

wenty

Newsletter
RREC



Number 19

May 2008



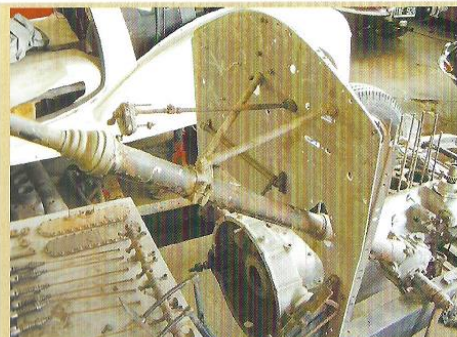
20hp: Green and Silver in Argentina

GUJ 30 has probably been in Argentina for most of its life. It is presently owned by Guillermo Viacava who lives in Pavon near Buenos Aires. Originally a Weymann landaulette, it is now a smart tourer with a style reminiscent of a classic W O Bentley.

Focus on Argentina



Another view of Guillermo Viacava's GUJ 30



(Continued from page 3):

It is not clear what happened to the car up to these last years. What I do know is that it changed hands very quickly recently. Mr Viacava bought the car from a Mr Persic who in turn found the car in a mechanic's workshop. It seems that the extremely damaged cylinder block deterred the new owners from keeping the chassis. This was unfortunate: many of its original parts got lost during its transport from one workshop to another and/or even kept as souvenirs. It looks as if the cylinder block has exploded from the inside! Welding experts have stated that it is completely way past salvation. We will start with the restoration of the engine followed by searching for the missing parts to complete the chassis.

It was a life-long ambition of my father to own a vintage Rolls Royce car. We intend to bring GUJ 45 back to its former glory. Luckily we have some experience in motor car restoration. Currently we are completing the restoration of a 1928 Kissel speedster (a rare American car). I have found and restored a 1911 Adler and my father has a fantastic "barn find" 1913 Buick. This car is totally original and we intend to keep it that way.

THE TWENTY NEWSLETTER

No. 19

May 2008

The Twenty Newsletter is published for members of the 20hp Register of the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club. Any opinion expressed and advice offered in this newsletter is not necessarily that of the RREC or its officials and no responsibility can be accepted for the results of following contributors' advice.

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Cover Photographs – 'Allo Allsorts at the 2007 Annual Rally, and

Guillermo Viacava bought GUJ 30 in October 2006 and joined the RREC in January 2007. For another view of his car see page 2.

He wrote: "I found in Argentina some 20 HP parts identified as G 774. From Mr J Fasal's book I found that these parts belonged to 1923 chassis GH 2, that was originally delivered to a Mr. Dunn. Could you tell me the original destination of this car. I do not know if other parts of this car could be found in Argentina." Can anyone help answer this question?

According to the RREC database, the Club has 6 members in Argentina, of whom two have 20hps. The other is owned by Ernesto Ayling, also from Buenos Aires.

Ernesto Ayling writes: My father and I have just become members of the RREC Two months ago, we acquired the remains of GUJ 45, engine number H5T, here in Buenos Aires. It was basically a rolling chassis with the engine "in bits". A true basket case! We bought the car from another RREC member here in Buenos Aires called Guillermo Viacava. Mr Viacava has another Twenty but a 1923 model. From Mr Viacava, we also got our car's chassis cards and car build history, which he had ordered from the club last year. GUJ 45 had originally a Barker deLuxe Tourer body and was imported by the Compania Argentina de Automoviles y Carruajes (Argentine Automobile and Carriage Company), a sort of luxury car (and chauffeurs) hire company for important events, etc.

(Continued on page 2)

Editorial and Readers Letters

Welcome to new 20hp owners

Kingsley Sleep, Essex GBM 65 1925 Hooper doctors' coupé
Christian Ditchfield, W Midlands GHJ 68 1927 H J Mulliner limousine
Philip Cordery, Anglesea GEN 54 1929 Lawton landaulette
Malcolm Crump, Warwicks GCK 40 1926 Hooper saloon
(Malcolm used to belong to the RREC 20 years ago. He owned GVO 40, Baden Powell's 20hp, Jam-Roll, and sold it to Ben Grew in 1986.)
Richard Reich, Surrey GYK 83 1926 A Mulliner limousine
Guillermo Viacava, Argentina GUJ 30 1927 tourer, rebodied (see front cover)
Ernesto Ayling, Argentina GUJ 45 1927 chassis only (see page 2,3)
Graham Tyson, Cornwall 68H4 1923 Charlesworth tourer
Wayne Blackburn, Essex GLN 44 1929 Hooper cabriolet

Forthcoming Events

Annual Rally, 20-22 June 2008: we will have our usual impressive line up of cars and ever-popular lunch time social gathering.

Brittany holiday, 23 June-1 July 2008

Technical Seminar, 20, 25 and 30hp cars, 30-31 August at the Hunt House

North Wales weekend, 5-7 September 2008. Organised by David and Jane Else.

SW Belgium holiday (provisional) July 2009. Choice of sailings from Hull to Zeebrugge, or from Kent to one of the French ports, or Ostende. Then meet up "somewhere in Belgium". Michel t'Kint de Roodenbeke and Serge Baye, both from Belgium Luxembourg Section, have kindly offered to help organise this visit, and to join us for a rally or two. One suggestion is Spa which has good hotels and excellent touring countryside, as well as being near the borders of Holland, Germany and Luxembourg. Another is Bouillon which is near the French and Luxembourg borders and is one of the most scenic areas of Belgium (like North Wales, Serge says). Please let me know if you are interested in receiving further details as soon as they are available.

East Anglia weekend (provisional) September 2009. Near Cambridge. Ideas for visits include Duxford Air Museum, Newmarket racing stables, the Shuttleworth Collection, Cambridge Colleges and Backs. Shôn Ffowcs-Williams (erstwhile Professor of Engineering at Cambridge) has provisionally booked a banquet dinner in one of the historic Colleges. Trevor and Patsy Baldwin have offered to help organise this weekend. Again, please let me know if you might be interested.

Rights Issue

I am proud to say that, following Royal Bank of Scotland's lead the 20hp Register is calling for funds from our shareholders. Since the last call, two years ago, your generosity enabled the 20hp Register to re-establish itself, issue four Newsletters

(this is the fifth) and organise various social events. I have not yet succeeded in issuing a new Register of Members, but I really believe that will be soon: Keith Jay has typed out hundreds of names, addresses, car details etc, and Doug Reece (Derby Bentley Registrar) has shown me his Register's software which is designed to make easy the updating and printing of a Register booklet (but only once you have learned the software!).

So, it would be appreciated if *everybody* could return the enclosed form to me, updating the information where appropriate. The Register would appreciate a donation, but you may ignore that request if you have sent something within the last year. The funds will be used for publishing and distributing the Newsletters, helping organise social events, supplying information on 20hp cars etc to members, and generally keeping a database on 20hp cars for future reference. I would point out that all charges relate to actual costs – the hours of work done by Club members on behalf of the 20hp Register is done entirely on a voluntary basis. The 20hp Register should and could play a part in developing knowledge and awareness of our lovely cars. Arguably, 20hps are among the most interesting of vintage RR cars: they come in a wide variety of shapes and styles; they often have fascinating histories, and because they are reliable and reasonably economic in terms of mpg and maintenance a high proportion of them are *used regularly*. And with increasing awareness of the cars' attributes, more and more abandoned 20hp cars and 20hp chassis are being rescued and restored.

The new rules for Registers offer scope for the Register to develop in future: new accounting software at the Hunt House will enable us better to keep track of our funds from one year to another and we can organise as many events as we like (subject to the normal Club rules). We have to provide a preliminary budget before organising an event, and any up-front deposits required by hotels etc have first to be collected from participants; the Club cannot underwrite deposits or other payments. And after every major event we have to issue balance statement to the participants. With the growth of the Club, and the enormous number of events organised every year on behalf of the club by Sections, Registers etc, all this becomes necessary.

So, please return your forms! And please include email addresses as much of the Club business is done electronically now. Some members of the 20hp Register do not actually own a 20hp car. The Register welcomes all *20hp Enthusiasts*, not just Owners.

We have a good selection of older black-and-white photographs in this issue. Some of them are of cars which have been "lost", so it would be appreciated by the archivists and historians within our Club if you could add any information.

Once again, many thanks to all enthusiasts who have sent interesting photographs, information, stories and articles. There must be many more out there waiting to be shared, so please sort them out and send them in for the next Newsletter.

From Linda Steen (you may remember Linda by her previous surname, Salt)

I feel it is the way forward for me to sell GEN 18 as I have so many fingers in the fire at the moment. I certainly do not wish to see her not being used. I have just bought more land and work is required on it. I intend to keep GSF3 my 20/25 long wheel base as she is a trials car with lots of references. Barker did a feature in 1935 on her, and she is in the 1935 December issue of the Rolls Royce Motor Company Bulletin; fortunately I have a copy. Other books reference her as she is the classic 1935 tailored back.

I have owned GEN for around 10 years and she has been a delight to drive, just like a mini, so light and positive. GEN runs very well and has never failed me. Apart from my replacing the leather on the driver's seat, she is in original condition.

[Linda recently moved from Northumberland to the Edinburgh area. She has, in fact, now sold GEN 18. See photograph on page 31]

From Jeremy Oates: I have given GOK 53, Reg. No. TU 2014, to my daughter who now lives in New South Wales. The Rolls-Royce Club there helped me ship it. *[Jeremy and Margaret Oates used to own two 20hps between them. We hope their daughter Louisa enjoys GOK 53]*

Feedback on OLD TYRES

From Chas Vyse: I still have my very first 'company car' - a 1966 Citroën DS21 Pallas. Some 20 years ago my eldest son also bought a DS "banger" as his first car. He bought a brand new set of Michelin X radials for the car, but before he'd even fitted them, decided the car was too riddled with rust and too complicated for him to try and restore. So the car was sold and I bought the new tyres. These tyres were stored correctly in a cool dark loft in my barn and were not fitted to my DS until I'd finished a complete re-build many years later.

With the car back on the road Joan and I set off on a rally to Cornwall. We got to Devon, there was an almighty bang and the front offside tyre blew. A large piece of rubber smacked into the newly painted front wing and damaged it. Luckily I was running-in; had I been going at speed it might have resulted in a serious accident. With something around 300 miles on a brand new tyre I was incensed. I wrote to Michelin demanding that they replace the tyre and contribute to the body repair. They did take the incident seriously and wanted the tyre for examination - but as you will have already deduced, dismissed all claims as the tyre was old. They stated that they would not consider any claim regarding a defective tyre if it was over 7 years old - irrespective of mileage or storage conditions.

I learnt a lot from that incident!

Graham Tyson, who is new to RR motoring, bought his lovely 1923 Charlesworth tourer, 68H4 only 6 months ago. It had been very expensively and extensively restored about 15 years ago, but has been used little since. Before going touring he

took the precaution of having it thoroughly examined and found the usual array of problems, for example: the coil had been connected with the wrong polarity; the magneto was seized and the shellac had melted, so he rewound and re-conditioned the magneto; the two wheel braking was only working on one wheel as the other was full of oil. Also, he noticed that the (virtually unused) straight-sided tyres were showing a mass of fine crazing on all sidewalls. Graham decided to invest in a complete new set of tyres. Ouch!

(Extracts from an article in) **Crewe'd Jottings, February 2008, an RROC (Australia) Newsletter**

Many Members (myself included), were blissfully unaware that our tyres have a 'use-by' date until fairly recent times. I received a call from John Mantello's wife that her husband was stranded on the side of the road with a 'puncture'. Lawrence Bottomley and I went to his assistance to learn that John had not suffered a mere puncture, but a catastrophic blow-out of the right-hand front tyre of his Silver Cloud. After getting his spare on and arriving at Roadstar Automotive, we searched for the cause and found no obvious evidence such as a nail, bolts etc. We then noticed that the epicentre of the blow-out was caused by delamination of the tread and a 'flipping great big hole.' There was plenty of tread on the tyre and all the other ones seemed to be in perfect condition. And then we saw the date of manufacture on the sidewall. The year of manufacture was 1987. The tyre was twenty years old. As Ken Long (one of our members who runs a tyre business), informed us at our December Club meeting, tyres should be replaced every 5 years and certainly shouldn't be on the car for more than 7 years, as the compounds that make up the tyre break down over a period of time - whether the car is used or not.

DON'T TRUST THE THICKNESS OF THE TREAD PATTERN.

No matter how good a condition your tyres appear to be in, if they are more than 5 years old; for your sake, for your car's sake, for your family's sake - and for everyone's' sake: replace them now.

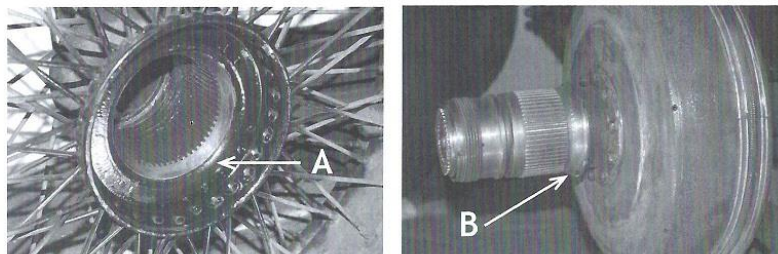
Articles TECHNICAL and HISTORICAL

Wheel Splines

The wheel splines are designed to hold the wheel in the correct position on the hub; they are a relatively loose fit and are *not* designed to transmit torque between the axle hub and the wheel hub. Most of the torque is transmitted by friction between the female cone inside the wheel hub (A) and the male cone (B) on the axle hub (see photograph next page). The friction comes from pressing these conical surfaces hard together by correctly torquing the large wheel nut. The pressure is sufficient to emboss the outline of the hub splines on the surface of cone (B).

If the nut is not fully torqued, the wheel will rock back and forth slightly on its axle, from the stresses of driving. This can wear the splines and result in an expensive

repair job. To prevent this problem it is essential that wheels are serviced at regular intervals. The splines should be cleaned and very lightly lubricated with oil or grease, but the two conical surfaces **A** and **B** should *not* be lubricated, in order to maximise friction between them. Lubricate only the wheel splines (ie do not lubricate the axle hub splines) so that any excess lubricant is not pushed along the axle, and on to the conical surfaces, when you slide the wheel into place.



The nut should be cleaned and lubricated; its main purpose is to push the conical surfaces hard together, not to transmit torque itself. So the nut should be screwed up tightly, by judiciously applying a mallet to the spanner.

Regular servicing also reduces the possibility of moisture penetrating in between the splines and corroding them. Rust can seize the wheel onto the shaft (and in extreme cases rust can expand sufficiently to split the wheel hub).

The owners' handbook emphasises that every 2,000 miles the wheels should be removed, the splines cleaned and lightly oiled, and the wheel nuts correctly re-torqued. It does help to know why.

Priming the Carburettor

Sometimes the carburettor float chamber needs to be primed, for example after carrying out maintenance work, or if the Autovac tank runs dry for any reason. And some people have reported difficult starting when petrol gets "stale" if left too long in the carburettor. The instruction book explains how to crank the engine until the vacuum draws sufficient fuel up from the petrol tank. An alternative method is to carry a small bottle of petrol in your tool kit. Suitable bottles are available for a few £ from camping shops etc. They are purpose designed, made from alloy, and the stopper is fuel proof as well as incorporating a valve device which allows any pressure or vacuum to be released gently as the stopper is unscrewed. After filling the float chamber and starting the engine the Autovac will quickly fill as normal.



250ml Alloy Fuel Bottle

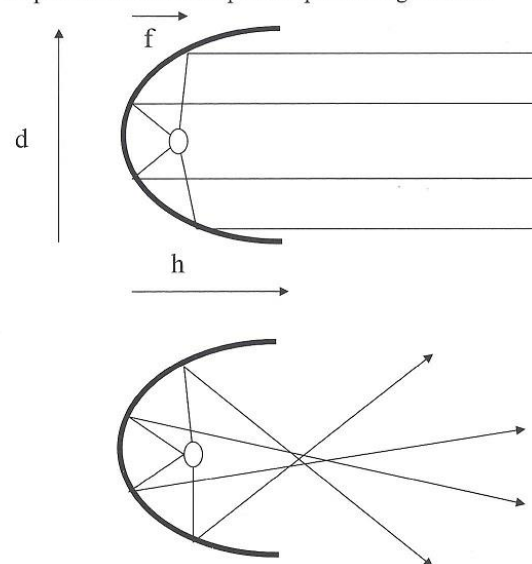
Headlamps in Focus

If you drive at night, it could be beneficial to check the focus of your headlamps. This is a simple task, but one which is easily neglected. Vintage car headlamps as fitted to the 20hp have a parabolic reflector. The centre of the bulb filament must be near the focus of the parabola, so that light collected by the reflector gives an approximately parallel beam, and maximum forward vision when driving in the dark. Lamps on old cars are often poorly adjusted, and the bulb holder might have been repaired or modified in the past, so the filament ends up being a long way from the focus. This will give a wide angle beam (see Figure) which does not efficiently illuminate the road ahead, but is guaranteed to annoy oncoming cars.

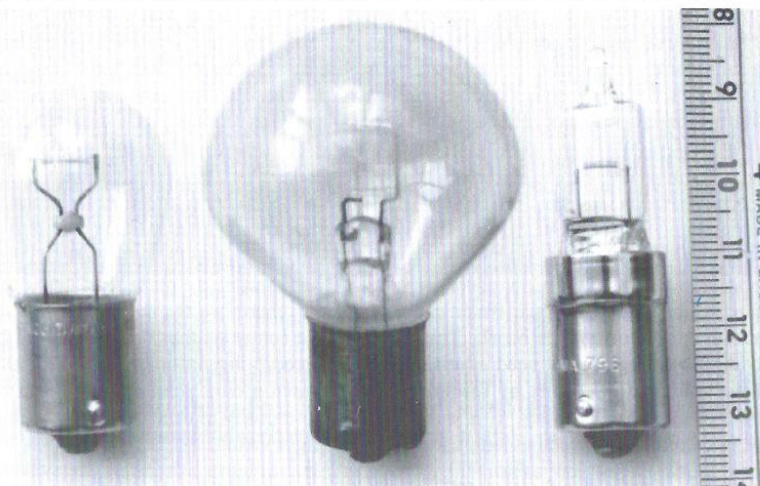
To find the focus, measure the diameter at the rim, d , and the height of the rim above the bottom of the bowl, h . The distance, f , of the focus above the bottom of the bowl is:

$$f = \frac{d^2}{16h}.$$

For my headlamps, $d = 210\text{mm}$ and $h = 88\text{mm}$, therefore the focus, f , is 31mm above the bottom of the bowl. This is where the centre of the filament should be. Old bulb fittings might need adjusting, or even modifying, in order to achieve this. Fine tuning can be done by shining the lamp down a dark road and adjusting the bulb position as necessary. It is worth doing this carefully in order to make the most of our simple-but-effective lamps and optimise night vision.



Three types of bulbs are illustrated: a modern 23 watt (indicator) bulb, a traditional 35 watt large globe, and a new 35 watt halogen bulb, designed to be a replacement for the large globe. Notice that the distance from the centre of the filament to the pins is 31 mm, the same as f - coincidence or design, who knows? It means that in my car the bulb is correctly focused if pins are level with the base of the reflector.



The large globe and its modern halogen equivalent are also available in 55 watt versions. The halogen bulb should, of course, give significantly more light than the large globe, providing it is run at full efficiency, ie it should be supplied with its design electrical potential of 13 volts! Halogen replacement bulbs for vintage cars are sold by Tim Hodgekiss in Norfolk (www.vintagemotorspares.com).

20hp Spring Replacement

by Andrew Sington

(This concludes Andrew's first episode in Newsletter 18)

After a discussion with 'The Oracle' - aka David Else - I was advised that replacing the spring would be more problematical than removing it - and this turned out to be the case. The situation wasn't helped by the spring company. They said they knew all about 20hp springs but this proved a little optimistic!

There were two points that caused problems - they didn't realise that the front shackle pin was 5/8th and the rear was 11/16th. They made both 5/8ths! Quite why they are sized thus is beyond me, but that's the way Sir Henry wanted it, so I had to

-10-

have the rear one drilled out locally. Also the front end wouldn't fit into the shackle pin cover - it was too thick - so my local man ground it down. There are also spacers to make each end fit snugly into the chassis which should have come off when you removed the pins. If they didn't come off, either there weren't any OR they are stuck on the chassis with grease. CHECK!

On presenting the spring to the chassis, I didn't know whether to attach the spring to the axle first or last - so I tried it first and that just wouldn't work. The answer is to attach the spring to the chassis and then present the axle to the spring - but there is a knack here for success. You must have the chassis absolutely level and supported on stands. Remove the other road wheel so that the axle is lying on an axle stand at the 'other end'. Under the end to which you wish to attach the spring, put a hydraulic jack. It is also easier to have another hydraulic jack under this side of the chassis too, as you will read.

Remember to replace the spacer onto the spring - it can only go on one way as there is a pin in it to line it up to the axle. The pin goes downwards into a hole in the axle. Do not put in on the axle as it is only aluminium and could be broken when you present the axle to the spring.

Now slowly jack up the axle and present it to the spring. You may find that the two 'U' bolts could be up to 1/2 inch out. If this is the case, jack UP the chassis on this side and the axle too - and keep raising both until the 'U' bolts line up with the holes in the axle. It's actually school geometry so don't get too excited about it. Once lined-up, lower the chassis onto the spring and - you're almost home. Connect up the shock-absorber actuating arm (add plenty of oil to the ball for lubrication).

Need I remind you to put all the split pins back - they are there for a purpose! Incidentally - the spring company had stripped 3 of the 8 castellated nuts that hold the 4 spring clips together and had not refitted any split pins. It is imperative that these are correctly secured as, in my case, should a main leaf fail, it is these clips that hold the spring together. Had these failed when I had a broken main leaf in Serbia, I would have been in serious trouble. As they were correctly set, they held the spring sufficiently for me to drive another 2000 miles before I realised that I had a problem!

Give the shackle pins at both ends a thorough oiling before you put the wheels back on. I use Millers 80/90 in my Enots for all chassis lubrication - it's a thick oil that seems to stay around longer.

For the record, replacing the spring took me less than 2 hours, so if I can do it (and I'm a complete amateur except that I have David Else to ask when I get in a fix) then anyone can do it!

Happy days!

Designing Aluminium Heads for the 20hp and other Small-hp Engines

By Richard Shaw, Alden Ltd.

Many moons ago, I received a lunch invitation. From Eric Barras and the RREC chairman. A rare event, what could they want?

All was revealed. They wondered if perhaps I could take on the unenviable job of making small-hp cylinder heads. The heads were failing and repairs were also failing. There were no more un-repaired or new heads available. The few that were made, found, or repaired were invariably no good, or would quickly fail. Has anyone ever tried saying "No!" to Eric in full flow ... and so, after a few drinks it was agreed that I would take on the project.

That was the all-too-innocent start ...

At that time, RR still had some parts and drawing availability for the older cars. The late Ron Haynes was an invaluable source of information at RR, but it became obvious that the drawings he kindly let me have were not reliable. They were often used to illustrate a modification, without regard to the correctness of the drawing, if used as an overall comprehensive base for manufacturing the complete head.

It also became apparent that one had to find the cause of the heads failing. It would be of no use to the members of the RREC if the heads were to fail with the same defects in the future.

Basic decisions were subsequently made, to:

- Find the causes of failure of the existing heads
- Modify the head design to eliminate the identified causes of failure
- Improve cooling
- Make complete new drawings
- Manufacture the new heads to the highest no-compromise standards

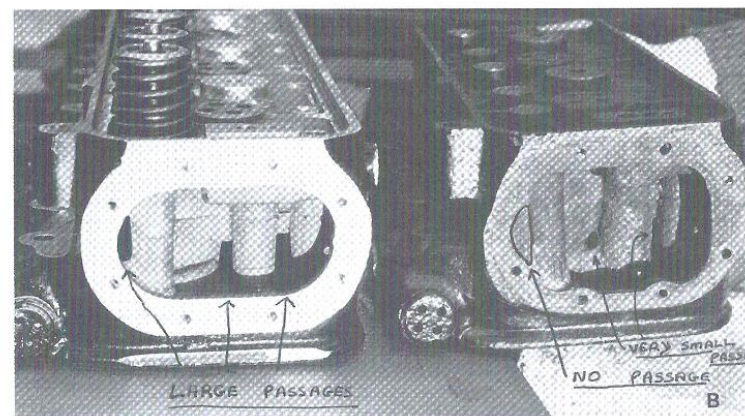
As with RR, cost was not to be a limiting consideration. We wanted the best possible job!

We set out to:

- Increase water flow
- Eliminate 'cold-shuts', blow-holes and other casting faults
- Improve sealing, especially at the rear of the head
- Increase head life

We discovered that RR had only instructed their foundry to 'endeavour to obtain' water passage opening sizes. All too frequently, the passages were either not obtained or were far too small, seriously restricting the water flow through the head. Therefore the top of the heads would stay cool, whilst the bottom part, in contact with the combustion chambers, got ever hotter. This situation would get worse as

the head water flow was reduced and blocked over time due to silting, corrosion, and deposits. Inevitably, the head would then crack.



Left:- new aluminium head.

Right:- cleaned original head with very small passages as originally cast in two places, and no passage in another place.

(Reproduced from Richard Shaw's article in Bulletin 133, July/August 1982, and Technical Manual No. 3)

Unlike, for example, head frost damage, the main cause of the failure - poor water circulation - was therefore still unresolved. As a result, any repair, even where expensively and properly undertaken, would inevitably fail again. So many cars were now off the road. If water leaked into the oil, or if they were boiling, the engines could quickly suffer serious damage.

Other causes of head failure included:

- Cold shuts, where the molten iron had not fully melded together when first cast
- Blow holes, common even when cars originally sold
- Machining problems when new, and including certain radius points
- Poor casting wall thickness control, resulting in unevenness, especially near the exhaust valves
- The unreliable petrol in the early seventies
- The subsequent introduction of unleaded petrol

The new head drawings incorporated larger passages and a greatly increased water flow area. This ensured that the new castings had an increased and reliable flow of water through the head and especially in the areas where water flowed past the valves.

The final resolution of the cracking around the exhaust valves was to use special inserts and valves, initially obtained from California. These were hard and could cope with the higher temperatures and lead-free fuel. As there had been so many variations of valve size and angle, there was the possibility of the wrong valves being re-used by purchasers. It was decided at an early stage that our new heads would only be despatched fully assembled with our matched valves, guides, springs and inserts.

Having completed the drawings, the search began for a good foundry. It was the time of a Labour government, before the reforms of Mrs Thatcher. No one was interested. Those capable, due to the problems of punitively heavy personal and company taxation, and trade union domination, had no incentive to try. Many chose to retire, or move abroad to join the 'brain drain'.

Eventually, after two abortive attempts with poor foundries, and a frustrating year, success was achieved. Subsequently, the drawings were changed to allow computer-controlled machining, at a time when very few machinists understood the new technology. This enabled us to limit costs and improve the consistency of the castings. We have been fortunate to continue to use the same state-of-the-art foundry, and also, for the last twenty years, the same company for the highly skilled machining and final assembly.

Subsequently, after consulting within the RREC, the casting material used was changed to aluminium from cast iron. Aluminium has better heat transfer properties, is more tolerant to abuse than brittle cast iron, runs smoother due to equalised and polished combustion chambers and ports, and is much lighter. The head castings are also vacuum-impregnated as a further fail-safe procedure.

Many heads have been tested over the years on GPK 40, my lovely little 1925 '20', which I have owned for just on forty years. These test runs are to check temperature, driveability, low speed running, power, noise, vibration etc.

Our heads, many not so new now, give a small power increase due to the valve size changes, smoother running with their polished combustion chambers and ports, easier steering as lighter, and much cooler running. There is also a greater tolerance to abuse and overheating.

In thirty-five years, and counting, nearly seven hundred cars are running on our new cylinder heads, and none of our heads has ever failed in service due to a faulty casting.

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Obituary: Mark Nagy (1941 – 2008)



Mark was born in Hungary and lived there with his parents and siblings until the uprising in 1957. He made a very daring and courageous escape from Hungary, being forced to cross mine fields on foot to reach Austria and freedom. From Austria he made his way to England and found lodgings in the Southend-on-Sea area of Essex.

He then found employment with the Westinghouse Company who were the contractors carrying out the

electrification of the main line railway system in the United Kingdom. Over the next several years he became a very skilled electrical and mechanical engineer. During this time he worked all over the UK.

Mark then met and married June and they settled in the Westcliffe-on-Sea area where they started their first business repairing and rewinding starter motors dynamos and cut-out boxes, and anything else that needed rewinding. He joined our Club in 1985. His first car was an early Silver Shadow needing restoring, which he carried out to a very high standard, and the car is still attending club events today. Mark then joined the committee of the Essex Section on which he served for many years.

Mark became more interested in pre-war cars and their restoration. The first project was a 20hp he purchased. It came in boxes; the only part that was complete was the chassis. He rebuilt that car from the chassis up, with it standing on four milk crates in his small garage. The car was finished as a very fine two-door doctors' coupé. Over the next twenty years or so he became expert in rebuilding 20hp, 20/25 and Derby Bentley cars, and even carried out a great deal of work on Phantoms. Over the years his reputation as an expert engineer on pre-war Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars, and all the electrical parts that they used, spread through out our club and members called from far and wide for his help - which he always gave.

The 20hp car, that in my opinion he deserves the most credit for, is the one he restored for his friend who could only drive cars with hand controls. Mark designed and made a system of hand controls so that his friend could have the pleasure of driving one of the best pre-war cars in the world which works perfectly.

Mark's funeral took place on the 25th February 2008 and was attended by more than 160 people. Mark is survived by his devoted wife June and two sons Daryl and Warren and his grandchildren.

Malcolm Law, Derby Phantom Registrar

Photo: Mark and June Nagy with their 1927 Park Ward landaulette, GLK 73

The Rise and Fall of Lady Ropley, Banger

Shôn Ffowcs-Williams sent these two evocative photographs of his student days at Southampton University in the 1950s. He and two chums were returning to



Southampton along a narrow country lane when Shôn spotted a group of cars, including two or three Rolls-Royces, abandoned in a copse. They went back with a can of petrol, and amazingly GLK 35 fired up first time! (Well, they *were* studying Engineering.) Shôn soon found the owner, and bought the car for £15.

He proposed to Ann in that car.

The car took part in a parade at Southampton University with 13 people on board when it collapsed ignominiously, causing a bent steering column. Shôn took Lady Ropley to a breakers yard and she was never heard of again.

Julian Walker is demonstrating the engine, while Shôn demonstrates his biceps and Tony Wilson looks on. Julian was at the wheel for the fatal collapse and, aptly, went on to develop and drive tanks at the Fighting Vehicle Research Centre.

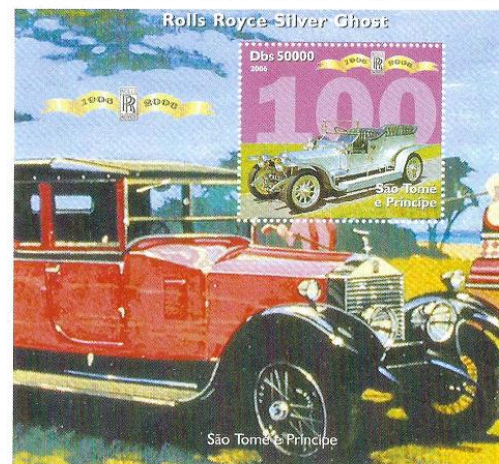


Above left:- Lady Ropley – GLK 35 with Hollingdrake 2-seater body.

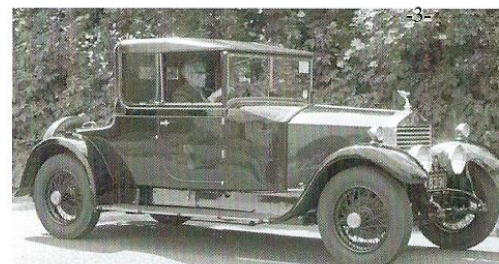
Above right:- Shôn and Ann cruising on Bristol's historic Floating Harbour during the 20hp Register's Westonbirt weekend, July 2007.

2wentymobelia

A commemorative stamp for the Silver Ghost was recently issued by São Tomé e



Príncipe, a group of small islands off the western coast of Africa. Someone decided to decorate the sheet with ... a 20hp. Colin Hughes kindly confirmed it was indeed a 20hp, and amazingly within a few minutes unearthed a photograph he took long ago: "I think this is Bill McAlpine's 20hp GHJ36 arriving at Yarnton in 1981 (he isn't driving)". The artist's illustration is uncannily similar to Colin's photograph (see detail below).



The painting of a blue 20hp was recently sold at auction. According to the vendor it is signed by A M Alderson, who is a nephew of the popular North Yorkshire artists Dorothy and Elizabeth Alderson, known for their animal and farmyard scenes.

It is 15" x 12" in size – just right for a chocolate box! No, that's unfair; many of us can empathise with this scene – touring through lovely countryside driving our very own piece of treasured kinetic art.

One of Life's Great Coincidences

The advertisement is from *Motor*, 9 May 1939. Last December, Tom Clarke, who is collecting information on rebodied pre-war Rolls-Royce cars for a book, sent it to me with a note: "I can't get a handle on this rebody".

ROLLS-ROYCE



SPECIAL BARGAIN
ROLLS-ROYCE, 21½ h.p., fitted in 1936 (late) with magnificent Two-door, 5-seater Sports Saloon Body, finished in black and ivory, black leather upholstery, sunshine roof, Bosch headlamps, twin horns, radio, five new tyres. This car is in splendid condition, exceptionally smart, and economical to run, averaging 22 m.p.g. Price ... **£325**

EXCHANGES DEFERRED
G. D. BRACKEN
Rolls-Royce Specialist
BRIGHOUSE Telephone: 425



Forward four months, and Clifton Spencer sent me a photograph that he thought might be of interest for this Newsletter. Clifton said: "I enclose a photo [of a car I saw] in Guernsey in 1995, and again in 2000."

Clifton had recorded it to be GXL 55, engine number X7E, and having a Taylor Knightsbridge sports saloon body. Today, GXL 55 is still on Guernsey, owned by RREC members Brian and Margot Jolly.

Tom Clarke suggested: "... Taylor of Knightsbridge can only be a dealer, not a coachbuilder ... I suspect Taylor would have organised a London-based coachbuilder to do the rebodging in 1936, and to be economic, this could have been Ranalah, or Newns. The

chassis number is not on Coachcraft's records"

Brian Jolly told me he has owned the car since 1962 and been an RREC member for 30 years. Another Guernsey resident, connected with shipping, had previously bought the car in Portsmouth. The car was smashed in an accident on the island and needed a new front wing. Mr Wilkinson the harbourmaster then bought it.

Brian saw it parked outside the harbourmaster's office, and asked to buy it. Some time later, in 1962, he got a phone call saying he could have it for £60. It was painted all silver, but (by another coincidence) Brian decided to change it to the present two-tone colour scheme, and the painter suggested following the same crease lines in the body panels as in the 1939 advertisement. Brian was unaware of the advertisement. He and Margot do use the car regularly, but only on the island.

Where are they now?



Tom Clarke writes: this is GHJ 4. I suspect this rebody might be a Corsica, or even a post-war Corsica by the former Corsica team though they didn't use the name then. At first I thought it was a Wing Commander Wallis car but it is not. The car survives in the U.S.A. The radiator has been moved forward, rather like a Silver Wraith. I wonder if your readers know the car?



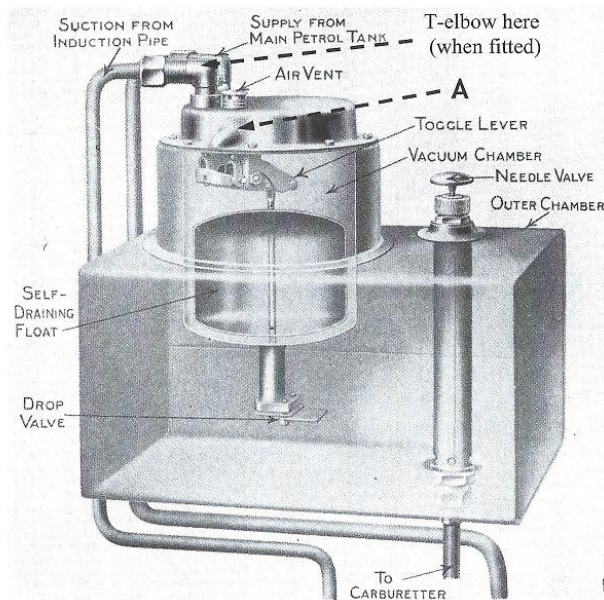
Another Puzzle..

.. from Tom Clarke: "this one is defying all the experts. Clearly very early. *Can your readers help?* Barker body 4742, design 6217A, so-called 'second' car for Herbert Smith."

HOW TO LOOK AFTER THE AUTOVAC

by Martin Hull

Suction from the inlet manifold creates a low pressure in the inner vacuum chamber which draws fuel from the main petrol tank. As the fuel enters the vacuum chamber the float rises and closes the suction valve, simultaneously opening the air valve. This allows the fuel to pass, via the drop valve, to the outer chamber. As the fuel empties into the outer chamber the float drops, closing the air valve and opening the suction valve. The process then repeats itself.



Reproduced from INSTRUCTIONS for the Care and Running
of the 20 HP ROLLS-ROYCE CAR

T-ELBOW (note: these were factory-fitted from January 1927)

During the “suck” process an enriched mixture is temporarily fed to the engine; this is particularly evident at low rpm and can result in poor idling. Rolls Royce devised the T-elbow to overcome this. Inside the elbow is a sprung piston which dampens the suction to reduce the pull on the engine and prevent stalling at low rpm.

THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR

- The outer rim of the main tank has a small vent which locates into the bump, **A**, on the top cover and links to the air valve. This vent must be kept clear – don’t use any silicone or Hermetite to seal. Cork gaskets are sufficient.
- The copper cone fuel filter located under the petrol elbow (supply from main petrol tank) can become clogged with dirt. This can easily be replaced or cleaned and is worth doing to prevent dirt reaching the carburettors.
- In the suction elbow (or T-elbow) there is a blow back valve. To check if this is working properly you should be able to suck through it but not blow. A new valve can be fitted but does need soldering in position.
- The piston in the T-elbow needs to move freely within the barrel of the elbow. Pistons can sometimes stick as either the piston or the barrel becomes worn or distorted.
- The spring linking the float to the valve mechanism can become weak over time, but can easily be replaced. However if you do, make sure that the end of the spring is located in the upper hole on the float spindle.
- If you change the air and suction valves (in the brass top) these must be set up correctly and then soldered in place.
- The drop valve must be clean and closing correctly against the copper tube; otherwise the negative pressure in the inner chamber cannot be created. A visual check to ensure that you cannot see daylight between the flap and the tube, whilst flicking the flap to simulate opening and closing, should be sufficient.
- Make sure that the float is not developing cracks as these can occur through simple metal fatigue and will render the float useless. If the float cannot rise, either because it is leaking or if the spring is broken, the “suction” effect will continue and the fuel will leak along the suction pipe.
- Unleaded fuel is unkind to the bonding agents used in some cork gaskets, causing the gasket to break down. For both the top cover gaskets (and RR tap gaskets) we have had our bonding changed to the current British standard to help overcome this problem.
- When fitting new gaskets use a light oil just to keep the cork supple.
- Autovacs work best at low rpm. Cars can suffer fuel starvation on long hills or during fast motorway driving. If this occurs either just back off the throttle or pause and enjoy the view! The Autovac will recover quickly. We have sent cars with Autovacs over the Rockies with no problems.

(Martin Hull and Barbara Ashton are proprietors of the Autovac company in Devon. Martin also fabricates body panels, and complete car bodies, in sheet metal.)

Editor note: when servicing my Autovac recently (for the first time since buying the car), I found the outer surface of the inner vacuum tank was covered by a thick layer of rust. After wire-brushing, it was evident that the inner tank wall was perforated with many pinholes. These holes would allow air to leak into the inner tank during the vacuum cycle, via the small vent in the top of the outer tank. I guess this would reduce Autovac efficiency by reducing the rate at which petrol is sucked from the rear tank. I repaired the tank by painting the outer surface with Kurust, followed by a thin layer of polyester resin to block the pinholes. Alternatively I could have bought a new inner tank.

Too Hot, too Cold, or Just Right?

Here is a story about a man (not Goldilocks) who travelled up-country to collect his first Rolls-Royce car, an old 20hp. During the drive home, he didn't notice the engine was overheating - until the car came to a juddering halt. The engine was wrecked. The man did not know that he should have opened the radiator shutters! I read this before we bought our 20hp and, apocryphal tale or not, I determined to make no such mistakes, taking the precaution of having the temperature gauge professionally refurbished, and then calibrating it myself before refitting it to the car.

But two things rather disturbed me:

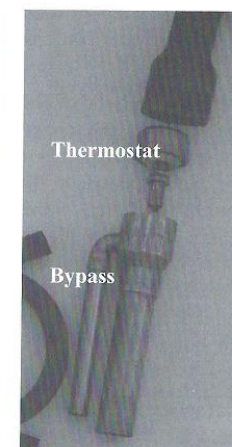
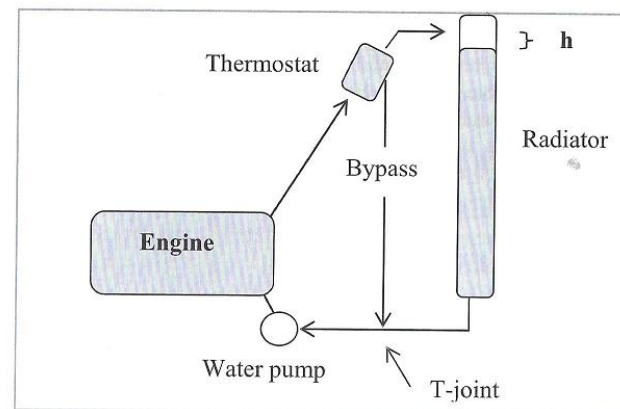
- Even in the summer, the shutters could only be partly opened, otherwise the engine would run too cool. In winter they were virtually closed all the time.
- When touring slowly round country lanes, up or down hills, or in cities, the temperature could cycle up and down rather rapidly.

Regarding the first point, it would be preferable to have a full flow of fresh air through the radiator *at all times*, in order to keep the engine bay cool. This should benefit the various bolt-on components such as coil, distributor, Autovac etc, prevent the carburettor from overheating or icing up, and perhaps help cool the circulating engine oil. As to the second point, it seems that rapid temperature cycling might confer undesirable thermal/mechanical (expansion and contraction) stresses on the engine. After seeing at the Annual an after-market thermostat kit for Silver Ghosts, and reading in Bulletin 187, July/August 1991 (also Technical Manual No. 5) how Ray Maguire fitted a thermostat to his Phantom I, I decided to see if one could be fitted to a 20hp.

Ray Maguire listed other potential advantages of his thermostat:

- Quicker warm up from cold (water in radiator, and the heavy radiator itself, is not heated during warm up)
- Less chance of vapour lock, if indeed that is a problem (increased air flow over engine)
- Better carburation
- Shutters still available to use in very cold weather, or to conserve engine heat

If a thermostat protects the engine from unnecessary stresses and strains, and helps preserve it for future generations of Enthusiasts, then I'm in favour of fitting one!



I ended up building a very simple system (diagram) using components which are readily available. A neighbour, who is a professional industrial plumber, designed and made up fittings from standard pipe connectors. Some of the joints should be brazed (for strength reasons).

The total cost was less than £50, which included several bottles of red wine for my plumber friend. The photographs show the installed system on the car, and the separate components of the thermostat and bypass unit.

Note: with this design, it is essential to drill a couple of 1 mm diameter holes through the thermostat valve. These prevent air locks, otherwise it is impossible to fill the engine with (or empty it of) coolant!

Our 20hp has been running with this thermostat for more than two years now, and without a single problem. Suitable Renault in-line thermostats are available from Halfords for about £7 each, and are rated at 83°C, 86°C, or 89°C. A 73°C version is available from First Line, FTS275.73, but on special order. The temperature gauge usually reads 7°C higher than the thermostat rating, because the rear of the head is always hotter than the water flowing up to the radiator. With an 83°C thermostat, the temperature gauge (ie the temperature at the back of the head) reads a steady 90°C all day, summer and winter.

All the published evidence suggests that the optimum operating temperature of a small hp engine is about 90°C or even higher, but most people are reluctant to aim this high because of the relatively small margin of error (coolant containing 40-50% ethylene glycol boils at about 105°C). The thermostat removes this worry, but if you do prefer to run cooler, you can fit the 73°C thermostat.

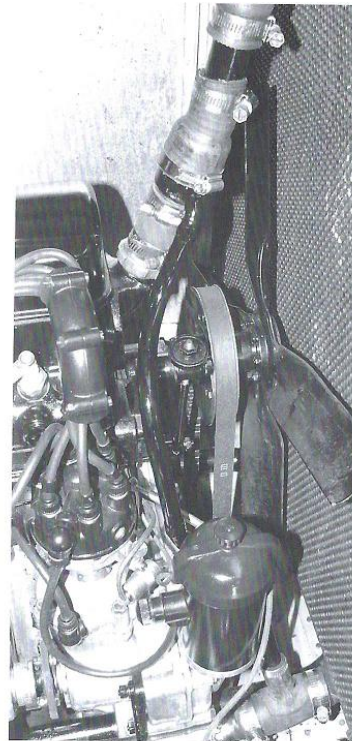
A big bonus is the faster warm up. When I set off with a cold engine, it is up to normal operating temperature within a mile or two, compared with the normal five-plus miles. Also I don't have to keep an eye on the temperature gauge; but I must say that even after two years I still can't resist the occasional smug reassuring glance!

Another thing I have noticed; the bulk of the radiator remains cool nearly all the time, even in the summer. Most of the re-circulating coolant bypasses the radiator. The relatively small flow of hot water into the radiator heats up the top tank of course, but by the time it trickles down to the exit pipe, it has become quite cool. This cool water mixes with hot water, which has gone down the bypass, and is pumped back into the engine. Usefully, the radiator acts as a large reservoir of cool water, which can be pumped into the engine at times of need, eg climbing a long hot hill. As the engine gets hotter, the thermostat opens wider to allow more water into the radiator. As a consequence, the hydraulic pressure at the bypass entrance falls, and less water is pushed down the bypass; eventually just by the small head of water, **h** (diagram on previous page), when the thermostat is fully open.

It is important to note that *water must circulate round the engine at all times*, even when the engine is cold and the thermostat closed; (a) to ensure the engine warms up evenly and (b) to prevent hot spots. Also the thermostat only operates properly if water flows over it all the time. Therefore it is really essential to have a substantial bypass with an internal diameter of, say, 12mm or more; it allows water to circulate continuously, both over the thermostat and round the engine. If you need to close off the bypass for any reason, you must remove the thermostat from its housing.

Components:

- Renault 4 or Dauphine thermostat from Halfords or First Line (see above)
- Renault 4, or Dauphine top hose from autojumbles or eBay (this hose serves as the thermostat housing)
- Copper pipe reducer, 42mm (male)–28mm (female) from BES (part no. 9174)
- Rubber drain tube ½" bore from Vintage Supplies (bypass hose – there is no need to use pressure hose for the bypass)



Philip Baron's 20/25

More recently, Tony Hunt has adapted this design to his Phantom I, and reported that it cured several niggling problems he had, associated with fluctuating coolant temperature.

Philip Baron has fitted a very similar system to his 20/25, see photograph this page. Philip writes: "It works very well; as you say the temperature on the thermostat is 73°C but the temperature on the gauge is 78°C to 82°C. I am very pleased - it should only have one mark deducted when presenting the car in the concours section. My local motor factors carries a stock of black silicone reducers 38mm to 32mm. They are quite flexible and able to stretch to the 42 mm required for the thermostat, a small amount of self amalgamating tape on the 28mm pipe will make it a snug fit. I have ordered one as a spare. Cost is £14.05, the web site is www.auto-bar.co.uk part no SH55B (B refers to black and is a special order) in the silicone hose section."

Note: Tod Marshman confirmed that he will deduct only one point for a thermostat, when marking concours competitions. However, if you wish, it is possible to replace the thermostat system by the original top and bottom hoses in about 10 minutes – *plus* of course the time needed to drain and re-fill the engine with coolant.

CJ's Book

Claude Johnson was Secretary of the Automobile Club (later to become the RAC) from 1897 to 1903. He left, and after a little while joined C S Rolls and Co., later becoming Managing Director of Rolls-Royce until his death in April 1926. He is widely regarded as being the principal organisational, commercial and marketing genius behind the rapid development of Rolls-Royce. His book "The Early History of Motoring" focuses on the pre-RR history of motoring. However it was first published in 1927, just after his death, when an anonymous but interesting postscript was added which described the history and revealed the philosophy of the Rolls-Royce company from its inception and up to 1927. Two short excerpts from this postscript are of particular interest to 20hp owners, especially as they were written while our cars were being manufactured. They are reproduced below.

THE EARLY HISTORY OF MOTORING

by the late

CLAUDE JOHNSON

First Secretary of the Royal Automobile Club

With a Preface by

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU

C.S.I., R.C.I.E.



Printed and Published by

ED. J. BURROW & CO. LTD.

109 KINGSWAY
LONDON

AND
CHELTENHAM

78

A BRIEF HISTORY OF

remembered that each of these achievements was without a parallel at the time.

The next milestone in the record of Rolls-Royce progress was reached in October, 1922, when, after lengthy preparation and experiment, the Directors decided to accede to a world-wide demand for a new six-cylinder-engined chassis of 20-h.p. which should be a real Rolls-Royce. This new model immediately became an outstanding success without in any way interfering with the position of the 40/50-h.p. model, the demand for which has remained unimpaired.

The secret of Rolls-Royce success probably lies in the consistency of its policy. The ideals of the early days are still maintained in 1927. They were clearly and unmistakably expressed by the present Chairman of the Company, Lord Wargrave, at the Annual Meeting on February 21st, 1927, when he stated:—

“The knowledge that we are the manufacturers of the two most perfect chassis in the world does not blind us to the fact that this position is maintained by our policy of continuous experiment. The smallest details are subject to the most searching tests. It is only by this policy that we can remain at the head of the motor car industry, both in quality and in value.”

This brief resumé of Rolls-Royce history may fitly be concluded by a quotation from a recent number of a technical journal. Its Editor, who is a highly qualified automobile engineer, writes as follows:—

“In spite of repeated attempts to knock the Rolls-Royce off its pedestal of fame, it stubbornly refuses to oblige . . . Still the word Rolls-Royce signifies everything that it did during the past eighteen years. Some people might argue that, if money were no object, a car could be built that would eclipse the Rolls-Royce. The argument, however, is false, because behind the manufacturers of the Rolls-Royce car there is a fund of experience which no money can buy or reproduce.”

Brian Packman's Story of GCK 65 (see photographs, page 31)

- Car to be supplied to Mr J H L Baldwin (Paton & Baldwin, thread manufacturers) of Levisham Hall nr Pickering, N Yorkshire.
- RR works no. 1453 – type India, engine no. G1587, 11 x 50 rear axle ratio, ordered by Myers & Burnell of York, 10 Oct 1925.
- Order placed with Woodall Nicholson, Halifax, to construct tourer body with 4 seats + 2 extra.
- The chassis was delivered to Woodall Nicholson by LMS goods train on 10 Feb 1926, and registered PY 4817 for license to John Herbert Lacy Baldwin on 12 March 1926.

In 1926 Messrs Salmons of Newport Pagnell had started constructing their Tickford Allweather wind-down hood on saloon coachwork, which must have appealed to Mr Baldwin as the car was sent to Newport pagnell for their latest type of open/closed coachwork.

When in Yorkshire in 1978 I met Mr Baldwin's youngest son at Pickering. Neither he nor his wife ever remember seeing the car with any other than the Salmons Tickford body, so maybe the open tourer was never fully completed. Baldwin

senior lent the car to his son and new daughter-in-law for their honeymoon tour in 1930. On this visit I also met Baldwin's chauffeur, Ken Green, who was then 80. When the car was delivered Ken was taken away from his game-keeping work on the estate to become chauffeur. He did not enjoy this change of position. The driving involved short runs to the local station, to the works in Halifax and occasionally to London, as Baldwin was a director of a London bank.

Mr Baldwin kept the car until about 1933 and during his ownership it would have covered approx 10,000 miles annually, as it was returned to Derby Works in March of most years for engine decarbonising, together with various upgrades to steering mechanism, slipper drive and axle springs.

Prior to passing the car to his son-in-law, Commander J Crossley (of Crossley Carpets) Mr Baldwin had the engine rebored, relined and 6 new pistons, connecting rods and bushes supplied by Derby for fitting by Mr Baldwin's local mechanic, J C Baines. Commander Crossley kept the car for some years and Derby were sending parts for servicing to Messrs Wooleys and in 1936 RR sent a man to decarbonise the engine at Crossley's home.

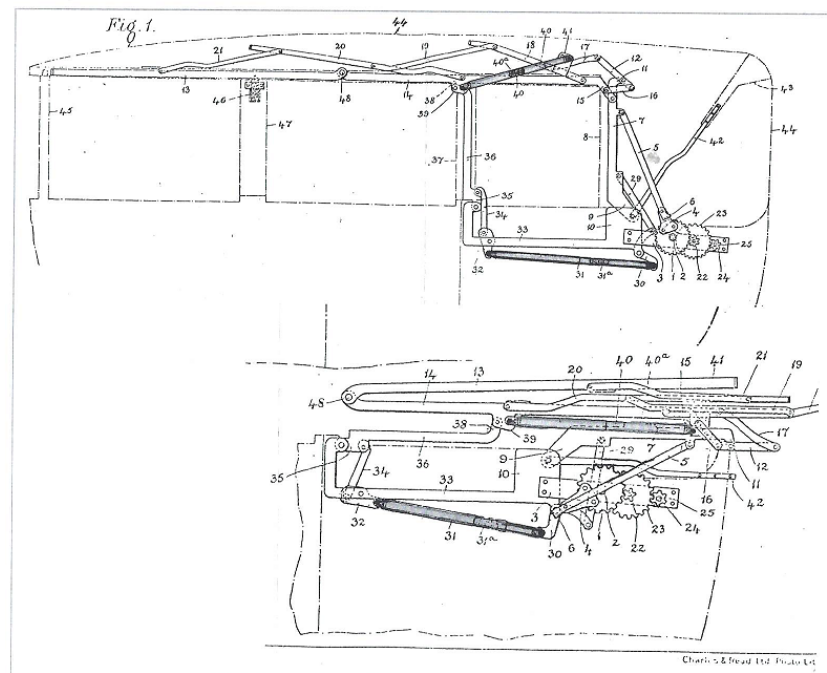
After leaving Crossley's ownership the car passed through various owners in Lancashire, Derbyshire, Bucks, London and Cambridge, prior to my purchase of her from Adams & Oliver in 1961 for £190. At that time the hood mechanism was inoperable and the fabric roof sealed closed. I used the car for some years as my only transport when living in Bromley, Kent.

At that time I was a regular visitor to James Young. Mr Pollard of their metalwork department persuaded me to let him drill a hole through a nearside rear panel to expose what he knew would be the main cross shaft that operated the gearing of the Tickford hood. This investigation eventually lead to a complete body overhaul by Roy Creech in early 1970s when various cut and mutilated sections of the hood operating mechanism were repaired prior to recovering and lining the hood. The car was then reupholstered, carpeted, and brush painted by one of the last experts in this craft.

The section drawings show the Salmon Tickford winding hood mechanism as fitted to a six-light saloon, but modifications were available for four-light saloons and sedanca dropheads. I have even seen a miniature version constructed on an Austin 7. The encased springs numbered 31 and 40 (shaded) in the mechanism aided the raising and lowering of the roof and also helped to prevent vibration of the components in the closed position. Approximately 8 turns of the operating handle on the end of shaft 24 either opened or closed the complete mechanism

Tailpiece We used the Twenty on our honeymoon in the West Country in 1967. Driving into a market town we asked a policeman where we could park. My new wife was impressed when the reply was: Sir, with a car like that, you can park it anywhere.

(First published in Middlesex Section Newsletter, Spring Edition 2008)



Adventures of my 20hp, GOK 61

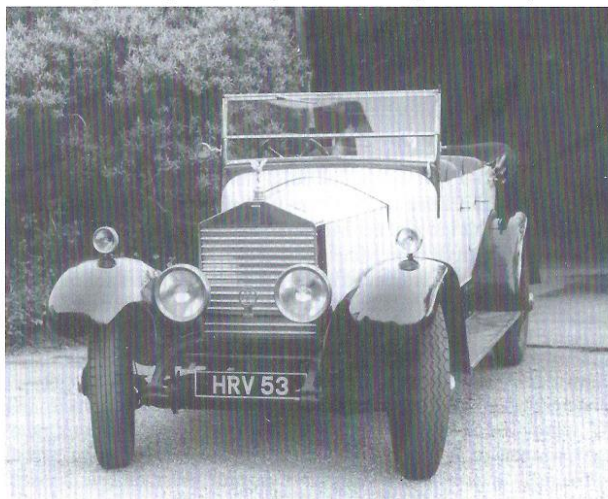
By David Mead

It was suggested that I write a history of my 20hp, having had it for 41 years continuously. When new it had a Barker Pullman limousine body and was bought by Miss Hulton with the registration number MH 668. She almost immediately took it to Malta when she married the Prime Minister of that island. She then became Lady Strickland. The Twenty was used until 1939 when it was returned for overhaul by Rolls-Royce. Not much was done which is not surprising when you consider how small the island is, and how few roads there were. In 1953 a naval officer bought it (the deal was done on a submarine) and again the Twenty returned to England, being issued with a new registration number HRV 53. The new owner wanted a more practical body so in Southampton he had a shooting brake made. He also had new 20" wheels fitted and the radiator shutters put vertical to look more modern; this was common in the 1950s. From the various letters from Mabel Strickland and subsequent owners the Twenty always gave good reliable service. The original coil did become unreliable, but nothing else.

In 1966 when I returned from overseas, I looked for another Rolls-Royce. GOK 61 was advertised in a small garage locally, so I went to inspect it on a dank winter evening. All seemed well – only the starter not working. – so the deal was done.

Careful inspection and checking serial numbers indicated the tyres were 1953 and worn to confirm a mileage of no more than 10,000 since then. I wanted a tourer body so I went to the first festival at Goodwood and took plenty of photographs of RR tourers. No alternative in those days except to copy a particular one, and then who was going to lend one to me? All the original fittings had been transferred to the shooting brake when it was built so I was lucky in having door handles, door pulls etc. The body is of the usual construction; ash frame covered in aluminium, with full weather equipment and rear Auster screen. I managed to retrieve the original registration, MH 668. After a few thousand miles I decided to go over the whole car mechanically. Piston rings were worn so everything was overhauled in the engine that was necessary – so that it would “last for ever” as they say. It has always started fairly easily “on the switch” but since run-in in it will, with luck, start like that over and over again, and sometimes even from cold. Due partly to the dense traffic in the South East, the Twenty is used less and less, so after 41½ years of ownership and about 15,000 miles it would seem time to pass it on to a younger enthusiast to look after and enjoy.

[Editor note: David has various spares that he wishes to sell, including a 20hp engine. This has its original iron head, and comes complete with dynamo, magneto, manifolds etc, plus its flywheel and clutch. David believes it is in good working order and he wants his spares to go to good homes! Please contact him direct, or I can put you in touch. David served as Spares Registrar and Spares Consultant for the RREC from 1977 to 1985.]



David Mead's GOK 61, carrying the number plates issued in 1953, after repatriation to the UK
(see also next page)



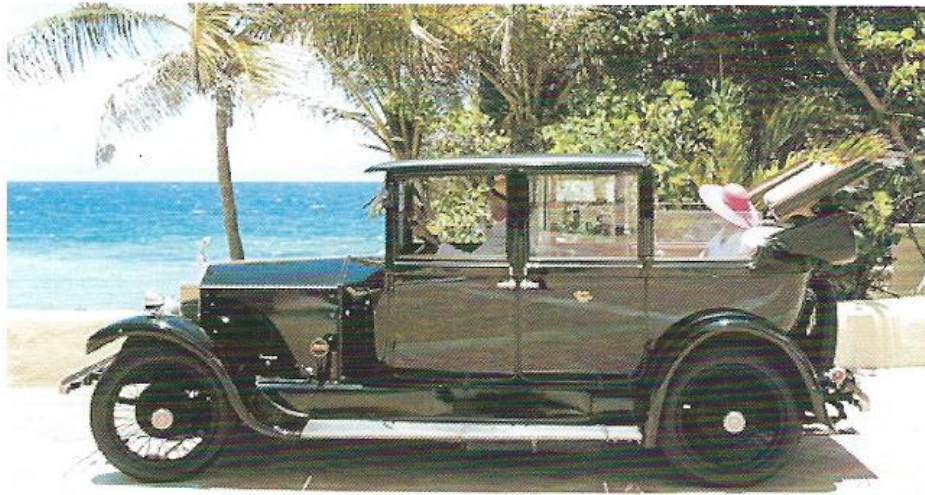
Top:- GEN 18, Windovers cabriolet, recently sold by Linda Steen (page 6)

Middle:- Brian and June Packman's GCK 65 with its Salmons Tickford Allweather body (page 27)

Bottom:- David Mead's GOK 61 with tourer body, converted from Barker limousine (page 29)



Advertisement



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A warm welcome is extended to the members of the 20 hp Register of the RREC.



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