



THE CAPITAL LETTER

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



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DEDICATED TO ROLLS-ROYCE & BENTLEY ENTHUSIASTS

Winter 2022



BNG56355, BNH61369

Bentley Continental GT

Ian & Tina Oliver, Mike Mulvihill

Seeing double!



From the Branch President

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Now that the strict Covid restrictions are behind us, our Secretary Martin Bennett was finally able to organise and confirm an outing to the Laggan Hotel on Sunday June 5th. Fifteen members and partners enjoyed a sociable get together for lunch. The weather was bitterly cold (snow fell in Crookwell the following day) but we know that our marque cars are made for such British driving conditions.

Martin also organised further events – including a mid-week run to the Sutton Bakery on Wednesday July 13th. See separate *CL* reports for these events. Once again, it would benefit everyone and ease Martin's burden if other members would occasionally organise an event.

The annual Battle of Waterloo display day was held on June 26th and two of our Silver Spirits formed part of the challenge, which resulted in another win for the Brits!

By the time you receive this edition of the *CL*, our Annual General Meeting will have been held on Wednesday August 3rd at Ian & Tina Oliver's home and the members of your ongoing Committee have been announced.

As a result of selling his Rolls-Royce and making plans to move away from our traditional catchment area, our Web-Master Tim Collins has resigned his membership of the Branch, necessitating the need for a volunteer to take on this role. It is simply a matter of keeping our Branch website current because Tim has already done all of the hard yards in getting the site designed and up and running; so if one of you has the interest and skills to become our new Web-Master, please indicate your willingness to do so.

In closing, it is with pleasure that I welcome our newest member David Kimmorley of Fadden A.C.T. into our Branch membership.

Peter Hyland



Above: Branch member Richard Mann lives in Somerset, in the West Country of England. His next-door neighbour owns this Bentley Continental R, and your Editor photographed it on his recent visit.

Front Cover: Our Branch is blessed with two Continental GT coupés, both owned by active members. In our Summer edition it was stated that "the opportunity awaits to photograph the twins together". The opportunity arose in Laggan on 5th June. Nearest the camera is Mike Mulvihill's BNH61369 and on the left is Ian & Tina Oliver's BNG56355. They are as near identical as could be imagined. Photograph by the Editor.

From the Editor

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Branch member Ian Irwin is to be congratulated on his superbly researched article in the June edition of *PRAECLARVM*, detailing the Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost delivered to Henry Ford in 1912, with the car concerned illustrated almost certainly for the first time in the ensuing century.

We bid a fond farewell to Tim & Linda Collins who are leaving us for a warmer climate, but not before Tim established our highly successful Branch website and then doubling that achievement with a new Federal website, too, leaving a lasting legacy for which we are very grateful. We wish you both all the very best for the future.

During the pandemic one of life's experiences that fell by the wayside was the ability to travel. As a result 2020 and 2021 drew a blank in terms of my otherwise regular attendance of the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club Annual Rally in England. This year was the first opportunity to resume that happy experience and to spend more pleasant time with our Branch member Richard Mann, who is retired from his role as Senior Quality Engineer in – as it turned out – warm and sunny Somerset. One of the highlights of the Rally in England was New South Wales Branch member Bob Roberts repeating his triumph of the Geelong Federal Concours in 2021, with his 1926 20 Horsepower GUK76, by winning a major award in the R.R.E.C. Concours, too. Congratulations to Bob and his much-travelled Twenty – you are both excellent ambassadors. Photographic coverage page 8.

Our own events are also flourishing, with good turn-outs for the run to Laggan pub and the mid-week Cars & Coffee, as our members start to renew their interest post-lockdown. Nevertheless, we are still postponing events when insufficient interest is shown. We never cancel events – eventually they all take place even if not always on the day originally planned.

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 each forthcoming event 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*.

AUGUST

Sunday 14th August: Monthly Run, destination to be advised by group email.

SEPTEMBER

Sunday 11th September: Lunch run to Murrumbateman Country Inn. Arrive around 12.30 p.m. or if you feel so inclined, those coming from Canberra could drive up through Sutton and Gundaroo and meet at Gunning around 11.00 a.m. for coffee at the café in the main street, then drive on to Murrumbateman for lunch. A pleasant day out.

OCTOBER

Wednesday 5th October: 7.00 p.m. for 7.30 p.m. Branch Meeting at the home of our President, 49 Barnet Close, Swinger Hill.

Wednesday 12th October: mid-week 'Cars & Coffee' run.

Sunday 23rd October: Monthly Run, destination to be advised by group email.



Above: In the foreground is Joe Quattrocchi's 1969 Silver Shadow SRH6847 and behind is Mike Walsh's 1977 Silver Shadow II SRH31700.

Lunch Run to Laggan

Sunday 5th June

Below: On the President's table, Mike Walsh (top left) and Garry Scorgie are examining Mike's newly-acquired Owner's Handbook for his Silver Shadow II.





Above: Our President's 1994 Silver Spirit III ASR54357 arrived with a healthy car-load of family members.

Below: From left to right: Tim Collins, Ian Oliver, Tina Oliver and Joe Quattrocchi.





Above: 1960 Bentley S2 B25CT, Martin & Manuela Bennett.



Left: From left to right: Manuela Bennett, Marcia Ronning, Bryce Ronning and Linda Collins.



Above: The opportunity was seized for an unabashed exercise in nostalgia when taking this photo, as this Bentley S1 B607EK was a dead-ringer for the one that Martin & Manuela owned when living in England in the early 1970s, with both exterior and interior colours the same. The setting for the Rally, the 16th Century Burghley House, is said to be the finest Elizabethan house in England.



R.R.E.C. Annual Rally

Burghley House, Stamford, Lincolnshire

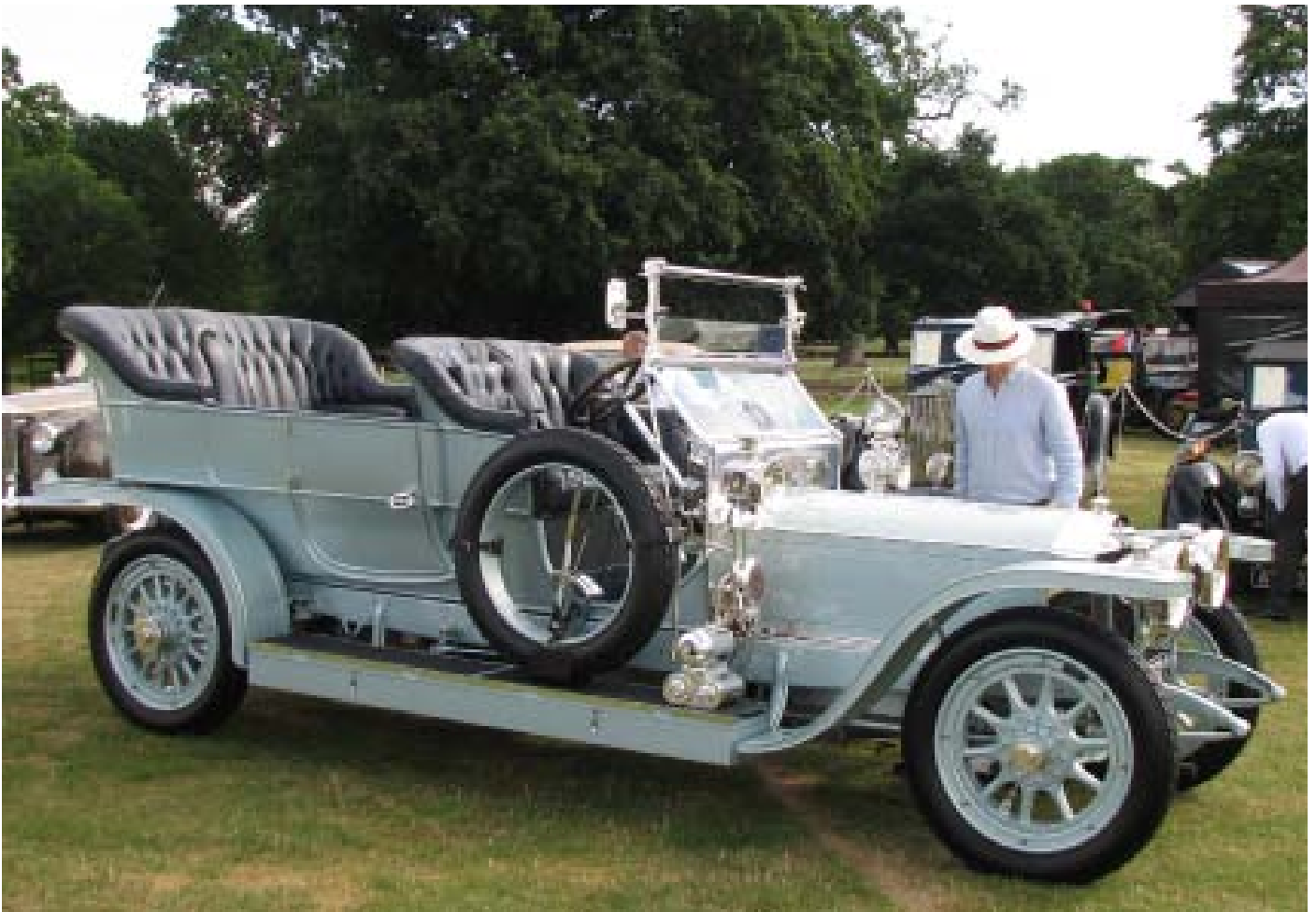


Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd July

Photographs by the Editor

Right: The sheer number of Silver Wraiths at the R.R.E.C. Annual Rally is quite gratifying to your Editor, who is rather keen on them. This Long Wheelbase Silver Wraith with H.J. Mulliner touring limousine coachwork caught the Editorial eye.





Above: Although this car is sometimes mistaken for AX-201 The Silver Ghost – and who could deny the similarity? – it is in fact a 1909 Silver Ghost, 60922, one of the Angas family cars from South Australia, exhibited by P. & A. Wood. Several other ex-Australia cars were spotted, including two other Silver Ghosts.

Below: This 1938 Wraith James Young saloon WMB53 is in superb condition. **Right:** Its toolkit stowed in the boot-lid is none too shabby, either!





Above: R.R.O.C. of Australia (N.S.W. Branch) member Bob Roberts took his 1926 20 Horsepower GUK76 to the U.K. and he and the car were present at the R.R.E.C. Annual Rally. Car and owner were awarded the P. & A. Wood Touring Trophy, which requires a car to have completed a specified minimum mileage during the previous year, which Bob and GUK76 comfortably exceeded. On the car, Bob was promoting his local town's car club and museum.

Below: Another R.R.O.C. A. member, Richard Mann, is admiring an early post-war product of Park Ward's Willesden factory where he began his career in the coachbuilding trade. The car is of course a Bentley Mk VI drophead coupé.





Above: Your Editor has been acquainted with this 1950 Silver Wraith for many years. It is WLE7, which is only seven chassis numbers later than his WHD101, now sold, with the same H.J. Mulliner touring limousine coachwork design.

It would be inappropriate to say that Bentley Continentals were ten a penny at the Rally, given that many of them have passed the 7-figure price barrier, but there were more than enough of them to satisfy the most ardent admirer of these highly sought-after cars. This is BC34D, a 1954 R-Type with the distinctive H.J. Mulliner 'fastback' coachwork. The rosette on the mascot indicates a Concours trophy win.





Later Bentley Continentals included **(above)** this 1956 S1, BC44BG, with Park Ward coachwork and **(below)** a 1963 S3, BC100XA, with rare two-door coachwork by H.J. Mulliner.





Above: This Silver Cloud I has superlative coachwork by James Young. When new it would have cost at least 40% more than a standard saloon.

Below: The Australian group this year was understandably a little smaller than usual. Your Editor is on the right of the photo.





***Above:** Richard Mann, in his capacity as Senior Quality Engineer at Mulliner Park Ward, was closely involved in the production of the 1992 series of 25 Corniche cars named 'Anniversary Corniche', all finished in Ming Blue with blue enamelled badging and incorporating a host of extra equipment. Here Richard is being reacquainted with one of these rare cars.*

***Below:** To complete this coverage of the R.R.E.C. Rally I give you this 2002 Corniche 'Last of Line' convertible, the final Rolls-Royce model produced by the original company in Crewe. A particularly handsome motor car, superbly finished, and powered by the 6.75-litre V8 engine. The employees at Crewe are known to have been particularly proud of this model.*





Above: Bryce Ronning's 1949 Silver Wraith Hooper touring limousine, WFC67.

Cars & Coffee Sutton Bakery

Wednesday 13th July

Below: Your Editor's 1960 Bentley S2, B25CT.





Above: The Presidential Silver Spirit III, ASR54357.

Below: Mike Mulvihill's 1998 Silver Seraph, AAX01243.





Above: Ian & Tina Oliver's 2016 Bentley Continental GT, BNG56355.

Below: Sutton Bakery is an ideal destination for these mid-week 'Cars & Coffee' mornings, though in the interests of variety we perhaps need to consider alternative venues. Please contact a Committee member if you have any ideas.



R.R.O.C.A. (A.C.T. Branch) 2022 PRESIDENT's ANNUAL REPORT

(Tabled at the 2022 Annual General Meeting of the Branch)

It is with pleasure that I table this Annual Report tonight.

We commenced our year last August with 59 financial members and despite a few departures and with the addition of a few new members during the year, we are on track to maintain that number.

As we are all well aware, Covid has played havoc with our personal activities and routines, and no less so than with our usual Branch outings. But with a glimmer towards the lifting of restrictions, our first Branch outing was in November when we ventured to Murrumbateman – just a small step at first! – Then, as N.S.W./A.C.T. ventured forth towards a “new normality”, we were able to take part in the Terribly British Day in Queanbeyan in December. Also then, we were hosted by Ian & Tina Oliver in their new home for the traditional End of Year Get-together. Since then of course we have enjoyed a few more outings organised by Martin Bennett – to whom we give our collective thanks.

The biggest event for any Branch is the hosting of the Federal Rally, usually every six years. In our case we hosted the 64th Federally Rally in March, only five years after hosting the 59th Rally in 2017. Suffice to say that from most accounts, it was an enjoyable success for the 220 participants in their registered 120 cars. But Mother Nature was also to play her hand with the northern floods in N.S.W./Qld preventing some attendances at the last minute. The success of the Rally was obviously due to the considerable work that three Committee members put into its planning and the volunteers who helped during the Rally itself. Once again, I extend my heartfelt gratitude and thanks to Martin Bennett, Ian & Tina Oliver, Ian & Ida Irwin, Mike Mulvihill, Peter Toet and Tim Collins – a small but dedicated team of enthusiasts!

A long-term and ever-growing taller hurdle was finally conquered by Tim Collins when he designed, launched and has since maintained, the Branch website. Tim proved invaluable in keeping the wider Club membership informed of Rally arrangements and has been uploading the *CL* editions as they are produced. Alas, Tim is one of our departing members so the call has gone out for a replacement Web Master.

And speaking of the *CL*, where would we be without it? Again, our often repeated thanks go to Martin Bennett for his untiring editorial efforts in producing this most informative Branch newsletter. I also know that he would like to step down from the position – so we are still in the market for another volunteer Editor of the *CL*.

It has also been a pleasure to continue working with my fellow Committee members over the past year – and I look forward to doing so in the future; but once again, another call for some new personalities to step forward.

Peter Hyland
President





Above: One of the displays in the B.D.C. Headquarters features the pre-war Experimental Bentley 'Corniche', which was a more sporting version of the Mk V model which was never introduced to the public due to the intervention of World War 2. The Company at Crewe has built a credible re-creation for display at its Heritage Centre.



Visiting the Bentley Drivers' Club HQ



Wroxton, Oxfordshire, Monday 4th July

Photographs by the Editor

Below: This pre-war (Derby) Bentley engine, sectioned for display purposes, is one of several Bentley engines exhibited at Wroxton.





Above: Another engine exhibited is this early Mulsanne Turbo 6.750 c.c. V8.

Below: Ian Scott, Richard Mann and Nigel Smith poring over a fascinating cache of drawings and documents from the office of H.J. Mulliner & Co. coachwork designer George Moseley.



Tailpiece . . .



Very shapely Silver Cloud and Bentley S Series tails during a lunch stop at Jingellic, N.S.W. during the 'Head in the Clouds' Register run in April which attracted considerable A.C.T. Branch participation.



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