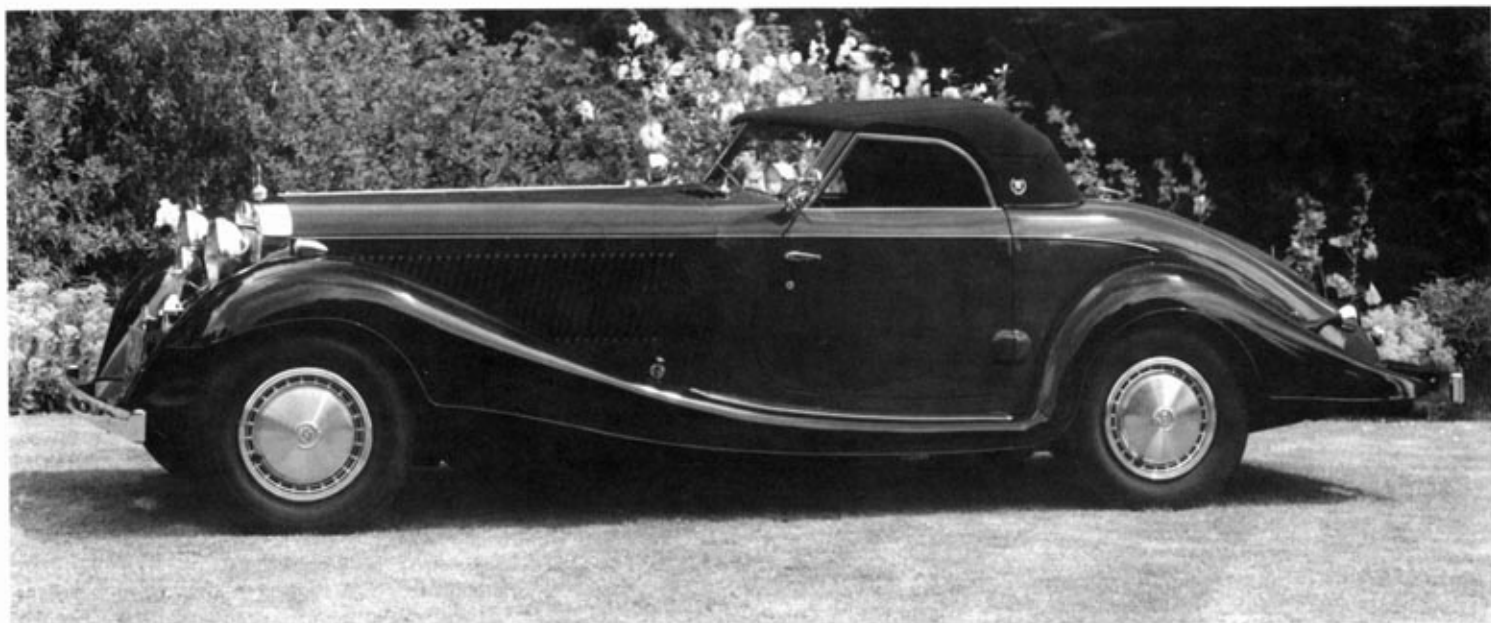


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BRITISH BUSINESSMAN MODIFIES A 1978 SEVILLE AND WRITES ABOUT IT



Would you believe this is a 1978 Seville? Robert Maidment and friends wanted a vehicle that drove like a modern-day Cadillac but looked like a 1930s European classic.

Robert Maidment has enjoyed a life-long love affair with Cadillacs.

As a child growing up in South Africa, he recalls his utter fascination with the 1948 Cadillac with electric windows. The first car he ever owned was a 1939 Cadillac. At the university, he drove his pals to the pub in a Cadillac hearse. And even today, he tools about England in a 1978 Seville that's racked up more than 230,000 miles.

So it was only natural that Maidment, a mathematician and engineer who owns his own manufacturing company in Haverhill, England, selected a Cadillac for a modification project he chronicles in a book due out in the next year.

The project began in the mid-1980s when classic cars were bringing huge dollars. He and his businessmen friends decided to create a new vehicle from an existing modern-day car but with the elegant look of the 1930s era classics.

"We wanted to make something that looked beautiful and was well made but had the handling of the best of today's motor cars," says Maidment.

In addition to Maidment's fondness for his 1978 Seville, the model was selected because spare parts were easy to obtain from Central Cadillac in Cleveland. The car had received outstanding reviews against other luxury cars for drivability. And, the size lent itself to the vintage 1930s look they desired.

The businessmen employed professionals to create what was to be a prototype for a limited edition vehicle of maybe 25 to 50 cars. Every effort was made to use as much of the existing 1978 Seville as possible. Virtually everything under the hood is original. The interior is intact except for the dashboard, which was cut in half and put back together. The grille is based on the 1978 Seville, using the same angled "V." The Cadillac name is engraved in the same size in the same relative position as the original.

The roof metal is original, though it was "cut and kinked twice" and a hole cut out for the rear windows. The doors are the original rear doors that were modified and hung backwards to be typical of 1930s European styling. The automatic trunk and adjustable lights work as they did on the pre-modified Seville.

Even the carpeting and instructions for using the jack remain intact.

Six thousands hours later, the project was completed.

"We made two miscalculations," says the good-humored Maidment. "How long it took to complete. And by the time we finished, the boom in motor cars was over. It will definitely be a limited edition of one."

Today, the modified 1978 Seville sits in Maidment's garage with 8,000 miles on it. He occasionally drives it and displays it at car shows. Last summer, a professional race car driver took it out on the famous Goodwood race track. "It did not disgrace itself," assures Maidment.

Maidment has just completed a book he expects to publish sometimes next year on the project.

"The book covers the human side of the project," says Maidment, who has a delightful sense of humor. "And it ponders how anybody could be quite so stupid as to take a perfectly good four-door sedan and make it into an unusual two-door roadster!"