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Variations on a theme

Much of the pleasure derived from working on *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* comes via the sheer variety of cars we get to experience. This issue in particular has been a joy to work on, with an array of different models being featured – ranging from a Rolls-Royce 20hp of the 1920s through to a modified Bentley Continental GT of the early 'noughties'. Whether your passion is for pre-war cars or modern classics, there's plenty for you to enjoy over the coming pages.

Fans of the Silver Shadow family are in for a treat. Not only do we bring you the full story of Rolls-Royce's best-selling model, we also tell the tale of driving a glorious Corniche convertible around the British Overseas Territory of Gibraltar – with wonderful photography to really set the scene. Meanwhile, a soft-top classic from earlier times can be found on pages 76-79, as we get to meet the owners of a well-presented Bentley S1 DHC by Park Ward.

For anyone who appreciates modern classics, don't miss our full buyer's guide to the Bentley Continental R – surely one of the finest grand tourers of the '90s and an absolute steal at today's asking prices. With experts suggesting that values are likely to rise soon, this is surely a great time to be investing in a Continental R of your own.

A personal highlight for me over the last few weeks was experiencing the 1927 Rolls-Royce 20hp featured on pages 51-57, a Mulliner-bodied touring limousine that remains in remarkable condition. Its current custodian is Tony Gray, an octogenarian who's fortunate enough to own a car significantly older than he is. It was a pleasure to meet Tony and to appreciate exactly why the 20hp is the ideal model for him.

You see, the Rolls-Royce and Bentley scene is as much about the people as the cars, and so far during my time on the magazine I've been lucky enough to meet some amazing characters. Don't forget that we're always on the lookout for cars (and people) to feature, so do please get in touch if you think your classic Rolls-Royce or Bentley deserves its own photo shoot and magazine coverage. Drop me a line, tell me about your pride and joy – and let's get it featured soon!

Paul Guinness

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HISTORIC MODELS FIND NEW HOMES

Five of the eight historic Rolls-Royces offered at auction by Bentley Motors (as previewed in our September/October issue) found willing buyers at Bonhams' Goodwood Revival sale in September – with the headline-grabbing Phantom IV State Landauette (originally estimated at between £1m and £2m) selling for £710,000. The car had been used extensively by the Royal Family before spending the last few years on display at the RREC's Hunt House headquarters.

The last Corniche IV ever built achieved mid-estimate at £222,000, while a 2002 Corniche (the final Crew-assembled Rolls-Royce of all) ended up attracting a top bid of £165,000 – £15,000 below its low-end estimate. The last ever Silver Seraph produced (with a mere 128 miles recorded) smashed its top estimate with a final sale price of £120,000, while the final Silver Seraph Park Ward long-wheelbase came in mid-estimate at £85,000.

A 1985 Silver Spur Centenary (said to be the 100,000th Rolls-Royce built)

didn't sell at £80,000-100,000, while the 1979 Phantom VI (a car used by the Royal Household on numerous occasions, estimated at £400,000-600,000) also failed to attract a buyer. Finally, the Phantom V 'High Roof' State Limousine that was expected to sell for between £1m and £1.5m was withdrawn prior to the sale, as a Bonham's spokesperson explained to *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*: "The Phantom V is currently on Royal Yacht Britannia, and contractually has to remain there for a year." ■



ALL-ORIGINAL BENTLEY HEADS TO AUCTION

By the time this issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* goes on sale, this astonishingly original Derby Bentley – with a genuine 15,500 miles showing on its odometer – will have gone under the hammer. Chassis number B135FC, described as ‘the most original and best-preserved Derby Bentley in the world’, was expected to sell for between £450,000 and £550,000.

First registered on March 1st, 1937, the Vanden Plas-bodied drophead coupe has had just three owners to date, the most long-term being Mr W. Randolph Angell who spotted the car for sale in a showroom in 1954. In his memoirs, Mr Angell later wrote: ‘How does one cope with blind passion? I was a ruined man. A visit to the showroom for a closer look was devastating. The car was immaculate, perfect, with tonneau covers and spares etc which had never been used. The asking price was beyond my means, and in any case I had no driving licence or any sensible place to keep the car even if I were able to acquire it.’

Nevertheless, Mr Angell did raise the necessary funds and the car became his, to be used only very sparingly during the decades that followed. Documentation still with the car includes a handwritten receipt showing a purchase price of £1350 (dated May 7th, 1954), plus another for tax and insurance (costing £32) and one for a series of seven driving lessons.

The Bentley was finally offered for sale again in 2013, when Mr Angell’s heirs made the difficult decision to



part with it. The buyer was keen to maintain the incredible originality of this Vanden Plas-bodied car, and set about recommissioning it to an almost obsessive degree. He enlisted the help of renowned Derby Bentley expert and the W.O. Bentley Memorial Foundation’s chairman of trustees, Ken Lea, who was reportedly amazed to discover that the ash frame in particular was so sound, even down to the sawn ends of the scuttle hoops. A careful strip down of the original engine (number E9BC) revealed bore wear in keeping with the recorded mileage, and more surprisingly that all six pistons were stamped with the chassis number B135FC.

This particular example is the last of

only four 3½ Litre cars to wear Vanden Plas drophead coupe coachwork and is surely unmatched when it comes to originality – from its two-tone red paint and red leather upholstery through to its axles, steering, suspension, brakes, brightwork, wood veneer and even chassis paint. After much deliberation, the decision was taken to rewire the car for safety reasons, although the replacement wiring loom is cloth bound and faithful to factory blueprints.

The auction house selling the Bentley – H&H Classics – describes it as a ‘worthy competitor in the preservation class of any major Concours d’Elegance’, and was expecting it to attract plenty of interest at the company’s October sale. ■



AMERICAN CHALLENGE

The Endurance Rally Association's recent Trans America Challenge saw more than thirty cars and their crews taking part, including Bill and Julie Holroyd in their William Medcalf-prepared 1927 Bentley 4½ Litre. The route to the chequered flag was a typically tough one, taking them from the southern city of Charleston on the hot and humid South Carolina coast all the way up to Seattle in the cold Pacific Northwest.

Covering an impressive 8000 kilometres over 22 days, the rally brought an array of challenges – including temperatures in the south that approached 40°C, a tropical storm in Alberta, plus the 4302-metre altitude (and thin air) of the legendary Pikes Peak. Bill admitted afterwards that the rally was very demanding: "One day was 750 kilometres long and I felt like I'd undergone a full-body workout. Thankfully, the car was faultless for the entire trip, which is a credit to William and the team. Credit must also go to my absolute rookie navigator, who started the rally telling me to slow down for every corner but by the end of the trip was exhorting me to drive like a madman!"



Bill's Bentley is already a veteran of such challenging events as the Classic Safari, Peking to Paris and the Sahara Challenge, and as usual it performed brilliantly. For

William Medcalf and his team of technicians, meanwhile, it means another satisfied client and another successful campaign for a vintage Bentley prepared by the company.

SWEPTAIL AT CONCOURS OF ELEGANCE

This year's exclusive Concours of Elegance event – held at Hampton Court in September – saw the completely bespoke Rolls-Royce

Sweptail taking part in a new 'Future Classics' feature. It was displayed alongside a brace of rare Aston Martins – a Vanquish Zagato

Speedster and a V12 Vantage V600 Coupé – as well as the first of the all-new McLaren Senna series.

The one-off Sweptail was originally unveiled on the shores of Lake Como in May 2017, heralding a remarkable return to the fully coachbuilt Rolls-Royce designed and built in-house. It is also one of very few two-seater models created by Rolls-Royce throughout the marque's 114-year history.

The lucky owner of the Sweptail ensured that the car was created exactly to his requirements, even down to the secret 'his and hers' attaché cases that deploy on command from the B-pillars, plus a centre console that effortlessly provides his favourite Dom Perignon vintage Champagne – chilled, of course, along with two fine cut crystal flutes.



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CULLINAN HEADS FOR THE USA

A collection of Rolls-Royce Cullinans departed Rolls-Royce Motor Cars' Goodwood headquarters in late September, heading for Wyoming in the United States in order to take part in the prestigious Global Press Drive event. The company's latest model was then appraised by 200 of the world's top journalists and social influencers in the luxury surroundings of Jackson Hole, one of America's best-kept secrets offering a high-end outdoor lifestyle to residents and visitors alike.

The fleet of Cullinans shipped to Wyoming showed a wider range of configurations than we've previously seen, with a palette of modern exterior paint colours, leather and wood



combinations and, of course, the two different rear seating arrangements that are available. The more functional lounge-seat configuration offers folding seats and a rising boot floor, while the most luxurious individual

rear seat arrangement features a centre console with champagne fridge and crystal flutes, whisky decanter and crystal tumblers, as well as a glass partition between the luggage and passenger compartments.

SPECIAL EDITION GHOST

To celebrate the original Silver Ghost – the model that first established its maker's 'Best Car in the World' reputation – Rolls-Royce has announced a limited collection of just 35 bespoke Ghosts, named as the Silver Ghost Collection. And as you'd expect from such a limited run, these latest variations on the Ghost theme offer a number of special features.

A solid sterling-silver Spirit of Ecstasy is featured, for example, uniquely boasting a specially created hallmark of AX201 (the most famous Silver Ghost registration number of all time) on its base, around which sits a black-gold-plated collar. An insert is crafted from hammered copper, in tribute to the copper extensively used in the engine bay of the original Silver Ghost, and this is also engraved with the newly designed AX201 hallmark.

Matthew Butt, Ghost product manager at Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, commented: "Careful consideration has been paid to the Collection's defining features. References extolling the past are skillfully hand-crafted into Ghost's interior and exterior, creating a contemporary homage which speaks as much of today's great brand as the original Silver Ghost does of its day."



CONTINENTAL GT EXPORTS BEGIN

Exports of the eagerly awaited new Bentley Continental GT have begun, with cars having now arrived in Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan and much of south-east Asia ready for delivery to customers. The latest version marks a thorough redesign of the model that has brought Bentley huge commercial success over the last fifteen years.

Sarah Simpson, Bentley Motors' regional director of the UK and Asia Pacific, said: "The Bentley Continental GT is a model that we are immensely proud of – and since the first generation was launched in 2003, it has become our most successful model in history."

The latest Continental GT combines what Bentley calls 'spirited, focused performance with handcrafted luxury and cutting-edge technology'. At its heart sits a redesigned version of the 6.0-litre twin-turbo W12 TSI engine, mated to a dual-clutch eight-speed transmission for the first time. A new adaptive chassis uses Bentley's intelligent 48-volt Dynamic Ride System to ensure a responsive ride and impressive handling, while also controlling comfort and lateral roll – cushioning passengers from excessive movement as well as making the car feel more precise.



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ROLLS-ROYCE ON THE ROCK

When a regular visitor to Gibraltar was offered a chance to get behind the wheel of a Corniche convertible, he was hardly likely to refuse. It turned out to be a day to remember...

WORDS: IVAN OSTROFF PHOTOGRAPHY: PATRIK LINDGREN



Gibraltar, the British Overseas Territory located at the very tip of the Iberian Peninsula, needs little introduction. It has been under British rule since 1736 and covers an area of barely 2.6 square miles. It's somewhere I have been visiting for a number of years and is a

place I absolutely adore. Quite frankly, Gibraltar is almost more British than Britain itself. So when I was given an opportunity to drive a Rolls Royce Corniche around the Rock for a day, I didn't hesitate. Gibraltar would surely be the ideal location for experiencing the ultimate in classic British convertibles.

The Corniche was, of course, the longest-lived member of the Silver Shadow family, officially launched in 1971 but essentially the same design as the Mulliner Park Ward two-door that had first appeared five years earlier. In convertible guise, the Corniche remained on sale right through to »

FEATURE CAR ROLLS-ROYCE CORNICHE



This 75,000-mile
Corniche's interior is
very well preserved

1995, by which time it had become the proverbial 'classic in its own lifetime'. The car I was being allowed to drive, however, was a 1978 Corniche convertible – a splendid example with just 75,000 miles under its wheels.

On the appointed day, Robert Dunn – the Corniche's proud owner – drove his Rolls-Royce along the Costa del Sol to La Linea, crossed the border into Gibraltar and parked it at the airport, from where I would collect it. As I slid behind the wheel, having first admired the immaculate Mulliner Park Ward coachwork finished in eye-

catching Regal Red, I knew I'd entered a wonderful world of quality and tradition. The interior of the Corniche felt 'just right', from its black leather seats with their red piping to its abundance of burr walnut veneer. This was going to be an experience to savour.

As I twisted the key, I was aware that the classic 6.75-litre V8 was running... but only just, such was its smoothness and refinement. Having adjusted the driver's seat to suit my frame, I released the parking brake, moved the steering column-mounted gear selector to 'D' and, with a gentle push on the throttle,

we were gliding out of the car park and on to the main road. Bizarrely, the road crosses the main Gibraltar Airport runway, with red lights enforcing a stop for a few minutes whilst a British Airways flight from Heathrow touches down – and then we were free. Whilst waiting, however, I took the opportunity to lower the Corniche's roof, enabling me to properly enjoy the Gibraltar sunshine.

CORNICHE ON TOUR

Once across the airport, I turned left at the Sun Dial roundabout at the top of

**“The road crosses the main runway,
with red lights enforcing a stop whilst
a British Airways flight touches down”**





The views across the Strait of Gibraltar are sure to impress any first-time visitor

Winston Churchill Avenue and proceeded along Devil's Tower Road. With the airport now on my left and the famous Rock of Gibraltar towering aloft to my right, I pointed the Corniche east for half a mile before negotiating the right hand bend close to the sea. The Rolls-Royce cornered well and with confidence, with the suspension resettling itself before we wafted along Sir Herbert Miles Road, which runs parallel with the coast.

Just before Catalan Bay village, I braked hard and turned sharp left, down the steep ramp into the car park that overlooks the bay. I parked up and got out of the car for a look around; this is one of my favourite spots on Gibraltar and has hardly changed over the last forty years. Like the white facade of the Caleta Hotel rising against the Rock in the background, the Rolls-Royce Corniche looked a picture of colonial elegance.

Back behind the wheel again, we headed past Little Bay and entered Dudley Ward Tunnel, one of just three tunnels where the public roads pass »

The Rock of Gibraltar's 34 miles of tunnels housed hospitals during World War II





“The apes of Gibraltar are famous for their thieving ways, and I didn’t want to take any chances”

through the Rock itself. Not many people are aware, however, that within the Rock are another 34 miles of tunnels, which during World War II housed three fully functioning hospitals and could have provided shelter for up to 16,000 personnel, complete with equipment and supplies. During the Cold War period, plans were in place for the inhabitants of Gibraltar to be sheltered inside the Rock in the event of a nuclear attack, and the tunnel network was regularly expanded by the

Ministry of Defence right up until 1968.

Emerging from the dark of the Dudley Ward Tunnel into the bright sunlight once again, I blinked momentarily while my vision readjusted, before letting the Corniche gather speed as it headed down the hill towards Europa Point. I looked out over the sea across the Strait of Gibraltar and could clearly see Morocco, less than nine miles away, before passing the lighthouse and heading north. I could have stopped again in order to take

in the spectacular views at Europa Point but I didn’t want to miss a single moment experiencing one of my all-time favourite Rolls-Royce models in what to me was the perfect setting.

As I climbed the winding Europa Road around the east side of the Rock, a small amount of pressure on the accelerator released an abundance of power, with the Corniche’s famously unconfirmed output of around 256bhp guaranteeing an effortless surge of acceleration. With a corner looming, however, I then braked hard to check the car’s progress before taking what is a very sharp right, up the road that leads to the top of the Rock. Close to the entrance of St Michaels Cave, I pulled over for another photo opportunity as well as to visit the monument reminding people that Gibraltar is famous for being one of the two Pillars of Hercules.



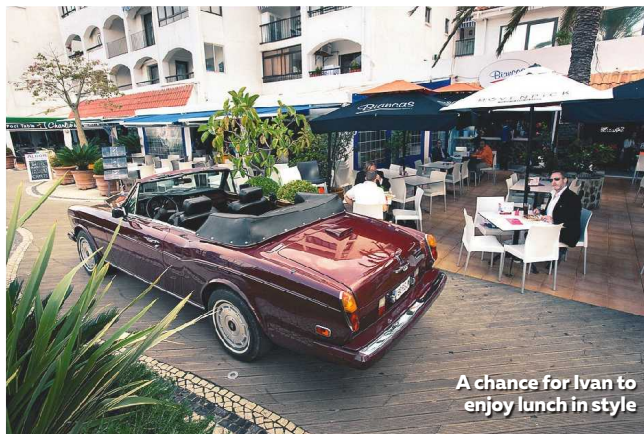
The famous Ragged Staff Gates date back to 1736

MEETING THE APES

No driving experience of Gibraltar would be complete without seeing its famous apes (or Barbary macaques, to give them their proper title), the only wild monkeys populating the European continent – and it’s at this point that I decided to raise the roof in order to secure the car. The apes of Gibraltar are famous for their thieving ways, and I didn’t want to take any chances with the immaculate interior of a borrowed Rolls-Royce. It was Winston Churchill who once said that the apes will remain there as long



The inevitable dusty engine bay of a dry-climate Corniche



A chance for Ivan to enjoy lunch in style

as the Rock is British, and these days they're still prolific – with numbers actually on the increase. Indeed, the apes remain a popular Gibraltar attraction for most tourists, although as we were keen to avoid any damage to the Corniche we continued on our tour, heading towards the main town.

Although many of the hills are extremely steep in Gibraltar, the brakes of the Corniche took even the trickiest in their stride. Driving past the colonial looking Rock Hotel and straight through the town area, we stopped the car to lower its roof once again before turning the car towards Queensway – at the end of which I twisted the steering wheel to almost full lock around a tiny roundabout, before peeling off up the hill and through the Ragged Staff Gates that still stand as part of the original sea defence walls, dating back to 1736 and allowing access to the quays.

A tickle of the throttle then had the Corniche swishing along Line Wall Road,

heading back towards Winston Churchill Avenue before looping off left around the Sun Dial towards Marina Bay. By then I was feeling somewhat peckish and so decided to call in for a late lunch at Bianca's Restaurant, an excellent establishment run by good friend and fellow car enthusiast Patrick Francis. He kindly agreed for me to park the Corniche outside his restaurant on the quay, allowing me to keep an eye on it whilst I indulged in a welcome pizza.

All good things must come to an end, of course, and so after downing my second cappuccino I climbed aboard the Corniche once again. During my drive back towards the airport over North Front, I delighted in the smooth refinement of the Rolls-Royce, its low-mileage V8 sounding more like a softly humming sewing machine at low revs rather than a powerplant capable of endowing such a weighty machine with decent pace. I've long been an admirer of the classic L-series V8, yet

it seemed particularly at home in the Corniche – especially when cruising around one of my favourite locations, with the roof lowered and sunshine of Gibraltar making its presence felt.

My day at the wheel of a forty-year-old Corniche convertible had been a unique opportunity to drive a truly delightful motor car, and as I glanced in the rear view mirror I realised I was wearing a silly grin that spread from ear to ear. It's usually at this point that I ask myself whether the car in question is one that I would actually enjoy owning, but this time there was no need. Cruising around Gibraltar in top-down luxury was a truly rewarding experience – and one that I won't forget in a hurry. ■

THANK YOU

The author would like to thank proud owner Robert Dunn for the loan of his splendid Rolls-Royce Corniche for the day.

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



VALUE-FOR-MONEY ARNAGE

While the majority of Bentley Arnage buyers tend to opt for the 6.75-litre British-engined versions, aided by the fact they're far more plentiful and therefore easier to track down, there are others who appreciate the value for money offered by the earliest BMW-powered models. And this example from 1999 shows why, presented in superb condition and with just 71,000 miles on its odometer – available at a tempting asking price of £19,999.

The car is currently on sale at Hanwells of London and is finished

in Peacock Blue with colour-coded bumpers and limited-edition Le Mans-style wheels, giving it the appearance of a later example. This Arnage has apparently been known to Hanwells for a number of years and has always been maintained regardless of cost, hence being in what's described as 'immaculate condition throughout'.

At the time of the Arnage's launch in 1998, it came equipped with BMW's 4.4-litre twin-turbo V8. But with BMW threatening to cease engine supplies during early discussions over the future of both Bentley and Rolls-Royce, new owner Volkswagen needed to avoid

such a risk and decided to reintroduce the former British-built V8 from the old Turbo R – launching what became known as the Arnage Red Label in October 1999. The BMW-powered version continued in production for a few more months, albeit badged as the Arnage Green Label.

Early BMW-powered Arnages are an interesting choice these days, with their short production run giving them a touch of extra exclusivity. If this extremely smart example appeals to you at around the £20,000 mark, give Hanwells a call on 0208 567 9729 or go online to www.hanwells.net.



CLASSIC CORNICHE

While many an enthusiast's dream car is the convertible member of the Corniche family, there's no denying that the fixed-head coupe offers far superior value. That's certainly the case with this handsome looking example from 1976, finished in Midnight Blue (with

a lighter shade of Everflex roof) and boasting a glorious dark blue interior. It's a Corniche FHC that certainly stands out from the crowd.

Just 83,000 miles have been covered to date, and the Corniche comes complete with a comprehensive history dating back to 1980. The car has been known

to Ghost Motor Works for many years, and the company is now tasked with finding it a new owner at an asking price of £56,000. For such an original Corniche in exceptional condition, that's got to be an extremely fair deal. Find out more at www.ghostmotors.co.uk or call 01732 886002.



FAMOUS OWNERS

Just a couple of days before this issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* went on sale, H&H Classics hosted an auction that included a Bentley Turbo RL formerly owned by HRH The Prince of Wales and a Silver Cloud II that was once the property of actress, singer and sex symbol Diana Dors. And with very realistic estimates set, H&H was predicting plenty of interest in this special duo.

The Bentley was supplied new to Prince Charles in 1994, built to special order and finished in an appealing combination of Brewster Green paintwork with a mushroom-coloured

hide interior. Since departing the Royal household, L881 DNP has had two further keepers and boasts an extensive maintenance history, original handbooks and service books, plus a large collection of invoices. Most interesting of all the paperwork, however, is the special order form showing the unique features fitted to the car, a list that included a blue lamp, a rear seat cushion lowered as much as possible, a fixed sunroof and front head restraints that were easily removable. The Bentley was expected to sell for around £12,000-14,000.

The ex-Diana Dors Silver Cloud II, meanwhile, dates from 1960 and

is finished in white with red leather upholstery. Its indicated mileage of 60,000 is unwarranted but potentially true, and this Rolls-Royce has been the subject of previous restoration work. The car is thought to have spent several years in the USA and was being sold by H&H complete with its original handbook, old invoices and a current MoT certificate. The auction estimate at the time of writing was £30,000-35,000.

Although both cars will almost certainly have found new owners by the time you read this, you can find out how much each one fetched via www.handh.co.uk.



THE ULTIMATE EXAMPLE?

Any Mulliner Park Ward S3 Continental drophead-coupe is a special beast, but this particular example is nothing short of astounding. It has been the subject of the highest-quality restoration by RR&B Garages and is described as 'automotive perfection' by Vintage & Prestige Classic Cars, the specialist company that's now offering it for sale.

This superbly finished convertible comes with a huge photographic history of the restoration, detailing the incredible attention to detail shown throughout. The current custodian of the Bentley bought it in 2014, but before that the car had been in the hands of just one owner from new. Finished in Sage Green with a dark green hood and interior, this glorious example has won numerous awards. V&P's Richard Biddulph explains: "Rarely do we get a car in that is faultless, but this is one of those seldom found examples."

If you're looking for the ultimate S3 Continental DHC and your budget will stretch to £325,000, you need to give Richard a call on 01375 379719. A full range of images of the car can be downloaded via www.vandp.net.



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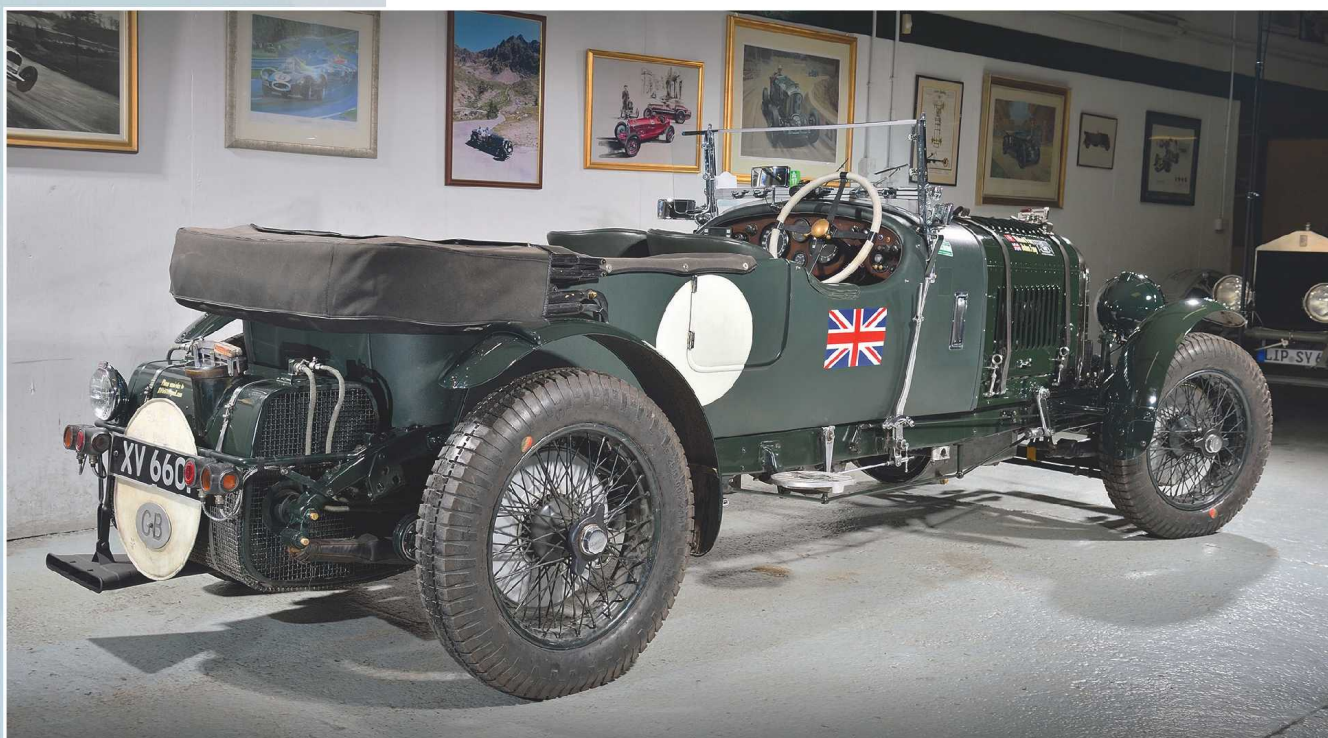
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VINTAGE ADVENTURER

Pre-war Bentleys aren't just for show; they're also among the most durable classics when it comes to long-distance rallies and adventures. Just ask proud owner Roland Frey...

WORDS: SAM SKELTON PHOTOGRAPHY: MATT WOODS & ROLAND FREY





Having owned an array of post-war classics, ranging from an MGB to a Mercedes-Benz 190 SL, Roland Frey is no stranger to old cars and historic rallying. Once he'd decided to embrace semi-retirement, however, his next plan was to invest in something pre-war that could take long-distance adventures in its stride: "I wanted a car capable of touring and rallying," says Roland. "It didn't take me long to decide on a Bentley, and so I acquired a 1924 3 Litre. However, after a year of continental touring and rallying, we decided that the 3 Litre – although a lovely car – had some deficiencies for our kind of usage. I got talking to the late Stanley Mann about the cost of upgrading to a 4½, which was when he offered me XV 6601."

This 1928 4½ Litre had a remarkable history, with a list of former owners that included W.H. Charnock (who had written about the car in his book, *Mind over Motor*) and Archie Butterworth, with whom the Bentley had competed in the 1952 Brighton Speed Trials. The car needed an engine rebuild by the time Mann offered it to Roland, although this was factored into the purchase price. And so the autumn of 2014 saw Roland becoming the proud owner of the 4½ Litre shown here.

The 2015 Flying Scotsman Rally

(organised by the Endurance Rally Association) was the first event Roland competed in with XV 6601, with the car by then being nicknamed George: "On our way to the start of the rally, we stopped by Tim Cresswell's VBE Restorations in Warwickshire to introduce him to the Bentley and to discuss future jobs for later in the year." Sadly, however, disaster struck on the second day of the rally when, just before reaching the Scottish border, it was evident that something was wrong with the transmission. Having considered the possibility of a broken half-shaft, Roland discovered that the differential had self-destructed – and so it was back to VBE with George for the inevitable engine rebuild and a new diff.

Tim Cresswell, managing director of VBE, picks up the story: "Roland originally came to us in 2015. Having recently bought the car, he had a catastrophic differential failure during the Flying Scotsman Rally that year. We rebuilt the entire diff with all new parts, which included a new VBE-spec diff housing made from HT aluminium with a thicker flange to increase its strength. We also upgraded the half-shafts to the 8 Litre design. While the Bentley was here, Roland asked us to carry out a thorough mechanical inspection with the aim of making the car good enough »

FEATURE CAR BENTLEY 4½ LITRE

Most of the work on the Bentley was down to VBE's Richard Jones, the lead mechanic on the project

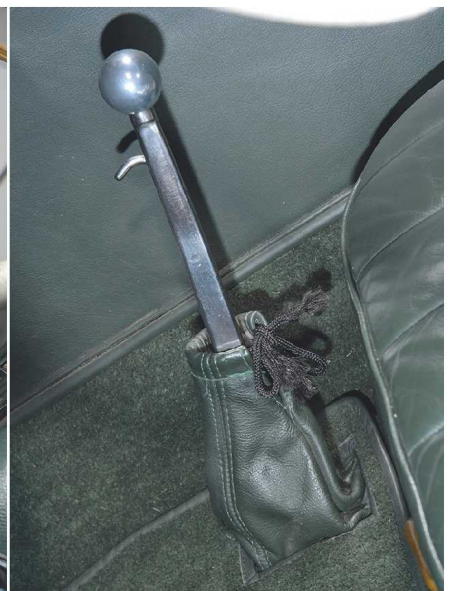


to take part in international events. And it was then that we found various areas that needed attention, including the fact that the white metal on the main bearings – at the bottom end of the engine – had deteriorated badly.

"After we'd spent some time

discussing numerous options, Roland opted for a belt and braces engine rebuild," recalls Tim. "This included a new semi-counterbalanced crankshaft and forged rods made to VBE's design. He also asked us to convert the engine to shell bearings and to replace almost

all reciprocating and rotating parts, ensuring total engine reliability. We fitted a modern oil filtration system to protect the engine, surpassing the original strainer standards, and the magneto and carburettors were rebuilt to ensure that the ancillaries would be





as reliable as the engine. Double shock absorbers were also fitted on each corner, as per the Le Mans team cars."

MULTIPLE EVENTS

By early 2016, George was back with Roland and was soon embarking upon 2000 miles of careful touring in order to ensure it was ready for that year's Flying Scotsman event. Roland doesn't give up easily – and having been defeated in 2015, he was determined to complete the rally this time round: "Success! George finished! After touring Scotland, we then drove the car to Switzerland to participate in the 2016 British Classic Car Meeting in St Moritz, where George won first prize in the Concours d'Elegance. After that, we continued to the Swiss RAID Basel-Paris rally, which we also successfully completed. And in the September we drove the Bentley back from Switzerland to VBE, as it had to be serviced and made ready for our next adventure – the Bentley Drivers Club's 2017 drive of New Zealand."

Almost 7000 miles had been covered in George during the 2016 season, but

"The toll booth at the Oakland Bay Bridge turned out to be a real challenge for the radiators, with several boiling over"

it was now time for VBE Restorations to ready the car for the following year, with Tim and his team putting together a comprehensive spares and tool kit during the preparation process. There were several provisions made in case of failures, including a spare propshaft being fitted to the underside of the car; if the overdrive failed, it could then be removed and replaced with a full-length propshaft. A radiator muff was made to ensure that on colder events the Bentley was running at the correct temperature, with an electric fan also fitted to aid cooling on any events in hotter climates. A Monit rally meter was installed, and the car received a full service ready for a busy year ahead.

Roland and his wife, Helen, went on to cover a further 10,000 miles in their 4½ Litre in 2017, competing in a list of tough and demanding events that included the famous Blue Train Challenge, the Baltic Classic, the

Schauinsland Klassik in Germany's Black Forest and the Vintage Classic Car Friends meet in France. With another season successfully completed, the Bentley was returned to the UK once again, where preparation for another series of adventures would take place.

MORE ATTENTION

"George spent last winter back with VBE Restorations and was treated to a new radiator," explains Roland, "as we wanted to ensure another year of trouble-free motoring – particularly as we were planning 10,000 miles of rallying in the USA throughout 2018." Roland and VBE's Tim Cresswell went through the car to establish any potential issues that could lead to failures, with the wiring posing an obvious problem; modified and repaired several times already, it was becoming difficult to establish »

FEATURE CAR
BENTLEY 4½ LITRE

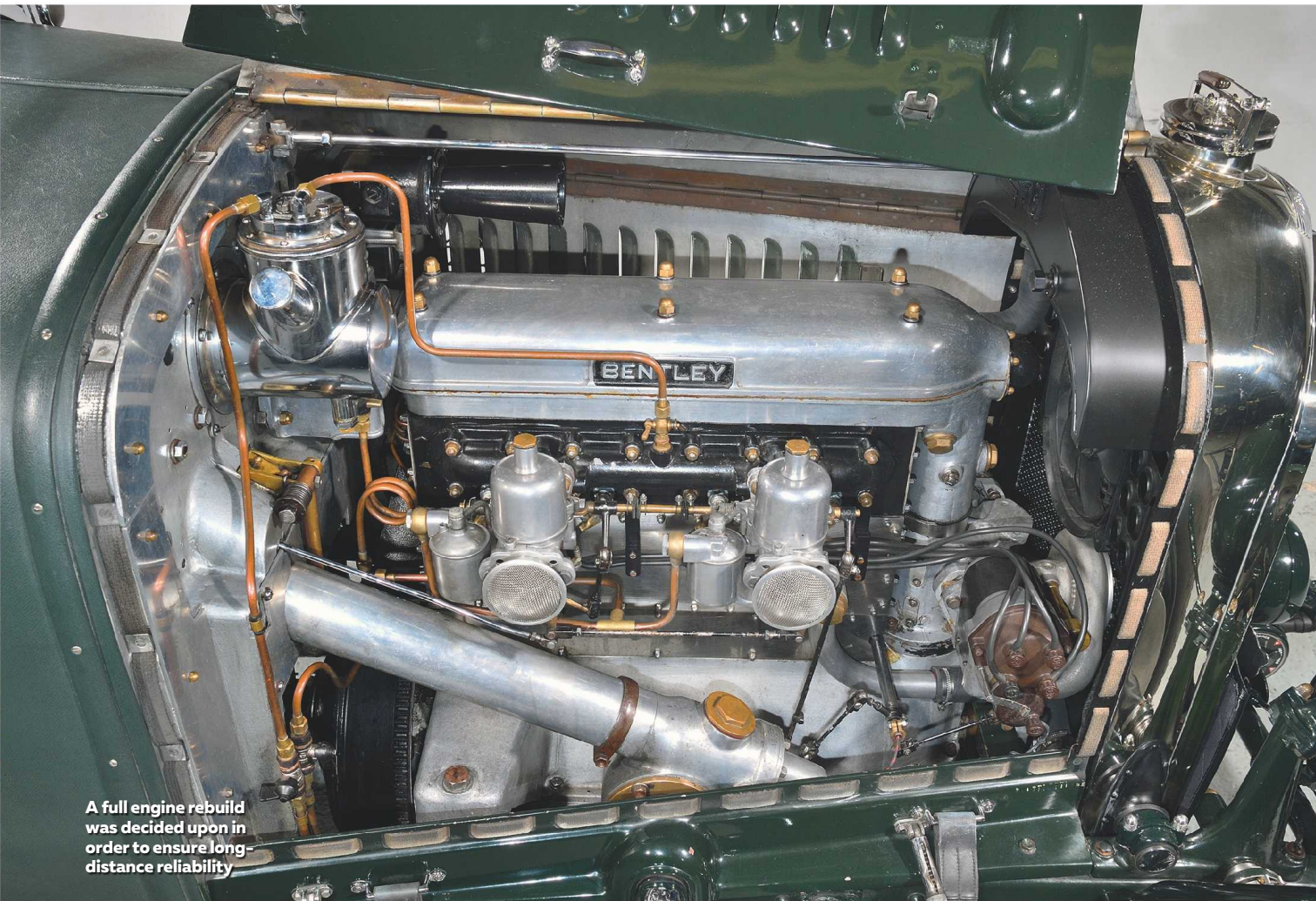
“A new overdrive was ordered from VBE and installed prior to the next leg of the American tour”



Roland and Helen have driven 27,000 miles in the last three years

what exactly did what, leaving too much potential for trouble. The entire electrical system was duly stripped and started again from scratch, with the full rewire including a conversion from dynamo to alternator, plus the fitment of reverse and rear fog lamps, an external jump point, a modified fuse board adapted to take blade fuses and an FIA-specification master switch.

Bump stops were fitted to both axles, and towing eyes were fitted fore and aft. A new exhaust was fabricated from mild steel, along with swinging and sprung mountings to cope with the roughest terrain a rally could offer. Swinging baffles were fitted to the sump with the same idea in mind; oil starvation and surge is less likely with baffles, which adapt to the terrain. A new radiator was fitted, together with new mounting rubbers and a stone guard, with stone guards also being added to the headlamps. The gearbox 'lid' and floors were



A full engine rebuild was decided upon in order to ensure long-distance reliability

modified to access the drivetrain and to allow easy filling of the 'box, a fire extinguisher was fitted, and all wearing parts within the suspension and steering systems were replaced.

For 2018, Roland's plan was a 10,000-mile tour of North America – and at the time of writing, he has covered more than 8000 miles: "During last year's tour of New Zealand we noticed that ERA – one of our rally organisers – was calling for a trip across the USA, from Charleston to Seattle in late May 2018. Wow, we thought, what a journey! We'd be able to see friends at the start and along the way before ending up with family in Seattle. However, on second thoughts, and upon checking the route and climate at that time of year, we decided that it was already too hot and humid for 'man and machine'. Talking to some Australian colleagues, they suggested we could join the Australian Bentley Drivers Club on its CANAM Tour – from »



International rallying brings extremes in terms of weather and terrain

FEATURE CAR BENTLEY 4½ LITRE

San Francisco to Vancouver, the long way via Yellowstone and the Glacier National Park – and so a plan was born.”

EPIC ADVENTURE

With Route 1 closed, the journey to the start line had to be modified. Roland headed inland, before making his way back to the Monterey coast and north to meet the other eleven vintage Bentleys and their owners in the Oakland suburb of Lafayette. There, Roland received the road book for his 24-day rally to Vancouver, checked the car and prepared for the month ahead.

Setting off proved difficult for some – but not for Roland and his plucky George: “The toll booth at the Oakland Bay Bridge turned out to be a real challenge for the radiators, with several boiling over. Luckily, our investment in a new radiator for George turned out well and he passed the test with flying colours. The drive through San Francisco and across Golden Gate Bridge turned out to be simple in comparison.”

From Lafayette to Vancouver spanned just over 3500 miles through spectacular scenery, with the drive being made all the more enjoyable thanks to the company and camaraderie of the Bentley drivers (and co-drivers) involved. Having arranged to cross the US border at a smaller crossing, however, Roland chose to head down Route 9 into Seattle in order to spend time with family, before a five week rest back home.

George’s speedo had broken by this stage, and it transpired that the issue was within the overdrive unit. Once opened it was found to be full



of debris, sparking concerns over its longevity. A new overdrive was duly ordered from VBE and installed prior to the next leg of the American tour: the Colorado Grand event. More than 6300 miles after reaching America, Roland and Helen were ready for their latest adventure.

That particular four-day event spanned just over 1000 miles of driving (which included more than a dozen

challenging mountain passes), starting and ending in Vail. Along its route, the Colorado Grand visited Steamboat Springs, Meeker, Grand Junction and Hotchkiss – and having raised over \$6m for local Colorado charities to date, the 30th anniversary celebration of 2018 boosted this by a further \$500,000. At the gala evening marking the end of the Colorado Grand, Roland and Helen were awarded the ‘Rookie of the Year’ trophy and were invited to put George on display: “Similar to the annual BCCM event in St Moritz, all participants are requested to display their cars in the town centre. We were surprised by the crowds, as some people came from quite far away to look at the cars that had taken part.”

By the time this issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* is published, Roland’s American expedition will be complete and George will have covered more miles in a year than many cherished vehicles manage in a decade. Indeed, over the last three years this well-used 4½ Litre has been driven an impressive 27,000 miles by Roland – proof, if proof were needed, that vintage Bentleys are still capable of offering their adventurous owners real long-distance reliability. ■



George the Bentley has performed extraordinarily well during 2018



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2006(06)Bentley Arnage T Mulliner Level 2,Special Order Small Rear Window, 57,000miles Diamond Black Metallic with Beluga Diamond Quilted Hide and Portland Contrast Double Stitching Embroidered Bentley Emblems To Seat Backs. Piano Black Veneers and Bright Aluminium Inserts, Beluga Wilton Carpets, Veneered Picnic Tables ,19"Split Rim Alloys, Jewel Filler Cap LeMans Front Wing Lower Vents with Mulliner Badges, Climate Control with revised Centre Console Controls Quad Rear Exhausts Electric Tilt and Slide Sunroof, GPS Satellite Navigation, Stunning Rare Example has Full Bentley Service History And Just Serviced £29995



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Older Rolls and Bentley cars can be challenging to drive in modern traffic conditions. The main issue is one of visibility and the failure of other road users to understand outmoded methods of signalling. Modern cars have brighter lights and sharper indicator systems and motorists see what they expect to see, or in this case, don't.

Better Car Lighting of Warwickshire have been busy developing neat and invisible solutions to make these cars safe and convenient to use in modern traffic. At the front, special replacement LED bulbs have been developed to give white sidelights but change to

Bright news for older cars

ADVERTORIAL

orange for indicating. These are a straight swap for the originals. If the current bulbs are single circuit, alternative bulbholders can be fitted to make use of these new bulbs.



The bulbs in semaphore arms can be upgraded to bright orange flashing ones, to make them useful instead of decorative. At the rear of early cars, the tail and brake lights are often very dim and again, the lack of orange flashing indicators can be a safety issue. Better Car Lighting can help here too. Most of the usual suspects



have conversions available which not only give brighter tail and brake lights, but also have orange flashing indicators which shine through the red lens.

All models are catered for, and as these upgrades are designed in-house, tech support is always available.

All of the other lights, including dashboards, interior, etc. can be upgraded and a great deal of equipment designed to make these cars safer and more comfortable is available.

For more details, visit www.bettercarlighting.co.uk or call 0121 773 7000





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FAMILY AFFAIR

More than fifty years on from its official launch, Essex-based P&A Wood continues to embrace both the classic and new-car market – and is looking to the future with confidence

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: SAM SKELTON

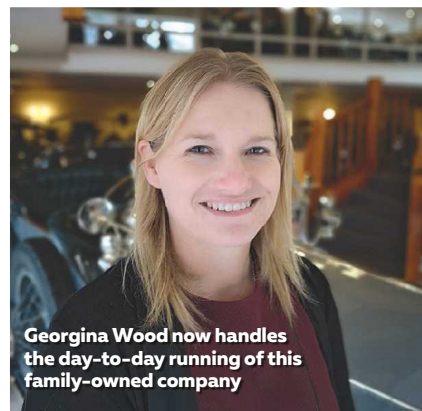
Stepping through the door of P&A Wood's historic showroom is like entering a gallery of wheeled art. This historic family firm is to our knowledge the only Rolls-Royce and Bentley specialist to maintain a modern Rolls-Royce franchise alongside its historic business activities. Managing director Georgina Wood is the second generation of her family to run the business; father Paul and uncle Andrew are both still involved, but the day to day operations are handled by Georgina and her team.

"They were real car enthusiasts when they were younger. My uncle Andrew left school and entered an apprenticeship with Rolls-Royce, and later he got my father a job there too. By the mid-1960s they were working in their own time to maintain

customer cars and decided to branch out by themselves. They opened their business from a barn with a dirt floor and lived in a caravan behind the barn – they had to put plywood down in order to jack cars up!"

Officially open by 1967, though in practice having traded since the early '60s, P&A Wood grew at an unexpected rate. However, as the workload grew, so did the rent – and as the work continued to come in, the brothers decided that a bigger workshop would be needed. Moving to premises in Bardfield in 1970, the business expanded into selling cars belonging to clients, and by 1972 Rolls-Royce was approaching the brothers to offer a franchise – which has continued uninterrupted to the present day.

The business moved to its current



Georgina Wood now handles the day-to-day running of this family-owned company

premises – a former lorry repair centre – in 1988, since when the site has been extensively remodelled: "I remember running in and out as a kid while they were busy adapting the »

SPECIALIST VISIT P&A WOOD



Bentleys and Rolls-Royces of all ages and spec can be found in the showroom



The hue of this Bentley Flying Spur certainly makes it stand out from the crowd

workshops for Rolls-Royces,” recalls Georgina. The service bay remains, though the showrooms are new. More recently, the brothers bought an adjacent site to develop into its new-car franchise, which also features the new paint and trim shops.

Rolls-Royce and Bentley appointed P&A Wood as its Official Heritage Dealer in 2001, a unique appointment across the worldwide Rolls-Royce network. It has been a franchise for Goodwood-era Rolls-Royces since the launch of Phantom VII, and now offers a complete range of models including the special Rolls-Royce Wraith by P&A Wood.

BESPOKE APPROACH

With chrome side trims, colour coded brightwork and wheels, and additional veneering to the interior among its features, the Wraith by P&A Wood is a very special car. The paint is bespoke, with two of the seven P&A Wood Wraiths produced thus far having their lower panelling in green (a colour that isn't found on the official palette), with

green hide atop the dashboard. The precise shade of green was inspired by a Bentley S1 Continental, says Georgina, and formulated for this car. A Wraith by P&A Wood typically costs around £25,000 more than a standard car, though this is dependent upon the specification chosen.

Our conversation turned to the Cullinan, a controversial model for Rolls-Royce but one that Georgina is confident has a niche: “It was nice to see how traditional Rolls-Royce and Bentley customers reacted to the Cullinan. I think it's a new direction for Rolls-Royce. When they said they were going to do it, there were definitely concerns from clients; we had our own concerns over how this car was going to be, what it was going to look like and how it could keep up with the Rolls-Royce expectation. A lot of our clients are considering replacing their existing SUVs with Cullinans now that they know what to expect.”

New cars account for approximately one third of total sales within P&A Wood's portfolio, with the remainder coming from the classic side of the



The Wraith by P&A Wood is a special edition that appeals to fans of bespoke motoring



Above: Andrew Wood is one of the co-founders of the firm and is still very much hands-on



Visitors to the P&A Wood showroom are greeted by this glorious Silver Ghost.



The repair and restoration of classics is still a major part of P&A Wood's business

business. Customers of historic cars often buy modern examples too, which means P&A Wood can cater for all of a client's needs. Both classic and modern examples can be maintained on site too, courtesy of a staff of 65 who share the same passion for the brand as Georgina and her forebears.

WORKSHOP FACILITIES

The current pride of the business is the new-car service centre, opened just days before our visit. Capable of taking six cars, and with an expectation for a minimum of five in for service at any given time, it is home to the UK's only air-assisted four post ramp of its scale. "We can look after the very latest cars as well as the heritage models," says Georgina. "P&A Wood is very well-known for being good at restoring heritage cars, but we also want to be known for looking after and servicing modern examples too."

A typical lead time for a service might be a couple of weeks, but anything more demanding such as a full restoration would typically need to be booked up to a year ahead of work beginning. While P&A Wood will never turn a car away, the lead time supports the assertion that its work is among the best in this field: "We'll try to save any car if the opportunity is given to us. We have excellent spares sources, and a machine shop to reproduce items when new ones are not available off the shelf. We'll use as much of the original car as possible, as nothing is ever truly beyond repair."

P&A Wood is justifiably proud of its facilities, which are varied by the type of work carried out. A 'clean' trim shop with craftsmen at work has cars in the final stages of restoration and continuing maintenance, including the past two winners of the RREC Concours d'Elegance – a pair of 3.5-litre Derby Bentleys. "Derbys haven't been popular traditionally at concours events, but we're proud of the fact that cars we've restored have twice won the RREC Concours – as well as the Bentley Drivers' Club Supreme Concours – in the past two years alone."

Georgina points out other cars in the trim shop, including a fascinating Mulliner-bodied MkVI Sports Saloon: "That was one of a limited run of three, two of which remain in existence. It was also the predecessor to 'Olga' – the prototype for the car we know as the R-Type Continental. That's another car



The company's extensive workshop holds an impressive number of customer cars

"The current pride of the business is the new-car service centre, opened just days before our visit"

which we've restored, brought here to be revived after 400,000 miles!"

The gleaming new service bay is a thing of beauty; with banks of specialist tools and an airy feel, it's exactly the right environment in which to care for more modern vehicles like the Phantom and Ghost ranges. It sits at odds with the historic workshop (yellow lighting, men in store coats, and a sensation that everything is done in a time-honoured tradition), where more unusual cars can be found – ranging from a Jowett Jupiter-esque MkVI Special to a deliciously extrovert Flying Spur in a colour best described as akin to British Leyland Limeflower.

It's here that we meet Andrew Wood (unfortunately Paul was away on the day of our visit), a diffident man whose obvious passion for the brand has grown over several decades' experience. His favourite example on site at present? "A 1908 Silver Ghost that we've recommissioned. Apart from the colour of the paint and the trim, it's wholly original – right down to the cast fuel tank and cast-iron pistons." All major components »



This Mulliner-bodied MkVI Sports Saloon is one of just three built



This Bentley MkVI-based special looks like it was influenced by the Jowett Jupiter

SPECIALIST VISIT P&A WOOD

including the engine, chassis, gearbox and axles were retained during the restoration, and all are stamped '1908' as new. Originally supplied to Australia, this car has more recently been used to display the marque history by standing in the showroom of Rolls-Royce's Goodwood headquarters.

SHOWROOM APPEAL

The car showroom is probably the building that most people associate with P&A Wood, as it's visible in the background of most of its historic car sales photographs. Typically you'll find a wide variety in here, with 1930s Bentley Specials rubbing shoulders with Silver Clouds and Arnages on the day of our visit. In pride of place, however, was a Silver Ghost displayed next to a Merlin aero engine. Georgina was quick to assuage any worries of expensive stock: "We aim to supply the very best examples, which usually means low-mileage cars with history, because they're often the ones offered to us in the best condition. But sometimes something a little more accessible might become available – perhaps a car with 80,000 miles but one that we've looked after for several years, and which we know has worn them well. We'd happily sell cars like this through our showrooms, as they support our hard-earned reputation for quality."

There's even an on-site shop from which customers can buy automobilia and branded products. Our eyes were caught by the Bentley aftershave range, the bookshelves and P&A Wood's own exclusive line of car care products. A surprising amount of



Classics of all ages are serviced, repaired and restored by P&A Wood's classic division

"There's even an on-site shop from which customers can buy automobilia and branded products"

interest is apparently shown in period brochures: "You'd be surprised how many clients phone up and ask if we can still supply brochures for their historic models," says Georgina. "A lot of what we have is from Dad's collection and that of Andrew, but if our clients want anything in particular we can usually source and supply it."

So what's next for the business? "We're always looking to expand our new-car sales," explains Georgina. "Rolls-Royce does set targets, and we'd exceeded our annual target by the end of September this year. We're hopeful that the Cullinan and Phantom VIII will bring more customers to Rolls Royce, as well as increasing uptake from a younger audience through the Black Badge range. We're also going to be

taking on more staff, particularly in the new-car service bays, to meet the growing demand for these services. But while we're keen to expand the new-car side, we're not going to lose sight of the fact that we're Rolls-Royce's only official historic sales and restoration specialist. That will remain a significant arm of the business, and is likely to be where the bulk of our business lies for years to come." ■

THANK YOU

Many thanks to Georgina Wood and the rest of the team at P&A Wood for giving us a guided tour of the business. To find out more, check out the website (www.pa-wood.co.uk) or call 01371 870848.



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BUILDING A BEST-SELLER

Launched in 1965, the Silver Shadow enjoyed a fifteen-year career – while its two-door convertible derivative lasted the best part of three decades. We take a look at the development and successes of this remarkably long-lived family

WORDS: PAUL GUINNESS PHOTOGRAPHY: KELSEY ARCHIVE

Rolls-Royce enjoyed considerable success with three generations of Silver Cloud – and Bentley S-series derivatives – throughout its decade-long production run. Launched in 1955, here was a car that stayed true to tradition, with its separate-chassis

layout enabling Britain's dwindling numbers of specialist coachbuilders to offer their own bespoke versions. There was, of course, a touch of modernity about the Silver Cloud saloon's aesthetics when it first went on sale, but car design was evolving rapidly by the start of the '60s –

and Rolls-Royce's chief stylist, John Blatchley, faced a dilemma when it came to creating a successor.

Even at the upper end of the new-car market, there was a noticeable shift in demand. There would always be wealthy buyers who wanted – and could afford – the ultimate in traditionalism

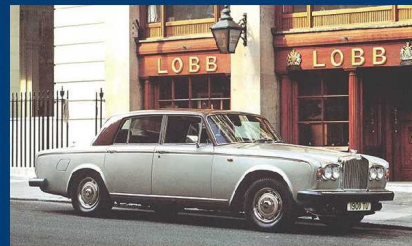


and prestige, which explains why Rolls-Royce continued to enjoy steady demand for its 1959-on Phantom V limousine. But as the 1960s dawned, John Blatchley knew that a successor for the Silver Cloud family needed to cater for a new breed of buyer: the owner-driver who didn't employ a chauffeur. The newcomer needed to offer the kind of luxury that a Rolls-Royce always should, albeit in a slightly more compact, more manoeuvrable package.

Blatchley also knew that the way the car was built needed to change, as the world was moving away from the separate-chassis layouts of old. The use of monocoque construction might have caused consternation among Britain's traditional coachbuilders, but it was a must for any new Rolls-Royce that needed to bring extra sales and increased profits to the car-building side of the business. Adopting a modern monocoque layout would enable the new Rolls-Royce to be both lighter and smaller than the Silver Cloud, which in turn would have an effect on both performance and fuel economy. And it would enable Rolls-Royce to build in larger numbers than before, with production of the newcomer's bodyshell being outsourced to Cowley-based Pressed Steel.

What became the Silver Shadow of 1965 wasn't just modern in terms of its construction, of course. It also needed to offer a smoother ride, much-improved handling and more stability at high speed than the Silver Cloud, hence the adoption of fully independent suspension. And with Citroën being world leaders in terms of suspension technology, Rolls-Royce wisely chose to licence the French firm's hydropneumatic system, albeit redesigned at Crewe to incorporate conventional coil springs. The hydraulics provided self-levelling to maintain the car's ride quality irrespective of load, as well as powering its four-wheel disc brakes to ensure reassuringly strong stopping power.

One of the few elements of the Silver Shadow that was carried over from the Silver Cloud III was its 6230cc V8 – a unit that was capable of endowing the smaller, lighter newcomer with superior performance compared with its predecessor. In every other respect, however, the Silver Shadow was a genuinely fresh design, hailed as 'the most radically new Rolls-Royce for 59 years'. Indeed, not since the



THE OVERLOOKED BENTLEY

Up until the arrival of the Silver Shadow, Bentley tended to rival Rolls-Royce when it came to sales success. The Silver Cloud of 1955–65, for example, was actually outsold by the Bentley S-series equivalent, with the early S1 in particular being significantly more popular than the Silver Cloud I.

The generation before had also seen Bentley enjoying considerable success in the luxury car market. The 1946–52 MkVI sold over 5200 units in total, with its R-Type successor of 1952–55 (derived from the MkVI and featuring modified rear styling) attracting 2323 buyers. By comparison, the Rolls-Royce Silver Dawn (another MkVI derivative of 1949–55) achieved a mere 760 sales.

The arrival of the innovative new

Silver Shadow in 1965, however, marked a remarkable fall from grace for the Bentley marque. Rolls-Royce's first monocoque-bodied model went on to be a major success, with 19,497 of the original four-door saloon (prior to the Silver Shadow II of 1977) being sold over twelve years. By comparison, just 1712 of the Bentley T-series (before the T2 of '77) attracted buyers, leading Rolls-Royce to contemplate dropping the Bentley marque altogether when work began on a Silver Shadow successor in the 1970s.

Fortunately, however, that never happened, and Bentley went on to enjoy renewed appeal – and booming sales – throughout the '80s and beyond, largely thanks to the success of the high-performance Turbo R.

original Silver Ghost had there been a Rolls-Royce so genuinely advanced compared with the competition.

QUESTION OF STYLE

Work on a successor to the Silver Cloud began while that car was still in its infancy, with John Blatchley focused on the need for modernity: 'Styling this car was very much an architectural exercise... the specification demanded it be lower, narrower and shorter with more luggage space and a bigger petrol tank. My biggest challenge was getting all this paraphernalia, plus passengers, into a car that still looked right.'

Prototypes began to appear in the late 1950s and early '60s, codenamed Tibet (for the Rolls-Royce) and Burma (for the Bentley), the original plan being to make the Bentley the smaller of the two. Even at that early stage, the final shape of the Silver Shadow was beginning to emerge, although the wraparound screens and reverse-angle rear door windows made those initial cars look dated compared with the eventual production model.

The grille treatment of the early prototypes was also controversial, as Blatchley experimented with numerous options (including a full-width grille design incorporating quad headlamps) before deciding on the final version. Martin Bourne, another member of the Rolls-Royce design team from 1959, recalled the many changes made during the Silver Shadow's early development: 'Hardly a day went by when some small detail of its appearance wasn't being considered.'

Rolls-Royce was also working with BMC at this time, the idea being to adapt one or two of the corporation's models into a higher-volume Bentley employing Crewe's 4.0-litre, six-cylinder F60 engine. And so while Blatchley and his team worked on development of the Silver Shadow, he also created a front and rear restyle of the Vanden Plas Princess 3-litre (codenamed Java) to accommodate a Bentley grille between stacked quad headlamps. This eventually evolved in to Java 3, a concept with definite overtones of the Silver Shadow, while other attempts at collaboration with BMC included scale models based »

THE FULL STORY ROLLS-ROYCE SILVER SHADOW

around the proposed Austin 3-Litre bodyshell. In the end, however, the idea of a BMC-based Bentley came to nothing, although the Rolls-Royce-engined Vanden Plas Princess 4-Litre R did arrive in 1964 – giving BMC a useful but (with the benefit of hindsight) commercially unsuccessful flagship.

BRAVE NEW WORLD

The Silver Shadow made its motor show debut at Earl's Court in the autumn of 1965, with *Autocar* magazine explaining that a 'new Rolls-Royce is an event of a decade'. It hailed the newcomer as 'the most advanced and intricate car the company have introduced' thanks to such headline features as monocoque construction and that all-independent self-levelling suspension. The Rolls-Royce stand of '65 featured three examples of the Silver Shadow, finished in Shell Grey, Regal Red and Dawn Blue.

“Rolls-Royce carried out innumerable upgrades and improvements to ensure it stayed ahead of the luxury car pack”

Members of the motoring press were highly impressed with the newcomer, of course, with Basil Cardew of the *Daily Express* describing it as 'smaller, roomier, lighter, swifter' than its predecessor. John Blatchley's brief that the Silver Shadow should be lower, narrower and shorter than before (the Silver Cloud was three and a half inches wider and seven inches longer), whilst offering more space for people and their luggage, had been well and truly delivered.

How would the Rolls-Royce and Bentley fans of old take to such an advanced design, though? Bentley Drivers Club president Stanley Sedgwick borrowed a new T-series in 1966, and was immediately impressed: 'I

accepted the design of the body for what it was. I liked it and I think the S-types really did look dated beside the car. The more I saw of the car, the more I considered it better-looking than any of its contemporaries.'

There were inevitably complaints from the company's more traditionally-minded clients, some of whom couldn't initially accept the Silver Shadow's modernity, not least its lack of a separate chassis. But in much the same way that the new Rolls-Royce Cullinan of 2018 divided opinion (yet allegedly attracted large numbers of orders from new customers even before going into production), there were enough well-heeled luxury car buyers willing to give the Silver Shadow a chance – ultimately ensuring it was the most successful individual Rolls-Royce model of all time.



TWO-DOOR DERIVATIVES

Just months after the launch of the Silver Shadow came a brace of two-door derivatives, with both James Young and Mulliner Park Ward (the in-house coachbuilding division of Rolls-Royce) launching their latest bespoke models in early 1966. The James Young version shared the Silver Shadow's straight-looking waistline and relatively upright rear window, giving it the look of a two-door saloon rather than a coupe. It proved to be short-lived, with the final example being built in 1967 after sales of just 35 Rolls-Royce and 15 Bentley versions.

The Mulliner Park Ward model went on to be a success, aided by its more stylish lines. This was the last new car from the era of chief stylist John Blatchley, although it was Bill Allen – Blatchley's deputy – who created the final shape using a wax modelling technique. The curved waistline just above the rear wheelarches proved to be a masterstroke, giving the MPW two-door a distinct style that set it apart from its Silver Shadow cousin.

By the end of 1966, a prototype convertible version of the MPW car had been built, and by the following year it was ready to be launched. It was this that went on to be one of the longest-lived Rolls-Royces (and

STRETCHING THE POINT

Compared with the standard Silver Shadow, the long-wheelbase version was an exclusive offering. It was a story that began via a pilot run of just ten 'extended' cars (one of them for Princess Margaret) in 1966/67, deemed to be successful enough for the long-wheelbase model to become a full-time member of the Silver Shadow family. Deliveries to American customers began in 1969, with home-market cars being offered from the following year.

The difference in price was considerable, with the long-wheelbase Silver Shadow costing £10,643 upon its debut (or a hefty £11,348 with chauffeur's division), at a time when the standard-length model could be had for 'only' £9272. Interestingly, most

of the long-wheelbase Silver Shadows were ordered with the division, which perhaps wasn't too surprising given the model's obvious appeal to the chauffeur-driven end of the market.

The arrival of the usefully updated Silver Shadow II for the 1977 model year saw the continuation of a long-wheelbase version. From then on, however, it would be badged as the Silver Wraith II; after little more than six years on sale in Britain, the model officially known as the Silver Shadow long-wheelbase was no more, bowing out after sales of 2780 cars. Even with the later Silver Wraith taken into account, however, only 4915 examples of the extended-wheelbase Rolls-Royce were sold worldwide.



The Silver Shadow was smaller, lighter, yet roomier than the old Silver Cloud

Bentleys) of all time, although from 1971 these two-door models would be relaunched as the Corniche.

The convertible version of the Corniche enjoyed an exceptionally long career, with the very last version finally being built in 1995 – thirty years after the debut of the Silver Shadow from which it was derived. It went through numerous upgrades during that time, with the Corniche IV of 1992-on featuring, for example, four-speed (rather than three-speed) automatic transmission and adaptive suspension, while the following year saw 20% more power from the venerable 6.75-litre V8. The final 25 Corniches were completed in the summer of 1995, uniquely featuring turbocharging and badged as the Corniche S.

STEADY DEVELOPMENT

Although the Corniche Convertible enjoyed a record-breaking career for Rolls-Royce in terms of longevity, the standard Silver Shadow saloon also did exceptionally well for itself, surviving for a decade and a half before finally giving way to the new Silver Spirit of 1980. Throughout that time, however, Rolls-Royce carried out innumerable upgrades and improvements to ensure it stayed ahead of the luxury car pack.

Many of these changes were subtle, such as the early adoption (at the end of 1965) of a lighter brake pedal movement, while October 1967 saw a Saginaw power steering pump replacing the original Hobourn Eaton type, complementing the Saginaw recirculating ball steering system that was fitted to the Silver Shadow.

At the same time, the car's opening front quarter light windows were changed to fixed units, while in 1968 the Silver Shadow received a revised handbrake, higher-ratio steering, an uprated front anti-roll bar (as well as a rear anti-roll bar for the first time, although not on US-spec cars) and the latest GM400 automatic »



The V8 was upgraded to 6750cc spec for the 1970 model year

“Just months after the Silver Shadow’s launch came two-door derivatives from James Young and Mulliner Park Ward”



part of management discussions for some time (the original plan being for the car to enjoy a ten-year production run), its eventual successor wasn't to appear until the start of the '80s – which meant extending the life of the company's best-selling model.

Indeed, sales of the Silver Shadow held up very well once the company was reconfigured as an independent car manufacturer, with 2720 Rolls-Royces being built in 1973 – up from just over 2000 per annum at the start of the decade. But it was obvious that a facelift would be required at some point if the Silver Shadow was to retain its 'best car in the world' crown, hence the announcement of the Series II in February 1977.

The most obvious visual changes included plastic-faced alloy bumpers with polyurethane side pieces, while below the front bumper was a spoiler (aimed at improving high-speed stability) and a pair of front fog lamps. Inside the car, the Silver Shadow II boasted a new-look fascia with revised instrumentation, while the air conditioning had been upgraded to a split-level system. Most important of all, however, was the adoption of rack and pinion steering and a modified suspension system, ensuring that the Silver Shadow II offered the kind of sharpened-up handling and more precise steering that luxury car buyers of the late '70s expected. »



CREATING THE CAMARGUE

Although not strictly a Silver Shadow derivative, the new-for-1975 two-door Camargue shared essentially the same floorpan. It appeared nine years after the debut of the last two-door Rolls-Royce (the Silver Shadow Mulliner Park Ward coupe, later renamed the Corniche), and was certainly one of the more controversial members of the clan thanks to its distinctive styling by Pininfarina.

It was also one of the most expensive cars on sale. Forty years ago, a brand new Silver Shadow

would have set you back £26,740, at a time when the Corniche coupe could be had for £38,879. But both cars looked almost bargain-like compared with the Camargue, which in 1978 carried a list price of £47,367.

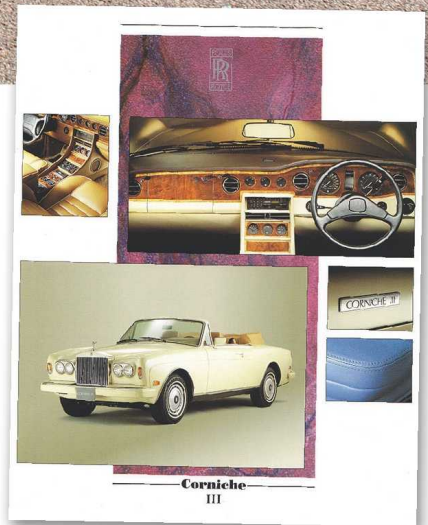
Rolls-Royce described the Camargue as an 'elegant and sophisticated two-door saloon of exceptional grace and beauty'. By the time the last Camargue was built in 1985, however, a mere 530 examples had been sold worldwide – reinforcing its reputation as one of Rolls-Royce's most exclusive models.



“What had been a hugely successful model for the company was finally being consigned to history”

Production of the Silver Shadow finally ceased in the autumn of 1980, as Rolls-Royce prepared itself for the launch of its imminent successor. What had been a hugely successful model for the company was finally being consigned to history, although its Corniche convertible cousin was scarcely halfway through its production

run by then. During its fifteen-year career, the Silver Shadow had gone from being a cutting-edge design packed with modernity to the highly respected elder statesman of the luxury saloon world. It left the automotive stage with dignity – and to this day has yet to be beaten in terms of Rolls-Royce production figures. ■



PRODUCTION FIGURES

Silver Shadow (1965-77).....	16,717	Bentley T-series MPW 2-dr (1966-71).....	98
Silver Shadow LWB (1967-77)	2780	Bentley T-series James Young (1966-67).....	15
Silver Shadow II (1977-80)	8425	Rolls-Royce Corniche 2-dr (1971-80)	1090
Silver Wraith II (1977-80)	2135	Bentley Corniche 2-dr (1971-80).....	69
Bentley T-series (1965-77).....	1712	Silver Shadow MPW Convertible (1967-71).....	505
Bentley T-series LWB (1967-77).....	9	Bentley MPW Convertible (1967-71)	41
Bentley T2 (1977-80).....	558	R-R Corniche Convertible (1971-95).....	5160
Bentley T2 LWB (1977-80)	10	Bentley Corniche Conv (1971-95).....	533
Silver Shadow MPW 2-dr (1966-71)	568		
Silver Shadow James Young (1966-67).....	35	TOTAL.....	39,882

1975

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2001/X Rolls Royce Silver Seraph. Finished in Meteor Blue with Cotswold fine lines and Cotswold interior with French Navy piping. Only 2 owners from new, last owner since June 2001. Wood and leather two tone steering wheel, folding mirrors and sat nav. FSH and in beautiful condition inside and out..... **£40,950**



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



1996 Model N Bentley Turbo R MK IV. Finished in Sherwood Green with Cream fine lines, 17 inch alloys and racing mesh grille. Parchment interior piped in Spruce Green with Spruce carpets piped in Parchment. Walnut veneers and only 63,000 miles with FSH. Known to us for 8 years. Superb throughout..... **£18,950**



1994 M Rolls Royce Silver Spirit MK III. Finished in Royal Blue with Gold fine lines and whitewall tyres. Pale Grey interior with Nautic top roll and piping, with French Navy carpets piped in Nautic. Only 49,000 miles with FSH. Known to us for last 5 years. Outstanding and a real investment, only..... **£24,250**



1992 K Rolls Royce Corniche Convertible Series III. Finished in Vermillion with a Magnolia hood and Magnolia interior piped in St James, with St James carpets piped in Magnolia and Walnut veneers. Only 14,000 miles with full history. Just amazing condition and will only go up in price..... **Only £132,950**



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1979 V Rolls Royce Silver Shadow Series II. Finished in stunning Oxford Blue with Silver Blue leather interior, with contrasting carpets and Walnut veneers. This car is in stunning condition with only 35,000 miles, with lots of history. A real investment and a joy to drive..... **Only £41,950**

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Two LHD S1 Saloons



1934 20/25 Limousine by Mann Egerton Fascinating barn find that was probably last used in 1970! Considerable cosmetic work needed but runs & drives Surprisingly sweetly; **£25,000**
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• THE TIME TO BUY •

BENTLEY CONTINENTAL R

Regarded by many as the ultimate Bentley of the 1990s, the Continental R is an exclusive offering for which prices are no longer falling. Now's the time to buy – and here's what you should know

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: JACK GROVER

With the launch of the Continental R in 1991, the decade-long revival of the Bentley marque was complete. This was the first Bentley since the '60s to not share its body with a Rolls-Royce; indeed, it didn't even share its body with another Bentley, such was its bespoke approach. Every aspect of the new two-door's styling was unique, from its lower roofline with cut-in door frames to its re-sculpted front wings and distinctive rear haunches. The overall look of the Continental R had

been created by the functionally named International Automotive Design consultancy of Worthing – and the end result was superb.

At £175,000, however, this newcomer was one of the world's most expensive cars, although at least it was also one of the fastest. At launch, this latest Continental used the familiar 6.75-litre V8 with a big Garrett turbocharger and an intercooler in the same state of tune as in the Bentley Turbo R. Crewe still declined to provide official power outputs at that time, although it's estimated

that around 325bhp was on tap, along with a huge amount of torque. Top speed was governed to 145mph, with 0-60mph achieved in just 6.6 seconds – all in a car weighing around 2.5 tons, on a 120-inch wheelbase and with an overall length of 17.5 feet.

The rest of the Continental R's running gear was also taken from the Turbo R, with fully independent coil-spring suspension (featuring hydropneumatic self-levelling at the rear) and power-hydraulic brakes with ABS, plus variable-assistance power steering. To add to the sporting feel



It's important to check that the Continental you're buying comes with a comprehensive history



of the newcomer, this was the first Crewe-built automatic-transmission car to have the gear selector in the centre console rather than on the steering column. The selector handle incorporated a Sports button, which would simultaneously quicken the gearbox's reactions and delay upshifts while firming up the suspension.

Aside from that, the interior was largely the same as in the Turbo R. The major change was to the centre console, which not only incorporated the gear selector but extended back to between the rear seats to form an arm rest, drinks holder and storage cubby; it also swept up to the dashboard top, forming space for six ancillary instruments. All Continental Rs were finished and trimmed by Rolls-Royce's Mulliner Park Ward subsidiary and carried MPW builder's plates, with the bodies being assembled by hand from machine-pressed panels.

CONTINENTAL SHIFT

The first updates to the Continental R were made in 1994, when the engine's cylinder heads were redesigned by Cosworth to improve both torque

and top-end power (to 360bhp), while the wheels were increased in size to 17-inch diameter. At the same time, a limited-edition model with even more power – the Continental S – was offered to existing Bentley customers, with these 37 cars providing an estimated 385bhp and shaving half a second off the 0-60mph time.

The Continental's engine received a new electronic management system and digital boost control in 1996, improving both throttle response and fuel consumption, while the air-to-air intercooler was switched for a more efficient air-to-water unit. For the first time ever, Crewe also published official power figures – with the latest Continental R now producing 385bhp as well as the highest torque of any production car (550lb.ft. at 2000rpm). Top speed was increased to an artificially limited 155mph and the 0-60mph time fell below six seconds, giving the Bentley true supercar-rivalling performance. Electronic traction control was also introduced to help keep everything under control.

The ultimate version, however, arrived in late 1996 in the form of the Continental T, featuring a wheelbase

four inches shorter than that of the R as well as noticeably extended wheelarches. Under the bonnet was a tuned engine delivering 400bhp, which was raised to 420bhp (and 650lb.ft. of torque) in 1998. The Continental T was 90kg lighter than the standard Continental R, and was noticeably more responsive to drive, while its interior featured engine-turned aluminium dash panels instead of wood, as well as a push-button starter.

The last major changes to the Continental range came in 1999, when Mulliner versions of the Continental R and Continental T were offered. In the case of the R, this meant gaining the same 420bhp engine as the standard T, while the T Mulliner benefited from uprated dampers and significantly stiffer anti-roll bars to further improve its sporting credentials. Bentley (by then owned by Volkswagen) also introduced a high degree of personalisation for the Continental, offering buyers a wider variety of power outputs and a plethora of interior and exterior options. The Continental R and T models – in both standard and Mulliner forms – remained in production until 2003, by which time a total of 1854 of all »

THE TIME TO BUY BENTLEY CONTINENTAL R

types had been built, 1236 of which were standard Continental Rs and 322 were standard Continentals Ts.

This critically acclaimed range was a major commercial success for such an upmarket offering, not only in terms of sales and revenue but also for the boost it gave to Bentley's reputation. Thanks to the Continental, the brand was once again seen as one of the most desirable and prestigious in the world, on a par – and perhaps even exceeding – its Rolls-Royce counterpart when it came to exclusivity. These days, however, the Continentals of the '90s are rather more affordable – and are a seriously tempting proposition. So what do you need to know if you're tempted to take the plunge?

BODYWORK CHECKS

The majority of issues with a Continental will relate to body corrosion, especially on early examples that are now approaching their 30th birthdays. Fortunately these problems are confined to a few well-known areas, and serious structural rot is extremely rare. The thing to bear in mind is that even relatively simple repairs, such as replacing crusty wheelarches, cost far



The seats, headlining and trim are obviously unique to the Continental R

more than on a regular car of the same age if the job is done to the proper standards, especially with regard to the paint and trim. Such jobs can quickly eat into the value of these cars.

Those wheelarches are the first areas to check, both outside and inside the wing; the lower portions of the front wings, especially between the A-pillar and the wheelarch, is another.

Swing the front wheels from lock to lock to get a good look behind the front bumper on each side, looking for accumulated mud, rusty front sections or repairs (the latter must be of a good quality). The panel line between the front bumper and the wing is, by design, an odd, uneven shape – and so, despite appearances, this is not a sign of accident damage or a bodge.



Checking the condition of the interior is vital, as refurbishment doesn't come cheap



Continental Ts and Mulliner-spec cars have fitted side skirts over the sills which trap dirt and moisture, often causing the metal sills to rot away unseen behind the cosmetic body kit. Run a hand under and behind the skirt to feel for scabby or soft metal. If the skirt itself is rusty, you can assume there is very little left of the actual sill. On other models, especially earlier Continental Rs, the sill tends to rust only at the rear where it flares out ahead of the rear wheelarch, and so you need to check here in the same way.

The doors, bonnet and boot lid are aluminium alloy, and any area where the paint is broken – such as door handles, locks, badges and trim – can be the starting point for electrolytic corrosion. It will be a rare Continental indeed that is entirely free of such corrosion, but it takes a long time to

“The majority of issues with a Continental will relate to body corrosion, especially on early examples”

become visible without close inspection. Repairing and painting aluminium costs even more than the steel parts, so it really isn't worth taking on a car with more advanced electrolysis issues.

TRIM AND INTERIOR

Much of the value (and potential expense) of a Bentley – and especially a Continental – is in the interior. It's all made of high-quality materials that rarely wear, but replacing or refurbishing any of the trim or soft furnishings will be a seriously expensive

job. Many cars had customised parts, which means that even a specialist breaker may not yield what you need. Fortunately, however, the vast majority of Continentals have excellent interiors.

If the car had a phone installed from the factory, Crewe usually fitted a rather nasty and cheap-looking aerial on the leading edge of the roof. The phone won't work anyway these days, so the aerial is best removed and the hole properly sealed.

The seats on the Continental are unique due to the fact that the backs fold forward to allow access to the rear; »



THE TIME TO BUY BENTLEY CONTINENTAL R

check that the latches work properly (they should release at the touch of the button on the side of the bolster and automatically re-engage). There are two ECUs per seat, with the extra one controlling how the seat will move all the way forward when the back is released to allow easier access, then return to its original position when the back is re-latched; make sure this works, as well as all the usual adjustments and memory functions.

RUNNING GEAR

The rubber bush at the top of the front spring strut needs checking. You need to open the bonnet and use a couple of fingers to test the clearance between the inner and outer parts of the strut mount. It should be even all-round; if

“The last major changes came in 1999, when Mulliner versions of the Continental R and Continental T were offered”

it's not, then the bush needs replacing at a cost of around £500 per side.

The upper and lower ball joints are prone to wear on these weighty cars, so listen for knocks and bangs from the front wheels during your test drive – and budget around £250 per side if they need changing. The test drive will also reveal whether the hydropneumatic spheres for the rear suspension are in need of replacement (shown by a stiff and jolty ride), with the cost of this work being around £600 via a specialist. If the car is tail-down, then the self-levelling system has failed altogether,

which is a big expense to put right. It is now easier to find 17-inch tyres of the correct rating for the Continental R than 16-inch ones, which means that many early Rs are running on later wheels; whatever the size, look for kerbing damage and general wear to the wheels.

The Continental's drivetrain is familiar and robust, with engine problems being fairly rare as long as it has been serviced properly. It should, of course, be whisper-quiet at idle, with noisy valvegear suggesting that the hydraulic tappets are worn (or gummed up from infrequent oil changes); they can be replaced, but it's a near-£2000 bill from a specialist. Any blue smoke under acceleration or lacklustre performance, meanwhile, points to a worn or damaged turbocharger, which you can confirm by looking around the turbo and in the intake tract for oil leaks. The gearbox is all-but indestructible and there are a lot of parts and specialists around to tend to any minor problems that may come up.

TECH DATA	CONTINENTAL R (1991-94)	CONTINENTAL T
Engine	6752cc V8 turbo	6752cc V8 turbo
Power	325bhp @ 4000rpm	420bhp @ 4000rpm
Torque	450lb.ft. @ 2000rpm	645lb.ft. @ 2100rpm
Transmission	GM 4L80-E 4-spd auto	GM 4L80-E 4-spd auto
Top Speed	145mph	168mph
0-60mph	6.6 secs	5.8 secs
Suspension	Independent coil springs, self-levelling, adaptive damping	Independent coil springs, self-levelling, adaptive damping
Brakes	Ventilated power-hydraulic discs all-round	Ventilated power-hydraulic discs all-round
Weight	2402kg	2423kg

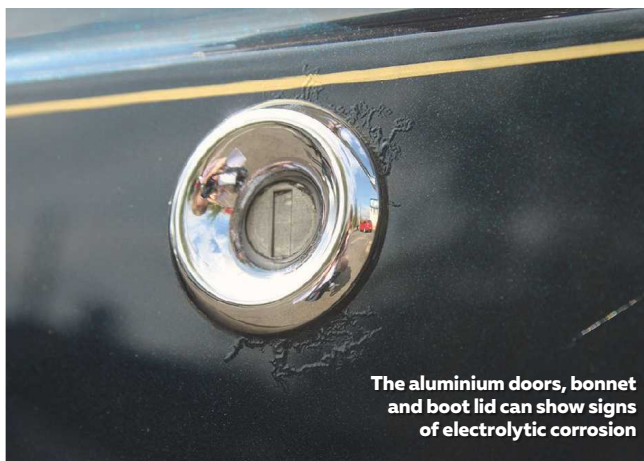
EXPERT ADVICE

Our source of information for this feature was Colin Ayres of





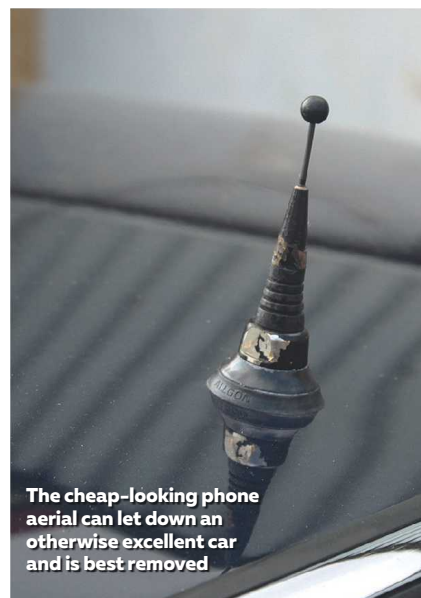
The Continental family's flared rear part of the sill needs checking carefully for rot



The aluminium doors, bonnet and boot lid can show signs of electrolytic corrosion



It's important to check the clearance between the inner and outer parts of the strut mount



The cheap-looking phone aerial can let down an otherwise excellent car and is best removed

Colbrook Specialists in Stilton, Cambridgeshire (tel. 01733 243737, www.colbrookspecialists.co.uk), who also provided the 1993 Continental R featured in the photographs. Beyond his advice that we've already included in this feature, Colin's offered this conclusion: "As ever with cars of these sort, the service history is key. Mileage is really inconsequential as long as the servicing has been kept up. But you need to be sure that it's a meaningful history, which means dealer or specialist stamps in the book rather than a general garage. We often see adverts claiming 'full' or 'extensive' service history, which amounts to a couple of stamps with years between them – so do make sure that you carefully check the paperwork yourself."

Meanwhile, Colin is full of praise for the value offered by these Continental models of the 1990s: "These cars are

hugely under-priced at the moment. If it was a Ferrari with 350bhp and coachbuilt bodywork, it would be worth ten times as much – although I think they're about to go from being modern classics to truly collectable cars. These are the last of the true all-Crewe Bentleys, as well as some of the last luxury cars you can genuinely call coachbuilt. That counts for a lot."

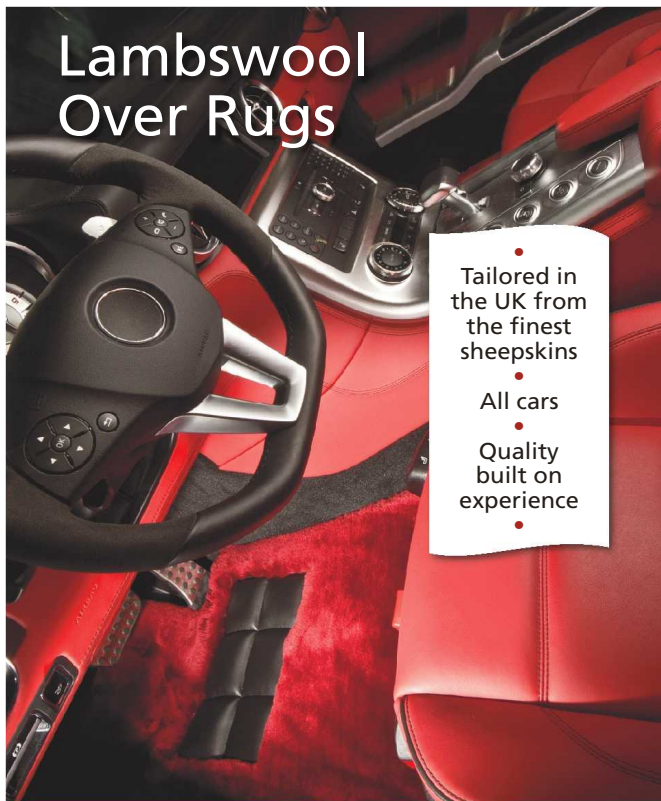
WHICH MODEL TO BUY?

Each of the Continentals offers a mix of performance, luxury and style that has won people over since the model's launch. The only question is how much you are willing to pay for exactly what levels of those three qualities. A standard Continental R has the advantage of offering the lowest prices in the range, with between £30,000 and £40,000 securing you

a fine example. It might be the most ubiquitous member of the family, but it's still an exclusive machine. The car featured in the photographs is a 48,000-mile Continental R from 1993, finished in Royal Blue and available from Colbrook Specialists at an asking price of £38,500.

You'll need up to three times as much to secure a good example of a Continental T, although that really is the ultimate in modern-classic Bentleys with a brawny 'iron fist in a velvet glove' character that can't be beaten. A worthy dream car, but is it really three times the car that the R is? Probably not, which is what makes a straightforward, well-looked after Continental R from the mid-1990s our pick of the bunch. Not only does it offer a superb ownership experience, it's also a sensible choice in terms of long-term investment potential. ■

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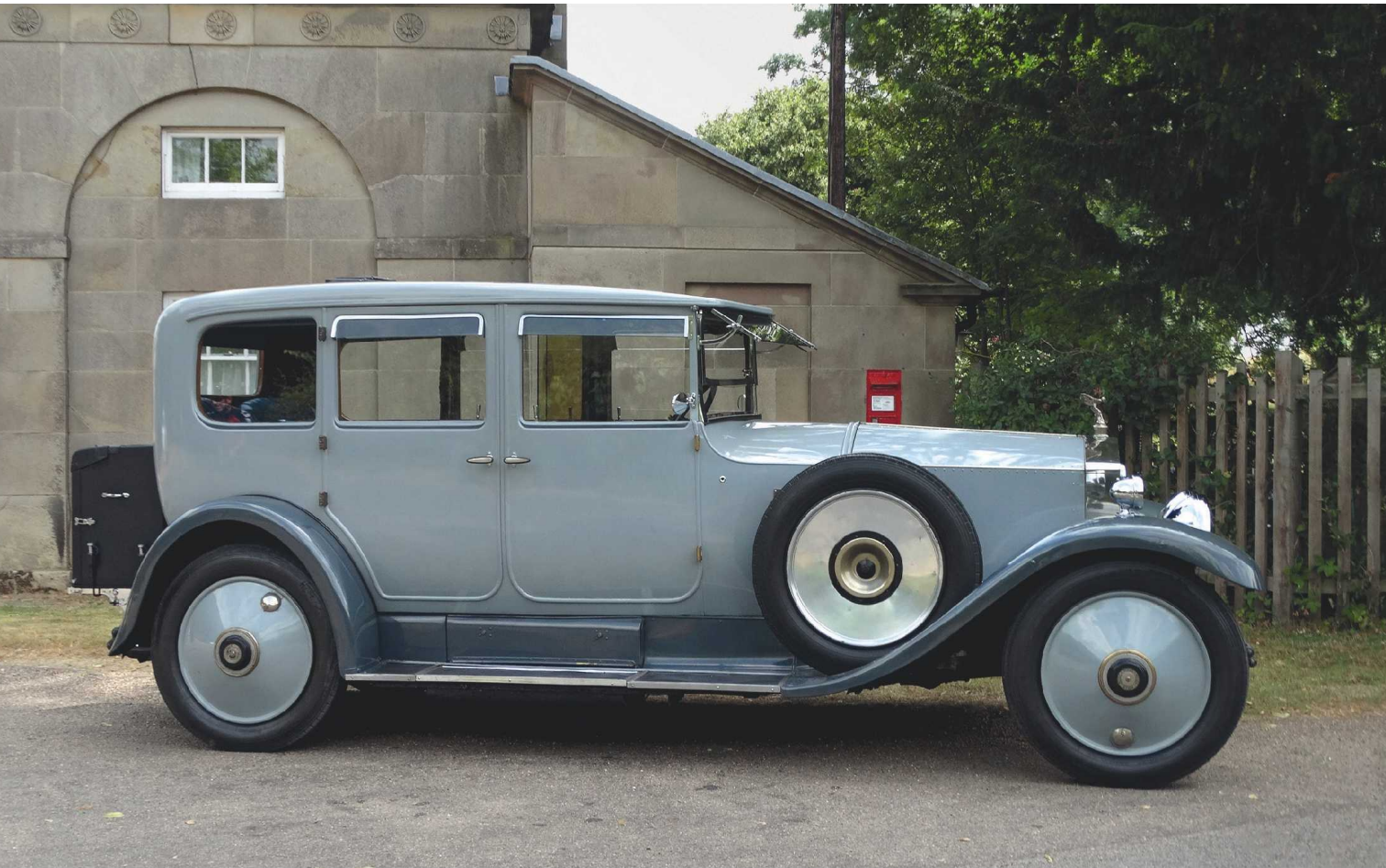
BACK TO THE TWENTIES

Six years after buying his Arthur Mulliner-bodied 20hp touring limousine, Tony Gray reckons it's still the perfect pre-war model for his particular needs.

We meet up with him to find out why

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: PAUL GUINNESS





“The six-cylinder engine designed for the 20hp was Rolls-Royce’s first to feature an overhead-valve layout”



At the age of 81, still impressively fit and active, Tony Gray has no intention of retiring: “I always say that to retire is to expire,” he laughs, as he manoeuvres his much-loved 20hp across the forecourt of the garage that he finally parted with last year. “I ran this place for half a century before selling it, but I’m still here every morning helping out. I can’t imagine not working. It just wouldn’t be me.”

We’re at Duffield Service Station, a ten-minute drive from the Derbyshire town of Belper, where we’ve arranged to meet Tony and the car that is ten years his senior. Having been involved in the motor trade his entire working life, and having owned (and worked on) countless different models during that time, he has plenty of fascinating tales to tell: “I started off restoring an Austin 7 Box saloon back in the 1960s,” recalls Tony, “before moving on to an Austin

16 Burnham. I’ve had lots of interesting projects, including building a Mini Marcos racer early on in my career.”

It wouldn’t be until Tony turned 70, however, that his desire to own a Rolls-Royce would finally be satisfied: “I was offered a low-mileage 1987 Silver Spirit about ten years ago,” he explains, “a car that I still have to this day.” But Tony had always wanted to own an older model, and shortly afterwards treated himself to a 20/25 Sedanca de Ville – the realisation of a dream, but one that didn’t quite live up to expectations: “It was a wonderful thing, and I had some good adventures in it, including the RREC’s parade of cars in front of the Duke of Edinburgh to mark his 90th birthday in 2011. But I found the 20/25 rather awkward to drive as I’m only five feet, four inches tall and I had trouble reaching the pedals!”

With the driver’s seat of the Sedanca de Ville (complete with chauffeur



Forming part of the offside running board is this comprehensive tool kit

Left: The original electric torch is still in place



The 3127cc powerplant is well detailed and obviously still performs well

division) being fixed in place, Tony couldn't find any way of being comfortable when driving the car – but was there any solution? A chance encounter with a specialist brought news of a 1927 Rolls-Royce 20hp coming to market, an Arthur Mulliner touring limousine that sounded ideal

for an owner-driver who didn't need much space behind the wheel: "It's a bit tight up front in any 20hp," admits Tony, "but for me it's absolutely ideal. I can fit comfortably and reach the pedals without difficulty, so buying one seemed like a logical move."

The sale of his 20/25 was entrusted

to Essex-based Vintage & Prestige, enabling Tony to take delivery of his newly acquired 20hp – a car that cost him £58,000 six years ago. Chassis number GAJ 65 wasn't the cheapest 20hp on the market at the time, but it was one of the finest. A photograph of it appears in John Fasal's iconic »

FEATURE CAR ROLLS-ROYCE 20HP



The interior of the 20hp touring limousine is immaculate

book on the subject, *The Rolls-Royce Twenty*, where it is described as 'a particularly attractive example'. But having recently seen the car up close, we'd say that's somewhat understating the case – as this is surely one of the most original, most complete examples of a 20hp currently in use.

RANGE EXPANSION

The 1922 launch of the 20hp (or Twenty) marked an important moment in Rolls-Royce history, the result of the company's decision to expand beyond producing a single-model chassis. The 40/50 'Silver Ghost' was renowned for the impeccable standard of its engineering, but Rolls-Royce realised there was space for a smaller, more affordable model capable of achieving increased sales. Edward Eves explained more in *Rolls-Royce – 75 Years of Motoring Excellence*:



The original scent bottle remains in the rear



The blue and gold brocade headlining is unusual and beautifully preserved



'This model was introduced to meet requests for a smaller, less expensive car in keeping with the trend after the First World War towards smaller cars for a wider market. Construction was simplified – but standards of workmanship were not compromised.'

As part of Rolls-Royce's planning for the 1920s, Henry Royce in particular was interested in the latest trends being adopted by the American automotive industry, and was keen for the crucial new 20hp to be seen as a modern, high quality offering. The 3127cc six-cylinder engine designed for the new Twenty was Rolls-Royce's first to feature an overhead-valve layout and was highly praised by the world's motoring press. Rather less impressive was the 20hp's three-speed transmission (with central gearchange), and so in 1925 the Twenty adopted a four-speed gearbox with a right-hand change. At the same time, the 20hp was also upgraded to all-wheel braking.

Although the 20hp is often referred to as the 'small' Rolls-Royce, it was still a hefty machine by standards of the time. It was, however, more compact and more affordable than the 40/50, making it ideal for the increasingly important owner-driver market that demanded Rolls-Royce levels of engineering in a car less gargantuan than the Silver Ghost or – from 1925 – the Phantom. Nevertheless, the Twenty had to be capable of continental touring in the Rolls-Royce tradition

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

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



“The 20hp’s ability to accommodate generously proportioned bodywork helped it to become a favourite among coachbuilders”

the compactness of the new engine.'

It was the 20hp's ability to accommodate generously proportioned bodywork that helped it to become a favourite among Britain's high-end coachbuilders of the 1920s, with Mulliner, Thrupp & Maberly, Barker, Park Ward and Hooper being among the most prolific users of Rolls-Royce's latest offering. A wide choice of bodywork was therefore available to customers, although the 20hp was particularly popular with limousine-style coachwork. A total of 2940 chassis had been produced by Rolls-Royce by the time the 20hp was finally replaced by the bigger-engined 20/25 in 1929. The Mulliner-bodied touring limousine you see here would have cost its first owner the substantial sum of £1700 when new in 1928.

SUPERB SURVIVOR

These days it's an extremely well-preserved and complete example, which is what first attracted Tony Fray when he heard it was for sale six years ago.

Its standard of presentation is very impressive, with just the 'right' amount of patina to reinforce its original look, although it's the car's Mulliner-spec detailing that makes it particularly endearing. This might not be the most attention-grabbing 20hp on the road, thanks to its subtle two-tone grey paintwork and enclosed wheel trims that are also finished in grey, but it's a car that charms any onlooker as soon as they start to study it in detail.

The large Carl Zeiss headlamps with cut glass lenses are still in place (and remain in wonderful condition), as are the adjustable exterior sun visors atop the original split front screens and the complete tool kit whose lift-up lid forms part of the offside running board. The rear of the car still has the same enclosed luggage holder that was fitted from new, which opens up to reveal the full set of beautifully finished suitcases that are still in extraordinary condition more than ninety years on. And the engine bay shows the same attention to detail, with the car's original copper oil gun and funnel still »

FEATURE CAR ROLLS-ROYCE 20HP

in place, as well as the electric torch that allowed the chauffeur to carry out any running repairs in the dark.

It's once you climb aboard this particular 20hp, however, that the standard of finish offered by Arthur Mulliner is best displayed. This was a company that was obviously keen to provide the personal touch, which explains why the rear of this touring limousine came complete with a cut glass perfume bottle, vanity mirror and leather purse on one side, while the other side featured a removable

"It's once you climb aboard this particular 20hp that the standard of finish offered by Arthur Mulliner is best displayed"

silver match holder for the gentleman. What's particularly refreshing to see is that all of these items remain in place and in perfect condition, even down to a collection of very old (and unused) matches still in the holder.

The car has obviously been exceptionally well cared for over the

years, which is why the glorious (and highly unusual) blue and gold brocade headlining is showing no signs of wear, and neither are the pull-down blinds in the rear compartment. The all-original leather upholstery still looks splendid in blue (as do the matching door and side panels), with the highly polished woodwork throughout being equally well preserved.



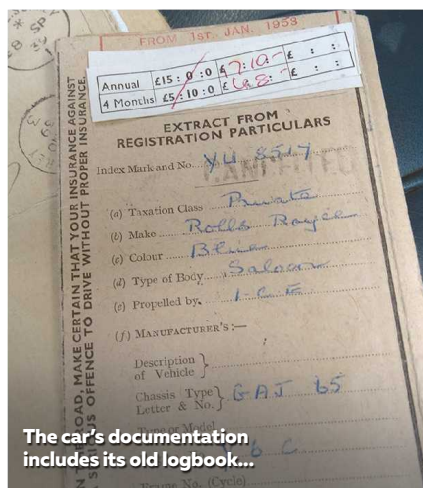
OLDER RESTORATION

Few cars that manage to reach ninety years of age remain in all-original condition, and so we weren't surprised to discover that Tony's 20hp made a return journey to Rolls-Royce for extensive restoration work in the late 1950s, with further refurbishment being carried out in the '80s. Happily, however, this means that even the restoration has taken on a patina of its own, helping the car to look more original than many of today's recently renovated examples.

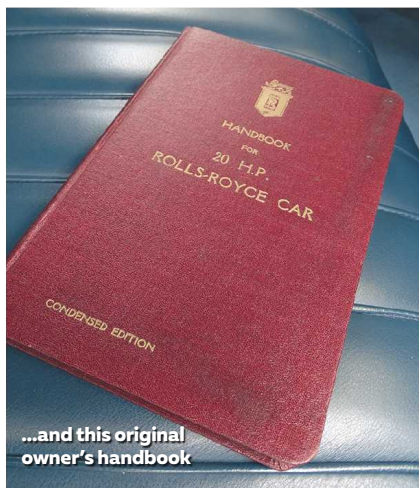
Prior to Tony acquiring the car six years ago, it was fully recommissioned by the supplying dealer, which helps to explain why it's been so dependable ever since: "I'm not afraid to use my Rolls-Royce, and will think nothing of taking it on fairly long trips to shows and RREC events. It cruises happily at 50mph or so, and is quite comfortable on any journey."

The driving compartment of this Mulliner-built car is ideal for Tony's fairly diminutive frame, giving him an advantage over many other owners: "It suits me perfectly," he says with a grin, "although some bigger chaps might have trouble fitting behind the wheel." As I jumped inside and sat next to Tony I appreciated what he was saying, as even the front-seat passenger has no room to stretch out. But that's all perfectly understandable, given the fact that this particular 20hp was fitted from new with limousine-spec coachwork and would almost certainly have been chauffeur-driven.

My brief journey alongside Tony was a joy, as he made the most of the Twenty's six-cylinder power to ensure reasonable progress around some of Derbyshire's rural B-roads. Gear changes were kept to a minimum on all but the steepest of gradients and the car did well to keep up with modern traffic, all the



The car's documentation includes its old logbook...



...and this original owner's handbook

while impressing with its smoothness of operation. The suspension did a sterling job of smoothing out the ruts and undulations, with the impressively refined engine ensuring noise levels were never intrusive.

Tony is well-experienced when it comes to driving his 20hp, which means he's obviously used to such features as the steering wheel-mounted advance and retard switch and the right-hand gearchange – although the car's ability to accelerate from very low speeds in top gear obviously helps to keep those changes to a minimum. "When I'm on a long run, I just cruise along happily and try to keep up momentum," explains Tony.

Since buying his 20hp, this enthusiastic convert has enjoyed largely trouble-free motoring, although there was some unexpected expense earlier this year: "The car needed a new ring gear on the flywheel, as well as a new clutch and first motion shaft bearing, and so I took it to Ristes Motor Company of Nottingham to ensure a proper job. It was a lot of work and the final bill was around the £6000 mark, but I was very pleased with the standard of work – and obviously the car has been transformed as a result."

As for future plans, Tony hopes he'll carry on driving his 20hp for a long time to come, and will continue doing his own oil changes and basic maintenance as long as he's fit enough: "I'm starting to feel my age a bit now, but I just carry on and do as much as I can. I hope I'll never stop working on my cars, as it brings me so much pleasure." Having spent the day with Tony and his wonderfully preserved Twenty, I suspect this most energetic of octogenarians still has plenty more motoring years ahead of him.. ■

POSITIVE REVIEW

When *The Motor* magazine first tested the new 20hp in 1922, it was full of praise for Rolls-Royce's latest model. Here are five of the most revealing quotes from that inaugural road test:

■ 'When a concern that has built up a world-wide reputation on one policy decides to alter that policy after fifteen years' steadfast adherence to it, more than passing interest is attached to the change. The 40-50hp Rolls-Royce chassis has been produced in numbers from year to year without its design having been altered in more than detail, and the suddenly announced introduction of an entirely new 20hp chassis, to be sold alongside the older type, has naturally created no small stir in automobile circles.'

■ 'The chassis takes roomy, six-seater limousine coachwork without any suggestion of disproportion, and in its appearance the bold upstanding lines usually associated with cars of this make are maintained and well harmonized. The chassis price is £1100.'

■ 'The outstanding features of this new Rolls-Royce chassis are its overhead-valved engine, centrally controlled three-speed gearbox, semi-elliptic rear springs, and the unit construction of engine, clutch and gearbox. All these represent a total break away from previous Rolls-Royce practice. The remainder of the car reflects the 40-50hp chassis in general layout, although differences in several other details are observable. For instance, on the 20hp car one ignition system (battery) only is provided, the mixture control is on the dash instead

of on the steering wheel, there is no cut-out on the silencer and no auxiliary oil tank is fitted; all of which features are prominent on the 40-50hp model.'

■ 'Dealing first of all with the power unit, the 20hp Rolls-Royce engine is of the monobloc detachable-headed overhead-valve type, built up in a unit with a single-plate dry clutch and gearbox, the three components, however, being separate in so far as lubrication is concerned. The cast-iron cylinder block is made separately from the crankcase; on its nearside it incorporates vertical tunnels through which run the pushrods to the overhead valves; on the off side the casting is left open and the water jacketing completed by means of flat plates fixed by studs, this arrangement allowing for proper distribution of the metal in the process of casting.'

■ 'The ignition system is by battery and coil only, and undoubtedly the choice of this feature by such a well-known designer as Mr F.H. Royce will go far towards popularising it in this country. The distributor is provided with a spark advance and retard range of 35 degrees from the steering wheel control, but, additionally, it is centrifugally controlled so that no matter in what position the ignition advance and retard lever may be placed, a self-adjusting 12-degree advance and retard is automatically afforded, according to the speed of the engine. This is a very clever feature, and makes for elasticity of performance which is independent almost of the skill of the driver.'



• ONE TO BUY •

PARK WARD LIMOUSINE

If the story of the Mulliner-bodied 20hp on the previous pages has whetted your appetite, this Park Ward limousine from 1928 might just tempt you

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: PAUL GUINNESS

When reading about a superbly preserved classic owned by a real enthusiast, it's not unusual for thoughts to turn to the prospect of buying a similar model. So when we knew that John Gray's 1927 Mulliner-bodied 20hp was being featured in this issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, we couldn't resist taking a look at a well-priced contemporary on sale at one of the UK's best-known specialists.

It was during a trip to The Real Car Company back in the summer that we encountered chassis number GWL16, another Rolls-Royce Twenty with limousine-style bodywork – this time courtesy of coachbuilder Park Ward. At the time of our visit, it had come to the market for the first time since 1961, making it a rare opportunity for a fan of these inter-war models – and certainly a tempting proposition thanks to its asking price of £45,000.

The car was lovingly restored over a period of many years by its long-term owner, and still impresses with its standard of presentation. The bodywork is extremely well-preserved, while the tidy paintwork – carried out by the previous owner himself – offers the kind of patina that will endear the car to many. It's a very useable example, as its last keeper proved by covering an impressive 90,000 miles between 1993 and 2017, mostly on club events and long-distance trials.

This particular 20hp has previously been fitted with an aluminium cylinder head and an overdrive unit, making long-distance adventures a more relaxed affair. Its long-term owner was clearly fastidious about maintenance too, with the car's underside being exceptionally smart. And he was equally meticulous when it came to paperwork, with every long trip or tour being carefully logged and recorded.

The interior of TU 8884 certainly impresses with its standard of restoration, with the grey leather upholstery, cloth headlining and well-preserved wood all being extremely well-presented. And yet it's a car that isn't over-restored, making it the ideal choice for anyone who prefers driving a Rolls-Royce Twenty to simply polishing it.

At £45,000, this Park Ward-built 20hp surely represents excellent value for money – and is the perfect example of how pre-war Rolls-Royce motoring can be very cost-effective. To find out more, go online to www.therealcar.co.uk or call 01248 602649. ■



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1979 BENTLEY T2 Finished in Silver Mink with Blue hide interior. 129,000 miles with full Specialist service history. A very smart T2 with excellent history. **£14,500**



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1996 ('97) BENTLEY BROOKLANDS LWB Light Pressure Turbo finished in Ocean Mica with magnolia interior piped blue. 75,000 miles. 4 Former keepers. Full service history Light Pressure Turbo 300 BHP model. Long Wheel base. Picnic tables and electric rear seats. **£18,000**



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MORE THAN A RACE MEETING

The Bentley Drivers Club has enjoyed a hectic last few months, with its annual race meeting at Silverstone taking centre stage



Michael Higginbotham's MkVI Special keeps Tim Llewellyn's 3/8 at bay (credit: Full Throttle Photos)



The traditional track parade makes its way past Silverstone's BRDC suite (credit: Full Throttle Photos)

The Bentley Drivers Club's popular annual race meeting – a major event on the British motor racing calendar – once again saw some superb on-track action at Silverstone in early August. Regarded by the club as 'more than just a race meeting', it was the good old days revisited as members and spectators alike mixed frenetic track action and the more sedate Bentley track parade with socialising and browsing the many paddock attractions.

The event, which prides itself on generating a friendly and relaxed atmosphere for car enthusiasts of all ages, drew an excellent crowd to witness arguably the largest gathering of Bentleys from the legendary marque's almost 100-year history. Bentleys of all ages – many raced by club members – shared the entry list with Morgans, Aston Martins, Austin-Healeys, Jaguars, ACs, MGs and many other marques, all tackling the testing National Circuit at the historic venue.

To give the meeting a fine start,

the club hosted a 100-mile Touring Assembly the previous day, with members and guests driving from the BDC's Banbury clubhouse to Silverstone along scenic country lanes, arriving in good time for the now traditional Friday evening paddock party.

Race day saw the BDC celebrating wins for five of its members, with Michael Higginbotham taking overall victory in the Padgett Motor Engineers-sponsored Bentley Scratch, Pre-War Team Challenge and Bentley Sealed Handicap; he also secured the Group A honours, enabling him to hang on to the coveted Times Trophy that he won last year. Gerard McCosh (MkVI Special S2) finished third overall and claimed the Gooda Trophy for winning Group B, while William A Elbourn (Riley 12/4) won the Pre-War Challenge prize. Oliver Llewellyn (4½ Vanden Plas), one of the BDC's younger racing members, secured Sealed Handicap honours, while the BDC's fifth victor was Alastair Payne (R-Type Special) who won the P&A Wood Bentley Handicap race.

This year's meeting also featured the traditional and popular lunchtime track parade of members' Bentleys, covering all production eras (vintage, Derby and Crewe), while a display of winners from this year's Concours d'Elegance at Stonor Park added a pristine touch to proceedings in the paddock. BDC chairman Ron Warmington declared: "Today's meeting has been the best I've ever attended here at Silverstone – and, as always, is one of the highlights of our club's social calendar."

The BDC also enjoyed a significant presence at this year's Hampton Court Concours of Elegance, with a highlight being Bentley Sunday and the Bentley Trophy. The Pre-1965 award was won by James Clough with his 1961 S2 four-door saloon, while the Post-1965 prize went to Ian Griffiths' 2000 Continental T. Finally, the club celebrated what would have been the 130th birthday of Bentley Motors founder W.O. Bentley on September 16th, with an enjoyable gathering for company employees and BDC members at the Crewe factory. ■



The Silverstone paddock party in full swing on the Friday evening (credit: Peter de Rousset-Hall)



James Clough's superb S2, winner of the Bentley Trophy for Pre-1965 cars at Hampton Court

Bentley DRIVERS CLUB

Founded by enthusiasts for enthusiasts. The Bentley Drivers Club is proud of its ethos: a club of friends who share a love of all things Bentley. It's also the only club directly affiliated with Bentley Motors.

While some follow in the tyre tracks of the iconic 'Bentley Boys', competing in races and rallies, others take pleasure watching their modern-day counterparts in the latest GT3 race cars.

Off track, some simply enjoy driving their Bentley on the road, frequently in the company of other enthusiasts.

No matter what your inspiration, the BDC can help enhance your Bentley ownership and take your appreciation of this classic marque even deeper.

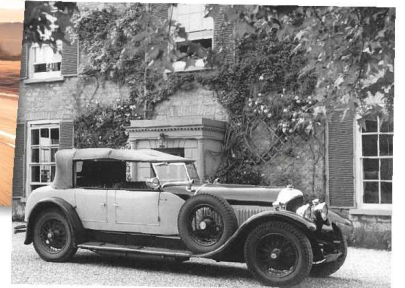
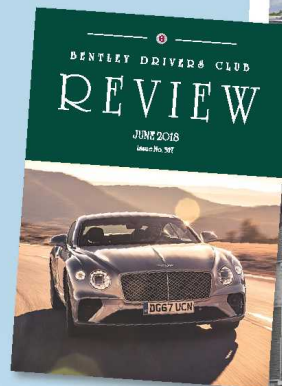
A great feature of our club is the excellent events we hold, both at home and abroad. These include our annual long-established Concours d'Elegance and Silverstone race meeting plus numerous tours and social occasions organised by our ever active Regions worldwide.

And 2019, of course, marks the centenary of the Bentley motor car, commemorated

by special events throughout the year - so what better time is there to join us?

Members enjoy a range of benefits with the BDC:

- Bi-monthly Review and monthly Advertiser & Diary publications plus frequent e-newsletters
- Access to comprehensive archives through the club's association with the WO Bentley Memorial Foundation, providing a deep insight into the marque's history
- Access to the spares schemes, covering the three key eras of Bentley production
- Favourable insurance rates and service plus undisputed valuations (for insurance purposes)
- Club forum offering the chance to discuss all things Bentley.



Driving adventures... Driving exhilaration... Driving friendships

We look forward to welcoming all Bentley enthusiasts to the Bentley Drivers Club



TO FIND OUT MORE, PLEASE CONTACT US AT INFO@BDCL.ORG OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.BDCL.ORG

AUTUMN ACTIVITIES

The RREC has been particularly active recently, with a variety of superb trips and rallies being enjoyed by members of the club

If there is one straightforward aim of the RREC, it's to encourage the preservation of all Rolls-Royce and Bentley motor cars and to boost the enjoyment of its 7000-plus members. And one of the best ways to do this is to organise rallies where like-minded participants get to meet old friends and make new ones, discover previously unexplored parts of the country (or travel further afield on overseas events) and simply get out and enjoy driving their cars.

Autumn is known for being rally season, proved by the 15 or more major Section, Register and Club events enjoyed by RREC members during the past couple of months. And that's in addition to all the day trips, lunch gatherings, pub nights and car shows going on across the country almost every day of every week of the year.

Take the recent Silver Ghost Register rally to the Isle of Wight. This was organised by the same team that ran the amazing Round Britain Tour in

2017 and was packed with incredible experiences. There were forty cars ranging from a 1923 Silver Ghost to a 2015 Goodwood Ghost, with a mouth-watering array of 20/25s, Silver Clouds, a Camargue, Silver Shadows and Spirits filling the years in between. The tour assembled in the topiary-lined courtyard of the Rolls-Royce factory, where staff flooded out to admire the forebears of the cars they were building. The following day the jaws of other motorists on the Portsmouth ferry gaped in wonder when forty Rolls-Royces and Bentleys joined them on the car deck. Lunch that day was specially arranged at the Royal Yacht Squadron in Cowes, one of the most exclusive clubs in the world, followed two days later by the cars taking pride of place on the Esplanade at Ryde as the centrepiece of the incredible 1000-car annual Charity Classic Car Show.

Meanwhile, another forty cars and their owners were enjoying the Twenty Horsepower Register rally

to Connemara, Ireland. Like all RREC rallies, every model of Rolls-Royce and Bentley was welcomed and there were plenty of post-war cars accompanying a trio of 20hps. Even more adventurous, however, was the annual Continental Rally, based this year in the Gelderland region of the Netherlands, with scores of cars from the UK and across Europe meeting at the Van der Valk hotel in Duiven before setting out each day on optional excursions to visit various car collections, museums and gardens.

Closer to home, the RREC was delighted to be approached at last year's Classic Motor Show at the NEC by the organisers of CarFest and invited to attend both North and South events in aid of Children in Need. Club members volunteered in droves to display their cars, and thousands of CarFest visitors got to enjoy the sight and talk to members. Many thanks to all those members who took part and helped to make the events a success. ■



Members enjoyed visiting this Rolls-Royce and Bentley collection during the Continental Rally



The trio of two-wheel-brake cars taking part on the 20hp Connemara Rally beside Lough Inagh



Thousands of visitors were able to admire the RREC displays at both Car Fest North and South



Even Pudsey himself got to enjoy the RREC's stand at Car Fest South



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• THE MEN BEHIND THE MARQUE •

GRAHAM HULL

A 'black belt in flower arranging' was Graham Hull's good-natured take on the Crewe engineering team's perception of his work as Rolls-Royce and Bentley stylist. We take a look at his thirty-year Crewe career, including his rebooting of the Bentley brand

WORDS: JEREMY SATHERLEY PHOTOGRAPHY: SIR HENRY ROYCE MEMORIAL FOUNDATION / ROLLS-ROYCE



Suddenly, among the 1960s high street mêlée of Minis, rusty decade-old Vauxhalls and Austin Somersets rocking on weak dampers, Pinner Road in north-west London took on the air of a scene from *The Fast Lady*. A vintage 4½ Litre Bentley full of "bright young things" broke free of the traffic queue and surged ahead on the wrong side of the road, "bellowing like a bull elephant". Older-generation bystanders might have disapproved, but for one teenage lad standing spellbound on the pavement it was a sight and sound to savour. Indeed, young Graham Hull would never forget the experience, which marked the conversion of his passion from aircraft to cars.

Born in January 1947, Hull trained in turn at the Harrow School of Art, the Central School of Art & Design and the Royal College of Art, the latter being an automotive design course sponsored by Chrysler UK. Any suggestions that this would lead to employment with Chrysler came to nothing; and while Rolls-Royce had offered him an interview, Hull hoped right up until the last moment that British Leyland would go firm on its initial interest. That didn't happen, however, and so he resigned himself unenthusiastically to that interview with Rolls-Royce, subsequently learning (to his surprise) that he had got the job.

Rather like chairman-to-be Ernest Hives on alighting from the train at Derby 63 years earlier, Hull must have wondered what he'd come to when he reported to Crewe on his first day one Monday morning in 1971, aged 24: "Rolls-Royce was barely on my radar," he recalled. "I was to contribute



Graham Hull ensured that work on the Arnage T was completed before he left the company

to the design of a product whose reputation completely overawed me and which I had little feel for."

Ironically, Hull couldn't have joined Rolls-Royce Motors at a more significant time in the company's history. Following the debacle of the RB211 jet engine project which had bankrupted Rolls-Royce Ltd into nationalisation, the car division was hived off as an independent company, albeit in the hands of the receiver until it found its feet.

Hull's boss was Fritz Feller, who had arrived in Britain as a young Austrian refugee in 1938 and secured a Derby apprenticeship with Rolls-Royce during World War II. A distinguished post-war career in Crewe's car division followed, where he developed the B and K series of commercial and military engines, as well as being involved in the company's new V8 engine project. The unfortunate cancellation of his promising military rotary diesel engine left Feller at a loose end until he was picked to succeed John Blatchley as chief stylist. Initially this seemed a controversial appointment, given Feller's lack of styling or body engineering experience. But as Graham Hull recalled, the

Austrian enjoyed classical music and art, which may have decided it for the board with its rather bemused view of the qualities considered necessary for automotive styling.

Feller brought an effective mix of aesthetic appreciation, practical reasoning and outspokenness to the role. And together with his fondness for confrontation, this made him a force to be reckoned with, standing him in good stead whenever defending his corner at meetings with technical director John Hollings, much to chief executive David Plastow's amusement.

SHAPING THE SZ

The main task in hand, begun soon after Hull joined Rolls-Royce in 1971, was development of the SZ, destined to become the Rolls-Royce Silver Spirit and Bentley Mulsanne. The six-strong styling team seemed a small one to be charged with replacing such a successful model as the Silver Shadow whilst also dealing with the normal daily routine, yet somehow it coped. Veterans Bill Allen and Martin Bourne from the John Blatchley Silver Cloud and Silver Shadow era

– the only two with coachbuilding experience – looked after the requirements of existing production models, such as updating bumpers to federal requirements or revising interiors, while model-maker Ron Maddocks, design engineer Norman Webster and stylist Graham Hull were primarily engaged on the SZ project.

Feller's approach to the SZ was one of evolution rather than revolution. With a clientele less concerned about fuel consumption, aerodynamics were not a priority. Nevertheless, he was aiming to surmount the Silver Shadow hull with a flatter, smoother, less perpendicular shape, featuring a greater glass area and reflecting current styling trends shown by cars like the Fiat 130 or Mercedes-Benz S-Class. An existing quarter-scale model of an SZ proposal struck Graham as too conservative, reminding him of the fulsomely-rectangular Ford Consul Mk1 of the 1950s. It was easy to criticise, he thought, but could he do any better? Inspired by the then-current NSU Ro80, Hull pursued some wedge shapes with Feller's approval. But they soon found that with anything larger than an Ro80, combining the »

three-box approach with a wedged boot resulted in a massive rear end.

Hull then suggested revisiting the more conservative concept, subjecting the shape to extra tautening and contouring all round. He used his student-project experience to his advantage, reducing the car's body mass with larger, circular wheelarches in order to emphasise the wheels – a treatment that also worked well on the Silver Spur's stretched wheelbase.

When the SZ range of Rolls-Royce Silver Spirit, Silver Spur and Bentley Mulsanne made its motor show debut at Geneva in 1980, the great designers came hovering. "It's not what I would have done but it is a Rolls-Royce," said Sergio Pininfarina in Hull's presence. Pininfarina's own effort with the 1975 Camargue was ample proof to Hull (who had found it "...well, a little Lady Penelope") of how much essential marque 'DNA' could be lost when consultants applied their own house-style solution to a brief. It also confirmed what Graham had experienced with his wedge experiments: "A style that works on a medium-sized vehicle

"Hull couldn't have joined Rolls-Royce Motors at a more significant time in the company's history"

cannot be pumped up to suit a larger package." The SZ's best accolade, however, came from Peter Stevens (subsequently of McLaren F1 fame) at a Design Centre gathering: "Carved out of the solid. Yes, solid enough to last another eighteen years..."

REBIRTH OF BENTLEY

The SZ's introduction threw a spotlight on what needed to be done with Bentley. In the Silver Shadow and T-series years, only three per cent of the cars were emerging as Bentleys, and a launch film for the Spirit and Mulsanne persisted in majoring on Rolls-Royce. Indeed, during nine minutes and twelve seconds of running time, Silver Spirits enjoyed eight minutes and six seconds of sweeping along rural roads, ruffling a muster of roadside peacocks, negotiating water splashes and heeling like

galleons on moaning fat tyres while performing tight arcs. The identically-bodied Bentley, by contrast, got a mere one minute and six seconds of trundling around with some rather weedy little planes on a runway.

At first sight then, the identically-bodied SZ Bentley looked like a case of plus ça change, although Hull had already planted a seed by coming up with the Mulsanne name back in 1977, when he inscribed it on a Bentley concept-car scale model for David Plastow's desk. 'Mulsanne' recalled the so-named long straight of the Le Mans circuit, where vintage Bentleys had triumphed in the 1920s. Duly registered, the name soon proved its worth for the SZ: "With Bentley's survival hanging by a thread, Styling & Marketing managed to mask the marque's vulnerability with just a radiator shell and the name Mulsanne," commented Graham.

The renaissance began in earnest

The task of creating a Silver Shadow replacement eventually led to the launch of the Silver Spirit

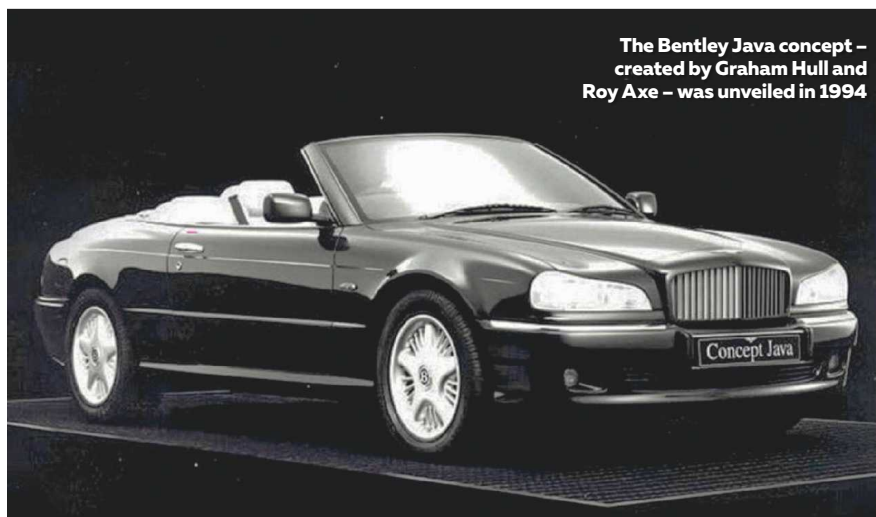


in 1982, however, with the Mulsanne Turbo – recognisable by its body-colour radiator shell: “It was the only instant external Turbo cue, apart from badges, that I could think of,” admitted Hull. Under the bonnet, meanwhile, a Garrett AiResearch turbocharger boosted power by 50 per cent, with the car’s top speed artificially restricted to 135mph in deference to available tyres.

By the time it was succeeded in 1985 by the Turbo R – complete with improved suspension and roadholding, plus an additional 30bhp courtesy of Bosch MK Motronic fuel-injection – the ‘blown’ Bentley had developed an identity strong enough for the Mulsanne label to be dropped and reapplied to a milder model. Hull designed a style of alloy wheel for the Turbo R (with colleague Martin Bourne considering them to be “boy racer nonsense”, although he did concede they were “reasonably civilised”) and improved the front air dam: “Everyone knew it was going to be a winner,” Graham later recalled.

PRODUCTIVE PERIOD

With the Turbo R deemed to be a success, Rolls-Royce chief executive Dick Perry and marketing director Peter Ward were keen to broaden the Bentley range. Graham Hull was by now chief of styling, following Feller’s resignation through ill health in 1984. But those in command left Hull out of the loop by commissioning International Automotive Design (IAD) of Worthing to look at a Bentley two-door coupé, for which Rolls-Royce’s in-house styling department was asked merely to supply the alloy wheels and door handles.



The Bentley Java concept – created by Graham Hull and Roy Axe – was unveiled in 1994

The rejuvenation of Bentley in the 1980s began with the high-performance Mulsanne Turbo



BENTLEY MULSANNE TURBO

The resulting P90 mock-up was rejected. Some thought it too reminiscent of a Lincoln, while Hull not only felt it lacked character but that time would be better spent on a Corniche replacement. IAD took that on board and tried again, only for the results to be considered somewhat bulky; Hull instructed the company’s John Heffernan and Ken Greenley to apply more profiling, particularly where pinching the line in at the waist was concerned. After some ducking and diving of curves, not helped by behind-his-back boardroom interference, Hull presented IAD’s full-size clay model to the board. In doing so, however, he dropped something of a bombshell by

announcing they’d been working on the ‘wrong’ project: the shape would better suit a Bentley coupé after all.

Marketing director Ward looked at him aghast, but Hull was now clearer in his own changed mind. The perennial Silver Shadow-based Corniche, he felt, was already a classic in its own lifetime, selling steadily as a result: “Limited funds dictated that creating a new Bentley body was the best bet for growth”. In March 1987, the board finally agreed and IAD was set to work implementing the many modifications suggested by Graham, while his own team worked up the interior. The resulting Bentley Continental R debuted at Geneva in 1991, scooping the Star of the Show award and prompting an offer from the Sultan of Brunei to buy the car straight off the stand.

Exclusivity was assured by the Continental R’s seventy-per-year planned output and lengthy waiting list. But the large, sleek coupé would form the basis of several other variants over the next eleven years, including 37 editions of the charge-cooled Continental S (1994–95), the Azure convertible (1995) and – indulging Graham’s taste for engine-turned dashboards – the even higher-performance, shorter-wheelbase Continental T (1996–2002). Hull’s faith in the project had been fully vindicated: “If the Mulsanne kicked off the Bentley rebirth and the Turbo »

THE MEN BEHIND THE MARQUE GRAHAM HULL

R established it, the Continental R completed the process, and Bentley was once again recognised for its own unique body style."

ECONOMY FOCUS

During his tenure at Rolls-Royce, Graham Hull was inevitably involved in a number of one-off projects as part of the company's future planning. In the early '80s, for example, Rolls-Royce knew it had to take a realistic look at proposed new legislation, particularly in the crucial American market where the Energy Policy Conservation Act was calling for a doubling of new-car fuel economy, from the average 13.6mpg figure of the mid-1970s to 27.5mpg by 1985. A downsizing of both body and engine (the latter to a favoured straight-six) was proposed, and Hull's team worked on styling ideas and scale models based on Design Office Engineering's packaging layouts, for progressing by Ital Design.

A full-size glassfibre replica was ready for assessment in May 1983. But although the car looked acceptable in a bland sort of way, it underlined to Hull the problem of producing a relatively small luxury car without it looking over-stuffed. Rolls-Royce customers were

used to generous seating, so space had been saved elsewhere by shortening the bonnet and boot. Despite that, it still looked rather narrow. After another full-size mock-up was produced by a second studio – Mike Gibbs Associates – to no further aesthetic advantage, the project codenamed SX was finally abandoned. Nevertheless, the experience had taught Graham a great deal, leading him to ponder

"With the Turbo R deemed to be a success, Rolls-Royce was keen to broaden the Bentley range"

over a very valid point: "Was genuinely efficient packaging compatible with high style? Space-efficient carriers are essentially boxes: interesting and charismatic shapes burn up space."

JAVA UNVEILING

A concept with much greater potential was the Java, a project undertaken by Hull in conjunction with Roy Axe of Design Research Associates and based on BMW 5-Series underpinnings of the time. Although small by Bentley standards, it caused Hull less of a headache than

the SX: "Luckily my masters began to recognise the commercial pitfalls of a small luxury saloon, and we were allowed to concentrate on a coupé".

The finished version, which looked stunning in metallic green with yellow upholstery, made its debut at the 1994 Geneva Motor Show, prompting Volvo design boss Peter Horbury to exclaim to Hull: "You've done it again!" Unfortunately, however, Rolls-Royce didn't have the capacity to produce the Java: "A completely different animal was needed to... generate more funds," concluded Graham. However, the Sultan of Brunei came up trumps again by commissioning at least three Java convertibles and three estates to be made to special order.

The Sultan was by no means the only Rolls-Royce customer placing special orders at around that time. Following the appearance of the Continental R, an unprecedented rush of bespoke requests arrived from VIPs around the world, each demanding their own personalisation of the Rolls-Royce and Bentley experience. SZ underpinnings served four-door coupés, multi-louved two-seaters, a Continental R sedan, stretched or estate versions, retro styles... the list was almost endless, with Hull liaising either with consultants



Hull came round to the idea creating a new Bentley coupe range, which began with the Continental R



The eagerly awaited Silver Seraph made its motor show debut at Geneva in 1998

or the formidable Jim Orr of in-house subsidiary Mulliner Park Ward (MPW), who did much of this bespoke work.

It was also contracted out to concerns such as Mayflower, Pininfarina or Hess & Eisenhardt in the US before return and final check-over by MPW – a process which had Graham flying regularly to Europe or the US in the capacity of aesthetic controller “helping these fantastic dream machines to take shape”. This made-to-measure work, coupled with further lucrative orders from Brunei, was a major factor in keeping Rolls-Royce going through the ‘90s, with a level of funds it could not hope to have generated from its traditional market.

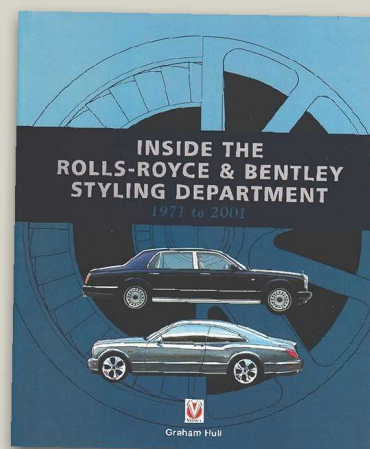
SWANSONG CARS

Handel’s rompingly magisterial piece ‘Let the bright seraphim in burning row’ was cue for Royal Ballet star Deborah Bull to pirouette at the 1998 Geneva Show before the newly-unveiled Rolls-Royce Silver Seraph, while a month later the Bentley Arnage – its model name borrowing again from Le Mans lore – was launched at that very circuit. The new models reflected an investment

in revised design and manufacturing techniques that made them cheaper and simpler to make, with all that implied in terms of greater margins. But behind the scenes, parent-company Vickers was poised to sell Rolls-Royce Motors to the highest bidder.

In styling the new cars, Hull acknowledged elements of John Blatchley’s ‘yacht aesthetic’ – most obvious in the Silver Cloud side profile, where elaborately sculpted front wings represented the parting of bow waves, followed by a wing-line tapering to a low tail. Initially, separate body styles were considered for each marque, but after the success of the Turbo R and Continental R it was decided that awareness of Bentley was more than strong enough to get away with one treatment. In any case, the cars had different engines: the Seraph a 5.4-litre V12 and the Arnage a Cosworth-developed 4.4 V8, both courtesy of BMW.

Hull had briefed two studios – Design Research Associates (DRA) and Mike Gibbs Associates (MGA) – but in the end it was DRA’s concept that won the day. And although the Cloud-inspired rear wing treatment »



READ ALL ABOUT IT

If you’d like to read more about Graham Hull’s lengthy career at Rolls-Royce, this fascinating book – written by the man himself – is well worth its £35 cover price. It’s a 176-page hardback packed with behind-the-scenes stories and fascinating anecdotes. You can order it direct from the publisher (www.veloce.co.uk) or from any bookstore quoting ISBN number 978-1-845846-01-5.



Derived from the Continental R coupe was the new Azure of 1995, a bespoke four-seater convertible

“Within a year of the takeover, Hull was told that VW would be appointing its own styling director”

was abandoned in favour of a simpler falling wing-line to save bulk, the ‘yacht aesthetic’ was subtly incorporated.

Hull’s last Rolls-Royce to come out of Crewe, however, was to be the new Corniche of 2000, based on the Azure platform but combining elements of Seraph styling with a hipped rear.

AUF WIEDERSEHEN: VW

Volkswagen became the new masters at Crewe from May 1998, and within a year Hull was told that VW would be appointing its own styling director, Dirk van Braeckel. Graham took this philosophically, reasoning he would “gain nothing from walking away, and could learn a lot by staying, however uncomfortable that might be”. In the event, he remained for another two years as the handover took some time,

with Dirk van Braeckel coming to Crewe whenever his schedule allowed to review ongoing matters with Hull.

But once Dirk had settled in, Graham took his leave, reasoning that the new director should be free to restructure the department without a predecessor looking over his shoulder.

Conscientious to the last, Graham ensured that work on the Arnage T – scheduled for 2002 – was completed before leaving.

BMW and Volkswagen’s pursuance of the Rolls-Royce and Bentley brands would surely have been less justified

had not Crewe’s products reflected a level of presentation and design flair that made them more attractive to

a wider market in the 1980s

and ‘90s. This came

about, suggests

Graham, because

“aesthetic

standards were

maintained due

to key people

at or near the top

appreciating their

importance”. Hull also

reminds us, however,

that neither he nor



Based around the Azure was the 2000 Corniche – the only Rolls-Royce launched under Volkswagen ownership

Fritz Feller were ever invited to be non-board directors: “Traditionally, UK manufacturing has had an ambivalent attitude toward aesthetic design.”

We can’t help thinking of Graham Hull as an unsung hero, with his contribution to the final era of the old Rolls-Royce and Bentley regime having a major effect on the sales success of the two marques. He’s a man who deserves to be more widely recognised for his Rolls-Royce and Bentley styling influence – and for helping to create some of today’s modern-classic gems. ■

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EXTENSIVE TESTS

With the first ten years of his working life spent at Crewe, Tony Spillane was involved in many aspects of Rolls-Royce development. In the fourth instalment of his story, he explains how the Silver Spirit's Refinement Package underwent high-mileage testing in France

ILLUSTRATIONS: TONY SPILLANE

With the noise and vibration improvements working well during development of the Silver Spirit family, as detailed in the September/October issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, it was time to prove their endurance – and to make them acceptable for production. At around that time (in the late 1970s and early '80s), the Rolls-Royce sign-off procedure for proving that a new system was suitable for production was a 50,000-mile endurance test in France.

That's why the company had a small workshop in Blois, in the Loire Valley area, an ideal location thanks to its plethora of little-used 'D' roads that allowed the miles to be accumulated relatively quickly (usually over a three-month period), yet with a history of correlation to real customer and service department experience.

Those French roads tended to have a different road surface profile to ours, which increased the likelihood of vehicle shake – which meant that I was sent out to Blois to investigate. Rolls-Royce had an arrangement with the hotel adjacent to the test garage, enabling the test drivers to stay there and have meals there. As the car was driven on a double-shift basis (the third period was left to allow it to cool down, thus achieving the necessary thermal cycling), meals could be at irregular times, which often meant Rolls-Royce people eating in the same area as the family that ran the hotel. I was fortunate

enough to share in this arrangement, and we all got on well with the family.

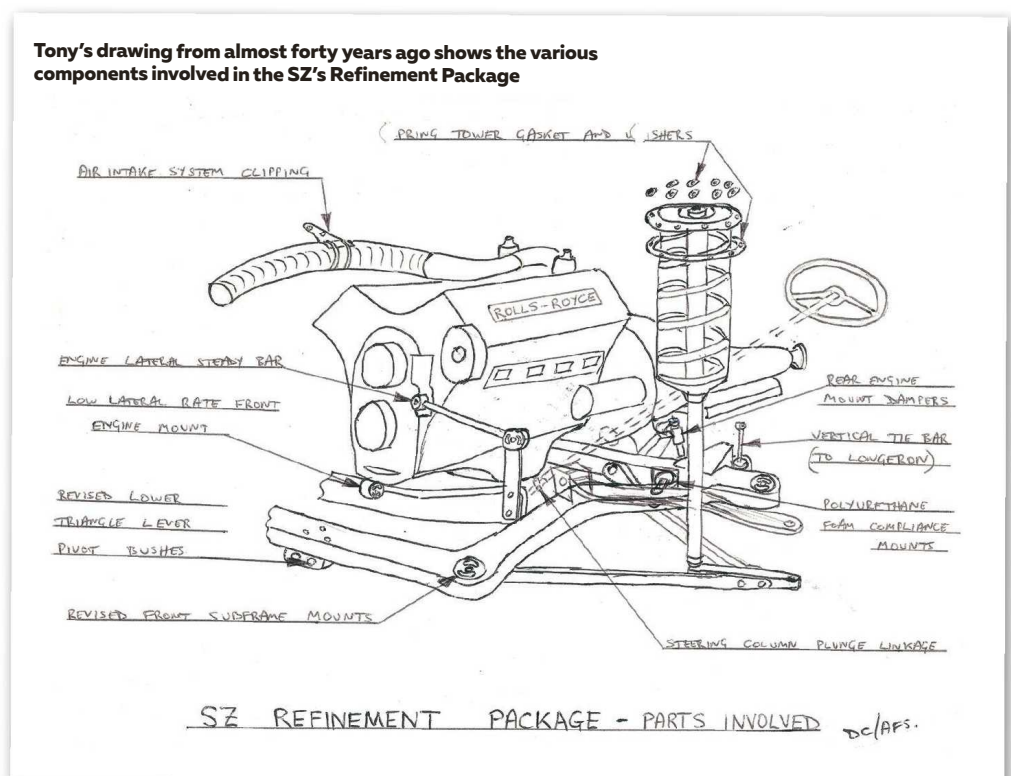
While I was there, the family's daughter had just had her 21st birthday. I tried to use my best French language skills, which had been alright when I'd passed my O-Levels but had deteriorated since. They seemed pleased, however, that I was at least making an effort. The daughter had received a new Renault Fuego for her birthday, and insisted that she should take me out in it. She drove me round the streets of Blois at hair-raising speeds and I was certainly impressed – albeit more with her than the car! Unfortunately, I wasn't allowed to return

the favour in the Rolls-Royce, which was probably a good thing in retrospect...

COMPARING NOTES

Knowing that the shake levels were worse in France, I had arrived in a car kitted out with all the necessary vibration measurement equipment and some spare components, so that quantifications (and hopefully some improvements) could be made. Sure enough, once the frequencies were measured – and using my previous analytical data as well – it was possible to make such improvements, which would then be finessed back

Tony's drawing from almost forty years ago shows the various components involved in the SZ's Refinement Package



at Crewe to ensure a good result on French roads and even better results on our favourite UK roads.

Two 50,000-mile tests were undertaken, with the first – SZ9 – used to test out the early road noise improvement components, starting on June 12th, 1979. SZ10 was then used to test out the complete Refinement Package, a process that began on May 15th, 1980. In parallel with this, rig testing was conducted on key components to prove that their fatigue resistance was up to standard, with all results being compared with the previous production parts. For some components we had prototype samples from two suppliers, which meant that we could choose the best.

Once the Refinement Package for the SZ was productionised and fitted to the pre-production cars, I was asked


“Those French roads tended to have a different road surface profile to ours, which increased the likelihood of vehicle shake”

to complete a set of noise and vibration measurements to confirm it was up to standard. In parallel with my work on the Refinement Package, other departments had focused on improving body sealing and wind noise, exhaust noise and so on, and the changes were immediately noticeable, particularly at high speed and at idle. Not only did this technology make the Rolls-Royce Silver Spirit a more refined car, it was also applied to design studies at that time for the proposed SW and SX lightweight cars.

I was encouraged to write a number of technical reports, which were circulated within the company and then

stored in the technical library. These included a front engine mount study (CCR 964), a Mercedes-Benz 6.9 SEL versus Silver Shadow comparison (CCR 965), Refinement Package comparisons between SZ, a standard Silver Shadow and a Jaguar XJ12 Series III (CCR 1217), plus the SZ Refinement Package development history (CCR 1218).

In my final instalment of this series, to be published in the next issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, I'll explain about my work on the SZ's air intake system and the changes needed during development of the first-generation turbocharged cars. ■



MOTOR CAR DEVELOPMENT REPORT	CCR.1217
SZ Refinement Package: Noise and Vibration Comparisons with Standard Silver Shadow II and Jaguar XJ12 Series III.	
DP.4820	

Report conclusions:

- a. The refinement package, as evolved for SZ car fitment, gives a reduction in road noise to result in similar standards to the Jaguar XJ12, for front seat occupants, and better than XJ12 for rear seat occupants.
- b. The engine noise standard is better than Shadow II standard. Jaguar noise levels could not be measured in the time available due to special equipment for the 12 cylinder engine being required.
- c. The air intake standard is significantly better than Shadow II.
- d. The secondary ride of SZ with refinement package is now equivalent to Shadow II, and much better than Jaguar XJ12.
- e. The handling standard of SZ with refinement package has had a low order change, and it has generally been agreed that it is not detrimental.
- f. The refinement improvements apparent at lower road speeds are nullified at higher speeds due to the increased aerodynamic noise that SZ suffers from above approximately 60 - 70 m.p.h.
- g. The refinement package can only be regarded as a short-term step improvement in refinement; cars such as the Chevrolet Caprice Classic are still quieter, and refinement progress at some other car manufacturers is both quicker and of a high order than at Rolls-Royce.
- h. Fundamental to the improvements in noise standards are the facilities to carry out this work. Knowledge of which parts of the vehicle require attention can only be learnt once the noise transmission paths are known, and this requires the quiet room facility.

/Continued

Date of tests: 1978-1980 carried out at Crewe

Full copies: Technical Library. (2) DP, Fnn, Hgs, Nsn, McF, DC, CJC, Mre, HED, FF, JSR,
Wsn, NJC, DC/Hdg, GM/Bty, JFX, Chass Dev. Office.

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	25.6.80	A.F.Spillane	DC/AFS	DC

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CCR 1217 compared the noise and vibration ratings of the SZ with those of the Silver Shadow II and XJ12 Series III



MOTOR CAR DEVELOPMENT REPORT	CCR 1218
SZ REFINEMENT PACKAGE : DEVELOPMENT HISTORY AND PRESENT CONFIGURATION	

Report conclusions:

1. A reduction in road induced and engine induced noise levels with the current SZ range of cars has been obtained by the development of the refinement package. Results and comparisons are given in CCR 1217.
2. Developments have ensured that early detrimental side-effects, such as to the ride's "shake" standard, have been eliminated.
3. Requirements that the package could quickly be applied to production cars with the minimum of major change have both limited the extent of refinement improvement compared to that obtained with larger changes on experimental vehicles, and given rise to several extra "add-on" features which are awkward, costly and only required because more fundamental changes as described in the text could not be considered sufficiently "short-term" for production.
4. The refinement package can only be regarded as a step to keep pace with the general car market's growing awareness to noise and vibration refinement being an important sellable car feature. It represents a similar magnitude change to that made by other car manufacturers, e.g. General Motors, but as such car manufacturers make such changes at regular intervals, the relative standing of Rolls-Royce cars in terms of refinement has not been redressed.
5. As the refinement package represents the maximum change without recourse to more significant mount type changes, and consequent sheet metal changes, further refinement improvements can only be achieved by either such changes, or by bodysheet development work.

Date of tests: 1978 - 1980 carried out at Crewe, Hitchin and France

Full copies: Technical Library. (2) Hgs, McF, DC, CJC, NJC, JFX, Cl, Wsn, Mre, Kgt,
BP, RP, DC/Hdg, CJC/Bre, JBA, Chassis Dev. Office

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	21.1.81	A.F.Spillane	DC/AFS	DC

Action required by:

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Report number CCR 1218 detailed the development process and final specification of the Refinement Package

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 or write to: The Editor, *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, Kelsey Media, Cudham Tithe Barn, Berry's Hill, Cudham, Kent TN16 3AG



AUCTION DISCUSSION, PART 1

I must say, I am shocked that Bentley Motors has decided to sell those significant Rolls-Royce motor cars from its heritage collection (September/October issue, page 4). This is its history. These are the company's roots – the history of Crewe and the great cars it produced. It is also the history of

the hard-working men and women who built these magnificent cars. I feel really bad that Bentley has decided to sell the past.
Scott Drab
Pittsburgh, USA

An update on the story can be found in this issue – Ed.

AUCTION DISCUSSION, PART 2

It's a testament to the apparent enmity that still prevails between Volkswagen and BMW that neither side has evidently been inclined to communicate with the other to negotiate a mutually agreeable price for the transfer of custodianship of this collection of milestone Rolls-Royces from the former to the latter. Moreover, such apparent indifference for the said collection is in stark contrast to the ferocity with which each of them fought for the spoils of Rolls-Royce Motors Ltd. The purported passion for the Rolls-Royce brand by BMW, as attested by their personnel in televised documentaries since their 'back door' purchase, is exposed as a sham, given that they're evidently disposed to allow this invaluable and irreplaceable collection of Rolls-Royce motor cars to pass from what should have been their prized long-term custodianship to the uncertainty of the open market. Volkswagen, meanwhile, exposes its contempt for the heritage of the most famous of British brands, by callously selling off such landmark examples of Rolls-Royce motor cars to the highest bidder. There can now be no doubt that these two Teutonic conglomerates nurture no genuine regard whatsoever for the preservation and future heritage of past historic Rolls-Royce motor cars.

Brian Brown
Cheshire

AUCTION DISCUSSION, PART 3

I am flummoxed by Bentley Motors' decision to sell a number of historic Rolls-Royces. Yes, today Rolls-Royce and Bentley are separate marques, but prior to their respective acquisition by BMW and Volkswagen they were one company. Their later models even shared the same chassis, body styling and so on. I think Bentley Motors should

have retained these historic cars. They are part and parcel of that company's heritage and should be cherished. All too often heritage is lost for short-term financial gain. If Bentley Motors cannot or will not cherish its heritage, why not offer them to a motor museum where they can be viewed and admired by many more people rather than

just tucked away in some oligarch's hermetically sealed garage.
S.J. Williams
Surrey

What do other readers think about the attitude of motor manufacturers towards their heritage? As ever, we want to hear your views – Ed.



PETRONELLA'S DESIGNER

First of all, congratulations on a fantastic magazine – it is amazing. I have loved the few copies that I have read.

I am the designer of Petronella, the one-off Bentley built and owned by Tim Cresswell of VBE Restorations, which you featured in the July/August issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*. I am super impressed with your article, and especially with Matt Woods' photography. I have taken hundreds of photographs of the car in VBE's workshops, so I can appreciate what he has done.

I have been looking for Matt on social media so that I could tag him in my comments about your magazine's article, but I can't find anything. Are Matt and the magazine on Twitter or Facebook? I also know Ian Seabrook from your sister magazine *Classic Jaguar*, as he wrote a nice article about me and my time in the Styling Department at Jaguar.

I'm attaching a painting that I did earlier this year of the 1948 Rolls-Royce Silver Wraith featured in the Netflix series, *The Crown*. It shows the Queen arriving at Sandringham for Christmas in 1956. When Meghan Markle turned up for her wedding to Prince Harry in this car, I was well impressed.

Cliff Ruddell
Via email

Thank you for your kind comments and for sharing what is a wonderful painting, Cliff. We're also extremely impressed with the design work that you did on Petronella, as the end result is stunning. Both Matt Woods and the magazine are indeed active on Facebook – all you need to do is search for 'Matt Woods Photography' and 'Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver' next time you log on – Ed.



THE SUV DEBATE

As a regular reader of your excellent magazine, I thought I'd add my contribution to the debate about the Rolls-Royce Cullinan. For my money, looking at the two companies, Bentley seems to have discovered a real touch of flair in its recent styling. The Mulsanne and the latest Continental hit just the right note for me – modern, yet classy and purposeful.

It's much harder when limited by the two-box style of an SUV to produce something really good looking. I can think of only one SUV that makes me want to go 'Wow!' and that's the Lamborghini Urus. Most are either bland or ugly. The Bentayga is certainly no oil painting, but at least it's fairly inoffensive and doesn't provoke any strong negative reactions in me.

Rolls-Royce used to stand for effortless elegance and understated class, a car for those who didn't need to shout too loudly about their accomplishments in life. Sadly, for me the Cullinan sends a signal that the company has finally abandoned this ethos altogether in favour of brash vulgarity, producing a car that shouts: 'Look at me, I'm stinking rich and I want you to know it!'

Of course, the business case is faultless. They will fly out of Goodwood because these days everyone wants an SUV (misguidedly in my opinion) and the world is full of ostentatious people who like to flaunt their wealth. The Cullinan's aggressive, in-your-face styling will be just what they want. I do hope that in future, however, Rolls-Royce can employ some stylists that are a bit less ham-fisted.

Alan Roadley
Lancashire

The Cullinan discussion continues. What do other readers think? Drop us a line with your thoughts – Ed.

PARK WARD PERFECTION

We catch up with one of the most elegant coachbuilt versions of the Bentley S1 – the drophead coupé by Park Ward – and get to experience a fascinating survivor

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: AXEL CATTON



When I was a youngster, I was invited as a junior member to attend a Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club meeting in Germany. I was determined not to go unprepared, as I knew that older members and owners would question my interest in the brand. After all, most kids my age would have had posters of red sports cars pinned to their bedroom walls, with prancing horses and an engine somewhere in the back. But not me. When asked which Rolls-Royce or Bentley most took my fancy, I remember the looks on their faces when I replied: "A 1964 Silver Cloud III Convertible by Park Ward". That shut 'em up.

Ever since I saw my first open Silver Cloud, I was in awe of its sheer beauty. It was only later I discovered that in the rarefied world of Rolls-Royce and Bentley convertible conversions – or rather, drop-head coupés – there is exclusive and there is even more exclusive. While my original love affair was with the Silver Cloud and S-series saloons that had been turned into open two-door models while keeping their dimensions and overall body shape, I have since dived into the world of entirely reshaped and bespoke convertibles.

The John Blatchley design was the last of the body-on-frame cars and for me represents the pinnacle of coachbuilt excellence. And so when I was reminded that a friend of mine, Dougal Fiske of Forfar in Scotland, owns a 1958 Bentley S1 DHC by Park Ward, I wasn't going to miss out on a chance to experience it for myself. The car was bought by Dougal's father, Ian, in 1990, since when it has remained in the same family ownership.

An interest in cars obviously runs in the Fiske family, with 82-year-old Ian having spent almost half a century as a car dealer in the Forfar area, while son Dougal currently runs the local Kia and Vauxhall dealership. Dougal's brother, Gregor, has meanwhile made a name for himself as a purveyor of prestigious classic cars in London. "I worked my way up," Ian explains on the day of our photo shoot. "I bought the cars, my wife Vivian and I cleaned them up, and we put them up for sale". It was inevitably more complex than that, but the venture was successful enough for Ian to be able to afford a Bentley R-Type Continental by the late 1970s.

Owning that R-Type proved to be the catalyst for his interest in the S1



Bought by Ian Fiske in 1990, the Bentley came with a comprehensive history file

DHC you see here, which he heard about via a friend: "By that time I had started feeling my age," Ian admits, "and what attracted me to the Drophead Coupe – apart from it being an open car – was that it had power steering and automatic transmission."

The S1 was being offered for sale by the Andrew Lewis family, well known in Aberdeen for building fishing trawlers. The Lewis' had owned the Bentley from new, taking advantage of what was thought to be a cancelled export order that enabled them to 'jump the queue' and buy the car bearing chassis number BC7EL. The S1 had been registered as RG 1 from new, a registration number reserved for the Lord Provost of Aberdeen, the elder Mr Lewis' father.

That registration stayed with the family, and so Ian transferred the equally suitable XSR 1 to the Bentley, a number originally issued to his wife Vivian's family: "Not only has this car had just two family owners from new, both in the north-east region of Scotland, but each of the registration marks fitted to it over the years has Scottish origins."

CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP

Other than its bespoke coachwork, BC7EL was not equipped with any further extras when it was built. "No, nothing," confirms Ian. "It's got an electric hood, power steering and automatic gearbox, but those were standard." By the time BC7EL »

FEATURE CAR BENTLEY S1 DROPHEAD COUPE

came to market for the first time in its life, it had been moved on from Andrew Lewis senior to Andrew junior. The car had undergone a partial restoration and a colour change to Seychelles Blue (a popular Silver Shadow metallic choice) in 1984, something that Ian wasn't too keen on. Nevertheless, he agreed to purchase the S1 for £110,000 – the equivalent of around £240,000 nowadays.

"I hadn't done too badly with my R-Type," recalls Ian with a car dealer smile. Bought for £7000 in 1977, the Continental was worth twenty times as much by the time he came to sell it, despite Ian using it mainly as his everyday transport and adding 100,000 miles to its odometer. A buyer for the R-Type was soon found through an advert in the *Sunday Times*, with a sale price of £140,000 being agreed upon. Ian's first outing in his newly acquired S1 DHC was to Wigan, delivering his old R-Type to its enthusiastic buyer.

For the next fourteen years, Ian kept his Park Ward-built DHC in fine fettle and the Seychelles Blue colour remained unchanged: "It eventually needed some work done, however,

"Other than its bespoke coachwork, BC7EL was not equipped with any further extras when new"

and so I found English Automotive Services, a restoration outlet in Surrey that came recommended to me. We left it there in 2004 for some bodywork attention and a colour change to the original Circassian Blue that it wore when Mr Lewis took delivery".

A quick look at the worksheet from English Automotive Services reveals more of a full-blown restoration, with a plethora of problem areas addressed – from noisy pistons and cracked engine mounts through to steering clonks and numerous oil leaks, as well as attending to corrosion in the wheelarches: "And I thought it was quite good," says Ian with a wry smile.

ATTENTION TO DETAIL

In the metal, Park Ward's sleek design is undeniably elegant. Although about the same length as the standard steel saloon, it is significantly lower, which

helps to make it look longer and sleeker than it actually is. In closed form, the roof looks substantial and the lack of any rear passenger window makes it appear more like a two-seater. While I direct the car back and forth (with Dougal at the wheel) at our chosen photo shoot location of Glamis Castle, I take in all the styling details that are different: the front, the rear wings, the bootlid... everything was designed and created from scratch.

At the rear of the car, the neatest of little fins hint at what US customers were getting in the late '50s. The bootlid flows, lower and longer than the original, while two massive chromed outside hinges make a bold statement in this elegant environment. Before we lower the roof, Dougal shows me the massive wooden box carrying parts for roadside repairs, untouched for sixty years – and a terrific find.

Sixty years ago, Park Ward's S1 DHC



Ian's son, Dougal, is the Bentley's proud custodian these days



came complete with an electrically operated roof, and so Dougal presses the relevant button... only for nothing to happen. "An intermittent fault," he admits. "It happened a few months back for the first time, and then it worked again for a while." Does this mean that our photo shoot is over almost before it's begun? "Give it a moment," says Dougal, "and let me drive forwards and backwards a few metres before we try again." This time the roof does as it's told and elegantly lowers to its most stylish position.

In open form, the full four seats make the Bentley look more substantial, more regal. The sumptuous and original red leather plays elegantly with the Circassian Blue paintwork, while the Park Ward dashboard – different in style to the original and fitted with a rev counter – impresses with its design and superb condition. After more photographs are taken, I ask Dougal the question of all questions: "Can I drive it... maybe?" Happily, the answer is yes and, as Dougal slides across American-style to the passenger side, I am soon behind the wheel of one of the most beautiful cars I've ever seen – and, at the price of about two substantial homes, also one of the most expensive.

The 4887cc straight-six engine is so quiet that I have to check the rev counter to make sure it's running. And while the four-speed GM hydramatic

transmission standard on this model is by no means a particularly sophisticated 'box, it suits the style of the car very well; unobtrusive and subservient, it delivers what's required. On the road, the Park Ward-built S1 seems bigger than when stationary, particularly in terms of width, while the large steering wheel requires more input than you might expect. And the seating position is unexpectedly low thanks to Park Ward designers facing the conundrum of wanting it to be sleeker and lower

than the saloon, whilst still having to accommodate the high frame.

Yet none of these things matter, for the S1 DHC still offers a sublime driving experience, with a smoothness to its operation that still impresses almost 61 years after this particular example was hand-finished by Park Ward craftsmen. The fact that I got to enjoy a short time behind the wheel of this formidable testament to high-quality engineering is something I'll remember for a long time to come. ■



In the boot is the car's original box of spares for running repairs

PERSONAL CHOICE

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



1969 ROLLS-ROYCE SILVER SHADOW

OWNER: PETER DIXON

I don't really know how you'd describe it: foolish, naïve or simply the need to fulfil a lifelong dream. The first time I saw a Rolls-Royce was in 1969, when I was just 12 years old and – on my way home from school – a Silver Shadow would drive past almost silently at the same time each day. It would be another 47 years, however, before I even got a chance to sit in a Rolls-Royce, let alone have a ride in one.

I made my first acquaintance with SRX 6662 at the Fredericia (Denmark) classic car show last year. This 1969 Silver Shadow, finished in British Racing Green, looking fantastic from the outside but quite rough inside, with tears in the leather and badly flaking woodwork. It also had no service history and an asking price of 200,000 krone – the equivalent of around £24,000. I should point out that we have a 200% tax on cars in Denmark, and so the price in the UK would be around £8000.

I decided I should carry out some research, and so I joined the Rolls-

Royce Enthusiasts' Club, bought Lan Sluder's *Buy a Classic Rolls-Royce or Bentley* book, and read all I could find on the internet. I then arranged a test drive of the Silver Shadow, which was interesting thanks to the clouds of smoke coming from the rear brakes and the rough gear changes, although included in the purchase price was a new transmission. The owner could see I had already fallen in love with the car and so a deal was made.

I arranged for the car to be delivered just outside Odense, on the island of Fyn, where my wife's son-in-law, Brian, has a garage – which meant I could get it up on his ramps to see what the damage was. First job was to bleed the brakes and replace the handbrake cables and springs, but still the brakes cooked. At least the car looked good underneath, with a new stainless steel exhaust and a thick layer of Tectyl; but with a heavy workload in front of me, I knew I wouldn't get much more done for some time.

Finally, by November of last year, I started work on the leather and wood. The latter didn't worry me, as I am a golf professional and have renovated hundreds of old drivers and fairway woods over the years. My wife attended to the carpets and I repaired the leather upholstery with a repair kit from Liquid Leather, the end result being much better than I'd expected. As for the brakes, I eventually had to take the car to an expert for a new master cylinder, discs and pads to be fitted. He also changed the transmission fluid, which made a huge difference; the car finally drove exactly how I'd expect a Rolls-Royce to.

The best advice from my short experience with a Silver Shadow is to buy the best you can afford, make sure there is a full service history, and be prepared to spend money from day one. You might give £24,000 for the car and spend half as much again getting it sorted out, but you'll still have a car that is worth £24,000. ■

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

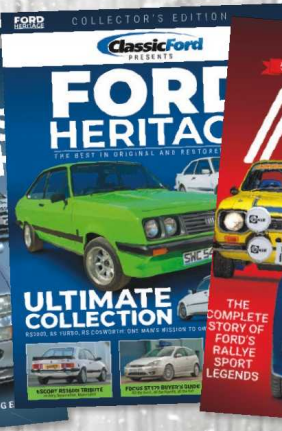
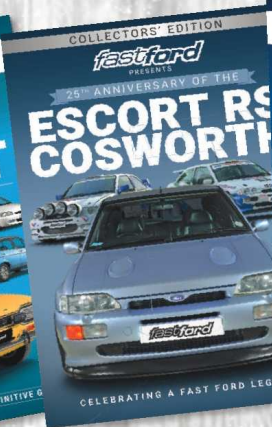
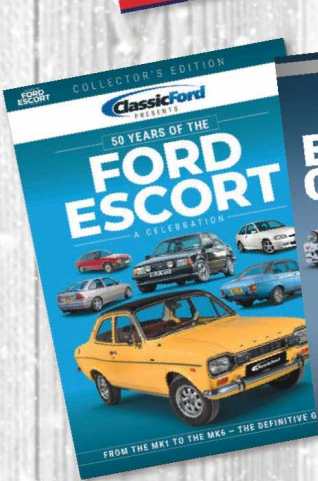
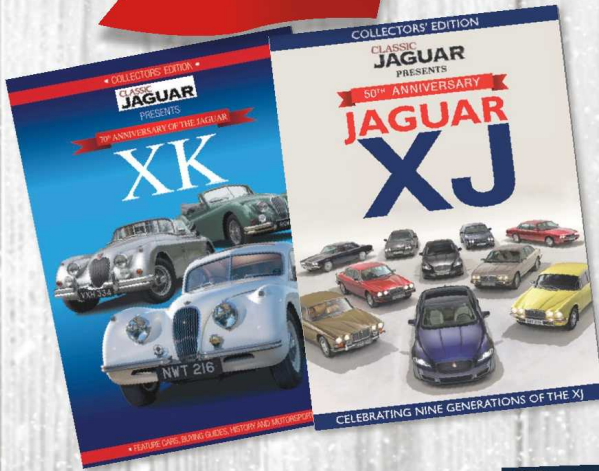
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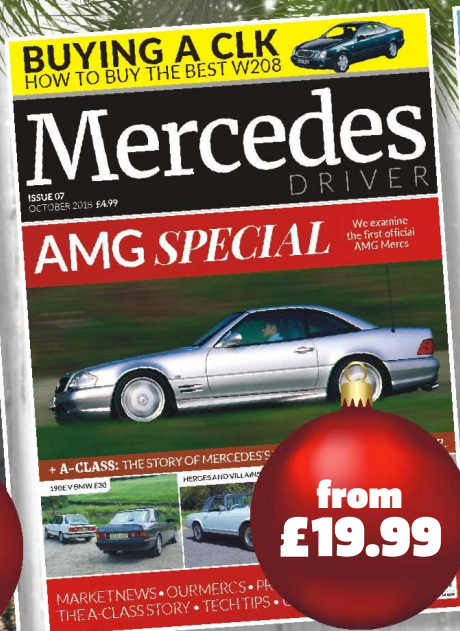
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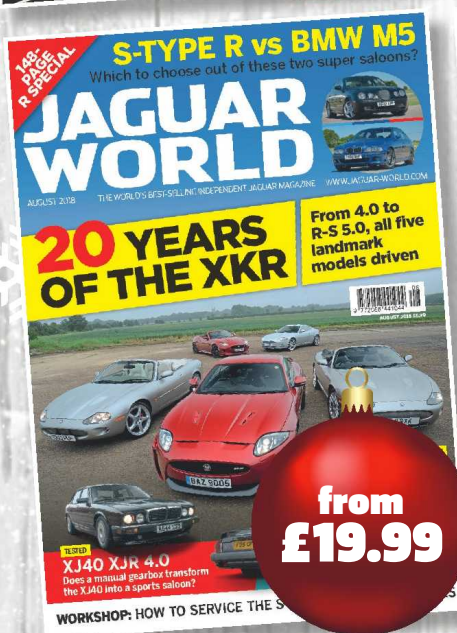
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FROM THE ARCHIVES

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

WORDS: PAUL GUINNESS PHOTOGRAPHY: VARIOUS

INDIVIDUALITY AS STANDARD

A new all-model brochure issued by Rolls-Royce Motors in 1978 featured this eye-catching image of the latest Camargue, with the Eiffel Tower providing an instantly recognisable backdrop. The brochure described the Camargue as being 'styled for today by Pininfarina', and focused on the hand-built aspect of this limited-production two-door: 'The traditional skills of the coachbuilder make each Camargue an individual and highly refined motor car'.

The copywriters of forty years ago were certainly keen to stress the bespoke appeal of the Camargue: 'No Rolls-Royce is exactly like any other car – not even another Rolls-Royce. The lavish use of natural materials and hand craftsmanship sees to that. And the choice of finishes, materials and fitments is wide'.



CHANGE OF NAME

July 1984 saw the Bentley version of the Rolls-Royce Corniche renamed the Continental, bringing back one of the marque's most famous names – with a host of minor improvements announced at the same time. New-style bumpers were introduced, along with a redesigned dashboard and uprated seats. The Continental remained in production for a whole decade, with other upgrades arriving to match those of the long-running Corniche.

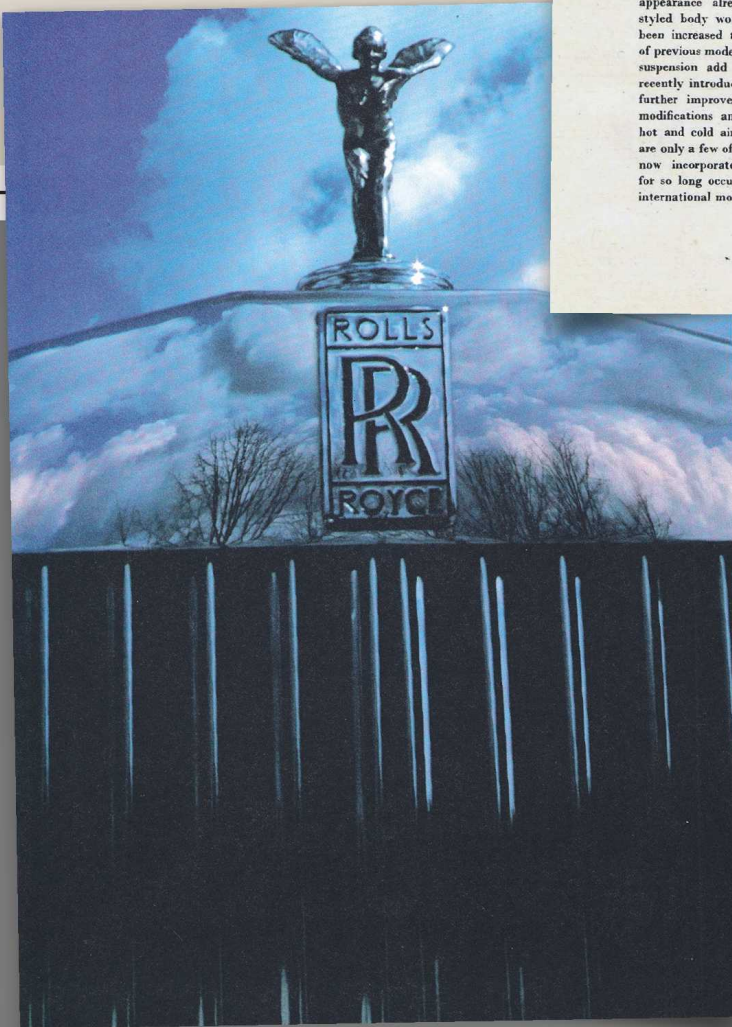
As with all members of the Corniche family, the Continental was a much more exclusive machine than its Rolls-Royce equivalent. Indeed, by the time the Continental was finally discontinued in 1994, just 421 examples had been sold over that ten-year period.

This all-model Bentley brochure, which dates from 1988, hailed the Continental as a 'classic luxury sporting convertible that meets the high standards of the most discerning driver'. Each example was 'meticulously hand-built by the craftsmen of Mulliner Park Ward, the famous London coachbuilders', and would take up to six months to complete – with the electrically folding roof alone taking ten days to finish.

ANNOUNCING THE R-TYPE

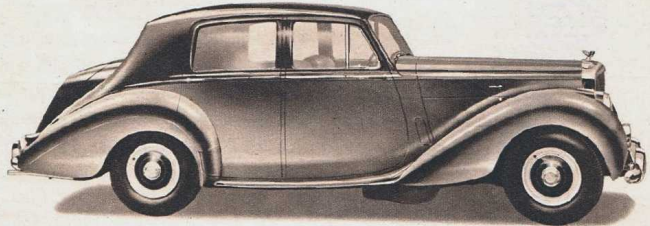
Launched in 1952 and remaining on sale for just three years, the MkVI-derived R-Type proved to be a successful saloon, keeping Bentley sales buoyant until the arrival of the all-new S-series. A total of 2323 R-Types were built, of which well over 2000 came with standard steel bodywork. This launch-year advert made no mention of the R-Type's moniker, however, referring instead to 'important new developments on the Bentley sports saloon'.

The advert went on to boast about the newcomer's lengthened chassis and an appearance that was 'improved by restyled bodywork' – particularly at the rear, where luggage space had 'increased to double the capacity of previous models'. On-board improvements included the adoption of 'hot and cold de-misting equipment', further enhancing a car that had 'for so long occupied a unique place in international motoring opinion'.

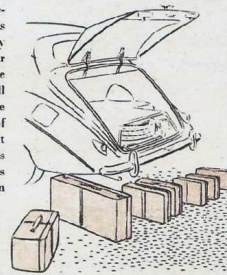


Announcing important new developments on the **BENTLEY** sports saloon

(A fully automatic gearbox with over-riding manual control is available on left-hand drive cars for export.)



The introduction of new developments on the Bentley Sports Saloon is an event in the motoring world. The car now presented incorporates many improvements and additional features. A lengthened chassis enhances the appearance already improved by restyled bodywork; luggage space has been increased to double the capacity of previous models; modifications to rear suspension add to comfort, and the recently introduced 4½ litre engine still further improves performance. These modifications and the introduction of hot and cold air de-misting equipment are only a few of the additional features now incorporated in a car that has for so long occupied a unique place in international motoring opinion.



BENTLEY MOTORS (1951) LIMITED, 14-15 CONDUIT STREET, LONDON, W.1.

SOUND INVESTMENT

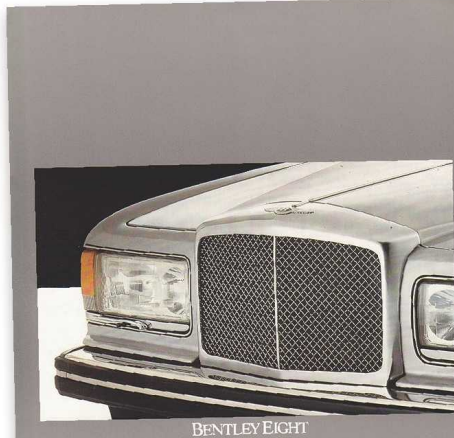
Forty years ago, a Rolls-Royce Motors brochure featured a headline that suggested its cars offered the best value in the world. It was perhaps a strange claim, given that any Rolls-Royce was among the most expensive models on sale at the time. But in many ways it made sense, given the potential longevity of the products from Crewe.

The brochure explained that the average car of the time lasted ten years from showroom to scrapheap: 'A Rolls-Royce, needless to say, is not an average car'. It also pointed out that in 1977, the British motor industry had produced an average of 5422 cars a day – of which just ten came from Rolls-Royce. And each new Rolls-Royce had the potential to outlast its contemporaries, as well as proving something of an investment: 'As things are today, a ten year old Rolls-Royce in good condition fetches rather more than it cost new'.

ENTRY-LEVEL BENTLEY

New for 1984 was the Bentley Eight, undercutting its Mulsanne cousin on price and providing Bentley Motors with a useful entry-level model. Not that any Bentley was cheap, of course, with the Eight costing £49,497 at the time of its introduction; but it provided a useful saving over the £55,240 normally-aspirated Mulsanne.

The most obvious visual change for the Eight was its adoption of a mesh grille insert, a nod to the marque's pre-war racing models – and something that suited the newcomer rather well. But did opting for the Eight mean the Bentley buyer of 1984 would be missing out when it came to luxury? Not according to this four-page brochure, which boasted about the Eight's 'outstanding degree of refinement and comfort', with an interior that was 'finished with the finest Connolly hide and perfectly-matched walnut veneer'. The end result was a sub-£50,000 model that offered 'refinement and power in perfect balance'.



BENTLEY EIGHT

BENTLEY EIGHT

The possession of a Bentley has always, rightly, been regarded as tacit evidence of an owner's distinctive taste and knowledge of motor cars.

It also confirms his appreciation of the power and pleasure afforded by the ownership of a car which is, quite simply, made as well as to perform, skill and economy alike.

The new Bentley Eight exemplifies, in the Bentley tradition, the new practical qualities which make any Bentley unique amongst motor cars. The pedigree of the Eight is shown up by its distinctive grille – and is quickly affirmed by the efficiency with which its 6.75 litre engine delivers outstanding performance with an outstanding degree of refinement and comfort.

When driving the Bentley Eight the refinement of engineering is immediately apparent through the power of the superbly balanced, light alloy V8 engine which is harmonised by the torque converter and an automatic transmission system of exceptional smoothness. Power-assisted rack and pinion steering permits the driver with fingertip control in City traffic, yet is reassuringly positive at speed.

Similarly, scrupulous attention is paid to every detail which affects the driver's physical (and psychological) equilibrium: from the Eight's air-aided anti-dive Braking system, to its power windows, and automatic split level air conditioning. The front seats are especially adjustable for height, tilt and fore and aft adjustment. The interior is finished with the finest Connolly hide and perfectly-matched walnut veneer.

Refinement and power, in perfect balance, make the Bentley Eight the ultimate expression of a philosophy which has made the Bentley marque famous for over sixty years.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION	
Body style	4 door saloon
Dimensions	Wheelbase 3000mm (118.11in)
Overall length	5050mm (202.76in)
Overall width	1850mm (72.83in)
Overall height	1370mm (53.94in)
Wheels	15in alloy
Wiper type	Intermittent
Wiper speed	Variable
Wiper interval	Variable
Wiper pressure	Variable
Wiper type	Intermittent
Wiper speed	Variable
Wiper interval	Variable
Wiper pressure	Variable
Wiper type	Intermittent
Wiper speed	Variable
Wiper interval	Variable
Wiper pressure	Variable

AS APPROVED BY JACK BARCLAY

The name Jack Barclay needs no introduction, although this is the first time we've come across a product endorsement from the company. Published in 1952, this advert for Car-Plate wax polish featured a letter from Jack Barclay himself, in which he stated: 'Having represented the Rolls-Royce and Bentley companies as one of their leading retailers for the last twenty-five years, I have no hesitation in recommending Johnson's Car-Plate polish, which we found to give the finest finish and exceptionally long-lasting wax protection'.

Barclay went on to say that his employees were 'particularly impressed with the ease and speed with which these results can be achieved'. According to the advert, Car-Plate could bring a shine to your car in just twenty minutes, 'with no rubbing at all'. And it was good value too, costing just five shillings 'from all garages and accessory dealers'.

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JACK BARCLAY endorses CAR-PLATE

SDB/CQ

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Middlesex.

May the
Seventh,
1952.

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The staff of this Company are particularly impressed with the ease and speed with which these results can be achieved.

Yours faithfully,

For and on behalf of
JACK BARCLAY LIMITED

Jack Barclay
Managing Director

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TRADITIONAL VALUES

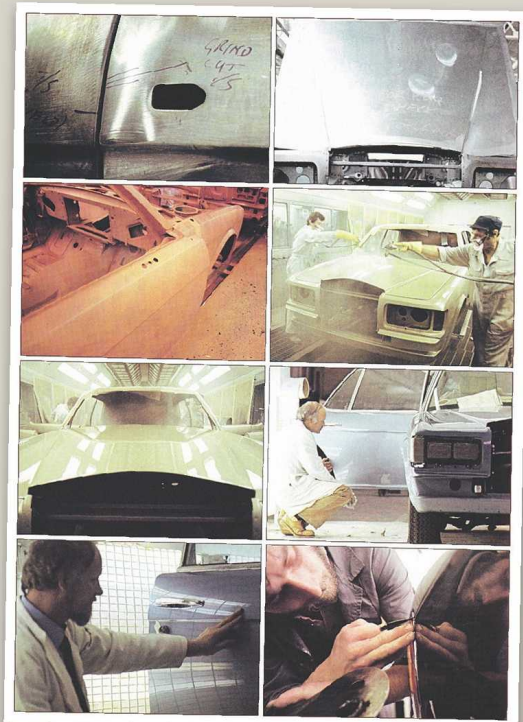
One of the numerous publications issued by Rolls-Royce Motors in 1982 was this brochure dedicated to the Silver Spirit, although the Bentley Mulsanne also made an appearance in its own six-page section at the rear. The brochure explained that 'development of the Silver Spirit took a full eight years, despite the long and distinguished service histories of many of the components'.

The Mulsanne, meanwhile, marked 'the return of The Silent Sports Car', reusing a phrase first used in the 1930s to describe the new-generation Bentleys of that particular decade. The Mulsanne brought together 'decades of dedication to fine engineering', maintaining Bentley as 'the symbol of a grand touring car in the classic European tradition'.

THE BODY BEAUTIFUL

The last issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* featured an image from a 1978 Silver Shadow brochure, showing the car's bodyshell in its raw state. This time it's the turn of the Silver Spirit in this publication from four years later, in which the various stages of bodyshell production and hand-finishing were shown in detail.

This latest brochure explained that 'beneath the lustrous finish of every Rolls-Royce motor car are hidden hour upon patient hour of loving care', with meticulous attention to detail guaranteeing a 'lasting statement of British craftsmanship'. Indeed, each bodyshell was apparently 'treated as if it belonged to the only Rolls-Royce motor car ever to be made'.



NEXT ISSUE
FUTURE FEATURES

COMING SOON...

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

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



PRE-WAR PERFECTION

When buying a pre-war car in which to tour Europe, what's the best choice? For one enthusiast, the obvious answer was this 1934 Rolls-Royce 20/25 Sports Saloon by Freestone & Webb



BENTLEY SPECIAL ON TEST

We head to scenic North Wales to get behind the wheel of this hand-built Bentley Special, based around a MkVI chassis but with the added benefit of 6.75-litre V8 power.



BUYING A CORNICHE

If this issue's driving feature has you yearning for a Corniche of your own, we reveal all you need to know before taking the plunge



ENTRY-LEVEL BENTLEY

Back in 1987, the most affordable Bentley was the Eight – undercutting the Mulsanne by thousands. We meet the proud owner of this underrated model



CONTINENTAL DASH

We recall racing legend Derek Bell's high-speed sprint from Malaga to Monaco in 2003, pushing the then new Continental GT to the limit

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2010 (10) BENTLEY CONTINENTAL GT 6.0 SPEED SERIES 51
25,000 miles, auto, petrol, silver. The Series 51 celebrated Bentley's design studio, and featured unique interior and exterior features, developed by Bentley's trim designers.
£51,990



2007 (07) BENTLEY CONTINENTAL GT 6.0 COUPE
68,000 miles, auto, petrol, finished in an ultra-cool matte black wrap. Full TITAN body styling. 22" Bentley Speed play wheels. Custom TITAN performance exhaust. Performance suspension, full leather interior conversion and quilted ceiling and seat centres with TITAN embossing and stitching.
£54,990



2004 (04) BENTLEY CONTINENTAL 6.0 GT 2DR
50,000 miles, auto, petrol. Full TITAN body styling. 22" Bentley Speed play wheels - Custom TITAN performance exhaust - Performance susps, full leather interior conversion and quilted ceiling and seat centres with TITAN embossing and stitching.
£45,990



2004 (04) BENTLEY CONTINENTAL 6.0 W12 GTC 2DR
Benz Bavarian are proud to offer this gorgeous, Beluga Black Bentley Continental GTC Mulliner. 12 months MOT, Metallic Black.
£49,990



2009 (09) BENTLEY CONTINENTAL 6.0 W12 GTC 2DR
29,000 miles, auto, petrol, 12 months MOT, convertible, Metallic Black.
£49,990



2002 (52) BENTLEY ARNAGE 6.8 T 4DR
52,000 miles, Auto, petrol, Clean bodywork, Beige Full leather interior - Clean Condition, Tyre condition Good, Silver, Facelifted from May 2004 and made Euro IV compliant.
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SUCCESS OF THE TITANS

If a standard-spec Continental GT isn't exclusive enough for you, why not consider a Titan? We head to Derbyshire to sample one of the first cars from an already successful series

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: PAUL GUINNESS

With the 2003-on Continental GT averaging around 4000 sales per annum throughout its lengthy career, this new-generation coupe was a huge success for Bentley. Developed during the early days of Volkswagen's ownership of the firm, it proved to be an immediate hit – and a best-seller by Bentley standards. But with secondhand examples now available for the price of an upmarket new supermini, is

the first-generation Continental GT really the exclusive offering that Bentley should be known for?

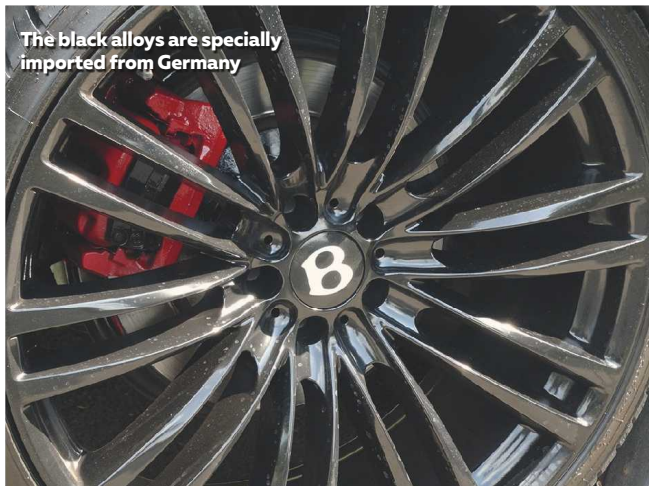
In reality, of course, a Continental GT isn't an everyday sight for most folk, unless they happen to live in London or one of the leafier suburbs of Cheshire. But it's true that by Bentley standards it's relatively ubiquitous, which then brings opportunities when it comes to personalisation. That's where Derbyshire-based Benz Bavarian comes in, offering a choice of bespoke

models based around carefully selected examples of the Continental GT.

The company has been trading as a specialist in prestige car sales for more than thirty years, but it was about a decade ago that founder Felix Frixou hit upon the idea of building a modified version of the latest Bentley coupe: "We'd already done well with used examples of the Continental GT," explained Felix during our recent visit, "buying and selling quite a number. But I always felt there was a market



The engine in this particular Titan White Edition remains unmodified



The black alloys are specially imported from Germany



for something a bit more exclusive, and so hit upon the idea of offering styling upgrades both inside and out."

Felix started work on creating a new look for the Continental GT and GTC, employing CAD (computer-aided design) professionals to bring his body kit concept to fruition. The idea was to give the Bentley a touch more 'attitude' without spoiling the original design's clean lines. The end result is a Continental with the wider arches, side skirts, new-look bumpers, bonnet vents and bespoke rear spoiler that you'd perhaps expect from such a treatment, albeit with a rather more subtle overall appearance than some of its restyled contemporaries.

"Many of the companies offering modified prestige cars tend to be more outrageous in their styling efforts," admits Felix, "but we didn't think the Bentley warranted that. It's a superb

looking car to begin with, and we wanted to enhance it rather than brutalise it."

Throw into the mix a suspension set-up that's up to 30mm lower than standard, complemented by a set of specially-imported 22-inch wheels with spacers, and you have a car that's guaranteed to attract attention. It offers an impressive stance, sitting well on its bespoke German-built alloys (finished in black in the case of the Titan White Edition featured here) and looking suitably upgraded over a standard model, with its front end improved via the addition of later-spec headlamps and daytime running lights in the bumper. It is, however, the car's more subtle detailing that completes its aesthetic transformation, something that Felix was keen to include from the outset:

"I think attention to detail is very important, and not just when it comes to the quality of the body kit, which is

built specifically for us by an overseas specialist and then sent to our UK base for expert fitting here," explained Frixou. "In terms of detailing, I wanted to make sure that any Bentley given the Titan treatment would have neat finishing touches. Even the exterior door handles have bespoke Titan inserts, while the reupholstered interior has the Titan logo embroidered into the leather. The centre console also features an individually numbered plaque, as we want each Titan owner to know they're part of an exclusive club."

EARLY CONVERSION

The quality needs to be more than skin deep, of course, which is why we were keen to sample the Titan White Edition that you see in the photographs. At the time of our recent visit to Benz Bavarian, the company had just bought »

FEATURE CAR TITAN WHITE EDITION

Lowered suspension gives the Bentley-based Titan a handsome stance



the car from its owner of the last few years – and with this particular example showing '02' on its bespoke interior plaque, it's important for being only the second Titan-upgraded Continental GT to be built. It would be interesting for us to see how it still looked, some years after its transformation.

Based around an early Continental GT and still with well under 60,000 miles recorded by the time we got behind the wheel, this Titan White Edition certainly looked the part. We were impressed by the fit of the body kit, which also highlighted just how impressive a finish is possible with glassfibre when it's built to a high standard rather than to a low budget. There's none of the ripples and unevenness that we've seen on cut-price kits in the past, with its fit around the existing Bentley bodywork being tight and even. Neither did the

Titan show any signs of paintwork issues, with absolutely no peeling, crazing or other potential worries on display after several years of use.

Climbing aboard the Titan, the impression is equally favourable. During its transformation from standard spec, this car was obviously given the full Titan treatment inside; the superbly reupholstered seats (in cream leather, with contrasting black bolsters and stitching, as well as featuring the all-important Titan logo on each backrest front and rear) still look immaculate, as does the dark veneer trim throughout. Again, the emphasis is on providing a more individual treatment than a standard Bentley, without spoiling the car's overall style.

Benz Bavarian offers a choice of Titan specifications for the Continental GT, with the White Edition shown here being





joined by the 300 Edition (finished in black with a red and black interior) and the Wolf Edition (in Caribbean Blue with blue/cream interior treatment), although just about any combination of colours and spec details is available to suit the buyer's individual requirements. A power upgrade to as much as 690bhp is also available (by reprogramming the engine, modifying the ECU and so on), although the majority of customers are happy with the standard car's 550bhp; a sports silencer is a standard part of the Titan treatment, however, giving the Bentley an even more impressive soundtrack as a result.

ON THE ROAD

Easing out of the Benz Bavarian headquarters and heading for some of the rural B-roads around that particular part of Derbyshire reinforced the extra sound quality provided by the Titan conversion, with the Bentley's already impressive exhaust 'burble' being boosted substantially. And, of course, as the car gathered speed, changing gear seamlessly through the six-speed automatic gearbox, the sounds improved still further.

The engine of this particular White Edition remains unmodified, which is perfectly understandable given the fact that no Continental GT is exactly short of power; the effortless way in which it gathers speed remains as impressive now as when this model first took a bow fifteen years ago. Critics of those

"The idea was to give the Bentley a touch more 'attitude' without spoiling the original clean lines"

early examples might have accused the GT of being a little 'soft' in the handling department (despite the awesome grip provided by its all-wheel drive layout), but the Titan's 30mm lower suspension sharpens it up just enough to make it more of a driver's car.

The end result is very impressive. Push the Titan into a tight corner on a wide B-road and it hunkers down as you accelerate, giving a feeling of confidence throughout. The well-weighted steering helps, of course, as does the lack of body roll. It's not dramatically different from a standard Continental GT of this vintage, but it's enough of a tweak to make the transformation worthwhile.

VALUE FOR MONEY

As with so many of these aftermarket conversions, much of the appeal of the Titan lies in its aesthetic upgrades, with the lowered suspension and 22-inch alloys being as important in that regard as the high-quality body kit and bespoke interior. It's a combination of enhancements that works well if you've a penchant for non-standard modern-classic Bentleys.

If the idea of a Titan appeals, then Benz Bavarian will be happy to discuss either transforming your own

Continental GT (or GTC) or acquiring a suitable donor on your behalf, enabling you to take delivery of a complete car built to your own specification. So far, an impressive total of 36 Titan-spec Bentleys have been produced, making this by far the most successful upgrade among the various makes and models catered for by Benz Bavarian.

A simpler alternative to having a Titan built to order would be the purchase of the White Edition featured here, of course, a car that's ready for its next owner to enjoy – assuming it's still for sale by the time this issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* is published. But how much would you have to pay for the privilege? At the time of writing, this car is available with an asking price of £49,990 – which doesn't seem outrageous for a machine that's capable of attracting even more attention (and being even more rewarding to pilot) than a standard-spec example. ■

THANK YOU

We're grateful to Felix Frixou and the team at Benz Bavarian for letting us loose in the Titan White Edition. For further details of the Titan range or to enquire about the car tested here, go online to www.benzbavarian.com or call 01332 840272.



• THE BIG PICTURE •

Almost six decades ago, a visit to London by President Eisenhower generated headlines around the world – and inevitably involved some distinctly stylish and suitably upmarket transport

WORDS: PAUL GUINNESS PHOTOGRAPHY: ROLLS-ROYCE MOTOR CARS



August 1959 saw Dwight D Eisenhower – the 34th US President – visiting Britain, shown here alongside Prime Minister Harold Macmillan in the rear of a coachbuilt Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud drophead coupe by H.J. Mulliner. It was, of course, appropriate for two of the world's most powerful politicians to be riding around in one of the most desirable – and most expensive – forms of open-top motoring at that time. After eight years in office, President Eisenhower was succeeded by John F Kennedy in January 1961, while Macmillan remained Prime Minister of Great Britain through to October 1963. The year of President Eisenhower's visit saw the debut of Rolls-Royce's Silver Cloud II, featuring the company's new V8 powerplant. H.J.Mulliner built fewer than a hundred examples of the Silver Cloud II drophead coupe, featuring bodywork to its design number 7504.

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READERS' ADVERTISEMENT COUPON

CATEGORY: FOR SALE WANTED
 VEHICLES PARTS MISCELLANEOUS LITERATURE & INFORMATION

ADVERT DETAILS:

Make/Model:

Year: Price: Mileage:

Main Text (no more than 30 words):

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Ad Contact Number:

ADVERTISER DETAILS:

Name:

Address:

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Town:

County:

Country:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email (optional):

PRIVATE ADVERTISERS ONLY MUST SIGN HERE:

(The goods advertised are not offered by way of trade.)

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- We reserve the right to refuse any advert.
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BENTLEY

CONTINENTAL R



1992, 85,000 miles, £36,495. Royal blue coach work, full leather, magnolia hide, dark blue piping, lambs wool rugs, fully documented history from new, with receipts. Professional LPG conversion, with certification. Economic, appreciating investment, and a joy to drive. Please call 07970 886345, Vale of Glamorgan.
4799

HOOPER



1956, £65,750. Finished in two tone green, with fine coach lines to compliment the coach work, matching hide interior, with glass like finish to walnut veneers, picnic tables to front and rear, power windows, original HMV radio, new tyres, matching thick pile lambs wool overugs to the interior, only one former keeper. Please call 01322 669081, visit peterjarvis.net. (T).
4785

T2



1979, 104,000 miles, £14,995. The car has just had a £3k braking system overall. The car had the MoT refreshed in late December 2016. Please call 01256 242212 (T).
4602

TURBO LWB



1997, 41,000 miles, £18,750. R, Finished in the superb colour of royal blue with magnolia hide interior piped royal blue, headrests front and rear. Please call 01322 669081, visit peterjarvis.net (T).
4862

MKVI STANDARD STEEL SALOON



1947, £34,995. The body was stripped down and treated to a full repaint, invoices in the file detail a full interior re-trim in leather and substantial re-chroming work. Documentation also relates to stripping, dismantling and rebuilding brakes, fitting a new rear axle, rebuilding shock absorbers, rebuilding king pins, new steering arm pins, new fuel pump, rebuilding the servo and various other mechanical work. The gearbox was checked and found to be in very good order. Please call 01944 758000, North Yorkshire.

MKVI STANDARD STEEL SALOON



1949, 116,000 Miles, £22,995. The paintwork is bright and presentable and in recent years have been treated to a two tone re-spray in Metallic Dark Blue over Silver. There are odd blemishes and imperfections but the body is strong, sound and in very good order. The chrome work is of a very good standard and the radiator shell particularly smart without any dents. The bumpers and over riders will certainly have been re-chromed in recent times. Please call 01944 758000, North Yorkshire.

ROLLS-ROYCE

SILVER WRAITH LWB



1979, 95,300 miles, £15,500. Red over gold beige interior. MoT May 19. Rust free every detail taken care of by enthusiastic owner for 16 years nearly new tyres inc brakes hydraulics receipts unblemished paintwork. Please call 07453 530355.
4838

SILVER SPIRIT IV



1996, 51,000 miles, £25,750. Rare, one of 36 Vickers PLC cars built at Crewe. Finished in metallic wild berry with sandstone and wild berry piped interior. Full RRandB and Panda Wood service history incl. build manual. Immaculate throughout. Unrepeatable. Please call 07702 880563, Cheshire.
4709

SHADOW 11



1978, 35,000 Miles, £POA. 3 owners. Nutmeg over silver sand, tan interior, just had major service inc. New Avon whitewalls Excellent Condition. Please call 00353 877853264, Dublin Ireland.

SILVER DAWN



51,000 Miles, £32,995. Blue metallic exterior. Automatic gearbox. Finished in immaculate peacock blue with unmarked magnolia hide piped royal blue dark blue Wilton carpets and lambs wool rugs. The car was registered when new in February 1997 by Rolls Royce Motor Cars Ltd and then bought by its only owner in November 1997. Please call 01485 541526 (T)

SILVER SERAPH



2002, £56,950. Only two owners, supplied by us to the last owner 3 years ago. Having covered only 58,000 miles with Full Service History. Finished in Silver Tempest with St James coachlines. Electric sunroof and all Last of Line features. The interior is finished in Light Grey with Mulberry carpets and piping. Immaculate condition throughout. Please call 0208 567 9729, London. (T)

SILVER SHADOW



1979, 72,488 Miles, £24,995. Stunning V8 silver shadow finished in larch green with magnolia hide and beige Wilton carpets. Large service history including 21 stamps from a mix of main dealers and marque specialist. Silver Shadows are now becoming really hard to find in this condition. Please call 01485 541526 (T).

SILVER SHADOW II



1980, 78,000 Miles, £24,950. Finished in unmarked Exeter Blue with whitewall tyres and Cream coach lines. The Cream interior is piped in French Navy with French Navy carpets piped in Cream. Comes with Full Service History. Known to ourselves for last 24 years. Immaculate throughout. Please call 0208 567 9729, London. (T)

PARTS FOR SALE

OWNERS CLUB SO CA USA



£65. Picnic with the Queen Mary. Please call 07398 015688, West Sussex.
5115

ROLLS ROYCE TYRE

£40. White wall tyre, half inch white wall, only used for four months from new. Purchased in 2017. Buyer to collect. Please call 07809 244870, Middlesex.



PAUL GUINNESS

Back in 1980, a brand new motoring magazine was claiming that the Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow was the most cost-effective car of its time – and an appreciating asset on the secondhand market

By the summer of 1980, the Silver Shadow was almost at the end of its career. After an impressive fifteen years on sale, this stalwart of the Rolls-Royce range would shortly be replaced by the long-awaited Silver Spirit. The company's best-seller was about to bid adieu. And yet, rather curiously, the very same model appeared on the front cover of a brand new motoring magazine, complete with this controversial strapline: 'Why the Rolls-Royce is Britain's cheapest car'.

The magazine in question was *Company Car*, a consumer title aimed at fleet car buyers and drivers alike. As far as I can recall, it was relatively short-lived and wasn't a huge success. But as an avid collector of just about every motoring magazine back then, I was intrigued by this new title – and as a car-mad fifteen-year-old, I had no hesitation in handing my local newsagent the princely sum of £1 for that very first issue.

Anyone who knows me will confirm that I'm an avid hoarder of car magazines and brochures, so it should come as no surprise to learn that I still have that inaugural issue of *Company Car* all these years later. Flicking through it now, I'm inevitably faced with features on mainstream fleet cars of the time, from Ford's evergreen Cortina through to young upstarts like the Renault 18. There's even a feature on one fleet's four-year (90,000-mile) experience with a Morris Marina Estate, and another on the benefits of going diesel. So why would the very same magazine choose to have a Rolls-Royce as its cover star... and suggest that it was cheap to run?

The answer lay in the opening paragraph of the Silver Shadow feature: 'If, at the beginning of 1975, you had bought the cheapest Rolls-Royce available, a Silver Shadow saloon unfettered by extra-cost options, you would have paid the list price of £13,999 because at that time demand for the cars was such that no dealer would have sold one for less. If, in the following five years you had looked after the car, saw it serviced faithfully, kept its body blemish-free and drove it a considerate 8000-10,000 miles a year, you could have sold it earlier this year for at least £19,000 – and you might have raised better than £20,000 with a truly prime example. Your profit would have been £5000-6000, representing a return of 35-40% on capital.'

Such appreciation on a five-year-old Silver Shadow says a lot about the UK's inflation rate during the second half of the 1970s. Inflation hit a high of 24.2% in 1975, and even by 1980 it stood at a mighty 18%, having dipped and then risen again in the intervening years. The price of a new Silver Shadow increased so much during those five years, it was perhaps inevitable that a 1975-spec example was going to be worth more than its original list price by the end of the decade.



“If you had bought the cheapest Rolls-Royce available, you would have paid the list price of £13,999”

Reassuringly, however, the same rule didn't apply to every luxury car of the time, as *Company Car* magazine explained in 1980: 'Had you bought a Mercedes-Benz (for £9794, early in 1975) or a Jaguar XJ12 (for £5491), you would be between £1000 and £2000 the poorer from a sale early this year, based on typical trade prices.' This got me wondering whether any *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* readers remember buying a brand new car that actually increased in value during their time with it. If so, we'd love to hear your story. ■

Vintage & Prestige

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£880,000.00



1923 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost Tourer
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1924 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost Arthur Mulliner Limousine
£148,000.00



1926 Rolls-Royce Phantom I, The Phantom of Love
£1,100,000.00



1930 Rolls-Royce Phantom I York Roadster
£290,000.00



1934 Rolls-Royce Phantom II Continental Sports Saloon
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