



Editorial

A great example of the benefit of belonging to a club such as ours was Neil's 'auto electrics day', which, as illustrated by Richard's report overleaf, was very beneficial and enjoyed by all those who attended, so thanks again to Neil for organising this, and to Richard L for the report. I somehow managed to completely miss the publicity about this, so the first I knew of it was when Richard's report arrived. Electronics in general have always been a bit of a mystery to me, and with the pending Elan restoration any help I can get with auto electronics would be very gratefully received, so I'm very hopeful that Neil can be persuaded to repeat the exercise at some point. I shall try to be a little more aware next time, and I'll be the first in the queue.

I have in the past mulled over what it is that attracts members to the club. I am sure there is a fairly wide range of reasons, but ultimately it must be to enjoy the benefit of 'sharing'. Sharing a common interest, sharing knowledge, sharing enthusiasm, and, no doubt with Lotuses, sharing problems.

Neil's day was an excellent example of that, but beyond that it seems to me that this 'sharing' is done on a largely individual basis. Being the last newsletter of the year, I looked back at the 2019 editions to remind myself of what we had done.

In January/February we requested help with the website and asked for a volunteer to organise the quiz night. I believe that Richard C has had some help with the website (but no replacement for him yet, so far as I am aware!) and Roger R very kindly took on the quizmaster's role, so some early success! Beyond that, we asked for opinions on the newsletter, and whether its present form is appropriate in this electronic age, we asked for peoples' favourite drives and their Lotus histories, and anything else they could come up with. The response? Silence!

I have just two more newsletters to go as Editor, so please let me have anything you can so I can go out on a high, and indeed, if we can't find a new editor, send the newsletter itself out on a high. Next month we have another instalment of Richard's Elan restoration report, but beyond that it's in your hands!

NKLG January Quiz Night - Reminder

As previously noted, to spice up the January meeting on the 8th, we will be having a Lotus quiz evening. The quiz will start at 8.30pm, so please arrive in good time to arrange yourselves in teams with a maximum of four per team.

Roger D

Auto Electric Workshop

A BIG thank you to Neil W who initiated, organised and delivered an excellent 1 day teach-in about auto electrics. It was attended by 6 NKLG current or previous baby Elan owners who all felt it had been informative and thoroughly enjoyable. Neil started (as you should) with some key safety issues and tips, graphically illustrating the power of a battery on a sausage – a new way of barbequing which hopefully the dog enjoyed later! Neil covered the full range of electrical components from wiring to dynamos etc.

All participants were able to raise their “pet problems” and some brought components for testing (and subsequent repair). Neil demonstrated how his “Octopus” (see picture) could be used to test a wide range of parts from starter motors to ignition circuits.

He also provided all sorts of non electrical tips such as how to measure the timing chain tension and how to prevent small springs flying off around the garage and lost for ever. We all were given electronic copies of relevant detailed manuals and following the workshop Neil sent us by email a “Santa list” of items we might wish to ask for in our stockings.

Lastly, a thank you also to Valerie for her patience in opening the front door so many times for those of us needing a “comfort break”.

Roger L



NKLG Newsletter Web site Archive

You may have or may not have noticed that the current website archived newsletters only go back to 2008 and previous issues disappeared some time ago. This is a shame as the Group had a documented history going back some twenty-five years.

Having talked to Richard C about this issue, I started to scan my 2007 printed copies BUT unfortunately as some newsletters had telephone numbers and e-mail addresses included in the text, simple scans could not be used for the web site due to Data Protection issues. After several unsuccessful attempts to cover the offending details, the only successful way around this problem was to use cutdown Post-it notes to cover the data, hence the gaps in the text.

One of the 2007 newsletters now on the web site, (the December issue) contains an article by Howard E explaining the start of the NKLG back in 1993 and is well worth reading. Another issue has an article (October issue) compiled by myself, that reported on NKLG members being involved in the Lipscombe sponsored Guinness Book of Records attempt to break the record for a parade of single make of cars at Brands Hatch. But this record was soon broken by the Ferrari owners club.

Sadly, I seem to have mislaid my copies of the January, March, April, May, June and September issues so the 2007 series on the web site is still incomplete, so can any NKLG member help?

Vaughn R

Christmas Meal and NKLK Cup for 2019/20

The annual NKLK Christmas meal was held at the Hadlow Manor Hotel on Saturday 30th of November.

The number of NKLK members attending was a little lower than in previous years due to a number of members who had planned to attend but were unfortunately unable to do so, due to illness.

However, the lack of numbers did not distract from the evening's enjoyment. Although there was a wedding reception in progress at the same time, our group was not distracted by "Disco's", which has happened in previous years.

Overall an enjoyable evening although the quality of the "brussels sprouts" included in some dishes did not meet with everyone's approval (ask John U).

Following the raffle, the evening culminated with the NKLK Cup for 2019/20 being presented to Richard C for all his efforts in developing and re-locating the NKLK Web site.

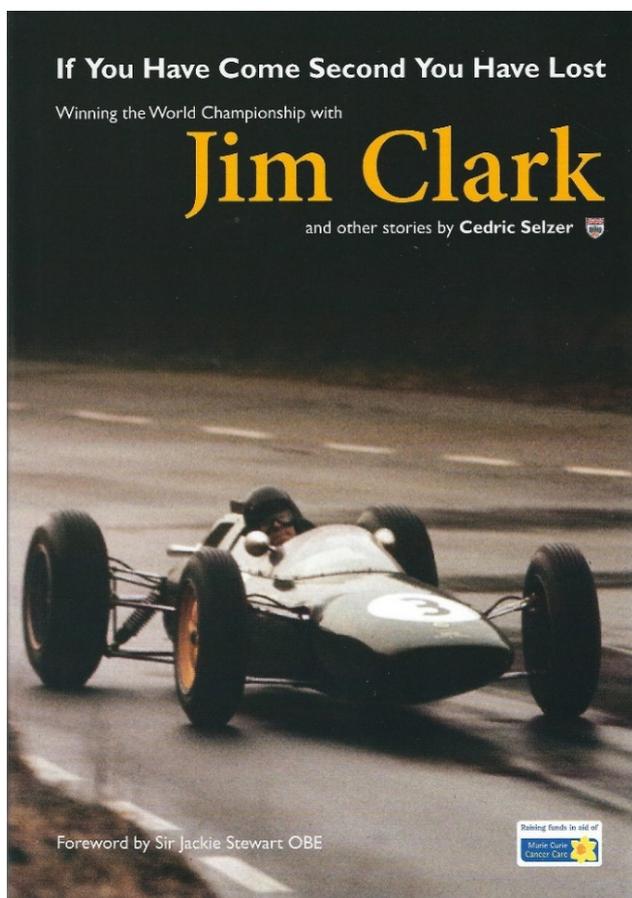
Vaughn R



The Worthy NKLK Cup Recipient

Jim Clark and Lotus

One of the NKLK Christmas meal raffle prizes was the interesting book shown below and I was lucky enough to hold a winning ticket and hence the book become mine.



The forward was provided by Sir Jackie Stewart, who stated that the book was written, financed and published by the one-time Lotus mechanic Cedric Selzer with the intent of raising funds for the Marie Curie Cancer Care charity.

Although the title suggests the book is about Jim Clark, it is really about Cedric's life as a mechanic with descriptions of his working life in F1. Cedric apparently only worked for Lotus for a short time, but he describes just how intense and pressurised working for Colin Chapman was.

The book contains many stories about the mechanics' antics, travels abroad, mechanical problems encountered and solved, together with details of their general miss-behaviour.

I found it an interesting book to read although the text in the initial chapters did not seem to flow but appeared to improve as you progressed through the chapters, possibly as I became used to the style of writing, which is a little different to the normal professionally authored books.

This book led me to look for other opinions about Colin Chapman and I discovered the web site www.thetruthaboutcars.com which contained the following opinion and I quote: -

“Though Chapman could and did inspire tremendous loyalty from members of his team, he was not beloved by all of his employees. He was not the world’s most sensitive boss.

He was driven and demanding and was always convinced that he was right, until he changed his own mind. This may have caused Keith Duckworth to leave Lotus to start up Cosworth (though Mike Costin stayed on for a few more years).”

Although Cedric held Jim Clark in high esteem, students of Clarks life may be rather disappointed in the lack of detail in this book.

Continuing with the Jim Clark theme, whilst researching for Scottish racing circuits and drivers for the November issue, I discovered some additional facts about Jim Clark and his association with Lotus.

According to “Grandprixhistory.org” and I quote: -

Jim Clark’s early racing exploits were initially met by family disapproval, not the sort of activity suitable for someone expected to take over the family farm. Clark, undeterred, continued to race in rallies and other local races under the guidance of his close friend Ian Scott-Watson. Later he joined a team run by Jock McBain known as the Border Reivers, named after raiders who plagued the border regions between Scotland and England during the 13th-16th centuries.

Ironically in 1959 the Border Reivers planned to buy a single-seater Formula 2 Lotus for Clark but after watching Graham Hill lose a wheel in a similar car, Clark decided that the Lotus cars were not safe and that he would stick to sports cars for the time being.

The Border Rivers - History web site, explains that Jim Clark was allowed to drive a development Elite (Type 14) which was being tested at Brands Hatch by Mike Costin and Clark lapped almost as fast as the works drivers after only ten practice laps having not driven there previously. Ian Scott-Watson, Clarks friend and mentor, immediately offered to buy an Elite for Clark to race, insisting that the car was to be delivered in time for the Elite’s racing debut at Brands Hatch on that years Boxing Day event.

The book “Colin Chapman Wayward Genius”, states that Jim Clark, on the day of the 1958 Boxing day race, overheard Colin Chapman and Mike Costin discussing the forthcoming race. Chapman was suggesting that they should toss a coin to decide who was to be the winner, Jimmy was not impressed.

Another internet entry records that Clark was in the lead in that race until he and Chapman both entered Druids bend on the penultimate lap, where a driver in an Austin-Healey Sprite they were about to lap, got a bit crossed up and spun whilst trying to get out of the way. It was just enough to let Colin Chapman nip through into the lead and as there was only one lap to go to the flag there was not quite enough time for Jim to overtake him and win. It was claimed to be one of Colin Chapman’s toughest races and he could see at once that Jim was just what was needed in Team Lotus. The third placed Elite was driven by Mike Costin.

One of my Christmas presents this year is a S/H book purchased from E Bay entitled “Colin Chapman, Inside the Innovator” by Karl Ludvigsen (Published by Haynes in 2010), so when I have read it, it may reveal more interesting facts about Lotus and Chapman, so watch this space.

Vaughn R

Situations - Vacant.

As noted last month, two members of the Steering Group have found it necessary to step down, and these positions therefore need to be filled at the AGM in March.

The positions of Webmaster and Group Co-Ordinator must be filled. I am not aware of anyone having put their names forward yet, so please, if you think you're able, give this some thought.

Also as previously advised on a number of occasions, and highlighted in this month's editorial, my tenure as newsletter Editor ends at the AGM, so again, please consider this vital role if you believe you have the ability and time to take it on.

Roger D

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