

Lotus **ESPRIT** World.com

Esprit Owners

This Section is dedicated to Giugiaro Esprit Owners.
Select an owner below and see pictures, info, upgrades
& experiences from real Esprit owners.



Gordon Masson's 1976

Gordon Masson from Aberdeen, Scotland, UK owns a 1976 S1 in Red, with a tan/cream leather interior.

Model:	S1
Year:	1976
Colour:	Red
Interior:	Originally green/tartan, currently tan/cream leather, eventually to be reinstated as green/tartan
Driving Style:	Normal
Miles per year:	4,000
Owned Since:	29th September 1983
Purchase from:	Private
Serviced at:	Dependent on work required.
Other Cars:	Renault Laguna as daily transport, Ducati Super Sport and vintage Honda
Previous Lotus':	None

Why an Esprit:

I wanted a Lotus from the age of 11 when I saw a Europa driving up my street. From that day on I always said I would own a Lotus. I put out a local ad asking for a Europa or an Esprit and it was answered by a tall leggy blonde lady who used the car as a "daily run around". The car looked great but was a bit of a dog under the skin but it was very difficult to see that through "Lotus tinted spectacles"

Unfortunately the car had gone through a string of owners who latterly had not looked after it..... Culminating in a half hearted repair job after a broken cam belt a couple of months before I bought it. (I didn't find out that the cam belt had broken until a few months after I had bought the car though!)

Everything!!..... in the past 20 plus years the car has had two new gear boxes, two engine rebuilds and has recently had a complete restoration from the ground up. This included:

Upgrades:

- New Galvanised Chassis
- Replacement or refurbishment of all running gear.
- Body stripped down to the gel coat.
- New front body section bonded on.
- Complete re-spray.
- New front and rear screens
- All fuel, clutch lines upgraded to Aeroquip lines and couplings.
- Copper brake pipes and brass unions fitted throughout.
- Stainless steel tubular exhaust manifold fitted.
- Stainless steel exhaust system fitted.
- New wiring loom.
- Rolling road set-up.

Everything!!..... I came to learn very quickly that if you buy a Lotus that hasn't been looked after properly, it may still look great on the outside but under the skin you have a mountain of problems to deal with. However bearing in mind that the car is coming up for 30 years old and it was probably designed with performance rather than quality, reliability and longevity in mind and with a view to getting it through its warranty period rather than how it would be 30 years on, you would expect to have your fair share of problems.

These have included:

Broken timing belt and associated carnage (just before I bought the car but didn't find out until later)

Engine bay fire due to wiring fault (car has always been fitted with a BIG extinguisher and thankfully so!!)

Problems:

Damaged camshafts / big ends 2000 miles after major engine rebuild due to cleaning rag from rebuild being caught in oil pick up pipe.

Leaking fuel tanks

Leaking windows

Wiper motor / wheel box failure

Wiring faults

Cooling problems (Fans connected to run backwards!!)

Info:

See below

The car is chassis number 0100G which was the first production Esprit. My understanding from talking to various people over the past 20 years is that the car was not originally going to be sold to the public and the Lotus Build Book specifies the car as the "Demo Version". However from what I understand of Lotus at that particular time, there were cash flow problems and the car was eventually sold as a "Demonstrator" to High Cliff Motors in Grimsby. The car was featured in an article for the local paper in Grimsby and several Press photographs were taken of the car for use in the article.



The car didn't remain a Demonstrator for very long as the early cars were in very short supply and it was sold on. There then followed a period of breakdowns and mechanical failures that can only be described as excessive even by early Lotus production car standards. In fairness however, the original intention was never to sell this particular car to the public and much of the development of the Esprit was still ongoing on this and the other very early cars during the first 6 to 12 months (using the new owners as test drivers to a certain extent).



The problems on 0100G however were severe enough to result in Lotus buying the car back from the first owner in June of 1978. The car was retained by Lotus for another year before it was sold on again in June 1979.

As far as I can gather the car was sold to a Mr. Rudd working in the oil and gas industry in the gas fields off Gt. Yarmouth and offshore Aberdeen, hence the car found its way to Aberdeen. The car changed hands on two further occasions before I bought it in September 1983.

Lotus have expressed an interest in featuring the car in the Lotus magazine Lotus Life this year.



I have managed to track down both the garage owner who first sold the car, the first owner and the photographer who took the press photographs of the car. While I am down in England I will be visiting these people with the car to let them see it again, 29 years on. Although the photographer (Mr. Horsewood) who took the press photographs of the car in 1976 has now retired, he has said he will help me to recreate the press photo-shoot at the same location.... although we didn't manage to track down the model who was photographed with the car!

This Esprit appears in [The First S1](#) and [Showstopper](#) articles



Gordon.masson@subsea7.com



Lotus Cars Limited

Norwich, Norfolk, NR14 8EZ, England. Telex 97401
Telephone: (0953) 608000 Telefax: (0953) 606884

JSA/SJH

24th June, 1985

Mr. G. Masson,

Dear Mr. Masson,

I have found your car's factory record, but there are few details on it. It was the first production Esprit S1 and was sold to High Cliff Motors, Grimsby (no longer dealers) who initially registered it as a demonstrator vehicle on 1st October 1976. It was sold to a Mr. B. Collen shortly afterwards.

Chassis Number 76080100G
Engine Number CC77607 12950
Gearbox Number 0027
Original Colour Red

I am sorry the details are so brief, but I hope they are of interest.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J.S. Allison".

J.S. Allison
Customer Service Administrator

© Copyright 2009 Lotus Esprit World. All rights reserved.

[Home](#) | [@](#) | [News](#) | [Esprit Models](#) | [Road Tests](#) | [Buying an Esprit](#) | [Running an Esprit](#) | [Owners](#) | [Main./Mods.](#) | [Pictures](#) | [For Sale](#) | [History](#) | [Lotus Models](#) | [Links](#)