



# KIT LOTUS

Volume 10 Issue 2 April 2017



Scratch building at it's finest - chance conversation results in two fabulous Bedfords.

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# AXEL'R

I always say this but where did that go? Its eight weeks already and it seems I only just finished writing the last edition but that's ok because it is one of those pleasant tasks made easier because of the expanding network of Kit Lotuseers willing to share experiences and prepared to drop some neat stuff in my inbox. Hopefully Volume 10 issue 2 will be no exception and I'm confident there is once more something for most of us.

**Race Retro plays** a big part in this issue as Kit Lotus on the road is getting just as important as building and collecting Lotus models. More and more people are getting to see us in the flesh and not just Lotus people but other model organisations who have been very complimentary not least toward the professional manner which I like to portray Kit Lotus when we are on show. Race Retro was amazing (apart from one flaw which you will read about later) and new owners Clarion Events can be justifiably proud of what they achieved, they certainly raised the bar from what was an already good show with lashings of atmosphere in to an even better show, what a great weekend.

**I've devoted** quite a bit of space to Peter Pedroza's brace of Bedford transporters, scratch built for a couple of special people, some of his techniques are brilliant and his machining skill just amazing. I was thinking of installing a lathe in my workshop as a gift to my approaching retirement but I'm not so sure I could pick up a long since unused skill to anything like Pete's standard, there could be a danger of all the gear and no idea, sub-contracting like ACBC did has its appeal!!

**I promised last issue** to let you know when the Speed Details website had been upgraded and you could get hold of those booklets on DFV plumbing. Well, Stephen Miller has pressed the button and his new site is live at <https://sites.google.com/site/speeddetails/> Well worth a look, Stephen shares not only access to his remarkable publications but to his own model gallery where he has dioramas depicting various Le Mans and Champcar scenes and some of his award winning entries to model shows. No Lotus subjects in the model section but that doesn't stop us admiring a fellow modellers excellent work.

The Lotus 30 features this time in the guise of a slot car from George Turner Models. The 30 has been quite popular as a slot car over the years partly because it is low and wide, obviously proving such traction potential is equally important in miniature as in real life. I'm confident though that pilots of this 1:32 scale offering won't suffer from the chassis flexing fondly remembered by pilots of the 1:1 version.

I never thought I would do any woodworking in connection with Kit Lotus other than building displays and the like but that concept went out of the window when I reported on a wooden Lotus in a previous issue. Since then the wooden world has widened and I have just built a Lotus 7 made of laser cut Birch Ply, read on...

Some good news arrived from Ebbro about new Lotus model releases, see the back page for the latest update.

**The end of any era** can bring mixed feelings none more so than the announcement that Roger Duple, better known for his Axel R range of 1:43 scale models officially hangs up his silicone moulds at the end of March opting for retirement and the chance to enjoy life without the pressures of deadlines and production to worry about. We wish him a long and happy retirement but sign off with a feature briefly outlining his modelling journey which delighted scale model collectors all over the world.

**The Race Retro report** mentions the Jim Clark Trust and its efforts to create a modern extension to the Jim Clark Room in Duns. A subject close to the hearts of most Lotus fans, the word is that it is unlikely the extension will be built before the 50th anniversary of Jim's death which will be April 2018. One thing getting in the way is the amount of cash needed to enable the matched funding to be drawn down. The Trust has to raise £300K by 21st April to ensure promised funding is triggered.

Whilst Kit Lotus isn't a begging letter bureau, I decided to include this route:

[www.crowdfunder.co.uk/jim-clark-museum](http://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/jim-clark-museum) If all Kit Lotus readers made a small contribution it would be a big help. UK taxpayers can also claim gift aid which meant The government will cough up a contribution with you. Enjoy the magazine **JT**

## A tale of two Bedfords - Genius at work Part 5



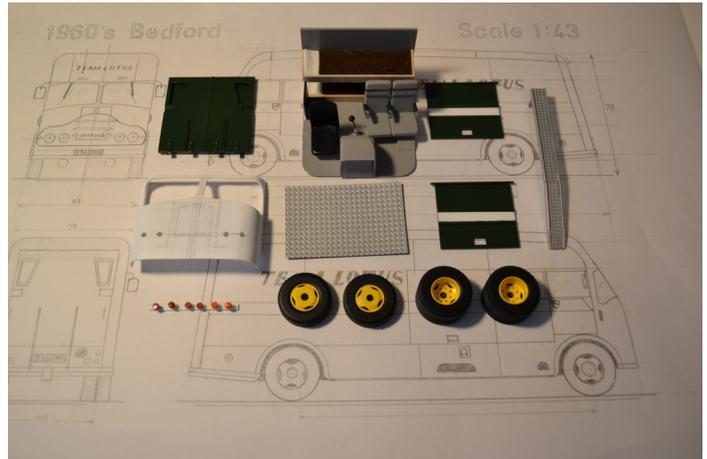
These two models came into being as a result of one of those chance conversations together with a bit of luck. It was the weekend of Mike Serrurier UK visit and the Kit Lotus double-header, Malcolm Ricketts charity open day on the Saturday followed two days later with a visit to Classic Team Lotus. As we were saying our goodbyes at CTL on the Monday John Thornhill was talking with Bob Dance and looking at some of the model Team Lotus transporters. Bob happened to mention that no-one seemed to make a model of the Bedford truck that was used during the early '60's and one of which Bob obviously has some fond memories. John then remembered that I had



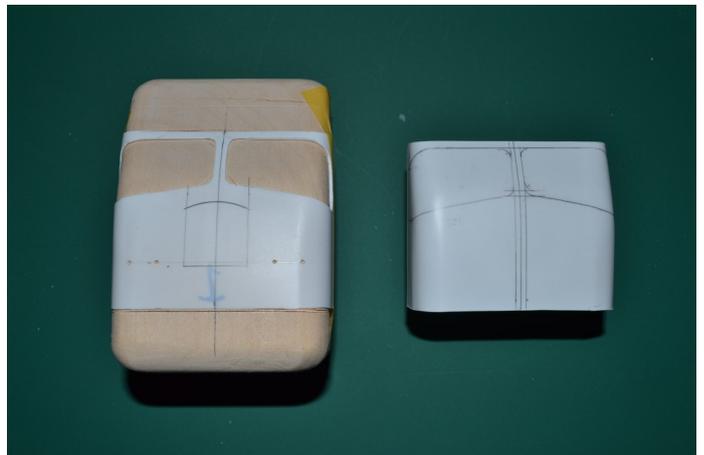
built the back half of this one for effect on a 1960's type 25 paddock scene, (Vol 3 Iss 2), not only that but it was in the back of my car as Kit Lotus had put on our usual display at Malcolm Ricketts.

Out in the car park I showed Bob this model and after having a good look at it he asked if it would be possible to build two models of it in a scale to fit with the other model transporters. Well, you can't say no to Bob Dance can you and so of course I agreed there and then.

One of the models was for himself and the second he intended giving to John Bowers whom regular readers will know about. This was a really nice thought on Bob's part to give the model to John as being the owner of 25/R4 this transporter would have carried his car all over Europe during the 1963 Championship winning year. This particular 25 is still raced regularly by Andy Middlehurst with Bob being the lead mechanic, a formidable trio if ever there was.

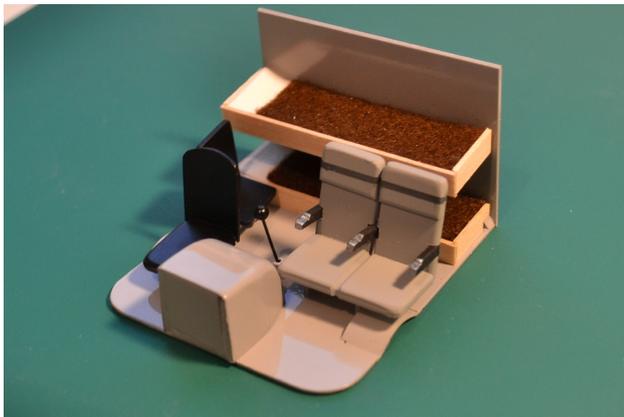


So two weeks later I prepared to start drawing the vehicle to 1:43 scale but straight away hit a snag. This is another of those Lotus vehicles that seems to have slipped under the radar not only as regards model manufacturers but also details of the vehicle itself, for there are very few photos and next to no information of it. Perhaps in this case it's not surprising really as these vehicles were just the workhorses of the day, there to serve a purpose and nothing more. These trucks were usually overloaded and underpowered but yet clocking up thousands and thousands of miles travelling all over Europe. Not only that but the mechanics who spent very long days building and preparing the race cars then had to drive these transporters as well, usually non-stop to reach the circuits in time for first practice.



## A tale of two Bedfords continued.....

As we all know research is vital for any model build and at the time all I had to start with was about four black and white photos of the truck in various books. However, I did have one more vital piece of information - Bob Dance! He supplied me with some of his own photos but more than that his memory is absolutely spot-on and he could remember virtually every detail of the truck, not surprising really as he must have spent a very large part of his life in it. Bob then told me the history of this particular transporter and it makes good reading.



Following a series of makeshift vehicles, including the now infamous 903 PMT, Colin Chapman decided to build what was the first purpose build racing car transporter used by Team Lotus. It was built in 1961 on a standard 18 feet wheelbase Bedford SB coach chassis by Arterial Motor Bodies on the Southend Road in London. The overall height was kept at 10' 6" so it could get on and off the ferries of the time and with an overall length of 28' could carry three cars, two on the top deck with the third on the lower, a bit of a tight squeeze but possible. There was also a tow ball on the rear for a trailer. Amidships, hatches either side revealed stowage for oil, tools etc., and including, according to Bob, six spare gearboxes. Although the ZF used at that time was a good unit the ratios couldn't be changed at races so if a driver wanted a different set-up then the whole gearbox had to be replaced. Fitted with a 2.8 litre engine this Bedford was still underpowered. A four speed gearbox mated with a twin speed final drive unit helped but fully loaded the drivers still had to use all 8 gears. The brakes weren't particularly great either, prone to overheating and there are some really big hills in Europe.

Up front a standard drivers seat was complimented with twin passenger seats from an aircraft. Behind the driver a small dickey seat was set at 90 degrees together with two bunk beds, .....

Bob saying you didn't want to get the lower one as being on the floor the heat and smell of diesel from the front mounted engine could be a bit overpowering. Originally the Bedford had just single headlights but it was rebuilt with a new front end incorporating twin headlights, spotlights and a sturdy bumper. According to Bob the reason for the mod was due to an altercation with a motorway service lamp-post on the M1 motorway! It served Team Lotus in F1 up to 1966 and was then used for the F2 team in 1967 before being sold on, together with two Type 48 F2 cars, to Gerry Kinnane for his Team Ireland racing team .

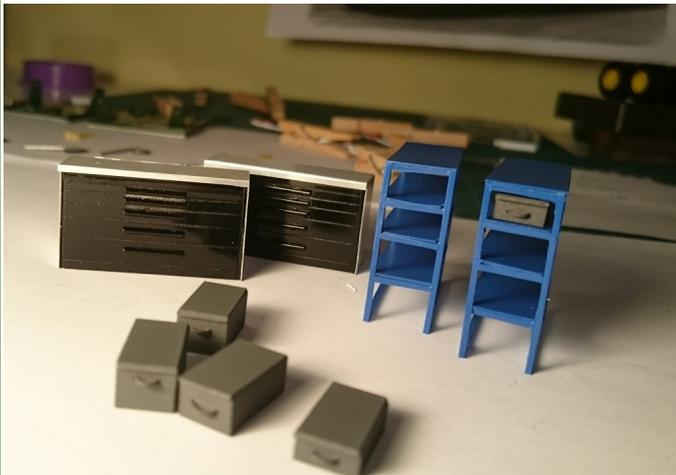


So that was the history of it, all I had to do now was convert all this information into a 1/43 model and the first thing to work out was how to actually build it. A single-seater is fairly straightforward, do it just like they build the full size cars. Start with the tub then add the engine, gearbox, suspension and bodywork. This vehicle was a bit different though. After a bit of head scratching I decided to build it in three sections. The first would be the bulk of the body from the doors backwards, the cab interior would be built as a separate unit and slid in from the front and then the actual front of the vehicle fitted at the end of the build.



## A tale of two Bedfords continued .....

A template of the sides with the windows and side hatch openings etc. was made from thin brass with this then being used to mark out plastic card with bulkheads added in the correct places. To show the way the coachbuilders did their construction the inside walls were fitted out with very thin Basswood. This wood is very similar to Balsa but has a very much finer grain. These wooden slats came in very handy on the full size vehicle as they served to hold spare racing wheels. The floor was covered in metal tread plate and this is where our model railway enthusiast friends came to the rescue. I suppose making models is a declining past time these days as can be seen by the lack of model shops on the high street. However there does seem to be quite a lot of suppliers on-line. A quick search and up popped plastic tread plate in various scales, mainly aimed at the said model railway buffs. Cut to size and a quick aluminium spray and that was the floors and ramps taken care of.



Next to be made was the roof so a bit of metal bashing from sections of aluminium sorted that. Bob had told me that during the transporters front end re-build this roof had also had sky lights fitted made from opaque plastic. Opaque plastic? No problem, I just used a piece from a plastic milk bottle!! After the usual primer, filling, rub down and top coats the separately built cab layout was slid in as previously mentioned.



Basically a block of wood, again I used Basswood, is shaped to the drawing dimensions less the thickness of the plastic to be used, 1mm in this case. Another flat piece this time of plywood had the shape of the block cut out of it's centre with a little clearance so that it easily slips over. A piece of plastic card is then attached to this flat section with double sided sticky tape and put in an oven at about 190-200C. The plastic will at first crinkle then start to regain its shape, at this point whip it out of said oven and push over the shaped block. After a few seconds the plastic cools and after trimming you are left with a thin walled moulding of the front of the vehicle. That's the theory anyway! For anyone wishing to have a go two points gained from experience. 1. You will need to have a few practice goes on scrap plastic to find the actual temperature and understand the process, and 2, wait while you are "alone" in the house!!



Polystyrene does smell a bit when hot.

All that remained then were detail parts. The lights were turned from aluminium with the 4mm lenses punched out from finely scribed clear plastic. The decal artwork I did myself and printed off on a really good printer. The wheels were turned from brass with aluminium centres and the tyres from Delrin, a similar material to Nylon.

As no drawing exists of this particular Transporter I couldn't be totally sure that the model was 100% accurate to 1/43 scale but at one point during the build I tried to see if a Brumm 25 would go anywhere near it but in fact it fitted nicely in the back. I mentioned this fact to Bob who then had a word with Clive Chapman who very kindly donated some of these models to make the transporter a bit more lifelike.

After completion the two models were taken over to Norfolk once again. I suppose I could send them by mail or carrier but I prefer to deliver them personally. By now regular readers will be thinking that the only reason I build these models for CTL is to keep going to Potash Lane so I can have a wander round the workshops and look

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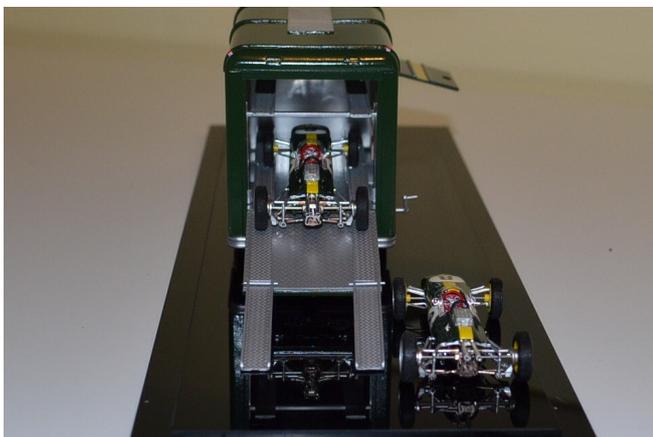
## A tale of two Bedfords continued.....

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lovingly at whichever cars happen to be there at the time. As if that was the only reason! As if!!!!!! However, on this occasion there was a post script.

After I handed the models over to Bob he gave me one back! This was at the end of January and as John Bowers was not due to visit the UK until early March Bob very graciously said that the second model should be displayed on the Kit Lotus stand at Race Retro in February.

This duly happened and a surprising number of people looked at it with comments such as; " Oooh, never seen one of those models before" and " About time someone produced this vehicle", things like that. The only problem I had all weekend was wondering how I was going to get it back to Bob as *unbelievably* I wasn't in a position to visit Hethel in the coming weeks, but by Sunday I had a unique solution. Classic Team Lotus had two cars on display all weekend, 33/R11 and 49B/R10 so I arranged to send it back with them. The model was boxed up and placed in the seat of the 49B and so in a complete role reversal for once it was the racing car that carried the transporter!!



Some "interesting?" stats about the second Bedford, destined for Australia and concerning the mileage given that in period, Lotus transporters had to suffer many thousands of miles before motorways were so prevalent:

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| <b>Manchester to Norwich (To hand over to Bob)</b>                             | <b>220 miles</b>       |
| <b>Norwich to Manchester (Brought back on Bobs insistence)</b>                 | <b>220 miles</b>       |
| <b>Manchester to Stoneleigh (Race Retro)</b>                                   | <b>125 miles</b>       |
| <b>Stoneleigh to Norwich ( To return to Bob)</b>                               | <b>150 miles</b>       |
| <b>Norwich to Croix, France (Taken to test session to give to John Bowers)</b> | <b>280 miles</b>       |
| <b>Croix to London Heathrow (To catch flight)</b>                              | <b>180 miles</b>       |
| <b>London to Sydney ( Flight home)</b>   | <b><u>10,560 "</u></b> |
| <b>Total Miles</b>   | <b>11735 Miles</b>     |

*It's always nice to be recognised*, especially when it is by the nation's foremost motor sport magazine, no less than **MOTORSPORT** itself.

Motorsport April issue carried a report penned by Gordon Cruickshank about Race Retro containing the following quote:

*" Always with an eye for the miniature, I was captivated by some of the work of Kit Lotus, a kit-building collective of Lotus fans, showing fine models of Lotus transporters right back to an early converted coach and the scary Zephyr- engine Thames van, plus a lovely 1/20 diorama of mechanics unloading 25s onto a grassy paddock"*

Hopefully, it won't be the last time Kit Lotus is recognised, I'm confident there is much more to come.

## Clarion Events - Race Retro 2017

They say the party isn't over until the well-nourished lady sings. Well. I never heard her singing so the party must still be in full flow, but sadly, the day after the night before inevitably brings anti-climax, large ladies or not. My anti-climax is Monday following Race Retro and time to start unpacking the car after another cracking four days at Stoneleigh Park showing off Kit Lotus.

Race Retro or The International Historic Motorsport Show as it is also known was celebrating 15 years with its new owner Clarion Events taking the reins for the first time and what a job they made of it, they made a great show even better. Clarion were very generous in allowing us to put on our annual showcase of hand built scale model Lotus in a six metre show booth nestling in a prime spot in the biggest hall, Hall 2.

Once again, the event spread over 4 halls plus many outside events such as a Classic Tour, self-drive classic cars and a Group B Rally Stage featuring many World Rally Cars.

Our own interest as Lotus enthusiasts was heightened this year with the arrival of Lotus 33/R11. Stored privately over the last 40 years and featured in Motorsport Magazine – the show headline sponsor – and this year exhibited in the Motorsport Hall of Fame. After the show it was to return to Hethel for a major fettle but not before it was used to launch the Jim Clark Truss Fund (check the spelling as I didn't know Jim ever wore a truss). Joking aside, the Trust fund has been set up to fund the planned extension to the Jim Clark Room in Duns which was due to open next April, 50 years after Jim's sad demise and the launch was well attended at the Motorsport Live Stage where Clive Chapman was the key speaker. It is my understanding that 33 R11 will grace the opening in a completely restored state, can't wait.

This year's Kit Lotus display started months earlier, not least to ensure we get accommodation booked on site (see later) but to check over displays, building them at home to make sure they go together ok. Our first day at Race Retro is spent loading cars up to the gunnells before transporting the lot to Stoneleigh Park and setting about building the display. This year the display took a full five hours to build and even then we weren't happy with the final set up which meant an early start in the couple of hours before the show opens to the public to get it right.



This year, we decided to eliminate 1:43 scale from our display apart from a handful of relevant small scale to complement other parts of the display such as the transporters. Our reason for this is varied. For a start, every year we have to run repair clinics because of the inevitable damage associated with handling and moving delicate models. Handling damage however isn't confined to our own hands, the temptation for visitors to pick up our models is sometimes overwhelming and not usually the youngsters. It tends to be the older visitors usually who think they can pick up our models despite polite signage requesting abstention from this practice. Not only that, the tendency is to mistake some of our small scale models for Spark or Minichamp such is the detail that can be found in diecast/resin cast models

## Race Retro continued....

>>>> Anyway, the 1:43rds can stay safely at home.

In larger scale, Pete debuted his amazing Bedford Transporter receiving masses of admirers as the stand filled with visitors time after time. It seemed as if coach trips were arriving at regular intervals disgorging their passengers into our 6 metres by 3 metres temporary piece of universe. Obviously there were no bus passengers but the level of visitors was definitely higher than last year, over 1000 Kit Lotus leaflets were given out.

Simon's collection of superbly built 1:20 scale formula one models made up the bulk of our 1:20



display whilst Pete's scratch built offerings also attracted lots of respect. Joining those ranks were my own 1:12 49s and my 1:8 Lotus 18 exhibited as work in progress but nevertheless sitting on its wheels held together by a couple of screws and lots of fresh air.

The show ran on Friday, Saturday and Sunday with Friday the day where the serious racers and people in the industry visit. Friday is our best day for meeting people and this time was no exception. Visitors to our display included several Kit Lotus readers, their numbers growing each year and to all of you it really is a pleasure to see you and talk Lotus models. Clive Chapman dropped in as did Bob Dance and Richard Parramint. Lotus racer Nick Fennel came to say hello and erstwhile Lotus mechanic Dick Scammel paid us a visit as did Malcolm Ricketts. All of them Lotus names.

All aspects of historic racing and motorsport including two wheels is covered. Clarion made a massive effort and there was a definite air of improvement. Many things were more professional than previous, Hall 3 for example where the live stage always sits was transformed with the stage really taking centre stage this time. The Fire Engine doubling as a bar, the vintage Mack Semi Truck doubling as a burger van were both banished. The area between 3 and 4 where usually a gigantic car boot/ Sunday market style tool vendor and tables of rusty bits used to sit was much better, the market stall had been banished to be replaced by an open meeting and rendezvous space with professional signage and access to one of the restaurants.

The live stage Q and A sessions proved very popular with rallying legend Ari Vatanen working extremely hard over the weekend meeting people, signing hundreds of autographs and taking part in the Q and A sessions themselves, he really is a gentleman. American bike racer Freddie Spencer and Le Mans winner Tom Kristensen did similar sterling jobs representing their particular brand of Motorsport. Mike Costin helped celebrate 50 years of the DFV alongside a display of DFV powered F1 cars including the Lotus 49 driven to victory twice at Monaco by Graham Hill.

Even the autojumble area, so often typical of the inside of a freezer but warmer due to the milder weather this year, was much better as was the Group B Paddock at the bottom of Hall 4. Well signed and barriered off with large black drapes suspended from the ceiling. Just as well really as the spectacle whilst just that, spectacular, would have left all the Hall 4 vendors with CO poisoning. The autojumble area proved a happy hunting ground as I liberated one vendor of his 1:12 Nichimo Lotus Europa and another gave up some 1.6mm x 4mm pan head screws and nuts with which to fasten the screen on to my Stirling Moss Lotus 18. All good stuff.

Another bonus was being asked by CTL to help with the Lotus 33. At 1.00pm every day, we were to visit the 33 and remove bodywork, carefully laying it on a set of trestles so visitors could see underneath. Then each day at the end of the show, we returned to the 33 and replaced the bodywork. Both stubby screwdrivers used on Jim's iconic car will now be painted with >>>>

## Race Retro continued.....

green and yellow stripes and carefully preserved in their respective tool chests. I really hope we can display again at next year's Race Retro in what will be the Kit Lotus 10<sup>th</sup> birthday year.



### **Custard and cushions at Race Retro**

Race Retro has become somewhat of an annual pilgrimage, similar to our more than annual trips to Hethel. In each instance we need a base camp as fellow Lotuseers arrive from different parts of the UK. In Norfolk, it tends to be the Whisky Distillery at Roudham – seems a good place as any – but for Race Retro there is more limited options and we have made our home at Stoneleigh Park Lodge, the guest accommodation within the Stoneleigh Complex. The Lodge has to be booked early as come the show weekend it is heaving despite it's simple but comfortable facilities. Getting a table at dinner is an art and so each day of the show, one of us departs early and sets up camp in the bar/restaurant ensuring we get a table for the evening.

Sitting at a dining table can be a little waring on the nether regions over the course of a full evening of beer, wine and whisky tasting, so much so that Mrs T showed remarkable compassion for our plight and crocheted a set of green and yellow cushions to take with us. Forearmed you see! Great planning.

Another area to become infamous about the Lodge was custard, or lack of it. The food at the Lodge is very good, we've been eating it for four years now but, and there is always a but. You can't eat apple crumble without custard and for the previous three years the Lodge menu steadfastly refused to serve said custard, preferring to offer only ice cream as the only option. Planning for 2017 called for some lateral thought and so packets of instant custard were

packed, the thought being to request custard and when refused, offer our own supply on the basis they would at worst refuse but with a chance they would be gracious and accept our custard. The chef had obviously heard of the great Kit Lotus custard plot and pulled off a coup, we needn't have bothered, custard is now on the menu!! Now we just have to persuade them to make decent chips!!

### **Scumbag at Race Retro**

Kit Lotus took to the road in 2009 putting on displays of our hand built models at a limited number of related events, the first true display was the 2010 Classic Team Lotus Festival at Snetterton. I remember buying some event programmes and getting some signatures alongside the images of the Lotus monoposto cars reproduced in the programme. From that day, the Snetterton Programme became the Kit Lotus guest book. People who visited our display were asked to autograph the programme alongside the Lotus car they were most associated with. The programme is kept carefully and has names such as Len Terry who was particularly interested in Pete's 1:8 Lotus 40 and John Standen who signed his name alongside the Lotus 25. Clive of course signed as did the current Lotus 25 drivers, artist Michael Turner, author Michael Oliver, one Mr R W Dance ( I'm told he doesn't often use his posh signature) and most recently, Dick Scammel.

Alas I turned my back on the book whilst it was out on the stand at Race Retro and some light fingered scumbag had it away. Gone!!

As it goes, I'm sure there is no significant monetary value in the book, but it holds special meaning to Kit Lotus as some of the signatories are no longer with us and seeing their signature would always jog a recall of the conversation we had whilst they were signing. So, if anyone comes across it, for sale or otherwise, please let me know. I would love to get it back, meanwhile we have to start a new guest book, this time with a chain attached!!



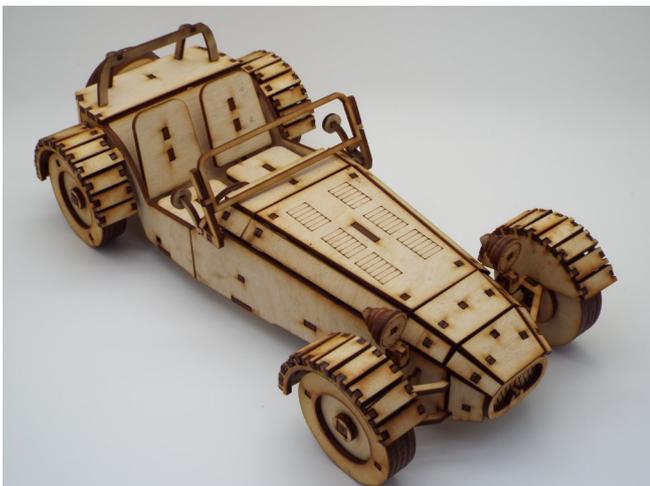
## *“ It’s a Lotus 7 Jim but not as we know it”*

For several years, eBay has been a source of rich pickings for the Lotus model collector, as with everything, the opportunities to get hold of Lotus models has increased and mostly it tends to be the same stuff we have all either got in our collections or at least we know about. Occasionally something comes along which is slightly different. Recently I spied a “wooden” Lotus GP car which I featured in a previous issue but as it was so eclectic and looked nothing like any Lotus I have ever seen , I gave it a miss.

More recently still, I came across a wooden model described as a Lotus 7. Now, anything since Colin Chapman sold the rights to the 7 to be made by Caterham still looks like a Lotus 7. Whether any copyright has since expired I wouldn’t hazard a guess but it seems there are lots of 7 lookalikes out there, the most recent being The Great British Sports Car, which has a chassis very akin to Colin’s 1957 masterpiece.

This model, described as a Lotus 7 actually looks something like, OK it has a rollover bar but it still has cycle wings and does look like a 7, therefore I am prepared to give it the benefit of representing a 7 and as such I had no qualms in getting hold of one.

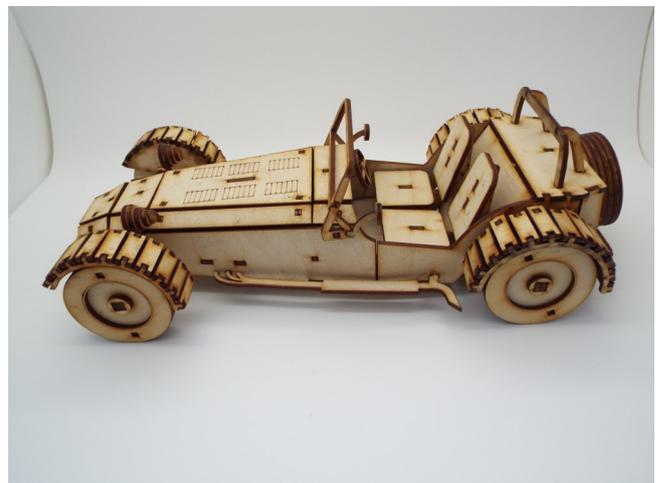
So what is special about this one? It is wooden, laser cut from 3mm Birch Ply. The method is up to date technology in itself but obviously someone has put in a lot of work designing the kit and producing the software for the laser cutter. Being laser, it involves heat and the kit has a hint, not unpleasant, of the smell of charred wood, no brainer there then? The burning has actually provided a contrast to the light colour of the Birch Ply and sets the model off in its as built form.



The kit cost only around £12 comes flat packed like a piece of Ikea furniture. A booklet showing the assembly sequence has to be carefully scrutinised but is quite adequate for the assembly. The vendor advertises a range of superglues to go with the kit, which I purchased. A word of caution here, superglue isn’t very good on such a porous material and whilst my super glue purchase will get used on other stuff, my advice would be not to buy it with the Kit. I used a five minute epoxy, quite adequate and forms a great bond.



It is the 60<sup>th</sup> year of the Lotus 7 so this model is a fitting tribute to Colin’s gift that just keeps giving, no matter whose name is on the badge nowadays, it started life as a Lotus 7, If it looks right it probably is right and whilst not perfect, I enjoyed putting the thing together and will happily display it amongst our diverse Kit Lotus arrangement. Check out [www.makecnc.com](http://www.makecnc.com)



## Axel'r - the end of an era

All of our era's come to a close, mostly before we realise it. I well recall reading my Eagle comic in the 50's marvelling at the adventures of Dan Dare – Pilot of the future, in his exciting adventures against his adversary The Mekon. The name of Dare's ship The Tempus Fugit, always intrigued me, Latin for Time Flies. Ok , so not a perfect metaphor for someone's retirement but when that someone has been producing and providing us with superb 1:43 scale model kits since 1998 under the well respected brand of AXEL'R, it really is the end of an era.

Roger Dutemple, artisan and creator of these fine models has decided to cool off his resin mixers, turn the heat off his white metal pots and call it a well earned day. His sign off? The rather neat Lotus 69 F3 depicting Dave Walker's 1971 Monaco winner, the last ever production AXEL'R model pictured on the front of this issue.

When I heard the news, I did two things, buy the model and then ask Roger to share his experiences, we couldn't let him go without a finale could we? Roger takes up the story.....

### The story of AXEL'R

Roger was born in 1955 in Valenciennes in the North of France but he has spent the greater part of his life in the South of France. and was interested in toys cars, even at 1 year old, and it never stopped. Since then he recalls in 1998 a driver, Sylvain Stepak, at a historic race meeting asking him to reproduce his racing car. As a result, his Elva BMW Mk8 was the first model car Roger created. Before becoming a model maker he was salesman and marketing man in the tool industry, and creating the Elva model prompted Roger to change his job, and to establish his own company AXEL'R in 1998. He is based in the little village of Cournonterral near the town of Montpellier close to the Mediterranean coast of France, 60 kms from the race track of Ledenon.

Key people have helped him get established include Jean-Yves PUILLET from Mini Racing, as a model maker, Thierry Dumont from DUTHY43, an expert in resin casting, and Jean Andre from Interdecal, a decals maker.

To begin with Roger used different machines and tools as every model maker does. He started his model making in a workshop making 1:43 scale, built model cars for drivers of historic races. Then he started his own range of kits of Le Mans cars and British racing cars including Lotus, Elva and Ginetta. All his Lotus Formula 2, F3 and F. Ford kits were made under license of the Classic Team Lotus.

He recalls once a driver asked him to reproducing his sports car in 1:10 scale. This was a considerable challenge for him to reproduce such a rare car as a Luccini. He only wanted 3 models. So then Roger gave them to 3 different artists who painted one model each. Then the driver was able to choose the best livery, and painted his real race car just like one of the three models!



Creating his models was a full time job! After photographing and measuring the real car, a scale drawing was made from which the French pattern maker will produce the masters of each parts of the new model. Roger has made most of the patterns for his models, but for the last 7 years he has preferred to work with, in his view, the best pattern maker, Patrick CORNU, who used to work at Provence Moulage. The masters were made in brass, resin or plastic. Roger then made silicon rubber moulds from these masters, and casted the different parts mainly in resin and white metal.



## Axel'r - the end of an era

The pattern for the windows was made from one of the first body casts. Then the windows were vacuum formed. Photos of the real car, together with one of the first body casts were sent to the decal maker who drawn and printed the decals for the new model. This technique was also followed for the photo-etched parts.

The resin bodies were painted in authentic colors with a fine polyurethane lacquer and varnished with a glossy polyurethane coat.

Roger aimed to produce 150 to 300 models of each series of AXEL'R kits. All models were always in production, except 2 or 3 models which may be sold out.

He distributed world wide to retailers and also to private customers, via his websites. He used typed sheets, for promotion, and sent samples to magazines. He packed his kits in white cardboard boxes with a label and photo of the model, together with text. The built models were shown in a clear display box with black base and label.



Like many one man artisans, Roger was pattern maker, resin caster, vacformed window former, painter, builder, salesman and marketing person. The tires, lights, white metal parts, photo etched parts and decals were made by other manufacturers. He made resin castings for several other French model makers, including Jemmy, Jade Miniatures, Provence Miniature Automobiles, and also built kits from different makers for private customers.

During 19 years he enjoyed his job, sharing his passion for kits and racing cars with all his customers world wide. Now it is time to him to retire and to enjoy a quite life with his family and friends. Of course he will spend time with his own collection of kits and model cars.

**Roger Dutemple**

Rogers' models have delighted model fans for so many years and inevitably, my thoughts turned to "what happens next?" I put this to Roger and like many retirees, he seems to have this all sewn up. One of my questions was to ask if the AXEL'R range would be licensed to another model maker, thus continuing the range, but Roger was adamant, that is it. What stocks of parts he has left will go toward building the Roger Dutemple model collection, the tools and moulds will be consigned to the cabinet for good and his hard earned retirement will be partly spent making AXEL'R kits and other models for his own enjoyment.

One comment Roger made was a perceived lack of interest in his range from other model makers now that Spark have committed to the ever increasing diverse range of model subjects, but he isn't worried.

On behalf of model collectors and builders everywhere, Kit Lotus would like to pay tribute to Roger's skills and to thank him for his efforts over the years to bring us subjects that until the recent explosion of resincast production from the far east, would have been impossible to find. We wish Roger a long and happy retirement and many years of following the exploits of Kit Lotus.



And so it is the Lotus 69 F3 is the last ever AXEL'R 1:43 model. As for that model, the pictures speak for themselves, a couple of variants are available but my choice was the Dave Walker Monaco car. That Walker didn't make a good fist of his elevation to the Team Lotus front rank is another story. The Kit is very well presented with excellent resin castings including a very neat engine block. The white metal parts have very little flash and will take minimal cleaning, a nice surprise was to find the Gold Leaf decals included in the kit and the seat belts are taken care of by a set of photo etch.

*JT*

## Slots and sods

I got a tip off about a new Lotus 30 slot car coming on to the slot car scene in February from the production line of George Turner models.

Not a new concept you might say because the Lotus 30 in slot car guise has several incarnations right back from Hawk Models, even Tamiya were in the act and all in 1:32 scale.

George Tuner chose the Lotus 30 to add to his large range, mainly because it is so low and therefore ideal for Slots. Even then because it is in Sidewinder format, George had to widen the body in scale a touch. This had a silver lining allowing space for a detailed interior, something rare on a Slot.

George formed George Turner models in 1980 after spending 8 Years with Matchbox, before turning his hand to producing prototype models for Corgi, Dinky, Lledo, Merit, Mattel, Tyco, MB Toys and Matchbox.. He currently operates with his son and some forty years later George reckons he about has the hang of it.



[www.georgeturnermodels.com](http://www.georgeturnermodels.com) will point you in the right direction.



### Can you see what it is yet?

Those familiar with visits to Classic Team Lotus on Potash Lane, will spot this as the piece of land adjacent to the car park and sitting to the left of the historic workshops.

The diggers are cutting the first sods that will see a



brand new high-tech workshop and see Classic Team Lotus move just fifty yards or so into their new home.



The CTL Facebook page has a very neat time lapse feature showing the progress of the building which is already up to the roof!!

**The alerts keep coming** in about imminent Ebro model Lotus offerings. The long awaited Lotus 49B is apparently on the horizon, popular reports suggest that ship will have docked by the time you read this, but in the long wait since it's announcement , its arrival has already been usurped first by the 88 and 88B and now by the Lotus 91 which is now available as you read this . It is fairly safe to say that now they are in the "flesh" Hobbyco will be filling the shelves of our favourite retailers quite soon. The fact that the aftermarket for this kit is now in full swing is another good pointer and mine is pre-ordered. To have a model of Chapman's last Grand Prix winner is a vital part of any Lotus collection.

Also on "pre-order advice" from Ebro but hinted at July 2019! Is the Lotus 77 in launch form as shown to the press and also in final form as the winner of the epic Japan Grand prix of 1976 which kicked off the last dominant winning era of Team Lotus. My advice? Don't hold your breath, when these kits arrive they will be stunning but there will be enough to go round, in the meantime, the specialists such as MFH and Studio 27 still have these models so if you are planning to offload them, now would be a good time before the plastic arrives which can be harmful to values. Your expensive multi media kit just lost some of its worth so you may as well build it. The point to all this may demonstrate a little frustration, an eagerness to see the models in our shops just as soon as they appear in the cabinets at the Nurnberg show. In reality, the technical, logistical and financial commitment to salve our frustration takes a while, hats off to those who are the committers.

The first iteration of the 91 will be the British GP race model where De Angelis came fourth, Nigel Mansell retiring. JT



**Often in Kit Lotus** you will come across comments from mostly experienced model builders that many of the more expensive full detail multi media kits coming out of Japan are buggers to build with areas of the model in question never able to fit correctly. My Studio 27 Lotus 79 for example or the frustrations of Chris Doube and his 1:12 stuff. Readers may recall Simon Parson's amazing Lotus 43 complete with a scratch built bench to display the nose cone.

Peter Pedroza is currently finishing off his MFH Lotus 43 and he too reports the nose cone is a non-starter in its out the box form. He even scratch built a new radiator some 3mm smaller all round and the nose cone refused to fit without omitting some of the stuff behind it and even then, needing around three hundredweight of tool steel balanced across the nose to ensure the epoxy set in the place he intended!!!!



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