

Broome's Garage

The Conway Garage was situated five hundred yards from "Fighting Cocks" on the Wolverhampton-Dudley Road. It was opened in 1936 by Alexander Broome - Alec to his friends. He gave the garage the name 'Conway' after his favourite spot for weekend breaks. On most Fridays, as soon as Alec finished work, he and his wife Gwen would set off for Wales in his beloved Sunbeam car.

The building, a timber asbestos shed, cost Alec £350.00, and was erected on spare land in front of the couple's bungalow.

Alec was born in nearby Poplar Street. In 1919 he was apprenticed to the Sunbeam Motor Company in Wolverhampton as a motor mechanic. Here he quickly proved himself a reliable and skilled worker. As a result, he was soon transferred to Sunbeam's prestigious Experimental Department, rising to be one of its leading mechanics.

In the 1920s Alec and the rest of the Sunbeam team travelled to Grand Prix and other race meetings in Britain and throughout Europe. On the walls of the garage there are framed pictures of the racing cars he helped to maintain.

Sunbeam thought so highly of Alec that they loaned him out to Sir Malcolm Campbell, the most famous racing car driver of his day. Alec was also one of the seven

engineers who travelled to Daytona USA in 1927 with the Sunbeam 1000hp car known as 'The Mystery' or 'The Slug', the first to exceed 200 miles per hour, which it did breaking the Land Speed Record at the same time.

The car on display was one of Alec's own, purchased in the mid-fifties - a 1932 sixteen horsepower Sportsman Fixed Head coupe which he owned and ran till the late 1970s. Sadly in the 1980s Alec became partially blind and was unable to continue driving.

Some of the 'accessories' which drivers needed to purchase from the garage, along with their petrol, are on display.

Much of Alec's time was spent changing tyres, mending punctures and carrying out mechanical repairs. His wife would help him most days on the petrol pumps.

Broome's Garage continued in business until the 1970s.