

Growing Up Lotus

Article and Photos by Anthony Kimberley



Anthony Kimberley MCMI, MIMI, is the middle son of Mike Kimberley, CEO and Managing Director of Group Lotus. In his time, Mike Kimberley has been instrumental in the growth, innovative development and design of new models from Lotus and his CV ranges from Project Leader to Technical Director on Europa TC, Elite, Eclat, Esprit, Excel, Lotus Sunbeam and Lotus Carleton (Omega).

Anthony is the only son to "follow in his fathers footsteps" by going into the Motor Industry and has worked for such companies as MAN Trucks, Tata, MG Rover, Mercedes and has just started with Honda at their local dealership in Norfolk.

Unlike his father, Anthony has always been more into Sales and Marketing and recently qualified as a Chartered Manager by completing his HNC in Motor Industry Management and Technology. His new position as Corporate Sales Manager, allows him to indulge in his passions of cars and talking (those who are members of the Lotus Esprit Forum will know him well for the latter). Anthony Lives in Norfolk, UK with his wife Wendy and 4 kids.

"What are you going to be in life when your earliest memory is of your dad's first new Lotus, a purple Elan +2. I must have been 4 yrs old and I still remember it's new car smell, smooth lines and that exhaust note!! I'm sure all Lotus fans have a special place in their heart for a raspy 4 cylinder. Unlike my brothers, I loved cars and anything to do with them and to this day I still get a childlike gleam in my eye every time I see an old Lotus. Last weekend my wife thought I was having a fit at the wheel of my car when I saw an

old Europa parked in a supermarket carpark!

Lotus! When we say that word I always see a new gleaming Esprit, Elite or Europa. These were the cars that really attracted me, though for different reasons. I am sure many, if not most, of the general public would agree with me. These were cars that created passion in kids and adults alike; they were years ahead in design, engineering and sheer driving pleasure.

HOWEVER, ask those who designed and built these cars and I know the answer. Asked recently in an open forum, my father was asked which was his favorite Lotus..."For design and Engineering it has to be the Elite (which won many accolades including the Don safety trophy for it's in built, innovative safety features). However, overall, I would have to settle on the Excel, it was the most sorted, reliable, drivable and useable Lotus ever built and highly underrated".

When I stop and think about it I have to agree. We had many Lotus's (or is that Lotii?) whilst I was growing up. From the Elan +2 in that beautiful purple to a Brown Elite (you never see brown cars anymore... I wonder why?) with a brown suede interior (I feel sick just thinking about it), then many other Elites and Excels before dad finally got his wish and got his first Esprit. Not easy to fit into when you are 6ft 6in tall (they actually removed the seat runners and bolted the seat onto the floor). This first Esprit was special as it was one of the 1989 special edition pearlescent white ones. Wow that was a stunning car at the time. Then there were several Elan SE's and a Lotus Carleton (Omega) before dad finally moved to General Motors in Malaysia (A story for another day).

However, the Elite was the start of great



(from Left to right) Fred Bushell(FD), Tim Enright, Richard Morley, Mike Kimberley, Tony Rudd, Colin Chapman and Don Mclauchlan. Collecting the Don Safety Trophy for the Elite.

things as Guigaro was involved in the interior design and it was this introduction that made Colin Chapman and my dad seek him out at the Turin show. And that led to the Esprit, one of the 20th Century's automotive Icons and maybe the car that made Lotus truly globally famous.

I have many great stories and memories to put in writing, but with time (and space) running a little short, these will have to wait for another time (or issue).

I will say that if you want a great read about those times and the Esprit, pick up a copy of the new Coterie Press book by Jeremy Walton.

Thanks for your time and I hope I have the opportunity to share some more stories and thoughts soon. ☺



Dad with our brown Elite at the UK owners club.

Lotus Car Care Tips

Article and Photos by Atwell Haines

Several people have asked me, "Tell us how you keep that old clunker of an Esprit lookin' good?" The eighteen-year-old car has the original Claret paint (only eight Esprits made in this color) and has been driven over most of the US, east of the Mississippi. It still fares well in the LOG concours despite being all-original.

"It's all in the care," I tell them, "It's all in the care".

So, below are some of the methods and philosophies I use when I care for my car. You may have your own favorite tricks...but this is what has worked for me.



Washing

First step is to get the right equipment. Paint is SOFT so grit in your sponge or wash-mitt will cause fine scratches or swirl-marks.

A nice quality sponge is what I use. My wash bucket has a holed platform on the bottom so that the sponge can't pick up stray grit that sinks to the bottom. The picture shows a commercially available solution.

Some people use two buckets, one for wash and one for rinse... same goal.

Car Wash solution: I generally use what is on sale, as long as it is made for cars. The exception is that I use Dawn dishwashing detergent before waxing. Dish detergent removes wax, so it should not be used on a regular basis... it causes a dull look.

When washing, be sure to wring out the sponge or mitt each time you dip it in the bucket. Again, this minimizes the chance of swirl marks. Don't press down hard! Paint is SOFT. Let the weight of your hand do the work. Use LOTS of soapy water... don't scrimp. Wash in the shade so the soap doesn't dry on the surface. Start at the top and work your way down... that way the water stays clean as long as possible. The lower third of the body (and the wheels) collect the most grit so do them last. I keep a special sponge for these areas, I save the cleanest sponge for the higher portions of the car.

juice from the windshield...it won't scratch the glass at all, just be sure to rinse it totally away before washing or drying the remainder of the car.)

For drying, I use a synthetic chamois cloth (clean) followed by a lint free bath towel. Sometimes you miss a few spot when you wash, so if the chammy or towel gets the least bit dirty, I use another. Remember, paint is soft, don't press hard.

A word about towels: when you wash them don't use fabric softener, it causes streaks.

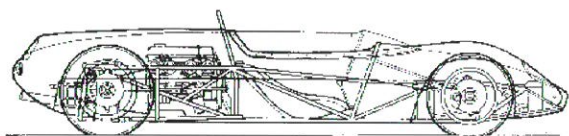
Glass: Most commercially available window wash solutions cause streaks. This is not always the fault of the solution, it's often because of the towels you use. They are loaded with chemicals whether they are paper or cloth. (See note about not using fabric softeners, above). The best way to get around the streaks is to clean as normal, then wad up a sheet of black and white (NOT color!) newspaper. Use this to wipe the glass...it will become streak and haze free!



I use a few specialty brushes to clean the wheels, all made with soft bristles. That's the easiest way to get into all the wheels' nooks and crannies. For rubber tires I use Bon Ami brand scouring powder...it cleans the rubber well. (I also use Bon Ami to remove bug

Lastly: Never work near your car's paint wearing anything containing metal. OK, maybe your teeth fillings are OK. Otherwise, I wear sweats in cool weather or sweat-shorts and a tee shirt in summer. Did I mention that paint is SOFT? ☺

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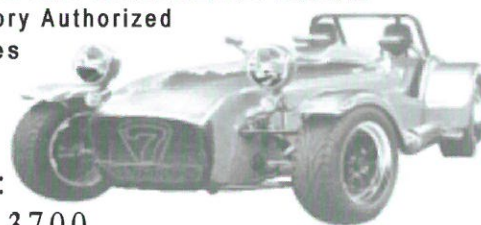
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