



Q & A

Robin Turner

Member No. 34

Questions: Graham Franklin

Answers: Robin Turner

You are a foundation member, number 34. You were there at the inaugural meeting of the club. Do you remember much of the early days regarding the formation of the club?

Yes, it was very exciting. Most of us had modest means, and we stretched ourselves to buy a Jaguar. There was lots of youthful enthusiasm with the bulk of the members predominately in their 20s. There was also pleasing social interaction outside of club meetings and events. We were able to help each other with our car issues and technical advice. And it was all good fun!

Being Club publicity officer in the early eighties was very enjoyable.

One 'event' that still remains strong in my memory was the political sacking of Police Commissioner Harold Salisbury, Patron of our club. Members organised a huge rally in Victoria Square in support of our Patron and his decision not to resign (as Police Commissioner). I was personally embarrassed in the way he was treated and am sure the Royal Commission into his sacking resulted in an early demise in his health. Harold returned to London and I wrote to Mrs Salisbury on news of his death. *

You let your membership lapse at one stage?

Active membership was retained until the late eighties - early nineties until pressure of work and other priorities took over. However, my passion never changed, and like many other members, the Club welcomed me back as circumstances changed.



Robin's first set of wheels!

Interview - Robin Turner (cont)

Do you remember your first car?

Yes, it was a green 1949 Austin A40. The engine was worn out. Our driveway was on a steep incline and the only way to get up the hill was to put the car in reverse. It had leather seats with the springs sticking out and whenever we parked, we put a drip tray under the car and poured the oil back into the engine.

Can you remember your first encounter with a Jaguar?

As a young kid with a crystal set during the 50's, I used to listen to the BBC (via the ABC) and remember the broadcasts from Le Mans about Jaguar's successes and the winning years of the D-Type. A Jaguar was the car to have.

Your first Jaguar?

It was a 3.4 litre Mark 2 auto. It wasn't the best example and it cost \$1,000 in 1973. It was white and we painted it gun-metal grey. We eventually sold it to fellow member Grant Murdock.

Do you recall the Jaguars you own or have owned?

We bought a 3.4 S-Type. It was glorious. Burgundy 4-speed manual with overdrive, wire wheels and power steering. It was an Australian delivered car and a particularly nice example. We do regret selling it but "had" to have an XJ6.

The XJ6 was a Series 1 English import. It was a nice car but suffered from rust problems. After that we owned a number of Jaguars. One was a Mark IV, but it was too much work for us to restore and we sold it to another enthusiast. We also enjoyed a black Mark V, a V12 E-Type convertible and a very early V12 XJ-S. There was also a Series 3 XJ6, blue with bone trim, and an XJ X300 as well as an XKR convertible. Currently we own a V8 F-Type roadster.

Your fondest memories of Club events?

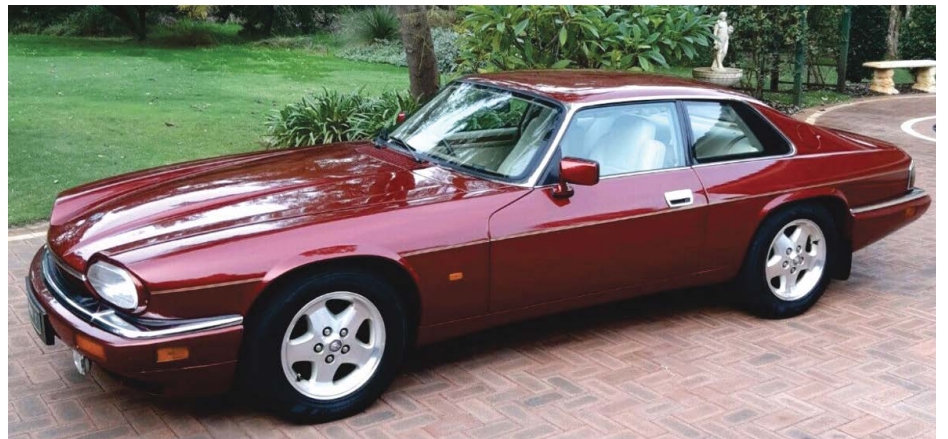
They go back to the early days of the club. The economy runs were always professionally organised. There was no cribbing allowed, filling and sealing of tanks was carefully scrutinised and vehicles were weighed. On one of these runs around the Fleurieu Peninsula, Barbara and I were in the 3.4 litre manual S-Type, and determined to do well, we coasted whenever possible and did everything we could to conserve fuel. We ended up winning the trophy for best fuel economy in our class. Economy runs were serious competitive events, up there with the Concour events and Motorkhana's, and we were very happy for the win.



Robin & Barbara Turner's (Ex) Maroon XJ-C Series 2 Coupe.



Robin & Barbara Turner's (Ex) 1973 Primrose V12 E-Type S3 manual convertible.



Robin & Barbara Turner's (Ex), 1992 XJS (Facelift) 4.0 litre AJ6.



Interview - Robin Turner (cont)

Have you been a member of any other Clubs?

- The Sporting Car Club
- Bentley Drivers Club
- First Boys Tuesday
- Sports Car Drivers SA

Of all the vehicles you have owned, and you could only have one returned, which car would you choose?

The 1973 V12 manual convertible. It was Primrose with Black trim and gorgeous chrome wire wheels. We sold it to Dean Wills (WD & HO Wills Tobacconist) in 1986. Goodness knows what happened to it, but we often think of it.

Any memorable motoring or club experience?

Motorkhana's. I remember Phil Smart screaming around in a Jaguar saloon with their baby in a bassinet in the back being tossed around. Wife Christine, other wives and girlfriends WERE NOT IMPRESSED!

Early in club days, Peter Wearing-Smith rolled up to a General Meeting with calf-high boots. John Raynor quipped "here comes Peter Wearing boots". It brought the house down.

Then of course there were all the very congenial parties at Rob Smith's house.

Anything else you would like to add

We have a very special memory from Mallala. I think it was in 1987. It was the release of the XJ (XJ40) and Club members were invited to the Mallala race track for a demonstration of the new car. British Leyland had flown Stirling Moss from the U.K. and he took Barbara and myself for a couple of laps around the circuit. At one stage he dropped two wheels off the track and into the dirt and slammed on the brakes to demonstrate the anti-lock brakes. It was special, something both Barbara and I will always remember.

Your story brings back great memories. Anything else that comes to mind?

Thank you, Graham. Barbara and I would like to pass on our compliments to the JDCSA. It has been a phenomenal success story which is directly attributable to all the dedicated and farsighted committee members over the last 50 years!

Thank you very much Robin.

**Editor: In 1979 Journalist Stewart Cockburn published the best-selling book 'The Salisbury Affair' that covered the controversial sacking of South Australian Police Commissioner, Harold Salisbury (and our then Patron). The book is available from libraries and it recalls details of the more than 10,000 strong protest rally organised by our Club (JDCSA).*



Robin & Barbara Turner's (Ex), XKR Convertible with the Clipsal 500 girls



Robin & Barbara Turner's V8 F-Type roadster.



Stirling Moss and Robin. Stirling took Robin & Barbara for a couple of memorable fast laps around Mallala in the then, new release XJ (XJ40).