PAUL HOLLYWOOD DRIVES BACK IN TIME!

Monday 27 October, 2014

Celebrity baker gears up for debut on the historic Bonhams London to Brighton Veteran Car Run

Paul Hollywood is turning back the clocks. The well-known television presenter is joining hundreds of other intrepid motorists taking an evocative trip down memory lane in this weekend's Bonhams London to Brighton Veteran Car Run (2 November).

The annual Run features more than 400 extraordinary automobiles dating back to the dawn of motoring and celebrates the original Emancipation Run, held on 14 November 1896. This marked the introduction of the Locomotives on the Highway Act that raised the speed limit for 'light locomotives' from 4 to 14mph and abolished the need for a man walking ahead of the cars waving a red flag.

Along with all the other participants, Hollywood will be setting out from Hyde Park just after dawn and heading for the Sussex seafront aboard a pioneering car from the pre-1905 era. He will be driving a two-seater 1904 De Dion Bouton powered by a single-cylinder 6hp engine kindly loaned by the National Motor Museum in Beaulieu.

"It's going to be great fun. I've always wanted to do the Run ever since my granddad used to talk about it, so I'm really looking forward to the journey," enthused the host of the BBC's *The Great British Bake Off* who's also a massive motoring enthusiast. "I've got a real passion for cars and taking this trip with lots of other people who also clearly have a similar passion is going to be something really, really special. Just seeing all these veteran cars going through the heart of London is going to be spectacular."

Hollywood has already had a brief chance to acquaint himself with the groundbreaking De Dion Bouton under the expert guidance of Ian Stansfield, senior engineer in the Beaulieu workshops. "It's very different from today's cars," grinned Paul. "You control just about everything with your hands and that takes a bit of getting used to. There are no dials but I'm told it will do 30mph which is going to be hilarious!"

Other familiar faces joining Hollywood on the historic 60-mile route include Olympic legends Sir Ben Ainslie and Sir Steve Redgrave, multiple world championship winning F1 team boss Ross Brawn and Pink Floyd drummer Nick Mason.

The Run is the highlight of a long weekend of motoring nostalgia in the capital, much of it free to view. Other events include the popular free Regent Street Motor Show (Saturday, 1 November) and the annual Bonhams Veteran Car auction (Friday 31 October).

For more details of the Veteran Car Run, the entries and the route visit www.veterancarrun.com.

Editor's Notes

The Royal Automobile Club was founded in 1897 and its distinguished history mirrors that of motoring itself. In 1907, the Club was awarded its Royal title by King Edward VII, sealing the Club's status as Britain's oldest and most influential motoring organisation.

The Club's early years were focused on promoting the motor car and its place in society, which developed into motoring events such as the 1000 Mile Trial, first held in 1900. In 1905, the Club held the first Tourist Trophy, which remains the oldest continuously competed for motor sports event. The Club promoted the first pre-war and post-war Grands Prix at Brooklands in 1926 and Silverstone in 1948 respectively, whilst continuing to campaign for the rights of the motorist, including introducing the first driving licences.

Today, the Club continues to develop and support automobilism through representation on the Motor Sport Association (MSA), Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) and RAC Foundation, while continuing to promote its own motoring events, such as the free-to-attend Regent Street Motor Show and the London to Brighton Veteran Car Run.

The Royal Automobile Club also awards a series of historic trophies and medals celebrating motoring achievements. These include the Segrave Trophy, the Tourist Trophy, the Simms Medal, the Dewar Trophy and the Torrens Trophy.

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