

ESTABLISHED 1937

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BENTLEY R-TYPE CONTINENTAL FASTBACK



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BENTLEY R-TYPE CONTINENTAL FASTBACK

OWNED FOR THE PAST 50 YEARS BY THE CHARISMATIC PINK FLOYD MANAGER AND GENTLEMAN RACER STEVE O'ROURKE AND HIS FAMILY

The R-Type Continental Fastback in its time was the finest and most expensive touring car in the world, the ultimate in transcontinental land travel for the super-rich owner-driver.

Owned for the past 50 years by the charismatic Pink Floyd manager and gentleman racer Steve O'Rourke and his family with a recorded mileage of only 32,000 which is believed to be correct.

When the prototype R-Type Continental Fastback was shown at the Paris Salon and the London Motor Show in the autumn of 1951 Bentley found over 200 buyers for a car in spite of the colossal price tag - £7,608 3s 6d.

In 1952 that would buy two new Ferrari 225s, two new Morris Minors for the staff and have enough left over to drive the Continental down to the Riviera for a couple of weeks holiday.

In 1949, H.J. Mulliner had produced three 'Mulliner Lightweights', streamlined coupés based on Mk VI running gear. In parallel, Franco-Britannic Automobiles of Paris commissioned Pinin Farina to design a sporting Bentley Mk VI coupé the 'Cresta' which was another aerodynamic design - but heavy.

Ivan Evernden, Bentley's head of chassis design, combined the principle of the aluminium bodywork/frame of Mulliner's Lightweights with many of the chassis developments of the Cresta. A tuned version of the new R-type's 4566cc engine, coupled to a close-ratio gearbox and final drive ratio of 3.077:1 gave 28mph per 1000rpm in the overdriven fourth gear and a 120mph maximum.





The new Bentley was introduced to the public as the 'Continental Sports Saloon', a title that encapsulated its role as a long-distance express. A total of 207 (plus the prototype) were built in five series: 'A' to 'E', from May 1952 to April 1955, and no two were the same.

First owners of the new Continental included the fabled American sportsman Briggs Cunningham, the Shah of Iran, Greek tycoon André Embiricos, shipping magnate Aristotle Onassis and Italian industrialist and principal shareholder of Fiat, Gianni Agnelli.



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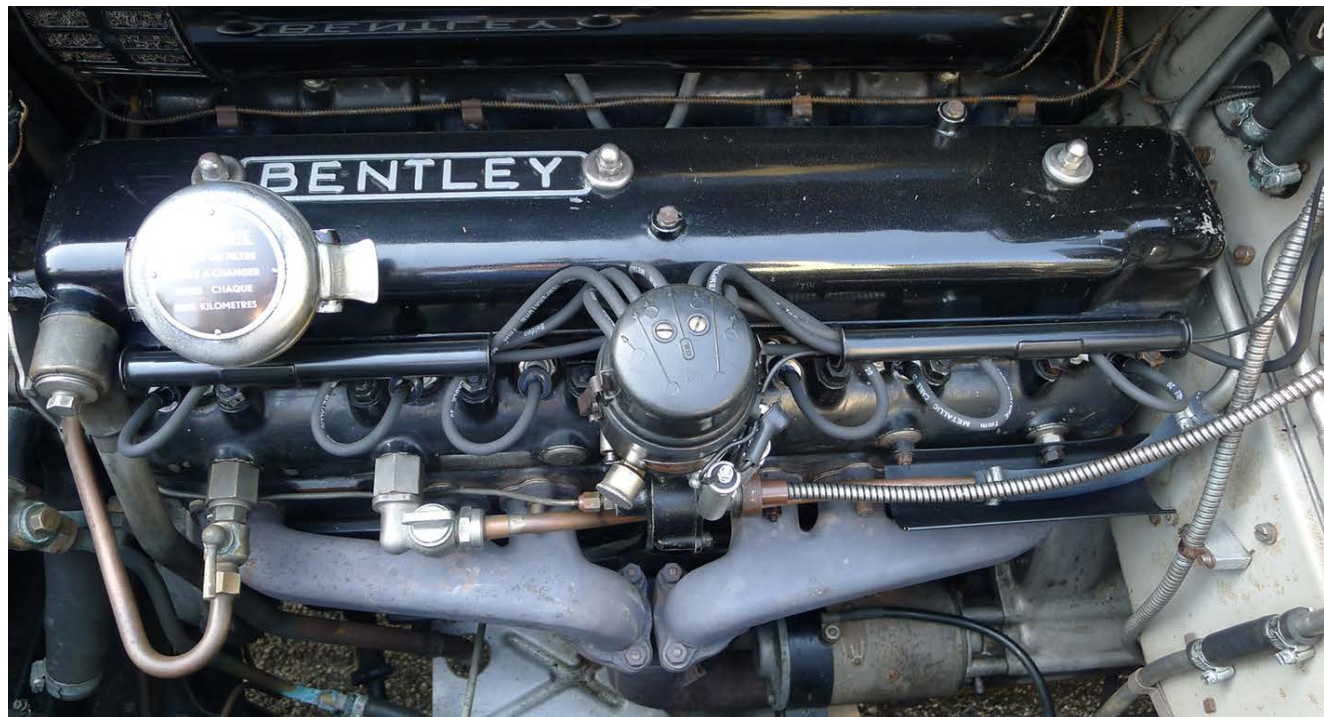
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First registered 1952

First registered in Paris it was repatriated twenty years later by Victor Barclay, scion of Jack Barclay Bentley in Mayfair.

In 1973 he sold it to Pink Floyd manager Steve O'Rourke, it's said that he bought the car in on whim whilst passing Jack Barclay's showroom in Berkeley Square after a particularly successful business lunch nearby involving a considerable amount of wine. He and his family have kept it since, always looked after by the best Bentley specialists with no expense spared. The car has been used sparingly to say the least but always conveyed the O'Rourke family and guests to the Duke of Richmond's Goodwood occasions.





LUCAS

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STEVE O'ROURKE

Steve O'Rourke the charismatic manager of Pink Floyd and a prolific gentleman racer, the former occupation enabling the latter along with a sublime collection of road and race cars from the 1950s to the 1990s.

Tall, well-built and lantern-jawed, O'Rourke combined irresistible charm with forcefulness as he negotiated with record company executives, publishers and promoters. He was described by one associate as "A streetfighter, a larger-than-life character who knew not only his own strengths and weaknesses but also the efficiency of

baseball bats in office redecoration". This unlocked fortunes for the members of Pink Floyd and a not inconsiderable income for himself.

His ambition to compete in the greatest sports car race of all - the Le Mans 24-Hours classic - was realised in 1979 when he drove a Ferrari 512 BB to a 12th place finish. Having bought the car he returned in 1980 and scored another finish in spite of a tyre exploding at nearly 200mph and destroying the rear bodywork.





Steve was to race a further ten times at Le Mans and his greatest racing success came while driving his somewhat outclassed McLaren F1 GTR in 1998 when he finished just shy of the podium in 4th place. Having saved money by refusing the costly update pack for the McLaren he then typically spent double the amount on a huge party for all concerned in his EMKA team's success.

For several years Steve raced in the International Sportscar Championship co-driving modern GT cars, Ferrari 512BB, the ex Niki Lauda BMW M1 and Porsches co-driven by the likes of Derek Bell, David Hobbs, James Weaver, Nick Mason & Eddie Jordan. In 1982 he entered the British Formula One Championship with an ex-works Williams FW07 finishing 3rd in his first F1 race at the frighteningly fast Thruxton Circuit. He also set up his own Race Team - EMKA Racing who eventually built their own Aston Martin engined Group C cars that raced in the FIA International Sports Car Championship and the Le

Mans 24H. Steve and EMKA also raced successfully in the European and British GT Championships winning the latter in the McLaren F1GTR in 1998.

Whilst doing that he also collected and raced a mouth watering collection of historic race and road cars. These included Alfa Romeo, Ferrari, BRM, Lotus, Cooper, Lister Jaguar, both the Aston Martin DB4GT & Jaguar e-type of Tommy Sopwith's Equipe Endeavour and a Jaguar C Type, in which he broke both his legs during the Carrera Panamericana in Mexico whilst sharing the car with Pink Floyd guitarist David Gilmour.

Amongst the road cars was this elegant Bentley R-Type Continental Fastback he and his family owned for over 50 years. It's said that he bought the car in 1973 on whom whilst passing Jack Barclay's in Berkeley Square after a particularly successful business lunch nearby involving a considerable amount of wine. Very Steve.

