

# New Zealand Rolls-Royce & Bentley Club Inc

Issue 08-4, 2008

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# NEW ZEALAND ROLLS-ROYCE & BENTLEY CLUB INC.

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***Front Cover: Andrew McIlroy fulfils a long-awaited goal, and reaches the peak of Mt Cook.***

***Philomena McIlroy took the photograph.***

## Disclaimer:

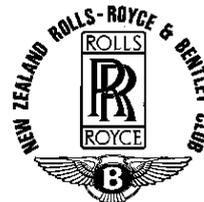
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## Membership

**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  
[www.nzrrbc.co.nz](http://www.nzrrbc.co.nz),

then **APPLICATION FORM**

## 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, 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 21 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.

**Our Web Site is [www.nzrrbc.co.nz](http://www.nzrrbc.co.nz)**

**Tell your friends about it.**

# Club Calendar 2008-4

## SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

The proposed new Club Constitution draft and a Guide are included with this magazine. To consider it, vote on it, and ratify it, a Special General Meeting has been convened:

**Saturday 20 September, 5.00 p.m.** at 242 Sunnyside Rd., Coatesville, Auckland. This will allow local members to return home in time for dinner and out of towners who travel up on Saturday will have time to return on Sunday. E-mail instructions to find the venue from [oldie@ihug.co.nz](mailto:oldie@ihug.co.nz).

There will be a selection of nibbles, the Club will provide some wine, and after the meeting we should have time for a couple of hours of socialising.

The Northern members will offer airport pick ups and beds overnight if anyone wishes to stay.

We look forward to seeing you.

## Northern Region

**Sunday 31 August 2008 for lunch at RD 6 Cafe (inside Matakana Country Park) 1 Omaha Flats Rd, Matakana.**

This is a change from the usual Mariposa Palm Gardens Cafe due to the continued inclement weather. RD6 Cafe is about a kilometre before the Mariposa Café. Meet at BP Dairy flat on SH1 at 10.30am for a 11am start or make your way independently. Travel north to Warkworth and turn right at the second set of lights towards Matakana & Leigh.

## Labour Weekend Away – 25 to 27 October

**Northern Region AGM and Dinner – 16 November** at Romford's.

## Central Region

**AGM in November at Southward's**

**2009 National Rally** Following the very successful First Light Rally organised by the Northern Region in March last year, the Central Region has agreed to organise the 2009 National Rally. Serious planning has started, and we welcome suggestions from all Club members.

## 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.

**Sunday 10 August: Social Run** to Armadillo's Cafe at Leeston for lunch, then an afternoon run finishing for coffee. Meet at New World Supermarket Car-Park, Halswell (Nicholls Road entrance) at 10 a.m.

**Sunday 10 August: The Rolls-Royce & Bentley Touring Club (Inc)** has invited us to their Movie Evening with **Pot-Luck Dinner** at Halswell Parish Hall with a 5 p.m. starting time. This will fit very nicely after the NZRR&BC Social Run.

**Saturday/Sunday 16/17 August "Classic Car" Show** at Pioneer Stadium. Anthony Dacre has 2 slots lined up for us, featuring his newly restored S1, and another car yet to be finalised.

**Sunday 21 September: The Rolls-Royce & Bentley Touring Club (Inc)** has invited us on their run, tentatively arranged for lunch at Gasmere Station. Details are to be confirmed.

**Labour Weekend 24-27 October: The Rolls-Royce & Bentley Touring Club (Inc)** has invited us on their Touring Run to Marlborough. These events have always combined good motoring through glorious scenery with good fellowship. Further details will be published in 08-5, but mark these dates in your Motoring Diary. Friday night in Kaikoura, and Saturday and Sunday nights in Blenheim.

**Sunday 23 November: "Lady Barker" Run** visiting locations associated with the author of *Station Life in New Zealand* (1855) and other points of historical interest around Whitecliffs, mid-Canterbury. Meet at Lady Barker plaque, High St (outside WINZ) at 10 a.m.

## 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 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. Regards, Roy.

## Mainland Comment

For anyone who has opened a modern car bonnet, only to be confronted by a disconcerting expanse of some miracle substance where metal would be normally expected, the illustration reprinted here may come as a reminder of a time when car maintenance could be undertaken by an amateur. The Lubrication Chart came from a slender book entitled *You Have Been Warned* (Methuen, London 1935, tenth and cheaper edition 1942) by Fougasse and McCullough, a gem of gentle motoring humour. Fougasse was the nom de plume of Cyril Kenneth Bird (1887-1965) a cartoonist and latterly editor of *Punch* magazine, and he collaborated on *You Have Been Warned* with W.D.H. McCullough (born 1901).

The later edition your editor owned before he loaned it to Person or Persons Unknown had a charming passage to the effect that instruments had given way to indicator lights which provided a bad news service from all parts of the car, but gave a very pretty display to those who were not particularly mechanically minded.

The Silver Shadow and T Series were certainly well equipped with warning lights, and are still being learned about by your editor. He does now know that the bright green light, commonly called the Evil Eye, tells you that petrol measured in seconds rather than litres or gallons remains. The bright red lights should not come on except under test conditions, and then not before the tester's leg muscles are very tired. Another very bright light indicates that the hand-brake isn't off properly. Yet another very bright light above "coolant" indicates that the water level is below optimum, although because the sensor is placed right

at the top of the header tank, it is a better option than the "All Over Light" sensed from the bottom, so named by Bruce McIlroy because when it comes on, it's all over.

Smaller lights indicate that the alternator or generator has not yet cut in, and that the oil pressure isn't yet at whatever the Company stipulated.

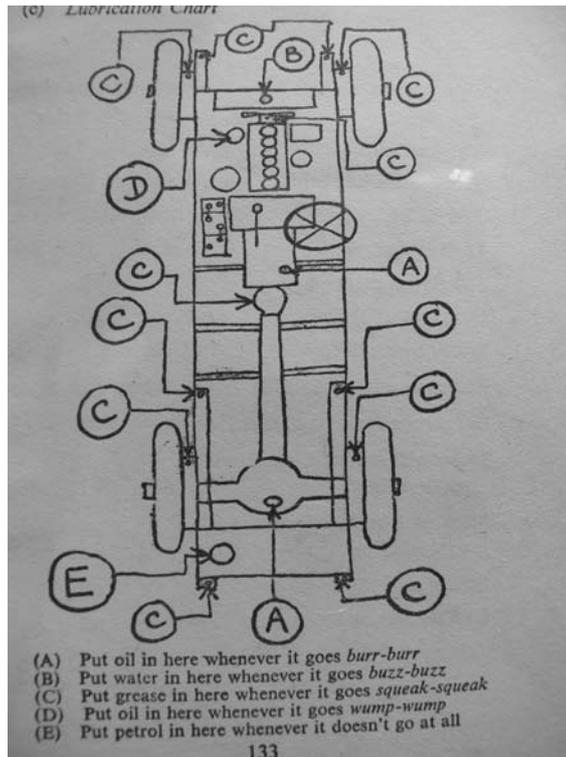
Then there are even smaller lights, one on the steering column called the "Prindle Light" (spelled "PRNDL") and one in the speedometer indicating main headlight beam. That bulb tends to fall off its perch, but can

be reached by long fingers past the drop-down cover under what we would call the instrument panel if it hadn't forsaken instruments in favour of those pesky lights. The first time we drove our car on the open road at night was not a happy experience. The lack of the main beam indicator, when allied with headlamps which ranged from the Ben Turpin Effect to the Marty Feldman Effect without giving much where it was needed, and the lack of the Prindle Light meant that the car didn't seem quite as free as it should have, but putting the gear selector in Drive rather than Intermediate did wonders.

The advice given by one Club member with considerable experience of a Silver Shadow is that if 90% of the complex electrics are actually working at any given time, the car and its owner are doing well.

Our car had a very good service history from its early history in Auckland, New Plymouth, and later in Canterbury, but the previous owner seemed to have had a policy of benign neglect, and since he had not liked the colours, his strategy seemed to be to promote a thick coating of Marlborough Drought Dun so that the factory's colour scheme of Desert Sand over Astrakhan couldn't be noticed.

The new format of our magazine seems to have been well received. There were teething troubles, largely ironed out by the redoubtable Hinemoa Ransom-Boyd at H & A Print. One thing she couldn't fix was the wrong caption on Page 5, where B175KU was wrongly identified as Berwick Taylor's B165MX. The photograph below has Berwick's car on the right, together with B49MX and B175KU. A report on B165MX is planned for 08-5.



## Chairman's Notes

I thought that the new layout of this magazine was really great and a great tribute to our hard working editor. Of all the people who contribute to the running of the club, no one comes close to the time and effort expended by Tom King. We are indeed extremely lucky to have his expertise and dedication at our disposal. The cost is a little higher than previously but the vastly improved look of the publication should make it attractive to potential advertisers. Just a couple of full page colour adverts would see the magazine costing the club very little and if any members can help with contacts in this regard or even wish to advertise their own business, then please step forward. Any member of the National Executive will be happy to help or you could contact Tom King, our editor, as per the inside front cover of this issue.

I was pleased that the team, and Rob Carthew in particular, managed to get the new members list out with the previous magazine. Rob, our new membership secretary, is really on to it and he has pulled out all the stops to make it happen in the time frame he had. From now on, I am assured that the list of names and addresses will be kept up to date and it shouldn't be too hard to press the 'print' button when we feel the previous list is becoming out of date. It has been a big job to achieve this after such a long break since the last issue and inevitably one or two of you will find the occasional mistake so I would ask that you let

your regional chairman or secretary know so that Rob can make alterations where appropriate. Alternatively, Rob's contact details are on the front inside cover of this magazine.

On the first weekend of July, Lois and I flew down to Christchurch to join our South Island members for the annual weekend trip to Mt. Cook in which we joined some members of the RR&B Touring Club. We had a fabulous couple of nights at the Hermitage together, and it convinced me that there is more future in cooperation than in constant wrangling over points of view. We drove there in Tom King's Bentley T1 with Glynn Williams but conditions were such that we bought and fitted a set of chains from Fairlie to Tekapo. Perhaps not absolutely necessary but when driving a friend's borrowed Bentley, we thought it polite to try not to fall off the island.

I also took the opportunity to suggest that we hold a meeting at Tom & Hilary King's house on the Friday evening before the run which was advertised to all those South Island members in our club. The South Island region has not been represented by a committee for over a year now since most of the original committee resigned after they could not be persuaded that our proposed constitutional revisions at the time were going to address their misgivings. A new committee has been elected and the branch funds have been released from National Executive



*Club Chairman Richard Hadfield (right) enjoying the snow at Mt Cook with (from left) Andrew and Bruce McIlroy and Hilary King.*

control so that they may operate once more as a fully operational region. They already have a fairly full calendar planned and I wish them all the best.

On Monday evening, after the run, I was invited to attend a meeting with the committee of the Touring club which represents some former members of our club as I mentioned above. I think there is much to be said for cooperation with them and it has been suggested that each club make their events 'invitation events' and each include the other. I hope both groups will find this approach advantageous and serve until we reach common ground.

And, speaking of that, a revised version of our constitution has been circulated amongst the National Executive and after some discussion we are now agreed on a document to offer to members. It is to be hoped that this will address many of the difficulties experienced in the past to which I referred in my last notes. It will also reduce the size and functions of the National Executive to a minimum and give much greater autonomy to the regions. This will, on the one hand, give us great savings in running the club and, on the other hand, encourage members to be more involved in the running of their region.

Another major change is the new rule which takes the job

of setting subscription levels away from the National Executive and puts it in the hands of members at the A.G.M. This will require the setting and presentation of a budget so that members can make an informed decision after the advice of the National Executive.

The other new provision is in response to a motion at a previous A.G.M. and you will see in clause 11.7 and all its sub clauses that proxy votes are now provided for.

These new proposals, in draft form, are included with this magazine along with an explanatory paper so all members can see the thought process behind the ideas. Members should familiarise themselves with the new provisions before a special general meeting which will be held to vote on the issue. A formal notice of holding a special general meeting may be found elsewhere in this issue. I sincerely trust that most members will be able to see that this is the way forward to strengthen the club and give us the versatility to face the future.

Don't forget that above all, this is supposed to be fun.

Happy motoring,  
Richard Hadfield.  
Chairman.

## Rolls-Royce & Bentley Touring Club Mt Cook Weekend 5/6 July



This was the third mid-winter foray to Mt Cook. The original idea came from the Southern Region Committee, who thought that, rather than everybody just go home after a mid-winter lunch or dinner, why not go somewhere more venturesome? Bruce McIlroy negotiated a special rate with The Hermitage, and we all had a splendid time in brilliant weather.

Last year and this the Rolls-Royce and Bentley Touring Club organised the event and this continuation of the original Southern Region event shows signs of becoming a tradition. Kris Wilson spent a great deal of time arranging the menu, and it was a pity that she was so discouraged by the blizzard she drove through between Christchurch and Ashburton that she was one of several entrants who elected to cancel their weekend. Although the weather report was grim, the bad weather was quite local, and inland at Geraldine it was clear. By late afternoon Burkes Pass and the terminal moraine into Tekapo were icy enough to make chains a Good

Idea. The McIlroy family in their Bentley B49MX, George Calder in his 1950 Mark VI Mulliner-bodied Bentley B67HP, and Stephen Fowler in his Silver Shadow II SRH35181 elected to drive cautiously without them, and had no problems. Mobile phones were very useful to advise conditions to be expected. Michael Midgley had decided to leave his S3 Bentley at home and take his 4wd Utility to be "Tail End Charlie" and arrived well after dark at 7:20, quite ready for dinner and restorative.

There were 15 of us, and we had a great weekend in superb weather, having decided to spend Sunday night there too so that we could do some of the walks, and visit the new Ed Hillary Centre, which all visitors to Mt Cook should do. The "cramp-ons" now available just clip over normal shoes, and transform them into quite practicable footwear for icy conditions. Trish Farmer reports that the widespread use of these gizmos has greatly reduced injuries from winter falls in Dunedin.



The photograph above was taken just metres from the front door of The Hermitage, showing that not much enterprise is required to partake of breathtaking scenery.

The upper left photograph shows, from left, Andrew, Kate, and Bruce McIlroy, Trish Farmer partially obscuring Philomena McIlroy, Ramon Farmer, Glynn Williams, Michael Midgley, and George Calder. It was taken in one of The Hermitage's coffee shops, and shows how bright the light is towards Mt Cook.

The lower left photograph shows Helen McArthur and Stephen Fowler as they swept, with some style, in to dinner.

Why not join us next year, as Glynn Williams from the Northern Region does? If bringing your own car is not practicable, seats in other cars can be arranged, and this year it was a real pleasure for us to have Richard and Lois Hadfield with us.



## Southern Region Meeting 4 July

Fourteen Club members, prospective members, and supporters gathered at Hilary and Tom King's home for a meeting. Richard Hadfield, our new National Chairman, chaired the meeting, which opened at 7:45 p.m. Apologies had been received from another 12 members. The fine turnout and interest in revitalising the recently moribund Southern Region was obvious, and most of those who could not be with us were avoiding the worst of the winter weather by being in China, Russia, Italy, or the South of France.

We needed to elect a Southern Region Executive, and expressions of interest had been sought. Nominations were received as follows, and elected unopposed:

Chairman:	Michael Midgley
Secretary/Treasurer:	Tom King
Committee:	Ramon Farmer
	Keith Hunter
	Hilary King
	Alastair Scott

Richard Hadfield then ceded the chair to Michael Midgley, who then initiated general discussion on the revitalisation of the Southern Region.

Ramon Farmer stressed the importance of organising a calendar with established seasonal runs, and having these dates published well in advance.

General discussion noted that the co-ordinating of New Zealand Rolls-Royce & Bentley Club (Inc) events with those of the Rolls-Royce

and Bentley Touring Club (Inc) was essential, and that Southern Region events must include an invitation to Touring Club and Bentley Drivers' Club members.

A first event to a vineyard was mooted, possibly Pegasus Bay or Te Papa near Greta Valley.

As we become more established a more ambitious event incorporating two weekends and the week between them was suggested.

Anthony Dacre mentioned that the Club had been offered a two car space (although too small at present for cars of a size ours seem to be) at the Inter-marque Concours, to be held at Pioneer Stadium on 16/17 August, and Anthony had accepted on our behalf. He is prepared to exhibit his recently completed Bentley S1, and another suitable car is needed. Bruce McIlroy mentioned that Neville Jordan's 1922 Silver Ghost is due down here in September, and it was thought that this car, so successful on last year's Peking to Paris Challenge, would be an ideal exhibit if the logistics of an earlier arrival here could be organised. Tom King suggested that Keith Hunter's Bentley S3 would make an excellent stand mate if the Silver Ghost were not available. The restorations of Anthony's and Keith's cars had been proceeding neck and neck, and the subtle development of the S Series would be an interesting exhibit.

There being no further business apart from continuing our social evening, Michael Midgley thanked everybody for attending the meeting, and declared it closed at 8:15 p.m.



*New Southern Region Committee Members Hilary King and Alastair Scott during the judging of Chris Skellerup's Silver Cloud 1 SED259 at the Club AGM, Easter 2006.*

*The reflection in the original finish of this originally Vice-Regal car shows to great effect a "witch's hat", of which some of our Southern Region members are keen collectors.*

## Northern Region Bay of Islands Escape



*Elizabeth Mitchell's photographs of (above) the group at Wellsford being careful where they step, and (below) Adrian Garrett's 1911 Ghost. Brent Mitchell's account of the Bay of Islands Escape Weekend follows on Page 10.*



## Northern Region Bay of Islands Escape



Elizabeth Mitchell's photograph of Adrian Garrett's 1911 and 1907 Ghosts, respectively, at Chris and Angela Hourys' property at Kerikeri. Note the Cat May Look at a King Syndrome.

### Saturday 31st May 2008

With our R-type Bentley out of action, undergoing engine repairs, we opted to take Elizabeth's Mk2 Jaguar on our forthcoming trip north which was promising to be a relaxing and enjoyable weekend, and one we were certainly looking forward to. On the Saturday morning we met up with fellow members at our rendezvous adjacent to the end of Auckland's North-Western motorway and set off, heading north-west for a picturesque drive along SH16 to Wellsford. This west coast route offered us great views of the Kaipara and rolling countryside with its high elevation along the way. It is becoming a popular alternative for motorists rather than using the main SH1 route. Our first stop-off was at Richard Izard's airstrip property just south of Wellsford where we had morning tea (my goodness those cream scones were nice) and were entertained by some model aircraft flying displays which I found very interesting.

We then ventured further north via Mangawhai Heads, Langs Beach and Waipu Cove, meeting up with Ray and Shirley Scampton at the Whangarei Basin for lunch, a very nice spot.

Our final leg for the day was the drive to Paihia, meeting at our hotel, the Kingsgate Autolodge, followed by a few welcomed drinkies and a lovely evening dinner at the Peppercorn restaurant.

### Sunday 1st June 2008

After a nice breakfast at the hotel, we visited Pete's Pioneer Museum at Kerikeri where we enjoyed viewing an array of exhibits comprising of period machinery and ware, vintage cars, historic settings etc. I think a lot of people were fascinated by the "pianola", a self playing piano with the operator pumping with his legs at two pedals to make it work, a mechanical joy belting out some good old tunes that were very kind to the ear.

We then moved on to a most enjoyable luncheon hosted by Chris and Angela Houry at their beautiful home set on acreage overlooking the Kerikeri inlet. I have to say that the food provided by Angela and Chris cooked by themselves (!) was absolutely divine.

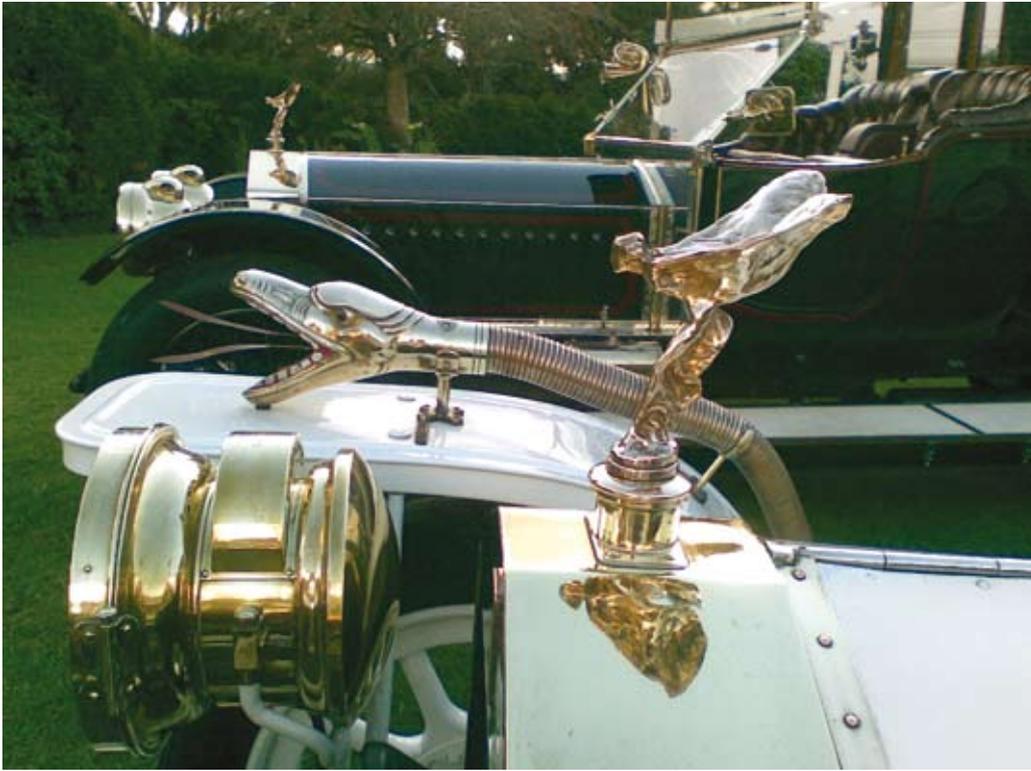
On display at the Hourys' property were Adrian Garrett's stunning Rolls-Royce Silver Ghosts of 1907 and 1911 vintages. These veterans take your breath away. To appreciate their age one can relate their presence to an icon of history. In this instance Adrian's oldest car bearing a name plate stating "The White Ghost" was first registered in Great Britain 5 years before the Titanic sailed on its fateful maiden voyage! The other car 1 year before! You look at them and marvel at the passage of time and events that these old graceful ladies have survived against. This can only speak well of their past owners and especially their present owner of more than half a century when it comes to the 101 year old White Ghost, and of course, their makers. They truly did make the best cars in the world.

### Monday 2nd June 2008

With breakfast over and final goodbyes we departed for home. Both Elizabeth and I thoroughly enjoyed the weekend and the little black cat from Coventry, dear I say, "purred" along beautifully though I did miss the R-Type!

Before closing I wish to express a word of thanks on behalf of the Northern Region to Richard Izard for the Saturday morning tea venue, Chris and Angela Houry for their generous hospitality, to Adrian Garrett for displaying his magnificent Ghosts, and to the organisers of this most successful event.

Brent Mitchell  
Northern Region.



*Evocative of an age a century ago, when Charles Rolls and Henry Royce had only recently formed their partnership, Philip Eilenberg's (above) and Elizabeth Mitchell's (below) photographs of Adrian Garrett's 1907 and 1912 Ghosts at Kerikeri, Queen's Birthday 2008.*



# My Years With Rolls-Royce Limited

An Article by John H. Craig in Four Parts

Part 1 – 1933 to 1945

Reprinted from *The B.C. Spirit*, Newsletter of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club, British Columbia Region Issue 2006-2, by permission of the Editor and the Author

I have often said that going to work must be a pleasurable experience, and I can confirm that I thoroughly enjoyed my many years associated with Rolls-Royce, and I gained a lot from that experience.

I have always thought that I was particularly fortunate in being born in 1923 because I think that the period up to July 1969 when man landed on the moon must be the most exciting period in our history. So many advances in engineering technology were made in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and a young man could not help being caught up in the excitement of that period.

I started at Rolls-Royce Limited in 1941 as an Engineering Apprentice and retired from Rolls-Royce Motor Cars (Canada) Limited after 13 years as C.E.O. in 1988, and this article will recount what I consider to be interesting events and personal experiences of mine during that period.

For my part I well remember the Schneider Trophy air races of 1929 to 1931, and being able to listen to the 1931 race on a crystal set that I had made. Little did I know then that a young Rolls-Royce engineer, Dick Garner, working on the engine for the Vickers Supermarine S6B (**Fig. 1**) at Calshot overlooking The Solent and opposite to the Isle of Wight would become a firm friend in 1955 and a fellow Car Division Director in 1970. Unfortunately he died in 1999 just short of his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.

1931 saw Great Britain win the Schneider Trophy for the third consecutive time to keep the cup in perpetuity. Shortly afterwards Flight Lieutenant Stainforth in the Vickers Supermarine S6B running on a special fuel mix achieved the then World Air Speed record of 407.5 miles per hour.

It was the excitement of the part that Rolls-Royce took in these events that made me apply at the early age of ten in 1933 to Rolls-Royce Limited in Derby for a position as an engineering apprentice when I reached the age of 17. My application was acknowledged and I duly sat



**Fig 1: The Supermarine Schneider Trophy Aeroplane with Rolls-Royce "R" Engine**

and passed the Matriculation Exam in London during the Battle of Britain in August 1940.

In December 1940 I was called for an interview at Nightingale Road, Derby, by the Rolls-Royce Apprentice Supervisor, Mr H.A. Ward. "Tubby" Ward, as he was nick-named, had been with Rolls-Royce a very long time, and had been the riding mechanic to James Radley's private entry Rolls-Royce Alpine Eagle in the 1913 Alpine Trial.

After this interview I was instructed to report at Nightingale Road, Derby, on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 1941 at 7:55 a.m. for work and that my starting wage for my age would be 22 shillings and 9 pence for a 48 hour week. I think I was one of the last, if not the last, Engineering Apprentice to be accepted.

It was suggested that I find lodgings at the Toc H hostel at the corner of Osmaston Road and Douglas Street about a mile from the factory and about a mile from the centre of Derby and the Derby Technical College the other. About 25 Rolls-Royce apprentices were living at this hostel so we had a lot in common.

I arranged to arrive at Toc H on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January and shared a dormitory with three other apprentices, one of whom was Spencer King,

who was to become responsible for the design and development of the Rover Gas Turbine Car in the '50s.

From time to time apprentices left to go to other R-R factories or to join the Forces and so I eventually moved to a two bedroom dormitory and shared with Tony Rudd, and we became firm friends. Tony will be remembered for his activities with the Formula One ORM (the Owen Racing Motor Car) which then became the BRM (British Racing Motor Car). Tony then went on to be the Chief Engineer at Lotus Cars and retired in 1988 near Norwich. He flew over to Vancouver in Concord with Margaret Thatcher for our 1986 Expo as one of the judges for the Engineering Apprentice Competition. His book *It Was Fun* is really worth reading. Unfortunately he died suddenly in 2003.

It is for the record that the Derby Railway Station was bombed on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January, just one day after I started work, on a glorious moonlight night when we could see the raiders coming in very clearly. Obviously all my newly found apprentice friends blamed me for bringing the bombers with me from London!

Anyway, as a result of this attack, the authorities decided that Derby and the factory must have some form of smoke screen capability, and placed at fairly close intervals down all the main streets incinerators which looked like dustbins with a chimney and cowl on top. These used kerosene or diesel fuel and some sort of material to act like a wick which, when ignited, gave off dense clouds of acrid smelling smoke.

On moonlight nights if there was any enemy aircraft activity detected, men on bicycles rode around these streets igniting the



**Fig 2: The "Cromwell" tank**

incinerators which then blanketed the whole of the town of Derby and the factories with thick smoke.

The smell was terrible, and clothes and homes were affected, but there were no more night raids on Derby. I do not know what the modern environmentalists would have said about those emissions!

My first day at work consisted of filling in papers regarding my school and family history, collecting three boiler suits in blue denim, being shown briefly around the Nightingale Road works, and then being told to report to the Apprentice Training School after lunch.

This School had been moved from the Works to the Derby Technical College, which had virtually been taken over by Rolls-Royce at the start of the War. Incidentally, those three boiler suits in blue denim, one on, one clean, and one in the wash would be my garb every day at work for the next few years. It is also the reason why I hate denim jeans to this day.

The Apprentice Training Centre was basically a large machine shop equipped with an example of nearly all the lathes, milling machines, grinders, shapers, etc that would be found in the factory. The objective was to give us "off the job" training in the correct and safe use of these machines, and we found ourselves making all sorts of pieces for spare parts for the Silver Ghost armoured cars still in use on the North West Frontier in India. Many of these cars were in fact moved to Egypt to help in Montgomery's push against Rommel in July 1942.

After about three months I was one of six apprentices selected to transfer to the night shift under foreman Lew Wozencroft, son of the then Nightingale Road Works Manager, to train about three dozen Government Trainees in the use of machine tools and measuring equipment so that they could be absorbed into the production force to increase Merlin aero engine production.

We enjoyed the experience of night shift although it was pretty tiring as we still had to do our one day and two evenings at the Derby Technical College.

After this stint at teaching we were moved to other areas in the factory, since the engineering apprentice programme was supposed to give you about three months in each of the departments so that by the age of 21 you had a rounded knowledge of everything that went on in the factory, and hopefully would be offered a job in the Department the Apprentice Supervisor considered you most suited.

After about six months I was moved to the Material Stores at the main Works, a very large and high building with an original Royce electric travelling crane going the full length. On the ground in large piles were all manner of metals that would be used in the production of the Merlin and other experimental engines that were being made. At the far end of the building were four machines, two centreless grinders, and two stretchers. The centreless grinders were used to produce accurate steel rod for use in the manufacture of threaded studs, and the stretchers were used to straighten with considerable accuracy heat treated rods which would be converted by grinding into the rocker shafts of the Merlin. For the uninitiated the term "stretch" in Rolls-Royce language means to "straighten".

The centreless grinders had to be set to produce rod for the ¼ and ⅜ inch diameter studs, but Rolls-Royce threads always had flat tops, so the grinders produced 0.244 inch and 0.369 inch bar. And this diameter had to be accurate to within minus one thousandth of an inch!

After about three months I was transferred to the Copper-Smiths Department and learnt how to make the tubing sets for the ignition harness, and also the exhaust pipe stubs for the Merlin. This taught me the art of brazing and also welding.



**Fig 3: Rolls-Royce "Merlin" engine**

Following this period I was transferred to the Aluminium Die Cast Foundry where I learnt how to pour molten aluminium at 760 Fahrenheit but my knowledge of machine tools soon put me working on making the dies needed for the new parts that the Foundry was called on to make for the Merlin and the Griffon aero engines.

In the early part of 1942 I was sent to Belper, a village about 7 miles north of Derby, where most of the car technical staff had been moved at the outbreak of hostilities for safety. I was to report for an interview at Clan Foundry, a shadow factory where all the car Division senior design staff had been housed.

I was particularly surprised when I was told that I would be joining the Armoured Fighting Vehicle Technical Service Department which was to be formed under Dick Abbott-Anderson, who had been at Conduit Street before war started, and previous to that was one of the Engineers who visited Rolls-Royce owners to talk about their cars. There were to be six Technical Service Engineers whose job it would be to live with the various Army units that would be equipped with the Cromwell tank to give them training and assistance with the vehicle, and at the same time report back problems and defects to our Engineers.

I was the youngest at 19 and, technically, still an apprentice and the oldest was about 40 I would guess.

It was necessary for the Service Engineers to be completely knowledgeable of all details of the Cromwell tank, and so we became involved with all the staff at Clan Foundry in the design, testing and driving of the Cromwell Tank fitted with the Meteor engine (**Fig. 2**).

The story of the Cromwell tank and the part that the Car Division Engineers played in its successful development and production is one which I do not think has ever been properly told.

Starting at the end, so to speak, the Cromwell Mk VII saw active service in Normandy in June 1944 and many did as much as 4,000 miles before victory was declared in May 1945. The Commander of the Seventh Armoured Division, probably better known as The Desert Rats, saw fit to write from France in 1945 a glowing letter of commendation about the Cromwell tank and the people who were responsible for its design and production.

I can assure the reader that no such letter was ever written about the A.F.V.s that General Montgomery had to use in his Desert push in North Africa in 1942.

Starting at the beginning, it was Arthur Robotham who became involved with Leyland in 1940 in respect of an engine to replace the Liberty engine being used in the Crusader and Centaur tanks. The Liberty engine was a World War I aero engine developing about 250 hp and was certainly not suitable for the 27 ton Centaur tank, especially when used cross-country.

Robotham considered that the Merlin, (**Fig. 3**) could be made without its supercharger to run on Pool gas (about 67 octane) and produce about 600 hp, and it did not take the Car Division team at Clan Foundry long to produce a prototype engine. The engine was called the Meteor (**Fig 4**).

I can vouch for its producing 600 hp because I was one of the guys who ran this prototype on the test beds at Clan Foundry.

The beauty of creating the Meteor from the Merlin was that much of the finished material for the Merlin which had been discarded by the Aero Inspection Department as not being up to standard for aircraft use could be used for Meteor production. Further, the Merlin was a proven engine, and running it down rated to 600 hp would undoubtedly produce a tremendously reliable power unit for land use in a tank.

Leyland were not too happy about the idea of the Meteor because they could foresee that the increased power would require considerable work being done to up-grade brakes, steering, transmission, clutch, suspension and air-cooling for satisfactory service life, and they withdrew from the joint project and reverted to the manufacture of the Liberty engine and the Centaur tank, much to the annoyance of Robotham.

It was at this point that Lord Beaverbrook, Minister of Aircraft Production, applied pressure on Ernest Hives, then Managing Director of Rolls-Royce Limited, to take over the Tank job, to which Hives, totally committed to Merlins for the Battle of Britain, is alleged to have replied "Not for a million pounds". The story goes that a cheque from the British



**Fig 4: Rolls-Royce "Meteor" engine**

Government in the sum of one million pounds was on Hives' desk the next morning with a cryptic but friendly note in Beaverbrook's own handwriting – "Now get on with it." It's a lovely story which may or may not be true, but the million pounds credit is definitely true.

**Figure 3** shows the Merlin with its two stage supercharger and propeller shaft output and **Figure 4** shows the Meteor tank engine which we developed from the Merlin in only eight months, a prodigious feat by any engineering standard.

The Merlin supercharger has been deleted and a wheelcase assembly has been designed to drive twin magnetos, a water pump, twin petrol pumps, the two overhead camshafts, an engine oil pump, and a scavenger oil pump since this engine is of the dry sump type. Another shaft comes out of this wheelcase and enables an external bevel gearbox to drive a 24 volt dynamo, the swash hydraulic pump to rotate the turret, and, most importantly, for a Bendix starter motor to start the engine. This bevel gearbox is actually part of the Tank, being inside the hull and get-at-able by the crew.

At the front end where the Merlin wheelcase and propeller would normally be, has been designed another wheelcase to drive two twin belt pulleys complete with tensioner jockey pulleys to drive the large cooling fans.

The normal internal splines on the crankshaft output enable a

## My Years With Rolls-Royce Limited (Cont from Page 13)

separate fully floating twin plate clutch to be fitted.

Whilst the Meteor was supposed to be all that Rolls-Royce were responsible for, the arrival of the million pounds meant that we became responsible for the whole Tank with the possible exception of the guns and radio.

Robotham set up an arrangement with Birmingham Railway Carriage and Wagon company in Birmingham to build the Cromwell Tank, and we at Clan Foundry then concentrated on developing the engine, the cooling system, the suspension, the steering and final drive units, the brakes, and, very surprisingly, the road wheels and the tracks.

We Service Engineers in training spent all our time working hands-on on all parts of the tank, with my three boiler suits working overtime. We had a team of three or four men down at Chobham about 20 miles west of London where the Fighting Vehicle Proving Establishment was situated. Vaughan Lewis who had been in charge of the pre-war Chassis Test Department at Derby was the Manager, and the rest of the team also came from Chassis Test. I went down there for about four months and helped test and develop the Cromwell, and I was fortunate in being able to live with my aunt who lived at Windlesham, just a short distance away.

We took components out and put in newly developed units from Clan Foundry, drove tanks for long hours, and reported on the results. We drove along the main London to Salisbury road at speeds of up to 40 m.p.h. to Farnborough Common where we would drive cross-country at all speeds, then on to a specially prepared cobble stone oval track of about half a mile, and then back to Chobham. Many times we broke a track and had to repair it with the tools we were going to provide in the tank.

We designed the proper servicing procedures and learnt such things as fuel and oil consumption figures. Incidentally, the Cromwell uses approximately one gallon of HD30 oil per forty miles, and does as little as half a mile per gallon of pool gas cross country. Pool gasoline was only 67 octane. By comparison currently our cars use around 90 octane lead free.

The Cromwell – Code name A27 – (Fig. 2) was fitted with a 75 mm gun, whereas the German Tiger tanks were fitted with a much larger gun, being a development of their anti-aircraft guns.

A development of the Cromwell was the Challenger – Code name A30 – (Fig. 5). It will be noticed that it had six road wheels instead of the five on the Cromwell, and it was therefore about three feet longer and three tons heavier than the Cromwell. It was fitted with a 17-pounder gun which was much more like the fire power of the Tiger, but it had a much larger turret and a higher profile. It was more difficult to produce and only 200 Challengers were produced, so that production could be concentrated on increased volume of Cromwells.

While I was at Chobham we tested the prototype A30 in the same way as the Cromwell. It was then sent down to Bovington Ranges in Dorset for gunnery trials. These trials were conducted by Army personnel and the Army were responsible for bringing the Challenger back to Chobham after these tests. As there was no transporter long enough or strong enough to carry the A30, it had to be driven on the road from Bovington Ranges to Chobham, a distance of about 90 miles.

About lunch time one day the Rolls-Royce office at Chobham got a message from the Army that the A30 prototype had broken down with brake trouble somewhere on the road near Nether Wallop on the main Stockbridge to London road. The Army personnel refused to drive it any further and had run it off the road into a field behind a hedge and left it.

Brigadier Rupert Instone in charge at Chobham was informed and stated that the A30 could not be left there unattended since it could easily be seen by any enemy aircraft that might come over and it was still on the secret list. We got the impression that it was Rolls-Royce responsibility and so I told Vaughan Lewis, who was in charge of our Test Section at Chobham, that I would go and see what we could do if someone else came with me. Ken Archer, one of the other Technical Service Engineers, volunteered to come. We set off in a small Army van painted grey with our tools to find the A30. Fortunately we found it in daylight just off the main road behind a hedge and on inspection we found that the back plate of one of the track brakes had broken and was rotating loose. We decided to remove the brake on that side altogether, which would make the tank driveable if not stoppable. There was virtually no

traffic because of gasoline rationing, and so I decided to drive the tank the 50 miles or so back to Chobham, with Ken driving the van some distance in front for guidance in the dark. We set off at about 15 to 20 mph and all went reasonably well until we got near Hartley Wintney. Here there was a road barrier due to the main road going through an aerodrome used by our night fighters. Normal traffic, of which there was virtually none due to gasoline rationing, was required to make a long detour on minor hilly and twisty roads to bypass the runway. I did not feel that taking a near brakeless 30 ton tank around these minor hilly roads was justified.

So Ken and I, two civilians in boiler suits with no other identification, a 30 ton Army tank and a grey Morris Army van, walked up to the Guard Post and explained our position. We were amazed that after conferring with the Control Tower they agreed to close down the runway for fifteen minutes for us to drive our two vehicles across the airfield and not have to go round the long detour.

We duly arrived at the Chobham gates at about midnight much to the surprise of everyone, who really didn't think we would make it. We had been out of touch for about nine hours since the cell phone hadn't been invented then.

The brake back plate failure had been caused by the Army driver braking heavily, as if he were driving a car or truck. The brakes on a tank were not designed for that sort of stop, but more for light stops and parking. Accordingly a limiting tensioner was put into the system, which overcame this problem and also took care of the problem of the brake fluid contracting as it cooled down when this brake was applied as a parking brake.



Fig 5: "Challenger" tank

Forward visibility was by two moveable periscopes, or through the circular porthole in the centre which could be opened when not in battle. There are the normal foot operated clutch, brake, and accelerator pedals, and a ratchet system which enabled the brake pedal to be locked down for parking. On the A30 this is supplemented by a hand wheel to increase the braking load on parking.

There is no steering wheel, but there is a right and left hand steering lever. The Cromwell and later tanks were fitted with progressive steering. Increasing the effort to pull the steering lever back results in a tighter turn of the tank. An interlock prevents activation of both levers at the same time. The tank is steered by changing the relative speed of the two tracks, and as long as a gear was selected controlled steering was always available. Changing gear had to be done by double de-clutching (like the Silver Ghost) and this has to be carefully learnt by anyone who was to drive a tank. To miss a gear change, especially when going downhill, could be disastrous because then there was no steering available. Of further interest is that when steering in reverse it was necessary to apply effort to the right hand lever to steer to the left, and vice versa.

The steering on the Cromwell tank was much safer than the Army had previously had on the Crusader and similar light tanks. On these vehicles the left and right steering lever had only three positions and as a result were not progressive. In the normal position both tracks were being driven at the same speed. In the mid position drive to that track was disconnected and the track would be freewheeling. In the fully back position the drive to that track was still cut but the track was also braked or locked. This was the position to do a skid turn, i.e. turn the tank around in its own length.

The mid position required a lot of experience to use successfully. If the tank was going uphill on a road surface, pulling the lever to the mid position while maintaining constant engine speed allowed the track to free wheel and the tank turned the way expected. However, the exact opposite would happen when going down hill as that track would free

wheel and the weight of the tank would allow that side to speed up and turn the tank the other way. A lot of experience was required on these tanks in dexterous use of the accelerator, clutch pedal, gear lever, and the steering levers.

After my stint at Chobham I returned to Belper and found that the Armoured Fighting Vehicle Service Department had been moved from Clan Foundry to Brettles Mill, about half a mile away as the office accommodation at Clan was just not available for us.

Here I found a number of people with whom I would be friends for many years to come. Dick Abbott-Anderson was in charge with Harry Ferguson-Wood as his deputy, and responsible for planning and obtaining all the service tools that we would require the Army to have when they took delivery of Cromwells. Harry had been with Freestone and Webb and joined Jack Barclay as Service Director after the War, and was well known by many members of the R.R.O.C. and the R.R.E.C. until his death in 1994.

Vic Kerley had been responsible for the preparation and publication of Handbooks and Parts Catalogues before the War, and obviously was given the job of producing the Workshop Manual, Spare Parts catalogues, and other similar material for the Army.

In my spare time between assignments I helped in the writing of the Workshop Manual and I have given my personal copies to the R.R.E.C. at the Hunt House for safe keeping. There is one to cover the Cromwell Mk VII which had a code name of A27, and also one to cover the A30, which was called the Challenger at the time. Incidentally by the time the War in Europe ended the turret had been lowered.

My first assignment was at Warminster with the 30<sup>th</sup> Armoured Brigade who had a few Cromwells and also some Centaurs, a similar tank but fitted with the Liberty engine. I was accepted into the Officers' Mess and also went on manoeuvres with them for three or four days at a time. The training of the men was very thorough and learning how to sleep out on Salisbury Plain near Stonehenge with a Tank for a few nights was quite an experience for me.

My next assignment was at Barnard Castle in County Durham with the 54<sup>th</sup>, 55<sup>th</sup>, and 61<sup>st</sup> Training Regiments where I lived with the 61<sup>st</sup> for about three months. My reception at these Training Regiments was very surprising bearing in mind the Terms of Reference that had been given to me by Dick Abbott-Anderson, my boss back in Belper.

I arrived by train at Broomilow Halt, a station specially built to give easy access to the 61<sup>st</sup> Training Regiment located at Stainton, near Barnard Castle. Apart from a suitcase of clothes, a kit of tools and, of course, my three boiler suits, I had little else with me. I was received by the Adjutant, who got someone to take me to my quarters and with instructions to bring me to the Mess for lunch. There I met all the Officers and was advised that after lunch arrangements had been made for all the non-commissioned officers, about a hundred in all, to be in the Lecture Hall for me to address them and talk about the Cromwell tank! That spoils an otherwise delightful lunch as can be imagined.

I was totally unprepared for this sort of reception and I decided the only thing I could do was to tell them all about the engineering of the Cromwell. After all, at some time or other I had handled practically every nut and bolt on the vehicle and knew it pretty well and why the design was as it was.

After about two and a half hours of ad hoc presentation and questions the Adjutant called the meeting to a close.

The next morning I telephoned Dick Abbott-Anderson back at the Belper Office, told him what had occurred, and asked him to get all the General Arrangement Drawings of the Cromwell copied and sent up to me because I could foresee that when I visited the other two Training Regiments the initial reception was likely to be the same. I told the Adjutant that Belper were getting these drawings for me, and without hesitation he sent a despatch motorcyclist down to Belper the next day to bring the drawings back to me. You could really get things done quickly without unnecessary questions in those tumultuous days.

I was able to repeat this presentation to the other two Training Regiments later, but used the General Arrangement drawings to complement using the blackboard and chalk.

After my period at Barnard Castle I went down to Catterick Camp in Yorkshire and spent some time with the Polish A.F.V. and E.M.E. Training Regiment. This regiment was comprised of all Polish citizens who had managed to escape to England from Poland in 1939 and 1940. They also were to have Cromwells and were extremely anxious to learn everything they could about the correct operation of the new Tank.

My final move in early 1944 was down to Swaffam in Norfolk to join the 7<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division (The Desert Rats) who had come back from Italy and were re-grouping and training for the invasion of France and Germany.

I was billeted with the 4<sup>th</sup> County of London Yeomanry and all the men I met in the 7<sup>th</sup> Armoured were very very attentive to everything they could learn about the Cromwell. They all knew their lives might depend on their having total knowledge of every aspect of the Cromwell, and that what I had to tell them was extremely important.

That was when I coined my own phrase "If it is right it is only just good enough" as being my personal interpretation of the Henry Royce motto "Whatsoever is rightly done, however humble, is noble."

In late April 1944 we six Service Engineers were called together and directed to go down to Salisbury where there were about a couple of hundred Cromwells under camouflage in the fields and carry out a modification to the engine on all of them. The modification was required to eliminate the puff of smoke that came from the exhaust when engaging gear and moving off after the engine had been idling for some time. The Army knew that this puff of smoke would give away the position of the tank too easily in combat, and as the engine had to be run at idle all the time the tank was in use to keep the auxiliaries working, something had to be done.

Clan Foundry engineers had concluded the problem was due to there being no oil control grommets on the inlet valves since oil running down the valve guides on the Merlin aero engine was known but obviously was not a problem. The only time a Merlin engine in a Spitfire or Mustang is run at idle is on the ground, and then not for long. Running at idle at 15,000 feet is not to be recommended!

Accordingly a modification had been designed and produced to fit oil control grommets to the twenty four inlet valves and was being fitted on production. We were given the job of doing this retrospectively on these tanks already delivered and standing around in fields under camouflage near Salisbury. We were further advised that we had to do the job quickly and secretly.

The job consisted of removing about a ton or more of armour from above the engine compartment, removing the whole carburettor and induction system, removing the exhaust manifolds, and then removing the rocker covers each held by 32 ¼ inch nuts, spring washers and washers. The camshaft assembly was removed next, and then all the sparking plugs.

A special tool similar to the one supplied in most pre-war car tool kits, was then inserted into the sparking plug hole so that the inlet valve could be prevented from falling into the cylinder. Another tool was used to compress the valve spring, remove the cotters and then the spring assembly. The newly designed grommet assembly was then fitted, the spring assembly refitted with the valve cotters. This was done on all twenty four inlet valves. The engine was then rebuilt, re-timed, and run up for test. Then all the armour was reinstalled. This was all hand work with no crane in the middle of a field! Thankfully it was warm with no rain that month.

We decided to make three teams of two and I teamed up with Maurice Patey. We were both motorcyclists and had been friends for some time. He had a Scott Flying Squirrel and I had a Triumph Speed Twin, and we used to race each other back to Derby from Belper when we were there.

We could only work the daylight hours since we could not put on any lights at night, being near the south coast. We managed about ten tanks per day which was pretty good going although it still meant that the job would take about three weeks and we had been secretly advised that the available time was short.

Shortly after completing the task we heard that the Normandy landings had started on 6 June, just a couple of weeks after we finished the modification campaign, and those Cromwells were over in France helping to win the war.

I have spent some time on this period because I think not enough is known about the overwhelmingly significant part that Rolls-Royce Limited played in World War II. Rolls-Royce started in 1939 with 10,000 employees and this was up to 85,000 by 1945.

The Company played an important role in the air, on land, and on sea. The Merlin and Griffon aero engines, used in aircraft and Air Sea Rescue and Motor Torpedo Boats, the Meteor tank engine, and the B60 and B80 range of engines were all specific to the war effort. To me, it was probably the most important learning period of my life.

## Winter Driving

(The following extracts from W.A. Robotham's *Silver Ghosts and Silver Dawn* (Constable, London 1970) were recommended by Ramon Farmer as he recalled the drive to The Hermitage by Bentley this month. *Silver Ghosts and Silver Dawn* is a superb account of Rm.'s 44 years from the date he joined Rolls-Royce as a Premium Apprentice in 1919. Ed.)

(Page 52) When we were in production with the Bentley in the thirties, it was thought desirable to show by means of track figures that the Rolls-Bentley had a reasonable turn of speed. Having achieved a Brooklands lap of 94 m.p.h. we thought that we could repeat the test at Montlhéry – always a slightly faster course than Brooklands – and at the same time demonstrate the car to some of our potential French customers.

With this aim I crossed the channel with the car, only to find the worst icing conditions on the Pas de Calais that I have ever experienced. The ice on the surface of the road was so bad that I had to creep along at about 10 m.p.h. with my wheels a few inches from the grass verge, so that as the car started to slide sideways it was checked by the side of the road. Having progressed thus for the best part of an hour over the undulating stretches between Calais and Boulogne I came to a slightly steeper hill, and found that I could not climb it. At this point a roadman arrived and, starting at the bottom of the hill, began to cover the surface with grit from a pile left there for the purpose. He had not dealt with more than a dozen yards when, to our mutual amazement, we saw cresting the brow of the hill a van travelling at about 50 m.p.h.

Halfway down the hill the driver lost his nerve, touched the brakes, and the van started to gyrate. By some freak of fortune it stayed on the road until it had passed by a small café almost at the foot of the hill, and then ran backwards into a tree. When it hit the tree, the two rear doors flew open and disgorged in all directions a colourful collection of hats. The driver leapt from his seat and, taking not the slightest notice of his vehicle or its cargo, rushed into the café to restore his shattered nerves.

Half an hour later, when the roadman had completed his gritting, I was able to climb the hill. I found that the coating of ice on the road surface ceased abruptly almost exactly at the top of the incline and that from there onwards the road to Paris was perfectly normal.

(Page 97) Before 1934, our Continental endurance tests had never taken into account the kind of winter conditions which existed throughout Canada and most of the Middle West of the U.S.A. At the beginning of that year, however, the first trial of the Bentley under arctic conditions by a member of the

Engineering Department took place, though in a somewhat unpremeditated manner.

Early in 1934 I decided to make a second trip to Detroit to see what further technical progress was being made by the American car industry. I felt that if I took a Bentley with me on this trip, it would interest the Engineering Departments with which I would be having discussions, and generally facilitate the amicable exchange of information. The car which I took was an early experimental chassis fitted with a Park Ward prototype body – which, being a prototype was not a very good sample of the British coachbuilder's art. Moreover, the car had had a good deal of punishment and the fit of the doors had deteriorated until they let in very noticeable draughts, since at that time we did not use rubber seals.

Now, although I knew all about the kind of weather to be expected round the U.S.A. Great Lakes in January, I light-heartedly planned to drive a British car from New York to Detroit and then St Louis. I thought so little about the problems involved that I did not even bother to fit the car with a heater. Incidentally, heaters were not standard fixtures on British cars in 1934.

I sailed with Coverley, my Experimental Department colleague, on the old *Berengaria*. When we arrived in New York, Coverley – who had got to the age where he enjoyed comfort – found some excuse to stay in the Wright factory at Patterson, New Jersey, and arranged to follow me to Detroit by train. This meant a 700-mile journey on my own. It was bitterly cold in New York and there were intermittent snow-storms. I cannot remember which particular route I took to Cleveland, but once outside New York I realised that I was going to be very cold indeed. The ground clearance of the Bentley was about one inch less than that of the average American car and, as a result, the metal shield which we fitted under the engine and gearbox acted as a sort of snow-plough. This reduced my average speed. Every couple of hours I stopped at one of the many transport cafés and thawed out at the big slow-combustion stoves with which they all seemed to be equipped. Before I had done 100 miles there was an ominous clatter from the engine which, on investigation, proved to be a broken valve-spring. Fortunately, at that date we pessimistically included a tool for changing valve-springs as well as several spare springs in the car kit. To prevent further damage to the engine, therefore, I changed the broken spring in the bitter cold, on the roadside. To make matters worse, I had to repeat this extremely uncomfortable operation again before I reached Detroit. I also discovered that if I left the Bentley in the open for four or five hours after dark, it would not re-start. One reason was that the thinnest grade of oil sold in England

became like treacle in below-zero temperatures, and the starter would not turn the engine. When the oil was diluted with 50 per cent paraffin – standard American winter practice at the time – the battery could then turn the engine; but the mixture provided by our starting device was not sufficiently rich to fire, and I had to make a modification to correct matters.

The car created a great deal of interest in Detroit. On the whole, however, my friends were not too favourably impressed. There was not enough room for passengers, by American standards, and the lack of ground clearance was an impossible handicap under winter conditions. At least it served its purpose by providing a basis for discussion.

To avoid further valve-spring trouble, I had a special set made by the Detroit specialists, Barnes, Raymond and Gibson, which I at once fitted. I then wired home for a replacement set of British springs and, although the Detroit springs functioned perfectly, was stupid enough to change them for the replacement set when the latter arrived; I was anxious to prove that the failures were due to a fault in the material which made them break in arctic conditions. My zeal was misplaced because the new springs were no better than the old ones. I must have been a glutton for punishment because, in spite of the weather, I decided to proceed to St Louis via Indianapolis to see some friends. During this trip I ran into several blizzards; on one long straight stretch of road the snow built up under the wings until the front wheels were running in grooves. When the road eventually swung sharply right, I could not follow it until I had chipped the frozen snow from the front wings with an axe. I found, too, that finely powdered snow would penetrate the mechanical front-brakes and linkage, and melt in the warmth of a garage. As soon as the car was taken out, the melted snow froze solid and made the brakes useless.

After St Louis I continued to break valve-springs. By this time, I had ceased to change them on the roadside, preferring to drive slowly to the nearest warm garage. I did this once too often, however – a valve hit the piston and that was that! Thankfully I put the car on a train and consigned it to Liverpool, travelling from then onwards in a civilised manner.

Perhaps the most galling part of the whole affair was that we never discovered exactly why the valve springs broke on this particular car, and we never had any widespread trouble from our customers in this matter. We did, however, abandon the mechanical front-brake mechanism as soon as we could, substituting hydraulics, and we also improved the car's ability to start under sub-zero conditions.

## We Welcome the Following New Members

Oliver and Vicki Newbegin  
10/66 Oxford Terrace  
Christchurch.  
Telephone 03 3656911  
1992 Bentley Continental Coupe

Adam and Catherine Bailostocki  
136 Wallace Road  
Te Puna  
R.D.2  
Tauranga  
Telephone 021-481437  
2006 Bentley CGT

Don and Keryn Mahoney  
31 Edward Avenue  
Pyes Pa  
TAURANGA  
Telephone 07-5430909  
1985 Bentley Turbo R

Peter Somerville & Margaret Foyle  
11 Maskells Road  
Balcairn  
R.D.  
Amberley  
Telephone 03-3148422  
1987 Rolls-Royce Silver Spur

Ramon and Trish Farmer  
213 Sparks Road  
CHRISTCHURCH  
Telephone 03-3396048

## A Bentley Prototype



These photographs were taken recently in Melbourne by George Calder. The car is 3B50, built with a Park Ward Saloon with Division body, and registered in May 1939 by the Company as RC7338. It was one of the experimental Mark VI Bentleys, and the only one of this batch to survive.

The details of its career come from *Rolls-Royce and Bentley Experimental Cars* by Ian Rimmer, published by the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club. Fitted with the new B60 engine, it weighed 38 cwt, and lapped Brooklands at 89.74 mph. It was used throughout the war,

predominantly by E. (later Lord) Hives (Hs) and W.A. Robotham (Rm) and was used for fuel and carburation experiments, its hard use evident in several contemporary photographs showing accidental damage to wings and coachwork. 3B50 was loaned to Air Vice Marshal Harris in 1944, and in 1950, by which time it had covered 200,000 miles, it was sold to Rm.

Thanks are due to George Calder, who loaned the photographs, and to Glynn Williams, who provided the details from Ian Rimmer's book. It is good to see that its Victorian owner has "personalised" its original RC7338 registration plate.



## Letters to the Editor

Sir,

The letter from Michael Midgley in 08-3 regarding the club structure revived memories of considerable frustration.

Michael has provided an excellent summary of the first proposal of the first rules review committee of about 3 years ago. Without going into a lot of boring detail, it was our intention that the existing structure should be dismantled and that the regions should become autonomous but with a linking back to an administrative committee of about 4 members. This admin unit would have responsibility for collecting dues and distributing funds to Regions on a formula basis. It would also monitor an events calendar.

It would be the "voice" of the Club in dealings with authorities and other clubs. It would be responsible for production of the Club Magazine. It was envisaged that no more than two face to face meetings a year would be necessary. We tidied up the billing procedures, simplified the electoral process and considerably reduced the size and complexity of the Constitution.

Unfortunately there was one dissenting voice on the committee who vociferously refused to accept any change to the Club structure. As our chairman, the late Bryan Gallagher, required unanimity in any decisions we made, we had to throw out our scheme and go back to the drawing board. After considerably more work we offered an alternative, which we did not feel was as good as our original proposal. This was rejected by the executive.

Now where are we? A couple more years down the track with more committees, more proposals, the loss of a substantial number of members and still no resolution.

However I believe there is hope, with the recently elected committee showing determination to get the problem sorted once and for all. If they have more people thinking as Michael does it should be no problem.

One word of caution. Beware of the possible consequences of demanding unanimity in your decisions.

John Stewart

The Editor,  
New Zealand Rolls-Royce & Bentley Club Inc

Dear Sir,  
I wish to lodge a complaint.

I was working hard on the production of my quarterly aviation magazine, wondering where to place a series of recalcitrant advertisements and trying to finish the magazine before a tight deadline drew even tighter, when I received by email a copy of the club's magazine 2008-3.

The quality and content of this new arrival were such to make me stop my own work entirely and start reading about Rolls-Royces and Bentleys instead of placing advertisements, photographs and text about aeroplanes. Fortunately I was able to drag myself away from the temptations posed by elegant motorcars and save the email attachment for further perusal, in time to continue my own work, albeit with an unwelcome delay.

The time spent is sure to impact on my later activities and cause me to spend cold evening hours in my backyard office, having to make do with incandescent lightbulbs because the newfangled ones won't work in my office installation, instead of warming my toes in front of an open fire, competing with the cryptic crossword compiler. This will undoubtedly incur even more carbon debits in an age when we are urged not to enjoy ourselves.

Yours in some dudgeon,  
John King

Hello Rod,

I recently received a copy of the register you have been compiling with the 08-3 newsletter.

I bet it has been a huge job putting the register together. I'm sure it will be well appreciated.

I noticed that I don't have any cars on the register and this is probably because I have only recently (this year) become a member.

I'm not sure whether I should advise you of the details or someone else.

Anyway, here are the details in the same order you have them in the register:

Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow I	1973	SRH13721	MM76
Rolls-Royce Standard Steel Saloon		Jefferis, Ian	Christchurch S
Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow I	1972	SRH12779	LU9275
Rolls-Royce Standard Steel Saloon		Jefferis, Ian	Christchurch S

If you would like me to send them to someone else, let me know.

Cheers,

*Ian Jefferis*

11 Charnwood Grove  
Waikanae 5036

Der Tom,

I was delighted to receive my copy of the New Zealand Rolls-Royce and Bentley Club Inc magazine issue 08-3, which enclosed among other things the Club Vehicle Register – the larger format is a great improvement.

I wish to advise a number of corrections/additional information related to the two Rolls-Royces we own.

1. Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow 1

Year 1973, Chassis SRH17018, plate MI5500. This vehicle has an exterior colour of maroon, with cloth interior and seats in a beige colour. The vehicle was built in October 1973 and arrived in New Zealand from Singapore on 10 December 1985 at 63,063 miles. We owned the vehicle from 22 June 2001.

2. Rolls-Royce Silver Spur 1

The date of manufacture of this vehicle is 26 April 1997. The vehicle we own is a Rolls-Royce Silver Spur long wheelbase (you have it recorded as a Rolls-Royce Silver Spur 1), and was simply known as a Silver Spur long wheelbase without a number 2 or 3 attached with it. There were a limited number of these vehicles made, although I have not researched my records to determine how many there were.

The chassis number for the vehicle is SCAZLN20C6VCH60190, and the registration plate is SSPUR.

The colour of the vehicle is midnight blue with a fine gold line running across the sides, with a parchment coloured leather interior. The vehicle was purchased from P & A Wood, the Rolls-Royce dealers a Great Eastern Dunmow, Essex, England and at the time of purchase had done 5,300 miles. The vehicle was acquired by A J Coull & Co Ltd on 12 December 2001 and exported from Britain on 22 January 2002. It arrived in New Zealand aboard "Mairangi Bay" which arrived in Wellington on 22 February 2002. The vehicle was first registered in Britain on 24 June 1997. The engine number is H7060L410M/TIV.

The vehicle had one owner in England and A J Coull & Co Ltd is the only owner in New Zealand.

Would you please update your records accordingly.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

John and Barbara Coull

# The Honourable C. S. Rolls

(From *The Vintage and Veteran Magazine* July 1960. This was written by Lord Brabazon of Tara to mark the passing of 50 years since the accidental death of The Hon. C.S. Rolls, a close friend, and of course another 48 years have passed since this eye-witness account.)

It seems remarkable that it is fifty years since dear Charlie Rolls was killed at Bournemouth. All due to a rather silly competition in which one had to land nearest a mark.

Charlie came at the target rather high to clear the stand over which he had to fly due to the direction of the wind. He pulled her out of the dive at about 60 ft. but in doing it he overstrained and broke a stabilising plane he had installed aft.

The machine paused for a moment, then nose-dived into the ground.

It is difficult to realise today the world as it was then. The motor car had, it was admitted, “come to stay”, and flight was being shown to be a possibility although a hazardous one.

The youth of the country, and in fact everyone had become a little mechanically-minded, due to having to compete with the intricacies of the bicycle, and now the motor car fitted with the mysterious four-stroke petrol motor occupied the young man’s attention, at the expense of the horse, which hitherto with hocks and spavins had been the topic of general conversation.

Into this new world emerged a good-looking young man, the Hon. C.S. Rolls, son of Lord Llangatick. True he had everything in his favour, educated at Eton and Cambridge, his family had wealth and social position.

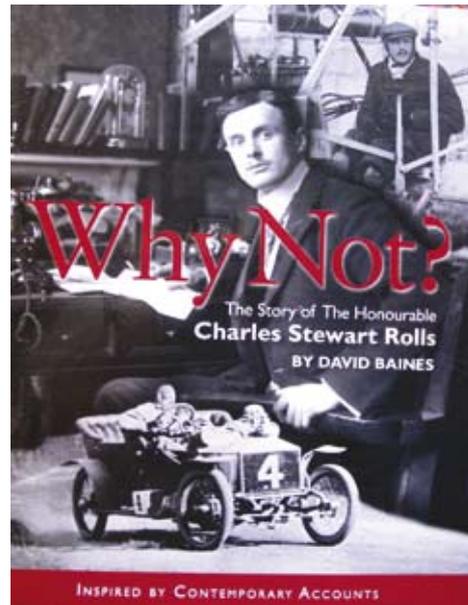
An aristocratic mechanic was a new phenomenon, no wonder Charlie Rolls was the young man’s hero of the day. He was one of the real pioneers of motoring. He won the Premier Prize in the great 1,000 Miles Trial. He raced cars. He won, on a Rolls-Royce, a Tourist Trophy Race in the Isle of Man. He was a considerate and superb driver with whom one never had a qualm or apprehension, and I say this with some experience as I acted as his mechanic for thousands of miles on all sorts of good, bad, and indifferent cars including a 110 h.p. Racing Mors in Ireland. Before aeroplanes arrived he was a balloonist of note and we shared one of the first privately owned balloons, in fact the first ever made by the Short Brothers. He early acquired a Wright biplane and naturally became one of the foremost experts in flying this machine which was extremely difficult to master.

With his experience and knowledge, he early discovered the genius of Royce and with Claude Johnson, late Secretary of the Automobile Club, as business manager, started that world-famous firm.

Royce was a brilliant engineer and would never have made anything but a good car, but it was Charlie Rolls who inspired him to what was wanted and it was he who placed those early masterpieces into the hands of the mighty, as he had the *entré* everywhere and was a superb salesman.

He was killed in the prime of life, when his name was a household word all over the civilised world and it is interesting but perhaps useless to speculate as to how he would have fared had he lived.

He would have been about eighty today, but he would never



have lost that keen, pioneering, boyish approach to everything new that was so characteristic of him.

He was never the type that was “hail fellow well met” – on the contrary he was reserved and a little shy.

Except on the subjects on which he was keen, and there were many, he was somewhat mute, but in those days of pioneering the motor car and the aeroplane, he was the ideal companion.

Forward looking, imaginative, brave, he died as I believe he would have liked to have died, that is in action. To those who knew him and loved him, he will always remain in their memory as the gallant knight of the pioneering days “*sans peur* and *sans rapproche*”. Brabazon of Tara.

*Why Not? The Story of the Honourable Charles Stewart Rolls* by David Baines, has recently been published by Dalton Watson Fine Books in 308 page hard-cover form with slipcase and 300 illustrations. ISBN 978-1-85443-224-7. The *Flying Lady* review appeared in our 08-1, and the opportunity to read the book recently came courtesy of Fazazz in Christchurch, where it is available for \$165. Finely bound and impeccably printed on heavy art paper in Singapore, the photographs from 100 or more years ago fairly speak straight to us, while the archival material to which David Baines had access through the Royal Aero Club, the Sir Henry Royce Memorial Foundation, and the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts’ Club provide a valuable insight into the working of the infant Rolls-Royce Company. Rolls’s letters to Royce are cordial, and the breadth of C.S. Rolls & Co’s enterprises are impressive, with the Works at Lillie Hall, a former roller-skating rink in Fulham, and of course the premises in Conduit St still in use today. Recommended.

A.T.K.



**More Photographs of the RR&BTC Mt Cook Weekend:**  
(left) Jack Barclay  
Pillarless Saloon B49MX  
(right, from left) Stephen  
Fowler, Helen McArthur,  
George Calder and Ramon  
Farmer happy as always in  
shorts.



## Book Review

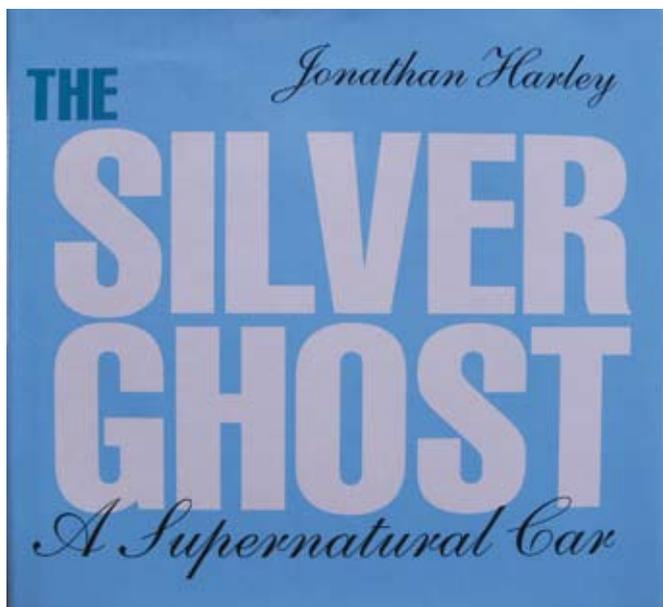
### *The Silver Ghost – A Supernatural Car*

By Jonathan Harley

ISBN: 978-1-85443-228-5

Published by Dalton Watson Fine Books,  
1730 Christopher Drive, Deerfield, Illinois 60015 U.S.A.

Hard bound 25 cm square, 224 pages  
\$136.50 from Fazazz, 84 Lichfield St., Christchurch.



Another beautifully produced book from Dalton Watson, sturdily bound and printed on heavy art paper in Singapore, this is very much a personal journey by its author. Jonathan Harley studied engineering and draughtsmanship after completing military service in the British Army, and first encountered an Edwardian Silver Ghost at the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary which the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club organised at Goodwood in 1964. The very traditional mode of Harley's engineering training meant that he could empathise with the purity of design the early Rolls-Royces featured, and this set him on his life's work of resurrecting and restoring Silver Ghosts.



The next year, at the age of 26, he bought his first Rolls-Royce, a Phantom 1 which had been converted to a breakdown lorry, and Jonathan Harley and his brother Nick were able to have the rear of the body finished by the then still extant Avon Bodies to replicate 72SC's original Barker Coupé Cabriolet coachwork. The purchase price of the car meant that the brothers were reduced to bicycle travel until the Phantom was mobile, but this mode of transport was all the better for finding the cars still readily to be found in England in the mid-1960s.

The author is not one-make blind, having worked on one of the Lanchester brothers' designs early in his career. These worthy cars would have been more of a rival to Rolls-Royce had they had an organisational genius like Claude Johnson, "the hyphen in Rolls-Royce" to drive the Lanchester company. Hispano-Suiza and Maserati were other marques worked on by J.N. Harley Engineering, which was operating by 1967 in a converted barn rented from a farmer near Stratford.

From there it is a fascinating account of Jonathan Harley's life with Ghosts throughout the world, the network of craftsmen who are able to restore and maintain these cars, and their owners who are able to provide the means with which to do the work required. Harley laments that coach-painting is now almost a lost art, and is knowledgeable about the coach-building companies that had survived into the era of the fine bodies built on Rolls-Royce chassis.

He is not afraid to debunk legends, the Company publicity for instance mentioning only £2.2.7d in parts required after the 15,000 mile endurance trial of 1907, and their not mentioning the 40 hours of labour during the trial, and 125 hours required after the trial.



(above) John Chamberlain's 1910 Ghost, chassis 1447, at Bruce McIlroy's workshop

(left) Neville Jordan's 1922 Ghost 7KG in the Gobi Desert, Mongolia.

(Bruce McIlroy's photograph)

Harley had the good fortune to find some of the survivors of the 200 6-cylinder Rolls-Royce Hawk engines built from 1914 after Henry Royce was finally persuaded to design and build aircraft engines. The Hawks were installed primarily in airships, and Harley mentions the highly combustible coal-gas with which they were filled in those days. The Hawk was influenced by the Mercedes engine which won the Grand Prix just before the First World War, an example of which was in England at its outbreak, and had the welded steel water jackets around the cylinders and overhead camshaft. One of these engines was installed in a Rolls-Royce chassis after the war, and Harley worked to similarly install a Hawk engine in a Ghost chassis.

All in all a fascinating book. Thanks are due to Fazazz for loaning it for review.

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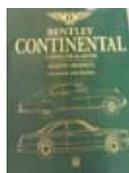
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### New books just received:

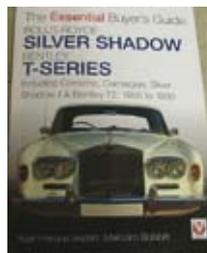
**Bentley Continental inc Corniche and Azure, by Martin Bennett, 2006 edition. \$160 inc gst and post in NZ**



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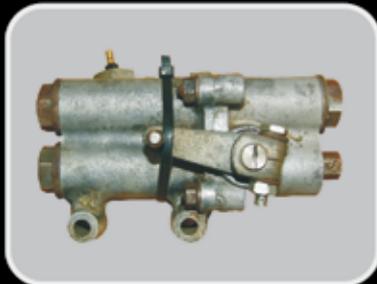


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Moonbeam Silver, Beluga hide 14,000kms, \$290,000
- 2006** Bentley Continental Flying Spur  
Beluga Black, Saddle hide 9,000 kms, \$269,990
- 2005** Bentley Continental GT Coupe  
Diamond Black, Portland hide 6000kms, \$280,000
- 2006** Bentley Arnage R  
Peacock Blue, Magnolia hide Burr Walnut Veneer 7,100 kms, \$375,000
- 2002** Bentley Arnage Red Label  
Amethyst Blue, Tangier hide Burr Walnut Veneer, \$160,000
- 1995** Bentley Continental R Coupe  
Racing Green, Magnolia Hide, 21,000 kms great car, \$150,000
- 2000** Rolls Royce Silver Seraph  
Peacock Blue, Magnolia Hide, Burr Walnut Veneer, \$150,000
- 1998** Rolls Royce Silver Seraph  
Silver Pearl, French Navy Hide, 21,000 kms, \$155,000

**For personal attention call our experienced staff:**

**Sales - Paul Shorter 09 361 7074 or 021 878 555**  
**Service - Byron Martin 09 361 7076 or 021 446 190**  
**Parts - Michael Light 09 360 4727 or 021 987 565**

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