

NEWS

THOUGHTS FROM THE SHOWROOM...

Happy New Year and welcome to the inaugural Frank Dale & Stepsons newsletter, something we will be presenting to you every other month throughout the year in addition to our monthly stocklist. We'll be highlighting some of the latest cars we have for sale, featuring current restoration jobs as well as technical advice from the workshop and our thoughts and musings on the classic car world in general. But before we step forward into the year ahead let me take a look back, at the year that was.

It was a mixed year of highs and lows for Frank Dale & Stepsons in 2016. Sadly, we said a final farewell to our honorary chairman Ivor Gordon. Ivor is a tremendous loss to the classic car world felt by many. His passing fell bitterly in the same year the company turned 70 years old. With glasses raised in tribute to Ivor, and James who passed in 2015, we celebrated this momentous anniversary as a company and marked the occasion with production of our fifth edition catalogue and a dinner event in the showroom for our best customers and some of our friends from the industry.



Giles, Vincent, Emma and Greg celebrating at our 70th Anniversary Dinner



The sales department saw two very busy periods of business, the spring and then the autumn, which I believe was heavily related to the political backdrop of 2016.



There is no doubt that 2016 will be a year that the history books will return to again and again, reflecting on the seismic events that took place, not least in the political arena. The vote for Britain to leave the EU and the election of Donald Trump were events few predicted, but they are both now a reality and they affected our industry a great deal. A year ago, when David Cameron announced the EU referendum would take place in June,

I felt we could well be in for a strange year. A huge amount of attention and media coverage was directed at this historical vote and the phones and emails of the sales department at Frank Dale fell much quieter from April through to August, with the run up to the vote and the subsequent fall out after the result. And who could blame prospective buyers in the slightest, making a significant purchase in such uncertain times is something that few people do.

However we all sat tight and over the remaining months of 2016, general confidence began to return to not just ours but to many industries. The devaluation of the pound has helped us with our export sales, with several cars finding their way to the United States, Switzerland and other foreign destinations, as shrewd buyers take advantage of the current exchange rates.

We sold some beautiful cars throughout 2016 and saw an ever increasing lean towards rarity, stylish coachwork, condition and provenance.

The right cars with something a little special about them are still finding their way to new homes and I see this trend continuing throughout 2017 and beyond. The auction houses, who so often are seen as setting the benchmark on values, were without consistency for the first time in many years, with some tremendous individual success stories and some un-sold disappointments. It seems the heady prices realised in 2013 and 2014 are now being remembered with a melancholic fondness as we move on with a degree of reality and sensibility when setting a pre-sale estimate or an asking price. But, never fear, quality motor cars are still selling for the best prices, as the less interesting have inevitably become less appealing.



1958 Bentley S1 Drophead Coupe



1938 Rolls-Royce Phantom III Coupe



1954 Bentley R Type Continental by H.J.Mulliner, Sold at Auction August 2016 for \$1,870,000

Our exhibiting commitments were wide during 2016 and we will look to continue in this vein this year. Our first official event will be in Germany in April at The Essen Techno Classica and we will feature this event and its build up in newsletters to come, with numerous other shows during the summer and autumn to follow. But our first stop will be to Paris in February and to Retromobile, not to exhibit this year but to visit customers and friends in the industry. We will be reporting back in our next newsletter, so until then, top up your anti-freeze and safe motoring.



NEW ARRIVALS

1958 Bentley S1 Continental Drophead Coupe by Park Ward

(Left Hand Drive)

1958 Bentley S1 Continental Drophead Coupe by Park Ward Chassis number BC18LEL

One of just thirty one original left hand drive all aluminium bodied drophead coupes by Park Ward for the S1 Continental chassis, built to Design No 700. This design is widely regarded to be the most attractive post war Bentley with open coachwork and one that is highly coveted by collectors and enthusiasts alike.



This particular motor car was completed in July of 1958 to the original order of the Government of Qatar, finished in sand over sable as it remains today. Later in life the car found its way to the U.S. when owned by Joan Dreyfus, the wife of Jack Dreyfus the famed Wall Street financial expert who founded the Dreyfus fund. The car was purchased by Vantage Motor Works from the Dreyfus family in 1996 and restored mechanically and cosmetically to show standard, in its original colour specification. It was then supplied to known collections and shown for the only time at Amelia Island in 2009 where it won first place honours. The car was then acquired by its current owner who has maintained it regardless of cost.

Being an EL Series it is fitted with factory power steering, twin brake master cylinders and the larger style carburettors, making it the most desirable specification. It is also fitted with power hood, power windows that are rarely seen on S1 Continentals and air conditioning. It comes complete with correct handbook and complete tools stowed in the Park Ward box in the boot. This vehicle will come serviced, prepared and tested prior to delivery to ensure the next owners continued enjoyment. This beautiful motor car represents a rare opportunity to acquire a late specification, original left hand drive example of one of Bentleys most sought after models.

Price: £1,250,000



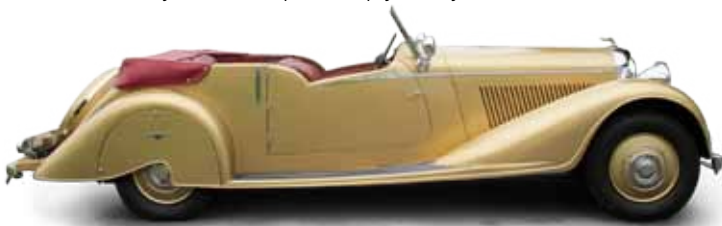
THOUGHTS FROM THE WORKSHOP...

The workshop was extremely busy throughout 2016 with an ever increasing number of customers calling upon our services. From a body off restoration to changing a light bulb, the work continued to be varied and interesting.

The beauty of the services we provide means you can often find a 100 year old Silver Ghost in one bay, perhaps having some scheduled maintenance, whilst in the very next bay there may be a one year old Rolls-Royce Ghost undergoing its first service. The variation of Rolls-Royce and Bentley models we work on is always interesting for our visitors too. A look around the workshop inevitably invites technical questions about their own cars, advice we are always very happy to provide.

The general servicing work throughout 2016 remained consistently busy, however the restoration jobs we completed, or that are ongoing, are perhaps the most interesting aspects of life at Frank Dale & Stepsons workshops.

We were delighted to be given the opportunity to restore a very well-known Derby Bentley recently, a project that was completed in 2016. It is perhaps one of the most famous Derby Bentleys still in existence. Previously owned by Johnnie Green, it has been the feature of many pre-war Bentley books. With its outlandish and original colour scheme and unmistakable coachwork by Vanden Plas, this 1939 Bentley 4¼ Litre Overdrive or "Honeysuckle" as she is affectionately known is quite simply a very beautiful motor car.



The works undertaken by Frank Dale & Stepsons included a detailed re-working of the ash frame and coachwork, chrome restoration, a replacement rear wheel cover to correct the look of the tail, interior work, a new hood and full mechanical preparation. The completed car now looks terrific and drives just as an "Overdrive"

Derby Bentley should, with silky smooth gear changes, light and responsive steering coupled with tremendous power and acceleration.



Mechanical preparation



Coachwork analysis



Coachwork restoration



New paintwork

The testing phase of the project was very enjoyable and it was clear that our fellow motorists delighted in seeing her out on the open road, with smiles and waves everywhere the car was driven whilst on test. It was a pleasure having this very special historical motor car in our care.

Moving forward, we are currently working on a number of lovely cars for our customers, with delivery dates scheduled throughout the year as the projects come to fruition. At present, we are fortunate enough to be carrying out major works to a number of important motor cars, with three projects ongoing on some beautiful Derby Bentleys, four Bentley S1 Continental Drophead Coupes by Park Ward and three Bentley R Type Continentals by H.J.Mulliner also all undergoing restoration works, so some very interesting projects.

We are also drawing close to completion of a very rewarding and heavily involved project; the conversion of a Bentley S1 Continental Coupe by Park Ward into a Drophead Coupe, ensuring the cars appearance and functionality is identical in every way to an original car. Sacrilege you may cry, but the customer is (nearly) always right and it's been fantastic to see this car progress. A further update and photographs of this particular car will follow in our next newsletter.

TECHNICAL TIPS FROM THE WORKSHOP

With the winter weather continuing, in the Northern hemisphere at least, you may not be using your classic car quite as often as usual. But if you are, here are some helpful tips for winter motoring:-

- Take extra care when checking the anti-freeze level in your radiator, the mix should ideally be a 50/50 mix with anti-freeze and water in equal measures. If the coolant freezes in your engine you run the risk of a cracked block. The coolant should also be changed regularly as

the corrosion inhibitors break down over time, which can lead to a build up of sediment in the water galleries. This in turn can lead to overheating, so it is important to keep a close eye on this aspect to avoid future problems.

- Your one shot lubrication system on pre-war up to S1 and Cloud I models should be exercised perhaps now more than during the summer months. This will keep your suspension joints lubricated and well-oiled during the colder weather. We would recommend you use these about once every 150 miles to ensure proper coverage.

