

Featured Car

In 1930, the Auburn provided more for your money than most, if not all, other Full Classics[®]

Ken Kenewell's Series 8-125 phaeton was the make's most expensive at \$1,695 list price

By Les Jackson

The year was 1930, and the stock market had crashed only months before. Auburn, being run and controlled by Errett Lobban Cord lost sales for the year from a very successful 1929, but was still prosperous and produced what proved to be the third most successful year in the make's history (the following year was the best and the prior one the second best). Production in 1930 was 12,985 cars.

Cord had started as the general manager in 1924 with an option to buy controlling interest in the company which he did. The company started auto manufacturing in 1900 when 8 cars were made.

By 1930 many Auburns featured two tone paint, with a sweeping style line from the front of the nose to the sides of the car below the windows, an attraction that was introduced in 1926.

Other interesting features made the Auburn one of the best buys among what we now consider Full Classics[®]. It offered the Bijur lubrication system, hydraulic four wheel brakes, Lovejoy hydraulic shock absorbers and semi-elliptic suspension front and back



and a 125 horsepower engine. And it was still a medium priced car in 1930. The engine was made by Lycoming, one of the Cord companies.

Ken Kenewell's Auburn is variously called a phaeton and a convertible sedan, which is probably a better term because it has roll-up windows instead of side curtains. It is a Senior 2506 car as designated by CCCA.

The original list price was \$1,695, the most expensive car Auburn sold in 1930. Other body styles offered were the cabriolet, sedan and sport sedan in each of the three different series. They were the 6 cylinder non-classic, the 8 cylinder 95 horsepower Classic and the 8 cylinder 125 horsepower Classic (Ken's car is in this series.)

The engine had a 3¼ inch bore and 4½ inch stroke. Displacement was 298.6 cubic inches.

After the highly successful year of 1931, Auburn production started a steady decline with a big drop in 1936 when only 1,263 were produced. That was the last year for the Auburn make.



Above: The interior of Ken Kenewell's 1930 Auburn is red, in a shade very similar to that of the exterior of the car. Note that the doors are of the so-called "suicide" variety as was common in that era. On the right, the instrument panel is in the center of the dash in the 1930 Auburn. Note that the dash is also red. Opposite page: The 1930 Auburn at McDowell Mountain Park at the Steak Fry in April, 2007.

Ken Kenewell's first Full Classic[®] was his 1930 Auburn convertible sedan

Ken Kenewell has owned a number of Full Classics[®] over the years, but he has only one now, the 1930 Auburn convertible sedan which was the first Classic he purchased in 1971.



Ken bought the car from the late Bob Adams of Wisconsin.

He has the history of the 13 prior owners dating back to the original one, Peter Nester, who allegedly was running a speakeasy in 1930 when he got the car.

All of the prior owners had trouble getting the car to shift properly, which may explain why there were so many prior owners. Ken got into the transmission and fixed the problem which was related to the selector in the tranny. He says it shifts great now. He has put many miles on the car, but it only has about 60,000 in total. For many years he drove it to the Auburn meet in Indiana.

With a high speed rear end and easy shifting, he says the car "drives like a dream."

When Ken got the car it had a white top and white-walls. Now the top is black and the tires are black-walls.

Ken recently returned from a 2,000 mile trip in Alaska in his Model T Ford (nc).



At right are the two open-grate step plates on the running board to assist passengers into the four door car. Note the light between the front and rear doors. Below left: The steering wheel is silver-gray, but most of the interior of the Phaeton/convertible sedan is red. The shift is floor mounted as in all cars of that era. Below right: The wheel cover/hub cap in the middle of the red spoke wheels.



Auburn Full Classics®

Not all Auburns in the Classic era are recognized by CCCA.

The ones that are: all 8 and 12 cylinder models 1925 through 1936 (the last year of Auburn's production).

This means that the 6 cylinder cars of 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928 (first and second series), 1929, 1930, 1934, 1935 and 1936 are non classics. All Auburns in 1931 were 8 cylinders. All in 1932 and 1933 were either 8 or 12 cylinders. The last V12's were 1934's which were essentially the same as 1933 models.

By the last Auburn year, 1936, prices of six cylinder cars varied from \$745 to \$1,182. The 8 cylinder cars varied in price from \$995 for the 2 door brougham to \$1,275 for the phaeton.

