

PRESS RELEASE

1 November 2019



HERITAGE TRUST

The Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust (JDHT) has acquired the oldest surviving Daimler SP250 and will be exhibiting it at the NEC from Friday 8th to Sunday 10th November 2019.

The JDHT has acquired the oldest surviving Daimler SP250, the third of three prototypes, built in 1959, chassis 100002. The other two were dismantled when their testing was completed. Registered as XHP 438 it was used as the press car, tested by Autocar and Motor magazines, among others, and featured on the front cover of Vogue in November 1959.

In 1960 the car was returned to the factory for some re-furbishment and was then sold. Its first private owner was Mr Donald Harley who worked on the 'Eagle' comic as the illustrator on 'Dan Dare'. He sold the car in 1962, replacing it with a Sunbeam Alpine.



It had four further owners around England over the next few years and then in 1978 was bought by Mr R A Van Pelt who exported it to Holland. Later that year he took it with him when he moved to Canada, although the car had very little use before going into storage.

In 1987 it went to auction and was bought by two Canadian brothers, Doug and Gary Titosky, who started on a 30 year restoration project. Early in 2019 they approached the JDHT to see if we would be interested in purchasing and preserving the car.

Tony Merrygold, JDHT Vehicle Collection Manager, flew to Canada to inspect it and the Trustees agreed the purchase. It arrived at Gaydon in July and the DVLA have re-issued its original registration.

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Some of the original publicity photographs of the car from 1959 were taken in the grounds of Compton Verney in Warwickshire, at the time a semi-derelict country house, in Capability Brown landscaped grounds.

Compton Verney is now an art gallery and the staff there were extremely helpful in giving the JDHT access to the grounds and allowing us to recreate the photographs.



The restoration work started in Canada is continuing in the JDHT's workshop at the Collections Centre at the British Motor Museum at Gaydon. Additional trim work has been completed by Jaguar Land Rover Classic Works.

XHP 438 will be on display at the Daimler SP250 Owners Club stand at the Classic Motor Show at the NEC from Friday 8th to Sunday 10th November 2019. Doug and Gary Titosky and their families are flying in from Canada to see the car. Following the show the car will return to Gaydon so the restoration can be completed.

Tony Merrygold

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Additional Notes for Editors

A more detailed description of the history of XHP 438 is available on the JDHT's website at www.jaguarheritage.com/vehicle-collection/xhp438

The JDHT have had a 1961 Daimler SP250 in its collection since 1989 – 4777 JW, which was previously owned by SP250 specialist, David Manners, but are now planning to sell this to help fund the new acquisition.

A total of 2,654 SP250s were produced from 1959 to 1964, far short of Daimler's original target of 1,500 in the first year and 3,000 for each of the next 2 years. Of these over 1,670 still survive, although not all of them are on the road – an unusually high survival rate for a car from the 1950s and 1960s.

The Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust (JDHT) is a registered charitable Trust established in 1983 – its aims and mission are to:

Establish, maintain and promote for the benefit of the nation, the permanent preservation of historic archives, artefacts and motor vehicles manufactured and sold by Jaguar Cars Ltd (now renamed Jaguar Land Rover Ltd) and its predecessor companies under the marquee names of Swallow, SS, Jaguar, Daimler and Lanchester, where such vehicles are of actual potential historic, scientific importance and education value.

Hi res versions of all pictures on the web pages are available from the JDHT archive.