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Let's be practical...

If your first thought when you pick up this issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* is that it feels a little thicker – and heavier – than normal, you're not wrong. We've managed to squeeze in an extra 32 pages, this being a special issue covering a theme I'm sure we can all relate to: Buy, Restore, Upgrade, Enjoy. Whether you're about to buy a Rolls-Royce or Bentley, or you're planning to carry out work on the one you already own, you'll find plenty here to interest and entertain.

The centre 32 pages of the magazine are dedicated to project cars, from rolling restorations through to full-scale rebuilds. We're not trying to provide in-depth advice on how to restore specific models, as that would take up far more space than we have available. What we are doing, however, is offering an insight into some of the major issues to consider if you're thinking of taking on a project – with plenty of useful advice from people with the right kind of knowledge and expertise.

The remainder of this issue continues the same general theme, with some terrific feature cars owned by enthusiasts keen to share their experiences – which, after all, is the finest way to learn about any classic car. We meet the proud owner of an immaculate Bentley Turbo R, discovering his top tips on buying and running this luxury express of the '80s and '90s. And we pay a visit to a company with unrivalled experience of the Rolls-Royce 20hp – one of the most charming (and certainly the most affordable) of the inter-war models produced by Britain's most prestigious marque.

Silver Shadow fans will also enjoy this issue, as we catch up with the cost-conscious owner of a late-model example to hear all about the ups and downs he's so far endured. And we launch a whole new series featuring Dan Furr's Silver Shadow II, a car that is currently undergoing a vast array of improvements that we'll be covering in the months ahead. Throw into the mix a visit to Hanwells of London, plus an in-depth look at the racing achievements of Bentley in the 1920s, and it's clear that this is a jam-packed issue – one that I hope you enjoy reading as much as we've enjoyed putting together.

Paul Guinness

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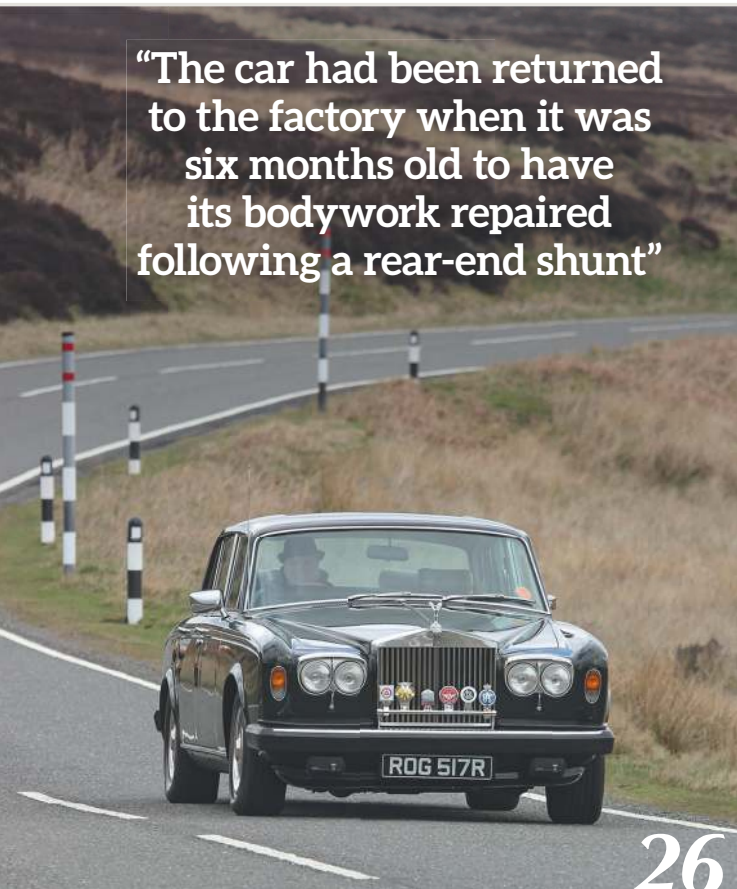
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ROLLS-ROYCE & BENTLEY *driver*

"The car had been returned to the factory when it was six months old to have its bodywork repaired following a rear-end shunt"



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BLIZZARD RECREATED

Announced in time for this summer's Bentley centenary celebrations is this long-awaited tribute to the company's Blizzard concept of almost seventy years ago – with the men behind the project promising that just fifteen limited-edition cars will be built, each one finished to a concours standard.

It was back in 1950 that Rolls-Royce's chief projects engineer, Ivan Evernden, released a brochure describing an experimental project known as the Blizzard – a two-seater open sports car, lighter and smaller in size than other Bentleys of the period. A single drawing of the proposed Blizzard was created by Cecily Jenner, showing a car that was similar

Coach doors and rear wheel spats complement the Blizzard's period look



The prototype's immaculate rolling chassis shows high standards of engineering

Photos: Gun Hill Studios

in size to the Jaguar XK120. Faced with such tough competition in the sports car market, however, it was felt that Bentley should focus on its luxury saloon offerings, and so the Blizzard proposal was never taken further.

Fast-forward seven decades and there's a new Blizzard about to be unveiled, with the initial full-scale polystyrene model – covered in high-build primer and painted to a high standard – shown here for the first time.

Everything has been built to scale, with the model sitting at the correct ride height to give a clear idea of how each production car will look. This hand-crafted creation will shortly be making its show debut, enabling potential buyers to see exactly how this 21st century interpretation of the Blizzard will look.

The company behind the project is Coventry-based Blizzard Motor Cars, founded by a highly experienced



The Blizzard employs a usefully updated R-Type powerplant

team that includes Stephen and Christopher Pearson of Chesman Motorsport and Jeremy Padgett of Padgett Motor Engineers, with Tony Hunter appointed as head of design. Work on the project began in 2015, with the aim of building a strictly limited-edition classic as close as possible to Ivan Evernden's original vision.

Known as The Supreme Fifteen, each one of the hand-built Blizzards will be based around an uprated MkVI (or R-Type) chassis, black-enameled and fitted with upgraded steering and suspension. Power will come from an uprated 4.9-litre R-Type engine featuring a brand new aluminium cylinder head, forged pistons, a triple-carb set-up and electronic ignition, ensuring an abundance of authenticity combined with useful modern-day features.

The Blizzard will sit on 16-inch alloy wheels, while the all-aluminium bodywork will be individually hand-crafted – featuring coach doors and easy-access rear wheel spats for a genuine period look. The cockpit will apparently also be finished to an exemplary standard, using Connolly hide and high-quality veneers throughout.

To find out more about the Blizzard project prior to it going on display at events this summer, go to: www.blizzardmotorcars.co.uk.



ROLLS-ROYCE SPECTACULAR

As this issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* goes on sale, there are just over three weeks to go until the RREC's Annual Rally, which this year takes place over the long weekend of June 21st-23rd at the familiar venue of Burghley House, near Stamford in Lincolnshire. As usual, this spectacular event will attract Rolls-Royce enthusiasts from around the world, with up to 4000 attendees expected.

The gates of Burghley House will open to visitors on the Friday, giving early guests a chance to enjoy the many trade stands – and to buy those all-important spares and accessories – before the major crowds arrive over the weekend. For more details of the RREC's Annual Rally 2019, go online to www.rrec.org.uk.

CLUB AWARD

The RREC's *Spirit & Speed* was named Outstanding Club Magazine of the Year 2019 at The National Car Club Awards in March, just twelve months after the title was launched. It was one of 14 finalists for what the judges said was the event's most fiercely contested award, but was finally crowned overall winner thanks to its "high production values, breadth of articles and appeal to a wide range of enthusiasts." The judges summed up the magazine by saying: "It's an excellent, vibrant new publication – and sets a new standard for marque club magazines."



WRAITH RESCUE

Reader and regular contributor Graham Crossley has been in touch to report on the recent sale of this 1939 Rolls-Royce Wraith, owned until recently by his friend, Simon Hayward. Due to lack of time, Simon's intention of restoring the car never came to fruition, leaving the Wraith (chassis number WXA102) in a sorry-looking state. Graham decided to



step in and, using his many social media contacts, helped Simon to find the car a caring new owner.

"Many people saw the Wraith online and showed an interest in buying it," reports Graham. "In the end though, it was an enthusiast from Sheffield who came to see it and agreed to buy it." The Wraith's new owner is Robert McNamara, who recently collected the 80-year-old Rolls-Royce and trailed it to his home, keen to start work on its restoration as soon as possible. We love a happy ending here at *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*.

ULTIMATE ACCESSORY

Rolls-Royce has unveiled the latest addition to its Accessories Collection, described by the company as ideal for 'the most extravagant of environments, from a superyacht to the terrace of a private residence'. The new Champagne Chest is said to embody 'meticulous attention-to-detail and commitment to remarkable handcraftsmanship', which helps to explain its start price of £37,000.

The 'chassis' of the Champagne Chest is made from machined aluminium and carbon fibre, complemented by Natural Grain black leather embossed with the Spirit of Ecstasy and flanked by Tudor Oak wood. The case opens at the touch of a button to reveal the ultimate champagne set for four guests, with the exterior lid transforming into a Tudor Oak serving tray with a laser-cut stainless steel inlay.

Four cotton napkins with finely embroidered 'RR' monograms are also included, together with hand-blown crystal champagne flutes arranged to 'evoke memories of a V12 engine'. If you're tempted by the Champagne Chest, you can place your order at any Rolls-Royce dealership...



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ONE-OFF CONTINENTAL

Bentley has announced a unique new version of the latest Continental GT Convertible, officially known as the Bavaria Edition by Mulliner – of which just one example will be built. Created by Stefan Sielaff, Bentley's director of design, the newcomer is said to have been inspired by 'the beauty of the Bavarian region' and will be officially unveiled at an exclusive event in Munich.

This one-of-a-kind GT Convertible is distinguished by 'iconic Bavarian colours', featuring Glacier White and an Imperial Blue roof, reflecting the Bavaria flag pattern. Each front wing also features the flag pattern in a chrome finish with enamel infills, while 22-inch Mulliner Driving Specification wheels and a chromed lower bumper grille complete the look. Inside, meanwhile, there are Bavarian flag pattern embroidered seat headrests in Bespoke White with contrasting Light Blue Sport thread.



BIGGEST BENTLEY SHOW

The countdown is on for the Bentley Drivers' Club's all-important '1001 Bentleys at Blenheim' event, set to be its biggest gathering of 2019 – helping to celebrate the marque's centenary. The show is being held in association with Salon Privé, one of Britain's most prestigious classic vehicle events, and takes place over the weekend of September 7th and 8th.

The weekend will see the third running of the Masters Series at Salon Privé, which this year is entirely dedicated to Bentley. Although there will inevitably be a competitive element, it will also be a celebration of the marque, with an impressive display of fifty Bentleys from the earliest through to the very latest versions. Owners of exceptional Bentley models are invited to enter their cars for both days of Salon Privé's Bentley celebration weekend. More details of the Bentley Drivers Club's centenary celebrations can be found on page 106.



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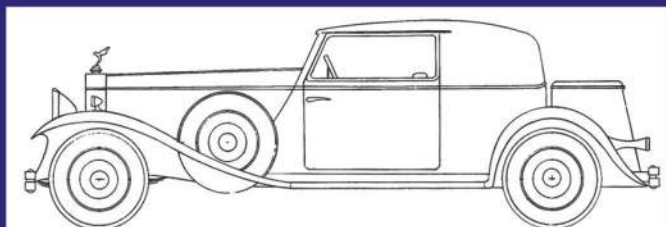
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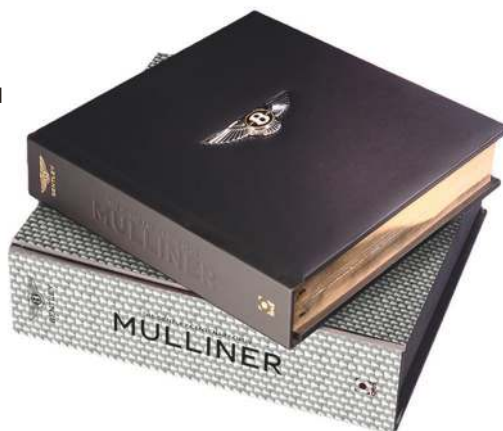
We catch up with the latest must-haves aimed at today's classic Rolls-Royce and Bentley owner

UNIQUE TRIBUTE

One of the most exclusive Bentley books of all time has been launched to commemorate the marque's centenary, covering its history in a unique way. At almost a metre wide when opened and weighing in at around 30kg, the Bentley Centenary Opus is the biggest book ever produced covering a single car marque.

Three different versions – the Centenary, the Mulliner and the 100 Carat limited editions – will be available, confined to an exclusive print run of 500 copies for the Centenary, 100 for the Mulliner, and just seven for the 100 Carat. The different editions are priced at £3000, £12,500 and £200,000 respectively, reflecting what the publisher calls 'the rarity, collectible value and long-term investment' of the title.

Highlights of the Mulliner edition



(hand-bound in top quality leather) include giant 20x24-inch Polaroid Portraits of ten landmark Bentleys and a collection of 56 Bentley watercolours commissioned exclusively for the project and individually painted on silk paper. For more information, go to: www.thisisopus.com/bentley.

IDEAL GIFTS

Although better known for its vast stocks of new, used and remanufactured parts, Flying Spares also sells a wide range of gifts and accessories – including an array of high-quality keyrings that start in price from just £20 including VAT. The company also has a choice of official Rolls-Royce lapel pins available, priced from less than £50 each – making them a cost-effective finishing touch for your outfit at this season's classic events. To see the full range of gift ideas available from Flying Spares, go online to www.flyingspares.com/shop.



HANDY WIPES

There's an unwritten rule in nature that as soon as you finish cleaning your car, at least one bird will decide to use it as target practice – and with bird droppings being so potentially corrosive, you'll want to deal with the situation as soon as possible. That's why Autoglym has now launched Bird Dropping Wipes, with each pack containing ten individually wrapped wipes designed to break down even the most stubborn deposits.

With bird droppings being a well-known cause of paintwork and lacquer damage, these latest products are ideal for keeping in your car and using as soon as the problem arises – particularly at shows and classic events. Autoglym Bird Dropping Wipes cost around £6.70 per pack, and more details can be found at www.autoglym.com.



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POST-WAR PERFECTION

We head to southern Spain, famed for its glorious scenery and idyllic climate, to meet the Gibraltarian owner of this superb 'Standard Steel' Bentley MkVI saloon

WORDS: IVAN OSTROFF PHOTOGRAPHY: LYNDON McNEIL



Having never previously had the pleasure of sampling a Bentley MkVI, I consider this to be my lucky day. I'm with Gibraltarian classic vehicle enthusiast Frank Linaris at Sotogrande in southern Spain, just across the border with Gibraltar. The reason? To encounter his rather splendid MkVI, a surviving example of the 'Standard Steel' saloon that helped to create commercial success for Bentley in the early post-war years. Frank's 1949 MkVI (chassis number B457DZ) is resplendent in its black

and red colour scheme, its coachwork looking every bit as impressive today as it did when it left the factory at Crewe seventy years ago. The proud owner lifts the right-hand side of the bonnet to show me his immaculate Bentley's 4257cc straight-six engine, and enjoys pointing out the torch that sits on the scuttle. In case of any night time mishap, said torch has a flex coiled around it which plugs into a two-pin socket inside the car. So sensible. So thoughtful.

Peering into the car as I open the

driver's door, its interior is a vision of elegance; and as I slip into the comfort of its well-upholstered driver's seat, I immediately feel at home. Before me are the usual instruments – speedometer on the right and additional dials in a group on the left, comprising amps, oil, fuel and water. Standing next to me with a contented smile on his face, Frank goes over the intriguing looking controls on the steering wheel: "The hand throttle is on the left, while the control on the »



FEATURE CAR BENTLEY MKVI

right adjusts the shock absorbers for ride quality. You need to move the Mixture lever on the bottom-left to Start, and when you're satisfied that the temperature is coming up, bring it down to Run as quickly as possible because too much petrol will wash the oil off the bores."

With Frank's advice ringing in my ears, I press the silver button to my left and the straight-six engine bursts into life. I bring up the hand throttle a tad, the engine settles into a seamless tickover almost immediately, and so I bring the lever back down once again. I pull the door to and it shuts with that unmistakable click that suggests a classic of real quality; and having acquainted myself with the position of each gear, I'm ready for the off.

Once on the move during my first ever experience of a MkVI, I'm instantly impressed by the quality of the synchromesh as I change up and down through the gears. As long as the driver is kind and gentle, the gears tend to slide in like a knife through butter; I usually find myself double de-clutching when driving older cars, but in the MkVI it is scarcely necessary.

The front brakes are hydraulic and the rears are rod-actuated, with power derived via a Hispano-Suiza patent mechanical servo device working off the transmission. Frank has warned me that I'll need to apply some force on the pedal to get the best out of the braking system, and yet it all seems to work perfectly adequately. Indeed, the brakes are reassuringly efficient,

with their servo-assistance proving its worth when you're on the move. The Bentley's turning circle is 46 feet, with reasonable lock for the size of the car; in a slow corner, however, the cam-and-roller steering box does feel a little heavy initially, although it's soon got used to after a short time behind the wheel.

I soon settle in to my inaugural MkVI experience, enjoying the car's relatively tall stance when surrounded by modern traffic, as well as the way in which it copes with today's road conditions.



Owner Frank Linaris



The interior of the MkVI was, of course, beautifully finished and generously equipped for the time





“I couldn’t help thinking that the MkVI was so much nicer to drive than the 20/25 and that I’d be foolish to buy anything else”

Indeed, for a car launched just a year after the end of the Second World War, the Bentley feels remarkably at ease in modern traffic, with its impressive torque enabling me to pull away in almost any gear, helping to make this MkVI novice feel relaxed from the start. Sadly though, my solo drive in the MkVI comes to an all-too-soon end and I’m returning the car to Frank, at which point I ask him why he opted for a MkVI in the first place:

“I’d toyed with the idea of buying a Rolls-Royce 20/25, but then had the opportunity of driving both a 20/25 and a Bentley MkVI belonging to my friend, Hector, who hosts our classic breakfast club on Sundays. I couldn’t help thinking that the MkVI was so much nicer to drive than the 20/25 and that I’d be foolish to buy anything else. I purchased this particular car in November 2013 and was fortunate enough to then secure the Gibraltarian

registration number G 2349 – which is rather appropriate, as the car was first registered on 2nd March, 1949.”

OWNER’S EXPERIENCE

It’s easy to see the appeal of the MkVI, and not just in terms of its elegant looks, as Frank explains: “Whereas the chassis was basically similar to that of the earlier MkV produced before the Second World War, it enjoys »



FEATURE CAR BENTLEY MKVI

the later benefit of independent front suspension whilst maintaining features such as controllable shock absorbers and centralised chassis lubrication controlled by a foot-operated pump and reservoir inside the car, which I rather like."

Ownership of his MkVI hasn't always been straightforward, with issues arriving almost from the start: "About two days after I took delivery of the Bentley, it began to lose power. I removed the cylinder head and discovered that the head gasket had failed between number one and number two cylinder. I knew that the engine had had a major rebuild prior to my ownership, and I suspect they didn't torque down the head correctly. I got hold of a new cylinder head gasket, had the head skimmed and then put everything back together, since when the engine has been running perfectly."

Frank then discovered a vibration and a rather severe juddering when the transmission was under load,

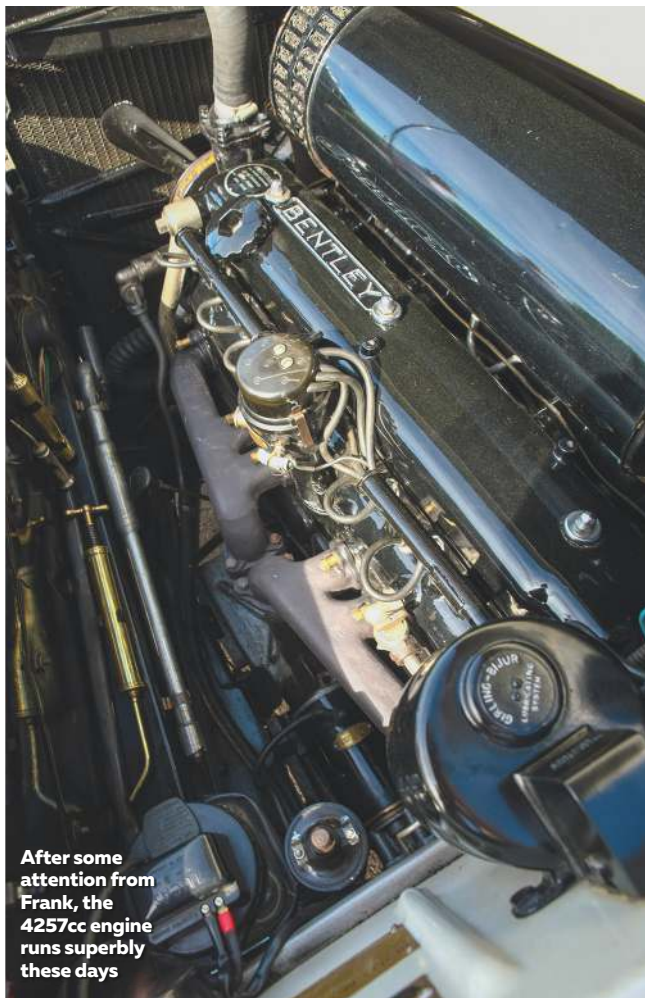
manifesting itself when the Bentley was going uphill or when it had four people on board: "I took the car to several garages but nobody was able to diagnose the fault. Then I came across a video on YouTube pointing out that if you remove the propshaft, it is imperative to replace it in exactly the same position. I got under the car and discovered that prior to my purchasing the car, the propshaft had in fact been removed and replaced with a ninety-degree offset. I therefore took the prop off, rotated it accordingly and refitted it. To my utter delight, this cured the problem instantly.

"I then noticed that the shock absorbers were leaking oil. The original seals were clearly well past their sell-by date, so I stripped the shocks and fitted new seals that I obtained from Flying Spares in the UK."

Another problem encountered by Frank early on was a broken spring, caused by one of the shackles around the nearside rear spring rubbing

against it, eventually weakening it so much that it finally gave way: "After searching for nine months, I managed to find a good pair of secondhand springs, which I successfully fitted. Then one day, driving along the road to Jerez, the SU fuel pump packed up when the contact breakers became fouled, and so I bought a new pump. Since then the car has been running without any problem whatsoever."

One modification that Frank has had to make to the Bentley is to add flashing indicators in order to comply with Spanish law, as the original-type semaphore trafficator arms are not accepted there: "I've wired the car utilising the two front spot lamps as flashers." He did, however, encounter a problem with the Bentley's emissions when it came to the MoT test in Gibraltar: "At its last inspection, it failed on emissions and the examiner drew my attention to an excess of black smoke coming from the exhaust. I drove directly over to my cousin, who »



Mounted on the scuttle is this original, rather useful torch

After some attention from Frank, the 4257cc engine runs superbly these days



HISTORY OF THE MKVI

Work on the Bentley MkVI began in earnest in 1944, inevitably employing plenty of MkV content but with a shortened wheelbase and generally simplified throughout for easier production. The engine remained at 4257cc, but now specified an overhead-inlet and side-exhaust head. The MkVI was the most rigidly-constructed British car of the period, could do over 90mph with ease, and the new gearbox designed for it was silky and precise.

Departing from traditional Rolls-Royce and Bentley practice, the MkVI was offered with a single off-the-peg body produced by Cowley-based Pressed Steel for finishing, trimming and mounting at the Crewe works (although chassis were still available to coachbuilders if required). Known as the 'Standard Steel' Bentley,

deliveries began in October 1946.

The MkVI was the right car at the right time, with its understated but tasteful looks providing well-heeled owners with a welcome anonymity in a more egalitarian-conscious post-war world. In appearance the car remained unchanged for six years, save for cutaway rear-wheel spats and chrome waist strips in September 1948, and scuttle vents and larger hubcaps from late 1951, by which time engine size was increased to 4566cc with a twin-exhaust system. This final MkVI was to be referred to retrospectively in the trade as the 'Big Bore, Small Boot' to distinguish it from the longer R-Type that arrived in October 1952.

To encourage exports to countries such as the USA (where Bentley was less well-known), a Rolls-Royce Silver Dawn version was introduced in July



1949. This was more or less identical to the MkVI, save for the Rolls-Royce radiator, single Stromberg carburettor and column-mounted gearchange. The Silver Dawn wasn't made available on the British market until October 1953, by which time it had adopted the later R-Type's silhouette. The 1952-55 R-Type was itself a further refinement of the MkVI design, featuring a more graceful tail that added seven and a half inches to the car's overall length.

“The car still purveys a regal atmosphere, and you can see other folk staring and wondering who we are”



is an excellent mechanic, and he set about adjusting the carburettors and weakening the mixture. The smoke disappeared and on the way back to the test station the car was running so much better. Naturally, it then passed its test with no problem. I'd been advised that the MkVI should run rich, but that was obviously quite wrong.”

REGULAR USE

Frank uses the Bentley almost every weekend when he goes over the border from Gibraltar to Spain to join fellow local classic car owners for breakfast on Sunday mornings: “I’m quite happy to take it on the occasional 200-mile round trip up to the Cadiz area, for example, with my

wife. On occasions, when driving in Gibraltar, everyone gives a thumbs-up – all the people there just love it. The car still purveys a regal atmosphere, and you can see other folk staring and wondering who we are. They almost look at us in awe. When my daughter got married in it a couple of years ago, I was rather amused when some kids opposite the Cathedral said: ‘Look at that car he’s driving, he must have a lot of money!’ People are always impressed by the Bentley and often ask how much it’s worth.”

On even the longest of trips, Frank finds his MkVI wonderfully comfortable and tends to cruise at around 60mph when circumstances allow: “It will easily stay with today’s traffic and I always manage to overtake lots of the more

modern cars. Keeping up good average speeds on motorways is easy, although those roads are boring and not really what the car was designed for. The Bentley is particularly enjoyable to drive on good country B-roads and twisting hilly sections, as the brakes are good and the car doesn’t roll excessively.”

This MkVI’s proud owner is as drawn to the history of its manufacturer as he is to the car itself, as he explains: “I find it rather interesting that this particular Bentley, built by Rolls-Royce with bodywork by Pressed Steel, was sold as the Rolls-Royce Silver Dawn in the USA from 1949, thanks to the Bentley marque being less well-known there. To create the Silver Dawn, the MkVI was essentially fitted with a Rolls-Royce radiator grille, while a single carburettor replaced the sportier twin-carb spec of the Bentley.” It was an interesting move, coming well before Bentley and Rolls-Royce fully merged into the world of badge-engineering with the launch of the Silver Cloud and S-series in 1955.

“I also love the fact that the Bentley MkVI was built at Crewe,” explains Frank, “in the same factory that used to produce Merlin engines for Spitfires and Lancaster bombers during the Second

CLASSICS IN GIBRALTAR

The Gibraltar Classic Vehicle Association was created in 2001 by a group of classic car enthusiasts who met regularly and decided to start a formal association in order to advance their enjoyment of older vehicles and the associated lifestyle. The club encourages all classic car owners and enthusiasts in and around Gibraltar, and currently has around a hundred members – who between them own almost 150 vehicles. The GCVA has an active Facebook page with regular updates, or you can find out more about the club via its website: www.gibraltarclassiccar.com.



Handy storage under the boot floor of this regularly used Bentley MkVI

World War. It almost endorses the Britishness of this very fine motor car."

Not surprisingly, though, it's the sheer quality of engineering that Frank is particularly in awe of when it comes to these older models: "Henry Royce never used four bolts when he could make do with eight, but the precision of it all is quite amazing. Everything fits so well, it's not difficult to take things apart and it's equally

straightforward when reassembling afterwards. The engine is not easily accessible when working on the car; but on the other hand, once things are running properly, it doesn't really require much in the way of attention."

Nevertheless, part of Frank's passion of ownership involves working on the car himself: "I know that many owners have mechanics to look after their classics, but I am very hands-

on. I have to be doing something, otherwise I get bored. My pleasure and mission in life is to repair things, which is probably why I'm a dentist. I appreciate precision of design, as well as the integrity of a car's structure. You can see that a lot of thought has gone into every aspect of the MkVI's design. There is nothing superfluous, this car is just beautiful. I suspect that I will probably keep it for ever..." ■



The car remains impressively original throughout

MARKET WATCH

Each issue, we take a look at some of the most tempting cars for sale and report on others that have sold – covering everything from affordable modern classics through to the most premium-priced gems



SOLD AT AUCTION

One of the most recent classic vehicle auctions hosted by Brightwells at its Herefordshire headquarters saw this trio of Rolls-Royces finding new owners – one of the most intriguing lots being the rolling chassis from a Phantom III. Chassis number 3BU182 was originally supplied in 1936 to be fitted with enclosed limousine coachwork by H.J. Mulliner. The completed car was finally supplied to its first owner in February 1937.

The auction house had no records of when the Phantom III lost its bodywork, although it was sometime before the 1970s, when the rolling chassis was acquired by its last owner with the intention of being transformed into a bespoke two-seater roadster. The chassis was offered by Brightwells complete with a correct-spec V12 engine and various ancillaries, a matching gearbox, a disassembled steering box, a radiator shell and core, as well as numerous hard-to-find spares. In the end, the winning bidder paid £9900 for the rolling chassis and parts. If anyone knows who bought it, we'd love to hear about their future project plans.

Rather more conventional by Rolls-Royce standards was the pair of Silver Shadows that found new owners at the same auction, with the rarest being a 1974 long-wheelbase that sold for a very reasonable sounding £8800. It had been in the same ownership since 1993 and was well-presented, having been resprayed (in maroon) around

ten years ago. Meanwhile, a 1979 Silver Shadow II – finished in Caribbean Blue with a Surf Blue interior – looked a tempting proposition at its final sale price of £5885. It might not have been cosmetically perfect, but it appeared to be a well-maintained example, fully road legal and ready to enjoy straight away.



MODERN-CLASSIC RARITY

Any example of the Bentley Continental R and T series of 1991-on is a rarity by modern-classic standards, although the example you see here (spotted during our recent visit to Hanwells of London, which you can read about in this issue – starting on page 92) is particularly unusual, as well as being one of the most sought-after versions of all.

Dating from late 2001, this Continental R is a limited-edition Mulliner 'wide body' model – and with just 32,000 miles under its wheels, it's also an exceptionally well-preserved example. Mulliner versions of both the Continental R and Continental T were offered from 1999, with the R gaining the same 420bhp engine as the standard-model T – making it the fastest, most powerful version of the R ever offered by Bentley, boasting a mighty 650lb.ft. of torque. It was the ideal choice for anyone seeking the longer wheelbase of a Continental R combined with the kind of power normally reserved for the T.

This particular Continental R



Mulliner looks superb in its original colour scheme of Silver Pearl with a Cotswold hide interior and contrasting French Navy carpets. The car comes with a full service

history and benefits from having recently had four new tyres fitted. The asking price is £96,950 and you can find out more via www.hanwells.com or by calling 0208 567 9729.



TOP CHOICE TWO-DOOR

The hardtop version of the Corniche tends to offer superb value compared with its convertible sibling and this example – priced at £47,950 – is no exception. Admittedly, a Corniche will always look relatively expensive compared with its four-door Silver Shadow cousin; but for those who favour a hand-built coupe rather than a saloon with bodywork by Pressed Steel, the extra expense is considered well worthwhile by Corniche admirers.

This Corniche FHC dates from 1974 and is finished in Seychelles Blue with contrasting Magnolia hide upholstery. It boasts an electric sliding-panel sunroof as well as an upgraded sound system, and has had extensive repairs and improvements carried out by Royce Service & Engineering (the specialist that's selling it) over the last two years. The car has covered just 57,000 miles to date and comes with a comprehensive service history. For more information, call 01737 844999 or check out the website: www.rsande.co.uk.



SOFT-TOP STYLE

Anyone looking for a stylish convertible for a pan-European touring holiday this summer may well be tempted by this impressive 1984 Corniche – a 48,000-mile example finished in blue with a contrasting Parchment hide interior. What makes this car particularly useful, however, is its left-

hand drive layout, making it the ideal choice if you're lucky enough to have a second home in the sun. The Corniche is being offered for sale by The Chelsea Workshop at an asking price of £67,500. To find out more about it, go online to www.chelseaworkshop.com or call 0207 584 8363.



PHANTOM III PROJECT

Offered for sale by H&H Classic Auctions at its latest sale on June 19th is this 1937 Rolls-Royce Phantom III (chassis number 3CP8), complete with its original James Young sports saloon coachwork. Although obviously something of a project car, this solid looking example is ideal for anyone seeking a pre-war Rolls-Royce that's complete and ready for further restoration.

The Phantom III has been in the same ownership since 1996, since when it has had plenty of work carried out – including replacement sections of the ash framework. Just 727 examples of the Phantom III are thought to have been produced during its three-year run, making this James Young-bodied car a rare sight on the classic Rolls-Royce scene.

Although unveiled at the 1935 Olympia Motor Show, the Phantom III didn't enter production until May of the following year. It was, of course, a highly sophisticated design for the time, featuring independent coil-sprung front suspension, a fully floating live rear axle, hydraulic shock absorbers and gearbox-driven servo-assisted brakes. It was also the first Rolls-Royce to come with V12 power, with its advanced new engine boasting a seven-bearing crankshaft, eight-bearing camshaft, hydraulic tappets and dual downdraught Stromberg carburettors. Allied to a four-speed manual gearbox (complete with synchromesh on second, third and fourth gears), the V12 gave most versions of the Phantom III a 100mph top speed.

The example that's about to come to market looks remarkably complete, still with its original engine and ancillaries in place, as well as its retractable glass division, fold-down occasional seats, twin side-mounted spare wheels and Lucas P100R headlamps. The car comes with various spares and should make a fascinating project – particularly as it's being offered for sale with no reserve. To find out more about this Phantom III (and to see what it sold for once the auction has taken place), go to: www.handh.co.uk.



OWNERSHIP EXPERIENCE

We meet the self-confessed eccentric owner of a late-model Silver Shadow II to find out more about his experience to date – and his cost-conscious approach to motoring

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: ROB HAWKINS



It's my car, so I can do what I like with it," jokes 59-year-old retired Royal Navy marine engineer, Roger Hagan. Living in County Durham in the north-east of England, his proud northern attitude is what makes ownership of this 1980 Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow II all the more interesting. He has a belt-and-braces approach to car ownership and he likes a bargain; yet Roger also knows that if a job needs doing, it should be done well or not at all.

The Silver Shadow II seen here hasn't always looked so immaculate. Over the two and a half years that Roger has owned it, he's gradually improved the car whilst also adding his own touches, such as the £30 universal badge bar below the front grille (a genuine badge bar costs around £130), a smaller wood-rimmed Nardi steering wheel that makes it easier to get in

and out of the driver's seat, and a leisure battery in the boot to power a small fridge. And he's not been afraid of having a go himself, from welding up a leaking exhaust downpipe to varnishing the wood-veneer dashboard.

As we arrive at Roger's home (an end-terraced house with a conveniently large back yard, providing enough space for a garage measuring 28 feet by eleven feet), the Silver Shadow is nestled amongst an assortment of rare and rescued Volvos, many of which might be described as emerging classics. Roger has previously owned a Brooklands Green Bentley Mulsanne S, while his father had a Brewster Green Silver Shadow back in 1987, but the desire to own a later Silver Shadow II had been there for some years. It's easy to see why, of course. The later models were equipped with rack-and-pinion power steering in



place of the more agricultural and less precise steering box of the original Silver Shadow, with changes to the suspension dramatically improving the car's handling and general road manners. By December 2016, Roger had »



FEATURE CAR

ROLLS-ROYCE SILVER SHADOW II



This smaller Nardi steering wheel makes entry and exit easier for Roger



The Rolls-Royce has been dramatically improved via its latest owner

already spent many weeks trawling the classifieds and the internet to see whether he could find a suitable Silver Shadow II. Most of the ones for sale were based in the south of England, and so he began planning a week-long trip to view a few of them. However, as luck would have it, just such a car became available at a dealer local to him. It was a strange model to have for sale by a dealer that generally sells modern machinery, but the Shadow II seemed worth a look, especially as it was a particularly late-model example – with an official build date of August 5th 1980, exactly two weeks before it hit the road for the first time.

Roger phoned for more information on the Shadow II and was informed that it was a probate sale, whereby the dealer was receiving a fixed fee. This meant he wasn't trying to haggle in order to maximise his profit, although there was a minimum price at which he would sell, a figure that he obviously wasn't willing to reveal. With the Rolls-Royce carrying a price tag of £13,995, the dealer explained that the car drove well but the bodywork was

“Roger spent weeks trawling the internet to see whether he could find a suitable Silver Shadow II”



a little tatty and the odometer had just passed the 121,000 miles mark.

TEN-FOOT CAR

Roger decided to visit the dealer and soon realised that his description had been reassuringly honest: “It was a good ten-foot car,” he remembers, explaining that close-up inspection revealed bubbling paint on the rear wheelarches as well as glassfibre repairs underneath, a hole in the nearside rear sill, cracked lead-loading around the front and rear screens and poor paint repairs at the front end where stone-chip damage had occurred. At the time the price reflected the need to repair the bodywork, and Roger was confident he knew what he was letting himself in for. He knows how to MIG weld and, being an engineer, knows what’s involved in repairing a vehicle. After surviving five heart attacks and bowel cancer, however, these days he relies on friends and friendly mechanics for any heavy-duty work that’s needed.

It was the test drive in the Silver Shadow II that probably sealed the

deal for Roger, with the car running and performing as well as the dealer had described. The supporting documentation showed that it had a full service history, with evidence of having been well cared for over the years. The Rolls-Royce was then driven on to a ramp at a local garage for an inspection underneath; the aforementioned hole at the rear of the nearside sill was easy to see, but the good news was that the underside of the car was in reasonable condition. All that remained was for Roger to make an offer: “As an opening gambit I started at £9000,” he recalls, “and the dealer accepted it. I wished I’d started lower now.”

Returning home with his new purchase, Roger decided that he could live with the bodywork as it was for a while, preferring instead to use the car to see whether the list of jobs and repairs would grow. Pretty soon, it did. Four months after buying the Shadow II, he noticed some brake fluid on the floor of his garage. He traced the fluid to a leaking brake pipe, which he replaced only to have another pipe burst immediately after bleeding the brakes. »



CARAVAN OF LOVE

When Roger spotted a 1980 Royale Tourmaster four-berth touring caravan for sale last year, he couldn’t resist snapping it up – and immediately arranged to have a removable tow-bar fitted to his Silver Shadow II: “Towing a classic caravan with a Rolls-Royce of the same age certainly turns heads out on the road,” he admits. “And everywhere I’ve been so far, there have been plenty of people wanting to ask why I tow a caravan with a Rolls-Royce. I love to see the expressions on their faces when I pull up!”

“The car had been returned to the factory when it was six months old following a rear-end shunt”



A search through various Rolls-Royce forums revealed confirmation that when one brake pipe bursts, it's only a matter of time before they all start to leak – and the general advice was to have all of them replaced, including the hydraulic pipework for the rear suspension.

Roger's nearest specialist is Fearons of Newcastle (www.alanfearon.co.uk), and so the Shadow was transported to the workshop to have a total of 21 pipes and four flexi-hoses renewed, as well as all of the brake calipers stripped and rebuilt with new seals. Then once the Shadow was back in Roger's garage he decided to service the engine with fresh oil, filters and spark plugs, as well as changing the oil in the gearbox and rear differential, with all the necessary parts being supplied by Flying Spares.

Throughout 2017, Roger managed to keep the old front exhaust pipe going by carrying out welding repairs every time it split and leaked, although “in the end there wasn't a lot left to weld to,” he recalls. With genuine front pipes and a balance pipe at the time costing around £630, he contacted a local exhaust specialist in Darlington and discovered they could make these parts from mild steel for £250

or from stainless-steel for only £400 (complete with a lifetime guarantee on the latter system). He opted for the stainless steel set-up, which linked up well to the rest of the system that was thankfully still in good order.

Equipped with the new stainless-steel exhaust sections, Roger set off from Darlington in the Rolls-Royce but didn't manage to make it out of the town. The fan's viscous coupling snapped, sending the fan in the direction of the radiator, instantly destroying it: “It looked like it had been through it with a chainsaw,” he says, recalling the plumes of steam billowing from the radiator grille. The RAC was called upon and asked to transport the Silver Shadow to Fearons' workshop, where a new radiator, viscous coupling and fan were fitted, along with a rebuilt water pump due to a leak.

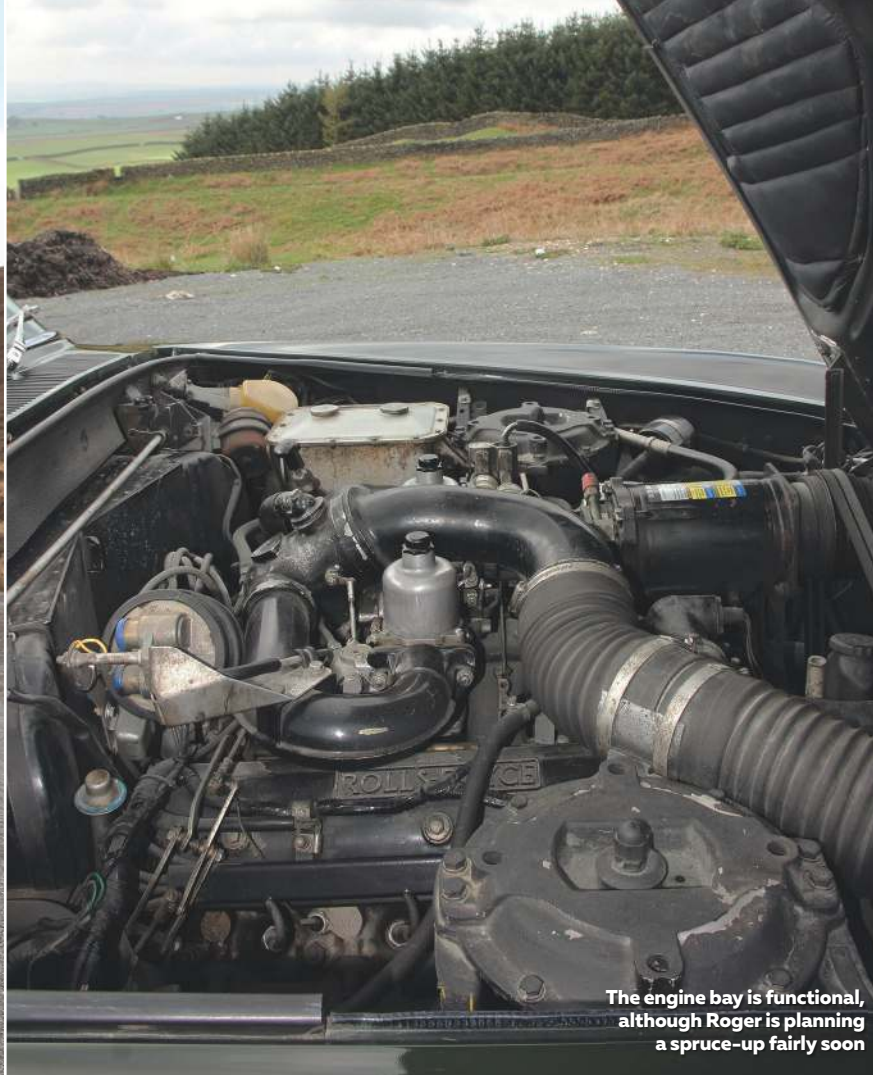
CARAVAN CAPERS

During 2018, Roger found himself buying a classic-looking Royale Tourmaster four-berth caravan of 1980 vintage, the same age as his Rolls-Royce; and despite having one or two (or more) Volvos that were easily capable of towing it, he decided to fit a removable

tow bar to the Shadow II instead. His plan is to tour around Suffolk and the south coast this year, but so far he's towed the caravan to some local classic car shows where eyebrows were raised by many onlookers, although such reactions tend to make Roger smile.

“One question I often get asked is how uneconomical the Rolls-Royce is when I'm towing,” he remarks. “The simple answer is that I get twelve miles to each gallon without the caravan – and exactly the same with it!”

Another use for Roger's Silver Shadow II became obvious last year, when his daughter announced her wedding date for May 2019 and suggested that the Rolls-Royce would make ideal bridal transport. Proud dad knew that he'd need to get the car's bodywork repaired and repainted for the big day, and so he approached a number of bodyshops and specialists – some of which were reluctant to quote while others were willing but vague on pricing. Roger then paid a visit to Steve Rodgers of Newcastle-based RS Bodywork, asking him for a price to replace both rear wheelarches and localised spraying. Out of interest, he also bravely asked for a price on a full



The engine bay is functional, although Roger is planning a spruce-up fairly soon

REMEDIAL WORK



The inner rear arches needed replacing along with the outers, with RS Bodywork being entrusted to carry out the repairs



With the new rear wheelarches in place, preparations began for the Rolls-Royce's full screens-out respray



After a black guide coat had been applied to locate any imperfections, Roger's car was resprayed in original Brewster Green

screens-out respray with all exterior trim removed, for which the estimate wasn't as painful as he'd anticipated.

In the end, Roger opted for a full respray and, in November of last year, delivered the car to Steve minus its bumpers and exterior chromework. When funds had been available, Roger had already bought one nearside rear outer wheelarch from Flying Spares, then saved up and bought a second along with a complete front wing in case it was needed.

At RS Bodywork, both rear wheelarches were cut out only to reveal more about the history of this Shadow II. According to its paperwork, the car had been returned to the factory when it was roughly six months old to have its bodywork repaired following a rear-end shunt. With the wheelarches cut out the extent of that work was obvious to see, particularly where lead-loading had been applied. What was also apparent was that the rear wheelarches had been changed before, with the replacements being spot-welded in place, therefore allowing moisture in and enabling corrosion to take hold once again. RS Bodywork then cut and removed the rear inner wheelarches, which had also

corroded, before expertly fabricating a pair of replacement inners. Such a job not only takes time but requires a high level of skill, and Roger was invited to regularly visit the workshop to follow the progress on his car.

With the fabricated inner arches in place, Steve coated them in a zinc-based paint to help further preserve them prior to fitting the outer replacements. Further repairs were made to rectify the aforementioned hole in the rear of the nearside sill, replace an old but poor repair to the same sill, and fix a small rusty hole in the front valance, before the entire bodysell was prepared for its respray. Retaining the original Brewster Green (L67-GV009) colour scheme, a black guide coat was applied first to help locate any imperfections in the panelwork prior to the correct colour paint being applied. Steve also offered to paint two sets of wheel trims with a matching band of colour, providing Roger with a few spares in case he needs them in the future.

By the end of February this year, the Shadow II was fully reassembled and returned home, complete with new seals for the front and rear screens. Painted stripes (fine lines) were due »



to be added, but due to unforeseen circumstances Roger resorted to fitting vinyl instead, although he's planning to have them painted on when he finds someone willing – and able – to do the job properly.

MOORLAND PHOTOS

As we head out onto the open moorland of County Durham to photograph this handsome example of a Silver Shadow II, I'm initially sat in the passenger seat, taking the opportunity to appreciate the ride quality and refinement that this 39-year-old car has to offer. It certainly feels smooth and comfortable, but it's not until I'm behind the Nardi steering wheel and actually driving that I fully appreciate the level of refinement and luxury this Rolls-Royce has to offer.

There's a faint rumble from the 6750cc V8 up front. With my right foot firmly planted on the wide footbrake pedal, I flick the steering-column-mounted gear lever from Park to Drive to operate the GM three-speed automatic gearbox, release the umbrella handbrake from below, then gently lift off the brakes.

“He decided he could live with the bodywork as it was for a while, preferring instead to use the car”

Take off is smooth with no sign of surging or hesitation. I push a little harder on the throttle and am unaware of any gear changes as I suddenly notice that the speedometer (which was recently repaired and checked by Speedy Cables) is showing 55mph, a speed that Roger assures me is accurate.

Approaching a corner on the open moorland road, I'm gentle on the brakes but later discover how responsive they are when I press much harder and find the all-round discs with twin calipers at each front corner creating more aggressive deceleration. It's reassuring to know, especially in a vehicle that weighs just over two tonnes without any passengers or luggage. What's equally reassuring is the steering, which is as light as a feather but precise and positive – and, of course, a huge improvement over the early Silver Shadow's steering box set-up. I'm driving

a vehicle that's over five metres long, yet the lightness and manoeuvrability of its steering would have me believe I was in a modern vehicle of far smaller stature.

Feeling inspired by how Roger has transformed an aesthetically tatty Rolls-Royce into something that his daughter ended up being proud to use on her wedding day, we discuss a few minor points on the car that could help to improve it, such as new over-rugs for the interior (when funds allow) and a spruced-up engine bay. He'll probably always have a to-do list of jobs lined up, but for now Roger can appreciate his Silver Shadow's gleaming new paintwork and watch the reaction of unsuspecting purists as he embarks upon some classic caravan adventures this summer. Here's a man who is genuinely enjoying his latest experience of Rolls-Royce ownership... and that, after all, is what it's all about. ■



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CAMARGUE CUSTODIAN

I like your magazine, not least because you're giving the Camargue some well-deserved attention (May/June issue). As a fifty-something, small-time collector/fan of classic cars, I'm not quite sure why I felt the need to add a Camargue to my shed. I've never been a Rolls-Royce 'buff', although certain Bentleys have always appealed – from pre-war 'Blower' to 1950s R-Type Continental, plus the more modern GT coupé.

I suppose rakish coupés for playboy types who need to be in Monaco by dinner time are the genre, and the Camargue ticks all the boxes. I think there's something really special about the Camargue; the sleek lines, raked grille, aero-style cockpit and, of course, its rarity. The excess of it, too – the bold launch in the midst of an oil crisis at an eye-watering showroom price to take on the world

and remind everyone what Rolls-Royce stood for. By comparison, I think Silver Shadows look like something your grandfather should drive, quite slowly...

Our Camargue is an early model (1976), which I think is altogether better than the later types. The additional chrome coachline on the doors adds a real touch of style, as do the wheel trims/hubcaps and lack of silly headlamp wipers. It's rather scruffy, having been stored for many years and neglected somewhat; but thanks to specialist Chris Moroney in London, it is mechanically recommissioned and runs really well on its original Solex set-up. To prove its ability as a long distance GT, we drove to Lake Como last summer (see photo) which was as it should be – at some speed and in total air-conditioned comfort.

Steven Prevet
Via email

CAMARGUE DEFENDER

I enjoyed the article on the Camargue in the May/June issue. While I am a traditionalist, I do view the criticisms of the Camargue as too harsh. Although the improvements could be viewed as limited at the time considering its price, there are many things about the Camargue that are noteworthy. And according to reviews, it offers a pleasing and impressive driving experience.

The Camargue has the Pininfarina touch, a company that has produced some beautiful masterpieces. In addition, it is a Rolls-Royce... a worthy member of the family and not an embarrassing cousin. In more modern times, the Camargue's distant relative – the Cullinan – has had its share of critics thanks to it breaking from the traditional lineage of Rolls-Royce.

One only has to review history to understand that innovative engineering and foresight of design have always attracted harsh critics, with the Eiffel Tower and even the Shard enduring their share of criticism. However, such bold, innovative designs often find history on their side as their beauty becomes appreciated with time. While I cherish traditional designs, the Camargue is a beautiful creation that does not detract from the lineage of Rolls-Royce. Indeed, such a creation enhances the lineage and will continue to be appreciated by the loyal patrons of Rolls-Royce.

Jeff Kelley
Oklahoma, USA

It's interesting that you should compare any controversy over the current Cullinan with that of the Camargue in the 1970s, Jeff. What do other readers think? – Ed.

CAMARGUE SPOTTER

I always look forward to and enjoy every issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*. I particularly loved the article on the Corniche FHC in the May/June issue, even though everyone knows of my obsession with the four-door Silver Shadow and T-series cars. But I am also a big fan of the Camargue – the model that was the most expensive production car in the world when I was young.

Think of today's Bugatti Veyron – there's really no need to have one but people buy them anyway. The Camargue was no high-performance

supercar, but those who owned them were the super-rich and that mystique is still there in my opinion. I've laid eyes on maybe a dozen Camargues and have driven four, one of them brand new in 1981 when I worked at a detailing shop in Toronto. The last one I drove was a tired example owned by a friend of mine (also in Toronto), which I really wanted to buy but another friend beat me to it.

The first Camargue I ever saw was in Berkeley Street, London in 1978 – a blue example, registered OYP 1R. In

1980, I photographed the famous JET 5 car (once registered as 1800 TU) outside Jack Barclay's. I don't like to hear people's negative opinions on the Camargue as I totally disagree. It's a car I have admired since the day it came out – and I'll have one someday. Meanwhile, please see attached some of my old photographs.

David Irvine
Toronto, Canada

Thank you for sending what is a really nostalgic set of photographs, David. Great to see! – Ed.



CAMARGUE REMEMBERED

I thoroughly enjoyed the article on the Camargue in the last issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*. It has been my privilege to have not only seen at least three of these cars but to have also driven two. As a child, brought up travelling long distances in an Alvis TA14 and ferried around in Rolls-Royce 'taxis', I have naturally been drawn to the better things in life. I cannot remember when I didn't have a love affair with all things Rolls-Royce. It has been my good fortune to have driven a Silver Cloud as well as numerous Silver Shadows and Shadow IIs

When I encountered my first Camargue, I was both intrigued and excited. That very morning, I had taken a Corniche off an enclosed overnight train from Crewe – my very first time behind the wheel of any Rolls-Royce. To add to my heightened nervous state, the car was parked askew on the train. Thankfully, both car and driver survived the ordeal without mishap, but I digress...

It was a full year before my next view of a Camargue, only this one I got to drive over a period of three days. I loved it. The purity of line that others might regard as bland, I saw as clean and uncluttered. The interior at first surprised, what with the visible screws, but suddenly I understood it all.

To drive any Rolls-Royce of the time, according to the press, was to sadly succumb to some negative criticism. I have never found this to be true. I personally believe that to drive any Rolls-Royce requires one to improve dramatically one's driving skills. I have driven two Camargues over a variety of roads, from fully-fledged dual-carriageways to B- and C-roads, and I wouldn't want to have swapped them for anything else.

Nicol Rainy-Brown
Via email



SILVER DAWN OWNER

I see that you are still asking for photographs of readers' cars and have just come across this one in the files of 'Merlin IV' – my 1996 Silver Dawn, making it one of the last of the 'proper' Rolls-Royce cars made. If the photograph is any good for you, please feel free to use it as you will.

Having just put down your latest magazine, which came

through the post today, can I also say a big thank you to you and the team for continuing and maintaining your first class standard since the very first issue.

Peter Edwards
Via email

**An excellent photograph, Peter.
Many thanks for sharing – Ed.**



'LIGHTWEIGHT' EIGHT

I refer to the January/February 2019 edition of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, in which you ran a story on the Bentley Eight. I own a 1990 model (Active Ride version) of the Eight, which has covered just 25,000 miles. Your readers may not be aware

that the Eight is 90kg lighter than the equivalent Rolls-Royce (according to the SZ website), which will imbue it with superior performance, everything else being equal.

Brian Trevan
Via email

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RACING PROVES THE BREED

W.O. Bentley established his company's reputation via an impressive racetrack record. Donning a linen helmet and clutching a bottle of Castrol R, we revisit Bentley's glory days at Le Mans and Brooklands

WORDS: JEREMY SATHERLEY PHOTOGRAPHY: BENTLEY MOTORS

"Is there anyone there from the Bentley sales department? I'm George Porter of Blackpool, and I want the agency for Lancashire. That car of yours is going to be a world-beater." It was like a line from a gung-ho biopic. Bentley had just won the team prize in appallingly wet conditions in the 1922 Tourist Trophy on the Isle of Man. Quite apart from it being the only complete team to finish

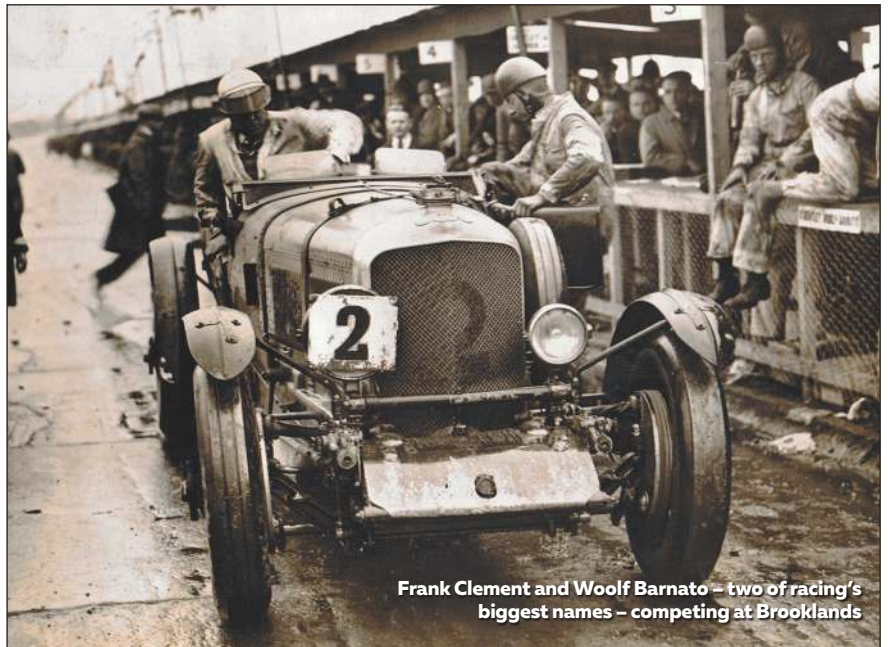
(impressive in itself against well-heeled rivals Vauxhall and Sunbeam), journalists were buzzing with the fact that the cars involved were virtually the same as you could buy off the showroom floor, rather than specially-prepared racers. But for W.O. Bentley, these were just the sort of results he was expecting from a design in which he'd had complete confidence from the start. Bentley's first-ever win came as early

as May 1921 at Brooklands' Whitsun meeting, with 3 Litre Experimental Chassis No.2 beating a Douglas and a Calthorpe into first place. The next foray, however, was very much in at the deep end: the entry of Chassis No.94 driven by Douglas Hawkes in the US Indianapolis 500. Known as the 'Brickyard' because of its surface, the oval 2½-mile track was the setting for a 200-lap race run anti-clockwise for

purpose-built racing cars. In the May 1922 event, Hawkes was up against the straight-eight Duesenbergs and Ford Frontenacs. He certainly wasn't among the fastest (averaging 74.95mph against the 94.48mph of winner Murphy's Miller-engined Duesenberg), was warned by the starter for driving a slow car in the centre of the course, and came last. But significantly, he finished: thirteenth out of an original field of 27 starters, while the Bentley was apparently the only car to cover the 500 miles without changing a tyre.

Barely a month later, Bentley was off to the aforementioned Tourist Trophy with three cars prepared by Frank Clement, who ran the company's experimental department. Higher-compression pistons, racing carburettors and modified exhausts were fitted, and smaller flat radiators were mounted – probably to save money, as the vee-profiled equivalent of the catalogued cars was expensive to produce. Before the race there were disagreements over the selection of drivers, and bath enamel used to paint the bodies wouldn't dry out, so had to be removed with petrol and quick-drying white undercoat hastily applied!

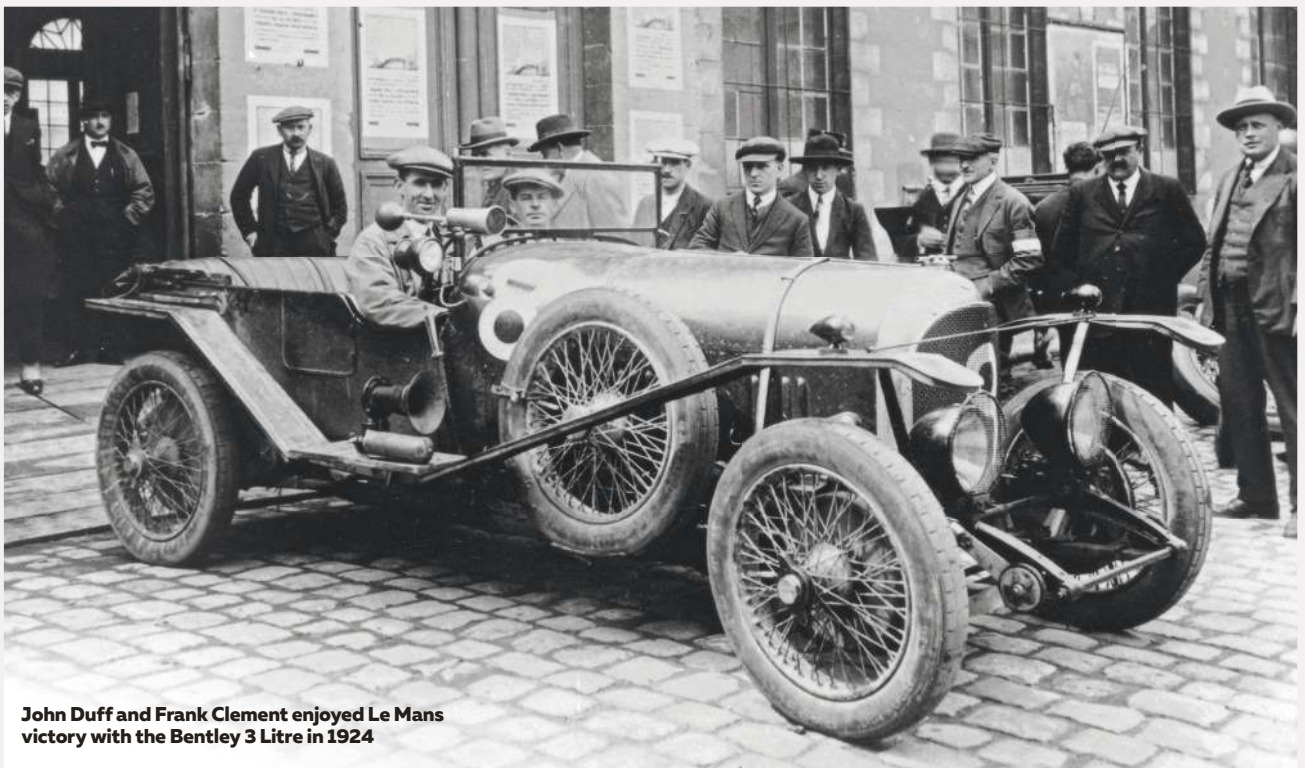
Perhaps W.O.'s decision to drive with the team (the last time his company



Frank Clement and Woolf Barnato – two of racing's biggest names – competing at Brooklands

insurance policy would allow it) was a good omen, for despite the rain bucketing down and only makeshift plywood front wings fitted offside to divert spray from the drivers' faces, the Bentleys just kept on going – Hawkes' lost radiator plug and W.O.'s exhaust dropping off notwithstanding. Piston

failure, meanwhile, scuppered two of the Ricardo-engined Vauxhalls, while Segrave's straight-eight Sunbeam retired with magneto trouble. It allowed Clement to come through second to Chassagne's winning Sunbeam, while W.O. and Hawkes followed fourth and fifth behind the »



John Duff and Frank Clement enjoyed Le Mans victory with the Bentley 3 Litre in 1924

remaining Vauxhall. It was a masterly effort for a fledgling outfit with little of the opposition's resources, securing Bentley the team prize represented by a silver cup – hurriedly appropriated from a local agricultural show.

LURE OF LE MANS

By September 1922, using his own 3 Litre, Captain Frank Duff had broken the Brooklands Double Twelve record (involving two daytime sessions of twelve hours each), covering 2083 miles at an average of 86.79mph – an impressive feat with any size of car, justifying the trauma of Duff having to be lifted painfully from his unpadded aluminium seat afterwards. Game for

more, Duff then entered his car – with Clement as co-driver – for the new Le Mans race to be run for the first time in May 1923. W.O. initially thought an event run continuously for 24 hours was a mad idea, but felt he ought to be there to supervise the pit. Once Duff and Clement had set off with the car to Le Mans, W.O. and sales manager Hillstead followed by boat and interminable train: "Next time we

bring the car," said W.O. pointedly.

Le Mans hadn't attracted the expected crowds; hired accordionists squeezed out their polkas to empty enclosures, while caterers fretted over the food they'd over-ordered. To cap it all, a fine, chilling drizzle predominated, followed by hail. But once the 35 entries had roared off the starting line, those who'd bothered to turn up soon realised they were watching something special. The odds were much in favour of the home-product Chenard-Walckers, new Lorraine-Dietrichs and raucous Bignans with their Rolls-Royce-like radiators; but the unknown Bentley was soon up there with the best of them, harrying the Bignans and running consistently well through the night, apart from sustaining a broken headlamp.

Next day, "driving like the devil" despite the 3 Litre's inadequate rear-wheel brakes, Duff got up to second place before the car failed to show. The pit was greeted by him walking in with the news that a stone had holed the petrol tank at Mulsanne, but what happened next was pure Norman Wisdom. With two tins of petrol slung around his neck, Clement borrowed a soldier's bicycle, rode down the track with cars whizzing past him in the opposite direction, and managed to pour in enough fuel to get the car back to the pits and seal the tank with a cork. Clement then set off again, not only to break the lap record at 67mph but to achieve a splendid equal fourth behind two Chenard-Walckers, a Bignan and an Excelsior.

1924: 'VICTOIRE!'

Encouraged, Bentley returned for renewed battle at Le Mans in 1924. Partnered again by Clement, Duff took a new 3 Litre sensibly endowed with four-wheel brakes, headlight and radiator stoneguards, and protective matting around the fuel tank. The support team, comprising W.O., Hillstead, service department supremo Kensington Moir and production manager Witchell, arrived in a large prototype saloon nicknamed 'The Sun' – eventually to

"...once the 35 entries had roared off the starting line, those who'd bothered to turn up soon realised they were watching something special"



**Above: Tim Birkin at the wheel of his 4½ Litre 'Blower' in the 1924 Le Mans 24 Heures.
Below: Tim Birkin showing his expertise at Le Mans' notorious Pontilleue hairpin**



become the 6½ Litre – which had to be hastily covered up behind the pit in order to avoid curious onlookers.

This time the organisers had shifted the date to June for longer daylight, and introduced the bizarre rule of raising the hood between the fifth and twentieth laps. The opposition was predominantly French – 39 out of 41 cars – and it was obvious that the Chenard-Walckers in both straight-eight and four-cylinder form were going to be particularly fast. Duff was advised not to go all-out in the early stages; even so, the Bentley soon got the better of the smaller Chenards, which meant that after an uneventful night it was lying second. Then the main-opposition 3-litre Chenard caught fire, leaving Duff to fight it out with two 3½-litre Lorraines. One made a pit stop, giving him a further advantage, then Bloch and Stalter's dropped a valve after 21 hours; in the end, Duff and Clement won by some ten miles from Stoffel and Brisson's Lorraine, despite an obstructive wheel change an hour and a half before the finish.

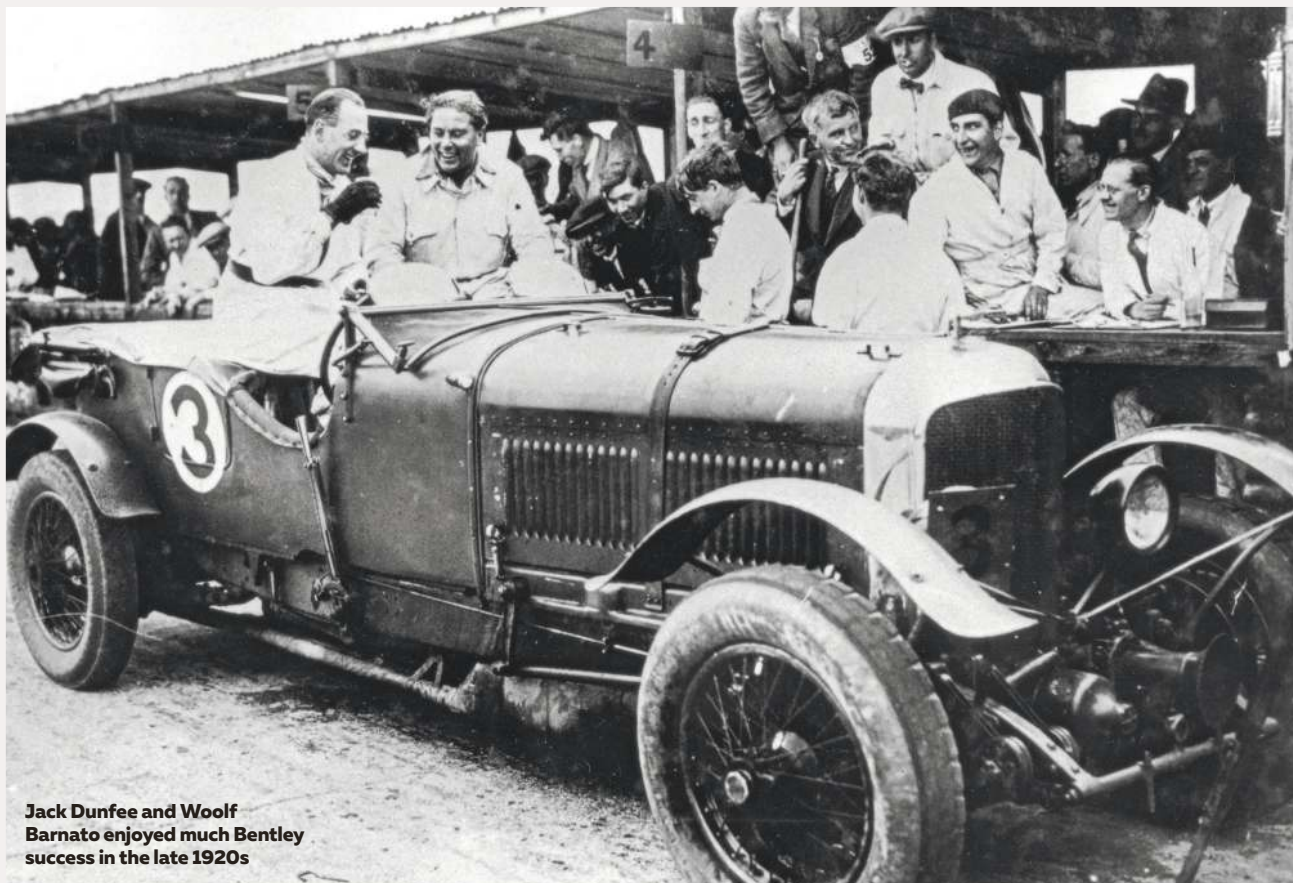
Celebrations, however, fell flat.



1929 saw Bentley achieving an unprecedented top four places at Le Mans

Unlike today, when podium stars spray champagne all over the place, no bubbly was forthcoming until Moir decided it was high time to order some

during the celebratory dinner, seeing as W.O. hadn't offered. The boss wasn't in party mood for some reason and wanted to return to Dieppe the same »



Jack Dunfee and Woolf Barnato enjoyed much Bentley success in the late 1920s

BENTLEY HISTORY THE RACING YEARS

night. Everyone then had to pile into 'The Sun' and travel back, befuddled by a combination of champagne, brandy and 48 hours without sleep.

1925/26: 'NUL POINTS'

By 1925, the start of Le Mans was changed so that drivers would have to run to their cars – in Bentley's case, two this time. Duff's and Clement's car was joined by a works entry piloted by recent customer Dr Dudley Benjafield, with Bertie Kensington Moir. Unfortunately, however, fuel bothers eliminated both entries. Refuelling was only allowed at twenty-lap intervals, and the increased wind resistance of obligatory running with the hood up eliminated the Moir/Benjafield car after only eighteen and a half laps. When Duff's car also ran out, he tried the pretext of trying to repair a broken fuel line, asking W.O. for more petrol. When he was refused, Duff retorted it was his car and he'd do what he "damned well liked with it". He managed to restart it with a lemonade bottle of petrol while the gendarmes weren't looking; but when he did get going legitimately again, an errant carb float chamber caused the car to catch fire.

Three cars entered for 1926: the two works mounts of Davis/Benjafield and Clement/Duller, and the private 3 Litre of 'Scrap' Thistlethwayte and Clive Gallop, but things began to go wrong on the Sunday morning. First, the Clement/Duller car (while lying eighth) stretched a valve, with Gallop then retiring at 9.00am with a broken rocker while in third place. All focus was now on Sammy Davis in his first drive for Bentley. He took over from 'Benjy' in third place, but with failing brakes.



Tim Birkin in a 'Blower' Bentley, tackling the famous banked circuit at Brooklands

"I couldn't free the car, so our race was over. Wonderful as W.O. Bentley was, I felt sick so I went for a long walk"

When Sammy positioned himself to overtake the second-placed Lorraine just before the right-angled Mulsanne turn, he couldn't lose enough speed and buried the car in a sandbank, with only two more laps to go. "Livid with fury, I dug like blazes," recounted Sammy. "I couldn't free the car, so our race was over. Wonderful as W.O. Bentley was, I felt sick so I went for a long walk."

1927: DRAMA, SUCCESS

Davis more than made up for that 1926 disappointment at the following year's

24 Heures. With Clement and Leslie Callingham allotted the new 4½ Litre, Sammy and Benjafield were back in their 'Old Number Seven' from 1926. The other works entry was a 3 Litre crewed by Baron André d'Erlanger and the jockey George Duller.

The car's brakes had been improved, and included the facility to adjust them while running. To simulate the weight of a full complement of passengers demanded by the rules, W.O. eschewed sandbags for lead tubing positioned across the frames up front and on the rear floors. Davis pondered over



Above: A brace of 4½ Litre 'Blowers' line up for practice day at Le Mans in 1930. Right: With broad smiles, Barnato and Birkin show the world what victory looks like in 1929



the ominous presence of Marco, a legendary local magpie, lurking under 'Old Number Seven' when parked; but magpies were considered lucky in France, and come the race the Bentleys got off to a good start, with Clement forging away first in the 4½ Litre. For some time the team held their instructed formation of the two 3 Litres following the 4½. "A happier run you could not imagine," recalled Sammy, with the 4½ Litre breaking the lap record twice and a 3-litre Ariès providing the only serious opposition.

Disaster struck as night fell, however, with Tambourin's Th. Schneider broadsiding across most of the road at White House corner. Callingham, following at speed in the Bentley 4½ Litre, swerved to avoid Tambourin, hit the bank and turned over at right angles to the track. The wreckage snared Duller, whose 3 Litre ramped up on the 4½. Then it was Davis's turn to attempt avoiding action: "My only hope was to skid sideways into the pile," which – throttle closed and handbrake on – he did, with a sickening thud.

Satisfied that his team mates were unhurt, Sammy manoeuvred gratingly through the wreckage and limped 'Old Number Seven' back to the pit. Smashed lighting was replaced by a torch and tortured metal was hammered back where possible, but the car was undeniably bent. "I can't say the car felt nice, but at all events it could be driven," said Davis. With a twisted chassis, brakes all over the place and a steering joint afterwards discovered to be cracked, the car resumed the race in an incredible eighteen-hour pursuit of the leading Ariès. On Sunday morning the latter was four laps ahead, but in the afternoon it expired an hour and a half before the finish, ensuring a win with Davis at the wheel. Typically, Sammy insisted it was the car that had won the race, commenting: "I cannot quite believe it... nor the legend that arose from the affair." For the rest of its Cricklewood existence, Bentley would not lose at Le Mans again.

1928: CRACKED IT!

Well, they won... but again with a less-than-perfect chassis. A works team of three 4½ Litres was fielded, comprising 'Old Mother Gun' from 1927's White House crash (crewed by company chairman Woolf Barnato

Tim Birkin piloting a 4½ Litre 'Blower' in 1930 – the final full year of Bentley independence



'Old Number Seven' arrives at The Savoy for celebrations following its dramatic Le Mans win of 1927

and Bernard Rubin) and two new examples with Vanden Plas 'bobtail' bodies entrusted to Clement/Benjafield and Birkin/Chassagne.

Main opposition came from a 4-litre Chrysler quartet and a lone 4.9-litre Stutz, whose flying start soon prompted an escalating Bentley lap record: 72.7mph (Birkin), 74mph (Barnato), 75.5mph (Stutz) and 76.2mph (Clement). Troubles began with Birkin collapsing a rear wheel after driving on a flat tyre; then Clement's car retired with a disconnected water hose caused by chassis flexing, leading to eventual breakage. By the time there were just fifteen miles to go on the Sunday, when he was now ahead of the Stutz

which had lost two of its three gears, Barnato's chassis had also cracked. But despite that and an overheating engine restricting speed to 70mph, he scraped home in first position. After sorting out their wheel problem Birkin and Chassagne came in fifth, having raised the lap record to a rousing 79.73mph.

1929: VICTORY AGAIN

The American cars' lively performance in 1928 did not go unnoticed. But Bentley allowed for that by providing a 6½ Litre for Barnato and Birkin, supported by four 4½ Litres, two of which replaced a pair of 'Blower' 4½ Litres withdrawn with lubrication problems. Apart from »

the Howe/Rubin car dropping out with ignition failure, and an anxious moment when the Benjafield/d'Erlanger 4½ refused to restart until it received a kick in the batteries (literally), the race became something of a Bentley cruise, with the big 6½ leading the other three cars virtually from start to finish.

Once the American cars began dropping back, W.O. ordered the team to slow down, prompting Jack Dunfee to retort: "I say, W.O., do you want me to get out and push the bloody thing?" Unabashed, W.O. commanded them to slow down even more a quarter of an hour before the finish, enabling the fourth car to catch the others up for a neat line-astern homecoming. The Barnato/Birkin Speed Six won at an average of 73.63 mph, with the French-entered Stutz and Chrysler coming in fifth and sixth respectively out of a field of ten cars left running.

1930: ONE MORE TIME

After 1929, the growing predictability of a Bentley win may have been responsible for there being only 19 entries for the following year's Le Mans, for which Cricklewood had bolstered its chances with three Speed

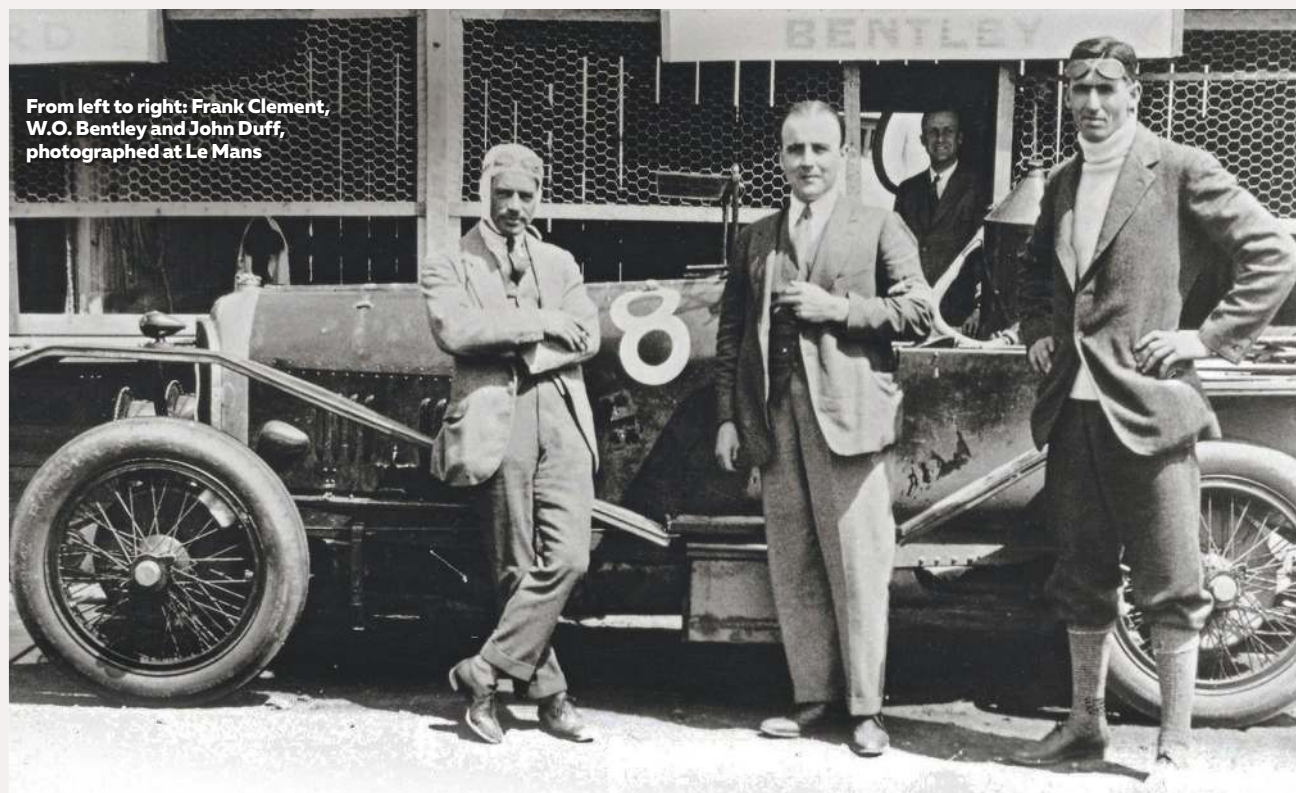
"W.O. commanded them to slow down even more a quarter of an hour before the finish, enabling the fourth car to catch the others up for a neat line-astern homecoming"

Sixes and three Blower 4½ Litres (the latter products of Birkin's own workshops at Welwyn, as W.O. famously disapproved of supercharging). The potential of the mighty Caracciola/Werner 7-litre Mercedes-Benz wasn't lost on W.O., who evolved tactics to harass this lone German entry until its engine blew up. Birkin needed no prompting, at times chasing 'Caratsch' at 120mph and running two wheels up on the grass to pass him, setting yet another lap record of 89.69mph before tyre troubles intervened.

When Barnato took over the Speed Six from Kidston, it was with instructions to force the Mercedes to use its supercharger all the time to destruction. He passed the beast, yowling away on its kompressor, on the 36th lap, to exchange the lead several times. The Mercedes was in

front on the 59th lap, after which the white monster eventually pitted for good with a discharged battery and what W.O. surmised was a blown gasket. After that, the excitement rather went out of the race, and with victory assured W.O. ordained fast-tour mode for the Speed Sixes of Barnato/Kidston and Clement/Watney to cruise into first and second places.

Victory in 1930 was slightly pyrrhic, however, with two-thirds of the team retiring. Dunfee had beached his 6½ Litre on the Pontlieue sandbank, bending the axle, while none of the 'Blowers' finished – one failing at the start, Birkin's breaking a valve after twenty hours and Benjafield's blowing a piston. Nevertheless, five Le Mans wins was a record that would remain unequalled until Jaguar's triumphs in the 1950s. And



From left to right: Frank Clement, W.O. Bentley and John Duff, photographed at Le Mans



Above: This Benjafield/d'Erlanger 4½ Litre achieved third place at Le Mans in 1929. Below: W.O. Bentley described Tim Birkin as his fastest driver... but not his all-round best. Right: Bentley made the most of its Le Mans success in its advertising of the 1920s



BENTLEY WINS

1927 1928 1929
for the 3rd year in succession

LE MANS

24 Hour Grand Prix d'Endurance

Bentley Motors are proud to announce that for the third year in succession their cars have triumphed in the gruelling 24-hour race at Le Mans. This year Bentleys filled the first four placings, the six cylinder, 6½ litre Speed Model driven by Capt. Barnato and Capt. Birkin winning the Rodge Whitworth Cup having covered 1,765 miles at a record average of 73.62 m.p.h. They also won the race outright and set a lap record, with Capt. Birkin at the wheel, of 81.12 m.p.h. on the altered circuit.

Second, third and fourth places were filled by 4½ litre Bentleys. The second car, driven by Lt. Comdr. Glen Kidston and Mr. J. Dunlop was the veteran 4½ litre, the first of its type made, that set the lap record in 1927 before becoming involved in the multiple White House crash, won the 24-hour race at Montlhéry a few weeks later, was used for private touring by its owner Capt. Barnato, and then reappeared at Le Mans in 1928 to be driven to victory by Capt. Barnato and Mr. B. Rubin.

Of 24 starters only ten cars completed the course, and of these ten, four were the leading Bentleys. Such a display of speed and stamina in a race where motorcars have to conform to standard conditions and carry wings, hoods and other ordinary arrangements, is a just recommendation for the new models from Bentley Motors.

The winning Bentley out-paced the strong challenge from America to give Britain's motorcar industry the most sweeping victory ever recorded. Dunlop tyres were fitted to all the Bentleys, the winning

car changing only one cover as a precautionary measure during the 24-hours. Shell petrol and oils, Champion sparking plugs, Young batteries, and Hartford shock absorbers, played their part in Bentley's fourth great win at Le Mans.

Victory Roll:	Driven by	Average Speed m.p.h.	Miles Covered
1924 3 Litre Bentley	Capt. J. F. Duff and Mr. F. C. Clement	57.5	1,380
1927 3 Litre Bentley	Mr. S. C. H. Davis and Dr. J. D. Benjafield	61.36	1,472.6
1928 4½ Litre Bentley	Capt. W. Barnato and Mr. B. Rubin	69.1	1,658.6
1929 6½ Litre Bentley	Capt. W. Barnato and Capt. H. R. S. Birkin	73.6	1,765 (altered course)

BENTLEY MOTORS LIMITED
POLLEN HOUSE, CORK STREET, LONDON, W.1.

Phone: REGENT 6511 'Grams' BENAMOTUM. PHONE LONDON.

as things would turn out, the company quitted racing while it was on top.

OTHER WINS, ALSO-RANS

Although Le Mans forged the golden legend of the vintage Bentley, there were many other events in which the cars appeared, in the hands of both works and private entrants. Notable performances included wins with the 4½ Litre in 1927 at the Grand Prix de Paris, the 6½ and 4½ respectively at Brooklands in 1929's Six Hours Race and 500 Miles, and with the 6½ Litre in Brooklands' 1930 Double Twelve and 1931 500 Miles, by which time Bentley had retired from racing and cars were being entered privately.

There were also distinctions in speed and endurance records, such as the Hon. Mrs Victor Bruce's achievement of 89mph for over 24 hours with a 4½ Litre at Montlhéry in 1929. But Le Mans was the Bentleys' natural

hunting ground; they were less happy on twisting circuits such as Montlhéry or the narrow Ards course in Northern Ireland (the TT had transferred there in 1928), where smaller cars got under their wheels. As for the 4½ 'Blowers', they frequently put up some pretty impressive lap times, usually in the hands of Tim Birkin, whom W.O. rated as his fastest driver but not his all-round best. (That accolade went to Barnato, who could be both fast and fair on his machinery at the same time.) Until the 'Blowers' adopted dry-sump lubrication late in the day, they often didn't last the course, with Birkin's second position in the 1930 French Grand Prix – after holding the

Bugattis to 135mph on the straights – representing the breed's highest placing in an international event.

The original Bentley company relied heavily on competition successes to publicise and prove its worth. "We were in racing not for the glory, or heroics, but strictly for business, and we never entered a race unless we thought we would win," explained W.O. That this philosophy frequently paid off, thanks to the cars' unquestionable toughness and reliability – sufficient to win Le Mans five times – was a tribute to W.O.'s talents as a methodical and level-headed engineer, as well as his uncompromising competence as a team manager. ■

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My Lifetime in Motorsport, S.C.H. 'Sammy' Davis (Hodder & Stoughton, 2007)
Bentley – The Vintage Years 1919–1931, Michael Hay (Dalton Watson, 1986)
Le Mans 1923–1939, Jacques Potherat (Éditions de l'Automobiliste)
Those Bentley Days, A.F.C. Hillstead (Faber, 1953)

PERSONAL CHOICE

Here at *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, we invite readers to share photographs and stories of their much-loved cars. Check out this latest arrival...



1927 ROLLS-ROYCE PHANTOM I

OWNER: JAMES RICE

LOCATION: BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA

Although I'm lucky enough to also own a Phantom VII and VIII, my favourite Rolls-Royce of all is my Phantom I, chassis number 29RF with four-door Barker tourer bodywork. It is the kind of car I was inspired to buy when I first saw the 1965 movie *The Great Race* as a child, with the Great Leslie and Professor Fate racing from New York to Paris. I finally purchased my Phantom I a few years ago from a prominent dealer in Essex, and shipped it back to the US. Having the good fortune to live in sunny southern California,

I can enjoy this open tourer all year long – and it serves as one of my daily drivers, weather permitting.

The car is relatively original and unrestored, which means it's by no means a show winner. However, the four other Phantom I motor cars that I know of in Los Angeles are in museums, whereas mine can be seen in the grocery store parking lot or on the freeway going to work, which for me is a 64-mile Los Angeles freeway drive round trip. The car's six-cylinder 7668cc engine pulls strongly enough to keep up with modern traffic, while the four-wheel

brakes are perfectly capable of stopping with the other cars as well. I put around 8000 miles a year on the car and have no reluctance to drive it anywhere at any time... except, of course, a destination that might require parallel parking or a three-point turn, as the original owner chose not to order power steering!

When I take the Phantom I to classic vehicle and concours d'elegance events, I drive the car there and pass those who tow their cars in. I find that driving this car provides great pleasure. It was the last model engineered by Sir Henry Royce himself, and he built it to last »



Ownership inspiration came from James watching *The Great Race* as a child



James often commutes to work in his Phantom I, a round trip of 64 miles



The car has attracted its fair share of celebrity admirers



The Phantom I is in remarkably original (and usable) condition



James' car is the only Phantom I in the area that's not in a museum

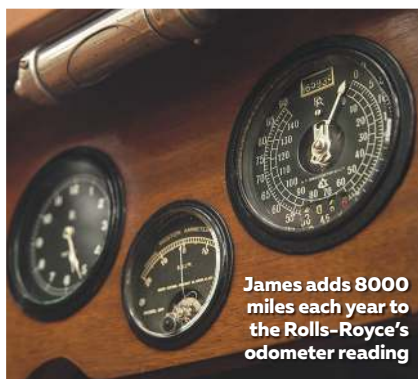


forever – and, of course, to be driven. I have done nothing but add oil, grease, water and love to the car for the last three years, and I'm delighted to report that it has never failed. Driving it is like driving in a parade; everyone waves at you, everyone talks to you, and everyone you pass takes your photograph.

One day last month, I was driving this car down a neighbourhood street in Santa Monica when I saw Jamie Lee Curtis standing on the sidewalk, and so I screamed to a stop and told her: "I was inspired to buy this car because of your father!" She looked over and said: "The Great Race?" I said: "Exactly". Then she yelled: "That's cool!" and continued walking. ■



This particular Phantom I boasts four-door tourer coachwork by Barker



James adds 8000 miles each year to the Rolls-Royce's odometer reading



The car obviously exudes quality, much to James' delight

SHOW US YOUR PRIDE AND JOY

If you fancy seeing your own Rolls-Royce or Bentley within these pages, it couldn't be easier! We're interested in any model of any age – and even its condition isn't important, as we're just as keen to see ongoing projects as we are potential prize-winners. All you need to do is email us a small selection of

good quality jpeg images – and we'll do the rest. Within your email, don't forget to tell us a bit of history about your car, details of any work carried out, or perhaps your future plans for it. The more information, the better!

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Most responsible owners of older Rolls and Bentley models recognise that the lighting needs upgrading to make the cars safe to use in modern traffic. This has involved quite a lot of time and effort in the past, but now Better Car Lighting of Warwickshire have announced a revolutionary new conversion which uses the latest technology to make the upgrade surprisingly quick and easy to install.

At the front a new LED bulb replaces the original sidelight unit.



Bright news for older cars

It is very bright warm white until the indicators are activated, and then it changes to flashing orange.

At the back, an amazing new three-function bulb directly

One bulb - 3 functions



replaces the original and gives a brighter tail light and brake light and flashes orange through the red lens when the indicators are activated.

All of this is made possible by a new electronic control module which mounts at the front and

tells the new bulbs what to do and when. It can work in conjunction with semaphore indicators and the kit has bright flashing LED bulbs to upgrade these, but will also suit cars built without them.

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an upgrade that used to take days can now be done in hours.

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Getting the most out of your finished car





CHOOSING YOUR NEXT PROJECT

If you're tempted to take on a Rolls-Royce or Bentley project car, preparation is the key to success – along with some honesty about your aims and capabilities

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: PAUL GUINNESS

Rolls-Royce and Bentley enthusiasts who enjoy an easy life are pretty fortunate these days. As long as their bank balances are healthy enough, they're able to visit some of the best-known, most respected specialists in those marques, peruse a line-up of immaculately presented classics, hand

over the necessary funds and drive away in a car that they know has been fully prepared for sale and is ready to enjoy. You don't even need to be extraordinarily wealthy in order to do this, as a budget of £12,000-20,000 is likely to get you behind the wheel of just such a car – inevitably of the Silver Spirit or Shadow generations – at the

specialist of your choice.

Fortunately, however, not everyone appreciates this straightforward approach. There are just as many folk out there who relish a challenge – and who think that taking on a project car and restoring it to its former glory is much more fun than buying one requiring no work. They're the ones

who enjoy the actual restoration process, the enthusiasts who buy down-at-heel examples and spend every spare moment (and usually far more money than they originally anticipated) bringing them up to show-worthy condition. But what if you've never previously tackled any serious restoration work and you're tempted to join this happy clan of hard workers?

BE REALISTIC

There's no reason why even an inexperienced first-timer can't consider taking on a full-scale restoration project – although it's easy to get carried away with the romance of it all. Cosy winter evenings spent tinkering with a few spanners, as a rusted hulk of classic Rolls-Royce or Bentley gradually gets transformed into a gleaming show-winner, all in the comfort of a centrally heated garage and surrounded by the finest tools and all the spare parts you could wish for.

Well, sadly, life isn't like that. You're far more likely to spend your evenings flat on your back on a freezing concrete garage floor, rain dripping through the roof, your fingers numb, your tool kit sadly inadequate, your language foul enough to shock a shipbuilder, as you curse the day you ever bought the box of bits that sits before you (laughably described in the advert as an 'unfinished project').

Whether you're a restoration virgin



A Silver Cloud or S-series can make a tempting project for any would-be restorer

“Unless you're skilled as a welder, should you be taking on a Silver Shadow that's in need of major bodywork renovation?”

or an old hand at rebuilds, it's vital that you choose a project that is within your capabilities. Those of us who either can't afford to or prefer not to entrust our project to a professional restoration company will end up doing much of the work ourselves. But we all have our limitations – and unless you're both

experienced and skilled as a welder, should you really be taking on the Silver Shadow you've spotted that's in need of major bodywork renovation? If you don't know your torque wrench from your junior hacksaw, are you simply looking at the idea of a restoration through rose-tinted glasses? »



Although based on the Silver Shadow, a coachbuilt Corniche will be more challenging to restore body-wise

The term 'restoration project' can be applied to cars in dramatically different states of disrepair, from an MoT failure that requires a couple of sills, a respray and a few mechanical jobs to be made virtually perfect, to a box of bits that's claimed to be a Derby Bentley but in reality looks more like the unwanted leftovers from a recent autojumble. In the case of the latter – or indeed, any classic car that's not fully assembled when you inspect it – it is essential you're satisfied that the vast majority of components are actually there; even if they're not in good order, they will be invaluable when it comes to sourcing spares or having pattern parts made.

Your choice of model is very much a personal thing, but again you need to apply logic – and you need a realistic view of your own abilities and aspirations. Rolls-Royce and Bentley enthusiasts are fortunate in that our cars generally enjoy excellent parts availability. But to buy a project car without first carrying out research into the cost of most of the parts you're likely to need is a dangerous tactic. And while we're on the subject of budgeting, it's essential that you make sure you can afford to see the project through to completion before you buy the car; there's no shortage of semi-stripped project cars to be found in garages, their owners having run out of either money or enthusiasm part-way through the restoration.

When budgeting, don't underestimate the cost of anything. Whatever you reckon it will set you back (whether it's having a front wing fitted or carrying out a brake and steering rebuild), it's bound to cost more – particularly when it comes to such complex issues as replacing the entire braking system



Restoring any coachbuilt Rolls-Royce or Bentley demands high levels of bodywork skills

“To buy a project car without carrying out research into the cost of the parts you're likely to need is a dangerous tactic”

on a Silver Shadow. One job inevitably leads to another, extra work is bound to be required and suddenly you've got bills to pay that are twice as much as you'd originally anticipated.

GET ORGANISED

Assuming that the classic car you've bought is to be the subject of a thorough, in-depth rebuild rather than a 'rolling restoration', what you do now is critical to how the entire project will turn out. It's all too easy

to dash into your garage, start ripping bits off the car and feel satisfied that the strip-down process is well under way. But this is where the problems start, as a year or so from now – when you need to actually start replacing those bits and pieces or finding new substitutes – you won't know where you've put them, where they came from or how they're fitted. You might think you'll remember... but you won't.

You need to tackle the task ahead as though it were a military operation. You want to start stripping parts off



Earlier models can make interesting projects – and bring their own potential challenges



A Silver Spirit project car will be relatively cheap to buy – but will it be cost-effective?



Rising values of the Silver Shadow help to make it a more viable project car these days

the car? Fine. But each and every item should be carefully removed, cleaned, labelled and stored away for future use or for replacement at a later date. The storage of parts is vital to straightforward reassembly later on, so try to establish some kind of logical system, with separate areas of your garage or workshop devoted to exterior trim, interior trim, steering, braking, engine bay and so on. A properly disassembled car will take up a large amount of space, which is obviously a luxury; but this kind of forward planning and detailing will save you huge amounts of time (and frustration) later on.

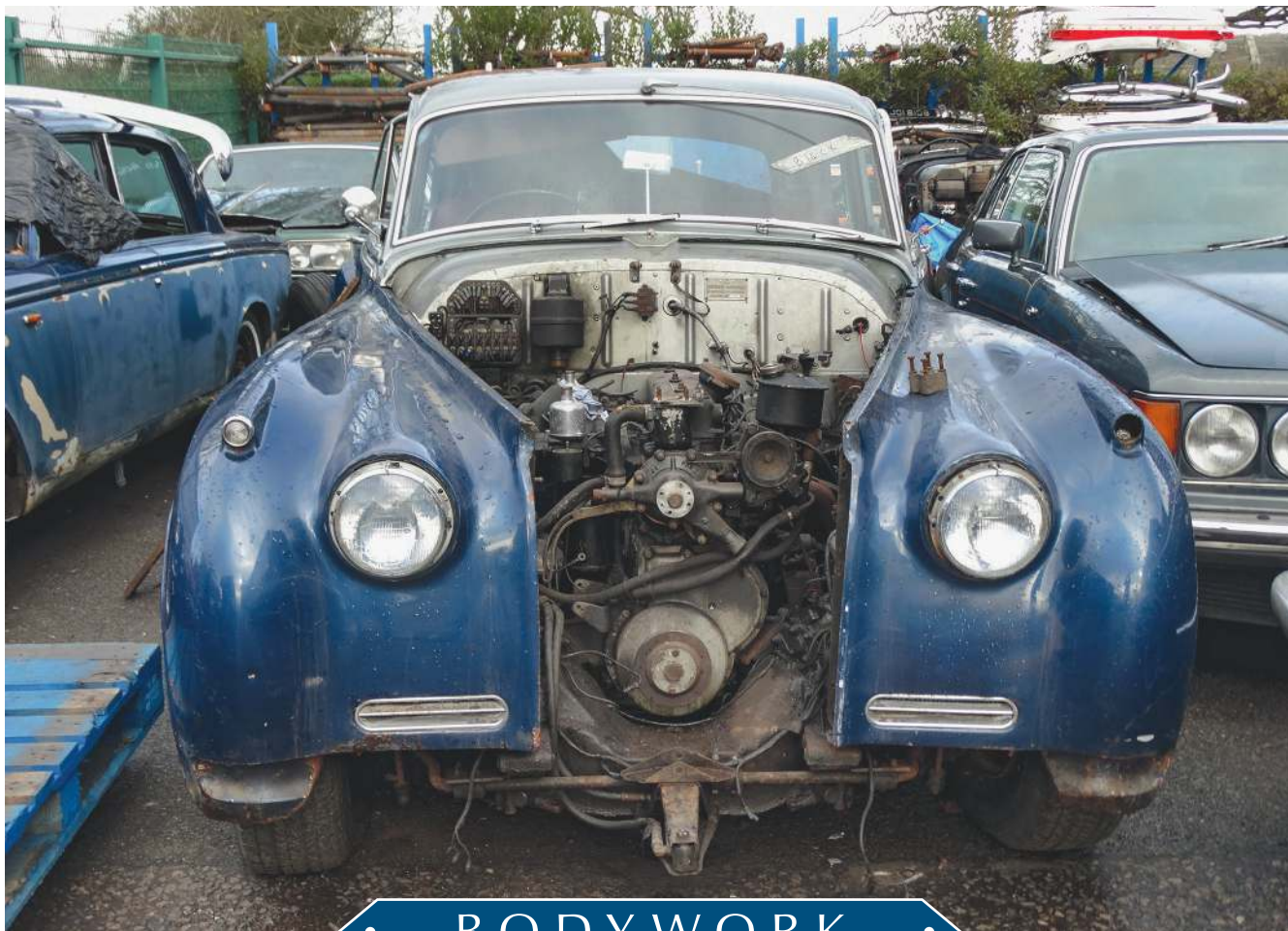
As to which models make the most sense when it comes to Rolls-Royce and Bentley project cars, your final choice may be dictated as much by budgetary constraints as any personal preferences. For the purposes of this special section of the magazine, we're focusing our attention on the Silver Cloud, Silver Shadow and Silver Spirit generations of models, which between them cover a 43-year period and account for a large proportion of the classic Rolls-Royces and Bentleys currently available. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't consider a model that's outside these parameters, whether it's a Rolls-Royce 20hp of the 1920s (which we're investigating elsewhere in this issue), a Bentley MkVI of the late '40s or even a relatively modern classic from Seraph/Arnage era. Whichever model you opt for, it pays to take your time, buy with care and be realistic about your chances of bringing the project to fruition within the budget that you've set. ■



Don't rush into any project without first researching the cost of the major parts needed



Even the Camargue – once the world's dearest new car – can suffer from major body rot



BODYWORK

THE BIG ISSUE

Whether cosmetic or structural, bodywork problems are far from rare among the most popular Rolls-Royce and Bentley classics – so what should you be looking out for?

WORDS: DAN FURR PHOTOGRAPHY: DAN FURR & PAUL GUINNESS

If we're being honest, it's fair to say that manufacturers of what we now view as classic cars adopted a relaxed approach when it came to protecting their products from the effects of harsh weather and unforgiving driving environments. Rustproofing was often an afterthought, sometimes an extra-cost option and never particularly effective. Many savvy owners hit automotive accessories stores for can upon can of cavity-filling Waxoyl or chassis-covering stoneguard after

purchasing their dream drive in period, yet these hands-on enthusiasts – dedicated to preserving the long-term life of their chosen chariots – remained in the minority. Sadly, more often than not, road salt and rainwater was allowed to penetrate and settle in every box section, drain and wheelarch lip, leaving later owners to contend with the fallout.

If you're lucky enough to be in charge of a classic vehicle in excellent working order, then chances are it was lovingly cared for by previous owners. Even

so, the passage of time can play cruel tricks, convincing us we're driving an immaculate four-wheeler when the dreaded metal cancer is working its way through the car in question from the inside out. It's a common complaint, with the only real cure being corrective bodywork; but just how easy is it to remedy rust on a Rolls-Royce, and what are the common complaints associated with the manufacturer's most popular post-war models?

Narrowing our focus to the Silver



A faulty battery can leak acid directly onto the Silver Cloud's offside rear chassis rail



The Silver Shadow was the first Rolls-Royce with monocoque construction, which brings its own rust issues



Wheel arches, sills and wing bottoms are the most common areas to attract rust on a Silver Shadow



The area of lower wing ahead of a Silver Shadow's front wheel is a trap for moisture and dirt

Cloud, Silver Shadow and Silver Spirit families (including, of course, their Bentley-branded derivatives), we spoke to experts in the field of Rolls-Royce restoration to find out what owners should be aware of as far as cosmetic ills are concerned. That three-generation line-up (spanning the mid-1950s through to the late '90s) covers a large proportion of Rolls-Royce production, although many of the comments and advice contained here will also apply to other models from Crewe.

VULNERABLE AREAS

"The Silver Shadow was the first Rolls-Royce to make use of a monocoque body," confirms Pete Wiles, general manager at marque authority, Colbrook Specialists. "In contrast, the Silver Cloud was a body-on-chassis construction, meaning many of the problem areas you can expect to encounter on the earlier car from Crewe are very different to those you'd come across when inspecting a Shadow or Spirit." He highlights

"Sills, wing bottoms and rear wheelarches are the usual suspects, although floorpans are also known to rot"

the fact Silver Clouds feature body mounting points that are susceptible to corrosion: "The nearside front mount is completely exposed to the elements. Similarly, wing fastening bars like to trap dirt and moisture. They're mud traps and need to be cleaned as part of a regular schedule of maintenance."

Pete also draws our attention to the Silver Cloud's battery compartment: "It's essentially a hole in the boot floor positioned directly above the offside rear chassis rail," he explains. "I've seen Clouds suffering serious corrosion in this area as a result of leaking battery acid dripping directly onto the metalwork below." Repairs are possible, but prevention is better than cure: "It should go without saying that it pays to check the condition of the battery in your Cloud every now and again!" he laughs,

going on to point out how an older car benefits from being used: "It's no secret that the fast flow of air around chassis components and wheelarches quickly dries out any lingering moisture."

Silver Cloud sills rot for fun, a trait shared with the model's successor. "The lower half of a Shadow is where you'll find rust," says Matt Duncan, operations manager at leading Rolls-Royce and Bentley parts specialist, IntroCar. "Inner and outer sills, wing bottoms and rear wheelarches are the usual suspects, although floorpans are also known to rot," he says. Thankfully, however, as visitors to the IntroCar website will attest, replacement parts are easy to come by: "Our line of Prestige Parts repair panels are made from 1.2mm gauge metal, the same thickness used by Rolls-Royce at the point of »

construction," he continues. "Heavy duty material promotes longevity, unlike the far thinner 0.9mm material adopted by many panel makers currently operating in the aftermarket."

VALUE FOR MONEY

Using factory jigs as templates and making good use of an English wheel, the IntroCar team always has a plentiful supply of new repair panels in stock, but don't be fooled into thinking you can buy complete rear quarters or a set of doors from the company. "Whole panels are usually only required as a consequence of crash damage," muses Matt. "It's not the kind of repair work IntroCar gets involved with. We only supply sections of bodywork, parts designed to eliminate rust before it gets out of control."

The good news is that key components to rid your Rolls-Royce or Bentley of the horrid orange stuff can be bought for as little as ninety quid. Indeed, a quick scan of the IntroCar website reveals Silver Shadow lower rear quarter panels and wing bottoms available for immediate despatch at this low price, with flared wheelarches commanding £170 and outer sills being advertised at a shade under £160 – the latter representing a huge saving over the price of genuine Bentley stock.

"For the majority of owners, the only practical solution is to commission a specialist to take care of the work"

There are, however, some of you who will have little choice but to buy direct from the factory. Owners of more exotic cars, for example, may find themselves faced with the rare and unfortunate condition of damaged bodywork requiring the appointment of complete replacement panels. Mulliners, Park Wards, Corniches and Continentals are all examples of models with more complex exteriors than those of their mass-production stablemates. Thankfully, a supply of unused production panels remains available from Crewe, even if you'll be forced to shell out a significant sum for each part.

Peter Johnson, sales and marketing manager at Rolls-Royce and Bentley parts supplier, Flying Spares, debunks the myth that there's a wealth of complete used panels available for owners to take advantage of: "You might get lucky through an owners' network and find a pair of wings in good order, but the reality of the situation is that most of the classic Rolls-Royces and Bentleys being pulled apart are stripped as a result of the corrosion they exhibit

making bodywork repairs prohibitively expensive," he reasons. "I'm responsible for acquiring the cars the company I work for dismantles for spares. Most of the vehicles I buy for this purpose are tatty. There isn't much in the way of salvageable exterior metal, which is why Flying Spares only concerns itself with the supply of brand new repair panels, such as lower wing fillets."

LATER CLASSICS

The Silver Shadow and T-series owners among you can sleep easy knowing that the doors, bonnet and boot lid of your four-wheeled friend are formed from aluminium, meaning the threat of corrosion is limited to the car's main body. The same is true of the Silver Spirit family, although these later cars have their own problems to deal with. "Back window frames and C-pillars can give up the ghost with ease," Pete Wiles reflects, listing several rust-ravaged Spirits and Mulsannes his colleagues at Colbrook Specialists have had to fix in recent months. "Less obvious is





Wheelarch repair sections for models like the Silver Shadow are readily available

rot forming around rear suspension spring pots," he adds, before drawing our attention to a late Bentley Turbo R undergoing corrective surgery in the company's Peterborough workshop. "Newer models feature integrated bumpers, which do away with low-hanging metal panels at each end of the host vehicle. This has obvious benefits as far as limiting the amount of bodywork susceptible to corrosion is concerned, but the rubber stone guards fitted to newer cars can hold moisture tight against wheelarches. In other words, owning a more recent Rolls-Royce or Bentley doesn't necessarily mean there's less for you to worry about."

If you're in possession of a Crewe car featuring imperfect bodywork, you'll be forgiven for thinking a date with the angle grinders at Flying Spares is fast approaching. Fret not! What becomes clear when speaking to experienced specialists is that owners of older Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars are in the lucky position of having a wealth of new body repair panels at their disposal, with a choice of genuine or aftermarket parts to take care of the affected area. "You can still buy Silver Shadow floorpans direct from the factory," explains IntroCar's Matt Duncan. "They're left- or right-hand panels covering the complete front-to-back span of floorspace on the side of the car in need of attention. The choice offered by IntroCar and others, however, enables owners to buy sections of floor pan, be they front or rear." Clearly, this flexibility saves time and money, especially if you're paying a body shop to carry out the work for you.

Ah yes, labour costs. It's all very well being satisfied you're in charge of a car that's superbly served by parts suppliers,



Items like this lower front wing repair section help to make any restoration more cost-effective



Local repairs like this are common, meaning your car can be put right by a specialist without bankrupting you



Have you factored in the cost of labour when it comes to bodywork repairs for your Rolls-Royce or Bentley?

even after so many decades have passed since the point your pride and joy was manufactured; but regardless of the low purchase price many repair panels can be bought for, you've still got to overcome the challenge of having the required remedial work taken care of. Some of you will be handy with a welder and a paint gun. Some of you may even be prepared to take up the challenge of learning how to correct automotive bodywork, viewing the task as part of your Rolls-Royce or Bentley-owning adventure. But the fact of the matter is that for the vast majority of owners, the only practical solution is to commission a specialist to take care of the work.

It's at this point you need to think seriously about whether your retro ride is likely to become a major project. Small areas of corrosion are to be expected on an older vehicle, but many with experience in these matters will argue

that if you're able to detect unsightly patches of rust on the outside of a car, the decay hidden within is likely to be far worse. If you're unsure what it is you might be letting yourself in for, an inspection carried out by a trusted technician familiar with older Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars is a wise move.

You may find that the results of such an evaluation save you a lot of heartache in the long run, not to mention time and money that could be put to better use caring for a car in superior condition. If, on the other hand, the findings prove pleasing, do make sure that you obtain multiple quotes for the necessary work before handing over your hard-earned cash. Don't be afraid to request a viewing of your chosen body shop's recent work. And best of all, don't forget to send us photographs of your classic Rolls-Royce or Bentley when it's back to its best! ■



TECHNICALLY SPEAKING

Tempted by the idea of a Rolls-Royce or Bentley project car?
We take a look at the mechanical issues affecting some of the
most popular of today's classic models

WORDS: SAM SKELTON PHOTOGRAPHY: KELSEY ARCHIVE

Everyone says you should steer clear of buying luxury motor cars as projects. After all, these were models designed to be run with scant regard for expense when new, so imagine how potentially painful they can be several decades on, having fallen into disrepair or suffered the indignity of long-term neglect. Many of the problems you're likely to encounter will, of course, be bodywork or trim based (which we're dealing with elsewhere), but it would be dangerous to assume that things are automatically less complex when considering the mechanical aspect of a restoration project.

Admittedly, owing to Rolls-Royce's gradual evolution, issues with its drivetrains are far less commonplace but there are still some key areas you should check and key elements to budget for. From engines to suspension, gearboxes to brakes, everything needs double checking when you're taking on a car in need of work. A Rolls-Royce (or its Bentley equivalent) may be robust and superbly engineered, but that doesn't mean it's guaranteed to be problem-free.

Here we're going to take a look at the three most likely model families for restoration status – the Silver Cloud, Silver Shadow and Silver

Spirit generations – and guide you through what you might expect to encounter should you take one on.

SILVER CLOUD

Early Silver Clouds and Bentley S1s used an inline six-cylinder engine carried over from the previous Silver Dawn. This was a B61 derivative of the Rolls-Royce B60 engine, as fitted to the Daimler Ferret and other military vehicles, and could be traced all the way back to 1922. Reliable in service, there are no issues specific to this engine that you would need to worry about on a project – beyond the obvious and universal

risks of seizure and perished gaskets.

From 1959 and the debut of the Silver Cloud II and Bentley S2, a new engine family was introduced, which is fitted to all subsequent models covered by this guide. This was the L-series V8, a pushrod-operated two-valves-per-cylinder unit that produced an unspecified amount of power and torque. This engine was used in 6230cc form in the Silver Cloud II and III, as well as the subsequent Silver Shadow through to 1970. Typically it's reliable, though there are issues which can be exacerbated by years spent off the road. Cylinder blocks are not resistant to corrosion, for example, and in order to rebuild them effectively it's vital to remove the cylinder liners. Worn tappets are also a known issue; General Motors was once able to supply suitable tappets for this engine, but the quality of recent sets has been lower than previously. It's safer to replace with tappet sets ordered from Bentley in Crewe, but you can expect to pay around £1500 per set for these.

Silver Cloud II and III models used a four-speed automatic gearbox also seen in early examples of the Silver Shadow. This was a licence-built variant of the General Motors Hydramatic transmission; and as this 'box is both simple and widely used, most automatic transmission specialists should be able to rebuild it if necessary.

Suspension on these cars is simple, with coils at the nose and semi-elliptic leaf springing at the rear. This is understandably heavy-duty owing to the size and weight of the chassis – and as a result of this, it's pretty long lived. Obviously though, shock absorbers



Before you take on any project, it pays to carry out extensive research into the cost of parts and services



The Silver Shadow and T-series used the L-series V8 in 6230cc guise until 1970

can wear, and you're looking at around £500 for a replacement – or £60 for a seal kit if you want to rebuild them.

Standard Silver Clouds have drum brakes all round, servo-assisted, because Rolls-Royce felt the squeal of early discs was unseemly. These



Just about any engine that's seen better days can be rebuilt – but at a price

brakes are more than up to the job, though the inside of the drum may need attention on those that have been laid up and new shoes will certainly be needed. All the parts are available to rebuild the system, from specialists such as IntroCar.



SILVER SHADOW

The Silver Shadow (and its Bentley T-series derivative) marked a major departure for Rolls-Royce, both in its monocoque bodyshell and its up-to-the-minute styling, and yet under the skin – on the early cars at least – very little had changed. It still utilised the fairly new L-series V8, it still used a GM Hydramatic gearbox built under licence, and the suspension was still fairly heavy duty. But developments during the life of the Silver Shadow brought it up to date – and the braking and suspension designs licenced in part from Citroen's revolutionary DS were both complex and ahead of their time.

Overhauling the braking system of a Silver Shadow is not really a job to »

be undertaken at home. It's a triple-circuit system which predominantly uses high-pressure hydraulics in the manner of contemporary Citroens – the third circuit was conventional, and served only to give a conventional-feeling pedal to owner-drivers and chauffeurs used to the normal systems of earlier Rolls-Royces. Rebuilding a braking system on a Silver Shadow is an involved job, and one we really would advise you to leave to the specialists. It's worth bearing in mind, however, that you're unlikely to get change from £3000 for a full braking system rebuild.

The suspension at the rear uses high-pressure hydraulics in order to self-level – effectively half of a DS suspension system. This is in conjunction with coil springs all round, which provides the majority of the springing alongside conventional and Citroen-style damping. Excessive firmness at the rear is the result of hydraulic spheres which have lost pressure over time. Rolls-Royce and

“The Silver Spirit (and Mulsanne) generation represents the most affordable entry into Rolls-Royce (and Bentley) ownership”

Citroen specialists alike can supply new spheres and provide the knowhow to replace them. It's important to know that all Silver Shadow models used the earlier LHS-derived system rather than the mineral based LHM of the later cars (which Citroen had adopted in 1967). This system should only be topped up with Castrol RR363 – never with LHM, which is the green Citroen fluid you would use in Silver Spirits. RR363 can be sourced from Flying Spares at approximately £24 per litre.

From 1967, the Silver Shadow's L-series engine was increased to 6750cc, a size which is still in use in the Bentley Mulsanne today. It also changed from the GM Hydramatic to the GM400 gearbox – a more modern, three-speed unit which has seen

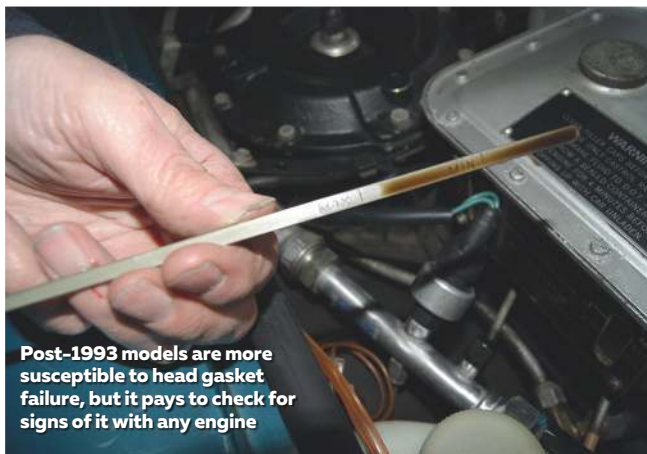
service in scores of models around the world. Expertise is not hard to come by, the 'box is long-lived with regular fluid changes, and any automatic box specialist should be able to rebuild it.

Most Silver Shadows used SU carburettors, which are reliable in service – but as detailed in the Silver Spirit section that's to come, we would advise buyers to avoid the Solex 4A1. This was predominantly fitted to Camargues and Corniches, but some have found their way into Shadows – although they can be removed and the cars converted to SU carburation.

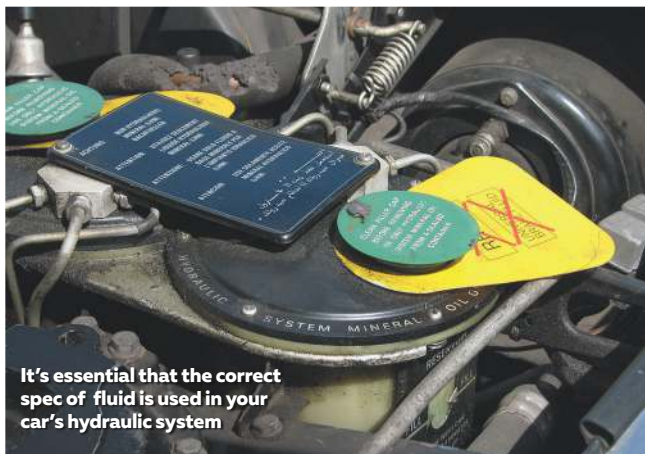
SILVER SPIRIT

The Silver Spirit (and Mulsanne) generation represents the most affordable entry into Rolls-Royce (and Bentley) ownership, with asking prices that put them within easy reach of most marque enthusiasts – particularly if the car in question needs work. There are, however, some potential problems unique to the Silver Spirit family (in addition to the usual issues you might expect, which have been covered in the Silver Shadow section), primarily covering the fuelling system, the later gearbox and the suspension.

The SUs fitted to early naturally-aspirated cars are simple carburettors in service, and shouldn't give you any real trouble once balanced nicely. Cars fitted with the Solex 4A1 – including the Bentley Mulsanne Turbo – should be avoided, however, as these carbs are prone to warping, which can



Post-1993 models are more susceptible to head gasket failure, but it pays to check for signs of it with any engine



It's essential that the correct spec of fluid is used in your car's hydraulic system



Having an expert to check over any car you're thinking of buying brings extra peace of mind



A Silver Shadow or T-series braking system rebuild could cost you £3000

lead to engine hydraulic issues and potentially nasty fires. Shared with contemporary BMW and Mercedes-Benz models, spares are scarce and rebuilding them can be difficult.

From 1987, all cars migrated to a fuel-injection system based on Bosch KE-Jetronic, a set-up that is generally reliable in service; but cars fitted with the Zytex injection system from 1993 onwards appear to be more prone to head gasket failures, partly caused by silted radiators. While we wouldn't avoid these later examples, it's important to let them get up to temperature during your pre-purchase inspection to ensure you don't have an expensive bill ahead.

Check the condition of the turbo on any of the turbocharged Bentley models. White smoke from the exhaust can indicate issues; and while the Garrett AiResearch TO4 turbo is easily sourced, it's still a job we'd rather not do if we had the option. The same applies to all late-model cars which feature low-pressure turbochargers to boost torque.

From 1992, the GM400 gearbox was replaced by the four-speed GM 4L80E, a unit shared with the Aston Martin DB7, Jaguar XJR and Chevrolet Corvette amongst others, and so expertise is fairly common if needed. Transmission bands can wear, leading to rev flaring when gears are engaged, although experience with these boxes is common within the trade and they can be rebuilt.

The Silver Spirit II and corresponding Bentley models of 1989-on were fitted with Active Ride systems, using ECUs to vary the stiffness of the suspension in order to retain a soft ride with improved body control. Active Ride dampers can fail, and you should budget in the region of £700 per side



to have the front dampers changed. Check for suspension lights on the dashboard, in addition to firm rear spheres. However, as it costs around £700-800 to 'de-convert' the system to the earlier pre-Active setup, many owners have done this to futureproof their Silver Spirits from further issues.

All Silver Spirit-based cars used LHM in their braking and suspension systems, a mineral fluid used under licence from Citroen. Do not use RR363 or conventional brake fluid in these systems, or you will damage them and create bigger repair bills for yourself in the process.

IN CONCLUSION

Buying a project Rolls-Royce can, of course, be a potential minefield, although much of the major expense of a full-scale restoration is likely to be caused by bodywork or trim issues. On the mechanical front, there is arguably

less to worry about thanks to these cars' high-quality engineering when new. Remember though, that neglect or long periods of inactivity can take their toll on even the finest machines – which means a higher-mileage, regularly maintained Rolls-Royce that has seen regular use is probably a wiser project to take on than one with fewer miles that's sat unused for a number of years.

Whichever model you choose as a project, it's very much a case of 'buyer beware'. That tidy looking Silver Shadow might seem like a bargain, but if its brakes are in imminent need of a professional overhaul, you're suddenly looking at major expense. Take your time when checking any Rolls-Royce or Bentley project car you're thinking of buying – and make sure you research the cost of any likely jobs before you take the plunge. Carrying out research into parts prices and talking to experts in the know might just save you a (not so) small fortune in the long run. ■



INTERIOR TRANSFORMATIONS

Damaged leather in your Rolls-Royce or Bentley doesn't necessarily mean that a full retrim is necessary, as we discover via our Silver Shadow II donor vehicle

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: DAN FURR

Tired leather. We've all seen it. Unsightly cracks, bolster damage, scrapes, scuffs and fading colour. Sadly, when it comes to classic cars, the hide in your ride is very often only as good as the level of care and attention it has been subjected to by its previous owners. Contrary to popular belief, being presented with rips, tears and scratches doesn't mean you need to dig deep for a retrim, as we discover during a

visit to see Simon Walters – the man behind leather restoration and detailing business, Cambridge Concours.

"You'd be surprised at how superficial a lot of serious-looking leather damage can be," he suggests. "I'm continually presented with cracks and splits for repair, but many owners fail to realise that the unsightly condition of the seats, door cards, dashboards or other furniture that they're unhappy with might simply be down to a

breakage in pigment." He uses a more familiar complaint to illustrate his point: "It's like scratches on car bodywork. What might look like a deep cut down to metal may just be a surface nick in clear coat that traps polish and reflects light awkwardly."

The remedial work he carries out on a daily basis has earned Simon a reputation as the 'go to' guy for many owners of classic Porsches, Ferraris and Aston Martins, not to mention

Rolls-Royce and Bentley-badged cars. He's refreshingly open about the process and products he uses to achieve the outstanding results that keep him in work, going as far as to host regular training courses at his premises near Bishop's Stortford.

"I supply correction kits to those who want to have a go at improving the cosmetic condition of their cars from the comfort of their own homes," he continues. "It makes sense to equip my customers with the knowledge that will help them to get the very best out of the products they've bought, hence my regular 'how to' classes."

As with most things automotive, the key to successful leather repair is the preparation of the parts that have come under scrutiny. Simon explains that a liberal application of degreaser coupled with a careful sanding of damaged areas is the first step towards restoring the look of cracked hide, a stage closely followed by the use of expandable flexible filler. The tricky job of colour-matching oft-faded pigment comes thereafter, with "a minimum of three coats of colour" applied subsequent to any necessary adhesion primer.



The interior of Dan's Silver Shadow II left a lot to be desired when he acquired the car, with the leather upholstery suffering from years of neglect, as well as an array of alarmingly deep cracks and other damage

THE DIAGNOSIS

To see for ourselves just what can be achieved, we presented Simon with my Silver Shadow II, a car suffering from deep tears and wide cracks in desperately dry hide. My first instinct when buying the car was that it would need a full retrim: "Not so!" announced Simon, seemingly relishing the opportunity to demonstrate how even the most damaged hide can be saved through the use of modern

leather treatment products and the right amount of care and attention.

"Unquestionably, the seats were in a bad way," Simon recalled. "You wouldn't realise by looking at the car's finished interior today, but in addition to the obvious wear I detected a fair amount of damage inflicted as a consequence of poorly executed repairs that must have taken place at some point in the distant past. It goes with the territory, but I frequently

find myself spending many hours having to deal with damage that has to be corrected before I can get on with the job I'm being asked to do."

The hour count also increases when he's being asked to change the colour of leather, or where complex factory trim needs to be treated, such as the navy blue piping on the seats of my Silver Shadow II. Even restoring colour back to its original state can be labour intensive depending on the »



A gentle leather cleaner and a soft brush designed to be sympathetic to the hide are called into action



The leather is wiped free of dirt and grease in readiness for the important work to begin



A coarse leather treatment preparation sponge is used to key the surface of the hide

level of wear. As if to prove the point, no fewer than five coats of colour needed to be applied to my car's seats, and that was before their piping was treated using a small brush following a sponging of mist coat. Needless to say, unwavering focus was required in order to avoid colour bleed.

The car's piping required a lot of masking, plus use of a brush small enough to get into creases that have formed over time. Fine art brushes were used during the final stages of colouring. All in all, it took Simon close to eight hours just to complete this part of the restoration.

He tells us that the repair of a car's leather-trimmed steering wheel can also be very time consuming. Much stronger degreasers are needed, products that have an extended drying time. Extra hardener has to be applied to the clear coat, and a non-slip additive must be used to

"Even restoring colour back to its original state can be labour intensive depending on the level of wear"

ensure the safety of the driver and passengers – the last thing one wants is to have a beautifully restored steering wheel, but serious front end damage due to the host vehicle leaving the road without warning!

The use of oil-based products at the point of the car's decades-old leather alterations (and alarmingly minimal routine maintenance) presented Simon with a challenge. "It can be difficult to key surfaces that have been coated in badly manufactured dyes or poor quality cleaning products. I can't simply add new product on top of whatever has been used in the past. In fairness, a lot of detailers and amateur restorers don't realise

they're doing something wrong, but it's worth bearing in mind that specially formulated leather cleaners aren't the same as all-purpose cleaning products."

TIPS OF THE TRADE

Stubborn brushes are also the cause of much of the damage that Simon sees, with nail brushes being a particular hazard to smooth leather surfaces. He advocates the use of a soft natural hair brush to avoid damaging the clear coat. Taking heed of Simon's advice should enable you to lift dirt out of grains and impressions in leather that can be wiped clean with a microfibre cloth. He suggests using white cloths to



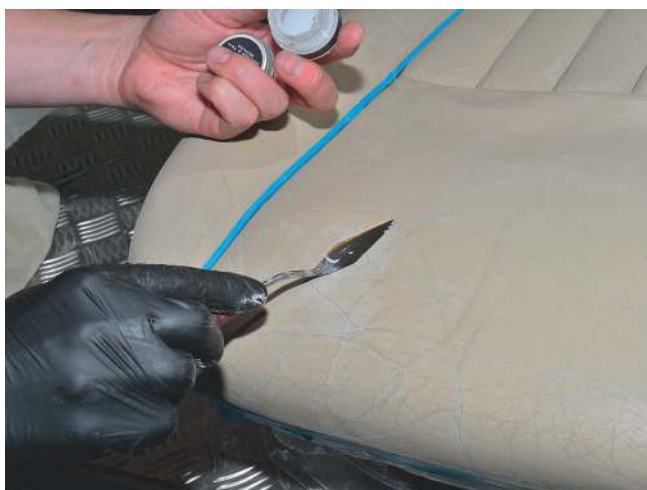
A spray-on adhesive primer is applied so that the new dye can bond firmly with the leather



A mild sandpaper is used just to flatten the surface of the scratches



A strong degreasing cleaning fluid removes any dust caused by the sanding process



A light surface filler smooths scratches that are too deep to be flattened by sanding alone



A colour-matched dye is mixed and applied, followed by clear coat prior to the dark piping being hand-brushed back to its best



Time-consuming piping work is followed by another application of clear coat



Once all fresh dye and clear coat has been applied, the surface of each seat is dried under warm air



Any tatty trim is repaired and colour-matched to the fresh-looking seats



The interior is returned to its natural habitat – and the end result is simply stunning



The refitted seats are given a hand-blended balm treatment that helps to reduce future wear

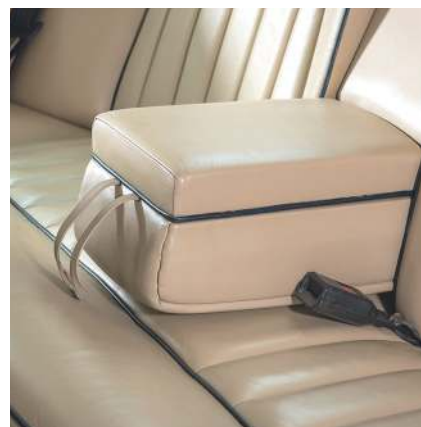
help detect unwanted colour transfer ("if this happens, you're past the clear coat!"), and he also stresses the need to apply a sealant barrier between cleaned leather and your clothes before you hit the road atop your car's revived hide.

Balms are also high on his list of 'must have' leather treatment products: "Many enthusiasts use conditioning cream without realising that they might be applying an emulsifier that does nothing but make leather look shiny. A good resealing balm will revive the look of your car's hide, but it will also work as a feed if the product being used has been manufactured correctly. This approach to protecting leather is much the same as when working with exterior bodywork – balm over a protective coating has a similar effect as wax when it's applied over paint sealant," he explains.

I'll admit to being stunned by the results that Simon was able to achieve for my Silver Shadow II without the need for an expensive retrim. What were once deep cracks in the car's leather now look more like faint age-

related crease marks, while formerly faded colour appears fresh, revitalised and uniform across all surfaces, including the car's door cards.

Of course, the state of my car's upholstery was far worse than what it is you're likely to be dealing with, which makes the extraordinary transformation all the more impressive. Equally as pleasing is the comparatively low cost of repair and recolouring work when tallied up against the often prohibitive expense of having seats covered in fresh leather. And, of course, there's the fact that today's specialist products will enable you to achieve outstanding results at home without the need to offload your car at a specialist's workshop. What are you waiting for? ■



The rear arm rest is checked to ensure that all corners are correctly coloured when in the 'down' position

FILL IN THE CRACKS

If you want to learn the tricks of the trade (including how to identify previous repairs, the differences between vinyl and leather treatments, sealant and balm know-how, repair techniques and

product knowledge), or if you want to get hold of a Cambridge Concours leather care kit, then give Simon a call on 0800 032 2918 or visit his website at www.cambridgeconcours.com.



A QUESTION OF CHROME

Is your brightwork looking a bit the worse for wear?
Then maybe it's time to invest in some quality re-chroming
– but what do you need to know before taking the plunge?

WORDS: PAUL GUINNESS PHOTOGRAPHY: MATT RICHARDSON & PAUL GUINNESS

If you're the proud owner of just about any classic Rolls-Royce or Bentley (particularly those cars from before the late 1970s), you'll already appreciate that it comes with more than its fair share of chrome. Or does it? We commonly refer to just about any area of brightwork on a car as chrome, despite the fact that (on more modern vehicles in particular) the item in question can be stainless steel or aluminium. So what exactly is chrome – and how do we go about reconditioning

the pitted, peeling or damaged chrome on our upmarket classics?

You don't need to be a genius to realise that chrome is an abbreviation of chromium, which in itself is a metal – albeit one that can't be used on its own. Nothing is ever made of solid chrome; when anybody says that an item is chrome, what they really mean is that there's a thin layer of chrome covering an object, which itself will be made of steel (or sometimes aluminium, brass or copper).

In theory, just about any chromed item on a classic vehicle can be re-chromed, and there's no shortage of specialists around the UK offering this service. But be warned, because it's a very labour-intensive process involving expensive raw materials – and as a result, it's not a cheap option. If a quote for re-chroming sounds almost too good to be true, it probably is – and that means you'll almost certainly be getting a poor finish that won't last.

Most chroming specialists offer



Is your chromework past its best? Then it's time for action



Heavily pitted over-riders and flaking bumpers are common issues



Removing bumper brackets yourself will save professional time – and therefore money



The back of a neglected bumper can suffer particularly badly from rust

what's generally referred to as triple plating, involving copper, nickel and chrome in order to achieve the perfect finish. Some, however, will leave out the copper coating, preferring instead to use a thicker nickel plating to achieve a good end result. Our advice is to always opt for triple plating, a process that costs more but ensures greater longevity and is therefore a wiser long-term investment.

GETTING READY

Once you've found a chrome plating company that you're confident will carry out a good job (having shown you some samples of their finished pieces and talked you through their particular process), it really is just a case of removing the items from your car and getting them delivered.

“The re-chroming specialist's first task will be to chemically strip your items to see the extent of the rust and damage”

It makes sense to remove any brackets (particularly from bumpers), as this will cut down the company's labour time and enable you to de-rust and paint the brackets while your bumpers are away. However, don't be tempted to carry out any further preparation, such as having old, flaking chrome sand-blasted away; re-chroming companies would rather receive items in an untouched state, enabling them to use non-aggressive chrome-stripping methods that cause no damage to the metal beneath.

The re-chroming specialist's first task will be to chemically strip all plating from your items to see the extent of

the rust, pitting and damage. The items will then be finished, cutting away at the metal surface to remove all scratches and pitting, so that any holes or missing metal can then be carefully welded and made good.

The best re-chroming specialists offer a bespoke repair service, with skilled craftsmen able to carry out major work on your particular item – whether it's a badly twisted bumper or a piece of trim with serious rot issues. As ever though, such work doesn't come cheap; if a better-condition substitute can be located (at reasonable cost) that requires less work before being re-chromed, »

it might be worthwhile buying.

The repair stage is followed by a mopping and cleaning process, before either a flash or heavy layer of copper plating is applied depending on the amount of pitting that needs to be 'filled'. Even if the base metal is super-smooth, most re-chromers insist on applying a flash coat of copper as it aids conductivity and will help draw the nickel to your item during the next stage. The nickel is what helps to make the chrome silver-like in appearance, and was at one time the 'chrome'

effect of old. A final chromium layer is then applied, which – once finished – is thoroughly polished prior to your re-chromed item being returned to you.

It all sounds relatively straightforward, though nobody should be under any illusion about the potential problems involved. Severely pitted or damaged steel will require an extra-thick coating of copper, as this helps to fill in any imperfections that the stripping and finishing haven't yet dealt with – and that will inevitably have a cost implication. Bear in mind too, that

a thick layer of imperfection-hiding copper will then need plenty of work afterwards, as the specialist polishes off much of what's been applied in order to achieve a perfect finish.

OTHER MATERIALS

If you're trying to have an item re-chromed that is made of a softer material – such as Mazak – there are lots of issues that can occur. Such items are often eroded away beneath the original plating, putting the re-chroming specialists in a difficult position when they strip it. Very light pitting can be polished out, but polishing too deeply will lose some of the original fine detail. Everything depends on just how pitted or damaged each particular item is, so make sure you get the advice of the re-chroming company you're using before you hand over any items that are unlikely to be perfect at the end of the process.

Re-chroming items made from aluminium can also be problematic. Even if it's in its 'raw' state, it's a difficult material to have chromed; if it has previously been chromed and needs to be stripped, the issues are even greater. One option is to simply have any aluminium pieces highly polished rather than chromed, as this will certainly save time (and therefore money), and the end result will be similar.

Another thing to bear in mind when having pieces of trim re-chromed is that any threads built into them for fitting purposes will need to be

“Severely pitted or damaged metal will require an extra-thick coating of copper to help fill in any imperfections”



A good chroming company will easily deal with the major dent in this Bentley S2's front bumper



Such large over-riders easily pick up dents and other damage, but they can be repaired



Seized bolts are usually the biggest issue when it comes to removing a bumper



Immaculate chromework can help to transform the look of any classic vehicle

carefully 'masked' prior to the chroming process. Specialist companies that carry out work to a high standard will already be aware of this, as chroming any threads can make re-fitting the piece difficult at best (or impossible at worst). Make sure the company you're dealing with is aware of what's required, and can return re-chromed pieces to you that will re-fit with ease.

Much of what we've already covered will only apply if you're trying to achieve the very best finish, as everyone has different expectations when it comes to chromium plating. You can drastically improve the appearance of mildly pitted chrome by spending a few pounds on a chrome-cleaning paste, which will be abrasive enough to remove many of the brown 'spots' and the appearance of pitting – although these will, of course, return over time.

As for how you should treat your chromium once it returns from being rejuvenated, we'd recommend whichever non-abrasive polish that you use on your car's paintwork. Let's face it, you want to be building up the protection rather than removing any microscopic layers of chrome, so a good quality car polish makes sense.

Finally, what should you expect to have to pay to have the brightwork of your classic Rolls-Royce or Bentley fully re-chromed and all set for a new lease of life? Prices vary throughout the country, and are equally variable according to how much work is required for each item. However, with most of the cars we're dealing with here being equipped with hefty bumpers, you shouldn't expect much change out of £400-600 per bumper for top-quality work. If you find a company willing to carry out the work for drastically less, you need to ask yourself whether you're likely to be happy with the end result – and whether you'll be creating potential problems for the future.

Re-chroming might seem like a relatively straightforward finishing touch for your older Rolls-Royce or Bentley, but it's a potential minefield when it comes to the work required – and the kind of costs that will be involved. Whether you're buying a car that requires restoration or you're bringing your existing classic up to scratch, make sure you budget carefully for any chroming work – and only entrust the task to a company that inspires confidence through its depth of knowledge and samples of previous work. ■

The chrome on this bumper has worn so thin that a full re-chrome is inevitably needed

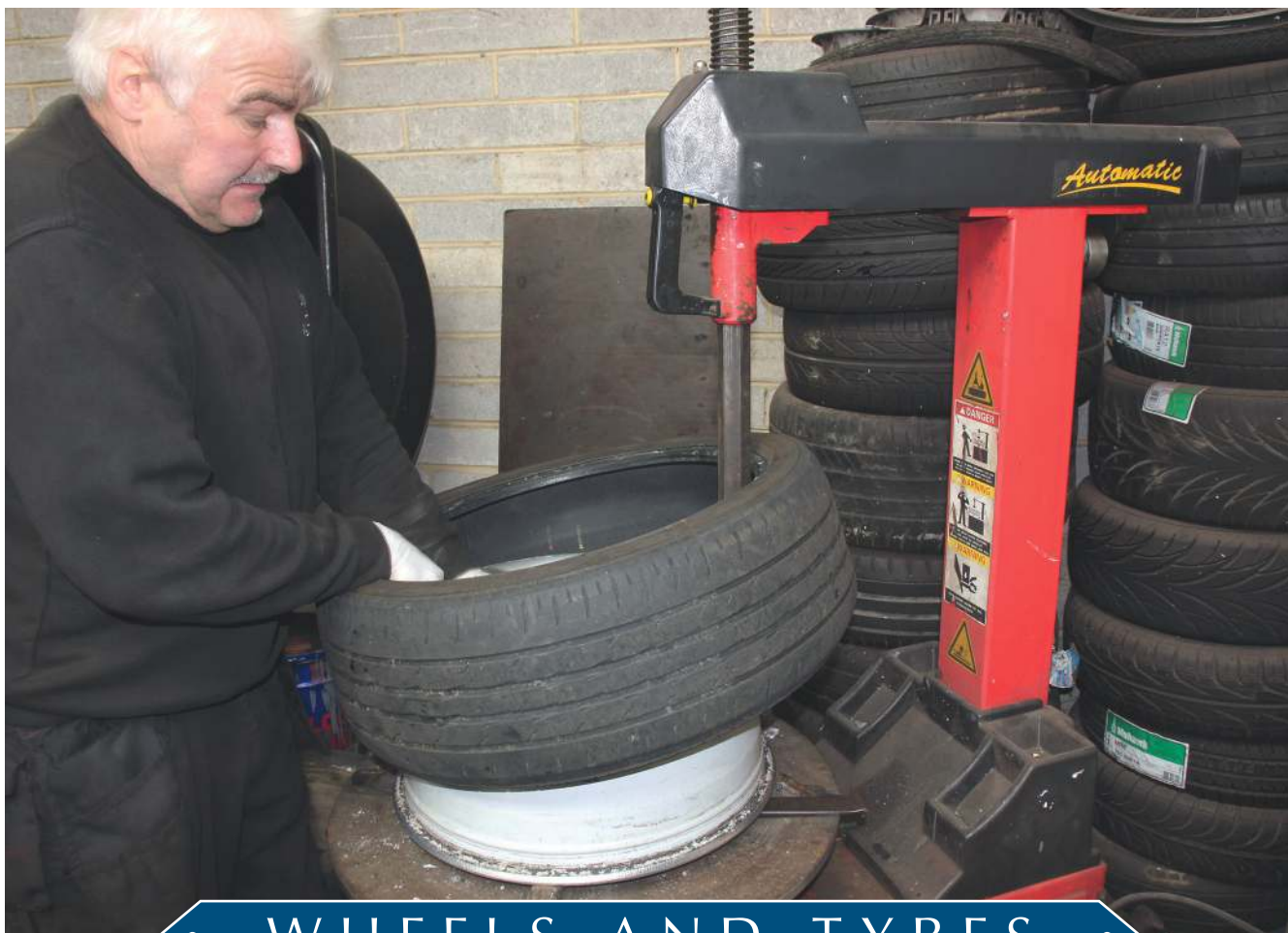


First task will be to chemically strip this bumper to judge the extent of the rust and damage



Twisted and bent bumpers can be straightened by the experts, albeit at a cost





• WHEELS AND TYRES •

SAFETY FIRST

We take a look at the issues surrounding the wheels and tyres of a restoration project, helping you to decide what can be rescued and what needs to be thrown away

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: ROB HAWKINS

Although they're often well down the priorities list of many a would-be restorer, it's true to say that wheels and tyres are among the most important components of a vehicle. They're the things that ensure you stay on the road when driving, playing a crucial role in the safety – and driveability – of your classic. The subject of tyres in particular, however, is littered with differing opinions when it comes to brand quality, with no shortage of horror

stories in terms of longevity.

We'll start by stating the obvious, which is that if you're faced with a project car that hasn't moved in the last twenty years, then the tyres should be discarded before it goes anywhere near a public road again. In other circumstances, however, the situation isn't necessarily as clear-cut as this. What if a car has been dry-stored in a Carcoon-type facility, with its tyres correctly inflated and rotated at regular intervals? How can

you tell the age of a tyre? And what can you do about a leaking tyre? The following pages will reveal all.

WHEEL TROUBLE

Assessing a set of wheels and tyres for a restoration project should ideally start with the wheels. Naturally, it pays to assume nothing, and so you should check that the wheels are the recommended type for the vehicle in question. An incorrect offset,



Specialists like Blockley Tyres sell beaded-edge crossply tyres that take advantage of modern technology



For early Silver Shadows, Longstone Tyres recommends Pirelli Cinturato 205VR15 tyres as a crossply substitute



Vintage Tyres suggests replacing the 670-16 crossply tyre fitted to many models with a modern Avon 670VR16 radial

for instance, can affect the car's handling, while a different diameter and subsequent rolling radius when the tyre is fitted can result in an inaccurate speedometer reading. A wider or narrower wheel will require a wider or narrower tyre, which may in turn affect the ride quality and handling of your car, while also either protruding from its wheelarches or appearing to sink into them.

In addition to ensuring that the correct wheels are fitted, it's important to have them checked. Fully inflate its tyre and then spray soapy water around the bead and the inside of the rim to look for leaks (air bubbles). This shouldn't be an issue with pre-war wheels and tyres where an inner tube is fitted; but for tubeless tyres, the rim of the tyre (where it meets the wheel) can be resealed if it's leaking and the mating surface on the wheel's rim can be cleaned.

Having the wheels balanced will help to eliminate unwanted vibrations through the steering and chassis. It's also a good opportunity to visually check the wheel for buckling to ensure it rotates true. On some wire wheels, the spokes can be adjusted to straighten the wheel and ensure it rotates true.

CROSSPLY AND RADIAL

Tyre manufacturer Michelin invented the radial-ply tyre in 1946, which appears to have been introduced in Europe two years later. The cord

plies are arranged at 90 degrees to the direction of travel, or radially. Up until that point, and in some cases for several years after, crossply tyres were used, consisting of at least four layers of textile fabric running from one sidewall, across the tread and to the other sidewall at approximately 45 degrees to form a complete structure. Inside, there's an inner tube and the recommended pressure of inflation is usually much higher (at 60-90psi) than a tubeless radial tyre, although later crossply tyres fitted to early Rolls-Royces can be inflated to 35-40psi.

Tyre specialists such as Blockley Tyres and Vintage Tyres sell a range of crossply, including the earlier beaded edge design that was fitted up to 1924. With modern manufacturing methods, they are confident that their tyres are still suitable for the vintage and classic cars they were intended to be fitted to. Ben Field, managing director of Beaulieu-based Vintage Tyres explains: "Our range of Ensign Chevron Cord beaded edge tyres are better today than beaded edge tyres have ever been, and providing the rims are in good condition and an adequate pressure is maintained, owners should not be afraid to use them."

However, there are some instances where switching from a crossply to a more modern radial can be beneficial. Rolls-Royce's bestseller – the Silver Shadow – was initially launched with crossply tyres but doesn't have to stay that way, as Dougal Crawley of



Balancing a wheel adds weights to the inside rim to help eliminate unwanted vibrations through the steering and chassis

Longstone Tyres explains: "It is worth pointing out that these cars, having such tall side-walled crossply tyres, benefit from changing to a radial tyre, making them so much more relaxing on modern motorways by diminishing the wandering. Hence, with the early Silver Shadow, we recommend 205VR15 Pirelli Cinturato instead of the crossply 815x15 offered in period."

Ben Field at Vintage Tyres also comments: "It has now become quite »

commonplace to retro-fit radial tyres in place of certain crossply tyres, the most common amongst these being the Avon 670VR16. This tyre was specifically developed as a radial replacement to the earlier 670-16 crossply tyre and is a perfect option for many Bentley and Rolls-Royce motor cars."

AGE OF TYRES

If you're faced with the decision as to whether a tyre or set of tyres can continue to be used on a restoration project, then a good starting point is to look for a four-digit date code. Introduced in 2000 and displayed on the sidewall, the first two digits represent a week number and the last two a year. For example, 3618 means the tyre was manufactured in the 36th week of 2018.

Most tyre manufacturers recommend a maximum lifespan of six or seven

"Having the wheels balanced will help to eliminate unwanted vibrations through the steering and chassis"

years for a tyre before it should be renewed, even if the tyre is hardly worn. Sceptics may argue this is purely a ploy to ensure more new tyres are purchased, but throughout its lifetime the structure of the tyre does weaken, resulting in a breakdown of the sidewall and a greater risk of air escaping – and even, as a worst-case scenario, a blow-out. Sunlight (including ultraviolet light from the sun) and heat cycles (in which the tyre warms up and cools down) also help to age a tyre.

An old but unworn tyre may have been stored for many years without the vehicle moving, and so bulges (known as eggs) may appear in the sidewalls, indicating that the rubber

has started to deteriorate. Small cracks in the sidewall are a sign that the rubber is perishing, which will allow moisture to penetrate and cause the tyre to delaminate.

If the vehicle hasn't been moved for many years, a flat spot may have developed where the tyre has made contact with the ground. This usually results in excessive tyre noise when driving the vehicle, which sounds like a rattle or chatter.

MOT EXEMPTION

Most cars registered before 1980 are now eligible for MoT exemption in the UK, a similar situation to some other



The four-digit date code 2114 means this tyre was manufactured in the 21st week of 2014



Bulges or eggs in the sidewall show the rubber has started to deteriorate and the tyre must be replaced



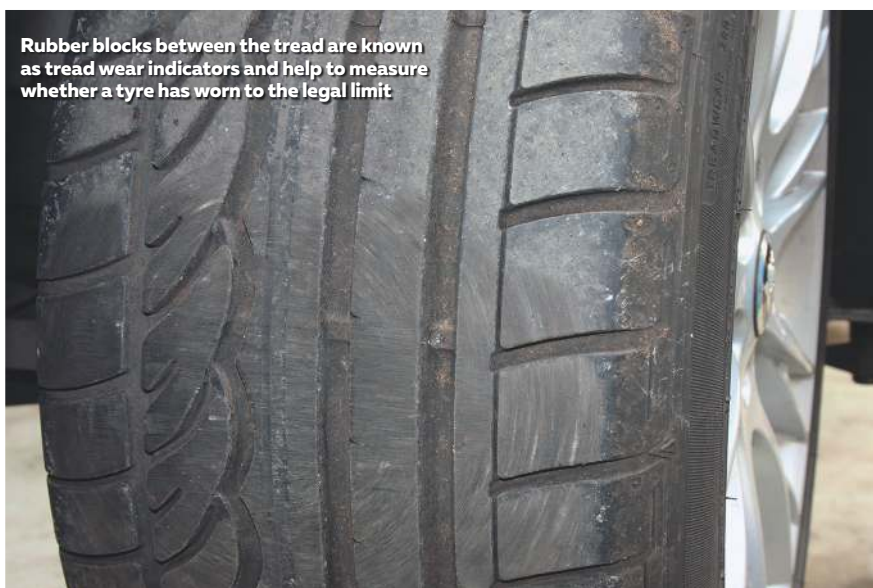
Long-term storage can result in tyres developing flat spots, even if they remain correctly inflated



Radial tyres appeared in the 1940s but have advanced greatly in terms of tread pattern, noise levels and grip



The condition of this tyre suggests the sidewall has weakened and collapsed, causing this huge crack



Rubber blocks between the tread are known as tread wear indicators and help to measure whether a tyre has worn to the legal limit

European countries in which classic vehicles aren't subject to compulsory testing. This has raised some horror stories in the media, where classic or vintage cars have been spotted on tyres with the cords exposed and the tread worn to the limit. However, the law concerning tyres still applies whether a vehicle is MoT-exempt or not – and if you're found driving an older vehicle with illegal tyres, the consequences are still severe. If tread wear indicators (blocks of rubber between the treads) are present, then in the UK this must be at least 1.6mm deep across 75% of the tyre where these TWIs exist. This limit is very lenient when compared to Austria and the Czech Republic (which stipulate a minimum depth of 4mm) and Sweden and Slovakia (with their 3mm requirement).

Uneven wear of the tread can indicate problems with worn suspension

components, incorrect tyre pressures or inaccurate wheel alignment. For instance, if the tread is excessively worn along the outside and inside edges, the tyre's pressure may be too low. If the tread of a tyre is worn excessively down the middle, it may have been overinflated. One worn edge on the front tyres suggests the steering geometry needs to be checked, or the car has endured hard cornering.

Scrubbing of the sidewall also suggests hard cornering that's too much for the pressure in the tyre, although Dougal at Longstone offers this useful tip: "The front tyres on a vintage car predominantly wear the outside edge first because they have positive camber to keep the steering lighter."

The obvious advice when choosing a set of tyres for a vehicle is to stick to the same brand across all four of them; and it's only when you drive a



WIRE WHEEL HELP

If you're lucky enough to own a classic with wire wheels, you may need to consult the experts of Motor Wheel Services (MWS) at some point. Here's a company that can restore just about any wire wheel: "With many classics, it's often more cost effective to simply replace the wheel," admits MWS's Oliver Smith. "But if the owner particularly wishes to keep the hub and rim – or even just the hub if the rim is badly damaged – then we can rebuild pretty much any wheel. This is particularly important for Rolls-Royce and Bentley owners, as the hubs are often complex in design and therefore expensive to replicate. Also, because they were engineered to such high standards when new, it's rare for a hub to be so damaged that it can't be reused."

Dan Cooksley, workshop manager, heads up the restoration team, using traditional tooling and machinery for each task – whether bending spokes, cutting them to length or punching the correct holes into a new rim. The work is very labour intensive and demands high levels of accuracy, particularly when it comes to drilling the rim; every hole not only needs punching, but also needs punching at the correct angle, ensuring that the spoke will be aimed at the correct hole in the hub. For more details of MWS's wire wheel restoration services, go to www.mwsint.com or call 01753 549360.

vehicle with such a set-up, including correct wheel alignment and well-maintained suspension components, that you get to appreciate the benefits. Mixing your tyres is almost like wearing a trainer on one foot and a brogue on the other, then trying to run as quickly as possible... ■



FANCY AN UPGRADE?

Whether you're restoring a car or carrying out basic remedial work, it's worth considering a few useful upgrades. Here we take a look at some of the most popular options

WORDS: **SAM SKELTON** PHOTOGRAPHY: **KELSEY ARCHIVE**

Having located and acquired your ideal Rolls-Royce or Bentley project, there's every chance you can't wait to get started, eager to embark upon the process of restoring the car to its original specification. There are, however, various upgrades that are well worth considering by anyone who doesn't mind deviating away from factory spec – and, of course, it makes sense to think about them at an early stage.

This feature will take a look at some of the improvements that are well worth considering for some of the most popular classic models. After

all, plenty of manufacturers have offered upgraded components for Rolls-Royces and Bentleys over the years – from companies like IntroCar in the present day right back to Harvey-Bailey, whose handling kits sharpened-up the cars when new. If improving your car appeals to you, read on...

The most obvious upgrade that can be made to a classic Rolls-Royce or Bentley (particularly of the Silver Shadow and T-series generation) is one that was available to owners when the cars were still in production. Yes, we're talking about handling packs aimed at the more spirited drivers amongst us, which in period

were supplied by Harvey-Bailey and consisted of new springs, new anti-roll bars and new anti-roll bar bushes. These handling kits are still available for around £1500 from many outlets (including Flying Spares), although specialist IntroCar has introduced a range of handling kits of its own. They're derived from the Harvey-Bailey kit in principle, and at £1150 they're a not dissimilar price. However, IntroCar's is a more comprehensive kit for the money, coming with all four anti-roll bar links, plus eight spring seats and the additional nuts and bolts that are needed as a result.

Kits like these will not turn your



At just over £1500 from Flying Spares is the Harvey-Bailey handling package



Active Ride Suspension was used by Rolls-Royce from 1989

Rolls-Royce or Bentley into a sports car by any stretch of the imagination. But they reduce body roll considerably, which means that they can actually increase comfort for those with modern tastes, as well as improving the handling potential. While these kits offer a greater benefit on cars with standard suspension, such as the Silver Shadow and Silver Spirit, they're also available for uprated models like the Bentley Turbo R.

BETTER RUNNING

Another obvious route for improvement is electronic ignition on cars that still rely on points and condensers. Kits to suit all manner of cars are available, with Flying Spares offering a kit suitable for Rolls-Royce V8s, including the Silver Shadow. It costs £160.68 including VAT at the time of writing, and all parts fit inside a standard distributor cap. Flying Spares also advises investing in an uprated coil (£82.80) and Magnecor Silicon leads (£223.08) at the same time as converting to electronic ignition, the idea being to provide a stronger, longer lasting and more reliable spark. Coils and leads wear over time, making these a sensible choice regardless of the conversion; they can be applied to any Rolls Royce from Silver Cloud II to early Silver Spirit.

Carburetted models – all Silver Shadows, plus Silver Spirits up to 1987 – will be fitted with a pair of SUs as a rule. A Solex 4A1 was fitted to the Bentley Mulsanne Turbo as standard, and may also be found on some naturally-aspirated cars. Parts supply and a habit of warping make this an unwise choice though, particularly as a warped Solex is irreparable, and can lead to fuel leaks if not replaced promptly. On naturally-aspirated cars it's possible

“Kits like these will not turn your Rolls-Royce or Bentley into a sports car by any stretch of the imagination”

to convert to SUs – there's a power drop of about 10%, but they're safer and more reliable carburettors. This is not the case on turbocharged cars owing to the pressurised plenum design, though it's possible to build a basic injection system to replace the carburettor if it has warped. No formal kits exist to do this, so you'll need to speak to companies such as Classic Fuel Injection to develop a suitable system.

SMOOTH RIDING

Silver Spirit and equivalent Bentley models from 1989 were fitted with Active Ride suspension – and if you're restoring one, it isn't unusual to find that the system has failed. Dash lights are the giveaway, as is an unbearable ride. The system works in a similar way to Citroen's Hydractive system, the idea being to allow a soft ride but improved body control. Typically, the expense of parts and labour to convert an Active Ride car to the earlier setup will cost the same as a single Active Ride damper – somewhere in the £700-800 region – while futureproofing it against further complications. For most, this won't result in a noticeable change in ride, and it will prevent the risk of further £700-800 bills in the future. It's a conversion that makes sense if you know you're going to have to rectify the suspension system



Above: IntroCar offers a useful range of air-conditioning compressor upgrades

anyway, although if your Active Ride system is working properly we'd advise you to leave it alone until it breaks!

Later Zytac injected Silver Spirits, Silver Spurs and Bentleys from 1993 are seemingly prone to head gasket failure. Both Colin Ayres at Colbrook Specialists and Ray Hillier at Hillier Hill have experienced this trend with stock and customer cars. Ray Hillier believes that part of the issue is overheating caused by a silted radiator, or one in otherwise less than perfect condition. This could be as simple as the wrong blend of anti-freeze over the years. Ray makes a point of replacing radiators on all Zytac cars he owns, and since adopting this »



Flying Spares' electronic ignition kits can improve your car's starting and reliability

protocol has had no further instances of head gasket failure. A worthwhile upgrade of sorts, therefore, would be a replacement radiator during the restoration process. There is no need to fit a bigger or modified radiator – simply a replacement to original specification will suffice.



Fitting a new radiator to any Zytec injected model of 1993-on is a sensible move

KEEPING COOL

Not all upgrades are driven by a mechanical need. It's said that a Rolls-Royce air-conditioning system has the power of thirty domestic fridges, and a good chunk of that is due to the Harrison A6 compressor used in these cars when new. As time passes, however, this unit develops faults and will eventually fail completely. Silver Shadows and early Silver Spirits have long been plagued by noisy air-conditioning

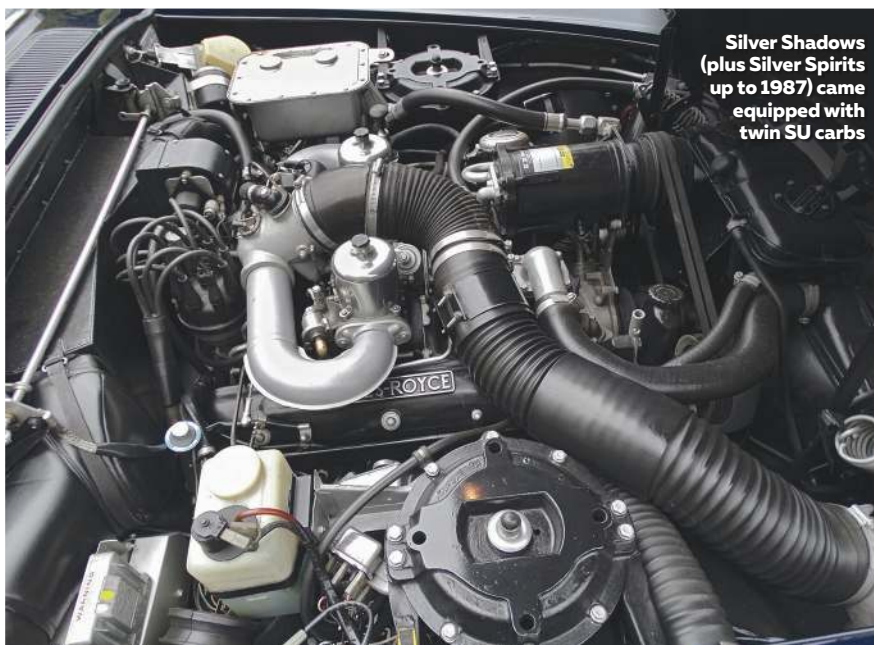
"Another obvious route for improvement is electronic ignition on cars that still rely on points and condensers"

compressors – if they work at all – and so IntroCar has recently introduced a direct replacement, which is lighter and more efficient than the original design. With Teflon coated pistons, it's quieter too – and the 54% weight saving means it saps less power in use.

Warranted for three years, it comes

with a new drier, new expansion valve and new O-rings – which means that for just £655, you can replace your air-con compressor with one that is guaranteed to work (where your rebuilt original may not). If it hasn't already been done, it would make sense to upgrade from the original R12 gas to R134a at the same time as your compressor replacement, in order to have a fully up-to-date and usable air-conditioning system. While some companies such as BeeCool in Kettering can re-gas R12 systems with a drop-in gas, it is expensive in comparison with R134a. It's also worth remembering that R134a systems can be recharged virtually anywhere.

While a factory standard car is an admirable aim, it's possible during a restoration to make a classic your own by adding a variety of improvements to its spec. Some may make it more reliable, some may make it sharper to drive, some might even boost its economy. With plenty of experience and options available, restoring a car to meet your needs and tastes mechanically should be no more difficult than choosing your preferred body and trim colour. Talk to the experts about your requirements – and relish the fact that there are plenty of upgrade options out there. ■



Silver Shadows (plus Silver Spirits up to 1987) came equipped with twin SU carbs



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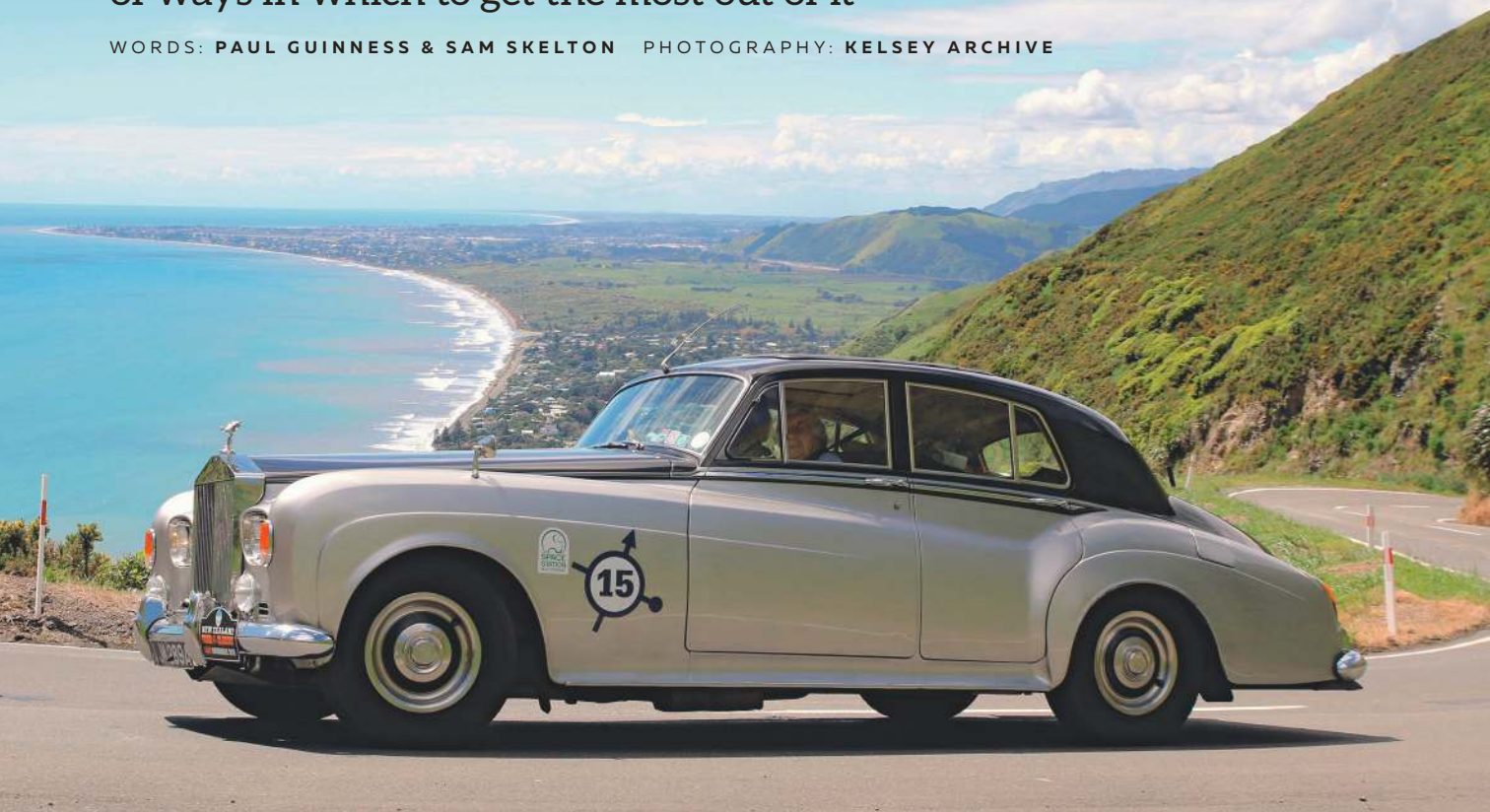


www.vbe-restorations.co.uk

REAPING THE REWARDS

Whether you're about to complete your project or your car is ready to enjoy right now, there's no shortage of ways in which to get the most out of it

WORDS: PAUL GUINNESS & SAM SKELTON PHOTOGRAPHY: KELSEY ARCHIVE



Every classic vehicle project has its fair share of ups and downs, whether you're embarking upon a few cosmetic improvements or a full strip-down and rebuild. And because of that, it pays to keep the eventual goal in mind, as you look forward to getting behind the wheel, taking to the road and enjoying the fruits of your labour. The only question is, how will you go about this?

For many enthusiasts, it's all about classic vehicle shows and perhaps even concours d'elegance events. Whether you intend taking your car along to a show in order to just display it or you're

intent on a more competitive approach, there are countless such events held throughout the summer, providing plenty of opportunities for a drive and to meet up with fellow enthusiasts.

General classic vehicle shows are usually renowned for their sheer variety, with a vast array of different marques on display. But for many owners, it's the single-marque events that appeal the most – or, in the case of Rolls-Royce and Bentley, dual-marque events such as the annual rallies organised by the RREC and Bentley Drivers Club, each one attracting thousands of visitors every year. The

same two clubs also have their own regional area representatives, who will focus on arranging smaller, local events for their members – from simple road runs through to weekends away. These are again a top way of meeting enthusiasts with the same interests, hopefully making new friends and enabling you to enjoy the whole classic ownership experience that bit more.

The clubs mentioned above have their own international sections, of course, although over in the USA there's the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club that also caters for owners of just about any Rolls-Royce and Bentley,



There are Rolls-Royce and Bentley events held throughout the world



You don't have to run a vintage Bentley in order to enjoy international historic rallying



For some classic show attendees, it's all about the competing... and hopefully winning

from the historic to the modern-day. The RROC is another club with a busy calendar each year, the highlight of which is undoubtedly its Annual Meet, which this year takes place in Detroit during the last week of July.

HISTORIC RALLIES

What choice do you have, however, if you fancy something a little more adventurous or challenging? Then maybe it's time to investigate the subject of classic rallies. Many people associate classic rallying with vehicles much older than the ones we're

focusing on in this section of the magazine, of course, with vintage Bentleys being a particularly popular choice among well-heeled enthusiasts with a sense of adventure. Whatever the age of your classic Rolls-Royce or Bentley, however, there's no shortage of activities with which to get involved.

The choice of rallies is, of course, as broad as the range of cars likely to be taking part. Different types of classic rally are available, from those suited to beginners through to the more arduous cross-continental tours that can last up to a month. The best way to get started, however,

would be to join a road run organised by your local classic car club. There are several over the summer, which means you should find a relatively local one that may also involve a classic car show at the end of it.

These types of road runs make an excellent soft introduction into the world of historic rallying – and because they are held on the public highway, any road-legal classic is eligible to enter. A number of clubs and companies hold events like this at least once a year, often to coincide with the UK's classic vehicle 'Drive It Day' in April, with similar runs held to commemorate »

the end of the summer show season.

Beyond these are longer, more ambitious road runs – Land's End to John O'Groats, for example, or coastal tours around the UK. These are usually a step above the small local rallies, with more thoroughly organised route maps, possibly prizes and recognition for those who achieve the best results, and often with an entry fee to cover administration. These are more likely to be organised by national single-marque clubs, so it's worth contacting your club's events team to find out more.

Specialist rally organisations will often host events of similar length and scope to the road runs above, but with an element of competition to them. This may take the form of regularity time trialling, in which a car must average a set speed over a set course and the victor is the closest to the speed originally set. This is in many ways more difficult than conventional time trial rallying, and yet opens up the possibilities of rallying to a wider clientele who might not be proficient at faster driving.

“These types of road runs make an excellent soft introduction into the world of historic rallying”



The USA's Rolls-Royce Owners' Club is renowned for its Annual Meet



The UK hosts a number of annual historic rallies, including the Flying Scotsman



Silver Shadow LWB owner, Paul Capper, taking part in the RREC's Concours d'Elegance

Event companies such as HERO and the Endurance Rally Association also work outside the UK, with longer and more ambitious events traversing continents and taking up to four weeks to complete. While something like this is a far greater challenge to both man and machine, it is also the kind of adventure that many owners never experience, despite their classic Rolls Royce or Bentley being potentially the ideal companion. If you've ever fancied trekking across Europe or Asia in your classic, taking in scores of sights, sounds, and smells en route, then these are the events for you – but they are not necessarily for beginners. If you take some time to acclimatise via smaller rallies, you'll get far more from these larger events than if you jump in blind.

However you choose to enjoy your Rolls-Royce or Bentley, the main point is that you're out and about in it – reaping the rewards of all that hard work. It doesn't matter whether you've simply made your classic roadworthy and there are still jobs to do, or you've transformed it into a potential concours d'elegance prize-winner, as we all have our different priorities when it comes to completing a project. The priority has to be enjoying what you've achieved so far, whichever route you choose to take. ■



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FEATURE CAR
BENTLEY TURBO R





WEDDING BLISS

Is ownership of a Bentley Turbo R guaranteed to be an enjoyable experience? We catch up with one custodian who has plenty of advice for would-be buyers

WORDS: FRANK WESTWORTH

PHOTOGRAPHY: FRANK WESTWORTH & CHRIS SPAETT

You know how it goes. A family wedding is looming ever closer and bride, groom, parents, sundry senior relatives and many others demand that they arrive in style. On this particular occasion, the logistical conundrum was fixed by proud dad Chris Spaett, who already had a Rolls-Royce 20/25 for his son to ride in – or possibly for the happy couple after the ceremonies, who knows? But the venerable Rolls-Royce lacked the room for the bridesmaids, and indeed everyone else, so...

So Chris decided that he'd need a second sophisticated motor to provide taxi duties on the big day. But what? Another 1920s Rolls-Royce? After much deliberation, and plainly keen on promoting classic variety in the entourage – the family Range Rover was also providing ferry duties – he decided upon a Bentley. And in his view, the finest candidate was the Turbo R. (It makes sense; I mean, if a quick getaway is suddenly needed due to an unforeseen change in circumstance, what would be better?) I wondered whether Chris's choice was made after weeks, months of soul-searching consideration, the kind of heart-sapping study of alternatives we all know so well?

"No, I bought the car on a whim,"

he admits. "Our son's wedding was coming up and we needed a car for the bridesmaids – and it needed to go along with our Rolls Royce 20/25 which was being used for the bride. That's it." So the wedding wasn't just a great big fat excuse to buy a super-rapid Bentley? "Well... there is that."

Of course, as all experts recommend, the only way to buy a seriously specialist car like a Turbo R is through a reputable specialist dealer, right? And even then, after months of exhaustive research and many careful viewings leading to a final shortlist of just a couple of outstanding cars? Not on this occasion.

"The car was listed nearby, in a Brightwells Classic Car Auction, and so we went to have a look. It looked very good too, with a near-pristine interior, good bodywork, and it also had an excellent service history via main dealers – plus in recent years with Balmoral Ltd, a well-respected specialist. The book was appropriately stamped and was complemented by a big pile of invoices. I wouldn't touch one of these cars without that sort of history, so combined with a very low mileage of 57,000 I thought it had to be worth a bid. I ended up paying a little more than I had hoped but the car seemed very good and so I bought it."

Care to tell us exactly what it is? Year, model, trim – anything which got your attention sufficiently for you to »

FEATURE CAR BENTLEY TURBO R



The familiar 6.75-litre V8 was transformed via Bentley's adoption of turbocharging

hand over a decent chunk of money at an auction, with no warranty?

"It's a 1992 Turbo R in a great colour – Midnight Blue Metallic. It's important to choose a car which is well-trimmed inside – especially when it's going to be used for wedding transport when a little luxury is so very important.



Proud owner
Chris Spaett

So it has Magnolia full hide inside, including the headlining, all piped in blue, with blue carpets and top roll."

CROSS-OVER MODEL

We were driving through the glorious Herefordshire countryside while chatting, so I took my gaze off the road for a moment and looked around the cabin. Beautiful. No company does better interiors than this. A few get close, but for a car with over a quarter of a century beneath its wheels the condition is simply stunning. And just to show that I was paying attention, I remarked that as a '92 car I'd expected it to have a four-speed 'box, 1992 being the year Bentley switched from the three-speed GM400 gearbox to the GM4L80E four-speeder, a change also marked by switching from the column-mounted shift to a console lever. This car, however, still uses the earlier lever on the steering column to shift the earlier 'box,

which means it was probably built right at the change point. "It's a cross-over model," explains Chris, "in that it is a pre-cat vehicle but does have Active Ride."

Despite being the old-model three-speed, the gearbox matches the silent smoothness of the engine just perfectly; it is possible to hear the shifts but unless you're really tramping on with unseemly enthusiasm you don't really feel them in the cabin. As we swept through the countryside, admiring both the brilliant day and the handsome scenery, Chris was waxing lyrical about his car and the truly terrifying moment when he drove it home after buying it at auction, without even the shortest of test drives beforehand.

"That drive home was as impressive as I'd hoped. I have owned a number of these cars over the years, so I can generally tell a good one from a bad one very quickly. This was indeed a good car – which was confirmed by Balmoral, who I took it to shortly after purchase



for a big service and check over. They found very little wrong with the Bentley, and attended to everything that they did find. Only a couple of minor faults were identified at the service and were dealt with there and then. All the books and tools were present and correct; the car drives beautifully and really cannot be faulted. No rattles, clonks or anything... just wonderful."

One happy owner, then? "Oh yes. Being a Turbo R, it corners much better than a car of this size and weight has a right to. The ride is a little firmer and you notice the bumps in the road a little more than in a Rolls-Royce Silver Spirit, but it does make it easier to cover ground quickly."

PREMIUM POWER

As we talked, Chris's opinions were confirmed. The Turbo R really is superb at covering the ground quickly, with almost no fuss and almost no effort. It

"For a car with over a quarter of a century beneath its wheels, the condition is simply stunning"

is certainly a very big car, which is scary at first when hitting the bendy roads with which Herefordshire is blessed, but visibility is excellent, due to both the commanding driving position and the slim door and windscreen pillars. That said, I did not try to park it in a multi-storey car park.

The biggest surprise comes when the road ahead is clear, everything in the mirrors is rosy and unthreatening, and the car is thoroughly warmed through. The perfect moment to take proud owner at his word and stand hard on the accelerator. The world moves backwards. The seats prove their worth as you sink gently back into the upholstery and the world continues to move backwards. There is sufficient 'whoosh' from the

engine bay to remind you that under that distant bonnet lives an awful lot of horsepower unleashed, and the distance to the next bend is shortening at a rate more familiar to Porsche drivers than the sedate types who famously drove cars like this. Did they drive sedately? Of course not, but you know what I mean.

Application of right foot to right-hand pedal had resulted in the gearbox kicking down – which I'd not noticed at all, and in fact only understood when it shifted back to top again. No fuss at all. Can this staggering 300bhp performance really be civilised? I'm no fast driver, but our proud owner is. Here's Chris again:

"These cars are not particularly fast by modern standards, but the way they deliver the power is remarkable. »

FEATURE CAR
BENTLEY TURBO R

The interior of this low-mileage
Turbo R is in impeccable condition



Magnolia hide is
the ideal contrast
to Midnight Blue
paintwork





I have a more modern Mercedes SL which delivers a little over 600bhp, which is naturally much faster and the power comes in instantly and is brutal in its delivery. It is loud and lets you know what's happening. You feel as though you have been hit in the back by an express train when the throttle is planted... whereas the Bentley may not be anywhere near as quick but it is equally impressive for the way it pushes you in the back almost silently and without any form of fuss, just a smooth tidal wave of acceleration that seems to be relentless. Fuel consumption can be very high if gunned, but when driven with a reasonable amount of self-control, high teens and even 20mpg is not impossible to achieve."

We must suppose that it's decently easy to be comfortable with a 2.3-tonne car delivering 300bhp when you're also used to punting along a car with around twice the power and weighing a half-tonne less. I confess to being absolutely startled by the power delivery – not just the giant shove itself but the utter snarling gentility of the experience.

"The Turbo R really is superb at covering the ground quickly, with almost no fuss and almost no effort"

And the brakes simply eliminate the speed, hauling down the heavy car as though it was half its weight.

TURBO CHOICE

Everything about the Bentley was as remarkable to this marque novice as it would have been when the model was introduced in 1985 as a replacement for the Mulsanne Turbo. The familiar 6.75-litre V8 – running a modest 8.0:1 compression ratio – was assisted in its power delivery by the delicate attentions of a Garrett AiResearch T3 turbocharger, breathing hard through a Bosch MK-Motronic fuel-injection system. Not really high-tech, but certainly effective – and relaxed, says Chris:

"In my opinion, when you get a good example, these cars represent exceptional value for money in today's

market. They just ooze quality like no other and provide such a relaxing way to travel. I have never known another car that you can do a long journey in at the end of a very tiring day and arrive feeling fresher than when you set off. You feel somehow cocooned from the outside hustle and bustle around you. They are a joy to own, and clearly this was a serious motivator to buying it, using the wedding as justification – or an excuse even.

"In fact, if you don't intend to do huge mileages, there is a strong argument that a car such as this can be quite a sensible choice from a cost of motoring point of view. Servicing is not expensive if you go to a reputable specialist. Parts prices are reasonable, and often good secondhand parts are pretty readily available. The bulk of the major mechanicals are largely »

FEATURE CAR BENTLEY TURBO R



Bentley's usefully generous tool kit



Correct-spec hydraulic fluid is essential



Even the boot of this particular Turbo R is near-perfect



indestructible. Classic car insurance is usually reasonably cheap and, if the car's condition is maintained, there is no depreciation to worry about. Only the amount of fuel used is going to be higher than in a lesser car. The key is obviously buying a good one in the first instance, and you do need a bit of luck on your side. On balance, I would probably buy an earlier car with simpler electrics if I was intending to keep one only for occasional use."

So does that make a Turbo R the best route into the world of the classic Bentley? Probably; although spending too little buying the 'wrong' example could be disastrous, and even those with deeper pockets can still encounter problems. Chris admits to being concerned that buyers with no great knowledge or understanding of the cars can too easily end up with automotive money pits, resulting in them being sold on at a loss and a potential enthusiast being lost at the same time. He also makes the entirely valid point that someone paying £12,000-15,000 for a car (that's used Mondeo money) might be horrified if they're unlucky enough to need something like a head gasket replacing. That little job – done by someone who knows his Crewe V8s – could set a chap back around £4000, which is scary to someone more used to running a Mondeo class of car.

"Mechanically they appear to be pretty much bulletproof if properly



“The Turbo R seen here is a fine, low-mileage vehicle with a deeply impressive service history”

maintained,” insists Chris, “although these cars were developed with an ever-increasing amount of electronic wizardry, which I have found is an area to watch, because early complicated car electrics don’t seem to be particularly reliable when they start to age, and they can be seriously expensive to fix. A good example on my Bentley was when the electric driver’s seat and mirrors – which worked when I got the car – stopped working for a brief while. Then they started to work again on their own and then failed completely after being laid up for a couple of months. It seems that an ECU controls the seats and mirrors, probably due to the introduction of Seat Position Memory. These ECUs are fitted with a little battery which retains the memory setting if the car battery goes down or is disconnected. All very good, but when the batteries get old they fail and leak, causing the circuit boards in the ECU itself to corrode and fail, which means that the seats and mirrors can no longer be adjusted. A new ECU was required, and that fixed the problem.”

Any other issues to note? “The hydraulics are certainly an area to watch. Make sure the car levels itself quickly on cold start and that the brake lights go out fairly promptly. It is important to use the correct hydraulic fluid. Bentley conveniently supplies two spare bottles in the boot, which Balmoral replenished for me. The engines should be pretty much silent

and the gear changes silky-smooth. The later cars and the Red Label Arnages suffered with head gasket problems but, as I understand it, this car is too early for that to be an issue.”

Remember at this point that the Turbo R seen here is a fine, low-mileage vehicle with a deeply impressive service history. And it is genuinely a brilliant car to drive, fast (very) or slow (for a wedding entourage, for example). Ownership is enormously rewarding, as you’d hope with such an impressive piece of kit, but rose-tints and a sense of denial should never be part of an enthusiast’s tool chest. Any car dating from 1992 is going to have issues; that’s a simple fact of life. The point is that fixing these issues is worth doing – and doing properly – when the result is as magnificent as this. Not least because we are observing quite serious price inflation for top quality example of the Turbo R, and so such fixes can be cost-effective.

I asked Chris whether he had any more sobering advice to anyone in the market for a car like his: “They do suffer from corrosion, mainly around the wheel arches and sills. I gather that the rear spring pans also have a tendency to corrode. You also get some

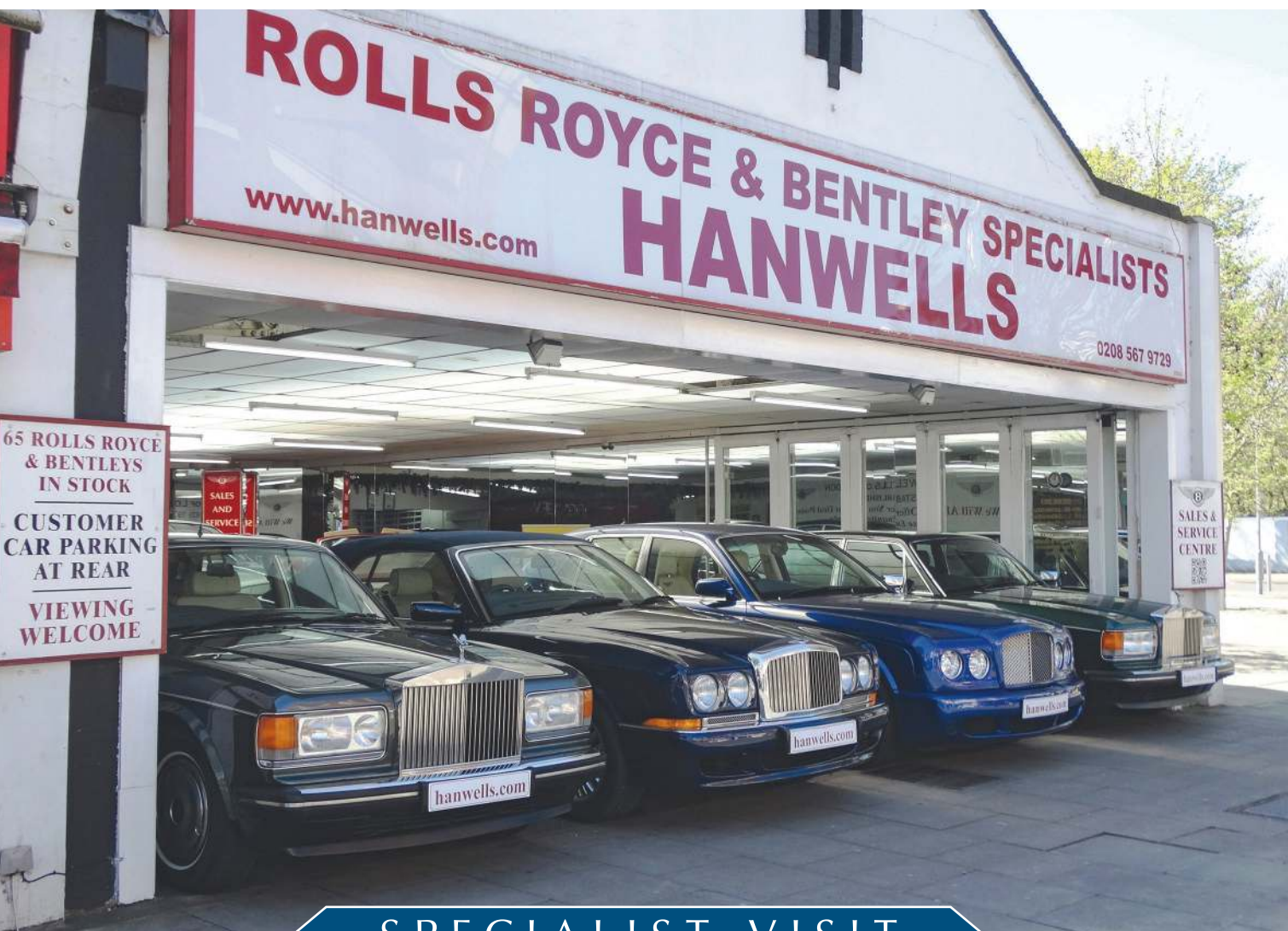
electrolysis between the door skins and their handles and locks, which seems to manifest itself by showing ‘spidering’ in the paintwork. Look for signs of repainting around the edges – fine if it’s been done by a specialist, less so if not.”

And what about Chris’s own car?

“Apart from a handful of chips and one or two very minor marks, the paintwork on this Bentley is fabulous and completely belies its age. The interior looks as though it is much less than six years old, let alone 26, and is a wonderful place to be. It even still smells like a Bentley inside. And now, apart from the telephone, which is disconnected, everything on this car works perfectly.” He grinned as he checked his watch; plainly it was time for afternoon tea and the sun was shining. Any final advice?

“Bounce the rear corners of the car to confirm that the suspension is working properly.” After a short laugh, Chris added: “I’m not trying to put you off – the Turbo R is a great car, you just need to keep your eyes open when buying one.” Which is certainly true.

And how was the wedding, I wondered. Did it go well? Did the cars behave? The guests? “Oh yes,” Chris replied. “Mostly...” ■



• SPECIALIST VISIT •

A LESSON IN LONGEVITY

After 44 years in the industry, Stephen Brown and his Hanwells of London team have bought, sold and worked on countless Rolls-Royces and Bentleys. We pay a visit to discover the secrets of their success

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: PAUL GUINNESS

"I've been buying and selling cars since I was 17 years old," explains the effervescent founder of Hanwells of London, a well-known company specialising in Rolls-Royce and Bentley motor cars, with a history dating back to 1975. Stephen Brown is sat at his desk, sipping coffee and occasionally taking phone calls from

prospective clients, as we talk about his early days in the motor trade. "I was a Jaguar apprentice back then, but took the plunge and opened my own used car showroom when I was 23, expanding to two other sites shortly afterwards. The business did well, and so just twelve months later I treated myself to a five-year-old Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow."

Driving around in a relatively new Silver Shadow at such a young age must have been unusual back then? "You'd be surprised," smiles Stephen. "Back in the '70s, particularly in London, there were lots of young entrepreneurs who liked the idea of being a bit flash and who could afford to buy a secondhand Rolls-Royce. For me though, it was



This potentially unique Silver Shadow II has covered just 6000 miles from new



Newest car on sale at the time of our visit was this 2008 Phantom Drophead Coupé



SY- and SZ-generation models are still among Hanwells' bestsellers



This 1936 Rolls-Royce 25/30 Barker limousine is a real head-turner

the engineering of the cars that appealed as much as the image."

Stephen had first become aware of the quality of the marque in his very early days, when he stumbled across a Rolls-Royce hubcap lying in the road as he walked past. He picked it up and was impressed by the sheer weight and standard of finish: "I thought at the time, if the hubcaps are made to such a high standard, the rest of the car must be very impressive!" All these years later, that very same hubcap still hangs from the wall of one of Stephen's showrooms.

Delighted with his own Silver Shadow, the young businessman saw the potential of specialising in used Rolls-Royces and Bentleys, and began buying and selling as many as he could find in the kind of condition that he demanded. And 44 years after opening his first showroom, Stephen continues to enjoy great success with both marques, these days operating from three separate sites (including two showrooms on the busier-than-ever

Uxbridge Road in West London) and employing a total of 18 staff: "I think people tend to associate us with our original showroom on the main road," explains Stephen, "as that's obviously been featured in our advertisements for many years. But we also have a large facility just a couple of miles away, where we have our biggest showroom as well as extensive workshop facilities and a team of experts in all areas of repairs, maintenance and restoration."

EXTRA SITE

We jump aboard a Bentley Arnage from one of Hanwells' Uxbridge Road showrooms and head in the direction of the third site, which I confess to Stephen I wasn't even aware of. "A lot of people are surprised when they visit for the first time," he admits. And it's easy to see why, with the fairly anonymous looking industrial building housing a large and smartly kitted out sales area, where SY- and SZ-generation Rolls-Royce and

Bentley models mingle with the later Silver Seraph and Arnage family, as well as various rarer models – including, at the time of our visit, a limited-edition Continental R Chatsworth (one of just ten built) and a 1936 Rolls-Royce 25/30 with Barker limousine coachwork.

"We tend to focus on what most people probably think of as modern classics," explains Stephen, "although we do sometimes have older models for sale – and, of course, we offer restoration and repair facilities for just about any Rolls-Royce or Bentley." The company prides itself not just on the quality of its cars but also its after-sales care, with each vehicle undergoing a thorough 100-point check and coming as standard with a comprehensive warranty: "The cars we sell have to be absolutely right before they leave us, as we obviously have a reputation to uphold."

The company's warranty is particularly impressive, with 'five star' coverage for two years from the date of purchase, »

SPECIALIST VISIT HANWELLS OF LONDON



The larger of the two Uxbridge Road showrooms houses up to 14 cars

but with an interesting twist for the first few weeks of new ownership: "Customers benefit from what is almost a two-month test drive at the start," says Stephen. "During that time, absolutely everything on the car is covered by our own guarantee – and I do mean everything, even down to the odd rattle or a blown bulb. It gives new owners a chance to get to know their cars and to report even the tiniest problems to us. Wherever they live in the UK, they'll get the issue dealt with free of charge – whether through us or via one of the trusted independent specialists with which we've built relationships. It's a system that offers real peace of mind for our clients."

REPEAT BUSINESS

Both the quality of stock and the aftersales service help to explain why Hanwells has a large proportion



This '92 Corniche III looks stunning in Vermillion with a Magnolia hood



Members of the Arnage family are popular among Hanwells customers



The company's third showroom is just a couple of miles away from the originals



Hanwells of London has a history dating back to the mid-1970s



“Delighted with his Silver Shadow, the young businessman saw the potential of specialising in Rolls-Royces and Bentleys”

of repeat customers, some of which Stephen has been doing business with since the very early days: “We’ve been known to buy and sell the same car a number of times over the years, with many of our clients coming back whenever they fancy a change or an upgrade. They know how we operate and they like the fact that our cars are described honestly and accurately. Many clients buy cars from us on the basis of a description and a file of photographs, without even seeing what they’ve bought until it’s delivered to them. The fact that we’ve been doing what we do for so long gives them the confidence to trust us.”

Many customers also bring their cars back to Hanwells when the time comes for a service or some routine maintenance, with the company’s team of technicians – headed up by service manager Terence Calder – being highly experienced in all aspects of Rolls-Royce and Bentley repairs. Servicing is carried out at a fixed price of £75 per hour, and Hanwells even offers a nationwide collection and delivery facility.

Should a client be unlucky enough to damage their car at any point, the on-site body shop can help there, handling everything from minor scrapes and grazes through to panel

replacements and full-scale restorations: “We can do most things in-house,” explains Stephen, “which means we’re able to maintain our quality standards at all times. We even have a wood department, offering repairs and restoration to interior trim, as well as our own wheel refurbishment specialists.”

A large proportion of the company’s turnover is inevitably generated through vehicle sales, however, with Hanwells stocking up to fifty different cars at any one time, the buying and selling of which is handled by Stephen and the company’s sales manager, Gary Mills. Much of the stock comprises cars from the Silver Shadow and Silver Spirit generations, with prices starting from around the £15,000 mark on the day of our visit. Of particular interest, however, was a 6000-mile Silver Shadow II of 1980 vintage, a potentially unique example with an asking price of £75,950: “It’s a difficult car to value, as it’s essentially a new Silver Shadow thanks to its phenomenally low mileage,” admits Stephen. “For anyone wanting the best, possibly lowest-mileage example currently for sale anywhere, it offers a fascinating opportunity.”

Later models are also important to Hanwells, with the Bentley Arnage being a particularly popular model »



The company always has a wide choice of modern-classic Bentleys in stock



You’ll find plenty of artefacts and artwork in the Hanwells sales areas

SPECIALIST VISIT HANWELLS OF LONDON

among the company's clients. The newest vehicle currently on display, however, is a 2008 Phantom Drophead Coupé – a superb example with just 8600 miles under its wheels and an asking price of £179,950. It might be unusual to see such a modern Rolls-Royce in a Hanwells showroom, but it proves the point that the company tries to cater for all budgets and tastes.

With so many of today's independent Rolls-Royce and Bentley specialists

“Many customers bring their cars back to Hanwells when the time comes for a service or some routine maintenance”

operating from rural locations, it's refreshing to come across one still trading from the original London showrooms where its story began more than forty years ago. Hanwells has expanded greatly during that time,

but has avoided any temptation to move from its traditional West London location. It's a setting that still works well for Stephen Brown and his hard-working team, as well as for the company's ever-expanding list of clients. ■

The hubcap that started Stephen's fascination for the marque is still on display



Hanwells' team of experts can repair and service any Rolls-Royce or Bentley



Resprays and full-scale restoration work can also be handled by Hanwells



The company's website provides full details of each car currently for sale

THANK YOU

Many thanks to the Hanwells of London team for our recent guided tour of the company. For more information on its current stock of vehicles for sale, check out the website (www.hanwells.com) or call 0208 567 6557.

1975

HANWELLS OF LONDON

2019



2014/14 Bentley Mulsanne Mulliner. Finished in Onyx with electric glass sunroof, 21 inch polished alloys and retractable Flying B. Beluga hide interior with Linen stitching and embossed Flying B's. Piano Black veneers with picnic tables and vanity mirrors. As new, only 8,600 miles and real value..... **£92,950**



2004/04 Bentley Arnage R. Finished in Peacock Blue with electric sunroof, Chrome radiator grille and 19 inch alloys. Parchment interior with French Navy secondary hide, two tone steering wheel, picnic tables and Bentley badges to the waist rails. Only 60,000 miles, with FSH..... **£31,950**



1996 P Rolls Royce Silver Spur MK IV. Finished in Masons Black with Cream coach lines. Magnolia interior piped in Black and Black carpets with Magnolia piping. Picnic tables and electric rear seats. Known to ourselves since 2004, just had new head gaskets. Immaculate with FSH. Must be seen..... **£22,950**



1986 C Rolls Royce Corniche Convertible. Finished in Aurora with new Spruce Green Mohair hood, colour coded bumpers and Champagne interior piped in Spruce, with Spruce carpets and Walnut veneers. Known to ourselves for last 20 years and has SU carburetors fitted. 59,000 miles with FSH. Immaculate..... **£62,950**



2008/58 Rolls Royce Phantom Drophead Coupé in Metropolitan Blue with Silver Satin bonnet and Silver hood. Light Cream interior with Navy Blue secondary hide and Navy Blue carpets. Beautiful teak deck, stainless steel package, camera system, TV and DAB. Just 8,600 miles with only 2 owners, immaculate..... **£179,950**



2000 W Bentley Arnage Red Label. Finished in Peacock Blue with Barley fine lines. The interior is in Barley with French Navy piping, French Navy carpets and Burr Walnut veneers. Only 88,000 miles with good service history and in outstanding condition throughout **£22,950**



1995 M Bentley Turbo R MK III. Finished in sought after Racing Green with colour coded bumpers and grille, racing matrix grille mesh and 16 inch alloys. Magnolia interior with Spruce Green piping and Spruce Green carpets with Magnolia piping. Known to us for last 17 years, with FSH. Unmarked throughout..... **£15,250**



1979 V Rolls Royce Silver Shadow Series II. Finished in stunning Oxford Blue with Silver Blue leather interior, with contrasting carpets and Walnut veneers. This car is in stunning condition with only 35,000 miles, with lots of history. A real investment and a joy to drive, Only **£39,995**



2008/08 Bentley Continental GTC Mulliner. Finished in Sapphire Blue with French Navy Mohair hood and 20 inch alloys. Magnolia interior by Mulliner with Charcoal carpets. Only 38,000 miles with full history. Unmarked condition throughout, value at only **£46,950**



1998 S Bentley Azure Mulliner in Peacock Blue with 18 inch alloys and a Dark Blue Mohair hood, with Magnolia interior piped in French Navy and embossed Flying B's in French Navy. Walnut veneers and French Navy carpets piped in Magnolia. Only 48,000 miles with FSH and 3 owners. Immaculate throughout..... **£69,999**



1992 K Rolls Royce Corniche Convertible Series III. Finished in Vermillion with a Magnolia hood and Magnolia interior piped in St James, with St James carpets piped in Magnolia and Walnut veneers. Only 14,000 miles with full history. Just amazing condition and will only go up in price. Only..... **£129,950**



1978 S Rolls Royce Silver Shadow Series II. Finished in unmarked Le Mans Blue with White fine lines and Cream interior, with Cream carpets and beautiful Walnut veneers. We have known this car for over 6 years. Recent extensive overhaul, including engine rebuild. A superb example at Only **£25,950**



2008 Model/57 Bentley Arnage T Mulliner Level 2 in Royal Ebony with Flying Band factory tinted windows. Portland interior, Beluga secondary hide, embossed Flying B's, rear vanity mirrors and electric rear seats. Supplied and serviced by us for last 3 years. Only 30,200 miles with FSH. Immaculate..... **£51,950**



1998 S Bentley Continental R Chatsworth Limited Edition. Number 7 of only 10. This extremely rare car, with numerous Chatsworth features, is finished in Chatsworth Silver with Silverstone interior main hide and Beluga secondary hide. Only 51,000 miles with FSH. One for the serious collector..... **£69,950**



1989 F Rolls Royce Silver Spirit ABS EFL. Finished in Silver Sand with Nutmeg coach lines and whitewall tyres. Cream interior with Nutmeg piping and Nutmeg carpets with Cream piping. Fitted with picnic tables. Only one owner from new and only 27,000 miles. Immaculate condition throughout..... **£23,950**



1969 Rolls Royce MPW Convertible, Corniche style. Finished in Oxford Blue with a Silver coach line and later style wheel trims with a Dark Blue hood. French Navy interior with matching carpets and Walnut veneers. Complete history, only 76,000 miles and superb throughout. A real investment at only... **£59,950**



2005/54 Bentley Continental GT. Finished in Cypress with Saffron interior, with secondary hide in Beluga, matching Beluga carpets and Burr Walnut veneers. Fitted with Mulliner 19 inch split rim alloys. Only 78,000 miles with Full Service History. Immaculate throughout..... **£27,950**



1998 R Bentley Turbo RT Limited Edition. One of only 250. Finished in unmarked Wildberry, with Magnolia interior piped in Mulberry and Mulberry carpets piped in Magnolia. Known to ourselves for last 12 years. Loved and cared for by a very fastidious customer. Superb and must be seen..... **£28,950**



1989 F Rolls Royce Silver Spur ABS EFL. Finished in Graphite with Silver coach lines and Parchment interior, with Stone carpets piped in Parchment, picnic tables and Walnut veneers. Only 66,000 miles with history. Known to ourselves for last 17 years. Outstanding condition throughout... **£18,950**



1968 Rolls Royce MPW Convertible, Corniche style. Finished in Fern Green with Beige Mohair hood and a Gold coach line with the standard wheel caps. Beige interior with Beige carpets and Walnut veneers. This car is in fantastic condition with lots of history. Only 95,000 miles and not to be missed at..... **£52,950**

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• THE TIME TO BUY •

ROLLS-ROYCE 20HP

Offering top value in terms of pre-war Rolls-Royce motoring, the 'Twenty' can be found in an array of different body styles – any of which now makes an intriguing choice

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: PAUL GUINNESS

The 1922 launch of the 20hp (or 'Twenty') marked an important moment in Rolls-Royce history, the result of a crucial decision to expand beyond producing a single-model chassis. The 40/50 Silver Ghost was renowned for the impeccable standards of its engineering, but also its vast size and high pricing. The company realised there was a gap in the market for a more affordable

model – a 'small' Rolls-Royce – capable of achieving increased annual sales.

The 20hp was particularly suited to the needs of the owner-driver, representing a whole new market for the company. It was noticeably more compact than a Silver Ghost in every respect, with an engine that was half the size and a chassis that was around two feet shorter. It was a model that became particularly

popular with the professional classes (such as doctors and lawyers), giving them a reliable and distinguished car without the cost or ostentation of a Silver Ghost or Phantom I.

As part of company planning for the 1920s, Henry Royce in particular was interested in the latest trends being adopted by the American automotive industry, and was keen for the crucial new 20hp to be seen as a modern, high

quality offering. The 3127cc six-cylinder engine designed for the new 'Twenty' was Rolls-Royce's first to feature an overhead-valve layout and was highly praised by the world's motoring press. Rather less impressive was the 20hp's three-speed transmission (with central gearchange), and so in 1925 the 'Twenty' adopted a four-speed gearbox with a right-hand change. At the same time, the 20hp was also upgraded to all-wheel braking.

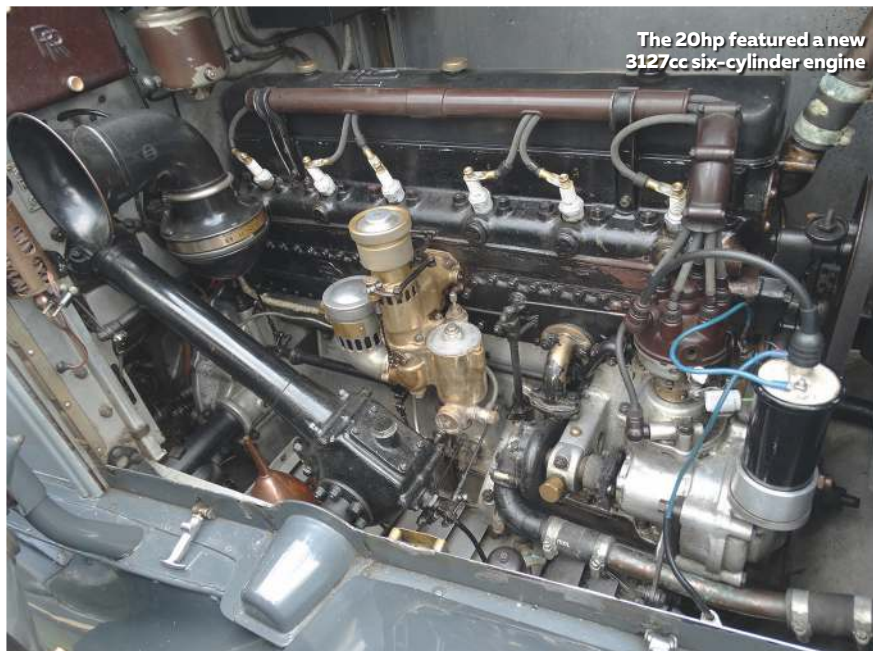
POSITIVE REACTION

Upon the 20hp's debut in 1922, *The Motor* magazine was one of the first British titles to review it, and wasn't shy when it came to praising the newcomer: "The existence of this smaller Rolls-Royce has been known to *The Motor* for some considerable time; in fact, we published photographs of a 20hp Rolls-Royce car when it was in its experimental and test stages over a year ago."

The same magazine went on to explain about the role of the 'Twenty' in the luxury car market of the time: "In writing of this new 20hp Rolls-Royce as a smaller car, some qualification is needed. It is in no sense a small car as is usually understood, its appearance being large and imposing; it is only when one sees it alongside the 40-50hp model that one appreciates the difference in size. The new chassis has a wheelbase of 10ft. 9ins, which is well above the average, and the body space is very large when compared with the overall length of the car, an arrangement made possible by the compactness of the new engine."

It was the 20hp's ability to accommodate generously proportioned bodywork that helped it to become a favourite among Britain's high-end coachbuilders of the 1920s, with Mulliner, Thrupp & Maberly, Barker, Park Ward and Hooper being among the most prolific users of Rolls-Royce's latest offering. A wide choice of bodywork was therefore available to customers, although the car was particularly popular with limousine-style coachwork – a fact that caused some consternation at Rolls-Royce, with the 20hp being best suited to more lightweight body styles in terms of its power and driving style.

A total of 2940 chassis had been produced by the time the 20hp was finally replaced by the bigger-engined 20/25 in 1929. The 'Twenty' had been a success story, proving that



The 20hp featured a new 3127cc six-cylinder engine



Rolls-Royce could indeed expand its range – and its customer base – without diluting the company's enviable image and reputation.

TODAY'S MARKET

All of which brings us to the role of the 20hp today, with this important model of the 1920s still offering good value for money in Rolls-Royce terms. It represents one of the few opportunities for an enthusiast with a sub-£40,000 budget to invest in a well-preserved

pre-war Rolls-Royce – although with values showing a steady upward trend in recent years, the 'Twenty' is perhaps no longer the outright bargain it once was. Indeed, some of the rarer models can command six-figure sums, making now the ideal time to acquire one of the more 'commonplace' derivatives that still manage to offer reasonable affordability.

Few specialists have sold more 20hp Rolls-Royces over the years than Ian Johnstone and Ray Arnold of The Real Car Company, with countless examples »

having been found new owners during the last three decades. Ian and Ray specialise in pre-war Rolls-Royces and Bentleys (although later models also feature in the company's stocklist), which explains why so many of today's 20hp survivors have passed through their hands – and why their shared knowledge of the model is so vast.

"The 20hp really is a charming car, full of vintage character," explains Ian during our recent trip to the company's rural base in North Wales. "And although it's by no means the fastest

"The 20hp was particularly suited to the needs of the owner-driver, representing a whole new market for the company"

car of its era, it is one of the most durable. Those fitted with overdrive obviously have an advantage on major roads or dual carriageways, with comfortable cruising at around the 50mph mark, and we know of many owners who cover big annual mileages in their cars. You won't get there in

a hurry but you will get there – and you'll certainly enjoy your journey."

Ray agrees, suggesting that the 'Twenty' encourages a different way of driving: "It certainly induces a gentler driving style, and provides plenty of smiles – both for the driver and everyone who sees a 20hp on the road. Pound for pound, it's probably got more charm and character than any other model, and driving one can be a really pleasurable experience."

But what about the issue of value for money? "Some versions of the 20hp are extremely rare and sought after," explains Ian. "Find yourself an original, lightweight, two-door, two-seater tourer in exceptional condition and you'll easily pay £100,000 now, and even original four-door tourers aren't that far behind."

Happily, however, 'Twenty' prices start well below that, with closed cars – typically six-light saloons or limousines – in good to excellent condition often available from around the mid-£30,000s to mid-£60,000s, while open-topped cars tend to start in price at £45,000-50,000 depending on spec: "We recently acquired a 1925 20hp converted a Barker-style barrel-sided open tourer in 1987 by Horsfields of Halifax, a company that specialises in such conversions," says Ian. "It's an excellent job and comes with full weather equipment and so on. We have that on sale now at £49,500, whereas a genuine Barker-bodied open tourer in the same condition would be in the region of £80,000."

BUYING ADVICE

With the 20hp being such a robust and durable machine, it's not difficult to find survivors for sale in good order, despite the fact that even the youngest examples are now ninety years of age. What makes the 'Twenty' particularly interesting is the sheer variety of body styles offered by so many different coachbuilders during the model's seven-year career, which means that on today's market you're unlikely to find two identical examples. These were hand-built offerings from an array of coachbuilders, hence the vast array of detail differences between seemingly similar looking cars.

CARS FOR SALE

Among the 20hp Rolls-Royces for sale at the time of our recent visit to The Real Car Company are these impressive examples, representing a variety of different body styles and coachbuilders.



This 1926 six-light 20hp saloon by Arthur Mulliner (chassis number GZK64) offers good value for money at £39,500. It boasts Bedford Cord upholstery throughout, unusually featuring an occasional seat in the back of the front passenger seat. The engine is currently in need of attention, but this will be dealt with at the point of sale – or you can take advantage of a discount if you prefer to do the work yourself.



A 1927 20hp Connaught limousine (chassis number GYK34) looks particularly tempting at £37,500. It's an example described as being in 'good, sound condition' and fully prepared for immediate enjoyment. Following a lengthy spell in Ireland, this charming 20hp has now been reissued with its original registration number (YE 1001), adding to its appeal and authenticity.



Rather different to the other versions featured here is this 20hp Windovers Three-Quarter Coupe from 1926 (chassis number GZK34), a two-door four-seater model with an attractive fabric-covered roof and rear quarters. Offered for sale at £45,500, this head-turning example comes with overdrive and also benefits from a recent engine refurbishment by The Real Car Company.



Another 20hp limousine currently available is this 1926 Rippon-bodied car (chassis number GCK7), which has been with its last owner for more than 30 years and is being fully recommissioned ready for use. It features correct-spec 23-inch wheels (complete with rear-mounted spare), a roof vent in the rear compartment, plus other attractive features – and at £42,500, it offers excellent value.



Arthur Mulliner built various 20hp bodies, including this six-light saloon

Your choice of bodywork will depend as much on budget as personal taste, with closed cars generally being the most affordable. If your budget is £40,000-45,000 and you're looking for a 20hp that requires no major work, you'll almost certainly end up with a four-door saloon or limousine. But are there any models that are best avoided, such as early examples with two-wheel braking? Not according to Ray Arnold: "Those early cars are lighter in weight and in feel, which gives them an appeal of their own. We'd advise a buyer to consider the car and version they can afford and like the most rather than worry too much about the differences in chassis specification."

It's rare for a 20hp to suffer any major corrosion to its chassis thanks to the strength and robustness of the design, but the same can't always be said about its bodywork, with deterioration of the car's structural »



A 1928 20hp with Park Ward limousine coachwork

THE TIME TO BUY ROLLS-ROYCE 20HP



Limousine versions are often tight for space up front



The sumptuously appointed rear of an Arthur Mulliner-bodied limousine

ash-built frame being the most serious potential issue. The aluminium body panels generally wear well but can suffer from corrosion, with the areas where aluminium mudguards are joined to steel brackets being particularly vulnerable. These coachbuilt models obviously don't benefit from readily available new panels, making any restoration work a repair rather than replace scenario.

Mechanical parts availability is excellent, helping to make routine maintenance of a 20hp relatively straightforward: "All the usual consumables are easily available," Ian confirms. "In fact, mechanically speaking, just about everything can be obtained, which is impressive for a car launched almost a century ago." This doesn't mean, however, that the 20hp isn't without mechanical problems: "They're a reliable car by nature, but the engine can suffer from cracks to the block and

CLUB QUOTE

The 20-Ghost Club (www.20-ghost.org) has been catering for the 20hp and other early Rolls-Royces since its creation in 1949, and offers the following view of the 'Twenty':

"Ownership of a 'Twenty' or any of the later small-horsepower cars opens new avenues for their use. Being small and less grand, they are just as well suited to going to the local pub or even to the shops as they are going

on a tour. The care and attention to detail given to the construction of the chassis and coachwork can give just as much pleasure to the owner as with a larger car. Once in the driving seat there is a similar delight to be found in the controls, as they are all relatively small but with a great precision to their feel. Overall the car tends therefore to delight, even before it is driven."

When it comes to looking after

your 20hp, the club offers this advice: "Maintenance of a 'Twenty' requires an oil gun to be applied to many lubrication points around the chassis in much the same way as a vintage Silver Ghost or Phantom I, though fortunately there are not so many." The club also advises that "cars which are cared for are very reliable" and that the "engine and chassis are well made and relatively unstressed in normal use".



“With the 20hp being such a robust and durable machine, it’s not difficult to find survivors for sale in good order”

cylinder head, usually caused by either frost damage or silted-up waterways.” The good news is that replacement blocks and heads are available, although you’ll probably be looking at a bill of £5000–6000 if either is required.

As with any Rolls-Royce, it pays to buy a 20hp with a known history, as this is likely to show the level of care and maintenance it has received over the decades. Specialists like The Real Car Company will usually have such information available, particularly if it’s a 20hp previously known to them via an earlier sale. You also get the reassurance that the ‘Twenty’ you’re thinking of buying will have been fully prepared for sale and any issues dealt with prior to you becoming its next

owner, with all work carried out by experts who know the model inside-out.

FINAL VERDICT

Owning and driving a car from the 1920s isn’t for everyone, with even a machine as upmarket as a Rolls-Royce inevitably involving some compromises in terms of its power, performance and driving style. For those who understand the appeal, however, it’s hard not to fall for the charm and charisma of a well-preserved, ready-to-use ‘Twenty’.

Whichever version you end up with, you get to enjoy the fact that it’s potentially unique thanks to the number of variations in terms of body styles and spec levels. These were

genuinely coachbuilt cars, hand-crafted to an extraordinarily high standard to complement the tough and reliable Rolls-Royce chassis and running gear that lay beneath. With prices of closed four-door versions in good order starting at around the £35,000–40,000 mark, there’s surely not another pre-war Rolls-Royce that offers so much for so relatively little. ■

THANK YOU

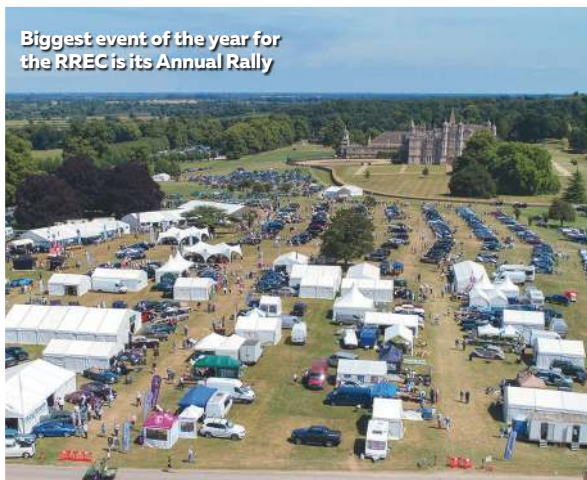
Many thanks to the team at The Real Car Company for its help and advice with this feature. To find out more about the range of Rolls-Royce 20hp models currently available, go to www.realcar.co.uk or call +44 (0)1248 602649.



A comprehensive tool kit housed in one of the running boards

CELEBRATING THE MARQUES

The RREC is planning an action-packed summer, with plenty of activities designed to appeal to Rolls-Royce and Bentley owners and enthusiasts



Biggest event of the year for the RREC is its Annual Rally



Burghley House will be celebrating this year's Bentley centenary

Driving events of all distances play a major role in the pleasures of life as an RREC member, with around twenty individual tours (open to all members) lined up for the rest of this year. These range from several weekends away not far from home, through to ambitious luxury driving rallies – such as our ten-day Grand Tour of Southern England and the Continental Rally, both of which take place in September.

Grand Tour participants will set off from the seafront at Eastbourne and cover a circuit of many hundreds of miles before arriving back at Windsor, staying at a different historic house or castle each night along the route. This is sure to be an absolute spectacle, not only for drivers and passengers but also for all onlookers who witness the convoy of thirty or more Rolls-Royce and Bentley motor cars gliding past.

For the immediate future, all eyes are on our flagship Annual Rally & Concours d'Elegance, held over the long weekend of June 21st-23rd at Burghley House, near Stamford in Lincolnshire. In addition to the magnificent sight of around a thousand club cars lined up on the grass in front of Burghley House, visitors on the Saturday will be treated to a breathtaking display and parade of Bentleys, comprising models from every era. This is part of the RREC's celebration of 2019's Bentley centenary,

with cars ranging from W.O. Bentleys of the 1920s right through to the latest Crewe-built Mulsannes and Continental GTs representing 21st century production.

The build-up to the RREC National Concours also includes a series of free seminars covering everything from how to research and write a magazine article, through to Rolls-Royce specialist Nigel Sandell sharing his experiences of working on club cars around the world, in countries such as Nigeria, Dubai, France, Germany and Spain. Emma Airey of RH Specialist Insurance will provide tips for ensuring your car is properly covered, while the East Midlands Section will host a two-hour hands-on workshop covering small-horsepower models such as the Rolls-Royce 20hp and 20/25.

Although the cars take centre stage, the RREC's Annual Rally is an event for all the family. A play-bus will be in attendance for our younger visitors, while our gallery marquee will be packed with crafts, fine foods and stylish accessories. Caterers Emerson & West will be serving delightful afternoon teas in addition to their



Spirit & Speed has won an award for club magazine excellence

usual fare throughout the weekend.

Another RREC benefit includes *Spirit & Speed*, our award-winning 108-page magazine – and we're delighted to announce that this had been named Outstanding Club Magazine of the Year by the prestigious National Car Club Awards panel, with judges praising its "high production values, breadth of articles and appeal to a wide range of enthusiasts". The judges went on to describe *Spirit & Speed* as "an excellent, vibrant publication that sets a new standard for car club magazines". It's yet another reason to join the RREC, whether you own a Rolls-Royce or Bentley, you plan to buy one or you simply enjoy a shared enthusiasm for these magnificent cars ■



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THE CENTENARY YEAR

The BDC is inviting all Bentley owners to help it achieve a world-record gathering at this year's Concours d'Elegance – and to celebrate Bentley Motors' centenary in style

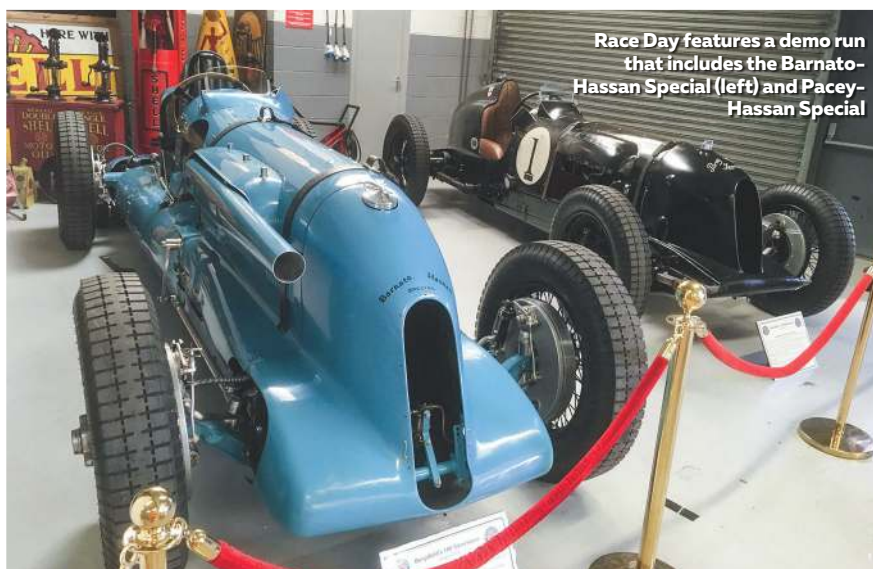
Come along to historic Blenheim Palace – and be a part of history! The Bentley Drivers Club is calling on all Bentley owners to bring their cars along to Blenheim Palace on Sunday 8th September to help create a world-record gathering of this classic British marque. As regular *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* readers already know, Bentley is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year – and to mark this unique event, the BDC is hoping to bring to life its '1001 Bentleys at Blenheim' tagline for the club's 2019 Concours d'Elegance.

The BDC is looking for as wide a range of Bentleys as possible to help commemorate the marque's '100 Extraordinary Years'. And so, whatever the age of your Bentley and whatever its model, you're being encouraged to bring it out. Cricklewood, Derby or Crewe-built, the BDC will be welcoming them all: "Our Concours d'Elegance and Annual Rally this year is a special, one-off occasion designed to fittingly celebrate Bentley Motors' centenary," says Nick Wilkes, general manager of the BDC.

The club is able to hold this historic event at Blenheim Palace thanks to its association with the organisers of Salon Privé, as Nick explains: "It offers us the extremely exciting opportunity to bring together the largest ever gathering of Bentleys against the backdrop of one of Britain's finest palaces. Our goal is 1001 Bentleys... but the more the merrier!"

Up to twenty trophies will be contested in the Concours, Patina and Inter-Regional Challenge classes. And along with a fantastic exhibition of Bentleys from across the decades, plus the BDC club shop, W.O. Bentley Memorial Foundation marquee and traders' stalls, there'll be plenty for classic car enthusiasts of all ages to enjoy at the Oxfordshire palace. It's also worth mentioning that visitors will enjoy access to the Salon Privé supercar display that takes place on the Sunday, with Concours ticket holders gaining free entry to the exclusive Salon Privé enclosure.

Helping the whole occasion go with a swing will be two eagerly-



awaited events the evening before, with Blenheim Palace hosting a gala dinner and the BDC planning similar festivities at the nearby Heythrop Park Hotel in the scenic Cotswolds. Tickets for the Concours must be booked via Salon Privé, available online via: www.salonpriveconcours.com/bentley-owners.

Another key part of the BDC's centenary celebrations this year is its annual Silverstone Race Day on Saturday 3rd August, the 71st consecutive meeting at the famous Northamptonshire track. With a special homage to the Bentley 3 Litre, the 'garden party' meeting will feature all the usual close racing for

which it's renowned, including three races featuring Bentleys – as well as the opportunity for more than a hundred members to drive their cars around the famous track. Not only that, there will be one very special addition to the programme: a high-speed demonstration run offering spectators a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see four iconic vintage racers on track together – the Barnato-Hassan Special, Pacey-Hassan Special, Napier-Railton and Napier-Bentley.

To find out more about the Bentley Drivers Club and the advantages of membership, check out the website at: www.bdcl.org. ■



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AMERICAN FOLLOWING

If you've ever wondered about the history of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club and its current membership benefits, read on...

It was back in May 1951 that six Rolls-Royce and Bentley enthusiasts gathered in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, for the inaugural meeting of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club, with 212 members subsequently joining during the first year. Within three months, the club had produced the very first eight-page *Bulletin* newsletter (now entitled *The Flying Lady*) featuring historical and technical articles and advice, a tradition proudly carried on to this day. And in June 1952 the RROC held its first Annual Meet at Springfield, Massachusetts – appropriately honouring the Springfield Rolls-Royce factory location.

It wasn't until 1968 that the RROC had an official headquarters facility, with that first location being in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, along the banks of the mighty Susquehanna River. After flooding of epic proportions in the early 1970s, however, the club traded picturesque river views for drier ground, moving to its current location of Mechanicsburg. The headquarters were remodelled in 2004, welcoming the Rolls-Royce Foundation's building to the compound at the same time.

The RROC helps to make the experience of owning a Rolls-Royce or Bentley motor car (or even just admiring the two marques) much more enjoyable by offering

practical, technical and historical information to its members. Through its complementary network of technical advisors and dedicated members-only forum, the RROC helps owners to preserve, maintain and restore their vehicles.

Across North America, the RROC has 27 separate Regions to serve its members on a local level – and although membership of a Region isn't mandatory, it is highly encouraged. These Regions offer members the opportunity to participate in driving tours, car shows and other enjoyable social activities, as well as hosting technical gatherings and publishing newsletters on a regular basis. In a similar fashion, the club also has seven different Societies, each dedicated to a specific model or era of vehicle; the full list comprises the Derby Bentley Society, Phantom I Society, Phantom II Society, Goshawk (Small Horsepower) Society, Early Post-War Society, Silver Cloud/Bentley S-series Society and – most popular of all – the Modern Car Society.

During each calendar year, the RROC hosts at least two National Tours, plus its Annual Meet – the latter being its big production, encompassing up to five days of technical seminars, vendor markets, driving and local historical tours, plus a multitude of business



Members of the RROC receive an array of publications

and social activities. The Annual Meet is located each year at a different venue, giving the membership a new experience every time they attend. RROC also partners with other car clubs and events to form weekend-long 'mini meets', enhanced by exclusive members-only activities.

As reported in the March/April issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, the 2019 Annual Meet is to be held in Detroit between July 22nd and 28th, with members of the RROC, RREC, BDC, RROCA, Rolls-Royce & Bentley Club of Japan and De Mascote clubs eligible to attend. We encourage you to join any (or all) of the clubs and come to Detroit in July. For full details, go to www.rrocdetroit.org, or you can join the RROC via www.rroc.org. ■



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• PART 1 •

PROJECT SILVER SHADOW II: WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

A late-model Silver Shadow II returns to the road following recent recommissioning work. In the first of a new series, we reflect on progress – and look towards the next chapter in this revitalised Rolls-Royce's story

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: DAN FURR

Those of you who have been with *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* since the magazine's earliest issues are right to think that the Silver Shadow II displayed before you looks familiar. The Silver Mink stunner first appeared on these pages during summer 2017, when I was asked by the title's then editor to outline my experiences living with SRH40385 following my decision to buy the car three years earlier. As I'm sure the vast majority of owners will concur, a second-generation Shadow is a fabulous machine delivering a huge number of smiles to the mile; but Crewe cars suffering from lack of use and/

or regular maintenance can soon wipe the grin from an owner's face when big bills start piling up. You can probably guess where this story is heading.

I don't mind admitting that my Shadow II wasn't the best large barge on sale at the time I bought it. In fact, as outlined in the aforementioned magazine article, I nearly walked away from the car after inspecting it at the seller's place of residence. A light restoration in the years leading up to my test drive had produced a less than desirable paint job (replacing the original lick of Caribbean Blue) and the exhaust had more holes in it than Swiss cheese. In the Connolly-clad

cabin, wood dash trim was cracked and the hide covering the front seats was exhibiting all the hallmarks of neglect. Sensing my frustration at travelling significant distance to be presented with a car not as advertised, the seller dropped the asking price. I still wasn't convinced. He dropped the price again, which was certainly a good way of renewing my interest. "How much further is he prepared to go?" I remember asking myself.

Quite a bit, as it turned out. In fact, the price was so low I considered it daft not to take the car home with me. There is, however, no such thing as a cheap Rolls-Royce, especially

if, like me, you're keen to ensure the car you find yourself in possession of is in tip-top mechanical and cosmetic condition. With this in mind, after agreeing to buy the car, I patched up the exhaust and piled on the miles in an effort to establish what work was required to bring my new land yacht back to its best.

Unfortunately, my other automotive projects prevented me from making any significant progress with the sizeable saloon. Consequently, I retired my Rolls-Royce from the road with a view to drawing up an ambitious plan of action at a later date, although aside from a full service and much-needed attention to the hide interior (which you can also read about in this issue, starting on page 64), little progress was made until last summer, when I delivered the car to leading Rolls-Royce sales, service, restoration and maintenance outfit, Colbrook Specialists.

WORK REQUIRED

Company boss, Colin Ayres, was quick to point out how the car had suffered from being kept in a state of suspended animation. He highlighted an impaired hydraulic system, as well as many other items in need of immediate attention. The resulting list of jobs was split into categories ranging from 'need to have' to 'nice to have'. Impressed by Colin's attention to detail and the enthusiasm his talented team of technicians had for righting SRH40385's many wrongs, I left the car at Colbrook's Peterborough headquarters and compiled an eye-wateringly long shopping list before making contact with independent Rolls-Royce and Bentley parts specialist, IntroCar. »



Everything (including the state of the car's hydraulic system) was assessed following its arrival at Colbrook Specialists



Colbrook technician, Richard Meadows, has worked at the company for 24 years – and is the ideal spanner man for getting Pandora back to her best.



The V8 engine was treated to a major service as part of the work carried out in advance of the car's return to the road



A full complement of genuine Bentley-branded fluids and filters was added to the massive stockpile of required parts

The first items ordered were those necessary to ensure the car could pass an MOT test with flying colours. A new power steering oil cooler and its accompanying pipework was swiftly joined by brand new brake calipers (all six of them), discs, pads, flexi-hoses, solid pipes and hub assemblies from IntroCar's signature Prestige Parts range. From front to back, every bush and mount was replaced, including engine steadies, wishbone pins and ball joints. A full set of Bilstein B6 heavy-duty shock absorbers was installed alongside new fitting hardware, while the car's ageing black circles were ditched in favour of new whitewalls supplied by Longstone Tyres.

Every part of the car's faulty hydraulic system was overhauled, restored or replaced by Colin's

team. Valve bodies were split apart and rebuilt with new seals. Accumulator spheres were stripped, reassembled and recharged with nitrogen. Self-levelling suspension rams were taken apart, serviced and reinstalled. The 6.75-litre V8 was treated to a major service and the nearby transmission was drained before being recommissioned with a fresh filter, new fluid and a replacement selector shaft seal.

Much to my delight, SRH40385 was finally ready to be returned to the road in January of this year. After an initial hiccup relating to weak windscreen washer fluid pressure and faulty rear fog lights, the car passed its MoT with flying colours. The engine, a supremely healthy unit despite its high mileage, produced satisfyingly

low emissions during the test. With the car's clean bill of health filed tidily in a constantly expanding folder of paperwork, I hit the highway in my fully operational, fault-free Silver Shadow II.

LOOKING AHEAD

The story doesn't end there, though. Far from it! A look underneath the car reveals a chassis in fantastic condition and loaded with brand new hardware throughout, but that's not to say the work is over. For a start, the car's paintwork is in dire need of correction; my suspicion is the respray commissioned by a previous owner was a 'tidy up' job designed to sell the car. Indeed, so thin and poorly applied is the paint, it makes a break for freedom if my pressure washer dares to get within

5



Hydraulic ram seals were bought from IntroCar's own Prestige Parts range for half the price of OEM kits from Crewe

6



Fresh chassis equipment, including these top ball joints and their housing assemblies, eliminated negative suspension and steering feedback

7



Unlike Bentley-branded shocks, each Bilstein B6 heavy duty damper comes complete with the required bushes and mounts

8



One of the car's rebuilt accumulator spheres, featuring all gaskets, a full charge of nitrogen and a rebuilt valve body

an inch or two of kicking distance. The car's interior needs an update, too; not only does the walnut trim require restoration or a full complement of replacement parts, the front carpets have deteriorated through water ingress. Indeed, at the time of writing, my recommissioned Shadow II is back at Colbrook Specialists having new front and rear window seals installed.

Then there's the exhaust. I always intended for the car to make use of a full stainless-steel system, but this was a bit of kit Colin and I considered best placed on the previously mentioned 'nice to have' list of desirables. Deteriorated sections of the tired, original system were replaced with parts from a donor exhaust I acquired from the owner of a former wedding chariot regrettably sent to the great scrapyard in the sky. This was enough to get SRH40385 through its MoT test, but in truth I was loath to shell out for an expensive custom exhaust system and its required fitting hardware

"I was able to confirm my car's original owner, none other than Ugandan Asian property magnate, Zul Virani"

(genuine Bentley-branded products costing as much as the exhaust itself) before Colin's gang had confirmed my car was capable of being returned to the road. After all, who wants to empty their wallet for attractive automotive equipment, only to find out problems located elsewhere on the vehicle make its new lease of life prohibitively expensive? Not me!

Thankfully, from a mechanical perspective, SRH40385 is fighting fit, which is why I didn't hesitate to visit the team at Lincolnshire-based Rolls-Royce and Bentley exhaust system manufacturer, Servicentre, to discuss options available for a complete front-to-back stainless system, including downpipes, silencers, intermediate boxes, balance pipe and new fitting

hardware. I'll outline the results of my discussions with the Servicentre team in our next issue. Yep, *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* editor, Paul Guinness, has invited me to document ongoing project progress in these pages; but before we get carried away with what the future holds for my blue belter, it's worth taking a look back at the car's early history.

HISTORY LESSON

In addition to my Shadow II's original handbooks, I was lucky to be gifted a huge folder of paperwork when I signed on the dotted line. All of the car's V5 Registration Documents, MoT certificates, tax discs, receipts and original correspondence between Rolls-Royce Motors and previous owners were included. Missing from this treasure trove of printed paper were the car's factory build and test records; fortunately, however, documentation relating to a car's original purchase, construction and subsequent maintenance under warranty is obtainable through a service offered by the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club. Indeed, for a small fee the club can provide all factory-held records relating to a Rolls-Royce, which is exactly what it did for SRH40385. »

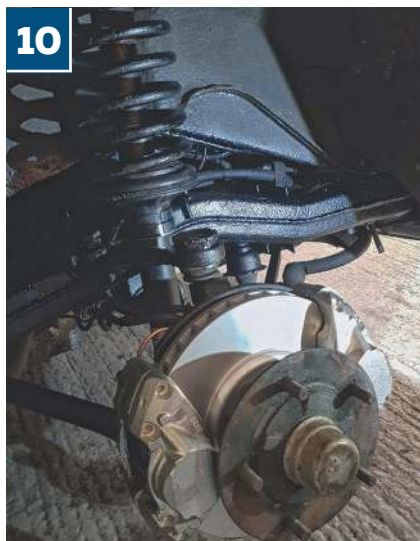
INTROCAR ADVANTAGE

Founded in 1989, IntroCar has evolved from a Rolls-Royce and Bentley dismantler to one of the world's foremost suppliers of parts for all models manufactured from 1945 to the present day. In recent years, the company has embarked upon an ambitious program of product manufacture and sourcing, with the result that it now carries what's claimed to be the largest range of new components outside Bentley Motors.

IntroCar's manufacturing strategy is to produce new components at the same price as (or less than) you might pay for reconditioned, exchange or secondhand parts. For further details about IntroCar's vast stocks of parts for your particular post-war Rolls-Royce or Bentley, go online to www.introcar.co.uk.



One of the reconditioned rear hub assemblies, with new brake lines, calipers and new brake discs also bolted in place



New front anchors, dampers, flexi-hoses, ball joints, bushes, mounts, nuts, bolts, washers and copper brake pipes



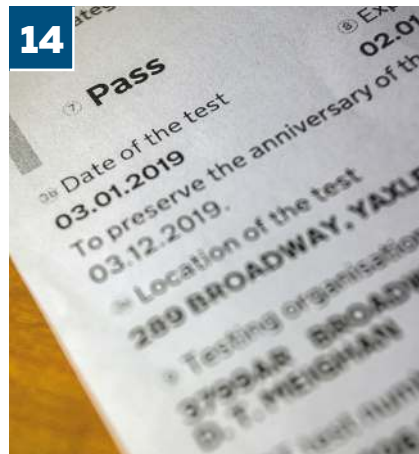
We're going flexi-hose crazy! In this photo, you can see the rear brake caliper hoses and suspension height control pipework



12 A chat with the guys at Longstone Tyres resulted in Dan buying four brand new whitewalls in the correct profile of 235/70/15



13 After many years of inactivity, Pandora was subjected to the beady eye of MoT tester, Daniel Meighan, at Broadway Garage in Yaxley



14 Hooray! Thanks to the work of the team at Colbrook Specialists, Pandora was given her first clean bill of health in four years



15 The RREC was able to retrieve the car's factory build and test records, plus all documents relating to the order, sale and servicing at Jack Barclay



16 The documentation supplied by the RREC outlines the many different stages of inspection during the production process at Crewe

Subsequently, surrounded by hundreds of pages of amazing history, I was able to confirm my car's original owner, none other than Ugandan Asian property magnate, Zul Virani. The Virani family arrived in the UK in the mid-1970s and went on to establish a massive property portfolio, primarily focusing on the acquisition of hotels and public houses in and around London. The purchase receipt and factory warranty card for my car demonstrates it was registered to Zul at the Ecclestone Hotel in Westminster, following collection from Jack Barclay's Mayfair showroom at 3.00pm on Friday 14th November, 1980. Later, the car appears to have been in the custody of Zul's older brother and former head of Control Securities, Nazmu Virani, when it was listed as being in the care of the

Hansel & Gretel Hotel in Belgrave Road. Both hotels survive to the present day, albeit with new names and new owners.

As is the case with a great many Rolls-Royces, the car's registration number has also changed over the years. First driven with HUC 28W displayed at each end, the fantastic four-door currently rides with plates exhibiting the dateless identity, OIG 1816. I've been keen to reunite the car with its first registration, however, a task that the DVLA told me was "impossible" until my relentless line of questioning saw the agency's vehicle casework unit reluctantly agree to evaluate my request. I'll let you know if my mission has proved successful in the next issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*. Oh, and on the subject of identities, I should

reveal SRH40385's nickname. She's affectionately known as Pandora, so-called because when I bought her, I really had no idea what I was letting myself in for! I like to think some of the mystery has now been solved, although the adventure continues. I'm pleased to have you along for the ride. ■

THANK YOU

Many thanks to the following for their help so far: IntroCar (www.introcar.co.uk), Colbrook Specialists (www.colbrookspecialists.co.uk), Bilstein UK (www.bilstein.com/uk/en), Servcentre (www.rrexhausts.co.uk), Longstone Tyres (www.longstonetyres.co.uk) and the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club (www.rrec.org.uk).



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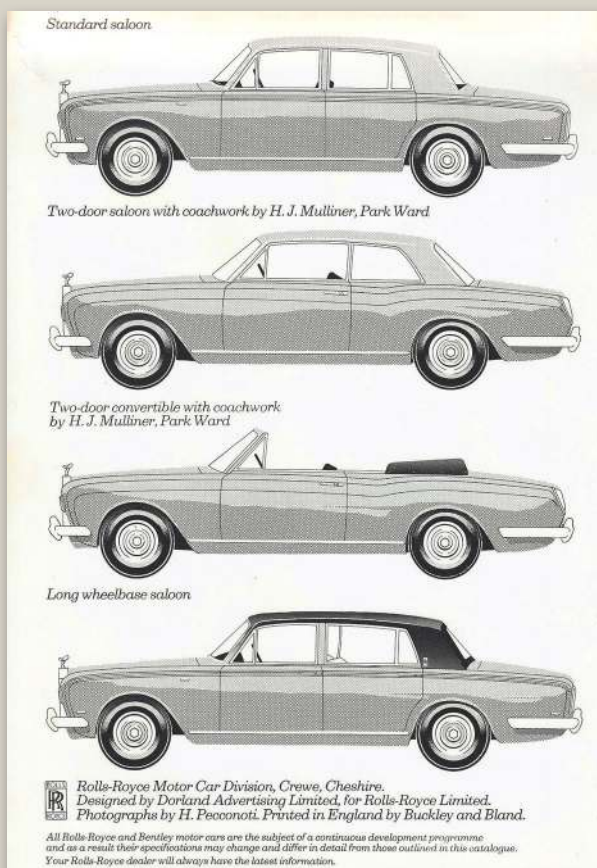
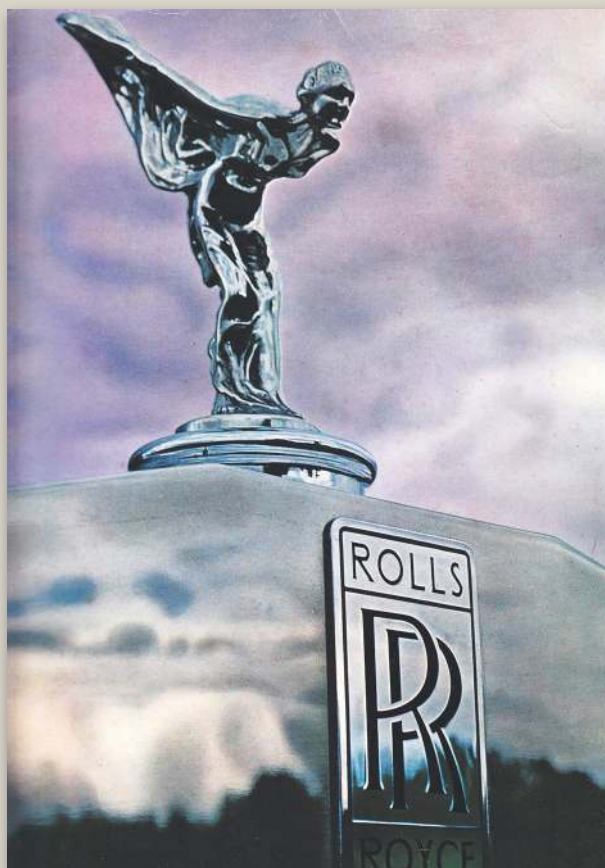
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FROM THE ARCHIVES

We take a look at some of the most fascinating, most innovative and most successful Rolls-Royce and Bentley models via an array of period brochures, adverts and images

WORDS: PAUL GUINNESS



SILVER SHADOW SENSATION

Published in September 1969 was this large-scale brochure covering the four-car range of monocoque-bodied Rolls-Royces, a line-up that comprised the standard Silver Shadow and its long-wheelbase derivative, plus the two-door saloon and convertible models hand-crafted by Mulliner Park Ward. The aim of the brochure was to outline the Silver Shadow family's "balanced combination of advanced engineering and unique

standards of workmanship and finish".

Rolls-Royce was keen to stress the refined performance of the Silver Shadow, described as "showing a clean pair of heels to most sports cars without raising its voice above a well-bred whisper". This was, of course, the most advanced range of cars that Rolls-Royce had ever launched: "Beneath the gleaming finish and the luxurious interior of the Silver Shadow is some of the most advanced

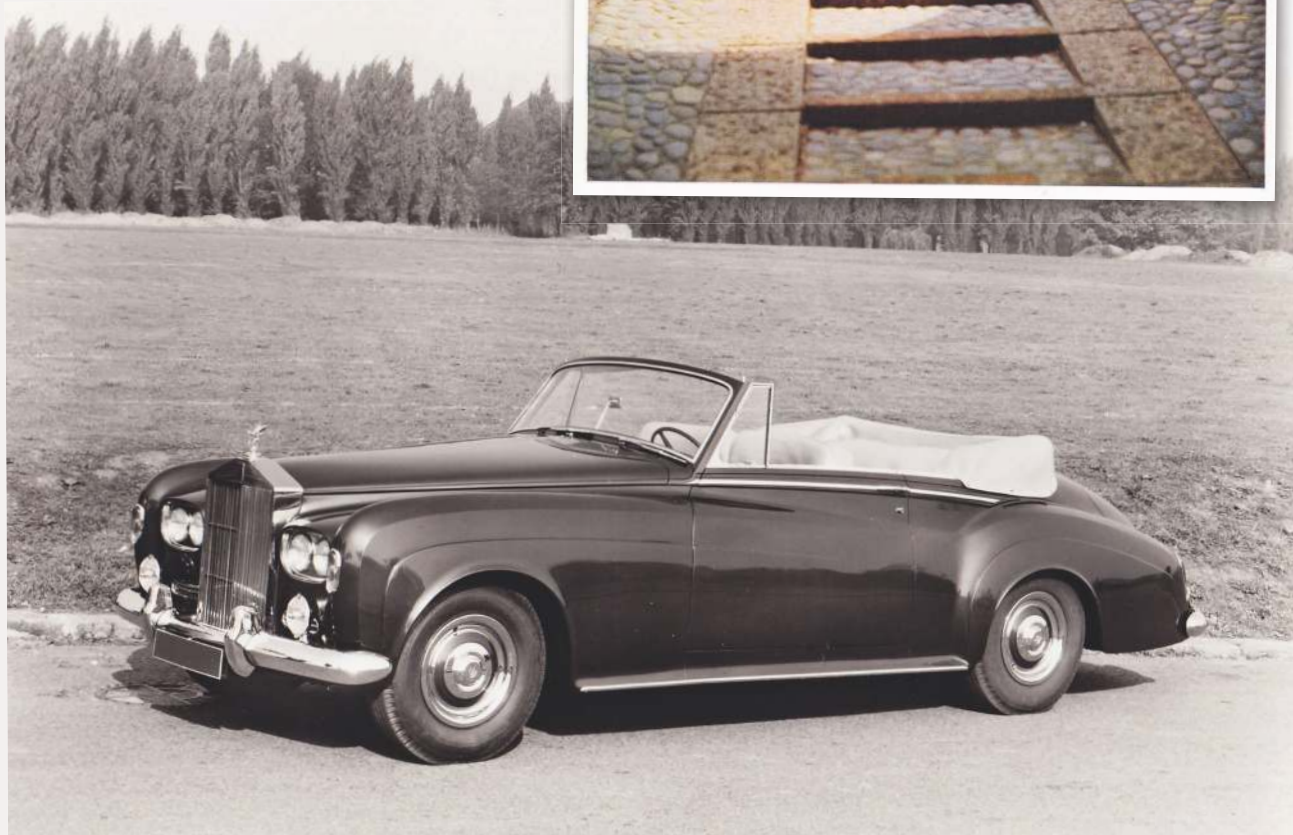
automobile engineering in the world", from its "exceptionally smooth and flexible 6.23-litre V8 engine" through to its "independent suspension with automatic ride height control".

The brochure claimed that "the majority of Silver Shadow owners regard the car as a valuable business asset". This was luxury motoring that "creates a world of its own... smooth, silent, luxurious, yet swift and business-like".

T-SERIES RARITY

This double-sided leaflet for the Bentley T-series four-door saloon was published at the end of the 1960s, featuring this re-badged version of the hugely successful Silver Shadow in a suitably charming setting. The rear of the leaflet featured the full specification of the T-series, with its list of up-to-the-minute features ensuring this was the most modern car ever to wear a Bentley badge.

The original T-series enjoyed the same twelve-year career as the first-generation Silver Shadow, with the Bentley finally being replaced by the updated T2 in 1977. During that time, however, just 1712 standard-length T-series saloons were sold worldwide, compared with 16,717 examples of what many now refer to as the Silver Shadow I in regular-wheelbase guise.



CLASSIC PHOTOGRAPH

One of our most recent acquisitions is this original monochrome photograph issued to the press by Rolls-Royce to announce the latest Silver Cloud III in what it officially labelled as Coupé Convertible guise. Following the same

basic design as the H.J. Mulliner-designed drophead coupé that had been available in the previous two generations of Silver Cloud, the latest incarnation featured the quad-headlamp front end redesign and other updates.

If you have any old press photographs issued by Rolls-Royce – particularly of the black and white variety, such as the one shown here – feel free to send us a scan and we'll try to include them in a future issue.

HEIRS TO GREAT TRADITIONS

Although this glossy brochure featured the entire two-marque line-up of the 1989 model year, the company chose the Rolls-Royce Silver Spirit and Bentley Eight to feature on the front cover – representing the entry point to each range. Every model within the brochure received a page of photographic coverage, but only the very first page of the publication featured any explanatory text about the cars.

The Rolls-Royce and Bentley models of 1989 were “in every way contemporary and as modern as the hour, yet worthy heirs to great traditions”, explained the brochure. The Bentley Eight on the front cover was “identified by a mesh grille which recalls the triumphant racing Bentleys of sixty years ago”, while the whole range offered a “single-minded approach to quality, great refinement, luxurious comfort and effortless performance”.

Rolls-Royce & Bentley Motor Cars



PARK WARD TRADITION

Unveiled at the Geneva Motor Show in early 2000 was an even more upmarket variation on the Silver Seraph theme, with the new Rolls-Royce Park Ward featuring an extra 250mm (10 inches) in its wheelbase for the ultimate in rear-passenger space and luxury. This glossy brochure was issued at the time of the launch, describing the newcomer as an “all-new touring saloon based on the Rolls-Royce Silver Seraph”.

The brochure went on to explain that

this extended Silver Seraph was “the ultimate contemporary expression of Rolls-Royce coachbuilding and personal commissioning”, a car that continued “the long tradition of Park Ward motor cars”. Originally founded by W.H. Park and C.W. Ward in 1919, Park Ward was acquired by Rolls-Royce just twenty years later. By 1947 it was producing the Silver Wraith long-wheelbase saloon, a Park Ward trend that continued with extended versions of the Silver Cloud

and Silver Shadow in the 1950s and ‘60s.

Reintroducing the Park Ward name in 2000 enabled Rolls-Royce to add some extra interest to its line-up whilst still under Volkswagen ownership. Production ceased during 2002, by which time a total of 127 Rolls-Royce Park Wards had been produced. The start of the following year would see Rolls-Royce under BMW control, by which time the all-new Phantom was ready to be unveiled.

PURSUIT OF PERFECTION

Issued in 1976 was this rather underwhelming six-page spot-colour publication dedicated to the Rolls-Royce Corniche in both hardtop and convertible guises – cars that were still hand-built at the company's in-house coachbuilding division of Mulliner Park Ward. These were cars, explained the brochure, aimed at the most fastidious of owner-drivers: "Between the Rolls-Royce Corniche and the discerning motorist who prefers to chauffeur himself, there is a special affinity".

The Corniche successfully married "the proven power unit and running gear of the Silver Shadow to coachwork by Mulliner Park Ward, each car being built by hand to

the order and personal taste of its owner". Here was a model that offered "the utmost refinement of line, the finest materials, flawless finish and meticulous craftsmanship –

both in the parts that show and those that do not". The end result, insisted Rolls-Royce Motors' marketing folk, was "another milestone in the pursuit of perfection".



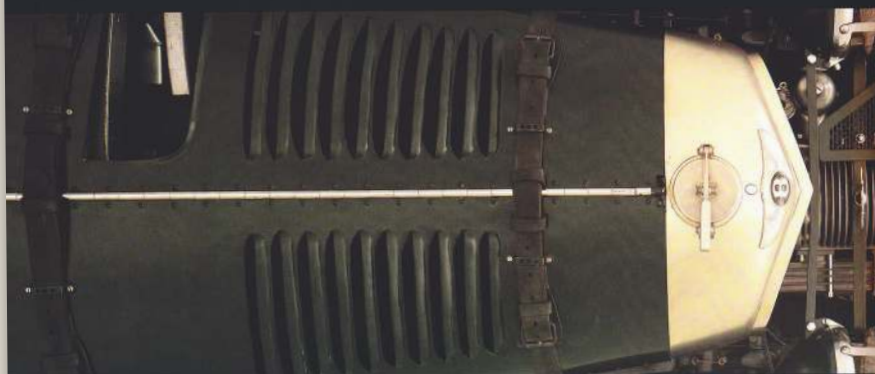
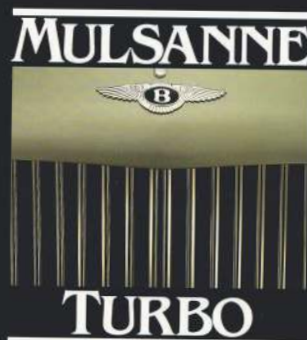
The Rolls-Royce Corniche.



POWERFUL RETURN

Bentley's biggest news of 1982 was its announcement of the Mulsanne Turbo, the model that finally put some performance distance between the Rolls-Royce and Bentley ranges – transforming the latter into far more than the badge-engineered brand it had become during the previous 25 years. In its latest guise, aided by a Garrett AiResearch turbocharger, the Mulsanne's power went from 'adequate' to mind-blowing thanks to a 50 per cent boost in output.

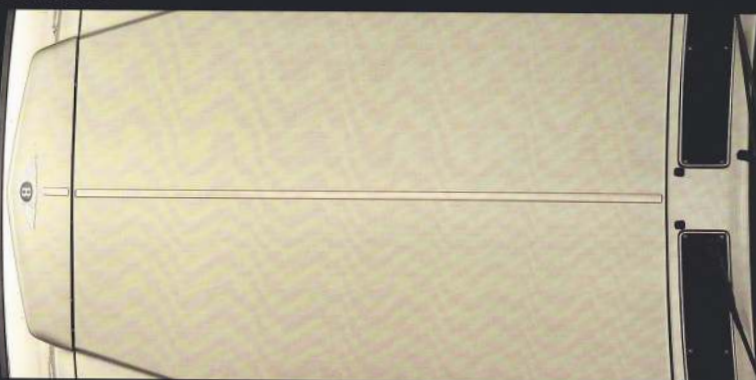
Not surprisingly, this launch-year brochure for the Mulsanne Turbo made plenty of references to the supercharged 'Blower' Bentleys, explaining that "the reputation of the Bentley motor car was created in the heat and drama of 1920s long-distance sports car racing". It's why imagery of the Mulsanne was shown alongside that of a 'Blower', together with text explaining the latest innovation: "It seems particularly appropriate that a motor car of the 1980s, designed to satisfy the sporting spirit, should employ the turbocharger,



It seems particularly appropriate that a motor car of the 1980s, designed to satisfy the sporting spirit, should employ the turbocharger, one of the most advanced methods of increasing power from an already efficient engine. The turbocharger increases the density of the intake air and thus the mass aspirated into the engine per revolution. The energy required to drive the compressor is taken from the exhaust gas stream via a small turbine.

The boost pressure controlled wastegate controls the amount of exhaust gas fed to the turbine. Hence, the output of the turbocharger can be controlled to shape the engine's torque curve to match the characteristics of the transmission. The result is an impressive gain in mid range torque coupled with a progressive and smooth output of power. In fact, with modest turbocharging the power output of the engine has been increased by 50% without any increase in engine speed.

Turbo



In addition to the turbocharger, a number of other important new features have been designed to improve performance and ensure component durability, including a new high throughput, low loss exhaust system with nickel iron manifolds and turbine housing. The 6.75 litre V-8 engine with its hydraulically controlled transmission is swift and positive. The inherent smooth running characteristics of the engine are made possible by careful construction

and attention to detail. Every engine is assembled by hand. Cylinder liners and pistons are precisely matched in pairs. Connecting rods are shot peened for durability. Self adjusting hydraulic tappets are assembled under oil to avoid contamination from airborne dust particles and each one is matched with its housing.

In the building of the Bentley Mulsanne Turbo there is no room for compromise.

one of the most advanced methods of increasing power from an already efficient engine".

The brochure went on to explain that "with modest turbocharging the power output of the engine has been increased by 50% without any increase in engine speed", complementing a range of other engine upgrades "designed to improve performance and ensure component durability". As the brochure concluded, "in the building of the Bentley Mulsanne Turbo there is no room for compromise".

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• THE BIG PICTURE •

Issued just under three years ago, this particular photograph is more up to date than most of the images we feature here – albeit with something of a classic twist

Back in October 2016, before we'd even published our first issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, Bentley Motors issued this photograph to accompany a press release announcing the company's latest apprenticeship scheme – on which these young recruits would be honing their skills by restoring a 1965 Bentley T-series. The press release explained that "the new apprentices will complete and assemble the trim section and restore the car's body, paint and engine, putting into practice the modern skills they will gain during their apprenticeship while becoming familiar with traditional techniques". Once completed, the T-series was set to join the company's heritage fleet. Bentley master trainer, Colin Jackson, commented at the time: "The challenge of restoring this car means that our apprentices will develop the traditional skills that Bentley is so famous for, and sets them up for their careers building Bentleys of the future."





COMING SOON...

**ROLLS-ROYCE
& BENTLEY** *driver*

Want to know what's scheduled for the next issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*? As always, we've got some great features coming your way.



AMERICAN ADVENTURE

The ever-adventurous Steve Natale embarks upon an epic road trip aboard a Bentley Turbo R, experiencing Death Valley and living to tell the tale



LIFE WITH A SILVER SHADOW

We're off to sunny Gibraltar once again, this time to meet the custodian of a splendid Silver Shadow and to hear his many ownership experiences



BEST BENTLEY BUYS

For the marque's centenary year, we take a look at today's top classic Bentley models – covering all budgets from £10,000 to £100,000-plus



1932 PHANTOM II

We get to experience this rather special Phantom II, a car with an intriguing past and superbly stylish H.J. Mulliner drophead coupé bodywork



ULTIMATE LUXURY

The Sir Henry Royce Foundation of Australia owns this Rolls-Royce Phantom V with a remarkable history – as we reveal in full detail

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BENTLEY

ARNAGE



2001, 47,000 miles, £24,999.

Amethyst blue, interior is magnolia with dark blue piping, fitted sat nav, parking sensors, automatic, power steering, electric seats, windows, remote central locking with two keys, alloy wheels, ABS brakes, stereo and CD player plus much more. Please call 02380 766870, Southampton (T). 8992

BROOKLANDS



1993, 77,000 miles, £12,950. All original handbooks and manuals. Extras include lockable alloys, White band tyres, leather headlining, floor change box and electric memory seats. Please call 01794 390895, New Forest. (T).

BROOKLANDS



1995, 87,000 miles, £15,750. Finished in wildberry with magnolia fine lines and magnolia interior piped in mulberry with cream carpets and walnut veneers. Fitted with parking sensors. Please call 02085 679729, London (T). 8122

CONTINENTAL GT



2004, 80,000 miles, £18,999.

Automatic, power steering, electric windows, remote central locking, alloy wheels, ABS brakes, stereo and CD player, heated seats, air bag, air conditioning, cruise control, walnut wood, tan leather interior, lots of service bills and will come with a new MoT on purchase. Please call 02380 766870, Southampton (T). 8995

GURNEY NUTTING OPEN TOURER



1926, £295,000. Excellent, correct, well maintained example with original body and all matching numbers! The car has successfully participated in Peking to Paris, Vancouver to Anchorage and various other rallies, driven by the owner of the last twenty years. Please call 01248 602649, North Wales. (T)

MK VI PARK WARD TWO DOOR DROPHEAD COUPE



1950, £125,000. A lovely car, very stylish, in excellent condition and in a tasteful colour scheme. Upgraded to 4½ litre and high ratio rear axle. Please call 01248 602649, North Wales. (T)

S1



1956, 56,000 miles, £15,000. 2 owners, blue with grey leather interior, runs well, bodywork not perfect. Minor work will make a very nice example. Please call 01483 282830, Surrey. 7844

S1 SERIES



1958, £23,000. Superb condition with PAS, drives really well and complete with tools, brochure and handbook, etc. Please call 01253 206271 or email johnmcglynn@blueyonder.co.uk, Lancashire.

T II



1977, £33,950. Finished in Georgian silver with a cream interior with contrasting carpets. Totally renovated throughout in our own workshops 5 years ago and still looking beautiful. Low mileage and a stunning example, the refurbishment costing over. Please call 02085 679729, London (T). 8129

TURBO R



1987, 65,000 miles, £14,000. First owner 13 years and covered 51,000 miles with main dealer servicing. Special order by chairman of company. I have owned the car since 2000, has good history. MoT till August. First to see will buy. Number plate is not included. Please call 07979 301972, Durham. 7661

TURBO R



1992, 79,000 miles, £14,000. Good service history with recent tyres and hydraulic service. New rear shocks and springs. Royal Blue with RT upgrades. Private plate not included. Please call 07826 557138. 8626

ROLLS-ROYCE

20HP

1923, 3,636 miles, £47,500.

Exceptional vintage Rolls Royce 20hp. £40,000 spent on mechanical restoration. Playboy roadster style coachwork with dickie seat. Total engine rebuild, over drive fitted and was film star Fred Astaire's first Rolls Royce. Please call 07711 851682, Yorkshire. 8527

20HP CONNAUGHT LIMOUSINE



1927, £37,500. Charming with some lovely features including curved division, side facing occasional and divided screen. Please call 01248 602649, North Wales. (T)

20HP WINDOVERS THREE QUARTER COUPE



1926, £45,500. A charming two door four seater, running well, fitted with overdrive. Recent engine refurbishment. Please call 01248 602649, North Wales. (T)

20/25 BREWSTER LANDAULETTE DE VILLE



1930, £72,500. A rare, desirable and versatile car, original USA-bodied, opening at the front and the rear. Excellent, restored condition and fitted with overdrive and power steering. Please call 01248 602649, North Wales. (T)

CORNICHE CONVERTIBLE



1982, 87,000 miles, £65,000. Excellent history folder. Maintained by main agents and specialists. A very attractive Corniche which has been known to us for many years. Please call 01732 886002, Kent (T). 8924

PHANTOM I HOOPER TOURER



1925, £195,000. A magnificent car, factory converted from a Ghost. Long term ownership with lots of history and much campaigned. Lovely condition throughout and ready to tour. Please call 01248 602649, North Wales. (T)

SILVER CLOUD II



1959, 66,900 miles, £55,000. Full MoT history. Many invoices for works carried out. Recent mechanical overhaul. Stunning original condition. Without doubt one of the very finest Silver Clouds on the market. Please call 01732 886002, Kent (T). 8926

SILVER CLOUD III



1964, 91,000 miles, £55,000. Latest owner 13 years. A very attractive example. Well maintained by specialists. Please call 01732 886002, Kent (T). 8930

SILVER SHADOW II



1980, 43,000 miles, £27,500. Recent complete professional respray in original factory colour with fully documented service and maintenance history and ready for home and continental touring in style and comfort. Please call 01403 871252. 8401

SILVER SHADOW II



1979, 57,000 miles, £36,000. A beautiful and totally original Left hand drive Silver Shadow in exceptional condition throughout. Please call 01732 886002, Kent (T). 8118

SILVER SHADOW II RHD



1980, £28,950. Finished in chestnut and nutmeg. Recent bare metal repaint to concours standard. Please call 02088 783355, Surrey. (T)

SILVER SHADOW MKI



1969, £10,500. Beautiful condition, inside and out. Beautiful engine and the car has always been garaged. Regularly serviced and maintained by Rolls Royce accredited engineer and the present owner has owned and loved this car for 23 years. Please call 07826 641392, Essex. 8548

SILVER SPIRIT



1981, £6,000. White, red leather with full service history, MoT August and in excellent condition. Please call 07714 263355, Scotland. 8452

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ROLLS-ROYCE 16 INCH STEERING WHEEL



£48. Part no on back DCC 1117/A UR/2427 in black with horn. Please call 02083 997541, Surrey. 7632

ROLLS ROYCE SILVER SPIRIT PARTS



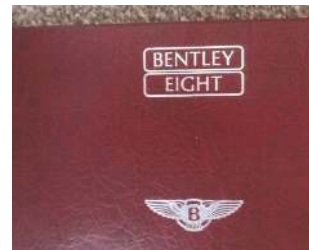
1989, £150. Price is for a pair of un-marked, undented polished stainless steel outer wheel rims and fittings that I had as spares. Picture shown with film of grease protection on them. Please call 07774 310488, Lincolnshire. 7769

PARTS WANTED

ROLLS-ROYCE SILVER SHADOW II Wanted. Front bumper, side shafts and diff carrier. Please call 27 1176 01090, South Africa. 8207

MEMORABILIA FOR SALE

BENTLEY EIGHT HANDBOOK



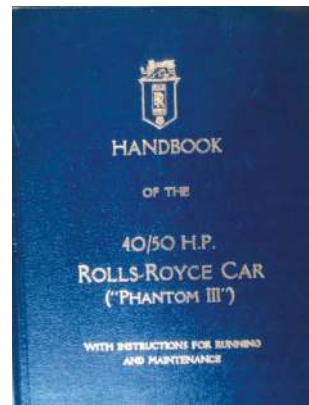
1986, £80. 121 pages in mint condition. Please call 07968 659967, Kent. 7512

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ROLLS-ROYCE PHANTOM III 40/50 HP HAND BOOK



£65. Phantom III instructions. Numbers XI and XII combined issue in mint condition. Please call 02083 997541, Surrey. 7484



PAUL GUINNESS

A humble paperback published in 1984 was packed with almost 600 facts and figures about Rolls-Royce – and all these years later it remains as interesting and entertaining as ever

A few days ago, I stumbled across my copy of a book first published 35 years ago, a plain looking paperback with an intriguing title. I'm talking about *Rolls-Royce, The Complete Works: The Best 599 Stories about the World's Best Car*, written by Mike Fox and Steve Smith, published by Faber & Faber. It's a book that does exactly what it says on the cover; and so while it may not have the snappiest of titles, it's a tome in which the reader can all too easily become immersed.

That's assuming you like lots of random facts about your favourite motoring marque, of course, which I think is a fair assumption. And while much of the content is centred around the early days of Rolls-Royce and some of the company's most fascinating engineering feats and motoring's greatest pioneers, it also contains plenty of facts about the latest models of the time – which in 1984, inevitably meant the Silver Spirit and its various derivatives.

One of the claims in the book, for example, was that "the suspension of the Silver Spirit is so sensitive, it even compensates for the gradual emptying of the petrol tank". It also pointed out that "there are five and a half times as many parts in a Rolls-Royce as in the average saloon car". And it explained how, as a touch of convenience for passengers, the courtesy lights of a Silver Spirit stay on for seven seconds after the doors have closed: "For obvious reasons, this facility is not available on cars exported to countries with a major terrorist problem."

Back in 1984, Rolls-Royce was keen to ensure its latest models maintained the company's reputation for extraordinary standards of quality

"For obvious reasons, this facility is not available on cars exported to countries with a major terrorist problem"

and precision, as the book explained: "The prototype of the Silver Spirit was test run non-stop for the equivalent of 40,000 miles. When it was stripped down and its components measured for wear, they were found to be well within accepted tolerances. 'Nicely run in' was the engineers' verdict."

Such high developmental standards extended to the Silver Spirit's interior, with the factory making use of two imitation wooden heels in order to test the durability of the Wilton carpets: "The heels rub backwards and forwards

100,000 times over four inches of carpet. The factory legend – that the heels were modelled on those of a famous transatlantic film actress – is untrue." Equally impressive was the fact that "56 yards of Connolly leather piping are used

on the carpets and seats... cut from the same Connolly hide as the upholstery".

The big news for Bentley back in 1984 was the success of the Mulsanne Turbo, with the book inevitably waxing lyrical about this turbocharged model's vast performance potential, pointing out that its 0-60mph time of around seven seconds made it quicker than some contemporary Ferraris: "Even more impressive for such a bulky car is its performance from 60 to 90mph – also seven seconds." And yet this latest Bentley provided an incredibly civilised experience for anyone fortunate enough to be chauffeured in one: "So tranquil is the interior of the Bentley Mulsanne Turbo that an eminent motoring journalist feel asleep in the rear seat while being driven at 135mph down the Mulsanne straight at Le Mans."

If you don't already have this long-since out-of-print book in your collection, I suggest you check online or have a search for it at the next autojumble that you visit. It's an entertaining read, that's for sure. ■



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