RREC

The International Club for Rolls-Royce and Bentley Enthusiasts

East Midlands Section Newsletter



The Custodian

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With Specific Responsibilities

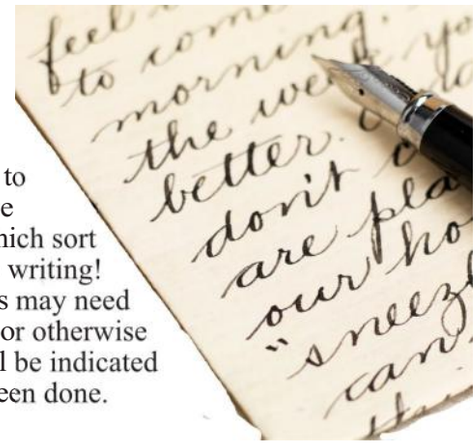
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Letters to the Editor

Have your say

The Custodian is your magazine about your Section of the Club.

We would like to hear from you about Club activities and what you would like to read about in this newsletter.



Letters may either be for publication or just a communication to the editor. Please make it clear which sort of letter you are writing! Published letters may need to be shortened or otherwise edited but it will be indicated when this has been done.

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Reports **Bookings**

Coming events **Articles**

January edition copy deadline

Copy to be received by the editor by 30th November please.

Formalities

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Safety: In addition to observing any safety procedures, which are explained and/or displayed, members and their guests have a "duty of care" to themselves; i.e. people are responsible for their own safety.

On the front cover

The offside of the engine of Reg White's 1925 Springfield Ghost - S287-PK with very elegantly fitted full-flow oil filter and (see page 10) a totally reversible installation of a front wheel brake system. Opinions are divided over whether Royce would have approved.

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Chairman's Letter



Martin Carnell

The main focus of the committee's recent work has been the Derby event ***Wings and Wheels*** run by a small team with Mike Wild at the head. I am writing this at the time almost all the pricing has been done, the time table done, and the pulling together of the small items. There is still plenty to do e.g. drive routes, booklets, planning of parking etc. We are looking for volunteers to help for signing in administration, marshalling, handing out information etc. so contact Mike Wild if you can give a bit of time and enjoy yourself meeting new RREC members. Meanwhile make haste to book your hotel accommodation (see pages 16-17)



At Fairfield Lake, the owner allows us to go and enjoy the 7¼ inch gauge railway which runs around his estate and his steam boat offering us to sail on his lake. Derek and Evelyne Randall organise the event, and part of the admission fee is raising monies for the air ambulance. This year they raised a staggering £866 for the Charity. Well done!

North of England Rally: This is where Jeff Dennis organises the Majestic Hotel and the entertainment at night. Jeff got a good rate at the hotel and the cabaret entertainment on Saturday night was first class; the two singers got 80% of the audience onto the dance floor. Well done!

At the visit to a South Derbyshire member's house, parking was a bit tight but Steve and Marilyn Hubbard managed to get us in. We had a saxophonist as entertainment who was excellent. The Ken Hucknall award for best maintained pre-war motorcar went to Ken Old for his early 20/25 Rolls-Royce, second place Graham Statham, and 3rd prize to John Newton.

June Dennis was not feeling well and was taken to hospital, where she had a pacemaker fitted. The Club sent her a get-well card wishing her well.

Big Pat McGrath's recent operation has gone well. I wish him a speedy recovery.

On 3rd November 2024 I will be doing the London to Brighton Run in my 1902 Renault with my grandchildren. The Renault has a connection with RR – see page 18 for an article about this and Vera Butler (Rolls' sometime girlfriend)

Happy Motoring, Martin. ■

Stanbrook Abbey – Report



Mike Wild

Jeff Dennis disproved the old saying "Never go back on holiday to the same place twice, you will always be disappointed", well this was the third time back to Stanbrook Abbey and over ninety participants again disproved that.

Set in 26 acres of gardens, Stanbrook Abbey, formerly a monastery, dates back to the early 16th century and is now a grade II listed country house hotel, with stone cloisters and gothic stained-glass windows. Today the facilities are modern without losing any of the historic character and ideal for our sort of purpose, a relaxed friendly spring break, which started upon our arrival with afternoon tea: prosecco and a scone with jam and cream. Lovely start to the break.



Following the evening meal, we were entertained by a very talented pianist, who seemed to be capable of playing any tune requested, including those he had never heard of, by listening to a few bars on his mobile phone.

Monday visit was a short run into Worcester city Masonic Library and Museum. Eighteen minutes' walk into the city centre, I timed it. We had a very interesting talk on the career highs and lows by TV series "Celebrity Antique Road trip" presenter and auctioneer, Philip Serrell. I was particularly impressed by his knowledge relating to each of the items he talked about, and without notes, or none I could see. This was followed by a super home-cooked buffet lunch; they even opened the bar for us.





In the evening, following another excellent dinner, we were entertained by a Buddy Holly tribute act, who were really good, and the singer even looked like and spoke like Buddy Holly with an American accent, although I did pick up the occasional slip back into an English accent. But it did not distract from the show.



On Tuesday, following a twenty-eight-mile drive through lovely countryside, we arrived at Hampton Court Castle and Gardens including a Maze, in deepest Herefordshire. The guided tour included details of the castle dating back to Henry IV, with extensions to create a home for various families, including the grandson of Sir Richard Arkwright, a Derbyshire mill owner, whose mill is less then two miles from my home. So it was of great interest to learn the family lived there from 1811 to 1911. A more recent owner included an American who acquired anything that would fit in with the period property, including replica armour and chandeliers, and I think I am right in stating that the fearsome stuffed lion was not a trophy from a shooting trip, it came originally from Chester Zoo and died naturally, but it looked good.

There were two routes back to Stanbrook, one the direct route by which we came, and another forty odd mile trip, which I chose. It took us

through more wonderful English countryside and although I was in a 20/25 with cable operated brakes, the car gave no cause for concern negotiating the rises, falls and hairpin bends.



That evening, our last, was fancy dress night, and the theme was, any character who could have met Phileas Fogg of Around the World in 80 Days fame. Such a wide-ranging option proved difficult to decide upon a suitable costume. But it gave others, the chance to let their imagination run riot, including our Chairman Martin Carnell who as always showed himself to have a little bit more riotousness than most. Once again, he had an inflatable costume, but this year it was a cowboy on an emu, just like Rod Hull and Emu. The entertainment was what Jeff, informed us, and I have no reason to doubt it, the UK's top female





comedy magic act. A strange combination, but it certainly worked and kept the audience laughing all the way through. There was more than an element of Tommy Cooper with the magic combined with humour, that gave the impression she did not know what she was doing but ended up with a clever trick. For example, during the act she asked various members of the audience questions and wrote down answers, that she discarded, suggesting that she had got the response wrong, all very humorous, but in the end, she picked up the paper she wrote on, and showed us all the answers she had written were correct! ■



Picnic at Haselour Hall – Report

Mary Mulholland

Despite gloomy weather predictions causing me and others to again bring waterproofs of varying degrees of protection, the day, against all odds, was dry and later sunny after thirty minutes of heavy rain.



This year there were more than seventy participants at this ever popular event.

The Tom Telfer Awards for the best maintained post 1965 cars are as follows:

1st Colin Smith
2nd Glyn Sanders
3rd Christina Wild





A further award (booby prize) went to David Howard for his innovative use of gaffer tape in maintaining his car.

The entertainment, as ever, was great and the band, with an excellent vocalist, had many of the members dancing in the sunshine.





Added to this, and the copious supply of tea, coffee and cream cakes, was the Sophia Loren Ice-cream van, providing a selection of luxury ice-creams served, as many male members will attest, by two 'luxury ladies`.



All in all an excellent day. Our thanks go to Russell and his family for providing this hospitality and asking if we would like to repeat the experience next year.

A resounding Yes, please! ■





Bishton Hall – Report



John Prentice

On 14th July our section went to Bishton Hall is Staffordshire. The Grade II* listed Georgian house is owned by Charles Hanson the well known midlands auctioneer.

The weather was bright and made for a very pleasant drive out to the venue. The house and estate has, what auctioneers might call, a pleasant patina and we had plenty of space for our cars.



Some weekends are obviously very busy on the site but we were able to enjoy the cafe and other shops in the Courtyard without crowds. The tea room is called *Sparrow's* and the story of this is interesting. The Sparrow family acquired the Hall around 1776. This was the Jane Austen era, with the novelist having been born in 1775. Charlotte, John Sparrow's daughter would have suited an Austen novel. Behind her feminine demeanour was a steely resolve. At the time a wife's inheritance passed to her husband – a situation which persisted until the Married Women's Property Act (1882). Upon marriage, the husband and wife became one person under the law, as the property of the wife was surrendered to her husband. Any personal property acquired by the wife during the marriage, unless specified that it was for her own separate use, went automatically to her husband. Accordingly Charlotte never married to ensure that Bishton remained in her family.



Perfect car for the house



After her death, the Hall passed to several owners and eventually was used as a school.

One of the shops had a good stock of old tools and electrical equipment and a few of us were led astray. ■

PUZZLE
What is this doing at a picnic?





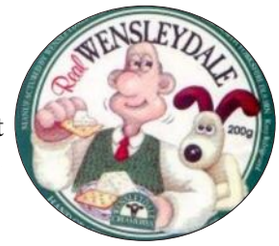
Harrogate Weekend – Report



Steve & Lorraine Percival

Lorraine and myself are relatively new members to the RREC with just over three years under our belt. Our passion for the cars is growing as we get into our retirement and making new friends in this new environment is proving very easy and rewarding. We have attended three national rallies, two Southern rallies and this was our second Northern rally, plus many Paulespury events and local car shows. We chose this year to come for the full weekend after seeing how well organised last year was together with the two Jeff's Spring Breaks that we attended. Although we are Paulespury Section members we like to travel as far as possible and meet other Club groups.

We arrived a little late (after many stops at petrol stations - 10 to the gallon?) and missed the afternoon tea reception but just in time to share a chat with Jeff, June and few others left. The hotel was welcoming and in a perfect location and we soon sat down to our pre-organised evening meal together. The food was only beaten by the table chat which did not stop all night until the hotel staff asked us to leave to set up for the next day. As is usual for a Jeff event - the after dinner jokes come freely and very welcome.



On the Saturday we were given the choices of a day out at an antiques fair in Wetherby, a 90 mile organised drive in Yorkshire or to spend the day in Harrogate? We chose the antiques fair as we thought we would spend less there than on petrol or in Harrogate shops – oops! But it was a great day out and "pride of place parking" was organised for our cars. We heard from others that the drive out was fabulous and ended up passing through Wensleydale - and - "*you know where you are with a bit of Wensleydale*".



Saturday evening Black Tie dinner was a great event with a champagne reception, great food, great company again and ending up with the very special talents of the "Passionettes" – two ladies that travel the world with music from the Beverly Sisters to ABBA – and we all danced the night away – and I mean all. Two of our lady guests, one from Holland and the other from Richmond said they had never seen their partners on the dance floor! The inimitable style of Jeff's dancing was challenged to a dance off by the Dutch man – Hans I think – marks for enthusiasm were both 10 and a draw was given. A fabulous night all round.

Sunday: As usual our breakfast was served in a reserved area for RREC and we could all watch eager car cleaners out the window hoping for a prize later in the day. The short drive to Harewood House was just long enough to see the last off the morning drizzle and then we were treated to a mixed a sunny and shady day set in front of Harewood House. The cars were well organised by type with the older cars down the front. A Jazz band entertained us all day with stalls from Members' spares and trade suppliers on hand. The parade ring was after lunch with many a prize won and commentary heaping praise on each exhibitor. A great collection of cars from the oldest to the newest was on show.

We even managed a tour inside the house this time – and what a great house it is. The day finished with another pre-organised dinner together and lots more chat - and Jeff jokes of course!

On Monday we finished a good hearty breakfast with those left and said our farewells – until the next one. Our thanks go out to Jeff and June for organising such a great weekend and to Mike Blunsom and team on the Rally field. ■





Fairfield Lake & Smite Brook Valley Railway – Report

Derek Randall



Weren't we lucky? It turned out to be a beautiful summer's day. Not too hot, not too cold. Ideal for a picnic under the trees and amongst the Rolls-Royce cars. All in all a good day to show off the Chairman's car detailing.



The Fairfield Lake and Smite Brook Railway has been an RREC East Midlands event since 2017 and is popular with members of the club because it appeals to all ages. We have had as many as four generations of the same family riding on the same train.

The big attractions included the seven-and-a-quarter inch gauge railway which takes people around the 40-acre site The trips were free of charge and many people went round more than once. The site is beautifully landscaped. Capability Brown did not design it but if he did, he would be proud of himself.



The railway travels alongside a lake, past the hut where teas/coffees and ice cream were available, past the picnic area then into the trees and back around the other side of the lake to the station; around 10 minutes duration.

A steam powered launch gave people free journeys around the lake and proved to be very popular.

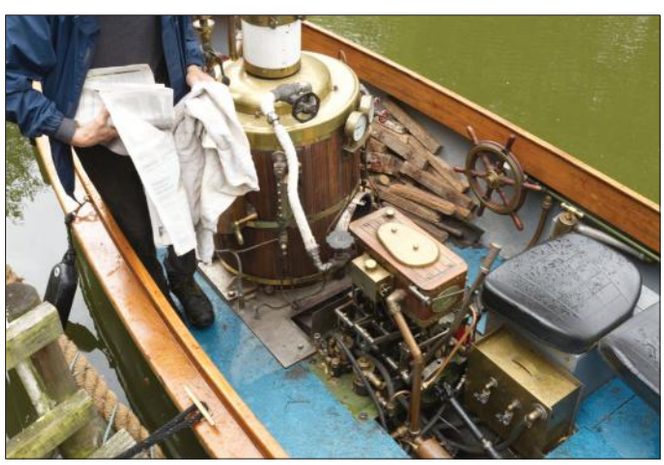
The event is organized to give members and their families and friends a pleasurable day out and to raise money for the Air Ambulance charity. 78 people attended on the day and a further 11 donations were made to the charity by people who could not come. The entry fee was £9.00, of which £7.50 went to the charity. Two additional Rolls-Royce groups joined us plus members of other RREC Sections.



At the end of the day, our chairman presented the site owner, Peter Stevenson, with a cheque for £719.00 payable to the Warwickshire and Northamptonshire Air Ambulance Service plus a further £147.00 cheque from the sale of raffle tickets. Peter was also presented with a bottle of single malt whisky to thank him for inviting us to his home. The money from the sale of refreshments and use of the barbecue was also passed on to Peter for the charity.

A very enjoyable day. ■





South Derbyshire House Picnic – Report

Mary Mulholland

After a wet few days prior to the day of the picnic, on the day itself the rain held off until 2:30pm at which time the majority had finished eating.

There was an excellent turnout with a fine display of pre- and post-war cars. It was splendid to see multi-generational families.



During the picnic itself we were entertained by a talented saxophonist who was very easy to listen to but did not drown conversations.

The Ken Hucknall award for the best maintained pre 1966 cars then took place with the results as follows:

1st Ken Old;

2nd Graham Statham;

3rd John Newton.











Congratulations to the winners (as shown in the photographs.)



I am not sure if it was intentional, but Reg White had parked so that he not only showed off the commendably tight steering lock of his Springfield Silver Ghost but a very carefully built front wheel brake conversion which he explained is totally removable to restore the original chassis design and dramatically improves safety amongst modern traffic.

(See the postscript on next page to learn what was being discussed about front wheel brakes in 1921)*

Members who have been to this picnic in previous years were probably surprised at the changes to the garden this year. Graham has been planning, for a while, to improve biodiversity by having a wildflower meadow and, early this year, a previously mowed area was seeded with an appropriate mix. The results, especially for the first year, have been most successful with many wild blooms standing high. This set the tone for the presentation of more plants!

Our thanks go to Graham and his family for their hospitality and his family's hard work in ensuring that all Section cars were safely and strategically parked.

All in all an enjoyable day. ■



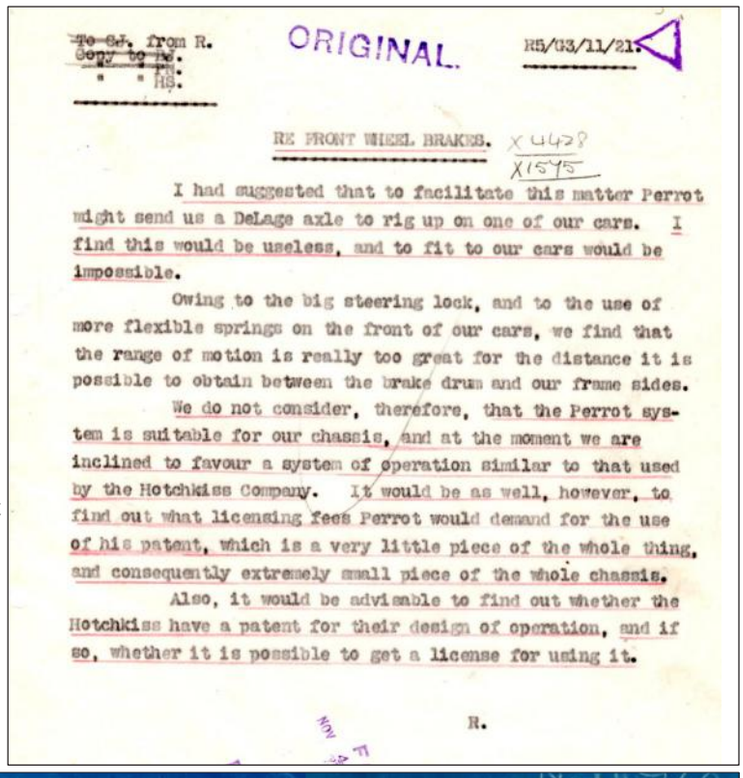
* Editor's Postscript

One of the great assets of our Club is the amount of old documentation and drawings available for our cars. Most marques must be very jealous!

The documentation includes nearly a quarter of a million technical memos, documenting discussions between Royce, at West Wittering or in France, and the Experimental department in Derby. These are all publicly available, as high resolution scans, online.

Front wheel brakes were a "hot topic" in 1921. Other cars had them and braking had become more important with rising speeds and density of traffic. Here are two scans. The first shows Royce's thinking about putting front brakes on the 40/50 (Silver Ghost) and the sketch shows a rig used to test the effects of twisting, one of the issues of concern, on a Ghost front axle.

We now, of course, know the outcome of this debate but it is, I think, interesting to read how the engineers tackled the issue "back in the day". ■



To Sr. from R.
Copy to Mr.
Mr.

ORIGINAL.

R5/63/11/21.

RE FRONT WHEEL BRAKES. X 642?
X1575

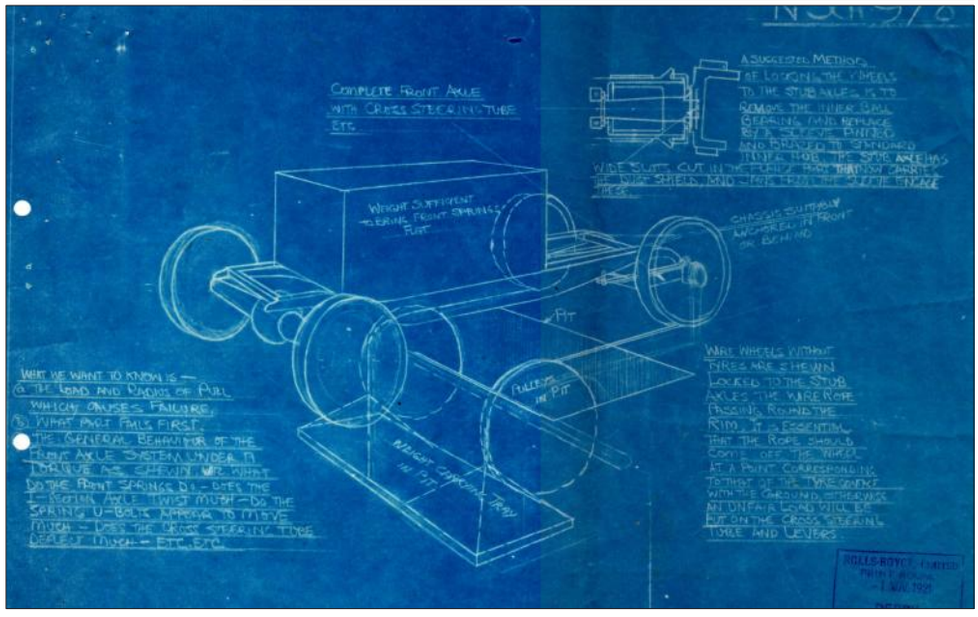
I had suggested that to facilitate this matter Perrot might send us a DeLage axle to rig up on one of our cars. I find this would be useless, and to fit to our cars would be impossible.

Owing to the big steering lock, and to the use of more flexible springs on the front of our cars, we find that the range of motion is really too great for the distance it is possible to obtain between the brake drum and our frame sides.

We do not consider, therefore, that the Perrot system is suitable for our chassis, and at the moment we are inclined to favour a system of operation similar to that used by the Hotchkiss Company. It would be as well, however, to find out what licensing fees Perrot would demand for the use of his patent, which is a very little piece of the whole thing, and consequently extremely small piece of the whole chassis.

Also, it would be advisable to find out whether the Hotchkiss have a patent for their design of operation, and if so, whether it is possible to get a license for using it.

R.



Event forms and booking note

Bookings for most Section events can be made online on the Section website https://rrec-eastmids.club/booking.html

Paper booking forms are now in a separate leaflet rather as past of the main Newsletter. In the PDF version they appear at the end of the file (i.e. after page 24 of *The Custodian*)

You can post the booking form to the organiser's address given with a cheque for payment. A separate cheque must be used for each event being booked. Confirmation of postal bookings will not normally be given unless you enclose an SAE.

You can email a copy/scan of the form and pay by BACS if you prefer. Account name: *Rolls Royce Enthusiasts*, Sort Code: *20-63-25*, Account: *70086088*. The Reference should be the event name and your surname.

Refunds will not be made unless other people can take your place. Please inform the organiser if you are unable to attend a booked event so any reserve places can be allocated. Late booking may be unsuccessful.

East Midlands RREC Badge and Clip



Show your affiliation with our section by displaying a beautiful enamelled club badge celebrating the formation of the section in 1969. The badge comes with a clip for easy mounting on a ¾" (19 mm) diameter badge bar or can, of course, be mounted anywhere convenient using the two pre-drilled holes.

The badge and clip costs £25.00. If you want it posting then this is an additional £5.00. Send a cheque payable to "RREC East Midlands Section" with your address to Derek Randall, 1 Brick Hill Lane, Allesley, Coventry, CV5 9BU or contact him to arrange collection at a Club event that you are both attending. ■

Lunch at Fairways, Duffield Golf Club

Sunday 20th October 2024



Martin Carnell

We have booked this excellent venue for lunch again this year.

Last year our event followed the biblical storm Babet which had floods in Duffield. These had abated just in time for the lunch. While there are no meteorological guarantees for this year, the warmth of the fellowship and excellence of the lunch is certain.

The conservatory dining room overlooks the 18th hole of the golf course and the site boasts stunning views, allegedly to five counties.

12 noon for drinks and we will sit down for lunch at 1 p.m. Please see the booking form for costings. The address is Chevin Golf Club, Golf Lane, Duffield. DE56 4EE

Please send your booking form to Martin Carnell (martin.carnell@rrec-eastmids.club) or make an online booking at https://rrec-eastmids.club/booking.html. ■



Remembrance Day Sunday Lunch



10th November 2024

Debbie Howard

We have arranged a lunch on Remembrance Sunday at the Izaak Walton Hotel, Dovedale, Ashbourne DE6 2AY.

The Izaak Walton is a 17th century country house between the picturesque villages of Ilam and Thorpe. Inside the hotel there are wooden beams, open fires, and views of the surrounding outstanding natural beauty.



Arrive around 12:00 for a 3-course lunch at 13:00, This will be followed by tea/coffee and after dinner mints. The cost is £37 per person. Please send your booking form to Debbie Howard (debbie.howard@rrec-eastmids.club) or make an online booking at https://rrec-eastmids.club/booking.html by 5th October 2024.

Please note that the closing date (5th Oct) for this event is significantly earlier than you might expect. Why not book now.



Section Christmas Lunch – Morley Hayes



Christina Wild

Sunday 8th December 2024

Christmas already!? Well the shops will expect you to have most of your presents purchased by the time October's *Custodian* is published so here is the chance to plan ahead.



This year we return to Morley Hayes for our Christmas lunch. We will be in the Pavilion Suite, as usual, with beautiful views over the golf course and surrounding countryside and with reserved parking for our cars.

Please arrive at 12 noon to meet up with friends before lunch which will be served at 1 p.m. The address of the venue is Main Road, Morley, DE7 6DG

Please send your booking form to Christina Wild (christina.wild@rrec-eastmids.club) or make an online booking at https://rrec-eastmids.club/booking.html ■

New Year's Lunch – The Roebuck



Clare Poyser

Sunday 19th January 2025

This year we have another new venue for our New Year lunch – The Roebuck at Draycott in the Clay. The Roebuck is a warm, welcoming, family friendly pub and restaurant. Just a stone's throw from the A50 on the A515 and on the border of the beautiful village of Draycott in the Clay. Darren, Gill and Abbie look forward to welcoming you to the Roebuck. It is a family run pub in a beautiful setting, with great food and home brewed beer!



We will be having a traditional three course lunch that you can choose from a good menu. See the booking form or online booking system to make your choice. The pub has a nice easily accessible car park.

We will gather at 12 noon to eat at 1 p.m.

The address is: The Roebuck at Draycott, Toby's Hill, Draycott in the Clay, Ashbourne, DE6 5BT and Google Maps knows about it.

Places are limited so, even if you are mainly thinking about Christmas now, please book this lunch by sending the form to Clare Poyser (clare.poyser@rrec-eastmids.club) or make an online booking at https://rrec-eastmids.club/booking.html. ■





Section AGM and Lunch



Mike Wild

Advance Notice for Sunday 16th February 2025

Here is advanced notice for your diary. The Section AGM will be held at 11 a.m. on 16th February 2025. It will, as usual, be at Morley Hayes and will be followed by lunch.



Please think about any issues that you would like the meeting to discuss and, indeed, if you would be prepared to help in running the Section. Andrew Whittaker, the new Club Chair has been consulting on plans that will give Sections new opportunities and new obligations. The Section is always looking for people with skills and ideas to improve our working.

Details for nominations and discussion items will be in the January issue of this Newsletter. That issue will also give you details, from Christina, of the lunch menu and its booking form. ■

Looking forward

Some events later in 2025

Sunday 23rd March the Yorkshire Section would welcome us to their ever popular visit to Ye Olde Bell Hotel at Barnby Moor. In previous years some members have made a weekend out of the event.

Originally, in 1635, Ye Olde Bell was a coaching stop on the London to York route. It has welcomed many guests including Queen Victoria, Charlie Chaplin, Bing Crosby, Shirley Bassey and One Direction, to name but a few. It has also been a checkpoint on the Monte Carlo Rally.

In April we are planning to hold our hands-on workshops for pre-WW2 cars. These are usually on Tuesdays and full details will be in the January 2025 issue of this newsletter.

On Tuesday 20th May, i.e. just after *Wings and Wheels* we hope to hold a hands-on workshop for Silver Shadow, Bentley T and derivative post-war models. If you note an interest in this on the form for *Wings and Wheels* then you will be sent further details when they are available. January's Custodian will also give you information about this event.

June, July and August will take us to a variety of excellent picnic locations.

If you use email and the Internet then you will get details to your Inbox from our Chairman and can see our events on the Club website and in *Spirit and Speed.* ■

Members in disguise 1 – June 2024









Wings and Wheels



Friday 16th – Sunday 18th May 2025

Mike Wild

This is a weekend residential event in Derby, the engineering "home" of Rolls-Royce, to celebrate the lasting magic of our cars.


Test chassis line up near Nightingale Road Works

On the Friday, the event starts at the headquarters of Great Northern Classics (GNC) which has recently been established in the old Light Alloy Foundry on Osmaston Road. GNC's mission is to support the heritage of classic cars by offering training for skills required to work with them, workshop and storage space, a hub for small businesses working in the industry and a visitor experience showing the breadth of contributions to the city, county and country that vehicle and power engineering have made. They have an excellent website at: www.greatnorthernclassics.co.uk

GNC will be offering us secure parking for our cars and their transporters over the weekend if required. On Friday there will be technical demonstrations, including the Dry Ice metal cleaning and preparation technique. Excursions will be run through the day to other Rolls-Royce heritage sites including the chance to visit the Nightingale Road site to which the fledgling company moved from Manchester in 1908.



On Friday evening, after you have settled into the Mickleover Hotel, there will be transport to a dinner at the Old Bell Hotel in the Cathedral Quarter of Derby. The hotel was established as a coaching inn in 1650 and was always considered one of the most prestigious of such inns outside London. In the days of the stage coach travellers would travel with their dogs so the Hotel had kennels to accommodate them. These will not, however, be available to us for this event!

After dinner there will be a speech by local historian Richard Felix who runs the famous local Ghost Walks and owns Derby Gaol. You are sure to learn new and interesting things about the bombing in World War II and other history of the Company and its products in Derby. At the end of the evening you will have transport back to Mickleover.

Saturday is being run with the help and support of Derby City Council who will have a big publicity campaign for tourists to the city. They are closing several streets of the Cathedral Quarter so we can have a display of examples from the whole range of Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars. Baden-Powell's *Jam Roll* (R-R 20HP GVO40) should be there, hopefully with some Scouts on duty. We hope you will want to take part in this massive display to show off your pride and joy, to talk to fellow Club members, and to infect the crowds with enthusiasm for heritage motoring. Many important attractions in the city including the Cathedral and the award winning Museum of Making will be taking part and you may like to take time to assume the role of visitor if you have not been to them recently. Cream Teas will be available in the Old Bell and for delivery to your car. The city centre offers many shopping and eating opportunities.

Despite the temptations, do not eat too much in the day so you can enjoy the evening Celebration Dinner at the Mickleover Hotel. Again we will have a speaker, and what an honour, Will Hives, grandson of Lord Hives, who has





promised to show items and tell us about his grandfather never seen before, and we may never see again.

Ernest Hives was a key person in the development of Rolls-Royce at Derby, he became chief test driver in 1908 and led the Rolls-Royce team in the Austrian Alpine trial in 1913. During the first World War he was involved with the development of the Eagle engine, and in 1916 became the Head of the Experimental Department. In 1936 he became Works Manager and in 1937 was elected to the Board. In 1942 Hives decided to go all out in the development of the gas turbine engine. The rest is history.



Informal social time will round off what should be a very stimulating Saturday. The hotel has ample parking for cars with some under cover being available on a first come first served basis.

Sunday allows for a leisurely breakfast before, again, assembling at GNC. For the morning we have a leisurely drive through the South Derbyshire's rolling countryside. This topography, being near to Nightingale Road works, was used for many test runs during the development of Derby cars. We will have a booklet about these test routes so you may, if you wish, try them out with cars old and modern.



The destination of the drive is Calke Abbey. When a historian, Howard Colvin, researched into the house in the 1980s he found most of its rooms were unchanged from photographs taken in 1886. Most of it remains preserved like this, as a time capsule, and as such it is a fascinating visit. Calke's gardens and parkland are beautifully maintained so it really does have something for everyone.

We will have reserved parking for our cars and it is a perfect place for a picnic or to eat in the on-site café.

What to do now: First please make your hotel booking on a bed and breakfast basis for the class of room you want direct with the Derby Mickleover Hotel using this link https://tinyurl.com/4wdtvtsc (this is short for the hotel's long version and given in case you want to type it by hand. Long version – https://booking.profitroom.com/en/derbymickleoverhotel/details/offer/616579?codes=MCHROY&no-cache=1&currency=GBP) The hotel deal is for a minimum of two nights in the period Thursday to Sunday.

Then complete the Section's application form at the end of the online magazine or in a paper insert to the print copy. Your details on the form will be used to send you dinner menus, excursion plans etc., early in 2025 to complete your planning.

Do not delay your booking as we anticipate demand exceeding the availability of rooms. ■



The early days of motoring and flight



John Prentice

Even in the very earliest days of motoring, there were a number of pioneering women. But very few are widely known today, so let me introduce you to one who achieved several significant firsts: Vera Hedges Butler.

She was born in London in 1881 to a wine merchant father, Frank, who in 1897 became one of the first people in Britain to buy a car (a Benz). Through the embryonic Royal Automobile Club, Frank met aristocratic young enthusiast Charles Rolls (who had bought his own first car, a Peugeot, two years prior, aged 18).



Frank and The Hon. Charles would take part in the 1000 Miles Trial of April 1900, a massed journey from London up to Edinburgh via Bristol, Birmingham, Manchester and then back via Newcastle, Leeds and Nottingham. It was designed to prove that cars were better than horse-drawn vehicles. Bear in mind that cars back then were complex, frail, puny carts using mostly un-metalled roads.

Vera, aged 19, went with her father in his 6hp Panhard, which was one of 17 cars to finish. Just one other woman was present, as was Lord Iliffe, publisher of a five-year-old newspaper named *The Autocar* . At this event the gold medal was won by Rolls, driving another Panhard.

Butler reported: "We had several punctures; piston rings working round lost a good deal of compression; a lift-pin of one of the valves put one cylinder out of action part of the time; and burners blew out uphill." It is clear that the run was no small achievement.



The 1000 Mile Trial — 23rd April 1900

This event clearly solidified Vera's love of motoring, as three months later the *Autocar* reported on her competing in a gymkhana event at a polo club, and then in August that she had driven her father's Panhard from London to Paris for the occasion of a race (presumably in that summer's Paris Olympics), becoming the first woman to do so.

She appeared in *Autocar* again almost as soon as she had returned, this time answering to a summons at West London Police Court, "*for driving a car at a greater speed than was reasonable and proper*".

A constable claimed to have seen her exceeding 12mph and "*a horse became restive owing to the noise the car made in its progress, finally overturning the van to which the animal was attached, and throwing the occupants into the road*".



6HP Panhard et Levassor

Her father, as passenger, said she had been doing no more than 7mph, but a witness said it had in fact been 14mph. Quite how he knew that is a mystery. In any case, Vera was fined £2 (about £200 in today's money), earning her the dubious honour of being the first woman prosecuted in Britain for furious driving.

Part of her defence was that she held a 'certificat de capacité', earned from a practical test in Paris. Such a document had been a requirement in France since 1893 but wouldn't be so here until 1903. As such, Vera was also the first British woman to earn her driving licence.

She would surpass her Parisian adventure in summer 1901, driving her father down to Nice, then over a 4000ft

mountain pass to a Grenoble monastery. She had to dig her new 4hp Renault out of several snow drifts. Here we are probably talking about a very similar car to Martin's in which he plans to drive to Brighton in November.

On her return, Vera planned to take a tour with her father and Rolls (who by that point was her boyfriend), but her Renault caught fire. So instead she organised a flight in a hot-air balloon (with the famous aeronautical pioneer Stanley Spencer their pilot) and while over London suggested the trio create *The Royal Aero Club*. She eventually bought an 8hp Renault.

She came to public attention again in 1915, having volunteered with the Red Cross at the outbreak of World War I when her husband had gone to fight (not Rolls – he had been killed in a plane crash in 1910), first taking wounded soldiers from trains to hospitals in her car, then driving a 35hp Daimler mobile kitchen.

After the Armistice, Vera settled into family life, but she never lost her love of motoring, as evidenced by *The Autocar* reporting in 1950 that she had attended an RAC event marking the anniversary of the famous 1000 Miles Trial. She would die nine years later, aged 78.

Details from Autocar archives with thanks. ■

Members in disguise 2 – June 2024









The Secret Life of – the Distributor

Tales from the pre-war bonnet

John Prentice



Modern cars with electronic ignition have lost their distributors but pre-war models and Shadows and related Bentleys rely on them. You might be interested in some of their secret and inner workings. If so then read on:

The first thing to know is that the naming can be misleading. In Silver Ghost and Phantom 1 days engines had a Governor. This is a mechanical device that adjusts the throttle automatically to keep the engine revs constant even if the load on it varies. The usual design in credited to James Watt, from the days of steam engines, although the principle was used by Christian Huygens to control the grinding stones in windmills in the seventeenth century. The diagram shows the operation in a steam engine. The assembly *D* rotates driven by the engine. The faster it rotates the higher the balls swing up because of the, so called, centrifugal force on them. This pulls end *F* of the arm *FGH* downwards so *H* moves upwards and this closes the throttle valve so tending to slow the engine. As it slows down the balls fall and so, via the lever, open the throttle a bit more. The system will settle down at a constant speed depending on its geometry.

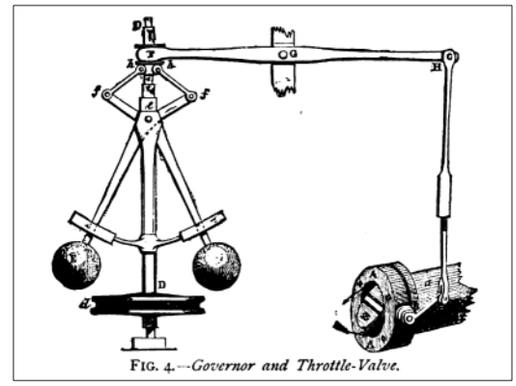
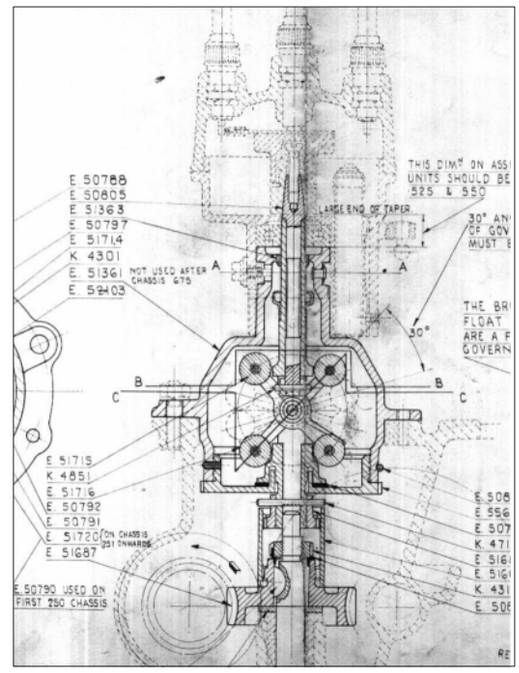


FIG. 4.—*Governor and Throttle-Valve.*

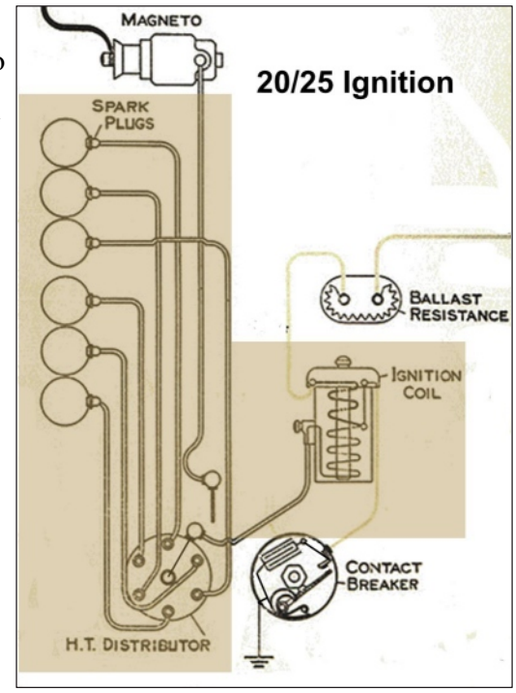
It was found that it was useful to control the timing of the spark in each cylinder depending on the speed of the engine as well as the throttle so the centrifugal governor mechanism was used for this too.

When the 20HP was designed it was decided that there was no need for this sort of governor on the throttle as the driver used the accelerator pedal in a similar closed loop way to set the desired speed and the speed when unloaded and idling in neutral was stable enough anyway. However the swirling weights arrangement was retained to tweak the timing of sparks and the whole thing still just called a governor in the titles of drawings. The second figure shows the swirling weights hidden in the pedestal of what we think of as the distributor.



So what does the device "distribute"? This is simple to follow. There is a sparking plug for each cylinder and it needs to have a spark at around the time the petrol-air mixture has been compressed in the well known Suck-Squeeze-Bang-Blow of a four-stroke engine. It would be wasteful to send sparks to every cylinder on the off-chance just so one could do its Bang, so the Distributor is a switch that sends the electricity for the spark to the right cylinder - i.e. it "distributes" the sparks.

You can see this in the green shaded portion of the wiring diagram of a 20/25 shown below.



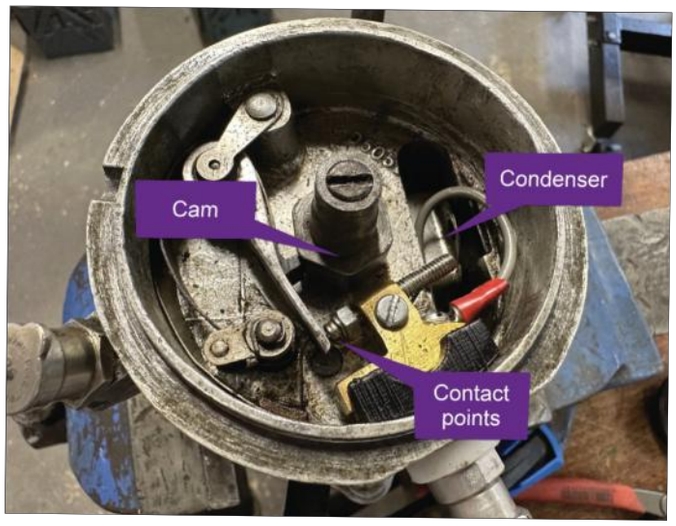
The high voltage electricity for the sparks comes from the Ignition Coil to the centre of the HT distributor and a "Rotor disc" or "arm" directs it to the end of the wire going to the correct sparking plug. The pictures below show where the wires go and the "rotor" under the cap.

Later we will come back to how the rotor contact actually "connects" to the sparking plug wires.





There is more "secret life" which is visible if you take the Rotor disc off. The Ignition Coil is a device with two coils of wire. The first, the primary, has quite thick wire and few turns; the secondary is wound with very many turns of exceptionally thin wire. The battery sends a current through the primary creating magnetism and when it is switched off the magnetic energy is dissipated by a voltage across both coils. Because the secondary has many turns it generates a very high voltage – enough to create a spark even in the cylinder full of high pressure air and petrol vapour.



You need a spark once every two revolutions of the crankshaft (Suck and Bang are when a piston is going down and Squeeze and Blow are when it is going up) Secretly under the rotor disc is a cam which opens a contact as the engine rotates. This turns at half the crankshaft speed. If we have six cylinders we need six lobes (bumps) on the cam so if the gears are set up properly then the spark will come just after Squeeze so ready to make the Bang. This is the Contact Breaker on the 20/25 Ignition diagram.

I already said that the swirling governor weights are retained in later engines even though they do not control the throttle. They do however change the angle between the distributor drive shaft and the cam itself. The faster the engine revolves, the earlier the cam opens the contact. This is "advancing" the ignition to take account of the time for the Bang to start from the spark. The whole body of the distributor can also be turned to give the same Early or Late effect using a lever on the steering wheel.



The Rotor, provided it is fixed to the cam in the right orientation, will be pointing to the correct sparking plug wire when the spark is made.

There are two other parts involved. The Condenser is there to make most of the magnetic energy go into the secondary coil so making a spark in the cylinder and not at the Contact Points. The Ballast Resistance stops the primary coil getting too hot when the engine is not running but has the ignition turned on.

It proved difficult to make the Ignition coil and Condenser have long and reliable lives because insulation in them tended to degrade with age and heat. Thus different car models had redundancy in their ignition systems. The 20HP and 20/25 have a Magneto as an alternative to the battery and Ignition coil. The Derby Bentleys had two coils fitted and the Phantom 3 went as far as having two coils, two distributors and two sparking plugs per cylinder. Even today most owners carry a spare coil and condenser!

Finally, I need to explain how the high tension electricity gets from the Rotor to the wires to the sparking plugs. The answer is simple: it has to jump (by a spark) from the Rotor to brass pins inside the Distributor Cap. This gap needs to be as small as possible to save wasting spark energy. The diameter of the circle of pins should be about 0.020" larger that the circle that the Rotor contact sweeps – i.e. a 10 thou. gap. The problem is that the Rotor is "secret". You can however make a dummy cap with screws that are adjusted just to kiss the Rotor as it is turned. Measure the gap between the screws and the distance between pairs of pins in the real cap. Choose the smallest of the three sets of pins if they are different. Adjust the screws (little micrometers in the photo) by half the error in the two diameters and make the contact just kiss the screws when the Rotor is turned. ■





Newsletter Subscription

The Custodian is distributed free of charge to all Section members each quarter by email. Members who do not have an email address will be sent the print edition so they have information for the AGM and are kept informed of all Section activities.

Many people prefer to read a hard-copy or like to file their collection. Any member can get a printed copy posted to them for a subscription of £15.00 for the rest of the year to partially cover our costs. This is cheaper than the cost of the ink for many home printers and the printed images are higher resolution than the emailed ones.

To subscribe, please send a cheque payable to *RREC (East Midlands Section)* to John Prentice at 141 Loughborough Road, Ruddington, Nottingham, NG11 6LQ with a note giving your name, your address and a contact 'phone number **or** send the money by BACS to Account name: *Rolls Royce Enthusiasts*, Sort Code: *20-63-25*, Account: *70086088*. The Reference should be CUSTODIAN and your surname.

Members in disguise 3 – June 2024





Unravelling a rat's nest with an even number of wires

John Prentice



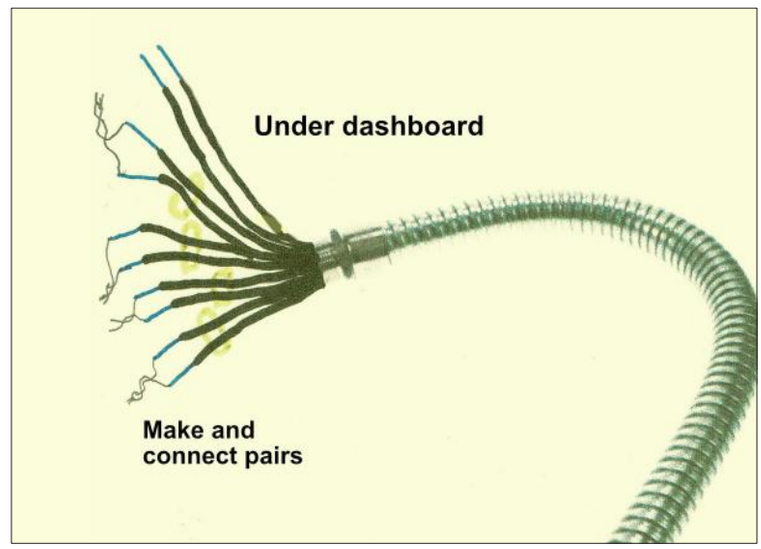
A solution to the sub-problem in Issue 55-3

Proceed as in last month's solution but leaving two wires untwisted under the dashboard.

In step 2 (Page 21 of Volume 55-3) you will find that you have two wires that don't connect to any others. Mark either as F and the other as G.

Now perform step 3. When you get to step 4 you don't know which of the two unpaired wires is F and which is G. But you can easily find this, as G is not connected to any other wire – so having found it you can mark it.

Although originally devised as a mathematical puzzle this technique is really good in practice for identifying the ends of quite complex wiring in conduits and cables. I hope **you** find it useful one day. ■



Diary – Autumn 2024 and Spring 2025

Sunday 20th October 2024

Lunch at Duffield Golf Course – details page 18 (Martin Carnell)

Sunday 10th November 2024

Remembrance Lunch – details page 13 (Debbie Howard) **Note:** early booking deadline

Sunday 8th December 2024

Section Christmas Lunch – Morley Hayes (Chris Wild)

Sunday 19th January 2025

New Year Lunch – The Roebuck, Draycott in the Clay (Clare Poyser)

Sunday 16th February 2025

Section AGM – Morley Hayes (Mike Wild)

Friday 16th – Sunday 18th May 2025

Wings and Wheels event in Derby (Mike Wild – mike.wild@rrec-eastmids.club)



Planning ahead

Put these events in your diary – more details of these and events for 2025 in January's newsletter.

Sunday 23rd March 2025
Lunch Ye Olde Bell (with Yorkshire Section)

April 2025
Pre-War Car Hands-on Workshops (Nicholas Simons)

Tuesday 20th May 2025
Silver Shadow and Bentley T Hands-on Workshop (David Howard)

Sunday 22nd June 2025
Picnic at the Tipper's (Mary Mulholland)

Sunday 6th July 2025
Picnic at Haselour Hall (Mary Mulholland)

From the Editor

Thank you for reading this issue.

John Prentice



The Custodian distributed electronically. Members who do not have an email address continue to receive a printed copy and any member can subscribe for printed copies as explained overleaf.

The Committee has decided that we will revert to our previous practice of sending a paper copy to all members for the January issue. You will also get the emailed copy if you have an email address known to The Hunt House. That means that everyone will get a paper copy of the Accounts and of the calling notice for the AGM. It also will give you a taste of reading the physical newsletter in comparison to the electronic version and help you decide if you want to subscribe for all the paper copies.

There is a risk that you might fall into the trap of expecting a paper copy every quarter. I am afraid that if you do not subscribe then this will not happen!

Finally your contributions to our content would be most welcome. Have you any thoughts about things going on in the world of classic cars? Have you had an interesting journey recently? Have you done or had done for you any major maintenance which transformed the car or was a nightmare? If so please do email me a letter or short illustrated article. ■

Flying Spares
Rolls-Royce & Bentley Parts Specialists
Visit Our Comprehensive Website:
www.flyingspares.com
Tel: 01455 292949
Fax: 01455 292959
Email: sales@flyingspares.co.uk

Welcome to our new members

Robert Cooper, Sheffield; Alan Cartwright, Derby; Richard Bennett, Burton on Trent; Ravendrasinh, Valiya & Krsnasinh Thakor, Leicester; William Davies, Leicester; Douglas Rankin, Lichfield; Stafford Armstrong, Oakham; Rahmeez Younas, Nottingham, Jacky Delaney, Buxton; Keith Baker, Gaulby. ■

Spring Break – 2025



Jeff Dennis

Due to the Spring Break event being close to the Derby Wings & Wheels event in May next year it has been agreed that I will be organising the Spring Break Event – 2025 under the auspices of the Paulerspury Section.

Anyone interested in attending should contact me, the Event Organiser on 07966 492333 or email jeff@jeffdennis.co.uk and I will provide you with full details of the event and booking form.

Good FUN, Good FOOD, Good FELLOWSHIP



Newsletter Subscription

All Section members will receive a paper copy of the January issue of *The Custodian* which will include the Agenda for the AGM on 16th February 2025 and the accounts for the financial year ending 31st October 2024.

Please note: that if you want to continue receiving paper copies in April, July and October then you will need to subscribe.

Full details for subscription are on page 22.

The Custodian is printed in Ruddington by
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Print & Reprographics Limited
RevB6 Sept 2024

Chevin's – Duffield Golf Course – Form

Sunday 20th October 2024

I/We would like to attend this event

Name | Address

Postcode

Telephone | E-mail

Car model | Year | Reg. mark

No. attending | Cheque | £32.50 (plus £3 for Beef per person) payable to RREC (East Midlands Section) | Or BACS

Menu

Starters

- **Prawn Cocktail**; King prawns in a brandied, Marie- rose sauce topped with smoked salmon, served with melba toast, mixed salad and leaves.
- **Asparagus, poached duck egg;** Seared asparagus, poached duck egg, smoked salmon served with a lemon and dill hollandaise sauce.
- **Roast Soup:** Roast tomato and red pepper soup served with a croque monsieur; cheese toastie topped with cheese sauce.

Menu choice code	
Initials	Name

Main Course

- **Roast Sirloin Beef**
- **Roast Pork loin**

Roast Meals (GFO) are served with Caramelised Onion Stuffing, Maple Roast Carrots, Tender stem Broccoli, Yorkshire Pudding stuffed with Brisket and Red Wine Gravy, Choice of either Roast Potatoes or Mashed Potatoes All Tables are served with Cauliflower Cheese, Creamy Leeks, Mangetout and Green Beans

- **Herb crusted Haddoc**k served on a bed of crushed potatoes with a mini fishcake and a cream of white wine sauce
- **Quorn™ Shepherd's pie** topped with a rosemary mash, served with mint jus, tender stem broccoli and confit carrots *(V)*

Dessert

- **Baked New York cheesecake** served with honeycomb ice-cream and mixed berry coulis *(V & GF)*
- **Poached pear:** poached pear in red wine and aromatics, glazed and served with vanilla ice-cream. **(V)**
- **Sticky toffee pudding** in a caramel sauce topped with mascarpone ice-cream *(GF option/V)*

Send this form to Martin Carnell, 22 St. Alkmunds Close Duffield, Belper, Derbyshire. DE56 4ED Closing date 4th October 2024

Remembrance Day Lunch – Izaac Walton Hotel – Form

Sunday 10th November 2024

I/We would like to attend this event

Name _____ Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Car model _____ Year _____ Reg. mark _____

No. attending _____ Cheque _____ £37 per person. payable to RREC (East Midlands Section) Or BACS _____

Menu

Starters

- **Fan of Melon** – fresh fruit
- **Garlic Mushrooms** – Chestnut Mushrooms, Garlic Cream and Toasted Sourdough
- **Smoked Salmon** – mixed salad, granary bread

Menu choice code	
Initials	Name

Main Course

- **Roast Topside of beef** – Yorkshire pudding, roast potatoes and a selection of vegetables
- **Roasted chicken** - Yorkshire pudding, roast potatoes and a selection of vegetables
- **Salmon** – saute potatoes, spinach, tenderstem broccoli and Caper butter
- **Vegan Cottage Pie** - roast potatoes and a selection of vegetables

Dessert

- **Vanilla cheesecake** – berry compote
- **Chocolate Brownie** – Vanilla ice cream and chocolate sauce
- **Apple and Rhubarb crumble** – custard

Coffee or tea and after dinner mints

Send form to Debbie Howard, 3 Clifton Drive, Mickleover, Derby, DE3 9HS
Or book online at https://rrec-eastmids.club/booking.html

Closing date 5th October 2024 – Please Note: this is probably earlier than you would expect!

Christmas Lunch – Morley Hayes – Form

Sunday 8th December 2024

I/We would like to attend this events

Name | Address

Postcode

Telephone | E-mail

Car model | Year | Reg. mark

No. attending | Cheque | £44.00 per person payable to RREC (East Midlands Section) | Or BACS

Starters

- **Cream of white onion soup**, Quicke's cheddar sourdough croutons *(V)*
- **Beetroot salmon gravlax**, horseradish and dill crème fraiche, pickled red onion
- **Baked camembert**, toasted focaccia, cranberry and shallot relish *(V)*

Main Course

- **Traditional roast British turkey**, chipolata sausages wrapped in bacon, lemon and thyme stuffing
- **Stuffed fillet of sea bass**, prawns, gremolata, capers, butter sauce
- **Red onion, beetroot and blue cheese tart**, walnut crumb *(V)*

Served with a selection of seasonal vegetables and potatoes

Menu choice code	
Initials	Name

Dessert

- **Matthew Walker's traditional Christmas pudding**, cranberry compote, brandy sauce *(V)*
- **Chocolate tort**e, amaretto cherries, vanilla cream
- **A slate of British cheeses** served with assorted crackers, grapes and celery

Freshly made Tea/Coffee and mince pies

Send form to Christina Wild, Lea Holme, Mill Lane, Holloway, Matlock, Derbys DE4 5AQ
Or book online at https://rrec-eastmids.club/booking.html **Closing date 22nd November 2024**

New Year Lunch – The Roebuck – Form

Sunday 19th January 2025

I/We would like to attend this events

Name | Address

Postcode

Telephone | E-mail

Car model | Year | Reg. mark

No. attending | Cheque | £25.00 (plus any suppl.) per person payable to RREC (East Midlands Section) | Or BACS

Continue with menu choices on next page ……

….. 19th January - The Roebuck – continued from p3

Name

Starters

- **Garlic Bread/Cheese**
- **Prawn Cocktail** *(GF)*
- **Cheesy mushrooms,** pan fried mushrooms with cream, cheddar cheese and garlic with a salted garnish (**£2** supplement)
- **Soup of the Day** *(GF)*
- **Smooth Brussels Pate**, served with hot toast

Menu choice code	
Initials	Name

Main Course

- **Roast Beef* or Pork* or Turkey***, served with Yorkshire pudding, roast potatoes and fresh seasonal vegetables (*GF* gravy available)
- **Vegetarian dish of the day** will be Roebuck's choice of nut roast or vegetarian lasagne
- **Homemade Cottage Pie, (meat* or *V** or *VE** available)** served with a pot of vegetables
- **Scampi**, served with chips peas and tartare sauce (**£1** supplement)

Dessert

- **Chocolate Fudge Cake**
- **Treacle Sponge**
- **Apple Crumble**
- **Cheesecake**
- **Ice Cream**

Note: Where * is shown please make sure your choice within the dish is clearly indicated
V = vegetarian, *VE* = Vegan, *GF* = Gluten Free

Send form to Clare Poyser, Somersal Mill Farm, Grove Lane, Doveridge, Derbyshire. DE6 5PB
Or book online at https://rrec-eastmids.club/booking.html **31st December 2024**

Wings and Wheels

UPDATED FORM

Friday 16th May – Sunday 18th May 2025

I/We would like to attend this event

FIRST please make your hotel booking on a bed and breakfast basis for the class of room you want direct with the Derby Mickleover Hotel using this link https://tinyurl.com/4wdtvtsc (this is short for the hotel's long version and given in case you want to type it by hand. Long version – https://booking.profitroom.com/en/derbymickleoverhotel/details/offer/616579?codes=MCHROY&no-cache=1&currency=GBP**)**

THEN online (https://rrec-eastmids.club/booking.html **), or by this form, notify Mike Wild that you are taking part.**

Full details of the costs and booking details for dining and the excursions and other activities will be sent to you around January 2025 using the details you give below. Clearly your costs will depend on how many nights you stay in the hotel and what other activities you choose but we estimate that doing everything over the whole weekend will cost around £700 per couple.

Name Address

Postcode

Telephone E-mail

No. attending

Car model Year Reg. mark

	Thurs	*Fri*	*Sat*	*Sun*
Hotel Nights Booked (minimum of 2 for deal)				

I will probably stay for the Tuesday Shadow Workshop day

After booking hotel, send form to Mike Wild, Lea Holme, Mill Lane, Holloway, Matlock, Derbys DE4 5AQ or send the information electronically at https://rrec-eastmids.club/booking.html

Hotel places are LIMITED so please do not delay.

Wings and Wheels

Friday 16th May – Sunday 18th May 2025

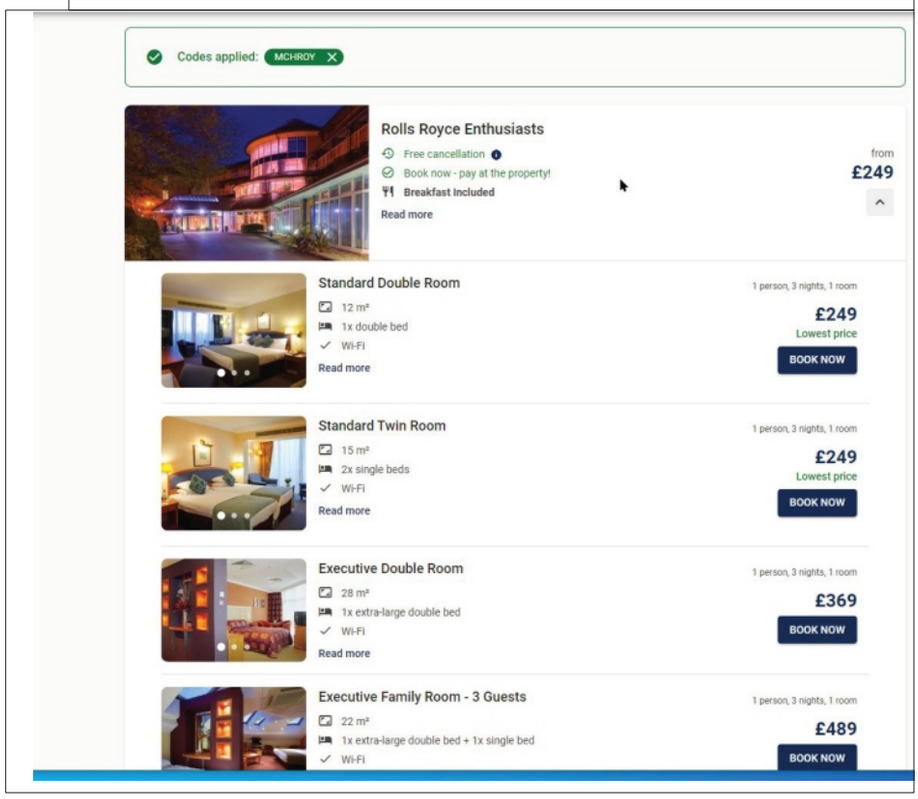
Guide to hotel booking website

1) The link given takes you to this page:



2) Choose your check-in and check-out dates

3) You will then get this page where you can see your prices and choose your room.



4) If you encounter problems with the website then this demonstration video might help:

https://youtu.be/hS8scLBqPWM

