

Essex Thameside News November 2023



Chairman's message

Steve Rider chairman@jecessexthameside.co.uk

Well, what a year it's been, with changes to the committee, a change to our regular club night and our relocation to the Police Sports and Social club in Chelmsford.

The committee fully recognises that the location of our new home hasn't been convenient for some of our membership, but it has made travelling somewhat easier for others. The move away from our long-term base at Langdon Hills was forced upon us, but I hope you will agree that our new home is superior and affords us far more opportunities that we will benefit from over the coming months.

The Jaguar Enthusiasts Club will be celebrating its fortieth anniversary next year, but publication of the final details for the planned festival have been delayed. However, the long weekend due to be held over the 26th to 28th July promises to be a tremendous opportunity to enjoy all things Jaguar, with accommodation in a superb hotel location at Chesford Grange in Kenilworth and celebrations at the British Motor Museum near Gaydon, in the homeland of Jaguar.

The teasing details so far released include a range of events, seminars, forums and entertainment available to members and their families whilst celebrating forty years of the world's leading Jaguar club. Both the national club's committee and our own are preparing a number of options for members wishing to attend some or all of the events, and further details will be made available in due course.

Another important date for your diary next year is the 10th August. Essex Thameside will be celebrating its 35th anniversary as a region, and we will be having a barbecue utilising Beck and Call Catering services, who did such an excellent job of feeding us at Lester Magness's home in the summer. Plans are also being laid to make use of the car park and garden area for this event, so watch this space.

By the time you read this, a number of members will have enjoyed an early start to Christmas festivities at the Orwell Hotel in Felixstowe, together with our neighbours from the Essex and Suffolk Borders region. More can be read in the next newsletter of our travelling back in time to enjoy the delights of the newly refurbished 1920s speakeasy.

The Silverstone Festival 2024 is due to take place over the August Bank Holiday and tickets are now on sale. Hopefully Vaughn High's article later in this newsletter will whet your appetite.

Likewise, the date for the 2024 Goodwood Revival has been published and tickets can now be purchased by both members and non-members of Goodwood alike.

Finally, it just remains for me to thank you for your continued support over the last twelve months. Hopefully, we will see as many of you as possible at our Christmas club night bash on 7th December but, if not, I will take this opportunity to wish you and your nearest and dearest all the best for the holiday season.

Steve

Committee Members



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Beverly Warren Membership Secretary membership@jecessexthameside .co.uk

Forthcoming Events

Monthly club nights:

Club night meetings usually start at 7pm on the third Tuesday of the month–exceptions noted in bold below– and take place at the Essex Police Sports & Social Club, 50 St Margarets Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DA

Thursday 7 December 2023 (Christmas club night); Tuesday 23 January 2024; Tuesday 27 February 2024; *Wednesday* 27 March 2024; Tuesday 23 April 2024; Tuesday 21 May 2024; Tuesday 25 June 2024; Tuesday 23 July 2024; Tuesday 27 August 2024; Tuesday 17 September 2024; Tuesday 22 October 2024; Tuesday 19 November 2024; Tuesday 17 December 2024.

Other Essex Thameside region shows, events and trips:

Sat 25 November Puttin' On The Ritz Christmas Dinner Dance with JEC Suffolk & Essex Borders, at the

Orwell Hotel, Hamilton Road, Felixstowe IP11 7DX

Sat 27 January Visit to Fairmont Classic & Sports Cars, 18 Tallon Road, Hutton, Brentwood CM13 1TJ

[please contact Ian Croxson ian@thecroxsons.com if you wish to participate]

For information; other non-JEC events you may wish to attend:

Mon 1 January New Year's Day Classic Gathering, Brooklands Museum, Weybridge, Surrey, KT13 0SL

The full list of shows and events that we are planning to attend in 2024 will be published next month.



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Are you up for Silverstone 2024?

Our club as a group has visited the Silverstone Classic Festival on several occasions, usually parking on the embankment opposite the Copse bend with the main J.E.C. club, booking overnight accommodation some distance away at a Premier Inn (or suchlike) with the option of visiting the festival. I recall that, on the last occasion, the weather was against us, raining so heavily in the evening that we sacrificed Tony Hadley's rendition of Gold for a meal back in the warmth of the hotel. Matters did not improve when I decided to tell the lady on the J.E.C. stand that I thought the reason for them reducing the price of the T-shirts was probably due to what I considered a poor design, only to be told that it was her idea and that actually she was the designer. I think she took it well but the conversation petered somewhat after that, not helped by Julie having a giggle in the background. But that's all in the past.

This year, Julie and I decided to fully engage in the spirit of the weekend, so we dug out our Le Mans tent and camping equipment, booking to stay on the Silverstone campsite, join in a Retro Run on the Saturday and drive around the race track on the Sunday. We packed our E-type with the tent, chairs, clothes, camp beds, two gas cookers, far too many gas cylinders, food, tea, coffee... The list goes on.

We arrived at the Silverstone campsite on Thursday

afternoon. To save a couple of pence I took the option of being really independent by going without the electric hook-up, choosing to survive like real outback, grass-root campers.

The site itself is situated close to the track on the grass driving range of a golf course and we had full use of the golf club facilities, including toilets and showers, cooked breakfasts, lunch and evening meals plus a bar. Outside was a shop for everything you'd forgotten to bring, more toilets, showers, waste disposal and large TV screens. Close by was a further entertainment area

with all the usual food stalls and a huge tent with a stage for the campsite evening entertainment. We had 24-hour security passes in and out. Clearly, we were going to have to rough it for a couple of days, but I was pleasantly surprised at how nice the set-up was.

Base camp was set up alongside others arriving with their classics. Some of them assembled a group gazebo for further evening entertainment and I recall that there was one guy I wanted to throttle by about 1.00 am because his voice burbling on was affecting my beauty sleep.

In the morning, I got up and made a cup of tea, collected my soap bag and looked for my towel. At that point we discovered that Julie had selfishly forgot to pack my shower towel and wasn't going to lend me hers. Drying my bits on a used handkerchief wasn't going to cut it. The shop could rent you a towel but I bit the bullet and purchased my very own nice, new and - I later discovered - fluffy towel. I spent many a happy hour removing excess towel fluff from my nooks and crannies. Julie said it reminded her of a monkey at the zoo?

On Friday, I drove our car to the inside track parking location that had been designated for use by those on the Retro Run. It was situated in the heart of the circuit beside the Wellington straight. We were able to come and go with the car as we wished or hop onto one of the two track bus routes for a tour around the festival.







We visited the auction area and sales stands before seeing the usual suspects Mike Brewer, his mechanic Elvis, and Ant Anstead's project, the Tipo 184. This mouth-watering project, for not a lot of money, uses a Mazda MX5 as donor car and gives you all the parts you need to build a seriously good-looking, single-seat, 1930s-style grand prix race car for use on track or, with the addition of mudguards and lights, on the road. [Editor's note: see www.tipo184.com for further details, including videos on how to build the car and how to get the car through IVA (individual vehicle approval) and license it for the road.]

Friday evening saw the circuit stage group returning to the campsite for continuing entertainment.

On Saturday, we entered the Retro Run, opting for the shorter route of around 60 miles. Having been supplied with the run booklet we opted for a 9.30 start, meeting a short distance away at Stowe House. The House deserves an article in itself; suffice to say that it is a beautiful country mansion with sprawling gardens and land now owned by the National Trust. We were allowed entry to the house for a look around, followed by cakes and coffee, before setting off at five-minute intervals.



The Retro run is not a race and you can take all day, visiting many places of interest. We toured through the picturesque Cotswolds including places like Stow-onthe-Wold, Bourtonon-the-Water, Bliss tweed mill near Chipping Norton (I don't actually remember that one and may have missed

it), and the Classic Motor Hub on an old air base with hangars containing classic cars for sale, cafe



facilities, and a meeting place for car drivers and bikers.

We then decided to go rogue, diverting off-route to visit Diddly Squat Farm, the home of Mr Jeremy Clarkson. As we approached the farm we were directed to the main car park directly outside the shop and cafe (classic cars a priority). It's clear that

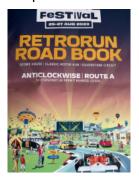
whatever Jeremy touches turns to gold, his popularity evident by the queues and the large number of people purchasing products. In my opinion, he has

done more for farming in two series of Clarkson's Farm than anyone. We spent a good hour soaking up the atmosphere, eating bacon rolls and drinking beer and coffee. Finally, we purchased a Diddly Squat chopping board to remember our visit before setting off to rejoin the Retro Run route somewhere in the heart of the Cotswolds.



In total we had about 30 places to visit or pass on our route before arriving back at the track at about 4pm. My chief navigator, now known as never-wrong Julie, and I never had so much as a raised word about which direction to go during this trip (OK, OK, I lied about that bit). We actually clocked up over 100 miles on what was supposed to be a 60-mile route, so I'm glad that we didn't opt for the longer route.

I've kept the Retro Run booklet as, perhaps, this might be a possible option for the club to consider for a trip in future?





Saturday night took us to the main event stage where we sampled the delights of the Sugababes. Sadly, they now look more like large sugar lumps. OK, now I have to be honest here; we gave it just five minutes before heading back to the campsite entertainment. I'm sure it might have got better, but everyone to their own as they say.



On Sunday morning, we returned to our allocated parking before driving the race circuit itself. Clearly, you are not allowed to race, but driving around was a great experience and something to remember.

Later, and somewhat hesitantly, we walked over to the J.E.C. area and display stand. I wore my hat and sunglasses, as I didn't want to meet any old friends, you understand. We spent the rest of the day buying the usual bits and collecting free samples. We had caps and water bottles and Julie purchased shoeshine wax, having had her boots polished, a T-shirt and a fleece which was apparently an absolute bargain.

On Sunday evening, we walked from the campsite, crossing the road and catching the perimeter bus into the main stage area. The main act for the evening

was McFly, who got the thumbs up from both ourselves and the crowd.

The following morning, back in base camp, we packed up our estate before a leisurely drive home.

To summarise:

- Most importantly it did not rain nor was it cold (always a bonus).
- Would I do the Silverstone Festival again? Yes, quite possibly.
- Would I camp again? Yes, quite possibly. The facilities are far better than what we have experienced at Le Mans, with hot meals, shop, clean showers, toilet facilities and the golf club. Also, it is only for a couple of days so, provided you go with the right mindset of what to expect, you can enjoy it and be in the heart of the festival, thus enabling you to do so much more.
- Would I go again and stay in a hotel? Yes I think I would. The experience is more comfortable and potentially dry, but I would seek perhaps more engagement with the main J.E.C. group or the festival organisation to see if I could get more out of the weekend.

I was really pleased with my first distance run out with the E-type and its performance, not having missed a beat all weekend, which helped to build my confidence before our next trip which was to be up into the Yorkshire Dales.

Vaughn High





J.E.C. Essex Thameside region



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)











London to Brighton Veteran Car Run 2023

Not quite an old fashioned charabanc, but a coach party nonetheless saw members making an early morning start to get down to the south coast on Sunday 5th November. This



was to welcome the first arrivals on the annual London to Brighton veteran car run. We were not disappointed by the variety of entrants and even the sunny weather played its part.

Blessed with eccentric charm and tremendous history, the run always attracts huge numbers of



spectators along its route and, sustained by a suitably filling cooked breakfast to overcome the early hour start, the majority of our club members assembled near the finish line in Madeira Drive on the sea front.

Marking the 70th anniversary of the BAFTA-winning

film 'Genevieve', starring John Gregson, Dinah Sheridan, Kenneth More and Kay Kendall, the two star cars from that muchloved romantic comedy had the honour of being the first away from Hyde Park this year. The recently refurbished Darracq and rival Spyker had been reunited to mark the milestone, both kindly



loaned by the Louwman Museum in the Netherlands, which some of us actually had the pleasure of seeing at close quarters on our last club trip to the museum. A number of



other veteran cars from this Oscar-nominated classic were fitted with special Genevieve starting number

plates, too, providing easy identification.



Vehicles then followed in age order, with the oldest machines starting first, giving them the most time to reach Brighton. Leading the way this year was an

1892 Peugeot entered by the Turin Motor Museum and believed to be the first car ever to turn a powered wheel in Italy.

The early starters included a Salvesen Steam Car – basically a steam locomotive running on the road, complete with stoker shovelling coal into the boiler's furnace – and a number of primitive, motorised tricycles, complete with many riders and passengers

sporting period costumes.

Thereafter followed a tremendous variety of antique machinery dating back to the era of pioneer vehicles, some fitted with steering-wheels, others with navalinspired tillers and helms; some powered by petrol engines, others propelled by steam (hence the hissing!) and even electric batteries.





The diversity of their powertrains illustrated the embryonic industry's innovative spirit as different sources of propulsion vied to dominate the next century of the car's development. We are witnessing a somewhat similar dilemma more than a century later. Emphasising the changes that motoring is currently going through, a

number of the veteran cars taking part were apparently running on sustainable e-fuels.



The route for 2023 split into two on the south side of Westminster Bridge. Once over the bridge the red route continued on to the A23 and the

blue route turned and ran along by the Thames and followed the route of 2022. Both routes reunited just before Croydon.

The unique 2023 Veteran Car Run, as always, recalled a bygone age when motoring technology was in its infancy, and well before many cars had protective roofs or windscreens, let alone mod-cons such as on-

board heaters, radios and sat nav.

It also attracts participants from around the world, and this year's 411 entrants included cars



from Austria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Holland, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, Sweden and Switzerland; some 25 vehicles came from the United States alone.

In total, more than 100 different marques were represented, ranging from Adler, Albion and Argyll to Waverley, Winton and Wolseley. A few, like Cadillac, Ford, Renault, Vauxhall and Mercedes, are still well-known today, but the vast majority have been lost to history.



Maximising the fantastically sunny weather, most of the starters completed the journey to Brighton well before the 4.30pm deadline. and so claimed a coveted finishers' medal. Of the 341 motor vehicles which left Hyde Park 301 reached Brighton, along with 27 antique





motorcycles and cyclists, to give 328 finishers in total.



The first car to reach the Sussex seafront was a 1903 MMC driven by Henry Lawson, the reliable British machine completing the journey from capital to coast in just under three hours.

The Darracq known as Genevieve and the Spyker from the 1953 film crossed the line together.

The Run is not a race. However, all entrants making it to Madeira Drive in Brighton had the opportunity to win an expenses-paid trip to the Madeira Classic Car Revival in 2024, courtesy of the island's Madeira Promotion Bureau.

If you have never watched the event in person it really is worth the effort to take in the sights, sounds, smells, costumes and atmosphere of a bygone era.

Steve Rider (with thanks to Liz Croxson for photos)







the Cord, Auburn, Duesenberg Group it was the company's swansong model. What a way to go!

A Date at the NEC - Part 1

With over 3,000 classic vehicles representing more than a century of motoring - and in six halls - the NEC Classic Motor Show is a must event on my classic car calendar, and a fitting end to the year. There is everything here for the enthusiast with car club stands, traders, TV personalities, an auction, dream rides, restoration workshops and much more.

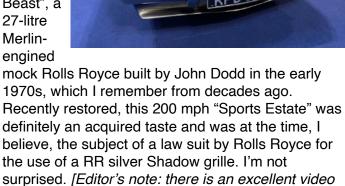


The quality of the vehicles and goods on display this year was excellent as always. The Restoration Workshop and the interviews

hosted by Wheeler Dealers' Mike Brewer were both interesting but to stay too long at these was to miss out on the variety of places to visit in the six halls given over to the event. In this review I thought we could look at some of the exhibits that were slightly unusual for one reason or another. So apologies if that DB5 or Daytona doesn't get a mention.

We always try to visit the Halls in sequence, although we usually fail. In this our first day, we entered via Hall 4 (I think) and were greeted by the National Motor Museum's 1935 cream Auburn 851 Speedster. A favourite of mine, with a straight-eight, supercharged Lycoming engine under the bonnet, capable of over 100 mph. Each car was tested before delivery to ensure that it achieved this figure. Part of

In the adjacent Hall 2, we came across "The Beast", a 27-litre Merlinengined



At the other end of the "Good Taste Road", Club Alfa showed a beautiful 1966 Alfa Romeo 2600 Spyder in metallic green - definitely a take home car.

about this car on YouTube; search for "Jonny Smith



driving the Beast"]

Iconic auctioneers displayed many interesting and, well, iconic lots. An Alfa Romeo Montreal (one of my favourite Alfas), a Hyland-green Mustang with almost a correct "Bullitt" registration and a 1960 Buick Le Sabre Convertible stood out for me at the perimeter, but the £10 entrance fee when we weren't going to be bidders, stopped us looking much further.





Over in Hall 1, a complete Triumph TR6 body shell was on offer. It was new old stock and must be unique. Further in, the Alvis stand never fails to impress with a well-

chosen selection of stand-out cars. The grey 'razor-edge' saloon did it for me. With sharp-edged coachwork by Vanden Plas, this 1939 4.3-litre 6-cylinder car was one of only three such 'razor-edge' cars built and the 6th from last Alvis to leave the factory before WWII broke out. Having been "modernised" over the years, it has now been returned to its original specification by its owner, Nick Taylor, whom some of us might remember joined our last trip to the Netherlands in 2019 with his XK140.



The Meguiar's club showcase – "the best of the best" from the UK club car scene – contained some stunning vehicles and is a must-see stand. Mike Brewer reveals the overall winner on the last day of the show. A hard job for the judging panel, based on what we saw. The 1972 Type 2 VW camper van was probably the most unusual on the stand. Bought in 2010 from the carer of the first, deceased owner, it

received a
"sympathetic
nut and bolt
restoration"
by the new
owner using
as many of
the original
parts as
possible.
Very nice!



Ever seen a Triumph TR7 Estate? Neither had we but, in 1977, Crayford were commissioned to build one to gauge public reaction and interest for Triumph to compete in the Sports Estate market. This car was the only one ever built, which says it all really.



The Lancaster Insurance Pride of Ownership stand was excellent, containing a diverse array of metal, ranging from an Escort RS Turbo to a Hillman Imp. A '93 BMW 850 CSi with blue paint and a matching factory blue and cream interior and a Vauxhall Cresta with its transatlantic styling were two of the many

eye-catchers, but the MG Midget Jubilee from 1975 took the biscuit with only 176 miles on the odometer. Originally given as a prize in the



factory, it was quickly sold and immediately stored. Its owner says that it has never been wet or washed and will never be driven, to keep the originality. How sad.



The Classic American Car of the year stand is always on my itinerary. The styling of the machines is probably something that will never be repeated. Stand-outs? There were many. To list but a few: the rare '54 Kaiser Darrin convertible (named after its designer), where the two doors slide into the front wings to allow access for driver and passenger, is the only one that I have seen "in the flesh".

The Series 62 1941 Cadillac Convertible in highly-polished black, showing off the chrome embellishments, was hard to miss as was the red





Eldorado convertible from 1976. With 60,000 miles recorded, this 8.2-litre land yacht had undergone a US\$46,000 restoration and certainly looked worth every dollar.

If you fancy something military, the prototype for the Austin Champ was at the show. Actually, it was a Wolseley Mudlark of 1950 vintage, built as a response to the British Defence Forces requirement for a replacement for the American Jeep. Whilst Wolseley won with their design, the contract was given to Austin.

If you like old Austins, then the Counties
Club displayed a rare
A70 Hampshire
Woodie Countryman.
One of two at the show. Bodied by
Papworth Industries, over 900 were made, mostly for export. An
A90 Atlantic convertible was again at the show. Painted in metallic sea foam green, it once





appeared on the cover of an '82 album by "The Stargazers" aptly titled "Watch This Space". Originally made for export to the States, it was a failure with now fewer than 50 examples remaining world-wide.

Now is the time to call it a day on this look at the show. Next time we will see some less than perfect cars and anything else of interest that we came across.

Neil Shanley









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Recovering from a Marelli Meltdown

Members may remember that, last year, I almost lost my V12 XJ-S in a fire caused by a failure of the Marelli distributor (see issue 184 of our newlsetter from August 2022). This resulted in the destruction of my exhaust system and catalytic converter, plus considerable damage to the rear 'plus 2' seats and underside of my car, as you can see from the following photographs.







As you may recall, this is a known risk for post-1989 V12 cars fitted with a catalytic converter and a Marelli 'double-deck' distributor. Instead of a single rotor arm circulating round all twelve points in a single plane, such distributors have a double arm which circulates around two sets of six points in separate planes, one above the other. In theory, this is a clever idea which allows the distributor to be more compact.

However, there is a risk. An electrical failure of the arm tends to affect only one group of six cylinders instead of all twelve. This in itself is not a problem but, because each plane is dedicated to the cylinders on one side of the engine, it will lead to one side of the engine firing normally while the other side just lets unburnt fuel into the exhaust. Catalytic converters run extremely hot, so the unburnt fuel can then set the

catalytic converter and exhaust on fire, potentially leading to catastrophe. I was lucky not to lose the whole car in a ball of flames.

Being quite handy, I was able to tackle much of the repairs to the exhaust and chassis myself, but refurbishing and re-trimming the seats was beyond my limited skills. So, I contacted a firm in Cwmbran, Wales, BAS International, who specialise in cabriolet hoods, interior leatherwork and other trimming services, including in particular for Jaguar cars. I was especially keen to ensure that the colour and finish of the newly refurbished seats would be a good match with the rest of the interior.

I am delighted to say that the work done by BAS International was second to none in terms of its quality and precision. I've been in the motor trade since 1986 when I left college and have worked in several garages, including main dealers, and the work done by BAS International is top quality; the colour match, the pattern of material and even the stitching are all exactly as Jaguar produced from new—it really is impossible to tell the difference. I cannot fault their work in any way and would heartily recommend them to any member who is considering updating or replacing the trim of their car, no matter what make it is.

Ray Holder











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