

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS 1994-2014

# NORTH KENT LOTUS GROUP

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Dear Enthusiast

**V**ery belated Happy New Year! Sorry that the January issue didn't appear but there was little to include so I thought it better to hold over anything that did crop up. Although it might well have been worth producing last month's for Graham Capel's reply regarding the pictures of an early Seven that Howard supplied in the December edition. So I won't delay in relaying Graham's message;

*Interesting pics of Jack Richards' Climax – Seven under construction. One of them (with the bald head) is certainly Derek Parker who was the original Accountant who helped Colin Chapman when he first started Lotus Engineering Co in 1952. Derek made the insurance claim against The Cooperative Society whose bread van collided with and wrote off the first Lotus VI- XML 6 in August 1952. Nigel Allen who was driving was Ok. Pauline his girlfriend suffered a bruised knee and this resulted in Lotus Engineering Co Ltd*

*being formed in September 1952 as Limited Liability Company to protect them individually.*

*The bread van shed its load of loaves all over the North Circular Road. The driver was later prosecuted for 'Driving without Due Care', which is how Lotus got the £800 insurance money thanks to Dennis.*

*Dennis told Colin in 1953 that he could not carry on as he was going to help his friend Jack Richards in South London build and race his Lotus VI on 1954. Colin did not speak to him again and later took on Fred Bushell whom he recruited in the Public Toilet outside the Lotus works in Hornsey in 1954.*

We are lucky having Graham as a member of NKLG and it's nice to have contributions from him from time to time - on paper or in person!

All contributions are most welcome and Vaughn has supplied some Elise maintenance advice which is over the page. He has the same problem as me - Elise MOT due in cold dark and wet January.

We were unable to make the first meeting of the year which went full circle and ended up back at the Plough. The original venue, The Cricketers at Meopham, had made an error with the booking and as numbers were growing by the day, Howard made a speedy last minute phone call to the Plough to request a now whopping table for 28 people. I'll let Jon provide the story.....

*Hi John,  
Thought I'd put finger to keyboard Re; the North Kent Lotus Sunday Lunch.*



*Sunday the 2nd of February saw the club descend on the Plough (the club night venue) for our Sunday Lunch. Although originally planned for the Cricketers in Meopham, a phone call from Howard E to finalise arrangements revealed they did not serve fish and chips on a Sunday. Lot's of phone calls from Howard saw the arrangement changed and 25 of us duly arrived at the Plough for what I must say was a very enjoyable lunch in very pleasant surroundings.*



*Only 2 Lotus in the car park, Simon and Pat in the Elite, Pauline and John in their Elan, well done to them. think it safe to say we all "thank you Howard" for sorting this one out and well done,*

*what a lovely way to spend an otherwise dull Sunday afternoon.*



*John, I think Roger has already sent you some photos. I'm going to try and get some work done on the Elan this weekend and will update you with any progress made. Cheers Jon*



I've since received Jon's latest on "Little Yella" which I've included further on. I do hope Big Yella isn't getting too jealous!

You may have seen John P's request to sign the petition to save the Brighton Speed Trials, well the good news is that thanks to the on-line petition and some celebrity endorsements, the Trials have been saved.

John should have the events list ready for next month, but he'll pass it on to Terry as soon as it's available - so keep an eye on the website in the meantime.

Also, you can have your say regarding events and everything else early next month - Howard has included details of this year's annual meeting and he's asked that if you intend to go please let him know so that food can be organised.

**North Kent Lotus Group  
General Meeting  
Wednesday 5th March  
7.30pm for 8.00 start  
The Plough Hildenborough TN119AJ.  
Please contact Howard by the  
27th February if you intend to be present.**

## ROLLING EVENTS DIARY

### MARCH

5	General Meeting	The Plough	Howard E
12	Club Night	The Plough	

With this year being a celebration year, all ideas to make it a successful one will be welcome - so please try and make it.

I wonder if there will be much news coming from the factory this year? With last year's government grant and more staff taken on, 2014 might see some progress being made. Keeping a keen eye on Pistonheads doesn't help - the Lotus news is so thin that even they

have very little to say. Must be the calm before the storm though.

I've included an email that Roger sent with some interesting content and he's rightly asked me to remind everybody about the website - Terry is always looking for content and suggestions and an active site attracts new members.

Not a bad turn out for club night this month especially as

the Sunday gathering was only just over a week ago - but there wasn't a Lotus in sight! - It's all down to the weather.

Next month's meeting is on 12th March but don't forget the General Meeting on the 5th.

Hi all  
Is anyone interested or know someone who may be interested in an A reg Excel for sale? A neighbour of mine is selling it as he needs to clear it from his garage. It has 86k on the clock and has some history. It has been garaged for the last seven years and started every 3 or 4 months. The cam belt has been changed in recent times and it has a brand new stainless exhaust. He is asking £900.



If there is any interest please call Wayne on 07901 677064 or I'm happy to make the introductions.

Regards  
Roger

Whilst waiting for the Christmas festivities to commence, I started to wonder what to do and suddenly remembered that my Elise 111S S2 MOT was due in early January. A quick phone call to my favourite local garage prompted a quick trip there.

Sad to report my Elise only covered just over one thousand miles last year so although I did not expect any real problems, this lack of

and possibly contact between the alloy and both the spring ends and the lower steel locating washer.

Bilstein produce a repair kit which consists of both upper/lower collars and an associated circlip. I obtained two kits from Paul Matty at £20 + VAT each plus PP which arrived the next day so I set to work immediately.

Removing the front spring/damper units turned out to be very easy (just a 17 mm socket and open ended spanner needed). Using a slightly modified spring compressor allows the lower collar to be removed (it has a cut-out slot to allow the damper piston rod to pass through the gap).

Prior to removal, MARK the Road Springs to ensure it is replaced the right way up as it may be of a PROGRESSIVE rate variety.

Following the instructions included in the kit the old upper collar, which does NOT have a cut-out, MAY have to be cut off which exposes the steel circlip located in a groove. Again the instructions show/tell you how.

It is IMPORTANT to note where the old circlip is located on the damper body as the Bilstein dampers have THREE possible slot positions and getting it wrong raises the ride height.

One other area that could cause confusion, the Bilstein instructions refer to upper and lower collar BUT which is which depends which way up the damper is fitted but the two collars are of different shapes and internal diameters so will not fit if you pick the wrong one.

Re-assembly is just the reverse BUT just to prove how easy it is to change these items I managed to complete everything and be ready for the road in about an hour and a half but would be quicker next time.

Finally, close examination of the old discarded collars suggested it was not that serious after all and they could have lasted many more years.

Vaughn

### 2014 SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Planning Group have decided to move the subs renewal date from January to March. So the membership period will run from March to February in future.

use can cause problems with the Catalytic converter not being able to meet emission levels or so I am told.

Upon arrival, everything was found to be OK and the only area of concern was some slight corrosion to the front Bilstein damper alloy front spring seating collars. According to various Internet Web sites, including SELOC.org, this is a common problem with Elise's caused by road salt

## Hi John

I agree that, as are all in semi hibernation, it must be more difficult than usual to rustle up some news and you've made a rash promise saying there will be a bumper edition next month so I thought I could chip on with a few snippets.....

You might want to make mention of the new film '1 - life on the limit' ([www.formula1.com](http://www.formula1.com)) - I think it's a case of we blinked and we missed it as it was on at 5 cinemas in the UK(!) last week but it's not on anywhere this week. Maybe you can get hold of a pirate copy and show it on club night?!

Rush is out next Monday on DVD so that may be worth a mention although I think I'll wait for the price to come down a bit first. After Chrissie and I went to see it last year, it got me thinking that I never got round to getting a copy of 'Against all odds', the James Hunt autobiography published the following year in 1977 and - thanks to ebay - I put that right. I followed that up by reading 'In the name of glory' by Tom Rubython published in 2011, which didn't get very good reviews but I thought it was an objective and well researched account of the 1976 season and I've now read Peter Warr's 2012 book

'Team Lotus - my view from the pitwall', which contains some 'warts and all' detail of what went on behind the scenes. Peter Warr obviously didn't think a lot of Nigel Mansell!

It maybe worth saying something about those books in the newsletter as reading seems to be a winter hibernation type activity and asking if anyone else has any books they'd recommend which could get a discussion going.

Not really a 'proper' book but you may remember I was 'showing off' 'Colin Chapman - the comic strip biography' at the xmas dinner. It's in the format of those Victor and Hotspur annuals some of us used to enjoy, with a lot of pictures with words like 'ROOOOAAAAR' and 'VROOOOMMMM' and some pretty graphic depictions of accidents. If anyone wants to remember what it was to be 12 years old again, I heartily recommend it. Again, might be worth a mention in the newsletter?

I'm racking my brains now but I had a new stainless exhaust put on my Elan in October. Based on Mick McDonald's recommendation as he had one put on his Elan, I went to Viper Exhausts are at Unit 9F

Whitesbridge Industrial Estate, Crayshill, Billericay CM11 2UL, phone 01268 534471 ([www.viper-exhausts.co.uk](http://www.viper-exhausts.co.uk)) They did it in about an hour and a half while I waited, did a very tidy job (which my MOT man agreed with when he tested it the following week) and at a very reasonable price (with no VAT!!). May also be worth a mention?

How about a piece in the newsletter about the website? Terry's done a great job on that and I've tried to help by adding some posts (I've just pasted a lot of the above from there) but it doesn't seem to get used much and it's a pity because it could be a way of continuing our conversations between club nights.

Finally, I don't know the rules about non members' cars being 'advertised' for sale but a neighbour of mine (based in Brasted), Wayne Lobley, is selling his Y reg white Eclat. It's taxed and MOT'd and on the road although I don't know much about it, I believe he's done quite a lot of work on it. If anyone likes the idea of buying a £2,000 Lotus and there aren't many of those around, Wayne is contactable on 07901 677064 and [Wayne.Lobley@crosswaterholdings.co.uk](mailto:Wayne.Lobley@crosswaterholdings.co.uk)

Roger

## Hi John,

What with finally getting the ok to return to work and the lack of favourable weather "Little Yella" has had to take a back seat of late. I'd been able to clean and paint some of the suspension components but little else. The first weekend of February saw me outside spanners in on, unfortunately my ideas, no sooner had I the car, out they came, work for a friend, yes I him my number, right I thanks. Back under Not 3 minuets pass Jon haven't seen you a while, how's it going and what's it like being back at work? 30 minuets of exchanging pleasantries and explaining what work I'm hoping to get done on the car (weather & neighbours permitting) I make another aged 10 minuets then the chap road came over wife's car to would I mind 2 hours later the and I've given anything done, the Sunday lunch at the Plough and the Jag desperately needs a bath. So away go the tools, on goes the car cover and another weekend of work on "Little Yella" is lost.



hand eager to crack neighbours had other got my head under could do some roofing can I said, just give must get on but the wheel arch I go. when I hear, Hello working on the car for a start, I man- ets this time, from over the he can't get his start, and taking a look. car's running up on getting we're going for

I managed to work on "Little Yella" pretty much without interruption this weekend, other than installing and tuning a new TV for my parents and a bit of rain on Saturday I got on pretty well.

The near side rear suspension and wishbone have been cleaned, painter and arch has had a couple of coats of chassis paint applied and has been stripped parts have had a chassis paint and back of the garage paint, only 1 coat point I need to Hi-Spec in Dart- can be re-faced, some grooves the fronts. I on Ebay for fitment I went ny's online cluding post- looks, all I need rest of the en-



re-fitted, the inner wheel ple of coats of chassis the offside rear suspension and cleaned, most of the coat or 2 of satin black are now hanging at the curing. Again the inner painter with chassis at the moment. At some take the rear discs to ford, I want to see if they if they can I'll also have cut into them to match found an oil filler cap £17, after checking the straight to the compa- store and paid £15 in- age, I like the way it to do now is detail the gine bay. I've also

bought some lengths of rubber seal. My intention is to try the different profiles on the header frame in a hope of curing the wet knee syndrome. Cheers.

Jon.