

LOTUS LINES



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE EVERGREEN LOTUS CAR CLUB

Winter 2015

From the Chairman's Desktop

By Doug Jackson

Here in the last part of January (as I write this), the weather continues to be on the chilly side, but there have been several days lately when the sun came out briefly and the temperatures got pretty darn close to sixty degrees... is this just a teaser to us, knowing that we've got at least three more months of "winter" weather before we can have any real confidence in experiencing what you'd call "warm weather"?!??

Oh well, winter-time is for pushing forward on those projects that you've been putting aside while the nice summer and fall weather made you think more about driving your Lotus than working on it.

You might like to know that we've picked up several new members during the past few months. Of course, some of the interest in the ELCC came directly from our participation in the Western Washington All British Field Meet during the last part of July, but also, as people cast about looking to buy their first Lotus car of some sort (old or new, or in-between), they find themselves talking with other Lotus car owners, various dealers and/or in "chat rooms", on eBay, Craig's List, Bring A Trailer (or other on-line venues) and word of our club gets bandied about... which is good.

We already had one of our official, but casual "First Thursday" get togethers this month (January) and we'll continue to have them throughout the year, so please come to them if you'd like to chat with a small gathering of Lotus-focused and like-minded individuals. The ELCC always pays for at least part of the total bill at these gatherings, so be sure to check out the schedule on our

Club's website (www.elcc.org). February's get together will be at Smarty Pants in Georgetown south of downtown Seattle and the one in March will be at The Market Arms in Ballard. These events officially start at 7:00PM, but a few people always arrive a little early.

I am involved right now trying to arrange for a couple of special "Shop Tours" and others are talking about a possible "Spring Drive", so watch for e-mail notices as well as the more formal Evite messages which sometimes request an RSVP.

There are number of the same types of enjoyable events and activities already on the calendar for 2015 as there were in 2014, but a few ELCC members are also discussing some new things that they'd like to try (Tech Sessions, possible over-nighters, etc.), so keep an open mind, gas in your car (or your batteries charged up, for one of our members who has converted his car to electricity!) and be ready to go.

I think 2015 is going to be a great year with lots of different opportunities for you and other people to enjoy time in your Lotus car(s), so put air in your tires, check the oil level and I'll see you out on the road.



Another winter under the blue tarp!

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EVERGREEN LOTUS CAR CLUB.**

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2015 Schedule

February

5 First Thursday, Smarty Pants

March

5 First Thursday, Market Arms
15 GP of Australia (Season opener)

April

2 First Thursday, Three Lions Pub
25 Tulip Rallye

May

1-3 SOVREN Spring Sprints, PRI
7 First Thursday, Smarty Pants
16 Vancouver, BC ABFM
25 British cars at XXX Root Beer

June

4 First Thursday, Market Arms
5-7 SOVREN, Spokane
7 Canadian GP

July

2 First Thursday, Three Lions Pub
3-5 SOVREN PNW Historics, PRI
11-12 SVRA PDX Historics
25 Western WA ABFM

August

6 First Thursday, Smarty Pants
13-16 Monterey Historics
21-24 LOG 35, Colorado Springs
30 San Juan Island Concours



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1990 Visit to Lotus Cars USA

Text and Photos By Alan Perry

Chris asked me to write a column. I wasn't sure what to write, so I came up with this.

In late spring 1990, I went to Georgia to visit my mom and stopped by the Lotus distributor, Lotus Cars USA (LCU), in Lawrenceville, GA. I knew a couple of guys who worked there (long-time Lotus employee Arnie Johnson and field service engineer Richard Clarke) from various Lotus events. The idea was to just say 'Hi' and maybe get shown around.

Richard was there and said that if I came back in a couple of days, I could get a tour. That sounded good to me, so I suggested that I could write up the visit for 'Stress Cracks', the newsletter for Lotus/West, the now-defunct Southern California Lotus Club that I was a member of. That was fine with him and I made the appointment to come back in a couple of days.

This was about three-and-a-half years into GM's ownership of Lotus. When GM bought Lotus, they replaced the existing Lotus distributor with LCU and, in preparation for sales of the M100 Elan, which was intended to sell in volume (well, volume for a Lotus), a large facility was opened in Lawrenceville, GA, northeast of Atlanta.

So, as planned, I showed up at LCU a couple of days later. And, to my surprise, they were treating me like a real journalist.

First, I was introduced to Ron Foster, president and chief executive of LCU. Mr. Foster was formerly national sales director for Porsche. I got more than an hour of his time and, aside from a joke that I made that fell flat, I cannot recall one thing said during that conversation. I do recall my impression that perhaps he didn't have enough perspective on the idiosyncrasies of Lotus ownership to be running the company. Still, he was exceedingly gracious and open with me and a fantastic opportunity that I was unable to take advantage of.

Next, Arnie gave me a tour of the facilities. This was just before the M100 Elan went on sale. If I recall correctly, Lotus was intending to sell over 3000 each year. LCU had a large area inside of the building intended to hold cars before they went out to the dealers. But when I was there, it was mostly empty, occupied by maybe 15 Esprits.



New Esprits

The spare parts area was not quite as vacant. Before LCU and its predecessor Lotus Performance Cars, there were regional Lotus distributors and LCU had accumulated a good-sized spare parts collections of many of those preceding companies. If you look at the back cover of the 2011 ELCC Calendar, you will see one of the photos that I shot.

There were rows and rows of parts in trays on shelves, mostly for the Esprit, but also Elan, Europa and other road-going Lotuses. As partly shown in the calendar photo, there was an entire wall of shelves of half-clips and quarter-clips of Lotus bodies. Also, there was a stack of Turbo Esprit chassis. It was the US distributor, of course there would be lots and lots of parts. It was fun looking through the shelves, guessing what a part was and then checking to see if I was right.

The last thing that we looked at was a Turbo SE engine on a stand. Arnie showed and explained the changes from previous iterations of the 907/912 engines.

Finally, Richard took me out to lunch. We drove a then-new Esprit Turbo SE and Richard offered to let me drive it back.

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1990 Visit to Lotus Cars USA (Continued)

We had spoken a lot in the past, so our conversation was mostly catching up on previous conversations, but he also wanted to put the performance of the SE on display.



Spare Lotus parts storage

At the time I had an Esprit S2, still my favorite Lotus, though I am afraid to drive one now out of fear that reality will ruin my memories of the car. The Esprit Turbo was certainly a faster, more powerful car. I drove it back from lunch and Richard encouraged me to take it out onto the freeway and put it through its paces. The 50-70-ish mph acceleration was very impressive and then Richard suggested a high-speed run.

I went to high school in the South and I had a few opportunities to get pulled over in the South. I asked Richard whether a high-speed freeway run would be safe from a law enforcement perspective. He said that they did it all of the time and it was fine. So, I took the car up to triple-digit speeds, which it did quickly and smoothly. I was continuing along like this when Richard realized that he needed to get back for a call, so we should head back to LCU. As I took the next off-ramp, Richard said that it would be better to take the next one, but we were already committed.

And when we got to the top of the off-ramp, what do we see on the other side of the ramp, watching over the freeway? A Georgia State Patrol officer. If I had done as Richard had intended, I would have been driving at well over 100 mph when we went past him!

Even if Richard didn't need to get back for his call, this seemed like a sign that it was time to head back anyway. I dropped him off and we said our goodbyes.

It was good visit, but something that I was totally unprepared for. When I wrote the story for "Stress Cracks", I didn't remember much, particularly details. Other than describing how amazing it was and expressing my thanks to the staff at LCU, there wasn't much that I could write about and if Ron Foster ever saw my story, he probably was not impressed.

Richard was let go from Lotus in 1996 during a cost-savings reorganization just before the US launch of the V8 Esprit. Arnie is still at Lotus; I think he is approaching 45 years at various Lotus distributors in the US. He used to be a common sight at Lotus meets, but has been keeping a lower profile recently.

After spending a massive amount of time and money developing the M100 Elan for the US market, only about 550 cars were sold in the US and its first year in the US would be its only year here. LCU eventually moved out of that building because it was too much space.

When Lotus people (usually Elan owners) see my photos of the spare parts area, I am asked where they are now. All of those spare parts (well, at least the ones for Lotuses before the Turbo Esprit) went to Dave Bean Engineering when Dave bought that business from LCU and became the "Official Lotus Vintage Parts Distributor".

It was an interesting time to be around Lotus. At least in the US, they were riding a bit of a wave with the success of the Esprit in the SCCA World Challenge series and the excitement that the M100 Elan would be available soon. It would have been nice if things had turned out better.

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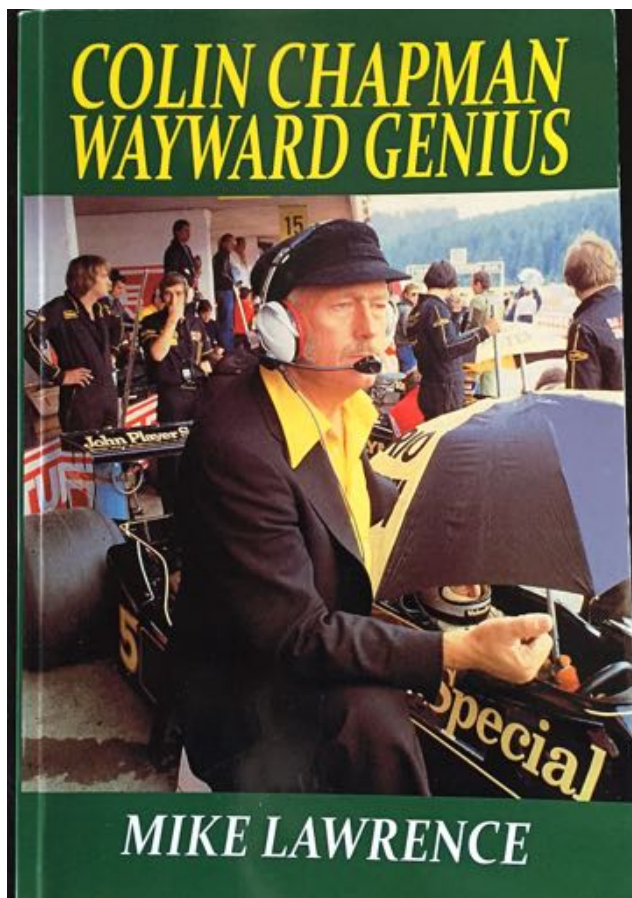
   

Book Review

“Colin Chapman, Wayward Genius” By Mike Lawrence

This book is a detailed review of Chapman’s life, seemingly intended to dispel the many myths and half-truths surrounding this unusual character.

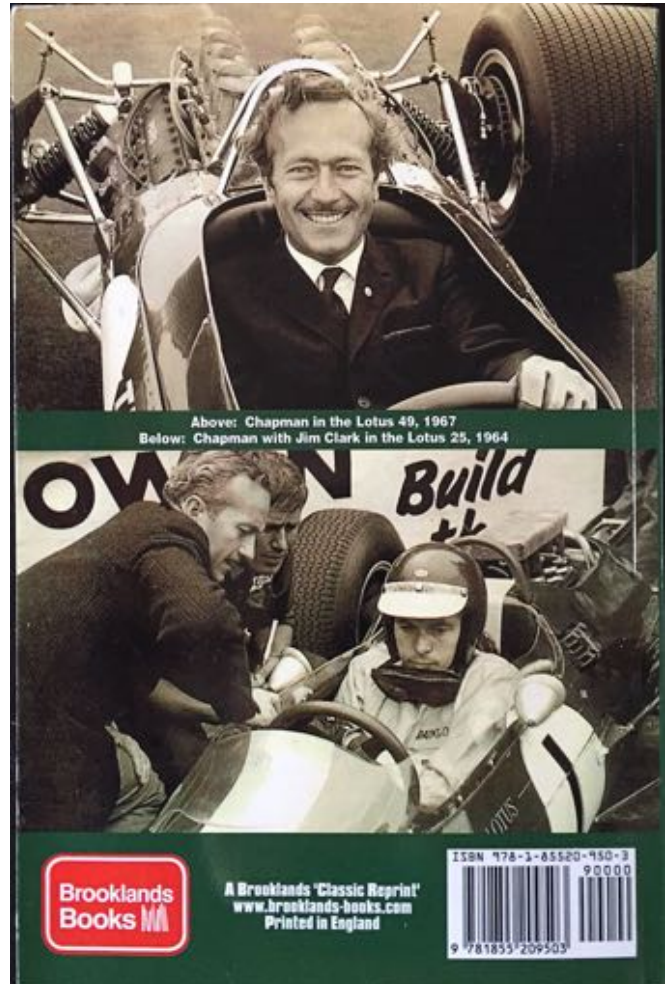
Originally published in 2002 and reprinted in 2012 by Brooklands Books, I came to the party late, only recently discovering and reading it. The author delves into great detail about Chapman’s faults and shortcomings as well as his characteristics that made Lotus cars successful. He interviewed many people involved in the early days of Lotus and included numerous quotes and memorable stories.



Front Cover

As a long time admirer of the Lotus legend, it was hard to read about Chapman’s dark side, but the book helped bring to light many details about the history of Lotus, the reason for the rift between Lotus and Honda, the growth of the British Formula 1 industry and the evolution of aerodynamics in F1. Also, as Gerry Foley pointed out in his article in the Fall 2013 issue of *Lotus Lines*, Ron Hickman gets the majority of the credit for the design of the original Elan.

Although Mike Lawrence is credited with a number of books and magazine articles, I found this one to be “choppy” and unpolished. In addition to the high quality photos on the covers, there are 19 small, low contrast, B&W photos inside the book. All in all, I give this a “3” rating on a scale of 1-5 and recommend it to Lotus diehards and Chapman fans.



Back Cover

2015 Membership Dues Reminder By Doug Jackson

If you have not already paid, please send a check for \$25 to the address below. Also, you can buy a 2015 ELCC Calendar for an additional \$18, with free delivery.

Thanks for your Membership!

ELCC, C/O Doug Jackson
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Interview with ELCC Member Darrell Boyd (Photos provided by Darrell)

Lotus Lines: Darrell, I see from the Club Roster that you now own eight sports or racing cars, please give us a brief review of your car history.

Darrell Boyd: I have owned over 100 British Cars since I was sixteen and also worked as a mechanic in several British car shops in the 70's. As a result, I can fix just about anything and have taken on many project cars of different makes.

LL: Which car have you owned the longest and how did you acquire it?

DB: I have owned the 1948 MG TC for 15 years, having bought it from a friend of my father-in-law. After knowing about the car for a number of years, I was finally able to buy it and trailered it from Virginia to Oklahoma .

LL: Do you have a favorite among your cars?

DB: The 1969 Elan S4 is a great car and purchased on eBay from a party in Phoenix. It was originally Canadian, built with Webers and now has a Spyder chassis. I'm worried about the dried up rubber donuts and will be replacing them soon with modern halfshafts. After taking an Elan for a test drive in 1969, I have always wanted one!



1969 Elan S4

LL: When did you start racing?

DB: During a tour of duty in the Air Force in England, I enrolled in the Jim Russell Driving School. Although I was only 19 years old, the age requirements were met and I spent two years racing Meryln Formula Fords. That was a lot of fun and after 43 years, I am still racing!

LL: Was your racing experience on the East Coast mainly in production cars?

DB: Yes, I drove a 1965 Spitfire and placed third in G Production for the 1977 Mid Atlantic Road Racing Series. The car had been purchased for \$400 and didn't need too much work to be competitive. I also raced an MGB in E production and have a 1966 MGB road car now.



Leading the Pack out of the "Chute", Summit Point 1977

LL: Do you have plans to race in 2015?

DB: Yes, I plan to enter a couple of SOVREN events in the 1979 Crossle 35F Formula Ford.

LL: What is the status of the 1970 Winkelmann WOF2 Formula Ford?

DB: This was Jay Hadley's car and I traded an XKE for it. It is currently a "project" and will be finished some day. One nice thing about a Formula Ford is that you can put it up on stands and sit down while working on the car; a very nice approach for "old guys"!



Van Dieman RF88 Formula Continental, Hallett, OK

LL: Which car is your daily driver?

DB: A 2006 Mini Cooper S because I have a long commute and want to avoid putting too many miles on the older cars.

LL: Last summer in the Lotus Car Corral at the July 4th races you were driving a Caterham Super Seven, how is that car?

DB: It is a fun car and now has a top, which makes it almost impossible to enter. The car was advertised in Hemmings last year and lived in Queen Anne so it was an easy buy.

Darrell Boyd Interview (continued)



E Production MGB, photo taken about 1985

LL: Do you keep each car on a battery maintainer?

DB: The older cars are fine with a few hours on a charger every 2-3 months. However, the 2006 Elise drains the battery quickly and needs to be on a trickle charger between drives. BTW, I really enjoy driving the Elise in the hilly roads outside North Bend where we live!



1979 Crossle 35F; the Winklemann WOF2 is under the workbench in the back with one wheel showing.

LL: Finally, can you share some personal details with us?

DB: We moved from Oklahoma to the Seattle area about 6 years ago where I am the American Airlines representative at Boeing. I am also a Flight Instructor and own a 1939 J-3 Piper Cub which shares a hanger with my 1983 Van Dieman RF83 Formula Ford.

LL: Darrell, thanks very much for your time and for sharing your stories!

2014 USGP in Austin, TX

Once again, turn 12 was the place to be as race winner Lewis Hamilton made the one pass on Nico Rosberg that determined their final positions. This was almost identical to the pass on Sebastian Vettel that clinched the win for Hamilton in 2012.



Pastor Maldonado in Austin

Lotus driver Pastor Maldonado placed ninth for his only points of the season after a hard fought battle with Jean-Eric Vergne in a Toro Rosso. Lotus teammate Romain Grosjean finished eleventh, just out of the points, having qualified sixteenth.

Mario Andretti was very much in evidence as an official host at the Circuit Of The Americas in Austin and we were reminded that he is the only US driver to win a US Formula 1 race, doing so in 1977 at Long Beach in a Lotus 78.



Mario Andretti, 1977 USGP West Long Beach Winner
(Photo: Bruce Oblad)

There will be three F1 races in North America in 2015:

June 7 in Montreal

October 25 in Austin

November 1 in Mexico City

It was a huge thrill to attend the 2014 USGP, this may be your year to attend one of the three in North America!

Formula 1

2014 Review

The Drivers' Championship was decided at the final race in Abu Dhabi, won by Lewis Hamilton for his second title. Teammate Nico Rosberg was second in the title race with Red Bull driver Daniel Ricciardo in third place. The year was full of surprises, summarized here:

- Mercedes dominance after four consecutive Red Bull Constructors' titles.
- Ricciardo finished third in the Drivers' race while Red Bull teammate Sebastian Vettel was fifth, 71 points behind.
- Alonso left Ferrari at the end of a disappointing season; the first time that a Ferrari has not won a race since 1993; the team finished in fourth place for 2014.
- Williams' new-found speed, finishing third with 320 points compared to ninth place in 2013 with 5 points.
- Lotus' lack of competitiveness, finishing eighth with 10 points compared to fourth place in 2013 with 315 points.
- Vettel departing Red Bull, where he won 4 Championships, to join Ferrari.
- Caterham and Marussia financial problems; they are days away from liquidation at press time.

2015 Outlook

- McLaren, the fifth place team in 2014, has teamed up with engine supplier Honda again and hopes are high: "McLaren have recruited two-time F1 world champion Fernando Alonso to partner 2009 champion Jenson Button for 2015, a line-up chairman and CEO Ron Dennis described as "by an order of magnitude the best driver line-up of any current Formula One team". (Did he really say "an order of magnitude"??)
- Lotus to use Mercedes motors, the winning choice in 2014. This seems like a very significant change since this team was the Renault Team from 2002-2010 and had used Renault power since 1995. The expectations for 2015 E23 are high: "Improvements within our Design, Aero and Simulation departments have all contributed to the development of a car which is a huge step forward," Lotus F1 Team CEO Matthew Carter said."
- Mercedes will be faster than last year, other teams should beware! They will be joined at the top of the order again by Williams, Red Bull and Ferrari unless Honda has a "super" motor.



(Photo: www.lotusf1team.com)

The new 2015 nose design rules to prevent "ugly noses" seem to be working as all the cars revealed to-date have more "normal looking" noses. 2014 will be a "year to forget" in terms of F1 design aesthetics.

The severe financial problems of the teams at the bottom half of the grid are illuminated by their need for "pay drivers". Sauber drivers Marcus Ericsson and Felipe Nasr are reputed to be paying a total of \$47M for 2015. Pastor Maldonado brings his sponsor PDVSA who paid Williams \$45m in 2013, we can assume that Lotus is receiving at least that much each year. However, given the financial issues in Venezuela with today's oil price, that payment may be in danger. At the other end of the grid, the following 2015 salaries have been reported: Alonso: \$38M; Vettel: \$33M; Hamilton: \$30M as the rich get richer.

In 2015, the Toro Rosso team will have two rookie drivers, 17-year-old Max Verstappen and 20-year-old Carlos Sainz Jr. (Verstappen's father, Jos, was an F1 driver from 1994-2003). When he takes the grid at the Australian GP in March, Verstappen will be the youngest F1 driver ever. New rules regarding age and experience have just been implemented and would have prevented him from gaining a license if they had been in place last year.



2015 Lotus Formula 1 car
(Photo: www.lotusf1team.com)



2014 USGP
(Photo by Tim Barker)

Interesting Stuff From The internet:

Interview with Gordon Murray; July 16, 2014

Thanks to John Schneeman for posting this link on the elccgoolegroups list:

<https://grrc.goodwood.com/road/news/qa-hankering-one-supercar-wouldnt-unless-hybrid-monsters-hadnt-come>

Murray has a long history in F1, as well as the designer of the McLaren F1 road car. Here are a couple of his Lotus related statements:

“What’s in your garage at home these days?

Ten cars, all of them under 900kg (*light weight is a theme of this interview*). Two Lotus Elans, Frogeye Sprite, Rocket, Smart Roadster, Porsche 550 Spyder Replica, Fiat 500, Renault 4 and the Ford Cortina MkI I drove today – bored and stroked to 1700cc, twin Webers, Lotus Cortina suspension. Sideways all the way to work. Brilliant.

Road cars you admire?

The purest new sports car for me is the Ferrari 458. And the best is the Porsche Cayman S. Among old cars, the (original) Lotus Elan is the ultimate, better than the F1. We tried to get its delicious steering feel in the F1 but we just missed it.”

1967 Elan Rebuild

<http://www.lotustalk.com/forums/f165/radical-rebuild-my-1967-elan-277025/>



Starting Point

This is a radical rebuild including a 2.0 L turbo Cosworth, expecting 520 HP (Do not read this link if you are a Purist!)

Forbes Interview with Jean-Marc Gales:

Here is a more in-depth interview with the CEO of Group Lotus Plc. than we have seen on some of the automotive websites.

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/markewing/2015/01/21/can-lotus-blossom-again/>

35th Lotus Owners Gathering, August 21-24, 2015

By Ross Robbins, LOG 35 Chairman

Lotus Colorado (LOCO), on behalf of Lotus Limited, is proud to announce that we will host LOG 35 in Colorado Springs CO August 21-24, 2015. We have some exciting plans already set and a lot more in the works to make this a great family vacation and Lotus holiday rolled into one. Colorado Springs is a vacation destination for tens of thousands of families each summer making it a perfect LOG destination as well with area attractions such as the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, Garden of the Gods, the US Olympic training site, the Air Force Academy and the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame.

As far as Lotus specific activities, the big one is a Lotus assault on Pikes Peak, aka “The Mountain”! We will have a special program to be the first cars up the mountain on Sunday morning and while we won’t be setting any Hillclimb records we will be driving with enthusiasm and won’t be behind the little old schoolteacher from Des Moines in her Buick with her foot on the brake going UP the hill.

This will be an affordable LOG. We have a block of rooms at the Colorado Springs Marriott at \$119 per night including resort fee items. Many things that are normally extras will be included in the registration and charges for meals and apparel will be reasonable.

For more information on everything including hotel, the panoramic photo location, the track day at Pikes Peak International Raceway and some motivational video on the Hillclimb, go to our website: www.lotusownersgathering.com. While we don’t have every item on there yet, we do have a lot and would like you to get your hotel reservations made right away (they are cancellable with no penalty until August 2015) and check back often to find out more. As John Muir said, “The Mountains are calling and I must go...”

(Ed Note: See photo on page 12 that Ross sent with this article. Also, a quick search revealed that the distance from Seattle to Colorado Springs is 1384 miles via I-84).

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For Sale:

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The car is located in Snohomish. More photos here:

<http://s835.photobucket.com/user/s2europa/library/HawkeDL11> Asking US\$12,500. Contact Dan Morrison danmo@yahoo.com, call or text 425-444-1628



Books - "Lotus - The Sports Racing Cars" by Anthony Pritchard (1987), "Lotus (A Competitive Survey of the Sports, GT and Touring Cars)" by Chris Harvey (1999), "The Elan and Europa" by John Bolster (1980), "Lotus Elan" by Duncan Wherett (1993), "Lotus Europa 1966 - 1975" (original version, not Gold Portfolio) Brooklands reprints, "The Illustrated Motorcar Legends - Lotus" by Roy Bacon (hardcover, 1995). Brochures/Flyers/Reprints - Europa S2 brochure, 1971 Lotus Colour Range brochure, M100 Elan brochure, M100 Elan brochure ("German"), (1991) Esprit SE flyer, 1993 Esprit Turbo flyer, M100 Elan S2 flyer, M250 flyer, Esprit S1 Car & Driver July 1977 reprint, Esprit S2 Motor Trend August 1978 reprint. Make offer. Alan Perry, alanp@snowmoose.com

Lotus Cup USA

Here is the 2015 schedule:

http://lotuscup.us/site/index.php?/section_schedule

If you are traveling in Northern California this year, you might catch a race at Thunderhill, Laguna Seca, or Buttonwillow.

Editorial

On this, the start of my third year as your Editor, I'm wondering what the ELCC Members would like to see in their quarterly Newsletter.

Your input is requested on the following points:

1. What articles would you like to see in a future Newsletter?
--Type of car, info about a specific Member, specific events, Lotus history, etc.
2. What is your opinion about a "digital only" Newsletter, possibly with increased frequency? Today, the Newsletter is printed with four pages on a sheet, so the total page count must be a multiple of four. A digital version could be of any length or format. What's your preference?
A. Digital-only please, after all, this is the 21st Century!
B. Hardcopy is best for this type of news and photos.
C. Neither, I don't read the Newsletter!

Send your thoughts to editor@elcc.org



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Garden of the Gods in Colorado Springs



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