Rare 1939 V12 Coupe, Hooper Bodywork for sale at NEC 12/13th April

Written by SRD at Mar 23, 2014 10:54 am

Silverstone Auctions have a "barn find" V12 coming up for auction at the NEC Restoration Show on April 12/13th

It is the ex-Ellard, Hooper-bodied FHC, 14083, fitted with what appears to be a genuine 4-carb engine (presumably retro-fitted by the factory). Paint scheme is not one I like, but the red colour, is probably original.

The concern might be that this car will be bought to be made into a racer, or at least that is where the engine might go.

As a one-off two-door FHC by a top coachbuilder, and with that ultra-desirable engine, it might indeed be a financially viable proposition, quite apart from being a rare survivor.

The car has been poorly stored, several pictures in the past year or two, including Practical Classics, show the same open barn with poor standing.

Estimate is £75-100k

Registration: FLD 1

Chassis Number: 14083

Engine Number: 14083

Number of cylinders: V12

CC: 5509

Year of Manufacture: 1939

Estimate (£): 75,000 - 100,000

Saleroom blurb below;

"This beautiful Lagonda V12 2 door 'Hooper' saloon is a unique car specially built for the wife of the owner of Hooper Bodies Ltd. (the most noted British body builder of the era) and first registered in August 1939. It features a 5509cc 'Rapide' 4 Carburettor engine and coachwork similar to the standard pillarless saloon found on post-war Rolls Royce, Bentley and Daimler chassis which embodied the traditional Hooper 'Razor Edge' design. Stored throughout the War the car was eventually sold to Mr. Harry Ellard in March 1952 at a mileage reading of 19,266.

Henry Ellard, known as Harry, was a highly successful engineer who built up the 'Henry Meadows' Wolverhampton enginering and engine producing business. He designed for the metal pressing business in the Black Country and was so successful that many of his designs are still being produced today. Becoming extremely wealthy during his life, the Midlands entrepreneur was able to start his hobby of collecting outstanding cars that had been well engineered and reflected great workmanship. The Lagonda certainly met this criteria as he was to own 6 cars, but this rare and special car was his clear favourite. He owned this car throughout the rest of his life as a part of his very significant collection until his final days when the entire collection was sold off in July 1984 by Colliers Bigwood and Bewlay at auction. This car was to feature on the cover of the catalogue which offered his amazing and treasured collection. By this stage the car had now covered a documented 39,809 miles from new.

The condition of the car at that sale was described in the catalogue as 'generally very good' and the new owner, Don Williams, was to enjoy the car up until 2001 when it changed hands to our current owner and vendor. It has been in storage ever since and now requires a complete restoration.

So, in summary, we are offering an extremely rare and very highly regarded matching numbers and highly original Lagonda, which includes it's original and collectable registration number 'FLD 1' (which we are told is transferrable) and the original buff log book showing just 3 former keepers and a genuine mileage of circa 40,000 from new."

Attachments:

a.jpg (filesize: 60.99 KB)

b.jpg (filesize: 47.35 KB)

c.jpg (filesize: 52.29 KB)

d.jpg (filesize: 61.94 KB)

e.jpg (filesize: 50.74 KB)

Re: Rare 1939 V12 Coupe, Hooper Bodywork for sale at NEC 12/13th April

Written by h14 at Mar 23, 2014 11:24 am

I remember seeing this car at the Ellard auction. I thought at that time, the first owner had been Dick Watney.

Interesting to see that this has the standard air silencer, but with 4 stubs for suit the carburettor set-up. I wonder if that silencer was a modification by Ellard, or as built by the factory. Also note twin Scintilla Vertex magnetos instead of the usual Delco Remy coil & distributor ignition.

Strange to see bonnet side louvres, in addition to the standard grille...wonder if it suffered from overheating. It does have the aluminium exhaust cowls, which I understand were expensive to produce, so only retro-fitted by the factory if the owner complained about overheating.

But...what's the story here? Someone buys this car in 2001 for presumably a relatively large sum...then leaves (encourages even) it to rot?

Perhaps a new development...invest in a perfectly good car, deliberately encourage its decay, then sell it at auction as a "barn find" in a cynical attempt to profit from the daft propopensity of some to pay more for a restorable wreck than a top condition car.

Laurence

Re: Rare 1939 V12 Coupe, Hooper Bodywork for sale at NEC 12/13th April

Written by SRD at Mar 23, 2014 12:46 pm

Laurence hi

If I recall correctly this was sitting in a barn on a Shropshire farm yard for the last dozen or so years, with no protection or consideration for the cars rarity or value..

Hooper did a great job, and clearly in the right paint scheme, the car would look wonderful. Interesting dash material, have also seen them in ebonised wood, certainly makes a change.

I imagine this engine rebuild will be potentially expensive, as will the car restoration. I wonder what the real reserve is, estimate is fine, but that is not the bottom line here.

Wise words, re. barn finds, and you may be right when it comes to auction. Lets hope that someone buys it to restore, but it is going to be an expensive proposition, given that it is not a dhc.

Re: Rare 1939 V12 Coupe, Hooper Bodywork for sale at NEC 12/13th April

Written by h14 at Mar 23, 2014 4:03 pm

Hi,

This car certainly has a certain presence, it's not unattractive but it lacks the lightness of touch of Feeley's designs. But then Lagonda didn't offer an

fhc...I wonder what one might have looked like.

Agree a well chosen paint scheme would help no end, two tone to make it look longer and thus less "heavy".

I often feel that prewar car designers just lost interest when it came to the rear of their cars, and sadly this one is unimaginative in that area. The dash...hmmm...looks a bit like something you'd find in a kit car, but of course that's not a fair comment as those didn't afflict the car world in 1939. Certainly brave of Hooper, would love to see what the dash looks like in the flesh.

My own LG6 special (fortunately unpainted aluminium) has sat outside unmoved for the past 4 years...not 12, admittedly, but the chrome all still looks fine. This car has at least been under cover...and it looks like that?! This is why I could be convinced it has been encourage to decay.

The low mileage could ... just... mean dismantling, checking and reassembling the mechanics. But then, my own V12 supposedly has only covered circa 53000 miles, and despite a new engine at 13000 miles in 1945, rebuilt by Thomson Doxey in 1952, it still needed total rebuild. Didn't I read somewhere V12s are supposed to do 100,000 miles easily, without needing work?

Laurence

Re: Rare 1939 V12 Coupe, Hooper Bodywork for sale at NEC 12/13th April

Written by SRD at Mar 23, 2014 5:58 pm

A few pictures I downloaded from the auction site.

Interior is matching colour, so I would suggest original colour paint-work.

I agree with your comment about the rear of the car, especially on saloons, often just something tagged on as an afterthought.

Just look at the dirt on the car - dreadful storage for such a fine car..

Attachments:

f.jpg (filesize: 98.42 KB)
g.jpg (filesize: 112.75 KB)
h.jpg (filesize: 92.14 KB)
m.jpg (filesize: 126.11 KB)
n.jpg (filesize: 81.89 KB)

Re: Rare 1939 V12 Coupe, Hooper Bodywork for sale at NEC 12/13th April

Written by bruffsup at Mar 23, 2014 7:32 pm

I just love the body lines of this car, my mind is changed about Hooper.

Re: Rare 1939 V12 Coupe, Hooper Bodywork for sale at NEC 12/13th April

Written by SRD at Mar 23, 2014 8:41 pm

I think that this unique Hooper fhc is a special car, although I remain dubious that the car will actually sell with such a high reserve, given it currently very poor condition

However, given the “barn find auction fever” present at so many auctions currently, I will no doubt be proved wrong.

I think the Rapide engine may will be attractive to the V12 racing brigade as well.

The auctioneer's, might have attracted more interest with a lower estimate and then let the car find it true price under the hammer.

The NEC Classic car show hardly seems the place to sell such a rare car. Bonham's or Coy's might have been more appropriate, they can target the audience to suit, especially with their long and wealthy client lists ?

I think that it is potentially impossible to come out of a restoration of this car on the right side if it sells anywhere near its lower estimate or above, and how long might it take as well ?

But no doubt it will look stunning when restored, in a two-tone paint finish, wish I had the money for it !

Re: Rare 1939 V12 Coupe, Hooper Bodywork for sale at NEC 12/13th April

Written by Julian at Mar 24, 2014 9:47 am

Hi,

You are absolutely correct.

A nice and interesting saloon but stupid estimate! (let us hope the reserve is far below) (I would say 40k GB top whack)

The Rapide spec engine will add interest to the car but as the only real difference is the extra set of carbs it would hardly be worth any extra other than adding to what is already an interesting car. For sure no one would pay extra for this if all they wanted to do was to turn it into a Le Mans special. no more than 1500 pounds extra anyway.

Being a short chassis though and having the four carbs etc does make it rather a fun saloon. What a shame it would cost in excess of 250.000 euros to do a good restoration on it.

Let us pray it stays a saloon, but I would rather see it on the road in any form than scrapped or broken up.

I would love to own this car but would be dead before I finished it and I'm still young...ish 

Julian

Re: Rare 1939 V12 Coupe, Hooper Bodywork for sale at NEC 12/13th April

Written by bruffsup at Mar 24, 2014 12:22 pm

Looks like great oily rag potential to me. After all who else would have one? Let the next idiot spend a quarter million on it!

Re: Rare 1939 V12 Coupe, Hooper Bodywork for sale at NEC 12/13th April

Written by David at Mar 24, 2014 4:29 pm

To £40K for the car perhaps add £20K for the number plate FLD1, can't be transferred off the car without an MOT from memory

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