
1987 Bedford Plaxton YNL bus

Lot sold	USD 0 GBP 0 (listed)	Drive	RHD
Year of manufacture	1987	Condition	Used
Mileage	80 000 mi / 128 748 km	Location	
Gearbox	Automatic	Exterior colour	Other
Lot number	254	Car type	Other

Description

"The 2nd June 2019 saw this bus and its accompanying Minis set of from leafy Hertfordshire to Turin on the 50th Anniversary of the release of the iconic film 'The Italian Job' starring Michael Caine. The idea to recreate the film was developed five years previously by 'The Welwyn Jolly Boys Drinking Club', an eclectic group of friends, after several bottles of port following a St. Georges Day lunch. 'Hang on lads, I've got a great idea..' soon became a massive project for Charlie Croker and his modern-day drinking club.

What seemed like a fairly straightforward escapade to start with soon turned into a far more complicated proposition when it was realised that there are actually very few Minis in good enough condition to make the 2,000 mile round trip including passing over the Alps. Twice. The decision was therefore made to purchase three Minis and completely rebuild them, styled to replicate the 1968 Mk. I Mini Cooper S as used in the film. A former (school run) Bedford bus completed the set and, after four years of grafting, the journey commenced.

After the 100 mile trip to Folkstone and to the bemusement of the Channel Tunnel team, the three Minis were driven aboard the bus for a single vehicle Tunnel crossing to the continent. It was on arrival in France that the 'Jolly Boys' realised that, apart from the Channel crossings and a place to stay in Turin, there was absolutely no plan whatsoever regarding the route or accommodation on the way. In hindsight they conceded that this may have been a mistake and may have been a contributing factor in the bus being refused entry through the Chamonix Tunnel (four hour detour) and the convoy going the wrong way over the Petit St. Bernard Pass. It was only on reaching the

other side of the pass, after a spectacular drive, that it became apparent that they were now three hours further away from Turin and in the wrong country, having now crossed back into France. Things went more smoothly in Turin where the lack of a plan meant that the authorities and building owners were not forewarned of the arrival of the British Minis which snuck past the sleeping security guards at the Turin Fiat factory gates allowing unfettered access to the test track on the roof and subsequent sorties around the Piazzas in Turin city centre. Surprisingly there were no arrests and the convoy set off a couple of days later escaping Italy, this time over the Alps via the Great St. Bernard Pass, through Switzerland, around Lake Geneva, into northern France for the ferry back to Blighty. In the iconic 1969 British comedy caper film, The Italian Job, a gang of thieves, after a daring heist in Turin sneak out of the city, they then rendezvous with a coach in the Alps. On the looping mountain roads, the driver loses control of the coach. The back of the bus is left teetering over a cliff and as Croker attempts to reach the gold, it slips further. The film finishes on a literal cliff-hanger with Croker announcing: Hang on a minute lads, I've got a great idea. This is a replica of that very coach and has been modified to carry the three Mini's which were restored to commemorate the film, named the 27th greatest British film of all time.

This Bedford Plaxton YNL bus was purchased by our vendors in 2019, a former PSV school coach it has been re-registered as a 13-16 seat coach for Class 5 MoT purposes. The bus can be driven on a regular car driving licence due to it being over 30 years old, it also has seven removable double seats supplied with it. Painted and remodelled to replicate the Italian Job bus, this example has opening rear doors and ramps so that it can fit three period Mini's. Welwyn Jolly Boys purchased this bus after the completion of their Mini's in order to complete the trip to Turin and recreate the iconic movie scene, much of this can be seen on the YouTube channel created for the trip.

Guide Price - £3,000 - £5,000

Further information

This is a Bedford YNV Turbo 500 with a Plaxton Paramount 3200 III body and we are informed it cruises at 65mph on a motorway. Currently a MoT class 5 with 14 removable seats and as a PSV vehicle its max weight is 16,250kg. With three Minis on board and eight men it weighs in at 12.5 tonnes.

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