World Land Speed Record breaker Sunbeam 1000hp restoration nears completion before start of centenary celebrations

Published: June 5, 2026

Author:

Online version:

https://www.wheels-alive.co.uk/world-land-speed-record-breaker-sunbeam-1000hp-restoration-nears-completion-before-start-of-centenary-celebrations/



Lowering restored second engine into Sunbeam 1000hp chassis in the National Motor Museum.

The National Motor Museum at Beaulieu tells us...

(All words and photographs from The Museum).

The second engine of World Land Speed Record breaker Sunbeam 1000hp has been completed, tested and lowered back into its chassis in the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu.

The race has been on to complete the restoration before Sunbeam is shipped to America for celebratory appearances, before its planned centenary run on the anniversary of breaking the 200mph record at Daytona.

Partners have helped restore parts to finish the second engine, with the refurbishment of four magnetos by expert Alan Fairbrother at Dibden Purlieu, casings and rotors for the airstart mechanism by A.J. Glew and specialist pipework from J&T Tubes.

All of the parts have been fitted by National Motor Museum engineers in their reassembly of the colossal 22.5 litre Matabele V12 aero engine, before undertaking a series of test start-ups. See work on the rebuild here: https://youtu.be/SPyi_eYI1S4

The front engine has now been reunited with Sunbeam's chassis in the museum, joining the rear restored engine which was completed last year. The challenge in the restoration's final stage is to synchronise both engines – which run in opposite directions – and run them together again for the first time in nearly a century.

National Motor Museum Senior Engineer Ian Stanfield said: "There are still hurdles to overcome in our attempt to get both engines working in harmony. Though whatever happens, we are working to the final deadline for Sunbeam to be shipped to America at the end of June."

As Sunbeam's chassis is nearly 25 ft long with a 75 ft turning circle, a dolly has had to be made to fit under its rear end to help manoeuvre it.

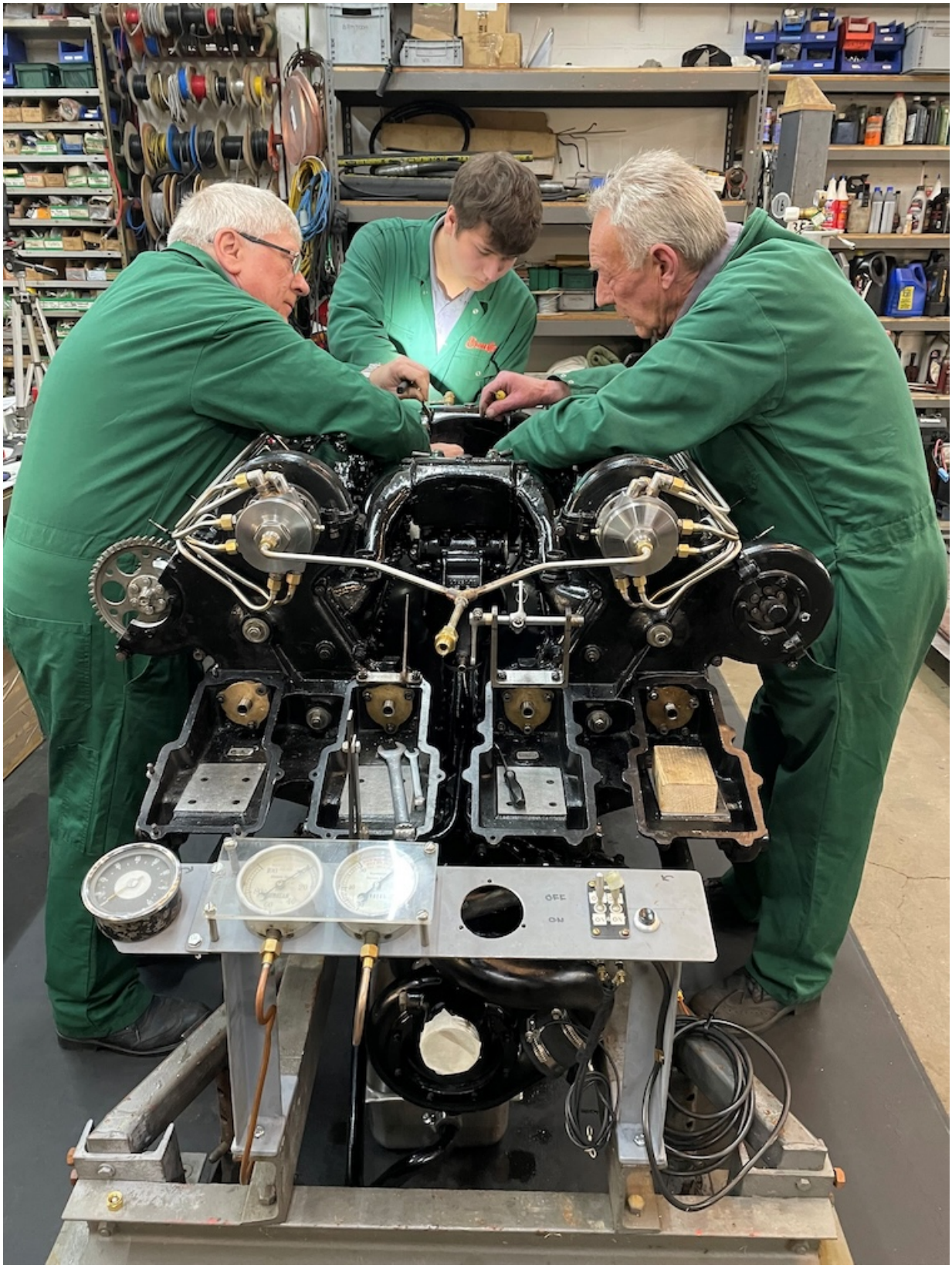
The original air ducts need to be re-fitted to scoop air into Sunbeam's body and cool its radiators during the planned low-speed centenary run at Daytona in March 2027, to celebrate the World Land Speed Record set on the beach by Sir Henry Segrave.



Workshop engineer Mitch Caws works on parts of Sunbeam’s second engine laid out in the National Motor Museum workshop.



Apprentice Aaron Burton with Sunbeam’s second restored engine in the National Motor Museum workshop.


OFF
ON

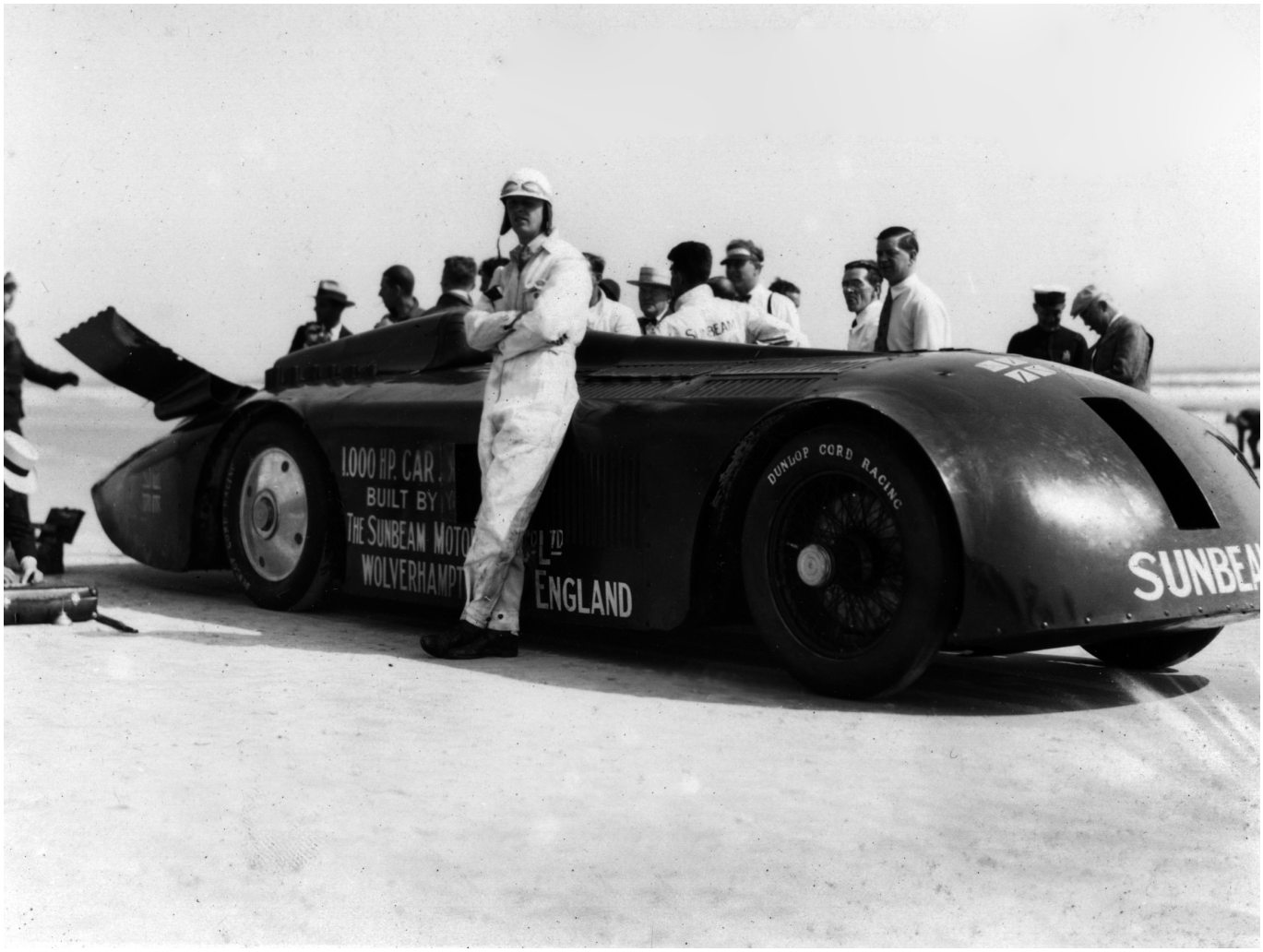
Senior Engineer Ian Stanfield (left), apprentice Aaron Burton and volunteer Phil Hibbard work on Sunbeam's second engine ready for testing.



National Motor Museum Chief Engineer Doug Hill (left) and Senior Engineer Ian Stanfield (centre) fit second restored engine in Sunbeam 1000hp.

Though Sunbeam's first public appearance will be at Pebble Beach Concours d' Elegance in California, when it takes centre stage at the prestigious motoring event in August.

Funds are still needed to help see this important part of World Land Speed Record history displayed and run again. To make a donation online see: https://nationalmotormuseum.org.uk/sunbeam-1000hp-restoration-campaign/.



Major Henry Segrave with Sunbeam 1000hp at Daytona Beach in Florida.