

Liz Bligh's 1936 Austin 10 Conway Cabriolet.

Purchased from new by her Grandfather, Mr Hall, at the end of 1936, the car was sold to him by Burton & Deakin's Garage in Orpington, Kent for the princely sum of £182.10s.0d. Powered by a 1125cc 4 cylinder side-valve engine with a 4-speed manual transmission, this car could reach a top speed of 60 mph.

Mr Hall never cleaned the car, but used it regularly until his death in 1963. He believed that the grime offered excellent protection against the elements. This theory also ensured that the protective surface on the paint was not worn away. Could this explain the cars remarkable state of preservation? It is without doubt that his heavy smoking contributed to the preservation of the interior, the smoky environment ensuring a moth-free zone!

Introduced in April 1932, the Austin 10 admirably filled the gap between the 7hp range and the recently introduced Light 12/6. Instantly well received, the '10' went on to become a best-seller and was progressively developed with a model of this horsepower rating being a mainstay in Austin catalogues until 1947.

August 1936 was to see the introduction of the new Cambridge Series, which was to take Austin years ahead virtually overnight. With styling very much in the trans-Atlantic idiom, this new model was also available as a cabriolet version, designated 'Conway'. Whereas the earlier cabriolet had been a two door design, the new car was in profile identical to the Cambridge saloon and consequently interior accommodation was far lighter and airier, with minimal blind spots.

Liz inherited the car and continued to run it until 1989 when it went off the road. It is currently undergoing a restoration with a view to getting it back on the road soon

Today, the Conway Cabriolet is amongst the rarest of Austin's open models, with only a small number of survivors recorded. An extremely attractive and practical pre-war family car, the Austin 10 benefits from enthusiastic club support and good spares availability.

