



**Evergreen Lotus Car Club**  
P.O. Box 40481  
Bellevue, WA 98015-4481



# Lotus Lines

Newsletter for the Evergreen Lotus Car Club  
January/February 2007

## VW Buys Lotus Parent Proton (Or Not)

According to a report in XFN-Asia (an Asian financial news wire service), Volkswagen agreed to buy a 51% share in the “manufacturer arm” of Proton, the current owner of Group Lotus, at the end of January. An official announcement was to be made on February 8th. Many publications reported on the XFN-Asia report, some noting that this would effectively be the sale of Lotus to Volkswagen. A few of them noted the increasing interest that Porsche has taken in Volkswagen.

However, there was no announcement from Volkswagen and Proton on February 8th. Proton was asked about the media reports by Bursa Malaysian (a stock exchange where Proton is traded) and the company responded “Pleased be advised that PROTON Holdings Berhad is not aware and neither have we been notified of, any transaction in relation to the shares of the Company.”

In fact, Volkswagen may not be buying Proton after all. According to a Proton spokesman “We have moved past the issue of [Volkswagen] eyeing any kind of shareholding and we are now able to work on specific initiatives that complement Proton’s capabilities and current range of products.”

Lotus is currently owned by Proton Holdings Berhad. It is one of three companies that make up Proton’s engineering services arm. LOTUS GROUP INTERNATIONAL LIMITED consists of Group Lotus Plc., Lotus Cars Ltd. (Lotus Engineering Ltd. and Lotus Engineering (M) Sdn. Bhd.), Lotus Body Engineering Ltd., Lotus Motorsport Ltd., Lotus Holdings Inc. (USA) (Lotus Engineering Inc. and Lotus Cars USA Inc.), Lotus Pension Trustees Ltd., Lotus Cars Foundation and Lotus Finance Ltd.

Aside from Lotus Finance Ltd., all of these companies are fully owned by Proton Holdings. Some of the British press is reporting that Proton has an 80% stake in Lotus, but this seems to be a mistake. When Proton acquired Lotus, they bought the 80% share that Bugatti held. The remaining 20% was held by Romano Artioli (former head of Bugatti) himself and continued to be held by him for some time. He eventually sold his shares to Proton.

Reports of Volkswagen buying Proton have been a frequent occurrence since the two companies signed a memorandum of understand for a “long-term strategic partnership” in 2004. They now “agree to cooperate” with “projects in the areas of technical and engineering, training and systems as well as other commercial projects, including the possibility of supporting [Volkswagen] to explore the Malaysian dealer’s network.”

Proton has a long-standing relationship with Mitsubishi. In addition to Volkswagen, General Motors and PSA Peugeot Citroen have been rumored to be interest in buying a stake in Proton.

Even if the reported sale of Proton’s manufacturing arm to Volkswagen had occurred, it seems unlikely that Volkswagen would have gained control of Lotus because it is part of Proton’s engineering services arm.

## ELCC Movie Night

When: Saturday 24 February, 5:00 pm  
Where: 8040 29th Avenue NW, Seattle (north of Ballard)  
Host: Randall Fehr, 206-782-8951, rsfehr@seanet.com

It’s the ELCC annual car video review and automotive film festival. Share your favorite video clip or film scene with club members over pizza and drinks on a casual late winter’s eve in my movie den.

Please RSVP by evite, email or phone so I will know to have enough food and sofa space for you. Also, tell me what must-see car-related moving picture media you would like to bring. Rarities and curious anomalies especially sought, Lotus content or no. Small house so members only.

Directions:

- From Interstate 5 in North Seattle exit at 85th Street (goes west only).
- Follow 85th (for about 3 miles).
- On 29th Avenue NW turn left (south).
- 8040 is near the end of the second block, on the left.



## Editor's Note

One down. Only nine more newsletters this year!

Since this is the first newsletter of the year, I should probably write something looking forward to the new year. However, it is already the middle of February and that kind of inspiration does not come to mind right now.

I delayed doing this month's newsletter in expectation of the February 8th announcement from Volkswagen and Proton that didn't happen (see the front page article). That's why you aren't seeing the newsletter until now.

As you may have read in Andy's column, Don Christopher has volunteered to take over ELCC webmaster duties from Mark Clear. Thanks, Mark and Don. Not sure what to do with the newsletter info to the right of this column, since I want to add in the newsletter position, but the space is pretty tight over. Look for an answer next month.

Don has also volunteered to guest edit a few issues of the newsletter. Details are being worked out.

Thanks to David Caley for once again providing great photos (this time, photos of the Holiday Party), and Mark Sterner for writing an article.

Some time in the next nine issues, I would like to include a technical article. I haven't seen one in so long. If you have some cool thing that you figured about your Elise, let me know and, if you can't do it, I'll write the article.

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Membership in the ELCC is \$20/year, with the membership year starting in January, and is prorated in three month increments. Membership includes a club roster and a subscription to *Lotus Lines*.

Contact the Editor for business ads rates in *Lotus Lines*.

Contact ELCC at:

Evergreen Lotus Car Club  
P.O. Box 40481  
Bellevue, WA 98015-4481  
<http://www.elcc.org>

The ELCC officers are elected bi-annually and currently those officers are:

Chairman:	Andy Keck andykeck@mac.com	(206)390-3870
Membership:	Jim Taylor jimtaylor@seanet.com	(206)232-2237
Treasurer:	Dave Billings elcc@bilcoh.com	(206)241-2167
Editor:	Alan Perry alanp@snowmoose.com	(206)855-9464

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## Lotus and ZAP to work together by Alan Perry

Lotus Engineering and ZAP (Zero Air Pollution), a California company that makes and/or sells low and zero emissions vehicles, made a couple of announcements involving their work together in the last couple of months. ZAP is probably best known for its work to import the Smart and modify it to meet US standards, but they have been primarily involved with electric cars.

In mid-January, Lotus Engineering and ZAP announced that they would be working together on a feasibility study on "new electric car concepts". According to the press release, "ZAP is moving forward with an aggressive programme to stay at the forefront of advanced transportation with new technologies and products. ZAP selected Lotus Engineering, one of the world's leading automotive design consultancies, to undertake engineering concept studies for a number of electric vehicles. The feasibility study is a comprehensive research project into the creation of a new generation of ultra-efficient electric automobiles from concept to production. Of particular interest in the project is the challenge of advancing the electric car market by incorporating new technologies which will maximize the consumer appeal."

ZAP CEO Steve Schneider said "This feasibility study is a critical part of the programme that will clearly identify the correct direction that future work should take. With the appropriate diligence at this stage we can look forward to

incredibly exciting design and development projects that meet the real needs of the market head on."

Two weeks later, ZAP announced the ZAP-X, an electric, AWD, 155mph, 644 bhp crossover vehicle based on Lotus' APX demonstrator that was first shown at last year's Geneva auto show. ZAP would replace the APX's V6 gasoline engine with their in-hub electric motors. In addition to the impressive (theoretical) top speed, it is supposed to have a 350 mile range and a 10 minute recharge time.

Schneider noted "Lotus Engineering's APX technology demonstrator vehicle is a perfect fit for our plans to introduce a full product portfolio of electric cars. Due to the initial design by Lotus, our cost and time to production will be significantly reduced. We believe that the ZAP-X will become the most advanced, most practical and most appealing flagship electric vehicle to date and will revolutionize the industry providing the driver with the enjoyment of a sports car and the practicality of an SUV."

Mike Kimberley, CEO of Group Lotus plc, said: "It's very satisfying that ZAP's proposed new model will make use of a great deal of the APX concept's advanced body structure and chassis technology. The bringing together of these next-generation vehicle technologies represents another significant step forward for automotive technology."

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## Classified Advertisements

Classified advertising for ELCC members is free. Pricing for non-members is available on request. To submit ads and for business ad rates, contact the Editor. Also, please remember to inform the Editor when you want the ad to be removed.

**For Sale:** 1991 Elan (M100). This car has been an amazingly reliable daily driver from the time I bought it until my Elise replaced it. It has less than 39,000 miles and is in very good shape. The car is in Bellevue and can be seen at: <http://www.galos.net/mike/CarsForSale>.

**For Sale:** Lotus memorabilia. I am reducing my collection of Lotus print memorabilia - magazines, brochures, etc. Most of it is from the early 90s (M100 Elan, Turbo Esprit), S2 Esprit and some other stuff. Also have *Autosport*, *Prix Editions* and *Chequered Flag* magazines from the same period.

Still putting together the complete list. Alan, 206-855-9464, [alanp@snowmoose.com](mailto:alanp@snowmoose.com).

**For Sale:** 1974 Lotus Elite, white w/tan & black interior. Has won second & third place at ABFM in past. Car is mostly original and close to "correct". Would need cosmetic restoration to be show competitive, but runs and looks good for a street car. \$3000 "as is", not currently licensed. Call Don Francis @ 206-723-4731 for details.

**Parts Wanted:** Original side curtains and top for mid/late-60s S2 Seven (black with white piping preferred). Also looking for original tunnel carpet (red with white piping) and owners manual for same car. Don, 425-357-1476, [don.christopher@att.net](mailto:don.christopher@att.net).



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NWARC: Northwest Alfa Romeo Club  
360-766-4405 <http://www.nwalfaclub.com>  
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**Racing Clubs**

BSCC: Bremerton Sports Car Club  
360-697-1761 <http://www.bscc.net>  
CSCC: Cascade Sports Car Club, Portland, OR  
503-543-8161 <http://www.cascadesportscarclub.org>  
IRDC: International Race Drivers Club, Seattle, WA  
206-781-8199 <http://www.irdc-racing.com>  
ICSCC: International Conference of Sports Car Clubs  
425-226-1338 <http://www.icsc.com>  
SCCA: Sports Car Club of America, NW Region  
206-292-0500 <http://www.nwr-scca.org>  
SCCBC: Sports Car Club of British Columbia  
604-824-7277 <http://www.sccbc.net>  
SOVREN: Society of Vintage Racing Enthusiasts  
206-232-4644 <http://www.sovren.org>  
TC: Team Continental, Portland, OR  
503-645-9058 <http://www.teamcontinental.com>

ELCC events are listed in **BOLD**

February

- 4 WWSCC TS Slush #2, Bremerton
- 17 TC Performance Driving School, Bremerton
- 18 BSCC Autocross Practice, Bremerton
- 24 ELCC Movie Night, North Ballard**
- 25 WWSCC ACE Slush #3, Bremerton

March

- 3 NWARC Performance Driving School, Bremerton
- 11 BSCC Autocross School, Bremerton
- 17 CSCC Enduro, Portland
- 18 BSCC Autocross #1, Bremerton
- 24 ELCC Karting, Tukwila**
- 25 SCCA Autocross Practice, Bremerton
- 30 IRDC Track Day, Bremerton
- 31 SCCA Autocross School, Bremerton

April

- 1 SCCA Regional Autocross #1, Bremerton
- 13-14 SOVREN Defrost Kickoff, Pacific Raceways
- 15 BSCC Autocross #2, Bremerton
- 15 NWARC Lapping Day, Pacific Raceways
- 28-29 SCCA Double Regionals, Bremerton

**From The Chair**

I suppose it's a little late to wish everyone a happy new year, but since this is our first issue of the year, I guess it's my only chance. I hope everybody had a good holiday season and that you all are ready for our low season to end and another year of club events to begin. I know I'll be happy if we have no more of these frosty mornings. Sliding around in an Elise while surrounded by SUVs (from my perspective, anything Camry-sized or larger) is not the way I like to wake up in the morning.

Here's the part where I would like to tell you all about the exciting and possibly inspirational things that I have done since I wrote here last. Unfortunately, I'm real short on such stories. Maybe the only relevant thing is that the foundation for my garage has now been excavated. By the time you read this, the slab probably will have been poured. This is probably a great relief to those of you who have heard me talk of little else over the past months. Maybe now I'll have some new obsession/frustration to ramble on about. Anyway, we could hold a pretty good reenactment of World War I in my yard, what with all the mud, trenches and rubble. Just don't shoot the dog. She's with the Red Cross.

We had our Officers' Meeting a couple of weeks ago, postponed a week due to icy roads on the original date. We came away from that meeting with a list of potential events for the year along with the approximate dates where possible. I'm waiting to hear back from a couple of contacts about two or three of our key events before I 'officially' unveil the calen-

**2007 ELCC Officer's Meeting**

The ELCC officers and other interested parties attended the annual officer's meeting. The meeting was delayed a week because of inclement weather. As a reminder of the weather, there was a truck with a tree-shaped indentation in its bed near the meeting location.

Who was there? I didn't write it down, so if I leave out anyone, my apologies. It was Andy Keck, Alan Perry, Jim Taylor, Sean Lane, Randall Fehr, Don Christopher, Mark Sterner, and ...

Don Christopher has stepped forward to help the club out in a lot of areas and much of the discussion focused around the

dar, but you can sleep well knowing it contains all of our old favorites (the ABFM, the SOVREN races and etc.) as well as having a few new things to keep interest high. I'm really excited about some of the things we've got planned for this year. Stay tuned.

Now all of this vagueness is good since there are lots of things still up in the air, but you're probably asking, "What's coming up soon?" Well, elsewhere in this issue are the details for February 24th's Movie Night, hosted this year by Randall Fehr. And in the next issue and Evite, you'll see the details for our annual Spring Karting Event, hosted once again by Dave Billings. That date is March 24th, although I'm not entirely clear about the 'firmness' of that date. Hopefully that's enough info to tide you over until next month.

One last bit of news: Don Christopher stepped forward with a multi-page document with bullet-pointed lists and target dates that outlines plans for the ELCC.ORG website. So what option did I have other than to appoint him our new Web Czar. Look for an update from Don in our next issue that will tell you all about the cool things that are happening. Many thanks to Mark Clear for holding down the fort web-wise for some years now (longer than I've been a member so ?) and for all his help getting Don up to speed with the technical details.

See you next month!

ELCC web site. We weren't sure where the web site was being hosted from or how to access it (those issues have since been resolved).

As Andy mentioned, an outline of the event calendar was put together. The details should be filled in soon.

Membership renewals were still coming in, so there was no firm membership count. Club finances are good because of lower than usual expenses. The annual Membership and Treasurer Reports should appear in next month's newsletter (OK, Jim and Dave?).

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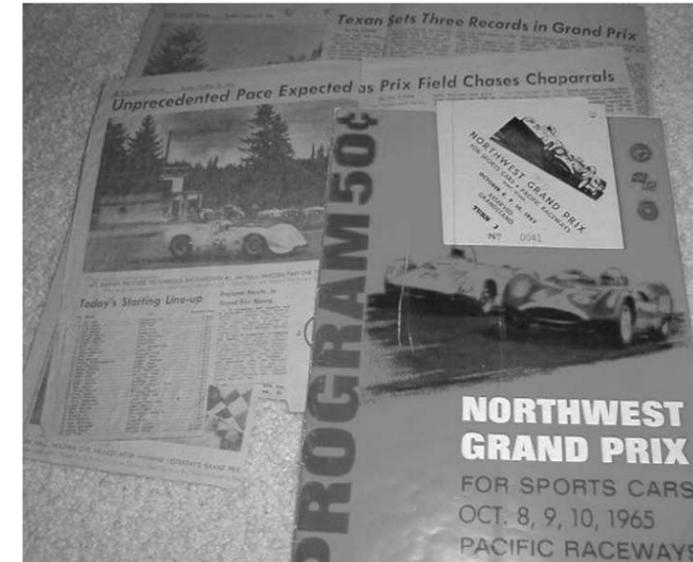
## ELCC Holiday Party Photos by David Caley

It may seem like the Holiday Party happened a long time ago, but that is only because it was a long time ago. However, this is the first newsletter since the party, so here are the photos.



## Loti Ramblings by Mark Sterner

Recently I was mentally dusting off some shelves in the back corners of my car addicted brain, trying to clarify and restore some of my many memories. I was hopelessly hooked early in high school in the mid sixties. Now approaching the physical age of 57 (mentally I never got past about 16) I still look forward to the natural high of cars and racing. Especially vintage racing. Back in the good old days.



My late father made the mistake of taking me to Pacific Raceways in 1965 to the Northwest Grand Prix. That weekend would affect my whole life, as Jim Hall and Hap Sharp in the mighty Chaparrals would put on a dominant show. It was also the debut race of the #66 flipper wing 2C. That car was an exercise in pure simple form. Pure white, black numerals, a few small decals, monstrous front winglets, a rumbling Chevy V-8 with incredible exhaust stacks, automatic trans, and it just plain dusted everything else on the track. I was in one continual goosebump. To this day, the original program, ticket stubs, and yellowed newspaper articles have a special place in my library. Looking back, I am still in disbelief that I

was fortunate enough to have witnessed a chapter in racing history!

I should also mention that F1 World Champion Phil Hill put up quite a dog fight in a mean McLaren-Olds, and would later actually join the Chaparral team. Could this have been that significant race that swayed Hill to drive for Jim Hall? More history?

But this being the Lotus club newsletter, I haven't forgotten the significant Loti that also participated that day. Doug Revson finished a respectable 6th in a Lotus 23H, Jerry Bruhl 10th in a Lotus-Climax, Pierre Phillips in a Lotus 23B, Lew Florence in a Lotus 19 in 12th, and Tony Settember finished 13th in a Lotus 23B. Bringing up the rear was a soon-to-be-famous Peter Revson in a Brabham BT8 who earned a whopping \$200. Jim Hall would take home a wallet busting \$3900 for the win. How times have changed in racing both with advertising and sponsorship budgets.

There exists now in present day a certain lack of creativity brought on by the burden of excessive rules and regulation. The numerous sponsors want an "even" playing field, but it has put a chokehold on innovation, except those done with computers. I think that the 1960's and 1970's were the glory years of all forms of auto racing. Danger was an accepted part of the sport. Winning and surviving in this era, knowing the risks, made the racers like Jim Hall, Pete Lovely, Phil Hill, Gurney, Andretti, Parnelli, Unser and Foyt true living legends. Safety equipment was not on their minds, just man and machine driven to win with the most power and driving skill. And all looking for that "unfair advantage" in one way or another, over their competitors.

Jim Hall and Colin Chapman were cut out of the same mold, but were as different as night and day and separated by half the globe. Both respected each others innovative designs, and both were at times outlawed because of their creativity. In my opinion, they will go down in automotive racing history as the greatest engineers ever.

## Lotus Engineering to Develop Innovative Microsports Cars for Obvio! LOTUS PR

British automotive engineering consultancy, Lotus Engineering, has been selected by Obvio! Automotoveiculos S.A., based in Rio de Janeiro, to develop two 'trybrid' high-performance microsports cars for markets across the globe, in a deal potentially worth over £70 million.

The lightweight urban microsports cars, designated 828 and 012, are the first products for the new Brazilian OEM. The full engineering programme will include the development of an advanced vehicle safety structure based on aerospace technology, the integration of 'trybrid' engines that will run on gasoline, bio-ethanol or natural gas, and other powertrain variants.

Lotus Engineering will work with a range of Brazilian 'supplier partners' to develop two variants of the new chassis

concept which will be engineered incorporating Niess Elliptical Survival Rings, already well-proven in the aerospace industry. Providing exceptional chassis performance as well as class-leading safety, the concept also allows for very light structures - target weight for the 012 is 750kgs (1,648 lbs) and for the 828 is 600kgs (1,318 lbs). This will enable the vehicles to feature exceptionally good performance characteristics while also running with highly efficient and economical power plants.

Obvio! has already signed a US\$700m pre-paid contract to supply a total of 50,000 units per annum, spread between the 012 and 828 models, to its exclusive North American distributor, California-based ZAP.