



# FORDIE'S FAVOURITES

CMM correspondent Grant Ford views the classic scene from 'down south'; the custodians and the clubs, the cars and their construction ...

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## 10-4 BIG CATS - WE GOT OURSELVES A CONVOY...



• Top down and leading the pack this E type made all the right noises as we passed.

**IT WAS A REAL SHALL WE, shan't we moment; 6am on the 27th May after a night of storms throughout the country and some 15,000 lightning strikes across the south alone.**

In a couple of hours, the 7th Annual Jaguar Enthusiasts Forum Convoy and Meet was due to gather at Pease Pottage Services on the M23, some 40 miles from my warm bed. The old Mark 2 was happy to make the trip, even if the drizzle had started, whilst the internet predicted plenty more of the same. Choosing to ignore the 'end of days' scenario, by seven we were on route and the sky cleared for the start of a cloud free and beautiful day.

The motorway services may not seem the most idyllic venue to gather but assembling nearly 80 pre-booked Jaguars was never going to be easy and with the 9.15am departure looming we met up with organiser Steve Sheldon. My first question being, would the overnight downpours keep many from joining us first thing on a Sunday morning; he certainly hoped not but understood if it had.

The route plan took the enthusiasts away from the

motorway and travel the A24 about 20 miles to the show venue at Denbies Vineyard near Dorking. Before long the 'Cats' had started to take over the services car park, so a quick survey followed to work out how far some of the convoy party had already travelled.

Owners of a shiny XE-R, John from Basingstoke, had left home just before seven but still early it was mainly local participants that

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arrived. Derek in his F-Type R and Steve Slight in an XK8 had both made the short trip from Crawley, whilst Maggie Page brought her F-type from Hertfordshire.

John and Richard Hamblin impressed with an overnight drive from Solihull (just down the M42 from their F type's assembly plant in West Bromwich); "Why not?" came the reply to my obviously

surprised expression.

### Early morning blast

We met up with Reigate resident Wayne an undertaker during office hours, with his V12 Sovereign, who pointed out he was most suited to this event as he drove in a long line of cars most days of the week. Richard and Claire Hayley had seen some weather but enjoyed an early morning blast from Romford in their XJR but all were surprised by a green rain splattered XK-R that had driven from a small town just south of Hamburg. A twelve-hundred-mile roundtrip to be part of this convoy was undertaken by Fred and Daggie Phillips and deserved an award for furthest travelled. The group gathered to collect their final instructions plus a welcome pack which included a complimentary copy of CMM, obviously.

Many of the entrants would need the *Autoglym* supplied shampoo along with freebies and info from the likes of *SNG Barratt*, *Simply Performance* and other Jaguar specialists. With route confirmed we headed out to gather some 'on the move' images as the group headed north to the show ground in Surrey. Across the South

turns of the A24 and headed for wine country.

Once settled at Denbies, the itinerary included presentations by *Leatherguard* on cleaning and preserving your Jaguars interior, plus the *Leather Repair Company* explained how they transform damaged trim. *Pro Detailer Magazine* were on hand to answer questions on getting the best from your Jags' appearance, whilst a team from *Harwoods Jaguar* showed many of the latest models from the marque.

From 3.00pm the awards ceremony featured the best in various classes, followed by a prize draw with some great prizes gifted by the sponsors. The event was well planned with a very relaxed feel, showing that the current trend of internet based groups works well at mixing modern car owners with the more classic minded.

No doubt, Steve Sheldon gave up many hours in order to make the day a great success, therefore post event CMM asked for his thoughts on the 2018 Convoy and Meet: "We had two contingents from Germany which was fantastic and UK attendees travelling 100s of miles in some cases to be at our event.

### Help and Support

"The convoy went very smoothly with one main group in it of 40 cars or so which was great. The weather put some people off unfortunately so we had I estimate, over 60 cars at the main venue spanning from early 1960s right through to 2018.

"Tony was there from Harwoods supplying help and support and we had six awards on the day and a huge selection of prizes in the prize draw ranging from lunch at Goodwood Kennels, through to bespoke luggage and wash systems. Our sponsors that were unable to attend this year included Scratchshield and Bag-World, they have both supported me heavily in the past year.

"As for next year, I am hoping we will be staying with Denbies and again we will be on the Sunday in the late spring bank holiday. We will be retaining the format of this year with a few tweaks, I am working on a couple of new features to add to the awards, talks, prize draw, convoy & main event. It will remain free to sign up for and everyone is welcome learning how to look after and enjoy their Jaguar and maybe winning an award or any of a range of incredible prizes.

"All anyone needs to sign up is a Jaguar and to be able to come along on the day, there are no other costs except for food/drink and a nominal cost for draw tickets for great prizes. I would just like to say thank you to everyone who decided to come along despite the forecasts, I genuinely hope they had a fantastic day. Our event has no budget and is known for being a little rustic but has an incredible, and growing following.

"Next year will be even bigger and better, the forum threads and Facebook will be kicking off in the next few days, anyone and everyone with a Jaguar is welcome to sign up and guarantee their place at our 2019 event".

Downs, lines of Coventry's finest both classic and current turned heads and brought acknowledgement from locals; E-type to E-Pace everyone enjoyed the twists and

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• Some exceptional Daimlers also joined in the South Downs cruise.