

**WOBURN**  
Make the discovery

# *The Flying Duchess' Rolls Royce*



The Flying Duchess' Rolls Royce Phantom 11 was specially built for Mary, wife of the Eleventh Duke of Bedford in 1934. It was later sold and in 1986 the Marquess of Tavistock, (later the 14th Duke of Bedford) purchased it from a gentleman in Tennessee and arranged for it to be shipped back to England. For many years after, it was once again used at Woburn.

The Rolls Royce has recently been beautifully and sympathetically restored. This historic vehicle is now available for bridal hire and with such a unique provenance, offers a very unique touch for weddings at Woburn.

## THE FLYING DUCHESS

**Mary, wife of the Eleventh Duke of Bedford is remembered as the Flying Duchess, although this was only part of her active and well travelled life.**

In Woburn, she was responsible for establishing a cottage hospital, Marylands which was a model of its kind. In the First World War she organised a temporary ward for wounded soldiers at the Abbey, where she devoted many hours to their care and became a fully qualified theatre sister and radiographer.

In 1925, her great interest in flying developed when she took private lessons. In June 1928, Mary accompanied her first pilot Captain Barnard, on his attempt to break the record to India. This had to be abandoned, but was successful the following year.

A record flight to Cape Town followed in 1930, taking 175 flying hours. Other trips were not without incident: these included a forced landing in the Sahara and being shot at by Berber tribesmen.

In March 1937, Mary took off in her de Havilland Gipsy Moth aircraft on a short flight to view the flooded fens and complete her 200 hours of solo flying. By teatime she had not returned and an immediate search failed to find her. Some parts of her aircraft were eventually washed ashore near Great Yarmouth, Norfolk.

A unique celebration of the life and achievements of the Flying Duchess can be seen by visiting the Flying Duchess' Room at Woburn Abbey and the exhibition 'Dear Sister Mary'.

## SPECIFICATIONS

- **Make and Model:** Rolls Royce Phantom 11
- **Year of Manufacture:** 1934
- **Chassis number:** 103RY
- **Coachbuilder:** Hooper
- **Engine capacity and type:** 6230 cc petrol engine
- **Colour:** Black and Royal Garnet
- **Original registration:** MJ 4414



1. Far left, The Inn at Woburn
2. Middle, The Safari Lodge at Woburn Safari Park
3. The Sculpture Gallery

## ENQUIRIES

For further details or to enquire about bookings, please contact The Sculpture Gallery at Woburn Abbey.

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