



French Car Torque

Magazine of the French Car Club of Canberra



October 2024



On the cover A dusty Presidential 508 at the famous musical fence (Google it), Winton, western Queensland
Image: Brad Pillans

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FRENCH CAR TORQUE

Official journal of the
French Car Club of Canberra Inc.
(FCCC)

PO Box 4183, Hawker, ACT, 2614.

The French Car Club of Canberra website is at:
<https://frenchcarclubofcanberra.com.au/>

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Individual opinions expressed herein need not necessarily reflect the FCCC as a whole.

Bonjour Francophiles,

After nearly 5,000 km on the road to western Queensland, last month, my 508 was due for its 165,000 km service. Although we only travelled around 100 km off the bitumen, the car came back very dusty (and insect splattered), so I gave it a good clean. Pleasingly, the dust did not get inside the cabin or the boot, unlike some of my older cars.

The service was unremarkable, with everything reported to be in good order. However, the lady behind the desk in the service centre at McGrath Peugeot was almost indignant that I could present my car with rear tyres below the legal minimum tread depth – only just, I might say, after the Queensland trip. Needless to say, I got new Michelins fitted the next day.

On the EV home front, we have installed a fast charger to take advantage of our solar panels. Makes it very easy to keep the 2008 battery topped up.

A few weeks ago, I bought several old books at a Lifeline bookfair. Among my purchases was a facsimile copy of explorer Ludwig Leichhardt's diary of his 1844/45 journey from Brisbane to Port Essington (300 km north of Darwin). The hardships he and his companions endured were remarkable – they covered around 3000 miles in 14 months, through country that was completely unknown to Europeans. My recent Queensland trip covered about the same distance in less than 2 weeks. I even traversed some of the same terrain as Leichhardt, namely around Roma, Injune, Rolleston and Blackwater. Leichhardt had studied geology and botany in Germany and England, before coming to Australia, and his diary is full of carefully documented observations of the rocks, plants and animals that he encountered. Indeed, he was the first to find coal deposits in the Bowen Basin of central Queensland, Australia's largest coal-producing region today.

I take my (Akubra) hat off to Leichhardt. Though he is perhaps best remembered for disappearing on a subsequent failed attempt to cross Australia from Brisbane to Perth, his 1844/45 expedition ranks as one of the great feats of early European exploration in Australia. While I travelled 400 km a day in air-conditioned comfort, in my 508, Leichhardt averaged about 10 km/day, on a horse!

The next club meeting is the Annual General Meeting, and it will be held at 8 pm on Tuesday 24 September, at the Raiders Club, in Weston, with dinner and drinks from 7 pm. The minutes of the 2023 AGM are on page 9 of this newsletter. The agenda for the 2024 AGM will be the same.

I encourage all members to attend the AGM, Don't be afraid to come along – you won't be press-ganged into joining the club committee, though I hasten to add that any member is most welcome to self-nominate for a position if they wish. To be president of a country usually requires a bit more than a self-nomination (though President Putin managed to do it), but we are pretty flexible in the French Car Club when it comes to such minor details.

Au revoir,

BRAD

Brad Pillans, Club President (at least until the AGM)



Brad in the hat, with Bernie Searle, in Searle's Outback Store, Winton

2023-24 FCC COMMITTEE

President

Brad Pillans
30 Aspen Rise
Jerrabomberra, NSW, 2619
0427 662 112
brad.pillans@anu.edu.au

Vice President

Colin Handley
4 Bains Place
Lyneham ACT 2602
0414 484 398

Secretary

Vacant

Treasurer

Neil Birch

Technical Officers

Bill McNamee
15 Finlayson Pl
Gilmore 2905
6291 6495, 0419 279 811
mcnamee@amorphous.com.au

Barry McAdie
bardot@iinet.net.au
0415 907 614

Magazine Editorial Committee

Brad Pillans
Lisa Molvig

Membership Secretary

Barry McAdie
bardot@iinet.net.au
0415 907 614

Web Page Editors

Mitch Jamieson-Curran
Leigh McEwan

Social Secretary

Lisa Molvig

General Committee

Lisa Molvig
Leigh McEwan

Public Officer

Barry McAdie

Delegates to CACTMC

Greg Francis
Neil Sperring

Club Registrars

Brad Pillans
Lisa Molvig
reno1338@hotmail.com



CLUB EVENTS 2024

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

27 October French Car Drive to Café Stepping Stone, Strathnairn. A change of venue for this event. We will have morning tea/brunch at this café located at Strathnairn Arts Homestead. Arrive at 10am. Follow signs to Strathnairn Arts, off Gullifer St in Strathnairn.

2 November Canberra French Car Day at La Grande Fete, Telopea Park School, from 10 am to 2 pm. Popular vote for favourite cars will be held and trophies awarded in several categories.

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

French Car Drives in 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

The website of the Council of ACT Motor Clubs has a calendar of car club events in the Canberra region – always worth a look... https://www.cactmc.org.au/cactmc_calendar.html

All French Car Day, Silverwater Park, Sydney was to be on Sunday, September 29, but was again postponed owing to wet weather..

French car festival in Melbourne is on October 27. Being organised this year by RCCV and will be held at Living Legends <https://www.livinglegends.org.au/> near Tullamarine airport.



Display Times
10 am to 3 pm

FRENCH CAR DISPLAY

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER

La Grande Fete
Telopea Park School. Barton.

CONTACT
club@fccoc.com.au
<https://fccoc.com.au>



Graham Crockett's classic car collection

Lisa Molvig, French Car Club of Canberra

On Tuesday 24 September, we visited the storage unit of Graham Crockett in Fyshwick to view his classic car collection. 12 club members attended. Graham gave us a history of his cars, their technical aspects and driving quirks. He has two Jaguars, a BMW, a Porsche, a Ferrari, an Alfa Romeo, a Peugeot 208 GTi, and a Subaru. Most of the cars are currently for sale - at 91 he feels it is time to downsize.

Thanks to Graham and Susan for their hospitality.



Local event

PARIS MATCH ALL FRENCH CAR DAY 2024

1039 / 5 AVRIL 1969 / 2 F



Featured horsepower from Renault, Peugeot, Citroen & More

At 'Living Legends', Woodlands Historic Park, the home of equine thoroughbreds (@livinglegends.org.au) Woodlands Drive, Greenvale 3059

All other French thoroughbreds welcome! Think Alpine, Simca, Delage, Amilcar, Panhard and Bugatti. New cars too! This year become a legend. Bring your French automotive beauty and let it shine at our annual spectacular display of all things French automotive. This year at beautiful, historic Woodlands Park.

- Concours judging for each club
- Merchandise for sale
- Coffee Van
- BYO picnic
- Historic homestead and grounds
- Cycling & walking trails throughout the park
- Café & food available at Living Legends homestead
- Participating cars arrive from 9am
- Participating cars \$10 entry
- All welcome. Free entry for public

HERE! SEE YOU THERE! SEE YOU THERE! SEE YOU THERE! SEE YOU THERE!

Hosts in 2024: Renault Car Club of Victoria

See also aussiefrogs.com and F/B

Letters to the Editor

A new feature – readers have their say

Not all Alpines are French

I snapped these pictures in France, recently. Is there anything French about this Alpine?

Neil Birch

Reply from our resident Alpine tragic, Barry McAdie

Not French but thoroughly British - a Sunbeam Alpine. This is a Series III soft-top made in 1963/64. The Series III is the rarest production Alpine,



with a total of 5,863 units bring made, comprising the soft-top model and a GT model with a removable hardtop roof. Sunbeam Alpines enjoyed a bit of success in European and North American motor sport events, but nothing like that of the French Alpine marque.



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

Peugeot 504 trapezoidal headlights
Contact Colin: 0414 484 398

Peugeot 403's for restoration?
Located near Orange; pics below.
Contact Dieter 0428 173 068



Peugeot 307 wagon 2008
Tubo diesel, 69,000 kms; at least 4 good mag wheels; severe rear end damage; located in Queanbeyan.
Phone 0414 154 895



Citroen BX front seats
Pair of front BX black cloth seats in vgc, best offer
Contact Colin: 0414 484 398

CLASSIFIEDS (cont)

For sale

Peugeot 404 sedan

1969 model. Great car but not getting used. Good condition throughout, no rust, excellent interior, door seals replaced, 2 litre motor, Weber carby, square port head, electric fan and upgraded alternator, Super Oscar driving lights and LED indicators. New brakes throughout, suspension good. Some spares. Noisy thrust bearing which will need replacing at some stage. Located Moruya NSW. A great fun car to drive. \$8000 ono. See 4 images, below. Contact Greg Summerhayes 0427 744 813



For sale

Peugeot 404

1966 404 straight rolling body shell; no motor or seats. Located in Bywong. Offers. Contact Fritz 0428 253 182

Wanted

Peugeot 504 left hand side boot hinge with spring

Contact Colin 0414 484 398

Classifieds

A short encounter with a Pug 3008: a 12-day rental

Mike Garrett, French Car Club of Canberra

Recently we went to the Gold Coast to visit our son and grandchildren who live there. We nearly always hire a car during our visits as public transport is fairly poor there although an extension to the tram which runs along the coastal strip is underway.

We have rented several different brands of cars during our trips up north but this time we were offered a recent model (2021 Allure I think) Peugeot 3008. It has been a long period since I have driven a pug - since I sold my 2010 207 hatch, I felt it was time to try the modern pugs again (our current cars have been Subarus).

I found the car excellent. Its roadholding and ride over rough surfaces were first class. It was quiet, with a very responsive 1.6 litre, turbo assisted, petrol engine and a smooth automatic six speed power train. All the controls were straightforward to use and the instruments and screens where usable. No annoying beeps but with all the safety features one would expect from a car of its vintage.

I have read many articles where the writers have complained bitterly about the small low positioned steering wheel in modern pugs. I'm 175 cm tall (5'9" for the old fellows) and had no trouble finding a good driving position. The seats were comfortable, and I thought they would be so for a long journey. We only travelled short distances of around 20 to 30 kms so I can't comment on that aspect. Fuel consumption was moderate at 8litres/100kms city driving. Compared to other cars I have been driving, the 3008 felt more sophisticated and less agricultural.

Members will know that my family have had a long association with Pugs since my first acquisition of a 1965 404 in 1968.

As a family we have had many pugs over the years:

[Mike's family Pugs are very similar in number to the Pillans family – see the following lists, for comparison. Unlike Mike, I have had no reliability issues with the later models. Ed.]

Mike's list (24)

One 203
Three 403's
Four 404's
Two 405's
Five 504's
Two 505's.
Two 306's
One 205
One 206
Two 406's
One 207

Brad's list (22)

Three 203's
Two 403's
Six 404's
One 405
Three 504's
One 505
One 306
One 407
One 308
Two 508's
One e2008

Following some sadly unfortunate experiences with the later cars, where the reliability and ability to fix niggling issues, made us rethink our car purchases on Pugs and move to Subaru's, Toyotas and other brands. Nevertheless, the 3008 was an excellent hire, so good I'm getting it again in December.



My cars and their stories.

Part 5. 1972 Renault 12 GL

Barry McAdie, French Car Club of Canberra

Up until 1972, I had not given much thought to any Renaults at all not being a car person at that stage except having a means of transport from A to B. I later discovered that my uncle Noel, who is now 94 living in Darwin, owned a Renault 750 based on an old photo showing it parked outside McAdie Motors in Ararat. So, I guess that Renault was in my genes so to speak

By about late 1972, I decided that I needed a more reliable new car. My research concentrated on a Datsun 180B (as my mate's Datsun 1600 was good) and a Renault 12 which had won Wheels Car of the Year Award in 1971. Kays Hire Car was in fact renting the Renaults and I hired one and drove to Ararat and back one weekend. I was hooked and thus begun my association with Renaults and later with Alpines.

After sussing out deals from a few dealerships, I ended up buying a new R12 GL from East Ivanhoe Motors in October 1972 for \$2815. The dealer also gave me a good trade in of \$450 for my Mini. Not long after, I saw my ex Mini speeding down Pitt Street Eltham, where my flatmates and I lived, with five blokes in it!

On 6 December 1972, I was going to work in my new R12 GL and a delivery van crossed my path out of a blind alley on my right and we collided. I think he was in a hurry to finish his run by lunch time. Because he was on my right, I was liable, and I had to pay for the damage to my car and his van. Not a good start!!

One of its big adventures was our honeymoon trip. We were married on 15 December 1973 and honeymooned in New Caledonia where we even hired a R12 to tour the island. After our honeymoon, we travelled back to Melbourne via Lakes Entrance and then decided to travel to Brisbane and Bribie Island to meet Dot's mum for New Year's Eve with stopovers at Wollongong and Sydney

In New Caledonia, we met Adrian and Shirley from Perth and they invited us over to stay with them. "Why not?" We travelled from Brisbane on 5 January 1974 with stopovers in Surfers Paradise, Grafton and Gunnedah, where we became stranded

. due to the flooding of the Namoi River. After the river subsided, we pushed on with stopovers at Wyalong, Mildura and Peterborough until we met up with Adrian and Shirley near Port Augusta on 13 January 1974.

Prior to our honeymoon, I was employed in the rail area of the Department of Shipping and Transport in Melbourne. A controversial proposal at the time was that the Commonwealth Railways, as it was then known, would be replacing timber with concrete sleepers on their rail lines. A trial was conducted on the Port Augusta to Whyalla line. Seeing we were in Port Augusta, I decided we would have a look at the line. This took us through the town rubbish tip. I don't think Dot appreciated me bringing work with me on our honeymoon.

We met up with Adrian and Shirley and proceeded to travel west to Perth along the Eyre Highway. At that time, it was just a gravel road and was not completely sealed to the WA border until 1976. We made our way dodging the corrugations, sometimes travelling off track. At night we camped under the stars.



[Great to see that after several false starts, Barry finally saw the light and bought a French car. Ed.]

My cars & their stories (cont)

French Car Club of Canberra Inc
Annual General Meeting
26 September 2023
MINUTES

We reached Perth on 19 January and had a great time seeing the sights and doing some fishing off Mandurah. We left Perth a few days later and headed to Albany via Margaret River and then back on the Eyre Highway towards Adelaide. We celebrated hitting the sealed road at the fruit fly checkpoint at Ceduna. When the inspector asked us to open the boot, he spotted a carton of “Lucky Strike” cigarettes that we had bought duty free in Sydney on our return from Noumea. We offered him a pack and he invited us in for a beer in his airconditioned station. What a relief after the drive across the Nullarbor during a hot January with no air conditioning in the Renault.

We continued through Adelaide and reached Portland in Victoria on 2 February 1974 to see Dot’s brother and other family. We arrived back in Melbourne on 3 February after travelling a total of nearly 10,600 miles. The car performed great, and it only required renewal of the front brake disc pads when we had arrived in Melbourne from Sydney prior to Christmas. Its next big task was to move from Melbourne and live in Canberra.

There were only another two incidents in its life. On 6 May 1977 I collided with a Volvo which went through a give way sign. The \$720 damage was fixed by Etana Smash Repairs and partly covered by insurance. On 29 July 1978, it broke down at Yass and found it had a blown head gasket. After that it performed well until I sold it on 28 April 1986 for \$1300 after more than 13 years of service after which we bought a Ford Laser

**Stay tuned for the next thrilling chapter of Barry’s Cars in the November issue of French Car Torque.
Spoiler alert: Another Renault 12**

Present

Brad Pillans, Neil Birch, Lisa Molvig, Barry McAdie, Leigh McEwan
Dave Rowell, Colin Handley, Joel Krewaz, Greg Francis
Neil Sperring, Charles Birch. Allan Lance

Apologies

Ross Stephens. Ian Brock, Glen Bryden. Bill McNamee

Minutes of the 2022 AGM

It was pointed out that the motion to accept the 2021 AGM minutes was seconded by either Greg Francis or Barry McAdie, not Greg McAdie.
Motion: With that error noted, Brad moved that the minutes of the 2022 AGM be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting, seconded Lisa. Carried.

President’s Report

Brad provided a summary of club activities for the year and thanked all club members for their participation in club meetings and events.

Financial Report

The audited financial statement to 30 June 2023 was presented, showing a balance of \$19,663.46.
Neil Birch moved that the report be accepted, seconded Barry McAdie.
Brad thanked the outgoing Committee and declared all positions vacant and asked Barry McAdie to conduct the election of Committee members.

Election of office bearers:

President: Brad Pillans, nominated by Colin Handley, seconded Barry McAdie.

Vice-President: Colin Handley, nom. by Barry McAdie, seconded Brad Pillans.

Secretary: nobody accepted nomination, left vacant.

Treasurer: Neil Birch, nominated by Barry McAdie, seconded Greg Francis.

These positions were elected unanimously and unopposed.

The meeting made the following appointments.

Technical Officers: Bill McNamee and Barry McAdie.

Magazine: Brad Pillans and Lisa Molvig.

Membership Secretary: Barry McAdie.

Website: Leigh McEwan and Mitch Jamieson-Curran

Social Secretary: Lisa Molvig

General Committee: Lisa Molvig and Leigh McEwan

Public Officer: Barry McAdie

CACTMC delegates: Neil Sperring and Greg Francis

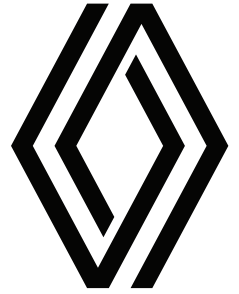
Registrars: Brad Pillans and Lisa Molvig.

The meeting decided not to have a position of **Event Coordinator**.

The meeting closed at 8:42 pm and was followed immediately by the September general meeting.

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**French Car Club of Canberra Inc
General Meeting
24 September 2024
MINUTES**



1. Present

Lisa Molvig	Neil Sperring
Greg Francis	Mike Ford
Barry McAdie	Jim Taylor
Lester Martin	Brad Pillans
John Hyslop	Linda Hyslop
Colin Handley	Ross Stephens

2. Apologies

Bill McNamee	Dave Rowell
Joel Krewaz	Bernard Wright
Neil Birch	Leigh McEwan

3. Introduction

The meeting opened at 8.25 pm.
Brad Pillans welcomed everyone to the meeting,

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

Motion: Brad moved that the minutes of the August meeting be accepted, seconded Mike. Carried.

5. Financial report

Our Account balance with Bendigo Bank is \$1,440.26, with three Term Deposits. For noting.

6. General Business

CACTMC report

CACTMC President, Greg Francis has written to all clubs asking them to lift their game. Less than 40% of delegates attend monthly meetings, so information from meetings isn't being passed to club members.

Still no club has put their hand up to run Wheels 2025. Much discussion on what constitutes club membership for CRS registration – family, joint, or single membership? Shannons has a new contact for sponsorship; no decision, yet, on Wheels sponsorship. AGM is October 10.

Social

Today, twelve club members visited the storage unit of FCCC member Graham Crockett to view his classic car collection. We then went to a nearby bakery for coffee and pastries. Upcoming events are French car days in Sydney (29/9), Melbourne (27/10) and Canberra (2/11)

7. Other business

Thanks to Greg for organising the welcome event for the Bean car which has been driven from London to Australia by an Australian couple. It was held at the Spanish club. See report in the last newsletter

8. Close and next meeting

The meeting closed at 8:48 pm. The next club meeting is scheduled for the Raiders Club in Weston, at 8pm on Tuesday 22nd October. This will be the club's AGM.



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