

October 2008



The Atlantic Lady

The Newsletter of The Atlantic Region



Photo by Bill Frederick's Studio/Sam Lahoz

On June 6, 2008, Klaudia, daughter of Maria and David Wilkinson, wed Michael Reyes at the Grace Episcopal Church in Nyack, New York. The bride was driven to the church in her father's Bentley S1 Continental, BC20LBG.

The Atlantic Lady Interview: Tom Clarke

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WF2Q@aol.com

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acwads@verizon.net

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bjmorris@rcn.com

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jmatsen@aol.com

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Acwads@verizon.net

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718-885-2724

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Editor

Bill Wolf
958 Arnet Avenue
Union, NJ 07853
908 687-0904
thecaptt@aim.com

Atlantic Region website:
www.atlanticrroc.org

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The Atlantic Lady

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The Atlantic Region is under the control of The Rolls-Royce Owners' Club, Inc.

Bill Wolf
Editor
958 Arnet Ave.
Union, NJ 07083
908-687-0904
thecaptt@aim.com

The Atlantic Lady is published bi-monthly by The Atlantic Region of The Rolls-Royce Owners' Club. Articles reflect the opinion of the authors and do not necessarily reflect club or region policy. The Atlantic Region and its editor seek to publish accurate material, but neither assumes responsibility in the event of loss or damage from publication.

The following is a schedule of our publication deadlines for future issues of *The Atlantic Lady*. If your material is to be included, it must reach the editor by the dates indicated:

Issue	Submission Date
February	January 7
April	March 7
June	May 7
August	July 7
October	September 7
December	November 7

Chairman's Message

by Howard Krimko

It certainly has been an exciting summer. The National Meet at Williamsburg was wonderful, and especially successful for Atlantic Region Members. There is a list of Atlantic Region National Prize winners elsewhere in this issue. We held the Atlantic Region Concours at Ringwood Park, in New Jersey and it turned out to be a great learning experience for many of our members. Even though Rolls-Royce Motors backed out of their traditional sponsorship of Lime Rock Vintage Car Weekend, a combined effort by the Yankee and Atlantic Region resurrected the event on two weeks notice. August 31 was a beautiful day and about fifteen Rolls-Royce and Bentley Motorcars were exhibited on the track at Lime Rock Park. A tailgate party substituted for the hospitality tent, but we brought our own tent and had a great time.



Our Chairman

The last event of the summer was held at Tuxedo Park. Peter and Barbara Regna rolled out their traditional Red Carpet for a memorable event. We began with a display of cars at The Tuxedo Club. Thanks to Peter's efforts there were many Pre-War cars at the event and John Cory brought five of his coachbuilt Cloud Class cars for a display on the Club lawn. After Lunch we visited the homes of Samuel M. Sugden and James Cacioppo. The event concluded at Chateau Regna where Peter and Barbara hosted a lavish cocktail party. I would like to personally thank Peter and Barbara for all their hard work in putting this event together. It was a great afternoon.

We have two events coming up this year. On Sunday, October 12, there is a Concours at the Americana Shopping Center. I am the Chief Judge at this event and everyone should have already received invitations. This is a great chance to see world-class automobiles in a viewer friendly environment. I hope that you will all be able to attend. Our traditional Holiday Party will be held at The Westchester Country Club. A flyer for this event will be published in the *Atlantic Lady*.

Editor's Message

By Bill Wolf

Please excuse a drop of nepotism. When my sister, Lucy, heard me talk about the RROC headquarters in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, she mentioned that she was heading for a conference nearby. I suggested she stop and visit, and I do believe she was bitten by the RR/B bug; I hope you enjoy her story. There was a lot of activity since the last issue was published, so I wish to thank all of those who took the time to write and send photographs—especially Howard Krimko who seems to work unflinchingly for our region. It was wonderful to see many of you at Tuxedo Park—more about that in our next issue.



Photo by Doris Wolf

Your Editor in Alaska

Correspondence

Hi Bill: Just a few lines to say thanks for the copies of your magazine; it was excellent. If they are all like that, I think you do a pretty good job for the enthusiasts. Thanks once again and hope you and your wife are okay. We've just come back to work from a two-week break, and boy didn't I need it! The weather was a bit mixed, but still it was a good rest. All the best to you all.

Dave Caine

Editor: I interviewed Mr. Caine from Bentley Motors for our last issue. It was kind of him to respond.

Dear Mr Wolf,

Just to confirm receipt of the package. The article is a great read so thank you for sending the copies.

Best regards, Jenny Elliot

Editor: Ms. Elliot works for Bentley Motors and she was most helpful when Doris and I toured the factory last April.

Dear Bill:

I would take great pleasure in keeping you up dated in stories going on at Bentley Motors. I really enjoyed doing my interview. As you have already guessed, I am quite a character—always playing practical jokes and having fun. The girls on the cell call me mum. I hope you and your family are well.

My eldest daughter is getting married Valentines Day next year. A Bentley would do well for a wedding car—I must look into that. The first time I went for a ride in a Bentley was a Friday morning working on overtime. We were given a lift around the factory to the canteen for breakfast. I was hooked on this amazing car from that moment on. My husband, John, turned 50 last year. He is heavily into American choppers, so I bought him a Honda Shadow with his own private number plate. I also booked a special restaurant with close friends and all unknowing to John we were picked up in a Continental Flying Spur. John thought we were going to a pub for a bar meal. I cannot express the feeling of how it felt when we pulled up at the restaurant.

I have just made some seats for a Brooklands in the most amazing colours. This car looks fab! I have spoken to Jenny to see if I can get any pictures and she said she will look into it for me. This is the nicest leathers I have seen. We at Bentley Motors are now on shut down for two weeks. I am going to Cornwall, on the South Coast, in our motor home with our youngest children next week. I hope to hear from you soon.

Debbie Dorricott

Editor: Ms Dorricott was also interviewed in our last issue. She works for Bentley Motors sewing the fine leathers found in Bentley motorcars. I am doing my best to recruit her to write articles for *TAL*.



Ms Dorricott of Bentley Motors

Dear Bill Wolf,

202AJS is a piece of my family's history as it was my Great Uncle Joseph Star who not only restored the vehicle himself (he restored every piece of that car by hand except for the clock in passenger compartment) but my Great Aunt Jinny and he took it around the world several times to car shows, family holidays and the like. When my uncle got sick in the late 90s, he decided to sell the car so my aunt wouldn't be burdened by it after he passed away.

When my Uncle was still with us he had promised my sister that he would drive her away after her wedding, and now she's getting married in less than two months and I really would like to honor his word. Just about every picture and memory I have of him is with this car. He had restored several other RR's in his home garage as well, but this was the one that he most treasured and drove most frequently. This was the car that started my love and passion for cars. Now that I'm older I've built quite a large collection for myself and this is the car I've always known I needed to bring back into my family and my collection as this is the car that's responsible for my car crazy disease (I hope that makes sense). My Great Uncle Joe was a large part of who I've become and I always find myself trying to lead my life in a manor he and my father would be proud of.

I have sent the following to Andre Blaise' who is so kindly helping me get the Phantom II back into our family:

Quite honestly there's very little I wouldn't do to get this car back into the US and back into my family. If at all possible, and from what I understand from Bill you may actually know who owns the car now and where it is physically located in Germany, any help you may provide is truly appreciated. I'd at least like to know first hand, so I can let my Aunt know (who's still with us), that the car went to a car lover who cared for the car. I know this is somewhat unusual and I'm sorry for making it seem like a sob story, but this car is a large part of my family's history and I WILL own it again one day. The question is now or later. I'd like to believe that I can do it now, and what I'm really hoping is the current owner/collection where the car is if I can tell them my story I'm hoping they will understand the passion and personal importance of the vehicle and consider selling it back to my family.

Thank you so much,
Matthew Katz

Editor: All of this is response to the ad published in the last TAL. It demonstrates the help and concern the worldwide Rolls-Royce/Bentley community gives to one another. 🙏

Corrections: In the August issue, the caption for the Mark V photo should have been the chassis number, B32AW. In the text of the Crewe/Goodwood article, it states that "the first of the Azures" is on display at Bentley Motors; this may be inaccurate. Also, in the same article, it states that the employees of Bentley Motors rotate day and night shifts weekly; this is incorrect. Shifts are rotated fortnightly.

TAL regrets her errors. 🙏

In Memoriam: *The Atlantic Lady* offers her sincere and deep condolences to the family and friends of Stewart Ross. He was active in the club, edited *The Atlantic Lady* and will be missed by all.

BC20LBG

By David Wilkinson

As a child I had a great interest in automobiles and auto racing. I recollect being told the stories of my mother's uncle, Ralph De Palma, and his nephew, Peter Di Paolo. In 1971, I read an advertisement in The New York Times announcing the First Annual Kirk F. White Motorcars Auction taking place at an Episcopal Church yard in Ardmore, Pennsylvania on May 1, 1971. I drove there the day before the auction and spotted a huge Mercedes racing car similar to the one my mother's uncle had driven and I decided I would bid on it.

My bid was not successful, however, but later in the auction, suddenly appearing like a beautiful woman across the room, was the Bentley. I hardly knew what a Bentley was although I was vaguely aware it was related to the Rolls-Royce. I raised my paddle just once and Kirk White pointed to me and announced, "Sold." My single and successful bid was for \$6,300.



A world record high bid of \$66,000 for a 1931 Duesenberg Phaeton was also sold at that auction. This was one of the first auctions of M. H. "Tiny" Gould and Kirk White, and I believe, too, that Roger Pensky was in some way sponsoring these auctions.

The Bentley was originally purchased in 1956 by a brewer from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for \$23,000. It was later owned by Ed Jurist, who owned the Vintage Car Store in Nyack. He used it as his personal automobile. Later it was sold to Gordon C. Morris from Upstate New York. He was, sadly, forced to sell it at the auction to pay his daughter's medical bills.

I used the car on a regular basis until perhaps ten years ago. 🐾



VINTAGE CAR STORE®

Dealers in Thoroughbred Motorcars

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPRAISAL OF THE PERSONAL PROPERTY:

-of-

Mr. David A. Wilkinson
32 Laveta Place
Nyack, N. Y. 10960

AND AT THE REQUEST OF:

AFFIDAVIT

Mr. David A. Wilkinson

X

STATE OF NEW YORK)
) ss:
COUNTY OF ROCKLAND)

E. A. JURIST, being duly sworn, deposes and says:

I am a qualified Appraiser and I am currently a member of APPRAISERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, INC. and the AMERICAN SOCIETY OF APPRAISERS as well as major automobile clubs in the United States and abroad, and that I am the PRESIDENT of VINTAGE CAR STORE, INC., whose place of business is located at 93-95 South Broadway, Nyack, New York.

I have been actively engaged for more than 25 years in the business of buying, selling, appraising automobiles of every description including that of the kinds and character set down upon the annexed schedule.

I, deponent E. A. JURIST, have personally inspected and appraised and made inventory of the vehicle(s) set forth in said schedule, described to me as belonging to the above mentioned individual, and that the value of same as stated in this affidavit is the true and fair market value as of the 17th day of April, 1991.

The said value are such as would have been paid for the property by a willing buyer from a willing seller in an open-market and not forced values.

Deponent further states that in his opinion the value of said property, so appraised, is in the amount of \$120,000.

Sworn to before me this day of April 18, 1991



EDNA FOWLER
NOTARY PUBLIC, State of NY
No. 4515731
Qualified in Rockland County
Commission Expires Dec. 31, 1991

Editor's note: Mr. Wilkinson reminds us that since the appraisal, he had factory air-conditioning and power steering installed.



Photo by Bill Frederick's Studio/Sam Lahoz

BCS0LBG in front of the Grace Episcopal Church for the Wilkinson/Reyes wedding.
Note the beauty of the 1880s neo-Gothic architecture.

A Trip to Mechanicsburg

By Lucy Wolf

The Rolls-Royce caught my eye and my gaze lingered on the maroon body with distinctive Everflex roof. It was the first time I had seen this beautiful automobile in town and I had to investigate. It was parked on Allegheny, the main street of Hollidaysburg—but there was no owner in sight. It was, however, a sighting worthy enough to report to Brother Bill, editor of the *The Altantic Lady*.

The gods were kind and a week later I was able to meet the owner of the Rolls, Don Massengale of Utah. He explained his car was a 1980 Silver Wraith II (LRL39131) and was rare for the model year. Mr. Massengale had lived in the area years ago. I also mentioned to Bill that I was to attend a law librarian conference in Mechanicsburg. He was delighted and shared a little-known secret: The Rolls-Royce Foundation Museum is in Mechanicsburg. Perfect opportunity to see a prized collection of Rolls-Royces and Bentleys.

And I did. When I arrived at the main office, I was pleasantly greeted by the staff, who recognized Bill's name, and directed to me to Laura Heescheen who is the curator of the museum. Laura was happy to have an enthusiastic guest and gave me her full attention. She encouraged me to pop in and out of the luxury vehicles and took photos of me "driving" these elegant automobiles. My favorites were the 1936 Bentley (B140FB) and the 1946 Rolls-Royce Silver Wraith (WYA16). Others I "drove" included a 1949 Mark VI (B429FU), a 1964 Silver Cloud III (9LSH559), 1992 Park Ward Corniche III (DAN40016).

When I told Laura that I was a librarian, she showed me the museum library collection and the National Register of the RROC.

I was quite impressed with exterior design of the vehicles, the famous grille, headlamps, the Flying Lady Hood ornament. I was intrigued with the personal touches of the interiors. Wooden dashboards, delicately hand-crafted knobs and handles, fully equipped bar in the back seat, the non-electric turn signals. Little touches that ooze grandeur.



Laura let me see the restoration room and the repair room, and she let me look up names of local owners. She gave me a photo and history of an H.J. Mulliner saloon, coachbuilt 1953 R Type Bentley (B370LS) owned by Mr. Henry Hoffstot of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, who is a friend of a friend of mine in Hollidaysburg. Mr. Hoffstot is the first and only owner of this graceful, beautiful Bentley.

My visit to the Rolls-Royce Foundation has given me new insight into the mystique of the Rolls-Royce and its history of handcrafted elegance and durability. Even the name Rolls-Royce rolls off the tongue with easy grace.

As a special birthday gift, Brother Bill, sent me a copy of Malcolm Bobbitt's book "Rolls-Royce & Bentley/ Sixty Years at Crewe" and arranged for Mr. Bobbitt to send me a personal greeting. It doesn't get any better than this. Blessings and hugs! 🙏



Lucy Wolf of Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania

Williamsburg National Meet

Editor: Thank you, Howard Krimko, for supplying TAL with the photographs for this year's grand event. All reports coming back from Virginia were positive. I hope all who had attended had a wonderful trip. Sincere congratulations to the winners. Sorry I missed you there. 🙏



Saluting a Modern Bentley



Vintage Bentley Powerplant



Williamsburg in Costume



The Gluckins, Andrea Krimko and Julius Cohen



Williamsburg



Bob Gluckin with his Prize Winning CRE26154



Our Chairman with his lovely wife Andrea



Larry Glenn of The Flying Lady
photographing Bob Shaffner's
Phantom IV, 4AF20



Riding the Ferry



Rene Cohen, Leslie Heller, Hugh Heller



Mark and Carolynne Corigliano



Prescott's Ammarell's 20/25 GYH62

Atlantic Region 2008 Prize Winners Williamsburg National Meet

TAL Offers Her Warmest and Fondest Congratulations to our winners.

Jeffrey Chernick	Silver Wraith/Silver Dawn Concours	1st Place
Julius Cohn	Silver Wraith/Silver Dawn Concours Rolls-Royce Trophy 1988 Corniche	2nd Place
Lee Dion	Silver Cloud I, II, III Touring	1st Place
Lawrence Durocher	Silver Cloud I,II,III, Concours Jack Frost Trophy H.J.M. Parkward Trophy	1st Place
Robert Gluckin	Silver Shadow/T Type Concours	1st Place
Richard Harries	Silver Spirit/Silver Spur Concours	3rd Place
Burton Hunter	Silver Spirit/Silver Spur Concours	2nd Place
Michael Shay	Mark VI/R Type Bentley Concours Guerrero Award	2nd Place
Ernest Smith	Late Ghost Touring	2nd Place
Walter Spilsbury	Late Ghost Concours Barrymore Trophy	3rd Place

CD Reviews

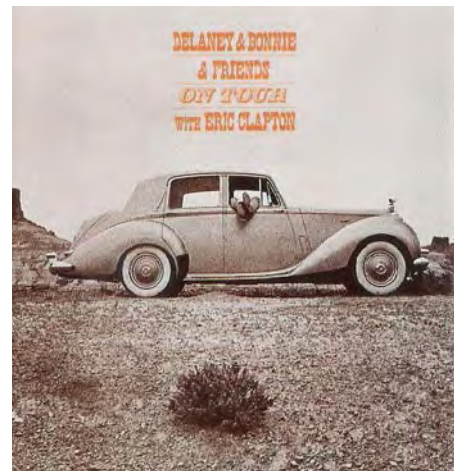
By Bill Wolf

Delaney & Bonnie

Delaney & Bonnie On Tour With Friends With Eric Clapton (Live)

June 1970

Atco



Live action from blue-eyed soul favorites Delaney and Bonnie Bramlett with Clapton's expert guitar work. Very nice 1970s classic rock. The Little Richard melody is nothin' but a groove.

Various Artists

30 Classic Car Tunes

1998

Sony Special Products



Robert Johnson's "Terraplane Blues", Charlie Ryan's "Hot Rod Lincoln", Ted Rubinowitz' "Hot Rod Man" and Nervous Norvovs' "Transfusion" make this a must-have CD. Norvovs' line, "Get out of my way, I don't drive with my horn" simply says it all.

Lord Such

Lord Such and Heavy Friends

Original Release Date: 1970

Wounded Bird Records



Such are the friends: Jimmy Page, Jeff Beck, Noel Redding and Nicky Hopkins. Predicable blend of classic rock and heavy metal. Keep in mind that Redding played with Hendrix and Hopkins played with The Rolling Stones. Beck does manage to get off some blistering wah-wah.

CD Reviews (Continued)

The Modern Folk Quartet

Changes

1964

Collector's Choice Music (originally Warner Bros.)



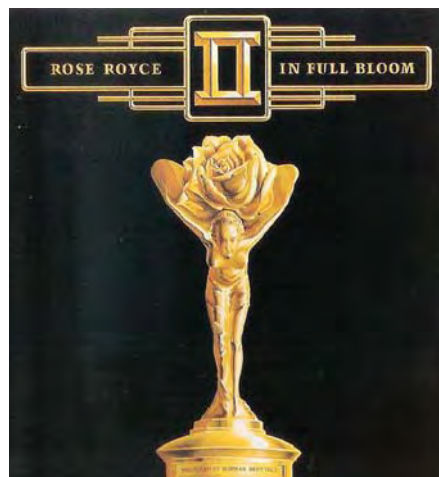
Less smooth than The Kingston Trio—and, as one reviewer put it, “slightly hipper than Chad Mitchell.” Recommended only to those who are dead set on completing a collection of early sixties folk material.

Rose Royce

In Full Bloom

1977

Ol' School



This CD is a pleasant blend of soul and disco. It has its moments. Recommended for those of you who came of age during the Disco Era and want a bit of background while you are polishing your Rolls-Royce or Bentley.

The Streets

The Hardest Way to Make an Easy Living

2006

Locked On

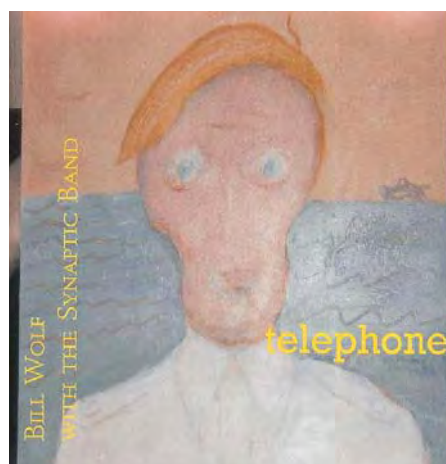


Surprisingly, an interesting and not unpleasant blend of contemporary pop and British, blue-eyed hip-hop. Be careful: Not heeding the Parental Advisory may lead to embarrassment.

CD Reviews (Continued)

Bill Wolf with the Synaptic Band
Telephone
Private Release

Don't ask.



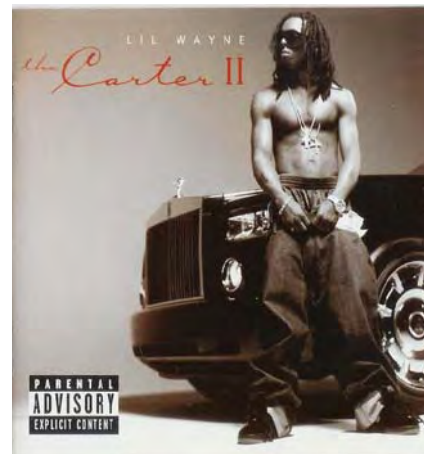
Kyle [Garrahan Kyle]
Times That Try a Man's Soul
1971
Paramount Records

Confession: It has been about a year since I had my turntable up and running, so I am reviewing this LP (the only LP amidst the CDs reviewed herein) pretty much in the dark—and, the LP itself had been in storage for however long. I have vague memories of passable folk melodies and lyrics augmented by an occasional harpsichord and other non-folky instruments. Kyle wrote all the songs.



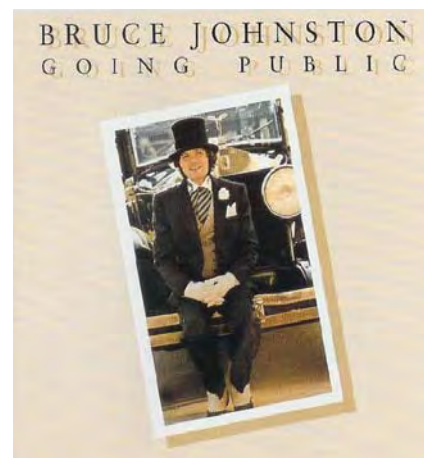
CD Reviews (Continued)

Lil Wayne
The Carter II
December 2006
Cash Money



According to reviewer Oliver Wang, Lil Wayne “wields a genuinely impressive array of different styles...from the chattering, thuggish ‘Fireman’ and the languid style of ‘Oh No’ to the emotional, introspective ‘Feel Me.’” Who am I to argue? This CD comes with a warning label: Parental Advisory. Do not play when the Grandchildren are over.

Bruce Johnston
Going Public
1977
Edsel Records



Although not one of the founding members of the Beach Boys, Bruce Johnston joined early in the band’s career. His contributions have always been a bit too saccharine for my taste, although I do like and appreciate his “Disney Girls” from the Beach Boys’ *Surfs Up* LP. Johnson’s solo album brings out the worst in the artist; apparently his sticky-sweetness had been balanced by other voices and arrangements when performing as a Beach Boy. Some of you may be surprised to know that Johnston wrote the song, “I Write The Songs,” a huge hit for Barry Manilow. This song, along with a solo version of “Disney Girls,” is found on this CD. Recommended only if you are a hardcore fan or you happen to be captivated by the cover art. 🙄

The 2008 Concours: A Deadline and a Destination

By Charles Roy

The 2008 Concours was held on Sunday, August 3. It was both a deadline and a destination: a deadline to bring my PMC to a certain level of mechanical excellence, cleanliness and shine, and a destination to spend a splendid day in pastoral surroundings with fellow members of the Atlantic Region.

Deadline – Mechanics

I became the custodian of SBL-32298 at the Dallas-Forth Worth Airport on the morning of July 14, 2007. After giving a pile of cash to the reluctant seller, I obtained in exchange the keys to the loving Charoux, along with gifts, such as books and champagne. We departed immediately, with the hopes of reaching the William J. Clinton Presidential Library and Museum in time before closing. However, my very understanding co-pilot (a fellow Canadian RROC member) and I shared a wonderful lunch, spiked with a happy supply of wine, in celebration of my new acquisition. After partaking in some dessert, we voyaged to Wal-Mart to gather car-cleaning products. Thereafter, every rest area became a magnet enticing us to pull off the road and stop to clean Charoux. We attempted to resist, but frequently succumbed. Needless to say, we arrived at Mr. Clinton's library after closing. If you enjoy looking at beautiful buildings, please take the time to study the architecture of this library the next time you are in Little Rock, Arkansas. You would also enjoy the superb architecture of the state capitol, the symmetry and balanced scale of which are reminiscent of the best elements of classical and Renaissance architecture.



A Fine Looking Interior



Beautiful Day/ Beautiful Phantom V

One thousand eight hundred miles further, we arrived home. Although we were pleased about the roadworthiness of my new Bentley, we became the more conscious of the impending maintenance and repairs that would make her a joy to behold. Hence, over the next twelve months, many issues had to be addressed, some anticipated, and some not. Ready? Here we go!: New tires (Avon, of course); new pre-catalytic converter (we are conscious of the environment, aren't we?); new rack (as of June 2008, you can save money by having yours reconditioned by Crewe, instead of buying a new one like me); new struts (as I was coveting a softer ride than that offered by the Bentley adaptive suspension, I now regret not having installed R-R struts instead); new engine mounts; new hand brake pads and cables; new thermostat (please, I beseech you, do not forget to take this opportunity to install a new temperature sensor);

new oil pressure transmitter; new bonnet cable; and a new water pump, the need of which prevented us from attending the Meet in Williamsburg with Charoux. Now you can catch your breath! As they say, these are complicated cars. . . .

Deadline – Cosmetics

Although I have been mostly passive with respect to the mechanical issues, I was fully immersed with the cosmetic improvements. The details about the countless hours spent scrubbing, rubbing, cleaning, and polishing would lull you into a haze. Nevertheless, one should remain positive and endeavor to provide insightful, thoughtful advice. In three words: zymöl did it. If the rust was nonexistent, and the leather remained uncracked, the former was stained from pollution and dirt and the latter dried from the sun. As Charoux is Mason black, every imperfection glares at the world to be noticed. Although, good quality clay and Leatherique products resulted in noticeable improvements, I thank God for having brought me into the presence of Mr. Emmons at the Meet in Williamsburg. Mr. Emmons generously took the time to present and explain the various features of the zymöl products. HD-Cleanse (pre wax cleaner) thoroughly cleaned the paint on my car. In short, with clay and this cleaner, no buffing is needed with a damaging electrical tool. While, Leatherique provided a newfound suppleness to the leather, it did not give it the gloss that I desired. Fortunately, Treat (leather conditioner) resulted in a most wonderful improvement.



Cars Displayed on the Lawn

There you are: A safe and clean PMC to attend the Concours!



Very Tasteful Coupe

functionality and effectiveness of irons! These moments will remain vivid in my memory for many years to come.

Destination

Charoux was in her garage listening to the rain for most of the night, and she was thinking: “Are we going or are we staying at home tomorrow?” Happily, at 4a.m., the rain ceased, and by the time we departed home, the temperature and the blue sky could not have been more inviting. We were the first to arrive, preceding various PMCs, most of them beautiful, and many of them in perfect condition. They were so lovely parked in a straight line, with the quaint valley and mountains in the background!

As you know, properly pressed clothing is always a vital concern, and it is always comforting to meet like minded people. Although Mr. Karpel, a new member to whom we extend our most heartfelt welcome, was there to present his acquisition, we spent most of the time discussing the apparatus he fabricated to test and compare the



Hugh Heller's Very Lovely
1954 Hooper Empress R-Type B75ZX

And then time came for Charoux to be judged. I had reviewed the judge sheets, and we were ready for some deductions. However, I had not at all considered the battery and its compartment. Oh, what a shame! Mr. Durocher, you learned judge, still I do not know if you deducted a point, but please be informed that I have since installed a proper black battery of the right size and cleaned and polished that compartment and those terminals.

We had brought our canopy to protect us from the sun's rays. Yet, by mid-afternoon, its dual purpose became apparent, as it started to protect us from the rain. In the meantime, we visited Skylands Manor, which is more or less the centerpiece of the New Jersey Botanical Garden. While we shared car stories, we had a glorious picnic, and, as always, the time to depart diminished our jovial mood.

Thank you to all of you who have taken a part in organizing this Concours. It was a most wonderful day. After all, is this not a purpose of the RROC, and our Chapter? Please be part of the fun at our next event. In the meantime, may you enjoy repairing, maintaining, scrubbing, rubbing, cleaning, and polishing your PMCs! 🗝️



Beautiful Day/Beautiful Design



“On week-ends his Rolls-Royce became an omnibus, bearing parties to and from the city between nine in the morning and long past midnight....”

F. Scott Fitzgerald:
The Great Gatsby, 1925

“When things go wrong, go wrong with you, it hurts me too.”

Elmore James



Photos courtesy of Kenwall Auto Body, Linden, New Jersey

Tom Clarke Interview

1. To start, tell us about yourself—your family, where you live, your work, your interests and hobbies.

A slightly complicated story. My family ended up in Singapore at the end of the War and I was born there. I was brought up in Australia but moved to England in 1970. My professional life was in librarianship (including a period at R-R Crewe), later training as a furniture designer/maker. Latterly I've switched to motoring history research. For some years we lived in Manchester, birthplace of R-R, but now we've retired to Cheltenham near the Cotswolds, west Midlands really. Apart from motoring history as a job and hobby, I take an interest in local history and architecture. Until recently I served on the Dating Panel of the Veteran Car Club.

2. Please discuss your position and duties in the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club.

None really. I was archivist from 1977-85 of the Sir Henry Royce Memorial Foundation (where the RREC is housed). And I indexed the RREC's Bulletin annually until 1995.



3. Tell us the history of RREC.

Eric Barrass has told the story in various publications so I'll just mention that it started in Oxford in 1957 and has now grown to 10,000 members, a third of them overseas. Before the RREC grew so large the 20 Ghost Club (membership by invitation), and the Midlands R-R Club, were the only other groups.

4. Why Rolls-Royce? Why not—say—Bugatti, Cadillac, Daimler or Duesenberg?

Or Fiat! I bought a 20 h.p. R-R in Australia in 1964 when I was 17. Before long I part-exchanged it for a small 1925 Fiat 509. Bad choice. So the R-R interest resumed. In 1966 I bought a 20/25 R-R (probably the best all-round R-R ever made!) and used it as my everyday car. Gave wonderful service in the Australian heat. But seeing a Silver Dawn at the 1955 Motor Show, when I was 11, really clinched the interest. And this happened in a country where American cars had long dominated!

5. Tell us about WMB64—and other cars you own.

I've owned my 1939 Wraith H. J. Mulliner saloon since 1984. I saw it first in 1970 and always wanted it because of the unique High Vision coachwork. I've spent a lot of money and effort sorting out the mechanical side but the bodywork is going to prove beyond me. It's still a nice car to use, smooth and quiet, 17 mpg (Imperial), and stunning looks. I've now also bought a standard 1951 Silver Dawn (SDB26) in Australia to use there on holidays. Very original car, the 1951 Melbourne Show car in fact.

6. Your book, *The Rolls-Royce Wraith*, came out in 1986. Please talk about how one goes about doing research for such a book—obtaining photographs, chassis numbers, gathering data, rechecking facts and the rest. How much time is involved?

To produce a really original book takes an inordinate amount of time. There's a lot to be said for just doing cut and paste books! First of all you've got to have the idea, the theme, the story that makes you excited about writing. Nobody had written about the Wraith model before. And then you've just got to pursue every lead you can think of: Hunt House, obviously, to create a chassis list; dealer records often found at the Hunt House; any surviving coachwork records (finding so many led me to add coachbuilding to my interests); and then tracking down collectors of photographs, photographic libraries and so on. In the mid 1980s it was still possible to interview 'old boys' who had worked on Wraiths at R-R Derby or the coachbuilders so I was lucky to be able to base my writing on first hand accounts (particularly the main Park Ward appendix in my book). Finally, the Experimental Files at the Hunt House gave me the company context for the Wraith design. Anyone contemplating a book on a motoring subject should join the Society of Automotive Historians and that way build up contacts for material. And you should never work in isolation. Always get yourself known and bounce ideas off other writers or researchers. Email is essential.

7. I saw a first edition of this book advertised for \$275 (US). Any comment on this?

About 1,200 copies were printed, to a pretty good standard, and there was only one edition. They sold out quickly (nobody made any profit!) and soon later Wraith owners were desperate to own a copy. About £120 is not unknown for a nice copy, much more for the rare leather edition. Some parts of the book are now out of date but it remains useful for the "Wraith in its context".

8. Please list other books you have written or contributed to.

The next big one was a study of the 1903-07 cars incorporated into the Fasal & Goodman monumental volumes 'The Edwardian Rolls-Royce' in 1994. In 1997 the first edition of my book on the 20/25 h.p. appeared, and another edition in 2001. In 1999 David Neely in Australia and I had our book 'Rolls-Royce and Bentley in the Sunburnt Country' published. In 2003 my study 'Royce and the vibration damper' (doesn't sound very sexy does it?) was published by the R-R Heritage Trust in Derby. Over the years I've done smaller brochures on other topics. My tally of articles is around 70, probably the activity I enjoy most as they are more manageable. Currently I'm working with Jack Triplett of Maryland on a very big project covering Gurney Nutting coachwork, and I have a book on C. S. Rolls in progress.



Photo By: Ruben Verdes

9. Let's go to something recent: Please give your impressions concerning the RROC National Meet in Williamsburg.

A terrific Meet which Fiona and I enjoyed enormously. Such a lovely area. I have been to Meets since Long Beach in 1987 and in more recent years we both thought Seattle 1995, Hot Springs 1997 and 2002, plus Newport 1998, Lexington 2001, and Monterey 2004 were all fantastic. Unlike R-R events in Britain, the U.S. meets give you a longer (but busy) timeframe, more spacious location and accommodation, and huge variety of activity. Williamsburg was really well organized, even Presidents Washington and Jefferson popped along for a chat! You really can't beat the atmosphere and social whirl. Where all Meets now suffer is in the decline in attendance by the older cars. The annual rally in Britain is still huge but proportionately fewer old cars appear too. Members need to dig deep and find the time and devotion to make their pre and early post War cars truly drivable for long distances. Properly maintained they are delightful, and then you just need to take your time to get to places on back roads. U.S. motoring holds out many delights, perhaps creating 'wagon trains' or convoys to share the enjoyment. Trucking a car to a Meet adds to the carbon footprint I think. Making concours judging less dirt-orientated might reduce an owner's fears of having to clean to excess after you arrive!

10. Discuss your relationship with RROC.

I enjoy good relations with HQ staff, who've always been so obliging with requests. But as an overseas member I don't really have another role. The late, and much revered, John De Campi and others eased my path within the RROC. I joined the RROC in 1971 and was bowled over with the bound volumes of Flying Lady I bought, also the regular reprinted 'freebies', and am still in awe of the bi-annual Directory, a wonderful service. The digital Flying Lady service is even more stupendous. So my relationship with the RROC is one of utter satisfaction!

11. Discuss your relationship with The Flying Lady.

I've been contributing full length articles to Flying Lady since 1996 and I greatly enjoy this link. Sabu Advani has made it one of the best motoring magazines around and he's a great team player, always seeking authoritative material and insisting his writers aim high. If anyone out there wants to get involved with writing history let me know! I'd willingly help anyone who wants to get started.

12. I consider one of the main pleasures and enjoyments of being a part of the Rolls-Royce/Bentley community is the open collegiality among enthusiasts worldwide. I would appreciate your opinion on this.

That's certainly true in two ways: 1. If you visit other countries, as I've been lucky to do from England to Australia, the U.S., Europe, the Philippines, Zimbabwe, and Japan, you find RR owners (perhaps through the RROC Directory) who have interesting cars hidden away or some unusual history to relate to you, often leading to new discoveries. Wherever you go, you can usually find a R-R, it's a great ambassador! 2. If you maintain contact via the Internet and email you'll soon reach people in all sorts of places who will suddenly share a topic you're researching or have information you couldn't find elsewhere. It has certainly revolutionized my contacts around the world.

13. Would you please share anecdotes about any well-known personalities in the Rolls-Royce/Bentley community?

Hmmm, not sure I can recall many anecdotes but I've been lucky to meet quite a few Founders in the British, American, and Australian RR clubs as well as some renowned collectors. Eric Barrass, secretary of the British Club from 1961-95 approximately, is well known internationally. One of his memorable pronouncements has stuck in my mind. It was at one RREC Annual Rally, held on a typically wet, soggy, British summer's day. The judging field was covered in water, almost a lake. Eric just brushed it aside, 'Welcome to the RREC Regatta, dear boy!' Every two years or so Fiona and I go the Australian Club's Federal Rally where I often meet laconic older members. I have happy memories of 20 h.p. owner the late Terence Donovan O'Reilly Bruce and his antics. If you want to read about him and absorb a new angle on R-R ownership then you'll need to read David Neely's monumental history of the RROC of Australia, 'In the Rear View Mirror' (2004). We owe a lot to those early characters who gave the RR clubs their distinctive flavor.

14. Malcolm Bobbitt told me that you have a particular interest in coachbuilt cars. Discuss the pleasures (and problems?) of owning a coachbuilt motorcar.

First the problems: wood rot! A bit like owning a historic house - it looks great but underneath it's only the worms holding hands that keeps it together. The pleasure is the sheer variety of form and style, together with the endless range of interior treatments, that make all coachbuilt cars so fascinating. Each coachbuilder had a house style, or little manufacturing habits, that are intriguing to appreciate today, it's almost personal. Not all coachbuilt cars creak or rattle, and those that are solid with doors that 'thunk' when they shut just make you all the more appreciative of the handwork and craftsmanship that went into the cars. I like to honor those unsung people.

15. Although by now it is old news, please comment on the Rolls-Royce/Bentley split. Was it hard to see the stewardship of the marque leave British hands?

You bet! Under European Union rules it was no longer possible for a British government to control the fate of one of its flagship companies. Even though a major British consortium put in a bid, the Labour government minister in charge of takeover policy nodded it through to the German bidder(s). In the end much good has come out of this (particularly for employment at Crewe and Goodwood) but it's hard to believe a British company trying to take over, say, Mercedes-Benz would have received approval from the German government! As my RR interests are mainly pre-war I take a stronger interest in Rolls-Royce Group p.l.c. in Derby, one of the world's great aero engine makers and increasingly a force in power generation and marine propulsion. Allison in the U.S. is part of the R-R group.

16. Is there anything you wish to add?

Interesting times ahead. We've got gas prices that will affect RR activity, and we've got an environmental movement that doesn't take into account the long life of such a car compared to the energy it takes to make a new car every few years. So we'll need to be alert to maintain the importance of Rolls-Royce and all it stands for.

Happy Halloween from *TAL*



Walter McCarthy was kind enough to share a picture of a 1939 Wraith he once owned.

BOARD BITS

John Matsen

RROC Northeast Area Director

The RROC Board of Directors has drafted a complete overhaul of the club's bylaws. They have decided that henceforth bylaws should be approved by the club membership, rather than just by the board as at present. Accordingly the new bylaws will be included on the elections ballot sent to members in November.

Some of the major changes in the governance of the club include:

1. The board of directors will be reduced in number from 23 (12 officers and 11 Area Directors) to 14. There was considerable consensus that the present board of 23 was too large.
2. Members will elect directors. The directors then elect a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. This model is used by most corporations and also by other car clubs, and is more like a parliamentary system of government.
3. The position of Area Director is eliminated along with Vice Presidents for Activities, Judging, Awards, Pre-war Technical, Post-war Technical, Communications, Membership, and Regions and Societies.
4. The functional duties of the previous vice presidents will be conducted by committee chairmen appointed by the board. These committee chairmen will become non-voting members of the board if they are not elected as directors. Additional committee chairmen may be appointed by the board.
5. Each year, seven directors will be elected for two year terms. The nominating committee is required to nominate at least 10 candidates, so every election will be a contest. There has been grumbling in the past when only one candidate for each position appears on the ballot, and at the same time contested elections pit two nominees directly against each other with sometimes divisive actions within the club.
4. Elections will take place at the Annual Meeting, which will coincide with the summer national meet. Thus there will be an annual general membership meeting in reality as well as in theory.
5. The size of the bylaws will be substantially reduced. The slack will be taken up by policies and procedures, which will be adopted in conjunction with the new bylaws. There is general consensus that the present bylaws are too detailed. They have grown piecemeal over the years.

Next Issue: Tuxedo Park



Photo By: Bill Wolf



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