

AUTOMOTIVE

Rolls-Royce celebrates cofounder's birthday with historical tour

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Charles Stewart Rolls was born on August 27, 1877. Image credit: Rolls-Royce

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

British automaker Rolls-Royce is marking the 144th birthday of its co-founder Charles Stewart Rolls with a pilgrimage of historical sites around London.

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The marque visited different locations associated with the motoring pioneer's life and career, capturing images of the brand's Ghost model at each stop. Some of the stops included Mayfair, Piccadilly and the Royal Automobile Club.

Birthday celebrations

The itinerary included 35 Hill Street in Mayfair, the house in which Mr. Rolls was born on August 27, 1877.

A son of Lord and Lady Llangattock, Mr. Rolls was born into wealth and privilege, eventually studying at Eton and Cambridge.

On the contrary, his business partner Henry Royce, worked as a telegram delivery boy at the Mayfair Post Office at only 10 years old. Part of his route included Hill Street, making it possible that he delivered telegrams to Mr. Rolls' parents.

The second stop on the automaker's trek was 119 Piccadilly, the home of the Royal Aero Club until 1961. Mr. Rolls co-founded the club in 1901 with Frank Hedges Butler.



Rolls-Royce Ghost shot in London. Image credit: Rolls-Royce

In 1910, Mr. Rolls became the second person in England to be awarded a pilot's license, then, in the same year, became the first Englishman to fly an airplane across the English Channel.

Mr. Rolls was also a founding member of the Automobile Club of Great Britain and Ireland, which became the Royal Automobile Club (RAC) in 1897, the third stop on the birthday tour. Fellow RAC member Henry Edmunds arranged the first meeting between Mr. Rolls and Mr. Royce at the Midland Hotel in Manchester in 1904.

14-15 Conduit Street was the West End headquarters of Rolls-Royce for the majority of the 20th century, and the fourth stop of the brand's celebration. From 1905 until 1910, when Mr. Rolls passed away in a flying accident, the building was used primarily for test drives of early models.

In March 2010, Lord Montagu of Beaulieu marked the building with an English Heritage Blue Plaque.

The final stop, Berkeley Street, is the site of Rolls-Royce's flagship U.K. store.

Earlier this month, the automaker introduced a new anthology of stories, Spirit of Rolls-Royce, featuring its own clients whose work and lifestyles represent the brand. Through each vignette, clients around the world share what it means to own and drive a Rolls-Royce vehicle.

In the debut episode, one client, Jihan, journeys to the rocky mountains of Ras Al Khaimah to reflect on her relationship with the brand's iconic Phantom model ([see story](#)).