

JAGUAR

J O U R N A L

JAGUAR CLUBS OF NORTH AMERICA
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8 JAGUAR CLUB SWISS TOUR

6 JAGUAR DOES 62.9 MPG!

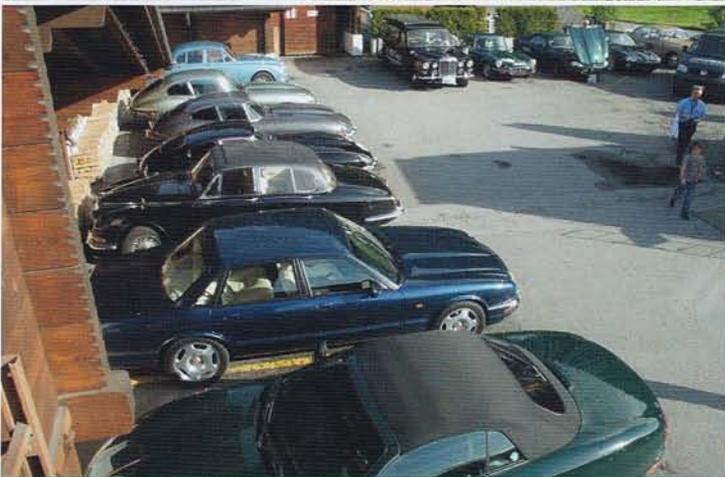
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AGM Western States Meet

Arizona March 6-14, 2012
Jaguar Clubs of North America



Jaguars in Switzerland



Top The Steigenberger Hotel at Gstaad is built in the traditional Swiss chalet style but is actually only a few years old. The E-type on display is LHD no. 5, the Geneva Show car which was revealed to the press in March 1961. It was restored by GB Classic Cars Donni and is owned by Dr. Christian Jenny. Bottom left What a view from our bedroom window! A courtyard full of Jaguars with everything from E-type to 420 to a Daimler limousine. Bottom right Martin Emmison sets off in his C-type replica, accompanied by Anne Marie Hardt who was one of the event's main organizers.

Story and photos Paul Skilleter

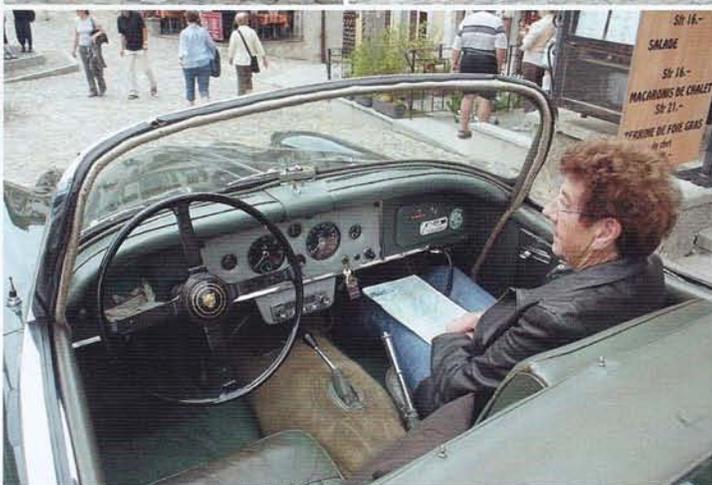
Yes, it's yet another anniversary year, but 2012 is the 90th since William Lyons and

William Walmsley founded the business from which sprung Jaguar. It all started in the seaside town of Blackpool, but the company today is a worldwide one, in that

its products are sold in more than 30 different countries. In this context it's interesting to reflect that within four years of the Swallow Sidecar Company starting in 1922 its



Top left The new supercharged XJ which ferried us from Zurich to Gstaad then did duty as a ferry-cum-course car during the event. Here it is at the Chateau d'Aigle. Looks like Norman Dewis leaning on the fender and enjoying a conversation. **Top right** Yes, Edward Jelinek's ultra-rare Worblaufen-bodied "Mk IV" Jaguar drophead makes a fine backdrop for a snapshot! Edward keeps a register of Swiss-bodied cars. **Middle left** More national dress display at Gruyere. Lots of pushrod-engined Jaguars on the event... **Middle right** Period-dressed locals pass the line of Jaguars in the town of Gruyere, famous of course for the locality's cheese. **Bottom** Rose Eaton, 101, who never lets her age get in the way of enjoying Jaguars! Here she is in George Donni's XK 150 roadster. Nor does she look her age!



products were being marketed abroad, with the very first Swallow agent overseas being Emil Frey of Zurich, Switzerland.

This was very much in my mind when my wife June and I travelled to Switzerland last June at the invitation of the Jaguar Driver's Club of Switzerland, because it was in this country where Jaguar's export drive effectively began – and in due course exports became absolutely vital and allowed Jaguar to grow and flourish. That has never been more true than today; a strong home market is important, but Jaguar's growth in the 21st century can come only from selling overseas, to North America and also in the huge new markets which are now developing a taste for quality British products.

But it all started in Switzerland, a country I was now visiting for the first time in many years, although for quite a long period in the late 1960s and early 1970s I was there almost annually, covering the famed Geneva Salon – where, of course, the E-type

was first launched. My host, Christian Jenny, now owns the very car that was on Jaguar's stand back in March 1961, after it had been revealed to press and dealers at the restaurant beforehand. Some of you may know that Christian has one of the world's most select car collections, which also includes the original round-tailed SS 90 prototype sports car, SS 100, C-type and Lister-Jaguar.

It was the 50th anniversary of the showing of the E-type in Geneva which the club was celebrating during our visit, along with the 35th birthday of the JDCS itself (an independent club, by the way, with no formal ties with the UK's Jaguar Driver's Club). Christian Jenny was for ten years president of the JDCS, and is still much

involved on the organizational side, along with such as Urs Schmid – who will be known to those of you who take a serious interest in the XK 120, because Urs has written two astonishing books on the car, with more volumes to come.

Our visit began at Zurich airport where we were met by Michel Tingeuly who works for Emil Frey – yes, the same organization still handles Jaguar imports into Switzerland, and while Emil himself died a number of years ago, the family still controls the business. During our

journey Michel reminded me how Frey came to be associated with Swallow – as a young man he raced motorcycles and then opened a motorcycle sales business in 1924. This brought him to London and the Olympia Show, where he saw the gleaming Swallow sidecars. An agency soon followed and today the Frey organization is vast, its automobile division importing a large number of different marques and maintaining an average inventory of some 2,000 cars.

We were chauffeured by Michel in a new XJ, and as there five of us – our party included Norman Dewis and John Butterworth who had flown in to Zurich separately – I had the new experience of being the centre passenger in the back seat. After two hours I have to admit to being a bit sore, because while there was room enough, the centre position lacks padding. Other than that, this black supercharged XJ took us to our destination in fine style.

The celebratory event was centered on the Steigenberger Hotel at the ski resort of Gstaad-Saanen (though it is also known for hosting top-level tennis tournaments). This and another hotel nearby accommodated around 200 club members who brought with them some 135 Jaguars. There is a huge enthusiasm for Jaguars in Switzerland, much of it centered around the JDCA which publishes the Tribune, a magazine of quite amazing quality. The members often own a classic Jaguar alongside a current model, though of course for an event like this, the "classics" predominated.

The sight of these old cars tackling passes and assembling at various beauty spots in the Swiss Alps was inspiring, especially when the rain stopped and the sun shone on the clean green grass and snowy mountain tops. This was well before the skiing season started, of course, but we did ascend one mountain in a cable car, a new experience for June and me – the nearest we'd come to it before was when we were hoisted up Washington's Mount Rainier in a ski lift, courtesy of the Seattle club some years ago (a good memory – thanks, Mike and Norma Markey!). The views were magnificent although vision was a bit restricted by gentle mists.

The event itself was run with the efficiency you would expect from the Swiss, and adhered to a formula which is pretty much



Top Not forgetting all the E-types on the event, celebrating the car's 50th anniversary. **Lower** I snapped the huge Emil Frey site near Zurich from the XJ.

universal – scenic tours during the day using well-illustrated road books, with dinners in the evenings. We weren't the only non-Swiss present by a long way – while the car that had travelled the furthest to the event was an E-type 2+2 (it had brought a family all the way from Finland), John Elmgreen from Sydney, Australia, would have won the award for the person who had travelled furthest. He was on his way to the US on a fact-finding tour, col-

lecting even more information to augment his stupendous archives on XKs.

Then also from the UK, was Rose Eaton; aged 101, Rose and her late husband Frank used to own an XK 150 and Rose only recently gave up driving her X-TYPE sedan... She was hosted in Switzerland by Jaguar parts and restoration specialist Georg Donni and his wife Simone, enjoying some rapid wind-in-the-hair motoring

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Above left XK 120 in the Swiss countryside, snapped from the XJ. Above right Norman Dewis and Christian Jenny discuss the technicalities of Christian's SS 100 – or was Norman recalling the SS 100 he himself owned in the early 1950s, even though (unusual for Norman!) he can't recall which one it was. Right One of the tours included the unique Foundation Herve museum at Aigle founded by J.R. De Wurstemberger, who successfully rallied an XK 120 (amongst other cars) in the 1950s under the pseudonym of "Herve." The museum contains the world's largest collections of Voisins – this C-35 Aerodyn appeared in the same year as the first Jaguar saloon (1935) and was powered by a 3.0 litre six-cylinder engine.



alongside Georg in his XK 150 roadster! Martin Emmison was another UK visitor and always interesting to talk to, as he

is a lawyer who specializes in cases of alleged fraud and suchlike involving old cars and their identities. With sometimes

millions of dollars at stake, such disputes (though fortunately rare) are serious business these days! ●