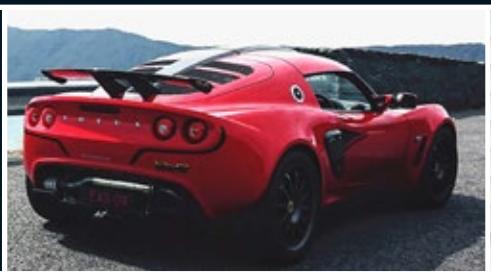
26/5 JUNE 2020 [$10]

LOTUS NOTES

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF LOTUS CLUB VICTORIA and LOTUS CLUB QUEENSLAND



2020

- Committed to making a difference: Petrina Astbury
- Waterfall Run in the Tropics
- The End of the Road, Peking to Paris, 2019
- Modernising the ‘daily’ driver

Print Post Approved 100001716

JUNE 2020
VOLUME 26 • ISSUE 5

FEATURES →

REGULARS →

Whilst we remain constrained by CoVid19 this plant is a perfect analogy for the human condition: even when its roots are in the dirtiest waters, the plant produces the most beautiful flower.

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Lotus Notes Magazine Editorial

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Queensland President's Report

by Steve Lennox

Here we are and it is June, the restrictions are lifting and we as a club are looking at getting activities up and running. This report is written in May and I have just had a couple of runs up Mt Glorious in the last few days, one with a small group of members. This went well although it was very busy, I thought just like 'peak hour'. Of course, Queensland Police are out in force making sure we all behave or betaxed.

Being out and about driving the Lotus is a promising sign that we can organise some day runs within the next month, albeit with the appropriate social distancing, group numbers and travel restrictions. Please check your email, the club website and Facebook for updates.

Ken is still proposing that we have the big overnight run sometime in September and plans are being formulated to do a reccie run late July. This is a great event and I urge all those who enjoy driving to participate. We explore great driving roads much further afield and get to socialise in the evenings at our stopovers.

At time of writing Queensland Raceways are opening in limited format, so we are expecting that as restrictions ease, racing and events, in particular the DTC, get back to normal. Morgan Park are reviewing their position and we will inform members when information is available. The expectation is that the 'B' Series will recommence at round 3 (4th & 5th July).

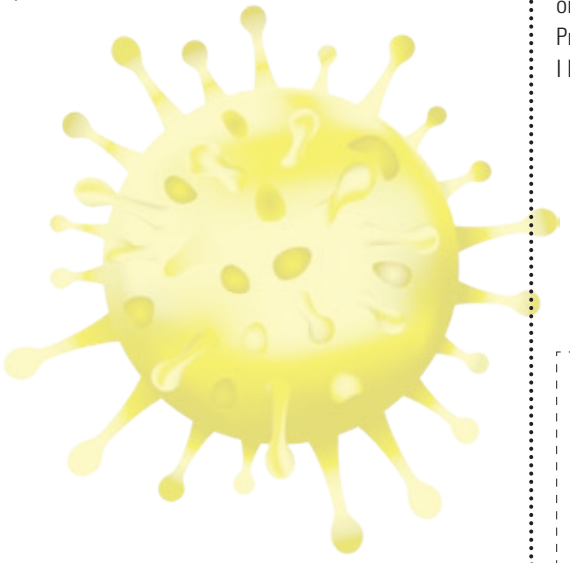
Lotus Club Queensland 25th Anniversary is this year and originally, we were looking at an event in June to coincide with the first meeting all those years ago. However, the plan is to take a 'rain check' and host an event later in the year when we can all get together.

Magazine content and stories are still coming through so please keep writing them. As we have no events please consider contributing your story on such things as why you are a Lotus enthusiast, restoration projects, or even your history in our club (as this is our 25th / Silver Anniversary).

I have concluded that I am not enjoying being part of this historic event. I'm sure that I will look back and remember these times, much like the 70s. A lot of time, little money and hanging around home.

Stay safe and wash your hands. (Thanks to Anastasia for this advice.)

Until next month.



Victoria ADDING Lightness

by Vicky Rowe

Although restrictions have started to ease, so much is still in a state of flux. At the time of writing the big question that remains is "what, and when, can club activities resume?"

Even though things might not return to the way they were before, it's exciting to think we may soon be able to hold an Early Morning Run (EMR) and return to the race track, to enjoy our marvellous cars the way they were intended.

Depending on what we're allowed to do and when, we may hold an anti-social EMR in June. Even then though we might need to split the group to avoid large group gatherings. Please be patient with us as we work out the safest way to proceed, especially if we're having to try something new.

One thing that we have discovered recently is that we can still get together in a virtual way, learning about special projects and special people from within our club. Many thanks to Neil Roberts whose 23B we got to see in great detail during the May session. Thanks also to cameraman Peter Murray for getting into all the nooks and crannies. Helping to draw out the story of how this 'tribute car' came to be was Peter Hill, who interviewed Neil during the session and helped to ensure the session was captivating. Thank you too, Peter.

Virtual meetings (so far) have been a great success. I agree with those that have provided feedback, the format feels more focused, more intimate and more informative than our face to face meetings. Perhaps we should keep them going in some sort of frequency, even when we are able to get together physically.

In the absence of any other guidance we're planning our June (Tuesday June 9th) virtual club meeting, heading to Lotus Melbourne. I'm sure we'll get to see and hear about the latest from Lotus during this meeting, but I'm especially looking forward to Peter Hill's interview with Mark O'Connor. If you haven't yet joined in on one of our zoom sessions then I encourage you to give it a try.

Our aim is to keep you informed on developments, so look out for President's emails. In the meantime I hope you stay well.

WELCOME

New Members

Gordon Dobie [Lotus Seven 1964]

Peter Lowry [Lotus Elan 1995]

LOTUS ELEVEN REPAIR

New Front Clam

by Alister Rees

This month considerable progress has been made on the manufacture of the new front clam for Ashton Roskill's Series One Eleven.

The reason a new front clam is being manufactured, is that it was not economically viable to repair the original to an acceptable level. Part of the Automotive Craftsmen philosophy is "nothing is impossible to repair", however economic reality must prevail, and sometimes it is more advantageous to build a new part.

Working with aluminium presents some unique challenges compared to steel, particularly 50-year-old aluminium that has been repaired before.

It is safe to say that with these classic hand-built cars from the sixties, most have had a few hits in their life, and if the previous repairs have been carried out by someone without an intimate knowledge of the intricacies of the material, this can present some challenges when the vehicle is involved in another shunt in the same area.

This was the case with Ashton's car, as earlier in its life it had a new section replaced from the leading edge to just behind the headlights. (The weld line can be seen just above the badge in photo 1). The quality of the weld leaves a little to be desired, and when these welds were dressed, quite a bit of material was removed in the surrounding area and the skin is very thin. After a detailed inspection there were several other areas where weld lines were beginning to fracture.

Another problem with this new front section that had been fitted, was the wing shapes were not symmetrical and the headlight pods were not correctly aligned. All these issues made the decision to make a new clam the only real option. All that remained was to sell this concept to the insurance assessor, which I am pleased to say we accomplished.

Traditionally, coachbuilding has been done over a timber buck or wire frame, however it is not always viable to make a timber buck for a one-off repair, and the coachbuilder does have other options to choose from.

In this case Adam elected to repair the damaged clam, and use this as the buck, which gives the added advantage that Ashton has the option to use the repaired clam for track events.

The most severe damage was to the RH front corner. To re-instate this, required many hours of working and unfolding the aluminium to carefully massage it back to shape. The LH side also sustained damage around the headlight area, and while not as serious, still required considerable time and skill to hand form the 50-year-old aluminium. The damaged areas were now restored to the point where the aluminium was back to a neutral state. (Photo 2)

To ensure the correct profile and shape were achieved, considerable research had been carried out using photographs from magazines and the internet to find the correct shape so this classic could be returned to the original design.

An obvious essential skill of a good coachbuilder is an excellent eye for line and detail, (far better than we mere mortals) and this is critical when working with compound curves and converging lines.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Once the original clam was repaired (taking 75 hours) a decision was made to use the LH side to make the patterns and profiles, as it was considered identical to the original shape. Using traditional templating methods combined with some modern materials, we were then able to copy the exact surface dimensions, panel lengths and join locations. This method is called the flexible shape pattern. As an added feature, the same templates and patterns can then be reversed and used on the opposite side to create a symmetrical part. (Photos 3 & 4)

From these patterns, 18 pieces of 5005 aluminium were then cut to size. (Photo 7)

Using the traditional wooden stump, blocking hammers and the English wheel, many hours were then spent forming each piece. Gauging the shape by hand and eye, then fitting each individual section to the templates.

With all 18 parts fabricated and defined, the next task is matching the sections with each other, taking two sections at a time, blending the shape into one another and fusion welding them into a single part. This weld line is then worked on the wheel to form a continuous even profile, and trial-fitted to the buck to check the form. A total of six pieces were then welded to form the new left front wing. (Photo 11)

Now sharp, precise and symmetrical, the iconic Series 1 Lotus Eleven shape was recognisable. The same process was then repeated for the right wing.

The next stage was to refine the shape of the centre bonnet skin. At first glance this would appear to be a relatively simple shape, but was, in fact, the most difficult section to manufacture.


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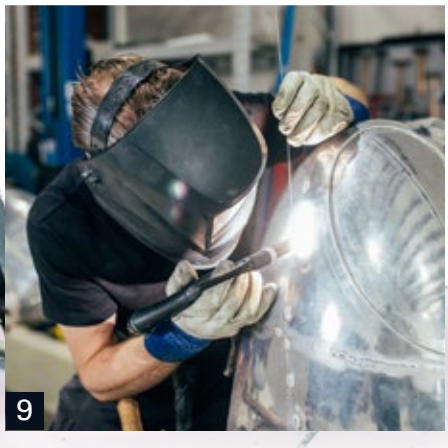
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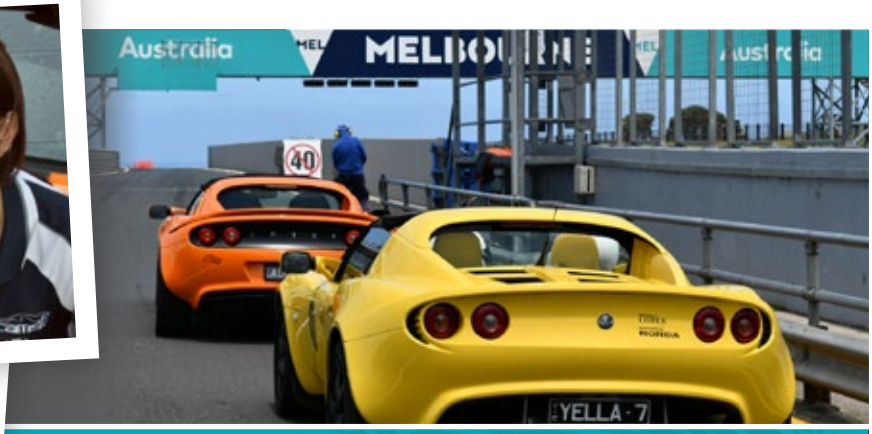
Having such a subtle amount of shape at the rear, then transitioning gradually to a full shape towards the nose of the car, provided a real challenge to achieve a consistent and even surface. For five full days (yes that's FIVE) Adam and Luke shaped this bonnet together on the wheel in complete synchronisation. With all the skill, attention to detail and patience, it still required three skins to be shaped to get the finished product you see here. (Photos 5 & 6)

Perfection is never achieved without effort, and with such a highly polished finish, the smallest ripple would be visible.

Now, time to join the left and right wings to the centre bonnet skin. This is the stage that will make or break the front clam fabrication. Using the 3D templates and marking out the exact trimming point, Adam slowly made the surgically accurate cuts that will be the final join of this month-long endeavour for perfection. With a final check of all profiles and dimensions, the tack welding and fusion process starts. If any stage of the process is skipped or miscalculated, this will have serious consequences on the finished product. After the three major parts are fused into one, it is very gratifying to see the end result with all major reference points aligning. (Photo 12)

Total labour to fabricate new front clam to this stage – 312 hours.

NEXT MONTH:
Finishing the New Front Clam



Committed to making a difference
PETRINA ASTBURY

by Vicky Rowe

Many of us volunteer our time to help sporting, social and community-based organisations. We're likely to fit it in here and there, avoiding being overburdened. However, there is a breed of volunteer that go beyond the call, committed to the task and driven to make a difference.

The MSCA (The Marque Sports Car Association of Victoria) is a typical grassroots motorsport organisation, running regular amateur motorsport events at Sandown, Philip Island, Winton, and The Bend (SA). The running of the MSCA is very slick thanks to a group of volunteers committed to delivering friendly, safe and well-run events. They're also known for actively encouraging and supporting motorsport fledglings.

As with all highly functional groups, there's clear roles and responsibilities and a shared purpose and vision. In this case it's also a close-knit family group, with Secretary, Petrina Astbury, working hand in hand with the President, her husband Bruce.

Encouraged by her father (also a volunteer), Petrina got hooked on motorsport 20 years ago, driving her Honda CRX (her first love). From that point on she arrived early for every track event to manage the driver check-in process, successfully combining essential tasks with the fun and rivalry of competing against her family and friends.

Romance blossomed for Petrina and Bruce whilst literally in the chase. No doubt a few sparks were flying as she fought hard, eventually succeeding in beating Bruce in her PRB Clubman. More recently she's made room for another love, her supercharged Lotus Elise in Chrome Orange, which she says is a track car pretending to be road car. The Elise suits Petrina perfectly as she can drive it to the track, fang it around all day, then sedately drive it home again.

In all the ways that Petrina has contributed to the MSCA over the years there is no better demonstration of her skills, passion and commitment than at the MSCA 'Come n Try' days. Starting nearly five years ago with the intent of introducing novices to the track experience in a safe environment, these comprehensive driver training days are only a fraction of the cost of professionally run courses.

Maybe it's Petrina's upbringing, or her caring nature, but it's no surprise to learn that she is a qualified counsellor who works for a prestigious corporate mental health provider in the role of Executive Director at People, Culture and Learning. Petrina is articulate, highly personable and engaging, with a genuine interest in everyone's wellbeing, and these skills are well utilised when she is coaching and mentoring stressed novice drivers, challenging themselves at speed on the track.

At 'Come n Try' days the MSCA team matches each novice driver with a carefully selected coach – one that is experienced, calm, patient, decisive, understanding, and able to communicate clearly. The coaches have the understanding that developing basic skills needs to come before speed. To that end, drivers start their training in the classroom and then return to the classroom throughout the day to share what they have learned and to reinforce key concepts.

Very proud of the driver program, Petrina states that many hundreds of novices have experienced the program in Victoria and South Australia to date, including one driver who is now racing in the Super 3 Touring Car series. She loves to watch the transformation in drivers, from terrified beginner, to confident driver, ready and willing to take up the sport.

Providing a non-threatening environment, the program is perfect for women interested in trying motorsport for the first time. As Petrina explains "It's one of the few sports where women are not disadvantaged because of their physicality". Petrina adds "Motorsport is a mental and physical sport that requires focus, courage and highly tuned motor skills." She describes how you need to be present and in the moment, and aptly refers to it as her 'meditation'. No doubt Petrina appreciates the mental health benefits of quieting the mind and pushing yourself to 'go beyond' self-set limits.

As a driving force behind the success of the MSCA and the 'Come n Try' program Petrina is attracting much-deserved attention. In 2016 she received a Service Award from CAMS for the development of grassroots motorsport. Then in 2019 she was nominated for the Victorian Honour Roll of Women as a Local Champion, which recognises achievements, and contributions to the sport over the years.

People like Petrina are not your average volunteer. They're committed to making a difference. They understand what it takes, surround themselves with people who have a variety of skills, celebrate every small success to fuel their energy, and take satisfaction from a job well done.

The good news is that even just a small amount of volunteering can be satisfying. You can start out small with an interest group, like a car club. You'll likely connect with like-minded people which is always fun. Take it a bit further and you may develop some enthusiasm and discover ways to make a difference too!

New Year's Drive
Waterfall Run in the Tropics

story & photos: Drew Dundas

Sunday morning saw a contingent of two Lotuses, (John and Drew) along with one Mini Cooper S (Kaine) meet at Green Fields coffee shop on the Cairns Esplanade to catch up on the 2020's new stories and set off on an adventure to the Atherton Tablelands.

We started with a leisurely drive up the Gillies Range and drove onwards towards Atherton for another coffee & chat stop.

There were some comments about one of the cars, 'Driving Miss Daisy', but it fell on deaf ears.

After a short and scenic drive through the historic town of Herberton, (note to self, drive this road again), we were treated to sweeping bends that negotiated their way around large eucalypt trees that quickly gave way to tropical rainforest. Turning right onto the Kennedy Highway, we found some challenging corners, past Mt Hypipamee and onwards to the Gentle Annie turn off. This road provided picture perfect panoramic views of the tablelands as we descended onto the waterfall circuit that leads to the infamous Milla Milla falls.

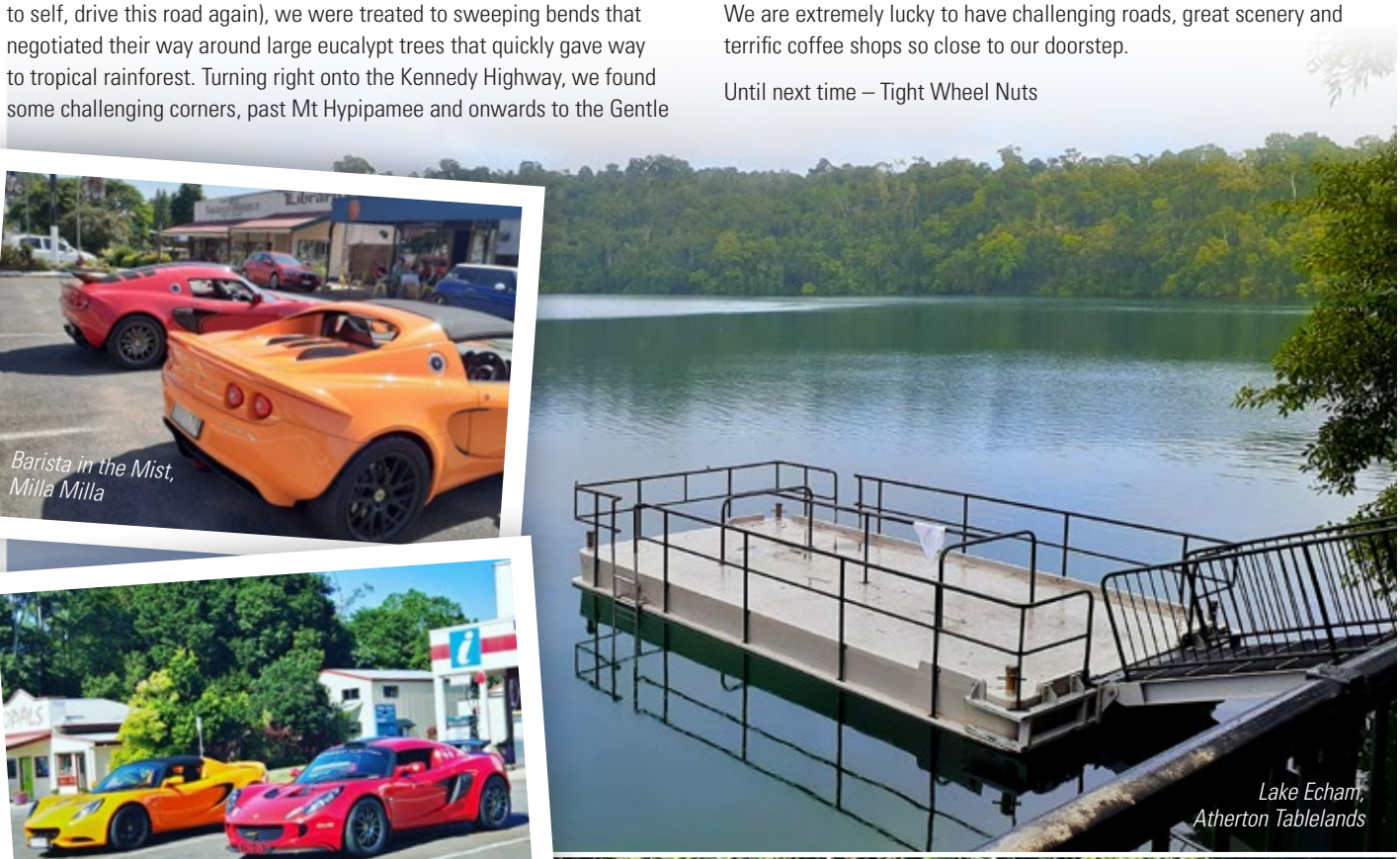
Time out for a pic at Milla Milla falls and then onwards to support local business in Milla Milla with yet another coffee at 'Barista in the Mist', located in the main street.

After a delicious break, the next stop was Lake Eacham where the crew separated with some having a quick swim in the Lake while the others returned to Cairns.

We are extremely lucky to have challenging roads, great scenery and terrific coffee shops so close to our doorstep.

Until next time – Tight Wheel Nuts

Barista in the Mist, Milla Milla



Lake Echam, Atherton Tablelands

Awaiting the start, Great Wall

by Giles Cooper

The End of the Road

Peking to Paris, 2019

When all is said and done, the Peking to Paris Enduro motor challenge can be broken down into three sections.

DAYS 1–18: Rough roads of China, Mongolia, and Kazakhstan
DAYS 19–26: The long slog across Russia
DAYS 27–36: Europe.

Days 1–18 are by far the toughest, and it is here that the event is won or lost. A serious breakdown or other delay in this section, and you will never catch up the time lost.

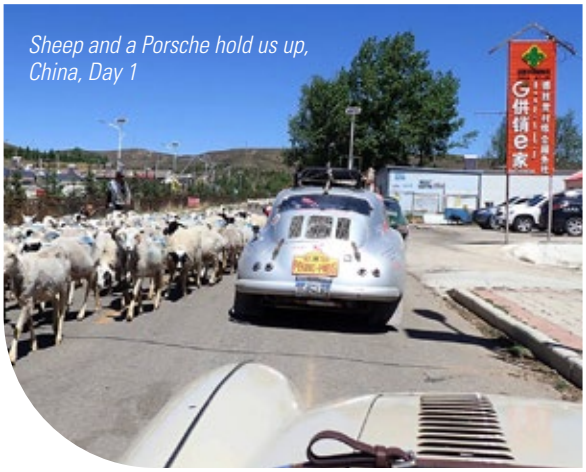
Days 19–26 are just one long day after another travelling across Russia. You still need a good, reliable car, but the (slightly) smoother roads mean that you are not beating the car to pieces quite as much any longer. Finally, the run across Europe is relatively easy, as long as you still have a good car – the biggest issue is often the busy traffic!

So after over two years of preparation, how did Gidget perform on the rally itself? The results speak for themselves :

29th overall (out of 72 cars in Classic)
16th in our class (over 2 litre)
7th outright overall in ALL timed tests
5th outright in the European Cup (From Finland onwards)

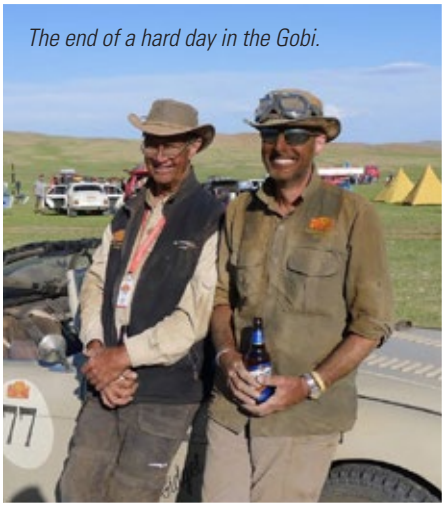
And, most importantly, she made it to Paris without being towed or trucked.

After starting at the Great Wall north of Beijing on 2nd June, it was two long days, mostly on excellent roads, heading towards Mongolia.


Sheep and a Porsche hold us up, China, Day 1

In full flight across the Gobi Desert

Choose best route in Gobi



The end of a hard day in the Gobi.

One of the better bridges in the Gobi

Once in Mongolia, the route got a lot tougher as we headed to Ulaan Bataar. We made it there without too much mechanical drama, although we realised that we had too much weight on board with all our spares, and if we were ever going to make it to Paris, we would need to jettison some of that.

The next five days after Ulaan Bataar were simply incredible. Five nights of camping, and on several of the days we didn't see any tarmac roads at all, and even had to organise tankers to deliver fuel to the camps because we passed no fuel stations during the day! This required us to travel all day without refueling, which, with our 30-litre auxiliary tank added to our 45-litre main tank, was achieved. However the rough roads took their toll in other ways. On day six, out from Ulaan Bataar, we hit some very rough roads, which eventually broke our right rear leaf spring. Luckily one of the sweep mechanics was nearby, and we got it fixed well enough so we could limp into camp, where one of our spare main springs (which we had mounted in place of our bumpers) was fitted during the evening.

Day 9 saw some terrible weather as we climbed rocky mountain trails to almost 3000 metres, the combination causing many cars major problems. We only made it to the top of the mountain by traversing backwards and forwards across the side of the hill, as we simply didn't have enough power to go straight up. But many other cars who were going to eventually beat us in the overall results, did have to be towed up the hill. We are proud to say that, unlike many others, Gidget was never towed or trucked once during the entire event – she covered it all under her own steam. However, the traversing meant that we were off the already rocky trail, and picking a path between larger rocks, unable to slow down too much in case we didn't make it to the top. But we made it to camp, which, that night, was beside the shores of the scenic Achit Lake, only to find there were millions of flying insects sharing our campsite – fortunately they were not the biting kind, just extremely annoying!

After a very long border crossing out of Mongolia into Russia, with many broken cars having to be pushed or towed across, we drove a surprisingly scenic road through the Altai mountains. However, the last 60 kms into camp were again off road, and very rough and rocky, and not long after the start of the dirt, we broke yet another rear leaf spring. Fortunately Ashton had learned how to fix it from our previous breakage, and once jury-rigged, we limped to camp, thus incurring considerable time penalties, but ensuring that we kept going. Once in camp, our second spare leaf was fitted by the mechanics. We no longer had any spare springs, so we had to drive with care until we could get something better made up.

The long 550km Day 11 saw us battling clouds of hatching butterflies in the forests, and coping with big crowds of enthusiastic people every time we stopped. At the end of the day, we had to get a local welder to fix some cracks that had appeared in the rear chassis, and for the next couple of days we drove in "preservation" mode, avoiding most of the rough special

Spanner check at Camp 3, Gobi Desert

Fans requesting freebies during lunch stop, Russia

stages despite incurring big penalties – the target was now very definitely "to reach Paris at all costs". This approach was being taken by an increasing number of competitors as their cars continued to show signs of wear and tear from the extreme conditions being encountered every day. We finally made it into Novosibirsk on Day 14, and a (misleadingly named) Rest Day, which would allow us time to fix the rear springs and some of the other issues encountered. New main leaves were manufactured using a much thicker leaf (from a truck?) cut to length, and then the eyes from our current springs were cut off and welded and riveted onto the ends of these new leaves. Fingers crossed, but they certainly gave us a little more ride height, and reducing the rubbing of the tyres on the inner guards every time we hit a bump. While in the workshop, we also straightened out our 6mm under-tray with a sledge hammer, replaced a headlight we had lost somewhere on the road (with a unit from a Lada), and re-tapped the gearbox steady bolts which had also come loose.

Day 15 saw the weather turn very wet and cold, and after a stop in a village to help the locals celebrate the start of spring, we were set loose on a VERY wet, muddy, and slippery timed stage, and advised by the organisers to "be careful". Unfortunately the wet mud got into the electrics, requiring repeated stops to dry them out, but we eventually made it to the time control. With both us and the car filthy and wet, we then crossed the border into Kazakhstan, eventually reaching Astana where Gidget (and us) got washed, and we fitted a rubber glove over the distributor to help keep future moisture out, perhaps a day or two too late!

Shortly after leaving Astana, we had clutch problems, and after trying to adjust it, realised the issue was more serious. Despite having fitted a new assembly prior to the start, the abrasive mud from two days ago had basically destroyed the throw out bearing, leaving Ashton unable to de-clutch. Twelve or so other cars had similar issues after the same muddy stage, and this necessitated push starts, extreme measures when driving in traffic, and extensive overseas phone calls to locate spare parts and eventually get them hand-delivered to Ufa, the next rest day, three days away. In the meantime we avoided some of the rougher timed stages, and generally drove as required to enable us to reach Ufa intact.

Finally we reached Ufa, and many cars underwent extensive repairs after the last 18 days of stunning, yet destructive roads, across some of the most desolate scenery in the world. Upon removal, there was little left of our throw out bearing, and Ashton toiled all day to get the replacement parts installed. On the way home from the workshop, an electrical problem left him briefly stranded, but seemed to resolve itself, and was forgotten. We had Russia to cross – four days of non-stop, long-distance driving to St Petersburg.

Shortly after leaving Ufa, the electrical issue resurfaced, and this time did not correct itself. Unable to locate our bag containing circuit testers, we were struggling to resolve the problem until Doug and Mike McWilliams stopped to help, and eventually found the (original Lucas) ignition switch was at fault! Since this was not actually required due to our revised wiring, we short circuited around it and eventually were on our way, albeit once again behind time. This was compounded by a navigational error when we went 50kms east instead of west, but eventually we got back on track, both location- and time-wise, and completed a lap of the Kazan Ring race track for one of the stages.

The remaining days to our final rest day in St Petersburg were long (600km) sections, and en route our starter motor also decided to pack up, another gremlin from that very muddy stage, but probably compounded by the clutchless starts made using the starter motor to get us moving.


Superb road through the Altai Mountains, Eastern Russia

Flat out in Poland


The office

Ashton managed to fix this in St Petersburg, and the following day we finally headed into Finland and Europe proper. Delightful scenery, and incredible forest special stages – they know how to enjoy their motorsport in Finland! An easy day was then spent mostly on the ferry across to Estonia, before we headed down through the Baltic States, with several special stages on local tracks, where Ashton was able to have some fun now he had both a clutch and a starter motor! Three days through Poland, with ongoing special stages, plus being stopped by a local policeman for going a little too fast through his village. He commented that he had never stopped an Australian car for speeding before, and after a few apologies and promises to never speed again, we were allowed to leave with our wallets intact!

Eventually into Germany, and the traffic on our route was insane, which, when added to the increasing summer temperatures, made for some trying days. A visit to Wolfsburg was interspersed with visits to circuits for timed tests, and inbetween we had to fix both another electrical problem (when the distributor points stopped opening) and then a loose banjo on the bottom of a carb, that pumped fuel out extensively before we fixed it.

Then it was on into Belgium, with spirited and complicated Tulip map runs through the scenic back roads of the Flanders Fields, all the time urged on by increasingly large crowds who come out to cheer us on. On reaching Ypres on our last night on the road, not only were the crowds in the car park beside the Cathedral enormous, but we were also welcomed by Phillipe Deckers from the Belgian Austin Healey Club. The atmosphere was certainly becoming more relaxed as we neared Paris, and the realisation was finally setting in that we may just reach the end successfully.

Day 36, our last day, saw an almost parade-like drive in through France to Paris, however Paris kept one last test for us all – heavy traffic in high temperatures meant that both crews and cars suffered, and the delays getting in to Place Vendôme put a bit of a damper on the finish. However, we got there fairly early, with some 20 or more family and friends waiting there to greet us both. Although, to be honest, everything was somewhat of a blur as we struggled to just "stop" after 36 continuous days of competition, across some of the roughest terrain in the world, plus, of course, more than two years of non-stop car preparation just to get us to the start line. We, and Gidget, had made it to Paris.

The cars were collected by truck that evening while we were at our Prize-giving dinner, and were shipped back to their various destinations around the world, with ours arriving in Australia in early September. After some ten days of delays we picked her up from the port where, surprisingly (considering a totally flat battery after the shippers had left ignition switches on), she started almost straight away (with a little help from an extra battery), and was able to be driven home.

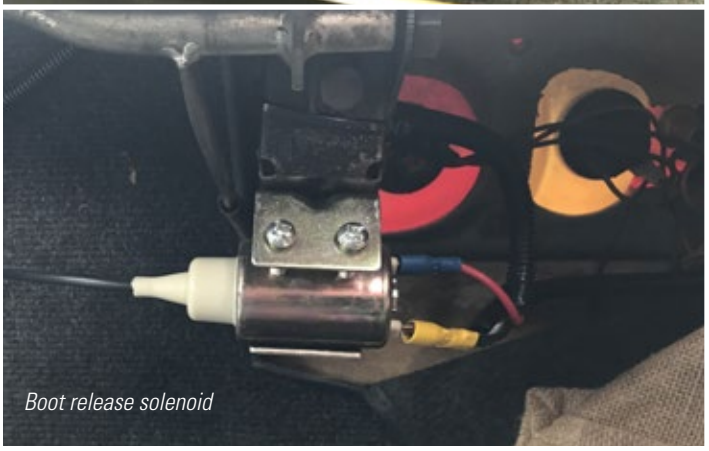
An Austin Healey had made it from Peking to Paris, despite many people's doubts. The Great Adventure was over. But the memories will last a lifetime.

Outside St Martin's Cathedral, Ypres, Belgium

Modernising the ‘daily’ driver

by Jeremy Worthington

Boot release relay and release cable attachment



Boot release solenoid

Control unit tucked against front LH wheel arch inner

For the last four years, my 1985 Turbo Esprit has been my only car. I have motorbikes and we have a Wrangler Jeep, but that is my partner’s car and she commutes in it, so the Esprit has been on the road more regularly – within the restrictions of the club permit.

Whilst not a wildly practical car, I haven’t felt too restricted when going to business meetings, shopping trips and leisure outings, but I did miss some practicalities of more modern vehicles, so I debated long and hard and then made some reversible additions for practicality.

The two major additions have been central locking and cruise control, and I’d like to share how these were done. Credit for doing all the hard installation and making the system work goes to Somerville Auto Electrics.

The central locking was the most simple as the connection of drive motors to the door latches is a straightforward process. I didn’t add key cylinder switches as the intent is to use the remote every time, but I wanted remote opening of the tailgate as removing the key from the ignition was an inconvenience and I don’t like to leave the handle unlocked. The system I ordered was a two-button remote system from Autostrada.

VAE317-650 remote entry system, with immobiliser and optional boot release function (small button) $175; 2 x 2 wire door actuators with fitting kits $25 each; boot release solenoid kit $45. All these prices include GST but not freight.

The boot release required a little ingenuity, but the existing mechanism was designed to include a release lever in the cabin on some models, so it has a lazy lever. That meant the solenoid could be connected to the release mechanism directly and operate even when the handle is locked. The solenoid and its relay are mounted to the uprights that support the deck lid mechanism, with a direct fused feed from the battery.

There is also a release button in the passenger side, which, for security reasons, is partially hidden by the door when it’s closed, as it’s permanently live.

The control unit fits in the nose, and additional feed and earth lines were run from the rear to the nose to ensure consistent supply. I didn’t use the alarm or immobiliser functionality of the unit.

The cruise control was much more difficult.

I investigated a motorcycle rpm sensor that fits onto the right-angle drive on the gearbox, but compatibility to a cruise control module was unclear. My mechanical speedo needle was jumping at low rpm (potentially due to the right-angle drive unit) so I also didn’t want to rely on a possibly faulty source. I opted to replace the mechanical speedo with a digital one (a matching Smiths gauge) and to add a rotational speed pickup to the drivetrain that would feed both.

The speedo and pickup came from Caerbont Automotive Instruments, the UK based manufacturer of Smiths instruments. It was an SNT5372-07CB. Price, including Carriage to Australia was £205.15. The sender is EMP34-1KIT (£55.80). This is a simple inductive device in the shape of an M8 bolt x 33mm, which reacts to any ferrous material.

The cruise control also came from Autostrada and is their CC-UM01LH (universal – electric operation) unit costing $485. It has a Bowden cable operation so the servo can be mounted remotely. A vacuum driven version wasn't a viable operation on a turbo engine car.

The speed pickup is a series of rare earth magnets bonded to the left hand inner cv joint, and an intricate bracket to securely hold a hall effect sensor in close proximity.

The cruise control unit is mounted on the wooden panel over the left fuel tank, but beneath the deck cover so it's hidden from view. The cable exits via the side trim and is very discrete. The outer is terminated on a modified throttle bracket and the inner runs alongside the existing throttle cable. Very neat work, and a massive thanks to Andy at Somerville Auto Electric for achieving this sympathetic installation.

There is no lazy lever mechanism on the throttle control, and there isn't one available to modify, so this meant that both the throttle cable, and the cruise cable had to be attached to the same lever. Whichever was operating (throttle or cruise) would then cause the second cable to go slack.

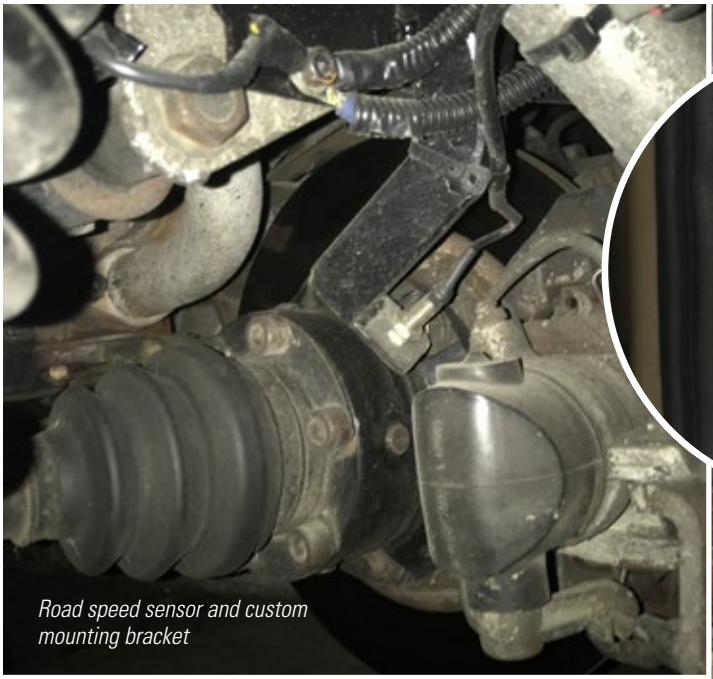
This caused some issues with the first installation, as the cable from the cruise had to be attached using a D-shaped shackle, which would catch on parts of the intake manifold resulting in the throttle sticking open. This has since been replaced with a loop of bicycle brake cable which has (so far) eliminated the problem.

If I can't buy/design a lazy lever arrangement, then a possible future modification will be to investigate adding a spring behind the terminator of the throttle cable inner, so that the slack is taken up by the spring when the cruise is activated (which must therefore be weaker than the throttle return spring on the carb). A flat spring lever (like half a pair of tweezers) would be suitably flat when compressed…watch this space.

The cruise lever was attached below the indicator stalk on the column and is a very simple (albeit slightly non-intuitive) operation. It all works beautifully and makes freeway cruising much more pleasurable (and less prone to inadvertent speeding fines).

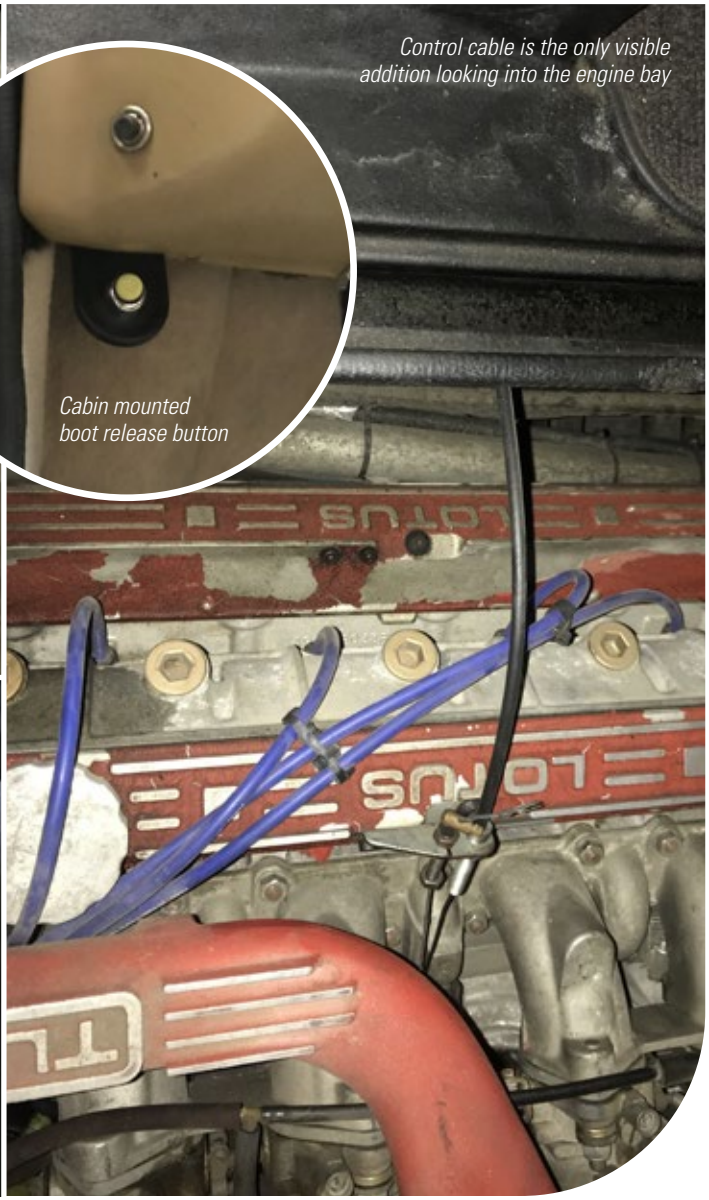
The combination of modifications has made the Esprit much more convenient, and all have been done in a manner that can be reversed should the car need to be put back to original condition.

I do have to confess that the labour required to do the modifications was considerable, and Andy likely under-charged me for the work. However, I am delighted with the results and the hours spent fettling could be avoided on a copy installation, so Andy and I could document an installation guide if anyone else was interested in the same upgrades.



Road speed sensor and custom mounting bracket

Cruise control stalk position



Control cable is the only visible addition looking into the engine bay

Cabin mounted boot release button

Elise at the Rex lookout

Exige DIY Shopping

FEBRUARY DRIVE

Rex Range and Omelettes

Armour and artillery museum

story & photos: Drew Dundas

Sunday morning saw the same three suspects and their crew, meet at Green Fields coffee shop on the Cairns Esplanade to catch up on the past month's stories and then plan an adventure north to Port Douglas and surrounds.

We set off on a leisurely drive along the coast road north of Cairns towards Port Douglas. Eyes on the road as we drive past the nudie beach and then a few sideways glances at the spectacular views of oceans and beaches that this stretch of road offers. Gotta love Far North Queensland.

Driving past the Port Douglas turn off, we turned left before Mossman and strangely found ourselves on a short, winding and exhilarating drive up the Rex Range. Stopping only at the top to take in the views with a few local bikers who were also out enjoying the morning.

Back down the range again, twice the fun on the way down, and a stop in Port Douglas at Café Ziva. Talk was split between cars, coffee and just what makes their omelettes so delicious. Reverse direction along the coast road and back to Cairns.

Might need to consider a small fishing rod for the next drive north.

Exige Rex Lookout

One Man's Need to Win

story & photos:
Ian Simmons

EDITOR'S NOTE

Ian Simmons has been a member of LCV since 2001. He owns an Amaroo Clubman and an Elan M100. He and his partner, Sonia Goubran, are regulars at the club's early morning runs and social events. Ian is one of the pack-and-post team who help deliver your *Lotus Notes* magazine.

This is Ian's story about his early attempts at motorsport.

The Mintinni

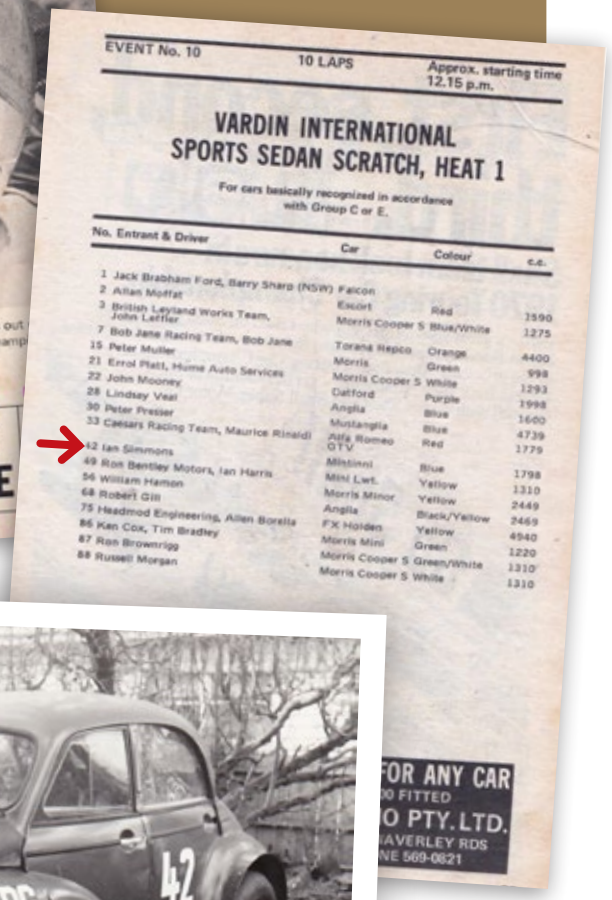
The Mintinni: A Morris Minor four-door sedan, heavily modified to run in the Sports Sedan Class of the '70's.

In my first and only professional motor race, I started in the second half of the field. With a duff tacho, and being unprepared for the deafening sound of 18 race cars all in one place, I stalled. I left the grid in last place but managed to round up six cars in the first four or five laps. In my attempt to make up ground from the start line, I had snapped the 'A' frame that located the rear axle (a Chapman favourite). This, in turn, let the inside wheel spin on each corner and the engine to over rev. I was lapped by Bob Jane and Barry Sharp on lap 5, and on lap 6 the engine cried enough. On entering Repco corner there was an almighty bang followed by relative silence and a distinct lack of forward motion.

The officials could not find any oil on the track or around the car (damn Valvoline). It had simply evaporated under stress. My dad came trotting down from the esses and called out, "what's the matter Joe?" I replied "It's #%?&@$", to which the crowd on the embankment behind him emitted an enormous Bronx Cheer! Exit one embarrased father.

The old MGB 'B' Series engine was totally destroyed with gaping holes in both sides of the block. The only salvageable item was the 42mm Weber carburettor, which later saw service on my MG Midget. I did hang onto the old Wade camshaft and one con rod and piston to use as garage art. The previous owner of the Mintinni had told me that Peter Brock had track tested the car for him at Winton earlier on, and had assured it him that it went like a bomb. Oh, how right he was.

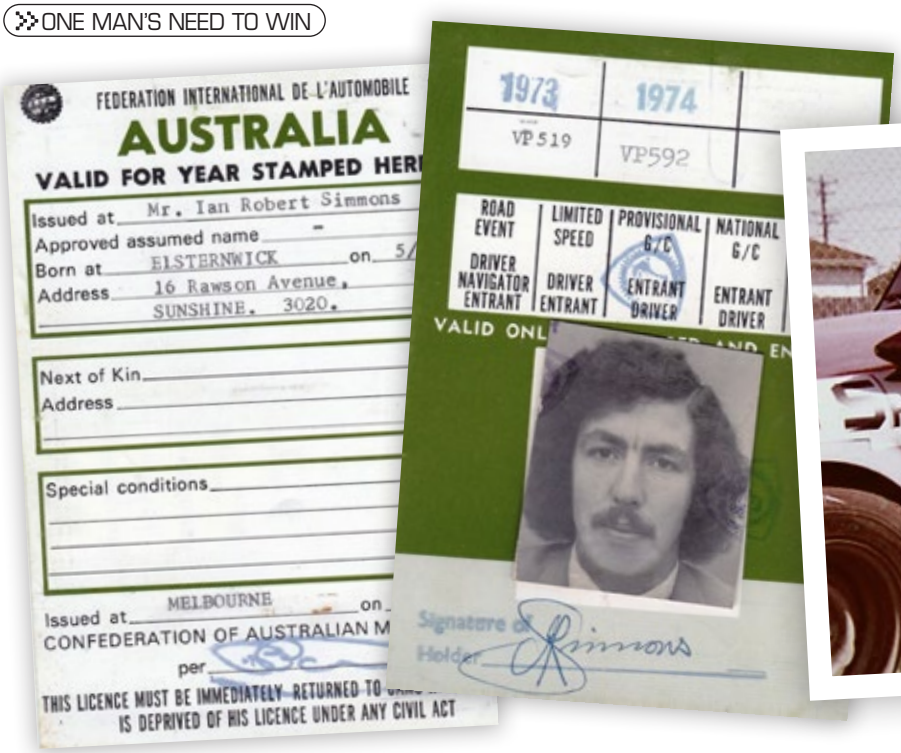
The Wade camshaft had suffered a hefty vee-shaped kink in it. Wade Camshafts Pty Ltd were at 27 Wells Rd, Oakleigh, Victoria. George Wade (1913–1997) was ex-Repco, and a supplier to



Calder race programme 1971

The Minitinni back home and in disgrace

MG Midget



Cams Licence

MG Midget

Brabham F1. Wade Cams ceased trading 28th February 2014. A great shame after 52 years in the business. A lesser quality product would have sheared in two according to my National 'C' class champion drag racing mate, such was the catastrophic damage to the rest of the engine.

One MOWOG Piston had a few chips taken out of it and the con rod had a mighty bend in it. However, both were remarkably complete given that the crankshaft and the block were totally destroyed.

So, what to do with my little-used CAMS licence? I know, I'll hillclimb my MG Midget!

While I did manage to take home a few minor club awards as fastest Sprite/Midget in hillclimbs and sprints, there was never any hope of beating the Clubman cars that were allowed to run in our class due to the small number of entrants being unable to form a class of their own.

OOPS!

I had a road accident.

After a 12 month delay, I won the court case, had the car repaired and then sold it to get married.

Maybe I could design and build a race car.

In 1990, the school that my daughters attended, Mt Lilydale Catholic College, decided to hold a number of events in recognition of 'Mercy Day'. The main event was to be a Grand Prix race. Well, if Adelaide could have a Grand Prix, why not Melbourne. The cars could be manufactured with the help of family and friends – each car was to be piloted by two students. Our car was drawn up on my garage floor in true British style, and manufactured from the latest hi-tech materials – corrugated cardboard, wood glue and gaffer tape. The design included front wings and an adjustable rear aerofoil. Well, it got adjusted when some dropkick thought he could sit on it!

We were very fortunate in being allocated two light-weight, very athletic and well-coordinated pilots. This proved to be a crucial factor as many competitors managed to get themselves tangled up, and crashed out of the race at any number of the corners on the tight and twisty track.

Our girls were fastest in practice, won their heat and were red hot favourites to win the final. However, they were disqualified on a religious technicality for overtaking a team of two nuns early in the final. Who was to know this was a mortal sin?

After attending confession, a holy decree was passed and we were awarded "Best Engineered Entry" in the race. At last, I had won something!

And then I built an Amaroo Clubman and joined Lotus Club Victoria.

Sometime later I bought a Lotus Elan M100 to keep the Amaroo company.

The trophy

Lotus 23 at Le Mans

Chapman's Revenge

by Peter R Hill


Clark Lotus 23 Nurburgring


Clark Lotus 23 Nurburgring

Photo: Getty Images

The subject of our well attended Zoom-based clubnight at Neil Roberts' shed on May 12 was his Lotus 23B "tribute". There was interest in the saga of Lotus entering two 23s for the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 1962, only for the organisers to go out of their way to have the cars banned.

The following story, by Sean Smith from *Bespoke*, a Kiwi magazine I write for, provides a view of the debacle and subsequent events.

In 1962, the diminutive Lotus 23 gave the racing world a kick in the seat of its pants. Making its entrance at the Nürburgring, the 1,498cc racer, with Jim Clark at the wheel, left cars with four times the horsepower in its rearview mirror. The first lap was run in the rain. By the end of lap one Clark was 27 seconds ahead of Dan Gurney in a Porsche, adding more and more seconds each lap until the track dried. At the end of that first lap the Lotus team had assumed that there must have been an accident that had delayed the rest of the field of Porsches, Aston Martins and Ferraris.

Sadly, a cracked exhaust manifold allowed fumes into the cockpit, and after eleven laps (154 miles) Clark crashed out after being overcome. But the car was showing signs of being a world-beater.

That same year, two Lotus 23s were entered in the 24 Hours of Le Mans. One had a 742cc aluminium-block DOHC Coventry Climax FWMC, with drivers Les Leston and Tony Shelly, and another, with a one-litre iron block pushrod Cosworth Mk III, driven by Jim Clark and Trevor Taylor.

They didn't get through scrutineering. Infractions were heaped upon them, one after another. Windscreen too low, fuel tank too big, insufficient ground clearance, no spare wheel. Issues were immediately taken care of, and even when the French made note of the different number of studs on the front and rear wheels (six on the rear and four on the front) Lotus had a four-stud rear designed and machined overnight and hand-delivered to the track the next day. Again, they were rejected. Lotus engineer Mike Costin was willing to show calculations that the four-stud set-up was safe. No go!

The team remained at Le Mans and supported an Elite driven by David Hobbs and Frank Gardner. It won the 1.3 litre GT class and the Index of Performance.

Post-race, the ACO admitted their mistake for not allowing the cars to run, even when cars with similar issues were allowed. Colin Chapman and the team were offered financial compensation. Chapman gave the ACO a dollar amount, was refused, and then stated, "Lotus will never race at Le Mans again!"

Chapman came to the conclusion the whole debacle was caused by one man, Frenchman René Bonnet, who was the odds-on favourite for the Index of Thermal Efficiency award with his entries and may have, behind the scenes, kept the potent 23s from giving him a run for his money.

Chapman was introduced to the founder of the famous French Renault Alpine, John Rédélé, by Swiss journalist and friend, Gérard ("Jabby") Crombac, a Lotus driver and strong Lotus supporter. It was Rédélé's dream to beat Bonnet for the Index of Thermal Efficiency. Together Chapman and Lotus might join together with John Rédélé and his Alpine company to defeat the cars of René Bonnet. Was revenge on Chapman's mind?

Chapman asked Len Terry, who had designed the 23's chassis, to create a two-seat prototype based on the 23 for John Rédélé. The chassis design fell afoul of the new 1963 regulations, so French designer Richard Bouleau proposed a steel backbone design to replace the original structure, and the progenitor of a long line of racing Alpines, the M63, was born.

At the test weekend for the '63 race the M63 had set a new lap record for under 1 litre cars. In the race, an accident and two mechanical failures thwarted Alpine's '63 plans, but the performances had been promising. In '64, M64, chassis #1711 (with unofficial support from Lotus) was first in the 1150cc class and won the Index of Thermal Efficiency. In a single package, a win for Chapman (Lotus co-design), Alpine (manufacturer), Renault, and Gordini (engine). They had taken the fight to Bonnet and won.

A LITTLE LOTUS 23 HISTORY

The Lotus 23 was based on the Type 22 Formula Junior single-seater. When it was introduced at the 1962 Racing Car Show it had Cosworth Ford 109E 1097cc power with a claimed 100bhp at 7,400rpm. It came with a Renault or VW gearbox. A Hewland five speed was listed as an option. It weighed 401Kgs.

The Type 23 became 23B when the Lotus/Harry Mundy designed twin-cam was installed. The car that Clark had raced at the Nürburgring in June '62 was actually a twin-cam. It was the production version of this car that became the Lotus 23B. Because of strengthening of the chassis to handle the extra power the weight had increased to 431Kgs. It was the last small capacity, pure sports racer designed by Chapman. Later sports racers were modified road cars.

THE EUROPA MANN

PART 15

by Richard Mann

May 2020 sees us still in lock-down and enjoying a more relaxed and less hectic lifestyle. Remember when everything had to be done, and done NOW?

May 2019 was a bit like that. Krishnan Pasupathi and I had been admiring his beautiful S2 Elan, and its slightly tired paintwork was starting to get the better of him.

KP: "I want to paint the Elan. Give it a quick blow over"
RM: "Err, rightio. What colour?"
KP: "Medici Blue"
RM: "Excellent"
KP: "And the gearbox just sh*t itself"
RM: "Err, nasty"
KP: "…and the oil leaks need fixing"
RM: "Err, it's a Lotus, but it could be improved"
KP: "And I want to tidy the engine bay"
RM: "Err, sure"
KP: "And I want to do the dash and tidy up some wiring"
RM: "Err, no problems"
KP: "Will you help me?"
RM: "Of course. When were you thinking of doing it? "
KP: "Right now. Ev's away for 3 weeks, so that's plenty of time isn't it?"
RM: "WTF?!! You'd better get cracking!"

With the intensity of a magnifying glass focused on a gum leaf, Krishnan snapped into action, donned his zip up coveralls, and buzzed off the old paint. It was a monumental day's work, but it revealed an amazingly straight and original 55-year-old body, with surprisingly few cracks, and just one previous repair to the RH rear guard. The bonnet was never a good fit and looked like it had been run over by a Mack truck.

KP: "I'll just bog it up for now!"
RM: "better buy a BIG tin of bog"

It was time for me to don the coveralls and attack the cracks! Grind 'em out, fill 'em up with glass, grind 'em back smooth.

Glass repairs underway

The next day


George's car in the Lotus Position


A bit spotty. This is pre- "Car-Owner virus" days


It looks all white to me!


In goes the famous Elan "Twink"

The engine and gearbox were removed, and things were progressing nicely. I was in the process of enclosing my carport area to double as a body repair shop and paint booth, so the Elan "christened" the space and duly emerged in stunning Medici Blue. The fab thing with any early Lotus is the lightness of the bodywork. George's car (like all Lotus) had suffered the ravages of time and needed a good old scraping of the keel. With a few helping hands it was a simple task to turn it upside down for the required attention.

Prior to being in this position, the shell had been sent off to the bead blasting man for a tidy up. Fifty-plus years of old paint, dirt, grease and grime were blasted away to leave a fabulously clean and translucent shell. This shell is by far the lightest Europa I've ever worked with, and, over time, has suffered many stress cracks as a result. A simple bit of reinforcing and a huge number of detail repairs resulted in things being as they should. I've done a few body shells over the years, and conventional two-pack paint sticks nicely to glasswork, but I've seen it shrink back after 12 months on the road. This is why high volume production glass work is always covered in gel coat. Gel coat is sprayed into the mold, then the glass fibres and resin are laid over the gel coat. The gel coat covers all the tiny glass fibres. It's these fibres that seem to suck back the paint solvent over a period of time. Gel coat sets chemically and goes very hard, whereas paint tends to "dry out"

I was determined to re-gel coat the car to eliminate this characteristic.

The gel coat I used was white, so it gives a very fresh and clean look when applied. The Europa is one of those "love it" or "hate it" shapes. Obviously, I'm one of those who loves its quirky shape, and it looks just like a little space ship when you see the plain shell for what it is. Because the car is soooo low, you never really see it from this angle.

Just when you think it's looking the beans, a close inspection reveals hundreds of pin holes still requiring attention. It's not a particularly difficult task, but it requires time and patience. I get into some kind of zone doing this work, where I mull over the meaning of life, solve the problems of the world, and wonder if I left the stove on at home. Bog is softer than gel coat, so it's easy to knock down the spot-filled areas and get the shape right. Krishnan and I were tag-teaming the spray booth and soon the Elan was finished off with a lovely layer of clear coat, a few dribbles and the occasional kamikaze insect that just couldn't resist landing on wet paint.

The Elan engine received front and rear main seals, new gaskets for the sump and cam cover, and a bit of paint to make it look the way it should. The gearbox revealed multiple teeth had parted ways with the input shaft, and a count of teeth revealed the car to have a standard gearbox, not the fab close ratio version usually fitted to an Elan. In between bogging, sanding, painting, filling, sanding, more painting, engine tidying, etc, Krishnan hunted down a set of Elan gears and duly rebuilt the box. There's nothing more exciting than reinstalling an engine and gearbox, and there is nothing more frightening than installing an engine and gearbox in an Elan. It is a really, really tight fit, and requires much wiggling, jiggling, teeth sucking, groaning, moaning and crying when you eventually scrape the paint off something. Note to self. When installing the extractors, allow three hours to work out how the hell it is done.

Assembly of the mechanicals is pretty straight forward after that. Krishnan re-veneered the dash, and had the joyful task of installing all the gauges. A Lotus is a pretty basic car, but it never ceases to amaze me how complex the wiring is behind the dash, and how impossibly difficult it is to access. The miracle of time makes you forget all the frustrating things you have to undo, or assemble in impossible locations, the pain and torture of breaking something, and the inevitable blood-letting of the knuckles. What is left is the simple joy of owning a classic Lotus. Let the next generations enjoy them as well!


Leo test-driving

Member Profile

Eric Mills

by Peter R Hill

Eric Mills

It's a coincidence that the last member we profiled, George Fishlock, was an early Europa owner and an early member of Lotus Club Victoria. When I got chatting with Eric Mills, I discovered that he too owned a Europa, in his case a Series 1, and he originally joined the Club in the early '80s, being a committee member in '82 through to '84. In those days Iain Palmer was the President and the committee included Kyran Meldrum and Chris O'Connor.

From 1982 through to '86 Eric raced and hillclimbed his Europa in MSCA and club events against the likes of Iain Palmer (Europa), Peter Fortune (Europa) and Chris O'Connor in his blue racing Elan complete with flared guards. Eric ran at the old Lakeland hillclimb, Winton, Calder, Sandown and Morwell. He says that his Europa was a lot like the Lotus 47 with adjustable pedals, lightweight doors, perspex windows and other weight-saving components. His taste of competition caused him to start looking for something a bit quicker that would make the straights less boring.

Eric considered moving to a Formula Ford but doubted that would give him the speed he was seeking, so after the Europa he bought a Formula 2 Cheetah Mk6 tub and built it up himself, enjoying getting the bits together and dealing with some of the characters of that time, including Peter Hollinger and Brian Sampson. Things took a lot longer than he expected as component makers were always overloaded and over-committed. But as he says, the bits were good when he finally got them.

Eric got his racing licence and raced in the CAMS State races. He was surprised to discover that the car he had created was considerably underweight, tipping the scales at only 390 kilograms when the minimum weight was 420kgs. He had to add ballast. The Cheetah was powered by a VW Golf engine. LCV member Rex Colliver did a lot of work on the Cheetah and his workshop was its home. Eric had a lot of fun racing against the likes of David Brabham and Lucio Cesario and the champion for that year, John Crooke. But the reality was that his ten-year-old car wasn't going to get to the pointy end of the field where the front runners had budgets of $250k. So, his racing days were over after 18 months.

Eric's career in the pharmaceutical industry has seen him move around a lot, so he has been an LCV member off and on over the last forty years. Despite no longer having a Lotus he enjoys the club because of the interesting people involved who have, " … incredible skills and know what they are doing." He distinctly remembers a club meeting in the '80s where David Mottram gave a presentation about the supercharger he had made for his MG.

Eric has owned many sports cars over the years including Porsche 911s, Boxster, Mazda RX7, and a Nissan GTR. The Boxster is his favourite road car along with his current love, an Aston Martin DB9. He'd like to get back into the Lotus fold with a Toyota-engined Elise. That's on the cards for 2021.

Eric's Cheetah Mk6

Eric Mills with Cheetah Mk6, Calder March 1986

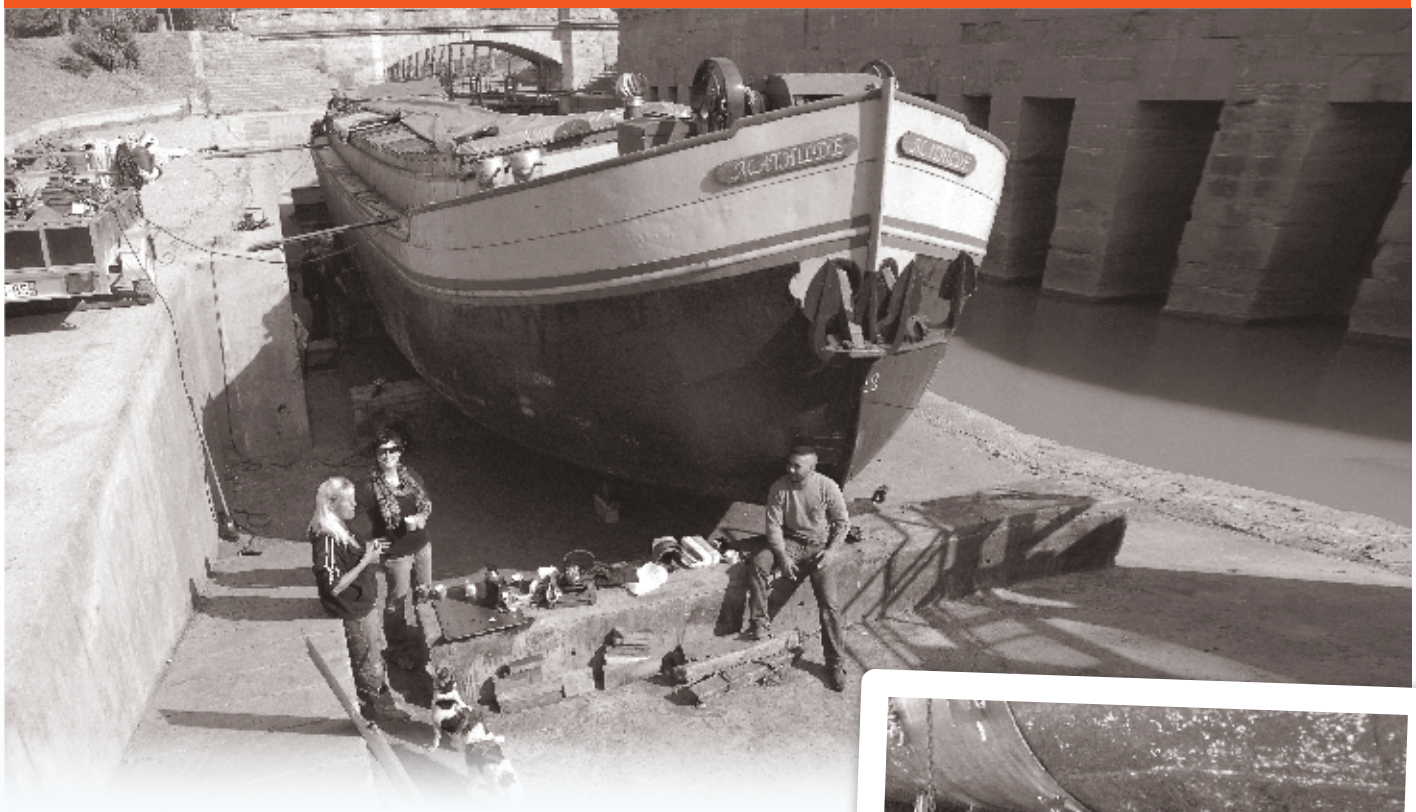
Eric's Lotus Europa S1 Winton MSCA, September 1982

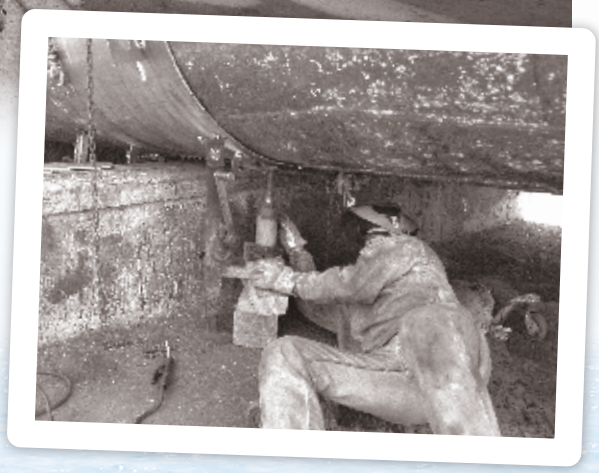
Mathilde

The story of how not to restore a 1902 Dutch barge

by Matthew Arnold

CHAPTER 3: The RETURN FROM DRY DOCK and the NEXT THREE YEARS





DEAR READERS, last month I took you through our first dry dock. During this blissful week your writer enjoyed face masks of rust and mud (great for your skin), heaving metal plates and holding them overhead to weld over the gaping holes in the hull (great for your back), and enjoying stray molten metal finding its way into your boots and collar. (Did I mention how good barge restoration is good for your skin)?

So sadly the week came to an end and it was time to refloat Mathilde and take her back to our mooring.

Now Dear Readers with dry docks, time is of the essence. This dry dock was the only one for 50km so it was fully booked, which meant the next boat was eagerly awaiting its turn.

So the local canal official came sort of on time with the lock key, and with some trepidation (actually open fear), the flood gates were opened and the dry dock quickly became very wet. As it started to fill, Mathilde moved not a muscle. Francois was inside the hull madly running around looking for leaks. Happily none appeared. The water level rose and rose and rose. Then there was this magical moment which I still vividly remember. For reasons I can't explain, Mathilde didn't gently start to float but stayed rock solid on her benches, then suddenly just popped up like a cork and floated.

So having established that it floated, and with the absence of water inside suggesting it would likely continue to do so, it was time to start the engine and get out of the dock.

Last month I also took you through the starting procedure for the engine. You may recall it was a slightly elaborate process. Well, try as we might the bastard wouldn't start.

The lock keeper was getting impatient, as was the next boat in, so we literally pulled it out of the lock by hand. How, you ask dear readers, can two guys with a rope move 80 tonnes of steel. Well the answer is "just add water".

So, now we had the task of getting it back 5km to our berth. The engine was cactus. It had breathed its last. Did I mention the need to check the health of the engine before buying a barge? Yes, I thought so.

"OK, so I will go and bring back a new engine" said Francois.

Now Dear Readers, the communication between me and Francois was less than seamless, due to a combination of language barrier, experience differential and a healthy disregard for anyone born outside France.

So he never really bothered to explain himself and off he went. But what was he going to bring back? We are talking about a big barge and no way did he have another 100 hp engine lying around.

Anyway, in no time he was back with the engine on his shoulder! I lie not, Dear Readers, it was a tiny outboard engine that he used to push around his little six-foot dingy.

"WTF" I thought.

I was bemused and so decided to say nothing and just watch, (something I rarely do).

So, welding rod in hand, he welds a little bracket onto the rudder, bolts the tiny engine onto it and fires it up.

"Allez" he said confidently.

Still saying nothing I released the ropes and jumped on board.

Nothing happened. We were going nowhere. Why? Well it's bloody obvious isn't it. We had a 30 metre, 80 tonne barge attempting forward motion with a 3 horse power engine spinning a propellor about 20cm wide.

About a minute or so passed and I was thinking this is some sort of weird french attempt at humour.

Then slowly but surely there was movement. Very slow, then just slow, but eventually we were moving at a leisurely walking pace.

I was astonished. How was this happening?

Well Dear Readers, I could bore you with the physical principles of velocity, force and some bloke called Archimedes, but hey, this is a car club not a maths club!

Who cares, we were moving. That was the good news. The tricky bit was when we came to stop. The deceleration force of our trusty outboard was just as effective as our acceleration force.

So, how did we stop. Well, that was easy.

Aim for the bank and brace!

So with Mathilde safely back at her berth it was time for us to fly back to the Middle East. By this time I was resigned to having Francois doing the lion's share of the restoration. It was simply impossible for us to have any meaningful input. So we spent the rest of the time putting in place a plan of work for Francois to do.

This went as well as you would expect for a couple with no boat experience, challenged communication and the tyranny of distance.

The next several years were spent basically as follows:

We would propose a work plan with a prioritised work list and timeline.

Francois would agree enthusiastically to the plan.

I would ring up periodically to enquire as to progress.

Francois would sort of imply things were going well but with a few problems and holdups.

We would then physically turn up once or twice a year to find he had done nothing on the list but had decided X Y Z was more important, but rest assured the list would be completed very soon.

More money would exchange hands.

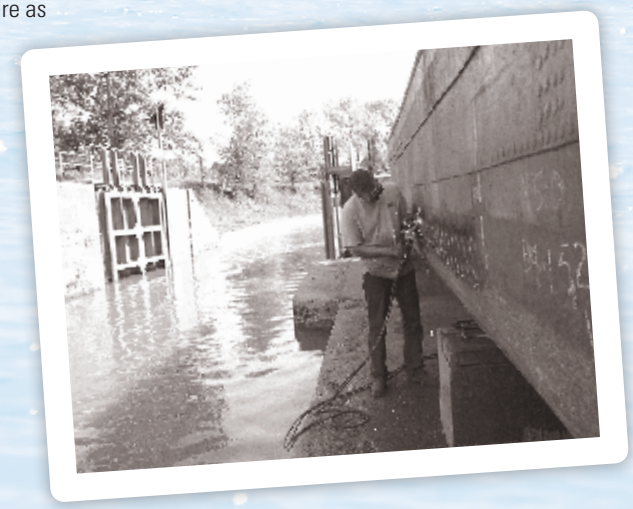
Repeat the above.

Call us fools, Dear Readers, and you would be absolutely correct. We were naive, uninformed and chasing a dream.

Just enough progress was being made for us to rationalise continuing to go forward. We had long since stopped counting the money outlay and we could see the dimmest of lights at the end of a long and dark tunnel.

By some miracle the light continued to flicker and after three years we finally had a steel structure that wasn't rusty, didn't leak water and was capable of supporting things like floors, walls, windows, plumbing and power. You know, the sort of shit you need to make a home.

Join me next month when we move to the next phase of Mathilde's restoration, as we leave the Middle East for France and prepare to move onboard.



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▲ 1962 Lotus Seven Chassis Number SB1571 **Price $38,000**

Known history: Marcel Frechin bought the car from a specialised sports car dealer in London in mid 1980 and shipped it to New Caledonia where the car was registered September/October 1980. The car was rarely used and then sold in 1986 to the owner of a group of new cars importing companies and added to his collection of classic cars. At that point, the car was fitted with a set of new Triumph Spitfire wire wheels. That collection was sold off in 2002 and the Seven was purchased by the current owner.

In 2014 the car was sent to the Gold Coast where it was blue plated and registered for use in Queensland.

The vehicle is in original condition and was always serviced during its time in New Caledonia by the local British Leyland–Jaguar Land Rover workshop. It appears the car still retains its original motor and gearbox.

The car can be inspected at Sanctuary Cove by contacting Patrick Cyprien on 0418 188 359 to arrange a time/date.

For further information and negotiation, contact the owner Gilbert Jeandot in New Caledonia via email at: gilbertjeandot@gmail.com.

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Contact: Jeff Jackson 0417 471 998 email: jeff@solitudesolutions.com.au

FOR SALE

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$35 for the pair plus P&P at cost.

Peter Hill: 0411111439

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All ads run for a period of three months in both *Lotus Notes* magazine and on the website.

Maximum length of five lines.

Sale price and vehicle registration (or engine number if not registered) must be included.

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FOR THE DRIVERS