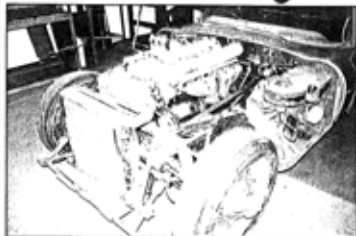


DAVID W. July 99

# Porter's Potterings

News and Views of Jaguars Past  
and Present from Britain's leading  
Jaguar Writer, Philip Porter

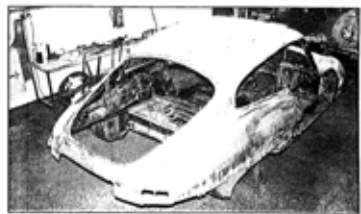
PO Box 2, Tenbury Wells, WR15 8XX  
Email: philip@porter-jaguar.demon.co.uk



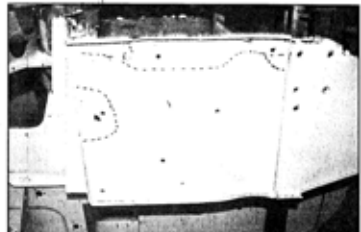
WITH THE BONNET AND OVER 20 YEARS OF GRIME REMOVED, 9600 HP STARTED TO REVEAL A FEW SECRETS.



FOLLOWING SHOT-BLASTING, THE BARE SHELL HAS BEEN TURNED UPSIDE DOWN FOR EASE OF WORKING. NOTE THE APERTURES IN THE TRANSMISSION TUNNEL.



AFTER CAREFUL STRIPPING AND DETAILED NOTE-TAKING, THE PAINT WAS REMOVED AND REVEALED THE UNDER CONSTRUCTION OF THIS SHELL. THE INNER WINGS ARE MADE UP OF SEVEN DIFFERENT SECTIONS WELDED TOGETHER.



THE DOTTED LINES INDICATE THE SECTIONS THAT WERE REPLACED, LEAVING AROUND 90% OF ORIGINAL METAL WHICH IS A VERY ACCEPTABLE PERCENTAGE.

## 9600 HP-THE LATEST

THE PROGRESS OF the restoration of 9600 HP, the old prototype E-type Fixed Head, is really gathering pace now at the Classic Motor Cars workshop. Following a thorough de-gunging of everything, the car has been very carefully dismantled. Whilst doing this, Andrew Tart and Colin Howell have been making copious notes and photographically recording everything with both a conventional camera and a digital camera.

As the shell has gradually become more and more naked, it has revealed further different and fascinating features. The challenge, which is very much part of the fun, is to try and work out why things were done a certain way, or why they were originally changed during its development car/Press car life. Sometimes it is very obvious, but with a number of quirky features it has taken some time to mentally construct the original course of events. In some instances, we are completely stumped.

Early on, John Burton of the E-type Register paid a visit and was able to point out a number of features which are unique to the

early production cars, which was very helpful.

However, as this car was hand built by the Experimental Dept, at least nine months before production really started, it is hardly surprising that many items are different even from the early production cars. One of the major differences is that, whereas a number of panels were overlapped, spotwelded and the joints leaded over on production cars, the panels on 9600 HP have obviously been hand formed on wheeling machines. They were then built welded using traditional gas welding.

Following the careful stripping opera-

tion, the shell was shot-blasted. This process takes no prisoners and reveals just how good or bad a shell really is. Of course, it is crucial to remove all corroded metal, reveal the panels that have become very thin and clean up the surrounding good metal. More often than not, it can be a pretty heart-breaking process for the optimistic owner. Thank goodness, we have been pleasantly surprised by this shell. With the conservation policy that CMC are applying, and my strong wishes on the subject, very few panels will need wholesale replacement and the majority can be repaired. Of course this is a far more time-consuming exercise than just throwing most of the body away and starting afresh with complete new panels, but the guys at CMC fully appreciate the historic importance of the car.

The bodywork is the responsibility of Tim Griffin and his considerable experience of E-type shells is proving very important. Not only is his workmanship first class, but like all his colleagues he is enjoy-

ing the challenge of 'understanding' the car and repairing rather than replacing. It is very much team work with everyone involved chipping in with theories as to why things were originally done the way they were.

As a result of the shotblasting, the entire nose section and rear wings appear to be one very large single panel. In fact, due to the built welding and superb original craftsmanship, it is made of several sections butt-welded together.

Something else which has been revealed by the stripping and shotblasting, is some very crude original workmanship. We know that the car was converted from the lefthand drive form in which it was built and appeared at Geneva. The conversion to righthand drive was done by Jaguar in either later 61 or 62 because there

is an article in a February edition of *The Motor* in which the car can be seen to be RHD. So we know this work was done by Jaguar. However, some of the work has more of the appearance of bodging done by a back street garage. It is quite extraordinary.

To give an example, nose apertures needed to be cut in the bulkhead for the pedal box mechanisms. The rectangular apertures have been hacked out and the edges are very rough. It appears that a series of holes was drilled and the job completed with a hacksaw (to be precise probably a pad saw with a hacksaw blade). It is just so crude, it is staggering.

In the transmission tunnel, there are three large apertures - two round, one square. Again, the round ones have been formed by the drilling of many small

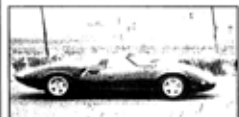
holes. The rear-most of the three holes was probably put in for accessing the grease nipple on the prop shaft. But what were the other two for? At this moment, we have no idea. Any suggestions? The middle, squarer one had the evidence of a small covering panel having been both spotwelded and pop-ripped.

The floor panels are some of the few that are being replaced. However, they are being faithfully copied. The drain holes in new standard repro panels have been welded up because there weren't any on this car. Extra stiffeners are being fitted as per original. There are even extra pressed strength-bearing ribs. To create these Andrew Tart has had made and female tools CNC machined to be able to modify the new floors in a fly-press. This is an example of the lengths CMC are going to.

## JABBEKE 99



A VERY LARGE SQUARE IN THE DELIGHTFUL, HISTORIC TOWN OF BRUGES WAS SWAMPED WITH JAGUAR SPORTS CARS ON THE SATURDAY AFTERNOON. THE LINE-UP INCLUDED GARY BARTLEY'S SUPERB XKSS



THE XJ13 SOUNDED MAGNIFICENT AS NORMAN DEWIS RETURNED TO THE SCENE OF HIS MANY FAMED RUNS. THOUGH THIS STRETCH OF ROAD WAS NOT ACTUALLY THE ORIGINAL ROAD USED ALL THOSE DECADES AGO, IT CERTAINLY LOOKED THE PART



KEITH HELFET, THE DESIGNER OF THE STUNNING XJ130, WAS ON HAND TO TALK ABOUT HIS WORK AND THE REMARKABLE ESCORT TIME FRAME IN WHICH THE WHOLE PROJECT HAD TO BE COMPLETED. AND MIKE CROSS, JAGUAR'S TESTING ACE, WAS IN THE DRIVING SEAT. UNFORTUNATELY, NO TIMES OR SPEEDS WERE GIVEN

Attending the Jabbeke celebrations and recreation was an interesting experience. It was made all the more enjoyable by being an international gathering of enthusiasts and many old friends.

Organising such a one-off event and running something of this sort for the first (and probably last) time was quite a challenge and it is hardly surprising there were a few hiccups.

Especially, we nearly didn't make it. As I wrote last month's column, there were about three weeks to go. At that stage we had discovered that the head gasket on my

120 Roadster had gone, but were hoping that this was the extent of the damage done by some serious overheating. However, Tim Kemp of VSE found, with about 10 days to go, that our bore was damaged where a piston had 'pucked up'. The only answer was a rebore and a set of new pistons. Cash financially, but also was there time to get the work done?

Four days later, Tim 'phoned us that the car was ready for collection. This is a good example of the advantage of being able to do everything in-house. They had already noted that the head was not seating per-

fectly but had fitted a demon gasket in the hope that this would do the trick. When I collected the car, which Tim had not had the time to test, though the engine had run on the bench, he mentioned that there was a small weep from the water pump. On the way home the car started misfiring, which Tim immediately diagnosed as the weep having worsened and doused the distributor. This was Friday night. On Sunday, he kindly arrived again with his trailer and took the car back to his company in Wales.

He already had my 120 FHC for a variety of engine work to be carried out and so the quickest solution was to swap the water pump, fan and radiator from FHC to OTS. This was done in a day and we collected it Monday evening. We were due to leave on the Thursday. On Tuesday, I drove over to the Nurekian area to Tarly's Interiors so that Mick could take a pattern for a new nose cover. I am always so desperately short of time and he had very kindly offered to make up a tonneau and hand it over at Dover - Mick was partnering Mick Duffin in his newly-acquired and superb 'last' 150 3.8 S' Roadster. On the way back I called at Coventry Auto Components to do interviews and photos for a profile on CAC for my XR Gazette magazine. The 120 performed faultlessly.

Next day - Wednesday - I had the tyres swapped, having borrowed some VR speed rated tyres, as demanded by the regulations. The brakes had started squeaking and I had a newly-acquired and superb tonneau to see if he could spot any obvious cause. Just after lunch, he reported finding a leaking wheel cylinder. I immediately made an S.O.S. call to Andrew Tart at CMC and he told me to bring the car straight up to Bridgnorth.

Luckily *Barratts* are round the corner from CMC and they had a wheel cylinder in stock. With that fitted and reassembled, Andrew sorted a few other problems, checked round the car and found a brake pipe rubbing on the bottom wishbone and a few other potential nasties. It was 9.30 in the evening before I left with much hand shaking and heartfelt thanks.

Julie and I left Thursday afternoon. Inevitably we got stuck in solid traffic on the M25. I had recently had an electric fan fitted. Illogically, it seemed to make matters