20/7 AUGUST 2014 [$8]



LOTUS
& Clubman Notes

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE COMBINED LOTUS CLUBS OF AUSTRALIA

2014

FEATURES

→ EMR and Sunshine Coast Hinterland Day Run
→ GOME 2014 – Madrid-Vila Real-Madrid
→ The Europa Mann
→ MSCA Phillip Island – July
→ "Get yourself a hobby"

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SSC Track Day, Wakefield Park
Cover photo courtesy Gloria Wade (LCQ)

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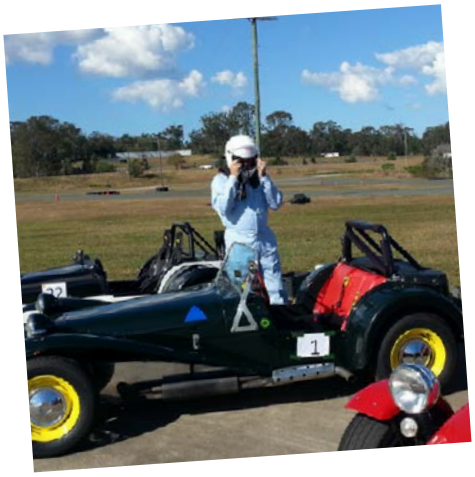
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For any last minute updates check your state's website!

www.clublotus.com.au
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www.lotus.org.au



Welcome – the blue stig!

President's Prologue

By DICK REYNOLDS, President, LCQ

DTC track day last Saturday.

It was a fantastic day. Weather fine, 43 entries; 16 or so from the Lotus Club and the rest from all over, no incidents and heaps of smiling faces.

So I have been wondering what makes an event a winner.

A guy from the North Coast, punting a 3 series BMW, came up to Daryl and I and raved about the time he was having. He said "well organised, great track and so many friendly people".

Perhaps that about sums it up. Look after the punters, plan it well, treat everyone as best you can and you get a great event.

A few other dumb things: be firm about the rules, check the cars thoroughly at scrutineering, ensure the track is safe and well prepared, marshall the cars to keep the runs happening and provide run times timely to give driver feedback promptly.

Next one should be good also, if maybe a bit oversubscribed by the sounds of it.

I haven't been on a social run for a while, but I think that is excusable at the moment. It has been so damn cold here of late. How is it that our soft top cars were first embraced in cold climates?

The last club meeting was an interesting one. We had to discuss the re-emergence of the Queensland Interclub Challenge. Tony Galletly has been driving this, along with his links with the MG Car Club. Plan is to have a series of events, score some points and at the end of the year decide which club is the most successful. It is a great way to enjoy low cost motorsport and meet people from other clubs of a like mind. I seem to remember it running back in the eighties, with Lotus forever competing with the Porsche Club. Looks like it will be a winner.

We also looked at having trophies for the DTC. Gary Pitt very rightly pointed out that they aren't really in the spirit of the event – so we don't and won't have trophies at the DTC!

We seem to have a lot of new members turning up lately, and they are all getting into the whole Lotus thing, engaging in Facebook rants, running at events and generally enjoying their cars. Juan Renato Laporta, Kevin Rowse, Gary and Angele Fludder, Mike and James Driscol,

Now, having moved three paragraphs on, I am just back from an EMR – impromptu SMS style EMR – and yes, it was damn cold, but most enjoyable. About half way up the hill we came up on two classic pommie cars: mainly a Bentley and an Aston Martin. Now, both had two doors, one had 3 foot wide tyres on the wheels and the other had the word Vantage on the boot. Neither had a soft top. Goodness gracious me they were giving them some stick! Only round the corners of course. Nice to see some implements being used as intended. Also, today, a lot of push bikes! It seems they have moved towards the centre of the road since the 1.0m clear rule came in. We have been co-existing on this road for some years now, but today was certainly more difficult. Perhaps if the authorities just left us to our own devices for a while, we would sort out the best arrangement, without the hassle! I will never understand how giving drivers the option of crossing double lines, into oncoming traffic, is a good idea.

There's been a bit of too-ing and fro-ing about the magazine and its content – of late. My view, for what it's worth, is that the magazine must both "represent" and "interest" the members of the club(s). The content should serve to perform this simple notion – notion, not edict! As such, I would like to see lots of local content, both members and their cars related, and hold over any further content until we need it. For example, an article about a bunch of us doing a sprint would gazump an article about Clive Chapman winning a trial in 1952. An article about one of the members difficulties in repairing a car would gazump one about F1 technology. An article about Dick Reynolds being an "old fart" would gazump one about Kimi Raikkonen being great company. It is the responsibility of the various committees to drum up articles, and if they are not forthcoming, then it's open slather on whatever is needed to fill the pages.

I believe we need to recognise that the magazine as it stands is brilliant, a credit to all concerned and will continue to be so irrespective of individuals particular notions.

So there you go!

Now where did I put that wine glass?

Dick

Postscript: It's not actually "The Stig" but a mild mannered 7 hero from another planet called Shane Murphy!

LCQ Monthly Meeting

TUESDAY 5 AUGUST – 7.30 pm
Shannons Insurance
Unit 5B, West End Corporate Park
305–313 Montague Road, West End
Contact: Dick Reynolds 0419 791 326



President's Prattle

By ASHTON ROSKILL, CLA President

Afternoon all!

Just when I thought I had everything organised, knew what was going where in the garage, what I was planning to do to the Elan, work needed on the Elise, and all the projects on the house under control, it all got thrown into a cocked hat! See the initial musings on my latest madness, the purchase of the Tuft Lotus Eleven, elsewhere … suffice to say, I have something of a project on my hands! Many, many thanks to Bruce Mansell and Warwick Bisley for entrusting the car to me, and I hope I will do them and the car proud.

Well, what's a garage for in the middle of winter if not a project? So I can hardly complain, and it is a thing of almost unmatched beauty (particularly when finished), so this is the start of the journey – bear with me!

Elsewhere in the world of Lotus, planning is well underway for the next nationals, Lotus 2015 in the beautiful Barossa Valley in South Australia over the weekend of 2nd – 5th October next year; accommodation bookings are already open (full details at www.lotus2015.weebly.com) and filling up quite fast! Judging by the conversations I had with Ian and Andrew at the recent SSC day, it is setting up to be an outstanding event, so I look forward to seeing lots of you there!

And for those lucky enough to have been over in Europe for some of their summer, there has been plenty of interest – Goodwood Festival of Speed was on in late June, and Goodwood Revival is coming up on 12-14 September – if you've never been to one or the other (or ideally both!) make sure you put them on your bucket list.

July has been a cold one, at least here in NSW it has – which is good for clean running engines, but does require a bit more wrapping up of the extremities! As I was reminded on the way to Cars and Coffee a couple of weeks ago – the heater in the Elan is about as much use as the one in the Elise, so I found myself (carelessly gloveless) with my hands under the dash at any red lights! But the showing was outstanding – and not just Lotuses, but the increasingly wide array of unusual and interesting cars from the 40's through to current models – if you haven't been you should come along – it's gazetted on the first Sunday of the month, so your Historic-plated car has a great excuse to come out to play!

August starts to get busy on the social and diary front, so make sure you have got all the dates in yours (and have applied for tickets where necessary), particularly as the date for the All British Day at Kings has changed from 31st to 24th August; the weekend before is the Shannons Classic on the Sunday (17th), preceded by the next round of the CSCA Supersprints on the Brabham Circuit at SMP on the Saturday (16th) – and all that starts off with our General Meeting, kindly hosted by Mike Basquil in his shed at 17 Booyong Avenue, Lugarno 2210.

Eggs Benedict bookings are now being taken by Anne, for Sunday 28th September – get your booking done now, as forgetting to do so will preclude involvement – need I say more? Anne is at anne-blackwood@hotmail.com

As our illustrious combined magazine continues to go from strength to strength, we need more CLA contributions! Please share your photos (as high a quality as you can manage so they print well!) and a few words describing what was happening, and get it to Tom by the middle of the month – it's a shame if our friends north south and west read in here about nothing going on! So hands up who's prepared to write up the events for August? And if you have a project, let's hear about it – no matter how stagnant it has become – who knows, writing about it might inspire you to get it moving again!

As an aside, for anyone else who runs a Gen 1 Mini Cooper S as a daily driver, I cannot recommend highly enough a few little mods I undertook, with some kind help from Barry Mather and Paul Hardy, last weekend; we put a 15% undersized supercharger pulley on the Eaton MP45, installed a CAI, and undertook what is euphemistically referred to as the "one-ball mod" to the exhaust (the standard exhaust has two silencer boxes – you can by-pass one, and it frees up the exhaust without affecting noise levels) – these three little mods (and about 5 hours of work) have transformed the car – well worth it – let me know if you want to try it!

OK, enough from me, have a fun month, and enjoy the perfect winter weather we seem to be having. I look forward to seeing you out there at some point.

In the meantime, keep safe, upright and on the black stuff,

Pip pip

Ashton

LCA Monthly Meeting

TUESDAY 12 AUGUST – 7.00pm
Mike Basquil's Shed. 17 Booyong Ave Lugarno (Go to the end of the street and come up the brick drive



President's Shed

By MIKE RICHARDS, LCV President

There is one thing the knowledgeable car enthusiast must not do...let his neighbours find that he knows the difference between a radiator and a gearbox, because once they realise he can come to their aid every time they have a flat tyre or a discharged battery, he will be besieged by calls for help. There are many good reasons for the neighbours to request help and the reasons are increasing at an ever faster rate. The root of evil infesting the car trade is the proliferation of electronic gizmos fitted to all but the very cheapest vehicles. We are all aware of the extraordinary number of gizmos common in cars which seem to be increasing to the point where the driver can live for an increasingly longer period inside the car, plugged into the outside world via electronic connections, or enjoy the luxury of driving incompetence because gizmos actually park, steer, brake and avoid collisions without his intervention.

To someone who has been driving for over 50 years the prevalence of gizmos is concerning. Firstly, because driving skills are like everything else in life, they need to be maintained and practised, and one cannot and should not rely on a machine unless there is simply no other alternative. After all, machines are designed by engineers, so they are inherently dodgy. Secondly, every new gizmo can stop working or perform erratically so there needs to be a backup system that is lacking in some things now fitted to cars. Thirdly, gizmos are soon replaced, ever increasingly so, by newer, better gizmos, making the older gizmos irreparable or prohibitively expensive to maintain.

Just think of all the old Mercedes, Toyota Crowns etc., loaded with wonderful gizmos for which there is no other alternative than the scrap yard.

This last point is a hidden trap in many new cars not just for electronic gizmos but for common components such as brake discs, water pumps, cam belts, alternators, fuel pumps which are simply not well engineered, fail prematurely and can be prohibitively expensive to replace with OEM parts. The wise buyer consults an independent specialist mechanic before purchase of any car to find the hidden traps which are becoming increasingly common. A neighbour had a Mazda RX8 as his toy car, loved it dearly, kept it perfectly, however, he was recently forced to sell. Now there are three things in the owner's handbook which cannot be disregarded: use only the special Mazda engine oil; top up the oil regularly; and never, ever, rev the engine when cold. Well guess what the majority of owners choose to ignore? The result is 352 used RX8s listed on Car Sales, of which the majority are basket cases. So when my neighbour came to sell he quickly discovered that an "as new" RX8 with very low mileage and all the correct servicing is unsaleable because of the car's reputation for being trashed by careless owners. I know it's a contradiction in terms, but my neighbour did eventually trade his RX8 with a caring car dealer.

So what has this to do with Lotus? Maybe more than we realise. My first wake-up call was the look of sheer terror on the owner of a new Evora when the car went into limp-home mode a long way from home. Now the owner did not know the difference between a radiator and a gearbox, but should have been made aware of the fact that the latest Lotus cars are like their lesser brethren, electronically capricious. All owners should know the correct reset procedure, in this case ignition on-off three times. It's the old computer nerd's standby line "have you turned it off then on again?" And the reason it works is the same, a momentary glitch triggers an error message that may manifest as a warning signal or limp-home mode. (RX8 owners…there's a small red button in the driver's footwell, Ferrari owners, ignition on-off five times)

Which brings us to the Lotus Exige S which is so dependant on gizmos it's a threat to all men and beasts.

We have seen the video of this remarkable machine defying all known laws of physics on the Hethel test track in pouring rain, totally dependant on its gizmos. The horrifying truth is revealed in its dismally unsuccessful attempt to repeat the performance with the gizmos turned off. In the name of safety these gizmos have the ability to save lives, undeniable truth. However, they give the incompetent driver a chance to appear as a driving hero and a false sense of security. Now I rate this more sinister than it may seem. I admit I am far from a driving hero, but when my red mist comes down I know from bitter experience I am totally fearless and things end up very badly. There is a more than even chance that I and an Exige S would be a fatal combination, courtesy of the gizmos.

I suppose the future of Lotus is dependant on how convergent the cars become with the mainstream in respect of electronic aids, and how far Lotus go in raiding the parts bins of manufacturers of seemingly good components which fail and cannot be economically replaced with OEM parts.

In the past, Japanese cars earned their reputation with new technologies done well which meant they were reliable into old age. They still do new technology well, but a high mileage example is becoming increasingly rare through failure of components which may cost a large percentage of the value of the car to replace. Well I suppose that may let Lotus off the hook, most end up in low-mileage senility.

Good night.

WELCOME

NEW LCV MEMBERS:

Peter Fortune [1969 Elan & 1969 Europa]

LCV Club night

TUESDAY 12 AUGUST – 7.30pm

Club Night at Raceglass.
8/5 Edelmaier St. Bayswater.
NOTE ADDRESS CHANGE
Contact Mike Richards 9397 1638



2014 LOTUS 2014 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

QUEENSLAND

AUGUST	
5	Monthly Meeting – 7:30 pm, Shannons Insurance – Unit 5B, West End Corporate Park, 305-313 Montague Road, West End. Contact: Dick Reynolds 0419 791 326
16/17	LCQ Weekend away – Binna Burra or similar. Contact Clive Wade 0418 196 570
21	Gear Day Lakeside Raceway
23/24	Leyburn Historic Motor Sprints – Leyburn Qld
24	Lakeside Driver Training Centre – Timed Laps Contact: Daryl Wilson 0418 711 227
SEPTEMBER	
2	Monthly Meeting – 7:30 pm, Shannons Insurance – Unit 5B, West End Corporate Park, 305-313 Montague Road, West End. Contact: Dick Reynolds 0419 791 326
6/7	Mt Cotton Hill Climb – Round 4. 1753 to 1799 Mt Cotton Road, Mt Cotton
18	Gear Day – Queensland raceway
20/21	Round 4 Qld Super Sprint B Series – Morgan Park, Warwick
28	LCQ Social Run – South West Run Contact: Ken Philip: kphilp@bennettphilp.com.au

VICTORIA

AUGUST	
12	Club Night at Raceglass. 8/5 Edelmaier St. Bayswater. NOTE ADDRESS CHANGE Contact Mike Richards 9397 1638
17	EMR to Marysville. Craig Chalmers 0412 983 818 Meet: Pane Di Fiore Bakery Cafe in Oakview Blvd, Narre Warren North 8:30 for 9am departure.
SEPTEMBER	
9	Club Night
13	MSCAV Phillip Island
14	EMR – Meet 9.30 Coldstream Brewery, 694 Maroondah Highway. Coldstream. Lunch at Jinks Creek Winery. Tonimbuk. Contact Carl Muller 0419 002 405
30	Committee Meeting

ACT

AUGUST	
9	12:00 Meet at the Palette Cafe, inside the Beaver Galleries at 81 Denison Street, Deakin. Contact: David Leaney, 0402 411 888

NEW SOUTH WALES

AUGUST	
3	Cars & Coffee 8.00am Corner McCarrs Creek Road and Yulong Avenue, Terrey Hills,
12	CLA Monthly Meeting – Mike Basquil's Shed. 7.00pm. 17 Booyong Ave Lugarno (Go to the end of the street and come up the brick drive
12	2nd GEAR – 8.00am Wakefield Park
13	GEAR – 8.00 am Wakefield Park
16	CSCA MOCA Event 5 SMP Brabham (full cct)
17	Shannons Classic – 7.00am SMP (Zone A)
24	CLA Concours Kings School All British
SEPTEMBER	
7	Cars & Coffee – 8.00am Corner McCarrs Creek Road and Yulong Avenue, Terrey Hills,
9	CLA Annual General Meeting – 7.00pm Shannons Artarmon
28	The annual Eggs Benedict – 9.00am at the Blackwood's home 310 Moreton Park Road Douglas Park

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

AUGUST	
3	Lotus Championship Rnd 3 – Jacks Hill Climb Wanneroo
11	Fish & Chip Run – 6pm Kings Park Boab Tree Carpark
16	Saturday EMR – 10am Meet at Guildford Railway – BBQ and watch Targa West in Bullsbrook
17	Shannons Classics on the Park – Langley Park Perth
24	MC Motorsport Sprints at RAC
SEPTEMBER	
7	Lotus Championship Rnd 4 – Jacks Hill Climb Wanneroo
8	Fish & Chip Run – 6pm Kings Park Boab Tree Carpark
14	EMR – 8am Meet at Guildford Railway
21	MC Motorsport Sprints at RAC

For any last minute updates check your state's website!

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2014 PICNIC and CONCOURS

Kings School on Sunday 24th August.

Let's hope the weather is as good as we have had previously which makes for a really enjoyable Club picnic as well as letting the perfectionists among us to exhibit their car preparation skills on their much loved Lotus.

It is also a great opportunity to wander around and see all the other British Marques, where do they all come from? The Art show and Street Stalls are always worth a look.

The Concours will return to the standard format of judging by our team of Judges (chosen for their knowledge of such things as the Lotus Marque and acceptance of bribes!) In other words we are not going to take ourselves too seriously, but if past Conkers are any indication we will all have a fun day. There will be a Guessing competition and a People's Choice award.

Class Winners will not be announced on the day but will feature in the next following issue of Lotus Notes and prizes will be presented at our Christmas Party.

The Club will provide some shade in tent form, a couple of card tables and some soft drinks. Otherwise it is a "bring your own " Chairs ,sun protection, food and wine, BBQ etc.

In previous years the Ladies have brought extra samples of their cooking skills for others to enjoy which has been appreciated by all.

Our hard working Secretary Elliott will take e-mailed entries from now on with entries closing on 15th August but get them in ASAP to save Elliott a last minute workload.

TO ENTER

E-mail Elliott at
enicholls@clublotus.com.au

Provide the following info:

- Type of Lotus (Elise S1,S2 etc)
- Colour
- Rego number
- Owner's name
- Number of guests/children
- Entrant's name
- Phone contact and e-mail address.

General enquiries about the event to
Keith Edwards 0417286 976
or
keithedwards@clublotus.com.au



The Lost Count of How Many 2014 Eggs Benedict with Barista



Will be held on Sunday,
September 28, 2014, at 9.00 a.m.
at "Ebony Hall" 310 Moreton Park Road, Douglas Park

Bookings absolutely, totally essential. Read it again …
NO BOOKINGS, NO SHOW, and that means booking
BEFORE Friday, September 20, 2014, please.

Anne Blackwood Email: anne_blackwood@hotmail.com

Please book early, as I will be touring Alaska with Janine Haydon during late August/early September. We plan to dress in camouflage – leopard print. Should be an interesting trip…

The "Tuft" Lotus Eleven

by Ashton Roskill

As those who know my wife will attest, she is extremely understanding and supportive of my affliction to cars…but even she raised an eyebrow over this one…

For some time I have been trying to work out what car I would like to drive in my dotage; top of the list were all the unattainable ones – Bentley Speed Six, Aston Martin DB5, Jaguar D-type, Lotus Eleven etc., etc.

Then there were some more accessible options – Healy 3000, Jag E-type etc. – all great looking cars, but they don't really light my fire to be honest – a bit, well, pedestrian…I wanted something I could enjoy on the road, but also possibly campaign occasionally in Historic racing.

At the same time, I have concluded that the Elan is not the right car to prep for historic racing, as its class would require me to spend a small fortune on it to make it competitive, and would probably spoil what is currently a lovely road car.

So I was starting to pursue the option of a race car – a Brabham perhaps, or a RALT, or a Lotus, or a Lola or…well, you get the picture, I hadn't really made a decision…in spite of several offers to help from friends!

And then a couple of weeks ago I got a call from Bruce Mansell to let me know that he was still expecting us to go ahead with a shed visit this year; this, in spite of his having tragically lost the sight of both eyes in a terrible car accident last year. Obviously I was delighted to be able to say "yes please, how soon?". (November 10th as it happens, so put that in the diary!) And we got chatting about how his recovery is going, what he and (son) Nick are planning etc.

Now, those who know Bruce will know he is a world authority on Lotus Elites, and also a consummate engine builder of the Coventry Climax engine, so we were chatting about the cars, and as we discussed HSRCA stuff, he casually mentioned that he was thinking of selling his Eleven… ELEVEN? Bruce, I had no idea you had an Eleven! Can I come round? Now? Please?

So the long and short is that I have bought one of my all-time dream cars, one I never in a month of Sundays thought I would get the chance to buy – after all, they never change hands (owners die before they sell the damn things) and as there are only 150 S1's and 270 or so in existence in total, they don't exactly jump out of the hedge at you!

Only slight snag is, the car looks like this currently:



And that doesn't tell all the story…underneath that beautiful body, I have to build an engine and transmission for it (fortunately Nick and Bruce have offered to help!), and although it is still a relatively complete kit (it is called the Tuft Eleven, and is the last S1 never to have been commissioned, so it has never been driven!) it doesn't have any electrics or plumbing…so that'll be interesting.

However, as with all projects, you have to start with the end in mind, so this is what I plan for it to look like:



The car comes as an S1 Club specification (as opposed to the Sprint (Ford engined) or Le Mans (Climax 1500 and DeDion rear end) car, and I plan to build it up as faithfully as possible to that original spec.

Wish me well, and if you can't get hold of me for the next XX months, you will probably find me in the garage (once I have worked out how to fit four cars into our two-car garage that is).

And anyone interested in helping out, your assistance (or just company!) will be most welcome though the long lonely hours!

EMR and Sunshine Coast Hinterland Day Run



by Patty Beecham

Sunday 22 June 2014. A beautiful crisp winter's morning, cold enough to make you stamp your feet with energy, and in the heavy patches of fog, we cruise through the sleeping city of Brisbane, on our way to a Lotus Club run breakfast at Birches Restaurant, on Mt Mee.

Then the voice started, slowly at first, monotonous, and then rising with pitch and urgency, as the kilometres slid under our blue Lotus Elise.

Slow, down.
S l o w D o w n.
S l o w d o w n !

It was odd, really, as we don't have a GPS in the car.

Slow down! SLOW DOWN! Turns out it was MY voice! There have been times I've been forced to use my husband's "man-brake" handbrake (you'll find it between any man's legs, just grab and look scared!) but fortunately he took note and drove sensibly. (I may have made that last bit up.)

I should know to expect the Lotus Elise to bring out the youth in my husband, as he feels the road under his seat, the quick response to his slight tug of the wheel, the wind in his hairs. Sorry, hair. (Actually he had a beanie on, it was COLD out there!)

Another Lotus run, another fabulous day with Lotus mates, beginning with a quick meet up in Samford, maps distributed and some encouraging words, then we are off, in a blur of scarves and gloves and coats and roaring motors and beaming partners and the fog, the cold nose, the heater struggling to warm us on a 8 degree morning run. Over the mountain, past the cyclists, road works, winding our way through beautiful country, my hands too cold to bother to take any images.

After a hearty breakfast on the verandah at Birches (gas heaters hastily lit, brr!) we depart for stage two, saying goodbye to some cars and hello to newcomers Derek and Anita and their white MGB.





Once again that voice begins, slow down, SLOW DOWN, and then we are in Maleny making our way to Bellbird Café near Kenilworth, racing against the black storm cloud that finally explodes beside us, behind us, ahead of us, but not on us. Hurry up! HURRY UP! (Why, oh why don't we have the lid on?)

We all enjoyed a stretch of the legs as bellbirds competed with the coffee machine, a popular haunt for motorcycles and motoring tourists. Bellbird Creek Tea Café is nestled in the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast, 4km south of Kenilworth amongst the native flora and fauna.

This quaint little café style Tea House offers tranquillity and the peace of the bush, along with friendly service and great food. Try the fresh, hot scones!

The name of the café comes from the Bellbirds which reside in the area. There are also wallabies, king parrots, water birds and much more to see when you visit this little gem. It is a bird watchers paradise.

Stage three sees us on our way to Noosaville, but not before getting lost through the many roundabouts in Cooroy. Chris Beecham to the rescue and once again we are a conga of pretty cars.

In Noosaville, Sirocco restaurant sits on the river, a beacon on a lazy Sunday, but where to park? (Wherever you can, and good luck!)

A long, chatty lunch, with good food, wine, and company! A touch of adrenalin, a handful of relaxation and a dollop full of good friends… with great roads and stunning cars.

Thanks to Clive and Gloria Wade who organised a fabulous trip.

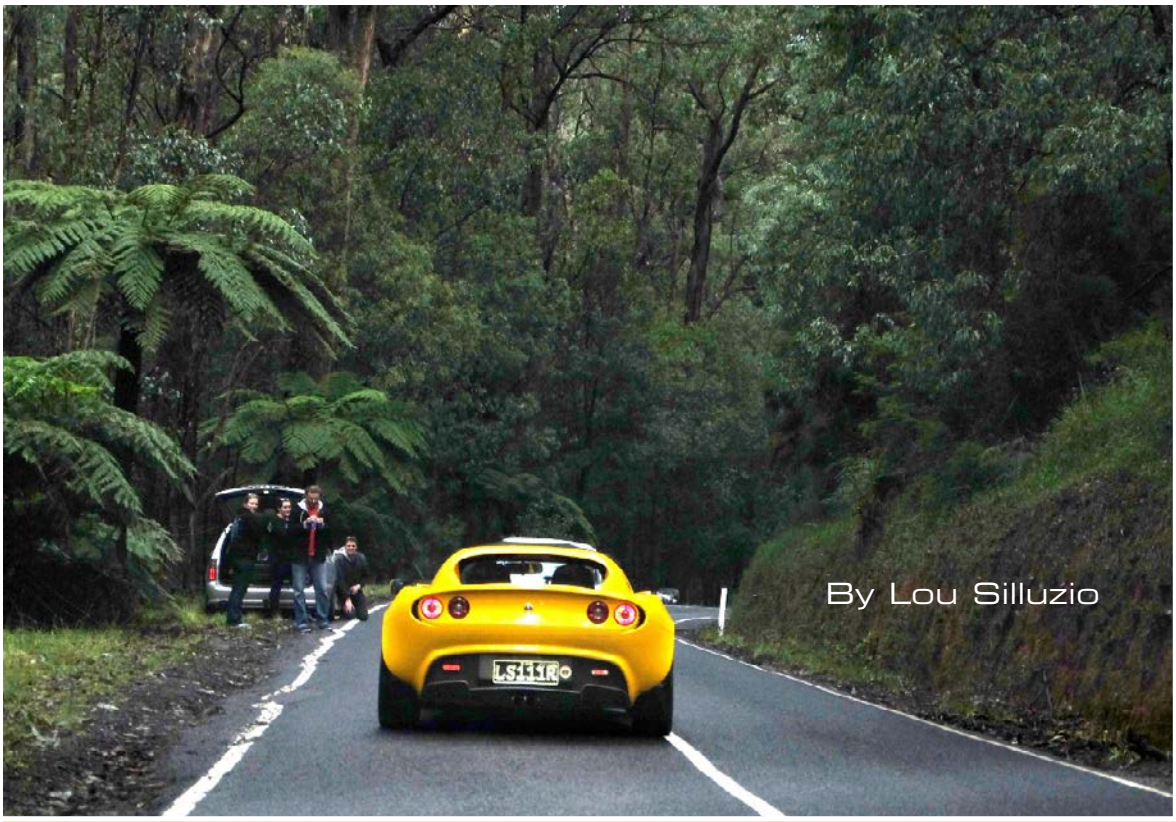








Birches	http://www.birchesrestaurant.com.au/
Bellbird Café	http://www.bellbirdcreek.com/
Sirocco restaurant	http://www.sirocconoosa.com.au/







LCV EMR Sunday 13th July

As they say in the classics – "there is no free cheese in the mouse trap".

I should have learnt this lesson from past experiences, however being the lazy bugger that I am, when nominated at the last committee meeting to organise the next EMR, naturally I squirmed at the idea. But seeing that none of my fellow committee members put their hands up, which is what I was hoping they would do, I was selected…against my will!

It was more like: "Well Lou, about time you did something rather than just turn up at committee meetings and eat the cheese and biscuits". Not that that was said! However, I took on the responsibility with open arms when all eyes were on me!!

Talk about making a guy feel guilty!

Not to be outdone, I suggested to the committee that we had gone on a terrific run some four years ago, that Peter perfect McConnell had organised. Would it be OK to do that again? As I had kept the notes from that previous run I thought to myself – 'this is going to be easy, turn up at McDonalds in Boronia Road, hand out the sheets from the previous run and Bob's your Auntie,' and I would come up looking trumps!!

Too easy I thought!

I received a call from John King who was assisting me with the run. He suggested we should do a test run! "Why?" I asked. "It's perfect, we've done this EMR before, the morning tea place was great – the winery at Brandy Creek was terrific – they had provided great food, value for money, service was excellent, venue great – why do we need to do the run all over again?" "Well", said John "we've had big storms, some of the roads could be blocked due to fallen trees etc. and we always do a test run a few days before".

'Fair enough,' I thought, 'that all makes sense.'

We organised to meet at my place at 10am on Wednesday the 2nd of July and go over the run armed with a copy of the old Peter perfect's notes.

Starting point: McDonalds Boronia Road, was in the old instructions, clear as a bell to both John and I.

I set the Sat Nav. in the Q7 to read "Boronia Road Boronia" and off we went, enjoying the pleasant spring-like morning sunshine that pierced the glass roof of the Audi. As we drove at a gentleman's pace we chatted about the efficiency of modern diesel engines, prices of second hand cars etc., and how good it was going to be sipping our first cup of coffee at McDonalds.

John and I arrived at McDonalds Boronia Road and promptly and efficiently told one of the ladies behind the espresso machine that we were from the Lotus Club and that we had been there some four years ago. There would be about thirty of us arriving at 8.30 on July 13th for breakfast before the EMR.

I stressed this to them because last time there were only two people behind the counter making coffee and the volume of members arriving all at once overwhelmed them and one of them got quite cranky. I said I thought it would be prudent to put on extra staff to cope as we didn't want the same scenario playing out again. She assured us she would tell her manager and put on extra staff. 'Perfect,' I thought, as she wrote the details in the diary.

After drinking our lattes and making a pit stop to the gents we set off, ticking off each section of the route as per our instruction sheet. First stop for proposed morning tea was Rayner's Peach Café at Woori Yallock. We met the owners there (very pleased to see us again) told them to expect us on July 13 around 10.30am. No problem said Mr. and Mrs. Rayner, we will have fresh scones and muffins ready for your crew.







Ian Simmons, Venus Lane & Roberta Silluzio



Marika Cook & son

'Too good,' I thought, feeling very pleased with myself.

Next stop Brandy Creek Winery to check the lunch venue. 'Piece of cake,' I'll be home in no time for a little afternoon siesta. We arrived at Brandy Creek Winery to find the doors shut. Knocked on the windows – no answer. John said "let's go around the back, I think there are lights on." We found the back door open which led to the kitchen.

"Hello" we said, surprising the chef who was wielding a meat cleaver.

"Can we talk to the manager? We're from the Lotus Club. I rang last night."

We were greeted by a man who introduced himself as the manager.

"Have you owned this business long?" I asked, my real estate sixth sense rising to the service. "No, not long". "OK. Can we see a menu?" "Certainly," he said, and that's when things started to go pear-shaped.

What we wanted we couldn't have. The decor had changed. There seemed to be obstacles every way we turned and whatever we asked for was too difficult. "How much for lunch? There will be about thirty of us."

"About forty-nine to seventy-nine dollars per head," he said.

That was it. John and I looked at each other and headed for the door.

"Thanks, send us a menu and we will be in touch."

Now what?

We decided to head back the way we had come and see if we could spot some winery signs. There were none. We were slowly becoming dejected. "Let's go back to one of those little towns and ask the locals."

"Great idea" said John. One thing I have learnt is if you want to know anything in the country ask the locals.

We walked into the local general store at Neerim South. Well, the local shopkeeper knew two-tenths of bugger-all. Fortunately a lady walked in just as we were about to walk out and we asked her if she was a local. She said she was and recommended Gypsy Creek Winery.

We rang the winery and obtained their details and proceeded to re-map the route from Neerim South. The owner, who was pruning vines, greeted us with a pair of shears in his hands and showed us around to the restaurant. We talked about the menu, the cost, etc., and we confirmed arrangements subject to an email.

"Sounds good. We'll ring you on the morning of the run and let you know the number of people who will be coming for lunch."

Somewhat relieved, John and I were both carrying migraines when we arrived at my place in Lower Plenty at 5.30pm to finally sit down and unwind with a glass of red and our first meal for the day!

'I'm not doing this again,' I thought.

Roberta and I woke up early on the morning of the EMR – after all, as the organisers of the EMR we should arrive at the starting point before everyone else, it's expected.

"Do you know where you're going?" Roberta asked.

"Of course I do, McDonalds in Boronia, Boronia Road" I said.

With this doubting question by my wife I decided to Google McDonalds Boronia.

No problem, just a question of setting the Tom Tom to 267 Dorset Road Boronia and we were off.

As we were travelling down Boronia Road I spotted the big M sign. "There it is."





Madeleine & Carl Muller



Lou & Roberta Silluzio



"It can't be" said Roberta, "the Tom Tom's saying we have another 3.7km to go."

"No it's definitely here, the Tom Tom's wrong, this is where John and I had coffee. This is where we started from the last time as well," I insisted.

"Are you sure", she asked again. "Yep, Yep, I'm sure. We're just early."

Quick glance at my watch 8.25am … not *that* early. Where is everyone?

"Are you sure? I've just seen three Lotus cars drive past."

"It's definitely here." I was getting angry. "They're wrong."

"There's two more Lotus cars going by…and…they're not stopping here."

"Give me that mobile."

I dialled the number.

"John King."

"Mate, are we meeting where he had coffee last time?"

"Yep, that's right!"

"Mate, there's nobody here!"

At this stage Roberta spotted Steve Blackie's red Esprit go by.

"That's it," said Roberta "follow him." The penny finally drops!

I screamed out of McDonalds Boronia Road quicker that you could say Jack Robinson. "Poor buggers" I thought, "putting on extra staff and no one's going to be here." "Ring John," I said to Roberta "tell him it's not *this* McDonalds it's the one in Dorset Road."

Red faced, I entered McDonalds in Dorset Road, Boronia to a very cheerful lot of familiar faces. After coffee John explained to everyone that all of the odometer readings were taken from McDonalds in Boronia Road, not this McDonalds, so we would need to start the run from there. We lined up along the kerb in single file ready to finally do something right.

A cavalcade of five Elises, two Europas, one Boxster, one VW Passat, two Hondas, one Esprit, one Alfa, three Elans, one XKR Jag and two Porsche 911s, made their way through some of the most scenic roads of our beautiful state. Driving through the outskirts of Sassafras, Kallista, Emerald, Belgrave and Healesville is such a beautiful sight, especially on a foggy morning with the sun glistening through, casting light and dark on the spectacular winding roads as it penetrates through the trees. Apart from the odd cyclist or two, the roads were pretty much empty. Arriving at Rayner's Peach House Cafe the hospitality was warm and friendly as usual. The smell of fresh baked scones, blueberry muffins and roasted coffee filled the air in the cafe. Blessed with a beautiful sunny morning, without a doubt the best day weather-wise of the week, how lucky were we to be able to do this? Mrs. Rayner, who is in her late 70s, was over the moon at the sight of these beautiful cars which coloured her property, and she photographed every single one.

We left Rayner's around 11am and made our way to Noojee, Neerim South and Jindivick, travelling through equally beautiful winding roads lined with lush tree ferns, tall timbers of ghost gums, stringy bark and blue gums – some bearing scars of past bushfires – as well as fields of strawberries and fruit orchards.

We arrived at Gypsy Creek Winery at 12.40pm and were greeted with a big smile by Sam the owner. As promised there was a fire going, a jazz band playing and the smell of fresh crusty baked bread filled the air. I knew we were not going to be disappointed. The two tables for thirty of us were set up beautifully. Everyone settled down to enjoy the warm bread fresh out of the wood fired oven and delicious home made dips, plus a complimentary glass of wine.





Courtney Neville



Mel & Cookie Mollison, Rex Beach & Carol Koch





Ian Simmons



Rayner's Peach House Cafe http://www.raynerstonefruit.com.au
Gypsy Creek Winery www.gypsycreekwines.com.au/

We were offered a choice of three different dishes on the menu to cater for everyone's tastes. My choice of lemon and oregano lamb backstrap was served on sautéed baby spinach, crispy potato cubes drizzled with lemon and oregano cream sauce. Yum!

We could not fault the place, the food, the service, the friendly staff and the $30 per head was excellent value for money. The wines were very good especially the Pinot and the Cabernet Sauvignon. The Shiraz didn't receive the same review. We left around 2.30pm feeling pretty satisfied with the whole day. Apart from the early morning hiccup at McDonalds, it was a perfect, memorable, Sunday outing for our club.

John and I trust you all had an equally enjoyable day.

PS. I did receive a free bottle of bubbly from the owners of Gypsy Creek – feel free to sack me from the club for not declaring it.

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GOME 2014 – Madrid-Vila Real-Madrid



by Ashton Roskill

Some of you might recall that my brother and I had an absolute hoot on this rally last year, right up to the point where we rather ignominiously left the race as a result of my planting the car under the front on an oncoming van in northern Greece.

However, my brother had decided his revenge was now due to be extracted, and as a result I went over to the UK in May for the GOME 2014 Madrid-Vila Real-Madrid rally.

While the luxury end of the market were largeing it in Oxford, Hethel and Monaco (the SSC Tour to Monaco GP was on the same week) I found myself sat on the Portsmouth St Malo ferry – it was supposed to have been the Portsmouth Santander ferry but when I arrived at my brother's garage on Friday May 17th, straight from Heathrow, the car was still in several pieces. So having put it back together in record time we still missed our preferred sailing (was fun trying to make it though!) and instead had a 12-hour dash to make it from St Malo to Madrid in time for the drivers briefing at 9.30 on Saturday.

Well, we made the briefing – just! And had the obligatory ribbings for missing our boat, although we were there before the cars that came to Santander. It was not huge fun holding 100mph all the way from St Malo to Madrid, but it got us there.

Race start on Sunday morning (19th) was fine and dry and we had a superb day up in the hills, working along the hills and valleys towards the border with Portugal, and overnighting at a great hotel called Hotel Baleario just outside Plasencia.

Monday dawned dry but threatening, and by go time it was cooling down – and we had left the roof back in the UK to save weight!!



100mph down the autoroute



Lunchtime in the shade

Given we had picked up a few points on Sunday we were trying hard by now! As we headed to Portugal it started to rain and by the time we were into the afternoon it was absolutely throwing it down, making reading a road book in an open cockpit interesting! Compounded by a closed road between Penacova and Luso, we ended the day down a further 25 points in 18th place.

Overnight was at the strange Hotel Monte Rio Aguiero near Almaca, where it set in to rain a bit more! Monday night we fabricated a roof from pipe insulation, plastic bin liners and gaffer tape to try to keep a bit dry, and Tuesday morning we really needed it – it was proper raining by now! And boy were we grateful for it up in the mountains around Torre and Mantiegas, where it was snowing. The snow plough even came out specially for us! Back down into the valley and heading towards Guarda we had the 4.5km Larges sprint stage, where we were trying so hard we blew the exhaust end-cap off! Roadside repairs had us underway shortly and making up good time as the sun shone briefly…and in the afternoon we worked our way back west to overnight at the precipitous Palace Visapara a Sierra da Estrela (short catchy name!) and undertook some more substantial repairs to the exhaust at a local mechanics!

We had managed to make up 5 places on Tuesday so Wednesday was looking to be a decider, particularly as there was a stage planned at Vila Real circuit. We headed off with an improved roof (just as well as it was still teeming down) to head north west past Viseu and on to Castro de Paiva. The final leg of the morning saw us heading south east towards Castro Daire, ahead of time and cruising probably just a bit too casually, we came round a corner about 6km from Castro Daire, onto a slippery piece of road onto a bridge, and before we knew it we had hit the railing, ripping off the front left wheel and stopping our rally short, for the second time. Only this time I wasn't driving – thankfully.

To say we were disappointed is a massive understatement as it was going well and we were having such fun. But that was us out of the GOME Madrid Vila Real Madrid, and with heavy hearts we left the rest of the competitors at 5am on the Thursday morning, drove to Braganca to hand in the Portuguese hire car, taxi'd to Valladolid, picked up a Spanish hire car (bizarrely, even though the hire car company is called Europecar, you can't drive their cars across borders!) and drove that to Bilbao in time for the 3.30 sailing, which saw us back in the UK on Friday afternoon.

So that's GOME for the second time – I can only hope that third time might be lucky – I am toying with prepping the Elan to use next year… just not sure I want my brother to exact that much revenge!



On the ferry



Coffee stop



The bridge did it dad...



GOME


GOME





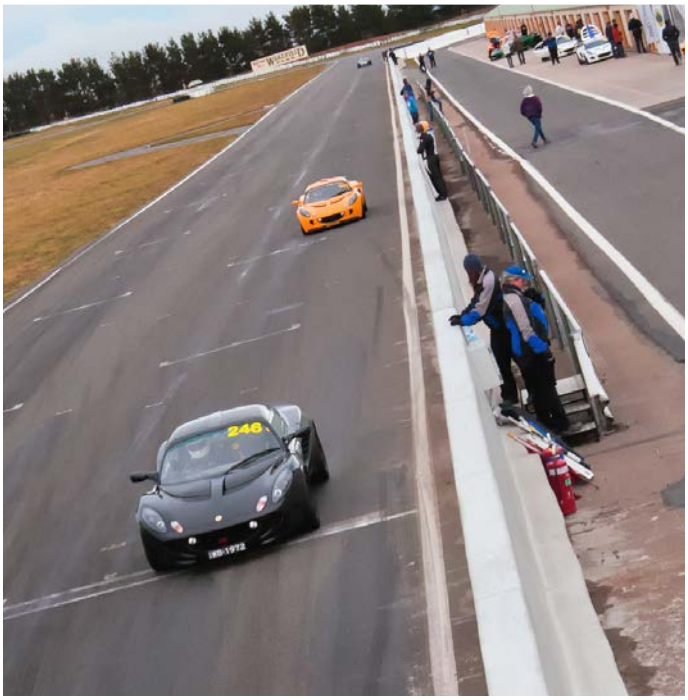
Simply Sports Cars

Lotus Only Track Day, 27 June 2014

by Clive Wade [LCQ]







This is the southerly trip for the year (unless I can find a way of doing Winton too, wouldn't mind a go at Phillip Island either).

Again, the weather just isn't dear old SEQ this June, it has gone the other way; warmest winter for many years, looks good for Goulburn! Lovely place in winter is Goulburn, guaranteed to get up to 3 or 4 degrees by the middle of the day, absolutely looking forward to it. And for the drive down? We freeze, from the time we leave Brisbane the mercury disappears out the bottom of the thermometer never to be seen again, a southerly gale pipes in, parts of Sydney are blown off the map, the SES come out. Absolutely just the thing for a cold pork pie and salad in a park at Glen Innes.

Before the drive down there is always some planning, and mine starts early this year. A certain president in NSW always manages to get his S1 around Wakefield Park two seconds quicker than me, not to mention the indignity I suffered (after his rescue for Lotus 2011) when he encouraged me into a spin on my home track, after suggesting I show him the "lines" at Morgan Park. And Joe has been widening the gap up here in Qld too! So I tackle my ground clearance of "road settings", enlist a couple of local experts (you know who you are, and thank you), and tackle a job I have always considered a dark art, I lower the car and learn how to re-align the wheels.

Off come the wheels, measure this, measure that, move this bracket, move that bracket, stick in these shims, stick in those shims, jack the car up lots of times left then right, right then left, clean off a few years road grime, get half way through the process, jack the car again only to watch green fluid trickle out of the RHS chassis rail…hmm, don't remember reading about that one in the Lotus Elise Suspension Section of the manual. Right! I know what that is, I've read about the dread fixing screw in Elise chassis' making love to the coolant feed pipe…I'll fix it later.

How many old fellows who own a Lotus, right now have a sense of deja vu…I almost feel like I really do own a real Lotus…start one job, get some more for your trouble!

Suffice it to say; I finish the job before our 2nd round sprints at Morgan Park, test it there and come home grinning like a Cheshire Cat…a few more adjustments and the car is ready for the SSC LOTD, I'm ready to sit on the rear bumper of a certain NSW S1…bring it on!

Now the Qld contingent is a mixed bag, one member spectacularly fast, some members pretty quick, me and a few others not so fast. We do have one thing in common though; 1,250km of road, add an extra 160km for Mike







Moore, or an extra 1,000km for Deon Attard (Deon cheated a little by leaving his car "down south" after the first of the SSC LOTD's this year). Both these lads drove their cars down, Deon in AC bliss, Mike in the elements in the 340R, wearing helmet and weather proof clothes. The Brisbane contingent made it a 2 day trip, stopping at either Raymond Terrace for sleep, pizza and beer (boys week away stuff). Or being a little more civilised; stopping in the Hunter Wine country for Chateau Briand and Shiraz…340R Mike, Gloria and I won! Though Gloria and I smugly felt warm and cosy in the Land Rover when we saw Mike pull up behind us in the 340R, outside temperature; 5 degrees! The second day saw us and the boys take the Pacific, the M7 and the Hume to Goulburn, except of course Mike, Mike did the Putty Rd, Lithgow and on down to Goulburn via Oberon…you've just gottta love him.

And on to the main event, sort of, because the main event starts the night before; it starts with dinner in Goulburn. This is when "the whole do" has the feeling of the Biennial Lotus Club Meets. This is when we catch up with folk both local and far away. Friendly, familiar faces from NSW (local), Victoria and SA (far) appear and chat, conversations change rapidly as more join the group, and the evening quickly disappears into catch-ups and comradery. The Lotus community might have flash new Elises and Exiges, powered by either tiny little Rover motors, various Toyota 4's, or testosterone-enhanced supercharged V6 Toyota motors (they need big motors now for all those heavy AC's, ABS's, air bags and stuff), but we all have in common the uniqueness that started with the 6's, the 7's, the Elites, Elans, Europas, Esprits, etal, we all share a passion for a strange little company in the middle of a turnip field in Norfolk, we are a fortunate and unique group.

And the day after the night before?

Well, this is when Simply Sports Cars, Lotus Australia and Mark O'Connor come into their own! This is the culmination of some very polished organisation. We, the participants, are quickly and efficiently grouped into the 4 groups of Drive, Race, Sprint 1 or Sprint 2. The sprint groups are defined by the claimed PB's of the entrants. And amongst all this the scrutineers are doing their thing; scrutineering, and the organisers; cross checking entries, issuing numbers, and fixing the never ending "last minute I didn't realises", and even getting to brief us all.

And then the fun begins; Drive Group go out, the Race Mob assemble, I get coffee, Gloria starts clicking (look at the website, she's got some great photos here), others do precious little tasks like checking tyre pressures, resetting dampers to get them to carry-out the task of the springs, others query and learn.

All day, 15 minutes in every hour, we get to test ourselves against the clock, only ever comparing our own time improvements, never do we check other folks lap times, for that is not the purpose of the day. As an example, I didn't know a certain S1 from Sydney got down to 1:09's whilst I got down to his last year's 1:12's….truly I didn't! (for you Qld'ers, I've given up comparing your Honda powered, super charger powered, slick tyre enhanced results…

The Race Group put on a spectacular show, Mark in the V6 Donut King Exige doing constant battle with Tim Mackie's Exige (courtesy of Mark O'Connor) and Geoff Noble's Elise. The lead swapping constantly with others butting into the adventure on occasions, and not one bump, not one, some very close racing (look at Gloria's pics) without any tears. Well done guys. And their last race? The handicap race, the battle for the David Mottram Trophy (DMT), the fiercely fought for trophy which David held for 2? years, then stolen by Geoff Noble, the guy who all thought would never relinquish the DMT ever again! Well done Ian Peters, Ian is now the proud holder of the trophy. But will he still have it for "show and tell" at Lotus 2015?

The Sprint Groups ran like clockwork, though there is video of one S1 doing a strange turn on to the main straight, and photos of two different S1's taking odd lines at turns 2 and "The Fish Hook". It should be noted that all three came from NSW …AND…Wakefield is their local circuit! But I'm not going to mention that Syd and I could have had a quiet chat at turn 2 if we had been in the same group, Gloria's camera was pointed elsewhere at the time, so I'm not going to mention it.

And the Drive Group participants were also seen to be out enjoying their very new cars, or having their first time track day experience, or, in particular, Pat Mottram enjoying the family's Lotus Seven S1 (1959) powered by a Climax engine.

Yes, all up, it the SSC LOTD is a thoroughly enjoyable day…great cars, great comradery and a great catch up with old friends.

Thanks must go to Lee at Simply Sports Cars, Alistair at Lotus Australia and Mark O'Connor. You guys are doing a very wonderful service for the Australian Lotus Community. Thank You.

http://www.flickr.co...81690@N04/sets/

by David & Pat Mottram [LCV]



Lotus Only Track Day

The NSW Lotus Dealer, Simply Sports Cars, along with Lotus Australia, has introduced a series of Lotus Only Track Days over the last two years. The days to date have been held mid-week at Wakefield Park in Goulburn, although it is hoped to run such days in other states in the future. Mark O'Connor from Victoria is the driving force behind the days and it is he who revs up all the participants on the Aussie Elise Forum. The majority of the fifty or so cars are either Elises or Exiges with just a few earlier Lotus models.

Participation is at four different levels and costs.

Drive Sessions: This enables anybody to simply take their Lotus around the track at whatever pace the want for the allocated time.

Sprint Sessions: The drivers are a little more serious about extracting their best performance so the sessions are timed. There is no prize for the fastest. It is simply an exercise in enjoying your Lotus at high speed on a track.

Race Sessions: This is where it starts to get serious. To compete in the races the appropriate licences and logbooks have to be in place. Whilst the fields have been modest in size (10-15 cars) the racing has been fast and close. It has been great to race amongst other enthusiasts at very close quarters, yet feel quite trusting of your fellow racers. No biff and bash is even contemplated. The racing has always been excellent.

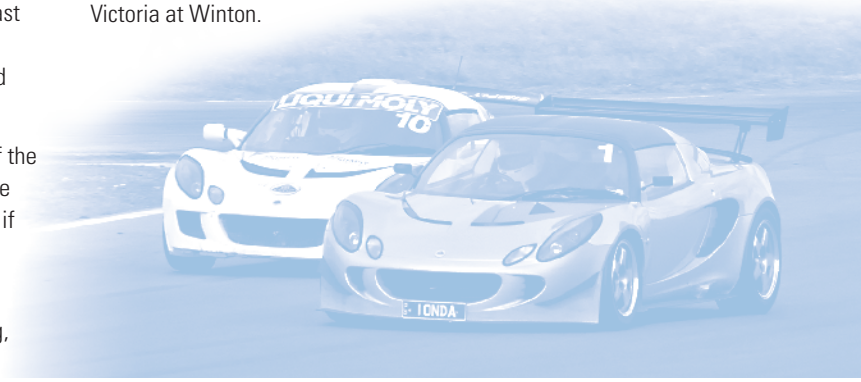
Hot Laps: Many of the participants joined this session in the middle of the day to be taken for a ride in a very quick race car driven by a few of the more accomplished race drivers. It is exciting stuff for the passengers if their smiles are any indication.

All participants receive the same amount of time on the track, five sessions during the day (e.g. the racers receive a practice, a qualifying, two scratch races and a handicap race)

Pat and I have participated in all four of the days so far and thoroughly enjoyed them. We took the Elise to the first two days where it was used in the race sessions. Earlier this year we took the Elite for the Drive sessions and at the most recent event, we took the S1 Seven C which Pat used for the drive sessions.

It is a great way to enjoy your Lotus. The evening before the track day most of the participants meet over a drink and a meal in Goulburn and then trek back to the Trappers Motel where most stay for the evening. Then out to the track where the paperwork is completed quickly and efficiently and the cars given the once over for safety. All of this is completed by a team from Melbourne provided by the company called Race Solutions...and they do it so well. The mechanics from Simply Sports Cars are there on the day to help out with any issues, as well as offer advice and help on vehicle set-ups. There is a Drivers' Lounge with freshly brewed coffee and sticky buns, plenty of guys to chat with...basically a very relaxed and enjoyable day.

Will we go again? Certainly will, especially if it happens to be held in Victoria at Winton.



by Peter R Hill



JULY CLUB NIGHT at the Bangkok Terrace

For the month of July we decided we'd have a change from the usual "smell an oily rag" club night, opting instead for the warmth and civilised atmosphere of a restaurant. We returned to the Bangkok Terrace, the establishment that served us well last year. It was a popular choice with thirty-two members keen to enjoy a fun night and some good Asian food.

John King did a great job organising everything including rounding up all the vegetarians onto the same table, so that the staff had a sporting chance of delivering their meals to them. It was good to see Ivan Butterworth in great form, Bill and Joan Newton, as always, not being afraid to make the long trip from Geelong, and the McConnell's just back from their long sojourn in the USA and Canada.

I had a good chat with Allan and Venus. Allan has owned, and still owns, some very interesting cars, but at present there didn't seem to be a Lotus in his stable. I found Steve Blackie and Joanne heading up the vegetarian group and was sad to learn that Steve still hasn't got his Esprit back – well, he had it back, but not for long – the problems go on and on.

I didn't notice any Lotus parked outside the restaurant, but given the very ordinary Melbourne winter's night perhaps we all had a good excuse. The food was good and plentiful, and the company was great so we all had a fun time. Thanks to John King for his organisation.











by Mike Basquil

2014 CSCA July Report



Rex & JamesKinghorn



Duncan



Wayne Bower

June was a Hugh month for the competition fraternity with three events plus the Simply Sports Cars day at Wakefield the Friday prior to the Austin Healey round. As expected the Healey round was fully subscribed a week and a half before the event with folks waiting for others to drop out, thankfully all those that wanted to run got an entry and those who had to pull the pin were given refunds, we still had a full field of 105 runners wanting to trouble the timers. It was also great to have some interstate entries to add some variety to the mix and I'm pleased to say they were welcomed warmly, despite the chilly Goulburn weather.

The weather has played a big part in all our events in 2104 Round 1 was hot and dry; Round 2 overcast and showery; Round 3 started in a monsoon; so was I veer so please on the Saturday morning to be driving to the track in cold clear and dry conditions – sadly that feeling lasted only till lunch time. As always with Events at Wakefield on Saturdays we were able to Scrutineer 52 cars on the Friday afternoon which was a mammoth effort form a few volunteers and my thanks go to them on behalf on AHOC. This helps the event get off to a flying start and we had cars on track by 9:10am, I made the executive decision not to run familarisation as in the past this has been a total waste of track time as the participants treat it as a warm up drive – not checking lines, flag points, braking points, track surface etc. coupled with the fact that I could identify all entrants with a previous time it appeared a no brainer.

Once underway there were a few teething issues before we got it right about the third group on circuit, then of course Kevin Edwards again decided that the track needed a coat of oil by lunching the engine on the EVO just after the start finish as we were about to give the car the Black Flag, we literally picked up the engine parts off the track. The end result was a loss of half an hour, the crash rescue guys did a sterling job in getting us under way so quickly – Kevin won't be given an entry at the next CLA or AHOC events. All continued going well with a few changes made to run group positions when John Ribeiro came up to me and said that it was pouring rain in Canberra sadly we endured the same weather within half an hour – karma for continuing to get the spelling of Ribeiro wrong in my competitor listing.

Once the rain and cold settled on Wakefield only the heroes continued to trouble the timekeepers and they all had roofs, John Ribeiro with 45 laps was followed Rex Mellor on 36 Leigh Mellor on 31c and James Kinghorn on 25, gentlemen stand up and take a bow. Not to be forgotten are the guys that ran the Dummy Grid all day Ian Jenson and Ian Clayton from fine and cool to wet and bitter these two guys were there all day all runners need so say thanks.



Results: we welcomed Len Goodwin back from overseas in Class C2 which Len won as we have become accustomed in the 26R Replica Élan with a 1:11.61sec. Class D2 saw Rex Hodder return back to the top step in class in the Exige with a 1:09.69sec from Wayne Bower from MG Newcastle in his Elise on 1:10.51sec. followed Leigh Mellor on 1:10.85sec. then was Ashton Roskill on 1:11.24sec in the Elise followed Andrew Challenor in his Exige on 1:11.74sec. James Kinghorn on 1:11.94sec. Dennis Brady on 1:13.93 and Phil Abraham in his Elise on 1:18.03sec. it was clear everyone's times were a few seconds slower then expected due to the cold conditions that then got cold and slippery. Class D4 saw Mark Alexander on top fastest outright on the day with a 1:06.63sec.in his Exige of course followed by Duncan Andrews 1:07.45sec. followed by Andrew Stevens form Adelaide in Ian Peters Exige sixth in class on 1:15.94sec. I'm sure Andrew was being kind to his mate's car. Class R1 again saw our outrageous pensioner Syd Reinhardt in his HPE Elise class leader and third outright on the day with a 1:07.62sec. Syd making the wise decision to pack the car on the trailer just as the rain started, I think I should be taking advice from Syd about when to run events to appease the weather gods. Peter Klumper in the PRB was 2nd in class on 1:10.97sec. followed by Rob Bryden 3rd in the Cup240 on 1:11.57sec. with Terry Waugh in the Westfield 4th on a 1:14.92sec. Class 2AC had Rex Mellor son of Leigh join our group in a VW Beetle that qualifies as a family airloom it has been in the family since new and kept circulating all day for 3rd in class on 1:23.72sec. Rex was obviously enjoying himself. Class 2AM was headed by John Ribeiro in the Toyota 86 with a best of 1:10.66sec. John played with tyres all day eventually reverting back to the road tyres for the wet session. Class 3AM saw John Taylor flying solo and only got to post a time in the wet but good enough for 3rd in class on 1:24.50sec. in the 205 Peugeot. Class 3BM saw John Bott in the Skyline 2nd in class with a 1:09.77sec. Adrian Weir in his Clio posted a 1:13.01sec. for 6th in class. Overall I was disappointed with a day marred by the weather and made a few organizational errors in trying to get it all right on the day but lessons learned, I have to say the company was great and believe it or not we got the best of the weather the Sunday Event was bitterly cold and windy interspersed with cold wet and windy, there will always be the next round.

Round 5 hosted by the Morgan will again be at SMP on the Brabham circuit with entry ONLY being through the CAMS Motor Event website we again expect a full field. Choy-Lin Williams is again the Event Secretary and I have no doubt that if you make any errors or omissions on your entry she will be in contact so be pre-emptive and check all your detail on the site to ensure they are correct and complete this takes a huge burden odd the Secretary and helps get the results out by the Monday night. A trend that has been noted since we moved to online Entry is folks putting an entry in and leaving payment till the last possible moment PLEASE don't be one of these people on pay when you enter on play, you have just succeeded in annoying the Event Secretary. Entries came in very quickly once opened and at present we have a field of 98 with a cap of 120 so if you want to run at the full circuit at Eastern Creek now is the time to put and entry in and if you intend to run a camera to record your exploits please bring the paperwork with you on the day.

See you at the Track,.



Martin O'brian



Pete Klumper

The Europa Mann **PART 1**



The first draft of this story was all wrong. I just started typing memories of what had happened in my shed (or Mann Cave) since late 2010. When I searched my appalling disorganized archives of electronic photos it dawned on me I had no idea what had occurred when, let alone what I had being doing, and what I normally think of as "achieving". So those little electronic dates attached to files helped me to unfold the following:

by Richard Mann

The shed was purchased as a brand new building in late 2010. It comprised a clean upstairs office for renting out, and a completely blank canvas downstairs to create my toy box. Partition walls were built and plastered, rooms created for work and storage, and ample space to park five cars – one working and four "projects". At my previous shed I had completely rebuilt the chassis and driveline of my A110, repaired the underside of the body and glued the body to the chassis. By April 2011 my new shed was sorted, and by chance my re-entry into the world of working on old cars was dictated by a sudden rear upright failure in my S2 Europa. By sheer luck this happened at very low speed in a quiet back street not far from home. So I walked home, got the Subaru, some tools and a jack, then returned to remove the spring/shock, plus half of the offending upright. Remarkably when I sat the car back on its wheel, it had a slight list to port, and proved to be drivable – just. I made it to the shed at little more than walking pace, but that saved me the hassle of hiring a trailer.



Stripping the S1 Europa.



Blasted S1 Europa

Around April 2011 my new car hoist had just been installed in my shed, so my S1 Europa was placed on it and its LH rear upright removed and installed into the S2. Club member Krishnan Pasupathi and our mate Rossco were mulling about one day and the next thing I know the S1 Europa is on the hoist and in a matter of three hours it was completely stripped to a bare shell.

The body had a lurid and slightly disturbing colour scheme, so the next step was to clean it up. I'd heard about soda blasting and found a place in Altona North that had done a number of cars. They even lent me a trailer to get the shell from my shed. After a week or two the Europa was ready and dragged back to the shed for contemplation. The exterior, interior and chassis were all cleaned up and the exterior showed promise Just a few dings here and there. An S2 nose grafted on. Not too bad. The whole underside had about three layers of glass applied for no apparent reason. I built a simple rotisserie and let Rossco loose on the underside. He wanted to learn how to do fibreglassing, and the floor pan presented an area he could practice without the risk of doing damage. He spent most of the time chiseling and peeling off redundant glass. I still have no idea why (or how!) the fibreglass was applied but the underbelly was completely glassed over. Many spot repairs were performed and Rossco used a belt sander very effectively to clean up where the new repairs were done.

Krishnan had been bitten by the bug of club sprints, so in July 2011 we headed to Sandown for an Alfa Club event. It had been a long time since I'd been there, so I headed out with the novices and gave the Europa a good work out, and re-acquainted myself with butt clenching and ring twitch. On my second outing, at the end of the main straight, I had to pull up hard for a little step nose GTV. I banged the Europa enthusiastically into second thinking I had slowed too much and inadvertently gave the engine a stretch. On the back straight I flew past Krishnan, then floored it to the end. At the final braking marker a valve gave way and my engine disintegrated. Oops. So my day was done, a tow car and trailer had to be found and the Europa returned home to the shed.

The S1 engine had been removed in one lump, and it presented a possibility. Bung it in and see if it will go. Well it did! It was odd driving the S2 with significantly less horsepower, but no less enjoyable. That survived around six months then suddenly lost all its water on the Great Ocean Rd and again left me stranded. A new engine was created towards the end of 2011, and things were sort of back to normal. In November my mum's health deteriorated suddenly and "car stuff" was pushed into the background. In January 2012 my favorite pooch, Romeo the whippet, had to be put down, and a few weeks later mum died.

Mid 2012 I split with Wendy. It was not a good time. My project list included the A110, the S1 Europa and, of course, my magnificent Lotus 47. I could not find the mojo to do anything.

Krishnan had completed a Westie build and was hooked on the idea of lightweight simple cars. Lotus had entered his psyche. Being old school, I suggested he consider something like an early Elan. During weekly update emails with Matt King, he brought to our attention a partially restored S2 Elan advertised on Steve Taylor's new Lotus Marques website. Krishnan was not really looking for another project, and eventually started to investigate Elises and Exiges. Wise move! Elans had always been my dream car (along with E-Types) and the first photo I ever took as a young lad was a stunning white S3 coupe, which sometimes parked in my street in Geelong. Elan fever soon struck me and the S2 Elan had me hooked. The body had been rebuilt and modified with correct 26R guards and front bumper, and with hardtop in place, it looked perfect. One small problem. It was in Adelaide. I phoned my mate Blondie. A toolmaker by trade and certified car nut, he happily went and checked out the car for me. A car in primer might look good in photos but in the flesh it can be hiding a thousand and one deadly sins. A quick visit by Blondie, a few photos and debrief over the phone. I was hooked. I really, really didn't need another project.



Smokin!



Alec's sorry Series 1

MSCA Phillip Island – July

by Chris O'Connor



Darrin Morice's stunning new Exige



Serious review of sad video footage

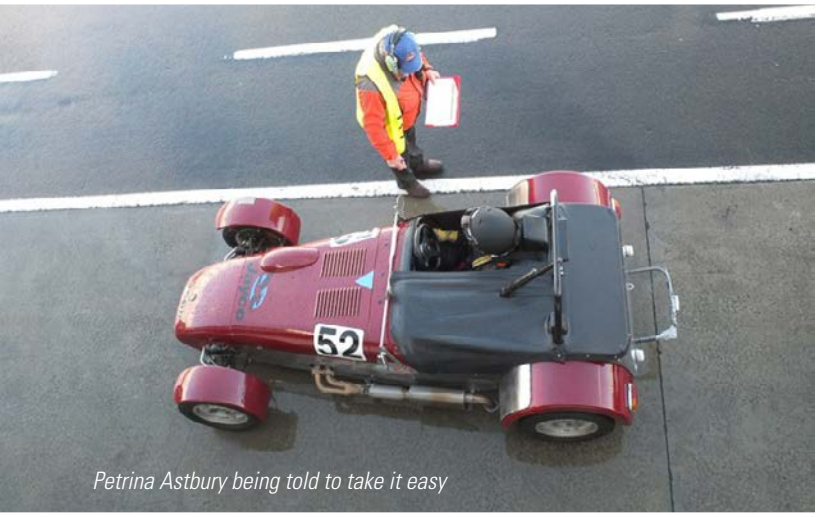
July 13 was the sixth round of the MSCA championship and the fifth round of the LCV championship. To schedule a sprint meeting at Phillip Island in the middle of winter might be referred to in other places as a courageous decision, and at least sixty seven pairs of eyes spent the preceding weeks scanning long term weather forecasts, consulting seers and fortune tellers, reading tea leaves and all manner of things to find out if it was going to rain. Each of these glimpses into the future would have turned up the same answer – YES. It was bucketing down first thing in the morning but against the odds stopped around 8:15. By drivers briefing the track was beginning to get a little bit dry and spirits were in the process of lifting.

With formalities out of the way the first couple of groups readied themselves but the weather gods exercised their cruel sense of humour and it started raining again. The almost dry track was soon gleaming with a fresh layer of water. The newly resurfaced Phillip Island is fantastic when dry but diabolical when wet. Cris Johansen and I had harmless spins during our first laps but the session was soon red flagged. Alec Spryou had had a moment on one of the fastest corners of the track and hit a tyre wall sustaining damage to his rear clam and suspension. Alec was shaken but otherwise OK. This was a bitter blow for Alec as he has, over the past year, invested a lot of time and effort into the MSCA and the resurgence in popularity of the series is due in no small part to his efforts. We, his fellow competitors, wish him well and look forward to him re-joining us on the track.

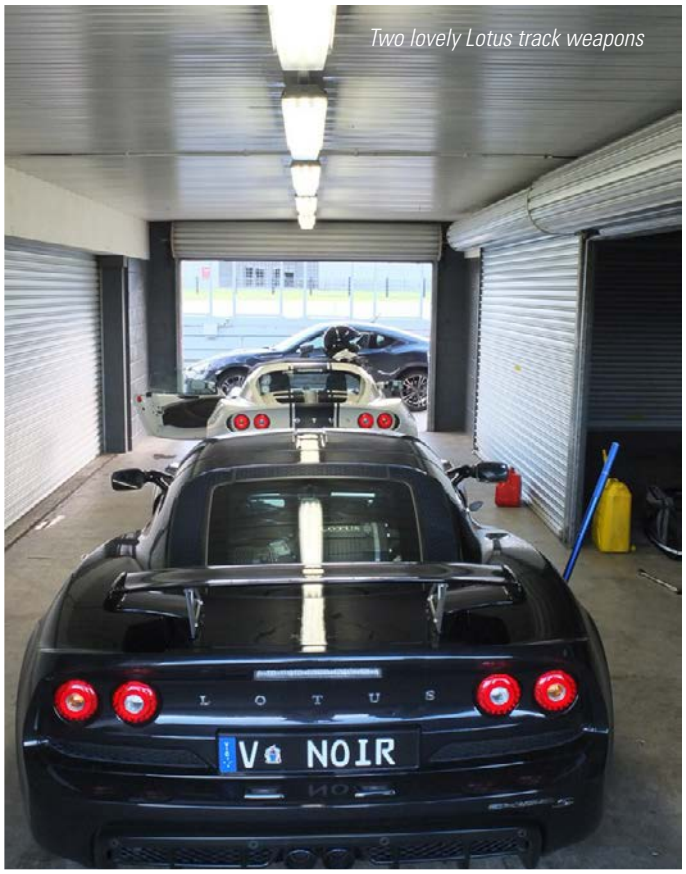
The start again stop again rain proved to be a nuisance throughout the morning but disappeared around lunchtime. Les Bone was dazzling both on and off the track. He posted a very quick time but that was nowhere near as impressive as his new squashed caterpillar green driving suit.



Bruce Astbury in a Clubbie for a change



Petrina Astbury being told to take it easy



Two lovely Lotus track weapons

At one stage I drove past and saw him posing with his car for a camera crew. Ben Styles continues to impress in his Exige. He lowered his best time more than once and ended with a sizzling time. Soon to be member Darren Morice dipped under one minute and fifty seconds in his new V6 Exige and he drove it home afterwards as he loaned his trailer to Alec—pretty impressive. Robert Smithers got into the 1:56s in his GT4 Celica, a car made famous by Carlos Sainz (and a host of others) in the WRC. Paul McMahon also shaved his previous best to also post a 1:56.

LCV RESULTS:

Name	Car	Class	Time	Class Place
Les Bone	Haynes Clubman	7	01:50.3	1
Ben Styles	Lotus Exige	2M	01:50.7	1
Michael Bouts	Porsche 2000 GT3	5M	01:53.3	6
Chris O'Connor	Lotus Elise	2M	01:54.0	2
Robert Smithers	Toyota Celica GT4	4M	01:56.2	2
Paul McMahon	Lotus Exige	4M	01:56.7	3
David Buntin	Lotus Elise CR	2M	01:58.3	3
Peter Astbury	Westfield SE	7A	01:58.5	2
Cris Johansen	Lotus Elise S1	2M	01:58.6	4
Petrina Astbury	PRB Clubman	7	02:03.4	2
Nick Ng	PRB Clubman	7	2:04.4	3
Gareth Walker	Elfin Clubman	2C	2:05.9	2
Robert Lancaster	Toyota MR2	2M	02:10.5	10


Darrin Alex and Dave



Nick Ng about to get wet



Rhett Parker, Chris O'Connor, Alec Spyrou

LCV Sandown report

by Kris Cook



Kris Cook

Melbourne in the middle of June is not normally a good bet for a dry track but as we rolled into Sandown the sky was black and full of stars, so fingers were crossed for it to stay that way. As the sun rose the car park behind the pits started to fill with all manner of machinery, a full seven run groups of cars had entered.

American and Australian muscle cars; Falcons, Torana, Camaro, Corvette towered over the classic English sports cars; Sprites, Spitfires, Minis and clubmans . There were also the more modern sports cars ranging from a cluster of S1 and S2 Elises to Modern Japanese track weapons like the Nissan GTR, 370Z, Honda S2000 and Subaru WRXs. However special mention must go to the MG car club who turned up in force with almost two full run groups of immaculate As, Bs, Fs and other alphabetically correct models.

With the start of the sessions underway it looked like the rain had stayed away and the officials got things rolling. With so many cars entered, good organization was always going to be key in everyone getting decent track time. Fortunately the MSCA have been concentrating on this aspect and all run groups were led out by an appropriately race inspired Fiat 500 Abarth pace car which kept the run groups cycling through at a decent pace.

In the Elise fraternity it was a tale of two engines, Chris O'Connor's Honda powered S1 had emerged from its short development cycle to dominate the Modern under 2 litre class. The straight line speed difference to a



Bruce Main, Chris O'Connor, Alec Spyrou


Chris O'Connor, Alec Spyrou



Chris O'Connor, Alec Spyrou

standard S2 Elise was frightening to behold. Alec's blatant disregard for camber shims was not enough to keep him in the hunt this time.

Rhett Parker, who had been absent from events in the first half of the year, also emerged with a new powerplant under the plastic bonnet of his S2. On closer inspection it was found to be none other than Chris's Multi-throttle K-Series. Rhett had entered in Regularity for the initial shakedown of the transplanted engine and by about lap 4 of the first run he was seen to be trailing a bit of oil smoke. Back in the pits and the car was leaking a significant volume of oil from somewhere in the engine bay. Cocky, Alec and Rhett swung into action and soon had the car up in the air and the undertrays off looking for the source of the leak. Unfortunately for Rhett the leak was not able to be fixed on the spot so his day was over.

In the clubman cars Bruce Main was the fastest of the LCV entries while Michael Bouts' GT3 Porsche was the fastest car on the day with a 1:24.14 lap time.

As the light started to fade back to black and the final run group finished up it was evident how well the event had been run. Every run group had got a reasonable number of laps in. The large field of cars with varying levels of experience and vast differences in car performance had managed to avoid any collisions and there were a minimum of recoveries required. Well done to all of the organisers and volunteers who run theses MSCA events for making them work so well.



Alec Spyrou



"GET YOURSELF A HOBBY"

The Restoration of Elan +2 (50.0026)

PART 1

Story and photos by Neil Roberts

Farmers do tend to fall into the seven days a week rut so Elizabeth's advice was well meant. Things turned negative when I suggested an old motorbike, but she was quite positive when the second idea was "What about an old "Pommy" sports car."

The Lotus Elan +2 was the car I yearned for as a young undergraduate in the 60's so I started my search there. Web searching located an ad in the Club Lotus Australia (CLA) for a 1968 Elan +2 (the car actually turned out to be a '67 build). My enquiry resulted in a conversation with the owner, Bill Mair (CLA member #109) who had kept the car as an untouched shed project for 35 years. He e-mailed me some photos after pulling the car out of a colleague's carport. The pictures hooked me of course and even though the car was not going, I wanted a closer look. I had never had any dealings with a Lotus-owning type before and was somewhat surprised when Bill invited me to inspect the car in Sydney and for Elizabeth and me to stay with his family in Dee Why to break the travel. Is this part of the "used car hard sell", I wondered? Having agreed a date, we were further surprised to receive a formal invitation to luncheon at the Mair's on the same day.

The lunch turned out to be a gathering of some of Bill's Lotus friends (and others) and we met some of the real names and characters of CLA (Sydney). The late Adrian Schagen, Maurice and Anne Blackwood and Tom Devitt were some of those who were there. The inspection of the car (garaged at car magician Rod Hoffman's) took place the next day before we returned to the Yarra Valley. It turned out that Bill had acquired the car from a panel shop guy in exchange for a Lotus 7 he owned (more on the implications of that later!).

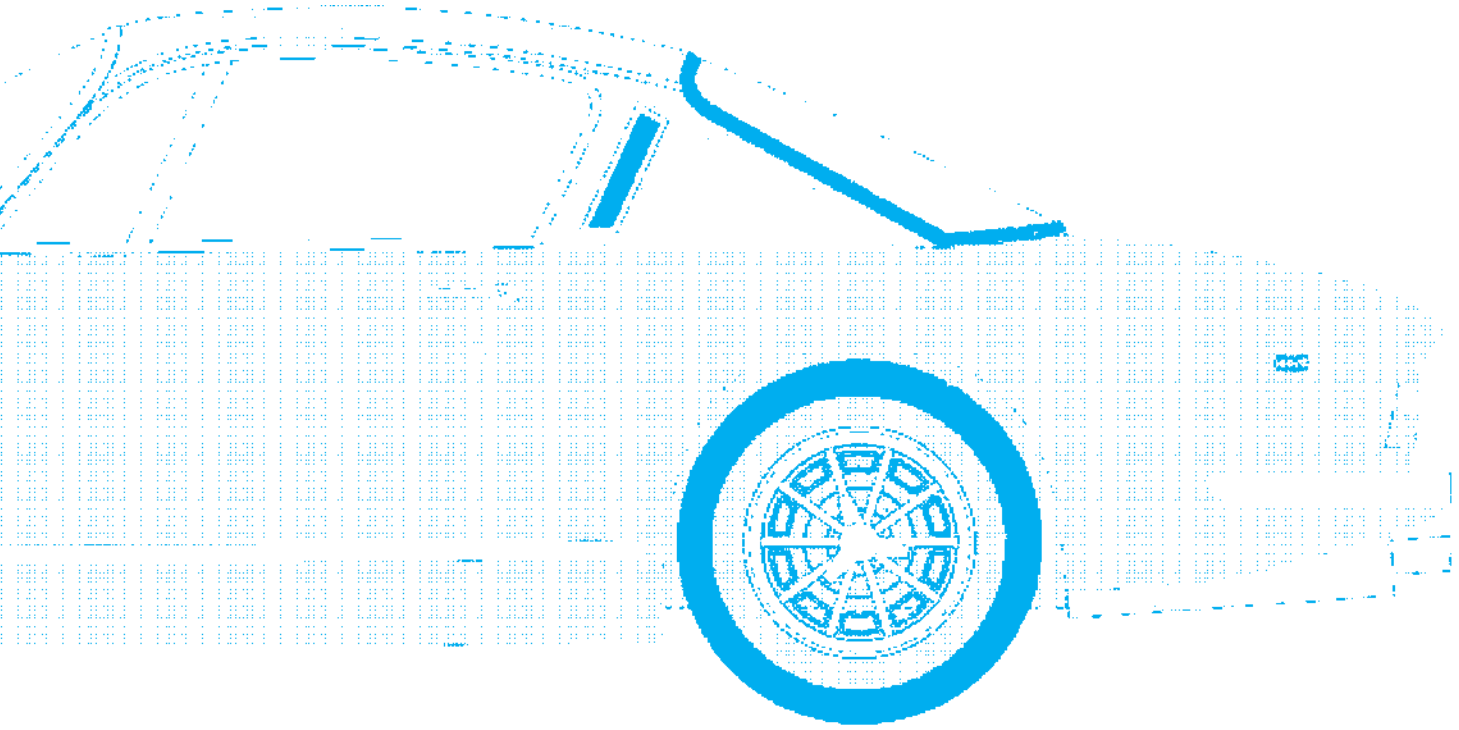


For Bill, marriage and family had intervened so the car remained an unfinished project thereafter. The panel shop guy had offered to paint the car in Bill's choice of colour before handing over the unfinished project. The result looked OK from a distance, but close-up, the quality of the work was quite appalling. Still, only 50,000 miles on the clock, having been off the road since 1977 and seemingly "complete"... I agreed to buy the car.

A trailer trip in November 2008 got the car back to Rising Vineyard in St Andrews. Before any work could commence, the 2009 "Black Saturday" bushfires intervened, inflicting losses to the farm and to income. Tentative research and work commenced after vintage in 2010. It was clear that real work was needed on all three systems in the car – the engine and drive train, the chassis and the body with its associated component parts. Nothing was good enough to ignore without work and the more digging was done, the more problems emerged.

Something about the Elan +2

On the face of it, the +2 is simply a variant of the 1963 designed Elan. Losing money on every Elite it made, Lotus badly needed a production car that was cheaper to make but which still had some of the Elite's 'cache'. Lotus design director Ron Hickman (yes, the B&D Workmate guy) had been involved in the Elite project, but he knew that a fully stressed monocoque body in GRP (fibreglass) was very expensive to make and precluded an open-top variant. Instead, he came up with the steel backbone design which Lotus continued to use until the Elise design was released more than thirty years later. Instead of the fully stressed body,



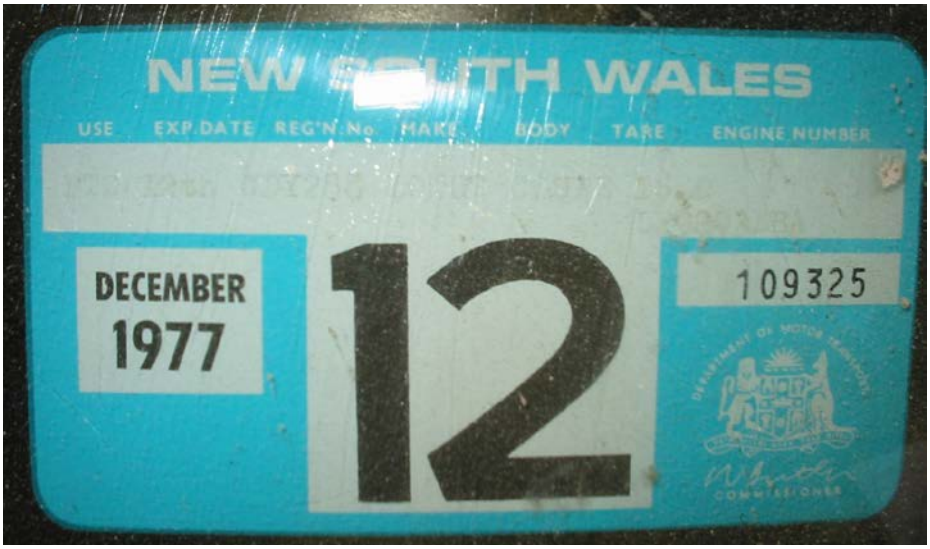
the lightweight backbone chassis does most of the work leaving the bolted-on body to stiffen things up a little more. While the 1967 released +2 (announced in 1966) shares the design concept of the "baby Elan" in almost every detail, it is a quite different car dimensionally and many of the chassis and body parts are not common. The +2 is longer and wider than the Elan, both in body dimensions and in chassis dimensions. The chassis *appears* identical, but is dimensionally quite distinct. Like the Elan, it uses the Triumph front uprights along with its version of the lightweight pressed metal wishbones. The rear suspension is a version of the Chapman strut design featured on the Elite—well that was the PR story at the time. In fact it is *not* a Chapman strut design at all, despite the fact that it uses a couple of the Chapman strut design's features. For the technically minded, here is a brief review of the difference:

Chapman Strut vs. Elan rear suspension

The key features of the Chapman strut design (first used on some of the open wheeler type 12 variants) are:

The drive shaft acts as the lower control arm, along with a radius rod. There can be no splines or longitudinal flexibility in the drive shaft if this is to be achieved.

There is no upper control arm. Instead, a long coil over damper unit (or strut) provides the control function as well as the springing, eliminating the need for an upper wishbone or control arm. To make this concept work, the strut *must be rigidly fixed to the hub* rather than bolted on like a wishbone or control arm.



All of these design ideas can be found on the Elite along with the brake disc mounted inboard on the differential. Elite cognoscenti will know that variations were made over the design-life of the Elite to sort out issues that emerged from the basic design. One of the inescapable issues, however, is the transmission of vibration to the differential from the lateral forces imposed by the driveshaft doing its work as a suspension control arm. This problem was tolerable with the Elite's differential mounted in the GRP monocoque. The problem was *intolerable* in test versions of the Elan's steel backbone chassis, so a wide wishbone took over the role of the Elite's stressed drive shaft and radius arm.

Yes, the strut cast into the hub was retained, along with the role of the strut as top link, but without the first key feature the Elan design *cannot* be said to implement the Chapman strut design.

The +2 was conceived as a way of widening the market for the Elan. "Yes dear, we can take the kids if I buy one of these" was the idea Lotus wanted to use. (Jaguar thought it was a good idea and stretched their E-type into a 2+2 version also.) Colin Chapman took no interest in the project and it became Hickman's personal baby. Hated by one and loved by the other!

The assessment

Some time passed between collecting the car and the first real hands-on work. In the meantime, I tried to learn as much about the car as possible and to consider the right plan of attack. Everyone assured me that it would take much more work than I imagined and that it would also cost more. They were right on both counts!

Steve Taylor from the Elan Factory in Boronia advised me to leave the engine until last—





good advice—and dig deeply into the chassis and body and find all the hidden problems rather than hope for the best. This was starting to worry me. So, body off to assess the chassis and running gear!

The body of the +2 simply sits over the backbone chassis and is bolted down with about 14 bolts. The rolling chassis contains virtually everything mechanical with the exception of the brake/clutch apparatus, the steering wheel and shaft, and the fuel tank. To provide mounting points for the front and rear seatbelts and to provide additional body stiffness and side impact protection, a fabricated steel "rail" runs between each side's wheel arches, serving also to clamp the GRP body sections together at the sills. On British cars, this sill member requires regular replacement as salty moisture collects in the body cavity and rusts away the steel. The un-galvanized chassis is fabricated from light pressed steel sections welded into a backbone with two pairs of "wings" to carry the rear suspension and the engine and front suspension respectively. This is another place for the rust cancer to strike and many British examples of the Elan and the +2 are on their third chassis replacement by now. Of course, I hoped that as this was an Australian delivered car and off the road for 30+ years, the chassis at least would be good enough to restore. There turned out to be surface rust everywhere and some areas of complete perforation of the sheet steel. This still seemed a restorable proposition, so the strip down continued.

Once the engine and drive-train had been removed it was possible to more accurately assess the overall state of the chassis. There was clearly an anomaly in the two front suspension towers . The LHS tower was clearly surface rusted like the rest of the chassis but the RHS tower appeared freshly painted!

The car had obviously had a serious bingle on the front right wheel, pushing the suspension mount out of shape and requiring its replacement.

This discovery raised the spectre of a twisted chassis, suspension out of alignment and all that that implies. More concerns when disassembly of the rear hubs revealed incorrect bearings in the hubs. Someone had replaced them with Elan rather than Elan +2 sized bearings.

The engine was put to one side and the project stalled until the strategic decisions were made.

Replacing an Elan or +2 chassis involves importing either a "genuine" Lotus chassis or a Spyder Engineering version of the original. While the Spyder version is dimensionally true in order to fit the body, it is an updated design, partially tubular space-frame and it is torsionally stiffer than the sheet metal original. Most restorers use the Spyder chassis for this reason. Additionally, one may, if desired, implement Spyder's improved tubular wishbone suspension for an improved (but non-original) suspension.

All these ideas were examined, but wait! There's more! Spyder also had a kit for the +2 which used a modern Ford twin cam engine, 5 speed gearbox and limited slip differential, along with larger brakes (Focus) and wheels. The engine is the recent Zetec 2 litre from the Focus which keeps the induction and exhaust on the same sides as the original Lotus Twin Cam thereby avoiding problems with the steering column. The Focus sump gets modified to suit the RWD configuration, Jenvey throttle-body injection replaces the Ford version and Emerald provides the ECU. 179 BHP at the flywheel, bog standard!

My concerns with the integrity of the original chassis, along with the clear signs of abuse, both impact and mechanical made a new chassis seem inevitable. The quoted cost of a proper re-build of the Lotus Twin Cam engine seemed to start at $10K and rise from there. There would still be the cost of rehabilitating the remaining mechanicals so it was starting to really mount up. The Spyder Zetec conversion would not be a "kosher" restoration, but the idea of a classic Elan+2 hiding modern mechanicals had some real appeal. Whichever direction I took, I still had a lot of work to do and money to spend to get the car to the state I wanted.

PART 2 documents progress on the restoration and the decisions made about the mechanicals.

My Day with "The Good Ol' Boys"

Story & photos
by Peter McConnell

NASCAR POCONO, PENNSYLVANIA
June 2014



As I was spending four weeks in USA, I looked for a chance to attend a race meeting. It presented itself with the NASCAR POCONO 400 in Pennsylvania scheduled while I was in New York.

I shot off an email to the organisers, and a very friendly Rick Durst arranged a ticket and pit pass for me to collect at the "will call" area at the track.

The track is a two hour drive from New York, and again NASCAR has it organised – NASBUS arranges buses from major cities in the US to the tracks – easy!

How big is the NASCAR Sprint Series?

There are thirty-six Races from Feb – Nov with approximately forty cars participating. Major sponsorship of one car is between $350K – $500K per race or $12M+ for the season. There were a total of forty-three starters in the Sprint Car Series, 22 Chevrolet, 12 Ford and 9 Toyota. The engines are 358 cubic inch V8's – power output near 900 HP, with speeds of up to 190 mph (305 kph).

A single team is made up of a primary team of six, including crew chief and engineers. Over the wall team of six, and the road crew of nine, comprising drivers, pit support and mechanics, making a total of twenty-one. A single team would have eight cars being set up for specific tracks and two cars come to each race.

The POCONO 400 track is called "The Tricky Triangle". It is two and a half miles long. The three turns are severe and not identical and banking of the track is different for each corner of the triangle, from 6 to 14 degrees.

Qualifying – of the forty-three starters, the top twenty cars are within three seconds – the pole sitter qualified in 49.6 seconds at a speed of 181.4 mph (290kph)

The Americans are big on razzmatazz and the pre race entertainment was by a country music performer – Tim Dugger. The Armed Forces Federation and NASCAR conduct a "Troops To The Track" program to honour and celebrate the service of current Armed Forces Members, veterans and their families. The drivers were announced and paraded in military vehicles.

I endeavoured to follow the Australian, Marcus Ambrose – #9 – who started in 29th position on the grid. I was able to talk with his pit crew, who told me they are suffering handling problems when back in the field, and with this year's regulations, Ford is not yet up with the leading pack.

The rolling start gets the field off smoothly. The noise and sheer speed add to the excitement – ear plugs all round.

There were no major accidents, but seven cautions during the race, often caused by spinouts, collision with the wall, flat tyres or debris on the track. Depending on tyres and fuel at the time of the cautions, up to half of the field may elect to pit under the yellow flag. It's quite a spectacle and frenetic as they come in and speed off. On lap 73, Jimmie Johnson collided with Marcus Ambrose in the pits at a speed of 55mph(88kph), both were able to continue on in the race.

Under yellow the field reassembles behind the pace car, and as the green flag is raised, there is great excitement especially near the end of the race. Everybody stands for a better view. The racing is close and fast as they jockey for positions, with cars up to three abreast on the circuit.

Towards the end of the race, Dale Earnhardt Jr., one of the most popular NASCAR drivers was running strongly, and won the race. Marcus had a difficult day, with a few more pit stops than planned, and finished in 24th position.

I tried hard to find Tee Shirts and promo gear that I could bring home and wear, but it was in vain so I had the customary Hot Dog with onion and the red and yellow sauces.

I then boarded the bus for the 2 hours back to New York. It was an enjoyable experience, the racing, the sheer speed and noise, the buzz of the day; it's very much a part of the American Way.

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▲ 2007 Porsche Boxster – ZZA 358
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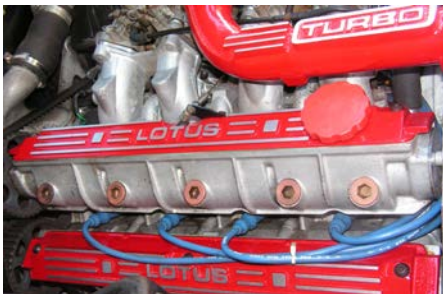
▲ LOTUS ELISE 111R 2009 (OCTOBER) – XHA 394

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