

# New Zealand Rolls-Royce & Bentley Club Inc

Issue 08-6, 2008



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**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE:****NATIONAL CHAIRMAN:** Richard Hadfield

242 Sunnyside Road, R.D.3 Albany 0793.

Phone: 09 448-2248

Email: [oldie@ihug.co.nz](mailto:oldie@ihug.co.nz)**NATIONAL VICE CHAIRMAN:** Dick Neill

P O Box 616, Gisborne.

Phone: 06 869-0106

Email: [diknemi@xtra.co.nz](mailto:diknemi@xtra.co.nz)**NATIONAL SECRETARY:** Philip Eilenberg

3B 21 George Street, Parnell, Auckland

Phone: 09 374-5901 or Mobile 021 928-041

Email: [peilenbergnz@gmail.com](mailto:peilenbergnz@gmail.com)**NATIONAL TREASURER:** Naomi Neill

P O Box 616, Gisborne

Phone: 06 869-0106

Email: [diknemi@xtra.co.nz](mailto:diknemi@xtra.co.nz)**MEMBERSHIP REGISTRAR:** Rob Carthew

85A Wharewaka Road, Taupo

Phone: 07 377-4117

Email: [watcher@pl.net](mailto:watcher@pl.net)**TECHNICAL LIAISON OFFICER** Post WW2: Roy Tilley

204a Waiwhetu Road, Lower Hutt

Phone: 04 566-0850

Fax: 04 586-2937

Email: [rmt@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rmt@xtra.co.nz)**TECHNICAL LIAISON OFFICER** Pre-WW2: Eddie Riddle

27 Edith Street, Fairfield, Dunedin

Phone 03 488-1121

Email: [edjoyr@xtra.co.nz](mailto:edjoyr@xtra.co.nz)**MAGAZINE EDITOR:** Tom King

191 Sparks Road, Christchurch 8025.

Phone: 03 339-8309.

Email: [the.king@xtra.co.nz](mailto:the.king@xtra.co.nz)**IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIRMAN:** Rod Newport

2 Wynsfield Garden, St Heliers, Auckland 1071

Phone: 09 528-8827 or Mobile 0274 887-117

Email: [newportdesign@xtra.co.nz](mailto:newportdesign@xtra.co.nz)**NORTHERN REGION****CHAIRMAN:** Rod Newport

2 Wynsfield Garden, St Heliers, Auckland 1071

Phone: 09 528-8827 or Mobile 0274 887-117

Email: [newportdesign@xtra.co.nz](mailto:newportdesign@xtra.co.nz)**SECRETARY:** Philip Eilenberg

3B 21 George Street, Parnell, Auckland

Phone: 09 374-5901 or Mobile 021 928-041

Email: [peilenbergnz@gmail.com](mailto:peilenbergnz@gmail.com)**CENTRAL REGION****CHAIRMAN:** Elliott Snelling

52 Raumati Road, Raumati Beach, Wellington

Phone: 04 902-1899

Email: [snelling@paradise.net.nz](mailto:snelling@paradise.net.nz)**SECRETARY:** Martin Taylor

24 Rangiora Avenue, Kaiwharawhara, Wellington

Phone: 04 470-7666

Email: [Porsche@globe.net.nz](mailto:Porsche@globe.net.nz)**SOUTHERN REGION****CHAIRMAN:** Michael Midgley

689 Rotherham Rd Sth, Culverden, Nth Canterbury 7391

Phone: 03 315-6445

Email: [midgley@xtra.co.nz](mailto:midgley@xtra.co.nz)**SECRETARY:** Tom King

191 Sparks Road, Christchurch 8025, New Zealand.

Phone: 03 339-8309.

Email: [the.king@xtra.co.nz](mailto:the.king@xtra.co.nz)

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**MAGAZINE EDITOR:** Tom King

191 Sparks Road, Christchurch 8025, New Zealand.

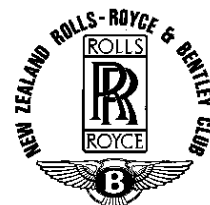
Phone: 03 339-8309.

Email: [the.king@xtra.co.nz](mailto:the.king@xtra.co.nz)

CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT MAGAZINE

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**Membership**

**MEMBERSHIP** of the New Zealand Rolls-Royce & Bentley Club, Inc is open to those of any age, including their spouses, partners and families, with an interest in these two distinguished marques, whether or not they are the owner of a Rolls-Royce or Bentley motorcar. Your Membership SUBSCRIPTION includes the Club Magazine (6 issues annually), the right to attend all Club events and activities, and the right to partake in all aspects of Club management.

**FEES:**

Registration Fee:	\$10.00 (once only)
Membership Fee:	\$75.00 (annual)
Family membership:	\$ 5.00 (annual)

**CONTACT:** Membership Registrar  
NZ Rolls-Royce & Bentley Club, Inc  
Rob Carthew  
85A Wharewaka Road  
Taupo  
Phone: (07) 377 4117  
Email: [watcher@pl.net](mailto:watcher@pl.net)

or

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**Front Cover:**

*Celebrating 75 years of the Derby Bentley, here we have Bruce McIlroy's B49MX and Berwick Taylor's B165MX at Fairlie during the recent Bentley Drivers' Club weekend trip to Dansey's Pass.*

**Club 40th - From Roy Tilley**

At the Napier AGM I was tasked with confirming the date of the founding of this Club. An article written by our founder, Roger Lloyd in the December 1992 magazine confirms that it was in 1971, the first major event being on Queen's Birthday of that year. Therefore we are looking at a 40th anniversary in 4 years' time, so perhaps we should be starting to think now about how we are going to celebrate it.

### Northern Region

- Annual Picnic at SHAKESPEAR REGIONAL PARK – Sunday 18 January
- RREC 25 Register NZ Tour starts from Auckland – Sunday 25 January
- Galaxy of Cars at MOTAT - Sunday 1 February
- Intermarque Concours and Classic Car Display at Ellerslie – Sunday 8 February
- Annual Rally and AGM Monte-Carlo Style to Napier with Dinner and AGM at Taihape – Friday to Monday 6-9 March (Central Region organisers)

### Central Region

**20/25 Rally** 30<sup>th</sup> January Meet the 20/25 rally contingent from the RREC UK at Southward's to meet and greet and inspection of the fourteen minus-one cars on the tour. Times to be advised.

#### British Car Day

15<sup>th</sup> February

Join other members for a day in the sun at Trentham Memorial Park, Upper Hutt, and take a look at many other cars and meet those who cherish them. As usual, all proceeds to Wellington Free Ambulance.

### Annual General Meeting Weekend Organised by the Central Region

Because the original date for our Annual Rally and AGM (March 7/8th) coincided with the Ironman contest in Taupo, accommodation in that area is booked solid. The date has therefore been moved back by one week. The arrangements therefore are now as follows with more details to be added from time to time:

**Friday 13th March:** Meet for dinner and stay the night at [Marineland Motel, Napier](#).

**Saturday 14th March:** Drive from Napier over Gentle Annie to Turangi. Stay overnight at the [Parklands Motor Lodge](#), where we will have our Annual Dinner.

**Sunday 15th March:** AGM at the [Parklands Motor Lodge](#), then drive via scenic route to Greytown. Stay overnight at [Oak Estate Motor Lodge](#)

**Monday 16th March:** Visits in the Martinborough area and then disperse.

Roy Tilley has booked 15 units at each of the following, but they must be confirmed by Christmas or there is no guarantee of beds etc.

[Marineland Motel, Napier](#); [Parklands Motor Lodge, Turangi](#); [Oak Estate Motor Lodge, Greytown](#).

### Southern Region in co-operation with the Rolls-Royce & Bentley Touring Club (Inc)

The new Southern Region Committee is at work on an exciting programme of events. We will be working closely with the Rolls-Royce & Bentley Touring Club (Inc) to ensure that their events and ours fit easily together. With our busy lives the wider choice of dates cannot be anything but beneficial to us all.

We propose meeting the RREC 25 Register's Tour on 3rd, 4th, or 16th February during their travels through our Region. Further details of these dates and other events will be published in the Southern Region Newsletter.

### Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club – 25 Register New Zealand Tour 2009

The RREC 25 Register covers the following models:

- 20/25
- 25/30
- 25/30 Wraith

A New Zealand wide tour has been organised as follows with 16 cars taking part from three countries. We will be represented by Richard and Lois Hadfield in their 1930 20/25. The itinerary is as follows with the tour starting on Auckland Anniversary weekend:

22nd January - Auckland, 3 nights.

25th January - Rotorua, 2 nights

27th January - Taupo - 1 night

28th January - Napier - 1 night

29th January - Wellington - 2 nights

31st January - Nelson - 2 nights

2nd February - Kaikoura - 2 nights

4th February - Windwhistle - 1 night

5th February - Hokitika - 1 night

6th February - Franz Josef - 2 nights

8th February - Wanaka - 1 night

9th February - Queenstown - 3 nights

12th February - Dunedin - 2 nights

14th February - Cromwell - 1 night

15th February - Tekapo - 1 night

16th February - Christchurch - 3 nights

The Northern Region Six-Pot Group is organising an Auckland district orientation pre-tour run on Saturday 24 January and all Club members are invited to a dinner that night with the tour group.

If any members around the country would like to meet with the tour group at the various locations this can be arranged.



## Club Shop

### BOOKS

*From the Shadow's Corner* by Cal West, Product Support Manager, Rolls-Royce Motors Inc, USA. A compilation of technical articles, specific to the Silver Shadow and its derivatives, reprinted from *The Flying Lady*. We will include with this a set of reprints from *Know Your Silver Shadow* featured in the Club magazine in recent years. \$80 per copy including P & P.

*Silver Cloud/S Series Reprints 1955-1966*: A compilation of technical articles from *The Flying Lady* specific to the Silver Cloud and S Series. \$20 per copy including P & P.

### NZRR&BC CAR BADGES

Of the original design but made in stainless steel are now available at \$60 each.

Send your order with cheque made out to "New Zealand Rolls-Royce & Bentley Club" to: Roy Tilley, Technical Liaison Officer Post-WW2, 204a Waiwhetu Road, LOWER HUTT.

### CHASSIS RECORDS

The Company's Construction Records, which accompanied every Rolls-Royce and Bentley (since 1931) chassis throughout its production at Derby or Crewe are a valuable resource for subsequent owners. They show details of the original order, any special equipment supplied, and the results of tests and inspections carried out prior to dispatch. The records for all cars over 10 years old are held by the RREC in the UK, and copies are available to members of that Club at a price which has to reflect not only the cost of photocopying and postage but also the cost of maintaining a valuable archive resource and employing a full-time archivist. The number of A4 pages for early cars may vary from two or three up to 20 or more, depending upon how much work and subsequent servicing was carried out by the Company and its agents. Records for a Silver Shadow can amount to 50 or more pages and are likely to cost around \$NZ150 but will be a worthwhile addition to any owner's library. For details of how to obtain a copy of your car's records, contact the Club's Technical Liaison Officer, Roy Tilley, on 04 566 0850

e-mail [rmt@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rmt@xtra.co.nz)

### ADVERTISING – pages 20 to 24

Classified advertisements (monochrome) pertaining to Rolls-Royce and Bentley matters are free to Financial Members who do not deal regularly in Rolls-Royce or Bentley cars or services. All classified advertisements must be submitted in writing to the Editor, Tom King, Phone 03 339 8309, e-mail [the.king@xtra.co.nz](mailto:the.king@xtra.co.nz) 191 Sparks Road, Christchurch 8025. The publication of commercial advertisements, or any advertising in colour, will be the subject of a charge to the advertiser. Colour advertisements are charged at \$220 per half page and \$300 for full page, payable to the NZRR&BC Inc.

## Mainland Comment

Welcome to the NZRR&BC (Inc) magazine 08-6. As a service for readers, there will be no mention of politics; celebrity; gossip; celebrity gossip; self-fulfilling prophecy; and journalists' searching their Roget's for ever more alarming turmoil synonyms. Now that hedge funds and their manipulators have moved out of the oil futures market, let us rejoice in the cheaper petrol prices at present applying, and enjoy our cars for what is going to be a glorious summer.

John Stewart noticed an item in the Motoring section of *The New Zealand Herald* recently, and commented "interesting, if true." The item reads "Want to know where to put your money in the midst of the current financial turmoil? Reports from Britain suggest that there's huge interest in classic cars. One London-based international car auctioneer, Coys, sold millions of pounds' worth of cars in the days following the collapse of Lehman Bros. 'It would appear that people would rather buy a historic car and put it in the garage than brave the current highs and lows of the stock market,' a spokesman said. 'We are continuing to get inquiries

from around the world and not just from traditional collectors, but from those who want to get into something different.'" There is always a balance to be struck between doing desired or necessary repairs and restoration that is not throwing good money after bad.

Be sure you take your Membership List on your travels. This club is about people at least as much as it is about our cars. Do drive carefully, and this thought brings to mind Anthony Dacre's solving of the road toll. Anthony derives such a feeling of well-being from driving his S1 Bentley that he is convinced if everyone drove one, there would be no road accidents.

The late Dave Bowman appeared on the cover of 08-5, and is remembered fondly by many of us. We are the keepers of the history of our cars and their past owners, and we must record their exploits. We have been fortunate to know many of the "characters" who have campaigned our cars, and this magazine would welcome contributions in their memory. It doesn't have to be an article; even a paragraph can help to make an eventual article, and suggestions of those who should be written

about are welcome.

Pete Davey was a Christchurch musician who bought Silver Ghost 7KG after Robert McDougall died and used it as his Band Car. Your editor was recently told how to find Mr Davey's house, but hadn't quite got around to a visit there when Pete Davey's sudden death at the age of 92 occurred. That lost opportunity to interview this past Ghost owner, respected musician, and Spitfire pilot is greatly regretted.

The following suggestion was received from Martin Green: "I was trawling the internet for Rolls-Royce & Bentley things, and put in the chassis number of our S2 to see what happened. There is a website called [www.chassisregister.com](http://www.chassisregister.com) which seems to hold information about the cars. At the moment the site is down or not responding, so I have added it to the favourites to try again.

Try putting the chassis number of your T series in and see what happens."

Finally, please note the change of date to our Annual General Meeting Weekend, as detailed on Page 3.



The late T.A. "Tommy" Thomson was briefly an Honorary Life Member of our Club before he died on 17 April 1992 at the age of 79. He is pictured here as the proud owner of the Phantom II Continental 101RY, an H.J. Mulliner Touring Limousine first owned by the Marquess de Portago, which is now in the care of his son Scott Thomson.

## Chairman's Report

Lois and I have been touring India this month, so I don't have a lot to report in the way of club affairs. We did, however, attend the Northern Region's one day run to Woodlands in the Waikato. We were asked by the organiser, Rod Newport, to write a report of the activity so I am going to cheat and make it the core of my Chairman's Notes.

We met as instructed at the B.P service centre on the Southern Motorway for a cup of coffee at 10.00 o'clock on the Sunday of Labour weekend and drove to Taupiri and thence via highway 1b towards Gordonton. Just short of that settlement the road to Woodlands turns off left and enters another world, one of old world tranquillity and peace. I don't suppose it was always that way as the house was built as the manager's house for an estate of 98,000 acres of land, nearly all swamp to be drained and cleared. There would have been a very large contingent of workers

hired to tackle this and it took many years.

The land was bought for the price of two shillings and sixpence an acre which equates to twelve and a half cents or about thirty cents per hectare. Work started in 1865 and the house was built in 1872. It would have been a hive of activity and a far cry from the haven it is today. Subdivision and land sales over the years have reduced the holding round the house to a mere 15 acres but with trees planted in the early days, it is a lovely garden to wander.

Woodlands is now owned by the district council and open to the public. The house is typical of its day but it is the history which fascinates with videos and photos of the early days. Follow this with a half hour wander through the gardens finishing at the café for lunch to complete a lovely day. Everyone had a great lunch even if our group of sixteen somewhat overwhelmed the kitchen.

The northern Waikato is ideal for

a day run in the Northern area as it allows members from out of Auckland to join in. However, the district certainly put the weather on for us. It absolutely poured down on the drive south and the rain on our journey home was nearly as hard as I have experienced. At the venue there was not a drop so they must have known we were coming.

There is no question that a Sunday run is the best form of motoring on a holiday weekend around Auckland. The Friday and Monday traffic just isn't worth the aggravation. Even so the queue of cars three lanes wide moving at five to ten K.P.H. extended from Newmarket to the harbour bridge and that three minute drive took us thirty minutes so you lucky members who live in the mainland can see what I mean. And Sunday is the quiet day of the weekend.

**Richard**



*Woodlands in the Northern Waikato, the venue for the Northern Region's recent luncheon described in our Chairman Richard Hadfield's notes above.*



An obviously happy Northern Region luncheon at Woodlands, with David and Beth Merryweather, Kerry Clements, Stephen and Rachel Atkinson, Bob and Jan Cleave, John and Margaret Chatterton, Rod Newport, and Richard and Lois Hadfield, together with two friends from Te Puke whose names our Research Department has been unable to discover as we go to press.

## The Six Pot Group Visit to Ardmore 8 November by Philip Eilenberg



With our having just returned from a month in the USA, John Stewart and George Urquhart organised a final Six-Pot Group gathering for the year with the instructions saying to meet outside a church in Ardmore – maybe for a prayer or two since it was Election Day! I ended up going with George in his 1933 Rolls-Royce 20/25 (GSY12). This was the first time it had been out to a Six-Pot event since being re-painted and as can be seen in a recent photo it looked a real treat.

The main attraction was at the home of Gavin and Miles Hicks who have some very interesting cars and projects. The selection of complete cars (mostly restored) included: BMW M6, Mini Cooper S, Maserati Bora, Maserati Ghibli, Mazda Cosmo, a racing Austin-Healey 3000 and a number of immaculate imported rally cars. There were also a 1938 Bentley 4¼-litre B84MR Overdrive Series with a replica Franay drop-head body, and a 1928 WO Bentley 6.5-litre with a replica Vanden Plas aluminium body belonging to another family member. Gavin and Miles discussed each of cars in great detail while many

photos were being taken by members.

The real treat for the group was a project to make two Bentley racing cars with V12 Meteor tank engines on a highly modified Bentley R-Type chassis. The Rolls-Royce Meteor was a British tank engine developed from the Rolls-Royce Merlin aero-engine (see John Craig's account in 08-4). Despite the removal of the supercharger and a few other minor modifications, which de-rated it to approx 600 bhp (447 kW), *The Engineer* reported that the Meteor 'used all the main "Merlin" components such as the crankshaft and bearings, crank case, cylinder block and valve gear' and that some of the more expensive aluminium items were manufactured in steel.





The chassis and engine stage are well advanced as can be seen in the photos. They will have four triple Weber carburettors to really make them go! The workmanship on the build is superb and is a real credit to Gavin and Miles Hicks. We thanked them for opening up their home to us and then had afternoon tea. We were also pleased to have a Southern Region Committee Member, Ramon Farmer, present.

Many thanks to John and George for organising an excellent afternoon.

As an update to a previous Six-Pot Group meeting (see issue 08-5), where we inspected the damaged engine parts of Bob & Linda Barbour's 1939 Wraith (WLB9), they visited Fiennes Restoration Ltd near Oxford, UK recently: "Their resident expert said that the probable cause of the cylinder bore damage was a sand casting flaw, a rare but not unknown problem with cast monobloc engines. The solution is to either remove the entire cylinder and fit a stepped sleeve, or bore to oversize for a dry liner. The advice was to try the dry liner first since the last block recovery strategy is the stepped sleeve."

"As Six-Pot Group members noted in the meeting, the support around the lower face in the block desk is not great. Fiennes had one of each sleeve type in stock so we bought the plain sleeve, plus engine and gearbox mounts. Members

may be interested to know that parts now attract a 'recycling cost' refundable when the used part is handed in to Fiennes. Franklin Engineering, Pukekohe are doing the cleanup of the bore and pressing in the new liner. The original engineering specifications for the sleeves are available on-line from the Australian Bentley Club."



## Central Region Report

### Central Region Annual General Meeting.

2nd November 11:00 a.m. at Southward's Museum.

Our AGM went very smoothly with no problems as a well organised AGM should. The new Central Region Committee bears a striking resemblance to last year's and consists of:

Chairman	Elliott Snelling
Secretary-Treasurer	Martin Taylor
Committee Members	William Giesbers, Carol Snelling, Lesley Tilley, Roy Tilley.

After the AGM we enjoyed lunch in the Southward's cafeteria after which members browsed around the many exhibits. Prior to the AGM some of us were privileged to be given a tour of the workshops where many of these vehicles have been restored, in

may cases from little more than small heaps of rusty scrap. Our thanks to John and Stan Bellamore for their time and trouble in arranging this visit.

### Silver Ghost Association Rally.

Further to the following report from September, we now learn that this rally will in fact take place in November 2010, so we have a little more time for planning!

We have been advised of the Silver Ghost Association's tour through NZ from November through January and understand that they will be happy to meet us in various appropriate locations. They wish to leave their cars here in the Wellington area for about 4 weeks over the Christmas period so suitable accommodation is being sought. Between 20 and 30 cars are believed to be involved.

## From Our Roving Reporter

I had the good fortune again to attend the big public day, Saturday 13 September, of this, the biggest Swap Meeting in Europe. September is officially autumn here in the UK, but my wife said "Impossible, autumn follows summer and we haven't had summer yet." Good point, and although it RAINED earlier in the week, the big day as warm and fine, although things were still a little slushy underfoot.

Beaulieu is home to the National Motor Museum, and the hefty £12.50 entrance fee gives full access to the museum. It is outstanding. I was in awe of the Land Speed Record cars that I had seen so many times since my childhood in book and magazines, for example the 1,000 h.p. Sunbeam (the first car to exceed 200 m.p.h.), Golden Arrow, Donald Campbell's Bluebird.... There is a full scale motor garage from the '30s, Formula One cars, and of course lots of examples of British cars from the '20s to the '50s. There is always some themed exhibition, and this year's it features customised creations, including a kind of hot-rod limousine based on a '80s Bentley.

The event is entitled "International Autojumble" and it surely is true, with hundreds, nay thousands, of French, Dutch, German, Italian, American, and some I didn't recognise, accents. Add to this the occasional NZer. I was delighted to pick up a 1956 edition of "Beaded Wheels". On enquiring about the price (£5), I was told that I could have it for £2.50 seeing I was a Kiwi! It turned out to be John Hearne from Auckland, now resident in Shropshire, whom I had met 10 or more years ago, but whom I did not immediately recognise – I guess we change a little as we age. Amongst other cars, John has a lovely "Brooklands" Riley he has brought with him to England.

At Beaulieu cars, as well as parts, are sold by Auction, Private Treaty, and Dealers. Consequently at such a big event there was a fine selection of Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars, from Silver Ghosts on, with most eras and body styles represented. The roughest was a Bentley S1 at Bonham's Auction, rusty and battered, and one wonders how such a fine car got that way. At the other end of the scale, up for private sale was the nicest Silver Cloud I've ever seen. With original paint gleaming like new, and a spotless interior, it had only 20,000 miles and two owners, the last since 1972. The asking price was a whopping £75,000.

The Real Car Company had a stall, and I spent a pleasant



hour or so chatting with Ray Arnold and Ian Johnstone. I was surprised at the number and variety of customers attracted – a group of Germans looking for a 20/25 carburettor which Ray obligingly produced, another gentleman wanting a left-hand-drive Cloud or S1 for Continental touring, another German wanting a "sprinkler" motor. We worked out that he needed a windscreen washer for a Shadow. Also sharing a corner of the stand was Bernard King, who has written a number of very good books on Rolls-Royce and Bentley, his latest being a comprehensive coverage of post-war Phantoms. The beautiful bodies the bespoke coachbuilders put on these are all covered, and it is a wonderful publication. Anyone with a Phantom would have to buy this book, although I concede that is not many of us.

More than 90%, I guess, of the goods are for British cars, but other interesting things appear – a 1930 Lincoln V8 in really rough shape, although very rare, and a 1931 Nash tourer were a couple of Americans, and there were early DKW motorcycles, Citroens, etc. There is something for everybody at Beaulieu!

Bernie Snalam.

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Marketing Director of the Car Division was an entirely new position in the Company and encompassed Sales, Service, Parts, Publicity, Warranty, Publications, for the World markets and all Technical feed back to Production, Engineering and Development.

My first job was to review the efforts of Styling and Engineering Departments who were planning the car to replace the Silver Shadow in 10 years' time. This prototype had the code name "SZ" and would eventually be given the name Silver Spirit.

Immediately following I had a meeting with Chris Blake, the Executive of Dodwell Motors of Hong Kong, who had come to Crewe to discuss and finalise an order for 9 Silver Shadow cars in a special colour scheme for the use of the Peninsula Hotel. This was to be the first of many such orders for this famous Hotel but was to be a lease rather than an outright purchase. The Hotel required 8 cars with the promise that the Dealer would keep the ninth identical car for their use when the cars went in for Service. Further it was required that the cars be built to Australian specification as the Hotel did not want them in the Hong Kong market when it became time to trade them in for new cars at the end of the three year lease. After some tight negotiations the deal was signed and this started a relationship which has seen the Peninsula Hotel replace the fleet on a fairly regular basis. The Hotel's experiences of their performance was so good that all the future deals were on an outright purchase basis which made the Dealer happy!! The reader will be interested to know that each Silver Shadow car had completed in excess of 100,000 miles when they were traded to Australia at the end of the three years.

Stanley Sears, then Patron of the 20-Ghost Club, my friend of many years, invited myself and Vera to the Club's Annual Dinner at the Hyde Park Hotel with the requirement to do the after dinner speech in view of my new appointment. The 20-Ghost Dinner was a very formal affair requiring white tie and tails with the ladies also being suitably attired. At the reception the men would gather around the bar while the ladies gathered at the other end of the room. The men would talk in depth about their cars and wanted to know all about AX201, which I had been responsible for when I ran the London Service Depot. After dinner we retired to the reception room for further talk before going home. Stanley Sears managed to get this annual event modified to a Dinner and Dance for the next year, but the Members still stuck to the white tie and tails.

January also saw the telephone operators' strike in the U.K. which meant that only the people living in the centre of a town could communicate by telephone. Subscriber Trunk Dialling had not been introduced in Britain at that time, and that meant that it was not possible for me, living in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century village of Knutsford, and David Plastow, living in Congleton, to contact each other by telephone when we were not at the Crewe Factory.

On Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> February, 1971, David and I were supposed to be catching the 8.00 a.m. train to London, where we were to present a specially finished Silver Cloud Chassis to the Science Museum. All the Press were to be there, and much publicity was expected.

I arrived at Crewe Railway Station at the appointed time, and – no David Plastow. I obviously got on the train full of speculation, as David was never late. The train arrived on time at Euston in London at 10:00 a.m. and Steve Stone, a Conduit Street Driver, was waiting with an envelope for me to open immediately. It was from Dr Llewellyn Smith, the Car Division Chairman, advising me that Rolls-Royce Limited would be going into receivership at noon. There was a briefing note and instructions for me to visit all our London facilities, meet individually with



*A pride of Corniches at Nice, February 1971.*

managers, foremen, and shop stewards and advise them what was happening. The locations were Hythe Road and Mulliner-Park Ward, both at Willesden and Chiswick, Lillie Hall at Earls Court, and the Conduit Street showrooms and it all had to be done by noon when the official announcement to the Press would be made.

Dennis Miller Williams had been detailed to present the Silver Cloud Chassis to the Science Museum.

I knew all the staff at these five locations personally and I was particularly shocked with having to tell this bad news, particularly since it was completely unexpected and we had had no prior warning, although perhaps we should have realised that something drastic was likely to happen with the Government withholding of the £10.0M stage loan.

As far as Hythe Road and Chiswick were concerned it was also embarrassing as they were servicing customers' cars. As a result of the appointment of the Receiver at noon on Thursday all gates had to be closed and no cars or parts were allowed to leave.

Owners who were expecting their cars to be ready were not able to collect them and they remained in the Service Station until Monday. The Receiver then gave permission for finished cars to be released providing the Owner paid cash for the repairs and any outstanding account that might be owing. Incidentally the same policy had to be applied at the Crewe Service Station.

On Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> February, David Plastow called a Car Division Board Meeting at which Mr McWhirter deputising for Rupert Nicholson, the Receiver, addressed the Directors and asked questions.

A Receiver's mandate is to protect the assets of the shareholders and realise as much as possible for them from the Company in Receivership.

We were advised that Rupert Nicholson had negotiated with the Government for a Government Corporation, Rolls-Royce (1971) Limited to be formed, which would take over all the assets of the businesses which were engaged on work of National Importance. That Company had also bought from the Receiver for £20M the famous trade marks, the interlinked R-Rs, the name Rolls-Royce, and the famous Rolls-RR-Royce badge.

It was the Receiver's intention to continue to run the Car Division and the Diesel Division as a combined entity under the name Rolls-Royce Motors with The Receiver as the sole owner, and when the time was right, to float Rolls-Royce Motors Holdings Limited on the London Stock Exchange, which would in effect mean that he had sold the asset for the best possible price on behalf of the shareholders of Rolls-Royce Limited in Receivership.

At the meeting I mentioned that the Sales and Marketing

Departments were wishing to introduce the Corniche with a launch to the Press in the South of France before the end of the month. On being advised of the estimated cost, which was less than the retail price of one Corniche, Mr McWhirter agreed that the plan should be put into action immediately.

I have already written an article on the 1971 Rolls-Royce Corniche Launch, which was published in the 99-3 issue of *The Flying Lady*, (copies are available from the Club Shop) but sufficient to say that on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> February just 13 days after the appointment of The Receiver we had 8 Corniche saloons and 1 Corniche convertible at Nice Airport in the South of France for the 25 or so Motoring Correspondents we had flown in by Caledonian Airways to try them on the road in southern France and northern Italy. An overnight stay at the Hotel Vistaero on La Grande Corniche, screening of the film, "Whatsoever is rightly done...." And we then flew The Press back to their desks with the Press release date embargoed to March 4<sup>th</sup>.

That this Launch, the first of its type ever attempted by the Car Division, had a positive effect on the market and particularly all the employees is not in doubt. The name Corniche still creates nostalgia in all motoring enthusiasts world wide.



*John and Vera Craig at the Vanderbilt mansion, Newport Rhode Island.*

with two important caveats: if Rolls-Royce Motors ever became owned by a non-British, i.e.: a foreign company or owner then the permission to use those trade marks would be forfeited, and also that Rolls-Royce (1971) Limited had the right to inspect the premises and workmanship of Rolls-Royce Motors at intervals of not less than six months to confirm that the Company was maintaining the standards required of the name Rolls-Royce. There was also a paragraph about registering and protecting the use of the trade marks world wide.

Rolls-Royce Motors was responsible for all the other trade marks used by the Car and Diesel Divisions, and spent much time ensuring that they were properly registered world wide. It is perhaps not properly understood that Rolls-Royce Motors owned the Spirit of Ecstasy and the classic Radiator Grille and all the names like Bentley, Corniche, Silver Ghost, Silver Shadow, Goshawk and even Griffon and quite a few more. It was a big job to get this done in all the world markets in which we sold our cars and diesel engines.

Following the Board Meeting of the 8<sup>th</sup> February we introduced an in-house communications plan to ensure that all employees when they went home each night were up to date with what ever had happened that day because the radio and tv channels loved to issue stories about Rolls-Royce which were not always strictly true. This was carried out daily at 4.00 p.m. for the rest of the year and maintained a high morale with them and their families.

A problem with being "In Receivership" is that the company is not permitted to obtain any Credit and must pay and be paid in "Cash" for all products received or sold. That his was well known by our suppliers was demonstrated one day in February 1971 by the local Council of Crewe sending a Municipal Works Team with a backhoe to collect a cheque for the Water Rate

Another major task for Rolls-Royce Motors was to negotiate an agreement for the continued use of the trade marks now owned by Rolls-Royce(1971) Limited. This was readily agreed, but

with the instructions to dig up the road and cut off the supply if the money was not forthcoming.

It was realised that Bentley Motors (1931) Limited, a paper company which had been kept valid since 1931 to ensure no-one else could use that name, was not "In Receivership", and accordingly Tom Neville, our Accountant, and myself were made Directors of that Company for the princely sum of £1 each for a share, and we were then able to use that company to buy and sell products and cars without the No Credit problem. This made our Overseas business able to flow again easily.

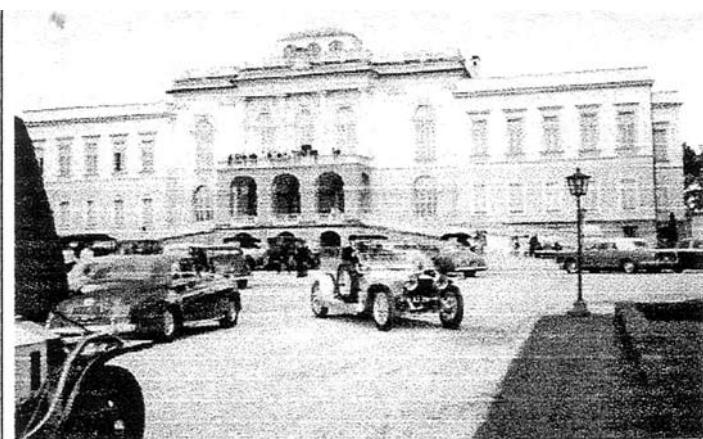
The visit of members of the R.R.E.C. with their cars to the factory at Crewe on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 1971 and the visit of the B.D.C. with their cars on the 19<sup>th</sup> April did a tremendous amount to maintain the morale of everyone. On both occasions some 25 cars were parked in front of the main building and groups of Club members were given tours of the production lines and were able to talk to employees. The Board was very grateful for this show of support at that difficult time.

In August we were much saddened by the passing of Walter Owen Bentley, with whom Vera and I had been great friends. There were nearly all the Members of the Bentley Drivers' Club and many other friends at his Funeral at Christ's Church in the village of Shamley Green near Godalming.

At the beginning of 1972 I was asked to add Chairman of the Specialist and Light Aircraft Engine Division to my responsibilities which then saw me responsible for not only the motor car, but also the B Range engine and the Continental line of small aero engines which Crewe built under licence to Continental Aero Engines of Mobile, Alabama.

February 1972 saw David Plastow and myself invite the Executive of the Bentley Drivers' Club to a private dinner at which we presented a cheque for £5,000 to the W.O. Bentley Memorial Fund to show that the new Company recognised the value of the Club.

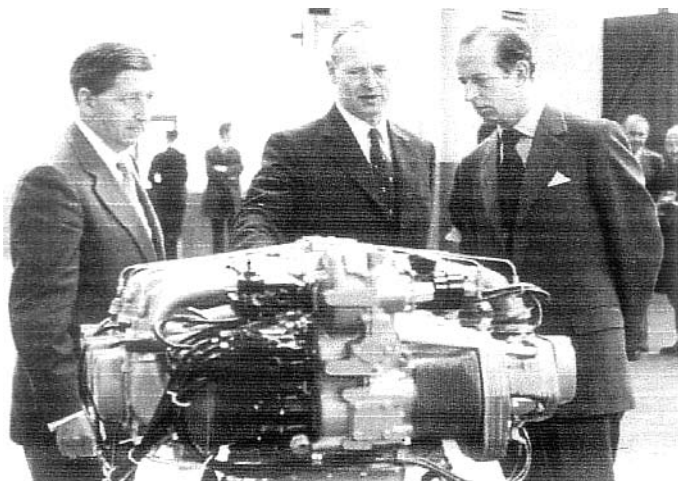
Because we sold into Europe I decided to license a left hand drive Silver Shadow for use in Europe and used to drive down to the Geneva Motor Show in March. After the Show I drove



**This is a view of AX201 in front of the Schloss Klessheim and the cars lined up in the beautiful gardens at the end of the Commemorative Rally..**

back to Orly Airport in Paris, picked up the Sales Manager, Arthur Widdowson, of the S.&L.A.E. Division and drove to Rheims for meetings with Rheims Aviation to whom we expected to sell our Light Engines in competition with Lycoming. Rheims is the home of Champagne and we were able to bring back some of the best "Samples" of course.

Shortly after the R.R.E.C. advised me that they were in trouble with some sizes of tyre availability and decided to go to Fort Dunlop for a meeting. I arranged to have the Silver Ghost AX201 taken there at the same time and was able to get good publicity for both Rolls-Royce Motors and Dunlop. As a result Dunlop agreed to deal with the problem the R.R.E.C. had reported.



**Explaining the Continental I-036 aero-engine to H.R.H. Duke of Kent, December, 1974**

In May I flew down to Nice Airport to attend the Cannes Air Show to further our Light Aircraft Engine Business and had the opportunity of a flight in an aircraft powered by one of our engines. It was a lovely clear day and my pilot was able to do Zero G. Aerobatics over the Mediterranean much to the amazement and consternation of my staff on the ground.

1972 saw the introduction of compliant suspension to the Silver Shadow, which had as its distinguishing mark the eyebrows to the front and rear wheel arches. Because there had been some controversy regarding the roll and road holding of the Shadow range it was decided to take 8 cars to Silverstone and allow the Motoring Correspondents to try the cars out on the Club Circuit. The date was set for the morning of the 26<sup>th</sup> July and the Correspondents gave a very good and positive response when their articles were published.

1973 was a very tumultuous year as far as Rolls-Royce Motors was concerned.

It was decided to form Rolls-Royce Motors International with its offices in Lausanne, Switzerland and which would be responsible for all our Overseas Car Business.

In March I spent a month travelling our Pacific Markets, - New Zealand, Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, and Japan, meeting with all our Dealer principals, since I knew them all personally, and explaining the formation of our International Division, and how they would all benefit from this more dedicated approach to their needs. I was able to be one of the first to fly the JAL new route from Tokyo to Heathrow via Anchorage, which was a fascinating experience.

Of significance later was the fact that for this trip I had obtained a personal American Express Credit Card. This was against the then Company policy that Credit cards must not be used by employees or by Directors to pay expenses because we were still owned by The Receiver and therefore were not allowed to buy anything on credit.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> May Rupert Nicholson, The Receiver and Owner of Rolls-Royce Motors announced that he would be floating Rolls-Royce Motors Holdings Limited on the London Stock Exchange and a Prospectus of Sale was issued. One section dealt clearly with the use of the R-R Trade Mark agreement with Rolls-Royce (1971) Limited and this made the late Robert Holmes a Court of Australia withdraw from attempting to buy a majority of the share offering which the Press had intimated he might do.

In the event this was a very successful offering attracting more than 22,000 mainly British shareholders. Rupert Nicholson was able to make a further payment to the shareholders of Rolls-

Royce Limited (In Receivership) and we became a publicly owned Limited Company again employing some 9,300 people with an annual turnover of just under £80.0M. (about \$US200.0M).

Shortly after this I lent a Rolls-Royce Corniche two door saloon to Stanley Sedgwick, the President of the Bentley Drivers' Club, who with Hugh Young as navigator drove from Dunkerque to Marseille and back in a day. They completed 1,330.8 miles in 17 hours and 22 minutes at an average speed of 76.57 m.p.h. including all stops.

In June the 1973 Grand Alpine Commemorative Rally was organised by the R-R.E.C. and we made plans for Dennis Miller Williams to follow the run with AX201, The Silver Ghost.

A Silver Shadow was prepared with towing facility, and a special low trailer for The Silver Ghost was made so that Dennis would not have to drive The Silver Ghost for the whole Rally. Arrangements were also made for my wife and me to be present at Salzburg for the final luncheon and prize giving at the Schloss Klessheim on the 29<sup>th</sup> June.

Vera and I departed from Manchester Airport in a Lufthansa Boeing 737 on the afternoon of the 28<sup>th</sup> June for Munich Airport where we were due to arrive about 10.30 p.m. expecting Dennis in his Silver Shadow to be waiting to drive us to the Hotel in Salzburg. On arrival we waited and – no Dennis and no Silver Shadow! The airport closes at 11.00 p.m. and all taxis had already left. The Avis Car Hire office was just about to close when we marched in with only my American Express card, no German money, and requested the rental of a car with drop off in Salzburg. Surprise, surprise, they had a Renault that required returning to Salzburg and so we were in luck.

We managed to get a road map of sorts and set off to find our way to Salzburg, about a hundred miles away, in the dark. We ran through torrential rain at one part of the journey but Vera, who had been my navigator in many Rallies in our youth, managed to



**Camargue in Sicily with Mt. Etna in background, January, 1975**

navigate us without incident to the outskirts of Salzburg where we arrived about 2.00 a.m. I had not been told which hotel was being used for the Meet Headquarters but we were lucky to stop a taxi and make the driver understand that we were looking for a hotel with a large car park full of Rolls-Royce cars. He understood and agreed for a fee for us to follow him there, and that is how we found the Winkler Hotel. The Reception Desk was still open and they were still expecting us so we got our bags up to our room after they had paid the taxi driver his fee. I then went down to see if there was anyone about and walked into the bar. There I found the late Peter Baines, later to be the General Secretary of the R-R.E.C., with a few others having a night-cap at 3.00 a.m. Peter's comment was the understatement of the year:- "*Hello, John, have you only just arrived, we were expecting you earlier*".

September saw Vera and myself attending the R-R.O.C. 1973 National Meet in Newport, Rhode Island, which helped to

confirm that the newly formed Company, Rolls-Royce Motors Limited, was really interested in all the Marque Car clubs and would do what it could to support them providing it was economically possible.

We had been developing the Straight 8 B81 engine for use in Dennis Fire Engines and many had been installed. A by-product was an experimental B81 engine converted to run on natural gas. This engine was fitted in a London type Double Decker bus and was labelled the "Clean Air Bus". It was particularly successful and well ahead of its time, and was used experimentally by Liverpool with good results in the centre of the city. A major problem to its acceptance was the fact that the infrastructure for refuelling natural gas was not in place and was a long way off.

However, the "Clean Air Bus" attracted the interest of the Shah of Persia (Iran) and it was anticipated that a significant contract was imminent, but we all now know the fate of the Shah and his family.

In 1974 H.R.H. The Duke of Kent made a visit to the Crewe Factory and spent a day being shown all the production and engineering facilities. He was particularly interested in the Silver Shadow and also the Light Aircraft Engines.

For the past five years development had been going ahead with an advanced design in collaboration with Pinin Farina under the code name DY20 and it was decided to launch the car to the Press in a similar manner to what we had used for the Corniche. The Island of Sicily was chosen and the village of Taormina where there was a lovely monastery which had been converted to a hotel. Taormina is about 50 kilometres south of Messina but only 30 kilometres from Mount Etna which we could see glowing at night. We chose four test routes of about 200 kilometres each and agreed them with the local Police.

We had nine cars and in three groups of three drove them down from Crewe to Taormina. All external badges were to be hidden from the public view and this was achieved by carrying the

wheel discs and the Rolls-Royce radiator shell in the boot. It was necessary for the radiator shell to be in place when passing through Customs and Immigration Posts so about 5 kilometres before each crossing the radiator shell was refitted and then about 5 kilometres after it was again removed. This had to be done before crossing the English Channel and again before crossing the French/Italian border. Going down this was also done before crossing the Straits of Messina.

The 15<sup>th</sup> January 1975 saw invited Press and TV from the U.K., U.S.A., and the countries of Europe flown into Catania on the Island of Sicily, housed at the Hotel, and given the opportunity of driving the nine DY20 cars over the predetermined routes.

They were given Press Kits but not the name of the car. This was given to them at the Dinner in the evening before they departed the following morning. The car was the CAMARGUE and primarily established that the new company, Rolls-Royce Motors Limited, was capable of producing a new model which the sceptics had been saying since the formation in 1973 was impossible.

I had the opportunity of driving one of the Camargues back to Crewe and can say that it was a truly magnificent drive up the spine of Italy and then through France to Le Havre where we caught the overnight ferry to Portsmouth and then on to Crewe.

In July I was appointed Chairman and C.E.O. of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars (Canada) Limited responsible for the Canadian and Pacific markets comprising New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, Borneo and Malaysia, Thailand, Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan and Japan, and decided that Vancouver would be the most suitable base.

Our initial exploratory trip took in the R-R.O.C. National Meet at Bellevue and then a drive up to Vancouver. However it was not until December that the move to Vancouver was completed. Nevertheless I visited all those markets in November, starting in New Zealand and finishing in Japan before flying direct to Vancouver.

## Membership Changes

Lee Small has recently been appointed General Manager of Bentley Auckland, and will continue the Corporate Membership in our club to represent Bentley Auckland and Independent Prestige Limited. We welcome Lee to our club, and look forward to our association with his firm. They have been most supportive of our club for many years under the leadership of Mike Clark, who has stepped down from his role as General Manager.

Almost thirty years ago your editor started thinking about Bentley ownership, and looked seriously at a Mark VI which Mike had for sale at his premises in Khyber Pass Road. In the event we didn't buy that car, instead buying one from a friend (who is still a friend), but Mike's helpful attitude will always be remembered, and we hope to see him at our future club events, along with Lee.

### New Members:

Teariki Manarangi and Jasmin Burness  
24A Bains Avenue, Peachgrove, Hamilton  
07 853 9656 [connary007@otmail.com](mailto:connary007@otmail.com)  
1966 Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow SBH1555

Tony & Frances Johnson  
64 Nilgri Rd Napier 4812  
06 844 8183  
1937 Rolls-Royce Phantom III 3BT23 RRV12

George and Karen Calder  
307 Hoon Hay Road  
Christchurch 8025  
03 338 5372  
[gandkcalder@actrix.co.nz](mailto:gandkcalder@actrix.co.nz)  
1950 Bentley Mark VI B67HP NAU812

## The Next Issue

09-1 will include a long-range programme of events organised across the Tasman by the RROCA. Some of these events would tie in very nicely with a Tour organised by our new advertisers, Air Adventure Australia.

## Lucas Wiper Motors by Eddie Riddle

Lucas wiper motors of the cable driven type are really very reliable. Having said that the early versions are susceptible to voltage loss in the brush gear. The solution to this problem is to solder a piece of very flexible wire (one strand off a starter brush works fine) to the back face of the brush holder and the other end to the wire that forms the connection to the system. Repeat this for the other brush. It is essential that you don't let solder run down the flexible cable. Check that the brush holders are still free to move.

The first of the cable-operated wipers had wheelboxes with a ¼" shafts to which the wiper blade is connected. The system is that the inner cable of the drive connects to the gearbox on the wiper motor and the other end passes through the wheelboxes. As the gearbox rotates the inner cable is pulled backwards and forwards thus operating the wiper arms.

If the vehicle has wipers where the blades move in opposite directions (referred to as "clap-hands" operation) it is necessary to mount one of the wheelboxes upside down. By this I mean if the cable enters the wheelbox at the top then the other one must enter at the bottom.

The control of the wiper motor is via a switch on the dashboard, which in turn is fed from the ignition switch.

These wipers are satisfactory on windscreens, which are

was reversed during parking. The main advantage was that the wiper arms were now parked completely off the windscreen. This model was only used on the expensive English cars.

The control of the motor is in the earth circuit not the live side.

The three wires to the motor are:

- Pin 1 to A4 (live feed)
- Pin 2 to earth via the dashboard switch
- Pin 3 is the earth connection

The system was particularly fussy about a smooth curve with no sharp bends in the first section of the outer casing, from the motor to the wheel box. This often led to motors burning out. The outer casing is 3/8" Bundy tubing. After flaring the ends it is a simple matter to **gently** bend the tubing. It is easiest to bend the tubing over a large diameter former like a tyre, which is inflated hard. With the wiper blades removed you should be able to move the inner cable freely in and out of the casing.

An improvement in performance can be made in reducing the voltage loss in the brushes by the same method as detailed earlier.

The end float in the armature is important here as excessive clearance can lead to the wiper motor failing to switch off.



George Urquhart's newly painted 1933 20/25 Freestone & Webb Limousine GSY12. Philip Eilenberg's photograph

flat, but they really struggle on the later curved type windscreens. This system was replaced in the mid 1950s by the DR series of wiper motors.

The DR series had the following improvements:

- Wiper box spindles are now 0.5" diameter splined shafts
- Automatic parking when the wipers are turned off
- Heavier inner cable
- More powerful motor

The DR3 models were 2 speed versions of the DR2

DR4 was a series with a complex parking system where the motor

A check of the wiper blade pressure on the screen is important. It needs to be just enough to keep the blade in contact with the screen. Excessive pressure leads to burning out armatures when operated on a nearly dry screen.

The motor is designed to move **slightly** on the three rubber mounting bushes. If it is found that the three rubber mounting bushes are damaged, then the most likely cause is excessive wiper blade pressure.



The Matthews family of New Plymouth were well known because of their wonderful garden property, "Tupare," in Mangorei Road. During the 1950s and '60s "Tupare" was always open to the public over Labour Weekend, with the proceeds going to some worthy charity. At the time the garden boasted the widest selection of rhododendrons in New Zealand.

The elder son, John Matthews (in the photograph above), had a Riley 9 Special, and in the late '50s this was replaced by a 1923 Rolls-Royce 20, 71A7. It was an early car with central gear-change and was really just a mobile chassis with no body. He had bought it from a traffic officer in Christchurch, and it had been used as a saw bench. John built a scuttle with a V windscreen to line up with the original bonnet top. Seating was on a steel frame bolted to the chassis.

Here is an extract from a family letter of 1961 written by Mary Matthews (later Lady Matthews). It is reproduced here by kind permission of my old school mate, Richard Matthews. Glynn Williams.

"The trip to Wellington was Quite Something as Elinor [Mary Matthews's sister. Ed] would say. We were planning to leave at eight but still at nine the engine was spluttering badly and poor John bewildered so I rang the airways to make sure I could get on the afternoon plane to connect with my flight to Christchurch. Suddenly there was a yell of relief from the mechanic who discovered that he had left an important spring out of the carburettor (I can't spell that) when he was so tired working late the night before. Last minute welding of a little donkey seat in the back for Richard, luggage piled in, safety straps fastened and away we left.

Left N.P. 9:20 a.m.

9:25 Stopped at garage to buy puncture outfit.

9:30 Stopped outside the Crematorium to check wheels 'This'll do as well as anywhere I guess' says John picking up an ENORMOUS spanner from the back.

9:38 Rain ahead.

John: There's a knock somewhere – I hope it's just the bonnet. No speedometer.

John: Everything's passing us. (A little hurt) Maybe we are only doing 27 m.p.h. 1923 and still going strong. Good old Venus.

10:00 One hair comb shaken out. Decided to wear flying helmet and goggles kindly provided by Stan Olsen.

10:05 Passed first car (in 15 m.p.h. area.)

10:10 Passed first truck.

Tighten safety belt.

Richard tightened belt keeping his hat on.

Passers-by fascinated. Waves from little Maori boys. Passing motorist slowed down and shouted incredulously, 'Good Lord'. Cheers from us.

New smell from the back. Remark from Richard: 'I wish you had put a longer exhaust pipe on, John.'

Wave from engine driver.

11:00 Stop for routine check (big heavy spanner).

Dark clouds ahead. Passed someone broken down! All thought that very funny. Stopped by two men in a car. 'Are you boys local?' (me in my stove pipe pants). They wanted some direction to somewhere.

Us: 'No.'

Men: 'Well you can't help. What have you got there?'

John: 'Take a look.'

Men: 'Gee. A Rolls-Royce? What do you do if it rains?'

## *A Day in the Life of a Rolls-Royce 20, by Glynn Williams*

Me: 'Put up my umbrella.'

Road wet but missed the rain. Peculiar sensation on my face – not even drizzling so what could it be? Mud splashing up from the road – no mud-guards.

11:20 Wanganui. Got eight gallons of petrol. John worked it out that we were doing twenty-three to the gallon. Drove with great dignity through the busy avenue. Much staring. Sunshine and VERY hot.

1:25 p.m. Sanson turn-off. Stop. Check wheels with great heavy spanner. Check oil. Tappet noise worrying John. Pulled well away from the main road to remedy it. Had lunch.

Passed someone broken down. All laughed.

2:10 Another strange noise so pulled up. Front head light fell off. Put in back seat with me. Richard having a turn in the front. Richard right about the smell.

3:30 Loud noise from the back. Heavy box holding luggage broken off one side.

Mended with a piece of fencing wire.

Levin. Drank two bottles of Coca-Cola and had two ice creams. Very hot. Exchanged helmet for sun hat tied on with raincoat belt. Overtook nothing all the way to Wellington.

Climbed right up all the steep hills to Cecil Road, Wadestown, without changing gear – even Johnny amazed AND so proud.

4:00 p.m. Arrived at Shirley Rowe's – sunburn burning. Had beer and a shower, changed into best Thai silk frock. John drove me to station where he had to collect a ticket. Venus not very manoeuvrable in traffic so I suggested I take a taxi to N.A.C. Found a taxi driver and explained that I had some luggage in the car further along. 'Good God. Where have you come from in that?'

'New Plymouth.'

Taxi driver: 'Good on yer.'

And so ended a much enjoyed episode in my life. One thing about the Rolls, sitting high and without hood or sides the view of the countryside was wonderful."

## *The Derby Bentley Turns 75 Years Old*



*The first Derby Bentley delivered, in September 1933, was B15AE. This car is currently for sale in Britain.*

## The Derby Bentley Turns 75 Years Old

This year the “Derby” Bentley is 75 years old. In a life span of only six trading seasons, cut short by the Second World War, the car achieved the status of a bench mark against which all its contemporaries can be measured and found wanting.

Rolls-Royce Limited bought Bentley Motors through a nominee company on 13 November 1931 for £125,000 and immediately formed Bentley Motors (1931) Ltd. Napier had been on the verge of buying the company which W.O. Bentley had founded but over which he had lost control, and Rolls-Royce, since they had achieved ascendancy over Napier’s aircraft engines with their “R” racing engine, had no wish to engage in competition with Napier on the road in a new Napier-Bentley design, likely to be a descendent of the highly regarded 8-litre Bentley. The existing Rolls-Royce Phantom II was a very large car, and hardly suited for the owner-driver, while the 20/25 had continued to gain weight. To plug a perceived gap in the market, Royce initiated the design of a new 2½ litre engine and chassis, to be called the Peregrine.

By the end of 1931, the design team, led by Sir Henry Royce, at West Wittering in Sussex, were at work on just what the “new” Bentley would be, and E.W. (later Lord) Hives (Hs), R.W. Harvey-Bailey (By) and W.A. Robotham (Rm) had the task of developing the new “Bensport.” This work took most of 1932, with various engine chassis, and transmission variations considered. The Peregrine chassis was accepted as the basis for the new “Bensport”, but to provide the “edge” thought necessary in a Bentley design, overhead camshaft and supercharger options were tried and rejected respectively as lacking in refinement, and providing complications of lubrication as well as detonation and gasket problems. To compete supercharged in the 3-litre class the Peregrine engine would have had to have been made still smaller, and Royce also suggested a straight-eight 3-litre design around the Peregrine 2.725½” by 4.125½” dimensions.

The happy merging of a 20/25 development engine and gearbox (this “J1” engine had a six inlet port cylinder head, a modified camshaft, 6.4:1 compression and twin S.U. carburettors on a new inlet manifold and had been under test in a 20/25 Rolls-Royce) meant that a mock-up was ready for the road in January 1933, clad in a Park Ward saloon body. Either this first car, 1-B-III (according to Alec Harvey-Bailey), or 1-B-IV (according to Ian Rimmer) weighed 30.75 cwt and reached 95 m.p.h. while being taken down to West Wittering by Hs and Rm to show to the dying Sir Henry Royce.

Shortly after this, Hs wrote to A. Wormald (Wor) and A. F. Sidgreaves (Sg) that the new Bentley could not be regarded as a cheaper Rolls-Royce option, its technical specification warranting a margin over the 20/25. He said, “We must make this car as good as we know how and charge accordingly.” The Peregrine development programme was cancelled, and the new 3 ½ litre Bentley was sufficiently different from all other Rolls-Royce products to not erode their market. W.O. Bentley (Bn) worked for the Company on 2-B-IV’s testing programme in the Alps, and spoke glowingly of the new car bearing his name, saying, “The way it climbed the various passes was a revelation and I have never been in a car which made these roads seem so ordinary.”

Four prototypes were built, and they ran up a considerable mileage each, at least one surviving to develop the “M” series of overdrive cars, another to have Citroen independent front suspension fitted, and all to show the results of the Company policy of arduous testing which included many accidents and mechanical failures. Front end shake or shimmy was a problem, and a jig was set up to measure this on 1-B-IV. A solution was seen in the installation of a Wilmot Breeden harmonic stabiliser bumper



*The high standard of finish, with plated tools, is evident on this Van den Plas drop-head coupé B195JY.*

with a lowered front chassis cross member. This bumper was fitted to 4-B-IV, which had been re-bodied as a Park Ward saloon with a special engine of 6.9:1 compression and larger inlet valves, but during road testing by Willoughby Lappin (Lp) with passengers including Jack Barclay aboard, a mounting bolt broke and one end of the front bumper dropped and was run over by a front wheel. The overload on the front axle caused it to fail outboard of the spring, and the car went end over end. Somehow the occupants were not seriously injured, but to ensure that the accident would never recur, By designed neat hooked arms extending from the chassis to fit loosely around the horizontally mounted bumper spring. Interestingly, Ray Drury’s early Thrupp & Maberly saloon B24AH, delivered in April 1934, and illustrated on page 18 of 08-5, does not have these hooks fitted. Did this car slip through the retro-fitting process, or did it lose the hooks later in its life?

So, what did this new Bentley look like? A radiator very similar to the final “W.O.” 8-litre and 4-litre designs, with calorstat-operated shutters, sat right over the front axle in the classic position for aesthetic pleasure and favourable weight distribution. Flared front mudguards, seen here on B15AE, added to the lithe appearance of the early Derby Bentleys, although testing soon demonstrated that domed wings, eventually faired in to front bumper level, produced a favourable increase in top speed, and the flared mudguards were soon discontinued. Headlamps of various types were tried, but the Lucas R (or B) 100 became the standard lamp used. These, and other high quality products such as Grebel and Marchal lamps, certainly look handsome, but the barn door effect certainly was a factor, and the September 2008 issue of *The Automobile* mentions wind tunnel tests which showed that a streamlined Derby Bentley would have been 15 m.p.h. faster in reverse.



Surely one of the prettiest cars ever built, this is B49MX, Bruce McIlroy's "Jack Barclay Pillarless Saloon" one of seven built by Park Ward.

The pressure to bring the new Bentley into production grew, and in June 1933 2-B-IV was taken by Rm to Brooklands for Sg to try. Sg was most displeased with the perceived lack of sporting demeanour in that the Sales Department had specified a noisy engine, but fortunately retailers such as the very influential Jack Barclay were delighted with the refinement, and the brilliant term, "The Silent Sports Car", was coined.

The coachbuilders of the era had a field day with the new Bentley, and some truly gorgeous designs were built. Stanley Sedgwick's *All the Pre-War Bentleys – As New* lists almost 60 builders, but of the 2,422 3½-litre, 4¼-litre and Mark Vs built, over 2,000 were built by ten companies, and Park Ward built over 1,000 of those. Bentley Motors (1931) Ltd had no control over quality, or weight, once their chassis had departed for the coachbuilder, but any durability issues and perceived lack of performance reflected upon Bentleys. Rolls-Royce had already introduced a policy whereby an approved design by an approved builder was sold through the Rolls-Royce Conduit St sales outlet, and Park Ward became Bentley's approved coachbuilder. Gradually steel replaced coach built aluminium on a wooden frame, and Rolls-Royce Ltd financed the jigs and dies necessary for the Park Ward body, eventually taking over that company. The Park Ward all steel 3½-litre weighed 32¾ cwt, about 2 cwt heavier than its ash-framed aluminium predecessor. By the time the longer and wider "M" series cars were built, the weight was 35½ cwt.

Bearing in mind that by 1933 The Great Depression had destroyed much of Britain's specialist car industry, this was not an ideal time to sell a luxury car costing about £1,500, or say about the cost of ten Morris or Austins of the era. What were the Bentley's competitors? Of British cars, Daimler had a somewhat stodgy reputation, in 1933 Alvis and Lagonda lacked refinement, and Talbot had almost finished its independent days. Favourable exchange rates from the franc to the pound meant that Delage, Delahaye, Bugatti, and even Hispano-Suiza could be cheaper to buy than a Bentley, certainly by the time they were in the second-hand market. The same applied to Alfa Romeo and Isotta-Fraschini from Italy, and the high quality of the American Packard could be bought for about half the price of the Bentley from Derby. Rolls-Royce Ltd bought or gained access to examples of many other

marques for evaluation, and the eventual liaison with Packard saw the Rolls-Royce Merlin engine built by them in large numbers, while a comparison of Mark VI Bentley front suspension with a 1937 Packard shows a family resemblance.

The first owners of Derby Bentleys came from several strata of society, with nobility and gentry of Britain and Europe, members of prominent business families, holders of military ranks, racing drivers, and show business figures all strongly represented. Malcolm Campbell road tested B15AE for *The Autocar*, and Raymond Mays owned a succession of them, using them not only for business and touring in Europe, but also for practise at the most arduous racing circuits. An article "Raymond Mays's Derby Bentleys" appeared in our 06-6.

E.R. Hall was an early customer, and he persuaded Sg, to Rm's alarm, to support an entry for the 1934 Tourist Trophy in Ulster. A whole generation had passed since The Hon. C.S. Rolls's success in the 1906 Tourist Trophy, and the Company no longer had any experience of organising such an enterprise. Although he could never beat the handicapping system which favoured smaller cars, Hall consistently beat his class rivals and achieved fastest lap times and average speeds. Hall and his wife, Joan, were already experienced competitors from the outset of the Ulster races in 1928, and used B-3-AE as the 1934 Mille Miglia practice car. The Bentley's lack of temperament initially caused Joan Hall some concern, as she reported that one of their earlier Tourist Trophy entries required four different types of sparking plug to keep it firing satisfactorily on all its cylinders, but Hall's light racing bodies in various forms and mounted on various Bentley chassis, together with Works-developed engines, were still being raced by him into the 1950s at Le Mans.

The Derby Bentleys were geared at 4.1:1, giving about 90 m.p.h. at the maximum engine speed of 4,500 r.p.m. and the degree of top gear flexibility desired by drivers for English conditions. When used for European touring, the driving conditions of the still rough French roads limited possible speeds, but the autobahns being developed in Germany enabled engine speeds exceeding the maximum safe limit to be achieved. Under these sustained conditions oil temperatures could rise to 100C, and some failures of connecting rod and main bearings were reported. Experiments

with Company developed special bearing material continued, but the most practical solution, since oil coolers were not a practicable solution in the 1930s, was to design the “overdrive” gearbox which was used for the final 200 cars of the MR and MX series of 1938.

By this time some of the other manufacturers’ products had caught up with Bentley, with independent front suspension offered, and the immensely complicated V12 Lagonda, with W.O. Bentley now in the design team, was available for a similar sum to the Derby product. Rolls-Royce introduced a programme of rationalisation to address the problems of small production runs, so that there would be a more standard product, and the Mark V Bentley was part of this philosophy, but only eleven cars were produced before the war stopped production, and components of other incomplete cars were used to develop other projects during the war. Probably the most exciting Derby Bentley was the Corniche 14-B-V on a Mark V chassis of thinner gauge steel than normal, with overdrive gearbox and a 2.87:1 final drive ratio, many light alloys, and a body built to Georges Paulin’s design by Van Vooren. With a cowled frontal shape bearing little or no resemblance to a Bentley, faired in headlamps, and a split windscreen this car was a radical design, and achieved a Brooklands lap time of 109 m.p.h. with a speed over the measured mile of 111.1 m.p.h. During testing in France during June 1939 the car was damaged in an accident, the chassis being returned to Derby and the body taken to a French coachbuilder for repairs. The body was lost in wartime action at Dieppe, and so far this car lives only in memory, although The Rolls-Royce Heritage Trust is working on a project to rebuild a Corniche using Mark V and original Corniche parts.

Only one Derby Bentley came to New Zealand as a new car, B193LE, owned by our members James and Susan Kircher in Auckland. Several more have arrived here since then, but they are still a rare car on our roads and in our Club. However, Bernard King’s *Bentley Motors ‘On the Road,’* reviewed in our 05-3, includes photographs of B143CW in various New Zealand settings. *All the Pre-War Bentleys – As New* lists this car as a Thrupp and Maberly Drop-head Coupé delivered to Ceylon, so

perhaps it went the long way around to see some more of the world.

This article has been compiled using the following sources:

*All the Pre-War Bentleys – As New* by Stanley Sedgwick, Bentley Drivers’ Club 1976

*Bentley Motors ‘On the Road’* by Bernard L. King, Dalton Watson Fine Books, Lavenham, Suffolk

Letter to the Editor of the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts’ Club *Bulletin* Issue 281 by Ken Lea

*Rolls-Royce and Bentley Experimental Cars* by Ian Rimmer, R.R.E.C. Publishing 1986

*Rolls-Royce – the Derby Bentleys* by Alec Harvey-Bailey, Sir Henry Royce Memorial Foundation 1984

*Silver Ghosts and Silver Dawn* by W.A. Robotham, Constable, London 1970

*The Upper Crust* by John Bolster, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London 1976



(Above) The hooks developed by Robert Harvey-Bailey to support the harmonic front bumper in the event of a mounting bolt failure. (Below) Berwick Taylor’s Park Ward Continental Saloon B165MX, delivered in September 1939, is seen at Dansey Pass Hotel during the Bentley Drivers’ Club Rally in November.





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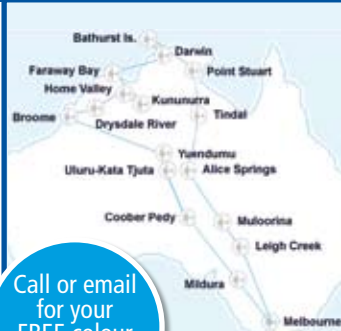
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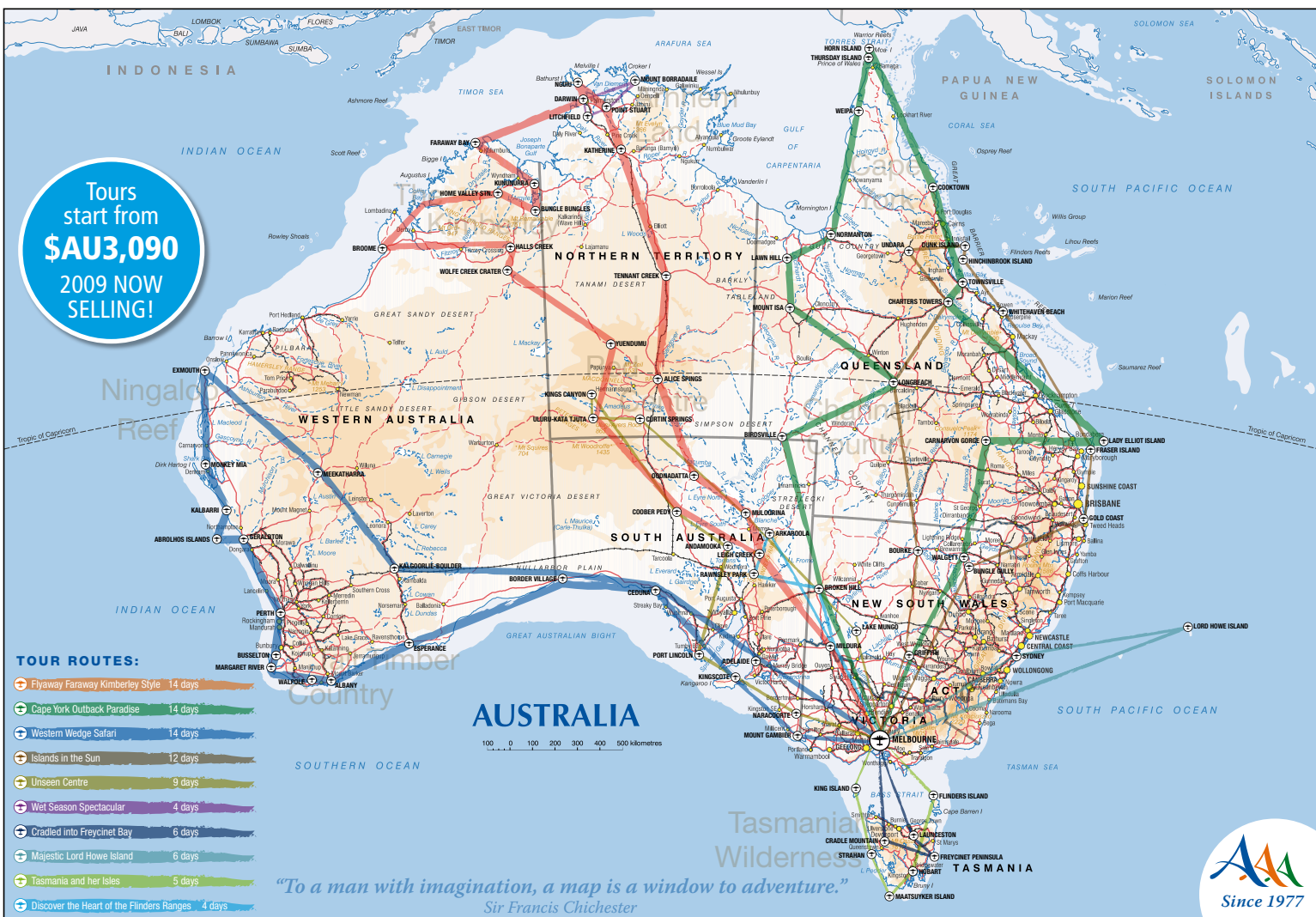


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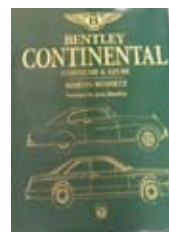
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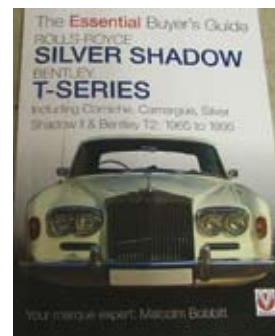


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