

## A Dozen Rolls-Royce Owners in South Australia in 1926 “G. Milne, Brougham Place, North Adelaide” 1923 Silver Ghost, Chassis 22NK, Barker (UK) Tourer

David Neely, Historical Consultant, Sir Henry Royce Foundation, Australia, 2022

“Rolls-Royce Owners – Twelve in State” was the heading of an article in the 26 January 1926 edition of the Adelaide newspaper ‘News’, which was published from 1923 to 1954.

It continued: “There are 12 owners of Rolls-Royce cars in this State so far as can be ascertained from records. On account of this rather small number casual observers usually look twice if they happen to see a Rolls-Royce purring along. Among those who are stated to own one of these cars, which are regarded as the aristocrats of the road so far as the British automobile industry is concerned are Messrs T. E. Barr Smith, Glen Osmond: T. Tait, Oaklands: C. H. Angas, Angaston: G. Milne, Brougham Place, North Adelaide: J. M. Reid, Victoria Avenue, Unley Park: J. P. Lewis, Nelyambo Station, Wilcannia: Napier Birks, Park Terrace, Parkside: Mesdames W. T. Mortlock, Martindale Hall, Mintaro: L. Hughes, Lee Lodge, Strangways Terrace, North Adelaide: M Symons, Walkerville: T.R. Scarfe, Eden Park, Marryatville: and Miss M. F. Simms, Moseley Street, Glenelg.”

**George Milne (1856-1934)** was a wine merchant. He was born at ‘Sunnyside’, Beaumont, Adelaide, and educated at St Peter’s College. He married Georgina Ellen Swinden (1863-1946) in 1884 at St Peter’s Church, Glenelg. Georgina was born in Carrowroo, near Riverton, South Australia. Both George and Georgina died at their residence in Brougham Place, North Adelaide.



*Left: ‘Sunnyside’, Beaumont, pictured here in 1872. The original house was built on an estate of 40 acres in the 1840s but was considerably enlarged by George’s father, William (later Sir William) Milne, after he purchased the property in 1850. George Milne was born here six years later. [State Library of South Australia.]*

The family’s association with the wine and spirit trade dated from 1846 with George’s father, William Milne (later Sir William) (1822-1895). William was born in Glasgow, Scotland, and with a free passage as a farm servant arrived at Port Adelaide on the barque ‘Palmyra’ in 1839. Also on board was Eliza Disher (1818-1912) his future wife, whom he married in 1842. They arrived only three years after the colony had been proclaimed. He retired from business around the time he was elected to the South Australian parliament in 1857. Another of his sons, William Jr

(1849-1905), opened a wine and spirit store in Grenfell Street, Adelaide, in 1869. In 1882 William Jr took on his brother George and their brother-in-law Henry Price as partners. George had been a senior manager in the firm and Price was a former bank manager. In 1887 William Jr and Price retired and George Milne assumed sole control of the business. He opened a branch in Western Australia in 1895. Two years later the business of the Thebarton Distilling Company, near the Torrens River, Southwark was added to Milne's company and in 1916 another south-eastern property was bought. He was a keen horseman and owned racehorses. George Milne appears to be the wealthiest of this dozen Rolls-Royce owners. He left an estate in 1934 of £323,260 equivalent to about 100 of the then current model Rolls-Royce Phantom IIs. Milne left £100 to his chauffeur, John Hughes.



**Above:** The rear view of 'Sunnyside'. [State Library of South Australia.]

**Right:** Close up of 1913 Silver Ghost 2243E at the rear of 'Sunnyside' in about 1920 before it was returned to England in 1925. [State Library of South Australia.]

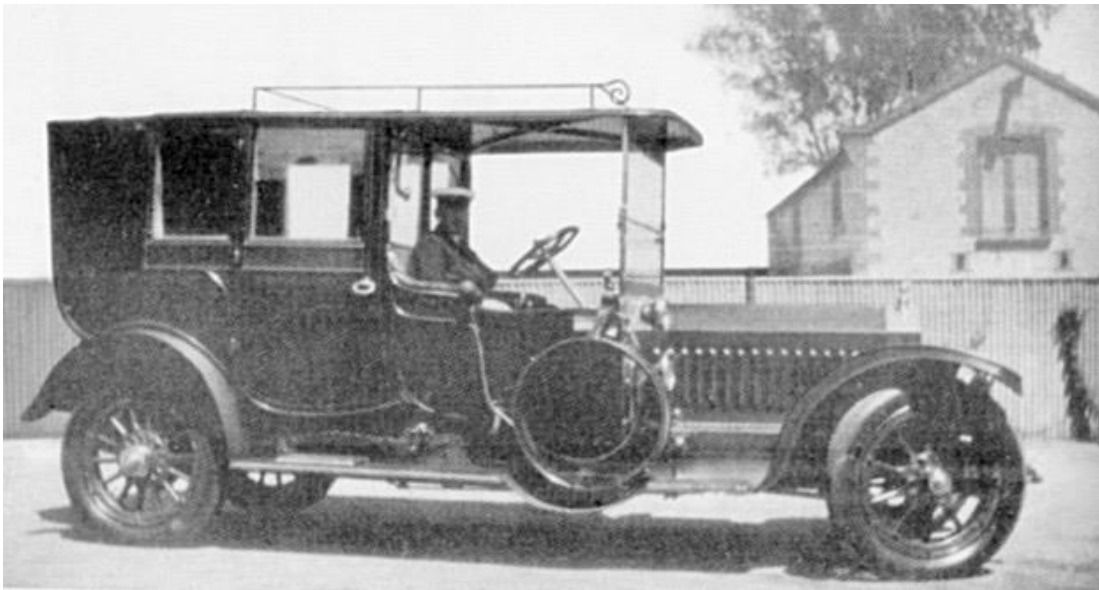






**Above:** *This impressive two-storey Federation house was built for George Milne at 45 Brougham Place, North Adelaide, near O'Connell Street. It is pictured here in 1903 soon after its construction in 1901. It is now part of Lincoln College. [State Library of South Australia.]*

George Milne had three Rolls-Royces: 1913 Silver Ghost 2243E, a Barker 'Whitmore' landaulette; 1923 Silver Ghost 22NK, a Barker tourer; and, 1925 Silver Ghost 125AU a Hooper V-screen landaulette



**Above:** *George Milne's 1913 Silver Ghost 2243E Barker "Whitmore" landaulette when new in Adelaide. Chassis 2243E was returned in April 1925 to England where it was last known as a funeral car in 1932. [Courtesy of John Fasal.]*



*1925 Silver Ghost 125AU Hooper landaulette new in England (**above**) and in Australia (**below**). A number of RROCA members have owned 125AU. [Courtesy of Malcolm Johns.]*



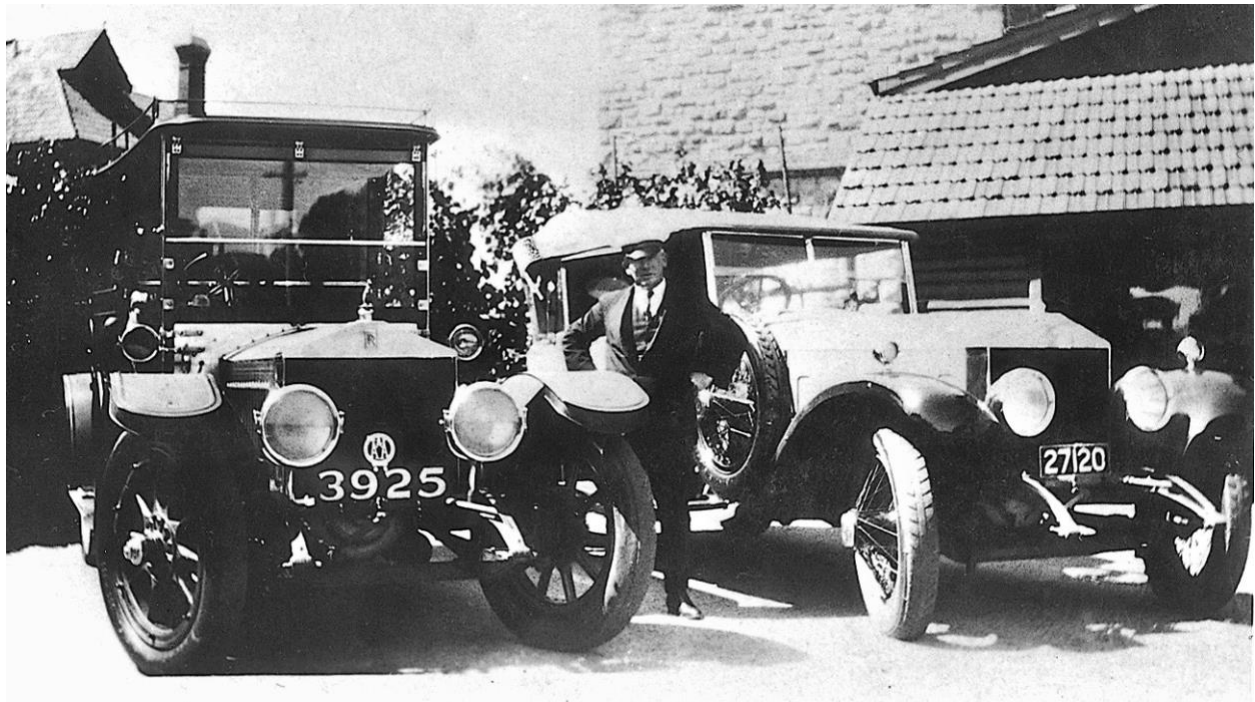


Chassis 125AU was delivered to Milne in London in June 1926. The Milnes returned to Adelaide in October 1926. They made another trip to England and brought 125AU back with them when they left London in November 1928. Both return voyages were on the P&O SS 'Narkunda', named after a small hill station in India. The Milnes no doubt marvelled at a celebrated frieze by Professor Gerald Moira in the ship's first-class dining saloon.

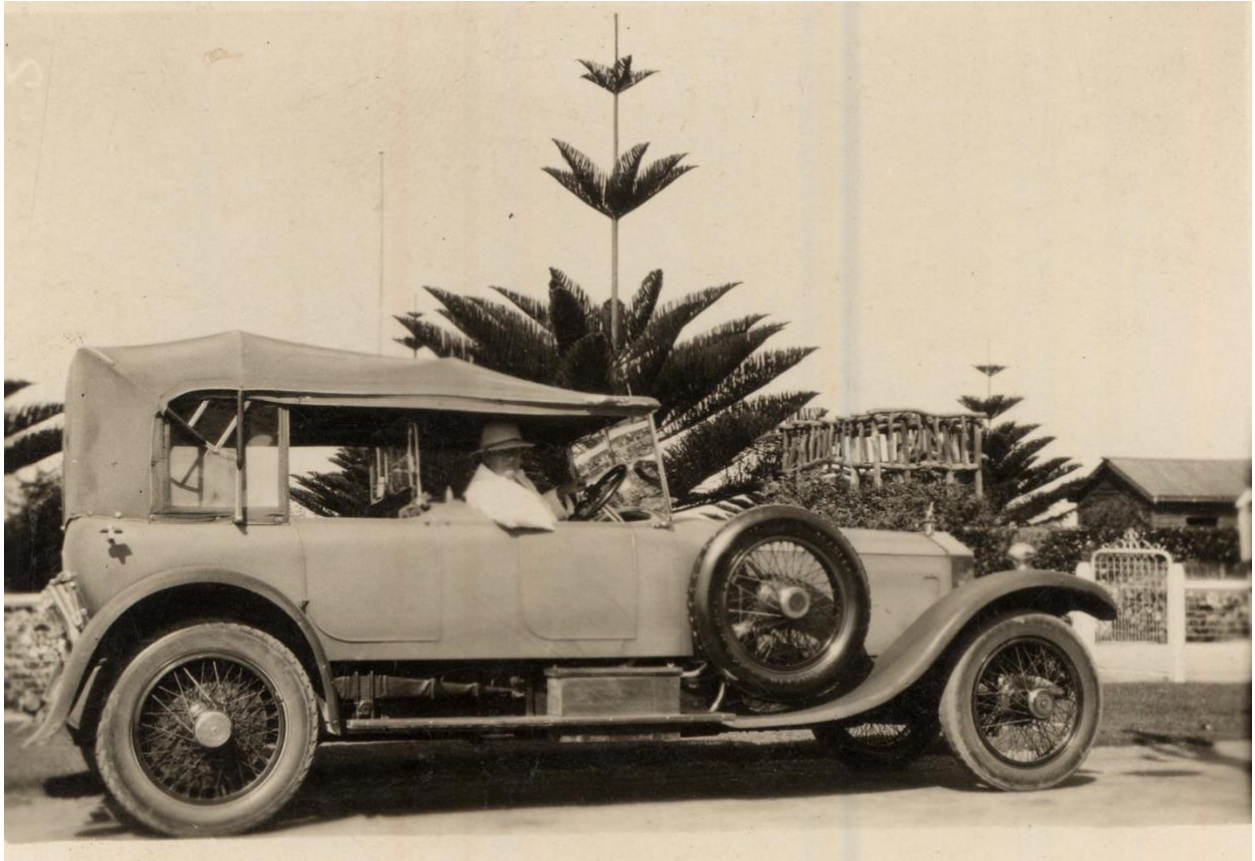
**Right:** The "riotously painted deep frieze" by Professor Gerald Moira, best known for his murals. [P&O Heritage.]



At the time of our 1926 newspaper list of owners Milne had 22NK, which is well known in the RROCA. It was owned by John McNamara who was a Foundation Member when the Club started in Sydney in 1956. The fastidious custodianship of Malcolm Johns RROCA HLM-1982 (NSW) over a couple of decades ensured that 22NK has survived with its original Barker body.



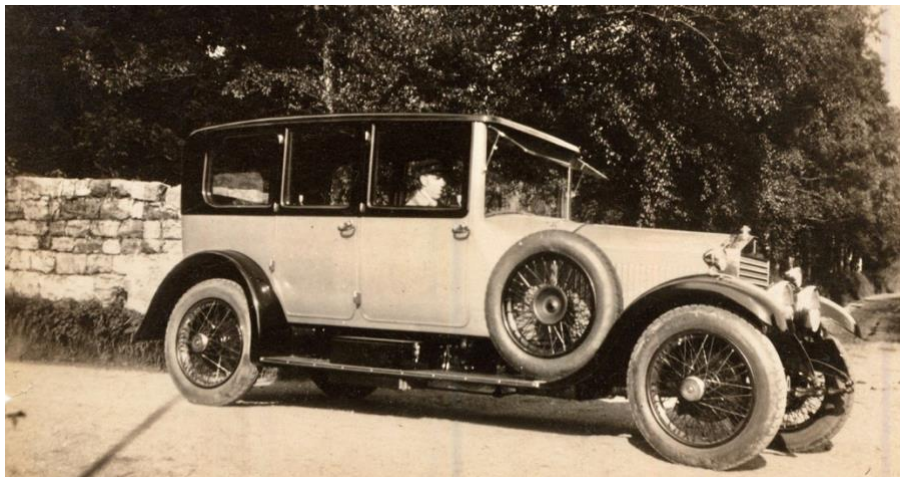
**Above:** George Milne's two Silver Ghosts in North Adelaide in 1924. On the left is 1913 Silver Ghost 2243E the Barker landaulette and on the right is, his new car, 1923 22NK the Barker tourer. [Courtesy of David Vinall.]



***Above:*** 1923 22NK Barker tourer when new. [Courtesy of Malcolm Johns.]

One of the Milnes' sons, Roy Melville Milne (1885-1938), was a noted racehorse owner like his father and owned 1927 Rolls-Royce 20 h.p. chassis GRJ24, a Windovers limousine. Roy and his wife Kathleen sailed for England on 21 October 1927 on the 'Maloja'. GRJ24 was off test in July 1927 and went to Windovers in August. Perhaps a Rolls-Royce was on their shopping list.

***Below:*** 1927 20h.p. GRJ24 Windovers limousine when owned new by Roy Milne. The chauffeur is John Hughes, who received £100 in George Milne's will. [Courtesy of Malcolm Johns.]







**Above:** RROCA Foundation Member John McNamara at the wheel of 22NK at Jindabyne in 1955, returning from the ski slopes with Ken Gibbons. Their skis were strapped to the running board. They very kindly offered lifts to some fellow skiers. [Courtesy of John McNamara.]

**Below:** John McNamara putting 22NK through its paces in 1957 at a gymkhana. [Courtesy of John McNamara.]

