



# BENTLEY

## DRIVERS CLUB NSW MAGAZINE

JANUARY – MARCH 2026 EDITION



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Please send copy and images to:

Gregory May: gregmay01@bigpond.com

**Copy:** Please send as a Word document

**Images:** Please save all images as **high resolution JPG**.

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Published by Bentley Drivers Club NSW Region © 2026

#### **On the cover:**

From the 2025 Bentley Drivers Club NSW Concours d'Elegance



# CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

Dear fellow members,  
 Firstly, my apologies for the lateness of this publication, due largely to the holiday season.

Nevertheless, our Club continues to thrive and to provide a vibrant forum for sharing ideas and enjoying lively social events. We have an action-packed schedule for the year ahead, with a variety of new events and venues. As I have said before, our aim is to keep the social events new and interesting in order to maintain your interest & participation.

Despite a few members retiring for their own reasons, I am pleased to welcome a number of new members including:

Scott Gledhill of  
 Murrumbateman  
 Spiro and Georgis Haralambous  
 of Earlwood  
 Matthew Fisher of Dural  
 Stephen and Belinda Curl of  
 Gledswood Hills  
 Mark Cramer-Roberts of Vacluse

We are certainly seeing some interesting developments in the automotive world at present, notably, the significant take up of electric vehicles. Bentley themselves have developed a new hybrid Continental GT, which I believe that two of our members have already acquired. The reports which I have received from them are that it is a breathtaking machine to drive, along with all of the usual Bentley refinements and fitments.

Despite this, the older Bentley motor cars still seem to hold their appeal, with drivers regularly reporting receiving compliments on their cars from the public at large often with photo requests. I, myself, was recently in Katoomba in my 1968 Bentley T when I was approached by a lady who was admiring my car, asked many questions and requested to view and photograph the car as well as the engine bay! I often get the thumbs up from other drivers of modern cars in my travels on the motorways which is always a thrill.

I think that we are particularly fortunate to have the Historic Vehicle Scheme, which allows us to maintain the ownership of the older vehicles at a significantly reduced registration cost. If you have not taken advantage of this scheme already, I strongly suggest that you discuss this with our Historic Plates Registrar, Garrath Will.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at future events, and I should also mention that the instigation of the Try Booking system, which was organized by Alison Davey, has greatly streamlined the booking process, for which I am extremely grateful.

I close by wishing you happy and safe motoring in your Bentleys.

**GREGORY MAY, CHAIRMAN  
 BDC (NSW Region) Inc.**



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## BENTLEY DRIVERS CLUB NSW REGION

# UPCOMING EVENTS

SAT <b>11</b> APR	<b>THE TITANIC EXPERIENCE</b> The Victoria & Albert Guesthouse at Mount Victoria	REFER TO WEBSITE
SUN <b>03</b> MAY	<b>THE LAGGAN RUN</b> Laggan Hotel Contact: Marcia 02 4837 3208	REFER TO WEBSITE
MON <b>04</b> MAY	<b>COMMITTEE MEETING</b> Online	8:00 PM
SUN <b>07</b> JUN	<b>WOLLONGONG / UNANDERRA RUN</b> Nan Tian Temple, Unanderra and lunch Contact: Tom	12:30 PM
MON <b>06</b> JUL	<b>COMMITTEE MEETING</b> Online	8:00 PM
SAT <b>04</b> JUL	<b>CHRISTMAS IN JULY</b> Bundanoon Hotel	REFER TO WEBSITE
SUN <b>05</b> JUL	<b>COFFEE &amp; CARS AT BUNDANOON</b> 280 Penrose Road, Bundanoon (Miles Felstead)	REFER TO WEBSITE
MON <b>03</b> AUG	<b>BENTLEY SYDNEY SHOWROOM</b> Contact: Nikki Shaw	REFER TO WEBSITE



# Canberra Run

Sunday 8 February 2026



**Gregory May** reports on the trip to Canberra and visit to Ollie's Garage in Fyshwick

It was a wet Sunday for this event, although it did not seem deter our valiant Bentley drivers and their friends. A number of members made the drive to Canberra on the day before to take in some of the museums and enjoy a relaxing Saturday evening.

We were 21 in all including members, family and friends.

Ian and Tina Oliver made us most welcome at Ollie's Garage, where they were featuring a display of Bentley cars as well as Ford vehicles to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Ford in Australia.

Ian talked us through his history and explained how he has

ended up with a private museum of cars, all starting with his father's Caltex motor garage in Queanbeyan, where he and his two brothers developed an interest and love of motor cars.

Ian gave us a run through both collections starting with his 1926 WO and running through until the 1990's.



The Ford collection started with a Model T commercial vehicle and ran through to the multi race winning Ford GTOs.

Ian also gave us a run down on the Sir Henry Royce Foundation and explained his involvement with this.

At 1:00pm we all advanced to the Kingston Hotel, where Ian

had us booked in for lunch. I must say that the service was prompt and the food most satisfactory at a reasonable price. From what I observed, there were smiles all round and much bonhomie. The last of us left at around 5:00pm, which is surely a sign of a most successful event.

A big thanks to Ian and Tina Oliver.

### Guest List

Charles Chelliah  
 Graeme and Toni Ellis with guest  
 James Humphries  
 Scott Gledhill and  
 Barnaby Gledhill  
 Spiro and Georgia Haralambous  
 Gregory May  
 Sam Ibrahim  
 Ciaran Jordan  
 Joe Quattrochi  
 John and Sue Sheehy  
 Coralie Ogle  
 Dirk Riding  
 Belinda Riding and Alan White  
 Garrath Will and Cameron Will  
 Trevor Butler





Gregory May

# Blue Mountains run to the V&A Guesthouse, Mount Victoria

28 February 2026



It had been wet and steamy in Sydney for weeks, so an escape to the cooler climes of the Blue Mountains was definitely what the doctor had ordered.

The predicted wet conditions deterred some of our members, but those who made it luxuriated in the cool and foggy conditions, and a refreshing change of scene.

The Victoria & Albert Guesthouse, which was established in 1914 did not disappoint. Recent refurbishment and re-decoration by the owners Shane and Michael is indeed a step back in time and a feast for the senses. The building is packed full of Victorian furniture





and decoration with the walls adorned by an array of portraits. Understandably, those of Queen Victoria painted at various stages of her life feature prominently.

The dining room is a feast for the eyes, lit by a myriad of chandeliers, one of which I believe was from the set of the film *Moulin Rouge*.

We gathered for social drinks in one of the many drawing rooms at 6:00pm and then proceeded to the dining room for a delicious meal, which was served on a long table. Our host, Nicholas, could not have been more welcoming and accommodating.

The special guests for the evening were Simon and Lachlan Pierce from the Queensland BDC Region. Simon spoke about the upcoming Australian National Bentley Rally which is to be held in Toowoomba from 1 to 8 November 2026.





**The Victoria & Albert Guesthouse**

*Welcome Bentley Drivers Club*

*Main*

**CRISPY CHICKEN**  
potato & leek gratin, carrot, sweet peas and jus | GF

**LAMB SHANK**  
mashed potato and seasonal vegetables | GF

*Dessert*

**CREME BRULEE**  
Cointreau rosemary served with ice cream | GF

**CHOCOLATE CHILLI CAKE**  
Raspberry coulis served with ice cream | GF





The place was full and buzzing with other groups and guests which made for a jolly evening.

The next morning we all convened in the conservatory for breakfast, after which some of us went on the Blackheath to check out the antiques in the Victory Theatre, and others went their own way.

I think that most of us would agree that it was a great weekend away.



**Guest list**

- Stephen Blundell
- Graeme and Toni Ellis
- Phil and Dianne Sidebottom
- Simon and Lachlan Pierce
- Gregory May
- Spiro and Georgia Haralambous
- Bill Aslinidis
- John and Margaret Lackey
- Garrath Will





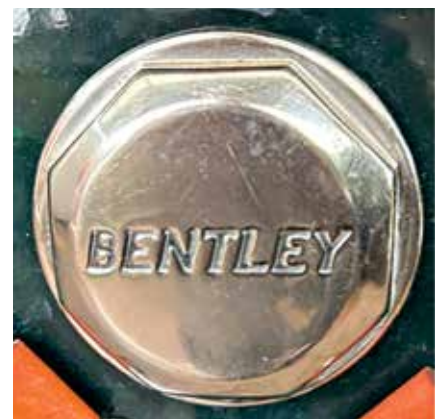
# Bentley enthusiast, driver and owner—for 75 years

Part three of **John Lackey's** reminiscences on his lifelong love of Bentley motor cars

## **OTHER ANACHRONISMS AND PARTS**

Before painting the body, I thought about all the other bits and pieces that should be painted at the same time. Things like headlights, horns, taillights, petrol tank, front valance cover, badge bar, mudguards and

all the mounting stays. The late Gordon Davis, a friend in the BDC NSW saw how I was going and generously gave me a vintage Bosch town horn. The country horn cost a fortune—it came from a wrecked Sydney Harbour ferry and was dated 1917. The headlights came from a swap meeting at Bendigo. I made up the windscreen from brass channel and MG TC rubbers. Similarly, the door catches came





from MG TC spares. The glass had to be to the official standard and had to have the approval stamp etched in one corner. The glass screen was made very reasonably by a firm on the south side of Silverwater Bridge. Robert Rowe modified the petrol tank to stand on the rear of the chassis, just like an MG TC. I modified a Volvo petrol depth sender to go into the tank. The spare wheel required an attachment to the rear of the bodywork and on the rear chassis cross member. I fabricated the leather belts for the bonnet and spare wheel. Note, for those keen MG “octagonal enthusiasts” Rolls-Royce used an octagon for Mk VI hubcaps.

### MUDGUARDS

The mudguards proved to be an expensive item—I sought out firms that could make them and requested quotes only to be amazed at how much they would cost. Four guards ranged from \$5,000 to \$8,000 each. There was no way that I could afford them. I found a firm in Albury that made truck guards—steel semi-circular guards of required width came in at \$600 including freight from Albury. Rod Hoffman’s son Gavin, maker of movie sets, was



prepared to have a go at altering one of the truck guards—I still have the prototype in the roof of my garage. He did a wonderful job. Fortunately, he had an English wheel that could change the shape of guard to the shape I settled on. To get the ridge down the centre he suggested a narrow piece of steel that he could shape in the English wheel that could be welded onto the centre of each guard. He made the four guards for a total of \$3,500 and then four sets of support brackets for \$1,000. Much better than what I had been quoted, a sigh of relief.

### THE RADIATOR

I had the radiator overhauled and the shell chrome plated. I bought some suitable brass wire mesh and put the vee in the centre. Bob Winley, a good friend, made the '8' template. I sprayed the whole mesh piece black and after it had dried, I stuck the template on and sprayed the '8' white ever so carefully. I mounted an electric radiator fan in front of the radiator where it would be less

obvious as I didn't know how well the radiator would do with the extra heat from the extra two cylinders—not used so far. The Kookaburra radiator mascot was acquired at a Ballarat Swap Meeting.

### THE BONNET

Graham Smith the welder fabricated the bonnet, and Rodney Hoffman made the tool for Graham to insert the louvres. All done in reasonably quick time. The bonnet fitted beautifully.

### PAINT

Now I was ready to get the car painted. By asking around I found a firm that would paint the car and all the little bits and pieces. I asked another friend, Cliff King, a Jaguar owner, the colour used by Jaguar for the D Type racing cars. Of course it was BRG, however, there were quite a lot of BRGs around. In one of Cliff's pamphlets on Jaguar I found a reference to the BRG used by Jaguar, so that is the colour I requested. Painting the car seemed

straightforward, however, the bonnet caused great difficulties. Possibly due to the heat in the spray booth the bonnet changed shape while the paint was applied. I have tried all kinds of tricks to make the bonnet fit properly to no avail. The fault has affected both sides of the bonnet. Now I have two bolts with knurled heads to pull the bonnet sides into shape. I am hoping that in the fullness of time these bolts will tame the bonnet and it will resume its initial shape. Otherwise, the painting was a success.

### UPHOLSTERY

I was at the painters one afternoon when an older man approached the painter looking for work. He was a recently retired upholsterer. I asked if he could do the seats, door cards, and carpets and we agreed he would supply a sample. The next day I received a call saying the sample was ready for approval. He exceeded my expectations, so I gave him the job. First though, I had to trace out the 'B' from Miles Felsted's foot plate





The woodwork and electrical wiring were achieved by myself.

so that an aluminium 'B' template could be used to cut out cardboard 'B's for the door flaps. I made the template and still have it hanging above my bench. The upholsterer made the tonneau covers too—excellent workmanship.

### THE ROCKER BOX

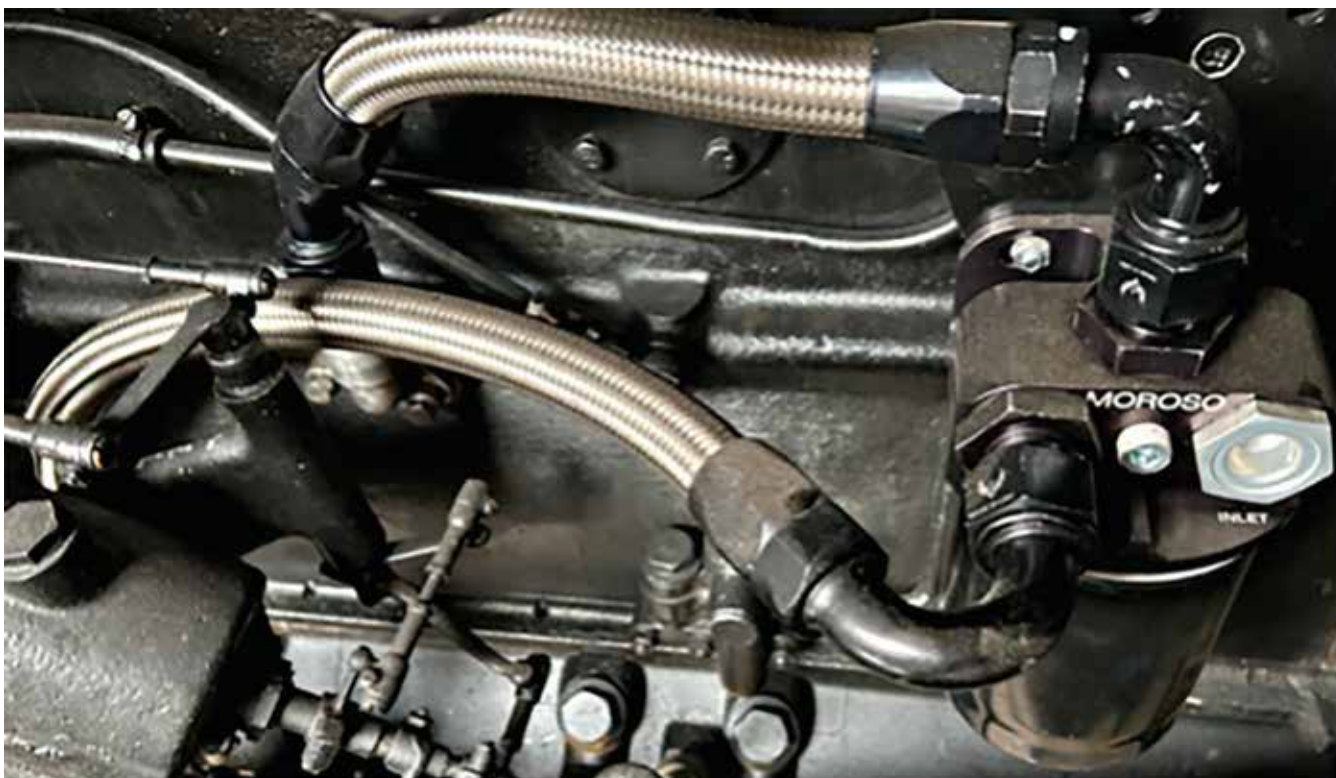
Being such a Bentley fanatic, I thought it wouldn't do to have Rolls-Royce inscription on the rocker box. I set up the rocker box on my mill table and with a fly

cutter I removed the Rolls-Royce raised letters and their surrounds. On eBay once more I acquired a V8 Bentley rocker box with the Bentley inscription just like that on my 3 Litre. I diligently cut the Inscription out and had a couple of them cast. Then I attached them to the rocker box that would go on the car.

### THE INSTRUMENTS

I had a full set of Mk VI Bentley instruments. The speedo didn't

work—why? There was an air gap between the gearbox and the instrument. I acquired a speedo in miles per hour using GPS data from Rocket. I mocked up a dashboard using the Bentley MK VI switches, the combined oil pressure, temperature, fuel and electric current gauge and the tachometer and drive cable that was in the crate with the engine, and some switches that were plentiful at Jaycar. I started with a very square dash, however I didn't like it. It ended up





At long last my Speed 8 Special on its maiden outing at Hawkesbury Lookout, 30 November 2017.

curved. Two WW2 Russian aircraft clocks, replicas of the Jaeger clocks often fitted to WO Bentleys, and electronic Speedo powered by GPS technology were incorporated.

### THE OIL FILTER

I replaced the massive RR Oil Filter System fitted to the engine with an after market system that used a readily available filter adapter from Rocket and a Z9 oil filter.

### CULMINATION

My Bentley Speed 8 Special is registered on club plates and is on the road and giving me much pleasure especially when I can overtake modern traffic with ease. The 1.2:1 overdrive at 4,000 rpm should make 190 km/h possible if one were game enough. It cruises at 110 km/h very happily, just over 2,000 rpm.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At no stage during this journey did I have misgivings about what

I was doing. Many wonderful friends came to my rescue at different times. They included Robert Phillips, Graeme Louk, Rob Rowe, Graham Smith, Garrath Will, Bob Winley, Cliff King, Rod and Gavin Hoffman, the late Miles Felsted, the late George Green, the late Gordon Davis, my sons Sam and John, and of course, lastly but not least my best pal, my wife Margaret.

### THE BENTLEY DRIVERS CLUB NSW REGION INC.

I joined the Bentley Drivers Club (BDC) in the early 1970s when the late George Green decided to pick up the reins. The Club had been formed earlier by the late Dr Esgate and his wife, the late John (Jumbo) Goddard, the late Laurie O'Neil and a few others. Due to a lack of interest, the Club activities declined, and it ceased to have meetings. George and I wrote to the BDC UK to get the Club going again—their permission was granted with

enthusiasm. The late Barbara Fell, the Secretary of the BDC UK at the time, continued to correspond with me for many years. I was Secretary to Chairman the late George Green and later after a stint of being Chairman I was Secretary when the late Keith Wherry was Chairman. With help of the late Malcolm Johns, I brought in the three year term for the Chairman and revised the constitution that was in use until recently. I have been a member ever since those early days. I have made some wonderful friends and have had some terrific drives.

I still love to drive my Bentleys! I do enjoy the camaraderie of the club!

**No more to come – I hope you have enjoyed my Bentley journey!**

PS. The Bentley S1 story is for another day.

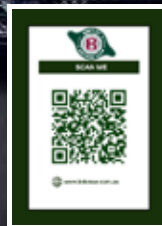



# BENTLEY DRIVERS CLUB – N.S.W

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Joe Quattrochi



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# The Start Line





### EXTREME SLIPSTREAMING

Now you see him... now you don't! Ben Eastick (he's in there somewhere) obtains a healthy tow in his T Type from Simon Worthington's BDC Continental GT race car during the Bentley Open encounter at BDC Silverstone in August. *Review* wonders if Simon can actually see Ben on his tail through his rear-view mirror...

Image: Courtesy of Pater Mallett/Tripas Media





4½ LITRE – RACING HISTORY

# Ghost *in the* machine



The 4½ Litre has a racing provenance that alone marks it out as a very special machine, but this car's remarkable originality is the real key to its appeal, writes

**Simon Hucknall.** Images: Courtesy of Max Edleston

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Classic & Sports Car magazine**

#### 4½ LITRE – RACING HISTORY



*“I think the whole thing is crazy. Nobody'll finish. Cars aren't designed to stand that sort of strain for 24 hours.”* Today it's almost unimaginable that those words came from Walter Owen Bentley, the very man whose company was to become inextricably linked with the 24 Hours of Le Mans. Recounted in his 1958 autobiography, it was a view WO had expressed in 1923, immediately before Bentley Motors' first outing at the Circuit de La Sarthe.

Had it not been for Bentley agent John Duff's encouragement, the firm's founder would not have supported the sole 3 Litre model that had entered the inaugural running of the event. But by the time Duff and Bentley's Frank Clement had brought the car home in joint fourth place, WO was hooked. Seven years and five outright works wins later Bentley's Le Mans legacy was entrenched.

An important part of that legacy is YW 5758, a 1928 Vanden Plas-bodied 4½ Litre. It is now widely recognised as the most successful surviving original-bodied Bentley Team Car from the 'WO' era, with a competition provenance that includes not only a notable finish at Le Mans, but also significant results at the important Irish circuits of the day as well as at Brooklands.

Upon its launch in 1927, the 4½ Litre was demonstrably superior to its predecessor, the 3 Litre. Revised steering and brakes made for more wieldy dynamics, and it was lighter and more manageable than the 6½ Litre, making it the sweet spot of Bentley's range. The larger engine made it a more biddable machine on road and track versus the 3 Litre, and in standard tune power increased by 40bhp over the older car. Perhaps more important, the unit turned out to be almost unbreakable, suffering only one failure in its contemporary racing career.

So you can understand WO's consternation about force-feeding it with more power. This was a concept championed by Bentley Boy (the name was originally coined for the works mechanics but hijacked by the media to describe the drivers) Sir Henry 'Tim' Birkin, for whom WO's race strategy of only running cars fast enough to stay in front, and no faster, was anathema. Financed by wealthy racehorse owner Dorothy Paget and, perhaps naïvely, supported by Woolf Barnato in his new role as company chairman, Birkin commissioned Amherst Villiers to design a supercharger installation for the 4.4-litre engine, with 50 cars



## 4½ LITRE – RACING HISTORY

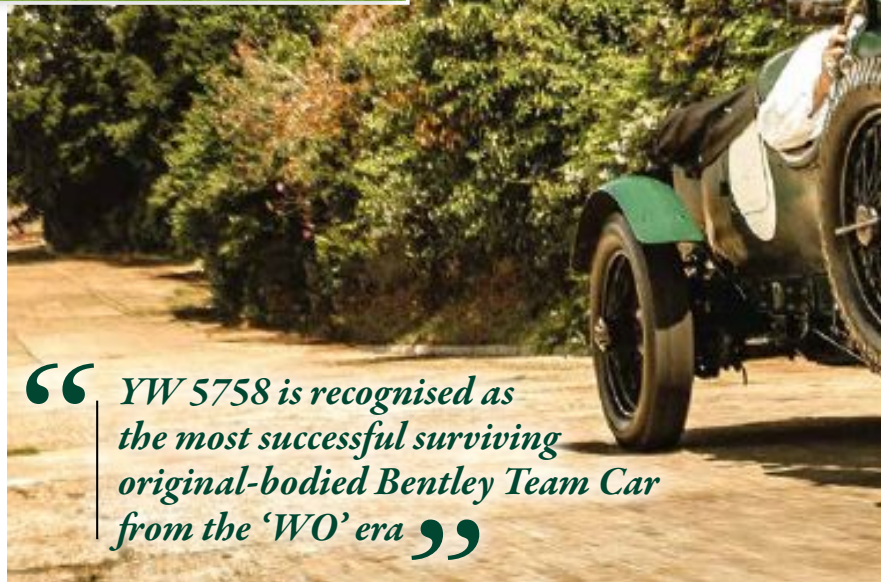


Current owner Ian Andrews with YW 5758 at the Club Concours at Stonor Park in 2018

(the minimum number to go racing) to be produced. As a blown unit, power increased radically, from the 130bhp of the atmospheric race cars to 175bhp. From the off, the ‘Blower’ was a hugely quick car.

But it never won a race. In its first outing at the 1929 Brooklands Six Hours, its performance wowed but it failed to finish, with a Speed Six cruising to a win and YW 5758 coming third. At the 1930 24 Hours of Le Mans – which, in WO’s mind anyway, pitted Bentley’s blown and unblown works cars head-to-head – Speed Sixes came in first and second, with engine failure causing the two Blowers to retire after 20 and 21 hours, respectively. Small wonder, then, that, along with the impact of 1929’s Wall Street Crash, WO cited the Blower as a key factor in Bentley’s downfall, which ultimately placed the company in the hands of Rolls-Royce from 1931.

All of this brings us back to ‘our’ car, which, you imagine, would have been well regarded by WO, as a works car that represented the pinnacle of his company’s engineering brilliance.



“ YW 5758 is recognised as the most successful surviving original-bodied Bentley Team Car from the ‘WO’ era ”

That this particular Bentley was not only raced extensively when new, but almost continually until the end of the 20th century, makes its story even more compelling.

Purchased by Humphrey Cook – a financier of Raymond Mays’ ERA –

in 1928, it was immediately pressed into competition at the Newtownards Tourist Trophy in Northern Ireland, where it finished second in class and seventh overall before a crowd of 250,000. In just six months of 1929 it entered almost every red-letter race available to the Bentley works team.

It got off to an inauspicious start on 10-11 May at the Brooklands Double Twelve, where a rare engine issue caused it to retire. We’ll return to its next outing at Le Mans shortly, but after that it was back to Brooklands on 30 June for the Six Hours where, in the hands of Cook, it achieved a first in class and third overall. On 12 July, YW 5758 was entered in the inaugural Irish International Grand Prix at Phoenix Park in Dublin, finishing fifth overall. It rounded off its season in grand style at Brooklands with an outright win in the 500 Miles race – at the time the world’s fastest long-distance event, and the first held by the British Racing Drivers’ Club – driven



Frank Clement, who shared YW 5758 with Jean Chassagne, on his way to fourth place at Le Mans in 1929

## 4½ LITRE – RACING HISTORY

**FAST FACTS: 4½ LITRE****Years sold / number built:** 1927-1931 / 667**Construction:** ash body frame with aluminium panels, separate steel chassis**Engine:** all-iron, ohc monobloc 4398cc 'four' with four valves per cylinder, twin SU G5 'sloping' carburettors**Top speed:** 90mph**Max power:** 110bhp (130bhp in racing spec)**Transmission:** four-speed manual, RWD**Suspension:** H-section axle (front), live axle (rear); semi-elliptic leaf springs, friction dampers front/rear**Steering:** worm and wheel**Brakes:** drums**Price new:** n/a; **Price now:** £450-500,000 (non-competition car)

Ian at the wheel at Brooklands, the 4½ Litre displaying the white-painted '8' it wore at Le Mans

by Jack Barclay and Frank Clement.

Fitted with a streamlined body the car very nearly came to grief, though: Barclay was at full pelt on the Members' Banking when it went into a high-speed slide. The moment was captured in a still, with the Bentley at an angle to the banked track and apparently driverless: Barclay, expecting the car to roll, had

ducked below the scuttle to prevent decapitation. Disaster was somehow averted, however, and Barclay and Clement drove on to victory at a spectacular average speed of 107.32mph.

It was, however, YW 5758's role at the 1929 24 Hours of Le Mans – a now legendary event in Bentley's history – that sealed its

near-incomparable provenance. One of five cars entered by the factory that year, it was driven by Frenchman Jean Chassagne along with Clement, the latter Bentley's only professional driver and one held in the highest esteem by WO. Three other 4½ Litre tourers were entered, driven by Glen Kidston and Jack Dunfee (in 'Mother Gun'), Dr Dudley Benjafield and



Humphrey Cook scored a class victory at the 1929 Brooklands Six Hours

[www.bdcl.org](http://www.bdcl.org)



Jack Barclay ducks below the scuttle during a high-speed slide at Brooklands during the victorious 1929 500 Miles race

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## 4½ LITRE – RACING HISTORY

YW 5758's oversize fuel tank is mounted aft of the rear axle while 21in wheels have replaced a set of non-original 19s

Baron André d'Erlanger, and Bernard Rubin and Francis Curzon (Earl Howe) in the final car. Barnato and Birkin completed the set driving 'Old Number One', the equipe's only Speed Six entry that year.

The race is perhaps only truly memorable for the team's dominance of the event, seemingly achieved with minimal effort. Once again, WO mandated that his cars be driven just quickly enough to lead – which, at one point, had Dunfee stopping for a drink at the Café de l'Hippodrome after racing too far ahead. Other than the Rubin/Curzon car retiring after three hours with an electrical fault, the only real drama affected Clement in YW 5758. At one point the car was second behind the Barnato/Birkin Speed Six when its ballast – required in this 'touring' car to represent a

passenger's weight – shifted. It caused the body to foul the brake rods beneath it, with one rod breaking. Clement was driving and forced to pit, saying later: "Of course, I had to get that thing [the ballast] back – it'd got to go back in its bolts, then I had to put an adaptor on the end of the brake rod. (Bentley mechanic) Hassan told me what I had to do. He was very wonderful."

But all was not lost. The car was straggling well behind in eighth when it returned to the track, but by 10am it had passed the Stutz and Chrysler entries – Bentley's only real rivals in the race – and fallen into line behind its three team-mates to make up the first four positions. And that is how the Bentley team completed the race, in close formation, with YW 5758 bringing up the rear and Old Number

One first over the line. 'Our' car had covered a total of 157 laps, 17 behind the winning Speed Six.

YW 5758's races were certainly not over, not by any means. Well-known Bentley dealer Barclay bought the car after Le Mans in 1929, before selling it on to Lord Brougham Vaux the following year. It changed hands again in '31, with John Carlson taking ownership for the next two years, coinciding with a run of second and third positions in consecutive Gold Star Handicaps. After another keeper, the car was bought by JP Emons, a founding member of the BDC. Emons and the next three owners – along with previous custodians (and influential former BDC Members) Harry Rose and daughter Ann Shoosmith, who took it on in 1957 – contributed to an almost continuous



The 4½ Litre carries its original engine undertrays



The hemp-wrapped, 20in steering wheel and scuffed cockpit sides showcase the patina that underscores the 4½'s originality

## 4½ LITRE – RACING HISTORY



“ We have just enough time on Brooklands’ Finishing Straight to capture an essence of what works drivers would have endured ”

competition history, including the current-day Le Mans Classic, Brighton Speed Trials, and races and hillclimbs too numerous to mention.

However, current owner and Club Member Dr Ian Andrews, who purchased the 4½ Litre 25 years ago, has never been near a race track – at least, not to compete. “I’m not a racing driver,” confesses Ian, “so there’s nothing I can add to its racing provenance.” It is a pragmatic and honest admission, and one that will certainly help preserve what is now an extremely rare and hugely valuable motor car for the future – and preservation has been Ian’s watchword.

Resisting the temptation to simply restore the car to concours standard, he has focused on a programme of conservation, which has left the car gloriously patinated and almost uniquely original compared with many other pre-war racers. Ian is passionate about this, saying: “The car has such a pure history and spirit, and there’s an aura about it – a historical signature you just cannot buy.” Which is why he initially turned down an approach from Bentley Motors in 2009 to display YW 5758 at the prestigious Pebble Beach Concours d’Elegance, thinking that its smart but non-concours appearance would leave judges nonplussed. As it turned out, its authenticity was welcomed and the car returned from California with a second-in-class trophy, the highest place that year for any Bentley Team Car among a star-studded group, including 3 Litre, 4½ Litre, Speed Six and Blower entrants.

Inevitably, Bentley invited Ian and YW 5758 back to Pebble Beach in

2019, where it took another second in class. Ian has also won a Fédération Internationale des Véhicules Anciens (FIVA) award, in 2000, again for the car’s originality. There has been no shortage of invitations to Goodwood’s Festival of Speed, where it has graced the Duke of Richmond’s hillclimb on many occasions.

Today, back at one of its spiritual homes (Brooklands), this prized Bentley looks magnificent. Tall, imposing and once again bearing on its radiator the painted ‘8’ that it wore at Le Mans nearly a century ago, YW 5758 is testament not only to Ian’s passion for maintaining its link with the past but also to the sheer longevity of a well-used example of what Ettore Bugatti reportedly described as ‘le camion plus vite du monde’ (the world’s fastest lorry).

Everywhere you look the car’s provenance is laid bare: the original eyebrow wings now frame 21in wire wheels, after a spell running on 19s; removing the original driver’s leather seat cushion reveals a flap to access an inflatable bag inside, offering an early form of seat-height adjustment; a St Christopher medal is screwed to the passenger door card and just below it, to the side of the footwell, is a policeman’s light for emergency night-time repairs on track. Ian also points to the original engine undertrays and, aft of the rear axle, the industrial-sized petrol tank which retains its original lagging (all Team Cars’ tanks were so modified from 1924).

And then we’re behind the hemp-wrapped, 20in steering wheel with which Clement and Barclay would have wrestled at this very location,

95 years ago. Twin magneto switches are located to your right, and no fewer than seven dials are dotted haphazardly across the rest of the dash, the largest of which is a Jaeger tachometer redlined at 4000rpm. Behind the driver the rear passenger space is covered with a tonneau, secured to a bulkhead into which the front seats are inset – a unique arrangement that provides this car with a distinctive profile.

Fire up the 4.4-litre ‘four’ and a majestically loud burble erupts from the straight-through exhaust. Engage first in the H-pattern, inboard gate next to your right knee and press gently on the long, floor-mounted centre throttle: the 4½ Litre moves away at little more than a fast idle. Despite weighing 3,600lb – typical of a big tourer from this era – the WO feels more substantial, not just in the way it moves down the track but also in the heft of its controls; a 30-98 racer feels lithe in comparison. Take your time with the four-speed crash ‘box and the gears mesh with well-oiled ease.

We have limited time on Brooklands’ bumpy Finishing Straight, but it’s just enough to capture an essence of what WO’s team drivers would have endured in period (albeit at three times our speed), their focus razor-sharp, tucked down below the aeroscreen, chequered flag in sight.

Only in the genuine article can you come so close to experiencing such a thrill – and there is no better example of that than YW 5758. 🏁

• Thanks to Brooklands Museum and Allan Winn

This article is one of 29 to feature in **Bentley Legends**, put together by the team behind **Classic & Sports Car** (classicandsportscar.com). To order your copy, visit [magsdirect.co.uk/classic-sports-car-presents/](https://magsdirect.co.uk/classic-sports-car-presents/)



The busy dashboard incorporates an array of period dials and controls

[www.bdcl.org](http://www.bdcl.org)



The 4.4-litre ‘four’ produced 130bhp, and a top speed of 90mph, in racing spec

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# Bentley Motors Focus





## SEMINAL SEDANS CELEBRATED

Three unique Flying Spur examples have been created to celebrate the anniversaries in 2025 of a trio of pivotal four-door models (*main image*): T Series – the first monocoque Bentley (60th anniversary, 1965), Turbo R – the model that started Bentley's rebirth (40th, 1985) and Continental Flying Spur – the first 200mph Bentley sedan (20th, 2005). The anniversary examples have been produced by Mulliner, Bentley's bespoke division, while the original threesome forms part of the 50-car Bentley Motors Heritage collection.

- The world's first true Luxury Urban SUV – designed, developed and produced in Crewe (*no official images yet available*) – is set to be launched late next year; deliveries of the as yet unnamed model, produced as part of Bentley Motors' forward-focused Beyond100+ strategy, will take place during 2027. Meanwhile, Bentley's new Supersports has been unveiled (*inset*); the latest twin-turbo, four-litre, V8-engined incarnation – produced in a limited run of 500 and set to go into production late next year – is only the fourth Supersports model in the marque's history, some 100 years after the original was born.

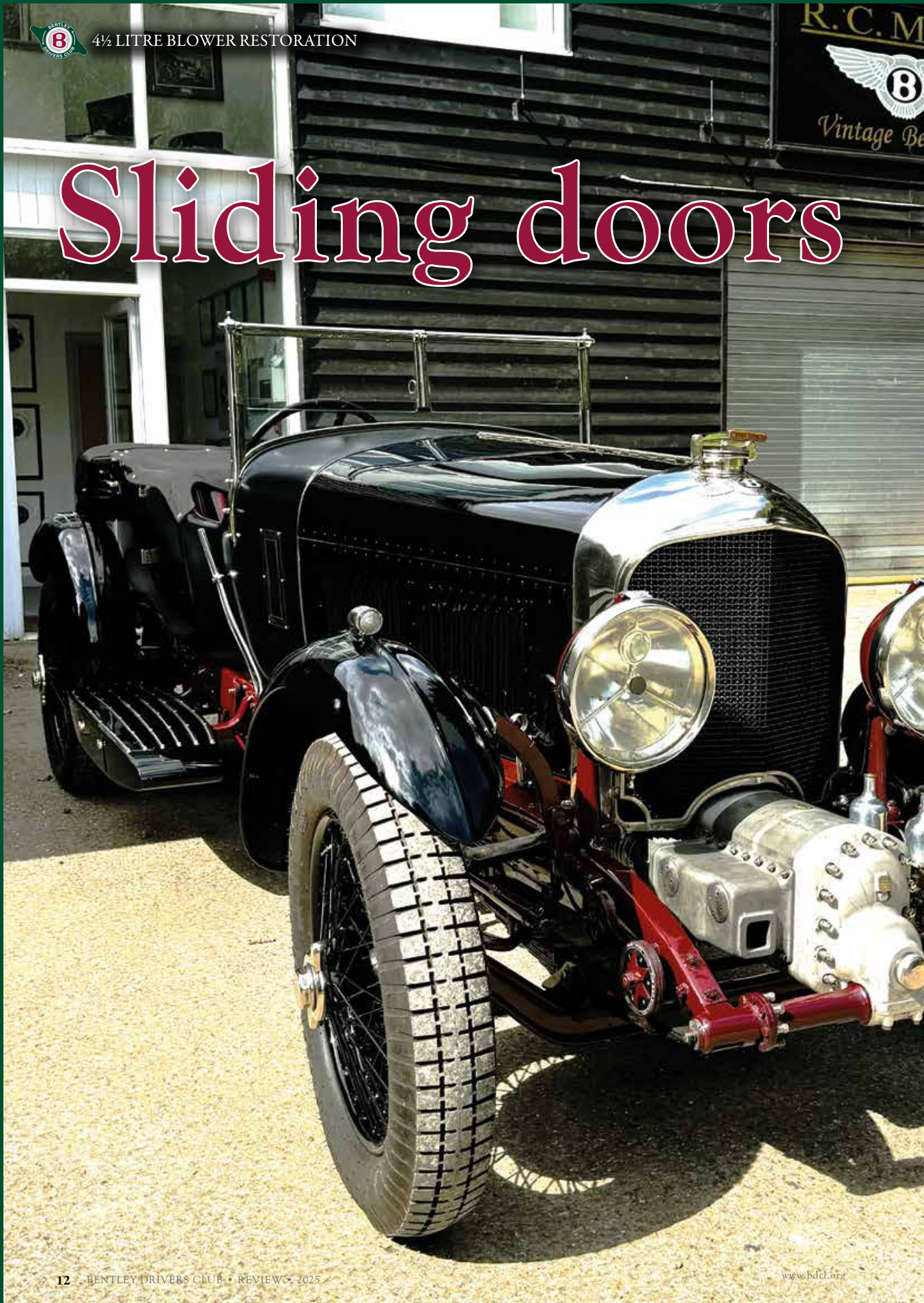
- Bentley Motors has officially opened its state-of-the-art Engineering Technical Centre (*inset*) at its carbon neutral headquarters in Crewe. The new R&D facility will play a vital role in the marque's preparations for future model development. Located across two floors, covering a total of 13,000 sq metres, the centre will include a prototype workshop, materials development and a software integration department.

Images: Courtesy of Bentley Motors



4½ LITRE BLOWER RESTORATION

# Sliding doors



## 4½ LITRE BLOWER RESTORATION



Moments of destiny and fate combined to ensure the rebirth of a rare 1930 4½ Litre Blower which currently enjoys star billing within a Club Member's private collection in Sweden, reports **Frederick Söderström**.  
Images: Courtesy of Author

Allan Söderström was born at the dawn of motoring in 1900. Together with his sons, Jan and Lars, he built Forenade Bil into one of Sweden's leading car importers, eventually representing brands such as Bentley, Rolls-Royce and BMW.

He also became a passionate collector of sports cars, such as Bentleys and Bugattis. It is easy to admire the Barnato 3 Litre Super Sports, the 4½ Litre, the 6½ or the 8 – but the pearl of the collection really is the 4½ Litre Blower from 1930.

One of 50 supercharged 4½ Litres produced by Bentley Motors, chassis SM3904 (registration number PL 1150) – which possesses a 'plain-case' blower in comparison to the later 'rib-case' versions – is also one of 19 currently known to exist with its original body, in this case by Vanden Plas.

The car's first owner was 1935 Le Mans winner John Hindmarsh – being an RAF pilot and racing driver it's fair to say he was an adventurer both in the air and on the track. Hindmarsh ordered PL 1150 through agent Moir and Straker Ltd, a company founded by well-known Bentley Boy Bertie Kensington Moir.

Hindmarsh, however, didn't keep the Blower for long: only three months, which raises the question as to whether or not PL 1150 met his expectations. Given that it was equipped with several racing features, it's not unreasonable to assume the initial purpose was to race the car in pursuit of winning Le Mans – which Hindmarsh ultimately achieved in a Lagonda. (Tragically, Hindmarsh was killed while testing a Hawker Hurricane aircraft near Brooklands in 1938.)

In a similar fashion to the privateer racing Blowers developed by Sir Tim Birkin, PL 1150 displays several modifications to the standard 4½ Litre chassis, such as an extended bonnet, specially commissioned Le Mans-type fuel tank, Homa switch for the Autopulse petrol pump, driver-operated brake tensioner and floor-mounted accelerator along with many more features.

In November 1930 the car's existing five-year guarantee was transferred to DNS Glasbrook who kept PL 1150 for about a year. Around the early 1930s the Blower suffered a serious accident and was bought back by Bentley Motors from the insurance company in 1932.



Allan Söderström owned the 4½ Litre Blower as part of his Bentley collection in Sweden



## 4½ LITRE BLOWER RESTORATION

Allan's grandson Frederick Söderström with the faithfully restored Blower



PL 1150, minus its blower, sporting a 1930s style Corsica body in 1957 (above) and here when owned by Bill Cheston in the early 1960s

It is likely the accident was a frontal impact as the supercharger was removed and the radiator, engine and chassis replaced with standard 4½ Litre components of the correct type; a new Corsica four-seat body included a bonnet and the steering was changed to incorporate an easier handling ratio as used in the 4 and 8 Litre models. The original Vanden Plas wings appear to have been retained, according to renowned Bentley expert Clare Hay.

PL 1150 boasts a continuous history and record of ownership since new. A Mr Hutchison owned the car for 20 years from 1935 before a Mr W Schermuly became the custodian in the late 1950s, with Bill Cheston taking over ownership in the early 1960s. In 1964 Allan Söderström bought the car from Cheston who also owned a 4½ Litre (UU 6505) and had swapped the gearboxes between the two cars.

Karlstad-born Allan passed away in 1978, and Club Member Lars was left in charge of both his father's collection and the family company. The impressive assemblage currently includes, according to the BDC membership database, a 1927 4½ Litre Vanden Plas (TU 7088), a 1930 8 Litre Hoffman & Burton (KJ 3154) and PL 1150.

## 4½ LITRE BLOWER RESTORATION



Prince Bertil of Sweden (left) with Allan Söderström and son Lars, the current owner of the Blower. Inset: Allan's other son Jan, the father of Frederick

In 2014 Sweden-based Lars was contacted by Ulf Smith, a well-known Bentley restorer and historian, who earlier had tried to convince Allan to restore PL 1150 with its original body and correct gearbox.

The previous year Allan's grandson, Club Member Frederick Söderström, had invited Clare Hay over to Sweden to compile historical reports on the various Bentleys in the family collection. With the fascinating history of PL 1150 now revealed, the family decided in 2014 to carry out a restoration.

In order to refit the correct Bentley D-type close-ratio gearbox, Bill Cheston's ex-4½ Litre (UU 6505) was traced and bought from Gabriel Öhman in Stockholm. The next task was to find the original body with the long bonnet (stamped with chassis number SM3904) – this had since been fitted to the 4½ Litre chassis SL3055 (registration TU 7088); it was tracked down to Connecticut, USA, and the car duly purchased from Timothy McCann. As an aside, TU 7088 also suffered an accident in 1932, and during its repair received the Vanden Plas bodywork from PL 1150, including the long bonnet, windscreen and seats.

The restoration strategy was to stay true – as far as possible – to the original Bentley Motors specifications. With its black body, oxblood-coloured chassis and long bonnet (it's believed only eight chassis were originally fitted with the latter

component), PL 1150 was certainly a Bentley that stood out – and not just because of its racing features.

Ulf Smith had the restoration groundwork carried out in the Azores – this included sandblasting and painting the chassis, creating new sidesteps, nickel plating, perfecting the cycle wings, installing a Ki gas pump and, of course, fitting the correct gearbox.

Vintage Bentley specialists NDR built a brand-new Blower 4½-litre engine and a supercharger from John Bentley was sourced. Historic car specialists RC Moss then installed these as well as performing further restoration tasks, such as repairing the existing woodwork, fitting a new ignition linkage system, radiator, exhaust silencer and windscreen, and completing Rexine fabric upgrades. Graham Moss also manufactured new upholstery, tonneau and hood.

With all that work now completed, over a period of approximately a decade, PL 1150 is (as of late September 2025) currently housed in storage near London awaiting transportation back home to Sweden.

Thanks to the recommendations and advice of Ulf Smith and Clare Hay, the time and resources afforded by Lars and Frederick Söderström, and the expert craftsmanship of NDR and RC Moss, this restoration project has now been completed – some 95 years after John Hindmarsh first turned PL 1150's ignition key.

And had Bentley Motors not bought back the 4½ Litre after its accident... and had Allan Söderström not subsequently purchased it from Bill Cheston... it's unlikely PL 1150 would be stood here today.

This rare Blower, resplendent in black/oxblood hues, has been restored to its former glory. Like a phoenix from the ashes. 🐼



The Blower's original owner, John Hindmarsh (balding head), following his Le Mans triumph with Lagonda in 1935



# A ONCE-IN-A-GENERATION CELEB 90 YEARS OF BE

BENTLEY DRIVERS CLUB ANNIVERSARY

## THIS IS NOT JUST ANOTHER CONCOURS



In its 90th anniversary year, the Bentley Drivers Club invites members to take part in an extraordinary three-day celebration of craftsmanship, camaraderie, and custodianship — a weekend that begins at Bentley’s spiritual home and concludes amid the refined elegance of one of Cheshire’s finest country-house settings. Put the weekend firmly in the diary. This is Bentley ownership, properly celebrated.

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A £40 per-car Concours Entry fee applies. This includes a commemorative plaque, which must be displayed for entry to the Concours at Rookery Hall. Bookings are now open for this once in a generation event. We are encouraging all members to join us.



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# RATION OF BENTLEY OWNERSHIP

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## CONCOURS WEEKEND 24-26 JULY 2026

### FRIDAY EVENING

Drinks reception, three course dinner with wine in the beautiful Long Gallery at Crewe Hall. Pre-drinks will be in the adjoining Library. This is a beautiful country house venue, with bags of history and loads of charm.

### SATURDAY EVENING

A drinks reception followed by a three-course dinner, with wine, hosted by a BDC Director, at the stately Cranage Hall, formerly the country seat of the Armitstead family.

### SUNDAY

Concours at Rookery, please help make this the biggest gathering of cars since Blenheim. Your car DOES NOT have to be Concours condition.

There will be a special one-off award, of Director's choice, chosen from all the cars present.

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Do not worry that the Rookery Hall Hotel room allocation has closed. There are many rooms left at Crewe Hall and Cranage Hall both hotels are set in delightful surroundings, with spa facilities. Directors of the Club will be staying at both venues, and hosting events there. Transport will be available between the events at the various hotels.



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Rookery Hall, hosting the Thursday Welcome to the North buffet, the Saturday Gala Dinner and home of the Sunday concours.

Crewe Hall Hotel, hosting the Friday Dinner.

Cranage Hall Hotel, Hosting the alternative dinner on Saturday.

All room bookings should be made directly with the hotel of your choice

### THINGS TO DO LOCALLY

Snugburys Ice Cream

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Chester Zoo

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# John Sergeant's Bentley Special

**O**n 25 March 2026, we finally were able to present John Sergeant with his 2025 Trophy for best in the Class 8 for his 1952 MKV1 Special.

Since the Club Concours in November 2025, John has completed an extensive tour from Sydney to Far North Queensland and back south through the Snowy Mountains to the Great Ocean Road in Southern Victoria.

He reports that it was an amazing tour, which created much interest along the way. It was also a great test of the reliability and durability of the car.

Congratulations John.

**Gregory May**





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*November 1-8, 2026*

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of the Bentley Drivers Club

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We cordially invite you join the National Bentley Rally 2026 being held in Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia being hosted by the Queensland Division of the Bentley Drivers Club.



## DAILY EVENTS OUTLINE

*We appreciate that many of our participants will have driven quite some distance to join us ( as we have discovered when we have travelled south to join in previous National Bentley Rallies).*

*Our planning is designed to allow rest/non-driving days between those where participants will be driving lengthy distances for planned activities. Many activities are in the CBD area where we are staying, but people are more than welcome to drive if they choose.*

*There are bar facilities at the Burke and Wills for afternoon drinkies but there are also plenty of cafes and bars within easy walking distance of the hotel.*

**Sunday/Nov 1 – PM registration, distribution of Rally information and meet and greet BBQ.**

**Monday/Nov 2** – Short drive to Brunch at Picnic Point Scenic Lookout. We then a moderate drive and orientation around the city of Toowoomba to a catered lunch. After lunch drive to a Fun activities afternoon on a rural property.

Dinner is a voucher for a venue of your choice.

**Tuesday/Nov 3 – MELBOURNE CUP.** After breakfast at the hotel, we will join with Toowoomba and the rest of Australia in revelry at the Clifford Park Raceway. Be sure to bring your best fashions for this event. Entrants will be taken to and from this event by bus but there may be a possibility for some vehicles to be on display.

**Wednesday/Nov 4** – Brunch at Darling Downs Vintage Car Club then a long drive through the Darling Downs region to the north and out west visiting the Australian National Army Museum at Oakey and lunch before heading back to Toowoomba via typical Darling Downs scenery.

In the evening, we have our first formal dinner at the Downs Club in Toowoomba. (approx. 150 km of driving in total)

**Thursday/Nov 5** – After Breakfast at the hotel, Our own Steam Train Charter and trip to lunch in a Country pub and viewing the DownsSteam Rail Museum.

In the evening, we will be entertained and fed at a Theatre Restaurant event.

**Friday/Nov 6** – A drive south on the New England Highway visiting the Charming Downs Zoo then down off the range to the Lockyer Valley in a scenic drive and lunch at Gatton. Back up the range to an organ concert and more in a famous, historic Toowoomba Church then afterwards dinner at an exotic restaurant in the Toowoomba CBD. (approx. 145 km of driving in total)

**Saturday/Nov 7** – Show and Shine Day. After Breakfast at the hotel, Polish up your car for a display in the centre of town at Queens Park with access to local markets and museums. Bring some folding chairs and rug for a picnic lunch in the park. At the end of the day, it's time for you to show and shine for the Formal Dinner and awarding of prizes.

**Sunday/Nov 8** – We say farewell to everyone with a breakfast to send you safely on your way.





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