

Dear SP Owner,

The next meeting is Wednesday 9th January

Our last meeting was the successful Christmas dinner event and the winners by a wide margin were the Peatfields, the only couple to arrive in an SP.

The motoring press continues its write-ups on the SP; the January edition of Classic Cars, which you might still be able to find on the bookstalls, has an article with John Box, one of the SP 250 test drivers retracing the test routes of more than 60 years ago. He recalls knocking a wall over in Wells, Somerset at three in the morning with the black prototype. I bet Matthew Waterhouse was pleased he didn't replicate the route in its entirety as John was using his SP.

Also, the latest Goodwood Members' magazine has an article on the SP entitled "A Bit Fishy", here the author Peter Wood asks the tantalising question, What do the DB5, the E-Type; Jensen FF, Mercedes-Benz C111, Reliant Sabre Six, Triumph Spitfire, Opel GT and the Silver Cloud all have in common? The answer is Modesty Blaise the comic strip heroine and every schoolboys idea of a woman. However, I'm sure Modesty first drove her ivory coloured SP to meet up with Willie Gavin at a Thames side pub before using the other cars that Peter Hall listed.

Can you handle the Truth? The following is from a book entitled "*Cat out of the Bag*" by Peter D Wilson. The book is about the inner workings of Jaguar's Competition Department and this book has caused many *genuine!* C, D and lightweight E-Types be uncovered as replicas/copies or whatever term one nowadays uses. However, within is the following narrative about the SP engine and the little Daimler saloon.....now read on.

We had, as our Competition Department 'hack', a Mk I saloon, formally assigned to Dunlop where it had been fitted with an experimental air suspension system. This experiment had been abandoned, the car return to standard suspension and in another Competition Shop exercise, had been fitted with a Daimler SP250 2.5 litre V8 engine, mated to a Jaguar four-speed manual gearbox with overdrive, which operated on second, third and top gears – in effect, a seven speed gearbox.

The SP250 engine provided 150 bhp, was lighter, more compact and sat further back in the frame than the 2.4-litre XK unit it replaced. As a result the car was better balanced, a delight to drive and could blow the standard 2.4 Jaguar into the weeds!

This was, to Engineering Director William Heynes, a complete anathema. He would not accept, under any circumstances, his beloved XK engine being shown up by the Daimler units.

Phil Weaver had been told to "Get rid of it!" However, in a somewhat clandestine operation in an exercise to legitimise its retention, it was fitted with a prototype AC Delco alternator 'for evaluation' and the car was kept out of sight round the back of the Competition Shop. It was used mainly for departmental transport, as well as by Phil for 'alternator evaluation' runs between Browns Lane and his Kenilworth home! It was a super car which Phil always referred to as "the little Daimler".

A similar situation had prevailed when Eric Wright, who ran the old Daimler Experimental Department, now domiciled in the Main Experimental Shop at Browns Lane, had two of his fitters install a Daimler Majestic Major 4.6 –litre V8 engine into a Mk10 saloon. This engine sat further back in the engine bay, it was more powerful than the XK unit it replaced, lighter and with 300lb/ft of torque, transformed both the handling and performance of the car. Needless to say, it was killed off very rapidly. Sadly, another opportunity lost, and the Mk10 ended up with the 4.2 version of the XK unit which was, quite frankly no match for the big Daimler V8. Such is pride.

Phil believed "the little Daimler" was worth pursuing and in an attempt to make this concept even remotely acceptable, decided that we should make a 'nice automatic car' out of it.

The Borg-Warner Type 35 'box was ideally suited for the purpose, as it could cope admirably with the power and torque of the 2.5-litre SP250 engine. Peter Whybrow provided us with a new unit and torque converter to suit, which myself and Peter Jones duly installed in the car. (then continues).....

Once installed, the type 35 transmission looked lost in the cavernous tunnel designed to take the manual gearbox it replaced. The car was a delight to drive, but with the auto 'box it had lost most of its performance edge over the 2.4 XK manual transmission vehicle. However, Phil thought it would be now acceptable to higher management

Over the next month, working with Borg-Warner's Peter Whybrow, we fine-tuned the transmission to make best advantage of both the transmission's and engine's characteristics. Phil then showed it to Mr Heynes who after admonishing him for not scrapping the car as previously instructed, true gentleman that he was, agreed that it was

indeed a nice package and a project was raised to develop the car for production in auto form only, so as not to eclipse the Jaguar 2.4.

By March 1962 we had passed 'the little Daimler' over to Eric Wright's Daimler Experimental Department which was to develop and productionise the vehicle under the project code XDM2. Bill Heynes ensured a manual version would not appear to rival the 2.4-litre Jaguar Mk2 by directing the transmission tunnel be reduced in size, such that it was impossible to accommodate a manual 'box.

However, towards the end of its production run the 'Daimler' bodysell was dropped and a manual version of the car introduced, albeit in limited numbers, but this variant was definitely 'the one to have'. Typically, in line with Jaguar's tight control on 'spend', there were only two definitive XDM2 prototypes built, on which all development work was carried out- a world away from the dozens of development vehicles that would be employed on such project today.

[So that is how 'the little Daimler' came into being and such a success financially for Jaguar – LCJ]

If you can find beg or borrow, it's a great read, the downside it's out of print and secondhanded copies are £500!

Crowdfunding plea, I mentioned last month about the SP website being re designed and configured, to that end we need some monies - not much but a total of about £700 so if you can help please send donations to Stewart Amos at sumptners@gmail.com as Stewart is spearheading this exercise with the web site developers. Any surplus monies will be given over to pasSPort funding.

We will be at the NEC Restoration Show taking place on the **22 to 24 March**, Hall 3 stand 420. The offer code for tickets is PCCCRS19. We will put up two SPs, one a running restoration the other mint.

Not sure if Alan Mason has run out of SP calendars, desk or wall hanging, proceeds go towards pasSPort. Alan's contact details are: - soaring.ace@btinternet.com when we last spoke he had a couple left.

The monthly Rant on EVs; I realise we live in what is termed a throwaway society but Jaguars on a rubbish tip is soon to be expected as the replacement cost of the 'battery package' is a staggering £27,000 and that from a dealers' salesman! No wonder the motor organisations are somewhat hesitant in recommending buying a second hand EV. I also read the Russians are now in on this band wagon, it's their intention to produce the iconic 1960s Bullit Mustang in EV form. And still... the fires burn bright around France, protesting against the rise in taxes to fund the EV movement.

The SPA May Classic trip during the period **17 to 19 May** is gaining a pace. Problems may focus on accommodation.

The 60th Anniversary Rally continues to gather momentum, a dinner is being held at the St.John's Hotel on **Friday 14 June** whilst the rally itself is being held at Ragley Hall the following day, **Saturday 15 June**. It's hope more than 300 SPs will take part and make this the largest gathering ever. If you have mislaid your booking form then please contact Glyn glynoverly@talktalk.net and he will send details to you.

Fore sail: - a 58 foot ocean going yacht is for sale in New Zealand. If this floats your boat, do get in touch and I will have details sent. I has been featured in the Driving member magazine when in Perth (Aus) owner lives in the UK.

.....and wanted, need four good SPs to satisfy serious NEC wish lists.

We still seek the SP with the registration number **755 DLU** so if spotted please get the owners' details.

And finally.....Ever wondered about classic car dealer speak, well here is a guide.....!

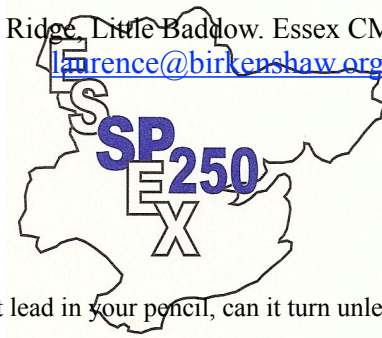
Rare Model.....	Nobody liked them when new either
Older restoration.....	Can't tell it's been restored
Engine needs work.....	It's been frozen for thirty odd years
One owner from new.....	Not been able to sell it
Uses no oil.....	Just throws it out
Rust Free.....	We don't charge for it
Not raced or rallied.....	This last weekend
One careful lady owner.....	No idea about the other eight
Rebuilt engine.....	Has a new set of spark plugs
Stored 25 years.....	Under a tree in the orchard
No time to complete.....	Can't find parts anywhere
Prize winner.....	Car needing restoration trophy, three years in a row
Clean.....	It sat outside all weekend in the thunderstorm
Great investment.....	Surely it cannot depreciate anymore
Rough.....	It's too bad even to lie about

With Kind Regards

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Thought for the day: - If Viagra can put lead in your pencil, can it turn unleaded into leaded?