

Richard Barton (1928 – 2021)

Obituary

I got to know Richard when I first joined the RREC. As the owner of a dilapidated Bentley MkVI, I attended a Hunt House weekend seminar on post-war 6 cylinder engines led by him in February 1984. It was a master class and I was hooked.

At the final Sunday lunch we sat together and he, to my surprise, knew the village on the Malvern Hills where I was the Rector. In mid Yorkshire pudding we both spluttered to discover that I had taken his mother (Granny B) home communion in a local Nursing Home on her 95th birthday, the day prior to attending the RREC event.

Blanche lived on to 98 but whilst Richard didn't quite make that, he certainly inherited her charm – and love of cars. They were both driving Lancias in their eighties!

After schooling at Shrewsbury, followed by Sandhurst, Richard had five years commissioned in the Army, and as a Lieutenant took an Austin Chummy out to Egypt. Following this, he was an apprenticed engineer at Millars Machinery in Bishop's Stortford. Two years in New Zealand in sales with Lucas NZ provided further experience, and the opportunity to take out a Triumph TR2 when imports were gold dust due to restrictions.

Upon return, the lure of the Rolls Royce took him to Paddon Bros Ltd. Cheval Place SW1 in 1958 where he was engaged in sales. Here he got to know other R-R owners and engineers including David Haines who remembers him owning "more cars than most people have breakfasts".

It was whilst working at Paddons that he acquired GDX36, his well-known 20/25 (reg. GO 14) which became familiar at many RREC and family events, happily it remains in the RREC.

From 1972, eight years with Frank Dale Ltd, further provided him with many long- standing contacts and friends and also acquainted him with the whole of RR/Bentley vehicles. Over the years Richard owned, including, a Silver Ghost, a 20HP, an R type Continental, and an H J Mulliner S type. Amongst his stable he added variously a Talbot 110, a Rover P3, a Rover 3.5 litre Coupe, numerous Lancias, MGBs and a number of Morris Minors. His interest in following Formula 1 racing remained with him always.

Richard played a key role in the RREC having joined within the first year of its foundation and organised the Hunt House seminars from the mid 1980s for a decade. He was also a founder member of the Middlesex Section. His knowledge and gentle manner endeared him to family and friends alike. Our condolences go to his family.

Rev'd Carl Attwood

