

# Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia Library

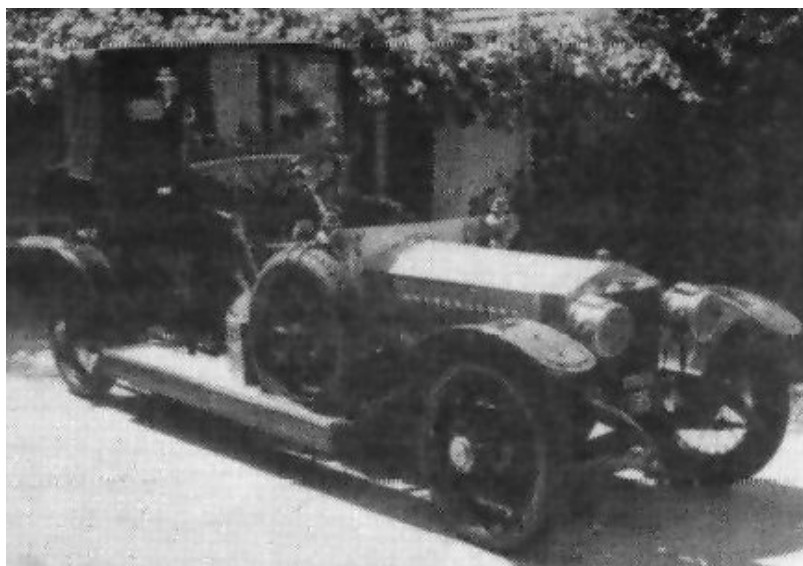
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## 1911 Silver Ghost Chassis No.1606

*By George W. Green*  
1971

The last known owners of this car were: 1945-1949 W.B. & Elsie M. Parker of Dookie, Victoria; 1949-1950 Alberte Lennon of Shepparton, Victoria;

1950-1958 Mr H.H. Wheeler of Sydney Road, Euroa, when it ceased to be registered.



At the time Mr. Wheeler acquired the car it was described in the Victorian Department of Motor Transport Certificate as a duplex tourer, number of seats: 5, carrying capacity 20 cwt., year model 1920, colour: dark blue, number of wheels: 4, H.P. 48. The cost of registration was as follows (in £.s.d): Power weight unit 4.0; Annual registration 17.0.0; Owners certificate 1; Insurance Premium (3rd Party) 15.6.

On the 3rd of August 1960, Mr. Fred Miller Robinson of 414 Collins Street, Melbourne, acquired it as an unregistered chassis. What happened to the Duplex tourer body, I do not know. Late in 1960 or early 1961, Dick Heher of Kenthurst, Sydney, purchased it from Fred Robinson. I purchased it from Dick Heher in 1961 and put it aside and forgot about it until 1969 when it was dragged out from under the stairs, a sorry sight. I scratched my head and wondered why I had bought such a heap. Half elliptic springs had been fitted by somebody handy with an oxy torch, grafting on some extra lengths of chassis to take the springs, but he had made such a mess of the original chassis that it had to be scrapped, and a new end welded on from another spare chassis, then the various kinks and bends were removed. The diff. was pulled down and found to be in a near perfect condition, the gear box likewise. The poor old motor was a different story. Everything in it was well worn and required the full treatment, the original pistons have been retained by sleeving the motor a shade undersize and machining a few thou off the pistons and fitting oversize rings. The crankshaft was reground, there being 2 to 3 thou. ovality and the amount of carbon that was dug out of the

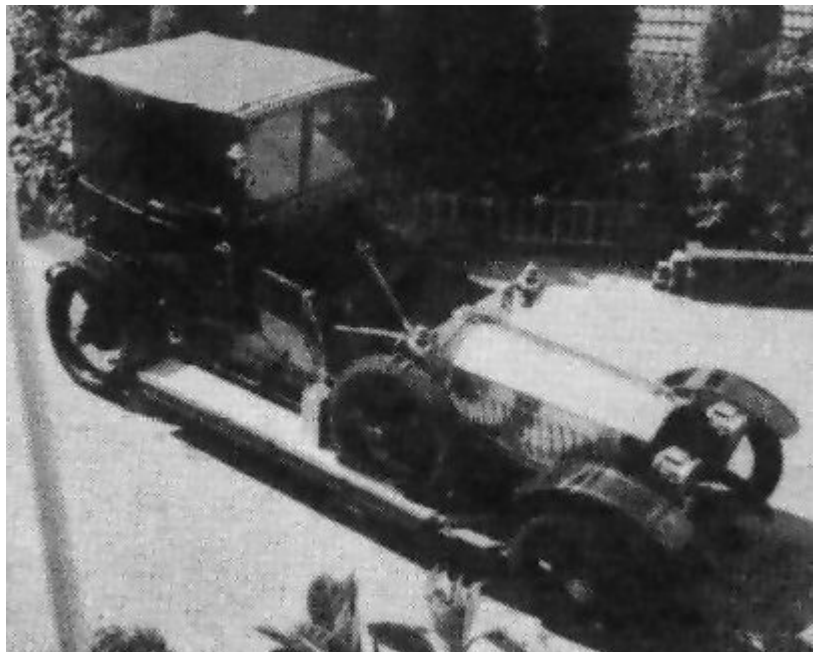
oil passages was quite alarming - one wonders how any oil found its way to the bearings. The camshaft was in reasonable condition, some of the cam followers required attention. The clutch was the surprise packet, it was in excellent condition; over the years, it had received more than its share of oil no doubt owing to the fact that most of the cotton bobbin in the clutch spigot (to suppress the flow of the oil to the clutch) was missing, with the result that every time the clutch was depressed a good flow of oil reached it. All springs had to be replaced; there was not an original Rolls-Royce spring on the chassis. Fortunately, these were available ex-stock, likewise shackle pins. The magneto was a mess, half of it missing, but with sundry bits in my possession it was rebuilt and now operates perfectly. The distributor shaft was badly bent making the head do some alarming gyrations, fortunately I was able to pluck a shaft from the spare parts shelf. The carburettor was the biggest challenge, the bower birds and magpies had all had a go at it, but, fortunately, over the years I had accumulated a few old carbies in various stages of ill health. With the aid of these and a few spare parts, I was able to restore the original 1606 carburettor back to normal.

Many other items required attention, all brakes relined, and drums skimmed and trued up, induction manifold was sad and the shaft to drive the magneto did not exist; one had to be made.

In late 1969, the chassis was nearing completion. It was then decided, with Adrian Garrett's permission, to fit a Holmes body that he had brought out from England in 1959, when he returned to Australia with my daughter; I might have influenced him a little to bring it out with him.

It is not known to what car the body was originally fitted, but Adrian took it off a Gladiator and it was apparent that it had been cut and shut to fit. When fitting it to the Rolls-Royce chassis 1606, all the alterations in the body had to be put back, and the body fitted perfectly which suggests that originally it could have been on a Rolls.

In February 1970, it was decided that the car should be entered in the 1970



International Rally starting 4th April. Upholstery had to be partly renewed, also new head linings where the moths had been very busy, the body had to be painted, wheels which were 20" had to be rebuilt to the original type of 895.135 and this was achieved thanks to Eric Rainsford. Many other small items had to be attended to.

The car just made the rally, thanks to the efforts of Peter Kable who drove it in the event, minus final coat of paint and sundry small items. Other than pumping excess oil out of the base of the distributor, and one puncture, no other trouble was experienced on the round trip from Melbourne to Sydney - a reasonable effort as the car had only travelled thirty miles prior to the start of the rally from completion of restoration.

Since the Rally quite a lot of man hours have been spent on finishing the restoration. There is still a little detail work to be done. The result has been quite rewarding. The one big question that has not been settled yet is do we fit a windscreen or not? Let us hear what the Club Members think.