The Chapman Report

Published by the Golden Gate Lotus Club www.gglotus.org December 2004

Elisian Fields

by jim mcclure, editor

OK, I've had a view of the after life twice. The first time was in the 60's and involved enhancement substances that were used improperly. That time was not Lotus related so I will not go into further detail.

The second time was a dream, where I was in the paddock, working on a Lotus, on a cool, crisp morning, somewhere in England. Just the hint of a slight fog in the air. I could hear in the distance the sound of a type 49, lapping the course, the whine of the Cosworth with smooth gear changes. I knew that it was Jimmy Clark, working on chassis setup.

Well, until that time has come we can all find heaven on earth by driving our fine cars. We can drive them just the way they rolled out the Lotus factory doors, with great pleasure, or we can have the fun of tweaking them in various ways. The very first Lotuses were designed to be modified, with some of the changes being done by the factory before the car was even delivered to the customer. The first Super Sevens were customer-requested variations of the standard production car.

The new Federal Elise is already being tweaked, and I look forward to hearing about some of the variety we will see. The options available for the S1 Elise are a good indication of what we have ahead of us. Someone just mentioned to me today that they saw an Elise having a turbocharger installed at a local bay area shop.

This car, like the Esprit and the other Lotuses, were great drives, right out of the box. But it's in our nature to 'play-with-the-package', and Lotus has always been happy to offer a car that encourges our "what if".

Race weekend at Goodwood is over and the owner of a rare red and gold'49' 111S removes his top and prepares for the drive home. This gentleman taught me how to manipuate the 'hood', as I had never had mine on!

Holiday Dinner

December 11, 7:30 pm
Romano's Macaroni Grill
31 Hillsdale Blvd. W
San Mateo, CA
650-638-3580

Check our Website for directions and a map.

Calendar

December 5	Annual Toy Rally	Fremont
December 11	Holiday Party San Mateo	Romano's Macaroni Inn
January	Monthly Meeting (w/ Xmas tree)	Host: Tom & Sherie Carney Belmont
March 22	GGLC Track Day	Thunderhill
June	Back to Tahoe ??	

How may piston does this steam engine have?

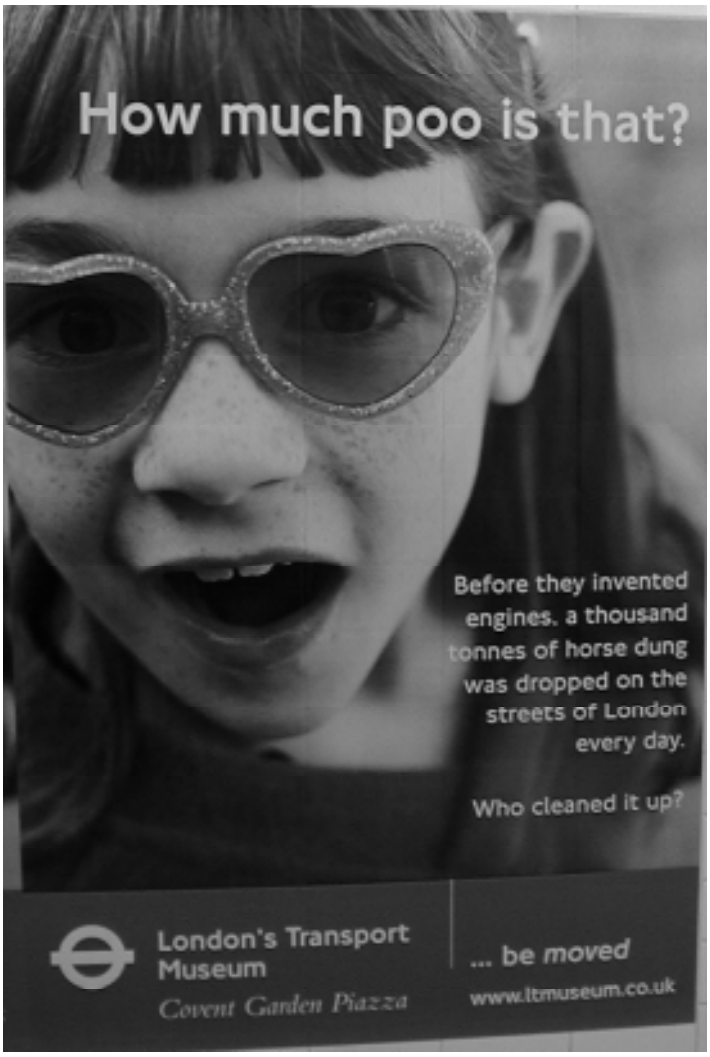
Chapman Report Via Email!

If you want to receive your Chapman Report via email (pdf) instead of snail-mail, send email to <ggmail@gglotus.org> saying "I want the CR by email".

You will get your CR sooner and the club will save on expenses. We need to know what email address you want it sent to, so be sure to type that in the email too.
Be sure to clearly identify yourself as in case of confusion we'll have to exchange emails to get things clarified. (Sometimes the email address in Reply-to: email headers is not what you want things sent to: do send me the correct email address.)

David Anderson, GGLC Membership.
1966 Elan, 1972 Europa

Another view of the ambiance that is created at the Goodwood Revival. The restoration of military vehicles is extensive in the U.K., and the American vehicles left after WWII well represented.



And we thought road polution began with the car. Now I don't feel so bad about the cat that fell off of my exhaust system.

A slightly different type of vehicle competition, Steam vehicle hauling capacity trials. The smells and noise are as exciting as vintage car racing.

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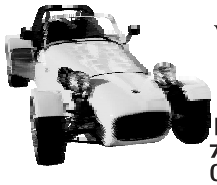

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LOTUS CARS USA ANNOUNCES NEW ELISE PRICING

DULUTH, GA (September 1, 2004) – Lotus Cars USA, importer and distributor of British made Lotus sports cars, announced a change in the MSRP of its new Elise two-seat roadster today, citing adjustments for exchange rates. Effective September 1, 2004, the MSRP for a base 2005 Lotus Elise is $40,930, up $945 (2.3%) from $39,985. Option package costs and delivery charges will remain unchanged.

"The Elise continues to offer a superior value due to its outstanding performance and limited production volume," said Lotus Cars USA CEO John English. "We are reluctant to increase prices from the introductory levels, however a challenging exchange rate environment requires Lotus to make an adjustment at this time." English noted that the price increase is substantially less than the actual devaluation of the U.S. Dollar against the British Pound since the debut of the U.S. market Elise.

(And what should the base price be if the price of a British pound was still at $1.50, as it was for years? My calculations came out to $30015.15! And the government keeps telling us that the falling dollar is good news? Guess they thought we would all go out and buy a Saturn. ed.)

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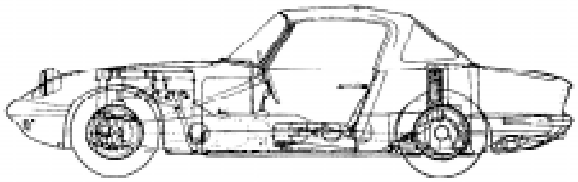

Elise Wins Award and Recognition from U.S. Media

by Kiyoshi

Auto experts at Popular Science magazine, Edmunds.com recognize Elise's leading edge technology, performance and value

November 12, 2004 (Duluth, GA) – Less than 12 months after its U.S. introduction the 2005 Lotus Elise has been awarded and recognized by automotive editors at leading consumer media outlets. Popular Science magazine today presented the Elise with its "Best of What's New" award while Edmunds.com selected the Elise as a finalist in its "Editors' Most Significant Car of the Year" competition. The Lotus Elise is a two seat, high performance roadster that has already won numerous awards and accolades from foreign media.

"We are very excited to have received such extraordinary recognition from Popular Science and Edmunds.com, two well-respected organizations" said John English, Lotus Cars USA CEO. "This recognition proves that the Elise does in fact offer the perfect combination of technology, performance, efficiency, fun and exclusivity so many people desire."

Priced at $40,930 the 190-horsepower Elise features an extruded aluminum chassis weighing only 150 pounds. This allows a car with a curb weight of 1984 lbs in standard trim. It outperforms cars costing several times as much, reaching 60mph in less than five seconds with a top speed of 150mph.

"Best of What's New is the ultimate Popular Science accolade, representing a year's worth of work evaluating thousands of products," said Editor Mark Jannot. "These awards honor innovations that not only impact the way we live today, but change the way we think about the future." The award can be viewed at http://www.popsci.com/popsci/bown/2004/cars/article/0,22221,750345,00.html

Karl Brauer, Editor in Chief at Edmunds.com, said, "The new Lotus Elise perfectly captures the original philosophy of Colin Chapman — who always felt weight was the enemy — in an advanced 21st century sports car offering amazing performance. For the money, you simply can't buy a more capable or thrilling ride."

Lotus is one of the world's best-known British performance brands with a reputation for innovation and success through a steady stream of winning racing cars and memorable sports cars. The first Lotus car was built in 1948 by founder Colin Chapman (1928-1982) and Lotus has pioneered automotive systems and components still in use today.

Today, Lotus Cars and its sister company Lotus Engineering are owned by Group Lotus, PLC, headquartered in Norfolk, England. The location is home to design, manufacturing, research and development and sales facilities. While Lotus Cars continues to design and build sports cars revered for their performance, style and innovation, Lotus Engineering develops advanced automotive systems and components for many of the world's leading automakers. Together, these two enterprises are a powerful team, committed to changing the rules that define automotive excellence. Group Lotus U.S. subsidiaries include Lotus Cars USA

end

First Elise Experiences

by Michael Sands

My Elise was ready for pick up at Desert European in Palm Springs, California. I live in Northern California and so I arranged to fly down and was greeted by 110 F weather. Hot! A quick shuttle ride to the dealer and I saw my car sitting in front of the dealership with Austin and another fellow looking it over.

I had asked that no work be done on the car. I did not want it washed or any stickers removed. I wanted copies of all the papers associated with the car. Austin was very careful and did what I asked. As a result of my request, the car had a bit of dirt here and there.

We completed all the paperwork, I handed over the funds, and the car was mine! I kept thinking about a seven-year wait and was amazed that it was finally over. I asked Austin if I could take a picture of him in the car and he graciously agreed. He was wonderful to deal with and tried very hard to make the experience a good one. I thanked him yet one more time. I got in, backed it into a parking spot that was shaded, and proceeded to familiarize myself with the car.

I still could not figure out how to get in and out. I tried a couple of different strategies. None of them worked. No matter how hard I tried,

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my shoes brushed up against something or I looked totally uncoordinated.

I tried to start it again and could not. I put it in neutral, no go. I pushed in the clutch, no go. I tried the key in multiple positions and kept hitting the starter and it would not start. I kept noticing the blinking red light in front and wondered how to turn that off. Finally I looked at the key fob and realized the immobilizer was still on. A quick push of the button and it started.

I planned on staying with a friend but I do not remember much about the trip to his house, as it was uneventful. Good company, a nice meal, and I retired late to study the operator's manual.

The next morning I took some pictures in front of his home as the sun came up. Soon I was on my way, headed for Santa Barbara, about 120 miles and the Pacific Coast. I started noticing things about the car. The tachometer is not linear, with 1, 2, and 3 being tightly spaced. Brake travel was not as bad as I had heard. (I have not heeled and toed yet.) There is significant power between 3,000 and 5,000 rpm. (Break in limits RPM to below 6,000 rpm.) Vision out the back is not bad once you learn where to look. The radio faceplate keeps coming off. (I cannot find the off button and am hitting the removal button. The faceplate spends the rest of the trip in the boot and I enjoy listening to the exhaust.) Not much room for the passenger.

Very soon I experienced one of the worst portions of the trip as I traveled Highway10W. I remember hearing the Federal Elise was modified to handle the terrible roads in California, especially the concrete roads with the joints. The ride was among the worst I have ever experienced, even worse than the Seven I used to own. It was so bad I tried going at different speeds and in different portions of the roadway. My car has the LSS Sport Pack option and the resulting ride is extremely bumpy. Do not order this option if you plan on driving these kinds of roads, even occasionally. I cannot emphasize this enough.

I stopped to get water at a store and

parked far away from all the other cars. As I walked towards the store, a mother and her young son were finishing loading their groceries. The son, about 12, stopped, pointed, and said, "Look Mom, a Lotus!" I smiled, and the Mom noticed. She asked if it was my car and I said yes and that it was great that her son recognized it.

I managed to sneak by Los Angeles and was soon headed up the coast on Highway 101N. Just before Santa Barbara, I hit another stretch of concrete roadway. Rather than continue, I took off on 33, towards Ojai and then back to the coast road on 150. This is the first time I was able to experience the Elise on a twisty road with little traffic. Heaven! Amazing how you can go from something so terrible to something so wonderful.

I entered Santa Barbara and experienced my first road incident. I was getting used to people hiding in my blind spot as I was driving, as they examined the car. I was careful making lane changes. On this occasion, traffic was medium to heavy, with all three lanes filled to capacity and all the cars spaced a safe distance from each other. I saw a Honda Prelude weaving up through traffic behind me and paced me to my right, as I was in the center lane. He revved his engine and kept accelerating and slowing, keeping pace with me. Suddenly he took off very quickly, cut in front of me and accelerated up my lane. I was terrified he was going to rear end the car in front of me but at the last minute he veered into the left lane. He missed the car in my lane by inches. The car he veered in front of slammed on their brakes and almost got rear-ended. The speeder kept going! Weaving in and out at over 100 mph on a crowded freeway. I have never seen anything like it and I was shaken. Being challenged to a race on the racetrack is one thing, but a challenge on a crowded freeway is something else.

I finally got to Santa Maria and decided to spend the night in the area. I wanted to get an early start. I wanted to drive Highway 1 before the tourists got up in the morning.

I started Highway 1 North at 5:00 am. Suddenly the perfect car was on the perfect road at the perfect time of day. (I was frustrated about not being able to rev above 6,000 rpm because of break in considerations, but the run was fun anyway. Besides, now I have to do it again soon, after the car is broken in.) There were no other cars and I was having fun. The sun was coming up and I looked for photo opportunities. I would stop, take a picture, and sprint on. Still no cars! I was having so much fun! After 70 miles I was starting to encounter other people on the road and slowed to a safe pace, and I soon arrived in Carmel.

I continued north and stopped in Castroville, the artichoke capital of the world. I purchased some giant artichokes for my wife and the sales person wondered where I was going to put them. I continued on to Santa Cruz and then up over Highway17 to Silicon Valley.

I drove 690 miles in a day and a half and wanted more. I almost did not go home and thought about continuing up

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the coast but I knew the wife and kids were excited about seeing the car. I also still needed to see if the car would fit in the garage!

My wife heard the roar of the exhaust as I arrived and the family tumbled out of the house. I finally got the car in the garage but I kept going down to see if it was really there. Hard to believe.

Later that day, my wife asked if she could take it for a spin. I explained the break in procedures and she was off. She was gone a long time. Upon her return I asked how she liked it. (She autocrosses her BMW M3, so she knows a bit about driving.) She related the experience and at one point she mentions she had it up to 100 mph once and 110 mph another. I stared! She got the car over 100 mph! I have not driven it that fast yet! I was waiting for a drive with her before hitting the cams and going above 6,000 rpm. She laughed. Men and their toys!

end

Lotus Bytes

From the Rumor Mill: Now that the Elise has proven to be a success in the American Market Lotus has turned their focus to a replacement for the Esprit. Stories of stretched versions of the glued and riveted Elise chassis being tested with a variety of engines are abundant. And a larger, faster and more powerful car is an opportunity for a bigger price and a better profit margin. The engine in the Elise is a Toyota Motor, but like many high performance pieces sold by Toyota the engine is manufactured under contract by Yamaha. And for those who remember the Toyota MR 2, that car was almost totally outsourced to Yamaha. What does this have to do with the Esprit replacement? Yamaha builds light and powerful engines and when Ford was looking for a V-8 to put into the tight engine compartment of the Volvo XC 90 they turned to Yamaha which just happened to have a nearly fully developed V-8 capable of longitudinal or transverse application. And by the way the engine would not only fit, but it was designed to be US and internationally smog compliant. Rumors have the engine starting at 350 horsepower and equal torque. But with a little massaging 400 horses would not be difficult to obtain. How long of a wait for the new Esprit? Ford is expected to want the V-8 for a variety of applications, potentially including a high performance version of the new Five Hundred Sedan, but once the demand begins to slack the engine should become available to other companies who would want it for the US Market and two of those who are expected to be interested are Lotus and TVR.

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Opinions expressed in the Chapman Report are those of the authors and do not represent those of the GGLC or its officers.

Submissions to the Chapman Report are accepted and encouraged. Please email them to chapmanreport@gglotus.org in MS Word, rtf or ASCII text. Submissions may also be mailed to Jim McClure, 11238 Bubb Road, Cupertino, CA 95014.

2003 GGLC Officers are: President: Faisal Khan, Vice President:Pete Richen, Treasurer: Laura Hamai, Event Coordinator: John Zender, Membership Chairman: David Anderson, Secretary: Jon Rosner

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EBay Watch: *editor*

"For Sale 'the lotus etna concept car as seen at the 1984 car show.. this a rare opportunity to buy this car and so to own a peice of automotive history the car is based on a new lotus esprit chassis all suspension parts on the chassis is new as at the time of building this car... hubs drive shafts gear box it even has a v8 lotus engine in the rear i have to say that the engine etc are not accessible from the top the car is a mock up but under the body appears to be some very nice engineering technology!!! i think it would be fantastic to take the concept and make it a reality please see the pictures.. the parts on this car must be worth £5000 alone.. this car is a mock up and has never been run it has no electrics no fuel tanks.. front screen and roof section are missing what you are bidding on is the unique opportunity to own this one off peice of history!!!' Sold for just over $10K Anyone ever heard of this car? Photo below

People are still trying to sell their spot on the Elise waiting list. Looks like it's too late for that, with actual cars being sold. No bids on most of these.

A bright red Elise, with both thge sports and touring packs, sold for just less than $49K.

"1966 (May) LOTUS CORTINA MK 1 suitable for restoration. No motor or transmition. At some time the bumpers have been changed and the green side flash has been changed to blue, however you can see the original color in the trunk area. Delivery possible." Didn't sell, as only bid up to just over $600. I don't think it's a real Lotus Cortina; no photos of the unique Lotus dash, etc. And I guess that no one else believed this guy, either.

Classifieds

(non-comercial ads are free to GGLC members and will run for three issues before requiring renewal)

For Sale: 1971 S-2 Europa. Very nice, original, unmodifed car. 60,000 original miles. Weber DGV carb. Fresh motor, suspension, brakes, dash, master cylinder. Many, many new parts. Bahama yellow/black. Don't buy a project car, get the finished product. Needs nothing excpet radio. Call Mike for info (916) 373-1557. $7,800. (8/04)

For Sale: Ser. 3-4 Elan Frame. Measures square, no crash damage. $1000.

Call Jody @ 831-254-1299 or locortjody@earthlink.net.

For sale: I am interested in selling my 1987 commemorative Lotus Esprit Turbo HC. I had a back injury and it is very difficult for me to drive it. I have not had very good luck on my own and was wondering if you had any suggestions. I am asking $23,000 OBO. More info if you know of anyone. Please contact me at 650-270-7417. Bill Locke (10/04)

For Sale: Parts from '69 Elan +2: Transmission, stainless exhaust, restored pindrive wheels, restored fuel tank, original twin brake boosters, radiator, new headlamp vac booster, and much more. Call Jim, 408-257-1463 home, 408-602-5445 cell goldengatehornet@yahoo.com

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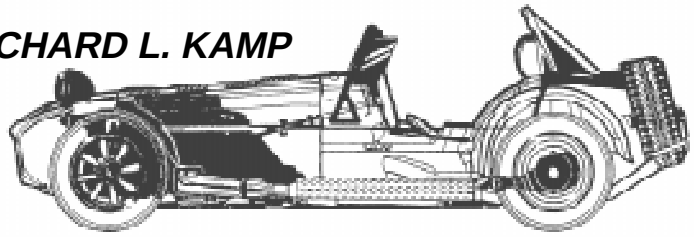

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For Sale: 1976 Eclat (Federal), custom Excel fenders by Barry spencer. Triple Black with Gold pinstripes, black/gold wheels. Custom black with gold leather interior. Euro cams, dual two barrel Dell'Ortos. Front/rear adjustable shocks, more. Ex-Barry spencer car. Must sell, best reasonable offer. Bob (650) 962-0451 (09/04)

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THE CHAPMAN REPORT

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