



Jaguar Jottings

March 2000

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Vice President: Michael Stott

Secretary: Guy Larabie

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Activities: Yann Robin

Concours Chair: Bob Hiland

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Jag Jottings is the monthly publication of the Ottawa Jaguar Club. It is produced for the information of its members and welcomes your participation.

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You are cordially invited to join the Executive of the Ottawa Jaguar Club at our annual

March Dinner

Saturday, March 18th

7:00 for 7:30

at the National Press Club

\$35.00 per person

Contact Paddy Robertson (729-8859 or
paddyrobertson@hotmail.com) by
March 13th to reserve

See Page 3 for more details



NEXT MEETING

Monday, April 10th,

7:30 at Capone's Restaurant

Industrial Road, Ottawa

There is no March meeting

President's Message

Isn't the weather great these days? The snow is melting almost faster than it came! Makes spring feel more like a real possibility rather than a dream; as a matter of fact, John and I were discussing whether we should dig the XJ-S out so we can use it when we go to Kingston on March 18. If the weather is still decent by the first weekend in March, we just might!

Speaking of March 18, that's the date for our annual March Dinner. I'm sorry I won't be there, but my very able Vice President will handle the only task of the evening quite ably. It's a Dinner evening, so there will be no business reports or any such thing. It's a time to get together, compare notes on winter activities and discuss possible dates of when to get the cars out and what kind of maintenance they all need before they become road-worthy after a 6-month hibernation. I would like to hear from you, afterward,



how Mike Stott handled his task - to tell everyone to sit down and "Let the dinner begin."

As always, we need to know who will be attending the evening. Therefore, you will be getting a phone call before too long (if you haven't already) to confirm your attendance at our dinner. We hope you decide to join us; it is always a very successful event. (Note: If you say you will go and then do not show, you will be expected to reimburse the Club the amount paid for your dinner.)

Does the Jottings look different to you? That's because we have a new layout person! At the February meeting, Guy Larabie informed me that Rae Chalmers had decided to give up the job of "Newsletter Designer" (actually, I don't know if he ever had an official title, but this sounds good!). He's done it for many years, and we are very grateful to him for the

time and effort he put into it. At the same time, Trevor Klotz, who had handled distribution for just about as many years, I think, decided it was a good time to "retire" as well. We owe him a big thank you, too. Your work has been greatly appreciated!

Taking their place for now, is Paddy Robertson. She may or may not give up layout when our Editor, Jim Walker gets back from his vacation down south. Whatever happens then, there will still be only two people handling the jobs instead of three, as in the past. We think this will be a much more efficient handling of the Jottings. Thanks, Paddy, for volunteering to help out. We know you're going to do a great job!

Well, after seeing how much space my first message took up in the Jottings, I vowed to keep future messages short - so that's it for now! See you on April 10th, at Capone's, 7:30 meeting start.

Wendy VanderMeulen

2000 Club Executive

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March Munch Info

Join the Club Executive and our guests at our annual March dinner in the Library of the National Press Club.

Menu

Potato & Leek Soup

or

Spring Salad

Choice of Prime Rib or Chicken Kiev

Strawberries & Kiwi in Kirsch

or

New York Cheesecake with Strawberry Coulis

(Cash Bar)

You are asked to pre-select from the options above (soup or salad, entrée, dessert).

The National Press Club is located in the Booth Building, 150 Wellington St. You can reach it through their back entrance on Sparks Street (just a few steps west of O'Connor). Go in the entrance and up to the second floor. There is free parking at the World Exchange Plaza.

Contact Paddy Robertson (729-8859 or email paddyrobertson@hotmail.com) to reserve.

Notes from the last meeting

by Guy Larabie

The president opened the meeting by going through a short list of “housekeeping” items. The key issue addressed was that the club ran a small deficit last year. However, the accounting did not make a valuation for our inventory of trophies, plates and other miscellaneous sundries. It was estimated that with a valuation of these items we would more than likely break even or have a small profit.

The key reason for this situation is that when the annual fees were lowered, no provisions were made for payment of the meeting room at Capone’s which came in early last year. As well, the free calendars that were given out as part of the membership cost us a fair bit.

There are still a number of



those calendars on hand that have not yet been claimed and they are available to anyone who wants them. The pictures are quite nice and are suitable for displaying in your office or garage.

Wendy then introduced Shannon Lee Mannion who recounted her many experiences in automotive journalism. This all began when she bought a 1963 Ford Falcon and then met a member of the Ford Club. This led to joining the Model “A” Club, to writing about the various cars in the Club, to writing about cars in general the Ottawa Sun, The Citizen and various other publications.

One of her first experiences with British cars nearly caused her a coronary! This happened when she was presented with the bill for overhauling her MGB. Merv Clarke was there and is credited from preventing her fainting! She also recounted many interesting anecdotes including her “alleged” marriage, as reported in Old Autos, to a party named Bark, who was actually the dog of a partici-

pant in the Great North American Car Race! All in all, a very interesting and entertaining presentation.

Yann Robin reported on his many trials and tribulations in dealing with Capone’s to get a reservation for our annual March Dinner. As it turned out, we will be having our dinner at the National Press Club on March 18th (see details elsewhere in this issue).

Harry Brownell reported on membership. We are more or less on target with over 40 paid up members to date. We usually end up with about 65 as those who winter south or the “last minute club” arrive in the spring or in time for the Concours d’Élégance. Speaking of the Concours, Bob Hiland reported that the meet and greet will be at the Chimo Inn on the 9th of June with the Concours the next day at the National Museum of Science and Technology. Everything is on track and any one who would like to help out is welcome to contact him.

Continued on page 6

A case of missed opportunity?

By Guy Larabie

“The Volkswagen Beetle is ugly, loud, clumsy and most definitely not an interesting commercial proposition for Britain.” This damning judgement by the British Government in 1946, one of the great economic blunders of modern times, is chronicled in a German translation of the British Intelligence Objective Sub-Committee (BIOS) files.

As one of the victors of the Second World War, Britain could have dismantled the VW factory in Wolfsburg and set it up at home. The BIOS files show that the Beetle was tested for the British subsidiary of Ford. Adolf Hitler had modelled VW on a Ford factory in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

British Major Ivan Hirst took over production at the factory and drove the 1,000th post-war Beetle off the production line in March 1946. The factory was handed on to German engineer, Heinz Nordhoff. The Americans had thrown him out of Opel, but the British military government gave him the chance to revive the ugly duckling VW.

After a road test, the Major grumbled: “The engine is rather loud and gives a rough ride, its performance is in no sense overwhelming.” The brakes, he added, were less than satisfactory. Steering on corners is difficult, the suspension is bad and moreover the car is “extremely ugly”.

Decades later, irony was to triumph as VW bought the two flagship marques of Rolls-Royce and Bentley! And it was this British decision that enabled the VW Beetle to become a world-beater. Over 21 million have been sold all over the world, a total higher for this single model than the total British auto production for several decades!

Today, Germany can barely conceal its mirth. “The decision to reject the company was the equivalent of missing a penalty shot in Wembley in front of an empty German goal,” Stern magazine recently guffawed.

*** Story adapted from an article in the Calgary Herald*

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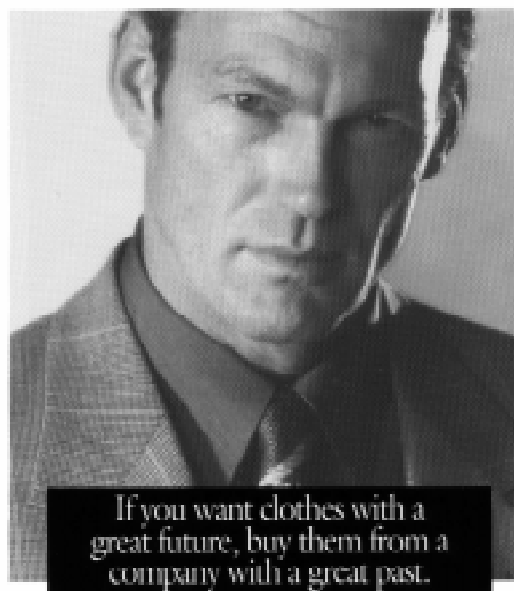
Notes from Feb. meeting
continued from page 4

There was no detailed financial report. Roger Gough, our treasurer, had apparently absconded to Cuba with our non-existent funds! Good luck, Roger. See you at the next meeting.

Wendy then circulated a survey to find out what members' preferences were for activities in the coming year. The results will be released at the March Dinner.

The meeting ended with Phil Karam and me giving a presentation on our trip to Arizona to attend a series of auctions and visit some cultural sites, i.e. auto recycling yards. Pictures were circulated and if anyone who wasn't there would like to see them, just let Phil or me know and we will bring them to the dinner.

Finally, there will be **NO MEETING IN MARCH** as we are having our annual dinner instead. The meeting closed at about 9:30 when members went outside admire/examine/question Phil's "new" 4-wheel drive Jaguar creation.



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