

July 2014

Desert Jaguar



Monthly Newsletter of the Jaguar Club of Southern Arizona



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From the Editor

No driving events in June, July and August so there are no reports this month. The emphasis moves across the pond to where your editor is presently basking in glorious British sunshine - I wish! So I hope you will excuse the Anglo bias in this and probably the next issue.

The cover page shows two of the Jaguars from the amazing Skipworth collection which was auctioned earlier in the year. Record prices were achieved as you can see from the article on page 5.

On page 4 is a most interesting article by David Reilly on the Mitsuoka Viewt - a blatant Japanese copy of an 1950s S-type Jaguar. Its lines are very similar to the original but sufficiently different to make it a rather poor copy. But you know what they say, imitation is the ultimate form of flattery.

The history of the World Land Speed Record is almost entirely made up of American and British domination. In the early years America was way ahead of any country in producing automobiles and fittingly the LSR belonged to such luminaries as Henry Ford who blasted across a frozen lake at 91 mph. Then the focus shifted across the pond



where Sir Malcolm Cambell was prominent in record setting on land and water. Then the action moved back across the pond where rocket powered cars took the record to 622 mph. In 1983 the record once again crossed the pond where it has remained ever since. On page 7 read all about the attempt to smash the 1,000 mph barrier.

Now for something with a European flavour. Since 2006 I have been leading long distance driving tours in Europe for classic XK Jaguars - all cars are either XK120s, 140s or 150s. Our destinations so far have been St Petersburg, Porto, Dubrovnik, Budapest, Istanbul, Morocco, Corsica and the Arctic Circle. This year will be very special as we start the tour on the Orient Express from London to Venice to where the eleven cars will be trucked. Then we drive deep into Eastern Europe to our destination of Transylvania in Romania. On page 9 you will find a description of the tour and next month I will give a blow by blow account of this our latest adventure.

Happy Motoring
Fred Secker

Events in 2014

July, August	No driving events planned - too darned hot!
September TBA	Kit Peak Picnic
October 25	Concours D'Elegance
November 7	Verde Valley double overnight
December 14	Holiday Party at Cathy & Jack's place

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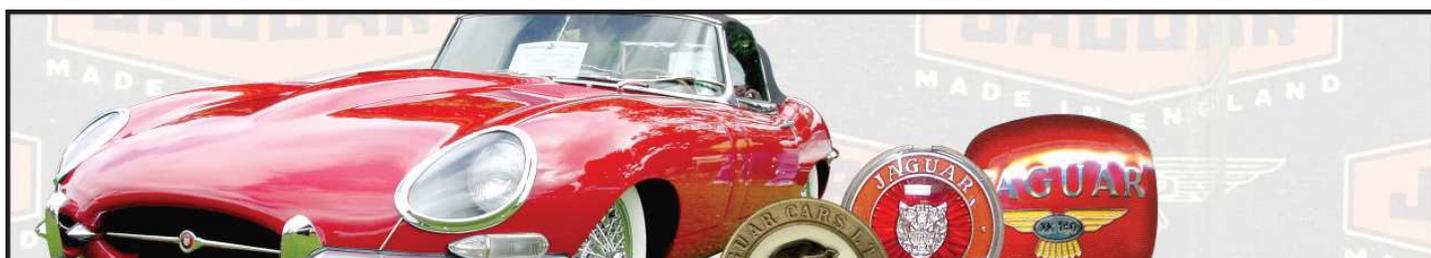
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Curious Cat Copy

The Mitsuoka Viewt

They say that imitation is the ultimate form of flattery; well here is a prime example as a Japanese company copies a Jaguar product. A Copy Cat or a Cat Copy?



Mitsuoka is Japan's 10th biggest carmaker, and almost unknown outside of Japan. It started in the 1960's as a repair shop in Toyama, about 250 miles west of Tokyo. In the late 1980s, it expanded into car dealerships. Then it started creating its own body designs using chassis and power trains from other Japanese automakers.

Their first 'special car', announced in January 1993, was the Mitsuoka Viewt, a blatant copy of the Jaguar MK2, based on the K11 Nissan March chassis, with a 1.0-liter four-cylinder engine. Over the years, Mitsuoka built other 'copy cat' models mimicking makes such as Rolls-Royce and Excalibur (the La Seyde and Galue), and a Caterham-lookalike sports car that used a 1.6-liter I-4 engine from the Mazda MX-5.

Today, Mitsuoka remains a coachbuilder, selling only in Japan, and has sold over 10,000 cars in the past 15 years. But the company founder and

chairman, a self-admitted English car nut, Susumu Mitsuoka, wants to be a full-fledged carmaker.

At the 2010 Tokyo car show, Mitsuoka launched the third-generation Mitsuoka Viewt (the second-generation model was introduced in 2005). This third-generation Viewt is built on the K13 March (in the U.S.A. the Nissan Versa), with an upgraded interior and powered by 1.2 to 1.5-litre, petrol engines developing 90 to 109 bhp.

Prices for this copycat Jaguar, with Nissan handling and ride quality, and an interior with a whiff of faux walnut or leather-effect PVC, start at 2.05 million yen (about US\$25,700). Each car is hand-made and customers often wait for up to three months for delivery.

For more information see:

http://www.mitsuoka-motor.com/usedcar/viewt_jewel.html

Contributed by David Reilly



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Skipworth Collection Auction



All eight cars in British connoisseur Dick Skipworth's collection from the legendary Scottish team that won two consecutive Le Mans 24-Hour races in 1956 and 1957, sold at Bonhams on December 1, 2013 for record prices.

Just as they did in the 1950s, four of the Ecurie Ecosse Jaguars raced ahead of their rivals.

The team's 1952 Jaguar C-Type sold for no less than £2,900,000, amid auction-room applause, while their 1956 Jaguar 'Shortnose' D-Type sold for £2,600,000. Both went to a buyer in the United States.

Meanwhile, the packed saleroom resounded to further applause as the Collection's Jaguar XK120 Roadster made a record £707,000.

However, it was the Ecurie Ecosse three-car Transporter, their unique 1960 Commer TS3 immortalized for many by the Corgi toy, which exceeded all expectations as it was sold to the same US buyer for £1,800,000 after a telephone bidding war that lasted almost 20 minutes.

The 800-strong crowd in Bonhams' £30-million New

Bond Street headquarters – opened by London Mayor Boris Johnson on October 24 - erupted as auctioneer Robert Brooks' hammer sealed this sale of the most valuable historic commercial vehicle ever sold at auction.

Following the Ecurie Ecosse Collection's sale excitement, the spotlight turned to Ringo Starr's Facel Vega, which sold for £337,500 while seven-time Formula 1 World Champion Michael Schumacher's Benetton-Cosworth Ford B194 went to a German museum in Boeblingen for £617,500, bringing the auction total to £16,861,630.

James Knight, Bonhams' Group Motoring Director, said: "We always knew that today's Sale had the potential to be a roaring success, but nobody quite anticipated the incredible atmosphere in the saleroom that saw so many truly historic cars go for such astounding prices.

"The Jaguars especially were exceptionally popular, and I am delighted that the Transporter will still be carrying two of its original Ecurie Ecosse racing cars."

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World Land Speed Record - 1,000 mph



Bloodhound SSC

You cannot be serious! 1,000 mph in a car! Well you had better start taking that statement seriously as this project is way beyond the drawing board and this unbelievable new World Land Speed Record attempt will take place at Haskeen Pan in South Africa in 2016. The Bloodhound SSC (Super Sonic Car) is under construction in England by a team led by Richard Noble who have the expertise, sponsorship and experience to carry it through to fruition. After all this team has held the Land Speed Record for 25 years first breaking the record in 1983 with Thrust 2 at 633mph, then going supersonic in 1997 with Thrust SSC at 763mph. Now the target is 1,000mph.

The first Land Speed Record (LSR) of 39.24mph was officially recognized in 1898 and achieved by Gaston de Chasseloup-Laubat in an electric car. The first petrol driven car to take the record was a Mors driven by William Vanderbilt II at 78.08mph. Then Henry Ford blasted across a frozen lake at 91.37mph.

In 1914 the record passed across the pond and was held until 1964 by Brits such as John Parry-Thomas in Babs, Henry Seagrave in Golden Arrow, Malcolm Campbell in Bluebird, John Cobb in the Railton Special and Donald Campbell in Bluebird whose record of 401mph still stands today as the fastest car to be driven by its wheels. From then onwards all incumbents have been either jet or rocket powered.



Blue Flame

Up to 1983 the new era was dominated by Americans and was fought out by Craig Breedlove in Spirit of America, Green in Wingfoot Express, Arfons in Green Monster and Gary Gabelich in Blue Flame whose record of 622mph stood for 13 years.

The man who returned the record back across the pond was Richard Noble who was fascinated by record breaking from an early age. He mortgaged his life to build his first LSR car Thrust I which crashed in 1977 but undeterred he built Thrust II which recovered the LSR for Britain in 1983 at Black Rock Nevada with a speed of 633mph.

Having limitless ambition Noble decide to break the sound barrier on land and employed Andy Green, a serving RAF fighter pilot to drive his new creation, Thrust SSC to a speed of 763mph in 1997.

Now the team have a new car, Bloodhound SSC which aims to achieve 1,000mph in 2016. Green will again be the driver and the 135,000 bhp Rolls Royce fighter engine will propel him at 3.6 seconds per mile - faster than a bullet.

A closely related program is aimed at promoting an interest in science, technology, maths and engineering amongst the youth in British schools. In fact this interest in Operation Bloodhound and its related technology is being followed by schools in 220 countries around the world.



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XK Jaguars to Transylvania

Equipe XKlusive is a group of Classic Jaguar Owners who tour Europe in their XK120s, 140s and 150s each year.

This year our driving group will drive deep into Eastern Europe to the Transylvanian Alps where vampire lore and creepy castles await.

We will start the tour in style by traveling on the world's most luxurious train, the Orient Express, from London to Venice where we will lap up the sights before leaving for Porec in Croatia by hi-speed passenger ferry which docks right alongside our hotel, the Grand Palazzo.

We will stay two nights in Porec so we can enjoy this delightful Istrian coastal town and here we will receive our cars from the transporters and enjoy a Gala Dinner.

After Porec we drive down the Dalmation Coast to Split where we stay one night near the wonderfully atmospheric Old Town and the remains of Diocletian's Palace. This Roman emperor settled here in retirement and built a vast palace which is still there today and forms the major part of the ancient town.

Next we drive further along the Dalmatian coast to Budva in Montenegro. This up and coming coastal resort has a small old town where our hotel, the Astoria, is built right into the old town walls. En route to Budva we pass through Dubrovnik the ancient city state that one rivaled Venice as a major maritime power.

From Budva we strike inland through the mountains of Montenegro and into the ski area of central Serbia where we stay at a ski lodge. Hopefully all the snow will be gone.

Moving further north next day we hit the Danube east of Belgrade near the 1st century AD Roman town of Viminacium and drive along the Danube following Emperor Trajan's road through the Iron Gates Gorge into Romania.

After an overnight pit stop we proceed into the heart of Transylvania and have a group lunch at the exquisite Monastery Hurezi before proceeding to our overnight lodging on the shore of Lake Vidraru. Right on our route is



Poenari Castle, one time home of Vlad Dracul, king of Wallachia (Vlad the Impaler) who was Bram Stoker's inspiration for Dracula.

Now we are all set to tackle the Transfagarasan Highway built by the dictator Nicolae Ceausescu as a way of getting military forces over the Transylvanian Alps in case of a Russian invasion. It rises to over 2,000 meters and some say it is the best driving road

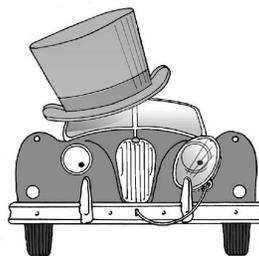
in the world. We will drive its entire length and then onwards to the attractive medieval town of Sighisoara, birth place of Vlad Dracul where we will stay 2 nights in a typical Transylvanian Inn. We will have time for some rest and recuperation here and in the evening we will have a folk dance performance by local people in the courtyard of the inn.

From Sighisoara we start our return journey by heading into the Tokaj wine region of Hungary where we will stay at a manor house with its own vineyard and will of course visit the cellars and sample some local wines before dinner. Next day we cross Slovakia by transiting east west just south of the Carpathian Mountains to the town of Trencin and the Hotel Pod Hramon in the shadow of an imposing castle.

The Czech Republic is next and 2 days in picturesque Prague where we will stay at the Intercontinental Hotel, just a short walk from the Old Town. On our second evening we will see a performance of the opera Carmen at the fabulous Prague Opera House.

After Prague we will visit Colditz Castle for a guided tour before proceeding to the famous town of Weimar, home of Goethe, Schiller and the Weimar Republic.

We then drive across Germany to the Rhine Valley where we will have our Farewell Dinner at Castle Schoenburg which sits on a pinnacle high over the Rhine near the Lorelei. Our tour will end here and we will disperse to the English Channel crossing of our choice.



Equipe XKlusive

Go to page 11 to see some of the hotels →

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