



French Car Torque

Magazine of the French Car Club of Canberra



November 2025

Contents



ALPINE, AMILCAR, BALLOT, BERLIET, BUGATTI, CITROEN, CLEMENT-BAYARD, DARC 'MAT, DARRACQ, DE DION, DELAGE, DELAHAYE, DELAUNAY-BELLEVILLE, DYNA PANHARD, FACEL VEGA, GORDINI, GREGOIRE, HOTCHKISS, HURTU, LA BUIRE, LAGO-TALBOT, LIGER, LORRAINE-DIETRICH, MAB, MAJOLA, MATRA, MOTOBLOC, PANHARD ET LEVASSOR, PEUGEOT, RENAULT, SALMSON, SIMCA, TALBOT, TURCAT-MERY, VOISIN.

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On the cover A Citroen SM, owned by Paul James, flanked by two Citroen 2CV's at French Car Day 2025
Image: Brad Pillans

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,

Sue and I have just returned from a two-week holiday in Aotearoa New Zealand, aka the Land of the Long-Lost Vowel – if you know what a chully bun is then you know what I mean...

We flew into Queenstown and rented a (very ordinary) Toyota Corolla station wagon for 10 days of touring around Fiordland, Southland and Otago. Highlights included a day trip and cruise on Milford Sound, bush walking around Te Anau, the moonshine museum in Gore and a memorable dinner at arguably Queenstown's finest restaurant, the Botswana Butchery, where I ate the best-ever venison accompanied by a top Central Otago Pinot Noir.



While we were in Queenstown, we visited the historic gold-mining town of Arrowtown, where fortunes were won and lost during the gold rush that began in the 1860s. The local museum was well-worth a visit, as was the Chinese section of town, and the historic post-office (the second oldest PO in New Zealand). My poor imitation of Queen Victoria is shown at the left.

Then we flew from Queenstown to Wellington, where we caught up with old friends Malcolm and Margaret Edgar – Malcolm has been the Secretary of the Peugeot Car Club of Wellington for more than 40 years(!) and was Secretary when I was club President there in the early 1990s. Another Wellington highlight was a visit to Zealandia – a predator-free enclosure that provides safe habitat for many birds and New Zealand's famous, but endangered reptile, the tuatara.

Although we spent two weeks in New Zealand, French cars were rarely sited, especially in the southern South Island. A large car show in Te Anau was a case in point – not a single French car among more than 100 vehicles on display.

Fuel prices in New Zealand are high, though diesel fuel (NZ\$1.80/litre) is significantly cheaper than petrol (NZ\$2.80). The price differential arises because diesel vehicles pay a road user charge (RUC), a government tax that funds road maintenance, based on the distance travelled rather than fuel bought at the pump.

Meanwhile, back in Canberra, our club has, once again, been invited to display a small contingent of cars at the French Sounds of Summer, at the French Embassy on Sunday 30th November. All club members are invited to attend, whether you are displaying a car or not, and you can register here:

[French Sounds of Summer – Célébrons le premier jour de l'été à Canberra](#)

Our next club meeting will be held at 8 pm at the Raiders Club on Tuesday 25 November, with dinner and drinks from 7 pm. Please come along and share your stories with other club members.

Au revoir,

BRAD

Brad Pillans, Club President

P.S. This month's issue of French Car Torque is a joint effort between Joel (new editor) and Brad (old editor). The next issue will be January 2026, by which time I expect that Joel will be fully inducted. We both wish all our club members a safe and enjoyable Christmas break

2025-26 FCC COMMITTEE

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Brad Pillans



CLUB EVENTS 2025

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

30 November **French Sounds of Summer** at the French Embassy
Details to be confirmed.

9 December Christmas get-together at Canberra Yacht Club.
Details to be confirmed.



This the Renault, Gordini dominant, contingent from Victoria at the French Car Day at the Spanish Club on 1 November.

See more about the French Car Day below in Local Events.

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



This Spanish, then French, gentleman reminisced about working on the Citroen 2CV production line in the 1960s. His short stint with Citroen in Paris, attaching the accelerator and clutch cables, allowed his father to gain a workers permit, a job with Citroen at the Levallois-Perret plant, then citizenship. His father stayed with Citroen, working on 2CVs, for the rest of his working career.

French Car Drives in 2025

These occur on the 4th Sunday of even months (except December). If you have any suggestions of places to visit in 2026, please send me an email on reno1338@hotmail.com. Lisa Molvig, Social Secretary

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

Citroen 1975 2cv 250 van

This LHD vehicle has been restored in France, including an engine upgrade to 602 cc. Such a delight to drive and has potential to be used as a marketing tool if sensitively sign written. \$22,500. Viewing in Moruya. Contact Ian 0404 821 153 or thegamboli@gmail.com



Citroen DS drive shaft

Contact Manfred: 0408 232 273

1962 Peugeot 403 motor

Complete in good condition \$500. Also 4x 16" wheels and old tyres with stainless steel trim - free.

Contact Peter Withington 0407 940 918 Batemans Bay area.

Citroen 2cv 1983

One for the adventurer, boasting the Swiss conversion to 4WD and powered by a Visa engine., this vehicle will truly go anywhere and at speed. The Swiss conversion comes at a cost of \$10,000 and this 2cv is priced at \$20,000. Viewing in Bega

Contact Ian: 0404 821 153 or thegamboli@gmail.com



1978 Citroen four speed manual Pallas 2400 sedan.

Mechanically faultless throughout. Maintained by one owner since 1991. No smash, body very straight. Exterior and interior need restoration. \$3,500. firm. Contact Ross (02) 6247 5345.

Peugeot 505 STI auto sedan

Not going, sell whole or parts, cheap
Contact Neville at Bombala 0429 168 595



CLASSIFIEDS

For sale, parts and wrecking

Renault 8 Gordini for sale

Superb R8 Gordini 1296cc, 5 speed, built January 1967 Melbourne. Fully restored copy 1969 R8G Monte Carlo rally winner with 2017 Targa Tasmania livery. Roll cage, Halda Twin Master, engineer's report and other rally instrumentation. Perfect mechanically rebuilt by Rob Sealey in Melbourne. Featured in Aust Classic Car, January 2008. Full details including spares. Contact James Coleborne, Stockinbingal 2725 M: 0434 604 865 jcolebor@bigpond.net.au Offers over \$80k.

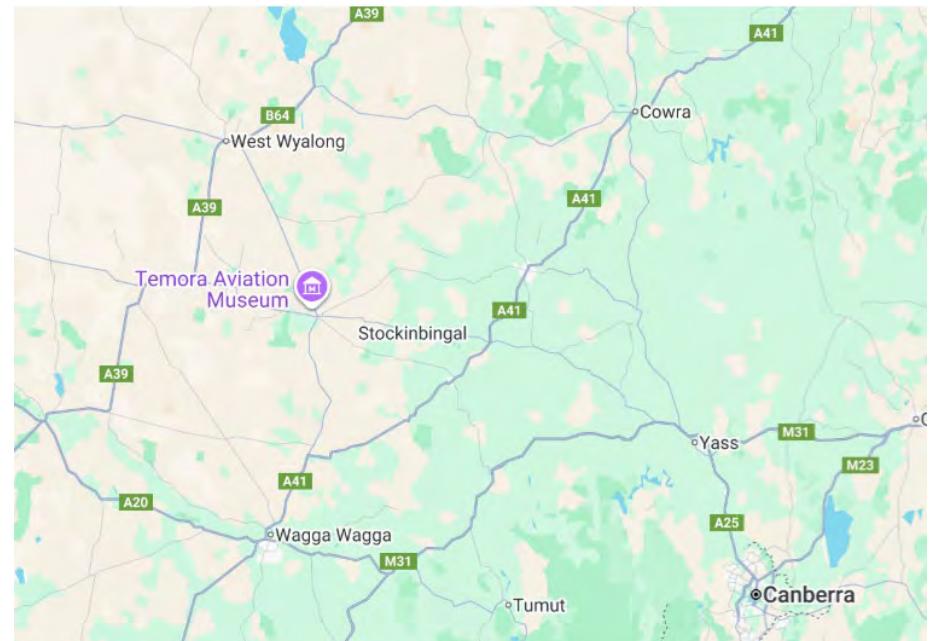


Peugeot 203, 403, 404

Second hand parts for sale. Contact Colin Handley 0414 484 398



Where is Stockinbingal? See the Google map, below.



13 countries in 28 days - Europe 2025.

Luke Drady (Renophile), FCCC

Part 1: Barcelona, Spain and Arles, France.

My wife, Karen, and I finally made it to Europe this year for a 28-day bus/train tour of Europe, finishing off with a lovely 7 day Mediterranean cruise.

For me, half the excitement of our trip was the prospect of seeing many types of Renault and other French autos, especially in France! To my surprise the majority of Renaults that we did see on our tour were in Spain and France. Germany probably had the least amount, with their abundance of efficient and expensive Deutsche makes and models.

Our first stop of the tour was Barcelona, where our hotel was just a few hundred meters away from a rather large Renault/Dacia dealership. Being a whirlwind trip as part of a tour group, our free time was limited. I managed to sneak away after breakfast on the second day to pop into the dealership just around the corner. I noticed the dealership didn't open until 10am, however I was there at just after 9am and the doors were open to the Renault section, so in I popped. The staff were busy with people dropping their cars off for service, meaning I was left alone to quickly browse and take photos of the multitude of models they have and we don't!



The first model to strike my eye was the newly released Renault Rafale in striking red. This car was an e-tech hybrid. The Rafale has two electric motors coupled to a conventional 1.2 litre, 3 cylinder petrol engine. It uses the electric motors for lower speed driving and for added power when there is a need for harder acceleration and torque. Together they muster an impressive 197bhp with the 0-100 km/h sprint completed in 8.9 seconds. Given my article is not a car review, I will only be including my own photos. (I am happy to pass on the road tests to our editor if requested). There is also a 4x4 300bhp version, which I think would be an awesome car and do well here in Oz given its decent power. Very much what Aussies seem to 'need'. Priced in Spain at 53,500 euros and is considered a Renault flagship model.





The next unusual model I was keen to check out was quite elegant Espace. First impressions were that it wasn't as large as I expected it to be. I think Renault have decreased its size to make it more comparable to the Honda Odyssey. This was later confirmed when I came across an older Espace from the early 2000's which was much larger and boxier.

The Espace pictured was also a full e-tech hybrid with similar specs to the Rafale mentioned above, though limited to 200bhp. It must have been the top of the line; decked out in cream, with sumptuous leather, moonroof etc. They retail in Spain between 40,000 and 47,000 euros with both 5 and 7 seat options.



A car I couldn't quite get to, so I had to settle for a photo from outside the showroom was the very new R4 full e-tech electric. I managed to see the pricing and specs sheet to notice that it retailed between 29,990 and 34,373 euros, again depending on model and options chosen. This was the only time I was able to see one of these new electric R4's in my travels, aside from numerous big billboard adverts. Our timing was never quite right to get into a showroom again. Personally, I prefer the retro R5 over the R4 if I had to choose.



As I left the dealership, my eye caught a striking and very funky froggy green R5 electric, which I understand are selling extremely well in Europe. A great little city car with looks not too far akin to its older ancestor. The little green 5 was parked just outside the dealership, probably a demo being prepared for a test drive by a lucky and prospective customer. Behind the funky 5 was a Dacia Jogger. Unfortunately, I could not get into that part of the dealership to find out more. I must admit, it is a model I hadn't heard of in the Dacia range.





On the road to Arles (France)

After leaving Barcelona we hit the road on our tour bus to the beautiful French town of Arles; place of a huge Roman amphitheater and, of course, the residence of Vincent Van Gough where he came to escape the crowds between 1888 and 1889.

Just outside the main township of Arles was our hotel; the area resembling an industrial like Fyshwick! After unpacking I thought I would go for a late afternoon walk. The streets were very quiet being a Sunday. Then low and behold sitting all on its lonesome was a rather beaten up Renault 4 locked up in an old industrial yard. It had a quite apt number plate '765 ARL 13', very cool I thought. I would say that this little R4 is still a runner given it was free of dust, grime and cobwebs despite looking a little worse for wear cosmetically.





All aboard to Cannes:

As we boarded the bus to head to Cannes, I was hopeful that now we were in France that I would see many more of these older Renault treasures. Sadly, this was not to be for quite some time. Many, many new Renaults, Peugeots and Citroen were travelling the large triple lane highways on the way to Cannes, but never an oldie!

On the bus to Cannes

The following morning there was a lot more bustle going on as it was Monday. We had about 20 minutes to kill before we had to jump on the bus to head to Cannes. I noticed the large carpark adjacent the chemist warehouse and supermarket was starting to fill with lots of fairly modern cars, many of them French of course. However, there was one older Renault treat for me, a little R5 SD, circa mid 1980's. The SD model was a lower spec with approx 54BHP from its 1.6l engine. Not a fast beast either claiming the 0-100 km/h is a lazy 16.5 seconds. Like the R4 mentioned and shown above, the little R5 was not pristine, but well used, presumably as a daily driver.

One thing I loved was the 130km/ speed limits – awesome! The one treat that I did happen to see while sitting on the coach was an immaculate bright yellow Renault Sport truck. I was so excited that I didn't even have a chance to get my phone out for a snap. It all happened so quickly. All I can say is that it resembled the large Renault Sport trucks I have seen on the TV that take the Grand Prix cars to the European races. Odd given that Renault Sport doesn't technically exist anymore. I hoped that I would see it again, but alas never did. I wonder what was inside the trailer and where it was heading? A retro event maybe? I will never know.



The European laws state that coach drivers must have a break after 3 hours, which was good for us as we got to stretch our legs regularly. At one of our truck stops I noticed a very new silver Renault 5 Electric being charged. A car that I saw quite a lot on our travels and from what I understand has already won a number of awards in Europe for affordability and pure retro funkiness.

Part 2 of my article will concentrate on our arrival in Cannes, Monaco, Nice and beyond, where we did see many different Renault models and had the fortune of staying right next door to a huge Renault dealership!

Buying the ‘Dream Drive’

Luke Baker, FCCC



I've been lucky enough to finally score one of my dream cars: a Series 1 Peugeot 504 Coupé—arguably one of the prettiest Peugeot's ever made.

This particular car, a 1973 504 Coupé, was originally delivered to the UK market as a right-hand-drive model. According to Roland Pym—the go-to authority on 504 Coupés and Cabriolets—Peugeot UK imported around 220 Coupés and Cabriolets from France and commissioned Hodec Engineering Ltd. to convert them from left- to right-hand drive. My car is one of those early conversions.

In 2011 it was brought to Australia by Leon Schulz in Melbourne, then later sold to Rodney Piggott in NSW, from whom I purchased it. At some point it received a fresh coat of paint, moving from a lighter blue to the deep blue it now wears, and a shiny set of 505 mag wheels were bolted on. Otherwise, it remains in original condition, still powered by the 2.0L TI Kugelfischer injected engine fitted to early Coupés and Cabriolets before the Series 2 cars adopted the V6.

Owning one of these always felt like a distant dream—just another item on the long list of “one day” cars. Recently, I found myself searching for a classic daily driver and I had my eye on a few different options, with a Coupé being one option.

Knowing how rarely these Coupés come up for sale in Australia, I even found myself considering importing a restoration project from Europe after an upcoming overseas trip—though that was unlikely to happen.

Then, as luck would have it, this car appeared on the Peugeot Car Club of NSW Facebook page in early August. It was truly a right-place, right-time moment. I went to see it within a few days and was instantly sold on it. For a 50-year-old Peugeot that hasn't undergone a full nut-and-bolt restoration, it was as close to perfect as I could hope for. I brought it back to Canberra in mid-September, tidied up a few small issues, and had it registered by late September.

Of course, as you'd expect with a car of this age, there are still a few jobs to tackle—most notably a new head gasket (hello, Christmas holiday project) and some minor rust repair. These should keep me busy for the next couple of months.

My plan is simple: enjoy it as a weekend cruiser, take it to shows, and have some fun. I've had a lot of enjoyable moments in various Peugeot's over the years, and I'm hoping to keep that tradition alive with this one.



French Car Day, Spanish Club Narrabundah, 1 November 2025

Lisa Molvig and Barry McAdie, FCCC

A bright sunny day greeted all participants at the annual Canberra French Car Day sponsored by Shannons Insurance and held at the Spanish- Australia Club in Narrabundah on 1 November 2025.

The last-minute change of venue from Telopea Park School to the Spanish Australian Club didn't impact the attendance, it may have actually increased from last year.

In all, there were some 30 cars on display augmented by contingents from Victoria and NSW. They comprised 3 Alpines, 11 Renaults, 5 Citroens, 10 Peugeots and 1 Talbot Darraq, and a Peugeot PSV10 racing bike.

Many thanks to those who attended from interstate, we had several cars travel from Sydney and Melbourne.

Cars which attended were:

Renault: R17TL, Megane RS, Alpine GTA, R8 Gordini, R12 1.4 wagon, Clio RS, Clio, R8 Gordini, Alpine A110, Megane Trophy, Megane Red Bull Racing, Alpine A110 Legende, R25 Bacarra, R25 GTX, Megane GT220
Peugeot: RCZ, P508 saloon and touring, P306 S16, P406 coupe, P504 coupe, P403, P203 wagon, P505GTi, P205 GTi, P308

Citroen: ID19, D Special, DS Safari, SM, three 2CV.

There was discussion about the future of this event, should we keep it separate from Telopea School fete or not. It will be interesting to know what members think.

The winners of the trophies, as voted by those who were present at the event, were:

Best Citroen: Bruce McCubbin for his 2CV;
Best Peugeot: Tony Watson for his 203;
Best Renault: Dave Cavanaugh for his R8 rally car;
Best Outright: Greg Spackman for his Talbot; and
Best Modern: Paul Bridgeman for his Alpine Legende.

A big thanks to Shannons for sponsoring the event and the trophies; to the Spanish- Australia Club for hosting the event after the Telopea Park School fete, our usual venue, was cancelled and to all the participants, especially those from interstate, which made the event a great success.

As usual, some of us reconvened at the Kingston Hotel at 6pm for drinks and a meal. Next time, we must remember to make table reservations as the pub is very popular especially on a Saturday.



Pictures by Lisa Molvig, Ole Andersen and Brad Pillans



A Family Member moves on

Bernard Wright
FCCC

New home for a good old Canberra 404

Last week I sold a 404 that my late mother had bought in 1971 (ex works 14 January). Its history was fairly typical of the brand story in Canberra – sold by Corin Motors, serviced initially by the late and highly respected Cam and Lew Edwards and later by Alpine Motors, as well as some work by Bill and Tim Maher.

(My mother had a lucky break - the choice had come down to an Austin Tasman or a 404)

The car had been on historic plates for several years and I would like to record my great thanks to Brad and to Lisa for their great help as club registrars – the revised historic vehicle scheme has added to their workload and, like everybody else, I am very grateful to them.

I would also like to thank Brad for his friendship over the years and salute his patient and constructive leadership of the club over such a busy time – the amalgamation of the former clubs, Covid, the new historic vehicle regime -the list goes on. We have been so fortunate to have Brad and Lisa in their key roles.

My warm thanks to other club members, including Bill, Barry, the incredible Peter Rees and the many others who have made the FCC the success that it is.

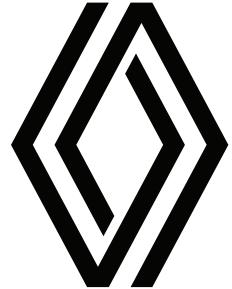
Whilst for technical purposes I have enjoyed being a French car driver, I must confess that for club purposes it has been more a case of being a passenger than a driver!

My thanks and best wishes to all in the FCCC.



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November 2025

16

French Car Club of Canberra Inc
Annual General Meeting
Raiders Club, Weston
28 October 2025
MINUTES



1. Present

| | |
|---------------|---------------|
| Brad Pillans | Greg Francis |
| Neil Sperring | Bill McNamee |
| Leigh McEwan | Mike Ford |
| Colin Handley | Ross Stephens |
| Lisa Molvig | Charles Birch |
| Neil Birch | Joel Krewaz |

2. Apologies

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Dave Rowell | Bernard Wright |
| Barry McAdie | Sue McCarthy |
| Peter McCarthy | |

3. Introduction

The meeting opened at 8.05 pm.
Brad Pillans welcomed everyone to the meeting
and mentioned those who have apologised.

4. Minutes of the 2024 AGM

Motion: Brad moved that the minutes, of the 2024 AGM be accepted, seconded Joel.
Carried.

5. President's report

The club has had another very successful year, with a range of well attended events and monthly club meetings at the Raiders Weston Club. My thanks to the outgoing club committee and to all members who participated.

Club membership hovered around 60 to 70 members, with 26 members having vehicles on concessional registration (21 in ACT and 5 in NSW).

5. President's report (cont)

Our major club events continued to be Wheels (in March), Battle of Waterloo (June) and French Car Day (November). A new event, French Sounds of Summer, hosted by the French Embassy in December, saw eight club cars on display, just inside the gates to the embassy.

French Car Drives, organised by Lisa Molvig, and held in conjunction with the Rover Club, continued to be popular – many thanks to Lisa. Destinations included, Googong, Murrumbateman, Mulligans Flat, Valerie's Sunroom Café in Goulburn and Strathnairn

Other events included a Bastille Day brunch at Breizh Café in Ainslie and a summer BBQ at The Shed in Queanbeyan – our thanks again, to Colin Handley for hosting the latter. Several members also attended Wheels of Wamboin.

Brad thanked the outgoing committee and moved his President's Report be accepted, seconded by Colin, carried.

6 Financial Report

Neil presented the Annual Audited Accounts and Report of the FCCC and moved that they be accepted
Leigh seconded, motion carried.



7. Election of Office Bearers

Brad thanked all members of the outgoing committee and declared all positions vacant. Brad invited Neil Sperring to conduct the election of new office-bearers.

President: Brad Pillans, nominated by Greg, seconded Joel.

Vice-President: Colin Handley, nominated by Brad, seconded Lisa.

Secretary & magazine editor: Joel Krewaz, nominated by Leigh, seconded by Brad.

Treasurer: Neil Birch, nominated by Brad, seconded by Colin.

Social/Events Secretary: Lisa Molvig, nominated by Colin, seconded by Greg.

These positions were elected unanimously and unopposed.

The meeting made the following appointments.

General Committee: Leigh McEwan and Mike Ford

CACTMC delegates: Neil Sperring, Ross Stephens and Greg Francis

Website: Leigh McEwan

Magazine: Brad Pillans and Lisa Molvig.

Technical Officers: Bill McNamee and Barry McAdie.

Membership Secretary: Barry McAdie.

Public Officer: Barry McAdie

Registrars: Brad Pillans and Lisa Molvig.

8. Meeting close

The meeting closed at 8:34 pm and was followed immediately by the October general meeting.

French Car Club of Canberra Inc
General Meeting, Raiders Club
28 October 2025
MINUTES



1. Present

| | |
|---------------|---------------|
| Greg Francis | Mike Ford |
| Leigh McEwan | Brad Pillans |
| Lisa Molvig | Ross Stephens |
| Neil Birch | Charles Birch |
| Neil Sperring | Bill McNamee |
| Joel Krewaz | Colin Handley |

2. Apologies

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Dave Rowell | Bernard Wright |
| Barry McAdie | Sue McCarthy |
| Peter McCarthy | |

3. Introduction

The meeting opened at 8.35 pm.
Brad Pillans welcomed everyone to the meeting.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

Brad moved that the corrected minutes of the September meeting, covering the public liability insurance premium increase and the balance change in previous accounts, be accepted.
Seconded Neil, carried

5. Financial report

As per the AGM audited accounts for the financial year ending 30 June 2025.

6. CACTMC report

Greg informed the meeting that the Wheels gathering for next year is still up in the air. Peter Atkins, who is looking after this activity is away with no progress on the details of around the insurance for that specific event from the park management.

Conditional Registration Logbooks need to be both complete and legible. It is a basic requirement that confers on all classic car club members, a valuable privilege, and not a right

By Law information can be found here

https://www.cactmc.org.au/docs/CACTMC_ByLaws.pdf

8. Social

Lisa covered the upcoming French Car Day, which was moved from Telopea Park School, due to cancellation of the fete, and will be at the Spanish Club Narrabundah on 1 November. Commencing at 9:00AM. Food will be available. French Sounds of Summer is on again at the French Embassy with a date change to November 30th. A small number of spaces are available for display cars from the club. The club registrar will check for suitable cars.

The Strathnairn coffee morning was a success with good turnout of French Car Club members and associated Rover Car Club friends. It was good to see a 504 Coupe and a Citroen SM in the car park on the day.

The proposed Christmas lake side event would not be able to have the Crepe Van in attendance. The venue has changed to the Yacht Club on 9 December. To be confirmed.

9. Close and next meeting

The meeting closed at 9.23 pm.
The next club meeting is scheduled for the Raiders Club in Weston, at 8pm on Tuesday 25th of November, with 7 pm dinner. All welcome.



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