

Dear David

Re: Austin Westminster OGF 138E

I am delighted that the car has found a good home with someone who appreciates a car like this. How did you come to own it?

First the history of the car intertwined with a bit of my family history. My Uncle Frederick (Fred) Sergent owned Fairhaven Hotel in Shanklin, I.O.W and later Swiss Cottage Hotel (my Aunt Madeleine, Fred's wife was Swiss).

Uncle Fred bought the car on the I.O.W. I don't know anything about the history of the car prior to its purchase or even when Fred purchased the car. (1971 seems about right). I don't believe he owned it from new. Being an Hotelier Uncle Fred was well known on the Island so presumably the car was purchased from a business contact. Most 'Island' cars have low mileage. Uncle Fred used the car until his death in 1979. The car then passed to Aunt Madeleine who rarely used the car. The car's registration OGF (Out Goes Fred) brought back too many memories so I was persuaded by her to buy the car in 1983, on a visit to the Island, and drove it back to Essex. As far as I know that was the first time the car had left the I.O.W.

Soon after buying the car we drove it on a holiday to Aldborough in Suffolk and the car went perfectly – a pleasure to sit in the big plush leather seats!

I had thoughts about restoring the car myself and put it in a friend's garage in Southend. I got as far as identifying a Company to provide replacement front wings (I.O.W. mud was beginning to rot the wheel arches and near the front door pillars). Work commitments meant I couldn't take this any further and the car stayed garaged and unused until 2006 when the garage space was needed. I sold it that year to Yesteryear Classics, 425 Sutton Road, Southend, Essex. (01702 465900) The showroom when we were last in the area appears to be empty, so the business may no longer be trading. However, there appears to be a connected business next door called Bygone Properties and Restorations Limited (01702 616060) and they may be able to give you more information if you care to contact them.

I may possibly have some documentation tucked away deep in my filing system about the car but currently cannot think where it may be. If and when I find anything I will let you know.

In the meantime, it would be awfully kind of you if you could send me a photo as you suggested.

Kind regards