

CHRISTMAS

LOTUSLETTER PART ONE 2025





GOOD news... BAD news...

Stephen Warburton reports on the repairs to his Caterham.

In a Million Pieces

Boyd Jarvis finishes his 1962 Lotus 7 restoration but for the usual glitches.

Cover

Kevin Marson arrives at British Car Day looking out of place in his diminutive 1976 Caterham 7.

PHOTO **MICHAEL EDDENDEN**

As others see us

Non sequiturs

Spark Plugs go to War
Lotus Moves into Baked Goods
Jaguar's Brave New World?
LOTUS Tea Exists
Escape Winter in Tennessee
Strolling

Neil Drew & Paul Dennis

represent the Club at the Taffia Fish & Chip Run in Wales along with **252 other Sevens**.

Stories

New Member **Howard Emer**
New Member **Jeff Cox**
Replica, Caterham or Lotus 7?
Acre Custom Classics opens.
Rockton 2025
Art Deco-rates AI : Mercedes, Bentley & Audi release Concept Cars

LOG 44

Jamie Caswell and son, **Rob Cattle** & **Claude Gagné** go to Pittsburgh.

Club Bulletins

LCC **SPECIAL Meeting**
LCC Winter Party
LCC Member Dues go up.
LCC President's Message
Rob Szakonyi 1951-2025
Mike Potter 1931-2025
LCC Glovebox

BRONTE 1 ARRIVAL

Club Contacts

Contacts are listed at the end of the newsletter. For more about the **LOTUSletter** contact the Editor at **LCCeditor@hotmail.com**
Design, captions, bulletins, and unattributed articles are the Editor's doing. The **LOTUSletter** can be downloaded free at www.lotusclubcanada.ca



abstract and brief chronicles of the time

Our monthly LotusClubCanada
meeting at the
ABBAY ROAD PUB & PATIO
IS AS USUAL **CANCELLED** FOR DECEMBER.

So don't RSVP Duncan Lamb at duncan.lamb@sympatico.ca that you are coming.

Colin



SPECIAL LOTUSCLUBCANADA MEETING

7PM, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2026
ROYAL WINDSOR PUB & EATERY

610 Ford Drive / Unit #6 / Oakville
L6J 7V7 / 905-337-0330



To all Members of LotusClubCanada

We will have a room to ourselves at a new Pub, the **Royal Windsor Pub & Eatery** to discuss your ideas as to the direction your club might take in the near future. Member Neil Young briefly outlined some interesting ideas he has at our most recent meeting which we will discuss further. It is generally acknowledged that the Club needs a kick start which would hopefully attract both new members and create new interest in existing members. With new ideas comes the need for people to head them up and co-ordinate their implementation.

We need to confirm a New Club President at this meeting, so please give thought to who you would like to help steer the ship.

This is an important meeting so please try to attend. Confirm your attendance by Friday January 10. Email Duncan Lamb at Duncan.Lamb@sympatico.ca

See you there.

RSVP DEADLINE JAN. 11

LOTUS
CLUB
OF
CANADA

JAN. 17

SATURDAY

3-6:00 PM

IL FORNELLO

OAKVILLE

\$30 PER PERSON

CLUB PAYS MEAL SEE FINE PRINT NEXT PAGE

RSVP BY JANUARY 11

INCLUDE NUMBER COMING

DUNCAN.LAMB@SYMPATICO.CA / 416.465.2088

PARTY



WINTER

2026

LOTUSCLUBCANADA'S GENTLE ANNUAL DUES INCREASE

At the Club's October Pub Meeting we discussed **increasing Annual Dues from \$15.00 to \$20.00**

All agreed that it was very reasonable. No one had had more than one drink.

As an incentive, if members pay for 2026 (and beyond) before January 1st 2026, \$15.00 will still be accepted.

For those who have already paid for 2026 and beyond, their payments will stand.

Our Club costs, even at \$20.00/year or \$1.67/month are a bargain compared to other car clubs:

Jaguar club—\$115.00, Triumph club—\$60.00, MG Car Club—\$55.00 and so on.

Please remember, our membership runs on the calendar year;
if on January 1st 2026 you haven't paid up, you are **officially delinquent**.

Our Annual Dues are still only a measly \$20.00 !

Cheers, **Tom Thomas**

Treasurer & Membership Guy, Lotus Club of Canada



HAVE **YOU** PAID

If you have paid your **2026 Dues** you are a warm and wonderful person and not only can bask

YOUR MEASLY \$20.⁰⁰

in the halo of having **Done your Duty**, but can point your index finger in righteous censure

LOTUS CLUB DUES YET?

at the irresponsible and feckless who haven't. **NOW** as for the rest of you miscreants...

Act now. Don't miss out on future obnoxious reminders.

Send your **2025 LOTUSCLUBCANADA DUES** to Membership Guy **TOM THOMAS** at **tsquared118@gmail.com**

Make your cheque out to the Lotus Club of Canada. To **Pay Online** see next page.



YOUR TIMELY LOTUS CLUB OF CANADA ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES **REMINDER**



LOTUS CLUB CANADA accepts electronic payments for Club Dues using Interac e-Transfer. It's easy. It's quick. **Pay for two years, save Banking Fees, and make the Membership Guy's life a little more enjoyable.** If you aren't familiar with e-Transfers this is the process at most major banking institutions:

Member, old or new, goes to his online banking...

Select Transfer Funds...

Select Interac e-Transfer...

Choose from which Account...

Enter recipient name and email address: **Lotus Club Canada** & **tsquared118@gmail.com**

Enter Amount... **\$20 per year, after January 1st 2026.**

Pick a security question... (May we suggest the Founder of Lotus? Surname only, lower case)

Type in the security question...

Type a message with your Name & Email Address...

Hit confirm or send...

Your bank may charge for the service but there's no charge to the Club.

Your e-Transfer with your Annual Dues finds its way into the Club bank account,

However, you should confirm this with an email to TOM THOMAS,

THE CLUB'S MEMBERSHIP GUY at tsquared118@gmail.com

with your NAME & ADDRESS telling him you have sent the money.

He will send the All-Important email confirming your LCC Membership.

YOUR LOTUS CLUB OF CANADA ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES : PAYING ONLINE



Duncan Lamb, LotusClubCanada meeting Nov. / 2025
PHOTO M. EDDENDEN

Hello one and all. After a great deal of thought I believe the time has come for me to step down as President of Lotus Club Canada. It has been my pleasure to help run our Club, your Club, but fresh thoughts and ideas are needed.

Many thanks to Tom Thomas, Michael Eddenden, Doug Howey, Roger Barker, Iain Thomson, Scott Long, Alan Sadowsky, Rob Cattle, Neil Young and all of you who have contributed so much over the years and made my job so pleasurable. Thanks to Chris Marson who spotted me one day some forty years ago in my old Lotus Seven and suggested I might like to check out the Lotus Club of Canada. Obviously I did.

As I've noted on numerous occasions we need more volunteers to organize activities, and again, I know you're out there.

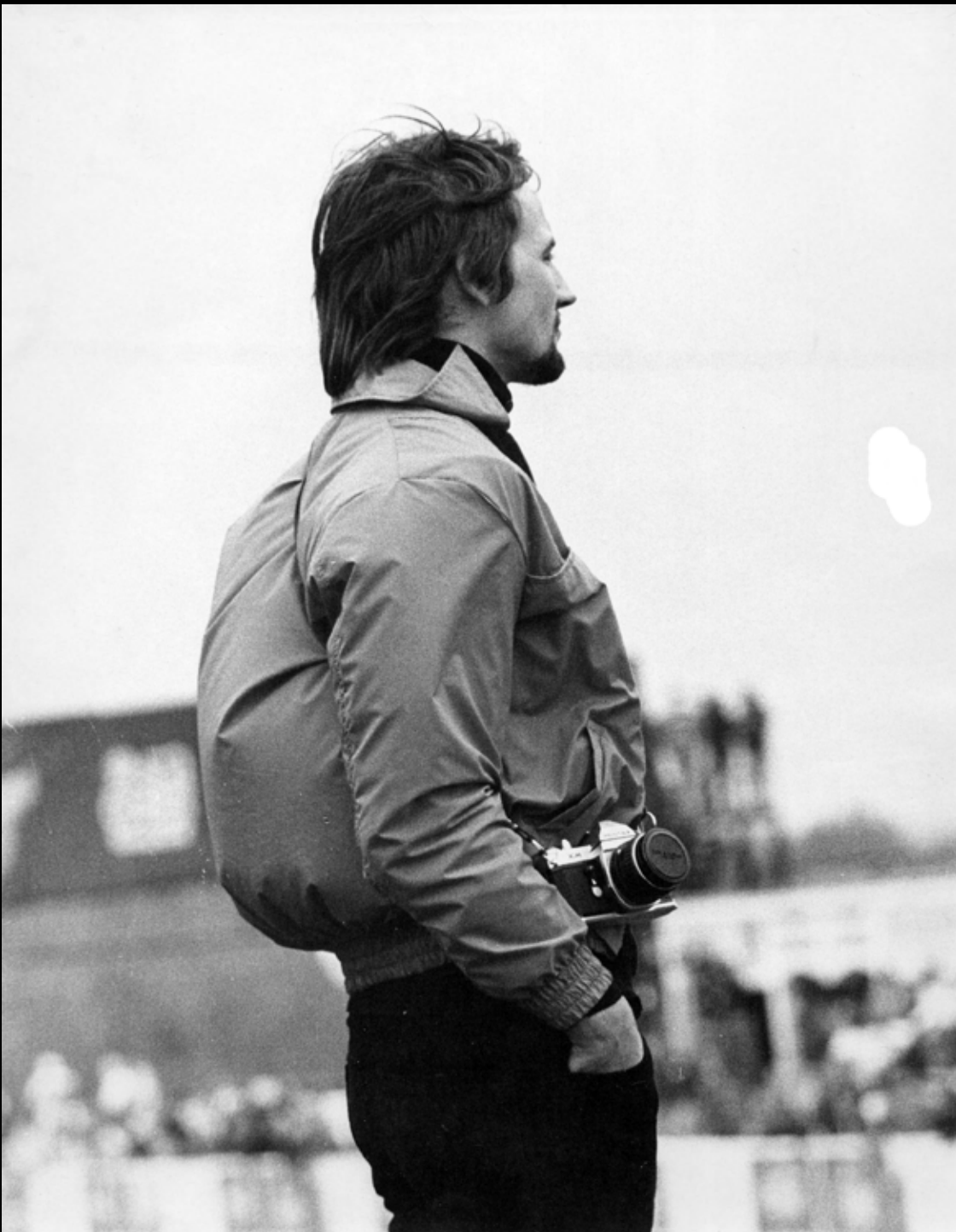
Please give some thought to who you would like to head your Club and bring those thoughts to our next meeting in January so that by our Annual Winter Party a new president will be in place.

Again many thanks to all of you.

Duncan Lamb DUNCAN.LAMB@SYMPATICO.CA

WHAT'S HAPPENING?
LOTUS CLUB CANADA PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS





Rob Szakonyi 1951-2025

IN SEPTEMBER I RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING EMAIL FROM ROB BASSETT, A CLUB MEMBER AND AN OLD FRIEND OF ROB SZAKONYI'S. ROB SZAKONYI WAS ONE OF THE CLUB'S FOUNDING MEMBERS IN THE LATE 1970S AND REMAINED IN THE CLUB THOUGH HE MOVED TO B.C. SEVERAL YEARS AGO. EDITOR

"I wanted the Lotus Club members to know that our dear friend **Robert Szakonyi passed away peacefully October 25th 2025**. On behalf of his family and myself I want to say a few words, and express my deepest condolences to his sister Lucielle Csonka, and his children Christa and Ryan.

My association and friendship with Robert spans almost 45 years. We were the original employees of an Ontario research and development company (privately owned) that was contemplating getting into the electric car business! *Fortress Scientific* was the company and Robert Szakonyi was hired for his electronic and mechanical expertise. He had previously worked for *Johnson Controls* and saw an ad in the paper looking for an individual wanting to become part of a unique start-up team developing electric vehicles. (Eat your heart out Elon.)

Robert and I created the assembly line for the company, while the first electric prototypes, vehicles for the disabled, were created by a five man team : Robert, myself, a mechanical engineer, an electrical engineer, and at the helm, company owner Leo Smith.

Robert and I became instant friends not so much because of our employment, but mainly because of our shared passions for sports cars. At that time mine were motorcycles and my beloved Triumph TR-6, while he was a passionate Lotus enthusiast.

Robert was naturally gifted with rare talents. He was entirely self-taught. Despite having no formal training those who were closest to him quickly recognized an exceptional electrical and mechanical genius. Yet he was one of the most humble individuals who I have ever met.

ROB SZAKONYI. THE PHOTO WAS TAKEN, POSSIBLY, AT THE CANADIAN GRAND PRIX MOSPORT, 1977.



Robert introduced me to the world of Lotus. He certainly had his idiosyncrasies and quirks, like the rest of us, but that never weakened our friendship or prevented my passion for Lotus & Caterham sports cars from blossoming! As the saying goes the rest is history.

I will miss his laughter and the countless conversations we had that span many decades. Those spirited Runs in the beautiful Ontario countryside with Robert were all magical, and left impressions that will forever remain ingrained as fond memories of a lifelong passion shared with a rare individual that we will all sadly miss.

Outside of Robert's family life, and passion for Lotus cars, he spent much of his spare time painting. He was a passionate artist, and as far back as I can remember it was his refuge or escape from the pressures of life throughout his life. The hobby became an obsession and expression of who he was, a true individual. I'm told by his sister Lucielle that during his life **Robert painted 22 canvases** each one telling a poignant story or specific event that had significant meaning in his life."

Robert Bassett CATERHAM SEVEN

LEFT A recent picture of Robert on Rob Bassett's sailboat in Port Credit, Sept. 2025.

BELOW Rob Bassett driving prototype electric car, Winter 1980, Rob Szakonyi passenger. Battery compartment and front drive unit were off a Mini with integrated electric motor.





Mike Potter 1931-2025

IN NOVEMBER I RECEIVED AN EMAIL FROM YOLANDA, MIKE POTTER'S WIFE; BOTH MIKE AND YOLANDA ARE WELL-KNOWN TO OLDER MEMBERS. SHE WROTE, "I AM DEEPLY SORRY TO HAVE TO TELL YOU ABOUT MIKE'S PASSING NOVEMBER 6... ALL THE BEST TO YOU AND THANKS FOR BEING SUCH GOOD FRIENDS." WITH THE EMAIL WAS AN OBITUARY REPRINTED ON THE NEXT PAGE.

MIKE WAS AN ACTIVE LOTUS CLUB MEMBER UNTIL AGE CAUGHT UP WITH HIM. HIS **1968 LOTUS SEVEN** — "IT'S A COSWORTH HEAD" HE WAS QUICK TO POINT OUT— WAS A FAMILIAR SIGHT TO MEMBERS. HE IS MISSED.

MIKE POTTER WITH HIS 1968 LOTUS SEVEN S2/3 AT BRONTE 2012. PHOTO MIKE MCGRAW



MICHAEL RONALD POTTER

In loving memory of a wonderful husband, father, grand-father and father-in-law, who passed away in his 95th year on November 6, 2025.

Michael was born in Hereford, England on September 10, 1931, the only child of Ronald Surman Potter and Evelyn Ethel Hannah. He had a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering and a Master of Science in Agricultural Engineering from King's College at the University of Durham.

He had an extensive career with the multinational company Massey Ferguson, where he acted as head of the Mexican and Italian entities. His postings in the UK, Mexico, Canada and Italy gave his family (including his cherished dog Sandy) many wonderful experiences abroad and a unique international upbringing that they will always value. Michael received a written testimonial from the

Mexican and Italian companies of Massey Ferguson, later Varity Corporation, for his professionalism, his technical teachings and his example as a human being for the harmony he brought as a boss, and for his friendship. When he retired, his pursuit of engineering and business interests led him to become President of Amertek Inc. Later on, he and his wife moved to Mulmur, Ontario, where he joined the Lions Foundation and helped, among other things, with the Christmas hampers and delivering hot meals to the elderly.

Michael and Yolanda became interested in fostering dogs for the blind and he joined the Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides. His family received a Certificate of Appreciation for their assistance. He was also an avid model-maker, reader and fan of cryptic crossword puzzles.

His love of engineering and motor cars made him an immense fan of F1. He also joined the **Lotus Club of Canada** and made many friends with the same interests. This resulted in hosting a couple of Lotus Club Canada Summer Barbecues (circa 2002) at his home in Mulmur where all the cars, including his own 1968 Lotus Seven, could park nicely on the grounds.

Michael will be greatly missed by his beloved wife, Yolanda and their children, Caroline and her husband Patrick, David and his wife Meghan and their dear grandchildren, Emily, Gillian and Lucas. He will be always in our minds and in our hearts.



TRIBUTES TO BOTH MIKE POTTER & ROB SZAKONYI

will run in the next Lotus Club of Canada newsletter.
Please email me if you want to say something in their memory,
or better, if you have a Szakonyi or a Potter story.
Length is irrelevant, especially if you quote either of them.
Don't forget to send your photos as well.

LCCeditor@hotmail.com



UPON closing in on being 75 years young, it dawned on me that I should reward myself, with something really memorable. Being a motorsport aficionado, I thought about renewing my relationship with Lotus cars, and ordered a much written about **Lotus Emira**. In summary, the two and a half year wait was worth it. The car arrived two days before my 75th.

My background in motorsport includes owning a 1967 Triumph TR4A, a **1970 Lotus Elan SE coupe** (from new). I raced a **Lotus 61M Formula Ford** in the Seventies following the delivery of the Elan, and then I split my time and moved from four wheels to two. I raced a Honda in the 125 GP Road Racing Canada East series and then became fascinated with Ducati motorcycles. I have been a member of the *Ducati Owners Club of Canada* for 40 years, and have collected over the years, some memorable models.

My son followed my lead and has raced a 1965 250 Ducati Monza the last four years with VRRRA (*Vintage Road Racing Association*), relegating me to team manager, which title I am very proud of.

I am a retired custom home builder, (*See building behind Emira. ED.*) living with my wife Nathalie in Uxbridge for the last 30 years. We passed some of the last ten years as partners at the *Second Wedge Brewing Company*, also in Uxbridge. I am happy to be a member of the Lotus Club and relish the chance to “Talk Lotus” and meet like minded people.

Cheers,
Howard & Nathalie Emer



Howard Emer
LOTUS EMIRA NEW MEMBER

Just a bit about me and my Seven.

I have always been a car enthusiast, as was my father. I lived in England until 1985, when I was recruited by a company to live and work in Canada. A great opportunity.

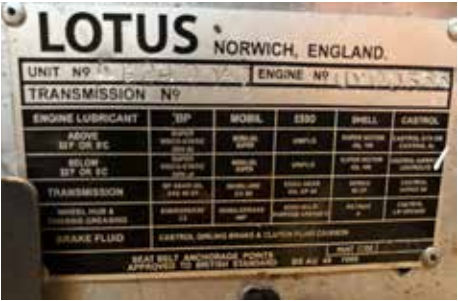
I passed my driving test in 1960 in a Triumph Herald and then learnt to drive in my father's Triumph TR3A. I've had an assortment of cars living in Canada: Hondas, BMWs, Volvos and others. Currently I've a VW Golf R, a Porsche Cayman S (my present to me on retirement), a Ford Mustang Mach E and a Replica Lotus Seven. I bought the Seven four or five years ago and keep it at my cottage near Huntsville. We spend the whole summer at the cottage and drive it in that area.

I'd like to know more about my Seven.

It was built in UK in 1974 and made it to Canada in the early 2000s. It's RHD. It has a 1600cc Ford Kent crossflow engine that says it's Holbay tuned. As you can see from the poor quality photos (right) the engine bay has a Lotus name plate but also another that says it was built by Triumph! Did builders put Lotus name plates on Replicas? Any thoughts about the car would be welcome.

Jeff Cox

Jeff Cox
REPLICA?SEVEN NEW MEMBER





Replica, Caterham or Lotus?

Jeff Cox's Seven is puzzling: he was told that the car is a 1974 Replica of a Lotus 7. But in 1974 no one was building Seven Replicas, although with a decade many companies would start up due in large part to Caterham's success. The car can't be a Lotus because the last Series 3 Seven that Lotus built was January 1970. It could be a Caterham. Caterham ressurected production of the S3 in September 1974. It is possible that a kit was ordered, produced by Caterham, built by the owner, and then registered before the year was out, but not likely.

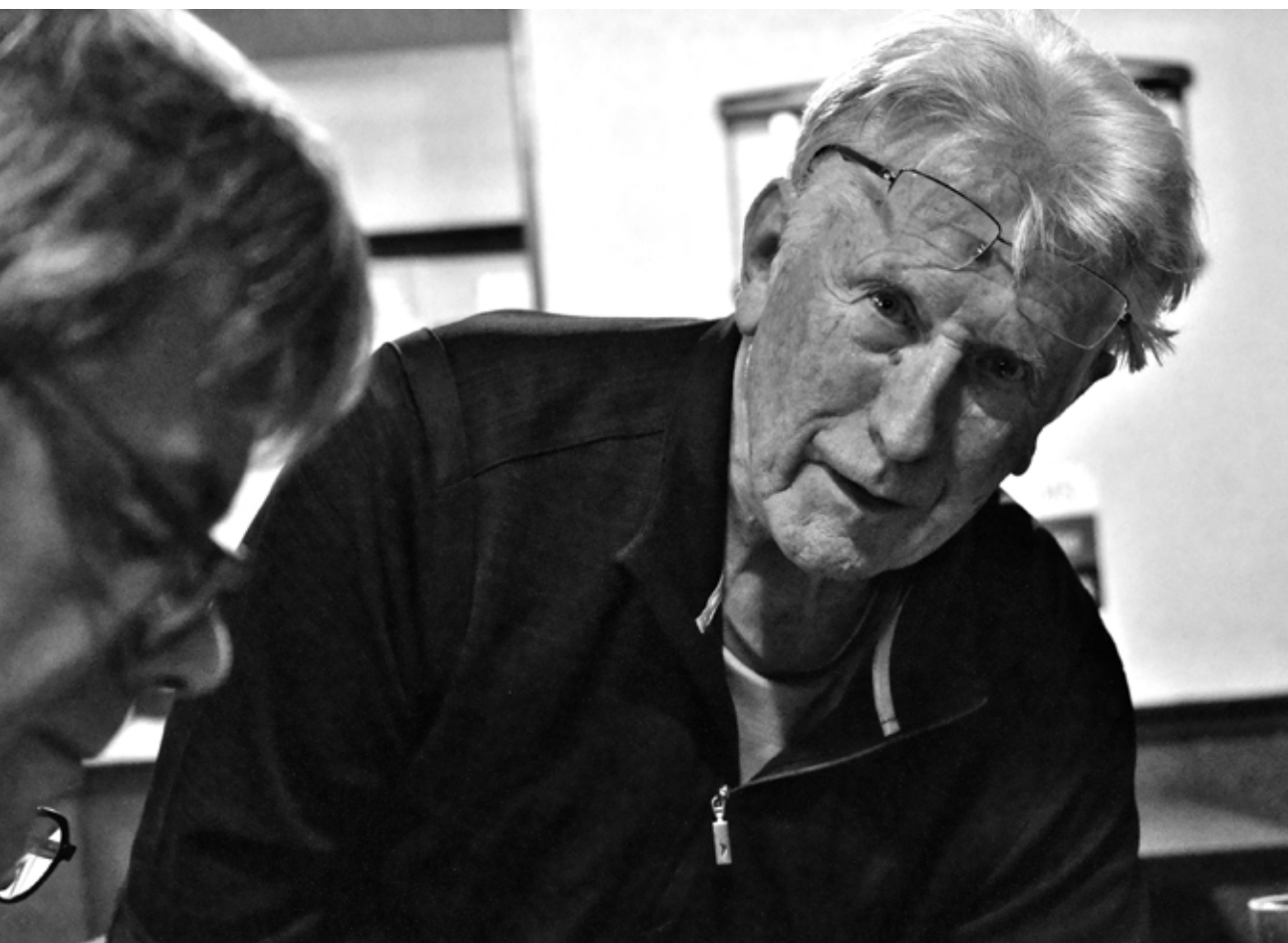
The facts are as follows:

The two plates in the engine bay only confuse the issue. One is from Lotus and the other from Triumph. It can't be both and in a well-run universe it shouldn't be either, not in 1974. Do early Caterham even have plates? If so would they be recognizable?

The Holbay Kent engine, single downdraft, was used by Lotus and must be from the time, which argues for it being a Caterham or a Lotus, assuming that it is the original engine, as it appears to be.

Jeff's photos of the Seven reveals that some parts are Caterham, such as the wheels and side mirrors, but they are modern parts.

The lights prove anything you want: the torpedo lights on the front fenders must be from either the 1960s or 1970s for





they haven't been available for decades but the front turn signals on the fenders are from a Caterham after the 1980s and the front turn signals below the headlights have never been seen on any Seven, ever. The lights then prove it is a Lotus, a Caterham and a Replica.

As for the exhaust, well, all old Sevens have idiosyncratic exhausts unique to each car. after decades of owner's tinkering.

And so it went with everything else about the Seven. There are authentic parts correct to the era, authentic Caterham parts but only much later than 1974 and parts never encountered by any of the Club members who saw Jeff's photos.

Chris Marson, a former Caterham owner, and Rob Bassett, a long time Caterham owner, suggested checking the stamping on the top of the shock mount. If it reads '**AM**' it designates that **Arch Motors**, the only builder of Seven chassis for Lotus and Caterham in the 1960s and 1970s, then it is a Lotus or a Caterham. Jeff checked but unfortunately there was no Arch Motors stamp.

The investigation continues. **If you have suggestions or advice please contact Jeff Cox at jeffcox88@gmail.com**

Editor

THIS & PREVIOUS PAGE

Jeff Cox (standing) confers with members **Roger Barker** (beard) and **Kevin Marson** about the Seven's authenticity at the November Club meeting. Kevin owns and has restored his **1976 Caterham Seven Twincam**. Appropriate to his expertise Kevin wears his Caterham 50th Anniversary T-shirt. **Anne Cox** (RH photo) was good natured about the endless discussion perhaps because for a change, she could share the burden with others.

DIMLY-LIT-PHOTOS M.EDDENDEN



We've been in Porto, **Portugal** for a couple of weeks vacationing...and have seen no Lotus. However, I did see these at the Mecardo (market) this morning. Sorry, couldn't try them. I'm gluten intolerant. The Ferrari was parked out front. If only it had been an Emira.

Dennis Deeley ROBIN HOOD SEVEN

*Lotus moves into
baked goods.*

Excrement Doth Occurs : UPDATE

Members may recognize this Update. It is taken from LotusClubCanada's Facebook page and was posted by the Club's most active user, **Stephen Warburton**. Stephen's 1993 Caterham Seven HPC, which he named **Purple Reign**, was damaged in a collision that was not Stephen's fault. He has been undergoing the trial of dealing with the insurance company and getting the Seven's front end repaired.

EDITOR

NOV.4 /25 **GOOD NEWS : BAD NEWS**

Today we were able to pick up *Purple Reign* from the bodyshop. Six months to the day from the accident! Think about that, the entire summer of fun lost. All our trips, big events and small cruise nights did not happen for us.



Before

The **GOOD News...**

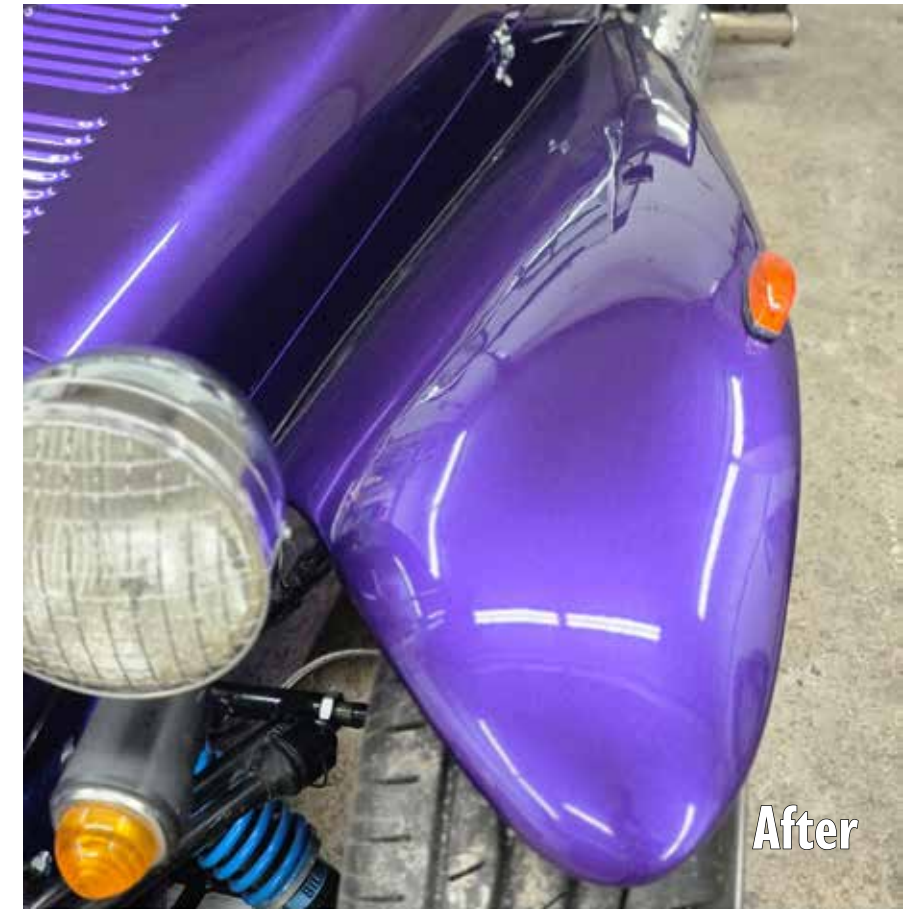
The colour match is super even though its modern paint. Both front fenders look great and the truck bed liner coating the undersides looks fantastic. Hopefully it will stop the star cracks from forming.



During

The **BAD News...**

The body shop guy failed to correct the bent left front fender bracket so the left fender still sits about 5/8" - 3/4" higher than the right. There are a few blemishes in the paint and the alloy panel around the lower 'A' Arm still shows a slight



After

ripple. The rear fenders did not get done and there are some bad marks in the Protective Paint Film on the nose cone from poor storage. It will be going back in the Spring to have the fender height corrected and paint imperfections addressed. The body shop still has to close things off with the appraiser because of overages. One item that they are fighting for is to get me some cash to cover the purchase of a “new” rim if or when one is found.

I may wait for that before going after the insurance company for all the crap I’ve had to deal with as well as paying full rate for a car I have just got back and will not be driving now until next year. I should not have to pay Personal Liability and Property Damage when the car has been inside shops for all but four days out of the six month driving season.

RIGHT

Repaired but with deficiencies. The left hand fender is still little higher than the other. In the accident the driver’s side wheel and suspension was damaged (bent tie rod end), the left front fender crushed. The left front tire was still holding air but badly scraped. The lower side panel from the front back to the exhaust cut out was badly rippled and missing paint.

ALL PHOTOS STEPHEN WARBURTON

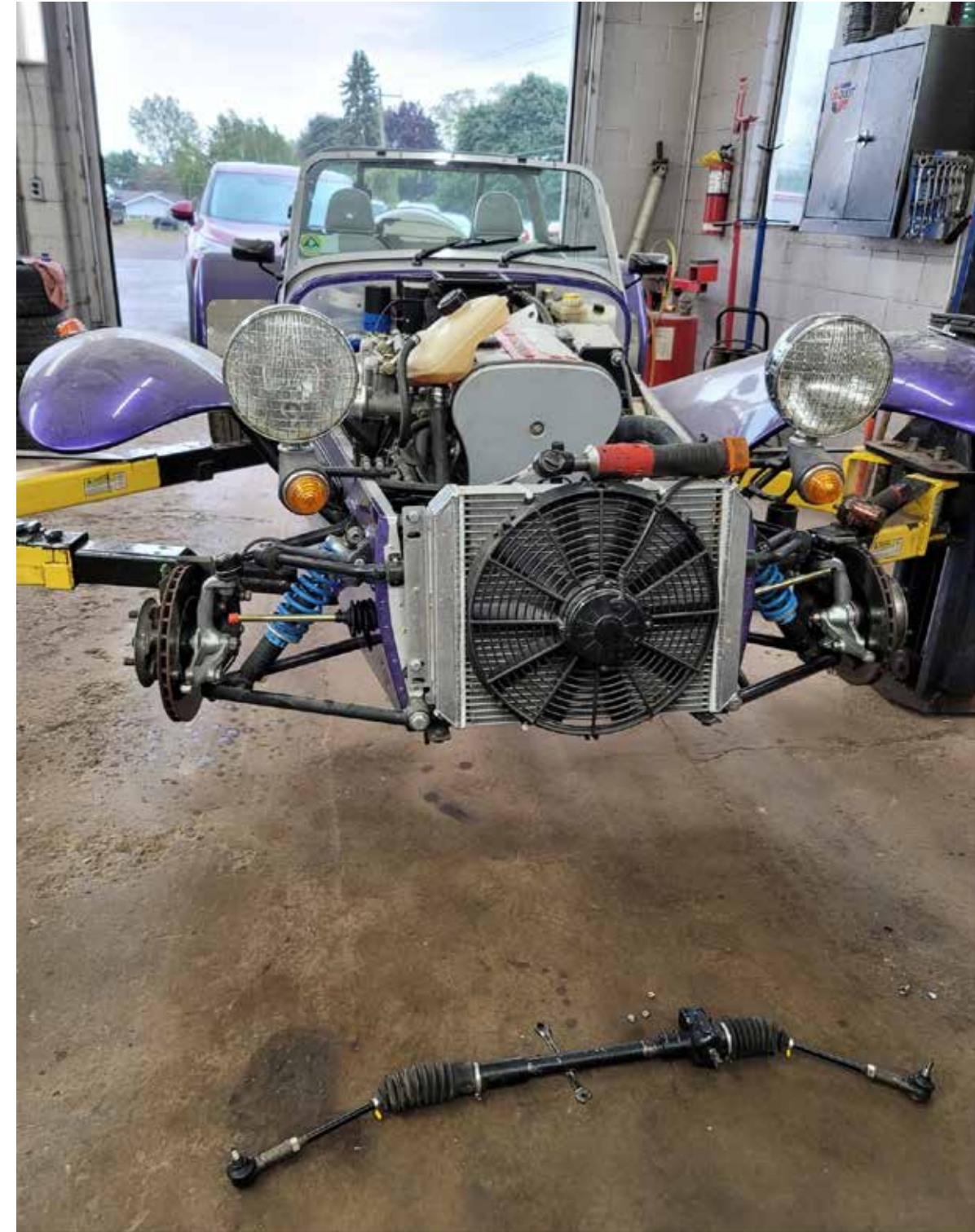


The drive home was Funtastic! The sun was shining, it was about 13C° and the car ran fine for the most part. When I got it up over 2800 RPM it stated making “*that*” noise so I had to keep the revs and speed down. While driving north out of Frankford and coming up a slight grade a little green Triumph Spitfire convertible popped up over the crest ravelling south. His hand went straight up in the air and waved so I returned the salute.

Gee, that was a great moment.

Stephen Warburton

P.S. “*That noise*” is I think the Clutch Release Bearing. The car is now with Bob DeShane at **BritSpeed Performance** in Lindsay. He is hoping to get the engine/trans out and give me full list of what needs replacing and what is still good.



ACRE CUSTOM CLASSICS



From time to time members contact me to ask where they can take their Lotus for repairs. We don't carry ads and don't have a list of recommended mechanics: none of us feel competent to hand out such advice. However, whenever a shop specializing in old British Sports cars, especially old Lotus, approaches the Club as Jack Fouracre did at British Car Day, we are happy to pass the information on in the Newsletter. EDITOR

*Hello folks. I just wanted to introduce myself for those that don't know me. I reside in **SW Ontario, just North of London** and I offer mechanical and paint work on all British and Euro Classic cars. I was always around these cars growing up, and had my own shop in England before migrating to Canada 15 years ago.*

*I've been doing this type of work casually here for a couple years and I am currently taking bookings for Fall/Winter. If you are interested please reach out to me at **jack.fouracre@gmail.com** or **519.671.8482** or visit my just finished website: **www.acrecustomclassic.ca***

*I owned and completely rebuilt a **Lotus Elise** in the UK, as well as a couple of **Westfields and Caterhams**. I entertain all work on these cars from paintwork, general maintenance and performance modifications.*

Jack Fouracre **ACRE CUSTOM CLASSICS**
WWW.ACRECUSTOMCLASSICS.CA
JACK.FOURACRE@GMAIL.COM
519 671 8482

254 SEVENS by NEIL DREW

Photos are mostly by **Neil Drew** especially the selfies. Others are taken from **Caterham's Facebook page** which like the photo of the start here, do not name the photographer, which is a shame. The Ariel Atom shot was taken from a Pistonheads UK article via google images.





Setting out from the starting point is cool. I am sure everyone who has done the **FISH & CHIP RUN** agrees. You look forward to it for a long time and watch countless videos beforehand. So when you pull out of the parking lot for the first time and accelerate up the hill, surrounded by other Sevens, waving at the marshalls, you get such a buzz. There really is nothing better than working your way through the gears of a Caterham. We buzzed up the hill, crossed the border into Wales, and straight into a Traffic Jam. This was not on the videos!

It was luckily, a small one. We (Paul Dennis and I) soon settled into the Run. Lots of people waving, pointing and saying “*Canada*” as we pinged by. The weather was perfect, midmorning, just over 20 degrees and getting warmer. Thank God I had worn shorts. I started teasing my Canadian Car Friend on the radio. The returned sigh, then silence confirmed his regret. We did the first bit of the Run, then stopped in the ranges to take some photos, including Paul and his mismatched shoes posed beside by his car with the Canada Flags. It made it onto the Caterham Group Facebook cover page a few weeks later.

As we were parked up, an Ariel Atom driving by waved at us. What an incredible machine and certainly something that can give a Caterham a run for its money. And yet as it drove by I realised just how wide it is and as it accelerated up the hill, it had to short-shift the whole way



Caterham Facebook photo



Clearly an amazing car to have on track, but I would wager it would struggle to keep up with our group on the super narrow roads of the Brecon Beacons?

Legs stretched and scenery observed. We went again, pushing the cars through their paces around the brilliant driving roads, undulating hills, hairpins, like nothing we had ever experienced in Caterhams before.

Stopped a few miles up the road we bumped into the group from Yorkshire led by Callum from *Turn 7*. They were going to add on a couple of stops to the Run and asked if we wanted to join them. *Absolutely*. We had been driving fast before we met the Yorkshiremen. How wrong we were. Crikey, these guys shifted. It was taking all of mine and Paul's driving ability to keep up with them, but we were having a blast. We no longer had to worry about directions, as long as we stuck with the car in front.



Paul Dennis, Neil Drew, Caterhams & Flags on Facebook



It was one of the best driving experiences of my life, especially as I was following a particularly quick CSR 260— phenomenal. Paul and I giggled over the radio the whole time.

We stopped at the Llandrindod Wells Service Station where Paul experienced his first ever *Gregs Sausage Roll*. A photo of the happy grin said it all. We then jumped back into the cars and followed the group again to a reservoir for amazing views and ice-cream. We had to park in a tight car park, up a hill on a dirt track. Not the easiest in front of bunch of Yorkshire Folk in a car with the heaviest clutch in the world, the turning circle of a large boat, which complains at anything under 5000 revs. I made it though.

As we had our ice-cream, a fleet of supercars went by: Lambos, Ferraris, Porsche GT3's etc. Together a couple of million pounds worth of cars. As we all watched, eating our ice-creams, we all thought the same thing: I would far rather be in my car, on these roads than you guys in your cars. This trip confirmed it; there is nothing like a Caterham. On the final leg from the reservoir to the beach, we lost the group at a junction and probably took a wrong turn. It did not matter, the roads were brilliant and we weren't done. We picked up signs to Aberdovey and made our way to the car park. We were the second to last cars to arrive— we didn't care, we had had an amazing day

of corners, overtaking, dodging sheep, hanging onto CSR tails, getting lost but not caring, and seeing hills, plains, villages and forests. Now, by the beach in early evening, thank God I had worn shorts.

We joined the queue and waited forty minutes for our Fish & Chips at Walkers, which I was told was short. Mushy peas for me; curry sauce for Paul. We sat on the steps by the beach with a beautiful view and had our food. The perfect end to the best blat of both our lives. We checked into the Dovey Inn, which was really pleasant. After a shower and a call home, we headed to a pub. Two pints and we were both toast. It was 9pm. We had bumped into some other owners who we doing a pub and curry crawl and had promised to meet up with them—no chance. We headed home. The *Fish & Chip Run* was over and it was everything we wanted it to be but we still had a few more days of our tour. We wanted to rest up to maximise them.

We met for breakfast surprisingly sprightly. I was expecting to ache, especially as the leather seats gave less support than the Tilletts. However, I was fine. Its always surprising how comfortable our Caterhams are. After breakfast we headed to the cars— both covered in seagull poo. After we cleaned the cars we headed an hour up the road to *Portmeirion* for the obligatory Seven owner

pilgrimage. I am happy to say I am way too young to have really watched the *Prisoner*, but *Old Car Friend* Paul was in his element. The weather again helped as it was hotter on the Sunday than the previous two days. The village was fun, the beach was beautiful and we managed to get some photos next to another lovely 1980's crossflow Caterham.

On the way out, two twelve year old boys were admiring the cars and taking pictures. As we were getting ready to leave they asked if they could take a video of us leaving and to rev up the cars. We obliged. As I went passed them, I revved the meaty Duratec a few times and then dropped the heavy clutch, forgetting I have over 200bhp instead of my usual 140. I lit the back tires up, fishtailing the car as I abruptly accelerated past, flicking my back wheel much too close to them as I went by, scaring the hell out of them. (Sorry Derek if I put a flat spot on the rear tires – I'll be honest, I was just trying not to accidentally maim a couple of kids). Hopefully they did not put it online.

Now the real driving started for the day. We had to drive almost the length of Wales to Milford-Haven, in the South Western tip of Wales in Pembrokeshire. There were a mix of roads. We had more dual carriageways to really open up the cars (remember we are used to slower speed limits), more villages with the dreaded 20mph speed limits





(my nemesis with my Seven's frantic engine) and Paul's nemesis, the roundabout. Mixed with windy roads and coastal roads, it was another brilliant driving day. We ended up staying in a really lovely Bed 'n Breakfast by the water. A pub dinner and a bottle of wine on Paul's balcony ended a truly brilliant weekend. Our last full day was tomorrow.

We had a wonderful breakfast the next morning. Today we were driving back to Bristol. On the map, it does not look far, but it was our furthest drive. We set off passing through towns I've heard of, but never visited Neath, Merthyr Tydfil, Ebbw Vale. It was fairly tough. We got separated a few times, but the radios saved us. The other benefit to having radios when driving in a convoy is when the lead car overtakes, they can tell the car behind if it is clear for them to overtake round a corner or over a hill. We did this a few times and it was brilliant. We also encountered more of the dreaded 20mph speed limits. I had worked out at this point to just slip into neutral and coast through the villages and only engage gears on hills. We left Wales and headed into the Cotswolds and picked up some more fun roads then made our way to Millwoods where Paul had bought his car the previous year. Eric was there and made us a cup of tea and showed us the cars in the showroom. This was one of the bonuses of the trip. After using a *halfhood* on this trip, Paul

really wanted one for his car. "I might have one" Eric said, "let me look". He went into the storage cupboard and rummaged around. He did have one, but for an S3 chassis that fitted my Seven, not Paul's. I bought it on the spot at a bargain price, and also picked up armrests for my doors. Paul walked away with nothing, much to his chagrin, and my delight.

We headed to Williams, dropped off Paul's car and then Paul hopped into the passenger seat of my car with his gear and my new accessories to head to Derek's house. It was a bit of a squeeze. At Derek's we had a few minutes to sort of clean Derek's Seven with detailer spray and old cloths, and remove the Canada flags. We chatted and thanked Richard. That night we stayed at a cool little AirBnB cottage in Hambrook on the outskirts of Bristol and had a dinner and few pints at a great pub called the White Horse. Jon Symons, without whom none of this trip would have happened, lived just down the road and met us for a pint. The perfect end to the perfect trip.

We then headed back to the Airbnb for our last evening. Lying in bed at 11pm, I get a text from Jon. The Caterham Club had a track day at Castle Combe tomorrow. If we had time to kill before our flight home, we should stop by—We did!

Next morning, we got an early taxi to the track. A load of familiar faces were there including the chaps from

Caterham who took us on our tour. We sat for a few hours with a coffee to watch the cars out on the track. A brilliant little bonus to our trip. I have not taken my Seven on a track yet, even though it is an ex-Academy car but this small exposure has given me the bug. I have a track near where I keep my car, *Shannonville*; it's a small, tight, flat but curvy track. The perfect place to take my Seven and embarrass the Mustangs, Camaros and Challengers. And show them how to go around a corner.

The trip was over. We headed to the airport. One final win for Paul was getting a last minute upgrade when we boarded, so while he was at the front of the plane drinking champagne, I was stuck at the back, in a middle seat next to a guy who slept, snored and farted the whole seven hours home.

As we waited for our bags in Toronto we recalled all the stories and experiences we had just had. Both Paul and I had been literally dreaming of doing the Fish & Chip Run for years. I was worried that I had built it up too much, that reality would not live up to the fantasy. This was not the case, it was a truly magnificent trip. My new *Full Friend Paul* was a joy to travel with. The Welsh roads were spectacular, the locations and scenery amazing. However the stars of the trip were obviously the

Caterhams and the Club members. The Fish & Chip Run reinvigorates your love for your Seven. We truly drive outstanding cars that offer something no other car can offer. The same can be said for the Club members. What a wonderful community they are. Paul and I could not have felt more welcome.

The Thank Yous: extra special thanks has to go to Jon Symons for arranging the *Fish & Chip Run* and making such an effort to involve us. To Derek and Richard Holliday for their generosity and overall coolness in lending me their Caterham. Although they did not think it was a big deal, it really, really was, and I am eternally grateful. There is free accommodation any time you guys want to come to Canada. A big thank you to the German group for letting us gate crash their factory tour. To Callum and the group from Yorkshire for letting us tag along and teaching us how to drive our cars properly. And to Eric at Millwoods for the accessories and the team at Williams for providing the rental car. A big thank you to everyone who stopped to chat to us; meeting fellow owners made the trip.

Paul *now* has his sights set on the European trips that happen from time to time. I for one am eyeing next years Fish & Chip Run and plan on bringing other Canadians. Until next year.

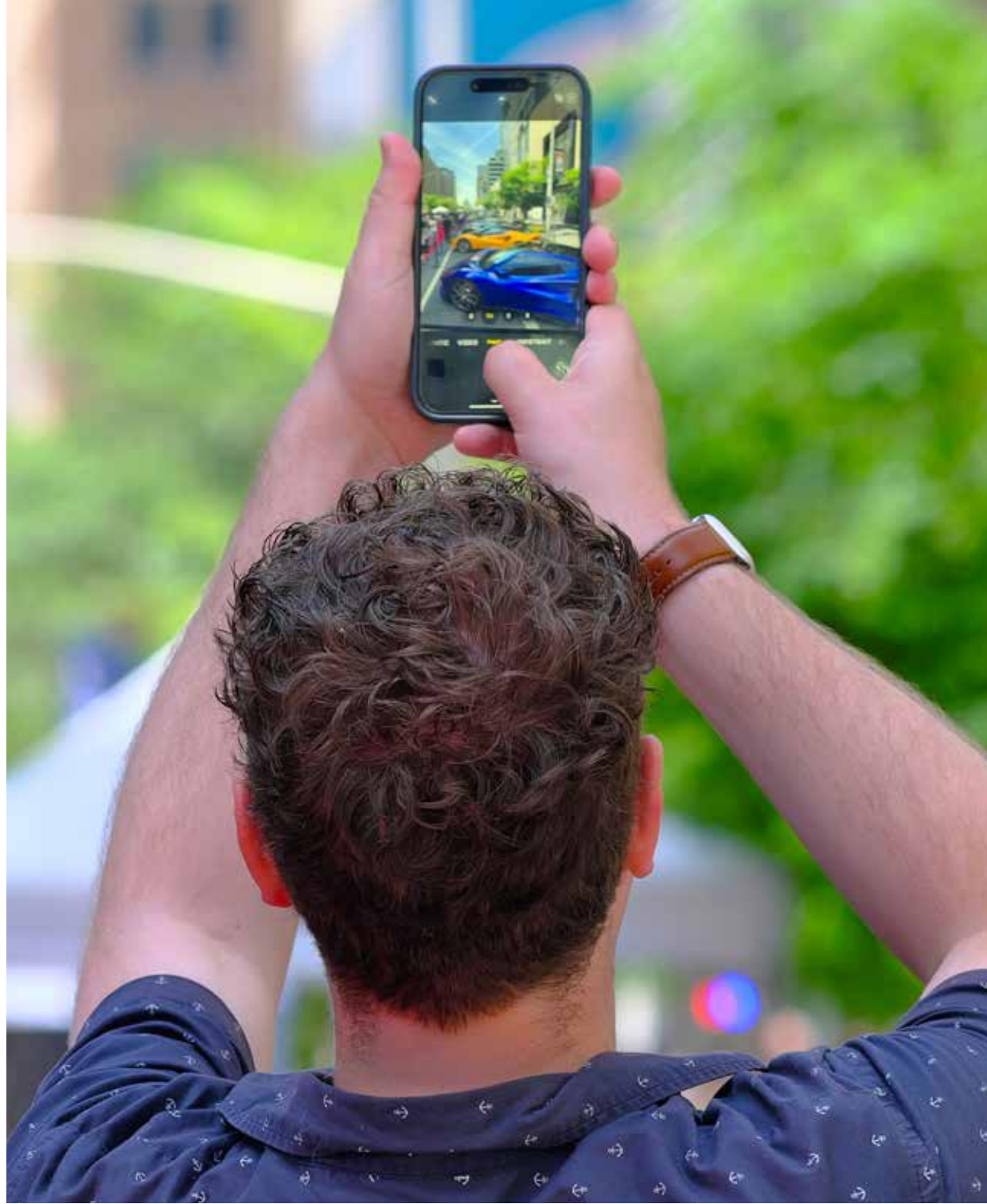


Neil Drew's Sigma engine Caterham Seven with the new halfhood. Behind is his newly acquired Vauxhall VX 220, also known as an Opel Speedster.

Pushing a stroller with a toddler who stares at passers-by while sucking her toes, isn't an image associated with Lamborghinis, or any exotic, but it shouldn't be taken to indicate a lack of interest in the cars. This picture of domesticity, a common one at the **Yorkville Exotic Car Show** didn't diminish the attention the sports cars received. At times it seemed to increase it, to heighten the fantasy beguilingly near and out of reach.

Strolling





As others see us.

PHOTOS by MICHAEL EDDENDEN





I noticed people looking at the Seven in the first years of ownership. It was instinctive and automatic, a sixth sense created by the attention. This was a natural reaction, people's attention being at times, loud and exuberant. and strangers who stared at the Seven also stared at me. Over the years I grew desensitized to onlookers, my awareness dwindled, and the public gaze faded to a white noise of curiosity.

At the *Yorkville Exotic Car Show*, Fathers' Day, I did not have the Caterham and not being noticed, I noticed the crowd. British Car Day is, more and more, old white guys and nostalgia, but like most events in Toronto this was neither. Young and old, men and women, families with strollers, strolling couples, gaggles of energetic teens, loner videographers, white, brown, black and every shade between : all were here, equally represented. They came to see Exotics, new and shiny. Some came because it was a glamorous event that drew crowds; for them the exotics were the MacGuffin. Some were true enthusiasts but only glanced at Lotus as they headed to the Lamborghinis and Ferraris. But most stopped at the long row of Emiras and Evoras and one inexplicable Europa S, displayed boldly along Bloor. Some had no idea what they were looking at or what a

Lotus was; some were knowledgeable and eager to show it.

Most people took pictures, either of Lotus or with Lotus—Lotus as scenic-selfie-backdrop. The majority took photos with their phones, often bright pink phones. Some videoed everything. A dedicated few with heavy camera bags, photographed the cars with big, black full-frame SLRs, sprouting long lenses, carefully setting up each shot oblivious to anything not in the viewfinder. In contrast to the crowds they looked serious & determined.

I did not quite fit any category but shared something with all of them. Here was a gift to see our cars as others see them and maybe as they see us. I stopped trying to photograph cars, a fool's errand when spectators crowd round, and started photographing people's reactions, which was more rewarding.

Michael Eddenden

PREVIOUS PAGE

The crowd at the Lotus row mid-afternoon.

OPPOSITE

Editor thinks deep thoughts. PHOTO DONNA ENG.

NEXT PAGE

Officially the *Show* starts at noon. This view of the Lotus row, barely visible through the crowd, was taken from construction scaffolding across the street at 11am.







ABOVE When I spotted the woman taking a photo of the couple posing with the Evora I immediately took a picture, as seen on the previous page. Enlarged on the monitor later, I saw she had filmed herself and as the backdrop behind her was a storefront covered in scaffolding, there were no cars, much less Lotus, in her story.

RIGHT A typical crowd: the parade of people displayed such variety that the accepted meaning of typical was contradicted.







Tall buildings shaded Bloor. Sunglasses weren't needed, which didn't stop people from wearing their shades.



All day a homeless man sat behind the rare **Lotus Europa S** (lower left corner). The dog's impeccable manners said something about the owner.



Two ways to photograph Lotus: *Photos of* vs. *Photos with*.





POSING

All selfies can seem alike. Some however displayed more individuality than was common.





LECTURE TIME

LEFT AND ABOVE

It's often derided as mansplaining but it could be more accurately described as an overwhelming urge based on the misguided assumption that the universe finds your hobby as fascinating as you do. This man stood before the blue Emira expounding on some aspect of Lotus to the woman in the leopard skin top for ages. He gestured continually to emphasize the import of his words. The crowd went unnoticed. They were in their own world: two conversations, his pauseless lecture and her unspoken gaze. She never looked at the car.



THE GAZE

Not everyone took pictures. Some, like the boy, gazed in silence. The photographer above, though equipped for his mission (see lens), stood rooted before the Emira, motionless, for a long time. I never saw him take a picture.



POSING
There were many dutiful spouses.





THIS PAGE

There were many Father & Son selfies. It was **Father's Day**. What memories will this evoke in thirty years?

NEXT PAGE

The CBC chose the Lotus row as the backdrop for their interviews.





END PART ONE CHRISTMAS 2025 LOTUSLETTER

GO TO PART TWO

PLEASE