

CREWE'D JOTTINGS

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Please visit the [Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia \(Victoria Branch\) website](http://www.rrocavictoria.org.au/) for more of our local Club news. www.rrocavictoria.org.au/

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We have reached the end of this century's first decade and even with all the scientific achievements and wonderful gizmos that operate, either at our fingertips or even at the command of our voices, my favourite decade is still the 1950's. As a young child in Post-War Britain, I was innocent from the horrors of recent conflict; I enjoyed listening to the valve radio and to the Goons, Family favourites, Les Baxter, the cascading strings of Mantovani and Ron Goodwin's orchestra playing my favourite piece of music, the Elizabethan Serenade. I had a disdain for Rock and Roll (but I eventually got used to it) and loved the sounds of Strauss, Beethoven and Tchaikovsky. I suppose I was born a 'square' (I think the modern name is nerd) and I bore the name proudly. Don't ask me the name of any pop group that came out after 1972 because chances are, I've never heard of them (I do remember the Seekers though).

So what on earth am I ranting about and what has it got to do with Crewe'd Jottings? You may well ask. Well, quite a lot actually; before the smell of plastic invaded our nostrils, motorcars of the 1950s and earlier essentially carried two distinct aromas – leather and wood. There was another factor too. There were no computers to make car designers lazy and it was easy to spot the manufacturer of any car on the road in that era (try doing that now from a reasonable distance). But one marque continues to stand out from the rest and that is of course, the Rolls-Royce motorcar.

I'm not going to wade into any politics regarding who owns what or any other arguments, but there is one thing I can say with safety; a Rolls-Royce still stands out from the rest from the outside and when one sits inside it, one can still smell the wood and leather. Sitting in even a 21st century Double R can still transport me back to my favourite decade and manage to do this magical time travel without me even turning the key. When I do turn the key, I can choose to listen to the gentle purr from the power plant, the whisp of the air as it passes behind me and the caress of the tyres as they kiss the bitumen.

If I wish to make H.G.Wells's fantasy come closer to life, I can turn the radio to a classical station or insert a disc or computer flash drive into the console and allow Mantovani, Strauss or Goodwin to insulate me further from the chaos of the times that we live in.

These motorcars are worth preserving. No matter what decade is your chosen favourite, any Crewe, Derby, Cricklewood or Goodwood product will take you there. Teach your children the true value of these cars! If you don't, they will be lost forever. Sooner or later, your kids will tire of 'sub-woofers' and tyre burning doughnuts and if they manage to retain most of their hearing (and survive 'hoon driving'), they may even learn to slow down, look around and actually smell the roses. Show them that there is a world of difference between a cesspit and a lake, a cacophony and music, a Picasso and a daVinci, a Trabant and a Rolls-Royce or Bentley (The opinions are expressly mine and not necessarily those of the RROC).

It was refreshing therefore, to see that out last Self-Help event had some Members bring along their under 12 year olds to the meeting. Certainly, they played some games and didn't watch what was going on all the time (who would expect less?), but watch us they did and of more importance – they admired the cars and began to understand what these cars are really about. They must be encouraged and I encourage each owner to do the same, for they are ours and our cars' future.

It's time to step off my soap box. Crikey! I think I've finally become a grumpy old man.

As has become somewhat of a pleasant tradition, we held our final self-help event for the year at one of our Member's homes in which he designed his garage with our grubby finger brigade in mind. Lionel's garage is situated at the rear of his home and is accessed from the street behind his residence. The garage is fully equipped with an air compressor, all necessary tools and a nice deep pit to get under the cars with ease.

The pit wasn't necessary for the first car (a 1953 Silver Wraith); the owner only needed to remove the fuel gauge as he has been having some ongoing accuracy issues with it. Neil demonstrated how to access the gauge via the removal of the fascia panels on the dashboard and as it happened, it wasn't too difficult a job to handle even for a novice.



Lionel's garage has more than enough space to look after two cars at a time. His other garage is on a lower level and houses his Silver Shadow



Neil gets stuck into removing the centre dash panel to get access to the fuel gauge on his Silver Wraith.



Appearances can deceive. The walnut veneer is mounted on an aluminium base



Removal of the offending gauge was relatively simple.

I have heard on more than a few occasions from some of our older Members, many negative comments about the 'newer' cars not having solid woodgrain dashboards and that the veneers are simply stuck onto aluminium bases. Well the truth is that they haven't been solid wood for decades (with the exception of some coachbuilt examples) and the same system of veneering was done even on the Silver Wraith, as we were to learn. The Silver Cloud/S Series cars had the veneers glued to a Bakelite base by the way; and why not? When you think about it, it makes perfect sense. I doubt very much if it was done as a cost saving measure as wood was fairly inexpensive back in those times (and so were labour costs). The trouble with solid wood is that it tends to shrink when it dries out as many pre-war owners will attest to and metal and Bakelite bases are much more stable.

There was not much more that could be done with Neil's fuel gauge and that will be sent off to the appropriate repairer but on the subject of gauges, Lionel has always been concerned that his Silver Shadow had not been fitted with a coolant temperature gauge and felt that an overheating warning light was not enough to assuage his fears that something might be amiss under the bonnet on a searing hot day. He had after all. Only just parted with a sizable sum of the folding stuff on new engine block and understandably, he wants to protect his investment. Lionel purchased an after-market temperature gauge assembly and Members of our little mob got started with the installation.



The multigauge unit as installed on another Member's Shadow



The red arrow points to the position of a coolant plug situated on the inlet manifold casting which is the ideal spot to fit the sender unit for the temperature gauge.

As it happened, one of our other Members had a similar unit installed in his Shadow, although it is a combined Oil Pressure and Temperature gauge setup, which was installed where the old analogue clock used to reside and as the clock didn't work anyway, he reasoned that this setup would be far more useful. In any case, it gave our installers some very useful information as to where the sender unit should be placed. Lionel wanted to keep his clock and another spot for mounting the unit needed to be found without defacing any woodwork.

The first problem that was encountered was, where to look for an existing hole or conduit to feed the line through. We didn't want to drill any holes unless we absolutely had to and finding a suitable orifice was not quite as simple as we had hoped for. We did eventually locate one suited to our needs where some of the existing wiring went through the firewall to the under bonnet area. It would have been easy to use the one where the accelerator cable went through but that was obviously not an option for safety reasons (one could imagine Lionel sailing down a side street at 160 kph because his accelerator became jammed in the wiring). Even our choice of entry wasn't that simple either; the existing wiring had to go through an almost 90° turn before it got through the firewall so with a bit of fishing with a hooked wire from the other end, we managed to eventually get the thing through.

The next question was, "Where to install the sender?"

There were two options. The first (and easiest) option was to simply feed the sensor into the upper radiator hose but there are two problems here. The first one is that it would look awful and really be something that one would do if they didn't really care about what they were doing. The other problem is that installations such as this usually result in a leaky upper hose and this is not what we would want at all.

The second (and much more desirable) option is to install it into the engine block itself and to create a permanent mounting for it. There is a coolant plug (Approximate position arrowed in the photo above) which can be removed by an Allen Key and this would be the perfect place to install the unit as the sender would give the most accurate reading of coolant temperature. The plug would need to be removed, a hole drilled through it and a thread tapped to the size of the sender's mounting unit would enable a proper fitting.

All well in theory, but the plug must have been tightened by a superhero because no amount of removing it was possible without causing damage to it and if we broke it, Lionel's Shadow would have been stranded. We resorted to the next option but we also knew that the temperature on the gauge would read higher than the actual engine heat because the sender would be placed between the thermostat and the radiator. Lionel decided he would go with that option, for as long as he knew where the normal reading would be, it would still indicate if all was okay in the cooling department, so after some discussion (and as long as he was happy), the place for installation would be in the top of the thermostat housing.

I would suggest to anyone doing this themselves to get hold of a spare coolant plug if you can and drill through that before trying to remove the one in the manifold: if that one gets damaged, at least you have the original one still in place.

The housing was removed and a hole was drilled into it at the thickest point; the hole was tapped and the sender was installed. As predicted, the temperature did read higher than it would have, had it been installed where we originally wanted it but we were happy with the result overall. At least now, Lionel can keep a close watch on his engine temperature (The fact that the engine block is new, I doubt if there should be a problem for the foreseeable future anyway).



The thermostat inlet housing was 'very carefully' secured in the vice before being drilled and tapped to accept the temperature sensor unit



A new gasket installed and back in place ready for the upper hose reconnection and wiring to be put into place.



Connecting the electrics to an existing fusible wiring circuit



The gauge was mounted discreetly so that only the driver could easily view the temperature

While all this was going on, another job was also in action. Peter's 'Green Beast' (a roadster based on a MK VI chassis and a lot of fun, I can tell you) was having some front sidelights and a new taillight assembly fabricated and fitted. Peter had previously fitted a pair of R100 headlamps to give it some pre-war character but it lacked any sidelights to the front wheel arches and the rear light assembly was not to Peter's satisfaction.

Peter employed some assistance from Mark (who managed to multi-task his talents between the Temp gauge installation with his Father, Terry and Peter's project), to drill the necessary holes and do all the wiring while Alan fabricated the mounting plates for the taillight assembly.

Apart from a brief break for our Christmas breakup lunch, all attendees were kept very busy throughout the day; so much so, our labours didn't cease until about 6.30pm which is about three hours longer than our usual finishing time. There were no complaints though. We were all happy to keep ourselves busy.



Peter must have been working His tongue was sticking out



Neil (on right) discusses the wiring with Peter



Mark gets prepared with the drill



Sidelights installed of the wheel arches to compliment the R100 headlamps



**More drilling
This time from Alan as he fabricates the taillight assembly mounting brackets**



Mark gets himself busy with the wiring



And it's all over bar the shouting.

Has anyone else had these problems? Clive Lungmuss shares his woes and remedies with us.

Hello Rob,

I have been having a little trouble with the Bentley not 'hot' starting. Did all the usual and have ended up changing the fuel accumulator, Fuel Pressure regulator (99d off eBay), Thermal timer Switch (broken).

Stripped the air flow channel to check the air flow meter was working. Found a couple of air/vacuum hoses that were looking a bit old. In the end I have somehow overcome the problem but I found the attached website very useful http://www.diagnostic-assistance.co.uk/mech_inj.htm. The Jetronic was also on Mercedes so some parts can be obtained from other sources.

Just another point you might like to make. I found that a couple of the hoses were split at the ends covered by the worm drive clips. They had also gone very hard with heat and age. Two in particular were the ones from the oil filler to the flame trap, the other was from the flame trap to the inlet manifold adjacent to the cold start injector? The man in his article does say that the Jetronic system is prone to malfunction if there are any leaks.

It may have been one of the hoses giving the problem. I have sent you this as on the forum bad hot starting has been discussed and no one has ever raised this point. Just thought it might give you the edge!! Just thought I would send this in case you can use or circulate the info.

Next job is the rear brake pump on the Bentley it is leaking a bit.

I guess you live and learn, well here is my latest lesson! I am going into Wales for the weekend in my old Vectra (2001), stopped for a coffee, started the car no noticeable problem and carried on to my destination about 30 miles further on. Stopped the car, went back to move it, dead as the proverbial Dodo. I have always had the old lead cell type of battery that always gave some indication it was getting old and liable to fail eventually.

Not so with the new type sealed unit; they just cease to function without any warning! This has been confirmed by the garage and people in the trade. So apart from changing the battery just before the guarantee finishes the alternative is to carry around a charger unit (It would have to be a powerful one to turn over a R-R) or an unused new battery? In fact we coupled up the car to a Range Rover and my battery started to drain the Range Rover's.

Just thought I would pass on this snippet in case you could use it as a caution/warning

Buying a Rolls Royce or Bentley?

When I purchased a 1982 Rolls Royce Silver Spirit eight years ago I would have to say I knew absolutely nothing about these cars. To me then, the tyres seemed all right, no holes in the seats, no body damage or rust, electrics worked, checked out the ownership and current MOT. Deal done, drove the car home and no major problem for some time. I was fortunate or lucky therefore I have put these notes together to assist anyone else considering purchasing the car of their dreams .If I had taken the time to research and gone with a check list it would have helped me eight years ago. There is an advantage to having two people look at the car to assist in checking and for another opinion.

BASIC STEPS.

Ask for any service records and what if any work has been carried out on the car

Look over the bodywork for signs of a respray that is to say in a good light are all the panels a matching colour shade. Check for filler by running your fingers under the wing edges. Tap or knock the sills and listen for differing sounds as this could indicate rusting metal and or filler. Open the bonnet and check that the inner wings are not distorted and are equally shaped on both wings. Here you are checking for front or side collision.

Open the boot and lift the carpet looking on both sides for distortion in the metal work. Once again you are looking for signs of accident damage. Any indication of damage or distortion of panels will require closer inspection of the car possibly by having it lifted onto a ramp and an inspection by a trained engineer.

Inspection of the interior should include checking for rips or tears in any of the fabric and close inspection of the seats especially the drivers. Look at the carpets and sheepskin covers for undue wear then lift the carpets, underneath look for rot on the floor panels. Look closely at the dashboard and door capping pieces for damage, poor repair and if the lacquer is splitting or lifting. If the car has rear picnic tables open them down and check for poor condition, also open the front passenger glove compartment. Is the general condition of the car tidy, polished, clean windows, in other words has the car been looked after.

Try and start the car from cold, with interior fans off and listen for any undue noises from starter motor, alternator or steering pump. After a short while is oil pressure being shown, is it correct and have the hydraulic pressure lights extinguished? Now pump the brake pedal and if the lights come back on again in anything less than dozen pumps this could mean attention is required to the braking system. Allow the car to warm up gently and as the temperature gauge starts to move turn on the heater, then change the controls to turn on the climate control (air conditioning) and cold air should come through. Open all internal vents and listen for changes in sound as you move the heater/climate control switches to check all fans are working.

While you are seated in the car take time to run through and check all lights, indicators, hazard warning, horn, wipers, wash/wipe, fog lights, reversing lights, radio, internal lights, electric windows and central locking work.

If the front suspension is not true or badly worn the tyres should show undue wear on the outer edges although I am told power steering also causes some wear. Look carefully at the tyres front, back and the spare as they may have been changed round to limit or hide the wear.

Start the engine and lift the bonnet and look over the engine compartment. Is it clean and tidy? An engine compartment covered in oil, grease and dirt always makes me query how well the rest of the car has been looked after. Listen for noises from the exhaust system, engine, compressor, alternator, water pump. If you or a companion are able to get under the car look for any oil, water, hydraulic fluid, power steering leaks or drips.

You may wish to drive the car yourself and check the general handling of the vehicle steering and braking. Go somewhere that enables you to check that the cruise control works. Is the gearbox changing up/down smoothly? Remember to try reverse as well. It could be beneficial to get the vendor to drive you part of the way with you sitting in the back and getting a feel of the suspension. If it is hard, jerky or lumpy this may indicate that the rear suspension requires attention.

These brief notes are written as a helpful introduction to your first meeting with the car you may go on to purchase. There are parts that are not easy to check such as the condition of the suspension gas spheres, rear spring cups, brake pads/discs, exhaust, gearbox and chassis therefore after this initial inspection you may wish to have the car looked over by a professional engineer or closer inspection by yourself.

Buy the best car you can afford but allow for some expense as your purchasing most probably an old vehicle and no matter how carefully the car is checked you should allow for the unforeseen problem. In my case I had to replace the suspension spheres within 3 months, gearbox in one year and some other parts over the years.

All the best, Clive Lungmuss

I don't know what I'd do without you Clive.
Many thanks for your contributions.

'Til next time folks,
Happy and safe motoring and please drive safely throughout the year

Robert Wort