

# The Chapman Report



Published by the Golden Gate Lotus Club [www.gglotus.org](http://www.gglotus.org) July/August 2019



Ryan Watson, General Manager of Lotus Cars USA, leads a discussion of the future of Lotus under Geely at the opening social gathering for the 2019 West Coast Lotus Meet, May 15, 2019. More WCLM photos and stories on the following pages.



Sacramento GGLC Chapter member, Craig Hunter, greets attendees at the 2019 WCLM Dave Bean Engineering Banquet May 18 in his traditional family Scottish garb with the addition of a bit of Lotus swag.

## July/August Meet-ups

**When:** Sunday, July 14, 2019 — 10:00 AM

**Where:** Sports Page Bar & Grill  
1431 Plymouth St.  
Mountain View

**Directions from HWY 101 in Mountain View:**

Exit at Shoreline Blvd, turn North (towards the bay)  
Left on Plymouth St. (just after Century Cinema)  
1431 is on the left shortly after the turn

*We are trying something a little different for the July get together. We will meet on **Sunday morning July 14 at 10 AM** at this local sports bar favorite to watch the pre-recorded British Grand Prix that was run earlier that morning. There will be multiple food and drink options available at the bar (no host) as well as a bunch of TVs to check out the action from the UK.*

*There is also loads of free, safe parking out front so let's try to fill it up with Lotus hardware. To make things interesting, the GGLC will buy breakfast and beer for the person wearing and/or bringing the highest number of Lotus-themed accessories. Your car counts as 1; and your shirt, hat, shoes, bra, etc. also count as 1 each. If this all sounds like too much fun, then please stay home and mow the lawn.*

**When:** Sunday, August 18, 2019, 8:00 AM–12N

**Where:** Cars & Coffee, Coyote Creek Golf Club  
1 Coyote Creek Golf Drive  
Morgan Hill

**Directions from HWY 101 in Morgan Hill:**

Exit at Coyote Creek Golf Drive and follow signs to  
Coyote Creek Golf Club on West side of 101

*Something different again this month as we invade the Cars and Coffee gathering on **Sunday morning, August 18** at the Coyote Creek Golf Club in Morgan Hill. The event runs from 8 AM to 12N, so you can arrive anytime. However, it's always fun to drive and arrive in a group, so we will start a drive to the event at John Zender's place in Mountain View (meeting at 8AM and departing at 8:30). Contact John at "john—at—fusiontechnology.com" for directions to his place. Our first stop will be ~8:53 AM at a San Jose Starbucks (5805 Silver Creek Valley Place) to join up with the South Bay Gang, and then it's just a few more miles to The Coyote Creek Golf Club.*

# 2019 West Coast Lotus Meet May 15–19, Folsom, CA

## Recap

editor

This issue of *The Chapman Report* is devoted to sights and stories from the 2019 West Coast Lotus Meet.

Starting with a raucous social at the Red Bus Brewing Company; then on to a breezy track day and autocross at Thunderhill Raceway and a snowy visit to cozy Uncle Tom's cabin; followed by more scenic driving to a beautiful lunch spot at the Helwig Winery and a picturesque visit to Lotus, CA; then a hilarious FunKhana, comic car photo booth and a tasty BBQ at Car-Michael; concluding with a superb Concours on the streets of Historic Folsom, CA, and ultimately capped off with a fine banquet at the Lake Natoma Inn headquarters hotel—the 2019 WCLM put together by the Sacramento Chapter of the GGLC was a 5-day whirlwind of exciting Lotus fun.

The event was a smashing success, and it provided numerous memorable experiences for the lucky attendees.

Some of that excitement—and the related challenges—are captured in the accompanying photos drawn from multiple sources. The photo album is followed by a personal account contributed by Ross Robbins from the Lotus Owners of Colorado (LOCO) club of his, and wife Ann's, travails on the way to and from the 2019 WCLM.



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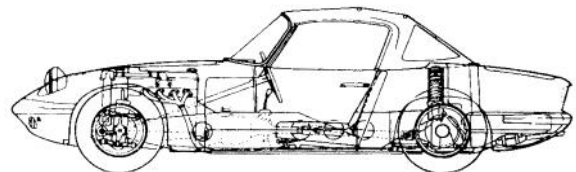
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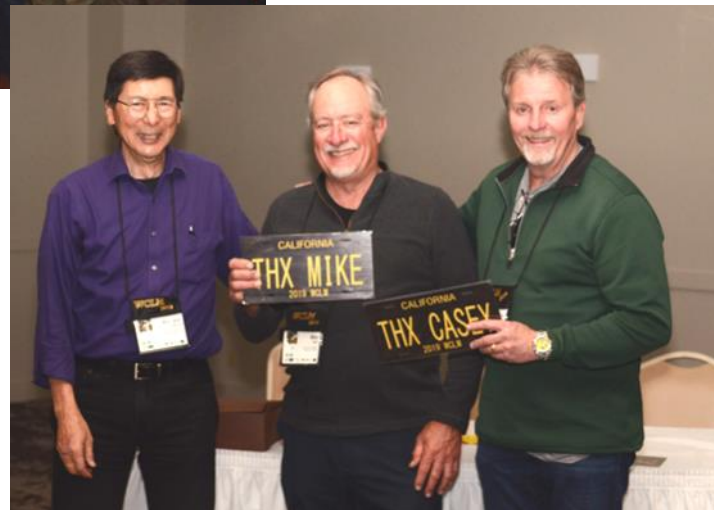
# Calendar

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Location</u>
July 2	SDLC Meet-up	San Diego
July 13	Breakfast/LCoSC	LA
July 14	GGLC Meet-up British GP View	Mountain View
July 21	AutoX, Round #4	Marina
August 6	SDLC Meet-up	San Diego
August 10	Breakfast/LCoSC	LA
August 16-18	<b>Rolex Motor-sports Reunion</b>	Monterey/ Laguna Seca
August 18	GGLC Meet-up Cars & Coffee	Morgan Hill
August 24	AutoX, Round #5	Marina
Sept. 3	SDLC Meet-up	San Diego
Sept. 14	Breakfast/LCoSC	LA

See [www.gglotus.org](http://www.gglotus.org) for additional information about upcoming events.



Scan to get current GGLC calendar on your mobile device.



## Groundhog Day—Lotus Style!

by Ross Robbins

This is the saga of our trip in the 1972 Elan Plus 2 that we drove to the 2019 West Coast Lotus Meet in Folsom, CA, via a circuitous route through Colorado.

The first leg, with about 15 cars from LOCO (Lotus Owners of Colorado), included overnights in Pagosa Springs, CO, and Moab, UT, as we toured through southern and western Colorado's generally spectacular scenery even as we dodged occasional spring snowstorms.

On the third day, as most of the group headed back to the front range, five of us went west through Capital Reef, Escalante and Bryce national parks to our overnight in Beaver, UT. That is a part of Utah I had not experienced. I found it amazing that the topography, vegetation and geology seemed to change completely every 50 miles or so. From red rock arches to canyons; from hoodoos to buff sandstone cliffs; from alpine forest to sagebrush, and all the while climbing and descending hills, riding on top of the ridge or looking up at monoliths on all sides. It was mind boggling!

On we went to the Great Basin National Park and the Lehman Caves. This park, just inside the state line of Nevada, has a spectacular natural cavern, which we toured as a break from the road trip. It was the perfect blend of original and accessible. The Park Service has done a wonderful job of blending the "leave it as it was when Ab Lehman found it" philosophy with the "make it as accessible as Disney" version. It was a true highlight of the trip.

After an uneventful drive out over five days and 1550 miles, I was feeling pretty cocky that this would actually be a routine, almost boring, trip with no car problems. Well, I jinxed it, didn't I?

After two days of hooning around the hills of northern CA on the excellent 2019 WCLM tours where I had flogged the car mercilessly to keep up with the modern Lotus offerings with their turbos and superchargers, Ann and I were simply cruising back to the hotel from the BBQ at Carmichael when I smelled burning rubber and saw the temp gauge go up while the charging gauge went down.

I thought right away that these symptoms pointed to a broken belt for the water pump and alternator, so I looked for the closest exit off the freeway. It was 2 ½ miles away. Fixated on the gauges I made it to the Hazel Avenue exit and called back to some folks who were still at the BBQ. After two calls went directly to voice mail, I finally reached Dave Green. He

relayed a message to others, and soon I had Dan Crow and Dave Simkin arrive, and we all agreed that a tow was needed.

While Dan and Dave, with Ann accompanying them, went back to get the trailer I waited with the disabled car.

### **Discouraged!**

Shortly after they left, Dave and Karen Green showed up with Peter and Rebecca Monson, and they kept me company until Dan arrived back with the trailer and Dave but no Ann. She had the right idea to wait in the hotel bar!

We got the car back to the hotel and left it until morning.

Dan and I went to an O'Reilly auto parts where we found a belt by measuring the old twisted, broken one and estimating the length we would need. The closest one we could find was about an inch bigger, but we thought that would be an improvement since the old one had almost no slack to get over the pulleys. Then Dan had to pay for it as I had left my wallet back in the hotel room. Of course, he said it was all part of my plan.

While we were shopping, Dave was removing the bolts





and loosening the brackets so that, upon our return, he was able to work the new belt on, albeit with some difficulty since the clearance was minimal around the crankshaft pulley.

After everything was buttoned up, I started the car and smelled the same burning rubber smell and saw smoke that confirmed it. Dave crawled underneath and saw a broken motor mount. **Defeated!**

But this was a Lotus meet and Lotus owners are resourceful aren't they? Kiyoshi Hamai came along, and after I ex-





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plained my dilemma, he said that Ken Gray might still be at Dave Bean Engineering, our old reliable Lotus parts supplier, and he was eventually heading up to the hotel. He called Ken who had left the shop but had not started his trip to Folsom yet. Ken agreed to go back to the shop and get the motor mount we needed. In the meantime, we towed the car to Mike Tatro's shop where he had volunteered use of his lift, which would make installation easier than lying on our backs in the hotel parking lot.

Dave and I went to the NAPA store for another belt. They had two, so I bought them both, just in case. **Hopeful!**

When Ken arrived, the usual suspects whom I had counted on to help (I am pretty useless with this sort of repair—the kind that takes tools more sophisticated than a funnel or a screwdriver) were all reportedly cleaning up for the banquet later that evening. (I believe they were actually napping.) So we said we would hit the job Sunday morning. **Delayed!**



**tasty Lotus bits**



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After a great banquet and a good night's sleep, I dressed and went down to the lobby to meet up with my chief mechanic, Dave Simkin, who was not there or in the breakfast area. Looking out to the west end of the parking lot, there was a major void where Dan's red truck and his trailer had been.

**Departed!**

At this point it had become clear that we were not going to have this done in time for Ann and me to leave Sunday on our return trip to CO, so I added a day to the hotel and planned to leave Monday...for sure! I was trying to figure out what I might do when I saw Ken Gray. When I updated him, he volunteered to come help, leaving his wife Rebecca in the car in the parking lot while he came to the rescue of a hapless Plus 2 owner.

We drove out to Mike's shop and went to work. Ken had told Rebecca that this was an hour job plus travel time so he would be back in an hour and a half.

Alas, getting the old mount off was a lot harder than he thought it would be because of the limited access for wrenches as well as the mount itself. After 2 hours, he begged for a bit more time from Rebecca saying we almost had it. When we hit three hours, I pulled the plug as the new mount was in place and just needed bolting in tightly.

Rebecca had been patient enough for three repairs. Thank you Ken for your help and expertise, and thank you Rebecca for waiting your day away.

**Heartened!**

In the time I was gone, Mike had taken it upon himself to complete the installation of the motor mount. We tried the second new belt only to find it was way too long. Despite being in

a sleeve with the same number as the other two belts, it was clearly much longer. We moved on to the third belt, and it was perfect. We started the car and everything seemed good until I backed it out of the shop and drove it about 100 feet to the place where we had parked the M100 that Mike had let us use as a loaner to get back and forth to the hotel.

When I stopped, the belt

started smoking again and while it was not as damaged as it was before, it was getting chewed up badly. **Dejected!**

I now doubted our ability to use the Plus 2 to get home within a reasonable time period, so I agreed with Mike that he would make arrangements for a "real" mechanic, named Scott, that he knew to effect the repairs. This was officially serious.

I had mentioned to Mike that his lovely yellow M100 was a great car and he suggested that it might be for sale. So, after agreeing to leave the Plus 2 in his care to be repaired, we negotiated our purchase of the M100.

As Mel Boss said "...such a creative solution to a 'broken Lotus' problem - buy an M100."

**Excited!**

Early Monday morning I called Spyder Engineering in England for advice, and Andy said that they had seen this before and the fix might be replacing the other motor mount even though it did not look bad.

Meanwhile, I needed to make funds wiring and insurance arrangements for our "new" car, and, while I was doing this Mike, texted and said he thought he had it figured out.

It seems a remark I had made to him about the rough roads we had been on and how the suspension had hit the bump stops several times, along with the gravel and wet roads we had traversed got him thinking. He got a bore scope and looked at the gap between the frame and the lower pulley and found granite chunks almost welded on with the heat. They were acting just like a grinding wheel in reverse with the belt on the wheel taking the beating.

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It took him a lot of time to get the debris out of there, but it seemed like that would explain why replacing the one motor mount had not solved the problem. **Encouraged!**

We went back to Mike's shop where he had fitted the second motor mount in the time we had been packing the car. I helped get the last bolts in and the last new belt on and we fired it up. We hoped to be able to leave with both cars...I'd drive the Plus 2 and Ann the M100. It was smooth and quiet for a while, but then we had the same smell and smoke as before. **Crushed!**

Our new concern was the weather. On Sunday it had snowed in the Sierra with nearly a foot of accumulation on Donner Pass. Another storm was forecast for Tuesday with more snow, but it looked like there would be a gap between storms that would allow for a quick traverse over the pass and beyond.

Dejected, and with the weather on Tuesday looking grim again, we decided to make a run for home in the window we had and solve the Plus 2 problem later—perhaps much later.

Looking at the satellite images, there appeared to be a hole in the huge cloud bands just over Folsom, and it was moving eastward. So, while Peter had left early morning on the northern route using I-80 all the way, and Cindy Hoest took the southern route after Tahoe through southern Nevada, we realized by now, at mid-day on Monday, that we had a very small window of opportunity. We decided to head east on the middle track, US 50, all the way to Colorado. Ann and I packed all the stuff from the Plus 2 boot (and back seat) into the boot of the M100...it fit! We had good weather all the way over Echo Pass and across Nevada on "The Loneliest Road in America."

**Elated!**

Tired and frazzled, we chose to stop in Ely, NV for the night and met up with Cindy there. After a good dinner, we agreed that the best bet we had was to chase the weather front ahead of us and outrun the one behind us. It was a great concept—unfortunately, spoiled by Mother Nature.

As we ate our breakfast a blizzard descended on Ely. By the time we got packed and bought gas, there was a good three inches of snow on the roads. We thought about staying, but the radar said the storm would run through the next day. So we crawled out of town in the tracks of the one pickup truck that blazed a track eastbound while the westbound lane was pure white. My thought was that even at 45 miles an hour, we would soon outrun the storm that had only arrived 30 minutes before, but Cindy was

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(cont'd. from p. 9)

not doing so well on her wide summer tires. It took a while, but the flakes got smaller, the sky lighter and the snow on the road thinner. By the time we got to Utah, it was pretty smooth sailing, and we just kept going.

Finally, in Green River UT we decided to go all the way home; Cindy on I-70 to Rifle and Ann and I to Colorado Springs on US 50. We waved goodbye at Grand Junction, drove on mainly dry roads all the way to Gunnison. Our last Go/No Go decision point was about 11,312 foot Monarch Pass, which Trip Advisor says "...should not be approached casually. Those who do so may well be spending their last day of life."

**Anxious!**

Though it had snowed earlier that day, and we were crossing the Continental Divide, the signs were positive from the folks at McDonald's we spoke with, so we headed over Monarch at 7:30 PM.

It was glorious; Evening sunshine, dry roads and no traffic. Once we cleared the pass we decided to ignore the shorter route my Garmin GPS wanted us to take and stay on 50 through Salida and down the Arkansas river canyon as it was lower than US 24 through South Park, and had no passes to cross, just a steady drift downhill. We pulled into our garage at 10:10 PM.

**Exhausted!**

When I got home, I looked at a text Mike Tatro had sent at 8:00 PM, which said that he and Scott had raised the right motor mount about 1/4 inch which made the belts clear and that the

car was ready for the road again. It seems that the slightly longer belt we had chosen, angled the alternator over just enough that it fouled on the notch in the frame for the crank pulley. So, by elongating the holes on the mount and welding some washers to ensure no movement of the mount, he had enough clearance.

**Ecstatic!**

I flew back to Sacramento on Saturday to pick her up and drive the exact same route we had just done. What did you do for Memorial Day?

Leaving Colorado Springs at noon Saturday, I flew into Sacramento, took my first ever Uber to Mike's shop where Susie opened the door as Mike was away, and I picked up the Plus 2. The car looked great as it had been detailed and I saw the fine job done by Mike and the Mechanics...hey, maybe they should form a band! I guess I'm showing my age and taste in music.

With a good measure of hope, I began the drive back to Colorado at about 5:30 PM with almost 1200 miles ahead of me and an untested repair.

Within a mile, or so, the oil pressure went to zero and I pulled off at a gas station, shut the car off and checked the oil. Full and clean. Normal water temperature. Nothing visibly amiss so I started it and got over 60 psi instead of the normal 45. As I let it idle it went to zero again then back to about 30 and finally back to zero.

My assessment was a faulty gauge, so I gingerly set off again watching and listening carefully. By the time I reached the edge of Folsom, I figured what the hell and assumed that I really had oil pressure. I just ignored the gauge. Well, some 1170 uneventful miles later, I can now report that she is still running sweet and getting 30+ MPG at 75 MPH average speed on the freeway.

**Enchanted!**

I got home safely and the car did too. The only "moment" I had was a sudden stop on the hard shoulder in Vail, CO. This unplanned stop was sudden, but the source of the stop was a Vail police cruiser with red lights flashing. Thankfully, I just got a warning ticket as the officer was sympathetic to my offer that



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“The speedometer was waving between 50 and 80, 65 is right in the middle, so I thought I was doing 65, sir!” He wrote me for 74, and then he paced me for a while so I could use the tach for more accuracy. (I think he just wanted to look over the car as he asked a lot of questions and seemed to admire it.)

**Relieved!**

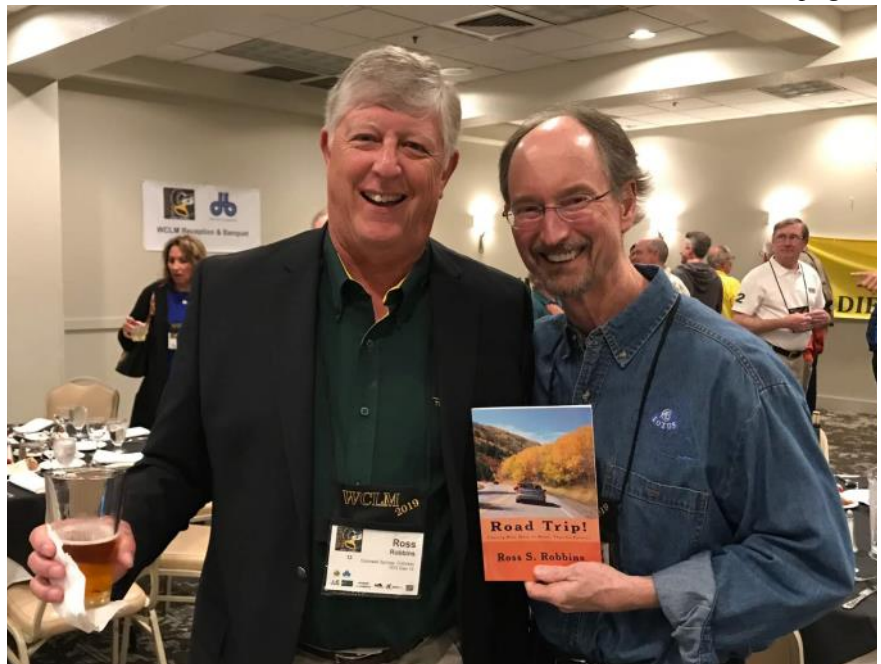
I think I am eligible for both the most stupid award and the iron butt award since I have now driven the “Loneliest Road in America” three times in two weeks. There is a line from a Garth Brooks song that captures my feelings perfectly...”I’m much too young to feel this damn old!”

So to sum up:

1. Huge thanks to Mike Tatro for all his help and for his contacts, and to Susie for springing the car when he was occupied elsewhere.
2. Big thanks to all of you who put on a great meet (except the weather chairman who should be replaced) and to Dan Crow, Dave Simkin, Ken Gray and all the others that helped make this another Ann and Ross Robbins road trip success story.

**Gob Smacked!**

(Editor’s Note: Ross Robbins has written two books based on his travels: *Road Trip!* and *Highways, Byways and Racetracks*. You can find them both on Amazon, so check them out. Also, Kiyoshi Hamai wrote a review of *Highways, Byways and Racetracks*. That review appears in the May/June 2018 issue of *The Chapman Report*.)



# GRIP

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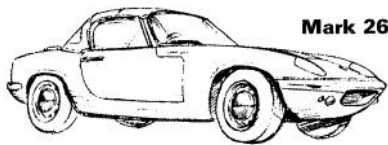
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# Classifieds

(non-commercial ads are free to GGLC members and will run for 2 issues before requiring renewal)

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**For Sale:** 2 ea, Yokohama ADVAN A048 195/50/R16 tires from the front of my Elise. Two years old, with more than 1/2 life left. (Total miles = 3515, with roughly 1100 of that on the track.) As you probably know, the price of these tires has recently doubled, (as per Tire Rack quote.) \$100 for both, you pick up or pay ship-

ping cost. (You can also have the rear tires from the car if you want them (225/45/R17) included at no extra charge. They are down to the wear bars, but OK for the track. Tires are located in Sacramento area. Contact: Jim, (775) 721-9455, or jim.flakus -- at -- gmail.com.

**For Sale:** 2000 S1 Elise (built by Sun International with Acura Integra Type R drivetrain). Registered in CA under SB100. Gray with red interior. A unique vehicle. Contact: Justin at jjgross007 -- at -- verizon.net. Photos can be seen on ebay listing.

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