

August 2015

Desert Jaguar



Monthly Newsletter of the Jaguar Club of Southern Arizona



Fred & Maggie's XK150
Carcassonne, France.

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The Prez Sez

This month there are 3 pages devoted to the Equipe XKlusive driving tour in France and Spain. It was the 10th year we have toured around Europe and from a pure driving point of view was probably the best yet.

Elsewhere we have a reminder of the double overnight event in November when we shall drive into the neighboring state of New Mexico and will drive the Trail of the Mountain Spirit. Mark your calendars for this very special trip.

I would like to use this column to say thank you to our secretary, Carroll Lam, for his dedication in



getting the club's legal responsibilities up to date. In the past the JCSA Boards of Directors have assumed that all our affairs were being conducted correctly but it has come to light that we were not making the appropriate annual submissions to the authorities regarding our not-for-profit status. We are now on the correct track thanks to Carroll.

Meanwhile Maggie and I are continuing to revel in the luxury and power of our newly acquired XKR. The effortless way it covers the miles is a revelation.

Happy Motoring *Fred*

For Sale

Herbie Hampton, a longtime member of the Jaguar Club of Southern Arizona passed away last fall. Herbie served on the JCSA Board for many years and was a valued member of our club. His wife Claire, has now decided to sell his 1957 Jaguar XK 140HC. This car is in near perfect Concours condition. The car is located in Vail, Arizona which is just east of Tucson. If you are looking for a truly beautiful example of the XK 140 series, this is the one.



Contact Claire Hampton at clairernr4ever@cox.net or phone at 520-751-7913

Upcoming Events

Monthly	First Wednesday dinner at Firebirds Grill
September	Stargazing
October 31	Concours
Nov 13 & 15	Silver City Double Overnight
December	Holiday Party

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Trans Pyrenees

Classic XK Jaguars in Europe by Fred Secker

Sublime French country roads and spectacular Spanish mountain highways - in a nutshell that says it all. From a pure driving perspective this tour was the best yet. There was no iconic destination on this trip so there were doubts that it would live up to our past tours but doubts were dispelled on a daily basis as we had day after day of unbroken sunshine and day after day of fabulous driving roads. Our group, as usual, consisted only of classic XK Jaguars.



Napolean Bonapart gave birth to many great projects but the one we like most is his idea to provide shade for his marching troops by planting lines of trees along French country roads. Today these quintessential avenues of trees not only provide shade but are delightful to the eye as you drive for miles between rows of majestic plane trees.



Another project that appeals to us is the decision by Spain to build a superb network of roads, bridges and tunnels throughout the country. A huge input of funds from the European Union allowed them to create a wonderful system of roads for us Jaguar drivers to relish.



However, I digress, so back to the tour itself. This year we had just eight XKs on the tour and we all met up at the Beaulieu National Motor Museum on the south coast of England to start the tour. The museum has a vast array of historic cars so a guided tour was arranged, followed by lunch and then back into the cars for the short drive to the cross-channel overnight ferry from Portsmouth to St Malo in Brittany.



Our first day in France was a long drive to the holiday island of Ile de Re on the west coast near La Rochelle. On the way we stopped for a break at another car museum. And what a surprise that was! Located miles out in the countryside was this beautifully presented collection of unusual cars and memorabilia. A visit to the Loheac Motor Museum is an absolute must if you ever find yourself in this neck of the woods.

We stayed 2 days on the holiday island of Ile de Re to soak up the ambience and fill up with the wonderful fresh seafood. Bike riding is a favorite pastime here so of course we had to indulge and trundled off to a beachside café where the oysters were a dime dozen so to speak.



From this island paradise we drove south through the wine region of Medoc where vineyards stretched to the horizon and chateaux such as Rothschild and Margaux were just around the corner. Our destination was the medieval walled town of St Emilion also famous for its high quality wines and here we were privileged to have a private tour of the Couvent de Jacobins and to taste their exclusive top quality wines.

Driving east from St Emilion we entered the Dordogne region which is highly regarded for its scenic countryside and also for its proliferation of pre-historic cave paintings. Most of these caves are no longer open to the public but we were lucky to have a guided tour of the only cave where one is able to view the original art work. The 15,000 year old paintings are staggering in their clever use of rock shapes to depict bison, elk and mammoths - some of which are life size.

Our accommodation this night was at the 5 star Chateau de la Treyne perched high on a bluff overlooking the River Dordogne where we dined in style at their Michelin Star restaurant.

Heading south we were immersed in the great driving roads of France as our XKs lapped up the empty tree lined roads linking quaint medieval villages. Waiting for us was a special treat as we were to stay in a hotel in the heart of the massive walled citadel of Carcassonne. With its double walls and 53 towers this castle was once impregnable but is nowadays breached by thousands of tourists every day.

Enough of the countryside, now it was time to visit the Mediterranean Sea and the Costa Brava in Spain. We stayed 2 days at the attractive seaside resort of Llafranc where we switched off and chilled out with a glass or three of cold beer and many plates of tapas. Some of us made the pilgrimage to Salvador Dali's one time home (castle) decorated with his surrealistic art entirely dedicated to his wife Gala who showed her appreciation by telling him that he may only visit her with written permission!

So we have done the French countryside and the Spanish coast so what's next? Well the mountains of course. Our XKs having enjoyed a rest now took us onwards and upwards into the Pyrenean Mountain Range which stretches along the border between France and Spain and joins the Mediterranean Sea to the Atlantic Ocean. These high mountains are often rained upon so we had our fingers firmly crossed during the previous week and lo and behold it paid off as we had cloudless blue skies for our route through the hills. The next 2 days provided the very best driving conditions to be experienced anywhere on earth. Long curving roads through lovely valleys with high craggy peaks all around and the occasional high pass to traverse. The Pyrenees has everything a driver could wish for and to be cruising through these magical surroundings in our XK Jaguars was a truly joyful experience.

Yet another aspect of Spain to be enjoyed is their network of paradors. These are castles, monasteries and other historic buildings converted into tourist hotels. They are state owned and run to a very high standard and at a very reasonable price. They also make an effort to serve meals traditional to the local area.



Our first parador was high up in the Pyrenees at the small alpine town of Arties and several high passes had to be negotiated to reach there. The area is truly beautiful and popular with hikers and skiers.

Next we traversed the mountain range and our Jaguars soaked up the miles of excellent roads with long sweeping bends revealing jaw dropping scenery at every turn. Our next stop was the historic hill town of Sos del Rey Catolico famous as the birth place of King Ferdinand who along with his wife Queen Isabella united the kingdoms of Arragon and Navarre and eventually drove the Moors from Spain. The town has hardly changed since medieval times with narrow streets and tiny arched alleyways leading to secret courtyards. Many movies have this town as their backdrop including El Cid.

Having left the Pyrenees behind we a drove through flat agricultural landscapes and into the famous wine growing region of Rioja and the old town of Haro, center of this wine producing province. A wine tasting was of course compulsory and we toured the bodega Lopez de Heredia the oldest of the town's wineries.

Awaiting us now was the next mountain range to be explored - the Picos de Europa. Not as high as the Pyrenees perhaps but nevertheless providing a superb driving experience. At Cangas de Onis, a converted monastery in an area known for its outdoor activities, we changed our mode of transport from cars to canoes and gently paddled down the River Sella and picnicked on a sandy bank.

Our next parador, the Hostelerie San Marcos, was the most stunning yet. This fantastic building in the city of Leon was built as the headquarters of the Knights of St James and as a resting place for pilgrims on their way to Santiago de Compostella - the burial place of the apostle Saint James. We spent two days here simply to enjoy the privilege of staying at such a magnificent edifice.

Leaving Leon we drove right across the Picos de Europa range to the north coast of Spain and our final destination, the Basque capitol of Bilbao. From here we would catch the ferry back to UK but more importantly we were there to visit the Guggenheim Art Museum. Designed by Frank Ghery this free form titanium structure is one of the most iconic buildings on earth even eclipsing the artworks inside. This was a worthy end to one of our most memorable European tours and now we look ahead to 2016 when we will journey to Sicily to drive the oldest motor racing road track in the world, the Targa Florio.



Cats and the Spirits

By Carol Anderson

Colleen and I have just returned from an exploratory trip to Silver City, New Mexico. We're planning a wonderful trip for November 13th – 15th of this year to the Gila National Forest with a drive on the Trail of the Mountain Spirit.

It starts with what Chuck Zimmerman called the Dramamine Lite from Safford to the New Mexico border. We'll pick up Highway 180 and head to Silver City. Our group will stay at the beautiful Bear Mountain Lodge.

www.bearmountainlodge.com

There are two handicap rooms on the main floor and ten other rooms in the lodge and nearby casitas. Each room has a private bath. Some have balconies and a few have Jacuzzi tubs. All are located in a bucolic setting just ten minutes from Historic Downtown Silver City. You will enjoy the beauty of the area, the relaxing accommodations, the hospitality generously offered, and the delicious food served at breakfast. Cookies that are impossible to resist are in the cookie jars in the dining room.

Once you are settled in, you have several options before dinner. The nearby Western New Mexico University has a museum with the largest and most complete collection of Mimbres pottery and materials in existence. For those who need to stretch their legs, there are trails around the lodge and the nearby 3 mile Dragonfly Loop that takes visitors to some petroglyphs. In Silver City there is the Silver City Museum, the Youth Murals throughout town, and, of course, shopping.

Friday evening we will dine at Shevek & Co. Restaurant in downtown Silver City. The menu is filled with tapas or small plates. Colleen and I ordered four and shared them. This gave us a delightful variety of tastes to enjoy during our relaxing dinner. The request that you turn your cell phone off during dinner reinforces their desire to have you relax while you dine. The waiters were attentive, the choices were interesting, and we left feeling full but not stuffed.

After breakfast on Saturday morning, we will head out on the Trail of the Mountain Spirit ending at the Gila Cliff Dwellings. You will get a chance to test your skills as you travel along the twists and turns. When you can take your eyes off the road, they will feast on the sights along this byway created by violent eruptions of volcanoes 30 million years ago.

When we reach the Gila Cliff Dwellings, we'll take time for a picture and then head to Lower Scorpion campgrounds where we will eat lunch prepared by Diane's Bakery. Incidentally, they make fresh bread daily with specials each day. Then those who are willing and able will hike the trail to the cliff dwellings. The loop is about a mile and the first quarter is relatively level. Then you will want your knee braces, sturdy shoes, water, and walking sticks because the second quarter of a mile is comprised of a steep climb along a winding stairway. Once at the top, the sticks come in handy when walking around and into the caves. A park ranger provides guided tours during the day with volunteers inside the caves to answer your questions. The descent is gradual. Those of you who choose not to make the climb can enjoy looking at a book with photos of the sights at the top.

We have two choices for our return trip. Part of the drive will retrace our route to the cliff dwellings. Then you can either retrace the winding route you drove to the turn-off or finish the drive along the Trail of the Mountain Spirit where it meanders through horse country and ends back at Silver City.

Saturday evening we'll enjoy cocktails before dining at the Bear Mountain Lodge. Colleen and I felt a relaxing evening would be just the ticket.

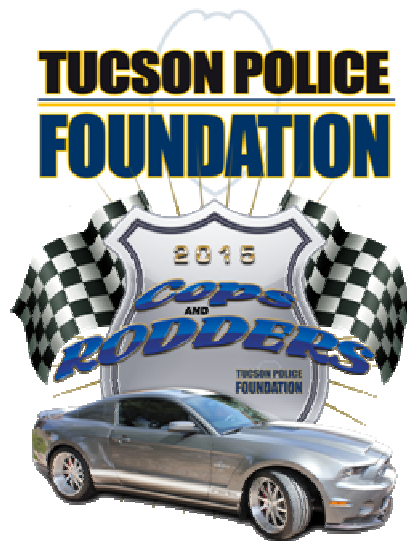
After breakfast Sunday, we head home. Those who wish to take the more direct route will head out NM 90. Brave souls, who haven't had enough twists and turns, can travel the Dramamine route of years past or head into the White Mountains.

Bear Mountain Lodge



Cops and Rodders

November 7th - Hi Corbett Field, Reid Park



Letter from Quentin Peterson:-

I have a car show for you. We have hosted over 600 cars each year for the past 7 years in Tucson, Arizona's Hi Corbett Field parking lots. The weather is usually great and it's lots of fun. I can tell you that Class 5 (Foreign) subclass C (British) will award 1st and 2nd place trophies this year. Please consider making this a club event, or simply listing it in your wonderful newsletter and on your website calendar. For more information, click on:

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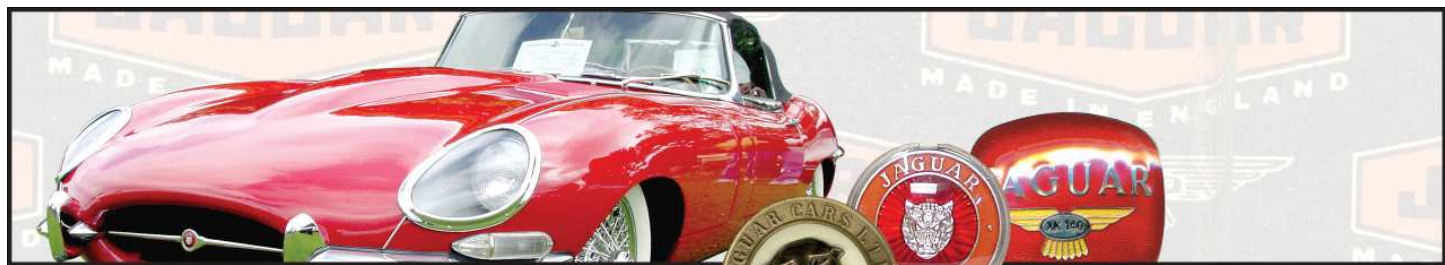
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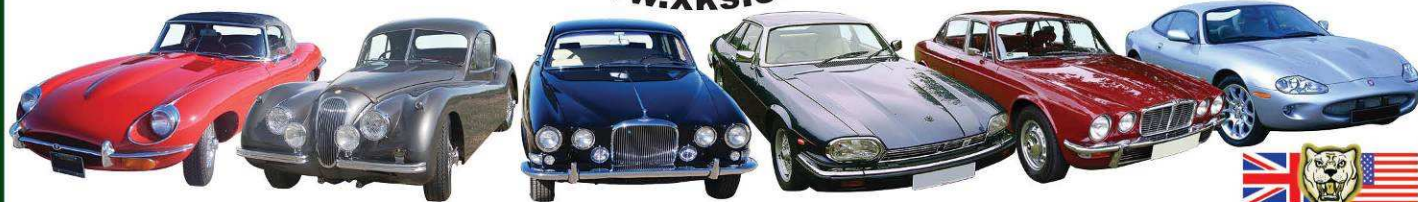


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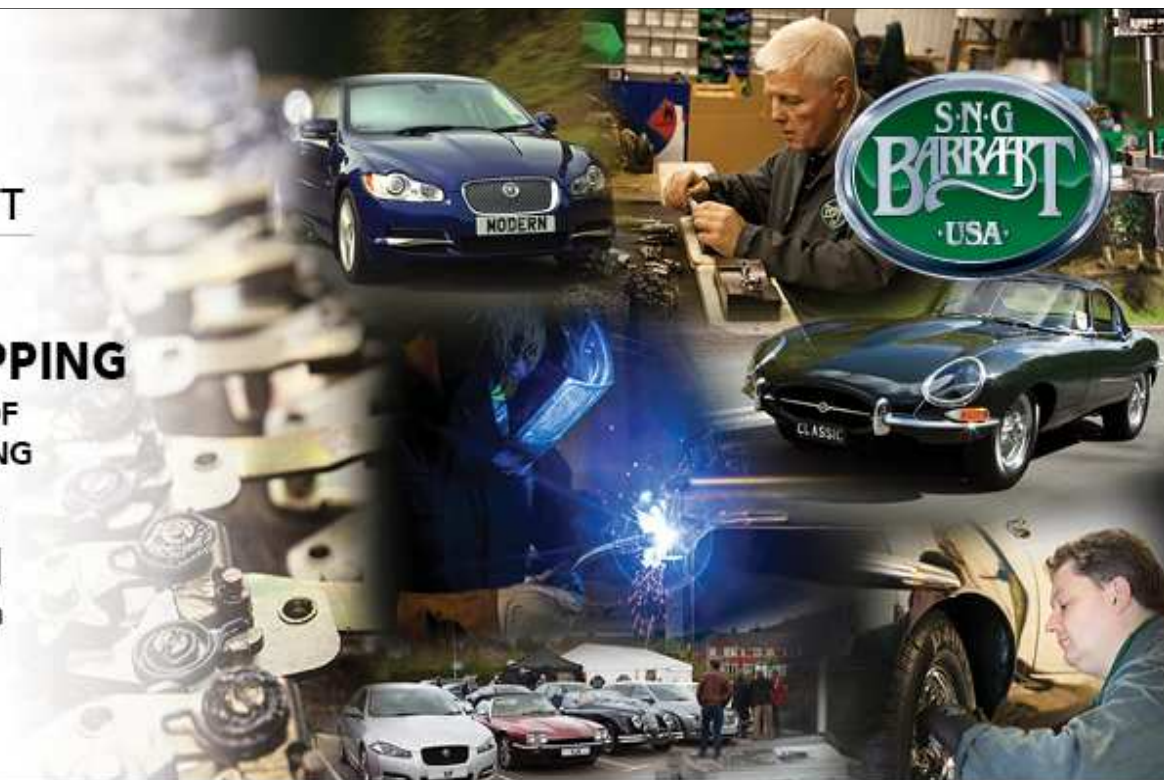
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