



FOUNDATION NEWS

Chairman's Notes



2020 has certainly been a memorable and eventful year. Thanks to COVID-19, the whole charity sector has been affected by the loss of interaction with its target public and by its consequential impact on income streams. Indeed, many small charities may not survive should the current conditions prevail.

Fortunately, the Foundation despite having to cancel events and activities, has continued to pursue its 'Objects' thanks to the generous support of members, the RREC and the tireless commitment of both my fellow trustees and the team at The Hunt House. It is appropriate that I formally place on record my sincere thanks to them all.

It is quite clear that, going forward, future sustainability will not embrace 'business as usual'. You can be assured that the trustees will continue to pursue a prudent, forward-looking approach in 2021, with more focus on virtual activity and by embracing an increased use of appropriate social media platforms. Provided the Government regulations allow, we are fully committed to running an enhanced lecture programme (the core lectures are described on the following pages). Furthermore, we will leave no stone unturned in our desire to organise the hugely enjoyable Open Hunt House and Heritage weekends. In addition, we hope once again to participate in the Lancaster Insurance Classic Motor Show. They were all sorely missed this year.

Finally, Jane Pedler is soon to retire from the board of trustees after nearly two decades of selfless voluntary service to The Foundation as advisor, trustee, chairman and treasurer. She has also been an RREC member for 40 years and is a past chairman. The board will really miss her dedication and commitment. It has been a pleasure to serve with such a steadfast person who always put the Foundation first. We all wish her well.

I, like many, will be glad to see the eclipse of 2020 and I sincerely hope that 2021 will herald a return to some form of normality. Nevertheless, whatever the outcome, the trustees are confident that they will navigate the appropriate route forward.

Duncan Featham

Tom Clarke named winner of the Philip Hall Award commemorating Rupert Nicholson

THE NAME RUPERT NICHOLSON is not as well known in Rolls-Royce circles as it deserves to be. Rupert Nicholson was the receiver appointed to control Rolls-Royce Ltd when, in 1971 due to prolonged development problems with the RB 211 aero engine, the company became bankrupt.

Fighting huge political opposition and severe financial problems, he was determined to keep the company together and took bold and unprecedented action to ensure this. Most notably he insisted that the launch of the Corniche, one month later, should go ahead. Large expenditure on a publicity event would normally be the first thing a receiver would cut, but Nicholson saw this was a way of telling the world that Rolls-Royce would live on. It is true to say that Nicholson was the saviour of Rolls-Royce and were it not for him, the Rolls-Royce companies as we know them today would not exist.

Rupert Nicholson's daughter, Mrs Brenda Wright, has established and funded various prizes to commemorate her father, this one being for activity in preserving Rolls-Royce heritage. She did Philip Hall the great honour of putting it in his name.

This year the clear winner is Tom Clarke who has long been passionate in ensuring that the Foundation acquires important documents and artefacts, and we are most grateful to him for securing the Eric Platford Archive. Eric Platford was one of two

apprentices chosen by Royce to work on the development of his first car. Platford went on to be Chief Tester until his death in 1938.

The archive comprises an important collection of Platford's personal letters and photographs, and Tom spent much time in tracing it and negotiating for it. Also, he most generously made a personal cash donation towards it.

The award comprises a cheque for £1000 and a Foundation gold medal and certificate. The presentation is usually made during the

Foundation's Heritage Weekend, which has had to be cancelled this year, so it will be made at another suitable event next year.



Additional sets of Autocar magazine are now available for binding with dedicated bookplate

FOUNDATION NEWS in *Spirit & Speed* November 2018 (issue 351) featured an appeal to sponsor the binding of further volumes of *The Autocar* to add to the set donated by Robin Barnard.

We have now completed 14 volumes and have put together several more 'sets' from loose copies donated from various sources – these now await further sponsors. A donation of £50 binds a 'set' and a bookplate can be added either with your name or a dedication to mark an anniversary, remember a particular person or a special event.

If you would like to take part in this initiative please contact Foundation business manager John Baker who will be able to give you the details of which sets are now available for 'adoption'.



2020 AGM - format and timing

At the time of writing (mid October) the exact format of this year's AGM and the best method of delivery within constantly changing COVID-19 regulations has still to be decided. By the time you are reading this a decision will have been made and all voting members will then be informed in line with the Foundation Articles.

● **Due to COVID-19 restrictions and The Hunt House being in lockdown there is no Hunt House Treasures feature in this issue. Philip Hall cannot get into the building to do the research. We hope Hunt House Treasures will return soon.**

LECTURE LIST 2021

Thursday March 11, 2021

■ **The Gloster Meteor and its Development - Rod Dean**

Rod has already given excellent lectures to the Foundation on the Spitfire and flying vintage aircraft. Now he will review the development of the Meteor and its use of Rolls-Royce Welland, Derwent and Nene engines. He will also tell what it is like to fly such an iconic aircraft.

Wednesday May 12th 2021

■ **The Fall and Rise of Rolls Royce Ltd - Alan Edge**

Alan's book on this subject will be completed next year. It is significant to do this lecture in 2021 as it is the 50th Anniversary on 4 February of the RR 'Crash'.

He is working on lectures along similar lines with the Rolls-Royce Heritage Trust and the Derby Branch of The Royal Aeronautical Society.

Wednesday 8 July 2021

■ **Lecture details to follow**

Wednesday 6 October 2021

■ **"Sixty years at the sharp end" - a pilot's retrospective on 60 years of change - John Hutchinson**

John Hutchinson has flown more than 70 types of aircraft from the Harvard to Concorde. His lecture last year was enthralling so we are inviting him back.

COVID-19 regulations are still fluid and an unknown quantity so please keep an eye on our website for up to date details and booking arrangements. We may even try and organise a virtual lecture using Zoom or a similar programme. If anyone has experience of organising events by this method then please contact John Baker with any helpful tips or suggestions.

The Sir Henry Royce Memorial Foundation

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