

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## 1937 Rolls-Royce Phantom III

- Lot sold  
USD 157 342 - 205 755  
GBP 130 000 - 170 000 (listed)  
**Year of manufacture** 1937
- **Chassis number** 3CP126
- **Number of seats** 2
- **Drivetrain** 2wd
- **Lot number** 251
- 
- **Drive** LHD
- **Condition** Used
- **Location** 
- **Fuel type** Petrol
- **Exterior colour** Other
- 

### Description

1937 Rolls-Royce Phantom III Sports Saloon  
Coachwork by Hooper & Co  
Registration no. DKC 444  
Chassis no. 3CP126

- \*In its original ownership for some 30 years
- \*Present ownership since November 2005
- \*Restored with no expense spared (with supporting invoices)
- \*Overdrive transmission

Perhaps the most outstanding luxury car of the 1930s - certainly on this side of the Channel - was the Rolls-Royce Phantom III. Introduced in 1936, the 7,340cc V12-engined Phantom III succeeded the Phantom II, the six-cylinder engine of which was considered to be at the end of its development life. The choice of a V12 configuration was a logical one for Rolls-Royce, the company already having had considerable experience of manufacturing V12 aero engines such as that used in the record-breaking Supermarine S6B seaplane. No doubt another consideration was the need to match the multi-cylinder opposition, notably the V16 Cadillac and V12 Hispano-Suiza.

A state-of-the-art design employing advanced materials and techniques such as 'skeleton' cylinder blocks with wet liners and aluminium alloy cylinder heads, the PIII V12 produced 165bhp in its debut form. The maximum output was subsequently raised to 180 brake horsepower, which was sufficient to propel later examples to 100mph, earlier models being capable of around 90.

Its engine configuration aside, the Phantom III represents an important milestone in the history of Rolls-Royce cars, being the first with independent front suspension. A total of 710 had been manufactured when WW2 halted production, of which around 300 exist worldwide today.

Chassis number '3CP126' was supplied on 17th September 1937 via W Watson & Co of Liverpool to J L Milligan of Birkenhead, and was kept by its first owner until at least 1965. Service records in the history file

list a major engine and chassis overhaul in 1947; fitting a heater in March 1951; and a full service at Rolls-Royce's Crewe factory in November 1963. By the early 1980s, the Phantom was resident in Northern Ireland where it spent almost a decade in the ownership of R-REC member Robert Huffam of County Antrim. In 1992 the car was acquired by well-known collector/dealer Terry Cohn. Its next owner, from February 1996, was Brian Brotherton, during whose nine years of custodianship the car was repainted in two-tone blue and silver and driven only some 2,000 miles. The current vendor purchased the Phantom at a UK auction in November 2005, since when it has covered 9,605 miles. The car is believed, but not warranted, to have covered only 57,540 miles from new.

'3CP126' has benefited from considerable expenditure while in the vendor's care. Works carried out during his ownership include a complete engine rebuild; new upholstery in Stone Grey hide; new headlining, carpets, and interior woodwork; and re-chroming of various components (2006/2007). Further extensive works were undertaken subsequently, including rewiring the electrics; overhauling the hydraulic jacking system; installing an overdrive; and fitting five new Excelsior radial tyres (2015). Specialists involved include Classic Restorations of Alyth, Toye Engineering of Killyleagh, James Black Restorations of Ballinderry; Tim Payne of Whitney, John Little, and M J Pickles of Macclesfield. In total, the sum of £92,136 has been spent by the current owner over the last 12 years.

Noteworthy features of this mightily impressive Phantom include a generous boot, original sunroof, rear window blinds, unusual rear wheel spats, side-mounted spare wheel, centre spotlight, and kneeling 'Spirit of Ecstasy' mascot. The aforementioned history file contains copy chassis cards; tax discs dating back to 1985; MoT certificates dating back to 1961; a reprinted colour sales brochure, and sundry bills relating to the works listed above.

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