S.S.120 PROJECT

PART TWO OF AN INTRIGUING PROJECT AT FINCH RESTORATIONS

THE S.S.120 PROJECT AT FINCH RESTORATIONS is evolving into a beautiful motor car. Finch, a boutique vehicle business in the picturesque Adelaide Hills, has made impressive progress on the first S.S.120.

After Finch's mechanics substantially finished production of the chassis, complete with driveline, the rolling chassis has been married with its body at Finch. The result offers a first impression of what is clearly going to be a unique and stunning new motor car.

The first S.S.120 is an open-top two-seater being built as an order for a Queensland customer.

Finch, Australia's oldest car restoration firm, developed the S.S.120 after imagining how William Lyons might have evolved the S.S.90 and S.S. Jaguar 100 series if not stopped by the Second World War.

The Finch S.S.120 is based on a shortened MkV chassis, and is similar in philosophy to that used by Sir William who, in 1948, revealed his newly developed XK120 based on a shortened MkV chassis. Like his XK120, Finch also uses the XK engine but the later 4.2 litre version. Behind the engine Finch has fitted a five-speed T5 gearbox.

The first S.S.120 has four-wheel disc brakes and rack and pinion steering. Conventional drum brakes and recirculating ball steering are options.

Finch's Project Manager, Bill, said: "The engineering systems on the first S.S.120 are well advanced. The main systems yet to be completed at this stage are the wiring looms, brake lines, fuel system and heating/cooling systems. The suspension still utilises Jaguar's torsion bar system, assisted by modern shock absorbers. The suspension has been lowered appropriately for the sleek and elegant sports car."

Colin is Finch's head of body-work. He is a veteran of the business having restored hundreds of British vehicles, as well as building Finch's past signature vehicles - authentic reproductions of the S.S. Jaguar 100 and replicas of the 1959 Ferrari GT Testa Rossa. Colin commented: "Having shortened the chassis, and lowered and shortened the body, I am pleased that we have retained so much room in the cockpit.

"I have driven the S.S. Jaguar 100 many times, including a delivery trip from Adelaide to Melbourne, and while very glamorous, the space is tight inside. The S.S.120 is far more accommodating to the

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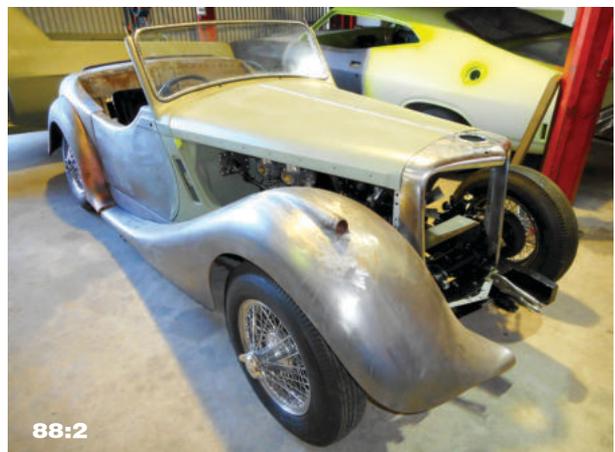
88:1 MkV chassis with 4.2 litre engine.
88:2 Showing an impression of the finished car.
88:3 A huge amount of handcrafting is incorporated.
89:1 Attractive new body coming together.
89:2 Colin prepares the dash framing.
89:3 Brand new boot based on the MkV.
89:4 Rear is superb.

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larger modern person. A tall six foot-plus driver can drive the car and still have reserve rearward adjustment in the seat."

The S.S.120 has an all-metal body using a MkV donor - no fibreglass here! Colin has sculpted the metal into automobile art. Other Finch panel-beaters apply the finishing touches finessing the body with further metal-shaping and lead-wiping.

Finch's metal-workers have also reproduced from scratch some of the original sheet-metal MkV components, including the spare wheel carrier which was deepened to accommodate the larger hubs of the S.S.120 knock-on wire wheels.

Soon the body of the first S.S.120 is expected to be effectively complete, and first trial fitting of the interior and trim will be underway.

The interior of this S.S.120 is to be trimmed with Blood Red leather and the body will be Midnight Blue. The dash will be the MkV arrangement reproduced in timber by Kim, Finch's in-house timber coach-builder, and fitted with Smith's Magnolia gauges.

The front of the car will be adorned with a headlamp support bar and cross-bracing, on which will be mounted large diameter headlamps and two-tone disc horns. The Jaguar leaper will take pride of place above the radiator.

There is still much exciting work to follow, and we look forward to bringing you further up-dates from Finch Restorations on this exciting project.