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January 2012

The **Coventry Cat**

The Newsletter
of the

Jaguar Association
of New England



*New JANE President, Michael Kaleel,
in his 1954 XK120 OTS race car at the 2011 Monterey Historics Races*

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Meet the JANE Board, Officers, and Event Chairs for 2012

The Coventry Cat is the official publication of the Jaguar Association of New England (JANE), a non-profit organization of Jaguar enthusiasts that is a regional chapter of the national Jaguar Clubs of North America (JCNA). JANE is incorporated in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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Aldo Cipriano • Dennis Eklof • John Feng
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Ray O'Brien • Dave Randall • Dean Saluti
Jennifer Taylor

The Coventry Cat

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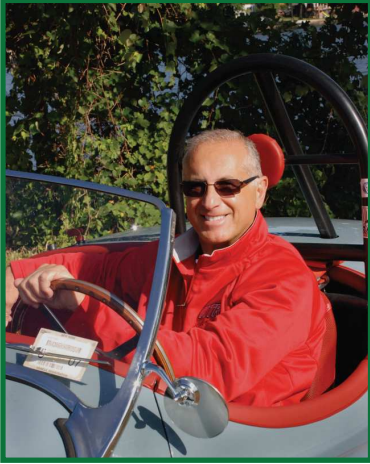


Al Zanengo
Slalom Chair

President's Update - January 2012

Happy New Year!

By Michael Kaleel



Well, it's a new year, a new day, and a new beginning!

As our wonderful and very cool outgoing president, Dennis Eklof, said at the holiday dinner, I, Michael Kaleel, am your new president.

2012 is going to be an exciting year, and the start of a lot of new adventures for me and for JANE. JANE is a very active group of wonderful people who share each other's company in a variety of fun

and educational events and venues that entertain and interest us. In listening to our members over the years, I have learned a lot about the concerns of the members, and, like our board, I want to ensure that we have an even more dynamic organization. I think we all need to have fun and laugh a lot. And fun and camaraderie, in my opinion, are what this club is, and should be, all about.

Of course, along the way we meet new people and form wonderful, deep, and long-lasting friendships. These are bonds we grow and ultimately cherish for a lifetime. Our events are experiences. These experiences enlarge our sphere of knowledge, broaden our horizons, provide laughter and love, and pile up treasured memories. From my many years in JANE, I know this is true.

For example, if it were not for JANE, I would not have met Gary and Sue Hagopian and Stu Forer; because of them, I became interested in vintage racing. I had never heard of racing old cars wheel-to-wheel. Now it has become my passion. I live it, I feel it, I love it! And because of my avocation I have met and made many new friends, like Tom Larsen, who eventually became a JANE member through our friendship. Through Tom and many others, I have stories to tell that are like a good novel. Friends who do not race wheel-to-wheel but also enjoy racetrack experiences in those cheap Italian cars have also become dear and lovable friends. Of course I am referring to Chuck Centore and Andrew Bass.

For me, my JANE experiences all began with my first Concours, about 11 years ago, when I met Gary and Sue Hagopian, Aldo Cipriano, Gus Nienwenhous, and the late Avis Mello. I became more active in JANE soon after I joined, taking on a little job here and a big job there. As Concours chair I had the privilege of meeting and getting to know many of our members and the businesses that support our club; clearly this is a warm, inviting club filled with members who are willing to open up their hearts.

As I told our members at the Holiday Party in December, I especially want to thank Dennis Eklof, our outgoing president, for his commitment to the club. Dennis and his wife, Prebble, have brought a comfortable, welcoming feeling to everyone. Fortunately, we are not losing Dennis,

as he will continue to be active as a member of the board and as chair of our upcoming national JCNA Annual General Meeting that our club will be hosting in 2014 -- just two years away! And let us not forget why Dennis has been so good. It is his partner, mentor, leader, idea person, Prebble, who is also the award-winning longtime editor of our *Coventry Cat* newsletter.

Dean Saluti, our Vice President of Events, and his team of event chairs and fellow board members have put together an exciting year ahead for 2012. As many of you may know, we also have three new board members: John Brady, John Feng, and Tom Moses.

In mid-December our new board met at Ken's Steak House in Framingham. They are clearly an eager group of interested, smart people who want to challenge me right out the gate. We discussed short- and long-term goals, our AGM, our events, and we began a discussion of programming for our monthly meetings, and also possibly moving our monthly restaurant meeting location. This year we would like to make a conscious effort to increase our membership and our presence in the community and to enhance and focus our meetings in ways that will be engaging to our members and our supporters.

Our January monthly dinner meeting on Wednesday, the 25th, will be an exciting kickoff to the year, and I am hoping many of you who have not been to a JANE dinner meeting recently will decide to come join us. Our guest speaker will be Don Rose, a specialist with RM Auctions. RM is the largest high-end auction company in the world, and Don, a good friend of mine, has generously agreed to come and share his knowledge of the collector car world. Please read Don's bio on page 6 of this month's Cat. His presentation is timely because the famous Scottsdale auctions will have ended just five days prior to our meeting. We are getting the inside story from the horse's mouth. You will not want to miss this.

Well, it is the middle of winter. My 1954 Jag XK120 is getting an engine rebuild at KTR, and I am also having my engine bay cleaned and repainted. Also converting the car to street/track use instead of just a race car. I am sure many of you have put your treasured Cats to bed for the winter or are working on them in anticipation of spring. Either way, I look forward to seeing all of you at our upcoming monthly social meetings, showing off our cars at many of our events throughout the season, and creating a new chapter in the life of this growing and fabulous club we call JANE.

Thank you all, and see you soon. 🇺🇸

Michael

Calendar of Upcoming Events

January

- 14 - Sat - 6 pm LAAM - Annual Members Winter Party
25 - Wed - 7 pm JANE Monthly Meeting

LAAM, Brookline, MA
Wayside Inn, Sudbury, MA

February

- 12 - Sun - 6 pm JANE Valentine's Dinner
22 - Wed - 7 pm JANE Monthly Meeting

Bullfinch's, Sudbury, MA
Wayside Inn, Sudbury, MA

March

- 09 - 11 Weekend JCNA Annual General Meeting
28 - Wed - 7 pm JANE Monthly Meeting

Phoenix, AZ
Wayside Inn, Sudbury, MA

April

- 25 - Wed - 7 pm JANE Monthly Meeting

Wayside Inn, Sudbury, MA

May

- 18-21 - Fri - Mon JANE Adirondack Tour
23 - Wed - 7 pm JANE on the Lawn at Larz Anderson

Saratoga Springs, NY
LAAM, Brookline, MA

June

- 27 - Wed - 7 pm JANE Monthly Meeting

Wayside Inn, Sudbury, MA

July

- 25 - Wed - 7 pm JANE Monthly Meeting

Wayside Inn, Sudbury, MA

August

- 10-12 - Weekend JANE Jaguar Festival and Concours d'Elegance
22 - Wed - 7 pm JANE Monthly Meeting

Sturbridge, MA
Wayside Inn, Sudbury, MA

September

- 14-16 - Weekend British Invasion
26 - Wed - 7 pm JANE Monthly Meeting
30 - Sun - 9 am JANE Fall Slalom

Stowe, VT
Wayside Inn, Sudbury, MA
Devens Air Base, Ayer, MA

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TO GET THE COVENTRY
CAT BY MAIL,
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TIME ON THE JANE
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THERE
IN COLOR!**



From the Editor



Yes, it's still January, the middle of winter, but what a mild winter we have had so far, and it's actually only a couple of months

until we begin to see signs of spring. Many of our recurring events are already on the 2012 JANE Calendar, and other events will fill in soon, as available dates are determined. Keep your Cats in tip-top shape the next couple of months, and put your favorite "must-do" events in your own calendars. Plan for a fun JANE year!

Although it was a bit of an unusual sport for girls in their early teens to follow, I have been an avid follower of car racing from the time I was 12, when my brother took me to my first race. So imagine the special treat it was for me to meet Denise McCluggage at the Larz Anderson Auto Museum's Winter Lecture Series earlier this month. Denise actually raced back in those days and was a successful journalist. I loved hearing her talk about the guys who raced at the Indy 500 back in the 1950's and 1960's. Here's a photo of Denise and me at the meeting that evening. 

Prettle



Upcoming Events

JANE Monthly Meetings



Longfellow's Wayside Inn

Most of our monthly meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of each month at Longfellow's Wayside Inn in Sudbury, MA. January's meeting is on Wednesday, January 25th. Come early to visit with friends in The Old Tavern before our dinner meeting, which will begin at 7 p.m., and then you are in for a real treat!

Ever wonder what it was like to drive 007's Aston Martin DB5, or to sell it for millions at an internationally televised auction? Want to know if your car would bring big money at one of the classic car auctions you see on TV? We are kicking off our 2012 monthly meetings with a very special guest, Don Rose, whose life-long interest in cars began in his youth, and who can answer all your questions about the high-end world of classic car auctions. Don is mainly an Aston man ... he's Vice-Chairman of the Aston Martin Owners Club of North America and Editor

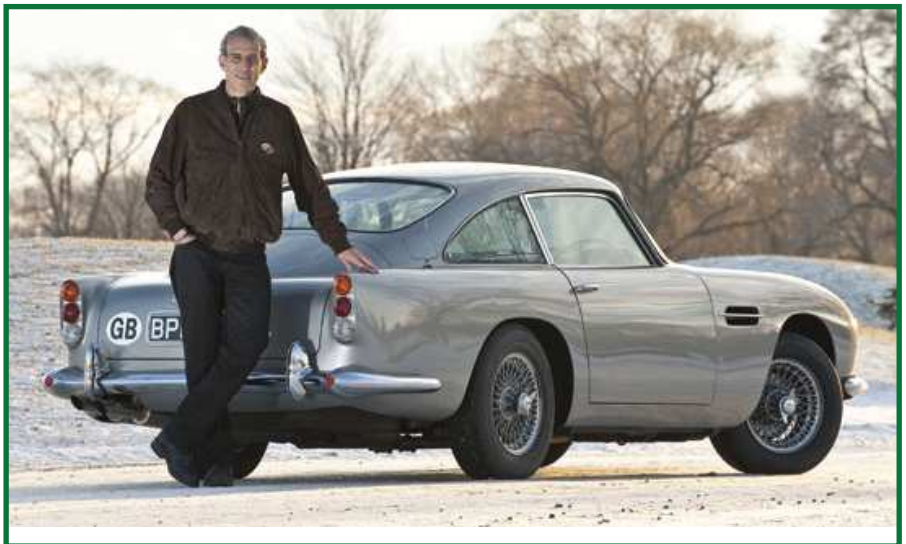
Emeritus of its magazine, *The Vantage Point* ... but admits to being first and foremost an English car guy. He has owned a Jaguar MK sedan that he loved, and he appreciates Jaguars as a great English brand.

Don has participated in a number of Concours and road rally events, including the Carrera Panamericana and the Mille Miglia of Argentina (Mil Millas). His collector cars include five Astons, from a pre-war 2-litre to his recently-acquired DB5. "Some may come and go," says Don, but his main DB4 is "the forever one." His other British cars are a Lotus Eleven and an AC Ace, both active racing cars and both with excellent period race histories from new.

Don joined RM Auctions in 2006. The culmination of his life-long interest in both cars and James Bond was realized when Don consigned the 1964 Aston Martin DB5 James Bond film car to RM's 2010 London sale and subsequently went on a world tour promoting the car. In Don's own words, "It turned my hair gray and added five pounds, I didn't sleep for months, and I loved every minute of it!" He says selling the James Bond *Goldfinger* Aston Martin was a highlight of his career. Many JANE members may be interested to know that Don also sold our late Harry Parkinson's 1948 MK IV DHC at auction last year.

Don Rose's appearance at our January meeting follows the Scottsdale auctions the previous weekend. Don will speak about the auction results and his views on what is the "hot" car today and what is not. He will address the pros and cons of buying a car at auction, what to look for in a good collector car, where Jaguars fit in this world, and which Jaguars are selling and why.

This is a don't-miss meeting ... so be there! 🇬🇧



Here's Don Rose in a 1939 Aston Martin 15/98 Open Sports, on a causeway in Puget Sound during the Kirkland Tour d'Elegance in September 2011 ... obviously enjoying the drive!

To save your space at the January dinner meeting, you need to call Dean Saluti at 617-483-9488 (daytime) or at his or Margie's cells (617-285-6565 or 617-285-6564), or email him today at djsaluti@aol.com.

JANE Valentine's Dinner

Bullfinch's Restaurant, Sudbury, MA - Sunday, February 12



Tom Moses

Bullfinch's Restaurant in Sudbury, MA, is a favorite restaurant of quite a number of JANE members. Last year we went there for our Valentine's Dinner, and we're going back this year. Mid-February is still too wintery to be Jaguar-friendly, but we can still get together and "think" and "talk" Jaguars in the warmth of Bullfinch's and the company of our Jaguar friends.

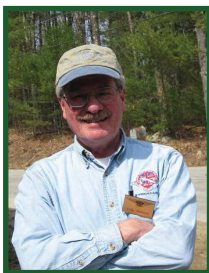
Join JANE for cocktails at 5 p.m. and dinner at 6 p.m. Bullfinch's is at 730 Boston Post Road, Sudbury, MA 01776. RSVP no later than Tuesday, February 7, to Tom Moses, 978-580-7416, tmoses@spillcenter.com, and

put JANE Valentine Dinner in the subject line. 🇬🇧



First Look at our JANE Spring Tour

Saratoga Springs and Adirondack Mountains - May 18 - 21



Carl Hanson

Heads up, JANE members! Save the weekend of May 18 – 21 for this year's spring tour, when we will take a road trip to Saratoga Springs, NY, and the Adirondack Mountains.

Early plans include driving to Saratoga Springs on Friday, May 18th, and spending Saturday, May 19th, at the famous Saratoga Auto Museum for their "Spring Invitational Foreign Car Show" (our Jaguars will be parked together on the grounds). This show is great and usually attracts hundreds of the finest cars. Their website is <http://saratogaautomuseum.org/> invitational. Check them out.

On Sunday, May 20th, we shift gears, driving scenic back roads to the Adirondack Museum in Blue Mt. Lake, continuing on to overnight in the Lake Placid area, and returning to our homes on Monday, May 21st.



Car Show at Saratoga Auto Museum

Carl Hanson, our tour organizer, is currently arranging for blocks of rooms at recommended hotels. He promises this tour will be fun and easy ... no tricky route instructions, no rally timing challenges. We will provide route suggestions, and then you will be on your own. Team up and caravan together if you wish. Race on to the next stop if you wish.

Stay tuned for additional details in coming issues of *The Coventry Cat!* 🇬🇧

JCNA's 2012 AGM and Western States Meet Phoenix, AZ - March 6-14




Are any of you New England Jaguar folks interested in getting away to warm Phoenix in March? The JCNA Annual General Meeting will take place the weekend of March 9 - 11, 2012, at the Crowne Plaza San Marcos Resort, located in historic Chandler, a southeastern suburb of Phoenix.

Because the AGM jumps around the country from year to year, it is ordinarily a stand-alone event. But with it being in Phoenix this year, they decided to take advantage of arrangements already made at the San Marcos Resort and tie in the 2012 Western States Meet immediately following the AGM. Western States will be a four-day event running March 11-14, and will include a Concours e'Elegance, a rally and tour with lunch, a slalom with lunch, and a banquet and awards ceremony.

But wait ... there's more! For anyone wanting to go out as early as March 6, before the AGM on the weekend, pre-AGM events are scheduled: a Ghost Town and Grand Canyon Tour, a Track Day, and JCNA's first AGM Golf Tournament and Luncheon Buffet. There will also be a Western Roundup dinner and entertainment on Friday evening, March 9. And for anyone who is not a delegate to the actual business meeting

on Saturday, tours are planned to Desert Botanical Gardens and Pueblo Grande Ruin.

In addition to all the social events, throughout the week special seminars will be scheduled at the hotel on a wide variety of topics relating to Jaguars.

There's more information about all of this, including registration form, hotel information, and a complete schedule of events on the JCNA website: www.jcna.com. 



Chuck Centore and Michael Kaleel will be JANE's two voting delegates at this year's JCNA AGM

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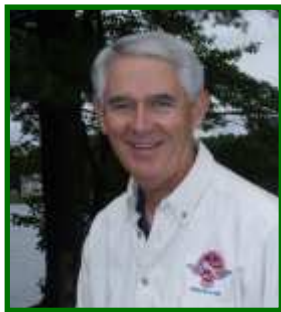
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2012 Membership Renewal



Ed Avis

As 2011 came to a close, 138 members had either renewed their membership or joined JANE for 2012. That's great news, but we still have at least 103 members on the official JCNA roster who have not yet renewed. If you fall in that latter category please consider renewing as soon as possible – the official JANE membership roster MUST be returned to JCNA by the end of January. With all the exciting events planned for 2012 you don't want to be left out! It's also important to remember that to participate in JCNA-sanctioned events (such as the Concours), your JANE/JCNA membership must be current.

A hearty welcome to the following new members who joined JANE from late November to early January:

Joe Ferguson, Weston, MA -- 1952 XK120

Don & Susan Lee LaHaye, Waitsfield, VT -- 2008 XK8

David Moulton, Groton, MA

Vincent Simarano, Marlboro, MA

Joshua and Angele Mott Nickerson, Shelburne, VT -- 1962 E-Type OTS and 2004 X-Type

Stephen & Frances Kramer, Clifton Park, NY -- 1999 XK8

Norberto and Linda Melo, West Wareham, MA -- 1990 XJ-S Coupe

**If you've not yet renewed your JANE membership for 2012, get it done now!
Please renew online at www.j-a-n-e.org or complete and mail the form below.**

- From the Home Page, scroll down, click the Member Pages menu button on the bottom left.
- From the Login Screen, enter your User code and Password and click the Submit button.
- From your personal JANE home page, choose the Renew button on the left.
- Pay your dues on-line using PayPal. \$60 per year with printed *Coventry Cat*, or \$50 per year with electronic *Coventry Cat*.

VERY IMPORTANT: If you use PayPal, be sure to add a note under "Instructions to Merchant" with your name, email (and/or phone number), and JCNA number so we can properly credit the payment and contact you with any questions.

JANE 2012 Membership Renewal (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY!!!)

Choose One:

- ☐ \$60 per year with printed *Coventry Cat*
- ☐ \$50 per year with electronic *Coventry Cat*
- ☐ \$29 per year for Associate Member (must be a primary member in another JCNA club)

Amount Enclosed \$ _____

MEMBER and CO-MEMBER NAMES: _____

JCNA NUMBER _____ (this is really important) OR Are you a NEW MEMBER? (circle)

EMAIL _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONES: HOME _____ WORK _____ CELL _____

CAR 1 YEAR _____ MODEL _____ BODY STYLE _____

CAR 2 YEAR _____ MODEL _____ BODY STYLE _____

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Time to Update Your JANE Profile

It's a new year, time to renew your JANE membership if you have not already done so, and it's time to update your JANE profile!

Some of you update your profile often, some of you only rarely, and some of you may not even be aware you have a JANE profile. Rest assured that you do, and it is online for other JANE members. Why should you bother to update your profile? Well, there are several reasons:

- Your online profile is an important part of your club's ability to contact you with information about the club's many activities.
- It is vital to maintaining our membership roster with the Jaguar Clubs of North America -- a necessary part of participation in that organization.
- It provides a way for other club members to contact you through the members-only online search capability or in the soon-to-be-printed directory. Online, members can search for other members by name, city of residence, types of cars owned, and other criteria. If you have a question about, say, an XK120 you can easily find all the owners who have XK120s listed in their profiles. Other members can seek your advice on their cars if you list them in your profile.
- Back by popular demand, we will publish a hardcopy membership directory early in 2012, so you want to be sure your profile is up-to-date.
- Get photos of your cars displayed on the JANE home page. We've had photos of members' cars appearing randomly on the home page for several years, but the inventory of available photos is out of date. Now, if you upload photos of your cars, they will automatically be selected at random for the home page display. Be sure to upload photos so your cars will be featured.
- I plan to do another article for the *Coventry Cat* and for the *Jaguar Journal* on a composite profile of JANE members and their cars. I did a similar article in 2007 and want to do an update. Lots of JANE members enjoyed the article, and we won a JCNA award for it. But I cannot do it without your help in updating your profile.

And remember, your JANE profile information is available only to other current JANE members. It is hidden from casual website browsers, our advertisers, and our guest members.

So please update your profile information and upload pictures of your cars. You can update your profile in three different ways: online; by responding to an email that you will receive, with the changes typed into the appropriate spaces; or by printing the form on the following page, filling it in with any changes and mailing it back.

Online (the best):

This is by far the preferred way of handling the update, as you can do it as easily as the other two methods and it requires no other time from your overworked webmaster. To update online, first go to the JANE Home Page and login (your user ID and password are in the form at the bottom of this email). Second, select Member Pages from the Home Page menu. When you get to your personal JANE Home Page, select Update Info and just make whatever changes and additions you want. Uploading photos is just as easy. From your JANE Home Page click on Upload Photos and follow the instructions. Need more guidance? You can find a more complete tutorial on the JANE site.

By Email (OK):

You have received, or will receive, an email containing a table of all of your current information. Simply reply to that email and fill in the right-most boxes labeled "New Value" with any new or updated information. We'll then figure out how to get the updates into our database. For photos, just attach the photos to the return email.

By mail (if you insist):

Print the form on the following page, fill it in by pen or pencil, and then mail to Dennis Eklof, 31 Ames Road, Groton, MA 01450 or Ed Avis, 252 Upper Pond Road, Litchfield, ME 04350. If you have hardcopy photos, send them along and we will try to find the time to scan them in and add them to your profile. If you want to see what is already in your profile, you can find it on the JANE website. See the instructions above for online access.

Thanks
Dennis Eklof
JANE Webmaster

JANE Membership Form

Member Name			
Co-member Name			
Company (Optional)			
Street Address			
City, State, Zip			
Phones	Home:	Work	Cell
Email Address:			
Home Page URL			
Birthdates	Member: Co-Member		
Occupation			

Willing to help out in staging JANE events? (Describe event interests, expertise, possible commitments.)	
Willing to share knowledge/experience with other JANE Members? (Describe/list interests and areas of expertise/experience)	
Willing to lend tools to JANE Members? (Describe tools, conditions of loan)	
Willing to lend a hand with JANE Members' projects? (Describe interests, limitations, etc.)	

	Year	Make	Model	Body Style	Color	Serial #
Car 1						
Car 2						
Car 3						
Car 4						
Car 5						
Car 6						
Car 7						
Car 8						
Car 9						

	Special Notes
Car 1	
Car 2	
Car 3	
Car 4	
Car 5	
Car 6	
Car 7	
Car 8	
Car 9	

News from Larz Anderson Auto Museum

By Prebble Eklof

LARZ ANDERSON AUTO MUSEUM



BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS

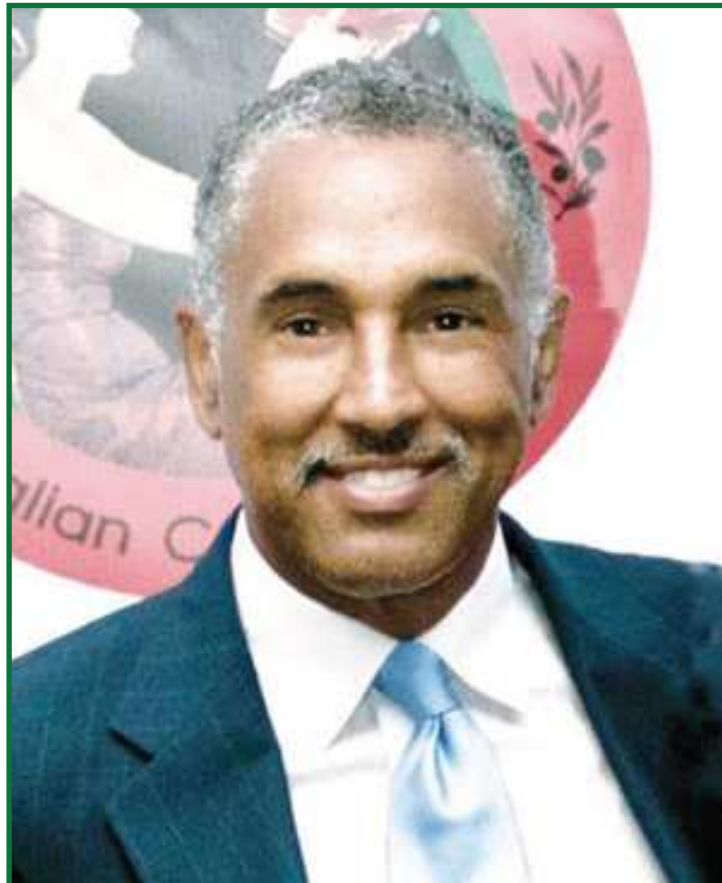
The Board of the Larz Anderson Auto Museum recently announced the appointment of long-time Museum staff member and motorcar and education expert, **Sheldon Steele**, to the position of **Executive Director**. In this leadership position Sheldon will manage development, membership, community relations, and donor support, as well as the operations and staff at the Museum.

Sheldon began working at the Museum in 2003 as Education Manager. Since that time he has become a recognized figure in the preservation of automotive history and as a member of the collector car community in New England. He has been curator of the last four exhibits and has also managed the Museum's Lawn Events program, a summer weekend series of car enthusiast gatherings presenting various car marques and staged on the Museum's great lawn. JANE always has a good turnout for their annual British Car Day. Sheldon is also a member of the Society of Automotive Historians and a member of the New England Motor Press Association.

Raising the public's awareness of the Museum's resources and historic value through community partnerships, outreach to media, and bringing a mix of attractions, from history lectures, music concerts, fashion, art, and of course the rarest, most significant automobiles to the Museum are among Sheldon's numerous accomplishments. Sheldon has also recently unveiled the Museum's new website. Check it out at www.LarzAnderson.org. "This is a great time to get involved, or get in

touch!" says Sheldon. "We welcome volunteers, donors, and help!"

JANE has long had a strong alliance with the LAAM, and we look forward to a continuing collaboration with Sheldon and the Museum. If you have never met Sheldon and have yet to visit the Museum, now is a good time to do so. Sheldon is extremely knowledgeable about Larz and Isabel Anderson, the history of this historic Museum (which dates back to the 1940's), and its unique car collection, and would love to share this treasure with you. 🚗



Sheldon Steele
Larz Anderson Auto Museum's new Executive Director

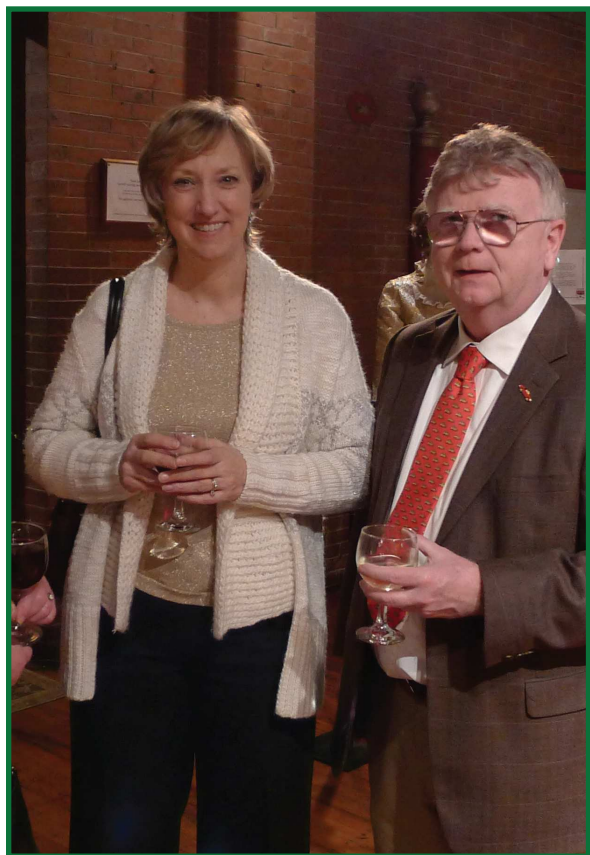
JANE was one of the sponsors of the Larz Anderson Auto Museum's "Evening With Denise McCluggage," the first in their 2012 Winter Lecture Series, on Thursday, January 5. There was quite a nice turnout of JANE members, in addition to the patrons of JANE ... John Feng, Chuck Centore, Michael Kaleel, Dennis Eklof, and Dean Saluti ... and what a treat this evening was.

Denise founded Competition Press, now *Autoweek*, where she still provides commentary on the current racing scene and analysis of new trends and new vehicles. But she was also a very successful race car driver long before Janet Guthrie, Lyn St. James, and Danica Patrick showed us that women could be part of the sport. Denise competed against Stirling Moss and Juan Manuel Fangio, and regaled us with stories of these drivers and many noted Indianapolis 500 drivers in the 1950's and 1960's. It was a most entertaining evening. 🇺🇸



L to R: John Feng, Chuck Centore, Denise McCluggage, Michael Kaleel, Dennis Eklof, Prebble Eklof, Dean Saluti, and Marjorie Cahn

Some JANE members also attended Larz Anderson Auto Museum's Winter Party on Saturday, January 14th. Not only were the ambiance and the dinner excellent, as always, the Museum also provided a TV in the Cafe for those of us who just had to know what was going on at the New England Patriots and Denver Broncos playoff game! 🇺🇸



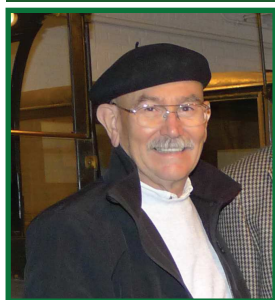
L: Kevin and Diane Murphy
at the
Winter Party

R: Nancy Monaghan and
Prebble Eklof sharing a laugh.
Must have been a reaction to
a Patriots touchdown!



Brian Morton Opens His Shop to JANE Members

By Dennis Eklof



Dennis Eklof

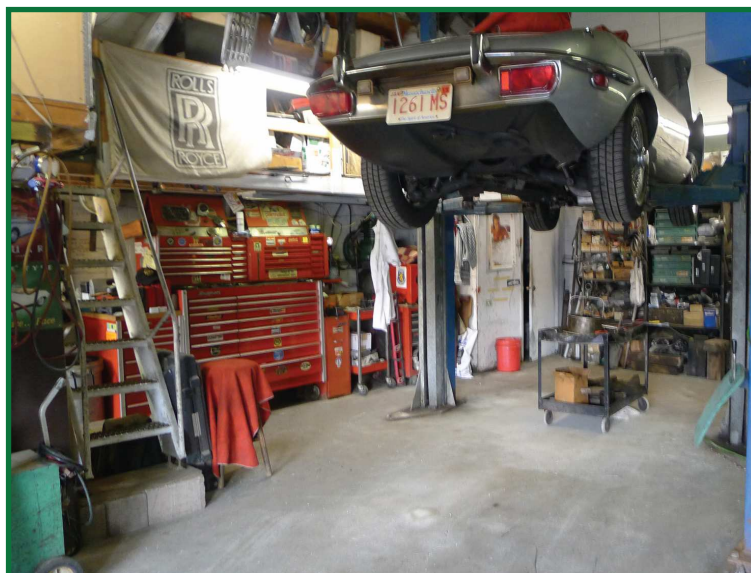
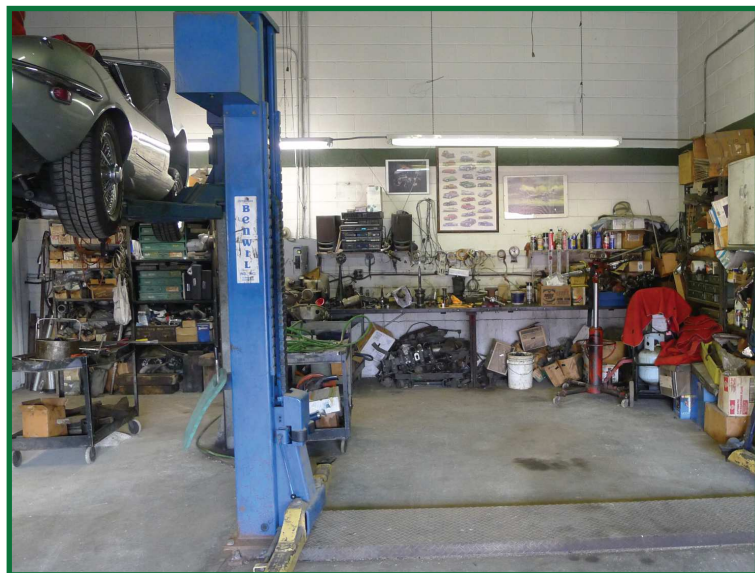
Okay, so your beautiful Cat needs some serious repairs and service during the off-season, and you want to do them yourself, but you are not quite sure your skills/knowledge/tools/space (or all of the above) are up to the job(s) at hand. Well, Brian Morton has a deal for you. You can rent a bay in his shop for \$200 per day – and considering what you get in the package, that is a huge bargain. Not only will you get a nice, heated space in which to work, but you will also get a lift, the use of all of Brian's tools, and – most importantly – you get his advice and counsel while you go about your work!

For those of you who may not know Brian, he has been working on Jaguars and specializing in their care and maintenance at his shop, Morton Jaguar Service, for over 40 years. He is widely recognized as an expert in the marque, and he knows them all – XKs, E-Types, MK anything, XJS, XJ6, XJ8, etc. – yes, all of them. He will be looking over your shoulder as you go about your work, and giving you the benefit of his experience at whatever you are doing. And if you need his active participation, he is always available at \$85 per hour, and that, too, is a bargain considering his skills and experience.

So if you are thinking about some serious work on your Jaguar during this off-season, consider doing it yourself with Brian's help. You can contact Brian and schedule a session at Morton Jaguar Service, 2 Oak Street in Chelmsford, MA, 978-256-9882. 🇺🇸



Brian Morton in his shop



Upper Left and Right: Views of Brian Morton's spacious workshop areas



Left: Some of Brian's awards and memorabilia on display at his shop

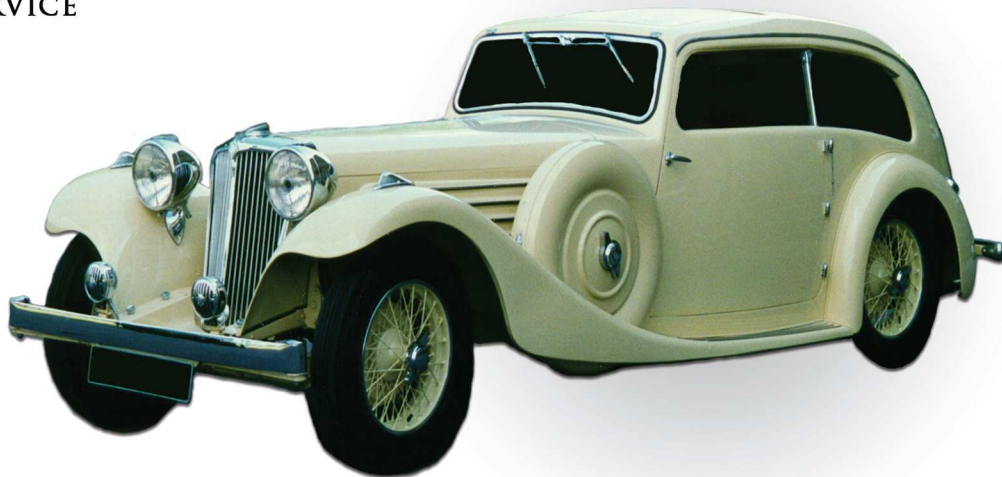


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How the Wobble War Was Won

By George Parker



George Parker

I was shocked when it happened the first time! It was 1990 and I was out for a pleasant drive in our newly-restored XK120 OTS when, out of a clear blue sky while motoring along at about 30 mph, we hit a bump and the front end went into a violent steering oscillation ... the wheels wobbling back and forth. What on earth was going on here? Everything in the front suspension was new and tight. I examined everything, but could find nothing wrong. I called in many "car guy" friends to look the car over, but no one could detect a

problem. I found that the only way I could avoid the wobble was to make sure that the front wheels were in top condition, true and properly balanced. In that manner I was able to drive the car. But all the time I knew that the dreaded wobble monster was lurking, waiting to strike again at any time, and I really didn't know what to do about it.

Finally, about five years ago I decided that I had to find and solve the problem once and for all. And the only way to do that was to call in the big guns! So I called my friend and local vintage Jaguar guru, Brian Donovan. After explaining the problem, Brian's answer was succinct, "It's the lower ball joints."

"But Brian, ball joints and tie rod ends ... everything is brand new and tight," I replied.

"George, you're not listening, it's the lower ball joints!"

"OK, I'll check 'em out."

And I did. But they appeared fine. So the only thing I could do was tighten them up. The shop manual calls for .010" end float. I took out shims until I had only about .002". It worked! Any tendency to wobble seemed to disappear. Problem solved ... or was it?

Later that same year I had occasion to talk Jaguar stuff with Bill Tracy (yes, *that* Bill Tracy!), and I brought up my wobble problem that I thought was solved. But Bill added another wrinkle, "You know, George, Jaguar changed from a brass to a phenolic cup in those lower ball joints early in production. I think it was to address the wobble problem. And I have some right here."

My response was quick, "I'll take a couple."

Now I had phenolic cups, but what to do with them? Since I wasn't experiencing any wobble, I lived by the old adage, *if it ain't broke don't fix it*. So the phenolic cups languished on my workbench for several years. But that changed in the summer of 2011.

We made the journey to Lenox, MA, and entered the XK120 in the new Tanglewood British Motorcar Festival. While there, to my consternation, the wobble returned! I wasn't a happy camper, but I concluded that wear in the lower ball joints had now resulted in excessive end float, and all I had to do was tighten them up and I'd be good to go. Since the wobble occurred only at low speeds, the trip home to NY on the MA Turnpike and NY Thruway was made without incident.

When I inspected the ball joints I was in for a surprise. There was no wear nor excessive end float! So my old fix wouldn't work this time. And, to my surprise, when I put everything back together I found that

the wobble occurred almost immediately; the car was basically undriveable! Then I remembered that I had switched wheels front to rear, and those rear wheels were so bad as to induce the wobble at the slightest bump. Back to my original fix, true and balance the front wheels. So I shipped them off to Hendrix Wire Wheel in North Carolina. They did their usual fine job truing the wire wheels, balancing, and shaving round. I got them back with a total radial run-out of about .005". I was sure the car would now be driveable. But the basic problem, whatever it was, was still not fixed.

While waiting for the wheels to return from Hendrix we attended the JANE Concours in Sturbridge, MA. There I took the opportunity to discuss the problem with one of my JANE friends, Carl Hanson. Carl had also experienced the wobble problem and we had discussed it in the past.

"Carl, what have you done about your wobble problem?" I asked.

"Oh, I've got that all solved. Turns out, there was a Jaguar Service Bulletin back in 1950 that addressed the problem," he replied.

"A Service Bulletin? What did it say?"

"It said to replace the brass cups with phenolic ones, and to use no grease! I'll send you a copy."

I was amazed! Good grief, Charlie Brown, ball joints with no grease?

Carl was as good as his word. Shortly after returning from Sturbridge I found Jaguar Service Bulletin #68, dated July 1950, in my email inbox. And sure enough, it said in bold letters that it was imperative that no grease should be allowed to get to the ball joints. And it went so far as to indicate that the ball itself should be removed so that the seal containing any grease could be removed so no grease left there could get down to the ball. Wow, this was really a revelation!

So, the next step was to install those phenolic cups that had been laying on my workbench all those years. It was a fairly simple process. The brass cups were removed from the caps with a sharp tap on the workbench. The spigot surrounding the ball had to be removed from the axle carrier to accommodate to phenolic cups. That was accomplished easily by a little twisting with channel lock pliers. Then the phenolic cups had to be pressed into the caps. Here I took an extra step that may not have been necessary. The phenolic cups appeared a little large to be pressed in, and I was afraid of getting them in halfway and not being able to get them either in or out, so I carefully reduced their radius a little with sandpaper. They pressed in easily.



Spigot and brass cup on the left, with the new phenolic cup on the right



Pressing the phenolic cup into the cap

Next, I cleaned all grease from the ball using a spray can of brake cleaner. Fortunately, the seals were flat and appeared to contain no grease. I certainly didn't want to go to all the work of removing the ball as the Service Bulletin indicated. And the seals were old and cracked, so I simply inserted the spray nozzle into a crack in the seal and flushed it out with the brake cleaner. I made sure I had removed all traces of grease from the seal and around the ball.



All traces of grease cleaned off the ball

For the installation of the caps on the ball, I first snugged them in place with no shims and measured the gap with a feeler gauge. It turned out to be .002" on both sides. Even though the Service Bulletin still called for .010" end float, I couldn't get myself to go that far. I used a .005" shim, which should give me about .003" end float. Sometime in the future when I feel more confident with the fix I may add another .005" shim to see how it works.

By the way, I also made sure that the caps no longer have any grease nipples to avoid any inadvertent introduction of grease in the future.



The new phenolic cup installed in the cap

At this point, the wheels had been trued and balanced, and the phenolic cups had been installed. The only thing left to complete the project was to check and adjust the front end alignment. I was particularly concerned with having at least the 3 degrees positive castor specified in the shop manual. I won't go into the details of that process here, but it's a straightforward, though time-consuming and tedious, process using a simple camber/castor gauge and an aluminum rod to measure toe-in. The one complication that had to be addressed was that the car had to be level. Of course, my garage floor is far from level, so I used a laser level to determine the pads necessary to be placed under three of the wheels to level the car. With the alignment done, I was ready to roll! And the test drives proved successful, with no indication of wheel wobble.

A word about history. It's interesting how sometimes knowledge gets lost over time ... and how sometimes when we think we're improving things we're really making them worse. This wheel wobble problem is a perfect example. When these cars started to be restored, many of those involved thought they were "upgrading" when they replaced those cheap phenolic cups with more substantial brass cups. And there were no grease fittings in the caps, so we'll improve the car by installing them. I'm guilty of that myself. When I bought new ball joints they came with brass cups, so I drilled holes in the caps and installed grease fittings. What I, and others, unwittingly did in the name of "improving" was to reintroduce a problem that Jaguar had solved many years before!

I'm indebted to several for finally getting this vexing problem solved. Brian Donovan was the first to open my eyes to the fact that the root of the problem lies in the lower ball joints. Then Bill Tracy introduced the fact that there was such a thing as phenolic cups, and they probably were somehow related to the problem. But it was Carl Hanson who tied it all together, did the research to find the Service Bulletin, and put the problem to bed! My thanks to them all! 🇬🇧

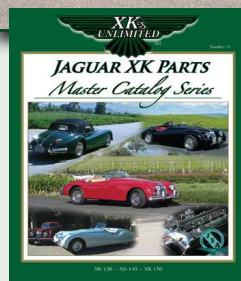
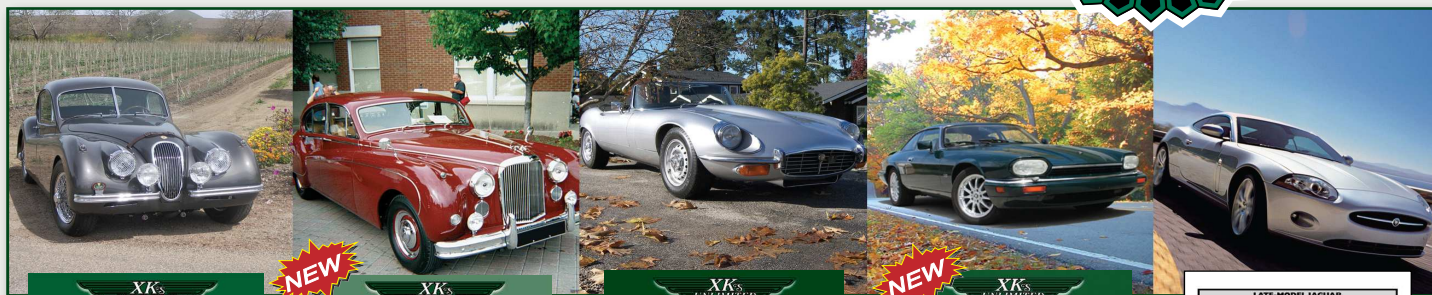
George Parker is a member of the Jaguar Association of Central NY and the Sun Coast Jaguar Club in Florida. He acquired his first Jaguar, an XK120, in 1955, followed by a new E-Type ten years later. George and his wife, Carolyn, have been regular attendees at our Concours for the past 20 years.

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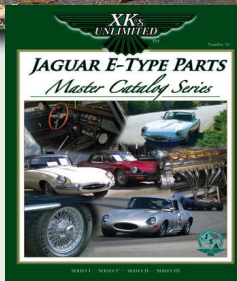
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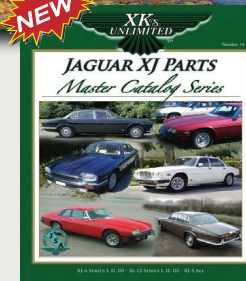
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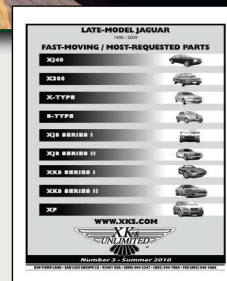
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