



# Lotus Lines

January/February 1996

Newsletter of the Evergreen Lotus Car Club

## Alice in Lotusland

Driving to the Monterey Historics in a Super Seven *Alice Larson*

### BACKGROUND

My husband Dave always said "Some year the Monterey Historic Races will feature Lotus, and we're going" in our 1966 Lotus Super Seven. 1995 was the year, but Dave died in 1992. The only good news is I don't have to argue over who gets to drive the Lotus anymore.

I HAD to go to Monterey.

A year's worth of work by my mechanic, Rick Slater, and I'm ready. I'm determined to not trailer, but drive from Vashon Island to Monterey. Bob Crichton, a fellow Lotus Seven owner, offers to go with me in my car.

### DAY ONE, OFF TO MONTEREY

We take the ferry from my Island to Tacoma [photo 1]. First stop is AAA. They don't ask what kind of car I have... I forgot how much people stare at a Lotus Super Seven on the highway. We wave to the kids... We opt for Interstate 5 all the way. No scenic route for us. We just want to get there.

The Lotus runs great toward our first stop in Medford, Oregon. Before we arrive, it starts to hesitate and sputter, particularly when we pull off the highway. We literally coast into my friend's driveway. By the time she gets home we've worked on the car, broken into her house, made friends with all her animals, are drinking beer and wine and have called my mechanic and others back in the Seattle area. The conclusion: needs points.



### DAY TWO, "SIMPLE" REPAIRS

Local parts store supplies points but not a condenser. Starts and stops along the freeway, with lots of calls back to my mechanic, make us decide a condenser is a must [photo 2].

The Lotus is still sputtering on and off the freeway. Sacramento is our second stop. We almost get lost about the same time we realize we're totally out of gas. We arrive at our destination on fumes.

Our second day was to be a shorter distance, but we've managed to stretch it to longer on-road time. Hmm.

### DAY THREE, ENTRANCE INTO MONTEREY

Decide the timing is off. Lots of playing with that. We check all fluid levels. Transmission oil is leaking into the car, but, hey, it's a Lotus. We're not worried. I have

a quick lube place check my differential oil level.

As we enter the freeway, I hear a whine. Bob's not concerned 'cause his whines like that too. A few hours out, we change drivers so I can make the grand entrance into Monterey. I hear a bad noise, but it disappears at speed.

We pull off I-5 onto Hwy 152 to a definite car- stopping thrashing sound. An Aston Martin pulls along side and the driver says, "It wasn't smoking until you pulled off the freeway." We admire the trail of oil leading along the ramp to our differential [photo 3]

Despite my anti-Yuppy determination, we had been



convinced to carry a cellular phone. Having no handy cigarette lighter in the Seven, we connect it to the car battery and call AAA. They lose money on my membership immediately.

We decide to tow it to Laguna Seca. Where else are we going to find a better collection of Lotus mechanics? While we wait, a large RV pulls up and John Carlson and his wife Coco from British Columbia get out. He spends 30 minutes providing a map of the race track, telling us what to say to get into the Paddock and offering other invaluable advice. We later learn John is a Judge at the Pebble Beach Concours.

I make my grand entrance into Monterey -- on the back of a tow truck. We get as close as a dusty parking strip above the Paddock. There my Lotus sits with a great view of the track [photo 4].

We rent the last car at the Monterey Airport -- a purple Hyundai. I name it "The Grape." We started our four hour drive from Sacramento to Monterey at 9 a.m. and conclude it at midnight.

#### DAY FOUR, THE SEARCH BEGINS

We hit the Paddock by 8 a.m. and are completely overwhelmed by the sights, sounds and colors of the most unbelievable collection of cars I ever imagined. Over 100 Lotus racers of every description as well as other makes ancient and not so old. Lotus Sevens are like weeds -- plentiful and common in comparison. We are in awe over the financial worth of what surrounds us.

We have three missions: find a differential, locate a mechanic and move the car into the Paddock so someone can work on it. We're immediately told these things are "impossible."

Entrance into the Paddock seems the hardest. A "person in authority" to the race organizer tells us, in a very authoritative voice, "There is only so much real estate, and it's all accounted for. We can't possibly allow your



<b>Evergreen Lotus Car Club FYI and COA</b>
<b>Chairman:</b> Randall Fehr, 206-782-8951 <b>Membership:</b> Alice Larson, 206-463-2816 <b>Treasurer:</b> Craig Shuck, 206-788-1900 <b>Newsletter Editor:</b> Jim Taylor, 206-232-2237
<b>Membership</b> in the ELCC is \$20/year and is prorated in three month increments. This includes nine issues per year and a club roster.
<b>Mailing Address</b> for all ELCC correspondence is: Evergreen Lotus Car Club P.O. Box 40481 Bellevue, WA. 98015-4481, USA

car in."

Finding a differential is an adventure. We go from team to team talking to mechanics and racers honestly concerned over our plight. They will do anything they can to help us. They refer us back and forth hoping somebody brought a spare dif.

One Lotus Seven racer tells us, "I just spent \$2,000 on the differential sitting in the back of my truck, but I'm not sure if I'm going to use that or the one currently in the car. Tell you what, if you haven't found anything by Sunday evening, I'll loan it to you. You can ship it back to me when you get home." This turns out to be a Triumph rear end and I need a Cortina.

The Australian Team Lotus has a spare Cortina dif but the ratio is wrong.

About 2 p.m. we give up and locate Dave Bean. For anyone with a Lotus, Dave Bean is an institution of Lotus parts. Sure enough, someone is driving in from his shop tomorrow, and they'll bring a differential.

I realize driving the Lotus on the AutoWeek cruise is not a reality.

On the way out of the race track, in The Grape, we find our fellow Seattle Lotus Seven owner, Steve Shipley, walking by the side of the road. His Seven overheated. We wait a couple of hours with him for a tow. There is also a group of Europas pulled over to the side of the road, and some of the race officials tell us about another Seven broken down somewhere. One concludes: "The Ferrari Gods must be angry [because Lotus is the mark]."

We are all 2 1/2 hours late to the big dinner at the Monterey Aquarium. I hear them announce a gathering of the "AutoWeek Group." We join up not knowing what's going on.

The speaker makes a few Lotus jokes. Something about their dependability. He asks if there are any Lotus owners there. The three of us Seven owners are the only ones to raise our hands. Me with a broken differential, Steve with his overheating problem, and Bob whose car didn't come. We decide we are in the wrong place and leave shortly after that...

{Well, that concludes "Alice in LotusLand" for this issue. Join us next time for the final episode... Editor}

## '96 West Coast Lotus Convention

The Convention is to be held in the Portland area near the Labor Day weekend. The working schedule includes:

**Thursday:** registration, reception, wine tour, and engine builder tour. **Friday:** track day with estimated price of \$100. **Saturday:** concours at track in conjunction with

the Portland ABFM where Lotus is the featured marque, with a banquet in the evening. **Sunday:** rallye, autocross, swap meet, and vendor day.

Estimated registration fee is \$120 which includes the ABFM fee. Accomodations will be available near the site. Further details in upcoming issues. Contact Dave Alford 503-635-6199 with questions.

## Chairman's Note

*Randall Fehr*

As new Chairman of the ELCC I would like to thank the outgoing leadership for their work over the last three years. The new crew is just beginning to discover the continuing dedication required to pull together a newsletter and activities for the membership and can appreciate the positive contributions of Ken, Susan and Don. And on behalf of new officers Jim Taylor, Alice Larson and Craig Shuck, I would like to thank the 19 members who submitted ballots!

Some of you made activities suggestions on ballots last month. All the ideas are excellent and are being fitted onto the sketch of this year's events calendar. I am working on track days at SIR and elsewhere, overnight and day tours, a gathering at the July Vintage Races, tech sessions, newsletter columns, the West Coast Lotus Convention and All British Field Meet in Portland, the Bellevue ABFM, and more. We also plan to list in the newsletter all the local sports car events, races and shows as we can learn of. At the membership meeting on Saturday January 20th I will go into more detail and will solicit suggestions. Also feel free to call me at 622-7469 days, 782-8951 evenings.

## From the Editor...

*Jim Taylor*

Well, elections are over, the new year is here and so is a group of newly elected ELCC officers. Of course, the Newsletter editor isn't really an elected position, but it is a nice show of support for me being the *Lotus Lines* Editor once again. 'Once again?' the newer members ask... Yes, I was the ELCC newsletter editor for the three years before Susan Hagaman (who did it for about two and a half years). As anyone that's done a newsletter before knows, a break once in awhile is a very nice thing to have.

Now, a little background on myself for the newer members and some updates for the more seasoned

members of our club. I've been with the ELCC for over six years and have been working on restoring my 1972 Europa S2 for even longer. About two months ago I bought another Europa (yes, in pieces), a 1967 S1. I've also sold the 1974 Elite that I had for about five years to another club member (and our new treasurer) Craig Shuck. It wasn't driven much over the past two years (bad second gear). It has gone into good hands with Craig and he hopes to have the Elite back on the road in time for the West Coast Lotus Meet in Portland at the beginning of September.

There will be a more robust calendar of events (SCCA, SOVREN, Autocross, etc) and recaps of past events in the next issue. I'm also planning on re-opening a column that I used to write, *Jim's Garage*, with the main subject being my newly acquired Europa S1. I welcome any input (good and bad) about the newsletter and urge all ELCC members to write an article for publication in the *Lotus Lines*. If you have any suggestions or questions, please call Randall or myself, the phone numbers for the club officers is on the second page.

I usually show up for most club events, so hope to see you at one (or more) of them in the future.

## Portland Race Swap Meet

The biggest event of its kind in the West is to be held Saturday and Sunday January 27 - 28. Hundreds of racers and commercial vendors will offer their wares to the public at the Portland Expo Center, 2060 North Marine Drive, I-5 exit 306B. Admission is \$6, hours 8:00am - 6:00pm Saturday, 9:00am- 4:00pm Sunday.

## Membership Renewals Due

The beginning of the year marks the time for ELCC membership renewal and you should be receiving a separate notice in the mail very soon.

## Calendar of Events

JANUARY MEETING - Saturday 20th, 2:00 pm

**Venue:** Cafe Veloce, 12514 120th Avenue NE, Kirkland, 814-2972. Informal restaurant with 1950s European motorcycle racing theme. Club will provide beverages at the meeting, but consider arriving early enough to lunch on the cafe's delicious pasta and pizza.

**Agenda:** View videos of Monterey Historic Races featuring Lotus and the Convention held last August. Outline and discuss activities and events in the coming year.

FEBRUARY MEETING - Date TBA (unable to confirm before going to press - will notify by mail)

**Venue:** Vintage Racing Motors, Redmond.

**Agenda:** Tour. Some of the most fabulous cars in the Northwest. Deluxe event.

MARCH MEETING - Date TBA

**Venue:** Griot's Garage, Fife.

**Agenda:** Detailing clinic, view club member and company owner Richard Giot's car collection, shopping.

### Evergreen Lotus Car Club FYI and COA

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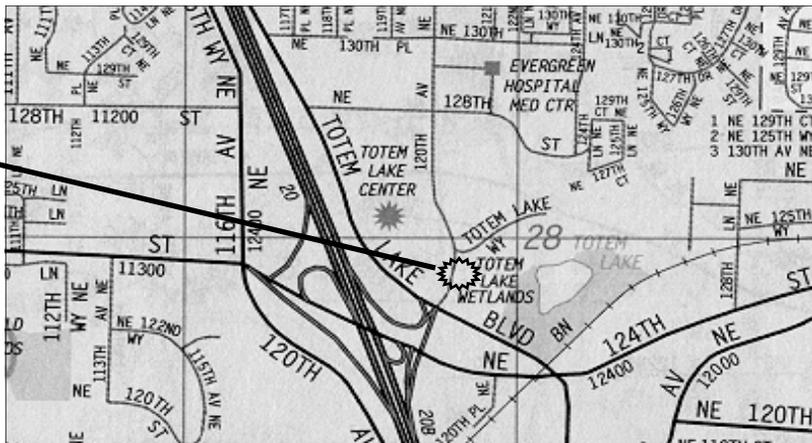
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Questions? Please contact the Editor.

## Meeting Locations

### January Meeting

Saturday the 20th at 2:00pm  
Cafe Veloce  
12514 120th Avenue NE  
Kirkland, (206) 814-2972



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