

TEE ONE TOPICS

(An occasional bit of bumf distributed among owners and others interested in the maintenance and care of Proper Motor Cars)

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Disclaimer

The Tee One movement is not in any way affiliated nor associated with the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia nor any other organisation. Its aims are to spread knowledge and information about proper motor cars that would not normally appear in club journals nor any other publications readily available to the public.

The knowledge of owners and enthusiasts that is shared in these gatherings is offered/received without any form of guarantee or authority. Individuals are solely responsible for their own cars and actions and the use to which they put the information gained.

It is with a good deal of pleasure that we put this issue together. Last month John Begg and David Gore put a group of Sydney owners into overall and flung them into the deep end together with their Silver Shadows. A more enthusiastic group you would not ask for. They ranged from early twenties to ancient in age and from selling their braces to buy an oil filter to a few from whom Kerry Packer borrows money. They all got equally dirty and apparently all had a great time. George Shores and Bill Coburn were invited to lead the group more than ably assisted by David Gore. George will give a more detailed report further on in this issue.

The ownership and maintenance of Rolls-Royce products in this country has had a checkered history. Due to the lurches and diversity of our economy since Federation, populations of owners are not concentrated in identifiable areas. Due to the sheer size of the country dealers and trained service personnel are spread far apart, a rather alarming fact to face when you have a fail to proceed situation in North Galargumbone. Lastly the name Rolls-Royce while generally respected by most Australians has never held the awesome and mysterious status that prevailed in the Mother country.

The net result of all this is that we have a wide range of models of Rolls-Royce in conditions ranging from heaps of parts in boxes and buckets at the back of a shed to grossly over-restored examples in museums that will never again see the light of day.

Ownership of these cars has inevitably percolated down through our egalitarian society, inevitably finishing up with people such as myself who used to try to put the wife on the street corner for a night in order to buy the next part when I was restoring my Silver Dawn. And to illustrate this even more graphically, tastelessly and irreverently, George Shores' very own father Trevor, who was the bootmaker at Duntroon owned at least three Rolls-Royces. Needless to say he maintained them himself through sheer necessity.

Well today the scene has not changed a great deal. I well remember every man and his dog turning up at rallies or being seen driving the ubiquitous Mark VI because they were the first real major influx of Rolls-Royces into the country. These have now moved to the coddled preservation class along with the pre-war cars and been replaced with the plague of Silver Shadows. The latest of these are now 20 years old and the worst drivable examples are selling for less than you would expect to pay for a well kept EH Holden. And so it is unrealistic to expect someone who buys one of these

derelict examples to tow it into Sydney Bentley and ask them to fix it. Even if that dealer was prepared to take on the job, the necessary charges that would be incurred would make the whole exercise quite uneconomic. But you still have the basic unit, a Rolls-Royce. As enthusiasts we hate to see the demise of any example and hopefully some demented soul will acquire the pathetic chassis and attempt to breath life back into it. But unless he is a gifted genius he will need help. Help with procedures, help with technical data, help with parts acquisition and most importantly injections of encouragement to tackle the seemingly impossible.

It is here that the Clubs, and I am speaking globally now, come into their own. Here you should have populations of people who collectively know most of what is needed to restore these cars or at the very least knowledge of where to get it.

The evolution of the model registers and the now functionally named self help groups is an extension of the of the Club charter. Thanks to automotive and legal apocrypha Clubs particularly in this country have been at pains to avoid fostering these efforts. At the same time the Factory has not been over enthusiastic in providing owners with information to maintain their vehicles. And lastly with a few prominent exceptions, dealers and licenced repairers are not particularly keen on parting with their hard learned trade secrets to the would-be enthusiastic restorer.

So all the foregoing is to explain why bum amateurs such as George and myself promote and encourage groups of people such as yourself to get in and have a go. We are not suggesting that you will immediately embark on a complete engine overhaul of your car, nor that you will become an immediate expert on all that ails your car, but we hope that the self help sessions and these pages will give you a glimmer of insight into what is involved in maintaining these vehicles, a growing awareness of their foibles and their possible cause and lastly a firm conviction that you are driving a vehicle the likes of which will never again be produced.

Keeping an Eye on your Nipples.

An oft-neglected accessory to the whole machine, grease nipples are not projections to force a grease gun against and grunt. But then I should mention the story, which you may not have heard which concerns a customer contemplating the purchase of a Silver Ghost. The 'spin' in those days was the total reliability of the chassis and this customer was testing the claim to the limit.

Espying the crank handle neatly cradled under the radiator he turned on the hapless salesman and pointed out that if the car was so reliable why on earth was this item needed; was the self starter perhaps unreliable? Legend has it that the salesman fixing the eye of his customer enquired whether 'Sir' had ever noticed two small projections located one on either side of his chest. The customer probably sensitive to the proprieties of the day nervously conceded the observation. The salesman continued pointing out that the likelihood of the customer ever needing these redundant protuberances on his body for the purpose for which they were apparently designed was about as likely as his experiencing the necessity to employ the crank handle.

Sorry that is the only relevant nipple story I know.

Some months ago I pulled the whole front suspension out of the S2 mainly to clean it but also to renew the rubber dust seals that had to be perished after 40 odd years. In fact most of them weren't. Having removed the coil springs, always a task to raise the blood pressure and tension levels, I loosened the very large threaded bushes that screw into the lower control arms; no small task given that they are tightened to 250 foot pounds tension. When I came to loosen the lower, outer rear bush,

the whole assembly came away in my hand. The thread on the main suspension pins had almost completely worn away obviously through lack of lubricant.

I had for the past 15 years pumped grease more or less blindly into the appropriate nipple but it had obviously gone everywhere but where it should be. An expensive result I can confirm.

Greasing a Cloud III recently I paid very careful attention to what and how much oozed out of the various joints as I pumped. I noticed the apparent lack of ooze from the lower outer joints. Removal of the grease nipple showed no fresh grease inside so a blockage was right there. But a new nipple produced no better result. The problem turned out to be a plug of grease that had gone quite hard with age. This was cleared and grease flowed as it was intended. Hopefully little damage has been done.

NOTE: - To be read only by those involved with Silver Cloud and S series Cars

Assuming you do your own greasing, the procedure we followed to clear 'the plug' was as follows. We removed the tie rod from the steering arm, which allowed a socket, and breakbar to be put on the rear screwed bush. It was very tight as expected put with the aid of a length of water pipe it came unscrewed. This was wound out about ¼ of an inch. The same procedure was followed with the front bush, which was easily accessible. These bushes screw simultaneously into the control arms (wishbones?) and onto the suspension lower bearing pin pressed into the yoke connecting the upper control arms with the lower ones.

The grease nipple on the underside of the yoke feeds through a drilling in this pin and into its centre, which has quite a large hole right through it. The grease oozes out of the ends of the pins and forces its way past the threads of the bush screwed onto it and emerges into daylight where the bush ends. There is only a small clearance between the end of the pivot pin and the end of the bush and it is here that we suspect the dried plug formed and prevented grease getting through to the threads in the bush. By screwing the bushes out say ¼ inch the plug could be pushed out and the newly available space filled with grease. Hopefully oozing out at the end of the bush. Screwing the bush back into the control arm and onto the suspension pin also forces the reservoir of grease out through the threads.

Notes for the unwary

There would be few owners that would have the size sockets, tension wrench etc needed for this task but we will list them below. If there is the slightest doubt that the grease is getting through liaise with your friendly garage man who will have a hoist and he can follow the above procedure.

Tools needed

- Tie rod end splitter
- I ¼" AF socket
- 6" ¾" drive socket extension
- Tension wrench of at least 250 ft lbs capacity
- Grease gun
- Button Nipple adapter
- Grease!
- II/I6" set spanner
- Side cutters to remove the split pins
- Split pins

Data

- Tighten both screwed bushes to 250ft lbs

NSW, WE HAVE IGNITION

George Shores

I will begin by offering Bill Coburn's and my congratulations to the keen Silver Shadow owners and friends who attended the inaugural NSW Self Help meeting organised by John Begg. The 'organisers' learned as much as the 'organised'. As an invited guest, I shall leave the formatting of the next meeting in the capable hands of John Begg and the very enthusiastic David Gore.

One observation, if I may; people were asking the right sort of questions. That, to me, was a clear indicator that the time is ripe for the "Learn hows" to move before the "know hows" drift away. There was less of the "Can you stop this rattle?" type of request, and more of the "How do you get at that to stop it rattling?" going on. The meeting was very encouraging.

Why do we need a "self help" movement? I think the answer is multi-faceted and will attempt to iterate mine.

History, the teacher.

A couple of decades ago, when Silver Shadows were still relatively new, the Silver Dawn was less esteemed than it is today. Many were doomed to the mechanical knackery because people simply failed to maintain them. Often, by the time a real enthusiast acquired one it was too far-gone to be anything but a spares car. Silver Shadows and T series Bentleys are heading in that direction and it is up to us as enthusiasts who believe that we are "merely custodians" of our cars, to safeguard them from that fate and other mistakes of the past.

Preservation of knowledge.

Anyone who has worked on these cars will agree that the workshop manual, as valuable an addition to one's toolkit as it is, still leaves something to be desired when it comes to some of the more complex jobs. For example, one may be frustrated by the simplicity of the instruction "remove window winding mechanism from the door frame." only to find that an hour later, one is still tongue biting and fiddling. Most of our professional members can do it with ease, (because they know the tricks) but they won't be around forever. If owners can learn about their cars, that knowledge is preserved.

Protection of the cars.

Sometimes from uncaring drivers, often from themselves. Our cars are extremely well built and can carry crippling unserviceabilities without fuss. We need to be able to tell when something is amiss. Better still, catch it beforehand, by observation, monitoring and the swapping of experiences with like-ininded people. The first thing most people do when shown a badly scored disc rotor (brakes) is to check the condition of their own. That's good, because it's the first step in Self Help. Now extrapolate that into meetings dedicated to maintenance (preservation) of our cars.

Equality.

Most of the membership is within a short distance of an expert proficient in the maintenance and repair of Rolls-Royce and Bentley motor cars. A few are not. They have limited options. They can transport their cars to the nearest capable repair facility (perhaps hours away), or they can ask their local mechanic to "have a go at it, or they can leave it unserviceable and unused. Or they can fix it

themselves with the advice and help of fellow enthusiasts. Like us. Out station people need not be isolated by the tyranny of distance.

Enthusiasm.

An enthusiast's car always stands out. It may not be a rare and/or expensive example but the oil is always clean and the car tidy. Enthusiasm is infectious, so infect. We need to preserve that as much as we do the cars. Who else are we minding these wonderful cars for?

A final word of thanks to the proprietors of the establishment (as mentioned elsewhere). Without the generosity of those kind souls, we'd be out on the street, literally.

NOW IS THE TIME