

Ian Trethewey (Mark VII)

As long as I can remember my brother, Ken, has had a fascination and a yearning for Jaguars, a subject I will get to later.

I started my apprenticeship at the Australian Morgan and TVR dealership, Museum Motors, in the mid-seventies and thus attracting a select client base, I worked on a couple of XJ6's and a few Mk2's. I also remember a Mk 10 floated in from outer space occasionally.

They all had a common fault, and that was that none of the bosses wanted to work on them, so it was usually left to me.

I had to take the head off an XJ6, and as we had no books, I had to work it out as I went along. Of course, the head would not come off so someone suggested we suspend the car by the head gasket overnight and see if it drops. Well as we were packing up that evening a boss backed a Volvo up to the back of the XJ and gave it a nudge just to fit the Volvo in

the door. When we opened the door in the morning the Jag had dropped and the head was through the windscreen.

Soon after that my circumstance changed and I moved to Adelaide where I finished my apprenticeship at Chateau Moteur. That was when they had Porsche, Ferrari, Saab and Citroen. I started out as the other Porsche app. but seemed to be attracted to Citroen and Saab so I crossed the floor.

I spent 13 years as the maintenance mechanic at Glenside Hospital where the atmosphere was like a big family and I worked on everything, walking frames, push bikes, electric runabouts, tractors up to a big Volvo bus. The patients used to drop in with problems that social workers and psychiatrists couldn't fix and if we could not help, they always got a cup of tea and a biscuit just the same as the over worked and underpaid managers.

We were a non-discriminating garage before it was popular. The government changed and they decided to privatise and depopulate and basically bugger up a caring refuge for people with mental problems and they shut my garage.

I used the pay out to setup my own business which I did till my back gave out about five years later when a friend asked if I had a motor bike licence and would I like to be a postie. Coincidentally I lasted there for 13 years as well. Loads of fun till the management buggered the job so it was time to move on.

I got a job working on Caterpillar machinery where I learned an enormous amount about motor mechanicing. Then I retired.

So getting back to my brother Ken and his long term passion for Jaguars. Kenno lives in Cootamundra and started out buying an XK 140, and to ensure a supply



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of parts he found a couple of Mk7's locally and brought them home.

One was in pretty good nick for being under a collapsed shed and covered in hay bales for 50 years, and so he decided to rip it apart and rebuild it from the wheels up.

After a year or so he decided to buy another Mk 7 that was for sale in Melbourne. Turns out this one is a very early model with an A motor and correct engine, head, gearbox and chassis numbers and a great car to drive, having been restored about 20 years back.

Now you need to know that as a working mechanic, Jaguars generate a level of fear and loathing in the trade, you are either for them or against them and I was firmly in the avoid camp. But then I went for a ride with Kenno in the XK and really enjoyed it. We pottered about putting the body back on his Mk 7 and

a few other jobs and afterwards it didn't seem too scary working on Jaguars once there was no time pressure exerted.

Well time goes on, and his fire burns bright, and he is supported by a very active and very knowledgeable Cootamundra Antique Car Club and his Mk7 nears completion, it came to me that he probably doesn't need two Mk7's, so I made him an offer he could not refuse.

I got a ride from Adelaide to Cootamundra with a friend going through to Sydney to pick up the spare Mk 7. After checking the oil and the tire pressure I drove it back to Adelaide. The trip was uneventful until I reached Renmark where clear blue skies closed in with an apocalyptic threat that would gladden the four horsemen to their exposed back teeth. It hammered down and the wind was ripping the water off the bridge over the Murray and the

modern cars ahead of me were being thrown about like twisties packets from a leaf blower.

But my Mk 7 did not move. Not wind or water or tempest could disturb the stately confidence of that car. It was like it put out its claws into the road and said "don't worry son, I'll look after you". It was at that point I became a convert.

Since then, I have happily replaced the crank pulley when I found it was broken while I had the radiator out for a recore. My attitude has changed completely and I owe it all to my brother's passionate affair with Jaguars that I have only just found.

Glad I did.

All the best, Ian

Editor - Thank you Ian. I have seen the car including your recent drive around the Tailem Bend racetrack, and it is a beauty.

