

The Club Secretary

The Jensen Owners Club was founded towards the end of 1971; it was originally intended for owners of pre-1967 cars but now embraces all Jensens including Jensen-Healeys; despite being in existence for only two years, the club has over 270 members with a number of overseas owners in USA, New Zealand, Hong Kong and South Africa. It is registered and approved by the RAC.

The aims of the club are to further interest in all the Jensen models, to locate and record details of all models still in existence and to assist in the maintenance and preservation of the cars; this is achieved through the three-monthly newsletter and through the club's own spares scheme. Already the club has had rear screens for 541 models made, has organised a full exchange scheme on carburettors has on order gasket sets for the relatively rare DS7 engine and has arrangements with firms on the production of stainless steel exhaust systems. In addition knowledge is steadily increasing on the interchangeability of parts with those of other marques with greater spares availability - for instance Jaguar disc brakes.

The first Jensen car, as opposed to the rebodied Standards and Austins, appeared in 1934 from the West Bromwich factory, using the Ford V-8 engine. Output had always been small until the arrival of the current Interceptor range, the accent being on quality rather than quantity; unfortunately all the pre-war records were lost during the war and only a few specific vehicles are remembered such as the special tourer built for Clark Gable.

In 1938 Jensens were equipped with 4½-litre Straight-8 Nash engines coupled to a Columbia two-speed rear axle; then as with the 541 Jensen appreciated the virtues of long-legged cruising. This feature was carried on with the PW saloon after the war; very few were made but these used a 4-litre straight-8 via Henry Meadows giving 130 bhp before the 4-litre Austin lorry engine from the Sheerline was adopted with the same output.

The early Interceptors came in for 1950 and

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in fact continued through the 541 range up to 1958 - a number of the 88 early Interceptors are still around. The 541 was so called because the prototype was built in 1954 and it was chassis no 1 - hence 541 which continued through the 541R and S.

The basic 541 was announced in 1953 and the de luxe version appeared in 1956 with disc brakes all round - the first standard road car so equipped. The 541 was the first European car to use a glass-fibre body blended into the well-known shape which is aerodynamically surprisingly efficient for its day. In 1957 Austin produced the DS7 engine for the Princess IV, distinguished by a new cylinder head with twin carbs on the right as opposed to Jensen's set up on the previous engine of triple SUs on the left. With a higher compression ratio, better camshaft and stiffer crankcase it developed 150 bhp against the 130 bhp of the de luxe. However Austin stopped producing this very quickly and only 50 of the 541Rs were so equipped before Jensen had to revert to the Sheerline/Princess DS5; thus spares for the DS7 are rare which is why the Jensen Owners Club has had to produce its own gasket sets. Due to the extra power of the DS7, the front end of the car was redesigned and considerably stiffened, rack and pinion steering adopted and Armstrong lever-arm dampers incorporating the top wishbone replaced telescopic dampers. The Moss gearbox provided better ratios than before too. Thus the 541R is the more sought

after of that range for the sporting motorist since the subsequent 541s in 1960 with its smooth Rolls-Royce automatic was slower in all respects, but an extra four inches let into the body increased the interior space. Production figures for the Standard and de Luxe 541s were 223, with 193 541Rs and 127 of the 541S - a total of some 540 cars in an eight-year production span.

Still using glass-fibre, the Jensen CV-8 was introduced in 1963 with the 5.9-litre Chrysler engine and gearbox; the following year saw the Mk II with the 6.3-litre engine and more luxurious interior trim. The Mk III in 1965 saw dual braking fitted as standard, and this model continued until the launch of the current Interceptor range in 1967 with steel bodywork; 496 CV-8s were produced. Surprisingly, nearly as many of the advanced FFs were made, their figures being 387.

From this brief outline you can see that until the current production range of Interceptor and Jensen-Healey of which over 5000 have now been produced of each, there is not a vast quantity of potential owners. That over 270 members already exist is a fair reflection of the enthusiasm in the club.

The social side is expanding steadily and last year the Annual National Meeting at Beaulieu saw nearly 100 cars in attendance for the concours and prize-giving. This year it has been extended to a week-end at Blackpool on June 8th/9th which will include a Motorcade through Blackpool at the request of the Milk Marketing Board; this will take place just before the end of the round-Britain Milk Race. After the annual Dinner/Dance on Saturday night, a concours will take place on Sunday along the Blackpool Promenade. Anyone interested is welcome to come and watch. Membership is open to all Jensen Owners at £3.00 a year, with Associate Members for interested would-be owners and enthusiasts at £2.50. Although the Jensen Owners Club receives no financial backing from Jensen Motors, the company takes a great interest and gives its full approval to the club. ●



To: The Secretary, Jensen Owners Club, 40 Station Road, St. Margaret's, Nr. Ware, Herts.

Please send me details of membership and a membership application form.

Name

Address

Cars owned: