

29th June 2009

RILEYS RUN RIOT AT BRIGHTWELLS

An extremely rare 1934 Riley MPH topped an impressive list of results at the Brightwells Classic Car Auction in Leominster on 24th June when it was sold for a record £214,500, some £30,000 over its top estimate. Bidders had travelled from Switzerland, Germany, Belgium and America to bid on the car, one of just 12 examples made, but it was finally knocked down to a private UK buyer, much to the delight of the many Riley devotees present who had feared that it would end up abroad.



The MPH was one of a dozen pre-war Rileys in the sale, many of them from the estate of Ivor Halbert, a Bristol-based engineer and collector who died earlier this year. A 1936 Riley Sprite from the same collection made £84,700, a 1935 Riley Imp made £61,600 and a 1934 Riley Kestrel 12/6 more than doubled its top estimate to make £41,800. A beautifully executed replica of an MPH made £57,200 and a replica Sprite made £46,200, while a replica Frazer-Nash BMW doubled its estimate to fetch £78,100.

In all some 150 cars and motorcycles came under the hammer of which 105 found new owners to give an impressive sale rate of 70% in an auction which grossed over £1.6 million. "It was our biggest sale to date and we were delighted with the result," said Brightwells classic car expert, James Dennison. "It proved once again that there is no shortage of money out there for rare and desirable machines that are correct and with good provenance. The prices achieved for the pre-war Rileys, in particular, were exceptionally high and have set new benchmarks for the make."

Other notable results included the £89,700 paid by a Dutch couple for a magnificent 1935 Bentley 3.5-litre Drophead Coupe and the £33,000 paid for a superb 1955 Austin-Healey 100/4 – the latter result proving that this four-cylinder model is now virtually as desirable as the later six-cylinder Healey 3000. A brace of superb Aston Martin DB 2/4 Mk Is also did well, a 1953 2.6-litre making £67,000 and a 1956 3-litre making £65,000, both these prices reflecting the huge gains that this model has made in recent years, dragged up on the coat-tails of the rapidly escalating DB4 and DB5.

Top condition MG cars always seem to do well at Brightwells and a superb 1935 MG PB made £27,700, a rare 1939 MG SA Saloon made £22,500 and a concours standard 1969 MGC Roadster made a very strong £17,000. Other British cars to do well included a lovely old 1954 Triumph TR2 at £14,100 and a barn find 1948 Bristol 400 at £15,800.

Among the German cars a very tidy 1978 Porsche 911 Turbo made £20,900, and a brace of very low mileage cars, a 1987 Porsche 924S and a 1980 Mercedes 450SLC made £6,400 and £11,700 respectively. Top seller amongst the motorcycles was a very rare 1931 Matchless Silver Hawk in good original condition which made £24,200, surely an auction record for the model.

To see all the results please visit www.brightwells.com or phone the office on 01568 611122. Brightwells' next auction is on 23rd September and entries are now being invited.

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Note to editors:

All the prices given above include the 10% buyer's premium.

For hi-res images of any of the vehicles, or for more information, please phone James Dennison on 01568 611122 or email classiccars@brightwells.com