

CLASSIC DRIVER

10th May 2003 - Auction Preview - Bonhams Aston Martin Sale at Newport Pagnell



The annual Bonhams sale at 'Works Service' in Newport Pagnell has now become a firm part of the Aston 'Season'. This year the Montpelier St team, ably assisted by Aston specialist Nicholas Mee, have gathered a solid selection of cars, headed (depending on your persuasion) by either the ex-Bond Vanquish, or the rare LHD DB4GT - in full racing 'warpaint'



As usual Automobilia forms the prelude to the car sale proper. A mixture of badges, models and photographs also includes paintings such as "**1935 Targa Abruzzo - Count Giovanni Lurani in the Aston Martin Ulster**" by Michael Wright, at an estimate of £1,000 - 1,200. Pieces connected to James Bond also form part of the Automobilia section and the enthusiast can choose from original film posters to gambling chips used in 'Goldeneye'. Potential bidders for lot 144 anticipating exporting their purchase may have problems with HM Customs and Excise - it's an 'Opium' sack from the James Bond film 'The Living Daylights', a movie prop, once containing 10Kg of 'Opium', and estimated at £100 - 150.

Opening the car lots, as last year, is a circa **1989 'Junior' Aston Martin V8 Volante**. In 4/7 scale the car is one of a series once made famous for being delivered to younger members of the Royal Family, it's estimated to be bid to £5,000 - 7,000. Also, as in previous years, the Sale is an opportunity for marque enthusiasts to pick up an example at a reasonable price as well as the 'big ticket' items going to some of the world's most discerning enthusiasts.



The **DB4GT** is a case in point. A rare LHD car, rebodied in the sixties to reflect the recently introduced DB6 model's tail spoiler it has been the subject of what is believed to be \$500,000 of work by collector William 'Chip' Connors II in 1990 to restore its original body shape. Finished in light Aston Racing Green, with red and white 'Swiss' stripes reflecting its original ownership, and as an 'homage' to DP199 the 1959 prototype entered at Le Mans [which I could have bought for £29,000 in 1986 - Ed]. Bonhams are expecting that the car, of a type suitable for Goodwood, Historic Le Mans and the Tour Auto, will meet the £270,000 - 300,00 estimate, and judging by the amazing figure achieved by Christie's in Paris this year for an example of no better provenance we may well see it go for a big price as well.



The Bond Vanquish, ('Refer Department' in the catalogue), is an opportunity for someone to skip the waiting lists oft-quoted by Aston main dealers; and also buy a slice of celluloid history, as it was one of the cars used in the recent 'Die Another Day' film. Untouched by bullets and explosions the car comes with a raft of proof of its provenance and would certainly be a talking point at the next local Aston Club meeting.

Back to reality, the bulk of the sale has some solid performers to cater for post-war Aston enthusiasts. Only two DB2s entered, a delightful **1955 DB2/4 MkII Drophead**, £50,000 - 60,000, and a **1954 Aston Martin DB2/4 MkI Coupe**, £23,000 - 26,000. Sharp contrast to last years' extensive DB2 presence. Six-cylinder cars of the 'Bond Era' are represented by two **DB4s**, two **DB5s** and four **DB6s**, the most expensive being a **1965 DB5**, in Kent Green, at £65,000 - 75,000, a reflection of the

price premium granted to '5s.

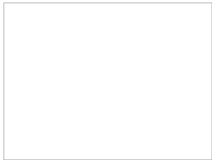
The company's staple car of the 70s and 80s, the V8 in all its forms, features large in coupe and convertible forms. Prices range from the £20,000 mark for a 1985 coupe to right up to the late £50,000s for two Volantes, one a 1987 one lady owner LHD model in Windsor Red.

The last of the massively powerful, hand built, Newport Pagnell cars is surely the **2000 Vantage Le Mans**. There is one in the Sale, with 'Works Service' V600 600bhp engine option. They only built 40 of them, all numbered and recorded by the factory. This one is estimated at £150,000 - 175,000.

The sale commences at 13.30 on Saturday 10th May with the car lots following the Automobilia.

For a full listing, see the [Provisional Auction Lotlist](#)

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Text - by Steve Wakefield

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