



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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PO Box 773, Mawson, A.C.T. 2607

DEDICATED TO ROLLS-ROYCE & BENTLEY ENTHUSIASTS

Spring 2020



GPK1

1925 20 Horsepower Barker-style tourer

Christopher & Rita White

The first four-wheel brake Twenty



From the Editor & President

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It is to be hoped that all of our members are coming through the coronavirus emergency unscathed, and that although this crisis continues, life might be starting to return to something more closely resembling normal. It has been a very strange time, and perhaps some have been lulled into a false sense of security in the sense that it is not over yet! I was very proud of our members' efforts in our Winter edition, when we had no events to report on and I had little other material for an issue of *The Capital Letter*. My thanks again to those who rose to the occasion with fine articles.

Speaking of fine articles, we have more in this edition: one from member Chris White about his very special 20 Horsepower, which happens to be another of those truly landmark Rolls-Royce cars that we have the good fortune to have in our Branch, being the first of the 20 Horepower model produced after that model was transformed by the momentous 1925 change to servo-powered four-wheel brakes and four-speed gearbox. This article is to continue in our next edition. Also in this Spring edition are continuations of the excellent articles by Peter Colwell and Ian Oliver that began in the Winter edition.

On July 12th, soon after our Winter edition was printed and posted, my dear friend and long-standing Branch member David Thurlow passed away peacefully at his Southern Highlands home. Please see below and page 17.

David Ramage has indicated that he sold his Bentley S3 B98EC to Peter Toet in February and so will not be continuing 

Below: *A man in his element. One memorable day in 1988, member David Thurlow drove his 1951 Bentley Mk VI, B150MD, to work in Moss Vale, N.S.W., having been rostered to drive the famous 1923 London & North Eastern Railway locomotive Flying Scotsman during its visit to Australia in the Bicentennial year. Photograph by the Editor.*



Front Cover: *GPK1, owned by Branch members Christopher & Rita White, was the very first of the four-wheel brake, four-speed version of the 20 Horsepower model to be delivered. It was a Company 'Trials' (i.e. demonstrator) car for the new improved model. The handsome barrel-sided tourer coachwork was just the kind of body best suited to the Twenty, and most favoured by Mr Royce. Photograph from Chris White.*

his membership. Likewise, the late Gos Cory's widow Elizabeth has sold their Bentley Mk VI B474DA and will not be renewing. We wish both former members all the very best for the future and thank them for their past support.

At the same time, we warmly welcome to Branch membership:

Graham Lawrence, whose magnificent 1965 Bentley S3 Continental 'Flying Spur' saloon BC96XE is well known to many members, and who also brings his 1997 Continental R BBW63021 into the Branch;

David & Linda Neely, with their fine 1985 Silver Spirit ASF13836;

Mike Mulvihill who adds no fewer than three lovely cars to our roster: 1961 Silver Cloud II SZD313, 1980 Bentley T2 SBH40622 and 1998 Silver Seraph AAC01243.

We wish all of these long-standing members a long and happy association with our Branch. David Neely is an Honorary Life Member of the R.R.O.C.A. as well as being co-author of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley in the Sunburnt Country* and author of *In the Rear-view Mirror* (both published by the Sir Henry Royce Foundation Australia) and we are privileged to have him among us.

Members may be aware that in the past *The Capital Letter* was printed and posted to all Branch members at no cost to us. Since that arrangement came to an end, we have been subsidising its printing and posting from Branch resources. When you received your membership renewal this year you will have noticed that you were offered the choice of an unchanged subscription or paying \$20 extra to continue receiving a hard-copy of *The Capital Letter*, as opposed to an emailed copy if you opt for the lower subscription. As in the past, we remain the most economical Branch in terms of annual subscriptions, and your Committee trusts that these new arrangements will be to every member's satisfaction.

As was explained in our Winter edition, our 'turn' to host the Annual Federal Rally has fallen to us a year early due to the disruption of the normal sequence by factors arising from the coronavirus emergency. Accordingly, on 17th July, at the home of Ian & Ida Irwin, the committee charged with organising the 2022 Federal Rally to be held in Canberra and hosted by our Branch, met officially for the first time. The basic format of the Rally was already in hand and by the time that inaugural meeting was closed, the committee had set the dates of the Rally and decided the Rally HQ and all of the main Rally function venues. As a result, subject to Federal Council approval the 2022 Federal Rally of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia will be held in Canberra from 23rd to 28th March, celebrating the Centenary of the Rolls-Royce Twenty Horsepower. There has been another meeting since, making significant further progress.

Although our Annual General Meeting went ahead as planned, the August, September and October runs could not, due to intended destinations being unready for such an influx, so unfortunately our return to a normal events calendar has again been postponed. At the AGM, by unanimous resolution we reintroduced our previous highly satisfactory practice of holding meetings at the homes of members with, in the present circumstances, maintenance of correct social distancing.

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*.

OCTOBER

Wednesday October 7th: Branch Meeting at the home of Ian & Tina Oliver, 15 Guilfoyle St., Yarralumla, 7.00 p.m.

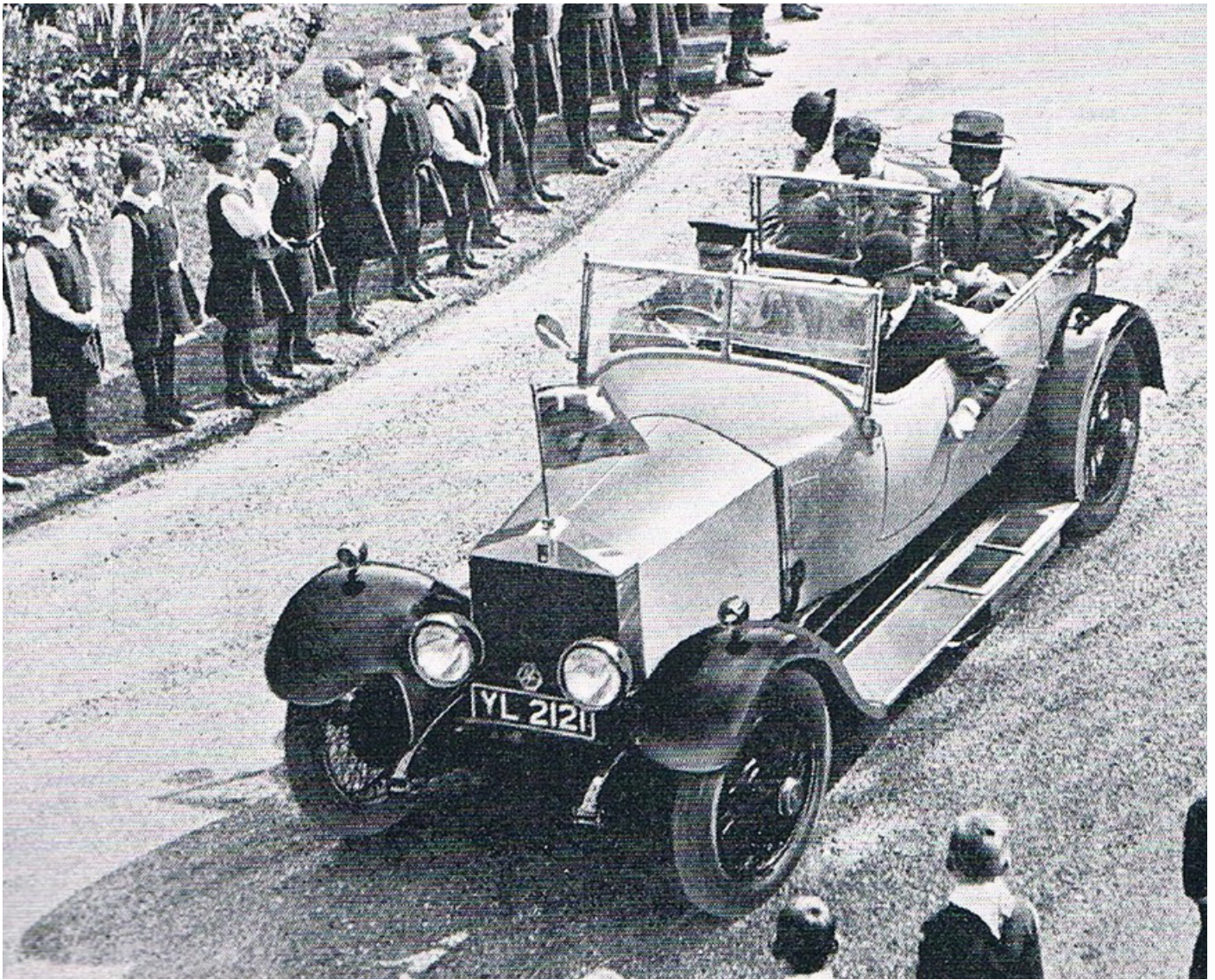
Sunday October 18th: 'Cars & Coffee' run to Sutton Bakery. This was well-supported last year and we look forward to your company again to break the events 'drought'. Car inspections and discussions in the Bakery car-park.

DECEMBER

Wednesday December 2nd: Branch Meeting at a venue to be announced, 7.00 p.m.

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

Sunday December 6th: 'Terribly British Day', Queanbeyan Park. Note: there is a high probability of this being called off.



Above: GP1 Barker barrel-sided tourer in England conveying HRH The Prince of Wales, who later became, albeit briefly, King Edward VIII.

Rolls-Royce Twenty GP1

Its history and re-restoration

By Christopher White

Background to the Rolls-Royce 20 Horsepower

Most readers will be aware of the Rolls-Royce 'Silver Ghost' (1907 to 1925) but don't know how the Rolls-Royce 'Twenty' came into existence.

By the end of the Great War (1914 to 1918) British society was changing. Many men had experienced driving and motor vehicles for the first time, with many professional and business men wishing to drive a car for themselves.

Car design was also starting to change at a rapid pace with many manufacturers still having models that were very 'Edwardian' in design. This included Rolls-Royce, and despite the 40/50 h.p. still being an excellent car, progress was start-

ing to affect the sales of the only model offered by the Company, known as the 'Silver Ghost'.

In fact, there was a surplus of these chassis after the War and as has been pointed out by Ian Irwin, many were sold to the British government to be made into armoured cars, a role in which they did so well during the War.

The Company realised that at least for the short term another car was required as a 'stop gap' until a new replacement for the Silver Ghost could be produced.

To address this issue work commenced on a new small Rolls-Royce in about 1920 as a way of introducing more of the motoring public to the Rolls-Royce marque and promoting

wider ownership. If you are interested in a full and detailed history of the Rolls-Royce 20 Horsepower I would recommend the excellent work *The Rolls-Royce Twenty* by John Fasal, who published this book in 1979 – a ‘must have’ book if you are a ‘Twenty’ enthusiast.

Production commenced in 1922. The first version had two-wheel brakes and a three-speed gearbox, with coil ignition only. Royce examined many other cars by other manufacturers to come up with a design that was worthy of carrying the Rolls-Royce name.

However, when it was released, it received quite a great deal of criticism from the motoring press and public as it was “too American” in design with only a centre three-speed gear change (a right-hand gear-change being the “proper” location in a British car) and two-wheel brakes only!

Despite this it sold very well and was out-selling the larger 40/50 ‘Silver Ghost’. Production lasted until 1929 when the model was updated to the 20/25 h.p. During that time a total of 2,940 Twenties were produced with approximately half that number still in existence today.

In 1925, due to much pressure, an update of the Twenty was announced. This included a four-speed gearbox, four-wheel brakes, a slightly wider track and dual ignition via magneto back-up. Our chassis GPK1 was the first off the production line in 1925 and therefore is the oldest four-wheel brake Twenty in existence.

More about this car later.

For readers’ information, about 125+ Twenties came to Australia either new or later as secondhand cars. According to local Rolls-Royce Twenty expert, Bob Clarke, most can be accounted for and about half a dozen have been broken up or destroyed. This includes GNK86 which was the last three-speed, two-wheel brake chassis to come to Australia. It was restored in the 1970s but was destroyed by fire in 1990; I purchased the remains to assist with the restoration of Twenty 78A1.

Our involvement in vintage cars and Rolls-Royce 20 Horsepowers

I first became involved with vintage cars in 1969 at the age of twelve and purchased the remains of a 1927 Austin 12 that I had back on the road in 1978 in between at secondary school and Teacher’s College. Being a glutton for punishment, I also purchased in 1977 the very, very sad remains of a Veteran Dodge Roadster which was driving a saw bench at the time. On completion of my studies, I was offered a teaching position in Melbourne and the restoration of the Dodge came to a standstill.

On one weekend whilst in Melbourne, I followed the early ‘eighties tradition of going in the city to buy *The Age* to see what Veteran and Vintage vehicles were on offer.

To my surprise there was a Rolls-Royce 20 h.p. for sale, but



Above: 20 h.p. 78A1 was fitted with this Australian ‘sedan’ body when acquired by the writer.

I knew little about them – only knowing about the Silver Ghost.

I thought I would enquire and rang (no answer – only land lines then) but was able to get in touch with the owner and arrangements were made to view the remains, which I did after attending a swap meet on the Sunday.

It was very sad and incomplete with many parts being removed from it in the mid- to late-sixties. Anyhow it was a “Rolls-Royce” and not listening to wiser enthusiasts I purchased 78A1 in 1982.

Despite no internet and lots of searching some progress was made including the new tourer body frame. Restoration of instruments, some items plated and restoration of electrics.

Progress was very slow as I was also restoring the Veteran Dodge. A decision had to be made on what car to restore first, and as the Dodge was further advanced we persevered with it and the Twenty was put ‘on hold’, but not the search for parts which continued.

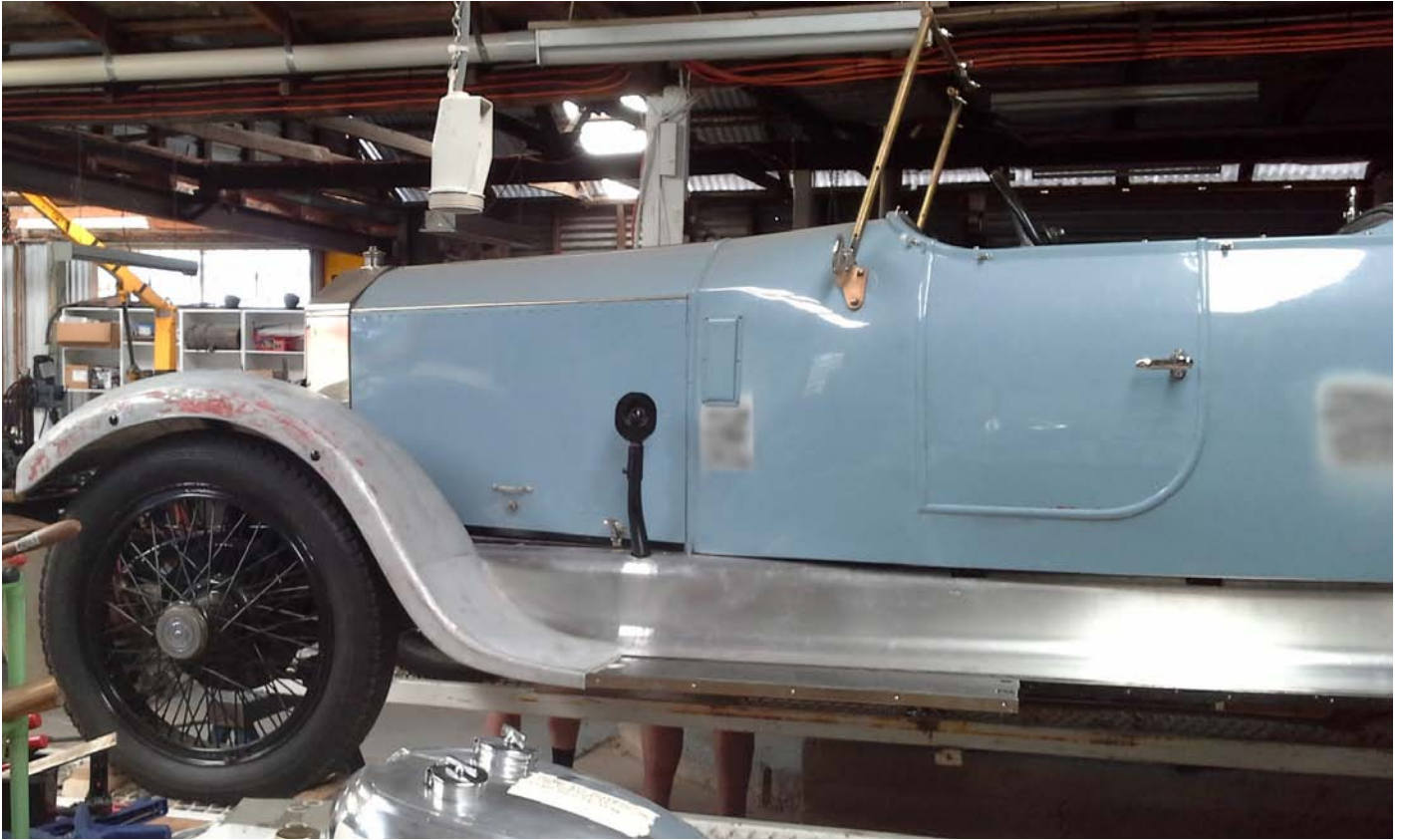
The Dodge was at a stage where much money was required and I also got married! Everything stopped to do with cars as there were other priorities. The Dodge was eventually finished in 1998 after having it for thirty years!

We were also finishing the major restoration of our period future home in Apollo Bay.

Only by 2010 after car restorations and house restorations, did I have the time and enthusiasm to finish 78A1.

A life-long friend and very serious collector had approached me a number of times to buy my Dodge. My answer was always NO! However, to shut him up, I put a ridiculous price on it, and to my surprise he agreed to buy it. I was not expecting this and said I would think it over. He suggested that I could use the money to finish 78A1.

After discussing it with Rita and with retirement approaching, I did not want to spend more years restoring another car. ➡



The answer was I would only sell the Dodge and 78A1 if I could find a restored, up and running Rolls-Royce 20 h.p.

The criteria were, it had to be usable and it had to have open tourer or two-seater coachwork. I was not interested in buying a rebodied 'thirties sedan which would be "a gutless wonder" – a term that was used until recently to describe Twenties that had been bodied with too-heavy coachwork.

The discovery of GPK1 a world away

I started to get serious in searching for the right car, but here in Australia there were none available in tourer or roadster form. I had no preference whether it was a two- or four-wheel brake model as long it was an open car.

I was hoping to find a Barker barrel-sided type like John Reis had (now belonging to Roger Warburton in Hamilton who also brought my 78A1 and my Dodge!)

There was no luck. Some in the United Kingdom, but prices were too high for what was on offer. After searching on the internet, I came across GPK1 which was being offered for sale by a dealer in New York.

At the time I didn't know the chassis number, but noted the U.K. registration number which was on the car: YL-2121. This number seemed to be familiar to me and after looking through Fasal's book which lists every chassis ever built and in some cases the original registration number I found it, the first production model of the 'India' series. I contacted the dealer via email and asked him to send more photos and con-

firm the chassis number, which was GPK1.

After I received this information and photos of the car I was very interested in purchasing it. This was subject to finalising the sale of the Veteran Dodge and then on the condition I could get import approval from the Australian Government.

The photos received looked quite good, but one still has to be a little a little cautious. From what I could see it looked good except for the 1950s retrim, broken tail-lights and the smaller 20 inch wheels (instead of the 23inch type).

I thought we might fly over to inspect, but at the time it wasn't possible. A price was agreed and a deposit was paid on the condition of approval to import was given. We didn't want to buy a vehicle which we couldn't bring into the country.

Having never imported a car from overseas, I soon discovered that there was a lot to consider. The best option was to find a reputable shipping agent who could handle all aspects of the process. After much research I settled on an agent based in Castlemaine in country Victoria.

We met with him and were advised that the best option was to have it sent out in its own shipping container, not 'roll-on roll-off' which means sitting in the ship unprotected or in a multi-car container as cars are sometimes damaged in rough seas.

We were also advised that there would be the agents fees, customs fees, port charges, GST on everything, plus luxury car tax on an old car due to its price. The other issue was

the exchange rate Australian Dollars to U.S., at the time one AUD was only sixty-eight U.S. cents. We were also advised not to under-value or to try and deceive authorities as this can lead to the car being seized and becoming a total loss without compensation.

At the end we had paid considerable sums to the Government, shipping agent and other charges.

The car arrived in North Altona and had to be collected within 48 hours or a daily storage fee would be required to be paid. Once cleared a flat tray truck was organised to collect it and bring it back to Keilor Downs. On inspection the front mudguard had suffered minor damage, so I wasn't happy as nobody would admit to it and the insurance excess was more than the cost of repairing the damage. The other issue was I could hardly get into the car. This wasn't due to an increase in my weight, but at some time (probably in the 1950s or '60s) the seat being moved forward, and lowered, and the wind-screen also lowered. This wasn't realised prior to purchase. I expect this was done to give the car a sportier look by a person who was no taller than about 5ft 3in.

Getting the car back on the road for some enjoyment?

Once the car was delivered a closer inspection was undertaken. All fuel and fluids had been drained and the battery was flat. It was decided to go over it and replace with Penrite lubricants, fresh fuel and either re-charge the American marine type battery or replace it.

I was a little uncertain if I had covered everything (extra starting information was in the side pocket from the Vintage Car Garage in the U.S.A. who had worked on the car).

After ringing Bob Clarke and asking for anything else I should know, Bob offered to come down and help getting it right for the start-up. A very generous gesture on his behalf; a date and time was arranged. He gave me two days of his time and experience, plus a one-to-one tutorial on servicing and maintenance.

The time came to start the car and I was shown by Bob how to set the controls and the procedure required. After a couple of turns on the crank-handle, ignition on, the starter was pressed and she was running.

Bob and I drove it out of the garage and drive. We then went around the block and it gradually kept improving and with a couple of adjustments it ran extremely well. He claimed that it was "the fastest Twenty he had ever driven". He believed that a great amount had been spent on the motor (see Steven Braddock's article written in 1996 for the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of America).

Over the next few weeks further work was undertaken to get it ready to be put on a Club permit. This included repairing the divers-helmet tail-lights and replacing missing and cracked lens, adjusting the brakes and brake-light, and making the non-original Lucas electric wiper operational (until I could replace it with

an original Lucas vacuum type).

Once this was completed it was taken to get a Roadworthiness Certificate which would enable it to be placed on a club permit. The customer service officer asked me about the car and offered a plate number ending with year of the car (5-025). At the time I thought this would be okay, but also found out that the Victorian rights to the combination YL-2121 (same as the original U.K. registration) was available, so I bought the rights to these plates and will place it on it some time in the near future.

Some rallying and events in the car

It was now time to use the car on short trips to see if there were any problems. This involved runs of no more than 20 miles from home until we had confidence in the car. First runs OK then fuel issues, vacuum tank not sucking, fixed, another time a flat tyre.

We then entered in the annual Hamilton Queen's Birthday Rally. We trailed the car there as it was 180 miles there and back. The car went well, however we did have carby and fuel issues. This was due to the tank being drained prior to shipping to Australia, with the new petrol stirring up old sediment causing blockages.

This was sorted out and no more problems. A few more local runs were undertaken and we were approached to take it on the 80th Anniversary of the Great Ocean Road in November 2012, which was limited to 32 pre-war cars.

To be on the safe side I had a vintage Rolls-Royce specialist check it out to make sure it would complete the seven day tour from Melbourne to Port Fairy and back. My mate also entered his 1929 Packard. Both cars performed well and easily cruised at 50 m.p.h. The only issue was on hot day some overheating occurred due the shutters not working properly. The other issue was I hated driving it because the seating position was "killing me". It was now clear that I couldn't use it on long trips with the current seating and the hood could not be erected due to it being too low and my head hitting the top bow. Rita was not happy at having the hood down all the time in extreme weather conditions.

The retrim and replacement of woodwork

Early in 2013 it was decided enough was enough and changes to the car's seating set-up were required along with a full retrim and minor panel work. This would get GPK1 right for another 90 years. After much research, it was decided to use Grant White Motor Trimming in Rosanna as he specialises in many veteran and vintage cars and he can carry out other basic repairs to hood frames and woodwork if not too complex.

An estimate was given and accepted, but this also depended on what was found under the old trim. To save on costs I stripped the old trim out.

Once removed we realised that this was a bigger job than we ➡

thought with much old timber needing to be replaced, a new floor to replace the incorrect plywood one, new seat springs for both front and rear seats, changes to hood frame and side curtains and replacement of a couple of hood bows.

We also discovered that the original Auster rear screen fittings behind the front seat were there, the Barker headlight tilt mechanism had been removed (hole in the body still there) and the headlight bar had been welded into place at sometime, and the large Lucas RB60 light reflectors had been 'butchered' to take 1950s sealed beams.

The more I looked the more I found was incorrect or had been done to a very ordinary standard. My wife just said "stop looking" but this not in my DNA. I was also driven by the original photographs taken of it when it was new, showing how it was in 1925. It was and is my mission to get it back as close to that as possible. This was to include replacing of the headlight mechanism, reinstating the Boa horn, repositioning the side wheel carrier from the right- to the left-hand side, finding an original English tax disc holder, the list went on.

Grant White looked at the woodwork and decided it was too big of a job for him and this would have to be undertaken by an experienced coachbuilder or cabinet maker.

As I mentioned before we had spent many years restoring our Californian Bungalow in Apollo Bay with the woodwork being undertaken by an exceptional young tradesman Dave Howell. After much pleading David agreed to undertake the work on the car, but only at nights and weekends due to time commitments. He advised that I would have to be patient as it could take at least 6 to 8 months of and on to get finished (there always seem to be delays in restoring not only a Rolls-Royce but any old car).

As I wanted it right I had to work in with him. The car was driven back to Apollo Bay and placed in his huge shed. Dave can do anything providing he had the information. Where this could be obtained? John Reis came to the rescue and was very kind in letting us visit his home and take many photographs and measurements of his car. This involved removing the floor-boards and seat bases. This was very valuable as the body on this car has never been restored or altered, so was an excellent reference which would enable us to get GPK1 right. Further information was also obtained from a touring design on page 260 in Fasal and also referring to original Rolls-Royce coachwork notes and recommendations in a reprinted brochure in the book. This gave the correct seat height, angles and other distances from the controls. This was critical in getting the new woodwork and wooden seat frames right. It also allowed for the windscreen and pillars to be returned their right proportion and height.

This along with personal preferences enabled a fantastic result. Grant White travelled to Apollo Bay to inspect the work and advise whether any other repair changes were need. However as I am 6ft 2in. tall I wanted the front seat back as far as possible, but this was determined by the 'bridge' in this type of body. A decision was taken to get the front seat back as far as possible. This unfortunately meant that the side

curtains could be no longer be stored in the back of the front seat. However it was more important to me for comfort and room when driving.

The more you look the more you find!

There were many other things I wasn't satisfied with this include a cracked wooden dash, wrong floor-boards, poorly made replica valance panels, worn door hinges and twisted door frames (due to age). The use of incorrect nuts and bolts (as these were UNF) I assume may have been done when the car received a 'make-over' during 1985-1990s. There were also wrong bolts holding the mudguards and other components. The list went on.

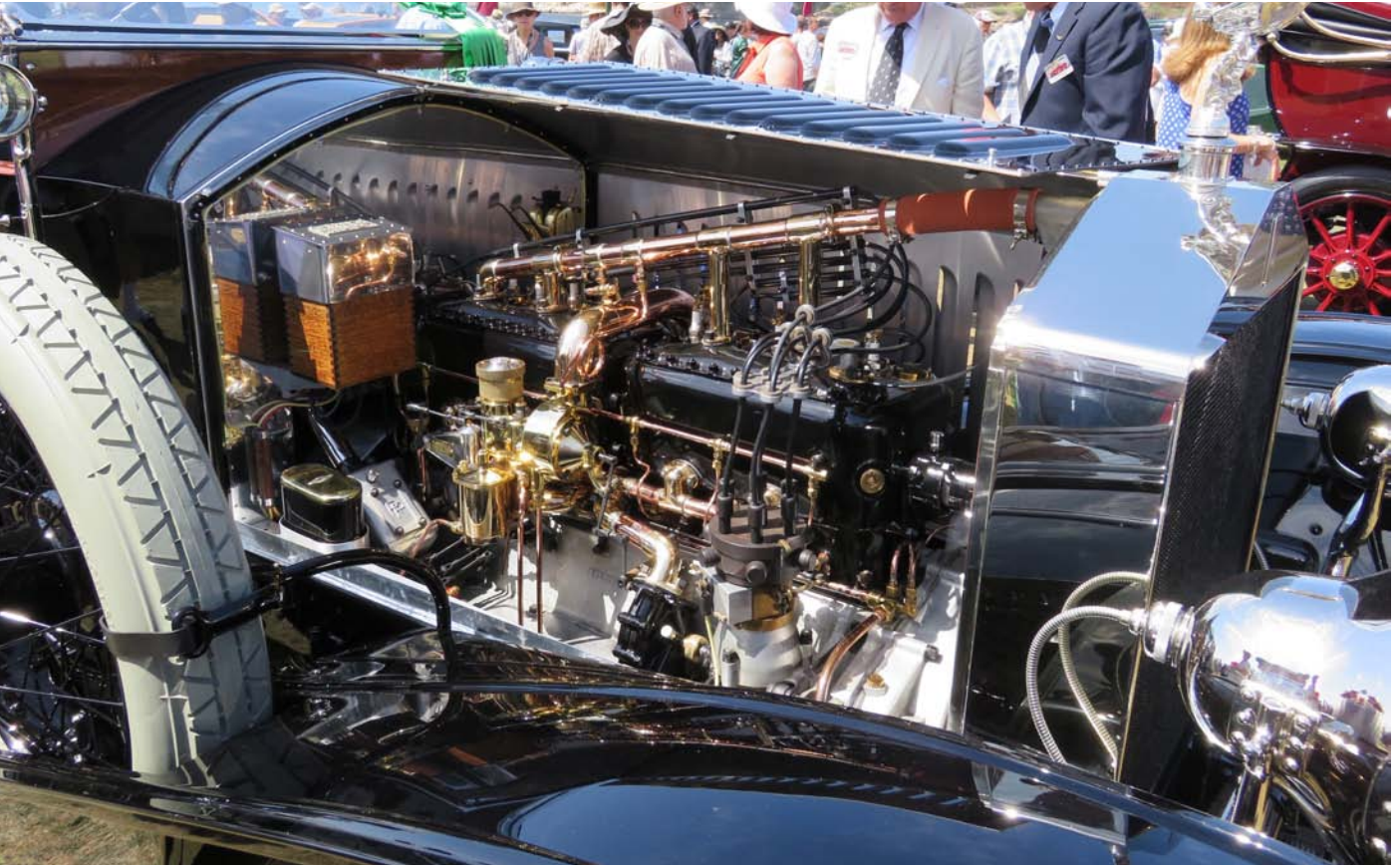
Using the internet I was lucky to source a set of original factory floor boards, compete with all the fittings to replace to old incorrect homemade ones. Over time other items were also found. These included the missing tax disc holder, the correct Auster rear screen, and an original battery-box cover with instruction plate, and rear luggage rack.

It was clear that many bolts would have to be replaced with the right type, but to purchase these through a major Rolls-Royce specialist would have cost a small fortune. I am lucky that my mate who owns the vintage Packard also has a major engineering business and offered to make the missing nuts and bolts to the original specifications. He has also made many other bits and pieces for the car. How lucky am I. Whilst the car was still in Apollo Bay, Dave carefully removed all four door skins, straightened the door frames, repaired the hinges and refitted the skins without any damage. This was a day per door procedure and was very stressful to the both of us.

The final job Dave undertook was to remake the running boards as the original photos showed, a tool-box in the running board was remade, with the correct metal covering and a special brass moulding edge coming from America. Frames have also been made to take the coir running-board mats.

To be continued





Above: This Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost shows that the engine of that model could be described as a little untidy in comparison with some European and American engines, but Royce wasn't aiming for a neat and tidy appearance: his priorities were for a superbly-made engine built from the finest materials, that would keep on doing its work without complaint for decades.

Blessed or Cursed?

Part Two: engines, and the senses . . .

By Peter Colwell

When I was very young, my Dad owned a Caterpillar D2 tractor, which of course I drove a good deal. The main four cylinder diesel engine was started by a noisy frenetic desperate little two cylinder petrol engine. The warm exhaust of which was routed through the intake of the diesel engine. Starting took quite some time. But the point is that once the diesel started, it settled into a low hum, strong, quiet and dignified. The process always reminded me of an annoying little puppy snapping at the heels of a big old Labrador.

Caterpillar is of course a very well respected quality engineering name. The thick manual for this tractor started off with a warning, which I have never forgotten and which goes to the theme of my story. It said; "An anti-friction bearing, properly lubricated with clean oil, will last indefinitely." Wow, really? Caterpillar said.

Therein lies the seeds for my methods of preservation, which now, more than 50 years later, I know actually work. There are many mechanisms in our cars that respond to this. Differentials for example, will never wear out if the oil is kept free of the grinding paste that it turns into, if not changed. Clutch repairs are usually caused by careless use, even brake parts, which are designed to wear out, last a very long time if used

properly. Automatic transmissions just love it if you always go to neutral when stopped, even briefly. Heat is always the enemy. Interestingly, Caterpillar also referenced this point, making the point that at stall, 100% of engine power is being converted to heat in the torque convertor.

Related to all this, is the need to have a keen sense of what is going on all the time. I am not sure if this trait can be learned, or one has to be born with it. I think I inherited mine from my father. But I do know that it works, and the benefits are huge. If something does not feel, sound, or smell right, it isn't. An unusual smell is a dead giveaway of course, but sometimes, a slight feeling of unevenness in some way, needs to be investigated NOW. A failing tyre (not flat) once revealed itself by a strange sideways rocking motion in the last few feet of a stop. Examination showed an out-of-round tyre, an ominous bubble in the tread.

Which brings me to some of my experiences. I was in the Rover at a national rally. At very low quiet speed, – read street parade speed – there was a strange clicking sound from the rear wheel, which I felt embarrassingly could be heard by every pedestrian. Up on the hoist at home, the clicking turned out to be the tail of a cable tie that was used to secure





Above: A post-war Rolls-Royce B.80 straight-eight engine installed in a vintage Bentley – with carburation by four big SUs.

the leather spring gaiters, touching the inside of the rear tyre. Really?

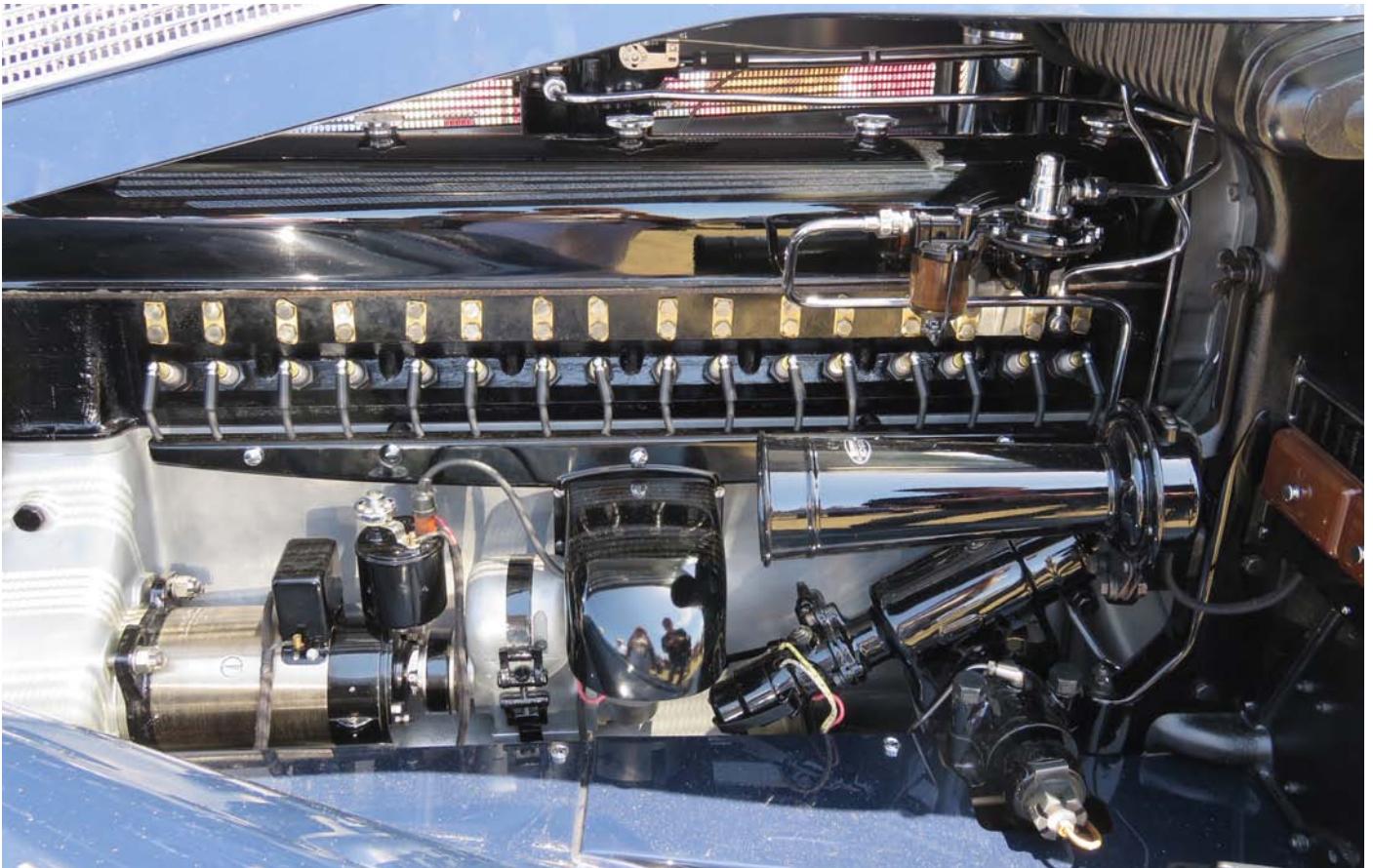
The classic case was an oil leak from my Land Rover V8 engine, when it was near new. Under warranty for service, the dealer reported that the front main seal was leaking. A major job. One would think that an engine designed in the 1950s would have its seals issues sorted by the 1990s. I was skeptical.

Up on the hoist, I noticed that the low pressure return hose to the power steering reservoir was seeping. The accumulated oil was running down the hose and dripping on to the engine just above the front pulley. You can guess the rest. A minute or so with a screwdriver fixed it.

I have often said that when inspecting a classic or used car mechanically, about 90% of what we need to know can be ascertained from listening to the exhaust at idle. If it passes that test, and it only takes a few seconds, then we can look further. But just about every mechanical engine ailment will show itself in the exhaust note. Just as perfect tune will too.

In the classic car movement, there are many classes. Some are excellent vehicle restorers and love to restore. Others love to polish. My personal passion has always been to preserve originality, and to have the car as close to original smooth running condition as possible. Some time ago, a journalist visited to write a story about my original unmolested 51-year-old Mini Cooper S. As we drove down the road I

Below: Pre-war Packard straight-eight. A fine appearance using quality materials to rival, and in some respects similar to, Rolls-Royce. Note the neat but impressive row of 16 spark-plugs.





Above: The German sense of order comes to the fore in the under-bonnet appearance of this vintage Mercedes. Note the cast-aluminium cooling fan.

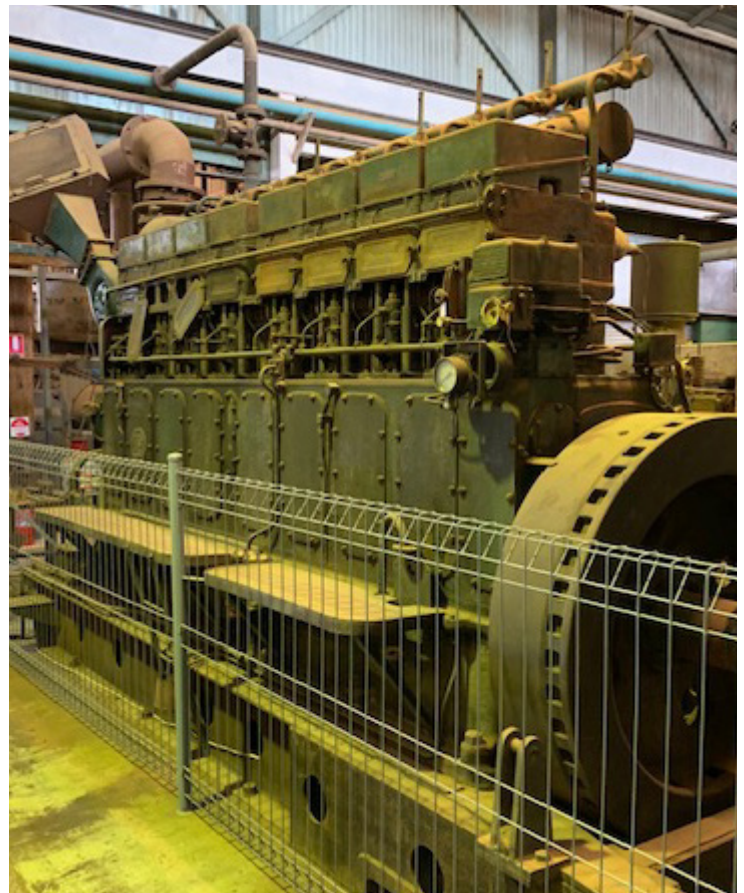
asked him – as a journalist of much Mini experience – how it sounded and felt to him. To my absolute delight, he offered that it ran more smoothly than some restored examples he had driven. Mr Caterpillar was right. This is especially interesting considering that the Mini engine is not a lazy slow-revving V8. Rather it is a frenetic high-revving busy cast iron pushrod engine that has spent hours on the highway at 4000 and more rpm. At 51 years old and 150,000 kilometres, it should be a basket case. But in reality removing the head or other major work, would be a complete waste of time. Yes, Mr Caterpillar was right. Clean oil, indefinitely.

I have four English vehicles in my shed, including the Silver Cloud. All still have their original Lucas electrics and distributor. I know many people fit modern electronic systems, and even alternators dressed in generator clothes, and that's fine. But I'm still waiting for any indication that I should follow. Similarly, modern electric fuel pumps do away with the need for tedious points issues with the original type. But the points in my Mini's SU pump have been replaced just twice, - in 51 years. Maybe the electronic ones will last 100 years?

My passion for all this cannot be explained to unbelievers. It follows that I find most modern cars totally sterile and characterless. But I still think that my Mini, Rover and Silver Cloud may well be still running smoothly when a brand new exotic car of today may be a pile of plastic and transistors.

Engines of the 1930s were shiny works of art. Very tidy with gleaming brass and alloy. Modern engines, while technically brilliant, are an unbelievable visual catastrophe.

To be continued

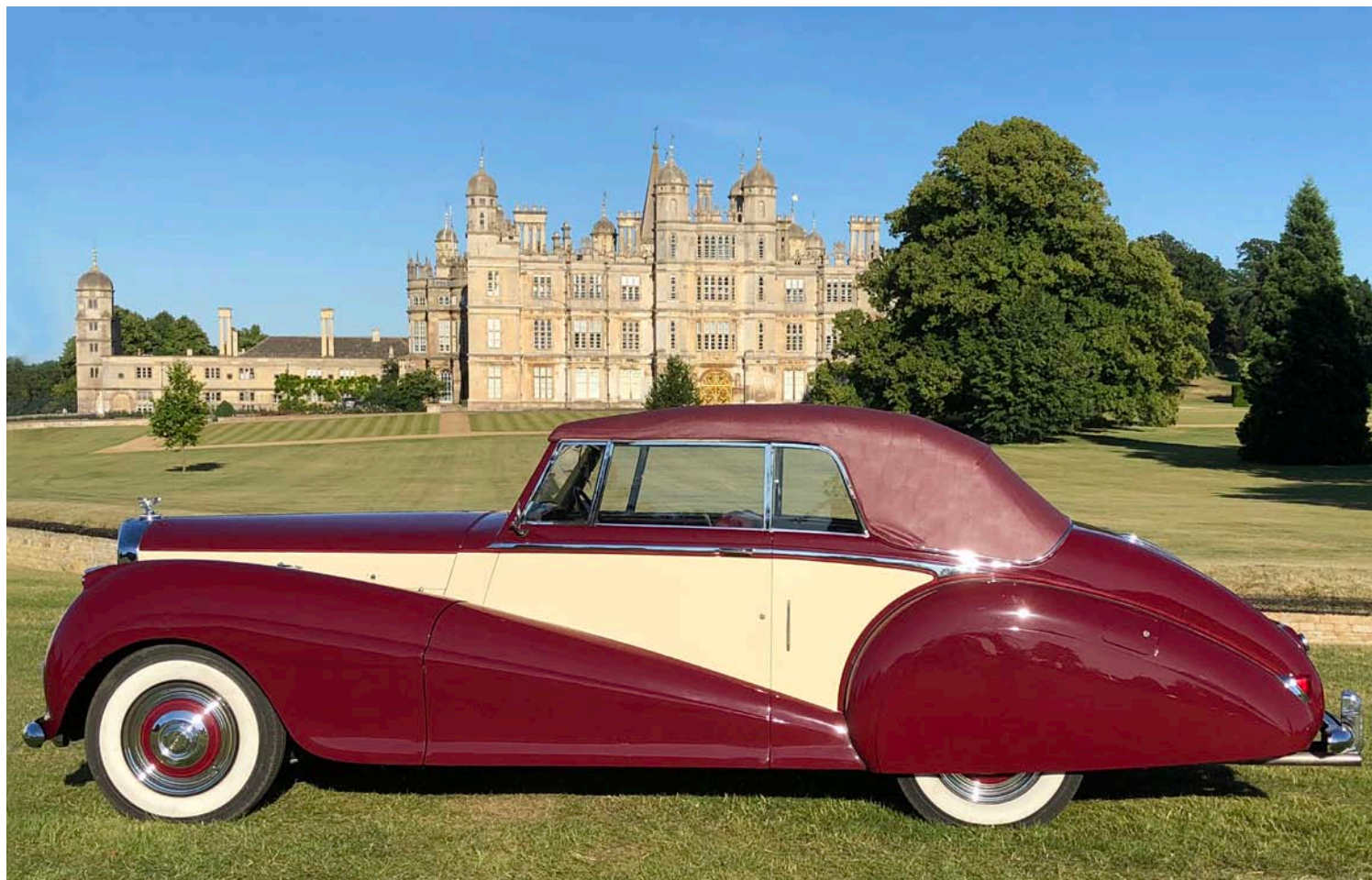


Above: This in-line 8-sylinder diesel engine, an early post-war product of the English Electric Co., powered a large generator in outback Queensland until 1985.

Photographs taken on location by Peter Colwell at: Pebble Beach, California; Caterpillar factory, Decatur, Illinois; Longreach Power Station, Queensland.

Below: This huge Caterpillar V20 diesel engine is typical of those that power modern diesel locomotives which are capable of hauling freight trains of five-figure tonnages with remarkable fuel-efficiency.





Above: The 16th century Burghley House forming a suitably glorious back-drop for B14MD.

Bentley Mk VI Park Ward drophead coupé B14MD

Part 2: Attending the 2018 R.R.E.C. Annual Rally and the Earls Court Reunion Show

By Ian Oliver

Arranging the car to be travel ready, obtaining Carnet, insurances, and transporting the car to Sydney for the shipping to the U.K. was the easy part of the journey.

The estimated time for travel by sea was quoted to me as 40-45 days so to be on the safe side I would need to add some extra days or weeks for unexpected days, including at least three days for customs clearances etc. The difficulty here is that we didn't want the car arriving too early as that would mean extra storage costs on the wharf at Southampton, U.K. So how did I respond when I looked at the invoice after dropping off the car in Sydney? The invoice quoted "current ETA 18/06/2018 in Southampton" (that is 50 days on the water being shipped!) and the Show starts four days later – on 22nd June 2018. In panic, I phoned the shipping agent to find out that they are only able to track the passage of the vessel daily and it might be able to make up time!

We were later to find that approximately one of every six containers that land on the dock at Southampton is "tagged".

This means that it is opened and thoroughly inspected, adding approximately another seven days for the time on the wharf at the other end. I thought this is like playing Russian Roulette – If this occurs the major reason for taking the car abroad vanishes and I am left with very little reason to fly over to the U.K. as the show will be over, possibly by the time the car arrives.

Despite this our air fares for our personal travel are arranged to allow us about a week in London to see where we may be able to park the car after the R.R.E.C. and Earls Court Reunion Show and the Register Rally in Devon, 24th to 28th September 2018. So after we arrived, we headed immediately to P. & A. Wood just out of London to find out whether this would suit us and to see their premises. We were more than impressed with the offerings and in a later Part of this article it will become clear that this was to become another unforgettable experience.

Back to London and then Southampton as we wanted



Above: Ladies in period dress enjoying a ride in the back of B14MD, with Ian Oliver at the wheel. The car was straight off the ship from Australia, having arrived at the R.R.E.C. Annual Rally from Southampton Docks – a five-hour journey – with 30 minutes to spare!

Below: Ian Oliver with Rolls-Royce & Bentley authors/publishers Davide Bassoli and Bernard King, who always share a very popular stand at the Annual Rally.





Above: B14MD beside the Club Hospitality Marquee. The mural glimpsed inside was subsequently acquired and brought home to Canberra.



Left: One of our many newly-made friends, Martin Carnell.

to be at the docks on the wharf when the car arrived, which was now scheduled to be on time, despite some agonising lost days reported to us earlier. The best thing we could do was to show our keenness to collect the car as soon as it was cleared from customs and pray that the container would not be held up for further inspection.

The prayers worked and we were able to be at the shipping agent's premises three days after docking at 7.00 a.m. to assist with the opening of the container and remove the car the day of the commencement of the car show. A special car transporter was arranged to take the car to Burghley House, Stamford, Lincoln-shire, as we had made it this far and there was no reason to take chances with unexpected holdups, breakdowns or getting lost. It was a scheduled 4-5 hour trip and we would follow the car transporter in our rental car keeping an eye on time and ensuring that we do our utmost to be at the planned event.

We arrived at Stamford at about 1.30 p.m. with the show commencing at 2.00 p.m. What a relief it was to be there with the car – with half an hour to spare! We could now relax and enjoy the surroundings, the approximately 1,200 Rolls-Royce & Bentley cars, the venue and the many people that we knew but hadn't yet met.

The first day was for enrolment and getting organised. The



***Above:** Proud owners Ian & Tina Oliver with two friends and fellow R.R.O.C.A. (A.C.T. Branch) members, retired Mulliner Park Ward Senior Quality Engineer Richard Mann and your Editor.*



car was dusted over, rear spats installed and as best we could entered for the show. We missed the opportunity for concours judging which would have allowed learning more of our car which was still relatively new to us.

The main reason for us being there was there was for the Reunion of Earls Court Motor Show cars, of which B14MD was one, and we could see the separate arrangements that were made for this particular part of the R.R.E.C. event. It was held in a separate area from the main concours judging and we were amazed that B14MD was treated as very special. We were specially photographed by the photographers in the inner grounds of the spectacular country house. The organisers made arrangements for our car to be featured in the special promotional brochure, it was displayed alongside the Club hospitality tent with another very special car – the Rolls-Royce Silver Wraith, WZB29, which was used to drive

Winston Churchill and other famous personalities. The car hadn't been seen in the U.K. for some time as it had found its way to Europe where it had been undergoing restoration work. With this car, B14MD made a grand entry with the fly-over of the Lancaster bomber and Spitfires, showing the other spectacular side to the Rolls-Royce heritage story, from the air. The sound and experience was moving and occurred just after a recording of the famous Winston Churchill World War 2 declaration of war speech. B14MD with model passengers in period attire entered the arena being specially introduced to the other participants and onlookers.

This event was to lay the foundation for further rewarding and memorable experiences which will be covered in later parts to this story.

To be continued

Review of the Deed Constituting the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia

The Deed Constituting the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia, which binds us as one of the six Branches, or "Members", of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia, came into effect in 1992 and having been closely based on its predecessor the 'Federal Constitution' it therefor has its roots in a much older document. The Deed is also inextricably linked to the Trade Mark Agreement between the R.-R.O.C. and the Companies, by which the Branches were able to be incorporated using the Rolls-Royce name.

It is recognised that those responsible for drawing up the Deed in the first instance deserve our gratitude and great respect. The Deed was formulated around the time of incorporation of the Branches with the laudable intention of, as far as possible, maintaining the pre-incorporation *status quo* of one Club, six Branches.

The Club's recent Annual General Meeting, which should have been held at Leura during the Federal Rally but which, due to unavoidable circumstances was held by telephone on 12th August, confirmed a motion already carried at Clare in 2018. That motion commits the Branches to carrying out a review of the Deed. Also at Clare, two amendments to the Deed proposed by our Branch were adopted, and although at the time we felt that they were the only amendments we required, circumstances have changed.

The Deed in its present form has continued to serve us well for nearly 30 years, with a particularly prevalent view being "if it isn't broken, don't fix it". However, earlier this year unforeseen circumstances arose. From the point of view of this Branch, the primary intent of this review is not to change its intent, but rather to clarify and strengthen it, in particular to avoid any weakening of the links that bring us together as the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia with all of the benefits that accrue to the membership

from our great national Club. Any amendments proposed by the A.C.T. Branch will have due regard to precedent and the clear intent of the original document, while proposing nothing that does not already apply in long-established practice.

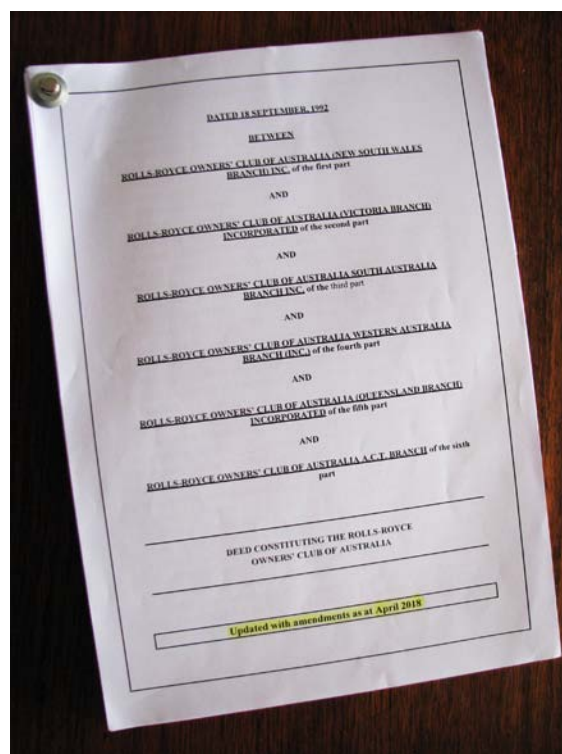
The review is to be carried out against a background of some parts of the document having the perceived potential to:

- * have unintended consequences;
- * continue to impose provisions which may not be considered applicable in modern times;
- * retain anomalous situations;
- * leave the Federal Council unable to proceed with business needing to be carried out;
- * restrict the flexibility needed to deal with exceptional and unforeseen circumstances;
- * allow unforeseen re-interpretations in the face of decades of precedent and clear intent.

As per the original motion in Clare, all R.-R.O.C. Member Branches have two representatives on the Deed Review Sub-Committee. Mike Mulvihill and I have been selected by our Committee as the representatives for our Branch, and Mike has since been elected Secretary of the Sub-Committee. Each amendment that the Sub-Committee agrees for adoption will be entered into a final package of amendment proposals which will be circulated to the Branches prior to the 2021 Annual General Meeting. It will then be tested by a vote at that AGM and, if approved by the required 75% majority, adopted as our amended Deed. In the event that it is rejected, we remain with the current Deed.

Any member with proposals for amending the Deed should in the first instance contact any Branch Committee member (see back page).

Martin Bennett



Members' Cars for Sale



1974 **Rolls-Royce Corniche** (CRH17997) two-door Saloon by Mulliner Park Ward. Brewster Green with Parchment Everflex roof and Parchment interior – a stunning combination. Full NSW registration with matching green number plates RRC 075. Selling because my family convinced me to downsize my passion for cars. Imported by York Motors in Sydney for Mr Frank Harvie of Vacluse. I am a RROCA member and the three previous owners were also members. A well documented 150,000 km. Complete original tool-kit, original owners' manuals, complete file of work by York Motors from its arrival on ss *Botany Bay* in November 1974 to its service in July 1984 at 60,000 km. Only 1,108 Corniche two-door saloons produced between 1971 and 1981. Engine fully reconditioned in the last 6,000 km. Bruce Webster 0408 401 010



1982 **Rolls-Royce Silver Spirit** (ASC04176). Imported by Kellow-Falkiner as the 1983 Melbourne Motor Show exhibit. Original build documentation and its past 10 years of service/repairs by a respected RROCA member mechanic are available. Lots of interior restorative maintenance already undertaken. A very fine and clean, reliable example of an original Silver Spirit, known by many SMART participants. \$26,000. Peter Hyland 02 6286 4265 phy40183@bigpond.net.au



Left: A young David Thurlow in his natural element – at the business end of a magnificent, powerful locomotive.

Above: David Thurlow was also no stranger to being behind the wheel of a magnificent, powerful Rolls-Royce car, in this instance the Sir Henry Royce Foundation's ex-Vice-Regal 1967 Phantom V, 5VF159.

David M. Thurlow

27th March 1935 - 12th July 2020

David Thurlow was born and grew up in the west London suburb of Greenford, a short distance from Western Avenue where the Hooper coachworks was located. His next-door neighbour worked there. He came to Australia as a teenager with his family, who settled in the Southern Highlands district of New South Wales.

As a friend of 35 years it soon became clear that David was that happiest of men – one of a select group who are completely content in their work. In fact he never saw his work as work at all. A highlight was when *Flying Scotsman* visited Australia in 1988. In his youth David had often admired this famous locomotive at Kings Cross station in London but not in his wildest imagination could he have foreseen that he would one day be its driver – in Australia.

David's 5-inch gauge passenger-carrying garden railway was his pride and joy and the scene of at least two memorable and highly enjoyable inter-Branch R.R.O.C. events. David's sound understanding of engineering was also put

to good use when he comprehensively rebuilt the engine of his Bentley Mk VI B150MD, in collaboration with the late Tony Ward of the New South Wales Branch, who recorded the whole process on video.

It was my privilege to have been accompanied by David on three forays to the U.K., riding that country's high-speed rail network, visiting heritage steam railways, the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club Annual Rally, countless other places of railway and Rolls-Royce interest, and visiting fellow Branch member and our good friend, Richard Mann. On one occasion we stayed at the Midland Hotel in Manchester, where C.S. Rolls and F.H. Royce met in 1904. As a travelling companion David's amiable, gentlemanly charm came to the fore. The words "David Thurlow was one of my favourite people", which I have heard from so many people, say it all.

To David's wife Pam, their daughters and grand-children, our sympathy and condolences.

Martin Bennett



Above: David & Pam Thurlow being presented with a Certificate of Appreciation and a gift by then Federal President Bryan Inder (centre) on the occasion of a joint outing of the A.C.T. and N.S.W. Branches to the Thurlows' miniature garden railway on 4th March 2006.

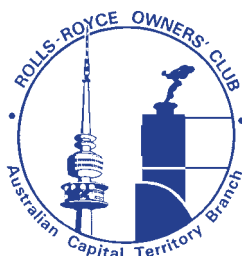
Below: on the same occasion, Club members and cars at the Thurlows' lovely Southern Highlands property 'Windy Ridge'.



Tailpiece . . .



1951 Bentley Mk VI B14MD being unloaded from its container in England, June 2018, after which this beautiful car and owners Ian & Tina Oliver took part in the R.R.E.C. Annual Rally (including the Earls Court Motor Show Tribute) and the R.R.E.C. Tour of Devon. See page 12.



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