

1953 ROLLS ROYCE SILVER WRAITH HOOPER SEDANCA

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SILVER WRAITH
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Year: 1953

Chassis no: ALW47

Registration: KYJ402

Price: £145,000

VEHICLE DETAILS

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION / SERVICE HISTORY

1953 Rolls Royce Silver Wraith Hooper Sedanca

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Originally commissioned by Nubar Gulbenkian.

Recent restoration costing in excess of £188,000.

A unique opportunity to purchase a piece of motoring history.

Appeared in the cult film 'Withnail and I'

In April 1946 the first post-war model from Rolls-Royce was revealed to the public: the Silver Wraith. Following their pre-war tradition of manufacturing a rolling-chassis only, Rolls-Royce delivered these cars to be bodied by independent coachbuilders. Enjoying a seven-inch longer wheelbase than its Bentley Mk. VI sibling, the newcomer was based around a massive, box-section chassis equipped with independent front suspension, hydraulic shock absorbers (adjustable to the rear) and four-wheel drum brakes. Powered by a smooth 4257cc six-cylinder engine allied to four-speed manual transmission, the model appealed to both owner-drivers and passengers alike.

The Silver Wraith outlived the Mk. VI and in fact survived until 1959 by making step by step, vital improvements such as the engine size increasing in 1951 to 4,566cc, then again to 4,887cc in 1955. The automatic gearbox becoming an option in 1952 and power assisted steering in 1957. The Silver Wraith was the last Rolls-Royce model to show a vast variety of coachwork styles.

This Silver Wraith was ordered by the Armenian born Nubar Gulbenkian, a flamboyant character who had a huge passion for unique cars. His passion was Rolls-Royces and his preferred coachbuilder was Hooper. Gulbenkians family amassed vast wealth and he was able to service his appetite for the unusual after some shrewd business decisions by his father, with whom he had a strange relationship and latterly through his own business dealings. It is thought at one time he was the wealthiest man in the world.

Gulbenkian is understood to have had four Silver Wraiths commissioned by Hooper, this example is delightfully handsome, being built on a long wheelbase chassis and in the style of a Hooper Empress Line coachwork. However, this example is in the 'Sedan de Ville' style and has reptile skin on the dashboard and some of the rear division section. Gulbenkian was known to have liked his chauffeurs to drive in a brisk manner and had a speedometer fitted to the rear division so he could keep an eye on his employee's progress.

This Silver Wraith appeared in the cult film 'Withnail and I' starring Paul McGann, Richard E. Grant and Richard Griffiths. The car was used by the character Uncle Monty in the film, which was written and directed by Bruce Robinson.

This example formed part of the late James Crickmay's private collection, having been acquired a number of years prior by Frank Dale & Stepsons. James used the Silver Wraith regularly for social occasions, family events and the Rolls-Royce annual rally on many occasions, and it was also loaned by James to Lord March for several Goodwood Revival meetings, to chauffeur Lord March's guests between the circuit and Goodwood House. In more recent times the car has been owned by a private collector on the Isle of Man. He commissioned extensive amounts of work to be carried out by M.J.Pickles Ltd. in Macclesfield. This included a full mechanical rebuild, together with some bodywork restoration. Whilst work has been carried out on the interior, this is largely original due to the uniqueness of the Gulbenkian effect.

The invoices paid to M.J.Pickles Ltd from November 2015 until May 2019 total a staggering £188,680. Upon completion the car was entered into a number of Rolls-Royce events and unsurprisingly this Silver Wraith won 'best in class'. Offered for sale with a significant history folder this Rolls-Royce Silver Wraith represents an opportunity to purchase a true piece of British motoring history.

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