



News & Record



The Magazine of the 20-Ghost Club
the Oldest Rolls-Royce Car Club in the World

Issue 35 January 2012

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NEWS & RECORD ISSUE 35

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[photo ©, design by Gerard Barry

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EDITORIAL

John R Redmill

The New Year has just started, and the current revised Club Rules are enclosed as a separate paper with this issue, as are the 2012 Membership Renewal forms, the annual report and accounts, and the 2012 Membership List. Subscriptions remain the same (UK £50.00, Euro €70.00, \$90.00), so do please renew as soon as possible; anyone not currently paying by standing order can get our full bank details by emailing Brian Fidler, Hon Treasurer. The club now has a Euro account into which payments for subscriptions, and other things, can be made by members living outside the Sterling area. This issue is mainly devoted to one very special event – the Centenary Re-enactment of the 1911 London to Edinburgh Top Gear Trial, superbly masterminded by Committee members Nick Naismith and Tim Forrest. Although only eligible cars were officially allowed to enter, the event is of such interest to all members and others it was agreed that it should be given major coverage in N&R35, and we hope you will all enjoy reading about it and seeing a selection of the stunning photographs produced by many photographers. The Club's range of merchandise has been extended, and members are encouraged to consider these items as gifts – and also as treats for themselves and their cars, especially when we resume motoring in the Spring; an Order Form is also enclosed. The next issue of N&R is due in May – and happy motoring for you all in 2012!

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 on such information.

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Pall Mall at dawn – and everyone is ready

LONDON TO EDINBURGH

THE TOP GEAR TRIAL CENTENARY RE-ENACTMENT

Nick Naismith

10th to 16th SEPTEMBER

The London to Edinburgh Centenary had long captured my imagination and the prospect of organising the centenary re-enactment was very exciting. Was it really possible to drive from London to Edinburgh and back in top gear and then lap Brooklands at 76mph? I couldn't imagine how it was possible 100 years ago with unmade roads and no support services, and I certainly had my doubts about how we could achieve it in 2011 with modern traffic and traffic lights.

Tim Forrest, our Club historian extraordinaire, was the fountain of all knowledge and, with assistance from Tony Dyas, spent many hours researching the actual route that had been taken in 1911, there being surprisingly little published information about it. Eventually he came up with an excellent route following as much of the Old Great North Road as possible. For authenticity Tim had retained numerous tricky but interesting detours through the town centres which the A1 now bypasses. Surprisingly where the A1 becomes motorway, in many places the old road follows alongside making our Ghostly progress much more enjoyable. Paul and Andy Wood took on the idea of the re-enactment with great enthusiasm and helped tremendously in arranging for some exceptional cars to be entered. These included the original trials car 1701 owned by Miguel Gonzales, who kindly allowed the car to be displayed in the Rotunda at the Royal Automobile Club to publicise the forthcoming event.

We assembled on 10th September at the Royal Automobile Club almost 100 years to the day since 1701 performed her amazing feat. Westminster Parking had not been very helpful and I was unable to reserve any parking spaces in St James's Square, but such is the attraction of these old cars that the hordes of traffic wardens seemed not to be

bothered that we had taken up most of the residents' spaces in the square. As usual there was a lot of last minute tinkering to be done in preparation. P&A Wood's John Ashford was busy fitting the brass inserts which he had machined to fit in the gearbox gates, some needed filing to fit the different size gates, and then they were fixed in place with wire and a lead Rolls-Royce seal. This effectively blanked off all but top and reverse so there was no going back now! The seals were optional and 9 of the 14 cars had them fitted.

We were very lucky to have so many beautiful London to Edinburgh cars present. Three were of the very rare under-slung type - Miguel Gonzales's 1701, Chip Connor's 1884 and Sir Michael Kadoorie's 1958. Lukas Huni brought his delightful Barker-bodied L to E Replica 2104, Roland Duce was in his 1914 replica L to E 30EB, and Bill Ives brought 32PB, a 1914 Colonial Ghost that had started life as an extremely sporty 2 seater. We were later to be joined by Irvine Laidlaw in another lovely L to E replica 2412. Collectively, they resembled thoroughbred steeds, powerful, light and purposeful. Jamie Lee Gibbs was very brave to be driving Bill Ives's car as he had never driven a Ghost until the week before the event, and he and Bill looked quite the part in their wonderful plus-four period outfits, later winning the prize for the best dressed team. Miguel travelled with Lukas in 2104 leaving Paul and Andy Wood in charge of 1701; this left Georgina, Paul Wood's daughter, to drive the 'Girl Power' car 46MA together with mum Valerie and Auntie Marilyn in the back. The Group was completed by our Torpedo Tourer 1606, Tim & Susie Forrest in their Barker Tourer 2154, Strone and Alex Macpherson in 27BD, Stan West driving solo in 314XH, and Albert and Monique Eberhard in their newly acquired 35RG.



Sir Michael Kadoorie's 1912 Holmes L to E tourer 1958



Gear lever limited to top & reverse

Albert was to have a challenging time as the car had only just come from his restorers and he had not had time to eliminate the inevitable minor problems. He was also having an interesting time seeing the differences between his Springfield Ghost and one from Derby. However he and Monique gamely kept with us and were certainly going as fast as anyone when we eventually got onto the circuit at Goodwood.

New member Ashley Carmichael had also just picked up his Silver Ghost from his restorer only days before the event. As he and Richard Spray were on their way to London there was a horrible knocking from the engine so they wisely decided to withdraw the car. They gamely came on down and joined us and proved very useful driving the modern Ghost from A to B and taking more pictures as they went. Fortunately, their engine malady was soon corrected and his Silver Ghost was going well at the Autumn Lunch the following month.

After an excellent dinner in the RAC Club we repaired for a few hours sleep before an early breakfast provided by the ever-willing staff. The start was set for 6am on the Sunday morning, and the cars made a spectacular sight lined up on Pall Mall in front of the Royal Automobile Club against a glistening wet road. Lukas Huni and Miguel Gonzales looked the part with their wonderful vintage racing

helmets, and the Woods led the way in 1701 being flagged off by Andrew Ball of Rolls-Royce. They also provided an intrepid photographer who, facing rearwards on a motorbike, took some fabulous photographs of us as we went out of London. Turning right at the end of Pall Mall, the first challenge was the traffic lights at the top of the hill in St James's where a lot of judgment was called for to avoid falling at the first hurdle. The route followed around Piccadilly Circus and up Shaftsbury Avenue to the Angel Islington. It was a surreal feeling gliding through central London with our historic cars gleaming under the fluorescent streetlights and causing a stir with late night revellers who were still falling out of the clubs.

After a while we adjusted to our very high geared steeds where the clutch was acting as a giant torque converter coupled to a single speed transmission – it's amazing how much abuse these wonderful mechanisms can take, transferring the power to lug these heavy cars away from standstill in direct top gear. The technique was to give the engine some revs to produce enough power to get the car rolling while slipping the clutch; once the road wheels were just turning, the clutch pedal could be fully released, the clutch would then continue to slip for a moment, protected by the egg-cup full of oil, before drive became fully engaged allowing the torque from the big low compression engine to pull top gear from virtually no revs - quite incredible!



Albert & Monique Eberhard's 1922 Colonial L to E tourer 35RG



Bill Ives's 1914 Wilkinson Colonial L to E tourer 32PB



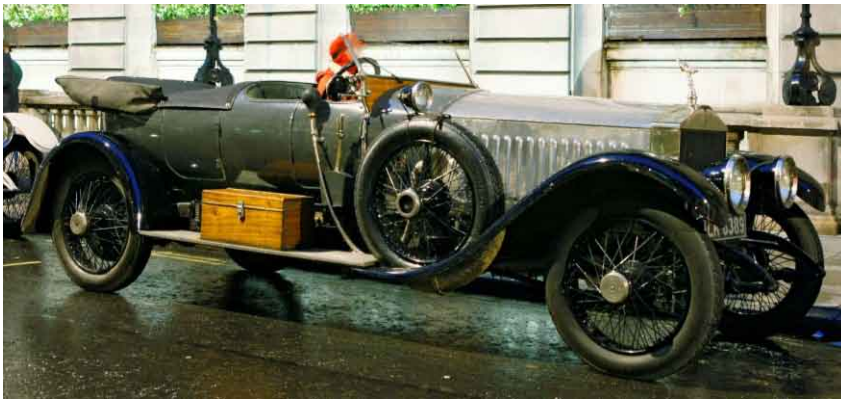
William "Chip" Connor's 1912 Mulliners L to E tourer 1884



'Girl Power' 1914 HJ Mulliner tourer 46MA with the three Woods ladies



Roland Duce's 1913 Barker L to E tourer 30EB



Strone & Alex Macpherson's 1914 Bridgewater tourer 27BA



Tim & Susie Forrests's 1912 Barker Torpedo Phaeton 2154 'Taj Mahal'



Irvine Laidlaw's 1913 Holmes L to E tourer 2412



Nick Naismith in his 1911 Barker Lamb of NSW tourer 1606



Lucas Huni driving 1912 Barker L to E tourer at speed, with Miguel Gonzales

The route out of London was surprisingly straightforward and proved very enjoyable as we motored in procession up Highgate Hill through Whetstone, Barnet, Potters Bar and Welwyn Garden City. The desire not to stop considerably improved our driving technique and made sure that we all

looked a long way ahead to predict what was happening at the traffic lights and junctions. We were ambling along when word came from Strone that we needed to speed up as his high speed, high-gear Alpine ghost couldn't cope with 30mph in top gear.



Tim & Susie Forrest crest the Archway and cross on amber



Nick Naisimth and Mark Dixon, of 'Octane' magazine, lead the great cavalcade out of London

After Baldock we joined the A1 and were able to let the horses run as we cruised up to Stilton at 60mph-plus, for our first stop at the Bell Inn for coffee and croissants. We all rejoiced in the performance of our Ghosts, happy in the knowledge that it might just be possible to achieve our

dream of going all the way in top gear. Thus emboldened, our next challenge was Stamford with its winding, uphill high street and traffic lights, and where we passed the George Hotel, an historic coaching inn frequently used in the past as a stopping place on runs to Edinburgh.

Passing safely through Stamford, we followed the Great North road route through Retford and onto our very welcome lunch stop at Ye Old Bell Inn, where we received a warm welcome from the proprietor who owned a new Phantom Drophead, which he had wrapped in bright yellow film to celebrate his 60th year! After lunch and

feeling good, we had a more relaxed and less challenging afternoon as we motored on past Doncaster and Pontefract to our overnight stay at the Woodhall Hotel Wetherby, where we were joined by Stuart and Ruth Evison in their Mulliner tourer 11 AB and Andrew and Neil Prestwich in their 1922 Tourer 312 KG.



1701 leads the team along the Great North Road

The Ghosts made a great sight, lined up outside the hotel perched on top of a hill from which there were spectacular views over rolling countryside. It is amazing how when one person puts on their overalls and starts lubricating their car a sense of guilt falls over everyone else. A hive of activity ensued with everyone going to town on their cars with oil cans and there were arms and legs sticking out from under and inside the cars at all angles. Meanwhile Roland was enjoying afternoon tea with Kimberley in the lounge oblivious to what was going on outside, his Ghost being of

the self-lubricating variety! The hotel drive was very long and narrow, with a steep downhill exit followed by a steeper and longer uphill part. The air was cold and we had to warm the engines before attempting the hill, the secret being to get up enough speed going down to get up the other side while hoping that nothing would come in the other direction. Unfortunately when it was Roland's turn a nasty modern Audi came the other way and baulked him on his uphill charge; he couldn't restart so his Top Gear run was sadly curtailed.



Sir Michael Kadoorie & John Maas making up time at speed while waving to the crowd

The roads from Wetherby onwards were very pretty and we motored on through Northallerton, Darlington, Durham and on past the Angel of the North Statue. All the cars were now getting into their stride and we zoomed up the A1 towards Newcastle at a good 60-70mph. Even the long steep sections out of Newcastle couldn't stop the relentless

charge of our valiant steeds. We bumped into the Woods and Lukas at Morpeth where the busy uphill High St proved challenging, but by that time we were getting a bit blasé about our Ghost's top gear abilities. As we climbed away from Morpeth on the old road I wondered whether it was a case of *déjà vu* for 1701.

By this time we were gasping for a drink and stopped in a lay-by for an excellent cup of tea from a very amusingly named 'greasy spoon' van. After passing through the massive stone gateway of the historic walled town of Alnwick, built in the 15th century by one of the Dukes of Northumberland, we lunched at the White Swan Inn.



Paul Wood & Nick Naismith enjoy some of Roy's Rolls

As we progressed further north up along the east coast, the weather got worse and worse, a severe northwesterly gale making forward progress difficult, and at times it was difficult to breathe without turning one's head away from the prevailing wind. It was necessary to drive with 5° of opposite lock to maintain a straight course and prevent being blown across the road. Tim and Susie's 'Taj Mahal' had all sails set and its progress reminded me of a yacht beating up to windward in heavy weather! We were now

Ashley Carmichael, having driven Mark Dixon from Octane Magazine up from Wetherby in the modern super Ghost to allow him to take photos, was now looking for a ride in an old car. Having been refused a seat in the 'Girl Power' car, he settled on sitting in the back of our ghost 1606 without an Auster screen!



Scotland welcomes us with open arms

getting very worried about Ashley in his exposed position in the back with gale force winds and horizontal rain - he kept giving us the thumbs up but I did notice that he was slowly disappearing under the tonneau. The storm hardened the resolve of our intrepid band to make it to Edinburgh. To our right the horizontal spray danced off the white horses of the distinctly unfriendly-looking North Sea, while the Ghosts didn't miss a beat; there couldn't have been a better test of man and machine.



1701 arrives in Edinburgh, and proud owner Miguel Gonzales and driver Paul Wood congratulate one other



The first three cars to arrive at Holyrood

By 5pm all the cars and windswept crews had safely reached Edinburgh and arrived at the finish in Holyrood Park under King Arthur's Seat. We were very relieved to see my wife Jo, who had borrowed the new Ghost to drive up from Alnwick and collected the champagne from M&S on the way. We were greeted by Audrey and Lenox Jamieson, long-standing Scottish members of the Club, and had a celebratory drink and ceremonial removal of the gearbox seals while the rain still fell. That evening there was no time

to rest as we were due on the Royal Yacht Britannia at 7pm where we were joined by Lord Elgin's son Alex Bruce and his wife Vikki, who had given us such an entertaining Whisky tasting when we visited Edinburgh on the Prince Henry Tour earlier in the year. We were treated to a private tour of Britannia and viewed the Queen's Phantom V in its garage on board before sitting down in the State Dining room to a sumptuous meal followed by a wonderful display of Highland dancing.



Highland Dancing on Britannia

STUDIES IN TARTAN



Lenox Jamieson disembarks from Britannia

The London to Edinburgh Trophy was awarded to Lukas Huni who had achieved the best fuel consumption of 14.57 mpg over the 423miles, still someway off the 24.32mpg at 19.59 mph that 1701 had achieved in 1911, albeit that our average had been nearer 28mph. Being a competitive racing driver, Lukas had taken the competition very seriously and had weakened the mixture on the overrun and coasted down the hills - I wish I had thought of that! Having achieved our goal we had no time to rest as we only had 2½ days before we were due at Goodwood for the Revival.

We all hoped that the return journey would be easier using all gears but we hadn't allowed for the circuitous route that Tim had in store for us. His route was absolutely stunning but mostly on single track roads across the Northumberland National park until we could blast along the arrow straight Roman Military Road following the course of Hadrian's Wall with its ups and downs. The route then took us down near Scotch Corner and then over the Yorkshire Dales - the English countryside at its best.



Georgina Wood chases 1701 across the Scottish Borders



We're somewhere in the Dales, I think ?



John Ashford takes a breather

We came across the Woods and Bill Ives again, and travelled in convoy until we lost Paul and Andy in 1701. By this time it was getting dark and we retraced our steps to find that 1701 had run out of petrol, an easy thing to do as the route had hardly any petrol stations. Not knowing how far the next garage was and not having a reserve or a siphon tube, we decided to fill up a can by removing the drain plug from the bottom of my tank, which was also running low. To our surprise the fuel came out rather fast and we deposited most of what remained in the tank all over the road; the moral of the story is that you should release the pressure in the tank before removing the bung! Some fuel went in the can and we were able to get 1701 going again, but a few miles later she ran out again on a long uphill

section. Fortunately John Ashford arrived to save the situation in the P&A Wood service truck. By this time it was getting seriously dark, 1701 didn't have any lights, and we still had a long way to the Devonshire Arms Hotel at Bolton Abbey, so John led the way in the truck like the Pied Piper and we all followed behind in a procession concentrating hard not to lose him. It was all good fun, a great challenge and the sort of thing that makes these tours so enjoyable. The Devonshire proved to be a very comfortable resting place and I could happily have spent all the next day relaxing in its comfortable opulence, but the lure of another 275 miles of Tim's masochistic windy route beckoned.



Exhausted Ghosts have a well-deserved rest at Bolton Abbey

In the morning Jo and I were late leaving due to beaded-edge tyre problems, and only just made it on fumes to the next petrol station. The route cleverly picked its way through the industrial sprawl of Bradford, Halifax and Burnley across the moors and down into the heavenly Peak District National Park, then down to Burton on Trent and Hinkley before picking up the Fosse Way to the Macdonald Bear Hotel at Woodstock; it was one of the longest but most enjoyable day-drives that I have ever had in a Ghost.

When we arrived, Strone was already in his overalls having only just made it to the hotel with severe fuel starvation - his car had been backfiring so violently that he had blown his exhaust pipe apart. John Ashford, who had been brilliant all trip, proceeded to clear 96 years of accumulated grot out of the fuel system. Needless to say the car was transformed and Strone and Alex were racing ahead the next day.



Paul & Andy Wood arrive first



The 3 sportingly-dressed Wood ladies with 'best-dressed' Bill Ives



Roland Duce & Kimberley Hughson in their garden party finery



Strone, Tim & Susie – all very dapper

The final push down to Goodwood over the Lambourn Hills was much more leisurely, and we were able to enjoy what turned out to be a beautiful day. We had a tremendous welcome at the Rolls-Royce factory from Richard Carter, Andrew Ball and their team who put on a fabulous English afternoon tea. Our new Honorary Club members CEO Torsten Mueller Oetvos and Design Director Ian Cameron were there to greet us, and 1701 took pride of place outside the doors next to its modern counterpart. Torsten was presented with a commemorative rally plaque. What was most encouraging was the interest that Torsten and his team took in the cars. Tim Forrest joked with Torsten who had made a comment that you

would never find a 'go-faster' button on a Rolls Royce and said he was wrong, as they had been fitting them from 1911 onwards! He then showed and demonstrated the exhaust cutout, emphasizing that it was "Not for use in the United Kingdom". Torsten was fascinated and promptly called the head of Marketing to see it. He too was suitably impressed and in turn called over the head of Design. Very soon all the design section heads were peering into the cars to admire the different types of cut-out that were fitted. So should there ever be the modern equivalent of an L to E or Alpine Eagle, let's see if there is also a performance enhancement button although, of course, it will be "Not for use in the United Kingdom".



Rolls Royce staff in awe of 100 year-old technology



Paul & Andy Wood maintain 100 year-old technology

That evening all much enjoyed dining with Adam Fleming, Chairman of Fleming Family and Partners, the private wealth management group who had so very generously sponsored the whole event; his early Bentley Continental

was much admired. We then were shown a wonderful film made by the Derbyshire Tourist Board in the 1970s, showing 1701 travelling around Derbyshire meeting other Rolls-Royce cars, and ending up at the Rolls-Royce factory.

The next morning we were up at the crack of dawn to be at the Goodwood Track for 7.30am to take part in the track parade to open the circuit. This was great fun as our pace car was an Aston-Martin DB4 GT Zagato, so spirited

driving from the Silver Ghosts and much waving from the track marshals as we went round. Rolls Royce then treated us to a magnificent day in their hospitality tent watching the Revival practice.



Lively Ghosts in hot pursuit around the Goodwood track

Thanks go to Andrew Ball, Richard Carter, Ian Cameron and Torsten Mueller-Oetvos for our wonderful reception at Goodwood, to Lord March for allowing us to use the track and display 1701 in the Motor Show exhibition, to Tim Forrest for his fantastic support and help in organising the route and producing the route book, to Paul and Andy Wood for getting behind the Tour with so much enthusiasm and arranging the wonderful cars including

1701, to John Ashford for his patience and helpfulness in keeping us and all the cars going, to Mark Dixon for his companionship and his excellent publicity for the event in the December issue of 'Octane', to Brian Fidler for paying all the bills, and last - but not least - to my wife Jo for helping me so much and for marking up all the maps and producing the route books.

Photographs © Tim Forrest and several others

The participants in the event were:

Nick & Jo Naismith	*	1911	1606		Rep of Barker Lamb of NSW Tourer
Miguel Gonzales (Drivers Paul & Andy Wood)	*	1911	1701	L to E	Crailville Rep Holmes L to E tourer
William E (Chip) Connor & Bruce Meyer	[2]	1912	1884	L to E	Rep Mulliners of Birmingham L to E Tourer
The Hon. Sir Michael Kadoorie & John Maas	*	1912	1958	L to E	Penny/Holmes Rep Holmes L to E Tourer
Lucas Huni & Miguel Gonzales	[1]	1912	2104	L to E	Rep Barker L to E Tourer
Tim & Susie Forrest	*	1912	2154		Barker Torpedo Phaeton Tourer
Lord Irvine Laidlaw	[3]	1913	2412	L to E	Rep Holmes L to E tourer
Georgina Wood & Marilyn & Valerie Wood	*	1914	46MA	4 sp	H J Mulliner Tourer
Stuart & Ruth Evison		1914	11AB	4 sp	Mulliner ex Daimler tourer bodysell
Roland Duce & Kimberley Hughson	[4]	1913	30EB		Rep Barker L to E Tourer 2267
Bill Ives & Jamie Lee Gibbs	*	1914	32PB	4 sp	Wilkinson Colonial L to E Tourer
Strone & Alex Macpherson		1914	27BD	4 sp	Bridgewater Motor Tourer
Ashley Carmichael & Bob Ingles (Days , 2 & -3)	[5]	1920	7RE	4 sp	Did not start Open Drive Limousine
Andrew & Neil Prestwich (Days 2 & 3)		1922	312KG	4 sp	Tourer
Albert & Monique Eberhard		1922	35RG	4 sp	Rep Colonial L to E Tourer
Stan West	[*]	1923	314XH	4 sp	Springfield Tourer

* Completed the entire run from London to Edinburgh in top gear

Note 1: Best fuel consumption award 14.7 mpg

Note 2: Balked in London by traffic continued using gears

Note 3: Joined at Woodstock for run to Goodwood.

Note 4: Balked leaving Wetherby Hotel. Continued using gears

Note 5: Did not start. Severe engine knock. Subsequently found block was not tightened down properly.



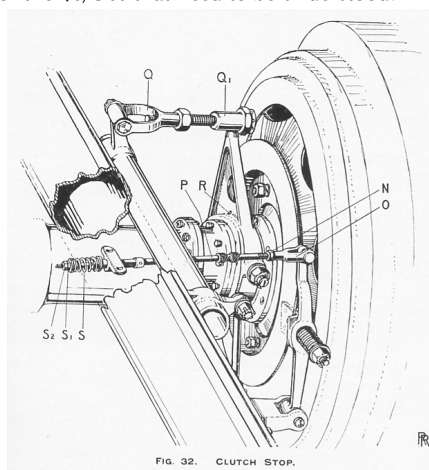
Lining up on the track at Goodwood

NOISY GEAR CHANGES? Part 1:

[or how they drove from London to Edinburgh?]

Nigel Hughes

The 40/50 hp Silver Ghost type has a reputation for difficult gear changes, mitigated somewhat by its 'go anywhere in top gear' ability. However, the difficulty is such that when a perfect change is achieved, particularly under difficult circumstances, such as grabbing 2nd gear just before a hairpin bend on a steep hill, it is a cause for celebration. Gear changing on the smaller hp cars does not generally have the same reputation for difficulty. Before we get into the science of why the pre-synchromesh 40/50s are more difficult than the 20s and 20/25s, there are some specifics of the 40/50s that need to be understood.



First and obviously, it is essential that the clutch disengage completely when the pedal is pressed. This is easily checked on a Ghost by lifting the front floorboards, running the engine at normal idle and de-clutching. The clutch cone – the aluminium plate with the big holes in it – should stop revolving in a couple of seconds. Very incorrect adjustment of the clutch linkage or excess oil in the clutch (SG ONLY) can be a cause of clutch drag, though excess oil will probably be noticed first by causing clutch slip. If there is too much oil in the clutch, a drain plug is provided to let it out. The drain hole is likely to be blocked with dirt and bits of clutch lining and I find it easier to push a cloth through the holes in the clutch plate and mop up with that.

Your 40/50 also has a thing called a clutch stop or clutch brake (see illustration). This is a device that slows down the driven plate of the clutch and hence the input shaft to the gearbox when you de-clutch. It is handy when engaging gear at rest as it stops the gears revolving in a couple of seconds and enables you to select your gear silently before moving off. It also enables upward changes to be made when ascending a hill. Without it, the car can slow down faster than the engine and you can never get the revs right. The SG clutch brake is the spring-loaded pad that bears on a brake disc on the back of the clutch plate. The loading on the clutch stop is provided by spring S, adjusted by locknuts S1 and S2. Later 40/50s had a shoe and drum arrangement inside the bell housing.

Finally, of course, your SG has the most complicated gear gate. I know of no other car that requires moves of right,

back, left, back and right for a change from 3rd to 2nd (four speed gearboxes) and you must practice this sequence until it becomes automatic and sub-conscious.

So, how is all this supposed to come together? Well, at the start of a journey, your gear oil will be cold and thick. This, together with the clutch brake, will cause your gears to slow down very quickly indeed when you de-clutch. Assuming that you start off in 2nd, your change up to 3rd requires the gearbox input shaft to be slowed down to match the revs needed in third gear. With a cold gearbox, this slow down is almost instant and you will need to de-clutch and move the gear lever very smartly into third gear. The slightest delay and the input shaft will be turning too slowly and the change will become impossible. This is one reason why you have to practice really slick moves around the gear gate. The shift into top gear also needs to be fast, though the path across the gate is easy. When the box is warm, the oil drag is much reduced, but the clutch brake will still slow down the input shaft when you de-clutch. This makes for a faster change than would otherwise be the case, but a slight pause in neutral before engaging the higher gear is required. It is better to be slightly too quick than too slow, as the gears will quickly slow down to permit the change.

Changes down are a different story. To change down, before engaging the lower gear, the gearbox input shaft needs to be speeded up to the revs which will be required in that lower gear. This is, of course, achieved by double de-clutching. This process involves de-clutching, moving the gear lever into neutral, engaging the clutch in neutral and increasing the engine revs to those required by the lower gear, de-clutching again and engaging the lower gear. The Owner's Handbook describes how this can be done with the assistance of the governor and the technique works brilliantly if you are the only car on the road and are travelling on the flat. However, for practical purposes in modern traffic, there is simply not time to go through the routine. Even if you have a good ear and judge the required engine revs well, the gearbox oil drag and the clutch brake will be fighting against you, trying to slow things down, when you are trying to speed them up. Things are made even more difficult to judge when the change is made while going uphill, as the car will be slowing down, requiring less speeding-up of the input shaft. It is easy to over-estimate the engine revs needed on a downshift with a warm gearbox. Trying a down shift while braking is asking for big trouble as you run out of feet unless you use the governor, but then you run out of hands. If it is necessary to change down while braking, use the handbrake, leaving it on while the change is made. This can be the only way to avoid disaster if you suddenly encounter an unexpected steep downward hill and urgently need first gear.

One trick I find helpful for unhurried downward changes from top to third is to de-clutch and move the gear to neutral, then very gently move the gear lever towards third until the gear teeth are very gently rubbing. Increase the revs until you feel the rubbing stop, then briefly de-clutch and slide the gear into mesh. You may even find that you can do clutch-less changes this way.



Bletchley Park in the autumn sunshine

AUTUMN WEEKEND & LUNCH

..... or how 20-Ghost Club members kept a Ghost at bay, and cracked 'The Code'.....

Brian Palmer & John Stuttard

30th SEPTEMBER to 2nd OCTOBER

A most agreeable and fascinating Autumn weekend was spent in Bedfordshire, including a memorable visit to Bletchley Park. We were blessed with two incredible strokes of luck, the first being the glorious Indian Summer weather, and the second our delightful guide for the day at Bletchley, Jean Valentine (no relation to Jimmy), who served at Bletchley Park as a young gal during the War.

The Menzies Flitwick Manor Hotel was our base for the weekend with nearly all the 18 rooms were taken by our group. The delightful Georgian-style hotel is set in acres of attractive gardens and wooded parkland, with plenty of safe parking for old Rolls-Royce cars. Elegantly furnished with fine antiques and period pieces, the Manor was constructed for John Thomas Brooks who moved in following his marriage to Mary in 1816. It was handed down through the generations until 1934 when it passed into private hands until 1984 when it was converted into

a hotel and restaurant. The Manor was sold in 1990 to Menzies Hotels. Mysteriously, Flitwick Manor has its own ghost, the origin of which goes back 100 years during occupation by the Lyall family, descendants of John Thomas Brooks. One of the Lyall children was mortally ill and was cared for in his last days by the old housekeeper, a Mrs. Banks, who was a short woman with white hair. The family decided that she was poisoning him and so dismissed her. She now returns periodically to Flitwick Manor to harass guests but, fortunately, she did not reappear on our weekend; the quantity of Silver Ghosts and Spirits of Ecstasy must have frightened her away.

Members who participated included newcomers Max and Janny Watson in their 1928 20hp Doctors Coupe, and joining us on Saturday morning were Ashley and Adrienne Carmichael and friends Bob and Kate Ingles in their 1920 SG Mulliner Open Drive Limousine.



Max & Janny Watson in their 1928 20hp GYL67



Ashley & Adrienne Carmichael's 1920 SG 47RE



Woburn Abbey, seat of the Dukes of Bedford

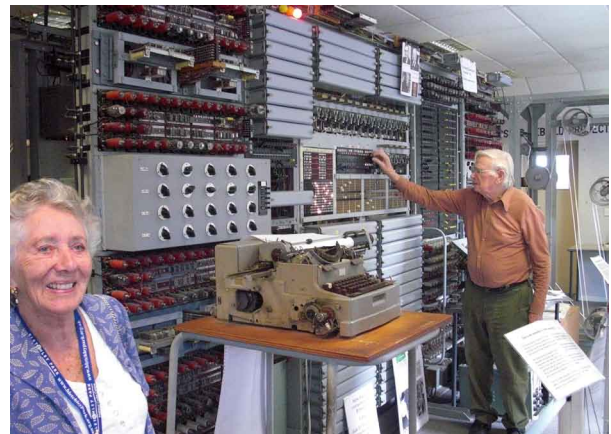
After a leisurely drive through the stunning Woburn Abbey estate and countryside south of Milton Keynes, fifteen cars were welcomed by the duty manager of the “Home of the Code breakers” and introduced to Jean Valentine. Jean is a most remarkable lady, of senior years, with an intellect as sharp as a needle. During WW2 she

volunteered as a WREN and, because she wrote on her joining up papers that she liked crosswords, was immediately sent to Bletchley Park. There she worked in one of the huts as an operative on the Bombe computer which de-coded enemy Enigma messages.



Jean Valentine explains everything!

Jean guided us through the various buildings where we were introduced to experts who explained the intricacies of the Abwehr Enigma and Lorenz cipher machines. Unless you are a Senior Wrangler it is quite difficult to understand precisely how it all worked, but our guides were patient and the highlight was seeing the Bombe Computer which had been rebuilt after fourteen years of painstaking work. The first wave of the Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS) moved to Bletchley Park on 15 August 1939. The main body of GC&CS, including its Naval, Military and Air Sections, was on the ground floor of the mansion, together with a telephone exchange, a teleprinter room, a kitchen and a dining room. The top floor was allocated to MI6. The prefabricated wooden huts were still being erected, and initially the entire “shooting party” was crowded into the mansion, its stables and cottages. These were too small, so Elmers School, a neighbouring boys' boarding school, was acquired for the Commercial and Diplomatic Sections. Both of the two German electro-mechanical rotor machines whose signals were decrypted at Bletchley Park, Enigma and the Lorenz Cipher, were virtually unbreakable if properly used. It was poor operational procedures and sloppy operator behaviour that allowed the GC&CS cryptanalysts to find ways to read them. Knowing that the slightest suspicion by the Axis powers that their ciphers were being broken, could



I thought I'd ordered the latest laptop?

lead to such a change, the authorities at Bletchley Park were extremely concerned about security. All staff had to sign the Official Secrets Act (1939), and were instructed to never discuss their work outside their immediate section. A May 1942 personal security form stated:

Do not talk at meals ...
Do not talk in the transport ...
Do not talk travelling ...
Do not talk in the billet ...
Do not talk by your own fireside ...
Be careful even in your Hut ...

Now after 30 years of secrecy, the full contribution of Bletchley Park is available for all to see. It has now become an important part of our heritage. The site has been faithfully restored and one gets a very good picture of how some of Britain's brightest mathematicians and crossword aces worked together to shorten the War by perhaps as much as one whole year, thus saving thousands of lives. In appreciation of our visit, Brian Palmer arranged a bouquet of flowers to be sent to the amazing Jean Valentine and Club members made a donation to the Bletchley Park Trust. The warm weather enabled participants to enjoy an excellent Cream Tea in the sunshine at Flitwick before a formal dinner.



Some Ghosts in the Shades

On Sunday the fine weather continued and enhanced our drive through the Woburn Abbey Deer Park and visit to the Gardens and Antiques Centre followed by a return to the hotel for the Club's traditional Autumn closing lunch, where six members from the Midlands plus two prospective Members joined us. It was, in all, a memorable weekend and the concept of combining future Spring Lunches and Autumn Lunches with weekend visits

to places of interest in different parts of the country (or even abroad) will be continued. Our particular thanks for this visit go to Brian and Joan Palmer.

And do book now for the 2012 Spring Weekend in Dorset (Friday 27 to Monday 30 April) after the Spring Lunch (on Friday 27 April) at the Macphersons in Hampshire.

Members participating;	Model	Chassis	Reg	Year
Tim & Susie Forrest	SG	2154	R1487	1912
Sir John Stuttard, David & Caroline Colvin	20/25	GSF29	BXB12	1934
Gervase & Margaret Forster	SG	60NE	SV6608	1921
Bob & Sheila Kilburn	20/25hp	GRW64	AJJ485	1932
Max & Janny Watson	20 hp	GYL67	YX2878	1928
Anthony & Gilly Armitage	P1	65CL	TY5221	1928
Brian & Joan Palmer	SG	149AG	KE6676	1921
Ian & Anne Scoggins	25/30	GAN37	DU4597	1937
Nick Channing & Julia Teague	SG	42ZG	NN3740	1922
Dr Alan & Diana Watkins	25/30	GLP26	ERA530	1937
Clayton Banks	SG	34MG	JL1	1922
Brian & Wendy Fidler	P11	101MW	157XUM	1933
Ashley & Adrienne Carmichael & Dr Robert Ingles & Katherine Ingles	SG	47RE	PX1780	1920
Nigel & Ann Hughes	SG	120EU	XY6932	1925
Richard & Margeret Boggon	20/25	GTK25	WS8565	1931

Also at Sunday lunch;				
Ken & Jane Forbes	P1	95 LF	YU7464	1927
Andrew Taylor & Susan Taylor	P1	20TC	YO8869	1926

Photographs © Tim Forrest, Brian Palmer & John Stuttard

The line-up in front of Bletchley Park



ANDREW SINGTON WRITES TO THE CLUB:

I was delighted to see so much space dedicated to my pen - I really don't deserve it as I have now sold my lovely 20hp (GOK65 aka UK-2). She is now resident in a collection of 160 classic cars in Budapest though still registered in the UK to keep the number with the car. I have had the most amazing experiences with UK-2 over the years, and whilst I have not been the most active '20-Ghost' member, I have derived immense satisfaction from the Club and more specifically from the News and Record. My first contact with it was an issue in 1965 that gave a description of a 'Top and Bottom' decarb on a 20/25 engine. At this time I had my very first car - a 1933 20/25 that was inclined to use petrol and oil in the ratio of 1:1. Not after I had done the work though - she would out-accelerate a Mini Cooper and keep going to well over 80mph - though the front threatened to leave the ground at that speed!

My trip to Bennecourt last year with another 6 club members cars was a trip to remember - all for the very best reasons of course! After driving to Israel in 2006, I drove my 20hp through Spain and Portugal earlier this year and it was this that made me realise that she (and I) were not up to this sort of touring. I needed something with a bit more verve, so I have to admit that a beautiful Aston Martin DB7 Volante (soft top) in, of course BRG, now graces my garage. There is still a connection with Rolls Royce though - she was painted at Pims Lane, Crewe! All my 20hp knowledge has been learned 'on the job' so to speak, and I can only recommend that other members 'have a crack' at fixing whatever needs to be done. It makes one feel so much more confident when one see the quality of the original workmanship. There are so many Members who have phenomenal experience (such as David Else, Tim Forrest and Chas Vyse to mention but three) and who are only a phone-call away. What wonderful guys they are.

I look forward to seeing many per-war RRs on the road, and as I fly past I will wave a hand in respectful acknowledgement - I got so fed-up with the man in the red Escort blasting his stupid horn to say how thrilled he was to see me - albeit with a deaf right ear; No More!!!! Just keep an eye out for my personalised number N555AMS

Yours very sincerely,

Andrew M Sington

NEW MERCHANDISE NOW AVAILABLE:

The 20-Ghost Club is pleased to announce that further items have now been made available for purchase by members, and all these can be obtained from Susan Glew. These include warm and cosy Body Warmers in navy blue washable fleece material, with the club's logo embroidered in red, ideal for those draughty journeys of ours and most welcome as presents. Available in sizes XS, S, M, L, XL and XXL, they are £28.00 each. Matching scarves are £17.00 each. Ties of the same colour ways are £24.00 for the 'new' look, £10.00 for the 'old' look. Solid silver Cuff links are £35.00 per pair, and Lapel badges/ Scarf pins, also in silver, are £20.00 each. Car Badges in brass, nickel and chrome are £25.00 each. All these items are very elegant and extremely practical - purchasing them will also help the Club's finances to thrive. Photographs of the whole range are on the Club's website.



Members are advised to first contact Susan Glew, **during reasonable hours** on 01386 700987 or email susan.glew@onetel.com, to discuss their requirements of size, etc, postage and packing costs, and method of payment, and then complete and send the booking form to her at 7 Draycott Business Centre, DRAYCOTT, nr Blockley, Moreton in Marsh, Gloucs GL56 9JY.

COMING EVENTS in 2012

and members' information, etc

IMPORTANT NOTICE about 2012 SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Subscriptions for 2012 are due **NOW**. If you pay by Standing Order from a UK Bank Account, **PLEASE** ensure that your bank is instructed to pay £50.00 [NOT £35.00, which is INSUFFICIENT as it was increased several years ago!]. If you pay by Sterling cheque, please send this, made payable to "The 20-Ghost Club Ltd", to our Hon. Treasurer, Brian Fidler, The Eighth House, Vernon Avenue, Oxford OX2 9AU. Anyone not currently paying by standing order can get our full bank details by emailing Brian Fidler at <brianhfidler@aol.com>. If you pay in Euros or US\$, please send your cheque for £70.00 or \$90.00, whichever is applicable – the club now has a Euro account, & details of this can be obtained from Brian Fidler.

PLEASE also send your e-mail address and any changes to your postal address, etc, **NOW** to Graham Tyson, the club's Membership Secretary, The Old Vicarage, St Minver, nr Wadebridge, Cornwall PL27 6QH, <gtyson2@tiscali.co.uk>. If Graham does not have these details, the 20-Ghost Club will not be able to communicate with you or, even more importantly, send your copies of News & Record with the flyers about future events, and other information, etc, including "The Roycean"!

EVENTS:

Download details, bookings forms and other information for all events from the club website.

Saturday 18th February;

AGM and DINNER, Harris Manchester College Oxford [Susie Forrest], with option visit on Sunday 19th February

Friday 27th April:

Spring Lunch at Armsworth Park, Hampshire [Strone Macpherson]

Friday 27th to Sunday 29th April:

Weekend in Dorset [Brian Palmer]

Friday 25th to Monday 28th May:

Annual Tour with Irish Georgian Society in Northern Ireland [Jimmy Valentine]

Friday 27th May:

Polo at Armsworth Park, Hampshire [Strone Macpherson]

Saturday 30th June to Saturday 21st July:

Tour of Nordic countries and the Baltic [Sir John Stuttard] ~ a few places are still available so book immediately to join the party on this wonderful tour.

Friday 5th to Sunday 7th October [t.b.c]

Autumn Tour & Lunch, Oxfordshire / Warwickshire [Jimmy Valentine]

DATES OF OTHER EVENTS WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN DUE COURSE

NEW MEMBERS WELCOMED TO THE CLUB:

Shaun Dowling

Orchard Croft, The Drive, BOURNE END, Bucks, SL8 5RE
1931 20/25 GRW 31 Windovers Saloon

Richard & Annie Burke

328 Glenferrie Road, MALVERN, Victoria, 31441928
20hp GBM 32 Martin & King roadster

Mark Herbstreit

54 Wangarra Road, FRANKSTON, Victoria, 3199
1931 20/25 GNS 60 Sedan de Ville [jointly owned with Peter P Jordan-Hill]
1925 New Phantom 56MC Brewster Sedan

HONORARY MEMBERSHIPS:

The Committee is delighted to announce that **Digby and Margery Wills** have been awarded Honorary membership of the Club. Members since 1969, they participated in countless visits, tests, trials and other events with their 1932 20/25 Sedan de ville GTB61 GX66 during their 42 years of membership. Digby was also Editor of the Club's magazine for some years. The Committee offers them very best wishes for the future.

BACK COVER: Sheer determination shows on the faces of Lucas Huni and Miguel Gonzales as they strive to win the L to E trophy and as 'Private Eye' would say – "crazy guys, crazy hats!!"

