



News & Record



Issue 64, Summer 2021



Cover image: Jonathan Samuelson and his 1922 Silver Ghost 73SG see page 6420.

Rear Cover: Excellence & Magnificence. Fokko's 1933 PII Continental, 47MW at La Calahorra in Spain, page 6432.

Left: The stunning Ghose Ghost! Parked outside a well-known emporium, 1911 Silver Ghost 1557 now owned by Daniel Ghose.

Below: Got coffee and good to go! Ron and Nanette Elenbaas set out to Wismar in 1911 Silver Ghost 1676. Picture: Kimberly Shadduck.

1928 NEW PHANTOM 29WR

Page 6434, It's relatively rare to know everybody who owned one of our cars. John Arthy takes us through the keepers of his well-travelled PI.

HOW TO DATE A PRE-WWII R-R

Page 6438, This turns out to be a thorny topic. Harrison Royce explains the various methodologies.

A NIMBLE CAR FOR NYC & BOSTON

Page 6444, Bob Vass on 20/25 GWP37 with a rare and highly original body.

FROM THE ARCHIVE

Page 6448, List of Members - June 1961.

THE LAST WORD

Page 6450, Johnnie G.

NEWS & MEMBERS

Page 6404, emails, new members, anecdotes & all sorts.

THE FORBES REPORT

Page 6412, Our chairman's update and a pic of Jane looking fab!

JUST A CENTURY AGO

Page 6414, Herodotus reports on The Autocar's R-R related articles during April, May & June 1921.

TYSON HOLDS FORTH

Page 6416, Our Graham shares a lesson and a couple of super stories.

FROM ACROSS THE POND

Page 6418, Kimberly writes from the USA.

FIFTY YEARS ON

Page 6420, Jonathan Samuelson writes his second article for the magazine - the first was in Summer 1971!

THE PERIL OF PRESSING THE BUTTON

Page 6428, Henry Fitzhugh and friends discuss what happens when you first fire the engine. Sage advice is at hand.

A MOTOR DRIVE FROM B TO A

Page 6432, Fokko Keuning takes us on a pan-European trip and makes every mile fun.



News & Members



Anthony Armitage dropped a line to say: 'A beautiful book of the Morpeth Foxhounds arrived unexpectedly. It's full of lovely photographs of meets, the field, hounds and horses but half way through I was amazed to find a photo of our 1928 PI 65CL as a horse box. It was the only one in the hunt for ten years 1947 to '57, known as the Black Maria it obviously created quite a stir. We have some other photos of it in this guise looking pretty scruffy, but the shot above was clearly taken just after the conversion.'



As you might have seen in their wonderful Gazette the **Australian Chapter** enjoyed a tour to Tasmania (their first since Feb 2020). Keith Wherry sent through some pictures. To the left is Clarendon House near Launceston in the north of the island. Whilst to the right is a fabulous Park Ward Ute!



Peter Brown is a former club member but the silly chap sold his 25/30 and bought a Derby Bentley instead! However he lives near me and is a darn good proof-reader. He emailed to say: '*In 'Tyson Holds Forth' (Issue 63) he tells the story of Arrol-Johnston, a much underrated marque, as he points out. An Arrol-Johnston was the first car in Sudan and is still there. I photographed it in the Khalifa's House at Omdurman in 1985 when I happened to be in Khartoum on the centenary of the death of General Gordon.*'



Many of us took part in **The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs** recent survey and they have now released a report which you can read online: <https://www.fbhvc.co.uk/2020-research-result-headlines>. It's a worthwhile piece of work, clearly and correctly designed to lobby government not to forget classic car owners. I noticed that Rolls-Royce owners account for approximately 1% of the classic car fraternity. But the other observation that made me smile was their point that the age of classic car owners appears to correlate fairly closely with the age of car owned. Clearly we 20-Ghosters buck that particular trend!

Ilkka toasts Vappu in style!

If you own a pre-War Rolls-Royce in Southern Finland, the 1st May is the time when you can begin to blow away the cobwebs and take your car out of the garage. You are no longer snowed in and the temperature rises to a benign, even balmy, two degrees.

This is 'Vappu', a national holiday which has its roots in pagan origins. The celebration was named after the English catholic Saint Walburg (Valburg in Finnish). She was made a saint on the 1st May in the 9th century (870 AD) for fighting, amongst other things, witchcraft. Because of that, the night between 30th April and 1st May started to be named Valpurgis Night which the Finns shortened to Vappu. Vappu is a time for partying. Students gather in the bars, and in the streets, wearing characteristic white caps which could be confused for nautical headgear. The place goes berserk.

This year, with Covid restrictions, one of the club's more recent members, Ilkka Brotherus, who has an impressive stable of old cars, including pre-war Rolls-Royce motor cars, celebrated quietly at home. In the picture above we see him with his 1931 Phantom II (261AJS), once owned by Charlie Chaplin. You can see he is demonstrating the correct use and purpose of the running board! Ilkka is not only celebrating Vappu but also the publication of the club's book on **Pre-War Rolls-Royce Motor Cars with a Finnish connection**, in which his cars feature. You will find a flyer with an order form with this issue. Get your orders in quickly - it's a super book!



New Members

Another group of great new members!

Andrew Boland, of Co. Wexford, Ireland owns 1922 SG 85TG, Grosvenor tourer.



Mikael and Maria Planting of Grankulla Finland own 1920 SG 47YE Hooper tourer.



Brothers Charles and Rik Armitage of Fulham and Swanwick, Hampshire respectively are the new custodians of father Anthony's 1928 PI 65CL. The Armitage PI is (quite rightly) a regular feature within these pages and so, as an alternative, pictured right is Rik with daughter Rachael driving the family's Bugatti Brescia.



Dr David Wyld of Liverpool is chairman of the RREC and owns 1937 PIII 3CM159, HJ Mulliner Sedan de Ville

Finally, my apologies to Nigel Atherstone who joined a little while back but I missed out in previous issues! Anyway, Nigel lives in Towcester and used to own a 1933 20/25HP GWX60 which he sold in November and bought a 1920 Silver Ghost 75CW. The Ghost is currently in dark blue but Nigel feels it looked better before it was painted so to the right is 75CW in its previous livery.



Welcome to you all!

Request for help with Rm collaboration

The club has received an email from non-member but well-known New Zealand enthusiast Tom King.

Tom met W.A. Robotham's daughter when she visited NZ some years ago. Robotham, or Rm as he was known in the company's shorthand, was one of R-R's legendary engineers who worked in the Experimental Dept., including periods in the testing station at Chateauroux in France.



Tom has been allowed to copy Rm's photo albums and wants to co-write a tribute to the drivers of Chateauroux, during the 1920s and '30s who tested all types of the company's cars including the Paulin streamlined Bentleys in France and Germany.

If you are interested in becoming involved then please email Tom at the.king@xtra.co.nz

Left: Rm with 2nd prototype 20HP "India" (9 G III) France, May 1925.

Below: Tom Colbert sent through a great shot of his Silver Ghost 65UE taken at the 2019 Pebble Beach. *'The body is by The Cunard Motor & Carriage Company, Putney, London which came into being in 1911 and became the in-house body builder for Napier. The bodies complimented the high quality of the Napier Chassis and Cunard were noted for skill in aluminium welding. Cunard also bodied a number of Silver Ghost chassis until its demise in 1925 as Napier car production tapered off. The quality of body building evidenced on 65UE lives up to the Cunard advertising slogan of The Body Beautiful. I particularly appreciate the nickel and mahogany rear windshield, the sporty leather paint protectors on the front doors, and the spring-loaded top mechanism.'*

Graham Tyson owns another Cunard-bodied Ghost and Tom Clarke and Will Morrison wrote an excellent history of the company which can be found in the Society of Automotive Historians in Britain, 2018.



HRH, The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh

Quite rightly there have been many tributes to the late Prince Philip but Bryan McGee kindly wrote some words which are appropriate for us:

It was Prince Philip who introduced Rolls-Royce cars to the Royal fleet, displacing Daimler who had held that position through four reigns. After WW2 the new Crewe company lent him an experimental Bentley with a B80 engine with 8 cylinders in-line, nicknamed Scalded Cat, due to its exceptional performance.



Picture with thanks to the Daily Telegraph

When the King in 1949 offered him and the Princess Elizabeth an official limousine of their own, he was instrumental in it being powered by the B80 to give it some 'oomph'. Thus was born, 4 AF 2, the first Phantom IV. This car remains in the Royal Mews and is a favourite of The Prince of Wales. Only 18 Phantom IV cars were ever built when sales were restricted to royalty and heads of state. The B80 engine was widely used in Saracen armoured personnel carriers and in Dennis fire engines.

In his long life the Prince owned a diverse selection of cars for personal use. His very first is reputed to be a 1935 Standard Nine which he purchased for 450 Rupees (£12) as a young naval officer when posted to Ceylon in 1940. This car still exists in fully restored condition in the Galle Face Hotel museum in Colombo. When he married in 1947 he had an MG TD for private use. In his early married life he supported smaller British car manufacturers by ordering interesting versions of their models. The most notable included an Alvis 3 litre TD21 dhc and in 1954 a Lagonda 3 litre dhc with its W.O. Bentley designed engine which was later developed for the DB range of Aston Martin cars. He took the Lagonda on his round the world tour on HM Yacht Britannia in 1956. He later used a converted London Taxi running on LPG for travelling incognito within the capital.

His keen interest in British industry took him to many car manufacturers, both large and small. On a private visit to BMC in 1955 he was alarmed to discover they were suffering from declining sales of their traditional models in the international market. It is said that his intervention then led directly to their engagement of Pinin Farina to modernise their designs.

In recent decades the Prince favoured driving various Land Rovers ranging from Defender and Freelander types on and around the royal estates to Range Rovers for more formal occasions. At his request his final journey was in a Land Rover adapted to his specification for the purpose.

One of his last interventions in car design was his insistence that the two recently supplied Bentley state limousines, built in the same Crewe factory as the original Phantom, should be able to operate on LPG (liquified petroleum gas) which burns more cleanly than petrol and produces less particulates than diesel fuel. His objective was to reduce pollution in the built-up areas where they tend to be used.

We were sorry to learn from Steve Wilks of the death of Derek Allan. Our thoughts are with Derek's family and friends.

Members may also have seen Ken Forbes' email about the sad death of Malcolm Johns in Australia - we will remember Malcolm in the next issue.



Kevlar linings Above: Wojtek's 1932 Phantom II Continental Hooper Saloon 60MS in Japan

Wojtek Kordel feels that standard modern replacement clutch linings are just not up to the job in a Phantom II: *I suggest that members consider fitting Kevlar impregnated friction linings. I believe that Steve Lovett at Ristes has them in stock- identified as "heavy duty" - Steve can drill and rivet fit them to the two main clutch components. I also fitted Ristes heavy duty clutch release spring sets as they are 10% higher spring rate than the original spec on the R-R drawing. Subsequently I have had no slip issues on extended trips to the US and Poland (5,000+ miles). This is a fairly normal upgrade in the USA on UK imported pre-war R-R motor cars.*

Members might also consider ceramic coated exhaust manifolds by Zircotech (based in Oxfordshire) to reduce the under bonnet temperature and helping avoid fuel vaporisation when stuck in summer traffic jams. I also metal screened the Autovac as it sits above the exhaust manifold and it's a bit exciting listening to the fuel bubbling in the Autovac on a hot summer's day!



1920 Scottish Tour - new book

Following on from Harrison Royce's tour de force article in the last issue John Stuttard has a new book: *By Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost to the Isle of Skye in 1920* containing full details of the Summers/Abraham tour together with great reproductions of all 33 photographs taken by Abrahams during the trip. Please find the flyer enclosed with this issue for full details and the order form.

Thanks to Henry Fitzhugh who found this image of 1920 Silver Ghost 39TW Watson Tourer in the Lake District.

Worried about E10?

Nigel Hughes writes:

The 1908 Ford Model T's low compression engine was designed to run on pure ethanol, pure gasoline or a combination of both. Our engines are all low compression by today's standards. E10 has been the normal petrol in many US states for years. Increasingly it's supplied throughout Europe. If you have toured Europe or USA recently, you may well have been running on E10. Use the additives the Federation of British Historical Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC) have recommended to combat corrosion of metal parts.

These are:-

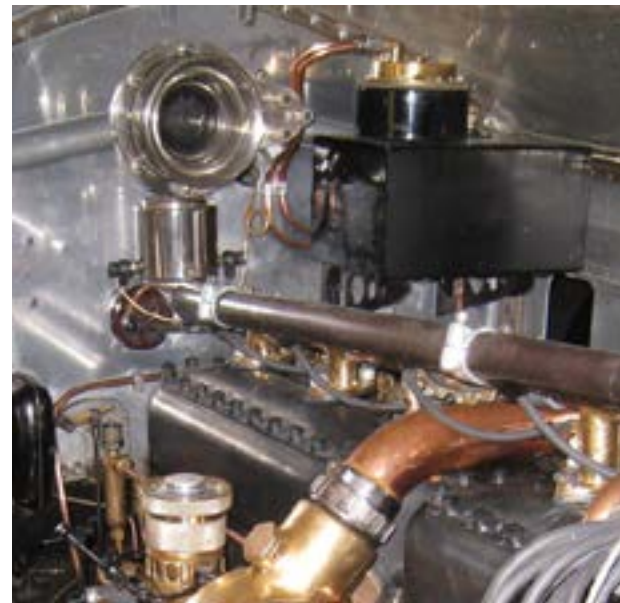
VSPe Power Plus, VSPe and EPS from Millers Oils; www.millersoils.co.uk

Ethomix from Frost A R T Ltd; www.frost.co.uk

Ethanolmate from Flexolite; www.flexolite.co.uk

Ethanol can attack rubber and plastic parts. As far as I know, the only possibly vulnerable parts in our cars are the cork gaskets in Autovacs and their associated fuel taps, provided that no rubber or plastic hoses have been substituted for original metal pipes. Our specialist restorers can supply ethanol resistant gaskets and tap washers.

[Note – all maintenance and mechanical suggestions within the magazine are made in good faith but without any responsibility on the part of the writer, the editor, or the club.]



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We have space for just one more car/couple on our fab 4-day tour.

Lunch at Irvine Laidlaw's home, staying at Careys Manor Spa Hotel, touring the Isle of Wight, touring the New Forest, dinner at Limewood, and finally lunch at Beaulieu. Do join us if you can.

£1,500 per couple

email Johnnie jgallop66@gmail.com

The Forbes Report

It does not feel like Summer as I write this, with gales and lashing rain. Like the weather, the prospects for events change every day, but do seem to be steadily improving, at least for our UK members to attend UK events. We can only hope that vaccine progress for other countries is sufficient to allow those who have signed up for events to attend. We have had two virtual events to keep us going during lockdown, the first being the AGM. All the current Directors were unanimously re-elected and the Annual Report and Accounts approved. It was a joy to see people's faces again and to be able to have an informal online chat amongst ourselves after the meeting. The next event was an innovation, with an illustrated Zoom lecture on transport design from 1900 up to the 1940s by Dr Gregory Votaloto, kindly organised by John and Mary Narvell. As 60 members signed up to tune in, including many international members, this clearly appealed to a wide range of people and was a resounding success. A follow up talk on coachwork design is planned.

The dry weather in April probably spurred many of us to get our cars out of hibernation and complete those jobs that were supposed to be done over the winter! In my case it was some improvement to the running boards and the side screen storage behind the rear seat on the Ghost, before the usual lubrication schedule and a polish up. After several days at it, I turned my attention to the 25/30, which with the benefit of chrome plating and central lubrication, was done in no time at all! With a roof, wind up windows, much longer service intervals and one hundred fewer oiling points, the chauffeur's life was much easier in the 1930's compared to a decade or so earlier.

It was a delight to be out on the road in the cars again and to be greeted with smiles and waves as we drove along. A feature of lockdown has been the number of cyclists, joggers and walkers on the lanes and a general desire to say 'hello' and appreciate seeing the cars out being used.



One of the hallmarks of the Club is that we actually use our cars and prove how capable they still are, decades after they were made. With more and more Ghosts a century old and still actively campaigned, Sir Henry would be justifiably very proud.

By the time you read this, I hope we will have successfully held our first proper event, with the tour and annual concours based at Mallory Court near Warwick, to be followed by a tour of the New Forest in July. A familiar theme for tour organisers is the constant adjustment of the programme to fit with the changes in regulations and who will actually be able to attend. With National Trust properties only taking bookings a week ahead and many destinations not yet out of lockdown, making arrangements has been a challenge. Thanks in particular to Brian Fidler and Irvine Iaidlaw for their patience and persistence with these events. We have just about managed to squeeze in everyone who wanted to attend too.

Likewise, take up on the London to Edinburgh top gear trial in September is exactly matching hotel capacity at our chosen venues, so nobody should be disappointed. This will be followed by the two Scottish Tours and we have nearly all the excursion venues confirmed as Scotland also comes out of lockdown. Our Australian friends were sadly the first to bow to the inevitable conclusion that returning home after the event would require quarantining and this was a risk they were not willing to take (particularly as the quarantine hotels seem to be the hotspots for Covid cases). Most places were quickly taken up from the waiting list and some new members. However, the waiting list has now been used up and there are a few places now available. Do please let me know if you are interested in participating (full details on the website).

To the right I have set out the current position on our planned tours for the rest of this year. As you will see, there are some places becoming available. With current international travel uncertainties, it is very likely that further places will become available, so even if a tour is currently full, do please contact the organiser of each tour if you would like to participate so that they can bear you in mind.

Sadly, our normally ebullient Membership secretary, Graham Tyson, managed to fall off a ladder at home and is now the proud owner of some large metal plates to replace the initial external scaffolding solution. His normal sense of humour was evident throughout the ordeal and we wish him all the best in his recovery.

Jane and I look forward to seeing you somewhere, soon!

Below: 'The Forbes' 1937 25/30 GRP68 Thrupp & Maberly razor-edge saloon, with Jane looking super glamorous in Biarritz in 2016

21-23 June Warwickshire Tour & Annual Concours at Mallory Court; tour currently full but places for the Concours and BBQ on 23 June possible.

12-15 July Tour of the New Forest; space for one couple. Also places possible for the visit and lunch at the Beaulieu Motor Museum

4-7 Sept London to Edinburgh Top Gear Trial
1 place left if you're quick

7-21 September Scottish Tour 1st Group
1 place available

10-23 September Scottish Tour 2nd Group
3 places available

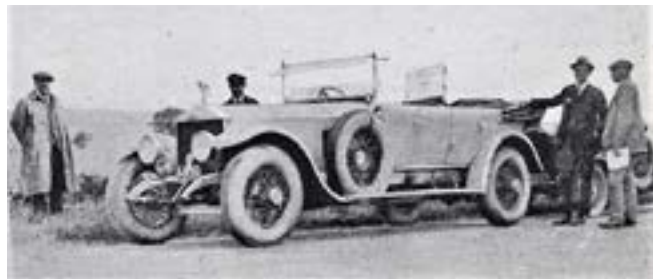
Best wishes
R



Just a century ago...

Herodotus – casts an eye over R-R related issues within The Autocar 100 years ago.

Amateur Road Inspection; in June 1921 “Vagrant” described a London to Edinburgh round trip. The photographs blew Vagrant’s cover: the car was registered AA-19, immediately recognisable as John Scott Montagu’s 1921 Silver Ghost. If further evidence were needed, the car is shown sporting Lord Montagu’s personal, and at the time unique, ‘Whisper’ mascot, designed for him by Charles Sykes.



He found the roads in Bedfordshire and Nottingham reasonable, but criticised poor signposting. In Lincolnshire he encountered roads left half-tarred in deference to horse-drawn traffic. Montagu’s main complaints in Yorkshire were the length of time level-crossings remained closed, high hedges making every curve blind, and the difficulty of overtaking motor coaches.

At this point Montagu noted that he had travelled 250 miles and obtained precisely 17 mpg.

And so the journey continued into Scotland and then back to Beaulieu via the west side of the country, with Montagu criticising or praising the County Surveyors as appropriate. He noted that the very steep pitches on the moorland road between Lancaster and Clitheroe twice called for third speed on the Rolls-Royce, the first time this trip that the road conditions demanded a desertion from top gear.

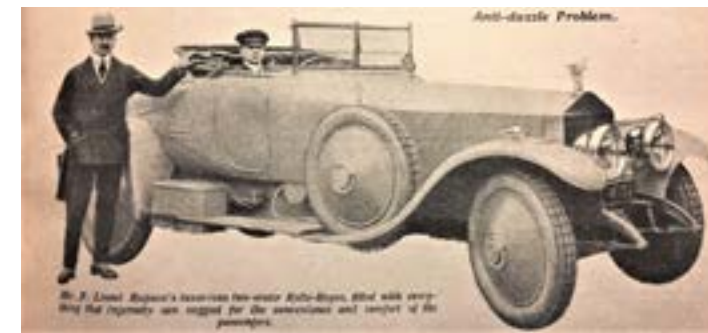
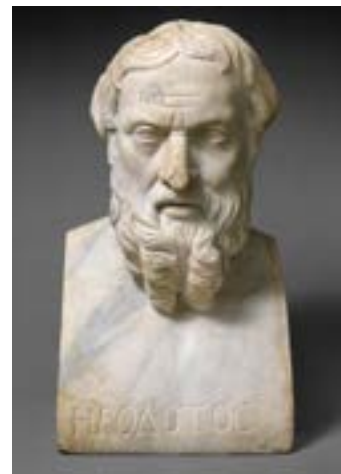
Road impressions of the 1921 Rolls-Royce; the editorial staff *‘availed themselves with pleasure of an opportunity to make the acquaintance of the latest pattern of the chassis’*. They wrote of the phenomenal power and ability to thread through London’s traffic in top gear at walking pace. “When the throttle is opened the passenger has the sensation of being pushed by the rear seat squab”.

The highest speed they drove at was 55mph, noting that 70mph was well within the car’s capability, but it was seldom safe or sensible to drive at this speed in Great Britain.

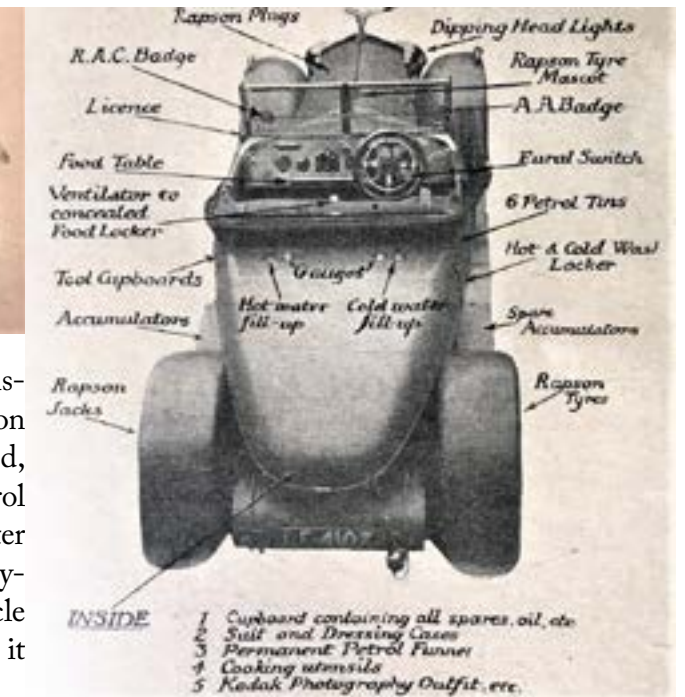
The drivers remarked that the springs were beyond reproach, and explained that this year the number of leaves in the rear cantilevers had been increased from five to eight. Over very poor roads the comfort in the rear was practically equal to that in the driver’s compartment. “Higher praise it would be impossible to give.”

They welcomed the addition of a radiator thermostat, and noted the quietness of the starter motor. They remarked that this was almost a superfluity and only used once in about ten stops. On all other occasions the engine started on the switch.

The only criticism was with the gear changing mechanism: they thought that if a gear-change were necessary it should be practically fool-proof, but “perhaps it was asking too much of Mr Royce to design a gearbox that would allow quiet changes to be made merely by pushing the lever from one slot to another”.



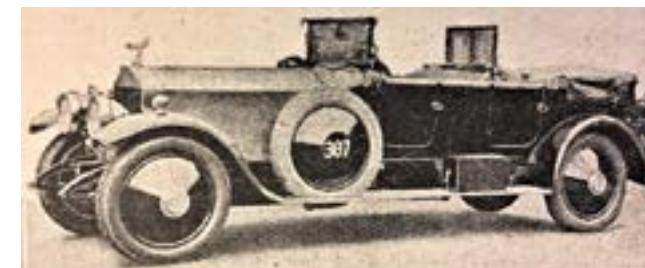
A Luxurious Two-Seater; April 1921 described a Rolls-Royce built for F Lionel Rapson (the proprietor Rapson Tyres). It featured numerous storage lockers for food, cooking utensils, suitcases, tools, accumulators, petrol tins and a wash basin supplied by hot and cold water tanks. Under a trap door in the floor was a permanently-fitted funnel for filling the petrol tank. Sadly the article does not name the coachbuilder (although we think it is 70JG with a Barker Coupe body).



The world’s best car; in May 1921, the same Lionel Rapson wrote at length about the superiority of the Napier, which he, ‘after searching tests’ asserted was the best car. He fully understood why the firm had got to the top. He immodestly cited his credentials for being in a position to make this judgement. “Never in my life have I handled anything to compare with the new Napier”, he wrote, “the efficiency of the engine is little short of marvellous...the beautiful movement of the suspension...the car leaps up steep hills like a greyhound...”

Unsurprisingly, this evoked nearly fifty letters in subsequent issues, some ridiculing Mr Rapson. A majority supported Rolls-Royce’s case, including such notables as SF Edge, GRN Minchin, and Phil Paddon. Napier themselves became involved, with managing director, HT Vane, writing on three occasions. Napier also made use of Rapson’s testimonial in their advertisements.

Rolls-Royce Ltd made no comment.



Herodotus (well known to our own Philip Hall) suggests a standing order to **Sir Henry Royce Memorial Foundation,**
Sort Code 20-20-15 A/c No 90525952
£20 a month would be fabulous if you could manage it!
Send Philip an email and let him know:
pah.rr@btinternet.com

Tyson Holds Forth

Graham Tyson, our membership secretary, owns a fine 1920 Silver Ghost (97AE) fitted with a touring body made by Cunard. Fearless of controversy he provides a regular source of fun, wit, and thoughtful reflection!

Let me start with a lesson; do not climb a ladder whilst carrying an 8ft x 4ft plywood board, it is not clever and you will fall off, trust me! So having learned my lesson the hard way I would just like to express my appreciation to those club members who somehow heard of my plight and telephoned, sent letters, emails, WhatsApps and cards. It cheered me up tremendously when lying on my back for weeks with my leg in the air. I must tell you that my leg repairs culminated in nine hours on the operating table which will be followed by many months of 'running in'. Interestingly (well to me at least) my surgeon told me that as recently as 30 years ago my mashed-up mess would have been deemed inoperable and resulted in amputation. Thank heavens for modern medical science!

And whilst I have your attention and, with apologies that this bit isn't car related, I was horrified to learn what a pittance the nurses earn, especially given they all need a degree. One who was on 5th pay grade earns just £15 per hour – that is the same as we pay our gardener for goodness' sake! The chaps who have recently been chauffeuring me around in the day ambulance earn £8.75 per hour, work long days and are abused, spat at and even attacked. They would earn £10ph on the Kelly's Ice Cream production line here in Cornwall and £11ph at Morrisons. As my surgeon said, it was ever thus, and every single Government regardless of political colour has taken advantage of the fact that the NHS is staffed by people who look on their jobs as a vocation. So forgive this semi-political rant in our club magazine but it just isn't right.

When I was young and came back home from school for Easter, the first morning of the holiday I would get up early, have breakfast, and my mother would make me sandwiches for lunch: I had a penchant for cold baked bean sandwiches, washed down with a bottle of Tizer (a sickly fizzy drink popular back then).



Obviously, in one's memory, the weather was always perfect. I would jump on my bicycle and ride along the farm tracks to the woods which in spring were laid with a carpet of bluebells. Then onwards through deserted lanes for three miles or so to a rutted grass track in the middle of nowhere. At the end was a breakers yard run by an elderly Irishman Dennis who I think was a Romany gypsy and who kept the ubiquitous Alsatian on a chain. Luckily Dennis seemed to enjoy my company and never minded if I rummaged around among the old bangers.

Next to the yard was a sloping meadow covered in cowslips (still my favourite flower) where I would sit and munch my soggy bean sandwiches.

One day there were six little Austin Sevens lined up awaiting their fate, to my youthful eyes they looked in excellent condition; each one had a complete set of side screens and inflated tyres. I asked Dennis if I could buy a couple of klaxons and he agreed provided I removed them myself and charged me 2 bob (10p). I still have the klaxons, in working order, in my garage with the rest of my ephemera.

However, on another day, there in the middle of the yard was (what I later realised) a very early Silver Ghost (three-speed gearbox) with wooden artillery wheels sans radiator and body. I can still feel that steering wheel and the gear lever in my hands. Dennis said I could have it for 40 quid as a favour. My mind raced as I frantically wondered whether I could get it towed back by the farm tractor and put in the stables at home.

But in my heart I knew the Silver Ghost was way beyond whatever limited expertise I fondly imagined I had. So I salved my disappointment by buying a radiator and wheel from a Bullnose Morris. I reckoned that if I bought other pieces over time then I could make up a complete car – the enthusiastic ignorance of youth!

I never did get together any other pieces but those two items stayed with me until about ten years ago when I bought a real Bullnose, and so finally sold them.

When I was nineteen I worked on the Church Commissioners Hyde Park Estate and walked to their Connaught Street office each day. One morning I spied a tatty skiff-bodied Rolls-Royce parked by the kerb. Knowing a little about Rolls-Royce motor cars by then I recognised it as a 20/25. The body was odd, it had the usual two seats but, behind them, a hatch containing another seat. There was no hood or weather protection.

Weeks stretched into months but the car remained right there. The interior had become waterlogged, tyres were soft and one side lamp had been stolen. After three months I left a note on the windscreen asking the owner to contact me, but had no response so I came up with a cunning plan. I would get a friend to tow it, with me steering it, back to a mews cottage where I had the use of a garage. Just for safe keeping – you understand – and go and tell the police what I had done. Who knows, it might have been dumped and I could eventually claim it for myself I thought with rising excitement.

And it came to pass. My chum arrived with his car, tow-rope plus tyre pump, I clambered in and we were off! We proceeded slowly and carefully along the Bayswater Road before turning into the mews. I can recall the awe and excitement I felt. 'I am driving a Rolls-Royce, the car of my dreams!'

We opened the doors of the garage and pushed the car onto the old wooden block floor, impregnated with oil from anonymous cars of yore. Having done the deed I then walked round to the Police Station to tell them and to give my contact details. I must say – I was a bit nervous – would I be arrested?

To say they were totally disinterested would be an understatement, they really could not care less but took down the details and nodded when I said I would be back in a few months if it remained unclaimed.

Weeks went past and I heard nothing, but just as I was beginning to believe that luck could be on my side I received a call "Hello I hear you have my Rolls." So I arranged a meeting at the mews cottage and was greeted by a not unfriendly hippie who thanked me for looking after his car whilst he had been abroad. He had it towed away and I thought that would be the last time I saw it. But no, the following week it was back, parked again by the road, with no protection. There it stayed, unloved, for many more months, deteriorating before my eyes until one day it disappeared. I often wonder what happened to it.

Some years ago I went back to see if there was any sign of Dennis's scrapyard, and perhaps even the Silver Ghost. To my distress I had great difficulty in identifying its location due to the many houses that had sprung up in the intervening years. The yard was no more, the grassy track had disappeared and the lovely cowslip meadow was under tarmac and buildings. So sad.

My word for the day which I must stress has absolutely no connection with my piece is:

MATAEOLOGIAN: Noun – one who speculates fruitlessly or who indulges in nonsense.

Below: an Austin Seven - the spitting image of one of the six in Dennis's scrapyard that day (does it still have a Klaxon?)



From Across the Pond

Kimberly Shadduck

Kimberly and Dave Shadduck own a Springfield Ghost (S131MK) and Springfield Phantom I (138FR). Kimberly is a photographer noted for her images of cars in motion as well as informal shots capturing both the spirit of our motors cars and our club.

Just a short column this time as Dave and I are rushing around packing and preparing our 1925 Silver Ghost for a tour that will have us touring to some of the majestic National Parks here in the USA. Fifteen exquisite cars will travel 3,600 miles through seven states in three weeks! We will be awe struck by the iconic Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Zion National, Bryce Canyon and Glacier National Park.

To be honest with you all we were supposed to be driving a brass era vehicle and unfortunately, our 1912 Pierce Arrow needs a new radiator and won't be ready when the trip starts on May 30th. Thankfully the tour master is allowing us to drive our Ghost and it will be in good company with the other Ghosts that will be on tour. John & Denise Dolan will bring their 1908 Ghost, Tim & Pia Sierra will be driving their 1911, Mike & Cynthia Sierra will be driving a 1912 and Steve Haines will be in his 1914. Pictures and stories next time.

So in the meantime, I was reviewing some of the photos from the wonderful Poland/Germany tour from a few years ago while remembering how I enjoy capturing images of the guys working on their cars in the early morning or at the end of day. Sometimes, they're simply lubricating, servicing and polishing their car before the day's travel, or they're tweaking and tightening up something on the engine that requires a special tool. Then there's the group of guys circled around one car, all their tails wagging as they help out on a car that needs more than one set of hands. I'll also overhear conversations where words like: magneto (dynamo), carburettor, valves, camshaft and manifold are



tossed around while the guys have either big smiles or serious looks on their faces (you ladies know what I'm talking about!) I don't understand what they're saying, but as they try to solve a problem and help each other with their knowledge and tools, I see car friends willing to get their hands dirty and assist someone who might be struggling in order to get them back on the road.

I know there will be times in the upcoming 3,600 miles when the guys may need each other's assistance, and of course they will be there for each other. The satisfaction that we derive in helping others and the gratitude we feel when we are back on the road with the assistance of great friends is one of the many special qualities of our car clubs. Drive safely, have fun and see you all very soon.

Clockwise from far left; Tim Kelly and Dave Shadduck with John Dolan (in the cap) and Jon Leimkuehler beside Tim's 1923 Silver Ghost 369XH Pall Mall Tourer, John Snook with his 1914 Silver Ghost 50YB, Gerald Davies with 1929 20HP GVO26 Landaulette, the guys manoeuvre Roland Duce's 1933 Phantom II Continental 31MW.





THE 20-GHOST CLUB RECORD

Vol 12 No 3 1971



73 SG AT MONT ST. MICHEL

Fifty Years On:

In Summer 1971 News & Record's lead article was penned by 16-year-old Jonathan Samuelson describing his family's trip to France in 73SG, their 1922 Silver Ghost Park Ward Tourer. In Summer 2021 both Jonathan and 73SG remain members.

If I'm honest I was just looking for inspiration as I was leafing through old (very old!) back issues. I looked at the cover shot opposite and just thought it magnificent. Fifty years ago - precisely. Where is that car now I wondered? So I looked it up on our database, and there it was: 73SG, Jonathan Samuelson - same car, same member. So I pinged Jonathan an email and he rang me up.

For a mad second I wondered about suggesting that we zoom down to Mont St Michel to recreate that 1971 image...but Covid and all that...I did say it was a bonkers thought.

Anyway, for many years now 73SG has been cared for and stored by AJ Glew in Moreton-in-Marsh, deep in the Cotswolds, and so one May morning, Jonathan and I arrived at Messrs Glew to be greeted by Allan and his son Frazer (general manager and pictured below chatting to Jonathan). 73SG was waiting for us, she started without a murmur and we set off into the countryside.

Now, this May's weather has not been kind and that morning the sky was purple - heavily laden with rain ready to fall. But Silver Ghosts and their owners pay no heed to such concerns and I could see that Jonathan and his car were as one. You don't own a touring car to have the hood up - well do you?





Jonathan takes up the story:

I have to say that the editor of The 20-Ghost Club Record is relentless in his demands for copy for the magazine. No sooner had I written one article than he is back on to me to write another. It is a mere fifty years since I wrote my previous article and these constant demands for more and more content arriving, as they do, every half century is actually quite wearing. Nag, nag, nag.

Since the last article the Silver Ghost has been a constant thread through our family life. We went through a phase of attending various 20-Ghost Club rallies and then settled into regular overseas tours which encompassed most of Southern Europe including a memorable trip to Greece culminating in me driving 73SG to the top of the Acropolis. I don't think you are allowed to drive cars up there anymore. Our children Jane and Robert were able to use our Silver Ghost at their weddings and that is also now part of our history with 73SG.

My father bought it at an auction at Blenheim in 1968. Previously it had been a breakdown truck with a crane on the back. Dad wanted a Silver Ghost as his brother had acquired two Spitfires and a Hurricane and he didn't want to be left behind in the Rolls-Royce stakes. Incidentally my uncle flew one of the Spitfires in the 1969 Daily Mail Transatlantic Air Race from London's Post Office Tower to the Empire State Building (although he changed to a twin engine Piper in Shannon).

Out of my three brothers I was the only one who was interested – besotted even – with the car and so, from the age of about 13, it was my baby and remains so – to this day. Every time I go to Allan Glew's workshop to pick the car up we always end up having a wonderful day. I invariably say to myself as I return the car to Moreton-in-Marsh that I must take the car out again soon. Sadly, the gaps between me pumping up the fuel pressure seem to get longer and longer. This is, I suppose, a function of a busy life, children, work and just not making enough time to use the car.

I love the routines through which one has to go in order to start up the engine. The switch over from the starting carburetor to the main carburetor. Not too soon but not too late either. I love knowing that I will not be able to get the car into the direct drive top gear without a bit of a crunch for at least 10 miles until the gear box oil has warmed up and thinned down a bit. I love that I find myself always, at some point, trying the exhaust cut out even though I am explicitly warned that it is "Not for use in the United Kingdom". Anyone reading this who is not familiar with starting and driving a Silver Ghost will probably think I am mad. However I believe anyone who is familiar with starting and driving a Silver Ghost will recognise all of these simple but unforgettable features that make owning and running a Silver Ghost such fun.

I particularly enjoy the satisfaction of carrying out a clean, crunch free, gear change. The combination of judging your speed at the same time as deftly double-declutching is, when it goes well, a joy. This is made even more pleasurable when changing down. The constant surprise, even after driving the car myself for nearly fifty years, is that you always need more revs from the engine than you think. Changing down brings with it, of course, the added frisson of fear as the traffic lights or roundabout get closer. Will I make the change down into third gear or second gear before the junction is getting too close and I have to resort to the brakes? Should I have another go at changing down or is the roundabout just too close now? These are all feelings, I am sure, that are all too familiar to Silver Ghost drivers. They are almost secret experiences known only to those lucky enough to have a car like 73SG to drive.

One of my favourite Silver Ghost tricks is to see how long after I have stopped the engine it is before I can no longer start it again by moving the timing control on the steering wheel quickly from Early

to Late. No one else knows I am doing this. Not even my own family. But again, I am sure I am not alone in enjoying these Silver Ghost peculiarities.

Another feature of Silver Ghost ownership with an open tourer (Park Ward) bodywork is just how wet does it have to be before you give in to the howls of protest from those in the back behind the Auster rear screen get too much? Eventually you have to stop. "Right. Right I'll stop. I'll put up the hood. But you know the rain is going to stop soon and then you'll want me to put the hood down again". Of course, a passenger who insists it is too wet to carry on without putting the hood up must also expect to be the person who is my assistant in putting the hood up. This involves them getting out of the car and braving it with me as we man handle the hood into place and wondering how much further the hood can possibly go up vertically before it is ready to be rotated down and onto the windscreen. Surely the tensioning straps must have shrunk as I don't remember it being this difficult to get them on to the clips at the back!

Fifty years. Don't they go by in a blink?

Opposite: After a mid '80s rebuild/restoration 73SG is now painted in a more sober blue than 'aircraft blue' livery of 1971.

Left & Below: Jonathan is full of stories from a half-century of ownership and fun.



Extract from the 20-Ghost Club Record Vol 12 No 3 1971:

A Ghost Goes West

73 SG Visits Brittany: Jonathan Samuelson

We thought long and hard before deciding to attempt a 1,000 mile round trip of Normandy and Brittany in April in our 1922 Ghost but decided to throw caution to the wind and go ahead with the planning. How lucky we were to have taken this so called chance because we all experienced something quite exceptional, which turned out to be a most memorable occasion.

We are a family of seven, my mother and father, two grandmothers, two brothers and myself plus our dearly loved 1922 Silver Ghost (chassis No 73SG) with its open tourer bodywork by Park Ward. While seven can travel reasonably comfortably in the Ghost we did take a relatively uninteresting Vauxhall Viva with us to act as a kind of 'Sherpa' for luggage and as an insurance in case the weather turned out badly. This was important because my two grandmothers (who are both game for anything) are in their seventies and might have found the cold too much for them if the April weather was up to the usual standard expected in the part of France we were venturing into. In the event, the Easter weather was the best in living memory in Brittany and our problem was only one of trying to persuade somebody to accompany either my father or my elder brother when they were following in the Viva. We did take a pair of walki-talkies to keep in touch with each vehicle but, who wants to travel in a 1971 saloon when the alternative is a glorious 49 year old Ghost?

We travelled to Southampton in cold and wet weather wondering if we were about to participate in an endurance test more appropriate to a group working for the Duke of Edinburgh Award and drove ourselves on to the Thoresen ferry full of concern. Our fears were not helped by the fact that the crossing was the worst experienced this year and we all staggered off at Le Havre looking a particular shade of green, a distinct clash with the vivid aircraft blue paintwork of our Ghost. After spending the night at Le Havre we woke to find hazy sunshine and clear minds which indicated the holiday could work out tolerably well after all.

D Roads Preferred: Our route was planned with nine stops at various towns and villages where one could find less than outstanding hotels but excellent restaurants. This worked very well as there was no need to change into anything other than our travelling clothes in the hotels and the addition of a tie was virtually all that was required when we arrived for dinner at the various restaurants my father had selected from Michelin.

Throughout the trip we travelled on D roads, those pale yellow ones on the map. And this was certainly the way to do it. An eminently suitable plan for the kind of journey we had in mind. These roads are universally excellent, not only the surface which is kept in first class order but the lack of other traffic made motoring a pleasure. We travelled for miles without seeing another vehicle of any kind and we all decided that this is how motoring must have been 49 years ago, when our car was born and when travelling by road was not the miserable undertaking it is today.

In case any readers are interested in knowing where we went I will list the places we visited during the ten days.

Le Havre, Caen, Pontorson, Mont St. Michel, Paimpol, St Michel en Grève, Brest, Landévennec, Argol, Quimper, Pont-Aven, Rennes, (including the motor museum on the Fougères road) Thury Harcourt, the Normandy beach-heads and Arromanches where parts of the Mulberry harbour can still be seen.



Our routing was to ensure it was never necessary to make an early start on any day! My family are not members of that strange breed which happily enjoys rolling out of bed at dawn, in fact we are just the opposite. We seldom left the hotel before 11am at which time we did our shopping for lunch which was taken picnic style wherever we happened to find ourselves at the right hour. This simple little idea gave us great pleasure and we found a series of delightful stopping places where we were on our own and able to enjoy a relatively simple menu of fresh French bread, pâté de campagne, a selection of three or four Normandy cheeses, fresh fruit and yoghurt, the whole thing rounded off with genuine English type tea made on the spot with the aid of Camping Gaz. Our total journey each day was never more than 120 miles so there was no need to attempt to break any records; we just took things quietly and found that the miles were covered completely without effort and in less time than one would have thought.

Photographers' delight: Of course one of the delights of the trip was the intense interest the Ghost created everywhere we went. We have always felt that one of the nicest things about owning a Ghost is that it has the knack of making people smile and it seems to us that even those who see the car and who are not lucky enough to own one can still get some pleasure from it. The enthusiasm in France was much greater than we expected and we found the local press miraculously appeared at some place where we stopped for the night. Somehow word must have reached the village photographer because on several occasions a man with a camera was waiting for us to appear from the hotel in the morning anxious to get a picture of the strange English family and the remarkable car they had arrived in.

It is interesting to note that the fact about the Ghost always asked first by our French friends was 'combien de kilomètres par litre?' I suppose fuel consumption is most important to the French with the price they have to pay for petrol there. We appeared in featured articles in four newspapers; not bad for a first and short trip!

Unlike many members of the 20-Ghost Club we are newcomers to the joys of ownership, being only in our third year. I suppose it was because of this inexperience that we had some doubts about the viability of the trip we planned, completely under-estimating the capability of our car and the quality of the restoration carried out for us by Joe Fildes. Such was our ignorance that I am ashamed to admit we carried a tow rope with us in case of need and we now ease our conscience by convincing ourselves that we only took it in case the Viva broke down! I am sure members will not be at all surprised to hear that we had absolutely no trouble with the car from the start to finish. The French people we were in contact with were over-friendly, if one can say that, and it was a wonderful experience for us all. We did plan each of our night stops to be at a hotel with a lock-up garage available for obvious reasons but still managed to lose the engine oil filler cap, presumably to some French person seeking a souvenir of 'les fous Anglais!' (Does any member happen to have a spare one?).

Now we look forward to a summer holiday by Silver Ghost all the way to the Côte d'Azur and nobody will get us to put the car on the train, that is for sure. We will spend seven days from London to Cannes, hopefully finding lots more D roads again, seeing real France and experiencing real motoring. It will be for us what I believe used to be called the GRAND TOUR.

Left: Jonathan enjoys his lunchtime yoghurt.

Right: 73SG, always the centre of interest, as here in Rennes.

Page 6420: Peter Samuelson leans out of the driving seat, with Marc standing and Jonathan in the passenger seat. The Viva 'Sherpa' is behind parked up on the verge.



Michael Power, chairman of Bicester Heritage, during the VSCC driving test, charges past the Bicester control tower in Silver Ghost 58CW. *'I bought the chassis in 2007 and it is, rather unusually for 1920, a brass car. I got the body secondhand but made, quite recently, for a 1919 Ghost. So I finally have a vaguely presentable car. The history of the chassis has not been obliterated and you can see the remains of 'Hackney Carriage' once clearly painted on the petrol tank. Sadly I do not know where or when it plied its trade.'*

Picture: Peter McFadyen

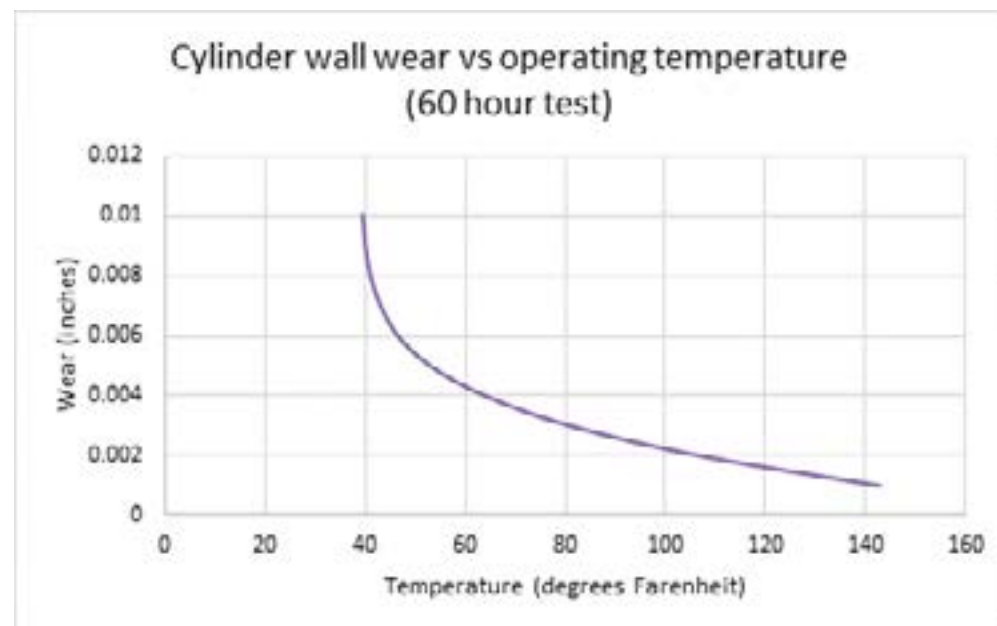


The Peril of Pressing the Button

Just How Much Does Your Engine Wear?

Henry Fitzhugh and friends discuss the issue of cold starting.

Ever since I started driving at age nine (no licence necessary to drive farm machinery on public roads in Texas), I have heard folklore from other drivers about the damage and wear done when starting an engine from cold. One person in particular, not a member of our Club, asserted authoritatively that the equivalent of 500 miles wear was done every time. Tired of hearing this I decided to try to get some real evidence. After a great deal of searching I found the graph below.



(Graph from How to Rebuild Big-Block Ford Engines by Steve Christ 1983, The Berkley Publishing Group)

The data was created by running several identical engines at various constant oil temperatures for 60 hours each, the oil presumably being cooled externally. Now our 25/30s take a half hour for the oil temperature to come up to a steady state, and it is possible to translate it into wear versus time data.

Without going through all the maths and graphs (which anyone is welcome to see by contacting me), the conclusion is that the average wear rate per hour in the first half hour is 5.3 times the constant wear rate thereafter. Thus, the same total wear is suffered in the next 2.65 hours as was experienced during the half hour warm-up. To put it another way, our 25/30 averages 20mph and thus warms up peacefully for 10 miles in the first half hour. She experiences for the next 2.65 hours the same amount of engine wear in the next 53 miles, at 20 mph. So, in a journey of a total of 63 miles, the wear is double that suffered during warm-up.

But what is the actual cause of this excess wear? Harry Ricardo stated in *Memories and Machines*, p.219, "Research into this subject concluded that most of the cylinder wear in current [1920s] petrol engines was in fact due to chemical corrosion and that the moral was as, far as possible, to keep the engine warm so that the inner surface of the cylinder bore should not fall below the dew-point of the various corrosive substances of which sulphur appeared to be the worst offender. During the early 20s the automobile industry as a whole urged upon its customers the desirability, whenever possible, of running their engines idle for several minutes after a cold start in order to ensure a thorough circulation of lubricating oil. Nothing could be worse than this custom for initiating cylinder wear. The immediate effect of this finding was the abandonment of this practice and the introduction of thermostats to hasten, as far as possible, the warming-up period of the engine."



Henry Fitzhugh and 'Emily' 1937 25/30 GRP4 Park Ward touring (close coupled) limousine in Potsdam.

Picture: Kimberly Shaddock.

Ricardo updated this advice in 1960 in his book *The High Speed Internal Combustion Engine*, fourth edition, pp. 295-297. In short, most cylinder wear is caused by condensation of acid products of combustion on the area at the top of the bore, where the piston rings are forced outwards by the gas pressure of combustion and the rings momentarily are stationary. This ruptures the oil film which is scraped away as the ring initially descends. During the descent, the ring rides back up the oil film resulting in negligible wear to the lower part of the bore. With the oil film scraped away, the bore is unprotected from acid combustion products. The bore needs to be above about 120 degrees C to prevent condensation of the acids. This generally means a water temperature of at least 60 degrees. Quick warm-up is clearly a good idea and the use of a thermostatically controlled bypass will assist that, as it is not necessary to heat up the whole radiator during the initial warm up. Use of a multigrade oil which circulates rapidly from start-up was proven in the 1950s to reduce engine wear as well.

The clear lesson from this is that is best to start your engine and begin driving immediately in your normal habit, so as to warm up as quickly as possible, rather than letting the engine warm up during a prolonged idle. Rolls-Royce wanted its engines to run at 80° C. Don't just start the engine just to move out of the garage – take her for a short drive. If your car does not have any thermostatic control, it is even more important to get going and get warmed up. Another improvement theoretically possible is to install an electric engine heater to be employed before starting – some modern cars had these fitted as standard.

The author is indebted to Anthony Armitage & Nigel Hughes for extracts from Ricardo and helpful comments.

Editor: Henry's article has already generated a fair amount of email comment some of which is reproduced below. It didn't come quite soon enough for us, though, as it was in mid-2020 that I noticed The Doctor (20HP GFN80) begin to judder. Not bad, but definitely something new. It happened at certain revs and if you speeded up or slowed down or engaged O/D then it would go away. Gradually it got worse. Roy O' Sullivan drove it and diagnosed a worn crankshaft damper. On removal it was indeed seized and was sent off to Tim Payne for refacing.

Then Steve White who now looks after our cars mechanically, drained the oil and didn't like what he found. If you look at the picture of the big end opposite you can see a flake of detached metal... and they were all like that. The poor old thing couldn't have driven much further without a major problem! There were fragments of white metal all through the oil. 20HP radiators are super-efficient but there is no thermostat or calorstat. The engine temperature remains very low with the shutters fully closed after 20 odd miles. Our crankshaft was full of sludge and the holes to oil the big ends were all blocked. Whether the failure of the damper caused this breakup or whether the lack of oil was the cause of the failure of the damper I don't know. Chicken and egg. Anyway, thank goodness that the problem has been identified as it could have been catastrophic.

Tim Payne at FW Payne produces a 20HP thermostat kit and Fiennes do an oil filter kit both of which have been purchased...but in the meantime the bottom end of the engine has been removed and sent off to Payne's for rebuilding (thankfully the crankshaft, cylinders and pistons seem okay).

Nigel Hughes: Proper functioning of crankshaft dampers or slipper drives is essential to the survival of the crankshaft of any in-line 6 cylinder engine. The worst case is when they become stuck solid (usually after a long period of storage). Our engines have poor crankcase ventilation so damper surfaces corrode and seize. The only preventative measure is to change the engine oil at the end of the season and run to full temperature to circulate the new oil before the car is laid up. The only official bible available to us remains 'Service Instructions for Rolls-Royce cars', TSD2066, which includes all pre-war models apart from Silver Ghosts. It contains thorough information on damper symptoms and overhaul. I am advised that some dampers are marked with the original optimum poundage setting, which could vary from engine to engine.

On a slightly different topic the 1925 SG had a thermostat and bypass. The handbook says the water should run at 85°C. Why did R-R not use a bypass on the PII? I suspect that many owners did not use antifreeze in winter and there is a much higher risk of the radiator freezing when using a bypass, even if warm water has been used to fill up an engine that

had been drained as a frost precaution.

Anthony Armitage: I think Nigel's comment re the 1925 SG having a thermostat and his hypothesis why it wasn't continued in the PII or the PI for that matter ought to be included for general interest. Dealing with frost in those days without antifreeze or heated garages was not straight forward. One of the reasons so few PI exhaust heated carburettor up pipes exist in one piece (in the UK) is the exhaust condensed in the jacket and subsequently froze in the unheated garage cracking the bottom of the up pipe outer casing. The Springfield cars got round this and got a more stable temperature in their up pipes by connecting them into the water coolant via tapping two of the core plugs. The same frost problem was true of rainwater freezing in the Mazac casings of Smiths cable driven wiper gear boxes.

On Rolls-Royces, like ours, the cylinder walls are only lubricated by splash from the oil escaping from the big ends etc., on the crankshaft. If the engine is only ticking over there isn't enough 'splash'. So once the oil pressure has reached its normal level it is better to get the engine turning over at a reasonable speed say 500 600 700 800 or whatever 30 mph is in top. Tick over is jolly slow in our cars - only 200 and on Ghosts probably less.

Steve White: In a Rolls-Royce the oilways are long; oil has to go through many pipes and galleries, then through the crank via the main bearings into the big ends, and up the con rods via a pipe on each one to the small ends. It also has to go up to the valve gear; through the rocker shaft to the rockers etc. It can take 20 seconds or more for the oil to get that far, but you generally get oil pressure after 5 seconds.

Once the oil has fully "got round", pick the idle right up whilst you shut the garage doors, then drive off smartly, without thrashing, to get everything up to temperature as soon as possible. Don't flog the engine, make it labour, or over-rev, but load it up and make it work in its mid-range. A modern thermostat is a huge boon for this, as it traps the coolant in the engine water jacket so there is a smaller volume to heat, rather than merely shutting the louvres (which means the entire coolant capacity is still being circulated and cooled by the enormous radiator - albeit closed off from the outside air). Big old engines have a

huge mass of metal, oil and water to heat to get to operating temperature, and it takes time.

Try getting the oil temperature up in an Aston V8 - 2 ½ gallons from memory, you have to drive for miles (25 plus) to get the gauge to move!

With a big engine, in a ship for example, oil pressure is achieved with an auxiliary pump first, before the engine is started, to avoid dry starts. Modern multigrade oils are thin for start-up, so they get everywhere quickly when cold. They have excellent "cling", so stay put, hot or cold. Over the years, engine oil has become as highly developed as internal combustion engines themselves.

Key things:

• **Change the oil. Change the oil. Change the oil!**

Right: Not a happy picture, a dismantled, and very dry, big end from 20HP 'The Doctor' GFN80. The flake on the left is disintegrated white metal.



Below: Rather better, a freshly rebuilt PII bottom end plus lovely new big ends. You also get an idea of the massive size of a large horsepower engine.



A Motor Drive from Buckinghamshire to Andalusia

Fokko Keuning takes us on a pan-European journey in his PII

As you will note from the title, we are travelling from B to A, rather than A to B. Thus, if you find this little write-up a bit pointless, you have been forewarned. The title is inspired by the book: Europe in the Looking Glass by Robert Byron, published in 1926, when Byron was just 21. The subtitle is: Reflections of a Motor Drive from Grimsby to Athens. Byron and two friends drove a Sunbeam Tourer (most likely a 1924 24/70) called Diana; a suitable name for a car destined for the bucolic fields of Attica. The book was, in a way, a precursor to the work by Patrick Leigh Fermor, even if he went by foot and was a much more accomplished writer. We travelled by Rolls-Royce of course, a Phantom II Continental 1933, Barker Sports Saloon, chassis 47MW. One of her former owners, John Donner, named her Alf, after her UK registration ALF 678. If I am not mistaken, Alf is a masculine name, whereas all Rolls-Royces are undeniably feminine. Our car is, alas, now registered in The Netherlands under the uninspiring number of AM2040. I could call her Amalia, after our crown princess, but that would perhaps be a little too presumptuous.

The first leg to Harwich was uneventful. In overdrive 47MW is quite capable of keeping up with modern traffic, even on motorways. I normally drive between 60-70mph on motorways, weather and traffic conditions permitting. Faster is forbidden in the UK and the car tends to consume even more abhorrent quantities of petrol above 70mph. In Harwich we had dinner at the old fashioned and reasonably pleasant Alma pub. Oysters, Dover sole and sticky toffee pudding: the joys of English cooking before venturing out into the Continent, with all its culinary thrills and deceptions. And so having been properly fed and watered we took the night ferry to the Hook of Holland, and from there we drove to Aerdenhout near Haarlem, where our car could rest for a few days.

From Aerdenhout we drove to the Champagne region, staying in a castle where the servants acted as if they were my long-lost best friends. I shall not bore you with the name of the place. 47MW had consumed a lot of petrol, but had stayed quiet on the oil with no coolant loss to speak of. We continued south to Condrieu on the river Rhône. Partly by autoroute, but mostly by secondary and even tertiary roads. Here 47MW came into her element, quietly and purposefully humming forward, the overdrive not engaged, but still making very good progress. The joys of uncluttered country driving!

We continued south to Lorgues (yes, the Hotel Bruno, famous for its truffle dinners) and thence to Canadel, where we visited the former winter home of Sir Henry Royce. Temperatures were rising, but our car did not overheat. However, on long climbs it was necessary to shift to third gear. In the heat, oil consumption increased and for the first time I had to top up the coolant a bit. From the Côte d'Azur we drove to the north of Catalonia, mainly all autovias, where we hit 75 and even 80mph. To teach us some humility the entrance to the hotel garage was so steep and narrow that I nearly burnt out the clutch by trying to get out again.

South to our Spanish home in Ontinyent, about 60 miles southwest of Valencia. Here 47MW could rest again and was treated to some routine maintenance and cleaning. Onwards to Cazorla, in the northern mountains of Andalusia. First, we drove on good provincial roads, but upon entering the mountains the going became narrow, steep and with extremely sharp curves. It was terribly hot and 47MW was labouring to keep going, her tyres screeching when cornering, her chassis severely pummeled, her engine stressed to the limit, but she did not boil! We arrived in time, safe and sound: a tribute to the excellence and sturdiness of Rolls-Royce engineering and workmanship.

Long Crendon 50,660 miles
Harwich
Hook of Holland
Aerdenhout
Rotterdam
Brussels
Mons
Maubeuge
Laon
Bourg et Comin
Fismes
Fère en Tardenois
Dormans
Romilly sur Seine
Auxerre
Arnay le Duc
Sercy
Cluny
Vienne
Condrieu
Cornas
Montélimar
Uchaux
Courthezon
Cavaillon
Pertuis
Jouques
Tavernes
Lorgue
Vidauban
Cocolin
La Môle
Rayol-Canadel
Le Lavandou
Pierrefeuf-du-Var
Toulon
Bandol
Marseilles
Salon de Provence
Arles
Nîmes
Montpellier
Marseillan
Narbonne
Perpignan
Figueras
Girona
Barcelona
Tarragona
Valencia
Ontinyent
Yecla
Jumilla
Hellin
Riopar
Puerta de Segura
Tranco
Arroyo Frio
Cazorla
Quesada
Jodar
Jaén
Alcaudete
Priego de Cordoba
Loja
Santa Fe
La Malahá
Mondujár
Lanjaron
Orgiva
Cádiar
Laroles
La Calahorra
Huéneja
Tabernas
Cuevas de Almanzora
Los Gallardos
Mojácar
Cartagena
Murcia
Torrevieja
La Marina
Santa Pola
Sant Vicent del Raspeig
Alcoi
Ontinyent 53,374 miles
Total 2,714 miles

The next day we drove further south to the Finca La Bobadilla, near Loja. The roads were even more challenging than the day before, but again we arrived in time, without mishap. But now 47MW was begging for oil! She had consumed just under 1 pint of oil per 100 miles, which surprised me quite a bit. She also needed coolant to top up her reservoir: half a gallon. A thirsty day. We were parched too, but La Bobadilla is a nice place which I can safely recommend - libations were brought aplenty and instantly! From there we drove south of Granada to Lanjaron and into the Alpujarra and the Sierra Nevada. In order to reach the village of La Calahorra in the province of Granada (there is also a La Calahorra in La Rioja) we had to cross the Puerto de la Ragua, some 25 miles long, some 2000 metres high and exceedingly narrow and steep. We had to do most in second gear, going down was even more frightening than going up. 47MW had a hard time, reaching 95C but she did not boil.

In La Calahorra there is nothing to do but going to see the magnificent renaissance castle, built around 1509 by the Mendoza family. *[Ed: See Fokko's amazing shot on the rear cover].* The unpaved road up the hill is very rough with tight curves, necessitating backing up. We nearly skidded into a gully. The castle has not been inhabited for a very long time but is still owned by the Mendoza heirs. The current keeper is Maria de la Almudena de Arteaga y del Alcazar,



20th Duchess del Infantado - a writer of historic novels. She is also the 24th Almirante de Aragon. This is strictly speaking not a title of nobility, but perhaps the oldest honorific title in Spain, dating back to the 13th century, instituted by Fernando III the Saint, king of Castile and Leon (died 1252).

You might think that a landlocked country like Aragon would not have a navy nor need an admiral, but things are not that simple. I am given to understand that even Luxembourg has some knightly order with naval connotations. It is rumoured that when an Italian diplomat pointed this out to Churchill, the latter remarked that he was not surprised. 'But why not!' exclaimed the Italian. 'Well' Churchill replied, 'you Italians have a minister of finance and yet your country has no money'. Of course I cannot guarantee that this is a true story, but I stick to the Italian theme: si non è vero, è ben trovato. In 2012 the municipality of La Calahorra offered to buy the castle for Euro15 million, but the family refused. They are one of the biggest landowners in Spain and remind one of the vestiges of the feudal past, still in evidence today.

For those of you interested in a bit of Spanish background I recommend the excellent book:

Ghosts of Spain by Giles Tremlett, ISBN 978-0-571-27939-5

The owners of 29WR, 1928 Rolls-Royce New Phantom; by John Arthy

Many of our cars have interesting histories and famous owners but in precious few cases is the ownership history well documented throughout the life of the car. That's not the case here and current custodian, John Arthy tells the story.

1st Owner: 29WR was 'Off Test' on 30th October 1928 and the long wheelbase chassis, with 'D' rake steering was dispatched on 5th November 1928 to HJ Mulliner of Chiswick for fitting of a four seat 'Open Touring' body. This included one rear spare wheel carrier, cobra horn, Auster rear screen, and Barker dip mechanism. The coachwork was finished in 'Fiat blue and black'. Finally, the completed car was delivered on 5th January 1929 by Harry Fleck, the Rolls-Royce sales department driver, to its first owner: Vincent Hemery of Grantham, Lincolnshire who paid £2,463-13s.

Hemery (1857-1944), a bachelor, was educated at Harrow, and Trinity Cambridge. His family were tea merchants who also owned Jersey fruit farms. He was a brilliant horseman with a passion for racing and hunting and became well-known as a successful horse owner and breeder. He must have also had a passion for motoring because he ordered twelve Rolls-Royce motor cars between 1923 and 1936, all from HJ Mulliner, a number of which were fitted with his unusual two seater dickey design.

2nd Owner: Hemery didn't hold onto 29WR for long and, in March 1930, it was acquired by Major James Onslow Kingsmill Delap DSO (1882-1957) for £1,335 via Hooper & Carnie of Nairobi. Known as JOK Delap, he was born in Ireland and educated at Wellington College and Christ Church Oxford. At the outbreak of the first war he joined the Royal Artillery served on the Western Front and was awarded the DSO. Between 1920-1924 he sold his entire English estates, comprising of 25,000 acres in Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, including 11 Farms, a manor and vicarage in the village of Lillingstone Lovel and emigrated to Kenya to grow tobacco, sugar, and coffee. Presumably Delap had bought the car sight unseen and before it was

shipped to Kenya the Cricklewood London Depot fitted new springs and shock absorbers, more suited for East African roads. The car was shipped from London to Kenya, on the *SS Llandaff Castle* and arrived in Mombasa on 28th April 1930.

3rd Owner: In October 1932, hotelier, planter, and Government coffee expert, Maxwell Douglas Le Poer Trench purchased 29WR. He had been born in Jamaica and with his business partner, John Carberry (formerly Baron Carbery, who had dropped his title) had a coffee plantation at Sememai, Nyeri. Together with his wife Nellie, Trench also ran the Jadini Hotel on Diani beach 20 miles south of Mombasa. He was a man of many parts and, having learnt from his parents in Jamaica how to distill, had a liquor still at Sememai, where he made excellent rum for family and friends. These were the years of the Kenyan Happy Valley set – as depicted in *White Mischief*.

4th Owner: Maxwell Douglas Le Poer Trench parted company with 29WR in March 1935 when it came into the ownership of The Central African Travel Company, of Kampala, Uganda, East Africa and from there on to...

5th Owner: ...become the property of the British High Commission in Dar es Salaam. 29WR was used as a diplomatic car by His Excellency the Governor & Commander-in-Chief, Sir Harold MacMichael, GCMG, DSO, (1882-1969) who had a distinguished military career. He also established the Tanganyika Museum in 1934. A photograph of 29WR was taken on 12th May 1937 (King George VI's Coronation) showing the Governor arriving for the celebration in Dar es Salaam. Note the Spirit of Ecstasy fitted on the scuttle, with the Governor's pendant on the radiator cap. Sir Harold left Tanganyika in January 1938 for a new post in Palestine.



6th Owner: The incoming Governor, in July 1938, was Sir Mark Aitchinson Young KCMG who remained in Tanganyika until June 1941. It doesn't sound like the Rolls-Royce was used much in those difficult years and Sir Mark's daughter Dr. Janet Owens remembers: "a car that was never used and lived throughout our time in Dar es Salaam, housed in one of the garages at Government House"

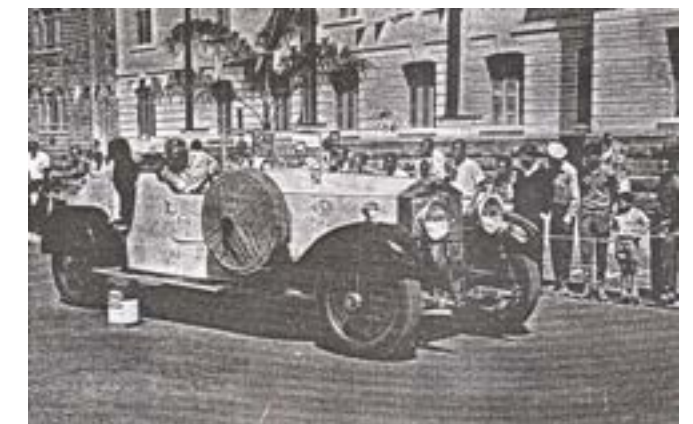
In 1942, shortly after Sir Mark had left office, 29WR was commandeered by the British Army and used as transport for officers in the African Campaign. The vehicle saw active service and was virtually destroyed in German attacks. It was almost retired to the scrap heap!

7th Owner: But in February 1947 29WR was purchased from the army by S Le Mesurier Lavers, (1904-1985) of St Andrew's School, Turi, Kenya. 'Peter' or 'Bonzo' or 'Pa', as he was variously known, established the school in 1931, together with his wife Jean (aka 'Ma'). The school educated the children of local farmers and, from small beginnings with 15 pupils, grew to serve



over 100 children from a large area of Kenya and Uganda. The school founded by 'Ma & Pa' still flourishes celebrating its 90th anniversary this year. In 1948 29WR was a shooting brake, much more appropriate for conveying school-children than the previous wrecked tourer. The spare wheels had been relocated as side mounts to allow access to the back doors which had non R-R locking handles. 'Ma and Pa' owned the car until 1960.

8th Owner: Jacob (aka Jack) Lionel Ruben (born 1929) a director of Express Transport and councillor of Nairobi City Council from 1958-1965 purchased the car in 1960. Ruben, who had served with the Kenya Regiment during the 1960 Mau Mau emergency, owned many pre-WWII cars and was a keen member of the East African Veteran Car Club. In 1965 a photograph shows 29WR with a rather unbecoming two-seater body at the EAVCC annual vintage car run from Kericho to Nakuru.



9th Owner: In 1966 Willie Balabanoff bought 29WR from Jack Ruben. The family owned J Balabanoff & Sons who were Underground Tank Manufacturers, Plumbers, and Tinsmiths but Willie had met Jack Reuben whilst they had served together in the Kenya Regiment. In 1967 Willie commissioned 29WR's fourth (and current) body, to be built by Cassini & Tonolo.

Vittorio Cassini & Cesare Tonolo came to Kenya from Eritrea in 1948 with a group of Italian lorry owners to work on a contract for Express Transport Ltd of Nairobi (where 29WR 8th owner Jack Ruben was a director). The following year they set up Cassini & Tonolo mainly working for local Ford agents transforming saloons into estate wagons, but also creating specialised commercial bodies and luxury buses. By 1967 tourism in Kenya allowed an



opening to expand their business by creating safari vehicles. They took vans and Land Rovers and cut out the roof sections to install viewing platforms for safari trips.

The hot climate, termites, and bad roads caused severe damage to traditional pre-WWII ash-framed bodies but Vittorio Cassini was a skilled metal worker creating steel frames clad in aluminum. 29WR was the second car to be rebodied by Cassini in that manner at their factory in Bamburi Road, Nairobi and, in all, 10 pre-war cars are said to have been rebodied with steel frames, including 6 Rolls-Royces, 2 Bentleys and an Alfa Romeo. The EAVCC Newsletter of July 1967, mentions Willie Balabanoff with his 1928 Phantom One on the Annual Rally from Kericho to Nakuru.

In late 1969 Willie Balabanoff emigrated to South Africa to start up a new car business with his brother Laurie. Willie personally boxed up 29WR for transportation by train from Nairobi to Mombasa, then aboard the *SS Kampala* to Durban, and finally by train again to Johannesburg. The address is shown as PO Box 373, Florida Hills, 1716, South Africa.

10th Owner: In 1970 the car was auctioned by Burchmores of Johannesburg and sold to Mr. Jan Botha for 8,100 Rand. Jan Botha was a wealthy Verwoerdburg businessman and bought the car to take his three daughters to the church when they got married.

11th Owner: Within 5 years 29WR changed hands again. The new owner was Wilse Mare of Pretoria. His name is mentioned as a participant on the Castrol-Datsun International Veteran and Vintage Car Rally held in South Africa between Durban and Cape Town from 11th to 21st March 1975.

12th Owner: On 20th May 1977 Sothebys South Africa auctioned the car and with a bid of Rand15,000 (£10,000) Craig Karr (director of a large family owned California rubber manufacturer) became the next owner. 29WR was trucked from Pretoria to Mombasa and placed aboard the Nedlloyd Kingston, arriving in Los Angeles USA in July 1977. "I must say that the engine ran superbly, and I have never driven a finer running Rolls P1 anywhere". The service work was carried out by Fred Buess of Hemet, California, whose expertise was without equal on the West Coast.

13th Owner: In 1985 Craig Karr had the opportunity to buy a Silver Ghost and also learned that Gene Littler the famous American golfer (8 PGA titles) wanted a P1. A mutual contact assisted in making the sale. 29WR clearly wasn't much loved as at one stage Littler placed an advert in the RROC's Flying Lady magazine: 'PHANTOM 1 (29WR) 1928 Cassini Tourer. Old restoration; very nice, \$37,500.'

Eventually, Californian dealer Mervyn Wright acquired 29WR as part of Gene Littler's entire collection including five Rolls-Royces. He mentions that 29WR was the 'Ugly Duckling' of the group, but mechanically one of the very best. 29WR was driven from Los Angeles to San Francisco and shipped back to the UK arriving in Harwich on 7th July 1987. The car moved through a few UK dealers, to Ivor Bleaney of Landford Wiltshire and was finally purchased by...

14th Owner: ...John Arthy on 31st January 1988 since when it has been cherished and much used. In 1998 29WR was treated to a complete engine rebuild and rewire by J. Harley Engineering of Alveston, Stratford upon Avon and then in February 2004 whilst participating in the Centennial Rolls-Royce rally in New Zealand, 29WR clocked up 100,000 miles since new (believed genuine – as the dealers say!) Today the mileage is 129,361 and the car is as strong, willing and wonderful as ever.

Left: 29WR in Kenya straight after fitting of the new Cassini & Tonolo body.

Below: Still looking perfect a half century after the new body was fitted pays testament to the skill of the Nairobi based coachbuilders. See also Issue 62 p6222 for a fabulous picture outside Rolls-Royce, Goodwood.



How do you date a pre-WWII Rolls-Royce? (or how many angels can dance on the head of a pin?) Harrison Royce gives us the answer

Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) was an Italian Dominican friar and a scriptural theologian. He was a philosopher who wrote many fine works including *De veritate* or “What is truth?” Allegedly, but not proven, he prompted the question ‘how many angels can dance on the head of a pin?’

I began to think I was on a similar quest when I innocently asked “how do you date a pre-WWII Rolls-Royce motor car?” The initial responses, many very strongly held, included:

- Date of order
- Date the chassis is ‘On Test’
- Date the chassis is ‘Off Test’
- Date the chassis is delivered to the coachbuilder
- Date the complete car is inspected by Rolls-Royce
- Date the Guarantee is given by Rolls-Royce or, alternatively, is effective
- Date of registration (eg with a plate or number) by a government authority

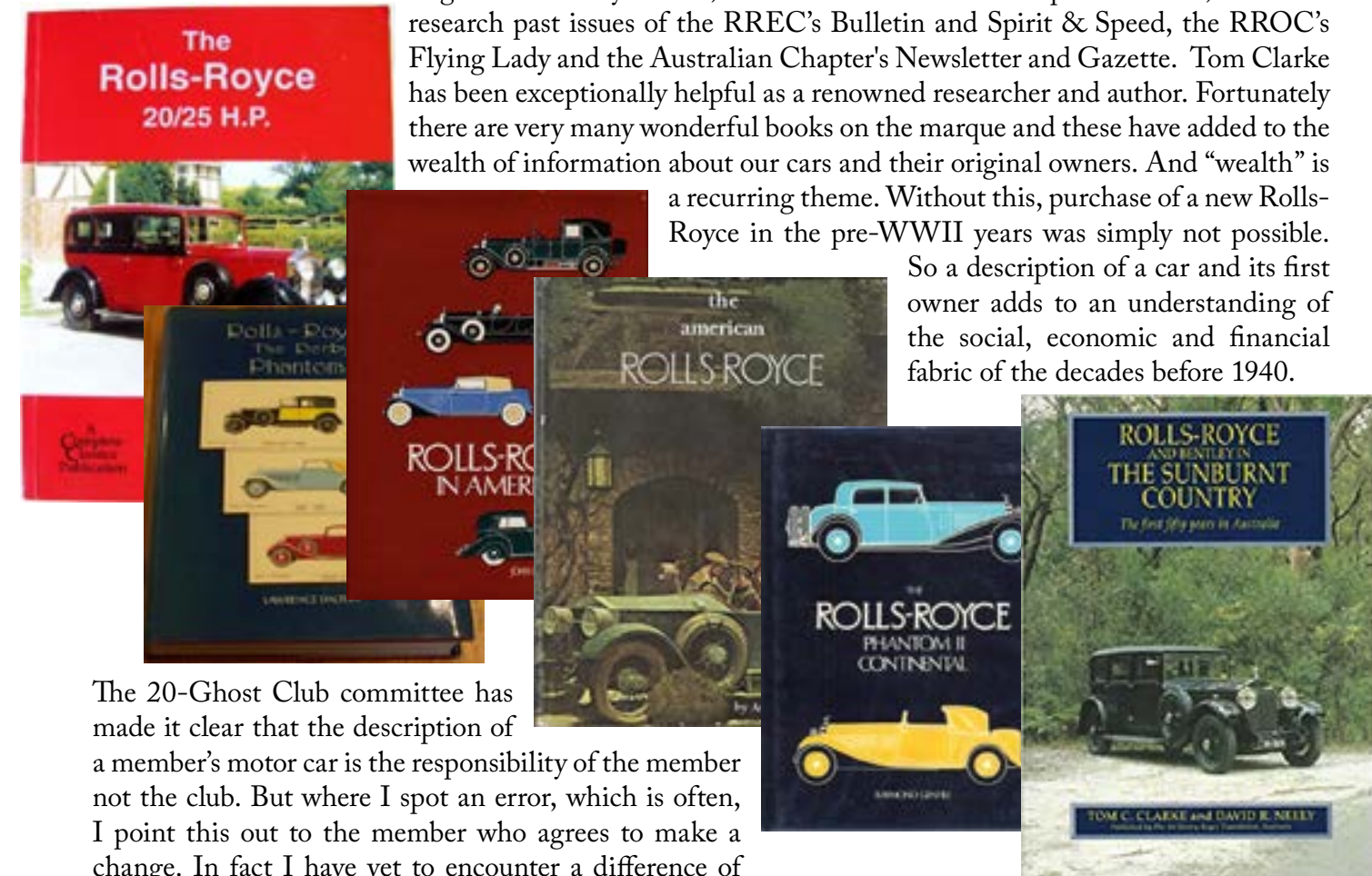
I was warned that I was entering a minefield and, to mix metaphors, opening a can of worms and stirring up a hornets’ nest. I wondered why this question should excite such strong views. One can understand that, for a veteran car, 1904 is more important than 1905 since 31 December 1904 is the cut-off date for entry to the annual London to Brighton Run. A 1904 Brighton car typically has a value much greater than a 1905 car of a similar marque and model. Similarly, a Silver Ghost made in 1914 is also typically, but not always, more valuable than a 1919 car. But in the case of a Silver Ghost which might be 1922 or 1923 or a 20HP which might be 1927 or 1928, I wondered why it mattered. Each car is unique; each car is special. Whether you are 97 or 98 years old doesn’t seem to make much difference. You are to be treasured.

My wife, Lesley, who studied French and French Literature at university, asked if I had heard of Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880) who wrote *Madame Bovary*. I admitted that I had but that I knew little of him or his work. Well, she said, one of his favourite quotes was “There is no truth. There is only perception”. I responded that that sounded a little like “fake news” which did not amuse her. “Flaubert was cerebral and poetic”, she replied. “Think about this carefully”. So, I did, and back to my quest and to my question.

Over the last two years I have enjoyed researching and discussing with members of the 20-Ghost Club (and our R-R experts) descriptions of the histories of these fine works of art. In the club’s 70th anniversary book, with help from David Davis and David Berthon in Australia and Doug Magee in the United States, there were descriptions of 164 pre-WWII Rolls-Royce motor cars. Since then, with additional help from lockdown, a further 85 descriptions of cars have been added to the club’s database. Members have sent me histories inherited from previous owners or written by auctioneers and dealers. I have been able to examine

original Rolls-Royce sales, chassis construction and dispatch records, as well as research past issues of the RREC’s *Bulletin* and *Spirit & Speed*, the RROC’s *Flying Lady* and the Australian Chapter’s *Newsletter* and *Gazette*. Tom Clarke has been exceptionally helpful as a renowned researcher and author. Fortunately there are very many wonderful books on the marque and these have added to the wealth of information about our cars and their original owners. And “wealth” is a recurring theme. Without this, purchase of a new Rolls-Royce in the pre-WWII years was simply not possible.

So a description of a car and its first owner adds to an understanding of the social, economic and financial fabric of the decades before 1940.



The 20-Ghost Club committee has made it clear that the description of a member’s motor car is the responsibility of the member not the club. But where I spot an error, which is often, I point this out to the member who agrees to make a change. In fact I have yet to encounter a difference of opinion, let alone a dispute. All too often an auctioneer has described a car incorrectly or the original records have been misinterpreted. Sometimes a dealer has tried to enhance a car’s history and its provenance to encourage a sale, with luck at a higher price. I have been able to help remove false information and to document the facts.

My interest in understanding the definition of the ‘birth date’ of a pre-WWII Rolls-Royce motor car stemmed from a review of the description of one particular Silver Ghost. To save the owner any discomfort I won’t mention the chassis number. But, suffice it to say, the chassis was ‘On Test’ in September 1920, had its springs changed in May 1921 to fit a lighter body, sent to the coachbuilder in June 1921 and delivered to the customer in January 1922. The original Rolls-Royce cards did not record the ‘Off Test’ date as became the practice with later models. So was this a 1920, a 1921 or a 1922 car? At first the experts whom I consulted were not unanimous but, in the end, all accepted that this was a 1920 car because the delay in putting a body on the car did not detract from the fact that the chassis had been tested (and was initially complete) in 1920, notwithstanding the change to the springs in 1921 to accommodate a different body.

Left: Strone and Alex Macpherson, with son Phil, in the back power through the Dolomites in 27BD their stunning 1914 Silver Ghost. Picture: Rolls-Royce.



And so what is the correct definition of the date of birth of a pre-War Rolls-Royce motor car? I looked at six books on my bookshelf, which revealed the following definitions:

- John Fasal in *The Edwardian Rolls-Royce* uses 'On Test'
- Lawrence Dalton in *Rolls-Royce The Derby Phantoms* uses 'Car completed or Guarantee effective'
- John Webb de Campi in *Rolls-Royce in America* uses 'Delivery Date'
- Raymond Gentile in *The Rolls-Royce Phantom II Continental* uses 'Off Test'
- Tom Clarke in *The Rolls-Royce 20/25 H.P.* uses 'Off Test'
- Tom Clarke and David Neely in *Rolls-Royce and Bentley in The Sunburnt Country* use 'Off Test'

In addition, Steve Hubbard who has been researching and writing about post-WWI Silver Ghosts was emphatic that 'On Test' is the definitive birth date.

I should add that in each of the above books the definition has been used consistently. But why are there such different views? I wrote to a few of the Rolls-Royce authors and other experts, whose opinions I respect, for further amplification and guidance. This was the feedback.

John Fasal recalled his research before he wrote his classic work with Bryan Goodman, *The Edwardian Rolls-Royce*: "In the case of the Silver Ghost production, the Company did not always quote the 'Off Test' date. I consulted the learned connoisseurs on this question, namely Stanley Sears, Michael Vivian and Hugh Keller. There were many cases of confusion and they saw the evidence I was able to bring to their attention. My own car is a good example of delays as it was originally 11PD and one of 17 others in this series delayed because of the Great War. Its special Barker body was ordered (no 929) with the specification supplied on 23rd November 1915 and the order placed on 14th December 1915. The chassis was 'On Test' on 1st September 1919 with the new number 32PP replacing 11PD. Many of the fittings are pre-War but I cannot call it a 1915 car. It was shipped in October 1920 per Messrs Cox's per S/S Morvada to Bombay and the Guarantee was sent on the 16th March 1921. The safest date is the 'On Test' which presumes the chassis was ready to drive and naturally there will be teething problems and delays, further improvements and adjustments and possible additional requirements made by the customer before an 'Off Test' date is revealed. For these reasons, I used 'On Test' in *The Edwardian Rolls-Royce*. Stanley made an amusing comment by way of an analogy when our triplets were born on 15th March 1983 by adding 'the day they emerged into the world in March 1983, they spent a further month in incubators before leaving "the works" in April to go home but in your case no Guarantee was issued!' So I think it is safest to quote the 'On Test' date as the birth of the chassis as told me by the three wise men mentioned above."

In the case of Silver Ghosts, Steve Hubbard writes, "For Derby-built chassis the date of manufacture is the 'On Test' date, because it is inextricably linked to the build specification, especially for those chassis upon which production modifications were introduced. No matter how long the testing or coachbuilding took, it would not alter the chassis specification (this did not include the road springs on the chassis, which were tailored to the weight of the intended coachwork, and these were subject to change). The only occurrence which would result in a specification change would be the chassis being dismantled and rebuilt to a later specification, which resulted in the chassis being renumbered with a new chassis number in a later sequence of chassis numbers. This happened frequently at Derby during the build period of the post-war Silver Ghost. For Springfield Silver Ghosts the actual month and year of completion dates are listed in Appendix E of Arthur Soutter's book *The American Rolls-Royce*."

Tom Clarke takes a different view, "The 'On Test' period could be lengthy, straddling a new year even, and does not represent a viable chassis officially available with a Guarantee. That only occurs with the 'Off Test' date when Rolls-Royce finally passed it as a viable chassis ready for coachwork (and driving). But, as we all recognise, Ghosts didn't yet have 'Off Test' dates consistently applied." He adds "You'd certainly expect the Build Cards (aka Construction Cards) to be amongst the first to start using 'Off Test' but the Sales



Above: Doug Magee attends Silver Ghost 2092: 1912 both on and off test! Picture: Kimberly Shaddock.

Department in London eventually got in on the act too - the sales sheets on the Barrie Gillings DVDs have some of the first instances of an 'Off Test' printed line in an improved sales sheet for just 50LK then a big gap before examples like 23EM and many others have 'Off Test' added by hand. Then at 11RM the new sales sheet with printed 'Off Test' becomes virtually routine. In other words, they used up old sheets first and then standardised on the new one. Ergo, it was circa May 1924 for 'Off Test' to become entrenched. But it also implies slightly earlier policy to bring this bit of data into use."

Bill Kennedy, Technical Adviser of the Silver Ghost Association, is inclined to agree with Tom Clarke's definition, namely, "two dates may be applicable to a lot of cars [Silver Ghosts]. One being the 'Off Test' date, the second when whatever body was on it when it went to the end user was applied. The primary 'year' would usually be the 'Off Test' date. But giving that date only for a car that was neither bodied nor sold for a relatively long time tells a half truth."

Philip Hall, trustee and director of the Sir Henry Royce Memorial Foundation, concludes, "I firmly believe that the date of a car should be the year during which the chassis came 'Off Test'. Where no 'Off Test' date is stated on the records, the 'On Test' date should be used. Other dates, eg the date of delivery to the customer or the date of the final test with the finished body, can be many months if not years after the completion of the chassis. An extreme example is the circa 1922 Brownsea Island Ghost (77AG) which did not receive

its body until some 35 years after the chassis was built. It would be nonsense to consider this to be a 1950s car.” Philip added “With Rolls-Royce there is little consistency, except for quality. You can always find exceptions with the specification and the numbering. There are few, if any, hard and fast rules. I defy anyone to come up with a rule about Rolls-Royce to which I cannot show an exception. That makes documenting the cars so interesting.”

Russell Rolls, Chairman of Trustees of the Sir Henry Royce Foundation (Australia) is of the same view as Philip, namely “‘Off Test’ is the date of ‘completion’ of manufacture from a Rolls-Royce standpoint. Where there is no ‘Off Test’ date shown then ‘On Test’ is the most sensible approximation.”

David Davis, a director of the Australian Chapter of the 20-Ghost Club, offers the following advice, “Most Twenty chassis cards have an ‘On Test’ date and no ‘Off Test’ date, in which case ‘On Test’ would seem appropriate. Another relevant date is the date the chassis was ordered which is the first date to appear on the Twenty chassis cards and when the works number was allocated. My preference is the date ‘On Test’, as to test it, the chassis must have been complete, although I favour the date of the order too as that date decided its works number, the batch it was allocated to and the components which would be built into the car. Not all original Rolls-Royce records show an ‘Off Test’ date. So, I don’t think that there is any alternative but to use a date that is on the chassis cards. So far as I can see the only common dates for all models is the ‘Order’ date and the ‘On Test’ date.” But, where the ‘Off Test’ date is also given, he considers that “Philip’s ideas seem sensible to me and are justified by information on the chassis cards.”

Gil Fuqua, Editor of the Silver Ghost Association’s The Silver Ghost Tourer also agrees with this, writing as follows: “I would also suggest that the ‘Off Test’ date makes the most sense in dating a chassis. If the ‘Off Test’ date is not available, then the ‘On Test’ date should be used. From my viewpoint, this methodology closely aligns the sequence of chassis numbers with a particular year and is the most straight-forward method for a consistent dating protocol.”

Andy Wood of P&A Wood responded “I have always thought it is the date the guarantee was issued. Brother Paul says it would be the date of the first registration.” They added “Please bear in mind this is only our view but we also agree with the other views”.

Having consulted the experts, it seems as though there is no precise definition of the birth date of a pre-war Rolls-Royce. But most agree that the defining date is that given in the original Rolls-Royce records, namely either ‘On Test’ or ‘Off Test’ of the chassis, as opposed to the final test of the car with its coachwork or when the guarantee was issued. The majority seem to favour the ‘Off Test’ date where this is recorded in the original records and, where it is not shown, then the birth date is the ‘On Test’ date.

To be clear, all original Rolls-Royce records show the ‘On Test’ date. For most Silver Ghosts and many 20HPs, the ‘Off Test’ date is not recorded. John Fasal pointed out that “for, Indian cars, the earliest sales card he has seen to print ‘Off Test’ appeared with 37LM (1924) sold via Messrs Car Mart Ltd, with a Park Ward Tourer body, shipped to Bombay. A number of the earlier sales cards have hand written ‘Off Test’ dates.” This confirms the facts mentioned above by Tom Clarke, namely that ‘Off Test’ dates were formally recorded from circa May 1924. But it also implies slightly earlier policy to bring this bit of data into use.”

For Phantom Is, many 20HPs, and for models thereafter, the ‘Off Test’ date is shown in the Company’s records as well as the ‘On Test’, delivery and other key dates.

There seems to be agreement that whatever information is recorded in the original Rolls-Royce records should be made transparent and included in any description of a car. This information may include, if available, the following dates:

- **Order recorded by R-R**
- **‘On Test’**
- **‘Off Test’**
- **Delivery to the coachbuilder**
- **The complete car is inspected by Rolls-Royce**
- **The Guarantee is given by Rolls-Royce and/or is effective**

So, after all this consultation, what is the date of birth of a pre-WWII Rolls-Royce motor car? Well, without seeking to count the number of angels, I personally incline to Philip Hall’s definition, supported by most of our experts, namely the ‘Off Test’ date unless this is not recorded, in which event it is the ‘On Test’ date.

As Philip points out, “with Rolls-Royce there are always exceptions and there are few, if any, hard and fast, rules.” So, if you disagree with me, please don’t shoot me. This is only ‘my personal perception of the truth’. Your judgement is as good as any: ‘On Test’ or ‘Off Test’. Look at the facts of each individual case. The key requirement is to be transparent, to explain why you have come towards your opinion and then to use the definition consistently in any book or article you are writing. And, if you identify an exception, don’t be surprised.

Health warning: The 20-Ghost Club does not date pre-WWII Rolls-Royce motor cars. Neither the Club nor the author accepts any responsibility for anyone relying on the information included in this article or for any loss arising therefrom!!



A Nimble Car for NYC & Boston

Bob Vass describes his wife, Hilary's, 1930 20/25, GWP37, with highly original Sedan-de-Ville bodywork by Frederick R Wood of New York



Hilary acquired GWP37 in May 2000 from Real Car and we have used it sparingly since. The car had enjoyed a pampered life and not suffered the years of neglect heaped on some of Sir Henry's products and was awarded the Michael Forrest Trophy (pre-1940 preservation) at the RREC Annual Rally in 2014.

It is quite unusual to come across a 20/25 which was shipped to the USA for bodying and I believe only eleven 20/25 chassis made it across the Atlantic in period. We can only guess at why it came to be imported but the first owner, Mrs Ada Waterman Small Moore employed one Ernest Pollard from Blackpool as her chauffeur. I imagine Ernest preferred a UK built chassis and had the notion that a 20/25 would make an easier, more manoeuvrable town car in New York than a 40/50 (Mrs Moore also had a Springfield Ghost and a couple of large Packards in her garage, anyway so a smaller car made practical sense).

Albeit not a household name coachbuilder Frederick R Wood was a major force in nineteenth century carriage building and then on into the early motoring era. The firm started in Bridgeport, Connecticut around 1848 and transferred operations to New York sometime in 1860. It bodied its final car (a Duesenberg now owned by Jay Leno) sometime in the mid-1930s.

Frederick R Wood were innovators, building a steam omnibus in 1900 and various electric delivery and invalid carriages around the turn of the century. They supplied the first fleet of mechanised ambulances to New York's St Vincent's hospital and it was a Wood ambulance that carried the mortally wounded President McKinley to hospital. By the way, there is no connection to Woods Electric of Chicago who built many more electric automobiles.

Frederick R Wood seem to have been overshadowed by more vigorous competitors, especially R-R Custom Carriage Works and Brewster.

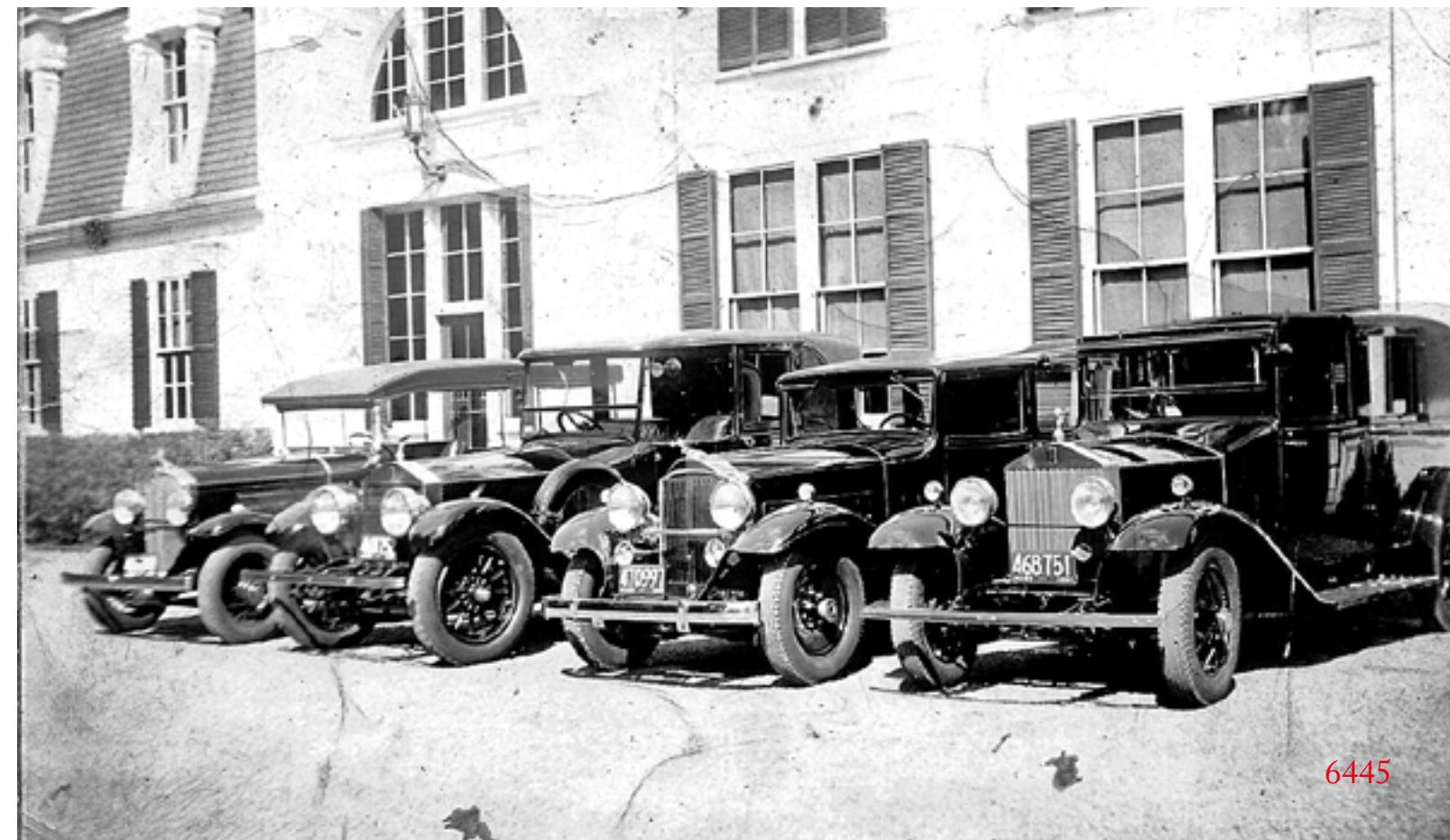
Rather a pity, as the body on GWP37 has survived particularly well; the doors still shut cleanly and the car bears its age with dignity.

Ada Waterman Small Moore, an American lady of the first rank, was married to William H Moore a New York entrepreneur and financier. He created significant wealth through his business ventures but his real passion was bloodstock and 'Rockmarge' at Pride's Crossing on Boston's North Shore provided stabling for a 72 horses. Ada's interests were archaeology and travel. She donated a technical library to the American University in Tehran, and received honorary citizenship of Corinth after funding building of two museums in Greece. She travelled extensively and was widely admired as an enthusiastic amateur archaeologist and philanthropist.

Although GWP37 was intended as a town car for use in New York, it was actually registered in Massachusetts and used in and around Boston. It remained with the family until sold in 1990. Ada's motor house address in New York was used in all the correspondence with R-R in Derby. This was in a less salubrious section of the city than one might associate with Mrs Moore, and it was a little while before we discovered her town house was actually located at 4 East 54th, just off Fifth Avenue. As our teenage daughter noted, almost next door



to Gucci, so convenient for shopping! The house is now preserved as an almost unique example of a period New York town house demonstrating Italianate influences.





Left: The immaculate dashboard of a very early 20/25.

Below: Ernest Pollard and Mrs Moore fairly late on in life.

Previous page top: the Stokes-Moore Mansion 4 East 54th Street, NYC.

Previous page bottom: the Moore's Rockmarge stables. From left: a Buick or Studebaker, a (sadly) unidentified Silver Ghost, a small engined Packard (c1928), and finally GWP37.



Later, Hilary went to work in Cambridge, MA not far from Harvard and we became friendly with Cecily Pollard. Mrs Moore ensured her grandfather had adequate finances to build himself a nice home on condition that he told nobody. And Cecily was still living in the house her grandfather had built in Beverly MA.

When we acquired GWP37 the recorded mileage was just under 44,000 miles and we have no reason to doubt that this was accurate. We've added a few more thousand miles as we feel the car ought to be treated gently as such an original example. The car is finished in its original black and deep purple (William Moore's racing silk colour) and Mrs Moore's monogram is still – just – visible on the body moulding just below the rear windows.

Right: GWP37 rightly takes the Michael Forrest Trophy (pre-1940 preservation) at the RREC Annual Rally in 2014.

Left: The gloriously original and sumptuous rear compartment is a joy and much appreciated by the concours judges!



From the Archive June 1961

NEWS & RECORD ISSUE 64

Given our main feature, reprinting Jonathan Samuelson's article from 1971, you might think that this issue is a bit of a 'From the Archive' special! But from a well-known internet auction site I managed to obtain a copy of our membership list from June 1961. So on my count we had 141 members sixty years ago (421 today – including 133 in Australia). One member shown in 1961 is Adrian Garrett who originally joined in July 1953 and remains our longest standing member today but Lord Bruce (now Lord Elgin) is only a year behind having joined in July 1954 (there is lots about both members in John Stuttard's book of the 20-Ghost Club).

LIST OF MEMBERS JUNE, 1961



BANKS, J. and MRS., 11 Hyde Park Gate, London, W.1. Reg. ALP174
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The Last Word

In his article from 1971 Jonathan Samuelson says his family don't approve of early starts but it was 4:45am when Bella and I set off to fire up Peabody. The BBC said that sunrise was at 5:02 and we didn't want to miss the light! Anyway, we early birds got some great shots including, just for my good friend Graham Tyson, some glorious cow parsley in the hedgerows!

I've thoroughly enjoyed putting this issue together and one thing that struck me in quite a few pieces was the move from one generation to the next. We all know that dear Tim Forrest passed 2154 'Nellie' over to Katie, but it's super to see Rik and Charles Armitage, as new members, taking on their father's PI (not to mention young Rachael in the Bugatti on page 6406). Then it's great to see Frazer Glew in the pic on page 6421 taking over the reins of the family business - absolutely essential for us all. And finally, an earlier generational transition, was Jonathan Samuelson taking over 73SG from his father back in the day - and still loving every moment of driving the car 50 years on.

My middle daughter Alice, aged 26, is talking about investing in an MGB and took Peabody for a spin when she was last down - so early days - but then I'm not ready to let go of any of our 20-Ghost cars quite yet!

Please keep the articles and especially photos coming in.
See you very soon, with best wishes as ever,

Johnnie



