

Essex Thameside News

Nº 196, August 2023



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Chairman's message

Steve Rider

s rider@live.co.uk

Hello and welcome to our August newsletter.

As this is my first 'chairmans message' it would be inappropriate if I didn't offer my sincere thanks to our outgoing chairman Graham Cook for all of his endeavours over the last five years. Taking over at very short notice and having to steer the club through the difficult COVID years, I am sure that you will join me in thanking him both for his past efforts and for his promise of ongoing support for the club going forwards.

Likewise, Ian Croxson took on a demanding role as membership secretary in addition to his position as secretary to our region. His decision to stand aside is understandable and again we are very fortunate in his commitment to continue as our region's Secretary.

I am very pleased to welcome Bev Warren to the committee and I am sure that we will benefit from her administrative abilities as well as the infectious enthusiasm that she brings to the role.

During the last month, members have attended various events near and far; some details from these will be reported in this and the next few newsletters.

Going forward, I am pleased to report that your committee has been working hard in planning and organising future events.

Our first major foreign trip as a club, since before COVID put a block on both travel and fraternising, is

now confirmed with a return trip to the Netherlands in the spring next year. With an overnight passage from Harwich to the Hook of Holland, a four night stay in a superior hotel, we have an exciting itinerary that benefits tremendously from the experience of our previous tour there in 2019.

Somewhat sooner, we are looking to end this summer season with a club barbecue on 24th September, kindly being hosted by our Events Coordinator Lester Magness at his home. He previously hosted a Sunday afternoon tea there, which made for a very pleasant afternoon, and I have no doubt that the barbecue will be just as enjoyable.







Further details of these and other proposed shows and events will be included in this and future newsletters.

The new Casual Days Out Whatsapp site, organised by our Vaughn High, is proving to be very popular and well used. It is intended to advise members of forthcoming meetings and shows, especially when they are organised at short notice. If you haven't already taken advantage of the site and would like to receive notifications in the form of a Whatsapp text, then please contact Vaughn on 07910 787411 and ask to be included.

Our next club night takes place on Tuesday 1st August at Langdon Hills Golf and Country Club from 8pm. I look forward to welcoming you then.

Steve

Committee Members

	Graham Cook Vice-Chairman cook_gm@hotmail.co.uk		Ian Croxson Secretary and Membership secretary ian@thecroxsons.com		Richard Gibby Treasurer, Webmaster and Editor rwgibby@gmail.com
	Lester Magness Social secretary and Events coordinator lestermagness1@gmail.com		Neil Shanley Committee member and co-editor neilshanley@btinternet.com		Beverly Warren Membership Secretary beverlylwarren@gmail.com

Shows and events in 2023

Club Nights are at 8pm on the first Tuesday of each month at Langdon Hills Country & Golf Club, RM14 3TY (**except** for September's meeting, which will be on Tuesday **12** September 2023).

JEC Essex Thameside show attendances and events:

Sun 6 August	JEC Jaguars At Parham, Storrington, West Sussex RH20 4HR
Sun 13 August	Saffron Walden Motor Show, The Common, Saffron Walden, CB10 1JH
Sun 20 August	Classic Car Show, Stonham Barns, Pettaugh Rd, Stonham Aspal, Suffolk IP14 6AT
25–27 August	The Silverstone Classic, Towcester, Northamptonshire NN12 8TN
Mon 4–Thu 7 September	JEC Essex Thameside Whitby & N Yorks Tour with Scenic Car Tours
Sun 24 September	JEC Essex Thameside Club Barbecue hosted by Lester Magness, Orchard Cottage, Hatfield Road, Langford, Essex CM9 6QD
Sat 25 November	<i>Puttin' On The Ritz</i> Christmas Dinner Dance, Orwell Hotel, Hamilton Road, Felixstowe IP11 7DX, organised jointly with JEC Suffolk & Essex Borders

For information—other non-JEC shows and events:

Sat 5 August	Toot Hill Country Show, Church Road, Stanford Rivers, Essex CM5 9PW
Sun 27 August	Clacton Classic Car Show, Plough Corner, Little Clacton CO16 9ND (pre-2002 cars only)
10-12 November	Lancaster Classic Car Show, NEC, Birmingham B40 1NT
Battlesbridge Classic Vehicle Breakfast Club on Sundays 16 Apr, 28 May, 25 Jun, 16 Jul, 20 Aug and 17 Sep	

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The Future of Jaguar—a Personal View

The Next Generation, a Leap of Faith or Too Little Too Late?

You may have read comments written in our main JEC Club magazine, both editorially and in the Letters pages, regarding members' concerns over the seemingly steady decline of the relevance of the Jaguar brand. Also, despite all the warning signs from sales figures, nobody within JLR appears to be doing anything positive to address the issue. It is not that products are of poor quality; no, the whole line-up is just too old and, as a result (notwithstanding the world micro-chip shortage), they are not selling enough.

A look at Jaguar's current range should be enough:

- F-Type, introduced in 2012
- Revised XF, 2015
- XE, 2014
- F-Pace, 2015
- E-Pace, 2017 and
- I-Pace, 2018.

Granted, there has been a steady evolution and several special versions over the years, but nothing to set the world on fire. Look at the figures. Last year,



Jaguar sold 77,381 cars. By comparison, BMW sent 2,399,636 units to customers. Now that's some writing on the wall!

So, with the departure of Thierry Bollore after only two years as CEO, where is Jaguar going? Well, by word in the press, we may not have long to wait. A new model is on the horizon for announcement in 2024, for sales to commence in 2025. Word has it that it will be a Grand Turismo retailing at over £100,000. Whether this translates to a sleek saloon, an SUV, a mixture of the two or an entirely new concept is a well-guarded secret. Oh, and it will be entirely electric with a range of over 400 miles and a capacity to add 200 miles with a fifteen-minute charge, if you are in a hurry. I hope it will be as ground breaking as some of the Jaguars in the past – it will need to be!

Of late, Jaguar appears to be hanging on by milking its heritage, having been overtaken by companies spotting consumer tastes long before Jaguar. Other makers have been producing SUVs and EVs with



modern designs whilst Jaguar, despite some excellent concepts, have continued down the retro path. This has been compounded by the late launches of options such as diesels and estates, with no convertibles except the F-Type. Jaguar achieved Car of the Year with the I-Pace, which was very well regarded, but the sales were a disappointment. Perhaps the buying public had just forgotten about Jaguar as a serious player, and who can blame them?

Let us hope that new CEO Adrian Mardell and chief designer Jerry McGovern can inject desirability into this iconic brand. With the recent announcement of a battery factory in Somerset to be built by JLR we may see a resurgence yet, but I won't be holding my breath.

Neil Shanley



J.E.C. Essex Thameside region

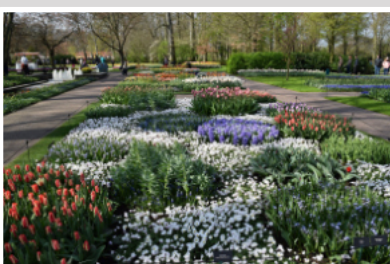
Spring in the Netherlands

6 days, 5 nights – Monday 15th to Saturday 20th April 2024
from approximately £495 per person
 (based upon 2 persons per car and sharing a twin/double room)



Spring is by far the best time to visit the Netherlands, when the tulips and other bulbs are in full bloom. At 79 acres, Keukenhof is one of the world's largest gardens with over 7 million bulbs, open for just two months each year. Also visit the Louwman Museum in The Hague, an amazing collection of over 200 unique cars including 'Genevieve' from the 1953 film, and the first ever petrol/electric hybrid dating from 1917. Other visits can include Kinderdijk, a UNESCO world heritage site with 19 large windmills, the Zaanse Schans living museum, the Beemster Polder, Amsterdam, Delft and other cities, plus a special scenic driving tour following the old rivers and canals of Holland.

We shall be taking the Harwich–Hook of Holland ferry and staying at the Van der Valk Hotel in Breukelen near Utrecht. For further details, please contact Steve Rider (srider@live.co.uk) or Neil Shanley (neilshanley@btinternet.com)





Driving the Atlantic Road

Visiting Iceland twenty years ago, I fell in love with northern landscapes. Ever since then, I have wanted to explore Norway, preferably in a classic car. My friend Nick Taylor and I decided in 2021 to do so together in 2023. Originally, he had planned to drive with his wife in his XK140 while I would take my Suffolk SS100. However, after a (for him) disastrous journey last year to Italy when his XK140 lost all steering and had to be recovered back to the UK, Nick's wife refused to go on any more trips abroad in an old car. So, we decided that just he and I would go together, sharing rooms and sharing the driving of his 1937 Derby Bentley.

This was an ambitious—some might say foolhardy—undertaking, since we would be driving over mountains with steep hills, hairpin bends and sheer drops in May, when several mountain passes had only just opened after the winter snow. And the Bentley has no power-assisted brakes, incredibly heavy steering with no power assistance, no heater or demister, a rudimentary and fairly useless windscreen wiper, and an old 4-speed gearbox which needs double-declutching in the lower gears. What an exciting prospect!

The first challenge was getting to Norway. We took the overnight ferry from Harwich to the Hook of Holland and then drove 400 miles via Bremen (where

we stopped overnight) and Hamburg to Kiel in Germany, for the Color Line ferry to Oslo. This ship was the largest I've seen, dwarfing the Harwich ferry and having a whole avenue five decks high of shops and restaurants along its centre.

Arriving in Oslo, we set off westwards in the Bentley towards Dalen, a small 19th-century resort at the end of a large lake that was built 120 years ago for Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany. On the way, we stopped at Heddal to visit the stave church.



There are only 24 stave churches left in Norway, all some 800-900 years old and built entirely out of pine. They are recoated with natural pitch every five or six years, which ensures that they are well-preserved but which also means they are not used for weddings because the pitch runs and can ruin a bride's dress.

Leaving Dalen the next morning, we motored northwest through the mountains, along a fjord and on the first of many ferries, all extremely efficient, towards Bergen. The roads in Norway are excellent and had been almost empty until we disembarked from the ferry for the last stretch into Bergen, where we hit a 40-mile tailback. Unbeknownst to us, we'd come across the Tour of Norway cycle race. The main road into Bergen and the city centre were closed, and all traffic had been diverted onto the single-track road we were driving. It took us about 3 hours to travel 20 miles and when we eventually reached Bergen, we could not get to our hotel; we had to park the car in a tiny old back street, leaving it in the care of a group of kids and a local house owner while we walked to the hotel to check in. Returning that evening to retrieve the car, we found it safe and sound so we gave them a bottle of English wine we'd been carrying as a thank-you.

Bergen is an attractive coastal town with a famous area of ancient wooden shops and warehouses dating from the Hanseatic League, plus a fish market and good restaurants. Unfortunately, however, the following day was the only time in our trip when it poured with rain all day, so we had limited opportunity to explore the city.

The next three days were spent taking a route north via Sognefjord and along the Atlantic coast to Ålesund and Kristiansund. The Atlantic Road is one of the most beautiful in Europe and well worth driving. It includes the famous and rather high curved road bridge, often featured in brochures.



The Atlantic Road and bridge were wonderful but we found Kristiansund itself a little disappointing. We had planned to take a day's boat trip to Grip Island, an historic fishing community on a small island out at sea, but unfortunately there was an extremely high wind so the boat trip was cancelled. Instead, we spent the day walking around Kristiansund and its four islands, but there was not a lot to see. We longed to escape; ironically, we noticed

that the hotel lifts were made by a Swiss company, so could we get two places on Schindler's Lift?

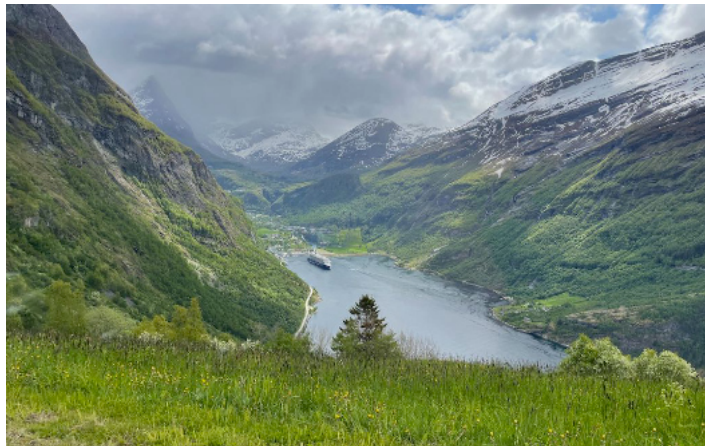
On leaving Kristiansund, we had been planning to take the famous serpentine Trollstigen ("Trolls' Climb") mountain pass, which has a lot of very steep hairpins climbing some 2,300 feet. However, the pass had only just reopened and the webcam showed that it was still snowing heavily. The hotel staff advised us strongly against taking that road in a modern 4x4, and especially when they saw what we were driving!



So, we changed our plans to skirt around the fjord and up into the mountains via a different route, still driving through snowfields but at least in better weather.



The descent into Geiranger was still terrifying, down the 1 in 4 Eagle Road with some 20 or so hairpins including one where we came across a coach and had to try and reverse back up the hill to let it past. However, the views were spectacular; a small dot in the distance far below us eventually came into sight as an enormous cruise liner.



We were staying at the Union Hotel in Geiranger, an amazing place overlooking the waterfalls at the head of the valley. The current hotel building is fairly modern, but the hotel originated towards the end of the 19th century. As tourists began sailing into Geiranger at the beginning of the last century, local people began transporting them up and down the precarious roads in early (mostly American)



motorcars, and the hotel has an amazing collection of them. There was a 1927 Buick in the lobby and, in a large room by the conference centre portion of the hotel,

we found a whole group of open-topped cars from the

1910s and 1920s, all beautifully restored. They included a Ford Model T, a Cadillac Type 57, the world's only Studebaker President still in running order



and driveable, two more Buick Phaetons, a Nash Phaeton, a Paige, a Hudson Super Six, a Studebaker Big Six, a Mercer Tourer and (hooray!) a Ford Model A truck.

These cars had been used to transport tourists from Geiranger (at sea level) up 4,800 feet to the Dalsnibba viewpoint overlooking the fjord. Figuring that, if they'd been able to do it, so should we in a 1937 Bentley, we also made the climb ourselves. It was hard going ascending some 38 hairpins, but well worth the trip as the views from the top, overlooking the fjord far below, were just incredible.



Leaving Dalsnibba, we headed eastwards to Lom, a reasonably large town which, for some strange reason, is just not marked on many roadmaps. Lom has another fabulous stave church. We were shown round the church by a beautiful and engaging young Norwegian girl so, while I was very attentive at the time, I can't remember anything about the church itself, just our guide! Afterwards, we rewarded ourselves with pastries from a bakery featured in the Hairy Bikers' Bakeation tour of Norway; it has the reputation of being the best bakery in Norway and I can confirm that its reputation is well deserved!

Heading back southwest from Lom, we crossed a high plateau where the snow and skiers were still

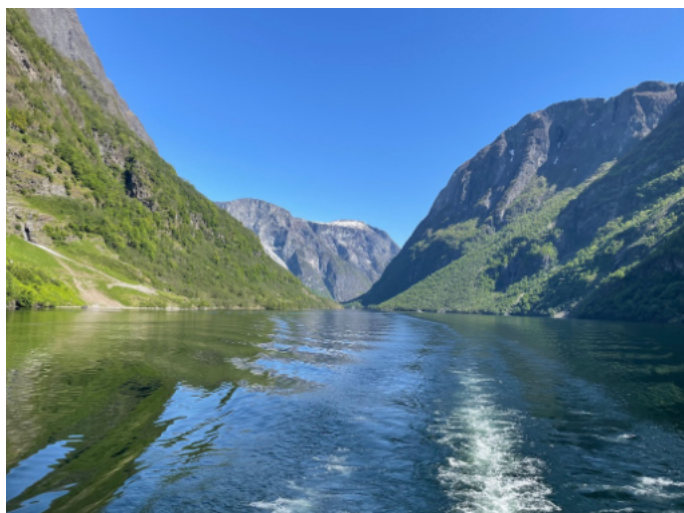
very much in evidence. Indeed it was gently snowing for some of the time that we were driving and we had to stop once or twice to clear the windscreen, since the wipers were hardly able to cope and we had no heating or demister. Thank goodness for a couple of travel rugs!

Eventually, however, we descended to fine weather and the top end of Sognefjord, along which we drove to the Walaker Hotel in Solvorn. This is the oldest hotel in Norway and our room was in a small building dating from 1620 with traditional 'cot' beds. It is very expensive—one night's stay sharing a twin bed room with dinner and breakfast cost us over £800—but the



location, food and room were all sensational. So we thought it worth treating ourselves for one night!

We left early the following morning to catch the sightseeing car ferry from Kaupanger to Gudvangen. This sailing takes some 2 ½ hours but passes along what are arguably the most spectacular fjords in Norway and it is well worth the journey. No doubt these fjords are the ones for which Slartibartfast won his award (for those who remember the *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*).



From Gudvangen we made our way to the Hardangerfjord and an amazing series of tunnels, one of which has a roundabout and junction inside the mountain, from which you suddenly emerge straight onto a high suspension bridge over the fjord and continue straight into another tunnel in the mountain on the other side. Another tunnel corkscrews so that the road spirals up over itself to emerge several hundred feet further up the mountainside. Clever engineers, these Norwegians.

We also stopped at the Hardanger Nature Centre which focuses on the natural history of Norway and includes some truly wonderful 3D film experiences as well as numerous wildlife exhibits. Well worth it.

From Hardanger we continued across the high central plateau of Norway towards Geilo, stopping at the ski centre for a night, and finally back to Oslo. The hotel we'd chosen in Oslo was in Holmenkollen, right next to the famous Olympic ski jump, and at the top of a large hill overlooking the city. This turned out, unexpectedly, to be Norway's hardest climb for the Bentley because it was 26 degrees and we had to navigate the hairpins in first gear with numerous hill starts behind a cyclist and a coach; the poor old Bentley only just made it without boiling over.

In Oslo, we'd arranged to meet Jens, the Norwegian secretary of the Rolls-Royce & Bentley Enthusiasts Club who showed us around the city for a day. The Norwegians are a healthy bunch and, despite being an octogenarian, he regularly skis and walks up four flights of stairs to his delightful penthouse apartment. Nick and I were more out of breath than he was.

Jens took us to see the ship Fram on which Amundsen annoyingly beat Scott to the South Pole by just a few weeks in 1912. But another highlight was the central park where a huge arrangement of sculptures by Gustav Vigeland are displayed. We loved these and can totally understand why they are so popular.

Finally, back on the ferry to Kiel and a long drive back through Germany. The journey through Hamburg was especially stressful because we had to crawl through a long tunnel in intense heat and amidst incredibly heavy traffic with no hard shoulder. The poor old Bentley's water temperature climbed to the high 90s and I was praying it would not boil over as it would have been the worst possible place to break down. Fortunately, however, the good old girl made it back via Arnhem to the Hook of Holland and safely home.

Richard Gibby



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Out in Orsett

On Sunday 9th July I took my XJS to the annual Orsett Classic & Vintage Show at the 30-acre showground in Rectory Road. The 420 was having a break due to a leaking header tank – try sourcing one of those.



It was my first time at this show and I was joined by around 18 members' cars from our club. The field was huge and filled with car club stands, auto

jumble stalls, many other commercial stands, food outlets, a kids' fair and a giant truck whose sole purpose was, it seemed, to run over and squash wrecked cars.

The show was well attended by the public who were able to see a wide range of vehicles, mainly from the UK, Europe and the States although I did see a Russian Volga with the former Eastern Block cars. All were well-kept examples of their breeds and there were far too many to name here, so I have chosen a few highlights that caught my eye.



American machinery from the 1940s to the 1980s arrived in force, although I did see a 1939 Chrysler and a 1903 Cadillac.



The 1940s were represented by two straight eights, a Buick Eight from 1941 and a 1946 Pontiac Eight, both sporting body styling of that period. The

1950s were dominated by Chevrolet Bel Airs in three body styles, illustrating their development as the decade progressed. From 1954, a beautifully finished, mildly customised cream sedan with low rider suspension compared with a standard red and white convertible. I loved that convertible. Also on show was a 1955 model with the straighter, boxier styling and a 1957 sedan with the fins.

The 1950s theme continued with a black Ford Thunderbird from 1955 and a 1959 Cadillac Eldorado convertible, possibly a Biarritz, in subtle pink and white.



Last, but by no means least judging by its size, was a 1957 Chrysler New Yorker. The owner showed us the size of the boot – you could hold a party in there. And it can do up to 12 mpg. How green is that?

Amongst many others, I could not ignore the Dodge Charger and the Highland Green Mustang, a homage to "Bullitt". What attention to detail, even down to their registration plates. Look closely and you can even see one of the visitors talking to Steve McQueen!

More garage-friendly were the many displays of Minis reflecting the ever growing popularity of these models. They were all there to be loved, whether you like the cars, vans, convertibles or pick-ups, there was one to suit you.



When did you last see a Vauxhall Senator or Opel Monza from the 1980s? Well there was the Autobahn Stormers club displaying several models in prime condition – nice cars.

I saw a lovely Ford Capri, the one based on the Ford Classic. People seem to be restoring these with more care these days, perhaps they are becoming more valuable.

Of the several themes running through the show – cars from movies, pick-up trucks and so on – it was cars from the former Eastern Bloc which fascinated me. We've all heard of Polski Fiats, East Germany's Trabants and Volgas from Russia, but a small red saloon that I had never seen the likes of before and could not identify really sparked my interest. No worries, its enthusiastic Polish owner came over to educate

us.

The car was a 1980 Syrena 105 manufactured by FSM in Poland. The model series made its debut in 1957 and was made by FSO until 1972 when it was made by FSM, an offshoot of FSO. From that date until 1983, FSM manufactured 344,077 vehicles, making a grand total of 521,311 including FSO's production run.

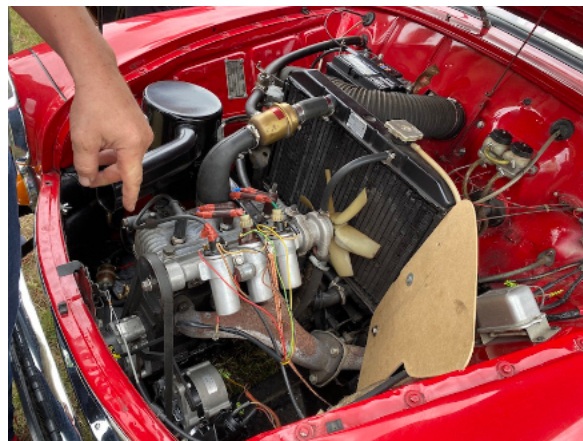
During its 26-year production run the Syrena barely changed, although the original two-stroke 746cc twin engine was replaced by a two-stroke 842cc triple engine in 1966. The 105 was the most popular model. Its owner informed us that when, in the Soviet era, you were finally allowed to buy one a new owner would hide it away as an investment for retirement, such was the demand for cars in Poland at that time – and I guess probably in the rest of the communist-controlled countries. When the USSR finally withdrew, you could exchange a Syrena for a couple of bottles of vodka. Its owner cheerfully stated that they were totally unreliable, with a day's outing taking three days – one day to get it going, then the day out and the third day repairing it.

An interesting detail that I spotted under the bonnet was a small aluminium tray which contained some liquid. Having asked its purpose, I was informed that it was a drip tray for the petrol, which leaked out of the carburettor above, so that it didn't go into the dynamo/alternator below. Apparently they all have this fitment which manages the symptoms but does not cure the fault. Finally, the car's name is derived from the Siren (mermaid) who protects the River

Wisla and the Capitol, Warsaw. Sirenka (little Siren) is a name often used for the car in Poland. And not a lot of people know that.

Enjoy the photos and see you at the next show.

Neil Shanley









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August 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.



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Answers to last month's quiz

- 1) MGA
- 2) Fiat 500 Giardiniera
- 3) Lomax 223/224
- 4) BMW 700
- 5) Borgward Isabella
- 6) Citroën GT Concept
- 7) Ford Capri RS2600
- 8) Alfa Romeo GTV6
- 9) Dodge Challenger 340
- 10) Vauxhall Cresta PC
- 11) Sunbeam Alpine Mk1
- 12) Toyota Toyopet
- 13) De Tomaso Pantera
- 14) Alfa Romeo 6C 2500
- 15) Oldsmobile Tornado
- 16) Ford Maverick

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THE ART OF PERFORMANCE

Exclusions apply.