
1938 Frazer Nash 326

Lot sold	USD 79 656 - 106 208 GBP 60 000 - 80 000 (listed)	Condition	Used
Year of manufacture	1938	Location	
Chassis number	82035	Exterior colour	Other
Lot number	233		

Description

1938 Frazer Nash-BMW 326 Saloon

Registration no. JHX 332

Chassis no. 82035

Introduced in 1936, the 326 was a landmark model of immense significance and the first BMW to have a box-section ladder-type frame rather than the traditional tubular variety, while its torsion bar rear springing was another first for the Bavarian manufacturer. Boring out the block by 1mm increased the capacity of the well-tried overhead-valve six to 1,971cc and raised maximum power to 50bhp in single-carburettor form as installed in the 326. Other noteworthy developments included hydraulic brakes and a four-speed gearbox with freewheel on 1st and 2nd gears enabling clutch-less gear changes, a particularly useful feature in city traffic.

Motor Sport tested a BMW 326 in 1937, and despite the car's relatively modest top speed of 75-80mph (120-129km/h) found that it could be "cruised up to this pace wherever conditions permit without sacrifice of economy or tune, and, as one has come to expect of all models of the marque, at such speeds engine and chassis are effortless and the coachwork unprotesting". It is hardly surprising that the 326 proved so successful, with almost 16,000 being sold up to 1941 when production ceased.

In the UK, BMWs were imported by AFN Ltd, owners of Frazer Nash, and the cars marketed as 'Frazer Nash-BMW'. First registered on 1st May 1938, 'JHX 332' retains its original engine, bodywork, and leather interior, which has a delightful patina of age. Owned in the 1960s/1970s by the family of Ted Walker (Feret Photographics), 'JHX 332' comes with an history file in which may be found a b/w

photograph of the car outside the Walkers' house in Dursley, Gloucestershire, taken circa 1971. The file also contains old MoT certificates dating back to 1993; an old-style buff logbook (1960s); various tax discs; and a V5C Registration Certificate.

In 2015, marque specialist Oliver Penney totally rebuilt the engine, the block being acid-cleaned and any worn parts replaced, and fitted a new 3.9:1 cw/p at the same time. Oliver Penney also sorted the suspension to restore the 326's fine handling characteristics; removed the gearbox and attended to the 3rd and 4th gear synchros; overhauled the brakes and steering rack. Four new tyres were also fitted at this time. The total spend including purchase of the car was approximately £85,000, and related correspondence and bills are on file. In short: everything that needed doing was done. Since the rebuild the BMW has completed various VSCC and other rallies including the RAC 1,000-mile Trial in 2015. This wonderfully original BMW 326, offered from a significant private collection is ready to use and enjoy.

Bonhams 1793

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