



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 2021



SZD313

1961 Silver Cloud II

Mike Mulvihill



Mid-week 'cars & coffee'

From the Editor & President


hjmullinersw@bigpond.com



In our Autumn edition I was guilty of mis-identifying a member's car at the Terribly British Day. The Silver Cloud on page 7 was incorrectly identified as Mike Mulvihill's Silver Cloud II, and although Mike was present on the day, he wasn't in his Silver Cloud II. The car in the photograph is in fact Peter & Kate Colwell's 1957 Silver Cloud, SFE87 – by far the furthest travelled of the cars we mustered on the day.

On Wednesday 31st March we had our first ever mid-week run, attracting three S Series cars, three different SZ models and a Continental GT. The impression gained was that these mid-week runs will be popular and will therefore become a regular feature of our Events Calendar.

The annual Federal Rally of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia took place in Geelong between 14th and 17th May. The Victoria Branch is to be congratulated on a highly successful Rally – the result of a great deal of hard work and dedication in the face of great uncertainty and only a short time in which to organise an event that normally takes much longer to bring together. Although participant numbers were of necessity limited, a significant number of our Branch members were there. Photographic coverage will be found in this edition of *The Capital Letter*.

In accordance with long-established tradition the Annual General Meeting of the Club was held during the Rally, with our Branch represented by its elected Delegates Joe Quattrocchi and myself. Our Treasurer Ian Oliver was also present in his capacity as Federal Treasurer. There were two important outcomes: firstly, no draft for an amended Federal Deed was able to 

Below: Tom & Fiona Clarke sent this shot of the lovely town of Broadway, Worcestershire, taken from their ex-Australia 1951 Silver Dawn, SDB26. Tom is an Honorary Life Member of the R.R.O.C.A. and a member of the Western Australia Branch. He is known for a great many accomplishments including co-authorship, with David Neely, of the wonderful reference book *Rolls-Royce & Bentley in the Sunburnt Country*, published in 1999 by the Sir Henry Royce Foundation Australia.



Front Cover: Mike Mulvihill's 1961 Silver Cloud II, SZD313, outside the Sutton Bakery during our first foray into mid-week events. Given its complete success, there will be more of these in the future.

achieve the required 75% support to be adopted, which means that the existing Deed remains in force, and secondly a resolution to equitably redistribute Federal funds was supported in an amended form.

We should not read too much into the failure of the Deed Review Sub-Committee to present an amended Deed acceptable to all parties to it, given the high bar that amendments need to get over at the Annual General Meeting and the fact that there is no reason to believe that the existing Deed will not continue to serve us effectively. There are some inconsistencies and ambiguities but provided its interpretation based on decades of precedent continues to be respected, there will be no problem. I place on record here my thanks to Mike Mulvihill for his leading role in serving the interests both of our Branch and the Club as a whole in the Deed Review process.

On the same day as the Annual General Meeting I attended two other meetings, in different capacities. As Registrar of the Silver Cloud, S Series & Phantom V/VI Register I took part in the annual meeting of the Federal Office-bearers with the Registrars, and as A.C.T. Branch President I was invited to the Sir Henry Royce Foundation Consultative Meeting. The Registrars meeting was particularly convivial. It is clear that within the model Registrars' meetings and their highly popular motoring tours, the Branch to which individual members belong becomes irrelevant. In fact, the Registrars form one of so many features of the Club from which the members derive great benefits and which we perhaps take for granted but which wouldn't and couldn't happen if we were to go down the blind alley of watering down our vitally important national structure.

Ralph Plarre's rousing Toast to the Club at the Presentation Dinner and its rapturous response by the members present said all that needs to be said about the deep affection in which our great national Club is held by members across the country.

The successful conclusion to the Geelong Federal Rally means that our Branch is the next Federal Rally host. We are of course ready for it, with a great deal of its organisation already in place, and in Geelong the Federal Council endorsed the holding of next year's Federal Rally in Canberra from 3rd to 7th March, these being the dates set by your Federal Rally organising committee.

Later in May we received, through Steve Stuckey, an impromptu invitation to join members and cars of the Jaguar Drivers' Club of Canberra at the Goulburn Waterworks Steam Museum on Sunday 30th May. Seven Rolls-Royce & Bentley cars of our Branch turned out – somewhat outnumbered by Jaguars! We should do more of these joint outings. There will be photographic coverage in our next edition.

The June Meeting of the Branch was informed that our long-term member Luke Drady is now the proud owner of his first Rolls-Royce car, a 1981 Silver Spirit, ASB02230. Congratulations, Luke, and we look forward to seeing you and your new acquisition on future outings and events. Also to be congratulated is our Webmaster Tim Collins who has been appointed by the Federal Executive as the Club's Federal Webmaster.

The Branch Committee and members warmly welcome into membership Michael Walsh of Binda, N.S.W., who owns a 1977 Silver Shadow II, SRH31700. We wish Michael a long and happy association with the Club.

Martin Bennett

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 and/or text message 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*.

JULY

Wednesday 21st July: Mid-week lunch run to Murrumbateman Country Inn. Spacious parking, good food and a fine log fire. Suggested arrival time: around 11.30 a.m.

AUGUST

Wednesday 4th August: 7.00 p.m., General Meeting and Annual General Meeting at Capital Classic Autos, Unit 6, Shea Street, Phillip. There will be a brief Extraordinary General Meeting to amend Clause 16 (c) (i) of the Branch Constitution. Light refreshments provided. Members wishing to avail themselves of the Branch Library will have the opportunity to do so.

Sunday 15th August: 'Cars & Coffee' morning run to Braidwood for coffee and 'elevenses' at the Bakery. Stay for lunch if you choose to. The best parking, where we have some chance of parking all together, is in Wilson Street alongside the park – approaching from Canberra this is a left turn at the top of the hill at the war memorial. Then walk down to the Bakery, 99 Wallace Street – the main street of Braidwood – on the left going down the hill. Suggested arrival time: around 10.30 a.m.



SFE87 purchase day, 2006, and public reactions.

By Peter Colwell

I had arranged to pick up my newly purchased 1957 Silver Cloud SFE87 from Bill Coburn's house and take it to Queanbeyan for a N.S.W. 'pink slip' inspection. This is not an issue in N.S.W., but as the journey was to start in the A.C.T., this presented an unresolvable difficulty to the N.S.W. authorities.

To make it worse, upon arrival in Canberra, we realised it was a public holiday in the A.C.T. What to do? So I phoned the A.C.T. Police and the following exchange occurred: an officer initially said that he could not help, but when I explained further – what the car was etc. – he gave me his Police number and said to proceed, and that if I was pulled up in the A.C.T., to quote his number, and tell the officer that I had been in contact with my new – presumably senior – best friend. Already I was starting to think this was a good deal.

But wait, there's more.

Upon presentation at the 'pink slip' inspection station, the car passed except that the mechanic could not find an engine number, which he had to visually confirm. An hour of scrubbing and cleaning passed, but no number. The issue was fast becoming a big problem.

Some phone calls revealed that Chris O'Rourke, who I had not met at that point, lived nearby and had a similar car. So Chris came down, and to shorten the story, we found that the number on his otherwise identical car was in a totally different place from mine! From that day on Chris & Narelle have been close friends.

Who can boast of that kind of help from unknown friends, *and* some appreciated common sense from Federal agents on

a public holiday? The story pretty much epitomises my experience generally over the last 15 years with the car.

I had lusted after a Rolls-Royce from a very early age, and that dream came true, as documented here. However what I was not prepared for and had not even thought about, was the active public reaction as one wafts about the countryside. If anyone ever doubts that the Silver Cloud is the epitome of Rolls-Royce, then the public reaction will prove it. It actually started on day one. I picked the car up in Canberra and stayed in a CBD hotel that night. Next morning I faced the 400 km. drive to Dubbo. Leaving very early, in a very unfamiliar car, I drifted as quietly as possible down Northbourne Avenue. Within minutes I noticed that ordinary cars rushing to work, were giving me a very wide berth, slowing well back from me, and not crowding me at all. This was 15 years ago. It was quite noticeable. Hmmm . . . probably not now.

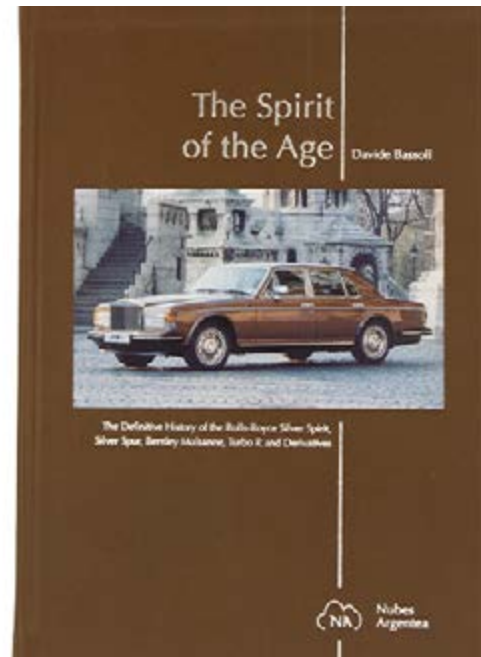
The typical reaction from the public is always positive – people wave and kids point from the footpath. In countless reactions I have never seen a negative one. Sitting at the traffic lights in the middle of Melbourne *en route* to the ferry terminal for the Tasmanian Rally, a lady pulled alongside in an open sports car – an Aston Martin. She looked up, as she had to as we were several feet above her, and clearly mouthed “nice car” with a smile.

Friends from New Zealand were visiting, so we decided to take the Silver Cloud to a lunch venue in Dubbo, which was along a four lane road on the outskirts. I told our friends to watch for reactions. Nothing happened for a while, and then a scruffy 1980s Commodore hove alongside and matched our speed for a moment. An even more scruffy mop-haired kid projected himself almost half out the window and yelled; “Nice car, mate”. One might have expected obscenities, but the exact opposite occurred. Our friends suddenly felt rather special.

Approaching a ‘T’ junction in town, there were two boys on bikes on the footpath at the head of the ‘T’. As I slowed to turn the right-angle corner, one yelled out “what a RIG”. It was definitely a compliment. Horsham in Victoria, at a roundabout. A gentleman on the corner, stood to attention, bowed and doffed his hat as we rounded the corner. This happened on another occasion too. However, our elevation did not last long. A few minutes later we parked in the main street of Horsham where they have parking meters. I alighted and was immediately accosted by a passer-by with the usual questions. When the conversation ended I had completely forgotten about the meter. You can guess the rest, but at least the Council clerk thought it was funny when I phoned up to pay later.

I would be interested to hear the experiences of others along the same lines. There have been countless examples not documented here. And when I take my Silver Cloud in for its annual health inspection, normal production ceases for a short period. This particular garage specialises in maintenance of European and exotic cars, and it is not unusual to see Audi, Mercedes-Benz, Volvo, BMW and even Aston Martin cars in the car park.

New Book on the Marques



The Spirit of the Age: The Definitive History of the Rolls-Royce Silver Spirit, Silver Spur, Bentley Mulsanne, Turbo R and Derivates

Published by Nubes Argentea, Italy

Features of the book include:

- * 262 pages with 360 colour pictures, many previously unreleased, 24 drawings, 19 tables
- * A colour folding cut-away of the Silver Spirit
- * Historical section for each SZ series
- * A dedicated chapter dealing with the SZ series colour range with 51 reproduced paint samples and 40 leather and cloth samples
- * Chapters dedicated to the bespoke extras, the special edition cars, the Hooper and Jankel conversions and a market analysis of the SZ series

Dimensions 320 x 243 mm (12¾ x 9 in.)

ISBN 9788894456714

Clothbound limited edition of 500 copies with slipcase priced at 190 Euros plus freight. At the time of going to press with this edition of *The Capital Letter* there was some indication that Branch member Steve Stuckey, himself a *Nubes Argentea* published author, may import sufficient copies to meet demand in the Club.





Above: 1960 Bentley S2 B25CT and its then owners John & Isabelle Salter in June 1967 during the Federal Rally of that year, with the host city of Albury in the background. Photograph by Fred English.

A.C.T. Branch members' cars:

1960 Bentley S2 B25CT

Martin Bennett

I was deeply attached to my Silver Wraith. I loved its style, the feel of its manual gear-change, and the incomparable view from the driver's seat. But Manuela disliked riding in it because of the absence of seatbelts and the impossibility of fitting them. As a driver she also has a preference for automatic, air conditioned cars with power steering!

The first car of Rolls-Royce manufacture that I ever drove was a 1960 Bentley S2, owned by John & Isabelle Salter. That momentous event in my life occurred on 30th April, 1967, during a Victoria Branch event a few weeks before the above photograph was taken. At the time it would have required a pretty wild stretch of the imagination for it to have occurred to me, even for a moment, that I would one day own the same wonderful motor car!

Nevertheless, that is the situation in which I now find myself. It has had two previous A.C.T. Branch owners, and our Treasurer Ian Oliver responded positively when I asked him if he would sell it to me. He kindly explained that whilst it was not on the market, he understood its significance to me.

B25CT was delivered new by Diesel Motors Pty Ltd, the then Western Australian Rolls-Royce & Bentley retailer, in the classic combination of Shell Grey over Black Pearl with red interior. Its first owner was Sydney-based Les O'Neil of Autralian Blue Metal Ltd. There was one further Sydney owner from whose estate John Salter purchased the car in February 1966. The only extra-cost option that was fitted was separate front seats – described on the sales card as “split bench”. S1 and S2 cars had as standard a bench-type front seat with separately adjustable backs, while the completely separate seats were a £30 optional extra.

The most expensive extra available at the time was the ‘under-wing’ air conditioning system. John Salter was an engineer who was perfectly equipped and skilled to retro-fit this system. He ordered the parts and fitted the system in his own workshop in Melbourne. It is still in place, though now with a modern rotary compressor which replaced the original reciprocating type, and it still works rather nicely.

Although the front seat upholstery is only some 20 years



Above & right: The car still looks much the same, with only subtle patination of the interior, though in 30 years of use John Salter's right shoe wore the pile off the carpet beside the accelerator pedal. The paintwork was renewed 24 years ago and is still excellent.

old, the remainder of the red leather is 1960 original, as are the headlining, carpets and woodwork, all contributing to a satisfying ambience inside the car. The original Handbook, small toolkit, inspection lamp and road tools are all present and correct, including the boot hold-down strap in perfect condition. It is in fact a veritable time-casule car, though it is in

Below: The rear compartment leather is 1960 original and in lovely condition, while the carpets and headlining are also original and in no need of replacement.



no way low-mileage: John Salter owned it for 30 years and for much of that time it was his only car.

It is my belief that the gulf that separated Rolls-Royce & Bentley cars from other makes was at its widest in the 1960s. What other 1960 car could drive in a way that would not disappoint many owners of modern cars? It has long legs, it is powerful and whisper quiet, with impressive ride and handling qualities, and interior furnishings of a standard scarcely even approached by other manufacturers. Its only short-coming in modern terms is its fuel consumption, which would make a modern car owner stare in disbelief!

It is very gratifying to have for once acquired a car that requires no cosmetic restoration, though I feel the responsibility of its ongoing maintenance, which must not be allowed to fall below the standard which it so obviously warrants.





Above: Silver Cloud II and its Bentley counterpart the S2 were represented by Mike Mulvihill's SZD313 and your Editor's B25CT.

Cars & Coffee mid-week run

Sutton Bakery, 31st March

Below: The S3 model was represented by Peter & Ann Toet's 1963 saloon B98EC.





Above: Former members Lawrie & Jane Nock, who are locals in Sutton, joined us at the Bakery. Jane is seen here in conversation with Mike Mulvihill.

Below: Ray & Raine Gulson's 1988 Bentley Eight BEJ23222.





Above: Tim & Linda Collins' 1986 Silver Spirit, ASG15221.

Below: Branch Secretary Peter Hyland locking up his 1994 Silver Spirit III, ASR54357.





Above: A good-sized group of members took part in this first mid-week event, though not all are in this photograph.

Below: Ian & Tina Oliver's 2016 Continental GT, BNG56355 was the most modern car present.





Above: On our way to the Federal Rally we passed this 1926 20 Horsepower GUK76, getting along in grand style with its matching trailer. It is owned by Bob Roberts of the New South Wales Branch, and it was gratifying to see it win the Trophy for Overall Winner of the Federal Concours in Geelong after the 95-year-old car had been driven all the way from the Hunter Valley. The roomy, comfortable coachwork is by Sydney coachbuilders Bryden & McKay of Rosebery.

The 63rd Annual Federal Rally of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia

Geelong, Victoria, 14th - 17th May



Left: This 1932 20/25 h.p., GHW75, owned by David & Nancy Axe (N.S.W.), was once an A.C.T. Branch car. Its limousine coachwork is the work of Belgian coachbuilder Van Den Plas.



Above: This 1938 Wraith WXA50, displays in terms of its H.J. Mulliner coachwork the groundwork for what appeared in the post-war years as the Silver Wraith – an entirely new model but with obvious evolution from the pre-war Wraith. This fine Wraith is owned by Howard Wraight (Vic.).

Below: Eric & Amanda Henderson (Vic.) travelled to the Rally in the spacious luxury of their 1976 Phantom VI, PRH4860.





Above: 1980 Bentley T2, SBH40622, owned by Mike Mulvihill (A.C.T.) who enjoyed its whisper-quiet comfort to, from and during the Rally.

Below: Ken & Margaret King (Vic.) brought their lovely 1988 Bentley Continental Convertible, BDJ22767.





Above: Keith Wherry & Marie Harland (N.S.W.) are the fortunate owners of this powerful, spacious and good-looking 2012 Bentley Mulsanne, BAB15562.



Below: Ian & Tina Oliver's 2016 Continental GT, BNG56355, provided Bentley travel in the modern manner.





Above: A.C.T. Branch Federal Delegate Joe Quarreocchi's 1986 Bentley Mulsanne, BSG14738.



*The Club's Federal Executive at the Presentation Dinner, **clockwise from left:** our Federal President Bruce Duncan addressing the throng and showing the flag; Mike Mulvihill in discussion with Federal Secretary Stephen Peoples; Federal Treasurer Ian Oliver & Tina, who are of course members of our Branch.*



Above: Russell & Heather Rolls (Vic.) enjoyed the Federal Rally in their 1981 Camargue JRH50643. Russell, who is Sir Henry Royce Foundation Australia Chairman, is seen here outside Rally HQ with the car.

Below: your Editor & Manuela, and (below right) Linda & David Neely at the Farewell Breakfast.





Above: N.S.W. Branch member Alan Olden recently drove his lovely 1962 Silver Cloud II Long Wheelbase saloon with division, LCD24, down to Goulburn to have lunch with your Editor.

Below: the sumptuous rear compartment furnishings of the long wheelbase SCII.





***Above:** A recent Capital Letter front cover car, 1907 40/50 h.p. 60551, The Silver Ghost, then in the long-term ownership of Rolls-Royce Ltd, is seen here boarding a Bristol Freighter of the 'Silver City' cross-Channel car-carrying service for an engagement on the Continent.*



***Below:** Another 'Silver City' Bristol Freighter on cross-Channel car-carrying duties, nose doors open, with a brace of Bentleys: on the left a 4½-Litre Supercharged and on the right a Continental S1 by H.J. Mulliner.*



Tailpiece . . .



As a mark of respect for the late Duke of Edinburgh, we see here Her Majesty The Queen and her consort His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, in the open rear compartment of the royal couple's second Phantom IV, 4BP5, a Hooper landaulette.



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 & Technical Registrar:

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
0417 260 927
ian@ianoliver.id.au

Membership Registrar:

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