



HISTORIC REPLICA & SPECIALS REGISTER

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So, you want to build a replica C-Type? How hard can it be? We're about to find out because I'm delighted to say that this month, we are running the first in a series of articles which aims to dispel some of the myths associated with building your own replica Jaguar. Hopefully, Tony Bratt's experiences, advice and caveats, will encourage any of you contemplating taking the plunge, to dive in and have a go.

IN THE BEGINNING

The vehicle I have built is a Realm Engineering Heritage C-Type with glass-fibre body. This is at the lower end of the price range for replicas, however, the principles are the same whichever format you choose.

The first thing to make clear is that you do not need to be an engineer to build a good replica. It helps if you have had experience wielding a spanner or two, but one of the most recent cars to be completed in my circle of contacts is a beautiful example done by a chap who didn't even have a socket set when he started.

Secondly, you would not be doing it on your own because for the Realm cars there is a strong network of chat forums and people to help at every stage. If something 'doesn't fit' or there is a problem, you certainly wouldn't be the first.

WHERE TO START?

You have decided that you want to build a car and not buy one that someone else has built, and you have also decided which supplier you are going to use for your chassis and body and probably most of your ancillary parts.

What you are going to need before you buy your kit is the donor vehicle. Why is this important? You probably want to avoid the dreaded 'Q' plate when your car is finished. A Q-plate is for kit cars that are made up of lots of bits rather than from one donor vehicle and if you want to put an age-related plate on your car, you must avoid a Q-plate. It also devalues the vehicle for most potential purchasers should you wish to sell it at a later date.

The number of the donor engine that will go into your C-Type must match the one that appears on the donor's V5C, otherwise it is no good for your purposes. Once your C-Type has been through the IVA process (Individual Vehicle Approval – more on that at a later date) and you finally register your completed replica, you will be able to prove that most of the major components in your car are from the donor

and you will get an age-related registration.

For a Realm car, the ideal donor is a Series 2 or Series 3 XJ6, although any Jaguar saloon with Independent Rear Suspension (IRS) will do up to Series 3. If you use a Series 2 or 3 XJ6, the engine, front/rear suspension, braking system, steering column and, if you're lucky, manual gearbox will all go into your C-Type.

I was lucky enough to acquire a 3.4-engine donor because that's what I wanted for my C-Type. All the cars in period ran on 3.4 engines with different fuel induction systems, whereas most donor cars have the larger 4.2 XK engine because this is by far the most commonly available these days. The popularity of replicas coupled with old age means that suitable donor cars are getting harder to find, but they are still out there, mainly because the cost of restoring a rotten XJ6 far outweighs its ultimate value.

The condition and age of your donor engine will determine whether or not you decide to rebuild it. Early engines do not have to undergo an emissions test as part of their IVA, but later ones do and might not pass if they are totally worn out and ready for a rebuild anyway. Everyone in Jaguar circles knows there are horror stories of people being charged mad figures for rebuilding what is, effectively, a 1948 twin-cam engine. I had mine rebuilt by an engine builder (not a Jaguar specialist) and it runs like a sewing machine. As it turns out, it was a runner and I would have 'got away with it' had I not bothered, but I wanted it to be right. It is important to remember that you do not have to decide any of this now, but it needs to be built into your plan.

WHERE TO GO NEXT

So, you have bought your donor vehicle and it is leaking oil and various other fluids into your lawn/driveway/garage, so now for the exciting bit – it's time to buy your kit. As I mentioned above, this series is about a Realm car because that's the one I know about, but there are other options available and the principals remain the same.

Before you commit, there are a few questions you need to answer:

- Where are you going to store the chassis, body and ancillary parts?
- Where are you going to put the major components as you strip them from your donor?
- Where are you going to build your replica?



1 The sight of Tony Bratt's finished C-Type makes all the hard work worthwhile!

2 First find your donor car, in Tony's case, a 3.4 XJ6 **3** The finished chassis awaits collection from Realm Engineering's workshop **4** The body of the new car takes shape at Realm



If the answers to all three questions are the same, then great – you have the space – and as you will soon discover, space is extremely important. I know some people have managed to build a Realm car in a single garage, but it's not ideal. Another useful bit of kit is a trailer, or access to one, plus a tow-car.

Once you have weighed up all the options (and costs) and made your decision, it will be a case of putting in your order and waiting while your chosen supplier builds your chassis and gets your body ready. Meanwhile, you will probably have been stripping your donor car and preparing the parts for cleaning and painting, ready for the big day.

Remember to bag everything up and mark it clearly because you might remember it now but, in a few months' (or in some cases, years') time, one bracket or widget looks much like another. Freezer bags will become your new best friend as you strip your donor vehicle.

The exciting day has finally arrived and you are off to collect your car - or bits of it. You will have had long discussions with your supplier before this big day, however, when you get it all back to your garage or workshop it all can look a bit overwhelming! What do you do first?

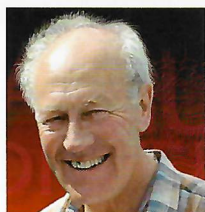
My advice is to check that you have all the bits you are supposed to have from the parts list, bag everything up and mark each item clearly. Find out if anything's missing or there's something you thought you had that you now find you haven't and, once you're satisfied that you're ready to go, put the kettle on and have a cuppa before you start in earnest. **Tony Bratt**

NEXT MONTH

Many thanks to Tony and let's hope his introduction to the world of replica

building hasn't put too many of you off. For me, his positive approach is encouraging and although I am a qualified engineer with plenty of experience of working on classic Jaguars, I find his can-do attitude should reassure a novice builder.

Next month Tony gets down to the nitty-gritty, gets pretty dirty in the process and tackles those first few steps towards achieving his goal - a beautiful C-Type replica to take him on many an adventure in the future. See you in September!



MK 1 & 2 REGISTER

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I've received an email from Matt Humphrey about his Jaguar - a 1962 Mk 2 from Los Angeles - and he could do with some help with his rust-free California car.

"The car ran - just - when I parked it up in October and removed the suspension. The rear is now complete, with most parts from Moss, and the front is next," Matt tells us. "I have a big question here. My wiring harness in the engine compartment is, to put it plainly, ***** and whoever modified the positive ground to negative did a major hack job. I purchased the wiring manual that Moss sells and it's very nice, with lots of good diagrams - what's missing is any reference to the modification from positive to negative. Does anyone out there have a wiring diagram or know where to purchase one for the modified wiring? I don't want to be replacing the harness blind."

Matt later followed up his first email with another one, this time about a friend's car - also a 1962 Mk 2 but, by the sounds of it, a rather unusual one.

"My friend mentioned that you might be able to shed some light on this car," Matt says. "It's right-hand drive, automatic and... a convertible! The story he got was that the Mk 2 came from Australia, before being shipped to the USA.

"My friend has the frame for the convertible top but it needs to be re-upholstered. He is trying to figure out what the value of this car would be for insurance purposes because he was told that there were only seven of these conversions done in 1962. Any light you can shed on this vehicle or if you or anyone else has an idea what it might be worth would be greatly appreciated."

I was obviously intrigued by this unusual set of requests so I passed it to Bryan Mander, our JDC Commercial Director and Mk 2 expert, who oversees valuations for the Club. He has sent a very helpful reply to Matt:

"I can confirm that this vehicle was converted after it left the Jaguar factory in the UK - a number of companies converted these cars to two-door convertibles over the years. Valuation of such a vehicle comes from documented provenance, not word of mouth, and usually the history of these cars is passed on as they are sold. What documentation, if any, is with the car?

"As I said above, a number of manufacturers have been involved in conversions, including Vicarage in the UK, who have been producing them since 1984 and could be a source of knowledge for this car. Radford did



some conversions too, but there is little detail available, while a coachbuilding company in Barcelona has converted a Mk 2, as has the Anglo-Italian Garage in Italy. Therefore, if this car was converted in Australia, it is not alone.

1 All is revealed... a rare and globetrotting Mk 2 convertible **2** There are few giveaways as to who converted the car and when **3** Still on its Texas plate, the Mk 2 spent time in Australia after leaving Browns Lane **4** According to Mk 2 guru Bryan Mander, the seats are not original... **5**...and neither is the wheel brace