

THE PRAIRIE LADY

Rolls-Royce Owners Club - Can-Am Prairie Region

Newsletter November/December 2007

Inside this issue

Chair's Ponderings
Editor's Notes
Driver Quality Restoration
To P of FTP
Hose Job of the decade

Officers and Directors

Chair
Kathy Doyle
Olds, Alberta.
403.
netook@

Treasurer and Membership

Maurice Tims
Calgary, Alberta.
403.
timsmd@

Secretary

Darcy Collings
Calgary, Alberta.
403.
dcollings@

Archives

Howard Lengert
Calmar, Alberta.
780.
lengert@

Social Events

Terry and Marianne Murphy
Calgary, Alberta.
403.
terryjmurphy@

Newsletter Editor

George Pope
Strathmore, Alberta
403.
pogo@

LEGAL NOTICE: The Prairie Lady is the official publication of the Can-Am Prairie Region of the Rolls Royce Owner's Club. It is published four times each year. The Region and editor seek to publish accurate material. Neither the Region nor the Editor assumes any responsibility in the event of claim or loss resulting from this publication however caused. Statements of contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect Region or Club policy.
Copyright 2007



Editors notes



1980 Rolls Royce Corniche DRL50461

George and Donna Pope's new car

Chair's Ponderings

We had our Annual General Meeting on October 14th, we had a good turnout and as a result you will notice that we now have a new Editor for the Prairie Lady, thank you to George Pope for taking on the position, and, I am sure I speak for all of us when I say thank you to Christopher McAviney for a job well done. Thank you to Terry and Marianne Murphy who have stepped up to fill the position of Social Events Director. This position was unfilled last year and as a result the social side of the club was not as active as the previous year.

This year the Annual Christmas Potluck Dinner Party will be at 5:00pm on Saturday December 1st at Cathy and Norman Howarth's home. Cathy has volunteered to cook the turkey and it is up to everyone else to supply the rest. Please contact Cathy Howarth directly to RSVP and to co-ordinate the menu. Contact information and address is:

Norman and Cathy Howarth
Calgary, Alberta.
403.
cmhowarth@

We have increased the Region fees to \$35.00 per annum mainly as a result of the extra expense of producing the Prairie Lady. I understand that the new editor will attempt to address this issue. If you have any questions or remarks about this please direct them to George Pope.

At the Annual General Meeting there was discussion of doing a tour that would cover our entire region. The idea is that members can join and leave the tour in their area. If anyone has ideas about this or would like to Chair such a tour please contact me.
Kathy

Let me begin by thanking my predecessor Christopher McAviney for his efforts the past 3 years and for helping me with this first newsletter. He has been out to my place many times helping me with the S1 restoration and taking pictures.

I have heard some rumblings about the increase in regional dues. The two main costs of the region are the spring technical session and the Prairie Lady. At the AGM, a motion was passed to charge members a fee to attend the tech session. For my part I have some ideas for reducing the cost of the Prairie Lady and at the same time increasing the number of editions to six per year.

Please feel free to submit articles and pictures for submission. I intend to introduce a new feature about people and their cars, initially focusing on owners who have had their cars for 10 years or more.

I appreciate any input into the new format.

George

Driver quality cosmetic restoration
Bentley S1
Part 3
Revenge of the Turds
By George Pope

Thus far the body work has been done with the patches glued in and the areas smoothed over with metal filler and then fiberglass filler. I never did a complete strip as many areas of the car [roof for example] just needed a really good 320 paper sanding followed by a 400 paper sanding. I had been told this was a good procedure for a high hide primer to "bite" into.



I next purchased a gallon of primer and went around the car 3 times. I had the doors and bonnet and wheel trim rings on the picnic table and did them 3 times as well. All of this took place in 2 bays of my garage in what could best be described as less than ideal conditions.

The primer went on quite grainy but as I put lots on I was not too worried. I would just sand the grain out and paint. No problem. Three weeks and 80 hours later I had finished sanding the body and started on the doors and bonnet. Two weeks and 60 hours later that was done and I went and purchased my paint. But my sanding was not done. My paint man said I need to go up to 600 paper so there would be no scratches showing through the paint. So I sanded about 40 hours more and then prepared to paint.

I have to point out that every time you spray primer or paint there is about 10 hours of pre cleaning and prep work involved. This is one big car and it took me about 15 hours each time. Remember I primed the car once and was to paint it twice and next year I may want to paint it again. That however is another story so back to painting.

The first time I painted the car I had some orange peel and a few runs with the odd small bug doing a flip flop in the paint. It was pretty grim but when a larger insect landed on the fender it looked like a magpie had got stuck. What a mess. I tried to clear up the runs by running out the paint [a procedure where you thin out some paint and spray till it pulls the run down] with some success.

Overall however I was disheartened by the results so I decided to re-spray. Sooo ... I had to sand again.....first with 320 paper and then with 400. Why ? So the paint would stick. This sanding took another 40 hours but it smoothed out the runs and the orange peel and removed the odd bug appendage that happened to be protruding.

The second painting was even worse than the first. I had less orange peel but more runs. But I did have something in my favor. First of all the paint was sticking and not reacting. Second of all it was so thick by now that I should be able to really fine sand and compound it down to a useable finish. That is what I did.

There comes a time in every project where you have to say stop , get it back together , use it and enjoy it , or it will be boxed up and left to the procrastination pile. So I cleaned up the paint with fine sanding , then compounded the paint , polished it , re-installed the chrome and put it back on the road. Will I paint it again? Maybe ... I might do all the pre work and then take it to a painter with a proper booth but time will tell. Interestingly enough the car has a rust free body now and everyone asks "is that the original paint" because it has the aged patina. At least the car is no longer the turd it was.



To P or FTP

Being a discourse on a few simple preventative steps that can be taken to help greatly reduce your chances of being struck by the dreaded FTP malady. By Bill Fane – '37 Phantom III 3BT69 James Young Touring Limousine – 13 September 2006.

One does not “drive” anywhere in a Rolls-Royce or Bentley, rather we “proceed”. Conversely, PMCs (Proper Motor Cars) do not “break down”, but on rare occasions they may “fail to proceed”. I was prompted to write this missive because of a number of FTP cases, and almost-FTP cases, at recent Club events.

A great many cases of FTP can be avoided through the implementation of a few simple avoidance tactics, which are generally outlined in the owner's handbook. Remember, when all else fails one should RTFM which translates loosely as “read the manual”.

One does not need to be a licensed mechanic to do the following checks. Most of them are simple visual inspections.

Getting Started: Before proceeding, one should emulate an airline pilot and do a quick walk-around visual examination, and a quick peek under the bonnet:

- Do the tyres look about right, or are any of them soft?
- Is the engine oil at a suitable level? Note the fill mark on the dipstick indicates the correct level when the engine is warm, a few minutes after it has been turned off. Before a cold engine is started the oil level normally shows a little higher because the oil has drained back into the crankcase.
- Is the coolant at a suitable level? It expands when warm, so it is normal for it to be down a bit when cold.
- Are there any untoward rattles or barks in the exhaust system?
- Once underway, depress the Bijur pedal (if fitted) two or three times, and every 100 miles thereafter. The pedal should take about 10 seconds to return. If it takes less there are leaks or the tank is empty; if it takes longer there are blockages; if it takes 10 seconds then everything is correct or the leaks equal the blockages.

On the Road again...So, it's a club meet weekend and the car has not been driven since the last club event. If the car has not been driven for a while, a few additional checks are necessary.

- Is there any sign of battery terminal corrosion? Mild cases can be cleaned up with a bit of baking soda and water.
- Corrosion can be prevented by placing a penny on top of the battery near the positive terminal. It will need to be replaced every few years. Just make sure it is a 1998 or earlier copper penny. 1999 and later Canadian pennies are simply copper plated steel.
- Check the battery water level. Ideally, it should be topped up with distilled water, but historically Vancouver tap water has been pure enough to use. (Not so in Alberta, ed.)
- Check the tyre pressures with a gauge, and if necessary top them up. Tyres should be checked when cold. Some people set them a little low when cold because the pressure rises when they get warm. This is wrong, because the heat is an enemy of tyres. If you set them to the correct pressure when cold then they will not get as warm and the pressure will not rise as much.
- Check for oil leaks under the car. If there aren't enough you may have trouble. No, I am not being facetious; our older cars are equipped with Bijur central lube systems. You should see evidence of oil leaks at the suspension and spring mounts, steering linkages, clutch and brake linkages, and so on. The Bijur tank on the firewall should be filled with non-detergent single grade 30-weight oil, available at Canadian Tire and probably other automotive parts supply houses.
- Check the fan belt and other accessory drive belts. On older cars with V-belts it should be possible to push the belt inward about ½” with your finger in the middle of its longest straight run. Modern multi-ribbed belts run quite a bit tighter, and should have virtually no slack in them.
- Are the lights all working?
- In the latter and current cars, check the hydraulic fluid / brake fluid. Note that our cars have used several different types of fluid over the years, and you must use the correct one. In particular, if your fluid reservoir has a green cap then you must use hydraulic mineral oil, not conventional brake fluid. If in doubt RTFM.
- Check the transmission fluid level, especially if your car has an automatic transmission.
- Check under the bonnet for any loose wires, loose spark plug leads, leaking hoses and tubes, and so on.
- The good news is that a great many of our cars use the SU (Skinner Union) electric fuel pump. These are the ones that go clickety-clickety when you turn the key on. The really good news is that there are usually two of them, in case one fails. The bad news is that the two pumps let you go twice as far before they fail. Many of the pre-war cars had a selector switch on the dash so we can switch between A or B or both when driving. A single pump can even keep up to my thirsty Phantom III at highway speeds, so I can test each pump regularly by turning the other off. It would be a good idea to have a selector switch discreetly fitted to cars that do not have one.
- Are the brakes operating properly? Do they screech, judder, or pull the car to one side?
- Does the steering track properly, or does the car pull to one side?

Fall has Fell...

As the end of summer approaches, many of our cars go into hibernation for the winter. Here are a few simple steps that will help to greatly reduce FTP possibilities next spring.

- Drive the car until it is fully warmed up. While you are out driving, fill the petrol tank because an empty tank will "breathe" as the temperature changes, causing water condensation problems. Add a can of "gas storage stabilizer" so the gas won't go bad, because as we all know there is no fuel like old fuel...

- Change the engine oil and coolant while the engine is still warm. You don't want dirty fluids sitting in an engine all winter. -Run the engine for a few minutes after the change to circulate the clean fluid through the engine.

When everything is ready, don't shut the engine off. Instead stall it by spraying a can of "engine storage spray" into the air intake.

Spring has Sprung...

When it is time to reawaken your car in the spring, there are a couple of things to do.

- Perform the Getting Started and On the Road Again checks.

- Add a shot of "Carburettor/Fuel Injector Cleaner" to the petrol tank.

- On earlier cars, check the wheel spoke tensions. Almost all pre-war cars have wire spoke wheels lurking behind the Ace wheel discs. Tap each spoke in the lower third of the wheel with a screwdriver or other suitable metal object. They should emit a crisp "ping" somewhere around middle C. Any spokes that emit a dull "thud" need to be tightened. Move the car twice, checking each remaining lower third of the spokes in turn. This is necessary because your car actually hangs down from the uppermost spokes, so the upper ones will all sound "tight".

What Can Possibly Go Wrong, Go Wrong, Go Wrong...

Here are a few quick diagnostic guidelines if things go awry.

- An "instant" problem (for example, if you hit the gas at speed to climb a hill and the engine immediately falters) often indicates ignition problems.

- A "delayed" problem (for example, if you hit the gas to climb a hill and get part way up before the engine falters) often indicates fuel problems. If a fuel pump is weak, or filters are clogged or dirty, then the engine may get enough fuel to start and run acceptably, but if you put it under load the fuel system can't keep up after the engine has burned the fuel in the carburettor float bowl.

- Drive safely and carry a big stick. Most of our cars in the "mid-age" category (early 1930's through the middle Shadow cars) have SU electric fuel pumps. If the breaker points act up, a smart rap on the side of the pump casing with a wooden stick can often get them working again for a short while.

The same range of cars as just indicated above also have SU carburettors. A rough idle, and stumbling when you hit the gas, usually indicates a lack of oil in the dashpots. Earlier cars have a brass hex nut on top of the main chamber, and later ones have a black plastic multi-spoke knob. In either case, remove it and pour a teaspoonful of engine oil into the chamber.

- Hard starting, especially when hot, usually indicates a fuel mixture that is too lean. This can be an improper adjustment, or it may mean dirt in the metering jets.

- Assuming the fan belts are okay, then running hot can mean a defective thermostat, or a fuel mix that is too lean, or the ignition timing is too far advanced. The latter case is often caused by worn breaker points.

If the ignition key won't turn, then you are in the wrong car. This is often a symptom of too much drink. This also applies if the steering wheel is on the wrong side.

So after reading all this sage advice, you may well ask how come my Phantom III didn't make it to the 2005 Spring Meet? It turns out that a DPO (a Dreaded Previous Owner, of which this car has had several) had replaced the ignition ballast resistors with an inferior GM product, one of which had partially failed on an intermittent basis.

Okay, I have run out of TLA's (Three-Letter Acronyms) so it is time to close this off.

Happy, reliable, safe motoring!

Hose Job of the decade.

By George Pope

Many of you with Shadow era cars know of my obsessive compulsive behavior regarding Shadow hydraulics. I bleed the brake system on my 78 SWII every 18 months flushing out small bits of nondescript and odd rivers of green goo. It has been 10 years since I changed the brake hoses and high pressure accumulator hoses and felt it was time again. Disagree with me if you will, but I still agree with the school of preventative maintenance in respect to Shadow hydraulics and 12 years and 55000KM with no failure has proved me right.

The job is not that big and involves depressurizing the system, cleaning the reservoir, replacing the accumulator to frame hoses, 8 brake hoses, 2 rat trap hoses, and then filling with new RR363 and bleeding the system of air. It took me about 10 hours [twice as long as a pro] but I did neurotic little things like cleaning the hose ends with clean brake fluid. Total cost for parts and fluid ...\$600.

When you hear of the \$10000 hydraulic rebuilds being done on neglected systems I think the price is pretty good.