



Edition

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Editorial...

Well it's happened again, the time of year that committees dread - AGM time with all the administration has come and gone and we are able to get on with the serious business of having fun with the cars. Before we do however lets extend a very warm welcome to Robin Stevenson who takes up the presidential position and the new committee members, committee list below.

Motor Clubs rely on input from the members and the greater the participation, the greater the enjoyment for all. With this in mind we intend to actively seek out and encourage owners of new cars and those who have not taken part previously to involve themselves in both club events AND provide their stories and interesting articles, which we will include in subsequent newsletters.

Let's get on with it...

PRESIDENTS REPORT

From (the new) El Presidente..

As you most of you are aware there have been a few changes on the committee with the retirement of a few and the introduction of a few new members onto the committee. At this stage I would like to thank Geoff and Rex for their efforts that they have put into Club Lotus and I know they will be missed on the committee, however they are still assisting on the Race Committee. Also Congratulations to Charles and Ian who have joined us on the committee.

The first committee meeting went successfully with some great ideas coming out of it as you can tell with the future meetings proposed.

Some of regular Monday meetings are to be replaced by socials on Sundays as for the beesOnline café and an alternative venue for our July meeting at the Horse and Trap. Other socials planned is a Ten Pin Bowling evening to replace the go-cart evening, but don't worry we will still be having our Christmas Breakfast and Show and Shine which still is the most popular event of Club Lotus's year.

For the more sporting members we are still are continuing with track days at Pukekohe and Taupo and the race committee will be organising these events.

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The committee would welcome feed back from members as ideas for events etc, events they have enjoyed and those they wouldn't bother turning up to again feed back helps us to organise better and more enjoyable events for the future.

So everyone keep your eye on the news letters for future fixtures and events and look forward to meeting you at the next Club Lotus event at Bees Online later in the month.

Robin Stevenson..

YOUR NEW COMMITTEE

President: Robin Stevenson
Vice President: Tjeed Huizinga
Treasurer: Stephen Van Wonderen
Secretary: Peter Schnell

General Committee:

Dean Savage, Jason Nicholl, Kylie Adams, Tony Ingram, Charles Lockie, Ian Christie, Ken Woodburn.

All committee members may be contacted by sending mail to committee@clublotus.org.nz

NEW MEMBERS

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LOCAL NEWS

Waiuku Flying 50 Update...

Initial preparations and planning for The Waiuku Flying 50 Special Event to be held in the Townsite on Saturday, November 25th as part of the Concorso Euro weekend, are well underway. Enthusiastic response from car clubs to the general public has been received, with volunteer support offers from the local business community, local Lions Club, and Rotary Group as well as participating Car Clubs. Useful to note that following the Franklin Councils official advertisement for objections to the event, that no complaints or objections were received. The organizers are currently engaged in formulating the Event Road Closure and Safety plan which will be completed after consultation with effected business entities, and then published a few weeks prior to the event outlining alternative transport routes to take on the day

As the main target of the event is to raise funds for the Starship Foundation, The organizers have a very limited budget to work with, (the event will be free to the general public.) The Waiuku Business Community are currently raising sponsorship in various forms, and offers of assistance have been received from several local businesses.

any quantity of these should contact Roger Phillips at Lotus Cars on 09 235 0057, and he will arrange pickup, transport, and return. These will be stockpiled in the Townsite the week of the 20th November, then placed on the circuit during Street closure, removed and returned by Sunday the 26th November. Volunteers will unload and load the trucks, but assistance is also sought from those with Tractor loaders to assist.

Full access to the town site during road closure is maintained via pedestrian and current off/street car parking arrangements, however vehicular access to the main thoroughfare will be denied, and it is intended that No Parking signs will be in place on the circuit from Friday night of the 24th to Sunday 12noon. This may alter with planning progress

Negotiations are currently underway to televise the event, and assistance has been provided by local St Johns Ambulance, Fire Authority, and Franklin Amateur radio group, recovery vehicle's operated by Aarons Auto Services, with Knight and Dickey advising and assisting with transport logistics. This is a difficult and complex event to organize, However Lotus Cars NZ Ltd and Fiat Car Club (Waikato) as organisers would like to take the opportunity to thank all those involved in advance and will strive with the communities support to make it a unique Landmark event on the annual Motorsport Calendar.

Note: The Waiuku Flying 50 will be open to all European classic and sports cars built between 1900 and 1975 and will run on the main streets of Waiuku Township in Franklin County.

Would you like to know more about the event? Better still would you like to take part? Contact: **Roger Phillips at Lotus Cars on 09 235 0057 or visit www.lotuscars.net.nz for full information on the Waiuku flying 50**

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UPCOMING CLUB EVENTS CALENDAR

Sunday June 25th beesOnline

beesOnline is located 791 State Highway 16 at Waimauku. Meet at the Café at beesOnline about midday. There are two options either drive yourself directly to beesOnline or secondly meet up at the North Harbour Stadium at 11.00 am, and we will take a leisurely drive through some pleasant Rodney Country side.

beesOnline is a honey manufacturing facility and where you can see the bees doing there thing and bottling facilities etc. For more information check out there web site at www.beesOnline.com

The bees on line will replace our normal Monday Club night.

Monday July 24th Horse and Trap.

We are having a video and DVD night at the Horse and Trap, Enfield Street, Mt Eden instead of our normal venue in Penrose.

For those who want to we will meet in the bar area at 7,00 pm for dinner and afterwards go upstairs to the functions room at 8,00 (normal meeting time), other wise just meet in the up stairs function room at 8,00 pm.

			British Car Day at Bruce Mason Centre, Takapuna	
10-Jun-06	Sat			
25-Jun-06	Tue	Midday	beesOnline, Sate Highway 17 Waimauku	CLNZ
24-Jul-06	Monday	8pm	Video Evening - Horse and Trap, Mount Eden	CLNZ
27-Aug-06	Sunday	Midday	Watergardens - Waiuku	CLNZ
23-Sep-06	Sun		HRC Icebreaker Classic Racing - Pukekohe	HRC
25-Sep-06	Thu	8pm	CLNZ Clubnight - TBA	CLNZ
7 & 8 Oct	Sat & Sun		Spring Classic Taupo 2006	TACCOC
23-Oct-06	Thu	8pm	Labour Dat - no clubnight	
11 & 12 Nov	Sat & Sun		Whittakers Classic Racing, Manfeild	Wlg MG
9-Dec-06	SAT		Lotus Sprints - Taupo 2006 (REVISED DATE)	CLNZ
2007				
1-Apr-07	SUN		Lotus Sprints - Pukekohe 2007	CLNZ

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

EUROPA



It's nearly here...

The first of the **Lotus Europa S** manufactured from July this year is expected to arrive in our neck of the woods for the launch of the new model in November. The Europa follows the core Lotus philosophy of performance through light weight, just 995 kg. When compared to the Lotus Elise, the Europa S has a larger boot / luggage compartment and easier cabin access, resulting from lower chassis the Europa S is not a derivative of the Elise or the Exige and has been allocated a separate Lotus type number of Type 121 - the Elise and Exige are both Type 111. The new mid-engined coupe will deliver exceptional performance from a high torque (263 Nm or 194 lbft at 4200 rpm) 2.0-litre turbo engine producing 149 kW (200 hp or 203 PS) at 5400rpm. sides and a higher roofline. A full leather interior, driver and passenger airbags and carpets are provided as standard equipment – all this makes for a usable everyday vehicle, however one with unique looks, and with stunning performance to boot.

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Lotus Elan – Owners Perspective, Ken Walsh



Lotus Elan (types 26, 26R, 36, 45 and 50)

As the owner of an Elan Sprint, I thought I might say a few words about a great sports car. Much has been written elsewhere about the specifications and history of the Elan and most people with an interest in Lotus know something of the story. So aside from a brief explanation of the various types I won't bore you with details. Rather I will talk about my impressions as a driver and owner of an Elan.

First to the types. The Elan started as the type 26 in 1962 and was only offered in drop head form. There were two series of Elan 26s and there was also the 26R competition version. The series three Elan was initially offered only in fixed head form and was given the type number 36. Subsequent series four fixed heads were also designated type 36. The series three and four drop heads which followed were designated type 45 and production of the 36 and 45 ceased in 1973. Between 1967 and 1974 the attractive (and to my mind underrated) Elan plus 2 (Type 50) was built. This beautiful car was wider and longer than its sibling and had two seats (I use the term advisedly) in the back. Some of them even came with a five speed 'box. The last few of the two-seater Elans (not counting the type 100 built between 1989 and 1995) were the series four big valve sprints some of which were painted in the red, white and gold (Gold Leaf) livery of the Team Lotus Formula One cars of the time. Easy isn't it? (Reference: William Taylor, 1999 The Lotus Book, Coterie Press, London).

The first thing you notice about an Elan is that it is beautiful. Many cars are pretty when viewed from certain angles but the Elan is beautiful no matter how you look at it: a tribute to the design skills of Ron Hickman (though many will not forgive him the Europa – but I will). The second impression is its size –

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it is very small. My Elan Sprint FHC shares a garage with an MX5 and makes the Mazda look positively porky.

Getting into the Elan is relatively easy thanks to the long doors and once inside it has oodles of legroom. The cockpit is close, especially for those with broad shoulders, but not claustrophobic, however the internal door cutaways are essential for comfort. The seats are small buckets and lack adjustment other than for and aft. They are sparsely padded but remarkably comfortable. The steering wheel is perfectly positioned and the angled gearshift falls ready to hand. Pedals are close together and well positioned for heel and toeing and there is a footrest beside the clutch (in the later versions at least). All this works well if your feet are no bigger than size 7 but above the footwell could get a little crowded.

One of the things I never tire of with the Elan is the beautiful engine note. At idle the slight whistle of the Webbers mixed with the burble of the exhaust is delightful. With rising revs the Webbers and cams combine to produce a turbine sound that is, to my ear at least, distinctive. The clutch is heavy compared to modern (Japanese) standards but feels perfectly weighted to the car. Much has been said about the Rotoflex drive couplings (or doughnuts) but I have not had the least trouble with them. “Windup” and kangarooing will only be a problem with the most ham fisted (or footed) of drivers. Balanced throttle and clutch control eliminates any leaping tendencies. The wonderful torquey engine produced fabulous acceleration for its day and is still very respectable. The figures quoted from period tests vary between a rather optimistic 5.6 for the 0-60MPH dash to a somewhat pessimistic 7.6sec. But whatever, the thing is fast and can easily humble many modern sports cars.

Similarly the Elan’s road manners are a lesson to many modern cars. Who was it that said, “I wanted to make the steering as good as the Elan’s and we failed. It’s really good but it’s not as good as an Elan’s”? Give up? It was Gordon Murray, designer of the McLaren F1, talking about the McLaren’s steering (quoted in Classic and Sports Car September 2003 page 6).

It is interesting to compare the Elan to the car it supposedly inspired, the MX5. As I have said, look at the cars side by side and you notice that the MX5 is considerably larger. Get inside the MX5 and you notice that (with the exception of width) you have much less room. Legroom is at a premium and there is no room behind the seats. The boot is much smaller than the Elan’s despite the space saver spare tire. The way the cars drive is also very different. The Elan is softly sprung compared to the Mazda and has a remarkably supple ride which seems to soak up the bumps. The cornering powers of the Elan are enormous but it pays to get the line right – to my mind the Elan is less forgiving than the Mazda. But then it is usually doing everything a lot faster as well - my Elan can easily out accelerate my series one MX5. In the Elan I am also aware that I am driving a car that has very little in the way of crash protection and whose body is only slightly thicker than paper and seems about as tough.

It is perhaps unfair to compare the MX5 to the Elan. The MX5 of the Elan’s era was the staggeringly successful MGB. In the 1960s the Elan was very much more expensive than the “B” and of course an all round better performer. Naturally the MX5 will run rings around an MGB in all areas (except exhaust note – the “B” burble is delightful) and for what it sets out to do the Mazda does very well.

The Lotus is not without faults, and I am willing to forgive all of them when I find out what they are! Alright, the lights can be unpredictable but mine always go up eventually, just like the electric windows. I still find myself reaching for a fifth gear. The handbrake is a silly little affair hidden under the dash and I still forget to let it off before doing up my seat belt (you can’t reach it with the belt done up!). The doors bulge at the bottom rear corners and the tacho and speedo do what old Smith’s gauges do (moon vaguely about trying not to commit themselves to any firm readings). The electrics are by Lucas (and he ain’t called the “Prince of Darkness” for nothing).

Lotus does not have a reputation for unreliability – we have all heard the ‘Lots of Trouble Usually Serious’ jibe. My Elan has been a pleasure to drive and in three years and 30,000 miles has never let me down – may it always be thus.

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Ken Walsh

Conclusion

Well, that's about it for this issue – please don't forget, if you have an interesting viewpoint, article that you feel will be of interest to others or just a strong opinion on a matter please send it to charles.lockie@xtra.co.nz and we will include it in the next newsletter.

Keep warm

Charles

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