



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

Autumn 2018



B89TO

1953 Bentley R-type saloon

Martin Bennett (Vic.)



From the Branch President

We are home from our adventure to the 2018 Federal Rally in South Australia. Based at Clare, this year's Rally was organised as a touring event. There were day runs through the Clare Valley and to neighbouring districts and townships. Interesting area, but not looking its best, as there had been many months of no rain at all.

We arrived on Wednesday 11th and were met with high winds and a dust storm as we headed north in our hired car from Adelaide airport. The Federal Council Meeting was held on Thursday 12th, as many more cars arrived. These participants had to encounter even worse winds and much worse dust storms, and the hoses were going, and chamois out all afternoon. Then as the evening wore on, light rains began to fall. The locals were overjoyed. And the rain continued on and off for the rest of the event, with some windy moments, but there was no real concern for most of the time.



It was interesting to find that no seminars were scheduled for this event. And I did not hear one single complaint about that. Without seminars, there was freedom to drive and enjoy, to drive into the shops, restaurants and cafes, and to visit a couple of exhibitions that were being held independent of the event. It was a most relaxing few days.

I will give an account of the relevant affairs of the Federal Council at the next Branch meeting, mainly those issues which directly affect the Branches. The Federal Constitution is to be reviewed over the coming months, with input from all Branches. This will be a task for the present and future members of the Branch Executive. The Constitution, or rules that govern the Federal operations, have not been fully reviewed for many years. The Immediate Past Federal President, Neil Matthews, has been involved in difficult negotiations with the Rolls-Royce and Bentley companies and has succeeded in having a new agreement reached in respect of matters which affect the Club's affairs with these fundamental bodies. There will of necessity, be more information to pass on to members in the near future, the fundamentals of which, I expect, will be passed on by the Federal President in the next issue of PRAECLARUM.

Many thanks too, to Robert Parker, an A.C.T. Branch member for hosting a pleasant evening at his historic Clare home, Wolta Wolta Homestead. Robert had invited two other event participants, Ian & Tina Oliver, and Ida and myself to have a look over his charming 1850s stone homestead that was largely damaged by the bushfires of 1984. It has been painstakingly restored since, and is really a wonderful home. Following our visit, the group went out to dinner at Seven Hills Hotel and all had a really pleasant evening. Thank you Robert, and it was wonderful to meet with you. We enjoyed our evening very much.

I would like to congratulate the South Australian Branch, and in particular Rory Poland, the 2018 Federal Rally Director, on the hosting of a very successful event. Truly memorable.

*Ian Irwin O.A.M.
President.*



Front Cover: Your Editor on 17th May 1970 during a run with the Victoria Branch of which he was then a member, driving his Bentley R-type B89TO, with friend Graham Bird in the passenger's seat. The location is St Kilda Road, just north of the intersection with Domain Road where the Club met monthly on a Sunday morning for runs into the country, in this instance to Mount Macedon. There is another Bentley behind and a Jaguar Mk V in the left background, while Holdens are well represented. Photograph by Fred English (Vic. and now also N.S.W.), courtesy of David Neely (N.S.W.).

From the Editor

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Member Gos Cory who left for sunnier climes some time ago has retained his membership of and interest in the A.C.T. Branch and you may have noticed that he still regularly contributes to *The Capital Letter* with photographs and occasionally an article, including a total of six pages in this edition. Gos also joined us for 'Wheels' on March 4th.

David Neely (N.S.W.) recently sent some photographs taken by Fred English who was for several decades photographer for the Victoria Branch, recording every Branch event, as well as Federal Rallies, mostly in wonderful black & white, which half a century on enhances their nostalgic, period feel. In total these thousands of photographs amount to an invaluable record and archive, and the collection has been secured by the Sir Henry Royce Foundation Australia. Gilbert Ralph (Vic.) was very helpful in identifying the Club events at which the half-dozen photographs from this collection sent to me were taken, between 1968 and 1970. Two are reproduced here – on the front cover and on this page.

Beneath the front cover photograph I have attributed my Club membership to Victoria as that was the case when the picture was taken, in May 1970, in Melbourne. The photograph below was taken in Canberra the following month, at the 12th Federal Rally (and the first for Manuela & me). There was no A.C.T. Branch at the time. When Manuela and I moved to Goulburn in 1982, news of a proposed Australian Capital Territory Branch reached us and we joined the embryonic Branch, though its status as a Branch of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia had not yet been formalised by the Federal Council.

Our Branch, now some 35 years old and firmly established as an integral part of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia, warmly welcomes new members Oliver Trajkovski of Taylors Lakes, Victoria, Dave Morgan of Narooma, N.S.W. who owns a 1972 Silver Shadow SRH13910 (see page 7), and Edward Sommerville of Carwoola, N.S.W. who has a 1989 Bentley Eight BEK27495. At the same time we bid farewell to Derek & Heather Watt who have returned to the U.K. Derek provided a great deal of valued technical assistance to members and their cars during the time he was with us.

Martin Bennett

Below: Your Editor's beard, seen in the front cover photograph taken only the previous month, is no longer in evidence during the Federal Rally in Canberra in June 1970, as this photo of Martin & Manuela during that event attests. That Rally long pre-dated the advent of the A.C.T. Branch and was hosted by N.S.W. On the right of the picture is fellow Victoria Branch member Brian Wodetski who owned 1939 Wraith WRB40. Photograph by Fred English, courtesy of David Neely (N.S.W.).



Branch Events Calendar

MAY

Wednesday May 2nd: Monthly Meeting at the Ainslie Football Club. Dinner from 6.00 p.m., Meeting at 7.30.

Saturday May 12th: Crookwell Potato Festival 'Show & Shine'.

JUNE

Wednesday June 6th: Monthly Meeting at the Ainslie Football Club. Dinner from 6.00 p.m., Meeting at 7.30.

JULY

Wednesday July 4th: Monthly Meeting at the Ainslie Football Club. Dinner from 6.00 p.m., Meeting at 7.30.

Sunday July 15th: Lunch Run to the Fireside Inn, Goulburn. 12.30 p.m. arrival in Market Street, Goulburn.



***Below:** Offered for auction at last year's R.R.E.C. Annual Rally was this magnificent 1949 Bentley Mk VI Park Ward drophead coupé, B373DZ, photographed by the Editor in the auction tent. Behind is Experimental Silver Wraith 41EX.*





Early post-war windscreen washers


By Martin Bennett

In late 1949 a new item of equipment was introduced on the Silver Wraith, Silver Dawn and Bentley Mk VI – a Trico vacuum-operated windscreen washer set. Seven decades on there can't be very many of these still working. The problem invariably lies with the vacuum diaphragm chamber mounted on the lid of the glass bottle. More often than not the trouble is in the rubber diaphragm itself.

Although complete new sets are available, the price is prohibitive and it would in any case be a great extravagance to replace *everything*, including the glass bottle and the cradle in which it sits, when all that's needed is a new vacuum chamber. If that could be made available as a separate part, owners would be better served and less inclined to seek alternatives as I did.

For those who place a high value on authenticity, or at a minimum the *appearance* of authenticity, any noticeable alteration to the appearance of the windscreen washing equipment would be out of the question. I therefore bought,

for a few dollars on eBay, a small electric windscreen washer pump which I attached to the bottom of the cradle under the water bottle where it is invisible to anybody who doesn't go looking for it with a mirror. The simple wiring for this was enclosed in flexible black plastic sleeving in the Rolls-Royce manner of the time, so that like the rest of the installation it is completely inconspicuous. A 12-volt push-button of suitable quality and appearance needs to be installed: a Phantom VI fuel filler flap release button that I had in my spare parts store satisfied these requirements.

The original black rubber delivery tube needed to be re-routed to the electric pump outlet and a new tube fitted between the original water outlet below the vacuum chamber and the pump. Again, to the casual observer the whole appearance remains unchanged and I need not fear being refused the annual roadworthiness certificate due to non-working windscreen washers! The rules indicate that if a car never had windscreen washers they are not required to be fitted, but if they are fitted they must work. 

Top: The new but unobtrusive pushbutton for the windscreen washers is to the left of the 'roof light' switch. **Below:** Under the bonnet, the difference between before (*left*) and after (*right*) the conversion to electric operation of the windscreen washers is very subtle and few would notice the little changes and additions, all of which are in any case reversible in minutes.





Above: Ian & Tina Oliver's 1951 Earls Court Motor Show car, 1951 Bentley Mk VI Park Ward drophead coupé, B14MD – only the seventh 4½-litre Mk VI.

‘Wheels’ 2018

March 4th, Queanbeyan Showground

***Below left:** The engine compartment of B14MD. Note the twin S.U. type H.6 carburettors, generous-sized air intake silencer and above that, the demister duct. **Below right:** For visual effect, some coachbuilt Bentley Mk VIs such as this one had a bonnet four inches (100 m.m.) longer than that of the standard steel saloon. The black cowling immediately ahead of the radiator header tank fills the space normally occupied by the radiator shell, due to that item being further forward than standard.*





Above: John Tetley's 1981 Bentley Mulsanne BSB03228 and newly-joined member Dave Morgan's 1972 Silver Shadow SRH13910.

Below: John Tetley's other Bentley, 1987 Turbo R BSH21535. In evidence is the recently-fitted chrome mesh grille (see The Capital Letter August/September 2017).





Above: Gos Cory reading the plaque on Ian & Tina Oliver's 1951 Bentley Mk VI standard steel saloon B162MD. Gos was on a road-trip from Queensland, keeping in touch with his Club Branch. See pages 10 to 13.

Below: Goulburn duo WFC67 and WHD101 brought along by Goulburn duo Bryce Ronning and Martin Bennett.





***This page:** Lawrie & Jane Nock's 1973 Corniche Convertible DRH16855 was chosen as Mayoral transport at 'Wheels'. John Tetley is driving and in the back seat are Tim Overall, Mayor of Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council, and his wife Nicole. The front seat passenger is Councillor Peter Bray. These two photos: Graham Gittins (A.C.T. Council of Car Clubs).*





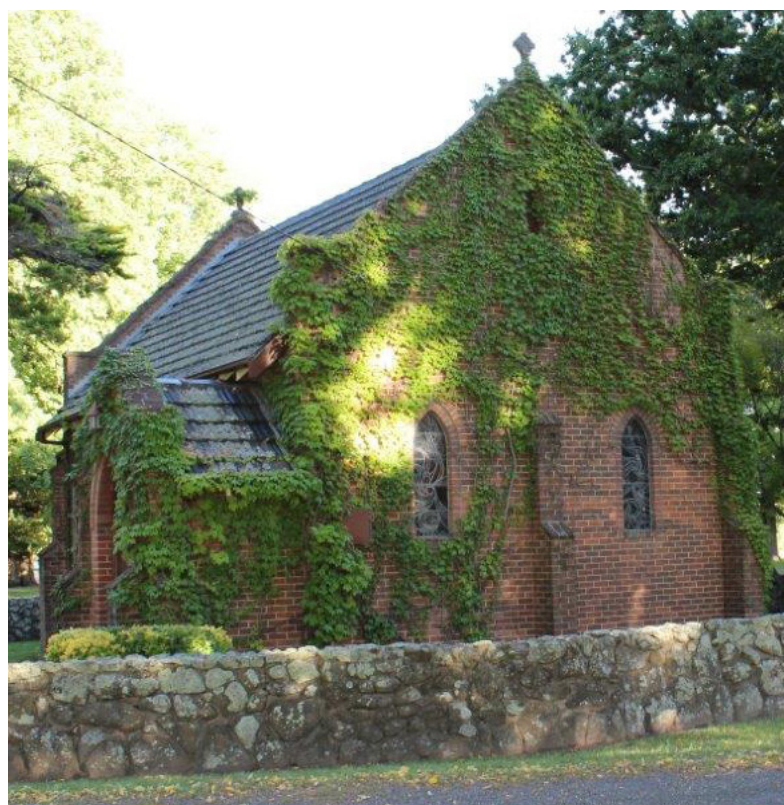
Above: 1924 Springfield Silver Ghost 'Pickwick' by Willoughby and Co., S64LK, once owned by R.R.O.C. member Dr John Matheson (N.S.W.) and now on display at the West Gosford Classic Car Museum. \$265k asking price.

West Gosford Classic Car Museum and other diversions *en route* to 'Wheels'

By Gos Cory

As an A.C.T. Branch member posted north I occasionally travel down to catch up with the Branch, its activities and members. Last year a trip to the Federal Rally sufficed, this year Wheels Day was the event. The Branch's executive jet was unavailable therefore I chose to drive and enjoy some attractions along the way. With fuel prices around \$1.50 a litre and time constraints I drove a modern car in lieu of my 70-year-old Bentley.

Heading due west then turning south, mid-afternoon saw me at my family's 1820s land grant and my namesake, 'Gostwyck', a few miles east of Uralla. There is a quaint 1920s chapel and a spectacular heritage-listed shearing shed, reminders that original land grantees were the forerunners of property developers, chancing their fortunes as they moved from venture to venture. This property is now one of the leading fine wool producers in the world, using 21st century technology and evolving grazing practices. Unlike their 1950s



Right: The quaint 1920s chapel adjoining the **writer's** family's 1820s land grant a few miles east of Uralla, New South Wales.



Above: The spectacular heritage-listed shearing shed on the writer's ancestral property 'Gostwyck', near Uralla. Nowadays this property is one of the leading fine wool producers in the world.

wool producer counterparts, no Bentleys or Rolls-Royces were seen in the paddocks.

Dusk saw me in Tamworth, home of the Golden Guitar and the Powerhouse Motorcycle Museum. If four wheels are sometimes two too many this will be of interest. The 50 or so exhibits are models many of we baby boomers aspired to before knees began aching and backs stiffening. The collection features bikes from the 1950s onwards such as Ducati, Harley Davidson, BSA, Norton, Matchless, Triumph, Honda, Velocette, Laverda and Yamaha, all immaculately restored. A couple of hours of dreaming well spent in my case.

The next stop, a few hundred kilometres on, was the West Gosford Classic Car Museum. This has been operational for a few years and is housed in an old Bunnings complex.

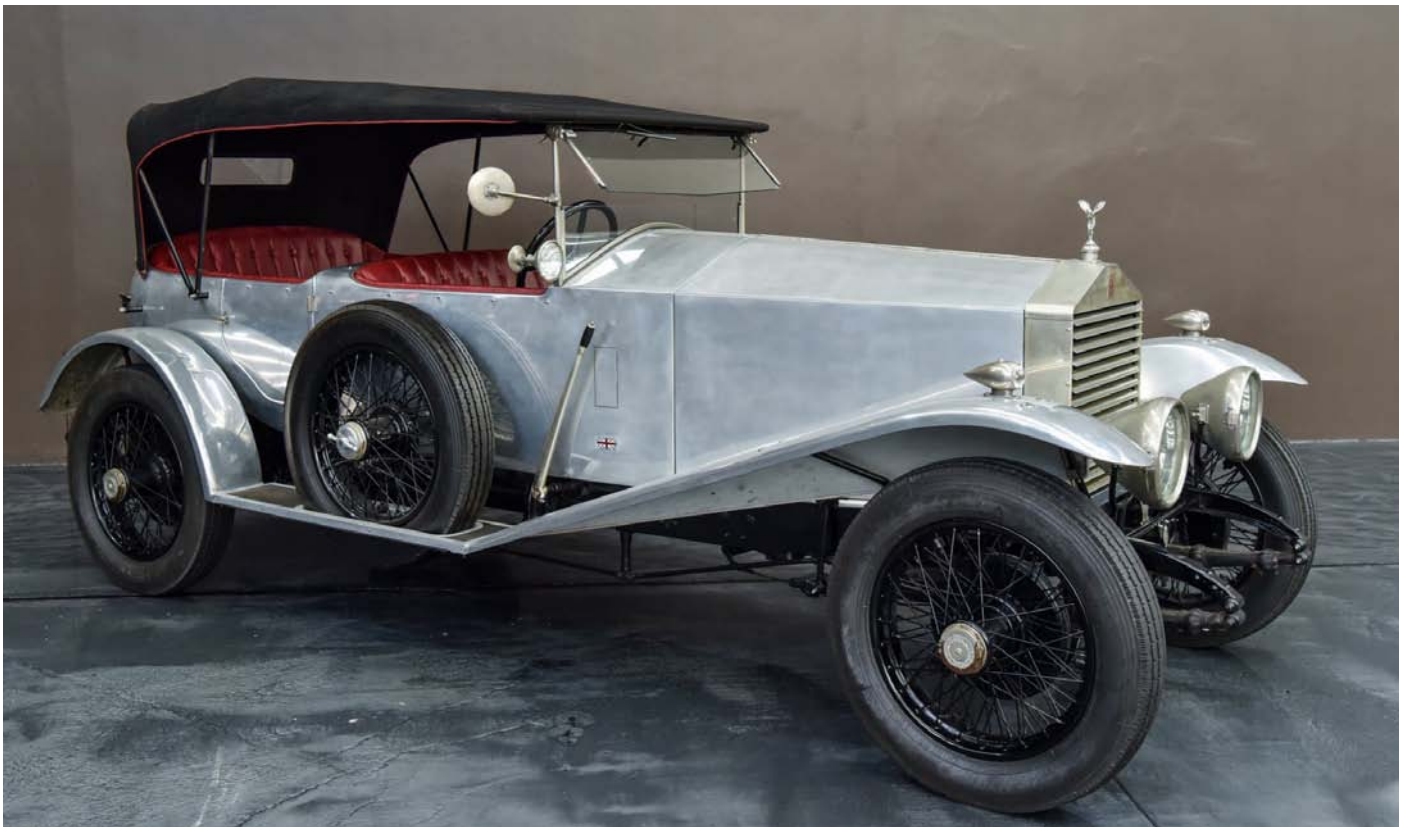
Claimed to be born out of a local entrepreneur's "passion for the artistry of automobiles" it covers some hectares and boasts over 400 vehicles worth in excess of \$70 million.

In the vast range of exhibits are a couple of "sub collections". One is of 25 Soviet Union and Eastern European cars, many ordinary (enough for a reshoot of *Gorky Park*) but some genuine classics such as a Zil limousine with a 7.7-litre V8 and weighing 3.5 tonnes – a poor comrade's Phantom VI – and a range of Tatra V8s. The other sub collection, of 53 Ramblers, is a more of an acquired taste.

The marques we are most interested in are represented by twenty or so exhibits. Similar examples would have been seen at the Federal Rally but it is pleasing to seem them here nonetheless. Highlights are a Silver Cloud III Park Ward ➡

Below: A fascinating 1938 Lancia Astura with with a narrow-angle 2.5-litre V8 engine and handsome cabriolet coachwork. A mere \$600k.





Above: Rolls-Royce 20 Horsepower "Sports", recently re-bodied locally. Yours for around \$70k.

convertible, an ex-Government Phantom VI and a Springfield Silver Ghost ('Pickwick' style by Willoughby and Co.). Also on display are some post-war coachbuilt cars and a nice Derby Bentley Gurney Nutting sedanca coupé. Unfortunately there is no catalogue so chassis numbers are unavailable. It is noted that most of the cars were acquired locally.

Other makes of interest include, for example, Alvis, Invic-

ta, Pierce-Arrow, MG and Jaguar, numerous virtually new Porsches, Lamborghinis and Ferraris plus a good range of curiosities such as the Aussi Invader WSR Car, a Cirrus-powered vintage racing car, a Haflinger amphibian and of course the Gogomobile Dart.

I found a fascinating Lancia Astura, a 1930s 4-door cabriolet with a narrow-angle 2.5-litre V8, and a couple of the motor-

Below: 1937 Bentley 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ Litre with particularly handsome and desirable sedanca coupé coachwork by Gurney Nutting.





Above: If you were to identify this car as an Allard, you would at least have the first two letters right as it is in fact an Alvis TB14 of 1948-50. Whilst the grille shape seems very un-Alvis-like, and the body style is perhaps reminiscent of a Jowett Jupiter, the red triangle badge proves the Alvis pedigree. The bodies for this model were supplied by A P Metalcraft, though other coachbuilders including Park Ward supplied most Alvis coachwork. Yours for \$149k.

cycles were very interesting.

All of the cars are for sale, some more than others which are actively advertised. The prices don't seem to be extreme, either. I found a Camargue that had sold for \$75k which I thought fair and there is a very smart newly-polished aluminium-bodied 20 Horsepower "sports" on sale for a little bit less.

This is not a museum to see the best examples of the cars we are devoted to, however for those with a slightly broader interest in old cars it is a worthwhile afternoon and for those it is recommended.

Entry is \$20, or \$18 for seniors, and refreshments are available.



Right: Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud III Park Ward drophead coupé.





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

Breakfast at Clementine's

April 22nd, Yass, N.S.W.

The President and 22 members and guests in eight Rolls-Royce & Bentley cars attended for breakfast at Clementine's in Yass, N.S.W.

Below: Lawrie Nock and Chris O'Rourke.

Below: From left to right, Jane Nock and Ken & Francis Lo.





***Above:** With their Bentley Mk VI Park Ward drophead coupé (see page 6) shipped off to the U.K. for the R.R.E.C. Annual Rally, Ian & Tina Oliver brought their 1951 standard saloon B162MD to Yass.*



***Above:** Around the table in the foreground, clockwise from left, are Bryce Ronning, Marcia Ronning, Manuela Bennett, Jason Bennett and Peter Hyland. In the centre background are Garry & Annette Scorgie. **Below left:** Two Goulburn Silver Wraiths WFC67 and WHD101 require no introduction and, **below right**, nor does Jane Nock's 1961 Bentley S2 B113BR.*





Above: Autumn leaves frame Secretary Peter Hyland's 1982 Silver Spirit ASC04176.

Below: Ken & Frances Lo's 1986 Silver Spirit ASG15800.

Bottom: John Tetley chose his 1987 Bentley Turbo R BSH21535 for the run to Yass.



Opposite page: Reflected Glory – now that's what I call polish! New South Wales President Bruce Duncan sent this shot of a friend's Bentley Continental GT reflected in the boot lid of Bruce's superb award-winning 1951 Mk VI B255LH.







Above: Gos Cory sent me this shot showing his 1949 Bentley Mk VI B474DA at an Australia Day display on the Sunshine Coast where he and Liz now reside. **Below:** Some of the interior woodwork recently refurbished by Gos. Note in particular the elegant shapes of the Freestone & Webb door cappings.

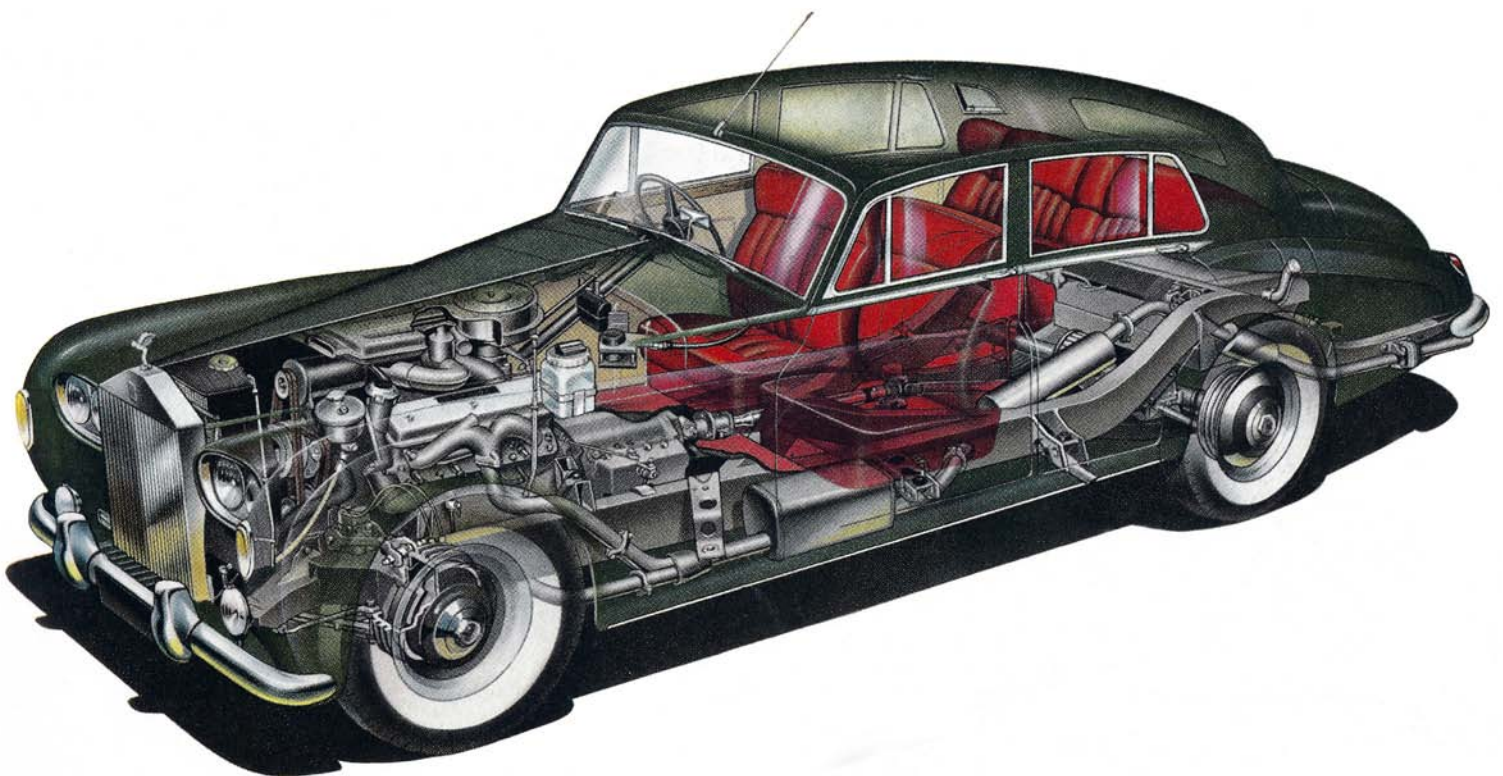


Car For Sale



1997 **Bentley Brooklands** (BEV59640) in excellent condition. Comprehensively serviced by Paradise Garage, and most recently by Garth Selig in Sydney. 90,860 km. Registered until June. Will be sold with N.S.W. 'pink slip' and standard N.S.W. number plate. Current plate 137 does not go with the car. \$70,000. Peter Colwell 0409 927 185 or email: fastoy@ozemail.com.au

Below: The 'X-ray' colour rendering of the Silver Cloud III that was used in publicity material of the time.





Erstwhile Senior Vice-President Gos Cory sent this shot of his 1949 Bentley Mk VI Freestone & Webb saloon B474DA with an MG TC of similar vintage and looking very like the one that Gos himself owned for many years, disposing of it just before moving from Goulburn to the Sunshine Coast where the picture was taken.



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