E-TYPE
50
FIFTY YEARS OF A DESIGN ICON
JAGUAR
It's not hard to see why the E-Type is perhaps the most elegant car ever made.
he 1960s was a decade defined by icons and heroes and 1961 had more than its fair share. There was Yuri, the first man to leave the confines of our planet. There was John, the American President who accepted the Soviet challenge and committed his country to sending Neil, Buzz and Michael to the Moon.

In California, Brian, Dennis, Carl, Mike and Al became better known as The Beach Boys. Meanwhile, in Liverpool, John, Paul, George and Ringo played their first gig at the Cavern Club. Then, just a month after the Beatles took to the stage for the first time, William, Bill, Malcolm and Norman unveiled the car that came to embody the spirit of the age.

The decade that became known as the Swinging Sixties was a time of revolution, liberation, innovation, socialisation and, of course, sexualisation. The E-Type encapsulated all of those things. It was the world’s fastest production car, capable of 150mph yet tractable and comfortable enough not to be the preserve of the unenlightened male. Its styling, by aerodynamicist Malcolm Sayer, was the epitome of grace, appreciated by both sexes at a time when the struggle for equality entered its fiercest stage. And it was no unattainable supercar but a reliable and, above all, affordable sports car.

The E-Type’s development actually began in the preceding decade as Jaguar founder Sir William Lyons looked to replace the XK sports car, which had itself been crowned world’s fastest production car in 1948. The intervening years had seen Jaguar dominant on the racetrack, particularly at the 24 Hours of Le Mans, with the C and D-Type racers, and it was the lessons learnt from these cars that would inform the design of the E-Type – as well as giving it a name.

The first prototype, E1A, was completed in 1957. Built from aluminium, it utilised a central monocoque and exotic magnesium framework to support the 2.4-litre straight-six, an engine design masterminded by chief engineer Bill Heynes. The main purpose of the car was to test
It's slightly dog-eared now, but this bound volume is a treasure trove of information for E-Type owners and enthusiasts worldwide. Held safely in the archives of the Jaguar Heritage Trust, it is one of seven containing data on every E-Type to leave the factory. From the chassis numbers, to the engine specifications, colours and even names of the first owner, every entry was recorded by hand.
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THERE IS A LOT OF EXPRESSION IN THIS CAR. BUT ALSO A LOT OF PURITY.
SIR JACKIE STEWART

The E-Type was not simply an iconic car but it played a huge part in my personal and professional life in the 1960s. My family actually ran a Jaguar dealership in Dumbarton and one of our best customers was a chap called Barry Filer, who allowed me to help him as a mechanic at races.

We were at a meeting at Oulton Park when I got the chance to drive an E-Type against some pretty big names of the era. I can remember everything about that car – even the number plate. FSMIL. It was a garage demonstrator but I managed to set similar lap times to Roy Salvadori and that was probably the point at which I knew my future lay with motor racing rather than trap shooting, which was my other passion.

On the racetrack, the E-Type was immediately a winner in the hands of drivers like Graham Hill. It was very well balanced and had a very driveable engine, so it was relatively easy to drive quickly. It was a perfect car for someone starting out like me.

Away from the track it also helped me win over the future Mrs Stewart! Helen and I were walking out at that time, too, and we did a lot of miles in an E-Type together. It was the car in which she drove at 100mph for the first time – and I should add that there were no speed limits in those days...

We also went on our honeymoon in one; we drove all the way to Germany, where I also competed in a shooting competition. I finished second... and I still blame Helen for that!

The E-Type’s timeless design and speed made it one of the great cars in the history of the British motor industry. It’s famous for being the car that everyone wanted and, at just a couple of thousand pounds, it was half the price of many of the limited edition cars from Ferrari, Aston and the like.

But it also played a part in changing how car owners dealt with dealers and the industry. It marked the beginning of the end for the specialist body builders because a network of dealerships was now in place, so you could easily fix your car if you bent it. That hadn’t been the case before.

The E-Type was, in every sense, the first mass-produced sports car in Britain. Nothing before had been available to so many people, for which we have Sir Williams Lyons to thank. He did so much for the motor industry in this country and it’s hard to believe that he was never made a peer.

Nothing let this car down, particularly when it first came out. In its purest form, before it grew bigger bumpers and a higher roofline, it was an incredibly beautiful car. Its lines were so clean. It revolutionised motoring and everyone wanted one. Why have a Ferrari when you could have one of these?

A young Jackie Stewart poses with an E-Type – the car which brought him to motor racing... and helped him to win over his future wife.
THE E-TYPE IN NUMBERS

HOW FAST,
HOW MUCH,
HOW MANY...
IT’S ALL HERE IN
THIS NUMERICAL
COMPENDIUM
A certain ratio here to believe that the E-Type achieved such astonishing performance with what would nowadays be regarded as less than the full complement of gears.
CARB LOADING

The E-Type’s engine was almost identical to that of the last of the racing D-Types. It exchanged Weber carburetors for SU units; trading a little top-end power for low-down torque to aid real-world road manners.
JAGUAR MEET JAGUAR  Decades before a certain motoring television programme decided to pit jet fighter against supercar, it seems someone else got there first...
THERE'S SOMETHING SO ELEMENTAL IN THE APPEAL OF AN E-TYPE THAT FEW CAN RESIST ITS SIREN SONG.
UNDER THE BRIGHT LIGHTS OF VEGAS, THE E-TYPE LOOKS AS GOOD AS IT DID IN THE HIGH DESERT.
THE E-TYPE DIDN'T JUST TAKE THE CROWDS
at the Geneva Motor Show by surprise, its rapturous reception caught Jaguar on the back foot as well.

Just prior to the demonstration, the fixed head 3600 HP, had been driven to Geneva by Jaguar press officer Bob Berry and after being presented to the media it was pressed into service showing off its abilities on a nearby hillclimb course.

Unsurprisingly, the queue was almost as long as the course itself and Berry soon found himself swamped. There was one other E-type available, 77 RW. The problem was that the convertible was being used as a development car, so it was nearly a thousand miles away, pounding round a British test track in the hands of Jaguar's chief test driver Norman Dewis.

A call was made and Dewis's session on the high-speed banking was interrupted by the track manager who told him he was wanted back at Browns Lane double-quick.
Arriving into the service bay by mid-afternoon, Dewis was met by Chief Engineer Bill Heynes and a couple of fitters, who immediately began stripping 77 RW of its test equipment before prepping and polishing it.

A baffled Dewis asked what was going on, only to be told by Heynes that both he and the car were needed in Geneva. Dewis was further taken aback when he was informed that he was booked on a ferry from Dover that evening and an overnight bag for him had already been collected from his wife. After a swift helping of fish and chips, Dewis roared out of the factory gates at 7.45pm that evening on the first leg of his daring drive through the night — 200 miles to Dover and less than two hours in which to do it. We'll let you do the maths.

It was a tall order but Dewis, who had set a production car world speed record in the XK120 in 1948 and partnered Stirling Moss at Le Mans in a C-Type in 1955, was equal to the task. Helped by an unprecedented non-stop string of green lights through London, Dewis arrived at the docks in Dover at ten minutes to ten, only to be told that he was too late to board, the boat was ready to sail.

However, the stevedores were intrigued by the E-Type, ticking as it cooled on the dockside and alerted the crew, telling them that they had to get a look at this sensational new car. The ramp was lowered and Dewis was ushered onto the ferry, where everyone crowded round the car. Hearing of the drive ahead, the crew plied him with food and plenty of strong ship’s coffee.
THE SEMINAL E-TYPES

EVERY E-TYPE IS SPECIAL BUT SOME HAVE A HISTORY THAT MAKES THEM QUITE UNIQUE. HERE ARE FOUR OF THE BEST...
Despite failing to finish at Le Mans in 1960, the potential of E2A was clear to driver Briggs Cunningham, who returned it to the factory and had the experimental engine replaced with a stronger 3.8-litre version with modifications for race pace durability. In order to clear the larger powerplant, a bulge had to be riveted to the bonnet, a feature that would find its way onto the production cars. The car achieved some success in America driven by the likes of Bruce McLaren, Jack Brabham and Dan Gurney. Fortunately, unlike the first prototype, E1A, which was dismantled at the end of its test programme, E2A ended up in private hands for many years before being sold in 2008 for just shy of $5 million.
SPORTS AND HIGH PERFORMANCE CAR NUMBER
American Dream: Briggs Cunningham entered three cars in the 1963 Le Mans race. Two retired, but Cunningham finished second in class.
The E-Type, unlike the earlier C and D-Type racers, was never designed as a competition car. Technology had moved on apace and the days in which a car could be driven to the circuit, win and be driven home again – exactly as the C-Type had done at Le Mans – were over.

That isn’t to say that the E-Type’s racing roots weren’t readily apparent. Its central monocoque and front and rear subframes were direct developments of the all-conquering D-Type chassis, while its straight-six engine had been powering Le Mans winners for a decade.

Exactly a month after the E-Type was unveiled, two cars in virtually showroom specification – right down to the cigar lighters – were entered in a 25-lap race at Oulton Park in the hands of Graham Hill and Roy Salvadori. The Aston Martin of Innes Ireland split the pair but future F1 world champion Hill took the chequered flag on the E-Type’s maiden outing. Briggs Cunningham, who had taken the E2A prototype to Le Mans in 1960, was sufficiently encouraged by this to repeat the exercise with the real thing, finishing a credible fourth in the 1962 race in a coupé, while a roadster fitted with an aerodynamic hardtop followed him home in fifth.

Despite this initial success, Jaguar was not to be drawn into running a full E-Type racing team, as it was concentrating its efforts on developing the mid-engined XJ220 XJ13 for a full-bore return to Le Mans. The company was, however, prepared to investigate the possibility of creating a competition E-Type for others to campaign.

A SHOWROOM SPEC CAR – DOWN TO THE CIGAR LIGHTER – WON THE E-TYPE’S FIRST EVER RACE
AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO THE E-TYPE FROM 1957 TO 1974
LIGHTWEIGHT E-TYPE

TOP SPEED: 170MPH. 0-60: 5 SECONDS
ENGINE: 3.8-LITRE STRAIGHT-SIX. PRICE: £1.5M

The Lightweight E-Type has been often imitated but it was the original 12 cars which were driven by such illustrious names as Hill, Salvadori, Protheroe, Stewart and McLaren.

Engine: 3781cc, six-cylinder, in-line; Lucas fuel injection; 350bhp @ 6800rpm; 325lb ft @ 5750rpm

Chassis: aluminium monocoque, torsion bar and wishbone independent front suspension; independent rear suspension with lower wishbone and upper driveshaft link

Dimensions: Length 444cm; width 165cm; height 119cm; weight 975kg
1967

**SERIES 1 1/2 2+2**

**TOP SPEED:** 136MPH  
**0-60:** 9 SECONDS  
**ENGINE:** 4.2-LITRE STRAIGHT-SIX  
**PRICE:** £2245

To satisfy the demands of the American market the E-Type was lengthened and made taller to create a third variant, which was — at least in theory — a four-seater. This was also the first E-Type to be offered with automatic transmission.

**Engine:** 4235cc, six-cylinder, in-line; triple SU carburettors; 265bhp @ 5400rpm; 280lb ft @ 4000rpm  
**Chassis:** Steel monocoque; wishbone and torsion bar independent front suspension; independent rear suspension with lower wishbones and upper driveshaft linkage  
**Dimensions:** Length 467cm; width 165cm; height 127cm; weight 1401kg
t has never been easy to capture the essence of the E-Type in words and pictures, but we hope that this book reflects the passion and reverence with which we hold the model here at Jaguar.

This iconic car is more than simply a museum piece. It remains a potent symbol of what every Jaguar should be, now and far beyond the next 50 years.

The E-Type’s combination of power, sensuous styling, innovation and attainability are hallmarks of every car in the current Jaguar range. Those same principles continue to guide our design and engineering teams. This book has been a celebration of arguably the most beautiful, most famous car ever created, but to think of it as the greatest Jaguar ever would be incorrect. That will always be the one we have yet to build...

JAGUAR CARS, COVENTRY, ENGLAND

CARL-PETER FORSTER, GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE, TATA MOTORS
DR RAFL SPETH, CEO, JAGUAR LAND ROVER | ADRIAN HALLMARK, BRAND DIRECTOR, JAGUAR CARS
MIKE O’DRISCOLL, MANAGING DIRECTOR, JAGUAR HERITAGE | FRANK KLAAS, GLOBAL HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS, JAGUAR LAND ROVER