



ELVA Newsletter September 2016 #2

There has been a number of important ELVA people who have sadly passed during the past few months and there are some words in this Newsletter which recognises the input of Chris Meek who had a long racing history with various motorsport marques, and was the saviour of the historic Mallory Park motor circuit.

Writing those words prompted me to look at the correspondence I have had with Chris, and also copies of correspondence that he had with Trojan-Elva back in 1963/4. Chris was a master of cutting a deal, pushing for discounts, and in early 1963 he was looking to buy another Courier which he intended to race but it needed to be a special 'lightweight'. He had of course raced an early Courier registered '9 FPE' several years previously. A reply to Chris from Sales Manager David McMullan stated that an experimental special lightweight chassis was to be made and it would then be supplied to Chris, with Barwell Engineering to undertake the engine tuning.

A later letter to Chris mentioned that "There has been a tremendous amount of interest in your car, as you can probably imagine, but we have managed to keep dark exactly what has been done to it. The boot lid and bonnet are, if anything, too light are quite likely to flap or vibrate at speed, and it is quite possible that we will have to put a couple of fibreglass struts over these, when you really get motoring."

This story continued at <http://www.elva.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=2&t=733>

ELVA on track

There have already been many race outings with some beautifully presented and competitive ELVA cars in action so far this year. Just a snapshot of a few; something of an ELVA Mk.VI fest!

Joey Bojalad: Mk.VI 60/01 Put-in-Bay event

A superb WIN for Joey in the beautiful Mk.VI which was originally raced by Chris Ashmore. Both Chris and the car received much attention following the amazing result achieved at the Brands Hatch 'Boxing Day' 1961 meeting, when a remarkable 2nd place was much applauded being a 1100cc car inches behind the far more powerful Ferrari driven by Graham Hill.

By a strange coincidence, Chris Ashmore called me a few days ago and of course we talked about his ELVA outings in the Mk.VI and the FJ's .. he felt that he could have beaten the Ferrari had he made a different decision to sneak past during the last lap, but left it just a little too late.

Meanwhile a brilliant outing for Joey in the same car all these years later .. ELVA .. SHE GOES .. AGAIN!!!



The Put In Bay Cup race, was won by Joey Bojalad, in an Elva Mk.6. Driving a flawless race, from start to finish.

ELVA owner Christopher Silvestri opens impressive new dealership in Florida.

Courier owner Chris Silvestri was also competing at the event racing his Yellow 912 Porsche and received the Morgan "Leaky Cup" for spreading "the good will spirit of vintage racing and all things Morgan". Chris plans to bring the Elva out this Fall for some racing in Florida where he has the new dealership offering 'Fine Sports Cars' <http://www.christopherjohnld.com/>

He is keeping a prominent space for the new ELVA! He also offers a range of ELVA clothing including the flat caps which were produced in memory of Frank Nichols and quickly sold out.

More produced to order soon. Contact Chris via his website for details. Lovely trophy Chris but let's see ELVA on the next one!!

Frank Mons: Mk.VI 60/21

Another stunning Mk.VI which has a rather unique history but thankfully all involved lived to tell the tale. Story at <http://www.elva.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=13&t=741&p=1870#p1870>



Paul Adams: Mk.VI 60/14

Another beautiful example of the potent Mk.VI sports racer which remains very unspoil and is being campaigned by Paul whenever his busy business life allows.



Bob Engberg and his extremely popular ELVA Mk.II

Bob is pictured with Millard 'Rip' Ripley who was an important part of the ELVA story as a racer who also became a dealer having set up the Ripley Motor Co. Sports Cars at 337 Elmira Road, Ithaca, NY. He sold and raced a number of the earlier sports racers in period.

'Rip' drove the 'Ecurie Ripley Elva' at Sebring in 1958 amongst many other U.S. events. The next outing for Bob and the Mk.II is to be at Coronado.



Photo credit to Rip Ripley Jr.

Sadly Passed ...

Christopher Arthur Amon, racing driver and farmer, born 20 July 1943; died 3 August 2016.

Chris Amon was known as the massively talented Formula One driver who never won a GP race, despite his dedication and skill. He was mostly a victim to mechanical failures.

During his time as a development 'works' driver with McLaren, Chris spent time in the ELVA Mk.VIII (BMW) plus the early McLaren series. He tested and raced the various models but also drove the GT160 which had sat unloved at the Trojan works as his 'daily' transport for a period.

A lot more about the life of Chris Amon at <http://www.autosport.com/news/report.php/id/125598>
Our sympathies are sent to his extended family in his native New Zealand.

Chris Meek, born Dec 1932 Farnham, Surrey; died 21 May 2016 Leeds, Yorkshire.

Chris Meek was one of the many UK racing characters of the ELVA era and later times. He was first involved with ELVA driving an early Courier alongside several other competitive drivers which included Pat Fergusson, Peter Gammon and his good friend Malcolm Wayne. Very active on and off track, Chris also drove the rear-engined '200' and '300' series Formula Juniors. He remained extremely loyal to ELVA and we met on several occasions including a trip to the Ginetta factory to see their production line and meet with Lawrence Tomlinson who revived the Ginetta marque. Chris was very successful in business and was applauded for saving the historic Mallory Park motor racing circuit from being redeveloped for housing.



I was delighted to be on Chris Meek's Christmas card list, as the very personalised greetings cards were always entertaining and centred around his love for Mallory but most importantly showed his total devotion to his wife and young family. We have lost a great friend. RIP Chris.
More at <http://www.brdc.co.uk/Notice-of-Death---Chris-Meek>

Fred Opert Racing Enterprises, Paramus, NJ. USA. died on Tuesday August 9th 2016 aged 77.

'Distributor for Brabham, McLaren, Elva and Beach Racing Cars'

Fred Opert established Fred Opert Racing in Palisades Park around fifty years ago. Prior to that he had marketed parts for the Couriers which developed into a business relationship with Carl Haas creating a successful dealership selling imported race cars including ELVA. He became the most active U.S. contact for ELVA during the late 1960's as Carl become more involved with other business commitments. Fred also had a racing school, was a successful driver, and a race team manager/owner. In more recent times he was instrumental in supporting the careers of several Formula One drivers. Another important part of the ELVA story has passed. RIP Sir.

On a positive note ...

Aram Allen was pleased to report that after a long restoration project, he has very nearly finished the rebuild of his Hastings built Courier with chassis number 200/63/R.

The car looks striking in the dark silver with red trim so we looking forward to seeing at an event sometime soon.



Last minute news ...

Goodwood Revival Saturday 10th September

The seven ELVA Mk.VII sports racers appeared in the Madgwick Cup race today, matched against thirteen Lotus 23B cars and another eight under 2 litre sports racers. It started to rain about ten minutes before the race started, and so the track was greasy and before long it poured down, much reducing the visibility. As a result a few cars took to the 'weeds' but we watched some fabulous racing in very difficult conditions.

As expected Lotus 23B driver Chris Goodwin, the McLaren Automotive test and development driver took the lead, but he began to drop back and it was ELVA Mk.VII driver Joe Twyman who was now leading the determined pack. Joey's lead was slipping towards the end of the race and we all had a heart stopping moment when Joe and his determined pursuers came across a back marker taking the middle line at the chicane, which is a short distance from the finishing line. The much faster ELVA and green Lotus 23B made the yellow Lotus the meat in a very tight sandwich, which somewhat modified the yellow 23B bodywork, however it was the ELVA that crossed the line first taking the chequered flag.

Brilliant driving and fantastic racing. Sunday it is the turn of the front-engined Formula Juniors. Hopefully in the dry!!

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