



CAT'S TALES

Newsletter of the
Jaguar Drivers' Club Queensland Inc
Sunshine Coast Register

April 2020

This and probably the next couple of Cat's tales will be a little different. There are no reports or pictures about recent club events. Funny that but, I'm sure you've noticed, there is Covid 19 going round and changing our lives. I do have some plans for next month but would welcome any stories, fun facts, whatever, from any of our members.

So looking forward to being on the road again as a Register!

Wendy Gross

Jaguar Ice experience + 2020

Do you remember the June 2019 issue? Peter Lehke wrote about his Ice Experience 2019. And now here is his 2020 report

So the Jaguar Ice Experience + for 2020 was over and I headed off to Birmingham and Coventry where I spent a few days touring the Jaguar Land Rover facilities, the spiritual heart of Jaguar. In 2019 I visited Load Lane, Solihull factory to see F pace and Range Rover Velar being built then to Castle Bromwich to tour the Press Shop and F Type assembly line. This time I was going to visit JLR Jaguar Land Rover Classic Works and Castle Bromwich again.

First, though, I neglected to tell the story of checking the ice thickness on the lake for the Jaguar Ice Experience. The lake maintenance staff check the ice thickness on regular occasions to make sure it can be driven and parked on safely, so we were invited to view the hole drilling procedure. Beautiful sunny day, it was about -25°C and we arrived to meet the maintenance man ready to drill. Using an auger ground drill with a drill bit of 150mm off he drilled. I was surprised at how quickly the hole was drilled. Ice thickness was around 740mm: Safe!! You can see the hole being drilled on Instagram -



click on <https://www.instagram.com/p/B86Qcv7JSLE/?igshid=1xl7v7xel6j>

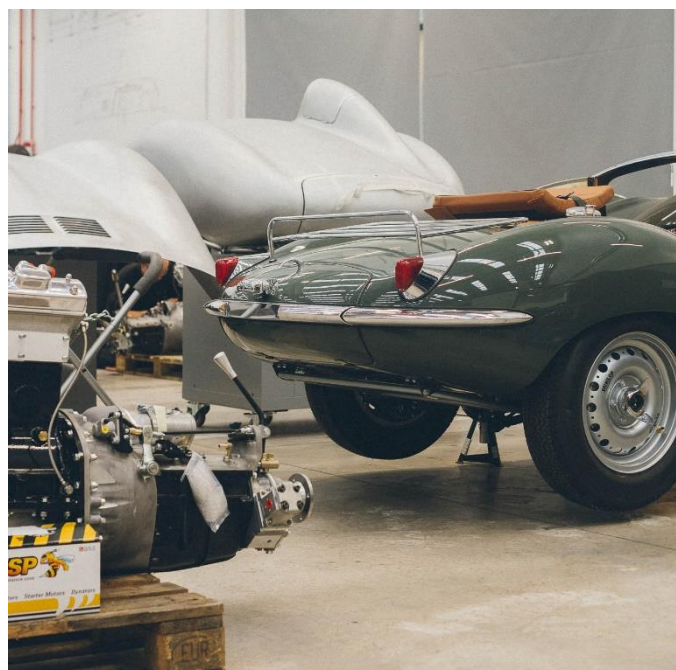
Then off to JLR Jaguar Land Rover Classic Works at Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Coventry for an 9am start! I arrived, signed in and all of a sudden, the fire alarm went off – the building was evacuated, and it wasn't a test. After about 20 minutes outside in the

cold the problem was solved and back inside we went. The fact is that due to the value of motor vehicles in the building there is a very complex fire system and no grinding, welding or cutting is allowed on site as it all goes out to contractors. At JLR Classic there are 54 individual workshop bays and strip down areas, a dedicated engine shop and space for 480 vehicles.

Walking into the Jaguar Land Rover Classic Works showroom is awe-inspiring. The dollar value in the showroom alone is staggering, but it's not until you take a guided tour of the factory out the back – where the D-Type Continuation cars are hand-crafted using traditional techniques – that the picture becomes clearer. From the multi-million-dollar Jaguar D-Type Continuation cars being assembled in bare aluminium before being painted to restored Series 1 Land Rovers and reborn Jaguar E-Types, it's hard to know where to look.



Walking through the workshop I was shown the new D Types Continuation models in raw material being fitted out with engines, front end and differentials and in the same area painted, finished and being reassembled, reborn E Types, Land Rovers. So many cars and so little time. Then there was the leather trim store and upholstery area, then the engine gearbox rebuild area – where can it stop?



JRL purchased approximately 250 of the last model Defender; they have built only 150 of the best of these as the Defender Works V8 70th Edition conversion – totally rebuilt with the JLR V8 in both short-wheel-base 90 and long-wheel-base 110 variants. I saw one with a price tag of £150,000.



You can send your car in to Classic works for a service. While I was there I saw 3 XJ220's, the famous XK120 Range Rover Series 1, from Saudi Arabia with a box AC on roof. One standout car just waiting in a service bay was the David Gandy XK120 Black roadster with tan basket weave seats. The project took 2,700 hours to complete over the course of 11 months – can't even think of the \$\$ that would have cost- but "that would go well in my garage", I commented.

Next stage was the visit to the storage area. There are about 250 cars stacked 2 high, every model from SS to current and not only Jaguar and Land Rover but cars from the Coventry manufacturing area over the past 80 years and models as well. As we couldn't take any photos inside the work and storage areas, I've used the liberty of downloading a couple of photos.



There are also customers' cars and JLR cars for sale in the showroom .A couple that took my interest were a 1992 Jaguar XJR-S 6.0 Automatic Coupe £34,950



and a 1964 E type Series 1 Open top £199,750 .



If you really want to spend the kids inheritance, a 1962 E Type Semi Lightweight FIA papers only £249,940.

Some historical information

JLR Jaguar Land Rover Classic Works has been built on the old Ryton factory (as well as JLR SVO and JLR DC7 Pilot Operations and Pilot Build, verification Prototype vehicles are built here). The Ryton factory was built in 1939 and manufactured aero engines in support of the war effort. The site was converted to a car factory in 1946 when the Rootes Group, comprising Hillman, Humber, Sunbeam and Talbot, started producing the Sunbeam-Talbot. In 1948 the Humber Pullman, Humber Snipe and Humber Super Snipe were transferred from Stoke to Ryton, while in the same year Hillman and Sunbeam-Talbot models were all launched. Between 1952 and 1962 production at Ryton was dominated by the Hillman Pullman, Hawk, Husky and Super series, along with the Hillman Minx. It closed in 2006 and the area was redeveloped as industrial premises.

I could have spent a week or more there at JLR Classic Works but time didn't allow as the next day I was off to Castle Bromwich.

The National Rally that never was.....

No, this isn't the beginning of a fairy story; more likely the start of a nightmare.

There were supposed to be five Sunshine Coast Register members attending the National Rally in Perth; none were going to be in their Jaguars. We were flying and hiring a car, Marion was going with friends from Sydney and Lyn and Merv were driving across in their campervan. Stu and I pulled out before travel was banned (and before the Nationals were called off) due to health concerns. By the time the ice cream hit the fan, Merv and Lyn were already well on their way.

They left Queensland on 15th March and planned to arrive in Perth by the start of the Nationals on 27th March, a leisurely trip, they thought. There were some great sights on the way like the giant red gum approximately 500 years old with a circumference of 10.89meters, just out of Orroroo town and only metres off the Barrier Highway in South Australia.



They had just started on the Nullabor Plain when the news came that the WA border would be closing in a couple of days. Instead of the usual 4 hour driving days then settling for the night, they had to drive like the clappers for a couple of 12 hour days. The border was crossed the evening before its closure. Relief!



Setting off the next morning in a much more relaxed fashion, the news that the National Rally was cancelled came as a great disappointment. Still, the Rally and the Post Rally tour were to be just an episode in an around Australia trip; the plan was to go north from Busselton, after the Post Rally tour, heading to Broome, then the Kimberleys, across the Top End and then meander back down through Queensland to home. Might as well continue, they thought.

There was already a booking for a caravan park with their own ensuite and, even as the Covid 19 restrictions got tighter, that was OK. The only times they were a little naughty was a day when they drove to meet the Greasleys (see the next Queensland Jaguar Driver magazine for their epic tale), staying at the Rally's expected resort, for a socially distanced takeaway lunch and the day the Greasleys came to their caravan park to return the favour.

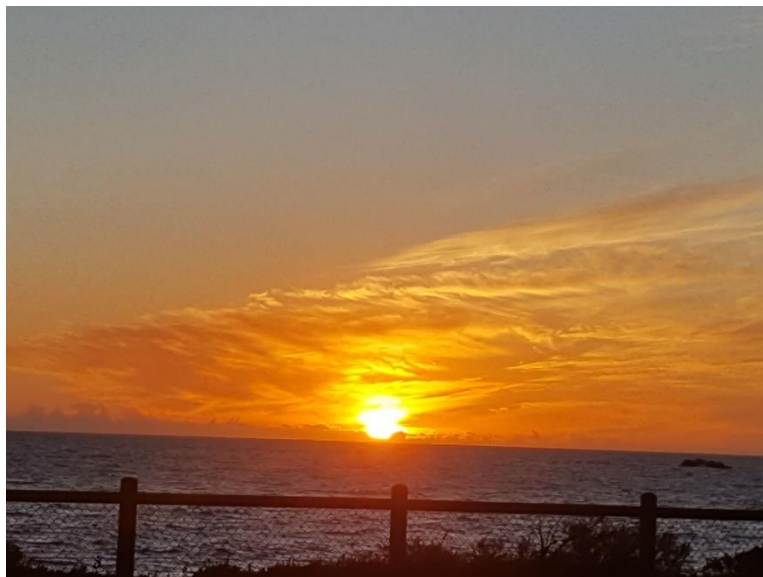
Then the bombshell hit. Western Australia forbade any non-essential travel so the trip north was now not going to happen. It became obvious they must be homeward bound and under some pretty strict rules. It was still possible to drive home, to do so in a sensible 4 hour driving day manner but it was made clear that sightseeing was not permitted .Still, on the return journey there was time to take photos.



At least there was no stress, there was plenty of food and grog in the campervan and there was nature!



They arrived home on 21st April. Since they had been in self isolation for 37 days in their tiny 1 metre of floor space motorhome and they had wisely avoided any Covid 19 hotspots (they kept to the roads through wide open spaces), there was no requirement to quarantine. They declared it fabulous to have all the space at home (shed, office, garden etc etc).



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