

NEWS

THOUGHTS FROM THE SHOWROOM...

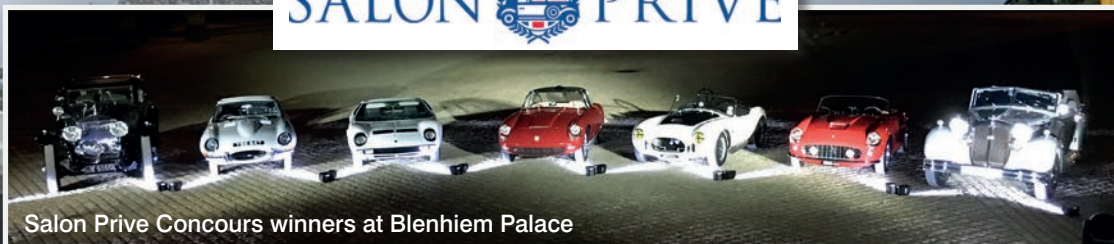
Welcome to Frank Dale & Stepsons Winter newsletter

Welcome to our winter newsletter, we hope you've been enjoying your classic cars over the last few months, we have certainly been kept very busy here at Frank Dale & Stepsons. So let's get started...

The summer months of June and July are usually a little quieter for us with many people taking some valuable holiday time and 2017 was no different, but as August arrived so did the late summer motoring events in the UK with their final flourish before the Autumnal weather started to creep in. Our first stop in August was to the beautiful Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire for Salon Prive where we

entered our 1956 Bentley S1 Continental Coupe by Park Ward and "Honeysuckle", the very distinctive Vanden Plas Open Tourer. Emma commandeered the S1 Continental for the day and I had the privilege of driving Honeysuckle up onto the concours ramp just as the sun came out. After the standard Salon Prive lobster lunch and a glass or two of champagne we attended the gala dinner with our fellow concours entrants. The evening concluded in the central palace courtyard with all of the day's winners on display. Best in show this year was awarded to the 1960 Alfa Romeo Superflow by Pininfarina. With its perspex roof and smooth lines the car exuded a somewhat quirky beauty which clearly captured the judges' imagination and the wonderful Blenheim architecture, lit from the ground up, formed the perfect back drop for the concours prize winners, ending a superb day and evening.

SALON PRIVE





R Type Continental by H.J.Mulliner and an S1 Continental Drophead Coupe by Park Ward at Hampton Court



Jaguars on display



Aston Martin DB4 by Zagato

The following morning we were up early and back to London to another splendid, iconic British venue - Hampton Court Palace, for the Concours of Elegance. We were delighted to be invited back to this top class event following our participation at Windsor Castle last year. This year's selection of entrants was again quite spectacular, with hundreds of millions of pounds worth of cars on display over the three days.

My personal favourites included an Aston Martin DB4GT by Zagato, a Ferrari 250GT short wheel base California Spyder and eventual best of show winner, a Lancia Astura Aerodinamica Coupe. We exhibited two "blue chip" post war Bentleys over the weekend, an R Type Continental by H.J.Mulliner and an S1 Continental Drophead Coupe by Park Ward. I was delighted to drive the latter onto the concours stage on Sunday afternoon where I gave a talk on the history of this particular well-loved model, as well as discussing the detailed restoration we recently carried out.

As some of you may know, public speaking is not my favourite pastime, however I am happy to report I didn't suffer any form of stage fright, with the car providing a beautiful distraction.





Greg, Giles
& Emma



Goodwood Revival Display

Our penultimate event of the year saw us return to The Goodwood Revival for, I believe, the 20th year in a row. Emma and I remember attending the first ever Revival back in 1998, when the only attractions aside from the racing on the circuit were our five car stand, a candy

floss seller and the wall of death! It was great fun but very low key back then and if you had attended the first ever Revival and hadn't been back until this year you would scarcely believe your eyes. It is arguably now one of the most well attended motoring events in the world and brings people together from all corners of the globe to enjoy

the high octane racing, the period clothing and the general buzz about the event. Sadly the weather was fairly miserable this year, turning the car parks into mud baths but we enjoyed our time in Sussex once again and it's always in the diary for the following year. We will be back, come rain or shine, in 2018 with more wonderful cars on display.

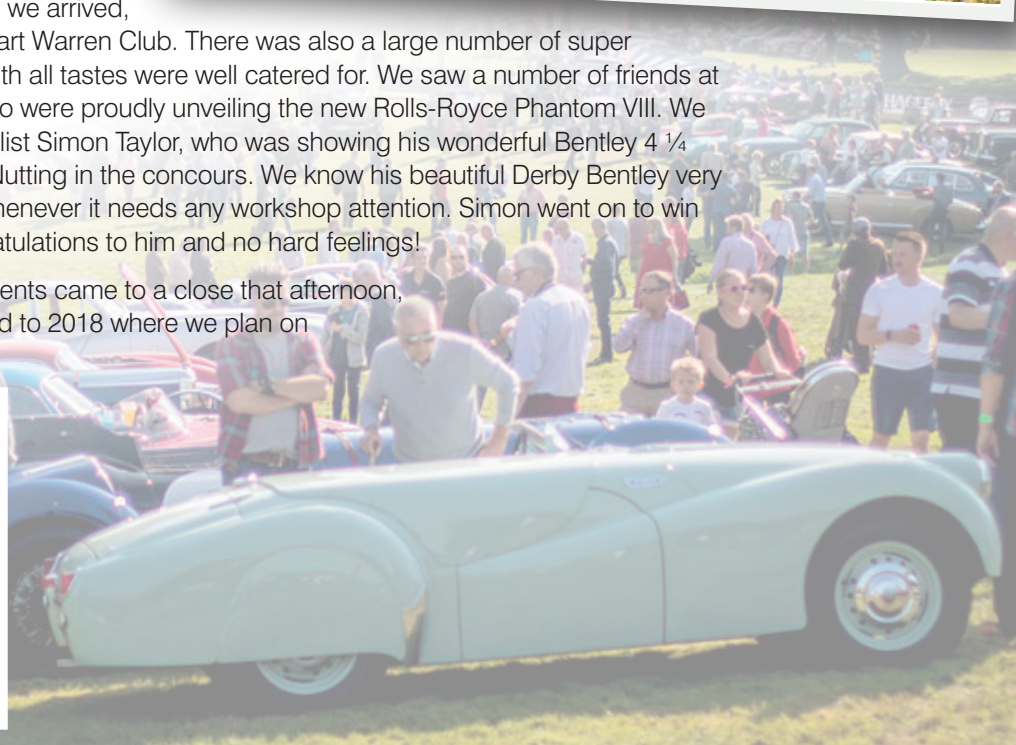
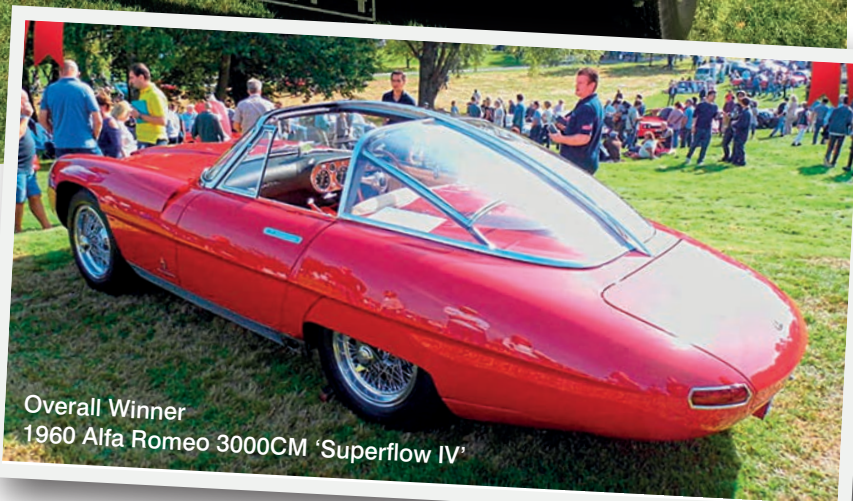




Our pair of S1 Continentals with Simon Taylors beautiful Derby Bentley in the concours

The following weekend saw our final outing for 2017 when we attended the Warren Concours in Essex, taking our infamous matching pair of S1 Continentals - a Coupe and a Drophead Coupe with striking silver over black paintwork and red leather interiors. The drive up to Essex on a sunny Sunday morning was a real pleasure, with many admiring glances for the cars in convoy. Another superb selection of classic cars were on display when we arrived, bathed in sunshine at the very smart Warren Club. There was also a large number of super cars on display so petrol heads with all tastes were well catered for. We saw a number of friends at the event including P&A Wood who were proudly unveiling the new Rolls-Royce Phantom VIII. We also bumped into motoring journalist Simon Taylor, who was showing his wonderful Bentley 4 1/4 Litre Sedan Coupe by Gurney Nutting in the concours. We know his beautiful Derby Bentley very well which we look after for him whenever it needs any workshop attention. Simon went on to win the Bentley class, so many congratulations to him and no hard feelings!

And so our year of exhibits and events came to a close that afternoon, and we are already looking forward to 2018 where we plan on being out and about even more.



MARKET REPORT

It's been a difficult year to analyse in terms of movement in the market, but quite honestly that is what has kept things interesting. Global sales at auction have reached almost £1.5 billion over the past twelve months and as auctions only provide approximately one third of total classic car sales it's worth considering that possibly more than £4 billion worth of classic cars have been sold over the past year when including cars sold privately or through dealers such as ourselves. Even so, the market simply hasn't been moving quite as briskly as it did two or three years ago.

From our perspective, our annual turnover has been comparable with recent years and we have set several new personal records during 2017 in terms of values achieved when selling various models. But interestingly, we have sold fewer cars this year than in previous years. From our experience the "right" cars with good history and in good to excellent condition are still selling for good prices, especially in the post-war sector. We have also found that the large bodied pre-war models have become harder to sell, but Derby Bentleys and sporting Phantom IIs are still finding favour with buyers and enthusiasts alike.

Everyone likes to buy well- in a thriving market with almost guaranteed appreciation. However this isn't guaranteed at the moment, not in the short term anyway, on the majority of classic cars. In the long term, I still see a good quality classic car as an excellent place to park some money, if you'll pardon the pun, but as I tell everyone buy the car you want because you love it, if it goes up in value that is an added bonus.

SO WHAT'S NEXT?

With 2018 on the horizon we have plenty to look forward to. The calendar is full of great events we'll be taking part in again, from Essen Techno Classica in March, the summer national rallies, through to the Concours of Elegance and the Goodwood Revival in the autumn. In addition, we are intending on making our first trips to both Amelia Island and Villa d'Este with two of our restoration projects entered into both events, so we will be there to support and cheer on their proud owners.

Expansion in the Far East is also high on our agenda for 2018 as well as continuing our mission to find and prepare the very best

I'm often asked, which models I think are investment worthy. I don't have a crystal ball but I think there are some basic principles to observe; style, condition, rarity, two door cars, history and production numbers. One would have to take into consideration the history and condition on any potential purchase, but the other four criteria are fairly set in stone. So which models should you consider? Pre-war; the most exotic looking, low slung cars will always come out on top. Post war; I would suggest either an S1 Continental Coupe by Park Ward or S2 Continental Coupe by H.J. Mulliner and from the more modern cars, a good quality Series III or IV Rolls-Royce Corniche convertible or the Bentley equivalent.

So what are my predictions for 2018? Frankly, I see much of the same. In terms of all important prices and values, I would put classic cars into three general categories. The best of the best will be just fine, there is always someone for a spectacular or special car, with the most valuable cars seemingly being some of the easiest to sell at present. I think the middle ground cars will remain steady and solid in terms of market value, and the less interesting cars, with a story or two to tell, might become harder still to sell. So we are continuing with our policy of seeking out the best cars we can find, with interesting and exotic coachwork and prepared to the highest standards, a formula I see continuing to work indefinitely.

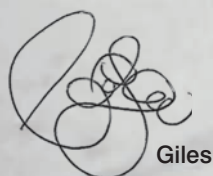
The most expensive car sold at auction this year.
1956 Aston Martin DBR1/1 sold for \$22,550,000



Rolls-Royce and Bentley motor cars from around the world and offer them for sale.

So it simply leaves me to do one final thing, and that is to thank you for your support in 2017 and for keeping up to date with everything at Frank Dale & Stepsons. On behalf of myself, Emma, Vincent, Greg and all the staff at the company, we would like to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a healthy and happy 2018.




Giles

Merry Christmas
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

THOUGHTS FROM THE WORKSHOP...



A pair of S1 Continentals we completed in 2017, including the conversion of one car to a drophead coupe

As we approach the end of another year, it's time to reflect upon all that has come and gone through our workshops throughout 2017.

We saw a number of large projects come to fruition in 2017, including the conversion of a Bentley S1 Continental coupe by Park Ward, into a drophead coupe. It took over two years to complete, but was well worth the effort with the finished product looking superb and driving just as one would expect. It is also indistinguishable from an original in terms of its appearance, so a very satisfying project to complete. Other major projects to reach fruition were the restoration of a 4 ¼ Litre Sedan Coupe by Gurney Nutting, an S1 Continental coupe by Park Ward and an R Type Continental by H.J.Mulliner.

In the pipeline at present, and drawing towards the end of their restorations are a number of cars, including an S1 Continental Drophead by Park Ward, a 20/25 Woody, an R Type Continental by H.J.Mulliner and also a Series IV Rolls-Royce Corniche convertible.

At present, we have just begun a number of large projects, including

the full restoration of a Bentley S2 Continental drophead coupe by Park Ward. It will be an extensive project probably taking about eighteen months to complete so I will update you on this cars progress in our spring newsletter. I believe we will also be beginning the restoration of at least one Phantom III in January following the Christmas break, which is possibly the most complex Rolls-Royce model to restore, but a challenge I am greatly looking forward to.

Looking over the numbers, we have just closed off our 400th job of 2017 which makes this year the busiest one we have ever had. It's been hectic at times, trying to get so many cars completed and tested for their owners, but with being so busy, the days, weeks and months have flown by. The team have worked incredibly hard this year and will have well and truly earned their Christmas break.

The team has also evolved this year a great deal. As some of our senior technicians have reached retirement age their former protégés have had to step in and step up, putting into practice all that they learnt from the past mentors. It's been incredibly rewarding to see the youngsters show their skills off, each and every one of them will turn out to be superb engineers in my opinion. Our future is in safe and talented hands.



THOUGHTS FROM THE WORKSHOP

It's also been rewarding to see some of our former cars on the lawns and ramps at the most prestigious concours events around the world, cars we have supplied and also worked upon. Mr Haymes proudly showed off his Bentley S1 Drophead coupe at Pebble Beach this year. Mr Kriz won an award for the most sensitive restoration with his Bentley Cresta at Villa D'Este this year following a few recent improvements. And most recently, Mr Male won The Amelia Island trophy at the Boston concours for his R Type Continental which we prepared for him, receiving an automatic invite to the concours in Florida in March 2018. It's been very satisfying to see such happy owners at these high profile events. And with some of our current restoration projects nearing completion, look out for some of our cars next year at these major events where we hope to see further success.

We will be winding down for Christmas shortly for a few days off, but we will be back at it in early January and I am looking forward to all of the challenges 2018 will surely bring.



Mr Haymes at Pebble Beach



Mr Male with The Amelia Island Trophy won at the Boston Concours



Bentley Cresta at Villa D'Este owned by Mr Kriz

TECHNICAL TIPS FROM THE WORKSHOP



There is no question that the MR/MX Derby Bentleys were the finest incarnation of the Silent Sports Car. But only the last two hundred cars built prior to World War II benefitted from the "overdrive" specification.

With over two thousand cars built prior to 1938, there are plenty of owners who would love to upgrade their car to this specification. In terms of increasing the

performance to something very similar to an original MR/MX series car, you can do this in two ways. The first is to fit a high ratio back axle, giving the car a longer legged feel, with more power at lower revolutions in fourth gear. The second option is to fit an overdrive which is usually activated with a pull switch on or under the dashboard. These also greatly enhance the cars capability at high speed, putting less stress on the engine and also making them more economical when considering fuel consumption. Flick the switch and away you go for an even more exhilarating drive at speed in your Derby Bentley. If you own a Derby and would like to consider upgrading it, please drop me a line or give me a call at the workshop.

Vincent

