



NEWS AND RECORD

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Front Cover Picture:
Cars at Allinton Castle
during the Kent Weekend
Photo: Tim Forrest



Note:

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NEWS AND EDITORIAL

Club Chairman

We are very pleased to announce that Sir John Stuttard has agreed to take over the Chairmanship of the Club. Sir John is a well-known committee member with great enthusiasm for the cars and with great drive and determination. We welcome him and look forward to his guiding influence in the years to come.

Our particular thanks go to Tim Forrest, who is retiring from the post after doing so much for the Club for much longer than he had anticipated when he signed up for the job. Tim believes the cars were made to be used and has always contributed to arranging tours and events which would provide interesting driving, as well as beautiful scenery and access to special places. Long may his legacy survive.

Subscriptions

Brian Fidler (Treasurer) writes: *"We are now at that time of the year when Annual Subscriptions are about to fall due. You may recall that last year we had to raise the amount due for the first time in some while. Many of you pay by Bank Standing Order and overlooked the need to advise your bank of the new amount, with the result that a lot of time was spent bothering you for the "missing" £15, to go from £35 to £50. In order to avoid this problem for 2010, would you please write / phone your bank as soon as possible to give your uplift instruction to them for the upcoming year to pay £50 to "The 20 Ghost Club Ltd" Abbey bank....all transfer details are unchanged. Many thanks for your help and co-operation."*

DO IT NOW (Ed)

Travel Insurance

Tony Dyas has been working on your behalf regarding marine insurance cover. He writes: *"The Club has recently entered into a Marine Cover Policy, underwritten by Lloyds, through Millers Insurance Services Ltd, insurance brokers, for the benefit of Club members that need marine cover when shipping a car overseas.*

The policy will be for a year and the rates fixed during that period.

The cover is available in three options as follows: - Coverage A) provides cover under Cargo Clause 'C' which is a total loss type of cargo cover which is extended to cover damage sustained during the loading and unloading of the cars into containers and onto/from the carrying steamers at the loading and unloading ports;

Coverage B) provides the same cover but is further extended to include damage arising

from failure of fastenings during the voyage; and Coverage C) provides 'A' Clauses All Risks of Physical Loss or damage for a rate of 0.20% inclusive of War/Strikes, Riots and Civil Commotion for round trip. Underwriters will require a deductible of GBP 1,000 each and every loss and will need to see a valuation certificate and a condition report for each vehicle that is shipped. This is what I would call comprehensive cover."

Any member interested in this insurance cover should contact Tony Dyas telephone number 01895 632343 or email adyas@gotadsl.co.uk. The rates offered are very competitive with choices of different levels of cover to suit members requirements.

As the Club will be involved in a minor amount of administration it is proposed that an administration fee of £15 be charged to any Club member using the arrangement."

Club Communications

I have been editing and publishing 'News and Record' for eight years and maintaining the Club web site since its launch. The job has been very rewarding, but I now need to hand over these Club communication tasks to a successor. Production of News and Record requires some computer skills, particularly those of word processing and manipulation of graphic images, which naturally also produce material for the web site.

We therefore wish to announce a vacancy for a Communications Director who will be the Committee Member responsible for communications including being Editor of "News & Record" (three or four issues per year) and for Website content.

If you are willing to take on this task, please contact the Chairman or Nigel Hughes : hughesn@aol.com . I will be happy to supply more details to anybody who is interested.

Where was News and Record?

My apologies for the delay in production of News and Record. I have been involved in a very long-winded process of moving house which has absorbed all my thinking time for the last four months. The good news is that despite downsizing the house and garden, 120EU now has a larger double garage to live in.

Event Programme

Your Committee has been very busy recently planning events for 2010 and beyond. Many of these are not yet finalised, but the following notes give their current status and identifies who is co-ordinating the planning of each event.

Friday 26th February – AGM and Dinner in the Library at the Travellers Club, London W1 – starting at 18.15, with dinner at 19.30 – Co-ordinators: John Stuttard and Tim Forrest

Friday 23rd to Sunday 25th April Spring lunch/weekend – Strone Macpherson will arrange, based on a lunch at Armsworth Park House and a hotel/pub nearby, including a visit to Lasham and a local country house.

1910 Ghosts Centenary Celebration – Roland Duce is exploring the possibilities

Friday 21 to Monday 24 May – Irish Georgian Tour in South Lincolnshire. Co-ordinator: Jimmy Valentine).

Saturday 29th May to Sunday 12th June – Roland Duce is arranging a tour in the Pyrenees, sailing from Plymouth to Santander and returning from Bilbao to Portsmouth.

July/August – Summer Concoors based around either two nights in Norfolk or Prescott – Co-ordinators: Brian Palmer and Roland Duce

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 – Co-ordinator John Stuttard

Saturday 11th to Monday 14th September – Weekend in Derbyshire including Gilbert & Sullivan at Chatsworth, plus Friday night at Wick Hill House, Stow-on-the-Wold for those wishing to combine the Fairford and Derbyshire weekends – Co-ordinator: Tony Dyas

Sunday 17th October – Autumn lunch – Co-ordinator: Brian Palmer

Roland Duce will review dates of other events which might clash, eg R-REC, SGA etc and will coordinate and agree dates for the above.

Events in 2011 to 2103

February 2011 – Charterhouse for the AGM? Co-ordinator: Roland Duce

Visit to Thorngrove, near Worcester, former home of Louis Napoleon – Max 20 people for lunch.
Co-ordinator: Jimmy Valentine

Visit to a narrow gauge railway at Leighton Buzzard – Co-ordinator: John Stuttard

Driving Tests at Brooklands – Brian Fidler is exploring the possibilities

North Wales tour – Brian Palmer is exploring possibilities

London to Edinburgh Re-enactment in 2011 – The current plan is for a one day event involving only 1911 cars, but with a tour of the UK or of Scotland for any pre-Second World War car. Co-ordinator: Nick Naismith, in conjunction with Tim Forrest and Roland Duce

Portugal in 2012 – John Stuttard is exploring the possibilities.

Alpine Rally in 2013 – further discussions would need to take place on this key Centenary, using basically the same route and hotels as in 1993 or 2003. It is hoped that Angelika Elliott will help. There will be a need to consult with the R-REC and the SGA – Co-ordinator: Roland Duce.

News from Australia

Rory Poland, Australian Chairman made the following presentation speech during the AGM of the Australian Chapter held at Middlebrook Winery McLaren Vale during the annual Tour this year held in the Southern Vales Region of South Australia. This will be of interest to all members who have watched the growth and development of the Australian Chapter of the 20-Ghost Club:

"In 1974, a Rolls-Royce Enthusiast in Australia decided to join the 20-Ghost Club in the UK. After joining the UK Club, his enthusiasm for Rolls-Royce vehicles was fostered in Australia, by membership of other Rolls-Royce Clubs.

In 1992, when the 20-Ghost Club had 19 Australian members, a meeting was held at the home of the late John Altmann when it was decided to form an Australian Chapter. From this initial meeting, the 20-Ghost Club has flourished. This would not have been possible had it not been for this person's determination and energy in establishing the Club. His continuing dedication as Chairman for the next thirteen years was an inspiration to us all. That person is Malcolm Nelson Johns.

Tonight, in recognition of the work done for the 20-Ghost Australian Chapter, I have much pleasure in announcing that Malcolm Johns has been made an honorary member of the Club."

Diana Jones AM DSJ

It is with great sadness that I record the death of Diana Jones, past Chairman of the Australian Chapter, on 5th July 2009. All who met her will have been struck by her enthusiasm, drive and determination, which included taking part in the Scottish Centenary Tour in 2007. Our sympathy goes to David and her family.

NHH

ANNUAL CONCOURS D'ETAT

Rousham House, Steeple Aston, Oxon

Saturday, 25 July, 2009



The 20-Ghost Club Annual Concours d'Etat took place in brilliant weather on 25 July.

Cars present were:

Tim and Susie Forrest's 1912 SG 2154 Barker Torpedo Tourer

Brian and Joan Palmer's 1921 SG 149AG Barker Tourer

Andrew and Pippa Ayres 1937 PIII 3BT139 Arthur Mulliner Sports Saloon

Richard and Tina Pascoe's 1926 20 hp GCK3 Windovers Tourer

Terry Lister's 1911 SG 1605 Wilkinson Roi des Belges Tourer

Colin and Joan Laybourne's 1920 SG 8 TE Brougham de ville.

Sir John and Lady Lesley Studdard's 1921 SG 33LG Car Mart All Weather Tourer

Philip and Favell Ashby's 1929 PI 62WR H.J.Mulliner drophead

Alan and Sue Glew's 1920 SG 89AE Flewitt Tourer

Andy and Val Butcher's 1931 20/25 GNS60 Barker Sedan

Roland Duce's 1933 PII 31MW and 1914 SG 30EB. Brandon Smith-Hilliard helped with the driving.

Other members who came in modern cars were Clayton and Helen Banks, Steve and Marilyn Hubbard, Nick and Jo Naismith and family together with Nicks brother with his wife and family.

Trophy winners were:

Large Horsepower [judged by Nick Naismith and John Stuttard] Colin Laybourn, with 1920 SG 8TE that he has spent many years restoring.

Small Horsepower [judged by Colin Laybourn] Richard Pasco 20hp GCK3.

Ladies Choice Tim Forrest 1912 SG 2154.

It was particularly nice to see new members Alan and Sue Glew with their 'new' SG, a car well known to the Club. Alan says he does not plan to restore the car but just do whatever maintenance is necessary.



Above: A very relaxed picnic on the lawn.



Left: Colin Laybourn with the Large HP Trophy



Centre: Tim Forrest presents Richard and Tina Pascoe with the Small HP trophy

Right: Colin Laybourn's magnificent Brougham de Ville

*Text and details provided by Susie Forrest
Photos: Tim and Susie Forrest, John Stuttard*



Radiators Galore

Check out your knowledge of Rolls-Royce models from this gallery of radiators at the Concours.

A WEEKEND OF CASTLES AND FINE HOUSES IN KENT

5 & 6 September 2009



Kent is a county that one often rushes through, on the way to the Channel Tunnel or to catch a ferry from Dover or Folkestone to France. It was therefore an interesting change and a special delight to spend almost two full days in the “Garden of England” at the south east corner of the United Kingdom, a county which takes its name from the Celtic name *Cantus*, meaning “rim” or “border”. Living up to its name, the county has been the border and therefore the scene of many territorial disputes and wars, not least the site of the Battle (of Hastings) that led to the Norman Conquest and of numerous airfields that were home to Spitfires and Hurricanes during the Battle of Britain.

On this occasion, 14 Rolls-Royces, with two accompanying modern vehicles, went safely about their business. Two pre-war Ghosts (Nick & Jo Naismith’s 1911 and Tim & Susie Forrest’s 1912) were joined by three post-war Ghosts, a 20HP, three Phantom IIs, three 20/25s and two magnificent Phantom IIIs (owned by Nick Whitaker and Andrew Ayres) – a real variety – and representative of the 20-Ghost Club’s membership. It is an aim of the Committee to make the 20-Ghost Club all inclusive with interesting tours attracting as many members as possible. The one night weekend was modestly priced and only involved two days of modest, but interesting, driving. So it was popular.

But perhaps the popularity was due to the special arrangements made, to visit two privately owned castles, Allington and Saltwood, and two National Trust properties, Ightham Mote and Sissinghurst, with a night’s stop including dinner at the Eastwell Manor Hotel at Ashford.

The cars and their occupants gathered at Ightham Mote, an enchanting 14th century moated manor house, a few miles east of Sevenoaks and now owned by the National Trust. A series of owners have made alterations to the interior and exterior of the house over five centuries but, as a house which is a real home, it was interesting to see how different generations have made their mark on this jewel. Pevsner described it as the most complete small medieval manor house in the country. The National Trust management allowed 20-Ghost Club members to park their Rolls-Royces in front of Ightham Mote Manor and these immediately became a tourist attraction for the many visitors, on a warm September morning. Lunch at the NT restaurant was delicious and wholesome.

A short post lunch drive took the cars to Allington Castle, owned by Sir Robert Worcester KBE and Lady Worcester, who have done a magnificent job restoring this most attractive 12th century moated castle. Situated on the south bank of the River Medway near Maidstone, the castle has an

extraordinary history spanning nine centuries and looks imposing as one approaches up the long drive with lakes on either side ending with a moat and a drawbridge. Inside, it is a home – albeit a rather big one – but very much lived in and enjoyed by its caring owners. To be shown around by Bob was very special – his study, the guest bedrooms, the Long Gallery and the Great Hall, where Margaret had organised a proper English afternoon tea. Stained glass windows depicting coats of arms and banners signified past and present owners and gave a sense of history and memories of the many events – pleasant and unpleasant - that must have taken place within its walls. However, no ghosts (at least of a supernatural nature) were to be seen and our visit went without a hitch.

Over dinner at Eastwell Manor, Bob and Margaret were our chief guests and Bob kindly gave us his views on the forthcoming UK General Election. His best guess of the date is 6 May 2010. However, dwelling on the purpose of our current tour of Kent, he informed the grateful party that out of the 17 castles in Kent, no fewer than seven had been restored with American money. We are grateful for this “special relationship” which Bob also embodies as President of the Pilgrims’ Society.

The Sunday morning drive from Eastwell Manor Hotel to Saltwood Castle was blessed with open Autumnal sunshine. The route took us along Pilgrims’ Way which rides the crest of the Kent North Downs, with commanding views of the plain below. Through small, attractive and sleepy villages, such as Boughton Lees, Wye, Hastingleigh, Brabourne, Stowting and then Postling, it is a journey worth repeating rather than struggling along the A roads or the motorway.

Soon we arrived in the village of Saltwood, on the outskirts of Hythe, and then a hidden route through narrow streets to the entrance to the castle, which, like Allington, is not generally open to the public. Jane Clark, the widow of Alan Clark MP, welcomed us warmly and showed us around the garden to

the Great Hall where we enjoyed morning coffee and the most delicious lavender flavoured biscuits I ever tasted, made by Jane herself. Our visit to Saltwood was facilitated by Charles Howard, who joined the tour together with his wife Ute, enthusiasts and veterans of many old car rallies. Charles had known Alan in the late 60s when they were both involved in trying to purchase vintage Rolls-Royce cars being exported from India. Charles started his renown specialist car sales business at that time and Alan had taken one of these Indian Ghosts, a 1920 which we had the privilege of seeing again in the garage at Saltwood. Like Allington, Saltwood Castle has an impressive list of owners, stretching back to the 11th century. Foremost among these was Archbishop Courtenay who was Archbishop of Canterbury in the 14th century. Fast forward to the 20th century and it was acquired by Lord (Kenneth) Clark “of Civilisation” who bequeathed it to Alan, better known as a Government Minister and author, who owned the castle until his death in 1999. Despite the castle being struck by lightning and the Great Hall suffering an infestation of death watch beetle, Jane has kept the castle as a home and what a delightful setting it is. We were enormously grateful to her for showing us around and for explaining the history and the current challenges at Saltwood. To see two privately owned castles, not often open to the general public, was such a privilege and a great treat.

The weekend finished with lunch and a visit to Sissinghurst Castle, after another memorable drive along the northern edge of the Romney Marsh, through attractive villages and towns including Lympne, Hamstreet, Tenterden and Biddenden. With its gardens created by writer Vita Sackville-West and her husband Harold Nicholson, Sissinghurst is a horticultural must. In the intimate setting of an Elizabethan mansion, the gardens are romantic little compartments filled with colourful floral displays. There are attractive lakeland walks and views of the Wealden countryside. But it was the ginger beer and the onion tart in the NT restaurant that seemed to grab the attention of some of

the participants whose cars were lined up in front of the house, again attracting many visitors to Sissinghurst. And, of course, there were plants and jam, as well as many horticultural implements, seeds and objets d'arts for the garden that also made the National Trust shop an added feature and an end to a weekend of private castles and fine houses in Kent. Old Rolls-Royces and fine mansions do seem to mix quite well.

John Stuttard



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| 2 | 6 |
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1. Strone Macpherson leads the way at Allinton Castle in 1914 SG 27BD
 2. Tim and Susie Forrest in 1912 SG 2154
 3. Nick Whitaker's 1937 PIII 3AZ168
 4. Michael and Angelika Elliott's 1933 PII 80MY
 5. John and Lesley Stuttard's 1921 SG 33LG
 6. Roland Duce's 1914 SG 30EB

ADRIATIC TOUR

May 31st to June 14th 2009

The story of the Adriatic Tour is one of two legs. There were those that claimed Italian legs to be finer than Croatian but to those of us who enjoyed the pair there were virtues to both. Our thanks go to those pioneers of the Croatian tour who paved some of the way in 2008. Ours was a briefer trip but full of great driving, fine scenery and fantastic organisation by Angelika Elliott with the aid of Roland Duce and his PA Lynne in the background preparing the way so well.

May 31 found us convening at the spectacular Kempinski Palace in Portoroz. Here at the Slovenian showpiece we were warmly welcomed by the tourist board and regaled with a concert of Tartini (local lad) and Haydn who had visited. Party bags were produced with maps and timetables and name badges for all. In addition a large packet of incontinence pads for placing under the cars, not under their occupants, to be used at strategic moments. The brochure even had pictures of the participating cars and their occupants, a most useful aide-memoire. The oldest participating car was Klaas de Boer's 1910 Roi des Belges "Silver Lion", the youngest the Elliott's elegant 1933 Phantom 11 Continental.

Driving in Croatia is interesting. There are numerous areas of road works and unmade roads. We were warned that red lights in this context mean "Stop unless you think you can make it". This is alarming when chancers approach in the opposite direction down single track lanes. The road workers are often dressed in Guantanamo orange and are enthusiastic about photographing the cars on their mobile phones. Day I was our trip to the ferry port at Brestova for embarkation to the island of Cres. The road downhill to the ferry was one of the rougher roads and the sign "Traject" was hard to spot, the track itself occupied by a large JCB. Several of us missed it and had tricky U-turns to make. Ernest Arendonk missed it by 20km and the reverse trip was reported by his navigator Annemieke to be on the speedy side. We all made it to Cres. The first of the island hops safely made. There were more.

The following day we traversed the whole of Cres, one of the long thin islands with spectacular views of sea to either side. It connects by a bridge to the island of Losinj and Mali Losinj was our

evening destination. The cars were placed on view in the main square down by the delightful port. The Corbetts had problems in getting to the correct side of the bollards dividing the square and after several town circuits ending up in the same place and some words a local was dragooned into the car to direct the operation and all the cars were then assembled.

The 2nd June was a day to remember for the weather. The ferry to Krk was a brief and uneventful trip. The sights were Krk Town, a walled town with medieval streets or Vrbnik perched on a cliff with hairpins to protect it. So far so good but as we left the North side of the island over the bridge at Smirka the wind was starting to get up. It was the legendary Bura or Croatian North-easterly wind much feared by sailors. However the ferry to Pag and relief at the hotel seemed not too distant. But by 2.30 all ferries were cancelled for the day and to reach the hotel a mere extra 100 miles to drive to a bridge at the far end was needed. Some abandoned the attempt, others undaunted headed off clutching their maps windscreens and their faces. Passengers in the back (Gilly Armitage and Teddy Beach Thomas) retreating beneath the tonneau. The Roi des Belges sat it out at the ferry port due to a puncture repair and were rewarded with an unexpected late sailing at 6.30. As Terry Lister so graphically described it a Roi des Belges in a high wind is not unlike the Marie Celeste in full sail and we know what happened to her. The Hotel Boskinac was welcoming and in a glorious situation in its own vineyard. Those who had made it there drank to absent friends and leaders.

Car problems on the trip were mostly a succession of punctures in Nick Naismith's beautiful 1911 Ghost. Dunlops were sent for and they eventually caught up with us in Gubbio. Terry and Margaret Lister had more drama. June 7 had us driving from Hvar to the port at Sicuraj. The drive was described as testing and it was with steep hairpins and blind bends, a good place to break a gear lever. Running repairs on the ferry failed to hold it and Margaret was on clutch control with Terry leaping athletically out to change gear. The drive to Dubrovnik looked like being somewhat tricky but a policeman in Ploce, a suitably depressing industrial town, led a troupe of ghosts to a local welder and under Tim Scott's direction and with

Nick Naismith's mechanical expertise the gear lever was repaired and survived the rest of the trip.

The high point of the driving was the spectacular coast road from Dubrovnik to Split. The weather was fine and the sea blue. The speeds were excessive at times and our former Lord Mayor Sir John Stuttard was lucky to get away with a caution when fined for both speeding and failing to stop when accosted by a traffic cop. His silver tongue saved the day and the fine was dropped. Would it have been less tense with Lesley on hand (sadly she and Pat Scott had to leave the tour at Dubrovnik). Angelika had already extricated Roland from a similar predicament. We spotted "Duce Tours" on a bus but felt fortunate to be on our own personalised Duce tour.

During the trip we visited many fine sites including Dubrovnik of course but also Trogir a fine fortress and medieval walled town with buildings from the 13 Century to the 15 Century and a truly alarming view from the campanile reached by open iron ladders. Hvar town with its Hotel Adriana "jewel of the Adriatic" was a perfect spot for a rest day with its old harbour and marbled narrow streets rising to a 14 Century castle up the hill. And then there was Knin capital of the 10 Century Croatian kings and the site of the smallest Cathedral in the world. Our final Croatian destination was Diocletian's palace at Split. With his Rough Guide David Colvin was a tour leader here. The high point was the enormous basement (covering the entire area of the palace) built in the 3 Century AD. Tim Scott and William Corbett started fantasising about what a good place it would have been to store Diocletian's famous collection of early chariots. They reckoned he would have had scouts scouring the empire for the very best in 6 horsepower chariots. Nothing changes. We headed for the ferry to Ancona and so ended the Croatian leg.

On Tuesday 10 June at 7am we docked in Ancona. Reversing out of the bow necessitated 6 point turns with monosyllabic ferry men directing operations. Eventually our leader Roland persuaded a parked lorry to move a few feet easing the situation and the convoy moved off with Roland and Angelika in the lead. There were fine views from Arcevia which was reached by a steep climb and a spectacular gorge on route to Gubbio and The Hotel Ai Cappucini (a converted monastery). This was the rendezvous point for

our new entrants to the tour. Otherwise known as the alternative Grappa tour this consisted of Michael Elliott, Clayton and Helen Banks with Graham Ashley Carter in tow. Graham's skills were much appreciated by those on the trip with any car problems or tuning requirements. But he was less able to cope when discovering braised rabbit on the menu of the recommended restaurant for a mere 28 Euros without vegetables. We decided in future to bring our own rabbits and ask for corkage! For those with stamina however it was possible to find cheaper fare and the bar in the town provided post-prandial drinks for a song. This brings me on to a missed opportunity Luus de Boer apparently learns her English by dint of singing Irish songs. We nearly got a rendering in the Ai Cappucini but shyness prevailed and this may have to wait for another trip.

The scenery in Umbria was green, mountainous and beautiful. The hill towns we visited starting with Gubbio and Assisi were spectacular for their hairpins and steep narrow streets. In particular those at Urbino were testing for the Ghost but we were rewarded by the 15 Century ducal palace of Federico de Montefeltro an art lover who had his nose broken and his eye put out in a tournament which is why he is only ever seen in profile in portraits. The middle of the trip found us on the island of Alberello in the land of the Po Delta. The scenery here was a complete contrast being flatlands and water. This was less exciting for our Dutch participants but interesting for the rest of us. The Golf hotel did us proud with dinner at an Imperial table in the Ca Tiepolo a former hunting lodge of the Venetian Tiepolo family. This was a feast for all and was crowned with a birthday cake for Jo Naismith - the first of several as it was a day early!

The driving in Italy was varied. In addition to steep hairpins for the very brave there was the climb up to Mount Subbasio with superb views from 1290m. As the fuel in Ernest Arendonk's 1926 Phantom started to vaporise he was to be seen coming down backwards rather fast which was a little alarming for the Armitage's following on. Leaving Gubbio we followed part of the Mille Miglia route on the N452. This was followed by the fantastic Furlo Gorge. We were less enamoured of the road from Pesaro to Ravenna route N16 from whence the coast is not visible but traffic is endless. Guard has to be maintained against the odd maniacal driver where there isn't quite room for three abreast.

Friday 13 June found us happily ensconced in the beautiful Villa Franceschi on the Riviera della Brenta. This was to be the Palladian part of the tour. On our very first evening we were welcomed by the Contessa Foscari Cortes to the Villa Foscari otherwise known as the Villa Malcontenta (is this aptly named because of the ghastly Venetian rush hour traffic on the N309 going south with deaf defying Left turn into narrow drive?). For the Naismiths who cleverly evaded the N309 and took the back route they were locked out at the back gates with no key forthcoming so had to retrace tracks. It was a hot evening and as we stepped inside the breeze ruffling through the glorious cruciform hall flooded with light from the south was very soothing. We all marvelled at the fact that Palladio was building these masterpieces in the 16 Century.

Our next villa next day was a drive past the Villa Cornaro, a villa suburbana, as could be seen from the flourishing market opposite. The Corbetts parked in the local primary school and were tipped the wink that keys could be borrowed from the waiter in the Bar Palladio opposite. Several campari sodas later courtesy of their new backseat navigator and convivial passenger, Anthony Crossley Cooke, this proved to be false so they rejoined the rest of the team in Castel Del Franco birthplace of Giorgione and site of his fine altarpiece.

For the really skilled navigators the Villa Emo could be seen but our next important rendezvous was at the Villa Barbaro, a villa rustica, set in its own agricultural domain. We were expecting the magnificently named Contessa Diamante but we were welcomed instead and most delightfully with delicious chilled Prosecco from the local vineyard. The drive up to the villa set into a gentle hill was spectacular and as fine a setting for the cars as any. We shuffled round the marble floors in felt slippers and admired the fine frescoes some by Veronese.

The late afternoon, once again very hot, was spent on the road to Vicenza via Bassano where we passed the rebuilt Palladian bridge. No drinks stops were forthcoming to a shortened lead convoy so they fell upon the drinks machine in a local service station in Vicenza where Angelika was able to sweet-talk the garage man into opening his rest room for ladies to change for dinner while gentlemen changed on the forecourt.

Our final and most spectacular venue was the Villa Rotonda. The Valmarana family entertained us to a fabulous farewell dinner peppered with anecdotes. They were even able to show us their family standard from the Battle of Lepanto. Sir John Stuttard did a fine job of thanking our organisers Angelika and Roland. Brian and Joan Palmer were worthy winners of the "Spirit of the Tour" award having driven the entire way out alone and planning to drive the entire way home at the end. Samantha, aka Caroline Colvin, presented the prizes and was able to catch his eye when she spotted that the frequent allusions to Il Duce were misunderstood by our Italian hosts. The joke was duly explained and smiles restored.

The final piece de resistance of the trip was the 50km drive home. Trepidation about lighting on the Ghosts as darkness fell meant that the Listers brought a modern car and nobly volunteered to shepherd the final cars home. All went well until a missed turn on the motorway meant a 20km drive in the wrong direction. Nothing daunted they left the motorway at the next exit. Then that dodgy navigator "Tom Tom" was brought into play. He mischievously led the convoy into the red light district down by Mestre docks. Irritation turned into farce as the ladies of the night marvelled at the fine vehicles not stopping for business. There was much relief when the troupe returned to the Villa Franceschi somewhat later than anticipated. The Italian legs had had their day!

Clare Corbett.

Photos: William Corbett



Sir John Stuttard finds confirmation of Roland Duce's organisational skills for tours



Photos

The De Boers car outside Hotel Apoksiomen in Mali Losinj on island of Cres

Investigating Gear Lever trouble on Terry Lister's car on ferry from Hvar (Sicuraj) to mainland (Drvenik)

Villa Barbaro at Maser

Brian and Joan Palmer just making the ferry from Cres to Krk

In Umbria between Gubbio and Assisi

Villa Rotunda

COMING EVENTS 2010

Friday 26th February – AGM and Dinner in the Library at the Travellers Club, London W1
Contact: Tim Forrest Tel: 01428 684208
e-mail: forresttim@aol.com

Friday 23rd to Sunday 25th April
Spring lunch/weekend. Contact: Strone Macpherson
Tel: 01962 735562
e-mail: macpherson@lcbroadband.co.uk

Friday 21 to Monday 24 May
Irish Georgian Tour in South Lincolnshire. Contact: Jimmy Valentine. Tel: 020 7352 8503, weekends 01295 811215
e-mail: f.valentine215@btinternet.com

Saturday 29th May to Sunday 12th June
Pyrenees tour. Contact: Roland Duce. Tel: 01636 830202
e-mail: roland@thurgartonpriory.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 17th October Autumn lunch.
Contact: Brian Palmer Tel: 0116 2862417
e-mail: brian@bandjpalmer.co.uk

News from the Club Shop

We are delighted to announce that Sue Glew has agreed to take over the Club Shop. Her contact address is Susan Glew, 01386 700987
susan.glew@onetel.com

Club Shop Price List:

Ties £15.00
Brass, Nickel or Chrome Car Badges £ 25.00

Cuff-links £35/pair

Lapel badge/scarf pin £20.00



Please note that the above items are in solid Sterling Silver and are very tasteful (i.e. Not flashy bling)

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

'Alpine 93' videos are still available, but will not be listed in future unless someone volunteers to make them available on DVD!



*Back Cover Picture:
Kent Weekend
Cars at Ightham Mote
Photo: David Crossley-Cooke*

PLEASE JOIN THE 21st CENTURY!

Despite loving to live in the past with our cars, communication with members would be vastly easier and we can avoid you missing out on short notice events if you get an e-mail address. Go on, somebody will give you one for Christmas surely.

