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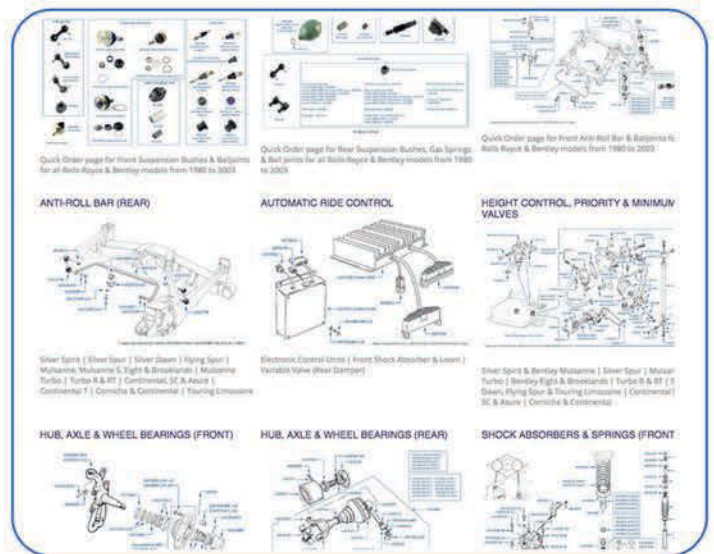
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There's more to come...

These are exciting times for *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, with this issue marking the switch from quarterly to bi-monthly – as well as having an extra 32 pages dedicated to road trips and historic rallies. For all those loyal readers who've been asking for more issues of the magazine, this is obviously great news. Thank you to everyone for your support to date.

This is also a special issue for me personally, as it's my first as editor – although some of you may already know my name, as I've been a proud contributor from day one. Nigel Fryatt has done an excellent job over the last three issues, and I hope to be following suit for a long time to come. I bring with me over three decades of experience, having been a full-time motoring writer since the mid-1980s and editor of several different magazines during that time. Now though, I'll be running a title that genuinely excites me thanks to my passion for all things Rolls-Royce and Bentley related.

So what's in store for *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*? For starters, more of the same. The magazine has developed a strong following over the last year or so, which means little need for drastic change. You tell us that you like what we're doing, so we'll carry on doing it – and that means great feature cars covering all eras, as well as the best buying advice, the most in-depth historical pieces and all the latest news and views from the world of classic Rolls-Royces and Bentleys.

One thing I'm keen to develop, however, is extra interaction with our readers. It's already under way on social media, where our Facebook updates generate plenty of interest and commentary from around the world. Meanwhile, this issue sees the launch of our new readers' letters section, giving you a chance to have a say on the cars, the magazine or anything else you have a view on. And we'll also be featuring increasing numbers of readers' cars in future issues, so don't forget to tell us about yours. Drop us a line and, you never know, one of our photographers might just be paying you a visit.

I hope you enjoy this special issue – and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Paul Guinness

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ROLLS-ROYCE 20HP SELLS AT AUCTION



Offering excellent value at a recent UK sale by H&H Classics was this 1929 Rolls-Royce 20hp Coupe. The well-preserved example boasted a fascinating history and had undergone some restoration work in recent years, yet it only just beat the auctioneer's low-end estimate – with a final sale price of £40,500.

The car was offered for sale by the private museum that had owned it since 2015, having enjoyed a full rewire, respray, new headlining, replacement carpets and re-chroming over the last three years. The car had been exported to Canada in 1964, and was repatriated

back to the UK as recently as 2013 by specialist dealer, The Real Car Company.

According to RREC records, this 20hp – chassis GFN10 – was ordered new from Jack Barclay by Mr Arthur Donn of Regent's Park, London, and was bodied as a four-door saloon by coachbuilder Victor Broom Ltd of Camden Town, registered as UL 4154 on 24th January, 1929. Less than three years later, however, the car was re-bodied as a stylish coupe by Barker & Co, with the original buff logbook listing a change to 'Type of Body Coupe' ratified by a London County Council stamp (dated December 1931).

A full ownership history remains

with the car, showing its acquisition in the mid-1930s by The Honourable W.R. McLintock Bunbury of the 15/19 Hussars, stationed in York. He later became the Fourth Baron Rathdonnell and relocated UL 4154 to Ireland, where it was licenced up until his death in 1959. A recent email from the present Baron Rathdonnell stated that he learned to drive in the four-seater and that the family sold it in about 1960. It was the current Baron Rathdonnell who supplied the charming black and white photograph seen here, depicting a family picnic and showing this 20hp's distinctive windscreen visor and tubular bumpers.

RETURN OF THE SILVER GHOST

Well, not quite... but it's true that Rolls-Royce is creating a collection of just 35 Rolls-Royce Ghosts in homage to the original Silver Ghost. This strictly limited run will be hand-finished by the Bespoke Collective of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars and will be known as the Silver Ghost Collection.

Each car from the Silver Ghost Collection will feature a solid sterling-silver Spirit of Ecstasy bearing the specially-created hallmark of AX201 – a tribute to the registration number of the most famous Silver Ghost. A black-gold-plated collar will enshroud the base of the Spirit of Ecstasy, with an insert crafted from hammered copper

in tribute to the copper extensively used in the engine bay of the original.

All 35 cars will be finished in Cassiopeia Silver (a complex paint that's said to incorporate 'both warm and cool tones'), with a hand-painted coachline containing fine particles of pure silver. Up front, black painted grille veins will mimic the distinctive black grille of the original car, while fully-polished wheel centres will be encircled with 'SILVER GHOST – SINCE 1907'.

A unique Forest Green interior will feature, with silver-tipped leather on the front and rear door panniers. A silver inlay will also be set into the wood of the fascia and door cappings,



while the tread plates will be engraved with the words 'Silver Ghost Collection – One of Thirty-Five'. As a finishing touch, a unique Silver Ghost hamper will be included, combining what Rolls-Royce calls 'bespoke design with the finest craftsmanship'.

BENTAYGA SET FOR PIKES PEAK

Two-time Pikes Peak overall winner Rhys Millen will pilot a Bentley Bentayga at the 2018 Pikes Peak International Hill Climb, set to take place in Colorado on June 24th. Aiming to break the existing Production SUV record of 12:35.61, the Bentayga will need to average a minimum of 60mph up the exceptionally tight and twisty 156-corner course.

With years of competition at Pikes Peak and in Red Bull Global Rallycross under his belt, Millen has the ability and experience required to push the Bentley to its limits. The race-ready Bentayga, featuring an unmodified 600bhp W12 engine, has been prepared by a dedicated team at Bentley's Crewe-based motorsport department.

The car has been built as close to production standard as possible, with minimal changes in accordance with Production Class rules. A full roll cage, onboard fire suppression system, racing seats and harnesses will ensure that Millen's assault on the mountain will be as safe as it is fast. Production tyres will be supplied by Pirelli and a custom exhaust system will come from Akrapovic. In every other respect, however, the car will be the



same as any production Bentayga.

Rhys told Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver: "The opportunity to race with Bentley at Pikes Peak is one that I couldn't pass up. I had the chance to drive the race-prepared Bentayga for

the first time last month and was blown away by the performance that's already available. I'm really looking forward to preparing for the race, competing on the mountain with Bentley and hopefully claiming a new SUV record."

CULLINAN IS COMING

Rolls-Royce Motor Cars has confirmed that its forthcoming SUV is to be badged as the Cullinan – the codename that the vehicle has been known by for some time. Although the company likes to refer to the newcomer as a 'high-bodied car', the Cullinan is effectively the first production SUV from Rolls-Royce – and is set to take on the Bentley Bentayga when it launches later this year

Named after the Cullinan diamond (the largest flawless diamond ever found), this controversial addition to the Rolls-Royce line-up has been given an appropriate moniker, explains Torsten Muller-Otvos, chief executive officer of Rolls-Royce: "The name Cullinan has been hiding in plain sight since we revealed it as the project name some years ago. It is the most fitting name for our extraordinary new product. Cullinan is a motor car of such clarity of purpose, such flawless quality and preciousness,

and such presence that it recalibrates the scale and possibility of true luxury."

We'd love to know what you think about the launch of the Cullinan,

so drop us a line via rrb.ed@kelsey.co.uk. See page 22 to read what our Facebook followers have already been saying about it.



BDC AWARD WINNERS



Stuart Morley, recipient of the BDC's Frank Clement Trophy for racing driver of the year

Stuart Morley is the latest proud recipient of the Bentley Drivers' Club's prestigious Frank Clement Memorial Trophy, awarded by the club's Competitions Committee to the BDC Racing Driver of the Year for 2017.

Stuart, one of the younger members of the renowned Morley motor racing



Michael Higginbotham on his way to victory at Silverstone in his Mark VI Special

dynasty and an outstandingly quick driver at the wheel of his family's Bentley 3/4½ Litre, received his accolade from club president Jimmy Medcalf at the BDC Competitions Day, held at the organisation's club house near Banbury in January 2018.

Robert Banthorpe, chief flag marshal at the annual BDC race day at Silverstone for many years, landed the Stan Terry Memorial Trophy. Michael Higginbotham was presented with the coveted Times Challenge Trophy after claiming victory in his Mark VI Special in the P&A Wood Bentley race for pre-1965 chassis cars at the BDC meeting last August. And Jim Tiller, who has been racing for almost six decades and a loyal supporter of the Silverstone meeting for many years, was deservedly made a Discretionary Member of the club.

SUCCESS AT ESSEN

Essex based dealer Vintage & Prestige won an impressive two Best of Show awards at this year's Technoclassica Essen exhibition with its magnificent 1911 Grosvenor-bodied Rolls Royce Silver Ghost, 'The Dreamer'.

Sales Director Mike Kliebenstein commented: "We always try to bring our finest stock to Essen and hope to win something, and this year was

no exception as we had £15 million worth of cars on our stand. But to get two first places for a single car really was a surprise." The company's Richard Biddulph added: "Put it this way, we went out with four Kentvale trucks loaded up with twenty cars and we came back with only two trucks."

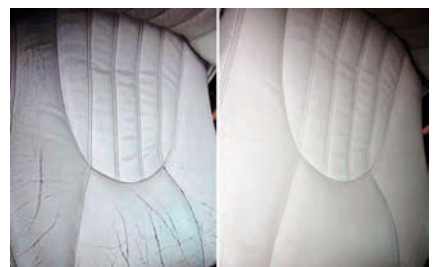
For more details of Vintage & Prestige's latest stock, go online to: www.vandp.net/sales.



THE ART OF DETAILING

If this issue's feature on vehicle detailing (see pages 112-117) provides you with some inspiration but you don't fancy getting your hands dirty, you might want to know about Cambridge Concours – a company that specialises in bringing your pride and joy back to perfection via a range of different services.

Cambridge Concours specialises in leather restoration (from basic cleaning through to recolouring) as well as paint correction – dealing with everything from swirl and hologram removal right through to paintwork preparations for concours show entries. The company can carry out a bespoke assessment of your Rolls-Royce or Bentley, and will even take paint measurements to identify old repairs or previously polished areas to ensure its experts know exactly what they're dealing with. A choice of ultimate car detailing packages is available, ensuring they can match each customer's individual requirements. To find out more, check out the website: www.cambridgeconcours.com.



1975

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1980 W Rolls Royce Silver Shadow Series II. Finished in beautiful Silver Sand and with a Nutmeg Everflex roof, complemented by Magnolia interior and Nutmeg carpets. Fitted with near side door mirror and Whitewall tyres. Only 63,000 miles with lots of history. Immaculate condition throughout... **£23,950**



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**



1996 H Bentley Brooklands. Finished in Peacock Blue with Magnolia interior piped in French Navy and with French Navy carpets piped in Magnolia. Fitted with front and rear parking sensors. We have supplied and serviced this car for the last 10 years and it has always been maintained regardless of cost. Offered for sale at only... **£17,500**



1998 R Rolls Royce Silver Seraph. Finished in unmarked Wildberry with whitewall tyres and Cream coachlines. Catswood interior with Mulberry piping and Mulberry carpets piped in Catswood. Walnut veneers with picnic tables and vanity mirrors. Electric and heated rear seats. Only 90,000 miles with FSH. A truly stunning example..... **£41,950**



1999 T Bentley Arnage Red Label Look Alike. Finished in Peacock Blue with colour coded bumpers and limited edition Le Mans style wheels. Soft Tan interior with French Navy carpets piped in Soft Tan. Known to ourselves for a number of years and always maintained regardless of cost. Only 71,000 miles. Immaculate throughout and amazing value... **£19,999**



2001 Model X Rolls Royce Silver Seraph. Finished in Royal Blue with whitewall tyres and privacy glass. Catswood interior with French Navy piping and Walnut veneers including door inlays, with picnic tables. French Navy carpets piped in French Navy. Only 23,000 miles from new with FSH, known to ourselves... **£59,995**



2004/04 Bentley Arnage R. Finished in Peacock Blue with electric sunroof, Chrome radiator grille and 19 inch alloys. Parchment interior with French Navy secondary hide, two tone steering wheel, picnic tables and Bentley badges to the waist rails. Only 58,000 miles, with FSH. Offered at only..... **£34,950**



2005/05 Bentley Continental GT. Finished in Moonbeam Silver with Portland hide interior and Beluga carpets. With Dark Burr Walnut veneers including door and rear quarter inlays. Fitted with massage option to the front seats. Only 66,000 miles with Full Service History. Immaculate throughout..... **£27,750**



2006 Model/55 Bentley Flying Spur. Finished in Silver Tempest with electric sunroof, 20 inch multispoke alloys and complemented with Savannah main hide, Beluga secondary hide and Beluga carpets. Heated and cooling seats front and rear. Just one owner from new and only 63,000 miles with FSH. Immaculate throughout... **£26,250**



2008/58 Bentley Arnage T Mulliner Level II. Finished in Beluga with diamond cut alloys. Soft Black interior with contrasting stitching in White. Piano Black veneers with turned alloy dash and waist rails. Only 41,000 miles with Full Service History. Immaculate condition throughout. Outstanding value..... **£57,950**

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Desirable 'Overdrive' Chassis - Fantastic driving experience with 'Plexiglass' clear roof & slim screen pillars! Strong mechanically & structurally, full set of large & small tools, loads of history; **£95,000**



1935 20/25 Park Ward Four Door Saloon
Very unusual, quirky, individual, and unspoilt with original Buttoned 'Moroccan Fawn' leather and many other lovely features; **£32,500**
Choice of about ten 20hp, 20/25 & 25/30's



1959 Silver Cloud I
Superb 49,000 mile car, Sand & Sable, lovely original Beige Leather. Very sound throughout, Drives just as it should, hard to believe it's 59 years old! **£62,500**
Also 1961 SCII and 1963 SCIII S/Saloons
Both in top condition.



1963 Bentley S3 FHC Mulliner Continental
Rare, striking and very desirable one of just eleven built to this design. Lovely Beige leather piped Green & original Triplex Roof panel. One family last 23 years, loads of history; **£250,000**



1962 LHD Silver Cloud II DHC by HJ Mulliner
Concours standard 'nut & bolt' restoration from the ground up. Superb finish in Silver Sand, Cream Leather & Tan Hood. Underside just as smart as the top! **£325,000**
LHD Dawn & S1 Due In



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SPECIAL BENTLEY COMPETES AT GOODWOOD

Vintage Bentley specialist William Medcalf took to the wheel of a Pacey-Hassan model at this year's Goodwood Members' Meeting back in March, competing on behalf of owner Andreas Pohl in the Bolster Cup race. Although used to racing Bentleys of the 1920s and '30s all over the world, this was the first time Medcalf had competed at the Members' Meeting – finishing in a worthy seventh position with a time of 21:53.854 and an average speed of 78.91mph.

Wally Hassan was arguably the greatest Bentley mechanic of his generation, and was retained to work directly for Woolf Barnato on his personal cars after the company was sold in 1932. And it was Barnato who decided to build an 8 Litre Bentley Brooklands outer circuit single seater (later to be known as the Barnato-Hassan), its main purpose being to take the outright record at Brooklands. Bill Pacey then approached Barnato and asked if Hassan could build him a 4½ litre version.

As a result the Pacey-Hassan was born, but with one unique design feature only later admitted by Hassan: when he built the engine, he fitted several compression plates to the block. Hassan would pull the engine down to make



sure everything was at its best, and when he reassembled he would forget to fit all of the compression plates. The handicappers were astonished that the car remained so competitive for so long.

Eventually, when all the compression plates were exhausted and the car was no longer competitive in that form, Hassan moved on to supercharging the engine for the 1937 season – with the Pacey-Hassan achieving an ultimate lap of 129.03.

The car is now looked after by the team at William Medcalf Vintage

Bentley, where the Pacey is reported to produce over 230bhp. It was recently seen at the Brooklands Double Twelve event (where original Brooklands cars were reunited) and was also run up the hill at the 2017 Goodwood Festival of Speed.

William Medcalf commented: "To race a car as special as this for the first time on a circuit as evocative and historic as Goodwood is an immense privilege and also a challenge. Looking after the car for its owner is a pleasure – and to race it on his behalf is a true honour."

ROAD TRIP TO THE FRENCH ALPS

HR Owen dealership Rolls-Royce Motor Cars London recently completed a one-day luxury road trip to the French Alps ski resort of Courchevel. Staff from the showroom set off from Mayfair early one morning to take on the 700-mile drive, managing it in just 13 hours behind the wheel of a Rolls-Royce Dawn Black Badge.

The dealership then went on to host the ultimate après-ski event in the company of the latest Rolls-Royces. The dealership invited VIP guests to the five-star Le Lana hotel for an evening of champagne, canapés and conversation, with the new Phantom taking centre stage to complement the Ghost, Wraith and Dawn that were also on display.

Claus Andersen, Rolls-Royce brand director, said: "The new Phantom was a massive hit with our VIPs, who thoroughly enjoyed being part of the most elegant of après-ski events. We're already looking forward to taking on another road trip and bringing the unique taste of Rolls-Royce back to the region."



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CROWD PLEASERS

The Classic Car & Restoration Show held at Birmingham's NEC back in March attracted a wide range of different marques – but still with plenty to please the Rolls-Royce and Bentley fan. Paul Guinness checks out some of his favourite exhibits



Left: Owned by RREC member David Cooper is this late-model Silver Spur of 1996 vintage, originally ordered by the Saudi Royal Family for use during their visits to the UK. Bespoke extras fitted to the car when new include Birds Eye Maple veneer for the dashboard and door cappings, a cocktail cabinet, on-board fridge and even silk curtains in the rear.



Above: This is surely the ultimate in opulent fixtures and fittings? The ex-Saudi Royal Family's unique Silver Spur features a gold-plated Spirit of Ecstasy, as well as gold-plated badges and door handles. No wonder it proved to be such a show-stopper at the NEC.

Right: This 1969 Silver Shadow MPW two-door looked superb on the RREC stand, having won the Douglas Wood Trophy for best personal restoration at the club's 2017 Annual Rally and Concours d'Elegance. Proud owner Rod Golightly inherited the car from his late father in 2011 and has since carried out a process of refurbishment.



Above: In the Classic Car Auctions sale held during the weekend of the show, this eye-catching Silver Shadow MPW two-door sold for £26,250. Originally owned by music producer Mickey Most, this 87,000-mile car is finished in Bahama Yellow. According to the auction house, the 1969 Rolls-Royce was running well and was ready 'for its next extrovert owner'.





This 1976 Silver Shadow I failed to reach its reserve at the NEC, and was made available afterwards at just shy of £15,700. With only 41,000 miles under its wheels, this Regency Bronze example looked extremely well-preserved and came with an impressive history.



Above: This 1924 Silver Ghost with Hooper open tourer coachwork could be found on the stand of the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs, where it certainly drew the crowds. This glorious survivor is currently for sale via Rolls-Royce specialist P&A Wood and carries an asking price of £600,000.



Left: Also offered at auction during the NEC show was this 1934 Rolls-Royce 20/25, described as 'the perfect candidate to restore' by Classic Car Auctions. In sound condition and having already been restored many years ago, this 20/25 showed plenty of promise – and was ideal for the hands-on enthusiast. Sadly though, it failed to sell at the show and was subsequently offered for sale by the auction house at £18,000.



Regular readers might recognise this as our front cover star from Issue 2. Peter Gunn's 1952 Bentley R-Type is one of just two cars in Britain featuring the 'Empress' body style created by coachbuilder Freestone & Webb. This very car was displayed on the Freestone & Webb stand at the Earl's Court Motor Show when new, and it remains in remarkably original condition to this day.



A fitting exhibit at the Classic Car & Restoration Show was this 1948 Bentley MkVI, currently owned by Eric Healey but originally one of 31 similar cars exported to Belgium when new. It's thought that this Bentley has been unused since the late 1960s, hence its low indicated mileage of just 47,000. As you can tell at a glance, the restoration process has yet to begin...



Providing proof that even a fairly prestigious event can still provide an auction bargain was this 1989 Silver Spirit, a car that had been with the same owner for the last 15 years and had covered just 67,000 miles from new. It came with a huge wad of paperwork and invoices (with £14,000 spent on bodywork alone over the years), and yet the car changed hands at the NEC for a reasonable sounding £7917.



WINNING ITS SPURS

Even in the dying days of the coachbuilder's art, the great names could still turn out highly distinctive and very desirable cars. We look at a rare fusion of Rolls-Royce and Bentley history – and a remarkably original survivor

WORDS: JACK GROVER PHOTOGRAPHY: MATT WOODS

When you hear the name Flying Spur, what comes to mind? Perhaps it's the four-door saloon variant of the 21st century Bentley Continental GT, which is still very much a current model. Or if your knowledge of the Bentley marque goes further back, you'll probably recall the distinctive four-door sports saloon versions of the Bentley S-type Continentals built between 1957 and '65. Either way, it's a name most closely associated with Bentley.

So why is it that this page is graced by a portrait of what is very clearly a

1960s Flying Spur, but featuring the Grecian Temple radiator grille and Spirit of Ecstasy bonnet mascot of a Rolls-Royce? It's a fascinating story that requires the drawing together of several threads of history.

Let us start, in the time-honoured coachbuilder's tradition, with the chassis: that of the Silver Cloud, the 1955-on model that replaced the Silver Dawn and brought with it a fresh, modern style. The Cloud was still designed and built to familiar principles, of course, and was built around a separate chassis (the last Rolls-Royce to be designed as such). But

the chassis was an entirely new design, with box sections rather than U-section channels, greatly increasing the rigidity of the frame (by 50 per cent) with only a negligible increase in weight. This in turn allowed the suspension to be softened for a noticeable improvement in ride quality and refinement.

Gone was the comprehensive automatic chassis lubrication system of previous Rolls-Royces, but in came a Z-link locating the rear axle to improve roadholding and reduce vibration. The steering was also lighter and lower-g geared – a sop to the fact that



increasing numbers of Rolls-Royce customers were now driving themselves in their cars. And the same thinking was behind the greatly-improved brakes, with hydraulic actuation front and rear, plus 30 per cent more braking surface area than the Silver Dawn. It did retain the distinctive transmission-driven mechanical brake servo unit, but this was re-gearred to provide lighter and more immediate brake action.

The front suspension was also redesigned for the Silver Cloud, with unequal-length twin wishbones to reduce the big car's turning circle. For the first time in Rolls-Royce history there were no minor control levers on the steering wheel hub – everything was now automatic in action or controlled by dash-mounted electrical switches. Under the bonnet remained the familiar 4.9-litre straight six, but with a six-port head and a new inlet manifold for improved efficiency and breathing.

At the time of its introduction, the relatively minor mechanical improvements of the Silver Cloud were completely overlooked in favour of the striking new 'Standard Steel' bodywork provided by Rolls-Royce's chief body design engineer, John Blatchley. Aside

from the traditional upright grille, the new bodies (provided in the metal by Pressed Steel but trimmed, finished and fitted at Crewe) were strikingly modern, with raked windscreens, higher waistlines and flowing wings that stretched virtually unbroken from nose to tail in a very Rolls-Royce take on the 'pontoon' style.

As far as the Bentley marque was concerned, the new S-type was little more than a Silver Cloud with a different grille, although this did require a subtly altered bonnet pressing. As established on the R-type, there was also a more powerful Continental version of the S-type, with a tuned engine, lower-profile tyres and a selection of streamlined two-door coupe and cabriolet bodies.

MODEL EVOLUTION

The Silver Cloud was warmly received, especially in North America where Rolls-Royce deliveries doubled in the year following its introduction. Ever-watchful of competition in this crucial market, however, Rolls-Royce decided to replace its traditional six-cylinder engine with a larger V8 incorporating

the latest engineering features. This 6.2-litre unit was ready for 1959, leading to the launch of the Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud II and Bentley S2. Beyond the new engine there was little change other than a higher final drive ratio that, in combination with the more powerful engine, gave the cars a significant improvement in both acceleration and top speed.

Three years later came a round of updates, which created the Silver Cloud III and Bentley S3, bringing us neatly to the chassis underpinning the car you see here. The stand-out styling change was the bold decision to fit quad headlamps – a very modern feature that was superbly integrated into the car's otherwise unaltered traditional lines. The radiator shell was »



FEATURE VEHICLE SILVER CLOUD III FLYING SPUR



also lowered by 1.5 inches, a subtle change that helped to give the car a sleeker, more streamlined look as well as improving visibility over the bonnet.

As standard, the Silver Cloud III's front seats were individual rather than a bench – another sign of a more driver-orientated outlook in the design department. The same could be said for the fitment of variable-assistance power steering to ease the effort required when parking, whilst retaining 'feel' and stability at high cruising speeds – the latter made easier by the raising of the engine's compression ratio (now that 100-octane petrol was widely available) and the fitting of larger carburettors. A new General Motors-sourced four-speed automatic transmission also transformed the car's cruising manners. At the same time the Continental models lost their uprated engines, instead having only an even higher final drive ratio made possible by the lighter bodywork.

The new Silver Cloud III continued to draw high praise, particularly in terms of its aesthetics. So handsome in standard 'off the peg' form was this latest model,

“From 1963, Silver Cloud III customers were offered the Mulliner Park Ward four-door sports saloon ‘Flying Spur-type’ bodywork”

many commentators suggested John Blatchley's team should shoulder some of the responsibility for the decline of the coachbuilding industry. But, of course, there were always those for whom the whole point of a Rolls-Royce was to have something bespoke... which brings us to the subject of bodywork.

SPECIAL OPTIONS

The Bentley S-type Continentals were, like the R-type that came before, intended as sporting grand tourers, hence their streamlined two-door bodywork made from aluminium rather than steel. They were, however, built on the same chassis as the standard saloon models, and thus had virtually the same space for passengers in the front and rear, although access to the latter was more awkward due to

the lack of rear doors and the sloping roofline. There were also a number of customers who wanted the performance enhancements of the Continental but in a saloon, be it for reasons of practicality, prestige or because they themselves rarely spent time behind the wheel.

Rolls-Royce initially rejected proposals for a four-door Continental but in 1957 permitted H.J. Mulliner to produce a four-door sports saloon on the Continental chassis. The coachbuilder's chief designer, Herbert Nye, redrew his Pattern 7401 design for the S-type (a six-light, four-door saloon) with more flowing and rakish lines to become Pattern 7443, which also had the same roof height as the Continental to give it similarly sleek, low-slung proportions. Crucially, like the two-door models, the new four-door was built from aluminium alloy panels on a lightweight steel frame,

Both inside and out, this late-model example of the 'Flying Spur' Rolls-Royce is almost entirely original – and is still in impeccable condition



giving it the same spirited performance.

The first Continental sports saloon was built in May 1957 and deliveries to customers began just two months later. Mulliner called their creation the Flying Spur – a superbly evocative name that was derived from Scottish heraldry. The symbol of the Johnstone clan is a winged silver spur, and Harry Talbot Johnstone was managing director of Mulliner from 1944 until 1960. In fact, he had a custom bonnet mascot in the form of a winged spur fitted to the first Bentley with the new sports saloon bodywork, which was later removed and mounted on a

base to become an office ornament.

Rolls-Royce, keen to protect the exclusivity of the Continental name, was originally strict that the four-door cars were to be referred to only as the Bentley Flying Spur, though by the time the S2 models were introduced Mulliner was referring to them as Flying Spur Continentals. By then Mulliner was also offering a four-light version of the Flying Spur (without rear quarter-lights) and a six-light version with smaller rear quarter-lights.

Now that Rolls-Royce had relented, other coachbuilders soon began

offering four-door sports saloons on the Continental chassis. James Young and Hooper both built such cars, which are often now referred to as Flying Spurs despite that name being created specifically for the Mulliner bodies. However, even in period they were sometimes marketed as 'Flying Spur-type' bodies, such was the allure of the name.

MULLINER MERGER

The same went for the 54 four-door Mulliner saloons built on the Silver »

FEATURE VEHICLE

SILVER CLOUD III FLYING SPUR



Of the 54 'Flying Spurs' based around the Silver Cloud III, 52 were of the same six-light bodywork design as this stunning example

Cloud III chassis from 1963 to '65. Rolls-Royce had purchased Mulliner in 1959, and two years later merged it with the Park Ward firm that it had owned since 1939 to form what was usually known simply as Mulliner Park Ward. At this point Rolls-Royce registered the Flying Spur name as a trademark under its own control. At the same time, the works at Chiswick – where Mulliner had been based since 1906 – were closed, with all coachbuilding now carried out at the Park Ward works in Willesden.

With the main producer of both Continental and Flying Spur bodywork now in-house, and with the standard and Continental models now being (essentially) mechanically identical, Rolls-Royce decided to open up the range of bodies it would sanction on the Cloud chassis. From 1963, Silver Cloud III customers were also offered the Mulliner Park Ward four-door sports saloon 'Flying Spur-type' bodywork – the name still being officially reserved for Bentleys. Of the 54 built, 52 (including this car) were six-light saloons, with one four-light and one 'small quarter-light' example completing the total.

That brings us to EYT 90C, one of the very last Flying Spur-bodied Silver Cloud IIIs, with its invoice being dispatched from Crewe on the May 11, 1965. The car itself left the works on July 6 that year, to be delivered to a Mr Reginald J MacRoberts at his business premises in Purley, Surrey. Exactly what line of business Mr MacRoberts was in is no longer known, but it was clearly lucrative as even a standard Silver Cloud III cost over £5500 in 1965 – and one with Flying Spur bodywork would be in the region of £8000. To put that into perspective, it was four times the cost of a Rover 3-Litre, and sufficient to buy 15 examples of the newly-launched Hillman Imp Deluxe.

The amount of paperwork that has survived with this bespoke machine is, if anything, more impressive than its actual condition. The original build sheet (where Mr MacRoberts laid out his own specification for the car) and the invoice are present, as is the original Rolls-Royce guarantee certificate complete with its cardboard tube and a stamped envelope bearing the Crewe address should (horror!) the owner need to make a claim.

The guarantee for the radio is also there, as is the original owner's handbook and the completed checklist from the car's final inspection before it left the factory. Not only is all this paperwork still with the Flying Spur, but it comes in the original buff envelope that would have been handed over with the car and which has its contents printed on the face. The original tool kit is intact, complete and seems virtually unused.

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

The invoice also shows that Mr MacRoberts lavished a fair amount of optional equipment on his Flying Spur. Interestingly the build sheet lists the body as coming from Park Ward, with no mention of Mulliner, but this must have simply been the habit of Rolls-Royce and perhaps in reference to the body being built at the traditional Park Ward works at Willesden; despite the body style having its own MPW design number by 1965 (number 2042), it is a Mulliner Flying Spur through and through. The original buyer specified a leather headlining in the same grey



leather as the seats and door trims, at an extra cost of £63 8s 9d. A further £180 secured power-operated windows on all four doors, while £36 5s purchased an electric aerial – which, for some reason, cost more than the set of lambswool floor rugs for the rear (£32 9s 6d). Other equipment included a badge bar (£9 1s 3d) and a lighting pack that featured reversing lights and side indicator repeaters.

The Astral Blue car has had a total of four owners, which includes its current custodians, Tudor & Black of Suffolk. John Smith of Tudor & Black told me that as well as all the delivery documents there's also a thick stack of full service history dating back to the early 1990s, plus other invoices and records going back further than that.

Paperwork aside, the incredible thing about this Flying Spur is its state of preservation, with just 88,000 miles covered during the last 53 years. Maintenance has been carried out by the calendar rather than the odometer (and to a very high standard), making it a very special example of a real rarity. Indeed, this impressively original and »



“Paperwork aside, the incredible thing about this Flying Spur is its state of preservation, with just 88,000 miles covered”

unmolested Silver Cloud III Flying Spur not only looks as fresh as it did in 1965, but smells and feels it too.

“We’ve handled about a dozen Flying Spur Silver Clouds over the years,” says John, “which given that they only made 54 is a fair proportion of the total. And this one is by far the best we’ve ever come across.”

At Tudor & Black, the Flying Spur has received some mild restorative work on areas where the aluminium alloy body panels contact the steel body frame and electrolytic corrosion had set in (the rear wing stays were the most significant area). That aside, however, it has simply been maintained and serviced to the same standards it enjoyed throughout its earlier years. “You can tell this is a car that has been continuously pampered,” John told me. “It has clearly never been

kept outside and has probably never even been in a garage with so much as a trace of damp. That’s why all the leather and the carpets still smell like new.”

I asked John if he could define how that fastidious care affected the driving experience. He said: “It’s hard to pin down, but it’s noticeable how incredibly smooth, yet precise, everything is. For instance, these cars still have the mechanical brake servo system, which works brilliantly when it’s set up correctly. If it hasn’t been set up to factory standards, or the mechanism starts to wear, you notice it because the brakes aren’t quite as progressive or as powerful as they should be. This one’s absolutely spot on – you can apply a lot of braking power very smoothly if you need to, which is how it should be. The same goes for the gearbox.

When they start to age and all the parts get a few thou of wear, they can become slightly slow or slightly jerky. This one’s perfectly smooth in all situations and yet still changes gear nice and quickly. It just doesn’t feel like a car that’s over fifty years old.”

Others have also noticed how special this particular Flying Spur is, explained John: “We took it to the Concours d’Elegance at the Warren Classic and Supercar Show last year, where it won ‘Best in Class’ – which for an unrestored car was a remarkable achievement. There were fully restored and detailed cars there that were much prettier, but this car’s all about the combination of originality and near-perfect condition. ‘Unique’ is a very overused term in the classic car world but I think I’d be right to use it here.” ■



THANK YOU

The Silver Cloud III Flying Spur featured in the photographs is currently for sale with an asking price of £295,500. For further information, call Suffolk-based Tudor & Black on 01502 675105 or go online to www.tudorblack.co.uk.



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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



PROLIFIC PHOTOGRAPHER

I have been taking photographs of Rolls Royce cars since 1977. It all started with a few snaps here and there, but now in 2018 I find I have in the region of 20,000. I have attended various RREC events throughout the country, and am a frequent visitor to London where I get to see some amazing Rolls-Royces.

In 1980, the Yorkshire section of the RREC held its first event at Harewood House, and this is now in its 38th year. At the start there

were around 200 vehicles attending, consisting mainly of Silver Shadows, Corniches and the odd Camargue or two. These days the number of cars exceeds a thousand, with enthusiasts travelling from around the world.

Attached are a few photographs that I took at an early Harewood House event, probably in around 1990 or '91. Please feel free to publish any suitable images in the magazine.

Graham Crossley
Via email

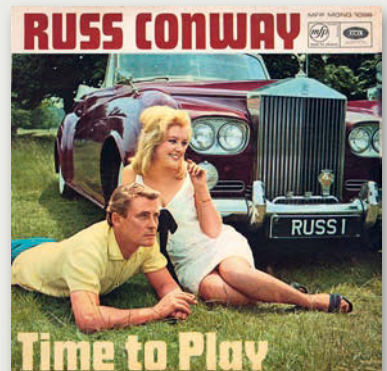
HAPPY READER

Thank you for your publication! I only recently discovered *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, and am thoroughly enjoying the articles and photographs. If I were to create in my mind the perfect magazine for the subject, this would be it.

Only a quick note. Nothing profound, just a very happy reader. Keep up the good work!

Jeff Loria
Via email

We're delighted to hear you're such a fan of the magazine, Jeff. Thanks so much for letting us know – Ed.



RUSS CONWAY MEMORY

I was pleased to read your piece – and enjoy a brief return to the past – regarding Russ Conway ('From the Archives', Issue 4). I was a regular visitor to the Gleneagles Golf Courses during the early 1970s. And although I couldn't afford to stay at the hotel, Mr Conway did – and he drove a silver Mercedes sports with the registration number RUS 1.

I just thought you'd like to know that he did, in fact, have his own personal plate, although obviously without the extra 'S' shown on his record cover. Great magazine, by the way!

Adrian Cowgill
Burnley

ABANDONED SILVER SHADOW

Whilst delivering to a customer in the Midlands area a couple of months ago, I was 'caught short' and so went behind some trees in a field. And that's where, much to my surprise, I came across this poor old Silver Shadow – which looks as though it's just been left to rot. It's such a shame to see a classic Rolls-Royce like this being reclaimed by nature.

Steve Chadwick
Via email

What a sad sight, Steve. Many thanks for emailing us the photographs. If any other readers have snaps of neglected Rolls-Royces or Bentleys that they've found on their travels, be sure to get in touch – Ed.



FACEBOOK FEEDBACK

Have you found our Facebook page yet? Simply log on to Facebook, search for 'Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver' and you'll find us there – now with well over 900 followers.

Among our recent discussions, we asked readers what they thought of the idea of Rolls-Royce launching an SUV – badged as the Cullinan – later this year. They said:

"Not for me, I'm afraid"
– Allen Walker

"It may be Rolls-Royce's first 'official' SUV but it's not necessarily the first Rolls-Royce SUV. In response to those who are not fans of the idea, I would say take into consideration the various estates and shooting brakes (as well as armoured cars) built on their chassis in the past. Not too much of a stretch in my opinion"
– Charlie Reaser

"Quite sturdy automobiles forever... time to make an official SUV" – Steve Natale

"Interesting, but I don't see the point of a Rolls Royce SUV. They need to stick to what they are known for, which is fine automobiles, instead of following everyone else in the SUV trend. What's next... a Rolls Royce pick-up truck? Such a utilitarian-type vehicle sort of besmirches the brand. The majority of Rolls-Royce customers will no doubt select the iconic sedan or coupe first, then something else as an SUV for hauling groceries or the kiddies around in" – Bill Smillie



CONTINENTAL GT FAN

Having an interest in these cars, I purchased a 2004 Bentley Continental GT – albeit one with a noise coming from its timing chains. I have the equipment to take out this huge engine and gearbox, and to remove the parts necessary to allow me access to the timing chain area. But could your magazine do a section on timing chain adjuster replacement, and the re-timing once the new adjusters are fitted?



The 2003-on Continental GT is now becoming a wish-list classic, but I'm getting no help in finding the technical information I need.

David Walker
Via email

The Continental GT is certainly a tempting modern classic, David – hence this issue's buyers' guide to the first-generation model. The type of feature you suggest is a little too specialised for us, as our technical articles are designed to appeal to a wider audience. I'd suggest contacting an independent specialist like Stewart Walker (www.stewartwalkerltd.co.uk) or RR&B Garages (www.rrbgarages.com) for more specific advice – Ed.

BOOK REVIEWS

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

THE ESSENTIAL BUYER'S GUIDE: ROLLS-ROYCE SILVER SHADOW/ BENTLEY T-SERIES

Author: Malcolm Bobbitt

Publisher: Veloce Publishing (www.veloce.co.uk)

ISBN No.: 978-1-84584-146-1

Price: £12.99

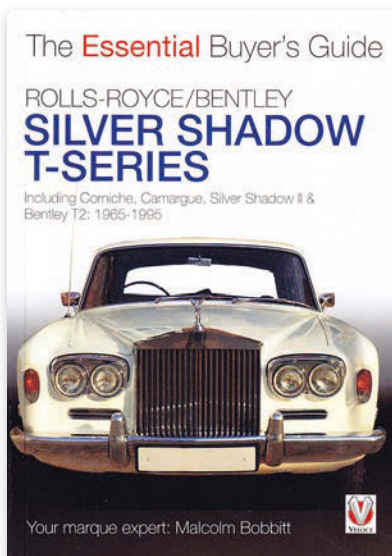
Joining Veloce's successful Essential Buyer's Guides series is this title dedicated to the most successful Rolls-Royce of all time, as well as its Bentley and Corniche derivatives and the rather more controversial Camargue. The idea behind these books is simple, offering no-nonsense advice to would-be buyers for around the £13 mark.

Each book is small enough to fit in your glovebox when you're out and about inspecting cars for sale, yet packed with enough information to ensure even the most inexperienced buyers don't get sold a pup.

Following the same layout as the rest of the series, this book gives details of what the Silver Shadow family is like to live with, as well as information on running costs and checking whether a Silver Shadow is the right car for you. Then you're straight into the serious, practical advice – summed up by such chapter headings as Fifteen Minute Evaluation, Key Points, Do You Really Want to Restore? and Problems Due to Lack of Use.

Like the other Essential Buyer's Guides, the information contained in this title is presented in an easy-to-follow style, getting straight to the point and providing the reader with expert opinions and sensible advice. It's a refreshingly jargon-free read, neatly written and packed with important information and enough facts and figures for any buyer.

There's a wide range of these guides now available from Veloce (check out its website for the full list). For anybody in the market for any of the cars featured, we think they offer excellent value for money.



BENTLEY 4½ LITRE OWNERS' WORKSHOP MANUAL

Authors: Andy Brown & Ian Wagstaff

Publisher: Haynes Publishing (www.haynes.co.uk)

ISBN No.: 978-1-78521-070-9

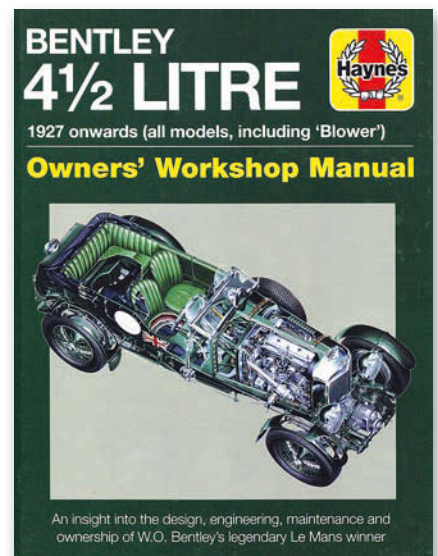
Price: £22.99

Although the front cover of this latest Bentley title follows the traditional Haynes Workshop Manual style, the 164 pages within are a very different proposition. Where previous manuals would appeal only to owners of the car in question thanks to the detailed step-by-step approach they took, this one has a much broader brief – giving it plenty

of appeal to anyone with an interest in pre-war Bentleys, even if they're unlikely ever to be able to afford one.

There is technical information included, of course, with a major section of the manual being titled Anatomy of the Bentley 4½ Litre, in which racing car engineer Andy Brown details the specification of all versions, including the supercharged Blower Bentley. Each aspect of the car is covered, from the engine and chassis through to its electrical and ignition systems, steering, suspension, brakes and more. It's a very effective overview of what makes the pre-war racing Bentley such a successful machine in terms of its mechanical make-up.

Elsewhere within this hardback manual you can read about some of the famous owners of the Bentley 4½ Litre (including Frank Clement, Tim Birkin and Sammy Davis), as well as the expert opinions of specialists like Neil Davis and William Medcalf. Almost a quarter of the book, meanwhile, is given over to the entire history of the 4½ Litre, majoring on its famous winning ways at Le Mans and its astonishing achievements in endurance events around the world. So much more than just a workshop manual, this is a must-read choice for any vintage Bentley fan.



INSIDE THE ROLLS-ROYCE & BENTLEY STYLING DEPARTMENT 1971-2001

Author: Graham Hull

Publisher: Veloce Publishing (www.veloce.co.uk)

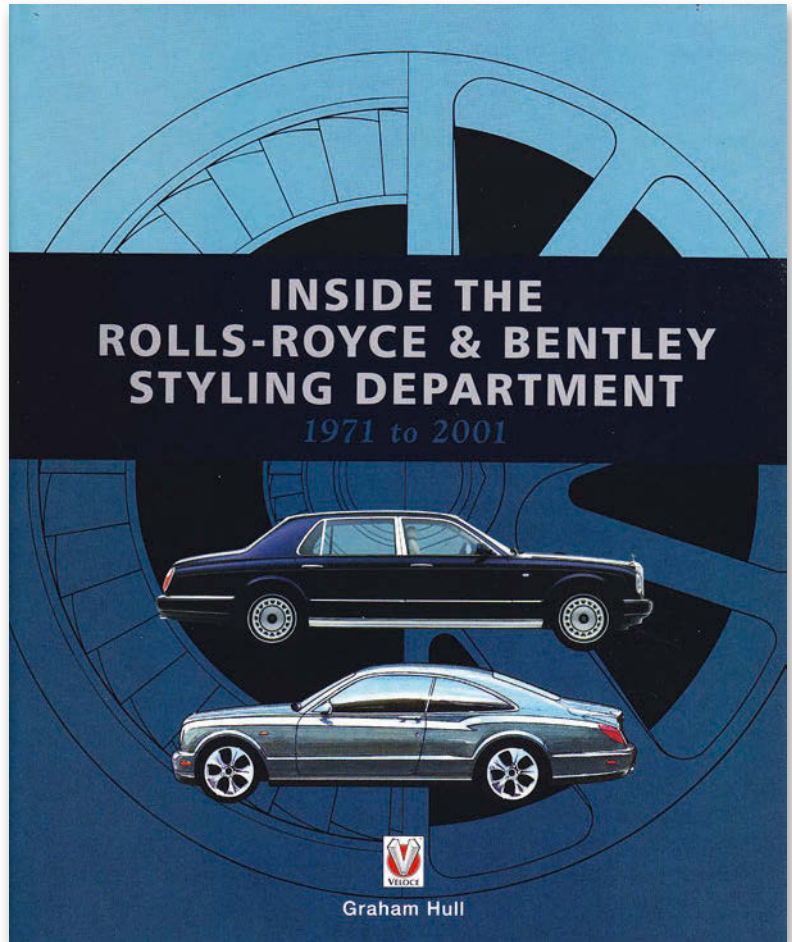
ISBN No.: 978-1-845846-01-5

Price: £35.00

We're always intrigued by stories written by former Crewe workers, hence our interest in this hefty hardback written by the man who started out as an apprentice designer at Rolls-Royce and ended up as the company's chief stylist. It charts the personal progress of Graham Hull and the company he worked for over a thirty-year period. But more importantly it provides an insight into some of the fascinating design proposals, particularly from the 1980s onwards – when the potential of Bentley finally began to be realised after many years of neglect.

'When the curtain finally fell on SY in 1979, barely three per cent of production had been Bentley,' explains the author. The attitude was that Bentley 'was an irrelevance, and continued to be so up to the SZ's launch in 1980'. The '80s saw the resurgence of Bentley via iconic models like the Turbo R, and it's fascinating to read how attitudes gradually changed towards the marque, leading Rolls-Royce to investigate how to make the most of Bentley individualism during that decade and beyond.

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



of the Silver Seraph and Arnage is covered in depth, and again the recollections are detailed and captivating. It's a highly recommended title for anyone who enjoys reading about the company – and the people – behind the cars.

ROLLS-ROYCE ARMOURED CAR OWNERS' WORKSHOP MANUAL

Authors: David Fletcher MBE

Publisher: Haynes Publishing (www.haynes.co.uk)

ISBN No.: 978-1-78521-058-7

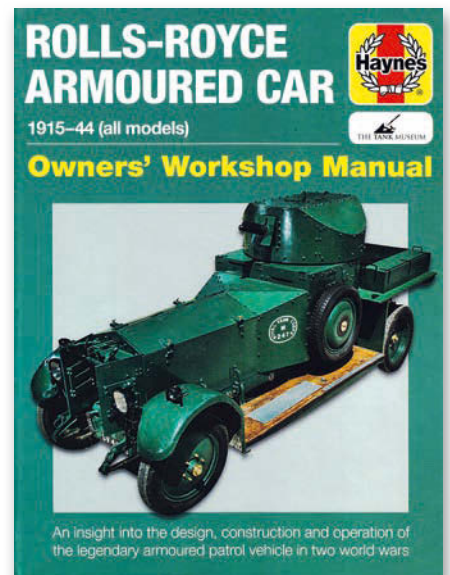
Price: £22.99

Following a similar format to the Bentley 4½ Litre title also featured in this issue, this 156-page hardback is dedicated to the highly capable Rolls-Royce armoured cars of 1915-44. And for anyone with an interest in military history or the role of Rolls-Royce in both World Wars, it's a genuinely insightful read.

The early turreted models were particularly effective, with the author explaining that 'an estimated 89 turreted Rolls-Royce armoured cars were built, the chassis being

either newly built or withdrawn from dealers'. Most of those cars were divided between seven squadrons of the Royal Naval Armoured Car Division, with the remaining examples thought to have 'been retained as spares or for experimental purposes'.

The book provides a detailed analysis of the anatomy of the Rolls-Royce armoured car, explaining the many changes that were undertaken during its career, right through to the final incarnation's role in North Africa during the Second World War.





• THE TIME TO BUY •

BENTLEY CONTINENTAL GT

With the earliest cars now temptingly affordable, the first all-new Bentley of the Volkswagen era might just be the perfect modern-classic choice for fans of the marque. We reveal what to look for when considering a first-generation Continental GT

WORDS: JACK GROVER PHOTOGRAPHY: BENTLEY MOTORS



As the first Bentley to be designed and launched under the ownership of Volkswagen, the Continental GT was also the first model since 1939 not to share its chassis with a Rolls-Royce. And yet the newcomer was far from bespoke, sitting instead on a corporate platform shared with VW's flagship Phaeton saloon, incorporating the latter's four-corner self-levelling air suspension. The Continental GT even used the Phaeton's unusual W12 engine (albeit with the addition of twin turbochargers) as well as the big VW's four-wheel drive system. This was, in nearly every way, a new sort of Bentley.

It was a move that would reap rewards, however, with Crewe under VW ownership achieving record-breaking Bentley production volumes. By sharing much of its engineering with the Phaeton, the Continental could incorporate mass-produced parts while still being assembled, trimmed and finished by hand to the kind of standards that Bentley fans expected. For manufacturer and buyers alike, it was perhaps a win-win situation, although many marque enthusiasts were initially cautious; could Bentley be completely reinvented whilst still remaining true to its character and heritage?

Initial reviews were also edged with caution. The new GT had sharper dynamics than any previous Bentley, and was a much more driver-focused car than even the likes of the old Turbo R. For all the air suspension and standard-fit continuously-adjusting dampers, the ride was not as cossetting as you might expect from a Bentley, while for a car with sporting pretensions the steering felt numb and the four-wheel drive system made the GT feel almost too composed and remote. There was no denying, however, that the newcomer was devastatingly fast, with outright performance that was truly in the Bentley tradition. »



Even in standard guise, a Continental GT is a fast and highly capable machine

With the 6.0-litre W12 mustering 552bhp, the Continental GT could sprint to 60mph in just 4.8 seconds before going on to a top speed of 198mph. And that trick suspension and four-wheel drive system meant that this big, heavy car (tipping the scales at nearly 2.5 tonnes) could take corners with remarkable alacrity. The quality of the materials, finish and build – both inside and out – also impressed. But there were still some critics who felt that this smaller, more efficient and cheaper Bentley (at just over £100,000, the Continental GT cost around half as much as the outgoing Continental R) had lost some of the character, panache and exclusivity of the breed.

Fortunately for Bentley, there were plenty of buyers who thought differently. A combination of that lower asking price and more modern image meant that for every Bentley traditionalist unconvinced by the new car, there were probably ten other people who were now considering a Bentley for the first time ever – and that meant huge sales potential for the GT. The old Mulsanne-based Continental R had sold only around

“The new GT had sharper dynamics than any previous Bentley, and was a much more driver-focused car than even the old Turbo R”

250 examples a year, while the GT went on to average around 4000 cars per annum during its lengthy production run. Indeed, this handsome, new-generation model was set to become the most successful Bentley of all time.

THE RANGE DEVELOPS

Despite recurring criticism from the press that the GT, for all its exquisite interior appointments, long-legged cruising ability and adjustable-rate air springing, was too tightly wound, VW-owned Bentley knew that its latest buyers didn't necessarily want a 'softer' model. In fact, what they wanted was more luxury, more performance and more hard-edged cornering ability. And it was the luxury angle that was delivered in 2004 with the addition of the Mulliner Driving Specification, which – despite its name – was

an entirely cosmetic package that added bespoke wheels, two-tone leather and veneer combinations, drilled alloy pedals, quilted door and dashboard facings, and optional piano-black dashboard veneer.

The 2008 model year brought a minor facelift for the Continental GT, which included lighter aluminium suspension components that produced a minor improvement in ride quality, while new multi-mode variable-assistance steering injected some extra 'feel' at the wheel without sacrificing refinement. Big news, however, was the arrival of the GT Speed, with an engine tuned to 602bhp and with a lower standard ride height, more powerful dampers and stronger anti-roll bars, as well as unique wheels and tyres, a bespoke steering set-up, stiffer suspension bushes and other performance-related enhancements.



For those who craved even more, the GT Supersports then came along in 2009, heralded as the most powerful, fastest and most capable Bentley road car yet. With 630bhp on tap, the Supersports could crack 204mph, hitting 100mph from a standstill in 8.9 seconds. More suspension and chassis upgrades, plus a unique four-wheel drive system with a rear drive bias, meant that the Supersports also offered phenomenal cornering ability and could pull 1.2g lateral force on a skid pad (against the standard GT's already impressive 0.98g). The Supersports also featured carbon-ceramic brakes and boasted a significant weight saving over the ordinary GT, aided by its lack of rear seats.

By that stage in the Continental GT's career, the shock of the new had worn off, while the improvements made to the standard car since 2003 had answered many of the original criticisms. A second-generation Continental GT range was then launched in early 2011 (having made its motor show debut the previous year), this time bringing the option of a 4.0-litre V8 in addition to the big W12, with this latest range spawning its own family of Speed, S and Le Mans editions.

It is, however, only the first-generation models that we're looking at here, with the convertible version – the GTC – also saved for a future issue. And it's easy to see the appeal of that inaugural Continental GT, particularly given today's asking prices; cars that had a price tag of »

EXPERT ADVICE

We spoke to Matt Smith of RR&B Garages (tel: 01527 876513 / www.rrbgarages.com), a company that has specialised in the Continental GT and related models since 2004. Matt was adamant that, when it came to a GT, its price, specification, cosmetic condition, age and mileage are unimportant compared with its service history: "You need to see a full service history from a main dealer or a reputable specialist, with a full set of stamps and invoices to match. Any less than that is asking for trouble, and it's not worth it for the money or the difficulty it will cause. There are plenty of cars out there with a proper history and you should always go for one of those."

Matt has seen plenty of cars that have suffered thanks to lack of maintenance: "You can have an early car from, say, 2004, with maybe less than 50,000 miles on it and a couple of gaps in the service record, priced maybe £5000 below the average. That seems like it would at least be worth looking at, but it isn't. Don't touch it – these cars really don't like being sat. Things deteriorate or the electronics get faults which can cost so much to put right. We had someone bring an early GT in to us that was cosmetically perfect inside and out, and it drove nicely enough,

but the dashboard was lit up like a Christmas tree with errors and warning lights. We ran a diagnostic check and the full list of faults was incredible – it cost £8000 to put right, which was way more than he had 'saved' by buying a car without a decent history. And that will happen every time, I assure you. The cars are fundamentally very reliable but they need to be maintained to the proper standards."

The Continental GT isn't a cheap car to maintain, but Matt explained to us that such maintenance is crucial: "The running costs don't depreciate with the value of the car, so it's still £2500 for a service. People need to be aware of this when buying one. Do your homework and make sure none of this will come as a surprise – because when it does is when you get people deciding to skip services or just have the fluids and filters changed. Do that and you're not only storing up big problems for the future, but the moment you miss a stamp in the book you're knocking value off your car."

Matt's final advice was: "Always get an inspection and full report on any car you're considering buying. And if the seller won't let a specialist inspect the car, then that should ring alarm bells."



THE TIME TO BUY BENTLEY CONTINENTAL GT



just over £100,000 when new are now for sale for as little as £15,000, with no shortage of contenders in the £20,000–25,000 price bracket.

BEHIND THE WHEEL

There is no forgetting the size of the Continental GT when driving it. At 15.75 feet in length and (especially) 6.3 feet in width, this is not a car for threading down narrow streets or lanes. The raked windscreen pillars and sculpted haunches of the coupe mean that there are blind spots on the rear quarters, while the GT's aerodynamic shape and low-set driving position make the extremities of the car hard to place.

Despite its huge power, the prodigious weight of the Continental affects its performance. Of course, it is still an incredibly quick machine by any measure; but as its name implies, this is a grand tourer rather than a sports car. Moving off the line is done without drama and, even at full throttle, no real kick in the back; what there is instead is relentless acceleration. At any road legal speeds (and considerably beyond), the high and near-constant torque of the big W12 means that the GT gathers

speed very quickly. Overtaking slower traffic feels almost instantaneous, be it from 20mph or 50mph.

The six-speed gearbox is quite content to be left to its own devices and can handle any aspect of on-road driving without even needing to engage its sports mode, let alone use the 'paddles' on the steering wheel. The same goes for the adjustable suspension settings, which provide various ride heights and ride firmness, although the sophistication of the automatic system means there's little reason to change these.

A combination of four-wheel drive, mighty anti-roll bars and a battery of electronic traction control and stability systems means the GT can take twistier sections of roads at speeds that might seem unlikely for a car of its mass and size. In the nature of many grand tourers, it is an astoundingly capable car in such conditions, without being especially involving or rewarding. The flipside of the grand tourer equation, however, is superlative long-distance, high-speed cruising comfort.

On smooth surfaces, the Continental's ride is sublime and the engine can whisk the car along in

hushed refinement at little more than a fast idle. You are sure to reach your destination comfortable and relaxed. You may not reach it particularly flush with cash, however, as even when cruising the GT will consume petrol at the rate of about 20 miles per gallon, which can drop to only 11mpg or so around town... or if you deploy all that power around the countryside.

WHAT COULD GO WRONG?

Time has proven that the Continental GT has few – if any – inherent flaws and that these cars are capable of remaining very reliable over high mileages. But it has also shown that they require regular and expert maintenance, without which they can quickly become riddled with expensive problems. A full service record from either a Bentley dealer or a recognised independent specialist is an absolute must, and you should be immediately suspicious of any gaps or omissions from the car's history, however minor.

Regardless of its state of tune, the engine rarely suffers from mechanical



For a Bentley, the Continental GT was relatively affordable even when new

problems, while the transmission is wholly reliable. Head gasket failure is rare but isn't completely unknown, and is nearly always caused by the failure of a more minor component (such as a fan or hose) or coolant that's no longer effective, again all due to lack of servicing; it can cost nearly as much as the car is worth (around £15,000 and upwards) to change the gaskets, which is an engine-out job.

The turbos are also usually reliable as long as servicing has been carried out at the right intervals and with the correct specification of oil (a Bentley-approved OW-40 fully synthetic). Turbos with worn seals or bearings result in plumes of blue smoke under acceleration, which would naturally be a deal-breaker for any potential buyer. The radiator should be checked for corrosion or missing sections of finning, especially on older cars; this costs over £600 to replace, but if neglected can cause failures that cost many times that.

Electrical and electronic issues are particularly important to watch out for. As with any car that's packed with modern electronics, the GT doesn't like being left standing for long periods,



The interior is finished to a typically Bentley-like standard

which can lead to flat batteries (there are two, one in each pannier compartment in the boot) and various systems losing sync with each other. Bear this in mind when looking at a low-mileage car that has seen only occasional use; and if you're buying

a GT with such use in mind, make sure you invest in a trickle-charge battery conditioner. The coil packs are rather failure-prone, which can be detected by uneven running at idle – although this can also be caused by spark plugs that need changing, a tricky job »

“A full service record from either a Bentley dealer or a recognised independent specialist is an absolute must”



and not particularly cheap at around £180 for a set of twelve plugs. The coil packs aren't a major expense at around £350 per set, but the fact they need replacing should make you worry about what else has been neglected.

Being a heavy, grippy and fast machine, the Continental GT puts a lot of strain on its suspension and other running gear. The air suspension is usually both mechanically and electronically trouble-free, but do be sure that the various adjustable functions (firmness and ride height) work as they should, as this would otherwise require an expensive diagnostic session and probably new sensors or actuators. The anti-roll bar drop link bushes wear relatively quickly (they cost around £50 to replace each side), so listen for knocks or clonks as individual wheels go over bumps.

The GT boasted the largest brakes fitted to a production road car at the time, with 16-inch discs at the front and 14-inchers at the back. Despite this, they have to work hard in slowing a 2.5-tonne car and the discs should be checked for rust, scratching, scoring or other wear. You should also be on the look-out for any symptoms of warped discs, such as vibrations through the pedal – particularly as a stingy previous owner may have balked at the £900 cost of a new set of discs (the carbon-ceramic ones on the Supersports cost an incredible £10,000).

The Continental was one of the earliest cars to be fitted with a fully electronic handbrake, but the actuator module is a known weakness – and when it fails the handbrake will not work. A new one can be sourced for £250 plus fitting costs. Such a car also needs decent tyres, so check that the rubber is in good condition. If the tyre pressure monitoring system doesn't work, the batteries in the sender units in the wheels have probably gone flat; these cost £100 each to replace, plus the cost of removing the wheels and tyres and rebalancing the wheel.

The Continental's interior is one of its finest features, and the high quality of materials and finish means that it stands up to age very well; it even used special UV-filtering window glass to ensure that the soft furnishings didn't degrade. Any defects, damage or wear in the leather or veneer will be expensive to repair to the proper standard. The adjuster motors in the seats can fail with age and these are also pricey to fix.

One vital area to check is the front left-hand footwell, as early Continentals had a problem with a void in the scuttle panel filling with water if the drain became blocked. The water then ran into the footwell and damaged the carpet and trim. More importantly, the void in the scuttle houses a great deal of the wiring loom and a number of ECUs, so putting right any water

damage could cost over £15,000. Any dampness or musty smell in this area, especially if it's teamed with warning lights on the dash or any other electrical gremlins, would be cause to walk away.

WHICH MODEL TO BUY?

With history being paramount, it is hard to recommend a specific model over any other. The Supersports will deliver a uniquely rapid and raw driving experience but at a cost of around £80,000 for a pre-2011 car. The models that are arguably the most tempting (now that they're within budget for many enthusiasts) are the early standard GTs, with plenty of cars currently sitting at between £20,000 and £30,000 with full service histories. They may be 'only' standard but they represent an incredibly capable and special car for a relatively modest outlay.

Many of those GTs will have the Mulliner Driving Specification, which adds some nice cosmetic garnish and does increase the desirability of the car, if not the price. Early Speed models, currently worth between £40,000 and £50,000, will be the most desirable in the years to come, but unless you really want the extra edge to the performance or are buying with an eye for making a return, then the ordinary (and yet far from ordinary) GT would be the one to go for at the moment. ■

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MARKET WATCH



In this regular new section, we take a look at some of the most tempting cars for sale and report on others that have sold – from keenly-priced projects through to ready-to-enjoy classics

RECOMMISSIONING PROJECT

This late-model Silver Shadow II has been dry-stored for the last five years and will therefore require recommissioning before it hits the road again. However, it looks to be a solid and presentable example of its type that may well be worth considering if you're happy to get your hands dirty – and you have somewhere around £7995 to spend.

The vendor reports that in addition

to the usual check-over, this Silver Shadow's brakes require attention (they're described as 'spongy') and there's a blow from the centre section of exhaust. You'll obviously need to budget for these jobs – in addition to basic recommissioning, such a fluid changes and so on – if you're tempted to take the car on. The last MoT certificate (issued in 2012) also shows an advisory for an oil leak at that time.

There are apparently ten original

stamps in the service book, and the current mileage is 108,000. The seller has owned the car for 18 years but is now thinning down his collection, hence the need for a new home for the Silver Shadow. Looking at the photographs, the bodywork and interior seem to be in decent condition, making this an interesting project for the more mechanically minded enthusiast. If you're tempted, the vendor can be contacted on (+44) 07768 716123.



BENTLEY AFFORDABILITY

If this issue's Buyer's Guide (see pages 26-32) has you pondering the prospect of the Bentley Continental GT as the ideal modern-classic choice, marque specialist Stewart Walker might just tempt you with this 2005 example – an 89,000-mile car that's keenly priced at £22,995.

For that you get the all-important full Bentley and specialist service history (with 13 stamps in the book), as well as the advantage of it being a one-owner example. Stewart Walker reckons this impressive Continental 'must be one of the finest early GTs' – and it certainly looks it, given the condition of its original Spruce Green paintwork. If you'd like to know more, go to www.stewartwalkerltd.co.uk or call 01635 866833.



SELLING SIR ELTON'S BENTLEY



Classics that have previously been owned by celebrities usually generate a few headlines when they come to market, with this 1985 Bentley Turbo R being no exception. Recently offered for sale by Classic Car Auctions (www.classiccarauctions.co.uk) at the company's NEC sale in Birmingham, this handsome example was originally bought new by W.A. Bong Ltd, Sir Elton John's own company. With just 64,000 miles recorded, the Turbo R has seen relatively little use and boasts a detailed service history. Finished in Mason Black with Magnolia leather interior, this Bentley has apparently been treated to a partial respray in recent years in order to make it more presentable. It still has its original service book and full documentation, as well as the all-important Watford FC badge on the radiator grille. And what did the winning bidder pay for the novelty of owning Sir Elton's old Bentley? A fair sounding £10,120. If you're this Turbo R's new owner, do get in touch!

EVERYDAY OPULENCE

One of the shortest-lived of all modern-classic Rolls-Royces is the Silver Seraph, which launched in 1998 and lasted just four years during Volkswagen's custodianship of the marque. Only 1570 Silver Seraphs were built in total, making it an exclusive offering – and yet it remains affordable by Rolls-Royce standards, with high-mileage cars in reasonable condition starting in price at around the £25,000 mark.

The example you see here was first registered in March 1999, and during nineteen years of use has covered just 98,000 miles. It's being offered for sale at the time of writing by Royce

Service & Engineering (www.rsandeco.uk), and has an asking price of £34,500. We spotted it during our visit to the company for the last issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, and can confirm that it's an excellent example.

As Royce Service & Engineering explains on its website, the Silver Seraph is becoming increasingly collectable, and yet it remains a totally usable model. Power is supplied by a 5.4-litre BMW-sourced V12 powerplant, making the Silver Seraph the first V12-engined Rolls-Royce to be launched since the Phantom III of the 1930s.

The fact that the Silver Seraph is such a useable and durable modern classic gives it potential as everyday

transport, even two decades on from its launch. And when you consider that the example featured here could be yours for about the same price as a brand new top-of-the-range Ford Mondeo in the UK... well, we know which large saloon we'd happily be driving to work in.

Admittedly, that £34,000 Mondeo (a diesel) will be significantly more economical on fuel than the Rolls-Royce, but the Silver Seraph's lack of crippling depreciation should easily make up for it in terms of running costs. Are upmarket modern classics like the Silver Seraph where the clever money is right now? Drop us a line (rrb.ed@kelsey.co.uk) and tell us your thoughts.



CAMARGUE ARRIVES IN GERMANY

Regular readers will recall the Rolls-Royce Camargue that we featured in Issue 4, a 1984 example that had just been sold and was about to head to Germany. We posted a photograph of the car on *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver's* Facebook page, only to receive a message from

reader Martin Heinze explaining that he'd just spotted the car at a German-based Rolls-Royce specialist.

Frank Wilke of Classic Analytics (www.classic-analytics.de) also saw the Camargue at the same premises and reported back to us: "Werner Monk, who is currently working on the car,

says this is one of the best Camargues he has ever seen." Martin Heinze later told us that the car had been sold to a private owner in Munich, and was due to be collected imminently.

Many thanks to Martin and Frank for their input, as well as for supplying these latest photographs of the Camargue.



ENTRY-LEVEL ROLLS-ROYCE



While rising values of the Silver Shadow might deter some would-be owners from taking the plunge, there are still good buys to be had at auction – as long as the bidder is happy to risk buying a car they've not had a chance to drive. One of the most tempting recent examples was this 1974 Silver Shadow I, which went under the hammer at Brightwells'

January sale (www.brightwells.com) for a top bid of £7200.

The car had just been returned to the road after eight years in dry storage, but had been lightly recommissioned and came with a fresh MoT. This Silver Shadow also came with a good history and plenty of paperwork and invoices to prove its years of careful maintenance – as well as its

mileage of just under 84,000. The bodywork was described as 'clean', the chrome was in good order and the interior was well-preserved.

The original hues of Mink over Caribbean Blue suited the car well, and the paintwork looked to be very presentable. We've a feeling that whoever snapped up WGY 2M at auction will be rather pleased with their purchase...

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GENETIC TRAITS

Our new editor's interest in Rolls-Royce and Bentley is something of a family tradition. Here he explains how his late father's Silver Wraith Park Ward limousine first made it into print over thirteen years ago – and how the car remains in the family to this day.

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: PAUL GUINNESS

If there's one thing my late father and I always had in common, it was our love of older cars. I'll be the first to admit that I lack the hands-on skills and ingenuity that he showed throughout a lifetime of car ownership, but my passion is just as strong. While I'm lucky enough to have spent the last thirty-odd years as a full-time motoring writer, he spent decades repairing, restoring and working on a vast array of different models, initially out of necessity but in later years for the sheer fun of it – particularly once he'd discovered the joys of Rolls-Royce and Bentley ownership.

I must have been in my very late teens when my father bought his first

Rolls-Royce in the mid-1980s. That particular car was a 1970 Silver Shadow, a model that always impressed me with its effortless driving style and ridiculous (or so it seemed at the time) levels of comfort and opulence. And once I was old enough to be added to its limited-mileage insurance policy, I soon fell for the Silver Shadow's driving style; for my father, however, it was just a tad too 'modern'. What he really craved was an older model from the Rolls-Royce or Bentley back catalogue.

Next to arrive was a Bentley S1, a 1957 example bearing a memorable Northern Irish registration number (SZ 7777), after which my father decided that Silver Wraiths were potentially

more to his taste. He proved this theory to be true by buying numerous examples over the years, some of them in a down-at-heel state, others rather more 'up and running' – although, without exception, they all needed work in order to bring them back to a usable, presentable state. But that was fine, as my father liked nothing more than tinkering with his much-loved Rolls-Royces in the large workshop at the bottom of his Stourbridge garden.

MAGAZINE FEATURE

For more years than I care to remember, I have been a monthly contributor to our sister magazine,





Classic Car Mart, and back in 2004 wrote a series of articles on classics that still worked for a living. As my father, Peter, had by then been carrying out wedding duties in his various Rolls-Royces in order to help fund numerous restoration projects, I hit upon the idea of featuring one of his favourite Silver Wraiths – the 1957 Park Ward limousine that you see here, photographed in late 2004 and destined to appear in print at the end of December that year.

I still remember the day that my 79-year-old father drove us in the Silver Wraith to a local scenic spot for some early-winter photography. He had been a subscriber to *Classic Car Mart* for a number of years and was more than happy to have his car included in the magazine. Sadly, however, Peter died in December 2004, just a week before the issue featuring his Rolls-Royce was due to hit the shops. He never did get to see his Silver Wraith in print, a fact not lost on the local vicar who – unbeknown to me – ensured there was a copy of the magazine at the funeral.

All these years later, and with this being my first issue as editor of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, I decided I'd try to unearth the photographs from that day in 2004. Fortunately, as you'll already have gathered, I'm a stickler



Peter Guinness at the wheel of his Silver Wraith in 2004

for hanging on to everything when it comes to my work-related archives.

POST-WAR LAUNCH

The 1946 announcement of the Silver Wraith was significant for Rolls-Royce, as this was the marque's first new-car

launch since the end of World War II. It was to be a model with a healthy future ahead of it too, remaining in production (via numerous incarnations) right through to 1959. Early Silver Wraiths used a 4257cc overhead-inlet and side-exhaust straight-six engine, with added propulsion provided by a »

FEATURE VEHICLE ROLLS-ROYCE SILVER WRAITH



Luxury, space and the obligatory drinks cabinet that you'd expect in an ex-Mayoral limousine



dual-choke Stromberg carburettor. By 1951, however, engine size had increased to 4566cc thanks to a larger bore, with a final power boost occurring three years later when the 4887cc derivative arrived.

The whole point about the Silver Wraith was that, in true company tradition, it was a real coachbuilt special, with Rolls-Royce selling the rolling chassis to a number of Britain's renowned and respected specialists. It wouldn't be much of an exaggeration to say that no two Silver Wraiths were ever totally identical, although the popularity of certain body styles meant a healthy order book for some of the best coachbuilders in the business.

The announcement of the long-wheelbase Silver Wraith chassis in 1951 opened up even more opportunities, enabling coachbuilders to offer genuine limousines rather than simply the opulent large saloons of previous years. Thanks to its extra length, the latest Silver Wraith became the model of choice for mayoral and VIP transport, with Park Ward being particularly successful with its own versions – which included the '57 model shown here.

PROJECT CAR

As my father explained during his interview for *Classic Car Mart*, this particular Park Ward limousine required a not inconsiderable amount of work when he acquired it in 1995: "A lot of restoration work had already been carried out, but the car was probably best described as an unfinished project." In fact, the Silver Wraith was a particularly sound example, with certain bodywork restoration already done to a very good standard. Mechanically too, the Rolls-Royce was in fine fettle, thanks to a general mechanical overhaul shortly before the change of ownership. However, the all-important finishing stages of the renovation had never been carried out, which is why so much of the Silver Wraith was supplied in 'kit form', as Peter explained back in 2004:

"It was basically a rolling chassis and bodysell, but it was in dire need of a respray, the interior needed refitting, new carpets and headlining had to be sourced – and that was just for starters. But at least with so much good quality restoration work having been previously carried out, I was faced with cosmetic issues rather than anything too severe. It

The launch of an extended chassis enabled coachbuilders like Park Ward to create Silver Wraith limousines



“The announcement of the long-wheelbase Silver Wraith chassis in 1951 opened up more opportunities, enabling coachbuilders to offer genuine limousines”

was a project I could easily handle, and I managed to get the car sorted and back on the road within a year.”

Silver Wraith limousines were, of course, always intended to be chauffeur-driven. That helps explain why most of the luxury and almost all of the on-board space was reserved for those VIPs bringing up the rear. Even so, your humble chauffeur of 1957 wasn't exactly slumming it, although manoeuvring himself astride the enormous steering wheel that seems to almost touch the driver's seat was a feat in itself. Once installed, however, the proud chauffeur was faced with a beautiful burr walnut dashboard, impressively comprehensive instrumentation and – wonder of wonders – an electrically heated front screen.

Riding in my father's '57 Silver Wraith more than thirteen years ago was certainly a rewarding experience

thanks to the car's impressively sumptuous ride and the gentle but effective performance of its 4887cc straight-six. And yet when new, this was a car that would have been seen as rather old-fashioned by Rolls-Royce standards of the time, thanks to the launch of the significantly more modern Silver Cloud (and its Bentley S1 cousin) two years before this particular Silver Wraith limousine had been created by Park Ward.

WORKING LIFE

There was, of course, still a market for the Silver Wraith chassis, with the Park Ward limousine in particular being the preferred choice of many a dignitary of the time. That included my father's example, which upon being registered in July 1957 was delivered to its official first owner: Huddersfield Corporation. Yes, the good folk of Huddersfield,



through their household rates and other taxes, had enabled the Mayor of their town to take delivery of a brand new Rolls-Royce Silver Wraith limousine with bodywork by Park Ward.

According to the official receipt that was still with the car when my father bought it, the price paid when new was a hefty £5570 – plus £110 extra for the chauffeur-benefiting addition of power-assisted steering. To put that into perspective, the same kind of sum would have »

FEATURE VEHICLE

ROLLS-ROYCE SILVER WRAITH



bought nine brand new Morris Minor saloons at the time, although a single limousine was obviously of more use when it came to mayoral duties.

This limousine was retained as the Mayor of Huddersfield's transport right through to 1973, which meant it enjoyed an impressive 16-year official career. Its working days weren't over, however, as the Silver Wraith was then acquired by AB Taylor Funeral Services Ltd of Birmingham, with its original combination of Midnight Blue and Black coachwork making it ideal for its new role as a funeral director's limousine. The car then went into private ownership for a few years before ending up in the hands of my father at the end of 1995.

As you might expect of any elderly Rolls-Royce, this particular limousine experienced a few changes of identity (well, registration numbers) along the way. As official transport for various Mayors of Huddersfield, the car was adorned with the registration MVH 1. This was transferred to the new mayoral transport in 1973, however, and so 1043 CX became the number of choice, followed by WRR 9 that a later owner decided to allocate to the car. Under my father's ownership, meanwhile, the Silver Wraith received its latest – and final – registration number, VAS 278.

You'll no doubt have noticed there was a change of colour scheme too, with the Silver Wraith receiving a two-tone grey combination, as my father

explained back in 2004: "I'd already got a 1948 Silver Wraith when I bought the limousine, and the other one looked great in two-tone grey. So it seemed a good idea to have them matching, particularly when it came to wedding transport. It's a popular colour scheme with brides who are bored with seeing white cars all the time, and it just seems to suit the Wraith's styling."

During the nine years that my father owned this particular car, it remained one of his favourite of all the Silver Wraiths he acquired in later life. It proved to be impressively reliable throughout that time, and was used as much for the sheer

pleasure of driving and it was for wedding transport. When my father died in December 2004, however, it was decided that two of his various classic vehicles would remain within the family, which is why this 1957 Park Ward limousine and an earlier Silver Wraith (which will no doubt be featured in a future issue) are currently in the safe hands of my brother, Simon.

The fact that this much-loved example is still part of the family would have pleased my father no end. The fact that it's now appearing in a magazine dedicated to his two favourite brands of motor car would have delighted him still further. ■



The functional engine bay featuring the car's original 4887cc straight-six

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ACTION-PACKED SUMMER

Bentley Drivers' Club chairman Ron Warmington tells us about the many activities being planned for the coming months

As winter slowly began to relinquish its icy grip this year, and the green shoots of spring began to appear outside our Clubhouse in Oxfordshire, the new driving season was suddenly just around the corner – much to the relief of all of our members. And that meant we could start to look forward to an array of club events.

We flagged up our key events of 2018 in the last issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, but we'll mention them again here. They include our Clubhouse Open Day on Saturday 9th June (at our Wroton home), followed by the Summer Concours d'Elegance on Sunday 10th June in the historic surroundings of Stonor Park, near Henley on Thames. Then there's our annual race day over the high-speed sweeps of the Silverstone circuit on Saturday 4th August, preceded by track days in May and June at MIRA and Curborough respectively.

Our Regions – both in the UK and overseas – have also been extremely busy organising a host of diverse events designed to keep members fully occupied over the coming months, with the calendars filling up fast. There are all manner of weekends away planned at fantastic and interesting locations, ranging from visits to Belgium, France (including the Tour de Somme, which will coincide with the centenary of the end of the First World War) and Spain/Portugal, through to excursions and trips to various rural corners



Bentley Motors factory tours are always popular among members

of England, Scotland and Wales.

Fellow members in the USA, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, as well as those in Europe, also have some magnificent road trips lined up in their areas. Judging by the reports received back, these trips tend to be fantastic fun – and enjoyed by members and their families of all ages.

That's not all. Add in single-day runs, lunches and dinners at luxurious establishments, along with informative and entertaining visits to the likes of Bentley Motors HQ in Crewe, the British Motor Museum, Pirelli and

the Airbus factory, as well as canal and steam train trips, classical music concerts, talks and summer BBQs, and you soon get to realise just what a busy summer we have planned.

Of course, if you fancy getting involved with our friendly club, making friends with like-minded folk, we'd be delighted to welcome you and your family as new members. Just contact our club office on 01295 73886 or send an email info@bdcl.org for more information. You'll also find our website of interest (www.bdcl.org), and it's well worth following our Facebook page.

Talking of Bentley Motors, the club's relationship with the company is becoming ever stronger, and the BDC is closely involved in arrangements for the marque's 2019 centenary celebrations, including the planned Extraordinary Drive UK tour. The BDC itself will be celebrating this momentous milestone by hosting its Summer Concours at magnificent Blenheim Palace, where it's hoping to attract the world's largest ever gathering of Bentleys.

Finally, the BDC will shortly be holding its annual AGM (on Saturday 28th April), when its future path will be mapped out, with Regional AGMs also currently being held. We're looking forward to an excellent turnout of members at both. ■



The BDC's Concours d'Elegance attracts Bentleys of all types... and sizes!



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- *and enthusiasts*



We invite *Rolls-Royce & Bentley* driver readers to join our friendly club



Join us at our 2018 Concours d'Elegance and Silverstone race day

This summer, our annual **Concours d'Elegance** will be held in the glorious surroundings of **Stonor Park**, an historic country house nestling in the Chiltern Hills near Henley-on-Thames, on **Sunday 10 June**. And there'll be plenty of fast and furious track action at our popular **Silverstone race day**, on **Saturday 4 August**. At both events you can feast your eyes on an awesome array of Bentleys spanning all eras. We hope to see you there!

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TECHNICALLY SPEAKING

The RREC's technical director, Martin Sinclair, tells us about the club's inaugural seminar of 2018 – with similar events already lined up for early summer

The first Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club technical seminar and workshop of 2018 took place back in February at the fantastic new multi-million pound National Centre for Motorsport Engineering (NCME) in Bolton, Lancashire. The centre is part of the University of Bolton campus, and is where the Automobile and Motorsport courses are based.

Members of the RREC Northern Section attended in a variety of their club cars, ranging from a 1934 Rolls-Royce 20/25 to a 1998 Bentley Brooklands. They were given a tour of the facilities where a selection of

high-performance sports and LMP3, BTCC and WRC competition cars were on display, as well as the production area of the brand new Keating Berus supercar (see www.keatingsupercars.com), a unique facility for a university.

The tour was followed by a seminar, in which I explained how to adapt a pre-war Rolls-Royce to cope with 21st century motoring. (The seminar was entitled: 'Take the best that exists and make it better', a quote from the great Sir Henry Royce.) The benefits of electric water pumps, electronic ignition, electric power steering, LEDs, generator control and other modern (reversible) improvements

were discussed and demonstrated.

The afternoon was then spent analysing the electrical systems of the attending members' cars, using the latest laptop-based diagnostic software coupled to a big screen. Unsurprisingly, most were found to be in perfect condition, with none that 'failed to proceed'.

More RREC seminars will follow this year, including a series of mid-week ones aimed at non-members as a way of introducing them to the world of Rolls-Royce and Bentley motoring. To find out more, email events@rrec.org.uk or go online to www.rrec.org.uk. ■



The National Centre for Motorsport Engineering made an excellent venue



The RREC's technical director, Martin Sinclair, hosted the seminar



The seminar included modern-day improvements to pre-war cars



Analysing the electrical systems of members' cars proved popular



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ROAD TRIPS & RALLIES

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American Adventure





HISTORIC RALLYING: AN INTRODUCTION

If you're tempted to get involved with classic rallying, or simply take part in organised road trips in your Rolls-Royce or Bentley, where do you start?

We take a look at some of the challenges and adventures that lie ahead

WORDS: SAM SKELTON PHOTOGRAPHY: BLUE PASSION PHOTO FOR HERO EVENTS / ENDURANCE RALLY ASSOCIATION

Old cars aren't just dry-weather friends, and they certainly aren't art exhibits. While there is undoubtedly a strong enthusiast following for concours events, and for keeping your car in the best condition possible, there is equally a second school of thought which says

that these cars were built to be used – and should be used. The Vintage Sports Car Club is one of the best examples of this philosophy, with men in bowler hats and waistcoats pushing Blower Bentleys as hard as possible around circuits, over muddy forest trails, and up hillclimbs such as Prescott in Gloucestershire.

But you don't need VSCC membership – or even a vintage car – in order to enjoy that same sense of adventure. And it doesn't even have to involve much competition if that's not your thing; instead you can simply take part in the holiday tour of a lifetime. There are scores of classic rallies – endurance,



Not every car that goes historic rallying is a vintage Bentley...

time trial or regularity stage – in the UK and beyond. And regardless of whether you own a Speed Six or a Silver Shadow, there’s something for everyone at all levels of experience. You might think of historic rallying as a sport involving Ford Escorts and forests, and yet there are several more relaxed approaches to it.

WHAT IS HISTORIC RALLYING?

Different types of classic rally are available, from those suited to beginners through to the more arduous cross-continental tours that can last up to a month. The best way to get started, however, would be to join a road run organised by your local classic car club. There are several over the summer, which means you should find a relatively local one that may also involve a classic car show at the end of it. These road runs make for an excellent soft introduction into the world of historic rallying – and because they are held on the public highway, any road-legal classic is eligible to enter. A number of clubs and companies such as Hagerty Insurance hold events like this at least once a year, often to coincide with the UK’s classic vehicle Drive It Day, with similar runs held to commemorate the end of the summer show season.

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

clubs, so it’s worth contacting your club’s events team to find out more.

Specialist rally organisations will often host events of similar length and scope to the road runs above, but with an element of competition to them. This may take the form of regularity time trialling, in which a car must average a set speed over a set course and the victor is the closest to the speed originally set. »



This is in many ways more difficult than conventional time trial rallying, and yet opens up the possibilities of rallying to a wider clientele who might not be proficient at faster driving.

Event companies such as HERO and the Endurance Rally Association also work outside the UK, with longer and more ambitious events traversing continents and taking up to four weeks to complete. While something like this is a far greater challenge to both man and machine, it is also the kind of adventure that many owners never experience, despite their classic Rolls-Royce or Bentley being potentially the ideal companion. If you've ever fancied trekking across Europe or Asia in your

classic, taking in scores of sights, sounds and smells en route, then these are the events for you – but they are not necessarily for beginners. If you take some time to acclimatise via smaller rallies, you'll get far more from these larger events than if you jump in blind.

RALLY SPECIALISTS

A number of specialist companies organise the larger national and international rallies, rather than clubs. These organisations have several years of experience organising historic rallying events, and can offer complete packages including places to stay and sights to see along the routes.

Some can even offer classic car hire in which to partake, though none that we are aware of will presently loan a Rolls-Royce or Bentley for the trip.

Typical of a smaller rally would be the HERO Challenge, organised by HERO Events and based in Buckinghamshire. A single-day event that doesn't require a competition licence, the entry fee at the time of writing is £195. The rally is open to cars produced prior to 1986, and covers a total of 150 miles. Scrutineering will take place in the afternoon of Friday 21st September 2018, with the event beginning on the Saturday morning at 8.00am. Awards will be presented in the evening, following a buffet. Vehicles confirmed at



William Medcalf Vintage Bentley hosts regular 'Drive Out' days for its clients





“Different types of classic rally are available, from those suited to beginners through to cross-continental tours that can last up to a month”

the time of writing ranged from Derby Bentleys through to 1980s BMWs, but the routes have been planned around cars from the 1960s. A trip meter is required, with five regularity stages and ten tests expected to occur around the vicinity of Bicester Heritage. A one day event like this, using tulip maps and centred in quite a tight area, is an ideal way for beginners to gain experience of professional events prior to tackling something more gruelling.

HERO's Land's End to John O'Groats rally is rather more challenging, featuring 30 regularity stages and 15 test stages. Covering approximately 1450 miles over three days (excluding scrutineering time), Le Jog is renowned for being one of the most arduous regularity events in Britain, a real challenge for both car and owner – and one that drivers of pre-war Bentleys seem particularly keen to take on.

Typical of the largest events is the Peking to Paris rally, organised by the Endurance Rally Association (ERA), with the next one due to take place

in June and July 2019. It is effectively a re-enactment of the original transcontinental 'great race' of 1907, and on a typical Peking to Paris rally you can expect to see upwards of ten vintage Bentleys. This 36-day spectacular sees pre-1976 classics traverse continents, achieving an average of 250 miles per day. Events such as this require a spirit of adventure, with some nights spent camping and with the ability to repair your own car essential should any fate befall it. Routes tend to cross Mongolia and Russia, before a number of days spent exploring eastern and central European countries.

Events such as the Peking to Paris would use maps and satellite systems in preference to tulip guides, in part because of the size of the rally and the fact that on an event like this it can be easy to make a false turn at some stage. Described on the ERA website as 'the longest and perhaps the toughest driving challenge for vintage and classic cars', demand for events like this is such that they can be fully »

DO I NEED A RACE LICENCE?

The majority of regularity and rally events are governed by the Royal Automobile Club Motorsport Association, also known as the MSA. The MSA issues competition licences, with a variety of rules which must be met. All new applicants are required to provide a medical report prior to the licence being issued, which must be updated annually once the applicant reaches the age of 45.

Competition licences are issued and renewed annually, even those for whom a yearly medical is not mandatory. There are several grades of competition licence, so it is worthwhile checking the entry requirements of the rally you are looking to enter. Typically, new applicants begin at Clubman level, and may upgrade as their experience grows and meets the criteria of the next available category. Some classifications require an entry examination while some are open to all applicants. For further information on exact categorisation, visit the MSA website: www.msauk.org.



booked up to two years before they take place. The 2019 Peking to Paris entry list is now closed, but those who are interested should check the ERA website for details of future events.

FULLY PREPARED

Such is the interest in historic rallying, there are companies now specialising in the preparation of classic cars for these events, and in the world of vintage Bentleys none are better-known than William Medcalf Ltd (www.vintagebentley.com). This is a company that believes these cars were designed to be used, and as well as offering full restoration services, it can ensure your car is ready for historic rallying – which means anything from a full overhaul to the fitment of a tripmeter. The cars are



When historic rallying is this challenging, you and your car need to be prepared for all eventualities

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

Local club rallies often don't charge for entry, which means that regional events and Drive It Day road trips shouldn't be expensive. You'll need to cover the cost of fuel and refreshments, of course, as well as membership of whichever club you have joined in order to cover public liability insurance and so forth.

National regularity and time trial events (such as those discussed in this feature) tend to come with associated

fees. HERO's Le Jog, for example, starts from £2995, which includes two nights of accommodation for a crew of two, map book, meals across a five-day period and mechanical assistance where required. The costs of the organisers and scrutineers are covered, too. Expect to pay similar fees for any rally of equivalent length, though obviously the fees will be greater on larger international events to cover

additional nights of accommodation, the extra stages and so on.

MSA licences are not free either. The National B licence is the entry point, and costs £60 at the time of writing. There are several upgrades, but the priciest (International A Race licence) currently costs £1054. Licence fees are paid annually and licence upgrades incur a fee, with additional fees payable if you require an express service.



all subjected to an extensive test drive before being signed off as rally ready.

"W.O. Bentley was a solid Victorian engineer and drew on his railway training to build incredibly durable cars," explains Medcalf. "A well prepared vintage Bentley today is faster, stronger and more reliable than ever – there is nowhere I wouldn't take one, and the madder the better." William and his team compete in historic rallies in their own Bentleys, and their experience has helped to ensure that they prepare cars to the highest standard. The company is currently preparing four cars for the forthcoming Peking to Paris rally, and is also able to offer a unique 'flying doctor' service – which means that parts and mechanical expertise can be flown to any location, usually within 24 hours, ensuring that a failure need not mean the end of the rally for vintage Bentley enthusiasts.

WHO CAN TAKE PART?

International events are popular with owners of classic Rolls-Royces and Bentleys – and there are even some »

"Regardless of whether you own a Speed Six or a Silver Shadow, there's something for everyone at all levels of experience"



record holders among these groups. It is believed that Dorothy Caldwell, who has competed in a number of challenging events with her son Alastair, is the oldest rally navigator in the world, and could be found taking part in the family's 1963 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud III well in to her late 90s. The mother-and-son team has competed in such difficult rallies as ERA's Trans-America Challenge and Rally Round's Haka Classic in New

Zealand (as featured elsewhere in this issue), with Dorothy handling the maps, trip meters and other navigation equipment like a seasoned professional. Sadly, however, when Alastair's Rolls-Royce was consumed by fire two years ago, Dorothy accepted that she should settle down for a quieter existence.

Speaking in 2015, before she chose to retire from navigating, Dorothy said: "I'll only come if he takes the Rolls-Royce.

It's more comfortable than his sports cars, and it has air conditioning. I'm the last in my generation now and I'm starting to find it harder. I'm beginning to need glasses for distance..."

Of course, you don't necessarily need soft seats and air conditioning in order to enjoy classic rallying, as many a vintage Bentley enthusiast will confirm. More recently, the 2018 Road to Saigon rally was won by Graham and Marina Goodwin in their 1925 Bentley 3-Litre Super Sports. Arranged by ERA, this 5300-mile (27-day) event included entrants as celebrated as Noel Edmonds, but an early lead in the Vintageant class was held until the end by the Goodwins in their Super Sport. The Leeds couple have been quoted as saying: "They are tough machines. This car was made for

WHAT ARE TULIP NOTES?

Tulip notes are used on smaller rallies arranged by both clubs and event organisers alike – and although the idea may seem daunting at first, they are actually simpler than trying to follow a map if you're in an unfamiliar area. Tulip notes feature a ball and an arrow, on a small infographic of each junction along the route. The ball indicates the direction from which your car is travelling, with the arrow indicating the road you need to take.

Other roads forming part of the junction are indicated but not marked.

Standard tulip route books utilise a 3x4 grid, with 12 directions per page. This, however, is open to variation depending upon the length and intricacy of the event. The instructions were first used by navigators on the Dutch Tulip Rally, which ran from 1949 to 1991. They are frequently used today as an alternative to satellite navigation or a conventional map.



Organisers like the Endurance Rally Association host worldwide events for true adventure seekers

racing when there was no tarmac on the roads. There were dirt tracks covered in gravel. We decided to take up rallying, and in our view the best British car is a Bentley, so we had to have this one."

You might assume that a Blower would be the ideal pre-war Bentley in which to compete, and yet the extent of tuning and the carburettor location on those supercharged models makes them less suitable for endurance rallying than their naturally-aspirated contemporaries. For less extreme events, however, just about any classic Rolls-Royce or Bentley can be employed, with the car's high standard of engineering and the sheer durability offered by a well-maintained example making it the ideal choice. So are you tempted? Don't forget to tell us how you get on... ■



ARE THERE PRIZES?

Typically, there are no cash prizes or substantial awards on the basis that these are events held for fun rather than competition. However, there are often trophies or similar awards for class winners, as well as for those who

best embody the spirit of the rally. Awards for HERO's Le Jog are split into four categories; Gold Medal, Silver Medal, Bronze Medal and Blue Riband; there are typically nine classes split by age and engine size, and those which

achieve first in class are also recognised.

Spirit of the Rally and Against All Odds awards are frequently given out on international rallies held by the Endurance Rally Association, in addition to any awards for class winners.

VINTAGE CHALLENGE

This year sees the tenth anniversary of the Flying Scotsman Rally, one of the most demanding UK-based events for vintage vehicles. We take a look at what makes it special

WORDS: ANDREA SEED PHOTOGRAPHY: GERARD BROWN FOR ERA

Bentley specialist William Medcalf was victorious in his Super Sports in 2015, aided by navigator Tony Brookes



Remon Vos and Harry Bannatyne competing in 2016 aboard their 1930 Bentley



When introducing the first Flying Scotsman Rally in 2009, founder Philip Young billed it as the longest and perhaps toughest vintage car rally in Britain: "There is nothing quite like this in terms of distance and magnitude... and nothing else quite like it exclusively for pre-war cars," he proclaimed. With the tenth anniversary rally of this highland adventure now imminent, the event's ethos remains unchanged.

Organised by the Endurance Rally Association (www.endurorally.com), which is also the team behind the gruelling Peking to Paris challenge, the Flying Scotsman's entry list fills within weeks rather than months, with over 100 pre-war cars taking part each year. Their occupants get to enjoy a wonderful journey through some of the most beautiful landscapes that Britain has to offer.

Bentley is the vehicle of choice for around thirty of this year's entrants, which is no surprise considering that Bentley crews have won the event four times, also clocking up more class winners than any other marque. Paul Carter and John Bayliss were the first Bentley crew to 'do the double', winning in 2009 and 2010 in their 1936 Bentley Derby 4.25. They were followed by Bentley specialist William Medcalf in the Super Sports, who also won twice, teamed with David Kirkham in 2014 and Tony Brookes in 2015. Medcalf is back in the 2018 list of 'runners and riders' with the hat-trick in his sights, this year with Andy Pullan by his side.

Of the Bentleys entered this year, ones to watch include experienced rally goer Bill Cleynert (with navigator Dab Harrison) in his 1925 Bentley 3-4½, who won the inaugural European Cup on the 2016 Peking to Paris. Graham and Marina Goodwin in their 1925 Super Sports (fresh from a win on the Road to Saigon Rally) are also in the frame for a good result, as are Anton

Gonnissen and Inge Willemen in their 1948 Speed 8. Two Rolls-Royces are also entered this year, with Flying Scotsman stalwart Keith Wickham and Brian Spearman venturing out in a 1924 Boat Tail Roadster, and the 1938 25/30 of James Hall-Smith and Ed Talbot also taking part.

For the 10th Anniversary celebration, the Flying Scotsman boasts an exciting new 'Brooklands to Edinburgh' route, with the whole of the ERA team helping to devise four days of exceptional open-road vintage motoring. The route will be a traditional mix of Regularity Sections and Special Tests, with a Time Control Section thrown in for good measure.

CHALLENGES EN ROUTE

Shortly after the Brooklands Clubhouse clock strikes 1.00pm on April 26th, the first cars will be flagged away – with action from the start, kicking off with the famous Brooklands Test Hill. Once out onto the public roads, the cars will then wend their way west through the leafy suburbs of the Home Counties and the scenic lanes of the Chiltern Hills before arriving at Luton Hoo for the first night's stop.

Once away from the morning rush around Luton, crews will get to enjoy quieter country lanes for the first competitive sections, heading north into the surprisingly hilly terrain around Grantham and reaching the rolling Lincolnshire Wolds later on for the first overnight halt at Forest Pines. The longest day then beckons, starting with an easy run out over the mighty Humber Bridge and on



An experienced navigator is an essential companion on the Flying Scotsman Rally!

into the Yorkshire Wolds for the day's first action, then onward to the North Yorkshire Moors. The gradients increase and roads get more challenging as the route heads west into the Dales and Pennines for more moorland motoring.

Fine driving roads continue to be the theme as the event journeys further north into the Pennine Hills to enjoy further competitive sections, before finally descending to the flatter lands around Newcastle and the overnight stop at Gosforth Park. The final morning then starts bright and early, with the cars out onto the roads of Northumberland with the ultimate destination in sight – crossing the border into Scotland.

All that then remains is a scenic

afternoon run across the Lammermuir Hills and along the North Berwick coast, with the final terminus for this anniversary journey being the luxurious Balmoral Hotel, right next door to Waverley Station. Before that, however, the Ceremonial Finish will take place in the heart of this beautiful city on the world-famous Royal Mile.

Fred Gallagher, ERA rally director, told *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*: "This event has got better and better each year. The standard of cars and driving is excellent, but credit must go to the navigators who face an intense challenge. We're also grateful to every marshal and crew member who has contributed to this fantastic event over the past ten years." ■



Paul Carter and John Bayliss were the first Bentley crew to 'do the double', winning in 2009 and 2010



EFFORTLESS ADVENTURES

When it comes to cruising through Europe, what could be more effortless – and more comfortable – than a long-wheelbase Silver Shadow? Paul Capper is one owner who's not afraid to take his much-loved Rolls-Royce on long-distance adventures

WORDS: PAUL GUINNESS PICS: PAUL CAPPER AND PAUL GUINNESS

For any enthusiast lucky enough to own an immaculate example of their favourite classic, there is an understandable temptation to limit its use for fear of wear and tear. Keeping a classic car in outstanding condition is hard enough without the extra pressure of tackling long-distance jaunts and overseas adventures. But Paul Capper, owner of this glorious long-wheelbase Silver Shadow I since 1997, is no such person; for him the real joy behind the ownership of Nellie (as she's affectionately known) has been more than doubling the 63,000 miles showing on the odometer when he first acquired her.

In many ways, an 'extended' Silver Shadow makes the perfect pan-European touring machine,

particularly when unencumbered by the chauffeur's division fitted to many of the long-wheelbase models. Proud owner Paul appreciates the extra space and practicality of Nellie over a standard-length Silver Shadow, as well as the sheer pleasure he gets from being behind the wheel. Indeed, he describes the whole experience as "like driving your favourite armchair", which helps explain why he's covered a high mileage (by classic vehicle standards) over the last 21 years.

"Of the five Rolls-Royce motor cars that I've owned, Nellie has always been my favourite," admits Paul. "And although I have often travelled extensively in her throughout the UK and beyond via well-organised Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club rallies, I had never been brave enough to venture to foreign fields solo."

A few years ago, however, Paul decided to take the plunge, taking Nellie on an adventure he'd never forget: "The idea was to head from





Paul Capper has more than doubled the mileage of his Silver Shadow since buying it



the UK down to my aunt's home in southern Spain, with a friend acting as my human sat-nav. We hurriedly acquired the appropriate maps and booked the ferry tickets in order to fulfil our first Spanish adventure."

BOUND FOR SPAIN

Paul departed Portsmouth for the 36-hour crossing to Bilbao, and was lucky enough to experience calm water on a stretch of sea that's renowned for being unpredictable. But his arrival in Bilbao was initially a little daunting: "We somewhat nervously joined the

Bilbao rush hour at eight o'clock in the morning and made our way south to Lograno, the lively capital of Spain's premier wine region. But as it was our intention to reach Alicante in one day, we joined the main AP-68 motorway south – with Nellie continuing to perform faultlessly – and made good headway, arriving in Zaragoza by lunchtime. We then continued our southerly journey towards Valencia."

Throughout the journey, Nellie managed to look the part thanks to the discrete Union Jack that Paul had cheekily attached to her front end: "This produced some

very favourable comments from fellow British motorists and expats alike," he recalls with a smile.

Many travellers might have considered a stop-off at historic Valencia, but Paul was determined to continue on his epic one-day jaunt: "We carried on through Gandia, with its breathtaking cliff-top and mountain roads overlooking the Mediterranean, and passed by Benidorm on our way towards Alicante. It was whilst driving through Alicante that we then spotted a billboard advertising a classic car event, and so we made a mental note to pay a visit to the show a few days later. It turned out to be the highlight of our fourteen days away – a stunning event that was as exciting and as well-attended as any British offering at the NEC."

Having spent a little time in Alicante, Paul was determined to press on with the journey, particularly as his car was continuing to perform faultlessly: "Leaving Alicante and its almost chariot race-like rush hour behind us, we arrived at our destination of Torre de la Horadada just before eight o'clock in the evening, and were able to enjoy a sunset picnic on the beach after an eventful and enjoyable day's driving in what was entirely virgin territory for me. This was to be the scene of many a photograph over the next few days, with Nellie taking pride of place along the beautiful and deserted white beach nestling at the foot of a sixteenth century castle tower."

After a few days of relaxation, Paul »



An epic day spent driving through Spain saw Paul arrive at the beach of Torre de la Horadada

decided he'd head back to Alicante on the first Sunday of his stay with his aunt, to take a look at the classic car show he'd spotted the billboard for: "My dear aunt, Diana, then noticed in the local newspaper that a Torrevieja-based classic car club was holding a gathering at the main marina on the same day, and so we headed out in torrential rain to be greeted by a very enthusiastic group of expats with an interesting selection of classics. After spending some time there, we then decided to head to Alicante's indoor classic car event, which turned out to be an annual show that combined the best of Spain's classic car clubs with a very well-attended autojumble. It was a superb day in every respect."

The next few days saw Paul heading to Murcia on numerous occasions,

"In many ways, an 'extended' Silver Shadow makes the perfect pan-European touring machine, particularly when unencumbered by the chauffeur's division fitted to many of the long-wheelbase models"

fascinated as he was by the city's spectacular architecture: "I'd always dreamt of taking a photograph of Nellie in front of the Cathedral de Santa Maria, but as we walked around we couldn't see any way of gaining vehicular access. All of the approach roads were for emergency vehicles only, and so we decided to drive Nellie back to my aunt's house. But it was as we were leaving that my pioneering

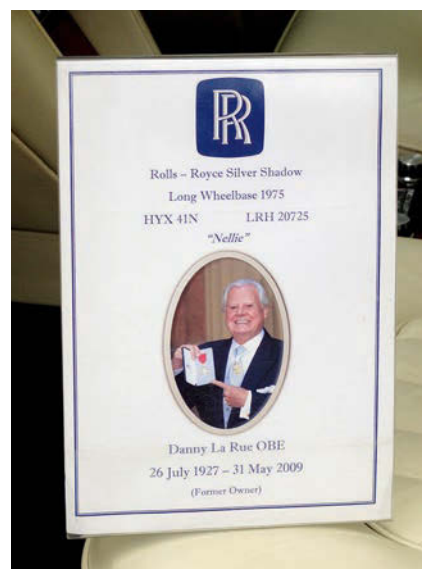
spirit kicked in, and to my friend's great surprise I began to reverse down a one-way street with my hazard warning lights flashing. This was, I'd realised, the shortest route to the cathedral – but just as we reached the granite square, we were stopped by the Guardia Civil. I explained that I was a mad Englishman who'd driven all the way from the UK in the hope of having my car photographed in front of the beautiful cathedral. Whether it was the heat of the day or the fact that I was getting on his nerves, the officer finally relented and gave me permission to drive there very slowly for dos momentos."



Paul managed to fulfil his ambition of photographing the Silver Shadow in front of the Cathedral of Santa Maria

SPECIAL HISTORY

Paul came away from his two-week trip to Spain determined to carry on exploring in his long-wheelbase Silver Shadow, spurred on by the reaction he'd had from onlookers throughout the trip: "We received a great many favourable comments about Nellie from the Spanish and expat Brits alike, and she became the focus of many a bystander's photograph. And, of course, as our fortnight drew to a close, Nellie made her way back



to Bilbao with the same effortless decorum as our journey there."

Other adventures enjoyed by Paul since acquiring Nellie all those years ago have included one particular trip to France, which took in the Loire Valley and a visit to Le Mans – the latter involving some very non-regal behaviour when Paul took to the track in his highly admired Silver Shadow: "When taking her around the Bugatti Circuit at Le Mans, straight lines were great, but the bends and cornering were like The Poseidon Adventure. I was expecting to see Shelley Winters sail past at any moment!"

It's always refreshing to come across an owner who isn't afraid to tackle long-distance challenges in their car, particular when theirs is such an immaculate example of its type. In the case of Paul Capper, he has covered more miles in his Rolls-Royce than the car's previous three owners put together. And whilst on the subject of other keepers, this brings us neatly round to the fact that this 1975 example of the most opulent Silver Shadow was once owned by Danny La Rue OBE.

Anyone who grew up in the 1960s or '70s, or who enjoyed variety shows during their TV heyday years, will remember La Rue for his on-stage cross-dressing, his impersonations of female stars (like Zsa Zsa Gabor and Marlene Dietrich) and, of course, for his singing voice (who could forget his 1968 version of 'On Mother Kelly's Doorstep?'). For many years, Danny La Rue was one of Britain's highest-paid entertainers, and he made sure that his chosen modes of transport reflected his fame and success.

At the same time that La Rue owned this long-wheelbase Silver Shadow, he was also the proud possessor of a regular Silver Shadow and a Silver Cloud, although the car featured here was his preferred mode of transport for London. With La Rue's cherished registration number – DLR 2 – each end and his chauffeur up front, it would have been an imposing sight. By the time the car was finally about to be sold, however, this Silver Shadow wasn't in the best condition, as current owner Paul admits: "It still looked lovely from a distance, if you squinted... but close-up it was a different story, and parts of the car were a mess."

Nevertheless, Paul went ahead with the purchase in 1997 and was delighted with his latest acquisition:



The long-wheelbase Silver Shadow proved to be the ideal vehicle in which to tour southern Spain



"For me, the ultimate Silver Shadow was always the long-wheelbase model but without the chauffeur's division, a feature that robbed the car of the extra legroom created by the four-inch increase in wheelbase."

PERFECT PROJECT

The fact that his newly acquired Silver Shadow wasn't in top condition was something that Paul was determined to put right once funds allowed: "As soon as I bought the car I started using it and taking it to RREC events, but it

was obvious that its condition left a lot to be desired," he recalls. And so after two years of ownership, Paul took the decision to give his long-wheelbase Silver Shadow the attention it deserved, entrusting most of the work to London-based OSC, specialists in classic vehicle bodywork repairs and restoration: "The car was stripped and, with all the necessary work carried out, treated to a bare-metal respray."

Most of the notoriously rust-prone areas (such as the rear wheel arches, lower rear quarter panels, sills and so on) were very solid, but the front »



As luxurious as any Silver Shadow, the extra on-board space of the 'extended' version is a useful advantage



wings were in a poor state. The offside wing was repairable, with new metal being expertly welded into place, but the nearside ended up having a half-wing replacement thanks to its decay. The repairs were carried out extremely well, however, and the paint finish achieved by OSC (in original Oxford Blue) was superb. The final bill of around £12,000 was no surprise given the standard of the work and the impressive attention to detail throughout.

While the bodywork restoration of the Silver Shadow has stood up extremely well to the miles and years that have since passed, Paul uncovered an extra problem whilst having his car MoT'd in 2014. The tester spotted a thumbnail-sized hole underneath, in the middle of the back seat area, and so Paul took the Silver Shadow to marque specialist Hillier Hill for further investigation. Remarkably, it was discovered that a minuscule gap between the rear window seal and the bodywork had allowed water to penetrate into the car, running under the back seat and remaining there, quietly creating a problem.

The only way of repairing the damage was to completely strip the interior of the car (even down to its soundproofing) and weld in a new section of floor. The Everflex roof was also removed and replaced with an exact replica, prior to everything being reassembled back to original. With the help of insurance advisors from the RREC, however, it was ascertained that the issue with the





“Leaving Alicante and its almost chariot race-like rush hour behind us, we arrived at our destination of Torre de la Horadada just before eight o’clock in the evening”

rear screen seal was down to more than ‘wear and tear’ and, after much discussion and support from both the club and Ray Hillier of Hillier Hill, an insurance claim was agreed upon:

“The insurer, Equity Red Star, was aware of the significance of the car as a prize-winning example, and so agreed that any issues with wear and tear would have been picked up over the years by the club’s concours d’elegance judges,” explains Paul. The final bill of £14,000 was therefore paid by the insurers, much to the relief of all concerned.

Since then, Paul’s Rolls-Royce has continued to win awards at RREC gatherings, achieving the accolade of Best Silver Shadow at various events, as well as being nominated for the club’s Master Class section in 2015. It’s a remarkable achievement for a car that, despite its previous celebrity links, looked rather down-at-heel when it came into its current ownership.

It’s also an impressive tribute to »

STRETCHING THE POINT

Compared with the standard Silver Shadow (of which more than 25,000 were built between its launch in 1965 and its replacement by the Silver Spirit fifteen years later), the long-wheelbase version featured here 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; 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 family were sold worldwide.



Back in the UK, the Silver Shadow continues to provide Paul with plenty of touring enjoyment

Rolls-Royce engineering that the car has needed remarkably little in the way of mechanical work, with initial problems of fuel starvation (caused simply by an incorrect fuel pump being fitted in those early days) being the only issue. The engine and transmission remain original and virtually untouched, as do the

steering, suspension and brakes – aside from routine servicing, of course.

Long may that continue, because despite Paul's Silver Shadow long-wheelbase gaining numerous concours d'élegance trophies and being in impeccable condition throughout, it is still very much a car that gets used – and that's not going to change

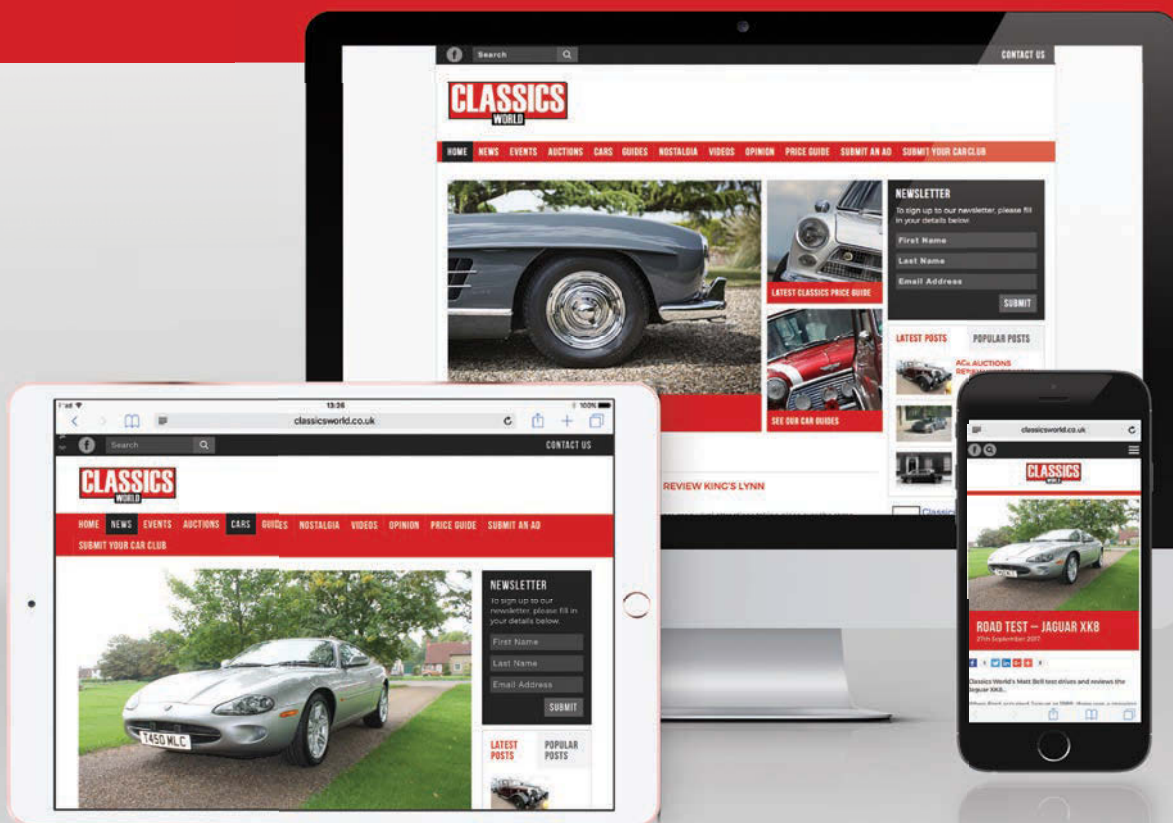
at any point, insists its owner. So where's he off to next? "I've always wanted to drive her to Austria, so hope to be doing that sooner rather than later," he replies. And frankly, we don't blame him; when a car is this comfortable and this effortless over long distances, further exploration of Europe is surely a must. ■



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ONE THOUSAND MILES IN BIRKIN'S 'BLOWER'

What could be better than tackling the legendary Mille Miglia at the wheel of an equally famous ex-Birkin 'Blower' Bentley? Our correspondent describes the trip of a lifetime – and a plethora of mechanical woes

WORDS: IAN ADCOCK PHOTOGRAPHY: IAN ADCOCK / NICK DIMBLEBY FOR BENTLEY

As a primary school child, one of the Adcock family homes was 29 Birkin Avenue, just down the road from Chetwynd Road in Toton, on the outskirts of Nottingham. Neither name meant anything to me until my interest in cars grew, and I learned about the extraordinary exploits of Tim Birkin with his Blower Bentley at Le Mans. I also learned that his mother was the Honourable Margaret Chetwynd.

Little did I realise that my subsequent

childhood dream of driving a 'Blower' – as well as actually competing in one – would eventually come true. It was in the spring of 2012 that I received a telephone call from Bentley Motors' Richard Charlesworth, then overseer of the marque's heritage collection. He asked if I would like to participate in that year's Mille Miglia in the legendary ex-Birkin Le Mans 'Blower' – and without even consulting my diary I knew that the answer was 'yes'.

I already considered myself fortunate to have competed in the 2000 event driving a 1937 BMW 328, in which I'd finished an ignominious 218th, despite some serious coaching in

the arcane mysteries of regulatory runs by BMW's in-house experts prior to the event. An opportunity to compete again twelve years later – this time aboard such an iconic Bentley – was one not to be missed.

First run in 1927, the Mille Miglia belongs to an era when the words 'health' and 'safety' never appeared in the same sentence, and before Armco – never mind disc brakes and seatbelts – had yet to be invented. Races were run at a furious pace down often unsealed roads, threading their way through tiny hamlets with throngs of spectators just inches from the speeding cars.

It isn't until you drive the roads that





Moss and Jenkinson famously sped over in 1955, averaging nearly 98mph in their Mercedes-Benz 300SL to win that year's race in a little over ten hours, that you realise the event's madness. And it is only with hindsight that we can see such speed would inevitably lead to fatalities, which it did in 1957 when de Portago lost control of his Ferrari 335 S, killing nine people (including five children) stood at the roadside in Guidizzolo. A second crash, in Brescia, took the life of Joseph Göttgens, driving a Triumph TR3. Adding to the 46 who had been killed over the previous thirty years, the authorities – including the Vatican – demanded that the event be discontinued.

It was briefly resurrected for three years from 1958 as a road rally, with the modern version revived as a regulatory run in 1977. Theoretically only cars that have already competed in the Mille Miglia are eligible, but this being Italy the qualification seems more to be: 'If it has four wheels and is interesting'. At the Brescia scrutineering I spied VW Beetles of varying vintages, a Citroen DS21, a Saab 93 and even a 1953 Lincoln Capri.

The event justly deserves its 'la corsa più bella del monde' ('the most beautiful race in the world') description thanks to the participation of works teams from industry giants like Mercedes-Benz, Audi, BMW, Porsche and Alfa Romeo, who prepare priceless museum exhibits and pour millions into hiring professional driving teams or former racers such as Jochen Mass, Jan Lammers, Gijs Van Lennep, and father-and-son team Toine and Mike Hezemans. (Jacky Ickx was also on hand in 2012 as brand ambassador



The author realises his boyhood Bentley dream of driving on the Mille Miglia

for the event sponsor, Chopard.)

The Mille Miglia attracts private entrants as well, of course, from all over the world – enthusiasts who are wealthy enough to indulge their passion for cars, even if that doesn't quite extend to striving for the most competitive time during the regulatory stages. And as well as the estimated four million spectators who throng the roads, there are increasing numbers of enthusiasts in their own classics who

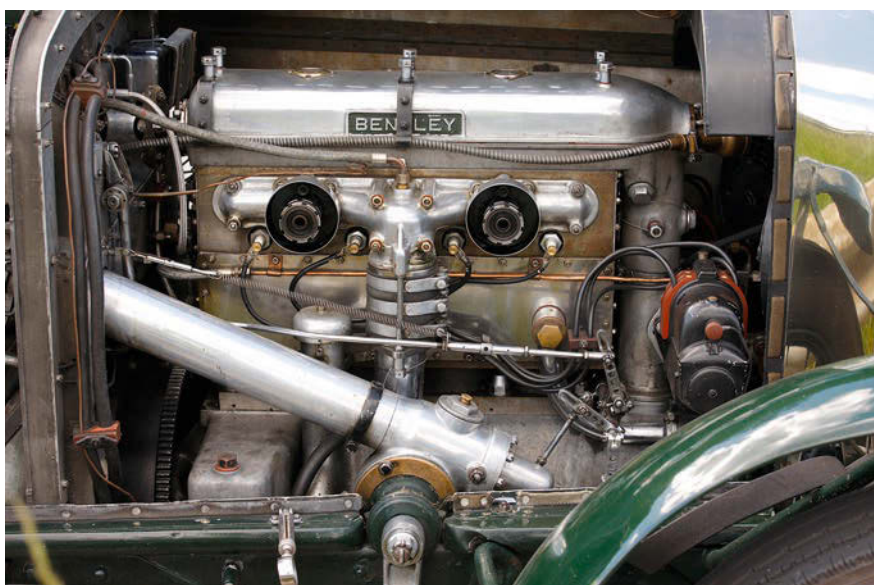
follow the route and competitors, very often hindering progress along the way.

THE BIRKIN 'BLOWER'

Bentley acquired Birkin's 'Blower' in 2000, following a telephone conversation between its then owner, the late Victor Gauntlett (former proprietor of Aston Martin-Lagonda) and Charlesworth: "I had always said to Victor that if he ever wanted to sell »



Italian cities that usually ban cars from their cobbled streets open them up for the Mille Miglia



the car, call me first and, true to his word, he gave Bentley first refusal."

When asked how much the company paid for the car, Richard Charlesworth responded with a lopsided grin: "Let's put it this way, I had to make a personal telephone call to Ferdinand Piech [the autocratic chairman of VAG, which had acquired Bentley in 1998] for his authorisation. Fortunately, he didn't hesitate in releasing the funds."

There is still something quintessentially British about the 'Blower', of course, in its pomp and engineering. The castings and their bolts, along with the girder-like chassis sections, betray W.O.'s engineering philosophy, forged by his apprenticeship at the Great Northern Railway works in Doncaster in the early 1900s. It's little wonder Ian Fleming decided that the most British of fictional spies, Commander James Bond (007), should drive one in *Casino Royale*.

This particular example – UU 5872 – is the most famous of the five race team cars that Birkin commissioned in 1927, sponsored by racehorse owner Dorothy Paget. The factory assembled a further fifty for homologation, complete with the Amherst Villiers engineered supercharger that, according to W.O., "corrupted the engine and design". Still, it upped the standard car's output to 160bhp and, with the aid of a more robust crank, added a further 50bhp for the race cars.

Nine decades ago, those were serious power outputs with performance to match. Charlesworth claims that this car's top speed is "in the region of 125mph", although with its skinny tyres and massive all-round drum brakes it would take some courage to exploit the 1.7-ton Bentley's potential. After all, here is a car with a steering wheel that wouldn't look out of place on a racing yacht, while the handbrake is located to the driver's right on the outside of the Vanden Plas canvas bodywork, with the gated four-speed gear change snug to the driver's right thigh. Thankfully, at some time in its past, a previous owner wisely decided to rearrange the pedals from its original central throttle arrangement to today's layout of it being to the right.

CHALLENGING DRIVE

There was a carnival atmosphere to Brescia as a perfect Italian spring day bathed in blue skies and glorious sun heralded the Mille Miglia's start. The

previous evening, Richard and I had presented our documentation and the car to the scrutineers; with its 49-foot turning circle, manhandling the big beast within the tight confines of the scrutineering shed was a sobering reminder of my relative lack of fitness and muscle power, something that was only emphasised on my first drive.

For those of us brought up on a diet of 1960s sports cars (an MGA in my case), a 'Blower' Bentley comes as a rude awakening. For a start, there's the driver and passenger entry/exit etiquette, as there's only one door and that's on the passenger side; and with two seats tighter than a Ryanair flight, there's a constant shuffling between the twosome on board at driver swaps and comfort breaks.

Then there's the issue of a starting procedure that's as convoluted as Captain Kirk firing up the Enterprise. First you fumble for the electrics master switch and Bakelite fuel switch, then fiddle with the magneto and ignition before prodding the starter button and... BOOM... the quartet of cylinders burst into life like cannons from the 1812 Overture, accompanied by a blue haze of exhaust fumes.

I also had to get used to the Bentley's non-synchro 'D' box, which required double de-clutching up and down its four ratios with a hefty prod of the right boot to raise the revs sufficiently to overcome the drivetrain's inertia, with a determined yank on the lever to slot it into the gate. Too gentle and it sounded like it was chewing



boulders; patience had its rewards, but second to third and vice-versa was a bit of a lottery. The heavy steering lightened as speed gathered, and even those massive drums were relatively reassuring as long as there was plenty of anticipation employed in slowing the beast down. Once on the move, even the rudimentary (by today's

standards) suspension coped well with the Italian byways and highways.

There was no real need to push the revs to their limit, as the 'Blower' had plenty of pulling power even at well below 3000rpm; once we'd got the car rolling, there was no real virtue in constantly swapping cogs, as both second and third »

“There was no real virtue in constantly swapping cogs, as both second and third are capable of getting the Bentley moving from almost a walking pace”



are capable of getting the Bentley moving from almost a walking pace.

In the other 'Blower' that was also competing, Bentley's then engineering director, Ralf Frech, had a fiendish digital timing and navigation device, while Richard and I relied on trusty stop watches. In any case, we were very much of the 'it's the taking part that counts' school, although not as extreme as some entrants who simply spent the time cruising, choosing to soak up the stunning Italian scenery and spectacular city sites. With hindsight our policy paid dividends, although it nearly came undone on one section where, much to our embarrassment, we finished just outside the top ten.

The first hint of trouble came at one o'clock on the first day when the 'Blower' coughed and spluttered its way to the kerbside, the big SUs starved of fuel by a blocked filter. Unfortunately though, this was just the start of our woes, as having passed Via Maggio (a mere 137 into the 1000 miles) the car ground to a halt again when the fuel pump failed. It took mechanic Frank Meakins nearly three hours to rig a second pump to bypass the errant one before we could set off for Rome; hearing the first cuckoo of spring was the highlight of that particular stop...

Charlesworth and I took the corporate decision to head straight for Rome, missing all that afternoon's stages and trials to arrive at the Stadio Olimpico just before 9.00pm. As a result we incurred 203,138 penalties, which pretty much did for us in the final standings.

Pandemonium ensued at the stadium, with the Carabinieri blowing whistles more ferociously than any



No matter what the hour, Mille Miglia fans cheered the competitors on

striking British Leyland worker, while tired drivers were having tantrums as their precious cars overheated in the traffic jam – exasperated by one driver heaving aside some railings to form another exit into another jam. An hour passed before we also joined that queue... oh, and the magneto jammed on. But at 10.15 pm we finally set off for a tour of the eternal city, past the Castel Sant'angelo and on to St Peter's Basilica. It would be nice to think that the then Pope was one of the tens of thousands cheering and waving the contestants

through the night and on to a well-deserved (and far too short) sleep.

BACK ON THE ROAD

My alarm dragged me early from my slumber in time for our 6.42am start the next day. The northern leg of the Mille Miglia turned out to be a blur of stunning scenery and spectacular towns that, for one special day, open their gates to the world's greatest parade of classic cars. Dropping down into Siena's main square, weaving around Bologna's narrow lanes and then being

“Only the continuous fragility of the fuel pumps marred the day, but lady luck still had one joker to play”





Not quite the Bentley Boys: from left to right, Adcock, Charlesworth, Day and Frech



guided through Maranello for a lap of Ferrari's Fiorano test track with the recently opened Museo Casa Enzo Ferrari in the background are bucket list memories that I'll treasure forever.

Only the continuous fragility of the fuel pumps marred the day, but lady luck still had one joker to play. At one o'clock in the morning and with the finishing ramp in sight, steam began to billow from the radiator: the 20-amp fuse for the fans had blown and we had no spare. Not only that, we were so far behind that the service crews had long since departed. Between us, however, Richard and I rigged up a spare 10-amp and hoped it was man enough to see us the few hundred yards to – and over – the finish line.

The thought of pushing 1.7 tons of Bentley in the early hours of the morning was just too much to consider. Fortunately, however, the fuse lasted and we limped over the line at 2.00am, greeted by the graveyard shift commentator. We were the last official finishers of the 2012 Mille Miglia.

I was awake the next day by mid-morning and, suitably famished, headed for breakfast with the rest of the Bentley team. One of them asked if I had seen the news, only to then tell me there had been an earthquake (measuring 4.5-plus on the Richter scale) in the Emilia-Romagna region that we had driven through just the day before, followed by dozens of aftershocks throughout the area. "Didn't it wake you?" he asked.

"Er... no," I replied. It was, I realised, the only time the earth had moved and I had never felt a thing. ■



Pure street theatre as another ancient city opens its portals

THRILLS WITH STYLE

When it comes to overseas challenges combined with a touch of luxury and style, Rally Round has an enviable reputation. That's why it boasts a loyal following among thrill-seeking Rolls-Royce and Bentley enthusiasts

WORDS: PETER HALL PHOTOGRAPHY: RALLY ROUND

"I cannot describe how beautiful it is," said Maria Romão de Sousa, the exceptionally well-travelled navigator of a 1956 MG Magnette on the Thunder Dragon Rally through the tiny Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan. "When my friends ask, I can only shrug and tell them it's no use – they wouldn't understand."

There had been some trepidation that morning as 21 vintage and classic rally cars (including two vintage Bentleys and a brace of Rolls-Royces) spluttered and roared into life on day twenty of a four-week adventure. Ahead lay an eight-hour drive on some of the world's wildest roads – the only way to reach the town of Mongar, in the rarely-visited east of Bhutan. Yet the rewards were great.

Beneath deep blue skies, the snowy Himalayas looked their stunning best as the rally crews reached the 3780-metre summit of Thrumshing La – the second highest pass in Bhutan – which was covered in hundreds of bright new prayer flags

for the King's birthday. They had been higher (at Chele La) but it was here that several competitors – Maria among them – were moved to tears.

Australian Max Stephenson, who has been piloting a 1923 Vauxhall 23-60 around the world for almost half a century, described it as the greatest drive and the most majestic scenery he had experienced in his life, an opinion enthusiastically shared by his wife, Julie. Yet there was more to come – a spectacular mountain road overlooking a vast, unexplored forest wilderness, home to tigers and leopards, and a hot picnic lunch cooked by the Bhutan royal family's personal chef. Welcome to the wonderful world of vintage and classic rallying.

Classic cars are frequently held to be excellent investment vehicles. The value of a genuine 'Blower' Bentley is now so high that mere replicas cost more than (several) houses; and for the fortunate owner, the temptation is to protect such a car at all costs. Some are rebuilt to near perfection

and displayed at concours d'elegance events, where their exhaust pipes are cleaned with toothbrushes and their bodywork caressed with exotic waxes costing £1000 a pot. Yet for many a true motoring enthusiast, such conservative obsessions are anathema. From vintage Rolls-Royces to humble Fords, cars truly thrive on being driven; all you need is a worthy destination and an amazing route.

EXPERT PLANNING

This is where Rally Round comes in, the brainchild of lifelong motorsport fan Liz Wenman, who in 2010 returned from an arduous 9000-mile rally from Peking to Paris convinced that there was a better way of doing things. She realised that a wealthy clientele would relish an adventure less punishing to man and machine, with superior hotels and cuisine and more time to explore the cultures of the regions it visited.

Seasoned rally fans Alastair Caldwell and his mother Dorothy competed in the 2016 Haka Classic aboard their 1963 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud III



Attracting enthusiasts who would prefer to see the world rather than rush past it in pursuit of a slightly bigger trophy, the company has since run acclaimed events on four continents, including ground-breaking rallies in Bhutan, Burma (Myanmar) and Japan, as well as South America, New Zealand and a series of period-dressed European contests celebrating the early days of motorsport. The Rally Round team has grown too, joined by experienced endurance rally organiser Heidi Winterbourne and internationally renowned route designer Kim Bannister.

Thanks to the emphasis on relaxed and sociable competition, Rally Round's customers are a varied crowd. Trophies have been won on merit by an 11-year old schoolgirl (Rosa Gordon, navigating her father's 1966 Jaguar E-Type to second in class on the 2014 Paris-Madrid Rally) and by the world's oldest rally navigator, Dorothy Caldwell, who was 96 when she took part in Rally Round's 2014 Road to Mandalay Rally in Burma, and 98 when she completed the 2016 Haka Classic in New Zealand – in both cases navigating her son, Alastair, in his 1963 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud III.

A frequent participant and multiple trophy winner, Alastair is the go-to man for entertaining stories of the 1976 Formula One season (when as team manager he guided McLaren and James Hunt to the World Championship) and for alarmingly pithy opinions on just about anything else. He owns a stable of cars, yet often chooses the most unsuitable; the completely standard Rolls-Royce, purchased on a whim and since rallied all over the world, is hardly a conventional competition car but is the ultimate proof that it isn't what you drive but how you drive it. Asked by a rival to explain his remarkable pace, Alastair replied simply: "I push the accelerator further down than you do."

THRILLS AND SPILLS

Whilst some competitors make winning look easy, including when Robert and Jane Abrey dominated the 2016 Paris-Vienna Rally in their 1929 Bentley 6½-litre, or when Bill and Jacqui Cleynert beat all comers on the 2017 Odyssey Italia in a 1924 Bentley 3/4.5, many more face a variety of challenges. Farmer John Harrison was nonplussed when the wooden steering wheel rim of his huge 14.5-litre 1917 American LaFrance fell apart in heavy rain during the 2016 Paris-Vienna, yet he and



The 1924 Bentley 3/4.5-litre of Bill and Jacqui Cleynert is seen lapping the Autodromo di Mores circuit of Sardinia during last year's Odyssey Italia event



More action from the 2017 Odyssey Italia, with Bill Cleynert putting his Bentley through its paces

wife Catherine pressed on regardless, using one of the wheel's metal spokes as a joystick. Less willing to make do were a crew on the Road to Mandalay, who carried a month's supply of English Breakfast teabags with them; distressed to find that their hotel room in Monywa had no kettle, they rang reception to request hot water and were promptly sent a plumber.

These and other memorable incidents – landslides in Bhutan, an earthquake in New Zealand, a 70mph dash through a French hailstorm in a pre-war Delahaye racer with no windscreen – provide rallyists with a lifetime of dinner party tales. So too do the countless moments of humour, beauty and wonder – the laughter as comedian-turned-navigator Hugh Dennis was presented with »



Maintenance and running repairs are a fact of rallying life, though there's always help and support should any problems arise

FURTHER DETAILS

For more information, advice and details of forthcoming Rally Round events in Africa, Asia, Europe and South America, go online to www.rallyround.co.uk, call (+44) 01252 794100 or send an email to info@rallyround.co.uk.

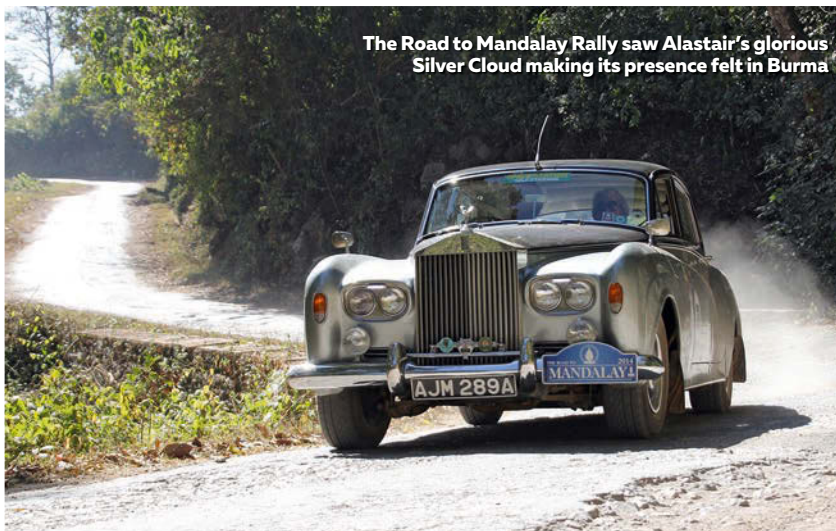


a clockwork oven timer in place of a stopwatch; the joy at cresting a mountain pass to see eagles soaring in the valley below; the thrill of exploring Machu Picchu or a dawn balloon flight over the temples of Bagan; the privilege of dining in Japan's finest (invitation-only) restaurant; and the rare opportunity to witness one of Bhutan's mysterious Tchetsu festivals from the private terrace of a Royal Palace.

A car allows you to wander far from the increasingly crowded tourist trail; and unlike a modern vehicle, an old machine offers an intimate connection with the road, the landscape and the people who live in it. Invariably welcomed with a smile, a vintage or classic rally car is more than mere transport – it can take you to places



This is what happy competitors look like! Alastair Caldwell and his mother Dorothy are Rally Round regulars in their much-loved Rolls-Royce



The Road to Mandalay Rally saw Alastair's glorious Silver Cloud making its presence felt in Burma



The thrill of exploring new places and getting to enjoy spectacular scenery is all part of the appeal of classic rallying

that are beyond imagination.

Notwithstanding the efforts to welcome novices (and several have already signed up for October's Rally Round Africa, a luxury safari from Dar es Salaam to Cape Town), you might imagine that some first-timers would be overwhelmed by the challenges, in spite of the easy-to-follow road book, the medical and mechanical support and the special briefings on rally timing. Yet rallying is an addictive sport.

Take, for example, the American twosome of Kevin Bennett (17) and Silas Hughes (23), who entered the Paris-Vienna Rally – their first – with a 1965 Ford Mustang. They left the start line in high spirits only to find themselves in deep trouble within minutes, when a Citroen they were trying to pass on

“Less willing to make do were a crew on the Road to Mandalay, who carried a month’s supply of English Breakfast teabags with them”

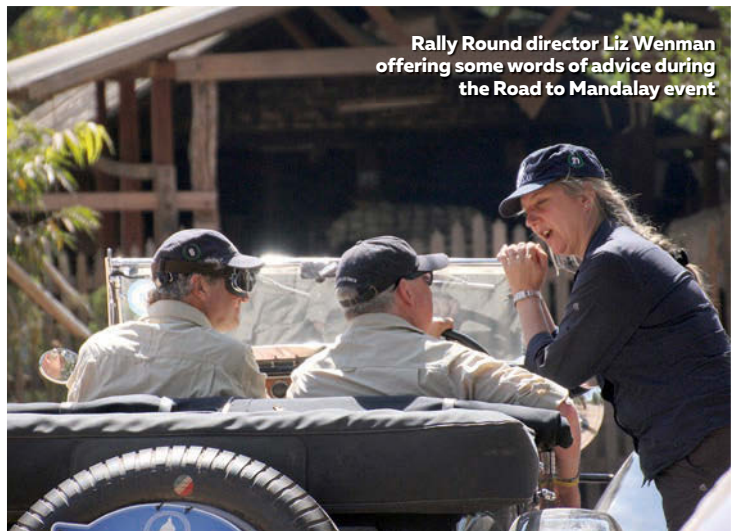
a perfectly straight road suddenly drifted left. The Mustang put a wheel on the grass and spun 180 degrees, not touching either verge until it settled into a deep roadside ditch, facing the way from which it had come.

That was Rally Round’s most dramatic accident to date, as the company boasts a superb safety record. But it wasn’t enough to deter the two lads, who after having their car rescued by one of the rally’s support

vehicles, went on to finish the event – earning themselves the Spirit of the Rally Award at the subsequent prize-giving dinner, along with a standing ovation from 120 fellow competitors. “It’s been everything we imagined and much more than we expected,” said Kevin, as crews gathered at the bar to swap tales of triumph and disaster. “But the best thing has been meeting all these wonderful people, all of them as crazy as we are. We’ll be back!” ■



The Paris-Vienna event of 2016 saw winners Robert and Jane Abrey dominating throughout in their 1929 Bentley 6 1/2-litre



Rally Round director Liz Wenman offering some words of advice during the Road to Mandalay event

FAMILY FAVOURITE

This 1958 Silver Cloud has been with the same family for the last fifty years, enjoying two weddings and countless road trips during that time. The owner's son tells the tale, including the car's epic journey to his own nuptials

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: JIM GOUDY



The 1958 Silver Cloud has been with the Goudy family since it was ten years old



Jim and best man Geoff drove the Silver Cloud from Minneapolis to Connecticut

I consider myself lucky to have grown up surrounded by a family of Rolls Royce and Bentley enthusiasts. My father, also James, bought our 1958 Silver Cloud I on January 20th, 1968, and took my mother on their first date in this much-loved Rolls-Royce. When my parents got married, the Silver Cloud was inevitably put to good use as their wedding transport; and when I came along some time later, the same car brought me home from hospital as a baby. It was even the car in which I first learned to drive (on private land) at just nine years of age.

After years spent enjoying my parents' Silver Cloud, as well as my uncle's 1961 Bentley S2 and 1997 Silver Spur, I met and proposed to Jenn – who comes from a remarkably similar background, her family being the proud owners of a 1938 4¼-litre Park Ward Pillarless and a 1959 Silver Cloud I. Given its personal history, however, we wanted to use my family's Silver Cloud for our wedding, which meant driving it all the way from Minneapolis to the Connecticut shoreline. It was to be quite an adventure, and so I enlisted the help of my best friend (and best man), Geoff.

We set off from the Minneapolis suburbs one beautiful August morning and had a fast, trouble-free run to the Illinois state line, where at a fuel stop we noticed the car had lost a small amount of coolant. We cleared Chicago without trouble, but soon needed to make increasingly frequent stops in order to top up the radiator.

To make a long story short, what should have been a two-day, roughly 1300-mile journey wound up being a frustrating and nerve-wracking nightmare. We even changed the thermostat at a Pennsylvania rest area, fashioning a new gasket from a granola bar box – such ingenuity! The garage that had previously serviced the car in Minnesota

evidently thought that checking the coolant level equalled flushing the entire cooling system...

Luckily for us, my wife's uncle runs a garage and managed to properly service the Silver Cloud in time for our wedding. My father was then happy to lend the car to us for a while, which meant we'd get to enjoy it for about two years here where we live in New England, after which it would complete a thankfully trouble-free return trip to Minnesota.

TIDY SURVIVOR

The family's Silver Cloud drives extremely well and is (usually) happy to cruise at 80mph without effort. The car is in what I'd describe as presentable, care-worn condition; we're not afraid to use our Rolls-Royce but we obviously want to keep it in good, solid order. During my time with the car on loan, I fabricated and fitted new sills to ensure that it remains a smart and sturdy example for many more years.

With the sill work completed, Jenn and I took the Silver Cloud all the way to Vermont for the annual British Invasion weekend, which takes place every September – only for it to experience problems again, similar to the epic earlier trip for our wedding. The car was running beautifully, and



Overheating problems turned sections of the epic trip into a nightmare

we were once again cruising along at what's best described as a 'brisk' speed, until we had to pull over because of more overheating issues. A filter had been installed in the radiator tank as a safety precaution, and had trapped a load of residual debris; I sacrificed my toothbrush at the side of the highway in order to clean the element, and fortunately that seemed to do the trick. We were soon on our way again, and have had

no more overheating problems since.

We went on to enjoy a couple more years of Vermont trips, by then accompanied by our new arrival safely buckled in to a child seat. Our son, Jenson, is now four years old and has been able to identify Rolls-Royces and Bentleys since he began to talk. It all bodes well for our family tradition continuing through the generations, no doubt with plenty more road trips to look forward to. ■



The Silver Cloud was used for Jim's wedding – just as it had been for his parents' big day



A new thermostat gasket was fashioned from a granola bar box!



Jim and Jenn's son, Jenson, is the third generation of the family to enjoy the car

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PERSONAL CHOICE

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



BENTLEY TURBO RT

OWNER: DARREN GOODEY

As a reader of your magazine, it occurred to me that the Bentley Turbo RT – the rarest and most special of the Turbo R breed – has not been the subject of many articles. I thought I'd therefore send you a few details and a couple of photographs of my own car.

I purchased this Turbo RT from P&A Wood (who I suspect need no introduction), a lovely example that they had sold new in 1998 and had maintained ever since, save for a couple of services by Bentley Birmingham. In 2013 she was the subject of a complete overhaul of her active ride system, and only last year I commissioned P&A Wood to undertake some detailed restoration to Bentley Heritage standards.

It is my hope that she is now



perhaps one of the nicest examples of her type, especially given her flawless service history. She has been exhibited at the Countess of Warwick's Show and the Helmingham

Hall Classic Car Show in Essex and Suffolk respectively. She is also a frequent visitor to P&A Wood events, where she is affectionately known as Lilibet – named after Her Majesty. ■

BENTLEY ARNAGE RED LABEL

OWNER: JONATHAN GOULD

I turned 44 back in November and fulfilled a personal dream (which started with my father) to one day be a Bentley owner. After months of seeing Bentleys appear in adverts on various websites, researching the things I should look for when buying, as well as talking extensively to Colin Ayres at Colbrook Specialists (together with a few visits to look at his stock), I finally took the plunge and bought my Bentley Arnage Red Label.

I had narrowed it down to three that were advertised online, each of which fitted my criteria – particularly price, mileage and condition. The first was a red Arnage Red Label in Wakefield, a 43,000-mile car that had just sold when I called the owner: "I'm so sorry, I've just been given a cheque for the full amount – the buyer drove all the way from South Wales." I was gutted but undeterred, and made another phone call – only to find that the British Racing Green Arnage Red Label in question had also sold the previous weekend.

Could it be a case of third time lucky? I called Chris at Vintage & Prestige, a well-known specialist company with a flamboyant owner. The Arnage in question was still for sale, and so I asked lots of questions. Having previously liaised with Colin at Colbrook Services, I asked him to check the car's history – and then decided to have the Arnage transported to Colbrook in order for him to inspect it. My offer was subject to a glowing report from Colin, and thankfully it passed with flying colours, with only a few jobs (nothing major) to be sorted.

I immediately paid for the Bentley and Colin carried out the work that



it required the very next day. I then collected the car late on Friday 3rd November, filled up with petrol at the A1 Services (west of Peterborough) and drove home. I was beaming: 'I'm driving my own Bentley,' was all I could think at the time. And as I write this, the novelty of Bentley ownership is still with me; I've been known to stand in my garage just looking at it.

My particular Arnage Red Label

was ordered from Jack Barclay in London, and has the dealer's chrome door kick plates in the front. The interior is as it came out of the factory, with beautiful grey leather, woodwork that's immaculate and dials that are just sublime. The steering is sharp (I'm amazed at the turn-in on such a large car), with superb response and a great feel to it.

When I bought the Bentley I had new front discs fitted (the pads had been replaced just a few miles earlier), which meant excellent braking once everything had bedded in. A brand new Alpine touch-screen sat-nav had been installed (at a cost of £1200) a year or so before I acquired the Arnage, so this gives me access to all the latest maps. My Arnage's history is mainly Jack Barclay plus a few other Bentley main dealers, with any spares required over the years being mostly sourced and purchased by Jack Barclay.

After years of aspiring to be a Bentley owner, everything about my Red Label feels great – and, as I write this, I still haven't found any faults. Long may it continue! ■



BENTLEY ARNAGE GREEN LABEL

OWNER: JULIAN LAPWORTH

Having owned a six-and-three-quarter Arnage up until two and a half years ago, I now find myself the happy owner of BMW-engined Green Label model. The story started with my quest to find a decent Continental GT, but ended with me falling in love with the sloping rear end of the Graham Hull-designed Bentley-badged Seraph.

Alas, my time with the Arnage Red Label proved to be too costly, with head gasket problems being closely followed by complete gear box failure; even though I had both issues dealt with, they left me with

no confidence in the car, and so she had to go. The next year or so was spent in the comfort of a Jaguar XJ, but I couldn't get the Arnage out of my system, and would pore over the internet looking at the ones for sale.

It was during this period that I started to dig deep into the issues around the (un)reliability of the Arnage, and discovered a whole lot of things to look out for. After much research, I realised that the Bentley best suited to me – and which seemed to be the most reliable – was the original BMW-powered version, commonly known

now as the Green Label. The search began; and when a low-mileage car with an incredible service history eventually came along at the right price, I just knew it had to be mine.

After a quick phone call to the selling dealer and a two-hour drive, I was greeted by the sight of Arnie (as my children now refer to him), sitting there resplendent in his beautiful blue paintwork with his chrome radiator grill glistening. The smell of the leather as I opened the door was overwhelming, and the deep thud as I closed it was a subtle reminder of the quality of these cars. The test drive confirmed what I already knew: this was the Bentley for me, and a deal was quickly done.

Now, just over 18 months later, I'm delighted to report no issues with Arnie whatsoever. Admittedly, it's not as in-your-face fast as the newer six-and-three-quarter V8 that I had, but I find it much more manageable as a result. For me, the Arnage is an all-time great with just the most 'classic' shape; indeed, I suspect the unique shape of the car means it's never in or out of fashion, rather like a double-breasted suit. Anyway, enough of my rambblings; it's my day off and the roads are dry, so where did I leave the keys? ■



SHOW US YOUR PRIDE AND JOY

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

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

Email us at rbb.ed@kelsey.co.uk – and don't forget to send your photographs

full-size. The higher the resolution, the larger we can use your images. If you'd prefer to send non-digital photographs by post, that's also no problem. Simply write to: The Editor, Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver, Kelsey Media, Cudham Tithe Barn, Berry's Hill, Cudham, Kent TN16 3AG.

COPPER-CLAD CREATION

Any Phantom III is a very special machine, yet the example featured here is genuinely unique. We tell the tale of a pre-war Rolls-Royce that took on a whole new identity in the post-war years

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: STEVE NATALE

Any Rolls-Royce Phantom III is a car capable of turning heads, this behemoth of pre-war motoring being one of the finest, most prestigious models of the 1930s. Rolls-Royce's very first V12-engined design attracts as much attention today as it did eight decades ago, although the car you see here takes such attention-grabbing ability to a whole new level. This is a machine

that causes onlookers to stop and stare... and then to stare some more.

This highly polished copper-clad Phantom III is well known among Rolls-Royce aficionados as the Copper Kettle – and is nothing less than spectacular. It's one of those rare cars that stops both the casual observer and the seasoned car collector in their tracks, something that has been happening ever since

its dramatic change of appearance occurred more than sixty years ago.

Life for this Rolls-Royce started in the spring of 1937, produced at the firm's Derby factory as a rolling chassis bearing the factory works number 5200 and engine number J18S. Ordered by George Heath Ltd and costing just under £1554, the chassis was then sent to W.C. Atcherley, a quality coachbuilder located in Birmingham



that – although less well-known than many of its contemporaries – successfully built bodies for Aston-Martin, Hotchkiss, Bentley, Invicta, Minerva, Alfa Romeo and Daimler (amongst others). Just ten pre-war Rolls-Royce cars were fitted with bodies by this coachbuilder, however, and this car – 3CP38 – was the only Phantom III.

All company records from W.C. Atcherley are lost to history, although the Phantom III Technical Society states that it was originally fitted with a 6-7 passenger limousine body. The completed car was then sold by John Bryant Ltd to a Mr J.M. Nicholson of Edgbaston Park Road, Birmingham.

UNIQUE NEW LOOK

The onset of World War II saw most UK-based Phantom IIIs tucked away for safe keeping, and it's likely that this particular car followed suit. Records indicate that by 1945, however, 3CP38 was owned by John Gaul, a car dealer and property developer who admired Rolls-Royce engineering and was the proud owner of two H.J. Mulliner saloons at the time he purchased the Phantom III. Gaul adored flamboyantly styled cars, and had previously owned several coachbuilt creations, including a large Delahaye with bodywork by Saoutchik of Paris – one of Europe's most idiosyncratic coachbuilders.

By 1946, Gaul had made the decision to have his Phantom III re-bodied in order to create a contender for high-profile concours d'elegance events. He commissioned coachbuilder Freestone & Webb to create a new body for his Phantom III, the first of many Rolls-Royces that the company would produce bodywork for in the post-war years. This, however, was to be its last Phantom III project, a task that began with the removal of the car's original W.C. Atcherley limousine body – which has not been seen since.

Freestone & Webb made good progress, and by August 1946 the completed car was delivered to its delighted owner – complete with fabulous new sedanca de ville coachwork featuring copper-clad radiator grille, front and rear wings, running boards, bumpers and more. Now wearing the Freestone & Webb body number 1353 and proudly displaying the registration number FOY 1, the unique copper-trimmed stunner was ready for the spotlight.

The automotive press was first to



The Autocar magazine was very impressed with the on-board luxury of this bespoke Phantom III

shower this one-off creation with accolades, with Britain's *The Autocar* magazine proclaiming: 'This has very striking lines which fall gradually from the scuttle to the rear, giving a very low-built appearance. The panelling displays sharp edges which are reproduced also in the long sweeping wings which, with the running boards, are in burnished solid copper with a satin finish. In combination with the deep Chianti Red paintwork, the copper makes a striking finish for the radiator, mouldings, lamps, bumpers and other metal work.'

The bespoke approach continued inside, as *The Autocar* explained to its readers: 'Every comfort is given in the interior by the two deep armchair seats upholstered in fine-surfaced cloth of a deep wine colour relieved by lighter coloured piping. In front of the occupants, in the back of the division, are folding tables, a wireless set and a

heater, in light burr walnut cabinetwork which is exquisitely finished. The division glass, the rear blind and the offside front door window are electrically operated from the instrument board or from switches on top of the rear cabinet. All operational switches are labelled with Old English lettering.'

The car soon became known as Gaul's Copper Kettle, and went on to be displayed at many concours d'elegance events, including Deauville, Monte Carlo and Cannes, where period photos show it winning the Grand Prix (Best of Show). Freestone & Webb had, as commissioned by Mr Gaul, delivered a show winner, creating what would become one of the most famous coachbuilt Rolls-Royces of all time.

CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP

The Phantom III remained in the same ownership through to 1954, when »

FEATURE VEHICLE

ROLLS-ROYCE PHANTOM III



Freestone & Webb uniquely re-bodied the pre-war car in 1946



The copper finish brought extra challenges during restoration



it was sold to a Mr L Zimble. Rolls-Royce records indicate that it was then shipped to its next owner in South Africa in 1957, only to subsequently find its way to The Netherlands. It resurfaced in London, however, in November 1964, when it was offered for sale by well-known car dealers Frank Dale & Stepsons. The Copper Kettle was advertised in *Motor Sport* magazine, with the ad boasting: 'Documented history, 56,000 miles recorded, potential concours entry, fully restored and ready in December'. The asking price was a lofty £3250.

The Copper Kettle found itself on the move once more in 1966, exported once again to the USA and owned by Pittsburgh-based Richard Sinicki by 1970. He disassembled most of the car with the intention of restoring it, but (as is so often the case) never got any further than that. Indeed, the Copper Kettle was left in storage in its stripped-down state right through to 1992, at which point it was acquired by Charles Crail, a noted collector and classic car broker from Santa Barbara. Crail stored the disassembled car until 1999, when its current owner – Don Williams of Blackhawk, California – finally persuaded Crail (who he had known for many years) to sell it to him.

After nearly three decades of languishing in storage, in pieces and gathering dust, the Cooper Kettle had at last found a benefactor with the means and determination to bring it back to its former glory. Williams is widely known as one of the world's leading purveyors of rare classic cars, and has a particular penchant for

“This highly polished copper-clad Phantom III is well known among Rolls-Royce aficionados as the Copper Kettle – and is nothing less than spectacular”

Rolls-Royce. Indeed, the number of significant coachbuilt Rolls-Royce cars he has owned is staggering, a list that includes the famous Darrin Phantom II ‘Countess’ and the wildly flamboyant Phantom II by Figoni e Falaschi.

His newly acquired Phantom III was entrusted to specialist restorer Mike Fennel, the man responsible for restoring many of Williams’ other cars and who has won numerous awards at the Pebble Beach Concours d’Elegance. Fennel’s shop was ready to take on Williams’ project by 2001, when the stripped rolling shell arrived at his workshop looking rather sorry for itself. Fortunately for all concerned, however, the Copper Kettle

turned out to be remarkably solid thanks to careful storage over many years – with even its unique copper-plated items being in good order.

LONG-TERM PROJECT

To help with the details of the restoration, Williams called in Mark Tuttle to help as a consultant. He was, of course, the perfect choice thanks to his expert knowledge of the Phantom III, having been a judge at Pebble Beach for 25 years and chairman of the Phantom III Technical Society. Tuttle also lived close to Fennel’s shop and would make regular visits to check on the car’s progress during the restoration process.

With work under way, Tuttle reported his impressions of the car in the pages of the Phantom III Technical Society’s newsletter of September 2003: ‘It came from its long hibernation in pieces and boxes but, even this early in the process, the coachwork was impressive.’

Tuttle closely examined how the Copper Kettle had been constructed by Freestone & Webb: ‘The coachwork’s fuselage is traditional aluminium over ash framing. It is all wonderful windblown, razor-edged shapes, but the only copper on it will be its brightwork, fittings and hardware. Examining the underbelly of the copper fenders, running board and bonnet reveal how Freestone & Webb pulled off their »





“Work progressed, although the restoration process took longer than expected, largely due to all the copper work”

copper feat. Virtually all of the copper body parts are actually a doublet of sheet copper over steel, with the edges of the copper rolled over, crimped and soldered to the steel underlayment. The thought of the work involved in double skinning all these components is daunting and the weight of a body made this way is brought home when lifting one of the copper/steel fenders.’

Work progressed, although the

restoration process took longer than expected, largely due to all the copper work. ‘Those fenders were very hard to get right,’ admits Don Williams. ‘Not only are they copper, the flat sides are engine-turned as well. The top of the fenders have a brushed finish, and the radiator shell, headlights, bumpers and all of the small trim is a smooth gloss finish. To get all those finishes looking perfect was tricky and time consuming,

but we got it right in the end.’

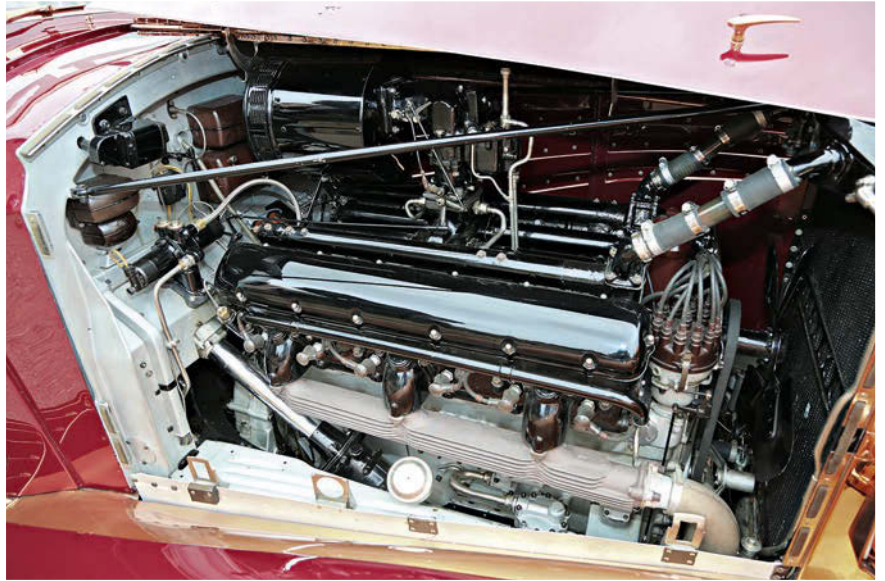
A major aid to the restoration was that original article in *The Autocar* magazine, which featured photographs of the car in 1946, as well as valuable data. Even so, the entire project took seven years to complete and involved the consultation of several Phantom III experts to ensure authenticity and correctness in every way. Eventually, however, the Copper Kettle was ready



to be shown to the world for the first time in decades, as proud owner Don Williams explains: 'I entered the car for the Pebble Beach Concours four times. We kept thinking it would be ready for the next show, but something would always come up. For Pebble Beach, it can't be anything less than perfect, so another year would go by, and another, and another. Finally it was ready for the 2008 show.'

When the newly restored Phantom III debuted at Pebble Beach, it created a sensation – just as it had more than sixty years earlier when it first appeared with its new bodywork. Thousands of people jockeyed for position to take photographs of the glistening copper-festooned Rolls-Royce, making it a favourite with both public and judges alike. The car was acclaimed the best in its class, as well as being awarded the prestigious Lucius Beebe Trophy – the award given to the Rolls-Royce considered to be most in the tradition of Lucius Beebe, a bon vivant who served among Pebble Beach's early judges.

That was ten years ago, of course, since when the Copper Kettle has been entered into only a handful of concours d'elegance events. Instead, this beautifully restored machine is kept on display at the Blackhawk Automobile Museum in Danville, California, where it has been admired by thousands of enthusiasts over the years. Always maintained and kept in perfect running order, it is occasionally exercised on the streets of the Blackhawk neighbourhood, near Don Williams' office and his collection of other world-class automobiles. So is this one-off Phantom III likely to change hands again at any point in the future? Not according to the ever-proud Williams: 'I wanted this car for myself – this one is special.' ■



V12 INNOVATION

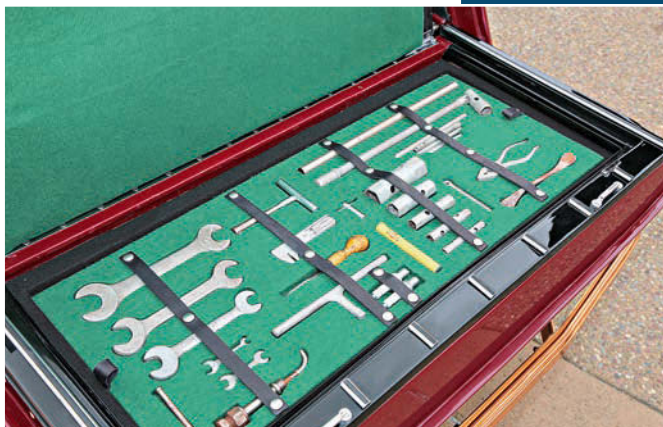
The Phantom III is renowned not just for being the first V12-engined Rolls-Royce (pre-dating the Silver Seraph by more than sixty years), but also for being the last model that Henry Royce had a hand in developing. Royce died in 1933, just a year into the development of the Phantom III – and three years before its eventual debut.

This was the last large Rolls-Royce model launched prior to World War II, and was an exclusive offering with 727 chassis built in total before production officially ceased in 1939 – with just one extra chassis being built the following year. Thanks to the bespoke nature of each car, however, some coachbuilders were still delivering completed examples of the Phantom III into the early 1940s.

At the heart of every Phantom III was its mighty 7.32-litre V12 engine, producing an impressive 165bhp at

3000rpm. Innovative new design features for the time included two spark plugs per cylinder, two ignition coils, two distributors, plus a single Zenith two-barrel carburettor. The cylinder blocks were angled at 60 degrees and were of the skeleton type (with wet liners), while the cylinder heads were aluminium. Power was transferred to the rear end via a manual four-speed transmission (featuring synchromesh on all but first gear), with an overdrive gearbox being introduced in 1938.

The Phantom III featured on-board jacking, as well as a one-shot chassis lubrication system that was operated by a lever inside the chauffeur's compartment. The heavy-duty chassis boasted independent front suspension, a coil-sprung system complemented by a semi-elliptic set-up at the rear.





WHEN ROLLS-ROYCE CAME SECOND

Just three years on from the launch of the annual European Car of the Year contest, Rolls-Royce found its highly impressive new Silver Shadow being awarded second place.

We take a look at the top three of 1966

WORDS: PAUL GUINNESS PICS: VARIOUS

If 1966 is remembered for one thing in the UK, it's England's victory over Germany in the World Cup final, winning 4-2 at Wembley in front of a TV audience of more than 32 million. It's the kind of event that sports fans never forget, and which helps to

make one particular year stand out from the others of the same decade.

There was more to Britain in 1966 than sporting success, however, for it was also the year when Harold Wilson won a 96-seat majority for Labour in a General Election; when John

Lennon announced in an interview that The Beatles were now more popular than Jesus; and when the launch of the Barclaycard marked the arrival of the UK's first ever credit card.

On the motoring front, meanwhile, 1966 marked the third year of Europe's

prestigious new Car of the Year award – and the first time it was won by a non-British model. Following on from success for the Rover 2000 and Austin 1800 in 1964 and '65 respectively, the latest Car of the Year accolade went to Renault with its innovative new 16. Perhaps more controversially, the Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow and Oldsmobile Toronado took silver and bronze respectively, proving that a new model didn't have to be aimed at a mass European market in order to do well in the contest.

Out of all the new cars launched in 1965, did the Renault, Rolls-Royce and Oldsmobile really deserve their podium positions in the following year's Car of the Year? We take a look.

1ST PLACE: RENAULT 16

When you look at the family cars being built in Britain at the time of the Renault 16's launch in 1965, it's easy to see why the latest French offering seemed so advanced. While rivals like Ford stuck with the tried and tested formula of rear-wheel drive three-box saloons, the 16 came with front-wheel drive and a supremely modern five-door hatchback body style.

It was a combination that made the Renault 16 an incredibly spacious family car by standards of the time, crossing the boundary between saloon and estate, and effectively creating a whole new market sector. The company had already enjoyed sales success with another five-door hatch (the utilitarian Renault 4 of 1961-on) and was adopting the same format further upmarket.

These days, it's perhaps hard to



Winning the CoTY award in 1966 was the innovative Renault 16

appreciate just what a revolution the 16 was – and what a brave move it represented for Renault. Would the car-buying public of France and the rest of Europe take to a full-size family model without a 'proper' boot? Renault needn't have worried; not only did the 16 go on to sell almost 1.85 million examples in total, it enjoyed a career that lasted right through to the start of the 'Eighties.

The 16 started off in life with a 1.5-litre four-cylinder engine, soon upgraded to 1595cc for more effortless performance. The 16TS then appeared in 1968, offering an increase in power to 88bhp and – with an eye on the sporting family man – a top speed of around 100mph. But it was the smart new 16TX of 1973-79 that was the ultimate version, with quad headlamps, better trim and a more luxurious interior, plus 93bhp from

its new 1647cc powerplant – enough to see it top 105mph flat out.

2ND PLACE: ROLLS-ROYCE SILVER SHADOW

Rolls-Royce traditionally (and famously) suggested that theirs were the best cars in the world, yet here was the company's new Silver Shadow being beaten in the Car of the Year contest by a relatively humble French hatchback. The launch of a brand new model from Rolls-Royce has always been a cause for celebration, given that its cars tend to enjoy lengthy careers. So did the Silver Shadow deserve to beat the Renault to the top?

At the time of its launch, the Silver Shadow's 'best car' claim was indeed justified, despite the newcomer upsetting some of Rolls-Royce's more traditional customers who balked at its impressively modern approach. And yet even those who disapproved must have realised that the debut of the Silver Shadow was one on the most significant moments in Rolls-Royce's history.

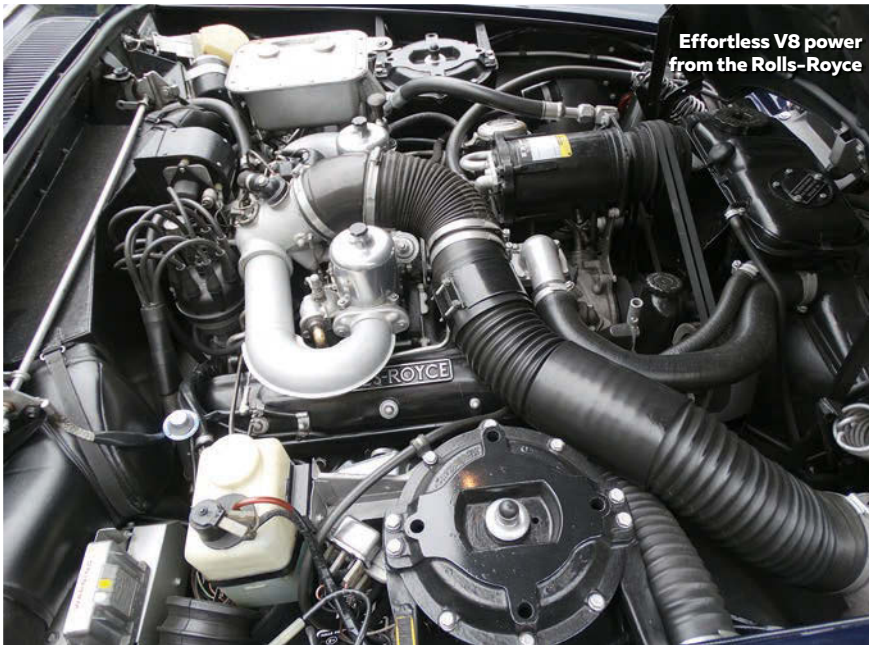
This was the first Rolls-Royce to feature monocoque construction in place of a separate chassis; and with sharp, angular styling, all-independent self-leveling suspension and disc brakes all round, this latest model was (by Rolls-Royce standards) almost state-of-the-art.

Britain's motoring press marveled at the changes: 'A new Rolls-Royce is an event of a decade', explained *Autocar* magazine in October 1965: 'Except for its 6230cc aluminium vee-8 engine and modified automatic transmission, the »



The Silver Shadow brought its maker into the modern world

SPECIAL FEATURE
1966 CAR OF THE YEAR



**Effortless V8 power
from the Rolls-Royce**

Silver Shadow is new in every respect'. The same magazine insisted that Rolls-Royce's switch to monocoque construction meant it had 'broken new ground technically'. But would such a transformation deter the company's more traditional customers of the time? Fortunately not, as the Silver Shadow days proved to be Rolls-Royce's most successful, with more than 30,000 examples of the Shadow I and II built by the time its replacement – the Silver Spirit – arrived in 1980. No Rolls-Royce before – or since – was ever as popular.

During its long and successful career, improvements were made to the Silver Shadow. Its 6230cc V8 was enlarged to 6750cc by 1970, giving improved performance to match its superlative ride, its smooth GM400 transmission and its opulent feel. And then there was the arrival of the Silver Shadow II in 1977, complete with upgraded suspension

“..the Silver Shadow days proved to be Rolls-Royce's most successful, with more than 30,000 examples of the Shadow I and II built”



**The Silver Shadow was the
car to aspire to in 1966**

and rack and pinion steering for a major improvement in driving style, although the addition of a front spoiler (along with other cosmetic updates) was perhaps more controversial.

Just like the Renault 16, the Silver Shadow enjoyed a fifteen-year career and significant sales success, even if its positioning in the market was somewhat different.

3RD PLACE: OLDSMOBILE TORONADO

An interesting statistic from the 1966 Car of the Year contest is that two out of the top three featured a front-wheel drive layout, giving a clear indication of the future direction of automotive design. However, the front-drive contender that took third place was no European hatchback or Mini-rivalling city car; instead it was a big (by European standards) American V8 coupe going by the name of Oldsmobile Toronado.

The fact that the Toronado featured drive to its front wheels was unusual by American standards, a market where front-wheel drive was more of an alien concept than in Europe. Oldsmobile had been working on a new front-wheel drive layout since 1958, however, which meant that by the time the Toronado came to market seven years later, it was as well proven as anybody could realistically expect, with developmental cars having clocked up an impressive 1.5 million miles in the process.

The first-generation Toronado of 1965-70 was a two-door fastback offering a choice of 425cu.in. or 455cu.in. (roughly 7.0- and 7.5-litre) V8s, with



a minimum of 385bhp on tap, linked to three-speed Turbo-Hydramatic automatic transmission. It was the first GM car to feature a subframe-based construction, as well as Oldsmobile's new Unitized Power Package (UPP), which was developed to ensure the front-drive Toronado's engine/transmission could be accommodated into an engine bay no larger than a regular rear-wheel drive model's.

The Toronado went on to be a success by coupe standards, with almost 41,000 built during its first year on sale. Just as importantly, it won critical acclaim from the motoring press, not only achieving third place in the European Car of the Year contest but also being crowned Motor Trend magazine's 1966 Car of the Year.

THE VERDICT

It would be a brave motoring historian who suggested that the Renault 16 didn't deserve to win the 1966 Car of the Year award. Here was the

model that brought front-wheel drive hatchback-style innovation to the family car sector, bridging the gap between conventional saloons and estates, and shaping the future of European car design along the way. Its importance to the family car market both then and now is considerable.

The Silver Shadow, however, was just as revolutionary in its own way. Here was the most modern newcomer ever brought to market by Rolls-Royce, with its monocoque design and various mechanical innovations (including its self-levelling independent suspension) marking a major step forward for the company. The Silver Shadow transformed the world's most prestigious car manufacturer from a creator of glorious but arguably dated limousines into the proud producer of an up-to-date gem.

The Silver Shadow was a reinterpretation of motoring opulence, brilliantly attracting 'new money' and a whole new generation who wanted the ultimate in luxury but who also craved a touch of modernity. Winning the 1966 Car of the Year contest would have been a fitting accolade for the newcomer – although being just 17 points behind in second place was an impressive result in itself. ■



1966 CAR OF THE YEAR: THE FINAL RESULT

1ST: Renault 16 – 98 points

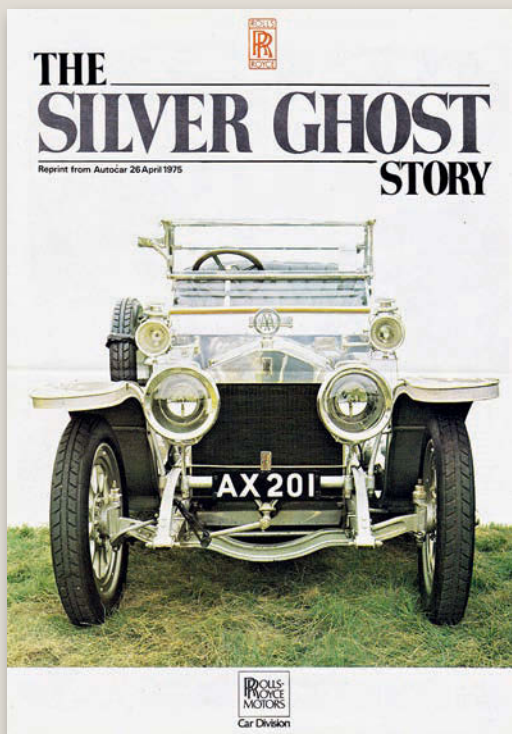
2ND: Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow – 81 points

3RD: Oldsmobile Toronado – 59 points

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Paul Guinness takes 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

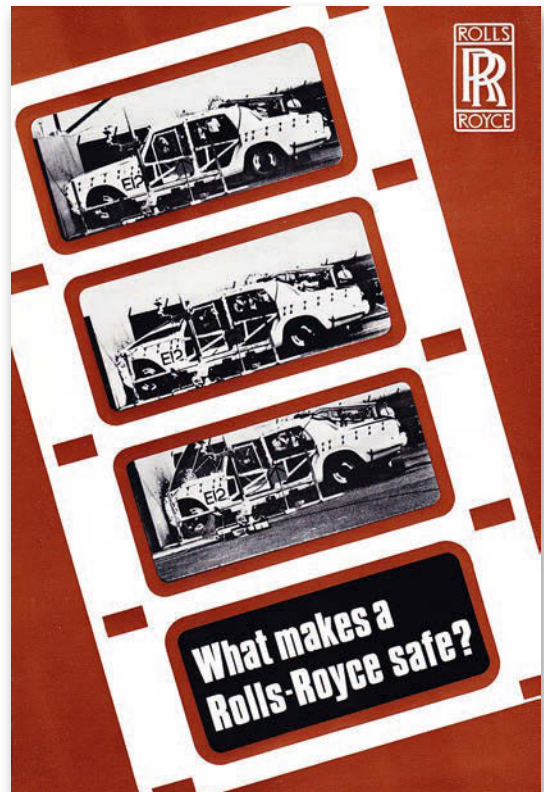


SILVER GHOST TRIBUTE

Reprinted by Rolls-Royce from the April 26th, 1975 issue of *Autocar* magazine was this eight-page tribute to the Silver Ghost, effectively a pull-out supplement that included a detailed cutaway drawing of this most famous model across the double-page centre spread.

Many of the Silver Ghost's achievements were detailed, including the completion of a 2000-mile reliability trial in May 1907: 'At the completion of the 2000 miles, the Silver Ghost had acquitted herself well, having been driven from the south coast of Scotland in top gear and having achieved a flying quarter-mile of 52.94mph in the Bexhill track on which she was also driven at a timed speed of 3.4mph in top gear'.

What also impressed was the 20.86mpg returned by that remarkable machine: 'Not bad for a six-cylinder 7-litre car that was no lightweight at 4382lb including passengers and all luggage'.



WHAT MAKES A ROLLS-ROYCE SAFE?

That was the question posed on the cover of this fascinating publication from 1972, in which Rolls-Royce went into detail about the reassuring safety features of the latest Silver Shadow and Corniche models. The brochure explained that 'the safety, comfort and wellbeing of driver and passengers has always been a major concern for the engineers who design and develop Rolls-Royce motor cars'.

The current range boasted primary safety features that included 'disc brakes on all four wheels', handling that was aided by 'automatic ride height control', as well as 'tyres specially developed for the Silver Shadow and Corniche by Rolls-Royce Motors and the tyre manufacturers'.

Then came the list of secondary safety features, which included 'impact absorbing front and rear section of bodyshell', plus 'burst-proof door locks' and a 'penetration resisting laminated windscreen'. It was all very reassuring to the Rolls-Royce buyer of the early 1970s.



Silver Shadow II



EXTRA LENGTH

Published in 1978 was this brace of double-sided leaflets promoting a couple of variations on the Silver Shadow theme: the standard Silver Shadow II and the extended-wheelbase Silver Wraith II, each one set against a typically British-looking backdrop. The rear of each leaflet featured the technical spec of the car in question, the biggest difference being their wheelbase lengths – with the Silver Wraith II boasting a 124-inch wheelbase, an increase of four inches over its regular cousin.

That extra length was subtle enough not to alter the overall look of the car too drastically, whilst still managing to endow it with a useful amount of extra rear legroom. A chauffeur's division was available as an extra-cost option, as the Silver Wraith leaflet explained: 'On cars with a division, an electrically operated glass screen separates the front and rear compartments'. And although both models came with an 'AM/FM stereo radio with stereophonic tape playing equipment', the Silver Wraith buyer



Silver Wraith II



also benefited from 'separate radio installations in the front and rear'.

The Silver Wraith also came with an Everflex-covered roof as standard, adding a touch of extra prestige.

When it came to pricing, however, the Silver Shadow II looked almost bargain-like by 1978, with its list price of £26,740 drastically undercutting the £31,485 Silver Wraith II.

QUALITY LEATHER

Another classic from the '70s is this double-page advert for Connolly leather, issued in May 1977 and featuring the all-important hide-clad interior of the latest Corniche Convertible. The colour photograph showed an affluent-looking couple (her at the wheel, him stood alongside the car) with a suitably upmarket Georgian property as a backdrop, complete with obligatory sweeping gravel drive. Opposite the image was a page of text, which detailed why Connolly was the perfect choice of leather for any Rolls-Royce.

As the ad explained, 'leather seats are what make a comfortable car a luxury car... especially when it's supplied by Connolly'. This company apparently had 'nearly 100 years of experience providing the right hides for the right purpose', with its impressive team of 124 craftsmen

having a 'grand total of over 2000 years of service'. Connolly leather was used by many of the world's 'leading designers and manufacturers',

although the company was still open for new business: 'Busy as we are, we are still happy to receive new enquiries: Mr Tim Connolly is the man to ring'.



Corniche by Rolls-Royce. Leather seat by J & S Green Ltd. Motor seat by John Carr (London) Ltd.

Sitting Pretty with Connolly Leather

Leather seats are what makes a comfortable car a luxury car. Nothing can touch it for quality and comfort. Especially when it's supplied by Connolly.

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And when it comes to after-sales service, ours is the best in the industry. In fact, the word 'Connollyising' has become the accepted way to describe the restoration of leather to its original lustre and condition.

Leading designers and manufacturers in this country and abroad have helped to make Connolly Britain's most famous name in leather. And today, more than ever, it's the one they ask for.

But, busy as we are, we are still happy to receive new enquiries: Mr. Tim Connolly is the man to ring.



Leather comes naturally to Connolly.

Connolly Bros. (Carriers) Ltd., 39-43 Chalfont Street, Euston Road, London NW1 1JE. Telephone 01-387 1661. Telex 27495.



Rolls-Royce headlamp cleaning system



HEADLAMP CLEANING

It's not often that an individual press photograph is released to show a new kind of headlamp cleaning system, but that's exactly what happened when Rolls-Royce began fitting the Silver Shadow with the set-up shown here. Compared with the fairly basic headlamp wash/wipes fitted to some upmarket cars of the time, the Rolls-Royce's brush-based system was in a suitably different league altogether. No wonder the company decided that a close-up photograph of this latest innovation deserved to be sent out to the press.

STYLING EXPERTISE

If you're familiar with the name of John Blatchley, you'll probably already know that he finished his career at Rolls-Royce and Bentley as the company's chief styling engineer from 1955 to '69. Unable to fight in World War II due to a heart murmur, Blatchley joined Rolls-Royce as early as 1940, initially as a draughtsman before becoming a stylist in the company's car division three years later.

This wonderful old image shows Blatchley (centre) in his final role of chief stylist, overseeing work on a selection of what look like clay models. During his time with Rolls-Royce and Bentley, he had a hand in refining the look of the MkVI prior to its introduction in 1946, as well as the Bentley R-Type of 1952. After plans for a subsequent new-generation car were rejected for being too modern, Blatchley embarked upon a clever redesign that was immediately



accepted by the board, leading to the Bentley S1 and Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud of 1955. The final standard car that this stalwart of design was

involved in was the Silver Shadow and T-Series design of 1965, ensuring he left behind one of the most impressive legacies of any British car designer.

REBIRTH OF A LEGEND

The world-famous Continental moniker made a welcome return in 2003, when Bentley unveiled its first all-new model since Volkswagen's takeover of the brand five years earlier. Badged as the Continental GT, the newcomer was instantly recognisable as a Bentley thanks to its familiar front grille and cleverly incorporated rear haunches; it was a thoroughly modern offering in every respect, whilst still managing to evoke memories of classic Bentley coupes from decades earlier.

These two press photographs date from the Continental GT's launch year, and are therefore among the earliest

issued by Bentley for use in news stories of the time. This crucial new model was unveiled at the 2003 Geneva Motor Show, while in the UK it made its presence felt at that year's Goodwood Festival of Speed and the Bentley Drivers' Club's annual meeting at Silverstone.

It's hard to believe that a full fifteen years have passed since the Continental GT arrived, giving Bentley a crucial new entry-level sportster in the process. A decade and a half later, the Continental GT is now a temptingly priced modern classic – and if you fancy one, there's plenty of buying advice to be found in this issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*.



New Bentley Continental GT



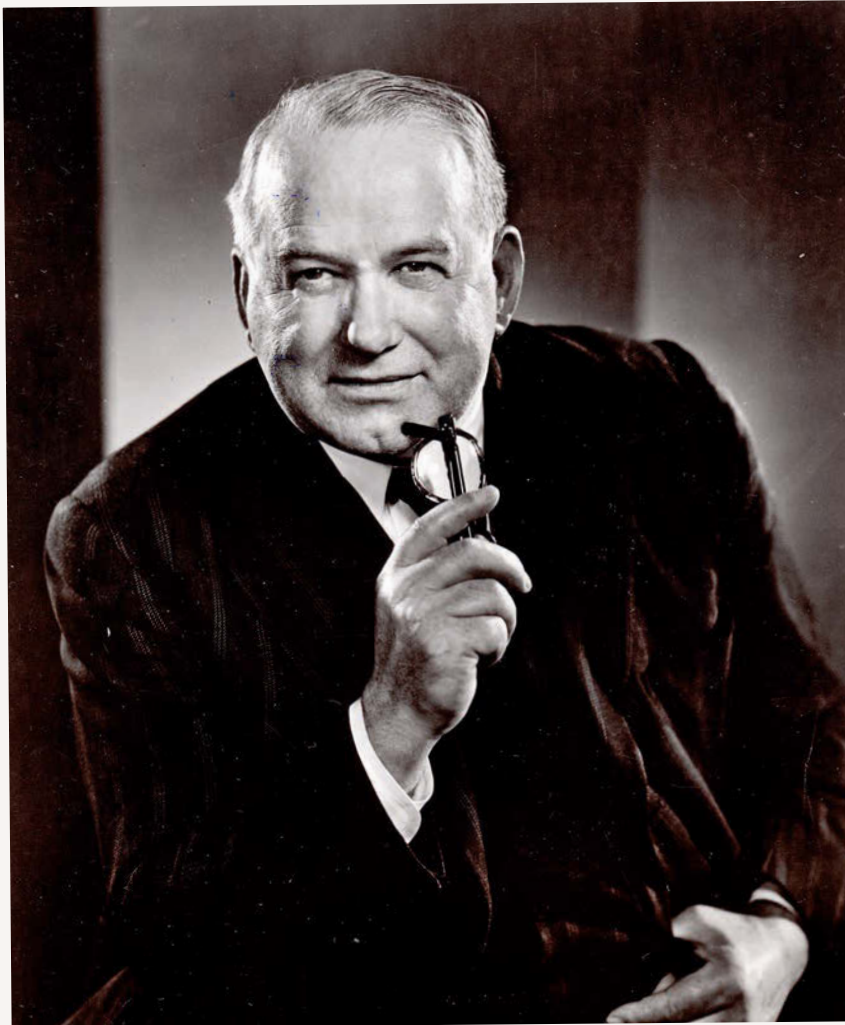
Bentley Continental GT

• THE MEN BEHIND THE MARQUE •

ERNEST HIVES

From his early days as Charles Royce's chauffeur through to his eventual appointment as company chairman, Ernest Hives arguably did more than anyone to consolidate Rolls-Royce's reputation within the car and aircraft industries. We take a look back at the countless achievements of the man who became Lord Hives of Hazeldene

WORDS: JEREMY SATHERLEY PHOTOGRAPHY: SIR HENRY ROYCE MEMORIAL FOUNDATION



A 22-year-old motor mechanic on his way to a new job had just got off the train and was not impressed by what he saw: "When I got to Derby in 1908 and walked out of the station, it was raining hard. Looking up Midland Road, it seemed so drab that I spun a coin to decide whether to go on to Rolls-Royce or catch the next train home". Fortunately for Rolls-Royce, the coin told Ernest Walter Hives to stay – which he did, for half a century.

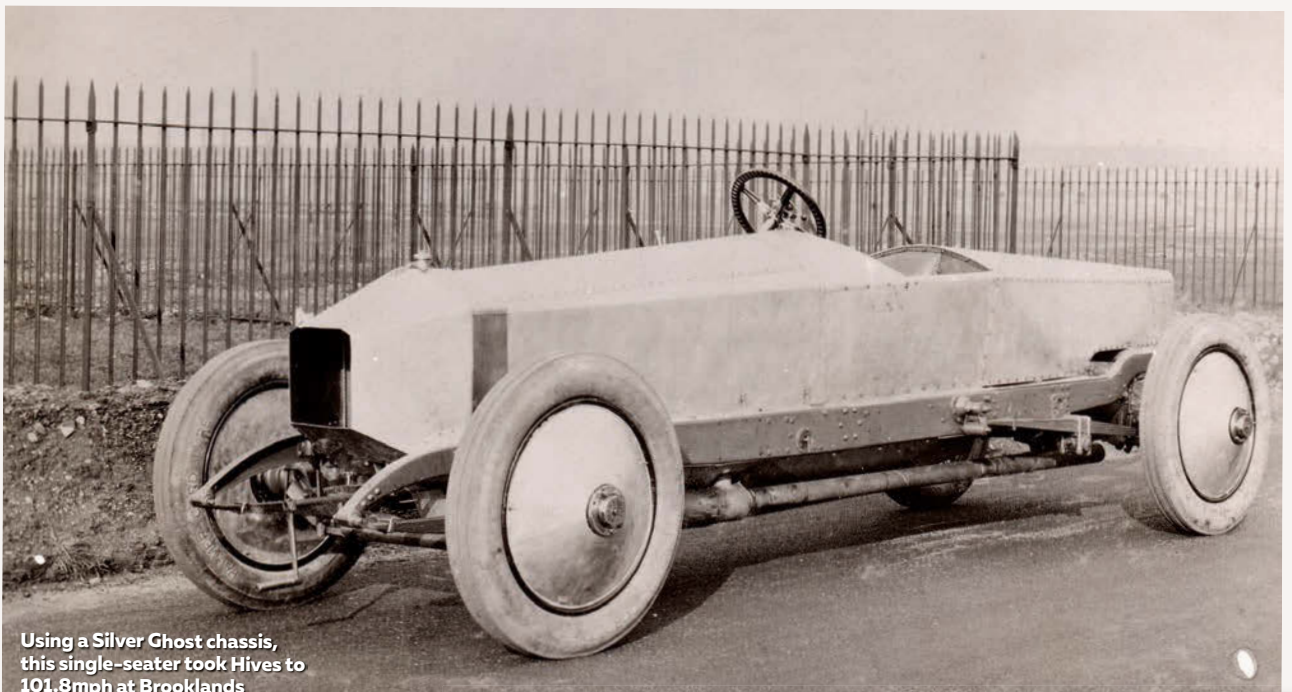
Born in Earley, just outside Reading, in April 1886, the youngest of a dozen children of a schoolmaster, Hives was only 12 when he began an apprenticeship to a local engineering company with an outlet in cars. Fascinated by the horseless carriage, he added to his fast-accumulating technical knowledge by staying

on after hours to learn more from some of the wise old night-shift staff. He was soon starting up and moving cars around the garage, and by the age of 14 had become so proficient that he was out on the road teaching customers to drive.

Such circumstances brought Hives, when aged about 17, into contact with The Hon C S Rolls, allegedly when he



Hives 19-20 years old



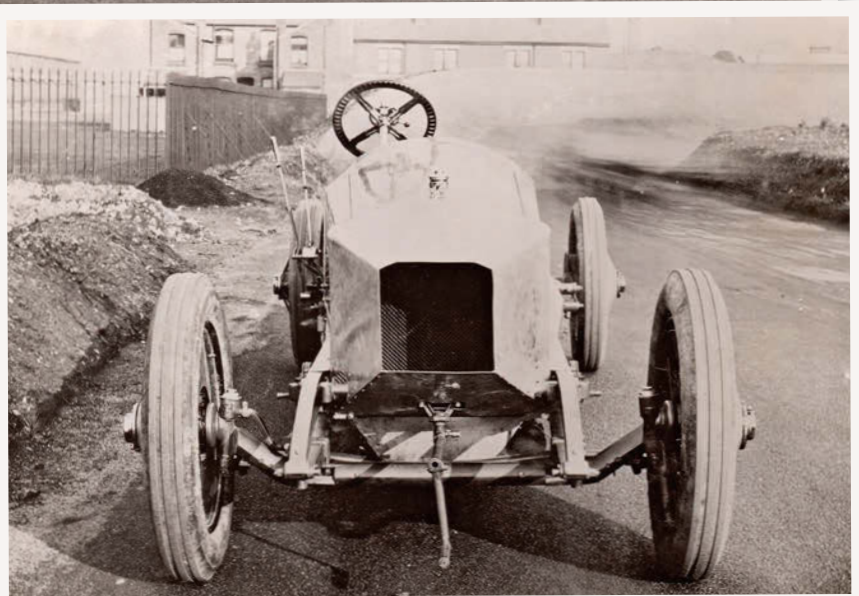
Using a Silver Ghost chassis, this single-seater took Hives to 101.8mph at Brooklands

rectified a problem with the aristocrat's car. Rolls was impressed and offered him a job, first as his chauffeur and then at his car dealership and repair works at Lillie Hall in Fulham. After a while, Hives moved on and spent three years at Napier, for whom he may have driven in the 1907/08 Scottish Trials, and raced at the new Brooklands track's second-ever meeting.

TESTING, TESTING

With that subsequent rain-soaked spin of a coin in 1908, Hives took the job of tester at Rolls-Royce, a role that was seen as vital to the company; having established a new standard of excellence with the 40/50 (or Silver Ghost), testing and experimental work had become a crucial element of maintaining the breed. It was the ideal job for Hives, undaunted by the prospect of testing cars exposed to everything the weather could throw at him, usually conducted against a backdrop of challenging roads and primitive, unreliable lighting at night.

By 1911, Hives' experience made him the natural choice when it came to driving a Silver Ghost from London to Edinburgh in top gear. With its lightweight chassis and – by Rolls-Royce standards – high-compression engine (3.5 to 1), the car achieved over 24mpg. Adapted via a single-



seater body devoid of wings and lamps, Hives then took the same machine to 101.8mph at Brooklands.

The rigours of the subsequent 1912 and 1913 Alpine Trials concentrated Hives' efforts on rectifying various Silver Ghost issues, including unsuitable gearing for such challenging escapades, as well as high-altitude boiling, stub-axle failures and chassis-flexing. Those last two problems were assessed on Hives' ruthless chassis bump rig, a bespoke rolling road specially designed for arduous testing.

The outbreak of World War I, however, saw the beginning of a new chapter in Rolls-Royce's history, with Henry Royce so keen to embark on aeronautical engineering that he had his first design – the V12 Eagle – ready for running demonstrations by March 1915. Hives, faced with the new challenges of in-flight carburation, associated oil-pressure behaviour and extensive bench-testing as part of an exhaustive experimental procedure, rose predictably to the task. He was made head of the Experimental Department »

THE MEN BEHIND THE MARQUE ERNEST HIVES

in 1916, earning the recognition of an MBE at the war's end. From that point on, his involvement with the company's aviation interests became an inseparable part of his remit.

BRUTES AND BENTLEYS

Royce visited the factory only once in the inter-war years, working exclusively from his retreats in West Wittering, Sussex, or Le Canadel in the South of France. Resident draughtsmen turned his concepts into technical drawings, which were sent back to Hives' experimental department for making up into parts. Occasionally Hives would bring a test chassis or complete car to either location for the great man's approval, and Royce would sometimes return the compliment with gifts for Hives' wife, Gertrude – including butter or fruit if it was West Wittering, or boxes of mimosa from his French garden.

There were times in Hives' travels, however, when his driving of a Rolls-

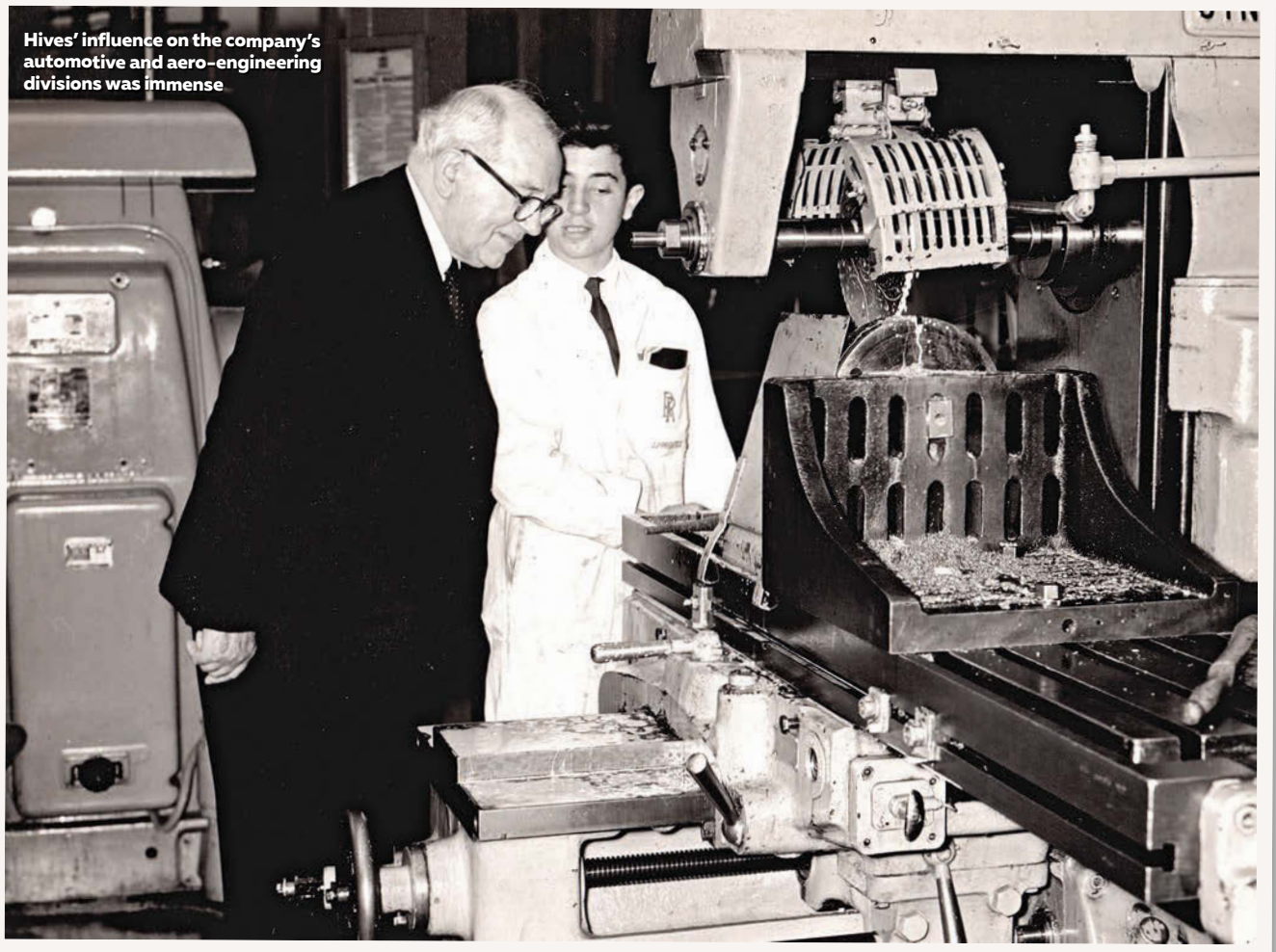
“With that subsequent rain-soaked spin of a coin in 1908, Hives took the job of tester at Rolls-Royce, a role that was seen as vital to the company”

Royce proved to be 'red rag to a bull' with onlookers. Vegetable porters pelted Hives with rotten fruit on the day that the car he was delivering broke down in Covent Garden market, for example. And to add to a difficult day out, the customer paid for his new car in gold sovereigns, which Hives had to hide under his clothing and tip into his boots.

The 1920s brought constant demands from Royce to testing and development, with Hives and colleagues being despatched to the motor show of 1921 in order to examine possible Rolls-Royce Goshawk (20hp) rivals such as the 3.4-litre Dietrich and Fiat 510. Cars would also be acquired for comparative purposes, with Royce being particularly

interested in evaluating a 15.9hp Delage, which Hives found to be “a proper bunch of trouble, a nasty, heavy brute”. It didn't help that it had been bought secondhand, with Hives then insisting that any future cars bought for evaluation should be submitted to him first for fettling. In 1925, Hives reported on a Fiat Forty limousine, the £1145 price of which approached Rolls-Royce levels. He thought that it rode like a lorry, the “carburettor wanted humouring all the time”, and its brakes were inferior to a Studebaker's.

Hives' main achievement under the old regime was successfully arguing against Royce over the proposed specification for the new Bentley 3½-litre. Royce



Hives' influence on the company's automotive and aero-engineering divisions was immense



THE TOUGHEST TEST

The early years of motoring saw numerous trials and challenges to prove the durability of the motor car, one of the most torturous being the Alpine Trials of 1910-on. It was in the 1913 event, however, that Rolls-Royce achieved worldwide fame, with three modified Silver Ghosts making up an official works team, plus a privately-entered example.

The cars performed faultlessly over the 1820-mile course, a route that took in northern Italy and modern day Slovenia, as well as much of Austria. It was a severe test of engine, gearbox and brakes, with the competing cars tackling inclines in excess of 27%. The exceptional performance of the Rolls-Royces drew universal praise, with observers amazed that a group of luxury tourers could climb such steep inclines at high speed.

favoured either the supercharged 2360cc Peregrine engine he'd been working on, or a 3.0-litre straight-eight. But Hives suggested the more cost-effective alternative of adapting the existing Rolls-Royce 20/25 (3669cc) unit with a modified head and camshaft, revised compression ratio and twin SU carburettors – creating the J1 engine. He agreed to test the Peregrine, but in doing so it was obvious there would be too many problems to overcome. And so Hives got his way and the J1 made an admirable unit for an excellent new model – provided it wasn't over-revved. Nevertheless, in 1935 Hives was concerned to discover after sampling the French 3½-litre Hotchkiss (price range £785 to £850) that it outperformed the Bentley (£1100 plus coachwork) and was let down only by a noisy exhaust system and insensitive steering.

LIFE AFTER ROYCE

Royce's death in 1933 left a major void in the company, not least when it came to the design team that had for so long been dominated by the old man and his cloistered way of working. But when the firm's general works manager, Arthur Wormald, passed away three years later, Hives was elected to the board to succeed him – and made his presence felt very quickly. His first act was to split up the aero-engineering and chassis divisions, moving aero into another part of the factory. With their very different practices, especially with the Merlin on stream, it was no longer practical to have both functions running side-by-side; besides which, it gave each a proper identity.

Then there was the question of staff.



Too many, he felt, were promoted on length of service rather than merit, while too few had been outside the works – where much of its machinery was over 20 years old – to witness modern methods of car manufacture. "All the brains," he said, "have to go into

the designing, planning and into the machine tools". As for the purchasing department, he considered its methods outdated and its costs too high.

The financial question brought him on to the cars themselves. Describing them as "super-expensive", with chassis »

“Royce’s death in 1933 left a major void, not least when it came to the design team that had for so long been dominated by the old man and his cloistered way of working”

prices ranging from £1100 to £1900 without bodywork, he was concerned about their value for money when a £415 Rover 20hp he tried proved “an excellent car”. And right from the time he visited Rolls-Royce’s unsuccessful Springfields, Massachusetts subsidiary in 1920, nobody was more aware than Hives of the superior quality of certain American cars in terms of ride, bodywork, performance and silence of running. In the mid-1930s, when many American makes were still actively marketed in Britain, even a £330 Chevrolet rode better than a Rolls-Royce, while Derby’s evaluation of a 1936 Cadillac V8 revealed that its top-gear pick-up was faster than the acceleration of a Bentley 4¼ in third gear. Useful lessons were also learned from consulting manufacturers such as Packard and former Rolls-Royce man Maurice Olley at General Motors when it came to the development of independent front suspension for the Phantom III, Wraith and Bentley MkV.

Hives’ major objective for the car division was greater rationalisation to contain costs without compromising

on quality, thus avoiding repetition of the situation with the complex 7.3-litre V12 Phantom III of 1936-39 – a car that, magnificent though it was, had little mechanical interchangeability with the 25/30 and was a demanding source of warranty claims, from hydraulic-tappet oil starvation to engine failures caused by flat-out autobahn driving. And so Messrs R W Harvey-Bailey and W A Robotham were given the task of designing a new range of cars with interchangeable components.

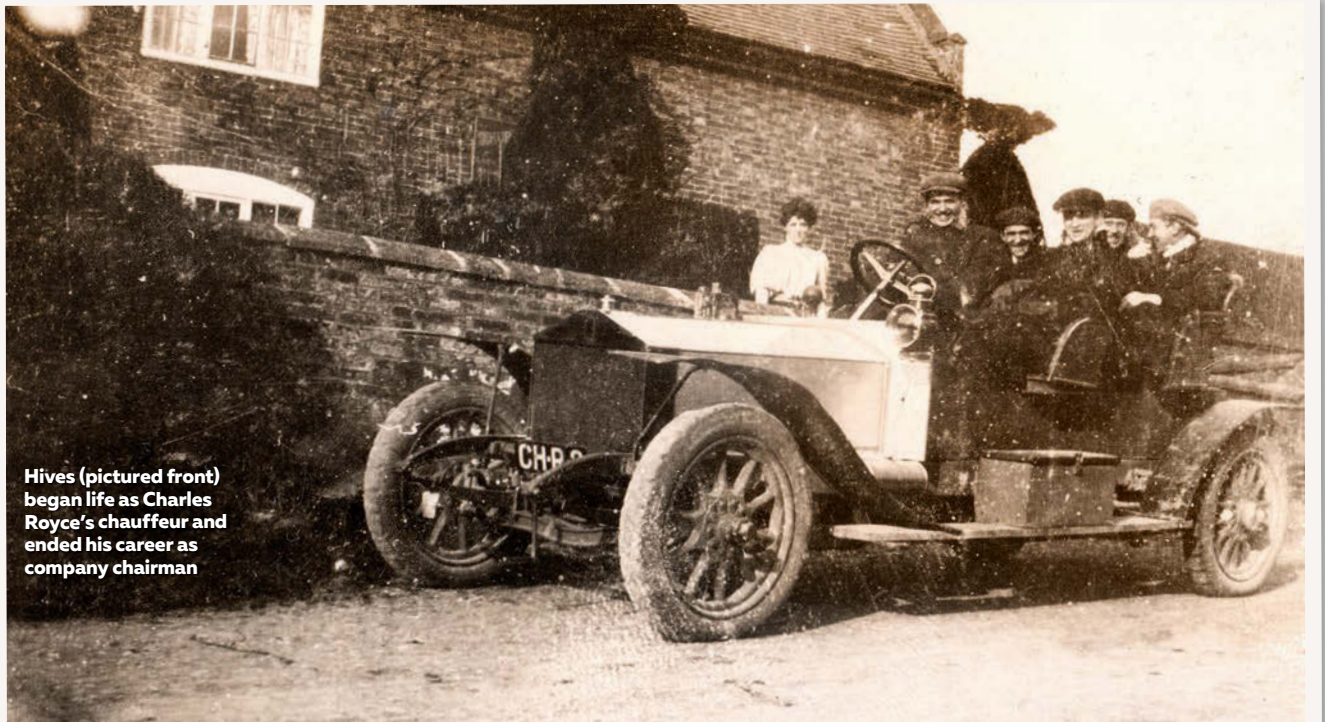
If it hadn’t been for the outbreak of World War II, 1939’s Earls Court Motor Show would have been big news for Derby, with the new Bentley MkV, the exotic high-performance Bentley Corniche coachbuilt by Pourtout, and the Rolls-Royce Wraith – sharing the same 4257cc engine design – all in production. Nevertheless, Hives’ policy paid off further just after the war with the 1946 introduction of the Bentley MkVI – the first of the marque to leave the factory as a complete car with the Standard Steel body, followed by the same treatment for

the Rolls-Royce Silver Dawn version in 1949. Such models made sense in a changing social climate, with fewer customers ordering bodies from a shrinking coachbuilding industry.

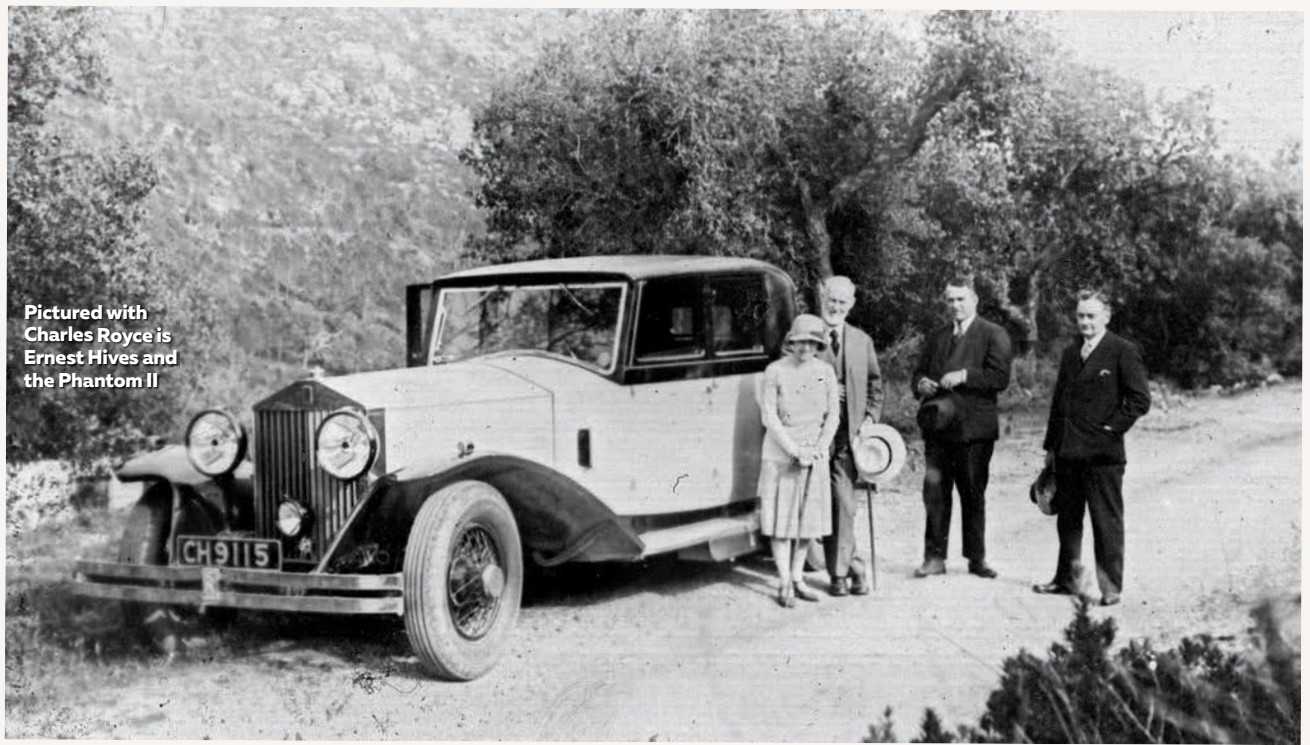
Although on becoming chairman, Hives had been allotted one of the Rolls-Royce straight-eights originally under development for the 1940 Motor Show, Hives’ favourite personal transport was a Bentley R-type. He was a fast driver and those who rode with him commented on his sixth sense when taking a line through blind corners.

SUCCESS IN THE SKY

Rolls-Royce’s prowess when it came to aero-engineering had been indisputable for many years, with its reputation for excellence firmly established by the end of World War I – although momentum was then interrupted by a change in policy. Managing director Claude Johnson insisted on priority for car manufacture, and although Royce was working in his remote outposts on the Kestrel and other engine designs,



Hives (pictured front) began life as Charles Royce’s chauffeur and ended his career as company chairman



Pictured with Charles Royce is Ernest Hives and the Phantom II

much of the company's aero activity in the 1920s was restricted to overhauls.

Hives deplored this situation, but fortunately things changed for the better when the firm was approached to design an engine for the 1929 Schneider Trophy. Begun in 1913, the Schneider was a prestigious event for fast seaplanes, which Italy had already won three times, thus becoming an important showcase for dictator Mussolini and his flamboyant Marshal Balbo. Royce's recently-introduced V12 Buzzard engine was quickly adapted to become the 'R' unit, and the gamble paid off – with the Supermarine S6 winning for Britain at 357mph. For the 1931 Trophy (this was by now a biennial event), 400mph became the goal and Hives suggested spicing-up the fuel, which his team did with a 60/30/10 per cent mix of methanol, benzole and acetone. As well as being an excellent paint and sealant stripper, the cocktail provided an extra 250bhp and the S6B won comfortably at 407.5 mph.

MAKING THE MERLIN

With this success behind it, the 'R' engine was key to re-establishing Rolls-Royce as a top contender for RAF contracts. The Kestrel engine, for instance, proved itself in dozens of

domestic and foreign aircraft, including – ironically – mid-1930s Heinkel, Messerschmitt and Junkers prototypes. But as early as 1932 the far-sighted Hives saw the need for a more powerful fighter engine, and before Royce died in 1933 secured his agreement to proceed with what became known as the PV12 ('Private Venture') engine, incorporating as much 'R' type and Kestrel technology as possible.

By February 1935, the PV12 had been trialled in a Hawker Hart biplane and (under its soon to be well-known Merlin name) went on to power the maiden flights in November 1935 and March 1936 of Hawker Hurricane and Supermarine Spitfire prototypes, while the Fairey Battle light bomber became the first production aircraft to fly with this unit. Initially there were reliability problems to overcome and, by the time of the Merlin C version, Hives had attended to recasting the crankcase and cylinder blocks into three separate pieces after problems with cracking and internal coolant leaks.

Further work was done on the cylinder heads with the Merlin Es and Fs before reaching fuller production with the Merlin G (or II). Hives resisted Air Ministry "bullyings and threats" over timescales, with the pressure on to supply Fairey Battle units. The fact that it took

until early 1938 for Merlin deliveries to flow in significant numbers may also have been down to Hives keeping an "intelligent eye" on production timing, to ensure "there would not be a stack of engines piled up in some stores which could have been better and more up-to-date engines if more time was spent on them". Meanwhile, Hives had been faced with the added problem during 1937 of securing enough skilled labour and being at the mercy of sub-contractors who, when chased up on overdue deliveries, could tell Rolls-Royce to take the work away, safe in the knowledge they had other profitable and easier jobs to fall back on.

WAR CLOUDS

Hives' decision to expand on Rolls-Royce's aero-engineering during the 1930s was a wise one, although the outbreak of World War II presented many challenges for the firm – most of which tested Hives' outstanding organisational abilities to the limit, not least when dealing with officialdom. "We have no anxiety whatever in producing more and more engines," he had said in December 1938. "We feel, however, that our job would be easier if the Air Ministry took us into their confidence and told us »

THE MEN BEHIND THE MARQUE ERNEST HIVES

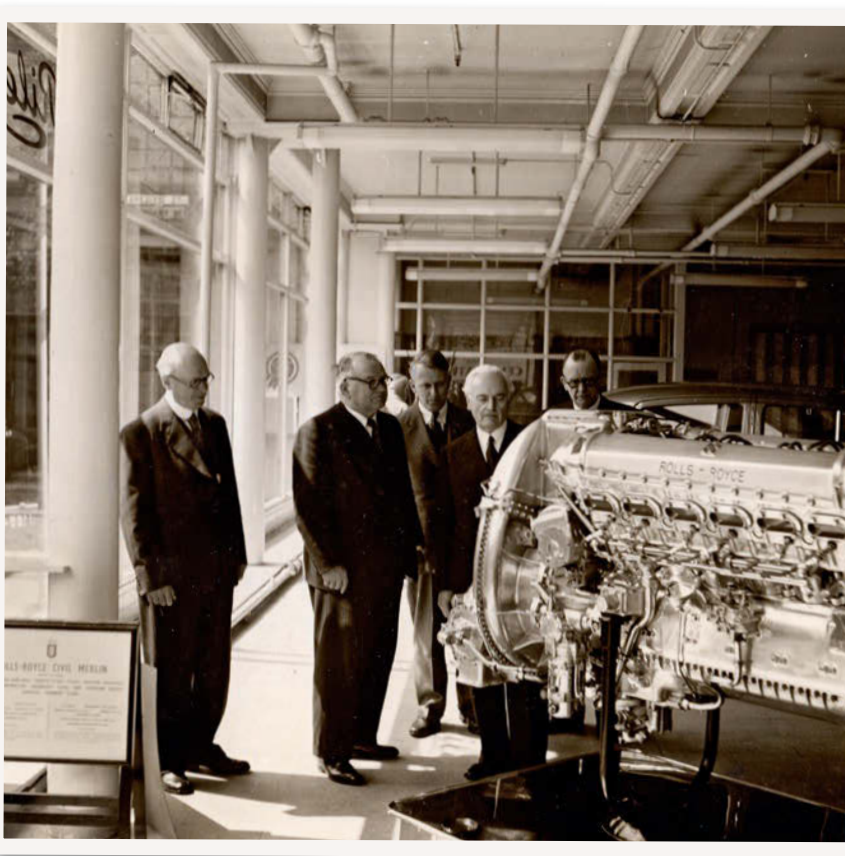
of their projected programmes”.

He was impatient of certain types of ministerial civil servant, who gave him “the stomach-ache”, and decried the Ministry of Aircraft Production’s meddling to divert labour, machine tools and schedules into producing other types of engine, such as Napier’s Sabre and the Whittle 2B turbo-jet. Despite a successful 1941 maiden flight in the Gloster E28/39, the Whittle would have required much work to perfect at that stage, although Hives subsequently adopted the project from Rover as an important part of Rolls-Royce’s jet engine development programme, begun later in the war. Production of the company’s two best units – the Merlin and the more powerful Griffon – was obviously a priority and made for a logical and efficient concentration of resources, with Hives having factories at Derby, Crewe and Glasgow to run, and with Merlin production also in progress via Packard in the US and Ford’s Trafford Park plant.

Fortunately, Hives had the support and trust of Air Chief Marshal Sir Wilfrid Freeman, who despite the credit heaped upon the Minister of Air Production, Lord Beaverbrook, was also a key figure in the effective armament of the RAF both before and during the war. Freeman, to quote his biographer Anthony Furse, was “deeply impressed by – and immensely grateful for – the speed with which Rolls-Royce brought into production the regular improvements to engine power”. Merlins powered the Mosquito and the vast majority of Lancasters, with Freeman admitting that “successive Rolls-Royce engines in various marks of Spitfire gave them a qualitative edge over German fighters during the war”. When Hives was invested as a Companion of Honour in 1943, Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Portal added to the accolades by saying: “Those who are best able to judge would put you among a very few men whom the country has to thank above all others for our survival in this war”.

COMMERCIAL FOCUS

With the cessation of hostilities, Hives was faced with the task of scaling-down military operations and establishing new commercial links for Rolls-Royce in the marketing of both tried and new technologies: the piston and the jet engine. Appointed managing director in 1946, he went on a deal-making journey, selling Nene (Rolls-



Royce’s first complete jet) engines to Russia and China, and licensing the manufacture of Derwent, Nene, Tay and Avon units to various other foreign governments, provided he was satisfied with that country’s capability.

Hives also continued to find outlets for the faithful Merlin, not only for bombers converted for civil use like Lancastrians and Yorks, but also Trans Canada Airlines for their Canadair North Stars. From the early 1950s, the Avon jet engine found its way into the Canberra, Comet airliner and Hawker Hunter, not to mention Hives’ sale of 900 Nenes to the RCAF for its Lockheed Shooting Star trainers. It was all excellent news for Britain’s balance of payments, and Hives – who had become chairman of Rolls-Royce in 1950 – was awarded a peerage that same year. He took the title of Lord Hives of Hazeldene, the name of the house he had lived at in Duffield, Derbyshire since 1937.

Unpretentious, direct, helpful to competitor companies and air forces, a non-sufferer of fools but a good host, snooker and darts player, Hives maintained a busy schedule through to his retirement in 1957. He died eight years later at the age of 79. In his book

Rolls-Royce – Hives, The Quiet Tiger, Alec Harvey-Bailey credits him with making a greater contribution to the success of the company than Claude Johnson and CS Rolls combined. Not the tallest of industrialists in feet and inches, Hives nevertheless proved Mark Twain’s theory that it’s not the size of the dog in the fight, it’s the size of the fight in the dog. Whether likened to a dog or a tiger, however, there’s no denying Hives was a corporate giant, with countless major achievements to his name during what was a crucial period in the history of Rolls-Royce. ■

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Hillier Hill's client base covers a vast array of different Rolls-Royce and Bentley models

SPECIALIST VISIT

ATTENTION TO DETAIL

A familiar name to many, Hillier Hill has an enviable reputation as an independent Rolls-Royce and Bentley specialist. We pay the company a visit to find out more about its success and the people behind it

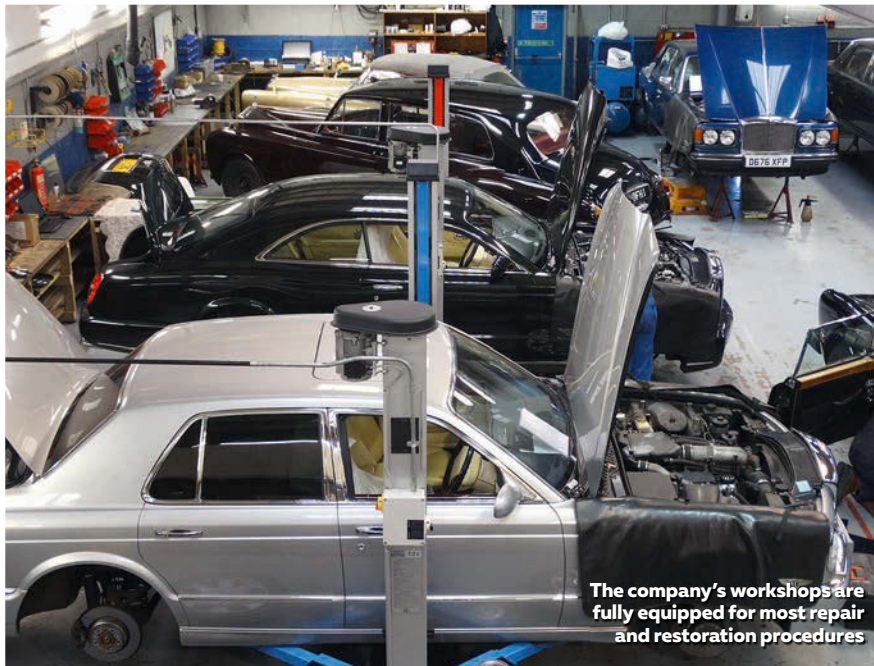
WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: PAUL GUINNESS



SZ-generation models account for a sizeable proportion of Hillier Hill's maintenance and repairs

When a specialist company manages to survive the best part of three and a half decades, growing in size and reputation throughout that time, it tends to attract an army of loyal customers. Hillier Hill is no exception, with an impressive amount of repeat business from Rolls-Royce and Bentley owners who appreciate the care and attention that's lavished on their cars. But, of course, plenty has changed since Ray Hillier and Tony Hill took the plunge into business, renting an 800-square-foot industrial unit at Sherington, near Milton Keynes.

That was back in 1985, when the Silver Shadow had been out of production for just five years and the Silver Spirit was the (relative) new kid on the block. Fast-forward to 2018 and you find a company that has grown considerably, now occupying 6000 square feet of workshop space in the ideal location of Olney, Buckinghamshire – putting its premises within easy reach of the M1 motorway, as well as roughly equidistant between London and Birmingham. And as owners of older cars from the pre-BMW and Volkswagen eras move



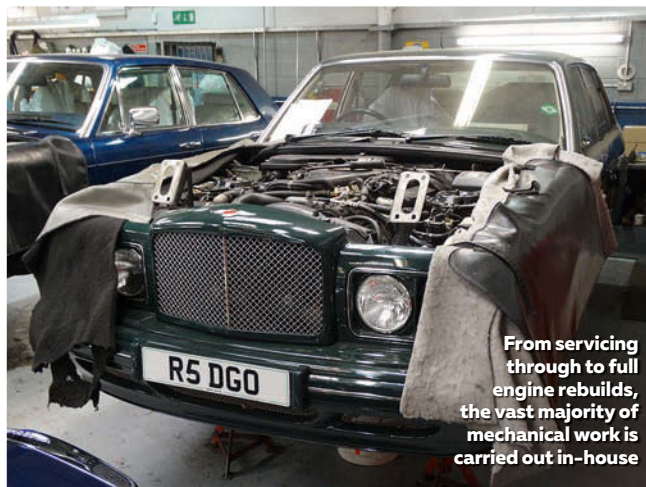
The company's workshops are fully equipped for most repair and restoration procedures



For many years, Hillier Hill has made a point of training apprentices in all aspects of the business



This American-import Corniche is a recent arrival, being fully prepared for its new UK-based owner



From servicing through to full engine rebuilds, the vast majority of mechanical work is carried out in-house

away from main dealerships for their servicing and repair needs, so Hillier Hill continues to build its customer base.

"I can honestly say we're busier than ever these days," confirms Ray Hillier, during our guided tour of the fully-equipped premises where the company's highly-skilled team provides just about everything that the classic (and modern-classic) Rolls-Royce and Bentley might require. "The last two years in particular have been exceptionally busy. It's interesting to see increasing numbers of owners willing to spend more on their cars. I'm not sure whether it's because money in the bank earns virtually nothing these days, or because the cars themselves have been increasing in value, but

"They met back in the early 1970s when they were both apprentices at the official Rolls-Royce service depot in Hythe Road, London"

we've seen a definite change. There are now more enthusiasts who view maintaining their cars to a high standard, and getting them into tip-top condition, as a wise investment."

EARLY PROGRESS

This is obviously good news for the business, but also pleases the duo behind it – with Ray and Tony both being genuine Rolls-Royce and Bentley enthusiasts who enjoy seeing a car

brought back to full health. They met back in the early 1970s when they were both apprentices at the official Rolls-Royce service depot in Hythe Road, London – which meant working on everything from the latest Silver Shadows through to some of the classics of the time. Even the Silver Cloud and Bentley S3 had only been out of production for six or seven years at the time, which meant that those trusty stalwarts were still relatively new by Rolls- »

SPECIALIST VISIT HILLIER HILL

Royce and Bentley standards.

The two eventually left Hythe Road (with Ray accepting a job at Aston Martin) and went their separate ways, albeit still very much involved in the motor industry. They eventually met up again at a non-franchised dealership in London and began discussing the prospect of being in business together, spotting a gap in the market for a Rolls-Royce and Bentley specialist company in the Buckinghamshire area. Ray and Tony eventually agreed a lease on their very first unit and, once it was equipped and ready for business, Hillier Hill was born.

These days, the company occupies a space seven and a half times larger than that first unit, and even has its own on-site MoT-testing station – which inevitably saves time and trouble when it comes to cars that come in annually for their servicing, maintenance and MoT. The company has certainly invested heavily in

“These days, Hillier Hill’s workshops tend to feature a wider range of Rolls-Royce and Bentley models than ever before”

equipment and facilities over the years, but has also wisely invested in its team of technicians, with numerous in-house apprenticeships undertaken.

“We were training our own apprentices long before apprenticeships became a buzzword again,” explains Ray. “We realised many years ago that we had to invest in enthusiastic young people and spend time and money training them if we were to maintain the skills and expertise that the classic car industry needs for the future. And I’m happy to say, it’s been a huge success. We have a very low turnover of staff, and our apprentices often stay with us for the long-term once they’re fully trained.”

As if to prove the point, we

were introduced to Chris, a former apprentice who has been with Hillier Hill for more than twelve years now, working under workshop manager Ed Bowden – the man who helps to keep everything running smoothly after more than a quarter of a century with the company.

Ray is particular proud of the fact that two members of the Hillier Hill team are fully trained Rolls-Royce and Bentley auto-electricians: “When you have a car in for repairs, or it’s undergoing a full restoration, it’s often inconvenient to be waiting for an outside auto-electrician to call in at various stages of the work, and so we decided to bring it in-house. We’ve now got our own expert auto-



The Arnage (and its Silver Seraph cousin) is a popular choice for anyone seeking a useable modern classic



This Bentley S1 has recently undergone repairs to its lower front wings, sills and lower rear quarters



This Bentley Corniche’s engine bay has been fully detailed during the finishing stages of its restoration



A glorious Silver Cloud III made an impressive sight as we checked out Hillier Hill’s MoT testing area



The utmost care is taken with each car, which helps explain why Hillier Hill enjoys so much repeat custom



Electrical problems are undertaken by Hillier Hill's own in-house auto electricians

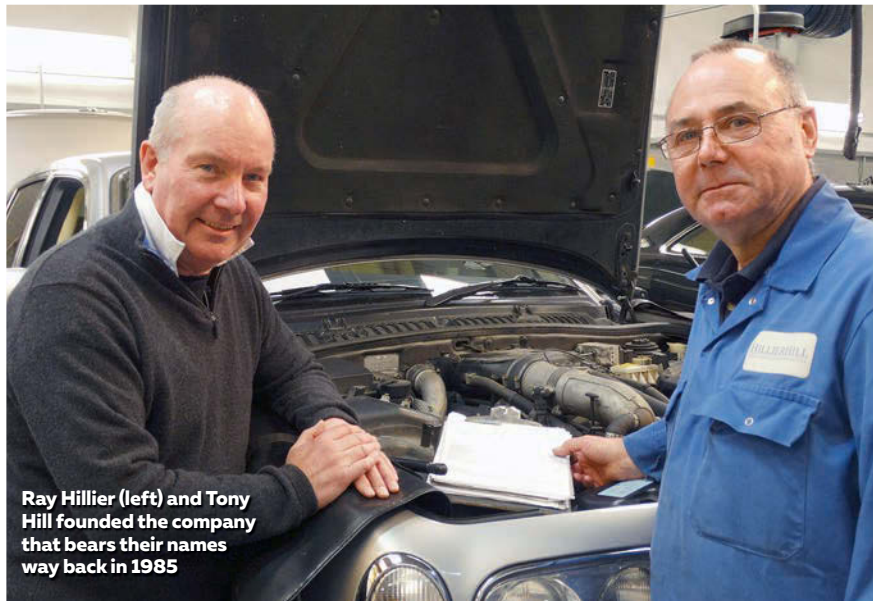
electricians who are capable of sorting electrical issues on any model."

VARIED LINE-UP

These days, Hillier Hill's workshops tend to feature a wider range of Rolls-Royce and Bentley models than ever before, although the most popular tend to be from the Silver Shadow era onwards, with the SZ-generation cars becoming increasingly important as owners start to spend more on maintenance and improvements. You're also likely to see a selection of Continental Rs, Ts and Azures at Hillier Hill, given the company's expertise when it comes to classics from the more modern era – with both the Silver Seraph and Bentley Arnage also becoming popular choices among the company's client base.

Older models are also catered for, of course, which explains why we spotted both a Bentley S1 (undergoing some bodywork repairs prior to being sent out to the paint shop) and a Phantom V at the time of our visit. Most of the work is carried out in-house, including full engine rebuilds and just about every mechanical repair, although gearbox overhauls are understandably outsourced to a transmission specialist. A nearby body shop carries out whatever paintwork is required once Hillier Hill has completed any necessary repairs, ensuring that everything is handled locally and on time.

Although much of Hillier Hill's work is centred around maintenance, repairs and servicing, the company has an enviable reputation when it



Ray Hillier (left) and Tony Hill founded the company that bears their names way back in 1985

comes to restoration work, as the sublime finish of a Bentley Corniche confirmed at the time of our recent visit. Previous restorations have included cars as diverse as a Derby Bentley, a pre-war Rolls-Royce Wraith and numerous Silver Clouds, with some of the company's projects going on to be worthy prize-winners at RREC Concours d'Elegance events.

With Hillier Hill having enjoyed more than thirty years of success to date, how does Ray see the company changing in the future? "We'll continue doing what we do," he replied with a smile, "which is to ensure that today's classic Rolls-Royces and Bentleys are looked after to the highest standards. Main dealers increasingly focus on

the current models and don't have the expertise that our team has. So while a Bentley dealer might be the right outlet for anyone with a ten year old Continental GT, we're happy to focus on the cars that came before. These are the models that our customers own and appreciate – and, of course, we do too." ■

THANK YOU

Grateful thanks to Hillier Hill for opening their doors to us and for their hospitality. To find out more, go online to www.hillierhill.com or call 01234 713871.



• TECHNICAL •

SEEKING PERFECTION

Want to get your Rolls-Royce or Bentley in fine fettle ready for this year's show season, or maybe you're after a little extra pride of ownership? We took this much-loved Arnage T to the Autoglym headquarters to find out how it's done

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: PAUL COWLAND

It's probably true to say that the majority of Rolls Royce and Bentley motor cars tend to be more cosseted than many of their contemporaries. Admittedly, that's something of a generalisation, as we have plenty of readers who use their vehicles to the full; but even then they're usually exceptionally well looked after, while those we tend to see at shows and events are often used fairly sparingly and mostly in decent weather conditions. That's

certainly the case with my own car, a Mulliner-spec Bentley Arnage T that I've owned for the past twelve months.

The Arnage was acquired from an executive hire fleet that used it mainly for taking high-flying businessmen to their private jets, whilst also acting as occasional wedding transport. Despite having been cleaned on a near-weekly basis, however, there was no doubt that it would benefit from the love of a more talented detailer – and most definitely from the application

of some decent-quality products.

We decided to pay a visit to the car care maestros at Autoglym (www.autoglym.com), whose Letchworth HQ isn't just home to the company's impressive factory but also its technical centre. That's where training supremo Ryan Bowden spent the day demonstrating the kind of car-care regime that will be invaluable during the 2018 show season, using a selection of Autoglym's trade and retail products. This is how the day progressed. ■



Clearly a very cared for example, this Arnage T had enjoyed many 'washes and vacs' during its long tenure as an executive hire vehicle – but sadly, no real deep cleans. That was all about to change with a trip to Autoglym's HQ, where the company's wash bay would be a Sunday morning dream for most of us.



Before the pre-rinse stage, Autoglym's Specialist Wheel Cleaner was applied to the Bentley's rather splendid split-rim wheels. These had been powder coated in the past, so are now fairly impervious to acid-based wheel cleaners. If you're still running chrome or polished wheels on your car, however, then going for a 'gentle' product like this is always a good policy.



High quality wheel cleaners like this can also be used to pull the dressing off the wall of each tyre – which is the brown 'gunk' you can see coming off here. It's not good to keep applying layer after layer of dressing on top of any rubber components. The best policy is always to strip back and start again afresh.



Even with only a small amount of agitation from a soft wheel brush, the wheels came up as new. The split-rim's bolts need a little extra care to make sure all the dirt has been activated by the clever composition of the cleaner, but the results speak for themselves...



Even after a basic rinse, it was obvious that the cleaner had done a good job. The wheels shone superbly and the bolt recesses were sparkling clean. This is something you can do every weekend to keep your wheels tip-top, even if you don't have time to clean the whole car



We then turned our attention to the bodywork of the Arnage – and there's plenty of it! Autoglym's impressive Polar Blast snow foam was the ticket here, lathering the car in a white blanket of suds, pulling away many contaminants and soil particles without you having to work hard.



Our lucky Bentley Arnage then got to luxuriate while the Polar Blast foam did its thing. We could actually see the dirt coming away without anyone lifting a finger. It was an impressive demonstration of the effectiveness of a modern-spec foam.



A quick rinse removed the rest of the foam to leave what looked like a perfectly clean car beneath – but we hadn't finished yet. In fact, we'd only just started. To follow would be a smorgasbord of bodywork care products that, with the addition of a little elbow grease, would help to transform the car.



Autoglym's Shampoo Conditioner is designed to clean your car's bodywork and leave a water-repellent finish. A good quality product like this can make a major difference to your car detailing routine. Don't be fooled by this trade-size container, as only a relatively small amount is needed for each application.



Ryan proceeded to give the Arnage a thorough shampooing, taking time to work his way up from the bottom of the car to ensure that no panel was missed. He used the safe 'two bucket' method, with the wash-mitt rinsed in one bucket and refreshed in another to avoid cross-contamination.



Time for yet another rinse to get rid of all that shampoo. While nobody could claim a wash routine like this is quick or easy, the end more than justifies the means. Not everyone will have the advantage of being able to work in such comfortable surroundings, but similar results can still be achieved at home.



Once rinsed, instead of drying the Arnage straight away, Ryan applied Autoglym's Express Wax. This is a product that can go on to a soaking wet car and is effectively applied as you towel it dry. It's an easy way of building up a protective layer.



After a quick dry and buff with a microfibre cloth, we got this rather fetching sheen on the bodywork. But that's not the only trick that this particular product has, as Ryan demonstrated in the next photograph after coating only half the bonnet.



Despite taking just seconds to apply, the wax had an instant effect – as shown on the right-hand side of this photograph. Whereas water was pooling and sitting on the other side of the bonnet, on the waxed side it literally 'flew' off the car. This kind of treatment makes it much easier to keep any vehicle clean.



Once the bodywork was fully dried once again, Ryan proceeded to give the whole car a full polish in the more traditional and time consuming sense. It's often advisable to 'clay' the car before this stage if there are contaminants on the paintwork (such as tree sap or fallout), but in this case the Arnage was deemed clean enough to go straight to polish.



Once again, a little went a long way. A tiny dot of the Autoglym polish offered impressive overall coverage. Unlike polishes of old, this kind of product can be left on for hours (or even days or weeks if necessary) without going hard, making it much easier to remove later on.



Judicious buffing with a soft, clean microfibre cloth soon had the bodywork looking 'as new'. The car certainly hadn't had that kind of attention for a while, and it really made a difference to how the bodywork looked under the unforgiving wash-bay lighting.



To protect the now clean rims, Ryan applied the new-spec hydroscopic coating that Autoglym has developed, logically branded as Wheel Protector. This keeps brake dust and dirt to a minimum, and reduces the effort required between cleans. That's good news for a painted wheel, but essential on a polished or chrome rim.

TECHNICAL VEHICLE DETAILING



On the interior, Autoglym's recommended method is to begin with a thorough vacuum of everything. The kindest way to do this is to loosen dirt with a soft horse-hair brush while holding the nozzle close by. That way, the dirt flies into the cleaner without marking any surfaces. Simple but effective.



Make sure you pay attention to the air vents, mouldings and trim. Because the brush is so soft, you can really go to town without a hint of damage. Even the switchgear and controls can all be cleaned by this method, leaving you with a practically dust-free interior that's ready for the next step.



Although the leather seats had been very well looked after, they had been buffed to a shine after years of backsides, products and dirt. The end result was a non-original sheen that spoiled the overall appearance. To make the car look as new, Ryan used an interior cleaner and soft sponge to cut through the dirt and remove the added 'oils'.



Carefully working a good quality leather cleaner across the upholstery will help to restore the dirty hide in any Rolls-Royce or Bentley, but make sure it's a gentle product that won't affect the dye. The leather in this particular Arnage was in excellent, unworn condition but was still suffering from years of dirt build-up.



On the left-hand side of this photograph, the seat looks exactly how it would have done when it left the factory. On the right is what sixteen years of 'polishing' had done via countless passengers. On any modern-classic Rolls-Royce or Bentley, such a sheen can make an interior look unoriginal and less than perfect.



The same cleaning process can be used on the leather-bound steering wheel. Again, this photograph shows half the wheel treated and the other (left-hand) half as found. It's clear to see the overall effect that all of those sweaty hands have had, adding an undesirable gloss to the leather.



The Arnage's door cards came up like new once they had been cleaned. Just this one simple job rolled back the years inside the Bentley, and helped to make it look and smell like a showroom-fresh model. Again, attention to detail around the crevices and brightwork is a must.



Once the upholstery (which obviously included the door trims as well as the seats) was thoroughly cleaned, Autoglym's logically labelled Leather Conditioner was applied to all surfaces to protect the hide and to nourish the surface. A product like this should also enhance the leather smell of the whole interior.



Although the Leather Conditioner added a temporary sheen as the product soaked in, this would later be buffed off to give a fabulous, original looking finish. This photograph shows a seat prior to being buffed, hence the shine that would later disappear.



Glass can make or break any car detailing procedure, and so each pane of the Arnage was blitzed with cleaner to get a smear-free, crystal clear finish. Autoglym's own Window Clean product performed well, drying quickly and needing little re-buffing to make perfect – hence it's ideal if you're after a quick makeover.



We'll cover the subject of engine bay detailing in a future issue, as this is an area that deserves its own dedicated section. In the case of the Arnage, however, the engine – being mainly covered and recently cleaned – was simply wiped down with a damp cloth before being dressed on the cover with Autoglym's plastic and rubber product.



The end result after several hours of hard work! For a car that's now sixteen years old and has covered over 100,000 miles, this Arnage could almost pass for new. Grateful thanks to Ryan Bowden and the rest of the Autoglym team for demonstrating what can be achieved with some attention to detail.

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Chief stylist at Rolls-Royce through the 1950s and '60s, Blatchley's aesthetic influence over key models like the Silver Cloud and Silver Shadow makes a fascinating read.



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KEEPING THE NOISE DOWN

With the first ten years of his working life spent at Crewe, Tony Spillane became involved in many fascinating aspects of Rolls-Royce engineering. In the second instalment of his story, he details how he set about reducing noise levels within the crucial new Silver Spirit

WORDS: TONY SPILLANE PICS: TONY SPILLANE / ROLLS-ROYCE MOTOR CARS

Once I had completed my graduate apprenticeship, I was appointed development engineer working on NVH (noise, vibration and harshness), one of my tasks being to reduce the level of road noise – sometimes described as ‘road rumble’. At that time, road noise was typified by driving at around 40mph on a smooth surface covered in tar and chippings; as other sources of noise (engine, wind and so on) were quite low at this speed, road noise was very dominant, especially in the rear of the car.

We used a specific road, speed and location for our tests to ensure repeatability, and employed interior

microphones, noise meters, a tape recorder and frequency analyser to obtain noise frequency plots. We knew that the Silver Shadow of the period was ‘less quiet’ than the Jaguar XJ12, the 6.9-litre Mercedes-Benz S-Class and the Chevrolet Caprice Classic – but we didn’t know why.

Previous ‘suck it and see’ experimental changes had proved inconclusive, so I wanted to use a more scientific approach. The first step was to determine how much of the noise was airborne transmission and how much was due to structure. On the test road, I also recorded the noise inside the front and rear wheel arches, as well as the vibration levels at each of the subframe and suspension connection

points to the bodyshell. The idea was to then recreate each of the noise and vibration levels to the ‘shell of a static vehicle in a quiet noise chamber, to see which were the dominant noise paths.

The problem was, Rolls Royce didn’t have a quiet noise chamber. I knew the factory site fairly well from my apprenticeship days, and knew that there was a disused air raid shelter that might do. It was made out of really thick bomb-proof reinforced concrete, and when inside with the door shut it was certainly quiet. Although it was just about large enough to get a whole car in, plus the necessary test equipment, it only had a pedestrian entry door and so I gained approval to have a vehicle-sized door fitted at the end of the bunker. Apparently, however, when the job was put out to tender, the contractor didn’t properly check the structure of the wall, resulting in what should have been a three-day job taking three weeks.

APPLIANCE OF SCIENCE

The assigned prototype Silver Spirit test vehicle (SZ3) was temporarily stripped of its powertrain, front and rear suspension and subframes. This left essentially a fully trimmed bodyshell that was suspended on very soft inflatable rubber air bags, giving access to the airborne and structural connection points to recreate each noise path in turn. A loud speaker recreated the airborne noise in each wheelarch, and an electromagnetic



Tony was a development engineer working on NVH (noise, vibration and harshness) issues for the new Silver Spirit

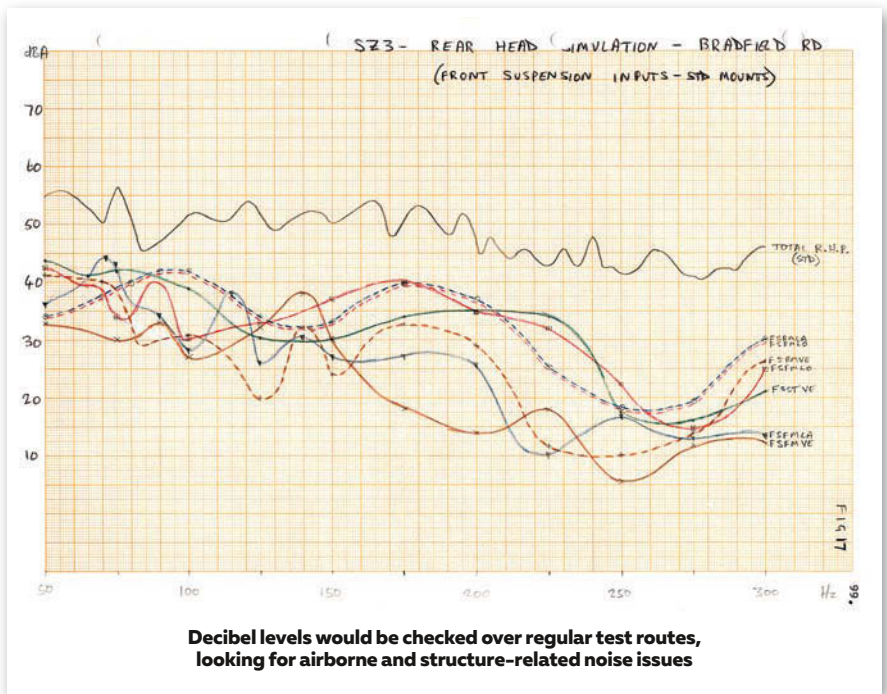
shaker recreated each structure-borne vibration, all done one at a time.

The results were very illuminating. The airborne noise was some 20-30dB lower than the structure-borne noise, which meant that the structural noise paths were dominant. Of those, it was possible to see which connection points dominated and in which direction (vertical, lateral or longitudinal), which gave great insight into how to effect an improvement.

Despite it being most apparent in the rear of the car, it was the front subframe mounts that transmitted the majority of the noise – particularly the front subframe front mount in the longitudinal direction, and the front subframe rear mount in both longitudinal and lateral directions. Using existing-type subframe mounts but with a much softer rubber compound gave a very significant improvement in road noise.

A more extreme change was made on an old experimental car, SBH 6879. As well as a totally different engine mount system, it had a radically different front subframe featuring cylindrical subframe mounts orientated longitudinally (instead of vertically, as on standard cars). This gave a further improvement but required significant changes to the vehicle.

Attention was then turned to engine noise, and a similar approach showed that the front engine mount in the



“The prototype Silver Spirit was temporarily stripped of its powertrain, front and rear suspension and subframes”

lateral direction was the guilty party. A simple softening of the existing mount was ineffective for two reasons. First, it was already quite soft, which meant

there wasn't much change available; and second, the consequent softening off in other directions brought extra issues, such as the fan fouling its shroud under certain conditions.

As the front mount connects to a bolt-on crossmember within the front subframe, it was relatively easy to design a new configuration of mount. A cylindrical rubber mount, with its axis laterally across the car, gave the required rates in the three directions. Also included was a tie bar system, to steady the engine laterally at the fan level.

These changes (with improvements to the air cleaner system and others) gave useful reductions in engine noise and improved the perceptions of engine smoothness.

Although the car had become noticeably quieter, the ride had deteriorated due to a significant low-frequency 'shake'. (Standard cars had a slight tendency to shake, but it was now at a totally unacceptable level.) Again, trial and error changes in the past had not got to the root cause of this shake, and so a new scientific approach was required – something that I'll explain in the next issue. ■

Design Records

Job No.	Rev.	Author	Checker	Date	Description	Part No.	Part Name	Material	Quantity	Unit	Weight	Volume	Notes
MS1	30	64	64	67	60	59	64	57	57	61	61	62	
	40	65	65	66	64	64	63	58	60	61	61	64	
	50	67	67	68	64	64	65	61	61	65	65	66	
	60	69	69	69	64	65	65	63	66	66	70	67	
SUBFRAME	70	70	71	64	68	69	64	66	66	73	71	67	
	80	71	71	69	72	73	73	66	66	64	74	70	
	90	73	73	73	70	74	74	67	68	76	71	73	
	100	74	74	74	70	74	74	67	71	73	78	76	
MOUNTS	30	65	65	69	67	64	64	57	58	60	60	62	
	40	69	69	69	68	68	68	58	64	64	64	68	
	50	71	71	69	72	68	68	66	67	67	67	67	
	70	69	69	69	68	68	68	66	67	67	67	67	
MOUNTS	30	69	69	69	68	68	68	58	58	64	64	64	
	40	69	69	69	68	68	68	58	58	64	64	64	
	50	69	69	69	68	68	68	58	58	64	64	64	
	70	69	69	69	68	68	68	58	58	64	64	64	
MOUNTS	30	69	69	69	68	68	68	58	58	64	64	64	
	40	69	69	69	68	68	68	58	58	64	64	64	
	50	69	69	69	68	68	68	58	58	64	64	64	
	70	69	69	69	68	68	68	58	58	64	64	64	
CROSSMEMBER	30	69	69	69	68	68	68	58	58	64	64	64	
	40	69	69	69	68	68	68	58	58	64	64	64	
	50	69	69	69	68	68	68	58	58	64	64	64	
	70	69	69	69	68	68	68	58	58	64	64	64	
TIE BAR	30	69	69	69	68	68	68	58	58	64	64	64	
	40	69	69	69	68	68	68	58	58	64	64	64	
	50	69	69	69	68	68	68	58	58	64	64	64	
	70	69	69	69	68	68	68	58	58	64	64	64	

Tony's hand-written chart shows how Rolls-Royce noise levels compared with those of the Jaguar XJ12, Mercedes S-Class and Chevrolet Caprice

Peter Wharton was the man responsible for these colour drawings of 'Oil Barrel', Queen Elizabeth II's new car



MEMORIES OF MULLINER PARK WARD

What was it like working in the drawing offices of Mulliner Park Ward back in the 1970s? We catch up with Ron Mitchell, who remembers his time there with fondness – and who has plenty of interesting tales to tell

WORDS: R. RON MITCHELL DRAWINGS: R. RON MITCHELL AND COLIN PARKER

Arriving at work each day at the Mulliner Park Ward division of Rolls-Royce in the 1970s meant slotting my MGB into a concrete area that was only two cars wide by six cars long. The result was that everyone occupying the same parking spot all had to leave work at the same time each afternoon in order not to hold each other up. A brick-based iron fence on one side separated our cars from Willesden High Road, while on the other sat one of the manufacturing buildings where the magnificent Corniche coupes and convertibles were hand-built at the time.

What a thrill it was to get to work each day. In front of our cars – to the west – was a Tudor-style building with a large door, through which we would head every morning as we made our way to the administration, management and drawing office areas.

As body draftsmen, even in the late 1970s our drawing boards were of

the old wooden type, comprising cast metal multi-grooved pulleys, wires and weights secured at each corner. A wooden cross member, attached to wires on both sides, was where we placed our pencils, erasers and drawing instruments (compasses, dividers, rulers, squares, French curves, circle and ellipse templates and so on), while under this cross member we placed our paper, which we taped to the board. The basic design of the drawing boards had not changed since the early days of coachbuilding, and there were ten of them organised in two rows in the detail drawing office, while George Crane – our boss – sat at a desk facing us.

In the next office area behind worked the chief design draftsman, Reg Unwin. He had been a director at James Young, a reputable coachbuilder that had sadly met its demise in the late 1960s. (Many of the coachbuilding businesses could not survive post-war due to the latest style of monocoque

car construction, a trend that had first begun on a mass-production scale via the 1934 Citroen Traction Avant.) Reg had one other design draftsman working for him in 1977, but the following year my colleague and friend Colin Parker was promoted to design draftsman and joined the design team.

On the other side of the corridor to the design section were the management offices (Ted Holland was general manager at that time) and the rather cramped styling office, where Peter Wharton – who had worked at Park Ward for decades – and his one assistant were located. Peter was a modest man with a great eye for body design and for vehicle interiors, and in 1977 he created the colour drawings of 'Oil Barrel' – the Queen's new car, inevitably based on a Phantom VI chassis. Peter's original colour drawings were presented to staff at Buckingham Palace for approval prior to the car being delivered.

From the start of my tenure at Mulliner Park Ward in January 1976, my goal was to move to the styling department. Details of some of my styling drawings were shown in Issue 4 of the *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, and it was only recently (some forty years later) that I found out from Colin Parker that a mock-up of my Silver Spirit convertible proposal had been produced. I had been asked to lay out the Corniche hood-well (on my old drawing board) to confirm whether or not it would package into the Silver Spirit body – which it did, thereby proving the manufacturing feasibility of a Silver Spirit convertible. Only minor modifications to the existing tooling would be required.

Management confirmed their approval to build a mock-up of the car; but because the Corniche was still considered to be a beautiful and elegant design, the decision was eventually made to continue production of that rather than further develop my proposal. With hindsight, as good as the Silver Spirit convertible looked – both on paper and in mock-up form – the right decision was made.

CUSTOMER TALES

Stories from customers – some old, some new – would often reach us in the drawing office, usually via Peter Wharton. There was, for example, one Phantom V chauffeur who brought his owner's vehicle to our Hythe Road facility (just a few miles away), insisting that there was something



The Queen's latest official Rolls-Royce of the late '70s was inevitably based on a Phantom VI chassis

“No amount of persuasion could talk the customer out of having zebra skins fitted to the rear of his Phantom V”

wrong with the brakes. Every time he braked, the car would continue to surge forward. A careful inspection ensued, during which it was discovered that the drain holes along the sills were plugged; water that had gathered in the sill panels therefore could not drain, and gallons would flow towards the front of the car upon braking. The problem was quickly rectified by simply unblocking the drain holes.

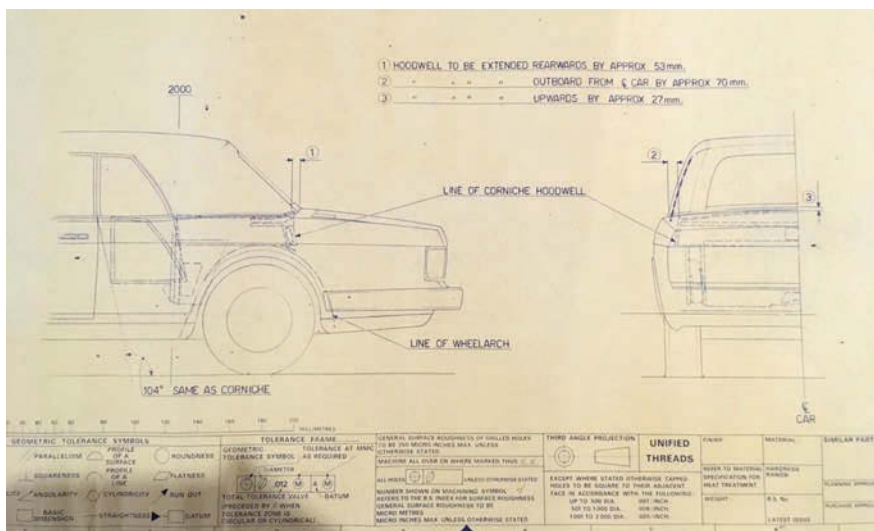
No amount of persuasion by Rolls-Royce staff could talk another customer out of having zebra skins fitted to the rear compartment of his Phantom V – at great cost, of course. On presentation

of the finished vehicle, said customer suffered some pain when he tried to sit on the rear seat, suddenly realising that the needles of zebra skin coats are extremely sharp. The car was duly altered to include the standard West of England cloth in the rear compartment.

One of the most embarrassing issues took place when the Phantom V (probably a Landaulette) was delivered to a Middle Eastern customer, who had asked for a series of 'stars' to be affixed to the sides of the vehicle – effectively a strip that started at the front between the bonnet and front wings, running along the sides of the car and filtering out just behind the rear doors. After delivery, a letter was promptly received by Rolls-Royce stating that while the owner appreciated the English sense of humour, he did not appreciate the 'Star of David' emblems that had been placed along the sides of his new Phantom V...

MULTIPLE PROJECTS

Back in the drawing offices, we inevitably worked across all Rolls-Royce and Bentley models and myriad different components. With no apparent record of the complete Corniche door assembly, for example, drawings needed to be compiled for record purposes, as most bodywork-related spares had to be hand-built to ensure the correct fit to each car. A revised instrument panel for the Phantom VI also had to be drawn. And the body of the Camargue required »



One of Ron Mitchell's memorable projects was proving that the Corniche hood-well would fit the proposed soft-top Silver Spirit

WE WERE THERE CLASSIC RECOLLECTIONS

minor modifications behind the front sidelights (just below the headlamps), which meant that updated drawings were required. Due to the very long lamp cluster that wrapped around the front wing, some reinforcement of the sheet metal was also needed.

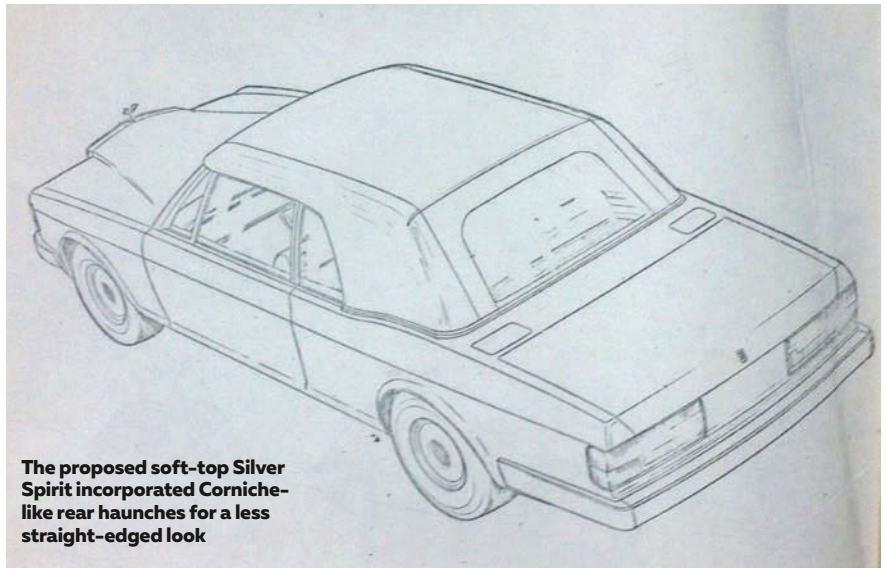
Perhaps not surprisingly, there was much discussion about the Camargue in our offices soon after it was introduced at Earl's Court – acclaimed as the most expensive car in the world. Indeed, shortly after the Camargue's introduction the price was increased and the customer waiting list simply grew! I suggested to my office colleagues that Pininfarina's concept for the body styling of the Camargue was based on the Fiat 130; and I still feel that the clean, simple lines of the bodywork resemble the 130, albeit in concept rather than execution.

Another draftsman, Dick Mann, suggested that the Rolls-Royce Camargue should have been a Bentley... which was certainly an interesting thought. I remember Bentley Corniche sales quickly accelerating (increasing from a mere five per cent of Corniches initially) in around 1978, with potential customers beginning to realise that a Bentley Corniche was a much more exclusive offering than its Rolls-Royce equivalent.

Back in the late 1970s, technical drawings and styling drawings of the Phantom VI, Camargue and Corniche models (the coachbuilt cars) were produced at the Willesden facility, while the standard car drawings (Silver Shadow and Silver Spirit) were created at the Crewe factory. By the end of the following decade, however, old but



Ron's design for a Silver Spirit convertible was impressive, encouraging Rolls-Royce to commission an official mock-up



The proposed soft-top Silver Spirit incorporated Corniche-like rear haunches for a less straight-edged look



The styling of the Camargue generated plenty of discussion in the Mulliner Park Ward drawing offices of the 1970s

reliable drawing boards were being replaced by computer equipment. (The latest CAD systems have become so sophisticated that even crash test data can be approved by safety organisations, thus negating the huge expense of crash testing actual vehicles.) So much was changing that the good old drawing boards were soon to become antiques.

Four decades later, the south side of the High Road in Willesden (where number 473 used to be) is inevitably very different. One can still see some brick-supported iron fencing that remains, but all of our buildings – the buildings that housed the teams of highly skilled craftsmen, who built some of the most magnificent coachbuilt cars ever made – are sadly all gone. ■



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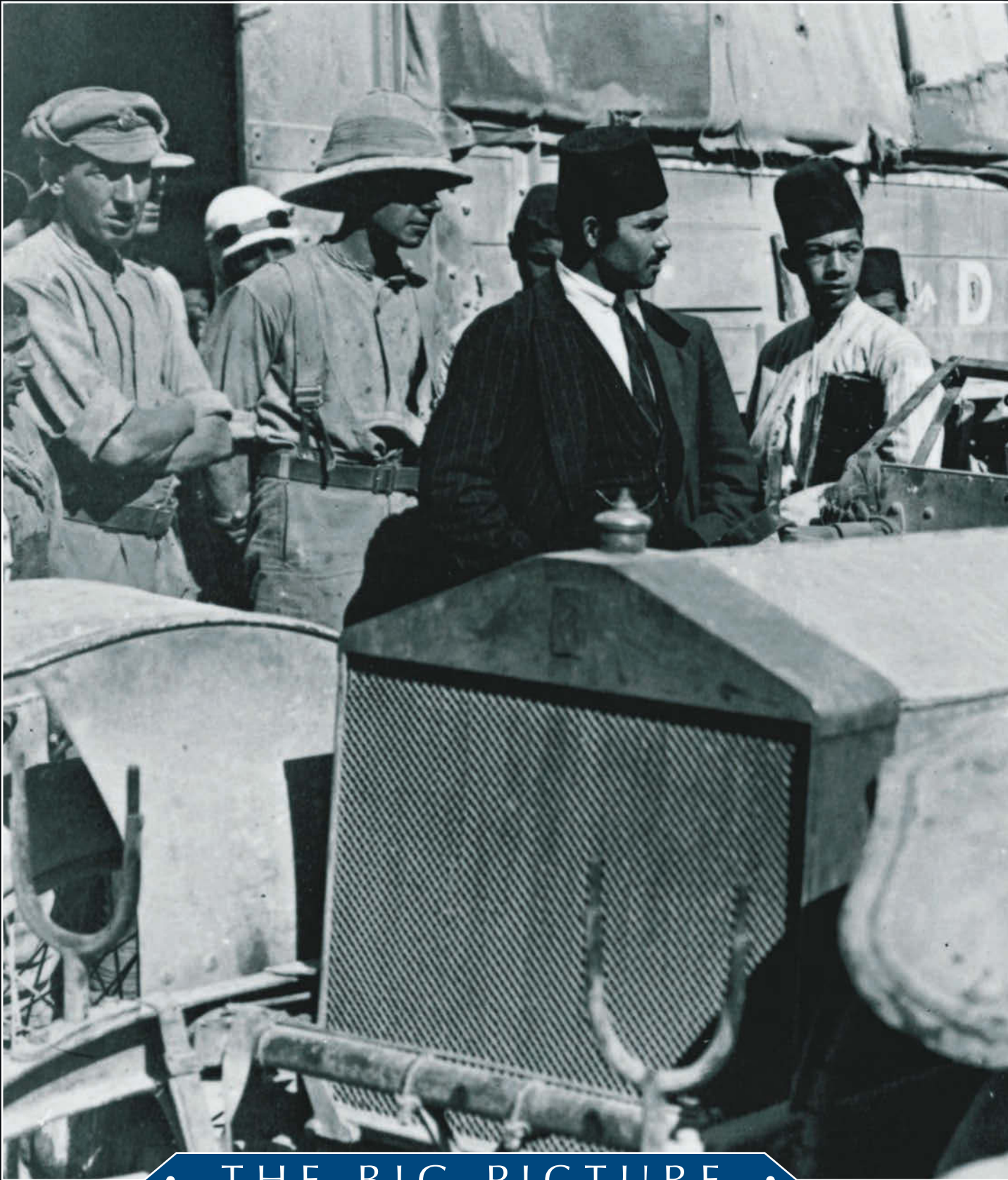


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• THE BIG PICTURE •

The finest car of its time played an unlikely but vital role in the First World War. This fascinating image features one particular military derivative of the Silver Ghost and its equally famous driver

WORDS: PAUL GUINNESS PHOTOGRAPHY: ROLLS-ROYCE MOTOR CARS



Such was the toughness and durability of the Rolls-Royce 40/50 chassis, the model best known as the Silver Ghost became something of a fighting force in armoured car guise during the First World War. Lt. Col. T.E. Lawrence (the legendary Lawrence of Arabia) was a particular admirer, commanding a unit of nine armored Rolls-Royces after being posted to military intelligence in Cairo, becoming British liaison to the Arabs in 1916 and coordinating their revolt against the Ottoman Empire. Lawrence hailed the armoured Rolls-Royce as "that most involved and intricate weapon", and later described using the cars on a one-day mission to blow up bridges and liberate 200 rifles and 80,000 rounds of ammunition. This photograph shows Lt. Col. Lawrence aboard a Silver Ghost tender (another essential weapon of war) in 1916.

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ADVERT DETAILS:

Make/Model:

Year: Price: Mileage:

Main Text (no more than 30 words):

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Ad Contact Number:

ADVERTISER DETAILS:

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Telephone:

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PRIVATE ADVERTISERS ONLY MUST SIGN HERE:

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

CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE

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BENTLEY

ARNAGE T



2003, 76,000 Miles, £31,950. Finished in Black Sapphire with Mulliner wing vents and '07 model 19 inch alloys. Magnolia interior stitched in French Navy with embossed Flying B's in French Navy. Turned alloy dash and waist rails with Walnut veneers. Electric rear seats. Comes with Full Service History. Immaculate throughout. Please call 0208 567 9729, London. (T)

ARNAGE T MULLINER LEVEL II IN BELUGA



2008, £57,950. Finished in Beluga with diamond cut alloys. Soft Black interior with contrasting stitching in White. Piano Black veneers with turned alloy dash and waist rails. Full Service History. Immaculate condition throughout. Please call 0208 567 9729, London. (T)

CONTINENTAL GT



2004, 85,000 Miles, £29,999. Finished in cypress green with 19 inch alloys. Saffron interior with burr oak veneers. Comes with full service history and in immaculate condition throughout. Please call 0208 567 9729, London. (T)

CONTINENTAL GT



2005, £27,750. Finished in Diamond Black with 19 inch split rim alloys, with Autumn interior, Beluga secondary hide and Walnut veneers. Full Service History. Known to ourselves for last 4 years. Immaculate condition throughout. Please call 0208 567 9729, London. (T)

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.

MULSANNE



2012, 21,000 Miles, £99,750. Finished in silver storm with linen interior, with imperial blue stitching and soft black carpets piped in linen. Fitted with rear entertainment and internet. Comes with full service history. Please call 0208 567 9729, London. (T)

ROLLS ROYCE

20HP



1923, £49,500. Unique sports coupe with full weather equipment, once owned by Fred Astaire. £40,000 spent on restoration, all bills available. Total engine, transmission rebuild, new tyres, respoked wheels, overdrive etc. Please call 01924 258731.

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)

SILVER SPIRIT MK IV



1996, 39,000 Miles, £26,950. Finished in Cobalt Blue with Cream coach lines and whitewall tyres. Cream interior with Walnut veneers, picnic tables and Cream carpets. Immaculate condition throughout. Please call 0208 567 9729, London. (T)

SILVER SPIRIT MK II



1990, 25,000 Miles, £23,950. Finished in beautiful special order Bordeaux with Black roof. White leather interior piped in St James, Cherry Red carpets and Walnut veneers with inlays. Fitted with picnic tables and cocktail cabinets to the rear of the front seats. Comes with Full Service History. Immaculate condition throughout. Please call 0208 567 9729, London. (T)



PAUL GUINNESS

Recently tasked with defending the Silver Seraph against a German rival, our new editor found himself explaining the virtues of Rolls-Royce's most exclusive modern-classic saloon

It will come as no surprise to learn that *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* has a number of sister publications, all part of the Kelsey Media motoring portfolio. My name tends to appear quite often, as I'm a regular contributor to several, including *Classic Car Buyer*. And it was for that particular weekly newspaper that I was recently asked to defend the Rolls-Royce Silver Seraph.

Defend a Rolls-Royce? What a strange premise, you might think. The idea itself was an interesting one, however, as the 1998-on Seraph was being compared with the V12 version of the BMW 'E38' 7-Series, a model that shared essentially the same powerplant as the Rolls-Royce. Even so, surely there could be no contest in terms of which car was most desirable?

You'd think so. And yet my freelance colleague arguing the case for the BMW made some interesting points, not least the fact that the V12 7-Series was around one-third cheaper than its British rival when new – and can be picked up now for around two-thirds less than the equivalent Silver Seraph. But since when did 'cheaper' automatically mean 'better'? For me, never.

What I found particularly baffling was my colleague's assertion that



“I still see it as a fresh design, albeit one with classic Rolls-Royce influences”

the Silver Seraph wasn't even that impressive: “The Seraph and Arnage remind me of the big BMC 'Farina' in one way, badge-engineered on the same shell with one having a Rolls-Royce engine and still being hopelessly outclassed by much cheaper big cars. These weren't outclassed

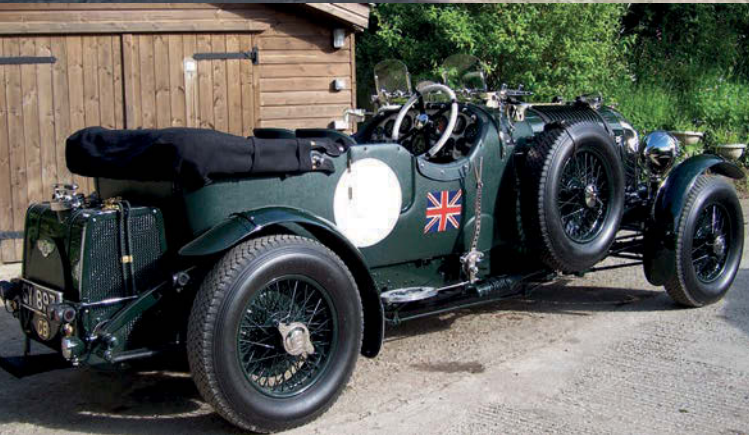
as such, but in what way were they better than cars like the 750iL?”

For me, the advantage of the Silver Seraph over the BMW 7-Series is the former's hand-finished quality, its ultimate luxury and – arguably above all else – its sense of style when compared with its Germanic contemporary. Here was a car created to replace the straight-edged Silver Spirit after a long and successful run, taking Rolls-Royce into a whole new era. And to my eyes, it did it brilliantly. It might have relied on BMW for its V12 power, but in every other sense the Silver Seraph was a true Rolls-Royce – and one that looked remarkably handsome upon its launch.

It's a sobering thought that the Silver Seraph is twenty years old this year. I still see it as a fresh design, albeit one with classic Rolls-Royce influences. It's a car that's not just aged remarkably well, but one that would still be on my wish-list if faced with a high-speed pan-European jaunt. It's just a shame that the Silver Seraph's four-year career (drastically shorter than that of its Bentley Arnage cousin) meant its true long-term potential was never exploited. ■



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