

Ricketts Racing Open Day

20th September 2025



Another great day turnout for this yearly event that is always so well attended. In recent years the car parking has had to be extended to cater for the owners and enthusiasts who flock to this 'must go' meeting.

A special announcement was made at this year's Ricketts Racing open day, to commemorate the Allen brother's contribution to setting up the original Lotus Engineering Company as fellow directors with Colin and

Hazel Chapman. The brothers, both Michael and Nigel were responsible for the early engineering and manufacture of the Mark III and Mark VI and essentially that chassis design continued for the Mark 7, 8, 9 and 11.

Perhaps the most significant contribution was the modifications to the Austin 7 engine which was de-siamesed with the block and manifolds being welded and brazed in parts to allow single porting to and from





Photos: Mike Seymour

the four cylinders. It is known that this modification was based on the Derek Jolly 750 series race car engine where the same modifications were carried out by Derek Jolly's engineer, Ron Uffindell. ACBC became aware of the consistent winning of the Derek Jolly car in events in Australia and managed to convince Derek with enthusiastic and long letters, to make the journey to England with the engine.

On show at the Open Day was the very same engine that the Allen brothers modified all those years ago. It could be seen that the engineering was quite remarkable considering the very small apertures of the ports involved



..... *the first Lotus Circuit Racer,*
Silverstone June 3rd 1950, the Eight Clubs Race Meeting
five lap scratch race, winner Colin Chapman , Lotus MK2.....



*This is the original aluminium alloy block which with specially
 cast-iron modification was the first Lotus engine. The block
 was made from a cast iron block of the 1950s. It was the
 first Lotus engine to be built in the UK.*

and the degree of finish by hand fettling to create the smooth port walls to increase the flow of fuel intake and exhaust outlet. Plus, the exterior of the manifolds were smoothed off to prevent detection of the modifications. The manifolds often would be clad in asbestos tape to hide any hint of upgrading.

Also, this engine is still intact and not broken in any way, so considering this engine was the original power house for LMU3 and campaigned by Colin, Nigel and Michael it is testament to the quality of workmanship!

entation. I had the pleasure of meeting Nigel and his daughter Samantha with our Chairman at the family home.

Many fabulous Lotus were on display as can be seen in the photos and once again the members of the Ricketts family and friends had carried out the planning and logistics for the event and great to see Malcolm and his son Martin and daughter Vanessa once again thanking everybody for attending.



Photo: Barry Davison

It is also the case that without this developed engine, it is likely that Lotus Engineering would not have got off the blocks as the winning of races was, I believe the initial driving force for ACBC to take to the circuits and enter into motor racing seriously.

It was quite a sight to see this tiny little engine up close and be next to the driving heart of Lotus as we know it. It is therefore very fitting that the engine is mounted on a plaque of wood with a commemorative sign acknowledging the importance of the contribution of the Allen brothers to Lotus. This plaque will be put on display at Classic Team Lotus Collection at Hethel.

A special thanks and notification of this plaque was made in a presentation by Malcolm Ricketts to Dynis the Eldest daughter of Nigel Allen and her brother, representing the Allen family members for this important announcement.

Unfortunately, Samantha the youngest daughter who attended the meeting had to leave just before the pres-

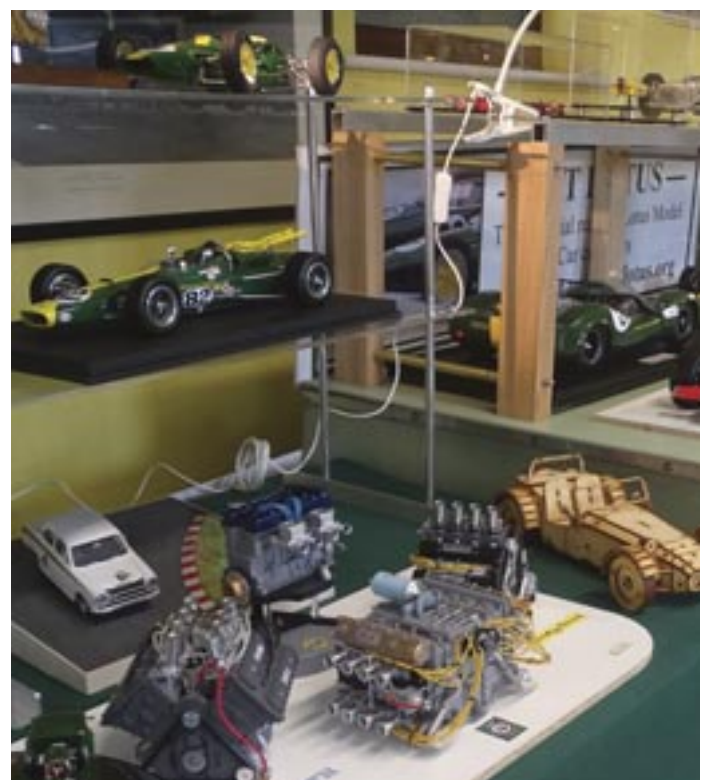




Photo: Barry Davison



Malcolm Ricketts

As usual many burgers, teas, and coffees were consumed and the proceeds along with contributions go to the Isabel hospice and this year's sum was £3385.

A heartfelt thanks to everybody for this from Malcolm, his wife Jill and Martin and Vanessa and their families.

As mentioned, another great day.

Ed

Also Richard Hinton Video of the meet

<https://youtu.be/XyKR3S7nGI4>



Photo: Barry Davison