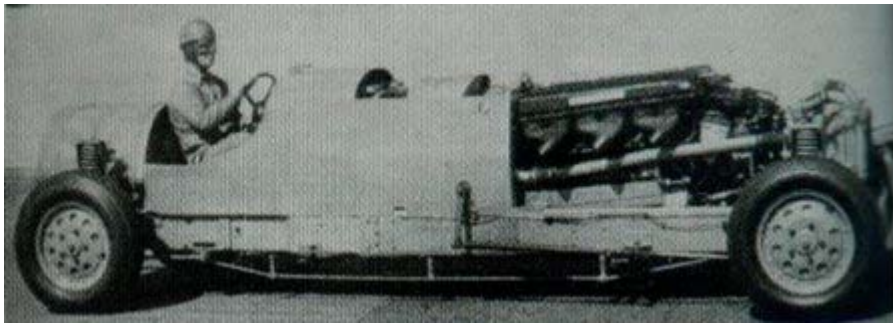




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The Daimler Fighting Vehicles Project – Part H
Oddities and Oddballs
Replicas & Other vehicles

The Worlds fastest Dingo (extract from the www.worthingherald.co.uk)

“THE Swandean Spitfire Special was an outrageous car. It had the biggest and most powerful engine anybody had ever seen in a road-going car up to that time – a 27-litre supercharged V-12 cylinder Rolls-Royce Merlin XXV straight out of a World War 2 Spitfire fighter aircraft!”



The monster car created after the Second World War by Worthing garage proprietor, Michael Wilcock, who in the nicest possible way could be described as a Spitfire “nut”. He loved everything about the fighter plane that had been credited with playing a major role in winning the war and for several years Michael had one of the actual planes “parked” on the forecourt of his Swandean Garage, in Arundel Road, Worthing.



When, in the early 1950s, Michael acquired a war surplus Rolls-Royce V-12 Spitfire aircraft engine for “a few pounds”, he made plans to incorporate it in a racing car that would out-drag everything that had ever entered the Brighton Speed Trials, at that time the biggest event on the high-speed motoring calendar.

He ended up with a massive 21-foot-long, two-and-a-half ton giant car hailed as “the most uneconomical car in the world”, for it consumed fuel at the phenomenal rate of one gallon every two miles!

To my knowledge, the car ran on a public road only once, when Mike Wilcock drove it from his Swandean Garage, along the Arundel Road to Patching, and turned right up Long Furlong towards Findon.

It also competed in the Brighton Speed Trials just once and, as you can imagine, the noise was shattering.

Not long afterwards, the unique car had vanished and so had Michael.

It took me a while, but I eventually traced Michael to Jersey, where he had retired with his wife, Valerie, and seven of his

ROARING SUCCESS: With its creator, Worthing garage owner, Michael Wilcock, at the wheel, the Spitfire Special roars down Marina Drive during the Brighton Speed Trials in the early 1950s. When building the car, Wilcock could not find a car chassis to accommodate the giant Spitfire engine so he married up two wartime **Daimler Dingo Scout Car** chassis and they made “a perfect workable cradle” for the task.

veteran and vintage cars. But not the amazing Spitfire Special.

That had been sold to an American speed enthusiast and that, so far as Michael was concerned, was the end of the story. . .

Move on half a century, and last year, I recalled the saga of this very special Spitfire car in Bygones.

Another year passed, and just as I was about to give up hope of ever being able to write the final chapter of the



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Spitfire Special story, an e-mail was this week flagged up on my computer screen from Steve Brauer, of St Louis, Missouri, USA.

It told me that far from rotting in the graveyard of discarded machinery, the Spitfire Special, the most characterful car I've ever known, would soon be up and running once again – as good, if not better, than new!

Steve filled in, albeit briefly, what had happened to the motoring giant since it left Worthing.

"The US purchaser of the car in 1956 was Stafford "Casey" Lambert, a famous aviator, playboy and heir to the immense Lambert Pharmaceutical fortune in St Louis.



For more than 50 years, the remarkable Swandean Spitfire Special car, powered by a 27-litre V-12 Spitfire fighter aircraft engine and conceived in a Worthing garage, has been "missing". But instead of the rusting wreck it was feared it might have been, we've discovered it has been completely restored to as good – if not better – than new condition, by Steve Brauer, of St Louis, Missouri.

"He was a friend of my stepfather, Lee Hunter, and I remember the car well as a teenager... what an impression it made!

"Today, I have nearly finished restoring the Swandean Spitfire Special and I read with great interest your article "The Kings of Speed".

"Now, I'm trying to track down who might have the old Brighton Speed Trial records from 1953-56. Any idea where I might look or whom I might contact?

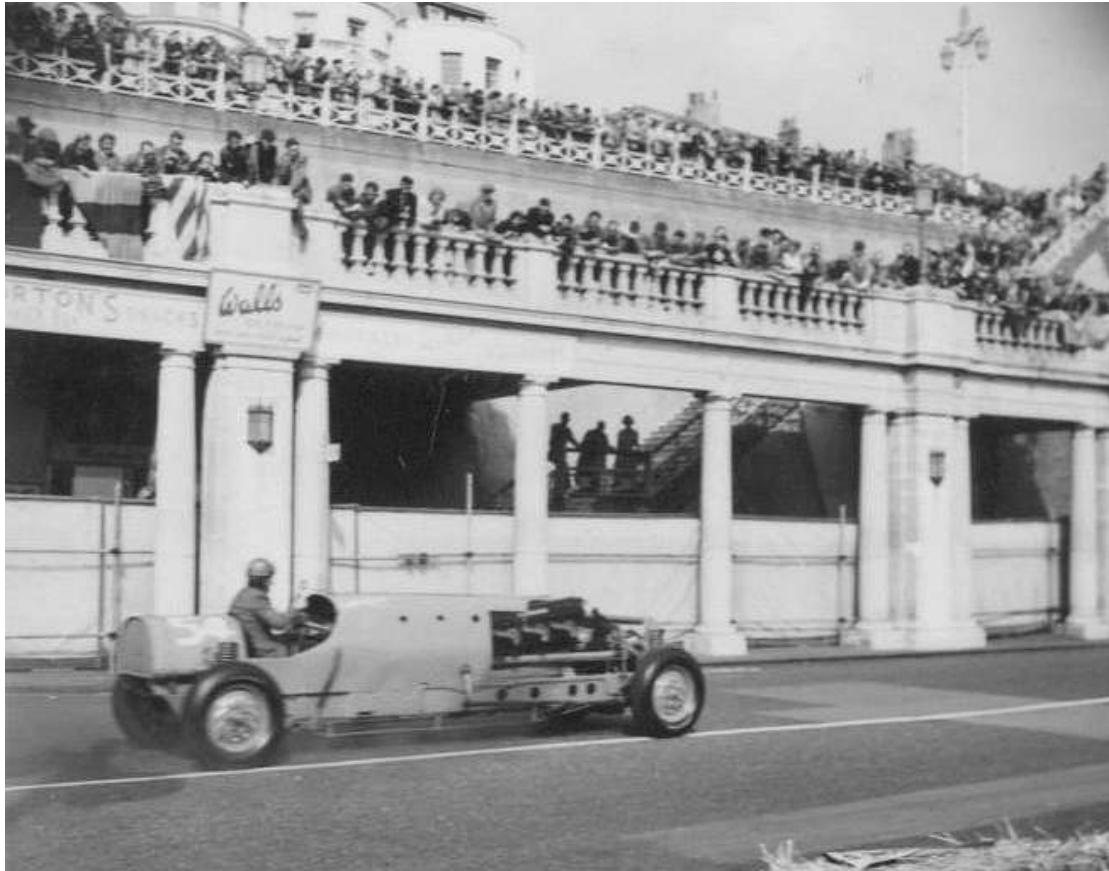
"I have spoken to Michael Wilcock. He was very friendly but apologetic that, now in his 80s, he did not remember much detail regarding the Brighton runs."

If any reader has memories of the Spitfire Special or its run(s) in the Brighton Speed Trials, I will be pleased to pass them on to the man who has obviously dedicated himself to the remarkable job of restoring this unique car.

Steve hopes to soon have it running again, just over half-a-century after it was conceived in a garage on the outskirts of Worthing.



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<http://www.worthingerald.co.uk/CustomPages/CustomPage.aspx?SectionID=13721>





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This 1/4 scale dingo model was built by Ivor Hodge of Kent for his son, its powered by a single cylinder one speed powered barrow engine and is of fully steel construction.



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A photo of this Dingo replica was found on the web
nothing is known about it!



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image courtesy of John Plumb

Description: Not really Daimler related, but interesting all the same.

Electricians of the Innes of Court Regiment manufactured this electric powered vehicle for the use of the Duty Electrician.

Apparently the War Department were not interested and sadly the opinion of the sergeant major has not been recorded, but I imagine he was not that impressed.

Circa 1950's