



## 1898 BENZ VELO COMFORTABLE

### *Some Interesting Facts...*

- 1 The Benz model Velociped or "Velo" was produced between 1894 and 1901 at the Benz factory in Mannheim, Germany and became the world's first series production car with over 1,200 produced.
- 2 This particular Benz has been recognised as Ireland's first car and was originally purchased by Dr John Colahan, a medical doctor and engineer, who owned The Grand Hotel in Malahide. In March 1899 a Mr Henry Vernon placed a £50 bet with Dr Colahan that he could not drive his Benz car from Blackrock in Dublin to Kilbeggan, a distance of 130 miles, in under 12 hours. Dr Colahan set out from the police station in Blackrock recorded by the sergeant in charge at 8.40am and arrived back again in Blackrock in 11 hours and consequently won the bet.
- 3 In 1907, it was purchased in poor condition, by Dick Hughes of Mullinahone Co. Tipperary, where it lay on a farm for almost 80 years before being rescued by Denis Dowdall in November 1984, when it was in a completely derelict state. Denis then commenced a restoration project that was completed on the 24th February 1986 just in time for an appearance on the RTE "*Late Late Show*" the next day. It then went on display on the Mercedes-Benz stand at the Irish Motor Show in the RDS.
- 4 In celebration of the centenary year of the Motor Car, it was entered in the world famous "*London to Brighton Run*". The car left Hyde Park in Central London, with Denis Dowdall at the wheel, on a November morning at 8.15am and after an eventful and successful journey of 60 miles, arrived safely on Brighton Pier.
- 5 The car's significance was also recognised by An Post and appeared on the 28p stamp in May 1989.
- 6 The Velo Comfortable is powered by a single horizontal cylinder, four-stroke petrol engine developing 3.5 hp at 800 rpm. Total displacement is 1,045 cc. It has a surface carburettor. The transmission is by two belts to a countershaft with differential gear and by chains to the rear wheels. The brakes are foot operated to brake bands on the rear wheels and also by a hand lever to spoon brakes on the rear tyres. Top speed is 16 mph and fuel consumption is 20 mpg.