

Essex Thameside News

Nº 173, September 2021



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Graham Cook
Chairman and co-editor

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Chairman's message

Hello and isn't it splendid to be going out and mixing with people indoors again, following the lifting of all Covid restrictions?

On 3rd August we held our first proper club night for 18 months at Langdon Hills, and it was wonderful to see members after so long. We took the opportunity to hold our much-delayed AGM, in which we reviewed our activities and finances during the past two financial years, and re-elected the committee for another year. As both Mary Monk and Vaughn High had decided to step down in order to create an opportunity for new committee members with fresh ideas, we thanked them for their support and hard work over the last few years and we welcomed Ian Croxson and Lester Magness onto the committee. In future, Ian and Gill Cain will also help out with handling cash transactions at club nights because Richard Gibby, while still wishing to remain a member of our region and happy to continue as our Treasurer, Webmaster and main Editor, has just moved house to Norfolk and won't be able to attend very many club night meetings from now on.

August also saw the resumption of several shows and visits. Although it was at very short notice, one of our members Chris Skinner was able to arrange a tour of Woodham Mortimer's splendid new premises in Chelmsford on Saturday 7th August, and the many interesting and beautiful cars in their restoration workshop.

While the Maldon Show did not take place this year, the annual Classic Car Show at the RHS Gardens in Hyde Hall did go ahead on Sunday 15th August. Our region put up a fine display with more than twenty cars, at the first show we've been able to go to since 2019. The show was well attended and, to everyone's relief, generally blessed by good weather, so it was a great day out.

Looking ahead, as I write this we have 25 cars due to attend tomorrow's Lavenham Classics Show in Suffolk, on Sunday 29th August. This is a new venue for us, and it promises to be an excellent day; Lavenham is a small town with lots of medieval half-timbered buildings and a fabulous High Street so there should be plenty else to see and do.

Later next week, on 3rd September, several members will be driving to the Peak District for a long weekend break, in our much-delayed UK tour originally booked for last year. We are also planning our own Drive It Day and a Sunday lunch later this autumn

On Sunday 19th September, around 50 of us will be visiting Lester Magness's home with our cars for a garden tea party. Lester has arranged a full marquee with dining tables and chairs, plus afternoon tea service provided by caterers, and Hilary Landy will be providing live music with her accompanist, so it promises to be a great day irrespective of the weather and all tickets have sold out.

And, finally, we have started posting again in our own Facebook Group. This is a private, closed group for members only; just search in Facebook for 'Jaguar Enthusiasts Essex Thameside' and click 'Join' - one of our Administrators will then accept you. Members are most welcome to add photos and comments.

I look forward to seeing you next club night.

Graham

Other committee members



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Events Diary: September–December 2021

The following remain subject to COVID guidelines, including potential cancellation or postponement in the event of further restrictions. Arrangements for next year will be advertised in future newsletters.

JEC Essex Thameside Region show attendances and events:

Sun 29 August	Lavenham Classics Show, Recreation Ground, Lavenham, CO10 9SH
Fri 3–Mon 6 September	Essex Thameside's Peak District Tour, Makeney Hall Hotel, DE56 0RS
Tue 7 September	Club Night, 8pm, Langdon Hills Country & Golf Club, RM14 3TY
Sun 19 September	At Home With Lester: garden party hosted by Lester Magness, CM9 6QA
Tue 5 October	Club Night, 8pm, Langdon Hills Country & Golf Club, RM14 3TY
Tue 2 November	Club Night, 8pm, Langdon Hills Country & Golf Club, RM14 3TY
Tue 7 December	Christmas Club Night, 8pm, Langdon Hills Country & Golf Club, RM14 3TY

For information—other non-JEC shows and events open to individuals:

Sat 4 September	Breakfast Meet at The Cherry Tree, Stambridge, SS4 2AF
Sat 2 October	Breakfast Meet at The Hare, Roxwell, CM1 4LU
Sat 6 November	Breakfast Meet at The Castle, Great Leighs, CM3 1NE
Fri 12–Sun 14 November	Lancaster Insurance Classic Motor Show at the NEC, Birmingham, B40 1NT

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A Walk Round Woodham Mortimer



Any member who read our Chairman's email of the 5th August regarding a tour around restoration specialist Woodham Mortimer and came along enjoyed a rare treat. For those who didn't, maybe next time.



We have member Chris Skinner and his son, Alex, who is employed at the facility, to thank for the invitation which also included the E-Type Club.

Thankfully, the rain held off whilst we were greeted at the main entrance by Sales Director, Paul Fox and six highly knowledgeable members of his team from each key department. The said rain hammered down once we were safely inside.

For those not familiar with the company, Woodham Mortimer is a world class car restoration company which employs around 60 crafts people and engineers here in Essex. They also source and sell classic cars of all descriptions. Vehicles restored by them have appeared and received awards in places



including Pebble Beach Concours, Cartier Style and Luxe and Salon Privé. They maintain a competitions department responsible for the sponsorship of and taking part in historic racing and motor sport at venues including the Mille Miglia, Goodwood Revival

and Le Mans Classic. Fortunately for us in the Essex Thameside Region, they are conveniently located in Chelmsford.

Following the essential Health and Safety inductions, we entered via an intimate little showroom, decorated with racing murals. There were Jaguars aplenty here together with a brace of Ferraris, a BMW and an Aston Martin. The haul of Jaguars included a much-photographed blue Series I 4.2 E-Type Coupé, which may have once been green when originally found.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, a 1953 XK120 3.4 SE Roadster from the States was being sold in its original condition, a sort of Rat Rod look. Opposite sat an XK150S from 1961 with unusual headrests built into the seats, one of only three RHD models to be fitted with this factory option. A very presentable Mark II also boasted a special interior which had been remodelled to include XJS seating. Sounds odd, but it works.



Duncan Hamilton's 1950 XK120 competition roadster nearby was not the only vehicle present with celebrity history. The red Ferrari hiding behind the E-Type Coupé was owned by Jenson Button and had only around 5,000 miles on the clock. He probably only drove it to church on Sundays.





Jazz singer Cleo Laine once owned the '63 Aston Martin DB4 Series V SS Vantage nearby. To most eyes, this looks like a DB5, although it does possess a slightly different dashboard. I was informed that the gadget-laden DB5 in "Goldfinger" was, in fact, one of these. The car in the road shots, however, was a DB5.

Not all the cars here can list a famous former owner, but many can tell a fascinating story. Take the blue BMW Z8, the first car you meet when



entering the show room. You may have seen Pierce Brosnan's being sawn in half in "The World Is Not Enough". This one, still in one piece, has only 365 miles recorded having been stored for 18 years and is genuinely still under a BMW warranty. The story has it that a gentleman bought it new for a lady who was a very good friend and lived in London. She drove it around the city for a short while, but did not really like it so placed it into storage where it remained until her recent passing away.



Close by stood a green "super car" like something Lamborghini never made.

Manufactured by Geely with many Volvo parts, it didn't actually run,

but was being evaluated for possible future sale. Perhaps not, but painted black it would make a great Batmobile in a future movie of that franchise.

As we passed through the showroom the building opened to a vast metal-roofed hall divided at low level into specialist areas providing trim, body, mechanics, paint and maintenance facilities.



A plethora of leathers was on display together with an E Type undergoing a re-trim in the trim bay, whilst a couple of E Type Roadsters were being rebuilt in the body shop.

Here I asked about the strange circles which appeared to be engraved on some of the panels.

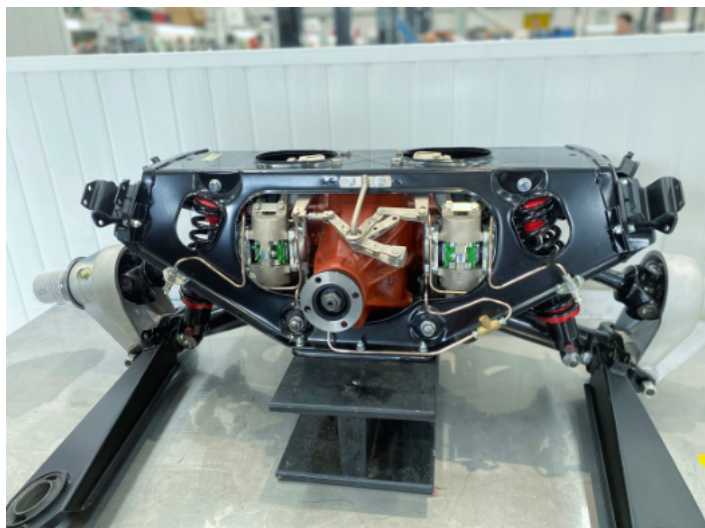


These, I was informed, were as a result of passing an arc welder type of implement over the panel to heat the steel and make it become more malleable, therefore easier to work when

removing dents and the like. I never knew that!



There were two spray booths in the paint area, one of which had recently been installed. In engineering, the two XK engines looked good enough to mount on your sideboard to impress visitors with no need for constant watering and changing at the end of the week. And that's not all. A beautiful rear inboard disc assembly was on display showing remote bleeding nipples. If only my car had those. In fact, it will. I shall arrange for this to be done in the next couple of months.



Along the way we passed some interesting cars, a DB6, a '63 Volvo P1800, possibly built by Jensen Motors, with an overhead roof console and a red Dino 246 GTS. From 1973, but owned by one person since 1976, it was very original and in very good condition. Originally black it was awaiting restoration work, but it did look fine to me. Adjacent to a late model Mercedes-Benz 450SL a rare Bandini 1100 Sport of 1951 vintage was displayed. It had rally history, FIA papers and thought to be one of only three manufactured. I still cannot see why it had a fuel gauge mounted on the rear bulkhead between the seats! Turn to the left and you will see a row of hydraulic lifts lining one side in military precision alongside vehicles in varied states of preparation. What an eclectic mix with E Types, a Suffolk SS100, a '54 AC next to what I believe may be an HRG, a Mike Hawthorne Ferrari adjacent to a 1964 250 GT Lusso Berlinetta, a Jensen Interceptor III and a Lotus Cortina shell awaiting its mechanicals. By the ramps a mighty Mille Miglia prepared '53 Lincoln Capri stood near an Aston Martin DBS converted to a soft top. There were many more, but I think you have the picture.

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The morning flew by and, with the rain replaced by cloudy skies, it was time to depart. Again, our thanks go to Chris and Alex Skinner and Paul Fox and his expert team from Woodham Mortimer for making this event possible and so enjoyable.

Neil Shanley





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A New Conquest

The first 'sporting' Daimler

I've had a lot of changes over the last few months. After taking early retirement from the British Library just before Christmas, I decided to move house to get garage space for one or two more cars and have now "downsized" from a 3-bedroom mid-terraced Edwardian house with single garage in Wanstead to a 5-bedroom detached house in Norfolk with a double garage and space for at least two more garages. To fill one of them, I've also just bought a new car.

As the only two cars I had already were both totally impractical (but fun!) two-seater convertibles, what better than to buy a third totally impractical convertible? To be honest, I had not been intending to do so but, when a good friend offered to sell me his Daimler at an excellent price, I could not resist. I had already driven it, and I knew that it had been well cared for, runs well and is very sound.

I console myself that at least it's a three-seater, although I'm not sure anyone would actually want to use the third seat for long because it's mounted sideways on. Even if you don't normally get car sick this is almost guaranteed to make you feel queasy,

since you must either look at the road ahead over your and the driver's right shoulders or stare in front of you at the pavement gliding (rather than flashing) past.

The car is a 6-cylinder, 2433cc Daimler Conquest New (Mark 2) Drophead Coupé, of which just 54 were made between 1955 and 1957 and only about 35 are left worldwide. It was Daimler's first 'sporting' car, although I would still regard it more as 'stately', especially in comparison with their next sporting car, the Daimler Dart, which followed just four or five years later.



Mine is chassis no 90514, built on 26th July 1956 and first registered on 6th October of that year. The next one built (chassis 90515) was exported to Australia and later used as a getaway car by armed bank robbers in a raid in Sydney in 1968. Mine also has a shady past, but more about that next month!

The car was originally painted ivory, with a red hood and red upholstery. It still has the latter but otherwise has gone through a couple of colour changes in its life. It was repainted blue, with a blue hood, sometime in the 1980s or 1990s and was photographed in this guise in southern Italy for the front cover of the Daimler & Lanchester Owners Club magazine in 2006. However, it now sports a fetching two-tone scheme, with blue bonnet, hood and boot, but ivory doors, front and rear wings.

Perhaps its most interesting feature, apart from its ownership history, is the transmission. This comprises a fluid flywheel with a Wilson preselector epicyclic gearbox. It is a form of semi-automatic in which you still choose which gear you want and when to engage it, but have no clutch, just a gear-change pedal where the clutch would be.

The concept pre-dates both fully automatic transmissions and synchromesh gearboxes, the idea being to enable a smooth gear change without having to double declutch or match the gear and engine speeds. Preselector gearboxes were fitted to many

racing cars, including Bugattis, and also to buses, heavy lorries and armoured vehicles including Germany's Tiger Tank. Daimler and Lanchester (absorbed by Daimler in 1933) were proponents and fitted them to most of their vehicles, especially their luxurious limousines.



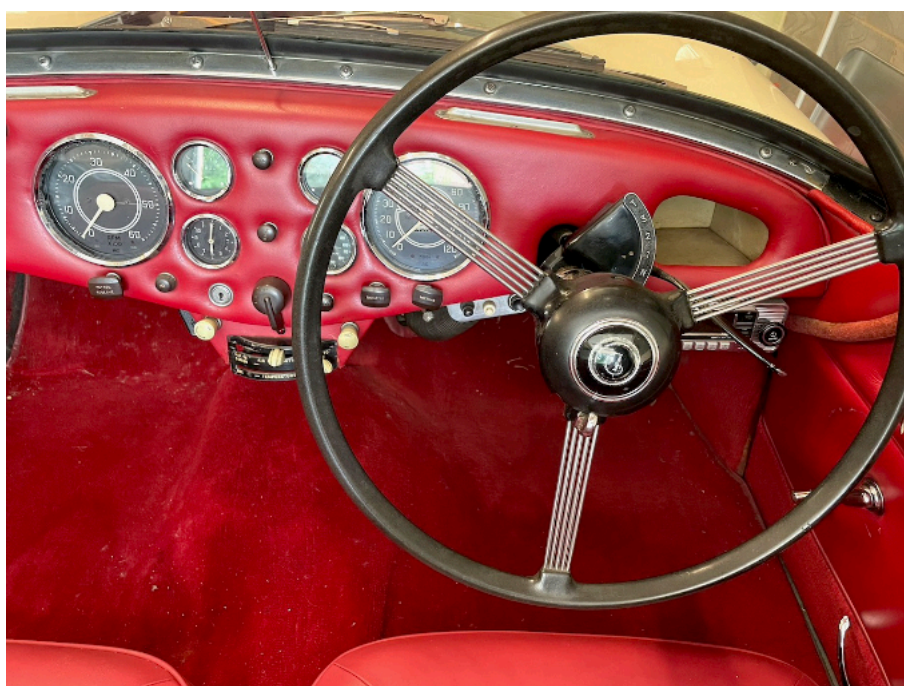
The preselector gearbox takes some getting used to but is very effective when you get the hang of it. You have a gear selector lever on the steering column (1 to 4, neutral and reverse) with which to choose the gear you want next. However, the gear only actually engages when you press and release the left-hand pedal. The pedal is not a clutch and must not be used

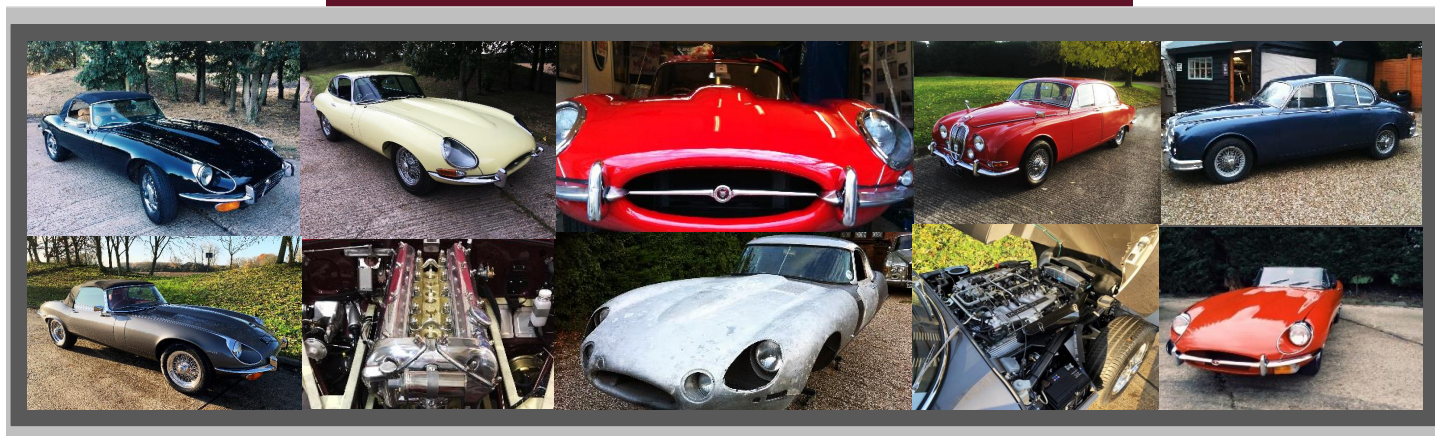
that way – e.g. no letting the pedal up slowly to set off. However, I can tell you from experience that it's awfully tempting to do so when you are used to a manual!

To a modern driver used to synchromesh or automatic boxes, the preselector seems an idiosyncratic idea and rather a waste of time with no real benefit; after all, you still have to select and engage each gear yourself. However, it was a big step forwards compared with the old 'crash' gearboxes and the struggles many drivers had with double declutching.

Its rarity and its unusual driving characteristics were one reason for buying the car. The other reason was its history, but you will have to wait till next month for that...

Richard Gibby

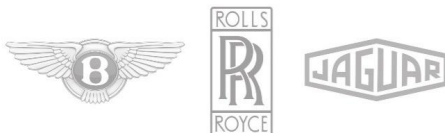




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Hyde Hall Show

On Sunday 15th August we attended our first car show since 2019. Under generally sunny weather, RHS Gardens, Hyde Hall was a fine gentle venue. Our club fielded over twenty cars plus a Ford Mustang, a late model of the petrol variety and an E type brought along by Paul Fox of Woodham Mortimer. A 4.7 litre much modified example with a finish so good you could use it as a shaving mirror. A similar car would set you back around £350K.

The show certainly attracted the crowds with club displays from; Rolls Royce and Bentley, MG, Austin Seven, Aston Martin, Triumph, Singer, Mazda MX5, Morgan and Jaguar (Area 33 and Thameside). There were many exceptional examples present and too many to list in this short narrative, but being an XJS owner, a pale blue Celebration convertible caught my eye. It was immaculate



and had only done 19,000 miles due to spending much of its life in two car collections. A mint DB5, a sparkling Triumph 2000 Roadster, a beautiful Bentley, a sole Lotus Cortina police car, a 13/60 Herald Estate (we had one) and a 50's Ford Consul were some of the many cars

present. I did love the Austin Seven Club display which included a scale replica pedal car.

The largest vehicle that I saw was a WWII American Army lorry, you know, the type they used in "Kelly's Heroes" and other war movies. It was there collecting for charity.



If cars are not your bag, then there were always the colourful gardens to walk through and a couple of splendid café/restaurants to keep you going. I will let the photographs lend you a flavour of the day.

Neil Shanley
(with thanks to Liz Croxson for some of the better photos).





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**WLTP (Worldwide harmonised Light vehicle Test Procedure) is the new process that has been phased in from 2017, which measures fuel, energy consumption, range and emissions in passenger vehicles in Europe. This is designed to provide figures closer to real-world driving behaviour. It tests vehicles with optional equipment and with a more demanding test procedure and driving profile.

September Car Quiz - Name The Make And Model



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10

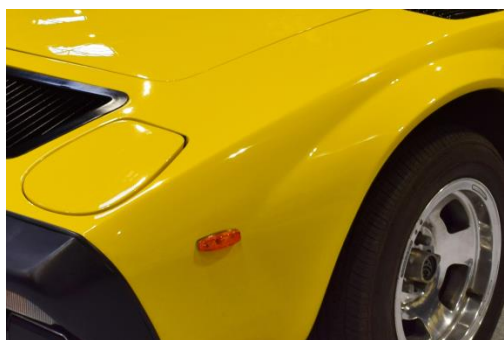


Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15



Figure 16

Good Luck. Answers in next month's Newsletter.

Answers to Last Month's Quiz:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. 1960s Jaguar S-Type | 6. Volvo P1800 ES | 12. 1961 Skoda Felicia |
| 2. Austin Cambridge A55 Farina | 7. Ford Corsair GT | 13. Honda S800 |
| 3. Renault 15 TS | 8. Austin 7 Swallow | 14. Amphicar 770 convertible |
| 4. DeSoto Firesweep | 9. Packard Light Eight | 15. Renault 4 |
| 5. 1938 Armstrong Siddeley 16 | 10. Jaguar E-Type Lightweight | 16. Studebaker Hawk |
| | 11. NSU RO80 | |

BEFORE THEY WERE FAMOUS

Who did these youngsters grow up to be?

1



2



3



4



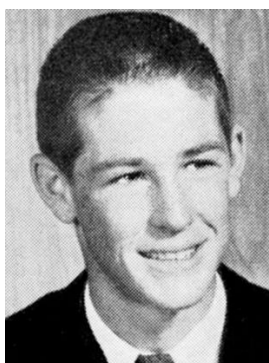
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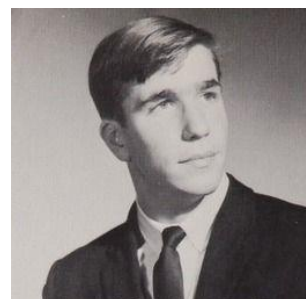
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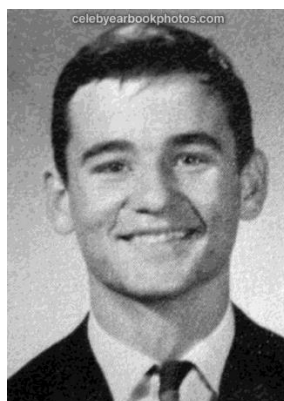
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10



11



12



Answers to Last Month's Quiz:

1. Dick Van Dyke
2. Elvis Presley
3. Kirstie Alley
4. Tom Cruise

5. Rihanna
6. Matt LeBlanc
7. Kevin Spacey
8. Henry Fonda
9. Dean Martin

10. Gerald Ford
11. Burt Reynolds
12. Art Garfunkel