



THE CAPITAL LETTER

Quarterly journal of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia ACT Branch Incorporated
Serving the Australian Capital Territory and surrounding areas



Branch mailing address:
PO Box 773, Mawson, A.C.T. 2607

DEDICATED TO ROLLS-ROYCE & BENTLEY ENTHUSIASTS

Autumn 2024



SZD313, SFE87

Silver Clouds

Mike Mulvihill, Peter & Kate Colwell

A.C.T. Branch Silver Clouds

From the Branch President

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Since my last message, we have entered another new year and with it, some ongoing Branch participation in displays and activities – the first of which was another successful Shannon's 'Wheels' display in the Queanbeyan showground in mid-February. We have also enjoyed another mid-week 'Cars & Coffee' run, this time to the Olive Grove Café at Collector. We haven't been to this venue for several years and it was nice to return for another friendly get together. See elsewhere in this 'CL' for photographic reports on these activities.

We have completed the final list of 2023/24 Branch members and despite a few resignations and with new additions, we currently stand at 54; so still the smallest Branch with several very active members. Speaking of our membership, it is with pleasure that we welcome Sonny Pirotta of Hall, A.C.T., the proud owner of a 1998 Silver Spirit ASJ24182.

A perennial housekeeping matter which has arisen again – apparent errors with the entries in the Club's annual publication – *Chassis Plate*. The accuracy of the details contained therein can only reflect the information that you personally provide. So, I urge everyone please, check the current 2024 edition and advise our Branch Membership Registrar – Ian Dunn dunncurry1949@gmail.com of any necessary corrections. Your Committee is often oblivious to your change of contact details or your disposal / acquisition of marque cars – unless you tell us!

Progress with Ian Oliver's new premises in Fyshwick is proceeding apace and Ian advises that the re-location of the Branch library from Phillip to Fyshwick has already happened. It will be a good opportunity for members to acquaint themselves with some of the very interesting library contents.

Martin Bennett's recent 'Head in the Clouds 3' Register run to Victoria was another great success – so we look forward to a report and pics in PRAECLARUM and the next 'CL' edition.

*Happily proceeding
Peter Hyland*



Left: New member Sonny Pirotta and his 1998 Silver Spirit ASJ24182. Photograph by Peter Hyland.

Front Cover: Nearest the camera is Mike Mulvihill's 1961 Silver Cloud II SZD313 with Peter & Kate Colwell's 1957 Silver Cloud SFE87. These were among the five A.C.T. Branch cars of a total of 15 on the recent 'Head in the Clouds 3'.

From the Editor

hjmullinersw@bigpond.com



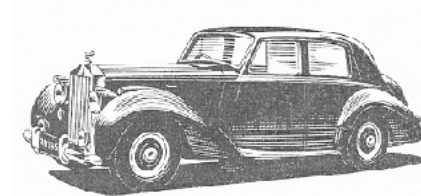
Our very small Branch is now well settled into its new home in Fyshwick, a fact that is attributable solely to the generosity of Ian & Tina Oliver and their tremendous enthusiasm for the Rolls-Royce & Bentley marques and for our Club. The coming of the Covid 19 crisis seriously disrupted the Club's meeting arrangements, and having a permanent home comes as a great relief as well as a significant boost to our future.

Our regular events continue to attract growing numbers of members, who clearly enjoy driving their special motor cars out on country roads in the company of their fellow enthusiasts. In particular our mid-week 'Cars and Coffee' runs have proved popular. As we closed for press we enjoyed another great event – the unveiling of the 'Canberra Showroom' in Gladstone Street. With a particularly impressive display of Club cars out the front, nearly all brought along by our Branch members, as well as the spectacular display of cars inside, a fabulous afternoon was had. Photographic coverage of the unveiling begins on page 16 – and we still have the full Grand Opening to look forward to.

It also gives me great pleasure to advise that during the unveiling it was revealed that Ian Oliver had been offered, and had duly accepted, a Trusteeship of the Sir Henry Royce Foundation. Congratulations Ian.

Under arrangements recently announced by the Australian Tax Office we now find ourselves in a situation in which we will need a Tax File Number and to submit annual income tax returns. The likelihood is that we will pay a small amount of income tax on our "non-member" income. Our Treasurer Ian Oliver is on top of this and you will be kept informed.

Martin Bennett



Branch Events Calendar

Members should please note that dates and details of events listed here are in some cases indicative only and are subject to change. Timely notice of each forthcoming event is provided by group email and/or text message but in the event of any doubt please contact the Secretary or President to confirm – contact details on the back cover of each edition of *The Capital Letter*.

MAY

Wednesday 8th-Monday 13th May: 66th Annual Federal Rally of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia, Noosa, Queensland.

Wednesday 22nd May: Mid-week 'Cars & Coffee' run.

JUNE

Wednesday 5th June: General Meeting, 7.00 p.m., 72 Gladstone Street, Fyshwick.

Wednesday 12th June: Mid-week 'Cars & Coffee' run.

Sunday 23rd June: Country Lunch Run.



Above: Work on the outside of the building progressing.

The Canberra Showrooms

At the last Federal Rally in Hahndorf S.A. the Sir Henry Royce Foundation Australia (SHRF) promoted the idea of other showrooms being established in other states and Territories, particularly N.S.W., S.A., and A.C.T.

A proposal was forwarded by our local A.C.T. member and Treasurer Ian Oliver for a Canberra Showroom to be established. A draft business plan proposal has been submitted for the SHRF Trustees to consider and approve with final agreements yet to be concluded. A target opening day for our members and the SHRF Trustees has been set for the 13th April 2024.

The premises at Unit 1, 72 Gladstone Street in Fyshwick have been used for the past four bi-monthly meetings of our Club and progress and plans are in place for:

1. SHRF Rolls-Royce and Bentley vehicles and memorabilia for public display;
2. Rotational Display of other makes and types of vehicles under the business name of Ollie's Garage;

3. Permanent address and meeting room for our local Club, library and memorabilia items utilising a dedicated and lockable glass display area. Arrangements are being made so that there is no cost for our Club.

Given his particular interest in Rolls-Royce and Bentley motor cars, Ian has a vision for the SHRF to have a strong presence in the National Capital. Ian has invited the Foundation to take up residence in a dedicated portion of the refurbished area.

As the SHRF relies upon cash donations to cover the cost of housing, insuring, and conserving the paper archive and the collection of artefacts including motor vehicles, Ian will seek donations from visitors to the Canberra display. In keeping with the SHRF charter, 100% of donations will be applied to the charitable objects of the Foundation.

These are exciting times for our local Club and we see this as a very positive step to promote our Rolls-Royce and Bentley marques in the A.C.T.



Above: Progress inside, with the non-slip floor surface in place.

Below: Chris & Narelle O'Rourke's 1957 Silver Cloud, SED51 during the 'unveiling' on 13th April. On the left is Paul James's 1997 Bentley Turbo RT, BPW66265. More photographic coverage of the 'unveiling' is on page 16 et seq.





Above: Dawn Waterhouse and her chauffeur for the day, Ian Oliver.

HAW100 Silver Dawn comes to life with a 100 year celebration

By Ian Oliver

(photos by Tina Oliver)

Our 1951 Rolls-Royce Silver Dawn, with long term Victorian registration HAW100, is an Australian import that was ordered by Robert Hawkes of Melbourne for a 25th birthday present for his wife Marjorie Hawkes. Extensive archival records supplied by The Sir Henry Royce Foundation of Australia reveal that the Melbourne dealership Kellow-Falkiner delivered the car new on the 3rd April 1952 and serviced the car until they closed in 1973. Mrs Hawkes is known to be the longest Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia member owner of a car since new. The car was continually registered up until she ceased driving the car in 2014. The last registration label is

still affixed to the vehicle.

An extensive restoration has been undertaken of HAW100 over the past 6 years with substantive body and trim work being undertaken by Mark Oliver (nephew of the owner), Wycombe St, Queanbeyan. Others involved in making it a bit of a family affair have been the owners two brothers Phil & Allen Oliver. Also, Ray Malam used his woodworking skills to restore the important walnut veneer. It is now planned to attend the concours showing and judging at the Rolls-Royce Owners Club of Australia Federal Rally in May 2024 at Noosa, Qld. It will also be one



Above: Centenarian Dawn Waterhouse with the Silver Dawn, chauffeur Ian Oliver looking on.

of the several Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars to be on display at the new Canberra Showroom premises of the Sir Henry Royce Foundation in Fyshwick A.C.T. later this year.

The car was first shown locally in Canberra at the Terribly British Day on the 3rd of December 2023. At that showing it was invited by the Waterhouse family to attend to a special errand on the 15th December 2023 and chauffeur Mrs Dawn Waterhouse (nee Calthorpe) to her former residence at Calthorpe House, 24 Mugga Way Red Hill, where she was presented with her 100th Birthday celebration letter from King Charles.

Memories of Dawn Waterhouse (nee Calthorpe) growing up at 24 Mugga Way, Red Hill, are fond ones. She was three years old when the family moved

from Lowe Street in Queanbeyan to what is now Calthorpe House, an historic house museum owned by the A.C.T. Government.

Dawn has been a champion of community service, involving herself in many causes including school and church fetes, Legacy, the Heart Foundation and the Red Cross Blood Bank where she became an honorary director for three years. She remains active in the Wattle Day Association and her love of Canberra and its history remains strong. In 2021 she was awarded an OAM for her services to community history.

Attending to the chauffeuring duties for such a special Canberran was an enjoyable event that will always bring fond memories. Thank you to the Waterhouse family, some of which have been known to me from very early days.





Above: The earliest car in our Club display at 'Wheels' was Bryce Ronning's 1949 Silver Wraith Hooper touring limousine, WFC67.

‘Wheels’ 2024 Queanbeyan Showground

Sunday 18th February



Left: The newest car in our line-up was Tina Oliver's modern Bentley Bentayga.

Opposite page and following three pages: An article dealing with the Bentley 3½-Litre, from *The Motor* of December 10th, 1935. The particularly handsome car on the introductory page is B112DG, a Vanden Plas drophead coupé.

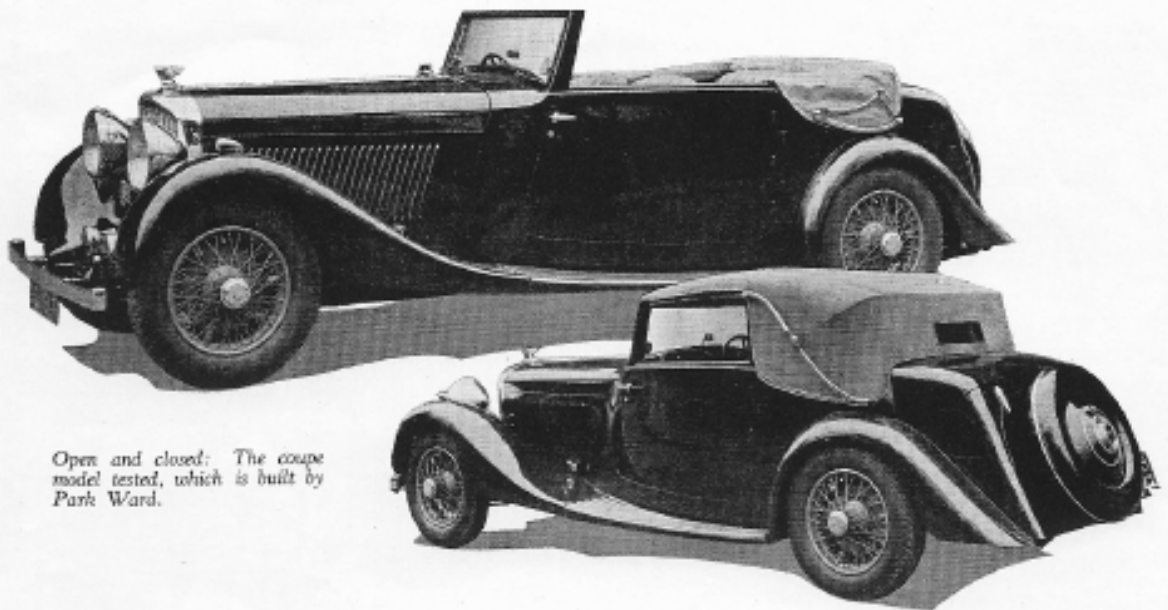
‘Wheels’ 2024 feature continues on page 13



THE 3½ LITRE BENTLEY DROP-HEAD COUPÉ



Reprinted from
"THE MOTOR"
December 10th, 1935



Open and closed: The coupe model tested, which is built by Park Ward.

A VERY QUIET REFINED SPORTS CAR

Try as he may to retain a pose of critical detachment, the road-hardened tester of motor cars is not likely to cover many miles on the $3\frac{1}{2}$ -litre Bentley without becoming a Bentley enthusiast. The special charm of driving this car is due to many performance features, of which the most important is its ready response to the controls.

A dictionary definition of the word "response" includes the phrase: "to answer by action." The lexicographer could not have hit upon a happier way of explaining in brief this delightful feature of Bentley performance. The car responds so quickly, and requires so little coercion, that the driver begins to feel that it is answering his thoughts rather than his physical movements. He just *wishes* to go round a corner, to slow down or to accelerate—and these things happen.

Long Journeys in Comfort

If one were equipped with the fatigue measuring apparatus of an American psychologist, it would be interesting to determine the reactions of a driver after covering, say, 200 miles in cars of different types. It is safe to assert that the Bentley would be found in the front rank if cars were classified in this unusual way.

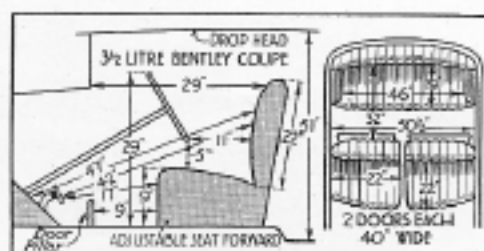
Without any sense of hurry or nervous strain, a very high average speed can safely be maintained. On a typical Sunday run from London towards the West, we covered 35 miles in the first hour, 48 miles in the second hour and over 50 in the third. These figures do not represent the limit by any means, but were obtained by driving in a normal and respectable manner with due concern for built-up areas. Silent running is, of course, a contributory factor to the reduction of driving fatigue. The Bentley engine is extremely quiet and is also smooth to such a degree that without the evidence of the rev. counter it is sometimes difficult to know whether the car is running in third or in top. Second, third and top gears are all very quiet and the ratios are high; the road speeds attainable without over-revving the engine are, respectively, 55 m.p.h., 75 m.p.h. and 90 m.p.h.—a useful selection. When wanting to jump away from a standstill it is convenient to reach 25 m.p.h. in bottom gear and then to change straight into third or top.

Attractive Cruising Range

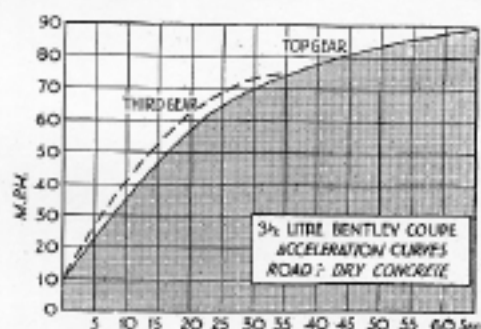
High gearing also gives the car an easy and comfortable cruising speed of anything between 60 m.p.h. and 80 m.p.h. with the engine turning relatively slowly. The car will sweep up all ordinary main-road gradients without loss of speed, but in the event of a check the special synchromesh mechanism and right-hand gear lever enable one to drop into third with great facility.

In the steering and brakes the responsive characteristics of this car are particularly well displayed. The steering mechanism is fairly high geared for quick control, is dead accurate at speed and gives an excellent lock for manoeuvring. To steady the headlamps and front-wing assembly a Wilmot-Breeden stabilizing bumper is fitted to the latest series of chassis, and a cross member has been added to the frame.

The braking system, as formerly, embodies a servo motor driven from the gearbox, and requires only the weight of the foot on the pedal under all normal conditions. An accessible hand brake, placed on the right, controls separate shoes in the rear brake drums.



Seating dimensions.



Performance curves.

Some months ago controlled hydraulic shock absorbers were added to the Bentley specification, and their performance was fully described in *The Motor*. The system is so arranged that the degree of damping increases automatically with the speed of the car. Additionally, the driver has an over-riding control by means of which he can at any time vary the amount of damping provided.

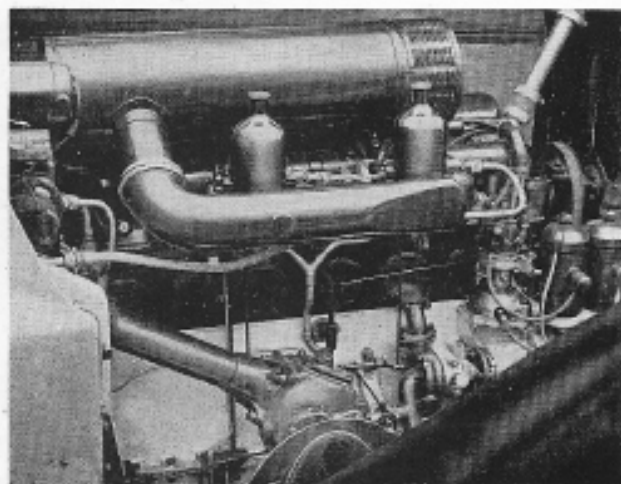
The car tested was a drop-head coupé of the type which is listed complete at £1,485. At Brooklands, despite extensive track repairs, a timed speed of 90 m.p.h. was just reached over one of the quarter-mile distances. The tests were made with screen and head erect.

The acceleration curves show the excellent getaway obtainable on top and third gears. This is confirmed by the figure for the standing quarter-mile—20.8 secs. Another point of some importance is that, although such a good performer, the car is economical in fuel consumption. Consequently, the 18-gallon tank gives a comfortable cruising range of 300 miles.

WORKMANSHIP & FINISH



Tools are stored beneath the luggage compartment. A separate door gives access to the tank filler.



An off-side view of the engine which shows the ignition system (with spare coil) and the two carburettors.

Workmanship and Finish

To the connoisseur in car construction the workmanship and finish displayed in every detail of this Bentley model are a delight to behold. On the offside of the engine two S.U. carburettors are mounted with intakes coupled to a large air silencer and cleaner. Towards the front, the distributor of the ignition system is mounted vertically, together with a service coil and a spare coil. Also on the off side is the water pump, and temperature is so effectively controlled by thermostat that it seldom deviates by more than two degrees from the normal figure—80 degrees C.

On the near side of the engine are found the dynamo and the exhaust piping. The reservoir for a Luvax chassis lubrication system, the switchboxes and two S.U. fuel pumps are mounted on the aluminium dash. Jacking equipment is also carried under the bonnet.

As regards the fascia, an excellent feature is the provision of a Yale-type key, by means of which the lighting and ignition can be left locked in position; the same key fits a lock on the near-side door. The steering column carries hand controls for the throttle, ignition timing (supplementary to a governor), mixture strength (used only when starting) and shock absorbers.

The drop-head coupé is a Park Ward production with quite a large rear compartment considering that the close-coupled style is employed. There is a roomy boot for luggage, the lid of which carries the spare wheel.

The seats are extremely comfortable, and each of the two wide doors carries a metal-framed drop window. With the head folded and the windows up the front-seat passengers obtain fresh air and sunshine on a fine day without draughts. Good vision is also a feature. All the glazing is carried out in Triplex glass of the laminated type.

* * *

The Bentley is definitely numbered in the small and select group of test cars which are relinquished with reluctance. The writer enjoys enough motoring to satisfy most people, covering about 20,000 miles in a year on automobiles of all kinds, but after handling it for several days he watched the Bentley's silent departure with a feeling of real regret.

TABULATED DATA—3½-LITRE BENTLEY

CHASSIS DETAILS

ENGINE.—Six cylinders, 82.5 mm. by 114 mm. (3,669 c.c.). Tax, £19 10s. Push-rod-operated overhead valves; Two S.U. carburettors; coil ignition with combined manual and automatic timing.

GEARBOX.—Four forward speeds; silent second, third and top gears; synchromesh engagement for third and top. Ratios: 4.1, 5.1, 7.08 and 11.3 to 1.

PERFORMANCE

SPEEDS ON GEARS.—Top, 90 m.p.h.; third, 75 m.p.h.; second, 55 m.p.h. Minimum speed, top gear, 5 m.p.h.

ACCELERATION.—From standstill through the gears to 50 m.p.h., 12½ secs.; standing ¼-mile, 20½ secs. (Average speed, 43.2 m.p.h.)

TAPLEY PERFORMANCE FIGURES.—Maximum pull in lb. per ton on gradient: top, 280 lb.; third, 34½ lb.; second, 470 lb. Corresponding gradients climbable at a steady speed

are respectively 1 in 8.0, 1 in 6.6 and 1 in 4.75.

PETROL CONSUMPTION.—17-19 m.p.g. according to average speed maintained.

BRAKING EFFICIENCIES.—By Tapley meter, using the pedal only: 82 per cent. at 30 m.p.h.; 76 per cent. at 50 m.p.h. Corresponding stopping distances are 36 ft. and 110 ft.

DIMENSIONS, ETC.

LEADING MEASUREMENTS.—Wheel-base, 10 ft. 6 in.; track, 4 ft. 8 in.; overall length, 16 ft. 0 in. including front bumper; width, 5 ft. 8 in.; ground clearance, 6 in.

WHEELS AND TYRES.—Centre-lock wire wheels with India's 5.50 in. by 18 in. tyres.

TURNING CIRCLE.—Left, 39 ft. 7 in.; right, 40 ft. 11 in.

WEIGHT.—As tested, with two up and full tank, 36½ cwt.; unladen, 32½ cwt.

PRICE.—Drop-head coupé, as tested, £1,485. Chassis, £1,100.

BENTLEY MOTORS (1931) LIMITED

Directors: A. F. Sidgreaves : A. Wormald : W. M. Cowen : Captain W. Barnato

16, CONDUIT ST., LONDON, W.1 : TELEPHONE MAYFAIR 4412



Above: New South Wales Branch member John Sheehy's 2005 Bentley Arnage, BF510748, was a welcome addition to our line-up.

Below: Paul James's 1997 Bentley Turbo RT, BPW66265.





Above: The Presidential 1994 Silver Spirit III, ASR54357.



Right: Norman Lee's 1976 Silver Shadow, SRH23090.



Left: Shane Mortimer's 1974 Silver Shadow, SRH19825.



Above: The Editorial 1960 Bentley S2, B25CT.

Below: Chris O'Rourke's 1957 Silver Cloud, SED51.





Above: Graham Lawrence's 1997 Bentley Continental R, BBW63021.

SHRFA Canberra Showrooms and Ollie's Garage unveiling

72 Gladstone Street, Fyshwick, Saturday 13th April

Below: Some of the A.C.T. Branch members' cars that were lined up out the front of the 'Canberra Showrooms'.





Above: John Tetley's 1997 Bentley Turbo R, BSH21535.

Below: This 1978 Silver Shadow II, SRH34273, has returned to our Branch after an absence of more than 20 years, now in the ownership of David Kimmorley.

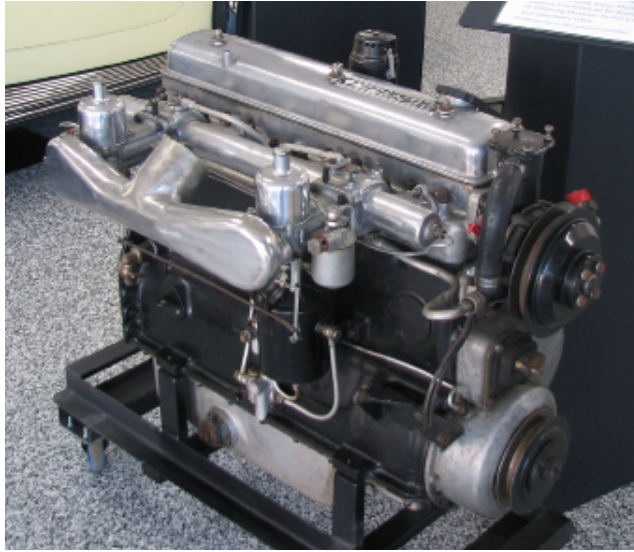




Above: The Silver Cloud III on the left, SDW327, was brought along by New South Wales Branch member Bob Doyle. Joe Quattrocchi's 1969 Silver Shadow, SRH6847, is alongside.

Below: The Sir Henry Royce Foundation's 1967 Phantom V H.J. Mulliner, Park Ward limousine, 5VF159, is one of two identical former vice-regal cars in the custody of the Foundation.





Above: Bentley Mk VI engine on loan from our sister facility in Coolum, Qld.



Right: From left-to-right: Wallace Moorhouse (Qld.), Sir Hentry Royce Foundation Chairman Brian Crump (N.S.W.) and Tina & Ian Oliver.

Below: 'Canberra Showrooms' inside view providing some impression of the scope of this fine facility.



Tailpiece . . .



Elegant tails at 'Wheels', Sunday 18th February.



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