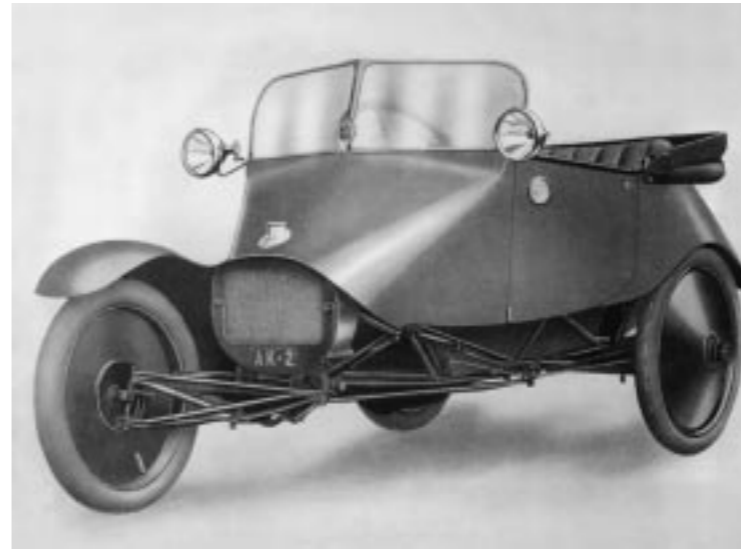




PURVES DYNASPHERE

▲ 'Who says cars have to have four wheels?' Dr John Purves, following designs originally drawn by Leonardo da Vinci, came up with the Dynasphere in the early 1930s, which he demonstrated at Brooklands and on the beach at Weston-super-Mare. On one occasion, he achieved 25mph, which does not sound too scary until the need to brake or steer arises, and the inability to perform either proved its downfall. The result of trying to brake with anything other than the meekest of pressure was a phenomenon known as 'gerbiling', where the rider would simply stop sitting at the bottom of the wheel, and become part of it, rotating as it carried on virtually oblivious to the attempts to stop it.

This did not dissuade the good doctor however as he was photographed in 1932 with a model of a fully enclosed passenger carrying Dynasphere which happily, was not built in full size.



SCOTT SOCIABLE

◀ The First World War introduced many people to motoring, and once demobbed, many were not willing to return simply to walking, cycling or public transport. The Scott Sociable was a machine which had its roots in the latter days of the war, when it had been designed by Alfred Angas Scott as a gun car, and in peacetime, its manufacturers hoped to find customers amongst those who wanted to drive but could not afford a conventional car.

Powered by Scott's two-stroke 587cc engine, it looked curiously unbalanced, and its unusual arrangement of wheels made unwise any attempt at the higher speeds it was capable of, as neither steadiness nor controllability was guaranteed. A little over 100 Sociables were made.

STIMSON SCORCHER

▶ Barry Stimson launched the Scorcher in the long hot summer of 1976, and it looked considerably less mundane than its Mini front subframe origins might have suggested it should. It could seat three, including the driver, and after some head scratching among the licensing authorities, it was classified as a motorcycle and sidecar combination.

Available as a kit that could be carried home on the roof of another car, it used the entire front subframe of BL's Mini for its engine, steering and front suspension. The main frame was made from steel, and was clothed in a single piece of glassfibre. Once built, the machine was capable of a frightening top speed of 100mph, while it cost only £385 to buy. Only 30 Scorchers were ever built, although happily, a number still exist.



TRIHAWK

◀ The 1983 Trihawk, as the name suggests, was an American-built three-wheeler that used the 1,299cc four-cylinder boxer engine, transmission and front-wheel drive layout from a Citroën GSA, a car never sold in the USA. With its front suspension and the rear wheel trailing arm from a Renault 5, there was a real French flavour to the car, although its rakish, two-seater glassfibre bodywork hid these humble origins well, and when *Road & Track* magazine tested one, proclaimed it to be one of the best cornering vehicles they had ever driven, a result of its incredibly low centre of gravity.