

A Couple of Retro Stories by Rick Luff

Editor - In order to help out with articles for the magazine, former President Rick Luff thought it might be worth revisiting some of his old scribbling. In the late 2000's he was quite prolific in supplying articles and pictures for publication. Here are a couple .

My Jaguar Story

I've never had a long-range goal of owning a Jaguar. Certainly, I have always considered them exiting and beautiful, but only other people actually owned them. After all, I have a Landcruiser and a Commodore with two garages to house them. Surely that would be enough.

In the 70's I learned to drive, like most of us at the time, in my Dad's car. No high-priced driving instructors in those days. Just him and I, broom sticks stuck in a couple of buckets for parking practice and half a dozen laps of the Westfield Shopping Centre car park. Back then I wished we owned a Holden or Valiant like most of my friends Dads did. Instead I grew up with and learned on Humber Vogues, Super Snipes and Wolseleys. So, by sixteen my subconscious was thoroughly imprinted with walnut dashboards.

Fast forward to one evening a few years ago. Instead of watching some formula American sit-com on TV with the rest of the family, I decided to fire up the PC and see what I could find on the internet. "What could I look up that was interesting", I mused? I made the fateful step of typing in Jaguar. The rest, as they say, is history.

I was surprised at how affordable a Jaguar was and casually remarked to my wife that a rather fetching Maroon 1984 XJ6 Sovereign would be nice to acquire. To my surprise she said to buy it. This was not a question I was going to ask a second time just in case the answer was different from the first. So, within a fortnight it was sitting in my garage. The Landcruiser was relegated to the elements.

Now as all of you would be well aware, addictions have a hierarchy of curability. There is smoking, followed by alcohol and then narcotics. The list appears to be topped by Jaguar-meglia. Apparently while the others will respond to treatment, there is no known cure for the latter.

Surely one Jaguar would be enough to slake the thirst (as I was new at this so you'll have to excuse my naivety at the time). I quite fancied the 420G and negotiated to travel to Canberra to buy an "Immaculate" example. Unfortunately, the seller's definition of "immaculate" matched mine for "Nice Fixer-upper" so I flew back home instead of driving.

The other model that fascinated me was the V12 XJS. To cut a long story short, the XJ6 now shares the garage with a 1988 XJS V12 Coupe, coincidentally in the same colour as the Sovereign. What about the Commodore? It now lives with the Landcruiser and I live with a very understanding wife. ■

Don't buy a Jaguar

If you don't want total strangers to come up and talk to you about your car, then don't buy a Jaguar.

When I owned a Commodore, the number of people wanting to talk to me about my car was roughly the same as those who enjoyed phone calls at dinner time from charities trying to sell their pens.

Last week I was accosted by a group of women, who unfortunately for me were in their eighties, who waxed poetic about my car. One of the groups had first purchased the marque sixty years ago. With quiet authority she told me that

there are Jaguars.... and there are other cars. 'Nuff said.

But the draw of a Jag is not limited to old age pensioners and the mentally infirmed like me. I've had three-year-old boys needing to be dragged away by their mums after sighting my car. Ice cream dribbling down their forearms and on to the footpath has not distracted their attention, nor has their mum's pleas to hurry them along.

As for V12's, even the massively spoiled, fluoro lit and farty exhausted Spotty Herbets are impressed by an engine that has three times as many spark plugs as theirs. Naturally they don't understand it, but they are impressed.

You see, there is something ethereal about a Jaguar. Not just in its form but also the name. I don't see anyone going weak at the knees over an '84 Falcon, but an '84 XJ6? Well, you know the answer to that one.

Of course, it's not just my cars, but all of yours too. Park an E-Type in an empty paddock and within ten minutes you wouldn't be able to see it for the crowd.

If all of this is a problem for you then buy one of the 'other' cars. ■

Rick Luff

Editor - Great stories. Thank you Rick



Rick Luff, 2017 Dolomite Brown F-Pace