddell was able to notch up yet another win for the red E-type.

The car passed through various hands in the ensuing years, had its by-then shabby rear wings replaced in 1977 and suffered damage to the near-side front wing and door in a race at Cadwell Park. This had been repaired by 1997 when current owner Mike Wilkinson bought the car.

'I knew that Sir Jackie had never been beaten racing this car in period and I'd always wanted to own it,' says Wilkinson.

The car races with the boot lid open so heat from the back brakes can vent through the rear bulkhead and escape

'As long ago as 1971, when I was a student at Durham University, I heard that it was for sale for £1250 and went to see it with some friends. Unfortunately we could only raise £275 between us so I had to wait almost 30 years before the dream of owning this wonderful motor car finally came true.'

Waiting in the Donington Park pit lane, I'm filled with awe and not a little trepidation knowing how much Wilkinson treasures this unique car. He has tried hard to keep SSN 300 much as it would have been when Stewart drove it. It retains its wet sump and still has a cast iron cylinder block. Apart from Weber carburettors and peg-drive aluminium wheels replacing the car's original SUs and wire wheels, the car is pretty much as it was in 1961. It races with an all-synchromesh unit. 'It's a very tall first gear and second is also close ratio,' says Wilkinson. 'It will pull 7000rpm and more than 60mph in first, but stick to 6800rpm to be safe.' I nod obediently.

Ignition on, fuel pumps on, press the button and six big cylinders burst into raucous life. The clutch is very in-or-out, but you also have to take care not to burn it out by slipping it. I thread my way on to the circuit, gazing down that great red phalanx of a bonnet and trying to forget that my every move is being scrutinised. I soon begin to understand how user-friendly this Jaguar is, so tactile and responsive to the slightest input of my hands and feet. For quicker response Wilkinson has fitted a 15in leather-rimmed steering wheel in place of the larger diameter wood rim; it's heavy at walking pace, but light and precise once on the move.

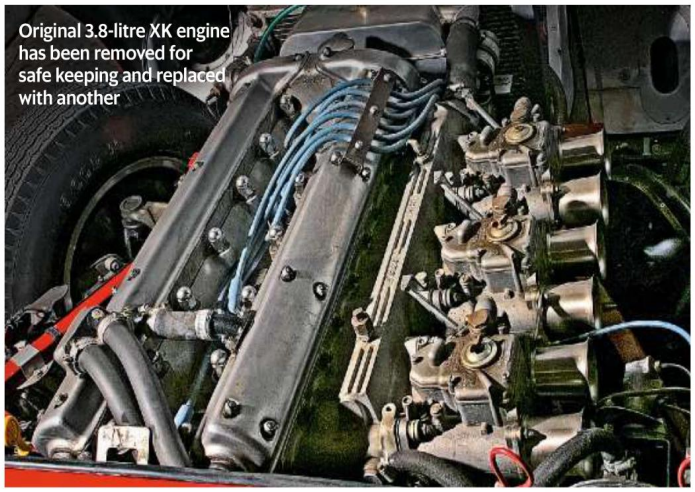
I'm beginning to feel at home after a couple of exploratory laps, so I put the hammer down on the Wheatcroft Straight heading towards Redgate, the first right-hander. I heel-and-toe down into third; the accelerator pedal is exactly level with the brake so I don't have to lift my foot, just slide it to one side and kiss the throttle. The growl of the unsilenced exhaust is enough to give anyone goose pimples – only a perfectly balanced Jaguar racing straight-six sounds this good.

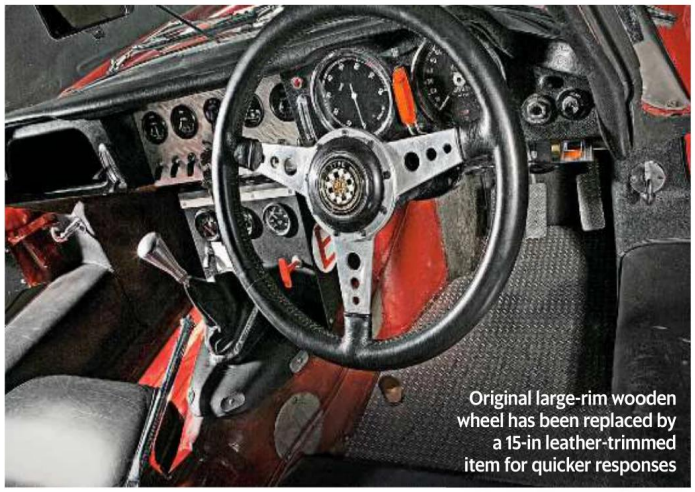
Holding off turning in until the last second, I whip the car round hard-right and apply a slight flick of correction just when the back begins to slide as I feed in the power through Hollywood.

SSN 300 wears 15in Dunlop 650L tyres on the back and 600Ls on the front. Typically of a car of this period on Dunlop Historic crossplies, there's plenty of grip until the breakaway point, after which a controlled drift is followed by an immense feeling of satisfaction and a huge smile. Exiting Hollywood I go over the crest, and as I'm about to go through the Craner Curves I'm up in fourth gear, which helps keep the car stable.

Wilkinson has fitted adjustable Penske Racing dampers which provide a marvellously controlled ride. At 5750rpm the E-type's engine note is a perfectly balanced melody as 325lb ft of torque catapults the car forward. With the ball of my foot on the brake as I approach to the next complex, the speed drops off; I prod the throttle with the side of my

Stewart felt an aluminium bonnet offered no benefit over the glassfibre equivalent


Original 3.8-litre XK engine has been removed for safe keeping and replaced with another


Original large-rim wooden wheel has been replaced by a 15-in leather-trimmed item for quicker responses

heel and guide the gearlever forward, hesitating momentarily through neutral. With smooth mechanical perfection it slips satisfyingly into third. It's the same story across the gate into second, then I'm accelerating again; at 6800rpm I grab third gear and power down the Dunlop Straight. Cool air fed from the scoop under the nose keeps the big Jaguar MkIX discs and pads cool and the original Kelsey-Hayes vacuum-actuated brake bellows perform perfectly as I brake from around 120mph. But there's no fade or lock-up and retardation is strong and progressive.

I could drive this car forever, but reluctantly guide the E-type's nose back into the pit lane on a popping and crackling trailing throttle after some idyllic laps. As the car rolls to a halt I slip the lever into neutral, blip the throttle to clear the plugs then kill the ignition. Wilkinson's voice breaks the silence that follows, 'What do think?' My huge grin says it all.

Jaguar produced a handbook on how to prepare an E-type for racing in period and this car was built according to that handbook. It was delivered with D-type camshafts, a big-valve cylinderhead, ram pipes feeding its triple SU carburettors and the air filter had been removed. It had holes cut in the front to allow ducted air to pass through the bonnet on to the front brakes. Uprated competition torsion bars were fitted together with a low 3.54:1 axle ratio. Jaguar didn't make it widely known that the car had the MkIX saloon's larger front brakes and that the rears were similar to standard cars' front brakes.

Today the car competes in the Masters Series as well as racing at the Goodwood Revival, so it's fitted with lightweight aluminium bonnet, bootlid, doors, and hard-top. But Wilkinson has kept the original steel panels and can be quickly refitted. It's not known if the car originally had an aluminium bonnet but it was definitely raced in the Sixties with both aluminium and glassfibre items. Apparently Stewart felt the aluminium one was expensive and gave very little benefit over the glassfibre part.

The original 3.8-litre cylinder block assembly has been removed for safe keeping, and another iron-blocked 3.8-litre XK substituted, with the original front-fed D-type camshafts in the cylinderhead.

'It has the extra weight of the original steel tub to lug around so we've lowered the diff' ratio to 3.77:1 – there's a lot of torque,' explains Wilkinson. 'It's said to be the quickest non-aluminium-block E-type around and has placed fifth at Goodwood in the TT with Tiff Needell at the helm. We show 325bhp at 6800rpm on the dynamometer but perhaps more importantly it's got roughly 300bhp from 5000rpm-7000rpm.'

Sir Jackie Stewart still has great affection for this car, 'My wife and I went on our honeymoon in it. There's a picture of Helen in her wedding dress and me in my tails with the car when we were leaving the church in Helensburgh. We had all our baggage in it plus my guns. We bought two tablelamps in Darmstadt to bring back for our new apartment and Helen had to travel with them crammed into the passenger footwell.

'Its very nice to see my old car again. It looks just perfect – Mike looks after it beautifully.'

***Thanks to**: M & C Wilkinson Ltd (jaguar-spares-uk.co.uk); Donington Park circuit (donington-park.co.uk); Philip Porter and the Jaguar E-type Club (e-typeclub.com); John Bradley at Dark Arts Marketing, Castle Donington (darkartsmarketing.co.uk)*

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[The List]

‘I can’t wait to have a drive’ Paul Cannon has dreamed of piloting an E-type since seeing a rock star driving one when he was a little boy. Now it’s his turn, will it rock his world?

Words ANDREW NOAKES Photography CHARLIE MAGEE

His List

Alfa Romeo GT Junior
Aston Martin DB6
Austin-Healey 3000
Austin-Healey Sprite
Dino 246 GT
Jaguar E-type 4.2 roadster
Lamborghini Miura
Lotus Europa
Morgan Plus Eight
Porsche 911


OWP 26E

The rock 'n' roll royalty of the Sixties had their share of iconic cars. John Lennon had his Rolls-Royce Phantom V, Paul McCartney and Mick Jagger had DB6s, Cliff Richard drove a Cadillac and a Ford Thunderbird and Ringo Starr – ever the individual – opted for a Facel Vega. Seeing George Harrison's Ferrari 365GTC inspired Eric Clapton to order one, despite the small inconvenience that he hadn't yet learned to drive a car with a manual gearbox.

Bruce Welch of The Shadows had a Rolls in the Sixties too – a grey Silver Cloud – but for fun he drove a maroon Jaguar E-type 4.2-litre roadster. *Classic Cars* reader Paul Cannon lived nearby at the time and regularly saw the Welch E-type on the move. 'I was a bit too young when the 3.8 came out. The 4.2 was in my schoolboy period, and it was always my dream car.'

More than 50 years later we're about to make Paul's dream drive come true. We're waiting in a car park a few miles south of Coventry where we've arranged to meet a 4.2-litre E-type roadster Series 1 and owner that have been together for more than 50 years. Paul, though, is still remembering the E-type dreams of his youth. 'My wife's mother comes from Greece and I had this notion when I got married that I would drive down to Greece in an E-type. But I could never afford one,' he says. 'I ended up with a Spitfire – red, with wire wheels – and we made it down to the south of France in that. Just as much fun, but not quite as fast.'

'I got used to it really quickly. The whole feel of the car is very light and easy to drive'

As he talks, a flash of red appears through the trees, followed by a glint of sunlight on chrome, and then the nose of a six-cylinder E-type appears in full view. The Jaguar turns off the road and

Paul Cannon

Surveyor Paul Cannon's first car was a Reliant three-wheeler. That was soon replaced by a Mini, and since then he's had a Caterham, MGBs, a Jaguar Mk2 and a Triumph Spitfire. His modern BMW is complemented by a 1380cc MG Midget and a Lotus Europa Twin-Cam.

Paul has dreamed of this since his scholboy days

4.2-litre XK unit made its E-type debut in 1964

Once in tune with the Jaguar's quirks, Paul relishes in the Jaguar's rewarding steering

crunches across the gravel towards us, stops and the tiny door swings open to reveal owner Bob Beecham.

He's owned OWP 26E since it was two years old, so he knows every inch of it. He's at pains to point out that it's not a concours-condition car – instead, he says, it gets driven. And that's good news, because it's exactly what Paul and I are here for.

Paul's taken with the E-type at first glance, 'I haven't really been up close to one for so many years – you don't usually get all that near to them at classic car shows. Standing here with that long bonnet it almost looks like an aircraft – that sense of the power of the engine is tangible. You just look at it and it says speed.'

While Bob drops the E-type's hood, Paul and I walk around it to drink in the details of its shape. 'They weren't worried about having the screws on show in those days,' Paul says, pointing at the fixings for the headlamp cowls. 'That's a really nice detail. It's the same with these chrome strips, the join between the side wing and the bonnet.' He opens the driver's door and installs himself into the seat behind the Moto-Lita steering

'Such is the E-type's urge, it's comforting there are fade-free disc brakes'

wheel – flat and wood-rimmed like the Jaguar original but a couple of inches smaller in diameter – and pulls on his driving gloves. 'I think to drive this smoothly will take a bit of finesse,' he says. 'I'll enjoy the challenge. I can't wait to have a drive.'

Judging by the broad grin that's broken out across his face, Paul is quickly enjoying the experience of pushing the E-type hard along a twisty country lane, cornering with big sweeps of the wheel.

'I got used to it really quickly,' he reports afterwards. 'The whole car feels very light and easy to drive – I thought it would be heavier. It hasn't

got power steering but it's very light, as long as you keep it rolling. Even though it hasn't got the standard steering wheel it's absolutely perfect.' But he's not quite so keen on the gearbox. 'I'm not being as smooth as I should be about getting it into gear. Bob has cringed a couple of times, but he's being very polite about it all!'

Paul's soon off again, the red E-type flashing along the smooth country roads of south Warwickshire with the big straight-six singing its melody. It's clear Paul has adapted his driving style to suit it. 'You just have to press the clutch and then let everything calm down a bit – then it's a beautiful gearbox, very precise,' he says of the all-synchromesh Jaguar unit introduced with the 4.2 engine. And he's full of praise for the way the E-type performs, 'It's so lively and modern, and very torquey.'

Paul hops out of the E-type so I can take his place. The smaller-diameter steering wheel makes getting in much easier than it is with the standard helm, and the interior has a nice patina of age and regular use. A sticker is still attached to the speedo giving instructions for resetting the tripmeter, but the letters have faded over the years, just as the legend on the gearknob is now barely visible. It's an honest and workmanlike cabin – it was built to be used, and regularly is.

With the tiny ignition key slotted into the dash, I thumb the unlabelled black starter button to turn the engine over. The XK unit is already warm, so it catches almost instantly. The view out through the narrow slot of a windscreen over the three wipers is full of the voluptuous curves of the wings and the bulge in the centre of the bonnet. Is there a better sight from any driving seat in any sports car? But I get a better view of the SU carburettors, visible through the slots of the right-hand bonnet vent, than I do of any bodywork ahead of the front axle.

Not knowing exactly where the nose is makes manoeuvring tricky, and it doesn't help that Paul's right about the steering needing some heft until you get the Jaguar properly under way. In classic sports car style I'm sitting a long way back in the car and aim the nose into corners, feeling the grip as the front Dunlops ride ripples in the tarmac and make the wood rim of the wheel jiggle between my fingers. The E-type needs constant tiny corrections to keep it on line at speed, yet there's a feeling

The 4.2-litre XK may redline 500rpm lower than the 3.8 but it has torque in spades

of security in the corners that many a contemporary sports car couldn't match thanks to the stiffness of the Jaguar's race-derived body structure and the suppleness of the independent rear suspension.

That was a rarity when the E-type first appeared in 1961, and well-located set-ups like this one were even rarer. It makes an enormous difference. Bumpy corners that would have a live axle leaping about in protest are flattened out and the E-type delivers confidence-boosting consistent grip and an excellent ride.

Comfort and cornering ability are matched by genuine pace. The 4.2-litre engine may not have the rev range of its 3.8-litre predecessor – the warning paint on the tachometer starts at 5000rpm rather than the earlier car's 5500rpm – but it never lacks torque. A gentle squeeze on the big accelerator pedal is all it takes to rouse the big six and have the E-type bounding forward, wherever the needle is on the rev counter. It's as smooth and docile as I could wish for in town, but it's easy to extract serious performance away from urban speed limits with neither the driver nor the car appearing to be trying all that hard. Such is the E-type's straight-line urge, it's comforting that there are fade-free disc brakes at all four wheels to shed speed when needed.

The E-type certainly isn't a difficult car to drive, but nor is it a car that an unfamiliar driver can immediately master – the steering and the gearbox in particular need a little familiarity before their custodian can feel entirely at home. 'I got a great deal of satisfaction from that final run; I really got into the feel of a car,' Paul tells me. 'You know how you feel in the groove with the car? I really felt I got into the groove with this – changing gear, flying through the corners. I felt as if I was at one with it. And that's the satisfaction, I think.'

But what really surprises both Paul and me is just how capable and relevant the E-type still feels, more than half a century on from its launch. 'I sometimes feel just a little disappointed when I drive my MG,' says Paul. 'And then you think no, I'm in a car that's 50 or 60 years old – this is what it was like. You have to keep taking yourself back to another era in order to fully appreciate it. An old car often looks great, but sometimes it doesn't live up to expectations when you actually use it – I think the Jaguar does however because it's solid and stiff and well put together, it doesn't have that floppy feel. It was fantastic – so much easier to drive than I expected. The handling was amazing and it felt so modern.'

How does the E-type stack up to other things Paul's experienced over the years? 'Well, I piloted Concorde last week,' he says, disarmingly. 'Brooklands has set up the old British Airways simulator and that really was an incredible experience.

'But not as good as driving the E-type.'

1966 Jaguar E-type 4.2

Engine 4235cc dohc straight-six, three SU HD8 carburettors **Power and torque** 265bhp @ 5400rpm, 283lb ft @ 4000rpm **Transmission** Four-speed manual, rear-wheel drive **Brakes** Dunlop discs front and rear, servo-assisted **Steering** Rack and pinion **Suspension** Front: wishbones, torsion bars, anti-roll bar. Rear: trailing arms, transverse links, radius arms, twin coil spring/damper, anti-roll bar. **Weight** 2716lb (1232kg) **Performance** Top speed: 150mph; 0-60mph: 7.0sec **Cost new** £2117 (1968) **Values now** £57,500-£130,000

Thanks to: *Jaguar Heritage, Jaguar Drivers' Club (jaguardriver.co.uk) and E-type owner Bob Beecham*

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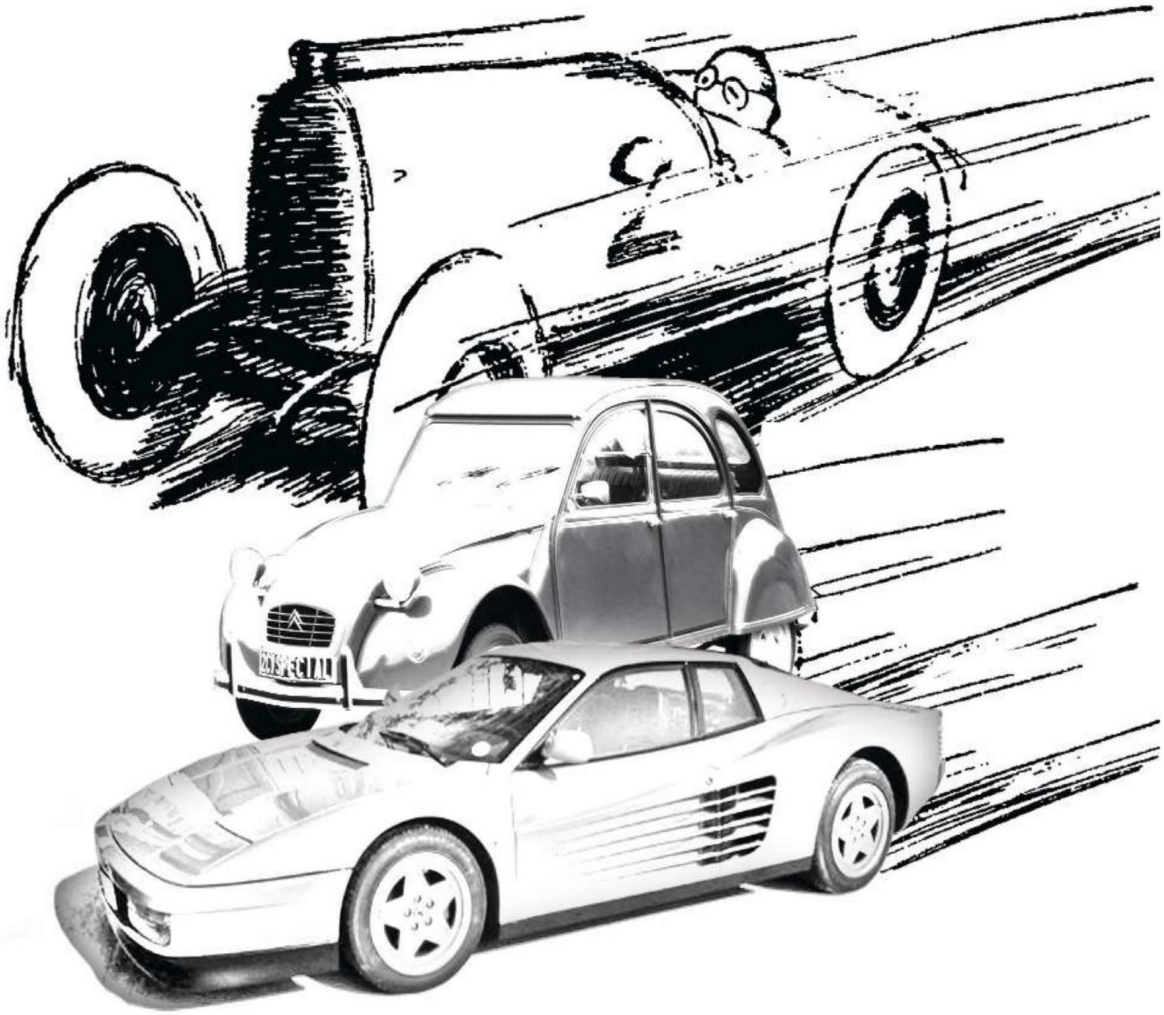

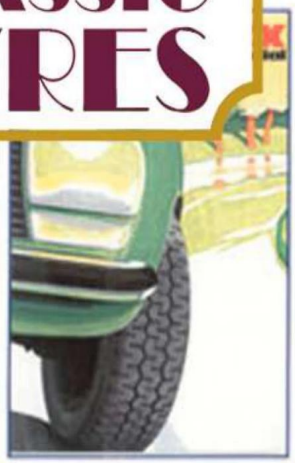

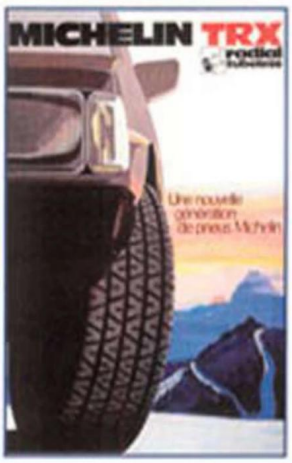

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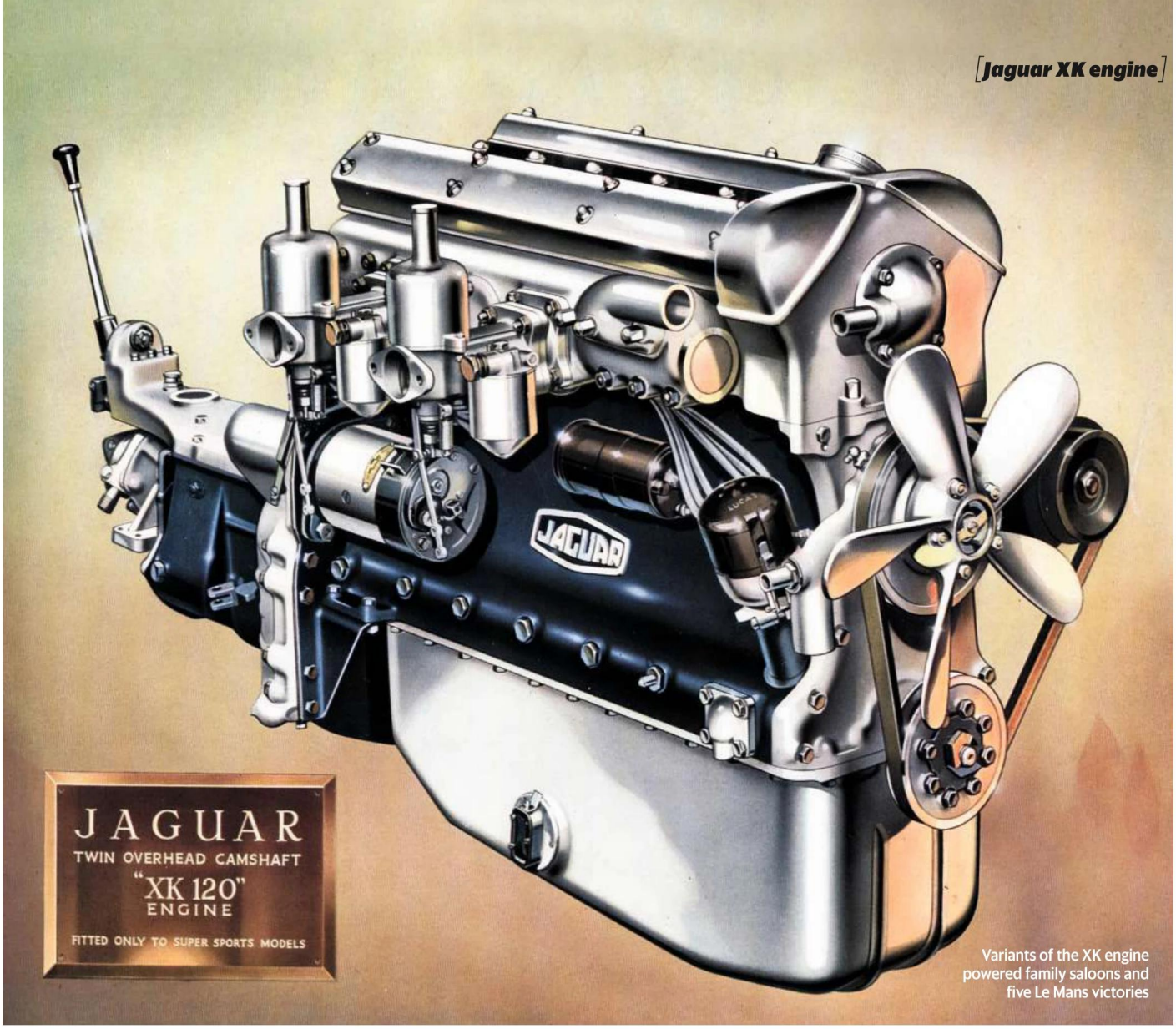


Variants of the XK engine powered family saloons and five Le Mans victories

JAGUAR'S EVOLVING HEART

The XK engine powered some of Jaguar's finest creations for nearly half a century

William Lyons' SS Cars relied on other firms for engines and chassis in its early years. By the mid-Thirties SS was building its own chassis, designed by Bill Heynes, then in 1942 it bought machinery from Standard that meant it could build its own engines. At first these were Standard designs, but during the war plans took shape for a new range of engines to power post-war SS cars.

SS staff took turns on fire watch, scanning the area from the Foleshill factory roof and raising the alarm if a fire was spotted. During their sessions engineers Heynes, Walter Hassan and Claude Baily planned the new engines and agreed that for high performance a hemispherical combustion chamber with opposed valves was essential. Four-cylinder test engines with that configuration were built from 1943.

'A hemispherical combustion chamber with opposed valves was essential'

The first, XG, used a side-mounted camshaft with pushrods operating the valves on one side of the combustion chamber, and a second set of horizontal pushrods across the top of the engine operating the second row of valves via rockers. SS decided it was too noisy.

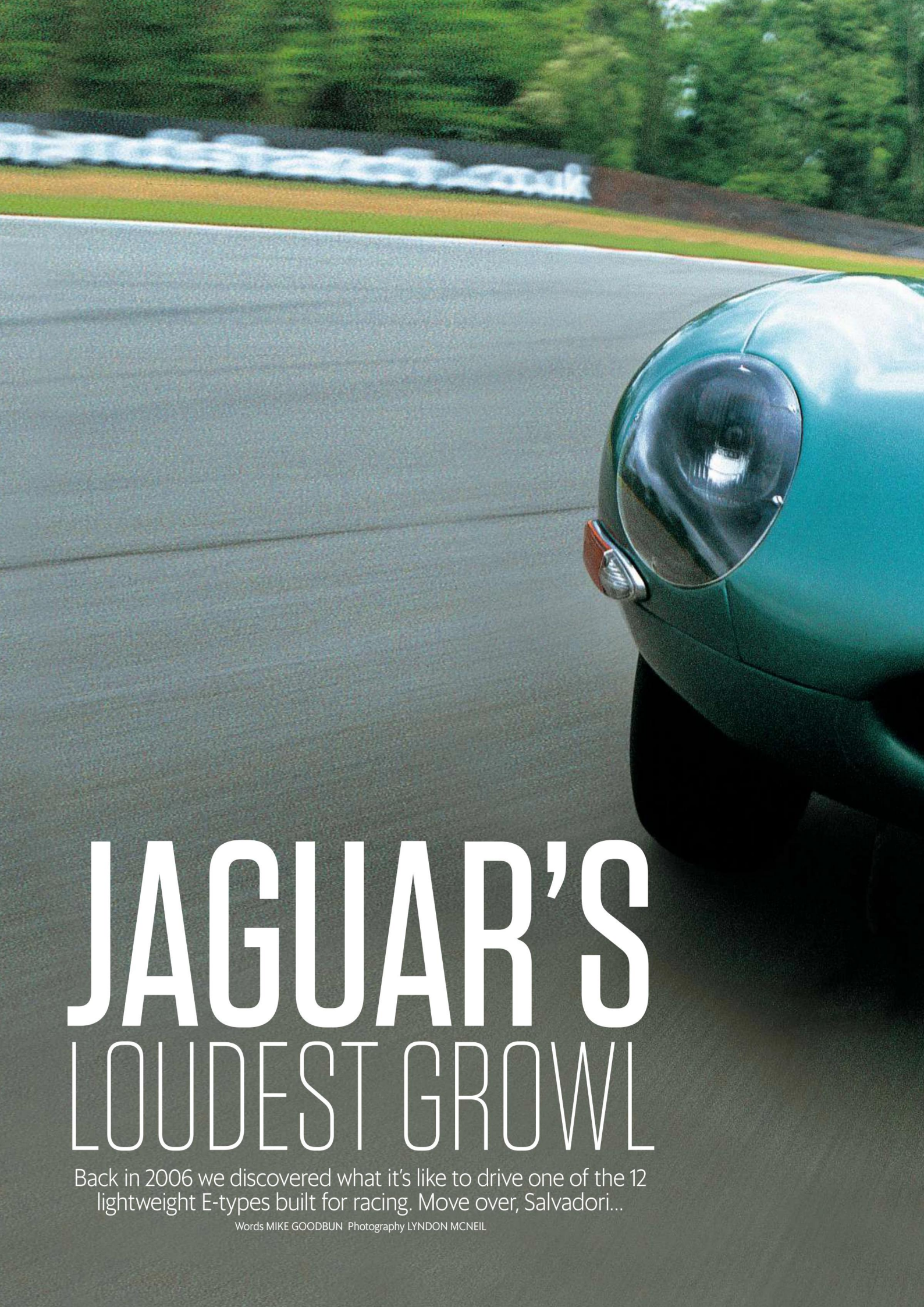
Instead work centred on another prototype engine, the XF, which operated its valves using twin overhead camshafts driven by chains from the nose of the crankshaft. The company, now named Jaguar, developed this into the XK engine that first appeared as a 3.4-litre in the 1948 XK120 and Mark VII saloon. Tuned 3.4-litre versions also powered C-type Jaguars to Le Mans wins in 1951 and '53, and a D-type win in 1955 and '56.

A four-cylinder XK was developed, but Jaguar used a short-stroke six-cylinder XK in the Jaguar 2.4 saloon instead. A big-bore 3.8-litre powered the Le Mans-winning D-type in 1957 and introduced into the XK150 and Mark IX in 1958, then the 3.8-litre Mk2 in 1959.

The XK was re-engineered in 1964 with wider cylinder spacings and siamesed steel liners to accommodate 3.6in (92.07mm) bores. The 4.2in (106mm) stroke was retained to produce 4235cc for the Jaguar Mark X and E-type 4.2 of 1964.

The Jaguar V12 replaced the XK in the E-type in 1971 (but for a small number of 4.2-litre Series 3 cars) but the XK continued in the XJ6, where the 4.2-litre unit was joined by a 2.8-litre that was replaced in the Series 2 XJ by a narrow-bore 3.4-litre, which continued until 1986.

The XK eventually gained electronic fuel injection which enabled it to see out the XJ Series 3 in 1987, but the 4.2-litre version of Jaguar's first ever in-house engine design continued in the Daimler DS420 limousine until as recently as 1992.



JAGUAR'S LOUDEST GROWL

Back in 2006 we discovered what it's like to drive one of the 12 lightweight E-types built for racing. Move over, Salvadori...

Words MIKE GOODBUN Photography LYNDON MCNEIL


86 PJ

My skin is tingling with red pinch marks, I can't stop nibbling my fingernails and my pupils are locked on to the E-type's starter button. I can feel my heartbeat quickening too. I can't quite believe it, but I'm about to drive a million quid's worth of Lightweight E-type. The fourth of the 12 Lightweights built is sitting at the side of our test track, bonnet up, exposing its all-aluminium construction and fuel-injected alloy-block 3.8-litre XK engine – with 320 genuine horsepower as opposed to the road car's 265bhp. It's one of the most original Lightweight E-types in existence, fresh from a meticulous restoration in which everything was crack-tested, only safety-critical items replaced and, as owner Paul Michaels puts it, 'not just a chassis number'. It's beautiful.

The three-eared spinners on the original D-type style Dunlop wheels are tapped, tyre pressures checked and the lightweight bonnet secured back into place with the original leather straps. We're good to go.

I click open the featherlight door, tip my head over to avoid knocking it on the hardtop, feed my legs under the familiar E-type steering wheel and ping the door shut. Then I fumble for the broad straps of the parachute-derived four-point harness, which clasp together alarmingly loosely. 6ft 2in tall Roy Salvadori sat here throughout 1963, racing 86 PJ for Tommy Atkins, so for once I'm a perfect fit. there's generous head room, even with a crash helmet on.

Scanning the cabin reveals a lovely 43-year-old patina at odds with the fresh new paintwork outside. It's the original interior, preserved right down to a stroke of pink lipstick at 5500rpm on the tachometer, put there by previous owner Penny Griffiths, not Salvadori. There's none of the bright aluminium trim found on contemporary E-type road cars, but a black dashboard with the same complement of switches and gauges. Olive green seats, door cards and sections of beige carpet (the floors are bare) make it feel more like a military vehicle than a racing car, but that seems appropriate considering the battles this E-type has fought against Ferrari 250 GTOs and Aston Martin DB4GTs.

That starter button is closer now. I can touch it, but not press it – yet. You'll need the skills of an experienced Lightweight E-type mechanic to start one from cold. The Lucas mechanical fuel injection pumps unleaded into the engine at more than 100psi and it's easy to foul a spark plug if you don't know what you're doing with the fuel enrichment device (a bit like a choke). But thereafter, it's refreshingly simple – press the accelerator down a quarter of its travel, turn the key and immediately press the starter button. Here we go.

It cranks briefly, splutters, then fires into an unsilenced onslaught. Nothing can prepare you for the noise it makes. None of the 72,000 regular E-types comes close. It sounds like a chainsaw ripping through trees and disturbing a wasp's nest while a Spitfire dogfights with a Messerschmitt overhead.

Surprisingly, there's no race car stroppiness when you do – force the stiff gearlever into first, bring the clutch pedal up to its unexpectedly soft biting point, feed in a couple of thousand rpm and it surges off. The transmission whines and the engine takes on a baritone growl and a hollow breathiness that you only get with unrestricted engines. That's because the mouths of the fuel injection's six throttle bodies are wide open, filterless, with an insatiable appetite for fuel and air. And every part of the engine, from wide-angle cylinder head to dry-sump oil system, is operating at its optimum for performance.

Open the chokes wider, sucking more of the explosive mixture in, and the growl gargles into a higher-pitched scream. There's a seamless slug of power and torque all the way to the next gearchange from 1500rpm in any gear. The change itself is short, rapid and it's free of the graunching that afflicts so many Moss 'box-equipped roadgoing E-types whether changing up or down through the four speeds.

86 PJ looks ready for a fight from any angle. It sounds utterly violent

Every aspect of the Lightweight feels so sorted that you're instantly at one with it. It's noticeably stiffly sprung and can attack corners with confidence, but it rides with the softness of the road car at high speed. The rack-and-pinion steering is weighty and immediately responsive. The all-disc brake setup is unservoed on this car, as Salvadori requested, and you know exactly what braking power you have left with every press of the solid pedal. Through all this you can feel the reduced weight.

Lap after lap, it encourages you to press harder on both the go and stop pedals and you quickly forget that it's 43 years old. There's a barrage of artillery fire from the twin upswept exhausts, popping and spitting neat fuel every time you lift your right foot. The hotter it gets, the better it sounds. For a brief moment you're back in 1963, jostling for position with the ghosts of Mike Parkes' Ferrari 250 GTO and Graham Hill's similar Coombs Lightweight E-type, but as the white-tipped needles dance across the gauges, I snap out of thinking I'm Roy Salvadori, remember the E-type isn't mine, and pit to find out more about racing this sensational car, from the man himself.

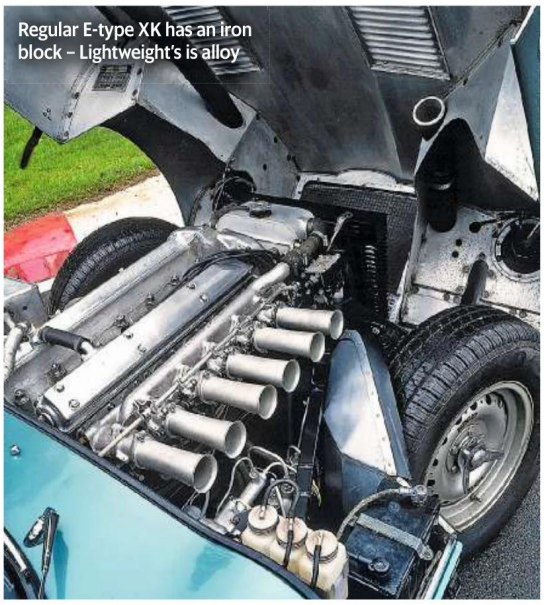
> Nothing can prepare you for the noise it makes. Not one of the 72,000 other E-types comes close

Roy Salvadori remembers 86 PJ well, 'It was a damn good car and very comfortable. You used to accept what Jaguar sold you, but Tommy's mechanic did a great job putting it together. It was tremendously reliable. As long as you kept it under 6000rpm it would go on forever.'

86 PJ was often the fastest Lightweight E-type racing in 1963, but Salvadori was denied a win with it. He took third place in the 1963 RAC Tourist Trophy at Goodwood, beaten by two of the five 250 GTOs in the race, and would have won at Silverstone had he not spun on the penultimate lap, finishing second to Graham Hill's E-type.

1963 Jaguar Lightweight E-type

Engine 3781cc, in-line six-cylinder, dohc, mechanical fuel injection **Power** 320bhp @ 6200rpm **Transmission** Four-speed manual, rear-wheel drive **Steering** Rack-and-pinion **Suspension** Front: independent, double wishbones, torsion bars, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar. Rear: independent, lower transverse links, radius arms, twin coil springs, twin telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar **Brakes** Discs front and rear **Weight** 920kg (2028lb) **Performance** Top speed: 170mph; 0-60mph: 4.4sec **Cost** new £3600 **Value now** £1.2million



Regular E-type XK has an iron block – Lightweight's is alloy

Lightweight feels tautly sprung in corners but rides compliantly at speed

Interior wears its middle-aged years well. Change up at the lipstick mark on the tachometer

OWNING THE ULTIMATE E-TYPE

'I always wanted to own the ultimate E-type, but never thought it would happen,' says Paul Michaels, chairman of independent BMW garage Hexagon of Highgate, who realized that dream when he bought 86 PJ in 2002. 'I'd seen one advertised for sale in Guildford in 1967, white, in bits spread-eagled over the floor. I thought, "I can't do this" and left it.' A chance conversation about Lightweight E-types while on a rally in Sweden more than 30 years later led Michaels to buying 86 PJ. 'It had done 2000 miles and was hand-painted white, as last raced in the late Sixties.' Previous owner Penny Griffiths had owned and hillclimbed 86 PJ since 1966, when her father (Jaguar collector Guy Griffiths) gave it to her as a Christmas present. E-type specialist Eagle brought the car back to life just in time for the 2005 Goodwood Festival of Speed, where former Hexagon F1 driver John Watson drove it up the hillclimb course. 'It wasn't timed though – it was just a bit of fun to exercise it,' adds Michaels.

Now the E-type is finished, Michaels is frustratingly stuck for opportunities to use it, limited as he is to occasional demonstration runs. 'It's too nice to race and it's not suitable as a road car. I like to drive my cars and thought I could use this for rallies with the hardtop off, but you can't because the whole package is held together by it. The car would fall apart!'

86 PJ may have been restored but most of its parts are still original

The only thing Salvadori didn't get along with was Jaguar's occasional experiments with the five-speed ZF gearbox. He says, 'I really didn't like the German five-speed gearbox. It was extremely heavy and you had to get it very hot. I soon discovered that I could drive at least as quickly with the normal four-speed transmission.' Other Lightweights suffered cracked engine blocks as a direct result of the ZF unit's weight.

For all of the Lightweight E-type's advanced construction and driver comfort, the Ferrari 250 GTO always had the edge over it on the track, despite its relatively primitive design. The Jaguar was a weekend project born out of customer demand. It never had full works support like the C- or D-type racers. Jaguar historian Philip Porter says, 'The Lightweight came too late, which was a great shame. The GTO was an old-fashioned car, with a live axle versus Jaguar's independent suspension, but the E-type was always a bit soft. The GTO was stiff and harsh from the start, designed as a racing car.'

Looking one last time at 86 PJ, ticking quietly away to itself as it cools, I can't help thinking that this ultimate version of Jaguar's finest sports car emphasises how great the regular E-type is. The Lightweight is obviously superior to the road-going cars in every department, but it's really not all that different. And, I recall something else Roy Salvadori once told me, 'I like driving any E-type, they're lovely cars.'

You know, he's so right.

Thanks to: *Hexagon of Highgate, 020 8444 1111 (hexagon-bmw.co.uk); Brands Hatch circuit – for tickets and information on forthcoming events at Brands Hatch, Cadwell Park, Oulton Park or Snetterton, call 0870 850 5017, or see motorsportvision.co.uk; MIRA Proving Ground, mira.co.uk; Elite Auto Storage, 07703 295282 (autostorage.co.uk); CKL Developments, 01424 838250 (ckldevelopments.co.uk)*

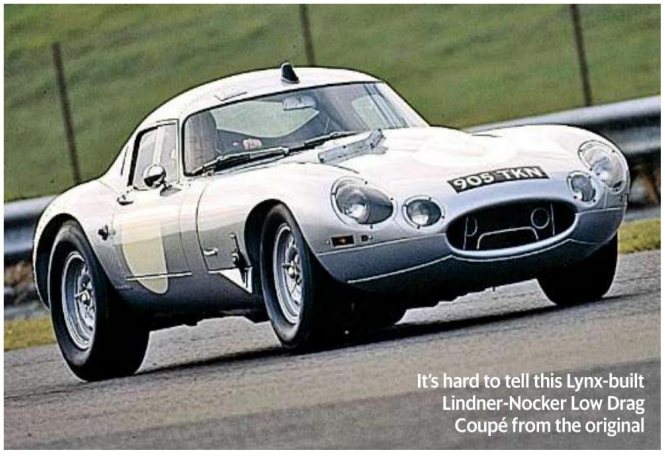
So you want one too...

You'll need more than £1million to buy a genuine Lightweight, but that's not the only way to realise this particular dream. Chris Keith-Lucas of Jaguar racing specialist CKL Developments says, 'The market in Lightweights is pretty strong. They used to be a poor relation to C- and D-types, but now they are right up there with them.'

A car's race history is the biggest factor in its value, 'CUT 7 is possibly the most desirable and best known of the racing E-types, despite in fact being a thin-gauge steel car. The Lindner-Nocker car is arguably the most beautiful, but has a rather tragic history.' Peter Lindner was killed when he crashed it at Montlhéry in 1964. Le Mans history is a big draw too.

Can't afford one? You can commission one. Specialists such as Eagle or Lynx Motors build them to order, including their own versions of the Lindner-Nocker car. You'll find secondhand examples on the market too, at around £50,000-£100,000.

Or, for £20,000-£40,000, just enjoy a regular E-type. Look out for structural rust, ill-fitting panels and try as many examples as you can to find one that drives properly.



It's hard to tell this Lynx-built Lindner-Nocker Low Drag Coupé from the original

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[Norman Dewis interview]

‘It was hard work but the E-type is my favourite Jaguar road car’

Words PAUL SKILLETER Photography NORMAN DEWIS, PAUL SKILLETER

Behind the glamorous launches at Geneva and New York, where the E-type was revealed to the Old and New Worlds, lay a vast amount of hard development work. In those pre-computer days cars were designed in the light of experience combined with hundreds of hours of stress calculations worked out using slide-rules. With the basic design produced in the drawing office, the next step was to hand-build prototypes, because with no computer modelling the only way to discover if everything worked was to accumulate lots of mileage – in Jaguar’s case, through grinding out the hours at the MIRA test track in Warwickshire, day and night, summer and winter.

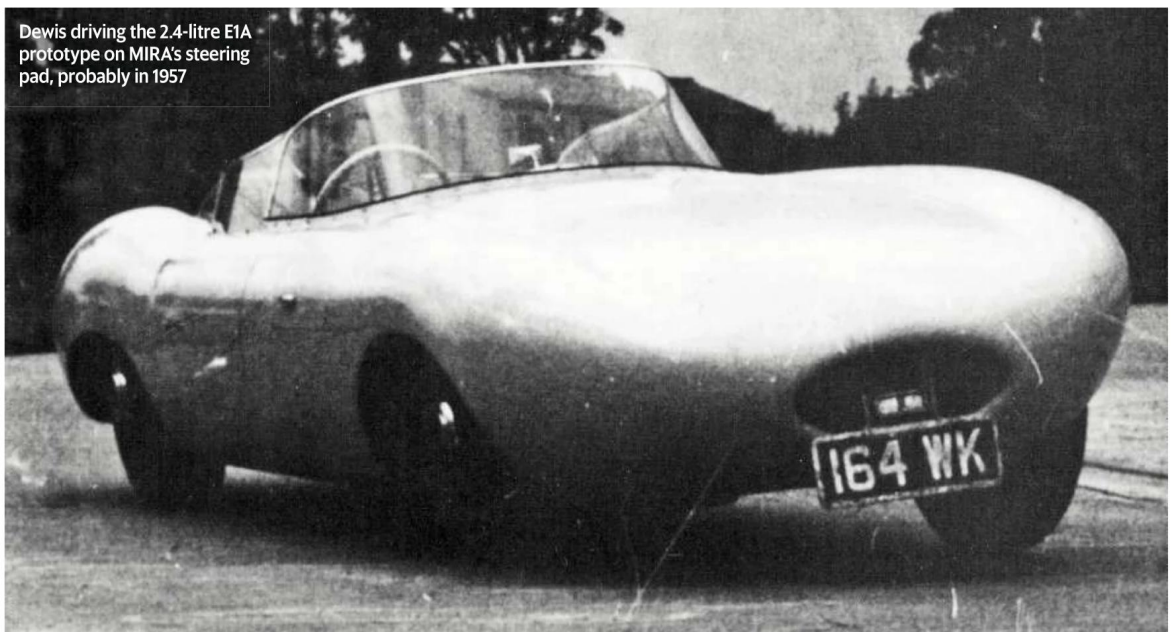
The man who instituted those tests at Jaguar, and who completed the great majority of them on the E-type, was Norman Dewis, a stocky Coventry-born engineer who had come to Jaguar in January 1952 after working for Lea-Francis. He had been recruited by chief engineer Bill Heynes who wanted to get some order into the test-development process, and to progress the Le Mans C-type. Not only did Dewis negotiate for a better salary, he also made sure he would report only to Heynes, ‘I always worked for Heynes and nobody else interfered with me at all.’ It was this direct line to the top of engineering that allowed him to make a unique input. Together with men like development engineer Bob Knight and aerodynamicist Malcolm Sayer, it was Dewis who established the characters of Jaguar cars for more than 30 years.

In the case of the E-type, Dewis makes the point straight away that ‘a lot of stuff went across from the D-type to the E-type’ and the first prototype, E1A – which first ran on May 15, 1957 and was originally 2.4-litre-engined – looked like a baby D-type. This was because it shared many of its main features, much as the production E-type would do – for example the unique combination of tubular frame and monocoque, and the six-cylinder XK engine.

Dewis first drove E1A at MIRA on May 24, 1957. ‘I would normally take a brand new car on the steering pad – it’s safer as the speeds are lower. I would have photographs taken by Bill Large, the works photographer, and from them you could work out the roll centre and roll angle.’

A huge amount of work was then done with E1A, especially on evolving Bob Knight’s new independent rear suspension, before the first full-size E-type prototype arrived in early 1958. Prototypes in those days were extremely raw compared with the remarkably well-finished machines of today. Dewis, on his first encounter with this first full-size E-type, noted a misfiring engine, slipping clutch, excessive gearlever travel, brakes that were ‘totally inadequate, pedal reaches the toe-board when operated’ and awful handling with ‘too much understeer, rear end very soft and has excessive roll, both rear tyres fouling arches’. A lot of work to do, then...

Most of Dewis’s work at this time centred on the forthcoming Mk2, which as Jaguar’s volume saloon was much more important than any new sports car. It wasn’t until almost mid-way through 1959 that the E-type began to dominate his test reports, though the model wasn’t hugely



Dewis driving the 2.4-litre E1A prototype on MIRA’s steering pad, probably in 1957

Norman Dewis in the 1955 long-nose D-type, his favourite racing car. He was part of the 1955 works Jaguar team

troublesome to develop because its major components had been in production for years. Dewis points out, 'The XK150 had the triple-carburettor engine and the same gearbox, which was a bit clunky but reliable. It also had the rack-and-pinion steering and the same sort of torsion-bar-and-wishbone front suspension. We had done a lot of work on the independent rear suspension in E1A. I did a lot of work on the brakes and the handling, though.'

Dewis had been Jaguar's key engineer when Dunlop and Jaguar jointly evolved the world's first practical car disc brake in the early Fifties, originally for Le Mans and then for roadgoing Jaguars. Like the XK150, the E-type featured disc brakes all-round, with similar size discs and calipers; it used a different type of servo, however, and Dewis's daily logs reveal that much time went into getting the pedal pressure down, 'Bob Knight liked to use a soft pad material because the Americans liked a soft brake pedal, just as they liked very light steering. I wasn't allowed to develop different set-ups so to satisfy European customers who complained about the brakes we told the service department to fit DS11 pads which were much harder and more fade-resistant.'

Even with standard pads, braking was good by the standards of the day – typically, Dewis carried out 30 consecutive stops from 100mph without the E-type's brakes fading, even though the discs were glowing cherry-red by the end of the session.

Getting the handling balance right also took time, 'I spent hours at MIRA with Bob Knight trying different anti-roll bars and springs. We also had different dampers – these were special screwed units supplied by Girling which you could adjust. I would spend two hours at a time going round MIRA's Number 2 circuit and the long wave pitch track with Bob, trying different combinations and damper settings. He was never quite satisfied. "It's quite good, Norman," he would say, "but I think we could try 5lb off the dampers..." Well, if you take 5lb off a figure of 200-300lb on the rebound setting you'd never notice it, so in the end I would say, "OK, Bob," and next time I would tell him we had adjusted the dampers – even though we hadn't. "Yes, Norman," he would say, "that's better..."'

> 'I did a lot of work on the brakes and handling... I spent hours at MIRA'

Testing included performance, and at first the E-type's maximum speed was disappointing. It gradually increased when it was discovered that a conventional number plate had a significant impact on the top speed; this led to the adoption of stick-on numbers on the bonnet. Strictly speaking, they should have been on a vertical surface, but the E-type seems to have got away with it ever since.

Almost all the development work was carried out on open two-seaters, a pre-production example becoming available in June 1960, 'a red car with Perspex headlamp covers with rubber, not chrome-plated, rims', recalls Dewis. 'There were problems with bonnet movement – it was the way it was fixed, with budget locks on each side. Later these were changed for levers which you could operate from inside the car, and that stopped the bonnet panting.' At first the new M1 motorway was used for high-speed testing, 'but it wasn't long before the police turned us off.' Eventually he used the Autostrada del Sol in Italy, where the police were more enthusiastic about speed.

It was at speed that a problem emerged with the two-seater's hood. 'The hood ballooned at the front and created a boom,' remembers Dewis. 'The production people were going to let it go, but I wanted to get to the bottom of it. I found a piece of chain in the garage and taped it inside the hood, and this damped the hood and stopped it ballooning. I brought the car back to Browns Lane and said that this was the sort of weight needed, and in the end a rubber tube filled with lead shot was used.'

There was a drastic shortage of development cars and it was not until November 1960 that a pre-production fixed-head coupé arrived for testing. This was 9600 HP, one of the two E-types later used as demonstrators at Geneva. With typical Jaguar economy it was employed not only for development but also as a press car, being loaned to *The Autocar* just ahead of Geneva. Likewise, the roadster 77 RW was supposed to be Norman's test car, but also doubled as road-test car for *The Motor* and as a Geneva demonstrator.

Both magazines were astonished by the E-type's performance, but also criticised details – for example the seats. Dewis took this on board, 'The seats were pretty poor on the Series 1, and it took a long time before they were improved,' he says. 'The lumbar support was poor and there was no side support. Also there wasn't enough cushioning in the horseshoe, and you'd get wrinkles. They tried to make it a bucket seat, but it wasn't as good as the Ferrari seat of the time. But Jaguar always looked at the cheapest way of doing things and, to be honest, they had to produce cost savings in order to keep themselves in business.

'Sometimes, though, people cut corners when they shouldn't. Arthur Fisher, who ran production road tests, would show complaints from the drivers who hadn't gone through procedures. I'd go back to Bill in the cost office and ask if they'd instituted a change, and he'd say, "Yes, it saved a penny." I would say "We hadn't signed that off – you'd better put it back as it was."'

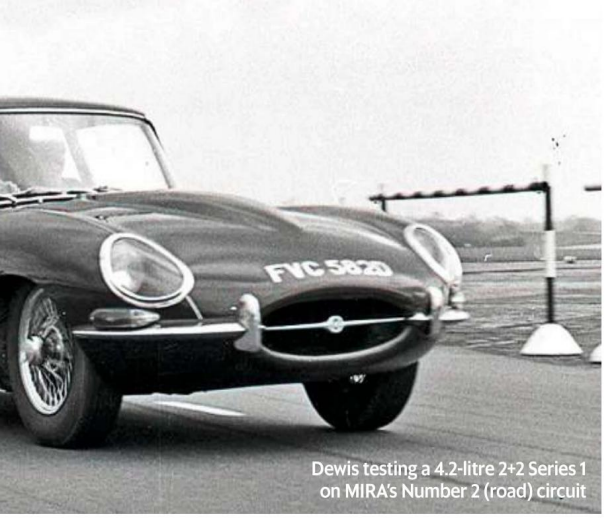
Both 77 RW and 9600 HP were in effect prototypes, and development was still continuing apace well after the E-type's Geneva and New York debuts. Even Dewis's epic dash with 77 RW to Geneva to augment 9600 HP as a demonstrator resulted in a long list of observations – though he rates the drive as one of the highlights of his career.

At times it seemed the car would never get into proper production, and weekly progress meetings began in May 1961 to try to make things happen. But Dewis didn't start the routine – and extremely punishing – pavé tests at MIRA until that same month. After 483 miles on the cobbles a steering rack mounting broke, at 565 miles the centre engine mounting failed, and at 709 miles the offside front engine mounting rubber failed. Such faults led to engineering changes, and there were a lot of them in the E-type's first few months of life, but eventually the car could complete 1000 miles on the pavé without failure.

Today Dewis, now aged 96, remembers those years – and especially 9600 HP and 77 RW – with affection. At the time he had no idea he was helping to create a sports car that would one day be hailed an icon but he says, 'The E-type is my favourite Jaguar after the 1955 long-nose D-type, and it's my favourite road Jaguar.'

A lot of people would make the same choice.

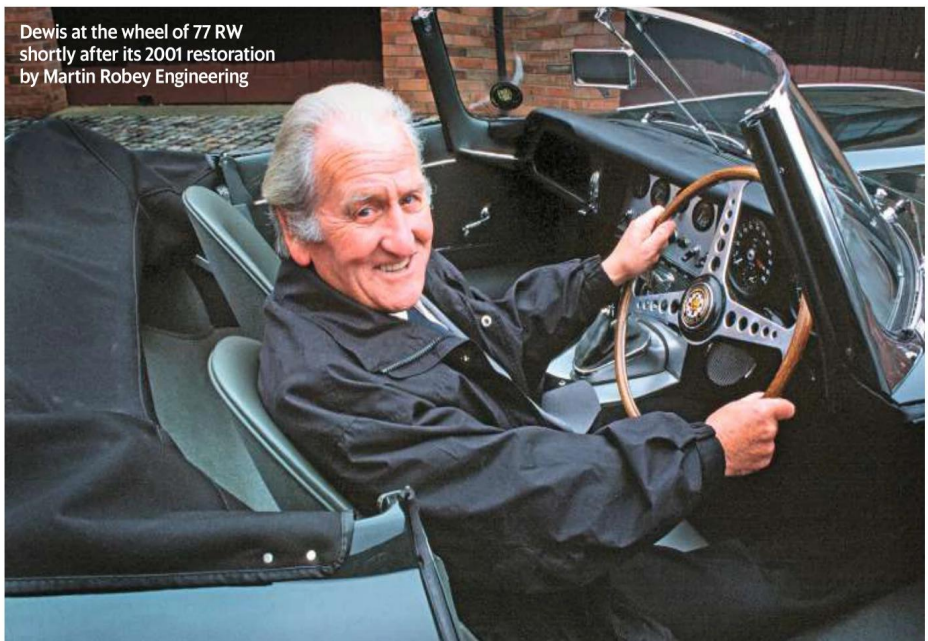
Ouch – 77 RW had its fair share of scrapes. This one happened on the way to MIRA in February 1961, inflicted by a Hillman Minx



Dewis testing a 4.2-litre 2+2 Series 1 on MIRA's Number 2 (road) circuit

Norman with 77 RW's current owner, Michael Kilgannon

Dewis, as reserve driver, in the Briggs Cunningham entered E2A prototype at Le Mans in 1960; cylinder head gasket failure put the car out of the race


Dewis at the wheel of 77 RW shortly after its 2001 restoration by Martin Robey Engineering


GUAR'S HERITAGE
1686 RW

‘Suddenly, no one was paying the bills’

Restoration of this 1961 *Daily Mail* competition prize looked doomed, until a keen new owner stepped in

Words NIGEL BOOTHMAN Photos LAURENS PARSONS

The Jaguar E-type looked distinctly shabby when its new owner brought it to Classic Motor Cars in Shropshire in 2007. A total restoration was inevitable. But then the recession bit and the owner didn't want to continue, as managing director Nick Goldthorp recalls, 'Suddenly, we had to complete a highly involved restoration of a famous E-type with no one to pay the bills.'

Cut-price compromises would harm both CMC's reputation and the car's value – and no Jaguar E-type is more valued than an early roadster such as this. These 'flat floor' cars, made for about a year from the spring of 1961, did without a legroom-increasing dished footwell, but there are other features that set them apart. For real bragging rights, you need one of the first 100 cars produced. Add a really exciting flash of history and you have an E-type to be reckoned with.

Chassis 24 (actually 850024) is just such a car. It is one of two E-types given away in a competition by the *Daily Mail* in May 1961. The car was won by a broke 20-year-old from Lancashire, Marcus Girvan. His father helped him to run it but after a year as Southport's most popular eligible bachelor, he sold it. Later, it made its way to South Africa, before returning to the UK in 1998.

CMC needed to find a buyer with the commitment to see this project through. Luckily, one showed up.

'An hour later I'd spoken with Nick and the car was mine,' says John Butterworth, a Jaguar fan with a delectable collection, of how he came to own chassis 24. He happened to visit CMC at an opportune time.

'Peter Neumark, CMC's chairman, was showing me around one day and there was this painted shell. I've always liked grey cars and said to Peter, "That's my favourite colour." I had a Mk2 saloon in the same shade. Peter told me it was a customer's car but that the owner had decided not to continue with the restoration. Then I heard about its *Daily Mail* history and that it had a very early chassis number and decided on the spot that I really had to have it. Having spoken to Nick and Peter, the car was mine.

E-type had several repaints in its earlier years, eventually ending up wearing 'Resale Red'

Expert tip

'Convertible roofs tended to drum at speed. Jaguar's early solution was to sew in a tube filled with lead shot to damp it, so I emptied shotgun cartridges in order to replicate this – and it works!' *Tom Hampton*

'It took about a year to finish off. When it was done, it was reunited with Marcus Girvan, the competition winner, who hadn't seen the car since he sold it in 1962. It made for a nice follow-up in the *Daily Mail*. The original registration, 303 CXR, was transferred by Marcus on to the MGA he got as a trade-in. Unfortunately, the car was written off and the registration number went with it. So I've found 1686 RW – RW is Coventry, and 1686 is not far from 1600 RW, the number on another famous early E-type owned by Peter Neumark. Everything else on the car is correct, so why shouldn't it have an appropriate registration number?'

'The project had got off to an unpromising start,' says Luke Martin, CMC's panel beater. 'It actually broke in half when we finally got it up on to the ramp. The floor and sills turned out to be a mixture of filler and rot, so I cut them away then did the same with the boot floor and the body's lower rear quarters.'

The way in which an E-type is built means that corrosion in the lower 12 inches of the body is structurally disastrous, especially for a roadster. The shell has front and rear bulkheads joined with the floors and sills, the two sills tied together by a crossmember. If you have to cut this out you're left with two detached halves of a Jaguar. When it happens by accident it seems utterly catastrophic, yet it's an important step and one that has to be taken if you want to to put things right properly.

'None of this could be done without mounting the body on a jig,' says Martin. 'It's the only way you've got of keeping all the dimensions accurate; without it you'd never get anything straight ever again.'

Bodyshell in his favourite colour set John Butterworth on his way to buying the E-type

Zoltan Nemeth was able to restore and re-use many original engine parts

Martin repaired the front and rear bulkhead edges but had to re-make one rear quarter when he discovered old accident damage. But despite the good availability of reproduction E-type panels, only the floors and inner sills were bought in.

'The quality and consistency aren't good enough,' he says. 'Or at least they weren't a few years ago when we started on this car. For instance, the outer sills you buy now are 1.2mm or 18-gauge steel but the originals were made in 1.5mm, or 16-gauge. So I made the outer sills, boot floor, bits of door frame and two new door skins.

'The rear quarter took about a week to shape, wheel and fit. The bonnet was another huge job. They're made from more pieces on early cars and this one had to be taken to bits entirely and re-made from a mixture of original components and new sections formed to repair crash damage. I guess it took three weeks in all.'

Just getting the repair sections right is only the beginning. When you see Martin's dedication to reproducing the factory-standard construction methods you start to understand CMC's approach to this car.

'I TIG-welded the floors to the inner sills as they were originally all one pressing. But everywhere that was spot-welded, I used the large spot-welder to recreate exactly the same result. I'll even admit to measuring between spot welds, which I'm sure the factory never did. But, today, people expect a certain finish!'

The paint was applied in a water-based Opalescent Gunmetal over solvent-based primers, with a solvent-based lacquer on top. The finish is staggeringly deep and flawless, yet doesn't look so modern as to appear out of place.

'There was a lot I couldn't replace – I had to find a way to repair everything'

Says Nick Goldthorp, 'We use water-based paint because more and more solvent-based or two-pack paints contain basic commercial tints to provide the colour, and this fades over time.'

For once, the mechanical stripdown revealed a car that was better than expected, as mechanic Zoltan Nemeth explains,

With so many changes in early production, restoration had to be tailored to the quirks of this car

Seat shell before new wooden strips and foam were added

Tom Wright applies the finishing touch to carpet edges

Unique job number attached to every piece, including roof

'The gearbox was intact; only the bearings had to be renewed. We found no serious electrolytic corrosion in the waterways at the cylinder head block joint, so no welding was required. The cylinder block was chemically cleaned and crack-tested using a dye painted on to the surface. It changes colour if it sinks into a hairline crack and shows it up clearly. Again, we were lucky and found nothing.'

Classic Motor Cars' standard philosophy of preserving everything that can safely be re-used applied throughout the engine build too.

'The crankshaft was re-ground and re-used, but the block had to be over-bored so new oversize pistons were required,' says Nemeth. 'But we were able to re-use the connecting rods and a lot else besides. At the top of the engine we used new valve seats suitable for unleaded fuel, plus newer-type valve guides with oil seals. It's a minor change from original specification but it helps to keep the oil out of the combustion chamber.'

The Moss gearbox would have presented a problem had any damage to gear teeth been discovered, as Nemeth explains, 'These gearboxes were set up as mated assemblies, so you can't just replace one damaged gear. If you do, they can make a terrible noise; one damaged tooth would have meant a complete secondhand gearset. Luckily, it was intact so it only needed new bearings.'

Colin Howell's work on the electrical systems of chassis 24 wasn't the most glamorous part of this lengthy project, yet it was thanks to his efforts that CMC was able to retain original parts that otherwise would have had to be discarded.

'You have to replace old wiring, just for safety reasons, but there was a lot else on the car that I couldn't replace, at least not with the right item – I had to find a way to repair everything,' he says.

'The dashboard gauges were one example – the fuel and temperature gauges need an average 10v feed and are controlled by a bi-metallic strip that turns the battery voltage on and off to get the right result, but after a while it gets pretty imprecise. We were able to renovate and recalibrate them here.'

Howell also refurbished a lot of the individual switches to avoid the need for replacements, though buying off-the-shelf items would undoubtedly have been quicker and therefore cheaper.

'The first E-types, like this one, had a submerged fuel pump. The one on this car wasn't working but I was able to rebuild that as well so, 52 years on, it's still running, along with the majority of electrical components, large and small, that came with it from the factory.'

'The gearboxes are mated assemblies so you can't just replace one damaged gear'

Expert tip

'The spaceframe that supports the engine and suspension may look fine, but tip it up and you can hear rust fragments rattling inside. You've no idea how it would stand up in a collision – it should always be renewed.' *Luke Martin*

Tom Hampton re-made the seats and the roof, leaving Tom Wright to trim everything else. He explains the difficulty in having to work from patterns, 'The early cars were handbuilt, so the standard E-type patterns aren't much use – the variation can be huge.'

Another colleague, Pete Madeley, is able to provide fascinating observations from his time as a Jaguar employee because he actually worked on the E-type production line when the cars were new, 'The E-type was often in such extreme demand that we would be told simply to remove something from another car to allow us to finish off the one that was needed most urgently, because Jaguar was always "on stop" with one supplier or another. That's why a lot of the features that you find – especially on the very earliest E-types – frequently aren't consistent.'

This insight may explain why chassis 24 was delivered to *Daily Mail* owner Associated Newspapers with the decidedly unusual combination of Opalescent Gunmetal paint with a beige interior and a black hood. So, in the only variation from this car's original specification, owner John Butterworth has decided to go with the red leather interior that's seen much more often in grey E-types.

'There's a considerable amount of work involved in trimming the boot, the bulkhead, the top of the dash, the sides of the centre console, the top box and the radio tower,' says Wright. 'As a general rule, Jaguar tended to use leathercloth for the less obvious areas, and leather where it would be visible.'

Tom Hampton has been trimming early E-types for more than 25 years. 'I replicated the original seats,' he says. 'We blasted the frames and then coated them in two-pack paint. A lot of the components that you don't see in the seats – including the foam, the woodwork and the tacking strips – were done for on this car, so I had to make like-for-like replacements.

'For the leather itself, I selected the most suitable bits of a hide for each part of the seat. So for instance the back of the hide – which is the least pliable and hardest wearing – suits the faces of the seats.'

Much of the exterior trim also needed attention. Once again, certain items that differed from later E-types were unavailable and had to be repaired or re-made by panelbeater Luke Martin. Bumpers and windscreen chromes were re-made, and the door-top trims were created using silver soldering. This is a technique not unlike brazing but more suitable for joining delicate bits of brass.

Zoltan Nemeth stripped down and rebuilt chassis 24. He photographed numerous details for future reference and to ensure the preservation of hundreds of apparently insignificant fixings.

'We ended up bead-blasting every old nut, bolt, screw and clip, then getting them cadmium-plated before re-using them,' he says. 'So many of these parts are unique to E-types of this age and so are unavailable new. If you lose anything, it's gone forever, so we had to be very careful with things like bolts stamped with Rubery Owen, Bees, GKN... and the round-headed Cheney and Jubilee hose clips.

Every single fixing was bead-blasted, cadmium-plated and re-used

Hood bag on; now let's take it for a run

Perfection? Not until it's passed the CMC 500-mile road test

'I mixed the right shade of duck-egg blue paint used for the brackets holding the reservoirs and elsewhere in the engine bay. The driveshafts were also blue, which was odd – maybe another example of pieces being taken from other cars on the production line.

'You rarely see the Trico Reservac lettering on the brake vacuum tank. The one on this car was only just about legible so I traced it, made a template and when the tank was refurbished I painted it on. I've since re-used the template for another car.

'This process of saving absolutely everything we could and making it useable again was something we worked out when restoring other early E-types,' says Nemeth. 'The sidelight lenses, windscreen frame pieces, external bonnet release catches and even the windscreen wiper motor are extermely difficult to source.'

When the car was ready Wayne Smallman, CMC's highly experienced and trusted road-tester, took over and subjected the E-type to a thorough shake-down. 'I did more than 500 miles in it before I was completely happy with it,' he says. 'Everything needs to settle and a lot has to be adjusted once it has. We've also had re-manufactured parts fail inside 50-100 miles – I went as far as taking the car around the Wolverhampton ring road during the height of the rush hour just to make sure that it was cooling as it should.'

This restoration turned out to be a mixture of the radical and the cautious. It started out radical – the replacement of damaged metal, built not to just imitate factory standards but to actually exceed them, trimmed with new leather and wool carpets. But then it was cautiously rebuilt, not only with original components, but with their original fixings. Doing a resoration like this is borderline obsessive and vastly time-consuming, but if you want the sort of results that John Butterworth and Nick Goldthorp are satisfied with, it's the only way to do it.

Thanks to: *John and Alfie Butterworth, Nick Goldthorp, Peter Neumark and all the staff at CMC: classic-motor-cars.co.uk, 01746 765804*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THE RESU

Twelve Lightweight E-types were made, but only 11 were accounted for until September 2014, when *Classic Cars* got to see it in original form, about to be reborn

Words DAN STRONG Photos TIM ANDREW, ANDREW DEE

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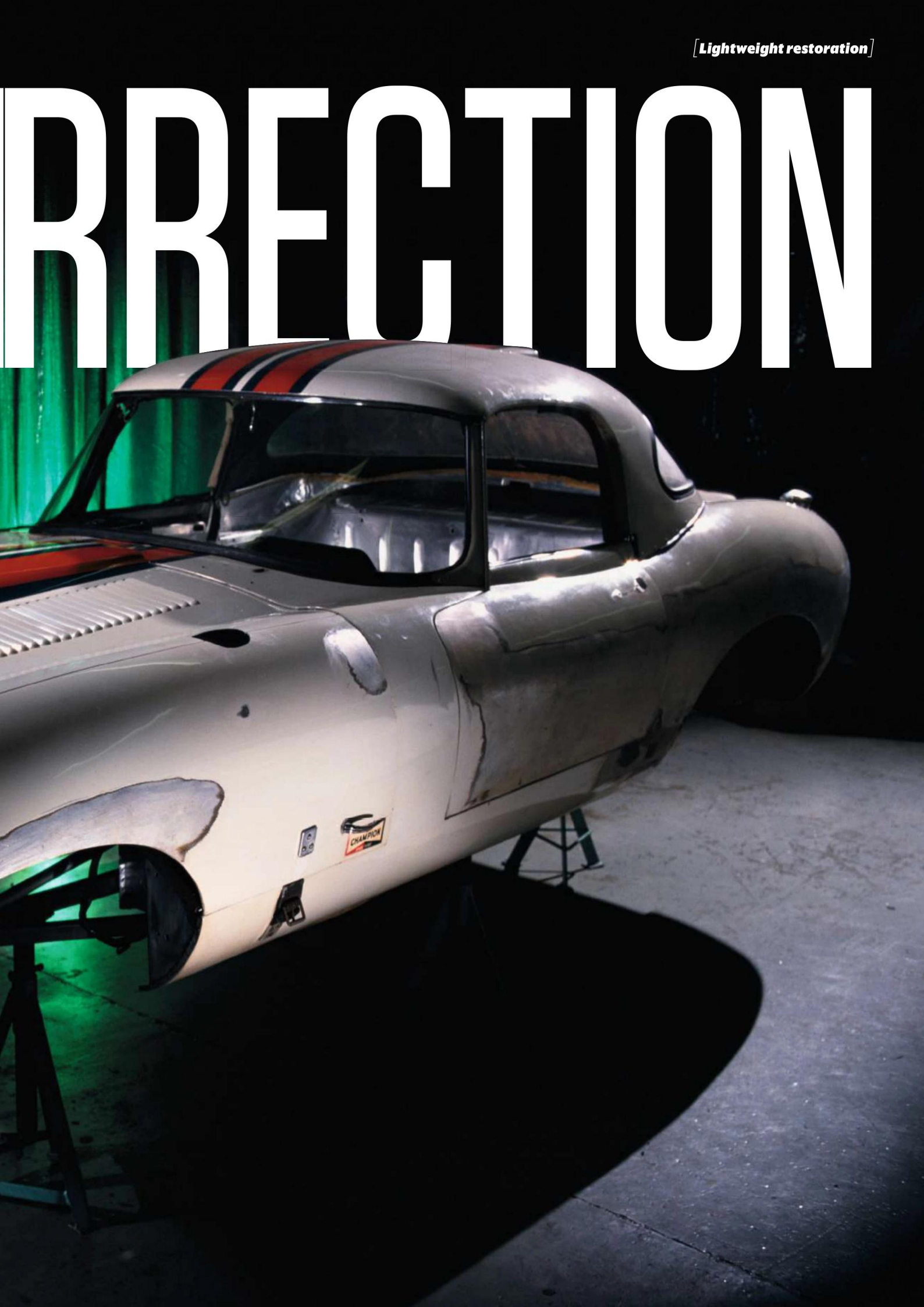


It's a dreamlike scene. Sitting among the glittering display of Jaguar race cars filling Lynx's Hastings workshops is a 1963 Lightweight E-type that's spent the last 35 years stored in a Californian garage. With the accumulated grime blurring its lines it looks like a giant 3D sepia photograph. From the viewing balcony that's provided this first glimpse, we make our way down to the workshop floor and pass a potted history of Jaguar racing. On any other occasion the sight of a TWR-built Le Mans prototype, a low-drag coupé E-type and an Ecurie Ecosse D-type would stop me in my tracks, but not now. The Lightweight is close. Just nine months ago it was still stored in suspended animation beneath a mountain of crumbling cardboard boxes, hidden from the world in 1963 by its incredible owner, Howard Gidlovlenko, a man as happy racing aeroplanes as he was cars. Had he not died, it's safe to assume the car would still be there, wrapped in its unorthodox time capsule rather then here in England awaiting its long overdue restoration.

We're now beside the car. Up close it looks almost surreal. For a 35-year-old racing car its aluminium body is impossibly smooth, but then it has covered just 2663 miles since it was built in March 1963. Goodyear Blue Streak racing tyres are still fitted to the car's alloy Dunlop racing wheels and the bonnet still bears the sponsorship stickers applied before a race at Sebring by its original owner and Jaguar's West Coast importer Kjell Qvale.

Looking closer I notice an almost ghostly aura of grease and dirt clinging to the red and blue striped paintwork, protecting the fragile aluminium body. For me that dirt and dust is as powerful an indicator of the car's incredible life as the reams of paper tracing its history. Neatly arranged next to the car is a collection of boxed factory spares that were found with the car. Incredibly, it includes two sets of new and unused Dunlop racing wheels packed in wooden crates,

The engine spaceframe is the only non-aluminium part of the structure!

Unique aero-specification hatches cut into the rear bulkhead help cool the inboard rear disc brakes

unground camshafts, brake kits wrapped in newspaper from the Sixties and a Borg and Beck clutch. The originality is almost beyond belief and in the case of the boxed wheels, priceless and almost certainly unique.

As we're standing there, the E-type's bonnet is lifted by four uniformed Lynx mechanics to reveal an all-aluminium engine mounted on a subframe stained with exhaust fumes. Oil is poured into the dry sump, hoses and electrical connections are checked and double checked before the 3.8-litre straight six is spun over on the car's electric starter motor. The mechanics deal with astonishing cars for a living, but I'm sure I'm not the only one holding my breath as they prepare to run the engine. I'm standing next to Lynx chairman and managing director John Mayston-Taylor. 'Gidlovlenko was an all American hero,' he explains, 'a decorated fighter pilot and World War Two ace for the RAF. After the war he turned his hand to hot-rodding aeroplanes and won a string of races in a tuned up, clipped wing P51 Mustang. He was also selected as a USAF test pilot for the X2 and became friends with Chuck Yeager. The man could have come from pages of a *Boys' Own* annual. It's said those patches of bare aluminium were created after Gidlovlenko took an angle grinder to the Jag's flanks during his divorce, cosmetically ruining the car and stopping it from being sold to pay off his wife. Paint removal and panel polishing aside, Gidlovlenko had also personalised this car for his own demands. He employed his initmate knowledge of aircaft technology, usining aluminium box sections to brace and strenghten the car's bodyshell, ensuring its longevity by spraying zinc chromate – an aerospace etch primer – over the exposed and unreated aluminium inside the car.

But despite this preperation, and Gidlovlenko's undeniable appetite for speed, he hardly used the car. Records show the car was raced by a team entered by Qvale at Sebring and Laguna Seca in 1963, but though Gidlovlenko obviously had big plans for the racer there's no evidence to

Patches of bare aluminium reputedly a result of Gidlovlenko deliberately angle-grinding the paint off it to prevent the car's sale following a divorce

'The bonnet lifts to reveal an engine on a subframe stained with exhaust fumes'

show that he entered it in any race, which explains the huge collection of unused spares.

An intention to run the car in a race at Daytona is mentioned in correspondence betweek Gidlovlenko and the Jaguar factory, but the details of his race preparation work seem a little vague. It's also clear that Gidlovlenko had not left himself enough time to finish the race preparation for the event because his mention of it comes just three months before it was due to start.

The car was last taxed and insured in 1967, though whether it was used during that year is unlikely because the '63 registration plates issued to

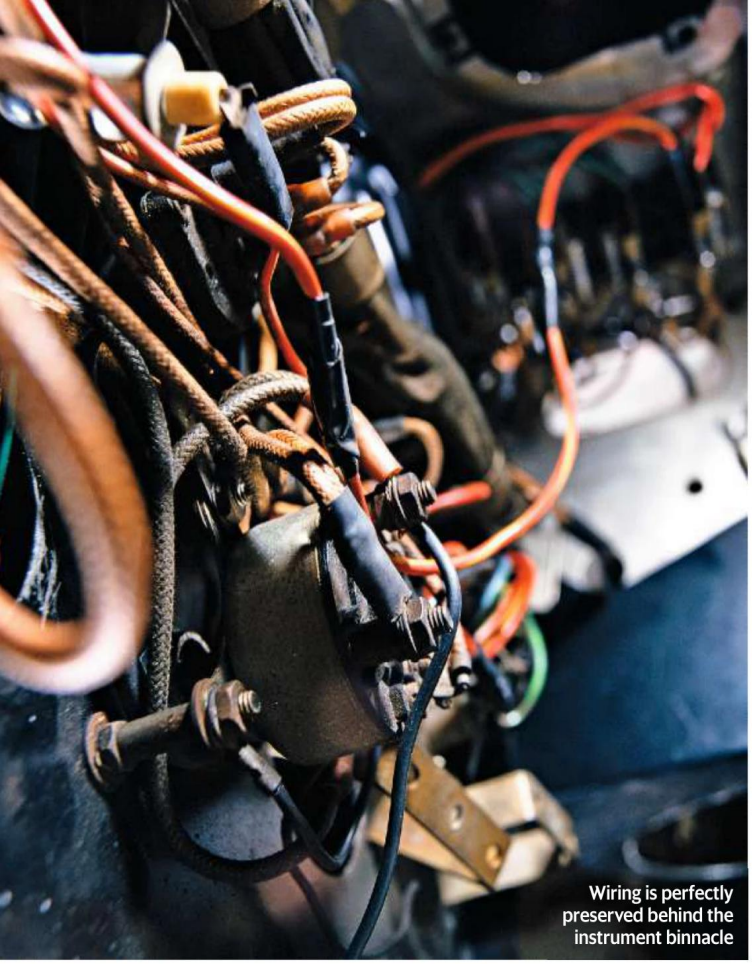
The Lightweight E-type- Jaguar's Ferrari-beater

The true competition E-type did not appear until March 1963, by which time Enzo Ferrari had commissioned a devastating response to the new E-type – the GTO. Jaguar built 12 Lightweight E-type roadsters, all fashioned from light alloy. Apart from the suspension, the engine frame was about the only major item not alloy, but later cars used thin-wall steel tubing for that too. The 315bhp-plus 3.8-litre engine also came later with its wide-angle, big-valve cylinder head, Lucas mechanical fuel injection and dry sump lubrication.

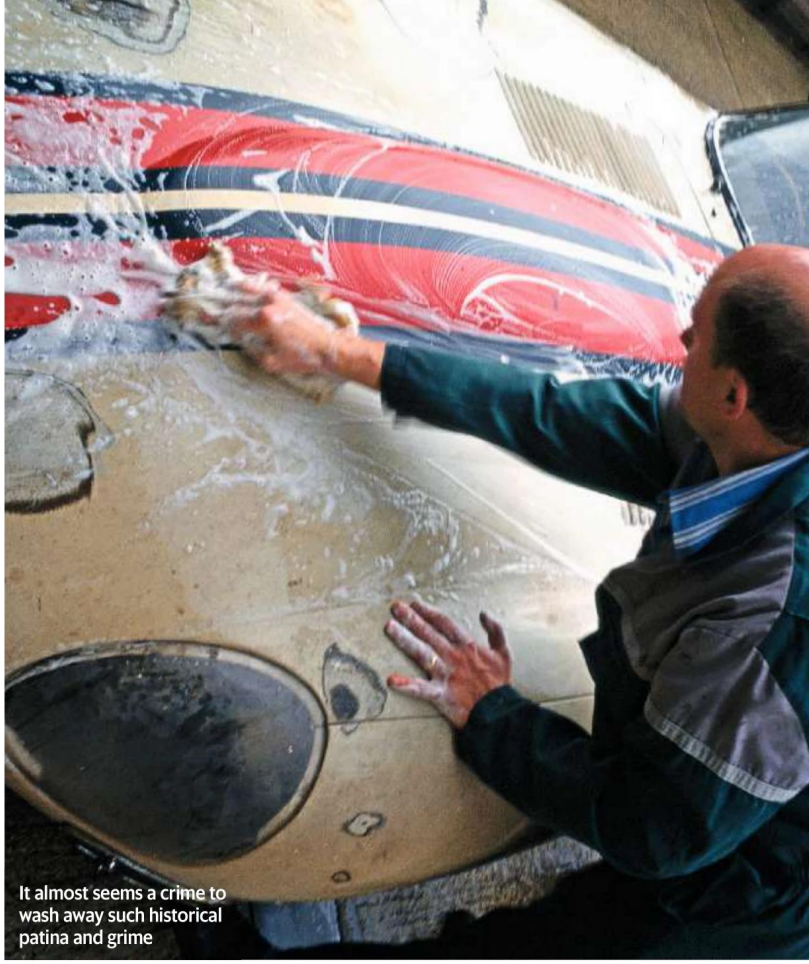
Suspension, brakes and drivetrain were production-based, though some cars had ZF's heavy five-speed gearbox – to the distress of the alloy cylinder block which could fracture due to leverage. All cars had production E-type chassis numbers so that they could meet the build quantities demanded for homologation; indeed they were sold at list price, customers being invoiced later for the modifications.

Two cars entered the March 1963 Sebring 12-hour race – 'our' car, S850660, and S850659 for Briggs Cunningham. The seventh overall achieved by Leslie and Morrill in our car proved to be the Lightweight's best result ever in a top-level long distance event. Graham Hill won four times during 1963 with a reborn 4 WPD, but only in British sprint races. Peter Lindner led the first lap of the Nürburgring 1000km but succumbed to engine trouble; and at the Cunningham team only managed 9th at Le Mans in 1963.

If Jaguar had produced the Lightweight for 1962 and whole-heartedly developed it, then Enzo's fear of the E-type might well have been justified. As it is, this car remains a tantalising reminder of what might have been. **Paul Skilleter**



Wiring is perfectly preserved behind the instrument binnacle



It almost seems a crime to wash away such historical patina and grime

This Lightweight E-type was mothballed after just two races. Preserving its originality was central to the restoration

Champion sponsorship stickers applied in 1963 survived well

Gidovlenko when he took delivery of the E-type remain unused. It was around this time that the car was dismantled in readiness for storage. He started by carefully dropping the rear suspension on its subframe, then removed the engine and covered the bodywork in a film of duck oil to protect it from the elements.

The Lightweight didn't move again until February 28, 1998 when it was publicly unearthed after Gidlovlenko's death by a consortium that included American restorer Richard E Darnell. The group, which comprised Jaguar historians and specialists, had been on the trail of the car for some time and from the moment it was found its pace of life accelerated unimaginably. From its suburban resting place it headed for the summer auctions at Monterey where it sold for $872,050 (£540,67 at the time). Interestingly, the original bill of sale, a hire purchase agreement, confirms that the car was originally sold as a demonstrator by Kjell Qvale on October 29, 1963 for $5000.

Immediately after the auction at Monterey, arrangements were made by Lynx to have the car shipped back to the UK. Endless paperwork was required for the move because the US authorities refused to believe an E-type could be worth such a huge amout of money, suspecting a complex money crime. Once they were sure everything was as it should be, the car headed for London on a 747 and then on to Lynx's Hastings workshops. This is the begining of the car's resurrection, and the start of a project that will turn a timewarp into a competition car that's reliable and safe. In some ways some of the existing magic will be lost as the Lightweight is recomissioned, but Mayston-Taylor is adamant that the aim is to preserve its originality, rather than create the kind of facsimile of it that can be seen in concours cars around the globe.

I'm jolted from my revery by the chatter of a starter motor. The exquisitely detailed engine sneezes through its fuel injection trumpets. After just a handful of seconds it snarls into life. The engine note from the twin straight-through exhausts has an almost physical quality, an edge you can feel in your chest as the revs rise. Three mechanics surround the growling engine, oblivious to the cacophony that's making me want to cover my ears. They slowly run their hands over the camshaft covers and complex mechanical fuel injection system, feeling for rattles and knocks that could signal trouble.

Fingers carefully turn the spring loaded throttle arms and the revs climb, apparently unhindered by inertia or friction. It's a tantalising taste of the unit's 315bhp-plus performance and one that sends goosebumps up my arms. All too soon the ear-splitting bark of the engine is quelled and the workshop falls silent. No one says anything – we just stand there inhaling the rich petrol aroma that's still seeping from the exhaust pipes, marvelling at the integrity of a 35-year-old engine that can still run on its original parts.

Eventually, the mechanics roll the car back towards the ramps and with the engine checked, tools, labels, boxes and cameras are arranged around the car, ready for the stripdown. Everything will be kept during the rebuild, every part photographed and catalogued, right down to the little plastic cable ties holding the wiring loom together. The aim of the rebuild is to keep as much of the car's original character as is physically possible.

It's raining as the Lightweight E-type is wheeled out to be washed. A bucket of steaming soapy water is brought from the workshop and the mechanics begin to wipe away 35 years of dirt, grime and the protective covering of grease the car was treated to by its owner. It runs off the car in muddy rivulets.

As the water drains away, the rain eases and a watery sun shines through, creating reflections on the wet paintwork. At the rear though, the reflection is broken by the matt outline of the number 423. It's the mark left by the glue of race numbers from the car's second and final race at Laguna Seca.

As it's cleaned away by one of the mechanics, it symbolises an end of an era for the car, and the beginning of a new life, one very much in the public eye and in stark contrast to the years it has spent hiding under an assortment of boxes in a garage in a quiet Los Angeles suburb.

The Lightweight at Sebring – and a suitcase on the trunk

Sebring has hosted the Sebring 12-hour race since the Fifties. Four E-types contested the 1963 event, two of them new Lightweight Competition versions. One (S850659) belonged to long-time Jaguar entrant Briggs Cunningham, the other (S850660) to Kjell Qvale's British Motor Car Distributors (BMCD), Jaguar's West Coast importer in San Francisco.

BMCD had run an MGB in the '62 event and chose one of its drivers, Ed Leslie, for the E-type along with Frank Morrill. There was little time to prepare for the race so chief mechanic Joe Huffaker directed his efforts at saving time in the pits. To avoid opening the bonnet, Joe calculated the amount of oil needed at stops and built a long cylinder with a plunger at one end. A hole was cut in the bonnet over the dry sump so when the car pitted, the crew could just dump oil into the tank.

The Cunningham E-type driven by Bruce McLaren and Walt Hansgen challenged the Ferraris and a top-five finish was on the cards until brakeline failure allowed Leslie and Morrill to take seventh. Their run was uneventful, though Ed Leslie recalls, 'I had a tyre go – it made a hell of a bang.' The flailing carcass damaged the wheelarch and moved the rear suspension sideways several inches, but they still finished ahead of the Cunningham car. Post race, Leslie drove the E-type to nearby Miami for its flight to San Francisco with racing numbers, open exhausts and a suitcase strapped onto the trunk lid!

It completed just one more race – at Laguna Seca – then the car was sold to Gidlovlenko and after that came the long sleep...**Paul Skilleter**

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Series 2 reels in the miles to Geneva

Series 3 coupé follows roadster into the snow-lined mountains before the final descent into Switzerland

RUNNING WITH THE OLD BREED

Fifty years after test driver Norman Dewis raced across Europe to deliver an E-type to the Geneva Motor Show we join Jaguar on a trans-European tour to celebrate

Words ROB SCORAH Photography ROB SCORAH/ROGER COOPER

They never lose their impact – these low, torpedo-like creations, standing ten or more abreast and four ranks deep in front of Coventry Transport Museum, their half-feral eyes gazing indifferently between their bustling crews. Jaguar's E-type – 1961-75.

They appear as almost pure forms from the very heart of Jaguar's psyche, given life by aerodynamicist and designer Malcolm Sayer in a shape that summed up the essence of speed and sensuality. Motoring has never been the same since. Today 50 of them are here to celebrate their half-century anniversary, setting off on a tour to Switzerland – a proper drive for a real GT.

Every series is here, from 1 VHP, the first Series 1 right-hand drive production coupé, to HDU 555N, a black 1975 S3 roadster and the last E-type ever built. There is the significantly rare – YVH 210, ninth of the 12 Lightweights and raced in 1963 by Peter Sutcliffe – and the downright odd in what looks like a Group 44 Bob Tullius team V12 SCCA racer. Marque enthusiasts will also appreciate the big dark shape looking like HMS *Victory* in among the fishing smacks – a 1957 MkVIIM, piloted by two American brothers and one of a few guest non-E-types that also include a 1953 XK120 that belonged to Jaguar boss Sir William Lyons' son. On a grey day, it's a colourful and impressive field.

'I sold my DB5 when I got a Jaguar E-type – it's the perfect sports car'

Modena would have arranged a police escort for its most illustrious offspring, but here every crew just follows its road book route out into Coventry's Monday morning rush hour. At least the mayor is here, flagging each car away to a fanfare from a brass quartet. There are even smiles from bus drivers and something resembling tolerance from the A-to-B diesel drones as the Immortals pull into the traffic. Exhausts puff condensation as throttles are blipped, engines slowly warming up after a chilly night.

It is pretty chilly – so why are we doing this at the end of February rather than a balmy day in July? There are two reasons. Firstly, these pilgrims are setting out for the Geneva Motor Show, scene of the E-type's launch in 1961. But more importantly the tour commemorates Jaguar development driver Norman Dewis's overnight dash to the same show to take an extra test car – the famous roadster 77 RW – to demonstrate to a very eager public. It took him fewer than 14 hours.

The night before the tour's departure a very sprightly 90-year-old Dewis was recounting the story himself at a dinner for the crews. Jaguar chief executive Ralf Speth also spoke warmly of the old Coventry firm. With the E-type such a luminous aspect of the company's history and a design still inspiring new models, it isn't hard to see why Jaguar and Jaguar Heritage have combined to organise the tour.

It's time to get acquainted with our mount for the journey. Car number 42 is a red 1969 fixed-head coupé Series 2 belonging to Peter Mitchell, recently retired CEO of Jaguar Heritage. Rush-hour traffic is never the best place to familiarise yourself with any classic, but at least an E-type is pretty urbane compared to many rivals. The 4.2-litre straight-six provides plenty of low-end torque, the clutch is of a moderate weight and the light steering allows easy negotiation of tight roundabouts and side street U-turns resulting from dodgy map-reading skills.

The mission for the first day is to negotiate the drizzle-bound, nose-to-tail A-roads of the Midlands and make for Castle Combe race circuit in Wiltshire and, after some relatively gentle laps, carry on to the Goodwood Hotel in West Sussex. Before bed we are guests at Goodwood House, home of Lord March, enjoying a candelabra-lit dinner under the steely gaze of a portrait of King Charles II.

Trends start to emerge on the second morning. The XK120's bonnet is usually up with owner and veteran tour driver Colin Stewart making sure the gleaming motor is well. Series 3 cars seem to get the most washes, with ex-Jaguar and F1 driver Martin Brundle's roadster leading by several buckets, and the crew taking so long to get zipped into their gear are the guys in the Group 44 – they have no other weather protection.

One car that stands out for its lack of pampering is No 49, a green 1966 S1 4.2-litre coupé. Its paintwork is dull, but the chrome still gleams; it's not the look of neglect, more like the feel of a well-used Purdy shotgun or

an old Gibson Les Paul guitar. Its owner, American Gary Bartlett, smiles fondly down at his old friend (which sports uprated and adjustable suspension, works D-type camshafts and a road-race clutch), 'I kind of like it just the way it is,' he says.

Fettling over, today's mission is a drive-by of Goodwood House and a few laps of the circuit. Goodwood's 1961 Easter meeting was intended to be the E-type's racing debut, but Jaguar couldn't supply the cars in time. Instead they appeared at Oulton Park a few weeks later, finishing in front of the Ferrari 250 SWBs and Aston Martin DB4 GTs, with Graham Hill and Roy Salvadori taking first and second respectively. Today our job isn't to beat the opposition – just the clock – and get to the Eurotunnel terminal in time. We need to be halfway across France by evening.

On the other side of the English Channel – sunlight. The change of weather seems to free up the whole tour, as do less-congested French roads. The S2 suddenly feels as if it can breathe more easily, the engine note settling into a constant rich burr on the A26 towards Reims.

Even while driving, your eyes are constantly drawn back to the body of the car, the bonnet power bulge giving a feeling of leaping forward while at the same time scooping up the road and funnelling it beneath the machine. The chrome highlights topping the wings carry an art deco resonance as their line streaks back toward you like liquid mercury taken by the air stream. Nothing ever really stands still on an E-type.

Not that this car would have evoked such a response when Mitchell first bought it. 'I could sit in the driver's seat with my feet flat on the ground,' he says. 'The biggest job was the sills – they needed replacing and welding. I used laser levels to make sure I kept the body straight while I was working.' The engine was rebuilt over seven months with the help of Brian Reed – 'an excellent Jaguar engineer, though he never worked for the factory' – and Mitchell swapped the triple SU carburettors for the triple SUs from an Aston Martin DB5. 'The originals were virtually scrap and I had these others doing nothing.' He's also substituted a five-speed gearbox from a Jaguar XJ in place of the original four-speed and added D-type-like Dunlop alloy wheels, 'Easier to balance.'

The steering is pure Jaguar; so light straight ahead, and indeed the car is apt to wander a little, though a mere tensing of the wrist brings it back. But as soon as you intentionally turn the wheel the machine responds precisely, the balance of force and the radius of the bend intimately felt through the rack's gearing.

What bends there are sweep wide and long as we head deeper into France across World War One battlefields. Small military cemeteries appear, their headstones white against the green hillsides.

We watch other E-types at play – the odd one blasting past (usually an Eagle-prepared model), some cruising with the lorries (S2 and S3 automatics) while the S1s mix it up depending on rivalries and opportunity. I presumed that the racing Lightweight was miles ahead, but later learn it had retired from the tour with valve trouble. And where's that other road-burner – the Group 44? It saunters into the hotel car park some time after us.

'It's not really a racer,' admits its pilot, Georg Dönni, as he unfastens successive layers of motorbike gear. 'It was a burnt-out V12 coupé and I didn't know what to do with it. Then one day my wife pointed to a picture [of the Bob Tullius racer] on a calendar and asked "Why don't you make that?"' As a high-end restorer in Switzerland, Dönni was in a better position than most to undertake the project and now he's here with it as well as friend, client and Jaguar collector Christian Jenny. It will certainly look the part on the next day's agenda – the race tracks of Reims (Circuit de Gueux) and Dijon.

Before that another sumptuous evening awaits. We're in the heart of Champagne country and are the guests of Taittinger at a dinner in the centre of the medieval town. It's in soirées such as this and Goodwood House that you feel the weight and power of Jaguar itself – its alliances and aspirations; GT values again.

The next morning brings a pink hue to the brightly repainted buildings and pit wall of the old Reims circuit. From 1953-55 Jaguar C- and D-types dominated the 12-hour endurance races – the new D-type took first and second here in '54, and a C-type third. Mitchell casually mentions he has done this straight at 120mph in a D-type, 'It was a real power circuit in its day.' It might be today too if the lorries would let up, but the sight of 50 E-types is slowing traffic down as drivers brake to take a better look.

Progress around the vaguely triangular track (the D27 and N31) is sedate, but you certainly get a good impression of those long straights with their panoramic sight-lines through the corners. Still, no time to tarry as we turn away and make for Dijon.

Further south we meet another icon of British motoring – a blue, GB-badged Mini, bowling along in the middle of nowhere. He gives a slightly bemused thumbs-up to successive waves of Coventry cruise missiles and disappears into our mirrors.

When we stop for lunch the sheer theatre of Sayer's design architecture comes alive – doors that open to reveal the sparkle of textured metal surfaces (the early S1s) and the huge clamshell bonnets with jewel-like engines beneath. There are a few surprises too – like the substantial heater fashioned, understandably, by a crew from Norway.

By nightfall most owners are willing to let their animals be, sleeping in the courtyard of the 16th century Chateaux de Chailly (chailly.com), while in the bar the talk veers from the technical, 'I bought a tub of that wax – it's best smeared on with your bare hands, but if your neighbours see you they think you're utterly mad. But you do get closer to your car while you're doing it.' His wife raises an eyebrow, 'I must buy some.'

Couples are a big part of this event. You get the feeling that if it were AC Cobras or Porsche 911s this would be guys in fleeces and baseball caps, but the Jaguar's appeal is broader, especially when matched with such roads. 'It's the supreme driving experience,' says Joe Greenwell, ex-chairman of Jaguar Land Rover. He's here with his wife Anne in their 1972 S3 roadster, which was *Autocar*'s long-term test car. 'The moment you see those tree-lined roads with no-one on them...' With a serene smile his hands come up to an imaginary steering wheel and his right foot goes down, 'The utter elegance of the power delivery.'

With all three generations of E-type here, which is the best for the event? 'A 4.2 S1 fixed-head coupé,' says Derek Hood unequivocally. His opinion carries a fair bit of weight – his JD Classics workshops have fettled a good proportion of the cars here. 'Its still got the looks of the early car,' he adds, 'but it's got better seats and springing

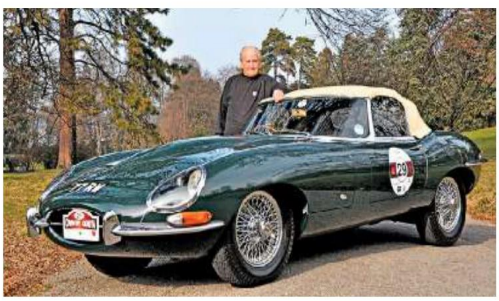
'Well done – I knew you could do it'

On march 16, 1961 Norman Dewis and 77 RW were brake-testing at MIRA when the track manager delivered a message from Browns Lane to him – he was needed back at the factory – urgently.

Dewis arrived back mid-afternoon to be told by chief engineer Bill Heynes that the response to the new E-type at the Geneva show was so overwhelming that another demonstrator was needed to cater for all those clamouring for test rides. Jaguar publicity man Bob Berry had driven fixed-head coupé 9600 HP down some days before, and Dewis had to join him now. His bag was already packed and the ferry ticket booked.

Dewis left at 7:45pm with less than two hours to get to Dover. Technically, when he got to the ferry he'd missed it, but the stevedores were so eager for their mates to see the new Jaguar that it was allowed to board.

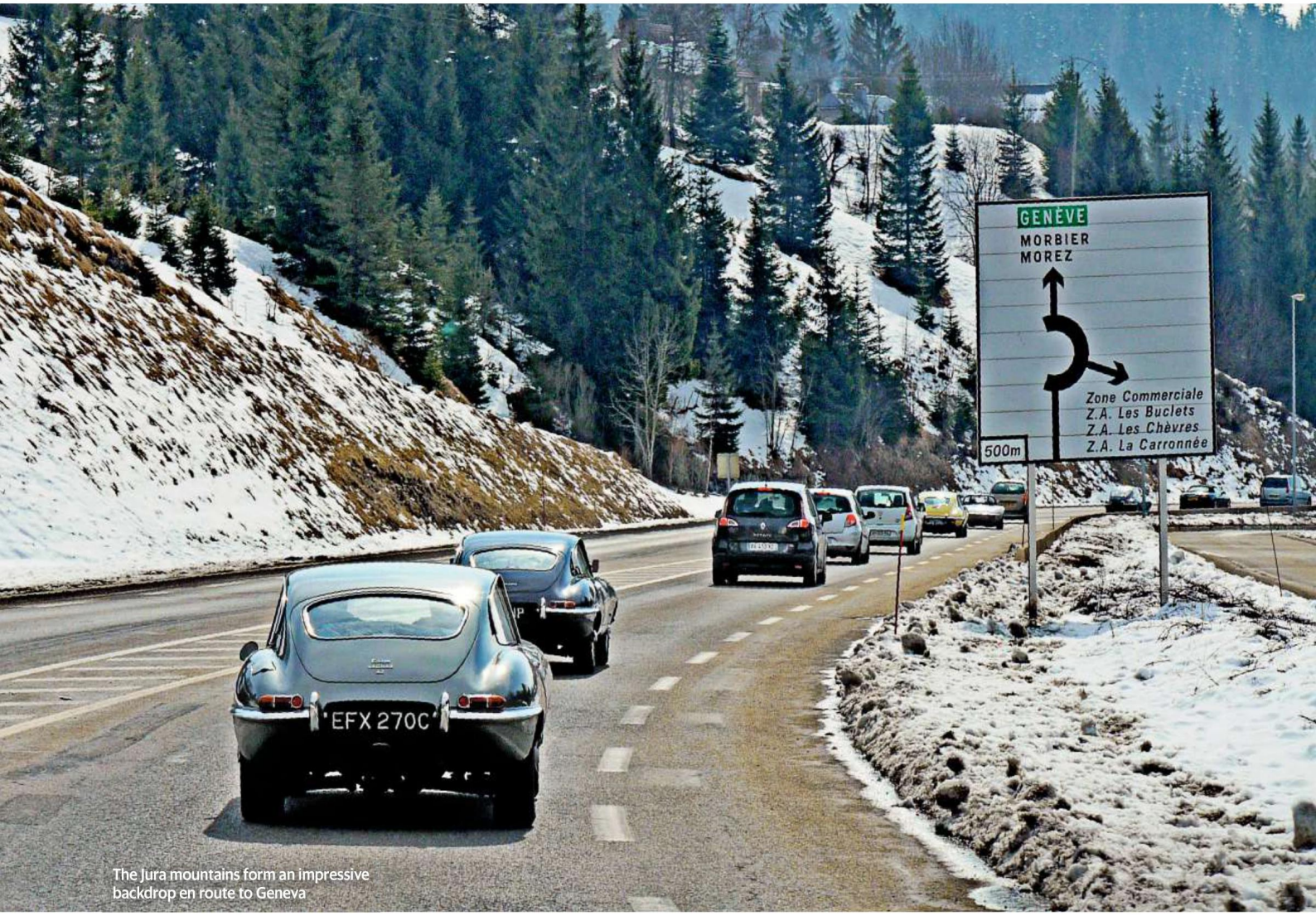
Driving down the ramp at 3:00am in Ostend, Dewis made for Brussels then on through the forest of Nivelles. Under a clear, starlit sky, he flashed through Metz, Nancy, Belfort, crossing the mountains via Morteau – the roads with a light covering of snow – before reaching Geneva at 9:52am. Sir William Lyons had only one comment, 'Well done, Dewis. I knew you could do it.'



Norman Dewis re-united with Geneva-dash roadster 77 RW

Uncongested French roads allow 2+2 S1 coupé to blast past S3 roadster

Classic Cars writer Rob Scorah shared a drive in Peter Mitchell's 1969 S2 FHC



The Jura mountains form an impressive backdrop en route to Geneva

Masses of low-down torque effortlessly propelled the E-types up steep mountain roads and above the snow line

Roadster S3 meets Mitchell's Dunlop wheeled S2 coupé and a wire-wheeled S2 coupé

Coventry's Coombe Abbey Hotel provides a suitably historic backdrop before the E-type convoy sets off for Europe

and a more user-friendly all-synchromesh gearbox. And it's more of a driver's car than the S3.'

By now the flat farmland has given way to undulating meadows and woodland, dark hollows and hills where the roads meander more. In the next day's driving through the Val-Suzon the road climbs steeply through woods between limestone crags and the tour takes on a more Alpine flavour. On the steeper hills you begin to feel the low-down push of the straight-six, pulling in behind the lorries then darting out at the first sign of a long gap. Again, the steering feels precise and perfectly weighted, the all-independent suspension poised in the ever tightening compound curves of the mountain roads – there's no squeal of tyres or lumbering understeer. Up the long inclines, the glint of the snow-line appearing, there is a tendency to push the tachometer needle towards the redline, half expecting the rising howl of an Italian V12. 'You don't need to do that in these,' sighs Mitchell with a patient smile. 'All the torque is down low.'

By now all is white and a world away from the green of lowland France. The E-types swoop past long-roofed pastel chalets, mountain railway engines and begoggled skiers. Here is where you can become intoxicated by the fast, international GT aura, captivated by James Bond/*Persuaders*/*Mission: Impossible* fantasies as twirling the wood-rimmed steering wheel swings the long nose into the cascading descent into Switzerland. The steep mountain forests now loom over the cars as they sweep down, the slopes gradually calming into the flat valley floor that surrounds Lake Geneva.

Geneva itself is set in a horseshoe around the end of the lake. Its grey and cream lakeside villas have a Parisian chic, but its traffic is as dense as the French capital, with the E-types bogged down in among silver Mercedes S-classes. It's here that our 814-mile outbound journey ends – at the lakeside Parc Des Eaux-Vives, in whose restaurant the model was first revealed to the press by William Lyons himself, and where 77 RW now waits to meet the tour.

Later, at the 2011 Geneva Motor Show, we'll meet up with Jaguar's original E-type show car, chassis 885005. And here again are Christian Jenny and Georg Dönni looking much more dapper than they have done for the four days. The car belongs to Jenny, and Dönni restored it to the glowing, semi-ethereal state in which it now stands. Jenny contemplates the car standing before him. 'I used to have an Aston Martin DB5,' he says reflectively. 'But when I got the Jaguar I had to get rid of it. The E-type just fits my image of the perfect sports car.'

It's a sentiment shared by the E-type faithful as they gather for the final welcome dinner at the Intercontinental Hotel. Guests of honour 77 RW and Dewis are already there as we file in to the dining room. With his trademark cheeky smile widening, Dewis stands to address the now-familiar crowd, the smile becoming a grin.

'What took you so bloody long?'

1969 Jaguar E-type S2 Fixed-Head Coupé

Engine 4235cc, in-line six-cylinder, dohc, three SU HD8 carburettors **Power and torque** 265bhp @ 5400rpm; 283lb ft @ 4000rpm **Transmission** Four speed manual, rear-wheel drive **Steering** Rack-and-pinion, power-assisted **Suspension** Front: independent, wishbones, torsion bars, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar. Rear: independent, lower transverse tubular links, universally jointed drive shafts, radius arms, twin coil springs per side, telescopic dampers **Brakes** Discs front and rear **Weight** 1260kg (2772lb) **Performance** Top speed: 150mph; 0-60mph: 7.2sec **Fuel consumption** 21mpg **Cost new** £2642 **Values Now** £25,000-£62,500

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The life story of a Jaguar E-type

Employed as honeymoon transport across Europe, almost bagged by a pirate, neglected but then restored in Canada, this Jaguar has seen life

Words ROBB PRITCHARD Photography ANDREW SNUCINS

The story of this E-type begins in 1970, after Australian-based Michael Wainwright had just finished his orthodontistry studies and was in England to introduce his new wife, Jackie, to his British relatives. His plans for the visit included buying a British car and exporting it back to Australia, although fate was to dictate that it wouldn't quite work out that way...

The 20-something's budget didn't extend to a Porsche 911S, so he and Jackie test-drove an MGB and a Lotus Elan, which almost flew off the road. Next they visited Jaguar dealer Henlys in London to try an E-type, which so impressed them that they ordered a brand-new fixed-head coupé. A big bonus was that the car was for export so they could escape paying the 25 per cent purchase tax.

But these were troubled times in Britain's industrial heartlands, and a strike at Pilkington Glass and another at Lucas meant the car's passage from one end of Jaguar's Browns Lane factory production line to the other lasted from June 3 to September 5. Eventually registered in Coventry as VVC 27J, the Old English White E-type was driven to Henlys for dealer installation of a Webasto sunroof and bullet wing mirrors (all of which are still on the car today). The tax-exempt invoice totalled £2204 12s 6d and the car was delivered to the Wainwrights on November 5, 1970.

However, since ordering the car Michael had accepted a teaching job at the University of British Columbia in Canada, which presented him with a problem. 'The car had to leave England within 12 months of purchase or it would be subject to the 25 per cent purchase tax,' he explains. 'But it couldn't be imported into Canada as a tax-free personal possession unless it had been owned for more than 12 months. Michael was facing a real Catch 22 situation.

'We came up with a suitable solution, though, which was to drive it around Europe for a few months. Our budget was £20 a day. Of this, £10 was earmarked for petrol, so our food and accommodation had to be quite modest.'

After touring West Germany, Italy – where the car narrowly escaped being stolen – and France, the E-type came back the UK, received its first 5000-mile service at Henlys in May 1971 and was then shipped to the United States. It had to wait there until its first birthday, when it could be taken to its new home in Vancouver.

The E-type became a much-loved family car, but the arrival of children increasingly rendered it impractical as the family's main transport – one trip to San Francisco was undertaken with Michael and Jackie's new son tucked into a baby bath wedged between the two front seats.

By the early Eighties he had three brothers and sisters, so their parents took the tough decision to exchange their beloved coupé for a bigger Jaguar, an XJ6, also finished in Old English White. So in May 1983, now with 76,000 miles on the clock, the E-type was duly advertised for CDN$13,000, (approximately £5000 at the time) and sold to Brian Lees of White Rock, British Columbia. That was the last Michael Wainwright saw of it for 29 years.

Brian Lees loves Jaguars. Over the years he has owned 14 of them, including four E-types – two roadsters and two fixed-head coupés.

> 'It narrowly escaped being stolen in Italy'

The Wainwrights' old E-type shared a garage with an Aston Martin DB5 and was used mainly for Sunday drives and car shows, but after five years and 15,000 miles in Brian's ownership he struck a deal in 1988 that would send it, as well as a Mk2, to Japan. 'I needed the space so I could move on to other projects,' he explains.

The buyer, ostensibly a Japanese fisherman, started arranging shipment to Tokyo – but then suddenly disappeared. That meant the E-type's next owner could pick up a bargain. Meanwhile, the Japanese fisherman was rumoured to be languishing in a south Asian prison after being convicted of piracy.

The next chapter of the E-type's story begins in June 1988 when David McIvor overheard a conversation between a colleague and the fisherman (or pirate...) who was trying to sell the car. David, from Vancouver, isn't so much a car enthusiast as a hobby dealer who over the years has bought, repaired and sold about 200 vehicles – so naturally he found it impossible to resist an opportunity to buy an E-type going relatively cheap.

Soon after acquiring the Jaguar, he and his father completed a meticulously documented and photographed rebuild of the engine at 89,000 miles. They also dealt

This E-type's travelled a rocky road during its life, but it now enjoys the good life in British Columbia

with some rust issues that had developed over the car's 18-year lifespan and had the car resprayed in its original Old English White – the same lustrous coat of paint that the E-type still wears to this day.

David recalls the car being the centre of attention when he and his wife drove it to a black-and-white-themed ball, he in a black tuxedo and the E-type debuting its new white paint. 'We were the talk of the ball, but my wife was the prettiest of the three,' he adds in gallant fashion.

The couple used the Jaguar for five years, after which the demands of work and young children – plus competition for their affections from an Aston Martin DB6 – meant the E-type was parked in a garage and left there for nearly a decade and a half.

In August 2008 David was moving house and needed to clear everything out of the garage. The car's next owner, Stephen Way, takes up the tale. 'I was looking for a replacement for a 1972 Lotus Europa Twin Cam that I'd sold a few years earlier and a deal on a Lotus Esprit had just fallen through. I saw David McIvor's advert, called him half an hour after he'd posted it, and was at his garage in Burnaby with a CDN$1000 deposit the next day.

'It was sad to see the car looking so neglected, but E-types are very hard to come by in Canada, so David had kept it in the hope that one day he would have enough time to restore it. Ultimately, though, that task was to fall to me.'

A week later Stephen returned with a bank draft for the balance of CDN$16,500 (about £8500) and a trailer and whisked the E-type away to its new home in Kamloops, 220 miles east of Vancouver.

'Fortunately the garage where it had been stored was very dry, so most of the electrics were good. The fuel had turned to powder, though, and the tyres were 18 years old and flat. In addition the windscreen had been cracked by a piece of wood that had fallen over, the fuel tank had a few holes in it and the original SU fuel pump had seized. But other than that, surprisingly little work was needed to bring the car up to its current condition.

'I let automatic transmission fluid soak into the cylinders, then hand-cranked the engine because I was concerned that it may have seized. But after stripping, cleaning and rebuilding the three SU carburettors and fitting a new battery, it started just fine.

'The original leather seats had rotted, so I sent them away to be restitched and given replacement foam for the driver's seat base, which had disintegrated over the years. While removing the seat I found signatures on the bottom – presumably put there by Jaguar factory workers, which I found fascinating. It was as though they were so proud of their work that they treated it like a piece of art.

'I also replaced the leaking clutch slave cylinder and the brake pads, and by the summer of 2009 the car was back on the road again. I've added a few extra things over the past few years – the most major modification was a valve tie-down kit, which I fitted myself. The valve stem liners are steel, but because they're set in an aluminium cylinder head the different heat coefficient properties of the metals can cause the sleeves to move up and hit the overhead camshafts – which would have caused untold damage.

'In order to install the tie-downs I had to drill a dozen holes with great accuracy and then tap threads into the aluminium head. It was definitely the most nerve-racking repair that I have ever carried out on a matching-numbers classic engine, although I did have a safety net – a spare engine had come with the car, so if something had gone terribly wrong it may not have been a complete disaster.

'I've also added electronic ignition. This makes a much more efficient spark, so on typically cool Canadian mornings it now starts better than it did with the original points. It's underneath the distributor cap, so when you open the bonnet you can't see any difference.'

Stephen has thoroughly researched the history of the car since it left Browns Lane in 1970 – in fact he's spent almost as much time on the internet as under the bonnet.

'The first owner took some finding because the Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust certificate only revealed his initials and surname along with an address in Australia,' he says. 'But after two years of searching, the second owner [Brian Lees] found me through a picture of the car in a car club newsletter. He remembered that the first owner was an orthodontist, so I searched for a Dr Wainwright – and amazingly found him right here in Vancouver.

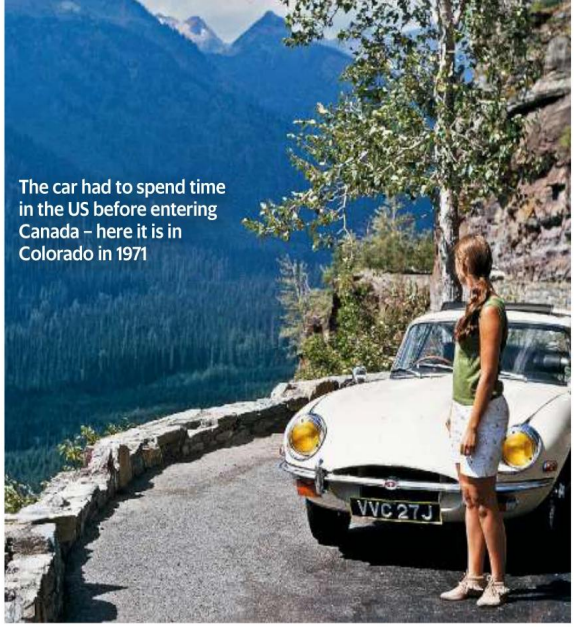
'In May 2012 we arranged to meet and 42 years after factory-ordering his new E-type he had the opportunity to drive it again around Vancouver. He said it felt much smaller than he remembered but accelerated just as well as it had all those years ago. I asked him if in its youth the car was capable of its reported 150mph; he told me that after it had been properly run-in it got very close.

'At that first meeting Michael returned the original tyre pressure gauge, the only item missing from the original tool kit, which is still with the car today. Now each of the car's Canadian owners keep in contact and we see each other once a year.'

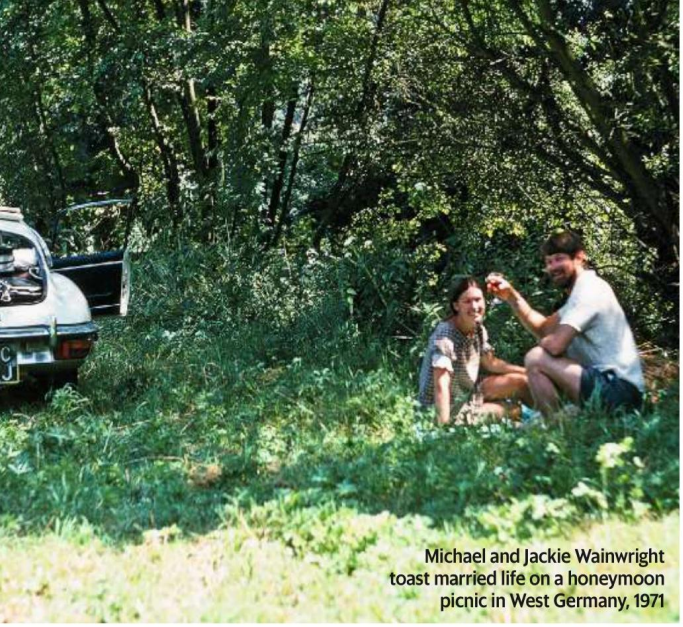
Today after many years of use and of storage and of almost being sold to an (alleged) Japanese pirate – plus plenty of restoration work – the E-type is now the pride and joy of British Columbia British Car Club president Stephen Way and takes centre stage at classic car drives and shows in and around Vancouver.

The car's future is assured. 'I have no intention of selling it,' confirms Stephen. 'Indeed, my eldest son has asked me to put it in my will for him.'

'My eldest son has asked me to put it in my will for him'

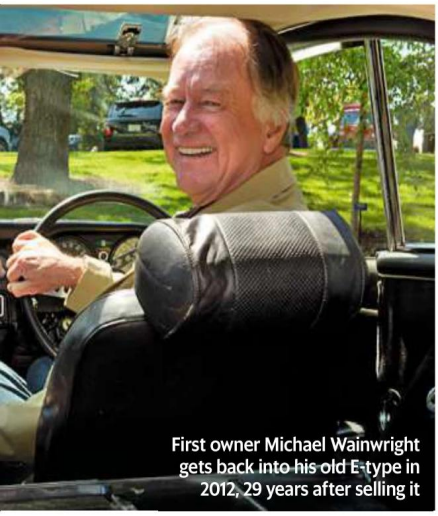


The car had to spend time in the US before entering Canada – here it is in Colorado in 1971



Michael and Jackie Wainwright toast married life on a honeymoon picnic in West Germany, 1971

Stephen Way discovered the E-type in a garage in 2008 and took it back home on a trailer



First owner Michael Wainwright gets back into his old E-type in 2012, 29 years after selling it

VVC 27J meets its twin and a brace of MGBs at a Fraser Valley British Motor Club get-together in 2011

The E-type still delivers the driving thrills remembered by its original owner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CATFIGHT SHOWDOWN

The Jaguar E-type V12 is even better than you think – it could be the best E-type of all to own. But for a fraction of the cost two later Jaguar roadsters make compelling alternatives

Words NIGEL BOOTHMAN Photography MICHAEL BAILIE

Length, weight and wider tyres meant all S3s came with power steering, giving the E-type more of a GT feel; modern rubber gives it a better ride

Something odd has happened to the Jaguar E-type market since the peak of the classic car investment boom in 1989 – early E-type prices are still climbing steadily skywards after many years of caution.

Look back to a 1989 copy of *Classic Cars* and you'll find the V12 roadster peaks at £60,000 while the Series 1 3.8-litre roadster was a comparative snip at £45,000. Just two years later the price guide figure for the V12 was down to £32,500 and the S1 was resting at £30,000. By 1999, ten years after the peak of the boom, the positions had reversed – £30,000 for the best V12, £32,500 for a top 3.8-litre roadster.

Then a few years ago blossoming values for iconic classics such as the DB Aston Martin, Lamborghini Miura and Ferrari Daytona and Dino dragged the E-type along too. But the 50th anniversary in 2011 brought increased focus on the first models with their aesthetic purity and ground-breaking design. Now you can pay £150,000 for a project 3.8 Series 1 roadster, double the price of an equivalent Series 3. But as we'll see, the V12 may still be the better option – especially with a few choice improvements.

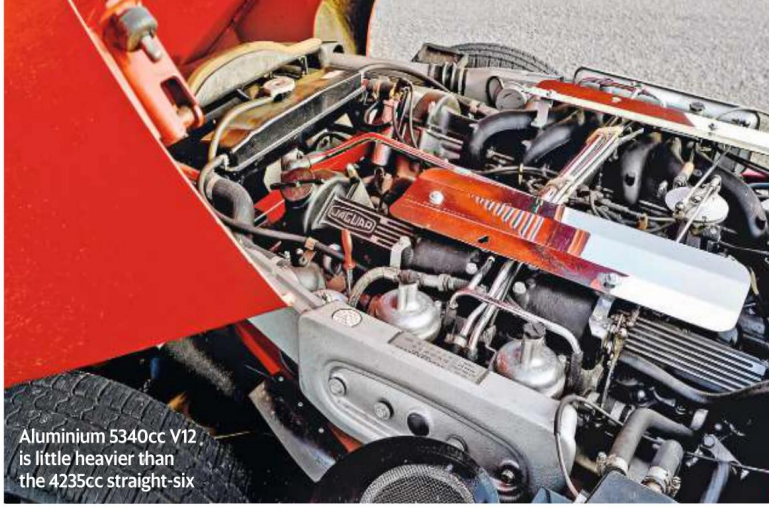
All the same, £50-£75,000 is a lot of money. For a lighter hit to the wallet that still offers some of the E-type's heritage and soft-top satisfaction we'll also look at a couple of alternatives. The last XJS convertibles, sold from May 1992, featured facelifted styling and better build quality. For the 1994 model year there was also a new version of the tough straight-six engine, making the final XJS the car to have – and today £11,000 buys one smart enough to be pampered but reliable enough to use every day.

The XK8, successor to the XJS, is even more suited to a daily role – after all, it was only replaced in 2006 and the bottom of the market is now an eye-catching £5000. Time to discover where the true value lies.

By 1970 the E-type had been getting steadily more civilised since the model's show-stopping launch at Geneva in 1961. The Series 1 went from 3.8 litres to 4.2 in 1964, giving better torque and driveability but no overall performance hike, and the gearbox became an all-synchromesh unit. The Series 2 arrived bearing a little more weight thanks to bigger bumpers and other changes dictated by the US market. Emissions-controlled American versions were down to 171bhp on their twin Stromberg carburettors, a serious drop from the 265bhp claimed for the first 3.8-litre cars. So it was time for a change.

Jaguar's first all-new engine since 1948 was an alloy cylinder-blocked V12 developed in prototype form (and used in the stillborn XJ13 Le Mans project) as a five-litre unit with two overhead camshafts on each bank. This made for a very wide engine, so it had to shed a couple of cams. The new engine in 5340cc form made a reliable 272bhp at 5850rpm while meeting the most stringent new standards. In pre-emissions tune 325bhp would have been easy.

The alloy block meant the V12 was of comparable mass to the old 4.2 straight-six, but its greater capacity for heat generation called for a larger radiator, which meant opening the E-type's mouth and inserting a grille. It was high time for a facelift anyway, but it's interesting to see how much of the S3's flared Seventies looks were down to engineering requirements rather than styling decisions. A heavier E-type, 136kg more than even the old 2+2 whose wheelbase it shared, was going to need better brakes, especially with all that new performance. Much improved discs inside larger pressed steel wheels were the reason for those flared wheelarches.



Aluminium 5340cc V12 is little heavier than the 4235cc straight-six

Chunky switchgear dominates a dashboard that's not as attractive as an S1's, but much comfier

But it was the extra 230mm between the front and rear wheels that really defined the looks of the Series 3. You'd never mistake an S3 roadster for an earlier soft-top E, but you might just confuse a V12 coupé with an S2 2+2 because all S3s were based on its longer wheelbase. The length, weight and wider tyres meant that power steering became standard on all V12s, though this decision may also have been influenced by a desire to broaden the car's market niche from pure sports to something a little more GT.

The interior of the immaculate 1971 example featured here is a very different place from the flat-floored ergonomic challenge of the first E-types. Long gone are the dazzlingly reflective metal surfaces and spiky toggle switches; instead a functional but not exactly soul-stirring array of black plastic rockers line up beneath four little gauges and a clock. At least there are still two big Smiths dials to gaze at through the leather-rimmed wheel. The rev counter is redlined at 6500rpm – surely we won't need to take it that far?

The V12 doesn't crackle into life like a Ferrari V12 or even burst into a bassy growl like the XK straight-six, but it's not unexciting because the car trembles slightly as all that reciprocating mass warms up, whooshing quietly with a sense of latent energy waiting to be unleashed.

Push the gearlever into first, release the long, elbow-bent chrome handbrake and the weighty clutch can come up. You don't really need to give it any throttle – the torquey V12 gives the impression of being unstallable even if you started up a hill in fourth gear. This makes it very easy to drive lazily, but that doesn't mean it's a lazy car. Find an open stretch, bury the throttle – any gear will do – and its character suddenly changes.

There's a greedy roar from the four Zenith carburettors and the exhaust starts to find its voice in a well-bred howl as the revs soar up through 3000rpm, 4000rpm and on towards 5000rpm. Using any more revs seems pointless because there's another gear (from a total of only four) and you're already travelling way beyond the legal limit. Looking over your shoulder you see the XJS and XK8 far behind. That's not to say the E-type would necessarily win in a full-on drag race, but on paper this manual car ought to dust the automatic XJS (not to mention all previous E-types) and stay within 0.4sec of the XK8 in a race to 60mph. Not bad for a 45-year-old car.

It stops well too – not something said of every previous disc-braked Jaguar. There's a little too much length and mass for it to turn like a sports car, but it has enough poise and grip to be fast through long, sweeping bends. Tighter corners need a lot of 'slow in, fast out' because the power steering is too light to render much feel. That's about the only compromise you make in choosing an S3 – do you see yourself carving up an Alpine pass, tyres howling on the limit? If that's your idea of E-type driving, go for an earlier model. But if high-speed touring, low stress and easy city driving matter to you, this is your car.

Practicality is far more important in low-slung, head-turning sports cars than most

1971 Jaguar E-type Series 3

Engine 5340cc, V12, ohc per bank, four Zenith-Stromberg sidedraught carburettors **Power and torque** 272bhp @ 5850rpm; 304lb ft @ 3600rpm **Transmission** Four-speed manual, rear-wheel drive **Brakes** Discs front and rear, servo-assisted **Suspension** Front: independent, double wishbones, torsion bars, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar. Rear: independent, lower transverse links, driveshafts, radius arms, twin coil springs, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar **Steering** Rack-and-pinion, power-assisted **Weight** 1502kg (3309lb) **Performance** Top speed: 146mph; 0-60mph: 6.7sec **Fuel** consumption 15mpg **Cost new** £3123 **Values now** £28,500-£75,000

Sumptuous interior improved on later XJS by improved quality and more conventional dials

AJ16 engine – the last Jaguar straight-six – offers acceptable economy and strong performance

Controversial Malcolm Sayer styling didn't get the factory-built full convertible treatment until 13 years after the XJ-S launch

people think, and here's why – if the car doesn't hurt your back, give you neck ache or cramp, leak on you or fail to start, you'll use it a whole lot more. And the more you use it, the better it will get.

Even then it can be improved a little, as Chris Forbes from CFS Motors, which looks after this car and the Jaguar Heritage fleet, explains, 'The amplifier in the OPUS electronic ignition breaks down when it gets hot, so using a constant energy kit in place of the distributor, amplifier, ballast resistor and coil is a major step towards reliability. It's about £350 if you exchange your old distributor.

'The V12 is prone to oil leaks; the most serious is the rope seal at the rear of the crankshaft. If the car hasn't been used much this can fail as soon as you put any miles on it. It's an engine-out job, but a lip-seal replacement stops it recurring. Check the underside between engine and gearbox. Leaks from the cam covers, cam feed pipe and tappet chest are annoying but don't worry about minor drips.'

Like any car with a large engine inside a tight space, V12 E-types can run hot. 'Uprated fans are a good idea,' says Forbes, 'but the standard radiator is OK. There's so much coolant – around five gallons – that once hot it takes a long while to cool down. Stop it happening in the first place by improving the fans or wrapping the exhaust manifolds.'

A fifth cog is good for motorway use; a Getrag conversion costs £2500-£3000 excluding labour. If the power steering is too light or there's too much wheel twirling in sharp bends, you can opt for a valve that returns some of the steering effort to the driver and/or a quicker steering rack. The Jag Shop sells a sports steering conversion kit for £1104.

Former Ford of Britain chairman Joe Greenwell, owner of the car here, dislikes very little about it. He admits to sometimes wishing for a fifth gear and calls the heating and ventilation 'a joke', but otherwise he's still smitten with the car. It's not surprising – this E-type has a special history. Greenwell worked for Jaguar from 1983-2005, ending up as chairman of Jaguar Land Rover. His E-type was a press car when the model was new. After that it went to William Heynes – creator of the XK engine and by then elder statesman of Jaguar's vehicle and power unit engineering – who used it for some years before it passed to his son and then two further owners before Greenwell bought it. He adds, 'I had a red E-type Dinky toy when I was a boy and always thought "Some day, some day..." and the feeling never went away.

He likes the torque, steering and brakes but 15mpg at an 80mph cruise is a downside. 'I do about 1500 miles a year, though I'll do more in retirement. It really can shift and modern Pirelli P6000s mean it rides well. It's tough too – the clutch gave up in Le Mans and I drove back mostly in top gear.' Greenwell reckons to spend £300-£400 a year looking after the car (excluding that clutch job). 'It's easy to live with because it's always been well looked after,' he adds.

He loves the effect the car has on other people. 'They come up to you and talk to you almost anywhere you go.'

1995 Jaguar XJS Convertible

Engine 3980cc, in-line six-cylinder, dohc, four valves per cylinder, electronic fuel injection **Power** and torque 238bhp @ 4700rpm; 282lb ft @ 4000rpm **Transmission** Four-speed automatic, rear-wheel drive **Brakes** Ventilated discs front and rear, servo-assisted **Suspension** Front: independent, double wishbones, coil springs, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar. Rear: independent, lower transverse links, driveshafts, radius arms, anti-roll bar, twin coil springs, telescopic dampers **Steering** Rack-and-pinion, power-assisted **Weight** 1830kg (4034lb) **Performance** Top speed: 139mph; 0-60mph: 7.8sec **Fuel** consumption 22mpg **Cost** new £38,950 **Values** now £6500-£13,500

'External XJ-S Cabriolet production was so slow that Jaguar brought it back in-house before adding a V12 in 1986'

The Jaguar's history, the fact that it was a Warwickshire car and even the colour were important factors in Greenwell's choice. But vitally it had to be a V12. 'Buying it was one of the best decisions I ever made,' says Greenwell. With the shift in E-type values since 2005 and the present state of the economy, it's a decision that's looking better all the time.

You get a smug, almost guilty feeling when something you buy for pleasure gains value unexpectedly and becomes an investment. Owners of elderly electric guitars, Raleigh Choppers and charity-shop record collections are familiar with it, but owners of Jaguar XJS models probably aren't. Not yet, anyway.

The XJS (XJ-S for the first 16 years of its life) has been in the price-guide doldrums for a long time. This applies far more to the ubiquitous coupé than the cabriolet or convertible – of 115,413 cars built from 1975-96 only 35,959 had removable or folding roofs and most of these went to America. In Britain ageing coupés abound with unsightly rust in the door bottoms, boot lid, rear panel, front wings and elsewhere, making them look like bangers even before the radius arms detach from the rusty floors and the scrapman is called.

It's not a fate William Lyons would have envisaged when the first prototype was completed in 1969. The winning ideas behind the E-type's replacement came from Malcolm Sayer, co-stylist along with Lyons of the original E-type. Sayer died in 1970 aged only 54, yet his input to the aerodynamics of the new XJ27, as it was during development, tied in well with British Leyland's anti-traditionalist stance to ensure its looks remained very similar until launch in 1975.

The rear buttresses sparked the most controversy. They were a deliberate switch from the heritage of flowing C-type, D-type and E-type lines to slab-sided modernity, and they wouldn't have been there if the car had been designed as a convertible. But here Jaguar was unlucky – fears that the US would ban convertibles on safety grounds were finally quashed shortly after the launch of the XJ-S. A stop-gap 3.6-litre Cabriolet was announced in 1983, but external contractors' production was so painfully slow that Jaguar brought it back in-house before adding a V12 cabriolet to the range in 1986, when it finally arrived in the USA.

Cabriolet owners had to remove two clumsy targa panels and stow them in the boot before manually unfurling a hood that didn't quite fit under its tonneau – not an attractive proposition in a country where convertible roofs had been descending in their entirety at the touch of a button and hiding beneath smooth hard tonneaus since the Fifties. Jaguar used Cincinatti coachbuilder Hess and Eisenhardt to transform cars to full convertible specification, selling them through the dealer network and giving Browns Lane a chance to learn from H&E's development. An in-house convertible duly appeared at the Geneva show in 1988.

'The E-type is everyone's dream; the XJS is a great grand tourer – but everything it does, the XK8 does a little better'

This spelt the end for the Cabriolet. In 1991 a £50m facelift produced a car that looked almost identical, from the front anyway. The rear was smoother and more corporate and by 1993, when the 5.3-litre V12 became a six-litre V12, the influence of the 1989 Ford takeover was showing in improved build quality. The last significant changes were the arrival of the AJ16 four-litre engine to replace the marginally less powerful AJ6 of the same capacity, plus bigger bumpers (1994) and a run-out Celebration model (1995).

With three different six-cylinder engines and two V12 capacities, it's surprising how similar the XJS models feel to drive. The touring side of the S3 E-type's character is there but with a much roomier and better-appointed cabin, noticeably suppressed engine noise and a ride that has more in common with XJ saloons than a two-seater sports car. The car here is a four-litre AJ16-engined example, and like any XJS it wafts and surges lazily and comfortably at whatever rate you choose. Owner Paul Synnott keeps the Sport button depressed most of the time to sharpen the changes and permit kickdown in two gears rather than one in his four-speed automatic.

XJS power steering has a little more weight and feel than the S3 E-type, but that doesn't make it Lotus-like. Instead you get a sense of wide tyres under a heavy car offering plenty of grip and security. Fast corners can generate rather more body roll than a modern equivalent, but an XJS isn't a car you drive on the limits of adhesion. Speed is best kept to potent straight-line overtakes, when the nose rises with the engine note and the AJ16 churns out all 282lb ft of torque at a high-ish 4000rpm. It's a satisfying experience.

Today even clean cars are cheap – for £3-£4000 you'd expect a pretty good pre-facelift coupé. Says Synott, 'Bad cars are very cheap, but really good cars are very expensive. The range is huge – an MoT'd coupé can still be found for £750, while the very best convertibles cost nearly £20,000. That's a large premium over what you'd pay for a nice, usable convertible; say £8000-£12,000 depending on specification, mileage and so on. When it was new the convertible cost 25 per cent more than the coupé; now the difference is at least double.'

Don't ignore the Cabriolet, which makes for very civilised sunny-day motoring. They cost about 50 per cent less than convertibles in equivalent condition, though most cabrios are older and need careful vetting. In fact don't buy any XJS without a thorough inspection. As well as rust, the running gear can suffer. Standard bushes wear out quickly and ruin the feel of the car – it shouldn't crash or bang. You can sharpen the steering by replacing the steering rack mountings, 'The best £25 I ever spent,' says Synnott. Suspension specifications (and tyre sizes) on most convertibles are different from most coupés – 'touring' rather than 'sports' – check which is fitted. Swapping from one to the other will tighten up a convertible nicely.

Modern styling notwithstanding, the XK8 carries XJS genes in its floorpan


4.2-litre engine doesn't suffer four-litre AJ-V8's Nicasil and timing chain tensioner woes


XK8 cabin is comfy but a tad cramped

Aftermarket brake pads such as EBC's Greenstuff reduce both stopping distance and the dust on the alloys, but other improvements should be centred on a good service regime. 'V12 cars need more conscientious attention than six-cylinder models, though they're no less reliable when well-kept,' says Synnott. 'But you should never run a V12 with the temperature gauge anywhere other than normal; V12s that have boiled always need the cylinder heads skimming.'

They also cost a lot more to put right than AJ6-engined cars, which can also suffer cylinder head gasket failure, but are otherwise capable of huge mileages. Check behind the rubber flaps obscuring the radiator to make sure the fins haven't crumbled. Also look at the oil cooler – the feed pipes corrode and usually can't be removed without ruining the cooler, which costs £160.

But there's plenty of good news – the three-layer hood is excellent, the mechanism that raises and lowers it rarely fails and parts availability and club support is first-rate. With models so affordable, the most cost-effective course of action is to buy a pampered example and carry on pampering it.

That's also the best advice to any prospective XK8 buyer. You can find cars from the first year or two of production for around £5000, but with superb coupés and good convertibles at £10,000 (rather more for the XKR supercharged variant) it's a bit silly to spend so little. It's seems astonishing now, given how contemporary it still looks, but the XK8 was launched at the 1996 Geneva motor show (chosen for its historical connection with the E-type and XJS launches).

Joe Greenwell had just taken on Jaguar's PR work and well remembers the XK8's development, 'It was a very significant launch, reclaiming a lot of important territory for Jaguar. We talked a lot about the spirit of the E-type and our sports car lineage. XJS replacements had been in the pipeline for years – although many of them were stillborn – but after the Ford acquisition there was a bit more resource to draw upon. I'll never forget the huge crowds surging around the Jaguar stand during the Geneva show. There was a box over the car which was supposed to be lifted off by a crane during the big unveil... I was terrified that the box would bash the car on the way up, but Jaguar chairman Nick Scheele made his short speech and up it went like a dream and without a single hitch. The car spoke for itself after that.'

Mike Horlor owns the car here and has also owned an XJS and a V12 E-type, so he's well-qualified to compare them. 'The E-type is everyone's dream,' he says. 'The XJS is a great grand tourer – but everything it does, the XK8 does a little better. The downside is that the XK8 is packed full of electronics and has other peculiarities that make it less easy to live with, especially for a DIY mechanic.'

Using a good battery is important, says Horlor – at the first sign of low charge, warning lights begin to appear that look more alarming than they really are. Wheel bearings can be a

2002 Jaguar XK8 Convertible

Engine 4196cc, V8, dohc per bank, four valves per cylinder, electronic fuel injection **Power and torque** 300bhp @ 6000rpm; 310lb ft @ 4100rpm **Transmission** Six-speed automatic, rear-wheel drive **Brakes** Ventilated discs front and rear, servo-assisted **Suspension** Front: independent, double wishbones, coil springs, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar. Rear: independent, upper wishbones, upper link, coil springs, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar **Steering** Rack-and-pinion, power-assisted **Weight** 1775kg (3913lb) **Performance** Top speed: 155mph; 0-60mph: 6.3sec **Fuel consumption** 24mpg **Cost new** £48,700 **Values now** (2016) £5000-£15,000

E-type Series 3 established a new template for comfortable, fast Jaguar grand tourers

problem because they require a special tool to remove and have been known to fail after as little as 30,000 miles or less, though by 2002 they were uprated.

The biggest single concern is the plastic-bodied timing chain tensioners. 'There are four,' explains Horlor, 'and they can split or lose the end of the plunger without warning on cars built up to 2001. When Jaguar finally introduced metal-bodied tensioners it cured the fault. All the 4.2-litre cars are OK, being introduced in 2002. Replacing the top pair costs £550 and is a minimum precaution for any susceptible car. Doing all four costs £1100. Negotiate the appropriate amount off the price if there's no history to show that it's been done.'

The biggest body concern is the plate under each footwell that dodged the rust protection, but check everywhere else carefully.

Earlier models used a five-speed automatic until the 4.2-litre cars brought in a six-speed version. This makes for relaxed and relatively economical cruising with plenty of urge available – 0-60mph comes up in well under 7sec. There's not as much room as you might expect inside, but this is a capable machine, stiffer than the XJS (though not totally free of scuttle shake) and thoroughly modern in feel.

The X150 re-style, which was launched in 2006, was another giant step forward and left Jaguar's product line looking considerably better than it had since the arrival of the V12 in 1971.

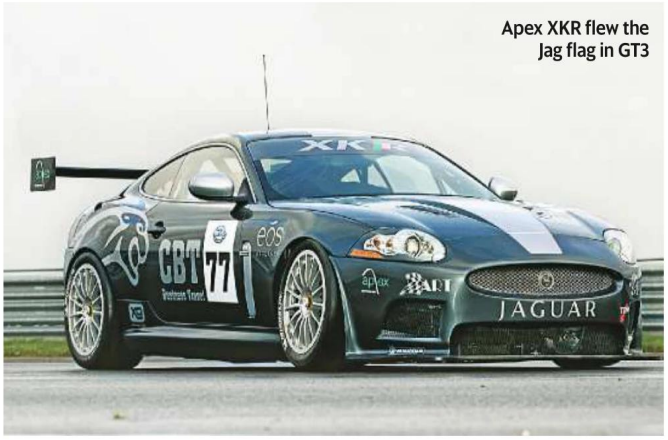
Jaguar sports cars always offered good value for money when new. Happily for us, they continue to do so as they age.

Thanks to: *Jaguar Land Rover, Jaguar Heritage, Tony O'Keeffe, Joe Greenwell, Tony Ridge and the Jaguar Enthusiasts' Club (jec.org.uk), Paul Synnott (jec-xjs-forum.org.uk), Mike Horlor (jec-xk8-forum.org.uk), Chris Forbes*

New model, new challenges

The original shape XK8, built from 1996-2006, hasn't had much of a motor sport profile in the UK. But bizarrely it formed the visual basis for an American silhouette racer that took the 2001 Trans Am constructor's title for Jaguar – odd, considering there was a Chevy V8 beneath its skin. By 2004 Paul Gentilozzi and Rocketsports Racing (the names behind the 2001 win) used a production-based AJ-V8 engine in their XKR to make 650bhp from 4.5 litres, but by then the series was on its last legs.

With the launch in 2006 of the new all-aluminium X150 series XK8, British team Apex Motorsport made a few forays into GT endurance racing in Britain and later in the FIA GT3 Championship. Results were mixed, but the car had undoubted potential – 510bhp from the 4.2-litre supercharged V8, through a six-speed sequential Hewland gearbox. Other cars on the grid with even more power and more years of development were tough to beat. Tragically, the programme ended when a 2008 air crash claimed five victims, including Richard Lloyd and David Leslie.



Apex XKR flew the Jag flag in GT3

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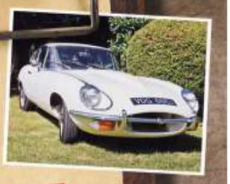

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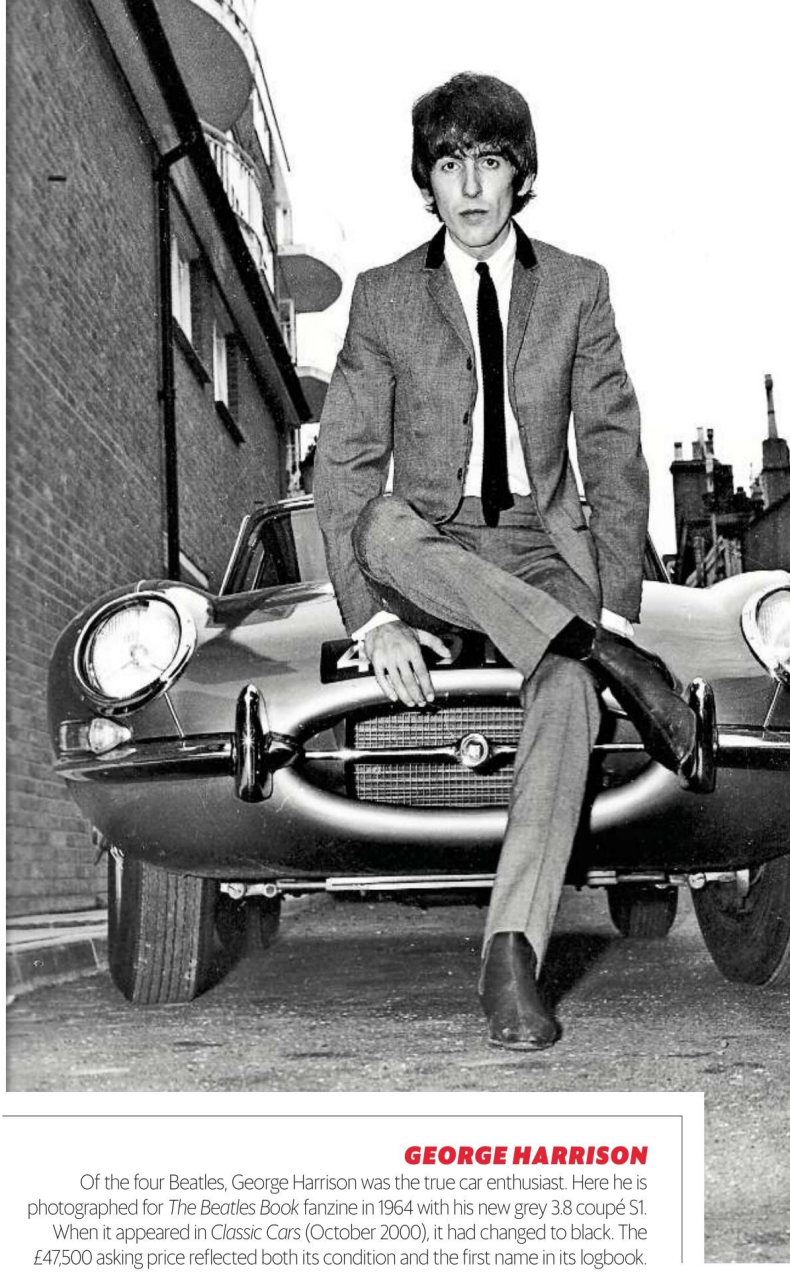
Stars and THEIR E-TYPES

Jaguar has long known the PR value of getting its cars seen with stars. Here are some of our favourite A-listers with their Es

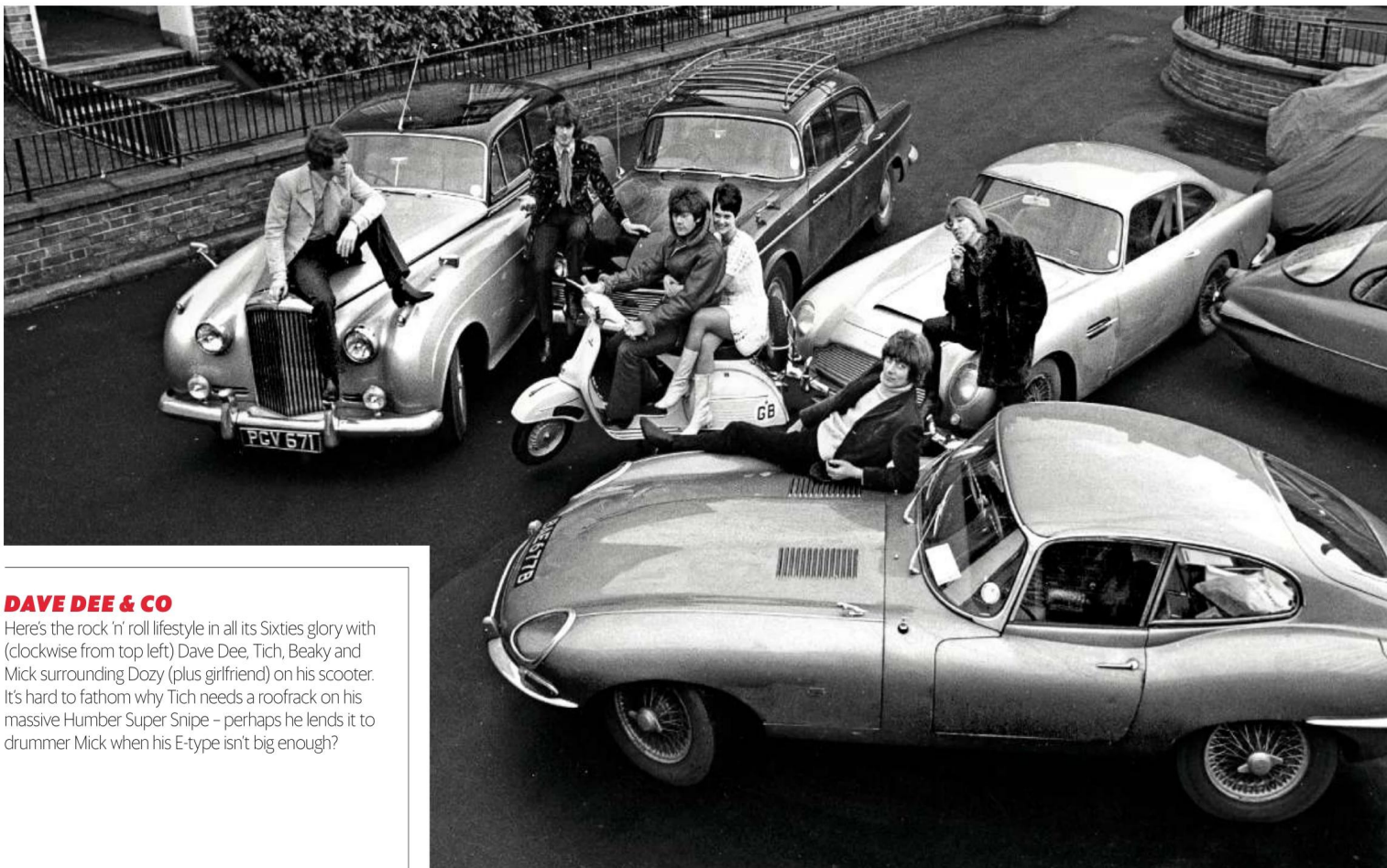


GEORGE BEST

First of a new breed of celebrity footballers, George Best's escapades off the pitch made him a top target for the new breed of celebrity-hunting paparazzi, as in this 1972 shot of him arriving in his E-type to meet a former Miss Great Britain. Two drink/drive bans came as no surprise, nor, alas, did his death from liver failure in 2005 aged just 59.

GEORGE HARRISON

Of the four Beatles, George Harrison was the true car enthusiast. Here he is photographed for *The Beatles Book* fanzine in 1964 with his new grey 3.8 coupé S1. When it appeared in *Classic Cars* (October 2000), it had changed to black. The £47,500 asking price reflected both its condition and the first name in its logbook.



DAVE DEE & CO

Here's the rock 'n' roll lifestyle in all its Sixties glory with (clockwise from top left) Dave Dee, Tich, Beaky and Mick surrounding Dozy (plus girlfriend) on his scooter. It's hard to fathom why Tich needs a roofrack on his massive Humber Super Snipe – perhaps he lends it to drummer Mick when his E-type isn't big enough?

JOHN SURTEES
With wife-to-be Patricia Burke looking on, Formula One driver John Surtees prepares to set off in his E-type. Having switched from two wheels to four, a second World Championship (with Ferrari) and life as an F1 constructor beckon.

BRITT EKLAND
Marry a car nut like Peter Sellers and you might well expect a four-wheeled gift at some point. Even so, Britt Ekland was no doubt delighted to find this E-type waiting for her at London Airport in 1967.

SID JAMES
The *Carry On...* star stretches the legs of an early E-type Open Two Seater with what looks like a camera bracket on its nose. He was no stranger to Jags – he drove a Lister-Jag in the movie *The Green Helmet*.

DONALD CAMPBELL
Donald Campbell hands over an E-type's keys to his wife, Tonia Bern, in 1966. Campbell holds the Land and Water Speed records but is installing a more powerful jet engine in his boat, Bluebird K7, with the aim of cracking the 300mph barrier. The E-type is parked up on the shore of Coniston Water when his attempt ends fatally the following January.

Early E-type sees light for the first time in 25 years

The earliest surviving unrestored Jaguar E-type was discovered in a private garage in St Helens, Merseyside, in 2002. Chassis number 850004 was the first right-hand drive roadster allocated to a private owner and is thought to be the first car off the production line. The previous chassis number belongs to Jaguar's test car, 77 RW, now owned by the Jaguar Heritage Trust.

The car's first owner was Jaguar's works competition manager Lofty England. He used it extensively and Jaguar regularly pressed it into service for public demonstration purposes at events and on TV.

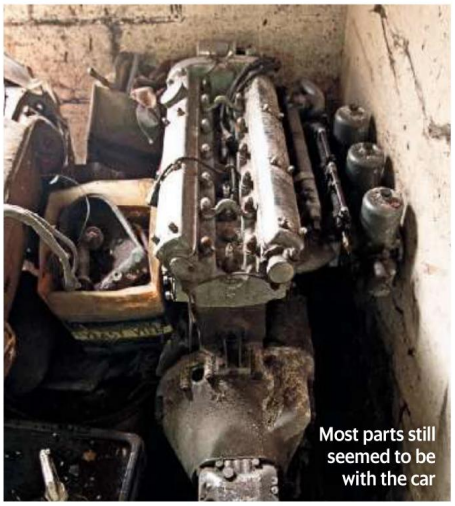
It was later sold on to Equipe Endeavour's Tommy Sopwith, then racing driver Mike Parkes.

How the car ended up in a St Helens garage isn't known, but it has lain dismantled there for 25 years. Robin Hanauer of auction house Coys of Kensington – which went on to sell the car – said, 'This is an exciting discovery and represents the opportunity to acquire one of the earliest and most important surviving Jaguar E-types.'

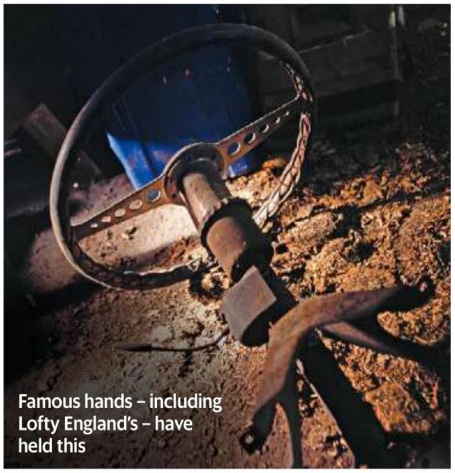
Coys of Kensington, which also sold the seventh right-hand drive roadster – then believed to be the earliest unrestored survivor – in July 2002 sold this car at the Royal Horticultural Halls in Westminister on 5 December 2002 for £63,783 against a £50-£60,000 estimate

'It sold for £63,783 and is now concours'

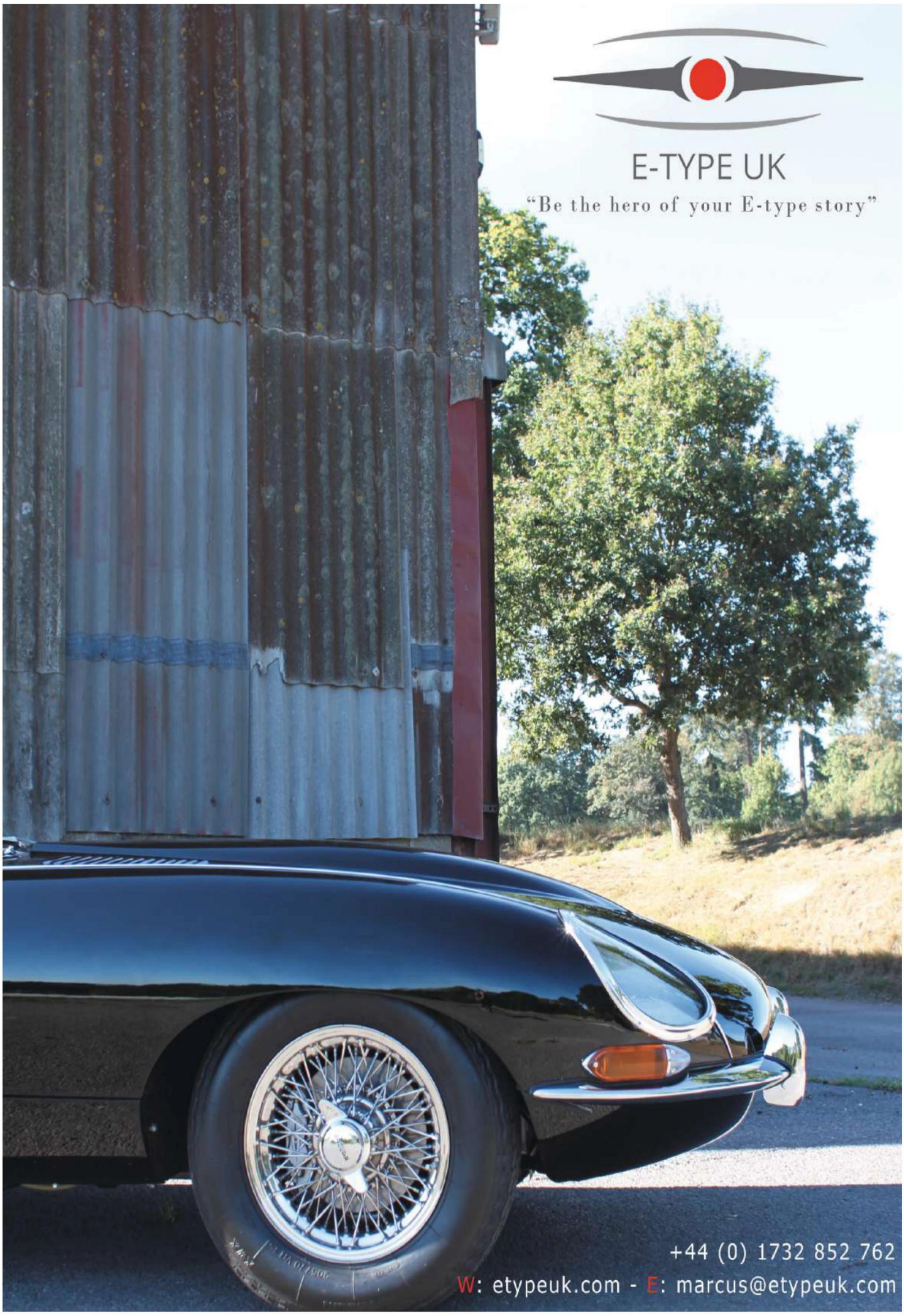
Jaguar restoration specialist Classic Motor Cars went on to restore the car – registered 1600 RW – to concours standards.



Most parts still seemed to be with the car



Famous hands – including Lofty England's – have held this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