

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTHERN DELTA REGION

THE SOUTHERN DELTA LADY

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1

MAY 1, 2008



RICHARD BRANYAN'S 1949 SILVER WRAITH
H. J. MULLINER SPORTS SALOON
WGC67 "BESSIE"

**WELCOME
NEW MEMBERS:**

Robert Adams, *Natchez, MS*
Todd Anders, *Houston, TX*
Richard Cravener, *Houston, TX*
Candie Gallagher
& Jimmy Hebert, *Houma, LA*
David & Sharon Galvan, *Houston, TX*
George Guidry, *Lafayette, LA*
Sam Hanagriff, *Centerville, LA*
John Owen, Jr. *Mt. Juliet, TN*
Phillip Reese, *Austin, TX*
Lars Steib, *Mandeville, LA*
Mike Vera *Gretna, LA*
Zigards Vitols, *Hot Springs, AR*

**UPCOMING
EVENTS:**

RROC Annual Meet

New Orleans, LA

June 15-21, 2009

SDR 30th Annual Show-off

New Iberia, LA

October 15-18, 2009

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



Southern Delta Region has begun 2009 with lots of new members, some great events and even greater events in the works! In January, our annual business meeting was held at Ruffino's in Baton Rouge. Our prospective slate of activities for the year was discussed, among other business. Our annual Day at the Races event in February at the Fairgrounds Racecourse was well-attended and some members chose well from the ponies in the race lineups, but others weren't so lucky! In March, Ralph's on the Park provided great food in a scenic venue, and some members made a visit afterward to the adjacent New Orleans Museum of Art. We were happy to see Texas residents Todd Anders and Richard Cravener at this event, who were passing

through on their way to Florida. Unfortunately, bad weather prevailed in the New Orleans area on the morning of our annual trip to Middendorf's in April, so attendance at this usually very popular event was less than expected. May will see a trip to the Mississippi Gulf Coast for a charity car show to benefit the Vancleave/Pebble Bluff Creek Volunteer Fire Department, at the invitation of SDR members Hamilton and Deanna Bickham.

June will bring RROC's Annual Meet to New Orleans! More than four years of preparation will come to fruition June 15-21 as hundreds of Rolls-Royces, Bentleys, and their owners will converge on New Orleans for the first-ever RROC Annual Meet held in our region.

I am looking forward to hosting RROC members from around the world and showing them the many attractions our area has to offer. There is still time to volunteer your efforts to help make this meet a great success. Contact Meet Chair Bill Borchert at bill@billborchert.com to volunteer. Don't forget to register to attend the meet soon, as registration fees do escalate as the date of the meet nears. You will have to register with RROC to attend any of the events or enter the expansive vendor's market at the meet. Affordable one-day passes are available if that's all the time you can spare, but I'm sure you will find that a single day will not be enough once you take a look at the extensive schedule of events.

- - Kelly Kyle

NATIONAL DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



A lot has been happening in RROC, on the national and local levels. Our National Board of Directors this year will be elected by a new method for the first time since the inception of the club. Mr. Sneed Adams, Mr. Jason Coker, and Mrs. Cathie Mouton are all members of our region and worthy of our consideration. The annual RROC general membership meeting will be held Tuesday, June 16th in New Orleans. I encourage you to sign up for the annual meet and attend the meeting and all the other great events the committee has planned for that week.

On the local level, SDR has

experienced the same economic downturn as the rest of the country, causing lower attendance at our local events. I know that many of our members are "maturing faster than others", and I am also keenly aware of the fact that several of our members have lost loved ones within the past year, making it more difficult to attend our events. Please know that your club welcomes you to attend any function.

In June, for the first time in the history of the club, New Orleans will host the RROC Annual meet. Laura and I, and the Meet Committee have been working tirelessly

to provide a week filled with Proper Motor Cars and howling good times. We start the week with a Voluntourism event with Habitat for Humanity; on Tuesday, business meetings and the Bentley dinner at the Aquarium. On Wednesday we have great tech sessions and society dinners. Thursday's highlight is the Rolls-Royce Creole Queen dinner, and we finish up the week in the Superdome with Judging and awards on Saturday. If you haven't signed up yet, get your registration in today!

I hope to see all of you in New Orleans.

- - Bill Borchert

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS: ALLEN TOUSSAINT

Allen Toussaint, RROC member from New Orleans, is featured on the official 2009 New Orleans Jazz and Heritage festival poster created by New Orleans artist James Michalopoulos. The poster is entitled: "Two Saints: Allen Toussaint and the French Quarter." The poster features "a joyous Toussaint in one of Michalopoulos' signature swirling French Quarter landscapes, with the spire of St. Louis Cathedral behind him. The firm confidence of Toussaint's hands is juxtaposed with the warm and somewhat reticent gentleness of his visage... A timeless paean to an American Master celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the world's greatest musical event by another master and a perfect match in size and

composition to Michalopoulos' sold-out 2006 Fats Domino Jazz Fest portrait." (Note: Fats Domino is also a Rolls-Royce owner. — Editor.)

A limited edition of only 750 numbered and remarked prints double-signed by Michalopoulos and Toussaint features a drawing (bottom right) of what is unmistakably a Rolls-Royce parked beside a French Quarter lamppost.

Toussaint's career in music has spanned well over fifty years and includes credits for writing, producing, and performing. Well-known artists such as New Orleans favorites Dr. John, Ernie K-Doe, Irma Thomas, Art and Aaron Neville, as well as Otis Redding, The Yardbirds featuring Eric Clapton, Paul

McCartney and Wings, Ringo Starr, The Rolling Stones, The Who, The Jerry Garcia Band, Warren Zevon, Bonnie Raitt, and Robert Plant and Alison Krauss have recorded his works. In 1977, Glen Campbell recorded Toussaint's "Southern Nights" and took it to Number One on the Pop, Country, and Adult Contemporary charts. Toussaint was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1998.

Immediately following Hurricane Katrina, Toussaint spent time in New York City, where he performed on the David Letterman Show with Paul Shaffer and the CBS Orchestra on September 7, 2005. A collaborative album with Elvis Costello, *The River in Reverse*, released in May,

2006, included tracks recorded in the first major studio sessions completed in New Orleans following the storm.

Mr. Toussaint currently owns a 1974 Silver Shadow and a 1987 Corniche drophead.



New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival is a trademark of N.O.J.&H. Foundation, Inc. Image © 2009 N.O.J.&H.F., Inc.

GROWING UP WITH “BESSIE”

RICHARD BRANYAN, NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI

Silver Wraiths were supplied by Rolls-Royce as a chassis and engine only and the body was built by the customer’s choice of thirty-one different coachbuilders making bodies for the 1,886 Silver Wraiths built between 1946 to 1959.

“Gor Ray Ltd.” a textile manufacturer originally ordered WGC 67 for use by their director. H. J. Mulliner built the body using their design 7062, one of the most successful Silver Wraith body styles with 80 completed. Design 7062 was normally a “Touring Limousine”; WGC 67 was one of only a few made as a “touring Saloon” without division. Mulliner made more bodies for the Silver Wraith than any other coachbuilder, supplying 518. Park Ward bodied 480 cars, and Hooper made 468.

WGC 67 was first registered in February 1950 in London. Originally painted black with tan interior, she cruised the streets of London until the director of Gor Ray retired. At that time, the director took the car as part of his retirement package (probably the reason that the car was ordered without the division). The car was later painted blue and black.



Esso transferred my late father Larry Branyan, to England in 1969. After an early mishap with a Jaguar, he started to purchase Rolls-Royces. His office at Esso Europe was located right behind Jack Barclay’s Mayfair showroom, which probably influenced his interest in the marque. His first Rolls was a Cloud I replaced by a 1935 touring saloon and a 1937 limousine; his other car was a bright orange Mini. As my mother would not drive either vintage Rolls-Royce and my father used the Mini to go to work, my father hired a chauffeur to drive my mother and the kids around town. I suspect this was a lack of confidence in my mother’s ability to drive on the “wrong” side of the road. The days of having a chauffeur did not last too long – both my sisters refused to be seen going to school in a 1937 Rolls-Royce and would be dropped off outside the gates. My father then bought a more modern Cloud III followed by a 1970 Silver Shadow. My father in the early 1970’s became involved with the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts’ Club and started showing the early cars. My parents with four kids, luggage, and our dog, a Scottish Terrier named Peter, went on

a memorable trip around Scotland in the 1937 limousine. Sadly we found that Peter was prone to get car-sick, not good for Wilton wool upholstery.

My father, if he decided to do something, always did it well. He realized that none of his cars would win the “Concours d’Elegance” so he asked the noted Rolls-Royce dealer Frank Dale and Stepsons to find him a suitable car; they found him WGC67, “Bessie”, named after my great aunt. After 23 years, she was still in good condition overall, but she needed some cosmetic and mechanical work. My father chose to repaint her in a two-tone brown and cream. The original tan upholstery was still in good condition, but was in need of some reviving. At the 1976 RREC annual show, the newly restored Bessie placed second “Most Elegant Car in the Show”. After such high

honor, Bessie continued to be part of the family although she rarely competed. She did attend other RREC events including the Queen’s Silver Jubilee celebrations in 1977, and she transported me to and from school when the British weather permitted.

In 1986, my father retired and decided to move back to the USA. My father was born in Greenville Mississippi, but had not lived in Mississippi since finishing high school. His decision to retire to Mississippi came as a surprise to all of the family. I was still in college, my oldest sister was an attorney in Missouri, her twin had “defected” by joining the Royal Navy as an officer, and my sister Betsy was working with horses in England. My parents had planned to move to Jackson, Mississippi, but a friend of my father’s from high school invited my parents to visit them in Natchez, where they saw a house they loved and purchased it. They returned to England and started to pack. Fortunately Esso was paying moving expenses so everything was packed by the fine art shipper James Bourlet. Even Bessie was loaded in a crate and packed full of plastic peanuts. Two containers of furnishings and Bessie’s crate were shipped to New Orleans in late 1986 and then on to Natchez.

After arriving in Natchez Bessie sat for a while waiting to be put back on the road. My father heard about a Rolls-Royce mechanic,

(Continued on Page 5)

Fred Fabre, and Bessie went to Monoxide Manor in Baton Rouge to be re-commissioned. Fred loved Bessie and kept her for extended stays, often long enough to get to a local show, and come back with a little plaque or trophy. My father occasionally had to post reward notices for the safe return of a “kidnapped” Bessie. When my dad died in 2002, I inherited Bessie. She was in good running order and Fred told me the best thing for her was to be driven. Sadly, Bessie had traveled less than 3,000 miles in almost 30 years, with Fred adding many of the American miles.

I started to exercise Bessie and we went to various Southern Delta events and in 2005 completed the Spring Tour from New Orleans to Jackson. During the tour, Bessie transported RROC President Fred Ward and his wife Anne during the Baton Rouge leg of the tour. As we were in Baton Rouge we decided to visit Fred Fabre where he was confined to a nursing home after suffering a stroke. Bessie is fitted with a sunroof, which is great for sun but terrible in heavy rain. Unfortunately, the skies opened and the weather was

awful. Depending which way we turned, either Fred Ward or I got soaked. Fred managed to provide some visibility by keeping the windows unfogged. Silver Wraiths never had good windshield wipers, and Bessie’s do not work at all. We arrived soaking wet at Fred Fabre’s nursing home. I reminded Fred that the last time he worked on my car, he had “fixed” the wipers. He replied “They worked when it left the shop.” We had a good visit and Fred was delighted to see Bessie.

Bessie continued to appear at local shows and also managed to win The English Motoring Club of Mississippi’s “Blue Light Special” the award for the car most likely to get stopped by the police, an odd choice for a car that on its road test in 1950 boasted a 0-60 in 23 seconds. Recently Bessie has been resting as her original clutch wore out and is currently under going repairs. I hope my mechanic, Fed-Ex, my bank account, and I will manage to put all the pieces together again in time for the RROC National Meet in New Orleans in June.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS: TONY A. SIMMONS

SDR member Tony Simmons, Executive Vice President of the New Iberia-based McIlhenny Company, makers of Tabasco ® brand Pepper Sauce has shared the following:

Tabasco® brand Pepper Sauce has achieved the ultimate Royal seal of approval. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II has awarded a Royal Warrant to its maker, McIlhenny Company, a family-owned company that celebrated its 140th anniversary in 2008.

Highly prized as demonstrating excellence and fine quality, Royal Warrants are marks of recognition to individuals or companies who have supplied goods or services for at least five years to HM The Queen, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh or HRH The Prince of Wales.

“We’re absolutely delighted to know that Tabasco sauce has a place at Her Majesty’s table,” said Paul McIlhenny, President and CEO of McIlhenny Company, and fourth generation family member. “England has always been very loyal to us, consistently ranking among the top in international sales. This is indeed a proud moment in Tabasco history.”

Tabasco sauce and England have historically enjoyed a very strong relationship, since the iconic pepper sauce was first exported there in 1874. During World War II, the Queen Mother had her staff search London for Tabasco sauce, which was in short supply due to wartime constraints. As her deputy controller of supply wrote in his memoir, *My Twenty Years in Buckingham Palace*, “The Queen,



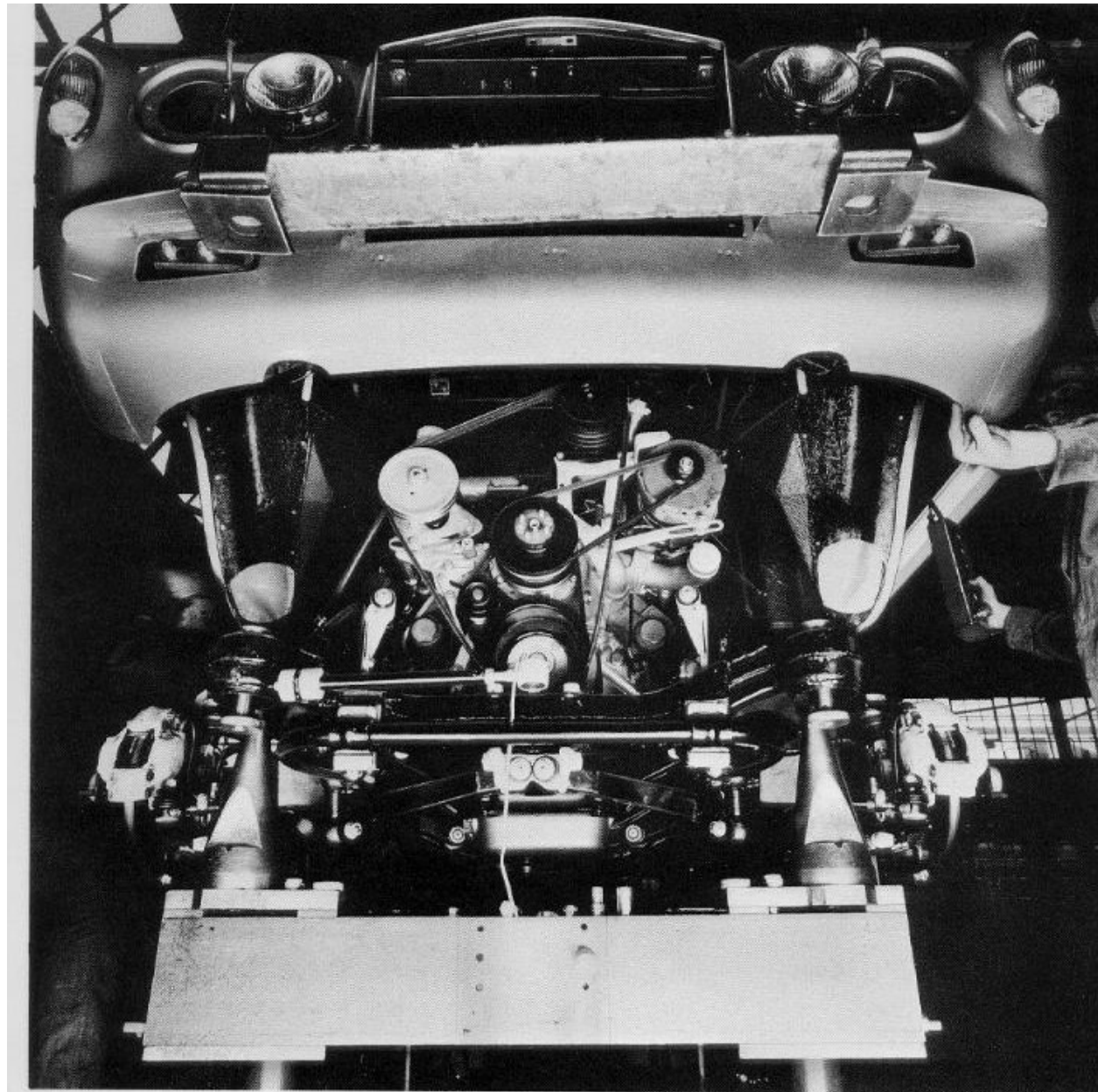
when she was told that there was no more Tabasco sauce, took the news philosophically.”

Tabasco sauce was created in 1868 by Edmund McIlhenny on Avery Island, Louisiana, from a special variety of pepper plants. Encouraged by local success, Edmund marketed his unique concoction to the world and the Tabasco sauce legacy was born.

Members of the McIlhenny family still oversee every stage of production, from planting, harvesting, mashing, wine-like fermentation and aging in white oak barrels to final blending and bottling. And although production has increased enormously since 1868 – over 160 countries now enjoy Tabasco sauce – the beloved recipe remains virtually the same as it was over 140 years ago.

Mr. Simmons owns a 1931 Rolls-Royce Springfield Phantom I Brewster Newport purchased by his father in 1957, and he is the fifth generation of the McIlhenny family to make the iconic product invented by his great-great grandfather in 1868. “Like the rest of my family I am very proud for the Queen to have acknowledged her fondness for our product,” said Simmons.

Southern Delta Region members will have a unique opportunity to get a behind-the-scenes tour of Avery Island, Louisiana, the home of Tabasco, in October, when Mr. Simmons will host our 30th Annual Show-off Event. For more information about McIlhenny Company, Tabasco sauce and its history, visit www.TABASCO.com.



This is the fourth advertisement in a series of ten dedicated to the 100 men who will become Rolls-Royce owners this year.

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pre-determined levels, all receive a fine coat of yellow paint, so that at a later date any unauthorized adjustments may be detected at once. This precaution is essential for the safety of the passengers and in order to safeguard the wealth of sophisticated hydraulic and electric equipment within.

The suspension, for example, has a sensitive self-levelling system. This

operates at two speeds. When your car is stationary, it adjusts instantly to any change in load. But when the car is in motion, the compensation becomes more subtle.

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Membership Directory
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FROM THE ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR: CHUCK LACOSTE

The National Meet will be here in June! There will be so many social events and tech seminars to attend that I think all in attendance will need a few days to rest after it's over. We really need every member of the SDR to get involved, as this is to shine! If you can volunteer or help in any way, please contact SDR Chairman Kelly Kyle at rkellykyle@flyinglawyer.com or Meet Co-Chair Bill Borchert at bill@billborchert.com. Any offerings of your time to help make this the most memorable meet in recent years will be very much appreciated.

Mark your calendars and start getting ready for a great BBQ party at Jannifer Seaton's house in St. Gabriel on August 31st. She already has great things planned. It is sure to be a hit. I have

made tentative arrangements for our Holiday Brunch at Ralph's on the Park on December 6, which is a Saints "away" date. This restaurant will provide a beautiful setting for us to gather and celebrate the holiday season.

The 30th Annual Southern Delta Region Show-off will be held in New Iberia, Louisiana October 15-18. SDR member and McIlhenny Company Executive Vice President Tony Simmons and his wife will be our hosts. This meet will definitely be one not to miss. We expect to invite our Texas friends to join us again this year for another great joint meet.

We missed seeing some of our regular attendees at our annual outing to Mid-dendorf's this year. Great food and fun

was had by all that attended! Bad weather did not help attendance figures, but Bob and Lydia Maureau came in their "nearly new" Silver Spur. Very, very nice, guys! Jannifer Seaton's Silver Shadow is looking like she has it ready to compete in New Orleans after its new paint job.

If anyone has ideas or suggestions for future activities please let me know. I want all of our members to get involved in your club. I can be reached at LCLinNO1@aol.com or you can leave a message for me at (985) 868-9123.

I look forward to hearing from you and seeing you soon!

- - Chuck LaCoste

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RROC Annual Meet
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