

SPRING 2024  
ISSUE 22



# 20-GHOST GAZETTE

The oldest Rolls-Royce car club in the world - Australian Chapter



## The 20-Ghost Club Australian Chapter Incorporated

The 20-Ghost Club was formed in England in 1949, and the Australian Chapter of the Club was formed in 1992. The Australian Club is an incorporated association registered in New South Wales (INC9886558)

The Club is dedicated to the preservation of pre-1945 Rolls-Royce motor cars. The name of the Club was taken from the legendary 40/50 hp Silver Ghost and its smaller counterpart, the 20hp model. The Club activities revolve around the early cars including Silver Ghost, 20hp, Phantom I, II and III, 20/25, 25/30 and Wraith.

Eligibility for membership extends to owners of all pre-1945 Rolls-Royce motorcars.

### Club Mailing Address

14 Hoyt Street, Hampton, Victoria 3188, Australia.

### Committee and Appointments

**President:** **Michael Henningsen**  
e: michael@michaelhenningsen.com.au  
t: 0418 818 767

**Vice President:** **Andrew Bayley**  
e: aobayley@bigpond.net.au  
t: 0417 142 779

**Secretary:** **Ian Berg**  
e: bergathol@gmail.com  
t: 0419 364 427

**Treasurer:** **Bruce Humphries**  
e: Bruce@Humphries.com  
t: 0407 545 037

**Editor:** **Ian Berg**  
e: bergathol@gmail.com  
t: 0419 364 427

**Committee:** **Noel Baker**  
e: noelbaker@yahoo.com.au  
t: 0428 597 994

**George Blenkhorn**  
e: blenkhorg@gmail.com  
t: 0429 139 902

**Mick Matheson**  
e: mick@phantom2.com.au  
t: 0415 666 147

**John Rowney**  
e: johnrowney@bigpond.com  
t: 0413 676 833

### 20-Ghost Gazette

The *20-Ghost Gazette* is the journal of The 20-Ghost Club Australian Chapter Inc. Contributions for the *20-Ghost Gazette* are welcome, and should be forwarded to the Editor preferably via email, or posted to the Club's address. When submitting digital photos, please send as JPEG files attached to an email at the highest resolution available. Please do not embed photos within Word documents.

### Editorial Policy

Opinions expressed in The *20-Ghost Gazette* are not necessarily those of the Editor, the Club or its Officers. Technical, historical, reference or other information is published in good faith and no responsibility for their accuracy or efficacy is accepted.

The Committee reserves the right to edit or omit any material submitted, including letters to the Editor, for inclusion in the *20-Ghost Gazette*.

All Rights Reserved and Copyright, 2024; The 20-Ghost Club Australian Chapter Inc.

### Print Post Approved

Publication Number 100028215

## Contents

|                                                    |    |
|----------------------------------------------------|----|
| <b>Chairman's Report</b> .....                     | 4  |
| <b>Editorial</b> .....                             | 4  |
| <b>The History of 1933 Rolls-Royce</b>             |    |
| 20/25 chassis GHA11.....                           | 5  |
| Two Twentys.....                                   | 8  |
| <b>Our President's New Acquisition –</b>           |    |
| The Story of 20hp 43G7.....                        | 14 |
| <b>John Matheson Tribute</b> .....                 | 15 |
| <b>Technical - Autovac and Petrol Issues</b> ..... | 16 |
| <b>My Adventures, or a Right of Reply</b> .....    | 18 |
| <b>Wheels and Tyres</b> .....                      | 19 |
| <b>For Sale and Wanted</b> .....                   | 20 |
| <b>Out and About</b> .....                         | 21 |
| <b>Out of Long Term Storage</b> .....              | 21 |
| <b>Silver Ghost 17CB,</b>                          |    |
| <b>A Unique Australian Silver Ghost</b> .....      | 22 |

## New Members



We welcome Bill and Helen Coleby from Kyneton in Victoria. They own the 1924 Twenty GDK17, a car that was active in vintage circles in the 1970s and was formerly owned by Gerald McKenna who restored it many years ago.

# Coming Events

|                       |                                                  |                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| October 20 - 26, 2024 | 2024 National Tour, Wagga Wagga                  | <b>Director: Michael Henningsen</b><br><b>Phone:</b> 0418 818 767<br><b>Email:</b> michael@michaelhenningsen.com.au |
| March 3 - 14, 2025    | Tasmania Tour                                    | <b>Director: Andrew Bayley</b><br><b>Phone:</b> 0417 142 779<br><b>Email:</b> aobayley@bigpond.net.au               |
| October 12 - 18, 2025 | 2025 National Tour, Cleveland Estate, Lancefield | <b>Director: Noel Baker</b><br><b>Phone:</b> 0428 597 994<br><b>Email:</b> noelfbaker@yahoo.com.au                  |
| November/December     | Christmas functions                              | TBA                                                                                                                 |

## Update on Wagga Wagga Rally

*Michael Henningsen*

Following on from my brief introduction in the previous *Gazette* I am pleased to report that, apart from one of the three aspects of the Planes, Trains and Automobile Rally in October everything is progressing smoothly.

Members are providing the automobiles, our run on the Thursday is to the Temora Aviation Museum and the trains component of the title was to have been provided by the Wagga Wagga Model Engineers Society. This society has a scale model railway system within the Wagga Wagga Botanical Gardens and on the Tuesday evening we are having dinner in the gardens adjacent their facility. I have, for some time now, been desperately trying to contact the society to ask them if they would be able to open their facility for us to view but it does appear that the society may have folded. I fear it might be another casualty of the Covid Pandemic. Never-the-less I will persist, it's not over until the fat lady sings or something like that!

The Wagga Wagga Rally is well subscribed and thank you to all members who have booked, but please if there are any members who, because of changed circumstances or whatever, might be able to come, please don't hesitate to register your interest with me in the event of any cancellations. My Booking Officer, Rory Poland, tells me that the Mercure is fully booked, however, that can change also.

I told you about a few of our drives in the last *Gazette*, but it would probably not surprise members, given that Wagga Wagga is considered the gateway to the Riverina, to learn that one of

our drives will be to a winery for a tasting and luncheon. The winery Borambola is situated adjacent to a historic property 30 kilometres from Wagga Wagga in the Gundagai Wine Region.

The budget for the National Rally is a little higher than the previous few rallies, a combination of rising costs in hospitality, additional morning teas and lunches being provided as part of the rally package and the fact that we are dining at the best restaurants in the area during the rally. I hope that the value for money that we receive for our registration will more than assuage the small increased dent to the hip pocket.

**Michael Henningsen**

**Phone** 0418 818 767

**Email** michael@michaelhenningsen.com.au



### Front Cover:

The 1933 Rolls-Royce 20/25 of John Milverton is a particularly attractive sports saloon. John provides the known history of the car on page 5.

# Chairman's Report

Well from having a casual look at the weather forecasts for most of the country over the last few days it does appear that there is a hint of Spring in the air.

Here in Adelaide, although the mornings are still quite cold, the days have been still, and the daytime temperatures are almost reaching 20 degrees. Really, it's the perfect weather for our cars.

The Committee met a few weeks ago now and plans are well underway with the planned Rally in Tasmania which Andrew and Marg Bayley are organising for the Club. Given the superb rallies which have been held in the Apple Isle previously it is no surprise that this event has been fully subscribed now for some time.

Wagga Wagga has also been finalised and many thanks to those members who have booked at the Mercure, very shortly they will begin to receive information regarding the bookings and planned events. I will provide a further brief update in relation to Wagga Wagga elsewhere in the *Gazette*. As Chairman, I should formally advise all members that the AGM of the Australian Chapter of the 20-Ghost Club will be held at the Mercure Hotel Wagga Wagga on Friday 25th October at 5.30pm AEST.

Your Committee feels that there is a real appetite for driving our cars, especially for shorter events of three or four days, evidenced by the success of the two recent events held in the Hunter Valley and the Flinders rally. Next year, in addition to the National Rally at Cleveland Estate and the Tasmanian Rally, we hope to also run an event. We are also very keen to get others involved in the organisation and help side of our events so if you are in any way interested, please contact me. It can be very rewarding, and your involvement would be well appreciated. Additionally, we are keen to see more of these shorter events in other states.

Again, I must thank Ian Berg for the fabulous job he does as Editor of the *Gazette*, it really is a very high-quality publication and, please, if anyone has interesting articles don't hesitate to send them to Ian.

Finally on a personal note I'm delighted to report that my mechanic and I have both cylinder heads off 3CM157 my Phantom III. The block is now on an engine cradle and a set of new pistons is about to be ordered. Given what I have said in the above paragraph, I fear that you all might be reading an article soon about the restoration of the Phantom III's engine!

Please, all of you stay well and drive those beautiful cars!

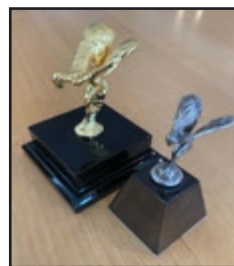
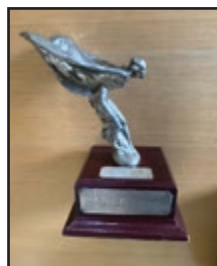
*Michael Henningsen, Chairman*

# Editorial

It's been quiet over the winter months; however, the Wagga Wagga National Rally will soon take place, and this is set to be another large event. Hopefully you have taken the opportunity to prepare well for the rally. Quieter months also mean fewer reports allowing room for some technical articles in the *Gazette*. You will find one on wheels, and Autovacs as well as fuel problems in this issue. If you have had some recent work done or have information or experiences that can assist others, please share them and submit some technical material for the *Gazette*.

Our trophies will be awarded at the upcoming final dinner of the rally. If you have been using your pre-war Rolls-Royce over the period, please do submit the mileages as you could be in for one. All we need is the information below and you can email it to me. A new trophy will be awarded this year too. Only owners of 20hp cars are eligible for this trophy and it is for the big competition that we hold each year during the rally for these cars. For those of you who have attended a recent National Rally you will know what I am talking about. See you at Wagga Wagga.

*Ian Berg, Editor*



## APPLICATION FORM FOR DISTANCE BASED TROPHIES

Applicant's name.....

Chassis number..... Year.....

Odometer reading 1 July 2023..... miles

Odometer reading 30 June 2024..... miles

The car's odometer reading should be used.

Signed

.....

Member

.....

Date

The above application form can be copied, and when completed should be sent to the Secretary.

# The History of 1933 Rolls-Royce 20/25 chassis GHA11

John Milverton

*John Milverton has put together the following brief history and general impressions of GHA11, a very unusual and attractive 20/25 which came to Australia in the 1970s. John clearly finds this car a very comfortable and usable pre-war Rolls-Royce. We saw it at the Mount Gambier National Rally, and I am hopeful we will also see this fine example of the 20/25 at Wagga Wagga.*

This four-door four-light saloon, bodied by Freestone & Webb from 1933, was purchased by me in January of 2010. They only made four of these bodies - and all have survived! Mileage was thought to be correct at 108,000 miles. The first owner was Capt EV Cohen who took delivery in January 1934 and who had a Lalique mascot fitted on the scuttle. It was illuminated from below and was originally a fish, the mascot of his regiment. This was replaced by a Lalique falcon by a later owner, which I display occasionally, but am worried about someone tossing an egg at it, or worse.

I needed a 'proper car' to replace the Phantom I that I had sold back to a benefactor of Tocal Agricultural College - where the car had been housed in a convict-built garage from new. I thought a suitable replacement would be a 25/30 which I used to drive occasionally that had belonged to Len Partridge - the well-known Charlton family's Doctor's Coupe. This car was owned by a retired Parramatta Holden dealer Les Vagg, but I didn't have his contact details, so I telephoned a current Holden dealer who I had known from my days living in Hunters Hill, Sydney. He asked why I needed to contact this man and then said that he had a 20/25 he wished to sell and that I could see and drive it at his large Holden car storage warehouse. I made arrangements to visit the warehouse with him and saw, amongst a mass of Holdens, the 20/25 under a cover in a corner. After viewing the car with him and taking it on a short drive, I agreed to buy it.

After driving it home to Burradoo, New South Wales, I contacted Tom Clarke (Rolls-Royce historian) who expressed surprise that this car had turned up in Australia and that it even existed! The chassis record from Rolls-Royce shows that it passed through the ownership of at least three others up until the 1960s. There was no record of this car after it left England in the mid-1970s when it was bought from CAR Howard in 1975 by the car dealer from whom I purchased it. The car went from England to South Africa with the car dealer who ran a Ford dealership, and then went to Victoria where he had another Ford dealership in partnership with Bob Jane. When that partnership was dissolved, the car went to Sydney where he bought a Holden dealership. It's not so surprising that Tom Clarke thought the car had disappeared!

This 20/25 was in good overall condition but did need some work, mainly on the body. The large sunroof had been leaking for years because the two rubber drains at the rear of the sunroof had perished, resulting in rotten wood in the rear compartment and rear doors.

This was remedied by Woods & Woods at Woy Woy, near Gosford. They also repainted the car, matching the original colours using the DuPont system.

The engine had been fully worked on by Robert McDermott in Melbourne in the 1990s when a new aluminium head had been fitted. The car is mechanically very good with everything working as it should. It is fitted with the DWS jacking system. The tool kit is complete and little if ever used. The spanners have the original sherardised finish. The ring gear on the flywheel failed with gross wear in the usual position where the engine stops. I removed the flywheel myself and had the ring gear machined off (it was all made from one piece of steel) and bought from Ristes in Nottingham a new ring gear, which was shrink-fitted to the flywheel. Earlier 20/25s needed rivets for fixing the ring gear.

After the 20-Ghost Club National Rally at Mildura, we experienced fuel vaporising on the way home on a particularly hot day. This has been overcome by the fitting of a double-skinned aluminium shield for the Autovac, made and fitted by Garth Selig of Repair & Restoration Services Pty Ltd.

My 20/25 that I keep in the UK (GBA64 - a 1933 Sedanica by Freestone & Webb) has an overdrive fitted, which allows for effortless fast touring, so I have one on order from Ristes to fit to GHA11.

This car is a delight to drive and is generally rattle-free. The steering is direct and not too heavy. The gearbox has synchromesh on 3rd and 4th gears. Torque is very good, shown by easy ascent of most hills - it's mainly a top gear car. Fuel consumption using 95 or 98 octane petrol is 15 - 17 miles per gallon, depending on speed. Cruising speed on the highways is around 100 kilometres per hour, at which the motor seems to be comfortable, however I'm looking forward to fitting the overdrive.



*A photo from the 1960s taken outside the gates of Cliveden in the UK. The photo was provided by a lady who learnt to drive in the car when it was owned by her mother.*



*The Freestone and Webb body plate.*



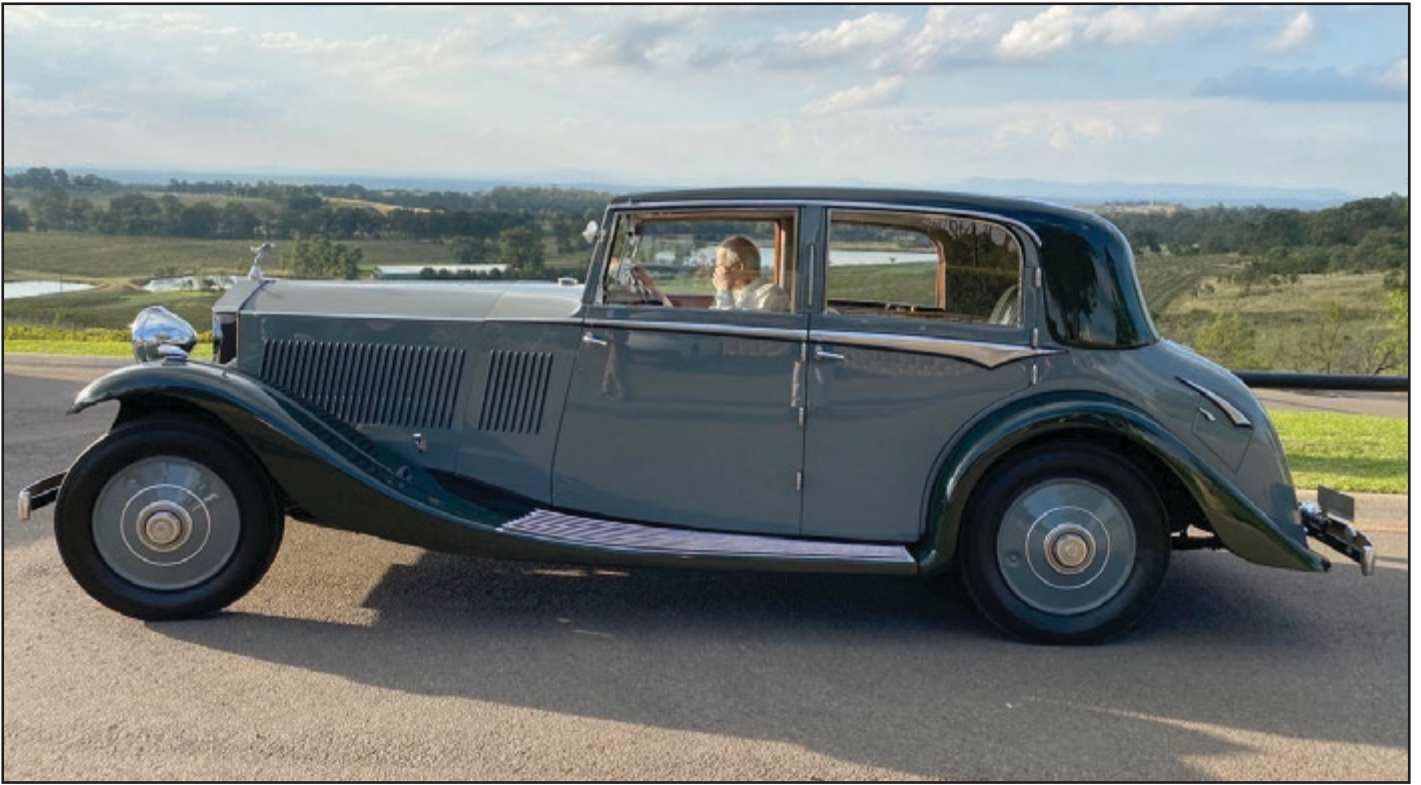
*The car is fitted with a very desirable and illuminated Lalique mascot.*



*The heat shield fitted to overcome vapour lock.*



*A complete tool kit is accessible in the boot lid.*



An original photo from the coachbuilders Freestone & Webb from 1934.

# Two Twentys

Steve Wasley

*Steve has been an enthusiast and dedicated restorer of 20hp Rolls-Royces for years having restored chassis GOK36 from 1924 to a running state and recovering and restoring the Hooper sedan GFN58 from 1928 in very quick time. Here he outlines his involvement with two examples that he still owns, GMK62 from 1924 and GLK68 from 1925. Steve has also purchased another project and you can see details of this in the sidebar article.*

I have owned 1924 20hp GMK62 for about 12 years after noticing it in *London & Derby* magazine where it was advertised for about six months in a non-descript advertisement. Simply saying 1924 Rolls twenty, no body, nice head and not driveable. When I contacted the owner he said it was in a barn in Wellington, New South Wales and was last used in the 1970s. After haggling about the price it was mine, and now the fun began. Upon inspection it was dusty but in good condition with nothing mechanical missing. It also had the heaviest all steel wheels that weighed about 70kg each, and these were the first thing to ditch. I was assured the car drove into the shed at the time and was not seized or having any engine issues which was good news.

After trailering the car home, it was pressure washed and some minor mechanical jobs were done which is when I was stunned by what I found. I removed the sump, the front engine plate and the head and found everything was like brand new inside. This engine had done very little mileage, and all inner parts were like they were assembled yesterday. When everything was re-assembled it fired up first go and has never caused any major issues relating to running, and the only things I have replaced were the clutch linings which turned out to be the reason it was listed as a non-driver. The car was also parked in the shed with a full tank of petrol, and the smell was something else! It took a while to clean the tank, lines, and the Autovac.

The history of the car showed Sir Alexander McCormack was the first owner. He was a leading surgeon at the time and his claim to fame was that he instigated the Sydney to Hobart yacht race. At that time it also carried the NSW numberplate '5' - and what a pity it never came with the car when I bought it!

As purchased, it lacked bodywork and was originally a Park Ward Limousine. Try as I might I could not find another body for many years, nor could I afford to have one fabricated. It was Mark Roberts of Adelaide who alerted me to an advertisement listing a small open tourer body from an Hispano Suiza for sale. It looked OK, so I purchased it, and I had more good luck as it offered straight up and went on with very little fettling. Even where the Twenty chassis rails rise to go over the differential assembly, it had the same arc in the same place. Some people, however, may find the mudguards off-putting, but until I can find better ones that's the situation.

The car drives well, and except for some carburetor adjustment issues it has always been well behaved. It is as Royce intended and the body weighs next to nothing affording a nimble and pleasurable drive.

One last thing – the car came with a brand-new set of CAV headlights, sidelights and divers helmet taillights which had never been placed on the car. It may be that these were worth more than I paid for the car! I currently have the car for sale and hope someone may give it a good home. If not, I am perfectly happy to keep it.





GLK68 is a 1925 Rolls Royce Twenty fitted with a Smith & Waddington open tourer body in original condition, all paint and interior trim is original, with wear and tear befitting a 100-year old car.

The cars first owner was WG Conley who was an executive of *The Sydney Morning Herald*. While the car was being built, Smith & Waddington of Camperdown, New South Wales were making the body, and with a new plating division coming on line, they undertook individual plating of small bits and pieces throughout the engine and interior which are in some ways unique. When completed, the car was used for display at the Sydney Motor Show and was also featured in a motoring magazine road test.

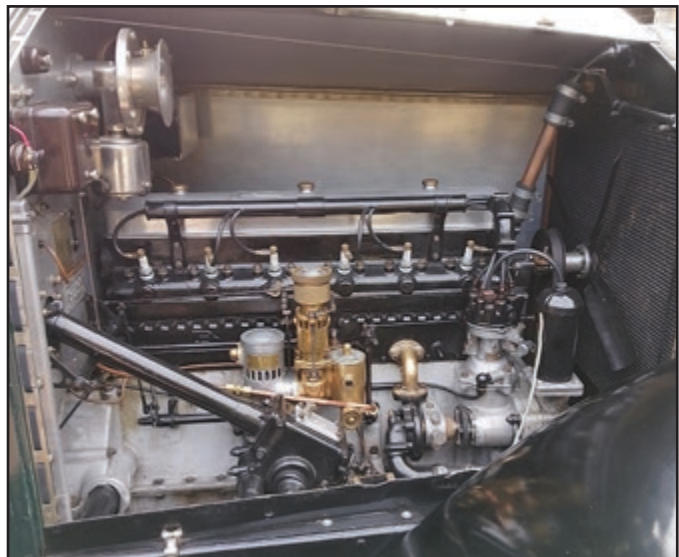
Mr Conley gave the car to his son-in-law who owned it for quite a while, eventually ending up with a Mr Schuster on the Gold Coast where it was on display in his car museum from about the mid-1980s until about 2012 when Les Holt of Toowoomba purchased it. I then purchased it from Mr Holt three years ago, after I saw an advertisement on *Facebook Marketplace* which appeared only once. I felt very lucky indeed!

Covid lockdowns prevented me from seeing the car in person and I had a further wait to pick it up. When I got it home it needed a lot of work, and it was amazing that it ran at all. For some reason the car had two complete fuel lines. One had bypassed the Autovac, and one line had an electric fuel pump straight to the carburetor which overwhelmed it. To make matters worse the pump switch was under the back seat which was not great in emergency situations! There were also many under-bonnet modifications with incorrect fittings and a lot of non-original nuts and bolts which I subsequently replaced with originals. The head gasket was also blown but fortunately readily replaced, and there was no damage to the head.

The car is the only one I have owned that has a comprehensive tool kit with some bits missing but I am slowly getting there. Once I had everything back to proper Rolls-Royce specifications, I got it registered for road use, something that it has not seen for quite some time, and it was a huge pleasure to finally drive. The car certainly gets people's attention!

I never thought I would own such an original and unmolested vehicle such as this and feel very privileged to do so, my next task is to get along to some rallies and share it with others.





## And Another Project

At a recent auction in Queensland, Steve acquired numerous 20hp parts and a bare chassis, 67H1, and has started to put this one together as well. Interestingly, there are no records of 67H1 arriving in Australia and it was likely a recent import, possibly for parts.

The auction was the same one where the very early chassis 44G6 was sold. This was once the famous (infamous?) Vita-Tan car (see p52 of *Concerning the 20hp Rolls-Royce*) which was abandoned by the owner in the 1950s or possibly 1960s in Surfer's Paradise and

subsequently rescued from the tip by Adrian Stephens who restored the chassis to an advanced state. Upon his recent passing, it was put up for auction along with many parts, and 44G6 was purchased by an enthusiast from Brisbane, with Steve buying the parts including chassis 67H1. Tragically, in early July, 44G6 was destroyed in a fire while being started and the resultant conflagration also destroyed three houses and other collectible cars.



Chassis 67H1 now being assembled and restored by Steve.



The ungainly looking Vita Tan car as it was in the 1950s. The then owner used to sell Vita Tan sun tanning products on the Gold Coast directly from the car.



Chassis 44G6 at the auction. Shortly after this, it was destroyed by fire.



*It is rare to find a photo of two veteran Silver Ghosts in a period setting in Australia. On left is chassis 2317 from 1913 with very attractive touring coachwork by Hordon, and it carries its second body, a two-seater roadster. According to Rolls-Royce and Bentley in the Sunburnt Country (Clarke/Neely) the engines from both cars were used in the construction of the Sydney Opera House. Photo courtesy of SHRF.*



y Watson of the UK. It is a London-Edinburgh chassis and was owned Lebbeus Hordon of Sydney. The front car is chassis 2142, also owned by Lebbeus both these cars ended up being used in Hordon's yacht! Neither car survives unfortunately.

# Our President's New Acquisition – The Story of 20hp 43G7

Michael Henningsen



I am thrilled to have recently purchased a charming little Twenty, the very early chassis 43G7. On 21 November 1922, it was the 35th car 'On Test' of the Goshawk II production series.

Initially fitted with a landaulet body from an unknown coachbuilder, she was delivered as a trials car (demonstrator) to Algemeene Garage and Auromobiel Holland on 24 January 1923.

However, by the mid 1920s the car was back in England. This is known because records show parts being supplied to Henry Suttard. Henry was one of two brothers in a family of seven children most of whom had Rolls-Royces in the 1920s and 1930s. It appears that in the late 1920s the original landaulet body was replaced by the current Tickford cabriolet body with a retractable hood crafted by coachbuilders Salmons. The hood is retracted using a crank at the back of the body.

43G7 had a few further English custodians until, in 1958, Alan Hickling acquired the car from his great uncle.

Alan first used the car whilst he was a student and later, as a member of the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm, the car moved with him to his various postings. The final posting was to Australia in 1971 when Alan migrated here.

Alan left Australia for the USA in 1978 but 43G7 remained in this country now under the custodianship of Alan's friend Bob McCulloch. Bob had been in the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm with him as they had been friends in the UK prior to both migrating Down Under.

Bob restored almost all the mechanical parts and did repair work to the body, including repairing a bullet hole in one of the rear doors. Bob McCulloch recalls that there were more than a few 'wild' parties.

Ian and Pamela Wall acquired 43G7 from Bob almost 25 years ago and it was lovingly cared for by them until Ian's death last year.

I've had the unique privilege to become the most recent custodian of this lovely early 20hp and, following some necessary maintenance and familiarisation, I hope to have her attending Club events in the near future.



Photographed in the 1960s in England. Cars like these were of little value at that time and owner Alan Hickling, a naval officer, used it as a daily driver including transporting his friends to the local pub. Photo from 'Praeclarum' October 1992.



The photos above are also from an early 'Praeclarum' and demonstrate the hood mechanism.

## John Matheson Tribute

Mick Matheson

John Matheson owned several Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars over more than 30 years, including several pre-war models. His first was Silver Ghost 9LG in unrestored chassis form, followed in no particular order by Springfield Silver Ghost S64LK, 20hp GYK82, Phantom II 139RY and his favourite, Silver Ghost 64EU. He did extensive travelling in all but 9LG, and among many other expeditions he crossed the Nullarbor in the 20hp, drove in South Africa and Europe in S64LK, toured the Arabian Peninsula in 193RY and took part in Alpine Trials in 64EU. He estimated he covered 50,000 miles in 64EU. In 1997, John participated in a Peking to Paris rally in a Rolls-Royce Phantom V and in 2005 he took part in a recreation of the original Peking to Paris raid in a 1912 De Dion-Bouton. His wife, Jeanne Eve, was his constant travelling companion. John died on Monday, 29 July, aged 85.



John Matheson and Jeanne Eve are pictured in their Twenty, chassis GYK82, in Perth having driven it across the Nullarbor for the RROC Federal rally in 2003.

# Technical - Autovac and Petrol Issues

Ian Berg

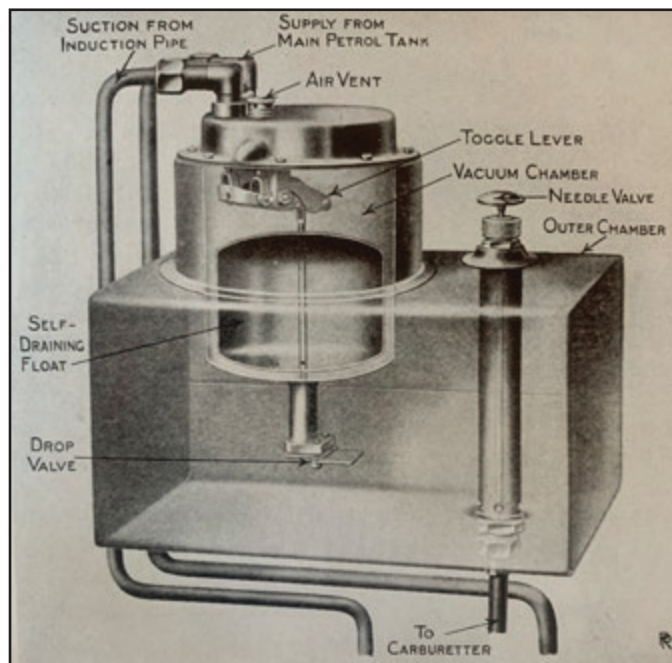
Recently, Peter McBeth experienced an issue in starting his 1926 Twenty, GOK69. From cold it ran very roughly emitting masses of white/grey fumes, and what appeared to be a considerable amount of water was coming out of the tailpipe. Close inspection revealed that it was not water – but petrol!

Some sleuthing was clearly needed, and it was ultimately determined that the Autovac float had a fatigue crack allowing petrol to enter the float. Gradually getting heavier, the float eventually failed to close the inlet toggle valve, and neat petrol was being sucked into the inlet manifold through the vacuum line between the manifold and the vacuum tank. Under these circumstances the engine will not run as it should, if it does at all, and there is a real risk of fire (hence a reminder to carry a fire extinguisher and ensure it is not out of date). This problem could arise on any model that uses a vacuum tank whether a Twenty or Phantom or 20/25.

The fix is relatively simple – either repair the punctured float or replace it. Being a century old, it is not surprising the original brass floats are corroded, worn or fatigued. And if you are taking the Autovac apart, ensure you clean any residue or rust from the surface of the inner tank as well. A protective coating as used in petrol tanks would be appropriate to apply if restoring an Autovac. Autovac parts are available from the usual suppliers and one specialist source is the Autovac Company in the UK <https://www.autovac.co.uk>

Note that a similar problem can occur with the float in a carburettor. If it has a hole such that it does not float properly, the carburettor will be continuously flooded. It will likely not start, at best it will run rich, and at worst there will be fuel all over the place.

*Some major surgery with three access holes required to get into the tank.*



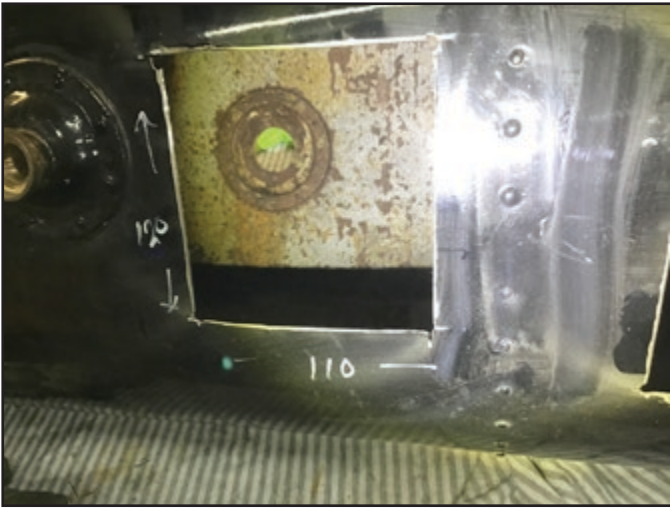
*The 20hp Autovac.*

Modern fuels also seem to quickly gunk up fuel components and lead to corrosion if a car sits unused for an extended period. Recently, the Twenty of Paul Daley chassis GSK34 was experiencing intermittent missing and fuel starvation. After repeated attempts to clean the carburettor, fuel lines and the Autovac, the problem persisted, and an internal inspection of the tank revealed stalactites and stalagmites of corrosion and gunk. The fix in this case was a bit more drastic including three cuts to the tank (it has two baffles so needs three access points) and a thorough internal clean before coating with sealant. Problem solved.

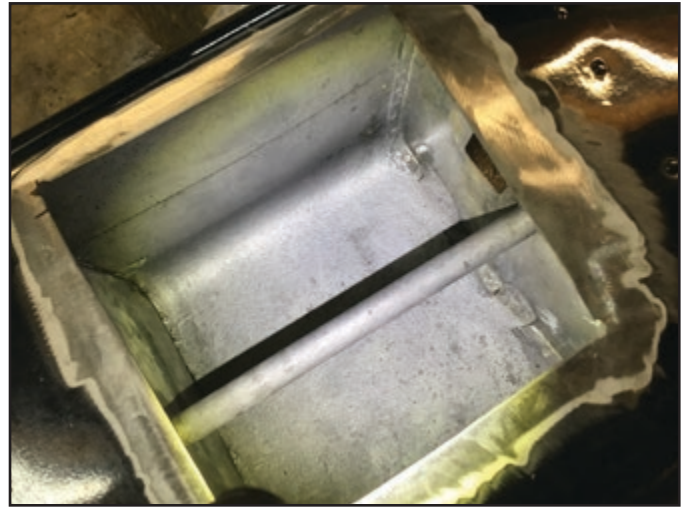
I would also suggest that it is worth using a fuel preserver such as Fuel-Stay or similar with our cars when they are subject to infrequent use.

Both problems were corrected by Derby Works.

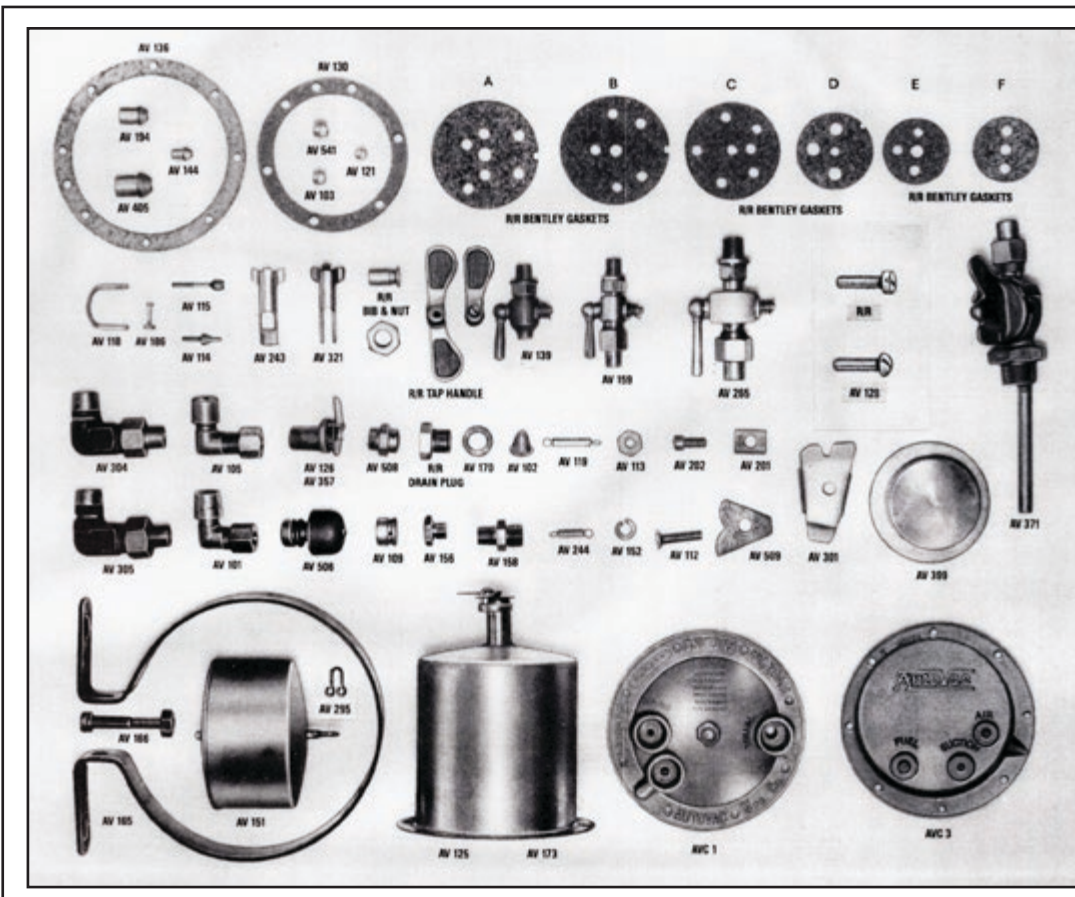




*Some serious corrosion and deposits were very apparent when the tank was cut open.*



*The inside of the tank required considerable cleaning. Following this the tank was patch repaired, refinished and painted before the inside was protective coated.*



Fortunately, Autovac parts are still available.

# My Adventures, or a Right of Reply

John Reis

A recent photo of 44EF, my 1927 Phantom I, in the *Winter Gazette* had the car looking a bit down on the starboard side, and this has prompted me to share my recent adventure.

When Helen and I acquired 44EF, part of the package included four spare rims. I purchased six new tyres at great expense and Antique Tyres in Melbourne, to their credit, condemned two of the rims on the car. So, I was down to two spare rims. Subsequently we took the car on a couple of RROC Federal Rallies (Geelong, Canberra, and planning on Hahndorf, we drove the family Toyota for other reasons). We then took it to the 20-Ghost National at Milawa, plus the usual tootling around the countryside to other routine events, we blissfully sallied forth (if 'New Phantom' and 'bliss' can rightly appear in the same sentence). But it was day four of the 20-Ghost Flinders rally in March this year when we experienced a flat tyre on the front lawn of David Phillip's vineyard. There we were, persons of interest in the front rank, but for all the wrong reasons. What had occurred in fact was a collapsed wheel, but it happened under the safest of circumstances on the lawn on a nice day in very pleasant company. A product of the Jesuits, I put a lot of faith into St Christopher, and he earned his keep that day. As did RACV Total Care, as the yellow van arrived with a proper trolley jack allowing the car to be elevated in seconds. It all seems so easy sitting here.

From the well documented provenance of our car, it provided service at Currie, King Island in 1957. How it managed to get there and return we can't imagine, but it came back to the mainland on some kind of vessel, and quite possibly this involved the rims being exposed to salt water perhaps on some crude launching ramp, which may have allowed this later drama to unfold. The rim had clearly split through corrosion and remains, as a salient warning to others, at Bill Allsep House in Rowville (where the RROC Vic club rooms and the Sir Henry Royce Foundation archives are located).

So, what did it all result in? Well, there was no tyre damage, the tube was replaced, and \$898 plus \$135 later, my hub had a new rim and 84 new spokes. The car was back on the road. Fortunately, wire wheel skills still exist as many more recent classic cars such as Jaguars, MGs, and motorcycles are still in service and continue to use wire wheels.

Moral of the story: check your 100-year-old rims, cleanliness and nice paint can disguise all manner of impending doom and disaster which may well emerge perhaps late on a rainy Friday afternoon in Melbourne's Domain Tunnel or somewhere else way less than convenient. Fate and Murphy are always ever present, out there, waiting for you. The other lesson - don't assume that the RACV service person will know where the jacking point is on your car.



John's tyre change on the Flinders Rally.



The damaged rim with the large split very evident. Surely a good case can be made for upgrading to new rims when restoring these cars.

# Wheels and Tyres

Ian Berg and Mark Roberts

The article about John Reis' experience with wheel failure is quite topical. Geoff Harrison also recently advised that the 23-inch split-rim wheels on his Twenty, chassis GPK42 were starting to show their age and he was thinking about replacing them. So where to get them?

Up until recently, we used to be able to get rims made in New Zealand. I had new rims made for my Twenty GF14 and Phantom I 48YC in New Zealand, and they were of very high quality. The rims were dimpled, and the spokes fitted to rim and hub by Neway Wheel Repairs (now referred to as DG Wheel Repairs) in West Heidelberg. Unfortunately, the owner of the New Zealand business has now retired and, in 2022, the equipment was sold to the Isle of Man.

<https://www.veterancarrims.co.uk/>

Vintage Rims in Queensland can also supply rims, although I am not aware of their sizing options nor of them specifically producing rims for Rolls-Royces. They have produced many rims for various veteran and vintage cars and often have a display at national swap meetings.

<https://www.vintagerimsaus.com>

Richards Brothers in Wales can provide both new rims and new hubs. This company has been in business for decades. No doubt this will not be the cheapest option, but they are well experienced.

<https://www.richards-bros.com>

Mark and Catrina Roberts recently faced the issue for their Twenty, GSK49, as it came with undersized 19in rims. Mark toyed with changing the diff ratio or perhaps installing an over drive (albeit with the burden of extra weight), but the car would still look wrong on 19inch rims. Mark's enquiries showed that Vintage Rims in Queensland could make a set of well-based 21in rims and re-spoke them to his existing hubs. The 21in rims are a good balance of size, looks, ride, comfort and tyre affordability. The Queensland company advised they could not make the 23" split rims.

Mark then got lucky and was able to obtain the last of the New Zealand rims from old stock and had them spoked to his hubs in Heidelberg. He used high tensile steel spokes sourced from the UK, which had the correct thicker taper from where they radiate out centrally from the hub itself. The cost at that time for five rims, re-spoking, wheel nuts re-nickelled and new tyres and tubes fitted was about \$3,000 per wheel. Mark painted them himself. He used Lucas tyres from Longstone in the UK and is very happy with them. These are a larger diameter, more commonly found on Silver Ghosts or early Phantom I's (I have them fitted to 48YC), and afford a significantly higher cruising speed for the same engine speed than the 19in rims.

<https://www.longstonetyres.co.uk/33x5-lucas.html>

## Rolls Royce 20hp Tyres

*Recommendations from Longstone Tyres.*

In the early 1920s when Rolls first made the 20hp they fitted 23in wheels. We would recommend the 32 x 4 1/2 (23in rim) 500 x 23 Lucas. These early cars require a 23in flap and reinforced 815X105 innertube and should run at 65psi.

By 1927, the 20hp Rolls-Royce fitted 21in well-based wheels. We would suggest 5.25 x 21 Lucas, as a comfortable quiet tyre. Depending on the body style we would suggest the tyre pressure 36psi with 21in wheeled 20hp Rolls.

Some 20hp Rolls-Royces had 20in wheels for which we would suggest 600 x 20 Lucas at 34psi depending on the body.

A 20hp Rolls Royce with 20in or 21in wheels need innertubes, the 19/20 H RET Michelin we believe is the best. You will also need a rim tape.

*A comparison of various tyres suitable for the 20hp, as supplied by Nigel Steel-Scott.*

The percentage indicated below can be used as a road speed indicator for a given engine speed in comparison to the Excelsior 500 x 23 which is very close to those originally fitted. The Dunlop tyres originally fitted to the early cars in the UK are not available. They were 32 (OD) x 4.5 (width) which gives a theoretical rolling diameter of 100.5in. Note that it is also possible that locally manufactured tyres were fitted to Australian delivered cars when new.

| Brand     | Size         | Width inches | OD inches | Circumference | %   |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|-----------|---------------|-----|
| Excelsior | 500 x 23     | 4            | 33.3      | 104.6         | 100 |
| Dunlop    | 450 x 21     | 4.8          | 31        | 97.3          | 93  |
| Excelsior | 5.25/50 x 19 | 4.5          | 30.5      | 95.8          | 92  |
| Excelsior | 4.50 x 19    | 4.25         | 27.75     | 81.2          | 78  |



*A new batch of Silver Ghost wheels produced by Vintage Rims in New Zealand just prior to the owner's retirement.*

# For Sale and Wanted

## FOR SALE

### 1929 Rolls Royce Phantom II, chassis MT 95, Sedanca De Ville by Thrupp & Maberly

A very original Rolls-Royce that has been vigorously maintained throughout its lifetime. Upholstery has been renewed in recent years as an exact copy of the original.

There is extensive history to the car. It's first owner was from Scotland and it still has its original Scottish number plate. Imported to Australia in 2017, it has Queensland special purpose registration

This is just a lovely car which always attracts attention and is a such a pleasure to drive.

Asking A\$215,000 **Contact: Chris Sorensen Ph: 0427244847, E: [chrisTsorro@gmail.com](mailto:chrisTsorro@gmail.com)**



## FOR SALE

### 1923 Rolls-Royce 20hp, chassis GF63.

Matching numbers car with desirable open touring body by Packard and the correct 23in wheels. In 2004, a full engine rebuild was completed along with the transmission and all mechanicals. Mudguards repainted, bonnet restored (\$5,000 for this alone), new hood with side curtains, new dash in Brazilian mahogany. The car comes with many tools, including hub removal tools, RR spanners, Girder adjustable spanner, Shraeder tyre gauge, an extremely rare pair of RR stamped pliers, screw drivers, Michelin Flirt jack with handle, and others. An original December 1923 handbook, town cap and mascot are included as are all receipts and a large history file. We have toured with the car extensively and it was most recently serviced by Simon Elliott at Derby Works.

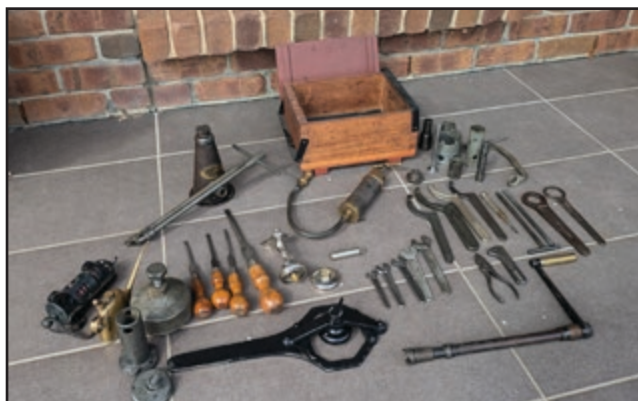
Now having another 20hp, after 40 years in the family, we have decided to sell this lovely example.

\$74,990 obo (or approx. 38,500 GBP).

SA Club Registered.

**Contact: Mark Roberts**

**Ph: 0412 122 200 E: [ma.roberts@live.com.au](mailto:ma.roberts@live.com.au)**



# Out and About

Paul Daley

The historic car movement plays an integral part in the greater community, often participating with displays in fetes, Sunday markets, schools etc, and is regularly a resource for local groups seeking a guest speaker. I recently had the opportunity to display my 1925 20hp Tourer GSK24 at the Men's Breakfast hosted by Holy Trinity Anglican Church at the imposing Mont Albert, Victoria residence of Simon Wheelton.

I have lived and worked in Surrey Hills for many years and was able to provide an overview of the hobby to 35 chaps, drawing on my extensive involvement with the Veteran Car Club of Australia over the past decade. GSK34 is a Wilkinson replica and presents picture-perfect parked on the manicured grounds under the English oak. In 1920, 1st Canterbury Scouts provided a Guard of Honour for HRH Prince of Wales during his visit to Australia. Prince Edward planted the tree, which can be seen in the photographs, to commemorate his visit to 16 Churchill Street, Mont Albert.



---

# Out of Long Term Storage

Ian Berg

Recently resurfaced, and likely to be on the market, is the 20hp Park Ward saloon chassis GH32. The car is well used and in all probability needs a complete restoration. A two-wheel brake model from 1924, it carries the original and quite unusual saloon body featuring an interesting V-windscreen and oval back window.

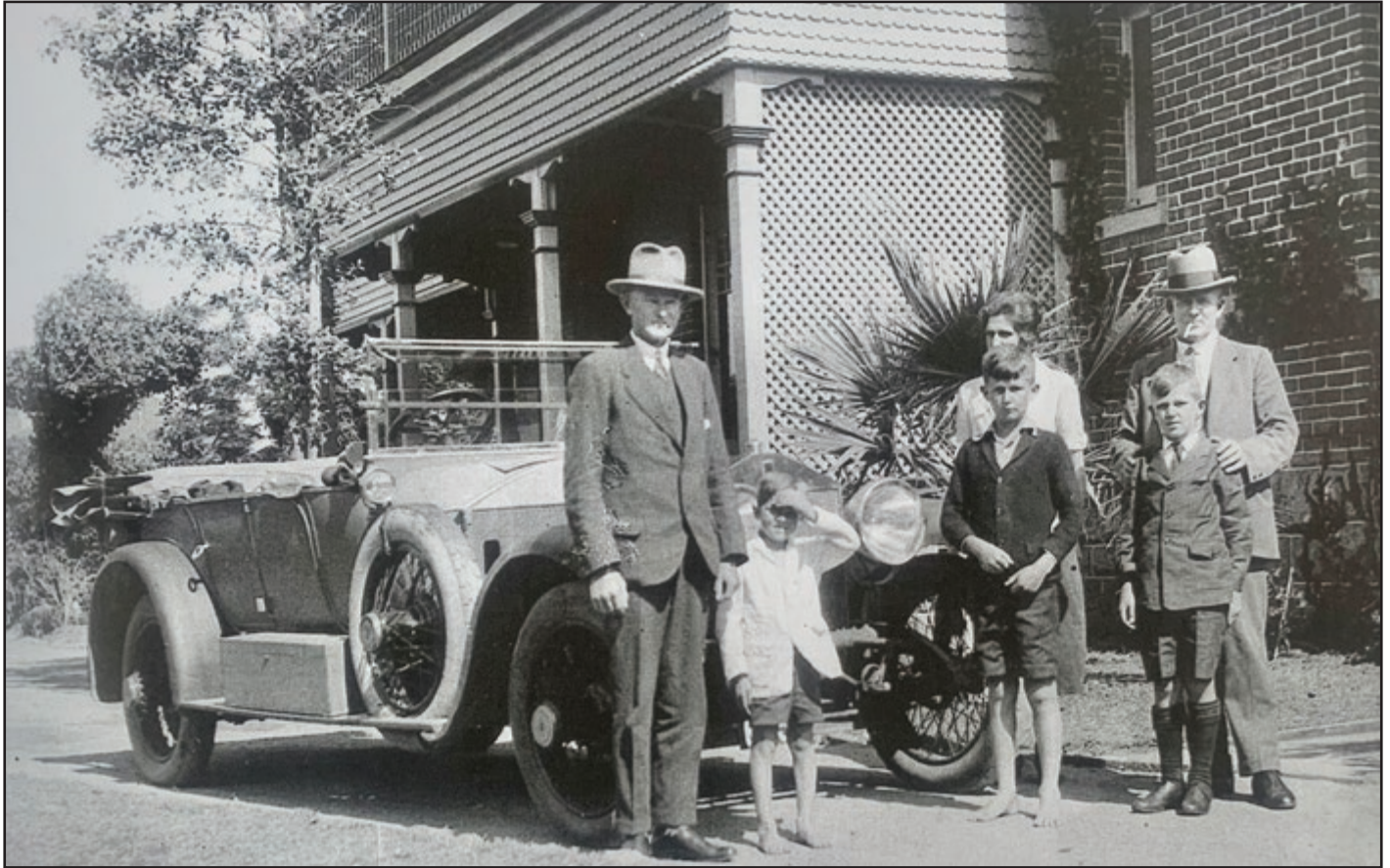


# Silver Ghost 17CB, A Unique Australian Silver Ghost

*Ian Berg and Paul Blank*

Paul Blank is managing the sale for the family of this very unique car and has detailed information regarding the vehicle's history and provenance. Extensive history can also be found in *Silver Ghosts of Australia and New Zealand* by Ian Irwin. See also back cover.

Paul can be contacted on 0407 097 911 or email [paulb@classicrally.com.au](mailto:paulb@classicrally.com.au)



*A period photo of the car. It has owned by only two families since new.*



*Hard at work towing a heavy trailer. The car was modified in the 1930s to be used as a farm vehicle and has done a very high mileage.*



*Photographed at the RROC Federal Rally Perth in April 1997.*

*Photos right: The car as it is today. It has not run for some years.*



*An engine view, with all major components intact and correct.*



The Silver Ghost with body by Barker, chassis 17CB, from 1915 which has been in the Falconer family ownership since 1923 is now for sale. The car is reputed to be the last pre-World War One Silver Ghost imported into Australia. It is also unique in that it retains the original coachwork and is completely unrestored.

Further photos can be found on page 22-23 of the Gazette