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Dear All,

Quentin Willson

1957 – 2025

Requiescat in pace



As you have no doubt read of the sad passing of Quentin Willson, to us all such a staunch advocate of the SP. Quentin bought his first SP when either 19 or 20 years of age. His after-dinner speech was heralded by thunderous applause at the SP's 50th anniversary held at the St. Johns' Hotel in Solihull (2009). Quentin found fame as the anchor man of the Top Gear TV series

At one time he owned 3 SPs simultaneously (4 in total over the years) his first and most famous being **UGS 5** (seen here

at the NEC) this he bought from the Strathmore household (the late Queen Mother's family) of Glamis Castle which he owned for 40 odd years.

One aspect he was trying to achieve was to build a classic car from parts advertised on eBay and for this he selected the SP, alas this didn't quite materialise, although, he was very close, finally selling all the parts he mustered. When Quentin delivered a Top Gear programme in the early 1990s which featured an SP250, he confessed at its conclusion to owning one and coined the evocative phrase 'a drastic plastic roller skate' when describing it and he likened the SP to Catherine Deneuve dipped in chocolate sauce!

We had a most successful stand at the NEC this year where we welcomed many owners and enthusiasts, selling a number of the SP calendars, so much so, Alan Mason has ordered another batch, if you have missed out and would like a calendar send Alan an email on soaring.ace@btinternet.com cost is £12 plus p&p.

Whilst I have Alan in the frame, next year's Spa Classic Weekend **22nd to 24th May** is in advanced preparations, the excellent value 3day ticket is a mere €40. Although we in SPs with no hard top or roll cage are not permitted to do a lap we will, however, be able to do a passenger lap with a pro driver at €160. Please let Alan know and also if you wish to join this merry group.

If you fancy yourself as a Classic Car racer then the ex-Piers Townsend SP lent by Martin & Jake Eady, we showcased on the NEC stand is up for sale. Martin and his team worked wonders (bloody hard) to get it up and running for the stand at such short notice, it having been somewhat dormant for a number of years. You may need to update one or two items such as race belts/harness to bring to current racing spec.

Martin & Jake's number is 07803 369 940 or
hillfarmautomotives@hotmail.com



Classic Car Weekly 19th November edition featured under their heading, *Living with Classics* the SP250 owned by Cameron Murray which describes his ownership and love affair with his SP for some 45 years, its registration is 2100 LJ or should it be mine! In the side article heading 'Why Britain Loves the Daimler Dart' it states; The foremost impression, however, was of the V8 engine which was smooth powerful and relatively free revving. It concludes; Today, staunch SP250 appreciators love the dowdy Daimler because its delightfully different; never falling out of fashion because it was never in it in the first place!

Futuristic and Sexy it is, we who drive an SP. The following is taken from *Great British Sports Cars* (2009) "Launched in New York as the Dart, Daimler's first sports car was officially renamed the SP250 after Dodge claimed copyright. The car was a barefaced attempt to ride the wave of popularity for British sports car in America, and it looked much more transatlantic than the Triumph or MG competitors on which its chassis was based.

Daimler's boldness, and hurry to enter the market, resulted in confused styling. From the front, the fibreglass moulded lines curl sinuously down to the wide grille. From the rear three-quarter view, the futuristic horizontal and vertical lines forming the outrageous fins seem to belong to another car.

Even so, the awkward design looks sexy- (my underlines) but it is the authoritative throaty rumble from the SP250's twin exhaust that confirms it. Powered by a 2.5 litre V8 engine, the SP250 is a joy to drive. Once initial problems of the chassis had been ironed out, the car began to fulfil its destiny as a two-door open topped king of the road. It was, and is, fun. Its responsive acceleration appeals strongly to enthusiasts as it once did to the British Police, who fielded a number of automatic versions as high-speed pursuit vehicles.

The real surprise is that Daimler ever made the SP250 (Dart). For decades the company had been associated firmly with upmarket family saloons and limited production of luxury limousines (whose clientele included the British Royal Family). The SP250 really is a delightful aberration. Its oddity, as well as its success, marks it as a product of a very specific late 1950s social climate".

The SP in profile: - <https://youtu.be/ouHieoSA6aQ?si=M95CGeAXNEkgfmZ4>

And finally.....

Sean Mooney in his HWM* inspired SP special, photographed here on the lower aspects of the ramparts at Angoulême after which he drove home and then displayed it at the NEC



*that in the past inadvertently I have referred to as a Frazer Nash special

Yours sincerely

Laurence & Ann

Thought for the day: The redeemable feature of an egotist is that they don't talk about other people.