

# Summer 2022 Middlesex Section Magazine



## MIDDLESEX SECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### **Nigel Sandell – Chairman**

*information@nsandell.com*

1937 Rolls-Royce 25/30

1979 Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow II

1997 Rolls-Royce Silver Spirit



### **Richard Edgell - Magazine Editor**

*redgell050@gmail.com*

1929 Rolls-Royce 20hp Weymann Saloon

1934 Bentley 3.5 Saloon

1935 Bentley 3.5 Drop-head coupe

1936 Bentley 3.5 Barker saloon Coupe

1951 Bentley Mk VI



### **Will Bate - Secretary & Website Editor**

*wbate@northpole-it.co.uk*

1927 Rolls-Royce 20hp Park Ward Saloon

1953 Bentley R-Type

1964 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud III

1979 Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow II

2007 Bentley Arnage T



### **David Siegal - Treasurer & Membership Secretary**

*david@ealingtrading.co.uk*

1963 Bentley S3 Continental

1981 Rolls-Royce Camargue

2015 Bentley Continental GT Speed



### **Tony O'Brart – Committee Member**

*tony.obrart@gmail.com*

1979 Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow II



### **Richard Skinner - Committee Member**

*richardskinner10@btinternet.com*

1936 Rolls-Royce 25/30 William Arnold

1971 Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow I



## Editors Ruminations- July 2022

I do hope that you have been taking every opportunity to drive your club cars this year. It can be difficult for your committee to know what sort of event appeals to our membership, but we hope that the events we arrange appeal to you, if not please tell us what you would like for next year.

Our first event might have qualified as a *Rolls-Royce Eating Club* gathering, but we had a fine array of pre and post war cars at the visit to Formans, the famous East End salmon smokers, in early March. The salmon really was excellent.

Board member Philip Brooks joined us for a short AGM at our usual venue of Grovefield House Hotel, Taplow on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> April. The meeting had to be short because we some driving to do on the annual Middlesex Road Run through the Chiltern Hills. Many days of preparation paid off, thirty three of us in eighteen cars completed the route and we enjoyed lunch at Ashridge House. It was at one of the preparatory meetings for the Run that I was asked if our section would support a Jubilee event at Ashridge. Despite the rain we had thirteen RR &Bs join us on the day. My James Young Derby had its first section outing since its restoration and acquitted itself well.

Hatfield House is on our doorstep and so it was surprising that we attracted only a few Section members, but it was a great day out and we saw some fabulous artifacts at this great Tudor mansion.

As Richard Skinner's photograph shows there were some rather good cars too.



The beginning of this month saw the return of a full National Rally at Burghley. Opinions differ concerning some of the arrangements, but it was undoubtedly a great weekend. Congratulations go to Middlesex member Michael Marshall Clarke who picked up the rosette for the Touring prize in the Silver Shadow class. Nigel Sandell took second prize in class 7 for his 25/30 Park-Ward Touring saloon, also the Douglas Wood trophy for the best Park-Ward car. Our chairman's crowning success however was in winning the Peter Blond trophy for the best pair of cars: his ex-Blond 25/30 and his Silver Spur.



Richard Skinner's photo shows the chairman's Park - Ward 25/30 taken late in the day alongside the Shadows of Richard Skinner left and centre.

A car that that I thought was one of the most striking at the show was a very late

Derby Bentley B187MX, owned by Section member Nick Harley. This flamboyant car carried off the pre-war conservation class prize. You can see more about this wonderful car on the Derby Bentley page of the July Spirit & Speed.

As ever, you can see many pictures of recent events on the RREC Middlesex website which is maintained for us by Will Bate.

Our next Section car event is on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> October and takes us to the Garden of England to see Jack Henley's collection of wonderful cars which he has built up over the last sixty or more years. This one is not to be missed, contact me for details.

Then on Sunday 20 November we shall have our annual visit to Isleworth to see what is new at N. Sandell's garage. I am expecting Nigel to show us some interesting developments.

Even if you don't make it to one of the events we have arranged, please do get out and DRIVE your cars!

Richard Edgell

## END OF AN ERA

### The Peter Blond cars, By Nigel Sandell

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June was the first day of the Goodwood Festival of Speed this year. Rebecca Blond had invited me to the Bonhams sale to say goodbye to her father's collection of cars, aptly named 'The Green Car Collection'. When Peter retired from his milliner business in 1990, he and Malcolm Barber started the Sotheby's car collection. Malcolm today is Senior Auctioneer for Bonhams, and it seemed apt that he would put Peter's cars under the hammer. I also feel that Rupert Banner, who had known Peter for many years, had done a lot of the groundwork in preparation of the sale.



Photo courtesy of Bonhams

1933 Phantom II Continental Sports Saloon, coachwork by James Young. If you have ever driven a Phantom II, you will know that this is a beast of a car and commands extreme presence on the road when being driven! This car was probably the jewel in the crown, although latterly Peter, at age 91, found this car extremely difficult to drive with no power steering and not a great deal of steering lock.

1932 Rolls-Royce 20/25 Close coupled Sports Coupe, coachwork by Gurney Nutting. Another of his favourite cars. He drove it in the royal entourage with Prince Michael of Kent to the prestigious Hampton Court concours in September 2020 where he was reunited with his HWM race car that he raced at Le Mans in 1958.

1936 Bentley 4.25 litre all weather Sports Tourer, coachwork Vanden Plas. Rebecca told me a story that this car was found in a farmer's field with a tree growing through it! After Peter gave up racing, he started collecting his amazing collection of cars. I was told by Matthew Turton that his father retrimmed this car in 1963 and it stills looks pretty good today.

1923 Rolls-Royce 20HP Barrel-Sided Tourer, coachwork by Barker. This was Peter's last purchase for his collection which I would say brave being 88 years old and purchasing a three speed no front brakes 20HP. Next year, this car will be 100 years old and is the oldest car I have ever worked on.

It was a privilege and an honour to stand with Rebecca as the cars were being auctioned off. We were all quite sad that day, but we knew the cars were going to new homes and that new people were going to love and enjoy Peter's legacy.

[N.Sandell](#)

# Tim Neale- an appreciation

By Richard Edgell

One of the great stalwarts of the Middlesex Section and a larger-than-life character in every way died suddenly on 11<sup>th</sup> July, shortly after his 90th birthday.

Tim owned and ran a successful refrigeration business and had number of modern Rolls-Royces as company cars and in May 1991 he joined the RREC. He soon felt the pull of pre-war car ownership, but not for him a small horsepower job, rather a Phantom III with a limousine body by Abbott. He drove this home from The Real Car Company and finding the gearbox to be poor, fitted a replacement as his first job on the car, whilst his wife Marguerite worked on the interior.

Not content with just one PIII he bought a magnificent HJ Mulliner Sedanca de Ville, and this soon supplanted the modern car to become the favoured carriage of the Neales. Later, he went to look at a sporty 20/25 coupe which he fancied, but came away instead with another Sedanca, this time on a short-chassis 20/25. Marguerite thus had two stylish parlours in which to take tea with weary rally goers.

This car did however have at least one particularly eventful day, as Nigel relates:

*As you are all aware, our cars can sometimes open some very strange doors. In 2012, through one of Tim's Watford based car clubs, he was invited to take part in the closing ceremony of the Olympics. His car was wrapped in newspaper and when the group Madness sang 'Welcome to the House of Fun', the newspaper was then torn off the car to reveal Tim's pride and joy 20/25! He told me that he had been to many rehearsals and that he was sworn to secrecy not to tell anyone what they were planning. What an honour to be with your beloved Rolls-Royce in front of a TV audience of at least a billion people!*

Following the death of Marguerite, Tim was less often seen at RREC events, preferring more local clubs in which he was very active. He did however continue to contribute to our newsletters which he had edited for a while and was always a font of esoteric knowledge.

Many times, he would say to me ‘as you go through life take time to smell the roses. Sound advice.

Our sincerest condolences to his daughter Angela and the rest of his family.

## **My time in Crewe’**

By Sandy Nicol

No, not a period at Her Majesty’s pleasure, but a graduate apprenticeship with Rolls-Royce Motors at the Pym’s Lane factory. I had made any number of applications to firms in the motor and transport industries for training to follow my engineering degree course at Aberdeen University. Most operated sophisticated application processes involving at least two interviews and so-called ‘assessment centres’ but, following only a single interview at Crewe with Training Manager Vic Harris in December 1974, I was offered a place on their programme starting in September 1975. This had been my first choice anyway and so I accepted without hesitation.

So it was that on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September, I presented myself at Leighton House in Crewe, the company’s apprentice hostel, giving myself over to the care of the warden, the redoubtable Mr Ernie Edgley, ex-RSM Scots Guards. I was allocated a ground floor room at the front of the hostel; a previous occupant of the room had been Sanjay Gandhi, younger son of the Indian prime minister Indira Gandhi. Monday saw the induction at Pym’s Lane of our motley crew of engineering, technician and business apprentices. The personnel director expressed his wish that we would all develop long and fruitful careers with the company; he was to leave the company a matter of months later .

The first part of the programme was an intensive six-week spell in the Apprentice Training School under the guidance of Eddie Swann and his instructors. The syllabus included machining, fitting, sheet metalwork, welding and technical drawing which provided us with the skills to make our own fitter’s vice and toolbox, both of which I still have.

The first departmental assignment was to Car Repair for a month. Three weeks were spent in the main workshop ‘assisting’ a pair of fitters carrying out general service and repair work to customers’ cars, ranging from the Bentley



Mark VI to the latest Silver Shadow. The highlight, not surprisingly, being when we went out on road test, mainly locally around Crewe but occasionally on the M6. The final week proved to be a complete contrast. I was placed into one of the old Merlin testbeds at the back of the factory. This dank and dark space was inhabited by two elderly characters, Archie and Fred, who regarded it as very much their domain. This was where they tested and overhauled the hydraulic units – brake pumps, spheres, valves and levelling struts. The wiry Archie proved to be most helpful, while Fred contented himself with tea and fags.

The Main Shop was next, the biggest unit on the site and managed by Jim Symonds who would later run Mulliner Park Ward. The immediate impression of the Main Shop was that of being carried back in time to the 1940's; a pervading atmosphere of oil mist with low level lighting and dour looking workers, many seeming to be of retirement age, dressed in appropriately drab workwear, a few in cloth caps. In this connection, a sight to behold was the exodus from the factory at the end of the working day – literally hundreds of workers cycling away along Pym's Lane; today's green lobby would have been impressed. As for Main Shop machinery, much looked to be of a bygone era with well-worn looking machines of Alfred Herbert and Churchill manufacture although, here and there, a new NC machine would glow through the gloom. The south end of the Main Shop was altogether brighter, it was here that the engines were assembled.

A major part of my time in the Main Shop was spent on machining operations; drilling and finished bearing caps for B-Range and L-Series engines, as well as honing L-Series cylinder liners. So, if you have a Rolls-Royce or Bentley motor car first registered in early 1976 (chassis number range 24500 to 25000), you might well find my handiwork in the engine. My final week was spent on the engine assembly line which comprised of 14 stations, supported by sub-assembly areas. Jim Symonds was rather dismissive of my suggestion that worker satisfaction might be improved through a single fitter assembling each engine but, of course, this did come to pass a quarter of a century later, albeit with fewer engines being produced.

In the meantime, back at Leighton House, I had clearly made an impression on Ernie Edgley because he appointed me as Hostel Chairman. I can assure you that I took my responsibilities seriously and properly looked after the interests

of the other 22 residents. A highlight in January 1976 was when I hosted Leighton House's first (and probably only) Burns Supper. A suitable quantity of haggis was dispatched from Aberdeen by my parents and the hostel catering staff were to provide the rest of the fare. Concerns arose when no haggis parcel had arrived by the day before the supper. Crewe Sorting Office suggested calling them again on the 25<sup>th</sup> (Sunday). This was done and, after a search, they did indeed find the parcel, but it would have to be collected – so, rapid trip on the pillion of a motorcycle to collect the errant haggis. Thus, there ensued a convivial and memorable evening.

From experiencing the manufacture of components and the assembly of the engine, it was now time to participate in the making of the Rolls-Royce motor car. Ted Dale was manager of Car Build and I always remember him having a particularly disarming approach to criticism of his department – he agreed with everything said (and doubtless disregarded it!).

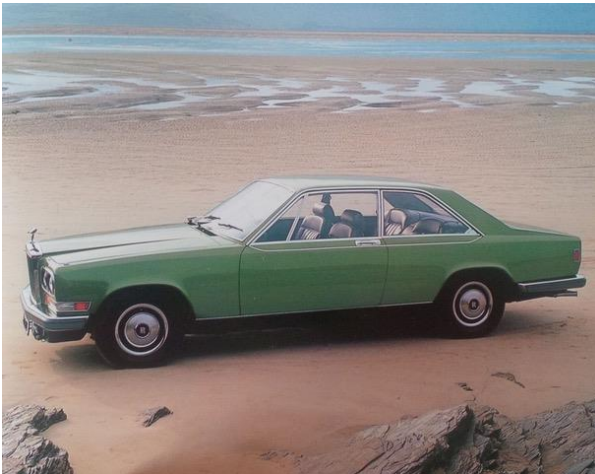
A fascinating process, nonetheless, where a bare painted bodyshell would enter car build and, after 44 stations (11 of which being for sub-assemblies or particular features such as the Everflex roof covering), a substantially complete motor car would emerge. But perhaps not quite how the wider public would have imagined a Rolls-Royce motor car being created.

The Road Test Department proved to be a highlight (and not just for Rolls-Royce and Bentley motor car reasons ...). The manager of Road Test was Norman Bentley, aptly named but, as far as I could ascertain, not a close relation of W.O. Bentley. Cars from Car Build were checked over, refrigeration gassed, and, for North American cars, the emissions system set up. A number of road tests around the Cheshire countryside would then be made, including some very illegal sprints along the straights near Calveley and Tarporley. Great fun, despite my being in the passenger seat! Reportedly, the Cheshire constabulary were minded to turn a blind eye. Cars would return for rectification, electrical checks and any last painting before a final road test.

All too soon, my spell in Road Test came to an end and, with the coming of spring, life took on a slightly different direction. I was tasked by the Publications Department to devise an improved stapling machine that could penetrate a greater number of sheets of paper than their existing equipment. A design was created but as to whether it was ever made, who knows? Following this came a request from Personnel Director Brian Dorey: could I

organise the visit of the National Blood Transfusion Service to the factory? Probably a very big ask, but naturally I said yes. Now, R-RM employed 5500 people in Crewe and I had to entice as many of them as possible to donate blood over the three days of the visit. I had been at the factory for barely six months and although familiar with its layout, I knew relatively few people, especially those key members of staff who would be essential in supporting me. And don't forget, this was in pre-computer days when there were no mobile phones, texts, emails, and the like. Internal factory communication was by telephone, memo or face-to-face contact. Nonetheless, I battled on, setting out my plans using the critical path method (a university education does have its uses) and delivered a successful visit with over 600 staff turning up in the Silver Starlight Room. The sole disappointment: I thought it only decent to offer my own blood, but it was declined on the grounds that I was anaemic!

It was around this time that I had my first involvement with the R-REC. I had got to know Ian Rimmer who was then a quality engineer at the factory and an active member of the Northern Section. He arranged that a fellow apprentice and I accompany him to Blackpool for a car show where the Northern Section would have a display, including AX201. On the Friday we travelled to Blackpool's imposing Savoy Hotel in 1800TU, the company's rather lurid looking Ascot Green Camargue demonstrator. The car show proved to be a success and I made my one and only television appearance when I was filmed polishing AX201's radiator surround (staged!) for the BBC's 'Look North' news programme.



The only incident to mar the weekend was a minor altercation with Captain Peacock (actor Frank Thornton) of 'Are you being served?' fame; every bit as pompous in real life as on stage.

August saw me off for two months at Mulliner Park Ward (MPW), mainly at 473 High Road Willesden, but with

occasional visits to Hythe Road; my attachment was with Quality Engineering. MPW production at that time centred on Corniche, Camargue, Phantom VI and extending (by four inches) the Silver Shadow bodyshell to produce the long wheelbase version. The production processes were complex and a logistical nightmare, so it is worth giving an outline of what was involved.

For Corniche, the floor pan was received at High Road Willesden from Pressed Steel. The bodyshell was then constructed and sent to Crewe for painting up to guide coat stage and the installation of running gear and electrics. It was then dispatched to Hythe Road for Stages 1-4 road test; this completed, the car went off to High Road Willesden for final painting and trimming (including the hood assembly for convertibles). Then it was back to Hythe Road for Stage 5 road test after which most were sent to Crewe for emissions testing and shipping, although a small number of home market cars were delivered direct from Hythe Road. Camargue followed a similar process although final painting and trimming were carried out at Hythe Road. Phantom VI, chassis and body were built at Hythe Road while the long wheelbase Silver Shadow bodyshells were simply dispatched to Crewe.

I had two main projects at MPW: the first was to formalise production improvements to the cubby box door on Corniche and the second to overcome assembly and fouling problems on the Corniche hood mechanism. The hood mechanism had assembly issues and the hood irons were prone to fouling. My suggested improvements were adopted and the supplier, Wilkes of Bloxwich, modified future parts.

Thursday 30 September provided an interesting diversion. I went over to Hythe Road to spend the afternoon in one of the Queen's two Phantom V Canberras (5AS33). Equipped with a thermometer, retort stand and velometer, the objective was to measure temperature and airflow distribution with the refrigeration system at maximum output. The results were to be used to optimise the refrigeration performance in 'Oil Barrel' (PGH101), the Phantom VI state limousine to be presented to the Queen by the SMMT on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee.

In summary, my sojourn at MPW was an eye opener. While Hythe Road, even though production work was being done on the bottom floor and the adjacent C-Site, was very much 'Rolls-Royce', the rambling works at 473 High Road retained the air of their Park Ward ancestry and, indeed, Charlie Ward's office

remained intact on the front ground floor of the mock Tudor office building. The Aero Workshop was a largely empty space partially used for storage and there was also the former Alvis Line, where bodies had been finished from 1958-1967 for the Alvis 3-Litre cars. It was at 473 High Road that I first met stylist Peter Wharton; we were to have much future involvement with the design of special extras and features for the coach-built cars. At Hythe Road, as well as servicing customers' cars (including all the Royal Household cars), Phantom VI chassis were built, rear axle units and Hydramatic and Turbo-Hydramatic automatic gearboxes were overhauled for worldwide clientele. There remained a few technical service staff (one, whom you might remember, being Ron Haynes) although the majority had by that time moved to Crewe. But one encounter reinforced the old adage of 'It's a small world'. The medical team at Mulliner Park Ward was led by the redoubtable Sister Gertrude Foster – a lady not to be crossed, though she really did have a heart of gold. In a conversation with her, it transpired that not only was she a fellow Aberdonian, but my second cousin!

The return to Crewe in early October took me to the Publicity Department, working with Gordon Worrall, Evan Morgans and Freddie Whitelaw under David Roscoe. There was little time to relax because the London Earl's Court Motor show was imminent, preparations had to be made. Not just that, but I was to be on the stand for the duration of the show - my luck was in! So off to London it was, with 4-star accommodation in the Kensington Close Hotel. The days on the stand were quite taxing but enjoyable and the evenings spent in some of the better restaurants in Kensington, all at RRM's expense.

It was during the show that I made my first acquaintanceships with Roger Cra'ster and the legendary Dennis Miller-Williams. The last day of the show was, however, rather poignant; this was the last ever Earl's Court Motor Show. After the doors closed, we piled the stand soft furniture into a massive pyramid and drank what we could of the alcohol selection from our stand bar, the remaining bottles being distributed among us to take home. Before leaving the Publicity Department there was another memorable occasion when I was delegated to host a visit by a team from 'What Car?' magazine. After the obligatory factory tour, I took them to lunch at a local restaurant where the wine flowed freely and some of my less-guarded comments ended up in print. Conducting factory visits for customers and interested parties was part and parcel of an apprenticeship and I probably performed more than any of my contemporaries. Bert Walton was in charge of factory visits and even after I

had moved permanently to MPW, I was often called back to Crewe when Bert was unavailable.

My last Crewe departmental experience was with Marketing. Through my motor show experience, I was already well acquainted with many of the staff there. I learned about various facets of the department's responsibilities and given a variety of tasks such as providing data on the popularity of standard paint colours and the frequency of interior specification carpets being requested for the boot trim. The outcome of the latter task was that on SY20A/B (Silver Shadow II), the boot carpeting was to the same specification as in the car interior, rather than the standard lower quality black carpeting used up to then. It was also the task of the departmental apprentice to enter car data details by hand into each home market car handbook. This process was to end with the introduction of Silver Shadow II, from which point the car data was entered on a tan-edged pale-yellow card to be found in the handbook pack.

Then there was the probable highlight of my time at Crewe so far – my first experience of driving a Rolls-Royce motor car. At the north end of the works departments, opposite the back of the administration blocks was Car Bond. Here, finished home market cars awaited delivery or collection and were presided over by the taciturn George. Late one afternoon, after George had clocked-off for the day, Northern Sales Representative David Trevannion took me over to Car Bond and allowed me to manoeuvre (hesitatingly, I must add) a Silver Shadow within the building; great joy! Company rules actually stipulated that only personnel who had been trained and passed a driving test with Jim Farmer, the Safety Officer, could drive company vehicles, even only for onsite purposes - the infamous 'Farmersisation'.

But my spell in marketing was about to take an unexpected turn. I was invited to a meeting with Bob Clayden, Financial Director of Mulliner Park Ward. Would I consider going to MPW for two months to take temporarily the position of Controller Commercial Services while the current incumbent was on sick leave? So it was that the Marketing Department Christmas lunch in the Bear's Paw at Warrington marked both the end of my time in the Marketing Department and, as it would transpire, in Crewe.

Sandy Nicol

## **Not *another* auction purchase**

By Will Bate

“Paddle number, please, Sir,” said the H & H auctioneer. In disbelief that I again won a car at auction, I hesitantly raised my paddle. I should add that I was only really vaguely interested in the car that I had just bid on.

Until then, it had a decent number of bids from the room, online and over the phone, so I thought my chance of actually winning it was pretty low.

I was wrong! My thinking was to put a single bid in on the car to get it out of my system. After all, I had only pined for Silver Cloud for some twenty years.

The next thing the auctioneer said was, “The car hasn’t reached its reserve, but we’ll check with the owner and get back to you” At that point, I turned to my father and said, “That’s ok, Dad, I can’t see them accepting that offer” to which my father replied, “oh I think they will”.

Some twenty minutes later, my bid was accepted, and I became the proud owner of a 1964 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud III.



I hadn't, of course, been quite as hasty as you might think, as, on the way to the auction, I had called Steve Lovatt from Ristes. The H&H auction write-up about the car stated it had an engine re-build some 500 miles ago, and Steve confirmed this.

The car is a standard steel saloon in a pleasing shade of dark red, perhaps maroon. According to the build sheets, it started life as Burgundy.

It has some interesting factory-fit features such as refrigeration, a rev counter and white leather headlining.

During a chilly drive home from the auction, my mind raced with excitement about what to fix first. Two things on my list were a working heater system and decent service. Some days later, I arrived at Isleworth, where Nigel Sandell hooked the Cloud up to a fantastic machine which told us about unburnt fuel. Some new parts and lots of expert fettling later and the car was running beautifully.

Service completed, I next turned my attention to getting the cabin heaters working. Unlike a MKVI or R-type, which has a straightforward and reliable cable to operate the heaters, a Cloud III has two heater taps driven by electronic actuators.

I pulled both taps off the car and successfully blocked the hoses with wine corks! The old taps were clogged entirely with a gummy substance, as seen in the photo below.



Nigel fitted two new taps from Introcar and replaced one actuator. I fitted these back onto the car in about a tenth of the time it had taken me to remove them. The satisfaction of having a working Upper and Lower heater was immense and warm. What to fix next? The replacement of coolant and heater hoses was started, one of which one had

sprung a leak at our recent AGM and is continuing as there are quite a few of them.



A more exciting quick fix was to get the rev counter working. Knowing nothing about rev counters, I asked Nigel about this. He told me there should be a feed wire from the coil, so I tested this with a multi-meter and a piece of wire. I got it working successfully and located the feed wire hanging behind the coil.



I have now driven the car 2,000 miles since the auction and enjoy driving it. It feels very similar to an R-type. It would do, of course, with a similar separate chassis, but with the addition of a powerful V8 and power steering.

Will Bate  
20<sup>th</sup> July 2022

## Rose tinted spectacles

By Richard Edgell

By now, you may be thinking, dear reader, that certain members of the committee have become somewhat intoxicated by this passion for impractical and elderly motor cars. You would be right. Our Chairman's affair with a Mini Cooper is evidence of this (*See Other cars are Available*). The following may supply still further evidence of this condition.

For my sins, I am the RREC Derby Bentley Registrar and as a result I feel I must take a healthy interest in all and every Derby that comes around the corner. Back in May I had just received some very uninspiring information concerning my pension fund when the next edition of *The Automobile* plopped through my letter box. Turning the pages, I saw a very brief advert for a 1936 Barker Coupe.

Now Barker Coupes do not come around the corner often, so I answered it. It turned out that it was a rather shabby car which had failed to sell at an auction back in 2020, (clearly Will wasn't there). I thought better of it, but was interested to meet the 'old school' dealer who was selling it. Since he was advertised as not far from anywhere, I drove up the M1 in the pouring rain. By the time I turned off the M6 into rural Shropshire, the sun was shining, time to don those rose-tinted spectacles.

I drove into the drive of The Old Vicarage, and there it was, scarcely touched since 1962 and strikingly handsome. Its body just one of only two to this exact design, the other survives in a South African collection.

The engine compartment was dirty, the leather was in shreds, there was rot in the massive Barker A post, the calorstat was missing, but she was lovely. Before I knew it, I had shaken hands on the purchase of B174FB, a 1936 3.5 litre Bentley with a swept back saloon coupe Barker body number 7058. I even paid the asking price!

The car started life as a Barker demonstrator, with a nickel silver dashboard, striking two tone paint, a comprehensive toolkit, and a cigarette lighter in the back. It is said that Barkers made it available for a short while to the Maharajah of Jaipur, one of this most prestigious coach-builder's best customers. The Maharajah subsequently ordered a 4.25 litre car to a similar design.

Its first registered owner actually purchased it when it had 3,000 miles on the clock, he kept it until 1955 when the mileage had reached over 90,000. He was the only person who was allowed to drive it and it went back to Derby or Hythe Rd. for major works. The correspondence and invoices on file from the 1950s make for fascinating social history and add immensely to the appeal of the old car.

After two further London owners, Paddon Bros. sold her to a US owner in August 1962. The copy invoice itemized the following: the car £275, repairs to roof £35, freight incl. insurance £120. Total cost to Mr. Bredin of Wilmington, Delaware, £430.

She returned to the UK in 1999, whereupon B174 FB joined a large car collection and saw little use for the next 21 years. Apart from some paint she was much as built 86 years ago, but much shabbier.





B174 FB in the May Shropshire sunshine

I have since been getting my hands very dirty cleaning out the sump, the crankshaft sludge traps and the chassis, with its blue paint under half an inch of oily mud. Cleaning a pre-war car takes weeks of effort.



Sludge!

A local trimmer is helping to repair and conserve the leather, and soon she will be ready for a rewire. Madness, but worth it.

I was pleased to be able to show her to a few Section members at a recent local pub meet and I look forward to having B174FB ready for the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the Derby in The Peak District next year.

Richard Edgell

*Something new for 2022*

**N Sandell –**

Specialising in Rolls-Royce and Bentley Motor Cars

*In association with*



## **ICE BLASTING**

for underside and under bonnet cleaning  
*(a non-Corrosive procedure)*



Call James on 07835297211

## ***Other Cars are available- Spa Classic***

by Richard Skinner

Five members of your committee went over to Belgium for the 2022 Spa Classic weekend. Richard Skinner took his lightweight E Type while our chairman took another 1960's icon, a Mini Cooper.

Richard writes:

We met down by the Chunnel with David Siegel in his S3 continental, Will Bate in his R type with Richard Edgell riding shotgun. Nigel Sandell in his rotisserie restoration Mini Cooper and Messrs Richard and Tom Skinner in our semi lightweight Jaguar E type. Torrential rain greeted us through the Calais hills and into Belgium.

Our hotel Le Val d'Arumont in the valley at the village of Malmedy is ideal for our classic cars and their protection. Our hosts Travel Destinations are absolutely superb at every detail which included us parking in the F1 paddock adjacent to all the action.

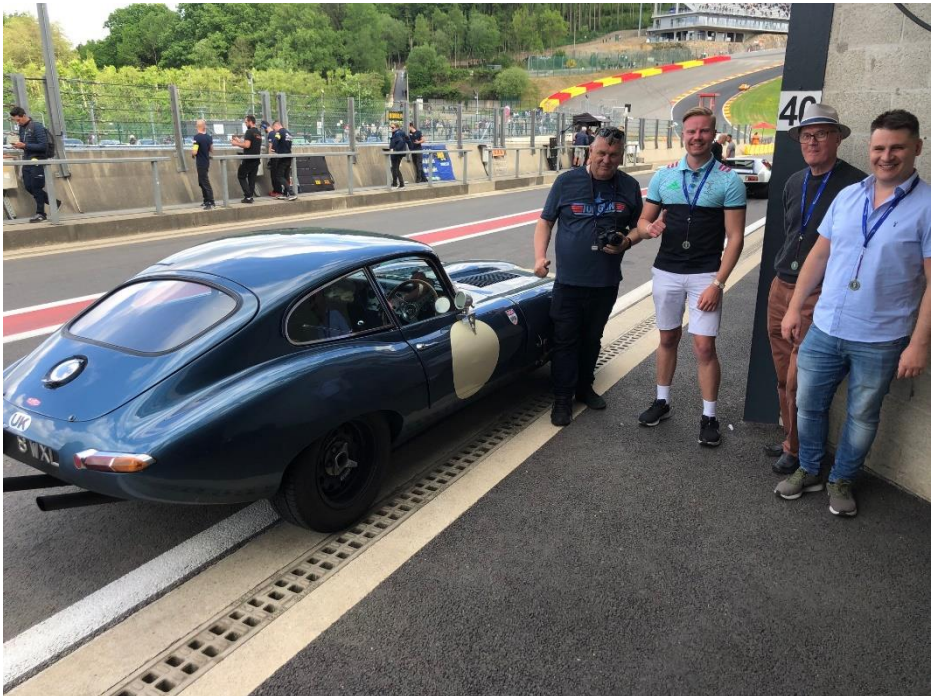


*(Note convenient parking location for Mini and Jaguar drivers-ed)*

The great thing was we could drive our cars on circuit in between races! Best of all Nigel Sandell received a standing ovation every time he went past the grandstands in his mini. Obviously, it was no match for the McLarens, Ferraris and GT40s that were out on the track, but Nigel and Miss Cooper still had immense fun.

On the return journey, the Mini had a small issue with a slightly waterlogged fuel pump and a pit stop for a frayed throttle cable. *(the Bentleys experienced no such issues-ed)*

Great Fun, great value and access to all areas made a very enjoyable weekend.



Left to right: Nigel Sandell, Tom Skinner, your editor and Will Bate in the pits. Richard Skinner took this photo of his very fast E Type.

## **MINI ON MANOEUVRES !**

Nigel recounts adventures with Olive Cooper prior to her trip to Spa.

For those of you who came to our open day last November, we unveiled our MkII Mini Cooper which I have owned for the last 10 years in bits! It was a moment of weakness that I bought a bodyshell that had supposedly been restored and lots of bits to put this car back together! In fact, what I bought was a very poorly restored bodyshell and so we started again.

I decided to join a couple of Mini clubs just to see how they compare with the RREC. The first one I joined was the BMC (British Mini Club).

The BMC's first event was in mid-March this year at Staffordshire County Showground. I arrived on Saturday afternoon where I had driven my Mini up from London and was quite underwhelmed by the lack of organisation such that I couldn't even buy a cup of coffee. Minis were being trailered in from all parts of the country to include cling film on the tyres to stop them getting dirty! As a judge for the RREC, I did have to chuckle at this.

I was joined on Sunday morning by my good friends Ian and Oscar Pinder from RR&B Garage in Bromsgrove. After a hearty breakfast, there was still no programme of events or what exactly was going on, but there were lots of minis and trade stands to keep us amused. The good news is that we ended up with a 2<sup>nd</sup> in class for the 1960-1970 mini class. Happy days!

27<sup>th</sup> March – a bit nearer home this time. We went to the National Mini Day at Brooklands. A very well attended event with lots of new and old minis. A great highlight for me was being able to take two runs up Test Hill! I was determined to get to the top but also didn't want to break my little pocket rocket. The hill is very daunting, and the road surface is extremely poor, but we managed two runs which was great.

Easter Saturday – we returned to Brooklands again for the New Year's Day meeting which had been cancelled due to Covid. An amazing mix of cars and we had fantastic weather.

1<sup>st</sup> April – by this point, the car had done approximately 650 miles so was time to pop it down on the rolling road to make sure everything was in order.



24<sup>th</sup> April – National Drive It day. I took the car for a blast round Surrey and one of the core plugs came out of the cooling system filling the distributor with water! That was the end of my drive for that Sunday as the car ended up on the back of a truck back to Isleworth.

8<sup>th</sup> May – National Mini Day at Himley Hall in Wolverhampton. This is the first time the poor little mini got wet. As we arrived at the event, the heavens opened, and we had a good hour and a half of good old British rain! Another well attended event and some more miles to put on the little car.



15<sup>th</sup> May – I was joined by my good friend, Will Bate. This was the big one where we joined together with 3,000 minis to do the London to Brighton mini run. Once again, the weather was not kind to us and it rained all day. However, I have never seen so many minis in one place. There were minis all the way from the pier

to the Marina and on both sides of the road at points. A very interesting day and lots of enthusiastic people with their minis.

20<sup>th</sup> May – 8 of us had booked a run out to Belgium to the Spa Classic. This would be the car's biggest test as we had booked a place to drive the car around the Formula 1 circuit.

The little mini is now back in its home in Isleworth and had completed just under 1,900 miles. We are so pleased that this little car which hadn't been on the road since 1986 (the year I got married!), is now restored to its former glory and working well.

Nigel Sandell

## Autumn Event

VISIT TO JACK HENLEY'S TOY CUPBOARDS IN KENT, Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> October



Some of you will remember Jack and Aiman from our 2021 Road Run when they joined us in Jack's Derby Bentley drophead coupe. Jack has been collecting cars for many years and is a great enthusiast. We are very pleased that he will be opening his Toy Cupboards full of wonderful cars for us to see from 10am on 2<sup>nd</sup> October. The photos show some of the collection and speak for themselves.



If you would like to join us, send me an email to advise who will be in your party and what car you will bring. You will need to bring your own picnic lunch. We ask for a minimum donation of £25 per car to be paid to the Section. **ALL OF THIS WILL BE GIVEN TO JACK'S FAVOURED CHARITY – THE HOSPICE IN THE WEALD** . The visit is limited to 20 club cars, so first come first served.

Richard Edgell [redgell050@gmail.com](mailto:redgell050@gmail.com)



Mr Skinner was on hand in June to take this picture of some of us at Hatfield House.

I include it for the marvellous expressions on the faces of those present. The 70-year-old Virgin Queen looks down in all her majesty at Sandy and Tony O'Brart whilst David Langston and Stephanie Lee look taken aback.

**Our treasurer reminds us that a few members do not seem to have paid their 2022 subscriptions of £15 per couple or just £10 single. If this applies to you, then our preferred method of payment is by bank transfer of funds to:**

**Santander**

**Sort Code           09-01-51**

**Account No        27058303**

**Account name     Middlesex Section of the RREC**

# N. SANDELL



Specialising in Rolls-Royce  
& Bentley Motor Cars



SERVICE

RESTORATION

SALES

COACHWORKS

Units 7&8  
Isleworth Business  
Complex  
St Johns Road  
Isleworth  
TW7 6NL

Phone:  
020 8758 2322

Email:  
[information@nsandell.com](mailto:information@nsandell.com)

Website:  
[www.nsandell.com](http://www.nsandell.com)



At N Sandell, we strive to bring you the best in terms of quality and professionalism. Having specialized in Rolls-Royce and Bentley motor cars for 21 years in our West London base, we have a wealth of experience with a large variety of cars.

