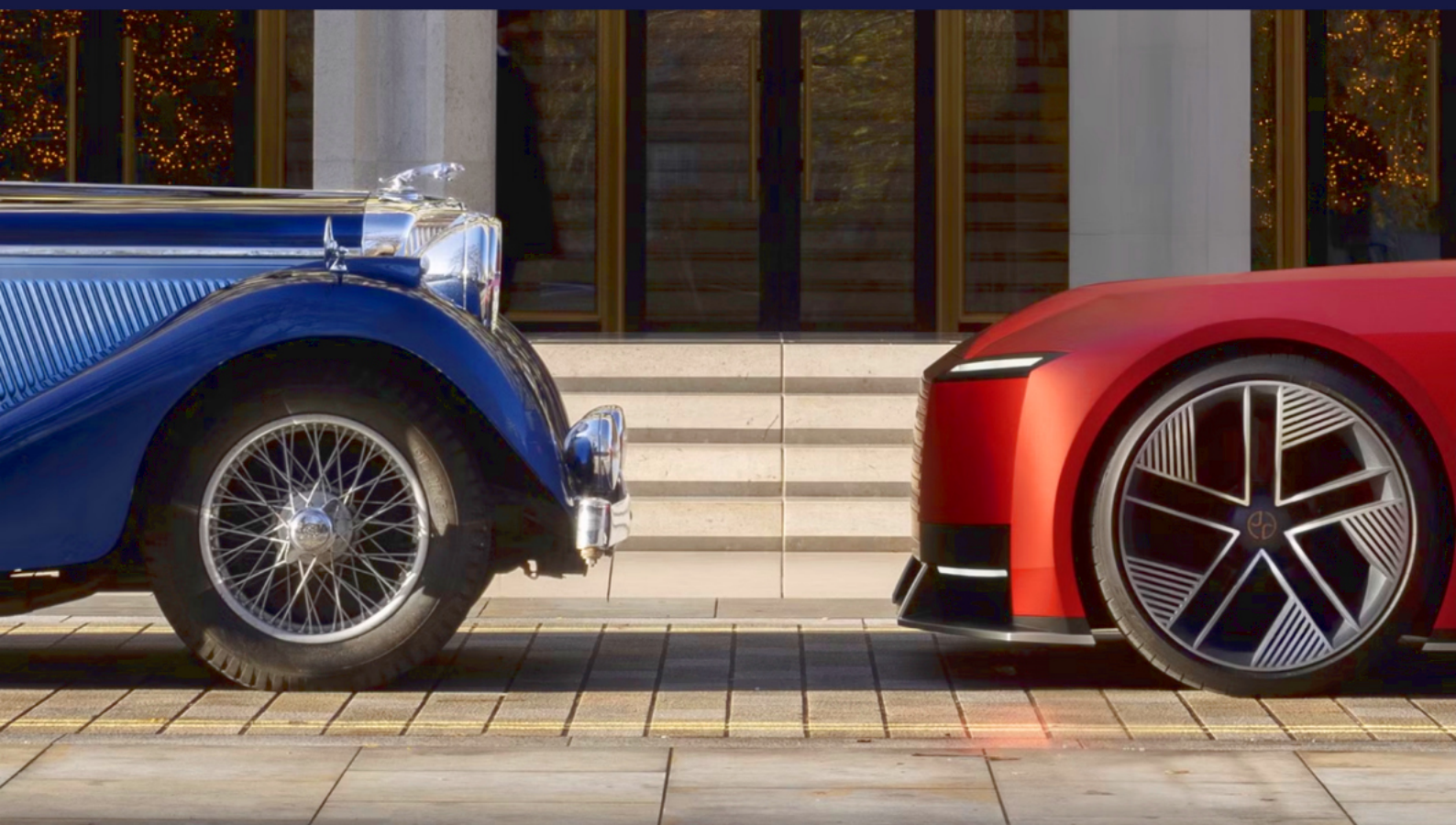


Essex Thameside News

Nº 226, February 2026



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From the Editor

Hello Essex Thameside members,

As I'm sure you know, both our Chairman Steve Rider and Membership Secretary Bev Warren are taking a sabbatical to complete various medical procedures; we wish them both well and hope for their swift recovery.

In the meantime, January has been a very busy month for the Essex Thameside region. We started the year by joining members of the Porsche Club GB for a Sunday breakfast/brunch at the Summerhill Garden Centre on the outskirts of Basildon. An impressive garden centre, the food was good and those who went thoroughly enjoyed meeting the enthusiastic members of a different club. So much so, that it was agreed we should try to do some more joint events in future and we invited their members to join us at our club night for a presentation by the Global Head of PR for JLR, Ken McConomy, accompanied by Peter Leake, Chairman of the JEC. We were also joined by members of the Jaguar Drivers Club Area 33, so this week's club night was therefore the busiest we have ever seen, attended by a 64-strong audience.

Ken McConomy began by talking about his personal enthusiasm and loyalty for Jaguar, having worked for them for many years. Jaguar is an essential part of a business comprising four key brands (Range Rover, Defender, Discovery and Jaguar) and "there would be no JLR without Jaguar". However, he said, it is a business and the overall objective is to make a profit.

So, JLR's strategy is not to make cars for every market segment but for each brand to target specific areas where it can make money. Despite their positive reception, income from sales of the F-Pace, XF, XJ, I-Pace and others had not reached the levels hoped for, exacerbated by the damaging impact of other events such as the pandemic, the resulting shortage of computer chips, uncertainty over the transition to EVs and the future of I.C.E. vehicles or, more recently, President Trump's imposition of tariffs and the massive cyber attack last year.

So, Ken said, Jaguar had decided to focus on the £150k-£250k price range where it perceives a gap, with sales led by design and desirability. Their marketing approach, the car's design and the choices they made were all quite deliberate; to quote their CEO, "Some may love [the new car] now, some may love it later and some may never love it—and that's OK". Overall, it was an interesting and encouraging presentation, followed by some very good questions which Ken answered honestly and positively. We are very grateful to both Ken and Peter; apparently they also enjoyed it and have offered to come back to talk to us again after the launch of the new car this autumn. You will be able to read more about it in the next issue of this newsletter.

Looking ahead, unfortunately the First Aid course which was planned for 12th February is now cancelled due to the non-availability of Steve Rider and Bev Warren that week. However, there will be a breakfast meet at The Angel, Broomfield, on Saturday 14th February (please contact Neil Shanley for details) and Sunday Lunch at the Six Bells in Boreham on 1st March (Contact Lester Magness). And, for anyone who has not already done so, please contact Vaughn High urgently if you wish to participate in our planned breaks in East Anglia (late April) or the Isle of Wight (September), as advertised on pages 5 and 6.

Happy motoring!

Committee Members

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|--|
|  | Richard Gibby Treasurer, Webmaster and Editor rwgibby@gmail.com |  | Ian Croxson Secretary ian@thecroxsons.com |  | Lester Magness Vice Chairman and Social Secretary lestermagness1@gmail.com |
|  | Beverly Warren Membership Secretary beverlyrwarren@gmail.com |  | Neil Shanley Committee member and Chief Correspondent neilshanley360@gmail.com |  | Vaughn High Committee Member vaughn.high@sky.com |

For Your 2026 Diary

| | |
|--|--|
| Saturday 14 th February | Breakfast Meet at The Angel, Broomfield CM1 7AH. <i>[Contact Neil Shanley]</i> |
| Tuesday 24 th February | Club Night |
| Sunday 1 st March | Sunday Lunch at the Six Bells, Boreham CM3 3JE <i>[Contact Lester Magness]</i> |
| Tuesday 31 st March | AGM & Club Night |
| Saturday 5 th April | Transport Fest at the Museum of Power, Langford, Maldon CM9 6QA <i>[Contact: Lester Magness]</i> |
| Sunday 19 th April | Drive-it Day with Mayflower Rotary Club, starting from Hunts Farm, Brentwood CM13 1UR <i>[Contact: Ian Croxson]</i> |
| 27 th April - 1 st May | Grand East Anglia Tour <i>[Contact: Vaughn High]</i> |
| Sunday 17 th May | Clacton Classics Show, Parish Fields, Plough Corner, Little Clacton CO16 9ND <i>[Contact Lester Magness]</i> |
| Tuesday 28 th April | Club Night |
| Tuesday 26 th May | Club Night |
| Sunday 28 th June [TBC] | Hatfield Heath Festival, Hatfield Heath CM22 7EB <i>[Contact Neil Shanley]</i> |
| Tuesday 30 th June | Club Night |
| Sunday 12 th July | Orsett Classic & Vintage Show, Orsett Showground, Rectory Road RM16 3JU <i>[Contact Lester Magness]</i> |
| Tuesday 28 th July | Club Night |
| Sunday 9 th August | Cambridgeshire Signature & Performance Motor Show, Duxford CB22 4QR <i>[Contact Ian Croxson]</i> |
| Sunday 16 th August | Lodge Coaches Car Show & Autojumble, High Easter CM1 4QR <i>[Contact Lester Magness]</i> . Also: J.E.C. 'Simply Jaguar' at the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu |
| Etc. | |
| Other events will be added when details are confirmed... | |

Contact Details:

| | | |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------------|
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| Steve Rider | 07969 572010 | s rider@live.co.uk |
| Vaughn High | 07910 787411 | vaughn.high@sky.com |

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Drive-it Day

JEC Essex Thameside Region, the Rotary Club of Billericay Mayflower and the Rotary Club of Billericay Town are collaborating to support the annual Federation of British Historic Vehicle Club's Drive-it-Day. Applications have just opened and we invite you to participate in the upcoming Drive-it-Day on Sunday 19th April 2026.

The event will begin at Hunts Farm, Old Church Lane, Brentwood CM13 1UR. Refreshments will be available to buy before setting out on a 40+ mile drive through the Essex countryside to a destination

venue north east of Chelmsford.

All proceeds from this year's event will be shared between Parkinson's UK, Motor Neurone Disease and other Rotary-supported charities.

Entries will be limited to 150 vehicles in total. Applications as per the attached Registration Form with your payment of £20.00 per vehicle must be made directly to the e mail address as follows ClassicCarRotaryMayflower@gmail.com

Additionally, please confirm your attendance to me directly at ian-@thecroxxsons.com or via mobile phone to 07477 785005.



a charity fund-raising National Drive-it-Day event on Sunday 19th April 2026

Starting from Hunts Farm, Old Church Ln, Brentwood CM13 1UR. Refreshments will be available to buy before setting out on a 40+ mile journey through the Essex countryside. The destination is a venue north east of Chelmsford.

Rules of the Event: -

1. The event is open to Vintage/Classic vehicles registered before 1984 & Thoroughbred cars. No Modern substitute allowed if entered car fails to proceed or due to inclement weather! Entry is at the discretion of the organisers. **2.** The entrant must be the legal owner of the vehicle or be authorised by the owner to be using the vehicle. **3.** Entries should only be on this form: please use a separate form for each vehicle. Photocopies of this form are acceptable. No change of vehicle can be made without prior notification and acceptance of the organisers. **4.** All vehicles must be licensed and have a valid MOT certificate where required at the time of the event. **5.** The use of the vehicle entered must be covered by appropriate insurance as required by law and entry warrants by signing this form that any person in charge of the vehicle on the event is so covered. **6.** Entry may be refused if satisfactory evidence of valid insurance cannot be produced upon request. **7.** Car Clubs Welcome.

DATA PROTECTION ACT: We will advise you of next year's event. (Please let us know if this is not acceptable to you).

From time to time we receive flyers from other car organisations, please advise us if you'd rather not be kept in touch.

| Registration Form PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS TO FILL IN THE FORM | |
|---|---|
| Name | Phone contact |
| Address | |
| | Post Code |
| Vehicle Make and Model | Year REG No. |
| Email | |
| (Please use uppercase so that it can be easily read) | |
| Closing date for entries is Thursday 2nd April 2026 | |
| I have read and accept the rules of this event | Signature of entrant |
| Send this Registration form via email to: ClassicCarRotaryMayflower@gmail.com | |
| ENTRY FEE PAYMENT OF £20.00 can be made by bank transfer to:- | |
| Rotary Club of Billericay Mayflower Charitable Trust CIO | |
| Bank: Co op | Sort Code: 08-92-99 Account No: 67249383 Payment Ref: DID25 |
| Postal alternative: Send an A5 postage paid SAE to: Rotary Classic Car, 76 Porchester Road, Billericay CM12 0UQ | |
| cheque payable to "Rotary Club of Billericay Mayflower Charitable Trust CIO" sent to address above. | |

Charities benefitting from this year's event are:-



Rotary charities in Essex

Charity No. 1186535



Grand East Anglia Tour

Let's get out and explore...

Lincoln



Bomber Command Centre



North Norfolk Railway



Cromer Crab lunch



Battle of Britain Memorial Flight

Kings Lynn



Norwich Castle Museum



Norwich Cathedral

Norwich



Historic Ely

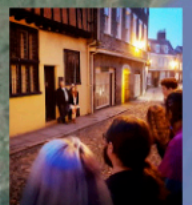
Ely



Oliver Cromwell's home



Medieval Norwich with night-time ghost walk



Monday 27th April
— Friday 1st May (4 nights)

Staying at Premier Inns in
Kings Lynn and Norwich East

Contact: Vaughn High
07910 787411

Chelmsford

J.E.C. Essex Thameside Isle of Wight long weekend

Classic car shows trip Friday 11th September to Monday 14th September 2026



The club has attended these two shows and had a great, inclusive weekend at Norton Grange in the not-too-distant past. It was difficult to beat as a trip. Therefore, for 2026, we are returning to the car shows at two locations for the Saturday and Sunday. It's great value and a lovely drive out so do you want to join us?

This trip is from Friday 11th September to Monday 14th September and the special price from Warners of £234 per person plus £55 per car includes the ferry crossings from Portsmouth and a three-night stay in chalets located at Warners Norton Grange, with evening meals, breakfasts and entertainment all included.

If you wish to come to the shows, on Saturday we drive to Newport for a relaxing day at the quayside show and around the town, and on Sunday we display our cars at Ryde Esplanade. You may instead decide to visit the Needles, Ventnor (for WW2 history) or even Osborne House.

We need to move quickly on this to ensure we get the Warners 'en bloc' rate via Geoff Monk's contacts. If you are interested, in the first instance contact vaughn.high@sky.com or add a message on our club Whatsapp.





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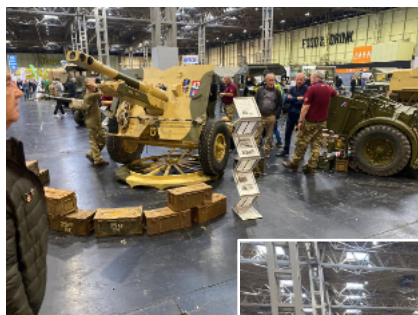


The Classic Motor Show, NEC, November 2025

Highlighting the Unusual

The classic car season seems to flash by in the twinkling of an eye, more so the older I become. One minute we are basking in the early summer sun at the Hatfield Heath extravaganza and the next it is a cooler, wintery sun which lights our way to the annual Lancaster Classic Motor Show at the NEC. From 7th–9th November, this is not a show to be missed. With over 3,000 vehicles on display at some 310 stands spread across six halls, it is a suitable climax to the season.

So, what did we see? Old favourites like the “Meet the Experts” theatre and the “Restoration Workshop” were again present, as were the “Pride of Ownership Competition”, The “Meguiars Club Showcase”, “Iconic Auctioneers” and “Classic Motorbike Display”,



plus autojumble and spares stalls together with dealer displays. New to the show for 2025 was the “Military Vehicle Trust Commemorative Showcase” featuring over 30 restored vehicles from WWII and other conflicts, although I am not convinced that stalls selling guns and ammunition, even if all deactivated, were suitable for a car show. Also new, and on a lighter note, was the “Pipercross Modified Car Display” showing all kinds of customised cars, some barely recognisable from the donor car.

Steve Potter and I take a long weekend up in Coventry and Birmingham to enjoy the proceedings and so do some of our members. Also staying at our hotel were Steve and Beverly, Richard Gibby and former members, Doug and Jackie Warren. At the show we met Lester, who was on the Lotus stand despite his car being on the Citroen Club stand. Vaughn High and John Pemberton were rumoured to be around, but sadly we did not meet up. Maybe next time. There was far too much to describe here but we did see a few oddities which were worth a mention.

Over at TVR, we came across the Speed 12, the first time it has been shown since 1997 here at the NEC. A development of the 7/12 shown in 1996 also at the NEC, the 12 was intended to take TVR to Le Mans to compete in the GT Class. The regulations stated that road cars had to be built and this one was originally being offered at £150,000. Its sister car was entered in the 1998 GT Championships with disappointing results and was withdrawn due to changing regulations and the end of the GT Class races. The running gear of both cars was removed and a new project, named Cerbera Speed 12 was developed to race in the GT2 Class. These had an alloy tub with sub frames instead of the tubular steel chassis as in the Speed 12. The display car had been registered but never driven on the road, hence just 12 miles on



the odometer. Its original engine is now in the Cerbera Speed 12, so the Speed 12 is now powered by a Jaguar-based 7-litre V12 with TVR Speed 6 cylinder heads. When restoration is completed, it should muster 800 horses, so maybe a bit of a beast for normal roads.

Speaking of Jaguars, the JDC sported some excellent cars including a TWR XJ-S and the XJS Club was celebrating 50 years of the XJS with some superb examples. Our own club stand was a welcoming place to enjoy a free cup of coffee and where we met Richard Gibby. On show were two XJ-S cars, one of which was a TWR Group A and rare pre-HE V12 Coupe manual of 1976 vintage, one of only 352 factory manuals to be built. Other models on the stand included: an SS Jaguar 2.5 from the JDHT, an F Type ZP Special Edition (the last ICE Jaguar), a racing MKI and an XK8.



Alvis did make quality cars in their heyday, and the later TD series was no exception. But the car on show here was a TD21 with Graber coachwork, first registered in 1959. When Mulliner and Tickford ceased manufacturing Alvis bodies, the company went to Willowbrook Ltd of Loughborough for UK orders and Graber of Switzerland for overseas customers. Graber first sculptured designs on a TA21 and produced designs for the TC and TC100 chassis. They then built the TC108G and, in 1957, Alvis decided to use the Graber design under licence and purchased some of the Graber wooden jigs for their UK supplier, Willowbrook, to build the bodywork. The 108G chassis together with the engine was revised for the TD21 of 1959. The Graber versions were marginally improved in performance and body stiffness. The line continued with the TE and TF series. The Graber-built bodies were renowned for their precise handwork, good proportions and elegant lines, all of which are evident on the car shown here.



The car we next saw was not in the best of health and definitely in need of some serious weekend work. It was a once-grand 1967 Bentley T Mulliner Park Ward Convertible and believed to be the first example ever built. It was delivered new in 1968 to David Wickens who, as Executive Chairman of Lotus, steered that company through its financial difficulties in the 1980s. The Bentley is a rare car with only 41 units produced. Fate was unkind to this example and, after decades of non-use and a rear-end shunt, the car ended up in a California scrap yard. Fortunately, it was rescued by its current owner and repatriated. The car retains much of its Ming Blue paint, wood

and leather interior, SU carburettors and its running 6.2-litre L-series V8 engine. Currently being restored, you can follow the work being done on Gary Mavers' (the owner's) YouTube channel, Classic Obsession.



Ever heard of a 1950 Tempo Matador? Neither had we but, on the Meguiars stand, there stood a slightly modified example. It sported a custom, coachbuilt rear body, a Porsche 356 engine, custom gearbox and 356 pre-A wheels, and was painted in Porsche Polyantha Red. A real show stopper! Without the custom add-ons, they were produced by Vidal & Sohn Temp-Werke in Germany from 1949 to the mid 1950s. It was a front-wheel drive workhorse and used VW boxer engines but, when VW stopped their supply to protect their own van/pick up, the company folded, although not before trying some Austin and Hanomag-sourced engines. Survivors are much sought after.

Speaking of custom cars, the most outlandish example that we saw was a "Kinky Voodoo" – based on a 1996 FX4 Taxi, although you would never have guessed it. Its fully hand-sculpted, one-off, fibreglass



body was an asymmetric design with wrap-around rear window, air suspension, fully enclosed wheels, remote suicide doors, retractable motorcycle ramp, electric opening bonnet, pop-up headlights, TV and phone. On the truck bed, it carried a matching 1981 Kawasaki Z1000 Chopper bike called "Voodoo Chilled". Definitely one for the die-hard customiser.

Volvos are usually pretty staid machines, but not the two we saw at their stand. The P1800 was initially produced by Jensen in West Bromwich between 1961 and 1963, and by Volvo from 1963 to 1973, but they never manufactured a convertible. This task was done in limited numbers by coachbuilders and enthusiasts. One such, out of an estimated 35 worldwide, was on display here at the NEC. Converted by the owner between 2014 and 2019, it has a complete, new floorpan, extra full-length,



heavy-gauge steel chassis box sections, 6 mm stiffening plates to the front and rear of the door openings, new outriggers, new three-part sills, many new body panels, new alloy wheels and a custom grille. Apart from that, the owner optimistically stated that the car was original! The second was one that Volvo themselves produced, a P1900 (1956–1957), mainly to gain a foothold in the burgeoning American sports car market. The body was fibreglass, built by Glasspar, a boat building company in California. Sadly, the idea did not float Volvo's boat as the quality was not up to their standards and so

production ceased after only 68 cars were made. This particular car was originally owned by “Tarzan” star, Jonny Weissmuller. Following various owners in the States and Belgium, plus a 10-year stint as a showroom display, the car finally arrived in the UK in 2024 and remains the first and only P1900 to reside here.



There is nothing unusual about an MGB GT, but a top-notch restored car in painted silver really called out to me. The bonnet was open, not only revealing a superbly detailed engine but also an inscribed plate on the forward bracing beam. It said that the restoration was done in the memory of James “Jimmy” Jennion born 29.01.1952 died 18.08.2017. That was a name familiar to me. Having talked to the present owner, the late Jimmy was indeed a boy I knew in St Helens and with whom I went to school during the late 50s through the 60s. The owner was his good friend and bought the car from his widow, promising to undertake the restoration that Jimmy had put on hold due to his poor health. He did an amazing job. Small world!

The Dealers Hall is always interesting and I love looking at the pristine offerings that I know I cannot

afford. One such dealer who I have seen at many NEC shows is Richard Biddulph of Vintage & Prestige—a tall, well-dressed gent usually wearing a striking fedora. He asked me if I wanted to buy a large vintage Rolls Royce that he had on display and which I could (nearly) afford, since he was selling it for a mere £64,000! The 1903 Peugeot next to it, and probably the oldest car in the Hall was definitely out of my league, however.



The best “themed” dealer stand was, in my opinion, the Arthur Daley Used Car Lot inspired by the “Minder” TV series of the 1970s–80s. It even had “The Winchester Club” along with some very competitively priced “bargains”, all with those old “For Sale” and price stickers on their windscreens. Bargains included: a Jaguar XJ308, a rare 1971 Fiat 1500, a Mini for £15,999 and a Sierra Cosworth for £18,995 billed as the cheapest around.

There was so much to see and far too much to describe here, but I must give a quick mention to: the ’58 pink Chevrolet Impala Convertible with Continental Kit, a 1979 Austin Princess Limousine (probably the only one left), the oldest RHD Morris Minor van in the world (unrestored but still driving), a rusty but complete Jaguar Mk VII (definitely not driving), and the Ford Consul 3000GT that was actually used in “The Sweeney” (no cardboard boxes in sight).

In summary, another great show during which Steve Potter and I managed to walk 45,000 steps on each of the two days we were there. No wonder we needed that drink at the Town Wall Tavern.

Neil Shanley



L to R above: Lester and Steve on the Lotus stand, Neil with Lester's Citroen TA, a Jaguar Mk VII



Above left: Oldest Morris Minor van



Above right: Ford Consul from TV's 'The Sweeney'



Above Left: Chevrolet Impala



Above right: Princess limousine



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