Essex Thameside News



Nº 161, September 2020

8.00 p.m., first Tuesday of every month. Langdon Hills Golf Club, Lower Dunton Road, Bulphan, Essex RM14 3TY





Chairman's message

Hello Essex Thameside members and welcome to our latest newsletter.

We still have a long way to go back to life as we knew it before Covid-19, but restrictions have generally continued to

ease and I am pleased to report that, in the last month, our club members have managed to meet up a few times.

We held our first Covid-19 club night meeting at Langdon Hills Golf Club on 4 August. It was more an opportunity for members to meet and catch up than a typical club night meeting—low key and attended by 17 members, many of whom took the opportunity to have a meal and a drink with friends.

We are holding our next club night meeting on Tuesday 1 September, starting at 7.00 p.m. (i.e. one hour earlier than usual). To comply with the government's safety restrictions, Langdon Hills Golf Club advise that we are now allowed a maximum of 40 members in the function room. If you would like to come along, please email me accordingly so that we have a record for 'track and trace' purposes.

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I want to thank Lester Magness for kindly allowing us the use of his garden for a club meet with cars on Sunday 16 August. You will remember from Neil's article (in April's newsletter "A Look Round Lester's", also available on our website) that Lester himself has an outstanding collection of cars. Most are French classics from Citroën and Renault but his collection includes a Rover P5B, MGB, a 1968 Mini Cooper, Ford Thames van and, of course, his early Jaguar Mk2. He had brought out a Renault Dauphine and two Citroëns (Traction Avant and 2CV) to display in addition to his Jaguar, and they were supplemented by three very rare and unusual cars brought along for the day by some other friends.

The weather on the day before was awful—it rained all day—and the forecast for Sunday suggested that we would be treated more of the same. However, we were in for a surprise and the weather remained dry from midday until 4pm when we decided to end as a light shower began. 26 members were able to enjoy meeting in a relaxed safe environment and you can read more about the event in this newsletter.

We also attended a car meet at North Weald airfield which was organised by the Jaguar Drivers Club as a replacement for the cancelled Hyde Hall show. We were invited along with other car clubs to attend. It was a little windy but remained dry. On the airfield they had a red bus

selling snacks and drinks. I reckon that close to 20 cars from our club attended amongst around 120 cars in total.

In case you are not aware, there is a big Jaguar Forums UK event coming up on Sunday 20 September at Denbies Vineyard in Surrey. Doug Warren has booked a place via the XK8/XKR Enthusiasts Club (XKEC) and will be on their stand. The event starts by meeting at Pease Pottage Services off the M23 from 8.30 to 10.00 a.m. Before driving in various convoys to Denbies, the largest vineyard in England. The cost is just £5 per car, but there are limited spaces now available so, if you are interested, I suggest you book now. See details at the following link: http://www.spanglefish.com/jaguarforumsuk/

Congratulations to Ray Oliver who was the winner of last month's Caption Competition with: "The new air bag did not come with any fitting instructions".

Well done Ray and the prize (an Essex Thameside cap) is on its way to you.

I look forward to seeing some of you at our club night.

Graham Cook Chairman

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Cooper's Nuclear Shelter

In 1962 W.J. Cooper & Son, a local building and decorating firm run by my father Fred and his uncles Geoff, Fred and Bill, was given a building contract by Mr Lewis, an architect and the owner of an old cottage on the corner of West Street and North Road in Prittlewell. It was at the end of a terrace of six brick-built alms cottages called "St Marys Cottages"

The work consisted of alterations, additions and renovations to the existing building. Part of the contract was to build an extension to the West side of the property which was very close to the four foot high boundary wall and adjacent public footpath.

As soon as we started setting out and digging out the footings for the extension, the general public, consisting mainly of inquisitive ladies and the odd elderly gentleman passing by, would ask what were we building.

One of the main workmen on this job was the firm's bricklayer Len Thacker. On the spur of the moment, and being a bit of a wag, he told them that it was going to be a top secret nuclear shelter.

Bearing in mind that the Cuban missile crisis was in full flow, with the Russians having just prepared to install nuclear weapons on the island of Cuba and a stand-off between US President Kennedy and the Russian premier, Nikita Khrushchev, the threat of nuclear war was very real, and a great worry and concern for all people in every nation.

News soon got around the area that Coopers were building a top secret nuclear shelter and the number of locals leaning on the wall to watch the footings being dug began to increase.

The next question to be asked was who would be allowed into the shelter when it was finished? Len's solution to that was to pick up a clipboard with a sheet of paper and pen and then, very quietly and secretively, behind a shielded hand, tell onlookers that if they wanted to put their name and address down on the list they would be the first to be considered ... "when the time comes".

Of course it wasn't too long before the locals realised it was only an extension being built, not a nuclear shelter, and that all had said in jest, but not before Len had three sheets of paper filled with names and addresses.

Colin Cooper

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ESSEX JAGUAR SPARES



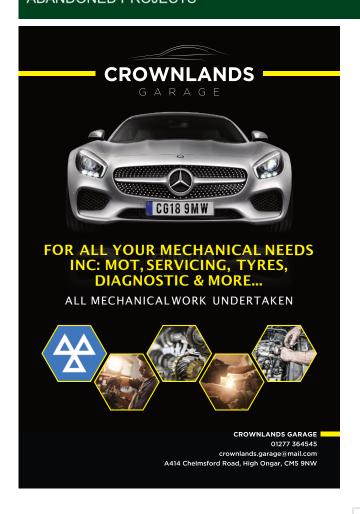


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Meeting at Magness's

Unlucky number 13. 404, the internet code for error. Evil 666, the number of the beast... Please bow for 2020, perhaps the worst number of all (and incidentally divided by five equals 404).

This year has certainly been a disappointment with no shows, club meetings or social gatherings at all. So we are most grateful to member Lester Magness who, when the government began to ease compulsory lockdown, kindly offered the use of his gardens and field for a club gathering of up to 30 people (the maximum allowed under government restrictions) with their cars on Sunday 16 August.

It was strictly self-catering, as safety constraints meant we could not offer any refreshments. However, the club had paid for two portaloos to be placed in the field for the day. The weather on Saturday had been awful, pouring with rain, and the forecast for Sunday was little better, but in fact the rain held off until 4.00 p.m. when everyone was packing up anyway to go home.

Some sixteen Jaguars of all periods were there in front of the house, including Lester's own early Mk2. But Lester had taken the opportunity to bring out in front of the barns four other cars from his collection of French vehicles: two Citroëns Traction Avant, one of which was a pre-war example from Paris, a 1960s 2CV and a lovely 1950's Renault Dauphine, of which there are just

twelve left in the UK apart from the two belonging to Lester.

But that was not all. At Lester's invitation, other friends had brought along three rare and unusual cars for variety and interest.

The first was a 1968 Lotus Elan Plus 2 in silver, registration RAH 400F. Rare enough as a model, this particular example was unique in that it was the car given personally by Colin Chapman to F1 world champion Graham Hill.There is a well-known photograph on Getty Images of Hill standing next to the car and his light aircraft.

The second was a rally-tuned, two-stroke Saab 96 Sports. Its owner had imported it direct from Sweden where it had been almost fully restored and tuned by a



Swedish rally driver who suddenly fell ill and died in his mid-50s before being able to complete it. Complete with its freewheeling system (since otherwise the two-stroke engine would seize under engine braking which interrupts the supply of lubricating fuel and oil), the car sounded amazing when it arrived and drove off.

Finally, an extremely rare Moretti 500 coupé imported

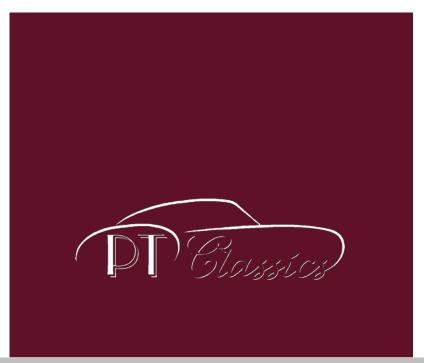
from Italy. Based upon a 1960s Fiat 500—indeed you can easily see the engine, chassis and dashboard under the skin—the tiny two-seater coupé was built by Moretti SpA, a company which specialised in microcars from 1925 to 1989. Overall, a fascinating day; thank you Lester!

Richard Gibby











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XK8 A-pillar issues



As many owners will know, the 'A' pillars on an XK8 are covered with a nylon-backed material, glued on at the factory. After time, this glue disintegrates and the nylon begins to lift off the plastic-fronted 'A' pillar posts, obviously looking unsightly. I decided to replace the nylon on my XK8 with faux leather in ivory.

I managed to get some white (ivory)-coloured faux

leather through eBay. They sent me a sample within two days of requesting a piece and it was a near enough match for my car's ivory interior, apart



from having a sheen. I ordered half a metre for just £6.50. In fact, this was enough for twice as many 'A'



pillars as I had, so lots over if you make a mistake!

The 'A' pillars actually detach quiet easily using either brute force or with a plastic spatula. Don't forget to unclip the ultrasonic sensor for the

airbag system inside both sides of the 'A' pillars. They do come out easily; the nearside with the cover has a single screw holding it in place. Remove the screw



before attempting to wriggle the fitting out of the 'A' Pillar. It has to be twiddled a bit but it will come out; just be careful.

Once off, one can remove the nylon trim by pulling off the material and then clean up the remaining glue using something like

Evostik adhesive remover. Once the plastic is clean, they should look like this:

Then it's a case of using the old nylon material as a template to cut out the faux leather.





I'm sure that a proficient person can spray the whole 'A' pillar with glue then curl the faux leather around the post, but I found it easier to glue one side first and let it dry before attempting to continue curling the remaining faux leather around the post. Cut off any excess.

One issue to note is that, at the bottom of the 'A' pillar, there is a recess. The faux

leather needs to be kneaded carefully into the groove to prevent bulges. If you cannot avoid a bulge or wrinkle,

try to make sure that it is below the recess so that it will be covered by the dash once refitted and will not be seen.

The end result will be better than before, by a mile.

Doug Warren







A trip down Europe's memory lane

An 8-day drive around Germany and Austria (Part 1)

Thinking about it, I suppose I have always been a bit of a petrolhead. Ever since my Dad's first 1956 Morris Oxford, when I was knee high to a grasshopper, I took an interest in cars and also in overseas travel. Long before package deals were dreamed of, my Dad, my German mother, my brother and I would pile into the family saloon to visit long-lost relations and acquaintances on the other side of the channel.

In the early 1960s, travelling to Europe was an adventure. We had a fully loaded motor car complete with numerous maps, a Camping Gaz stove and a Primus burner together with gas cylinders, cans of Heinz baked beans and sausages, tins of potatoes and gifts for Uncle Kurt and Auntie Inge, upon whom we



were about to descend for our annual pilgrimage to the motherland.

Uncle Kurt and Auntie Inge lived near the VW factory in Wolfsburg and highlights of the trip usually included a visit to see Beetles being built, and a trip into the Harz mountains. Part of the fun was boarding ship with the car and setting sail to this strange country and beyond, where people speak a different language and eat sausage.

The other day, I was looking at our home collection of slides—remember them?
—now on disc. I remember a

trip for two weeks in 1961 when we visited Holland, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Italy, ending up in Venice at the Lido. The highlight of the trip was seeing a car in Brescia outside our hotel that was competing in the Mille Miglia. From the photo it looked very much like a Ferrari 250GT (see photograph).



Of course, with car ownership and the freedom of the open road came car troubles and the misery of roadside repairs. A holiday could be spoiled by the alarming rattle of some vital engine component working loose, the disheartening rumble of a flat tyre or steam coming out of somewhere beneath the bonnet. The bonnet was often up to help it cool down, my Dad used to say.

We travelled often into Berlin, my Mother's birthplace, via the DDR before the wall was both put up and later torn down, travelling down what I have now learned is the A2 E30 corridor. I remember having a puncture en route. Dad was pretty used to it on those cobbled stones; he was good at changing the wheel on the side of the Autobahn, getting the jack into position and putting the spare onto the hub. On one occasion, the

Volkspolizei (cops) from East Germany pulled alongside. They got inside the car, startling us all by trying to pull it apart to check for any stray wannabe emigrants in the boot and underneath. All they found was a load of baked beans and spuds. They were pretty scary in uniform and made it very clear that we should not stop and get moving straight away. Dad fixed it in record time and shot off, leaving the hub cap behind. When we reached Berlin and stopped after hearing strange sounds coming from the rear wheel, he became furious with himself for having succumbed to a couple of Stasi-type Commies, making him forget the precious hub cap.

Wind the clock on 50 years or so to 2020, at the start of this year and pre-Coronavirus, I got a call from a good friend of mine, Norbert. He is a former business associate and fellow Jaguar XK-owner, and was keen to secure a companion for his pride and joy on a road trip through Bavaria and into the Austrian Tyrol. It would end up on the Großglockner Hoch Alpine Pass, some 2500m (8500 ft) above sea level, thought by many to be one of the world's best scenic drives. As my own pride and joy had just been replaced by a 2013 Jaguar XK variant in British Racing Green and I needed to 'run it in', I booked the ferry crossing on an open return basis. Little did I know that Covid-19 would kick off soon after.

Norbert contacted me at the start of July to tell me that Germany and Austria had opened up and he was going ahead with the expedition. Did I still fancy it'? Having running out of ideas during lockdown, and wondering what the new tomorrow on the continent had in store, I jumped at the chance of letting the big cat loose on the Autobahn and beyond, and I readily accepted. A great opportunity to road test the finest Grand Tourer to come

out of Coventry since Lady Godiva.

At the end of July, and armed with my essential face mask and Sat Nav system, I packed my bag and drove the 44 miles to Harwich International Port and boarded the Stena Brittanica en route to the Hook of Holland, A far cry away from the crane method of entry used in 1961. (See photograph)



Suitably refreshed after a good night's sleep in my single suite cabin, I was woken up at the Hook, just outside Rotterdam, ready for a day's drive ahead. The first night I spent at Augsburg, at Norbert's home, just an hour from Munich and 480 miles from Chelmsford.

Driving on the Autobahns of southern Germany just feels like normal, only faster than in the fifties and sixties, and on the other side of the road. Definitely brown trousers at the ready and squeaky bum time, it takes a little adjustment, especially when you are being hotly pursued by an Opel Astra with the driver's foot prodding the floorboard, a contraflow looming up ahead and a lorry pulling out. You do wonder whether the



brakes on the car behind will make it.

Keeping to a steady 80-90 mph, with the occasional burst of speed keeping the adrenalin and testosterone level suitably lubricated, helps curiosity and I am pleased to say that the Jag swallowed up the kilometres with ease and in comfort.

Day 2. Setting off early, we negotiated the Munich ring, driving past the Allianz Arena, the home of Bayern Munich, and headed for Berchtesgaden, the former home of National Socialism and summer home of the Führer, one Adolf Hitler, at the Eagle's Nest. Now little remains of it apart from a museum and a memorial to reflect on this beautiful Alpine village and the historical aspects of war. It seems that the Führer was a questionable visionary who just went too far down the dictatorship route. He operated a murderous, psychopathic, serial-killer regime, but he did also instigate a couple of sensible ideas in building a road network system that was years ahead of its time, and creating the concept of a people's car to go on it, the VW Beetle.

Late afternoon was spent high on the heels of a lonely goatherd, high above the village and overlooking the Hotel zum Türken, a notorious watering hole frequented



by Martin

Bormann, Hermann Göring and Adolf Hitler. A secret tunnel connected to the Berchtesgaden bunker and it was a well known meeting place. My Jag had pride of place in front of the same until James Dean's Porsche 356 convertible came along and blocked the view (see photograph).

Driving on from there across the border into Austria we came across the scenic Rossfeld, where part of the film Sound of Music was shot. This was alleged to be in the same vicinity that the von Trapp family villa was located. Julie Andrews (or Mary Poppins), who played Maria von Trapp, and Christopher Plummer would have been impressed that we visited it some 50 years later.

After a short break admiring the scenery, we headed via Innsbruck and Zell sam See to the Gasthof Post in

Bruck an der Großglocknerstraße, our base for the evening. A few large Edelweiss beers and a pork Schnitzel later for dinner rounded off a great day.

Day 3. The next day was a short journey from Bruck onto our featured scenic drive, the 48-kilometre Großglockner-









Hochalpensrtaße (high Alpine road). This is the highest surfaced mountain pass road in Austria. Named after the Gross Glockner, Austria's highest mountain, it was built in the early 1930s, just after the New York stock market slump, which shook an impoverished Austria with terrible force. Austria had suffered catastrophic economic results through losing the First World War, and had seen devastating Inflation and unemployment of over 26 percent. Construction of the road was seen as a way of giving work to 3,200 men (from an average of 520,000 jobless at the time). Although the idea was mocked, it was also seen as a way of creating international tourist traffic', in the belief that some 120,000 visitors a year might come. The state advanced the building costs and users of the road would pay off this sum through tolls. Little did they realise that, 90 years later, this road would be accommodating around 350,000 tourists a year by car and a further 500,000 by motorcycle and bicycle.

The road starts in Bruck in the state of Salzburg and ends in a place called Heilegenblut (meaning Holy Blood). With its 36 hairpin bends and its 2,500-metre backdrop, looking down with the soft top open is enough to drain anyone's blood supply.

The toll was 33 euros and the big cat, with its 5-litre V8

lump and paddleshift gearbox, handled the curves and climb up to its highest point, the viewpoint at



Edelweißspitze, with ease. The scenery was truly breathtaking and worthy of accolade as the country's, if not the continent's, most beautiful mountain pass road.

We passed lots of exotic cars on the journey but probably the most interesting was the 1942 VW Kubelwagen, a military vehicle, with its Weimar Republic plates. Based on Hitler's Beetle designed by Ferdinand Porsche, it had an air-cooled engine of 985cc knocking out just 23 hp and mounted behind the passenger compartment. The engine had no radiator, thus making it less susceptible to gunfire or shrapnel. Clever, those Germans, even then! (See photograph).

That evening was spent at the Gurgltal Hof Hotel in Tarrenz, in the heart of the Tirol famous for its mountains, ski slopes and toboggan runs. Fortunately there was no snow, just 34 degrees of sunny mountain air. Another 208 miles covered and ready for a couple more Edelweiß beers and a veal Wiener Schnitzel this time. Both Norbert and I remarked upon the relaxed



mood of Austrians compared to the Germans. No social distancing or face masks here in the hotel, nor in the supermarkets. A trifle worrying perhaps, or was it just

down to more regular testing on a larger scale?

Day 4. The midway point of the trip was spent in transit back to Augsburg and some 180 miles were covered, finishing the day at Norbert's retirement project in



Binswangen. This is a classic car storage facility accommodating his own fleet of 10 vehicles and vintage motorcycles. Since my last visit in 2019, he has put in a mezzanine level, doubling up on floor space, with a lift system allowing him to accept another 10 collector's



vehicles in a closed dry garage with underfloor heating, air purifiers and a dustproofing course that provides a healthy and clean environment.

The Jaguar XKR that Norbert uses in summertime is a 1997 model in royal blue with ivory leather and has just 120,000 kilometres/75,000 miles on the clock (see photograph).

The electric fan cutting in is his only complaint; it doesn't do hill climbs without a little rest and its bonnet needs to come up in the process. According to Norbert, it is a pleasure to drive but it "likes a drink" of unleaded.

1,124 miles were now completed on the Croxson Jagfest Rock Tour, with another four days to go advancing on to the Berlin scenes of my yesteryear. Part 2 of this story will continue in October.

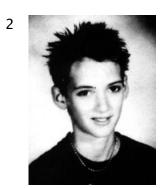
Ian Croxson

BEFORE THEYWERE FAMOUS

Who did these youngsters grow up to be?

1







3

6

9

12







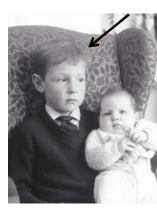


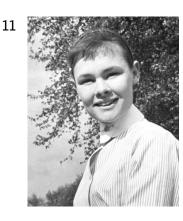
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8









Answers to last month's quiz:

8) Freddie Mercury

1) Brad Pitt 2) Catherine Deneuve

5) Whoopi Goldberg 6) Forest Whitaker

9) Julie Andrews

3) LizaMinelli

4) Denzel Washington 7) Presidents George HW Bush and George W Bush

10) Paul Newman

11) Prince

12) Samuel L Jackson

September Car Quiz - Name The Make And Model





Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

Figure 8

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Figure 9

Figure 10





Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15

Good Luck. Answers in next month's Newsletter.

Figure 16

Answers to last month's car quizzes

Movie Cars Quiz

1) Aston Martin DB5, appeared in *Goldfinger* (1964) with Sean Connery and Honor Blackman, *Thunderball* (1965) with Sean Connery and Claudine Auger, *Goldeneye* (1995) with Pierce Brosnan and Izabella Scorupco, *Tomorrow Never Dies* (1997) with Pierce Brosnan and Teri Hatcher, *Casino Royale* (2006) with Daniel Craig and Eva Green, *Skyfall* (2012) with Daniel Craig and Naomie Harris, and *Spectre* (2015) with Daniel Craig and Léa Seydoux. It will also appear in the yet-to-be-released *No Time To Die*, again starring Daniel Craig, Naomie Harris and Léa Seydoux.

- 2) Dodge Charger R/T 400, appeared in Bullitt (1968) starring Steve McQueen and Jacqueline Bisset
- 3) Hudson Commodore Eight, appeared in Driving Miss Daisy (1989) starring Morgan Freeman and Jessica Tandy
- **4)** Replica Ferrari 250 GT California Spyder, appeared in Ferris Bueller's Day Off (1986) starring Matthew Broderick and Alan Ruck
- **5)** Ford Anglia 105E deluxe, appeared in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (2002) starring Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint and Emma Watson
- 6) Plymouth Fury, appeared in Christine (1983) starring Keith Gordon and John Stockwell
- 7) Lamborghini Miura, appeared in The Italian Job (1969) starring Michael Caine and Noel Coward
- **8) Delorean DMC-12**, appeared in *Back to the Future* parts 1 (1985), 2 (1989) and 3 (1990), starring Michael J Fox and Christopher Lloyd
- 9) Peugeot 406, appeared in Ronin (1998), starring Robert De Niro and Jean Reno
- 10) Ford Thunderbird, appeared in Thelma and Louise (1991) starring Susan Sarandon and Geena Davis.

Make and Model Quiz

- 1 Vauxhall Wyvern
- 2 Ford Zodiac
- 3 Chevrolet Camaro SS
- 4 Lamborghini Miura
- 5 Aston Martin DB5
- 6 Ford Thunderbird
- 7 Ford Model Y
- 8 Ford Corsair
- 9 Wolseley 6/110
- 10 Volvo P1800
- 11 Lotus Elan Plus 2

- 12 Alfa Romeo Brera
- 13 MG X Power SV
- 14 Sunbeam Alpine
- 15 TVR Tuscan
- 16 Volkswagen Karmann Ghia

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