



Introducing Prince Caspian

Monday, 11th May 2015

My daughter Jamey has come up with a name for the Jag - "**Prince Caspian**", or **CASPIAN** for short. A bit of background: my first Jaguar, bought in Harare Zimbabwe in May 1988 was a magnificent Mark IX (at least it was magnificent when I had finished with it!). At that time my daughter Jamey was 6 years old, and into her My-Little-Pony's, tormenting her little brother, and The Chronicles of Narnia, a make-believe world whose Guardian is a talking lion ASLAN, the King of Beasts. The Mark IX was such an imposing, regal car, it naturally was named after the wise and compassionate figure. Anyway, Jamey came around this weekend to inspect my new purchase, and while she was impressed - and almost as excited as I am - she declared that nothing can replace ASLAN (the car), except perhaps Prince Caspian, who eventually became King of Narnia. So, **CASPIAN** it is.....

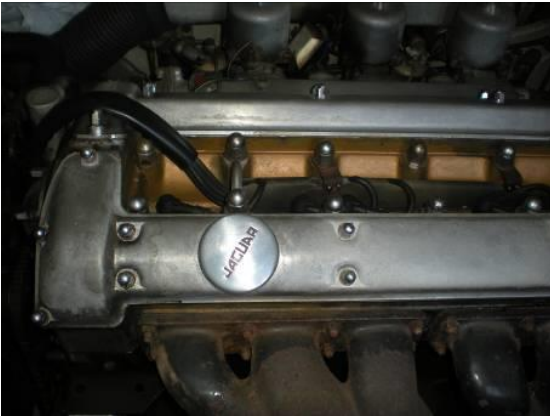


ASLAN in our driveway

- Caspian's bodywork has a few minor spots of rust, but the original Warwick Grey paintwork was seriously oxidised. I used Meguire's Compound on a couple of panels, followed by Armour-All Wax Polish, and the results are quite satisfying - although not as brilliantly shiny as I would like. I've done about half of the car so far, and my critical eye detects some of the panels are slightly discoloured with age, but I feel that I can get away without a respray at this stage, so I can concentrate on other priorities.
- The left side fuel filler flap hinge was rusted closed. I managed to manipulate a spanner in to remove the cover from the hinge, which then allowed me to remove the hinge itself. Both filler recesses are scaled with rust, but it hasn't penetrated into the metal, so I think it can be removed and treated without any replacement body parts. The overflow pipes are quite blocked (hence the rust) and will need to be either unblocked or replaced.
- The cooling fan is loose and wobbly. I couldn't tell if this is caused by a loose fitting or a collapsed bearing without getting access by removing the radiator. Hoses are hard, and all need replacing, so the radiator has been removed and will be sent away for reconditioning. The thermostat housing is corroded, but should be salvageable. Haven't yet had a chance to examine the fan.
- The windscreen washer bottle doesn't work in situ. I've removed it and cleaned it up, and it works quite well on the bench. Windscreen wipers were torn and bent, but the glass is unscratched. I've removed the blades to protect the glass.

- The burgundy leather upholstery is generally in reasonable condition, with one large tear in the driver's seat. I've removed the passenger seat and started to treat the leather with OAKWOOD LEATHER CARE to see how it comes up. All the seats will need to be re-upholstered as the foam rubber has deteriorated, and leaves a fine dust everywhere.

Tuesday 26th May 2015




I have to restrain myself! I get carried away cleaning and scraping etc, when I should be focused on more important matters. But hey!, I've polished the important bit – the oil-filler cap.....

My primary aim is to get the car registered as soon as possible - beautifying it can be done later, or fitted in while waiting for spare parts. **And I've set myself a deadline for registration for registration by the end of the year!** I have to be reasonably careful with the pennies, so this won't be a "chequebook project"..... but I won't accept cutting corners.

So, what needs to be done to get that precious Road Worthy Certificate? I've made a list of what I think are the most important jobs to be done:

The Smell

- Within days, Caspian was really ponging, and blow flies abundant . For the life of me, I couldn't find the culprit, though of course it must be something dead. I put up with it - surely it couldn't last forever! - but while furling about, I removed the air filter housing, gaining access to an enclosed compartment in the front right wing, and found a very large ex-rat..... now consigned to the bin! You should have seen the face on the young man at Auto-1 when I took the filter in as a sample.....

Don't know where it came from, but it's gone now!!! 

Cooling system

The radiator hoses were hard and crackly, and the fan "wobbly".

- Removed the radiator and hoses up to the heater unit, the thermostat housing and water pump. Sent the radiator to BAYSWATER RADIATORS for reconditioning - their report indicates 50% blockages! Unit has now been returned, painted gloss black. The vanes have been straightened, the drain tap removed, polished and replaced, and a complete hose kit ordered from Jaguar Prestige Spares (JPS).
- Removed the water pump - it seems to check out ok, no play and moves freely, so will replace as is.

- Removed the thermostat housing, which looks a bit corroded, but is serviceable. The thermostat itself was unserviceable, and will be replaced with a generic hi-flow thermostat from Supercheap Autos.
- Removed the fan and viscous coupling. Fan and pulley seem absolutely fine, but the viscous coupling has collapsed - hence the wobble. Ordered a new unit from JPS - although they had to be prompted to match a better price I had from elsewhere.
- While I was in the general area, I removed the alternator, to get access to clean the l/h engine block, and to give it a good clean. I've no reason to suspect it's faulty, so will replace as is.
- With the radiator and fan removed, I wanted to clean up many decades worth of oil and grime from the front of the engine, so I removed the bonnet and got my hands dirty. (I love the XK engine - so much aluminium to polish.....)
- Reassembly will happen when the spares and new gaskets arrive.

Brakes

- Removed the front callipers - the seals are torn, the pistons are probably unserviceable, and the brake pads are at the limit - $\frac{1}{4}$ in. Ordered calliper kits, pistons and pads. When they arrive, I'll send the callipers to BRAKEFORCE for reconditioning, and hopefully they'll return better than new.
- The pistons are hellishly expensive - \$380 for a set of 4! *Tip - never let your brakes deteriorate to the point where the pistons are damaged.....*
- Haven't had a chance to look at the rear callipers - I only have one set of axle stands - but I suspect they are in a similar condition - they are leaking fluid, and will obviously need attention, but let's hope I can get away without replacing the pistons!!
- The front brake rotors are around 13.2mm thick - well within the minimum thickness required of 11.5mm (Thanks, Reg, for the info). There's surface rust on them, so I'll send them away with the callipers, for skimming.
- Haven't even looked at the master cylinder and servo unit - but no leaks, and no obvious indication of any problems.

Front suspension

- I've only had a visual examination, but the lower ball-joints are history, and upper wishbone bushes are visibly cracked/perished, so most if not all of the wearing parts will need to be replaced.

Engine

- Seems to be running sweetly, so I'm hoping there's nothing to be done here, but I suspect there's a blow from the exhaust-side cam-cover, so I'm ordering a precautionary cam-cover gasket set.

Electrical

- Battery needs replacement
- Rev-counter and clock not working
- Windscreen washer not working. Removed it, cleaned it, and it works fine on the bench.

Bodywork

- L/h side petrol filler cap was rusted closed. Managed to open it slightly, to get access to the fitting, and removed the flap, then the hinge. The recess was full of water, so the drain is blocked. Removed the water and the rust - just surface rust, thank goodness. Hinge needs new springs. R/h filler cap opened ok, but has similar rust problems.
- Chrome work is generally in good condition, but some pieces will need to be re-chromed - but this shouldn't affect the RWC so is being filed as a future job.
- The windscreen and rear window rubbers are badly weathered, and will need replacing for the RWC. The door rubbers are also u/s. I priced the rubbers individually, but it's far better to get a full body rubber kit, which includes all the mouldings used on the car, including window, side-light, headlight, overrider mouldings etc. *Tip - These kits can cost anything from \$1700 in Australia - but they're half this price if you source from UK.*
- As noted before, the paintwork is original, but badly oxidised. I've used a cutting compound on most of the panels to see how this would improve it. Seems to be much better, though not by any means where I want it to be. I'll continue with the compound and polish, but I suspect eventually I'll get the car professionally resprayed. Another job for the future.
- There are a few minor rust spots - pinpricks really - which should not impact on the RWC.

Interior

- Woodwork is complete, but the varnish is weathered in places.
- The red/burgundy leather seats need some attention. There's a sizeable rip in the driver's seat squab which will need to be replaced, as will one panel on the back of the passenger seat. Some of the Dunlopillow cushioning in the seats has deteriorated, leaving a powdery trail. There's a hole in the rear seat squab that can be repaired. Normally this would wait until after the RWC, but the driver's seat needs attention now - so I've taken all the seats out, and taken them to Paul Walsh at NORTH QUEENSLAND TRIMMING. I inherited some leather dye from the previous owner - let's hope this will be sufficient for the leather repairs needed.
- The carpeting is badly worn, but serviceable for the time being.

This list is bound to get longer as time goes by - let's hope I can tick off these jobs and get the car registered in my time-frame - the end of **this** year.



*Caspian in his heyday,
November 2005*



*The poor young man as he is today –
at least some of the dirt has been removed!*