



# French Car Torque

Magazine of the French Car Club of Canberra



February 2026

**Cover Page:**

A vintage photo, circa 1970, of a fine lineup of Peugeot 403s near Yarrangobilly, Kosciuszko National Park. Photo by Mike Garrett  
See the article below for a history of the 403s design.



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## Bonjour Francophiles

In last month's column I mentioned my son putting his Peugeot 406Hdi on club plates in Victoria and that he had not joined the Peugeot Car Club of Victoria (PCCV), opting instead to join a non-marque club.

My thanks to PCCV Secretary, Tim Farmilo, for picking me up on a factual error – while the eligible age a vehicle for club plates in NSW and ACT is 30 years, in Victoria it is a very reasonable 25 years. I should have worked that out because my son's 406 is a late model and therefore less than 30 years old.

Tim was also keen to encourage my son to join the PCCV – a simple inter-club transfer of membership would not require the car to go over the pits for a retest. And, my son would get the benefit of the monthly edition of *Torque*, the excellent magazine of the PCCV. I have forwarded Tim's email to my son, and we will see what happens...

This month's newsletter is transitioning to a new layout, in the capable hands of the new editor, Joel. While the previous template suited me, it was rather clunky and not easy for someone else to pick up. Joel is in the process of developing a new template, with a style that suits him. The aim is make the production of the newsletter as easy as possible.

This month's cover image of a trio of 403's was taken by Mike Garrett in about 1970, three years before I bought my first car, also a 403. Like Mike, I discovered that 403's,

with their good ground clearance, were perfect for traversing bush tracks, farm paddocks and the like. I did get bogged a couple of times and had to be unceremoniously pulled out by tractor, courtesy of a local farmer, but otherwise my 403 coped easily with most off-bitumen trips that I made.

The famous 'camping body' – front seats that could be laid flat to create a spacious bed – were also a handy feature for bush trips in the 403 (also a feature of the 404).

**Our club meeting this month is an end of summer BBQ at "The Shed", in Queanbeyan, hosted by Colin Handley, at 5.30 pm on Tuesday 24 February. Food is provided by the club, BYO drinks.**

Au revoir,

**BRAD**

Brad Pillans  
Club President



# 2025-2026 FCC COMMITTEE

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A vintage Michelin Man air compressor –

# CLUB EVENTS 2026

## Tue 24 February

[Summer BBQ at The Shed in Queanbeyan, hosted by Colin Handley](#)

Incorporates monthly meeting

## Sun March 22

9:00 am - 3:00 pm

[Wheels of Canberra at Thoroughbred Park](#)

Heritage Motoring Display

## Tue March 24

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

[French Car Club of Canberra – monthly meeting](#)

Raiders Club 1 Liardet St, Weston Creek, ACT, Australia

## Sun April 26

10:00 am - 1:30 pm

[French Car Drive to visit the shed of a FCCC member in Sutton.](#)

Details to be confirmed.

## Tue April 28

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

[French Car Club of Canberra – monthly meeting](#)

Raiders Club 1 Liardet St, Weston Creek, ACT, Australia

## Tue May 26

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

[French Car Club of Canberra – monthly meeting](#)

Raiders Club 1 Liardet St, Weston Creek, ACT, Australia

Carbeque, a Dutch company

<https://www.carbecue.com/shop/citroen-2cv/>

will do you a beautiful French Car BBQ. It comes in two French flavours, 2CV and Renault 4.



# CLASSIFIEDS

For sale, parts and wrecking

## Hubcaps – Peugeot

Three early Peugeot hubcaps for sale, \$15 each.



Contact Lisa Molvig

[reno1338@hotmail.com](mailto:reno1338@hotmail.com)

Classifieds



The Council of ACT Motor Clubs Inc. presents

## WHEELS of Canberra '26

An Autumn Show & Shine for all Marques

Celebrating: Military & Service Vehicles  
and classic MGs



In aid of:



Thoroughbred Park Canberra



**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2026**

Exhibitor entry 8:00 to 10:00

Public Entry 10:00 to 13:30

Enquiries: [info@CACTMC.org.au](mailto:info@CACTMC.org.au)

Details: [https://cactmc.org.au/cactmc\\_wheels.html](https://cactmc.org.au/cactmc_wheels.html)

## French Car Drive- Sunday February 22- Gunning

It was a humid overcast day for our first outing of the year, but the rain didn't arrive until we were safely home. This time we visited the home of Simon and Patti, Rover Owners Club, in Gunning.



Their historic house was the former police barracks and housed the magistrate's court, police accommodation and prison cells in the underground cellar.

We had 10 members from the FCCC- Michael F, Nick and Helen, John and Linda, Lawrie and Jane, Neil, Charles, Lisa,

Chris- plus about 16 people from the Rover club. Everyone brought a plate of food to share for morning tea.

We toured the house and some were brave enough to go into the cellar. Then there was a tour of Simon's shed where he is restoring a Rover P4 and Triumph Herald, plus looking at the cars which members drove. The French ones included P407, P3008, Xantia and DS. Rover club members drove a broad



variety, including Rover, Jaguar, Range Rover, Ford Zephyr and Mercedes. Many thanks to Simon and Patti for their hospitality, visitors stayed for more than two hours enjoying the company and cars. **Lisa Molvig**



## Minutes of the General Meeting 27 January 2026 Raiders Weston

### Present

Brad Pillans, Neil Birch, Ross Stephens, Bryan Clarke, Charles Birch, Mike Ford, Leigh McEwan, Barry Mc Adie, Lisa Molvig

### Apologies

Bill McNamee, Greg Francis , Neil Sperring, Joel Krewaz

### Introduction

The meeting opened at 8:09 pm.

Brad wished everyone a Happy New Year.

### Minutes of the previous meeting

Brad moved that the minutes of the November meeting be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting, seconded Lisa.

Carried.

### Financial Report

Working Account balance is \$572.10, with 3 Term Deposits totalling \$15,835.71.

Brad asked if we have enough in the working account. Treasurer said there is enough, provided there is nothing out of the ordinary, he noted that if anyone has ideas needing large expenditure, they will need to take into account the lead time waiting for one of the Term Deposits to mature.

Motion: Neil Birch moved that the report be accepted, seconded by Bryan. Carried.

### **cactmc.org.au – report:**

Wheels 2026. Pre-purchase entry tickets will cost \$5 each. Tickets purchased on the day will cost \$10 each. Last year tickets were available at a Council meeting before Wheels 2025.

Each club will need to provide Marshals on the day.

### **Social:**

Lisa has put together a calendar of events that were published in latest FCT.

February French Car drive is to the house of a member of the Rover Club in Gunning.

There will be a BBQ at the “Shed” in lieu of a February General Meeting. Lisa elaborated on what was published in FCT.

Brad thanked Lisa for organising the French Car Drives. He is very happy with the way things are going.

### **General Business**

French Embassy Sounds of Summer: Brad suggested that we should thank the embassy for the event again in 2025. Brad offered to write to the embassy thanking them and saying that would like to participate this year as well. The meeting agreed.

### **Close and NEXT MEETING**

The meeting closed at 8:37 pm.

There will be a BBQ at the “Shed” in lieu of a February General Meeting.

**The address is Foster Street, Queanbeyan East.**

A superb **Berliet** veteran car spotted by the editor in the **National Automobile Museum of Tasmania** in Launceston.

<https://namt.com.au/>

A short-lived French make I had not heard of. For more information this link may help, It was in perfect order, as was every other car displayed. Well worth a visit.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berliet>



# The Baby and the Lion



*pininfarina*



Many European coachbuilders (carrossiers to us French car enthusiasts) and car design firms have had productive and, sometimes long, relationships with French car manufacturers. The pre-war era saw many outstanding firms crafting elegant bodies on individual high end French chassis. All the big names, Figoni et Falaschi, Talbot-Lago, Saoutchik, and the more easily remembered Henri Chapron of Citroen DS convertible fame, amongst them.



This is a Talbot Lago Grand Sport by Saoutchik

The adoption of Monocoque (French for 'single hull') or unibody construction on the Traction Avant (another Citroen first in 1934), meant that design

houses needed to try and become more like strategic partners with car manufacturers, as a single successful design could last for decades and be produced in great numbers.

Pininfarina's relationship with Peugeot began in 1951, when Peugeot contracted the Italian design house to style the future Peugeot 403 as the replacement for the aging 203. Sales of the 403 exceeded expectations, selling over 1 million units and cementing the partnership.



Photo from <https://thetransportjournal.com/2017/03/12/cars-of-tintin-series-peugeot-403/>

The above design and execution of the 403 displays the artistry of the Pininfarina design house.

Peugeot models designed, styled and/or bodied by Pininfarina include:

- 403 (berline and long-wheelbase derivatives).
- 403 Cabriolet
- 403 Pickup
- 404 (particularly coupé and cabriolet, with bodies built by Pininfarina).
- 204 berline and break.
- 504 sedan (more on that later)
- coupé and cabriolet (designed and bodied by Pininfarina).
- 104 (certain versions styled by Pininfarina).
- 305 and 505 (design input credited to Pininfarina).
- 604 (styling involvement).
- 205 Cabriolet (bodywork by Pininfarina, based on an in-house hatch).
- Peugeot 306 Cabriolet (again built by Pininfarina).

Surprisingly, the sedan and hatch were actually designed in house at Peugeot.

- Peugeot 406 Coupé (full exterior and interior design plus complete assembly at Pininfarina). In effect, a Pininfarina car. Often considered a Pininfarina masterpiece, and a peak design for Peugeot.
- Peugeot 1007 for which Pininfarina was responsible for styling the production car based on Peugeot's 3-door supermini/mini-MPV featuring signature electric sliding doors launched in 2005.

There were also several Pininfarina Peugeot concepts and one-offs, such as the 504 Break Riviera, 104 Peugeotette, 205 Verve, Griffé 4 and Nautilus. So, from 1951 to 2005 there existed 54 years of successful cooperation between the two companies.

### Pinin Who?



Photo from Wikipedia -

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Battista\\_%27Pinin%27\\_Farina\\_and\\_his\\_son\\_Sergio,\\_ca.\\_1950.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Battista_%27Pinin%27_Farina_and_his_son_Sergio,_ca._1950.jpg)

Battista Farina (born in 1893), was apprenticed in his family's *Stabilimenti Farina* coachbuilding firm before striking out independently in 1930 with financial support from his wife's aunt and friend Vincenzo Lancia. No doubt an advantage to have the founder of Lancia as a supporter. Farina's *Corso Trapani* workshop in Turin, the hub of Italian car manufacturing, focused on custom bodies and small runs for elite clients, producing designs for Lancia, Alfa Romeo, Fiat, and even foreign luxury marques like Cadillac and Rolls-Royce.

In 1951, a pivotal Ferrari partnership began leading to over 60 years of styling nearly all Ferrari production cars, quite the coup (and coupe...apologies). Legend has it that Farina's son Sergio (see above) arranged the meeting and Battista and Enzo Ferrari, both too proud not to not be the host, met in May 1951 at a restaurant in Tortona, Italy, which served as neutral ground between their respective bases in Turin and Modena.

This is the same year Battista's design firm was engaged by Peugeot to style the next range of 403s.

The name change to Pininfarina occurred in the following year, 1952. 'Pinin' meaning youngest brother or baby of the family in the Piedmont dialect of Italian. Pinin was Battista's nickname at home and when used for the company, it distinguished himself from his father's old firm.

### The iconic 504 and Pininfarina

In 1963 Peugeot launched a styling contest between its in-house team (led by Paul Bouvot, Gérard Welter, and Jean-Pierre Prodeau) and Pininfarina for the 504 sedan, Peugeot's new flagship after the 404.

Pininfarina's proposal featured the iconic and innovative trunk detailing (that famous kink) and front lines inspired by, apparently, American cars.

The final 1968 sedan adopted a hybrid: Peugeot's in-house "Sophia Loren eyes" trapezoidal headlights and slatted grille up front, blended with Pininfarina's distinctive rear-end bluff Kamback look.

Pininfarina handled full design and body production for the 504's coupé and cabriolet variants (styled by Franco Martinengo), plus the one-off 504 Break Riviera shooting brake—but not the sedan, wagon, or pickup, which were produced by Peugeot.

Aldo Brovarone at Pininfarina receives credit for key sedan styling cues, though Peugeot's internal studio dominated the saloon's detail execution.

Aldo Brovarone (1926–2020) had a long tenure at Pininfarina, where he rose from assistant stylist in 1952 to chief stylist in the early 1970's. A position he held for 14 years.

Born in Ponderano, Italy, Brovarone trained under masters like Francesco Salomone and Franco Martinengo at Pininfarina after early work at Cisitalia. Strangely, Brovarone's sole confirmed Peugeot contribution was the 504 sedan. However, Aldo was design royalty with Ferraris such as the stunning Dino 206/246 GT, as well as the Superamerica to his credit and topping it off with the F40.



The trapezoidally illuminated Peugeot 504

Peugeot enthusiasts can obtain a Pininfarina masterpiece, designed by the very best designer and design lead in his heyday, for the cost of an elderly family saloon.

Pinin Lux for beer money I say.

Joel Krewaz



# MOST MAKES & MODELS

**SORRY NO CITROENS**

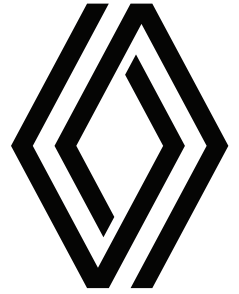
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**11 FCT February 2026**

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