



Q & A Peter Holland

Member No. 3

Questions: Philip Prior

Answers: Peter Holland

Peter, how did the club come about and what role did you play in establishing the JDCSA.

I did not have any direct role in the formation of the Club. That was the initiative of Phil Smart, Ian Forrester, David Seidel, Chris Holland (my brother) and Shane Dunstone.

During the late 1960's there was a growing number of younger owners of second-hand Jaguars, particularly Mark 4's, Mark 5's, Mark 7's and to a lesser extent XK's. During this period many of us met informally and started to "network" sharing information and parts. This was greatly enhanced by regular Saturday afternoon gatherings in the backyard of David Seidel's parents' home.

David was keen to fully restore a Mark 4 and over time gathered up cars which were beyond restoration and a source of spare parts, others suitable for restoration and some that could be easily recommissioned for road use.

On another front during 1970, three XK owners, John Alexander, Shane Dunstone and myself, who were passionate about our cars, wrote to all the known XK owners, past and present at the time, inviting them to meet from time to time to go on informal runs. This continued for 18 months or so but as we were not a formal club interest waxed and waned to some extent and was probably destined to fade away in due course.

During this time, we also established contact with the JCCV primarily via Heinz Schendzielorz which led to many years of friendly interaction between the two XK groups and ultimately following the formation of the JDCSA, between the Clubs.

In addition to the XK group a number of owners of pushrod engine Jaguars (SS, MK4 and MK5) met independently on a Sunday morning at Ian Forrester's home and as would be expected some owned multiple cars overlapping the XK and pushrod models.

This brings me back to the five people mentioned above. They met through the informal means described above and set out to form the JDCSA by writing a constitution, registering the name, advertising the first meeting by word of mouth and in the Advertiser. That meeting was held on the 25th July 1973.

I was elected to the position of editor/historian and have been hooked ever since!! And the rest is history.

The following year (1974/75) you stood down from the committee. In fact, of the eight positions, the entire committee changed hands apart from David Seidel (secretary) and Graham Franklin (sporting secretary). Was that always the plan for you and most of the others to step back for a time and bring in new blood, or did it just happen?

Although at first glance it may appear that there was a big change, this was not really quiet the case. Work commitments at the time for our first Treasurer, Chris Holland, Social Secretary, John Alexander and me as Editor/Historian took precedence. Chris Graves came on as Treasurer during the first year and continued on in 1974/75. Likewise, Steve Weeks replaced John Alexander in the first year and continued the following year.

I completed the first year and John Pinto stepped up for the next year. He had been an active member of the group that established Classic Marque, and it is worth remembering that through the generosity of the JCCV and the friendships established prior to the JDCSA being formed that we were given four pages a month in Cat-A-Log to start us off.

So, to answer the question, the change as I recall just happened due to personal commitments.



Peter's first Jaguar - Mark V 2.5 litre

Interview - Peter Holland (cont)

The next year (1975/76) you were back as Secretary and since then you have held many positions including President. Do you recall any particular challenges or issues over the years?

The usual challenge for anyone on the committee is the personal time commitment. I have been very fortunate as Ros has supported my involvement all the way and without her support I would not have continued.

The time "doing things" behind the scenes is far greater than many realise. I am sure there have been issues to be addressed from time to time, but were best sorted at Committee level and filed.

The one that I do recall, and was very much a personal crusade was to try and broaden the brief for the National Rallies. I felt it was unfair to not allow clubs some flexibility to devise the format that particularly suited the host club.

This view was shared by many others in the JDCSA at Executive level and as a collective over a decade and a half we have been able to now gain acceptance of the more open approach that is followed today.

As for the future, the big challenge is going to be how to maintain new memberships, as I am not certain our current rate will continue forever.

What do we need to do to create interest in the Jaguar car? What do our children and grandchildren want from a club such as JDCSA? How do we achieve change? These are some of the questions that need to be asked.



Peter's Jaguar Mark IV. A daily driver bought for \$40.00

In those early days of the club, SA and Vic clubs were very close and regular attendance at interstate events were common. Do you recall some of those trips to Victoria?

It is all about the people, then and today. The car is the catalyst to bring us together. I think the main memories are really just being able to catch up with friends. There were a few late nights in motel rooms or private homes enjoying chatting about our latest projects with a beverage or two to help the conversation along.

Some of the antics that may have occurred should remain as myth and legend!!!! However, one memory that shall forever remain vivid is the lunchtime barbeque at A1 Auto Wreckers. A little more heat was required to finish off the chops and

sausages to perfection. What better than a couple of Jaguar dashboards to do the job, so on they went. The food was delicious.

Attendance at Interstate National Concours events were also common. Any special memories?

I think they were always special, but as always catching up with interstate friends was the top priority.

The very early ones (Ros and I attended our first in Canberra in 1973 before JDCSA was official) were held on the June long weekend. The weather was unforgiving at times, the facilities fairly basic, motorkhanas in a paddock, but a lot of fun. The first Rally organised by JDCSA with Phil Smart as Rally Director will always be remembered for the Australian release of the XJS and XJC models and also for introducing a more formal approach that has continued ever since.

Perhaps one of the most memorable was Canberra. The motel was multi-storey with a magnificent internal atrium. Our young children thought so too and spent many happy hours running up and down the stairs and around the balconies. Their coup de grace was on the presentation dinner night. After the celebrations, on returning to our rooms, the hired baby sitters were fast asleep and the little ones were having a ball!!!!

When did you and Ros start a family? Did that effect your involvement with club?

Our first born was Jennie in May 1975 followed by Judy in April 1977. As pre-schoolers we were able to continue our



Peter and Chris Holland's XK 150 S back on the road after an engine rebuild

Interview - Peter Holland (cont)

involvement without too much change to our routine. In fact, at age 3 months Jennie attended her first interstate event, the inaugural Pushrod Border Run at Swan Hill, carefully packed into the back seat of our 2+2 E-type Jaguar.

That car proved to be practical for a number of interstate trips with both girls, pusher, baby basket, luggage and other paraphernalia carefully packed into every nook and cranny. It was all about the packing; every item had a place.

Later, once they had started school, especially by late primary school and secondary school, we were not able to attend the National Rallies and sometimes the occasional local event. We were very fortunate as our parents were more than happy to look after the girls if we were away or attending meetings and events.

A lot of fellow members were starting families at the time? It must have had some effects on the social aspect of the club in those days.

I don't think it did really, as many of the members started their families around the same time so they played and grew up together at Club events.

Many of the events in those days were very casual, often picnic style with our portable BBQ's, fold up chairs and a beverage in hand. They even attended some of our night events which again, were casual and held at a member's home.

If formality prevailed, our baby sitters usually came to the rescue. Naturally, once our children were in their teenage years, they started to go their own way, leaving the parents to pursue their Club interests.



Peter's XK 120 DHC. Brisbane and back.

A number of those early club members are no longer with us. Did you have any special bond or memories with any of those (deceased) members?

It is always a sad moment when we lose a Club member as at some point in time, we have shared time together.

There is one member that I did have a special bond with, Shane Dunstone. He was in my life from the moment that I got my first XK120 and was always willing to help and support his friends whenever needed.

He would visit regularly first when I was still living at home with my parents and of course after Ros and I were married. He had a very special knack of knocking on the door when a new car had arrived in the Holland driveway to check it out.

His sixth sense was incredible. We had not seen Shane for a few months when in 1997 Judy bought a Triumph Stag and soon after entered us in to a dusk/early

evening rally organised by the Sporting Car Club. As it happened Shane also attended, and at each coffee stop, the conversation was endless. We finally arrived very late at the SCC rooms and managed a few leftovers from the BBQ tea. The conversation continued unabated till it was home time.

That was the last time I saw Shane because a few short weeks later he died from a massive heart attack. That last meeting remains etched in my mind of a man who was full of kindness.

Back to the beginning - what was your first car?

My first car was a Jaguar MK5, but I have to admit Jaguar was not my first choice. An MG T-series was the preference, but they were significantly more expensive. The brother of a friend had a MK4 one and a half litre, which was a good-looking car and gave me some inspiration to widen my search.

I must admit that cars, even at that time of life, 16+ years, were not a burning interest but more a means of getting from A to B in something that looked nice. Radio (now electronics) was the primary interest and remains so to this day. However, that first Jaguar did stir up a passion that is also difficult to suppress.

Can you remember your first encounter with a Jaguar?

I was aware of Jaguars from my school days as one of our teachers had an XK120 followed by a Mark 1. As schoolboys do, I had a look at these cars during lunch break as a matter of curiosity, but I cannot honestly say it stirred up any emotion which said I must have a Jaguar. Actually, I thought the XK was a funny



Peter's XK120 roadster, currently under restoration.

looking car. There were other students whose parents owned a Jaguar (S-type and XK140), but again not a must have emotion for me. It was in my last year at school that my interest in MG finally came out. One of the other students drove an iridescent green MGTF and that is when my apparent dream car surfaced.

How many Jaguars (or classic) cars do you now own or have you owned?

I have lost count, but it must be 25-30 or more! Whilst Jaguar became the primary interest, I found British cars in general to have a certain charm about them. So, Triumph, Daimler (proper Daimler and not Jaguar derivatives), Bentley and Bristol have also crossed our driveway over the years.

Let's briefly go through each one of them? Do you know what happened to them?

I have mentioned the main different brands above. There were also two Hillman Minx saloons which were very solid cars that Ros and I used as daily drivers for a period. Those cars were unbreakable.

I do not know where all the cars have gone (some are still in my possession) but of the seven XK's they are all accounted for and have been restored or are in the process, which is very satisfying to know that they have been saved.

Of all the Jaguars you have owned, which was your favourite?

That question is very hard to answer. The first thing to understand is that each car must be appreciated in the context of the year of manufacture.

The driving experience of say a Mark 4 is quite different to that of a late model car. Naturally, the younger the car the better the driving experience with the improved engineering and technology that goes with the later model. However, if I have to choose there will always be an XK in the mix (just because), followed by an XJS V12 and the short wheelbase Series1 XJ12. It is very hard to separate those three.

Your fondest memories owning a Jaguar or classic car?

I think the experience of driving my XK120 DHC all the way to Brisbane and beyond, driving the XK140 DHC to Sydney and similarly driving the E-type 2+2 automatic with our young family on board to Sydney must rate high in the memories file.

We were much younger of course and those trips were an adventure as well as a taste of what it might have been like to drive these cars when new.

Any interesting or special 'Jaguar' experience?

I am sure there have been many special moments, but two come to mind. The first was being taken for a short run in my dream car Jaguar, Gavin Sandford-Morgan's C-type Jaguar.

The other is a story against myself and involves "Big Red" a 3.8 litre XK150S Roadster jointly owned by my brother Christopher, me and I think our parents. When first purchased it used petrol as if there was no tomorrow as the starting carburettor had been removed and the three two-inch SU's tweaked to enrichen the mixture at start-up. I'll fix that, I thought, and eventually sourced all the bits to do the job. Once finally completed, including a major carbie rebuild, the car ran very nicely. "Come on Christopher, time for a test drive".

Flooring it up Taps in second gear was not such a good idea. There was a big bang, lots of smoke and sparks from the exhaust and running roughly thereafter. Once home Dad wanted to know what was wrong, "You look worried" he said. "I have just blown-up Big Red" was my reply. "Better get rid of it then, we don't want any more old cars lying around" he said. That night Dad helped me lift the head off to reveal a piston which had seized. This mishap led to a full mechanical rebuild of the car, a valuable learning experience which has been of great use ever since.

As it turned out that "blow up" was a blessing in disguise as there were many things that had been done to the mechanicals that would have possibly led to the destruction of the motor, gearbox and differential.

Perhaps a funny motoring or club experience?

There have been many things over the years, but this time I will incriminate my daughter, Jennie. I was undertaking some work on the E-type 2+2, bonnet up and plenty for a 12+ month old to marvel at. She was upright, very fast on her feet and still learning to talk. My favourite socket set was beside me on the driveway and while tinkering away somewhere under the car, I was unaware of the disappearing sockets. When I



Jennie helping Dad on his E-Type (1976)

realised, they were nowhere to be seen, I suspected they were in the garden, the only response she gave when shown the only remaining socket, was "GONE".

Time for a cup of tea said Ros. Afternoon tea was duly consumed and the question asked again. "GONE". So, for the next week the E-type served as daily transport to and from work, which was its primary function, without mishap. The next weekend it was time to try again for a solution to the disappearing sockets.

The scene was set up as per the last Sunday and the question asked again. The response "THERE". After removing the air intake and main air cleaner canister, there on the aluminium cover plate underneath were my missing sockets. None were lost and I hope they enjoyed their trip to town for the week.

Jennie and I still have a laugh about this experience and we even have a photo of her peering into the depths of the car at the time.

Anything else you would like to add?

I think all of the above is enough! In closing I would like to thank all the members of the past 50 years for their support, friendship and memories and I wish the Club well for the future and may the next 50 years be as much fun as the first fifty.

Thank you, Peter, very much for your time and effort in putting these 50 years of condensed history together.