

The Jaguar XJS—Ignored by some . .

. . . . *But loved by many!*

By Philip Prior

I read an article recently that described the Jaguar XJS as the ugly duckling of the Jaguar stable. The article went on to talk about the E Type as “The most beautiful car ever made” and generally do what many do, proclaimed the XJS as the failed E Type replacement. Whereas the initial take-up of the XJS may have been slow and I agree it was never likely from either a design or a style point of view to be a “replacement” for the E Type. But any suggestion that it was a failure as a popular model is just not supported by the sales figures in comparison with the E Type.

Model	Years of Production	Number of Years	Production Numbers
E Type	1961 - 1974	13 Years	72,515
XJS	1975 to 1996	21 Years	115,413

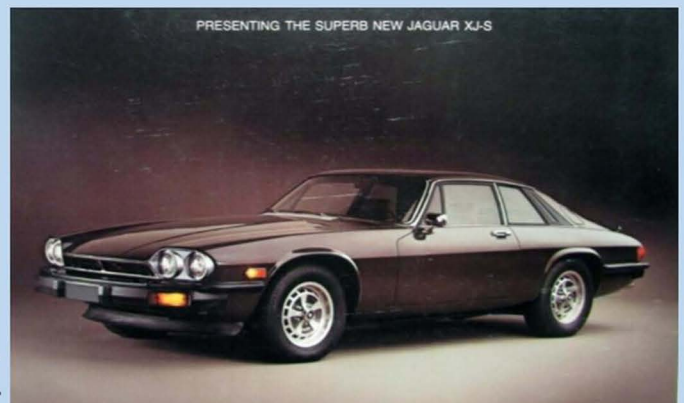
It is not hard to see that the XJS was produced in greater numbers over more years, clearly demonstrating it as one of the most successful models ever produced, other than the Classic XJ Series. Certainly the XJS Series cars out performed the E Type in terms of longevity in production and buyer popularity.

Originally developed using the platform of the then current William Heynes designed XJ saloon, the XJ-S as it was originally called, was noted for its prominent rear flying buttresses. (not entirely popular at the time) The early styling was partially by Jaguar's aerodynamicist Malcolm Sayer — one of the first designers to apply advanced aero principles to cars. Sayer died just before the XJ-S body styling was frozen for production.

In its final iteration produced from 1991 to 1996, (Generally referred to as the Up-date models) was manufactured after Jaguar was acquired by Ford, who introduced numerous modifications — and eliminated the hyphen in the name, marketing the model simply as the XJS.

It is also true to say unfortunately that so many of the XJS critics then and now have never driven an XJS and appreciated it as the true Grand Tourer it is.

In 1983, the new 3.6-litre Jaguar AJ6 straight-six engine was introduced along with a new model called the **XJ-SC**. The coupé's rather small rear seats were removed in order to make space for the removable soft top, making it a 2-seat car. The six-cylinder cars can be identified by a raised bonnet centre section.



An XJ-S Story by Phil Prior (cont)

The XJS received a new 4.0-litre version of the AJ6 straight-six engine and in 1991, a convertible model having the same engine was added to the range. The V12 engine's capacity was enlarged to 6.0 litres in May 1992. Outboard rear brakes replaced inboard brakes of previous models.

In April 1994, substantial revisions were made to the 4.0-litre AJ6 engine and it was given a new name of AJ16. In 1995, the final specification changes were made and the car was referred to as the Celebration model to celebrate the 60th year of Jaguar Cars.

My Preference

Initially I shared the dislike for the flying buttresses on the XJS but more recently have grown to accept them as a defining and distinguishing design feature of the model. My preference in this model range was for the up-date version (1991 – 1994) or if possible, budget permitting, the Celebration model (1994-1996). Equally I had a preference for the 4.0ltr engine in the convertible configuration.

I searched for some time for the right car knowing that the up-dated 4.0ltr convertible was a comparatively rare car in Australia, very few were Australian delivered. But patience does pay-off and I eventually found my car in WA. A 1992, 4.0ltr. XJS convertible in Kingfisher Blue finish and Saville Grey interior. The car had been imported new by Kellow Faulkner of Melbourne and had spent some time in a private collection. At the time of purchase, it was showing just 92,000kms.

After Market Rear Seats They had to go!

Although the addition of factory rear seats in some convertibles and coupes was common, this car was never intended to have them. But somewhere in its past someone decided it would be a good idea to add them in. The problem is that the shape of the cars bodywork etc was never intended to accommodate the seats and the abomination that was added was just horrid!

I determined very early that they had to go. But easier said than done. A very large heavy gauge steel frame (suited to a WW2 Tank) had been welded in place to the cars body, the hydraulics for the roof repositioned centrally and covered as part the new seat arrangement. It took me a week to remove the seats and this monstrous framework, restricted to the use of a small air saw and seeking to be protective of the bodywork and interior of the car. Finally it was out, having decided to retain the unorthodox position of the roof hydraulics that would be covered by the traditional "Cubby Box" arrangement.

Once the framework was removed it was a question of where do I find an original cubby box to fit in place? I did find them available second hand internationally for some ridiculous prices. So the decision was made to manufacture one myself. This was a relatively straight forward job aiming to reproduce something as close as possible to the original design.

(These photos give some idea as to what was involved)



An XJ-S Story by Phil Prior (cont)

The MBF frame was formed to suit, the lid cut out to give access to storage within, the whole module then covered in carpet to match as close as possible the current floor carpets. One question remained. What will I do for the chrome handle on the lid of the cubby box? I could not find one available so a cry for help on Facebook resulted in a guy from the US saying he had one and I could have it for the cost of postage. Great . . . let's do it I thought. Then out of the blue someone else notifies me telling me he has one and I can have it for free. After searching the world for this handle I determined that this gentleman was, would you believe, actually in Victor Harbor. So a quick visit and I had the handle and the installation was completed.

The Teves Breaking System

In their wisdom Jaguar decided to install what is known as the "Teves" breaking system. Introduced in 1988 until 1994 and incorporates an ABS system. This system replaces the traditional vacuum system found in the pre 1988 cars. The system works on pressure rather than vacuum. There is an electric pump and a pressure accumulator that provide pressurized fluid.

When the brake pedal is depressed, the pedal linkage moves a piston within a chamber in the ABS master cylinder. This piston directly applies pressure to the fluid leading to the front brakes, which means the front brakes will work even if the pump stops working. This leads some to conclude that the front brakes are not assisted, but they are mistaken. The force applied to this piston also actuates a valve that allows pressurized fluid to enter the chamber behind this piston, helping push it forward and applying the front brakes. The result is a 4:1 power assist on the front brakes when the system is working properly. The pressurized fluid applied behind that piston to assist the front brakes is also ported directly to the rear brakes. The rear brakes are therefore actuated entirely by the power assist to the front brakes. If the pump fails you will have no rear brakes whatsoever, save for the handbrake. Combined with the loss of power assist on the front brakes, the fact that something is very wrong with your brakes will be apparent immediately -- even without all those warning lights lit up on the dashboard.

The annoying thing about this system is that Jaguar advises that the system is not serviceable like the standard vacuum driven master cylinder system.. Even worse a replacement will cost in the vicinity of \$5000. Generally the system is regarded as being very reliable however it is essential that brake fluids are changed at least every two years and if the car stands without use for an extended period the system can be compromised.

Ask me how I know My car had spent some time sitting in a private collection with little use and even the latest owner had driven the car a mere 2,000 klms in 7 years. When I drove my car all was well, however on a longer trip I lost brake pedal completely, not a nice experience. I was able to limp home with a very little bit of pedal at the bottom. Now here is the scary part. The next day I had full pedal and a short drive demonstrated that all was well, so I thought. On my next extended drive, again suddenly without warning, no pedal again. Clearly I had an issue that needed to be resolved.

I had the car transported to Geoff Mockford, who was initially as surprised as I was as he had not experienced any problems in the past with this system, and there were no warning lights showing. The mystery of no warning light was revealed with the removal of the dash and finding the ABS warning globe (which signals the problem) removed from its socket and taped to the back of the facia. Clearly a deliberate and rather dangerous attempt to disguise the problem.

It was decided firstly to see if we could source a second hand unit and one was sourced using the cars VIN to ensure the correct replacement unit. But it was found to be not the correct unit on arrival. Another unit was sourced and installed but all attempts to bleed the system failed.



The final solution was to revert to a pre 1988 vacuum system. (this would mean no ABS but...) With it fully installed and brakes bled we were back on the road with reliable brakes with a big thankyou to Geoff Mockford.

WARNING: The moral of this story is, if your XJS has the Teves braking system and you do not know when it was flushed and the fluids changed, **DO IT NOW!**

So now with some minor paint touch ups and a good polish the XJS is being enjoyed . . . The next upgrade involves re-built rear brake callipers that leak badly. Oh well it is all good fun.

Footnote: We have approximately 45 Jaguar XJS cars in the club. Why do we not see more of them out and about?



Jaguar XJS Appreciation Run (7 Nov 2021)

Although numbers were restricted to 40, a great and special day was had by all. The run was organised by Phil Prior so that fellow XJ-S owners could get together, enjoy each other's company and talk over technical issues during the run and over lunch.

However, it was not exclusively for XJ-S owners and we were joined by other GT Jaguars and saloons.

We all met at Nick Scali's Carpark, on Marion Road where there was a Pop-Up Café on site.

At around 10.00am we headed off through Blackwood, Coromandel Valley, Clarendon and then onto the Mount Bold Reservoir for a photo shop opportunity.

A big thank you to Angela and David Rogers who took the time to go to Mount Bold in advance and take photos and videos of the cars as they arrived. David also put up his Drone and took some terrific aerial photographs.

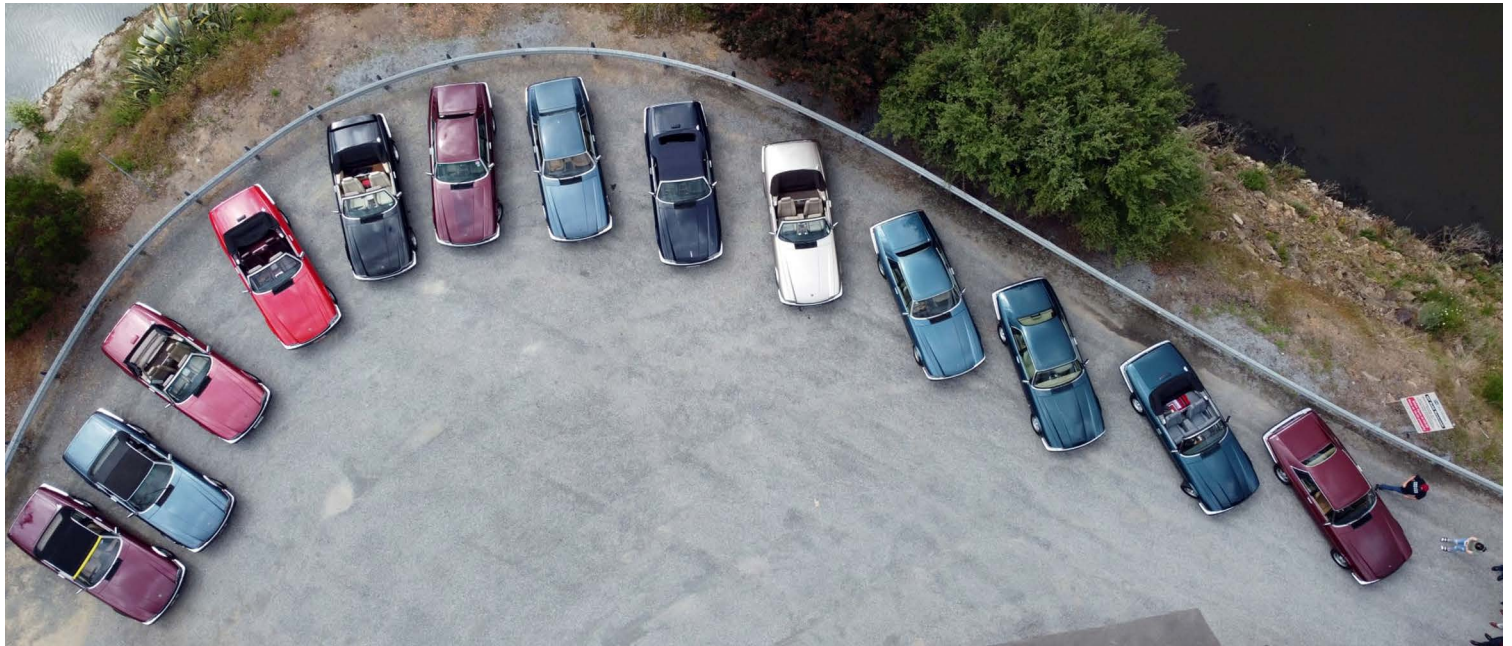
After everyone finished checking out each other's cars, we headed off and travelled through Kangarilla and McLaren Vale

to Mick O'Shea's Irish Pub where Peter Buck organised special approval for all the cars to park on the lawns.

After a terrific lunch, some of the group headed off to "Sports Car Sunday" at the Waite Oval.

Many thanks to those who attended and to Phil for a well organised event.

Graham Franklin
Events Coordinator



Jaguar XJS Appreciation Run (cont)



Club events are open to all members - not car specific. The XJ-S were joined by a variety of Jaguars & Daimlers sports cars and sedans



Mark Bartold, 1988 Silver Birch 5.3 litre V12 XJ-S HE convertible



Ivan and Janine Cooke, 1984 Blue 5.3 litre V12 XJ-S HE



David & Robyn Cocker 1986 5.3 litre V12 XJ-SC Cabriole



Bruce Perks & Robyn Sach, 1989 5.3 litre V12 XJ-S HE convertible

Jaguar XJS Appreciation Run (cont)



Phil Prior, 1992 XJS (Facelift) 4.0 litre AJ6 convertible



Peter & Kathy Taylor, 1989 5.3 litre V12 XJ-S HE convertible



Di & Roger Adamson, 1989 5.3 litre V12 XJ-S HE convertible



Bryan & Anne Blair O'Shaughnessy, 1989 5.3 litre V12 XJ-S HE



Tim Telfer, 1985 5.3 litre V12 XJ-SC Cabriole (Targa) Convertible



Allan Britcher, 1984 5.3 litre V12 XJ-S HE

Jaguar XJS Appreciation Run (cont)



Andrew & Milly Costi, 1971 V12 5.3 litre E-Type (S3) 2+2



John & Robyn Whittaker, 1969 Blue 4.2 litre E-Type (S2) Coupe



Josephine (Jo) Orford, 2001 Jaguar XKR Classic 4.0L V8 S/C Coupe



Fred Butcher, 1962 Daimler Dart SP250 V8



Robert & Robyn Welch, 2019 Caldera Red S/C V6 F-Type Coupe



Tony Human and Gabriela Orford, 2019 S/C V6 F-Type Roadster

Jaguar XJS Appreciation Run (cont)



Roly Donders, 1983 Blue 5.3 litre V12 XJ-S HE



Don & Elaine Cardone, 1992 BRG 4.0 litre AJ6 XJS (Facelift)



Peter & Heather Buck, 2001 XJ8 Sovereign



Rod Lovell, XJ X308 Sovereign



Peter Buck organised with Mick O'Shea's Irish Pub to allow the Jaguars to park on their lawns, much to the delight of other patrons