

A real Jaguar Hearse Inspired by Harold and Maude

By Neville Barlow

The movie Harold and Maude is an unlikely love story. Harold is a young man from a wealthy family. He is fascinated with death; attends the funerals of people he doesn't know and makes a regular habit of faking suicides to try to rattle his self-absorbed mother.

Maude is a free-spirited 79-year-old woman with a breezy outlook on life, who meets Harold at funerals.

Harold drives a hearse, a great bulky 1950 model. His mother, in her quest to shake Harold out of his obsession with death, gets rid of the old hearse and presents him with a brand-new Jaguar E Type. He promptly turns it into a hearse.



The car was prepared for Paramount Records production, ending up flying off a cliff and was completely wrecked. The film failed miserably at the time but has made a comeback as an authentic cult tape, I am sure in no small measure to the E Type.

The E Type as we all know is a benchmark for elegant English Sportsmanship. However, the Jaguar Company never saw this car which could take people on their last ride, as a possibility.

However, Ken Roberts and his wife, who live in Arizona are classic car collectors and movie buffs. After researching numerous Jaguar clubs, he found no one had, in 45 years, made a copy of the Harold and Maude Jaguar E Type, so he decided to make one. His recreation began with an E Type convertible. The most difficult part to create the rear roof but he used the rear of a Datsun 510 to do the job. The result is a stunning replica car that even though it was demolished in the film, is said to be a perfect copy.

I understand that here in Tauranga, a Funeral Director has as Hearses, two Jaguar XF Sportbrakes.

Neville