



French Car Torque

Magazine of the French Car Club of Canberra



March 2026

Cover Page:

A veteran Bugatti Type 13 Roadster at the annual Fete des Vendanges, or celebration of the vintage, at the Provencal town of Tarascon in France. See Mike Garrett's article below for more.



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Bonjour Francophiles

Last month's club meeting was an outdoor affair in perfect late summer weather, with some 22 members enjoying a BBQ at The Shed, in Queanbeyan. My thanks to Colin Handley for hosting the event and a pat on the back for the chef/caterer (OK, that was me).



As usual members also enjoyed inspecting the remarkable collection of Peugeots (owned by Colin) and Citroens (owned by Bob Shackley) that are housed in The Shed – see pictures on page 7.

With the Middle East war intensifying, global oil prices have gone through the roof and (predicably) fuel prices have reached painfully high levels at the pump in Australia. Panic buying hasn't helped either, with Bunnings reportedly sold out of its largest size of jerry can and some rural servos sold out of fuel completely. Diesel has been most affected, which means truckies and farmers will take a hit, in particular.

Sue and I have a hybrid fleet of family cars and by that I mean a mix of electric (Peugeot e2008), diesel (P508) and petrol (P404 and Landcruiser). Needless to say our e2008 will be doing most of the driving for the foreseeable future.

Our club meeting this month is back at the Raiders Club on Tuesday 24 March at 8 pm, with dinner and drinks from 7pm

Au revoir,

BRAD

Brad Pillans
Club President



2025-2026 FCC COMMITTEE

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Peugeot was the first company to mass produce motorcycles, beginning production in 1898 with a Peugeot engined Norton winning a first Isle of Man TT race. This vehicle, a single cylinder 3 ½ HP was the 5th registered motorcycle in Tasmania in 1908.

CLUB EVENTS 2026

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

You don't have to give up French classic cars to own an electric car. Paul Arzens, a French engineer and artist, designed and built this one back in 1947. Here it is being returned to the Musée National de l'Automobile (also known as the Schlumpf Collection) in Mulhouse, France.



Photo L'Alsace

<https://www.lalsace.fr/haut-rhin/2015/09/05/l-oeuf-d-arzens-de-retour-des-usa>

You can also see modern French electric cars in Luke Drady's Travel article.

CLASSIFIEDS

For sale, parts and wrecking

Hubcaps – Peugeot

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



Contact Lisa Molvig

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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 22nd March 2026

Exhibitor entry 8:00 to 10:00

Public Entry 10:00 to 13:30

Enquiries: info@CACTMC.org.au

Details: https://cactmc.org.au/cactmc_wheels.html

Famous. Wheels of Canberra 2026, Council of ACT Motor Clubs

Perfect weather for a car show on Sunday 22 March- partly cloudy and mid 20s temperature. A new venue this year, back in the ACT at Thoroughbred Park. Grassed areas between Randwick Road and the racetrack were used, but it was very awkward and cramped. Areas were allotted to general groups of cars, e.g. European, British, Japanese etc, and some specific clubs had reserved areas, e.g. Mercedes. But some clubs far exceeded their allotted areas and were quickly overtaking other groups' space. Plus, access points and "driveways" were being blocked. So, it wasn't very orderly. I struggled to maintain a space for our French car display, even though we only had 3 of the 5 cars booked in the end. But once everyone was in place, it seemed to work okay, and you didn't have to walk far to see all the cars. I don't know how many were there, several hundred is all I can guess. FCCC was represented by Brad (P508), Barry (Alpine A110) and Lisa (P308 and folding Peugeot bike). Luke D couldn't bring his R25 due to lack of spare driver and Luke B couldn't bring his P504 Coupe due to mechanical issues. My R12 also stayed at home due to mechanical issues. A few of our members were there with their "other" cars- Paul (Bentley), Shannon (Mercedes), Luke D (Rolls Royce)- but came to have a chat. If they use this venue again, I hope that they re-think the allocation of space and maintenance of access to all areas. **Lisa Molvig**

Local Event



Photos: Brad Pillans



The Renault Roundup in Victoria 2026

It was a brilliant summer's day to drive from Maldon to Melbourne via the Calder Freeway in my 2018 Alpine A110 to attend the annual Renault Roundup in Melbourne on 15 February. The venue was down by the Yarra River at Pier 35, 263 Lorimer Street, Port Melbourne. I thought my GPS was leading me astray as it seemed to take me on a seemly circuitous route towards Avalon and over the West Gate Bridge away from the city but eventually the entrance came into view highlighted by Dave Cavanagh' R8 tribute rally car. At least 100 Renaults and Alpines were already on display when I arrived all parked against a magnificent

backdrop of boats, cranes, containers etc. marking the Port of Melbourne. Much needed refreshments and food were available from Pier 35. A concours was conducted with the public making judgements on the best presented cars according to the decade of manufacture and prizes were awarded later in the day by Dave Cavanaugh, President of the Renault Car Club of Victoria.



Cars of particular interest were the Alpine A110s of Rob Sealey and John Hardy. John's 1600S Group 4 Works rally car used by private competitors in France in the late 1960s and early 1970s and taken for rallying in Tahiti and then Noumea.



It travelled to Australia aboard a 747 and was fully restored by Alpine Affaire in Ringwood and its first event was the 1995 Grand Prix Rally. John has used the car in many events, including historic racing at Phillip Island and Sandown and in hill climbs at Mount Tarrengower in Maldon.

Other cars of interest were the two 1972 Renault 12 Gordinis that are two of six only right-hand drive R12 Gordinis in the world one of which is owned by Peter Rasmussen.

Some nice Fuegos, a Caravelle and a Floride were also on display and attracted my fancy.



Barry McAdie



Colin's fine collection.



The Citroen Pavillion – heavy with Lights, a Heavy and lone 2CV.



A vehicle to rival Maigret's Citroën Light 15/6H Traction Avant.

Rallye des Ancetres en Tarascon Provence France

Mike Garrett



As part of its annual Fete des Vendanges or celebration of the vintage, the Provencal town of Tarascon this year held an exhibition of fine old French cars and cars from elsewhere in the world built in the early part of the last

century. We were lucky enough to be staying nearby at St Remy de Provence and drove over to witness the spectacle.

As part of the vintage precession and festival there was an opportunity to view the old cars and watch them move off for their run through the wonderful Provencal countryside. There were many fine French marques some that I had not come across before, and some highlights were a 127 Peugeot and a Mercedes that had apparently run in the 1907 Targa Florio.



As the cars moved off from Tarascon they all got underway fine apart from one. That's right; you guessed it was the Pug. I was standing amongst a bunch of French guys who, like me were watching the cars move off and although my

French is virtually non-existent, I could not help but pick up a sentence from one which was uttered in a derisory tone and finished with the word Peugeot. Roughly translated it probably went something like "typical bloody Peugeot, has to break down now amongst this exalted company"! Regrettably the pug would not start even after being pushed by several fellows and some considerable time spent under the bonnet.



The cars then proceeded gently through the countryside to the Abbye Notre Dame de Senanque a beautiful Cistercian church founded in 1148 that sits at the foot of a steep incline in a lovely valley which in spring is

covered in purple lavender. Luckily, we had lunch near the Abbye and got a chance to pore over the cars in detail as their drivers were bon vivant at the restaurant nearby. 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.

----- Fini -----

13 countries in 28 days - Europe 2025.
Part 2: Cannes, Monaco and Nice - France.
Luke Drady

The trip to Cannes was a visual delight for French car enthusiasts. Lots of trucks, buses and cars all with the magnificent diamond



logo...yes there were some Peugeots and Citroens too. First stop was the city of Cannes and low and behold, just up from where we departed our bus was a 'Renault' Police station – check out the Arkana's below.

Not many other opportunities for me to snap unusual Renaults while in Cannes unfortunately. There was definitely a large cohort of very flashy up-market cars, such as Rolls-Royce, Bentley and Aston Martin. Very nice indeed.



I did manage to find a lovely black Renault Talisman in a side street. These were the successor to the Vel Satis, which was the successor to the Safrane, the R25 and R30.

The Talisman was a very nice executive limo that came in both hatchback and wagon form. I saw quite a few of these when travelling in France and some of the smaller countries such as the Czech Republic and Ljubljana. As always, another model we should have received

Upon arriving at our Hotel in Cannes that evening, I was delighted to find that we were two units down from the very large Renault Dealership.



On display was a beautiful and unique Renault Duo electric vehicle. First time I had ever seen one of these creatures. Very small and apt for busy European cities.



The next morning I was up early to go investigate the cars that had arrived at the Renault service department at the dealership just down from our hotel.

The first model I came across was the Austral'E'. It felt very close to home with that name and being an SUV.



Then, just up from the Austral'E' was an older school Espace. Again, why didn't we



get these in Australia – would definitely have given the Toyota Tarago a run for its money if priced right! The one pictured was a 2.0 Diesel. I particularly like the spoiler on the roof! These were introduced in 2006 and came with 130bhp, 150bhp and 173bhp variants.

The 150bhp version being the most popular. Transmission was 6 speed manual and 5 speed automatic. The 173bhp version had a top speed of 204km/h. They also came in petrol 2.0 and V6 variants with the Grand Espace topping out the range.

What I did become very familiar with was the new electric R5. Every country we visited had them, and for an electric retro car,



they look pretty good. I have many photos to share. Even the R5 Alpine! This dusty black one was waiting for its service.

After checking out the awesome Renault dealership in Cannes it was time to get on the bus and head to Nice. The first Renault model, that I had not yet seen in down town Nice, was this white Symbioz E-Tech.



Another very cool thing I snapped from the bus about 8 times to get the picture show, was the massive billboard advert for the Renault 4 E-Tech Electrique. I must admit – I am so glad car companies are reverting to old designs that were at least memorable and distinctive.



The R4 E-Tech starts at 23,445 UK pounds. No longer an affordable car. When the R4 was first introduced in the UK it cost a whopping 616 pounds! The new R4 is larger than the new R5, with a longer and wider wheelbase, larger boot space and can fit 4 large adults comfortably. I am also keen for a retro R25 and Retro R17!

We also saw a number of Austral'E' and a beautiful black Talisman sedan. That would suit my R25 as a neighbour in my garage nicely.

Amazingly there were a high number of R4's in many countries. I managed to snap two travelling together from the front window of the bus. I love France!



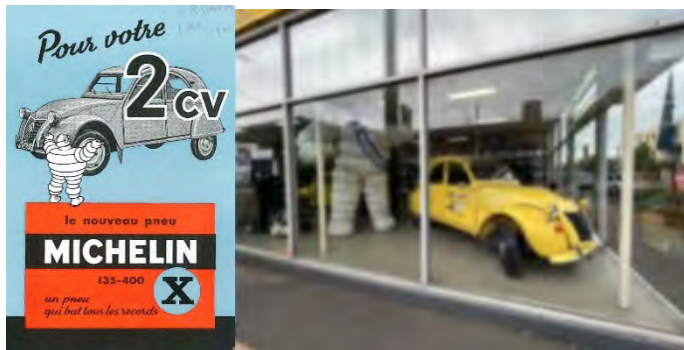
Before I sign off on this shorter part 2, I will leave you with a very cool sticker that was plastered on the back of a very beaten-up Renault Master, also in Nice.



----- Fini -----

Michelin, the Citroen 2CV, and Sydney Road Melbourne.

In 1935, Michelin took the reins of French carmaker Citroën (which went bankrupt in the early 1930s) and put Pierre Michelin and Pierre Boulanger in charge. Early on, the two men started conducting tests as part of the TPV program — for “Toute Petite Voiture” (“Very Small Car”). This idea was inspired by the results of the National Popular Automobile Survey. The Michelin brothers conducted this first major market study in 1922 to identify consumer needs and create a new type of vehicle: simple, versatile, easy to drive, and above all, economical. The 2CV was finally launched in 1949. It was a success, and the company produced more than 5 million units.



Prior to the launch of the 2CV, in 1946, Michelin designed a prototype tyre called a “fly cage” in reference to the widely spaced cables in its casing. This revolutionary architecture gave rise to the Radial tyre, which they patented in 1946. Sold under the name MICHELIN X, this tyre was a breakthrough in tyre design and function. See <https://www.michelin.com/en/group/heritage>

Structure and handling

The radial casing (carcass cords laid at 90° to the direction of travel) gives a much stiffer belt area under the tread, which improves straight-line stability and cornering grip compared with older cross-ply tyres.

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On the 2CV this radial construction helped maintain tyre contact over lumpy or ploughed fields, supporting the car’s famous “soft-ride, no-break-the-eggs” design brief.

Ride comfort and suspension match

The radial sidewall is more flexible than a cross-ply.

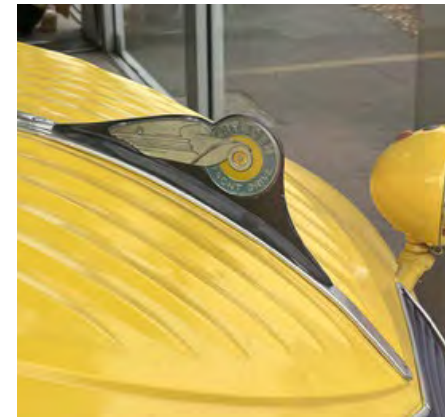
Michelin and Citroën tuned the tyre size and sidewall height so the radial’s vertical compliance complemented the 2CV’s suspension, rather than fighting it, which would otherwise have made the ride harsher or less controlled.

Durability, mileage, and running costs

Radials run cooler at sustained speeds than cross-ply tyres because the internal cords rub against each other less, so Michelin radials on the 2CV give longer tread life and better reliability on long journeys.

Reduced rolling resistance also helps the tiny 2CV engine (375 cc, 6.6 kW (9 hp) in 1949) work more efficiently, improving fuel economy and tyre-related running costs—something Michelin emphasised in early marketing of the X-type radial used on the 2CV and other Citroëns.

Michelin stopped owning Citroen in 1976, selling its stake to Peugeot



Note the front drive tyre mascot.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bj0-l3DfL14&t=18s>

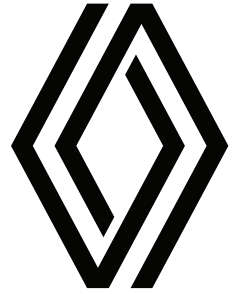
Joel Krewaz

Why Sydney Road you ask?

The bright yellow Citroen photographed is an icon on Sydney Road in Brunswick. It is the home of Sticky tyres. The early ripple bonnet 2CV proudly displays the reproduction Michelin X tyres Sticky provides in all relevant Citroen sizes.

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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.

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Minutes of the General Meeting 27 January 2026 Raiders Weston Club

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.

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