

A Dream Come True (by Tom Brindle)

**MY 1967 JAGUAR MARK II -
A DREAM COME TRUE!!**

The First Encounter

I was about 10 years old when we had a family holiday to Southport (UK) and then travel on to Blackpool to see the Illuminations, that the fun started in my quest to eventually own a Jaguar.

On the Southport Beach it was okay to drive your car on to it and enjoy the day there until the tide rolled in. It was not unusual for cars to get bogged though in the soft sand and there was usually an ex war amphibian vehicle around that would patrol the beach and tow you out if you did get bogged. Alternatively people on the beach would band together and help push you out.

The car next to where Dad had parked his car had slowly sunk into the sand over the period of the afternoon and subsequently it became bogged. It was all hands-on deck to push the car out. I got into a position at the front of the car to help push near the grill and I can still remember (my wife Marj is a bit surprised I can remember that far back based on my present form, but I assure you that the memory is deeply embedded – thank goodness!!) seeing this shiny leaping “cat” right in front of

my eyes and hearing the sound of the wonderful engine and I said to myself “I must get one of these when I get older”.

Fast Forward 28 Years

It was 38 years later and having migrated to Australia in 1964 with my Mum and Dad and two sisters, that my dream was finally realised in 1997 with the private purchase of a Sherwood green, 1967 Mark 2 Jaguar 3.4 litre with a manual gear box with overdrive. I can still remember (I really can!!) it was raining when Marj and I picked up the car near Adelaide and it was our first introduction to the wonderful wiper blades “dance” that takes place when they are switched off.

I had joined the Club earlier that year and I was assisted greatly in my endeavours to find a Mark 2 by a lot of members in the Compact Register, and in particular at that time Roger Wallis (Register Secretary) and Steve Corbally. I was also greatly helped by Geoff Mockford who checked out the car and addressed a few issues the Mark 2 had at the time. The car was subsequently serviced by Geoff for a long period of time.

Joining the Car Club was a wonderful decision to make and has made the experience with owning the car that much more enjoyable.

The Old Engine Overheating Problem!

On one of the Car Runs the engine started to overheat and I thought it best to pull over and let it cool down. Marj was a bit concerned that we would miss lunch, but as it turned out, Roger Wallis was behind us and stopped to see if he could help. Well to cut a long story short, Roger towed us to the lunch venue okay, but on this day he was driving his 1967 Holden HR, so it was a bit embarrassing being towed by a Holden under the circumstances, and of course everyone just happened to be in the carpark to watch us arrive!!

Any way I took it easy going home and we got home in one piece. The cylinder head was reconditioned and it turned out to be a blessing in disguise as it gave the engine a new lease of life as well as so much more power.

The Old Flat Battery Problem!

My experience with having a flat battery was memorable. We had friends visiting from overseas and after dinner at home we said we could take them for a drive in the Jag. Well, I had the car perched at the top of our fairly steep driveway, but I had inadvertently left the inside lights and tail lights on. We all got into the car and I pressed the button to start the engine (see



Photograph taken at the Annual British Classic Tour held at Victor Harbor

A Dream Come True (cont)

even 1967 Jags have press button starts !!) and that dreadful sound of the engine turning over too slowly to get it started confronted us. Anyway undaunted, I was not going to let this spoil the evening run, I jump started it in reverse gear!! Well not the best gear to choose, but I had no option (no jumper leads) and after a series of hops down the driveway the engine roared into life!! Needless to say, the car's occupants were somewhat shaken up, but it was soon forgotten as they enjoyed the ride so much!!

I was recognised in the Club's special annual "poem" for this feat. This "poem" was read out at the Club's Annual Dinner that year for all to hear. Esteemed long time Club member, Ray Smithers use to compose the "poems" each year, describing "special" experiences members had with their Jag, which as a member("victim"), you would prefer to forget about and not want anyone to know about. The "poems" were a work of art and we really enjoyed them.

The Reliable Mark II

A testament to the reliability of the Mark II that I experienced, came a few years ago.

We registered to go on the Wollongong National Rally and do the post Rally tour and decided we would take the XJ40. A



Photograph taken at a club event at McLaren's on the Lake

few days before we were to leave for the trip the Xj40 petrol pump decided to play up. This is not an easy repair, because in the late model versions of XJ40's the pump sits inside the petrol tank. A quick chat with Geoff Mockford and the decision was made to take the Mark 2 as the best solution given that we had only a few days before it was necessary to leave. Geoff was kind enough to service the Mark 2 and check it over at very short notice. Well, the car went all the way there, completed the post Rally Tour and got us home without any problems.

The Old Navigation Problem

I added extra mileage on that trip by inadvertently coming home via the Sydney Harbour Tunnel. As some club members will know that my navigational prowess has further diminished over the ensuing years and I cannot rely on Marj as she will often drift off to sleep, so not a lot of help with navigation there (she says that she is "just resting her eyes !!").

I had originally purchased a GPS to help me out, but the Mark 2 is so original, the car is still positively earthed, therefore rendering my use of it not possible at the time. We travelled home in convoy with the late **Noel Orford and his wife Jo** and they were in their beautiful green Daimler V8 250. We stayed overnight at Tooleybuc. It was a lovely trip home and wonderful to see the two cars together and we received lots of admiring glances.

Travelling in convoy with other Club Members is a great thing to do, especially on long trips, and makes the trip much more enjoyable and memorable.

Trivia

To finish off, and to just stir the pot a bit, I just wanted to raise the long-standing query of which way the red plastic (white colour for very early models) side light tell-tales should be positioned on the front of the Mark 2. Mine has the slope facing towards the back of the car. I think the slope should face the front?? ■

Tom & Marj Brindle

Editor - Tom has been the Clubs Librarian since 2004. Thank you Tom for your loyal support. Also thank you Tom and Marj very much for a wonderful story.



Photographic taken at the Annual British Classic Tour at Victor Harbor