

Spring Edition 2021

the Oily Rag

The Newsletter of the Vintage Sports Car Club of Calgary



JAGUAR ETYPE TURNS 60!

Editor's Comments



Fellow members, please forgive the lateness of this issue of the Oily Rag. As some of you are aware, I have been waylaid by a back surgery which resulted in two operations, ten days in hospital, and several ounces of titanium screws, bolts and rods inserted to stabilize my spine. Apparently 50 some odd years of sitting in airplanes and automobiles resulted in some twisting of the human equivalent of a car frame! After a month of taking it easy, as per my doctor's advice, I am now able to sit at the computer for an hour or so and put together this newsletter.

As many of us have found out while restoring old cars, the frame must be straight and, in some cases, reinforced as the steel making up the frames have weakened over the decades. Similarly, the human spine suffers over the years and I am fortunate to live in a time where my spine could be straightened and supported by the insertion of some titanium hardware. Despite my urgings, I was not able to convince my doctor to PowderCoat my underpinnings!

At any rate, as the last several months have seen most activities curtailed or cancelled, perhaps the timing of my imposed restrictions were not that onerous. It seems, (knock on wood), that we may be returning to some semblance of normality and this summer we may be allowed to see each other and admire each others cars once again. As our President, Chris Durnell points out in his column, the Executive has been busy and arranged several day drives which have allowed the Club members to get on the road and see each other. (Maintaining physical distancing and mask protocols.

As more and more of us get our vaccinations, please be vigilant and follow the health guidelines. God willing, we can look forward to a summer where friends and family can meet and share some fun times without worry.

I am pleased to introduce a new regular column written by Dr. Chris Gorrie! As a long time member of the VSCCC and a long time car buff, I ma sure you will enjoy his take on our passionate vintage car hobby!

Best regards, Larry

The Prez Sez



Hallo Everyone!

Well after a bit of a long absents its back to the computer to try and come up with another gripping Pres says. It's been a long winter and I am sure all of you are itching to get back on the road with our Club. Thanks to some of our Exec we have managed to get out a few times as I'm sure those who read our web page and receive our Emails will know.

The last drive was combined with the MG Club and we had 23 cars on a gorgeous sunny days drive through Bragg Creek and Cochrane North and back to Calgary.

I am no longer the Pres without Auto. I have just acquired a 1997 BMW Z3. I have often wondered what they were like and the opportunity came up and not wanting to see another carless season I snapped it up. After the TR4A it is sheer luxury and I don't scream every time I see a manhole cover.

Like I mentioned before our Club Exec manages to meet via Skype so we are active on your behalf if not around a board room table.

Its been a tough year for everyone and our Club is no exception. Last year we had to cancel just about all of our events and this year things don't appear to be any different. Our main event the ECCM isn't looking possible again this year. We are trying to be hopeful but the reality is that we need time to prepare and with the current situation it just doesn't seem possible. Lets hope that by Christmas we can at least all get together for our Christmas Party. Fingers Crossed.

We will get through this and our Club will be a strong as ever. I hope everyone has managed to stay well and healthy.

It would be good to see many of you on our regular runs on a Wednesday evening or weekend they are fun and its just about the only thing we can still do as a Club.

As you may know Brent our VP is also the SVAA Representative and they do a lot for our hobby as car enthusiasts lobbying on our behalf. Please support the SVAA when you can they do a lot of work like I said on our behalf.

You can help by performing a safety check at one of our next drives. The safety sheets will be provided by SVAA they are quick and self explanatory.

I would like to close by wishing our Oily Rag editor a speedy recovery from back surgery and invite anyone who has an interesting article to send it in.

Your 2020 Executive

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**The Board Executive Meets
Monthly On The Last Wednesday**

THE BIRTH OF A LEGEND



The gestation period of the Jaguar Etype began in December of 1956 and was originally envisioned as a 2.4 litre two seater. Without doubt, the Father of what would become the famous car was Sir William Lyons. Ironically, although he was the leader and director of Jaguar, it was Malcolm Sayer who was responsible for the sensuous lines of the production Etype. The aerodynamicist joined the company in 1950 after spending years with Bristol Aircraft. He was responsible for the use of wind tunnel testing using smoke trails to discern the movement of air over the cars. Without doubt, William Heynes, who was the Chief Engineer was instrumental in approving the developing the Ctype which won Le Mans first time out.

On October 20, 1953 a modified Dtype was driven by Norman Lewis averaging over 178 MPH on a Belgium racetrack. The Ctype's tubular frame was dispensed with and a monocoque tub was built up around the hollow sills.

THE BIRTH OF A LEGEND

This approach was very different than the ladder type frames used in the earlier Jaguar cars and would find its way to the Etypes.



A Dtype race car showing the distinctive rear wing

In 1956, under the direction of William Heynes, Malcolm Sayer began work on designing the body lines of what was the first prototype of the Etype. Officially designated the E1A, the car used the same under body structure of the Dtype with a central monocoque tub. The rear of the car however differed from the earlier racers as it employed a new independent suspension and inboard disc brakes. After 5 more years of development, The car was ready to be unveiled at the Geneva Motor Show in 1961.

The press and public were floored by the visually sensational sports car. Also adding to the excitement, was the announced price of 2,097 pounds! Not only was the Etype the fastest car on the British market, it was half the price of the Aston Martin DB4.

THE BIRTH OF A LEGEND



A proud Sir Williams Lyons stands by the revolutionary Etype unveiling at the 1961 Geneva Car Show.

Jaguar shipped one car to the Geneva Show to be displayed on a pedestal inside the show pavilion. Two cars had previously been supplied to a couple of motoring magazines for road test articles. However, such was the demand for demonstrations that Lyons realized that another car was needed immediately. He then called the Jaguar PR department and they dispatched a driver to set off by road to Switzerland. The car sped throughout the night and was duly presented by Lyons after a quick wash.

Media reaction was swift with The Motor Magazine reported 0 to 60 MPH time of 7.1 seconds with a top speed of 149 MPH. Autocar Magazine managed to make a top speed of 150 MPH and eked out a 0 to 60 time of 6.9 seconds.

THE BIRTH OF A LEGEND

Two models of the Etype were available for purchase initially. They were the Coupe and the Roadster. Lyons personally preferred the Coupe version which Ferrari's CEO Enzo Ferrari remarked it was the "most beautiful car he had ever seen!" A Series 1 Coupe is on permanent display in New York at The Museum of Modern Art which adds credence to Enzo's opinion!

As the Etype evolution continued, changes, (*improvements* ?), took place:

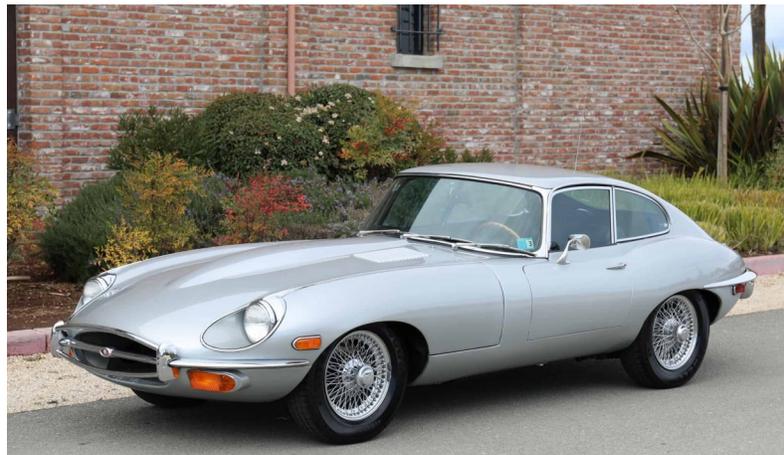
- the flat floor of the original footwell was enlarged.
- the external bonnet latches were relocated inside the car.
- Four speed gearbox changed to syncromesh in first gear
- A Borg Warner Auto gearbox was optional
- the engine displacement rose to 4.2 litres
- electrics, interior switches changed from flip type to rockers
- the headlight covers were eliminated
- a 2+2 version of the Coupe was added with a small back seat
- a 5.2 litre V12 in mid 1971 for Series 3 cars, 9 inch longer wheelbase
- Power steering and Air Conditioning options
- Windshield raked back and grill opening enlarged
- Due to U.S. safety requirements, large rubber bumpers 73 –74 models
- U.S. EPA standards required Emission Controls, Compression dropped

Although most automobile enthusiasts hate change to the original models of any marque, the addition of the 2+2 models and the V12 engines were very popular with the North American buyers. The Series 3 cars were much more of a GT rather than a true Sports car but much better suited to high speed touring.

THE EVOLUTION OF A LEGEND



Series 1



Series 2



Series 3

A b o u t t h e V S C C C

The motto of the VSCCC is "***Dedicated to the preservation of vintage motoring***" and the main purpose is bringing like-minded enthusiasts together for the mutual enjoyment of our automobiles.

Membership is open to all those owning, and having a keen interest in, traditional (vintage) sports cars. Our current membership owns mostly British roadsters and coupes dating from 1935 to 1980; however all vehicles are welcome. Dues are \$40.00 per year.

General Meetings are held at 7:30 pm on the second Wednesday of each month at the Austrian Canadian Cultural Centre (3112 11 Street NE, Calgary).

The VSCCC is a member of the Specialty Vehicle Association of Alberta.

Personal information is gathered from club members solely for the purposes of distributing club related information to the membership. Our membership list will not be sold or exchanged with other clubs or commercial interests.

The membership list (including members name, phone number, email and cars owned) may occasionally be distributed to club members. Distribution is intended so that members with similar vehicles can contact each other for help and advice. If you do not wish your name to appear on this list please contact the membership secretary. Please refrain from distributing the membership list to non-VSCCC members, using it for mass email or for other purposes that have not been sanctioned by the VSCCC executive.

t h e O i l y R a g

The Oily Rag is the newsletter of the Vintage Sports Car Club of Calgary (VSCCC) which is a registered society in the Province of Alberta (Number 50229498). ***The Oily Rag*** is published electronically six times a year (January, March, May, July, September and November).

Editorial Policy: Articles and letters, are welcome and may be edited subject to space. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect VSCCC policy. Publication of submissions may be delayed due to space and time requirements. Deadline for submissions is the 20th of the month prior to publication (e.g. June 20 for the July issue).

Send submissions to: VSCCC, 215 Dalcastle Court N.W., Calgary, Ab, T3A 2A7 or via Email.

Authors and advertisers note: The "house style" of *the Oily Rag* is to set text in either Arial or Times New Roman. If using other typefaces (fonts) please check with the Editor as you may have to supply a font file to support the desired effect.

Copies of the Oily Rag are distributed via electronic means



CONFESSIONS OF A CAR ADDICT!

BY CHRIS GORRIE

HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

I can't exactly remember when I first became fascinated with cars. There are childhood pictures of me at about age 5 with my first car- a red, plastic-bodied, 'Reliable' open-wheeled roadster. It was a real race car to me. According to family lore, my dad stayed up most of the night on Christmas Eve assembling this mechanical wonder. There was a big red bow on it when I came into the living room in the morning-what a sight! It had pedals, a horn and very good steering. But there were no brakes that I can recall. I must have worn off the bottoms of many shoes. I used to take it to the top of my street (we lived at the bottom of a big hill) and let it fly. I think I made engine sounds when I drove it. I had a set of old car keys that I carried with me when I drove it.

I put a lot of miles on that car. I even rolled it over a few times and came home with nasty road rashes. I think it was totalled when the body finally cracked. I once sat with my sisters in my grandfathers new shiny black Chrysler Imperial on our driveway while pushing those fascinating PRNDL buttons on the dash, until the car rolled onto the street and everyone else jumped out. Thankfully, grandpa came to my rescue!

I read books about cars and watched 1960s European car racing on television. My dad always looked after his cars and did some minor maintenance. I would often help him. I can remember helping him replace the carburetor on my sisters old Chev Bel-Aire sedan. We also repaired the gas tank on her boyfriends Chevy Nomad and changed the oil on our cars, changed tires and did some tune ups.

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BY CHRIS GORRIE

I installed many sound systems in friends' cars back in the 70s. I grew up in the muscle car era and street racing was everywhere. We burned a lot of rubber. I had a Cougar and my friends had 'Cudas, Camaros, Challengers and Mustangs. I studied auto mechanics in high school and helped rebuild a Chrysler slant six engine. Then things changed dramatically when my dad bought a completely restored MGTD when I was in university. This seemed a strange little vehicle, the likes of which I had never seen before. It had narrow tires, a wooden dash, a small four-cylinder engine, and a standard transmission. Why in the world would dad want such a thing when he could have bought a rip roaring V8 bomb? I was a bit disappointed, but my attitude changed when dad taught me how to operate the manual gearbox and I began to appreciate the cars' charms. The handling was amazing and although I wasn't driving that fast, it sure felt like I was, since I was only inches off the ground. It had great style with a narrow bonnet, rolled fenders and running boards and a throaty exhaust note. The chrome wire wheels were gorgeous, the gauges were very antique looking and the black leather seats were extremely comfortable.

I learned to appreciate the sounds and smells of being in an open car. I started thinking that an old open British sports car might be the thing to have, so I started looking. The following year, I saw my very first Austin-Healey 3000 at a British car dealership here in Calgary. I didn't even know what it was. It reminded of my old pedal car. I just saw this sleek, low, bright red, oval grilled, wire wheeled sports car sitting on the lot and I knew I had to have one. It was restored and way out of my price range. I followed the classified ads in the newspaper every night for many months until it finally appeared. I remember the night I bought it. I dropped my fork in the middle of supper and ran out the door. It was only a fifteen minute drive from our house, stored under a pile of junk in a double front drive garage. It hadn't been driven for years and it was covered in dust. It was blue. The convertible top was missing. The older fellow selling it said his son lived in Winnipeg and had lost his job and asked his dad to sell it and send him the money. After digging it out and dusting it off, it fired right up and I took it on a test drive, sans top, in the cool November air.

CONFESSIONS OF A CAR ADDICT! Page 3

BY CHRIS GORRIE

It had that wonderful old British car smell. It backfired a few times, likely from old fuel. Loose wires were arcing and sparking under the dash. The gauges were dim and the banjo styled steering wheel seemed huge. The unmistakable Austin-Healey sound echoed off the houses as I passed them -whining on acceleration and burbling and popping on deceleration. I was driving a piece of automotive and racing history. I'm sure I had a great big grin on my face. Wow! What a sound! When I got back to the sellers' house, there was a line up of would-be buyers. Without hesitation, I bought it right then, before anyone else could even touch it. There were many unhappy groans from the waiting crowd. These are hard cars to find and I bought this one at a very reasonable price. But it also needed some work. I joined our local vintage sports car club soon after. A South African fellow from the club named Roy called me the next day and offered assistance. He was a mechanic who specialized in Austin-Healeys. He had all the pieces I needed and he became a good friend and trusted advisor. I had a lot of fun with that car over the next few years and learned how to repair all sorts of things I hadn't done before: gas tank, fuel pump, radiator hoses and thermostat, carburetors, front end, steering box, shocks, upholstery, carpet and electrics. I even did some body work and paint (I found six different colors of paint and lots of body filler when I sanded it down). The fellow who bought it from me years later intended to do a total restoration. I was glad to hear that. I wanted to know it would be preserved. It had been a great car and I was selling it to buy a better one of the same type. I have owned many vintage cars since.

Stay tuned for the next installment by Chris next edition!



**V i n t a g e
S p o r t s C a r
C l u b
O f C a l g a r y**

Our members share a strong interest in their vintage sports cars and the friendship of like minded individuals. They share in the joy of a hands on restoration completed

VSCCC Regalia

Chris Gorrie, our Director of Regalia, would be happy to fill your order for any of the following::

- • • • **Club Jackets**— Stock on hand includes 9 Large, 7 Med, 2 XLarge Red with the club logo and fleece lining, each \$50.00 (actual cost is more- this is subsidized by the club) Order yours before the heat wave passes.
- • • • **Club Logo Patches** - 47 in stock
- • • • **Golf Shirts**—members cost is \$25-47 in stock
- • • • **Grill Badges** — \$15 - 29 new style, 7 Old style
- • • • **Window Decals** — two free to each member
- • • • **Can Koozies**—\$2
- • • • **Pens** - 217 on stock
- • **Mugs** - lots in stock

Classified Ads

Classifieds in *the Oily Rag* will be available as space permits.
Ads will be included for two issues unless cancelled or renewed.
All classified ads, including email links and photos are available by visiting
www.vsgcc.ca

NOTES: The VSGCC accepts no responsibility for errors or omissions of posted items or for the quality, quantity or condition of any item advertised.
Watch out for scams and for potential purchasers using this list to contact vendors with any conditions.

Classified ads will now appear on the VSGCC website. Please send all submissions to the VSGCC Webmaster.