

LYONS TALES



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VIRGINIA JAGUAR CLUB
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LYONS TALES

LYONS' ROAR

Meet the new VJC President

By Brian Trickett
VJC President

Hello all you fellow Jaguarians.

Allow me to introduce myself. I am your new President having taken over from Bill Sihler who stepped down from the roll earlier this year. I am sure you will wish Bill all the best and thank him for his hard work and stewardship of the club during his tenure, especially the difficult times during Covid.

I joined the Virginia Jaguar Club In 2016 and have previously served as secretary, events chair and vice president. For those of you who do not know me I will give you here in my first letter as president some idea of my background and of course some of the cars that I have happened to be associated with.

I was born in Mansfield, a small coal mining town in Nottinghamshire England. I left school at fifteen. Most of my friends went to work down the deep subterranean mines in the area. However, I was mad keen on motorcycles and cars. I obtained a five-year indentured apprenticeship as an auto mechanic at a Rootes Group main dealership in town. You may never have heard of the Rootes brothers in the USA, but in the booming post war era of the British motor industry they made some really nice automobiles such as Hillman, Humber, Singer and Sunbeam. You will probably know the Sunbeam Alpine or especially the

Sunbeam Tiger sports car with the large V8 engine still much admired by British car enthusiasts in this country.

I was 20 years old when I bought my first car, a Morris 8 series E. It was almost an antique when I acquired it, being a 1946 model. Since the battery was a bit dodgy I would mostly start it up with the cranking handle which you would push through a hole in the front bumper and crank the engine by hand being careful

See Roar, p. 3



VJC President Brian Trickett

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SAVE THE DATES

**Saturday
April 13
VJC Meeting &
Lunch**

**Saturday
May 4
Williamsburg
Car Show.**



Roar

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to give it full choke to fire it up. It was of the vintage before cars had flashing lights as turning indicators, they had little things they called semaphores that poked out of the upper body of the car to indicate if you wanted to turn left or right. I used to tell the girls in the pub if they wanted to see my E Type but you can imagine the reaction I got when they saw it in the parking lot!

After a couple of years of owning the old Morris I moved up to a newer one. Yes! The little venerable Morris Minor. It was an early model with the split windscreen, split not meaning it was broken but was manufactured with a chrome strip running down the middle. Later models had a one-piece windscreen. The little car went like a rocket and could outrun bigger cars. I found out why. The bloke who had it before me had the mixture adjusted really rich. Having an SU carburetor if you had adjusted the mixture too rich at idle then it was rich throughout the whole speed range. No wonder the car stunk of petrol all the time.

Now one year later and having got married to my lovely wife Kathy and a baby on the way and money getting shorter by the day, the little Morris Minor had to go and we returned to getting around by hoofing it or catching buses. I quit my job at the Rootes dealership and went to a Ford dealership. Then moved on to gain experience on diesels and heavy-duty trucks.

I then traded my spanners (sorry, wrenches) for a classroom and chalkboard, obtaining a place at a college of



Morris 8

education studying for a teacher's qualification which would enable me to teach auto engineering at City and Guilds of London Institute level at a college of further education. I needed transportation now since we were to move north to Huddersfield in Yorkshire. A van would be useful, so I bought a sorry looking Ford 105E van. I put some work into it, including a flashy paint job, packed what we had and drove up to Huddersfield which would be our home for a year. Having gained my certificate in education I obtained a position at East Hertfordshire College of Further Education,

See Roar, p. 4



Morris Minor.



Ford Anglia van.



Austin Princess.

Roar

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just north of London. I taught at East Herts College for seven years.

Living in the capital it was advisable to have even a smaller car, hence the Austin Mini came along. This was another secondhand car with some mileage on it but had been well kept. Perhaps this is an oxymoron but it was a great little car. The pure genius of Alec Issigonis had to be admired when he designed this car with transverse engine, front wheel drive, good road holding, easy to park, affordable to buy and great to drive.

Then came the Vauxhall VX490, which was basically a kind of sports sedan, well it did have an aluminum alloy cylinder head and twin Zenith carbs which was not that great a thing but was a big deal for the day.

Moving on I obtained a position teaching Diesel engineering and related subjects for marine and off highway applications on Guadalcanal in the British Solomon Islands in the Southwest Pacific. Kathy and I and the kids, Sally and Neil, uprooted again and moved to the other side of the world for a three year contract with the British government. Upon arrival I was determined to buy British but none were available, only Japanese. So being no alternative, we bought a Datsun (now known as Nissan). It was truly a great and

reliable car. As we managed to save more money we then obtained a used Land Rover Mk 3. Now we are talking. This thing would go anywhere. Up mountains, across rivers, anywhere.

Returning to the UK I obtained a position with Cummins

See Roar, p. 5



Austin Mini.



Fording a stream in the Solomon Islands in the Trickett Family's Land Rover Mk. 3.

Roar

Continued from p. 4

Engine Company at their factory in Northamptonshire. Starting in the service training department I was part of a group training the service technicians of the network of distributors of Cummins. My area covered countries in Europe, Middle East and Africa. This gave me the opportunity to travel in those areas and I even went to Russia on one occasion, that was during the Cold War.

I went French during that time and bought a Renault 9. This was nothing really to brag about and best left forgotten. Tiring of the Renault I bought an Austin Princess which was a British Leyland product. You may say that this was a step backwards. It was not a bad family car really apart from the fact that it had no power steering. It felt like you were driving a military army tank but helped build up your arm muscles.

After five years working in the training department Cummins offered a position as Technical Product Manager for Chile.

What was so special about Chile? Well, CODELCO (Corporacion de Cobre de Chile) was the biggest producer of copper in the world at that time and a very important customer. They had a fleet of 50 mine trucks in operation at their Chuquicamata Coppermine in the Atacama Desert

in northern Chile. The trucks of 170 tons capacity were Cummins powered with the V16 50 liter engine developing 1,600 hp.

So off we went to South America, living in Santiago. The car of choice in Chile was the Peugeot since they were assembled there for the south American market. I was not that thrilled about going French again but this one turned
See Roar, p. 6



Jaguar S Type R.



Brian and Kathy Trickett enjoying their Jaguar F-Pace.

Roar

Continued from p. 5

out to be a good tough little car.

Living in Chile was a really good experience for the whole family but the country was passing through the difficult period with the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. When Cummins decided to move us to Miami USA, we were ready.

Arriving in Florida I couldn't wait to try out American cars so over the years living in the USA our fleet included Chevrolet Impala, Pontiac Grand Prix, 1500 Dodge Ram truck and a Dodge Charger.

I worked for Cummins at the Americas office as Regional Service and Support Manager for the Caribbean, Central and South America areas until I retired in 2009. Altogether working for Cummins Engines in UK and USA for a total

of 30 years.

Now living near Richmond, Virginia I have returned to my British roots and have a Jaguar, in fact two. At present I drive my 2005 Jag S Type R and Kathy loves the Jag F-Pace.

Returning to the Virginia Jaguar Club, we had a reshuffle of some of our club officers for this year and all are determined that 2024 will be a great year with a JCNA concours in June and an assortment of events and outings planned to keep you entertained throughout the year. Keep an eye out for more news and information on the VJC website and other communications you will be receiving.

Cheers!

-- Brian Trickett, President

Did you know you can now email your contributions, photos and suggestions **directly** to the Virginia Jaguar Club newsletter?

LyonsTales@yahoo.com

VJC NEWS

Annual General Meeting held Dec. 30

Virginia Jaguar Club Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, December 30, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 12:20 p.m. by the President, Bill Sihler, at the Reserve restaurant, 8136 Highland Glen Drive in The Highlands Development in South Chesterfield, VA.

Attending were: Mark Creech, David and Una Harrison, Bill Sihler, and Brian and Kathy Trickett.

The President noted that the unfortunate requirements for scheduling the meeting had resulted in low attendance, but issues to be discussed had been reviewed and voted on at the Christmas Party, December 2, 2023. To the extent required, these were reviewed and approved at this meeting as noted.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Leland Miller reported that the cash balance was \$5889.78.

The decision made by board members at the Christmas Party to increase the VJC dues by \$5 to \$70 a year because of a similar increase in the JCNA dues was endorsed. This leaves the dues to VJC remaining at \$30.

Nominations

According to the discussion at the Christmas Party and subsequent developments, the President made the following nominations for VJC officers for 2024:

President: Brian Trickett

Vice President and Events Chair: David Harrison

Treasurer: Leland Miller

Secretary: Bill Sihler

Membership Chair: Bill Guzek to be succeeded by Mark Creech

Election

There being no other nominations, nominations were closed and the slate of officers elected unanimously.

The new board then met briefly to elect members to the following positions and to the board, subject to their acceptance:

Additional Positions

Chief Concours Judge: Sherm Taffel

Concours Chair: Wayne Estrada

Concours Co-Chair: Ron Gaertner

Newsletter Editor: Greg Glassner

Webmaster: Wayne Estrada

Members at Large: Peter Schowalter and George Parker


Training Session

It was noted that a training session for judges was required by the seventh of May if the concours is to be run in association with the AACA event on June 8, 2024.

Future Events

A discussion of other occasions that have potential for VJC meetings are the Williamsburg Car Show (which will feature MGs this year, April?) and the Shenandoah British Car Club show (usually early in October) in Waynesboro.

-- Respectfully submitted, Bill Sihler



The 2024 Virginia Jaguar Club's (VJC) sanctioned JCNA Concours is ON this year and will be held on Saturday, June 8th again at the historic St. Joseph's Villa in Richmond, Virginia.

This year's event will again be held in conjunction with the Richmond chapter of the Antique Automobile Club of America (RAACA) and as in previous years, VJC will be sub-hosting a "show within a show."

24TH ANNUAL WILLIAMSBURG BRITISH & IMPORT CAR SHOW



Charity

SATURDAY, MAY 4, 2024

10AM - 2PM

**THE SHOPS AT HIGH STREET
WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA**



Sponsor



Register online at www.wmbgbrit.com

Williamsburg British and Import Car Club



FROM THE EDITOR'S LAPTOP

A glimpse at Jaguar vehicles 70 years ago

By Greg Glassner
LT Editor

An old friend from my Penn State Sports Car Club days was de-cluttering his attic and discovered he had two copies of "Sports Car Album; An International Report on Foremost Makes of Sports Cars," published by Fawcett Books in 1953. So he mailed me one.

I remember buying similar publications when I was in junior high, although I would only have been 8 or 9 when this one came out. These annual anthologies were eye-opening insights into a fantasy world of cars that the son of a Buick-buying father had never encountered growing up in Wisconsin and Iowa.

This particular publication was written by John Wheelock Freeman, whose enchanting if somewhat over-the-top prose explored the best sport and GT car offerings from England, France, Germany and Italy as well as fairly extensive articles on Italian coach-builders Pinin Farina, Ghia, Vignale, Bertone and Touring,

The lead article under Great Britain, was six pages long and devoted to Jaguar. The author explained why:

Jaguar is the most discussed Sports car and you don't have to look far to see why. It comes in three forms: a roadster, a competition car and a family sedan. All three are better dollar-for-dollar values than anything else of the same type. For engineering advancement, Jaguar was the first



Editor Greg Glassner driving Miss Virginia 2014 Courtney Garrett around the State Fairgrounds in his XK8.

company to give us a really new postwar car.

... Jaguar struck solid gold with their prototype roadster, the XK-120. This curvaceous car had an absolutely fantastic twin-overhead-camshaft engine, just like a Bugatti or Alfa-Romeo, developing 160 horsepower...

... the XK-120 went into large scale production by the middle of 1950, it began to hit the U.S. with a bang...

... Actually the Jaguar's staggering performance results from a simple formula: low weight plus exceptional power give it a ridiculously favorable power-to-weight ratio. American sports car maniacs grappled this car to their bosoms with aplomb.

Freeman goes on to explain that the Jaguar XK-120 (and its equally impressive stablemates, the Mark V and Mark VII sedans) were "hardly the picture of utter perfection you might think. Its faults, despite being minor, were real and irritating." but he concludes: "Any Jaguar is worth what it costs, or more. This, plus its availability, is the secret of its success and of its builders' ingenuity. It takes real imagination to 'get there first with the most.'"

I also enjoyed the articles on Aston-Martin, Bentley, MG, Mercedes-Benz, Porsche, Alfa-Romeo, Lancia, Maserati, and of course Ferrari, as well as marques like Allard, Frazer-Nash, Healey, Simca, Talbot, Borgward, Pegaso and Cisitalia that are only distant memories now.

In addition to finding this article written more than 70 years ago immensely entertaining, I found it insightful and thought provoking.

Over the years, many manufacturers caught up and passed Jaguar's position of being on the cutting edge of technology, performance and value. And, although eclipsed in other categories, Jaguar unfortunately held onto its vexing reputation for building cars with at least a few niggling problems.

So what does the future hold for Jaguar?

Will it become just another manufacturer of cookie cutter, all-electric SUVs and Crossovers?

Will it once again startle the automotive world with a sports car or sports sedan that offers more bang for the buck (or Euro) than almost anyone else?

Or will it join the list of bygone memories like Allard, Healey, Frazer-Nash, Talbot, Simca, Borgward and Cisitalia?

Only time will tell, but I don't think we will have to wait another 70 years to find out.

VJC MEMBER PROJECT



Land Rover Series 2A SWB in Harrison back yard after journey from North Carolina coast.

N.C. Land Rover rescue & resurrection

By David Harrison
VJC Vice President & Events Chair

I never pined for a Land Rover, especially the recent ones. The early cars look more interesting to me, and Her late Majesty loved to drive an early Landie around Sandringham and Balmoral.

So how did I own a Series 2, albeit briefly?

Una and I were at Beaufort N.C. this summer, a cute waterfront town about four hours away. Driving to and from our hotel I noticed an old car sitting in a nearby yard and remarked to Una that it looked like a Land Rover. After a few drivebys, I knocked at the door of the house, got permission to look at the car, and found it was a 1969 Series 2A SWB. It had been sitting for 17 years, had rust, tires had sunk into the ground, but seemed basically solid and original, and the engine could be turned with the fan belt. The owner said make me an offer and I made him a half joking, ridiculous offer of five hundred. He said OK and I was suddenly a Land Rover owner.

There were a few challenges. The owner, Todd, had never titled the car in N.C., but he had the necessary paperwork. I offered to fund the \$90 N.C. DMV title fee so he could

legally sell it. The next challenge was to find a way to drag the sunken Landie out of the ground, onto a trailer and back to Chester. I own a closed trailer but the Landie with its hardtop was too tall to fit. Fortunately my neighbour's son, Mark, was a mechanic and had an open trailer and a late model F 150 (mine is 1993) and agreed to pick it up for a very reasonable \$500 and gas.

After Todd received his title, Mark and I drove to Beaufort with his trailer and a heavy duty winch. While I went with Todd to the N.C. DMV to purchase the title transfer to me and get it notarized, Mark dragged the Landie out of the ground, winched it onto the trailer and strapped it down. The tires were in rags but the wheels did turn, a good sign.

Mark let me keep the Landie on his trailer while I searched for 205-75-15 tires. I was lucky to find four new ones in Hopewell. Mark jacked the Landie up on blocks, spun the lug nuts off with his air wrench, I got the new tires installed on the rims and the next day the Landie was mobile and in my yard. It looked pretty good after a scrub and vacuuming out. It's great to have a mechanic neighbor.

See Landie, p. 12

VJC MEMBER MEMORY

The Merlin and Me

How ball bearings helped win World War II

By David Harrison

VJC Vice President & Events Chair

The Rolls-Royce Merlin aircraft engine has a significant role in aviation history, powering Hurricane, Spitfire and P-51 Mustang fighters. Recently I read Stanley Hooker's book, "Not Much of an Engineer," an account of his development of the Merlin supercharger. A must read for anyone interested in aero engine technology, the title reflects a remark made by Ernest Hives, then Works Manager of Rolls-Royce, at Stanley Hooker's hiring interview. The book brought back some family associations.

Bernard Ernest Cramp, my wife Una's father, ran a small innovative ball bearing business called W.E Cramp and Sons, located in Ashton, Birmingham. His factory previously made metal buttons, he expanded it to provide small pressings to the Midlands motor industry, then saw the market for ball bearings and personally developed improved ball bearing machinery which turned out ¼" balls eight times faster than the competition. Coincidentally, Rolls-Royce was located nearby. The Merlin engine used a great number of



Spitfire fighter with Rolls-Royce Merlin aircraft engine.

ball bearings, the most critical being the magneto bearings which experienced high rotational and gyroscopic loads during aircraft maneuvers. British bearings were inadequate so Rolls-Royce bought magneto bearings from Germany.

After WW2 started, these key German bearings were smuggled out until the fall of France in May 1940. Rolls-Royce substituted magneto bearings from traditional British makers, but magneto failures started to down Spitfires and Hurricanes at an alarming rate. Rolls-Royce turned to Mr. Cramp asking him to find the secret to the superior German bearings. He found the answer, not in the balls or the races but in the ball cages. The cages, which separate the balls, had to be coined, a high speed stamping process. Cramp magneto bearings were fitted to Merlin engines just in time for the Battle of Britain.

The government tried to protect the Cramp factory with three rings of barrage balloons during the blitz. The factory narrowly escaped damage from an exploding landmine, the canteen doors were blown off! They built a shadow factory to satisfy the demand for Cramp bearings.



Rolls-Royce Merlin aircraft engine.

See Merlin, p. 12

Merlin

Continued from p. 11

Later, he provided thousands of bearings for miles of conveyors used to offload supplies from ships onto D-Day beaches. Una remembers her father spent little time at home during these years, sleeping at his factories. He met Churchill, was offered a knighthood, and declined, saying his service was his gift to the country.

Lord Hives, Managing Director of Rolls-Royce frequently visited Una's father at Netherby Hall, the Cramp family home, after the war ended. Una remembers that the two men were good friends, and went on business trips together

with their wives to Paris.

Lord Hives' wife encouraged Una to pursue an acting career. Una went on to study theatre at the Royal Academy in London and had a distinguished acting and teaching career both sides of the pond. I met her at a theatre party in Darlington.

So, you could say that the Battle of Britain may have been won by my wife's father, and the Merlin magneto started a chain of events leading to our marriage.

Landie

Continued from p. 10

At this stage I had a visit from my friend David Laughton who beautifully restored my 1933 L type MG Magna and previously owned my 1929 Austin Swallow. He came with his British friend Mark, who flies over every year for Hershey and usually goes back with a haul of Jaguars and parts. Long story short, David fell in love with the Landie and Mark bought my ex-Murff 1969 E type plus a very restorable 1964 E type roadster (that's another story). In a few days both were gone, the Landie to Urbanna, and the E types over the pond.

David, a noted restorer of many classics, started stripping the Landie right away. An early Land Rover is built like an erector set, it comes apart with a few basic tools. I went over to help a couple of weeks later and the car was already down to a bare chassis. David sends me progress photos and the chassis now restored and rolling on its suspension, the rusty bulkhead and much sheet metal has been restored and the engine is coming back together, all in two short months. The Landie was a brief encounter but a lot of fun and I learned a lot.

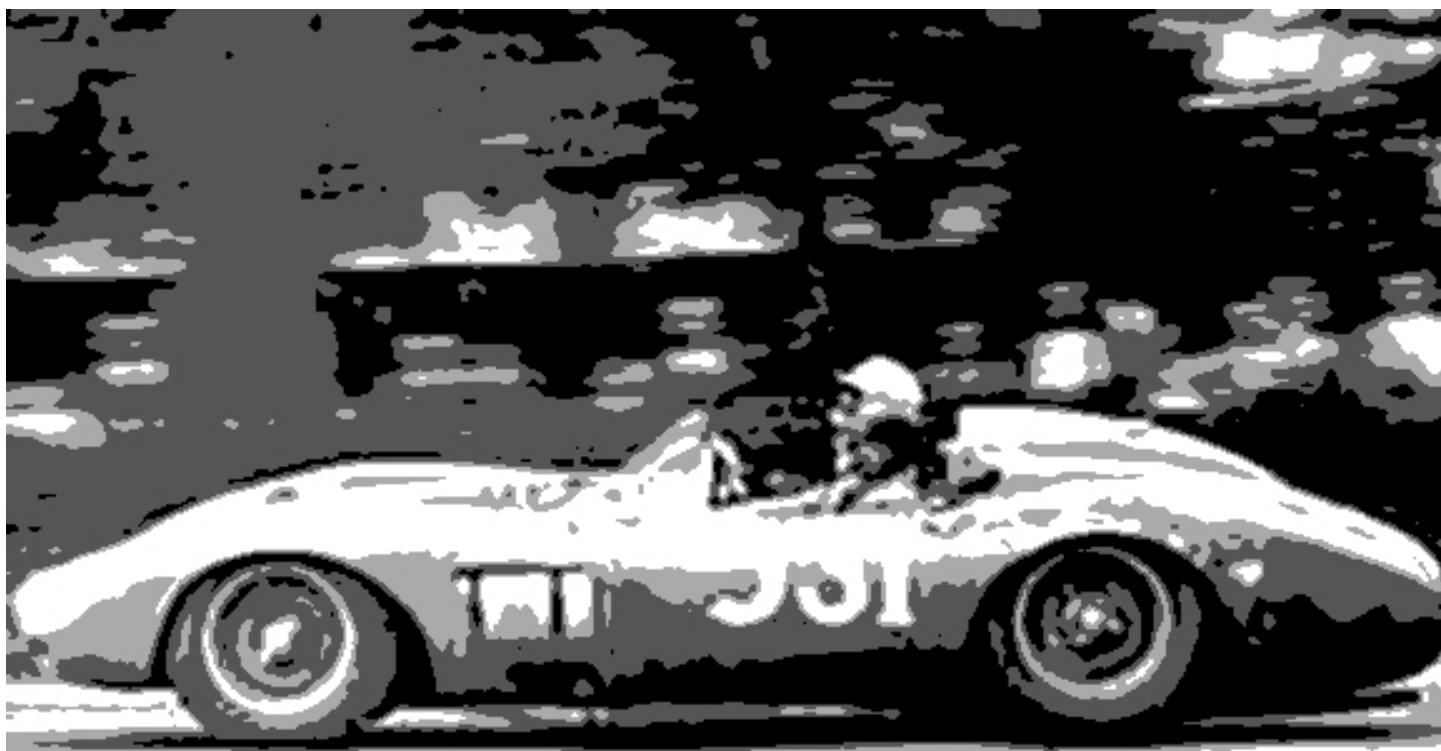


Reconditioned engine block, above.

“I say, Nigel, how can I submit stories to this newsletter?”

“It's easy, Clive, you can now email your contributions, photos and suggestions directly to the Virginia Jaguar Club newsletter at:”

LyonsTales@yahoo.com



The Curse of Fon's Ferrari, a short story

EDITOR'S NOTE: This short story is a work of fiction that I wrote for my local library Writers' Group. I passed it along to a few car enthusiast friends and they liked it. In conjunction with the release of the new feature film on Enzo Ferrari, the website Veloce.com ran it in two parts Dec. 26 and Jan. 2. I thought Lyons Tales readers might also enjoy this specially edited version.

By Greg Glassner

Part I

Rodney "Chub" Olsen managed to get through four years at Slippery Rock State College with a BA in marketing followed by two years in the Army. He returned home to Milledgeton, Pennsylvania in 1975 to decide what he wanted to do with the rest of his life.

Lacking direction and prospects, he latched onto a temporary position as a car salesman and "go-fer" at Carlo's Used Cars, Towing and Body Shop, a modest multi-purpose enterprise loosely run along the lines of a fiefdom by Carlo

Ludovico the hardworking, albeit mercurial proprietor. Chub and his old high school buddies had hung around Carlo's and Olson continued to do so through college.

Chub rented a room by the month at the rundown Lakeside Motel, which was at least a mile from the lake. His job as a car salesman included use of a "demonstrator" for transportation. This translated into whatever car no wary customer would touch with a ten-foot pole. "Beggars can't be choosers," Chub reasoned.

Carlo always had a few interesting imports and sports cars on his lot, which had originally attracted Chub and his pals to adopt the business as their hangout, but the bread and butter was quick turnover of cheap rides and "E-Z Financing." These cars started out as wrecks that insurance companies had totaled. They were then resurrected by the boys in the body shop between customer jobs.

See Fon's Ferrari, p. 14

Fon's Ferrari

Continued from p. 13

Carlo's business model hinged on collecting a down payment that equaled his initial investment in each vehicle. Most of these financially challenged customers would make at least a couple of monthly payments before finding various flaws in their purchase. Many buyers eventually defaulted on the loan. At that point the car would be repossessed. As the car salesman, Chub also got the honor of driving the wrecker and repossessing the cars so Carlo could patch them up and resell them to another sucker.

Not every customer was happy about seeing his or her ride departing on the hook of a tow truck and shots were sometimes fired. Chub was handed the company flack jacket when assigned repossession duty. His marketing degree helped in selling cars and his recent military experience came in handy when retrieving them.

It wasn't all drudgery and dodging bullets and baseball bats, however. Chub was able to take a 1959 Jaguar XK-150 home as a demo on several weekends and a 1966 Porsche 912 on several other occasions. On these weekends off he hung out with some of his old high school pals and the Jag and Porsche were deemed assets in chasing after attractive, unmarried twenty-something women.

Like many body shops, used car lots and wrecker services, Carlo's had a large fenced in open storage area – a glorified junkyard – and a concrete block outbuilding with wrecks too fragile to remain out in the rain and snow. Chub liked to explore these treasure troves as he had when a teenager.

One day, in the deepest recesses of the outbuilding, he discovered a mangled wreck under a brown tarp with assorted fenders and bumpers piled on top. This mystery intrigued Chub and he finally started removing the layers until he could squirm and burrow his way under the tarp and probe with a flashlight. The crumpled aluminum nose was painted red and had a small, yellow rectangular badge on it. It depicted a prancing horse.

"Geez, it's a frickin' Ferrari!" Chub exclaimed out loud, his voice echoing in the empty building.

After finding the proverbial diamond in the rust in the back building of Carlo's Body Shop and Used Cars, Chub Olsen wasted no time on additional excavation, but immediately plotted a strategy aimed at acquiring it, regardless of condition.

Chub headed straight for the state liquor store after work and then headed back to the office armed with a quart of Jack Daniels Black, Carlo's favorite libation, along with ice and



some chips and pretzels from a nearby convenience store. Carlo sat and listened to police wrecker calls well into the evening to avoid heading home to a household of noisy kids. Chub had already hung around to shoot the breeze and talk cars several times so his arrival was not all that suspicious.

"Not much action at the Lakeside Motel tonight, so I thought I'd come back to keep you company," Chub announced. Carlo seemed delighted, so the plan was underway. About halfway through the bottle, Chub steered the conversation around to the mystery car. "What's the story on that mangled car under the tarp out back? I was looking around and realized it's a Ferrari."

A strange look came over Carlo's usually open and smiling face and he exploded: "You don't wanna' mess with that. It's got a curse on it!"

Stunned, Chub quickly retreated and spent the rest of the evening trying to get back in his employer's good graces. But the quest didn't stop there. In fact Carlo's dramatic reaction only piqued Chub's curiosity. He asked his fellow employees about the mystery Ferrari and didn't learn much. They all knew about "the curse" and Carlo's prickly reaction when any of them had asked about it.

The next time Carlo was away from the shop, Chub revisited the corner of the storage building, armed with a powerful flashlight and a notepad. He removed enough of the debris on top of the car and found a serial number on the body and the engine, a sophisticated and powerful looking twin-cam V-12. He could also make out enough of the bodywork to conclude that this was an old race car. It was in sad shape but it looked to Chub that it could be resurrected in a well equipped body shop. "And what a car it would be," he muttered.

Over the next several weeks, he tried several times to bring the subject up with Carlo and got the same reaction.

See *Fon's Ferrari*, p. 15

Fon's Ferrari

Continued from p. 14

While Chub Olsen was wary of Carlo Ludovico's feelings about the Ferrari under the tarp and wanted to be respectful, Chub didn't believe in curses, not that sort of curse, anyway. "Werewolves, zombies and vampires existed in movies and popular culture, right?" Chub told himself. "And killer cars like 'Christine' and a haunted Buick V-8 were figments of Stephen King's fertile imagination. But a curse on an old race car?"

"No way!" Chub burst out loud. "I mean, there's a frickin' Ferrari, just sitting there in the back of that storage building."

In the meantime, Chub did some digging and contacted Mike Smith, an old college pal who was so nuts about Italian cars that friends called him "Maserati Michael." Armed with the engine and chassis serial numbers his friend delivered some answers.

"Chassis number 0646 is a Ferrari 335 S, and the engine number identifies it as a 4-liter V-12 with six twin-throat Weber carburetors," Mike told him. "But according to my sources the car was a write-off after a racing wreck and never used again after the 1957 Mille Miglia," Chub's friend added. "Wasn't that the last time they ran the Mille Miglia?" Chub asked. "Sure was," his friend added. "You've got a piece of Ferrari racing history there. Restored, it would bring big bucks at a classic car auction."

"But not until I spent a year driving around in it," Chub replied.

By the spring of 1976, Chub knew a lot about the car's history. It appeared that the car at Carlo's was indeed the Ferrari 335 S driven in the 1957 Mille Miglia by the dashing Spanish aristocrat, Don Alfonso Cabeza de Vaca, Marquis de Portago, or simply "Fon" Portago to friends and fans. Portago and his co-driver, Edmund Nelson, were running as high as third overall late in the 1,000 mile road race when they made a pit stop during which Portago's latest squeeze, actress Linda Christian, impulsively leaned into the cockpit and kissed him. A photo shot at that moment was later dubbed "The Kiss of Death."

Perhaps the smooch added to Portago's desire to go all out over the final leg of the grueling race. Less than 40 miles from the finish a tire blew out, causing Portago to lose control at 150 miles per hour. The Ferrari hurtled itself into the crowd, killing the young Marquis, co-driver Nelson and nine spectators including five children. That tragedy, so soon after the 1955 Le Mans crash, spelled the end of



the Mille Miglia as a race.

"Was Linda Christian's 'Kiss of Death' the 'curse' Carlo kept mumbling about?" Chub wondered.

Curse or no curse, it was a very valuable car, and Chub redoubled his efforts to get to the bottom of the mystery.

The Curse of Fon's Ferrari Part II

After Chub Olsen, the young hero of our story, determined that the notorious Fon Portago Ferrari 335 S somehow found its way to a small town in Pennsylvania and into the custodianship of his employer Carlo Ludovico, Chub continued his quest to resurrect it.

One Friday night in May, Chub went all out and brought a jug of Jack Daniels Black and a bucket of KFC to the body shop. After they wolfed down fried chicken and biscuits and made a big dent in the bourbon, Chub brought out his research and told Carlo he knew the car under the tarp was the one involved in the Mille Miglia crash. "Is that why you say it's cursed?" he asked.

This time the older man didn't snap like he usually did when confronted with that sore subject. In fact, his eyes misted up and he nearly broke down in tears. "My family comes from a little village near Guidizzolo in Italy," Carlo said. "By 1957 I had started this business and could afford a trip home to visit my relatives. This was the week of the Mille Miglia and my whole family went over to watch it.

"We were sitting on a hill overlooking the road and having a simple picnic lunch of bread, cheese and salami washed down by the local vino," Carlo continued.

See *Fon's Ferrari*, p. 16

Fon's Ferrari

Continued from p. 15

"We were having a great time. Nobody noticed that my brother's six-year-old daughter wandered down the hill to get a better look at the car as they sped by. When Portago's Ferrari blew a tire and flew into the crowd, little Carlotta was one of the children killed instantly," Carlo said.

"She had been named after me," he added.

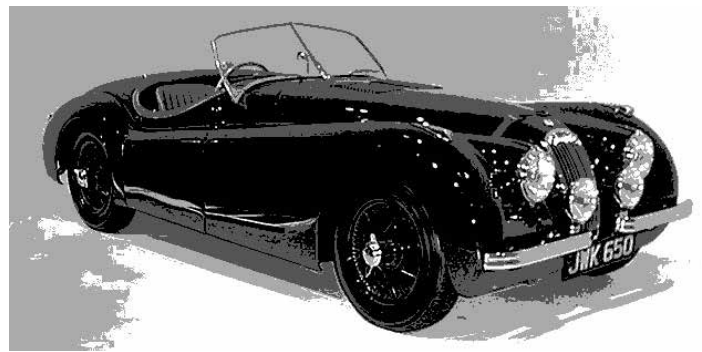
"Ten years later, I had a chance to buy a Ferrari for \$500 in the U.S. Customs Auction in Buffalo. I knew it was in sad shape, but figured I could fix it. When it got it here, it looked familiar and I did some of the same research you did."

After a pause, Carlo said sadly, "When I found out it was Fon's Ferrari, the one that killed my niece and so many others, I shoved it in the back of the storage building and it's been there ever since."

While he understood Carlo's deep feelings about the Ferrari 335 S and wanted to be respectful, Chub Olson didn't believe in curses, not that sort of curse, anyway.

Chub doubled down by continuing to sell used cars at an unprecedented clip and successfully repossessing them when the buyers defaulted on their E-Z-terms, no money down loans. In addition to being the consensus Employee of the Month, if there was such an award, Chub displayed individual initiative by finding a battered Jaguar XK120 in another corner of Carlo's storage building and making Carlo an offer he couldn't refuse. Chub paid \$400 for half interest in the British sports car on the condition that Carlo would coach him in the art of auto bodywork.

Chub set aside his sybaritic lifestyle and spent his spare evenings and many weekends mastering grinders, welding torches, rivet guns, socket wrenches, vibrating and rotary sanders, body putty and paint guns. Carlo augmented his coaching responsibilities by sending the Jaguar's engine and transmission to a shop owned by a friend who owed



Carlo a few favors.

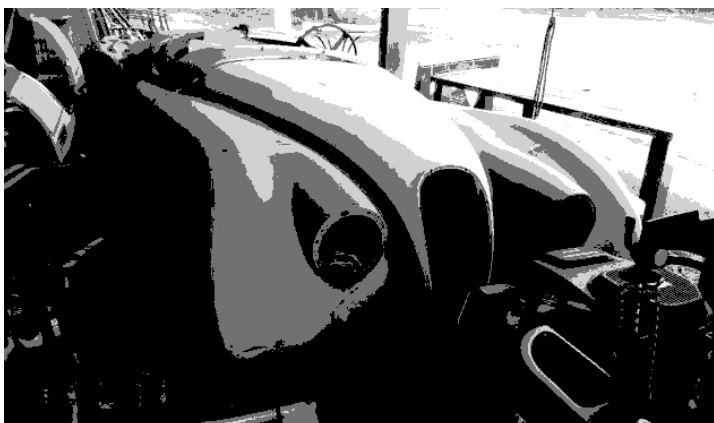
By spring, the Jaguar was running and resplendent in a shiny coat of British Racing Green lacquer. After enjoying it for a few weeks, Chub sold it for \$3,500, netting each partner a cool \$1,000 after expenses.

Carlo Ludovico had always dreamed of turning over his business to his kids, but the oldest was still in junior high, so Chub Olson had become something of a surrogate son over time.

After celebrating the sale of the Jaguar, with more bourbon and some takeout barbecue, Chub again brought up the Ferrari and Carlo admitted that 20 years after that tragic 1957 Mille Miglia, it might be time to give "the curse" a rest. That Saturday afternoon Carlo and Chub uncovered the Ferrari 335 S and extricated it from its resting place. With Carlo's coaching, Chub went to work on the new project. Carlo accepted \$500 of what Chub made on the Jaguar sale plus the anticipated hours of sweat equity for a half share in the Ferrari.

As Chub peeled back the layers like an onion, he discovered that the car had been at least partially restored after the race wreck. The tube frame had been straightened and the engine and drive-train had apparently been rebuilt. Even the thin aluminum skin of the sinuous Carrozzeria Scaglietti body was in much better shape than it should have been. The new damage looked more like the result of careless stevedores than a high speed shunt, which may have explained the car languishing in a customs warehouse for years before Carlo acquired it. The feral cats that roamed the property had kept the Ferrari free of rodent damage. The interior of a race car is pretty spartan to begin with, so freshening it up was within Chub's newfound capabilities.

Although he was more exacting with the Ferrari restoration than he had been with the Jaguar, Chub had learned by trial and error and by early March, 1978, the Ferrari was all together and its once crumpled body was smooth as silk. Chub had sprayed on countless coats of primer,



See Fon's Ferrari, p. 17

Fon's Ferrari

Continued from p. 16

hand sanding each coat before applying another. It awaited a top coat of Italian Racing Red, which would be applied by Lorenzo, the grouchy troll-like perfectionist who ruled the paint booth at the back of the body shop, an unlit stogie always clenched in his jaw.

Carlo agreed that Chub deserved some time off, so Chub packed a bag and took off for a sort of arrested development spring break in Florida, where he would catch the 12 hours of Sebring and perhaps cavort with some hot college babes at Daytona Beach. With Carlo's permission, Chub selected a durable Volvo Station wagon from the car lot and popped an air mattress and sleeping bag in back.

Chub headed back to Milledgeton after two weeks of sun, beer, seafood and brief flings with a blonde cheerleader from Rutgers and a statuesque brunette hippy. He thought he might want to see the brunette again. Chub blew into town on a Friday night and dropped his bags off at the Lakeview Motel. He picked up a quart of Jack Black, a bag of pretzels and headed over to Carlo's, hoping that Lorenzo had worked his magic on the Ferrari's paint job. When he strolled in the door, the look on Carlo's face and the stench of smoke told him the news was not good.

"Wha... what the heck happened, Carlo?" Chub blurted out.

"It's not good, Chub," Carlo said. Take a couple belts of our old friend Jack and I'll tell you. After they each tossed back a good three inches of hooch, Carlo continued.

"Lorenzo finally got around to painting the Ferrari last Friday night. He'd been doing customer cars all day and maybe exceeded his usual capacity for inhaling fumes. Maybe I should've stopped him, but I wanted the car ready for you," Carlo said.

"I guess he felt a little woozy and went out in the alley for some fresh air and lit up a new stogie, forgot it was still lit and went back to the paint booth. He must have poured lacquer thinner into his sprayer and when the fumes hit the cigar, 'Blammo!' the whole place went up in flames. I was in the front office when I heard the explosion and called 911, but by the time I got back there and the firemen arrived, Lorenzo was a goner and the Ferrari was a smoldering mess."

Chub and Carlo made new drinks and walked back to the gutted paint booth. Poor old Lorenzo's remains had been removed but the Ferrari's charred corpse remained. Chub agreed with Carlo's assessment of "it's a mess." The

concrete block structure had acted as a firewall, so most of the damage had been restricted to the paint booth and its contents. The Ferrari was, as they say, toast.

Saturday, a memorial service and wake were held at the body shop. The presence of Father Salerno lent a solemn air to the ceremony, but Italian food and libations lightened their spirits. No mention was made of a curse.

Chub reported for work Monday morning, but his heart was not in it. Curse or no curse, the doomed Ferrari was on everybody's minds. Even moving the charred remains back to the storage building did not lift their spirits and the other employees looked at Chub a little differently than they had before.

Chub realized there was a change in his own priorities as well. He let an Olds Cutlass go for well under what Carlo had in it, even though the buyer had no job and his ability to make payments was shaky. And he practically gave away a Triumph Spitfire with a faint engine knock to a cute 18-year-old redhead who flirted with him. Three weeks after Chub got back to Milledgeton, he and Carlo sat in the office Friday evening, a half-empty bottle of Jack Daniels between them, when the phone rang. Thinking it was a lucrative wrecker call, Carlo grabbed the receiver, listened and then handed it to Chub.

"It's for you, some woman named Rachel," Carlo said.

Chub was half in the bag and had to think a minute before taking the receiver. Carlo listened to Chub's side of the conversation which was mostly "ahhs" and "a-has", and finally, "Sounds like a plan. Count me in." After hanging up, Chub turned to Carlo and said, "Rachel is a brunette I met in Daytona. She's a perennial grad student and a pretty decent photographer. She just got a rebuilt engine in her VW van and scored a grant to retrace Ansell Adams' photos of the Rockies. Wanted to know if I'd like to come along as a co-driver and ... er ... companion."

Chub paused for a minute, took another sip of his drink, and added, "Probably needs someone strong enough to get out and push the old VW up steep slopes. Those vans are pretty gutless."

Chub didn't need to add that he had accepted the offer.

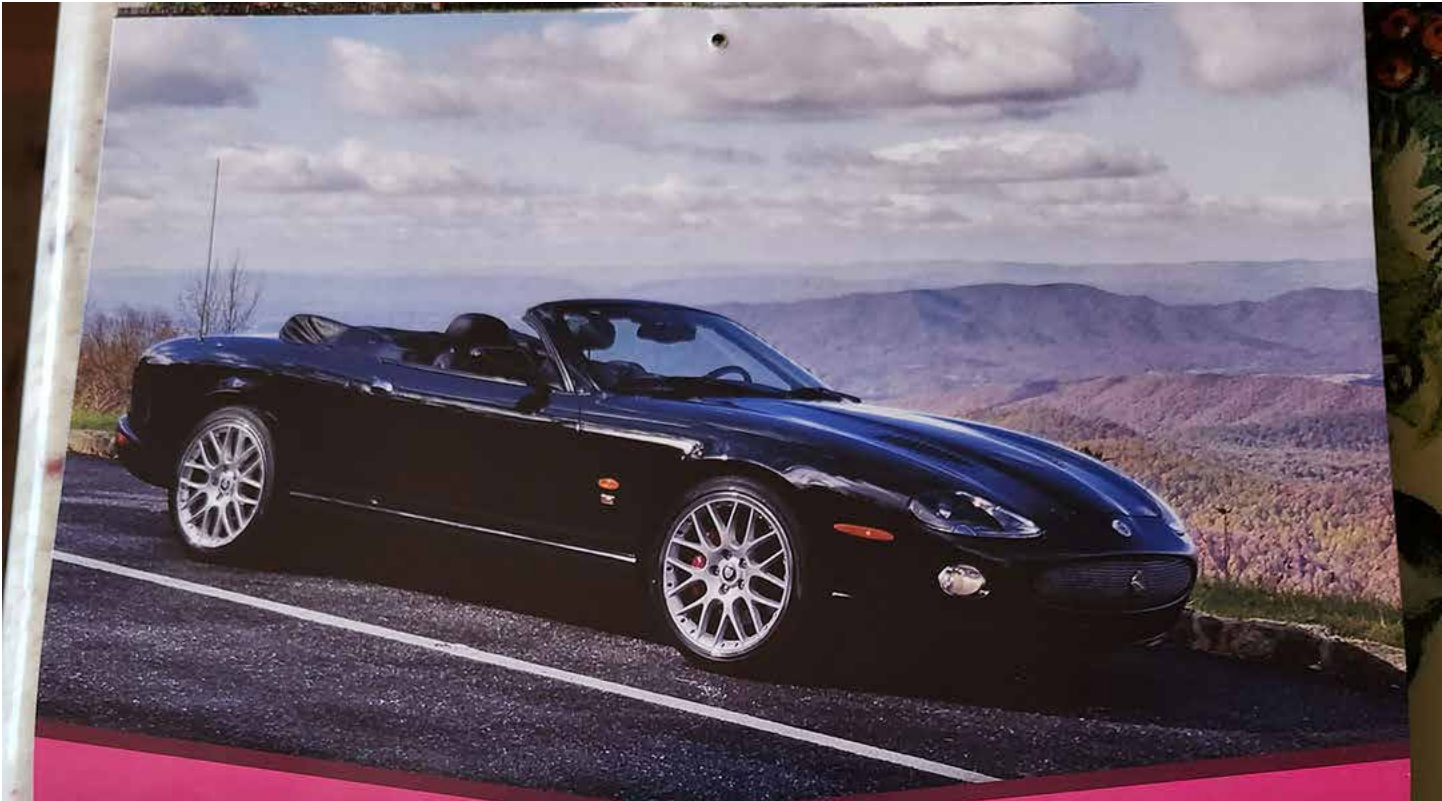
"I'm never gonna forget working for you or that Ferrari," Chub finally said. "After all that effort, I never really got a chance to drive it except for a few short runs in February, when it was too cold to put it through its paces."

"Curse or no curse, I don't think I'm done with that Ferrari," Chub added.

"But maybe we need to give it a rest."

- The End -

VJC MEMBER HONOR



2006 Jaguar XKR "Roxanne"
Bill Guzek
Forest, VA, USA

MAY 2024

April 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

EVENTS THIS MONTH

- May 3-5 — Formula One Miami Grand Prix — Miami, FL
- May 10-11 — Carlisle Import Performance Nationals — Carlisle, PA
- May 10-18 — Mecum Auction — Indianapolis, IN
- May 19 — Lytham Hall Classic & Performance Motor Show — Blackpool, UK
- May 23-26 — Monaco Grand Prix — Monaco, France
- May 26 — Indianapolis 500 — Indianapolis, IN



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June 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

For updated 2024 JCNA events please visit: jcna.com

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

			1	2	3	4
			Loyalty Day			
5	6	7	8	9	10	11

PIN-UP GAL

Virginia Jaguar Club member and long-time membership chair Bill Guzek reports that his 2006 Jaguar XKR, affectionately dubbed "Roxanne," is featured in the new Welsh Enterprises 2024 calendar. Roxanne was selected from 252 entries for the annual photo contest and is the poster car for the month of May.

VJC EVENTS CALENDAR

April 13 -- Talk by Patrick Duffeler on the BRM (British Racing Motors) Formula 1 team in the 1970s in the Library of Wedmore Place at the Williamsburg Winery at 11:30 a.m., Saturday, April 13. Lunch will follow at the Gabriel Archer Tavern on the winery grounds.

May 4 -- The 24th Annual Williamsburg British & Import Car Show, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Saturday, May 4 at the Shops at High Street, Williamsburg, VA. Sponsored by the Williamsburg British and Import Car Club. Register online at www.wmbgbrit.com

May 11 -- Annual VJC Garden Party and Garage tour at David and Una Harrison's residence, 11724 Elmwood Lane, Chester 23831, at 4 p.m., Saturday May 11. Bring your Jaguar, adult beverages and something to share. We will have the Barbie cranked up and set ups and paper plates etc.

May 18 -- 3rd Annual Ashland VA Kiwanis Club "Karwanis" car show, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Saturday, May 18, at Ashland Junction Shopping Center, U.S. Route 1, one block South of Route 33, Ashland, VA. (Contact Greg Glassner, glassgreg@hotmail.com for details.

June 8 -- Virginia Jaguar Club Concours in conjunction with the 55th Annual Richmond Collector Car Show of the Richmond Region, Antique Car Club of America, Saturday, June 8, 8 a.m.-3 p.m., at St. Joseph's Villa, 8000 Brook Road, Richmond, VA. www.RichmondCarShow.com www.VaJaguarClub.com

June 22 -- Visit to Upper Shirley Vineyards, Charles City County, sponsored by the Williamsburg British & Import Car Club. VJC Members invited. Details TBA.

VJC Concours set June 8 in Richmond

Now, finally! After that the disruption of the pandemic is at long last in the rear view mirror, we are happy to report that the 2024 Virginia Jaguar Club's (VJC) sanctioned JCNA Concours is ON this year and will be held on Saturday, June 8th again at the historic St. Joseph's Villa in Richmond, Virginia.

This year's event will again be held in conjunction with the Richmond chapter of the Antique Automobile Club of America (RAACA) and as in previous years, VJC will be sub-hosting a "show within a show." Entries into the VJC Concours may also register with the RAACA show and be eligible to receive rewards in both programs.

St. Joseph's Villa is located at 8000 Brook Road, Richmond, VA and is a large park-like setting with classical architecture and is conveniently located off of I-95 at the Parham Road exit at the intersection of Parham and Brook Roads, about eight miles north of downtown Richmond.

Last year the RAACA show had over 500 vehicles and will feature over thirty food, merchandise and auto-related vendors offering something for everyone. There is easy access to the facility, plenty of parking available as well as

many nearby restaurants and hotels.

In addition to JCNA member cars, the show field has traditionally chock-full of a variety of other British marques including MG, Triumph, Lotus, Aston Martin and Rolls Royce as well as lots of great classic American, muscle cars and hot rod custom cars as well.

Sister JCNA club judges are encouraged to be a part of our judging team. The number of entries will be limited by the quantity of certified JCNA judge, so the number of entrants will be limited. If you are from another club and are a qualified JCNA judge, please contact the VJC Cheif Judge, Sherman Taffel at [Sherman Taffel on staffel1945@gmail.com](mailto:ShermanTaffel1945@gmail.com)

Pre-Event Social Gathering

What would a Concours be without a bit of chin wagging and libations over our love for all things JAGUAR?!?

Meet our fellow Jag-Lovers at Virginia Center Crossings, a short drive from the event site at 1000 Virginia Center Pkwy, Glen Allen, VA 23059 We will meet in the lounge from 5 p.m. on. Relax and meet your fellow enthusiasts before the Concours.

VJC COMING ATTRACTIONS

Annual Harrison Garden Party

You are cordially invited to the annual VJC Garden Party and Garage tour at your VP's residence, 11724 Elmwood Lane, Chester 23831, at 4 p.m. on Saturday May 11.

Bring your Jaguar, adult beverages and something to share, we will have the Barbie cranked up and set ups and paper plates etc.

Jaguars will be parked on the lawn, Detroit on our quiet street.

Please rsvp:

Regards
David Harrison
VP and Events Bloke
davidmharrison2003@yahoo.com



BRM FORMULA 1 TALK

VJC Events Bloke David Harrison has arranged a talk by Patrick Duffeler on the BRM (British Racing Motors) Formula 1 team in the 1970s in the Library of Wedmore Place at the Williamsburg Winery at 11:30 a.m., Saturday, April 13. Lunch will follow at the Gabriel Archer Tavern on the winery grounds. VJC members, friends and other interested car club members are welcome. RSVP to David Harrison <davidmharrison2003@yahoo.com>

In Memorium

Dr. Bill Massey

Dr Bill Massey was a Jaguar enthusiast, a long standing member of the VJC, and he served as Vice President for several years at a time when the VJC was very active.

Bill hosted many VJC gatherings at his office in Williamsburg, where members could admire his Mk2 Jaguar, his Mk 6 Bentley and his collection of motoring art. Bill passed away on December 4 .

He will be missed by us all.

His obituary is available on the Buckrout Funeral Home website.



Lyons Tales is the official publication of The Virginia Jaguar Club, Inc.

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The VJC Newsletter now has its own email address for your convenience. Send your submissions of feature stories, news, photos, and opinion pieces to:

LyonsTales@yahoo.com

Membership

Membership in the VJC is open to any Jaguar enthusiast, whether you own a Jaguar or not.

For more informaion please send an email to Mark Creech, VJC Membership Chairman:
Mark_Creech@hotmail.com

and we will send you details on how to become a member.

Or fill in and return the membership application on page 23.

Visit us online at: www.vajaguarclub.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/904051982964621/>The Virginia Jaguar Club is affiliated with
The Jaguar Clubs of North America

Submissions

We encourage our members to submit articles, stories and pictures for publication in Lyons Tales. We kindly ask you follow the specifications listed below. To submit an article, please send to:

LyonsTales@yahoo.com

(Alternate: glassgreg@hotmail.com).

Make sure you reference

Lyons Tales or VJC somewhere in the subject line.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

10th of the month preceding the issue date.

SUBMISSION SPECIFICATIONS

Any regular font like Arial or New Times Roman

Format: Word or Text file

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briantrickett@gmail.com

Virginia Jaguar Club



Virginia Jaguar Club - Membership Form

You do not have to own a Jaguar to be a member of the Virginia Jaguar Club

Check One: New Renewal Date: _____

Name: _____

Spouse or Significant Other Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: Home (____) _____ Cell (____) _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Jaguar #1: Year _____ Model _____ Body Style _____

Jaguar #2: Year _____ Model _____ Body Style _____

Jaguar #3: Year _____ Model _____ Body Style _____

I am interested and/or are willing to assist with (check all that apply):

Car Shows Rallies Racing Club Administration Newsletter Web Site Organize Social Activities

Type of Membership (check one):

Annual Membership (January – December): \$70.00 *

New Member 15 Month Membership (October – December Following Year): \$80.00 *

Annual Young Enthusiast (25 years or less) Membership (January – December): \$40.00 *

Half Year Young Enthusiast (25 years or less) Membership (July – December): \$33.00 *

Club Membership for Active JCNA Member (Club Membership Only): \$25.00

* Includes JCNA Membership

(Memberships Include Spouse/S.O., All Memberships Expire on December 31st)

Payment Options:

1. Paying by Check - Please, make checks payable to "Virginia Jaguar Club" and mail with a copy of this form to: Virginia Jaguar Club, c/o Bill Guzek, PO Box 2034, Forest, VA 24551

2. Paying by Credit Card - Email the form to the Membership Chairman: VJCMembership@gmail.com or send it to the address above indicating you want to pay by credit card and we'll email you an invoice via Square (membership active upon payment).

Please note that there is a \$2.15 convenience fee for credit card payments.

ANY ROAD TRAVELED

Disclaimer: Lyons Tales' purpose is to disseminate news, technical information and superfluous minutiae related to Jaguar automobiles.

Any maintenance technique, modification or bodge published in Lyons Tales should be weighed against conventional, traditional, and generally archaic maintenance practices and procedures established by The Knights Templar. LT is not the authority on maintaining or improving Jaguar automobiles.

The views expressed are those of the author of the article or person quoted and not necessarily that of the Editor, VJC, JCNA or JLR-NA or any of its parent organizations (although maybe they should be). Owners should consider possible techniques or modifications in light of common sense and compromises among economy, longevity, performance, reliability, drivability, legality, and resale value not to mention the affect on one's virtue, morality, integrity, dignity, honor, respectability, nobility, purity, ethics and good character.

Any modifications possibly affecting emissions or safety are just silly and should not be attempted.

Neither this publication nor this organization, editor or his minions will assume any liability for ensuing consequences for your inept application of those techniques described herein. So there.

P.S. If you don't know where you are going, any road will take you there.

-- The Editor



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