

LOTUS

48/5

reMARQUE



Northern Exposure

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LOTUS *re*MARQUE

Produced by: Coterie Press Ltd. 303 933 2526
5 White Birch, Littleton, Colorado 80127, USA

Direct questions or submissions to: coterieltd@aol.com



CONTRIBUTORS:

WILLIAM TAYLOR - editor-in-chief
DAVID NAGLER, REED FIGLEY - assistant editors
VIOLET CRUZ - designer
FOSTER COOPERSTEIN - magazine watch
TONY VACCARO - living the lotus life
JENNA MAYER - northern exposure
RICHARD PARRAMINT - my favourite things
WILLIAM TAYLOR - from the archives

LOTUS, LTD. BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

BRIAN VACCARO: president
(716) 861-4100
TBA: vice-president
(000) 000-0000
MIKE PEARCE: treasurer
(205) 612-8211
CORA GREGORIE: corresponding secretary
(941) 900-1481
JIM ROBERTS: recording secretary
(205) 322-0650
DOUG MILLER: director at-large
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WES SPERA: director at-large
(720) 343-0862
ROSE PERRY: director at-large
(978) 771-8588
BOB METZ: director at-large
(303) 369-6288
DOMINICK MUNOFO: senior adviser
(581) 486-7951
DAVID NAGLER: insurance & track event instruction adviser
(845) 469-6001

FOR TECHNICAL ADVICE, CONTACT YOUR TECH REP:

DAN CURCIO - federal elise S2 - (262) 554-4921
JIM SCHERER - europa S1 - (908) 479-6074
BOB MURRAY - europa S2 - (804) 227-3363
LLOYD CAYES - europa TC - (919) 556-7793
MIKE OSTROV - elite (early) - (510) 232-7764
ATWELL HAINES - esprit - (862) 812-4925
GARY DAVID - cortina, scale models - (330) 467-1074
MIKE PEITSCH - twin cam shim exchange - (920) 733-2118

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For questions regarding your membership or club matters please send an email to: info@lotusltd.com

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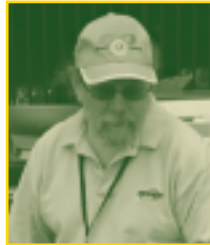
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Lotus, Ltd. e-mail: info@lotusltd.com • Website: www.lotusltd.com



Brian Vaccaro



Foster Cooperstein



Richard Parramint



William Taylor

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Here we are. We made it. It's finally 2021 and what an exciting year it will be! With the infamous 2020 behind us, we're looking forward to returning to our regularly-planned year of Lotus-filled events and get-togethers.

Before we get there, I wanted to briefly introduce myself. My name is Brian Vaccaro and I'm your new Lotus, Ltd. President for 2021-2022. I've served on the Board of Directors since 2012 as both a Director-at-Large and, most recently, Vice President. I was also your co-Chair to LOG33 in Watkins Glen, NY alongside the outgoing president, Tony Vaccaro. Additionally, I've acted as the webmaster and lead marketer for Lotus, Ltd. while helping bring to life the digital membership renewal process, Lotus Owners Gathering (LOG) online ticketing, and digital issues of the Lotus, Ltd. Lotus *re*Marque magazine.

I'd like to take this moment to thank Tony Vaccaro for his years of dedication and service to Lotus, Ltd. He's been a mainstay and constant on the board for over a decade and we're looking forward to seeing him continue his support and dedication to the club. Many of the events, benefits, and general "happenings" that we've all enjoyed as part of Lotus, Ltd. have been made possible through his efforts.

Looking into 2021, we have a lot to be excited about for our club. Our Lotus Owners Gathering (LOG40) is going ahead as planned for September 10-13 and we're hoping to see all of you there. It's been a while since we've been able to get together and it'll be a wonderful coming-together when we see each other in September. It's also a great excuse to caravan with old and new friends alike and make new memories on the way. Additionally, we have a lot of exciting track-focused events with Watkins Glen's Performance Driver Education Day (and others to be announced!). I'd be remiss to not mention that you have two ways to help support the club (if you so desire!) going into the new year. You can choose to buy one of our great calendars for 2021 (filled with cars from our members) or gift a year's worth of Lotus, Ltd. membership to a friend.

Lastly, I'd like to congratulate my fellow board members that have been voted in this past month. Cora Gregorie (Corresponding Secretary), Bob Metz (Director at Large), and Rose Perry (Director at Large) will join me for the 2021-2022 term on the Lotus, Ltd. Board of Directors. Our dearest and deepest "thank you" to Ed Reagan, an outgoing Director at Large, for his years of service, ideas, dedication, and can-do attitude that brought many great events to our club at Lime Rock Park. You'll be missed on the board and we look forward to seeing you at upcoming events this year.

I'm quite excited for what the next two years will bring for the club and I'm glad that you're along for the ride with me and the rest of the board members. Our goal is to provide all of you with a remarkable, fun, and exciting club to be part of and we try to improve on that every day. As the new President, I'd love to hear from each and every one of you that want to reach out and say "hi" or provide cool ideas (or feedback) on the club.

Let's all have some fun this year. I can't wait to see you soon.

Brian Vaccaro
President, Lotus, Ltd.

Cover Image: LotusPals out and about in Wellsboro, PA. Image © Jenna Meyer

LOTUS *re*MARQUE

Lotus club NEWS

ALABAMA

Alabama Lotus Car Club - JOHN HIGGINS,
Birmingham, AL, (205) 936-9997, johndhiggins3@mindspring.com

CALIFORNIA

Lotus of Los Angeles [LOLA], More info in the next issue!!!!

CAROLINAS

Lotus Car Club of the Carolinas [LC3] - JIM GRUNEWALD
Raleigh, NC, jgrunewald@nc.rr.com

Carolina's Lotus Owners Group [CLOG] - RAY SCHWARTZ
Winston/Salem, Burlington, Raleigh/Durham, NC,
(973) 464-3366, a59mogguy@yahoo.com

COLORADO

Lotus Colorado [LOCO] - JAMES COLLINS,
Denver, CO, jamesdeancollins@gmail.com

FLORIDA

Associated Lotus Owners of Florida (ALOOF) - DENNIS FRESCH,
Sebring, (863) 699-1623, a1survcomp@aol.com

GEORGIA

Lotus, Ltd. Southeast (LLSE) - SHAUN RAMKUMAR,
Atlanta, GA, (678) 451-9948, shaun.i.ramkumar@gmail.com

IOWA

Lotus Owners Touring Iowa (LOTI) - MARK DOUBET,
Mt. Vernon, IA, (319) 329-7110, madoubet@msn.com

KANSAS

Amalgamated Lotus Owners - MARK BRACEWELL,
Kansas City, MO/KS, (816) 806-2920, mbracewell@kc.rr.com

LOUISIANA

Louisiana Lotus [LALLA] - MICHAEL GLORE,
Destrehan, LA, (985) 764-2396, mglore@southernprecision.com

WASHINGTON, DC and MARYLAND

DC Chapter - PHIL MITCHELL, Brookville, MD,
(301) 942-6059, jpsprtd44@yahoo.com

MASSACHUSETTS

New England Lotus Club [NELLI] - JON GARDNER & BARBARA SALOME,
Putnam, CT, (860) 382-6462, jon.a.gardner@snet.net

New England Members of Lotus Ltd. (NEMOLL) - SHAWN DRISCOLL, Chelmsford,
MA, (978) 314-3865, shawngtp@yahoo.com

MICHIGAN

Great Lakes Lotus Club - MARK PLECHATY,
South Haven, MI, (708) 369-2736, greatlakeslotus@gmail.com

MISSOURI

St. Louis Area Lotus Lovers (STALLS) - to Chris Faulbaum,
MO, (314) 920 3098, faulbaumc@yahoo.com

NEVADA

Lotus Car Club of Southern Nevada - SEAN LETHBRIDGE,
Las Vegas, (702) 375-1177 (cell), s3964L@lvmpd.com

NEW YORK

Lotus Owners Of New York (LOONY) - TONY VACCARO,
New York (Western), (716) 861-1412, tvacc@lotusowners.com

Lotus Enthusiasts Organization [LEO] - "Please contact
temporary LEO co-ordinator Kyle Kaulback (see PALS)

OHIO

Cleveland Area Lotus, Ltd. [CALL] - ROD WIGGINS,
Berea, OH, (216) 496-1452, rwiggins951@gmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia Area Lotus Society (PALS) - KYLE KAULBACK,
Bethel, PA, (717) 933-9393, kylekaulback@msn.com

Lotus in Pittsburgh (LIP) - RUSSELL MUSTA,
Clinton, PA, (412) 491-9361, lotusinpittsburgh@comcast.net

TENNESSEE

Tennessee Area Lotus Enthusiasts - MIKE McMILLAN,
Friendsville, TN, (865) 995-3366, mimcmillan1@gmail.com

TEXAS

Lotus Owners Of Texas (LOOT) - SCOTT WHITMAN, TX,
(408) 426-3355, slim@acm.org

North Texas Lotus Club - DEREK BLAKELY,
Dallas, TX, (214) 316-6401, derek@sportscarworld.com

UTAH

Utah Lotus Owners Coalition (ULOCO) - RICH SHEYA,
Murray, UT, (801) 971-0956, rsheya@canyonheating.com

VIRGINIA

Northern Virginia Lotus Car Club (NoVA) - MARK FRANKE,
VA, (703) 963-0773, mfranke@cox.net

LOG 40 news



LOG 40, will be held September 10-12, 2021. The Marriott Hotel has been wonderful to work with and was happy to move our event to next year. If you made reservations the hotel has automatically moved them to next year with no penalties or price changes. If you want a refund they'll do that as well; just contact them directly.

Utah Motorsports Campus has also moved our non-Lotus, Ltd. sanctioned track-day to Monday, September 13th, 2021 and reserved the outside loop for us. See page 7 for more details on LOG and a day at the track.

Most, if not all, of our very special guests have re-confirmed for 2021 and we've added a couple of others who will be bringing additional color and deep Lotus history to LOG 40.1. See you there!

Living the Lotus Life!

by Tony Vaccaro

Images © Tony Vaccaro, Coterie Press

In the spring of 1968, it was my brother Angelo who gave me my first Corvette which in a roundabout way led me to my first Lotus. So, it is fitting that my brother led me this week to purchase a 2005 Mazda Speed Miata. I have written about my brother's role in the journey that took me down this "Living the Lotus Life" path and it has been printed several times in reMarque over the years. If you have not read it, send me an email to tvacc@lotusowners.com and I can send you a pdf file.

My brother has driven my Elans over the years, so I always assumed he knew the connection of the Mazda Miata to the Lotus Elan. I'm pretty sure that once or twice I had told him the story of Bob Hall, the Miata, and the Lotus Elan. I was very happy and not totally surprised when in 1992, my brother purchased his son's (my nephew's) Miata. It was my nephew Nick's first sports car and it was only a new job that forced him to sell the car for a larger vehicle.

Bob Hall was the "father" of the Miata and I spoke at length with Bob several times. This is his story as I recall him relaying it to me. Bob Hall worked for Mazda. One of his bosses based in Japan was a longtime fan of the Avengers television show and even more a fan of Emma Peel and her Elan.

When Mazda proposed the idea of a small 2-seater sports car, the management at Mazda asked Bob Hall go to Dave Bean, the Lotus parts distributor on the west coast, and purchase a white Lotus Elan for Mazda to study. The employee who had directed Bob to buy the Elan was so enamored by Emma that Bob was also instructed to have the Elan painted the same color as the car on the Avengers television show! What I did not know and was surprised to learn is that they also purchased an MGB which I will get back to later. Bob drove the Elan up and down the California coast and had every intention to one-day purchase the Elan from Mazda as his planned retirement was approaching. He told me he could not think of a better retirement vehicle. Bob's purchase plans were thrown askew when Mazda requested that the Elan be sent to Japan for further study, along with the MGB I mentioned earlier.

I asked Bob about the rumor that the Miata was based on the Lotus Elan and he became a little defensive with my question. That is when he told me about the MGB and was very insistent that the Lotus AND the MGB were the basis for the Miata. The design process included the designers walking around the Elan and the MGB placing Post-It-Notes on the parts of each car that they wanted the Miata to emulate. For example, Bob said they put a note on the gear shift, twin cam motor, and exhaust of the Elan. They put a note on the interior and doors of the MGB.

Years later, long after Bob had retired from Mazda, there was a dinner in Japan celebrating the anniversary of the building of the Miata. Bob attended the affair, and after dinner, the gentleman who had directed him to buy the Elan from Dave Bean asked Bob if he would like to see something. Walking across the factory to a completely empty warehouse, sitting in the middle of the warehouse was the Lotus Elan Bob had purchased all those years ago. They took off the cover and there was the Elan, with the exception of the Emma Peel paint job, pretty much the same as Bob had purchased it from Dave Bean. For all I know, it might still be there!

I bought my brother's Miata for my son Brian in about 2004. It was his first car, had 115,000 miles on it, and we affectionately called it the "Training Lotus." Brian drove that car for about two years, following me on Sunday LOONY breakfast runs all over the New York state. Brian bought his second Miata, a 1999 Anniversary Edition from fellow LOONY and Lotus, Ltd. member Nate Fawcett. Nate had bought a 2005 Elise and Brian had always admired his

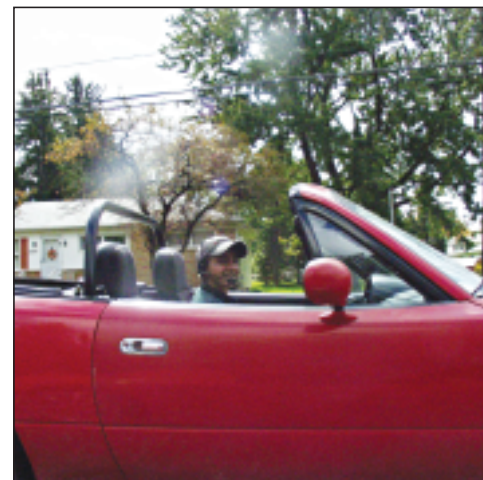




Anniversary Edition Miata and a deal was struck with Nate to replace the “Training Lotus.” We sold the first Miata to Chris Morphy, a fellow LOONY whose Lotus 7 was still in a state of restoration. Chris drove the Miata for a few years and then he bought a M100 Elan and the “Training Lotus” was parked.

A few weeks ago, I sold Chris my M100 Elan. Typically like most Lotus owners, he now has two. In the deal, I asked for the “Training Lotus” back. My brother had asked about his old Miata and wondered if Chris still had it. My plan was to give it back to my brother as a thank you for that first Corvette. I know, not an even pay-back, but I thought he would enjoy it as he had just sold his Corvette and I figured that is why he was asking me about the Miata. I told Angelo that I had bought the car back and it was his for the taking. He thought about it for a while, but its lack of a working driver airbag, and no passenger airbag at all led my brother to decline the offer. As the roads were still clear of snow and salt, I drove the Miata for a few weeks in November recalling how similar it appeared to be to my early Elans. The gearbox was pretty close to the Elan and the exhaust did sound similar, so I suppose the Mazda designers got that part right.

One thing the designers did miss was that the early Miata’s were just not fast enough. I was spoiled by the quickness, responsiveness, and the handling of the Elan. It did not help that in the last issue of Lotus reMarque I wrote about driving my Elan home from long term storage. With the 140 horsepower Twin-cam, the lightness of the car with the Spyder chassis and suspension, dim Elan recollections got bright quickly. When I compared the Miata to the Elan, I knew I was not going to be happy. So, I got to thinking that an Elan inspired Turbocharged MazdaSpeed Miata might just do the trick.



After searching for about two weeks, I found one in Kansas City with 23,000 miles. A bit of a distance from Buffalo New York, but Lotus, Ltd. came to the rescue. I called Lotus, Ltd. member Mike Roberts and asked him if he would do the deal and buy it for me. He said he would and would even take it for a pre-purchase inspection. As I write this, Fedex has literally just delivered my check to Mike and he will complete the deal for me next week after the Christmas Holiday.

Leading the Lotus Life sure takes some strange turns. From Brian driving the “Training Lotus” and myself buying a MazdaSpeed. It is all Lotus connected and it is all Living the Lotus Life!

**Drive Passionately....
Live Life To The Fullest....
Live The Lotus Life!**