

## Norman Dewis OBE

Norman joined Jaguar in 1952 to work directly for William Heynes as chief test development engineer, progressing to chief vehicle proving engineer and finally as Manager, Vehicle Proving, on leaving in 1985.

He was 'happy' to leave the new regime, where he didn't fit in (*no doubt there were communication faults on both sides*) and thus felt unable to be effective in improving the product, his *raison d'être* for joining Jaguar Cars as a development (*a key word to him*) test engineer, not just 'proving!'.

He was, of course, always part of a team, driven by Director of Engineering, Bill Heynes, all challenged by Sir William Lyons' desire to produce the best car in the world, which the whole team of design and development engineers were thought by many to have achieved in 1968 with the XJ6.

Pioneering work with some great suppliers and colleagues developing the disc brakes and, in particular, Bob Knight on the ride and handling side, with Tom Jones and others, all equally passionate about trying to achieve perfection, Norman was a key player, as part of a small and very talented team, developing the Jaguar road cars for 33 years.

In addition he made a unique contribution the race development of the 'C' and 'D' Types in the 1950s, working with those named above and Malcolm Sayer, Gerry Beddoes, Phil Weaver and many of top drivers of the time, including Stirling Moss, Mike Hawthorn and even Jackie Stewart in the John Coombs Lightweight 'E' Type!

As an apprentice in the early 1960s, I found him, known as chief tester, to be helpful and cheerful and he really looked after anyone working for him. He was building a team of talented test and development engineers including Peter Taylor and Richard Cresswell, both crucial to the work in that small department in the mid/late 1960s, constantly refining the ride and handling quality of the XJ6.

Finally, following his retirement, he did a marvellous job as an international ambassador for Jaguar, traveling across the globe talking to hundreds of Jaguar enthusiasts at events or at Jaguar Clubs, although he could get carried away by the attention, which he loved, and some of the stories could get a bit 'out of kilter', such was his enthusiasm! That over enthusiasm probably caught him out when filming the XJ13 but the fact that he stayed at Jaguar after that misfortune says everything about someone at the very top of the company acknowledging the very significant contribution he had made to Jaguar development!

A friendly but determined man, who will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

Jim Graham (ex Jaguar apprentice and friend) – Stratford upon Avon – June 2019

*To find out about all the significant people who were part of the Jaguar development story, Paul Skilleter's fabulous: 'Norman Dewis of Jaguar' is a must read book.*