



News & Record



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Front Cover photo by John Redmill:

Leela Meinertas [Irish Georgian Society London Chapter] uses the 1932 Phantom Dual Cowl Tourer SC8968 belonging to John O'Dowd [20-Ghost Club] to demonstrate how she inspired Edvard Munch's 'The Scream'.

Front Cover design: Gerard Barry, to whom many thanks

This is the first issue of News & Record to be edited by the new editor, who gratefully acknowledges the help and guidance of the former editor, together with his many contributions to this issue. The appearance of the magazine has only been very slightly altered as a first experiment, and comments from members about this would be cautiously welcomed. However, much more welcome from members would be articles, reminiscences about their cars, and other material for inclusion in subsequent issues, for everyone's interest and enjoyment. Please send these to the editor at the addresses shown.

Included with this issue [but sent separately to Australian members] is the inaugural issue of 'The Roycean' by Tom Clarke and others. This will be a serious historical journal of record, issued annually, and will be sent to all members. We congratulate the authors on producing this extremely valuable publication, to which we wish every success.

Note:

Opinions expressed in any articles, letters or editorials may not be construed as being necessarily those of the 20-Ghost Club. Although the Club, its editors and contributors of all articles always endeavour to produce accurate information, illustrations and advice, they cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage caused by acting upon such information.

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THE NEW EDITOR

John R Redmill



The smug expression on the face of the new editor of *News* and *Record* as, a mere seventeen years ago, he sat behind the wheel of what in his opinion will always be the most beautiful car in the world, is quite different to the one he wears now, trying to write his first editorial following the many years of Nigel Hughes's most successful editorship.

So - how do I start? It is with considerable trepidation that I have assumed this new role, and I am most relieved that Graham Tyson will be looking after the Club's website, and Nigel has most kindly agreed to continue editing the technical issues, thank goodness! I barely know how any car works, let alone a Rolls Royce, but I am trying to learn. At the same time, I am trying to learn how to be an editor and fulfil the duties that are now required of me in the modern technological and digital world that is foreign to me. You may already be asking why, then, have I been asked to take this on for you all, a question I have been asking myself many times since I agreed to do so, and why did I become involved in the first place. Well, the photograph is the answer.

As you all know, the 20-Ghost Club has been closely associated with the London Chapter of the Irish Georgian Society through the annual Country Houses Weekend. The two organisations have enjoyed these together since Jimmy Valentine suggested the first one in 1978; I helped organise that, and a number of subsequent tours. Right from the beginning, I loved it. I loved it even more when former *Record* Editor Digby Wills suggested in 1991 that, as his eyesight was becoming too poor for him to drive, I take the wheel of his exquisite 1932 20/25 Sedan-de-ville GBT61 [GX66 and now cared for by his son Ashley], for our weekend the following year so he and Margery could attend. I needed no further persuasion or second invitation to see if that particular driving seat fitted my 'purpose and gusto', to use an eighteenth century expression, or btm, to use a modern one. Does a cat like cream? The photo says it all.

But a test drive was needed first, so in mid May 1992 I presented myself at the Wills apartment near the Royal Albert Hall and, with Digby at my side and my heart in my mouth, I timidly pointed this stunning machine into London's traffic, and ... whoosh, off we went, around Hyde Park Corner, up Park Lane to Marble Arch, across the Park to Kensington Gore --- and then repeated it. Digby's theory was if I could do that without hitting anything or anyone, I could take him, Margery and the car into the English countryside without incident. Two weeks later and, "Toad of Toad Hall, you were a mere beginner", I thought, as we swept along like Moses through the Red Sea, towards our target, North Wales. I could barely contain myself. I will never forget that magic moment, as I hurtled down some steep narrow country lane near Denbigh, when Digby gently leant towards me from the passenger seat and, with far more control than I was exhibiting, very quietly whispered into my shell-like - "you know, when I am driving this car, I don't normally go QUITE so fast"!!! I decided there and then that eventually I would have one of these myself.

Now since March 2007, we have had a lovely early [1929] 20/25, one of the first 30 ever made, and I find myself a member of the 20-Ghost Club, and now on the Committee and the editor. I am now very fond of the relatively un-restored and somewhat scruffy GXO97 [which Nick Whitaker so tactfully described as "oozing authenticity" - and a few other things as well, as it turns out], and in due course I will bore you all about the repairs that have been recently carried out. But it doesn't, and I don't think any car ever will, give me that same shiver and thrill, that tingle up and down the spine, that the pure elegance of GX66 gave me all those years ago and still does to this day. Jimmy and Digby, it's all thanks to you - and Chairman, Committee, and Club members - I will try my best as I follow in Nigel's footsteps, and I gratefully thank him for all his help and advice during the 'hand-over'.

JRR

THE ROLLS-ROYCE DYNAMO

Graham Ashley-Carter

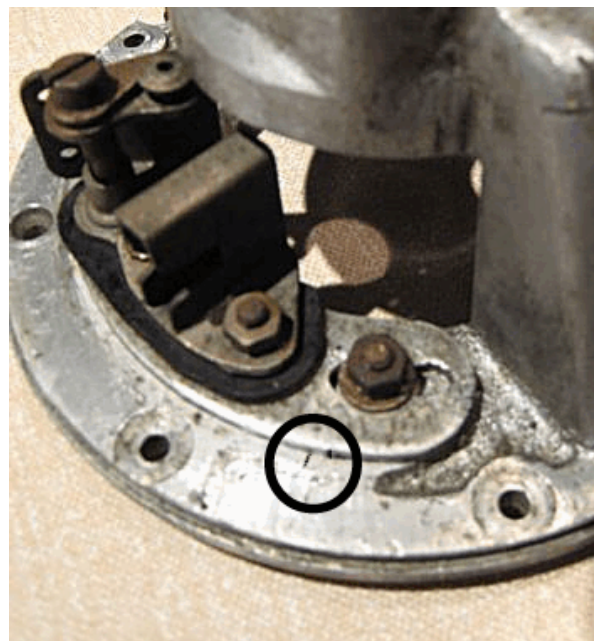
Following the use of various 'outside' charging and starting systems by Lucas, CAV, etc, Royce, having overcome the electric start problems with a system of legendary refinement and reliability on the Ghost, obviously felt the need for customers to enjoy similar reliability on the charging side to replace the belt driven arrangement from the gearbox 1st motion shaft driving an under-floor dynamo, often of the coachbuilders choice. The revised RR system, introduced in 1924, incorporated an engine driven third brush type dynamo, initially manufactured by Lucas, with automatic cut out switch separately mounted on the firewall.

Judging from 'works memos' of the time and R's earlier history in the electrical industry, (notable amongst other things for his pioneering work in reducing commutator arcing), the SG and 20hp dynamo also received his close attention, resulting in an instrument carrying all the hallmarks of the company's design and quality, together with an automatic switch (cut-out) of equally sophisticated design.

Everything worked well, but there were two main differences: the starter, of necessity, had only to work intermittently, whereas the dynamo ran continuously with consequent wear and tear of brushes, commutator and bearings. The other difference was that the system was prone to interference by amateurs, mainly wishing to increase the rate of charge to get rid of a small discharge shown whilst driving at night with headlamps, which was normal for the system. There was therefore, in standard trim, a reasonable compromise between avoiding overcharge during the day, and normal periods of night driving. It was, nevertheless, recommended that drivers turn off the charge switch on long journeys - say 10 miles or more - but to remember to turn it back on again a few miles from home, all part of the R-R school of instruction of the time.

Most of the service problems encountered with this system relate to overheating of the dynamo, caused by this unauthorised interference, as evidenced by burnt brushes / commutator, charred windings, and, in extreme cases, melting of the solder attaching the armature coils to the commutator. With insensitive drivers there was also the problem of continually having to top up the battery due to overuse of the charging switch. Occasionally this resulted in the

battery running totally dry and then exploding. A memo from R at the time recommended a maximum charge of 8 amps on the 20hp dynamo, and the 3rd brush carrier was often marked with a small nick showing the original setting (*see the misaligned marks ringed on the 20HP brush assembly on the photograph below*).



In 40/50 dynamos the 3rd brush is not moveable. The company went some way to countering these problems by introducing a three rate scheme known as 'Summer / Winter' during development of the 20/25 & P11, in which resistances were inserted into the dynamo field circuit for daytime running. These resistances are automatically bridged with use of the 'Winter' position and lighting switch.

The problem with DC dynamos has always been increasing voltage with increasing rpm, and various ideas have been used to control this, but with RR dynamos this is achieved by a special armature winding pattern, designed to distort the field, but even so, if the battery is disconnected with the engine running, and the charging switch is used, (MB&C), the voltage can rise to around 50, and will certainly blow the bulbs and damage other components difficult to replace. This is what the warning plate on the dynamo is about and blackening of the shunt coil in the cut-out switch shows that it has been allowed to happen.

In 1934 the whole system was revised up to a fully voltage controlled scheme with two brush, air cooled dynamo and separate voltage regulator unit, giving a maximum charge rate of 20 amps. This immediately made life much easier for owners / drivers, to say nothing of the battery. Theoretically, if the dynamo is kept in good condition, this system should give no other trouble, but sticking brushes and poor commutation, if not caught early, will upset the barrel regulator and things will never be the same again. Hence the item in the service schedules to check brushes for wear and freedom in their holders.

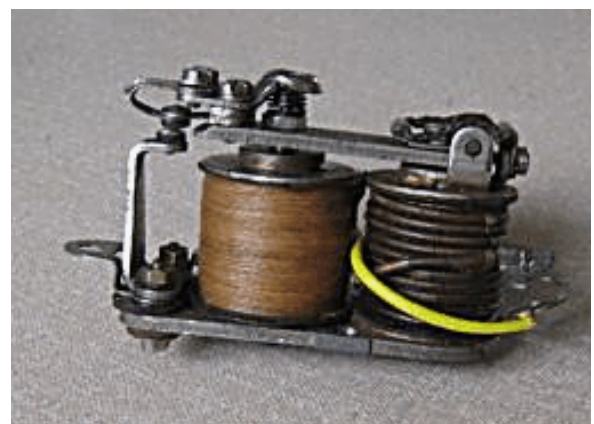
Repair of RR dynamos is not a suitable job for the average auto electrician, the skills required being more akin to those of an instrument maker. Special tools are required to break the tapers on the armature, and to ensure full service life, perfect truth and concentricity of the commutator is mandatory, i.e. there should be no perceptible oscillation of the brushes with the dynamo running. To achieve this, a high quality lathe is required with suitable copper turning tool. Cleaning with emery or other abrasives is a waste of time.

Unfortunately, brushes and commutator do not wear evenly, so the practice of simply replacing worn brushes with new is not acceptable, since this will exacerbate uneven wear and burning of the commutator as the brushes "lift off" and arc over the low points. This results in much more material having to be removed from the commutator when machining finally becomes necessary to reach the bottom of the burnt sections and restore truth. Fitting of new brushes is not as easy as it looks, and R-R literature recommended that units should be returned to Service Depots for fitting of brushes. There is no secret, but a new brush cannot be expected to fit the exact radius of the commutator and some hand work is always required to achieve 100% bedding - necessary to eliminate all arcing and ensure long and trouble free operation. Each brush must be bedded in its own holder since there are small variations in the mountings etc. Finally and most importantly, it will be noticed that a brush set is 'handed' and the set carries four different part numbers. This is to ensure they are fitted the right way round, but there are no instructions covering the proper method of assembly. The correct way is to ensure the slope against which the brush spring bears, tends to push the brush in the direction of rotation (arrow on case), and the leads are to the outside of the holders. If there is no slope to the top of the brush, it (they) should be returned as sub standard, as the grade of carbon may also be suspect. Brush spring pressures do not alter and should not be increased.

It will sometimes be found that new brushes are tight in their holders, as the manufacturing tolerances are very close. Assuming this is not due to damaged holders, the tight points will show up as polished marks on the carbon. It is in order to rub these out using fine wet or dry paper on a surface plate or suitable true surface, until a close but free fit is obtained. Looseness is not acceptable.

Bedding to the commutator is vitally important to a long and trouble free life, but it will be found, more often than not, that bedding of new brushes occurs on just one edge. This will often give rise to a high pitched wine when running but it will also cause burning of the leading edges of the commutator bars leading to premature failure. Bedding by hand is tedious and time consuming, but worth it in years of trouble free service.

The automatic cut out switch (in the fuse box) drops out when dynamo output falls below battery voltage and conversely, cuts in when dynamo output exceeds battery voltage. It is accurately set in manufacture and requires no attention as no arcing occurs at the points. In the case of, say, a barn find or other long period of neglect, the points may require polishing to remove surface corrosion only. Its performance can, however, be checked by reference to the ammeter, which should be seen to advance smoothly into the charge side as revs increase, without any sudden movement of the needle, and similarly, as engine revs reduce, the needle should not drop below and then spring back up to the normal slow idle reading. Adjustments are made by the spring tensions controlling the armature and its gap, and have nothing to do with the points.



2010 AGM & DINNER

26th February at The Travellers' Club, London

Excellent dinners in convivial venues are always a treat, especially when they are held on miserable winter evenings, so the 2010 AGM and Dinner at the Travellers' Club in Pall Mall, on Friday 26th February, was bound to be a success. Of course it was, being organised by Tim and Susie Forrest - there was never any question of that - and attended by the Earl of Elgin, President, and Lady Elgin. After an extensive drinks reception enjoyed by all, the AGM itself, the sixtieth since the 20-Ghost Club had been formed in 1949, was chaired skilfully and effortlessly by Sir John Stuttard, and the evening rapidly became the Club's 60th birthday party. The recently retired Chairman, Tim Forrest, now elevated to the height of Vice-President as a token of thanks for his years of service, looked on with evident relief, as did his sofa companion Nigel Hughes, now unburdened by the role of News & Record Editor [see Back Cover].

The usual formalities of adopting the 2009 AGM Minutes were followed by the Chairman's Annual Report which included an account of the activities of last year, including the Spring Lunch, the May tour of Wiltshire with the Irish Georgian Society, the amazing tour of Croatia and Italy [organised by Angelika Elliott and Roland Duce], the Concours at Rousham in Oxfordshire, the Kent weekend and the Autumn Lunch at More-in-Marsh. All were pleased to hear that the Club's finances are in better shape than last year, the

Treasurer having recovered a considerable sum from the Icelandic bank in which it had been deposited, and the Report was duly proposed, seconded, and passed unanimously. The Directors and Committee members [Roland Duce, Brian Fidler, Tim Forrest, Nigel Hughes, Strone Macpherson, Nick Naismith, Brian Palmer, John Redmill, Sir John Stuttard and Jimmy Valentine] were elected unanimously, as were the Earl of Elgin as President and Brian Fidler as Hon. Treasurer; Tony Dyas continues as Company Secretary. Sir John thanked them on behalf of the Club members for all their work for the Club.

Then the events for 2010, including the tour of the Pyrenees, were briefly outlined; as always these will be advertised to members by flyers in the usual way when they have been confirmed. Plans are already under way for a major tour each year in 2011, 2012, and 2013, for which members will be given as much notice as possible. The Chairman proposed Toasts were proposed to HM The Queen and to the Immortal Memory of the Hon. Charles Rolls and Sir Henry Royce, then presented the various trophies to their surprised and shrinking recipients, as the accompanying photographs record.

As part of this ceremony, Mermie [Karger] and Colin Hughes were congratulated by the Chairman on their marriage last September; all were delighted to hear this and offer their best wishes for their future together.



Dinner is about to be served



The Chairman presents his Annual Report

The Trophies:

Mileage related trophy - Alpine Large HP - Don Meyer in his 1913 Silver Ghost with 5,700 miles

Mileage related trophy - Alpine Small HP - David Else again, in his 1928 20HP

Mileage related trophy - Woodmansee - Mermie Hughes (Karger) yet again, in a 1913 Silver Ghost with 3,517 miles

Harding Rolls for most notable performance - Anthony Armitage

Dymmock Maunsell for exceptional driving on the Croatian Rally - Ernst van Arendonck

Stanley Sears for meritorious service - Tim Forrest

Ferguson Wood Photographic - John Redmill

Phoenix for notable restoration - Colin Laybourn

Brian Wootton for assistance to members on tours - Nick Naismith

Harry Watson for engineering/technical assistance - Graham Ashley-Carter



The Committee applauds Susie Forrest for all her trojan work on behalf of the Club and the Committee



Susie Forrest accepts the Alpine Small Hp Trophy on behalf of David Else and the Phoenix Trophy on behalf of Colin Laybourn



Mermie [Karger] Hughes receives the Woodmansee Trophy - and wedding congratulations



Nigel Hughes accepts the Harding Rolls Trophy on behalf of Anthony Armitage



As Ernst van Arendonck receives the Dymmock-Maunsell Trophy, Sir John informs him that he cannot take it out of the country – “oh yes I can”, “oh no you can’t”



Nick Naismith receives the Brian Wootton Trophy



Graham Ashley-Carter receives the Harry Watson Trophy



Roland Duce accepts the Alpine Large HP Trophy on behalf of Don Meyer

Photographs Colin Hughes ©

SPRING WEEKEND

23-25 April 2010



Once again we are extremely grateful to Strone and Alex Macpherson for hosting the Spring Lunch at Armsworth Park House. And, once again, the weather was perfect. The event is always well supported and the barn was well filled at lunch time with guests enjoying champagne, shepherd's pie and peas and finishing off with treacle tart.

The Spring Lunch was a preamble to the Spring Weekend during which we were to visit four National Trust properties in Hampshire and West Sussex.



20 HP trio. Centre: David and Pat Mills' 1929 Barker Tourer GEN16

We were very pleased to welcome David and Pat Mills with their 'new' 20 HP (above) and Alan and Diana Watkins with their 1937 25/30 Hooper Sports Saloon GLP26.



After lunch, Strone briefed participants on what was due to happen.

Our first visit was to Mottisfont, where Kerry Bignell, House Steward, greeted us and told us of the work the trust is doing to widen the appeal of the property and to ensure its future profitability and survival.



At Mottisfont, (above) we were able to park in front of the house where the spectacle of our cars added to the site attractions for the many visitors. Kerry gave us a personally escorted tour of the house and explained how the Trust is casting off parts of its old staid image and making the properties and their contents more 'hands on' for the visitors. Photography is now encouraged rather than prohibited and Jimmy Valentine and John Fasal, unofficial Club Clock Enthusiasts, were even allowed to climb up the ladders to the stable block clock tower! They were however disappointed to find an electric clock. The visit finished off with an excellent lunch and we departed for Hinton Ampner (below).



We were greeted by James Taylor, property manager, who gave us an excellent introductory talk. Although the house only dates from 1960, the original having been destroyed by fire, it houses an outstanding collection of art and is set in magnificent gardens with stunning views. The head gardener gave us a tour of the amazing gardens and we were left in awe of the tremendous amount of work he puts into keeping everything in top condition. His hedge trimming has to be seen to be believed. After tea, we departed for our various overnight resting places.



Next morning, after a damp run, we arrived at Petworth, where we were parked in the garden behind the house (above). Andrew Loukes, the House and Collections Manager gave us an introductory talk while we had coffee and then escorted us to see the highlights of the house and its contents, which include a magnificent collection of paintings by JMW Turner and a large sculpture gallery. Lunch followed in the Servants Hall and we departed for a short run to our final destination, Uppark (below).



The weather was now fine and on the stiff climb to the property we discovered why it had originally been called Up Park. Uppark was completely destroyed by fire in 1989. The fire service managed to save much of the contents and the Trust decided to rebuild it exactly as it had been. The result is an astonishing tribute to the workmanship of the restorers. Julia Barker, the property manager gave us details of the story. We were also given a very amusing insight into the history of the various occupants of the house, as we toured the gardens. We were then set loose to discover the house on our own.

Aside from the formal rooms on the ground floor, the house has fascinating kitchens and servants quarters in the basement, and a highlight is a superb dolls' house dating from the mid-1700s.

This was an outstanding weekend break and mini tour. Our thanks go to Strone Macpherson for his organisational and persuasive talents in setting up the event. In particular, our thanks go to the National Trust for allowing us such excellent access, for giving up the time of their staff and for the enthusiastic and knowledgeable way in which they entertained us on the house and garden tours. The catering was excellent too!

We hope it will be possible to do something like this again.

Photos and article: Nigel Hughes



Strone greets John Fasal in his 1912 SG



Alan and Diana Watkins 1937 25/30 Hooper Sports Saloon GLP36



Colin and Joan Laybourn at Mottisfont with their 1923 SG 72NK with Body by Laybourn



*Susie Forrest (right) with Viv Dyas, Kay Marsh and John Marsh at the Spring Lunch
Below L to R Alan Watkins, Brian Palmer, Helen Banks, Jane Ashley-Carter, Diana Watkins and Joan Palmer*



GOK65 - MY LIFE SO FAR!

An elderly lady dictates her autobiography to Andrew Sington



My life started on the 27th October 1925 when a very lucky salesman in Rootes Limited of New Bond Street, London was approached by a Mr Burness.

The news of the day was split between the publication of P G Wodehouse's second book 'Carry on Jeeves', John Logie Baird demonstrating his TV system, Malcolm Campbell breaking the World Land Speed Record and a suggestion that city traffic should be split with pedestrians above ground level, cars at road level and trains below. What a novel idea - it'll never catch on!

Mr Burness was not a large man - so the 20hp chassis was ideal for him - but some modifications were called-for that took some time to finalise. Also - as Rootes owned the coach-builder Thrupp & Maberly, it was no surprise that it was they who were instructed to build my barrel-sided tourer body.

The changes that were specified were to my steering column, gear-change lever and hand brake lever. The hand controls in the centre of the steering wheel were too close to Mr Burness but the wheel rim was ideally positioned so it was

agreed to reduce the length of my steering column 2½". In order that the wheel rim stayed at the same position, the wheel was 'dished' with the resultant effect of bringing the rim forward by 2½". Both the gear-change lever and hand brake lever were extended by 4" which left the tops of these much more readily to hand than standard.

The next problem was the specification of my body [oh how embarrassing!] which took more time to agree - the undertaking being finally signed-off on the 26th March 1926. Life had taken quite a change by then and even though Mr Burness had a home in St Helen's Place, London EC3 and at The Lodge, Farnham Royal, Bucks, it would appear that his finances were to become somewhat stretched because he appears not to have taken delivery of me and in July 1927 Charles Alfred Vernon of Hampstead took me into his keeping.

This transfer caused me great consternation as I seemed to recall that this chap 'had a history' so to speak! On investigating his past, it appears that in 1913 he was a prominent Government official within the Ministry of Munitions and was involved - with Sir Joseph Jonas, an ex-Mayor of Sheffield - in a bit of espionage!

VERNON IS OFFICIAL ACCUSED WITH JONAS

Arraigned in London Police Court as Involved in Enemy Infor- mation Conspiracy.

LONDON, June 15. — Charles Alfred Vernon, who is said to have been employed in an important capacity in the Ministry of Munitions, was charged in Bow Street Police Court today with conspiring with Sir Joseph Jonas, ex-Lord Mayor of Sheffield, who was recently arrested on the charge of having communicated information useful to the enemy.

The case was adjourned until Wednesday next, when the two prisoners will be arraigned together.

Sir Joseph Jonas, a prominent steel manufacturer, was born and educated in Germany and became a British subject by naturalization in 1876. It was indicated at the time of his arrest that a War Office official might figure in the case, and yesterday the arrest of "a prominent official of the Government offices" in this connection was reported from London. It has been asserted in London reports of the case that the alleged offense was committed before the war began.

- the net result being that he was fined £2,500 (approx £100,000 by today's standards) for supplying 'the enemy' (though this was before the Great War had started) with information prejudicial to the interests of England. Obviously Vernon was a man of some substance as he retained my services until very early in World War II at which time I was transferred to London County Council to be used - if my memory serves me well - as emergency transport taking nurses to various bomb sites. The war was kind to me and I emerged unscathed and was sold to J R Pressney of Lockheed (aka Automotive Products) of Leamington Spa early in 1945 and then in September to Jack Katz - a car salesman - who took me in and I resided with him for a couple of months before being sold to Richard E Clark, a well-healed farmer in Congleton, Cheshire in October 1945. 3 years 'working on the farm' was a pleasure as it would have been difficult getting petrol in the cities, but I was again to move south and Joan Ann Sellick made Richard an offer he couldn't resist and I stayed in Blackheath until June 1950 when I think another car salesman by the name of Christopher Curwen took me under his wing and he passed me on to Lucette Cartwright who was a most interesting woman and highly rated sculptress. She gave me 'food and lodgings' until I was moved to Dorking in the service of John Ormiston Attlee - a very successful Chartered Accountant.

My next move was to Welshpool - purchased this time by Edward Bevis Watson-Smyth. Wow - what a wonderful estate he had - his wife Mary was of true British blood being a member of the Plowden family and with whom I was to have a meeting many years later. E. B. Watson-Smyth's father had been to Cheltenham College with L.F.S. Sington and in 1956 I was driven from Welshpool to see the young Sington family in a caravan that had been parked on a searchlight site where Reggie - the son of L. F. S. Sington - had been briefly stationed in WWII and I recall giving Reggie's 3 boys (all sub-teenagers) a ride through the beautiful Clun Forest. At this meeting 'Reggie' asked 'Bev' for the first offer of refusal should he ever want to part with me. Rolling forward to late 1959, I was indeed transferred to Reg Sington and consequently moved to the Wirral, but first I had to have my upholstery replaced as by now it was in a pretty poor state (being an open tourer, the weather wreaks havoc with leather). Unfortunately money was again a bit short so I was re-upholstered in vinyl in Fishers Garage in Woolton, Liverpool - not what I wanted but it was better than nothing. Incidentally - it would appear that by this time my speedo indicated 19,977 miles so I had travelled either 219,977 miles - which averages 6,666 mile per year or 119,977 miles which averages out at 3,333 miles. As the engine had been changed in 1947 and the chassis showed little wear, I suspect that either figure could be accurate.

For a short while I had the company of a 1933 20/25 Van den Plas Tourer, but space was a problem and that had to go into storage in Bebington until Andrew left boarding school. He then rescued the 20/25 and gave it a new lease of life before it moved to Mr Gott - a builder in Welshpool. I understand she's now in chassis format only in the USA. The registration number was BG1656 and had been the Birkenhead Mayoral car. Reggie needed some spare parts and he heard of a 20hp chassis in a scrap yard in Ashton-under-Lyne with the remains of a Humber body on it. A visit was arranged, the grand sum of £25 exchanged hands which seemed fair and the chassis was towed to the Wirral to be broken up. A couple of weeks later the owner of the scrap yard sent Reggie the Log Book - which was kind of him - and it showed the number as UK-2. Reggie therefore transferred this number to me and I have been UK-2 ever since.

From here-on-in everything that happened to me and every long journey was noted in two Log Books that still exists and are up-to-date today, and it's interesting to see that I frequently took Andrew to his boarding school in Ruthin, North Wales notwithstanding the fact that my autovac was a little troublesome with serious back-firing and, on one occasion,

failing to proceed one Sunday on the A5 that resulted in a detention (Andrew's - not mine!). The snows of the Clwyd hills are still imprinted on my memory as is the drive in 1964 to attend the RREC 60th Anniversary Rally at Goodwood commemorating the 1904 meeting of Henry Royce and Charles Rolls followed by a sumptuous dinner at The Guildhall in Southampton. Andrew had a cine-camera with him and he took some movies of this wonderful occasion which he still has - only to be bettered by him in 2000 when, along with Harry Broster, they organised the highly successful Guinness World Record attempt for the longest procession of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars in Chester - but I move too quickly here. I can't say I was particularly easy to run at this time - records show that I was sometimes returning as little as 9mpg - but I was being attended-to by a chap who shall remain nameless as he was supposed to be an R-R trained engineer but I can assure you he was anything but! It was some years before I was to be brought back to original condition and be maintained correctly. (I now return between 18 and 19mpg and frequently start 'on the switch' rather than the starter). Every year I would attend the VSCC meetings at Oulton Park in Cheshire - and take part in the procession around the track - on one occasion I had the pleasure of driving every race winner round.



All this talk of processions and whathaveyou has suddenly made me feel rather tired [after all I am getting on now, you know - or was it the sherry? Oh yes please, dear, just a little, just up to the top], so I'm off for an afternoon nap in my garage, and will continue my story in a later issue

ROLLS V ROYCE

“O. Fogey”

“When you come to think of it, Buffer,” I said, “we’ve had some clever editors of our Bulletin in our time. I won’t say anything about the present incumbent, but there was that Mr Clutton, you will remember, Buffer, who was never sued for libel, or was he? And then there is this Mr Barker, who has just written a splendid ghost story in the Christmas number of one of the motor papers –”.

“About the Silver Ghost, wasn’t it?” interrupted Buffer, and then he added, “I’ve always thought it was the second-best Rolls they ever made.” I was deeply shocked. “Really,” I said reprovingly, “you mustn’t speak like that, or you will have the whole of the Rolls-Royce Section down on you like a ton of Hooper coachwork. If you must abbreviate, you may call it a Royce, but whatever you do, you must not drop the great Sir Henry’s name.”

“On the contrary,” said Buffer, who did not seem to be in the least bit abashed, “that sort of remark is typical of you young fellows who don’t know the first thing about the history of motor cars. What Mr Barker was writing about, I think I am correct in saying, was a light-weight Silver Ghost of 1910, the year that Charlie Rolls was killed, and if you have ever driven one, my boy, you’d know that it does not begin to be the sort of car that Royce would have built on his own.”

“But Buffer,” I said, even more shocked by now, “he did it, and it proves he was a VERY GREAT ENGINEER.”

“Oh! Royce was a very great engineer all right.” Buffer said, “but the point is I don’t think he was particularly interested in motor cars and he was obviously not in the least bit interested in motoring. Clearly, Fogey, you are in a mental fog about this, and I must remind you of some facts of history. In 1902, I think it was, Royce bought a Decauville. He was shocked, so all his biographies say, at the engineering faults which it displayed, and he proceeded to correct them all in that first Royce car of 1904. But what the biographers omit to say, my dear Fogey, is that around that time, Decauvilles were sweeping the board in voiturette races, whereas that first Royce car would not have won a motor race downhill with the wind behind it.” I was astounded by the effrontery of the man, but I had to hear more. “Go in,” I said.

“Well, at that point,” Buffer went on, “fortunately for Henry Royce, Charles Rolls came on the scene. Now Charlie Rolls, as even you must know, Fogey, was not only interested in motoring, he was a racing driver of some considerable merit and experience. Quite obviously he explained to Royce what motoring was all about, As a result they built the Tourist Trophy winner which, in my opinion, Fogey, was the best Rolls they ever built.”

I winced at this improper abbreviation, but I did not want to bring another tirade down on my head, so I just said, “Really better than the Silver Ghost, do you think, Buffer?”

Buffer looked a little less aggressive now, perhaps because he thought he had made his point about Rolls. “Well, he said in a more conciliatory tone, “it’s a damned close-run thing, if you can only think of the early Silver Ghosts, of the period when Rolls’s influence was paramount, and forget the later ones, when Royce was on his own.”

“Do you really think that Rolls’s death made any difference?” I asked. “Made any difference?” said Buffer, “Why, it obviously made a fundamental difference, Rolls died in 1910, Royce not until 1933. But after 1910, Fogey, Royce never did another thing worth remembering. Do you think Rolls would ever have stomached that 20 hp Rolls-Royce, which is quite one of the dreariest products of the vintage period – “

“Buffer,” I interrupted, “this is ‘lese majeste!’”

“Or the early Phantoms?”

I was almost too shocked to speak. At Last, “What do you think would have happened if Rolls had lived?” I asked timidly. “Well,” said Buffer, “I think that by about 1914 Royce would have thought it was time they got back to motor racing. In the Tourist Trophy, I expect. He’d have had his ear pretty close to the ground as to what was going on on the Continent, don’t make any mistake. Royce would probably have wanted to stick to his six cylinders – after all Mercedes had used them in a racing car in 1913. But Rolls would have told him to use two camshafts, like the Henry Peugeots, possibly a supercharger like Marc Birkigt’s abortive Hispano-Suiza racing car of 1912, certainly front brakes. Royce would have done it all superlatively, once he’d been told what to do. Of course, they’d have walked away with the race. After the war, the production model would have dominated Le Mans throughout the vintage period. There’d have been no necessity, in the thirties, to buy Bentley, and then not know what to do with it when they’d got it, for the simple reason that nobody would ever have heard of a Bentley if there’d been a Vintage Sports-car Rolls”

But I was too upset to listen to any more.”

Reprinted at the suggestion of a certain Graham Tyson who, realising the obvious comedic significance of the first few and the final sentences, then obtained the kind permission of Mary White, editor of The Silver Ghost Tourer, and John Staveley, editor of the Vintage Sports-Car Club Bulletin, in which it appeared in the Spring 1966 issue, No 89, pp 13-15, for this to be reproduced here.

JRR [aka as one of the Irish O’Fogey’s]

COMING EVENTS 2010

and members information, etc

Wednesday 4th August:

EGM and Annual Concours at Belvoir Castle, Grantham
Contact: Brian Palmer, tel: 0116 2862417
e-mail: brian@bandjpalmer.co.uk

Friday 10th September:

A day of fine art (at St Mary's Church, Fairford and Kelmscott Manor) in the Cotswolds with the Glaziers, including lunch at a Past Master's house.
Contact: John Stuttard, tel: 020 8959 1692, e-mail: john.stuttard@uk.pwc.com

Saturday 11th to Monday 14th September:

Derbyshire weekend with the option to follow on from the day in the Cotswolds (above).
Contact: Tony Dyas, tel: 01895 632343
e-mail: adyas@gotadsl.co.uk

Sunday 19th September:

A day in Worcestershire, visiting RR&B Garages [Ian Pinder] and Thorngrove, Grimley, once occupied by Lucien, brother of Napoleon Bonaparte, when exiled from France, and now home of Club member Jane Hickton.
Contact: John O'Dowd
Email: johnfbodowd@hotmail.co.uk

Sunday 17th October:

Autumn Lunch. at Waddesdon
Contact: Brian Palmer, tel: 0116 2862417
e-mail: brian@bandjpalmer.co.uk

2011 – please note dates in your diary, details later:

Friday 25th February:

AGM and Annual Dinner, at RAC Club, London

Saturday 16th April:

Spring Lunch at Armsworth Park, Hampshire, and visit

Sunday 5th to Friday 18th June: TBC

Prince Henry Tour, Beaulieu to Edinburgh to Brooklands

Tuesday 22nd June:

Annual Concours at Brooklands, Surrey

Friday 9th to Wednesday 14th September: TBC

Centenary Re-enactment of London to Edinburgh Tour

Dates of other events will be announced when finalised.

NEWS of MEMBERS, etc

Cdr Michael and Colette Norman of Yeovil, Somerset, are welcomed to the Club, along with their superb 1927 20hp [Salamanca body by Brewster, chassis GAJ15, reg no DS8665].

Richard and Pamela Procter, of Mellor, Stockport

Obituaries:

Diana Jones [1939-2009]

It was with great sadness that the death last July of Diana Jones, Chairman of the Australian Chapter of the 20-Ghost Club from 2005 to 2007, whom many in the UK will remember with affection, was recorded in a recent issue of News & Record.

She served countless societies and charities in and around Melbourne, her native city, including the Association for the Blind, the Royal Children's Hospital, and the Victoria State Opera; in recognition of this extraordinary contribution to the community, she was made a Member in the Order of Australia in 1993. A talented tennis player and pianist, she became interested in cars after her marriage in 1959 to David – and Alice, his 1920 Silver Ghost. They had several cars, including 15CW and a 1928 20hp Barker Limousine, and attended and organized many rallies for the Club. She and David came on the Scottish Rally in 2007, and she is very much missed, both in Australia and in the UK.

W K Hancock [1927–2010]

It is also with great regret that I report that Bill Hancock, or Billy, as he was known by the family and close friends, a well-respected retired member of the Club, passed away on Tuesday, 25th May 2010, having had an aortic aneurism earlier that day.

Bill suffered a major stroke in 2004; his youngest daughter Linda was a nurse working at the hospital to which he had been taken, and one night she went to the ward and kissed him goodnight while he was apparently asleep. Bill didn't realise it was Linda and thought it was lovely that the nurses kissed their patients goodnight each evening! At the age of 14 years Billy went to work in his father's haulage business and later to run the business until its sale in the late 1980s. Billy joined the Club in 1988 and he and his wife, Nora, actively toured in their 1912 Silver Ghost in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, USA, Europe as well as the UK. Bill will be remembered as being a quick driver and having a very keen sense of humour. Billy leaves a widow, Nora, three daughters and a son. His friends and family will sorely miss him. The Club was represented at the funeral on 3rd June, in Allendale, Northumberland, by Graham and Barbara Mead, Richard Hensby and Tony and Vivien Dyas.

Tony Dyas

PLEASE send your e-mail address and any changes to your postal address, etc, **NOW** to Tony Dyas at <adyas@gotadsl.co.uk>. If he does not have these details, the 20-Ghost Club will not be able to communicate with you or, even more importantly, send your copy of News & Record with the flyers about future events, and other information, etc, including "The Roycean"!

Back Numbers of News & Record are available from Tim Forrest at £2.50 each

The Club Shop - Susan Glew:

Ties £15.00, Brass, Nickel or Chrome Car Badges £ 25.00.
Cuff-links £35 pair & Lapel badge/scarf pin £20.00 are in solid Sterling Silver and are very tasteful [not flashy bling] -
Contact 01386 700987, susan.glew@onetel.com

Back Cover photo by Colin Hughes:

Tim Forrest and Nigel Hughes console each other at the 2010 AGM as they realise the consequences of retiring as the Club's Chairman and Editor of News & Record respectively.....

