

**act**

**news**

WINTER 1986/7



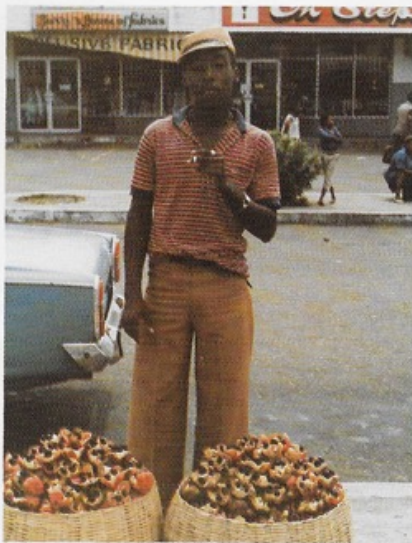
**Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year  
to all our friends around the world!**



# CARIBBEAN'S EXOTIC FOODS



Bananas growing in Jamaica. Dasheen leaf is in the foreground.



A street vendor selling ackees, the national fruit of Jamaica.



Dasheen growing in a small-holding in Jamaica. Much of the country's fruit and vegetable crop is grown in plots like this.

## Our Cover

As in most parts of the world, Christmas Day in Australia is very much a "family and friends" day and no matter how far apart they might live the rest of the year, Christmas brings almost everyone "home".

The Christmas Dinner is the traditional turkey and all the trimmings, Christmas pudding with brandy sauce and lots of talk and good cheer. Others take the opportunity of getting out into the fresh air and flock to the beaches with their picnic hampers and bottles of cold bubbly.

Although it is a different hemisphere and a different climate, the same spirit of Christmas that has bound mankind together all over the world for centuries is present in Australia.



Ground provisions are loaded at Manchester Packers, Mandeville (photo at left). In the photo at right the container is loaded at Kingston Container Terminal.

Today the British housewife has a greater variety of tropical fruit and vegetables to choose from than ever before. UK greengrocers and supermarket shelves are laden with a host of exotic foods which would not have been available only a decade ago.

Fashions have changed and thanks to the technical advances in refrigeration and container transport, virtually all of the produce that is on sale in the street markets of the Caribbean Islands is now available in Britain. Spitalfields Market, situated just outside of the Square Mile occupied by the City of London, is the centre of this highly specialised trade.

## ROOT VEGETABLES

Regular shipments of Ground Provisions are imported from Jamaica in 40-foot Conair containers belonging to the Harrison Line. The term Ground Provisions refers to the fact that these items are principally root vegetables, such as yellow and negro yams, dasheen, cocoe, sweet potato and cassava. However, pumpkins, plantains and sugar cane are frequently included in these containers.

Dubois Enterprises Limited of London, trading under the name of "Tropifresh", has built up a substantial business specialising in exotic fruits and vegetables. Peter Durber, MSc, FCCA, and his wife, Sandra, head up the enthusiastic and busy team which is located at Spitalfields Market.

Tropifresh started business five years ago and for three years has been at Spitalfields, which handles 75 per cent of all exotic fruits and vegetables that come into Britain. Tropifresh is the leading trader at the market and the company re-exports to the Continent as well as selling to traders in the North and Mid-





lands and to local primary and secondary wholesalers and retailers.

Managing Director Peter Durber says that exotic fruits and vegetables are one of the few fast-growing areas in the fruit and vegetable business.

Peter, who is a qualified accountant and member of the Institute of Marketing, was working as a Consultant in Export Marketing to the Commonwealth Secretariat in the West Indies, where he met his wife. Realising the great potential for exotic fruits and vegetables in Great Britain he decided to go into the business himself. Today he is going from strength to strength.

During the winter season, Harrisons also carry full container loads of melons, pineapples and, more recently, mangoes, which are proving increasingly popular in the UK market. Jamaican specialities, such as ugli fruit and ortaniques are shipped in the February-April period. The ugli has a taste similar to a grapefruit, although in appearance it is somewhat alarming, while the ortanique is a cross between an orange and a tangerine.

## BREADFRUIT

One of the most favoured tropical foods in the Caribbean is the breadfruit, carried all those years ago from the South Pacific by Captain Bligh on the "Bounty". We invite you to try our recipe for baked stuffed breadfruit (below) over the Christmas holidays or roast a plantain with your turkey.

The national fruit of Jamaica is the ackee, which grows on a tree and is, in fact, eaten as a vegetable. Canned ackees are shipped in cartons in Harrison Line containers to specialist wholesalers in the UK. The ackee is traditionally eaten with salt fish (a kind of salted cod), but its delicate flavour can also be savoured in an omelette.

With more people travelling overseas every year and more adventurous cooking at home, the prospects for expanding the trade in exotic foods is excellent. The Caribbean Islands welcome the additional export earnings and a reminder of the tropical sunshine can be very pleasing on your table in the long British winter.

### Baked Stuffed Breadfruit

- 1 large breadfruit (not over-ripe)
- ¾ lb minced beef
- ¼ lb minced ham
- 1 onion (chopped)
- 1 tomato
- 2 tablespoons butter
- salt and pepper to taste

Peel breadfruit and parboil whole in salted water. Lightly fry chopped onion and tomato in butter and add to minced meat and cook until meat is almost done. After breadfruit has cooled, cut off the stem of the breadfruit and core it well. Fill it with meat mixture. Bake in a greased dish in a moderate oven for 45 minutes

### Breadfruit Croquettes

- 1 breadfruit (medium size)
- 1 egg
- 4 tablespoons milk
- 4 ounces margarine
- 1½ pounds bread crumbs
- 1 quart cooking oil
- salt to taste

Peel and wash breadfruit. Cut in pieces and cook in boiling salted water until tender. Remove from water and mash well. Add margarine, beaten egg and hot milk to mixture, and mix to a creamy consistency. Shape and roll in fine bread crumbs. Fry in deep fat. Drain on greased paper. Serve hot. 20 servings.



Sugar cane being loaded in bundles. This year a 20-foot container of cane was shipped for London's famous Notting Hill Carnival.



A 40-foot Harrison Line container (above) arrives at Tropifresh's premises at Spitalfields Market where it is unloaded. In the photograph below Peter Durber (second from left), Managing Director of Tropifresh, discusses produce being purchased by a customer while Mrs. Durber (right) prepares a receipt for the transaction observed by Rueben Gane (left), Homeward Freight Sales Representative of Harrison Line. The fruits and vegetables on display at Tropifresh are similar to those sold in the street markets of Jamaica.

till soft and a nice golden brown colour. Serve hot. Serves 8.





# OPEN TOP - OPEN TIME



To celebrate the introduction of BLC's new fleet of containers now operating through the port of Hamburg to and from the Far East, Ben Line's agents in Germany, Menzell & Co., held a Reception for BLC customers and friends in a 40-foot open top BLC container at the HHLA Terminal in Hamburg. The photograph at left shows the BLC 40-foot container with the new "Big Ben" logo and at right with its "unusual load" of happy guests.

Captain Angus MacLean, who has commanded BLC container ships since 1973 on the Europe/Far East route and who is well known to BLC customers who have visited one of the vessels when he was Master, "swallowed the anchor" when he retired recently after completing his last command on the "City of Edinburgh".

Among the many informal gestures of farewell was a dinner given in his honour at the Finkenwerder Hof restaurant in Hamburg, hosted by Menzell & Co., Ben Line's agents in Germany, during which he was presented with a carriage clock.

In the photograph, which was taken by Robert Hogg, Ben Line's representative in Europe, are (left to right) Mrs. Etta and Captain Uwe Messenbrink, Captain Angus MacLean, Chief Officer Duncan Sutherland and Chief Officer Peter Thompson.

## CAPTAIN MACLEAN SWALLOWS ANCHOR



## GETTING TO KNOW 'THE SCOTCH'



Kenichi Kawabe, head of BLC's Osaka Eastbound Department, visited BLC customers in the UK and on the Continent recently including Mitsubishi and The Invergordon Distillers Limited in Scotland. In the photograph at left, Kawabe-san is shown with Dan Spence, Shipping Manager of Invergordon at their Head Office in Leith. Invergordon support BLC services to Japan with regular shipments of well-known Scotch Whisky brands such as "Inverness" and "Mackinlays". Before flying to London to continue his visits in Europe, he attended the Japan-Scotland Rugby International with BLC customers and he is pictured (photo at right) with (left to right) Takatoshi Ise and Tadahiko Sunada of Mitsubishi; James Kirsop, BLC Director; Roger Pheely, Mitsubishi; (Kenichi Kawabe) and Jack Flucker, Ben Line, Edinburgh.



# SHIPPING LINES OF THE YEAR

BLC and Harrison Line have been voted number one in their respective trades for 1986 by readers of "British Shipper and Forwarder" magazine, and the presentation was made at a large Reception held in London and attended by exporters, forwarding agents and leading members of the shipping community.

BLC was voted favourite shipping line to the Far East for 1986 and Harrison Line came top in the Central and South American trade.

In the photograph, Alec Peill (left), Public Relations Manager of Ben Line, and Dan Beckwith (right), Marketing Manager of Harrison Line, proudly display the awards made to BLC and Harrison Line for having been voted the best in their trades, following the presentation made by Roger Hailey (centre), Editor of "British Shipper and Forwarder".



# ROYAL DAIMLER COMES HOME

In 1946 Ellerman Line carried a luxurious Daimler motor car to South Africa to be used by the King and Queen of England during their visit to that country in 1947. Forty years later, Ellerman Harrison Container Line has brought the same Daimler back safely in a 20-foot EHCL container.

When the Daimler originally arrived in South Africa, imported by Messrs. Stansfield and Ratcliffe of Pretoria, it was found to be so sophisticated that it could not even be started. A motor mechanic was sent out from the UK to instruct the driver how to use the car.

## KING GEORGE

Apart from the driver, the car could seat four passengers in comfort and two ladies-in-waiting on folding seats. The roof of the car was built higher on Royal request to allow King George an extra 20mm head room.

After the Royal visit, the Daimler was left in care of the South African Government for their official use. The last owner of the vehicle in South Africa was Mr. Klaas van de Wetering of Pretoria and it was bought by Mr. John Wentworth of the UK to add to his extensive collection, which includes the late King Edward VIII's private car among others.

On arrival in Southampton of the Royal Daimler, which was carried by EHCL, it was inspected by (left to right) Mike Harding, Operations Controller of EHCL; John Wentworth, who purchased the vehicle for his collection; and Nigel Holloway, Cargo Care Manager at Southampton, of ACT Services.



King George VI, Queen Elizabeth, Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret in their Daimler motor car in Church Square, Pretoria on March 29th, 1947 during their visit to South Africa. (Copyright Reserved. Reproduction by gracious permission of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.)



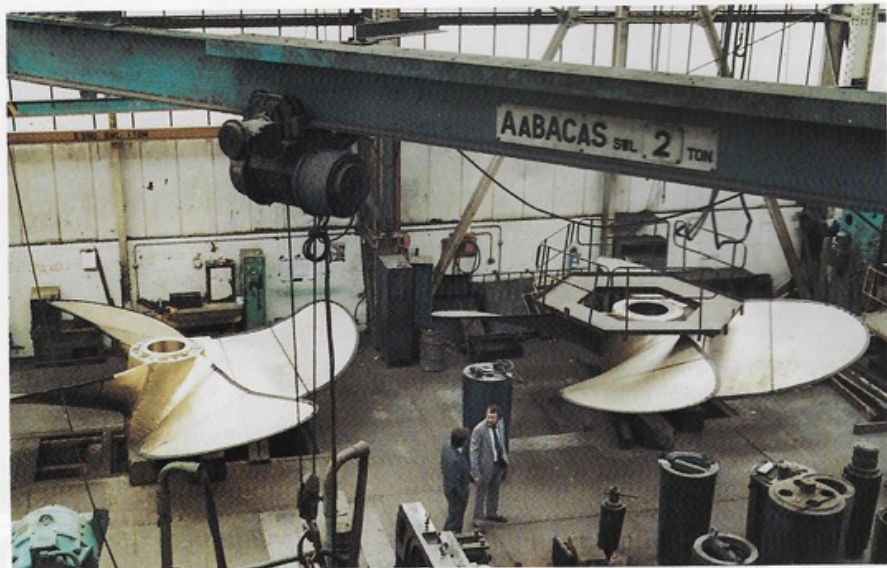


# SMM - PROPELLER MAKERS TO T

Stone Manganese Marine Limited of Birkenhead is the world's leading manufacturer of fixed-pitch propellers for large ships. At the present time they are supplying propellers for the re-engining in Japan of ACT(A) ships, "ACT 3", "ACT 4", "ACT 5" and "ACT 6", and over the years the Company has provided propellers for many ships in the ACT Group.

Stone Manganese Marine (SMM) can trace its origins to the early years of propeller-driven ships when Josiah Stone formed a small company in Deptford in London, in 1831, to manufacture copper boat nails used in the construction of wooden hulled sailing ships. A short time later, Manganese Bronze and Brass Limited set up a propeller foundry nearby. Eventually specialist factories were established at Charlton and Millwall.

When World War II came, the government took a decision to establish a



Partial view of the heavy machine shop at SMM's Birkenhead factory.



A high degree of skill is required to produce a perfect weld in propeller alloys.

shadow factory outside London and Manganese Bronze and Brass Co. chose the site at Birkenhead. In 1940 the Millwall factory was damaged and it was decided immediately to move all production to the Birkenhead site. Shortly before that, J. Stone Limited bought out the Glasgow propeller foundry, Bull's Metal and Marine, and in 1958 they became part of the Stone Platt group.

In 1963 the two companies merged with Manganese Bronze and Brass Limited and combined to form Stone Manganese Marine Limited, and by the mid-seventies all fixed-pitch propeller production was centred at the Birkenhead works.

In spite of the current over-production of oil and relatively low prices, the world has become energy conscious, especially where it involves the conservation of fossil fuels. One of the ways that cargo fleet operators, like those of the ACT Group, can conserve fuel is by reducing

the operational speed of ships and this requires specially designed propellers which will be more efficient at these speeds.

SMM is an acknowledged leader in the design of energy-saving, economy propellers. They employ an experienced team of qualified Naval Architects and Engineers with highly specialised technical expertise in the field of marine propulsion.

The Company's Technical Services Division, headed by Dr Graham Patience, BSc, PhD, CEng, MRINA, has a research department to monitor and assess new methods of propulsion and to develop and streamline design methods. They have a long established connection with Newcastle University and the Company is closely involved with the operation of the University's Cavitation Tunnel which permits them to carry out research and other experiments on the effects erosion, noise and vibration can have on the propellers.



Discussing the shipment of the new propellers for ACT(A) ships (left photo) are (left to right) Jim Wilson, Managing Director of SMM; Keith Riley, Assistant Sales Manager, North-West, of ACT(A); and Cliff Spiers, Area Sales Representative of Henry Tyrer & Co., BLC's agents in the North-West. In the photo at right, John Smith, Contracts Manager of SMM, explains moulding techniques to Cliff Spiers (left) and Keith Riley.





# THE WORLD

This is supported by in-house computing facilities with over 20 years' experience in applying computing techniques to propeller design and analysis, with software developed by SMM's own technical staff.

There has been a sharp decline in the world shipbuilding industry and this has meant a much smaller demand for propeller production and a corresponding reduction in staff at SMM. This has been achieved mainly through normal and early retirements and natural wastage. Most of the employees have been with the Company for many years - some for nearly 50 - and the expertise built up through long years of experience is not easily replaced.

The Company has increased its marketing activities and has managed to maintain a positive balance for most years during this recession. SMM exported 90 per cent of its output in 1985 to Japan, the Far East, Yugoslavia, Denmark, Italy, etc. SMM also supplies sophisticated castings required by the Royal Navy.

### LARGEST

The Birkenhead site was turning out 4,000 tonnes of propellers per year before the cut-backs and the Company is capable of making propellers from one tonne to 70 tonnes, the largest ever made. SMM's range of services includes carrying out economy and feasibility studies, providing an advisory service, conducting model experiments for propulsion and cavitation performance, supplying design estimates, detailed design studies, drawings and modifications and is equipped to carry out research and development work in the subjects of new alloys, fatigue, casting processes and repair of propellers.

The new six-blade propellers which have been designed especially for the re-engining of the ACT(A) ships weigh nearly 24,000 kgs. each and are 7100mm in diameter. As another example of co-operation among ACT Group members, the propellers are being shipped by ACT(A) from Southampton to Japan using the BLC Service.



Expert handling is required when molten liquid is used during the pouring process.



Strict quality control is exercised at every stage of production and in the photograph, Dr. Graham Patience, (left), Technical Director, and Ken Poole, Quality Manager, carry out a dimensional check on a propeller.



The new six-bladed propellers for installation on ACT(A) ships are being carried to Japan by the BLC Service and in the photograph at left, one of the propellers is pictured securely cradled for shipment from Southampton to Japan, while the photo at right shows the propeller being unloaded after arriving safely at Nagoya.



# MEETING CUSTOMERS' NEEDS

ACT Services are now operating in the UK a number of new lightweight tractor units which have been built in Britain. These allow them to move 20-foot containers of up to 24 tonnes gross container weight.

Recognising an increasing demand from shippers and importers to provide this service, ACTS and the manufacturer studied the problem and as a result of a joint exercise modifications were made to the standard specifications of the tractors involving the use of lightweight components, and resulted in the objective being fully met.

ACT Services now have the capability to carry these 20-foot boxes of up to 24 tonnes gross container weight on 20-foot trailers, affording full tailboard access.

Bill Campbell, Managing Director of ACTS, said, "This shows once again that ACT Services and the ACT Group are determined to remain at the forefront of container shipping and transport and their commitment to meeting customers' requirements by providing the widest range of services possible."



Lightweight tractor units being used by ACT Services.

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



Killick Martin (Southampton) celebrated the 25th anniversary of the opening of its offices there. In the photograph, taken during the Reception held at the Southampton office, a toast is drunk to Killick Martin's continued success by (left to right) Del Jenkins, Director and Head of Management Services of ACT Services; John Rucker, Chairman of KM Southampton; Peter Williamson of Ben Line, Edinburgh, who is based at Southampton; Bill Campbell, Managing Director of ACT Services; and David Gravell, Chairman of Killick Martin & Company Limited.

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BEN  
LINE



BLUE STAR  
LINE



CUNARD  
STEAM-SHIP CO.



ELLERMAN  
LINES



HARRISON  
LINE

## Helping Bernd On His Way

Bernd Schubert of Germany is travelling around the world by bicycle and BLC recently gave him a lift on its giant containership "City of Edinburgh" from Kaohsiung to Hong Kong. In the photograph, Bernd is wished "good luck" by Hamish Hoh (left), BLC Terminal Manager in Hong Kong, following Bernd's arrival there on the "City of Edinburgh" before continuing on to the Philippines and Indonesia on his challenging venture.





# CARGO OF THE FUTURE



BLC Marketing Director Roger Miall visited the Daya Bay Nuclear Power Station site in Guangdong Province, China, recently and met the administration and construction officials with a view to having BLC considered as one of the container services to carry the plant, which is being manufactured in the UK for export to China, including pressurised water reactors and turbine generators. In the photograph at left, Roger Miall (right) on a hill overlooking the site of the Daya Bay construction with (left to right) Mr Chi Zhen Yu of the GNPJVC, and Mr Chan Wang of Ben Line Hong Kong. The picture at right shows Cameron Bowie of the Ben Line Hong Kong office, a PRC military official and Roger Miall at the entrance to the GNPS construction site.

# BLC GOLF TOURNAMENT



A golf tournament for members of the Japanese business community in Belgium was organised recently by Conship N.V., BLC's agents there, and some excellent scores were recorded during the event. In the photograph are (left to right standing) Messrs. Kuwano of Mitsui; Kawabe, BLC-Osaka; Yuki, Pioneer-Matsushita; Nishimura and Kuga of Aisin Europe; M. Van den Houdt, Pioneer-Matsushita; George Allan, Killick Martin; Frank Torfs, Conship; John Dekens, Gellatly Hankey; and Philip Knight, British Consul General at Antwerp. Kneeling (left to right) are Messrs. Hojo, Tsuchiya and Yasuda of Honda; Peter Van de Houdt, Pioneer-Matsushita; Luc Calluy, Conship; Kato, BLC London; and Robert Hogg of BLC Europe.

An urgent telephone call from the managing director of a boatbuilding firm – cruising on a yacht somewhere in the Mediterranean – to the marketing director of BLC in Edinburgh, ensured that a "Trader 60" yacht was shipped from Taiwan to Southampton in time to go on display at the Annual Boat Show there.

Roger Miall, BLC's Marketing Director, had to quickly organise some cargo re-scheduling in the Far East, but he was able to arrange that the yacht would be there in time for the show in answer to the appeal from the Tarquin Boat Company of Ringwood, Hampshire.

The "Trader 60" yacht arrived in Southampton on schedule and after Customs clearance it was moved by sea to its berth in the floating exhibition area in time to be made ready for the start of the Boat Show.

The photograph shows the yacht being lowered gently into the water at Southampton after being unloaded by BLC following its voyage from the Far East.

# EMERGENCY CALL





# THE GULL GOES HOME

One of only two known Percival Gull airplanes in existence is being taken back to Australia to be placed on permanent exhibition at the National Museum in Canberra.

The aircraft was purchased in Britain from Neil Jensen and after a test flight to see that it met requirements, it was flown from Redhill, Surrey to Chessington, where it was dismantled by Light Aircraft Services and securely stowed in a 40-foot ANL container and is being carried by ACT(A) on the "Australian Exporter", which left the UK in November.

Edgar Percival was a popular Australian aircraft designer who produced a number of light aircraft types in the 1930s and the Gull which is being shipped got its certificate of airworthiness in 1937. Mr Percival later moved to Great Britain and died there on 26th January 1984.

## New Facility For Shippers

A new facility is now available for ACT(A) shippers to book export cargo space for Australia, New Zealand and Fiji with the Company's Southampton office.

Any transport and freight enquiries which shippers may have and also all documentation requirements will be handled by the Export Desk at the following address:

ACT Services  
Richmond House  
Terminus Terrace  
Southampton SO9 1GG  
Telephone (0703) 634433  
Telex No. 477622  
Fax No. (0703) 222308



Discussing the dismantling of the Percival Gull in order to load it into the 40-foot ANL container are (left to right) Jerry Austin, ACT(A) Sales Representative; Geoff Master-ton, Managing Director of Light Aircraft Services, who were responsible for the dismantling and packing of the plane; and John Vaughan, Shipping Officer of the Australian High Commission.



Final preparations are made for the aircraft to be stowed in the container after its wings, etc. have been removed.

## PROVIDING SERVICE TO CUSTOMERS

ACT(A) held its annual Sales and Marketing Conference in Eastbourne recently and speakers included members of the senior management team from the UK

and Sandy Sandom, Sales and Marketing Manager of Blueport ACT (NZ) Limited.

The theme of the conference was how to make ACT(A) the most efficient and

effective shipping line to Australia/New Zealand and great stress was placed on "Product Knowledge" and providing service to customers.



Among the speakers at ACT(A)'s Annual Sales and Marketing Conference were (left to right) Robert Grover, Assistant to the Marketing Manager; Michael Cartwright, Managing Director; special guest Sandy Sandom, Marketing Manager of Blueport ACT (NZ) Limited; David Haigh, Marketing Manager; John Mather, General Manager - ACT(A)/ ANL Trade; Jeff Stoddart, Commercial Manager; and David Hooper, Traffic Manager.



# WHEN OLD IS BEAUTIFUL

A record 417 vehicles participated in the Veteran Car Run from London to Brighton, including one car from New Zealand and eight from Australia, most of which are being shipped by ACT(A).

This year's 57-mile London to Brighton run marks the 90th anniversary of the event which began in 1896 to commemo-

rate the change in the law that required a man with a red flag to walk in front of the vehicles.

It was a glorious day for the run this year and it is estimated that two million people lined the route to cheer on the vehicles and their drivers. Good humour was the order of the day and the magnifi-

cantly maintained veteran cars were the subject of great admiration by the crowds of onlookers.

The only car from New Zealand participating was driven by Sir Len Southward, who owns the motor museum in New Zealand. He was driving an 1895 Benz, the oldest car in New Zealand.



Four of the Australian cars which participated in the London to Brighton Veteran Car Run in November are pictured following unloading at Barking Containerbase near London. They were shipped in two 20-foot ACT(A) containers and arrived in perfect condition. In the photograph are (left to right) Max Roberts in his 1904 Vauxhall, chatting with Vernon Pearce, ACT Services' Depot Manager, Barking; Bryan Inder, 1903 Oldsmobile, talking to Sam Garnett, Sales Manager, Southern Region, of ACT(A); John Simmons, 1903 Oldsmobile, who is discussing the run with Malcolm Johns, in his 1904 Speedwell.



Among the first to start the run (No. 6 off the mark) was Sir Len Southward and Lady Southward in their 1895 Benz (left photograph) who are congratulated by David Haigh, Marketing Manager of ACT(A), as they stop to say "hello" a few miles from the finishing line. Any commercial advertising is prohibited and the ACT logo was put on just for the picture. It was good humour all around and in the photo at right Mr. and Mrs. Keith Wherry in their 1901 Oldsmobile give a wave while David Haigh admires their Australian flag.



# RINGING IN THE BICENTENNIAL

The oldest existing ringing bells in Australia have arrived in England to be restored and refurbished at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry in London where they were originally cast 140 years ago.

The bells, from Holy Trinity Church in Hobart, Tasmania, will be tuned and generally restored and then fitted with completely new ring fittings and framework. They will then be returned to Hobart well in time to join bells across Australia to ring in the nation's 200th year in January 1988.

The bells were brought from Australia by ACT(A), who are one of the official sponsors of the bicentenary. ACT(A) will be bringing more than 20 container loads of bells from Australia for restoration in England and they will also ensure that they are returned safely in time for the celebrations.

Many of the bells are more than 100 years old and some weigh over a tonne. They are being carried on specially designed pallets which will facilitate their handling. In addition, ACT(A) will be taking back to Australia other bells as



The bells from Holy Trinity Church in Hobart, Tasmania, arrive at London's Whitechapel Bell Foundry after being transported by ACT(A) from Australia. Discussing the unloading are (left to right) Alan Hughes, Managing Director of Whitechapel Bell Foundry; Walter Marshall, General Sales Manager South of ACT(A); and Philip Gray, Chairman of the Hobart Bells Fund Committee.



The "Fifth" bell is taken out of the top of the bell tower of Holy Trinity Church in Hobart prior to being loaded for shipment to the UK by ACT(A).



On arrival at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry, where they were originally cast, the bells are carefully unloaded to be retuned and refurbished.



A close-up of one of the 140-year old bells from Holy Trinity Church which will be rung on January 26, 1988 to mark the nation's 200th anniversary.

well, which are gifts from the UK for the bicentenary.

At dawn on January 26, 1988 bellringers, who are coming from all over the world, will join their Australian counterparts to ring bells in churches, universities and city halls across the nation to mark its 200th anniversary.

The Whitechapel Bell Foundry is in the Guinness Book of Records as the oldest existing business in Great Britain with written records dating back to 1570;

however, members of the foundry's management believe it was already going as early as 1420.

It is one of the few foundries in the world today that concentrate solely on bells and, despite its long history, it is a forward-looking company with sophisticated bell-tuning equipment and it supplies computerised chiming devices and carillon control units.

Famous bells manufactured by the Whitechapel Bell Foundry include the

clock bell for St. Paul's Cathedral in London - one of the heaviest in England, the well-known "Bow Bells", the American Liberty Bell, "Big Ben" - weighing 13½ tons, and a set of bells for St. Petersburg (Leningrad).

Whitechapel bells can be found in Westminster Abbey, York Minster and Lincoln and Liverpool cathedrals. Also, the American Bicentennial Bell was cast in 1976 as a gift from Britain to the people of the United States.

