

# AN XK150 STORY

## A HOLE IN ONE

Whenever I visit my good friend Jon in the UK he loves to take me for a ride around Somerset in his Series 1.1/2 Jaguar E type roadster and his lovely black jaguar XJ super V8.

So, when he visited me awhile ago I was only too keen to demonstrate what an XK150 converted to S specifications (3.8 litres, triple 2 inch SU's and overdrive) could do.

We set off one morning from Onkaparinga Hills for a run down to the South Coast. I was leading with Jon in the XK, and Wendy following in the Pajero with wife Catherine and children, Eleanore and Oliver.

All was going well until we started up Willunga Hill. I put my foot down to demonstrate the power and "COUGH", it shouldn't do that, then another "COUGH" and started to lose power.

The coughing got worse and worse and it lost more power and I only just managed to make it to the lookout near the top of the hill in bottom gear!

What a calamity.



Wendy pulled up behind me in the Pajero and said the XK was exuding great volumes of grey smoke from underneath the car.

Jon and I got out of the car and I opened the bonnet to make a formal inspection, of course nothing being evident.

Jon was standing on the left of the engine bay and I thought I might see what happened if I tried to start it.

I turned the key on, pressed the button and "BOOM", an explosion in the engine blew the dipstick out past Jon's ear and the oil breather pipe waved to him.



*Editor: I cant speak on behalf of all club members, but I have been in this situation a few times!*



# AN XK150 STORY



The only thing to do was ring the RAA and send Jon back with Wendy and the rest of his family for lunch at McLaren Vale while I attended to the RAA.

Despite me insisting it was a job for a tow truck, only the RAA man turned up after an hour or so. He explained that they can't take my word for it and he must arrange the tow.

After a further wait of over another hour for the tow truck enabled all the visitors to the Lookout to tell me what was wrong with the car. The general consensus was a hole in a piston. The RAA man very

nically pushed the car back into the garage for me where the XK lay sulking for a further 8 weeks while we went caravanning in Queensland which had been previously arranged.

All the experts told me it was either too lean a mixture or ignition too far advanced. Well I have been driving this car over 35 years and have always timed it as per the specifications so I didn't think it was the timing and everybody who was following me in the XK said it was obviously running rich because it emitted black smoke whenever I put my foot down.

On our return from the caravan trip, I took the cylinder head off and sure enough there was a hole in piston number 5.

But what caused it?

Our expert Geoff Mockford thought that, as I was still using the original distributor (60 years old) the centrifugal advance springs were probably getting a bit tired making the timing too advanced at speed.

In response to me saying I never heard it pinging, he said "you don't hear it at speed".

After six new pistons, a you beat electronic distributor, changing the air filters from a felt type to the proper foam one which lets it breathe a little easier and a lot of help from some of my good friends, the XK is now running like a well oiled machine.

All I need to do now is to wait for Jon to come visit us again so I can now show him how an XK can really go up Willunga Hill. ■

**Onslow Billinghamurst**

*Editor - Onslow and Wendy have been members of our car club since 1974 and were elected to Life Membership in 2015. Thank you Onslow for sharing this story.*



*Onslow and his good friend Jon in the UK in his Series 1.1/2 Jaguar E type roadster*