



LOTUS lines

NEWSLETTER NUMBER TWO for 1985
March-April 1985

EVERGREEN LOTUS Car Club
3010 132nd Ave. SE
Snohomish, WA 98290
334-5768

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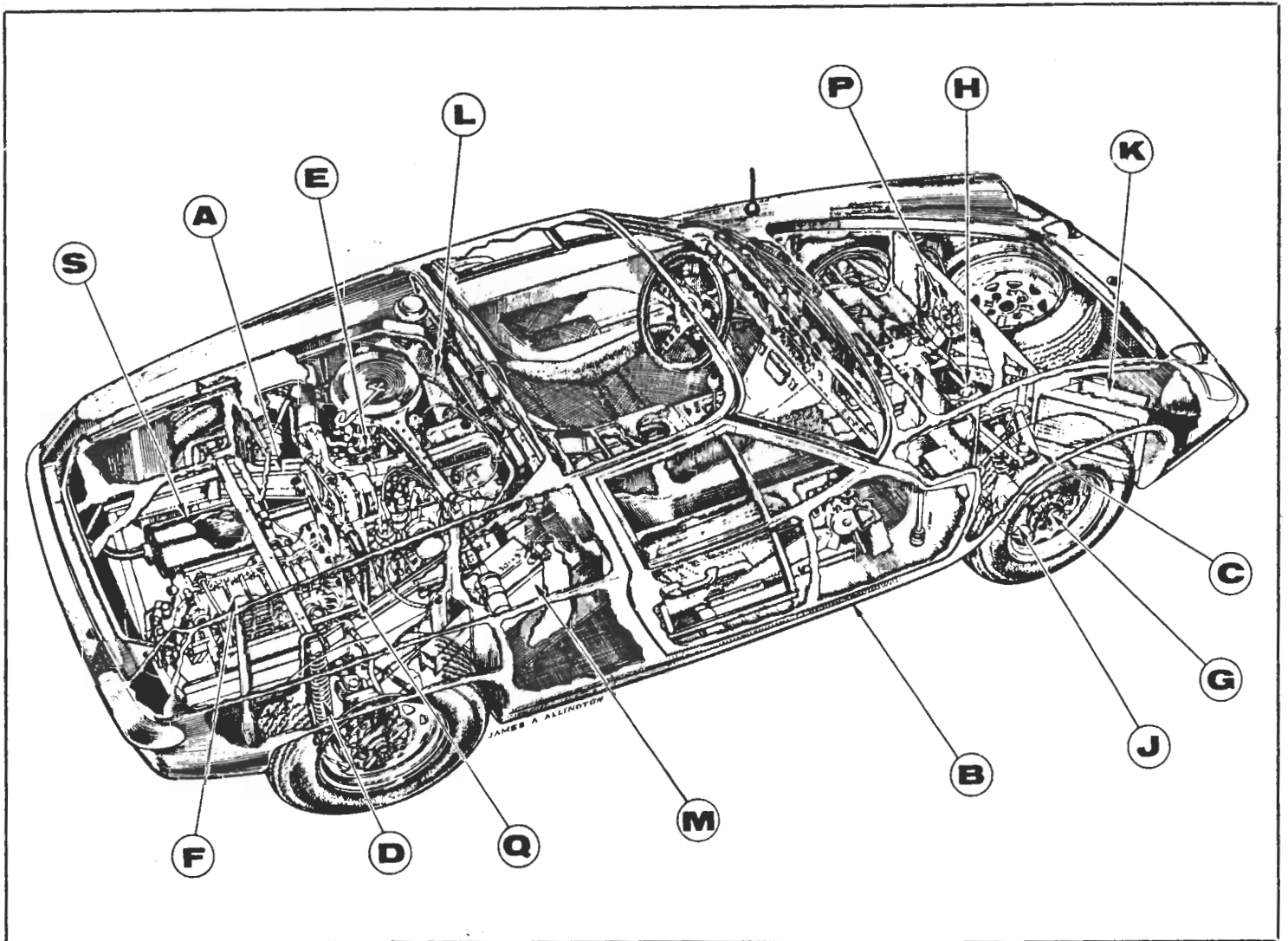
TECH ARTICLE- ENGINE BUILDING, Part I

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UPDATES TO MEMBERSHIP LIST



Since this issue is due out by the first of March, it looks like for a change one will be on time, and hopefully I can now get on a more positive schedule of getting issues out every two months- next issue will be out no later than the first of May, so if you would like to provide any contributions, in the way of articles, illustrations, want ads, etc please get them to me preferably by the middle of April. Several people have offered to provide me with some material for future issues, which is much appreciated- for example, Bill Boyer presents the first of his articles on engine work in this issue which I'm sure you'll find of interest. We haven't had any ads in the last one or two issues, so if you have any bits and pieces you'd like to dispose of, or you're looking for anything let me know and we'll put an ad in the next available issue. If we have enough people with parts to sell, perhaps we should think about organizing a swap meet later this year, as the BC Club has put on a number of times.

I had planned to drive up for the Lotus Car Club of BC's monthly meeting on the 6th of February, but the weather and road conditions were such that I decided not to chance it. As I mentioned in the last issue, they're planning another Swap Meet for sometime in April (they hadn't picked a firm date the last time I spoke with them) but I have sent them our membership roster, and they will be mailing notices regarding time and place (I would assume the location will be the same as the last three meets, i.e. at MCL Motor Cars in Vancouver, the Lotus dealer) directly to all of you.

Our January meeting, at Torrey's in West Seattle, went quite well- I was pleasantly surprised to see a good turnout of running Loti, especially for a winter meeting with the threat of snow! A total of seven Loti showed up- new member John Mengedoht stopped by with his Esprit, and Jim Orgill and Jim Kirbach with their Europas, and Fred McDonald and Rob Roberts had their Elans, and Raj Savara arrived later with his Esprit. New members Alice and Dave Larsen were there with their Seven from Vashon- first Seven we've had at a meeting, which was nice to see- since they were dressed for Seven driving, with multiple layers of clothes, they were the only ones not freezing out in the parking lot while we were looking over the cars. Others in attendance, but Lotus-less, were Mike Lathrop, Eric Wyss, Bill Boyer, John Shih, and Lezlee and I. All together I believe we had about 15, and unfortunately we thus discovered that Torrey's really isn't big enough for us- the group we had there there in January was about the most we could accommodate in the back room we had, without having to spread people out around the room in booths, and as I'm sure we'll have larger meeting turnouts in the months to come, we need to find another location.

Our next meeting was planned for this coming Sunday, at Angelo's Restaurant in Bellevue- however, I've since found that they aren't open on Sundays, so that's out. So, our next meeting will be postponed for a week, and will thus actually be in March- see the report of all the details on this later in this issue. We are planning a garage tour in conjunction with our next meeting, in order to see a few of the non-running Lotus our members have hidden away in garages- I've had some trouble getting in touch with some of you that I know are in this category, which is another reason why this next meeting

is being moved a week back, but I will be trying between now and next week to contact everyone, to find out if you're willing to have a group of fellow members invade your garage for a half-hour or so and see what you've got, and perhaps offer some advice and moral support on getting your car on the road.

Our T-shirt order with Gran Prints went in the day after the last meeting, as promised. We haven't received anything yet, but I'll let you know when they come in (and of course if they come in this week I'll have them for the meeting).

As those of you who are also members of Lotus Ltd. know, Christopher Neil has now opened their US branch. I had heard rumors, when I first heard of their plans to open up over here, that it would be in the Boston area, but their outfit is located in Alexandria, VA: Christopher Neil East, Inc.

5702-A Gen. Washington Dr.
Alexandria, VA 22312
(703) 354-8081

The bad news is that 1) this new Chris. Neil outfit, while it will be competitive with other US Lotus parts suppliers, will not have the low prices we've been getting from the UK- a Lotus Ltd. member went to check out their prices and found them to be about double the UK 2) He was also told that the C.N in the UK, now that they have a US branch, will no longer accept orders from the US. I've written to C.N. (UK) to try to confirm this (especially since I still have a credit with them), but I would have to say that it's probably true, which will be unfortunate as they've been a good source for Lotus parts at very good prices. I've written to a number of other UK Lotus parts dealers (Len Street, Fibreglass Services, etc) and as I receive price lists from them, I'll make copies available for anyone that's interested.

I received a packet of information a few days ago from Chris Tchorznicki, who is the new US distributor for Caterham Car Sales, through his firm Sevens and Elans of Cambridge MA. I'm reprinting the press release he gave me to describe this- he also sent some price lists, both for brand new Caterham Super Sevens (a rolling chassis starts at \$9988, with engine options running from an 84hp 1600 Gt @\$1375, to a 150hp Cosworth BDR RS1600 TwinCam @\$4850), and a price list for Seven parts. I've made copies of the latter for all our Seven-owning members- if anyone else wants one let me know. Also included was a data sheet on the specs for all the engines available, and a couple of reprints of articles on the Caterham Seven, including a road-test against a motorcycle which was very interesting reading.

Chris inquired also about advertising rates, and this brings to mind something I've mentioned before that you might want to think about- if you know of any businesses locally that might be interested in either advertising in our newsletter, or in offering some sort of discount to our club members, please feel free to discuss it with them, or let me know about it so I can contact them; if we are able to line up some commercial advertisers, it would help to defray the cost of producing this newsletter, and possibly we could then also afford to print photos etc as well. I'm going to check with the BC Club to find out what they charge their commercial advertisers, and suspect we would probably charge about the same.

Bill Boyer, author of the article on engine-building you'll find elsewhere in this issue, called me last week to advise me of a couple of things. First, as he builds engines professionally, he obtains all his supplies at jobber prices, and he has kindly offered to supply Evergreen Lotus members with any items he can get, at just 10% above his own cost. Secondly, he told me that he will be attending a large Trade Show on March 31st, at which he will be able to obtain material at a discount of 10 to 20% off his regular jobber price; so, anything he obtains for you at this show will be, even with his 10% "commission", lower than the regular jobber price, so this is an excellent opportunity for you to obtain some stuff at very good prices, in time to do some maintenance work on your Lotus before the real Lotus Season is upon us. A lot of the stuff at this show is meant for dragsters, Funny Cars, etc., but there are a lot of things which, while not intended for funny little plastic foreign cars, can be used. For example, I've mentioned before the possibility of our group having a tech session, in which we fabricate braided hoses to replace our present brake and fuel lines (especially the latter, as the plastic lines present such a fire hazard- the BC has had four Lotus fires in the past year or so, and I believe that all of them were fuel-line related)- Bill told me that both Russell, and Earl's Performance braided hoses are available at this show.

I've just received the latest issue of the Cam Journal, the BC group's newsletter, so I can tell you that the date (tentative) for the Spring Swap Meet up there is Saturday, April 13th, at MCL. Something new, to make it even more interesting, is that they are planning a slalom for the following day, the 14th. More details on this as I receive them, and as I said earlier you'll all be getting notices directly from them when things are more definite.

Just SIX months now, before the All-British Field Meet in Portland, August 31st and September 1st. I've written to John Rollin, who has been in charge of the event the past three or four years, to insure that we're on their mailing list, and hopefully they'll send us another packet of info and entry forms like they did last year. Just as soon as I have any info from them I'll pass it along to you.

Finally, I'd like to welcome these new members to our continually growing group:

Alice and Dave Larson	Glenn Drumheller	John Mengedoht
Rt 4, Box 423	1515 Pacific Ave.	1237 NE 90th
Vashon, WA 98070	Everett, WA 98201	Seattle, WA 98115
(h) 463-2816	(h) 652-6405	(h) 525-2274
'66 Super Seven	(w) 258-4361	(w) 623-4646
	'72 Elan	'77 Esprit

As some of you may know, we exchange newsletters with the MG Car Club, and several of our members also belong to that group (Jim Kirbach, Jim Orgill, and Bill Boyer)- Jim Orgill's lady friend, Lynn Brown, is their contact to whom I send our issues. Jim told me at last month's meeting that Lynn was hospitalized for some surgery; I haven't talked to Jim since then, but I hope Lynn is feeling better, and on behalf of the members of Evergreen Lotus I would like to wish her a speedy recovery.

We're going to try something a little ambitious this next meeting. In conjunction with this month's meeting, we would like to have a "garage tour" to visit the garages of some of our "less fortunate" members, i.e. those members who are presently without a running Lotus. In so doing, we will get a chance to see some of the other members' cars that otherwise might not see the light of day for quite some time, and perhaps collectively we can lend some support, be it technical with words of advice and offers of help, or at the very least some moral support to spur the owner on to get back to work on that project (that "bar Lotus", as Bob McDaniel so aptly put it).

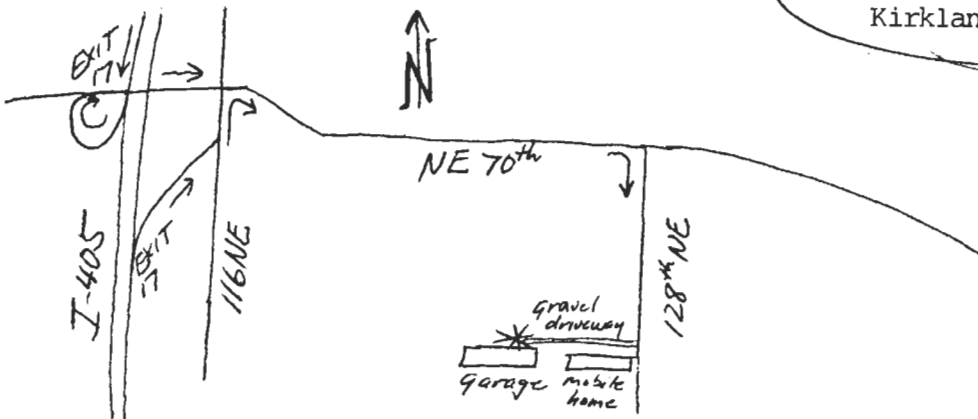
We were originally going to have this tour and meeting this coming Sunday, the 24 of February, but I have had some problems getting in touch with some of you, that I would like to include on the tour if you're willing, and also the restaurant that we were going to end up at, in Bellevue I discovered later isn't open on Sundays- so, we've moved it back a week, and will be ending up at Jim Kirbach's place, and meeting in his garage.

The plan right now is to assemble at Torrey's Eggcetera, the site of our January meeting, at 5001 California Ave. SW in West Seattle; we will leave here at about 9:30, but anyone that wants can arrive earlier and have breakfast here as a group. We will then make our way through West Seattle, and over into Seattle, heading north to cross over the north end of Lake Washington, and down the Eastside to Jim's, to have our meeting at about 3:00 in the afternoon. We will need about four or five garages to visit- I have one or two tentatively lined up, but I will be calling a number of you in the next few days (or trying again to get in touch with you)- if you're willing to have a bunch of us invade your garage for an hour or so, and haven't gotten a call from me yet as you read this, please do give me a call and volunteer your garage as a stop on the route. If we get more than the four or five we need for this tour, we'll do it again in a month or two. If you can't make it for the tour, the map below is for Jim's place if you can make it to the meeting. If you can't make the entire tour, but would like to meet us en route, call me Friday or Saturday as I should have our route finalized by then and can perhaps give you an idea of where we'll be at a given time so you can catch up with us. You fortunate ones with running Lotus should certainly drive 'em if you got 'em, and can perhaps also give one of the less fortunate Lotus-less a ride on the tour, to eliminate a few non-Lotuses and alleviate any parking problems of too many cars.

Hope to see a lot of you on Sunday!

Terry Elmore

at Jim Kirbach's
6537 128th NE
Kirkland 822-5645



This is the first of a Series on building a high-performance Austin A motor. This engine is to see use in my Lotus 7 which is to be heavily autocrossed, and see some street use, so the old lump must make a lot of power, have good low speed torque, be safe to 7000 RPM, be reliable, and not use a lot of money I don't have.

The Austin was chosen because I a) have a garage full of parts from all my Sprites, b) like to be Jack the Giant Killer, and c) just plain like the silly things. The engine will be a 1275, because a) they "look" legal by WWSCC rules, b) it makes more power than the 948, and c) nothing says Jack can't have a big stick.

Granted, few members have Austin-powered cars, but a lot of the basics that I'll be showing can be used on just about any motor, at least they work on small block Chevs!

Part I The other day I watched a friend put his 1275 engine back together. The block had been bored and honed at a good machine shop and was, as he said, "ready to build". He washed the parts in solvent and started putting the pistons in. I cringed. To think of the time and money that he was spending and then to just slam it together! I asked him what the piston clearance and ring gap was, and he said he didn't know but that "the machine shop and ring manufacturer would have taken care of that". I cringed again. This is a trust in outside suppliers that I just do not have. I talked him into chacking one of the pistons and was he glad we did. Instead of the .0019-.0025 that the factory calls for it was only .0015, or to put it another way he would have destroyed the motor about as fast as it took to start up. And, as for piston ring gap, there was NONE.

To check piston clearance an inside micrometer (or snap gauge) and an outside micrometer (mic) are needed, although some very good motors have been built with just a feeler gauge. The clearance is checked 90 degrees from the wrist pin at about the center line of the pin. Don't forget that the piston is a bit barrel-shaped from the rings down, for it is where the piston is largest that it will need to be measured. As for how much clearance you should have, the main thing is to not have too little, and from my experience on 1275 Midget/Sprite motors the stock .0025 is not enough. If the car is for street use and will not be driven hard then .003 will do; if fast road work or the occasional slalom, or if forged pistons are to be used in a full-time slalom car the clearance should run about .004. But if you expect to really use your car and plan to use cast pistons such as Hepolites then .005 is what you should shoot for. The engines I sell use .004 on forged pistons and .005 on motors with cast ones.

As for piston ring gap the only tools needed to check and adjust them is a feeler gauge and a small fine file. The ring is put into the cylinder it is to be used in, and the gap is measured with the feeler gauge- just make sure that the ring is square in the bore. The factory calls for .008-.013 but the closer you get it to the low side the better- though I have built some motors with as little as .006 I generally build them to .007 on all but the top and oil rings which run .008.

Is all this "extra work" worthwhile? You bet! If the engine is put together like this and the rings and cylinders are prepared like I'll describe in Part II, it should make more power (about 5hp more) and get better mileage, not to mention it should live longer!

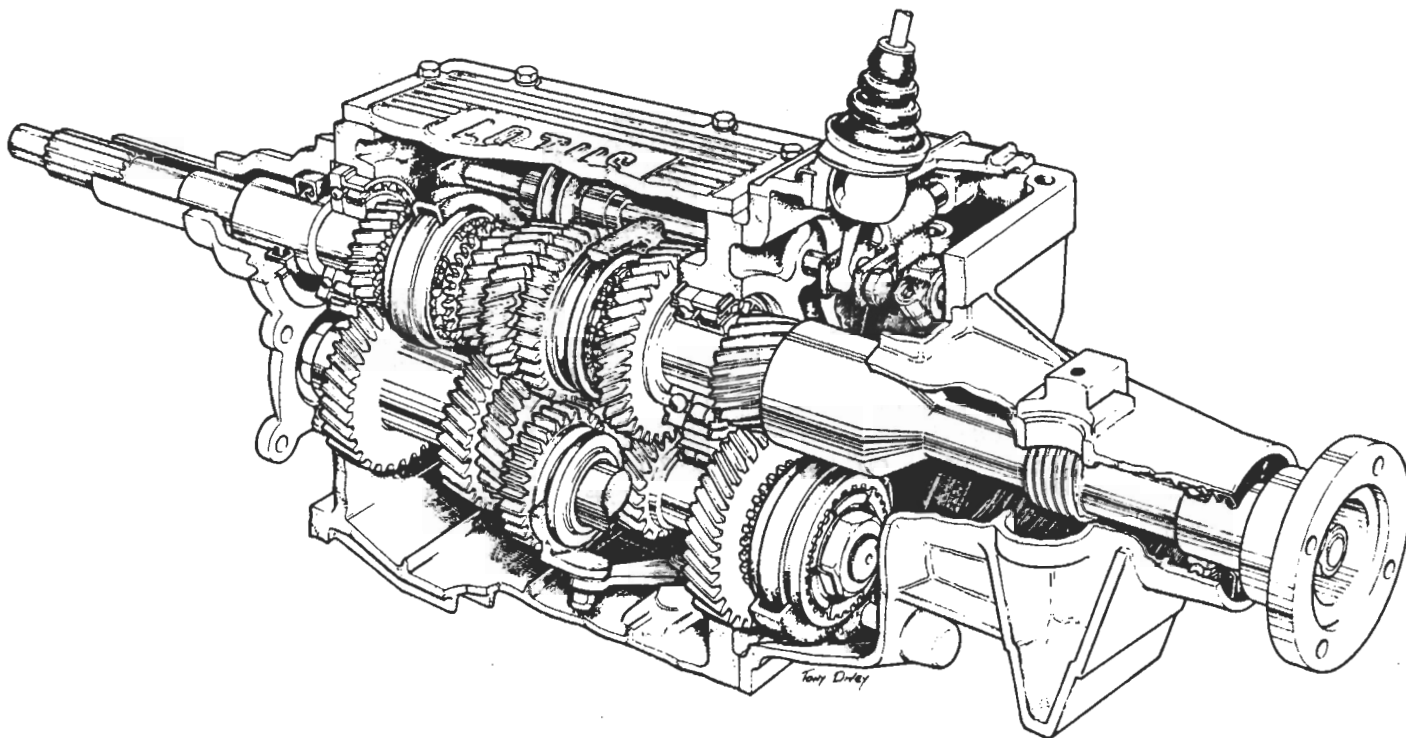
Date: February 8, 1985

For Immediate Release

Caterham Car Sales, Ltd. of Surrey England, is pleased to announce that Sevens & Elans, of Cambridge, Massachusetts has been appointed distributors for the Caterham Super Seven.

Sevens & Elans is owned by Christopher J. Tchorznicki, a long time Lotus enthusiast and former resident of the Bahamas. There he was for seven years the Grand Bahamas Motor Sports Club overall racing champion. Chris is the owner of a 1962 Lotus Elite, a 1965 Series 2 Seven, and a 1967 Lotus Elan Coupe.

Sevens & Elans will be selling new Caterham Super Sevens to order. Also, the restoration, to a pristine condition of Lotus Elans and Sevens. All parts for Sevens, including panelled chassis and parts for Elans will be available at competitive prices. Special orders for new and used parts for all British sports cars, will also be a taken.

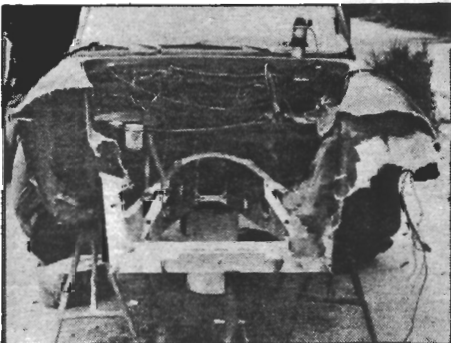


PRACTICAL CLASSICS PROJECT CAR

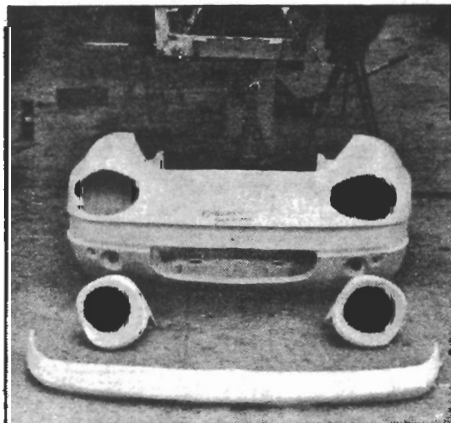
Last month we left off with the body on trestles and the task this month is to laminate on the new mid-front section and return the Elan to its proper shape once more. The first step then is to remove any remaining fixtures left on the damaged areas which are going to be cut off, namely the headlight relays, washer bottle, pump, coil, and any brackets; in our case all the relays were intact and were just coiled up in the engine bay. If you remove them altogether, do mark on a piece of paper where the wires go.

We left the body on trestles last month, the chassis having been gutted and chopped up.

Offer the new chassis up, not forgetting to lightly stick the felt on from the old chassis. This is essential to provide a platform for the new section when trying to align it. Two of you can lie on your backs and just lift the chassis into place then support it, or alternatively use two jacks and jack it up. Either way, the full body weight must be on it, so just jack it up until the body lifts off the trestles, then lower again until the body is just touching the trestles. It is essential that the chassis is well and truly into its correct place.

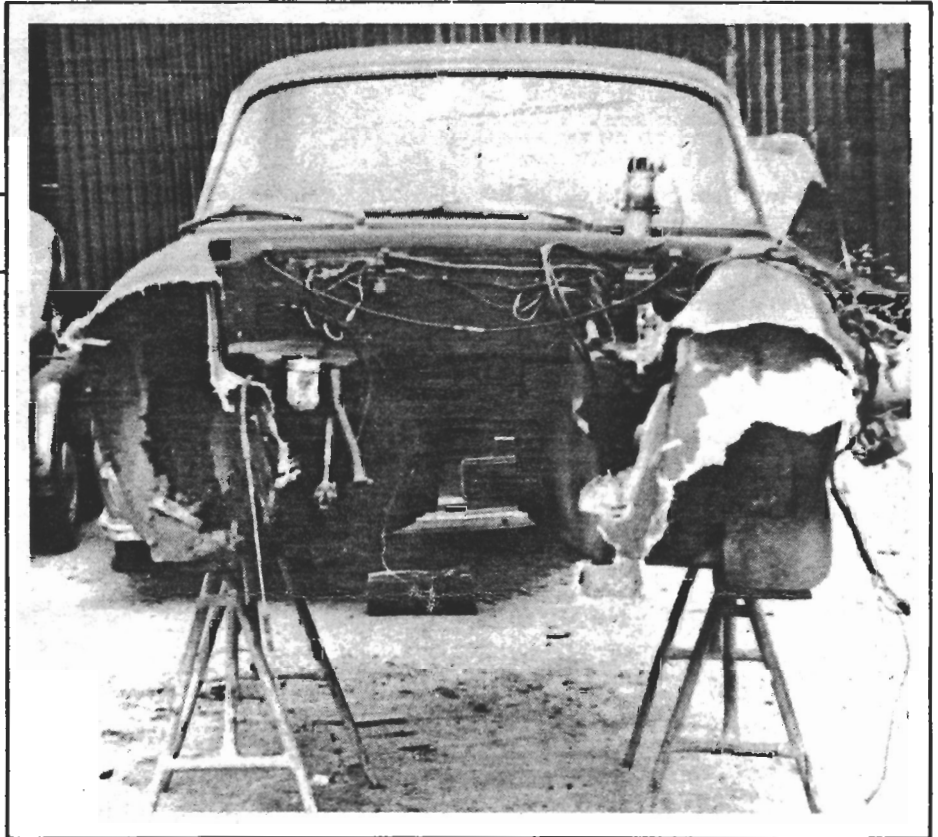


The new chassis is offered up into the body recess and held firmly in its correct position. (Don't forget that the felt must be in place).



The new body section and headlight pods and bumper. All come from the factory in primer-surfacer.

LOTUS ELAN RESTORATION



Part Three: Bonding on the new section by Miles Wilkins.

Equipment

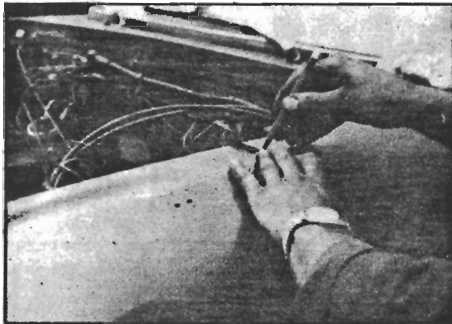
Jacks x 2.
Drill, Jigsaw, Wooff or Bosch grinderette or a 5" coarse cintride disc on an electric drill.
Hacksaw.
Steel tape measure and felt tip pen.
Production file, cork block, P.60 production paper.
3/8" mild steel strips (or aluminium) to act as clamps.
No. 6 1/2" self tapping screws, masking tape.
Solvents, chisel etc. to remove caked-on under-sealants.

Now here of course we cheated and spotted the chassis for drilling and tapping, and did all except the front turret and rack platform (chassis drilling will be detailed in part 5). The new section was then measured and the

corresponding mark was drawn with a felt tip pen on the body. When both sides were done, the remaining damaged wings were cut off with a jigsaw using a coarse metal blade (a hacksaw would do but takes a long time. Use a 24 tooth blade). The new section was offered up and little by little was edged up to the body after careful trimming. The chassis also serves as a good guide of course. At this stage before the final alignment the bonnet must be fitted and anchored on its catches. If the section is fitted too 'long' there will be a large gap between bonnet and front panel, too 'short' and there will be no gap so the section will have to be pulled back and you'll have a larger joint to make good. Make sure the contours are right in the vertical plane, and there is an even gap between the bonnet and the wings/front panel. Remove the bonnet and use a pilot drill (1/8th) and drill

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LOTUS ELAN RESTORATION/Continued

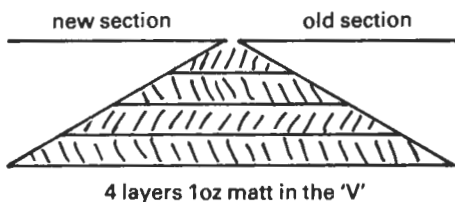


Marking the body with a felt tip pen and steel tape where to cut off the damaged part to accept the new section.

through the two front bobbins on the new section, from underneath use a 3/8th drill and carefully drill the chassis. Remove the section and thoroughly clean up all the bonding areas, remove all traces of underseals, paint, dirt and then grind a shallow V about 3" from the cut using the grinderette or cintride disc (coarse) on an electric drill. Grind the other half of the V on the new section and offer the section back up. Bolt the section to the chassis at the front securely and use clamps and self tapping screws to bridge the join on the sides. Make sure the bonnet fitment is still perfect, if not, refit again if necessary, as once you've started to laminate, that's it, the bonnet will never fit. From inside the wheel arch laminate the join using 3-4 layers of 1oz (300gm) matt. After doing both sides, go into the engine bay and do the same there.



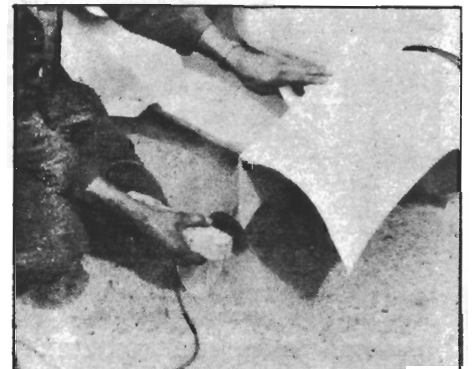
Showing the damaged areas cut away leaving a clean "square" edge.



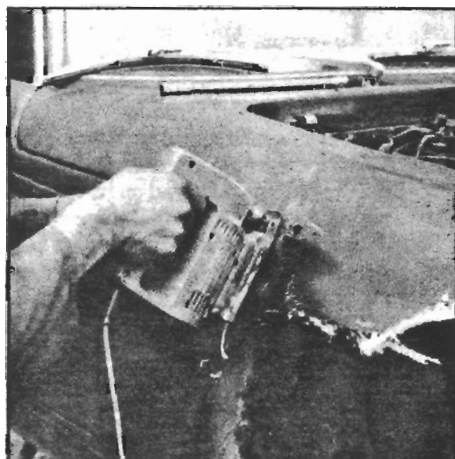
You'll find the screws from the clamps will help hold up the laminate.



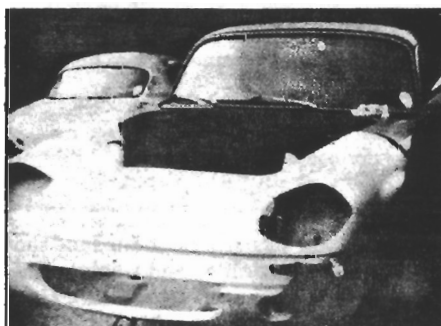
All bonding surfaces must be thoroughly prepared. Use the grinderette here or anything to abrade the surface well. Note master cylinders and hand brake cable have been removed.



True-ing the new section up with the grinderette.

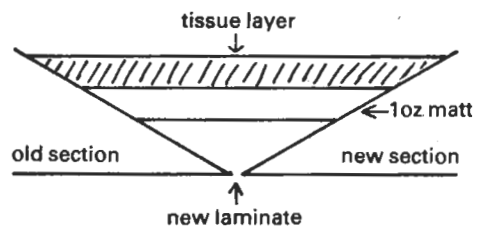


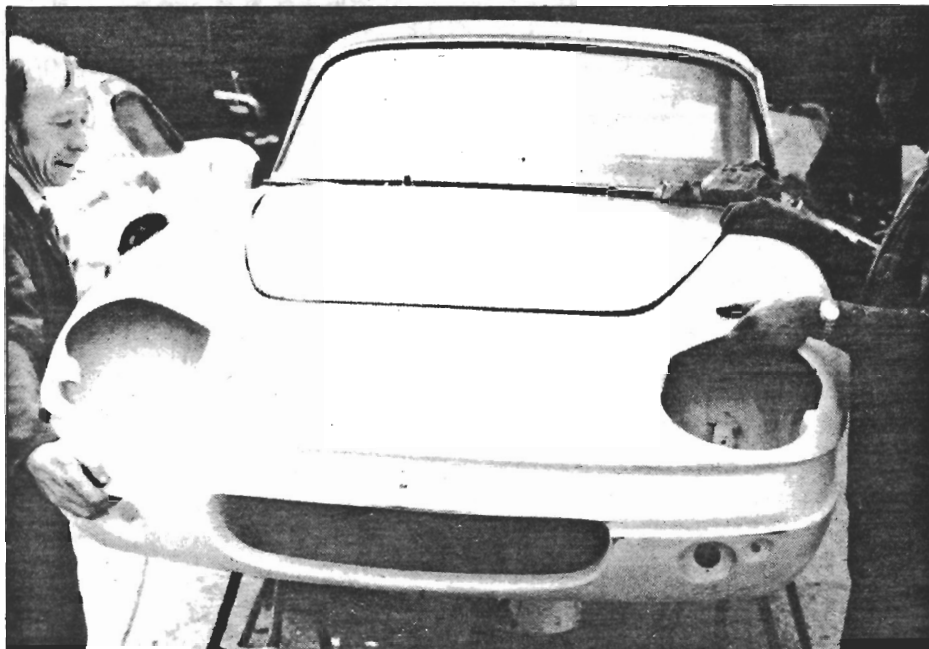
Use of the jigsaw to cut along the dotted line.



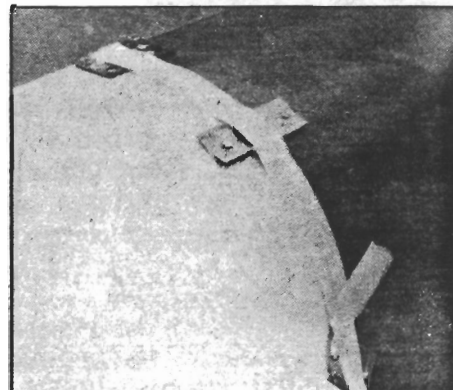
Offering the new section up using the chassis as a platform.

When set, remove the clamps and tape and then 'V' the top surface until you just break into the underside laminate. Go about 3" either side again of the join, feather the paint edges with P.80 paper, and then use 2 layers 1oz matt and finally a layer of tissue, just jiggle the tissue short of the paint edge.





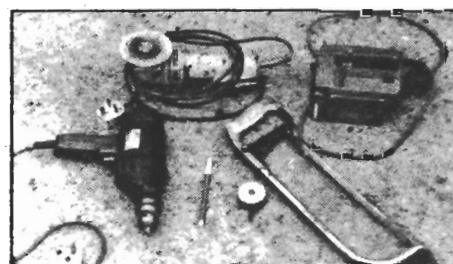
The perfect alignment with the bonnet in place. (The pods and front bumper were also tried in place as well and fitted perfectly). The section is bolted in place to the chassis.



Close-up showing the use of clamps to hold the two parts together. The masking tape is just a neat way to prevent resin from dribbling through the join and going everywhere. Clamps are mild steel 3/32nd thick with 1/2" no. 6 self tapping screws.



Laminating inside the engine bay joint. 1oz (300gm) mat is being used.



Essential equipment for cutting off and preparing any section.

When set, finally spot the front turrets for drilling and tapping, remove the 2 front bolts and remove the chassis. The body is now one again and will be rock solid. Finally spread filler over the tissue on the top wing surfaces and down the inside of the wheel arch and contour to shape using one of the excellent 3M production paper files or a cork block. Two or three applications may be required to get the contours absolutely right. Next month will see the body being prepared for painting.

What goes wrong:-

- Not aligning the section correctly.
- Making a mess on laminating; always make a neat job with neat edges.
- Not taking enough time over preparation, so laminate won't stick to the surface.
- Not taking enough time on finishing, so final "join" is still visible through poor contouring, i.e. slight razor edge on the Elan wing line has been obliterated. Any poor finishing will always show immediately on painting.

Time taken for this section from start to finish was 18 hours, and you would never know that a section has been fitted.

Approximate quantities of materials used

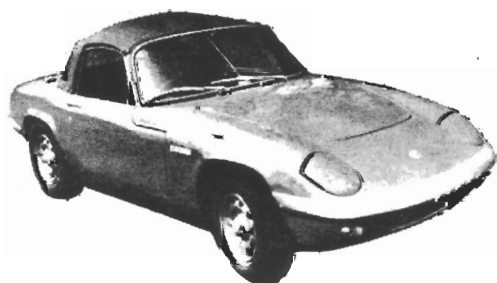
- 1 1/2 metres 1oz (300gm) mat
- 1/2 metre tissue
- 2 litres resin
- 1kg filler (P.38 or U-pol C)
- 3 sheets P.80 paper
- Masking tape
- One 1 1/2" resin brush
- 1/2 litre acetone for cleaning.

Essential Reading

Fibreglass Bodywork by Miles Wilkins, published by Osprey in the Restoration Series, £6.95.

I make no excuses for plugging my own book as it has been hailed as the definitive volume on the subject. The book covers all aspects from gel cracks to bonding on sections and much more. If difficulty in obtaining, please write to me and I'll send you a copy post free.

NEXT MONTH
Painting the body.



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EAJ/MD

31st January, 1985

Mr. Terry A. Elmore,
3010 132nd Ave. SE,
Snohomish,
WA 98290,
USA.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter of 20th January 1985. The metal side frames you refer to are not a service part. We therefore are unable to supply you with this item.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "E.A.J. Jones", written over a horizontal line.

E.A.J. Jones,
Service Parts Marketing Controller

Concurrent with my writing Part I of this series of tech articles on Elan side frame corrosion, and what I planned to do to repair the damage in Emma, I wrote to Lotus Cars to find out if I could obtain a set of these side frames from them; since they still manufacture complete Elan body shells, which would of course require these side frames, they must still make them and I was hoping I would be able to obtain a pair from them, all made up on their own jigs and ready to install.

Well, the page opposite is the reply I received, which is actually about what I expected. These side frames are not listed in the Service Parts List (which, incidentally I highly recommend for all Elan owners, as it can be much better than the Shop Manual in illustrating just how things go together, and give you the part numbers you need in ordering from dealers), and so Lotus does not sell them separately. This is I suppose understandable, as they don't have a price for them, and so to sell something like this and have to determine a price, and make up an extra set over and above what they need to go along with body shells, etc would be more trouble than it's worth to them.

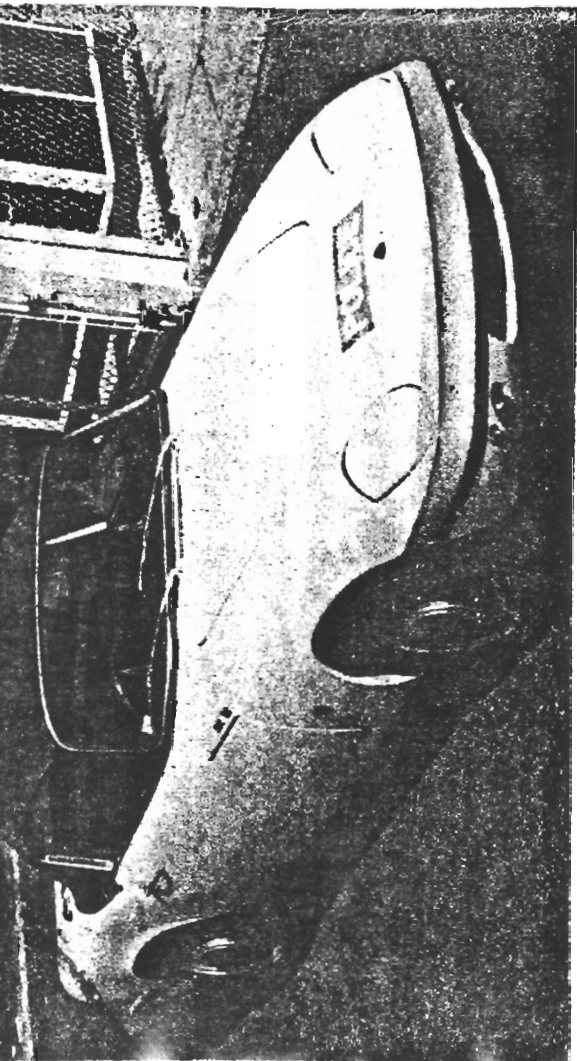
So, my options now are to either repair the side frames I have (either set- the ones I take out of Emma, or the set from out of Alan Orr's car, which are the better of the two sets for the amount of corrosion), or make a jig and manufacture a new set, using the old ones for dimensions, but out of a more-resistant material like stainless steel. This is definitely one project that I don't ever want to have to do over again, so I am inclined to go with the stainless steel as a permanent fix. So, I'm starting to make a jig now, and Part III of this tech article will be concerned with what I find out on cost of materials.

One additional tool I've found useful, in removing the side frames from Emma, in addition to the power tools I listed in Part I, is a wood chisel- I've been using several sizes of these to split the fiberglass patches that bond the frames in, in places I can't get at with the Dremel bits, and they work so well that I've been using them more than the power tools.

Next step, when I have the frames cut out and almost ready to remove, will be to place the entire body shell on a plywood platform. This will support the body and keep it flat, while I remove the present side frames, and replace them with the new ones, to ensure that everything stays in alignment and the door openings don't get pulled out of shape with nothing inside to support them. This will be easy to do, as when I bought the two wrecked Elites from Norm Britting, I also got the two plywood platforms he had them sitting on (to keep the body parts lined up for when he got around to putting them back together). As the Elites are now in storage on the side of the house while I work on the Elan, I will be able to use one of these platforms for this phase of the project.

The only other thing I can report on now, while I wait to price my materials to proceed, is to describe what I plan to do once I have replaced these side frames. The only things that run through the cavity under the door openings, and behind the side frames (what would be called the rocker panels in a metal car) is wiring- the battery cable running from the trunk up to the engine bay, and the wiring harness running from behind the dash back to the rear of the car for the rear lights, radio antenna, electric fuel pump if so equipped, etc. What I plan to do is cut a piece of plastic pipe in half, lengthwise, and mount it in this cavity, to run the wiring through- then, I'm going to fill the rest of the cavity with expanded foam

foam; this will provide some additional stiffness in this area, with very little added weight, and also serve to exclude any water from getting in this area ever again. I also will be using this material to re-do the back sides of my bumpers front and rear, as the original material got very waterlogged over the years and is now very crumbly, so as long as I have them off the car and am refinishing them I may as well replace the stuff. There are a number of cavities in the Elites where I'm also planning to use this material, so when I'm ready to do some work with it, I will let everyone know and we can use it as a tech session, like the ones Bill Reynolds put on at my house previously on fibreglass work that were so informative. I'm checking around now for a good source for this, so if anyone can suggest a place let me know. Just so you know what I'm referring to- this expanding foam is used in boats, to fill cavities and provide flotation; you mix two components, and then pour a set amount into the cavity, and it expands to fill the cavity, and then after it sets you trim off any extra that comes out the openings you've left to allow the air to escape. This is also the stuff you can buy in cans, and spray into opening around the house for insulation, but it's too expensive to do very much this way. I know Fiberlay has the two-part type, but they are rather expensive, so if anyone knows of an alternate, cheaper source please let me know.



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