

Program: Tour of Rolls Royce – Allison Museum

Speaker: John Rathman

Sponsored by: Jim Bettner

Attendance: 63

Scribe: Conz Chua

Editor: Jim Willson

The members of the Sciencetech Club gathered at the Knights of Columbus Club early this morning, boarded a tour bus and left for the Rolls Royce Museum shortly after 9:30 AM.. We arrived at around 10:00 AM and checked in with the security, were issued badges and gathered in the conference room. Sciencetech member, John Rathman, representing the Rolls Royce Museum, gave a short history of the Allison Rolls Royce Company.. The museum is called James A. Allison Exhibition Center, and opened first in 2004 and opened in new facility in 2017.

It tells a story of a 102 year legacy. The company started as Indianapolis Speedway Team Company in 1915 and became the Allison Division of GMC on 1929. It split into Allison Turbine and Allison Transmission in 1983 and changed to Rolls-Royce Corporation in 1995. James Allison's father Noah started the company, and after his death in 1890, James and siblings took over management. He later joined Carl Fisher and P. C. Avery and formed the Concentrated Acetylene Company in 1904 making auto lamps/, This was sold to Union Carbide and they used the proceeds to formed the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. The company was renamed Allison Experimental Company in 1917 to support the war effort by manufacturing war materials particularly bearings. The effort then also was expanded into developing airplane engines like the Liberty engine. Following WWI, the company was renamed Allison Engineering Company and expanded into building of aircraft engines. The Allison V-1719 engines were used in many WWII airplanes. Engine development continued with the introduction of turbojets, turboprop, turboshaft and turbofan engines consecutively.

Betsy Spencer the discussed the Rolls Royce as a global company that is located in over 50 countries, with over 17,000 engineers and over 5,000 employees. She presented all types of aircrafts that used the Rolls Royce engines and showed the different facilities in the Indianapolis area. She then gave examples of records held by planes using the Rolls Royce engines. At closing , she speculated a lot of futuristic uses of Rolls Royce products.

The members were then divided into groups to tour the beautiful museum filled with engines and small plane replicas ably discussed by several of the docents.



An Early Allison Turboprop Engine