

# *Triumph Stag on Show in Korea*

by David Frith

“David, would you be interested in your Stag going to Korea, something to do with films?” This question was from John Snook (our Membership Secretary), during afternoon tea on a Club Triumph outing last September. Not the sort of question you get asked every day! John Snook has been a friend for many years, as a fellow Stag owner, although my wife Wendy and I had only just joined Club Triumph. John had recently been at a Classic Car show where he was approached by someone who was looking for a Saffron yellow Stag for “something to do with films, in Korea”. Anyway, a phone call isn’t much of a commitment, so I called the contact number he gave me and found myself speaking to Paula Brown, of WeDriveIt.co.uk. She was the UK agent for the organisers of an exhibition, the Hollywood Motor Show in Korea, and she had the task of locating various cars and arranging contracts. The Stag was required to represent the one which appeared in the 007 film, *Diamonds are Forever*. The show was to be at the COEX exhibition centre in Seoul from 19 December to 4 January, and the car would be away from early November to mid-February. The deal involved a payment and the offer of flights and hotel for my wife and I to visit the show in Seoul.

Yes, we were very interested! But, this was quite a venture for us. Apart from visits to the very informal “Classics on the Prom” on summer Sunday evenings in Bournemouth, our Stag has never been exhibited. We always think of it as a tidy practical car rather than a show-car. Quite a lot of preparation would be required. First of all, lots of non-standard bits to get rid of; removing the tow-bar, hiding the oil cooler and extra instruments, re-fitting the original radio, removing the seat covers and non-standard head rests...



Comparing a few details of our car with the film car, I found that ours has alloy wheels but the film car had steel wheels with trims. Back to John, to see who, in Club Triumph, might lend me some wheels and trims for the show. Simple answer, John himself had a spare set. There was also the major problem that ours has black interior trim while the film car had tan trim, but the show organisers assured me they were not worried about that. A quick trip to the local body-shop was booked to fix a few minor blemishes, and then some serious cleaning and polishing. But, the task never ends! As you improve some parts other parts are left standing out as “tatty”. The Stag badges on the grille and rear wings looked quite poor, and for



some reason our Mk.I car had the black rear wing badges from a Mk.II car. So, the final finishing touch was a new set of grey badges.

Shipping to Korea was arranged by TNT Showfreight. After collection from home on 3 November, by one of the superbly fitted trucks from Classic Vehicle Collections, our car was packed in a 40ft container, actually sharing it with a Jaguar XK8 from Austin Powers Goldmember. The cars arrived in Pusan, in the south of Korea, on 3 December, ready for onward shipment to Seoul.

Meanwhile, Paula had done more details on the organisation and the owners’ trips to Korea were booked. As it turned out, most owners had opted for trips in mid-December to see the start of the show. As Wendy is a teacher, we could not manage those dates and we had opted for a trip over New Year so we didn’t get to meet many of the other UK owners. Paula returned from her trip on 22 December and mailed us a few pictures of our car. It looked so much more stunning at the show than on our own front drive! It stood on a white plinth surrounded by black carpet with a white wall behind and lit by floods and spots!

Our flight out on 28 December was with Air France, via Paris, and we arrived in Seoul on Monday morning, 29 December. We were met by a guide and, of course, the first place we wanted to go was the show. I have to say, we felt really emotional seeing our car there, with all the people looking at it.

We stayed in a Hotel Ibis about 10 minutes walk from the complex which included the COEX centre, our nearest Metro station, and a massive shopping mall. We were able to call in at the show on almost every day for the week we were in Seoul and it was always busy. In fact, we went in before opening time one morning; it was the only way to get close enough for good pictures of some of the cars. My concerns about the details of our car were eased when I saw that some of the other cars were less like their originals than ours. For example, the Toyota 2000 in *You Only Live Twice* was a rare white convertible; it was represented at the show by a red coupe!

The rest of the time in Seoul was spent sight-seeing; we saw various palaces and temples, markets and souvenir shops, the war memorial and museum, and, perhaps the most unusual trip, a visit to the De-Militarized Zone between North and South Korea.

So, what else was at the show? The full list of UK cars was:

# *Triumph Stag on Show in Korea*

continued.....

## **Car**

Triumph Stag  
Aston Martin Vanquish  
Jaguar XKR  
Jaguar XK8

Ford Anglia 105E  
Mini  
Mustang Shelby GT500  
De Lorean  
Chitty Chitty Bang Bang  
X2000 - replica of 1958 Ford concept car  
Custom car based on Volvo Amazon  
Cadillac Low-rider "Dancing car"  
Datsun Low-rider "Dancing car"

The rest of the cars had come from the USA and Japan. Quite a number of USA cars had been supplied by Jay Orhberg's Hollywood Cars collection, and his assistant, Jason Harbour, was there for the whole show. They included KITT, Herbie, the Flintstones car... From Japan, a lot of cars came from the Exotic 2 Seater Club, including Ferraris, Lamborghinis, a Lotus Esprit, and Dodge Viper.

The show guide was a lovely 120 page glossy book; the first section was the James Bond cars, and our Stag was on the section index page! We also had a full double page spread. It's great to see

## **Film**

Diamonds Are Forever  
Die Another Day  
Die Another Day  
Austin Powers  
Goldmember  
Harry Potter  
Mr. Bean  
Gone In 60 Seconds  
Back To The Future  
Chitty Chitty Bang Bang



your own car in there! One set of amusing entries, presumably due to a communication problem with the Japanese owners, were the Ramborghinis (seriously, big titles, on 3 double pages of the guide!).

If anyone is interested, the Show web Site was <http://www.ehollywood.co.kr/> It may still be available.