

## Veteran car stars of the 'Genevieve' film on display together at The National Motor Museum

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[Image from the Louwman Museum, The Hague, Netherlands.](#)

The two star cars from the film Genevieve on display together at Beaulieu, celebrating the 70th anniversary of the famous film that



did so much to encourage interest in veteran cars...

*The National Motor Museum tells us:*

(Photographs as individually credited).

Veteran cars that starred in a classic British movie have arrived at the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu over the summer. The film star cars, Genevieve and Spyker, are on display to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Genevieve*, the much-loved, Bafta-winning movie which was first released in 1953.

The comedy film follows the adventures of two couples participating in the annual London to Brighton event when driving a pair of veteran cars, the 1904 Darracq called *Genevieve* after which the film is named and a 1905 Spyker.

Andrea Bishop, Director of Collections and Engagement at the National Motor Museum says, "It's wonderful to have Genevieve and the Spyker on display in the Museum. Film buffs and motoring enthusiasts will, I'm sure, revel in celebrating this classic Ealing-style comedy and its role in inspiring the preservation and driving of historic cars in Britain."



Image from the Louwman Museum, The Hague, Netherlands.

In the movie *Alan McKim*, a young barrister, and his wife Wendy (played by John Gregson and Dinah Sheridan) are aboard a 1904 Darracq called *Genevieve* after which the film is named. Their friend Ambrose Claverhouse (Kenneth More), a brash advertising salesman, and his latest girlfriend, fashion model Rosalind Peters (Kay Kendall) – plus her pet St Bernard dog – ride in the Spyker. Although timid by today's standards, their exploits on the way to Brighton and on a return race to Westminster Bridge won millions of admirers right around the globe, and also fuelled unprecedented interest in the veteran car movement.

Following their time at Beaulieu the cars will visit the Royal Automobile Club in London and in November participate in the RM Sotheby's London to Brighton Veteran Car Run.



Genevieve has an interesting history. The Darracq was discovered among piles of junk on an estate in East London shortly after WW2 and purchased for £25. The new owner found an appropriate two-seater body but had neither the time or money to complete a restoration so sold it onto Norman Reeves who oversaw the car's complete renovation and named it *Annie*. Film director Henry Cornelius cast the little reborn Darracq for the leading four-wheeled role in the motion picture, rechristening it *Genevieve* after the patron saint of Paris where the car had originally been built. Reeves eventually got tired of all the publicity surrounding the celebrity Darracq and sold it to a new owner in Australia. After 40 years, *Genevieve* returned to Europe and is now displayed - appropriately alongside the Spyker - at the Louwman Museum in The Hague, Netherlands. However, with such an important anniversary to honour, both film stars will be back in Britain this summer and autumn.



Image from the Louwman Museum, The Hague, Netherlands.



70 years of *Genevieve* will also be the subject of a 'Transport Torque' lecture by Andrew Roberts at the National Motor Museum Collections Centre on the evening of the 7 October. *Genevieve* will be in the Collections Centre for the evening of the Transport Torque.



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For more information, please visit <https://nationalmotormuseum.org.uk/events>

## About The National Motor Museum

- The National Motor Museum Trust Limited is a charitable organisation founded in 1972, which runs the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu in the New Forest. Continuing the work of the flagship Montagu Motor Museum, the Trust has a world-famous collection of 250 vehicles and associated motoring items, which are on display in the National Motor



Museum. The nearby Collections Centre houses and cares for a vast array of motoring artefacts, photographic images, specialist reference library and film and video library. For more information about its collection and services see [nationalmotormuseum.org.uk](http://nationalmotormuseum.org.uk)

- Visitors to Beaulieu can enjoy a full day out with features including the ancestral Montagu home Palace House, 13<sup>th</sup> century Beaulieu Abbey, adventure play area Little Beaulieu, and grounds and gardens. Tickets can be bought in advance. For tickets or more information see [beaulieu.co.uk](http://beaulieu.co.uk) or call 01590 612345.
- A full calendar of events and exhibitions is held at Beaulieu by the National Motor Museum, including Collection Centre Open Days, Classic Grille Evenings, Meet the Curator events and Transport Torques. Details are available at [nationalmotormuseum.org.uk/events](http://nationalmotormuseum.org.uk/events)