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An Independent Publication

Kelsey Publishing Ltd, The Granary, Downs Court,  
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UK subscription and back issue orderline: 01959 543 747

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Toll free USA subscription orderline: 1-888-777-0275

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Seymour Distribution Ltd, 2 East Poultry Avenue, London,

EC1A 9PT. www.seymour.co.uk. +44(0)20 7429 400

**Printing** William Gibbons & Sons Ltd, Willenhall, West Midlands



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## Another successful year

It is one of the quirks of magazine publishing that despite this issue carrying a cover date of January/February 2020, it is in fact being published at the tail end of 2019 – and what a great year it's been for *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*. I took over as editor just shy of two years ago, and since then I've been delighted to see the magazine grow, with its ever-increasing subscriptions base leading to an amazing amount of positive feedback from our readers.

When I joined the title, I made a promise that this was your magazine and I'd be adopting a personal approach. I genuinely enjoy receiving letters and emails from readers both in the UK and overseas, and I do my best to answer each and every one. Admittedly, at deadline times, my replies might take longer than I'd ideally like, but I usually get there in the end! A great big thank you to everyone who has been in touch during 2019 – your feedback and enthusiasm means a great deal.

We particularly enjoy receiving your contributions to the Personal Choice section of the magazine, which in this issue starts on page 86. It's a chance for you to send in details and photographs of your classic Rolls-Royce or Bentley, showing fellow readers what you drive and describing your ownership experiences in the process. Absolutely any model in any condition can be included, and you'll find full details of how to get involved on page 89.

This, of course, is another packed issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, with an array of feature cars that includes the Bentley Continental R and later GT, a 1971 Silver Shadow, a rare Radford-bodied Bentley MkVI Countryman and a coachbuilt Silver Cloud III with four-door James Young bodywork. Particularly fascinating, however, is Richard Gunn's in-depth look at the life and times of Eleanor Thornton, the woman who will forever be associated with the legendary Spirit of Ecstasy.

Enjoy the magazine – and if you'd like to see your own car featured in a future issue, don't forget to drop me a line.

## Paul Guinness

rrb.ed@kelsey.co.uk

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## ALL-ELECTRIC CLASSICS

**S**ilverstone-based Lunaz, a recently launched classic car electrification company, has chosen two of Rolls-Royce's most famous designs – a 1956 Silver Cloud and a 1961 Phantom V – as part of its initial three-car line-up, joining a somewhat sportier 1953 Jaguar XK120. The start-up company, led by ex-Renault F1 technical director Jon Hilton, claims it will make “the most beautiful and celebrated cars in history ready for the future”, its focus being the electrification of mid-century British luxury and sports cars.

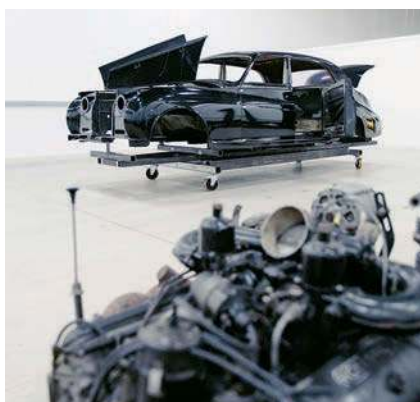
Each car is fully restored as part of the conversion process, with Lunaz offering a range of bespoke paint

schemes and interior packages designed by automotive styling specialists. The Phantom V comes equipped with a 120kWh battery pack, and all Lunaz models will feature such important EV functions as fast-charging capabilities and regenerative braking, together with the modern additions of traction control and cruise control.

The process of electrifying each vehicle begins with a comprehensive analysis of its shape, weight and intended driving dynamics. The original powertrain and its associated hardware are then removed before the car is 3D-scanned so that Lunaz engineers can use scale models for reference. The vehicle is then subject

to a thorough restoration process that involves taking the bodywork back to bare metal and rectifying any imperfections by hand. Upon completion, the interior is modernised with the addition of sat-nav, wi-fi and a contemporary infotainment system.

Existing vehicle features such as the fuel filler cap, dials and vents are retained and reconfigured to suit the electric powertrain, while braking, suspension and steering components are updated to cope with the added power. Prices start at around £350,000, and the company's order books are about to open at the time of writing. More information can be found at [www.lunaz.design](http://www.lunaz.design).



# BDC NAMED CLUB OF THE YEAR

The Bentley Drivers Club capped a magnificent twelve months when it was named Club of the Year at the prestigious Historic Motoring Awards 2019. The coveted award came hot on the heels of the BDC setting a world-record Bentley gathering, when 1321 cars attended its recent Concours d'Elegance at Blenheim Palace.

Club president Duncan Wiltshire accepted the Club of the Year honour from motoring journalist and editor, James Elliot, at a gala dinner held at London's Rosewood Hotel in October. The award is a fitting tribute for the BDC in Bentley's centenary year, and recognises the impressive efforts of the club's members in its various regions, who have arranged over 350 events and tours throughout the world during 2019.

To win the award, the BDC had to overcome tough competition from the Alvis Owners' Club, Bugatti Owners' Club, the E-Type Club and the Vintage Sports Car Club. The BDC also had to impress an expert panel of judges comprising some of the most respected names in the historic motoring world, including journalists, industry leaders and specialists.



A delighted Duncan, pictured here with James Elliot, commented: "This award is accepted on behalf of the whole club. It recognises the magnificent efforts and support of our regions, and the fantastic array of events and tours they organise

for the pleasure of all our members, as well as the hard work of the club office team. It is also, of course, the icing on the cake of a truly memorable year for the BDC, of which one of the main highlights was our world-record Bentley gathering at Blenheim."



## CLASSIC OPEN DAY

Celebrating forty years in the business, as well as twenty at his current location in West London, Rolls-Royce and Bentley specialist Nigel Sandell hosted a special open day in October – with a wide assortment of classic models and their owners in attendance.

A number of iconic Bentleys helped to celebrate the marque's centenary, including an 8 Litre of 1931 vintage and an S1 Fastback by Park Ward. Also of interest was a rather special 1998 Turbo R, on loan from the Metropolitan Police heritage department and formerly used by Prince Charles –

hence its run-flat tyres, bulletproof glass, blue flashing lights and bomb detection. Around 35 cars and twice that number of enthusiasts arrived for the day, with John Tupper – managing director of IntroCar – giving a short presentation on some of his company's latest products.



## NEW YORK GATHERING

Bentley continued its centenary festivities in October with a number of connected events celebrating the past, present and future of the brand, taking place in Lower Manhattan, New York. Five parades of customer-owned Bentleys from across the last 100 years made their way from starting points outside Manhattan to converge at Brookfield Place on the downtown waterfront.

Guests were then able to enjoy the Centenary Concours – a dedicated display of the very best models from the past, examples of every car in the current Bentley range and a look to the future in the shape of the EXP 100 GT concept car. Leading the parades was a selection of the latest models from Bentley, including the all-new Flying Spur in its east coast debut, and the new Bentayga Hybrid.

## 'BLOWER' TRIBUTE

For fans of the 'Blower' Bentley, this latest high-quality book from Porter Press International is a welcome addition to the market, telling in wonderful detail the story of the first and most famous example – YU 3250. Joining W.O. Bentley at the end of the First World War, the book explains the whole tale, from the prototype 3 Litre through to the Bentley Boys' antics, as well as focusing on Tim Birkin's legendary 'Blower' project.

Extensively researched by Bentley authority Clare Hay and written by Giles Chapman, this hardback book offers a wealth of period and contemporary

photographs, documenting the life of the most famous Bentley of all. To order your copy of *Gentleman Heroes – The First Blower Bentley and the Men Who Made it Happen* (priced at £95), go to [www.porterpress.co.uk](http://www.porterpress.co.uk).



## CENTENARY CELEBRATION

Still available at the time of writing is this special 100-page bookazine from the publisher of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, dedicated to the centenary of the Bentley marque. *Bentley at 100* is a celebration of this classic

British brand, charting the company's fascinating history and paying tribute to its most famous models. To order your copy of the bookazine at just £7.99 (or £9.99 for overseas customers) including delivery, go online to <https://shop.kelsey.co.uk/product/BZBENTLEY>.



## HISTORIC ENGINE

Crewe-based apprentices at Bentley Motors have fully restored a historic engine, originally built by the company in 1923. The trainees at Bentley spent 700 hours preparing the 3.0-litre, four-cylinder unit, which was completely stripped down to single components as part of the project.

Engine number 212 was originally fitted to chassis 209 and then passed on to an unknown coachbuilder who applied the bodywork. Interestingly, however, the powerplant was later adopted by the Royal Artillery Corps School in Bovington, Dorset, where it was used from 1935 onwards as a training aid to teach students the workings of the internal combustion engine. Historians at Bentley believe this suggests the owner of chassis 209 might have been a member of the armed forces.

The engine remained in the possession of the Corps until 2011, when it was offered back to Bentley. It was then placed in safe storage until last year, when it was decided that number 212 should enjoy a new lease of life, undergoing restoration for Bentley's 2019 centenary celebrations.



# THE CHELSEA WORKSHOP



1948 Bentley Special £175,000



1950 Bentley Special £130,000



1980 Rolls-Royce Corniche £65,000



2001 Bentley Azure wide body £69,500



2006 Bentley Azure £145,000



1962 Rolls-Royce Cloud 11 £395,000



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# PRODUCT NEWS

We take a look at the latest must-haves aimed at today's classic Rolls-Royce and Bentley owner



## BENTLEY GIFT IDEAS

If you're keen to help a Bentley fan celebrate the marque's centenary year this Christmas, Flying Spares has a vast array of gift ideas available via its website, with something suitable for all budgets – including keyrings from less than £10 each and these stylish Bentley 'B' cufflinks at £110 including VAT.

The gifts section of the website covers clothing, golf accessories, bags,



wallets, books, fragrances, phone covers and even Bentley-branded umbrellas. Naturally, Rolls-Royce enthusiasts are equally well catered for. To see the full range of products, go online to [www.flyingsparses.com](http://www.flyingsparses.com) and click on the 'Gifts & Accessories' tab or call +44 (0)1455 292949.



## LIGHTING UP

Better Car Lighting, the appropriately-named specialist in lighting upgrades for classic cars, has introduced a range of front sidelight bulbs that not only look 'right' on older vehicles thanks to their traditional appearance, but also match the period-style ivory white light offered by its existing LED headlamp kits. All such items are available separately, or you can buy a complete LED headlamp and sidelight package (complete with a five-year guarantee against fault or failure) at a cost-saving £167.99 including VAT.

Also new this month is Better Car Lighting's aid to safer reversing in the form of an LED reversing light bulb (above) that not only provides a brighter light than standard but also 'beeps' as you reverse, alerting pedestrians and other road users behind. At its special launch price of £11.99 (saving you £3.60), this audible LED offers excellent value for money. For more details or to place an order, call +44 (0)121 773 7000 or visit [www.bettercarlighting.co.uk](http://www.bettercarlighting.co.uk).

## THREAD REPAIRS

Anyone who has experienced the dreaded stripping of a thread when working on their Rolls-Royce or Bentley might be interested in the range of Nes thread repair tools available from Damar International. Whether the thread is imperial or metric, left-hand or right-hand, the Nes tool will automatically adjust, making thread repair effortless and saving you the trouble of having to buy different sizes of taps and dies.

There are NES thread repair tools available for both internal and external threads. For more details of the full range, go to [www.damar.biz](http://www.damar.biz) and click the 'Automotive' tab, or call +44 (0)116 216 5128.





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# BOOK REVIEWS

We catch up on all the latest essential reading to arrive at the *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* offices

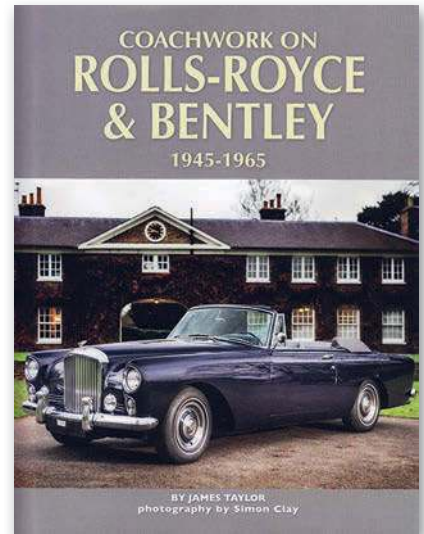
## **COACHWORK ON ROLLS-ROYCE & BENTLEY, 1945-1965**

**Author:** James Taylor  
**Publisher:** Herridge & Sons ([www.herridgeandsons.com](http://www.herridgeandsons.com))  
**ISBN No.:** 978-1-906133-89-4  
**Price:** £50.00

This brand new hardback title from renowned motoring author James Taylor covers one of the most fascinating periods in Rolls-Royce and Bentley coachbuilding, telling the full story from the end of the Second World War through to the final Silver Cloud-based models. Although Britain's coachbuilding industry was in gradual decline at the time, with the subsequent debut of the monocoque-bodied Silver Shadow marking the end of an era, there were still independent specialists providing a wide array of different models and body styles right through to 1965 – all of them featured within this book's 192 pages.

Chapter One sets the scene by focusing on the chassis and standard factory-fitted bodywork options of this twenty-year period, with detailed technical specifications and chassis number details adding an impressive depth of information. The book then offers sections dedicated to specific coachbuilders, with an A-Z chapter covering such famous names as Freestone & Webb, H.J. Mulliner, Hooper, James Young and Park Ward, with each company's individual body styles featured and well-described. Less well-known firms also get their Rolls-Royce and Bentley-based designs included, a line-up that includes Abbott, Baker & Son, Rippon and Radford – the latter featuring its various generations of Countryman models.

Overseas coachbuilders also receive their own dedicated section, with companies like Bertone, Brewster, Chapron, Ghia and Vignale all included thanks to their involvement in this specific era of upmarket coachbuilding.



As one of the most comprehensive books dedicated to post-war coachbuilders specialising in Rolls-Royce and Bentley, this fascinating title comes highly recommended.

## **INSIDE THE ROLLS-ROYCE & BENTLEY STYLING DEPARTMENT, 1971-2001**

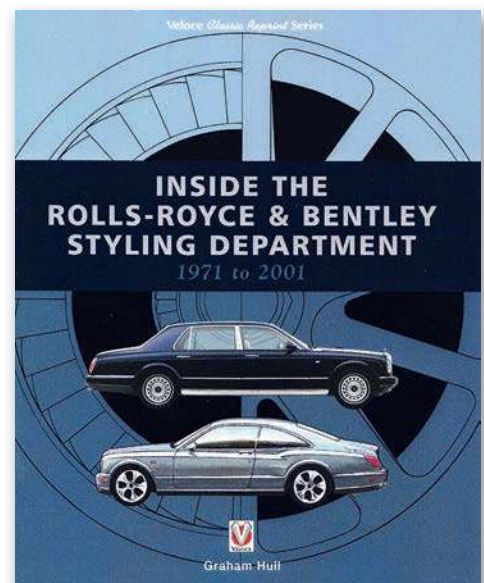
**Authors:** Graham Hull  
**Publisher:** Veloce ([www.veloce.co.uk](http://www.veloce.co.uk))  
**ISBN No.:** 978-1-787115-47-7  
**Price:** £25.00

Originally published as a hardback in 2014, this impressive tome has now been released in softback guise as part of Veloce's Classic Reprint series, offering an insight into Graham Hull and the company he worked for over a thirty-year period. More importantly, it provides an insight into some of the fascinating design proposals, particularly from the 1980s onwards – when the potential of Bentley was finally realised after many years of neglect.

According to Hull, Bentley had

been seen as "an irrelevance, and continued to be so up to the SZ's launch in 1980". The '80s saw the resurgence of Bentley via iconic models like the Turbo R, and it's fascinating to read how attitudes gradually changed towards the marque.

The 1990s brought the challenge of how to design a replacement for the Silver Spirit and its Bentley cousins, and again the author offers a wonderful insight into the thinking of the time. Hull explains that as Bentley sales continued to increase, "there was a growing intention that SXB Rolls-Royce and Bentley would share platforms but not bodies". The eventual launch of the Silver Seraph and Arnage is covered in detail, and again the recollections are both detailed and captivating.





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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

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.

### 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.

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

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# TEENAGE KICKS

While few 19-year-old car enthusiasts dream of owning a Silver Shadow, and even fewer make that dream come true, James Popp was determined to achieve this unusual ambition

WORDS: PAUL GUINNESS PHOTOGRAPHY: MATT WOODS



**T**here's no shortage of young enthusiasts on today's classic car scene, with many of the UK's best-known single-marque clubs having special sections dedicated to under 25s. It's the clubs' way of encouraging young first-time buyers to enter the world of old-vehicle ownership, which is why it's not unusual to see a Morris Minor or a 1980s supermini with someone in their late teens or early twenties at the wheel. What is unusual,

however, is when a 19-year-old ends up buying and owning a Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow – surely one of the most unlikely classics for anyone still in their teenage years to choose.

"I suppose it's not an obvious choice for most people of my age, but it's the car I've wanted since I was a small child," admits James Popps, who lives near Chelmsford and works as an administrator for a finance company. "It must run in the family, as my father had a couple of Rolls-Royces

when I was growing up. In fact, my first ever ride in a car was when my dad brought me back from hospital as a baby in his Silver Shadow."

James has been collecting Rolls-Royce and Bentley scale models most of his life, and has always had an abundance of marque-related items – including a Rolls-Royce radiator grille on his bedroom wall when he was just eleven years old. His purchase of a 1971 Silver Shadow in June 2019, however, marked the fulfilment of »

# “What is unusual is when a 19-year-old ends up buying and owning a Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow”

an ambition that James has had for as long as he can remember.

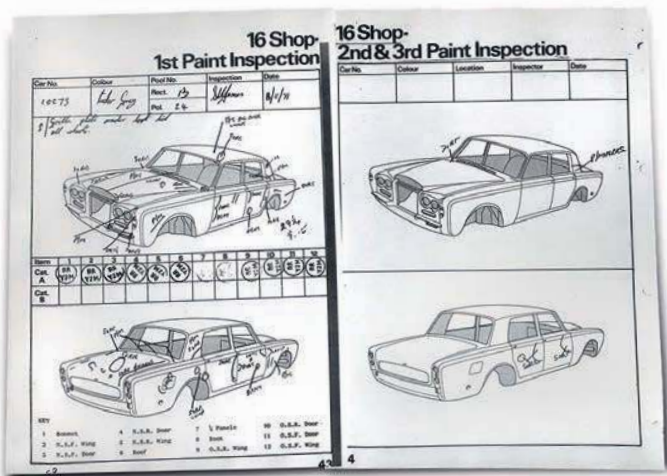
We first got to hear about James when we received a phone call from Stephen Brown, founder of Hanwells of London, who told us: “I’ve just sold a Silver Shadow to our youngest ever buyer. He’s only 19 years old. It’d make a great story.” And so it was that we headed to Essex a few weeks later to meet one of our youngest readers and to learn more about his extremely well-preserved Rolls-Royce.

## NEW ARRIVAL

“My dad and I started looking for a suitable Silver Shadow and enquired about quite a few,” explains James. “I really wanted a blue car with a cream-coloured interior, but none of the ones we’d spotted for sale were in the right sort of condition. Then

we decided to pay a visit to Hanwells of London to see what they had in stock, and were told of a Tudor Grey Silver Shadow that had just arrived. It hadn’t even been advertised at that point, but we were allowed to take a look – and, colour aside, it was exactly what I’d been looking for.”

With just 64,000 miles under its wheels, this 1971 example of Rolls-Royce’s bestseller looked very well-preserved and came with an impressively comprehensive history, with invoices and paperwork dating back over the decades. This isn’t unusual for a car that has perhaps had just a couple of owners, but chassis number SRH10273 had passed through around a dozen custodians prior to James discovering it – although judging by the history file, each of those owners must have been of the caring variety,



**ABOVE/RIGHT: Factory build sheets and a full history file came with the car. BELOW: James is a keen collector of Rolls-Royce and Bentley scale models**







ensuring that the Silver Shadow was meticulously maintained at all times.

One of the car's more recent owners was Gerald Garratt, who lives in Buckinghamshire and acquired the Silver Shadow in 2007, keeping it for a total of nine years, as Hanwells' Stephen Brown explains: "Mr Garratt worked in engine development at Rolls-Royce and, being very proud of the product, this was about the

sixth Rolls-Royce or Bentley that he'd owned. Then in 2016, Mr Garratt bought a Silver Spur from us and we took the Silver Shadow in part-exchange. It was in such beautiful condition that we decided to retail the car and, after carefully checking it over and servicing it, we then sold it to a very nice couple with a young family, this being the first time they'd owned a Rolls-Royce."

The Silver Shadow's latest owners looked after it well but decided they fancied a change in 2019, says Stephen: "Having enjoyed a taste of Rolls-Royce ownership, they wanted to exchange the Silver Shadow for another one of the iconic marques, and this time they chose one of our Bentleys. With the car being in such superb condition still, we decided to retail it once again, which is »

**FEATURE CAR**  
ROLLS-ROYCE SILVER SHADOW



The Rolls-Royce's cream-hued hide and walnut veneer are still in excellent condition



when James Pops – our youngest customer to date – came along and fell in love with the Silver Shadow.”

**DETAILED HISTORY**

It's easy to see why James was so impressed with this particular example, its Tudor Grey paintwork still being in superb order, as is the car's brightwork and its beige hide interior with walnut veneer trim. Everything about this Silver Shadow is a tribute to its fastidious maintenance over the years, and James is particularly delighted that its history file is bulging with paperwork, previous MoT certificates, bills of sale and more: "I like a car with plenty of history, and this one even came with copies of its original factory build sheets. I've also got all the names and addresses of its previous owners, which is fascinating as it's a car that has moved around a lot over the years."

EFH 525J first hit the road in February 1971, its inaugural owner being Theodore Emms Ltd, a steel specialist based in Dudley. It remained there for five years, with its second owner re-registering it as RB 123 when he bought the car in 1976, selling it seven years later – at which point the original registration number was reinstated. The Silver Shadow then





James is a fan of the Silver Shadow's effortless driving style

## MODEL DEVELOPMENT

Launched in 1965 as Rolls-Royce's first ever monocoque-bodied offering, the Silver Shadow (and its Bentley T-series cousin) was steadily developed during its early career, a key change occurring when the old General Motors-derived Hydramatic four-speed automatic transmission was dropped in favour of the smooth-operating GM400 in the summer of 1968. That same year saw the dashboard redesigned on left-hand drive cars to comply with the latest American safety legislation, with right-hand drive versions following suit in May '69.

The L-Series V8 engine that had first appeared in 1959 was adopted by the Silver Shadow and T-series, initially in 6230cc form before being upgraded to 6750cc in July 1970. That makes James Popps' 1971 car desirable in many ways, as it benefits from the extra power that arrived for the '70s whilst still possessing the classic good looks of the original model, prior to the arrival of the Silver Shadow II in 1977.

passed through a series of relatively short-term owners, some of whom kept it for just a year or two. Its eighth owner acquired the car in 1990, at which point it was re-registered as WKC 706 – the cherished number that then stayed on the Rolls-Royce right through to recent times. Now though, it benefits from having had its original registration reallocated

once again, much to James' delight.

"I like the originality of the car and the fact it hasn't been modified in any way," explains the Silver Shadow's latest – and youngest – owner. "It was also very well prepared by Hanwells, who treated it to a full service and a 100-point check-over, and also agreed to fit a set of lambswool rugs for me."

James is delighted not only with »

**“With just 64,000 miles under its wheels, this 1971 Silver Shadow looked very well-preserved”**



his choice of Silver Shadow but also his choice of specialist: “I must say, the service from Hanwells has been excellent. The car developed a bit of an oil leak not long after I bought it, and it was sorted without any hassle. The car was collected from me and delivered back again once the fault had been fixed, no problem at all.”

Having owned his first Rolls-Royce for only a few months so far, is James as pleased with the overall experience as he expected? “It’s been brilliant,” he smiles. “I just love driving the Silver Shadow, it’s so effortless. Nothing about the car has disappointed me.”

So what about future plans? Not surprisingly, James is determined to

ensure his car continues to receive the best care and attention: “I’ll make sure it’s looked after, and will obviously keep the service records up to date. It’s not an everyday car for me, as I prefer to keep it for weekend enjoyment when the weather is decent. It’s got to last me a long time as I’ve no intention of ever selling it.” ■



**James is determined to keep his first Rolls-Royce perfectly maintained**





1975

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**1997 P Bentley Brooklands Turbo.** Finished in unmarked Racing Green with 16 inch alloys and St James coach lines. The interior is in Spruce leather with St James piping and Laurel carpets piped in St James, with Walnut veneers. One owner with only 44,000 miles and FSH. Totally immaculate and must be seen..... **£18,950**



**1997 P Bentley Turbo RL MK IV.** Finished in beautiful unmarked Wildberry with twin coach lines in Cream and Sandstone interior piped in Mulberry, with Mulberry carpets piped in Sandstone and Walnut veneers. Fitted with DAB radio. Only 58,000 miles with Full Service History. Immaculate condition throughout..... **£19,750**



**1997 P Bentley Turbo RL.** Finished in Peacock Blue with 17 inch alloys. Cotswold interior piped in French Navy with French Navy carpets. Only 73,000 miles with Full Service History. Immaculate throughout and must be seen. One of the best we have seen..... **£18,750**



**1997 Model/ P Rolls Royce Silver Dawn.** Finished in Royal Blue with Silverstone interior, French Navy carpets and Walnut veneers. Fitted with park sensors. Known to ourselves for last 9 years and maintained regardless of cost, this car is a credit to its previous owner..... **£24,950**



**1980 V Rolls Royce Silver Shadow Series II.** Finished in 1980's classic Walnut with Gold fine lines and London Tan interior. Lockable centre cocktail cabinet, Walnut veneers and Fawn carpets bound in London Tan. Only 29,000 miles with lots of history. A stunning car, realistically priced at only..... **£38,950**

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Check website for other interesting projects.

1934 20/25 Gurney Nutting 3 Position Drophead Coupe An 'Owen Sedanca' - often considered the most stylish coachwork - major work early 2000s, engine/gearbox rebuild, rewire, re-cored radiator, overdrive etc; **£145,000.**  
'35 Thrupp & Maberly 3 position DHC **£135,000**



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# 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

## LEFT-HAND DRIVE CORNICHE

Although Corniche Convertible values are extremely wide-ranging on today's market, this 1982 example looks decent value at an asking price of £55,000. The American-spec Rolls-Royce's left-hand drive configuration makes it ideal for pan-European touring or for permanent export from the UK. It has clocked up just 34,000 miles from new and has been treated to a respray in its original hue of Georgian Silver.

The interior is finished in blue hide

that's piped in grey, while the grey vinyl hood apparently "glides up and down at the touch of a button". The car was re-imported from the USA a few years ago, with its subsequent buyer being based in the Dordogne, where the Corniche was then garaged and used only on fine days. It is now back in the UK and is being offered for sale via Essex-based Vintage & Prestige.

A major overhaul of the car's hydraulic system was carried out in 2016 (at a cost

of around £6600) by those respected specialists at The Beaconsfield Workshop. As you'd expect, the Corniche comes with a decent history file, including an assortment of bills from the USA. It currently still has its French plates in place but can be registered in the UK prior to purchase, if required. To find out more about this impressive looking survivor, give Vintage & Prestige a call on 01375 379719 or go to [www.vandp.net](http://www.vandp.net).



## AWESOME ARNAGE

If you're looking for an impressive example of a Bentley Arnage R and you have a sub-£30,000 budget, it's worth taking a look at this 50,800-mile car that's described as being in "outstanding condition" and with a full service history. Finished in Silver Storm with a Cotswold hide interior and contrasting French Navy carpets, it comes with all the usual benefits of buying from Hanwells of London – including a 100-point pre-sale check and two-year warranty. If you're tempted at the asking price of £28,950, you'll find more photographs at [www.hanwells.com](http://www.hanwells.com).



## MkVI DERIVATIVES

Anyone in the market for a Bentley MkVI or any of its various derivatives might want to check out this interesting trio on offer from P&A Wood, the oldest being a 1949 coachbuilt MkVI with four-door bodywork by H.J. Mulliner. Finished in Brewster Green and Black, it's described as having "very elegant coachwork with Hooper-style rear quarter windows". Extensively restored and presented in excellent condition, it's a tempting proposition at £75,000.

A later variation on the MkVI theme is the 1953 R-Type you see below, sharing exactly the same green and black colour scheme; this 'Standard Steel' saloon was supplied new to the Duke of Marlborough and can be yours now for £65,000. Finally, if you crave something a little rarer, £70,000 will buy you this 1951 Rolls-Royce Silver Dawn, a 'short boot' model finished in Tudor Grey over Shell Grey;

supplied new to an Australian buyer, the car is described as a "very good, corrosion-free, well-maintained example".

For more information on any of these three classics, go to [www.pa-wood.co.uk](http://www.pa-wood.co.uk) or call 01371 870848.





## LATE SILVER SPIRIT

Described as one of the last standard-wheelbase models, this 1996 Silver Spirit is finished in Red Pearl, featuring gold metallic twin coachlines and fitted with whitewall tyres. The interior is also particularly attractive, with Parchment leather and red piping, all set off by Portland Stone carpet and red sheepskin over-mats.

Colbrook Specialists, the marque specialist selling the Rolls-Royce, reports that it comes with an "exemplary service history file that includes factory build sheets", plus a 1998 bill of sale from P&A Wood for £65,000 and every MoT certificate since 1999. Colbrook has known and maintained the car

for the last 14 years, with Bentley main dealer services prior to that.

The car's mileage currently stands at only 54,800 and it has had just three previous keepers, two at the same address. The asking price of this late Silver Spirit is £27,500 and you can find out more via [www.colbrookspecialists.co.uk](http://www.colbrookspecialists.co.uk) or by calling 01733 243737.



## TURBO R VALUE

There's no shortage of Bentley Turbo Rs available for less than £10,000 these days, although only the bravest of buyers will take on a very cheap project needing major work. Close to that figure, however, buys a clean car that's ready to use and enjoy, such as this 1989 example for sale at the time of writing.

Although it has covered 154,000 miles, this metallic grey survivor is said to be very well maintained and apparently has an "excellent body and interior". Its most recent MoT test (in August 2019) was advisory-free. For full details, give the Northamptonshire-based selling dealer a call on 01536 219109.





# COUNTRY ESTATE

One of just nine examples built, this MkII Countryman was Radford's own motor show car prior to being entered in the 1954 Monte Carlo Rally. We take a trip to Wales to find out more

WORDS: PAUL GUINNESS PHOTOGRAPHY: GERARD HUGHES

**T**he story of the MkVI – Bentley's inaugural post-war model – has been well documented over the years, for this was the car that marked a major change of direction for the marque, its availability in 'Standard Steel' guise being a first for the company. Previous Bentley (and Rolls-Royce) models had relied on Britain's independent coachbuilders for their bodywork, with rolling chassis being supplied to the trade before being offered with an array of intriguing body style options. With the MkVI, however, Bentley was able to supply its customers with complete cars straight from the factory, a policy that



proved popular with well-heeled buyers seeking an upmarket, modern saloon.

The MkVI went on to be a major success for Bentley, with around 5200 examples built by the time it was usurped by the heavily updated R-Type in 1952. The vast majority of those cars were of the factory-built 'Standard Steel' variety, but among the coachbuilders offering special versions of the MkVI was Harold Radford, who converted an early example into an estate, badged as the Countryman and featuring distinctive wood-panelled bodywork from the A-pillars back. As author Martyn Nutland explains in his Veloce-published book

dedicated to the Bentley MkVI, the Countryman was a "car for the country gentleman, a vaguely Wodehouse-esque eccentric who would have had friends called Psmith and Stiffy Byng, and a chauffeur nicknamed Grapes".

The quality of the conversion was impressive enough for Rolls-Royce to officially recognise Hammersmith-based Harold Radford Coachbuilding Ltd as a specialist coachbuilder, with that initial MkVI-derived Countryman being displayed at the 1948 Earl's Court Motor Show. There was no shortage of interest in Radford's transformation of the MkVI, leading to nine examples of the first-generation model being

commissioned. The Countryman's alloy panels were clad with oak or beech trim and offered with a choice of mahogany or walnut veneer at the rear, giving the appearance of a wooden-bodied estate, while the horizontally-split rear tailgate opened to reveal a fully folding back seat and a generously proportioned load area. As an upmarket 'shooting brake' for wealthy customers who enjoyed indulging in country pursuits, the Countryman was both well designed and brilliantly targeted.

Not one to rest on his coachbuilding laurels, Harold Radford unveiled a second-generation MkVI-based Countryman in 1951, although this time »

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## FEATURE CAR RADFORD COUNTRYMAN

Unlike its predecessor, the MkII Countryman offered elegant, saloon-like styling



### “Not one to rest on his coachbuilding laurels, Radford unveiled a second-generation Countryman in 1951”

he took an entirely different approach. The Radford-designed coachwork now followed the general shape of the MkVI, albeit with a horizontally-split rear tailgate where the boot lid of the ‘Standard Steel’ saloon would normally be. This was a fully-coachbuilt model,

albeit one that didn’t look as different from the regular MkVI as its forebear.

The first of the MkII Countryman models was unveiled in 1951, based around MkVI chassis number B40MD – and it still exists to this day. Indeed, it’s the very same car that you see in

the photographs, a superb survivor that is not only fully restored but has also recently found itself a buyer and – at the time of writing – is about to set sail for its new home in the USA. It is the actual MkII Countryman that ended up being displayed at Britain’s annual London-based motor show in both 1951 and ‘52, after which it went on an epic adventure thanks to its participation in the Monte Carlo Rally of 1954. And so, when it comes to provenance and historical significance, this is one Bentley MkVI that knows how to stand out from the crowd.



The ‘big bore’ 4½-litre engine provided the latest Countryman with smooth performance

#### HISTORY LESSON

In his new book entitled *Coachwork on Rolls-Royce & Bentley 1945-1965* (which you’ll find reviewed on page 12 of this issue), motoring author James Taylor describes the official launch of the second-generation Radford Countryman: “Once again built on the Bentley MkVI chassis, the MkII Countryman was introduced to the public at the 1951 Earl’s Court show by B40MD. This time the design was metal-panelled,



The interior of B40MD is superbly presented these days, following its restoration



The wood-veneer trim used throughout added to the MkVI's luxury image



Chassis number B40MD was the very first MkII Countryman built by Radford

and was a four-door saloon rather than a utility estate like the MkI."

The newcomer might have lost its predecessor's estate-like body style, but it was still a highly versatile and thoughtfully equipped addition to the market, with Taylor explaining that "the design incorporated picnic and other items carefully stowed in compartments within the body." The MkII Countryman was well-received at launch but, like the MkI, was always destined to be an exclusive offering, hence why

once again a total of nine examples ended up being produced, the last of which was chassis number B495NY in February 1953. A MkIII Countryman then followed, inevitably based around the new Bentley R-Type, once again featuring a split tailgate despite the newcomer's extended boot line and unmistakably saloon-shaped profile.

The fact that B40MD – the very first MkII Radford Countryman – still survives is a cause for celebration, as is the car's current standard of presentation. This

rare Radford has been significantly restored to an extremely high standard over the years, which explains why its history file contains bills and invoices totalling almost £200,000 – a figure that makes the car's most recent asking price of £75,000 seem like extremely good value. It is, of course, possible to spend considerably less than this on a superb 'Standard Steel' MkVI, but the coachbuilt cars inevitably attract higher prices, largely thanks to their rarity appeal. »

**FEATURE CAR**  
**RADFORD COUNTRYMAN**



The MkII Countryman features a horizontally-split tailgate...



...that opens to reveal a generously proportioned load area



The lower tailgate incorporates a hidden-from-view washbasin and shaving mirror



With the split rear seat folded flat, the Countryman's carrying capacity is transformed





Generous rear-seat accommodation offers plenty of comfort – and conveniences  
 Right: Beneath a sliding rear armrest sits this delightful cut-glass decanter



Folding occasional tables are a useful addition for rear seat passengers



Shortly before our photo shoot at The Real Car Company, based in North Wales, the MkII Countryman had been reserved by a purchaser based in North America, giving us a brief chance to experience it (and photograph it) before it left the UK. It was an opportunity we weren't going to miss out on, and our first impressions of the car certainly didn't disappoint. With immaculate black paintwork to its upper body and silver below, broken up by a stylish black flash that sweeps down the car's flanks and around the base of the cutaway rear spats, it certainly isn't lacking in style – despite the fact that this was a Bentley built with practicality in mind.

## VERSATILE DESIGN

The first clue of this comes at the rear, when the casual observer notices the shut-lines that run up the sides and across the top of the rear window. Then when we twist the chrome handle that sits on the curve of the boot, the uniqueness of the Radford conversion becomes obvious as the top half of the horizontally-split tailgate lifts upwards, allowing us to drop the lower part to form a continuation of the wonderfully level boot floor that features practical 'treads'. We're suddenly staring at a generously proportioned load area, one that can be made positively gargantuan simply by folding forward the split

## “The fact that B40MD still survives is a cause for celebration, as is the car's current standard of presentation”

rear seat, with the backrest then extending the boot floor still further. This is a MkVI that looks like a saloon but within just a couple of minutes can be transformed into a load-swallowing machine with estate-like capability.

That's not all though, as Harold Radford was a man of ingenuity when it came to detail touches. Not content with ensuring the MkII Countryman had a large rear opening and the potential for carrying hefty loads, he wanted to make sure his customers' needs were taken care of, whether they were enjoying a day out in the country or embarking upon some kind of grand tour. That's why when the bottom part of the tailgate is lowered to horizontal, the rearmost centre section can be lifted up to reveal a ceramic washbasin and built-in shaving mirror. The rear part of the load area also contains a hidden storage area on each side that's accessed by a fold-down panel, with one side featuring a wooden bottle carrier for your alcoholic tippie of choice and the other being ideal for essential foodstuffs.

On those occasions when the full-length load area isn't required and the back seat can be left in the usual upright position, the owner of the MkII Countryman can enjoy more pampering by sliding forward one of the built-in armrests found each side of the seat, inside which can be found the inevitable cut glass decanter and matching glasses – essential for celebrating that morning's successful shoot. Fold-out tables in the front seat backrests, meanwhile, provide even more comfort and convenience for anyone enjoying light refreshments in the rear of the car.

Such versatility wasn't lost on *The Autocar* magazine, when its writers got to grips with B40MD for an early report on the MkII Countryman in 1951, hailing the newcomer as “one of the most distinctive special coachwork designs appearing at Earl's Court this year”. The same article went on to describe why the latest Countryman was so innovative: “On a Bentley MkVI chassis, the car is of composite construction in steel and aluminium, and hinged flaps at the rear give access »

**FEATURE CAR**  
**RADFORD COUNTRYMAN**



**“The car’s career took a bizarre turn in 1954 when it was entered into that year’s Monte Carlo Rally”**

to extra-large luggage space achieved by automatically folding rear seats. All the expected Bentley comfort is there, such as occasional tables for the rear passengers and a sunshine roof, and the front windows are electrically operated. Should the early morning shoot follow the all-night party, there is even an optional electric razor!”

The Countryman was an expensive proposition back in 1951, of course, with *The Autocar* quoting a UK list price of £4245 – plus almost £2360 in Purchase Tax. It was, however, an ingeniously-designed offering, as the magazine readily acknowledged: “A luxurious exterior impression gives little clue to the considerable luggage carrying potentialities of the Countryman, as apart from the unobtrusive upper flap at the rear, the car appears as a normal saloon”.

**VARIED CAREER**

As the first of the MkII Countryman models, B40MD inevitably became something of a publicity machine for Harold Radford, appearing at two consecutive Earl’s Court Motor Shows (in 1951 and ‘52) and featuring in various magazine and press reports of the time. In 1954, however, the car’s career took a rather bizarre turn when it was entered into that year’s Monte Carlo Rally, piloted by Brian McCartney-Filgate (a Lagonda dealer at that time) and Major



**B40MD was the actual Countryman tested by *The Autocar* magazine in 1951**



**The car was displayed at the Earl’s Court Motor Show in both 1951 and ‘52**

## 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. Chassis were also available to coachbuilders, however, hence the numerous different versions offered by specialists like Harold Radford.

Bentley began deliveries of its new 'Standard Steel' model in October 1946, with the MkVI remaining unchanged aesthetically for the next six years, aside from the adoption of cutaway rear-wheel spats and chrome waist strips in September 1948. Scuttle vents and larger hubcaps were also

fitted 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 subsequent R-Type.

Available from October 1952, the R-Type was 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. Production ceased with the debut of the drastically more modern Bentley S-series (and its Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud sibling) in 1955.

R.W. Holmes, joining such accomplished fellow competitors as Stirling Moss, Mike Couper and Greta Molander. It still carried the HAR 1 registration number famously used by Harold Radford, making it even more recognisable to rally followers of the time.

A coachbuilt MkVI with very minor modifications might seem like an odd choice for an international rally, but it says a lot about the inherent durability of the Bentley that it managed to complete the event, achieving a final placement of 108th out of 383 starters – and winning a well-deserved Elegance Award in the process. Adding extra interest to B40MD's already fascinating history is the fact that monochrome photographs of the car competing at Monte Carlo have survived, showing this most unlikely rally star in action.

A less arduous existence then awaited the Countryman, which from late 1954 through to 1967 was owned by John Cleland of Stormont Engineering, whose firm sold Fordson tractors, specialising in converting them for use in the hop fields and orchards of Kent. By 1968 the car was in the hands of one Hylma Payn of Burningfold Manor, Dunsfold, and three years later it was passed on to her son, Richard Peel. He kept the Bentley until 1988, when it was acquired by Major H.H. Sykes of Craigdarroch House, Monaive.

In more recent times, B40MD has been treated to some very high quality restoration work, and the end result is a car that looks stunning from any angle, yet without the over-fresh appearance that can afflict many a newly completed renovation. A certificate in the glovebox shows this to be an award winner in »



**In 1954, B40MD became an unlikely entrant in the challenging Monte Carlo Rally**



**Brian McCartney-Filgate being interviewed at the start of the Monte Carlo Rally**



**Was this the most luxuriously-equipped rally contender of 1954? Quite possibly...**

## FEATURE CAR RADFORD COUNTRYMAN



its class at a fairly recent RREC Annual Rally, and justifiably so. What adds even more to the car's authenticity is the fact that The Real Car Company has been able to have the Bentley's period registration number OXW 710 reinstated by the DVLA, replacing the age-related one it was issued with many years ago.

From the beautifully refurbished wood veneer to the smartly re-trimmed, cream-coloured hide upholstery, B40MD's interior is a joy to experience, particularly the superbly detailed hidden compartments that still function and are presented exactly as they would have been when new. The bodywork is also impeccable in its presentation, finished to a high standard and problem-free throughout. And although the uniqueness of this very first MkII Countryman is enough

to set it apart from just about every other MkVI Bentley, its overall condition also puts it up there among the best.

Needless to say, the car's engine, transmission and running gear are also well detailed and in perfect working order, with the 4½-litre 'big bore' engine starting on the button and instantly settling down to a smooth and even tickover. It provides this handsome machine with pleasing performance, with acceleration through the user-friendly four-speed manual gearbox being effortless, matched by precise (albeit heavy at parking speeds) steering, usefully responsive brakes and the kind of bump-smoothing ride that wealthy buyers of the early 1950s would have expected.

Being able to witness this Radford MkII Countryman 'in the metal' before

its impending trip to the USA was a delight, giving us a chance to experience a Bentley that is fascinatingly different from the norm. Should the car's new owner happen to be reading this at some point in the future, however, do please drop us a line – because we'd love to know more about your plans and future life experiences with this very special MkVI derivative. ■

### THANK YOU

Many thanks to The Real Car Company team for allowing us access to this rare and fascinating Radford conversion. For full details of the other Rolls-Royces and Bentleys currently held in stock at the company's North Wales headquarters, call 01248 602649 or go online to [www.realcar.co.uk](http://www.realcar.co.uk).



**The Countryman offered plenty of on-board space for spares and equipment**



**B40MD must rank as one of the most unusual Monte Carlo Rally stars of all time**

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# *The secret behind* **THE SPIRIT**

It may be one of Britain's most famous symbols but the story behind Rolls-Royce's radiator mascot is less widely known, as is the woman who inspired it

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WORDS: RICHARD GUNN PHOTOGRAPHY: NATIONAL MOTOR MUSEUM,  
RICHARD GUNN, ROLLS-ROYCE MOTOR CARS

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**E**leanor Thornton is one of the most famous women that most people have never heard of. Granted, in Rolls-Royce circles, she is somewhat better-known than she is in the wider world, where even her more distinctive moniker of Eleanor Velasco Thornton probably wouldn't ring a bell. And yet, despite such obscurity, there can be few spots left on the globe where her likeness isn't recognised, as she has become one of the most defining international icons of British prestige. Refer to her instead as the Flying Lady or the Spirit of Ecstasy and the penny will finally drop, for Eleanor was the model for the ornate radiator grille mascot that has adorned Rolls-Royce motor cars for over a century.

But how did a Victorian girl from humble London origins end up gracing some of the most elegant, most luxurious and most expensive cars ever built (and, of course, still continues to do so)? Her life story is shrouded in myth and fable, includes an illicit affair, and ends in tragedy during the Second World War. An early death would mean Eleanor never got to see just how well-known and much-loved her sculpture-in-motion would ultimately become.

Nelly Thornton was born on April 15th, 1880, in Cottage Grove, Stockwell, south London. It was not the most salubrious of areas, bordering one of the many railway lines fanning out from Victoria station. Today, although the street name remains, the site has completely disappeared

**Eleanor Thornton helped organise the Thousand Mile Trial of 1900, in which John Montagu came third with his Daimler**



under rather bland 20th century flats. Only the Victorian era The Falcon pub at the junction with Bedford Road is any sort of link with the location as the Thorntons would have known it. It's now impossible to see where number 18, the family home, once stood. Those seeking it will search in vain for any blue plaque to her memory.

The mysteries of Eleanor's life start with her parents; her Australian father, Frederick, was a telegraph engineer supposedly employed by the electric apparatus and machinery manufacturer Latimer Clark, Muirhead and Company, although the firm's successor doesn't have any records of him. Her mother was Sarah Anne, who some believe was Spanish thanks to her daughter's striking, rather Mediterranean good looks and the 'Velasco' name that Eleanor later appropriated. However, the truth seems to be that Sarah Anne's parents were true Londoners. As well as Nelly, the Thorntons also had another daughter, Rose, in 1887.

Nelly's family were at least affluent enough to send her to school, where she stayed until the age of 16. By then, she'd formalised 'Nelly' to 'Eleanor' and inserted 'Velasco' between it and her surname, presumably to appear more exotic than she really was, as she seemed keen on the idea of pursuing an acting career. However, the need for a more secure income also saw her take a job as a secretary for the newly-formed Automobile Club of Great Britain. This cemented her future path



**Claude Johnson, managing director of Rolls-Royce, who commissioned Charles Sykes to create what would become the Spirit of Ecstasy**

in life, for her boss there was Claude Johnson, later to become Rolls-Royce's managing director and, as he described it, "the hyphen in Rolls-Royce".

During her time there, Eleanor assisted Johnson with organising the 1900 Thousand Mile Trial across the UK, won by a certain Charles Stewart Rolls, albeit driving a 12hp Panhard. In third place was the Daimler of (deep breath) John Walter Edward Douglas-Scott-Montagu, a few years before he inherited the title of Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, in Hampshire. As one of the well-heeled motoring



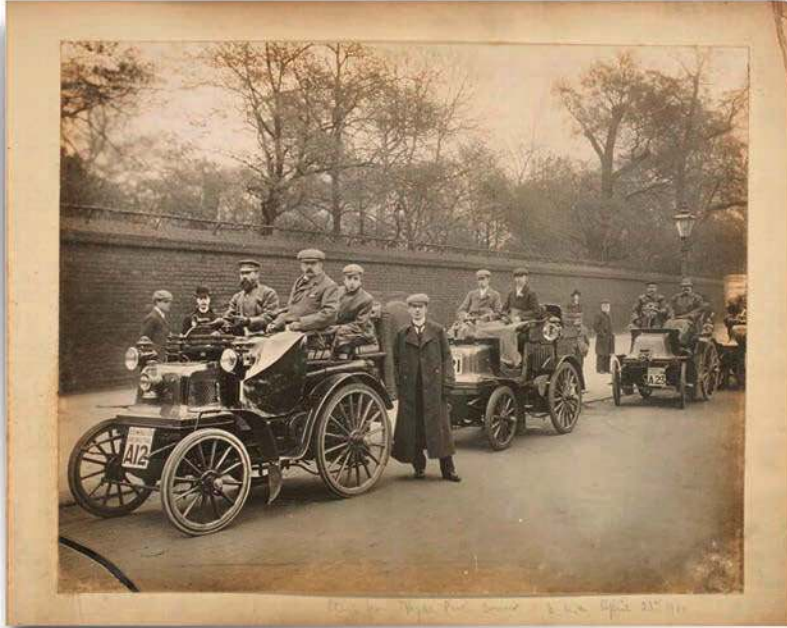
**John Douglas-Scott-Montagu in *The Car Illustrated* magazine's London offices, where Eleanor Thornton worked alongside him**

pioneers of the day, he would have been introduced to Eleanor while she worked for the organisation.

## THE THORN

The two seemed to hit it off, and in 1902 Eleanor left the Automobile Club and went to work for Montagu as his personal secretary and on his new *The Car Illustrated: A Journal of Travel by Land, Sea and Air* publication, Britain's first motoring magazine. The two also fell in love, despite Montagu being married. The affair remained largely »

## “Eleanor assisted Johnson with organising the Thousand Mile Trial across the UK, won by a certain Charles Stewart Rolls”

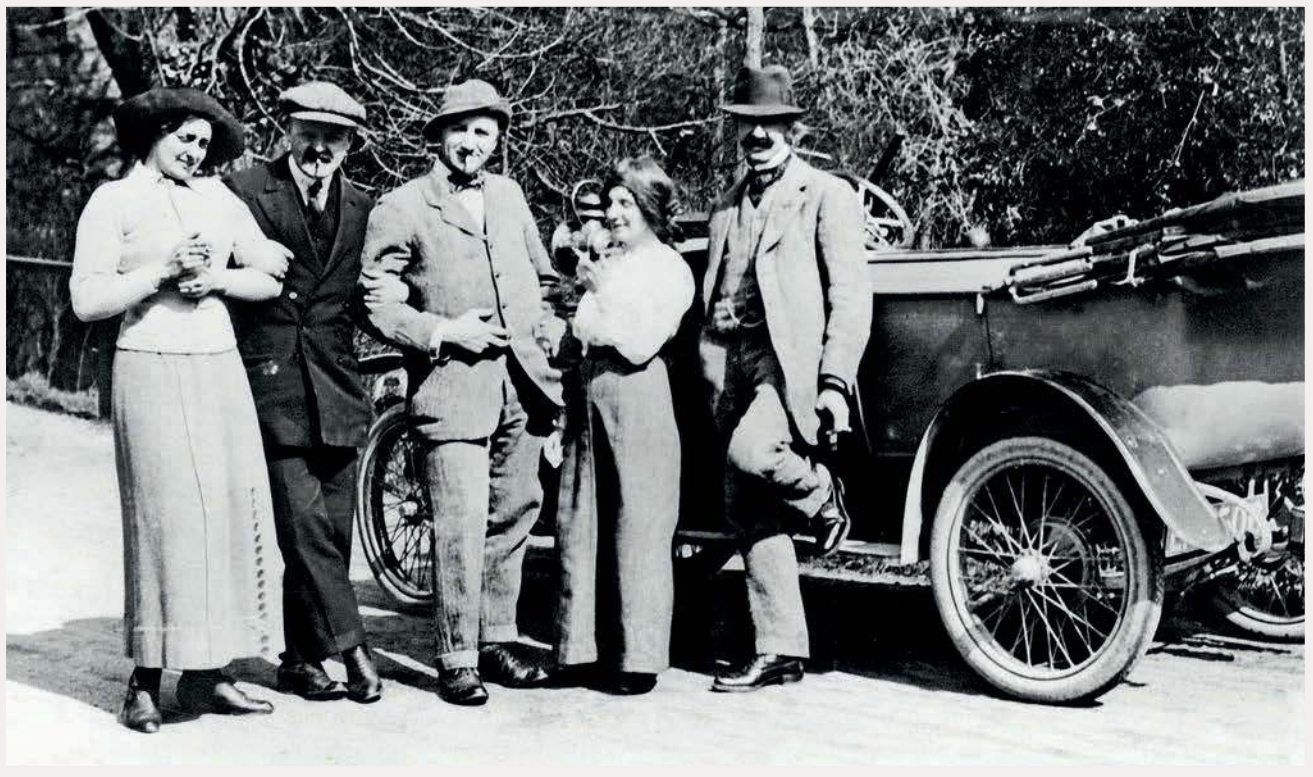


**The start of the Thousand Mile Trial at Hyde Park Corner on April 23rd, 1900 – an event won by Charles Rolls, with John Montagu third**

secret, even when 'Thorn' (as Montagu affectionately nicknamed his mistress) gave birth to an illegitimate daughter, Joan, in 1903. To avoid scandal and because of the social mores of the era, the baby was given up for adoption, although Montagu continued to provide for her. It seems that Lady Cecil Kerr, Montagu's wife, not only knew about the relationship but actually condoned it, even becoming a friend of Eleanor's in the process. Such was the Edwardian aristocracy...

An associate of both Eleanor and Montagu was the sculptor and illustrator Charles Sykes, via his freelance work for Montagu's periodical. Before long Eleanor started modelling for Sykes, appearing on the front cover of *The Car Illustrated* and as 'Alice' in *Alice in Motorland*, an automobile-orientated 1904 pastiche of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, written by Horace M. Wyatt with drawings by Sykes.

It therefore seemed only natural



**Eleanor Thornton on the left, along with sculptor Charles Sykes (centre), who would immortalise her in cast metal on the front of Rolls-Royces**



that when Montagu decided he wanted a personalised mascot for his 1909 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost, he should turn to Eleanor and Sykes, commissioning the sculptor to immortalise his secretary and mistress in cast form. The marque's cars already had the intertwined 'R's as their badge, but radiator ornaments were the choice of the owner. Sykes' artistic representation of 1910, christened The Whisper, portrayed Eleanor with robes flowing behind her and a finger raised to her lips, symbolising the secret love. Those who didn't know the truth generally assumed it was a reference to Rolls-Royce's very quiet engines, a convenient misinterpretation under the circumstances and a myth that persists to this day.

Simultaneously, Rolls-Royce itself was becoming concerned about some of the other mascots ending up on the front of its cars. The company considered many – such as caricatures of policemen, cats and dolls – not quite befitting of the prestigious image it wished to project. Claude Johnson had become the firm's managing director a few years previously and set about finding a more appropriate decoration that could be offered as an official accessory. He also turned to Sykes, having been introduced to him by Montagu, to see what he could come up with.

The brief that Johnson gave Sykes

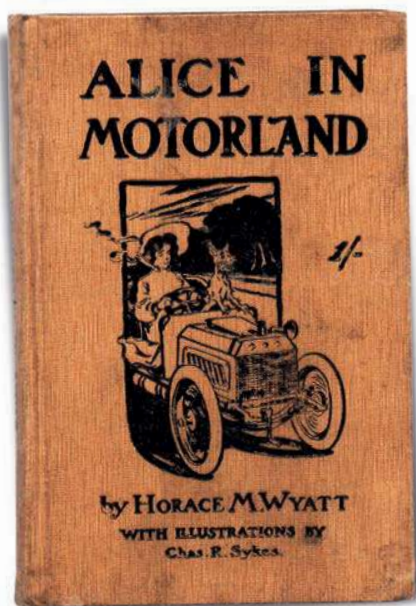
was he wanted something along the lines of the 'Winged Victory of Samothrace' statue in the Louvre, more commonly known as Nike, the Greek Goddess of Victory. Sykes managed to convince him that something a little softer (and not headless) would be more appropriate and decided to modify The Whisper, again using Eleanor as inspiration. This time, she was portrayed as bent forward, with her cape-draped arms outstretched behind. Initially known as the Spirit of Speed, it was Johnson who bestowed on it the name that persists today; "the spirit of ecstasy, who has selected road travel as her supreme delight... she is expressing her keen enjoyment, »



**The luxuriantly-moustachioed John Douglas-Scott-Montagu in military uniform during or shortly after the First World War**



**Eleanor Thornton, the little-known woman behind the Spirit of Ecstasy**



**Eleanor Thornton provided the likeness for Alice in 1904's *Alice in Motorland* parody serialisation, illustrated by Charles Sykes**

## “Remarkably, Henry Royce wasn’t keen on the radiator decoration when it was unveiled in February 1911”



**The Whisper mascot was commissioned by Lord Montagu and modelled for by his secretary and mistress, Eleanor Velasco Thornton**

with her arms outstretched and her sight fixed upon the distance.”

At this point, it should be noted that while Eleanor definitely was the model for The Whisper, it’s less clear-cut if she actually posed anew for the Spirit of Speed. The weight of opinion suggests she did – after all, it was a fresh creation, albeit based on The Whisper, and she was still one of Sykes’ favourite models. Friends at the time also presumed it was her. But until his death in 1950, Sykes never spoke publicly about Eleanor, probably out of respect for his friendship with her and Montagu. Among those who dispute that she sat (or rather stood) for the statuette was Sykes’ own daughter, Jo, who didn’t feel a person could have adopted the position for long enough to be sketched. She also regarded Eleanor as rather too “strong” and “statuesque” to be the delicate, sylph-like Spirit. However, Montagu’s

son Edward (the National Motor Museum founder, who died in 2015) expressed his “absolute certainty” that she posed. So did John Montagu’s doctor and confidant, Reggie Ingram, who said: “They shouldn’t have put Eleanor’s head on it”. The evidence is further strengthened by the fact that, after the death of Eleanor’s sister, Rose, among her possessions was a solid silver Spirit of Ecstasy that Sykes had given to Eleanor. And there’s the 1911 photo that shows her with Montagu’s Silver Ghost, which has been posed in such a way that both the lady and the mascot are deliberately in shot, as if trying to confer some link between them.

### **STANDING, KNEELING**

Remarkably, given its intrinsic links with the cars bearing his name, Henry Royce wasn’t keen on the radiator

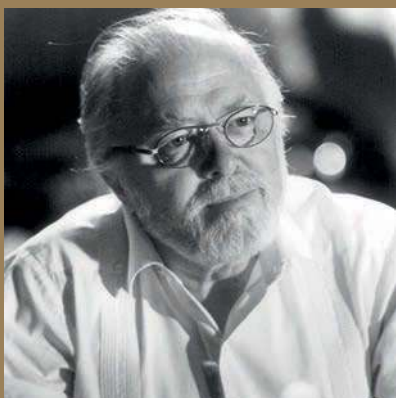


**Eleanor Thornton with one of the Montagu family Rolls-Royces in 1911, the same year the Spirit of Ecstasy (or Speed, as it was initially dubbed) was unveiled**

## THE STUFF OF MOVIES?

It's remarkable that, given the twists, turns and tragedy of Eleanor Thornton's life, nobody has yet made a movie about her. There has been an abortive attempt to do so, in addition to the short film that Rolls-Royce itself produced in 2016 about how the Spirit of Ecstasy came into being, narrated by Kate Winslet.

In 2008, it was announced that Oscar-winner Lord Attenborough, of



**Richard Attenborough, who died in 2014, co-developed *The Silver Ghost* movie**

*Gandhi* and *Shadowlands* fame, was to direct *The Silver Ghost*, starring Christian Bale and concentrating on the long term affair between Montagu and Eleanor. Edward, Lord Montagu, the son of John, was brought in as a consultant on the project, mooted to have a budget of £40 million. At the time, he expressed himself delighted with the prospect of a big screen adaptation: "It is a story that is obviously well-known within the family itself now. My father and Eleanor shared a great passion. It was a grand love affair – perhaps even the love of his life. All this happened before my father met my mother. But I understand my father's first wife knew about the mistress. She was very tolerant of her and they got on very well. It is a source of great pride for me that there is a connection between my family and Rolls-Royce, the most famous car in the world. I have known Lord Attenborough all my life... we couldn't be in safer hands."

Unfortunately, the world lost this safe pair of hands in 2014 when Attenborough died, followed by Lord



**Edward, Lord Montagu, acted as a consultant on the nascent *The Silver Ghost* film scheme when it was conceived**

Montagu a year later. The proposal then passed into Martin Scorsese's palms via its co-developer, Anthony Haas, and in 2016 it was revealed that the director behind the superb 2010 *Senna* biopic, Asif Kapadia, would be at the helm. To date, however, work has yet to begin...

decoration when it was unveiled in February 1911. He felt that it infringed the driver's vision, and to a certain extent he was right. Therefore, from 1934 to 1939, and then 1946 to 1956, a kneeling version was created, again by Sykes, to allow a better view on the new sleeker, sportier saloons of the era, after which a smaller standing variant was adopted instead.

Since the original, there have been eleven variations on the theme. The first mascots were silver-plated, but nickel or chrome alloy took over in 1914 in order to discourage thieves. Now though, your new Rolls-Royce can come with its Spirit of Ecstasy in stainless steel, 24-carat gold, illuminated frosted glass or matte black and studded with diamonds. Whatever would Charles Sykes have made of it all?

Eleanor herself wasn't around to see just how significant her statuette would become. She didn't even live to see it become a standard fitment, which happened in the early 1920s. Four years after she became the



**The tablet put up by Lord Montagu in Beaulieu parish church that memorialises Eleanor Thornton "who served him devotedly for fifteen years"**

'face' of the Best Car in the World, she was on the P&O's SS *Persia* near Greece, en route to India via Aden (in what is now Yemen), where Montagu was to take up a military command during the First World War. The ship was torpedoed by a German U-boat

on December 30th, 1915. Montagu survived but Eleanor was one of the 343 (of 519 on board) who died. Her lover was saved by his newly-invented inflatable waistcoat, after which he and a handful of other passengers survived in a damaged lifeboat for three days. »

**SPIRIT OF ECSTASY**  
**ELEANOR THORNTON**

Shortly before the pair sailed, Eleanor sent a letter to Lady Cecil, who had expressed herself "glad that Miss Thornton was going to Aden" with her husband. "You have the satisfaction to know that he will be well looked after," wrote Eleanor. "I do not think for one moment that there will be any trouble in the Med, but supposing? The Lord will have an extra chance, for there will be my place in the boat for him, even if he has to be stunned to take it."

Eleanor's body was never found. She is remembered today by a plain memorial plaque in Beaulieu parish church, which cites her as serving Montagu "devotedly for fifteen years". Rather ironically, it's just above a radiator. The church is within the grounds of the National Motor Museum; nearby are the two surviving castings of The Whisper out of only four ever made. One is on display in the Montagus' ancestral Palace House, a place Eleanor would have known well. The other tops a Rolls-Royce 40/50 New Phantom in the museum. Her real legacy, however, is the thousands of motor cars built since 1911 on which she is the crowning glory, distinguishing them from lesser machines – and she'll still be there on the Rolls-Royces of the future. As she led then, she leads now... even if few people know who she truly was, or be able to whisper her name. ■



**Charles Sykes in later life, with his daughter Jo. He would never discuss Eleanor, but Jo had her doubts that she was the Spirit of Ecstasy model**



**The 'Winged Victory of Samothrace' – the incomplete Greek statue that inspired Claude Johnson, who initially wanted something similar for the front of his company's cars**



**The Spirit of Ecstasy, created to discourage less appropriate mascots from degrading Rolls-Royces, and inspired by the earlier The Whisper**



**A later Charles Sykes reinterpretation of the Spirit of Ecstasy saw the figure adopt a less obstructive, kneeling posture which lasted from 1934 to 1956**

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# BATTLE OF THE BENTLEYS



**O**n the face of it, these would appear to be two very similar cars, albeit separated by an automotive generation: both expensive, glamorous two-door coupés, both bearing the winged Bentley badges and sharing the historic Continental model name which evokes images of streamlined Bentleys of the '50s whisking their occupants to the Côte d'Azur.

In practice, however, they're really very different: one is a hand-crafted

exclusive product that took the ageing Silver Spirit SZ-generation platform to its very limits, while the other was born from a brief to improve the sales volume of the Bentley brand in order to ensure its survival and is a temple to modern production processes and technology.

The pricing is perhaps the perfect illustration of their differences: the 1997 Continental R you see here would have been £187,000 before extras, while the 2008 Continental Speed GT retailed at £138,000. Factor in the

ten years between them and you see just how exclusive the older car was.

Few readers will have failed to notice the rising enthusiasm for modern-classic Bentleys in recent years; and as values of early examples fall, the high-tech GT is an enticingly affordable-to-buy proposition. As values of the older Continental R and T rise, meanwhile, they meet ten-year old examples of the later one on their way down, with a figure of around £40,000 being sufficient to secure a very nice

This modern-classic Bentley twosome offers an interesting dilemma for anyone with up to £45,000 to spend – but which one makes the most sense? We experience them both in order to find out

WORDS: PAUL WAGER PHOTOGRAPHY: GERARD HUGHES



example of either car. So which makes the better choice? We get behind the wheel of each in order to find out.

## CONTINENTAL R

Even in a modern streetscape filled with lumbering SUVs, the Silver Spirit-based cars remain imposing vehicles and the Continental is no exception. It's based, of course, on the same floorpan as the four-door saloons, yet somehow the extravagance of having a car this size

with just two doors adds to the occasion.

The Continental's shape has worn the passing of the years well, quite possibly because its basic three-box aesthetics weren't particularly on-trend when it first appeared. This is a product of Crewe going its own way, regardless of whatever automotive styling directions were in vogue at that moment in the mainstream market. As a result, what might at first sight seem like a straightforward two-door version of the Mulsanne/Spirit is in fact

a particularly elegant piece of work and very different from its four-door sibling.

The first unique Bentley model under Rolls-Royce ownership since the 1950s, the Continental was intended to replace the controversial Camargue as a range-topping model. It had its roots in the 'Project 90' concept that appeared at the 1985 Geneva motor show, produced after then managing director Peter Ward expressed a desire for a Bentley to stand apart from the Rolls-Royce models.

Styled by John Heffernan and Ken »

## THE TIME TO BUY BENTLEY COMPARISON

Greenley, the concept was revived as the more practical Continental R in 1988, based around a proposal for a replacement Rolls-Royce Corniche. One little-publicised fact is that the concept car inspired the Sultan of Brunei to commission the huge number of ultra-expensive special models which it's reckoned kept Rolls-Royce afloat during the next few years.

The total development budget for the Continental R (and its later Azure-badged convertible derivative) was tiny by car industry standards at just £19 million, and the car entered production in 1991 at the rate of around six units

per week. Although the Continental wore Mulliner badging, unlike the older coachbuilt Continentals they were constructed at Crewe using bodyshells supplied by Park Sheet Metal of Coventry, and were very much a factory production model.

Underneath, the running gear was identical to the contemporary Turbo R, which in the case of this 1997 example means 385bhp and 553lb.ft torque. Despite its not-inconsiderable bulk of 2.4 tonnes, that's enough to give the big coupé serious pace: 60mph from a standstill in just over six seconds, plus a top end of well over 150mph.



The Continental R employed the familiar 6.75-litre V8 in turbocharged guise

## LIVING WITH THE CARS

Under the skin, the Continental R is essentially a big Turbo R, which means it's very much like a Silver Spirit and by extension a Silver Shadow to live with. Your big issue will be the hydraulics, which if neglected can get costly when seals and similar need replacing – and remember, these cars use the hydraulics for the self-levelling as well as the brakes. As for parts availability, the bulk of the mechanical bits are shared with the saloons, so the usual Rolls-Royce and Bentley independent specialists will be able to oblige.

Since the Continental arrived late in the production of the SZ-generation cars, it benefits from the improvements made over the Turbo's lifetime, and so a good one can prove very reliable,

especially if it's used regularly.

The Continental GT can also prove to be a reliable bet... but that's only if you buy wisely and have a good helping of luck. Early cars can now be had for well under the £20,000 mark, but it's those early ones that suffered from the bigger problems, especially with the electrical system. One major issue involved the drain holes becoming blocked, which tended to cause the interior to fill with water over time. With various control modules positioned low in the footwell, this played havoc with the electrical system but can easily be avoided if the drains are checked regularly.

Another issue is the high-level rear brake light, a thin LED strip

running the width of the rear window, which tends to fail and can only be sourced from Bentley. You're looking at around £800 and it's not unknown for the glass to break when they're being changed.

Elsewhere, the W12 needs its cooling system to be up to scratch, so check the radiator and hoses for damage, while oil smoke suggesting worn turbos will obviously be bad news. A set of discs and pads can be £900, while the spark plugs are £180 for a dozen, with coil packs at £350 a set. Anti-roll bar link bushes are a common failure, although they are at least only £50 a side. It also pays to check the obvious: tyres are expensive and the split rim wheels are known to corrode.



**“The total development budget for the Continental R was tiny by car industry standards at just £19 million”**



It might seem an odd comment about a car that was the price of a decent house when new, but next to its younger brother, the Continental R seems classy and understated. The subtly flared arches give it a quiet, muscled presence without needing enormous rims and shallow-profile rubber to make it look the part. It's a similar story on the inside too, with the traditional wood and leather of the Rolls-Royce/Bentley cabin of the era being very different from the bright embellishments

and piano black gloss of the GT.

This car predates the era when cars with sporting pretensions had to have a racy 'engine start' button, so waking up the familiar 6.75-litre V8 involves nothing more than twisting a key in the dash-mounted ignition, with the age of the car's electrical architecture being betrayed by the separate alarm key fob.

The Continental R is impressively refined in the finest Crewe tradition; once you've swung the heavy doors shut, the engine note is reduced to

a distant 'woofling'. Lift the selector, slip it into Drive and with a lean on the long-travel throttle pedal the car oozes forwards. The R has a relaxed feel to it, which is notably different from the more eager GT, with a lazier engine note and a mellower demeanour. In urban traffic speeds, it barely needs to rise much above idle to trickle the car through traffic, but once the road clears it's happy to oblige. A distant, almost imperceptible whistle is evidence of boost building, with the »



## THE TIME TO BUY BENTLEY COMPARISON

proW rising slightly as the iron hand of that 553lb.ft pushes you in the back.

Even by today's standards, a well set-up Turbo R or Continental R is a fast car and it's easy to see why road testers of the time were so awe-struck back in the mid '90s; quite simply, a car of this bulk didn't really have any right to exhibit such pace. In some ways, however, the Continental R's age does show – the pattering over broken road surfaces for example, which the more rigid GT has licked courtesy of modern computer-aided bodyshell design. Nevertheless, for a 20-year-old car it's mightily impressive.



The Continental R's beautifully finished cabin is still a joy to encounter



“Few readers will have failed to notice the rising enthusiasm for modern-classic Bentleys in recent years”



## CONTINENTAL GT

The story behind the Continental R's high-tech descendant is a familiar one, so we'll keep the recap brief. When Volkswagen Group outbid BMW for Rolls-Royce in 1998, it later discovered that the rights to the Rolls-Royce trademark weren't part of the deal, which presented a fairly major blow to making the cars bearing the name.

With Volkswagen claiming that the Bentley brand was the prize it had wanted all along, a deal was eventually arrived at whereby Rolls-Royce cars would be built at Crewe until the end of 2002, with January of the following year seeing custodianship of the brand moving across to BMW and production shifted to a brand new plant at Goodwood. At that point, the historic Crewe factory – under Volkswagen control – would

produce only Bentley-branded cars.

A new Volkswagen Group model was already well under way in the unlikely shape of the VW Phaeton, said to be a pet project of company chief Ferdinand Piëch. It contained all the elements that would later go into creating the Continental GT, chief among them the W12 engine. Looking like a slightly bloated Passat, the anonymous Phaeton was packed with high-tech and, although in many ways a massively costly folly, it did allow VW to fast-track development of the all-important new Bentley.

The W12 engine first appeared in the Audi A8 of 2001 before being employed in the Phaeton the following year, although in Audi and VW guise it produced 'only' 414bhp. In order to match the mighty heft of the old Turbo

R models that Bentley customers were used to, it needed more – something that was duly achieved by bolting up a pair of KKK 'blowers' alongside much modification of the block and internals. The result was a handy 552bhp, backed up with 479lb.ft torque at just 1600rpm, driving through a six-speed ZF automatic specially developed for the car and adapted to work with its standard four-wheel drive.

All this technology was wrapped up in a body that was claimed to have been styled in-house in Bentley's Crewe studios, but which was actually the work of Dirk van Braeckel, a Belgian designer who had begun his VW Group career at Audi before heading up Skoda prior to his move to Cheshire. His brief was to recapture the Bentley heritage without producing »

## THE TIME TO BUY BENTLEY COMPARISON

something self-consciously retro... and he duly delivered. With its short front overhang and muscled haunches, the Continental GT had overtones of the R-Type Continental of the '50s but with a thoroughly modern clean look.

The structure of the bodysell itself was impressive, too. One of Piëch's goals with the Phaeton had been class-leading torsional rigidity and the Bentley followed suit. Making a car this size – especially one with pillarless side glass – rigid without being massively heavy is a big ask, but by using technology that included adhesive

bonding and laser welding, VW and Bentley were able to keep kerb weight down to 2350kg. It's a hefty beast, but not as hefty as it could be considering that it can seat four six-foot adults in comfort, yet achieve 198mph and sprint to 60mph in an impressive 4.7 seconds.

Underneath was found wishbones at each corner with anti-roll bars and an electronically controlled air suspension which allowed the car to squat by 15mm at 100mph. On the inside, the GT was a neat mixture of new world and old, with the high-tech elements neatly offset by subtle use of leather and hand finishing.

The Continental GT was announced to the press on March 3rd, 2003 at the Geneva motor show – and by March 24th, a staggering 3200 deposits had been taken for the new car. The enthusiasm was no doubt fuelled by the price, which at £110,000 was almost half that of the older, hand-built Bentleys.

After driving the older Continental, the GT is something of a culture shock. It's obviously a much more modern car and even before you get as far as the driving seat you'll have noticed little touches like the double-glazed side windows and the way the glass



The all-new GT's cabin managed to combine modernity with a 'proper' Bentley feel





drops to clear the seal as you pull the door handle. Inside, anyone who has spent time in a modern Audi will find the controls familiar, albeit many of them with a garnish of bright metal, a machined finish or similar to suit the Bentley's more extrovert cabin and remind you that this is no A4 diesel. This certainly isn't a criticism; after all, if you're going to borrow switchgear from anywhere, Audi is just about as good as it gets and there's no argument that the GT is beautifully put together.

The mighty W12 – which is in essence a pair of VW's VR6 engines on a common crank – springs to life either by twisting the key or jabbing the console-mounted start button, and its idle tells you just how different from the Continental R the GT's character is. With half as many cylinders again, it seems busier at tickover, more urgent but no less refined, although a blip of the throttle reveals an exhaust note which hints very obviously at the huge power on tap.

Pressing the big Bentley logo »

**“The Continental GT was announced on March 3rd, 2003 – and by March 24th a staggering 3200 deposits had been taken”**



## ONES TO BUY

We're grateful to Balmoral UK, based in the West Midlands, which has both of these cars in stock at the time of writing. The firm has specialised in Rolls-Royce and Bentley for a quarter of a century, and the cars on site on the day of our visit told their own story: everything from Phantom to Corniche and Continental GTC.

The 1997 Continental R looks superb in Peacock Blue, on 18-inch wheels and with navy-piped Sandstone leather. It shows just 57,500 miles and comes with a service history from Bentley main

dealers and independent specialists. There's a big history folder with the car and it's obviously been lovingly maintained. Recent work includes an air conditioning overhaul as well as brake and hydraulic work, and we can report that it drives really very well indeed. Balmoral UK is asking £44,950 for the car.

The Continental GT Speed is a 2008 example and, finished in Beluga with Magnolia leather with contrasting stitching, it's a striking beast. As with most of these cars, it offers a big spec that includes keyless

entry, sat-nav, electric seats and a powered boot – plus, of course, the 602bhp engine spec of the Speed, which was paired with uprated springs, dampers and anti-roll bars.

The car has been maintained within the Bentley dealer network for all of its life so far, the most recent being a service last month at Bentley Birmingham. With just 26,000 miles under its wheels, you're looking at an asking price of £39,950. To find out more about either car, call +44 (0)1562 711114 or go online to [www.balmoraluk.com](http://www.balmoraluk.com).

## THE TIME TO BUY BENTLEY COMPARISON



The Continental R and GT represent two very different approaches to Bentley coupé design

and selecting Drive, the car is more eager from a standstill than the older Continental, noticeably more responsive to smaller throttle inputs but despite its size, no more demanding to drive than a Golf. The steering at parking speeds is fingertip-light and the good visibility makes it easy to place in a crowded car park.

Out on the road, the GT is supremely refined and the way in which the immensely rigid shell manages to shrug off most of our scarred tarmac is one of the most noticeable differences between the two cars. Of course, the W12 is quite happy pootling along in the school run traffic, but when there's a clear stretch of road – and seriously, you'll need a fairly long bit of road – an ample squeeze of the pedal sees it surge forwards in a way the older Bentley can't hope to match. The huge torque makes it feel lighter than it really is, while the four-wheel drive gives it a 'planted' feel that makes it seem immensely secure.

On a gentle test drive near Balmoral UK's Halesowen premises, we were barely able to scratch at the car's huge performance, but we know from previous experience that these big coupés can really be made to hustle – as indeed anyone will know who saw the *Top Gear* episode in which a GT was rallied.

Ultimately, the strength of the Continental GT is in the way it manages to be so very ordinary in some ways and remain utterly outrageous in others, while conveying just as much a sense of occasion as the older car. Here is a Bentley your granny could happily drive to the supermarket, and if she sneezed at the wrong moment could easily find herself touching nearly 200mph without noticing.

### VERDICT

As we said at the beginning, these are two very different cars, which makes it both very easy and almost impossible to choose which one better deserves your £40,000 or so. The Continental GT is a car you could use every day, all year

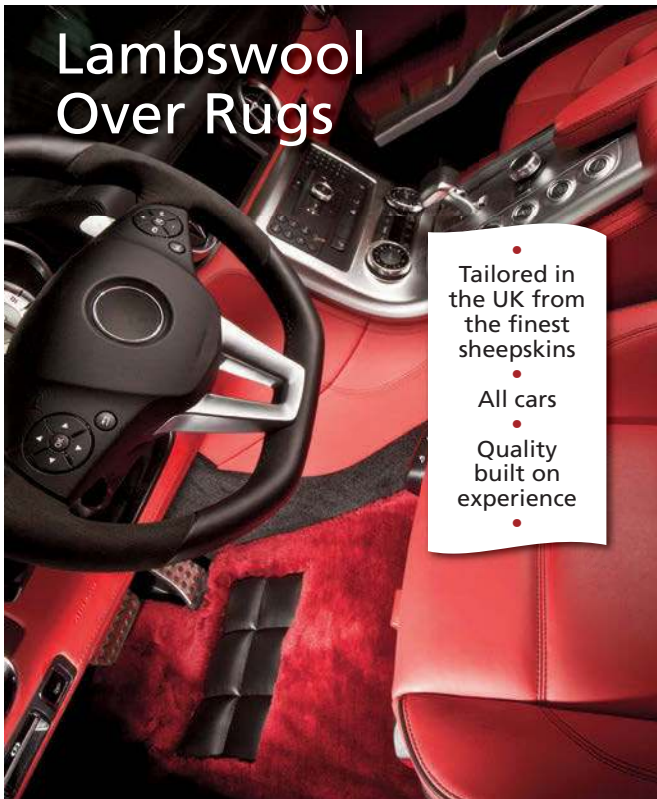
round, while the Continental R is of the age where to do that to it would be a shame. It's a car for special occasions, to be savoured and enjoyed as a reminder of times long gone, when Bentley didn't need to worry about sales figures or the tastes of Premier League players.

The Continental R is also likely to provide a very handy return on your investment in even the short to medium term, with values of fine examples seemingly on the up. By comparison, an excellent example of a decade-old Continental GT is still in the depreciation zone. All of which means that as a financial decision I'll take the Continental R – but if it's a non-stop dash to the South of France, then give me the Continental GT Speed every time. ■

### TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

	1997 Continental R	2008 GT Speed
Engine	6750cc V8	5998 W12
Transmission	5-speed auto	6-speed auto
Power	385bhp	602bhp
Torque	553lb.ft	553lb.ft
Top speed	151mph	202mph
0-60mph	6.1 secs	4.3 secs
Length	5.3 metres	4.8 metres
Weight	2402kg	2350kg

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## 1965 ROLLS ROYCE SILVER CLOUD 111 BY JAMES YOUNG

IMMACULATE CONDITION ONE OF 13 SCV100 BODIED CARS

1951 XK120 OTS | 1957 BRISTOL 405 | 1959 LANDROVER SERIES 11 | 1997 FERRARI 456 GTA | 2003 FERRARI 575M  
 SILVER / RED      OEW / RED      GREEN , CONCOURS      SILVER / NAVY 6K MILES      SILVER / NAVY, F1



# COACHBUILT CLASSIC

Built by James Young to body spec SCV100, this is one of just twenty such examples of the Silver Cloud III – a rather special car that’s currently for sale

WORDS: PAUL GUINNESS PHOTOGRAPHY: DANIEL POWELL

**B**y the time Rolls-Royce had unveiled the third generation of its stylish Silver Cloud and Bentley S-series in late 1962, the range was already seven years old and was inevitably heading towards the autumn of its career. Nevertheless, the Silver Cloud III succeeded in bringing some useful updates to the ‘Standard Steel’ factory-bodied models, including

distinctive quad headlamps, a slightly shorter radiator grille and a moderately more sloping bonnet – beneath which Rolls-Royce’s highly-praised 6.2-litre V8 offered an estimated 7% more power than before thanks to such changes as a higher compression ratio and larger twin SU carburettors.

Although relatively short-lived, the Silver Cloud III proved to be a major

success, with well over 2000 regular-bodied saloons being built, plus another couple of hundred long-wheelbase versions. Britain’s coachbuilding industry also embraced the latest range, however, with Rolls-Royce supplying a total of 328 chassis to UK-based specialist companies, which then created their own hand-built saloon, coupé and convertible variations on the Silver Cloud III theme.





The interior of James Young's SCV100 design was obviously exquisitely finished

Among those was James Young, who had already enjoyed success with coachbuilt models based around the Bentley S1 and S2, one of the most stylish being body design CV100 – a generously proportioned four-door, six-light saloon that employed the chassis of the S2 Continental. The arrival of the Bentley S3 for the 1963 model year saw the same basic design continue, albeit with a new quad-headlamp front end design to provide a visual link with the latest factory-built models.

A Rolls-Royce version of the updated James Young design was also developed, however, as James Taylor explains in *Coachwork on Rolls-Royce & Bentley 1945–1965* (Herridge & Sons, 2019): “At the Earl’s Court Show in autumn 1963, design CV100 was joined by a version called SCV100 that was for the newly available Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud III chassis with more raked steering column. The SCV100 »



## FEATURE CAR SILVER CLOUD III JAMES YOUNG

bodies brought a minor change in that their door handles were now blended in to a bright side moulding that extended along the full width of each door, but by 1965 this distinction between CV100 and SCV100 had blurred and the bodies for the Bentley chassis also had the side moulding."

Just twenty of the Silver Cloud III-based SCV100-bodied cars were built by James Young, as author James Taylor points out in his book: "The first of the SCV100 bodies was built on chassis SEV121 in 1963, and the last of twenty examples built was delivered

in December 1965 on chassis CSC115B, the one on chassis CSC117B having been delivered the previous month."

### PERFECT EXAMPLE

A rare sight when new, any James Young SCV100-bodied saloon is now a highly sought after member of the coachbuilt Silver Cloud clan, with asking prices having increased dramatically over the years as a result. The example shown here is one of the few for sale at the time of writing, and it carries an asking price of £185,000. With the specialist

dealer handling its sale suggesting it has "flawless paint, incredibly good brightwork and an interior which shows that perfect patina", it's obviously an extremely well-presented survivor.

Chassis number SHS343C first hit the road in January 1965, having been completed by James Young just a month before. With the car are copies of the original build sheets from both Crewe and James Young, detailing every aspect of the car, including its original owner's request for a fitted radio with a fully automatic aerial. The Rolls-Royce was supplied to its

Derived from the Bentley-based CV100 six-light design, SCV100 used the Silver Cloud III chassis



## “The Silver Cloud III proved to be a major success, with well over 2000 regular-bodied saloons being built”

first London-based owner by Jack Barclay, since when it has obviously changed hands a number of times.

This rare James Young creation has had serious sums of money spent on it over the years, including restoration work by P&A Wood totaling £45,000-

plus back in 1995. Finished in Regal Red with a grey hide interior, the coachbuilt Silver Cloud III now looks exquisite and is all set for its next custodian. If that person turns out to be a *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* reader, we'd be delighted to hear from them... ■

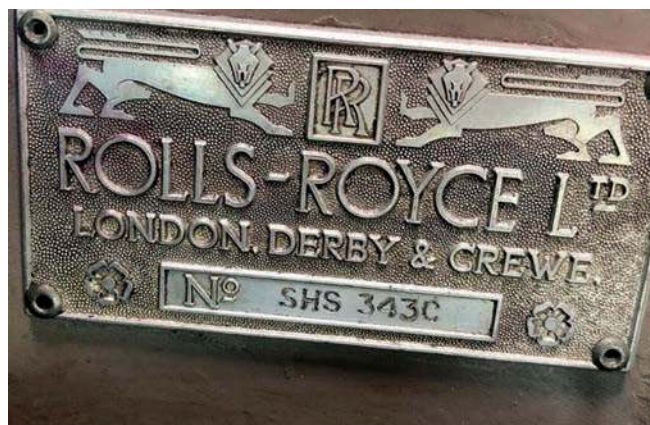


**FIND OUT MORE**

To find out more about this rare James Young-built Silver Cloud III, call Daniel Powell at Yorkshire Classic & Sports Cars on 01765 609798 or go online to [www.ycsc.co.uk](http://www.ycsc.co.uk).



This splendid example first hit the road in January 1965



# YOUR SHOUT

**Got something to say about anything Rolls-Royce or Bentley related? Then we want to hear it!**

Send an email to [rrb.ed@kelsey.co.uk](mailto:rrb.ed@kelsey.co.uk) or write to: The Editor, *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, Kelsey Publishing Ltd, The Granary, Downs Court, Yalding Hill, Yalding, Kent, ME18 6AL

## AUSTRALIAN SYSTEM

I recently found your magazine here in Putney, Sydney. Although I do not own one, I have always admired anything Rolls-Royce or Bentley related, and so I thought I'd send you a couple of photographs. The first is of a Rolls-Royce open-top tourer and a Morris 8, taken in about 1954 at Wauchope, about 250 miles north of Sydney. The Rolls-Royce owner must have been a keen fisherman, as on the back seat was a Coke bottle with fishing line wound around it! The other photo was taken in the lower Blue Mountains, forty miles west of Sydney at a pit stop for the Vintage Sports Car Club, showing a rather distant shot of two Rolls-Royces.

On the subject of registration numbers (mentioned on The Final Page of your September/October issue), I suggest you visit Shannons Number Plate Auctions, where you will find many older re-issues by Australia's transport department, as well as a few Rolls-Royces for sale. Some time ago, a single-digit plate was sold to a Chinese Billionaire who just held his buyer card up until all other bidders were wiped out. I forget the price paid but it was certainly substantial.



As you may know, here in Australia we don't have counties as in the UK, and so plates are just issued by the transport department as required, via its district offices. Each state has its own identification (NSW, VIC, SA and so on), and up until 1955 only Queensland required a rear number plate on any vehicle. Here in New South Wales, plates started with numbers only; I have seen number 1 and I used to regularly see a 1920s Austin Seven with the number 1234. When I

started as an apprentice toolmaker, my boss drove a 1947 Wolseley with the number 800, which had obviously been moved on from another car.

Our plates can be transferred from car to car, as we don't hold any credence with them coming from any particular area. These days the sky's the limit when it comes to names on plates, with owners' first names and surnames allowed as long as they fit the six figures.

Arnott's Biscuits, which started in 1865 in Newcastle, seventy miles north of Sydney, had an early product called an SAO – a cracker biscuit named after the Salvation Army Ordinance, with Salvo receiving an income from its sales. I only mention this as the company's delivery trucks had plates starting at SAO 000.

My daily transport for 46 years has been a 1964 Mercedes-Benz 220, registered as WR 022, which now has 320,000 miles on it and still stops and goes well when required to. I hope this has not been 'too much information' for you – keep up the good work with the magazine!

**Warwick Reynolds**  
Via email



## REGISTRATION NUMBERS

As a long standing Rolls-Royce and Bentley owner (my first 'proper motor car' was a 1959 Bentley S-series, acquired in 1973), I have been an avid reader of your magazine since its inception. Incidentally, I only joined the RREC in 1985 when I acquired a 1936 Rolls-Royce 25/30, as up until then I'd always assumed the club was just for pre-war cars!

With reference to your article on registration numbers (September/October issue), I bought my number – CT 50 – in 1974. It resonated with me because, having a long double-barrelled surname, I was always known by the initials CT at school, which then stuck with me. I attended a number of registration number rallies in the early 1980s (more to do with the variety of cars than the actual number plates) and there is a picture of me taken with my Bristol 411 Series 4 at such a rally in 1981, shown on page 50 of Tony Hill's book *The Concise Guide to Car Numbers*.

I totally agree with you about



cars keeping their original numbers if possible, and have used CT 50 only on my modern vehicles. You might be interested to learn that it was issued on December 15th,

1903 (and is therefore a very early number) and I bought it off its second 'owner'. Keep up the good work!

**Graeme Calvert-Thomson**  
Windermere, Cumbria

## SUV SOLUTIONS

As always, I enjoyed every page of the latest (November/December) issue of *Rolls Royce & Bentley Driver*, particularly your observations on The Final Page regarding the latest models. Passions are at both extremes when it comes to past and current designs of Rolls-Royce and Bentley, and while I am a traditionalist and find the older creations more appealing, I cannot but give respect to the latest models.

The SUV craze is largely a US creation. I have always found the SUV to be a monstrous and unattractive beast that cannot compare to the grace and beauty of a classic sports car or luxurious tourer. Indeed, the current models actually highlight the elegance of the classic designs of the past. Yet a new generation is driving the taste of modern design, which I fear expresses little appreciation of the finer creations of yesteryear.

One must appreciate the fact that Rolls-Royce and Bentley are



astute enough to monitor the pulse of change and have adapted accordingly. While many may not appreciate the SUV, at least Rolls-Royce and Bentley have improved its appearance with their unique touch of design. Both have softened the beastly look of the American monstrosity in a way that only they can manage, and in so doing have given additional longevity to both the

Rolls-Royce and Bentley marques.

Thanks again for such an incredible publication.

**Jeff Kelley**  
Oklahoma, USA

**Do other readers agree that Rolls-Royce and Bentley have managed to improve the SUV concept with the Cullinan and Bentayga? As ever, I'd love to hear what you think – Ed.**

## KEEN COLLECTOR

I read your article on registration numbers in the September/October issue and thought I'd drop you a line. I remember from a very early age (maybe seven or eight years old) being fascinated by unusual and interesting number plates, and even had a notebook in which I'd write down any that I saw.

My father bought a cherished number (4 MW) and as soon as I could I also started getting them for all of my cars. I started with R1CK W but was eventually made an offer that I just couldn't refuse, and so I sold it a few years ago. I now have W77LDE on my Bentley and R111CK W on a Porsche, but I'm always still on the lookout for any more interesting ones.

**Rick Wilde**  
Via email



## NEW-MODEL ENTHUSIAST

I am a new subscriber to *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* and am loving it. Every book on Rolls-Royce or Bentley has a couple pictures of the Silver Shadow and Silver Spirit/Spur and that's it. Within the magazine, however, it's great to see so many incredible photographs of the cars, plus the repair coverage, the owners' stories, the rare options... all of it is superb.

I personally appreciate all models covering the whole history of both marques. From the Silver Ghost to the Dawn, I love them. Because they were so unique and hand-built, each one has its own story – which brings me to the point of The Final Page in the November/December issue. It would have been a tragedy beyond compare to lose both lines after Vickers sold the company. Every new model – Continental GT, Flying Spur, Mulsanne, Dawn, Wraith, Ghost, Phantom, and even the Bentayga and Cullinan – are amazing vehicles. I stop at their

showrooms several times a year just to take in the magnificent products from the two marques. Nothing – nothing – compares to them in any way.

I just saw the new Continental GT on Friday for the first time, and can't wait to see the latest Flying Spur. I am also waiting with anticipation for the unveiling of the new Ghost next year. It would be wonderful to have your magazine feature the new models and updates to them as well. Not a token article, but full ones.

The point is this: while the new models are well beyond what I can afford, I want to read about them. Please don't ignore the offerings since Vickers, even the new ones. I am finally getting to see lots and lots of Rolls-Royce models in print, even ones I didn't previously

like. Your recent coverage of the Camargue actually converted me to thinking it wasn't so bad! This letter is scattered, but if I don't write it I will never get to it. Keep up the great work.

**Randall Shanks**  
California, USA

***Thank you for your feedback, Randall. Funnily enough, we have the latest Bentley Continental GT Convertible appearing in our next issue. Our priority will always be the classics but I feel it's interesting to show the current and future design directions of both marques. What do other readers think? Drop me a line with your views – Ed.***





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# GLANCING BACK, LOOKING AHEAD

The RREC concludes another successful year of events, seminars, road runs and other gatherings, with plenty more of the same planned for 2020



Thirty cars ranging from 1911 up to the present day assembling for the start of the RREC's castles tour



More than half a million people will line the streets of London to watch the RREC display in the New Year's Day Parade

Everybody loves a Rolls-Royce. Even those who are not 'into' classic cars stop in their tracks to admire a Silver Shadow if they see one parked in the street. Go back a little further in time to, say, a 20/25 or a Silver Ghost and the reaction is even more pronounced. And that's what makes so many RREC events such a spectacle – the chance to share the sight of these great cars with as many people as possible.

The recent tour of castles and grand houses in southern England is an excellent example, with RREC members coming from all around the world to take part in this 1000-mile drive. In cars ranging from a 110-year-old Silver Ghost with Roi des Belges coachwork through to a brand new Dawn, they broadly followed the coastline from Eastbourne to Cornwall before returning to Windsor for a memorable dinner in the Guildhall. Unsuspecting spectators along the route were treated to the sight of a convoy of thirty cars, three of them more than a hundred years old and still going strong, with participants coming from as far afield as California, South Carolina and Florida, while others travelled from France, Germany and the Channel Islands.

Just as the castles tour attracted RREC members from across the globe, so too will the next big event in the club calendar, as it is going to put a spectacular assortment of Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars dating from 1913 to the present day onto the world stage. The 2020 London New Year's Day Parade will involve more than 8000 performers representing the London boroughs and countries from around the world, a fantastic event that attracts around 600,000 roadside spectators and millions more watching live TV broadcasts in the UK and abroad.

Among all the dancers, acrobats, cheerleaders, marching bands and pageantry, there will be an



unprecedented array of around sixty RREC cars divided into three groups. The first group will comprise six of the most impressive early open motor cars (such as Silver Ghosts, 20HPs and Phantoms), each of which will carry two celebrity guests in a position near the front of the parade, following behind the Lord Mayor's coaches. About an hour later, a line-up of around 25 Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars dating from between the two World Wars will join the middle of the parade, and these will be followed by another 25 or so vehicles about three quarters of the way through the procession to provide a great finale to our display.

Looking ahead to next year, following the success of 2019, the RREC is planning an even further enhanced series of technical seminars. Tuition by industry experts makes these great events an absolute must for new and existing owners alike; places are limited to ensure personal attention, and all the previous seminars have been a sell-out. All eras from the earliest pre-First World War cars right through to Silver Spirits will be covered during 2020, catering for every level of knowledge. These are great social weekends as well as practical sessions.

## EXTRA BENEFITS

It was terrific to see so many existing RREC faces on our stand at the recent Classic Motor Show at Birmingham's NEC, and to welcome scores of new members to the fold. We hope they will all enjoy the many benefits of being involved with the club.

**"..everyone with an interest in the cars can meet like-minded enthusiasts and enjoy them together"**



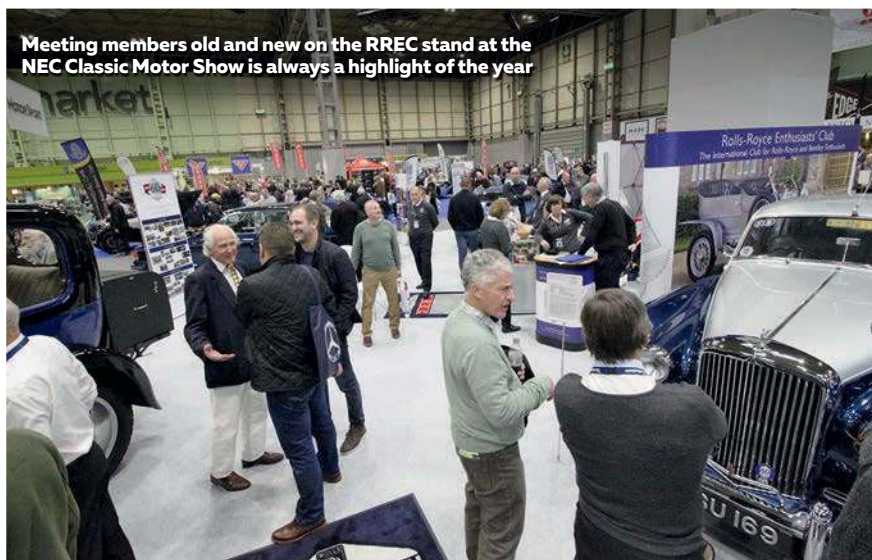
**The three-day Birmingham-based NEC event attracts large crowds of enthusiasts**

We are also delighted to be able to highlight the new stock in the RREC's enhanced club shop. In addition to the existing range of merchandise, literature and handbooks, we have adopted the drop-shipping method for all branded club clothing, which means that all items are now made to order in as many sizes and colours as you could imagine.

RREC members are now also able to benefit from a range of exclusive discounts from top brands such as Antler luggage, the National Trust,

RAC, Flying Spares, Rybrook Rolls-Royce's owners' loyalty programme and Pickett hand-made leather goods.

Membership of the RREC covers every aspect of Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars, including researching, buying, restoring and running them – and you don't even need to own one to join the club. Most of all, it's about a welcoming, inclusive, friendly atmosphere in which everyone with an interest in the cars can meet like-minded enthusiasts and enjoy them together. ■



**Meeting members old and new on the RREC stand at the NEC Classic Motor Show is always a highlight of the year**

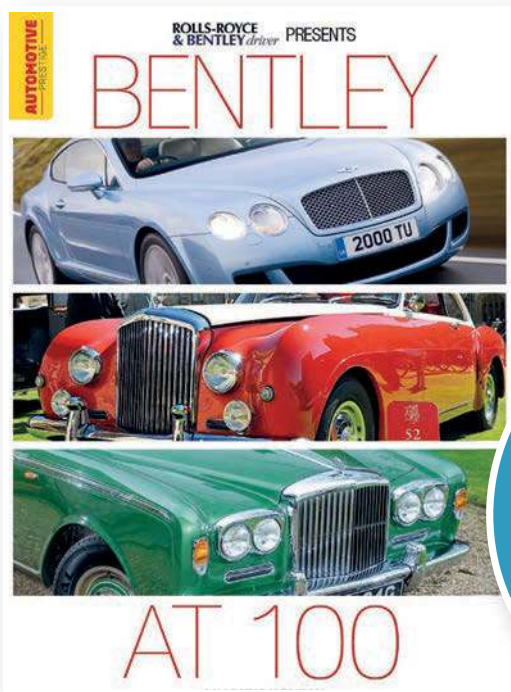


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# ROLLS-ROYCE & BENTLEY *driver*

PRESENTS

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# RECORDS BROKEN AT BLENHEIM

The BDC's 2019 Concours d'Elegance proved to be a record-breaking event, with the club's ambition of '1001 Bentleys at Blenheim' being well and truly achieved



Early arrivals heading through the palace gates, led by Mark Woolley's 4½ Litre Tourer and a Continental GT



A record-breaking 1321 Bentleys attended the BDC's 2019 Concours d'Elegance at Blenheim Palace

The Bentley Drivers Club managed to absolutely smash the '1001 Bentleys at Blenheim' target for its annual Concours d'Elegance, held on Sunday 8th September – with an incredible world record gathering of 1321 magnificent Bentleys eventually parking up on the historic palace's pristine lawns.

Under gloriously sunny skies, a huge number of members, guests and Bentley enthusiasts poured through the Blenheim Palace gates for the latest BDC Concours – held in association with Salon Privé – to browse the wonderful array of assembled cars and to enjoy the day's special garden party atmosphere. And of the 1300-plus Bentleys of all ages and models in attendance, perfectly highlighting the marque's illustrious 100-year history, it was BDC member Dean Kronsbein's beautiful 1953 R-Type Continental that was eventually named Best in Show.

Some sixteen prizes were up for grabs across the various classes, including Concours (from which the Best in Show was chosen from forty stunning Bentleys), Patina (in which judges assessed a record 300 entries) and the Inter-Regional Team Challenge, all of them being presented against the »

spectacular backdrop of the celebrated palace. Aside from Dean Kronsbein claiming the W.O. Bentley Memorial Foundation Trophy for Best in Show, Dutch member Maurits van Son's 1928 4½ Litre Jarvis-bodied boat-tail took the Bentley Trophy as the overall Patina winner, while the Mid-West Region retained the Kensington Gardens award thanks to its three-car team of John Harris (1926 3 Litre Vanden Plas Tourer),

John Churchill (1938 4¼ Litre Derby) and Terry Unwin (1957 S1 Continental).

Adding to the memorable spectacle, which proved to be a photographer's paradise, was a special Exhibition class showcasing twenty superb models that represented Bentley's storied 100-year history. Among these were two incredibly rare models: Dean Kronsbein's 1947 MkVI Franay Cabriolet, one of only two in the world, and fellow club

member Jack Henley's 2008 Continental GT Zagato, of which only nine were built. Also on display was a unique pop art car, a Continental GTC V8 S, whose striking paintwork was designed by celebrated artist Sir Peter Blake. Meanwhile, an entertaining lunchtime diversion to proceedings, with all eyes cast eagerly skywards, was provided by a special Spitfire fly-past courtesy of BDC member David Ratcliffe.



**Overall winner of the Bentley Motors Trophy in the Patina class was Maurits van Son's 4½ Litre Jarvis boat-tail**



**Ian Griffiths' Continental T and Michael Stephenson's R-Type looked resplendent alongside the River Glyme**



**Dean Kronsbein is presented with the trophy for his victorious R-Type Continental by Emma Crickmay of Frank Dale & Stepsons**



**Peter Rae's 1926 3 Litre Vanden Plas Tourer set against a particularly scenic backdrop**



**Club president Duncan Wiltshire (left) and Bentley Motors' CEO flank W.O. Bentley's step-grandsons, David Northey and Johnny Hutton**



**This rare T-Type Special single-seater race car was proudly shown off by Ben Eastick**

Two special presentations were made on the day, with James Bhebhe receiving a '1001' gold plaque on behalf of his brother, Ernest James, whose idea it was to aim for 1001 Bentleys at Blenheim. And the US-based Rolls-Royce Owners' Club presented a special gift to the BDC to mark both the Concours and the two clubs' close affiliation.

To ensure proceedings kicked off in fine style, the BDC hosted a special »



**Judges Mike Haig and Tom Commander checking out John Coxon's 1935 Derby Special**



**For his winning Continental Drophead, Peter Cobbold receives the R.A. Parker Trophy from Stuart Parker of Team Parker Racing**



**The Daks Trophy was presented to Ray Cook for his MkVI Convertible by Ron Warmington, BDC director**



## BEST IN SHOW: 1953 R-TYPE CONTINENTAL

Smitten by the R-Type Continental when reading an article about the model, Dean Kronsbein purchased his award-winning car at Coys' True Greats auction in December 2010. It had previously lived in Sweden and Switzerland before returning to the UK. Although the R-Type was in sound condition, P&A Wood undertook a six-year major restoration to return it to concours condition.

Dean drove the Brewster Green-coloured car for the first time to

last year's Concours d'Elegance at Stonor Park, where it impressed the judges so much that they awarded it the Frank Dale Trophy for the Best R/S-Type Continental.

"It's overwhelming and a very nice feeling to win - I certainly didn't expect it," said Dean upon receiving his Best in Show award. "In fact, on the way here the car actually broke down! I would like to thank all the club members and enthusiasts for coming along and enjoying a splendid day here at Blenheim Palace."



**Attracting attention in the Specials class was John Coxon's winning Derby Sports**



**Jack Henley's eye-catching Continental GT Zagato in the Exhibition class**



**Tom Dine's 3 Litre adorned the entrance to the W.O. Bentley Memorial Foundation marquee**



**The President's Trophy was awarded to Sir Michael Kadoorie and his Speed Six Dual Cowl Tourer by Duncan Wiltshire**



**The Mid-West Region retained its title thanks to the three-car line-up of John Churchill's 4¼ Derby, Terry Unwin's S1 Continental and John Harris' 3 Litre VDP Tourer**

pre-event dinner for around 140 members and guests at the stylish Heythrop Park Resort, in the heart of the Cotswolds, while 250 guests also enjoyed a dinner in the sumptuous surroundings of Blenheim Palace.

Commenting on the 2019 Concours d'Elegance, BDC president Duncan Wiltshire said: "To smash the 1001 target by over 300 cars is a truly fitting tribute to the Bentley marque's centenary. To say the assemblage

made for an unforgettable spectacle is an understatement! The club would like to sincerely thank all our members and guests who attended the event, along with Bentley Motors and Salon Privé for their amazing support in helping us achieve this incredible turnout. I also thank all the club's judges and volunteers for their excellent efforts, and congratulate Dean on his deserved success – his gorgeous R-Type was a worthy winner." ■



**A 1940 MkV Park Ward Sport Saloon outside the marquee of event sponsor, Formhalls Vintage & Racing/Historic Competition Services**

## SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

At the '1001 Bentleys at Blenheim' event, the US-based Rolls-Royce Owners' Club's Ralph Curzon presented a special plaque (inscribed 'Bentley 100th Anniversary Tour Host') to BDC chairman Richard Parkinson. Several members of the RROC were at Blenheim Palace to witness the presentation.

"The gift is a thank you for inviting us to this special event," explained Ralph. "The US often talks of its special relationship with the UK. Well, we have our own special relationship

and long may it continue!" Richard Parkinson then thanked the RROC members for coming "all the way from the US", and added: "We are very grateful for this and will treasure it."

Meanwhile, James Bhebhe received the '1001' gold plaque on behalf of his brother, Ernest James, whose idea it was to aim for 1001 Bentleys at Blenheim: "I am extremely honoured to receive this special award," said James, after having it presented by BDC director Ron Warmington and general manager Nick Wilkes.



**Richard Parkinson accepts a commemorative RROC plaque from Ralph Curzon**



**James Bhebhe receive the special '1001' gold plaque from Nick Wilkes (left) and Ron Warmington**



**W.O. Bentley's own personal transport – this famous 8 Litre saloon – attracted plenty of attention**



**Peter Morris receives a trophy for his 4¼ Litre Saloon from David Northey and Johnny Hutton – W.O. Bentley's step-grandsons**

# Bentley

## DRIVERS CLUB

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• PART 4 •

## PROJECT SILVER SHADOW II: EXHAUSTING WORK

The installation of a Servicentre stainless steel exhaust system called time on this Silver Shadow II's poorly manifolds, which have now been replaced with brand new items from IntroCar

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: DAN FURR

**T**he Silver Shadow II project progress report published in the September/October issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley*

*Driver* showcased the fantastic work carried out by Servicentre, the leading manufacturer and supplier of exhaust systems for classic (and modern classic) Crewe cars. Regular readers will recall the amazing stainless steel pipework fabricated for my Silver Mink stunner, not to mention the mountain of new genuine Bentley fitting hardware used to install the comprehensive front-to-back system at Servicentre's workshop in Friskney.

It was great to be able to bid farewell to the tired mild steel exhaust, which seemed to have developed a blow at every joint. Crude repairs appear to have been carried out by one of the car's

previous owners, evidenced by a poorly welded link pipe and vast quantities of Gun Gum residue splattered all over the original silencers. As a 'quick fix' to enable the car to pass its first MoT test in years, I replaced compromised parts of the system, including a dodgy downpipe, with components from a used mild steel exhaust sourced through eBay, but this was only ever intended to be a temporary arrangement.

Adding insult to injury, the offside rear exhaust manifold gasket failed. At first, the resulting ticking noise only presented itself on start-up, quietening to an inaudible level when the V8 reached regular operating temperature. When Servicentre workshop manager, Matt Dawson, removed the mild steel parts and worn supporting hardware before installation of the shiny new

stainless exhaust, he confirmed the leaking gasket's manifold appeared to be in good shape, but the corresponding nearside part? Not so much. Evidence of messy crack-patching welding was clear to see, and though the part didn't appear to be leaking, Matt reasoned that disturbance caused by removal of the old exhaust, plus the fitting, adjustment and fine-tuning of the stainless system, was likely to signal the end of the road for the previously repaired part. I added a new manifold to my continually expanding shopping list.

The weeks following fitting of the gorgeous Servicentre stainless system went by in a flash. I was getting plenty of seat time in the large barge, but the noise I'd previously associated with the busted manifold gasket was taking longer to quell with each successive »





**1**  
With the Servicentre stainless exhaust system's downpipes removed, Sean started the arduous task of freeing the old manifold bolts



**2**  
Non-related parts, including intake components, needed to be removed to allow access to the top of the outside exhaust manifold



**3**  
Down below, steering components needed to be removed to allow enough space to drop the same manifold from where it has been sitting for the past four decades



**4**  
Some of the bolts were stuck fast, while some were only finger tight – but most bolts put up a fight, refusing to come loose and remaining seized into their collars



**5**  
Needless to say, Matt and Sean had more than their fair share of snapped bolts to contend with!



**6**  
When the nearside manifold eventually came free, it was apparent the previously welded part had severely cracked



**7**  
Brand new Silver Shadow exhaust manifolds can now be bought directly from IntroCar's Prestige Parts range – much to Dan's relief

trip out onto the open road. As you may recall from my last project update, I was also preoccupied with a failed windscreen seal. Understandably, securing a dry cabin was more of a priority than stopping the car from sounding like an American muscle machine, but the noise suddenly became a permanent feature of the V8. Searching classifieds for a replacement manifold didn't yield positive results, and even leading independent Rolls-Royce and Bentley parts supplier, IntroCar, was only able to offer a reconditioned manifold on an exchange basis. Knowing the part I'd be sending

the company had already been repaired, I didn't hold out much hope of the firm's technicians being able to make much use of it. I pressed the pause button and hoped a breaker would offer an uncompromised manifold at low cost on eBay before too long.

All good things come to those who wait, right? This was certainly the case when, after coming to the conclusion I'd have to bite the bullet and accept a reconditioned manifold in the hope IntroCar could recommission the part I'd be sending them, the London outfit's sales executive, Phil Xiberras, informed me that brand new Silver Shadow II

exhaust manifolds were now available to order for immediate despatch. New parts meant no exchange to worry about, with the added bonus of a three-year warranty and a purchase price not far removed from what I was quoted for reconditioned parts. Take my money, take my money!

### EXPERT HELP

Though Servicentre supplies most of its Rolls-Royce and Bentley exhaust systems (and individual exhaust components) through mail order, the company's convenient close proximity



**8** A fresh selection of new gaskets to accompany the new exhaust manifolds



**9** New manifold bolt collars (also known as 'distance piece exhaust manifold screws') were ordered from the IntroCar online store



**10** You can't have new bolt collars without bolts to slot through them, right? For attaching the new manifolds to the engine, we now had all the parts required for the job



**11** With the compromised nearside manifold removed, it could be placed in a vice for the extraction of its heat exchanger, which could then be fitted to the new manifold



**12** When working with old cars, things are never straightforward - which is why Matt brought out the big guns in order to apply heat to the heat exchanger to ensure its removal



**13** A removed heat exchanger requires a new gasket for installation on a new manifold (or reinstallation on a repaired manifold), and once again IntroCar was on hand to help



**14** Ever wondered what the heat exchanger in your Silver Shadow II's nearside exhaust manifold looks like? Wonder no more!



**15** With the old nearside manifold rendered scrap, the heat exchanger took its place in Matt's vice, before he proceeded to clean the part in advance of its installation in the new manifold

to where I live meant that a trip back to Friskney to take Matt up on his offer of a post-installation inspection of the new stainless exhaust system was a no-brainer. During the course of our conversation, I'd explained the problems I was having with what he'd predicted as being a failed nearside manifold, in addition to the previously reported busted offside gasket. It made little sense to fine-fettle a new stainless exhaust system if blowing manifolds were honking away up-front, which is why he offered to fit the new IntroCar-supplied hardware if I could bring it with me when the car was scheduled

## “It was great to bid farewell to the tired mild steel exhaust, which seemed to have developed a blow at every joint”

to be raised on the Servicentre ramp.

I duly placed an order with IntroCar for a pair of new front manifolds, all related bolts, gaskets, joint collars and the pair of heat exchanger stove pipes linked to the nearside manifold. Removal of the old parts, however, wasn't as straightforward as you might

think. Seized (and snapped) bolts, tight spaces to work in the engine bay and non-related intake and steering parts causing an obstruction provided Matt and his colleague, Sean Clarke, with no end of trouble. Put it this way, watching Sean working from above, Matt working from below and witnessing the »



**16**  
A snug fit for the heat exchanger in the shiny new nearside manifold!



**17**  
We're whizzing through the process here, but after agonising work removing the seized old equipment and working in the narrowest of spaces, the troublesome manifold was finally replaced



**18**  
The heat exchanger is linked to the intake and choke assembly by two braided stove pipes, with these IntroCar items being pre-moulded to ensure a perfect fit, and bent using original factory equipment



**19**  
And relax! Well, not quite as Matt and Sean now had the offside manifold to fit...



**20**  
With the obstructing hardware already removed, the new offside manifold, its gaskets, bolts and joint collars were fastened into place



**21**  
It was finally time to reinstall and fine-tune the Servicentre stainless steel exhaust system, safe in the knowledge that any disruption to gas flow (and any consequent loss of power) was a thing of the past

22



Just a couple of months since their original installation, the genuine Bentley-branded clamps, olive rings and fasteners were returned to their natural habitat

23



With the stainless pipework back where it belongs, Sean adjusted each mount to ensure a perfect fit and finish

24



Get this part of the process wrong and you may find the height set by the mounts causes pipework to hit the chassis over bumps or when the engine is delivering heavy torque

25



With the work complete and a test drive proving successful, the car is now running like a dream and sounds amazing thanks to an immensely satisfying exhaust note

necessary application of heat, patience, the world's biggest prybar, power tools and the despatching of various ratchets to the great workshop in the sky confirmed the situation's suitability for the phrase 'don't try this at home'.

Eventually, the car gave in to Servicentre's demands and allowed the old exhaust manifolds to be liberated. Close inspection of the previously welded nearside part showed its condition – and the extent of previous repairs – to be much worse than anticipated. In line with Matt's foretelling, the crack-hiding weld had failed, but what we hadn't realised is that it went all the way around the manifold, as though holding two halves together as one. Indeed, we were sure that if it hit the floor hard enough, it'd snap in two! No wonder the under-bonnet racket had got so bad in recent weeks.

Fortunately, the part held together enough for it to be fitted into a vice for removal of its internal heat exchanger, which was promptly installed into the new replacement manifold following a thorough clean. Cylinder head mating surfaces were prepared for the installation of the new parts, with the tricky job of fitting fist, socket and ratchet into the previously mentioned tight spaces in order to torque each manifold into place. It was a long, laborious job, but Matt and Sean were absolute troopers, never complaining (unless you count Sean registering concern that I'd ignored his instruction for sugar-free tea by delivering him a decidedly sweet cup of the brown stuff) and seemingly more determined to conquer the challenge I'd presented them with the more my car refused to play ball.

With the new manifolds, fitting

hardware, gaskets and heat exchanger stove pipes in place, reinstallation and fine-tuning of the extended exhaust system commenced. Then, at long last, it was time for the all-important test drive. I'm not exaggerating when I tell you it's as though I was in charge of a completely different car. No more nasty blowing noises from the engine bay, an absolutely gorgeous exhaust note and restored power under load. Bliss! I can't thank the Servicentre boys and company boss, Kathy Morgan, enough for their help. ■

## THANK YOU

Our thanks to the following for their assistance: Servicentre (tel. 01754 820798, [www.rrexhausts.co.uk](http://www.rrexhausts.co.uk)), IntroCar (tel. 0208 546 2027, [www.introcar.co.uk](http://www.introcar.co.uk)).

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• SPECIALIST VISIT •

# CONTINENTAL DRIFT

Although highly experienced in all post-war Rolls-Royce and Bentley models, Stewart Walker has in-depth knowledge of the Continental GT and GTC – giving him a unique advantage in today’s market

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: PAUL GUINNESS

**M**any of today’s independent Rolls-Royce and Bentley specialists trained at the company’s Hythe Road facility in London, and Newbury-based Stewart Walker is no exception. Training there during the 1970s, Stewart gained invaluable experience in all aspects of Rolls-Royce servicing,

repairs and restoration, paving the way for a successful career with numerous official dealerships before setting up his own business in 1993. Fast-forward almost 27 years and Stewart finds himself in a fascinating position, renowned as an expert in the 2003-on Bentley Continental GT and GTC models that play such an important

role in today’s modern-classic market.

“I do, of course, carry out work on other Bentley and Rolls-Royce models, so you’ll often find a Silver Spirit, Silver Shadow or even a member of the Silver Cloud family in my workshop,” he explains on the day of our recent visit to his Berkshire premises. “But after buying one of the first Continental



**The Continental GT offers good value on today's upmarket modern-classic scene**



**Stewart is a member of the Rolls-Royce & Bentley Specialists' Association**



**Stewart Walker's latest premises are immaculately presented and well laid-out**

GTs after its launch in 2003, which was followed by several others, I quickly gained experience of the car's faults and how to deal with them."

Compared with previous models, the new generation of Bentley Continental was highly complex in specification, bringing challenges for many owners as the cars began to age and problems inevitably began to occur. This is where Stewart's expertise in faults diagnosis comes into its own, although almost half a century spent working on Rolls-Royce

and Bentley models of all descriptions means he's able to offer help to the owners of most of today's classics.

"My training began at the Rolls-Royce factory training school at Hythe Road, after which I was employed as a technician by H.R. Owen before moving on to Jack Barclay," recalls Stewart. "In those days it wasn't unusual for mechanics to become known to other official dealerships, and I was made an offer by Lex Mead of Weybridge, Surrey. After that I went to work for a Rolls-Royce

dealership – Scarritt St Petersburg – in Florida, returning to the UK in 1983."

Ten years later, Stewart decided to take the plunge and become self-employed, having recently carried out repairs to a local trader's Silver Shadow. The owner of the Rolls-Royce was so pleased with the standard of work, he offered Stewart use of a vacant workshop that he owned, thereby solving one of the obvious problems of setting up in business. It proved to be a successful move for Stewart, and just a couple of years »

## SPECIALIST VISIT STEWART WALKER LTD

later his fledgling company expanded into larger premises near the Berkshire town of Thatcham, where he would remain for the next 23 years.

### NEW LOCATION

Now based just off the A34 in Newbury, Stewart's current premises are relatively compact but highly impressive, housing the four or five Continental GTs and GTCs that he normally has available for sale, as well as the immaculately presented workshop facilities where he carries out the servicing and repairs that his loyal clients demand: "It's strange really, but since I moved here in early 2019 I've been busier than ever, with a lot of new business coming through."

Some of that extra work may well be down to the sheer complexity of the modern-day Continentals with which Stewart is so closely linked, which explains why many of today's independent specialists prefer to focus on earlier cars: "The big problem with a Continental GT can be accurately tracing a fault," admits Stewart. "It's one thing to have the kind of diagnostic equipment necessary for fault-finding, but being able to accurately interpret the results is also key. Fortunately, we've had so many GTs and GTCs here with faults that are now very familiar, we trace a problem far more quickly than a regular garage might. I also work in conjunction with another expert in the Continental GT, which means there's nothing we can't

diagnose and find a solution for."

As Stewart points out, the Continental doesn't just rely on complex electronics for its functionality, but also a far-from-simple vacuum system: "The engine bay is full of pipes, as the whole car basically runs on vacuum," he says. "These pipes and their joints can often suffer from leaks, which affect the whole system – but simply relying on electronic diagnostics can send a technician in completely the wrong direction. One of the first things we do, for example, is a smoke test in which we isolate the system, connect a Snap-On smoke machine and check for any signs of smoke escaping, which then not only proves there's a leak in the system but also pinpoints exactly where."

Stewart demonstrates this on a



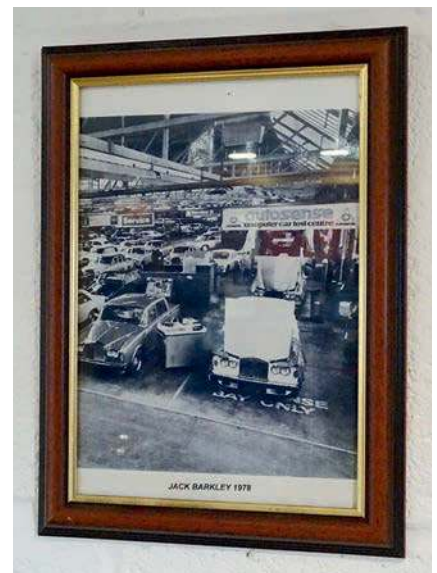
A wide range of tyres – including whitewalls – is permanently kept in stock



Stewart's workshop is fully equipped with all the latest in diagnostic equipment



This 41,000-mile Continental GT offers a lot of car for its asking price of £29,995



The office is packed with memorabilia, including this Jack Barclay photo from 1978



GT that is awaiting diagnosis, with the end result showing a leak in the pipework at the back of the engine bay: "We now know exactly which length of pipe is causing the problem, and we can replace it accordingly. But if we'd done it the traditional way, the diagnostics machine would have thrown up a whole host of fault codes and we'd be no closer to locating the problem. That's why so many non-specialists have been caught out over the years, with their lack of GT experience giving the car a bit of a poor press in terms of potential problems."

The same kind of smoke test can be used to find faults with the GT's air suspension, many of which are relatively minor and fairly easy for Stewart to fix: "The suspension system is generally very reliable, but sometimes it will suffer a simple problem like a valve becoming stuck, perhaps due to corrosion. Changing the valve is straightforward, but many a garage will struggle to pinpoint such a small component as the cause of what seems like a major problem."

## **SENSIBLE BUYS**

With so many years of experience in the Continental GT, Stewart is full of praise for the range that marked Bentley's new direction under Volkswagen ownership, cars that shared zero components with any of their forebears: "A GT or GTC can be a very reliable machine, but maintenance



**Stewart is very hands-on, applying the utmost care and attention to customers' cars**

## **"Compared with previous models, the new generation of Bentley Continental was highly complex in specification"**

is obviously the key to success," he points out. "It's not just the quantity of service stamps either, but also the quality of the work – which is why I'll only buy in cars that have full service histories from either main dealers or independent Bentley specialists."

A neglected Continental can be an expensive proposition, which is why Stewart suggests that buying

from an expert is so worthwhile. It doesn't even need to be an expensive route to ownership, as he explains: "We've currently got a 2006 Continental GT Mulliner that's covered just 41,000 miles and has a fully detailed history. It's a very well looked after example and represents a lot of car for just under £30,000."

Most problems with a GT are as »



**Stewart's Snap-On smoke tester is an expensive but invaluable piece of kit**



**The smoke tester allows Stewart to accurately locate faults in the vacuum system**



**Smoke rising from the rear of the engine bay shows where the vacuum leak is**

## SPECIALIST VISIT STEWART WALKER LTD

likely to be caused by neglect as by any inherent issues, particularly when it comes to expensive-to-replace items like the twin turbochargers: "Turbos can fail, it's true – but usually this is caused by an ignored fault with a vacuum pipe or a lack of regular oil changes, as with any other upmarket car that's technically complex."

You're just as likely to see a member of Rolls-Royce's SY- and SZ-generation cars being worked on at Stewart Walker's as you are a Continental GT, with Arnage owners also making regular use of his services – whether that means sorting a suspension or ABS issue or perhaps carrying out a major service or brake renewal. It's very much a 'one stop shop' for owners of all post-war Rolls-Royce and Bentley models, and even boasts its own healthy stock of brand new tyres (and on-site tyre fitting and balancing) across a wide range of cars: "For example, we always keep whitewall tyres for the Shadow and Spirit models in stock," explains Stewart, "as these can often be on back order with suppliers, and I like to make sure we have what the customer wants straight away."

The then-current Rolls-Royce and Bentley models that Stewart trained on in his early years are now classics in their own right, and he enjoys working on these as much as the later cars. It is, however, the more recent Continentals from Bentley that this highly experienced specialist is best known for, offering a range of services for models that some marque aficionados are happy not to be involved with. In that sense, Stewart has created his own niche within a niche – and in terms of workload, he's well and truly reaping the rewards. ■



### THANK YOU

Many thanks to Stewart Walker for our recent guided tour of his premises. For more information on the company's current stock of vehicles, as well as Stewart's servicing, repairs and diagnostic facilities, check out the website ([www.stewartwalkerltd.co.uk](http://www.stewartwalkerltd.co.uk)) or call 01635 866833.



Stewart moved to his latest Newbury-based premises in March 2019



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# INTERNATIONAL RESCUE

Dean Jaggard recalls a trip to Singapore a decade ago, on which his task was to repair a non-starting Bentley

PHOTOGRAPHY: DEAN JAGGARD & BENTLEY MOTORS

Probably the best part of ten years ago, the boss at the company I used to work for asked me if I'd be happy to go abroad to repair a Bentley. I was used to regularly travelling around the UK to carry out such work, but this was a first for me. And so the obvious questions were: what needs repairing and where in the world is the car situated? I was told that it was a nearly new Bentley Flying Spur with starting issues and that it was located in Singapore.

My contact in Singapore was one Albert Lim, a very good friend of my boss, who had reassured the owner of the Flying Spur that he could fly in a Bentley technician to take a look at it. You may wonder why the owner didn't simply take the Bentley to his local dealership, and this is where it

gets interesting. It turns out that the car had been imported direct rather than bought from an official dealer in Singapore, and so the nearest dealership wouldn't touch the car without a very high premium placed on the work and parts required. It was then deemed cheaper to fly a technician over from the UK, which is where I come into the story.

Thinking about how best to repair the Bentley, I decided it would be wise to take as many control modules as possible, as well as various relays, fuses and so on. I confirmed with both parties that I would do my best to get the Bentley running, but wouldn't be accountable if I was unable to.

I remember going to Heathrow with my now wife, the first job being to check in the suitcase containing my

tools, control modules and general clothing. Thinking that the case might arouse suspicion when passed through an x-ray machine, I asked the check-in assistant whether there would be a problem. She asked if I had a hand drill or screwdrivers in there, and when I said no, she replied: "Nothing to worry about then."

My flight to Singapore was on an Airbus A380, which hadn't been in service long, and I seem to recall it was a 13-hour flight. I met Albert at the airport terminal and he asked me what I wanted to do first – freshen up at the hotel or go directly to the car. Due to the time constraints, I decided to go straight into battle to work out what I was dealing with and to come up with a plan of action, despite the fact I'd had little or no sleep on the flight.

## STARTING WORK

The workshop was at a friend of Albert's and was basically a regular garage and bodywork repair centre... and it was damned hot in there. I'd previously asked for the car's main battery to be fully charged and fortunately this had been done – which meant I was all set to read the codes, at which point I realised there was a potential problem. The equipment I'd brought over had been placed in the hold of the plane, and the issue was the extreme temperature difference between that and the garage I was now in. The diagnostic computer had suffered from 'sweating', but luckily it fired up and I was able to read the codes. Relief all round.

The next challenge saw things drifting away from the original plan, as I was told that somebody had already





tried to fit new engine control modules and the Bentley still wouldn't start. I decided to place the original modules back on the car, clear down all the memories and re-read everything, which sure enough showed issues with both engine management modules.

Next task was to fit the new engine control modules that had already been supplied. In those days the module had to be aligned via a pin code, and luckily I'd pre-empted this by making the Bentley technical team at Crewe aware of what I was going to attempt in Singapore. Because of the time difference, I waited for UK office hours and then went through the alignment menu, making my phone call when the PIN prompt occurred. My colleague at Bentley was most interested to see if it would work, and was delighted when the code that I entered was accepted.

Next job was to clear all the codes in the car, and after another read it presented all green ticks – which was fantastic. I called Albert over and explained it had worked and that it was time to crank over the car to see what would happen. The Bentley fired up straight away, much to the delight of everyone who had seen it abandoned in the workshop for several months. By this time it was



## “I decided to go straight into battle to work out what I was dealing with and to come up with a plan of action”

late afternoon and I'd had enough, and so I was taken for a quick meal and then to my hotel. Needless to say, Albert was very pleased with what we'd already achieved.

The next day was going to be less pressured, with Albert suggesting that we should use the car to make sure it was in full working order. We visited various places around Singapore, which was a fantastic experience, and the Bentley performed without any issue. The next evening I had a wonderful meal out with Albert and even went to the famous Raffles bar

for a Singapore sling. The following day I was to return to the UK.

I must admit that carrying out these international repairs is quite an experience, and I've enjoyed being involved with a number of them over the years. They can, of course, be very intense as there is nobody to talk to if you're running out of ideas and all eyes are on you to sort the issue. On the other hand, it feels fantastic when everything goes in the right direction, with the added bonus of seeing some amazing places and making some fabulous memories. ■

# PERSONAL CHOICE

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



## 1929 ROLLS-ROYCE PHANTOM I

OWNER: MURRAY HAWKES

In October 2018, my brother Kenn and I once again sallied forth in my long-suffering Phantom I.

Following the Rolls-Royce & Bentley Club (RRBC) of New Zealand's Queen's Birthday frolic on the Otago Peninsula, I caught up with Kenn in Invercargill to try our hand at the inaugural Targa VCC time-trial, set to take place in Southland and Otago, southern New Zealand.

This rather foolish commitment to around 2500km of sealed road driving – including almost 700km of closed road stages – was in no small part (actually, not at all) inspired by a desire to contribute substantial revenues to the new 4c/litre electric car tax on fuel, not wanting to miss the chance to progress New Zealand's

drive to a more sustainable future.

It was back in July 1929 that the Rolls-Royce New Phantom bearing chassis number 59OR was delivered to Hoopers for fitment of a landaulette body for its owner, Mr A.W. Nicholas of Melbourne. It matched the body already under construction for Mr Nicholas' brother, and by October both vehicles were on board the SS Maimoa on their way to Melbourne. It was very much a family affair, as it always is when it comes to boys and their toys.

So it was that some 89 years after that voyage to Melbourne, my brother and I (without seriously considering the wisdom or otherwise of our actions) embarked on the first Vintage Car Club participation in a New Zealand Targa Rally. Including the journey down from

mid-Canterbury, tripping around the Otago Peninsula, the old girl was in for around 4000km of spirited driving. In any other context, this type of behaviour would be classed as elder abuse. In this instance, however, I'm convinced that she had a ball – and enjoyed every straining kilometre.

Not long after her original arrival in Melbourne, 59OR was re-bodied with rather pedestrian, almost American-looking saloon coachwork. Then in the mid-1980s, the car was reconstructed for more fun (and maybe some paddock racing?) via the fitting of – or modification to – open tourer bodywork, which is what she proudly displays today. More recently, new canvas has been fitted all round, cleverly designed to



provide downforce when undertaking high-speed cornering (no need for silly little spoilers as seen on the old Porsches on the Targa Rally). Bringing critical oiling points to the valance rather than requiring under-body oiling was a logical modification, as neither Kenn nor I have 'under-body oiling physiques' these days.

The rally format was quite a challenge for a lady of 59OR's stature. The closed road sections varied from around 10km to 30km-plus, often with a short time available to tour the intervening open road sections to the next stage. Targa participants drove four to six closed road sections per day, motoring for at least 500km with the clock ticking. On the VCC section, the objective of the closed road stages was an average 70km/h from flag drop to finish, measured on the Rallysafe GPS system. This was a reasonable target for the Phantom, but a challenge on the likes of the Crown Range stage where we only averaged 58km/h on the climb, cheerfully attempting to regain time on the long downhill to Cardrona. We were rarely (never) limited by the

130km/h maximum in stage speed limit, although some of our more spritely and youthful competitors may well have toyed with this. I was, however, cheered by receiving an infringement notice for a minor open road speed violation, once again supporting our government's funding challenges.

I would love to relate a story of flawless mechanical performance throughout the rally, but sadly this would be substantially inaccurate. Replacement of the condenser (twice) and coil, plus fuel line clean-outs, dominated a couple of days, and we hunted down a 'final' solution to a pernicious misfire several times. Nevertheless, the Phantom came through on each occasion.

The tour showed us a wonderful variety of back road motoring – through Eastern Southland, North to the Waitaki, and traversing central and southern Otago. On each stage the organisers had done a massive amount of work, with the road closures being marshalled at every bend and driveway, and we saw evidence of community participation all along the

route. Evening social events were a great opportunity to meet not only the VCC participants but also the go-fast brigade (with race-ready safety modifications) and their support teams. We also mingled with the Targa Tour groups, which cover the special stages behind pace vehicles at 160km/h (with crash helmets) and 130km/h (without) maximum speeds. All in all, there were around sixty vehicles in each group, with 24 in the VCC section.

The VCC organisation for the rally was driven by Rod Corbett, who put in a massive effort to make this inaugural participation in the event a success. I commend this as a motoring adventure for anyone with the necessary time, energy, funds and limited common sense.

This event was as much fun as I can legally expect to have on four wheels – a challenge, a tour, a great experience to share with Kenn, and a chance to meet and mix with like-minded people. That the basis of this pleasure was an extended exercise in elder abuse is, I hope, forgiven by 59OR as we plan our next new adventures. ■





## 1965 BENTLEY S3

OWNER: BRIAN & HELENE LEIMBACH

**W**hen I was a teenager back in the 1950s, in Baltimore, Maryland, I saw a Cutty Sark Scotch salesman driving a Bentley S-series with the Cutty Sark ship logo on its doors. I loved the

design of the car, which really stood out against the Chevrolets, Fords, Pontiacs, Cadillacs and so on that were the norm. Over the years, I never lost the desire to someday have an S-series of my own.

Life goes on and, when I was in my

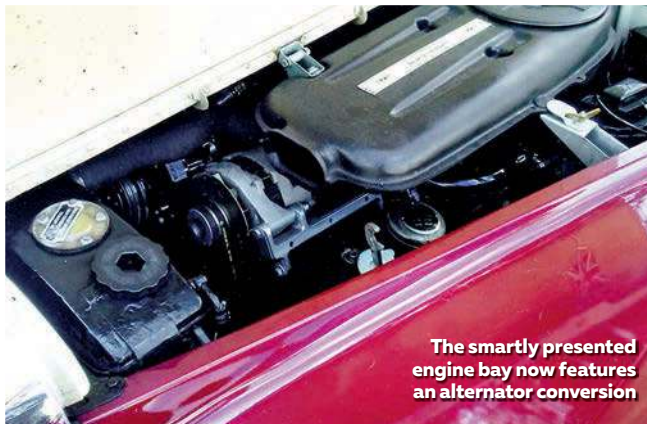
forties I subscribed to Hemmings Motor News and read various advertisements for Rolls-Royce and Bentley motor cars. I subsequently wrote to numerous dealers in the UK requesting photographs. The S3's Bentley grille and quad headlamps – as well as the firm's racing heritage – appealed greatly, and I kept a photograph of an S3 on my dresser, which meant that every morning I could view my goal!

In the mid-1980s I finally bought a 1963 Bentley S3 that turned out to be a basket case. I joined the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club here in the USA and learned much more about these 'proper motor cars'. Armed with extra knowledge, I then found an advert in the RROC's *Flying Lady* magazine for a 1965 S3 in the state of Ohio, with the owner claiming that if he couldn't find a buyer for the Bentley he would have it shipped back to the UK. I corresponded with him, received photographs and decided to drive 500 miles with my bride to check the car out.

After a careful inspection, we purchased the S3 knowing that the



Brian has added a 1920s 'Flying B' mascot to the front of his Bentley



The smartly presented engine bay now features an alternator conversion



brake servo was bad, but drove all night back to Maryland. This Bentley had two rare factory options comprising rear air-conditioning and aircraft-style seatbelts. Its Midnight Blue paintwork was in poor condition, but just a few weeks later the car was treated to a full respray in Alabaster Cream over Claret.

Over the years we worked on improving the Bentley by repairing or replacing virtually everything, aside from the engine which has still never been stripped. We entered the S3 in the RROC's Touring Class for judging (which is based on the 400-point system) over a ten-year period, winning third place and a couple of years later coming second, before finally achieving first place. We later fitted a 1920s 'Flying B' mascot on top of the grille, as well as period-correct spotlights. When the rear air conditioning failed, a new under-dash AC system was installed along with an alternator and solid-state ignition.

We are both keen drivers, and from Maryland we have taken the Bentley to Florida, Illinois, New York, Kentucky and Toronto, Canada. The biggest ownership benefit of all, however, has been the friendships we've made, as well as the countless places we've visited. Most of our dear friends are Rolls-Royce and Bentley enthusiasts, and the S3 has been a true blessing in our lives. ■



The highly distinctive US licence plate of this much-loved S3

## 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

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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

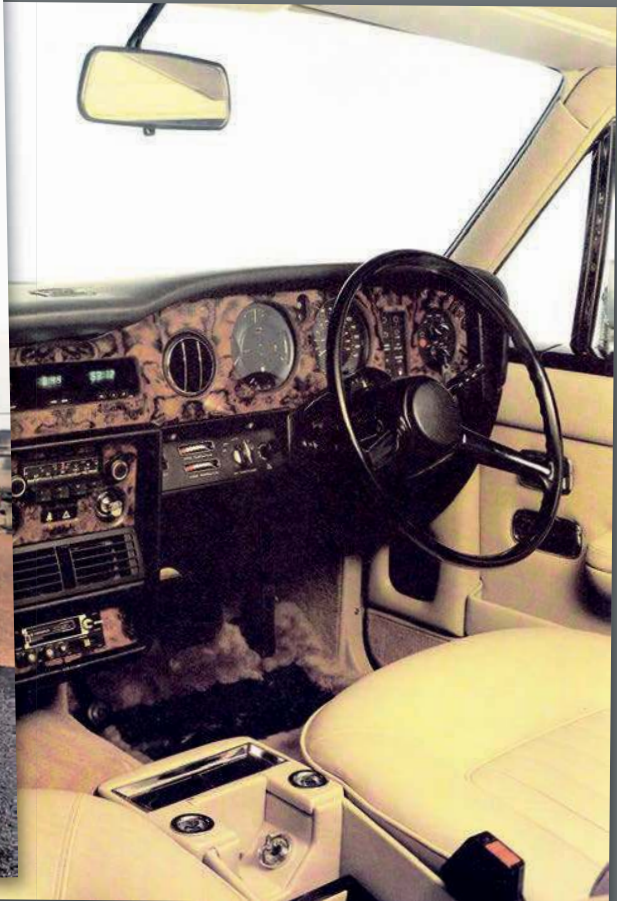
## ULTIMATE LUXURY

A high-quality brochure dedicated to the Silver Spur was issued in 1982, boasting that this latest model's rear passenger compartment was "some four inches longer than that of the new Silver Spirit". It provided the kind of extra room that "simplifies the installation of video equipment, a telephone or mini-computer", as well as being

"furnished as you would expect a Rolls-Royce to be furnished, with full use of traditional, natural materials".

While most examples of the Silver Spur were inevitably chauffeur-driven, Rolls-Royce knew that it also had to cater for the owner-driver market, with the brochure promising that "if you prefer to drive the Silver Spur yourself, you

will gain added delight from the car". It reassured readers that the Silver Spur was "smooth, silent and responsive" out on the road, offering a ride quality that was "superb, with imperceptible noise or vibration". This was, explained Rolls-Royce, a car guaranteed to provide a "continued source of pleasure, pride and prestige".



## BENTLEY EXCLUSIVITY

A new Bentley brochure was published in 1977 to promote the latest T2 and Corniche models, with the former benefiting from the same improvements that had resulted in the Silver Shadow II. Towards the back of the brochure was this photograph of a T2 at speed, while on the opposite page was the car's technical specification in full.

When describing the T2, Bentley's copywriters explained that "in no way does it flaunt its sporting pedigree", despite being "unmistakably the latest in a historic



line of elegant motor cars that has made the Bentley marque a byword among enthusiasts for more than fifty years". And because the

T2 was drastically out-sold by its Rolls-Royce sibling, it also offered what the brochure hailed as "the cachet that is exclusively Bentley".

### Specification

#### Bentley T2\*

Five seat, four-door saloon of steel integral construction. Boot lid, bonnet and doors of aluminium alloy. Wrap round bumpers with hard polyurethane inserts. The individual front seats, electrically adjustable for height, tilt and fore-and-aft movement, have manually adjustable backrests. Upholstery in English hide. Deep pile carpet. Lambswool rugs. Walnut veneer facia and garnish rails. Vanity mirrors in rear quarters. Head rests to rear seats. Tape stowage between front seats. Instruments: Electronic speedometer, clock, ambient air temperature gauge, combined ammeter, coolant temperature gauge, oil pressure gauge and fuel/surp level gauge. Warning lamps for low pressure in hydraulic systems, low hydraulic fluid level, low coolant level, low washer fluid level, stop lamp bulb failure, low fuel level, seat belt reminder, icing conditions, parking brake, oil pressure, ignition. Automatic speed control system (electronic), controlled from switch on gear range selector.

#### Bentley Corniche saloon and convertible\*

Four seat, two-door coachwork of steel integral construction by Mulliner Park Ward. Boot lid, bonnet and doors of aluminium alloy. Wrap round bumpers with hard polyurethane inserts. Individual front seats electrically adjustable for height, tilt and fore-and-aft movement, have manually adjustable backrests which are electrically released for easy access to rear seat. Adjustable front seat head restraints. Head rests to rear seat (Corniche saloon only). Tape stowage between front seats. Upholstery in English hide. Deep pile carpet. Nylon rugs. Cloth headlining. Walnut veneer facia and

garnish rails. Door rear view mirror adjustable from car interior. Inertia reel lap and diagonal front seat belts. Instruments, warning panels and speed control as Bentley T2. Power operated hood on convertible in Evertex material.

#### Engine

6750cc (412cu.in) 90° V8 with overhead valves and hydraulic tappets. Bore 104.1mm (4.1in). Stroke 99.1mm (3.9in). Compression ratio 8.0:1 (Australia and Japan 7.3:1). High silicon content aluminium alloy cylinder block with cast iron wet liners, aluminium alloy cylinder heads. Hardened steel crankshaft runs in five main bearings. Full flow oil filter. Cooling system pressurised to 1.05kg/sqcm (15lb/sq.in). Water pump mounted 7 bladed fan with electric booster fan forward of radiator. Electronic ignition system. Twin exhaust system with stainless steel silencers. (Catalytic converters fitted for Japan, air injection system with exhaust gas recirculation for Australia and Japan).

#### Fuel system

Two SU HIF7 carburettors (single Solex 4-choke on Corniche) with automatic mixture enrichment, two SU electric fuel pumps (Pierburg pump for Japan), 107litre (24gallon) fuel tank. Fuel evaporation loss system for Australia and Japan.

#### Transmission

Three speed automatic transmission with torque converter. Electrical gear range selector. Single piece propeller shaft. Hypoid bevel final drive. Overall ratios: 1st 7.70:1; 2nd 4.62:1; 3rd 3.08:1; Reverse 6.16:1. Top gear speed at 1000rpm: 42km/h (26mph).

#### Suspension

Front, independent by lower wishbone, stabilised upper lever, coil springs and telescopic dampers. Anti-roll bar. Rear: independent by semi-trailing arms, coil springs and telescopic dampers. Anti-roll bar. Automatic ride height control.

#### Steering

Power assisted rack and pinion. Overall ratio: 17.5:1. Turns lock-to-lock: 3.2. Turning circle kerb-to-kerb: 11.73m (38.5ft). Leather covered wheel on Corniche.

#### Wheels and tyres

38cm (15in) diameter steel disc wheels on five stud hubs. HR70HR15 or 235/70HR15 low profile radial ply tyres.

#### Brakes

28cm (11in) diameter discs (ventilated at front) on all four wheels. Two separate hydraulic circuits pressurised by engine driven pumps to 175.8kg/sqcm (2500lbs/sq.in). Mechanical parking brake operated by hand (right-hand drive cars) or foot (left-hand drive cars).

#### Air conditioning system

Rolls-Royce Motors automatic air conditioning with separate temperature control for upper and lower systems. Swivelling ventilators and central air outlet on facia. Stale air extraction via boot top to atmosphere.

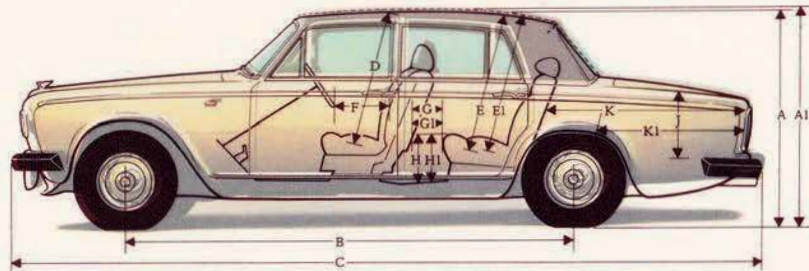
#### Electrical equipment

12v negative earth fully fused 75amp alternator. 68 amp/hr battery. Pre-engaged starter motor. Four headlamp system with safety circuit to give dip beam if main beam fails. Hazard warning system. Two front fog lamps

and two rear guard fog warning lamps (not standard in all markets). Parking lamps at front. Combined parking, reversing (separate on Corniche) and stop lamps at rear. Two-speed and delay windscreen wipers, with washers and wash/wipe system. Electrical operation of gear range selector, front seat adjustment, front squab release (Corniche), windows, centralised door and boot locking system, rear window demister (except Corniche convertible) radio aerial, petrol filler flap. Interior courtesy lamps with 7 second delay. AM/FM stereo radio and quadraphonic tape player, four speakers with front-rear balance control.

#### Dimensions

Corniche saloon	Corniche convertible		T2		
	cm	in	cm	in	
A	149	58.75	A1	152	59.75
B	305	120	B	305	120
C	519	204.5	C	519	204.5
D	91	36	D	91	36
E	86	34	E1	89	35
F	41	16	F	41	16
G	25	10	G1	23	9
H	41	16	H1	38	15
J	38	15	J	38	15
K	122	48	K1	93	36.5
L	183	72	L	183	72
M	121	47.5	M	114	45
N	137	54	N	137	54
O	135	53	O	135	53

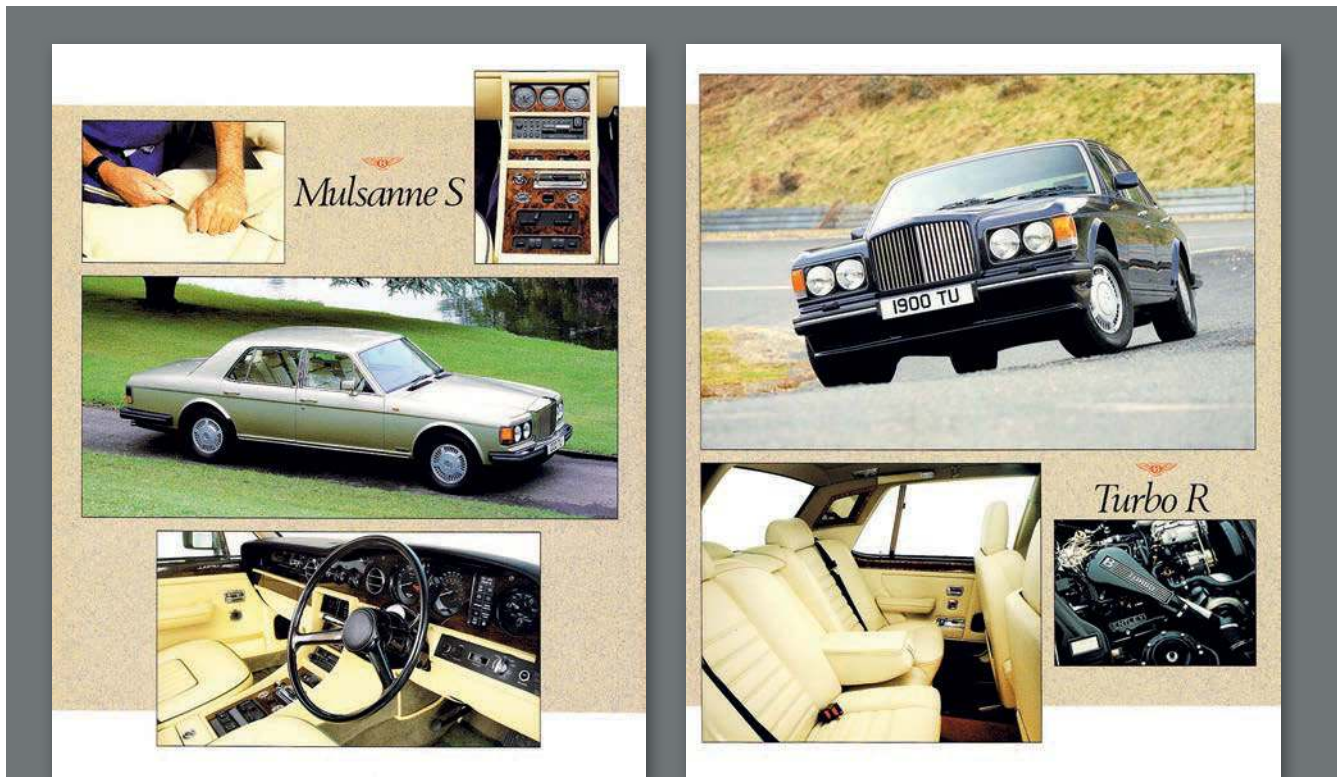
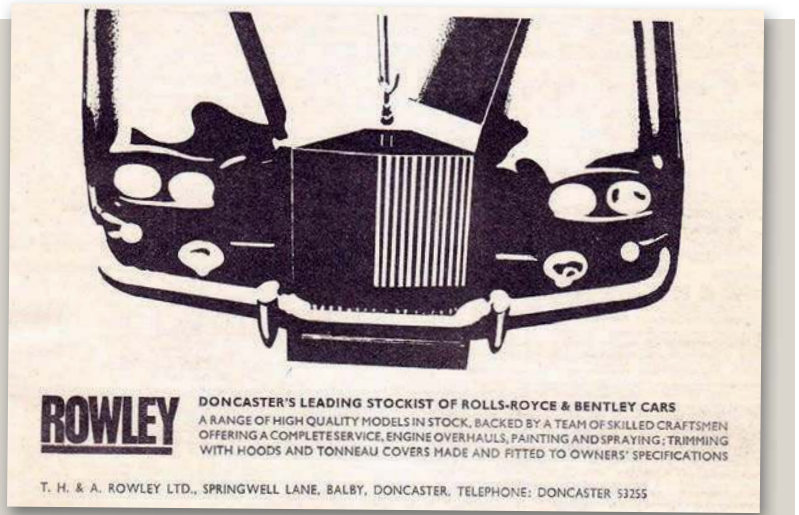


All Rolls-Royce and Bentley motor cars are the subject of a continuous development programme and as a result their specifications may change and differ in detail from those outlined in this catalogue. Your Rolls-Royce Motors dealer will always have the latest information. The names Rolls-Royce and Bentley, the Rolls-Royce and Bentley motifs, and Rolls-Royce and Bentley motor car mascots are all registered trade marks.

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**SALES AND SERVICE**

If you lived in the Doncaster area in 1965, you would no doubt have known of T.H. & A. Rowley Ltd, based in Balby and described in this advert as "Doncaster's leading stockist of Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars". The company always had a "range of high quality models in stock", while existing owners could benefit from a "team of highly skilled craftsmen offering a complete service, engine overhauls, painting and spraying". Rowley even provided a bespoke service to those motorists lucky enough to own soft-top models, offering "hoods and tonneau covers made and fitted to owners' specifications". Do any readers recall T.H. & A. Rowley – or did you perhaps pay a visit to the company in its heyday?



**PRIDE OF BRITAIN**

It's often the case that pictures speak louder than words. At least, that's what Rolls-Royce must have thought in late 1988, when it issued a glossy new fold-out brochure with each page being dedicated to an individual model from the '89 model year – including those in the resurgent Bentley line-up. Sat above the entry-level Eight in the Bentley

range were the Mulsanne S and Turbo R shown here, the latter being largely responsible for Bentley's boom years of the '80s, following on from the marque's poor sales record of the previous decade. Only the first page of this brochure featured any explanatory text, and even then just a single column of words. Still, it was enough to get the

message across that the Mulsanne S had a "cockpit-like interior which declares it to be a motor car intended for the sheer enjoyment of driving", while the Turbo R was described as "the ultimate 'no compromise' luxury sporting saloon". No wonder the entire Rolls-Royce and Bentley line-up of 1989 was hailed as "the pride of Britain, the envy of the world".

## RARE ROLLS-ROYCE

Three years after the debut of the Bentley MkVI – a first for the marque thanks to its factory-fitted 'Standard Steel' bodywork – Rolls-Royce announced its own version, known as the Silver Dawn. The idea was to give a boost to exports, particularly in those countries where Bentley

was less well-known at that time. The Rolls-Royce Silver Dawn was introduced in July 1949 and was virtually identical to the MkVI aside from its Rolls-Royce radiator, single Stromberg carburettor and column-mounted gearchange. The Silver Dawn wasn't available on

the British market until October 1953, however, by which time it had adopted the later R-Type's silhouette, featuring an extended boot line. This official press photograph was issued by Rolls-Royce to illustrate the Silver Dawn, of which just 760 were built over a six-year period.



## BEST BATTERIES

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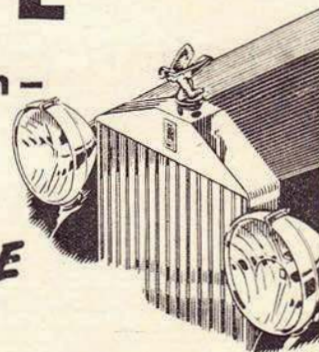
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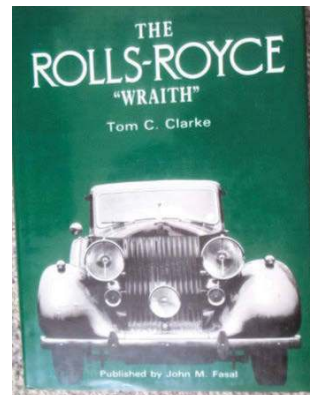
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## PAUL GUINNESS

With the 40th anniversary of the SZ series approaching, our editor is feature-planning for 2020 – and reminiscing about the Silver Spirit’s motor show debut

With this issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* being the first to feature a 2020 cover date, we’ve inevitably been pondering the year ahead and making plans for future features – particularly when it comes to the SZ-series models. Why? Well, 2020 marks the 40th anniversary of the Rolls-Royce Silver Spirit and its Bentley Mulsanne cousin, a range of saloons that – via various upgrades and new derivatives – managed to remain in production for an impressive 18 years, outlasting even the long-lived Silver Shadow that had gone before.

For anyone who remembers the launch of the Silver Spirit, it’s a sobering thought that four decades have since passed. As a 15-year-old, I went along to Britain’s biggest motoring event of the year, billed as Motor Show 80 and staged at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham. I still have the show catalogue among my collection of motoring paraphernalia, a hefty volume of more than 360 pages that cost me the grand sum of £2. And I can still vividly recall my excitement at the thought of seeing so many new cars displayed on such a vast scale.

There was no shortage of new-model launches at that 1980 event, with mass-market newcomers like the Austin Metro and front-wheel drive Ford Escort being the most important in terms of volume car sales in the UK. At the other extreme, however, were the new Silver Spirit and Mulsanne from Rolls-Royce, a duo tasked with replacing the company’s best-selling range of all time. No pressure there, eh?

At Motor Show 80, the Rolls-Royce stand could be found in Hall 3, where you’d also find an array of other prestigious marques – a list that included Ferrari, Maserati, Lotus, Aston Martin, Porsche and Maserati. But of course, it was the unveiling of the Silver Spirit that generated huge levels of interest, which wasn’t surprising given that it had been 15 years since the arrival of the last all-new Rolls-Royce four-door range.

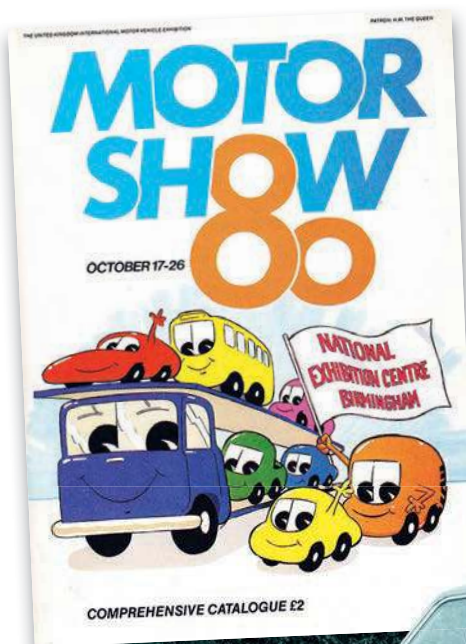
**“I still have the show catalogue among my collection of paraphernalia, a hefty volume of more than 360 pages”**

We all know that the SZ generation went on to be a huge success for Rolls-Royce, spawning such game-changing models as the Turbo R – the high-performance behemoth that succeeded in bringing Bentley back to the forefront of luxury motoring. It was, however, the original Silver Spirit and Mulsanne of 1980 that marked the start of that

incredible journey, although at the time not all onlookers were impressed with the newcomers’ larger, boxier aesthetics, with more than a hint of American influence in their styling.

With the benefit of hindsight, it was a clever move on the part of Rolls-Royce, as the newcomer had to succeed in the vital US market. The Silver Spirit needed to be a little larger than its forebear in order to compete with newer designs – but just as importantly, it had to *look* substantially bigger. In the end, the sheer squareness of the Silver Spirit gave the impression it had grown far more than it actually had.

Compared with other cars that also arrived in 1980, I can’t help feeling that the Silver Spirit has aged rather well, its simple lines offering a fresh alternative to today’s increasingly complex styling cues. Meanwhile, if you’re a Silver Spirit fan, rest assured that the next few months will see plenty of extra coverage as we gear up to celebrating this all-important model’s 40th birthday. ■



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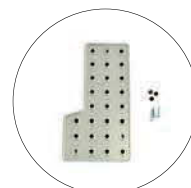
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