



THE CAPITAL LETTER

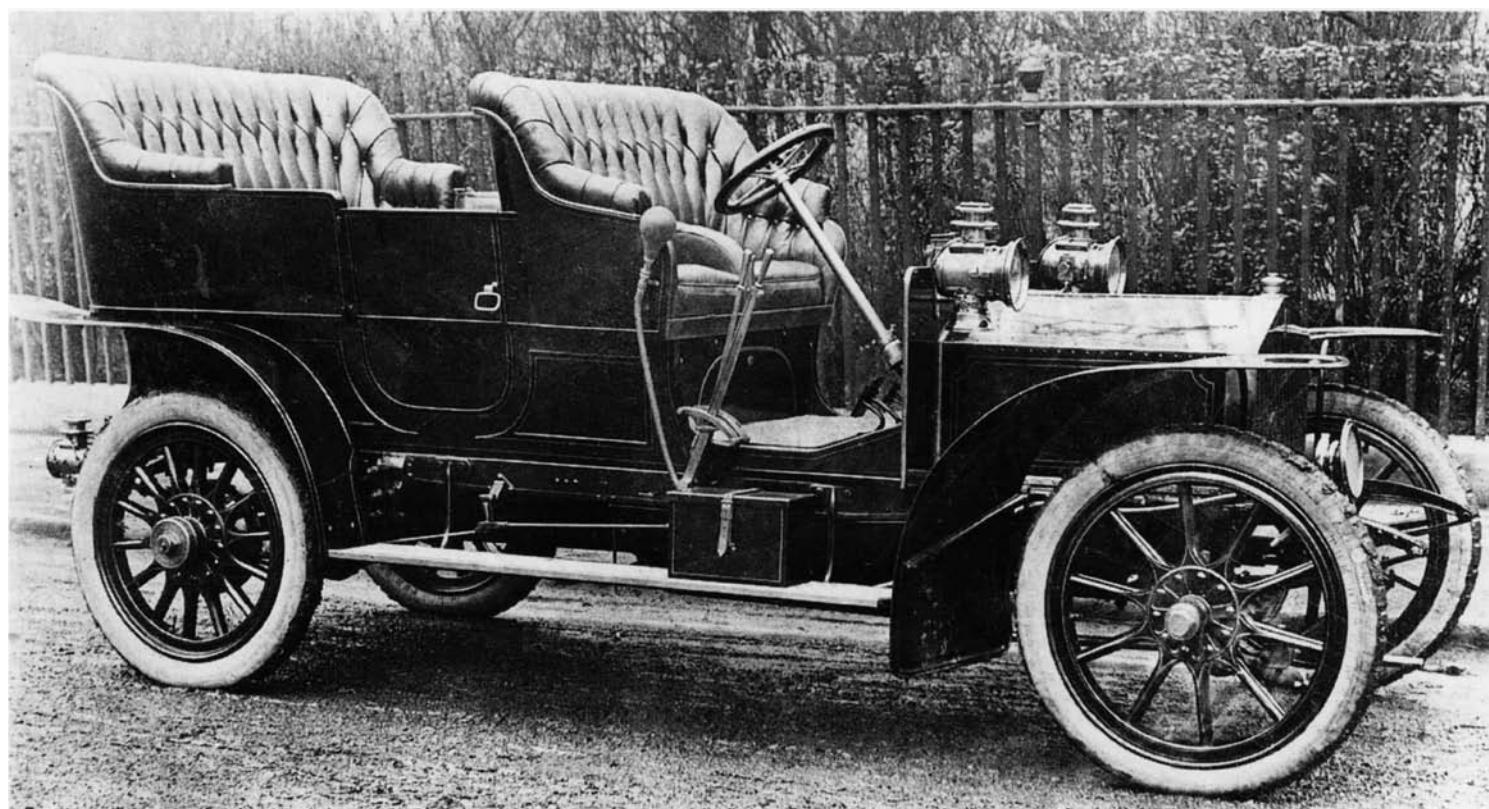
Quarterly journal of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia (A.C.T. Branch) Inc.
Serving the Australian Capital Territory and surrounding areas.



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

DEDICATED TO ROLLS-ROYCE & BENTLEY ENTHUSIASTS

Autumn 2019



40509

1906 'Heavy' 20 h.p. Barker 'standard' tourer



The first Rolls-Royce to arrive in Australia

From the Editor & President

hjmullinersw@bigpond.com



Recent correspondence from the N.S.W. Roads & Maritime Services provided the information that as a club participating in the Historic Registration scheme we may appoint as many 'Responsible Persons' authorised to sign off and stamp Part 4 of the application/renewal form as our geographical circumstances require. Our Club is of course in full compliance, and the 'Responsible Persons' in our Club are:

Technical Registrar Phil Sproston
Branch President Martin Bennett
Junior Vice-President Peter Toet
Branch Secretary Peter Hyland
and Bryce Ronning, JP

Contact details for most of these are on the back page. When using the post for signing and stamping with the Club stamp, it would be appreciated if you would include a stamped self-addressed envelope for the return of the form. Members with cars registered under either of the two conditional/concessional registration schemes (A.C.T. or N.S.W.) must ensure that they do not allow their club financial membership status to lapse, which would nullify their registration and third party insurance.

Although I previously reported the departure from the Club of Ludy & Elizabeth Bobruk, it had transpired that Ludy & Elizabeth opted to retain their membership, so I am delighted to announce that two lovely people have not left us after all.

Our first and second events for 2019 were unavoidably only a week apart, which did not appear to have dampened the enthusiasm and support of our members. For our first event of the year we were privileged to welcome three members of the New South Wales Branch who joined us for this commemoration of the arrival on these shores of the first Rolls-Royce car to come to Australia. Indications are that this may become an annual joint event with each of the two participating Branches organising it in turn. On this inaugural occasion there were to have been five members from the N.S.W. Branch but John Matheson & Jeanne Eve were unable to join us after John suffered a broken hip a few days earlier. Jeanne has kept in touch and has advised that John is progressing well after his operation. We wish him all the very best for a speedy and wholly successful rehabilitation.

A week later was 'Wheels', at which we celebrated the centenary of the Bentley marque. Many car manufacturers started up after the Great War and many other centenarians such as Alvis, Armstrong Siddeley and Citroen come to mind without even ➡



***Left:** To enthusiasts of the marque, the success of C.S. Rolls, driving Rolls-Royce 'Light Twenty' 26350B to victory in the 1906 Isle of Man Tourist Trophy race, forms a significant part of early Rolls-Royce lore. Here we see the winning car and, behind, the other competing 'Light Twenty' 40523, in Douglas, Isle of Man. Photograph courtesy of Tom Clarke.*

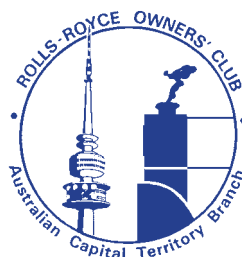
Front Cover: The first Rolls-Royce car to arrive in Australia was this 1906 'Heavy' 4-cylinder 20 h.p. 40509. The coachwork was the tourer of the standard range of bodies offered at the time, built by Barker. It was finished in dark green. On February 24th we commemorated the arrival of this car in Australia (see above and page 9). Photograph from 'The Edwardian Rolls-Royce, Vol. I', via Tom Clarke.

looking beyond 'C' in the alphabet. Although some of those were also represented on the day, it gives considerable pleasure to be able to say that our display of centenarians was by far the most extensive and varied.

Following my request in the Summer 2018/2019 edition of *The Capital Letter*, a small number of members have asked that they continue to receive the newsletter in mailed, hard-copy form. All such requests will of course be complied with. In the meantime, following a decision of your Committee, you are reading this edition in hard-copy form as an interim measure pending our website being up and running, after which most members will receive their *Capital Letter* by means of a link on the website. The building of our website is progressing and I beg the indulgence of members if it seems a little slow in coming to fruition.

As this edition was being finalised for press, around 17 members and guests enjoyed a most excellent event, meeting at Ian & Tina Oliver's impressive car storage facility in Phillip, followed by a marvellous lunch, modestly described as a "sausage sizzle", at their lovely home, with much technical discussion and practical demonstration involving members' cars. Photographic coverage will feature in our next edition.

Martin Bennett
Branch President



Branch Events Calendar

MAY

May 1st - 6th: Annual Federal Rally, Toowoomba, Qld., hosted by the Queensland Branch.

Sunday May 26th: Open day at Peter & Ann Toet's garages in Evatt and Hall.

JUNE

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

Sunday June 16th: 'Battle of Waterloo'. British and French car clubs battle it out for supremacy.

JULY

Sunday July 14th: 10.00 a.m. morning coffee at the home of Martin & Manuela Bennett followed by lunch at the Fireside Inn, Goulburn.

AUGUST

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

Sunday August 11th: Run to Braidwood for coffee at the Bakery, then on to River Forest Road and the Mongarlowe River picnic area in the Monga National Park for a picnic / barbecue lunch. Picnic tables and coin-operated gas barbecue facilities.

SEPTEMBER

Sunday September 15th: Run to Wakefield Park for historic race day. Date and details of this event subject to change.

OCTOBER

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

Sunday October 13th: Brunch run to Sutton Café followed by the Tulip Farm.

NOVEMBER

Saturday November 30th: From 9.00 a.m., End-of-Year 'brunch' get-together at the home of Martin & Manuela Bennett.

DECEMBER

Sunday December 1st: 'Terribly British Day', Queanbeyan Park.

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



***Above:** After air raids in 1940 on the Spitfire production plants near Southampton, Spitfire production was dispersed all over the country. This Spitfire Mk XIV was built at the end of 1944 at RAF Keevil, Wiltshire, and sent in 1945 to India where details of any service she may have seen have been lost in the records system in the the Royal Indian Air Force. After returning to England in the early 1970s she formed part of the 'Warbirds of Great Britain' collection. The sliding 'bubble' canopy and slimmer rear fuselage lend an even sleeker and more modern appearance to these later Spitfires, which were powered by a Rolls-Royce 'Griffon' engine – a larger and more powerful version of the earlier 'Merlin'. Photograph by Gos Cory.*

English Motoring and Aviation Heritage Tour

Part 3 – Imperial War Museum Duxford

By Gos Cory

This is Britain's largest aviation museum. My hosts were enthusiastic when I expressed an interest in visiting it as they frequently drive past lamenting none of their previous guests had been attracted to it. Nominally a museum, we found it more a theme park, the guide book pointedly states it is "a museum like no other". Similarly, while supposedly an air museum there is an outstanding display of Land Warfare exhibits also housed in the complex.

In World War 2 airmen from Britain, the Commonwealth, all over Europe and the US took to the air from Duxford to fight, most famously in the Battle of Britain. The air field and buildings remain and the sights and sounds still exist. Now with a totally different perspective it challenges the sobering awareness of the realities of those past conflicts.

Several huge buildings are occupied according to themes, various original hangars house exhibits and the original

Operations Rooms depict the authentic atmosphere of the WW2 era.

The Airspace Hall covers most civil and military aspects of British aviation including over 30 of the most famous aircraft from 1903 to the supersonic age. A Lancaster, Spitfire, Vulcan and Concorde (yes another Concorde!) are included in a display which is literally too much to take in. Many exhibits are able to be entered and the circumferential viewing platform allows outlook from a second perspective, it could take days to take it all in.

We stopped for coffee at the canteen and simultaneously took in the amazing flying show underway. While all manner of historic aircraft were taking off and circuiting, the special attractions were the Spitfires (possibly six of them!!!), Hawker Hurricanes and a quaint De Havilland Dragon Rapide. Having seen several Rolls-Royce Merlin engines



Above: The Imperial War Museum Duxford, Cambridgeshire site. On the left foreground is the large Air Space Hall. Just visible is the cafeteria then various hangars leading to the American Air Museum and the eastern end of the runway. A few hundred metres further around to the left background is the Land Warfare building.

Below: A spectacular view of the legendary Supermarine Spitfire in flight. Photographs: Imperial War Museum, Duxford.





***Above:** American reconnaissance 'plane Lockheed SR71 'Blackbird'. This aircraft holds the speed and altitude records for a jet-engined aircraft.*

***Below:** View across the Airspace Hall featuring more than 30 aircraft exhibits. Photos: IWM Duxford.*





Above: This American Harvard IV AJ841 'Wacky Wabbit' (G-BJST) is available for joy flights. The Boeing B-17F Flying Fortress in the background, 'Sally B', was used in the making of a 1944 documentary film, *Memphis Belle: A Story of a Flying Fortress*, and a 1990 Hollywood feature film, *Memphis Belle*. This was one of the first USAF B-17s to complete 25 missions. Photo: Gos Cory.

over the previous few days this was the ultimate consummation. We observed the show each time we moved between buildings. Some Spitfires have been converted to two seats allowing those lucky enough to have a spare £3500 to experience a 20 minute flight.

Next we toured the Aircraft Restoration Company where there are a couple of dozen WWII era aircraft undergoing maintenance or restoration. One almost trips over fabulous partly disassembled engines and airframe parts being rebuilt.

No signs of the presentation police here but a boffin's heaven where you can peer right into the private parts of these craft.

A few hundred metres along is the American Air Museum, equally spectacular as the Airspace Hall in terms of exhibits and layout. The underlying message is: "At its peak strength in 1944, USAF employed 450,000 Americans in Britain. Many were fighter or bomber crews, but the majority of USAF's men and women were engaged on a much wider range of tasks, all of which were necessary to keep the air- ➡

Below: View across the nose of a Boeing B52 bomber into the American Air Museum. Photo: IWM Duxford.

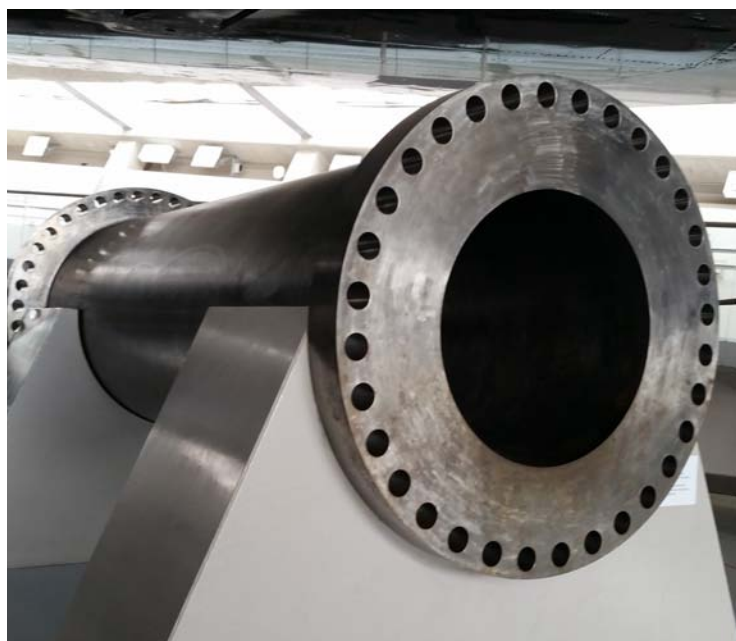




Above: Gos included this nice shot of a de Havilland 'Dragon Rapide' at Duxford, in the knowledge that it would awaken childhood memories in your Editor, this being the first aircraft type in which he ever flew – in the mid-1950s at a Filton Air Display in Bristol.

craft flying. Nearly 30,000 never returned". While this is the rationale for the display the opportunity is taken to commemorate all theatres of war the US has participated in, right up to the modern conflicts. I was interested in a section of the barrel of the 'Project Babylon' cannon, seized from the Iraqis. This cannon, had it been completed, would have

Below: A section of the barrel of the 'Project Babylon' long-range cannon. Photo: Gos Cory.



boasted a 100-metre barrel (in sections), 1-metre bore and a range of 200 miles. Other highlights are a P51 Mustang, B52 Stratofortress and a variety of stealth aircraft including a U2 (as flown and crashed by Gary Powers in 1960). On reflection the WWII theme almost seems like a convenient excuse to display a representative range of the entire US military aviation history. Who is going to complain about seeing exhibits such as the fastest jet powered aircraft?

Finally we ended up at the Land Warfare building at the far end of the site. By no means an anticlimax, this building features exhibits of artillery, tanks, all types of vehicles and other military equipment from the Great War right up to the present. The lighting is subdued and presentation is excellent. Once again a day could easily be spent in this building. The International War Museum Duxford is an imperative choice for everyone. The sheer scale and spectacle provides the basic appeal. The range, quality and presentation of the exhibits is superb for all levels of enthusiasm. Tickets are £18 and concessions are available. Find it at Duxford, Cambridge CB22 4QR, about an hour and a half north of London on the M11.

Viewing this array of military aircraft, and writing this article brings to mind our departed former Branch President Kerry Bos. Kerry had a vast knowledge and experience of military aircraft and was ever-ready with stories and anecdotes which were shared before, occasionally during and after monthly meetings. We miss you Kerry.





Lunch Run to Bungendore

to commemorate the 1906 arrival in Australia of Rolls-Royce 40509

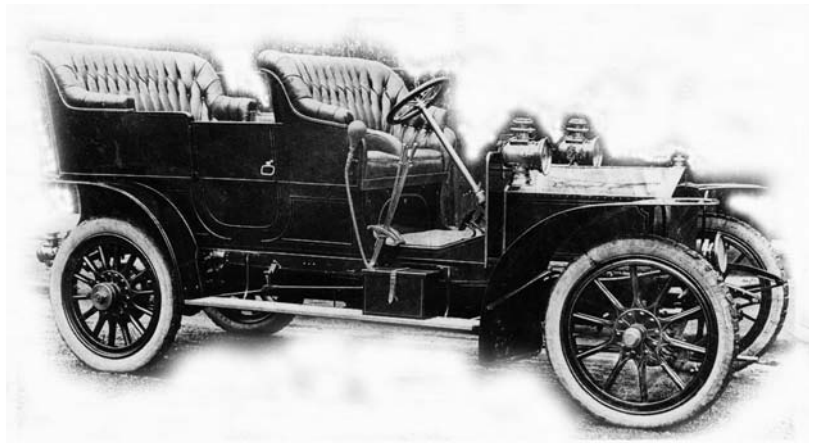


February 24th, 2019



Top: Outside our lunch venue The George at Bungendore, Tim & Linda Collins' 1986 Silver Spirit ASG15221, viewed over the bonnet of your Editor's 1950 Silver Wraith WHD101.

Right: 40509, the 1906 20 h.p. 4-cylinder car which was the first Rolls-Royce to arrive in Australia and the focus of our lunch run to Bungendore.





Above: Chris & Narelle O'Rourke arriving in their 1957 Silver Cloud SED51.

Left: Ian Irwin addressing the throng on 40509, the first Rolls-Royce to arrive in Australia. The story of this and other early Rolls-Royce arrivals in the Western District of Victoria includes some intriguing facts and thought-provoking coincidences.

Below: Our Junior Vice-President Peter Toet's 1966 Silver Shadow SRH1336, complete with picnic tables and other nice features with which the earliest Silver Shadows were fitted.





Above: N.S.W. member Nick Illek's Bentley Continental GT.

Below: Ian & Tina Oliver's 1951 Bentley Mk VI Park Ward drophead coupé B14MD – back from the U.K.





Above: Bryce Ronning's 1949 Silver Wraith Hooper touring limousine, WFC67, once the ceremonial car of the city of New Orleans.

Below: From left to right, Mal Henderson, Ray Gulson and Nick Illek inspecting the business end of WFC67.





Above: Alan Ford's 1986 Bentley Turbo RL, BNG15389. This is a Long Wheelbase saloon.

Below: Clockwise from left: Bryce Ronning, Narelle O'Rourke, Robyn Henderson, Nick Illek, Chris O'Rourke, Mal Henderson, Peter Toet.





This page: Ian Kenny's superb Bentley 4 1/2-Litre tourer graced our display, exemplifying the spirit of Bentley as befits the Centenary of the marque. Its engine (below right) drew many an admiring look.

‘Wheels 2019’ display day

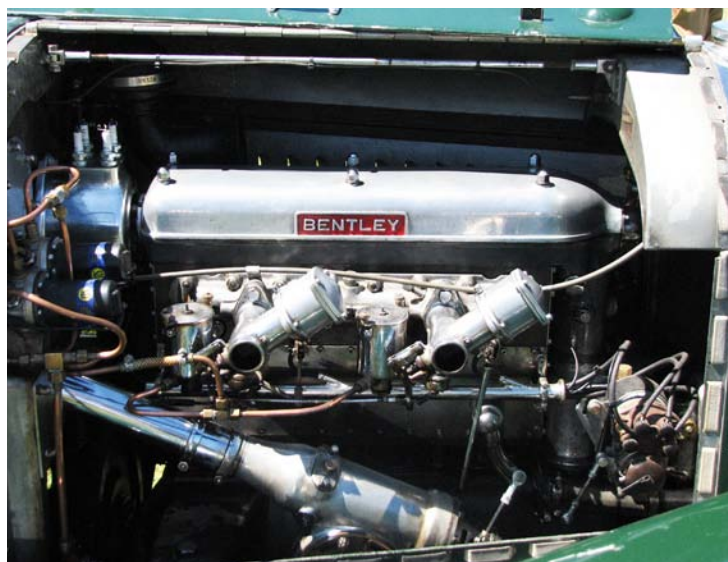
featuring the Centenary of the Bentley marque



Sunday March 3rd



Left: In addition to bringing no fewer than four Bentleys on the day, Ian & Tina Oliver displayed this miniature Bentley which at first glance looked like a pedal-car but is in fact electrically-powered.





This page: Ian & Tina Oliver exhibited no fewer than four of the Bentleys on display to commemorate the centenary of the marque. ***Above*** is their well-travelled 1951 Mk VI Park Ward drophead coupé B14MD. ***Below***, on the same chassis type, is standard steel saloon B162MD.





***This page:** With owners answering the call to celebrate the centenary of Bentley, we only had three cars to represent the Rolls-Royce marque! These were **(top)** Bryce Ronning's 1949 Silver Wraith Hooper touring limousine WFC67, **(left)** your Editor's 1950 Silver Wraith H.J. Mulliner touring limousine WHD101, and **(below)** Chris & Narelle O'Rourke's 1957 Silver Cloud SED51.*





Above: Rob Swain's 1957 S1 Continental H.J. Mulliner two-door saloon BC14CH. These were the top of the range cars of their time.

Below: Although Lawrie & Jane Nock are no longer members, they were nevertheless kind enough to exhibit with us their 1966 Bentley T Series two-door saloon by Mulliner Park Ward, CRH1672. Arguably, this was the equivalent model to BC14CH above in the Bentley range of nine years later.





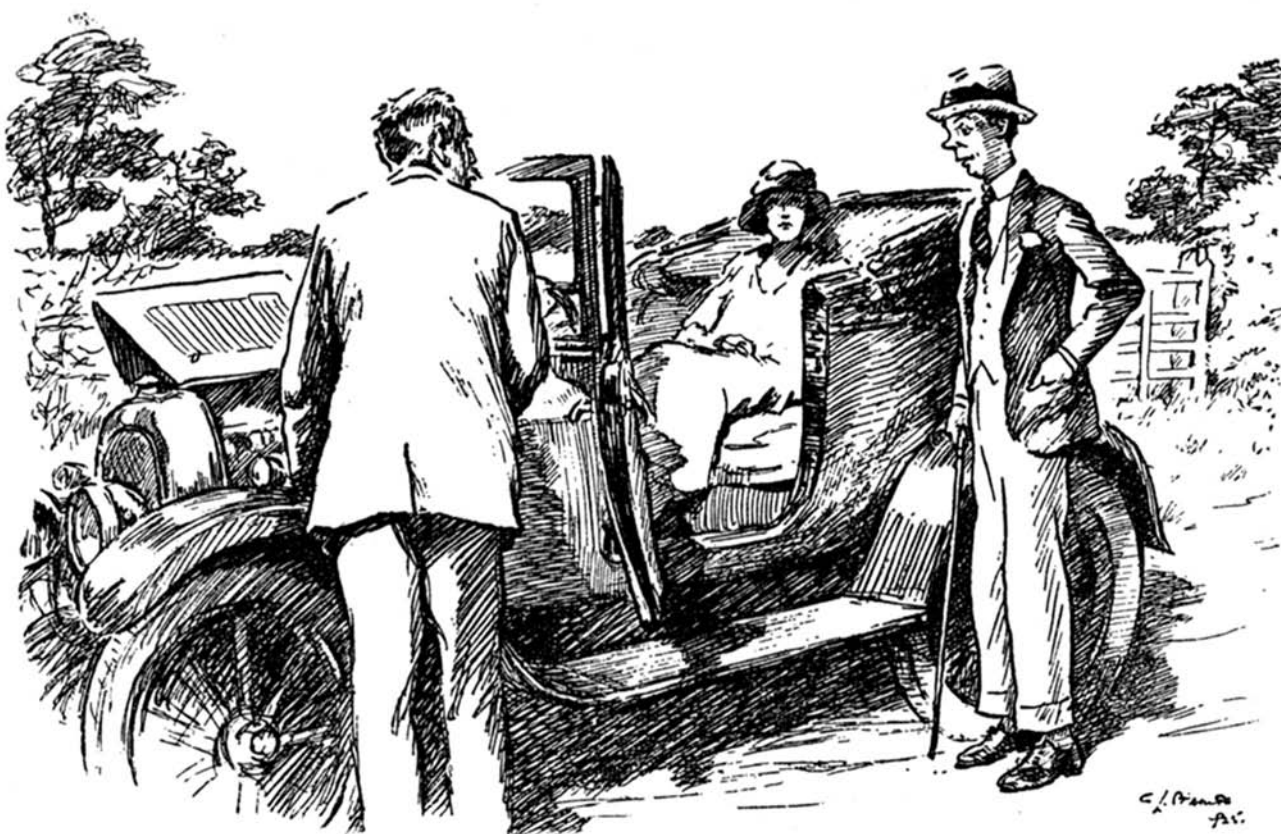
Above: John Tetley's 1981 Bentley Mulsanne BSB03228.

Below: Ian & Tina Oliver's 2016 Bentley Continental GT. It was not purchased new – it had 87 kilometres on it!





Above: Ian & Tina Oliver's beautifully conserved 1960 S2 B25CT.



POLITE PEDESTRIAN: "In difficulties, Sir? Can I help?"

MOTORIST: "Perhaps you can tell me what's made her stop?"

POLITE PEDESTRIAN: "Well, to tell you the truth I've no idea what makes 'em go."



Tailpiece . . .

At 'Wheels' 2019, celebrating the centenary of the Bentley marque, here we see, from foreground: Ray Gulson's 1988 Bentley Eight BEJ23222, Rob Swain's 1957 S1 Continental H.J. Mulliner two-door saloon BC14CH, Ian & Tina Oliver's 1960 S2 B25CT and Lawrie & Jane Nock's 1966 T Series Mulliner Park Ward two-door saloon CRH1672.

BRANCH OFFICE-BEARERS

President:

Martin Bennett
177 Old South Road
Yarra NSW 2580
02 4829 7140
hjmullinersw@bigpond.com

Senior Vice-President:

Ian Irwin
P.O. Box 333
Hall ACT 2618
02 6259 9770
eleanor.11@bigpond.com

Junior Vice-President:

Peter Toet
PO Box 149
Belconnen ACT 2616
0408 697 105
ann.toet@bigpond.com

Secretary:

Peter Hyland
PO Box 773
Mawson ACT 2607
02 6286 4265
phy40183@bigpond.net.au

Treasurer:

Ian Oliver
PO Box 9254
Deakin ACT 2600
ian@ianoliver.id.au

Membership Registrar:

Ian Dunn
40 Murrarji Street
Hawker ACT 2614
02 6278 3763
iandunn@grapevine.com.au

Technical Registrar:

Phil Sproston
PO Box 35
Harden NSW 2587
0418 266 631
phil2025@gmail.com