



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

Winter 2020



60551

1907 40/50 h.p. Barker 'Windham' tourer - 'The Silver Ghost'



AX-201 in Australia



From the Editor & President

hjmullinersw@bigpond.com



Soon after going to press with our Autumn issue, it became clear that next year's Federal Rally will be hosted by the Victoria Branch, in Mildura. The Western Australia Branch having excused itself from hosting next year's Federal Rally, it was agreed by the Federal Council that Victoria could 'lift up' a year. In the meantime the New South Wales Branch, in a generous gesture, posted out to all 2020 Federal Rally registrants the Rally pack that they would have received had the Leura Federal Rally gone ahead. This included a superbly-made replica, courtesy of the Gillings family, of the Rolls-Royce Ltd chassis number plate (in my case of the early post-war pattern as fitted to the car I had entered for the Rally).

I commend our members to the 2021 Federal Rally in Mildura over the weekend 18th-21st June. The easiest and most direct route from Canberra to Mildura is by simply taking the Barton, Hume and Sturt Highways, the latter starting just after Gundagai and then going all the way to Mildura. For a modern Rolls-Royce or Bentley car capable of a good turn of speed – and by that I mean one built within the last five or six decades – the driving time from Canberra to Mildura is about 8½ hours, plus time to refuel cars and people, plus further allowance if you are driving an older, slower car.

Those members who have not been to a Federal Rally before would be guaranteed an extremely enjoyable time both during the Rally itself and driving to and from by Rolls-Royce or Bentley motor car, most likely in the company of fellow members. Please give your participation the serious consideration it deserves.

Following the founding of the Rolls-Royce Owners Club of Australia in Sydney in 1956, the Club was soon expanded to include the Victoria Branch, after which annual 'Interstate Rallies' were held in Wagga Wagga – a convenient half-way point between Sydney and Melbourne. The choice of Mildura as next year's Federal Rally venue has historic roots. The 1962 Rally was held there, and that is understood to have been the first to be called 'Federal Rally', following South Australia joining the growing Club federation.

Changing the Federal Rally scheduling for next year brought with it an implication for our Branch, given that we traditionally 

Below: Ray & Raine Gulson's fine 1988 Bentley Eight, BEJ23222. See Ray's article on page 6 for another classic case of 'all's well that ends well'.



Front Cover: AX-201 has visited Australia twice, the more recent occasion being in 1991 when it was photographed by Graham Cornish in the Melbourne showroom of Hamilton's, who briefly held the Rolls-Royce & Bentley retailship. The Company and its corporate successors owned this famous piece of cultural heritage from 1948 until it was recently acquired by collector and enthusiast Sir Michael Kadoorie. Photograph by Graham Cornish (Vic.).

follow Victoria, in that we could be the Rally hosts for 2022 - a year ahead of schedule. We already had a Rally Committee formed, and with none of its members at all deterred by the prospect of doing it a year early, seeing no problems, only opportunities, and the outline of the Rally having already been sketched out, we are ready to be the hosts of the 2022 Federal Rally. It will celebrate the Centenary of the Rolls-Royce 'Twenty' – the 20 Horsepower model introduced in 1922.

Meanwhile, on a local level, we look forward to a tentative return to normal. Within days of our Secretary Peter Hyland sending out a plea for articles, there being no events to cover, four excellent articles had been received from members! That is a superb result, and I thank Peter Colwell, Ray Gulson, Ian Irwin and Ian Oliver for their fine contributions. At the same time, I could point out that such articles are very welcome at *any* time! Peter Hyland added to the total with his own article, adapted from his carefully-researched work on the history of the A.C.T. Branch, providing clear insights into the origins of our Branch and highlighting our pride in achieving the status of a Branch of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia.

Regarding our front cover car, often known as AX-201 after its U.K. registration number, it seems to be not widely understood – or perhaps simply forgotten – that when Rolls-Royce Motor Cars Ltd was sold in 1998, the buyer was Volkswagen. It was a straightforward sale in which all of the assets of the Company were acquired by VW, including AX-201, the famous 1907 40/50 h.p. car named *The Silver Ghost*, in honour of which the model type later became known. In recent months there has been a great deal of news media talk around whether Bentley Motors, as the Company was renamed after the Rolls-Royce brand was sold in a separate deal, had sold *The Silver Ghost* to an American collector, for how much, and whether or not it would be allowed to leave the United Kingdom. More recently it has become clear that what is arguably the most famous and most valuable motor car in the world has in fact been sold, to well-known enthusiast and collector Sir Michael Kadoorie and that it will remain in the U.K. in the care of P. & A. Wood – a far more satisfactory outcome than most enthusiasts might have thought possible a mere few months ago. David Berthon's article in PRAECLARUM 2-20 provided more detail on this.

To have kept *The Silver Ghost* in the long term would have held little value for Bentley Motors, the dilemma being that its only possible use was in promoting what had become a rival marque, so its eventual disposal was inevitable. The other historic Rolls-Royce car owned by Bentley, the lovely little 10 h.p. 2-cylinder car 20165, also of 1907 (despite often having a 1905 date attributed to it) and also with original Barker tourer coachwork) was also sold to Sir Michael, in whose enthusiastic ownership both cars will no doubt become much more visible at various Club and other motoring events.

Finally, I am proud to announce that our Branch Treasurer, Ian Oliver, has been appointed Federal Treasurer.

Martin Bennett

The optimist's 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 forthcoming events is provided by email 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*.

AUGUST

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

Sunday August 9th: 'Cars & Coffee' morning at Sutton Bakery. This was well-supported last year and we look forward to your company again to break the events 'drought'. Car discussions over coffee and inspections in the Bakery car-park.

SEPTEMBER

Sunday September 20th: 'Cars & Coffee' run to Braidwood Bakery. Stay on for lunch if you choose.

OCTOBER

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

Sunday October 18th: Vineyard run to Shaw's of Murrumbateman, where you can sample award-winning cool-climate wines and enjoy lunch at Olleyville restaurant within the winery.

DECEMBER

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

Saturday December 5th: End-of-year Get-together. Details to follow.

Sunday December 6th: 'Terribly British Day', Queanbeyan Park.



Blessed or cursed?

By Peter Colwell

I have always been blessed – or cursed? – with a mechanical bent. Why things work the way they do. My memory of mechanical ‘events’ in my life might be considered a boring curse by some, but as well as being very enjoyable for me, it has also saved me a lot of money.

I was about six when I watched my father jacking up the car for some reason. Both rear wheels were off the ground. He rotated one and – lo & behold – the other wheel rotated in the opposite direction, and even more curiously, the drive shaft remained stationery. How could this be?

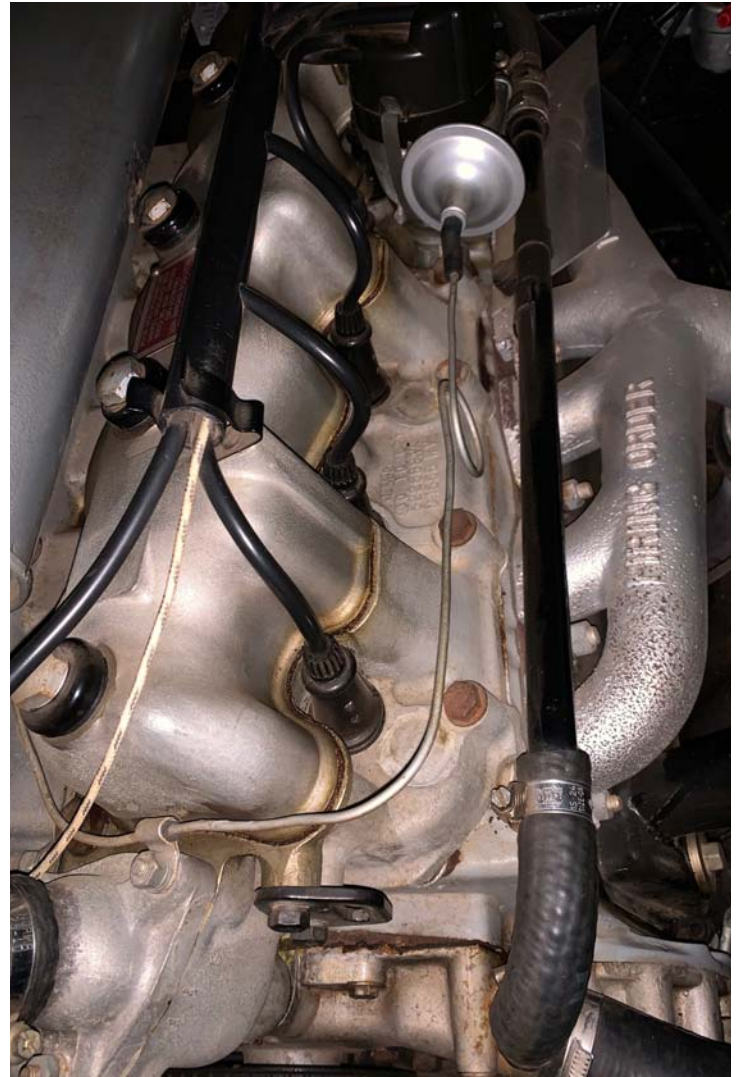
I had to find out. There was an old trailer on our farm, which had been made from an ancient truck chassis, complete with

differential. So I carefully removed the rear cover and looked inside. All was revealed, very simple.

Over time, I realised I had an affinity with things mechanical. I was never inclined to simply tear things apart and scatter them. Just the opposite, and to this day I take great pride in owning several old vehicles that are still original and running perfectly. A sweetly running engine is to me, the sweetest sound in the world. My interest in Rolls-Royce in particular was founded in the 1960s, when a local identity drove down the street in his Bentley Mk VI. It was almost soundless.

Fast-forward 65 years, and we are at Pebble Beach, California. My favourite memory of the day was not the impres-

Opposite & right: The two engines pictured have several things in common. But one unusual feature makes them unique. Both are the last engines designed with overhead inlet valves and side exhaust valves – the ‘F’-head design. In the case of Rolls-Royce (**opposite page**), the design is very simple, with a flat head/block and side exhaust valves driven directly from the camshaft. But in the Rover’s case (**right**), the designers really excelled themselves. The top of the block is angled at 22 degrees, and the piston has a wave-shaped top. The exhaust valves are angled too. The net result was a very efficient design. The Rover engine is also unique in having one camshaft but two rocker shafts. The Rover six-cylinder ‘F’-head engine continued in production for around 40 years, finally reaching three litre capacity in the late 1950s. Both engines were superseded by aluminium block V8s, itself an unusual feature in the 1960s. Both these engine types are unique, and deserve to be preserved. That era has passed, and now the focus is on turbocharging and electronic controls, which make them much easier for the masses to use, but less rewarding for the purists.



sive display, it was the sounds of the cars as they made their way in to the display site, some loud and grumpy, others just sweet silence.

One of the wonders of the modern world, that is sadly lost on the younger generation, is the absolutely astounding advances in mechanical technology. I am not referring to electronics, although that is an enabling part of it. The power that is now extracted from quite small engines, reliably and smoothly, is just astounding. And even more astounding, as the power increases, fuel consumption decreases, almost something for nothing. The huge trucks that now cruise with the cars on the highways, are actually carrying twice the loads of the 'sixties, at double the speed, on half the fuel.

When it comes to preserving old engines in good condition, I have several mantras. Given that several of my engines are still running fine after 50 years of use, and have never had major surgery, I feel qualified to declare them a success. Most are very simple. One of those of course, is sympathetic treatment when starting from cold. I have a certain routine, especially if the engine has not been running for some time. Once the engine has been running for no more than two minutes, I turn it off and leave it for several minutes (if possible and time allows of course). Why? What does this do?

Old engines tend to be heavy and large – a huge lump of metal. Wear comes from two sources, friction, and uneven expansion. Friction wear can be kept down by moderate revs, but if an engine is started from stone cold and run without stopping, expansion is very uneven as the top end becomes hot even as the oil and lower block is still cold. I discovered almost by accident that if a short period of running is followed by a short stop, the initial heat disperses quietly through the engine, ready for the second start with little distortion.

How did I work this out? Well, I had an engine (Mercedes) with an oil temperature gauge, and discovered accidentally

that if I started it, the top end (water temperature) would rise quickly but the oil temperature remained against the stop. But lo & behold, if the engine was stopped for a few minutes, and then turned on again, the oil temperature would show as having magically risen even while the engine was stopped, as the initial top end heat dispersed gently through the engine.

The other mantra is that when I return home from a drive, I always put the car away while it still fully hot. This totally avoids filling the engine and exhaust with corrosive moisture, ready to do its worst while the car is resting. Similarly I avoid if possible, very short drives. If the car can't be driven it is far preferable to just turn it over if possible without starting, than to run it for a few minutes. I followed this procedure for over 20 years with my Mini Cooper S, and when it came time for refurbishment, the engine started and ran just like it did 25 years before. And sounded the same too, the memory was still there!

And so on . . . there is a lot more to this story, maybe for another day. Part Two will be all about the senses of hearing, smell, and feel, and how they can save your car, your money, and your sanity in some cases. And how a dealer-diagnosed oil leak requiring engine removal, was actually fixed in two minutes with a screwdriver.

To be continued



***Above:** The brand new 6.75-litre V8 engine newly arrived from England, with the car's original Bentley rocker covers fitted.*

The story of my 1988 Bentley Eight

By Ray Gulson

Gulson Canberra traded this Bentley and I decided that I would like to keep it. The car was first sold and serviced by York Motors. I drove it back and forth to Sydney many times to visit my boat on Sydney Harbour.

Returning from Sydney one day, the temperature warning light came on at Mittagong. I pulled over immediately but was too late. The engine was cooked. It was put on a truck back to Canberra and I was lucky enough to obtain a brand new Rolls-Royce engine from England. It came with the oil, coolant and a new filter. The engine was shipped by sea to Sydney where we picked it up in the workshop ute.

I changed the Rolls-Royce tappet covers for my original Bentley ones, fitted the fuel injection system, and installed

the engine into the car – with help. It started first go and has now done 20,000 kms.

Later the body was completely stripped and repainted with four coats of green and two coats of clear. I now use it as my every-day transport. With its huge boot it is as good as a ute (much to my wife's annoyance, as she says, it is full of sh*t).

One man's sh*t is another man's treasure.

The interior is completely original and in excellent order. I have fitted new spheres and front brake caliper kits.

I enjoy it every time I drive it but must admit that in the winter, my wife's Porsche is warmer with its heated seat.

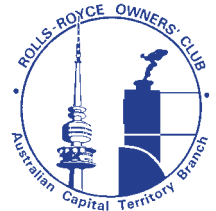


Above: BEJ23222 arriving home after its misadventure at Mittagong, and (below) with its new engine waiting to be fitted, the Rolls-Royce rocker covers still in place. All's well that ends well, as they say in the classics.





The origins of our Branch



By Peter Hyland

The Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia was formed in 1956 in Sydney with a foundation membership of 19. Today the Club has Branches in every State and Territory. The primary purposes of the Club are threefold:

1. to encourage ownership, maintenance and restoration of those motor cars manufactured by the various Rolls-Royce and post-1931 Bentley companies;
2. to promote practical motoring, safety and courtesy on the roads; and
3. to encourage social and community activities among the members.

The beginnings of the A.C.T. Branch

The association of Rolls-Royce cars within Canberra is long standing. The visits of early Silver Ghosts to Duntroon House before the First World War are recorded and many more of the cars were used for official functions during the inter-war period, particularly with Vice-Regal and Royal visit duties.

One of the earliest and most notable enthusiasts was Trevor Shores who at the time, was the Sergeant Bootmaker at the Royal Military College, Duntroon. Upon his retirement and departure from Canberra, he left with his two sons, two Phantom Is and a uniquely-bodied Silver Wraith.

The late Dr Russell-Jones owned two Bentley Mk VIs in the late '60s but it was Bob McCulloch and Ian Irwin who were probably the first new enthusiasts after Trevor Shores, to arrive in the post-war period.

Ian Irwin purchased one of the Palfreyman Silver Ghost chassis from a sale of 28 conducted by George Sevenoaks, while Bob McCulloch emigrated from England with a Hooper-bodied Silver Dawn.

To digress a little, the 12th Federal Rally was held in Canberra in June 1970. Perhaps, because of the interest it generated at the time, thoughts of a separate A.C.T. Branch were triggered. At that Rally, over 400 members in 112 cars attended in the depths of a Canberra winter!

Rally HQ was the Canberra Rex Hotel on Northbourne Avenue with the Concours being held at the local Racecourse in what was then known simply as north Canberra. Martin & Manuela Bennett were known attendees (PRAECLARUM 5-10 p.5742).

Then again in June 1980, the N.S.W. Branch hosted the 22nd Federal Rally in Canberra.

David Neely's book *In the Rear View Mirror* (p.83) provides a good account of the early attempts to form an A.C.T. Branch of the Club.

N.S.W. members who lived in Canberra or nearby areas wanted a local Branch but it took them 10 years from 1972 for a Branch to be formed in the A.C.T. In a city used to bureaucracy, the red tape encountered during the early attempts to form the Branch was unbelievable – mainly due to the encumbrances contained in the Club's Federal Constitution.

Ian Irwin who instigated moves to create the Branch in 1972 had been a N.S.W. member since 1970. As a Canberra resident, it was difficult for him to become more involved in the N.S.W. Branch activities and so, he thought if a small Branch could be formed in the A.C.T., it would provide occasional meetings and outings for the local enthusiasts.

After discussions with local N.S.W. members and other enthusiasts, Ian organised a meeting in May 1972 in the St Luke's Church Hall at Deakin. The N.S.W. Branch was asked to send a representative also. Those invited to attend included:

Faris Palfreyman	Harry & Elsie Ganter
Clement G. Cummings	Jack Wilkinson
Peter Treacy	Trevor Shores
Robert McCulloch	Brian Andrea
Reg MacDonald	Grp-Capt. Frank Carey
Nig Morrow (Wagga Wagga)	David Pockley (Tarago)
Dai Davies (Tumut)	Allen Kelly (Albury)
George Sevenoaks (N.S.W. Branch)	

Ian Irwin addressed the meeting before handing over to George Sevenoaks. The bombshell that there was a Constitutional problem was dropped to the total surprise of everyone present.

The problem was that the A.C.T. was not mentioned in the Federal Constitution's 1971 Clause 8a as being a "State of the Commonwealth or the Northern Territory" in which Branches could be formed. – i.e., the A.C.T. was excluded.

In the November 2002 *Capital Letter*, Ian Irwin scribed his recollections of the formation of this A.C.T. Branch and so, they can be read in the 2000–2005 chapter of *The History of the A.C.T. Branch*.

In 1972 Bill Coburn returned to Canberra and purchased a partially dismantled Silver Dawn. Bill teamed up with a fellow long term devotee, John Baker. Between them, they

offered to enhance the N.S.W. Branch Newsletter – *London & Derby* which had at that time fallen to almost extinction and was one of the few journals in Australia dealing with the marque. Their efforts famously became the “Canberra Contribution” in the re-designed *London & Derby* magazine.

Bill Coburn, Ian Irwin, Bob McCulloch with Eric & May Goudie (owners of a 1960 Bentley S2, B413CT) approached the N.S.W. Branch to form either a sub-Branch in Canberra or to develop some structure on which Canberra enthusiasts could build a nucleus for a future Branch. Regrettably, this was unsuccessful.

A further meeting was held on 2nd December 1972 at the Deakin Inn and Bill Coburn in his first “Canberra Contribution” in the N.S.W. *London & Derby* magazine, wrote that Canberra members met with the N.S.W. President, Owen Bourke and other N.S.W. members to discuss the activities of the members in the A.C.T.

Then at a N.S.W. Branch meeting on 15th February 1973, President Owen Burke advised that the Club’s Legal Advisor, Malcolm Johns had drawn up a suitable clause which would enable A.C.T. members to hold meetings until the Constitution was changed. That meeting resolved that the new Clause 15 be added to the Constitution. In May 1974 the Federal Council approved a landmark event by amending Clause 8a to read “any State of the Commonwealth or Territory thereof”.

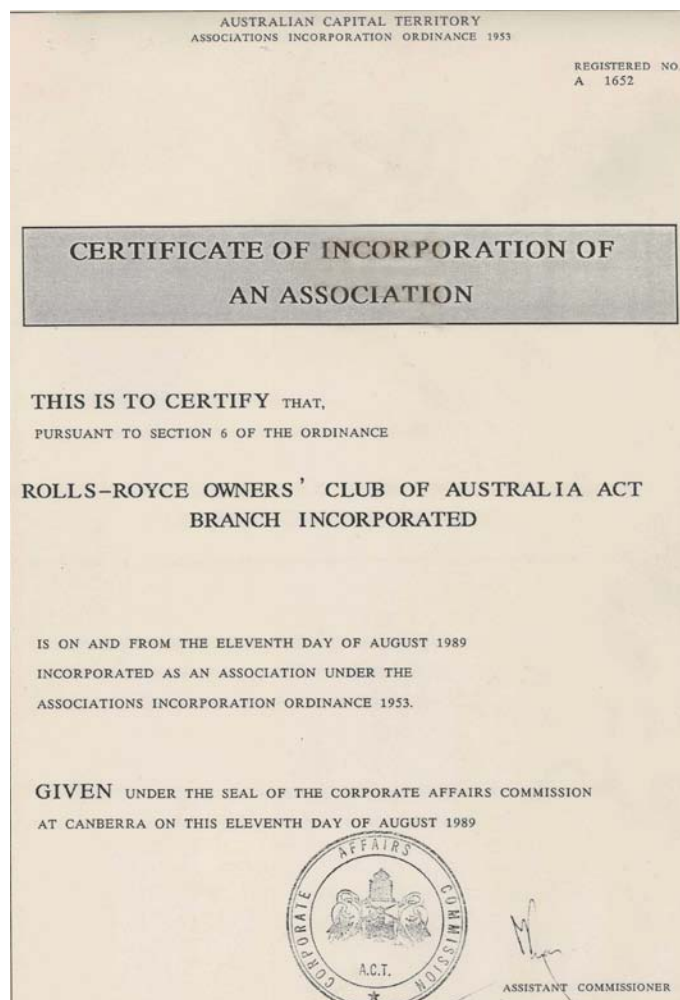
This gave status to a Federal Executive to which Bill Coburn was elected Federal Secretary in 1976. During this time also, St John Herbert who was a Canberra owner of several Rolls-Royce cars, commenced editing PRAECLARUM – so two contributors from Canberra.

A further impetus for the formation of a separate A.C.T. Branch came when the N.S.W. Branch hosted the 1980 Federal Rally in Canberra. Ian Dunn who had been lurking on a side-road, moved forcibly onto the few Canberra enthusiasts like Bob McCulloch and David Davis, and virtually demanded the formation of an A.C.T. Branch. So interest in a Branch was building but it would be another year before a definitive move was made to form the Branch.

Penn Bradly arrived on the scene from Armidale and between he and Ian Dunn, an inaugural meeting of enthusiasts was held at Yarralumla coinciding with a fortuitous visit by Larry Yarwood in November 1982, then recently retired from Rolls-Royce Motors at Crewe; and so the A.C.T. Branch was formed as a de-facto organisation on 7th December 1982 – with 8 cars!

Funds were raised, members were sought and Ian Dunn took up the position of Secretary and later President. Eric Goudie performed the duties of Treasurer from the Branch’s inception.

From those humble beginnings the club grew once potential owners could be assured that they could get help quickly with the technical side of the vehicles on an owner-to-owner basis;




Above: A ‘Certificate of Incorporation of an Association’ was (finally!) issued to our Rolls-Royce Owners’ Club of Australia A.C.T. Branch Incorporated on 11th August, 1989.

owning an example of the marque was not the financial abyss which it may have appeared.

Informal meetings commenced in the latter half of 1982. Following Ian Dunn’s presentation to the motion, this Branch was formally recognised with unqualified support at the Federal Council meeting in June 1983 at Berri, S.A. The formation of the new A.C.T. Branch had to be ratified by all states but W.A. proved obstinate in doing so until November 1983, then allowing this Branch to be officially established.

Following the March 1983 monthly meeting Ian Dunn submitted an application to the A.C.T. Corporate Affairs Commission on 28th March for a search as to the availability of the name – Rolls-Royce Owners’ Club of Australia A.C.T. Branch. The Commission replied on 20th April 1983 that the proposed name was available.

This procedure was repeated on 3rd July 1985, also stating that the Association had been active for three years but was an unincorporated body. (The Corporate Affairs Commission had mislaid our original March 1983 application!)

The A.C.T. Branch of the R.R.O.C.A. was finally incorporated on 11th August 1989. There was a unanimous vote of thanks to Stephen Brown, our Legal Advisor who had provided hours of dedication to bring this to final fruition. 



Above: B14MD ready for loading into its 20-foot shipping container.

Returning to the U.K. with Bentley Mk VI Park Ward drophead coupé B14MD

By Ian Oliver

When I saw the advertisement in the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club magazine seeking cars to attend a 2018 reunion of the Earls Court (London) Motor Show cars, I thought what a good idea. I was to embark on doing a trip of a lifetime with a favourite car in a bid to have a new experience and learn more about the car and its time in the U.K. Being supported and encouraged by my darling wife Tina, I soon became enthusiastic with the idea and was well encouraged by the R.R.E.C. committee and promoter Gérard Leclerc.

Bentley Mk VI B14MD was the actual car that was displayed by Bentley Motors at the 1951 Earls Court Motor Show. It was imported to Australia in the mid-1980s by Ian Bennell, and professionally restored by Tasmanian Geoff Smedley to win three Concours Trophies at the 1990 Federal Rally at Leura, N.S.W. I was hoping for it to appear again at Leura this year. But of course that has gone by the wayside.

The car's history in Australia was fairly well known to me. The idea of taking a car to a show in the U.K. to find out more about its U.K. history was a challenge for me. Never before

have I dreamed or thought of shipping a car overseas and returning it to Australia.

The matters that challenged me but were never going to put me off were numerous: the shipping requirement, insurance in transit, driving in the U.K., driving licence and registration requirements, storage, picking up the vehicle, delivering it back to the wharves, and not to mention the asbestos issues for reimportation into Australia, that were well publicised and would frighten many. But to me I researched every matter and went about dealing with them all in a way that gave me a sense of achievement and satisfaction.

If I was going to take a car to a U.K. Motor Show reunion show, what other worthwhile thing would I do whilst the car is overseas? There would be little point in not taking the car for a drive. Having a bit of Pommy in me, I have driven in the U.K. several times and the idea of also doing a rally interested me. Driving somewhere that is different to where I have driven previously was also going to be on the agenda, even if it meant leaving the car over there until there was a good opportunity. The research for that drive eventually re-

sulted in selecting the Post-War Six-Cylinder Register Rally in Devon, 24th to 28th September 2018, nearly three months after the Reunion show which was to be held at the R.R.E.C. Annual Rally at Burghley House, Stamford, Lincolnshire on the 22nd to 24th June 2018.

Storing the vehicle in the U.K. was one of the biggest challenges. Having some family and friends in England did not present an option. Most drivers in England do not have a garage for their own everyday-driver car, let alone the likes of a classic collector's car from abroad. I thought and tried several other options – I emailed car museums, car clubs, dealerships, friends of friends with collections and workshops. Finally, the Sydney Bentley dealership manager at the time, decided to help me with a favour and offered to put me in touch with the U.K. heritage dealer P. & A. Wood, about 35 miles out of London. They were not known to me, but when I enquired, they were willing to help. The response from some was “you are crazy – you don't know how much it will cost and the asbestos in the car will mean that you might never get it back”. I wasn't going to be put off.

The job before leaving Australia was to obtain a professional asbestos report. Whilst there was no certainty in dealing with the provisions of re-importation, I needed to take the necessary steps to show that I have removed any known asbestos. The local consultant that I chose did his investigation and took samples from the brake shoes, manifold gasket, head gasket, exhaust hangers, mufflers and anything else that looked suspicious. The only identified external asbestos was



Above: The writer securing the webbing straps used on the vehicle transporter to prevent the car from shifting during its journey.

Below: *B14MD peeping out of its vehicle transporter, tied down and ready to leave Canberra on the first stage of its vast journey across the globe to the United Kingdom.*





Above: A Condition Report was required to be completed for the Shipping Agent with instructions provided on how to operate the vehicle.

to be in the exhaust mufflers – very nice and original but even to the naked eye asbestos protruded from the underside. I thought it was going to be an easy removal. However trying to coordinate the required licensed asbestos removal contractor, with a licensed motor mechanic and the asbestos consultant was a nightmare. All of them considered it had never been done before. After the removal the mufflers the consultant required them to be stored in an asbestos-approved storage facility before compiling his final report photographing the replacements. These were hurriedly modified units adapted to the original pipes and fittings and they proved to be a disaster. On the first attempt they sounded something similar to the sound that you might hear from an old tractor or an early

model Holden! On the next attempt the exhaust had horrible rattles and grinds from hitting the tail-shaft, showing that I was in the wrong hands. Where am I going to get that fixed properly, I asked myself? A push and shove here and there by yours truly and it will have to do, as I had to get the car to the shipping company in Sydney the next day.

More dramas were to test me and make me consider whether maybe the pessimists around me might be right. But I was not perturbed and knew that I was embarking on a memorable trip and became very excited with the thought of the experience.

To be continued



Left: B14MD's rear wheel-arch spats that are a characteristic feature of this style of Park Ward coachwork were removed for transport and stowed neatly and safely in the boot.





Above: In the dying days of our events participation, when the effects of the pandemic were just beginning to take hold, four Branch Rolls-Royce cars at 'Wheels' show their Spirits of Ecstasy – evenly divided between 'standing' and 'kneeling' types.

Below: On a lighter note, David Neely (N.S.W.) sent this from The Canberra Times, Monday 27th April 1970.





An A.C.T. Rolls-Royce that you may not have seen

© Ian Irwin, April 2020.

Here we have a Canberra Rolls-Royce that most of our present Branch membership may not have seen.

Back in the late 1960s, I met Trevor & Vicki Shores. Sergeant Trevor was on staff at the Royal Military College, Duntroon. I was a young teacher, and had been appointed to the Duntroon School. I taught one of their children. Vicki was a war bride from Japan, and Trevor & Vicki arrived in Australia with their first-born of seven children. Trevor was a car enthusiast, with an associated interest in portable steam engines and traction engines. On their front lawn in Gymkhana Road, there sat a portable steam engine, with a funnel around 3.5 to 4 metres tall from the ground. But it was the Rolls-Royce cars that were Trevor's greatest passion. He told me that the portable steam engine was just the ticket for steam cleaning the mechanicals and chassis of the Rolls-Royces, and that every restorer should have one.

Over those early years, he had three vintage Rolls-Royce cars, the oldest a 1922 Silver Ghost, chassis 51TG. Then came two Phantom I cars, chassis 98DC (1926) and 69EF (1927 model). Later he added a Silver Wraith, with stylish one-off 'Wentworth' saloon coachwork, which was the Park Ward 1948 London Motor Show car, chassis WGC47.

I also recall a conversation where he told me that he had a 20 Horsepower as his first Rolls-Royce, and that he acquired this from a home in the Canberra suburb of Ainslie. I never saw that car, and there are no records of it in his ownership.

As time passed, and with my teaching at the Duntroon school in 1966, we saw a bit of each other, and he soon found that I

was looking for a Ghost. He used to call by of an afternoon, and collect his children in one or other of the Phantoms. But eventually they were to succumb to plans for a practical rebuild.

With Trevor & Vicki's seven children, he believed that a commodious old Rolls-Royce was the perfect thing for a large family. After acquiring his first Phantom, with a huge and ugly 1930s American car body grafted onto it, he soon acquired the next one. He apparently thought he'd work out which was the better one mechanically, but they grew on him, and he kept them both for years.

In the first photo, we see chassis 98DC with a body designed and built by Trevor and the boys in double quick time. No doors, and a straight-sided body. It was clearly functional, if not everyone's cup of tea. For some time, it remained in the raw aluminium finish, and was named The Fun Car. The first windscreen fitted was awful, and I acquired one a shade more suitable for him, at Cooma. This was V-shaped, and had a bit of military practicality about it.

I am not sure if he was inspired by that, or what came over him, but he very soon decided to use some of the Duntroon stores paint and give it a military look.

After the repaint, the rifles mounted on the running board in the first image, reappeared. The spare wheel was relocated to give better under-bonnet access. The screen has been replaced with the V-shaped one, and a mock replica Lewis machine gun was mounted amidships. The camouflage paint took away some of the spartan look of the aluminium body,



but that camouflage on the body, radiator, lamps, wheels, tyres fuel tank, hub-caps and in fact everywhere, gave it a new persona. The careful observer will note the shovel above the rear guard. Heavy duty military canvas was fitted with studs all round to protect the seats.

This second image (*above*) was taken outside our home in Garran, with the repaint completed. It was the car's first day out on the road in its new livery.

Very soon, Trevor invited me to join with him, taking the two Phantoms. It was an event organised by the Antique & Classic Car Club if I remember correctly, but that was incidental. I drove 69EF with tourer body half built, unpainted and with no doors, but experienced fuel blockages. We decided to get off the busy Canberra Avenue into a quiet area where we could park. We drove up through Manuka shopping centre, and when rather centrally positioned, the car

burst into loud blasts that echoed off the shopfronts and the Capital Theatre across the road. We soon got everyone's attention. Trevor pulled in behind in The Fun Car, and everyone jumped out. I think people were counting the children as they landed on the footpath. We began sorting the serious fuel blockage again. It was very embarrassing on a Sunday afternoon.

Then the crowd began to gather around 98DC, puzzled by what they saw. Questions soon came, as to what it was. Trevor was one of life's characters, and told the audience that it was an armoured car from the Desert Campaign. They swallowed it. He pointed out the highly polished brass bullet neatly stuck through one of the (recently constructed) steel doors on the radiator, saying how lucky they were that day when under full attack. Still they swallowed it.

The side profile (*below*) gives an idea of the length of the ➡



monster. Note the fuel tank in its original position, with the overhang at the back, some 30 inches beyond the chassis rear cross-member.

A newspaper report revealed that it 22 feet long, that the rifles were a .303 and a .310 Martini-Henry. Along with these were 'Kaiser Wilhelm' bayonets, disposal store shovels, axes, and assorted trenching tools.

For some years, Trevor and the family visited us spontaneously when they were out and about in 'the gun carriage' as it was sometimes called. Ida and I would also drop in to them in the residence at the RMC Duntroon. One day, while we were chatting in the outdoors, sitting on logs, he said 'See those drum over there. Do you know what they are?' I was a bit puzzled, and was taking in the collection of around 20 black drums. Before I could answer, he came out with; 'They're dunny cans. All of them have been cleaned up nice-like. I'm disenchanted with the Rolls-Royce Club, so I've been gathering these up, one or two every now and then, as I'm planning to build a dunny-cart body on the other chassis.' I did not know what to say. He filled the gap in conversation with a brief comment something like: 'What do you reckon? They'll know where they stand with me then.' Some of our other early members may have seen these drums. Until that day, I had no idea that the Duntroon staff residences did not have sewerage connected.

To say that Trevor was one of life's characters would be an understatement.

When Trevor passed away suddenly in early retirement, his cars passed to the family.

68DC was sold to Gavin Sandford-Morgan of South Australia. He used it as it was for some time, with plenty of other projects on his plate. Then one day, George Lucey said, 'All right, I'll buy it. You restore it.' This statement is in a letter to me from George, when he first acquired the car. It is just one of many letters and emails from Phantom I and II owners



Above: Kitted out in military attire, the whole Shores family enjoyed the fun at every opportunity.

who have assisted me to gather files on those cars with a view to a book on the Australian-owned Phantoms.

The car that was originally the property of Major C. Osburn Fairbairn, of 'Banongil', Skipton, Victoria, and fitted with touring car coachwork by H.J. Mulliner, and was eventually to escape from some years of embarrassment. It was restored to a brilliant running chassis, and fitted with replica 'Ascot' tourer coachwork, by Roger Fry & Sons, of Perth. George says it runs like a gold watch. He is very proud of the car, as well he should be.

It's another of those great stories on early Rolls-Royce cars that had stumbled down over the years, and while sound mechanically, was not a pretty sight. And then to have the good fortune to be found by someone who could see it being a thing of beauty once again, with patience, good planning and a lengthy restoration.

Clearly another case of the proverbial 'silk purse out of a sow's ear', you might say.



Left: 98DC returns to happier times with this delightful replica 'Ascot' tourer coachwork by Roger Fry & Sons of Perth. It is the property of George Lucey of South Australia.



Above: On a recent trip to Thailand, Stephen Beer spotted this pair of Rolls-Royce cars parked in the basement of his hotel. He wrote that “I couldn’t help myself so photographed them and tried to purchase the older one but to no avail. The staff said they belong to the owner of the parking station”. Using Bernard King’s reference books, the older car which is clearly a 20/25 h.p., may be identified as GBJ16, a 1935 Hooper saloon, while the Silver Cloud II is SVB95. Photograph by Stephen Beer.

Below: Taking pride of place on your Editor’s desk is this Franklin Mint model of 20165, the 1907 Rolls-Royce 10 h.p. 2-cylinder Barker tourer, the full-size version of which which was recently purchased by Sir Michael Kadoorie from Bentley Motors Ltd as a package with 60551, the 1907 40/50 h.p. Barker tourer The Silver Ghost.





Above: WTA62, the famous Nubar Gulbenkian Silver Wraith, has been acquired by a U.K. enthusiast whose intention is to restore it to as near as possible to exactly as it was when the Armenian-British oil magnate took delivery in October 1947. The car is seen here when new, near the Western Avenue works of Hooper & Co. (Coachbuilders) Ltd in London, who built the sedan de ville coachwork to the owner's somewhat eccentric requirements. Although this is undoubtedly one of those 'love it or hate it' cars, your Editor entertains neither of those emotions in respect to this very famous Rolls-Royce car, hoping only that in the not-too-distant future we will be able to gaze upon it once again as it was when new. Photo: Editor's collection.

Opposite page: Following on from the 1950 Sydney streetscape in our Autumn issue, Steve Stuckey sent this fascinating shot of a not dissimilar London scene from around the same time. Steve would not be Steve if the scene did not include a Phantom III, and the car seen is 3DL124, a Hooper limousine. The street is Shaftesbury Avenue, Soho, and the cross-road at the traffic lights is Rupert Street. Photo: Bernard King via Steve Stuckey.

Right: The same 1938 Phantom III, 3DL124, in later life, photographed in 1990. Photo: R.R.E.C. via Steve Stuckey.

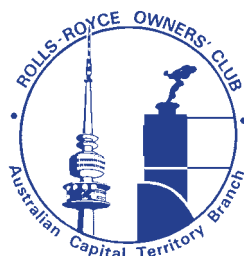




Tailpiece . . .



AX-201 – The Silver Ghost – at Hamilton's Melbourne showroom, 7th November, 1991. Photo by Graham Cornish (Vic.).



BRANCH OFFICE-BEARERS

President:

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

Junior Vice-President & Technical Registrar:

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

Treasurer:

Ian Oliver
PO Box 9254
Deakin ACT 2600
0417 260 927
ian@ianoliver.id.au

Senior Vice-President:

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

Secretary:

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

Membership Registrar:

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