



THE CAPITAL LETTER

Newsletter of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia (A.C.T. Branch) Inc.
Serving the Australian Capital Territory, Goulburn, Wagga Wagga and surrounding areas.



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FOR ROLLS-ROYCE AND BENTLEY ENTHUSIASTS

March / April 2016



ASG15800, BSH21535

1986 Silver Spirit, 1987 Bentley Turbo R

Ken Lo, John Tetley

Old Goulburn Brewery

From the Branch President

The seemingly everlasting summer is showing signs of conceding directly to winter, bypassing autumn. The night temperatures have begun to drop quite rapidly. Thankfully the days are still quite pleasant, and we all hope that things will continue until the closure of the Bendigo Federal Rally.

It is with much pleasure that I can report that the 2017 Federal Rally format is being finalised after some months of preparations. The team has worked diligently and is very enthusiastic about what we have in store. Our Rally Director, Al Kinloch, ably assisted by wife Di, has been negotiating an exceptional event of global significance. Together with the broad aspects of the program, we will be announcing at the Bendigo Federal Rally shortly, an event not to be missed. I thank all who have contributed to our meetings on this event.



Martin Bennett advises that his Silver Wraith restoration is progressing well, and from what I have seen it is setting a very high standard. Al & Di Kinloch have parted with their Phantom I, which has been a part of their stable of cars since 1988. Talking of that, the 1910 Silver Ghost, Chassis 1425 has been with us for the same period, 28 years, and this year celebrates 60 years since its restoration and participation in the 1956 Veteran Car Rally in Melbourne to celebrate the 1956 Olympics.

To those who crave a Silver Ghost, you know the old saying, “blink and you’ve missed it.” Well in fact, in recent weeks, you’ve missed the opportunity to buy not one, but two. Both of these were 1910 cars. The first of these sold was Chassis 1363, which has never been restored. It was fitted with a replacement locally-built saloon body in Melbourne in the late 1920s, and has rarely been seen in the last 20 years. It is going to a new home at Warrnambool. Better known to many enthusiasts, is the Gillings’ family’s Chassis 1492. This car has been sold, and remains with its new owners in Sydney. Both of these cars, I understand, are to undergo major rebuilds, and will be fitted with replica coachwork unless by some miracle, some original coachwork emerges from the woodwork.

There is no May Meeting of the Branch, as the entire Committee of the Branch will be attending the Federal Rally. Their absence would render any meeting invalid as a breach of the constitution. Enjoy the break. Members not going to Bendigo are encouraged to attend the Wheels Car Display. PLEASE CONTACT LAWRIE NOCK FOR DETAILS. There will be heavy PARKING FINES for cars on the display which do not carry the permit to be in attendance. Owners of some cars at the recent Auto Italia display reputedly found this to be the case.

Until we meet again.....enjoy your motoring.

Ian



Front Cover picture: At the Old Goulburn Brewery during the joint event with the Jaguar Drivers' Club are Ken & Frances Lo's 1986 Silver Spirit ASG15800 and John Tetley's 1987 Bentley Turbo R BSH21535. Photograph by the Editor.

In the piece on L.T.C. Rolt in the last *Capital Letter* it was explained that the Silver Ghost tow-truck in the photograph was not the one referred to in the article. Ian Irwin has provided the information that it is in fact chassis 60939, the Lord Edward Montagu 'White Ghost', restored in the late 1950s and now the symbol of the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu. It was sold new in Scotland in 1909 and some time after its second ownership was converted into the tow vehicle seen in the photograph. In that form it gave many years' service in Dundee. In 1954 was offered for sale as a cab-chassis and Lord Montagu acquired it then for 125 pounds.

Still on the subject of very old cars, our Federal Concours Age Allowance proposal was withdrawn on my recommendation after the present system – introduced at the last Canberra Federal Rally – was deemed, after a close examination, to be fair and equitable except for one aspect. The present system differs from the pre-2011 system in two ways. The first of these is that the present Allowance of one-tenth of a point per year of a car's age is less generous than the previous quarter-point. However, that is neither here nor there provided all cars have the Allowance applied equally, which brings us to the second difference: the Age Allowance is now 'capped' at 65 years on the grounds that all cars over that age have now been restored (which is not entirely true in any case) and therefore "virtually new", which aside from being illogical misses the whole point of a restoration. Nothing that is old can become new or even "virtually new" by any restoration process, that being neither the intent nor the outcome. But it is one of those points that could be argued endlessly to no avail. The hard fact is that a 65-year-old car is now a post-war car, which means that no pre-war car can now receive any more Age Allowance points than a post-war car! In my opinion it is that and that alone that should be reconsidered. As a Club we should be in the business of honouring 100-year-old cars for what they are, rather than discounting their age on the spurious grounds that they been restored and are therefore "virtually new". There is at least one hundred-year-old car in the Victoria Branch, often driven but never restored, that in this current Age Allowance system would be deemed no older than my 1950 Silver Wraith, which reminds me that although I potentially stand to gain from the current arrangement, I am nonetheless strongly opposed to it.

If the government had the same system of attributing age to people as the R.R.O.C.A. does to cars, nobody would be considered any older than 65. The rationale, applying the same logic as the Club, would be that an 80- or 100-year-old is no older than a 65-year-old because by now they have all had knee reconstructions, new heart valves and cosmetic surgery.

Unfortunately, the 'Wheels' display day this year falls on the Sunday of the Federal Rally and several of our members who would normally be present at 'Wheels' will be away in Bendigo.

Martin Bennett

Below: When President Ian sent the Silver Ghost tow-truck photograph seen in our last issue he also sent this charming watercolour depicting a similar subject, with a 'Bullnose' Morris being rescued in the depths of winter.

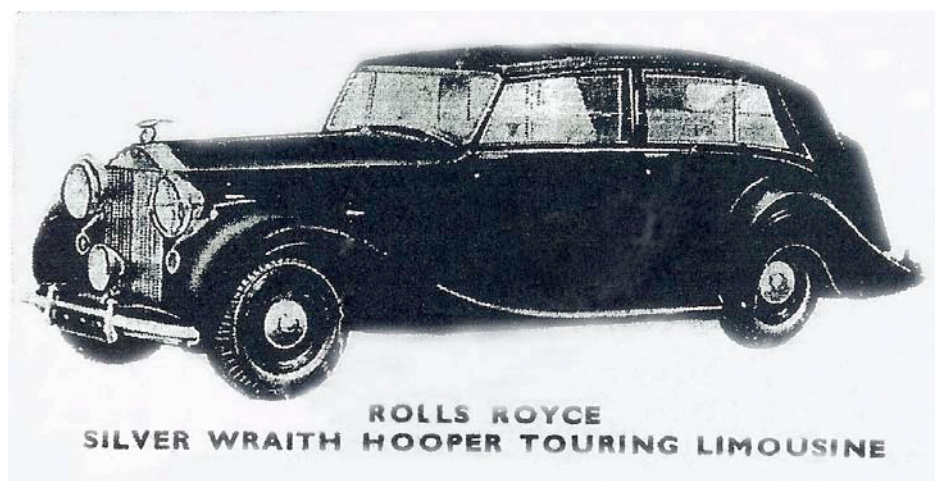


Branch Events Calendar

Most fortunately, for our Monthly Meetings I have been able to take up an arrangement at the Irish Club in Weston. However, a change of meeting night is necessary and for the time being we will be meeting on the SECOND Wednesday night of each month.

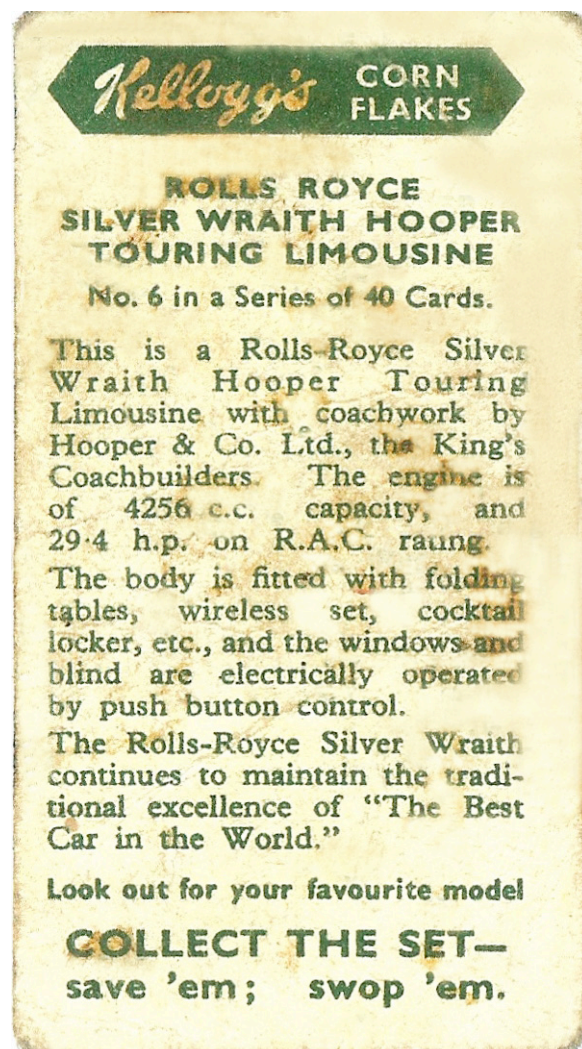
Peter Hyland

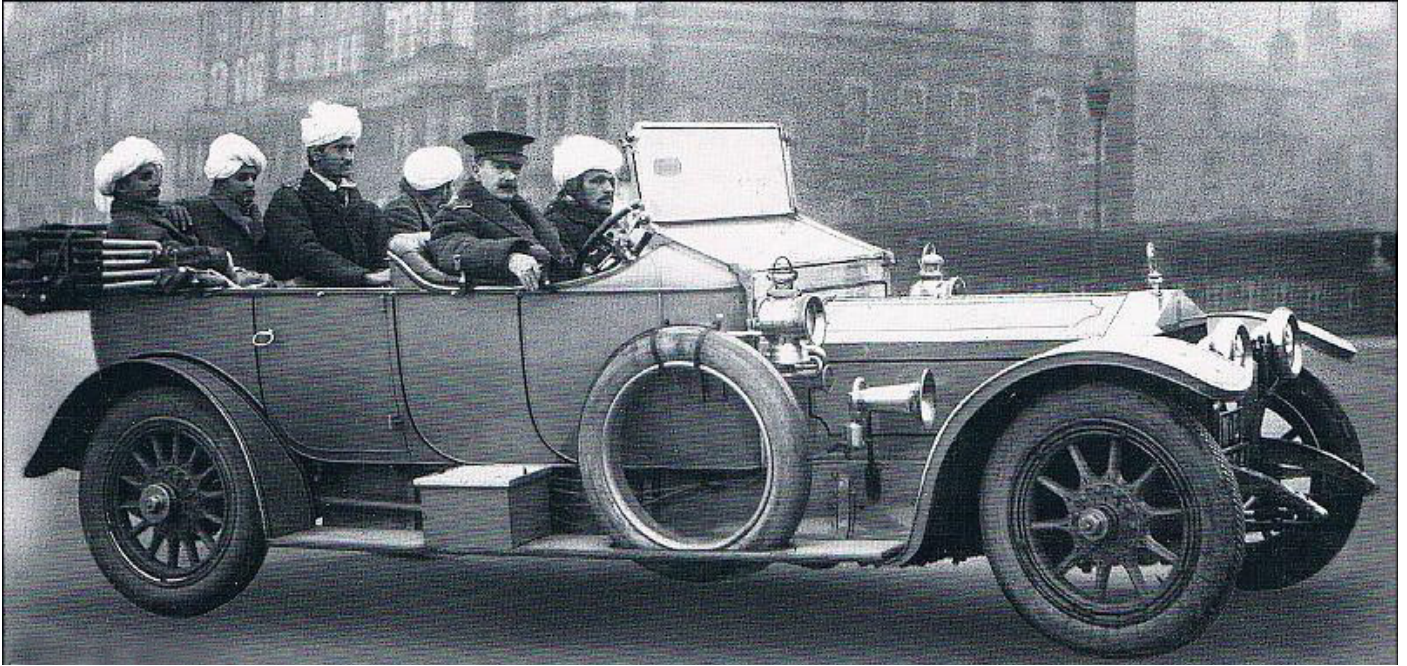
Sunday May 15th: Shannons 'Wheels' Day, on the Old Parliament House lawns.



Branch member Ken Baldwin found this card in an old box dating from his childhood. Ken remarked "those were the days when you got luxury cars with your cornflakes". Although the artist created a quite accurate impression of the car, he clearly had no more than the sketchiest notion of the Spirit of Ecstasy!

Below: Your Editor took this photograph on a Victoria Branch outing in the early days of his Club membership in the mid-1960s. The car in the centre is 1936 Phantom III 3AZ56. At the time the chassis had recently been the subject of a magnificent restoration by Don Busch, who then refitted the original, essentially unrestored Thrupp & Maberly sedan de ville body. Some members will know this car in its present colour scheme of silver.





The passengers taking the air in this Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost in London during the Great War are said to be convalescing wounded Indian soldiers.

H.J. Mulliner & Co. of Chiswick introduced this particularly elegant body style for the last of the Bentley Mk VI chassis, continuing it in greater numbers for the R-type. The six-light window configuration is of advantage to rear-seat passengers when touring, and the design proved popular with buyers who could afford the very considerable cost premium applicable to all coachbuilt cars over the standard steel saloon.



Old Goulburn Brewery Run



Above: Steve Stuckey, Geoff Klause, Ian Dunn and John Curry.

Below: Bryce Ronning's 1949 Silver wraith Hooper touring limousine, WFC67.





Above: Steve Stuckey's Jaguar 'XF', driven by Ian Dunn and John Curry. Branch members Ray & Raine Gulson's XK120 may be glimpsed at top left.

Below: David Thurlow and Chris O'Rourke.





Above: Chris and Narelle O'Rourke's 1957 Silver Cloud SED51.

Below: A stunning XK120 roadster. Alongside Steve Stuckey's Mk II saloon may be glimpsed.



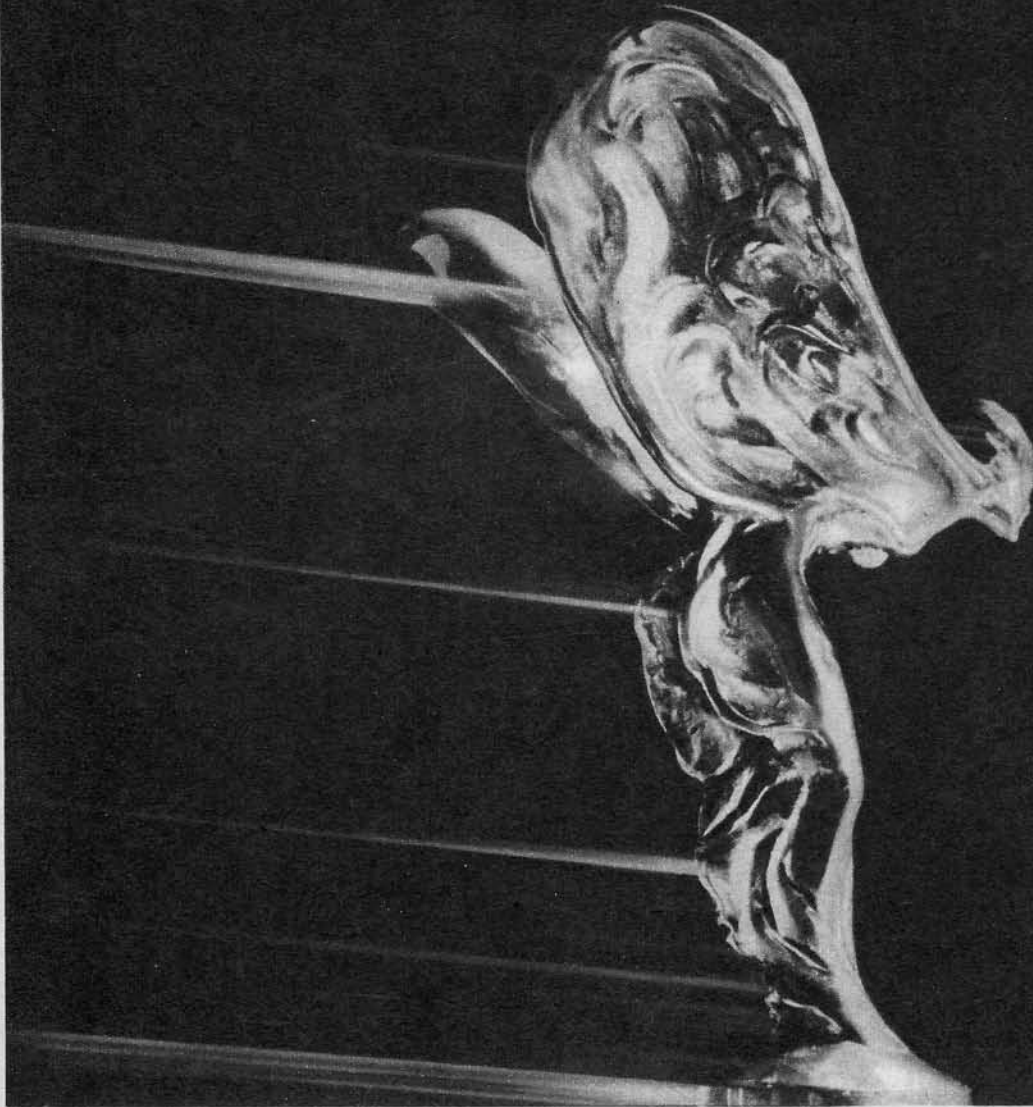


Above, left to right: Narelle O'Rourke, Ken Lo, Frances Lo.

Below: Gos Cory's 1949 Bentley Mk VI Freestone & Webb saloon, driven by the Editor.



A new engine for the best car in the world



The Rolls-Royce Phantom V and Silver Cloud II are powered by a new aluminium 8 cylinder engine. It gives more power with greater silence and smoothness.

Aluminium Alloy Engine. Developed by Rolls-Royce over the past five years the new engine in the PHANTOM V and SILVER CLOUD II is a compact, vee unit (Bore 4.1", Stroke 3.6") made of aluminium alloy and with a capacity of 6230 c.c. It weighs no more than the 6 cylinder engine which it replaces, delivering greater torque over the entire speed range. Yet its smoothness and silence are such that there is little indication of the increased engine performance.

High Safety Factor. Other features include automatic transmission, power-assisted steering, ride control, and the high safety factor of Rolls-Royce designed servo-assisted brakes, with two entirely separate hydraulic systems plus a mechanical linkage to the rear wheels.

Air Conditioning. The heating, demisting and refrigeration units are redesigned to give increased capacity and flexibility. Rear window demisters and press button window lifts are available.



*By Appointment to
Her Majesty The Queen
Motor Car Manufacturers
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A.C.T. BRANCH REPORT
TO THE FEDERAL COUNCIL,
2015-2016

The A.C.T. Branch of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia has some 74 members. Within this, more than half of our members live outside of the A.C.T., in the southern-western, South Coast and Southern Highlands districts of New South Wales, with others in Victoria, other Australian states and overseas.

Our A.C.T. resident membership is but a fraction of our on-paper membership, so we are faced with challenges that are not experienced by the other State Branches. Meeting attendance ranges from, at best, 12 to 15 members, and at other times as few as six to eight. Our winter weather is sometimes a disincentive for more-distant members to journey to our scheduled events.

Our Branch has only three local members with pre-World War II cars, so the bulk of cars in our club are able to cover distances with greater ease than these few cars.

Notwithstanding, we have an enviable record on many fronts. Four of our members have been honoured by the Trustees of the Sir Henry Royce Foundation, receiving the Award of The Sir Henry Royce Foundation Annual Trophy for long-term contributions to the ideals of Sir Henry Royce – The Pursuit of Excellence. Two have given long-term service in the chairing of Registers within the R.R.O.C.A. Three have received Life Membership of the R.R.O.C.A. Three of our members have published substantial works on Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars that have been acclaimed around the world. We have hosted six Federal Rallies, mostly in Canberra, and apart from the usual minor issues, have received very gratifying comments from participants on every occasion.

We are justifiably proud of our record. And all this has been achieved by the Branch which was only formed in 1982.

Our events have been varied throughout the year past. We have conducted a survey to seek member feedback on types of events which have greatest appeal to members, and the pattern of events in the future will be tailored more closely to members' desires.

Membership has been relatively stable, and for the first time, when membership renewals were due, every existing member renewed. We must be doing something right. However, sadly in the past twelve months we have been shocked and saddened to lose five members who have passed away.

In 2017, we will be hosting another Federal Rally in Canberra. Once again, despite our small membership base, we are working hard to bring to the Club another Rally of which we can all be proud. We may need to tap into clubs with larger memberships to assist us in some areas, such as concours judging.

I thank all who have served on the Committee for the year past, for their commitment to their tasks in the service of their fellow members.

*Ian Irwin OAM
President.*



Tailpiece . . .



Opinion is divided over whether the early post-war Standard Steel Saloon looked better in its original form or in its later 'long boot' guise as seen here on 1954 Silver Dawn SOG94. Photograph from Gerard Le Clerc (France).

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