

CLASSIC DRIVER



1954 Rolls-Royce Silver Dawn

Lot sold	USD 36 662 - 45 827 GBP 28 000 - 35 000 (listed)	Drive	LHD
Year of manufacture	1954	Condition	Used
Chassis number	SRH44	Location	
Number of seats	2	Fuel type	Petrol
Drivetrain	2wd	Exterior colour	Other
Lot number	184	Engine number	S22H

Description

The Earls Court International Motor Show
1954 Rolls-Royce Silver Dawn Saloon
Coachwork by Hooper & Co Ltd
Registration no. PXB 421
Chassis no. SRH44
Engine no. S22H

'The new Silver Dawn, which was exhibited for the first time at the recent International World's Fair at Toronto, is designed to appeal to those overseas connoisseurs who appreciate the quality of a Rolls-Royce but who do not require a chauffeur-driven car.' The Autocar, 22nd July 1949.

Despite the popularity of the Crewe factory's 'standard steel' body, pioneered on the MkVI Bentley and continued on the Rolls-Royce Silver Dawn, a coachbuilt alternative remained the preferred choice of many customers, including Mr J H Thursby of Grosvenor Square, London W1, who purchased this Silver Dawn for his wife. Chassis number 'SRH44' carries saloon coachwork by Hooper & Co in that company's distinctive 'Empress Line' style. One of only 12 Silver Dawns built to body design number '8401', it was chosen by Hooper's Chief Designer Mr Osmond Rivers to be featured on their stand at the 1954 Earls Court International Motor Show in October of that year. The colour was changed by Hooper, to metallic pearl black (code '9955'), prior to delivery on the 27th November 1954.

Following an estimate for accident damage in May 1957, Hooper's recommend the following: 'Owing

to the difficulty in matching to perfection the colour, we suggest that this is further discussed with a view to recellulosing the complete body and wings in order to effect a satisfactory finish.' The figure agreed for the cost of the change to the current Midnight Blue livery was £45.

On 10th August 1960 'SRH44' was sold to one R S Mead in Maidenhead and only three months later passed to a Mr A B Stothard of Alderley Edge. There is no further information about 'SRH44' until 20th October 1969 when it was sold on behalf of Mr Richard Alden Levy of San Francisco, California at a public auction in Denver Colorado, the purchaser being Mr Robert Samuels of French & Co, a New York antique dealer. On 18th May 2002 'SRH44' was sold at public auction at the Rockefeller Centre, New York and in 2003 was purchased from The Real Car Company of Bethesda, Wales by the current vendors.

While in the vendors' care the Silver Dawn has been enthusiastically campaigned on numerous R-REC events including the Yorkshire Section's weekend at Kendal in the Lake District in 2003, after which it was driven to Thornbury Castle for the vendors' wedding anniversary. In 2004 the car attended the R-REC French Section's Centenary Celebration at Villarsaux-Ile de France near Versailles where it was presented with a glass bowl by Madame Lalique for the Concours d'Élégance (3rd prize).

In July 2005, 'SRH44' went on the R-REC Austrian Section's rally to Velden am Worthersee in the south of Austria, travelling via the Black Forest and Salzburg. From Velden am Worthersee, the Rolls-Royce was driven into Italy for breakfast and on to lunch in Bled, Slovenia, while the drive back to Zeebrugge was broken by an overnight stop on the Rhine in Germany. In 10 days 'SRH44' had clocked up just over 2,000 miles.

In August 2006 the Silver Dawn went on the R-REC Euro Rally to Norway; in September 2007 on the Euro Rally to Bad Saarow near Berlin; and in September 2008 on the final Euro Rally to St Moritz. While on the latter event the vendors drove into Italy and came back over the Stelvio Pass on the return journey. The Rolls-Royce has enjoyed a somewhat quieter life in more recent years, staying closer to home, attending the Goodwood Revival Meeting (in 2012) and the R-REC Yorkshire Section's Crewe weekend (in October 2013). On all of these rallies 'SRH44' has never 'failed to proceed', as Sir Henry Royce would have said. Indeed, the car has always behaved impeccably. Running well, the engine has good oil pressure and does not smoke, while the automatic gearbox changes correctly. Currently MoT'd and taxed, this much loved and well travelled Silver Dawn is offered with sundry bills, old-style logbook and V5 registration document.

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