

NEWS AND RECORD



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Front Cover Picture

Rotherfield Park

Photo: Brian Palmer



Note:

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EDITORIAL

Graham Ashley-Carter has recently retired from Hoffmanns of Henley. He has sent in the following note on the history and the present position:

Hofmann & Mountfort Ltd. (Hofmanns)

I had known this company for many years whilst working for Jack Barclays and Fred Hofmann became a good friend at a time when we at J.Bs were not equipped to handle the W.O. product.

Likewise Fred would ask my advice on R-R matters which he normally tried to avoid. He was a delightful man of huge skill and ability with that rare essential; a sense of humour which endeared him to his many clients and personalities in the Bentley world.

Sadly he died of a brain tumour in 1970 and the company floundered, was eventually sold and fared even worse under new management until 1984 when I was asked to take it on.

January 1st 1984 was a very cold day and a jack-knifed lorry made me late. Arriving at Fairfield Works provided little cheer with little or no heat, the suds in the machine tools frozen, the workforce of 5 - two past retirement and one apprentice - and a group of cars of various makes mostly belonging to the previous owner.

The owners, friends and staff who placed their faith in myself and this hopelessly rundown company have my eternal gratitude for its subsequent recovery and profitability but, after 24 years, age has caught up and at 71 my wife has a justified claim on my time and presence, so I have sold to a group of 3 local businessmen who have moved the company to new larger premises close by and are investing heavily in its future.

It is their intention to keep and increase the existing customer base and profile with the addition of an interesting new racing department and long may they flourish and keep the RR flag flying.

I hope to see everyone at future meetings and rallies .

20-Ghost Web Site

I have recently been playing about with the Club Web site, making changes to the behaviour of the 'About Us' and 'History' pages. The changes include a couple of slide shows replacing the previous stills. Also, the 'News' page has a slide show of the Concours d'Etat at Rotherfield Park. I would be grateful if members would regard these efforts as experimental for the moment. All the changes require 'Active X' to be enabled and will only work if

you have a broadband connection. Mine (not my car, the broadband connection) remains one of the slowest in the country and appears to tolerate the changes. However, all feedback from members is welcome and I would like to know whether the changes work for my 'customers'.

Aussie Enterprise

Let's face it, whether with one-shot lubrication or not, our pre-war R-Rs are designed to be incontinent as regards oil for the multitude of chassis oiling points. My garage floor is awash with drips and, all too often, we leave our signature at any location where we park our cars. Our enterprising Australian Chapter has designed a drip sheet which the car can be driven onto to catch the drips. It may also come with a bag so that it can be used while touring. If you are interested, please contact David Vann e- mail david.vann@vanguardblinds.com.au

Thanks

Thanks for the messages of approval for Issue 20, the Silver Ghost Centenary Report. One kind member even suggested that it might become a future collectable.

Apology

My apologies to New Members Geoffrey and Ellen Foster Taylor for scrambling their name and address on recent correspondence. We welcome them on page 311.

NHH

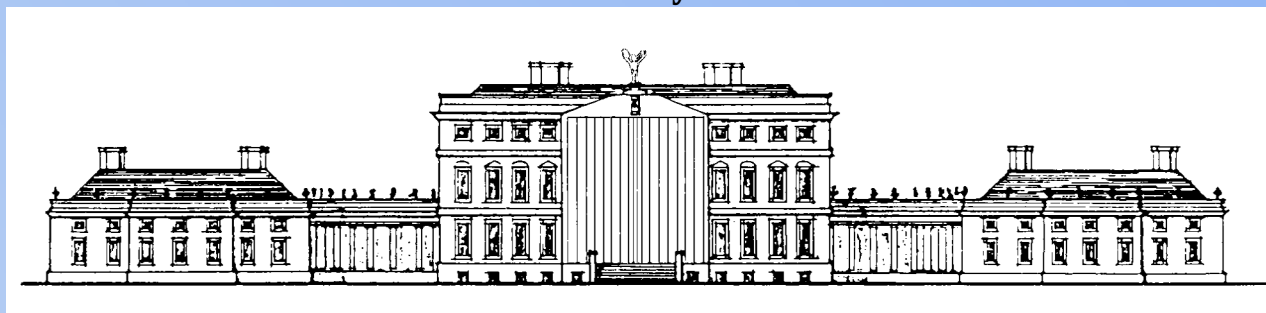
Spares for Sale

I have 4 tyres - all with some mileage still on them and available for anyone who wants to collect them from Southport. Cost - a bottle of wine for each tyre.
[Andrew Sington, 01704 562343, asington@aol.com](mailto:Andrew.Sington@AOL.com)

Silver Ghost wooden wheels adapted for split rim tyres & fitted with almost unused 33x5 Goodyear Silvertown Cord tyres. Wheels are 12 spoke front, 14 spoke rear, manufactured at the end of the 1990s, very little used since. Contact Tim Forrest 0142868 4208 or email forresttim@aol.com

TOUR OF HOUSES IN SUSSEX

with the London Chapter of the Irish Georgian Society
26-28 May 2007



On a fine sunny Friday evening, fourteen pre-war Rolls-Royces lined up on the lawn facing the flint façade of the mansion of West Dean. Thirteen of the cars, ranging from two Silver Ghosts through Phantoms I, II and III to a Wraith belonged to existing members, whereas the fourteenth, a 20/25 Park Ward saloon, was a recent acquisition by John Redmill, Chairman of the IGS London Chapter, who organised our tour with logistical support from Robert Jennings.

After dinner, we were given a guided tour of the main rooms by the Principal, after which Desmond Guinness, founder of the Irish Georgian Society, regaled us with anecdotes about his friend the late Edward James, former owner of the house and eccentric supporter of the Surrealist Movement made famous by Salvador Dali.

The next three days provided dismal weather but this did not dampen our enthusiasm for visiting the houses, although it did limit the opportunities for photography.

Our first visit was to Stanstead Park. This had been variously rebuilt and remodelled many times over five centuries, but suffered a disastrous fire in 1900 so that it had to be demolished down to ground level and a new, distinctly Edwardian house built on the basement. After seeing the main rooms, some with plasterwork recreated from fragments surviving the fire, we were given a prolonged tour of the basement which had been set out for

educational purposes as recreated servants' quarters. This resulted in our being late for our next event which was to join, at the kind invitation of Rolls-Royce Motors, the Silver Ghosts at the Goodwood factory, as they gathered for their Scottish Tour. We were all impressed by the spotless and spacious conditions under which the new great cars are assembled.

Fortified by excellent refreshments, we proceeded to our final visit of the day, which was Arundel Castle. Since first fortified by Edward the Confessor (with a motte or mound which still survives) the castle was built and modified many times during its long history but now has the uncanny appearance of what Victorian architects thought a medieval castle should look like. The Gothic Chapel with its Purbeck marble and the elongated Library were the most impressive parts. Throughout the Castle were superb furniture and portraits of the Howard family, Dukes of Norfolk.

On Sunday morning, our first stop was at Bailiffscourt which is now an exclusive hotel but looks like a medieval settlement. It was in fact assembled for Desmond Guinness's grandparents Lord and Lady Moyne in the late 1920s. Described as "a blend of fantasy and scholarship" it includes a 12C. chapel (left over from a previous house), features rescued from demolished buildings and whole buildings rescued from other sites. The clients of the hotel were surprised to have their peace disturbed by our party with our damp umbrellas

and the hotel staff were equally surprised, having diared us for the next day, but swiftly provided coffee.

We then moved on to Parham Park, which provided everything we could hope for: a fine park setting looking towards the Downs and a house which has grown from 14th century origins to an Elizabethan house, complete with a long gallery extending the full length of the house on the top floor. The main rooms, including a great hall, held a fine collection of furniture and pictures including 17th century Royal family and their circle. Behind the house, the gardens would have justified a longer visit under better weather conditions. On arrival we received a warm welcome from our hostess and were told the history of the house and then served a most welcome warming lunch in the old kitchen, part of the original house.

Our next house was Wiston House, now a conference and wedding centre and Elizabethan in origin but much altered over the years. It retains however its great hall with double hammerbeam roof and tall windows, although enlivened by some later rococo plasterwork. The group much appreciated the tea laid on in the sitting rooms in front of the unseasonal open fires and admired the delicate white-painted cast iron tracery of the conservatory.

Our notes warned us in advance of the schizophrenic nature of the final house of the day – Goring Castle. Built around 1800 for the poet Shelley's eccentric grandfather, to the designs of John Biagio Rebecca, the entrance front of the house is built of flint and stone as a Gothic Castle, while the rear or garden side is described as 'Graeco-Palladian'. This dichotomy extends into the house, with the style changing abruptly half way along a passage. The future of the house is uncertain: it is now too close to the A 27 bypass and too small to make a viable hotel. Its current use is as a language school.

On Monday morning, we visited Nymans, a medieval tower house built about 1410 of stone from the Isle of Wight and Normandy and still

retaining much of its original character, despite alterations and restorations over the centuries. The gloom lifted briefly, enabling us to enjoy the garden renovated by the owner.

Then we moved on to Petworth House to enjoy its art collection, fine rooms and painted staircase and its setting in the Capability Brown park.

Our final visit was to Goodwood House for a tour and tea. During tea, John Redmill was thanked for arranging the tour and the car drivers very kindly presented me with a silver whistle to complement the whistle with which John collects the group as we leave each house. We then drove up part of the racing circuit to visit to the shell house, effectively a grotto lined with patterns of sea shells brought back to Portsmouth in the 1730s by Naval captains for the Duchess of Richmond and her daughter to arrange.

Some of us stayed on an extra night and, in brilliant sunshine, either explored the famous gardens of West Dean or toured the workshops of the diploma courses of the Edward James Foundation in applied arts and restoration, until a foreign object in a ceramics kiln set off the fire alarms and we had to assemble on the lawn to await the fire brigade.

Next year the Irish Georgians will be celebrating the Golden Jubilee of the founding of the Society by Desmond Guinness. We have been asked to join them at Carton House Hotel for the period of June 11th to 18th, with three days of visiting Irish houses and a coach visit to Dublin, interspersed with appropriate parties. We are planning to precede this week with some touring in the Northwest of Ireland.

Jimmy Valentine



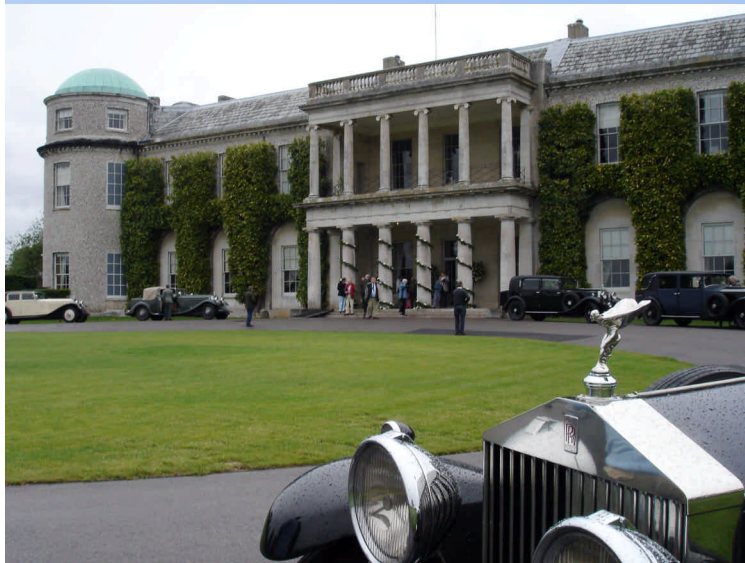
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1. Stanstead
2. Dr David Collier watches Nick Whitaker clear an embolism from Sue Traylor's Wraith
3. The Line-up of cars at West Dean. From the right: Ken Fairbairn's 1932 PII Freestone & Webb Continental Sports Saloon, Jimmy Valentine's 1928 PI Mulliner Weymann Saloon, William Corbett's 1922 SG Tourer by Woodall Nicholson and Lenox Jamieson's 1924 SG Jarvis Tourer.
4. Lenox Jamieson at Bailiffscourt



1	2
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	5

1. Parham Park
2. The fine Hammer Beam Roof at Wiston House
3. The Conservatory at Wiston House
4. The front of Goring Castle
5. The unbelievably different back of Goring Castle



1	2
3	4
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1. West Dean
2. Nymans Gardens
3. Goodwood House
4. The Shell House at Goodwood
5. Frankie (Frances) O'Dowd takes a firm grip on John O'Dowd's PII Tourer 98GN

THE EXTREME ALPINE TOUR

22 June to 8 July 2007

For those Ghost owners who wanted even more excitement than that provided on the Scottish Centenary and Cornwall Tours, the Silver Ghost Association arranged another form of Alpine Tour, the Extreme Alpine. Several 20-Ghost Club members took part and John Marsh wrote the following notes to give us an insight into how it went.

The tour consisted of 21 Silver Ghosts, dating from 1910 to 1925.

Many of the entrants had traveled between 500 and 800 miles to Strasbourg to be there for the start of the rally on 23 June. We arrived a day early to give us time to service our car after this run.

Day One, we just drove down to the centre of Strasbourg where we were welcomed by the deputy mayor at a reception at the City Hall. This was also where two registrars worked on the ground floor, there being 15 weddings in the morning and 12 more in the afternoon. Naturally, our cars were very much admired and a number of grooms and brides had their photographs taken in front of the cars.

Before the banquet, Marco Stoffel, the organizer, and Alan Glew, who had helped plan the route, gave us a briefing on the event.

On Day Two, Strasbourg to Rouffech, we really got down to business with 202 Km and two passes. This was the first real test for our cars with only minor adjustments having to be made. Chassis 17RB developed a leak in the fuel pump line which resulted in handpumping being used to get her to our hotel.

Day Three, Rouffech to Saignelegier (Switzerland) was as planned except for the torrential rain which persisted for most of the day.

Day Four, Saignelegier to Yverdon, 131 Km with one pass, was somewhat unusual when we were met by four wagons drawn by a pair of horses which took us 50 minutes before arriving at a small private car museum in the pouring rain. We then passed through the Swiss border, very informal, again in heavy rain, which resulted in Sylvia Sierra having a bad fall trying to retrieve Mike's hat that had blown off. Due to the inclement weather, she had a long waterproof coat on. In hurrying out of the car, she tripped, hitting her face on the road and breaking her wrist and leg. She was taken to the local hospital, but they decided that as her wrist had to be pinned, they would return to America the next day. Sylvia was our second casualty. Stuart Halsall from South Africa had stomach pains and ended up in Strasbourg Hospital where he was detained for a couple of days.

Day Five was a rest day.

Day Six was a good driving day with only one very twisty pass.. One car had developed gearbox trouble which was rectified by Alan Glew, our traveling mechanic, who replaced the gear oil with SAE 250, which seemed to cure the problem.

Day Seven, Gstaad to Evian (France), 161 Km, was a hard driving day with three passes, two reasonably short and a third involving a lot of steep hairpin bends.

Day Eight, Evian to Megeve, 136 Km with two passes. We were greeted with a beautiful morning. Again, some hard driving was necessary, which was made more difficult by a number of cyclists obstructing us on many bends. All cars, aside from a bit of overheating, were going well.

Day Nine, Megeve to Val d'Isere, 132 Km with eight passes, started with a group photograph with Mont Blanc being used as a snow-covered background. The day itself was only 68 miles, but very taxing with some exceedingly long passes where temperature gauges were over 90 degrees. Everybody arrived at the hotel tired and weary.

We all knew that Day Ten, Val d'Isere to Alpe d'Huez, 186 Km with three passes, was probably going to be the most difficult both for cars and drivers, as the passes were to be the steepest on the tour. Before reaching the summit, it started to hail, which quickly turned to snow which continued for the next five kilometers. We managed a lunch break when we were blessed with sun in the afternoon and our steepest climb. We all staggered into our hotel without incident. The big shock was that we had virtually no fuel left in our tanks, which had been filled up that morning. Cars seemed to be averaging 6-7 mpg.

Day Eleven was a well earned rest, but everybody was busy servicing their cars. There was however a timed hill climb of some 18 Km for those who wished to participate. Ten cars eventually competed, with Alan Glew driving Roland Duce's car, which he sportingly loaned him.

Day Twelve, Alp d'Huez to Corps with three passes; and Day thirteen, Corps to Lauzet in the Southern Alps, 155 Km with six passes, were similar days in the wet. One of the passes was only eight feet wide and steep. All Ghosts were going well with only minor adjustments required.

On Day Fourteen, Lauzet to Castellane, 137 Km with one pass, we were given an option for three passes, one taking us over the Col de la Couillole, the highest in the Alps.

Day fifteen, Castellane to Vence, 96 Km with two passes, took us to our final hotel and festive farewell dinner



1	2
3	4
5	6

1. Day One. Fuel Stop at Riquewihl.
 2. The navigators at Morning Prayers
 3. The Marsh's 103EM at the Hotel in Megeve
 4. Roy and Libi Southward descend to Megeve
 5. The Boyntons descend the Col d' Espreaux
 6. The Marshes brave fog, snow and hail
 Photos by Alan Glew