



News and Record

Issue 9
March 2004



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The 20-Ghost Club

www.20-Ghost.org (Password: frosty)

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Front Cover Picture:

John Kennedy, looking very 'Radley' in the Radley Ghost, descending the Loibl pass on the Austrian side



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EDITORIAL

Tour Reports

2003 has seen rather fewer formal 20-Ghost Club tours and rallies than in some previous years. However, that does not mean that Club members have been in any way inactive.

In the last edition of *News and Record*, we reported on the contribution made by members to the Alpine Celebration, organised by the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club and the Silver Ghost Association. In this edition, we have a report on an Alpine Re-Enactment privately organised by John Kennedy.

In the Rolls-Royce Centenary Year of 2004, a large number of international events combine to provide the option of a World Tour. The major kick-off for this is an Australian tour taking place as we go to press, incorporating the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia 46th Federal Rally in Melbourne. This has proven to be a major attraction to several 20-Ghost Club members and friends and, in this edition, we include a report by Tony Dyas on

a visit to New Zealand as a preamble to joining in the Australian rally.

The 20-Ghost Club contribution to the 2004 celebrations is of course the tour to Monte Carlo in August, ably being overseen by John Stuttard.

All this frenzied activity merely gives support to our fundamental belief that if you want reliable and enjoyable historic motoring, then a pre-1940 Rolls-Royce provides the ultimate solution.

Magnetos

Having extolled the reliability of our cars, there is one, not too well hidden, thorn in the flesh. You only have to read the reports on major rallies to discover that the magneto has become the achilles heel of the early Rolls-Royce. Some will argue that the only way to be sure of a magneto is to have it rewound using modern wire and hence insulation. However, it is not only the winding which can break down, but high tension pickup brush holders and distributor caps can also

deteriorate. Moreover, those who have dared to explore the mechanics of these complex machines will have discovered how much wear there can be on slip rings etc etc.

Magnetos were a very expensive item to buy on any car. On lesser cars than a Rolls-Royce, they were the single most expensive spare part you could have to buy. Their complexity is such that they would be extremely costly to manufacture. However, the survival of our cars in proper working condition may well depend on somebody biting the bullet and manufacturing new reproduction magnetos. This is by way of a plea to those engineers who support our hobby at least to take a look at the feasibility of such action.

From Australia

Margaret Gillings kindly sent me some photographs taken during the Australian National Tour held last October in the Barossa Valley. Below: Denis Deasey's SG 122 EU Gill Coupe.
Nigel Hughes



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & DINNER

Oriel College, Oxford

27 February 2004



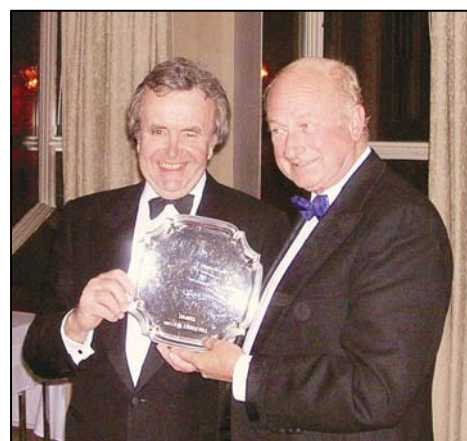
This year, through the good offices of Strone Macpherson, we were able to hold our Annual General Meeting and Dinner at Oriel College, Oxford. It was a bitterly cold evening, but we gathered in the warmth of the 17th Century Senior Common Room, where Champagne and Orange Juice were on offer to provide initial lubrication. After a brief introduction to the history of the college, founded in 1326, we were off via the beautiful James Wyatt library to a thoroughly modern lecture theatre for the meeting. The photograph shows, for a change from the usual Committee picture, the 'back to school' atmosphere and the audience's evident approval of the Chairman's report.

The Chairman welcomed all present, particularly noting Stephanie Martin and Mermie

Karger who had travelled from the United States to be with us.

In his Report, he advised the Club that it was now necessary to raise the annual subscription to £35.00. Such an increase had been approved by the Club in 1992, but had not been implemented. The meeting supported the proposal. Another major item raised by the Chairman, with Strone Macpherson, was the recommendation from the Committee that the Club should take the necessary legal steps to limit the liability of Officers and Members in the event that damages were sought from the Club for whatever reason. There was unanimous and enthusiastic support for such a move.

After the formal business, we moved to the college Chapel,



David Robson receives the Harry Watson Trophy from Chairman Tim

where we listened to Graham Ashley-Carter giving us a short recital on the organ.

We then went to the Weldon-Dalrymple-Hamilton Room for an excellent dinner, followed by the presentation of those Club Trophies not already presented at events (See page 119).

ALPINE 2003

An Alpine Re-Enactment organised by John Kennedy

Mermie Karger took her Silver Ghost 2442 Saoutchik tourer on 'Alpine 03', a centenary tour of passes used in the Alpine Trials of 1913, organised by John Kennedy. The tour aimed to capture some of the spirit of the original Alpine Trials and included cars of makes which took part in 1910-1914. Mermie produced a very full record of the Tour. The following are some extracts from her excellent account:

"It was the first time 2442 had been in England since 18 September 1913 when the chassis went to Paris for its coachwork. A visit to Derby to see the Works and the Rolls-Royce Heritage Trust was part of that pilgrimage. The trip meant a return to France after 80 years in America, leading to a spontaneous meeting of the son and family of Eugène Duflo, 2442's first owner in Vervins, northeast of Paris. It was my first sea voyage and my first experience of continental Europe. Finally, it was the first trip of this length and complexity I had taken, and doing it with 2442 did indeed challenge both car and driver. It all exceeded my expectations. The favorable weather, the help cheerfully proffered for the mechanical difficulties I could not handle myself, the wonderful cooperation and support of my passengers, and the tremendous good will encountered everywhere, can only be explained by extraordinarily good fortune."

Cars and their crews taking part in the tour included::

1911 Gregoire (3.12 litre) Keith Nash, Robin Pearce, UK
1911 Minerva (4.4 litre) Martin and Joan Ferner, NZ
1913 Pope Hartford (5.0 litre) Frank Taliaferro, USA, Liz Porter, Daniel Edwards, UK
1913 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost (7.42 litre) John and Rae Kennedy UK
1913 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost (7.42 litre) Mermie Karger, Betty Woodard, Mary Landry, USA, John Walmsley, UK
1914 Vauxhall Prince Henry (3.97 litre) Nigel and Jane Price, NZ
1914 Praga (3.82 litre) Hermann and Nora Tratnik, Austria
1922 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost (7.42 litre) Julian and Beverly Smith, Peter and Diana Halsted, James Smith, NZ
Isaac Sananes, UK
1926 Vauxhall (4.2 litre) Ronald and Wendy Harris, UK
1929 Steyr XII (1.56 litre) Thomas and Andrea Billicsich, Austria
1933 Rolls-Royce Phantom II (7.7 litre) Michael and Angelika Elliott, Austria.

Mermie went through the same learning curve experienced by other Alpine Drivers:

"It wasn't the climb up the Semmering or the Niederalp on the first day that brought home what the challenges of mountain driving would be for me. It was the Niederalp's very steep descent. We were advised to use low gear. I started down in second and immediately realized it had to have meant lowest gear. John Kennedy in 2260E went down in first, and with his 16:52 rear axle instead of mine of 17:52, drove down the hill. I braked my way down, something I did very seldom afterwards."

Mermie had her share of the all-too-familiar range of Magneto faults:

"I remember vividly the great sense of anticipation during the fast run from Linz towards Salzburg. But why couldn't 2442 keep up with the Prince Henry Vauxhall on the upgrades? During the next day's free time, I gave Frank Taliaferro a ride to a nearby machine shop, and 2442 ran so disturbingly rough that, on my return, I investigated the magneto, which had had some troubles on the drive to Vienna. The point gap was way too small, but in fiddling with that, I discovered that the long bolt holding the point plate had worked loose. With that tightened, the gap was correct again. Performance improved immediately."

With electrical problems overcome (for the time being), Mermie began to enjoy herself:

"As 15%, the Katschberg was very steep, yet not as steep as in 1912 when it was 25% and more. Still it was a test of my skill at shifting down into first gear with a modern car inches behind. That shift would become easier with more practice. We drove steadily up, then a big grin again, and we had a lovely well controlled drive down, as the gear I had chosen better matched the degree of descent."

There was some discussion among rallyists about the decision to drive the Stelvio or not during our free day in Merano. I was never in doubt. The Stelvio was one of the reasons I came on this rally. It gave me some pleasure to hear "if Mermie's doing it, I guess I'll do it." So off we went on a gorgeous, cool day to conquer the forty eight hairpins so sharp that the right hand turns required getting way over into the left hand lane to make the turn without reversing to avoid the mountainside wall.

I totally missed the first one, having forgotten the advice. What a look that biker gave me. Then I got a bit into the hang of it, but on one that I might just have made I drifted back, not wanting that sort of souvenir from the Stelvio. I reversed on only one more when a descending car was suddenly there, and I drifted back to get out of the way. After that I established a rhythm as I got over to the left, spotted my turning point and went. Too bad about my not noticing the spectacular scenery. Good thing Betty took pictures. I did stop once nearing the top to let an RV I had seen leave the summit come down before I completed the climb. At the top it was euphoria for all – bikers, cyclists, and old car nuts. Everybody was happy for everybody having made it."

The tour was a classic example of how owners of old cars come to one another's rescue:

"During the free day at Riva, with the dynamo not charging enough to run on the battery ignition and the performance of the magneto having deteriorated again to the point where I thought I should put on the spare, I had to ask for assistance. I knew how to remove and refit the mag without disturbing the timing, and I had done it before in England in concert with someone more experienced. I needed that sort of someone again."

Being wary of advice too freely volunteered, I had already watched and seen who was quiet, competent, and deliberate. Ronald Harris was to be the recipient of my plea. Wendy assured me it was the sort of work that would make him very happy. Martin Ferner came to see what was going on and stayed to help as well. The spare magneto was not another Bosch ZR6, but a Watford magneto that had been expected to be a straightforward fit. It's quite a chore to fit a mag to a Ghost, and none of us wanted to start until measurements told us it would work. We couldn't figure out how. Martin, who had had his Bosch mag apart before, suggested looking more closely at this one and in so doing, discovered that the points, although gapped correctly, were now bad. I had yet another mag that we had removed in England. A quick switch of points between the two, a bench (running board) test, and a laborious reinstallation of the Bosch mag during which Ronald admitted it was indeed a two man operation, led to a successful test run. A Vauxhall and a Minerva had saved a Silver Ghost."

The tour included one very special climb:

"In Italy, we stopped in Cave de Predil to prepare for a very special climb into Slovenia. We were to drive up the old summer road to the Predil Pass 830 feet above us, a steep, almost straight, two mile rutted dirt and gravel track that we were told had not been open for cars since the 1930s. An energetic group of local old car enthusiasts had worked very hard to clear off the overgrown bushes and deep grasses. A good ground clearance helped and 2442 climbed unfalteringly."

Much of the joy of tours is in seeing how your own car compares with others. Mermie found it particularly interesting to compare the performance of her Rolls-Royce with that of other makes:

"At a petrol stop, we met up with Keith and Robin in the Gregoire and Ronald and Wendy in the Vauxhall. They invited us to follow them through Trieste and on to Portoroz. These "West Country Boys" usually travelled together, the Gregoire in the lead until Ronald couldn't stand it any longer so passed and drove at the Vauxhall's speed. I already knew that 2442 could easily pass the Gregoire on the straight and up the hills, but could only just keep up with the Gregoire on narrow, flat, winding roads. Ronald once said to me, "Drive your car harder; you're babying it". I was happy to let them set the pace. This run became one my favorites of the whole rally, as I had the advantage, at the back, of seeing how all three cars looked moving down the road in evenly spaced concert, following first the upper road to get us to Trieste, then descending directly into the town center down a winding steep hill in full view of the Adriatic. We kept right on going, still together, even to making our one

correction in exact harmony when a detour blocked our turn. What a sight we must have been."

Climbing the Loibl is a highlight of any Alpine tour

:
"Not everyone can describe the Loibl as being like her short, steep (20%) driveway at home, only steeper (17-29%) and more of it, over and over again; gravel, not blacktop; and with considerably more of a thrill on achieving the top. It must have seemed familiar to 2442, too. Even with four up, the going was steady and sure all the way with never a hesitation or slip. What a car!

Once at the top, we stayed there to savour the exhilaration. We accepted champagne, compared our climbs, admired the vintage motorcycles that had ascended with us, photographed the great obelisks marking the border, read all the inscriptions, enjoyed the abundant wildflowers, received our commemorative plaques, had our passports specially stamped, and cheered at the ceremonial unveiling of an historic border sign.

It was history that brought us on Alpine 2003, and here at the Loibl we were as close to "Alpine 1910-1914" as we could get. Unlike the other roads we used in following the Alpine route, the old Loibl road has remained nearly unchanged. Even the drive from Bled through Begunje and Trzic was a challenge. Because the newer road leading directly to the tunnel cuts through the old road, the old road has not been straightened or graded as had so many of the others on this rally. After 1963, when the tunnel opened the old Loibl road was nearly forgotten. John Kennedy tells how, in the late 1980s, he figured out where the road was and went up it on his own to see for himself those

obelisks so prominent in the old photographs."

Mermie finds a use for modern communications:

"One of Mary's duties that John didn't have was pumping up the falling fuel pressure on long downhill runs. I used one of my most important tools, my cell phone, yet again and called Dick Frawley back home in Pennsylvania. Dick had overhauled 2442. We had selected the tools and spares I should carry, the most important three being "duct tape, vise grips, and a cell phone." On these calls, he always reviewed an appropriate procedure to eliminate possible causes for the symptoms I described.. Cleaning the fuel pressure relief valve fixed this problem. I should have known that. Perhaps it was too easy just to call. From time to time I would assure him that in spite of all of my calls, 2442 was rising wonderfully to every challenge."

As a footnote to Alpine 03, Mermie recalls:

"It wasn't a competition this year, yet if I had to choose, Keith Nash driving the "little" Gregoire and Robin Pearce, his super navigator, would get top marks. We all have reason to be proud of having participated with such distinction in the very memorable Alpine 2003. With fond farewells Alpine 2003 was done."

*Below, left
Fascinated family at Slovenia Fuel Stop
Photo M Landry*

*Below, right
Croatian scenery. Photo M Landry*





Left from top:

Priz-Alpine

Photos, Left from Top:

1. Schloss Weikersdorf Reception. (Minerva, Gregoire and Ghost.)
2. Mermie Karger tackles Stelvio hairpin
3. Minerva gets a spot of maintenance near Riva
4. Repairs for Prince Henry Vauxhall on Falzarego ascent, (Gregoire in front and Phantom II behind.)

Right from Top:

5. John Kennedy's Ghost on the Stelvio. Pope-Hartford coming up behind
6. Stelvio Summit
7. NZ Ghost climbing out of Trento

Photos: John and Rae Kennedy



Photos, Left from top:

1. Smith Ghost on the Loibl. Photo J Kennedy
2. 'Unveiling' of replacement for old road sign on Loibl. The sign shows 'Keep Left' in one direction and 'Keep Right' in the other. Thomas Billicsich and Hermann Tratnik (right) in historic uniforms of kk freiwilligen Automobilcorps. Photo: R. Kennedy
3. Skofja Lofja, Slovenia. Mermie Karger explaining that 'the music goes round and round and it comes out here'. Photo: M Landry

Photos, Right from Top

4. Karger Ghost 1442 rounds the final hairpin on the Loibl. Photo: J Kennedy
5. Predil Pass. John Kennedy with the Radley Ghost comes to the rescue of the Prince Henry Vauxhall. Photo R. Kennedy
6. Martin Ferner 'bench tests' the magneto of 1442 during the 'rest' day at Riva. Photo: M Karger

NEW ZEALAND AT LAST

Tony and Graham Visit New Zealand
October-November 2003

Vivien and I had booked to go on tours of New Zealand twice before but on both occasions we have had to cancel due to our daughters deciding to increase their families when were planning to be away. On the second occasion we were touring with the Meads and the Garretts when we heard that two of our daughters would be having babies, both due on the same day, four days into the proposed tour!

On hearing the news that we had cancelled our proposed visit to New Zealand, Graham and Barbara Mead suggested that we should arrange our own private tour. Vivien and I were delighted with this suggestion and the initial idea was to visit the islands separately, the North Island in November 2003 and the South Island in February 2004. However, like all good ideas they were developed and Graham suggested visiting Australia as well, whilst the cars were in that part of the world!

So the master plan was agreed to make one visit to New Zealand and two to Australia. The tour to New Zealand took place successfully in October and November 2003. The second leg is to visit Australia in February and March 2004 to tour from Brisbane to Melbourne finishing at the Federal Rally. The final leg is to return later this year to visit Tasmania and then tour from Melbourne to Perth. A very exciting programme.

It was agreed that we should have cars of similar performance and we decided that Vivien and I would use a 1909 Silver Ghost and Graham would use a 1910 Silver Ghost both with Roi des Belges coachwork.



Tasman Glacier near Mt Cook

The first leg has now taken place.

We started and finished the tour at Christchurch. We broadly went in an anti-clockwise direction around the two islands

(up the east coasts and down the west coasts) and moving inland When something caught our fancy! We travelled over 4,300 miles."



1330 at Buller Gorge

Rather than write a detailed report I will list the highlights: -

A visit to Banks Peninsula near Christchurch.

A visit to Adrian and Sylvia Garrett- wonderful hospitality.

A trip around The Bay of Islands in 'Blue's' motor launch. Blue is an old friend of Graham. We lunched on board and feasted on mussels collected by Graham off the rocks in the bay!

Seeing one of Adrian and Sylvia's mares with her one-hour-old foal.

Kauri trees 2000 years old.

Geysers, a cave, mud pools, a soda fountain at the Hidden Valley of Orakei Korako.

Travelling from the Chateau to Hawera along the "Forgotten Road".

My first sight of the volcano "Egmont" as sun went down.

A memorable visit to the Southward Museum and having the honour to meet Sir Len Southward and Roy Southward. The museum is world class.



Mt. Egmont (Taranaki)

The journey along Queen Charlotte Drive from Picton to Nelson.

The drive over Takaka Pass.

The drive through Buller Gorges, with a road cut out of the side of the gorge on the way to Pancake Rocks- a fabulous example of nature at its best.

The walk up to Fox Glacier.

The view at Wanaka Lake.

More waterfalls at Milford Sound than I have seen in my entire life before and all at one fiord!

The steam train at Kingston letting off steam as it left the station.

The drive to Bluff Point in the wind and rain to arrive at the most southerly point on South Island.

The spectacular view of the Moeraki Boulders- a wonder of nature.

Mount Cook in the sunshine and at nightfall as the sun went down.

Finally it was the pleasure in having route masters with the local knowledge of Graham and Barbara who guided us around the islands with only a casual use of maps!

The tour was a great success and I strongly recommend a visit to New Zealand by Silver Ghost.

Article and Photos by Tony Dyas



1930 and 1917 outside the oldest hotel in NZ

TROPHIES PRESENTED AT THE AGM

Alpine - for the highest mileage in the year taking age into account: Chess Ferrier

Woodmansee - for the highest Silver Ghost Mileage: Don Meyer:

Small Horsepower - for the highest small horsepower mileage: David Else

Harding Rolls - for her notable performance on the European Alpine passes: Mermie Karger

Fergusson Wood Photographic - for the best photograph published in *News* and *Record*: John Stuttard

Phoenix - for the best restoration: Nick Whittaker

Harry Watson - for engineering accomplishment: David Robson

Brian Wootton - to the member offering most assistance to members on tour: Alan Glew

COMING EVENTS 2004

Saturday 24 April - Spring Lunch

Strone and Alex Macpherson invite you to an informal lunch/picnic at Armsworth Park House, near Alton, Hampshire.
Contact: Strone MacPherson 01962 735562

Saturday 8 May - Irish Georgian Celebration

The celebration of 25 years of our combined weekend tours will take the form of a lunch on Saturday 8th May to be held at Englefield House near Reading.
Contact: Jimmy Valentine 0207 352 8503 or 01295 811215
Weekends

Friday 21- Monday 24 May - Exmoor and Dartmoor Tour

A tour designed to provide interesting driving, based for two days at Porlock and two days at South Molton.
Contact: John Marsh 01384 273061

Friday 4- Monday 7 June - Irish Georgian Tour

The tour will take in historic houses in the Scottish Borders
Contact: Jimmy Valentine 0207 352 8503 or 01295 811215
Weekends

Tuesday 15 June - Ascot Race Meeting

It is hoped that this event can be reinstated for 2004.
Contact: John Kennedy 01344 883033

Wednesday 16 June - Annual Concours

The Annual Concours d'Etat will be held at Rousham House, near Banbury.
Contact: Tim Forrest 01428 684208

Sunday 18 July - Driving and Gliding

A visit to Lasham airfield in Hampshire to give friends and family an opportunity to drive a pre-1940 Rolls-Royce off public roads and to try their hand in a glider.
Contact: Strone MacPherson 01962 735562

Wednesday 25 August- Thursday 9 September - 100th Anniversary Celebratory Tour to Monaco

This is now full with 28 couples and cars entered.
Contact: John Stuttard. E-Mail johnstuttard@uk.pwc.com

Sunday 10 October- Autumn Lunch

Contact: Andy Butcher : Silverghost@ukonline.co.uk

Saturday 6 November

There may be another chance for cars to take part in the Lord Mayor's Show in London.

Contact: John Stuttard. E-Mail johnstuttard@uk.pwc.com

Welcome to New Members

Allaway, John & Lorna 5 Romans Field Silchester Reading
Berkshire RG7 2QH

1926 20 GCK74 YR-890 Replica Tourer Munton (1990s)

Hickton, Godfrey & Jane Thorngrove Sinton Green Worcester
WR2 6NP

1934 20/25 GRC34 BGK-370 Thrupp & Maberly Sedan de Ville

Kennedy, Robert & Jill 14 Harpenden Road St Albans
Hertfordshire AL3 5AD

1923 20 80K7 SR-3680 Stevenson (Glasgow) Tourer

McQuay, John & Carolyn 6/31 Lansell Road Toorak Victoria
3142 Australia

1923 20 59S7 Barker Tourer

1924 20 GRK38 Chassis

1926 20 GOK42 Howarths Landaulet

Powell, David & Janet 32 Ringwood Road Headington Oxford
OX3 8JA

1923 20 GA71 XR-7663 Barker Cabriolet

Richmond-Dodd, Bryan & Penny Ribblesdale Park Sunninghill
Road Ascot Berkshire SL5 7RL

1928 PI 56WR XV-2332 Replica Super Sports Tourer with
Wedge Tail Ashton Keynes c1980

1931 PII 195GY GP-329 Park Ward Faux Cabriolet

1936 PIII3AZ56 RAS-277 Thrupp & Maberly Sedan de Ville

For Sale from The Club Shop

Ties £15.00

Nickel or Chrome Car Badges £ 25.00

Contact: Andy Butcher

Alpine '93 Videos £20.00 Back numbers of *Record* and
News and *Record* £2.50 ea. Contact: John Kennedy



Back Cover Picture

*Mermie Karger's Silver
Ghost 2442 Saoutchik
tourer near Scheibbs in
the Austrian Alps*

