

## ACROSS THE POND

Article by Gordon Morris

A gremlin is a mythical small animal that lives in cars, aeroplanes and probably other machines as well. He probably looks a bit like ET but no one I know has ever seen one. His role in life is purely to make ours more difficult. He'll sit and watch you service or repair your car (or aeroplane); he'll wait till you've gone and then he'll slacken off the bolts you've torqued up so carefully, remove the split pins you've fitted, change the carburettor settings you've achieved and generally undo all the good things you've done. Gremlins seem to quite like living in Lotuses, especially those with Ford or Ford based engines; probably because there's plenty of work for them to do in those cars. But I've found an antidote to gremlins – the southern British breed at least. Although they are adept at loosening most nuts, bolts and other connectors, they don't yet seem to have come up with a way of undoing lock wire. So, as part of the scheduled winter servicing of my Elan and Seven, I drilled and wired all the nuts and bolts that are critical to the working of the car. So far, fingers crossed, all remains as I left it, so my gremlin has probably moved garage in disgust and gone away in search of an easier life. A neighbour has an old Jaguar saloon with potential for plenty of mischief, so he's probably moved in with him.

Gremlins apart, the North West European winter is upon us. It's cold, damp and dark outside and Spring seems a long time off. So I've been steadily picking off the jobs that need doing on the Lotuses; with plenty of time in hand, there's no hurry to get the jobs finished. One such job on the Seven had been nagging away for some time.

The Series 2 Seven has, for a reason I've never quite understood, a Standard Ten (TR10 to you) rear axle from the Fifties. That axle was designed to cope with 38 horsepower from its antique engine, but we now expect it to handle three times as much. With suitable bracing, good bearings and so on, it just about manages, as long as you don't use sticky Hoosiers and indulge in racing starts at every traffic light. The last MoT test in the summer revealed some lateral play in the bearing which allowed the wheel to move about 1/4". Winter servicing revealed that the play had increased somewhat and that EP90 oil had found its way past the oil seal into the brake drum.

So off came the half shaft, bearings, brake drum, oil seals and so on. I then got out my micrometer and measured up the critical bit of the half shaft where the outer bearing sits with an interference fit. Thanks to the Lotus Seven Register ([www.lotus7register.com](http://www.lotus7register.com)).

co.uk) I was able to find a pair of half shafts which were a few thou larger at the bearing platform. Before fitting the replacement shaft and bearing, I drew out the old oil seal using a simple puller I made up from a bolt and a couple of washers ground to size and pressed in a new seal. Reassembly was a straightforward nut and bolt job and I replaced the brake linings which had absorbed some oil. Finally, the car was dropped onto its wheels and the centre half shaft nut tightened carefully to 110 lb ft torque.

I now have a spare half shaft should the other side give problems. Thankfully, in this part of the world, there is no shortage of Standard axle parts to keep our S2 Sevens mobile. Now, I know where there's a rusty Standard Ten in a scrapyard with a complete rear axle. I'll go and have a chat with the owner and see if I can get him to remove the axle and sell it to me for a reasonable sum. If he finds out I want it for a Lotus, the price will double...

Now that we're in 2007, the car show programme is taking shape nicely. There are a couple of indoor car shows and autojumbles in January and February before Club Lotus open the season with their Lotus Show and Festival at Donington Park in mid March. Before that, though, there's an International Historic Motorsports Show at Stoneleigh in late February. US friends tell me that they plan to attend either or both of these fine events, so I look forward to a couple of enjoyable weekends kicking tyres and chewing the fat with members of the International Lotus family once more.

Since I wrote this, my Jaguar owning friend came round to borrow some tools and to tell me that he can't understand how the brakes he carefully adjusted a week ago have slackened off and a split pin in the throttle linkage seems to have disappeared. I started to tell him about gremlins but I don't think he believes me ... ☹


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(Submit Local Group Events to Dom Giangrosso, [dglotusltd@optonline.net](mailto:dglotusltd@optonline.net))

**(Every Sat)** Amalgamated Lotus Owners, (Kansas City area), very informal breakfast with other like-minded folks at Sharp's 63St. Grill from 8:00am to approx 10:00am. Sharp's is at 63rd St. and Brookside Plaza in the Brookside area near the middle of the city. Contact Mark Bracewell (816) 459-7707 or [mbracewell@kc.rr.com](mailto:mbracewell@kc.rr.com)

**FEB 10 (Sat)** Lotus Owner South Texas(LOST) Monthly meeting (2nd Saturday of every month) at Star Motor Cars or Lotus of Clear Lake, Houston at 10am. After the meeting, cruise and lunch. Check at [http://autos.groups.yahoo.com/group/lotus\\_ownerssouthtexas/](http://autos.groups.yahoo.com/group/lotus_ownerssouthtexas/) for place of meeting.

**FEB 17 (Sat)** Southern Nevada Lotus Car Club meets every 3rd Saturday of the month. Because we try to keep it fresh, we change our locations monthly. This is posted on our web site. For more details go to <http://snlcc.com/PHP-Nuke/index.php> or contact Dave Weinberg. 702-203-9651 [livesnd@cox.net](mailto:livesnd@cox.net)

### MARCH '07

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**1988 ESPRIT TURBO**, BRG, tan int., orig. owner, full maint. by Jaime Goffaux, orig., nr. perfect, orig., 22K mi. \$25,000. Kevin McGovern, (410) 964-1459 (MD), [kevinmcgov@aol.com](mailto:kevinmcgov@aol.com).

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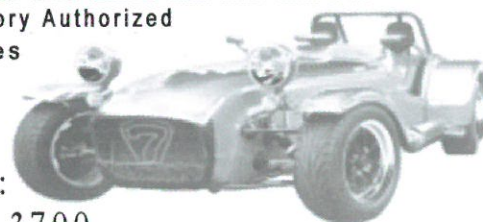
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