



*WESSEX VEHICLE
PRESERVATION CLUB*
FOUNDED 1971



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'WESSEX WAYS' FEBRUARY 2020

VEHICLE OF THE MONTH

The **Austin Cambridge** (sold as **A40**, **A50**, **A55**, and **A60**) is a motor car range produced by the Austin Motor Company, in several generations, from September 1954 through to 1971 as cars and to 1973 as light commercials. It replaced the A40 Somerset and was entirely new, with modern unibody construction. The range had two basic body styles with the A40, A50, and early A55 using a traditional rounded shape and later A55 Mark IIs and A60s using Pininfarina styling.

The A40 number was re-used on a smaller car (the Austin A40 Farina) from 1958 to 1968, and the Cambridge name had previously been used to designate one of the available body styles on the pre-war 10 hp range.

The Austin Cambridge was initially offered only with a four-passenger, four-door saloon body, although a few pre-production two-door models were also made. It had a modern body design with integrated wings and a full-width grille. Independent suspension was provided at the front by coil springs and wishbones while a live axle with anti-roll bar was retained at the rear.

A van derivative introduced in November 1956 and a coupé utility (pick up) introduced in May 1957 and remained available until 1974, some three years after the demise of the cars on which they had been based.

A40 CAMBRIDGE

A 1.2-litre straight-four pushrod engine B-Series engine based on the one used in the previous Austin Somerset (although sharing no parts) powered the new Austin Cambridge. A maximum power output of 42 bhp (31 kW) was claimed: power was transmitted to the wheels by means of a four-speed gear box controlled with a column-mounted lever.

The A40 Cambridge was intended to be available in both two-door saloon and four-door saloon variants; however, the two-door body style did not reach production.

Only 30,666 A40 Cambridge models were produced. After the A40 Cambridge was dropped early in 1957, the A40 name was re-used on the smaller A40 Farina, though that car, the 'Countryman' version of which was an early example of a hatchback, was neither a replacement nor much related to the A40 Cambridge.



A50 CAMBRIDGE

Also introduced in September 1954, and with a body identical to that of the A40 Cambridge, was the A50 Cambridge which used a new 1.5-litre (1,489 cc) B-Series four-cylinder engine with single Zenith carburettor which was good for 50 hp (37 kW). It sold better and remained in production through to 1957 with 114,867 A50s being produced.

The deluxe version had a heater, leather seat facings, carpets replacing the standard rubber matting, armrests on the doors, twin-tone horns, a passenger sun visor, and some extra chrome, including overriders.

Technical advances in the A50 Cambridge included an optional Borg-Warner overdrive unit for the top three (of four) gears. A semi-automatic transmission (branded "manumatic" and providing pedal-free clutch operation) was also offered, but it was unpopular with buyers.

A deluxe version tested by *The Motor* magazine in 1955, had a top speed of 73.6 mph (118.4 km/h) and could accelerate from 0–60 mph (97 km/h) in 28.8 seconds. A fuel consumption of 28.0 miles per imperial gallon (10.1 L/100 km; 23.3 mpg-US) was recorded. The test car cost £720 including taxes.

A55 CAMBRIDGE

The A55 Cambridge Mark II, known as the first "Farina" model because of its Pininfarina design, was produced from 1959 through to 1961. It was a rebadged Morris Oxford and retained the 1.5 litre B-Series engine, now with an SU carburettor, and producing 55 bhp (41 kW) at 4,350 rpm.

The interior had individual leather trimmed seats in front spaced closely together to allow a central passenger to be carried. The gear change was either on the column or floor-mounted and the handbrake lever between the driver's seat and the door. Other improvements highlighted at the time included an enlarged luggage compartment with counterbalanced lid and increased elbow width on both front and rear seats.^[20] A heater could be fitted as an option.

A "Countryman" estate model appeared in 1960. The Austin Cambridge estates was called the "Countryman". (Morris Oxford Estates were called "Travellers".) A55 Mark II and A60 estates were identical from the windscreen back; the later models never got the reduced rear fins and modified rear lights of the A60 saloons.

The engineering of the car was conventional with coil sprung independent front suspension and a live axle at the rear with semi elliptic leaf springs. The braking used a Girling system with 9 in (229 mm) drums all round.

A total of 149,994 were built.

A MkII A55 was tested by *The Motor* magazine in 1959 had a top speed of 75.5 mph (121.5 km/h) and could accelerate from 0–60 mph (97 km/h) in 24.5 seconds. A fuel consumption of 31.0 miles per imperial gallon (9.1 L/100 km; 25.8 mpg-US) was recorded. The test car cost £878 including taxes of £293.



A60 CAMBRIDGE

An upgraded Cambridge model, now called the A60, was introduced in October 1961. It included a new 1.6-litre version of the B-Series straight-four engine which had first been used in the MGA. Power is 61 hp (45 kW) at 4500 rpm. Modified styling included side chrome stripes – some models with contrasting colour infills – and reduced fins on the rear wings. The style continued to be known as "Farina". This body covered a chassis that was slightly longer in wheelbase and wider in track than the A55. This allowed three people to be accommodated on the rear seat. Anti-roll bars were added to both front and rear suspension. An estate version with the petrol engine, called the Countryman, was also offered. The A60 from 1966 was offered with many optional extras to keep up with increasing competition from the Continent and Japan.

A diesel version was introduced in 1961 for export cars and was available in the UK from 1962. Early manual models had the option of column gear change. The Borg Warner three-speed Type 35 automatic transmission was an option, the first British car to be fitted with this type, with the selector on the steering column. A 1.5-litre diesel option, mainly for the taxi trade, was introduced in November 1962. With only 40 hp (30 kW), top speed was limited to 110 km/h (68 mph).

The A60 Cambridge sold well, with 276,534 being built before production finally ended in 1969. Its intended successor, the front-wheel-drive Austin 1800 of 1964, did not affect sales, so Cambridge production was continued until 1969 at the Morris plant at Cowley when the Austin Maxi took over production and the Morris Oxford version continued in production until 1971, when the Morris Marina was launched.

Austin A60 saloons assembled in Ireland by Brittain Smith of Portobello, Dublin 2 were identifiable by the use of Morris Oxford series VI tail-lights. The last of these were produced in 1970, and some were registered in 1971. The A60 Cambridge was effectively replaced by the Austin Maxi hatchback in April 1969, while the Oxford continued until early 1971, when it was replaced by the Morris Marina.

Both a manual and automatic version of the A60 were tested by *The Motor* magazine in 1961. The manual had a top speed of 80.4 mph (129.4 km/h) and could accelerate from 0–60 mph (97 km/h) in 19.8 seconds. A touring fuel consumption of 25.1 miles per imperial gallon (11.3 L/100 km; 20.9 mpg-US) was recorded. The test car cost £883 including taxes of £278. The automatic was slightly slower, with a top speed of 77.9 mph (125.4 km/h) and acceleration from 0–60 mph (97 km/h) in 24.9 seconds. A touring fuel consumption of 28.9 miles per imperial gallon (9.8 L/100 km; 24.1 mpg-US) was recorded. The car cost £982 including taxes of £309.



THE NEWSLETTER

AS YOU CAN SEE THE ARTICLES ARE NOT UP TO THE USUAL STANDARD SET BY CHRIS PACEY. AS I HAVE HAD TO STEP IN AND PRODUCE THE NEWSLETTER ON A TEMPORARY BASIS I WOULD APPRECIATE ANY HELP IN THE FORM OF ARTICLES AND ADVICE. PLEASE CONTACT ME BY EMAIL AT djones49@talktalk.net.

DENNIS JONES.

CHAIRMANS CHATTER.

Hi Everyone,

First thing is to say sorry for missing last month's meeting, we had the choice of an evening out with the family enjoying a meal or coming to the Club so it was a no brainer.

Your committee are trying to find some different things to do regarding the Club so if anything new comes along your support would be welcome,

The eagle eyed of you will have noticed a change of heading on the Wessex Ways and are possibly wondering why, the reason is the editor of many years has had to give up the role for the foreseeable future, I know that he was in hospital before Christmas but I am not sure if there is a connection between the two, if I hear any news I will pass it on, well that's me done for now, any ideas for future events pass them on, make sure you all drive and ride with care.

VAL BAKER.

It is with deep regret that I have to let you all know that Val sadly passed away, as many of you know Val came to the rescue of the Club when we were in deep financial woes after a certain treasurer left us in the mire, so in that respect we owed her a great deal. Val had a good sense of humour and we often shared the odd joke, our thoughts are with Colin and the family at this sad time and all of us pass on our condolences to them all, Val will be sadly missed.

CREAM TEA

I have found a different venue for this year's Cream Tea run it will be on Sunday June 28th, all the details and an entry form will appear shortly. So write down the date so that you don't miss it.

Doug.

VE DAY 8TH MAY 2020

We have received the following two invitations for events being held on VE day. If you are interested then please communicate with the appropriate organiser :-

We are holding an event on the 8th May (VE Day) in Poole to celebrate the people and the town's role in WW2. Together with the Royal British Legion we are having a 40's theme with bunting down the High Street, live singers singing songs of the period, information boards about the roles taken and we hope vehicles, military and private to display along the Quay as well as parades down the High Street and along the Quay. We would love for you and your members to attend and help to create the feel of the time for the veterans. I would welcome it if someone could contact me to see if this would work with your members. Thanks Mike Pearce chairman@societyforpoole.org

We are looking for some pre-war cars for our Village Celebration of VE Day on the 8th of May in Fontwell Magna. We are hoping to have a small car display about 6-8 cars of the era and we have a small area of hard-standing next to St Andrews Church put aside. Rob has rounded up 4 cars so far and possibly an Army Truck. We have arranged for Church Street to be closed from 9 am to 6 pm that day for a Street Fair and entertainment and we are working very much to a wartime theme with the opportunity for fancy dress. The stalls and exhibitions will be open from 11 am to 3.30 pm but as we have to maintain emergency vehicle access it will be possible for cars being shown to arrive after 9 am. If any of your members would be interested in showing a car from the wartime era please get in touch. Best wishes Lisa lisa.ledruillenec@gmail.com

CHRISTMAS 2020

Yes I know we have only just got over the last one! However, we have had mixed feedback about the Bloxworth Christmas Dinner that was held in December. In light of this, your committee would like to suggest a couple of alternatives for this year's festivities. This is your club, so please let us have your opinion and we can get the ball rolling.

The suggestions are :-

Christmas Dinner at Bloxworth Village Hall - usually held on a Saturday in December at an approximate cost of £18 per head.

Dinner Dance at a Bournemouth Hotel – for example a week day in December at The Elstead Hotel, 3 course meal and disco at approximately £25 per head.

Christmas Dinner at Cobham Sports Club – to be held on Tuesday 8th December in lieu of the December club night, 3 course meal at approximately £22 per head.

Please could you complete a voting form at Club night, call me or email me at familypalmer29@hotmail.com with your preference.

Thank you, Janet.

Christmas Dinner Voting Form – Please circle preference

- ⑩ BLOXWORTH VILLAGE HALL
- ⑩ BOURNEMOUTH HOTEL
- ⑩ COBHAM SPORTS CLUB

JOKES

So there's this snail, and he's really tired of being slow, so he goes to the nearest Renault dealer and buys one. He has them paint a big red S on the side, (for Snail) so everyone will see him and, marveling at his new speedier lifestyle, exclaim "Sacré bleu! Look at that S-car-go!"

I was walking down the street today when a breakdown truck pulled up alongside me and said, "Excuse me, I'm looking for the accident site involving a van carrying a load of cutlery."

"No problem," I said. "Go straight down this road for 1 mile, then take the first left, and when you get to the fork in the road you're there."

CALENDAR OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

February 11th – Quiz Night – bring your brains with you please.

March 10th – Bingo Night – prizes to be won !

April 14th – Speaker :- Paul Stickler on 'The Kray Twins'.

May 12th – Noggin and Natter.

June 9th – 'Cars and Bikes in the Field' Night – more prizes.

June 28th – Cream Tea Run.