



2013 CENTENARY ALPINE TRIAL REPORT

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

first four places on every day except the last, when one car was driven into by a non-competing car. They won the majority of the major prizes awarded and came home to triumphant reports in the press both at home and abroad.

Most of all they had shown that the Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost was the best car in the world. The improvements made for the Alpine enabled the Silver Ghost to remain the pre-eminent European luxury car for the next 12 years with very little further change being made.

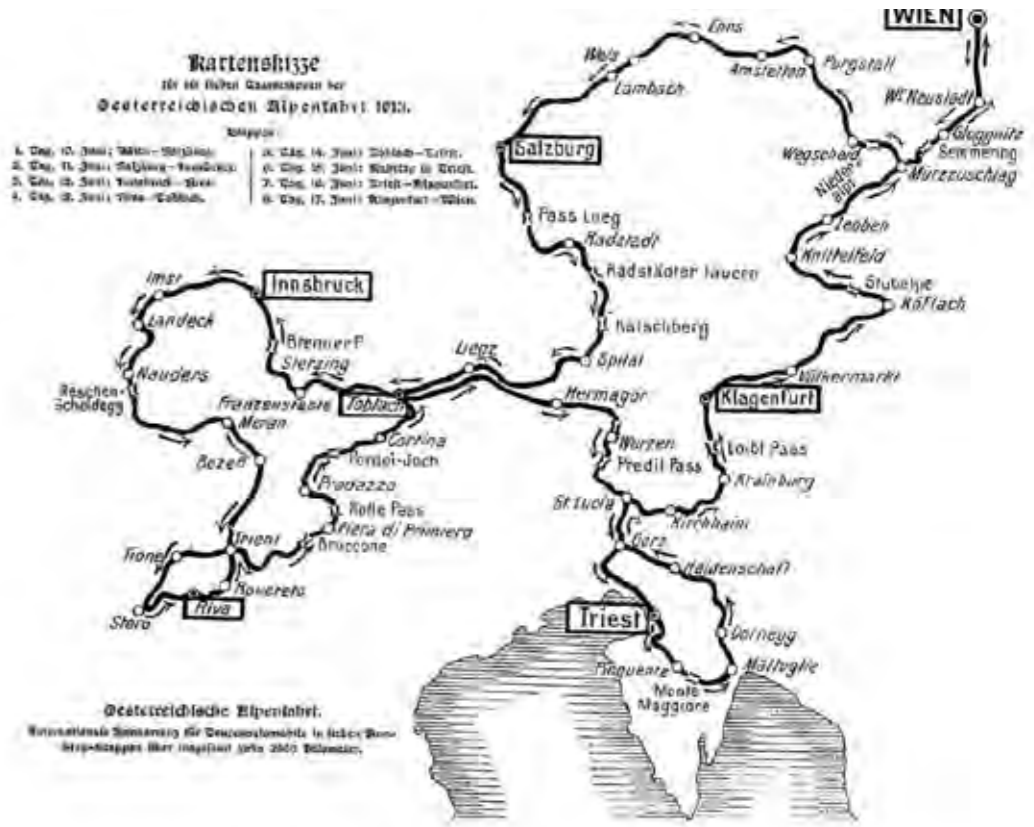
One hundred years on, the 20-Ghost Club, with support from Rolls-Royce Motor Cars Ltd, decided to re-enact the original 1913 trial following as closely as possible the original route. We aimed to have the same number of entrants as in 1913, and Rolls-Royce decided to enter a Works Team, consisting of the 1913 Silver Ghost used by James Radley in the original trial, plus a special Centenary Alpine edition of the new Rolls-Royce Ghost.

Just like on the original trial 100 years ago, the 2013 Centenary was distinguished by a very interesting set of participants, some extremely challenging driving, wonderful scenery, a glorious variety of weather and a sense of tremendous achievement by both the participants and their cars. In addition, we had the attention of three British Ambassadors, a Duke, a Prince and Countess from Great Britain and finally an Austrian Count and Countess to round things off.

Participants and cars arrived from wherever Rolls-Royce had successfully sold the Silver Ghost, including Australia, Continental Europe, Hong Kong, India, South Africa, the US and the UK. The 47 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghosts dating from 1909 to 1926 varied from low sleek London to Edinburgh tourers, to full sized Limousines.

The tour started and ended in Vienna, travelling through Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Slovenia and Croatia over 16 days, covering 1,900 miles of spectacular scenery and challenging passes. This

was twice as long as 1913 in view of the age of the cars and many of the participants. We were accompanied by a Rolls-Royce photographer, hanging precariously off the back of a motorbike, and by the Club's and John Kennedy's film crews. We had two mechanics from P&A Wood supporting the rally, and a luggage van, all of which made life that much easier.





1. Participants at the start outside the Kursalon in Vienna

Participants started to arrive on Wednesday 12 June 2013, some having driven from England, whilst others shipped their cars on transporters to Vienna and flew in. However we came, on arrival the InterContinental Hotel in Vienna made sure that a little chocolate Spirit of Ecstasy patisserie was waiting for us in our room.

Proceedings started with a very pleasant reception given by the British Ambassador to Austria who gave us a reception and lunch at her residence in aid of promoting the Great Britain campaign. The Ambassador wished us well with a very amusing speech linking the British engineering excellence of our cars with the British eccentricity of us driving 100 year old cars for 1,900 miles around the Alps!

In the afternoon, we were welcomed by 20-Ghost Club rally organisers, Tim Forrest and Nick Naismith, at the briefing for Drivers and Navigators at the InterContinental Hotel. We were provided with our name tags, numbers for our cars, Garmin sat navs and a route book of instructions that followed the 1913 routes through the mountains avoiding expressways, bypasses, motorways and autobahns.

In the evening, we travelled by coach to a black tie dinner at the beautiful and historic Palais Todesco in the centre of Vienna. Our guest of honour was the Markgraf Pallavicini (whose great grandfather had been the President of the Austrian Automobile Club that organised the original 1913 Alpenfahrt).

One hundred years ago they had started at 5am, but as we wanted to avoid rush hour traffic and we were splitting the journey to Salzburg into two halves we had a more leisurely start shortly after 9.30am. The start was from The Kursalon in the centre of Vienna, less than 100 metres from the headquarters of the Austrian Automobile Club.

It was a hive of activity as all 47 Silver Ghosts, plus the 2013 Rolls-Royce Ghost, assembled and we made last-minute checks to our cars and checked the route out of Vienna. We were joined by a large number of Austrian car enthusiasts who came to watch and talk to us all about the cars and the event. The Markgraf Pallavicini inspected the cars before flagging us away in the glorious sunshine.

The first day's run was relatively easy and once out of the confines of Vienna, rapid progress was made through the flat mixture of agricultural and urban landscape. On route, we went down the very long straight near Neunkirchen that had been used for testing by the local Austro-Daimler car company. Here many of the participants had their first opportunity to stretch the legs of their cars and see how well they were running before getting into the mountains. The first mountain challenge was quite easy with the attractive climb up the Semmering, before continuing through undulating countryside to our first overnight stop at a 13th century Carthusian monastery in Karthaus, Gaming.

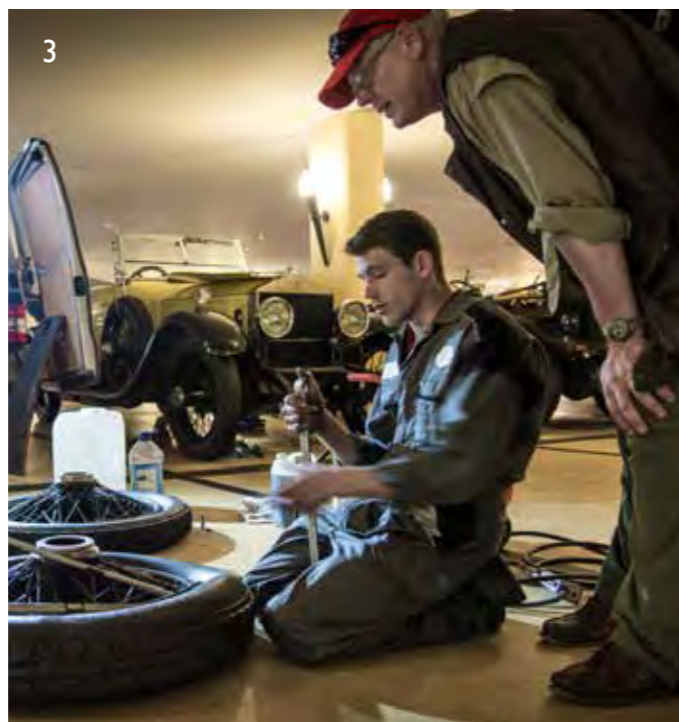
At the Hotel Karthaus, all the Silver Ghosts were parked inside the Karthaus walls which made a very impressive sight to look down on. Early arrivals were greeted by Father Andrew, who was intrigued to hear the histories of our Silver Ghosts. We then enjoyed a traditional Austrian dinner and shared stories of our first day's adventures on the road.

Two problems soon became apparent that were to continue throughout the tour. The first was the old problem of beaded edge tyres. As on many previous long distance events, these tyres proved to be unable to withstand the pressures that modern conditions create and within fifty miles cars were experiencing blow outs.

In some cases the problems were caused by poor fitting, but there were also problems with wheel rims and tyres and even after correcting this there were still problems, particularly on the rear wheels. Fortunately for the drivers, P&A Wood had provided two mechanics to assist with any mechanical problems on tour, and for the first few days they spent endless hours changing beaded edge tyres.

Fortunately most of the tyre failures were in open country and luckily no accidents were caused. However, in one case the tyre came off the rim and rolled into the front garden of a house only stopping when it came against the irate householder's car. A lesson for the future is that we should seriously consider banning the use of beaded edge tyres on the rear wheels of Silver Ghosts participating in demanding tours, because of the dangers caused by their very limited capabilities.

The second problem was completely different. The organisers had decided to try to simplify the very complex navigational challenge experienced in 1993, by pre-loading the route on to a sat nav. This had worked very well on a trial run of the whole route, but unfortunately with the latest sat navs supplied, the software overrode the pre-loaded original route. Instead of following the minor country roads used 100 years ago, it insisted



1. Silver Ghosts gathering at the Karthaus, Gaming
2. River Danau (Danube) above Isperdorf
3. Mark Hawes tackling one of the many beaded edge failures
4. Morris Franklin and Buddy Cortines do like to get to places!

on directing us via motorways and other shortcuts. Despite every effort of the suppliers, it proved impossible to reliably overcome this problem. Unfortunately, it took three days before the source of the problem was traced to a software fault and so half way round, the original sat navs were replaced with a simpler version which worked rather better. However, in some cases this took more current than the 100 year old electrical circuits could provide and so failed. This was a great disappointment but fortunately the backup system of route book and maps helped get people round without too much difficulty. The sat navs were a good idea but some significant software changes and further testing are needed before the system can be depended upon 100% in future.

Apart from these two problems, the cars were proving reasonably trouble free, although it became apparent that some had not been as thoroughly prepared as they could have been. Quite a lot of work was therefore required by P&A Wood on magnetos and ignition systems as well as carburetion to get the cars to go as well as Rolls-Royce intended them to when new. As a result, many cars ran better as the tour progressed.



The next day was a very pleasant driving day, over the Niederalp Pass followed by a run along Donau River; which was incredibly full due to the floods that had swept Europe the week before our arrival. We had been warned that the road might be closed but we had a really beautiful drive along the banks until half way along, when there was a barrier across the road.

Fortunately, the diversion involved a spectacular climb up into the mountains, where several Silver Ghosters stopped for coffee in a classically Alpine setting. The diversion then bent round a series of brilliant hairpins before we rejoined the route along the Donau. The second surprise of the day was equally pleasant. Tim Forrest had been contacted by some Austrian Rolls-Royce enthusiasts who invited us to the opening of a museum created by Ing Ernst Piech whose uncle was Ferdinand Porsche. Ernst Piech proved to be an incredibly enthusiastic and knowledgeable gentleman who was delighted we had brought so many Silver Ghosts to his opening ceremony and personally showed us his key exhibits. The most interesting was the 1910/12 Austro Daimler Alpenfahrt car. This illustrated the type of narrow sporting bodies used by the German and Austrian cars in the Trial, which were much closer to the racing cars of the period, than they were to large touring cars like the Silver Ghost.



Our next day, Sunday, was a rest day and while some set about fine tuning and lubrication, many went into Salzburg for the day. One group went to listen to the wonderful singing in the Cathedral, while others indulged in culture of a different kind with a tour through the Mozart Museum. Coffee and apple strudel followed in a delightful little café in the sun in the old part of the city with its beautiful arcades and laneways.

In the evening, we drove in our Silver Ghosts to a gala dinner at the Schloss Hellbrunn, famous for its 'trick fountains'. Our Ghosts were positioned on display in the palace courtyard and Rolls-Royce Motor Cars' new 'Alpine Trial Centenary Collection' Ghost was on display alongside the original 'James Radley' 1913 Silver Ghost. After a champagne welcome the official group photograph was taken.

We ate our wonderful entrée and main course in the awe-inspiring Bishop's dining room surrounded by fearsome murals depicting sin and damnation! Afterwards, we all went outside for a guided tour of the gardens where we avoided the trick fountains and extraordinary water features designed to catch out the unwary for the Bishop's entertainment. However, we had an increasing feeling that at some stage we were going to get wet. Our garden tour concluded at a small amphitheatre where desserts were being served and an opera singer was entertaining us from the middle of a lake.

This provided a delightful scene until gradually we realised the heavens were opening and the opera singer became drenched in a torrential downpour! All the Silver Ghosts had been left with their hoods down, so the men made a dash for the cars and the ladies took cover as best they could. As one of the security guards remarked afterwards, the car park which had earlier been such a scene of tranquility, suddenly resembled the start of a race at Le Mans, with everyone leaping into their cars and dashing off to the security of the underground car park at the Hotel Friesacher!

I. Official Tour Photo





After a good night's rest we set off in glorious sunshine again and for the first time we really started to get into the mountains. The first was the Pass Lueg which provided a wonderful run up a narrow gorge with a raging torrent beside us. However, the lovely bends proved too much for one car which went through two more beaded edge tyres before the day was done.

Our next challenge was the Radstadter Tauern Pass. The steepest of this was only 14% but as the day progressed it was getting pretty hot and it began to indicate which cars and drivers were coping with the heat and which were not. As we began to reach the base of the notorious Katschberg Pass, some drivers took the precaution of strapping open their bonnets before starting the climb. This made a surprising difference.

The Katschberg was the pass on which James Radley, in his highly geared London to Edinburgh tourer had failed to proceed in 1912 and his passengers had had to dismount before he could reach the summit. In the ensuing 100 years, the road has been regraded and although it is still a long 15% climb it does not have the very sharp 28% incline at the very summit that proved to be Radley's undoing.

This time most cars climbed the hill easily, but some of the Silver Ghosts were lacking full power and had to stop half way. After adjustments to carburetion or ignition had been made, we all climbed successfully and eventually arrived at the superb Grand Hotel Lienz. This had a wonderful terrace overlooking a really fast flowing river so we were soon either relaxing with drink in hand or enjoying an invigorating swim in the two pools. It was such

a lovely evening that the bar and terrace remained pretty busy well into the night. Meantime, the poor P&A Wood lads were still changing the dreaded beaded edge tyres!

The next day included some more surprises. It started with a wonderful breakfast on the terrace and there was then the option of a drive along the valley floor or an alternative route suggested by Austrian members, Angelika and Michael Elliott. This proved to be a wondrous road until the road was blocked by repair gangs clearing land slips after the recent heavy rains.

While we were waiting, The Rolls-Royce Works Team joined the queue with the Centenary Ghost and camera crew. Once we were allowed through the roadworks, we had a glorious run through the high pastures in convoy.

1. Rex & Nora Vincent in 26TE approaching Pass Lueg
2. Keith Wherry in 2133 approaching Obertauern
3. Michael Zeitlin in 19TB passing through Pass Lueg
4. Ashley Carmichael in 47RE approaching the Katschberg Pass
5. Bernard Holmes in 9NA climbing strongly
6. Tim & Susie Forrest in 2154 and Centenary Ghost on the high road out of Lienz



After this there was quite a long stretch to Innsbruck, so we stopped and had a delightful lunch in one of the small towns along the route. Lunches were not pre-ordained so participants just stopped and had a picnic or stopped at a convenient hostelry. Once again it was a glorious sunny day and good progress was made until after we had climbed the Brenner Pass.

Unfortunately, the wonderful road that drops down into Innsbruck was closed as they repaired land slips due to the previous week's rain. The diversion was very unclear but took us onto the autobahn and soon Ghosts could be seen going in wildly different directions. Eventually, everyone found the route past Innsbruck airport and were back on track. We then had our last surprise of the day as without any warning there was a very long steep climb to the InterAlpen hotel. The original hotel had had to be changed at the last minute and so no recce had been done of the approach to the hotel. The road up was really long and steep and proved to be a major challenge for the crews and their occupants as they ground up to the hotel 1,000 metres above the valley floor. However, all was soon forgiven as the cars were received in a wonderful wood panelled reception area in the entrance to the underground garage.

The InterAlpen Hotel, a 5 star spa hotel with spectacular views and facilities and fabulous spa pool was a welcome relief for many of us. Dinner was described as Tirolean and took place in a large private dining room. Several late arrivals on the tour, who had been at the RREC Annual Concours, joined us here.

1. Nick Whitaker in 22LM chasing down Jonathan Wood in 68ZG
2. Graham Ashley-Carter in 2211 arrives at the InterAlpen Hotel reception
3. The amazing view from the InterAlpen Hotel
4. Doug Feeney in S322PI lead the Ghosts up the Reschenpass
5. Rex & Nora Vincent beside the Reschensee



3

As the next day, Wednesday 19th June, involved only a short run of 100 miles, many people took a leisurely breakfast and enjoyed the spectacular views before setting off. Although relatively short, it was a day of considerable interest with a climb of the steep and challenging Reschenpass.

Once over the top, we came to a big dam creating the Reschensee, which flooded a village leaving only the church spire showing above the water.

By mid afternoon, everyone had arrived at our overnight destination at the foot of the Stelvio Pass. On arrival at the hotel, we were greeted by a contingent from Rolls-Royce Motor Cars and met the very impressive Chief Executive, Torsten Müller-Ötvös. Accommodation was across three hotels in this ski resort in the Alps, which afforded stunning views and photo opportunities. We all met for dinner at Hotel Cristallo. Our

guests were R-RMC's Torsten Müller-Ötvös and his colleague, Richard Carter, Director of Global Communications. Tim Forrest and Nick Naismith had made a speedy recce of the Stelvio and gave us a briefing on the drive up the Stelvio Pass, which it was suggested would be best undertaken first thing the following morning when it would be pleasantly cool.

The next morning there were some very early risers as several decided that the best place to take breakfast was at the top of the Stelvio. Nick Naismith took Torsten up in his 1911 Silver Ghost. Much to his credit, Nick managed to get round every one of the 48 hairpins to the top of the pass without having to back up on any of them.

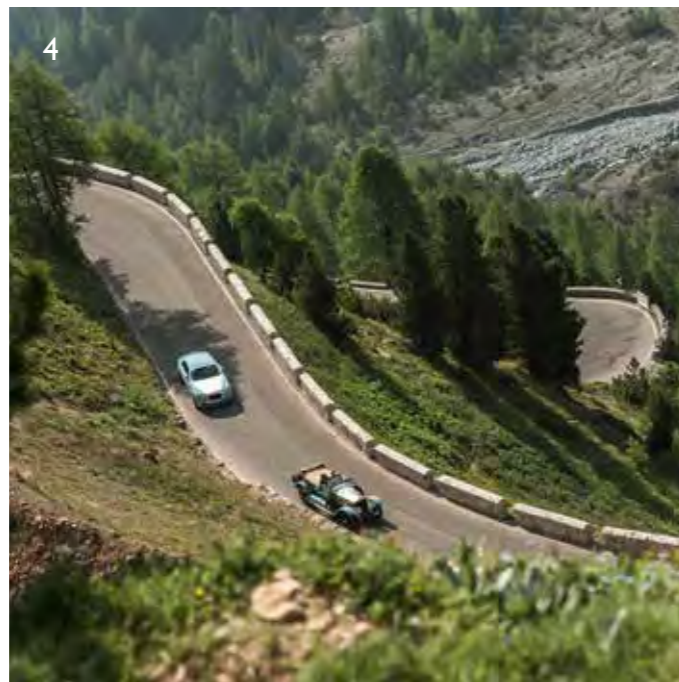
As expected, it proved to be the first big highlight of the tour as the cars climbed steadily to the top without any significant problem. Even when the bends were too tight to get round in one, all that was necessary was to roll back slightly and then take off again and go round onto the next hairpin.

In all, there were 48 hairpin bends from the base as the road climbs 1,500 metres to the top at 2,758 m. (9,050 ft). To put it in perspective, that is higher than most fighter planes could reach in the first World War! Fortunately there was very little traffic apart from the inevitable motorcyclists and everyone reached the top without incident, where indeed some excellent croissant and a modicum of Champagne was waiting!

The road down through into Switzerland and thence back to Italy gave us our first taste of driving on graded but un-surfaced roads. This proved interesting, particularly if you had to brake on the loose gravel surface, but it did make one realise just what they coped with 100 years ago driving on similarly loose surfaces for 1,800 miles. Fortunately, the customs officials on the Swiss Border seemed content to let us pass through without looking at any documentation which was fortunate, as in the excitement, some had left their passports in the hotel.



1. The First Big Challenge, The Stelvio Pass with 48 hairpin bends, climbing to 2,758 m, (9,050 ft)
2. Early starters at 5.02am on the Stelvio Pass, 20th June 2013
3. Gervase & Margaret at turn 11 in 60NE at 6.11am
4. Alan Clendenen in 20UB already at turn 24 by 5.38 am
5. Albert Eberhart in 35RG leads Georgina Wood in 46MA near the top



1. Garth Selig in Jacqueline Hall's 1388
2. Philip Oldman in 25BD
3. Jorge & Monica Fernandez in 69CW above the snow line
4. John Kennedy in 2260E leads the Centenary Ghost
5. Breakfast stop at the top of the Stelvio. From left to right Philip Oldman's 25BD, Bryan Stringer's 46PE, Roland Duce's 30EB, Sir John Stuttard's 33LG (behind 30EB), Tim Forrest's 2154, Strone Macpherson's 27BD

1. Nick & Jo Naismith in 1606
2. Tim Scott in 1948
3. Chip Connor in 2208
4. Terry Bramall in 23NA
5. Dawn & David Gooding in 47GB
6. The Hon. Sir Michael Kadoorie in 1958
7. Tom Heckman & Mary Jo Ashenfelter in 36PB
8. Bill & Jacquie Hall in 2145





- 1. Clayton & Helen Banks in 34MG
- 2. Knud Sassmannshausen and Willie Gilbertson Hart in 35TG
- 3. Strone Macpherson and the Hon. Lady Alex in 27BD
- 4. Charles & Ute Howard in S317PL
- 5. Tim & Jeremy Shipton in 401HH
- 6. William & David Corbett in 60AE
- 7. Brian & Joan Palmer in 149AG
- 8. Richard & Emily Buckingham in 42YG



All the cars climbed the Stelvio without difficulty and despite the very sharp hairpin bends, all coachwork remained undamaged by the unyielding stone walls. It is at times like these, that some might question the wisdom of taking such wonderful cars on routes like this. Yet, without exception, the view of the participants is that it is much better that these cars are used and seen doing what they were designed to do, rather than gathering dust in some private museum where only the owner can see them.

Once the cars and participants had got over the excitement of the Stelvio, there was then quite a long day's drive down to Trento. It was varied and pretty as we travelled through valleys, orchards, vineyards and alongside lakes. At one point, we encountered a major car club rally travelling in the opposite direction to us. Lots of waving ensued. Some time later, we came round a sharp narrow bend to find the road had been dug up as it went through a very old narrow tunnel. Much bumping over boulders ensued, but to our surprise we were still on the road that the tour planners had intended although they were not to know it had been dug up! After several wrong turns into too

narrow streets we eventually reached the Grand Hotel Trento at 3 pm very hot and a little sunburned. It turned out to be the hottest day of our tour at 35C or 95F.

Dinner was by own arrangement as we were in the middle of an historic Renaissance City, so various groups set off into the beautiful streets in the cool of the evening. The President of the 20-Ghost Club, The Duke of Gloucester, arrived at the hotel and a group took him to dinner in an old restaurant on the Piazza Duomo, where there is an astonishing Baroque fountain of

Neptune. When we came out of the restaurant, the piazza and the fountain were full of young people listening to an open air concert in the balmy evening.

The next day, the carnival atmosphere continued with a gentle drive down to Riva del Garda, followed by a glorious boat trip in perfect weather to Limone. Here, after lunch a number of ladies enjoyed a little bit of retail therapy after all the motoring! Back in Riva del Garda we were joined by members of the RREC



who had just started their Alpine Celebration Tour. The 80 Silver Ghosts proved an entrancing sight. Our President, The Duke of Gloucester, who had been driven down in Sir John Stuttard's car, was particularly interested and probably photographed every single car there for his collection. In the process, he displayed a remarkable knowledge of the wide range of coachbuilders involved. One of the most interesting cars on the RREC trip was Steve Littin's, 18PB, James Radley's 1914 Alpenfahrt car. As well as the variety of cars, it was lovely to catch up with so many friends on the RREC's tour. That evening Rolls-Royce Motor Cars generously hosted a reception and gala dinner for us in the lovely gardens on the edge of the lake followed by a wonderful fireworks display. Sir John Stuttard welcomed Torsten Müller-Ötvös and Rolls-Royce's participation in the event. Torsten then made an extremely complimentary speech in return praising the club for its imagination in creating such a wonderful event and complimenting us on the meticulous execution of the tour. He also said how much he had enjoyed his journey up the Stelvio Pass in a 100 year old Rolls-Royce.

Once the fireworks had finished echoing off the cliffs around the lakeside, a number of Silver Ghosts quietly left to return to the hotel in Trento, while the majority took the coach back or stayed in Riva del Garda overnight.

A Silver Ghost's headlights are never the most wonderful means of making your way in the dark, but fortunately it was a lovely starlit night with not much traffic. After about an hour, the cars were all safely tucked away in the hotel garage with their owners enjoying some happy memories in bed or in the bar!

1. The oldest car on the Trial, Robert Gaines-Cooper's 60922 nears the top of the Stelvio
2. Nick Channing and Ruba Jurdi in 42ZG
3. Centenary dinner and fireworks in Riva del Garda



The next day, we all set off on the great Dolomite road which took us back into Austria over the high Gobbera, Broccone and Rolle Passes which offered some of the most spectacular mountain scenery and beautiful passes of the whole tour. The Duke of Gloucester accompanied Tim and Susie Forrest in their 1912 Silver Ghost and quickly learnt the mysteries of the fuel system as he kept a watchful eye on the fuel pressure gauge and pumped vigorously should it ever fall below 0.5psi. After an enjoyable lunch in Moena, he and his aide were whisked away to the airport in a modern Ghost courtesy of R-RMC.



Coralie Ogle, from Australia had come on the tour with Bill and Jacquie Hall, but by the end of the tour she had probably navigated more Ghosts than anyone. On this day she excelled herself, starting out in 42YG, then jumping into 25BD before finally ending up back in 42YG. Along the way she had also managed to organise the kind of picnic others can only dream of, including crusty bread, gorgonzola, prosciutto ham, tomatoes, strawberries and wine – some spread! She ended up feeding nine as the film crew of Katie, Matt and Stuart had been filming them along the way and were kindly invited to join in. Informal gatherings at lunch were indeed part of the challenge of the tour as there are not as many roadside restaurants or pubs as are to be found in other parts of Europe.

Meanwhile, others were enjoying the twists and turns of the mountain roads and by mid-afternoon everyone was able to relax in the delightful Alpine town of Moena where we stayed in three charming hotels and had traditional local food and wines for supper.

Next morning, we were off again, aiming to climb the highest pass on the 1913 Alpenfahrt, only to find that this was not to be. As we emerged into a rather colder morning than we were used to we were engulfed by bicycles, motor bikes and pedestrians watching a bicycle race that had closed off the whole region around the Pordoi. So, instead, we followed some hastily improvised diversions to the south. These proved equally as spectacular and possibly even more challenging as we rose and fell several thousand feet round an amazing series of hairpin bends. This first half of the day was one of the most varied drives of the tour with dense forests, green grassy slopes, lakes, and snow-capped mountains - simply stunning scenery!

By lunchtime, we were out of the mountains and we then had a fairly quick run across lower Austria until we reached the thermal spa town of Villach. Welcome drinks were served on the terrace of the Warmbaderhof Hotel, the older of two spa hotels, the group was staying in, and we were entertained by a band and a visit of a magnificent 1913 Austro Daimler complete with officers in period costume.

The next day started cold and wet as we set off across the border back into Slovenia. Here the only accident befell poor Bob Kilburn whose Silver Ghost was rear ended by a modern Audi. Fortunately, the police were very helpful and agreed that the fault was that of the Audi driver; but the fact remained that Bob's fuel tank was badly damaged. Andy Wood was close at hand and he and the P&A Wood Mechanic, Mark, found a way of rigging up an electric fuel pump drawing from a series of petrol cans placed on the running board. It was a traumatic moment for Bob who was, however, absolutely determined to finish the event and pressed on to the end.

As we drove south, the sun came out and we went over the very steep Wurzen Pass and then over the Predl Pass before following through twisting river valleys and First World War forts down towards the Gulf of Trieste. Here we turned right in the middle of a little village and shortly found ourselves on a wonderful road high above the gulf with fabulous views all the way down into Trieste. Trieste itself, is a busy tourist centre and commercial port which was once Austria's principal port before it was handed over to the Italians in 1919. Our destination was Portoroz and a superb hotel on the Adriatic Coast.

After a leisurely breakfast on the wonderful balcony in front of the hotel, we had a lazy day's journey into Croatia along some very minor roads before climbing over the old pass up Monte Maggiore and then had a police escort down a very steep road to the stunning seaside resort of Opatija. We arrived at the Milenij Hotel, a lovely old hotel on Croatia's 'Riveria', which is a bit like the French Riviera 50 years ago, with lots of old-world charm.

The evening began with a parade through the town to the next village with the Ambassador promoting the "Great Britain" campaign. We then repaired to the 'Hemingway Café' on the waterfront where a British Embassy Ambassadorial Reception was in full swing with a big band belting out show tunes. That week, Croatia was to become part of the European Union and so the Ambassador and local Mayor were keen to promote Anglo-Croatian relations. The night ended with a Croatian themed buffet while being serenaded by a delightful group of seven lady singers.



1. Tim Milverton drives Clare in John & Liz's 6 TB by Lago di Levico
2. Nick Channing & Ruba Jurdi extending his quick Silver Ghost 42ZG
3. Sir John Stuttard's 33LG and Alex Joyce's 40PG

The next day started with a lovely drive through a pretty countryside of agricultural valleys before eventually coming to some larger rivers in steep valleys with glacial water flowing under limestone escarpments. The traffic was surprisingly heavy and there were roadworks which slowed us, as the clouds gradually became blacker.

There was an option in the early afternoon to take either the new road or the old road. Those that took the old road soon found themselves climbing up the side of a mountain on a gravel track little changed over the past 100 years.

Soon afterwards it started to rain and the later cars had an unpleasant run on twisting country lanes in the pouring rain until they eventually arrived exhausted at the Grand Hotel Toplice. The hotel was right on the water at the spectacular

Lake Bled and had a stunning panorama of the lake with medieval Bled Castle atop a cliff and a beautiful old church on Bled Island. Bled was soon to be twinned with Henley-on-Thames; most appropriate as both are famed for their rowing regattas.

That night there was much discussion about the next day's challenge which was the climb of the Loibl Pass. Tim Forrest and Nick Naismith had made a quick recce that evening and fortunately everything had survived the recent rains remarkably well and if anything the pass was in better condition than it had been for many years.

In 1913, the Loibl was the most feared of all the passes as it was a real challenge to the cars. 100 years on and the pass is virtually unchanged with an unsurfaced country lane climbing up the side of the mountain past the twin obelisks at the top and then down

the other side into Austria. Both sides are very steep, particularly the hairpins on the Slovenian side where the gradient is 25% or greater on the inside. Even for a Silver Ghost, this is a challenge, particularly if you are driving a three speed Silver Ghost with their high bottom gear ratio.

Fortunately, the day dawned fine and by 9am Nick Naismith and the camera car driven by Tim Forrest had climbed the hill filming everything as they went. On the steeper hairpins, Nick's three speed car could only just make it, so the riding mechanic Mark had to jump off and run alongside. Subsequently the remaining cars which were nearly all four speed cars managed the climb without undue difficulty.

1. Lake Bled with the medieval Bled Castle towering above
2. Georgina Wood drives Andy Wood up the mountain track in 46MA
3. The Final Challenge: The Loibl Pass taking us back into Slovenia. Bob Kilburn in 19CE approaches the steepest hairpin on the Loibl Pass which is just as it was 100 years ago.





1. William & David Corbett with Penny & Clare climbing strongly in 60AE
2. Georgina & Paul Wood in 46MA
3. Alan & Sue Glew in 89AE on the final corner
4. Robert Gaines-Cooper and 60922 at the top of the Loibl Pass
5. Philip Oldman & Clive Boothman in 25BD on the very steep penultimate hairpin



6. Alex Joyce & Sean Paul Cahill in 40PG nearing the summit
7. Chip Connor & Bruce Meyer looking understandably pleased after their high-speed ascent in 2208
8. An understandably happy Georgina Wood in front of the two obelisks marking the border between Slovenia and Austria



The ascent of the Loibl is an achievement for anyone as it is extremely steep and has a very loose surface. Later Silver Ghosts with their lower axle ratio and four speed boxes could make light of it, even climbing most of the way in second gear, but for the early cars with their really high bottom gears it was a real challenge.

Nick Naismith, having just managed to get up after shedding his riding mechanic, told Chip Connor in his very high geared three speed London to Edinburgh tourer to never lift the throttle the whole way up. So as Chip said, "that's precisely what I did! I really had no choice as slowing down would have been the kiss of death, so I just threw the car into the corners and she kept on like that to the top".

Two other valiant climbs were made, the first by Bob Kilburn, still running on his emergency fuel system. At the top, Bob was so happy that he did a dance with a somewhat startled young Slovenian reporter. The other notable car to climb the Loibl was the oldest car on the event, the 1909 "Silver Dawn" which slowed for the penultimate hairpin and came to a halt. However, with judicious use of the clutch and a push she re-started and climbed to the finish in fine form.

Not unnaturally, those that made it to the top were extremely elated, but all was not over as there was still an equally demanding and exciting descent. This was very steep and had many deep caniveaux (drainage gulleys) cutting diagonally across the road. Great care was required!

1. Georgina Wood tackles the Loibl in 46MA
2. Strone Macpherson introduces his group to The Earl of Wessex
3. The Countess of Wessex asks the Forrests lots of questions about the rally

Our thanks go to the members of the local Slovenian Motor Club that helped to marshal us on our way up the Loibl Pass and to the various R-RMC personnel with their walkie talkie radios that ensured everything was clear on the pass before the next car went up. The local Slovenians had also organised a barbecue lunch for us which was extremely kind, but unfortunately somewhat clashed with the next event on a rather busy day!

We made a rapid return to our hotel in Lake Bled where preparations were being finalised for a reception laid on by the British Ambassador to Slovenia who had arranged for The Earl and Countess of Wessex to visit us as part of an official visit to Slovenia promoting Great Britain.

Our Ghosts had to be moved from next to the hotel to another

location and the bomb squad had apparently already been through the hotel. We'd been asked to wear our name tags, bring our passports and our invitations.

Once through the security checks, we were then escorted downstairs and onto the terrace where Champagne and canapés were served. We were divided into groups of 10 with Sir John Stuttard and Strone Macpherson introducing one group to His Royal Highness and Tim Forrest and Nick Naismith introducing the other group to The Countess. The Earl kept his group relaxed with several jokes whilst The Countess was very charming and relaxed and shook hands with us all.

Both were a delight to talk to and seemed somewhat amazed at what our 100 year old cars had managed to achieve. After a few

speeches they and their entourage departed and those who had not been to the barbecue settled down to a belated lunch,

In the early evening, Keith and Marie Wherry hosted a Champagne Reception in their suite on the top floor, with a terrace overlooking Lake Bled, for the 'Australian Austrian Alpenfahrt Attendees' where an Aussie tour photograph was taken with Nick and Jo Naismith and Tim and Susie Forrest. Later there was a great deal of reminiscing on the events of the day when we all repaired to the local restaurants, where many of us enjoyed one of the local specialities, a shank of veal which was amazingly succulent. For some, all of this jollity and good living was slightly tempered by the fact that we knew we had a 250 mile drive to do the next day.



Two hundred and fifty miles on cross-country roads is quite a long way in a Silver Ghost. People therefore set off quite early next morning for the drive through the Loibl tunnel and then up into Austria. On the way, we crossed over the steep Radpass on what is now the eastern end of the border between Slovenia and Austria before dropping very steeply down to Ebiswald.

Fortunately, the roads were relatively empty and dry and good progress could be made. After a long haul through undulating countryside we came to what was the notorious Stubalpe. In 1913, this long mountain climb had been criss-crossed with over 125 drainage channels which had to be jolted over on the ascent of the pass and then over 200 on the descent. The pass is still a long stiff climb but the cars made it without boiling despite the continuing very pleasant sunny weather. At the top there was a very welcoming hostelry for those in need of refreshment. From there it was possible to do the last 70 miles, either on the expressway, or on the original parallel route along the valley floor. Either way it gave drivers the opportunity to make up time to their destination with many cars cruising at 100kph on the open road.

When everyone eventually arrived at the Panhans Hotel there was a huge buzz of excitement and elation. Everyone recognised that they had cracked the longest day and there was only an easy 50 mile journey left to do the next day. The car park was a hive of activity as people unpacked while others washed and polished their cars ready for the grand arrival back in Vienna.

In the restaurant and bars, there was much toasting and well wishing as everyone celebrated their success thus far. The Panhans Hotel, itself, was a reminder of the turmoil of the last century. From 1905 to 1913 it had been at the peak of Austrian society with visits from Archduke Karl Franz Josef, the last Emperor of Austria and many famous artists. Then, in the difficult times of the 1920s, it changed hands many times before having a revival in the 1930s with film stars and famous racing drivers from the German Auto-Union and Mercedes teams. It then became a favourite of Herman Goring during the war before

1. Knud Sassmanshausen's 35TG Cabriolet de Ville in front of the Panhans
2. John Kennedy at speed in 2260E, 100 years on from the car's first Alpenfahrt
3. 1606, 33LG, 100HG and 36PB at a well-earned stop for morning coffee
4. Chris Blundell in 1921, leads Michael Zetlin 19YB and Philip Oldman 25BD
5. The cars at the finish at the Kursalon, Vienna



being occupied by the Russians in 1945. Eventually resurrected in the 1970s it then fell into bankruptcy in the depression following the banking crisis of 2008. Still rather living on past glories, it was fortuitously rescued again in time for our arrival. The next morning dawned slightly misty but soon the sun burnt through and we were able to enjoy the fabulous views. The Panhans Hotel was a hive of activity as everyone did final polishing and decoration of the cars with flags!

Once everyone was ready, we set off in a leisurely convoy back to the final flagging in point at the Kursalon in the centre of Vienna. However, as everyone was on a high and the road was fast, there was plenty of opportunity to exercise the cars. There were also a few last opportunities for the sat navs or route instructions to baffle us and so by the time we reached the centre of Vienna, the cars were well strung out.

The Markgraf Pallavicini flagged us in as he did on the off, but this time he was accompanied by his very excited young daughter. Everyone was delighted to be home with 45 cars finishing out of the total of 47 starters and one car classified as walking wounded. Unlike in 1993, all the modern cars were exemplars of reliability and effortless performance showing that Rolls-Royce did indeed still make "The Best Car in the World"!

Naturally, there was Champagne and more congratulations all around accompanied by press and film photographers of all kinds. Also present were our new-found Austrian friends who had wished us well at the start and had been following our progress on the internet as we made our way around the route, paying us flying visits whenever they could.

Once we had finished our celebrations we parked the cars up in the underground car park and prepared them for their long journeys home. There was a buffet awaiting us plus a goody bag including a rather nice little book containing a Historical Record of the Centenary Alpine Trial and the original event of 1913.

At 7 pm we went by coach to the Palais Pallavicini where the Markgraf and his delightful Italian wife were our hosts for the evening. The British Ambassador to Austria and her husband were in attendance, as was Richard Carter, Director of Global Communications for Rolls-Royce Motor Cars. We were welcomed with a Champagne reception in the walled courtyard where Radley's 1913 Silver Ghost and the Centenary Alpine Centenary Collection Ghost were parked.

A string quartet played for us as we went into dinner and at the top of the grand staircase of the Palais was an impressive ice sculpture of the Spirit of Ecstasy, next to which many people had their photos taken. We dined in a stunning gold and white ballroom with wonderful mouldings on the walls and huge chandeliers.



Before dinner, the Markgraf gave us a brief history of his family palace and how they came by and managed to retain such a magnificent palace which is one of the few in Vienna still in private ownership. At various stages during the evening, we were serenaded by an opera singer from the Vienna Opera House who sang most beautifully, at one point appearing from a magnificent balcony suspended above our heads.

After dinner, it was speeches and awards time. Several people received 'good egg awards' for giving assistance on tour, but the main award was the 'Spirit of Adventure' Trophy, a special edition Spirit of Ecstasy statuette, presented by Rolls-Royce Motor Cars to Bob Kilburn for his 'Alpine spirit' and determination to get to the finish despite a jerry-rigged fuel system. Bob, in turn, dedicated the trophy to John and Mark from P&A Wood, because he said without them it would have been impossible.

In 1913, the principal trophy, a pair of cut glass decanters, were awarded by the Archduke Leopold Salvator of Austria to Rolls-Royce and were subsequently given to the Club in the 1950s and became known as The Alpine Trophy.

In recognition of the spirit with which Rolls-Royce Motor Cars entered in to the Centenary Alpine Trial, and for the outstanding performance of their cars, The Alpine Trophy was awarded to Rolls-Royce Motor Cars for the remainder of the year.

As the evening came to an end, we returned to the coaches and back to our hotel, where many of us adjourned to the bar and continued our celebrations. Some had early morning flights and said their farewells and retired, while many of the rest of us joined the large group of the younger generation and continued celebrating, some till 3.30 am!

Next morning some of the cars were loaded onto transporters whereas others set out on the long journey home, while yet another even went straight off onto another rally in Germany!



1. Inside the magnificent Grandsaal of the Palais Pallavicini
2. David & Dawn Gooding in 47GB with Tom Heckman at the finish line
3. A highlight of the final evening was being serenaded in style!
4. Bob Kilburn accepts his 'Spirit of Adventure' trophy with obvious delight
5. Sir John Stuttard presents the Alpine Trophy to Richard Carter, Communications Director of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars

SPECIFICATION OF 2013 ALPINE CARS

No	Owner	Car	Year	Chassis No	Reg No	Colour	Coachbuilder	Body Style
1	Robert Gaines-Cooper	Silver Ghost	1909	60922	R-562	Silver Mink	Barker	Roi des Belges
2	Jacqueline Hall	Silver Ghost	1910	1388	29378H	Dark Blue	Unknown	Roi des Belges
3	Nick Naismith	Silver Ghost	1911	1606	CH-722	Green	Barker replica by Lamb NSW	Marlborough Torpedo
4	John Kennedy	Silver Ghost	1913	2260E	R-827	Alpine Blue	Radley-Morison	Alpine Tourer
5	Chris Blundell	Silver Ghost	1912	1921	LD 9053	Brown	Barker	Tourer
6	Tim Scott	Silver Ghost	1912	1948	J1	Grey	Holmes replica by Craillville	London to Edinburgh
7	The Hon. Sir Michael Kadoorie	Silver Ghost	1912	1958	R 8818	Grey	J. Penny replica Holmes body	London to Edinburgh Tourer
8	Keith Wherry	Silver Ghost	1912	2133	RR-1912	Black	Barker replica by Williams	Torpedo Tourer
9	Bill Hall	Silver Ghost	1912	2145	1912RR	Brewster Green	Barker replica by Fry	Cabriolet
10	Tim Forrest	Silver Ghost	1912	2154	R-1487	Pearl Grey	Barker	Torpedo Phaeton Tourer
11	Chip Connor	Silver Ghost	1912	2208	8572	Grey	Mann-Egerton	Sports Tourer
12	Robert Gaines-Cooper	Silver Ghost	1912	2211	AX 310	Blue	Hooper	Tourer
14	Bernard Holmes	Silver Ghost	1913	9NA	CC371	Red and Silver	Lamb	London to Edinburgh
15	Terry Bramall	Silver Ghost	1913	23NA	IA4	Cream	Ferguson of Belfast	Tourer
16	Georgina Wood	Silver Ghost	1914	46MA	LL 1524	Blue	H. J. Mulliner	Open Tourer
17	Roland Duce	Silver Ghost	1914	30EB	EL 2071	Silver	Barker	London to Edinburgh
18	Tom Heckman	Silver Ghost	1914	36PB	6009	Black and Dark Green	Brooks-Ostruk	Five Passenger Tourer
19	Michael Zeitlin	Silver Ghost	1914	19YB	R-2096	Grey	Unknown	Tourer
20	Alan & LaDel Clendenen	Silver Ghost	1914	20UB	2286248	Light Grey	Penny-Barker	Tourer
21	Dawn & David Gooding	Silver Ghost	1914	47GB	AZBBC2731	Green and Black	Barker	Torpedo Tourer
22	John & Elizabeth Milverton	Silver Ghost	1914	6TB	SV9325	Burgundy	Houston	Tourer
23	Philip Oldman	Silver Ghost	1914	25BD	BG-957	Blue	A. J. C. Thomas	London to Edinburgh
24	Strone Macpherson	Silver Ghost	1914	27BD	LR 6389	Grey and Black	Bridgewater Motor Company	Torpedo Tourer
25	Jorge & Monica Fernandez	Silver Ghost	1919	69CW	BB41SF	Blue and Black	J. Rothchild & Fils Paris	Open Tourer

SPECIFICATION OF 2013 ALPINE CARS

No	Owner	Car	Year	Chassis No	Reg No	Colour	Coachbuilder	Body Style
26	William & David Corbett	Silver Ghost	1920	60AE	79 FLY	Blue	Woodall Nicholson	Open Tourer
27	Allan & Susan Glew	Silver Ghost	1920	89AE	R 4871	Grey	Flewitt Birmingham	Tourer
28	Bryan Stringer	Silver Ghost	1920	46PE	BF6009	Mid Blue	Barker	Cabriolet
29	Ashley Carmichael	Silver Ghost	1920	47RE	PX 1780	Black and Silver	H.J.Mulliner	Open Drive Limousine
30	Gervase Forster	Silver Ghost	1920	26TE	XK 1702	Blue and Black	Arthur Mulliner	Cabriolet Top Doctors Coupe
31	Bob Kilburn	Silver Ghost	1921	19CE	SC 6394	Blue and Black	Barker	Tourer
32	Gervase Forster	Silver Ghost	1921	60NE	SV 6608	Yellow and Black	Lopes of Portugal	Open Tourer
33	Sir John Stuttard	Silver Ghost	1921	33LG	XF-7646	White and Blue	Park Ward/Car Mart	All Weather Tourer
34	Brian Palmer	Silver Ghost	1921	149AG	KE-6676	Maroon	Barker	Tourer
35	John Kennedy	Silver Ghost	1922	100HG	HC-3459	Ivory and Black	Hooper of London	Open Tourer
36	Clayton Banks	Silver Ghost	1922	34MG	JL 1	Greenish	Hooper	Open Tourer
37	Alex Joyce	Silver Ghost	1922	40PG	AA 04060	Pale Yellow	H.J.Mulliner	Four Passenger Tourer
38	Knud Sassmannshausen	Silver Ghost	1922	35TG	XN-5107	Black and Aluminium	Barker	Cabriolet de Ville
39	Albert Eberhard	Silver Ghost	1922	35RG	EL 1743	Dark Blue	Wilkinson	Open Tourer London to Edinburgh
40	Richard Buckingham	Silver Ghost	1922	42YG	R1922	Blue	Mulliner	Open Tourer
41	Nick Channing	Silver Ghost	1922	42ZG	NN3740	Dark Red and Mahogany	Unknown	Open boat tailed skiff
42	Jonathan & Sarah Wood	Silver Ghost	1922	68ZG	TS 3911	Green	Hooper Reproduction	Tourer
43	Stan West	Silver Ghost	1923	314XH	BP 5157	Black	Springfield	Tourer
44	Tim Shipton	Silver Ghost	1923	401HH	DS 7752	Dark Green and Black	Rolls-Royce Custom Coachwork	Piccadilly Roadster
45	Nick Whitaker	Silver Ghost	1924	22LM	XT 1857	Grey and Black	Gill	Tourer
46	Morris Franklin	Silver Ghost	1924	EU55	EU55	Cream and Burgundy	Rolls-Royce Custom Coachwork	Pall Mall Tourer
47	Charles Howard	Silver Ghost	1926	S317PL	SV 6947	Black	Unknown	London to Edinburgh
48	Doug Feeney	Silver Ghost	1926	S322PL	THE PAST	Green and Black	Rolls-Royce Custom Coachwork by Merrimac	Pall Mall Tourer
100	Rolls-Royce Motor Cars	Silver Ghost	2013	SCA664S0 5EUX40597	R100 GWD	Light Blue-Greyish	Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, Goodwood	Saloo

A TRIBUTE TO THE ORGANISERS AND SUPPORT TEAM

Creating and organising a big tour like this cannot be achieved without an enormous amount of assistance. Nick and Tim (*on the far right*) decided the kind of rally they wanted to have and where they wanted to go and stay, but it was down to Ally and Michelle of Mindworks Marketing (*on the left*) plus colleague, Simon, (*not in photo*) to make it happen. Not only did they organise all the accommodation, (approximately 1,350 rooms in all), there were eight major dinners or events and then there was all the paraphernalia needed like route books, rally plaques, mementos, prizes, sat navs, maps etc. There were also a further 40 visiting journalists and Rolls-Royce personnel to look after as well as our Royal Guests. Quite some task but expertly undertaken by the Mindworks team.

Also in the picture are the two Charlies (*centre back*) who crammed an ever-increasing amount of luggage into Nick Naismith's car trailer. As well as the two mechanics, John and Mark, in the centre we have Katie, Matt and Stuart who followed us throughout and are finalising the film of the event as this goes to press. Not present in the photo are the two professional photographers, Fiona Richardson who took this photo and many other still photographs and also James Lipman who buzzed around on the back of a motorbike driven by taking simply wonderful mobile shots of the cars on route.

Two other people played a critical part in shaping the event. Angelika Elliott helped enormously in capturing the essence of Austria 100 years ago combined with the best of today. Andrew Ball of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars saw the historical significance of the

event to Rolls-Royce Motor Cars from the outset and persuaded their Marketing Team to participate in it to the full.

You might well ask why we decided to organise such a huge event as this. The only good answer is that it was there, there was a huge demand from our members to come on it and somebody had to do it! Of course underneath it all was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate a tremendous series of achievements in 1913 and 1914 that sealed Rolls-Royce's long term success. How could we not celebrate such an event in the style which it deserved? Rolls-Royce Motor Cars clearly thought so too and we are extremely grateful for their generous sponsorship and participation in the event. It was really great that they recognise the significance of the heritage of the marque in their success today.

I am sometimes asked why the event was only for Silver Ghosts. We knew from the outset that there would be a huge demand for the tour and so it was just not practical to widen the participation to all types of pre-war Rolls-Royce. As it was, we had to decline a few entries. Secondly, by definition, the event was a celebration of the success of one model, the Silver Ghost, in building the reputation of Rolls-Royce as the Best Car in the World. Consequently it was only right to celebrate this with examples of the Silver Ghost.

Tim Forrest
Vice-President
20-Ghost Club



From Left to right: Ally Chai, Michelle Leggatt, Mark Hewer, Matt Jarman, Stuart Birchill, Katie Forrest, Charlie Naismith, Charlie Mouncer, John Ashford, Tim Forrest and Nick Naismith



We are delighted that the Centenary Alpine Trial was awarded the coveted prize of Best Rally or Tour 2013 and the picture shows tour organisers, Nick Naismith and Tim Forrest, receiving the well-deserved trophy.

"Historic rallies and tours grow in popularity, complexity and ambition every year not least thanks to organisers such as Philip Young and his Endurance Rally Association, and HERO (the Historic Endurance Rally Organisation). But the award for Rally or Tour of the Year actually went to a car club-organised event; albeit one on a rather grand scale.

The 20-Ghost Club Centenary Alpine Trial saw cars over 100 years old cover 1,850 miles of extremely challenging driving across four countries - Austria, Italy, Slovenia and Croatia - in 16 days. Participants from 12 different countries drove 47 of the world's most beautiful old Royce-Royce Silver Ghost cars plus one brand new Rolls-Royce - the Alpine Trial Centenary Collection created specifically by Rolls-Royce Motor Cars to celebrate this historic event."



Front cover: Jorge and Monica Fernandez in 69CW
Back cover: Jonathan Wood in 68ZG



www.20-ghost.org