
1945 GMC DUKW

Lot sold	USD 0 GBP 0 (listed)	Drive	RHD
Year of manufacture	1945	Condition	Used
Mileage	3 108 mi / 5 002 km	Location	
Gearbox	Manual	Exterior colour	Other
Lot number	201	Car type	Other

Description

"The DUKW was designed and developed to solve the problem of resupply to army units who had just performed an amphibious landing. Its name was derived from the manufacturing initials used by General Motors at the time; D designed in 1942, U utility, K all-wheel drive, W dual rear axles. Now colloquially known as a Duck, it was initially rejected by the combined armed services. However, when a United States Coast Guard patrol ran aground on a sand bar near Provincetown, Massachusetts, an experimental DUKW that happened to be in the area had no trouble in rescuing the seven stranded Coast Guardsmen when more conventional craft had been prevented from doing so. The military opposition to the DUKW soon melted.

This General Motors DUKW is one of the largest lots ever offered by Historics. Manufactured in 1945 it is one of the last 150 ever made.

This DUKW has only had two owners. You could say three, as the US government ordered them to be manufactured, but never took delivery. The first owner was the Tennessee Valley River Authority who purchased six or more in 1945. They fell out of use in the 1980s and Mr. Glyn Hewitt of Hewitt Marine purchased this one. He shipped it over in 1988 and added it to a pile of DUKWs in a field in Barrow on Soar, Leicestershire. Following a lengthy ordering delay the vendor took delivery in January 2000. Two Varta lorry batteries give 24 volt starting power and it was on the road but the petrol engine seized so Rex Ward of Reading did a diesel conversion in 2003, fitting a six-cylinder Bedford 330 diesel engine which, we are told, has proven to be reliable, starting first time, every time. He also put in air over hydraulic brakes, a marine synchromesh gearbox and new brake cylinders all round, this

made a much safer vehicle with much better braking. This DUKW has had two major mechanical overhauls, in January 2000 and May 2012. Both by DUKW specialist Rex Ward of Reading. Engine and drive train accessories re-newed or repaired as necessary. It is unusual to find a DUKW in such good order and with as many original features as are displayed on GSL 629, these include an original kedge anchor by Danforth Berkeley and the original Garwood Detroit winch with fitted wire, two US fuel cans on the rear deck, new three-part canvas, new metal (tyre) chock, original hinged passenger seat with original cushions, and a full set of canvas support irons and all original floor boarding in rear load area. Also in the rear loading area is a secure box containing gear oil, wheel brace, and a tin containing the bronze bungs which seal the bilge drain hole and the breather holes in the prop shaft outer housings. These are extremely rare, and when fitted are outside the underneath of the hull. It has the original bilge pump which works at an incredible 300 gallons a minute and also present are two good spare wheels with fitted tyres which have the seventeen good nuts for the removeable tyre retaining ring. There are two correct pattern front tyres which were imported from the USA at a cost of £900, four good rear tyres and a good spare on the rear deck. There are also six spare, part-worn, tyres which could be used for a display vehicle but not for road use. It should be noted that the DUKW tyre size is almost unique in American WWII vehicles.

Our 81 year old vendor tells us that he regularly takes the DUKW from its custom built barn to military vehicle days at Debach airfield near Ipswich and Rougham airfield near Bury St. Edmunds. He also says that the 100 mile round trips at 35mph are enough for him. Offered to auction with a V5C registration document and a comprehensive history file containing various bills receipts and photographs, this road ready DUKW is a real head turner and is offered with a sensible reserve. Potential buyers should note that GSL 629 has not been on the water for a number of years and should be fully inspected before doing so.

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