

CSTS Visit Report

Venue: Rolls Royce Heritage at Derby
Special features: Special private visit
Date: 16 th May 2012
Organiser: Bunny Lees-Smith
Number of members: 10
Number of non-members: 8 (Fairford Classic Car Club) 8 (Hankerton History Group)
Cost per person: £25
CSTS account: No surplus
Reporter: Tony Gordon
Comments Web Report for CSTS by Bunny Lees-Smith
<p>A joint visit to Rolls Royce Heritage collections at Derby.</p> <p>On 16th May we joined forces with our usual groups from the Fairford Classic car Club and the Hankerton History group to travel by coach to the home of Rolls Royce at Derby.</p> <p>They have two collections the first of which illustrated the establishment and growth of Rolls Royce as a Company and the events which led to new innovations and designs. Success was first achieved in the automotive industry when Royce demonstrated his prototype cars to Rolls the moneyed entrepreneur . An early example of this product was available for us to see.</p> <p>Both Mr Rolls and Mr Royce unfortunately died before the first World War broke out, but the philosophy of care and very high quality in the product led the Government to place orders for aircraft engines when it was discovered that other sources needed a rebuild every 50 hours. Immediately on using Rolls Royce engines the rebuild time extended to 250hours.</p> <p>Another milestone was the winning outright of the 'Schneider Trophy' in 1931 at 340mph in a Supermarine S6 B. The Company now had a reputation for fast and powerful engines.</p> <p>From thereon we saw examples of many engines developed between the wars, during the Second World War and subsequent to the war. This now included of course the jet turbine engines of which the firm reluctantly took over development from the Rover Car Company.</p> <p>During the afternoon we were treated to a display of products of all types and ages being preserved by the voluntary staff through the Rolls Royce Heritage organisation. This band of enthusiastic skilled personnel each with their own particular experience were working on cars, aircraft engines, power sources such as emergency supplies, jet turbines and if fact all kinds of Rolls Royce products. This even included products of Companies who long ago were merged with the parent Company such as Armstrong Sidderley, De Havilland and Bristol Engines.</p> <p>This was is a huge workshop in three adjacent buildings which at one time formed the</p>

aluminium foundry for the Company. We were guided around by the retired Works Manager of the Foundry.

Amongst the cars shown were several in various stages of restoration and some which are fully working. In the latter category we saw Chief Scout Baden Powell's Rolls Royce towards which each scout at the time contributed one penny.

One most intriguing exhibit showed the construction of the turbine blades which, as the reader may well know, are hollow. What we had not realized was that the blades operate at well above the melting point of the parent metal and they survive only because of the cooler air at 700 degrees C passing through them.

There were several working models including an RB211 engine and we understand that if we could attend on their open day they would start up a Merlin piston engine. So this was for real!

We are deeply indebted to Rolls Royce and their staff who really put themselves out to make sure we saw and understood what was on display.