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“Life is too short not to own a Jaguar (or two)”

The story of my 1966 S Type

Affectionately dubbed by my wife “The Other Woman”

Philip Prior - 2010

I Just Wanted One!

I grew up in Griffith NSW (along with other infamous people in the sixties and seventies) My uncle Ben, now deceased purchased a brand new Jaguar Mk 1 2.4ltr (if my memory serves me right) in the late 50s. It was a black car with red leather interior, I was just a teenager at the time but remember the car well, it was the envy of my father who owned the current model Ford (Star Model) V8 (with plastic covered vinyl seats) and there were many rather daring races, much to my mothers dismay, on country roads of a Sunday as we traveled home from church.



I guess my desire, to own one of these Jaguars had its beginnings back then and I never quite got over it. I recall that this car was regarded as a very prestigious car to own in those days and the envy of many. The car stayed in the family for many years and in latter years I often enquired after it with the thought that maybe one day I might own it or one just like it. But I had to wait another 45 years or so, before my dream would be realized. I wonder how many ‘baby boomers’ finally decide (or can finally afford) in their retirement to buy the car they always wanted? Even a mid-life crisis in my early forties only resulted in a fully restored MGA Roadster (A five year restoration project

and a lovely car) but satisfying as it was, it was not a Jaguar.

I wonder how many ‘baby boomers’ finally decide (or can finally afford) in their retirement to buy the car they always wanted?

I originally had my heart set on purchasing a Mark 11, and scanned the internet for approximately six months trying to hide my determination rather unsuccessfully from my wife. During this period it was

inevitably that I educated myself on values etc. I to a lot of sellers and personally inspected a few local cars, but was disappointed with what I found. I was determined not to pay too much and found as usual sellers expectations on price usually exceeded my willingness to pay. The complete ground up restoration on my 1959 MGA 1600 roadster taught me what some of the pitfalls of such a project were. With this experience in mind I had a preference for a fully restored or at least almost fully restored vehicle. This time I would let someone else spend the money. I was content just to cash in after all the hard work had been done and hard earned cash had been spent.

The Businessman's Express

My search for a Mark 11 was not proving very successful when my brother-in-law in Sydney whom I knew what I was looking for, sent me a photo of a 1966 S-Type up for auction in Sydney. I was aware of this model but had initially decided against it, probably based on nothing more than the popularity of the Mark 11. However with a little more research, I decided it really did suit my style, age, and my considerable size. I was impressed by the write-ups and testimonials from those who owned S Types and information sourced from the forum at "Jag Lovers" (what a great web site) and found other owners of S Types urging me to "just do it!" The sophistication of the car with the IRS, internal finish etc. (The Businessman's Express indeed) finally won me over and I decided this was to be my Jaguar model.

66-CAT

The car with Queensland registration **66-CAT**, was being offered for Auction by The Classic Throttle Shop, a well established classic car dealership in Sydney, that was conducting their inaugural classic car auction. After having my brother-in-law (who has owned numerous classic cars himself and needed little encouragement) inspect the car and report that it seemed to be everything the promotion and photos claimed, I decided a trip to Sydney was inevitable. In hindsight the fact that this was the Inaugural CTS Auction was really to my advantage. The crowd on the night was small and the bidding less than enthusiastic with a very small number of lots actually selling on the night. Being the only bidder on the night I was successful in the purchase of the car (6th Dec 2009) I was of course like a kid with a new bike.



The car came with factory power steering and heated rear window and with some historic records and receipts. I have no history of the car prior to 1993. Jim Leicht, of Toowoomba Qld. owned the car from at least 24th March 1993 to 12th May 2007. He sold the car to Sandy Brinkman of Noosa, Qld., who owned the car from 12th May 2007 to 6th Dec 2009. Sandy clearly did not use the car a great deal but was successful in gaining a prize with it at the Noosa Car Show.

Jim Leicht, had in the mid nineties carried out an extensive restoration of the vehicle with approximately \$60,000 worth of receipts being supplied with the purchase. (Don't you just love that....) This restoration included a bare metal re-spray. The car I have been told by Jim was originally Golden Sand, it had been painted white before his purchase and he changed the colour to light oyster gold (metallic) The restoration included a complete internal make-over with carpets, leather seats and all interior linings and trim replaced, new woodwork, new wiring harness, some new chrome, new wire wheels (5) with Pirelli tyres.



There is also evidence in the receipts that the motor had an overhaul at the same time, however it seems to me now that this overhaul was not as thorough as it could have been and I have now decided to remove the motor and have it completely rebuilt to my satisfaction and peace of mind.

I have been able to obtain a Heritage Certificate for the car which verifies that the car was indeed sold with the original colour being Opalescent Golden Sand, and confirming that the Chassis Number, Car Number and Engine Numbers etc. are indeed the original matching numbers.

But is it a 3.4 ltr. or a 3.8 ltr?

At this point there is a little twist to the story. The car was sold to me as having left the factory as a 3.4ltr. (Confirmed by the Heritage Certificate) that had been converted to 3.8ltr. I didn't think much more about it at the time, I was delighted to have successfully purchased the car and was happy to have a 3.8ltr. However curiosity got the better of me. The receipts from the partial rebuild in 1995 itemised amongst other things the fitting of 3.8 rings. Yet the block is clearly embossed 3 ½ Litre, and the engine numbers confirm this. Could it be that the motor was bored to 3.8 ltr. specifications by a previous owner? You can imagine my curiosity that turned to confusion when my learned friends on the "Jag Lovers Forum" assured me this could not possibly be the case. "It just cannot be done!" they said. Sometimes we can have just enough knowledge to be dangerous.



So without 'boring' you too much, with the head now off, I can reveal that the 3.4ltr. block has indeed been bored to 3.8ltr. without sleeves. (which is well beyond the recommended limits for a 3.4 block.) So....decisions, decisions, decisions.....what do I do? At this stage I am inclined to sleeve the block back to 3.4ltr. but that decision is yet to be finalized.

With the body work and interior of a suitable high quality it is not my intention to change much other than a few cosmetic touch-ups and a few chrome up-grades. My concentration is now on rebuilding the motor and enjoying the ride.

Finally, having joined the Jaguar Drivers Club of SA in February 2010 I want to express my appreciation of the club and its members, my wife (Sue) and I have enjoyed the fellowship and friendship and look forward to many years of Jaguar inspired fun.

Philip Prior