

works Torque

The official magazine for
Aston Martin Works Service

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issue 22

The road to

RESTORATION



Bonhams auction is creating a real buzz...

There is a real buzz to Works Service this year: we have a new way of working, with four teams now set up to deal with specific cars and jobs.

You may not notice the changes straight away, but – inspired by the fantastic success of our Heritage Centre – they will ensure we continue to say ahead of our competitors and work in the most efficient way possible. Find out more about this on page 3.

In this issue of Works Torque, we go behind the scenes at our Body and Accident Repair Centre on page 14 – the largest specialist Aston Martin repair facility in the world – and on page 5 we find out how our new Rapide concept car is taking the world by storm.

A lot of hard work is also going on behind the scenes as we all get ready for the Bonhams auction. This event – now firmly established as an annual highlight for Aston Martin – is something we all really enjoy being a part of. Not only is it an exciting day, but it also does such a lot of good for our customers, owners and future owners.

Read more about the auction highlights, star cars, the new format and timetable on pages 8 and 9.

I hope you enjoy this issue. We look forward to seeing lots of you at the Bonhams auction – and for those of you who fancy VIP treatment, don't forget to book one of our Premier Luncheon packages. See page 3. Tickets are selling fast ...



Kingsley

Kingsley Riding-Felce
Director of Works Service and
Customer Relations



On the cover

Going under the hammer: The restored DB4 that had been locked away in a barn in Norfolk since 1974. One of the star cars at Bonhams.

We hope you like our magazine and we welcome your ideas, opinions and contributions. If you know someone who has an Aston Martin, please tell them about *Works Torque* and we will be delighted to send them a copy.

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Contents

News

- 3 **Bond is back:** His Highness Sheikh Nasser Mohammed Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait, loans part of his collection for the latest 007 film
- 4 **Racing into 2006:** Aston Martin takes second and third place at Sebring with two faultless DBR9s



Features

- 6-7 **Unlocking our history:** we take a trip down memory lane with part two of our timeline
- 8-9 **Extra special event:** going under the hammer at the Bonhams Auction in May
- 12 **Owners club and heritage:** news and events

Regulars

- 11 **A day in the life of:** Ian Rhodes, Supervisor for Special Vehicle Operations Department
- 13 **Glove compartment:** check out the latest stylish accessories we offer
- 15 **Me and my Aston Martin:** a whole new way of driving

Bond is back!

Although the new Aston Martin DBS will be stealing most of the limelight in the forthcoming 007 movie, *Casino Royale*, it's not the only example of the marque to feature in the film. Also back in action will be the classic DB5 ... the car probably most associated with Britain's finest secret agent.

Works Service was sent undercover, Bond-style, to find two left-hand drive silver DB5s by the film-makers – one to appear in the film and one as a spare car. David Townsend, Heritage Restoration Centre Manager, and his team rose to the



Silver stars: The two restored DB5s.

occasion and completed the assignment on schedule.

"Fortunately, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Mohammed Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait and foremost collector of Aston Martins in the world, was able to oblige with two cars," says David.

But there was a slight problem. Although one of the cars was already silver, the other wasn't. "It had to be completely resprayed from green and retrimmed with black interior too."

Because both of the DB5s hadn't been used for a while, they also had to be hastily recommissioned. "We had one car completed within a week and the other – which had to be repainted – took two weeks," recalls David. Both cars then travelled to the film set in the Bahamas.



The right skill for the right job...

Inspiration: The Heritage Centre.

A new and improved way of working has been introduced into Works Service – with four teams now drawing on specific resources and expertise.

The changes – inspired by the phenomenal success of our Heritage Centre – will help us to accommodate our increasing workload and will also ensure we always match our skills and experts to the right jobs.

While the main part of the workshop will service all our DB7 and later models, there will be a new area, Special Vehicle Operations (SVO), which will manage upgrades and enhancements.

Restoration work on older cars will remain as a separate team, while the

specialist work needed to service V8-engine cars will be carried out in a fourth area – complete with hand-picked team members.

Arthur Sinclair, General Manager, Works Service, said: "We have proved how successful this way of working is with our Heritage Centre, so we want to repeat this success and do the same in all other areas, with V8s, specific upgrades and enhancements having dedicated facilities.

"The demands for specialists in all areas continues to grow. It is essential we stay ahead and work in the most efficient way possible – so we can continue to be experts on everything from 1950s cars to models built this year."

VIP lunch



Exclusive: Last year's event.

Preparations are under way as we gear up for our seventh Bonhams Auction at Works Service.

The exciting annual event, which is taking place this year on Saturday, May 13, will once again include the popular Premier Luncheon facility. As an added extra, this exclusive event will be held in a new venue – within Works Service and close to the auction, so you will have easy access to the full proceedings.

The cost of the Premier Luncheon Package is £155, including VAT, per person, which includes a copy of the Bonhams catalogue (which admits you to the auction itself), VIP reserved parking, and a bespoke enamel badge giving easy unlimited access to the facilities. Coffee and tea with biscuits on arrival is also provided, with a sit-down, hot, two-course buffet luncheon, served with wine or soft drinks, reserved auction seating and afternoon tea and coffee.

Only around 80 people will be able to enjoy this VIP package, so tickets are being sold on a first come, first served basis. For information or to reserve your space, phone Wendy Harrison-Drake on either 01908 619239 or email wharri64@astonmartin.com

News



Result: Two podium finishes for the DBR9 at Sebring.

A fantastic year!

The DBRS9 will be joining its sister car on the international race circuits and will be competing on both sides of the Atlantic – in the FIA GT3 series and the SCCA Speed World Challenge Series. Historic racer Tom Alexander will be driving one of the Barwell cars, partnered by Tiff Needel.

Britcar and Dutch Supercar Honda Civic driver, Leo Machitsky, will be one of the drivers for the second car. Three additional drivers are yet to be announced.

Autosport Designs Inc is entering two DBRS9s in the SCCA Speed World Challenge – a competitive production-based US race series.

We are back on the podium after a Sebring thriller saw the Aston Martin Racing team taking a second and third in Florida.

At the GT1 competition finale, the team's two Aston Martin DBR9s – numbered 007 and 009 – ran faultlessly throughout the race, completing 661 laps of the 3.7-mile international raceway and covering a total of 2,445 miles at speeds of up to 168mph.

The driving team of Pedro Lamy, Stéphane Sarrazin and Jason Bright brought DBR9 number 009 home in second place, after a long battle with the class-winning number four Corvette. After 12 hours of racing, the gap between the pair was 1min 28sec.

The team's sister car, number 007, was involved in another transatlantic tussle with the second American Corvette entry, culminating in a nail-biting battle to the chequered flag. Tomas Enge drove a double stint to finish the race third and keep the hard-chasing Corvette behind.

■ A number of DBR9s will also be competing this year at Le Mans, in the FIA GT Championship, the Le Mans Endurance series (LMES) and the American Le Mans series (ALMS).

Aston Martin Racing is currently firming up this year's plans and wants to run a two-car team in blue riband events, including Le Mans.

BMS, an official works team, is racing two DBR9s in the FIA GT Championship and has automatic entry for one car for Le Mans.

RaceAlliance will enter two DBR9s in the FIA GT Championship, and the Austrian team also hopes to gain entry for Le Mans. Cirtek Motorsport will return for a second season with the royal blue DBR9, which will compete in the full LMS and selected FIA GT events. Entry for Le Mans is automatic.

Meanwhile, Phoenix Racing has purchased a DBR9 and plans to race in the FIA GT.

A greener service

These days, it isn't just what Works Service puts on cars undergoing work that is important. It's also what is taken off.

Some customers may have noticed the gradual appearance of environmental charges on their bills. This is because Aston Martin takes its commitment to the environment seriously, and the responsibility for disposing of old materials associated with servicing or rebuilding a car is an expensive exercise.

Aston Martin has ISO 14001 (2004) accreditation. "Approximately 80 per cent of all waste produced by Aston Martin is recycled," says Paul Huewen, Senior Environmental Systems Engineer.

Used oil, tyres, paint materials, lead acid batteries, petrol, metals and even wood can all be removed from a typical car during work. Some of this can be recycled or disposed of relatively simply, but hazardous waste now has to be professionally treated, with appropriate charges also levied by the Environment Agency.

The company absorbs much of this financial burden, although a small charge has to be levied to customers.

So next time there's an environmental charge on your bill, you'll know just why.



Environmentally friendly: Joe Waters disposes old oil filters.



Unique: (Above) the four-door Rapide being photographed the night before shipment to Detroit and (below) the final preparations are made for the show.

Rapidefacts

- At 5m long, the Rapide is 30cm longer than the DB9 and just 140kg heavier.
- The concept car's interior features custom-embossed shagreen hide specially sourced for the Rapide.
- The interior offers such luxuries as dual climate zones, DVD screens and audio controls for the rear seats.
- To help make every journey a real occasion, the concept car also incorporates a chiller cabinet in the boot, perfectly shaped to hold a magnum of Jacquesson champagne, along with four elegant flutes.
- The fully functioning prototype Rapide was built entirely in-house at Gaydon.

Rapide mover!

Its unveiling proved to be one of the highlights of the Detroit Motor Show – and from every point of view, the Rapide is living up to its name.

As the seventh new car from Aston Martin in just two and a half years, the Rapide is a four-door, high-performance coupe of grace and poise. Based on Aston Martin's unique VH (vertical/horizontal) architecture, the Rapide combines Aston Martin's commitment to power, beauty and soul with space and practicality for every eventuality.

It took just six months to move the Rapide through all the design stages, from initial sketch to fully-fledged concept car, with Aston Martin's modelling team working with both raw clay models and advanced computer

modelling to create the harmonious effect of this car.

Glowing press reports indicate the media would welcome the opportunity to experience the exciting new concept car for themselves. They – and we – would love to see the car go into production.



What the press said:

Excitement surrounding the Rapide so far this year has been global, with motoring magazines from as far apart as Germany and Japan giving our latest concept their very best attention.

The Rapide was the star attraction of the first *Auto Express* cover for this year, and received further positive coverage inside. Under the headline, 'Aston four-door steals show', the UK motoring magazine suggested this 'dramatic-looking four-door saloon' was 'the ultimate in fast family transport'.

The Times singled out the Rapide as one of the best of the European gems which between them brightened up what it described as 'dreary Detroit': "The Italians did not grab all the glamour: Aston revealed its first four-door production car for 30 years. The Rapide is officially only a concept ... but the smiles around the Aston stand seemed to say that this elegant four-seater is likely to become a reality before too long."



Sleeping beauty



DB4: In its former glory.

Every once in a while a story comes along that stirs the imagination.

When Bonhams were contacted about a DB4 which had been bricked up in a room for over 30 years, they immediately contacted the experts at Works Service to help extract it.

When the team arrived at a secluded Norfolk farmhouse, half the wall had already been knocked down. Everybody waited anxiously as the unveiling began. Although thick with several layers of dust, the car seemed to be in remarkably good condition – even one of the tyres still had air in it!

Every precaution was taken to ensure the car could be removed safely. It was stuck in gear, which required a technician to disconnect the prop shaft. Once in neutral, and with all four tyres inflated, the car was carefully pushed to freedom.

We will never know why the owner decided to lock his pride and joy away, but one thing's for sure: whoever buys this tiny piece of history at the Bonhams auction in May, will be investing in a car that has 9,000 genuine miles on the clock and, with some TLC, will soon be back to its former glory.



News

HISTORY: 1970-2005

unlocking our

Early 1980s view of Works Service, Newport Pagnell.



Works Service has always maintained His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales's Aston Martins. 'Prince of Wales Spec' shown above.

During this period the design and focus of the company was on V8 production, when many of the owners chose to modify their cars, both in terms of bodywork and performance enhancements, in which Works Service led the field.



1970

1975

1980



1985



The world's fastest car of its time (170mph), the V8 Vantage.



In 1984, subtle changes to the Aston Martin badge further enhance the design.



In August 1985 the company is granted the Royal Warrant of Appointment to His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, for motor manufacture and repair.

HISTORY

Part two of our feature where we remember Works Service from 1970 to the present day...

A four-door Vantage epitomising the company's 90s coachbuilding era.



The Works Service customer reception area is completely refurbished and officially opened in May 2001 by His Royal Highness Prince Michael of Kent (pictured here with Dr. Ulrich Bez, Chairman and CEO, Aston Martin).



The new silver gilt Lagonda badge is similar in style to that of Aston Martin. The company name is picked out in white enamel on a dark red background.



1990

1995

2000



First four-door Virage (badged Lagonda).



Virage 6.3-litre conversion.



Throughout the history of the Works Service department, people have been key and the skills that existed in the company's founding days are as much in existence now as they were then, sometimes still being used by the same team of craftsmen that created the originals.

The timing of the seventh Bonhams Auction has been brought forward this year, to enable visitors who are going to AMOC's Spring Concours at Blenheim Palace to get there on time. The doors will open at 9.30am and the auctions will start at 1pm – with the automobilia going under the hammer first, followed by an auction of the cars at 2.30pm. The event is expected to finish by 4pm to 4.30pm.



Extra-special

Star cars and Aston
Martin memorabilia
will go under the
hammer on May 13 at
the Bonhams Auction
at Works Service...

Star cars, a VIP luncheon and a new format promise to make our seventh Bonhams Auction as exciting as ever.

The day, widely regarded as the most important auction of Aston Martins in the world, will bring together hundreds of owners, prospective owners and car lovers – who will all be able to browse, view and even bid for a hand-picked selection of the most special and best maintained Aston Martins.

A DB4, unused since 1974 and hidden away in a Norfolk barn, will go under the hammer at the auction on May 13, along with a DB4GT Zagato and a host

of other Aston Martin cars and automobilia.

An exclusive VIP luncheon will be another highlight of the day, when, for the first time ever, we will be moving the VIP marquee inside the workshop.

Kingsley said: "The luncheon has been a big success for the past four years and by moving the marquee inside we will be making it extra-special, offering guests a temperature controlled climate, a quiet sanctuary to dip in and out of and a delicious lunch." As part of the VIP package, guests will also receive VIP parking and the comprehensive auction catalogue.



EVENT

Tip-top condition

People buy with their eyes, so anything you can do to improve your car's looks will add value and attract more bidders.

Here are some top tips for preparing your car for auction:

- Dirty oil, worn pedal rubbers and tyres without shoulders are all signs of hard use and lack of service – so spend a few pounds and you could paint a completely different picture.
 - Unsightly body damage is a no-no, so talk to Works Service and consider the options. It may be worth paying for a repair – which should help at the auction.
 - Make sure you clean and polish the bodywork and spring-clean the interior – shampooing carpets and feeding leather trim. On the outside, don't forget to get those wheels shining.
 - Prospective buyers will probably want to take a look inside the boot and under the arches and bonnet, so make sure these are clean.
 - A prospective buyer may request Bonhams to start the engine, so make sure it is running smoothly.
 - The little things can make all the difference. If your number plate is scratched or delaminating, it won't cost much to replace it. The same holds true for windscreen wipers.
 - Don't forget the bulbs and fuses. Make sure everything is working and that the battery is reliable.
- When your car is looking its very best, take some time to get a full selection of photos and collect together all relevant bills and service history, and put them in a folder. If you have any historic papers, photos or press cuttings that confirm its provenance that will be a bonus.
- **We have prepared many Aston Martins for auction and sale, so if you want more advice on getting your car ready for auction, contact Works Service on 01908 619264.**

The star cars...

➤ A DB4GT Zagato promises to wow our auction-goers. The unique car, originally supplied as new to Sir Max Aitken, was sold during the 1960s to a Mr Buchanan-Michaelson, who commissioned Aston Martin to re-body the car. A subsequent owner then commissioned further restoration of the car, and clothed it in original DB4GT Zagato bodywork. Turn to the back page to see it for yourself.

➤ An old DB4 is going under the hammer after being found in a Norfolk barn. The car – last driven in 1974, when the owner drove his daughter to church for her wedding day – has been hidden away ever since. A few months ago the son and daughter of the owner, who has since passed on, approached Bonhams about selling their dad's car.

■ **For details about the Works Service Bonhams Auction, or to secure your VIP luncheon tickets, phone us on 01908 619264.**

The DB4 which was uncovered from a Norfolk barn.



Tool box

The DB6 in Newport Pagnell's Heritage Restoration Centre may look like a straightforward classic. But this is a car with a few secrets...



Andrew McCloskey reveals that all is not what it seems.

Classic meets hi-tech

Service Reception Engineer Andrew McCloskey gives a tour of a classic Aston Martin undergoing a Works Service rebuild ... and reveals that all is not what it seems.

As sophisticated as such cars were in their day, automotive technology has moved on in the last 40 or so years. And sometimes, even an Aston Martin can do with some sympathetic updating...

"We can improve the handling, increase the engine capacity, fit power steering, air conditioning, electric cooling fans, intermittent wiper systems, heat insulation, hazard warning lights, halogen headlamps ... the list just goes on," says Andrew.

However, it's not just what can be done, but how it's done. All these improvements, and more besides, can be incorporated without altering the car's classic looks or character. To the casual observer, the vehicle still looks just as it did when new. It takes a real expert to spot what has been done in the name of progress.

Andrew is keen to demonstrate the clever touches. He flicks down the original centre mono speaker

panel to reveal a modern stereo behind it.

"We can make it so that both the old MW radio and the new unit are operative, so you can have the authentic crackle if you want, but also be able to play CDs with the same sound quality you'd expect from a current Aston Martin. We could probably also fit satellite navigation under there as well."

Up on the dashboard is the rotary knob once used to operate the selectable Armstrong lever arm dampers. Because this DB6 now sports telescopic shock absorbers, the control has been converted to work intermittent wipers instead.

"When finished, you could probably put this car into a concours event because it all looks completely authentic," believes Andrew. "Unless somebody really starts probing around inside...."

Although these upgrades are primarily aimed at DB4s onwards, "... if somebody came in with a DB2, we would be pleased to discuss their requirements," Andrew explains. "At Works Service, we're open to listening to any ideas a customer has."

■ **Why not give them a try on 01908 619264?**



The DB6 telescopic rear suspension (above) and the rotary knob (below).



Works Service's latest initiative is its Special Vehicle Operations department. Works Torque met up with Ian Rhodes to find out what it's all about . . .

A day in the life of . . .

name: Ian Rhodes

job description:
Supervisor Special Vehicle Operations

time spent at Aston Martin: 20 years



"Well, I guess I'm James Bond's Q now," laughs Ian Rhodes about his latest role at Newport Pagnell. After two decades with Aston Martin – which have seen him looking after prestige cars abroad, before becoming lead technician, supervisor and finally workshop controller – Ian now has another string to his bow.

He's heading up the technical side of the new Special Vehicle Operations (SVO) department, a small but dedicated team of specialists who intend to make the impossible ... well, a little less impossible. SVO aims to go beyond the many production options and accessories that already exist for new Aston Martins and offer customers almost any extra they want on their new car, within the three main areas of styling, comfort and/or performance. Even if it's something that has never been done before.

"We talk to customers and determine the feasibility of their requests. If they are viable we then go ahead and make them happen,"

asserts Ian. Typically, any enquiries will come through to Andrew McCloskey, the customer-facing side of the SVO team. Andrew, Ian and the rest of the SVO personnel then all get together to discuss how best to achieve things. Says Ian: "We look in depth at the cost and the engineering, then put the package together and report back."

Customers can either contact SVO while their car is being built, so it comes delivered with any Works Service options already in place, or if owners already have their Aston Martin and decide they'd like something more for it, SVO can retrospectively carry out most requirements.

But however simple a request might be, Ian's job is still a complicated one. Safety legislation, plus the increasing complexity of new cars, means that many aspects have to be carefully considered before modifications can be carried out.

"Even moving a seat cushion can change how effective the seatbelt is," according to Ian. "Technology also determines what can be done. Something small and simple can interfere with the electronics and affect the whole car. However, we can draw

upon the knowledge of the bigger Aston Martin organisation as a whole.

"I can talk to the original engineers, see engineering drawings and use CAD (Computer

Aided Design) to work through ideas. We've got the engineering and legal support. We also have to consider the financial costs – is this going to be something totally unique or would we offer it elsewhere?" In the latter case, engineering and development costs can be spread across a number of vehicles, making the option more affordable.

Such factors make the SVO team – with Ian at the centre of it – best placed to make any special changes to your Aston Martin.

"Well, I guess I'm James Bond's Q now."



Discussing a project with Andrew McCloskey (above), and (right) an ongoing project!! Call Andrew for details.

The ONLY place for all things Aston Martin!



The Trust is an educational charity, and its main remit is to make knowledge available on all matters Aston Martin.

Apart from our museum and archival work, we also stage regular events. The latest in the line of lectures we hold was the 2006 Walter Hayes Memorial Lecture, held at the RAC in late January. This year, David Richards, Chairman of Prodrive, was the invited speaker, telling us the inside story of 'Aston Martin Racing – the story so far'.

With the re-entry of Aston Martin into top-line sports-car racing with the DBR9, 2005 was meant to be the year of the learning curve. Of course it was, but that didn't stop early success with a debut class win at Sebring! We heard much about the plans, developments, trials, and (just a few) tribulations, all delivered by a master communicator.

A truly fascinating evening, hugely oversubscribed, and attended amongst others by Peter Livanos, Ted Cutting and Sir Stirling Moss, a sure sign of the regard in which the Trust is now held.

Later in the year, and by complete contrast, the Dudley Coram Memorial Lecture is to be a Bamford and Martin day, telling the story of the very earliest days of AM. This is to be held at the Barn on Sunday September 10, and will feature one of the largest ever gatherings of these early cars in recent memory, photographs, ledgers and as much other material as we can make available. A day for all who value the early history of the company.

■ **For all information on the Trust and its activities, please contact the Secretary on 0044 (0)1865 400414, or visit the website at www.amheritrust.org**



Wide-ranging: Events include a Scandinavian Tour (pictured above), and the Horse/Wind Power Challenge (right).



Great line-up of events for 2006!

The Aston Martin Owners Club has an extensive programme of events lined up for 2006, ranging from a Spring Concours and Snowdonia Amble to a Swedish Tour and Wind Power Challenge.

A 10-day Spanish Tour and Track Day, starting on April 22, will pull all the excitement of racing together with members exploring parts of the Iberian hinterland. The trip culminates in a track day at the Circuito de Guadix.

On the day after Works Service's Bonhams Auction AMOC is holding its Spring Concours at Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire. There will be an evening dinner, with a number of international members due to turn up.

The Horse/Wind Power

Challenge is being held in Cowes, on the Isle of Wight, from May 5 to 7 – complete with sailing and motoring around the picturesque island.

Members will be able to ride in two 76ft-long America's Cup yachts, to experience the power and majesty first hand. More like F1 racing than sailing.

Another highlight of the events calendar is the Scandinavian Tour, a journey starting in Helsinki and moving into southern Sweden, known as the 'Land of the Knights', where the Knistad Herrgard Country Club has been booked from August 9–13.

■ **A host of other events have been organised. For details, log on to www.amoc.org, email secretary@amoc.org or phone 01865 400400.**

calendar of events

Key: ■ AMOC events
■ other events

April 21: Mallory Track Day

April 29: Annual General Meeting

May 5–7: Horse/Wind Power Challenge, Cowes

May 13: Bonhams Auction at Works Service

May 14: Spring Concours, Blenheim Palace

May 28: Curborough Spring, long circuit

June 3: Race Meeting, Snetterton

June 10: Polo at Cowdray Park

June 12–18: 24 Hours Le Mans

July 1: St John Horsfall Race Meeting, Silverstone

July 21: Track Day, Goodwood Park

July 22: Sprint meeting, Goodwood Park

July 30: Hillclimb, Loton Park



This season's must-have

Enjoying one of the first spring days on the open road used to be a bit of a 'windy' experience. Not any more.

The DB9 Volante wind deflector makes open-air motoring a less turbulent event.

Specifically engineered for Aston Martin, the wind deflector is both stylish and practical. It can significantly reduce 'in car' turbulence during open-air motoring.

■ **For further details please call Works Service.**

Finishing touch

Add the finishing touch to your car with the Aston Martin floor mats.

These premium quality carpet overmats, with a hardwearing and easy to clean soft pile surface, are edged in quality hide with a heavy-duty non-slip backing. Aston Martin is embroidered onto a discreet label which is set into the hide edging.

■ **For further details contact the Works Service team.**



Experience saves Heritage models

In line with the expansion of the Works Service Heritage Restoration Centre, the Heritage team at Parts Operations at Wolverton Mill have been busy supporting the requirements of their colleagues at Newport Pagnell.

"They have certainly given us some challenges over the past few months," said Roy King, Heritage Operations Procurement Engineer. "Several cars are having conversions from right-hand drive to left, or auto to manual gearbox – jobs which are quite rare these days. We have been asked to supply some parts that have not been sold for 10 years or more.

"Our archive of 28,000 original production drawings has proved invaluable in re-sourcing some of these parts. We work closely with our colleagues in Works Service to ensure that parts are sourced with minimum delay, and we also incorporate improvements, taking advantage of modern production methods where we can."

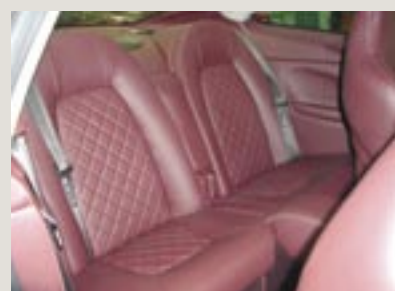
The depth of experience that exists in both teams is vital to keeping Heritage cars on the road.

■ **Did you know? Chris d'E. Vallancey, Roy King and Mark Hewitt (Sales Specialist) together have 71 years of experience with Aston Martin.**

Glove compartment



Are you sitting comfortably?



If you want the luxury of a new look, Works Service has several seat trim options.

Leather or Alcantara quilted leather inserts, for the Vanquish, DB9 and V8 Vantage, are now available as a retro-fit option.

■ **For your specific requirements please call Andrew McCloskey on 01908 619264 for details.**

Put to the test: DB5

When Autocar did a road test on the Aston Martin DB5 back in 1964, doing 100mph was considered deadly dangerous for ordinary mortals – but as the magazine explains, a short ride in this 3,995cc car could put anyone's mind at rest. It was a man's car, said the writer. The two-door saloon, with purchase tax, cost £4,248 17s 1d. It could do 100mph at 17.6mpg with a maximum speed of 143mph, doing 0 to 60mph in eight seconds.

"Like the fourth dimension, subjects and experiences beyond our personal comprehension are virtually impossible to visualize with any degree of reality.

"One naturally relates all things to the fixed values one has for comparison, and other people's claims seldom ring true unless one knows for oneself.

"To be told 100mph (with certain qualifications) is a safe speed would cause a large majority of everyday motorists to throw up their hands in horror and launch forth on a counter-attack on the dangers of high-speed driving. Yet they could be silenced simply and for ever by a short trip over ordinary trunk roads in an Aston Martin DB5.

"More and more cars today can reach the magical 'ton'

but those which can do it with the ease and rapidity of the Aston can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

"High-speed stability and safety is not cheap and with few people to pay the price, production costs are never reduced by the quantity of the work. The DB5 therefore fills a unique corner of the market, a corner at the top end both in the way it performs and the price one pays for the privilege.

"It is a car which cries out to be driven, to be driven well, and to be driven far. It is a car requiring skill and muscle – a man's car – which challenges and satisfies and always excites."



Body and soul

We mentioned Works Service's new Body and Accident Repair Centre briefly in the last issue. But when you're talking about the largest specialist Aston Martin repair facility in the world, it's a subject that deserves more limelight.

That's what Repair Supervisor Nigel Woodward believes about Newport Pagnell's latest centre of excellence. "We do everything here, from the DB2 onwards. But our focus at the moment is on modern cars. Current Aston Martins have a unique construction – the VH bonded platform – and unless you are an Aston Martin Category A repairer, which we are, you're not authorised to carry out structural repairs. It's important to go somewhere with the right level of technical competence. And that's us."

Most of the work the centre carries out is for insurance companies, and it's the special relationship Works Service has with these that brings dividends for customers. "We do a repair that is in keeping with the owner's passion for the car," says Nigel. "We talk to both the assessor and the customer to get the best job done. On an Aston Martin, it's a much more involved and considered process than with an ordinary car. A typical front end medium crash repair can run to three to four weeks, while a new tub on a Vanquish can take several weeks."

Cases in point can be seen throughout the scrupulously clean facility. There's a silver Vanquish with its engine removed and its front end out for repair. "This will probably need several weeks and eight people working on it to put right," explains Nigel. "But we will be able to make it just like new."

Nigel is particularly proud of an almost finished silver Vanquish that demonstrates the centre's attention to detail. It looks like new, and it's impossible to tell where the new paint has been blended with the old. Says Nigel: "We have technicians from DuPont – which makes Aston Martin's paint – on site once or twice a week, and through them, access to subtly varying shades of standard colours. To the best of my knowledge, nobody else can offer that."



Competent:

Nigel Woodward checks the finish (above) and (left) examines damage.



thefacts

- Aston Martin is anticipating running over 700 PDCs in 2006, the majority of which will take place at Millbrook.
- The number of PDCs in 2006 is expected to increase by 90 per cent compared to 2005.
- Each course costs £895 including VAT.
- For further information about Aston Martin's Performance Driving Courses, contact Nicki Richardson on 01926 644944.



In control: (Main) Les Goble and (inset) the V8 Vantage at Lommel Proving Ground.

A whole new way of DRIVING

Customer comments:

"I had a brilliant day – thoroughly enjoyable and very useful. Definitely a must to get to know the vehicle in controlled surroundings."

"This type of day can only improve the owner's driving standards and brand loyalty. A thoroughly enjoyable day."

"I would not have wanted to take delivery of the car without having taken this course."

"A very enjoyable day with first-class tuition."

When you buy an Aston Martin, you're not only taking ownership of one of the world's most sophisticated performance cars – you're also opening yourself up to a brand-new motoring experience.

So much more than a status symbol, it's not until you explore your car's full driving potential that you can truly appreciate what an Aston Martin is all about.

To illustrate this, Aston Martin has designed a series of Performance Driving Courses exclusively for V8 Vantage, DB9 and Vanquish S customers, to show just how fulfilling and exciting your car's capabilities are.

The courses are run at three locations around the world – Millbrook Proving Ground in Bedfordshire, UK, Michigan Proving Ground in North America, and Lommel Proving Ground in Belgium.

The full day course at Millbrook, which caters for all levels of experience, begins with a highly trained professional driver talking through the basic safety elements. Your tutor remains with you throughout the day, providing one-to-one instruction, at a pace that suits you.

Having familiarised yourself with the controls of a specially prepared Aston Martin, you will then take the car out onto the circuits, where you will tackle a variety of specially designed courses to demonstrate the car's urban driving characteristics, gearbox functions, ABS system,

Traction Control, Emergency Brake Assistance and Electronic Brakeforce Distribution.

Having mastered these, you will then undertake a high-speed emergency stop, going from 100mph to standstill, whilst maintaining complete control.

After lunch, you will learn the skills to enable the car to become more balanced, and eventually faster and smoother, under your control.

The climax of the course will see you take the car on to a high-speed two-mile bowl, where intense focus and confidence will reveal the high-speed stability of the car.

Les Goble, Performance Driving Executive for Aston Martin, revealed: "These courses are designed to give owners a greater understanding of their car's technicalities, while improving their driving techniques, providing them with more confidence. These exclusive one-to-one driving experiences are the perfect introduction to further driving courses."



Circuits:
Millbrook
Proving Ground.

1793
Bonhams



Aston Martin Works Service Saturday 13 May 2006 Newport Pagnell



This exquisite DB4GT has a well documented history. It was originally supplied new – as a genuine DB4GT – to Sir Max Aitken, and during the 1960s it was sold to a Mr Buchanan-Michaelson, a charismatic gentleman who commissioned Aston Martin to re-body the car. The new look was an acquired taste but unique nonetheless.

In later years a subsequent owner commissioned respected Aston Martin specialists R S Williams Ltd. to completely restore the car but crucially for Carrozzeria Zagato to clothe it in original DB4GT Zagato bodywork.

DB4GT/0148/R is to be offered at the annual Bonhams auction sale at Aston Martin Lagonda Limited, Newport Pagnell on Saturday 13 May 2006. For further information regarding buying or selling at this sale please contact James Knight on +44 (0) 20 7447 7440 or email james.knight@bonhams.com

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by Nicholas Mee (2011)

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Photo: courtesy Michael Bailey