

EVENTS/CAUSES

Bonhams puts vintage car passion on display with event sponsorship

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Entrant driving a Mercedes from 1904

By STAFF REPORTS

Auction house Bonhams is returning as the title sponsor of the Royal Automobile Club's annual run of vintage automobiles from London to the British seaside.

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The 2016 Bonhams London to Brighton Veteran Car Run, happening on Nov. 6, will honor the 130th anniversary of the Benz Patent Motorwagen, which was the world's first commercially available car. For Bonhams, this partnership enables it to highlight its passion for antique vehicles.

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The annual run from London's Hyde Park to Brighton commemorates the Emancipation Run held on Nov. 14, 1896. The original run celebrated the newly enacted Locomotives on the Highway Act, which raised the speed limit from 4 to 14mph.

Prior to the legislation, motorists needed to be preceded by a man waving a red flag, something that was abolished with the new law. This lowering of restrictions is celebrated at the annual event with the tearing of a red flag.

In order to enter, a car must date from before 1905. Along with Benz models, the organizers are expecting vintage vehicles from Adler, Bergmann, Daimler and Mercedes, among others.

2015 Bonhams London to Brighton Veteran Car Run

In recent years, as Bonhams became a title sponsor, the weekend kicks off with an auction of run-appropriate vehicles on Friday. Some come with an entry to the race, so the winning bidder can buy the car and then drive it on Sunday.

Adding to the genuine connection between race and sponsor, a number of Bonhams employees participate in the race, driving their own cars.

In addition to Bonhams, Harrods serves as the official partner of the event.

With record-breaking vintage car sales, a number of auction houses are stepping up their efforts around the automotive category.

Last year Sotheby's strengthened its efforts in the automotive sector with a new partnership with a collector car

auctioneer.

Sotheby's acquired a 25 percent stake in RM Auctions, which has since been known as RM Sotheby's. High-end automobiles represent a \$2 billion market, providing both parties with strong potential as they prepare for their first joint sale ([see story](#)).

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