



THE CAPITAL LETTER

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



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DEDICATED TO ROLLS-ROYCE & BENTLEY ENTHUSIASTS

Winter 2018



4AF2

1950 Phantom IV H.J. Mulliner limousine

HM Queen Elizabeth II

First of
Eighteen

... one lady owner nearly 70 years on

From the Branch President

The time has come. This will be my final President's report to members in *The Capital Letter*. When I took on the role of president of our Branch, I had no idea that it would lead me into five years in the chair. But as I look back, it really doesn't seem that long.

I have enjoyed serving the membership, and I'm standing down to create the opportunity for another member to take the reins. Most members will have known that this has been my intention for some time now, so it won't be a surprise. I would particularly like to thank my colleagues on the Executive for their unstinting assistance, and for their considered advice on aspects of our operations.

Martin Bennett, as Senior Vice-President has always been there to provide counsel, and has been quick to recognise opportunities and make valuable management contributions. He has also quietly continued his marathon work in the vital life-blood of the Club, the production of *The Capital Letter*. Peter Toet, as Junior Vice-President, has also been a valued advisor, and a strong support at all times. Peter Hyland, as Treasurer, then as Secretary-Treasurer, combining two of the Committee roles, has competently and diligently handled much of the Club's day-to-day affairs: the correspondence, meeting agendas and minutes, revenue and expenditure, and so many other matters. Club members really owe Peter a great debt of gratitude. And Ian Oliver has, in the year past, relieved Peter of the role of Treasurer, and with professional skill handled our financial affairs.

Peter, when Ian Oliver came on board, was then able to give more time and enthusiasm to his passion for other Club matters, and has brought his *History of the R.R.O.C.A. (A.C.T. Branch) Inc.*, to its conclusion. He is to be highly commended for his devotion to this mammoth task. It's a wonderful achievement, and we are extremely grateful for this valuable work, now having been concluded and in the hands of the experts to print and bind copies.

The Branch has always been a big part of my life, so I won't be far from the action. My own book on the history of our 1910 Silver Ghost has been substantially drafted, and I hope to bring this to a close in the not-too-distant future. I have documented the known history of the car, which accounts for approximately 105 years of the 108 years of the car's history, and profusely illustrated with copies of many photos from the earliest years of the car, pre-World War I to its demise in 1939.

I also enjoy the research into pre-WWII Australian Rolls-Royce cars. I'm always adding to my substantial files on the individual histories of Australia's Silver Ghosts and Phantom I and Phantom II Rolls-Royces, and I get great pleasure as gaps are filled, and new and unseen photographs turn up, often from persons unknown to me, but who, through contacts, have heard of what I'm doing. The National Library's Trove initiative is a wonderful source of information and photographs not published since they first appeared from 70 years to more than 100 years ago.

The 1911 Silver Ghost chassis 1663 (*photograph opposite page*) is a very recent case in point. This car when new was purchased by A.E. Foster of Sydney, and fitted with English coachwork by Arthur Mulliner, in the 'torpedo' style. When I published my first book on these pre-Great War Ghosts in 1999, I had not found any photo of this car. Nor did Tom Clarke and David Neely when they published their great work. But at last, we have a photo of the car when it was owned by the Sydney surgeon, Sir (Dr) Herbert Maitland in 1914. So there we have it. Readers of *The Capital Letter* are the first in the world to see this image since it last appeared in a newspaper in 1916. The car's destiny is unknown. It is one of many Australian Ghosts that have mysteriously disappeared. The last documentation on the car came in 1939. It might well have contributed to the metal collections for the war effort during World War II. Doesn't this research do something for you?! It's exciting isn't it! Well another maybe? See **page 4**. I have literally hundreds and hundreds of like images.

Thank you for giving me the privilege to serve you these last five years. I hope I have left the office in a respectable state.

Ian Irwin O.A.M.
President



Front Cover: There was much of Rolls-Royce & Bentley interest in the recent Royal wedding. Vast numbers of people lined the Long Walk in Windsor while the bridal car, 4AF2, sweeping magnificently by, could hardly have failed to grab the attention of any Rolls-Royce enthusiast. An Australian TV commentator made a very creditable guess, calling it a Silver Wraith, though somebody must have corrected that as he later accurately called it a Phantom IV. Unfortunately he then compounded his original error by referring to the following Range Rovers as "Land Cruisers". Only 18 Phantom IVs were built, of which 4AF2 was the first.

From the Editor

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The attraction of over 1,000 Rolls-Royce & Bentley cars in one thoroughly appealing location was sufficiently irresistible that I again attended the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club Annual Rally this year. Several other A.C.T. Branch members were similarly attracted, and I was able to arrange a group photograph of all eight – yes *eight* – of us (page 8) in addition to the usual 'Australian Photograph' (page 15).

Ian & Tina Oliver were among the A.C.T. Branch participants, along with their 1951 Bentley Mk VI Park Ward drophead coupé B14MD – probably the only A.C.T.-registered car in the U.K. at the time! Gos Cory was there, and having taken the opportunity to visit the Crewe factory and the premises of P. & A. Wood, is preparing an article or two on his adventures for our Spring edition.

Members will have noted that Joe Quattrocchi, a member of our Branch as well as of the New South Wales Branch, has been elected to the position of Federal President. Our best wishes to Joe for his time in this important Club post. Joe was among our number at the recent Fireside Inn lunch in Goulburn, on what proved to be the coldest day of the year so far (see pages 18/19). Also joining us was recently joined member Alan Ford in his Bentley Turbo RL, BNG15389. Welcome to the Club, Alan.

Former N.S.W. member Ray Millington who lives in the Goulburn area, has contacted me regarding the possibility of selling his 1925 20 Horsepower GSK49, with six-light saloon coachwork by English coachbuilder Mann Egerton. This is a fine opportunity for somebody to acquire a particularly charming, 'time capsule' vintage Rolls-Royce with some lovely original coachwork features. It has been in clean, dry storage for, I understand, some 20 years. Ray can be contacted on 02 4834 2163. All Ray asks is "fair market value".

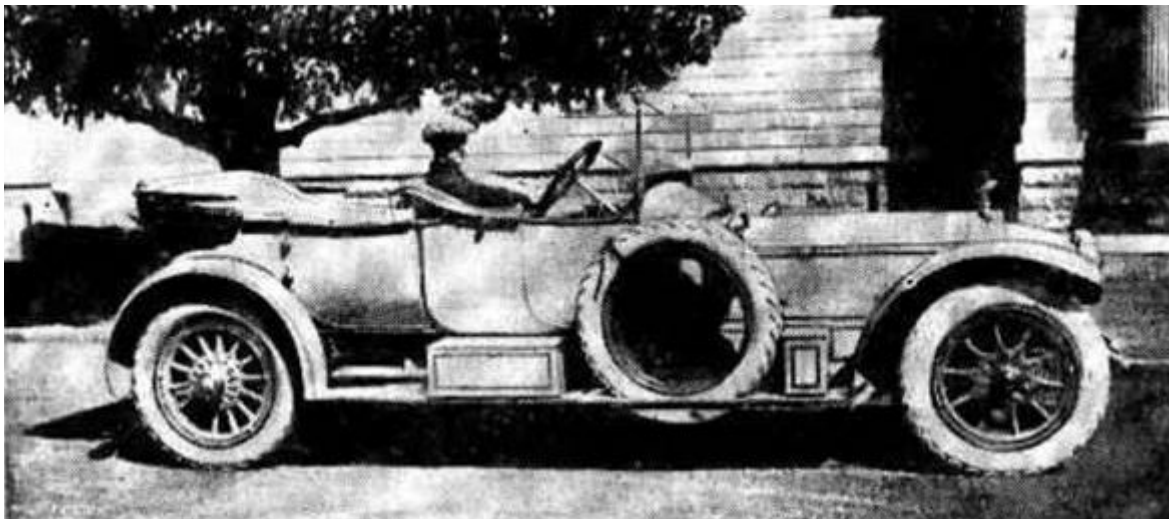
I have recently fitted a new distributor cap, rotor arm and points to our Silver Wraith WHD101. When I put the car back on the road in time for the 2017 Federal Rally, I retained those items which were probably on the car when it was put into storage in 1977, the folly of which is obvious in retrospect. However, having been focussed on the coachwork, I was so pleased that the car ran at all after all those years that I perhaps overlooked some of the shortcomings needing to be addressed. The engine now idles smoothly and quietly with a nice, slow tick-over, accelerates strongly from 20 mph in top gear up steep hills, and goes into over-run with no snatch or other adverse effects – none of which it would do before.

To say that I am pleased would be to understate my delight! The car is now so completely charming to drive (bearing in mind that I was quite satisfied before!) that it has been decided not to fit the electronic ignition system that I showed at our July meeting.

Martin Bennett



Below: 1911 Silver Ghost chassis 1663. See Branch President's notes opposite page.



Sir Herbert Maitland's Rolls-Royce car.

Branch Events Calendar

SEPTEMBER

Wednesday September 5th: Monthly Meeting at the Ainslie Football Club. Dinner from 6.00 p.m., Meeting at 7.30.

Saturday/Sunday September 15th & 16th: The Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia (Victoria Branch) extend an invitation to join them at the Victoria Branch Concours d'Elegance events over the weekend. On Saturday: an open day at both Bill Allsep House and Lionel Gell School of Instruction for Rolls-Royce & Bentley Cars, the judging of cars entered for the Concours d'Elegance at LGSI, and a dinner at the Amora Riverwalk Hotel, Richmond (if attending the dinner please advise Greg Wayman 0402 009 901). On Sunday the Concours Display Day at Xavier College. Bill Allsep House displays a fine collection of heritage artifacts in the SHRF 'Museum' and a collection of documents and publications in the 'Archive'. LGSI features technical facilities and cut away engines which will be complemented on the day by some of the finest marque cars in Victoria. Morning and afternoon tea as well as lunch will be available at BAH and LGSI.

OCTOBER

Wednesday October 3rd: Monthly Meeting at the Ainslie Football Club. Dinner from 6.00 p.m., Meeting at 7.30.

Date TBA: Run to Cliftonwood Homestead, Old Hume Highway, Yass. Date will be advised to members by email.

NOVEMBER

Wednesday November 7th: Monthly Meeting at the Ainslie Football Club. Dinner from 6.00 p.m., Meeting at 7.30.

Saturday November 3rd: Classic Yass display day, Banjo Paterson and Riverside Parks, Yass. For entry form please contact Ken Reidy on 0408 632 492 by October 12th.



***Below:** One of the photographs discovered by Branch President Ian Irwin and referred to in his message on page 2. It shows 1926 Phantom I chassis 48YC, at the gates of the Mount Buffalo Chalet in the Victorian High Country. Again, an unpublished photo until now. This is one of 18 of this car that Ian has been kindly gifted recently. This car survives, with genuine low mileage and its original Martin & King tourer coachwork intact.*





***Above:** In the cold and drizzle, with single-digit ambient temperatures made colder by winds straight up from the Antarctic, only two Branch members took their cars to Crookwell, which stands at an elevation of some 900 metres. Here we see Tim Collins' 1986 Silver Spirit ASG15221 and, behind, the only other Branch car to brave the elements.*

Show 'n' Shine at the Potato Festival

Saturday May 12th, Crookwell, N.S.W.

***Below:** One of the Potato Festival officials exhibited his Silver Shadow II, increasing the Rolls-Royce total by 50 per cent.*





A.C.T. Branch members Ian & Tina Oliver and their 1951 Bentley Mk VI Park Ward drophead coupé B14MD, with the 16th century Burghley House behind.

The 2018 Annual Rally of the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club

Burghley House, Stamford, Lincolnshire

June 22nd - 24th

Photographs by the Editor except where otherwise credited





Above: The 'three-position drophead coupé' is so called because it can be fully closed, fully open, or in the 'coupé de ville' position as seen here on 1934 Bentley 3 1/2-Litre Gurney Nutting drophead coupé, B55BL.

Below: 3AX79, the 1937 Phantom III famously used during World War II by Field Marshall Viscount Montgomery. The unusual coachwork, with its curious forward-sloping windscreen, is the work of H.J. Mulliner & Co. Photograph by Klaus-Josef Rossfeldt.





Above: Members of the A.C.T. Branch at the R.R.E.C. Annual Rally. From left to right they are: Beverley McLean, Andrew Wood (of P. & A. Wood), Neil McLean, your Editor, Richard Mann, Tina Oliver, Gos Cory, Ian Oliver.

Below: Two Silver Wraiths, both with coachwork by Park Ward, eight years apart: in the foreground WZB29 shows the 1948 look while behind, ELW15 is a 1955 car showing John Blatchley's styling for the Long Wheelbase touring saloons. Photographs this page courtesy of Klaus-Josef Rossfeldt (owner of ELW15).





Above: Ian & Tina Oliver and their 1951 Earls Court Motor Show car B14MD, with Richard Mann and your Editor. Richard began his coachbuilding career at the High Road, Willesden premises of Park Ward & Co. where the coachwork on B14MD was built, finally rising to the position of Senior Quality Engineer with the later combined firm Mulliner Park Ward. We of the A.C.T. Branch are privileged to count Richard among our members. Photo by Gos Cory.

Below: Although the luxuriously fitted-out 'Countryman' saloons were nominally the work of London coachbuilder Harold Radford (Coachbuilders) Ltd, the actual work was contracted out to another coachbuilder, Seary & McReady. This 1950 example, on chassis B190KM, was beautifully presented, with all of its accessories.





Above: A regular feature of R.R.E.C. Annual Rallies is a fly-over of Rolls-Royce-powered aircraft. This year, the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight provided no fewer than three in formation – an Avro Lancaster, a Supermarine Spitfire and a Hawker Hurricane, making a total of six Merlin engines overhead at once – four of them on one aircraft! Klaus-Josef Rossfeldt took this shot of Ian & Tina Oliver's B14MD as the three World War II aircraft passed over the Rally venue. **Below** we see three more Bentley Mk VI Park Ward drophead coupés of an earlier design than B14MD. Where else could this be seen?





Above: Coachbuilt cars, as opposed to the standard steel saloons, only amounted to around 20% of Bentley Mk VIs and R-types. It is therefore pretty amazing to see so many of the coachbuilt cars gathered in one place. This is 1952 R-type Freestone & Webb saloon, B12RT – only the sixth R-type built.



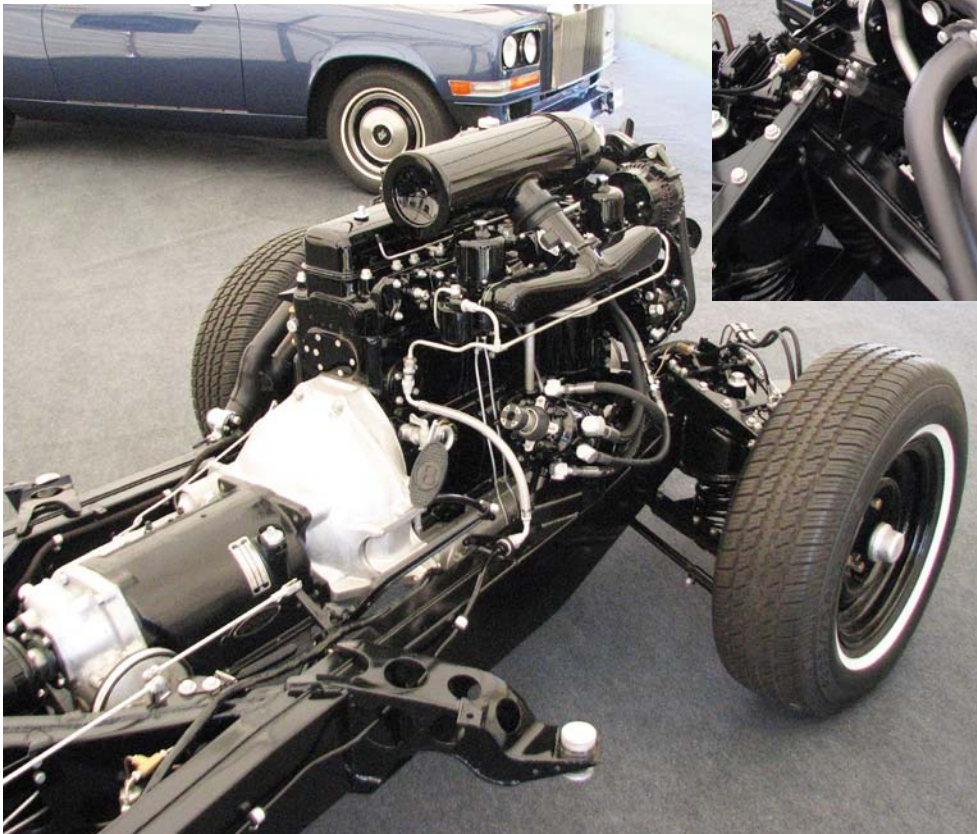
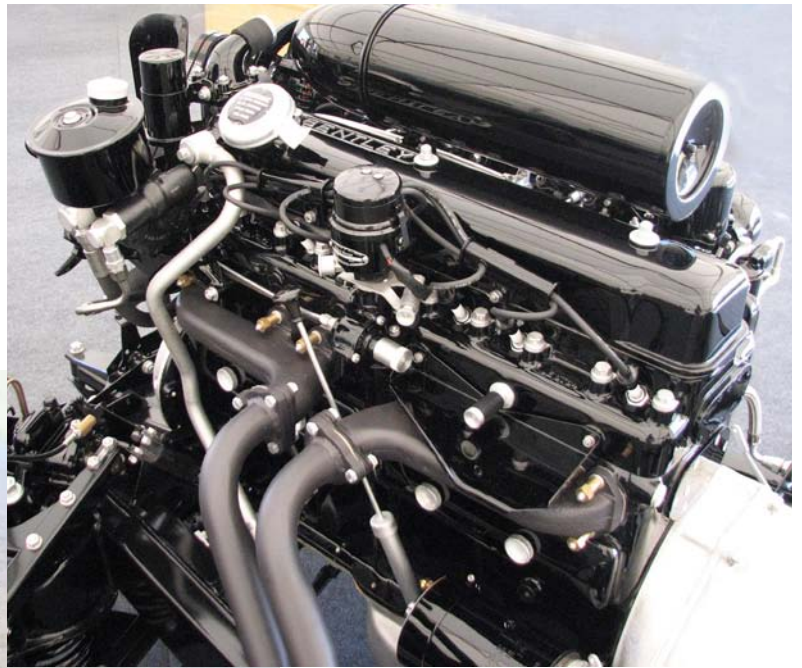
Above: 1957 Bentley S1 James Young saloon, B148BA. Your Editor once owned one of these rare cars and had a “wish I’d kept it” moment on seeing this one!

Below: When Hooper & Co. built coachwork on the Silver Cloud chassis, their designer Osmond Rivers took no visual cues whatsoever from the standard saloon. This is SZB27, a 1956 Silver Cloud with coachwork by Hooper.





***This page:** One of the many trade displays at the Rally included this magnificent restoration of a 1958 Bentley S1 Continental chassis, BC21EL. Excellent attention to detail was in evidence.*





***Above:** Bentley Continentals such as this 1958 S1 Continental with highly sought-after Park Ward drophead coupé coachwork command seven-figure sums these days.*

***Below:** 1959 Silver Cloud H.J. Mulliner drophead coupé, SKG31. Photograph by Klaus-Josef Rossfeldt.*





Above: This Silver Cloud III Park Ward drophead coupé was owned by Barry Gibb in the Bee Gees' heyday.

Below: A pair of early Silver Shadow two-door saloons, sharing the same colour scheme, made a pretty sight parked alongside each other. The coachwork is of course by H.J. Mulliner, Park Ward Ltd.





Above: Of great interest was 1911 Silver Ghost chassis 1701, the legendary original 'London-Edinburgh' car from which a whole new model of the Silver Ghost arose. By 1963 the chassis frame and some other parts were all that remained, which in no way detracts from the historical importance or continuity of the car resulting from P. & A. Wood's restoration.

Below: The 'Australian Photograph' is traditionally taken at noon on the Sunday of each R.R.E.C. Annual Rally. Here is this year's Australian group, courtesy of Klaus-Josef Rossfeldt.





***Above:** On the Saturday evening of the Rally, at this lovely old country pub, the Royal Oak, your Editor enjoyed the company of fellow members for dinner, as seen **below** from left to right: Gos Cory, Fiona Clarke (U.K.), Barbara & Mark Glanville (N.S.W.), your Editor, Richard Mann (U.K.) and Tom Clarke (U.K.). Photo by Royal Oak waitress on Gos Cory's camera.*





Above: It is July 1950 at Bedford Park Works, the Chiswick, west London coachworks of H.J. Mulliner & Co., and in the final finishing shop body number 5034 is being prepared for delivery to Their Royal Highnesses Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh. This is of course the famous Phantom IV chassis 4AF2, still in use in its original ownership though now seldom seen in public. After Princess Elizabeth came to the throne as Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, 4AF2's Valentine Green paintwork gave way to Royal Claret and Black as seen in all its glory during the recent Royal wedding. In 1950 H.J. Mulliner & Co. were building coachwork on three Rolls-Royce and Bentley chassis types, and one of their Silver Wraiths may be glimpsed on the left-hand side. Photograph: Editor's Collection.

Below: 1950 Phantom IV 4AF2 as seen during the recent Royal wedding. Note the fitting of sealed-beam units to the original R.100 headlamps, one of several specification updates carried out on this car over the decades.





Above: Branch Treasurer Ian Oliver drove his 2016 Bentley Continental GT, BNG56355.

Winter Lunch at the Fireside Inn

Sunday July 15th, Goulburn, N.S.W.

Right: Our Secretary Peter Hyland's 1982 Silver Spirit, ASC04176.



Below: The earliest car present was 1949 Silver Wraith Hooper touring limousine, WFC67, brought along by owners Bryce & Marcia Ronning.



Below: Martin & Manuela Bennett arrived in their 1950 Silver Wraith H.J. Mulliner touring limousine, WHD101.





***Above:** Recently joined Branch member Alan Ford (centre) joined us in his fine 1986 Bentley Turbo RL, BNG15389.*

***Below:** Garry & Annette Scorgie cruised comfortably up from Yass in their 1976 Silver Shadow, SRH23952, seen here against the backdrop of Goulburn's historic court-house, built in 1881 to the design of architect James Barnett.*





The small changes carried out on 4AF2 over the decades include the removal of number-plate mountings (the sovereign's cars are exempt from wearing registration plates) and the fitting of flashing indicators and other lamps which it did not have when new.



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