

Friends

Motoring writer and TV presenter Quentin Willson was clearly thrilled to have been invited to open the *Ladybird Big Book of Motorcars Show* on October 8. In his address he revealed how these pocket-sized children's books had given him the love, interest and



passion for motor cars. Before an invited audience he spoke of Ladybirds with enthusiasm, suggesting they provide a basis for children's development; are warm and nostalgic; and are a seminal force in our lives. "They come from a Golden Age," he said. Quentin took along his children Max and Mini who played lookalikes from the Peter and Jane books. Pat the dog completed the family picture. Also present was the Managing Director of Ladybird Books, Stephanie Barton and Gerald Whitcombe, one of the artists who illustrated the books.

Launch: Quentin Willson with Stephanie Barton and Gary Hall

Ladybird launch

The evocative scenes created using large-sized images from Ladybird Books have been brought to life using cars and cycles from the museum collection (see photos below). The familiar hardbacks were first published in 1940, their size being dictated by wartime paper shortages. The books also had to fit the company's print machines in Loughborough, where they were produced for more than 60 years.



Always in full colour and at an affordable price - for 30 years until 1971 the books were priced at 2/6d. After decimalisation they sold at 15p. They are printed in more than 30 languages.



The Scott Memorial Lecture guest speaker will be Sir John Egan

on 'Past Problems and Future Hopes of Building Luxury Cars in the UK'. This is a rare opportunity to listen and talk to the architect of British luxury car manufacturing from the 1980's, just when car making in the UK was fighting for its life. Sir John will talk about development of the Hybrid engine project, reducing fuel consumption in luxury cars and the manufacturing of quality British components for the luxury car market. Reserve your place with Anne Dooay at the museum on 024 7623 4270 or anne.dooay@transport-museum.com) Special Friends' price is £6.00. All money raised from the event will be donated to Myton Hospice.

October 2010

Chairman's Chat

Last month, I asked members to be ready to help with the stores move. This has been delayed because of technical issues with the lease and we shall have very short notice when it actually occurs.

This month sees the introduction of an "e-newsletter" by the Museum for anybody who has registered and I'm sure this will be of interest to many Friends.

Next month, we hope to be in a position to make our newsletter available via email to the small number of Friends who have expressed a preference to receive it in this way, thus contributing to savings in the cost of distribution - a mailshot to all members costs in the region of £60.00 plus time out of the Museum's ever-tightening budget. Notice of the stores move may well be too short to notify you by post. I have arranged the next edition of the Museum

"e-newsletter" to be sent to all members with email (with a facility to unsubscribe if you are not interested).

While the newsletter will always be available in printed form, an increase in the number electing to receive it electronically would be really helpful.

These are just examples of the benefit of our having all available email addresses.

Currently, we have these for just over half the membership. Does this mean that nearly half of you do not have email? Or is it that some have omitted to tell us the address? Perhaps you're not sure.

If you have email and have not received one telling you about the Museum's "e-newsletter", it will mean that we do not have your address or that it is incorrect.

In this case, please send an email to us at friends.ctm@gmail.com.

You can use the same address to let us know if you would like to receive this newsletter by email.



Following last month's report on the Coventry Motoring Festival, I would just like to add that it was a big weekend for Friends who helped out with store tours and manned our stand at the Memorial Park. While some friends stayed at the park to enjoy the various entertainment and look after the vehicles on display, others hopped aboard 333 for a run around the route in convoy with a De Courcey double-decker. Of course some Friends took their own classic on the run.

Despite the morning rain all passengers enjoyed the bus trip through the leafy lanes and villages of Warwickshire, and our thanks go to Colin for a nice steady drive. My picture is of our mid-way refreshments stop at the Bulls Head, Brinklow, when the two double deckers were passed by a TR6 and E-type Jaguar.

Brian Jackson



A reminder that it's the London to Brighton on November 7 and the 1902 Napier (pictured left) will be in this year's field. The current owner is Daniel Sielecki who bought the car six years ago. Notably Napier was the first British car to win in an international race. Good luck for the 7th.

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Pictures from the top: NUB 120, the ex-Appleyard 1950 XK 120 rally car; a series II E-type coupe from Switzerland is flagged away; MSB 30, an S-type looking particularly sporty on wire wheels



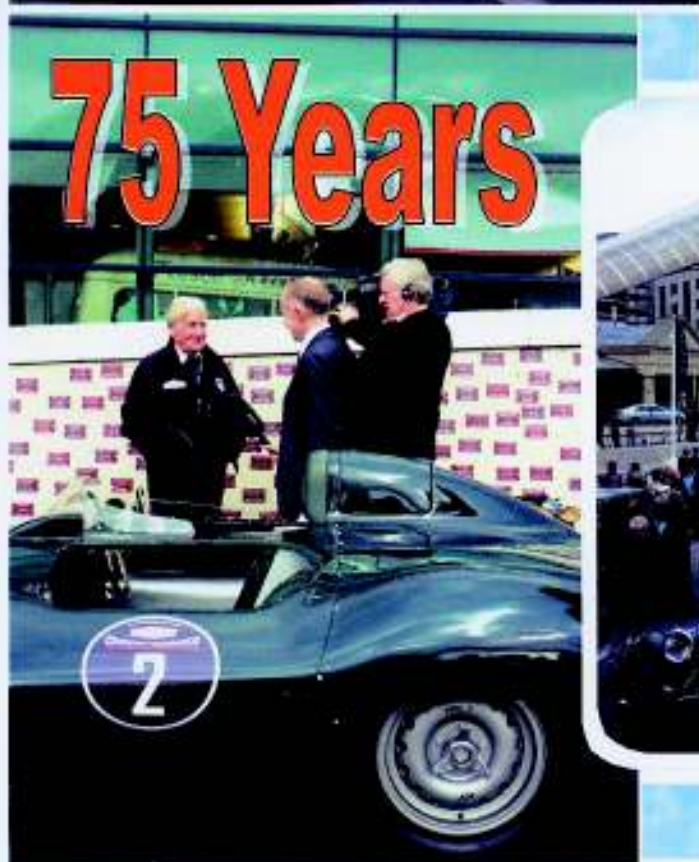
September 23rd was the 75th anniversary of the very first Jaguar. To mark the occasion, a group of 75 individually-numbered, iconic models from across the years made a two-day journey from Coventry to Goodwood.

The cars would arrive in London for an overnight stop at the Mayfair Hotel with a celebratory dinner and archive films in the Crystal Room. Of course this is hallowed ground as it's the very place where the original Jaguar model was launched 75 years ago. The cars would continue on the Saturday to a finish at the UK's largest heritage motor festival, the Goodwood Revival.

Most cars were privately-owned examples, driven by their owners. Others were famous cars from Jaguar's own heritage collection, including the E-Type, C-Type, pre-war SS Jaguar saloons and a selection of the firm's latest models.

Some of the cars started their drive from Castle Bromwich with employees acting as co-drivers and two of Jaguar's longest serving employees went along to experience this very special weekend event.

Each entrant was loaned a sat nav. Hardly a device for a retro event. But for at least one owner it was a godsend, serving as a speedometer when the dashboard instrument died a death en route!



Factfile

- When the first ever Jaguar was revealed, Sir William Lyons asked guests of the launch event to speculate on how much the SS Jaguar 2.5 Litre Saloon would cost. The average guess was £632. In fact, the handsome, luxurious machine cost a mere £385.

- At Le Mans in 1953 Jaguar C-Types finished 1st, 2nd and 4th. The company sent a telegram to the Queen, dedicating its win to her, in her coronation year, and received a congratulatory reply from Her Majesty.

- The XJ220 was developed by an informal group of Jaguar employees known as the 'Saturday Club' who, as the name suggests, dedicated their spare time to special projects.

- The fastest ever Jaguar was a slightly modified production XFR that achieved 225.675mph at the Bonneville Salt flats in 2009.

Pictures by Keith Draper

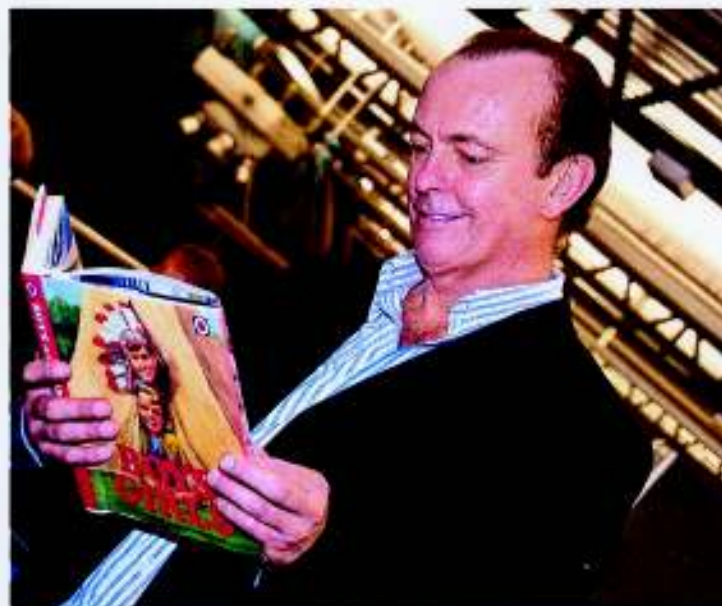


Pictures from the top: BN 51 JYJ is the 2001 Jaguar XK8 Austin Powers Union Jack replica from the Jaguar Heritage Trust; former Jaguar test driver Norman Dewis in demand for some film footage; FOV 296, a post-war 2½ litre saloon looking very fine in two-tone blue livery

Picture above: a fine assembly of Jaguars on Millennium Place with Whittle Arches framing the picture and the spires of Holy Trinity and the Old Cathedral beyond. In the front row from left are - a mid-30's 2½ litre saloon, a mid-30's 1½ litre saloon, the oldest in the event, and an SS Jaguar 2½ litre open tourer

Ten minutes with Quentin Willson

Best known as a presenter of *Top Gear*, Quentin Willson is the man who slashed thousands of pounds from the cost of new cars overnight. He exposed the loaded prices that British motorists were paying compared with continental neighbours. While at Channel Five he created Britain's *Worst Driver* format. In 2004 Quentin Willson was Best Motoring Writer of the Year. A raft of similar shows followed, including *Britain's Worst DIYer*, *Worst Mother in Law*, *Worst Husband*, *Worst Teenager*, and *Worst Builder*. In 2004 he was awarded Motoring Writer of the Year. During the supper to launch the Ladybird Book Show, Keith Draper put a few questions to him.



For a decade from 1991 you co-presented *Top Gear* when you were the serious, sensible member of the team. Hasn't the programme changed since you left for Channel Five?

The world is divided. Some people think [Jeremy] is one of the best pre-eminent motoring journalists in the world and some people don't. That's what is good about him. He does divide opinion; but he's certainly good at what he does; a distinctive very entertaining personality; he's revolutionised car journalism beyond our wildest expectations; and turned for better or worse *Top Gear* into a hybrid entertainment show and there are people who think that's fantastic; and the audience is much more considerable than in my day. But of course there are those who prefer a show with more content. To be more down-to-earth.

It tends to be all image, little substance these days, doesn't it? That is the world at the moment – just look at what's on the front pages of the tabloid newspapers who gets chucked off first in reality television, Cheryl Cole and all this sort of stuff. We have to get with it. The world has changed beyond all recognition. And what you and I think is great is not necessarily.

That's why it's lovely to be here celebrating the soft genteel, lovely lovely world of Britain circa 1957.

I understand you started out in life selling beat up Ferraris and Maseratis.

I was between school and university started with cars, started with a frog-eye Sprite, sold it at a profit and then purchased a Sunbeam Tiger. Bought an E-Type 495 had to fix the clutch in my parents' driveway and sold that. Went to university did my degree. You know I'd go to university in a Jensen Interceptor. After that I then carried on selling these cars.

I even had a Ferrari Daytona at one stage. Bought it for £3500 and

sold it the next day for £4000. I thought that was fantastic. They were lovely days.

An interesting time. But if you were starting all over again, what would you be selling?

I'd probably go down that same road. Of course the cars are so much more expensive those old Ferraris and Maseratis. What a lovely thing to be involved in. And I miss going on the train to some bankrupt auction in Devon or Cornwall or somewhere. And coming back with an absolute treasure of an old AC 428; nursing it back up the motorway; watching all the gauges, wondering if it was going to overheat or blow up; getting it back and then doing it up, driving it around for a couple of weeks and then selling it.

How do you see the modern-day car industry?

The global car industry, particularly in the UK is really good, really audacious. Take Jaguar, take Land Rover with the Range Rover. You know, they're fantastically advanced. They're solving technical problems, they're lighter, they're much more economical. You can buy a small diesel car now that will do 65-70 mpg. And it will sound as refined and quiet as a petrol car. In terms of industry I wish Bill Gates and Microsoft and his computers had done what the car industry has done. Cars are so reliable, they don't rust, they're really frugal, low emissions. People berate the car industry because they pollute. But in the last 24 months the average emissions have gone down a significant amount. Air coming out of the exhaust pipe is cleaner than the air going into the engine in some cases. They should be congratulated for their huge technical powers.

You were in Birmingham recently to launch the Smart Electric. What do you think of electric cars?

I have a little Mitsubishi. My children are here and when I say to them, shall we go in the Range Rover or in the Jag? They say, oh no daddy, let's go in the electric car. It does 80 miles to one charge overnight on Economy 7 for six hours. Top speed is 85 mph, and that 80 miles costs you a little over a quid. What is there not to love? And they are so fast you can chase Mini Coopers because the torque is instant. So I'm a great believer that these kids will be driving clean cars. It's not really about climate change, it's about the cost of fuel. They won't be able when they grow up to afford petrol and oil in 2025. The price will be 200 dollars a barrel. That's why we need to promote this alternative technology now.

Any burning ambition to own a Coventry-built classic?

Well, I'm so lucky – I've got two – a 1961 E-type Jaguar, a very early car made here at Brown's Lane. It's got a lovely long history. I've had it for seven years and it's just about to come out of rebuild in the middle of next year. And then there's the car I've had since I was 18, a Daimler SP250 Dart, fibreglass, once owned by the Countess of Strathmore. I bought that car when I was 18 for about 38 quid and I've had it ever since.

So here you're talking to a man a just loves Coventry and Coventry cars. I've a Range Rover at home. Ok, not Coventry but it is Midlands and a Jag an XJ. So when it comes to buying cars I've got to drive something that's been made in the Midlands. It's important for me. I grew up in Leicester, but my wife's mother was born in Coventry and worked at the Humber factory and the Talbot factory. We have good solid car making connections.

Have you danced since *Strictly*?

No, never. It was series 2 and it's the only reality show I've done having been asked to do others.

The great thing about *Strictly* is that you've really got to try and work at it. I've said it before – *Strictly* needs more crap dancers. People like John Sergeant and me. That's what makes it.