

HUMPS AND PIPES

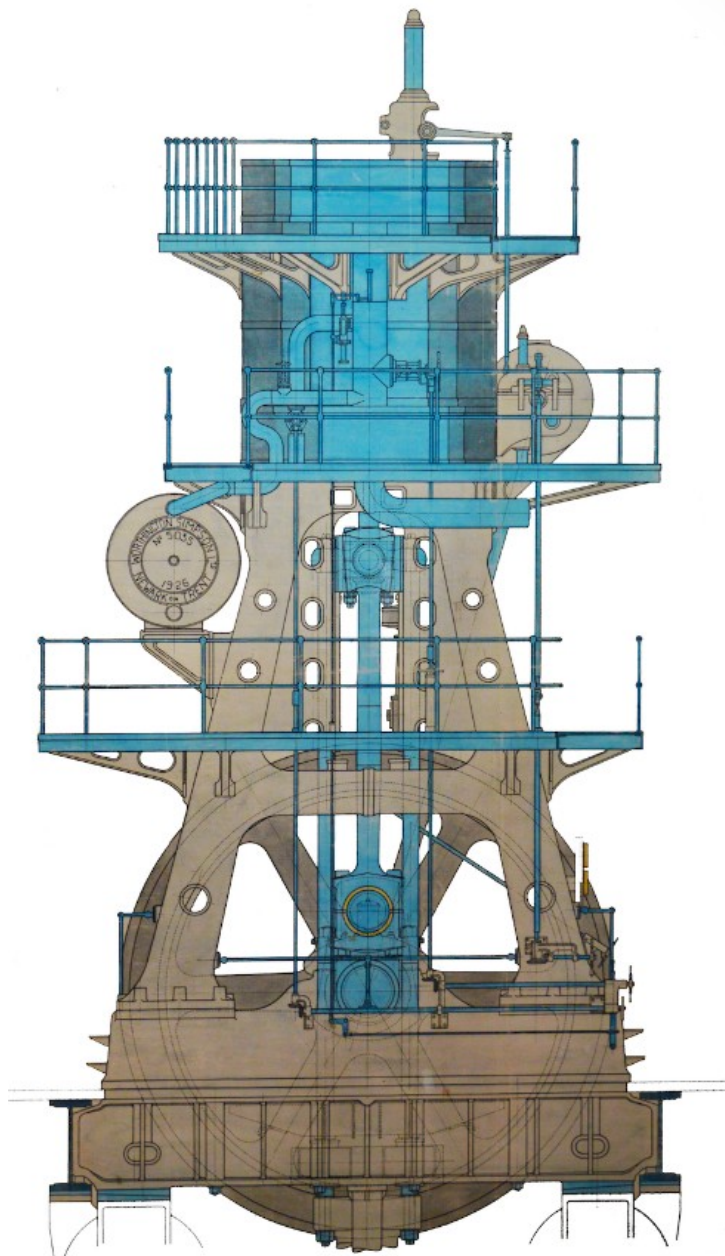
Autumn 24
Issue 83

How Big is your Spring?



One could believe this must be the spring edition, ha, ha! But it is not. This is Autumn and we started off with a meeting at the Kempton Park Steam Museum. The above picture is a Valve Spring. For those not mechanically minded lots of machinery has valve springs, our Ronarts have lots of them. The main

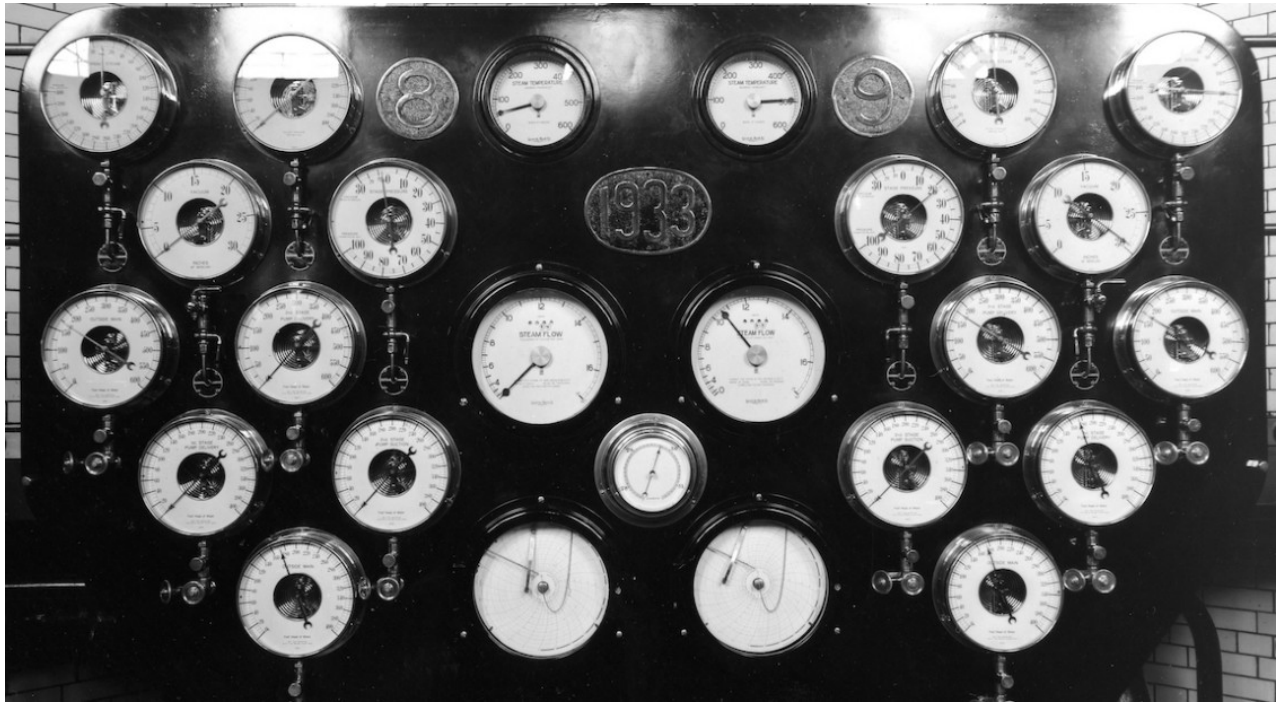
engine ones in a Ronart are about 2 inches tall and the spiral metal coil has a diameter of an 8th of an Inch. Now the valve springs used at Kempton take a couple of blokes to just lift up! This one was 30 inches long with square profile coils 3/4 of an inch thick. The museum also had a spanner designed for two men to pick up and use on the giant Nuts and Bolts used on the engine.



The Engine is 62 Feet tall and weighs in at 800 Tons. It has a top speed of 24 RPM. It was built in 1928

The Museum houses many of the ancillary components that helped with delivering mains water to London and above is one of the Instrument Panels used to view and control the flows.

I thought my Ronart had a lot of gauges but clearly I need more! I only have 9 dials! - ED



Did you hear about the wooden car?

It had wooden wheels, wooden engine, wooden seats, wooden bumpers, wooden lights and it wooden go!

Ed: I could do better but why change habits of a lifetime!

From the Chairman



Dear Ronart Drivers,

A few weeks ago in mid of October, the Editor gave me call and asked for another Chairman's piece for our next H&P. To be honest, writing is always a tough challenge for me but this time I felt almost incapable of writing anything, I just couldn't find the words that I thought being worthy of being shared, the accident of Helen and Gordon was just a very short time ago, so many questions and almost no answers.

In the meantime I learned to accept that we will never receive the answers that we are looking for, that a significant level of uncertainty will always remain and yes, that we are not able to change it. After a number of conversations with other members, I am sure that the last thing Helen and Gordon would have wanted is, that we would stop any of our activities as a Ronart Drivers Club and I am also sure that continuing doing so is a good way to keeping our memory of the good times we have all had together going.

Having written this I wish you all the best for the rest of this year and a good start into 2025. I am looking forward to seeing most of you at the AGM and I am also hoping that it will be a huge group of Ronart Drivers going together to the Netherlands next year.

Sincerely
Jürgen



Notes from the Editor:

What is more precious than life itself? It is with a very heavy heart that this edition contains the passing away of 3 stalwart club members. They being Wendy Jordan wife of long time member Peter, former owner of now Bruce Smith's red S6 and Gordon and Helen Mills who tragically lost their lives in France this September, after holidaying with a number of other members. Gordon, for those who have been members for some time, was a past Chairman of the club for some years.



Wendy I had known for over 20 years and it is difficult to remember when I first met her. I believe it was at an AGM but I cannot recall which one. However my first residing memory was of Peter and Wendy arriving by Motorbike, both well into their 70's at a small farm house in North Wales to greet the returning group of Ronarts who were coming back from a trip to Ireland. It was Freddie Trodd's 70th Birthday and so we had a small gathering to celebrate and Peter &

Wendy travelled from the Midlands to join in. Since then I had met up with Peter and Wendy on many occasions and had enjoyed a number of holidays with them. My sincerest condolences to Peter and his family.

Gordon and Helen Mills I had also known for many, many years, before even when they were married. Gordon's car was built just a little after mine and I would hazard a guess has done a similar 60 – 70 thousand miles like mine has. Most of which like mine has been travelled abroad. As I mentioned Gordon was a past

Chairman and whilst he was, he organise a wonderful trip around Norfolk and Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire. I remember well disappearing down into a cold war Nuclear Relay Listening Post. A very interesting experience I can tell you, a trip to Cadwell Park racing circuit. A tour around Royal Sandringham and finally a sky diving experience in an up-turned tube with fans blowing you up into the air! Yes really!

Gordon and Helen came on many, many holidays with other Ronartiers and this year was no exception. It was a trip down to Angoulême for the annual race meeting there which a group of 18 of us had decided to add on a few more days too, in the Dordogne, before the race weekend. After this wonderful holiday with all its stories which shall be revealed further on in this edition of H&P, Gordon and Helen set off from our Hotel in Angoulême with all of us waving farewell to them as they set off to their holiday apartment in Chamonix near to the border of Switzerland only to never arrive. Tragedy struck on their journey and they were both fatally injured in some sort of car accident. I cannot truly express what a shock this was to hear and how devastating to all of us on the trip it was. My thoughts and condolences go out to both Gordon and Helen's families.



Gordon &
Helen Mills
enjoying lunch
in Spain
summer 2024

RDC visit to Kempton Park Steam Museum – Tony Cliffe

On the 17th August the sun shone kindly for the 14 Club members who made the trip to Kempton Park to visit the famous steam museum there. Unfortunately, fine weather usually means busier roads and the midlands contingent of David and Janice, and Peter had to contend with heavy traffic as they made their way to Kempton. Patrick and Janet drove up from the Isle of Wight with Tony and Kay and Gill and Tim doing the same trip without the Solent bit. The southern group of Chris and Heidi, Mario, and Tony and Jean made up the group with the latter appreciating the opportunity to show they do have a working Ronart.



(No rain
equates to
happy
Ronart
crews)

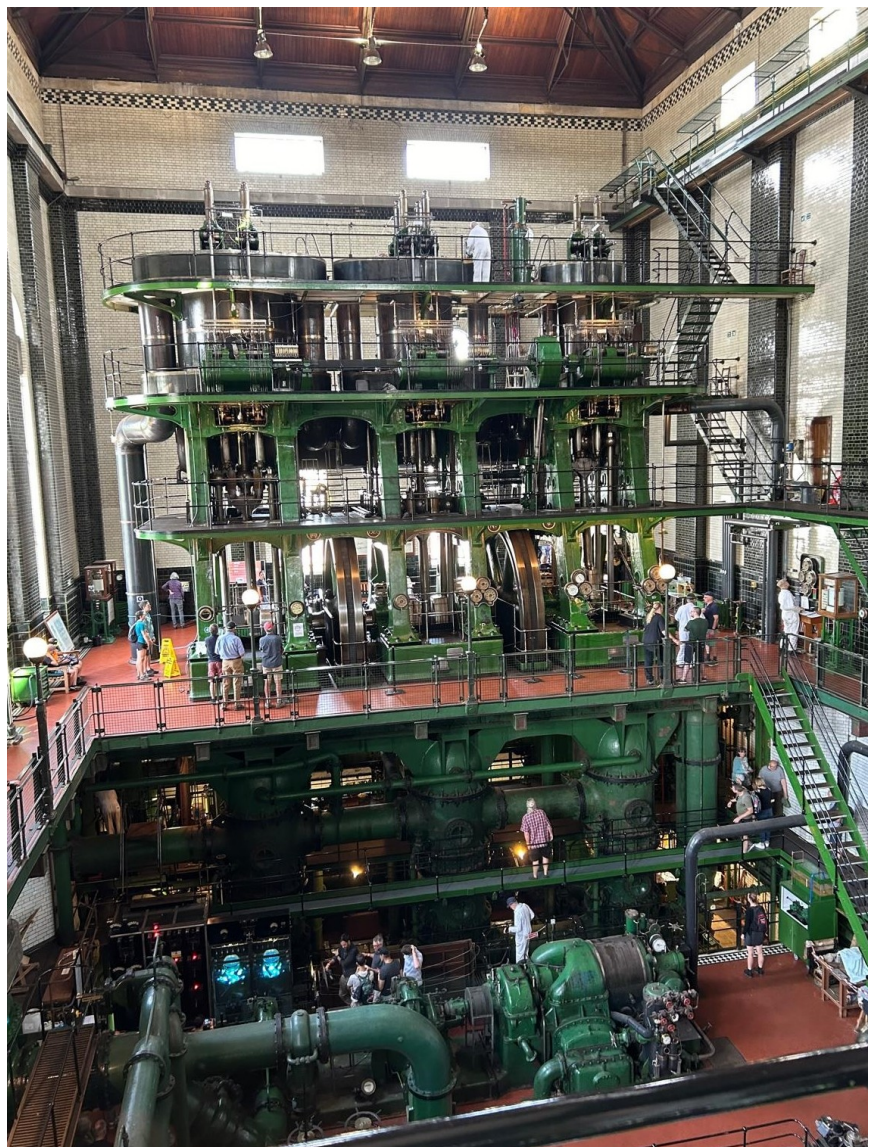
The added attraction of this particular weekend was the opportunity to see one of the two massive steam engines in action, and they are massive being some 4 stories in height. Completed in 1929 the “Sir William Prescott” engine duly named after the chairman of the Metropolitan Water Board, operated for over 50 years pumping 19 million gallons of water daily into London’s

reservoirs. It was due to be started at midday and run for half an hour, but as it was, the team of volunteer operatives suitably dressed in white boiler suits enthusiastically fired it up early and ran it for well over an hour. I realise that is probably more of a boys thing to stand next to an 800 ton, 62 feet tall hissing monster with 17 ft diameter flywheels whizzing round at 25rpm flat out but I hope that the girls amongst the group appreciated their exposure to this genuine piece of historical significance.

The "Sir William Prescott" engine.
Photo by Janice

Only half points for spotting Peter Jones, David Moreton and Chris Bennett.....

Full marks for spotting Tim Blackler



In addition to the working engine on display the identical "Lady Bessie Prescott" engine stood at the opposite end of the building,

as yet to be restored. Whether or not the chairman's wife had a say in the 800-ton lump of metal being named after her is up for debate. We were also given access to the lower ground floor area which housed all the necessary ancillary equipment such as the turbines, pumps and controls needed to make the whole system work. One interesting fact is that the two main triple expansion engines installed in the Titanic were very similar to those on display at Kempton and that images of these engines have been used in several films about the ship.

After a cuppa in the cafe, we returned to the cars which had attracted much attention from the visiting public with the usual question being "What are they?"

The Ronarts on display outside the Museum, David and Janice's car out of pic)



Tony had suggested a gentle drive taking in Windsor Great Park before finding somewhere to have lunch, so we set off. As is usual with a convoy of cars in traffic we got split up but most of the group managed to assemble at the Rose pub where a leisurely lunch was enjoyed in the sunshine.

The Rose (by Nicholas James) Pub in Ascot is an interesting venue to visit if you are ever in the area. Firstly finding the place is somewhat tricky in that when you arrive the pub appears to have a different name! As it should, after all that is a different pub! The Rose pub is hiding a mere 20 yards further along the track. The pub

also sells its very own lager and not many pubs do that these days -
Ed



(Late lunch at the
Rose pub. Photo
from Janice)

Many thanks to Tony for using his excellent organising skills to
arrange this RDC meetup. Ed : Thank you

ENGINE:

Apparently the word “Engine” derives from old French when the word was “*En-Gin*”. This had come from the Latin word “*Ingenium*” The Latin word meaning a natural quality, a genius of nature. At the turn of the 20th Century when so many engines were steam powered the term “Motor” was widely used to differentiate between Steam Power and liquid fuelled combustion engines. Which is why the modern French word for engine is Moteur. Naturally the English speaking world were able to use both words interchangeably!

TRIP TO DORDOGNE & ANGOULÊME 2024

The Ronart club is a lovely group
We never have a serious dispute.
The destination was Angoulême
Amongst our number some fishermen
And a spare comedian.
Ladies we will not no forget
You formed more than a mere quartet
Playing cards, it had to be done
Winners one and all for one
What went right
was sheer delight
What went wrong was never shameful
Fixing things was rather painful
One motor would not ignite
Another rattled into the night
A wheel was removed to make a fix
It was not done, for extra kicks!
French cuisine was eaten without delay
As no one diets on a holiday
The Ronart car was in the lead.
But the Bentley went with extra speed.
The Jaguar was very posh
It made the crowds go golly gosh.
Rain and hail could stop us not
We are a bunch of motoring clots
Most people like a roof and doors
But we think that is rather poor
The countryside is there to see
And don't we see it goodness me!
We all went to Angoulême
And we love our cars with enthymeme!

A poem by Kay:

Ed: This was a large trip and rather than ask a single member to write a piece, I elected to ask as many as felt able to write a memorable anecdote. I will attempt, briefly, to fill in the gaps.

The group mostly met up for an evening meal at the Cams Mill, Fareham, which is a Gastro-Pub on the Cam which is an Estuary inlet off of Portsmouth Harbour. Tony & Jean Cliffe did not join us as they wanted to eat earlier and as it turned out, last minute, neither did Peter & Julia Jones. The cars were spread out in the car park with Gordon Mills' car being adorned with a very interesting cover. Peter & Julia would meet up with us at the ferry terminal.

So two things to note here, (1) Gordon had washed his tonneau cover and put it out to dry on a bush. Then when approaching London, and too far en-route to turn back he realised that the tonneau was still left on that damn bush! So a detour into

Portsmouth Halfords and a full weatherproof car cover was purchased. (2) Whilst enjoying our meal overlooking the mud flats by the Cam river, the tide being out, a bevy of swans, (and yes I'm assured that is the



correct term) gently swam up the rivulet of water still in the estuary. Barbara Latham, became most concerned as she was sure that they were marooned sheep! To much hilarity it was decided that perhaps Barb should not be the lead car as though we were in no doubt that she could navigate, we all suddenly

felt, that her observational skills might be slightly wanting. (Sorry Barb but you were sitting next to an optician)



Peter, a two Ronart Owner, had found that his Red V12 had sprung another fuel tank leak and his Green V8 got him 50 odd miles on his outbound journey before the engine died. A quick

recovery by a local man and they were back home and again on their way in an XKR drophead Jaguar.

So in the queue at the Ferry terminal in Portsmouth we all met up, then boarded, went to our overnight cabins and awaited for France in the morning.

The next morning, at an ungodly hour we left the boat to gloomy weather and all headed for Falaise to meet up, knowing that we would all leave the ferry in disjointed groups. The weather for the day looking very ominous. Our destination was for small hotel called the Manior de Beauregarde owned by Sue & Jez just outside of Samur. They have a lovely boutique style B&B, overlooking the Loire, are super friendly and I have stayed with them before. Unfortunately they did not have enough rooms for all of our party and the Cliffs & the Mills were to be in a hotel just down the road. However just to complicate matters, 3 days before we departed the UK the overflow hotel shut due to Covid! Sue who had found us this extra accommodation, somehow managed to find a gîte also not far away to accommodate Tony & Jean and Helen & Gordon. What a last minute nightmare and what a star Sue was.



Sue contacted me during the morning to let me know that she had turned the drying room on, knowing what the afternoons weather would bring and knowing just how topless our cars are!

ED: Chris Bennett showing Heidi how to use an umbrella in such a way as to keep the main car controls as dry as possible. Apparently it also ensures hours and hours of unrivalled, stoney silence from the passenger side, so that you can enjoy the scenery all by yourself!

By mid afternoon the heavens had opened. The rain was so heavy as to be mostly un-driveable. It belted down in squalls. One moment you were dry the next soaked through. Do you stop to put on all the wet weather gear or is it too late already? By this stage we had largely become separated from each other, after all seeing the end of your own bonnet was difficult. For whatever reason, most likely a mistake, I decided to cut across to the banks of the Loire and then follow it until I reached our hotel. This turned out to be a wise manœuvre, Kay and I only



experienced phenomenally heavy rain. I pulled over and resorted to wearing a full face crash helmet, I was already in waterproofs but I really felt only half an inch of rain in the footwells was not enough. The short stop allowed an extra

inch to fill. However others, only a couple of miles adrift from my route experience a huge hail storm. Hail the size of golf balls rained down on them, with Helen particularly suffering as she tried to escape the pummelling. Tony & Jean Cliffe with the roof on their Ronart and Peter & Julia Jones in their, roof up, convertible XKR were largely in the dry. We eventually arrived at our warm and dry destination to afternoon tea and cakes and a drying room giving off more steam than the Flying Scotsman!

In the evening our Hosts Sue and Jez ferried all of us, in there cars, into town to a local restaurant and joined us for supper. We had a beautiful meal, overlooking the Loire and not a toilet in sight! Yes the Loos were in a different building on the other side of the road. I kid you not. Fortunately the traffic was quiet and nobody got caught short, dodging any traffic.. The following morning, the Cliffe's & the Mills' joined us in the "Map Room" for a strategy meeting or basically me telling everyone where we were next headed to.

Chateau Le Fraise. This is one of the oldest Chateau's in France and only one of three still in the original families ownership. Having been in the same family for 800 years. Louis our host a direct descendent of the former Kings of France whose family somehow at some point managed to escape the Guillotine had allowed us to all stay at his residence.



I say this because only some of us stayed in the formal accommodation, whilst others stayed in his personal family rooms as he called them! It was another rainy afternoon and we arrived wet and cold on his door step. After tea and cakes, Louis gave us a guided tour of his palace. Clearly many thousands of pounds need to be spent to refurbish the house to its former grandeur. Nevertheless Louis was a super host and had laid on an evening meal for us in the state dining room.



This picture does very little justice to the magnificence of the setting. All laid on for us by Louis and his family.

After another lovely meal, Kay and I retired to our bedroom. Ours was the former masters room. Yes it did have a fully dressed mannequin in the corner dressed in Louis' Grandfathers full Admirals uniform, a little off putting, but sleeping in a bed made in the 18th Century was even more so!



Over to Tony & Jean Cliff's particular memories.....

Our favourite memory of our trip to Angouleme, believe it or not, was not the 8 hours travelling 220 miles in pouring rain to recover the wallet containing our passports that I stupidly left at the Chateau Le Fraisse, mind you the look on Louis face when I knocked on the door was a bit special. No, it was on the second night, our first night abroad, when we stayed at the Domaine de Joreau in a Gite with Gordon and Helen. Our original overnight resting place was changed, last minute, as the owner contracted covid so the four of us were told we would be spending the night in a remote Gite with a shared bathroom. This was not a problem other than to get to their bedroom Gordon and Helen had to climb a creaky circular wooden staircase which led into our bedroom, before exiting right towards their bedroom.

The weather, having changed we all agreed to raid the honesty fridge which was beautifully stocked with beers etc before finding a table in the garden where we sat in the late afternoon sunshine. Now Gordon has more than a few interesting stories about their travels and we were surprised to find out that he is rather good at croquet, good enough to have a world ranking in the game and as such had played in many international tournaments. We were due to be picked up to be taken into town for dinner but as I hadn't slept a wink on the ferry from Portsmouth, we decided to crash out leaving Gordon and Helen to be collected by Jez, their driver, for the evening dinner.

Fast forward 4 hours, remember the creaky staircase I mentioned earlier, well it sprang into action as Gordon tried to quietly ascend it when they returned to the Gite. Now he is a big lad and the staircase took exception to his bulk as each step he trod on groaned its displeasure. Isn't it always the way that when you are trying to be super quiet the law of physics has other ideas. To cap it all as he reached the top his elbow caught the light switch and the room was brightly illuminated, just like in Michael Macintyre's "Midnight Game Show". It gave us all a good laugh at breakfast the next morning as the episode was recalled, a genuine happy memory.

Back to ED's narrative.

Having survived the night with what felt like the Admiral being actually in the room, a meeting was called and maps were laid out on an early version of a billiards table, called a Carom table or



French Billiards.

An interesting game similar to billiards but the table is devoid of pockets! We set forth through the French countryside with the weather looking a little better. We were headed for hotel

La Hoirie in Sarlat la Canéda which is a small town on the Dordogne/Lot border. We were staying there for 4 nights. The next day we toured the region and visited the hillside town of

Rocamadour. This is a small enclave built into the side of a very sheer side of a plateau. Why it was not built at the top or the bottom I cannot say but someone must have had a very good reason. All the same an amazing place to visit and the gentle drive there and back through the French countryside was fabulous. The weather also held off for this day. The next day was a different matter. It rained all day and so the group, en-masse, toured the town and the ladies went shopping.



In the evening we all went back into town with Kay and I being

ferried by Peter and Julia in the XKR. Gordon Mills had found us a lovely restaurant in the spooky part of town. The third full day in Sarlat was spent with the majority of us going either to watch or to participate in a Kayaking adventure. 8 of us in 4 Kayaks set off down the River Vézère whilst the rest went off for coffee and cakes. It was hard work paddling, especially if you wanted to go straight!



A couple of hours later and we were all back together having lunch. Except Gordon and Helen who had gone cave exploring a little further along the valley.

Whilst we were in staying in Sarlat it transpired that it was David and Janice Moreton's wedding anniversary and David had laid on with the Hotel a Champagne reception for us all before one of our meals in the hotel. I can only tell you that it was a very memorable evening, and due to the amount of liquid refreshment taken I cannot actually remember very much of it at all!

Over to Janice Moreton.....

David and I have like many of you found it hard to think about our recent club tour without also thinking about what happened to Gordon and Helen. Their warm and enthusiastic presence at so many Ronart Club events will be hugely missed. Up until the

news of their tragic accident we had all enjoyed such a very good time.

It was probably one of the largest group of Ronarts to set off together for ten days touring in France, the trip organised by Tony Legon to coincide with the Circuit des Ramparts in Angouleme. Tony had clearly put a lot of time and effort into our travel arrangements and we felt lucky indeed to just sign on the dotted line and turn up! One thing he failed to organize was the weather on the way down and I think that has to be the worst soaking I have had on a Ronart trip. David actually pulled up unable to see and we sat under our golf broly until the worst of the storm had passed.

Thereafter the weather picked up, we dried out and some of us even felt warm enough to make use of the hotel swimming pools.

I wimped out of the early morning dips! We stayed in an eclectic mix of hotels and a château; where I admit to being rather relieved that David and I were not allotted the slightly spooky desperately in need of restoration master bedroom, or the one where a night time visit to the bathroom at the very far end of an attic



corridor might involve dodging bats. However we were made so welcome by our host and it was a unique experience to stay in his historic ancestral home. Everywhere we stayed we were lucky to enjoy similar generous hospitality.

I should mention the racing at Angouleme but will leave you petrol heads to do that! I particularly enjoyed walking around the pits and meeting some of the drivers who are prepared to risk both themselves and their pride and joy for their love of a race.

My memories of the trip are many but the best involve lots of fine dining, the banter and laughter around the table each evening and driving through amazing scenery in convoy with friends. All an adventure. So thank you Tony we did have lots of fun.

Back to ED's narrative.

Having recovered from the previous nights festivities, the Kayaking and the arduous trek up to Rocamadour, a couple of days before, from the lower car park. Probably just a stroll for most but my legs, knees and back were telling me that they'd done enough for a few days. I was extremely grateful for the many push starts I needed as I was not at all sure I could have helped much had the roles been reversed and I was needed to push someone else's car! It was Friday and we were due to leave the Hotel in Sarlat and head North West to Angoulême. It was here where we would meet up with David Small and his good friend Dr Andrew Cross in David's Ronart, along with his son Rob and fishing friend Marc in Rob's 1920's Bentley. The Bentley has such a wonderful sound and once the gears are selected it goes like stink!

I will leave you all here..... wishing for more??? Isn't that supposed to be the best way? We will return with the final chapter in the next issue. Can you all wait? Please don't answer that!

As many of you know I used to live just inside the M25 in leafy Surrey, now I live further West and on the South coast but others live EVEN further West and South, in places inhabited by lots of men eating grass out of the corner of their mouths. At least that

is what I've been told along with fact that all the population seem to have an uncanny similarity to each other..... I'm just saying! So to:

“Minor Issues in the South West” by Mike Kanter or founder member.

My W152 has given good service this year and done a view trips. That is until the offside rear wing stay broke a weld again. I've taken off the rear body section to effect the repair and add the bolt that catches the vibrations from the number plate that Arthur forgot to tell me about, and hopefully it's fixed for ever now. This gave me a chance to adjust the handbrake cable as well and reduce the number clicks down from 7 to 4. Whilst doing this I noticed some 'liquid' on the back of my hand. My god the petrol pipe from the pump to the engine was was perished at the pump end and dripping petrol. The last couple of inches had no braiding on them. Now I've got to empty the tank and replace the braided hose right through. I'll have to lift the tank to get to the jubilee hoses, which have the adjusters the wrong way round ie facing upwards and not downwards where I could get at them from underneath the car.

With the tank removed I can now get at all the fuel pipes. I glanced at the handbrake mechanism to see how it worked, wish I hadn't, only 3 out of 4 handbrake pads were in position, the other being



just the metal plate. As you know they don't just slot in, they are screwed in place. Unfortunately, without dropping the whole rear differential cage the missing pad could not be replaced as

one of the chassis members was in the way. I did not want to drop the axle to do this so I called Freddie who described one of his well known fixes or possibly 'bodges'. The brake pad back plate was still in place, it was just the fibre pad that was missing. So I did as he directed. Removed the fibre pad from a new brake pad set, made sure I could insert it between the disk and back plate by physically maximising the gap and shaving off a bit from the fibre pad. Then applied araldite to the pad to 'glue it' to the metal back plate, pushed it into place and applied the handbrake lever hard on overnight. Yippee the handbrake works great now for those hill starts. /

Ed: Well done Mike, another Freddie Fix to the rescue! If it works go with it is what I say!

Events in the Pipeline

1. The **2025 AGM 9th May - 11th May** if you are coming for the full package. This will be at Crewe Hall. We have been here before, it is a magnificent venue
2. The big one is the trip to the **Netherlands**. The Dates being **18th June to 26th June**. If you are interested please call Mireille on 07891 44.237 for details. Spaces are limited

We were considering a trip to the Lynmouth and Lynton Classic Car show as a long weekend jolly but as it is on the 8th of June just 2 weeks before a lot of us set off for Holland perhaps it might be best to postpone that until 2026. I was wondering whether there might be interest in a long weekend trip to St Valerie or even Honfleur later on in the Autumn of 2025? or possibly a trip to the Isle of Man. Let me know if you are interested ED:

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