



French Car Torque

Magazine of the French Car Club of Canberra



August 2023



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On the cover REDEX Rerun cars in front of
Old Parliament House, Canberra
Photo by Brad Pillans

FRENCH CAR TORQUE

Official journal of the
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(FCCC)

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Bonjour Francophiles,

This month's newsletter is a bit shorter than usual as your editor (me!) is on a road trip to Brisbane.

Sue and I are doing the trip in our 508. The first day we drove Canberra to Port Macquarie (around 660 km) in about 7 hours at an average speed of 94 km/hour and 4.8 L/100 km fuel consumption. An easy drive these days, as most of the distance is on motorways. Even traversing Sydney is relatively painless, outside of peak hours, now that the Hornsby area bottlenecks are gone.

We spent a night in a cheap, but clean motel in Port Macquarie, and enjoyed a good honest dinner at a local Chinese Restaurant. The next day, it was on to Brisbane (the south-eastern sea-side suburb of Cleveland, to be precise), where we are staying with my brother, Rob, and his partner, Kate. There are still a couple of slow sections, with major road works on the Gold Coast and at Coffs Harbour, but otherwise an easy run in the 508.

One downside to the upgrading of the highways to motorways is that the scenery is not nearly as interesting. There are also fewer places to pull off the road and admire the views. Motorway travel may be quick, but it's boring!

Cleveland is a nice part of Brisbane, with ferries running to nearby islands, such as North Stradbroke Island and the much smaller Coochiemudlo Island, both of which we have visited since arriving. We even saw two whales off the east coast of Straddie. However, things may be about to take a change for the worse, with the huge Toondah Harbour development project aiming to change 42 hectares of internationally significant wetlands into an urban jungle of 3,600 luxury residences, including high rise apartments, a hotel and a conference centre. Having walked along the local beach and skirted the development area by ferry, I can personally vouch that this is an appalling degradation of the natural environment of the area. The project is supported by the Queensland government and the local council, but I think that the Federal Environment Minister, Tanya Plibersek, may yet have one final say on whether the project is fully approved.

Anyway, Sue and I are enjoying the warm Brisbane weather. Our next destination is Rainbow Beach up near Fraser Island, now officially called K'gari. More on that next month...



Not sure about the number plate, above, spotted in a car park in Cleveland. Is the owner of the Citroën C4 Cactus a mad doctor?

The next club meeting will be held at 8 pm on Tuesday 22nd August at the Raiders Club, in Weston, with dinner and drinks from 7 pm. Sadly I will be unable to attend as I will still be in sunny (and warm) Queensland.

Au revoir,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads 'Brad Pillans'.

Brad Pillans, Club President

P.S. Don't forget the club AGM, to be held at 8 pm on Tuesday 26th September, at the Raiders Club in Weston. NEXT MONTH!



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CLUB EVENTS 2023

Calendar

22 August French Car Club of Canberra meeting, Raiders Club, 1 Liardet St, Weston, with dinner from 7pm & meeting at 8pm.

27 August French Car Drive to Mulligans Flat Nature Reserve, Wildbark café, <https://www.wildbark.org/eat-1>

26 September French Car Club of Canberra **AGM**, Raiders Club, 1 Liardet St, Weston, with dinner from 7pm & meeting at 8pm.

22 October French Car Drive to Cooma Motor Museum <https://www.coomacarclub.com.au/Motor-Museum>

24 October French Car Club of Canberra meeting, Raiders Club, 1 Liardet St, Weston, with dinner from 7pm & meeting at 8pm.

4 November. French Car Day. Telopea Park School

28 November French Car Club of Canberra meeting, Raiders Club, 1 Liardet St, Weston, with dinner from 7pm & meeting at 8pm

Early December Christmas BBQ. Date to be advised.

French Car Drives in 2023 and 2024

These occur on the 4th Sunday of even months (except December). If you have any other suggestions of places to visit, please send me an email on reno1338@hotmail.com. Lisa Molvig, Social Secretary

REDEX rerun 2023 passes through Canberra

Between 8 and 9 am on Saturday, 5th September, the cars participating in the 70th anniversary REDEX rerun gathered in front of Old Parliament House. It was quite a spectacle to see so many older Peugeots, and a few other similar aged cars of other marques, lined up in front of one of Australia's most iconic buildings (and just across the road from the Aboriginal tent embassy).

Several local participants took part in the rerun from Melbourne to Sydney, via Canberra, including Colin Handley, Dave Rowell, Chris Reid and Geoff Boyd (plus their co-drivers). Colin and Dave have provided an account of the event (see page 9).



Part of the Lion-up in front of Old Parliament House. Photo: Brad Pillans

My adventures in France

Barry McAdie

My recent overseas trip 29 June to 2 August 2023 involved a trip to the USA for my daughter's wedding on 4 July, then off to London and Scotland (family history business in Wick, tour of Edinburgh Castle, day trip to Windsor, Bath and Stonehenge, walk around sights of London), Eurostar to Paris (visit to Alpine dealership (bought heaps of Alpine stuff), scout around old Renault site, day trip to Versailles, visit to Sacre Coeur, walk down Rue Lepic, visit the Pantheon, walk up des Ave Champs -Elysses to Renault Pub, drive to Dieppe, visit Mont St Michel and Utah beach), fly to Rome (tour Colosseum, Roman Forum, Pantheon) and then home via Helsinki, Singapore and Sydney.

For my visit to Dieppe, I hired a car from Hertz at Charles de Gaulle airport. It was supposed to be a Renault Clio but ended up with a Peugeot 208 with a 5speed manual shift. It performed well but I later discovered it had no working satnav. Ever tried to drive to/from Paris and around the French countryside with no satnav??? Not recommended. Fortunately, I met a Canadian at the Hertz desk who was driving with his family to Lille and I was able to follow him out of the maze at the airport up the A1. We met for lunch at a service centre and unfortunately discovered I had overshot the turnoff that would lead eventually to Dieppe. I arrived at dusk to my accommodation at Hotel de la Page but unfortunately destroyed the right hand side mirror on a pole while trying to make room for a mobile home in a narrow Dieppe street.



Next day, I visited the Alpine factory but security would not let me enter (I already knew it was not open to the public but tried anyway) and then visited the site of the Alpines on the roundabout into Dieppe and the memorial to Jean Redele, the founder of Alpine, all close to the Alpine factory. They were also close to a hardware store where I purchased a roll of duct tape to make the damaged mirror a bit more streamlined for my trip.

Then I was off to Mont St Michel and what a magnificent monument to French history. The shuttle bus takes you right up to the site. Unfortunately, I forgot to collect my ticket at the car park which would have told me where I parked the car. Eventually, after a seemingly endless walk through the various car parks, I found it as it was the only one with a damaged side mirror.



With the assistance of paper maps, I located Utah Beach, one of the D-Day landing sites on 4 June 1944 and collected a jar of beach sand as a keepsake. I had hoped to visit the other D-Day landing beaches, especially Omaha, but ran out of time.

Adventures in France (cont)

No satnav, and poor French sign posting in little villages, meant I again got lost but eventually I found my way back to Dieppe late that day. A couple of 1664 beers at the hotel were a source of much needed relief. Next morning, I did not relish the drive with no satnav back to Paris, especially to find my way through the freeway system back to return the car at CDG airport and catch my flight to Rome. All was going well until I missed the A1 turnoff to CDG and had to travel via the A13 and periphery through Paris congestion to make it on time. Even then, I overshot the turnoff close to CDG and had to double back via an interchange but fortunately made it in plenty of time to settle my account with Hertz and make my flight to Rome.

The French freeway system is very good with no potholes to be seen anywhere apart from the minor roads. Up to 3 or more lanes wide and 130kph speed limit for most of the way and the little Pug handled it with ease. HOWEVER, every now and then you encountered toll gates which would only open after they gouged your credit card. Australia got rid of toll gates years ago with etags – France should get with the program. My other gripe is if you miss a turnoff, you are doomed to travel many kms before you could find an interchange to enable you to change direction. Solid concrete median barriers prevent any attempts at U-turns unlike our Hume Highway.

Viva la France.



The tidal island of Mont-Saint-Michel, in Normandy

Gold Coast sinkhole swallows a Pug

ABC News, 2 August



An unlucky Gold Coast driver had a nightmare morning after a sinkhole opened up on a busy street, swallowing their parked car.

The silver Peugeot 206CC was parked on Short Street at Southport when the road spontaneously opened shortly after 4am, causing the vehicle to fall in. Luckily, the driver was not inside at the time.

A City of Gold Coast spokesperson said a burst water main caused the sinkhole to form. The council has apologised for any inconvenience caused!

CLASSIFIEDS

For sale, parts and wrecking

If you want to advertise something for sale or simply offer items free to a good home, then this is a good place to let other club members know.

Please contact either Colin Handley (0414 484 398) or Brad Pillans (0427 662 112) to place an ad.

For sale

Early Peugeot 404 instrument cluster

Also have front indicator light and bumper bar over-riders to suit same model. Make an offer. Contact Lisa 0412-011927 or reno1338@hotmail.com



Peugeot 505 manual sedan

White, 1984, very good condition, on club plates. \$2,300.
Contact Neville: 0429 168 595

Peugeot items

505 STI auto, needs fuel pump
2 x 406 petrol auto sedans, located in Bombala, also 403 gearbox.
Best offer for each.
Contact Neville 0429 168 595

Peugeot memorabilia

Early 20th cent advertising posters. Approximately 380mm high by 280 wide. Bought from a market stall in Avignon. \$30 the lot plus postage. Contact Mike Garrett mike.garrett@bigpond.com



Peugeot bits

403 front guards, 403 outer sills, 403, 203 diffs; second hand windscreens, several 03 crankshafts, 604 504 diff centres and shafts, offers. Contact Neville: 0429 168 595

For sale (cont)

Peugeot 504 sedans

3xdiesel 504 sedans, one nice body, one for spares plus a bent one, on trailer, for delivery. Offers. Located near Candelo. Contact: Ian Wood (02) 6493 2019.

Peugeot 306XT (see pictures on right)

One owner 1994 4 door hatch, 1.8L petrol engine, manual transmission, 348,000 km, tinted windows, electric sunroof, fog lights, registered in ACT until Sept 2023. Offers. Contact: Andrew 0407 296 345.

Peugeot folding bikes x2

Mid 1970s. Nice original condition for renovation. \$60 the pair. Located in the Canberra region. Contact Chris 0413 996 481 or lynwood327@gmail.com



Wrecking

Black 2008 Peugeot 407 SV V6 petrol sedan.

Just over 98,000kms on the odometer and was driven to where it now lays. Has major oil leaks in the engine and a split cooling system "evaporation chamber" and a small scrape on the back offside mudguard. If anyone is interested in any bits please contact Flash on 0418 110 078, and we will see if it is something we don't need and then see if we can get it off without too much drama.

Wanted

Roof rack for Peugeot 403 station wagon

Contact Flash: 0418 110 078



REDEX rerun 2023

Dave Rowell and Colin Handley

In 1953 a Peugeot 203 driven by Ken Tubman won the first Redex around Australia reliability trial, one of the toughest trials in the world. To celebrate the 50th 60th and 70th anniversaries of this event Peugeot owners from around Australia have come together to rerun part of the original course. This year 34 cars took part travelling the old Hume Hwy where possible from Melbourne to Sydney.

Shirley and Colin set off from Canberra on Monday with Dave Rowell in our 203s, for a leisurely trip south to the start of the 2023 Redex. We decided to avoid the freeway wherever possible. A lovely sunny morning was a good omen for our trip.

At Gundagai we stopped for a late lunch at the historic Niagara Café and visited the Pen Museum – a must do for people who are fascinated by pens. We spent our first night in the teeming metropolis of Woomargama as we had been told they put on pretty good spread at night. Sadly, we discovered they don't do it on Mondays! As there was nothing else in Woomargama we returned to Holbrook where Colin was able to coerce a friendly young chap into doing a wheel balance on his 203 to get rid of an annoying wheel wobble.



Colin's van and Dave's sedan in Yackandandah

The next day we took the picturesque Bowna Road and dropped in to Annie Brown's farm for a flying visit. We continued through the hills north of Hume Weir to Wymah on a winding road that felt like it was made for 203's. The young lady running the ferry was a colourful enthusiastic character, who maintained a small flock of geese at the ferry ramp! From the Wymah Ferry we travelled west, following the Murray River to Yackandandah. Nice pies at Yackandandah, but the fascinating antique shops are only open on weekends. We finished up at Beechworth where we stayed in the nurses' quarters of the old Asylum in a garden of huge Bunya pines. We did an interesting tour of the old Beechworth and learnt about the many famous characters who had been guests of her majesty over the years. We picked up Susanne at Seymour station, which bore a sign 2m off the ground saying "Beware of Snakes"!



Two rare 203s: Colin's van and Alistair Inglis' styleside ute, at Yan Yean reservoir.

We spent the night at Whittlesea and met up with a number of other Redex entrants, and travelled to the Yan Yean Reservoir next morning for a leisurely start. The event launch was at Regans Peugeot Dealers the night before due to roadworks and heavy traffic. It was great to catch up with many friends we had made on the 2003 and 2013 Redex runs, as well as Chris Reid, John Wilson and Tony and Judith Dorrell who had also driven down from Canberra. It was terrific to see so many beautifully turned out Peugeots, including fifteen 203s, five 403s and a number of these new-fangled things from the 60s and later. Every car had its own story, but some unusual examples included Alistair Inglis's rare 203 styleside ute (there were only 16 made, and only 3 on the road), and Damien Jenkins' 203 with a Mazda rotary motor. Needless to say Damien left all the other 203's behind on the road, but agreed he had an unfair advantage.

Redex rerun 2023 (cont)

Where possible we avoided the freeway, taking diversions onto the old Hume Highway and other roads that featured in the original 1953 Redex route. On the old highway, we climbed Pretty Sally Hill (named after the owner of an illegal pub in the 1840s) which was later the site of Fat Nancy's in the first Mad Max film. That evening we finished in Albury and invaded the Kinross Woolshed *en masse*, to the hilarity of the locals. Annie Brown greeted us there; it was very sad that her husband Tony Nott is no longer with us to share in the camaraderie. However, Gabor, the new owner of Tony's 203 wagon "Cedric" was able to join us for the start of the next day's run.

The Albury to Canberra run involved many diversions onto the old Hume Highway, which highlighted how dreary the Canberra-Melbourne run is on the freeway. The Canberra dinner was held at Eaglehawk – a very social night, and the pugilists (some from NSW club) were even noisier than the locals.

The next day involved an 8am start at Parliament House, where we appreciated being welcomed by local French Car Club members and other interested locals. We were pleased to show off some of the great spots in our region to the non-Canberran entrants, including the coffee shops at Gunning, and the popular Sutton Bakery. Notable diversions and highlights of the trip included the Cullerin Range road, a stretch of over 20km of dirt road boasting excellent views of the countryside, and running close by many wind turbines. Later we covered the "horror stretch" near Marulan, which sorted out the field in 1953, with many cars dropping out. On these unsealed sections the 203s really came into their element, and made it clear why they were such competitive rally cars in the 1950s. The 203 was designed for unmade rough roads in post-war Europe and Africa, and they are an absolute delight to drive in these conditions. We didn't hold back on this section, yet there were no dropouts and the only minor setback were Dave's chipped windscreen and Colin's speedo cable (the original 1956 one!). Thanks go to our navigators Susanne and Shirley who may have had a white knuckle ride at times. We all had fun!

To avoid the Sydney traffic the rally finished on the large rooftop carpark of the Panthers club at Penrith. This gave us a final opportunity to look under everyone's bonnets and ask questions like "What's that thing?", "How did you do that?" and generally share our mechanical

knowledge and special tricks. The final dinner was held at the club, and a number of NSW club members also attended, which gave us the opportunity to share old Redex stories and make up lies about our cars. The buffet-style meal was top notch, and the evening was a great success.



Damien Jenkins' Mazda rotary-powered 203



Not only Peugeots: A Volvo PV544 looks the part, in Gundagai

The final dinner gave us the opportunity to recognise and thank those people who had been instrumental in organising the rally, including Graham Wallis and other committed members of the Peugeot Car Club of Victoria (the oldest Peugeot club in the world, formed in 1956?). Graham Wallis also organised the 2003 and 2013 Redex reruns and has coordinated and run many other Peugeot events over the last 40 years.

A visit to Paris

Barry McAdie

I love Paris – it was my third visit. This time, I was determined to see the sights I had not been able to visit before – Versailles, Sacre Coeur and the Pantheon. Unfortunately, a visit to the Catacombs wasn't possible as it was fully booked out. The visit to Sacre Coeur included a walk down Rue Lepic and visiting Moulin Rouge. On Christmas Eve in 1898, Louis Renault took some friends for a ride in his first car up Rue Lepic (a very steep, narrow street in the Montmartre district) and at the end of the night had several orders for his car – and so the Renault story began.

I stayed at my usual place – Hotel de France – and visited the Alpine dealership nearby and of course spent a few Euros (many actually) on some Alpine merchandise. Enzo, who spoke English, mentioned his dad had a new Alpine and gave me 20% off my purchase. There is also a Renault dealership further up the road towards the city proper.



One of the recently restored Renault factory gates

Apart from the above, my mission was to find out what was happening to the old Renault factory site since my last visit with club member, Leigh McEwan. The old factory on Ile Sequin was demolished some years ago and half the island is now occupied by a music cultural centre and the other half is now a hive of construction activity with the aim of building new apartments and

offices. There is also construction activity of the adjacent shore where the original Renault offices are located. Louis Renault's shed, where he invented the direct drive gearbox, is located nearby under some trees.

Unfortunately, security would not let me enter the construction site but I could see that the original Renault factory gates have now been restored. I am still trying to confirm the purpose of the construction activity but gathered it might be aimed at establishing a new Renault museum. Perhaps it will be ready by the time the Queensland Renault group do their tour of the UK and France later in 2024.



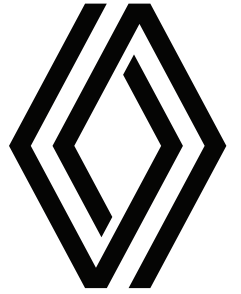
*Above”
The Alpine dealership in Ballincourt, a wealthy commune in the western suburbs of Paris.*



*Left:
A new Alpine A110S at the dealership*

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for club members, family and friends^



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*\$500 accessories bonus is on the full rrp of any new vehicle in stock. ^eligible for financial members of the club and anyone they refer only. 10% discount applies to the retail service and retail parts price. National Capital Renault reserves the right to vary, extend or withdraw this offer.

August 2023

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French Car Club of Canberra Inc
General Meeting
27 July 2023
MINUTES



1. Present

Greg Francis
 Neil Birch
 Lisa Molvig
 Leigh McEwan
 Charles Birch

Neil Sperring
 Brad Pillans

2. Apologies

Colin Handley
 Barry McAdie
 Allan Lance

Ross Stephens
 Joel Krewaz

3. Introduction

The meeting opened at 8.10 pm.
 Brad Pillans welcomed members to the meeting.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

Motion: That the minutes of the July meeting be accepted as a true and accurate record.
 Moved Brad, seconded Neil Birch, carried unanimously.



5. Financial report

Account Balance with Bendigo Bank is \$4,663.49 with three term deposits of \$5000 each. Overall current balance is \$19,663.49.

Motion: that the financial report be accepted.

Moved Neil Birch, seconded Leigh, carried unanimously.

6. General Business

CACTMC report:

At the beginning of the new Financial Year the Council bank balance was \$20,048.16

71 clubs have renewed their affiliation; two or three more are expected to do so. Three clubs have not reaffiliated. At least one club has not reaffiliated because they have not incorporated; they were given over two years notice of the new requirement.

On 30th August Skyline day at the Spanish Club; open display; gold coin donation on entry.

Club VeeDub cruise to Batemans Bay coming soon See the Council Web Site for all events.

Date for Wheels 2024 has been set, still no organising club, same for terribly British Day.

Feedback on the 60-day usage scheme is still being sought.

Social:

The Bastille Day celebration at Breizh Café in Ainslie went well, see July FCT. May do it again.

Next drive is to Mulligans Flat Nature Reserve on 27 August, at the new café that has opened there.

70th anniversary rerun of Redex trial is due to pass by Old Parliament House between 8 and 9am on Saturday 5th August. It is an informal gathering.

Other business:

Chris Deligny (President, NSW Peugeot Club) has indicated that discussions about organising a Peugeot Pageant next year have started. If it goes ahead they are proposing a somewhat simpler event than past pageants.

Greg proposed that we buy bumper stickers for the club; some proposed mock-ups were passed around for consideration.

Motion: that we buy 50 Bumper stickers for the Club.

Moved Greg, seconded Neil Sperring, carried.

Motion: that we buy 50 Pens for the Club.

Moved Leigh, seconded Greg, carried.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm. Next meeting will be at the Raiders Club at 8 pm on Tuesday 22nd August.

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