

Jag Mag article - Warren Tait

Jaguar E Type 1969 S2, 4.2, 2+2

I purchased the car in 2006 as a three owner, NZ new from Dunedin. The car looked ok for its age but was in desperate need of refreshing.

This was particularly evident with everything under the bonnet. It was mechanically sound but in a very tired condition.

This also included the IRS which was covered in years of dirt and largely unnoticed.

The paint job was ok from a distance but a close eye would reveal a poorly executed respray where the chrome trim had not even been removed.

The interior appeared original and mostly unmarked so I had no yearning to interfere in this department.

I decided to carry out a complete overhaul of the car as this would most likely be the last car rebuild I had left in me.

So it was back to my hot rodding days mentality of the seventies, where everything had to be bright, shiny, smooth with lots O Bling !

Concourse didn't really interest me as I knew that what I was planning would most likely send many purists into a tailspin as this project was to be far more than a row of slotted screws all orientated the same way.

I decided to split the rebuild categories into three stages.

Stage 1 the under-bonnet area, (the biggest undertaking and the most important to me).

Stage 2 the rear end, and

Stage 3 a new paint job.

Stage 1 2009,

The overhaul consisted of an engine & gearbox rebuild and everything from the firewall forward which included the front suspension, steering assembly, brakes, radiator etc.



The bonnet was removed and all the engine componentry was disassembled.



Then the engine and gearbox were removed. Then the rolling body was wheeled out of the garage for steam cleaning.



Then the body was back in the garage where every single component from the firewall forward was removed, cleaned and prepared for painting, polishing or plating. Bright zinc was the plating of choice.

I made a paint stripping tank from a 20 ltr metal drum and this stripped all paints and contaminants from everything that was to be painted.



The engine and gearbox were separated and stripped down for inspection.

The car had only traveled 135000 miles and everything was standard, but I decided to replace every part I could with new while keeping it all standard also.

It soon became apparent that a membership renewal to the Daimler and Lanchester owners' spare parts club would be required. I had been a member of this club since 1981 when I purchased a 1963 Mk2 Daimler.

After looking around for an engine reconitioner I chose Taylor Automotive in Kyber Pass for the short block, and The Cylinder Head Shop in Glenfield for the Head.

While these items were in their hands, it was then onto prepping all the parts. This meant hours and hours in front of the wire buff cleaning every part / component for either plating or painting.

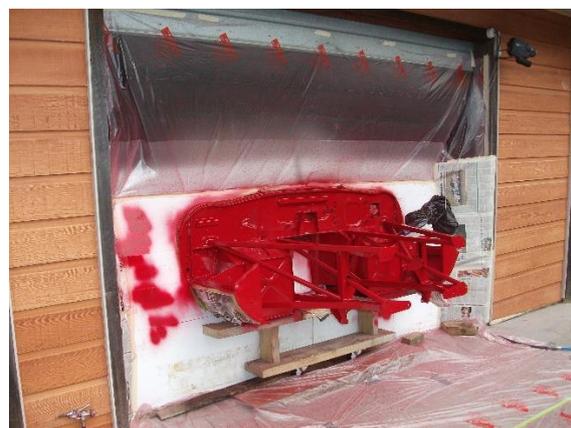
For the plating I chose Acme Plating in Onehunga.

All components of the front suspension that were to be plated had to go through a debrittling process which ensured their tensile strength.

For the painting I choose myself, not because I knew what I was doing, but because I could manage the risk of getting a poor job, plus by now I had numerous car repaints behind me thanks to my Fathers boat building and painting business days, and you do get a lot of satisfaction from the finished product.



The colour was to remain the same so everything from the firewall forward was prepped and painted in 2Pak. When it came to the engine, I didn't want a black one, so I decided to break a few more rules and painted it the same red.



Then there was the polishing, all that beautiful aluminium that the Poms are so good at using.

Every piece of aluminium on the engine including both pedal cluster housings were filed sanded and polished to remove all the casting marks.

Unfortunately, I landed this task too, mainly because I had all the gear to do it, and it is a substantial financial cost, which was something I didn't have access to. So many hours were spent in front of a polishing machine sometimes till 1.00am

Next, I stripped down the starter motor, alternator, fan motor, windscreen wiper motor, windscreen washer motor and both radiator cooling fan motors for cleaning and reassembled with new bearings or bushes, and brushes as required.

Testing and calibration of the starter motor and alternator was done under the expertise of Grant from Hope Hickman.



Soon the engine short block and cylinder head were ready for collection so I proceeded to assemble the engine and detail it with new freshly painted, plated or polished parts.



The end result was very satisfying and although it could be called, totally pimped, everything was still completely standard and 100% original.

New nolathane bushes and rubbers were fitted to all suspension joints, brake calipers were completely rebuilt after plating then painted. The rebuilt suspension arms, wheel hubs, rotors, calipers and steering rack were refitted.



Next it was time for the engine and gearbox. This proved quite a task with so many new surfaces to protect from accidental damage, so a good friend was essential for this task.





Now all the engine components could be fitted including radiator, heater box, hydraulic cylinders and all the pipes and hoses.



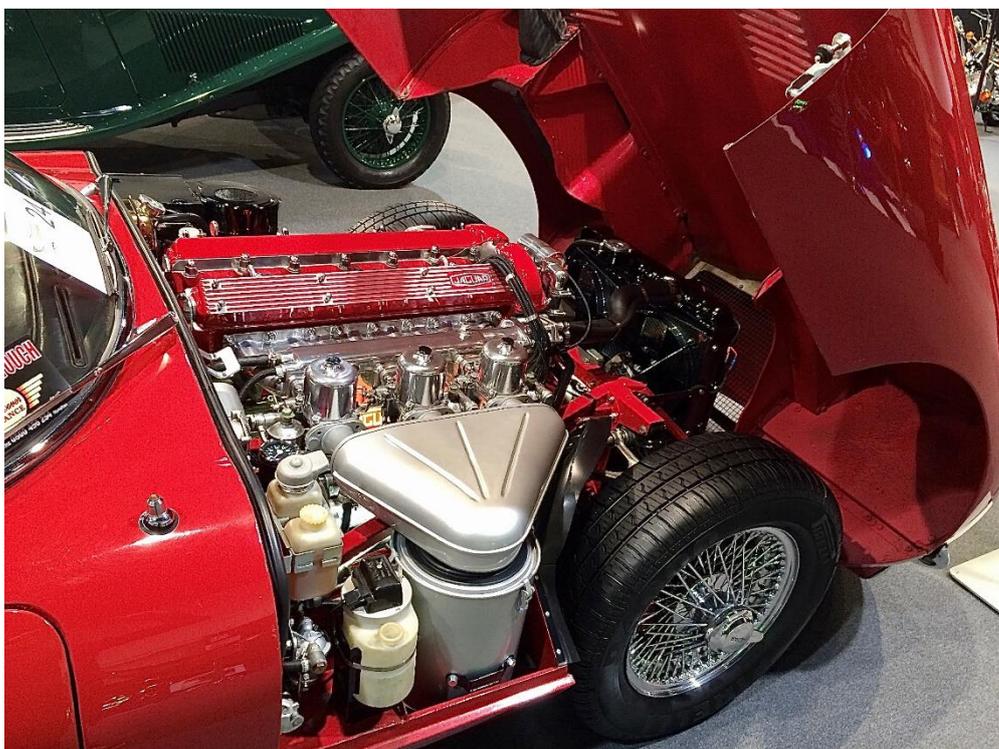
After finally getting to a stage where we could call it finished, which it never is, an estimated 2500 hours over a 2 1/2 year period had passed by.

The rebuild was very satisfying and the car was a joy to drive, creating considerable interest from all age groups wherever we went.

At the request of the club I was asked if I could make my car available along with 3 other club members for a story on the 50th anniversary of the EType article to be done in the June 2011 edition of the New Zealand Classic Car mag. We got the cover and the centrefold for that article.



The first main outing of significance after completion was a club trip to Taupo for the 50th anniversary of the E type in 2011 which was our first club event after joining the club and involved the whole family with Jan following in the Corolla! and a tow rope!



Next task after having a bit of fun, was to start stage 2 and remove and rebuild the rear end.