

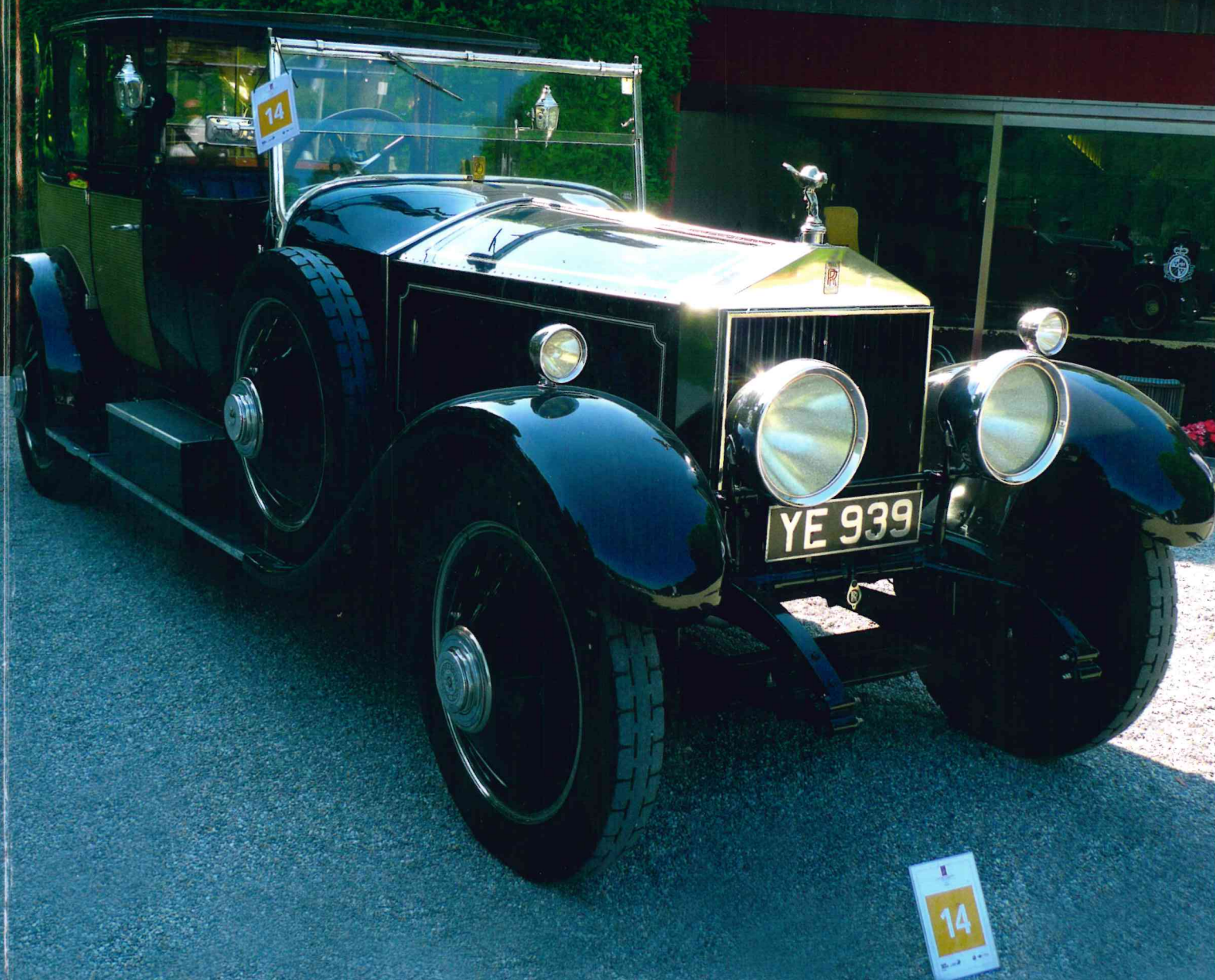
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# the Bulletin AND ADVERTISER



THE INTERNATIONAL CLUB FOR  
**ROLLS-ROYCE  
& BENTLEY**  
ENTHUSIASTS

THE BULLETIN ISSUE B346 AND THE ADVERTISER ISSUE 428



TORRE LOIZAGA • VILLA D'ESTE • REGGIE • ALL DRESSED UP





## Background

Lovingly restored over three decades, the restoration of the Loizaga tower and medieval castle ruins was masterminded by talented landscape painter, musician and local businessman, the late Miguel de la Via. But Miguel also had other talents, most notably a passion for vintage and classic motor cars: over the same time he built up a remarkable collection of seventy-five motor cars, primarily manufactured by Rolls-Royce, representing all models made between 1910 and 1988. This unique and unrivalled collection is displayed in a series of spacious halls around the extensive property. All the cars are kept in running order and are maintained on site by expert technicians.

Loizaga Tower has been open to the public since the nineties and has traditionally been an obligatory stop for car clubs and enthusiasts who have shared their experiences on many Internet forums. In April 1997, the Tower became the stage for an impressive meet-up of antique cars from the United Kingdom.

During the event, members of the Rolls Royce Enthusiasts' Club presented a plaque to Miguel de la Via which declared him Honorary Member for Life in recognition of his work. The family still owns and runs the property with the founder's niece, Maria Lopez Tapia de la Via, who is herself an RREC member, and her son Patricio doing so with such professionalism, but also a friendly and enthusiastic approach to preserving the collection.

Along with the motor cars there are interesting photographs and other memorabilia relating to Rolls-Royce on display on the walls surrounding the exhibits.



# TORRE LOIZAGA

## A Private Rolls-Royce Collection in Northern Spain

Hidden in the wooded hills just thirty kms south-west of Bilbao is a beautiful castle dating from the fourteenth century known as Torre Loizaga. It houses one of the world's most complete private collections of Rolls-Royce motor cars. Andrew and Simon Buck-Honour visited it last September.

Having made enquiries about the collection earlier in the year, we were fortunate enough to be invited to visit and meet the owners in late September, while on our way to our winter retreat in southern Spain

### THE COLLECTION

The collection is spread through six halls. The first hall includes luxurious pre-war machinery made by various manufacturers of the time, including a gorgeous 1925 Isotta Fraschini Type 8, a 1907 Delaunay Belleville 10HP Roi des Belges and a 1936 Hispano Suiza by Van Vooren, along with a selection of horse drawn carriages from an even earlier era. The second hall houses more modern and classic machinery, including Jaguar and Austin Healey, as well as a unique English "Merryweather" fire engine.



➞ Memorial plaque to the founder of the collection



➞ A selection of Rolls-Royce models from the 1980s



➞ Prize winners in the Autobello competition



➞ Silver Ghosts and Phantoms on display





➡ Silver Ghosts with 1912 Barker style Rainsford limousine 1997 in the foreground



➡ Display of Pre-war RRs with a solitary Bentley: 1935 3½ litre Thrupp & Maberly sports saloon B110CR



➡ 1955 Phantom IV H. J. Mulliner limousine 4CS4 formerly owned by the Emir of Kuwait

The third hall contains 1980s Italian and British sports cars together with contemporary examples of the Rolls-Royce marque. The remaining three halls are exclusively Rolls-Royce except for a solitary Derby Bentley.

What makes the collection special is that not only are there over ten immaculate Silver Ghosts, including 1910 chassis 1462 with a Barker Roi des Belges, as well as some models built at the Rolls-Royce factory in Springfield, Massachusetts, but there are examples of all Phantom models from I to VI, including a Phantom IV once owned by the Emir of Kuwait. In fact there are examples of every Rolls-Royce model manufactured from 1910 to 1988 including two Silver Wraiths that were once used for state occasions by the British Royal family.

➡ Silver Wraith display with a 1958 Mulliner limousine HLW50, an ex Royal car, in the foreground







➡ 1903 Peugeot in the foreground with light blue 1925 Isotta Fraschini



➡ 1948 Park Ward saloon WZB4 with two former Royal cars (in the background) as part of the Silver Wraith display

Alongside these gems is the oldest vehicle in the collection, an 1899 Allen Runabout of which possibly only three examples survive. Its carriage-like appearance hides a single-cylinder engine which transmits the power to the rear wheels by chains giving the vehicle a maximum speed of twenty km/h.



➡ Phantom collection





➡ The Autobello 'concour of elegance'

### **SALON HIGH MOTORS**

The museum is normally open to visitors on Sundays throughout the year, but also on other days by appointment and for groups. Guided tours are provided although a free flow system is also possible. We attended the annual three day "Salon High Motors" event in late September: a showcase of luxury foods, drinks, goods and services beside the car marques on display with a programme of presentations and tastings. This superb event also encompasses the Autobello 'concour of elegance' competition organised by the Spanish CAR magazine and open to any classic car. Following a parade in front of the crowds by all cars taking part in the competition, medals are awarded to all participants, while trophies are presented under several categories following judging by a jury of motor car specialists.

The owners are justifiably proud of their extensive collection and would happily accept pre-arranged visits from individual RREC members or Sections where they would be assured of a warm welcome. ◀

**Andrew and Simon Buck-Honour**



➡ Line up of Phantoms





Further information about the collection  
may be found at [www.torreloizaga.com](http://www.torreloizaga.com)

➡ Torre Loizaga and some of the beautiful gardens



➡ The owner, Maria Lopez Tapia de la Via, pictured with Andrew and Simon by the tower



➡ Autobello parade