



### **Blue Bird returns to Pendine for anniversary record run**

This year celebrates the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sir Malcolm Campbell achieving a new World Land Speed record of 150mph at Pendine Sands, South Wales, in his 350hp Sunbeam. Ninety years to the day, the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu, is marking the occasion with a commemorative low-speed demonstration run with the Sunbeam, back at Pendine Sands. The run will take place at 4pm on 21 July, starting from the area of the beach adjacent to the Pendine Museum of Speed.

The car will be driven by Sir Malcolm's grandson, Don Wales, himself a Land Speed Record holder. In addition to performing the run, he and the museum team will be aiming to re-create two iconic pictures from the original run.

Don said: 'I am really looking forward to driving the 350hp Sunbeam, which is the car that gave my grandfather his first Land Speed Record. I cannot believe that I will get this fantastic opportunity to drive this iconic machine on Pendine. It will also be fun to dress in costume to look as my grandfather did in the pictures taken ninety years ago.'

"My grandfather was a remarkable man and for us to remember him and honour some of his achievements in this way will be very humbling. I really must thank Beaulieu for this opportunity and for all the hard work the restoration team have done on her.'

The car was the brainchild of Sunbeam's chief engineer and racing team manager, Louis Coatalen, and was constructed at the company's works in Wolverhampton during 1919 and early 1920. Its power came from a modified 18.322 litre V12 modified Manitou Arab aero engine, a type used on naval seaplanes.

The Sunbeam, renamed Blue Bird by Campbell, holds three World Land Speed Records, the first achieved by Kenelm Lee Guinness at Brooklands in 1922 with a speed of 133.75mph. Campbell then purchased the car, had it painted in his distinctive colour scheme and in September 1924 achieved a new record speed of 146.16mph at Pendine, raising it the following year to 150.76mph.

Campbell then sold the Sunbeam and it passed through a number of owners and was in a poor condition when purchased by Lord Montagu in 1957, for his ever expanding motor museum. It was restored to working order and when not on display, it was taken to motoring venues in the UK, Europe and as far afield as South Africa. Its last outing was at the British Automobile Racing Club Festival of Motoring at Goodwood in July 1962 when Lord Montagu took it on a 3-lap demonstration run and Donald Campbell did a lap d'Honneur.

During a test fire-up in 1993 to assess the car's condition, disaster struck when a blocked oil way in the engine caused it to seize and 'throw a rod'. For several years after that, the car was on display in the museum with a very visible hole in its engine where the piston and con-rod had exited.

In January 2014, following a complete mechanical rebuild undertaken by the National Motor Museum's workshop team over a period of many years, the Sunbeam was fired-up again - the first time it had been heard in public in over 50 years. The following month it was a star of the show at Retromobile, Paris and was also run at the 2014 Goodwood Festival of Speed.

Doug Hill, the National Motor Museum's Manager and Chief Engineer said: "We are delighted to be able to celebrate such an amazing achievement with this historic motorcar, 90 years to the day after Malcolm Campbell achieved 150mph with it on the same stretch of sand. Having spent over 2,000 hours on the engine alone, this low speed commemorative demonstration run is a fitting tribute both to the team of engineers at the Museum involved in its restoration and to the original creators of the car. It is also a tribute to Lord Montagu who had the foresight to preserve this iconic motorcar and to the courage and determination of Malcolm Campbell."

Supporting the run will be the 1933 aero-engined Napier Railton Special, which holds the all-time lap record of 143.44mph at Brooklands. The Napier-Railton has its own unique history at Pendine, having been the star (alongside James Mason and Ava Gardner) of the 1951 movie *Pandora & The Flying Dutchman*. In the film, the car is used for an attempt on the Land Speed Record, for which the action sequences (culminating in the car being driven into the sea to quench an engine fire) were filmed on Pendine Sands during 1950. In recent months, a film researcher has established that amongst the 'extras' in the crowd scenes for these sequences was the famed Welsh poet, Dylan Thomas. Owned by the Brooklands Museum since 1977, the Napier-Railton will also run at Pendine, with Museum Director & CEO, Allan Winn, in the driving seat.

***Editors are invited to send a representative to Pendine to cover the event for film, photo and interview opportunities. For further information, press accreditation or to interview Don Wales please contact:***

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**National Motor Museum:** The world famous National Motor Museum houses a collection of over 250 vehicles telling the story of motoring on the roads of Britain from the dawn of motoring to the present day. The 350hp Sunbeam is one of four Land Speed Record cars on show in a permanent display *For Britain & For The Hell Of it*, opened in 2014, which also features the 1,000hp Sunbeam, the Irving-Napier Special 'Golden Arrow' and Donald Campbell's Bluebird CN7. Opened by Sir Stirling Moss in March, two new motor sport display areas in the museum, *Grand Prix Greats* and *Road, Race and Rally*, feature F1, rallying, trials and drag racing exhibits, as well as clothing, trophies, photographs, film and video, telling the story of both track and road racing from its beginnings to the present day.

In addition to its vehicle collection the National Motor Museum Trust holds a Motoring Objects collection containing more than 42,000 items, a Photographic Collection with over one million images and a Film & Video Library holding footage from major car manufacturers and many other sources. The Motoring Reference Library, one of the largest resources of its type anywhere in the world, holds books, workshop manuals, handbooks sales material and periodicals from the pioneering days to the present. [www.thenationalmotormuseum.org.uk](http://www.thenationalmotormuseum.org.uk)

**Brooklands Museum** is on the site of the world's first purpose-built motor racing circuit in Weybridge, Surrey which opened to the public in June 1907. More than a great sporting arena, Brooklands is the birthplace of British motorsport and aviation, home of Concorde and the site of many engineering and technological achievements throughout eight decades of the 20th century. The Museum displays a wide range of Brooklands-related motoring and aviation exhibits ranging from giant racing cars, motorcycles and bicycles to an unparalleled collection of Hawker and Vickers/ BAC-built aircraft, including the Second World War Wellington Bomber, Viking, Varsity, Viscount, Vanguard, VC10, BAC One-Eleven and the only Concorde with public access in South East England. With a year round programme of events that includes car club visits (often with Test Hill in action), Auto Italia Italian Car Day, The Brooklands Double Twelve Motorsport Festival, aviation events and car rides on weekdays during school holidays, the Museum is embarking on a major Re-Engineering project that has secured £4.7M of Lottery Funding towards restoring and relocating the WWII aircraft hangar and re-joining the original Finishing Straight of the race track due to be completed in autumn 2016. [www.brooklandsmuseum.com](http://www.brooklandsmuseum.com)

**About Don Wales:** Wales, who is the nephew of Donald Campbell CBE and Grandson of Sir Malcolm Campbell, has been maintaining the Campbell record-breaking tradition since establishing the UK National Land Speed Record for an electric car in May 1998 at a speed of 116mph. In 2000 Don returned with Bluebird electric to Pendine Sands and set a two way average of 137mph, with a peak speed of over 160mph – a national record he maintained for 12 years.

In 2009 working alongside the British Steam Car Team Don achieved a World Land Speed Record for a steam powered car of 148mph, a record previously set in 1906 by Fred Marriott in a Stanley steam car. In 2010 he returned to Pendine Sands and set the World Lawn Mower Record with a speed of 87mph. Don currently holds a World Land Speed Record, two American National records and eight UK National records. It is his ambition to be the first to exceed 500mph in an electric car. [www.donwales.co.uk](http://www.donwales.co.uk)