



A word from the Works

The following 14 pages illustrate just how diverse and busy Aston Martin has become as a company, beyond manufacturing at Gaydon. At Works Service in Newport Pagnell, where we offer a complete service and restoration for all Aston Martin models spanning half a century, we're preparing for this May's Bonhams auction – the 10th in succession. Prices still look extremely good and interest in our heritage continues to escalate. Indeed, some would say a heritage Aston Martin is a considerably more fun investment than a share certificate! There will be some enjoyable surprises amongst the automobilia consignments too, and spaces are still available for our popular Premier Lunch.

Our second article, on the audio-visual upgrades available at Works Service, reveals the sheer depth of knowledge commanded by our specialists in Special Vehicle Operations. Their technical expertise is unsurpassed, aided by the great personal interest shown by Ian Rhodes and his team. Their iPod® retro-fits are still proving extremely popular and the new multi-view cameras are being snapped up already. Our relationship with in-car-entertainment brand Alpine is a special one, and it means our specialist technicians get the most out of every system. Customers for both the standard-fit and bespoke set-ups have been delighted with the results.

Just down the road in Wolverton Mill you'll find the unsung heroes of Aston Martin, Parts Operations. Philip Eaglesfield and his team do a wonderful job supporting our Dealers and heritage projects around the world, and recent new initiatives include the Heritage Art prints, reproduced from Parts Operations' extensive archive.

All in all, it's been an exciting start to the year – compounded next month by the Heritage Trust's completion of restoration work on A3, the oldest Aston Martin in existence – and business across the board is thriving, in spite of the financial doomsayers. We've taken on two new restorations at Newport Pagnell – a DB2/4 and DB5 – and our books are swelling with new customers, many of them younger Vanquish, V8 Vantage and DB9 owners. Long may it continue.

Kingsley Riding-Felce
Director of Works Service & Parts Operations



SALE OF THE DECADE

The annual Bonhams auction at Works Service, dedicated only to the Aston Martin and Lagonda marques, reaches its decade milestone this year, and already it's promising to be the most spectacular yet.

Simon de Burton reports

This May marks the 10th anniversary of the annual Bonhams auction at Aston Martin's Works Service facility in Newport Pagnell, where dozens of covetable Aston Martins and a wealth of related automobilia come under the hammer in an event that has become a key fixture in the diaries of enthusiasts the world over. Whether you're looking for an immaculately restored DB5, a modern classic such as a DB7 Volante or a satisfying restoration project to rebuild to your personal specification, the sale has proved to be an unbeatable source of the unusual, the fabulous and the downright hard to find. It is also a great place to see much-loved, well-cared-for models that are not for sale: the dedicated car park for auction-goers arriving by Aston Martin has been described as one of the best impromptu 'concours' around, with rare pre-war and Zagato-bodied cars regularly putting in an appearance.

Since the event was instigated in 2000, cars that have crossed the block have included a Vanquish from the James Bond movie *Die Another Day* (sold for £144,500), an ultra-rare 1966 DB6 short-chassis Vantage Volante that fetched £282,000 and a DB6 MKII Volante rebuilt from the ground up by Works Service, which drew a winning bid of £430,500. Last year, meanwhile, the seven-figure barrier was broken in style when a 1964 DB4GT changed hands for a remarkable £1,079,500 – just part of a sale that grossed a record £4 million in total.



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The man responsible for putting the Works Service auction together is Tim Schofield, head of Bonhams' Collector's Motor Cars department, who says he and his team look forward to it with eager anticipation: 'This auction has undoubtedly achieved a standing in the Aston social calendar that grows in importance every year,' says Tim. 'We have always been delighted to have the association with Aston Martin and thoroughly enjoy the whole ritual of arriving at Works Service, setting-up for the sale and the spectacle of the auction itself. There's a real sense of camaraderie about it and the environment is so appropriate that it feels as though it couldn't be done any other way.'

Bonhams is anticipating another successful outing this year on Saturday 9 May and, although consignments were still being finalised as this issue went to press, some impressive offerings were already lined up. Among these is a 1964 DB5 saloon with a four-speed overdrive gearbox, which was one of the first batches of DB5s built, being only the 33rd off the production line. Restored around eight years ago by Goldsmith and Young – complete with a conversion to run on unleaded fuel – it is being sold simply due to lack of use, having covered fewer than 300 miles since the comprehensive rebuild. Finished in striking black paintwork with a tan leather interior, Bonhams expects the car to fetch up to £120,000.

One of only around 30 right-hand-drive Series V DB4 Vantage cars from 1963 is also on offer. This precursor to the DB5 comes complete with its correct cowled headlamps and has had just three owners from new, the vendor having owned it since 1970. Described by Bonhams as 'effectively a barn find', it is finished in Dubonnet Rosso with burgundy leather and conservatively estimated to realise £20,000–30,000. Interestingly it was only used from 1963 until being taken off the road in 1975. But it still managed to clock up 110,000 miles, showing that an Aston Martin that has to work for its living is not a purely modern-day phenomenon.

A 1955 DB2/4 drophead coupe is also expected to attract strong bidding with its £90,000–110,000 estimate, while the recent announcement that Lagonda's badge will once again grace a modern-day car is likely to heighten interest in a rare, 1963 Lagonda Rapide, converted from automatic to manual specification by Aston Martin when it was just two years old. Maintained by Works Service of late, the dark, turquoise-blue car with pale-blue leather interior offers quintessential 1960s' motoring in the gran turismo style for an anticipated £20,000–30,000 – remarkable value for a coach-built car based on the DB4.

LEFT: A 1955 Aston Martin DB2/4 Drophead estimated to fetch £90,000–110,000 at this year's auction
RIGHT: A 1964 Aston Martin DB5, sold in 2008 for £161,000

As usual, appetites will be whetted ahead of this fine selection of cars by the sale of an equally impressive array of Aston Martin-related automobilia, parts and accessories. Not least of which is a collection of items originally belonging to the firm's founder, Lionel Martin. Appearing on the market for the first time, it comprises correspondence with customers, early sales ledgers, information about competition successes and photographs from the dawn of production, all of which opens a rare window onto the fledgling years of the marque.

Further photographs from the estate of lifelong enthusiast Roger Stowers, who became Aston Martin's official lensman during the 1970s, are also on offer along with a good selection of James Bond items that include a rare, 1960s Scalextric '007' set offered in complete condition and with its original box. You'll need to have saved plenty of pocket money to buy it, though – the estimate is £1,500–2,000.

The Bonhams Aston Martin auction takes place at Works Service, Newport Pagnell, on Saturday, May 9. Viewing will be on sale day only. Full details from the Bonhams Motoring department on +44 (0)20 7447 7447. The catalogue will be published on line at www.bonhams.com



NINE STARS IN NINE YEARS

The top-selling lots from every Aston Martin Bonhams sale

- 2000**
1952 Aston Martin DB3 Sports Racing two-seater £287,500
- 2001**
1963 Aston Martin DB4 Series V Vantage GT Saloon £129,100
- 2002**
2000 Aston Martin SWB Vantage Volante £254,500 (pictured above)
- 2003**
1961 Aston Martin DB4GT £309,500
- 2004**
1960 Aston Martin DB4GT £304,000
- 2005**
1966 Aston Martin DB6 Vantage Volante (Short Chassis) £282,000
- 2006**
1961 Aston Martin DB4GT Zagato £716,500 (pictured top)
- 2007**
1970 Aston Martin DB6 MKII Volante £430,500
- 2008**
1961 Aston Martin DB4GT £1,079,500

THE PREMIER PACKAGE

For the 10th Anniversary Bonhams sale, Aston Martin Works Service will once again host its ever-popular 'Premier Lunch' on the day – a little extra luxury for a very special occasion. Limited to 100 people, the £155 ticket price entitles holders to an auction catalogue, bespoke 'access all areas' enamel badge, reserved parking and seating, a hot two-course buffet lunch served with wine or soft drinks, and afternoon tea. Tickets are available strictly on a first come, first served basis by contacting Wendy Harrison-Drake at Works Service on 01908 619239 or at wharri64@astonmartin.com