



KIT LOTUS

Volume 8 Issue 3 June 2015



First of a range of
1:20 Lotus resins

1:20 Scale prototype resin Lotus 63 by Paul Munby

In this issue

- Editorial
- Kit Lotus on the road
 - CTL
 - Automodellismo-5
- MFH 1:12 Lotus 79
- Meet the Collector
- Classic Models Museum
- MFH 1:20 Lotus 77
- A brief history of Tamiya



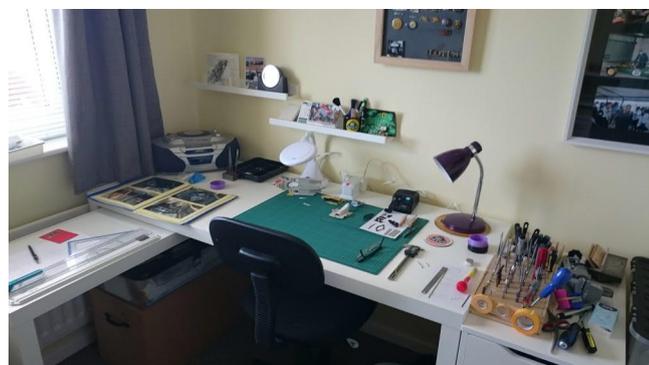
B24 Liberator - 389th Bomber Group USAAF
stationed at RAF Hethel 1944/45

Kit Lotus editorial - "the worlds only magazine dedicated solely to scale model Lotus"

It's been a funny old time since the last issue but here we are again with 13 pages of hot, not so hot and other news from the world of miniature Lotus cars. I say a funny old time mainly because of the lack of model building these last 8 weeks, and due in some large way to the builders who have been transforming my rear yard into an oasis of clam and sitting out in the sun opportunities. Somewhere to sit and read my latest Lotus book or relax between coats of model spraying in the garage. Idyllic you might say but stand by for a wet summer, sod's law will now dictate I will get no sun as a penance for disturbing the previous equilibrium. At least now the builders have retreated I will be indoors getting the garage back to some order for building models.

The spring is still touring season for Kit Lotus and trips to both Hethel and to Automedillismo 5 took place this month. It is on tour where we hold our extraordinary annual general meetings, extraordinary because no one knows until we decide in the pub it is time to hold one. This time was no exception, so, unsuitably convened in the lounge bar of the Cock Inn, Hanslope, Buckinghamshire, it

(2) We have to get a model of a vintage tractor with Jim Clark driving if we are to stand any chance of lifting the Best Display award at Automedillismo – the committee there are in to vintage tractors – and finally (3) calling for a night cap in the next pub after leaving the first pub in search of our beds is not a good thing at our age, because that would mean another extraordinary general meeting and the risk of impossible pledges being made whilst under the influence.



was decided that: (1) Peter's recently refurbished modelling studio (spare bedroom) will henceforth be known as The Piggery – a place where wonderful Lotus things are always found.

On a more serious note and for the first time, I have to mention the shananagans of a con-man who more than spoiled the hobby of collecting Lotus model cars for Kit Lotus readers. I am referring to James Sommarin who was sentenced to two years imprisonment at Exeter Crown Court a few weeks ago on charges of deception and fraud. Some of you will be familiar with his offer of building high quality 1:8 scale Lotus 18s. In short he was taking the money and producing no models. He was even selling models on behalf of people and pocketing the cash leaving some of our readers out of pocket to a tune of well in to four figures. The defence's mitigating circumstances fell on deaf ears when the judge heard Sommerin had even been taking new commissions for the work whilst on bail awaiting sentence. People do get ripped off but you don't tend to hear of it in our model world. An article from the Cornishman (March 5th 2015) is reproduced elsewhere in this issue to serve as a reminder that things can and do go pear shaped from time to time so beware when parting with brass. If you pay up front for something only do so if you can afford to lose the moneycontinued

Continued.....

Some interesting people have contributed to this issue and, it is a measure of how far Kit Lotus has come that interesting people choose to check out if Kit Lotus has anything interesting for them before choosing to share both their experiences and their interesting news with Kit Lotus. Recently Paul Munby, whose father was an engine designer and used his home garage to do testing on many a Lotus car, the original Jet 1 Rover turbine car and the Rover BRM. Growing up in that environment inevitably led to a life with cars. Paul who, has produced kits in the past of F1 and WLSR genre, has advised Kit Lotus of his re-entry to the fray with a soon to be released 1:20 resin kit of the Lotus 63. By choosing



to announce it in Kit Lotus recognises how far its influence can stretch. Whilst collecting Lotus models is still a very niche interest, Kit Lotus refreshes the Lotus parts other model magazines fail to reach. I am extremely honoured that Paul chose Kit Lotus which is why the bare 63 prototype adorns the front cover.

Paul has ambitious plans to fill in some of the gaps, so often mentioned in Kit Lotus, which exist in our model collections. Already he is creating drawings for a 1:20 Lotus 12 again in resin and like the 63, presented as a curbside model. It is likely that the decalling for the 63 will be courtesy of the aftermarket with a recommendation for the best set of Gold Leaf decals to buy. Quite a sensible option this, no doubt helping to keep the cost of the kit down. The 63 is progressing and Paul reports that the first model will feature the Italian GP version. John Miles drove the car at Monza and managed just three laps before retiring with engine problems.

Thank's to Chris Doube for identifying the print of Jim Clark shown in the last issue as being from the brush of acclaimed motorsport artist Nicholas Watt and the title? – Clark in Control

Then, all this is to be followed up with a 16 and an 18. Later if all goes well both 21 and 24 may emerge. Best of luck to Paul, I hope Kit Lotus readers will support his venture but a queue behind me will have to be formed!!

From Australia, we are also privileged to have Chris Doube's continuing story of his MFH 1:12 scale Lotus 79 build, featured on the front of the last issue. Remaining with an Antipodean theme, John Bower, owner of JC's Lotus 25 consented to give me his 'meet the collector' thoughts to share with you and, in keeping with this once more international edition, Kit Lotus supporter Bill Kennedy from the Pacific North West of the USA sent me this fabulous picture of his recently completed WWII B24 Liberator bomber. So what you might say, is an aircraft doing in Kit Lotus when it isn't even painted in Lotus colours? It is because the bomber is a replica of the Consolidate B24 Liberator, stationed at Hethel belonging to the 389th Bomber Group whose memorial is featured on the CTL website and is clearly signed as you approach Potash Lane – just thought it would be a nice touch to keep our feet on the ground, what it stands for may remind us how fortunate we are as we commemorate events of 70 years ago.

I had a response to my enquiries about the Classic Models Museum in Mexico so that too features in this issue, more of an insight in to what they do down there in Guadalajara. They do inform me that they would welcome an enquiry from anyone potentially willing to import their range into the UK. It isn't ever going to be big numbers but nevertheless, could be quite a niche for someone. Interested? Let me know and I will pass it on.



Rogue gallery - caveat emptor

cornishman.co.uk @cornishmanpaper COR-E01-52 The Cornishman Thursday March 5, 2015 7

‘Fantasist’ jailed over £25k replica car con

Court

street character’

By Johanna Carr
jcarr@cdm.co.uk

A CONMAN and compulsive liar from Hayle tricked model car enthusiasts out of around £25,000 over a seven-year period by taking their money and promising them replica classic vehicles and then failing to deliver them.

James Sommerin defrauded up to £5,000 from each of his seven victims by promising to make them models of cars such as the Lotus 25 and a Rolls Royce, Truro Crown Court heard on Thursday.

The 40-year-old, who has been jailed for two years, targeted some of the enthusiasts at Goodwood Festival of Speed, said Philip Lee, for the Crown Prosecution Service.

Mr Lee said of the victims: “All of them were enthusiasts in relation to sports cars racing, in particular models of classic sports cars.

“Some were retired, some have their own businesses but they shared this passion for the subject and it was that passion, that enthusiasm, that this defendant took advantage of.”

The court heard Sommerin, of Harvey Way, met his first victim, Stuart Walker, at the festival and promised delivery of Lotus 25 model within four weeks.

Mr Walker paid a £400 deposit and then the balance of £2,100 despite Sommerin making various excuses for failing to meet the delivery deadline.

Mr Walker never received the model.

Other victims included Grahame Anderson, who paid £4,800 for two model Lotus cars which he never received and sent Sommerin a model he owned for work to be carried out on it – a model he did not get back.

At an earlier hearing, Sommerin admitted seven counts of fraud by making false representations to customers that, for payments between £600 and £6,000, he would produce models of high-end cars.

He also pleaded guilty to two counts of theft, of stealing Lotus 25 model cars from Mr Anderson and Martin Angle.

The offences took place between August 30, 2007 and September 4, 2013.

Mr Lee said: “It is clear this defendant knew about models but he appears never to have completed any.”

The court heard Sommerin had no assets but Judge Christopher Harvey Clark, QC, made an order under the Proceeds of Crime Act that his benefit from criminal activity had been £24,895.

Sommerin was ordered to pay a nominal figure of just £1, due to his lack of assets, but the order means that the police can force Sommerin to pay in the future if and when he has means to do so.

Robin Smith, for the defence, said that Sommerin had completed some orders successfully during the period of the offences and this was not a case of him having utter contempt for his customers.

He said: “Mr Sommerin would say that this behaviour was not born out of deliberate nefarious cynical embarkation on a course of action.

“Yes he is a dreamer, yes he is chaotic and yes in some ways, as far as running a business is concerned, he is somewhat inadequate.”

Sentencing, Judge Harvey Clark said: “I hear with some degree of astonishment that even while you have been on bail awaiting sentence, you have taken four further orders. I regret to say that I don’t regard you as a dreamer. I regard you as a plausible conman, you are described by two people who know you well as a compulsive liar and a fantasist.”



James Sommerin.

MFH Lotus 77 1:20 update

Building the MFH Lotus 77 is slow going, but only due to other circumstances. I finally got to put some paint on the tub and on the assembled nose cone which meant at last some components could be assembled. My adhesive of choice, alongside making sure the components dry fit as



they are supposed to and using the screws provided, is a rapid set epoxy. Once all the components are together, they will stay together. I’m using the same adhesive on the complex suspension and brake assemblies. Although the components are all very well detailed they do still need some attention to make them fit, but like the monocoque, once the assembly is fabricated, the epoxy ensures it stays that way.

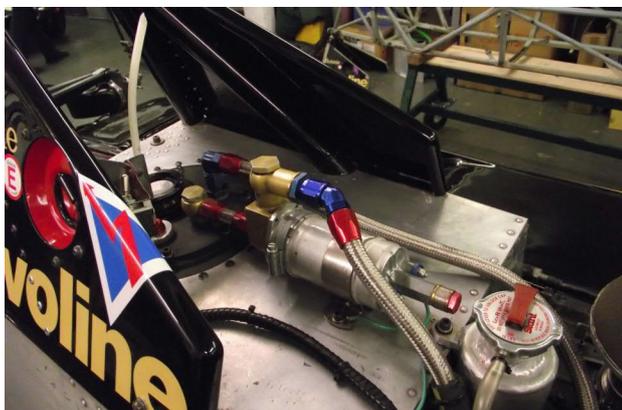


Kit Lotus on the road 1 – CTL visit

The first of the 2015 Classic Team Lotus works tours on May 6th gave Kit Lotus another opportunity to join in the visit with two of us making the trip in Peter Pedroza's very fine Series 1 Elise.

There is always a warm welcome by Clive Chapman and his team for these quite intimate trips which due the nature of the workshop, is limited to around a dozen souls, but Clive is quick to point out in his welcome address (tongue in cheek) that any of the twelve would be in very bad company if they latched on to us with the probability of the Lotus affliction becoming permanent. So armed with this warning, the group split in to two and we were escorted in to the Team Lotus theatre of dreams.

Typically, the season is getting longer and so the works are heaving with famous Lotus racing chassis, often irreverently treated, left in bits with engines and gearboxes on dollies, stripped of bodywork and panels and many of them on trestles and wheelless. Nevertheless I can't think of anywhere where it is possible to brush past the chassis of the very first Lotus single seater under restoration, so that I could get a photograph of the fuel tank detail on Mario Andretti's Lotus 79.



In the room where the merchandise used to be stored, all has been cleared and five more iconic Lotus cram in to the space and include Emerson Fittipaldi's Lotus 72 tub being restored from its Zandvoort crash in 1973. Alongside is the Lotus 21 driven by Innes Ireland to Team Lotus first ever world championship win and just to the rear of that, one of the Lotus 25's being readied for an event at Donington.

Having this proximity to famous cars is a model builders dream especially as Clive puts no photographic restriction on visitors unless a client specifically asks his car not to be photographed,

The more times we visit the CTL works, the fewer pictures we take of complete cars, not that the interest wains, far from it, the need for greater detail draws the camera lens closer to find it which hopefully will enhance our model building.

Each visit is different with the history an ever changing pattern depending on which cars are in the works. This time for example, a famous GT car sits waiting for attention, the 2.0 Litre Coventry Climax engine Lotus Elite that Colin Chapman built with his eye on one prize and one prize only, outright victory at Le Mans. Having shown an incredible turn of speed in the lower classes previously, the thought of 2 litres in a lightweight GT car had David and Goliath written all over it, the original wolf in sheep's clothing. Sadly the car never raced at Le Mans and little has been written about its history, although Anthony Pritchard in his book Lotus The Competition Cars, seems to draw the reader to forming a conclusion that the drivers were scared of it. Anyway, the car is stunningly pretty with only small details being the visual difference. Two NACA ducts on the bonnet and a deflector being the giveaways. Not so obvious but larger section tyres, essential for all that power, hide under the Elite's sleek flanks.



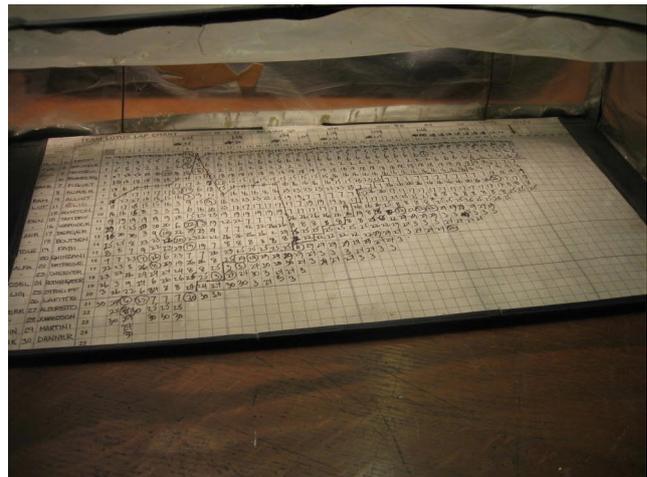
Cars on wheels included some special chassis., the two times Monaco winning 49B (Graham Hill) is in the works as is Ayrton Senna's Lotus 97T and the Lotus 72 in which Jackie Ickx audaciously passed Niki Lauda around the outside of Paddock Bend in the wet during the 1974 Race of Champions. Of the cars being restored, CTL take the view that originality is essential. The Lotus 12 frame complete with Lotus gearbox and De Dion rear end has had full crack testing carried out with a clean bill of health and so the plan is to keep the original paintwork which will be hidden when the body panels are attached. Similarly, it is felt important that the repair to Emerson Fittipaldi Lotus 72 should be visible when the panels are off so this 72 will also get the same treatment. Continued.....

CTL Visit continued

Bob Dance is overseeing the restoration of the Lotus 12 which will be an awesome addition to the CTL collection. This chassis is the very first and the one exhibited at the 195x Motor Show held at xxxxxx. It is interesting that in the CTL workshop, this is the 12 that started what was to be a formula one legend albeit with formula two origins. Next to it is the car that delivered Chapman his 7th and final world championship for constructors, the Lotus 79. It is this history that is so fascinating in such a crowded space.

Although supposedly bomb proof, anything like a fire would be a disaster particularly if the plan chests full of original drawings were lost. Fortunately, visitors were re-assured that all of the designs are committed to digital images. It is probably hard to understand that whilst this is a works tour taking interested onlookers on a guided visit, it isn't any old works tour, it is in fact a living museum and one that thrives on the hustle and bustle of the ordinary working day.

Digitizing artefacts is one thing it would be difficult to replicate items such as this lap chart from a very soggy 1985 Spa complete with Team Lotus improvised plastic rain cover and cut out fish on one side. Unlike other museums, things like this don't live behind glass and can be examined like the original Chapman drawings.



There are some things too precious not to be protected, Jimmy Clarks overalls from the Indy 500 for example but everything else is still work in progress and not yet for the static display. Spare parts from instantly recognisable Lotus cars can be seen on various racks around the works along with old pit identity boards and long withered winners garlands all cheek by Jowell with today's work, that of keeping these historic cars alive. Still the only works grand prix team in historic racing, just 15 people keep these cars running for either the CTL collection or for customers. If you can compare CTL with anything similar, it has to be the RAF and how they maintain and run their own historic aircraft through the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight at Conningsby in Lincolnshire.

You hear me lamenting the changes to the Donington Grand Prix collection and the lack of Lotus exhibits, yet the fact is CTL stands testament along with other restorers that the Lotus cars which still exist are not static displays, they are living exhibits and far from moaning about them not being in static displays, what better way to exhibit than still on the race tracks where they belong. Can't wait until the next time



Kit Lotus on the road 2 -Automodellismo 5

In the small leafy English village of Hanslope on the edge of Buckinghamshire (quite near to where Jackie Oliver lives actually), an annual model car show is held – Automodellismo . Kit Lotus have appeared by invitation two years running and joined like minded modellers who build almost exclusively model cars, to put on a fantastic display of our craft.

Kit Lotus provides the biggest display in the show with Peter's array of scratch built 1:8 , dioramas and his wonderful 1:5 scale trio of DFV, Lotus Twin Cam and Coventry Climax engines providing a large part of the exhibit. My own 1:12 49s and a range of 1:20/1:24 together with Simon's immaculate 1:43rds complete the Kit Lotus mix. Apart from a collection of Batmobiles, ours was the only single subject exhibit



There are a couple of traders selling models (but we have yet to see a Lotus) and a large array of specialist modelling tools, fixings, accessories, air brushes, paints and adhesives etc; but the atmosphere is like a large club meeting. Exhibitors include organisations such as IPMS (International Plastic Modelling Society) with their special interest groups such as motorsport. A handful of model car clubs, the model motor museum and ourselves.

Held in the Village Hall, there are relatively few visitors compared to a big or other events we are used to and the entry fees go toward the upkeep of the Hall. But, the club atmosphere more than makes up for it . There is a prize for the best display won this year by the West Herts Model Car Club. We will win it next time (see editorial for the winning strategy).

and we were fortunate to attract some out and out Lotus fans amongst the visitors.

Automodellismo is a stress free relaxing exhibition with a set up period on Saturday, full day Sunday on display and is a good excuse for a Kit Lotus stay over giving us the chance to catch up and discuss future plans. With two pubs a Chinese restaurant and only a few minutes walk to warm comfortable accommodation Hanslope is the perfect place for that catch up. We will be back next year—now where is that vintage tractor?



I don't need another HIRO—Chris Doube

Having successfully completed a Hiro 1/20 Lotus 49c and two 1/12 conversions of the Lotus 72E and 77 based on Tamiya kits, I thought I would like to try Hiro Lotus 79 full kit.

Having found one for a very good price from BNA model world in Martini livery, I then found another in France for an even better price in JPS colours, so most this year's model building was taken care of in one fell swoop.

On receiving the kits I could not help but be impressed with the quality and complexity of the components, it surely must be the ultimate in what can be done technically in the model maker's art.

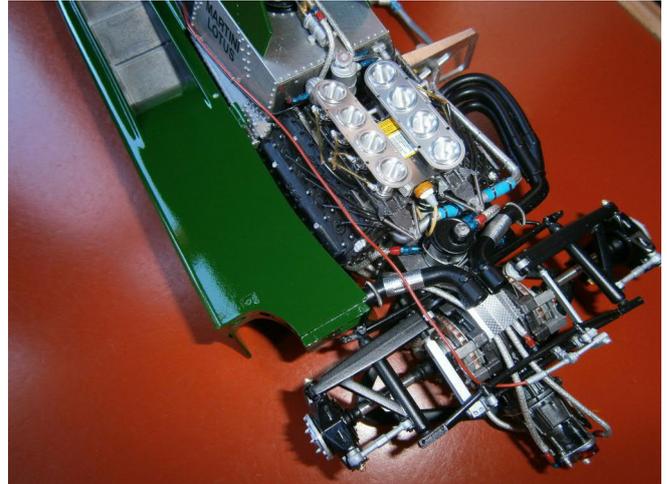
After the 3/12 months of extremely challenging and



some very tedious work, like the drilling and fitting of 1100 rivets in the monocoque, I am in the final phase of the build, fitting the body panels.

It wouldn't be a Hiro if there wasn't at least one major kick in the b*ll **cks for the builder and this is it. The alignment of the side pods on which the fit of all the other panels depend is compromised by being too tight a fit therefore none of the mountings line up. I have had to use the Hiro builder's best friend (Mr Dremel) and remove most of the underside of the side pod mounting brackets to achieve some sort of fit, and doing that at this stage of the build was very displeasing.

Over all there are a number of shortcomings with the instructions, and I was caught out several times by procedures which should have been done earlier. Also, some of the detail such as the Pistons, Camshafts, clutch and spark plugs are lost forever when the engine is built (I left the plugs out on this and the other two 1/12 Hiros I have built as it make fitting the leads more secure, it also has separate brake pads in the rear callipers.



One detail which was very difficult was the tiny springs for the throttle return and the exhaust clamps, it would be hard enough to fit them if they were the right size, but they have to be shortened and a new hook fashioned to make them fit.

Also there are 20 of the smallest Phillips screws known to mankind which secure the front rocker arms, rear uprights, side pods and rear deck, these require a 4 zero screwdriver which had to be obtained from Japan and magnetised. There isn't the luxury of even one spare, so imagine the indignity of having to contact Hiro if you lost one!

In summary, this mode is a stunning tribute to what is one of the most beautiful and influential Lotus Formula One cars, as by 1979 when this version raced every team had copied its Ground Effect technology, and building it has given me a whole new appreciation of the technical brilliance of this magnificent design.



Meet the collector—John Bower

Following up from Peter's article last issue about his building three 1:5 replica Coventry Climax FWMV8 engines, as fitted to Jim Clark's Lotus 25. Owner of the 25 John Bower, presented one to Tony Mantle the engine builder and one to Bob Dance the genius who looks after Clark's car. John also consented to find the time to answer the meet the collector questions asked of many other Lotus model collectors and featured in kit lotus.

Q. When did you first become a Lotus enthusiast?

It must have been around 1961 or 62, when I was 15 or 16 and still in High School. I had previously made (flying) model aeroplanes, but as I approached the driving licence age, I was eager to switch to cars!

Q. What was the biggest influence that drew you in to Lotus?

An uncle gave me the book Lotus – The Story of the Marque by Ian H Smith, and I was hooked.

"Ian Smith has a lot to answer for, him being the catalyst for many a Lotus enthusiast catching this deadly Lotus disease" — Editor.

Q. Did that coincide with collecting Lotus models?

Not immediately, I was too interested in full size cars. Unfortunately I could not afford a Lotus until much later – my first car was a Triumph Herald that my wonderful stepfather (a mechanic) helped me rebuild.

Q. Do you have a preference for die cast or kits?

Kits. It's more fun to do some work myself.

Q. Do you have a favourite brand either die cast or kit?

No.

Q. How big is your Lotus collection and do you collect other models?

Quite modest, really: just one of each Lotus that I would like to drive. Nothing other than Lotus.

Q. What is your favourite Lotus model car and why?

I have never met a Lotus I didn't like (even the Type 30). But my favourite model to build was the large scale Tamiya Lotus 49, because it enabled me to carefully inspect the suspension design.

In Australia we didn't have the same access to the real cars, other than during the magical Tasman series (which were the only occasions I saw Jim Clark drive). Of course, I never dreamed back then that one day I would get to work on a 25.



Q .

how did you come across Kit Lotus?

Through contact with Peter Pedroza, who has made a beautiful model of the Coventry Climax FWMV8 engine used in the Lotus 25.

Less is more, to quote a popular buzz phrase of our time, but with John's collection, why bother with miniatures when you own outright, the very subject of many a Lotus model collection, Jim Clark's Lotus 25. As can be seen in this photo. In the picture. Most of the trophies won by the 25 remain at CTL but in honour of John's car winning the Glover Trophy so often, Lord March gave permission for a full sized replica to be made.

A not insignificant point is made in John's response and one that has affected several people who have gladly committed their collections to Kit Lotus. The point being the way John was drawn to Lotus, by the author and Lotus historian Ian H Smith. Many others including me read Smith's work as their first Lotus book. Quite rare now, If you care to look right back into back into Kit Lotus Vol 1 Issue 3 you will see my very battered copy of The Story of Lotus 1947-1960 Birth of a Legend. I was also glad of Doug Nye's follow up The Story of Lotus 1961-71, a birthday gift from my then girlfriend now my wife of over 40 years. It came in very handy during a fourteen hour delay at Venice's Marco Polo airport!!



Briefly mentioned in the last issue of Kit Lotus, I promised to find out more about Classic Models Museum and their low volume production of 1:12



scale models. In Particular some interesting Lotus subjects such as the Esprits featured in the James Bond film franchise and Jim Clarks Lotus 25.

Raul Mejorada sent me some information about the operation which runs out of the City of Guadalajara in Mexico. A small group of craftsmen, but increasing in size and experience, set on providing a model museum in the city and what better way to start than to hand make your own exhibits for what is essentially a private collection. They mainly produce 1:12 scale models of cars but they also make models of planes, ships, tanks and dioramas along with sculptures in bronze and cold cast.

The quality of the models is increasing as the group grows and more craftsmen join the group which also expands the available range. The group is able to make small quantities for the general public which means they are very exclusive and very rare, basically, the small runs are made on request.

The main goal of the group is to collect enough funds to make the museum a viable proposition, a Museum of Modelism, in the city of Guadalajara. Along with this, funding helps the group support the Respalda Foundation, which is an association who help children without resources who need essential back surgery.

The models are cast in resin with some parts having metal inserts to add strength. Photoetch, vac form and decals are also used as is ribbon for seat belts

Models take around seven days to produce. The cost of a 1:12 Esprit is around \$280 US which at todays rate is around £180. then of course there will be shipping costs of around \$60. Expect to pay VAT and around 4% duty for the total package but however you look at it, a rare big scale model for quite a reasonable rate.

I am told that they are looking for a sales outlet in the United Kingdom so an opportunity exists if anyone is up for it. Kit Lotus does not trade in model cars.



All in all, a great story from an unusual source Classic Models Museum deserves our respect and support. We wish their venture well and look forward to hearing how successful it becomes.



Photos: Jim Marsden Collection



Red is for passion, blue is for precision



Plastic kits as we know them have been around for a long time and most of the manufacturers started life as something else. Airfix for example was formed in 1939 to produce inflatable toys (Air would fix it) but it wasn't until a series of coincidences that Airfix began kit production in 1953, the same year Tamiya closed its original lumber mill and concentrated on wooden models. Before then, during the second world war in fact, Revell was born in California with Monogram two years later.



Tamiya 49s

On the other side of the pacific in an air raid ravaged Shinosuka, a city in the Honshu Prefecture, a lumber company called Tamiya was started in 1946 – by 1948, the business had started to produce crude wooden models and set up wooden model production alongside the lumber business but trade wasn't that spectacular.

The red and blue star logo is now recognised internationally as the mark of model kits of unrivalled quality and precision. It was not always so, on to the scene in the 1950s stepped family member Shunsaku Tamiya who joined the debt-ridden business to oversee the wooden models only to see that market destroyed by the arrival of the plastic American imports. Shunsaku Tamiya made the transition to plastic and fashioned the business into the bench mark by which all other plastic models are now judged. Tamiya has long been synonymous with the highest standards in plastic injection moulded plastic kits. For many years it has been the last word and has driven the overall market quality ever higher so that those who have entered the market are forced to offer the highest standards.

Shunsaku is a model maker, a craftsman, photographer, machinist and accidental businessman. His energy and passion for attention to detail created this gold standard to the delight of millions of fans all over the world. It makes what we do here all possible but there are links to the UK and to our own passion for Lotus weaved into the story as I will reveal.

The first Tamiya plastic model came along in 1960 and was the Japanese warship Yamato in 1:800 scale, even then it had amazing details

In the last issue of Kit Lotus I wrote about The Hobby Company, Tamiya importer based in Milton Keynes. The link is with Pete Binger who in 1966 went over to Japan to persuade the Tamiya family to give him the import licence for Tamiya products in the UK. Despite not being able to speak at his meeting with Tamiya—a Japanese business associate had to do the talking, Tamiya confirmed the business arrangement and a whole new chapter commenced. It is partly because of Binger that the Tamiya range includes plastic kits of ships, aircraft, tanks and military, cars, figures, radio control, slot racers, mini racers and of course our favourite big scale F1 cars.

In 1967 Shunsaku Tamiya came to visit his UK importers. During the visit he was taken to the Tank Museum at Bovington where he spent hour after hour photographing the tanks there. Whilst other Japanese businessmen wilted, Shunsaku kept clicking sprawled over, under and inside the tanks, even having to send out for more film. The result was the start of even more highly detailed kits of model tanks but with interior detail and opening hatches, once gain raising the bar.



Tamiya Lotus 99T

Tamiya continued

Our Lotus link came on that same trip when Shunsaku was taken by Binger to meet the winner of the very first Japanese Grand Prix at Susuka in his Lotus 23, Peter Warr no less at Peter's slot car establishment. Here again Shunsaku spent more time with the models than anyone, remaining at the venue long in to the evening but, the meeting saw Peter provide the necessary networking for Tamiya to commence the 1:12 scale Formula One journey which began soon afterwards with the release of the Honda RA273. Peter was able to open doors in the Formula One circus before he went on to be the Team Lotus manager.

It was around this time that the Lotus Tamiya's range grew and grew with many of the significant steps suggested by Pete Binger so we have a lot to be grateful for.

As previously mentioned and not surprisingly, the Honda was the first Big Scale 1:12 Formula One model followed by a Porsche but then the Lotus 49, moral victor of 1967 was next and the Lotus story within Tamiya was struck.

1968 became a landmark year with Tamiya exhibiting for the first time at the Nurnberg Toy Fair it also saw a new production factory built. Milestones in



Tamiya Lotus 25

the history of Tamiya flowed, new factories, shipping facilities and an eight storey headquarters had been built by 1990. For Lotus fans, April 1977 saw the launch of the 1:20 formula one series beginning with the Tyrell P34, our favourites the Lotus 78, Lotus 99t and the Lotus 25 followed.

In 1991, Tamiya became a formula one sponsor for the first time choosing Lotus as the flag bearer. This was followed by Tamiya re-releasing the big scale 1:12 Lotus F1s which included the 49s the 72 and 78. The Tamiya F1 sponsorship continued through to 1973 and the 102B was used as the first model in their successful Mini-Racer Series.

Shansaku Tamiya continued to show his dedication and commitment to modellers world wide and made financial donations to the Bovington Tank Museum where the Tamiya Hall was created. Tamiya isn't just plastic models, slot cars started in 1964 with a 1:24 D Type Jaguar and Radio Control ten years later with the M4 Sherman Tank. Diecast has also been catered for with the Tamiya Collectors series, the Lotus 102B being the subject of the first in the 1:20 scale range.



Millions and millions of Tamiya models, created with ever increasing detail continued to set the gold standard. In 1994, the 1:12 Masters Coachwork collection launched with the Caterham 7, pity it wasn't a Series 2 Lotus 7 but the roots are there and the model is highly sought after long since the end of its production. As an industry leader, Tamiya built its own track for radio control racing open to the public but primarily for the purpose of testing its own product. Located in Kakegawa City, Shizuoka the circuit is close to the epicentre of plastic models (see next issue). Tamiya continues to be the market leader in its various forms but sadly, the prospect of future Lotus models coming over the horizon isn't there. However, the legacy we have is quite a range of Lotus originating from a true enthusiast with the vision to get all of us hooked.

Bits & pieces.....

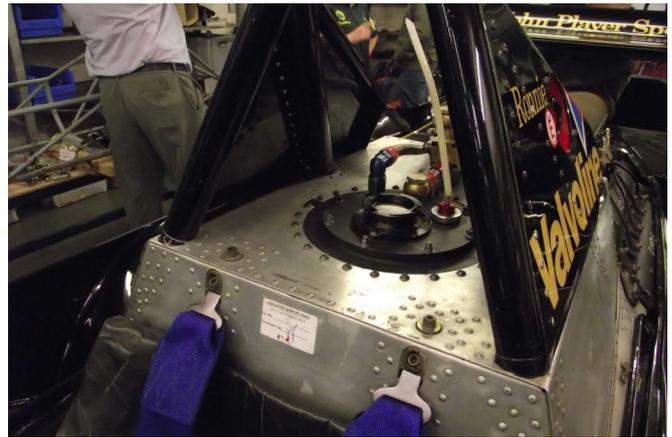
I like to recommend stuff whenever I can especially if it has significance to what we do. I can thoroughly recommend a shufftie at the Classic Team Lotus website. It is updated with team news and currently carries a link to a short film from the Henry Ford Museum about the Lotus 38, very appropriate as we continue to celebrate the greatest ever racing driver's greatest ever season.

It also features the current exploits of famous cars including podium places for Andrew Beaumont and Dan Collins at both Pau and at The Barber Motorsport Park but best of all it describes Greg Thornton's double victory in the FIA Master Grand Prix Series at Brands Hatch in emphatic style.

www.classicteamlotus.co.uk



Cockpit detail—Lotus 97T



Always handy to have—some details pictures of the Lotus 79—Seat Belt mountings and roll over bar, throttle linkage and cable connection, dash panel.

Legal stuff - Kit Lotus is copyright and published by J Thornhill , Nottingham, NG16 3DQ. Contact us at mail@kitlotus.com or visit www.kitlotus.com. Kit Lotus is copyright and may not copied by any means either mechanical or electronic, without the expressed permission of the author. Kit Lotus may contain images that are copyright to third parties other than Kit Lotus. There is no deliberate intention by Kit Lotus to infringe any copyright and any such infringements will be removed immediately on request. We welcome links to appropriate websites but we will not be liable for damages of any kind arising out of such access to third party websites or to our website , or any inability to access third party websites or our website or your reliance on the information contained within our website or third party websites Clicking on links from www.kitlotus.com will take you to other websites of which we take no responsibility. We will use every reasonable effort to include accurate and up to date information, in all of our publications but neither make nor imply any warranties or representations as to the accuracy or completeness. Kit Lotus has no affiliation , implied or otherwise, with Group Lotus and its companies or any other official or unofficial group or entity.