

**From:** Rolls-Royce Owners' Club <kzagoric@rroc.org>

**To:** mlbirk <mlbirk@aol.com>

**Subject:** French Lick Meet Follow Up

**Date:** Tue, Jul 11, 2017 2:31 pm

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**IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I LAST WROTE...  
PERHAPS YOU MISSED ME?  
OR PERHAPS YOU JUST ENJOYED THE QUIET**





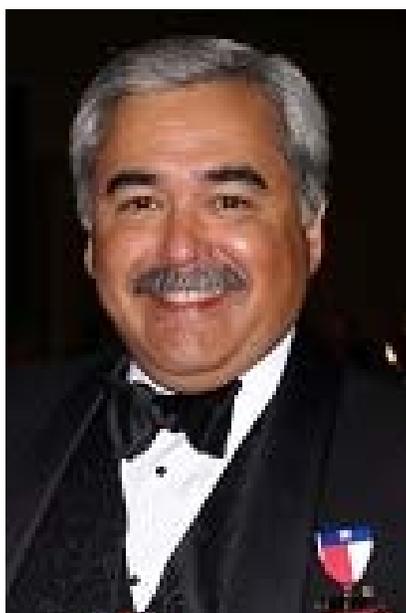
I just realized my last email was before our 2017 Annual Meet in French Lick. That was three weeks ago now! The run-up to the Meet creates a lot of excitement in our Headquarters office. Understand, that is not a complaint, it's just a fact. We have a relatively small team and they all end up doing a lot of work to see that everything is ready when the Meet rolls around. This includes preparing about 14 pallets of materials to be sent to the Meet venue in advance so that we have all of our registration materials, all of the merchandise for our Club Stores, all of our Judging and Scoring materials, and all of the computers and accessories to support our business transactions and technical presentations. While the staff works hard in preparation for the Meet, there is a much bigger group of people without whom there could be no Annual Meet, and they are all volunteers. I want to start this email by giving a big thank you to all of those people who volunteered at French Lick.

Without a doubt, the list needs to start with **Michael Ozment** and **Marlyn Coomes**, the Co-Chairs of this year's Meet. They have been working for almost three years laying out all of the plans, arranging the activities, recruiting the speakers, selecting the Meet gifts, and working with the hotel to see that all our members would have a great time. From everything I could see, the 250 primary registrants and approximately 600 individuals who participated at French Lick did exactly that. **Michael** and **Marlyn**, congratulations and thank you for a job well done.

Most of the time when we think of one of our RROC Annual Meets we focus on the great social events, the fun driving activities, or the educational seminars that we can attend. But there are some important business meetings as well. Most important for the RROC members is the summer Board of Directors Meeting, which always takes place at the very beginning of each Meet. At this meeting, the new members of the Board, who have been elected by the membership at large, are added to the Board and the outgoing Board members are retired. New to our Board as of the June meeting are **David Berndt** (FL), **Ralph Curzon** (MO), **John Sweeney** (TX), and **Marilyn Turner** (ONT). Stepping down at this meeting were **Thea Armstrong** (IL), **John Palma** (NJ), **Dick Tilden** (OR), and **Richard Vaughan** (MI). To those Board members stepping down, we hope you will accept our thanks and appreciation.

One of the first orders of business when a new board is seated is the election of the new Executive Committee. Again, this took place at French Lick on June 22nd and we have a new, but very experienced Executive Committee. Our new President is **Sue Brooks**, our

new Vice President is **Jason Coker**, our new Secretary will be **Al Briseno** and our new Treasurer is **Gil Fuqua**.



If these names seem familiar it is because all of these people were members of our last executive committee, but each in a different capacity. What does this mean to the RROC? It means that we will have a great deal of experience to call upon in the leadership of our Club. To most of you, as members, the RROC is a nice organization in which to belong. Our roughly 6,000 members share your passion for automobiles and for most things Rolls-Royce and Bentley. We have a wonderful bi-monthly magazine. We offer some attractive, interesting, and useful items in our Club Stores, and our website helps you to keep in touch with your friends and find any number of activities and places that might be fun.

But, running a Club today, especially for one with 6,000 members around the world is a lot of work, and is much more complex than you might imagine. At 66 years old, the Rolls-Royce Owner's Club is no longer an organization you can run in your spare time out of your garage. With a staff of 7 people, numerous publications and

supporting/administering several events a year...being a member of the Executive Committee is like having a second job!

I think we all should thank **Al Briseno**, **Sue Brooks**, **Gil Fuqua**, and **Jason Coker**, not just for the great stewardship they provided for our Club in the past year, but for the commitment to continuing to shoulder these key responsibilities in the year ahead. This is a battle tested team. They have experience in leading our Club, and have renewed their commitment to doing it again this year. When you see them, be sure to thank them.

## WHAT ABOUT THE FUN STUFF AT FRENCH LICK?



I'm glad you asked! There were plenty of fun things to do, events to participate in, and things to see. The real kick off of the Meet was the Bentley Welcome Reception followed by Dinner on Tuesday night. The reception was held in the upper garden at French Lick and the weather could not have been nicer. I will admit it was a bit hot out there...but beautiful. When it was time to actually go in and have dinner the room was fantastic. Our good friend **Terry Lee** from Bentley in the UK and his colleagues from Bentley Motors here in the US, did their usual fantastic job of representing their brand and products.

Registration ran very smoothly this year and **Eileen Dilger**, backed up by a strong team of volunteers saw to it that everyone was efficiently handled and all questions were dealt with quickly and effortlessly. **Bonnie Hake** was again heading up the RROC Club Stores area with the assistance of a strong, friendly, and helpful crew of volunteers. Sales of goods at Club Stores did not set an all-time record, but on a per attendee basis, we sold more than ever!





**Charlotte Infantino** ran the RRF Silent Auction Table. Here, nearly 100 items had been donated that were up for auction for the benefit of the Foundation. The donations really covered the gamut, from a large oil painting of a pink flamingo....to a set of unused genuine Goodwood Factory coveralls (that my wife was very happy to see leave). This year, our bidders apparently recognized that the reason for the Silent Auction....is not to provide rare items at bargain basement prices....but rather to raise money to fund the operation of the Rolls-Royce Foundation. Please allow me to add my thanks to all of our generous bidders this year. With your help, the Foundation raised over \$10,000....including their fantastic 50/50 drawing which produced over five hundred dollars for the winning ticket holder. Well done by all.





Fortunately, there was covered parking at French Lick. Friday as they say, “the rains came”, and did they ever! It came down all day and most of the night. To be very honest, I was worried about the condition of the Driving Range that was to be the location for our Concours the very next morning. It was also the location for The World of Luxury Tent which houses the wonderful and creative offerings from those people who are sponsors in our 2017 Yearbook! The Staff from St. James’s House, the publisher of our Yearbook had come over from the UK to organize the World of Luxury and were greeted by what looked to be an epic flood. They and their vendors never slowed down and set up their tent as if it were a sunny summer’s day. By the next morning that was exactly what it was.

Saturday, the weather was wonderful. You couldn’t have asked for a nicer day....not too hot, not too cold, sunny, but not like you were in the desert. The cars were delayed an hour before coming on the field to allow for a bit more drainage. No cars got stuck or had real problems. I will admit there were probably a few “undercarriage judges” who would have been happier had it not rained the day before, but overall, it was wonderful.

## THE SHOW FIELD WAS BEAUTIFUL!





The cars were fantastic, as usual. I guess I am not supposed to have any favorites...and of course I do not. But, there are three cars that I wanted to share with those of you who were not able to join us. The first was a Rolls-Royce J&B Scotch delivery car. What else would you expect? It was a fantastic piece of eye candy, and while very practical, it was also fantastically detailed in every way. I would almost be tempted to say it was not that beautiful when it was new. But it probably was.



Second was the Phantom II with an absolutely lovable mascot in the form of a sad eyed dog. The car was beautiful on its own and operated in complete silence...as you would expect. But the mascot, just makes you want to take this car home.





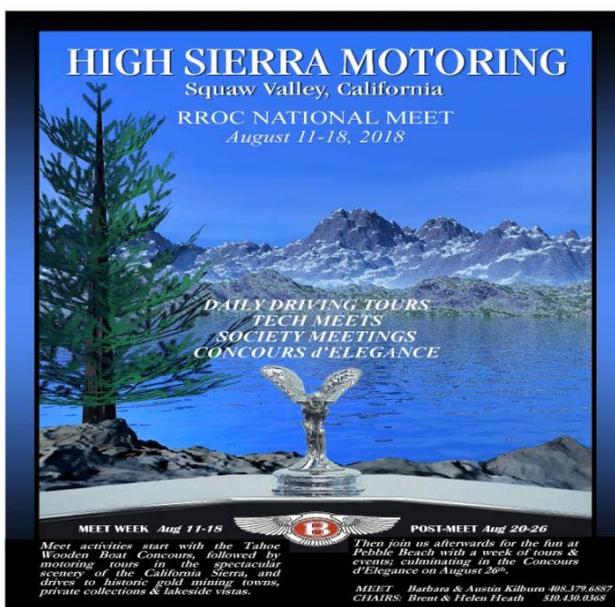
Finally, there was a Trans-Africa Safari Replica. I am sure this was not what they had in mind when they formed the RROC in 1951, but a lot has changed since then. This car was built to satisfy the taste and interest of its owner. While it is not necessarily what most of us would like to do with our cars, it attracted a lot of attention, it was very interesting, and it was certainly different! Perhaps, it can even serve as something of a reminder that our hobby is changing. We need new people to appreciate automobiles today. Many young people do not appear to care about cars at all. Others see them in a different light. They see a car as a blank canvas, onto which they can create their own vision of what a car should be. To many of us this is a very different way to looking at things. But if it makes their owners happy, so be it.



As always, our Meet concluded with the Rolls-Royce Banquet, this time held in the magnificently restored West Baden Atrium. This six story-high structure was one of the engineering marvels of its time when it was erected over a hundred years ago. The facility was beautiful and provided a great backdrop for the evening's ceremonies. **Gerry Spahn**, Head of Communications for Rolls-Royce Motor Cars NA, welcomed our guests and thanked them for bringing all of their beautiful cars...and for being the protectors of the brand's heritage. A series of awards were given as the evening began to wind down into smaller groups of people, who clearly wanted to catch up before Sunday morning saw us all getting ready for the trip home.

It was a beautiful Meet and certainly all of the people I spoke with had a wonderful time. As always, we closed the Awards Banquet with a brief look ahead to next year's Annual

Meet which will be held in the Lake Tahoe, CA area at the famous Resort at Squaw Creek. So, now is good time to start your planning for next year. I can assure you we already have!



Finally, let me end by saying that I hope you all had a wonderful July 4th weekend. Sure there were more fireworks at our town celebration, but the excitement at our 2017 Annual Meet seemed to be even a bit brighter than the sparklers that surrounded us. If you did not get to join us this year, please think about making it in 2018. If you feel that California is just out of your comfort zone, join us in 2019 in Detroit...which is about as central as you can get....and it is even very close to Canada! So, sometime in the next two years, we expect you to join us at a Meet. I am sure you will enjoy the experience.



Best Regards,



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