

A Love Affair with an Unusual Beginning

Editor - The following story was published in Classic Marque in September 2014, not long after Roland and Elly Donders joined our club. Thank you very much to Roland for allowing us to reprint this enjoyable account of buying an XJ40.

The Beginning

It all started with my younger brother acquiring a project car, a Jaguar MK VII in Western Australia. As I am a motor mechanic about to retire, he suggested he send the motor and gearbox over to SA for me to recondition in my spare time (ha ha).

Well, it arrived and needed a lot of work.

As I stripped the motor down, I thought it might be of some value to check various forums on the net to find any peculiar quirks or faults associated with this model and of course where to find a good supply of parts for the task.

Fatal Attraction

Whilst browsing the net, in particular eBay, I found this 1990 Daimler being offered by a dealer south of Sydney at a reasonable price. And thought it looked a classy eye catcher.

After a lot of correspondence, I reluctantly paid a deposit in return for which he would fit 2 new tyres and submit the car for a road worthy inspection and register it for 3 months.

He posted me the report, a clean sheet. So, the next step was hop on a plane just prior to Christmas 2012 and then a 2-hour train trip south to Albion Park.

The dealer picked me up from the station and took me to his yard. There it was and after my full inspection and a consequent test drive, I fell even more in love.

All the books and service records and the complete tool kit were there. The previous owner was obviously fussy.

After signing transfers and taking position of the rego papers, oh and of course parting with my cash, I drove out of the yard.

Step2:

First to the nearest servo to fill with fuel and some lunch (I was starving as it was 4.30pm and I hadn't eaten since 6am on the flight over).



Roland Donders 1990 Daimler. The car is an XJ40 Update model featuring analog gauges and the 4.0 litre motor.

Next program the TomTom sat nav for the trip home along with documenting times, kilometres and locations on the long trip home. Winding through Macquarie's Pass the handling and power impressed me.

Onto the Hume highway and here was the chance to test the cruise control, fantastic, it even braked to maintain an equal speed downhill, all that with a return of 9.51 per 1,000km. I'm impressed even more.

As I crossed the border into Victoria, perhaps a few hours rest wouldn't go astray.

Wife Elly rang on my progress and insisted I book into a motel for some rest.

Why waste money on a motel when this car with plush leather seats has a perfectly comfortable back seat. Three and a half hours alongside the river Murray near Tooleybuc.

The Good Old Kookaburras

The kookaburras woke me up, so on I drove to Ouyen where there is a nice bakery for breakfast, or so I thought. They had changed hands and no longer bake on the premises.

Oh well, go on without breakfast to Geranium for some fuel. To my surprise the proprietor owned an XJ series 3 which he just had painted in exactly the same colour as mine, and of course was very happy to tell me all about it.

Dear Wife Meets the Car

When I got home, my thoughts were that Elly might still prefer the later model Fairlane, but how wrong can you be. She has decided this is her car now, except for when it needs maintenance.

Speaking of maintenance, all I have done in the last 12 months is replaced the shocker bushes, a new rack and pinion seal and fitted standard rear springs to compensate the removal of the self-levelling system.

So, to sum it all up after 40 or so years as a Ford fanatic I am now converted even to the point of joining the Jaguar drivers club of SA to share and compare notes with fellow enthusiasts and enjoy outings with members with similar interests.

New members no 3576: Roland and Elly Donders of Mannum.

Footnote:

Unfortunately, Elly is no longer with us and until her death, the car was his dear wife's favourite, and she referred to it as "The Dame". About 6 months ago Roland decided to honour her by getting personalised number plates IE: Dame 90 (refer back page).