

The 20-Ghost Club Record



Volume 33

1992

Issue 61



Made in 1912

20-Ghost Club Record

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Contents

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Library:

Members are reminded that the Club Library contains a considerable amount of Rolls-Royce literature, which may be viewed by appointment with the Librarian.

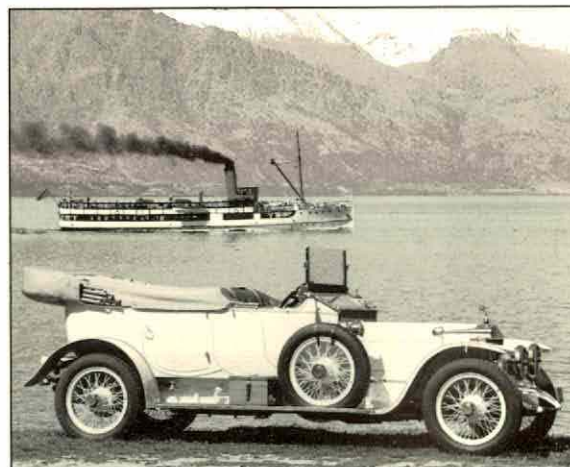
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Cover Photo: Made in 1912. With an unbroken 80 years of service behind her, TSS Earnslaw steams out of Queenstown on an afternoon run, passing the 80 year old Silver Ghost (2018) of Bill and Nora Handcock, on its first trip to New Zealand. The Remarkables, with a rare covering of fresh summer snow form the backdrop.



CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Despite the world's troubles during 1992, including the economic ones which have caused the value of vintage automobiles to decline along with impressionist paintings and Georgian silver, most of our members have continued to reap great pleasure from using their rolling (if not liquid) assets. I base this statement on the fact that our Club's events in 1992 have for the most part been as well attended as ever. All these events are described elsewhere in this issue and a reading of these accounts will show that there has been no recession in enjoyment of them. Since economic forecasts for 1993 are little brighter, I suggest that even more of you partake of the friendship and camaraderie of the events your Committee has in store for you.

Having issued the above invitation, I must at once partially withdraw it (apart from the 60 or so members signed up for it). I am referring to the forthcoming Alpine 93 rally to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the 1913 contest which put Rolls-Royce firmly on the international map. This event has been fully subscribed for more than a year and unless there are late cancellations you will have to get your pleasure from our other activities or from the film and book which are planned for the Alpine event. In my letter last year I paid tribute to our Honorary Secretary John Kennedy's valiant work in organising this event, and I can say that in the ensuing year John and Rae have made numerous trips to the Alpine region to ensure that everything goes smoothly next summer. With up to 60 Silver Ghosts expected, this will be one of the biggest Club events since the 1967 Goodwood Rally which our Club shared with the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts Club.

Since a large proportion of our members belong to both clubs, most of you will know that in early September 1992, the Sir Henry Royce Memorial Foundation opened the Hon. Charles Rolls Wing at its headquarters in Paulerspury, Northamptonshire. In support of this very worthwhile endeavour, the 20-Ghost Club presented a handsome two foot high model of the Spirit of Ecstasy, suitably inscribed, and we have been told that it will grace a prominent spot in the handsome new building.

Club membership tends to be stable or grow slightly from year to year, but in 1992 we had, for us, a banner crop of new members, many from abroad. This is largely as a result of the participation of a few of our members in recent tours in the United States, Australia and New Zealand, where they were able to spread the gospel about the delights of membership of our Club.

I close by recording the death last spring of Cecil Chapman, a long time member of the Club, who also served for a number of years on the Committee as Honorary Treasurer. In addition to participating in his 1932 20/25 in most of our overseas trips over many years, he went as my guest in our PII to Japan in 1979. I am happy to say that his car continues to be in the Club in the possession of his son Richard.

May all of you enjoy the companionship of the Club and the satisfaction of driving your splendid old Rolls-Royce motor cars during 1993.

Lynn Brua

AGM & ANNUAL DINNER

London Charterhouse - 24 January 1992

For the second year in succession, the historic buildings of the old London Charterhouse were the venue for Annual Winter Dinner and AGM of the 20-Ghost Club.

Some 50 members present renewed old acquaintances in the pre-dinner session before the formal meeting session, where the existing committee, all present except for Lord Elgin, were all unanimously re-elected for a further term. The revisions to the Club Rules, having previously been circulated and discussed with members, were then approved unanimously. Approval was also given for the committee to raise the subscriptions to £25 when they deemed necessary, although by a combination of increased membership and good housekeeping, it was stated that this would not be happening during the current year.

Further discussion on the planned events for 1992 and beyond then followed, plus approval of a request for a branch to be opened in Australia, due to the strong demand and substantial increase in members from there.

With the formalities over, the gathering adjourned to the fine old hall for dinner, with the tables decorated as usual by the fine collection of trophies, some of which had, pleasingly, been won by newer members.

After a splendid meal and enjoyable evening, the evening came to an end with members dispersing out through the old courtyard into the quiet streets of a very mild winter's evening.

Our thanks again to Clive Carter for organising the event.

ON THE RECORD

The year in review has been different in its focus from those which went before it. For those with a car to restore or prepare, with the deadline of the Alpine starting to loom on the horizon, motoring has sometimes had to take a back seat in favour of the 1993 requirements. For those unaffected by the Alpine, there have been a good selection of events including a French Tour. And for the expanding Australian Chapter, the first of what is hoped to be many successful events was staged.

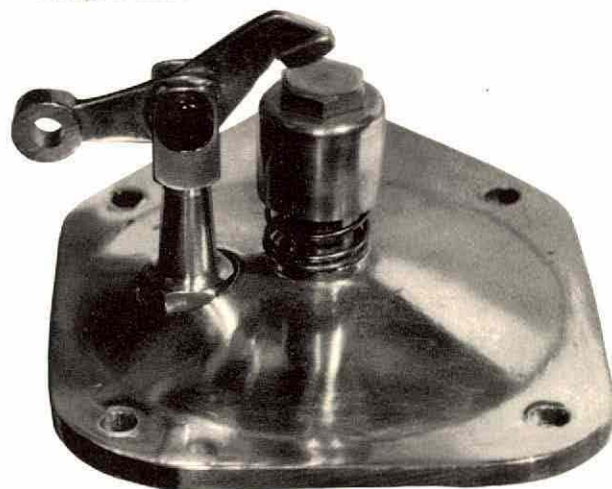
The economic situation has kept the market very quiet and resale prices are still soft. This has the effect of making it attractive for the genuine enthusiast to enter the market with little competition from the speculator. It would appear that although such an animal may not have ever gone for good, it may be a long time before he causes big problems in the old car industry.

One different effect that may be felt, however, is the fact that the market is now back in a situation where money spent on overhaul and restoration can not necessarily be recouped by a commensurate increase in the sale value of the car. This has had little effect in our part of the industry so far; many restoration projects were already committed; many people who entered for the Alpine needed to get their cars ready by a deadline, and others who use their cars a lot also had been planning for major work to be done. But there seems reason to suspect that some 'basket cases' or other major restorations of cars which could be nice and usable but of no particular exotic merit may now remain unreadied for the road or be more valuable as parts only, thus removing another potential car from the list of survivors. A pity, but maybe inevitable. A result of this could be a shake up of those in the restoration industry, for that is what it is these days. While this may only cause the cowboys to go to the wall, a major reduction in the availability of the good restorers could be a problem for us all. Perhaps only the more ordinary marques will be affected. We will need to wait and see but the wait may not be too long.

On the Alpine 93 front, the realisation, as the year progressed, that the countdown to the event was now months, rather than years, has helped to concentrate the mind somewhat, particularly when there is both an event to organise (or at least keep on course) as well as a major restoration project to finish. A year ago it seemed that the Radley Ghost (2260E) would be finished sometime during 1992. But further research during the year has brought more details to light and the discovery of some further photographs of the car has necessitated the search for more detailed items to ensure that the final restoration will be identical in detail to the original of 80 years ago.

The unique priming and carburettor flooding devices have been among the many items that took a large amount of research time. Information for these has come from a variety of sources. The first of these was the Bibliothek in Vienna, source of many interesting items, photographs and facts on the Alpenfahrt. The article that described some of the technical 'jokes' on various Alpine cars, showed the operation of the Rolls-Royce Carburettor Flooding Device and the Radiator Extension Tube, which was not a Rolls-Royce invention at all, but was used first by Fiat in the 1912 Alpenfahrt then taken up by many of the manufacturers the following year. A translation of this article is published in this issue. My thanks to John Altmann for this, which was a great help during the restoration of 2260E.

Further research in the archives at the Hunt House brought to light some of the original drawings and these, together with the discovery of a 1914 Silver Ghost in America that is still fitted with a version of the flooding device have enabled the correct mechanism to be fitted onto 2260E once again. Very satisfying, but the time taken to get all these details right makes me glad that the deadline is June 1993 after all. Even that will be tough enough to meet!



The Carburettor Float Chamber Lid, showing the special flooding lever used on the Alpine cars that allowed activation without opening the bonnet.

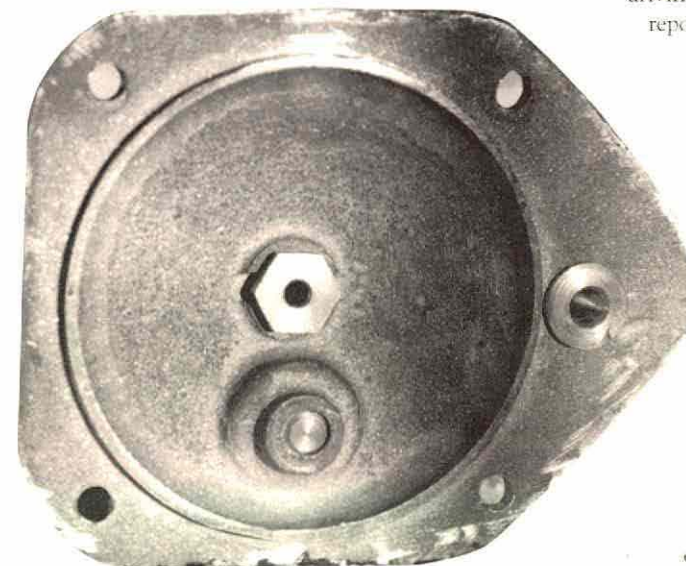
As regards the Alpine event itself, the most important piece of route news is that the Slovenes, aware of the great asset they have in the Loibl Pass, have now declared it a *Technical Monument* and plan to restore it to be open

for our use next July. The road has been closed for about 30 years and will eventually be restored to the original state it was in during the original Alpenfahrt events from 1911 to 1914. We have a full day allocated to using this great mountain road with its severe gradients, tight hairpins and seemingly endless caniveaux (drainage gullies) on the descent on the Austrian side.

After the troubles of 1991, when it was not possible to go into the new states of Slovenia or Croatia, almost the entire route has been traversed twice during 1992. This included the Slovenia sections and the small section south of Trieste on the Istrian peninsula in Hrvatska (Croatia), in an area mercifully completely free from the ethnic troubles plaguing other parts of the former Yugoslavia - hundreds of kilometres further east.

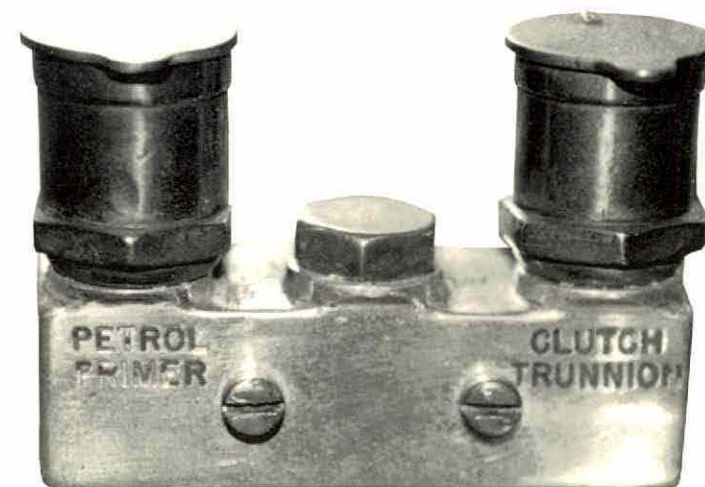
For the overall route, final checking for the year was completed in October. Already the snow line was down below 2000 metres and there was snow on the Pordoi Pass (2239m). Three days after crossing the Dolomites, there was heavy snow down to 500m and the passes were shut by the earliest winter falls for decades.

The draft route document is now complete and a final



Underside of Float Chamber Lid

route check will be carried out next Spring, provided the heavy snow has thawed sufficiently to permit the roads to re-open.



The Petrol Primer Cup used for cold starting and the adjacent Oiler for the Clutch Trunnion. This unique device has stayed with the car since new.

For those whose cars were already prepared and ready by 1992, there were a couple of chances to test both the car and driver on some demanding hill roads. First was the New Zealand tour after the Pan Pacific rally, which two of the Silver Ghosts from England participated in. Then there was the Cumbrian Driving Weekend in May, attended by nearly twenty of the Silver Ghosts which will be driving the Alpine route a year later. Both the events are reported on in this issue in some detail.

Not to be outdone, the Australian Chapter are organising an Australian Alpine rally in March, just in time for final adjustments (or engine rebuilds)? before loading into containers for the long journey to Europe. We were delighted to be in Melbourne in March for the inauguration of the Australian Chapter of the 20-Ghost Club. Our thanks to all those present, especially the Altmanns, for their hospitality, plus the chance to try John's Silver Ghost.

The Alpine event soon to be commemorated was not the only Silver Ghost highlight of 1913. Just days before the Alpenfahrt, Rolls-Royce won the Spanish Grand Prix. An original account of this triumph is included in this issue. Eric Platford, who came third in this event, then came over to Vienna just in time for the Alpenfahrt. Perhaps this is another event worthy of a re-enactment.

Finally, to all car owners, whether coming on the Alpine or not, may 1993 be a year for using and enjoying our fine motor cars.

John L. Kennedy

Technische Witze an den Alpenwagen

Von Alexander Nicklitschek

Source: Allgemeine Automobil-Zeitung, Wein 13 Juli 1913.

Translated by John Altmann

"The translation is quite difficult due to the idiotic phrasing and old fashioned German used in the publication together with never ending sentences. The translation is therefore as correct as possible so that it retains the German way of expressing something as complicated as possible when it could be said more simply. The outcome is that some of the sentences are awful but this is what the Germans like and everyone thinks how clever they are."

Only minor changes have been made to the Altmann translation to remove possible ambiguities.

Technical Jokes on the Alpine Cars.

By Alexander Nicklitschek

As at most automobile sport events and test drives at the present time, the main purpose of the Austrian Alpenfahrt is to test in severe conditions the performance efficiency of modern touring cars and of all their components, but also to ban special constructions which in any way show up a detail at the expense of general usage. In spite of this, one can see a small number of improvements and

aim of the designers to make the alterations but the will to prevent the "treachery of the object" of which automobilists and in particular Alpine drivers can tell much. (In other words, to prevent some of the awkward rules of the event from causing the contestants to lose points or be disqualified on a technicality.)

In the previous year, when the harder rules and the more difficult tour of the Alpine rally gave some

that some new adaptations from the previous year were adopted on this year's Alpine cars and are seen in different variations.

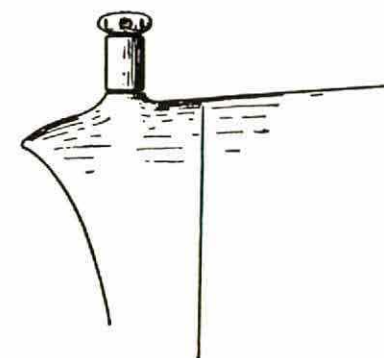


Fig. 3. Kühlerverschluß der Daimler-Benz-Wagen.

There is for example the "famous" Fiat "Sugarcone" which today is seen on nearly all the cars from the factory, but firstly on the Fiat team of the Alpenfahrt from 1912. The aforesaid "Sugarcone" is a high cone shaped cooling water tower which takes in the lengthened exhaust steam pipe. Through this higher position obtained by the exhaust steam pipe in this construction, it prevents the cooling water being carried away with the excess steam. Today the cars of the Rolls-Royce team and the Horch team as well as the Scat car of Mr Piwonka display lengthened radiator caps. (Diagrams 1-3)

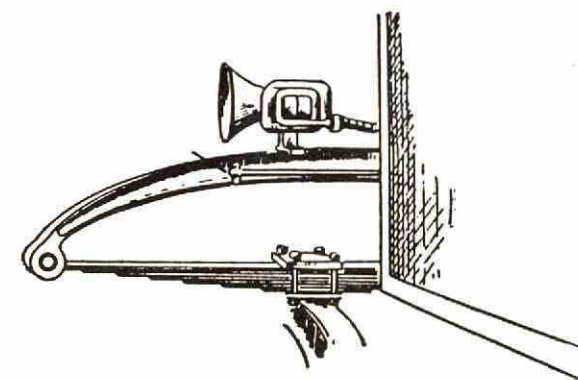


Fig. 4. Vorderrad-Federband bei Rolls-Royce.

Of the different pull arrangements to operate the carburettor floats, we show here the interesting details of the Rolls-Royce car (Diagram 4). In the hollow of the spring of the right front wheel is fixed a pull handle (Z) which is connected with a wirepull to the float. New also is the fixing of the horn on the spring support. Generally one could find many interesting details on this car which appear strange at first glance but they testified to the practical mindedness of the English.

The demand of the proposers for a speedometer for instance is not as resolved as is usual by fixing to the firewall but is screwed to the right windscreen support, to enable the driver to always control the speed without turning his head. The speedometer also shows detail rarely seen locally. As the diagram makes apparent (Diagram 5), displays of three vertical dials, one on top of the other, the uppermost

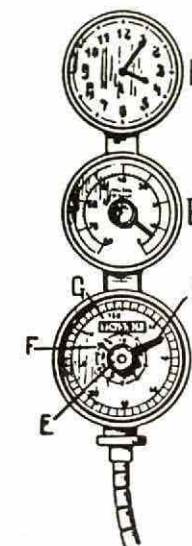


Fig. 5. Tachometer der Rolls-Royce-Wagen.

- A = Uhr,
- B = Tachometerstala,
- C = Zifferblatt des Leistungs-zählers.
- D = Zeiger für die zurückgelegte Strecke,
- O = Gesamtleistungszeiger,
- F = Zehntelkilometerzeiger für die zurückgelegte Strecke,
- E = Rückstellknopf.

(A) is a normal dial of a clock, the middle one (B) is the scale of the speedometer, calibrated in kilometers and English miles per hour. The lowest part of the apparatus consists of a kilometer counter which not only shows the total performance on the small numberscale (G) but the big hand (D) which can be connected with a push on the button (E) to the counter, and shows the distance travelled from a fixed time started on its scale. The small hand (F) shows the tenth kilometer of this distance. In turning the button (E) all the hands can be returned to zero-position.

One can therefore read off the scale of these instruments at a definite point of time the distance travelled and, if one is not adverse to a little calculation one can work out the average distance covered in an hour.

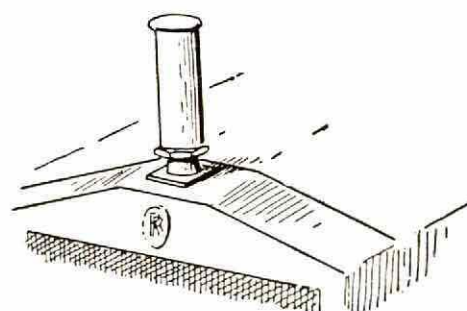


Fig. 1. Kühlerverschluß der Rolls-Royce-Wagen.

adaptations on the Alpine cars. However, these additions are not important changes in the construction and working of the whole machine, they are only serving to help to ease the most difficult proposition and to knock the top off and outwit the control book in a constructive way. It is not the worry of failure of an important part which was the

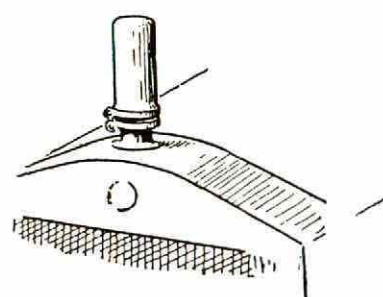


Fig. 2. Kühlerverschluß beim „Scat“-Wagen des Herrn Piwonka.

drivers the horrors, one could find some of the "technical jokes" in all combinations and details. Today, when most of the drivers are aware of the difficulties of the driving route and the heavy proposition, one could notice only few but apparently practical executions. For the correctiveness of this proposition is the realisation

The Spanish Grand Prix.

A British Victory in this Road Race for Fully Equipped Touring Cars.

FIRST and third places were secured by Rolls-Royce cars in the Spanish Grand Prix Race which was held over a most difficult course of 192 miles on June 15th. The second car was a Lorraine-Dietrich.

The complete list of entries and a few other particulars were given in *The Autocar* of the 14th inst. Out of a total entry of twenty, seventeen started and eleven finished. There were one or two slight accidents, which considering the difficult—and in places somewhat dangerous—nature of the course is not surprising, but fortunately nobody was seriously hurt. Rizal, who would have driven a Sunbeam, was injured whilst practising, and he was one of the three non-starters. Many complaints were made that for some unknown reason the modern high speed engine was handicapped unfairly, there was a minimum weight for each car according to its horse power, and the latter was arrived at by a formula which included the output of the engine at its maximum power. As a result of this the Talbot, for instance, was severely handicapped, as it had to carry nearly as much as each of the Rolls-Royce cars. The Hispano-Suiza, we learn, was not entered because of this handicap.

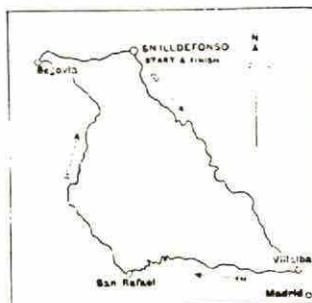
There is every indication of the event assuming greater importance next year, but in many quarters it is asserted that the formula must most certainly be altered before the next race if it is to be a success. The King of Spain, who was present, took a great interest in all the proceedings, and stated at the con-

clusion that the race must become an annual affair.

The course was a most difficult and trying one, embracing as it did the Guadarrama Mountains, which had to be negotiated twice on each of the three circuits. Once round the course was 64 miles, and as



A view of the course over the Guadarrama Mountains approaching Madrid. This illustration shows the hilly and forbidding nature of the country through which the race was run.



this was covered three times the total distance was 192 miles. Bends and sharp corners were the rule, the only satisfactory feature from the competitors' point of view being the road surface, which on the whole was very good. One of the ascents of the Guadarrama Mountains (at the Navacerrada Pass) meant climbing 1,886 feet in a distance of eight miles, and the second climb meant rising 2,460 feet in 10½ miles. Added to this, the heat was terrific, as when the race started at 10 a.m. it was already 90° in the shade; notwithstanding this, tyres appear to have given comparatively very little trouble.

Competitors had to drive fully equipped four-seated touring cars with hood, lamps, and two spare tyres. All bunnets were sealed before the race, the petrol carried being previously measured. No cooling water could be added to the radiator when once the race had begun, as a consequence of which, after climbing at full speed such lengthy gradients in such a heat, overheated engines were very common, and not more than half a gallon of water remained in the radiator and pipes of one car which finished the course.

The Talbot appears to have done remarkably well, in spite of being



The summit of the Alto de Leon Pass (4,980 feet above sea level), where a control station was established.

The Spanish Grand Prix.

so severely handicapped, until it had to retire owing to engine lubrication trouble. The little Humber retired owing to one of the wheels becoming loose, though this reason hardly seems credible.

The following was the order of finishing and the times of the cars that completed the total distance of 192 miles:

Driver and car.	Time.
h. m. s.	
D. Carlos de Salamanca (Rolls-Royce) ...	3 34 12
Marques de Audencia (Lorraine-Dietrich) ...	3 37 4
G. Eric Platford (Rolls-Royce) ...	3 39 56
Marques de Ugena Th. Schneider ...	4 7 51
Conde de la Patilla (Minerva) ...	4 8 22
Marques de Ugena (Th. Schneider) ...	4 7 51
Conde de la Patilla (Minerva) ...	4 8 22
D. Angel Santibanez (Panhard) ...	4 18 19
Duque de Zaragoza (Mercedes) ...	4 19 57
D. J. Román Manzona (Opel) ...	4 55 42
D. Juan G. Ocana (Delamoy-Belleville) ...	5 2 26

The times do not include the periods occupied in traversing the neutralised portions of the course; as the distance of these controls is unknown, it is impossible to give the average speeds.

The driver (Platford) of the third car is an Englishman, and will be recognised by many of our readers as the driver of one of the Rolls-Royce cars in the famous 2,000 miles trial of 1908.

The following table shows the engine sizes of the cars entered, together with the number of revolutions of the engines at their maximum b.h.p. As already mentioned, this was taken into account in determining the load to be carried by each car, and it pressed very hardly upon the high speed engines:

TABLE SHOWING ENGINE SIZES OF CARS ENTERED FOR THE SPANISH GRAND PRIX RACE.

No. of car.	Make.	No. of cyls.	Bore and stroke.	R.P.M. at max. h.p.
1. Sunbeam	...	4	80 x 148.5	2,400
2. Th. Schneider	...	4	110 x 160	1,800
3. Rolls-Royce	...	6	114 x 121	1,850
4. Excelsior	...	6	85 x 130	1,860
5. Humber	...	4	75 x 130	2,600
6. Talbot	...	4	101.5 x 140	3,000
7. Mercedes	...	4	100 x 130	1,400
8. Panhard	...	4	100 x 140	1,800
9. Opel	...	4	90 x 135	1,500
10. Delamoy-Belleville	...	6	83 x 130	1,700
11. Panhard	...	4	100 x 140	1,800
14. Lorraine-Dietrich	...	4	125 x 160	1,700
15. S.C.A.R.	...	4	85 x 140	2,000
16. Rolls-Royce	...	6	114 x 121	1,850
17. De Dion	...	8	94 x 140	1,500
18. De Dion	...	8	75 x 130	1,650
19. De Dion	...	4	100 x 140	1,700
20. Minerva	...	4	124 x 150	1,600

Nos. 1, 4, and 15 were non-starters.



On the left Don Carlos de Salamanca, the winner of the Spanish Grand Prix, passing over the Alto de Leon Pass in the second circuit on his Rolls-Royce car. On the right the Rolls-Royce No. 3, driven by Mr. G. E. Platford into third place, overtaking the Schneider No. 2 at a point about 150 yards before reaching the Alto de Leon Pass control station.



Der beste Wagen der Welt

Preise der Wagen (loko London):

Chassis mit Pneumatik ... £	985.00 K 23.640	Limousine, siebenstrigig ca. £	1305.00 K 31.320
Touristenwagen, vierstrigig (Type London-Edinburgh) ca. £	1087.10.0 K 26.100	Limousine-Landaulet ca. £	1235.15.0 K 29.658
Torpedo-Pneumatik ... ca. £	1125.00 K 27.000	Limousine ca. £	1240.00 K 29.760

(From Allgemeine Automobil-Zeitung, Vienna — 29 June 1913)

General-Repräsentanz für Oesterreich-Ungarn:

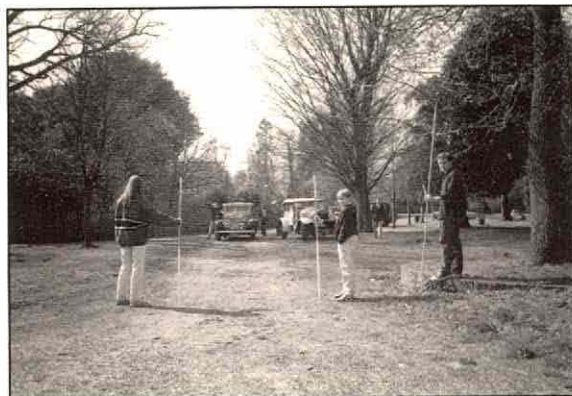
Telephon 11.958. Wien, I. Tegethoffstrasse Nr. 4. Telephon 11.958.

SYON PARK DRIVING TESTS

Sunday 5 April 1992

This year's venue proved to be an excellent choice by Brian Wootton, spurred on by the news that the Motor Museum in the park was due to move north. The weather was kind, so the Paddock, or rather, in this eighteenth century context, Grove, behind the Museum building provided an unusual, but nevertheless agreeable grass and tree course in a rural location in the heart of the western suburbs of London. Syon had everything for the enthusiast — and for his passengers and family too.

The Museum has a varied, even curious, selection of machinery, including a handsome formal 20 hp, some significant and some expansive Edwardians and even some evocative 1960's classics. An excellent re-creation of a local village garage, not far removed from the blacksmith's shop, was a powerfully evocative reminder of hammer-and-screwdriver maintenance and a testimony to the work of all the mechanics whose bread and butter efforts lie behind the apparent splendours of between-the-wars motoring.

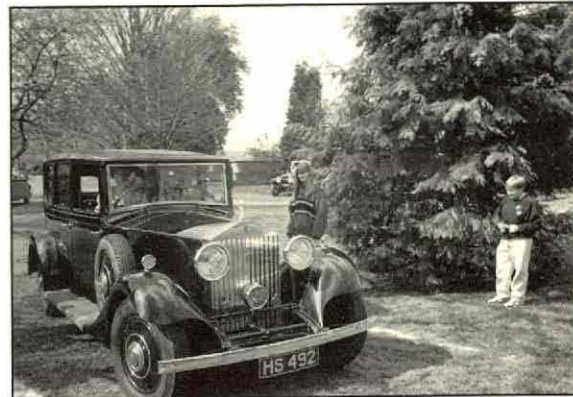


John Stuttard in his 1934 20/25 (9GSF29) tries his skill on the long distance estimation of width.

By comparison, the extravagance of the Great House seemed a bit over the top, but the whole ensemble of house and park brought back the age of Thames-side palaces in what was countryside and which we now all too often miss as we roar down the Kingston by-pass.

For those interested in Industrial Archaeology, the startling sight of masts rising above the Paddock wall revealed the Grand Union Canal on its way from Brentford to Birmingham, while for those who follow gentler pursuits, the Pleasure Grounds were there to stroll in while admiring a conservatory which followed the shape and scale of St. Paul's Cathedral. The old stables and ancillary buildings have been converted into restaurants, craft shops and a garden centre so there was more than enough to sustain mind and body.

The driving tests involved more natural hazards than usual; even parking on arrival meant avoiding armoured cars, and the manoeuvring test involved competitors



Head of Charterhouse Motor Club tries his own figure-of-eight course in 1933 20/25 GBA62 as owner Clive Carter sits alongside for a white knuckle ride.

dodging large trees as they wove their way forwards and then, unkindly, backwards over a figure-of-eight course. The Charterhouse Motor Club had produced their usual brand of cruel and unusual punishment including a height as well as width judgement in the through-the-narrows test. Drivers showed a great deal of gusto as well as expertise.

Digby Wills, whose failing eyesight has banned him from highway driving, proved that judgement is more important than mere vision by yet again beating those half his age and winning the tests yet again.

The number and interest of the various attractions meant that many stayed into the late afternoon after the official luncheon and I, for one, was delighted to find so much unfamiliar around a House which I last visited far too long ago. My thanks to Brian for his inspiration and for his negotiations and to Simon Fielder and his pupils for the goodwill and charm of the velvet glove on the iron hand of trial.

Clive Carter



"With the aid of my young assistant I will now attempt the impossible." Eventual winner Digby Wills in his 1932 20/25 shows how it is done.

CLANDON PARK ANNUAL CONCOURS & SUMMER PICNIC

Built in the early 1730's for the second Lord Onslow by the Venetian architect Giacomo Leoni, Clandon Park provided the perfect setting for the Summer Picnic and Concours d'Etat of the 20-Ghost Club on Sunday 21 June 1992.

The weather made a major contribution by providing a cloudless (no pun intended!) hot summer day; perfect for vintage motoring and picnicking. The cars, parked in a neat semi-circle facing the porte-cochere and elaborate steps, ranged in age from John Kennedy's 1905 Light 20 (26350) to Andrew Ayres' 1936 PIII (3AZ134).

It was pleasing to welcome Australian members Malcolm Johns, John Milverton and Keith Wherry as well. All Alpine 93 participants, we hope to see them again next year with their own Silver Ghosts.

Bryan Wootton & David Martin had agreed to the judging tasks, so for the second Sunday running (the other

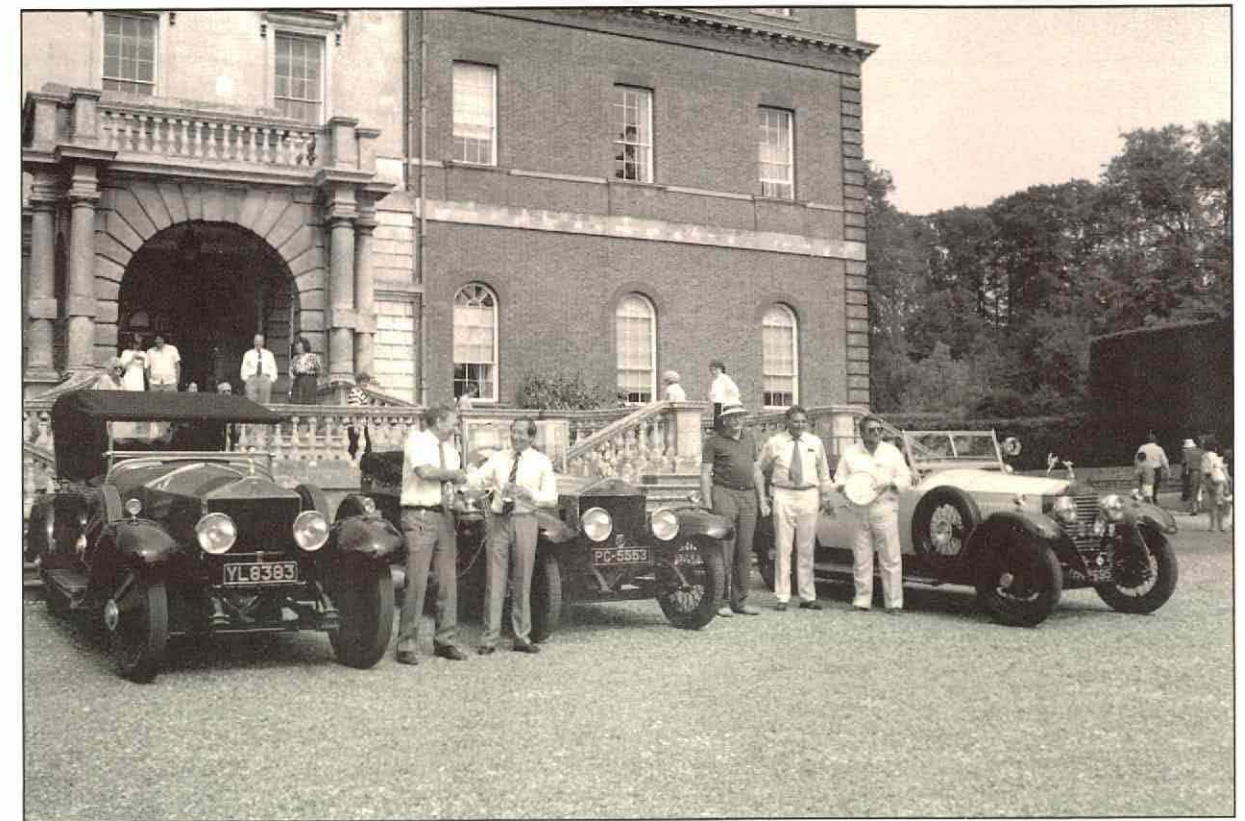
being Castle Ashby the previous weekend) the judges crawled around under the cars while the others tucked into their picnic hampers.

Winner of the Fred & Joan Watson Trophy for the best large horsepower car was Peter Collinson's 1925 Silver Ghost (135AU) and the 20 hp Hooper Tourer of Peter Price won the small car Messervy trophy. The ladies voted Michael Panter's 1921 Silver Ghost as their favourite.

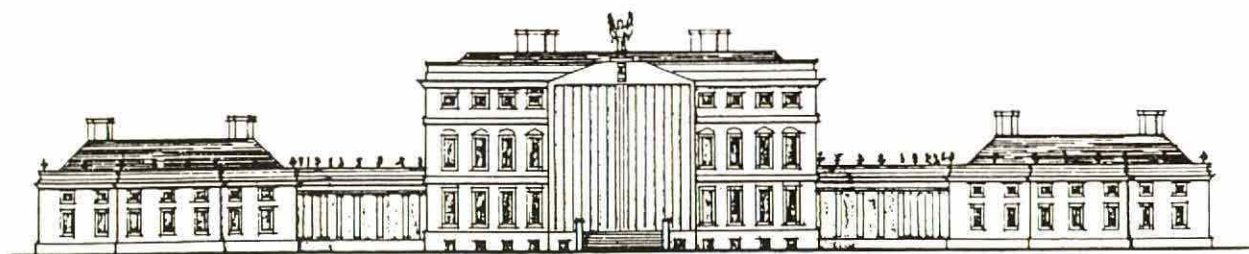
The house, with its Onslow family pictures, furniture, needlework and Gubbay collection of porcelain, provided a pleasant diversion before it was time for another meander through the leafy lanes of Surrey as everyone made for home.

Congratulations and thanks to Clive Carter for arranging the venue.

David C. Martin



The winners at Clandon Hall. From left to right: 135AU, Peter Collinson, Michael Panter, 186AG, David Martin (organiser), Brian Wootton (judge), Peter Price, GAJ81.



IRISH GEORGIAN SOCIETY & 20-GHOST CLUB TOUR OF NORTH WALES

It really is not a very good idea to allow an Irish Georgian behind the wheel of an elderly Rolls-Royce, especially if it is a most elegant 1932 20/25 Sedan de Ville that has been lovingly maintained by Digby Wills.

If this unfortunate combination is then compounded further by glorious weather and 750 miles of open road, then the similarities between the said Irish Georgian and Toad of Toad Hall become frighteningly real - poop poop, poop poop !!! The sheer terror of the lunch-time driving lesson - round Hyde Park Corner, up Park Lane to Marble Arch, return through the park and repeat - was quickly forgotten as on the morning of 22nd May, in brilliant sunshine we swung majestically into Kensington Gore swept past the Albert Hall and surged towards North Wales, 1992's venue for the annual meeting of friends from both organisations.

It was IGS members Tim and Marylyn Bacon who were tour leaders for the first time and despite their worries, this 'baptism by fire' was a truly superb weekend. Twelve cars provided the most appropriate transport possible: Lenox Jamieson's 1924 Silver Ghost Tourer (68RM) being the oldest followed by Stormin' Norman Gardner (1929 20 hp GEN45) and Reg Marsden, the O'Dowds and the Beers, all with 1929 PIs or PIIIs. The Carters, Colliers, Kents and Watts all drove 20/25's, and Sue Taylor's 1939 Wraith and Jimmy Valentine's 1954 Silver Dawn completed the party. Here, homage must be paid to Margery Wills for so serenely and patiently coping with my driving (and Digby's navigation) for five days.

The Rosset Hall Hotel, on the Chester side of Wrexham was an excellent base, pleasant and friendly with a sheltered car park. And - what a surprise for you all - a garage and petrol station were exactly opposite for the repair of punctures and tank filling as an added bonus.

As always, Saturday morning found all the Irish Georgians eyeing up the cars and making instant decisions about them before the friendly much loved IGS whistle, so gentle and delicate, softly encouraged all to climb aboard for Erddig, our first stop, and flagship of the National Trust in Wales. Built in 1683 it changed hands in the early 18th Century, when it was remodelled and sumptuously refurbished, including the wonderful State Bed of 1723. The house was extended by James Wyatt in

1772 for Philip Yorke whose character and taste still dominate throughout. We saw the servants' quarters and out-buildings, all fascinating, including the decaying content of the garage an elderly Rover and some rusting bicycles all left by the last reclusive members of the family, who finally handed the estate to the National Trust in 1973 with the funds to repair all the damage caused by mining subsidence and neglect. It was an uplifting thrilling start to the weekend.

We then travelled to nearby Pickhill Hall, where IGS member Robin Dean occupies the central portion of this sumptuous 1720s house designed by Richard Trubshaw for John Puleston, the remainder of the house being separate flats. Exotic canapés and Pimms were kindly provided for us to enjoy while we were told the history of the house and the various families who have lived in it. We then danced down the local lanes, misled by both Janet Valentine and Sue Taylor, to the nearby village of Worthenbury when the Emral Arms put on a wonderful lunch for us all. Afterwards some polished their radiators while other crossed the road to see the finest Georgian Church in Wales, St Deiniol's, rebuilt in 1736-9 by the same Richard Trubshaw and still containing all its original fittings and box pews.

We headed off along the A494 towards Llangollen but all missed the sharp turn up to Trevor Hall, so had to carry out U turns to the merriment of the customers of the nearby pub. I crashed the gears as we laboured up the narrow lane to the sloping field below Michael Tree's handsome mid 16th house which he bought in 1987. Again, this was an inspiration to us all, for Mr Tree has rescued it from being an abandoned roofless ruin, used as a livestock shelter. The works are extensive and continuing and have revealed the alterations carried out in the 1740s when also the entrance front was rebuilt. A lovely tea was laid out in the kitchen - lots of different cakes, Welsh scones and gallons of tea. Having consumed all of that we set off for Bettisfield Park near Whitchurch; again we missed the turn, thanks to Norman Gardner so more three point turns were needed. Every tour seems to produce at least one real eccentric and one house that is a revelation. Mrs Bayley and Bettisfield were this year's 'finds'. The house is mainly about 1800 built for the Hammer family with high

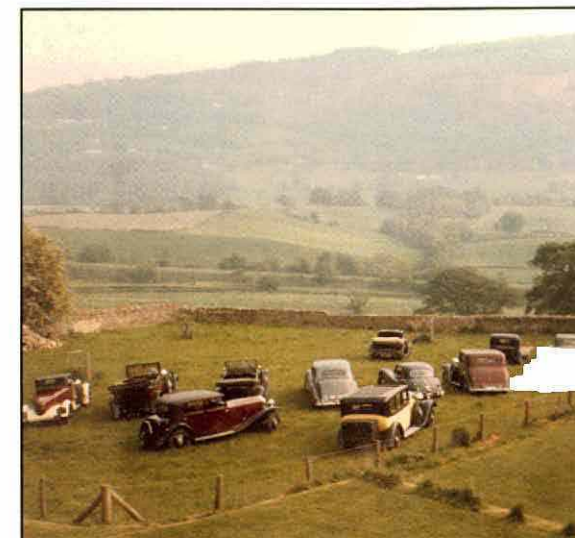
richly decorated interiors that have a very Irish feel to them. In fact it could have been designed by the Irish architect Richard Morrison, but no documents survive. Mrs Bayley, a real achiever, immediately produced lots of wine and glasses when she removed the spiders from them. Then sitting cross legged on the hall table (one of the few pieces of furniture in the whole house) she told us of her determined struggle to restore the house despite such set backs as the theft of virtually all the contents and the refusal of the adjoining owner to allow electricity to be supplied across his land. We wandered through the great empty interiors with their rich plaster work, the late afternoon sun pouring in through the enormous windows - a most atmospheric experience.

From there we made the short journey to one of the most perfect houses we were to see, the mid 18th Century red brick Iscoyd Park. We drove through the beautifully landscaped park, past the cricket match being played by the pavilion (great excitement for the many cricket buffs in the party) and past beautiful flower beds to the elegant front facade. But to our surprise this quintessentially English house, physically in Wales, had lots of Irish connections. For 150 years it has been owned by the Godsal family and Major & Mrs Godsal first welcomed us with champagne in their

first floor drawing room. His great grandfather was the Philip Godsal carriage maker of London who had made in 1790 the State Carriage for the Earl of Clare, Lord Chancellor of Ireland, which has recently been restored for the Irish Government and

is now on public display at Newbridge House north of Dublin. With this background they were particularly interested in both of our societies and were entranced by the cars as we were by then and their house. Jane Carter demonstrated the modesty that a 20/25 provides as a changing rooms and dinner was served - a most delightful evening.

On Sunday we travelled north west to see a group of nineteenth century rather than Georgian houses. The first, Nantlys, is a very complete example of an Elizabethan style house built in the 1870's by T H Wyatt for the Pennant family whose descendants still live there. Sadly Mr Pennant was in hospital but Mrs Pennant gave us one of the most entertaining tours possible and provided iced coffee and biscuits for us to enjoy while we wandered round the rhododendron gardens. We then motored



Trevor Hall car park.



Lenox Jamieson's Silver Ghost at Plas Teg.



Leeswood Hall.

to the next estate, Brynbella, to see the magically positioned house built in 1814 by John Piozzi; he was the nephew and adopted son of Dr Johnson's friend Mrs Thrale and her second husband, Gabriel Piozzi and she had given John the estate after she had built part of the house. Now owned by Mrs Glazebrook this elegant house has most elegant interiors and contents.

Dr Johnson had also known Bodrhyddan although he would not have recognised it after the brilliant and exciting remodelling of the 1870s by Nesfield for the Conwy family. Inherited in 1869 by Charlotte the wife of Richard Conwy whose grandfather and uncle were the Earl of Bective and Marquess of Headfort, the house had been built in the fifteenth century drastically altered twice in the seventeenth and again in 1840 before the delightful transformation from 1871 to 1875 in the Queen Anne or 'Pont Street Dutch' style. Nesfield, son of one of the most successful landscape gardeners of the times, also laid out the wonderful formal gardens. We were told all this, and so much more by the present descendant of Charlotte Conwy, Lord Langford, who regaled us over lunch with the funniest stories about his spartan childhood, the courtship of his wife and various other escapades. From Bodrhyddan we went to another house by Nesfield and one designed at the same time (1871-4) Kinmel Park although the word 'palace' might be more appropriate. This vast mansion, a sort of Frenchified Hampton Court, was built for an apparently quiet and relatively obscure family called Hughes who had made a huge fortune from their copper mines on Anglesey. Sadly, the house is no longer in private hands, and its present use as a Christian conference centre is architecturally inappropriate. But it was an enjoyable experience to see the vast rooms and wander through the grounds, with spectacular views over the sea. But storm clouds were gathering and thunder and lightning heralded our departure from North Wales' response to Ludwig of Bavaria.

The sultry atmosphere lasted all evening and there were more fireworks of a different sort the next morning in the form of Mrs Bayley again when we visited her other country house, Plas Teg, the survival of which is little short of a miracle. To find an eccentric house or owner on one of our tours is always a bonus; to find such an owner with two extremely fine houses is unprecedented. Mrs Bayley is totally besotted with historic buildings that need rescuing and her purse is utterly committed as well. Plas Teg is a wonderful example of what can be done with sheer determination and flair. It was built about 1610 for Sir John Trevor in the 'Chivalry' style popular at the time, utterly different to the great prodigy houses of the Jacobean period and is romantic and exotic with four square corner towers with their ogee domes. Only used by tenants from 1641 until earlier this century it has survived relatively unscathed although a derelict white elephant in constant danger of demolition for much of its life. Mrs Bayley has had the house repaired and redecorated with great panache and her colour schemes and choice of fur-

nishings are just stunning.

Our next appointment was the nearby Nerquis Hall where Mr and Mrs Furse welcomed us with coffee and let us explore the house, 30 years younger although much more traditionally Elizabethan than Plas Teg but no less delightful. The house was substantially altered internally during the eighteenth century when the Great Chamber was elegantly panelled but the 1797 Gothic extensions were removed 25 years ago when it was restored. The charming gardens were explored and revealed a ruined folly and a charming cast iron octagonal Orangery of 1814. But we had to push on through the narrow lanes to lunch and we then realised why David Collier had repainted Harriet red - so the splattered blood stains would not be so noticeable.

The great White Gates of 1726 triumphantly announced our impending arrival at Leeswood a fully quarter of a mile away and we all ground to a halt in front of the magnificent house also of 1726, built for George Wynne (whose fortune was from lead) by Francis Smith of Warwick and now owned by Tim Bacon's sister and brother-in-law, the Bartletts. They are in the process of restoring the house, somewhat reduced and internally remodelled soon after 1800 but stopped work long enough to produce the most sumptuous lunch for us all. We took the opportunity to present Tim and Marylyn with some recent books on Irish architecture as a small token of our appreciation for all their excellent organisation and then spilled out into the sunshine to wander round what survives of the 1720s pleasure grounds and walled gardens.

From here it was a short drive to Gwsaney where Captain Peter Davies-Cooke and his wife were waiting to welcome us to the final Jacobean house of the tour. Built in 1603 for the Davies family it is a tall stone house plain with mullioned windows but set on a 600 ft high ridge with extensive views across the Dee to the Wirral peninsula and beyond. So near the edge of the ridge is the house that the part nearest to it had to be removed in 1823. The materials from this provided stone for an extension of the 1860s and various garden features. The garden is Mrs Davies-Cooke's forte and we were able to further enjoy it after seeing the interior of the house with its fascinating contents by having tea, of Welsh scones and cakes on the terrace. Here we bid farewell to each other for another year and dispersed home; slower for some than others. GX88 made her stately progress that evening to Worcester with Sue's Wraith providing an escort. From there the following leisurely day included lunch at the Lygon Arms in Broadway, and a blissful drive in the blazing sunshine across the Cotswolds, finally arriving back in London in the early evening. What would the Irish Georgian Society do without the 20-Ghost Club? Our most sincere thanks for all the pleasure you gave us and we hope you will join us in Kent in 1993. Oh, did you get the gear box replaced Digby?

John R Redmill IGS



Roll call at Gwsaney



Iscoyd Park



Bettisfield Park



Eyddig



Gwsaney Hall

THE GENESIS OF THE AUSTRALIAN CHAPTER OF THE 20-GHOST CLUB



20-Ghost Club members present at the meeting at 5 Struan Street, Toorak, Victoria on 16th March 1992. From left to right: Byron Dobson, Rae Kennedy (UK), Audrey Dobson, Doug Bristow, Malcolm Johns, John Milverton, Russell Rolls (behind), John Kennedy (UK), David Jones, Heather Rolls, Gary Dubois, Keith Wherry, John Altmann, Peter Willkie (behind), Robert McDermott, Ian Irwin. (Sally, Peter Willkie died later in the year.)

Photograph by Jan Altmann

A meeting, organised by Russell Rolls, John Altmann and Malcolm Johns at the home of John and Jan Altmann, was called on the 16 March 1992, and Australian members of the 20-Ghost Club and entrants of Alpine 93 were invited. The meeting date coincided with a visit to Melbourne of John Kennedy, Honorary Secretary of the 20-Ghost Club and Events Director of Alpine 93, who, together with his wife, Rae, were en route back to England after the Pan-Pacific Rally in New Zealand.

A very good roll up of 18 members and partners turned up to hear a detailed progress report by John of the re-run of the 1913 Alpine Rally, scheduled to take to the road starting in Vienna on the 80th Anniversary in June 1993. Over 70 nominations have been received from many different countries including 7 from Australia, all with veteran or vintage Silver Ghosts.

At the close of the meeting, John Kennedy announced, in response to requests from

Australia, that it was now appropriate that an Australian Chapter of the 20-Ghost Club be established, which was unanimously agreed. Malcolm Johns, the Alpine 93 co-ordinator, was elected Chairman and Dr Byron Dobson was elected Secretary/Treasurer, both appointments being unanimous.

For some time it had been discussed privately that it was a pity that Australian Members mostly missed out on the events which were so brilliantly organised in Britain and Europe and it was felt desirable for events to be organised in Australia. It is the intention of Malcolm Johns and Byron Dobson that this should happen and plans are already under way for the first of such events.

Footnote: Next day, 10 members turned up at John and Jan Altmann's farm 'Kangerong', where John and Rae were entertained at an Australian barbecue and John's 1913 Silver Ghost (2320E) was given a pre-Alpine tryout by John Kennedy and pronounced fit for the mountain passes of Europe.



Barbecue lunch at 'Kangerong', Dromona on 17th March 1992. From left to right: Byron Dobson, John Altmann, Russell Rolls, Malcolm Johns, Heather Rolls, John Kennedy, Rae Kennedy, Ian Irwin, Audrey Dobson, Jan Altmann.

CUMBRIAN DRIVING WEEKEND

8-11 May 1992

Billed as a weekend of driving especially suitable for Silver Ghost drivers going on the Alpine 93 event the following year, this tour had all the ingredients necessary for an ideal warm-up for mountain motoring.

The route, superbly researched by Martin & Julia Dawson, covered some of the most scenic and at the same time the most demanding routes in Cumbria, with a mixture of narrow roads, very steep gradients and sharp corners with a few very tight hairpin bends as well. So demanding were parts of the route that some of the drivers were relieved to know that the Alpine 93 route did not contain any sections as narrow, steep and irregular as the renowned Hard Knott Pass route.

The Friday route, from the base at the Netherwood Hotel, Grange-Over-Sands, headed east (which allowed participants to drive up on the day and connect with the tour) and followed the route of the famous Settle and Carlisle mountain railway for much of its most dramatic section. The weather, always likely to be vigorous in this wild region, produced a forerunner of what might be expected in the Alps. Strong winds and blizzard conditions with hail and rain, followed by brilliant sunshine gave everyone an opportunity to test their cold weather motoring gear. Besides braving the weather and following the route maps and detailed instructions supplied, navigators and passengers received a teasing set of observation questions to answer.

Saturday, in somewhat better weather, saw a route over the Hard Knott and Wrynose passes. Not particularly high but very steep and irregularly graded, they provided a severe test for the drivers and produced smiles in the evening when the now more confident drivers recounted their exploits at the bar. In addition, there were a series of photograph locations to identify before reaching the Steamboat Museum on Windermere in mid-afternoon.

Sunday was touring with a difference. It was necessary to 'collect' locations from clues provided and an Ordnance Survey map. The further away, the more points each clue was worth, so it required a skilful combination of locations. Fortunately, a number of the locations were pubs, although this did sometimes cause additional delays and make it more difficult to reach Levens Hall, the National Trust rendezvous point, by the required afternoon deadline.

The Alpine motoring mode continued in the evenings, with presentations on the history of the Alpine events and discussions on the requirements for the next year's tour. As those present represented at least a dozen of the Silver Ghosts planning to make the trip in 1993, the discussions were a useful prelude to this event.

Our thanks again to Martin & Julia Dawson for their hard work and thoroughness in producing this well organised and well-prepared tour.

The Cars & Drivers

Car	Name	Chassis	Regn No
1912 SG Tourer	Tim & Sue Forrest	2154	R-1487
1912 SG Road B.	Richard & Ian Hensby	1888	DS-8986
1920 SG Tourer	Graham & Gill Adams	51TW	XC-5895
1920 SG Tourer	Colin Crabbe	71CW	XE-7925
1920 SG Tourer	Jens & Anne Pilo	58UE	XF-7007
1922 SG Tourer	Ron Bonar & John Fyda	27RG	TS-3714
1924 SG Tourer	Martin & Julia Dawson	85TM	PX-777
1924 SG Tourer	Peter Collinson	135AU	YL-8383
1924 SG Tourer	Harry & Pat Watson	31EU	KL-4869
1925 PI Tourer	Brian & Jo Wootton	10UMC	TD-1234
1928 PI Tourer	John & Kay Marsh	55CL	UL-5136



Peter Collinson storms up the Pennine hills on to Cragdale Moor



Driver's eye view: Jens Pilo ascends Hard Knott Pass

JKL

Picture Record

cumbria
THE LAKE DISTRICT



Smiles of satisfaction as Richard Hensby reaches the summit of Hard Knott Pass with son Richard as navigator.



Over the precipice, Jens Pilo about to test his gears and brakes on the extremely steep Hard Knott descent



Line-up at Levens Hall.

Photograph by Jens Pilo



Steep gradients, You have been warned!

Photograph by Derek du Toit



Peter Collinson negotiates the hairpin on Hard Knott Pass



One of the distractions on the back roads. Jens Pilo about to leave the ancient Blacksmith's Arms... Ron Bonar has no such plan!



Brian Wootton attempts the Hard Knott hairpin while navigator Derek du Toit offers advice and Jo freezes in the back



Peter Collinson drives up into the Pennines near Kettlewell



Derek du Toit tests out Colin Crabbe's Silver-Ghost

Photograph by Jens Pilo

A SCOTTISH TEST RUN

After having visited John O'Groats and Dunnet Head on the 1991 Scottish Tour, Gill and I decided to go back to the other end and visit Lands End and the Lizard. This showed up two particular problems with the car.

- 1) We could not keep the coil points working for more than about 200 miles and
- 2) we consumed oil at the rate of 1 pint per 75 miles.

Thinking about the 1993 Alpine which we had entered, we decided to have a close look at everything, which resulted in a major work programme. We took the car off the road in January and were pleased to have it working again by May, so we could participate in the Cumbrian weekend.

The coil trouble was a combination of wear and a failing ballast resistor. We found 3 big ends with large pieces missing, several piston rings broken, and excess bore wear (compression test showed 62 lbs each cylinder - be warned!). The crankshaft and main bearings were as new, but plenty of sludge had built up in the oil way. The engine to gear box coupling needed overhauling and the clutch cone was badly scored. The magneto drive was sloppy and the brake needed re-lining. For good measure we decided to have the carburettor overhauled. We did not want to look any further if we were to be on the road by the end of April.

We sent the cylinder heads and con rods to John Cockayne who bored and sleeved them, supplied us with new pistons, rings, and white metal all the big and small ends. He also reconditioned the carburettor.

We had all the parts back by mid April, reassembled everything, and were running in time to complete 1500 miles and two oil changes by May 6th for the Cumbrian weekend. Our only problem was carburettor adjustment and a poor needle valve which plagued us until November.

During the Cumbrian weekend we lost first gear a couple of times on very steep hills. When we got the car home we did a bit more fine tuning and two or three club meetings. We decided that another practice long run was needed to test the car for Alpine 93, so off we went in November, fully laden, four of us with luggage, to Lands End; destination John O' Groats. Our ambition was

1. Not to use the self starter
2. Not to open the bonnet (other than a pre-arranged meeting with John Cockayne for the needle valve).
3. Not to wash the car (Gills idea!).

We are pleased to report that all three were achieved; we did open the bonnet for admirers who wanted to see the engine, but no adjustments were made. We lost our speedo drive after 736 miles.

The total mileage for the trip was 2388 miles calculated from the petrol used after the speedo broke, a total of thirteen days with one day off for the carburettor giving an average of 199 miles per day. We used 2.25 pints of oil, this was accurately checked by measuring off the oil in the engine at the end of the trips and recording the oil put in from the side tank which now has its own dip stick.

By far the worst driving we encountered was on the A1(M) which we could not avoid, however, most of the time we used minor roads. Our journey took in Porlock Hill, Lynmouth, the Peak District National Park, Hard Knott Pass and Wrynose Pass Galloway, Glencoe, Fort William, Inverness, John O'Groats and returning over Teesdale, to Sheffield and back to London.

We have now discovered a little more work and have replaced the ball joints on the drag link, relined the brake, removed the gear box to attend to first gear and we are removing the sphere to check it for wear. We have fitted four new tyres and will have two new spares. We now have a fuel filter in case of dirty fuel abroad, a spare magneto, coil and condenser, string, wire and tape all for the Alpine run in 1993.

Participants on the Alpine may be interested in the recommendation we have received from our oil supplier. They say the samples we have sent them have been consistent with an engine that has undergone major work. However, we have been picking up silicon from the atmosphere which would normally be filtered out by the air filter. Apparently, silicon wears an engine very quickly, and they therefore recommend changing oil at a maximum of 2000 miles. That will mean at least one oil change on the Alpine.

Graham Adams



Stopping for a breather near the top of the Hard Knott Pass



51TW meets Father Christmas on his way from lands End to John O'Groats

A number of 20-Ghost members shipped their cars to New Zealand for the major international rally in February 1992. After this rally, Bill and Nora Hancock and John and Rae Kennedy took their Silver Ghosts (2018 & 100HG) on a tour of the South Island before returning to Auckland to ship the cars back to Britain. This is their tour.

New Zealand TOUR

THE PAN PACIFIC RALLY & SOUTH ISLAND TOUR

Knowing that New Zealand possessed some of the best roads for the driving of vintage cars provided the extra spur to decide to tour the country early in 1992, while it was still midwinter in the northern hemisphere. The local Vintage Car Clubs were staging a large rally in Palmerston North, in the southern part of the North Island, making it convenient to cross over to the South Island afterwards.

Incredibly, these rallies attract about one thousand entrants, but by using a racecourse as the rally headquarters and operating a hub type rally there are few traffic delays and little congestion. The rally was spread over 10 days, with five touring days to five different locations, to which each car went on one occasion, so that everyone went to all of them.

The universal theme was the pioneering days and the venues were either old towns or historic houses, so the addition of up to 200 old cars gave a real period atmosphere to the stops. The local people entered into the spirit of things and dressed in appropriate costume and provided various foods and entertainment to their visitors. After an exhausting day they then had one day to recover before another invasion of about 500 people again!

After a stopover with family and friends in Wellington and the scenic ferry crossing to Picton we were ready to begin our figure-of-eight tour of the South Island. With an area about two-thirds the size of Britain and a population of less than a million, the roads are even more traffic free than the North Island.

The route we took contained a mixture of flat country, undulating country, river gorges, dramatic coastline where the Tasman Sea crashed into the beaches alongside, creating a salt-laden haze, plus a variety of mountain routes, ranging from steep passes to rock strewn glacial valleys where the rugged landscapes seem to be still under construction.

Although overall distances are not large, the variety of things to see and do made for very full days of motoring or sightseeing. After panning for gold (successfully) at Shantytown on the West Coast we headed across Arthur's Pass to Christchurch on the same day. Although only a fraction under 1000 metres in height, the fact that one's journey starts at sea level makes this a challenging and steep route, particularly the ten kilometres from Otira to the summit that included a steep gorge with sheer vertical walls then continued on to a steep irregularly graded final climb with sharp hairpins. A great road to drive up in Silver Ghosts and a good trial for the Alpine event the next year; one must, however, have great admiration for the early pioneers and especially the drivers of the Cobb & Co. coaches, for this was the main route between Christchurch and Westland.

The drive through the red bloom of the Rata forest is further rewarded at the summit by the antics of the local inhabitants. The kea, an alpine parrot, seems to sense some fun or some mischief as soon as one stops to admire the view. Perhaps it was the novelty of two Silver Ghosts

to investigate; we had barely stopped when the local gang swooped in and took over. Seemingly fearless, although always keeping just out of reach, they investigated everything that was bright or shiny, and Silver Ghosts have such items aplenty. As many as a dozen keas at a time were on each of the cars and they were particularly attracted by items such as tonneau turn buckles which they could turn with their strong sharp beaks. Given time, I am sure that they would have had the tonneau removed, the windscreen dismantled and flown off with the mascot - well maybe not, but they certainly took over in no time, but were so delightful to watch, that one had to balance their entertainment value with the fact that with their very sharp claws, their haphazard landings on the mudguards and bonnets were unlikely to improve the paint work.

Arthur's Pass is on the main divide of the Southern Alps, a chain of mountains that runs the entire length of the South Island, at a height of 1500 to 3000 metres or more for its entire length of 800 kilometres. This has the effect of producing an entirely different climate on the eastern side of the mountains - low rainfall and few trees compared with the high rainfall and sub tropical rain forests on the west coast, with the two distinct areas only a few kilometres apart. We were making full use of this feature, as a very strong southerly storm was blowing up from Antarctica and with luck we would avoid the rain by being to the east of the mountains. Our ruse worked well, for although we drove into strong and very cold winds, the weather remained fine as we headed south from Christchurch along the billiard table-flat Canterbury Plains.

When finally we headed inland into the foothills and encountered roads with corners again, we soon reached the intriguing monument to one of New Zealand's lesser known heroes, Richard William Pearse. A rather unsuccessful farmer from Waitohi, Pearse was a pioneer aviator whose feats if anything outranked those of the immortal Wright brothers and he was almost certainly airborne nine months before them. His experiments with flying machines in the first years of this century earned him the reputation of an eccentric from the more charitable of his neighbours in this then rather isolated community.

It is now generally accepted by authorities, including the Editor of *Jane's All the World's Aircraft* that on a date probably 31 March 1903, this young farmer wheeled his home-made aeroplane out onto the road and before a sceptical group of locals, prepared for take-off. In many technical respects Pearse's plane was years ahead of its time. Though a flimsy construction built of bamboo, linen and scrap-metal, it had ailerons, a steerable tricycle undercarriage and a home made engine with direct drive to an adjustable-pitch metal propeller. With this pioneering device he taxied down the road and was airborne for about 100 metres, before ending ingloriously in a high gorse hedge. He was slightly injured, but made several more 'flights' in his career, both at Waitohi and, later, in Otago.

In the 1930's, in Christchurch, he built a plane designed for vertical take-off and horizontal flight, using a more powerful and highly original tiltable engine and a tail-rotor to correct torque. Although he regularly ran the engine he never attempted to fly this precursor to both the helicopter and the Harrier jump jet, possibly prolonging his life until 1953 as a result.



Pioneer day at Mangaweka



Vintage aviation - the world's first flying machine. Richard Pearse memorial at Waitohi.



Climbing to the summit on the Crown Range road.



Driving through the rainforest near Haast.



Two of a kind. 1922 Silver Ghosts 47YG and 100HG at Palmerston North.



Instant waterfalls over 200 metres high at Homer Tunnel on the Milford Sound road.



Historic Cardrona Hotel on Crown Range road near Wanaka.



Mount Cook summit (was 3763m, now est. 3750m). The black scar shows where the top fell off, covering the snow to the lower left of the picture.

Pearse had no technical training and only rudimentary primary education and had to make all his own tools and equipment from farm scrap-metal. He also constructed motorised farm equipment, a hydro-electric generator, a power cycle for his own use, a pedal cycle with a unique transmission, as well as sound recording equipment. Given a better start in life and living in a less remote community he may have been one of the great inventors and engineers of the 20th century. His vertical take-off plane and surviving fragments of his original plane are now displayed in the Transport and Technology Museum in Auckland, a fitting memorial to a man whose first powered flight preceded Orville Wright's better-known flight by nine months.

After a suitable look at the model of his original plane, mounted at the spot where his historic flight took place, plus a chat to the local farmer who came along with the inevitable flock of sheep, we headed further into the foothills and spent a cold night at Lake Tekapo.

Although this was still late summer, there was overnight snow on the high peaks just a few kilometres to the east of us, but we set off through the treeless tussock country to Mount Cook. The strong winds from the south brought the snow showers onto the mountains, but only a few 'escaped' over to the east side, so for most of the time we were in brilliant sunshine and intense blue skies with long haze free horizons that we only dream of in Europe!

After a quick trip into Mount Cook, where the high mountains and glaciers parted fleetingly with their high cloud cover, it was time to continue south to Queenstown, warmly wrapped in winter driving gear as we proceeded down the treeless plateau country then over the Lindis Pass, dodging as best we could the snow showers which were visibly changing to white, the colour of the distant mountains to our west.

On the deep glacial Lake Wakatipu, Queenstown is a popular base for a variety of activities, with some scenic and very challenging motoring tours for the experienced motorists as well. The best attraction for those who enjoy vintage machinery, however, is TSS Earnslaw, a steamer prefabricated in Dunedin, sent by rail to the lakehead in 1912 and assembled and used on the lake ever since. So clear and pollution free is the lake water, that this 51 metre long vessel has never needed a boiler washout in her entire 80 years of service; for most of her years she was the only means of access for the runholders on the far side of this 80 kilometre lake. Now, with road access, she spends a slightly more sedentary life as a boat for the tourists. Her information signs in English and Japanese attest to their origins.

For sheer dramatic driving routes, few anywhere can equal the trip to Milford Sound, the only one of the score or more fiords in this area that is accessible by road. It is difficult to describe this journey without using up too many superlatives. The journey is through primeval beech forest, but with mountains rising vertically to tower more than a kilometre from the road, the tall trees seem scarcely more than a dark green lawn. Nothing can add to the awe of this route more than recent rain, and as we set off, so it rained - not uncommon in this region where the average rainfall is over one inch per day! The entire route is in glacial valleys where the forces of nature are still hard at work. Building a road in such a location and, indeed, keeping it open are difficult tasks. Driving the route, particularly in a Silver Ghost, is challenging and rewarding even if the scenery is so distracting, and the unlined Homer Tunnel, more than a kilometre in length and on a 10% gradient, requires a large amount of care and concentration. The rain produces instant waterfalls, hundreds of them, falling down every rock face until soon after the rain stops, producing an amazing sight whenever it happens.

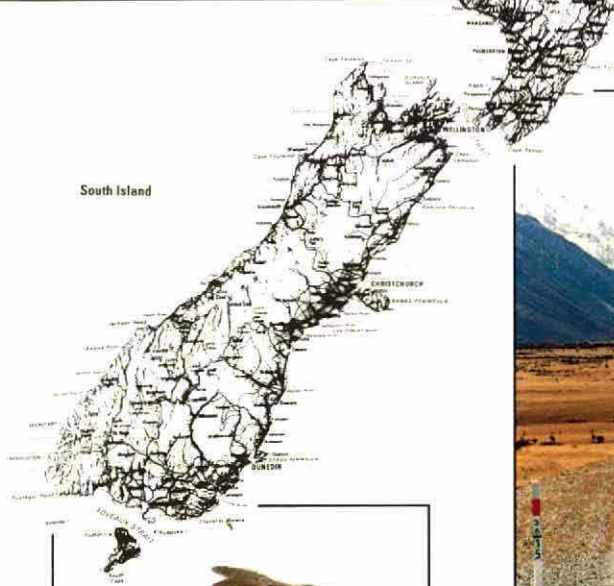
After returning from Milford, it was time to head back up to the west coast road via the Haast Pass route. To reach our objective there were two routes, one relatively flat and easy, the other climbing over the highest main road in the country. We chose the latter. The Crown Range road climbs steeply through a series of switch backs before becoming a dusty dirt road that continues climbing steeply to a height of 1119 metres. The view from the summit was spectacular, to say the least. In the clear afternoon light the panorama included Lake Wakatipu and Queenstown, more than 20 kilometres away, and behind them, range upon range of the mountains of the Southern Alps, stretching more than a hundred kilometres to the distant horizon.

If the climb presented a real motoring challenge, the descent was even tougher. A rather narrow dusty road with large round stones on it made braking somewhat haphazard, even without the delights of Silver Ghosts with no front wheel brakes. The road was barely wide enough to pass oncoming vehicles and the bridges, fortunately rather infrequent, were always set at right angles to the stream bed, requiring a skilful manoeuvre, as they were definitely one-way only, and inevitably seemed to be where we met traffic. The reward at the end of this dry, dusty, difficult stretch was the Cardrona Hotel, dating back to the 1870s and an oasis to us as it had been to the early gold miners and other pioneers who trudged through a century or more before.

Crossing the Haast Pass main divide, we once again changed from dry treeless land to lush rain forest within the space of a few kilometres as we moved across to the western side of the mountains where the prevailing winds deposit all their rain. Continuous dramatic motoring down to the coast at Haast township, then easy motoring along the West Coast road, with scenes changing from the crashing waves of the Tasman Sea, to views eastwards through the rain forest to the mountain tops only about 20 kilometres away. Frequent fast flowing rivers and attractive lakes make up some more of this wild and beautiful drive.

Our main destination was Fox Glacier, which, in conjunction with the Franz Josef Glacier 25 kilometres further north, are the only glaciers in the world that descend from mountain tops into lush green forest. We abandoned our cars here for a spectacular helicopter flight over the glaciers and into the mountains. Although by road, Mount Cook is hundreds of kilometres away, by air it is quite close by, so our short flight included a close up look at the mountain, and an excellent view of the peak, the highest in New Zealand, but reduced in height only weeks earlier when the top of the mountain literally fell off! A landing on the upper reaches of the Franz Josef Glacier was the final highlight of this most scenic of flights.

The return journey was over the Lewis Pass - a less dramatic route through beech forest, but this meant that we had made all four crossings of the main divide. Although we stopped overnight at Kaikoura, we did not have the time to go whale watching this time, as we had a ferry to catch to return to Wellington. That will have to wait until next time. However there is a plan for a major rally in Christchurch in 1996 to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Vintage Car Club, so this could be a good time to renew old acquaintances and do some of the things left over from this trip.



South Island



A kea models a new style mascot at Arthur's Pass



Keas examine 226QE at Arthur's Pass



On the road from Mount Cook



Late afternoon at the Lindis Pass (970m)



Lake Wakatipu and the Remarkables

JENOLAN CAVES WEEKEND

On 6 November 1992, several members of the Australian Chapter ventured to the beautiful Jenolan Caves for our first 20-Ghost Club rally.

Jenolan Caves House dates from 1889 and remains one of the few surviving Blue Mountains guest houses so popular in the late Victorian era. Set in the natural Australian bush land of New South Wales, Caves House is peaceful, the serenity only being broken by the sound of native birds, visiting wallabies, wombats, possums and Rolls-Royce motor cars.

The caves were discovered in 1838, actually by bushrangers, and subsequently by the Colonial constabulary. The remarkable beauty of Jenolan Caves has aroused the awe of visitors from all over the world.

Twenty-four members and friends attended the rally, and those whose proper motor cars were ready willing and able to traverse the mountains were:

John and Liz Milverton - 1914 SG 6TB
Malcolm and Debbie Johns - 1923 SG 22NK
Terry Bruce - 1926 20hp GYK47
George Forbes and Fiona Bailey - 1931 PII 148MY
Laurie Ogle and Coralie Ross - 1938 25/30 GGR45
Barrie and Margaret Gillings - 1930 PII 147GN

Other members who attended were Dick and Joy Donnelley, Jim and Dorothy Kelso, Jim and Angela Redman, and Kerry and Keith Wherry.

Friday evening we enjoyed drinks in the bar, followed by a convivial dinner in the lovely dining room and more drinks at the bar. On Saturday morning the group toured to the nearby town of Oberon, surprising a few locals and their sheep. Lunch was followed by a tour of one of the caves, and Saturday night's format was the same as

Friday's, with the addition of a few of our Chairman's jokes thrown in!

Sunday morning we said farewell to Caves House and visited the historic car races (held by the Vintage Sports Car Club) at Catalina Park, in Katoomba in the Blue Mountains. The cars from our Club were taken on a couple of laps by a steady pace car, the Boy Racers being suppressed by the caution of the powers that be. We then travelled to the beautiful village of Mount Wilson, famous for its gardens. Lunch was enjoyed at 'The Old Post Office', followed by a visit to 'Lindfield Park' and its magnificent garden.

Most of us then returned home, having enjoyed a splendid weekend, and our thanks go to Dick Donnelley for his organisation.

The next event for this Club will be the Australian Alpine Rally, a testing tour through the New South Wales and Victorian Alps, which will take place in early February 1993.

Kerry Wherry

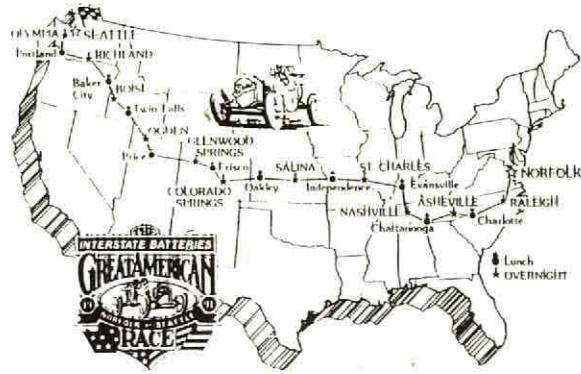


The two Silver Ghosts followed by the PII and the 20 on the Jenolan Caves weekend.

Following his momentous drive from London to Beijing (Peking) in 1990, Sydney member Neil Collins then completed a journey around the world by driving across the USA in 1991. Who else can claim to have driven any car on a complete lap of the globe?

COAST TO COAST BY GHOST

The Final Lap of Big Red's Round the World Journey



In 1919, when L. M. Bergen ordered 94FW, it is unlikely that he could have imagined that over 70 years later it would be driven around the world. Having completed the drive from London to Peking in 1990, it seemed that the 1991 Great Race across America was an ideal opportunity to complete the round the world journey.

Due to business commitments in Sydney, I arrived at the starting point in Norfolk, Virginia, only two days before the start so it was not possible to spend much time practising timed runs in the car.

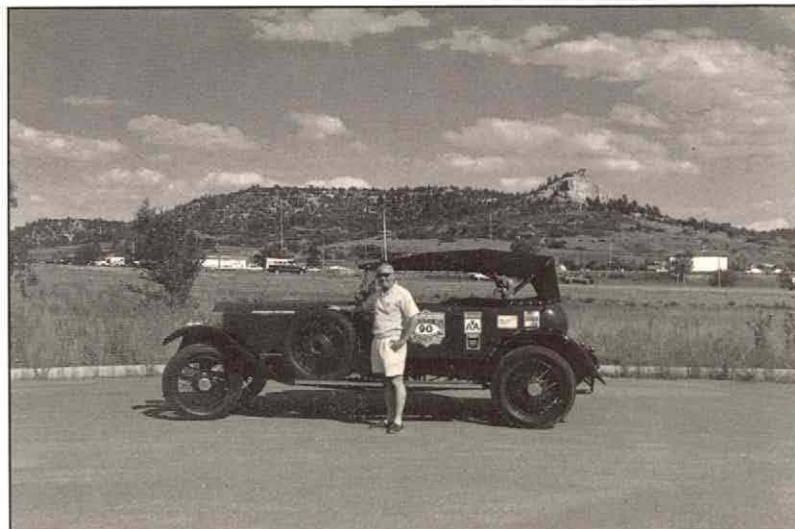
I was fortunate to have as my navigator, Jack Christianson from Chicago. Jack spent the day before the rally with me practising acceleration and deceleration times on the back roads of Norfolk. We were told that this was the least amount of preparation taken by any of the entrants. Apart from a brief trip of 100 miles last September in Australia, I had not driven 'Big Red' since the end of May 1990 in Peking.

A warm-up rally was organised for Friday 21 June. After visiting the Norfolk Naval Base the rally ran through the countryside on the outskirts of Norfolk. We managed to come 4th in our class which came as somewhat of a surprise considering limited sleep and minimal preparation.

The object of the Great Race is to arrive at various destination points at precise times by following the daily

issued instruction sheets to maintain various speeds with only a stop watch and the speedometer to assist. Navigation was without the benefit of an odometer. Calculators were also prohibited so an enormous amount of mental arithmetic was required by the navigator to enable the various average speeds to be calculated. To maintain the speeds it was necessary to drive the car very hard at times. 'Big Red' took it in its stride. The more I drive Ghosts the more I marvel at the engineering of these fantastic cars.

The race started on 22 June 1991 from Norfolk. We crossed the starting line at 10:30 a.m. as the heavens opened. The initial run along the freeway to link up with the back roads was quite easy; however we were soon in heavily wooded country in blinding rain. Later we were told that four inches of rain fell in four hours. Fortunately, by the time we reached the first stop at Roanoke Rapids



Near Asheville, North Carolina

in North Carolina, the rain subsided. This small community turned on a grand welcome for the entrants.

The afternoon run to Raleigh, the capital of North Carolina, was relatively uneventful although by now I had learned that in an event like this you do not have much chance of observing the scenery. For the next twelve days and 4,300 miles the scenery consisted of the speedometer and the road - preferably one eye on each!

It should be explained that this race has several categories, essentially one for pre-1920 vehicles and another for 1920-1940 vehicles. There were 100 vehicles in total. There is a winner at the end of each day for the various classes and an overall winner based on the combined final two days' totals. To be eligible for the final two days run, two 'Did Not Finish' (DNF) are allowed in the pre-1920 class and one DNF in the 1920-1940 class. In fact, due to the heavy rain and other factors, four cars 'Did Not Finish' on the first day.

On our second day we departed from Raleigh and proceeded to Asheville NC. I was assured by the navigator that the scenery was beautiful. We made a brief stop at the Charlotte Fair Grounds for lunch then to Spartanburg for a further brief stop, but on leaving, 'Big Red' had a flat battery. The friendly local residents kindly gave us a push start. Moments after we had left, the heavens opened again. We arrived at Asheville in one piece, but looking like a pair of drowned rats. We came second in our class and we were in the top twenty overall, having covered 370 miles in the day.

Leaving Asheville at 6 a.m., we started to climb a fairly steep mountain covered in fog. At one stage we could just see the radiator. It reminded me of a similar problem in Turkey the previous year, but at least this time we had guard rails. We climbed to about 5,000 feet and I was reliably informed that we passed some magnificent scenery. Coming down the other side of the mountain was a little more exciting as the brakes became hot. Although we descended safely, a 1907 Buick had its brakes so hot it caused a fire, destroying the timber wheel spokes.

We stopped for lunch at Chattanooga, Tennessee.



'Big Red' and Writer at Colorado Springs



In the Rockies between Colorado Springs and Frisco

After a quick look at the famous train we devoured fried chicken and coleslaw before travelling on to the Tennessee capital. The highlight of Nashville was the biggest steak and steak knife I have ever seen. The knife, big enough to kill a dinosaur, I managed to purchase from the restaurateur as a souvenir of the South. No time for country music - we had travelled 440 miles in the day.

The next stage was Nashville to St. Charles, Missouri. In the three days so far we had had no mechanical problems, merely a flat battery. The spare wheels on 'Big Red' were chained to steel support brackets. The keys having been mislaid in transit, I decided, before leaving Nashville, that it would be a good idea if I broke the lock holding one of the wheels just in case we had a flat tyre. How lucky can you be? Shortly after leaving the hotel, travelling to the start at 55 mph the rear tyre went bang. I managed to get 'Big Red' off the bitumen and on to the dirt. With the assistance of my muscular navigator we changed the tyre and made the start on time.

The route to St. Charles was quite interesting. A lot of twisting country roads and undulating long stretches through the plains of Missouri. Memorable motoring. St. Charles is a wonderful old fur trading town. It has been beautifully maintained with interesting craft and gift shops. Next time I hope to visit them. We came 5th on this day in our class, having travelled 380 miles.

At 6:30 a.m. we departed St. Charles on the way through Boonville MO. to Independence for lunch. It should be noted that to commence at 6:30 a.m. means getting up between 4:30 and 5 a.m. to allow time for a calibration run

to warm the tyres and check the speedometer accuracy for the day's run. (A special speedometer had been fitted specifically for the Race.)

The organisers of this race co-ordinate towns along the way for pit stops each morning and afternoon as well as lunch stops. A prize is given to the town providing the best hospitality and the organisers have a travelling caravan selling programmes, T-shirts and other souvenirs of the Race. It is a little like a travelling circus with the finish line arch, media van and the entourage moving from town to town each day. The cars and crew were announced as they came through the finish arch. I guess we were the circus performers.



Between Frisco and Leadville, Colorado

From Independence we headed towards Topeka, Kansas for the afternoon stop, then on to Salina. It was incredibly hot (high 90s F), long stretches of road - a very long day covering some 450 miles.

We were met in Salina by Roger Morrison who had been contacted on my behalf by Elaine and Rudy Rosales after my S.O.S. call for a split rim. Roger kindly loaned me a spare wheel and tyre as one of the split rims disappeared into the desert during one of our other flat tyre episodes.

The next day we left at the almost civilised time of 7:30 a.m. for a 450 mile drive to Colorado Springs. Again long flat roads into a strong head-wind with the temperature in the high 90s. Unfortunately we miscalculated our fuel consumption and ran out. We were carrying jerry cans, but refuelling caused us to lose time and put us out of contention for the day. It is interesting how competitive you can become in events like this. When I left Norfolk I thought to myself, "just to finish will be enough - I won't worry too much about the competition, the other crews have practised together and know the ropes - I'll just take it easy". Now here I am kicking myself for not stopping to refuel sooner, costing us a place finish on the day.

After a lunch stop at Oakley, Kansas it was on to

Cheyenne Wells, Colorado. More long, straight roads, no doubt beautiful wheat country but somewhat dangerous as we had to dodge several tractors on the road as it was coming on to harvest season. We would come over a rise and see road disappearing into the distance. Very tiring and monotonous driving. Colorado Springs was a welcome sight. Not only is it a beautiful oasis, it also allowed the only day off on the whole race.

When my navigator telephoned me early the next morning to suggest practising (checking the speedo and doing some calibration runs) I suggested that he might like a game of golf as I was going to sleep all day. (I am not *that* competitive.)

We restarted at 8 a.m. on 29 June after the very welcome break. The route went through the Air Force Academy then through beautiful pine tree covered hills which I noticed out of the corner of my eye. We started to climb over the Rocky Mountains (up to 11,000 feet). The car ran like a top. The engine temperature did not go over 85°C. At only one stage did I have to go into second gear. I lost count of the number of modern cars and trucks on the side of the road with bonnets open cooling off overheated engines. As I have said before, these Ghosts are wonderful cars.

There was still snow on the mountain tops. This is picture postcard country. I would love to travel in this area when I do not have to spend all my time watching the speedo. At the top of the climb the heavens opened and it

was almost like tropical rain. It was a bit hairy coming down the mountain particularly as 'Big Red' has only two wheel brakes. By the time we reached the lunch stop at Frisco the rain had stopped. We devoured a magnificent chicken and rib lunch. It might sound as though I am obsessed with food, however after driving for two months in Russia and China, food has become more meaningful.

From Frisco we encountered some twisting sessions on very narrow roads particularly dangerous when it started to rain again. We managed to keep very close to our times despite the conditions. Remarkably we won our class for this day.

Next morning we left the hotel at Glenwood Springs at 5:30 for a 6:30 start. We drove through very pretty countryside with long runs down the mountain this time without the rain. With this event, not all of the day comprises time sections, there are transit zones. This was the only time we really had the opportunity of enjoying the scenery although we found we had to average more than 50 miles per hour on most transit sections. On the first two stages we were going extremely well but lost another tyre on the third stage. Changing tyres lost us 2 minutes on the leg and we ended up 5th on the day. The overnight stop was at Ogden, Utah where we received the most amazing welcome from several thousand people. While

not as large as Urumqi in China, it was nonetheless overwhelming.

As previously mentioned, to be eligible for the final series (called 'The Grand Championship Run') two DNFs were allowed. As we had been having a little trouble with the clutch brake on the latter stage into Ogden, I decided to take a DNF on this section. We took a leisurely drive up the Interstate to Boise, Idaho, arriving at 1.30 p.m. The countryside was fairly monotonous broken by occasional rock outcrops reminding me of the old John Wayne movies. I was expecting Indians to attack at any time. Real cowboy country of vast open plains.

From Boise we enjoyed the latest start of the entire Race, departing at 10 a.m., as it was only 310 miles to Richland. We stopped at Baker City on the old Oregon Trail, for lunch of stew and salad (waggon trail food). The people were in pioneer dress complete with waggons and horses. Despite only 20-30 minutes allowed for lunch stops, each crew had a host assigned from the local community. Our host at this particular stop was the most remarkable. A delightful girl in her early 20's whose handshake managed to crush my hand as well as the navigator's. Definitely a wood-chopper grip; I'm sure this girl would have been capable of pushing 'Big Red' to the next stop!

We arrived in Richland, Washington State, hot and tired, at 6 p.m. in sixth place, after missing a huge detour sign. This was the final day of general competition before the Grand Championship two day finishing run for which we had now qualified.

Grand Championship Run

Arose at 4:30 a.m. for the first stage from Richland to Olympia, Washington.

Again I was told we travelled through some of the prettiest country in America. Some very steep hills with switchback roads. On one or two occasions I did peek over the side to see five or six cars zigzag down the hills. After this it was back in flat country, through forests with winding roads and a National Park. Someday I would like to revisit this area when I do not have to keep my eyes on the road. After a twenty minute lunch stop to eat 'dinosaur ribs' from an extremely large beast, the afternoon run was an absolute potpourri of driving, from fast sections, blind turns, switchback roads through forests; quite confusing with cars going in all directions - probably the most exciting but dangerous day's driving apart from the rainy days through wooded areas early in the rally.

On arrival in Olympia we were in 3rd position in our class, just a fraction behind 2nd place and 13th overall. A little drama then ensued, as a spare tyre I had forwarded had gone missing. Just the sort of thing I did not need the night before the final day. We retired at midnight to arise at 4.30 a.m.



Between Frisco and Leadville, Colorado

After a quick coffee in the car park we headed off for what was expected to be a very hard day. The previous day had been the most intense of the trip. The last day turned out to be an anti-climax. The stages were through wooded areas without any of the maze-like course of the previous day. The whole thing was over in three hours. We felt confident that we had done well. After being taken to the staging area we were directed to the Myrtle Edwards Park on the waterfront in Seattle. Unfortunately our result on the last day was not as we had expected and we ended up coming sixth in our class.

Overall it was a fantastic adventure but a lot harder work than I had envisaged. The event was well organised, however the nature of the event was such that very little time was available to meet many of the other competitors. At night, most crews were so tired that after a quick bite to eat they went off to bed. Most mornings it was necessary to be up by 4.30 - 5.30 a.m. For someone considering the event, it would not be recommended for those wanting to enjoy the scenery or camaraderie of a group of people, but as a test of a car (or more particularly the crew) it is a great event.

As with the London to Peking Challenge, Big Red came through with flying colours although I am not sure the driver will ever be the same again. I wore out a brand new pair of driving gloves in the 12 days of driving, but apart from a few blisters, no other damage.

Big Red is now one of the few if not the only Silver Ghost to have been driven around the world in one piece. She is now safely back in Sydney and after a wash and service and a new set of tyres will be ready for its next adventure.

Footnote: Neil and 94FW were to be a star partnership on Alpine 93. Regrettably, Neil has now had to withdraw from the event - not for mechanical reasons. - Ed

1992 FRENCH TOUR

by

Graham Ashley-Carter and Lynn A. Brua

Our 1992 overseas tour took us to the Normandy and Champagne regions of Northern France during late June and early July. The tour was meticulously organised by Muriel and Ron Skerman over a period of 18 months. It would be hard to find anyone better qualified to put together this particular event because they have been dividing their time between living in Surrey and Forges les Eaux in Normandy for a good many years and know every part of the territory we visited.

Our party made up in quality what it lacked in quantity, there being only four cars and eight people in the group. Muriel and Ron were in their 1913 Silver Ghost (2582), along with Jane and Graham Ashley-Carter in their 1927 Phantom I (26EF), Ann and John Barber in their 1930 Phantom II (84GY) and Midge and Lynn Brua with their 1932 Phantom II (36MS).

The main party assembled at Abbott's Lodge Hotel on Thursday evening in readiness for an early ferry from Newhaven to Dieppe. A very old town, Dieppe has that air of refined neglect that makes so many French towns interesting and attractive with far fewer 'carbuncles' than in England.

As Normandy had suffered from two weeks continuous rain until the previous day so we were lucky to be offered the hot sunshine which goes so well with open motoring on empty roads. The countryside has everything to offer, from magnificent beech woods beautifully maintained, to wide open agricultural land, some flat, some hilly, all interspersed with attractive villages and elegant châteaux.

Eventually we arrived at Bar Bugatti in Forges les Eaux, with the Bugatti trade mark proudly displayed over the front door. There we met M. Gaby Lebreton who will go down in motoring history as the man who built, from an engine, a complete Type 41 Bugatti Royale! The French are generous in the praise of our cars and we were able to exercise our inadequate grammar over some suitable refreshment. From there, another warm drive in evening sunshine to our hotel at Lyons la Forêt for French cooking, French wine and bed.

Next day was very warm and we set out through beau-

tiful forest to the village for picnic provisions. Lyons la Forêt is an outstandingly attractive village with a large central covered market square with local produce of undoubted wholesomeness laid out on long wooden benches. The oak and tiled market alone would surely qualify for Grade 1 status in Britain.

We purchased a sumptuous picnic and proceeded to Abbey Mortimer, an old monastery with a water mill. Although too early for the guide, it was easy to see the tranquillity and natural beauty of the place before we made a tour of typical Normandy towns, all with their individual charm, including Rosquentin, Bézou, Neuf-Marché, Rouge Marc, Mainneville and Neufchâtel (famous for cheese). Picnicking in a comfortable roadside location with grass verge and welcome shade, a passing wedding added entertainment to the perfect setting; the opportunity was also taken for some minor engine adjustments, mainly in the interests of fuel economy. It is salutary to find that an improvement of 1 mpg can make a 10% reduction in one's fuel bill and we all took an unseemly interest in each other's consumption.

With temperatures now over 80° F, the rest of the afternoon was spent in a leisurely drive, stopping to see shops and to visit a café in the proper French style. The cars were inevitably the centre of interest and always guaranteed friendly and generous service.

Sunday was a very different day and after a warm night it was already hot by breakfast time. First stop was Bar Bugatti where drinks were taken

and an English rock band had been provided which operated outside with powerful amplifiers. This made French conversation impossible, to the relief of some, but caused an enormous crowd and we were soon joined by other elderly cars, including a Brescia Bugatti and a Delage. Eventually a messenger announced that we were required at the Hôtel de Ville and the convoy proceeded, first visiting the Musée de Résistance, of which there is a number in Normandy. This one was particularly authoritative, being run by an ex-Resistance officer who gave us many interesting anecdotes through an interpreter, M. Jean-Paul Lefevre, who also owned the Delage.

We were ushered into the Hôtel de Ville to be entertained by the Mayor, M. Blot, then given mementoes of our visit, together with generous refreshment. Lynn Brua was then called upon and did his bit for the *entente cordiale* in a very pretty speech.

With the formalities over we continued to the town square where the whole population appeared to be having lunch in the street and a mechanical organ was providing music. After some further refreshment the Mayor called the party to order and to our surprise, our leader M. Ron Skerman was presented with the Freedom of Forges les Eaux! He replied in elegant French to this great honour and we could do nothing but bask in reflected glory. Photographs in and around the cars followed and the whole cavalcade departed for lunch at Maison Ron, where Muriel had laid on a staggering feast. Some of us now regretted the temptations of the town hall, but it is surprising how the human frame can adjust to these occasions and the honour of the Club was upheld.

Following lunch, the owner of the Bugatti, M. Berthelot, suggested we joined him at his home for (tea)? which seemed a good idea at the time so off we went and spent a pleasant couple of hours looking around his rather elegant XIV Century home and lounging by his lake, where a pair of swans clearly thought we intended to murder their young, causing us to retreat to safety.

Eventually we departed and were advised that we were expected to drop in on M. Claude Lamirand which we duly did. His house was a farm building converted with exquisite taste into a period family home with few anachronisms and must qualify for 9 out of 10 for originality. Drinks had been prepared in the garden with home made Calvados and we continued our afternoon in like manner. Our hosts were charming and generous but the gateways were getting narrower and our leader was becoming concerned about dinner, so we made our farewells and returned to the hotel where, to our surprise, our French friends had already arrived and had organised refreshments in the garden. The hotel kindly opened the ballroom and laid tables for this party without demur and we sat down to a riotous dinner.

We assumed that this was a typical French Sunday!

In the morning we headed east, destined for Épernay in the heart of the Champagne region. The journey took us through such northern French cities as Beauvais, Compiègne and Soissons. The highlight of the day was our picnic beside a quiet lake in the Forêt de Compiègne followed by a visit there to the famous railway carriage where the Germans surrendered in 1918 and Hitler accepted the French surrender in 1940. Near the end of the day we stopped at the first of a number of champagne houses. This was Mailly, near Épernay, where we had a tour of the cellars and a generous sampling of the product. For the next two nights we stayed at the Hôtel le Cheval Blanc where as always on the tour we wine and dined in style.

The following day we proceeded to Reims to the famous Veuve Clicquot champagne establishment. First there was a tour of their large cellars and the tasting, fol-

lowed by a splendid lunch at the company's 18th century château on the outskirts of the town. After lunch we visited the château of the Comte de Dompierre for more champagne and to see his collection of vintage cars.

Wednesday morning we headed west again to return to our first hotel, Lyons-la-Forêt. The one organised event of the day was the last champagne house stop, at the chateau of Henri Germain at Rilly-la-Montagne for our final dégustation.

The tour then headed toward western Normandy by a route taking us through the hills to Les Andelys with a wonderful view over the Seine and a castle once occupied by Richard the Lion-heart. The destination was Falaise, a town made famous during the Normandy invasion in 1944. Our hotel was the Château de Tertre which turned out to be a very special adventure. When the first of our party arrived late that afternoon at a large edifice in extensive grounds the place seemed devoid of any staff, but distant hammering and sawing could be heard. In due course a young lady appeared and announced that our rooms were not quite ready and would we like to take a stroll in the gardens or tour the town. This we declined in favour of coffee or a beer, the latter being served in a teacup with an ice cube on the saucer. Such hospitality was interspersed with frequent disappearances to see how the rooms were getting on.

An hour or so later, by which time all of us had arrived, the owner put in an appearance with apologies accompanied by oysters on the half shell and champagne. He turned out to be a prosperous English investment banker married to a French woman. He had an ambition to develop this property into a luxury hotel but had no prior experience. This had become apparent by the time we were shown to our rooms at 10 p.m. and were told to hurry to the dining room for a deluxe dinner. Our host announced that we were the only guests in the place and that he was not going to charge us for the rooms but only for the gala dinner. By the time we had completed the seven-course meal we all agreed that the 28-year-old chef (whose wife was English) might well achieve the accolade of the best chef in France that our host predicted for him. Breakfast the next morning ranked gastronomically in its own way with the dinner. Before departure we were photographed and interviewed by the local press and congratulated for being the first guests of the Château de Tertre. We reached Bayeux by midday and spent the rainy afternoon viewing the famous tapestry which commemorates William the Conqueror's invasion of England in 1066.

Our last full day was mainly occupied with a drive along the Normandy landing beaches, with a stop at one of the museums of the event. We also passed through fashionable Deauville and had tea by the picturesque harbour of Honfleur, before spending the night at the Hôtel Belle Isle sur Risle on an island not far from Rouen.

In the morning, Ron led the way to Dieppe through narrow lanes, to avoid the road blocks set up on the main roads by striking French lorry drivers, thus getting us to the ferry in good time for the return crossing to England.



Château de Tertre

THE SUFFOLK WEEKEND

4-6 September 1992

Billed as an opportunity to spend a weekend driving through the rolling Suffolk countryside and include visits to old houses, local museums and cathedrals, but also have a scatter rally and a photo quiz, this event certainly had all these ingredients, plus the extra benefits of staying at 'The Swan' in Lavenham, a 500 year old inn situated in one of England's most beautiful medieval villages.

Arriving at Lavenham in the clear afternoon light for which Suffolk is noted, gave time to spend the remainder of Friday exploring the village, with its ancient Guildhall in the Market Square around 1529, and large church of St Peter and St Paul, both built when the wealth of the region from wool was at its zenith.

Jens Pilo, the organiser, had linked the Saturday route to a photo quiz, and this most scenic run, which included the gems such as Kersey, another medieval village of timber framed houses, with the River Brett running through a ford at the bottom of the main street. This village alone

makes a trip to Suffolk worthwhile, particularly in mid-morning when we had the place almost to ourselves. Continuing through Sudbury and Long Melford, we arrived at Coldham Hall, the Pilo's elegant home, where we were hosted by Jens and Anne to a magnificent banquet which Anne had prepared for everyone.

We then had time for a guided tour of the Hall and an inspection of Jens's Rolls-Royce collection before setting off to visit Ely Cathedral.

Whilst some of the group headed back on Sunday morning, the hardier souls risked threatening weather to drive on a scenic route to north Norfolk to visit Blickling Hall, a Palladian mansion built in the 17th century. The rain kept off until after arrival time, producing a wet drive home but a fine weekend nevertheless.

Our special thanks to Jens Pilo for organising the weekend and to Anne for the wonderful banquet which was much appreciated by all.



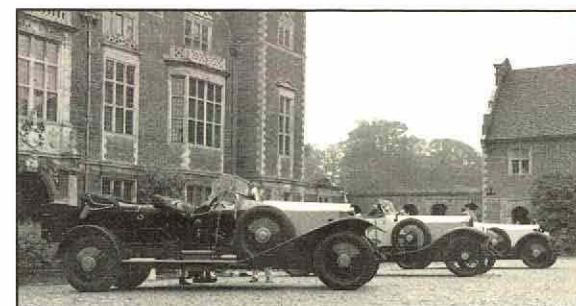
Rush Hour in Kersey. Brian & Jo Wootton negotiate the water splash of the River Brett in their 1925 Silver Ghost 104EU, followed by 1912 Silver Ghost 2154, driven by Tim Forrest and 1923 20, driven by Susie Forrest. 51TW, 100HG and 58UE are the parked Ghosts.



Vintage lineup at Coldham Hall. Five Silver Ghosts and one of each of 20, 20/25, P1, P11, P111



Susie Forrest starts her 1912 Silver Ghost 2154 and gets the show on the road from Ely Cathedral



Silver Ghost lineup at Blickling Hall.

Photographs by Jens Pilo

RECORD TOKENS

Caveat Emptor - or Watch for Fakes

The Times of London in November 1991 reported that an American car collector had been awarded £60,000 damages in the High court against Coys of Kensington, for selling him a fake 1913 Silver Ghost. It was reported that the collector successfully sued Coys for fraudulent misrepresentation after he discovered, six years after buying the car in 1983, that it was a 1922 model worth half the amount he paid for it. The court was told that a plate with the 1913 chassis number 2513 had been fixed on the car and the real number filed off the front cross member. What seems worse is that the judge stated that Coys knew about its dubious past, having been forced to take it back from a Surrey purchaser a year before, after a legal action was started then for the same reason. Documents had even been 'concocted' at that time to help make the second sale.

A second case of a 'fake' car was also revealed late in 1991 at a Brooks auction in London. This was a 'bitser' in the guise of chassis 2678 with engine 97D, being offered as 'truly splendid Edwardian-period motoring'. Robert McDermott of Melbourne, owner of the genuine 2678, was one of a number of Silver Ghost owners or experts who advised Brooks, who withdrew the car.

This very proper action contrasts with some of the other history of this car, which is one of a number of Australian Silver Ghosts with a chequered history that passed through the hands of early Ghost collectors who often dismantled the cars or mixed or swapped parts, making attribution of such cars rather difficult. In some other cases, the lack of evidence of a chassis number was allegedly overcome by 'borrowing' the chassis number from a genuine Ghost known to have been sent to Australia but whose whereabouts was unknown, presumed destroyed.

The fake that masqueraded as 2678 apparently fitted this latter category, but its position as an imposter was revealed when the real 2678 and, subsequently, the real engine 97D were found. It is known to have been sold in Australia some time in the mid 1970s with the true facts known, but subsequently this bogus attribution as a veteran Ghost seems to have been applied to it once again, possibly when it was shipped to England in the 1980s. As a car with part of the chassis (at least) believed to be from 26PE (1920), the gearbox from 58LE (1921) and the differential from 114AE (1920) it was certainly not a veteran Ghost.

With the odd genuine discovery of a long lost Silver Ghost still happening now and then, prospective buyers, particularly of veteran Silver Ghosts, must take particular care. Remember, these two cars mentioned above remain in existence, and further veteran ex-Australian (and maybe other) Silver Ghosts may still be there to haunt us.

The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs

The 20 Ghost Club is a member of the Federation, the main purpose of which is to ensure that historic vehicles, such as ours, can still be used in public roads, without onerous restrictions, provided of course that the vehicles are properly maintained. In this country the Federation co-operates with the Department of Transport to ensure that the ever-increasing requirements of the MOT test, often urged on by the safety and environmental protection lobbies, do not put our vehicles off the road.

Correspondingly, in the EC the Federation is active within FIVA which liaises successfully with Brussels which is beginning to 'harmonise' vehicle testing throughout the Community.

Fuel

The Vintage Sports Car Club has been doing most valuable work in researching problems raised by the use of modern fuels in older cars. Two reports have been published, and are available from them respectively on unleaded petrol and vaporisation.

The main problem posed by unleaded fuel is 'Valve Seat Erosion'. The lead component in leaded fuel forms a protective layer on valve seats (in addition to discouraging 'detonation' or 'pinking'). In engines running at high speed and their maximum output, erosion of cast-iron valve seats can be rapid. Luckily, few of our cars run under such stressful conditions and the problem has apparently not so far raised its head. Some consider that an occasional filling with leaded fuel can form a valve seat coating which will last for some time.

In North America where leaded fuel has been unavailable for several years, no problems have been reported. Recently, fuel has been much more volatile than when our cars were built. We tend to like to use them on hot days in summer and to park then with their exposed tanks in full sunlight, on heated tarmac.

Anything you can do to reduce access of heat from the exhaust or engine to the fuel will help, as will ensuring steadily inclined pipe runs to ensure that vapour can escape back into the Autovac tank (where fitted). It is believed that the Government is requiring the oil companies to make fuel less volatile to protect the atmosphere, but also doing us a good turn.

Australian Inaugural Meeting

The newly formed Australian Chapter of the 20-Ghost Club held its inaugural meeting at the Ristorante Buon Ricardo, Paddington, Sydney on Thursday 6 August 1992. This was an appropriate venue as it has been found that most of the membership of the new Chapter are interested in pre-war Rolls-Royce motor cars and also food.

Chairman Malcolm Johns welcomed some thirty members and friends present and spoke briefly of the Club and its English roots and emphasised that it is in no way competing with existing clubs.

An election was held to provide support for the Chairman and Secretary/Treasurer and Dick Donnelley was elected Events Captain, supported by Kerry Wherry and Jim Redman. Jim Kelso was elected Australian Newsletter Editor.

Ghost Seminar

At short notice, the Australian Chapter Chairman, Malcolm Johns organised a Silver Ghost technical seminar in Sydney on Wednesday 2 December 1992. The purpose of the seminar was to examine and discuss the mechanics and restoration of the Silver Ghost distributor tower, air pressure pump, advance and retard mechanism, governor and oil pump. Actual items from 22NK and 6TB were used to reveal many of the aspects of Sir Henry's engineering excellence and a useful technical handout was also supplied.

Overseas Visitors

As always, overseas visitors are welcome at events, this invitation is now extended by the Australian chapter to UK and other members, in the same way that it is extended from the UK to Australian and all other members. Do bring cars if possible, especially for the longer tours.

RECENT NEW MEMBERS

A welcome is extended to

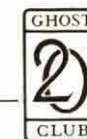
- Keith Beers, Hinton St George, Somerset
1929 PII Boat Tail Roadster 34WJ
1937 PII Continental Touring Limousine 3BLU30
- Peter Briggs, City Beach, Western Australia
1914 Silver Ghost Barker Landaulet 54AB
1925 20 Reeves Sedanette GSK35
- Bob Brod, Wallingford, Pennsylvania, USA
1923 Springfield Silver Ghost RRCCW Pall Mall Tourer 357HH
- Terry Bruce, Carrum, Victoria, Australia
1926 20 Park Ward Saloon-Limousine GYK47
- Richard Bunning, Liphfield, West Sussex
1919 Silver Ghost Barker Open Drive Limousine 35PP
1920 20 Gurney Nutting Drop Head Coupe GUS72
- David Corbett, Southampton, Hampshire
1920 Silver Ghost Woodhall Nicholson Tourer 60AE
- Colin Crabbe, Stamford, Lincolnshire
1920 Silver Ghost Barker Tourer 71CW
- Patrick Daniell, Winchester, Hampshire
1930 PII HJ Mulliner Sedan de Ville 35GX
- David Davis, Cremorne, NSW, Australia
1922 20 Diskon & Molyneux Tourer 42GI
- Dick Donnelly, Newport Beach, NSW, Australia
1925 PI Barker Sedan Coupe 31HC
- Keith Edwards, Turramurra, NSW, Australia
1911 Silver Ghost Replica Balloon Car 1730
1924 20 Cheetham & Borwick Saloon GAK57
- Michael Elliott, Warmbad-Villach, Austria
1933 PII Barker Continental Drop Head Coupe 80MY
- George Forbes, South Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
1926 20 British Motor Restorations Skiff GOK74
1927 20 Martin & King Coupe GUJ62
1933 PII Hooper Landaulet 148MY
- Robert Gaines Cooper, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire
1912 Silver Ghost Hooper Tourer 2211
- Barrie Gillings, Turramurra, NSW, Australia
1910 Silver Ghost Landaulet 1492
- Peter Golding, Barnet, Hertfordshire
1935 20/25 James Young Sedan Coupe GPG38
- Richard Goode, London
1921 Silver Ghost Tourer 42SG
1930 PII Barker Continental Cabriolet 54GX
1933 PII Barker Continental Sports Saloon 130MY
- Ben Grew, Westcliffe on Sea, Essex
1923 20 Barker Tourer 66H9
1929 20 Page & Hunt Saloon GVO40
- Richard Hensby, Wakefield, Yorkshire
1912 Silver Ghost Roi des Belges 1888
- Richard Hipkiss, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire
1933 20/25 Gurney Nutting Drop Head Sedan GT29
- Max Houston, Central Mangrove, NSW, Australia
1934 PII Park Ward Continental Touring Saloon 173RY
- Lawrence James, Omaha, Nebraska, USA
1922 Springfield Silver Ghost RRCCW Pall Mall Tourer 85BG
1925 20 Park Ward Tourer GLK81
1929 Springfield PI Brewster Derby Tourer S154FR
- James Kelso, Pymble, NSW, Australia
1929 PI Hooper Landaulet OR50
- Con Keogh, Canning Vale, Western Australia
1921 Silver Ghost British Motor Restorations Tourer 106AG
1927 PI British Motor Restorations Tourer 48UF
1929 PII HJ Mulliner Weymann Saloon 98WJ
- Richard Knight, Glen Iris, Victoria, Australia
1923 Silver Ghost Waring Bros Tourer 97LK
- John Marsh, Stourbridge, West Midlands
1928 PI Tourer 55CL
- William Maunsell, Sydney, NSW, Australia
1927 PI Jackson, Jones & Collins Limousine 57LF
- Ian McKay, Rolls-Royce Marketing Director, Crewe, Cheshire
David Neely, Croydon, NSW, Australia
1929 PII Jackson, Jones & Collins Limousine 120XJ
- Laurie Ogle, Sutherland, NSW, Australia
1926 PI Boat Tail Sports SC102
1938 25/30 Molyneux Sedan de Ville GGR45
- Henry Petronis, Easton, Maryland, USA
1912 Silver Ghost Barker Tourer 1921
1914 Silver Ghost Portholme Tourer 17RB
1924 Springfield Silver Ghost RRCCW Pall Mall Tourer 195KF
- Peter Price, Woldingham, Surrey
1927 20 Hooper Tourer GAJ81
- Jeffrey Priddle, Kenmore, Queensland, Australia
1921 Silver Ghost Tourer 142LG
1933 20/25 Hooper Sports Saloon GLZ67
- James Redman, Paddington, NSW, Australia
1922 Silver Ghost Tourer 22G
- Hamish Scott, London
1937 25/30 Rippon Sports Saloon GLP9
- John Smith, Ferny Creek, Victoria, Australia
1924 Silver Ghost Tourer 58TM
1937 25/30 Hooper Limousine GUN26
- Terry Spilsbury, Huntington, New York, USA
1926 Springfield Silver Ghost Tourer S207ML
- DeNean Stafford, Tifton, Georgia, USA
1921 Silver Ghost Barker Tourer 50UG
1925 Springfield Silver Ghost RRCCW Pall Mall Tourer S175MK
1937 25/30 HJ Mulliner Sedan de Ville GMP38
- Johannes Stefels, Nieuwersluis, Holland
1923 Silver Ghost Pininfarina Open Drive Limousine de Ville 10EM
- Christopher Tubbs, Stroud, Gloucestershire
1914 Silver Ghost Tourer 27PB
1922 Springfield Silver Ghost RRCCW Oxford Tourer 5BG
- Peter Vacher, Abingdon, Oxfordshire
1922 Silver Ghost Barker Cabriolet de Ville 35TG
1926 20 Windovers Allweather Tourer GSK15
1928 20 Doctor's Coupe GYL67
1928 20 Chassis GYL68
- William Vincent, Castle Hill, NSW, Australia
1923 Silver Ghost Chassis 17GH
- Christopher Watts, Robertsbridge, East Sussex
1932 20/25 Freestone & Webb Sports Saloon GMU59
- Beth Wilkie, Turramurra, NSW, Australia
1912 Silver Ghost Tourer 2139
- Ashley Wills, Penn, Buckinghamshire
1932 20/25 Barker Sedan de Ville GBT81

Events Calendar 1993

- AGM & Dinner, Charterhouse, City of London 29 January
- Australian Alpine Rally — Beechworth, Victoria 6-10 February
- Spring Luncheon & Driving Tests — Brooklands 25 April
- Irish Georgian Tour — Kent 28-31 May
- Cotswolds pre-Alpine Tour 3-5 June
- Annual Picnic & Concours — Hanbury Hall, Droitwich, Worcestershire 6 June
- Alpine 93 — Re-enactment of the 1913 Austrian Alpine Motor Contest 17 June/5 July
- Isle of Wight Tour 24-27 September

Beyond 1993

- AGM & Dinner, House of Lords, London 28 January 1994
- 3 I's Tour — Ireland, Islay & Iceland Spring 1994



Trophy Winners 1992

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Alpine: | Graham Adams |
| Woodmansee: | John Kennedy |
| Harding-Rolls: | Bill Handcock |
| Fred & Joan Watson: | Peter Collinson |
| Messervy: | Peter Price |
| Dymock-Maunsell: | Digby Wills |
| Stanley Sears: | Ron Skerman |
| Phoenix: | Tim & Sue Forrest |
| Fergusson-Wood: | Ashley Wills |
| F-W Photographic: | Jens Pilo |
| Ladies: | Michael Panter |

Club Shop

Car Badges

The Club has superb car badges, red enamel on brass to match brass radiators, or chrome for nickel or chrome radiators. £25 each.

New 33x5 Tyres

Original 1920s tread pattern. Suitable for Silver Ghosts and New Phantoms. Available from the Club at competitive prices. (Other sizes also possibly available).

Back Copies of the Record

These include a few early numbers. Most recent editions also available. £2.50 each.

All above items available from the Honorary Secretary

Rear Cover:
A scene from the classic motoring days of the 1920s? Not exactly. In fact a classic scene from the 1990s, on the Settle & Carlisle railway — on the route of the Cumbrian Driving Weekend tour.
Photograph by John L. Kennedy

