

LOTUS LETTER



COVER

One last ride, late October. Kevin Marson cresting a back road in his Caterham 7, before putting it away for the winter. Note gravel road.
Photo by Mike McGraw.

PHOTOS

Mike McGraw... Cover
Kristy... Fall Run
Christiane (Chris) Thickett... Fall Run
Michael Eddenden... Fall Run
Claude Gagné... Road/Racer

NEW YEARS 2008 (January)



Michael Eddenden, Editor

The Lotus Club of Canada

Usually meets the second Monday of the month at 7:00pm
at the **Hare and Firkin Pub** (427 and 401)
2800 Skymark Ave, Unit 28, Mississauga. (905 624 4273)
The next meeting is February, 2008.
The Club's website is <http://lotusclub.ca>.

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Lotus Club of Canada Fall Run 2007

(Conversation after the Run)

Glovebox

Below: LCC Fall Run 2007. Lotus Club Canada members arranged tallest to shortest, more or less. See Fall Run story.



LOTUS CLUB OF CANADA

WINTER PARTY



Highland Yacht Club,
Saturday, February 16, 2008, at 7:00pm.

Cost \$7. per person.

RSVP/VOLUNTEER Roger Barker

Home: 416 621 9068, Work: 416 840 1078, email rogerfbarker@hotmail.com.

The evening will comprise the bar, appetizers, various dishes, salads and dessert.

Someone (that's you) will likely bring Videos and DVD's of past club Events, for our entertainment pleasure. Bring your photos for Don Seibel to scan into our Archives.

To reach the Highland Yacht Club take Brimley Road heading south off Kingston Road, down the hill, then bear left at the bottom.

The road then follows the shoreline, Scarborough Bluffs on one side, Lake Ontario on the other, until it reaches the Yacht Club's entrance gate on the right.

To pass through the gate you will need The Password; the Clubhouse is far enough away that shrieking and honking will do no good.

To obtain the password call Roger Barker. If you forget the Password, the Yacht Club number is 416-267-0224, for those with cellphones.

Please note that the Winter Party supersedes the February monthly meeting at the Hare & Firkin Pub.

There will be no monthly meeting in February, only the Winter Party

Roger Barker (rogerfbarker@hotmail.com) is now preparing our Calendar of Events for 2008.

If members are aware of events that have not traditionally been on the club calendar, please advise Roger of the details (date, place, contact information). In addition if you have ideas for new events, or want to volunteer to organize an event such as The Winter Party, Spring Run, Fall Run, and Barbeque, please let Roger know.

The BOY

Drawing and story by M. Eddenden

I was stepping into the Seven when the smell distracted me. I raised my foot. A wad of pine needles, gravel and fresh cat shit covered the bottom of the shoe.

Back lane, late October:

In the bright sun the wooden fences lining the lane were warm to the touch. Pine needles covered our parking spot, quilt thick, fragrant and soft underfoot. Chickadees and Nuthatches perched in trees either side, waiting for the Jays to finish at the feeder; lured by ripe berries, a single, secretive Veery rustled in the Virginia creeper. From the lane came the sound of a basketball hitting a backboard.

An unlooked for perfect day to wash cars.

I changed into old clothes, opened up the back end of a truck that serves as our garage, set up the ramps, backed the Seven carefully down onto the lane, opened the gate to the parking spot, climbed back into the Seven and watched the breeze slam the gate shut, reopened gate, reopened it again, parked Seven, collected non-spotting car wash, special rim cleaner, non-toxic citrus flavoured degreaser, rags, mitts and chamois, untangled the hose and dragged it through the garden to the Seven, lugged bucket of hot water from laundry room, lugged out Shop Vac, found misplaced extension cord and stepped in shit from world's largest house cat. I'd been at it 40 minutes and hadn't cleaned a thing.

* * *

The dribbling came closer. A boy's pale face appeared at the open gate, looking at the car. Washed and vacuumed now, the Seven sat surrounded by cleaning fluids, buckets, rags and hoses. He edged closer, like a hungry squirrel. The basketball dribbled a little slower.

It was a neighbour's boy. I knew his parents. Fair hair and fair skin, he took after his mother. He and I'd seen each other on the street for years but we had never spoken. He was 13 or 14, perhaps two years older than my son Alexander, and it struck me that I was looking into the future.

He stood staring at the Seven. I waited. It went on long enough that one of us had to say something. The dribbling stopped.

"How fast does it go?" he asked.

"Well, um, not that fast," I said reluctantly. Boys of all ages want to hear that it goes 400 km/hr. Otherwise it's not the real thing, not authentic, just a kit car. "It's quick, very quick," I said. "But the top speed isn't great. Aerodynamically it's silly."

No answer. He didn't give much away. He was too polite, or shy.

"It handles wonderfully," I continued after a pause. "It will match just about any car made, up to say 100."

Now I was stretching it. At 110hp my Seven couldn't claim this, but I wasn't going to let all those Cosworth powered 260hp CSR Superlight Sevens down, or bore him with explanations that sound like excuses.

"It's fun to drive," I added. "Exhilarating."

He kept looking at the car. Then he glanced up.

"When are you going to finish it?"

I blinked. "It is finished," I said as gently as I could, or maybe not. "It's 15 years old."

His eyes popped open. His mouth sagged. I realized just how long this was to him. The car was two years older than he was. He stared at me, inhibitions forgotten.

"But I never see you drive it!"

It wasn't true, I did drive it. But there was something to what he said. I don't drive the Seven half as much as I'd like and it alternately frustrates me and makes me feel guilt. From his view I didn't drive it. He couldn't have seen me on the Run to Creemore the week before, or the Run to Thornbury or Bronte or Ancaster, or any other time. He only saw the car when the garage doors were open, when I was changing oil, bleeding brakes, tracing intermittently faulty brake lights, or just plain cleaning the car.

But that was too much to say.

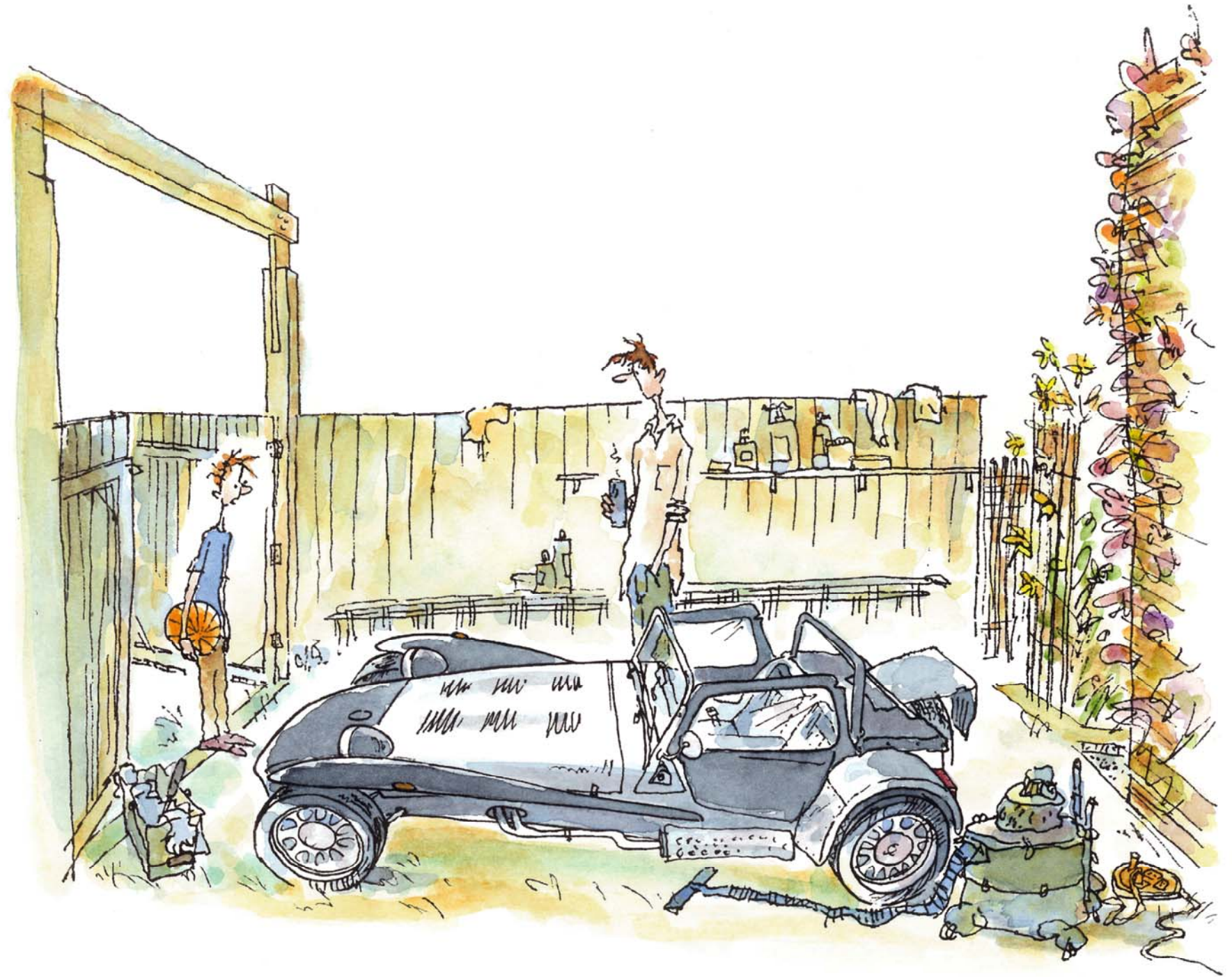
"I do drive it," I said, "Just not as often as I'd like."

He looked at me, then back at the Seven with an expression that said he'd drive it all the time if it was his car. Like right now.

"Cool car," he said. That generic compliment that has superseded 'nice'.

"Yes," I agreed.

And he dribbled away.





ROAD/RACER

BOB ENGLISH

Photos by Claude Gagné

The following story first appeared in the October 25, 2007 edition of the Globe and Mail, much to the Club's delight. The photos did not appear in the original Globe article.

You've got to love a car story that begins with "In 1971, I was still in university and I took all my savings and bought ..." In Claude Gagné's case, it was a brand-new "bread van" Lotus Europa. And the story gets even more entertaining when you learn the car that so besotted an impressionable university student is still a much cherished and frequently driven possession 3½ decades later.

As a teenager growing up in Montreal in the 1960s, Gagné, who now lives in Embrun near Ottawa and works for the government, became fascinated by Formula One racing. One of its brightest stars at the time was much-admired Lotus ace Jim Clark, who sparked an interest in Gagné for the British brand that has become an enduring lifelong passion. Gagné currently owns seven Lotus and is now a racer himself. He recalls seeing his first examples of the breed while attending a race meet at Mont-Tremblant.

"There were three Europas lined up side-by-side and I fell in love with them. I was fascinated by the mid-engined layout, which was just like the Formula 1 cars."

While working towards his degree in actuarial science at Laval University some years later, a visit to the local Lotus purveyor revealed two interesting things. The first was an unsold 1969 Europa and the second that the dealership was about to drop the Lotus franchise.

Facing Page: A younger Claude and Nicole in their new Lotus Europa, Montreal, 1973.

"It was the last one on the lot and it was fall in Quebec City. If he didn't sell it he knew he'd be stuck with it for the winter. So I managed to negotiate a good deal," says Gagné.

The car, which listed at \$5,300, became his for the \$4,000 he had been saving to buy a Corvette.

The Europa was typical of the design goals espoused by Lotus founder Colin Chapman - light, quick, agile, aerodynamic and, above all, innovative. Chapman as a young engineer got his start as a car builder with an Austin 7-based special in 1948, and went on to create Lotus Cars in 1952. In 1963, it won the first of its seven Formula One world championships, with Clark in the cockpit. In the early years Lotus produced formula and sports racing cars as well as ultra-basic but very quick sports cars such as the Lotus 6 and Lotus 7. Its first really sophisticated street car design was the Elite of 1957 with its revolutionary all-fibreglass monocoque chassis. This was followed in 1962 by the very pretty Elan, with a unique box-section backbone chassis design later employed by the Europa when it was launched in 1966.

The genesis of the Europa was in Ford's initial plans to tackle Le Mans. With already strong links to Lotus, Ford asked it to create a suitable design, which was undertaken by Ron Hickman (who's also credited with the original Elan and later gave the world the Black & Decker workmate folding bench). Ford eventually went with a design from rival Lola, which became the GT40, but Hickman's ideas resulted in the Europa.

The Europa is a mid-engined GT car built around that steel backbone chassis, which was integrally bonded with the one-piece fibreglass structure that made up the rest of the car, the combination providing great strength with low weight. To this was fitted four-wheel independent suspension with double wishbones up front and long trailing arms at the rear, following current racing practice.

The engine, mounted longitudinally behind the seats, was sourced from the front-wheel-drive Renault 16 with Lotus merely swapping it end for end and inverting the four-speed gearbox's final drive crown wheel and pinion to suit rear drive. It's a 1,470-cc four-cylinder overhead valve design that was super-tuned to increase output from 52 hp to 82 hp.



Above: The original 1973 Europa, Claude's first Lotus. The second Europa, used for vintage racing and now for sale (See Glovebox), appears in all the track photos.

The interior of these first-generation S1 cars was extremely Spartan, helping keep all-up weight to just 686 kg and resulting in 0-100 km/h acceleration times of about 10 seconds (quick for the day) and a top speed of just under 180 km/h - thanks to a drag coefficient of just 0.29 - allied to exemplary road-holding.

The S2 versions came along in 1968 with improvements in many areas, including additional comfort and luxury inside - power windows, a wooden dash panel and better seats. In 1969, a version for sale in North America was developed with its Renault motor punched out to 1,565 cc. In 1971, the Europa was fitted with a Lotus-Ford twin-cam, 1,558 cc four-cylinder engine making 115 hp (later 126 hp) and five-speed Renault gearbox. Production ended in 1975 after 9,300 Europas had been built.

The "bread van" nickname was given the car by the typically irreverent motoring press of the day and referred to the Europa's rather awkwardly styled rear section, which made rear three-quarter vision problematic. (Incidentally, the nickname had been used prior to this for a Ferrari-based racing special built in 1962.)

Gagné was still driving the Europa when he graduated in 1974 and he and his wife Nicole later honeymooned in the car. And it went to the Ottawa area with him where it was joined by a Lotus 7 found in Vancouver and driven home. A 1964 Elan then became part of what was now becoming a collection. Following its full restoration, he found a 1967 Series 3 Elan, also in need of saving. He intended to fix and flip it, but it too found a permanent home. A 1976 Elite followed, an unusual car in that it is equipped with an aluminum Buick V-8 (installed in Montreal) similar to those used in various British cars over the years. Gagné says Lotus had planned to build one like it.



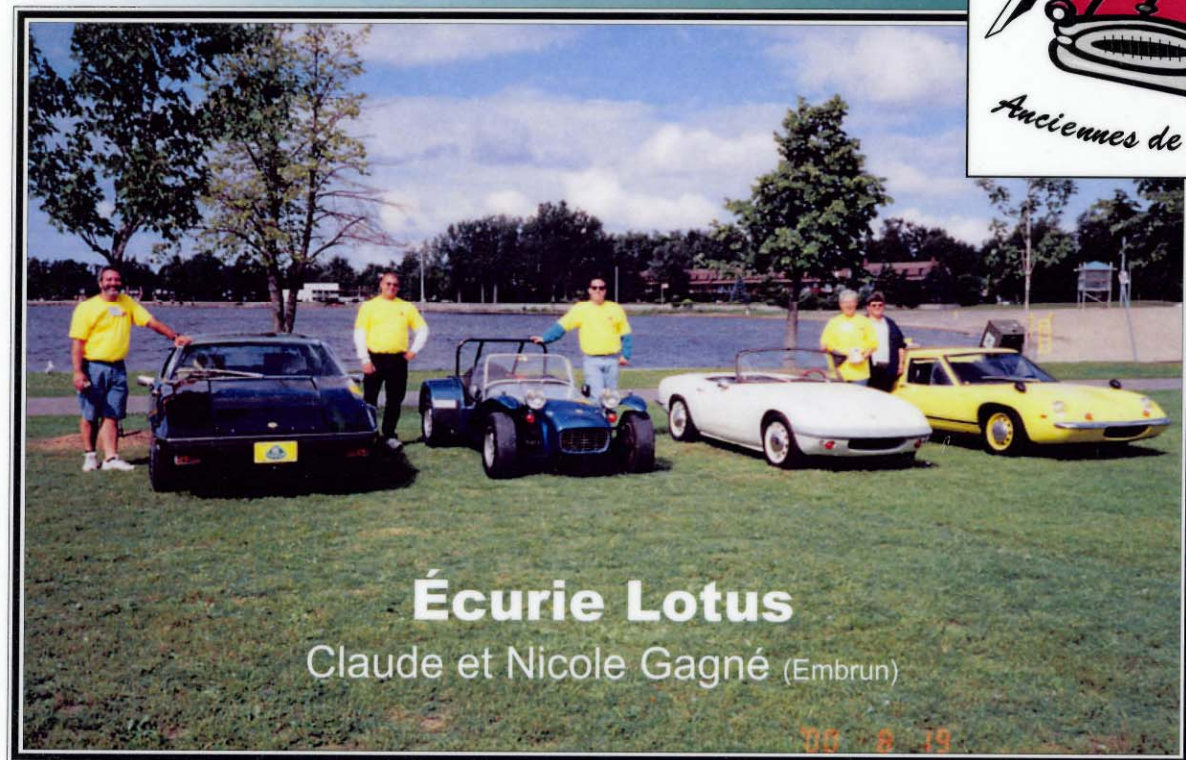
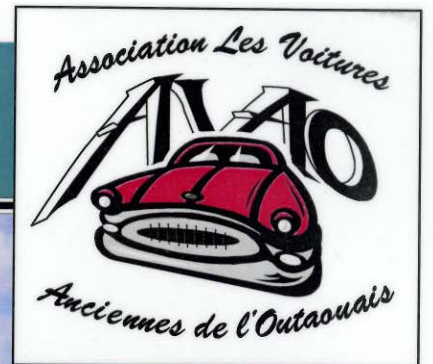
*2004 Vintage Celebration
New Hampshire International Speedway*





About seven years ago, Gagné bought another 1969 Europa. It had been raced in the 1970s, found abandoned in a field and restored by a friend. He raced this in vintage races before parking it in favour of the Seven, which he's now raced for three years. (The racing Europa is for sale. See Glovebox, Editor) But he's just completing restoration of a 1972 Lotus Type 61 Formula Ford, which will be ready for the track next spring after a quarter-century absence from competition.

Gagné, now 56, says he plans to work for a few more years, but will keep driving, racing and simply enjoying his Lotuses "as long as I can hold a licence."



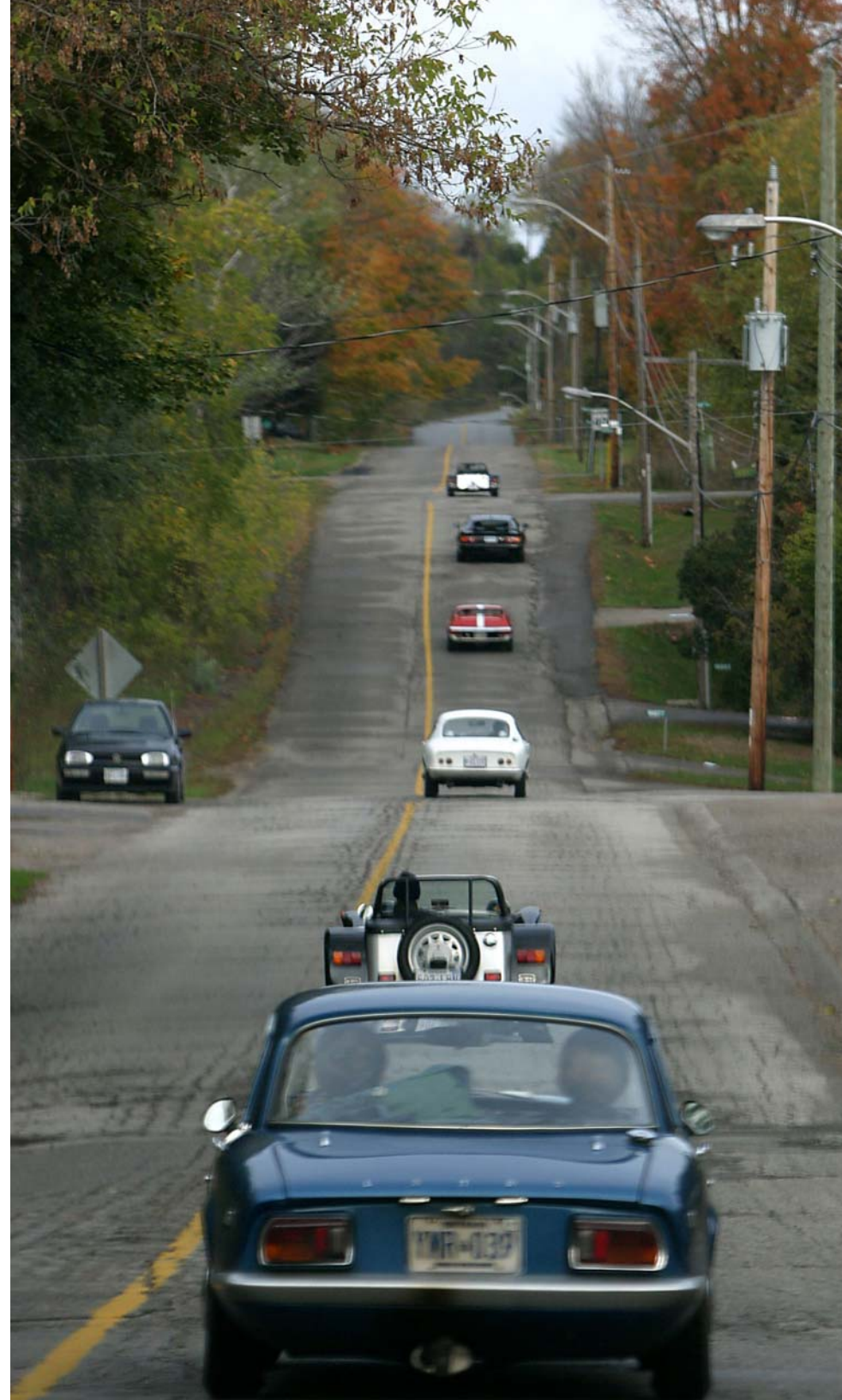
Écurie Lotus
Claude et Nicole Gagné (Embrun)

2007

LOTUS CLUB OF CANADA FALL RUN







CONVERSATION AFTER THE RUN



The phone rang.

"Hello! It's Mike Potter!"

"Mike, thanks for calling. I'm almost done the story on the Fall Run. I've lots of pictures but - "

"You're not using the close-up of me and my bald spot bending over the engine!?"

"You, or your Seven, appears... 1, 2, 4, 7 times I think."

"Not the group shot of us around the Seven? Where I've got my foot up on the front tire?"

"It's a good photo - "

"Yolanda hates it. 'It makes your pot look bigger!' she says."

"About your Seven, you said it broke down on the Run because of worn points -"

"No, no. You see it all started with Mosport back in June - "

"But I saw you working on the distributor-"

"Someone said it was points and someone said the timing was off and then someone else thought it might be a fuel blockage or bad fuel pump or plugs or the coil..."

"The barrage of friendly Club advice. Well it worked."

"Actually, the timing was fine, the points were fine and gas was getting through - when I loosened the banjo fitting at the Webers the gas gushed all over - "

"That's when Stephen Rodgers came over smoking his pipe to see what the fuss was about?"

"He did a great job setting up the Run I thought."

"He did didn't he?"

"And a pipe is so scholastic."

"Very apt. So your Seven, it was running poorly?"

"Oh no, it ran like a top all day - Ken Mason had cleaned up the carburetors beautifully for me - it ran wonderfully until we left Creemore - Did you see those women on the brewery tour, the ones with the Viper Club?"

"Can't really put that in print. Especially if it's true."

"No, I suppose not..."

"You were just leaving Creemore..."

"Yes, yes. Anyways, as we left Creemore the Seven began to run slower and slower until... A gaggle of Turkeys just sauntered across my lawn."

"A covey would be more accurate I think."

"Really? Well, the Seven was running slower and slower until, coming down the hill into Mono Centre, it died altogether. I just managed to coast into the Pub's parking lot."

"Why did you park in front of the Rolls-Royce?"

"I didn't! He parked behind me."

"A striking visual contrast in any case.. So then you fixed the Seven..."

"Ah, but I didn't fix it."

"You drove home."

"It started alright. And Duncan was kind enough to give me peace of mind by following me back. But the same thing happened next time I drove it. Had to call the CAA and be trailered ignominiously back to the garage. And there she sits."

"But -"

"I think I know what it is. Bad gas. You see, that's why I'd taken it to Ken Mason. Gummed up the carburetors. Ken says I haven't got it all out yet."

"Where did you buy it?"

"Ah, it all started with Mosport back in June. I got clever. I decided to save some time getting there, having to stop and fill up."

"Uh huh..."

"So I poured in this old can of gas I found lying around the garage, going to waste behind some debris. Or so I thought."

"So it was pilot error?"

"It usually is."

"Well, I'll write something up. Thanks."

"OK. Bye."





GLOVEBOX

M.Eddenden, eddenden@pathcom, 416 463 5679



For Sale: 1968 Elan Plus II

\$3000 spent on heads in 2005. Some minor issues but overall great running car. Appraised at \$9500. Asking \$7900 or B.O. Call Kris for details, 416 315 4270

For Sale: 1992 Caterham Vauxhall HPC

California RHD, BRG, 4 pt. Luke harness, clamshells, FIA roll bar, 16" HPC wheels, new fibre glass all around, Cosworth heads, dual 45 Webers, solid lifters, med QED cam, balanced, DTA programmable ignition, relocated Odessey battery, ignition and battery cut offs, 4-1 comp exhaust and a SPD dry sump system that has not been installed.

The car has mostly club drive miles on it (highway miles driving with older Lotus') and a few track days on larger longer tracks. Well maintained. It is located in California right now but can easily be shipped anywhere in North America. I'm open to offers over \$30,000 CAN.

Contact Rob Durstan hpc92caterham@mac.com

For pictures of the car, check eBay where Rob has listed the Seven for sale...Editor.

For Sale: 1969 Lotus Europa Series 2, Race prepared. Recently restored by Manny Vardalas (Montreal). Fresh Renault Gordini 1600 engine, 5-speed Fuego transaxle, twin Webers 40 DCOE, headers, Denso gear-reduction starter, roll cage, Kirkey racing seat, six-point racing harness, kill switch, transponder, American Racing mag wheels, 215/60-13 Yokohama A008R. Car in Ottawa, plated in Ontario. Original seat, trunk and muffler included to convert back to street. Needs some work on shift linkage, one carburetor and minor bodywork. \$12,000 firm. Call Claude Gagné at 613-443-0998 (home) or 613-748-2370 (work) or e-mail v8elite@sympatico.ca.



FOR SALE

1976 Caterham Super 7

- excellent Condition
- 1700 Lotus Twin Cam – 140+ hp
- custom fabricated header & exhaust
- tires new spring 2007
- propylene glycol coolant system
- electric engine pre-oiling system
- 4 speed gearbox
- always stored in garage
- top, tonneau, side & half curtains
- asking **\$30,000** or best offer
- contact Kevin at 905-633-6907 or kevseuropa@hotmail.com