

# *A ONE OFF 1951 JAGUAR XK120*

*By Neville Barlow*

## **THE ABBOTT XK 120**



On April 7<sup>th</sup> 1951, Jaguar cars sent a rolling chassis number 660750 to coachbuilder Abbotts of Farnham. A Mr David Stuart Mitchell of Tauranga New Zealand had commissioned Abbotts to build him an XK120 4 seater.

All panels were hand beaten of aluminium and fitted on the ash wood frame. The Abbott design was a lengthened XK120 to create the extra space for the additional seats. The side profile was subtly altered by placing the boot further behind the chassis. Rear wheel spats were added to complete the look, said to be surprisingly balanced and harmonious. The drop head convertible was tailor made for Abbotts but the interior was largely borrowed from a XK 120.

As ordered by Mr Mitchell it was fitted with a radio, a tow-bar and an extra pair of fog lamps. The vehicle was completed in early 1952 and then shipped to N.Z.



Our club member Bruce Jamieson has vivid memories of this vehicle but as I understand he thought it was not the prettiest motor vehicle he has seen.

Many people thought that this car had disappeared. Because of its New Zealand and Tauranga connection they were very

disappointed. However it lives again. After 66 years it has undergone a complete restoration.

Its restoration is said to have taken 5,000 hours of painstaking work, which was carried out in the Netherlands. The main feature of this car is that it is the only known XK 120 that has been stretched to become a 4 seater.

Amazingly after all this time the exterior of the car was found in good condition.

The interior has been totally replaced and modernised. It does however feature standard XK120 gauges, but has had a beautiful walnut dash added. All switches and gauges were removed, restored and recalibrated.



All mechanicals, including matching number engine and gearbox as well as rear axle and brake systems were fully restored. Also forged pistons were installed and many other upgrades to the 3.4 twin cam straight 6 engine. Nice to see a little of New Zealand's history bought back to life again.

*Neville*