

The Chapman Report



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It Was Forty Years Ago That Our Band Began To Play.... *editor*

Now is the winter of our discontent..... Well, it is winter, and the winter solstice will be here soon. Now called Christmas in much of the world, but always considered the time of transition. Out with the old and in with the new.

We are winding down on the '08 Lotus activities, while we plan for next year's events. It appears to have been a good year for car events. We had the roll-out of the Lotus Evora. I and other club members, had a great time at the Goodwood Revival. The Monterey Historics had some good races, along with the many concours and auctions that now encompass a full week of events. 2009 should be as successful, though possibly muted by the recession.

Forty years ago, 1968, was also a good year for cars and car events. My 'Baby-boomer' generation demanded and got some pretty hot cars then. I got my first SCCA G-production Spitfire and my first muscle car, a '69 Barracuda 340-S.

Both 1968 and 2008 were years of tragedy and transition. In 1968, we lost Jim Clark. We also lost Bobby Kennedy and Martin Luther King. We drifted deeper into a war that had no end-game or definition of 'Victory', leading to the My Lai Massacre. Opposition to the war led to the Democratic Convention in Chicago and the election of a Republican president, who ran on

a 'Peace' platform, Richard Nixon. Another 20,000 U.S. soldiers and an untold number of Vietnamese would still die after he took office.

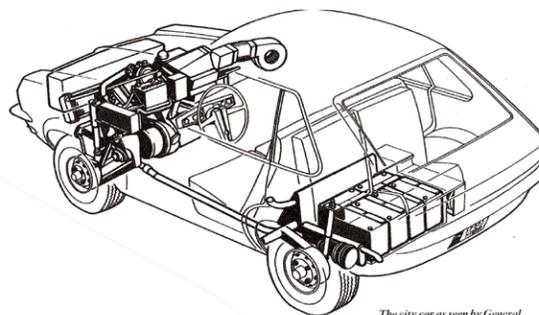
Jump to this year and we see much of the same issues. What we have lost is our self image as the 'good guys', that play by the rules and take the moral high ground. Our tragedies have names like Gitmo and Abu Ghraib. But, while 1968 was considered prosperous, economically, we are now deep into the worst recession most of us have seen.

Many of us, including myself, are now collateral damage from horrible decisions on war and economics. And those we have sent to the Middle East while we go to the shopping

mall? They suffer the greatest sacrifices and come home to a nation that has mostly forgotten them. They're old news!

But this is a time of transition again, with hope that new leaders will bring much needed changes. To the right is the graphic of a change that might have been. It's a prototype hybrid by GM from over twenty years ago. They canned the project and now need \$12M from us to stay in business.

Hope springs eternal, and Spring will be here soon.



The city car as seen by General Motors, whose four-seat XPR83 has a 10 ft 2 in. long glass-fibre body. It has both petrol and electric motors, the petrol engine being used for constant-speed running and the electric for moving off. The engines combine for acceleration

December Meeting

Saturday, December 13th, 6:30 pm

GGLC Holiday Dinner
Ristorante Don Giovanni
235 Castro Street
Mountain View, CA 94041

Toy Rallye

This Saturday, December 6, will be the annual Toy Rallye. Registration is from 1 PM to 3PM, a Beginners School will be held at 2 PM. I'm guessing that cars will roll around 3 PM, and will finish as a local restaurant by 6 PM. Below is a screen capture from the flyer, with a bit more information and a map of the starting point. Entry is \$25 and an unwrapped, new toy, which will be donated to EHC Life

What's a Gimmick Rallye?

A Gimmick Rallye is not a race, but a test of one's ability to follow instructions over a predetermined course. The more tricks and "Gimmicks" you catch, the better your score. Think of the roads and streets as the game board and your car as the playing piece.

Who can compete?

Previous rallye experience is not required. First Timers and Beginners will get extra help getting started. All you need are paper, a pencil or pen, a clipboard, a friend or two, and a car to put them all in. Oh, and a sense of humor helps.

Rallyemasters:

Ed (Chief Dispatcher) Slintak
Ray (Division Superintendent) deBlieck
Assistant: Alex (The Apprentice Extraordinaire) deBlieck

For additional info on this rallye, send e-mail to: dec08@therallyeclub.org

For more info on rallyes in the Bay Area visit: www.therallyeclub.org



Calendar

- December 6, Toy Rallye, Mountain View
- December 13, Holiday Party,
- December 26, Track Day, Laguna Seca
- January 16, Club Meeting, Tom & Cherie Carney

For more and up to date information on these GGLC and other events check the GGLC website at www.gglotus.org



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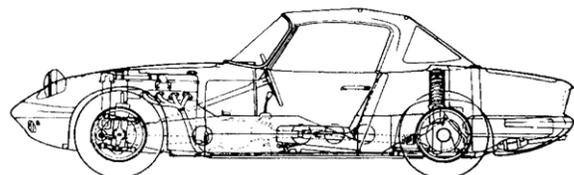
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ROAD RACING IN NEW JOISEY???

A September business/vacation trip to New Jersey provided Flash Racing Ltd. another unique opportunity. VRG (Vintage Racers Group) had a vintage race at the New Jersey Motorsports Park (NJMP) in southern NJ. NJMP has 2 tracks. VRG was racing on the Lightning (as in P-38) circuit, and there was an SCCA Regional on the Thunderbolt (as in P-47) circuit.

A friend told me about Air Cooled Racing. Ring, ring, “Hi Steve. It’s the world famous Flash. I hear you may have toys available for the NJMP race. 914-6s? Sure I know what they are.” (FRL almost bought a 914-4 in 1969.) Aren’t they kinda like a Vee except they have 2 more cylinders, 5 more carbs, doors and a roof? We BS’d for the better part of an hour; deal done. I neglected to tell Steve that this just might be the fastest car I have ever really raced. Oh sure, Flash has piloted some really fast cars on various racetracks, but a track day in a NASCAR stocker and racing a 914-6 are DIFFERENT!

The race weekend included an air show of warbirds at the airport, next to the track. So we had four P-47 Thunderbolts, a P-40 Warhawk, a P-51 Mustang, a Spitfire, two B-25s, a C-47, a PBY, a TBF, and four or five T-6s flying overhead all weekend. One of the most spectacular demos was the P-51 that did a number of rolls and dives during the V-8 race. He finished off

with a full throttle pass, 300 feet off the deck, during the V-8 race. The sound of the flying Mustang easily drowned out all of the ground-bound Mustangs.

Friday went well for Flash, but badly for a big group of racers. There were many incidents with a few guys having major mechanicals, or they were just bad boys. There were 2 incidents where friends ran into one another. Remember, this is vintage racing and crashing is verboten. In one case a car with knock-offs side swiped another. The other car looked like he was racing against Ben Hur’s chariot with those worley, spiky gizmos. VRG came down hard on the offenders, as they should. I had 2 good, solid sessions and went faster each time.

In Saturday’s qualifying I got the POLE! In the afternoon race Flash screwed up the start a bit by bouncing off the rev limiter in second and third (once maybe, but in 2 gears—you idiot!) but won the race anyway. This was my first overall win in many years (Vees don’t generally win in mixed company).

For Sunday’s feature race, Flash got a great start (from the POLE—did I mention that???) and opened up a lead at the rate of a second a lap. Then he was smart enough to back out a bit and run conservatively to get the win. 11 laps into the 15 lap race the alternator/fan shaft broke. The fan fell forward and started rubbing on the firewall behind my back. I shut down

and parked the car at the edge of the track when the funny noises started. Even though the car broke, it was a great weekend and I had a blast.

How was the 914-6 GT to drive? It was fast and easy to drive. And the sweet noise that the flat 6 made—Wonderful!! As I shifted up each time, the song from behind me got sweeter and sweeter. It was a REAL racing motor, it would snarl @ high rpms and burble, spit, and pop @ low rpms. None of that “bees buzzing around your ears” that FVs produce.

The car provided enough challenge at the limit that it always had your attention. I kept trying to roll on the throttle harder and earlier in the Lightbulb. As I got near the limit of rear traction, the 914-6 would respond gently but firmly to tell me that the rear end had just about enough of that kind of screwing around.

By Flash Team Principal,
Flash Racing Ltd.

Freelance Automotive Journalist

Member of the Western Automotive Journalists

All around good guy
Dick Ryan

Planning to attend GGLC is always a bit of a problem. We have missed it twice because of graduation ceremonies, and this year we came up with a plan fairly early on. We coordinated travel with our good friend Justin Gross, who had surgery this summer and wasn't sure how well he would be at the time we booked everything. The fall back plan was to drive him there, but in the event he was in good health, and we formed a little convoy of Justin's red M100 Elan followed by my silver Series 1 Elise. The ladies are a bit harder to predict, so we planned to fly them in for the weekend as necessary. In the event Julia Gross was off on a business trip and Laurel Cockcroft flew from SFO to Medford for the weekend.

We wanted to take it easy, and enjoy our drive, so we split the travel with an overnight stay in each direction, taking Highway 101 northbound, and I-5 southbound. Justin lives in Gilroy, and I'm in Los Gatos so we met on Wednesday morning in Milpitas. Having looked at the weather forecast, I made sure to pack my WCLM 2004 rain coat and two towels. One for each side of the Elise where it drips... Heading up Highway 880 around 10:30, we took 580 and crossed the Richmond Bridge to reach 101. A nice cruise for Justin, but my Elise has stiffened suspension bushes and engine mounts, so everything vibrates and booms, and I keep ear plugs in the car. However as a

birthday present I had asked for some Sennheiser iPhone earbud headphones, and they act as ear plugs for the car noise while also letting me listen to music and take phone calls. There is a combined microphone and clicker on the cord, so I could click to answer calls hands-free if needed, but more importantly I could easily locate it to click to pause and double click to skip to the next song. Out in the country I listened in iPod mode, but when there was good reception I had fun with my own Pandora internet radio channel.

We stopped for an excellent lunch at Geyserville (Justin knows all the good places to eat and stay) then carried on to the Benbow Inn just south of Garberville. This is a magnificent hotel, it's usually very expensive, but their off season mid-week prices were bearable and we got very nice rooms since they weren't busy. Dinner was excellent at the Benbow Inn, not cheap, but very good.

The next day we woke up to a very nice breakfast and rain, the carefully positioned wet towels from overnight were squeezed out and we set off north again on 101. Justin lead a slight detour through the redwood trees along of The Avenue of the Giants, then we pressed on in the rain. There aren't many decent places to eat, other than the usual fast food chains in Eureka and Crescent City, so we made a long stint (Hwy 199) inland to Oregon over Grants Pass to the city of Grants Pass. This is where 199 meets I-5, so we continued up I-5 to Canyonville

to the Seven Feathers resort, finding a designated Lotus parking area and eventually locating the back room behind the casino floor that was full of old friends, new friends, a bag of stuff, food, drink and car talk.

The next day, we decided to share the drive to Crater Lake. Justin would drive there and I would drive back. Of course we both left our route instructions behind, but figured out that we could follow people and use iPhone maps as backup (note, this was a bad plan). The day started off with a visit to an up-market saw mill, which was quite impressive, to see big round trees being turned into nice big high quality planks and "pencils" according to our guide. Checking someone else's instruction sheet the way to Crater Lake was to head north to Roseburg, then turn right and keep going, so we did. We ended up with an Elise and an Exige following us, and it also began to rain more as we got closer to Crater Lake. The need for a pit stop got to us a bit early, and we pulled off at Diamond Lake's lodge, where the very friendly staff were happy for us to eat our box lunches, and we drank lots of their coffee in return. Continuing to Crater Lake, we caught up with a larger contingent of Loti at the entrance, and continued to the Crater Lake Lodge/Shop. There was heavy rain, mist, low cloud, but no sign of any craters or lakes. I consoled myself by buying some postcards of what it was supposed to look like.

continued next month

2008 GGLC Autocross Series *Kiyoshi Hamai*



The 3rd season the GGLC Autocross Series closed on Saturday Nov 1st. This marked the end of a season of 6 events that began back in April with the annual GGLC Autocross Clinic. Through the summer and into the fall the GGLC Autocross events attracted 60+ drivers that competed against the clock and against one another.

Three classes were contested, Elise/Exige on R-compound tires, Elise/Exige on street tires and Open Class.

But, I get ahead of myself. The 2008 GGLC Autocross Series was led by Larry Bisares and assisted by Alexander Komlik, Colm Gavin and Jason Sams. Larry has been instrumental in organizing the events and with Alexander's assistance every GGLC Autocross sells out in a matter of days. Colm took up the task of managing Timing and Scoring and Jason has become the clubs course designer!

Last year the GGLC took a big leap by purchasing autocross equipment. We acquired timers, cones and such, but we had no permanent way to transport all this equipment. A trailer was considered, but then we would have the problem of towing it. Modifying an old RV was suggested. The RV could be gutted and then modified. This seemed like an ideal solution because the RV could be set-up to be the perfect Autocross support vehicle we also knew that it would be unlikely to get enough time and volunteers to help with the build. In the end we decided on purchasing a used box van.

Over the course of the GGLC Autocross season we had sell outs every event. We had one event

with torrential rains, another with scorching heat and lots of memories.

The last event was Nov 1st with about 60 entrants contesting and fighting off and on rains. Lunch was hosted by Silicon Valley Auto Group. Thanks to SVAG's generosity we had season ending awards and a wonderful lunch.

The 2008 GGLC Autocross Season Champions are –

Retro Koradi – Elise/Exige R-compound tires class

Colm Gavin – Elise/Exige Street Tires Class

Joshua Salvage – Open Class

Kevin Koch – Most Improved

The 2009 GGLC Autocross season will start in April. Watch for it and join the fun!



At the top, Adrian Cockcroft with his Honda powered S1. Above, Colm Gavin congratulated on a win, and Larry Bisares below.





My car is a 1972 Lotus Europa. Colin Chapman, a British engineer and hotrod enthusiast, founded the Lotus car company in the 1950s. He competed in hill climbs and was such a successful innovator that other hill-climb racers would pay him to help modify their cars. It wasn't long before he started selling kit cars. The most famous was the Lotus 7, an iconic sports car, which is still manufactured today. By the late '50s he was offering finished cars. While his sports car business was successful, his main focus continued to be racing, and he (and the Lotus Marque) acquired a reputation as a formidable team in Formula 1. They won several world championships during the '60s and '70s with renowned drivers such as Jimmy Clark, Graham Hill, Mario Andretti and Jackie Stewart. Unfortunately, Chapman died of a heart attack in the early '80s. Since his death, Lotus Cars has had its ups and downs, but is still producing cars for driving enthusiasts.

Lotus introduced the Europa in 1966. It was one of the first production cars to incorporate the mid-engine concept pioneered in the Ford GT 40, the car that revolutionized sports car racing in the mid-'60s. Chapman recognized that with a minor modification to the transaxle, the power train of

a Renault 16 (a front-wheel drive car), could be used to drive the rear wheels of the mid-engine car that he was designing. The car received favorable reviews in the automotive press; the only negative comments were that the car was somewhat underpowered - approximately 80 horsepower in a car weighing 1,350 pounds. In 1971, Lotus replaced the Renault engine with the four-cylinder Twin Cam Lotus Ford engine. This engine, with a cast-iron block, was 100 pounds heavier than the Renault engine, but increased the horsepower to 125. Production continued until 1975, when the model was replaced by the more up-scale Lotus Esprit. Approximately 10,000 Europas were produced, about 4,000 of them powered by the Renault engine. The factory raced a competition version of the Europa in Europe between 1966 and 1968; it won several races in its class.

I have always admired the Lotus minimalist approach to constructing performance cars. These cars are known for being lightweight and for their superior handling. Also, they are relatively inexpensive compared to cars with similar performance statistics.

I courted my wife in a 1966 Lotus Elan Roadster (for those of you who remember the "Avengers" TV program, the Elan was Emma Peel's

car). Sadly, I sold it when I got married and went to grad school. But when the kids began leaving the house for college, I started looking for a car to work on as a hobby. I couldn't afford an Elan Roadster, but a year later I finally located my Europa. It was a "basket case" that had been disassembled by the previous owner, who then ran out of time and funds to restore it, but it was essentially complete. Doing minor tasks myself and contracting with professionals to do the rest, several years and several thousand dollars later, I had a running car. Since then, I have continued to enhance the car, most recently upgrading the engine and brakes and adding a roll bar. The car has a custom orange-and-black paint job (the colors of Oregon State University, my alma mater, and the San Francisco Giants).

These cars are not expensive to maintain. The power train is Ford/Renault. A lot of the suspension components are from the Triumph Spitfire, another popular British sports car that was imported into the United States. There are several small businesses based in both the United States and the United Kingdom that sell replacement and upgraded parts, and there are shops that specialize in maintaining and rebuilding Lotus cars.

One of the advantages of owning a car like this is the opportunity it affords to interact with other Lotus enthusiasts. The Bay Area's Golden Gate Lotus Club is very active and sponsors a lot of activities, such as car shows, rallies, autocrosses and track days at Laguna Seca, Thunder Hill and other nearby race tracks. The members are friendly and generous with their time and advice. If you are a "gearhead," I would strongly advise you to join a club. There is one for practically every brand of car.



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The Chapman Report is published monthly by the Golden Gate Lotus Club, PO Box 117303, Burlingame, CA 94011. The GGLC is a non-profit incorporated car club and is not affiliated with Group Lotus, Team Lotus or Lotus Cars USA. The GGLC's annual membership dues are \$25.00.

Opinions expressed in the Chapman Report are those of the authors and do not represent those of the GGLC or its officers.

Submissions to the Chapman Report are accepted and encouraged. Please email them to EDITORGGCLC@YAHOO.COM in MS Word, rtf or ASCII text. Submissions may also be mailed to Jim McClure, 11238 Bubb Road, Cupertino, CA 95014.

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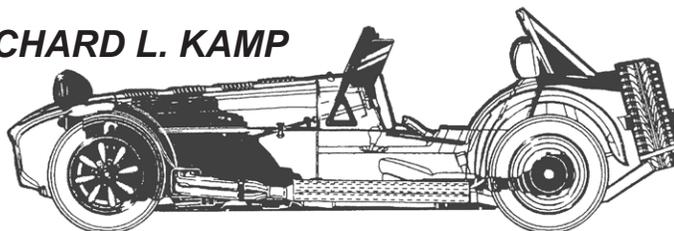
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