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British Motor Museum campaigns to fix OWL's wings!

Published: June 21, 2024

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Online version: <https://www.wheels-alive.co.uk/british-motor-museum-campaigns-to-fix-owls-wings/>



1899 Wolseley 3.5hp.



Campaign launched by The British Motor Museum to restore the leather-covered wings on their 1899 Wolseley...

They tell us:

(All words and images from The British Motor Museum).

The British Motor Museum has launched a campaign to fix the leather-covered wings of their 1899 Wolseley 3.5hp Voiturette to allow it to participate at the London to Brighton Veteran Car Run in November. The legendary 125-year-old historic vehicle needs to be restored and the Museum is asking for donations to raise £5,200 to complete the work this summer.

Affectionately known as 'OWL', the 1899 Wolseley 3.5hp Voiturette has participated in the famous London to Brighton Run a staggering 38 times with the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust. As such a regular entrant to the world's longest-running motoring event, OWL would be very much missed this year.

Following a visit by the Leather Conservation Centre, it's been confirmed that work is needed on all four of OWL's wings to secure and stabilise the original 1899 leather. Made in Birmingham, OWL was the first vehicle that Herbert Austin designed with four wheels. The same car was driven by Lord Austin himself in the Thousand Mile Trial of 1900 and won first prize in its class!

Catherine Stuart-Yapp at the British Motor Museum said "This vehicle is a fantastic example of motoring history and, as a charity, we need to raise significant funds to look after the collections. We are asking for support to restore OWL to its former glory and get it ready for the start line once again this year! We are so grateful to all our visitors, Members and supporters who enable us to continue to collect, conserve, share and inspire."

Its historical significance has long been recognised - OWL was exhibited in Britain's first ever motor museum back in 1912. It's now one of the oldest vehicles at the British Motor



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Museum, home of the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust. As an educational charity, the Trust's role is to collect, conserve, share and inspire. OWL's participation in the London to Brighton Veteran Car Run each year is an important part of this work - providing a unique opportunity to share the collection with the public and inspire the next generation.

As an independent charity, the Trust needs to generate substantial funding and relies on various income streams. These include ticket sales, charitable donations and commercial activity, all vital to the Museum's mission - to tell the story of Britain's motor industry, now and in the future.



'OWL' at the finish of the 2023 'London to Brighton'.



For more information please visit www.britishmotormuseum.co.uk/owl



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