



Jaguar E-type Restoration - Part 3

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Jaguar E-type 4.2 restoration by Spotless Automotive Restorers, Knysna, South Africa

Stripped down and body laid bare, Stuart Lottering's E-type rebuild project is slowly but surely taking shape. With her shell being prepared, painted and reassembled at Spotless Knysna and her heart and lungs safely being dissected at Bodge Engineering, she is in the best hands any E-type could possibly be. In this 3rd part of the Jaguar E-type restoration, Ron Hollis gives us an inside look at how they will proceed with the mechanics while



Spotless Knysna completes the body work.



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Jaguar E-type: Portrait of a Design Icon, is the only book dedicated to the design of this great British sports car. It earned the author the *Laurin & Klement* award for writing on automotive design. It is packed with numerous interviews with engineers and insiders who worked on the E-type, and features specially commissioned studio photography. This is a must-have for all Jaguar enthusiasts.

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The engine at Bodge Engineering

Situated in the heart of the Garden Route in sunny South Africa, Bodge Engineering is a classic car workshop that specialises in Jaguars, particularly E-types. When it comes to the mechanics and technicalities these are the people you want to work on your Jag.

Reminiscing his first E-type, Ron tells us that his passion for restoring and rebuilding these majestic machines had its beginnings when he had to overhaul his own E-type's engine.

Today, Ron is the owner of Bodge Engineering, a specialist classic car workshop with many returning and new customers from far and wide.



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Stripping, Cleaning, Inspecting, Assembling, Repeat

Stripping down all the mechanical parts is just as much an arduous, meticulous process as with the stripping of the body, if not more so. Ron explains how they started with removing and stripping the engine, inspecting each part and how they made a comprehensive list of



spares needed. This process was repeated with the gearbox, back suspension, front suspension, and clutch system and so on. The parts that weren't replaced were thoroughly cleaned, removing all the grease by sandblasting or brushing it, ensuring the part is spick and span and back to standard. Each section of the car, like the engine for instance, has a dedicated area in the workshop where all the parts are laid out. Once all the parts that need to be replaced have been received, the engine will be put back together, using new seals and gaskets, mounting brackets including all the pieces that would go back first into the shell of the car. Ron explains that the whole process entails a lot of liaison between the client and the other parties working on the car. Some of parts would be sent to Spotless for painting.



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As parts are cleaned, inspected and new ones are received, the team starts preparing to insert the sub-assembly, including the wiring loom and brake pipes. Ron explains that it is critical to have maximum access to install and put all the pieces back together as the car is literally built from the inside out. Then they start on commissioning each of the systems, for



instance the fuel system by putting fuel in the tank to check for leaks. The front brake circuit is then bled, followed by the rear brake circuits. This ensures the pressure is correct and that there are no leaks. Each of the electrical components of the car is completed and systematically checked.

Getting to the Heart of It

When Ron and the team at Bodge Engineering started stripping the engine, they could see that the engine had been rebuilt fairly recently - the pistons and all other parts looked good. They were surprised though, to note that the crankshaft bearings didn't appear new and were possibly not replaced with the previous rebuild. Digging deeper in the strip down, the team noticed that in the oil filter housing, the gasket was incorrectly positioned, which could have resulted in the car having low oil pressure. This would not have had too big an impact on the overall performance of the car, but could challenge the bearings in the long run. This type of finding is not uncommon, Ron explains. They have come across other engines with similar overlooked details, older Jaguar engines being rebuilt by people who do not fully understand the older machines and lack the experience. With over 30 years' experience, Ron and his team knows exactly what to look for and can get to the root of the problem easily. This is complimented by their process and sequence of stripping, cleaning and testing. Ron's meticulous process and eye for detail together with constant testing ensures that, all the parts and bits are where they ought to be, and that the engine runs like a dream at the end of the day. Needless to say, the smile on the client's face on a job well done is key.



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Back at Spotless

The team at Spotless have stripped the E-type down to bare metal. Once completed, everyone was pleasantly surprised by the mint condition of the bonnet. They even went so far to say that it is one of the best bonnets they have seen with very little to no rust - compared to many other classic cars they have done work on in the past. The doors, as previously noted, had quite a large amount of rust, and required either complete replacement or remanufacturing. The latter has been done by Spotless' Bruce Smith, a professional artisanal welder. At the time of writing, some of the parts ordered earlier had arrived from the UK, including some of the engine parts. Other parts yet to arrive and be manufactured include the wiring loom and upholstery. The chroming is now complete and



all the re-chromed parts are back at Spotless' workshops.



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[Don't miss the next segment of our Jaguar E-type restoration project, where we will take a look at the intricate welding work of Bruce, share some photos of the chroming and have some more information on any new findings on this project.]

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