

The **Coventry Cat**

The Newsletter
of the

Jaguar Association
of New England



*Dennis Eklof in a "Flat Iron" Lister Jaguar,
one of several fabulous cars in Chuch Schwager's
car collection (see page 15)*

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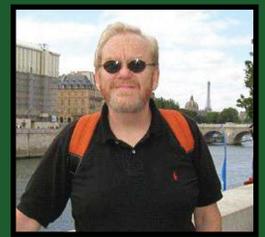
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President's Update October 2008



The Coventry Cat is the official publication of the Jaguar Association of New England (JANE), a non-profit organization of Jaguar enthusiasts that is a regional chapter of the national Jaguar Clubs of North America (JCNA). JANE is incorporated in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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Inside front cover	\$1000
Back cover half page	\$500

Visit JANE on the web at

www.j-a-n-e.org

Rained out in September . . . more events in October . . . and the E-Type . . .

By Ray O'Brien

We were rained out for the Slalom and the North Shore Tour to the Myopia Hunt Club, and due to scheduling conflicts that indicated a very small turnout for Drag Night, that event was postponed. It's difficult when events have to be canceled or rescheduled, because a lot of work goes into the planning, scheduling, and marketing of each event.

On the positive side, the rain stayed away for the British Invasion in Vermont, and the weather was great for all. Eight of our members brought home awards. We had four 1st places, three 2nd places, and one 3rd place. The Friday night street party was a huge success, and our Saturday night JANE dinner put together by the Eklofs had a nice turnout of 31 people.

Coming up on Saturday, October 11th, we have a tour to the Chauncey Creek Lobster Pier in Maine. Unfortunately, our JANE/JCNA Fall Foliage TSD Rally has been canceled due to recent road construction along the route. On the plus side, the Autumn Slalom has been rescheduled for Sunday, October 19th. Details of all the events can be found in the calendar of the *Cat* and on the JANE website at www.J-A-N-E.org.

Life with the E-Type. A few weeks ago, on a nice Sunday, Sanda and I were going to visit my daughter and her fiancé in Plymouth for dinner; this is about a 50-mile drive from our home in Brookline. The E-Type was running great, we had the AC on, and were cruising down Route 3. A glance at the gauges showed that the battery was not charging – in fact it was discharging! We forged on because we were more than half way there when I noticed this.

After a great dinner I went outside and checked every wire I could think of. All seemed ok. We decided to leave a bit early in anticipation of having to call AAA to get home. But the E-Type persevered; we ran with a completely discharged battery all the way back (without the AC) to Brookline.

Over the next week I swapped out the voltage regulator, still no success. That narrowed it down to the alternator. I tried in vain to find a replace-

ment. The Series 3 E-Type uses a Butec alternator and they are very scarce. I had offers from two well-known parts houses to rebuild my alternator, and then I remembered that one of our advertisers, Auto Electric Warehouse, Inc., rebuilds starters and alternators. I called and spoke to Dana Merrill, the owner. He told me he used to rebuild all the alternators and starters for British Auto, and he had the correct original parts in stock to rebuild mine, at a very reasonable price.

To pull the alternator, first get the car at least a foot off the ground; release the bonnet support to get the bonnet as vertical as possible; secure the bonnet with wire to prevent it from falling; remove the radiator shroud; unbolt the radiator and tip it toward the front of the car; and then you can remove the fasteners, wires, and the alternator. With the alternator securely in the boot of the XKR, I drove it up to Dana at Auto Electric Warehouse in Merrimack, NH.

Two days later I had my alternator back, installed it, and voila, the battery is charging once again. But while installing the alternator I noticed a small amount of anti-freeze on the bottom bolt and washer that secures the radiator. At that point I recalled seeing some anti-freeze on the ground in the garage at home on the driver's side. With the car still on a lift and the radiator half unbolted, I pulled the radiator out and took it to a shop in Malden. They pressure tested it and fixed the leak. While the radiator was out I repainted the header tank, the top metal hoses, and a few suspension parts, and cleaned up the entire sub-frame area.

Got the radiator back, repainted it, and did the reassembly. The E-Type was good to go once again. Next month I'll tell you what happened a week after all of this work was completed. Not as dramatic, but equally as interesting.

Our next monthly meeting is Wednesday, October 22nd, and don't forget that our new meeting location is the Wayside Inn in Sudbury, MA. Check out their website at www.wayside.org.

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RAY

Calendar of Upcoming Events

From the Editor

WHEN

WHAT

WHERE

October

3-4 - Fri-Sat	VSCCA, Finale Weekend	Lime Rock Park, Lakeville, CT
4 - Sat - 9 a.m.	Bonham and Butterfield Auction	LAAM, Brookline, MA
5 - Sun - 9 a.m.	JCSNE Slalom	Hartford, CT
11 - Sat - 10 a.m.	Chauncey Creek Lobster Tour	Chauncey Creek, Kittery, ME
19 - Sun - 8:30 a.m.	JANE/JCNA Fall Slalom	Nashoba Valley Ski Area, Westford, MA
22 - Wed - 7 p.m.	JANE Monthly Meeting	Wayside Inn, Sudbury, MA

November

8 - Sat - 6 p.m.	A Platinum Evening Annual Gala	LAAM, Brookline, MA
19 - Wed - 7 p.m.	JANE Monthly Meeting	Wayside Inn, Sudbury, MA

December

7 - Sun - 3 p.m.	JANE AGM and Holiday Party	Vesper Country Club, Tyngsboro, MA
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The driving season is quickly coming to an end, our busy schedule of summer events is winding down, and our Cats are about to go into hibernation for the winter. During those months when there are fewer events to write about, I could use some news. Let me know of anything going on in your lives that you think other JANE members would be interested in hearing about. Are you taking a fun trip that you would like to talk about? Moving to a new house? Getting a new grandchild? Getting a new car? Have an interesting car story to tell? Working on a car that you would like to talk about? Have some helpful tech tips to pass along?

I'll take almost anything under consideration! 

Prebble

Fall Slalom Rescheduled

Due to heavy rains forecast for Sunday, September 28th, the Fall Slalom was once again postponed. The new date is Sunday, October 19th. See more information about the event on page 6.



TSD Rally Canceled

Those of you who were looking forward to the joint AONE/JANE Tri-State Fall Foliage TSD Rally scheduled for October 18th will have to wait a bit. Due to an unfortunate "perfect storm" of circumstances happening along the rally route on the weekend the rally was planned, the decision's been made to postpone it. The date hasn't been set yet—it will likely be rescheduled for next spring. Watch your local listings!



Welcome to a new *Coventry Cat* advertiser this month, The Silverstone Club. Silverstone opens for business on October 1st in North Andover, Massachusetts. Climate controlled car storage, lifts and tools for working on your cars, and professional race driving simulators are just a few of their services and facilities. Open House dates for viewing Silverstone's facilities are October 1st, 4th, 8th, 11th, 15th, and 18th; or private showings may be arranged by calling 866-426-4480. See their ad on page 13 in this issue of *The Coventry Cat*, and check out www.SilverstoneClub.com for more complete information on their offerings. 

Know of something else happening that would be of interest to our members? Have an idea for a JANE event? Want to run an event? Questions about an event?

Contact JANE Webmaster at
www.j-a-n-e.org

or

JANE President at
raymondobrien@comcast.net

or

Editor of *The Coventry Cat* at
prebble.eklof@verizon.net

Upcoming JANE Events

JANE Monthly Meetings Longfellow's Wayside Inn, Sudbury, MA



Longfellow's Wayside Inn

JANE held its August and September meetings at a new location, Longfellow's Wayside Inn in Sudbury, MA. There was a large turnout for the August meeting, but a very small showing in September. How come? The Wayside Inn is a lovely historic inn and restaurant on beautiful grounds with lovely gardens. We are able to park our Jags in a safe place, along the semicircular drive in front of the Inn, very near the door to our meeting room.

Our monthly meetings are on the fourth Wednesday of each month (except for November and December). Some are business meetings, others are minimal business followed by a program of some sort. But they are all a good opportunity to keep involved with the club. If you've not been to one of the meetings in a while, come out and join in the activities of the club. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 22nd. The address is 72 Wayside Inn Road, Sudbury, MA. Phone 978-443-1776. Their website is www.wayside.org. 

Tour to Chauncey Creek Lobster Pier Saturday, October 11th



Here's Wes Keyes showing us his route planned for the 2005 tour to Chauncey Creek

JANE missed doing a tour to Chauncey Creek the last two years, but it's "on" again for this fall. No one knows that New Hampshire and Maine coastal area better than Wes Keyes, and Wes has agreed to lead us on a tour taking in some beautiful New England coastal scenery. We'll meet at the Portsmouth, NH, Traffic Circle on Saturday, October 11th, at 10 a.m. Take I 95, then take the US-1 BYP exit, Exit 5, to the Portsmouth Circle. We'll congregate in the NH State Liquor Store parking lot and then tour up to the Chauncey Creek Lobster Pier in Kittery, Maine, arriving in time for lunch around 12:30 p.m.

Chauncey's is on a broad wooden deck out on a tidal inlet. Lobster is the specialty, but steamed mussels and clams are also available, as well as side dishes. It's BYOB, so bring your own cooler of beer or wine, chips, or whatever else you might want. Flowers and candles for the table?

Check out previous Chauncey Creek event reports on the JANE website. 



Some of the coastal scenery along the way



We take our lobster eating seriously!

 **CHAUNCEY
CREEK**
LOBSTER PIER

Fall Slalom Rescheduled for October 19th



Bill and Tom Parish
JANE Slalom Co-Chairs

Autumn is now well on the way --
Time to watch the falling leaves and
falling times at the
Fall Slalom!



JANE's Fall Slalom has now been postponed twice. But mark your calendars again for Sunday, October 19th, same place -- Nashoba Valley Ski Area in Westford, Massachusetts.

After a very successful Spring Slalom we are looking forward to a similar strong event, the last driving event on our 2008 event calendar. The venue is excellent. We hope the weather cooperates this time, and we know the driving will be spirited and competitive. Whether you have never run a slalom before, or are a regular, plan to come and take in this event. It's focused on making slaloming fun and comfortable for beginners and experts alike. We want everyone to experience the thrill of driving Jaguars (or other cars) the way they were meant to be driven.

Volunteers are needed for setup, timing, scoring, etc. If you can help, please contact either Tom Parish (tparish@carlisle-co.com) or Bill Parish (wdparish@verizon.net) . 



Scenes from our Spring Slalom in May 2008

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED!

- Four volunteers to help with timing and scoring
- One excellent announcer (Tom – bring your daughter, Abby, again; she was great at the May Slalom!)
- Four volunteers to set up the course
- Four volunteers to help with clean-up at the end of the day
- Two volunteers to do the final tallying at the end of the racing
- One excellent calligrapher to fill out the awards

Any and all suggestions are welcome to make the fall event even better or more fun than the spring event. Please contact:

- Bill Parish at wdparish@verizon.net or 978-486-9830
- Tom Parish at tparish@carlisle-co.com or 978-692-8090

JANE Annual General Meeting and Holiday Party

Sunday, December 7th

How did this year go by so quickly? Believe it or not, JANE's Annual General Meeting and Holiday Party is already right around the corner. Put Sunday, December 7th, on your calendar and plan to be there. Avis Mello has graciously agreed to organize the affair once again, and it will be at the lovely Vesper Country Club in Tyngsboro, MA.

As in the past, we will begin with cocktails, then have our Annual General Meeting, followed by dinner and an awards ceremony, and finally the traditional, and always fun, Yankee Swap. Watch for more information in the next issue of *The Coventry Cat* and on the JANE website. 🎄



SCENES FROM THE 2006 AND 2007 HOLIDAY PARTIES

PREVIOUS EVENT REPORTS AND MORE PICTURES
ARE ON THE JANE WEBSITE IN COLOR

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Other Happenings

JCSNE Slalom Two

October 5th

Jaguar Club of Southern New England will hold another JCNA-sanctioned slalom on Sunday, October 5th, at 360 Market Street, Hartford, CT. It's a good chance to get another slalom in this season and hone your skills a bit more before JANE's Slalom on October 19th.

9:00 a.m. Registration and Tech Inspection
9:30 a.m. Drivers' Meeting
9:45 a.m. First Car Off

Registration: \$20 for JCNA members
\$25 for non-JCNA members



Need more info? Contact Kenneth Haas at 860-345-0015. 

51st JCNA AGM Denver, Colorado

March 27-29, 2009



**CHECK THE CALENDAR ON
THE JANE WEBSITE OFTEN FOR OTHER
NON-JANE EVENTS**

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Memories of Harry

From: jbdunow@psyber.com
To: CHansonjag@aol.com
Sent: 9/11/2008 12:53:12 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time
Subj: About Harry

Hi Carl I just read your account of Harry's passing. I am behind in my reading as you can guess.

I always enjoyed talking with Harry. I believe I first met him with you in Long Beach. We had a few beers! Over the next couple of AGM's I got a chance to talk with him, and about being a newsletter writer. He gave me some tips which I have passed along to our current newsletter writer. And somewhere along the line he told me the story of boarding an airplane with a long, funny, skinny package, and the stewardess said "I know what those are -- Skis"! Of course Harry told her they were bumpers for his MK IV to be re-chromed in the UK. I bet that story was told over and over.

He was a good guy, friendly, and always willing to help. I will remember him! I am guessing he was a little older than me, about 77 or 78!

Our club is getting along in age, so we, too, will be experiencing these losses of members who have added so much to our hobby and, in our case, social gatherings.

Regards, Bruce Dunow S672947 OTS

The next issue of *Jaguar Journal* will carry a tribute to Harry Parkinson.

Odds and Ends

2008 Concours Photos

You can still see the terrific photos that Patty and Mike Axford took at Concours this year. Go to <http://www.axfordphoto.com/Slideshow/JANE/>. Select either Low Resolution or High Resolution to play the photo montage with music. Select Downloads and enter "JANE" as your Logon and "concours" as your password if you want to select specific photos to save and print. Patty's website and contact information are below in case you have any questions. 🌸



www.axfordphotography.com

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JCNA 50th Anniversary Publication

This 50th Anniversary of JCNA publication has a one-page history and one page of interesting photos from every club. Carl Hanson did the write-up for JANE. You may see samples of each club's input by going to www.westernstates2008.com and clicking on the Clubs button. This publication is sure to become a JCNA collectable, and when they are gone -- they are gone!

The publication is now available for \$35 a copy including postage. If you want a copy, make your check out to Western States 2008 and mail it to:

Steve Kennedy
JCHA President
5296 Youngfield Court
Arvada, CO 80002



A Platinum Evening Annual Gala

Larz Anderson Auto Museum
Saturday, November 8, 2008
6:00 - 11:00 p.m.
Black tie optional
\$125.00 per person



Live entertainment and dinner

A raffle of tour packages to:
The great car design capitals of Italy
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Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance

An exciting silent auction and more

This magical evening is to raise awareness and funds to support the many programs of the Larz Anderson Auto Museum. For more information about the event, call Karen at LAAM, 617-522-6547, Ext. 18.

In previous years we have reserved a table for JANE attendees. If you are interested in attending as a JANE group, contact Prebble Eklof (prebble.eklof@verizon.net or 978-448-2566) by October 15 so we can reserve a "JANE Table."

Event Reports

JANE at 2008 British Invasion

By Carl Hanson



Jaguar was one of the two featured marques this year and JANE was a big part of the action. Every year the British Invasion (BI) is the largest British car show in the Northeast, and this year lived up to its advertisement. JANE members arrived in droves from Thursday through Saturday, some taking the tours, others going off on back roads, and the Rod Gilbert group even found time to attend the East Coast Hot Rod Show in Essex Junction on Friday.

As usual, there were British cars buzzing around the mountain roads and villages around Stowe in anticipation of the Saturday show, but for the first time, Friday night became a big part of the weekend activity. The main street of Stowe was closed and British cars were angle-parked along the street for the strolling public to admire. All the while an excellent Beatles knock-off band was playing on the Town Hall steps to an adoring crowd of a certain age! Stowe really pulled out all the strings this time and a wonderful time was had by all. Of course, it didn't hurt that the weather was perfect – a little cool, maybe – but for the first time in recent memory no threat of rain!

The big show, of course, is the “British Classic Motorcar Show and Concours d’Elegance” on Saturday, and again the weather was sunny and bright, making for one of the best “BI’s” ever. To set the scene ... nearly six hundred cars covered the field in 56 classes, and 120 of them were Jaguars! There were large tents with food and merchandise vendors, and smaller canopies of clubs and parts suppliers. Wagner Motors of Boylston, MA, brought a truckload of new Jaguars for the showground, and our JANE tent settled amidst them. Thanks to the many JANE volunteers who took turns staffing our tent – Prebble Eklof was the mainstay again this year – we generated a lot of interest in our club. Later Saturday evening, the Eklofs hosted the annual JANE dinner at Ye Olde England Inne, with 31 diners in attendance. Door prizes were awarded – who had owned the most Jaguars to date? Tom Brady. Who had owned the earliest Jaguar? Keith Carlson. It just doesn't get any better than this!

Or does it? Yes, JANE members did very well in the awards department. According to my unofficial records, here are the JANE results in the People's Choice Division:

Carl Hanson's XK120 FHC – 2nd in Class 4

Tom Brady's Mk 9 – 1st in Class 5

John Chiungos' XJ6C – 1st in Class 7

Aldo Cipriano's XJ40 – 2nd in Class 9

Rod Gilbert's Series 1 E-Type – 2nd in Class 10

Dennis Eklof's Series 1.5 E-Type – 3rd in Class 10

Keith Carlson's Bristol – 1st in Class 55

John Sweeney's C-Type Replica – 1st in Class 56.

There were no JANE winners in the Concours Division.

Following the big events on Friday and Saturday, Sunday is a winding-down day. Yes, there are some fun competitions, like the best car of certain colors, picnic displays, and blindfold driving, but most people just hang around and kick tires while jawing with long-time friends and making plans to attend next year. Yes, next year! Jaguar will move to the back of the field, but we plan to be there in force. Right? Yes. 🇺🇸



There was a small gathering of familiar JANE cars in Waitsfield, VT, on Thursday night before the final trek to Stowe on Friday



The first-ever Friday night all-British Car Street Party in Stowe was a popular addition to the festivities



JANE Headquarters on the show field on Saturday



What a difference in the weather from last year -- there was even a sundog in the sky on Saturday!



Ed Hall's XJ12C was the only JANE car entered in the Concours



A row of E-Types in their "classic pose," looking like they are bowing to the Queen



Tom Brady accepting 1st in his class for his Mk 9



John Chiungos accepts his award for 1st in Class 7 with his XJ6C



Keith Carlson's Bristol is always popular. Keith accepts his 1st place award in Class 55



No, it's not a Jaguar, but Keith Carlson's Bristol coming through a covered bridge in Warren, VT, on the way home from British Invasion

Jaguar - the Featured Marque!

By Carl Hanson

(Published In the British Invasion program this year)

Jaguar is an icon in the worldwide motor industry. The marque has become legendary over the past six decades with model after model setting the standard for beautiful design. Jaguar's race cars dominated the sports car racing world during the 50's, 60's, and again in the 80's. Prior to WWII, during the 20's, the company made sidecars for motorcycles and car bodies placed on Austin chassis under the name of "Swallow." The brand was changed to SS, and then SS Jaguar in the 30's. The name "Jaguar" was adopted in 1945 by the company's founder, Sir William Lyons.

Early Jaguars were primarily saloons (sedans), and would have remained so but for one seminal event...the unveiling of the XK120 at the 1948 Earl's Court Motor Show. This new design created a sensation in the automobile world and Jaguar was hard pressed to fulfill the demand for the sports car. Refinements continued in the XK line, resulting in the XK140 in 1954 and the XK150 in 1957. Jaguar created another sensation in 1961 at the Geneva Automobile Show when the E-Type was introduced to an amazed world. The E-Type continued to be the standard of beauty through the mid-70's when it was replaced by the XJ-S, and later by the beautiful XK8's.

Jaguar's racing history has been equally significant over the years, especially in the 50's when the C-Types and D-Types dominated the sports car racing scene. Jaguar won LeMans five times during the 50's, as well as in 1988 and 1990. In US racing, the legendary Group 44 XJ-S cars consistently won races in the Tran-Am Series during the 70's, with championships in '77 and '78.

Meanwhile, saloons continue to be the backbone of Jaguar sales, with a reputation of grace and pace as one of the world's leading luxury brands. The current models continue the tradition of beautiful design combined with the latest in technological developments. 



Carl Hanson and his 1951 XK120 -- a breakthrough design introduced by Jaguar in 1948

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Thunder & Lightning at Thunderbolt

By Gary Hagopian



The VRG (Vintage Racer Group), to which we Hagopians belong, gave us the opportunity to vintage race our 1963 Jaguar E-Type, a recently acquired Sprite, and daughter Margo's '72 Porsche 911 on the weekend

of Sept 19 – 21. Thunderbolt, a brand new road race facility, features two separate road race tracks and an F1 karting track on the grounds of the Millville, NJ, municipal airport.

Perfect weather made our decision to camp out in a tent pitched adjacent to the trailer absolutely prescient! Eighty-two degrees in the daytime and 63 at night made delightful conditions for both racing and sleeping outdoors. The downside was my new Chinese-made air mattress that, literally, let me down. As the air escaped, my left hip bone got ground into the asphalt on which the tent was pitched!

Between practice and race sessions, we were treated to a fabulous air show being conducted from the adjacent airport, both Saturday and Sunday. There in Millville they have a wonderful WWII museum, part of it displaying many beautifully restored WWII aircraft, most of which performed aerobatics, strafing and bombing runs, and formation flying directly over our heads!

The 1.9-mile ribbon of fresh, smooth asphalt of the Lightning course, is bordered by lots of "runoff" areas for the Mario-what's-his-name-wannabees to safely stop when speed exceeds ability. Of course, none of US went "agricultural." Maybe we (I) needed to turn the wick up a little, as I came in 15th of 15 in Sunday's feature race! Grandson Matt Hagopian screamed the "Bugeye"-nosed Sprite around the track in the same lap

times as mine in the Jag! He finished his feature race in mid-pack, while daughter Margo and friend Damon blew up the engine in her Porsche 911 in the first day's practice sessions! Seems that pump gas, lean mixtures, and "lead" feet make a lethal combination, melting pistons quicker than you can say "octane booster"!

On Sunday afternoon we found ourselves stranded in southern NJ with three cars (one broken) and only two trailers! Fortunately, Margo was able to charm another racer, who had a spot open in his four-car trailer, into taking one of our cars to Medfield, MA! At this moment, her car is resting comfortably in Plastow, NH, after having had a two-piston "piston-ectomy." With any luck, she'll be merrily lead-footing the Porsche around the Watkins Glen Racetrack the

weekend of October 17–19. Such is racing: Race it. Break it. Repair it. Repeat it!

Meanwhile, my red '63 Jag purred along without adding anything but gas, and went all weekend without even needing a qt. of oil! Simple really. All it took was three seasons of aggravation to finally find the formula needed to make a racecar last a whole weekend!

Oh yeah! The "Bugeye" also made it thru the weekend, as well it should after I spent two solid weeks at home fixing the engine after it swallowed a valve at NHIS on only the third lap after its having been purchased on Ebay in August. Matt's dying to slalom the "Bug" in the October 19th JANE slalom. He's out to prove that the fastest Hagopian is from Wilbraham, MA, not Sunapee, NH, where "Gramp" lives!

Ahh! Life is good! Touring may be fun, concurs a challenge, but vintage racing is the ultimate, with the JCNA slalom not too far behind. C'mon out and join us at the next slalom!





"Gramp" Gary Hagopian coming off the track in his '63 Jaguar E-Type



The paddock area, with Gary's E-Type and Margo's Porsche 911 parked at their trailer and campsite



Gary hands Matt his helmet as he is ready to roll

WOW -- What a Collection!

By Dennis Eklof



Thanks to Gary Hagopian, Mike Kaleel and I had an opportunity to visit the private collection of Chuck Schwager, and all I can say is WOW!

Gary, Mike and I, along with a few of Gary's other motorhead friends, converged on Chuck's garage in Middleton, NH – about 100 miles from Boston – on Tuesday, September 30, and the trip proved to be more than worth the effort. Chuck's collection numbers almost 30 cars, 27 of which were on hand on Tuesday. While every car is in pristine condition, every one is also a driver, as Chuck drives each and every one of them as his fancy suits.

Chuck's collection includes three

special Jaguars, a gorgeous XK150SOTS, a very early E-Type with flat floors and outside latches, and a "Flat Iron" Lister Jaguar. In addition, there are Ferraris (4-cam GTB4 coupe, 512TR, and Dino), Mercedes (Gullwing and 300SL roadster), Porsches (204 coupe, 356 Carrera Speedster, 356SC Cabriolet, and several 911's), Corvettes (a '67 427 coupe and a '61 fuelie), a Lamborghini Miura, a Maserati Ghibli, an Allard J2X, an Aston Martin DB4, a De Tomaso, a Cheetah, a BMW M1, an E-Bird, and a couple of very fast Audi S models.

Chuck was a fabulous host and regaled us with interesting stories about each of the cars he has gradually accumulated since the 1970's.

Our plan is to try to arrange for a JANE tour and visit to Chuck's collection early next fall, so keep watching the JANE calendar as 2009 unfolds. 🇺🇸



Chuck Schwager, the owner of the collection, is in the middle



Some of the cars in Chuck Schwager's collection

A Cautionary Tale

... a story, like so many others, that deals with the unexpected cascade of events

By Jay Gilchrist

Editor's Note: Jay Gilchrist is a former editor of The Coventry Cat and was named JCNA's Newsletter Editor of the Year in 1999.

I was looking forward to driving alone to support my daughter and her stepson at the funeral of his little boy. Although Landon died in utero, he was so close to full term. His face will be indelibly etched in the memories of those who saw him.

Based on what subsequently happened to me, I am still a bit stunned by how close I came to a major mishap that was almost two years in the making, but totally below my radar.

My elderly but still quite potent Jaguar XJS could not pass inspection with its old catalytic converters, so I had a new exhaust system installed by a dealer. Some time later, during an oil change, I noticed two bolts that had never been installed to attach the pipes to the forward frame member brackets – I made a mental note to install them myself at home, then promptly forgot about it.

Fast forward two years ... I'm driving the 230 miles to my daughter, and toward the end of the trip I was able to use the two little passing zones on the 30-mile stretch of country road that marks the end of a long interstate passage. I remember bragging to my daughter that, having made the trip alone, my wife was not there to demand that I not pass on this road. I estimated that I was able to wind it right out in second gear – somewhere near 100 mph.

Two days later I was pulling out of her driveway onto the main road when a terrific persistent noise forced me to a quick stop still half in the lane, half on someone's lawn. My imagination ran wild till I finally looked under the car and saw that the left exhaust pipe had fallen away from the forward converter to the ground. I could not go forward. I could back up, and did so – all the way up her long, uphill driveway – and my son-in-law and I began the task of reinstalling it. I shuddered to think what would have happened to the car and to me if that pipe had let go at high speed on rough pavement! Would it have resulted in a 4200-pound pole vault jump into oblivion?

Even though it was dark during most of our work we congratulated ourselves on a speedy reinserting of the pipe and made sure those bracket bolts were replaced. If they had been there before, the pipe could not have dropped down to the road to become a potential pole jammed forcefully into the pavement, launching the car's rear upward or tearing through so much on its way to the gas tank.

The next morning I restarted my trip home, at first uneventfully, but twenty miles into the return trip I was plagued with what sounded like a wheel bearing failing, a persistent clatter like someone hitting an empty soda can with a heavy knife, but punctuated with occasional loud complaints like heavy metal resisting a strong colliding pressure. There was no noise until reaching 20 mph. It persisted even after shutting down the engine and coasting. The noise was definitely in the chassis and running gear somewhere. Some folks at a rural garage directed me to a muffler shop ten miles farther up the road after casually shaking my front wheels, perhaps to see if they would fall off.

At the shop the mechanic and the shop manager seemed more preoccupied with filling out both computer and printed forms about my arrival than inspecting the car, but eventually confirmed on a drive around the

parking lot that they could hear it. I explained that it might be related to my exhaust pipe mishap, but they looked at almost every metal part under there except the exhaust. They gave up and I elected to drive the hour back to my daughter's to safety and a thorough look for myself. It was an unnerving ride.

My son-in-law was now home from his half-day Saturday shift, so I asked him to get in and confirm the noise. Leaning far out the passenger window he said the noise was from the rear, not the front as I had insisted. So up on the jacks went the rear this time and shazam! – we spotted the now mostly destroyed inboard axle universal joint cover. The tail pipe had been too close to it after the forward pipe had been reinstalled. We cut it away, and the next test loop revealed that the noise was gone. I started out again with thoughts of languid professionals who don't listen. But no harm really done and no expense incurred. YET!

After a hundred miles of uneventful eastward driving I called home on my cell phone to report that I would arrive in less than two hours, since all problems had been solved. Looking back, the powerful exhaust note leaving the I-84 Hudson River Bridge toll booth must have been me, not the truck leaving at the same time. Because shortly after I had finished my call, I noticed an occasional light scraping noise that became constant as I pulled off the highway into a Citgo station in Waterbury, CT. By the time I spotted the gas station it had gotten very loud. I could not believe what I saw. Now, the tail pipe muffler was dragging on the ground because the system had become unattached going over the axle, right where we had removed the offending universal cover. Because of how I had entered the gas station, I could not back up because of the pipe and could not go forward because of the dumpster in front of me.

I went into the Citgo station building. Ever notice that the people working in these places do not know where they are, what is nearby, and apparently never have to go to the bathroom? It was Saturday, late afternoon, and the nearby shops were closed except for a little auto detailing shop. I felt I now needed a tow truck and a bathroom. He let me dial one up from his phone book, but they told me I would have to call the AAA number on my card. Even though they were a AAA towing company, they could not accept calls from a AAA customer directly. I asked the helpful shop owner if I could use his toilet, but he did not have one. No problem, there was one in the big park across the highway that he uses. Just as we got to the street, there was a three-car pileup that happened right in front of us. In the melee I doubled back a few steps to my car to retrieve my cell phone. I needed it because his phone handled only local calls in the near vicinity. A little rattled and worried about my bursting bladder, I tucked my phone into my belt and hustled after my guide across the road and down the lawn to the bathrooms two hundred yards away. When I left the pool building I felt for my phone – and it was not there! I turned and went back up the lawn to retrieve it. Apparently I was too late. The kids going up that hill on my descent must have seen it silently fall and had made off with it.

Back at the shop we discovered I could call out to an 800 number, so I called AAA, waited an hour, and fretted about how I was going to reach anyone else – there are very few public phones these days. I was adding up how much a 130-mile tow would cost me when the second truck arrived (the company truck I was told to expect had roared past me at high

speed some time ago). I was in luck. He was equipped with a bit of wire and offered to tie the muffler up a bit while I used his cell phone to call my wife to not expect me on the previous timetable, and to please call AT&T and report my phone stolen. He wired me up and directed me to a neighborhood PepBoys shop that should still be open and drove off. But first he handed me a mystery in exchange for my \$10 tip. Three stainless bolts. He discovered them still in the open coupling, but all were missing their nuts. Apparently two years before, these had not been secured with lock washers and all the nuts had vibrated off with the universal cover bashing that section of the pipe during the second episode above.

Those two-year-old pipes and cats had cost over \$3500 installed. I guess you only used to get what you paid for. Now it's a bit less. Two bolts and five nuts less, to be exact.

An hour at PepBoys resulted in a solid rebolting after much fussing to get the alignment right. Somehow the two pipes were an inch apart. The mechanic was very bright, the shop very impressed with the complexity of the Jag's previous independent rear suspension, and the cost was \$69 plus a \$10 tip direct to the mechanic in recognition of his clearly outranking me, my son-in-law, and the other NY and CT mechanics on duty on Saturdays.

Would you believe something as mundane as an exhaust system could cause such a long, drawn-out spiral of events? Just think how much worse a moving part failure could be. I was lucky, but I still have to buy a new tail pipe and integral resonator to fix the new hole over the universal, and replace the missing rubber doughnut and universal cover.

I drove home thinking that the dissolving of the auto service industry is in perfect synch with the drying up of supplies of affordable fuel. It will all balance out after all. 

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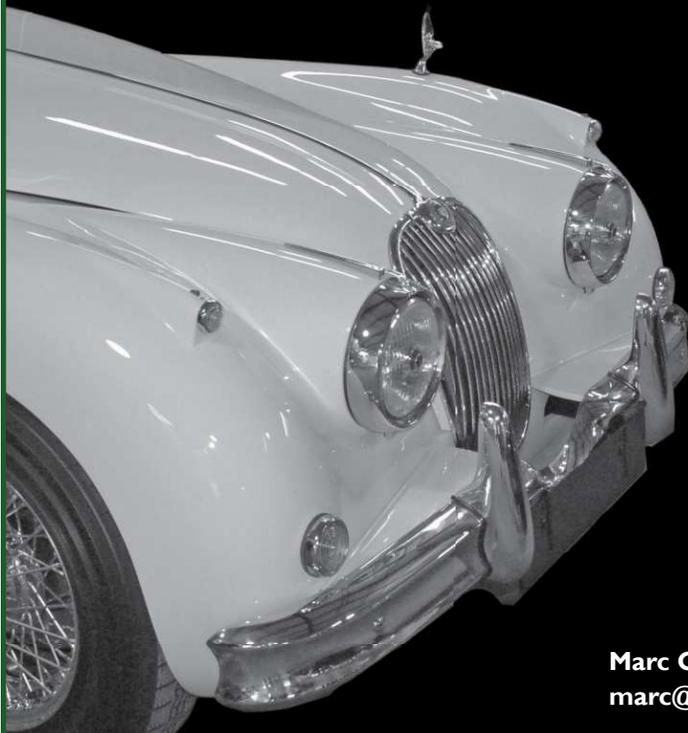
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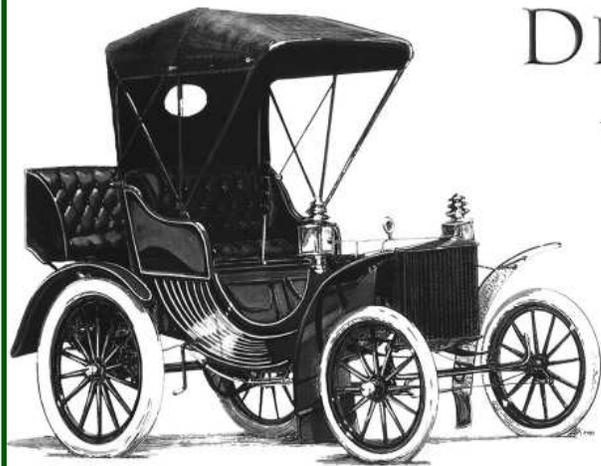
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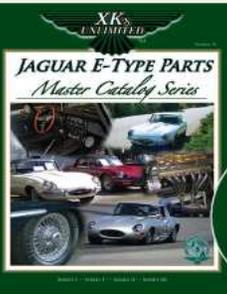
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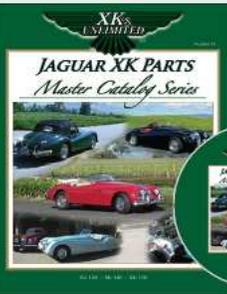
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1987 XJ6 - The last year for the Series III. This is an entirely ORIGINAL two-owner car that has always been garaged and well-maintained. I have owned her for 17 years. Total mileage is less than 41K. Dark metallic grey with medium grey interior. Excellent in every respect. All documents and car cover included. Pictures are available via email. \$10,500. Phil LaCasse, Boxford, MA, 978-887-8655, plsamfam@aol.com (11/07)

PARTS FOR SALE

1969 Series II Jaguar Bonnet - "Brand New". This front end sheet metal was purchased over twenty years ago from a parts dealer in RI. It is new and in near perfect condition aside from a couple of dings from being in a garage for so long. I have plenty of photos to share upon your request. Serious inquiries only please. Best fair offer takes it. Chris Kielb, 413-734-4544 or 413-531-7580, advance-welding@comcast.net (6/06)

Windscreen - For XKE Series III Roadster. This is an aftermarket windscreen. There are no pits or cracks. It is used, though. \$80.

Ray, Norwell MA, 781-659-4024, crookjag@comcast.net (2/07)

E-Type Series I Radiator - When I rebuilt my '67 E-Type 4.2, I replaced the radiator with one of aluminum, so the original is surplus. Previous owner said it had been recored, but I cannot vouch for that. I never drove the car prior to the conversion to aluminum, so I have no experience with this radiator. The sale includes a high-quality aftermarket fan that is attached to the front of the radiator. Photos on request. \$400. Dennis, Boston area, 978-448-2566, dennis.eklof@verizon.net (7/07)

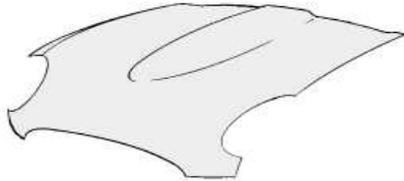
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Miscellaneous Parts from XJ-40 - Entire interior of this car has been stripped. Decorative items, chrome pieces, door seals, many pieces of wood trim, including the luxurious wooden Vanden Plas Picnic Tables, the front lights (markers and headlamps), the rear red marker lens, taillamps, interior lights, interior seats and seat belts, A/C compressor and air injection pump, both with clutches intact. Call or email Tom Letourneau (401-334-3315, or alfaracer1@cox.net) with your best offer. Proceeds to fund JANE's 24 Hours of LeMons project. Anything that doesn't sell will be put on eBay. (6/08)

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