

From a Woman's Perspective

By Natalie Cox

My husband has Parkinson's Disease. We don't want you to feel sorry for him (he doesn't), or treat him differently because of it (he's no different), and, in reality, you probably won't even realise he has it. He does get tired in the afternoons and has a wee lie down, where possible, which is a great plan cause it means I can listen to MY music (not what you'd call middle of the road), do my craft-work and actually.....do whatever I want. Oh, and also he feels better for it.

I only even mention my husband's Parkinson's because this is what started us both off on "The Jaguar Chronicles". Before Jags took their place in the garage, hubby used to ride Triumph motorbikes. Not the patched-jacket, criminal sort of rider, more the middle-aged crisis, the-kids- have-left-home sort of rider. I explain it by saying that he's not a bikIE, but a bikER. It meant him and the "lads" (other like-minded middle-age men) would head off on trips far afield. I'd be left on my own to....do whatever I wanted. Or as I told hubby, to sit at home pining for him till he got back. Sometimes the women were invited for a few days, sometimes a week or so, to perch ourselves on the back.

My good man got me a Discman (yep, that long ago) which he fitted inside my jacket and ran the earphones inside the helmet. Only problem with this is that I was so in to the music that I'd relax too much. He'd brake for a corner, or something, and because I wasn't watching, or holding on, my helmet would slam straight in to the back of his, eventually chipping off the paint.

Thankfully we weren't married then, so he forgave me and still kept taking me as his pillion passenger. Moving on, he went up north for a long weekend with a mate and was so unnerved on the way home. His shoulder was so painful and his hand kept stiffening up which made the gears and throttle hard to operate. He went to the doctors to check his shoulder out, thinking it was a muscle strain. They sent him for some scans, then told him he had Parkinson's. Bit of a bombshell but he is not one to wallow in self-pity, figured there are a lot of things it could've been that are far worse. Anyhow, that is how he got his first Jaguar.



1984 Jaguar XJ6 Series III

We had a diagnosis, a Jaguar and threw a wedding in there too. They say good luck comes in threes, or is that bad luck? Whatever, it's worked for us. Great wedding, guests didn't know it was a wedding and guests AND my betrothed didn't know Ewan Gilmour (Westie Comedian) was the Celebrant. Tricky me.

Anyhow, that's a whole different story. My husband, I can legally call him that now, has always wanted a Jaguar but thought it was only rich, old men that owned them. Rich because Jags are expensive to own and run, and old because it takes them all those years to become rich. He searched extensively through Trade Me and found a 1984 XJ6 Series III in a pretty (I'm a girl, I can call a car pretty) light gold colour.

It had been used as a wedding car and was at a price we could afford so off we went down to Taupo to have a look. Husband was smitten and I thought it had the softest, pillowy seats ever. We did the deal and went down a week later to collect it. It even made it MOST of the way home to Auckland. Just about every time we went out it would break down. After spending too much money trying to find out what the fault was, to no avail, we decided it had to go.



2005 Jaguar XJ8

We next had a Black 2005 XJ8 which was a "Ford" Jaguar. Seats bit less comfortable but it took us around half of the South Island, so that's gotta be a bonus. Was amazed at how many strange men, (I mean strangers, not odd people) would stop and comment on it. Bit beyond me, it was just a car after all. Oops, sorry!!!

My husband now had the bug. He wanted to take me shopping one day, (aaww, what a sweetheart), but when we ended up at a car dealers, alarm bells rang. He wanted to take me to show me a newer, flasher Jag, but it cost a lot so said he wouldn't get it unless I agreed. He was drooling over the car, and the salesman was drooling over all the money he'd get, so because I'm a good wifey, I said okay. We got a Silver 2008 XKR parked at our house. The seats were even more uncomfortable but hubby started telling me all about the powerful engine, the wheels, the something else that I didn't understand, blah, blah, blah. I'm a woman for goodness sake, I don't care. I just want a pretty colour, comfy heated seats, good air conditioning and good sound system. The rest I leave up to you men to ooh and aah over. We had a trip to Taupo where we got pulled up for speeding. My husband calmly said he had the cruise control set on 100kph so couldn't have been. They went back and forth a bit longer before the cop said "Ok, you can go."

I personally think he just wanted to stop us so he could ogle over the car. Few trips later though, the love affair was over as he decided it didn't ride very well on the road and he didn't like the stress it caused.

He "needed" something that drove a lot better, where he could relax and just enjoy the drive.

Next.....a Silver 2010 XJ with, yes, more uncomfortable seats. They weren't so much uncomfortable as hard.

Newer the car, harder the seats.

We'd gone from the flashy, man about town Jag to the strong, stable, businessman Jag. Went on some good trips in it and it never let us down. At least husband was happy now. He'd got the car he wanted, felt it drove perfectly, thought it looked impressive and had all the bells and whistles he liked.

What more could you want? Well, apparently, a different Jag. Men!! Go figure.

The last one, I say with fear in my voice, is the Dark Silver (gray) 2011 XKR Jag. He bought it sight unseen from Christchurch and they delivered it here as part of the deal. Apparently they did a few modifications to this one to get it to ride better than the 2008 one that he constantly complained about.

We go to some awesome places in the car and even though we almost need a mortgage to pay for the petrol, it is worth it to see the joy on hubby's face every time he drives it. I have my heated seats so I'm happy too. Doesn't take much to please me!

He says the car is everything he wants but I still see Jags popping up on the watchlist, so you never know. I'll just smile and nod when and if it happens. (and see the overseas holiday disappear)

My husband has Parkinson's Disease. But because of that, he owns a Jaguar. Because of the Jaguar we joined the Club. Because of the Club we have met so many lovely people and made some good friends. Our Jaguar journey has only just begun.....



2011 Jaguar XKR

Natalie