



News and Record



Issue 11
November 2004

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Front Cover Picture:

*David and Jane Else's
20 HP GKM 30 poses
outside 'Le Canadel'*



Note:

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NEWS, EDITORIAL

and technical stuff



20-Ghost Club Limited

An Extraordinary General Meeting of the 20-Ghost Club was held on 9 October 2004, with Tim Forrest in the Chair (*photo above*). At the meeting, a formal resolution was passed unanimously to create a Company limited by guarantee of its members to take over the functions, assets and engagements of the present 20-Ghost Club. This has the effect that, in the unlikely event of a catastrophe, members who apply to join the company will guarantee to provide a sum not exceeding £10.00, should the Company be wound up. Application forms will be sent out later this year inviting all Club members to join the Company. The picture above shows Tim proposing the resolution, with Tony Dyas on his right, John O'Dowd, who has done most of the donkey work in preparing the legal documents, Nigel Hughes and Jimmy Valentine on his left.

Battery Failure

Anthony Armitage e-mailed me to explain why he unexpectedly

failed to get to the Lasham meeting. His battery exploded just as he was about to depart from a fuel stop on the way. With a battery that would not hold charge well enough to start the car, Anthony had been using the starting handle for some time. R-R's are so well behaved that starting on the switch or on the handle is easy enough that there seems little reason for haste in battery replacement. This is fine until the battery fails completely and becomes open-circuit. This presumably happened during Anthony's refuelling stop. When he restarted the engine and the generator cut in, there was a loud explosion and the battery case disintegrated, presumably because the surge voltage from the generator caused an internal spark which set off a hydrogen explosion from trapped gas.

Years ago, when I similarly had a battery go open circuit at night, I had lighting circuits selected and the generator blew half the filaments. The message seems to be that when a battery warns you that it is failing, you should take notice and replace it sharpish.

Wheel Rim Failure

We continue to hear stories of wheel rim failure, generally on large horsepower cars. Those I am personally aware of have been to well base rims, but straight side rims are not immune. Failures usually involve a circumferential split several inches long. I personally believe that these occur where old rims have suffered deep corrosion during periods in the open, as in scrapyards, followed by a period in service when fatigue cracking develops, starting at the weakened points. It is as well to check for corrosion damage when tyres are replaced and to have wheels rebuilt if there is evidence of deep pitting. Others may be able to offer alternative theories or advice.

More on Ignition

I am advised that in addition to the items I mentioned last time, it is known for the steering column ignition switches on Ghosts to fail, so these are worth checking too when seeking the cause of sudden ignition failure.

Broadband Internet

To my great surprise, Broadband has come to Compton Abdale, so I am able to receive larger graphic files without dying from boredom. I am still happy to accept good hard copy prints for publication, but prefer digital images, either on CD-ROM or via e-mail. Please keep them coming.

Centenary Rally Report

The 20-Ghost Club Centenary rally to Monaco was a major event worthy of fuller reporting than is usually the case in 'News and Record'. A separate publication covering the event is in preparation.

NHH

IN PURSUIT OF CHEZ SIR HENRY

A Pre-Centenary Hunt for Villa Mimosa

By
Jane Else

David and Jane Else were unable to join the Club Centenary Rally to Monaco, so they decided to do their own tour. As it turned out, they were to do some very valuable reconnaissance for the Centenary event. Jane takes up the story:

On Sunday 16th May we set off for Le Canadel via Route D559 on a glorious sunny morning. We had driven about 30 km when we spotted the little Town Hall on the left hand side of the road which bears the plaque commemorating Sir Henry Royce's life and work. We were taking photographs when a member of the local fire brigade turned up. He was delighted to see the car and asked us to drive round to the Fire Station, which was situated just behind the Town Hall. His fellow fire-fighters viewed GKM30 with awe and great excitement! Photographs were taken from every angle with their fire engines forming the backdrop. One of the firemen was keen to lead us to the house where Royce had lived.

Although we had maps and a plan of the area we agreed. He kindly led the way and on arrival we realised that this was Claude Johnson's house, Villa Jaune. Two more locals appeared on the scene. All agreed it was the Villa Jaune but were adamant that this was the home of Royce, because the plaque was on the wall! A similar plaque was on the wall at the Town Hall so that was no criterion! We were sure the house situated a few yards further down and which we could see more clearly up its drive was the one which Royce had designed for himself. Villa Mimosa is now



called 'San Peyre'. An old man in our midst said he had the key to that one and asked if we would like to see inside. We couldn't believe our ears. He said it had been on the market for two weeks and he tripped off down the road for the key. It emerged that he lived in Le Rossignol, the house which accommodated Royce's design team. Having returned with the key and still insisting that Sir Henry lived in the Villa Jaune, he unlocked the gate and like a scene from the past our Twenty rolled up the drive. The front elevation of the house is different from the early drawing which appears in John Fasal's book 'The Rolls-Royce Twenty.' The top floor has been extended as has the large balcony and the steps go up at the side rather than the front. We entered the house through the kitchen where the room call bell panel is still on the wall. A few old photographs of pre-war Rolls' were framed on the walls. We went upstairs and stood on the little wooden

balcony which led from the bedroom with its beautiful views of the coast below. What a magical place! What a perfect setting! Just visible through the trees was the smaller house which was the design office.

It was apparent that the current owners used it as a holiday let. It's rather sad that a full appreciation of its history seems to have been lost. We took some photographs and filmed our visit, then drove out through the gates and onto the Avenue de la Corniche to join the Avenue Sir Henry Royce and back to St. Tropez just wishing we had the money to buy it!

According to my E.U.P. French dictionary - le rossignol is translated as an unsaleable article as well as nightingale. There's a thought to conjure with!!

Jane Else

Photo by Tim Forrest: The coast at Le Canadel

GLIDING AND DRIVING AT LASHAM

18 July 2004

The day dawned with wind and rain evident and Strone Macpherson contacted Lasham Gliding Club early in the morning to see if there would be any gliding. The news was that there might be an improvement in the weather, so 15 intrepid 20-Ghosters set off towards Lasham to find on arrival that flying would be ON from mid-day. Flights were on offer in tandem 2-seat gliders and, in the event, all who wanted a flight got one. It turned out that the visibility was good beneath the cloud cover and the Isle of Wight, off the South Coast, could easily be seen.

As well as gliding, Lasham offers well-paved perimeter tracks and, thanks to an understanding site manager, we were allowed to drive our cars on the airfield. This gave me a chance to introduce my three daughters, one husband and one boy friend to the complexities of driving a Ghost. They were impressed by the top gear take off and four wheel brakes and surprised at the feel of driving a piece of machinery in which you can feel so much through your hands.

The event also allowed a spot of car swapping. Strone invited me to sample his London-Edinburgh Colonial model Ghost. I was blown away by the precision of steering of this car on beaded edge tyres. Strone had a go with 120EU and was amazed at the smoothness of the engine. I offered to swap my engine for his steering, but he did not seem to want to take up the offer.

All in all, it was a very enjoyable meeting, with something for everybody. Thanks Strone for the arrangements and can we do it again please?

Photos and report by Nigel Hughes

Pictures:

Top: R to L Strone Macpherson's 17BD, Tim Forrest's 2121 and John Marsh's 55CL.

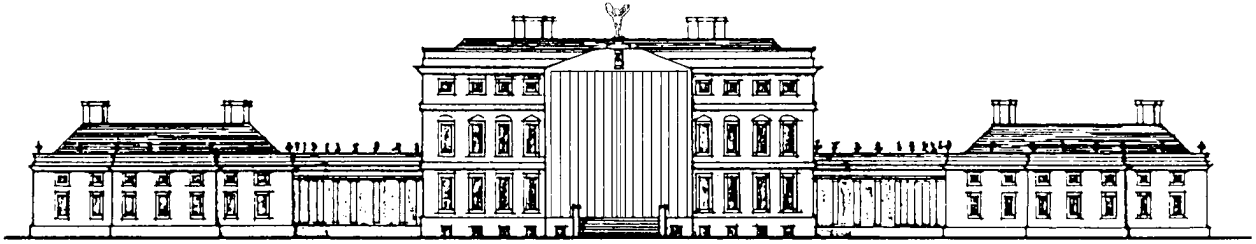
Centre: Tim Forrest strapped in for his flight

Bottom: Tim leaves Terra Firma



IRISH GEORGIAN SOCIETY TOUR IN THE SCOTTISH BORDERS

4 to 7 June 2004



Well, what a splendid weekend! This was the first time Alex and I had ventured to provide transport for the Irish Georgian Society, London Chapter, and it was the greatest possible fun, if rather exhausting. Alex and I had decided to bring the 1914 Silver Ghost which lived most of its life in Scotland as we planned to go north after the Georgian trip, of which more later.

We met at Berwick Station on Friday afternoon and GNER was more or less on time. A luggage car was provided to take the necessities straight to Kelso while the Irish Georgians picked their carriages and we left to Paxton - just a few miles from Berwick-on-Tweed - a Palladian villa of John and James Adam with additions by Robert Reid. Though somewhat austere, it houses the most remarkable collection of Chippendale and Trotter furniture of the highest order. Everyone was astonished by the grandeur of the portrait gallery that has paintings from the National Gallery of Scotland.

Dinner was provided by the Haddingtons at Mellerstain where we arrived at about 7.30 pm, just as the sun was lending a golden hue to the opulent western facade. Mellerstain's very fine library and dining room are masterpieces of the best of William and his son Robert Adam. Most cars managed to be back at the Cross Keys Hotel in Kelso, overlooking the remarkably large and attractive cobbled square (*Photo: Right*), before it got too dark. Courtesy of the Balfour family, secure parking was provided at Newton Don's wonderful coach house a few miles out of Kelso

Saturday brought a veritable feast of border properties - Floors, which is really part of Kelso itself, is a magnificent William Adam and William Playfair castle, still lived in by the Roxburgh family. Notable were the additions to the interior - tapestry and porcelain brought by an American heiress marrying into the family - much Boule and Meissen in evidence. A longish drive through wonderfully unspoilt Border country with no traffic took us to Bowhill, set in agricultural land and with one wing covered by scaffolding. The Duke of Buccleuch still spends time there, though not often. The highlights here were the



fabulous hall, dining room and Canaletto collection and the feel of the property still being lived-in.

Still the weather held and we moved on to Abbotsford, famous as the house of Sir Walter Scott and the start of the renewal of the Scottish Baronial style - heavy, dark and fitted with of course a delightful library and overlooking the rushing Tweed. An interesting small formal garden too. The future of the house is uncertain following the death of Dame Jean Maxwell-Scott.

A further beautiful drive through the rich and undulating agricultural estate took us to Mertoun, the home of the Duke of Sutherland, now half the size it was a few years ago and much the better for it, with a spectacular setting again overlooking the Tweed and with views to the Cheviots. The Duke and his wife have a fabulous collection of paintings (and more in the National Gallery of Scotland) partly acquired from the Orleans family. The Duke and Duchess were most welcoming and the Duke sporting enough to drive our 1914 Ghost with much gusto down the long drive. He is also the Duke of Bridgwater, the Ghost's coachbuilder!

After this, we returned to the Cross Keys for dinner and an early night somewhat interrupted by two committee member and an Irish Georgian getting shut in the Cross Keys lift for half an hour while they were winched down.



Sunday took us to Thirlestane, *above*, an early castle with a surprisingly grand drawing and dining room on the first floor where we were taken round by Gerald Maitland- Carew. We then drove over the moors to Arniston a William Adam masterpiece, still in restoration mode, but with a spectacular hall. The current owner Mrs Dundas-Bekker and her daughter Jane gave us an amusing and lively history of the house and the restoration project.



Then on to Newhailes, *above*, a new National Trust property occupied until recently by the Dalrymple family and now preserved untouched by the National

Trust. Though being encroached upon by the industrial section of the suburbs of Edinburgh, it undoubtedly enjoys a certain faded charm.

This was followed by one of the most attractive runs of the trip over the moors from Stevenson, a rare 'Grange' house lived in and restored over the last five years by Raymond Green whose wife provided a most sumptuous tea, to Manderston. A beautiful drive with views to the North of the Firth of Forth and the Bass



Rock and to the South of heather-clad moors.

Manderston, *above*, is an example of Edwardian opulence (in the Georgian style) built by the Miller family, who made their fortune trading herring and jute into St Petersburg, to outdo their relatives, the Curzons, and their house at Kedleston. The stables, which were built before the house for the architect to



prove himself were spectacular.

Then dinner at Duns Castle, *above*, built in the 1820s, an asymmetric castle full of mediaeval detail.

It has a huge Drawing Room with a large North facing window and a dining hall which accommodated about 50 of us in comfort. The weather remained good and we had a delightful fast run across the countryside to Kelso again for the night.



Monday sadly saw us checking out as we were heading North and not taking the passengers to Berwick-on-Tweed. Prestonhall, *above*, was the first port of call, just South of Edinburgh on A68, built with East India Company money and still lived-in by the Callander family whose current members took us on an enthusiastic tour of the house and its contents including a rare small Knibb long case clock.



And finally, Gosford, *above*, lying East of Edinburgh and West of Dunbar overlooking the Firth of Forth and just within sight of the Forth road and rail bridges. The Earl of Wemyss, who is well over 90, was there to greet us with his wife who gave us a good introductory speech. The house is essentially a vast picture gallery with a few cabinet rooms off and still allegedly with 1000 pictures uncatalogued and stored in the corridors. Features included a wonderful organ/clock, a pair of Macpherson clocks and a good selection of Dutch

cabinet painting in the living room. Lunch off Chelsea porcelain for 50 was interesting and different. All in all, a wonderful weekend tour, brilliantly organised by Robert and Pippa Jennings of the Irish Georgians, to whom we are most grateful.



Alex and I headed North, for Glamis, Glenisla and Balmoral. Then over the Grampians to Ballindallach castle, *above*, where the widow of 27BD's chauffeur still lives, aged 98. She insisted on coming for a 'wee whirl' (*below*) and was glad to see 27BD again, which her husband looked after from 1916 to 1955.

Article by Strone Macpherson. Photos Jimmy Valentine, Strone and Alex Macpherson



ANNUAL CONCOURS D'ETAT

Rousham House, 16 June 2004



The Cars, Left to Right: Kennedy's 2260E, Butcher's 25AE, Hughes' GOS 8, Forster's 60NE, Marsh's 55CL, Forrest's 2121, Whitaker's 92MY, Palmer's 149AG and Forbes' 95LF. Photo: Colin Hughes

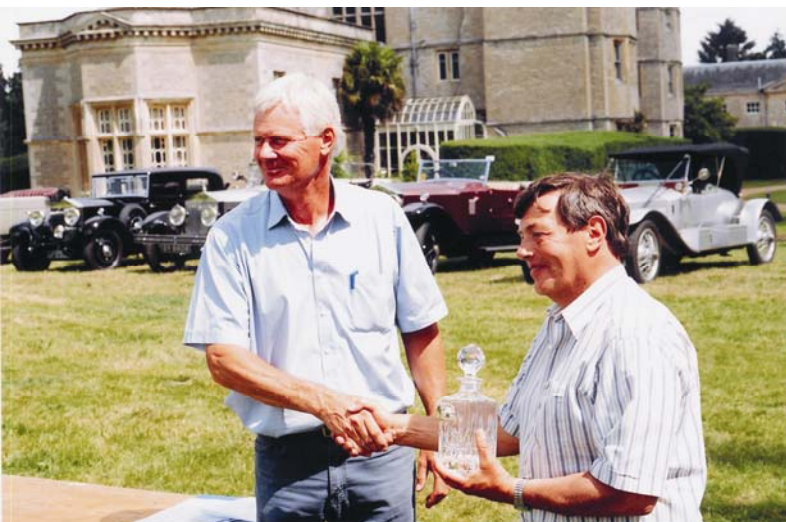
The 17th June was unseasonably cool and cloudy with a brisk northerly breeze. Fortunately, our annual picnic and concours was the previous day which was perfectly warm and sunny. We were at Rousham House in Oxfordshire, the most quintessentially English location, which has a profound sense of being totally unaffected by the last couple of hundred years! So, our cars looked magnificent in the paddock beside the house, with a small bridge over the ha-ha giving us immediate access to the garden and grounds.

The midweek June date had been chosen in hopes of making attendance possible for overseas members who were in the UK for the centenary events, and allowed us to invite participants in the Round-Britain Tour as guests. The Australian contingent were David and Ellen Bailie, who brought along John and Joy Byrne, in Paul Farnill's 20-25HP, Paul and Dorothy Hesse, and Steve Stuckey, the PIII guru and author. He had come with Bernard King, another well-known author of R-R books. Steve and Marilyn Hubbard, not in their Wraith, WXA 93, which is under restoration, continued the author theme. He is well on the way to completing his reference work on the post-war Ghosts. From the USA and Spain we had Kjell Andersson (SGA) and Derek Illingworth (RREC).

Fifteen Club cars, from Nottingham to the New Forest, arrived in time for judging and while most people wandered off to explore the gardens, or follow the woodland walks to the river, the judges got down on their hands and knees, discovering the odd thistle concealed in the grass. I had asked my American friend, and total car nut, Bob Allen to assist me - he is an accredited AACA judge - and while he marked interiors and exteriors, I marked chassis and engines. Our task was completed in time to join everyone else at lunch. We had acres of space, and two very large trees at either end of the line of cars which offered welcome shade, so leisurely picnics were laid out under both.

Full of fine food and wine, we gathered around the trophies set on a table in front of the cars, where chairman Tim Forrest welcomed us all, and left me to announce the trophy winners.

The Messervy Trophy for the best small horsepower car was easily won by GOS 8, the 1931 Park Ward Saloon of Colin Hughes. Though this was the only small hp car entered the trophy was not a foregone conclusion, since it is only awarded if a high enough standard is achieved. In fact Colin's car was the highest marked car of the day, by a significant margin, and an example to us all, including the judges!



The Ladies Trophy, presented to the Club by Bess and Susan Taylor, is awarded to the car judged to be most attractive by the lady members. Most votes went to 60 NE, the 1921 Lopes (Portugal) Tourer of Gervase and Margaret Forster.

The Fred and Joan Watson Trophy for the best large horsepower car presented the judges with a real challenge. Firstly, Nick Whitaker's PII, 92 MY, was looking very smart but having won last year was ineligible this year, so not judged. Secondly when we added up the points for all four elements, there was a tie! We had to go back and try to find one winning point. So, very bad luck for Ken and Jane Forbes, whose 95 LF, the 1927 Robinson Tourer, looks better and better each year, and so nearly made it. And congratulations to Tim and Susie Forrest, for 2121, the 1912 Torpedo Tourer by Penny/Grosvenor which took the trophy.

It was time then to take our guided tour of the house, still in the same family ownership since it was built in 1635. Much is unchanged, but two

wings were added to the house by William Kent during the time of General James Dormer (1737-1741). More notably, the garden and landscape were re-designed by Kent too during those four years, so he had a major influence on the property. Despite that, we were still amused to hear our guide remark quite often, 'General James did this' or 'That was General James' idea.' It was as if General James had died only recently and been a personal friend of our guide; well it was only 250 years ago!

Over the next hour or so we took our leave. The judges were shocked to see the concours winner, 2121, getting a tow start, especially as it had started 'on the switch' for the judging. But by then the trophy was locked in the trunk! And the electrical fault disappeared whence it came, so no 'failure to proceed'.

As an aside, the nearest village to Rousham is Steeple Aston, the home of Michael Vivian, a former chairman of the 20-Ghost Club, but who I knew better as a Civil Aviation Authority pilot and inspector. In that role, he oversaw the qualification and operation of Training Captains within the airlines, and was greatly respected. Sadly, now eighty five, his sight has deteriorated to the point where he is almost completely blind, and for that reason he felt unable to come to Rousham. However Nick Whitaker and Richard Barton called at his house after the event. Nick says there is some hope of a slight improvement to Michael's sight - we wish him well.

Andy Butcher

Photos:

Top: Colin Hughes receives the Messervy Trophy for the best Small Horsepower Car. Photo Andy Butcher

Left: Gervase Forster receives the Ladies Trophy. Photo: Colin Hughes

Below: Tim Forrest receives the Fred and Joan Watson Trophy for the best Large Horsepower Car. Photo: Colin Hughes



COMING EVENTS 2005

Friday 25 February - AGM and Dinner

The Annual General Meeting and Dinner will be held at the Travellers Club, Pall Mall, London
Contact: Tony Dyas 01865 632343

Saturday 16 April – Spring Lunch

Saturday 14 May - Visit

A visit to The House in the Woods, near Beaulieu
Contact: William and Clare Corbett 0208 560 3837

3 to 6 June - Irish Georgian Tour

The Irish Georgian Tour will be in Shropshire and will probably be based at The Feathers, Ludlow.
Contact: Jimmy Valentine 02073528503 or 01295811215 weekends

June - Grange Opera

It may be possible to arrange a formal evening picnic at the Grange Opera between 8 and 30 June.
Contact: Strone Macpherson 01962 735564

Note: 15-20 June - R-REC 80th Anniversary of the New Phantom

Note: R-REC Annual Rally 11 - 12 June

Saturday 23 July - Annual Concours

The Annual Concours will be at Grey's Court, Henley-on-Thames.
Contact: Andy Butcher 01386 701757

15 - 25 September - Tour of Southern Ireland

This will be the main event for the year in Ireland. Dates to be confirmed. Details to be arranged.

Sunday 9 October - Autumn Lunch

Venue to be decided

Welcome to New Members

Boggon, Richard and Margaret, 151 Writtle Road
Chelmsford Essex
1923 20 68H4 Charlesworth Tourer
1936 20/25 GTK25 Park Ward Saloon

de Boer, Klaas and Luus, de Nieuwe Plantagie 1, 1851 EA
Heiloo Netherlands
1910 SG 1302 Toby Baxter replica Roi des Belges

Fitton, Bryan and Ros, 1 Norwood, Prestwich, Manchester
M25 9WA
1020 SG 39EE Replica Tourer
1929 20/25 GDP3 Hooper Coupe

Hubbard, Steve and Marilyn, Barclay House, Watling Street,
Little Brickhill, Milton Keynes MK17 9NB

1939 Wraith WXA93 Chassis, under restoration
Jordan, Bill and Susan, Applegarth, Bromsgrove Road,
Clent, Stourbridge, Worcestershire DY9 9PY
1929 PII 171GN Barker Sedan de Ville

MacMillan, Scott and Kathrine Kurtz, Holybrooke Hall,
Bray, Co Wicklow, Ireland
1930 20/25 GWP4 H J Mulliner Drophead Coupe

Murray Ian, St Andrew's Manse, Blair Atholl, Perthshire
PH18 5SX bentleymurray@yahoo.co.uk
1926 20 GUK47 Unknown Tourer built 1999

Oldman, Philip and Lynn, Ivy Farm House, Hall Lane,
Oulton, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 5DJ
1914 SG 25BD Christopher Thomas replica Holmes-style tourer

Pearson, David and Bridget, The Manor, Berwick St
John, Shaftesbury, Dorset
1933 PII 90MY Barker Continental Sedan de Ville

Shipard, Terry and Michelle, 14 Hereford Avenue,
Trinity Gardens SA 5068, Australia
1935 20/25 GSF35 James Young Sports Saloon
1936 PIII 3AX71 Gurney Nutting Sedan de Ville

Vyse, Charles and Joan, Heronry, Little Trodgers Lane,
Mayfield, East Sussex TN20 6PW
1929 20/25 GXO71 Thrupp and Maberly Tourer

White, Albert and Margaret, River Banks, Water Lane,
South Witham, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG33 5PH
1912 SG 1831 Woodall Nicholson replica Roi des Belges

For Sale from The Club Shop

Ties £15.00
Nickel or Chrome Car Badges £ 25.00
Contact: Andy Butcher. **Please defer orders until March 2005 as Andy is out of the country.**
Alpine '93 Videos £20.00 Back numbers of Record and News and Record £2.50 ea. Contact: John Kennedy



Back Cover Picture

Roland Duce's
Continental PII 31MW
with Sports Touring
coachwork by James
Young

