

# Members Story - Greg Souter

When I started looking back over my 7-8 years of ownership of my Jaguar, I quickly realized it would be a challenge to provide a brief story.

## Fatal Attraction

I bought the XJ-SC at a time when I was not really looking for a Jaguar. I had previously owned an MGB with a Rover V8 and 5-speed conversion. I parted with that car and immediately regretted that decision. I really wanted a manual car and a convertible or coupe body shape.

My brother shared an advert with me regarding a Jaguar located in Northern NSW. I purchased the car without hesitation, a decision that I have questioned on more than one occasion over the months and years that followed.

## Regency Park!!!

The vehicle was transport to SA, and I immediately proceeded to Regency Park Transport Inspections. This is where the fun really began, and the first of my many moments when I queried my latest purchase.

The Regency experience could be a novel in itself, but after 3 attempts, a letter from Jaguar Australia confirming my vehicle's identity and my absolute defiance in their request to remove the Brown's lane



stamping from the firewall / bulkhead....  
....I achieved SA registration.

## Problems on the Horizon

It became quite clear early on after registration, and subsequent driving that the car was not in the healthiest of states as far as running gear was concerned.

So began the journey of a rebuild and restoration. In the early days I did a lot of work on the front end, front spring replacement to correct ride height, bushes, etc. As such I was introduced to someone who became instrumental in this project and well known to many in this club I'd imagine (Geoff Mockford).

Between Geoff and my brother Gary, my two trusted advisors I threw up all conceivable engine options from the LS1 (yes, I thought about it) to a Jag V8, and everything in between. In the end common sense prevailed and the decision to rebuild the V12 won (thanks Geoff).

As the project progressed, I was determined to try and simplify and tidy other aspects that I wasn't completely happy with. My goal was to improve overall drivability and simplicity of the car.



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The manual conversion was not finished to a level that I was happy with, so I commenced a long list of improvements.

## Lucas Electrical

First and foremost was the repair of the wiring loom located behind the dash that runs virtually everything.

My car was a Californian car and had a modified wiring loom that was very untidy. Not happy with it, I sourced a loom for a same year car but factory RHD. This led to climate control issues. After pulling it apart 3-4 times, I became an expert at heater box removal (3rd worst job ever) and finally resolved the problems.

## Rear-End Rebuild

Next came the complete rear end rebuild, and the installation of a rear sway bar. The mounts were still there on 10/86 model, but they had stopped fitting them by then (apparently). The diff ratio was changed from a 2.88 to a 3.31 and the rear end was rebuilt at the same time.

## Engine Rebuild

Next came time to tackle the engine, lots of smoke on start up, and it was running very rough, so the engine was pulled out and completely rebuilt. It was all relatively standard, but just cleaned up at every possible point, including every single nut and bolt on a wire buff in my shed for countless hours (2nd worst job).



## More Electrical Work

The alternator was relocated, and I eliminated the factory fan, electing to run twin electro fans, and an electric controller instead. The concept was to try and eliminate as many belts, pulleys, vacuum lines as possible.

To this end, the original ECU was removed, and a Haltech Elite ECU was installed. I mounted this under the passenger seat, and I must admit it was one of the most satisfying jobs I did. I hooked up the ECU with new tidy looms and a freshly painted engine bay. The original AAV was replaced with a Bosch 2 wire stepper motor along with a custom piece of plumbing.

## Modified Engine Air Intakes

Prior to getting the engine bay painted, I removed the headlights, and associated



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rat's nest, and proceeded to remove the material (metal behind the headlight assembly). I sourced a 3" pipe and cut and welded on an appropriate angle to allow 3" ducting to the airbox which was also modified.

## Replacing the Starter Motor (in the car)

A lighter foot pressure clutch with higher clamp pressure was sourced for the 5-speed gearbox, and last of all the (very heavy) starter motor was fitted. This required a 'dumbbell' arm lift on one arm with a double inverted pike whilst lying on my back. It was not only the worst job ever but carried out no less than three times. The first one wasn't up to the job, and the second one that was reconditioned .... well, it wasn't ...

It was at this very moment in time, despite all the progress, I started questioning the purchasing decision once again.

## Start-Up Time

Eventually after some initial over fuelling issues that really had me scratching my head, and the subsequent return to two fuel regulators, it immediately started.

After about a total of 30 minutes running over 1-1/2 days, checking every connection, fuel line, injector, coolant connection, temp and oil senders, fan



*Completed rebuilt engine and refurbished engine bay.*



*Completed rebuilt rear independent suspension and differential.*

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controller, and spanner check it was off for an engine run in session in a controlled environment with the help of the guys at TRS.

## The Exhaust

The last major job was the exhaust system. The initial setup of the exhaust consisted of two separate systems, and with a combination of boxes used. My desire to not have the car too loud resulted in a significant failure with an exhaust note not dissimilar to an old Holden 202 going up Willunga Hill with a hole in the muffler. Back to workshop.

The exhaust now comprises of a middle box and a single rear muffler on each side. It sounds great.

## Final Tidy-Up

Finally, there was the seemingly simple calibration and setup of the electronic speed sensor from the 5-speed gearbox to drive the original (square wave signal)

speedometer. This now had to have a small program calibrated in the ECU, which wasn't simple and took days and days – a long story.

I have completed about 7-8,000 kms on the vehicle now, and often drive it around the Adelaide hills or the Fleurieu Peninsula.

## More Modifications in the Planning

Next job or project is to see if I can source some oversized throttle bodies and modified inlet manifolds. However, the 'good idea's brother' has suggested we consider twin turbos...with just a little boost...a concept that we may consider.

## A Big Thank You

I could not have completed this without the help of my brother Gary – engine builder, bracket maker, simplifier of all things 'Lucas'. The constant support and guidance from Geoff, who would take a call on Sunday afternoon and selflessly

assist me through whatever tangled mess I had achieved in my head by over thinking something.

Lastly the help from the guys at TRS. I still maintain that the engine running in session was the most anticipated moments, in the entire project.

One thing for certain, it is not getting sold.....not anytime soon. Absolute pleasure and great fun to drive, the look on people's faces when they realise it's a V12 doesn't get old....

**Greg Souter (aka Ollie M)**  
- another long story.

*Editor: Story reprinted from February 2022  
Classic Marque.*

