

Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust by Linsey Siede

Editor - The following article was written by Victorian Car Club Member Linsey Siede for the September edition of CAT-A-LOG. Thank you very much Linsey for allowing us to reprint this very enjoyable and informative article.

Between 2001 and 2007 I worked at a Australian company that had an office located in Coventry, England, which I used to visit once every year. To make matters even better, in 2004 I found a wonderful place to stay called "Brooklands Grange Hotel" (which started out as a 16th Century Jacobean farmhouse), and just happened to be located less than 1 mile from the Jaguar factory at Browns Lane.

I was fortunate enough to make two visits there (in 2004 & 2005) to see the "Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust", (Ref: <https://www.jaguarheritage.com>) which at

that time was located in a stand-alone building right next to the Jaguar HQ building in Browns Lane.

For those that haven't been, I thought I would put together some photos of their collection, which not only included cars, but also many pieces of Jaguar memorabilia. Sadly, the last time I visited a few years later, the entire area had been bulldozed ready for a housing development.

Fortunately, there was another Museum located nearby showcasing a range of British Cars, and in November 2015 after significant renovations and extensions, the "British Motor Museum" located in Banbury Road, Gaydon, Warwickshire, was re-branded and opened as a store for the reserve car collections of both the British Motor Industry Heritage

Trust and the Jaguar Heritage Trust. (Ref: <https://www.britishmotormuseum.co.uk>).

My first visit to JDHT was on September 21st 2004, where I was welcomed with open arms by the friendly staff looking after the Trust collection, particularly when I told them I'd come all the way from Australia.

Their collection was quite vast, but as a proud Mark IV owner, I was a little shocked when they told me they did not have a Mark IV in their collection.

(Looking at the vehicles listed on the current website, I see they have now remedied that oversight. Ref: <https://www.jaguarheritage.com/vehicle-collection/>).

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Browns Lane was sold in 2007 and the buildings progressively demolished including the building above. The museum was then moved to two permanent displays in Gaydon and Coventry. The majority of the site was turned into a housing estate known as "Swallow's Nest".

Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust (cont)



At the time of my visit a number of vehicles were displayed outside the Jaguar HQ Building, Offices and Heritage building. In the above photo you can just see the curved verandah to the entrance of the old Browns Lane JDHT building on the far right hand side. (Now all demolished).

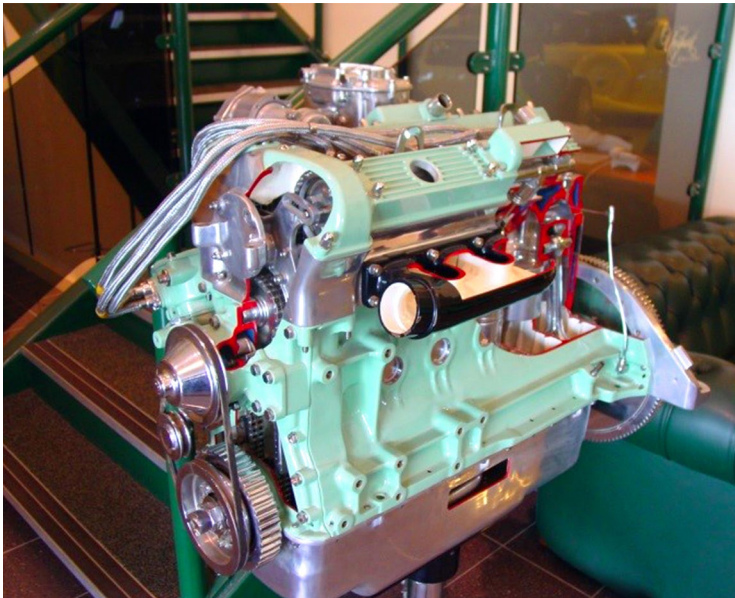


The JDHT collection includes vehicles dating back to the early days of the Swallow Sidecar and Coachbuilding Company.

Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust (cont)



The collection included former Jaguar race cars and specialist vehicles like the Jaguar XKR used in the James Bond film "Die Another Day".



The Collection was more than just vehicles, and included a range of posters, sectioned engines, parts and a range of memorabilia.

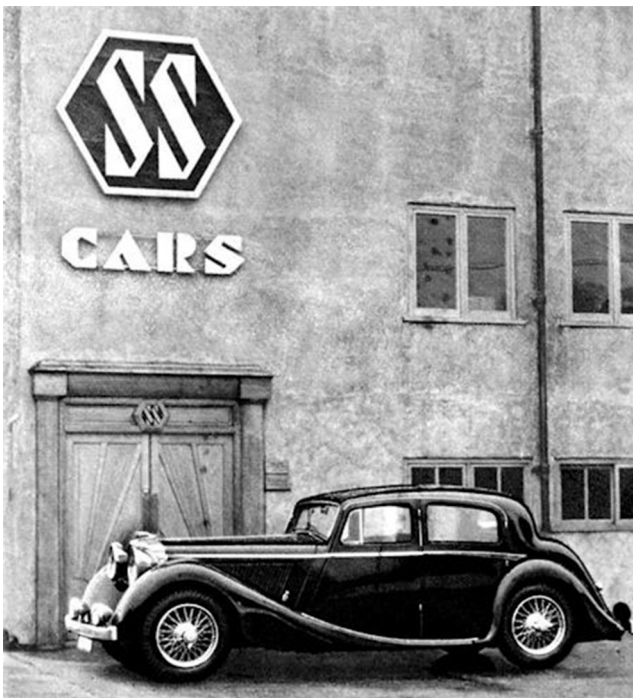


Photo left: 1939 Jaguar Saloon parked at the SS's front doors. The plaques by the doors denote the registered offices of the Swallow Coachbuilding Company and SS Cars Ltd. Photo above: The original doors on display at JDHT.

Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust (cont)



On my visit in 2005 to Browns Lane, JDHT were celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Mark I. Many Jaguar models also attended.



The JDHT collection includes displays dating back to the 1920's &30's. Above left: "SS Airline" and above right: "Swallow Sidecar".

Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust (cont)



The collection includes a huge selection including a Jaguar F1 car and a polished aluminium XJ.



The famous Daimler V-8 engine that was designed by Edward Turner and produced from 1959 to 1969.



One car which attracted a lot of interest was the XK 180 Concept car. Built in 1999 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the XK 120. The 4.0 litre supercharged V8 had a claimed top speed of 180 mph. Only two XK 180 roadsters were built, one LHD and the other RHD.



Displayed proudly outside of the entrance was the last ever vehicle to be manufactured at the Browns Lane factory, a magnificent XJ; and also the last ever XK8 vehicle to be manufactured at the facility.

Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust (cont)

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Despite the JDHT building being located only 100 meters from Browns Lane, to get to the JDHT facility you had to drive through the main gates to the factory and HQ building which was via Lyons Drive, and wind your way around the warren of roads and buildings located on the Jaguar site.

It wasn't until my second visit to the JDHT building, that I realised it was only open during weekdays when it could be manned mostly by volunteers. My first visit was obviously during a week day, and when I arrived for my second visit on Saturday September 24th the following year, the place was all but deserted, except for a few people outside the building seemingly busy moving things around.

When I asked what was happening, I was told they were only open week days, but as in the first visit, when I let them know I had come all the way from Australia, they told me to go in a have a

look around, while they attended to their activities outside.

Very little had changed, but a few more bits and pieces had been added, and a few of the display cars had been changed. They had many more vehicles in the collection than could be displayed in the building, so they kept many of their display cars off-site. Some additional sectioned parts had been added, plus some of the newer vehicles.

As I was leaving, I thanked them for letting me in to have a look, and they asked me what I was doing tomorrow? I said I had nothing planned, so they invited me back. Apparently, they were getting things ready to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Mark I, and were expecting more than 200 cars to arrive.

There was also the added bonus that they were setting up some displays in their HQ building for people to look at and walk through. I thanked them very much, and told them I would definitely be back. An extra added bonus, was that

they were going to open the entrance of Browns Road for the first time in many years, so I also got to enter through this original gate.

They not only welcomed a huge amount of Mark I and II vehicles, but also other Jaguar owners turned up to examine the incredible display of vehicles. Vehicles included many from all over Europe, and I even spotted one with Victorian registration plates.

For an English day, the weatherman smiled upon the attendees, and it was a wonderfully organised event. It was an outstanding day for the many that attended, but also a sad day for Jaguar and the Browns Lane factory as that was the last event like this that was staged there. I was very happy and privileged that I was invited, and able to attend. I guess sometimes you just have to be at the right place at the right time!!

Linsey Siede



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2005. While the Jazz band played outside the HQ building, entering the HQ building through the impressive foyer provided access to a range of technical presentations and other displays.