



THE CAPITAL LETTER

Quarterly journal of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia ACT Branch Incorporated
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

Spring/Summer 2023/24



B179CW

1935 Bentley 3¹/₂-Litre Park Ward drophead coupé

Ian & Tina Oliver

Bentley 3¹/₂-Litre



From the Branch President

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All appears to be quiet and content within our fraternity because I'm unaware of any negative concerns or issues. However, since my last message there continue to be some positives within our Branch.

Mid-week outings are proving to be popular runs as we experienced at the new Rose's Café in Goulburn on 8th November at which 14 members and guests attended. Its relocation from beside the central park provides better parking opportunities and the interior facilities and ambience make it a definite positive venue for future mid-week runs.

I thank Ian Oliver for organising something a bit different for our traditional End-of-Year Get-Together gathering – this year it was held at the Kingston Hotel ("The Kingo" in old Canberran parlance). We had 18 members and guests attend and typically, it was an enjoyable get-together for all who were able to attend. A highlight for me was the presentation of a 'long service' certificate to Joe Quattrocchi for his 40 years of RROCA membership. Well done, Joe!

Due to unseasonal, widespread downpours, and continuing showers, the annual Terribly British Day display in the Queanbeyan Park on Sunday 3rd December had to be re-located to a back-up venue at a nearby open car park. Unfortunately, this resulted in fewer of our member's cars being displayed than usual. Nevertheless, a good number of our intrepid marque custodians, supported by a small group from Sydney, added to the overall success of another TBD. (Photographic coverage of these events elsewhere in this edition of 'CL').

A small, but important administrative item that has fallen by the wayside over recent years, is the provision of Branch Name Badges. These serve a very convenient role in Branch and wider Club events and I'd like to thank Tina Oliver for resurrecting their procurement for new members. Their cost is included in your initial joining fee but replacement or additional badges can be made for a cost of \$15. Anyone wishing a new badge should contact me.

Elsewhere in this 'CL' and within the December PRAECLARUM edition are articles on the October "SMARTING to the Elms" rally which I organised for participants, including fellow A.C.T. Branch members Ian & Tina Oliver and Graham Lawrence.

Wishing you and yours the best of compliments for the coming festive season and let's all make the most of it and enjoy the year ahead.

*Happily proceeding
Peter Hyland*



Left: This 1934 photograph shows four Bentley 3½-Litre cars – a pair of saloons flanked by two dropheads – in the courtyard beside the office block (known as the 'hayloft') at the Willesden, London NW.10 premises of coachbuilder Park Ward & Co. Ltd. We now have two 3½-Litre Park Ward dropheads in the A.C.T. Branch. Photo: Editor's collection.

Front Cover: Ian & Tina Oliver's newly-acquired 1935 Bentley 3½-Litre, B179CW. The drophead coupé coachwork is by Park Ward. Photo: Editor's collection.

From the Editor

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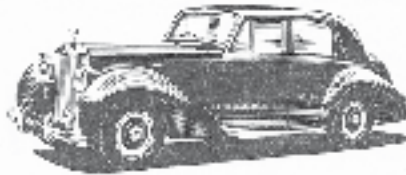


Having fallen behind a little, this 24-page edition of *The Capital Letter* combines our usual Spring and Summer issues. It includes coverage (page 4) of the recent Spirit, Mulsanne And Related Types ('SMART') Register tour in the N.S.W. High Country. Although this is a Federal event, covered in greater detail in PRAECLARUM, it is appropriate that the A.C.T. Branch affords it recognition too. For one thing, the SMART Registrar, and organiser of the event, is our President Peter Hyland, while several other Branch members participated. These Register tours are very popular with the membership nationwide, and this one was certainly no exception.

Our mid-week 'Cars & Coffee' runs are clearly maintaining their popularity. The most recent one, on 8th November, attracted 14 members and guests in a creditable number of splendid Rolls-Royce and Bentley motor cars representing all post-war model groups up to and including the Silver Spirit, with two cars making their first appearances at A.C.T. Branch events. See page 8.

Likewise, the End-of-Year Get-Together lunch at the Kingston Hotel (page 12) was also well attended, while next day our Terribly British display (page 16) was impressive as always. For a Branch with such a small number of members we do very well indeed – we “punch above our weight” as our President would put it. The weather was glorious, and despite a number of members staying home to avoid the forecast wet weather, our numbers were more than respectable. Because of the previous few days' weather dampening Queanbeyan Park, and more wet weather expected, we were banished from the usual venue in the Park to the Bus Interchange a short distance away.

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 group 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*.

FEBRUARY

Wednesday 7th February: General Meeting, 7.00 p.m., 71 Gladstone Street, Fyshwick.

Sunday 18th February: 'Wheels' display day, Queanbeyan Showground.

MARCH

Wednesday 6th March: Mid-week 'Cars & Coffee' run, Olive Grove Café, Federal Highway near Collector, N.S.W.

Monday 18th March to Friday 22nd March: Silver Cloud, Bentley S Series and Phantom V / VI Register 'Head in the Clouds 3' High Country tour. All members, all models welcome. Contact the Registrar, Martin Bennett.

APRIL

Wednesday 3rd April: General Meeting, 7.00 p.m., 71 Gladstone Street, Fyshwick.

Sunday 14th April: Lunch Run to the Royal Hotel, Dalton, N.S.W.



***Above:** Two Presidents: on the right is Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia President Louise Matthews with our own Branch President – and Registrar of the SMART Register – Peter Hyland. Photographs by David Neely.*

SMARTing to The Elms Rally

October 2023

About now you will also be receiving the December 2023 edition of Praeclarum which has a fuller report but as a prelude to that article – Branch President and Federal SMART (Spirit, Mulsanne And Related Types) Registrar Peter Hyland organised his first Register Rally commencing in Cooma and finishing at The Elms in Tumbarumba, after visiting Adaminaby, Kiandra, Cabramurra, Khancoban, Batlow, Tumut and Adelong. So making a very scenic road trip over sealed roads across Australia's rooftops.

Apart from Peter in his Silver Spirit III (ASR54357), other A.C.T. participants included Ian & Tina Oliver in their

Silver Spirit (ASH20330) and Graham Lawrence in his Bentley Continental R (BBW63021). Another six Rolls-Royce cars with 18 participants in all, enjoyed the few days in the N.S.W. high country, up to the 1,500 metre elevation of Cabramurra Lookout.

The weather was very kind to us – bright, clear sunshine with about 22 degrees which many participants commented very favourably upon as being very conducive to fine touring conditions in our marque cars. Incidentally, had our rally been one week later, it would have had to have been abandoned at Cooma because the whole area over which we travelled

became covered in light snow.

To set the scene for the rally and intended to be a different experience for most participants, the first night's dinner was held within the Cooma Car Club Museum. About forty 1960-70 era cars (but including a Ford Model T), and motorbikes from the local Cooma-Monaro region members are exhibited as well as model car collections, motoring memorabilia, posters and images of motoring history. Within its walls it even boasts a vintage petrol station and a 1960s American Diner to add authenticity. Because of the museum's interest and easy accessibility for A.C.T. members, we will make it a Club run in the early part of the new year.

By special arrangement, the head volunteer at the Snowy Scheme Museum in Adaminaby opened the facility for us to spend 1½ hours viewing a documentary video and inspecting its extensive range of curated exhibits. We all know about the Snowy scheme but it was enlightening to see items and machinery actually used during its construction over twenty odd years, and to learn about the harsh living and working conditions which our newly arrived European immigrants endured at the time.

Then onwards, upwards and downwards again! – a very

arduous, but an incredibly diverse scenic 125 km drive to prove our cars' capabilities and endurance. Onwards from Adaminaby (1,250 metres), upwards via the remnants of Kiandra (1,400 metres) to the Cabramurra lookout (1,500 metres), and then back downwards to Khancoban (337 metres) for a very late lunch. Obviously we spent too much time at the museum and the various spectacular lookouts along the way!

On our northwards-bound drive to Tumbarumba, we stopped on the Tooma Road to view the Southern Cloud lookout, overlooking the Maragle Valley. This commemorates Australia's first commercial air disaster in which eight people were killed when their small plane crashed en-route from Sydney to Melbourne in 1931. Although its wreckage was not discovered for 27 years, the disappearance of the Southern Cloud prompted an investigating committee to advise that all passenger aircraft should be equipped with two-way radios.

After arriving at our Tumbarumba destination for the next two nights, the next morning was 'free time' to allow participants to view any of the many attractions in the vicinity. Reported highlights were the Paddys River Falls just out of town and the ruins of ➡

Below: The Cooma Car Club Museum. The 40 or so exhibits are owned by Cooma/Monaro district club members.





Above: Ian & Tina Oliver with their 1987 Silver Spirit, ASH20330.

Below: Paddys River Falls just outside of Tumbarumba.





Above: Southern Cloud Lookout, overlooking the Maragle Valley, commemorating Australia's first commercial air disaster in which eight people were killed when their small plane crashed en-route from Sydney to Melbourne in 1931.

the Adelong Falls Gold Mill.

Lunch that day was pre-arranged at the delightful Courabyra winery before visiting the Glenroy Heritage Reserve which reflects on the ingenuity of

women in finding solutions to the challenges of looking after a family in early rural Australia.

The Elms Rally culminated with a very enjoyable but traditional Black-tie dinner at the Elms Restaurant.



Below: The Elms Rally participants at the Black-tie final dinner at The Elms restaurant. The R.R.O.C.A. President Louise Matthews is in the centre of the photograph, The SMART Registrar Peter Hyland on the left, with other A.C.T. Branch members Ian & Tina Oliver, David & Linda Neely and Graham Lawrence also in the picture. Most of these and many of the other faces are regulars on these and other Register tours.





Above: A shot too good to miss – out of the window of B25CT, showing the classic front of Bryce & Marcia Ronning's Silver Wraith at Rose's Café, Goulburn.

Mid-Week Cars & Coffee

Rose's Café, Goulburn

8th November 2023





Above: Two local cars: Martin & Manuela Bennett's 1960 Bentley S2, B25CT, keeps company with Bryce & Marcia Ronning's 1949 Silver Wraith Hooper touring limousine, WFC67, with the impressive backdrop of Saints Peter & Paul's Old Cathedral.

Below: Mike Mulvihill enjoyed his drive from the Southern Highlands in his 1961 Silver Cloud II, SZD313.





Above: Chris & Narelle O'Rourke's 1957 Silver Cloud SED51 is back on the road following a starter motor rebuild (see also page 15).

Below: Prue & Ken Wedgwood's 1974 Silver Shadow SRH19525 was on its first Branch outing.





Above: Also new to Branch events is Ian & Tina Oliver's 1987 Silver Spirit, ASH20330.

Below: Nearest the camera, joining their first Club event are Prue & Ken Wedgwood.





Above: President Peter Hyland presenting Joe Quattrocchi with his 40 Year Certificate. Photograph: Mike Mulvihill.

The End-of-Year Get-Together

Lunch at 'The Kingo'

2nd December 2023



Left: Bryce Ronning, Manuela Bennett and Marcia Ronning.



From nearest the camera along the table (above): Stephen Beer, Mike Mulvihill, Ian Oliver, Tina Oliver, Shane Mortimer and (below) Chris O'Rourke, Joe Quattrocchi, Graham Lawrence, Ken Wedgwood, Prue Wedgwood.





Above: around the table from left: Narelle O'Rourke, Linda Neely, Peter Hyland, David Neely.

Below: Graham Lawrence and Joe Quattrocchi.

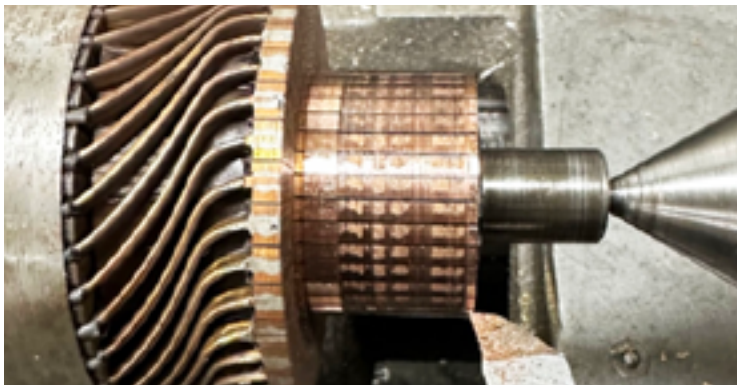


SED51 Starter Motor Rebuild

The errant starter motor before removal from the car (**right**).



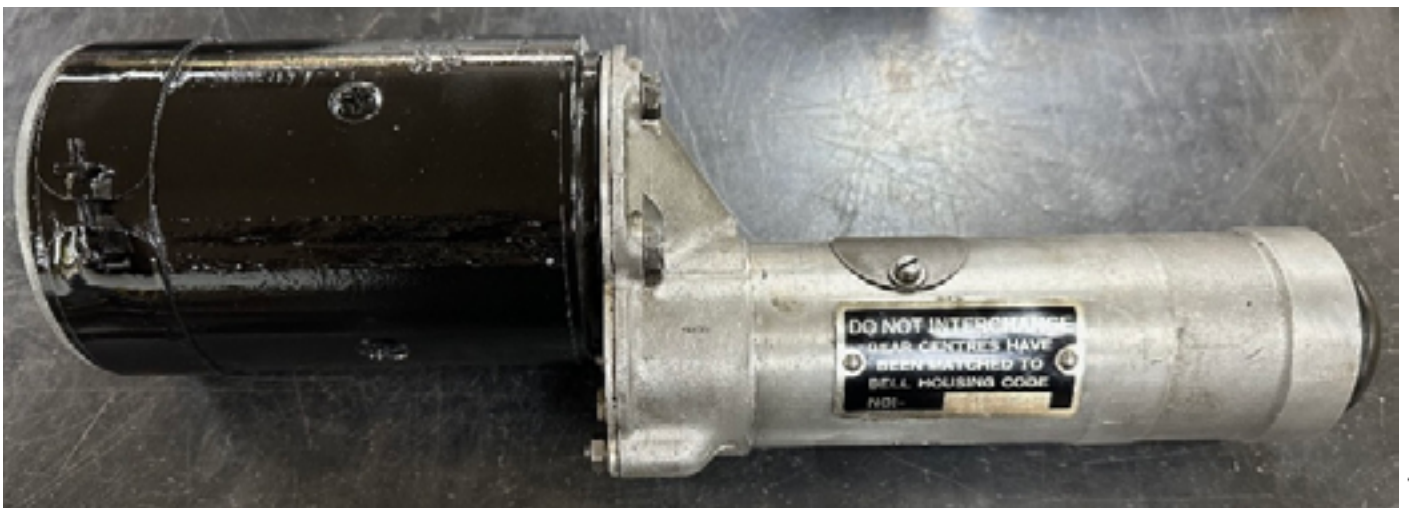
The commutator (**below left**) was machined to provide a new, clean operating surface (**below right**).



A new sealed bearing was sourced and fitted and the rotted cotton tape wrapping of the field windings was renewed (**right**).



Below is the finished product ready to re-install in the car, returning SED51 to its natural state – complete reliability for many more thousands of miles to come.





Above: Prue & Ken Wedgwood's 1974 Silver Shadow SRH19525.

The Terribly British Day

Queanbeyan Bus Interchange

3rd December 2023

Below: Ian & Tina Oliver's 1951 Silver Dawn SFC66 is now very close to the end of its extensive restoration, with just a few more details to finish off. It was looking terrific in its Pearl Grey paintwork with red leather, just as it was when new.





Above: Stephen Beer's 1965 Silver Cloud III SJR309.

Below: Chris O'Rourke's 1957 Silver Cloud.





Above: David & Linda Neely's 1965 Silver Spirit ASF13836 was driven down from Sydney for this event and the previous day's End-of-Year Get-Together.

Below: Also from Sydney, N.S.W. member Charles Chelliah brought this early Bentley T with two-door saloon coachwork by Mulliner Park Ward.





Above: Mike Mulvihill brought his 2017 Bentley Continental GT, BNH61369.

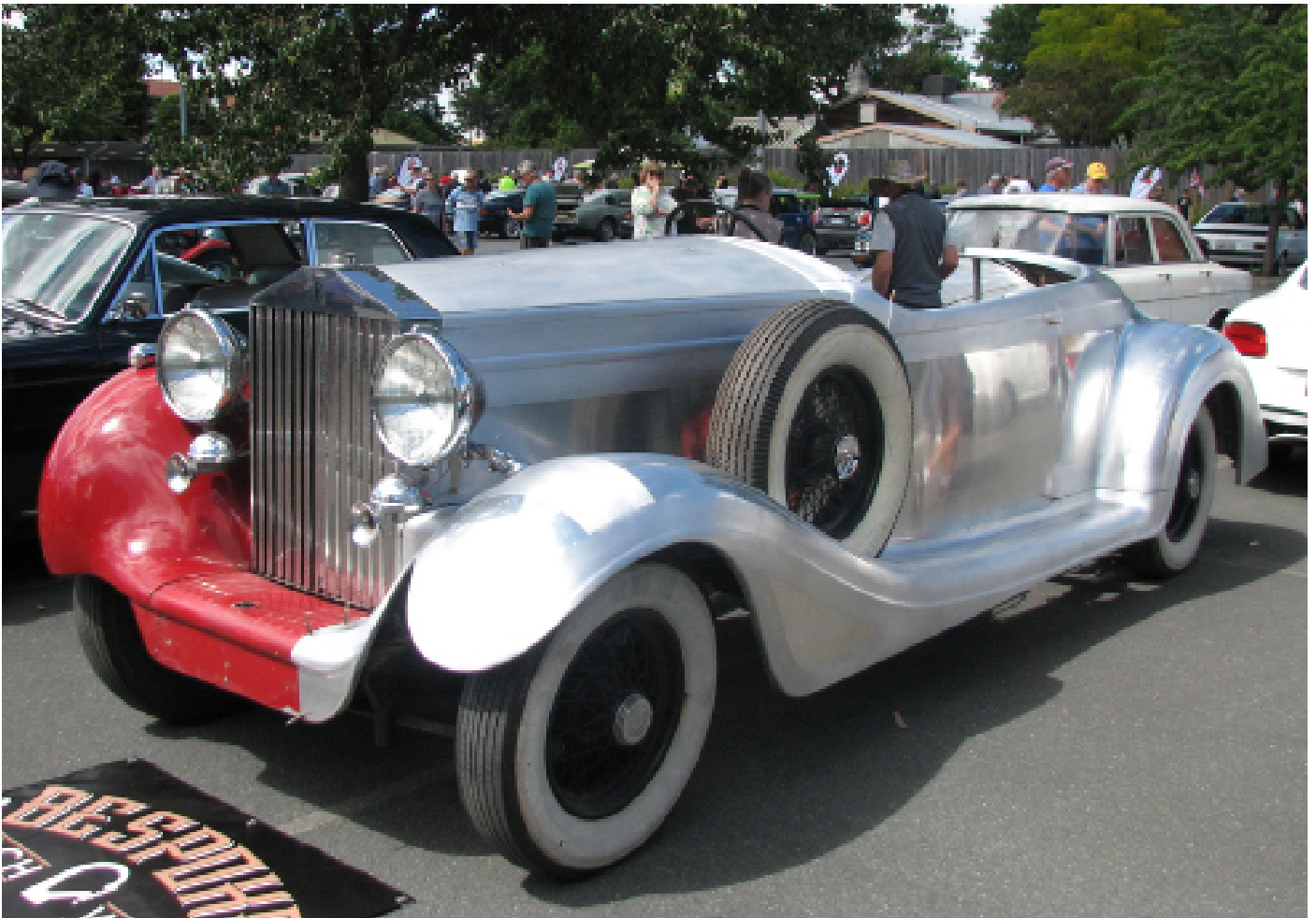
Below: your Editor's 1960 Bentley S2, B25CT.





Above: 1934 Bentley 3 1/2-Litre B173BL, Martin & King saloon brought along by N.S.W. member Mark Glanville who is seen alongside the open boot, with co-driver Andrew Gibson.

Below: This 1937 Phantom III, 3BT171, started life as a Barker limousine but is in Canberra for rebodying by a local business with something more rakish. It was displayed at the stage which it has so far reached.





***Above:** 1974 Silver Shadow SRH, owned by Shane Mortimer who is seen (**below**) with Mike Mulvihill (foreground) enjoying gin & tonics behind the car in the sunshine.*



Picture Gallery



Above: In 1973 Italian coachbuilder Frua built what was almost certainly the biggest drophead coupé of modern times on Rolls-Royce Phantom VI chassis PRX4705. It was exhibited at the 1974 Frankfurt Motor Show – almost certainly the scene of the photograph. The forward-leaning Rolls-Royce radiator shell provided a rakish touch.

Opposite top: Another car with Italian coachwork, this 1954 Bentley R-Type Continental, BC49C, has two-seater fixed-head coupé coachwork by Pininfarina.

Below: The last Rolls-Royce model to be introduced by the old Company at Crewe was this convertible sharing the name Corniche with the classic model introduced in 1971. The frontal styling was shared with the Silver Seraph but the engine was the venerable 6.75-litre V8. Photographs: Editor's collection.





***BENTLEY. THE CLOSEST
A CAR CAN
COME TO HAVING WINGS.***





1934 Bentley 3 1/2-Litre B. The saloon coachwork was built by Melbourne coachbuilder Martin & King who were not always necessarily well-known for such pretty body styles. It was driven to and from Sydney by owner Mark Glanville and fellow N.S.W. Branch member Andrew Gibson.



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