

# Lotus Enthusiasts Organization

NY-NJ Area

**Dateline: August 11, 2003**

**(Beginning our Fifth Year!)**



**LOG is coming! LOG is coming!** Always the year's biggest Lotus happening, this year the world's most prolific multitude of Lotus cars is at **Grand Island, NY**, near Niagara Falls. It takes place this weekend, August 15, 16, and 17. And, on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, several members have signed up for a track day at Watkins Glen racetrack.



We published the full schedule of activities last month so we won't repeat them this time. If you are considering going out, Mark Nyman [E.GENEL@prodigy.net](mailto:E.GENEL@prodigy.net) is coordinating a Friday caravan...and several others are going up on Wednesday the 13<sup>th</sup> in order to get some sightseeing done.

If you can possibly spare the time be sure to join your fellow LEO and LOONY members in Grand Island.



## Upcoming Events

Even if you can't make it to LOG, don't worry. There are still several opportunities to mingle with your fellow Lotus owners closer to home.

On **Labor Day weekend**, the **Lime Rock Vintage Races** take place. George Robertshaw of Westport CT will be there, and invites all Lotus owners to meet him on Monday at Noon at the BMW Pavilion. George has a nice Series 4 Seven. Watch the races with your fellow Lotus owners! [GRSHAW123@aol.com](mailto:GRSHAW123@aol.com) or 203 227 3363.



Join George and his Seven at Lime Rock on Labor Day!

Another Vintage Festival is at Watkins Glen every year. This year the dates are **September 5 through 7**. According to Bob Prescott of LEO, the Concours at the start-finish line is the best parking place in town!

Rest up the next weekend, because it will be busy the week following! S4 owner Rich Clementi invites all LEO members to his place at **30 Southwynde Drive, Denville** for a Get Acquainted LEO Party and Birthday Bash. That's **Saturday, September 20...** 1 to 5 PM. **RSVP to Rich** at [lotus@ix.netcom.com](mailto:lotus@ix.netcom.com) for directions, 973-713-0653 with any questions. His family makes a wonderful Italian Buffet, so please join him!

Our next "official" LEO event is the **September Breakfast and Car Show** in Summit, NJ. We will meet on **Sunday September 21** at **8:45 AM** at Summit Lotus on River Road. A 55-minute driving tour through Essex County's best switchbacks will bring us back to the Summit Chamber of Commerce Car Show, where we will park and enjoy a breakfast at Café Mavi on Maple Street. RSVP to Joe Saturnia [jsaturnia@audioweb.com](mailto:jsaturnia@audioweb.com) 908-358-5314. For more info on the show contact Mike Melnick at Summit Lotus, 908-273-7400 x105.



## Summer Fun

The past month or so has been a lot of fun...here are reports on some of the LEO things that took place.

## Friday At The Track (FATT) July 11

*As the capabilities of our cars got greater and greater, it became more of a problem to experience the potential on the open road. So we always recommend participation in a Track Lapping Day such as FATT.*

*Joe Saturnia has owned his Esprit V8 for over a year, and just experienced his first drive at a track. His report is below!*

It's now time for the complete Friday At The Track (FATT) recap from July 11<sup>th</sup> at Summit Point Raceway.



Joe's "Yellow Fever" decked out for the track. (Hey Joe, you forgot to tape the lead edge of the rear wing!)

It all starts on Thursday evening when Jim Cummings and I leave with cars in tow (Thanks Jim for letting me borrow one of your trailers. FYI: it is for sale in case anyone is interested. Contact Jim). This was my first time towing anything, which made the entire track day weekend even more adventurous.

We check in the local Hampton Inn around 11:00pm, I collapse in my room and wake to begin the day at 6:30am. We arrive at the track around 7:30am. We take our Esprits off the trailers,

register, get our cars inspected and show up for the mandatory driver meeting at 9:00am. Up until this point, I'm pretty nervous. I've never been on a track before and I'm not sure what

to expect. I must admit that the thought of lying in a ditch with the car totaled had crossed my mind on more than one occasion. The entire morning Jim could sense my apprehension and did his best to make me relax. The driver's meeting was informal and reassuring. I was scheduled for the first group so my first session was at 10:00am.

David Hsu, fellow Turboesprit lister, is an instructor at Summit Point. We met up with him that morning and he arranged for me to have a wonderful instructor named Elizabeth Miller. If anyone here plans to attend FATT, I highly recommend you try to get either her or Dave to be your instructor. As is customary at FATT, Elizabeth drove the car the first two laps to demonstrate the line. We then had a quick change of seats and we were on the course. 10 laps and 20 minutes later, I'd completed my first session. It was great.



Jim Cummings, Joe Saturnia, Dave Hsu at Summit Point

I had one more session with Elizabeth. During lunch, Elizabeth offered to let me ride along with her on the instructor session in her Ferrari 355. Ten laps in the Ferrari with an experienced driver were amazing. The car had a very different feel to it. It was an unexpected thrill to be able to ride with her.

My last two sessions were with Dave. On my last session I had Dave drive the first two laps and on the second lap the check engine light came on. Upon quick inspection, I was very low on gas. The old P1412 had been triggered again due to low fuel. We pitted quickly, filled up and were back out on the track. My day ended with a shorter 4th session but was no less gratifying.

For Jim, this track day was old hat. On his third session, he was signed off to go solo, which he did on the fourth session. I got some great video of him in White Lightning (the '79 S2) coming down the front straight.

Pictures and video are available here:

<http://www.saturnia.org/Esprit>

Many people had told me that I needed to do a track day. They were right. It has given me a completely new appreciation for the Lotus and it's capabilities.

- Joe Saturnia



## Hunting Ridge Motorsports July 19<sup>th</sup>

*The LEO July Breakfast and Drive was held at the new Hunting Ridge Motorsports. HRM principals Mark Starr, David Butler, and Mark Nyman (Lotus owners all) started us off with High-Energy donuts and Super-Octane Coffee at the Greenwich Lotus showroom. From there we drove throughout suburban Connecticut back to the HRM service facility in Port Chester NY, with one stop for refreshment.*

*Several new LEO members were in attendance, as well as some folks we hadn't seen for a while. Following is a report on the trip by Jim Chittenden, who took delivery on his new Elise Sport that morning. The Drive was his shakedown cruise!*

### Elise and I

A test drive was the only driving I had done in the Elise before this get-together. When I went down to Hunting Ridge Motors, in Port Chester, NY, I met with Mark Starr, co-owner, Exige racer extraordinaire, and all around nice guy. We went out for a test drive that took in some really nice roads (Hunting Ridge Motors is right near Greenwich, CT!), and let me get a feel for the car's responsiveness. It **was** a little hard to concentrate, though, with Mark shouting "Take it to redline!" all the time. So this LEO drive was the first time I was driving it solo, and the first time driving it for any



Lotus of Greenwich!  
At the Start

real distance. It's amazing how much of a difference it makes in a 1600 lb. car without an extra 300 pounds in the passenger seat!

The drive was something of a strange experience for me. Having only bought one new car in my life, and never having bought a car costing more than 4 figures, it was a lot 'more' car than I was used to. And it's the first time I had owned/driven a pre-built 'racer'. Any other car that I had owned that was as racy as the Elise was that way because I had **made** it that way. So normally my cars get to this modified state gradually, and I'm intimately familiar with the car's mods before I even get in it. Suddenly being surrounded by all these racy pieces that someone **else** created and I needed to discover/get used to (the small steering wheel, digital gauges, roll bar cross brace, turn ignition switch **and** the interior master cutoff, cam-lock safety harness) made the car feel a little foreign. As did the KPH speedo. But Mark said he wouldn't charge me anything



Mid-Way: the Photo Op

extra for the metric speedo, even though it was a genuine piece of European exotica, so I guess I was lucky.

I was also surprised how easy the car was to drive. Unlike another member who was driving an Elise variant, I was taking it very easy on the engine. It was perfectly happy driving along at 2000 rpm in second when we were stuck in traffic. Or even start off in second gear, as long as we hadn't come to a complete stop. It was only when it got below 2000 rpm that there was any 'surging'. It could start off with very little revs, and still pull smoothly. It had a lot more low-end torque than I expected, given its displacement and horsepower. Yet when I did let it rev freely, it was equally happy with that (maybe more so!), and rewarded with more acceleration than I've ever had. And great noises! (Although I'm told it sounds even better outside the car.) The suspension wasn't as stiff as other cars I've had. There was only one major 'bump' on the trip that made the suspension feel like it crashed into something. (If you don't recall this you were probably smart enough to see it coming and avoid it.) Even though some of the roads were typically rough New England roads, it didn't feel harsh at all. Shifting is very easy. I had a couple mistakes on my initial test drive, due to the side-to-side shift gate being so close. But I never even thought about it on this drive. Coming from a Europa, the shifting seemed as easy as any Honda. And the steering is even quicker than the 2.8 turns lock-to-lock would suggest, evidently because of the very small steering wheel.



The Lunch Break

Bottom line, it felt like an easy-to-drive street car with a lot of performance. Nothing stood out shouting 'race car' - no harsh suspension, no finicky engine, no work-up-a-sweat-trying-park manual steering. Only the brakes (**no** power assist) needed considerably more effort than I was used to. The whole car seemed very docile. Until I let it scream. Then things happened a lot faster than I was used to. I can't really imagine driving it on a track at racing speed, where the car can really be given it's head. I'm sure its limit would be frighteningly higher than mine.

So anyone interested in taking a test drive in a Lotus, **any** Lotus, it doesn't matter if you can actually afford to **buy** it or not, should head on down and talk to Mark and David. If you're too lazy to head on

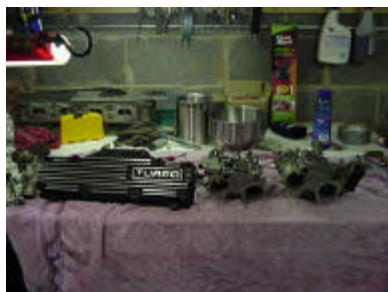
down there, or you're depending upon your current Lotus to get you there, then you can give them a call at **914-234-3750**. That way you'll get to talk with Amy first! 'Nuff said!

- *Jim Chittenden*



## Muffler Party July 27<sup>th</sup>

This was the type of impromptu gathering that makes LEO great. Joe Saturnia had yet another crack in his Esprit's Sport Muffler, and having repaired it once, Jim Cummings was determined not to let it



Ted's Intake and Carbs



Joe's Cracks Repaired <g>



The Fix.

conquer him. So with the moral (?) support of Frank Lu, Ted Markson, and myself, we removed the V8's muffler assembly for a close inspection and some modifications.

The problem is that even though it is a well-made piece, the constant resonance and vibration from the unsupported tailpipe will crack the pipe over time. Jim's answer was to weld a support between the intake and outlet pipes. We'll see how it holds up!

Ted was there for another reason. He wanted to rebuild the Del'Orto carbs from his 84 Turbo Esprit because of an intermittent high idle. Jim, who had just refurbished the carbs on his '79 S2, agreed to help out, though to his credit, Ted did most of the work. Except for one unfortunate problem this aspect of the day went as planned. Hot dogs and Beer finished the day...another job well done!



## TECH TIP of the Month

*If it's still leaking, it can't be out of oil. That's what they say...but here's a tip from Robert Grener of Massachusetts, on how to reduce the pollution somewhat! Thanks Robert.*

On the end of each cam tower on the Esprit/Elite engine is a cap behind a heat shield. [Unless you have a carburetted car, then the air pump drive is there. – Atwell] Revving my engine, I could see it spitting some oil. So I pulled the cap off and there is a rubber o-ring which seals it. The o-ring was as hard as a rock and we didn't have anything like it in stock at our auto shop. I smeared some DP 300 Blue Halomar around it and put it back together, and that should seal it up temporarily. The o-ring is Lotus part number A907E6027Z and there is one on each cam tower cover.

With the age of the cars and the heat, I would recommend everyone replace theirs... VERY easy job. Use a putty knife to pry the cover open, once you get a gap, I used a small pry bar (like a screwdriver but with a bent end), the fit is very tight. You might be able to use a screwdriver, just be careful not to score the cover.

-Robert Grener

## Tech Tip Number Two

Everyone who has a lockable glove box on his Lotus runs the risk of them breaking. What happens is, the lock claw's pivot pin backs out of its hole and all the teeny tiny pieces fall into Limbo. (That's the messy bottom of your Glove Box...)



Pin, inside the Spring and Claw Hook

To prevent this from happening, first determine that the pin is fully positioned in it's locating hole. If not gently squeeze it so it doesn't stick out either side. Then put a drop of epoxy on both sides to hold the pin in place. In the picture I applied a small square of tape to



prevent any drips; now it won't come off!

That's about it for this month. Next month, Tales of LOG! See you in September.

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