



French Car Torque

Magazine of the French Car Club of Canberra



April 2026

Cover Page:

Photo of Peter Worthington's Peugeot 203 Cabriolet replica.
 You can find the article in the 'Lantern Rouge' section.

Contents

1	President's Report	
2	Committee Members 2025-26	
3	Club Events 2026	2 Social events and 2 Meetings coming up
4	Classifieds	
5	Local Event	French Car Drive to Sutton – Lisa Molvig.
6	Interstate Event	Historic Rally Association Alpine Tour Victoria 2026
7	Travel Notes – Trip 1	Patagonian Renaults - Chris Forsey
8	Lantern Rouge	Peugeot 203 Replica - Peter Withington
10	National Capital Renault	
11	Committee Meeting Minutes	24 March Club meeting report
12	Shannons	



Bonjour Francophiles

April is a great time for tripping around the Canberra region, with warm sunny days and cool nights. However, with fuel prices still through the roof, particularly, diesel, many people have probably decided to stay home.

Not so for Sue and I – our e-2008 Peugeot means we don't have to spend a fortune on fuel. OK, so there are flow on effects of high fuel prices, because almost everything we buy is transported by road, rail, sea or air, and extra fuel costs are being passed on to consumers already.

We decided to do an overnight trip to the South Coast, which is well within the modest range of the e-2008 (the factory range is 340 km, but 270 km is closer to the mark under most driving conditions – less on cold days or at freeway speeds).

Going down the Clyde Mountain, with regenerative braking, the battery level increases, so from the top of the Clyde to Batemans Bay is battery-neutral.

We were heading for Central Tilba, south of Narooma, so we decided to charge in Moruya, where there is an NRMA fast charging station (only two chargers, though) tucked in behind the Eurobodalla Shire Council building. One bay was already occupied by a Renault Megane, so we grabbed the other one to make it an all French affair. The owner of the Megane was having trouble – the charger wasn't working, and neither was our side either, as it turned out. After a bit of farting around, Sue rang NRMA and they rebooted the software and all was well. Time for a quick bite to eat and then off to Central Tilba where we stayed the night in a terrific B&B (though not cheap) called The Bryn, with dinner at the nearby Dromedary Hotel. On the way home we charged in the underground carpark in Batemans Bay



Fast charging stations are still not all that common on the South Coast so it pays to do your homework!

Our club meeting this month is at the Raiders Club on Tuesday 28 April at 8 pm, with dinner and drinks from 7pm

Au revoir,

BRAD

Brad Pillans
Club President



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Peugeot launched the 404 Utility in 1960. Built tough for France, and many export markets, the 404 barely changed in its 28 year production run. A ladder chassis, leaf springs and an up to 1000kg payload made it tough for harsh climates. Spotted in Launceston.

CLUB EVENTS 2026

Sun April 26

10:00 am - 1:30 pm

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

On Sunday 26 April we will visit the home and car collection (French and British) of Lawrie Nock in Sutton.

Bring a plate for morning tea, tea and coffee will be provided. Arrive from 10am for tour of Lawrie's car collection and morning tea.

Address will be supplied when you RSVP.

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

Sun June 21

[Battle of Waterloo, Spanish Australian Club, Yarralumla](#)

June 21 @ 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Battle of Waterloo, Spanish Australian Club, Yarralumla Details to be confirmed.

Seen in the Maritime Alps between San Remo and Nice was this Renault Twizy.

The editor's bicycle for comparison.

These electric micro cars (quadracycles?), built from 2012, have also been used at the Château de Versailles as grounds transport.

Très bon.



CLASSIFIEDS

For sale, parts and wrecking

Hubcaps - Peugeot

Three early Peugeot hubcaps for sale, \$15 each

Contact Lisa Molvig
reno1338@hotmail.com



VALE JOHN BUCKLEY

Barry McAdie

It was with great sadness that we recently learnt that a past member of the Renault Owners Club of Canberra (ROCC), John Buckley, had passed away after a prolonged illness. He spent some time in the Masonic Lodge Nursing home in Goulburn after suffering a stroke and unfortunately did not fully recover.

John, along with fellow members, Mark Christie and Per Edin were keen collectors of Renaults and associated parts. It was rumoured that they had a secret paddock somewhere with a number of Renaults in storage. Unfortunately, they were vandalised and exposed to the elements which caused the boys great dismay. John still had his own collection as well.

John often attended French car shows both in Canberra and Sydney with Mark. John was a lovable character who enjoyed a good laugh and to me he was a happy go lucky sort of guy who knew all about Renaults. He was a music and maths teacher by profession and lived in Goulburn. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends.

John's funeral will be held on Friday 1st May at Campbelltown Christian Community Church in Minto, NSW.

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French Car Drive to Sutton, Sunday April 26

Lisa Molvig

Perfect autumn weather for our drive to the home of Lawrie and Jane Nock outside Sutton. Many thanks to them for their hospitality and tour of their sheds, and there are many!

We had many people attend (over 30 altogether from my count) from three different clubs- FCCC plus Rover club and NSW Citroen club. Visiting French cars included Alpine A110, Citroen 2CV x 2, Citroen DS x 2, BX x 2, Peugeot 307 SW and 308 SW, 505, Renault Koleos. Other European makes included Mercedes, FIAT, Jaguar.

We welcomed new club members and potential new club members, met Citroen owners and mechanics from Sydney, and our Rover club friends from the local area.

Lawrie had just finished putting the roof on a new garage this week and moved some of his car collection into it. This shed could fit at least 10 cars and is tall enough to fit a tractor with cabin/rollbar. His cars include Citroen DS and Xantia, plus Bentley, Rolls Royce and Packard.

Our outing in June is to a furniture restoration workshop in Fyshwick owned by a member of the local Rover club.



Historic Rally Association Alpine Tour Victoria 2026

Colin Handley

A gaggle of Peugeots on the Historic Rally Association Alpine Tour in march enjoyed 900 km of forest roads and bitumen around Albury, Bright, Mt Buffalo, Bogong , Falls Creek and Tumut. Other cars included an A110 Alpine, 2 seriously kitted Porsche 911s and other old rally cars. Many participants were aged rally drivers.

The 504s were mostly from the Peugeot Car Club of Victoria. Locals were Geoff Boyd in the grey 1965 404 with Alan Cummine his navigator for 40 years, Tim Bailey from Brisbane and I in Alan Lance's old 505 enjoyed the comforts over many fabulous back roads many not open to the public, some closed for the Alpine Rally.



Patagonian Renaults

Chris Forsey

A Rover club member who was in Patagonia spotted this Renault Torino.



From what I can gather from Wikipedia, the **IKA Torino**, later renamed as the **Renault Torino**, was made by Industrias Kaiser Argentina (IKA) between 1966 and 1981, under an agreement with American Motors Corporation (AMC). The 1966 Torino was IKA's first national product. IKA was eventually bought out by Renault in 1975 to form Renault Argentina S.A.

The Torino was built on the same hybrid AMC platform through 1981 in both two-door hardtop and four-door sedan variants.

In 1961, IKA was looking for a car that could break into the Argentinian market. The automaker provided two 1965 Rambler Americans (a coupe hardtop and a sedan) to Pininfarina seeking styling updates.

The new design largely maintained the general shape of the original Rambler with a completely new interior and facelifted "European" grille and rear end.

The car was presented on 30 November 1966, and was marketed as the quintessential Argentinian car. The Torino proved popular throughout the 1960s and the 1970s. It continued to be produced after IKA was bought out by Renault.

Renault continued the production until 1982. A total of 99,792 two and four-door IKA Torinos were built.



So, Patagonian Renaults via AMC and Pininfarina.

REPLICARS: RUBIES OR RUBBISH

Peter Withington

Copies of rare, desirable cars are about and quite popular. Clubmans, Cobras and Porsche 356 spring to mind. For most of us there is no other way to own and enjoy an expensive, exotic classic at an affordable price. Dedicated, original only car fans, please read no further.

In 1970, I bought Peugeot number three, a 1957 203C 4 door sedan of South African heritage. I sold it on to Flash Flanigan in 1984, who sold it to Alan Johnson in 1995 who sold it back to me in 2003. Pretty normal car club trading! But it came back as a replica of a Peugeot 203 Coupe soft top.



Peugeot 203 Coupes are very rare in Australia, although I'm told there is a very rusty original in Adelaide. So, I dragged out all my Peugeot books looking for photos and line drawings of 203 Cabriolets and Coupes. I found about 20 photos and a 1/24th scale model that I had collected and forgotten about. All angles are covered except for the rear window.

Please, if anybody has an image of the rear window of a 203 Cabriolet or Coupe can I get a copy.

I then compared what Alan had done with my findings. First impression is obviously that the roof has gone, cut about 200mm behind the top of the windscreen. Next, the two doors are now one bigger door on each side, still hinged at the rear and cut off above the quarter vent.

Above the boot has been flattened and recurved, taking Alan two goes before he was happy. The chassis has been strengthened and approved by an automotive engineer.

So how does it compare with a genuine 203 Coupe? Spot on, as close as my measurements from photos and line drawings can make it. Alan has spent some time getting it right. But, the top of the windscreen on a 203 Coupe is quite different from the sedan. Coupes are flatter, smaller radius in the corners and the front edge of the doors are straight, not slightly curved. The result looked like a bald man's forehead. Not that that's bad on a man, but it makes the car look top-heavy. The soft top is all Alan's design, closer to the Coupe profile than the Cabriolet and not easy to fold down.



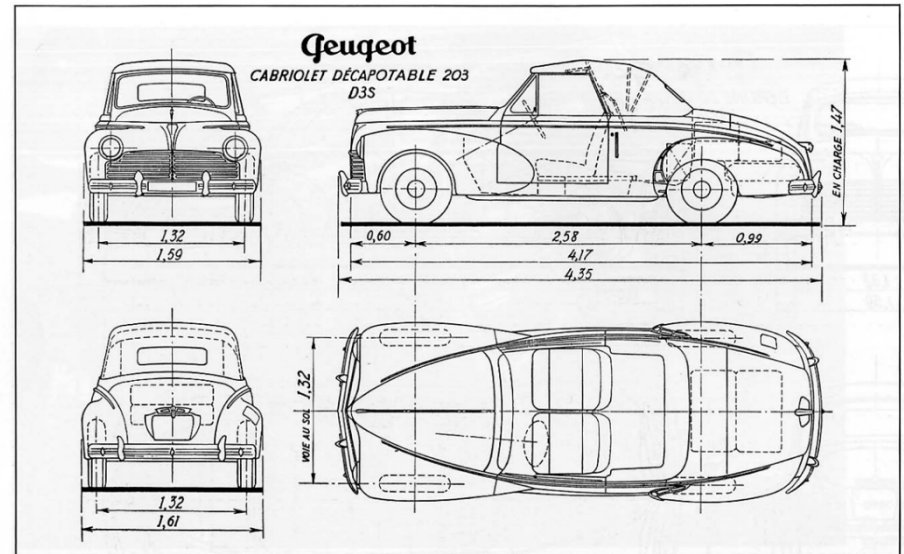
So, what to do next? Not much was needed to get it registered and running well. I have the interior to finish before a respray and any cutting and welding should be done before then. Cutting the top off the windscreen and rebuilding the door frames is major work. Not impossible but time consuming for only a little improvement in appearance. And which way ahead? Building a fully folding soft top or a hard top?

Except for 2 years in my driving life, I have always owned a Peugeot 203 and love the classic shape, fat guards and long bonnet. I also like open cars for Sunday runs in good weather and a soft top 203 Coupe would be Peugeot heaven. But I like my cars to look good, work well and not offend most of the car enthusiasts at displays, so I would like to get this cabriolet as close as possible to the original, as is the aim of all replicars. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, so to me, this 203 Coupe will be a ruby when restoration is finished, not rubbish.

Moving to Batemans Bay and joining the CVMCE meant that the ACT Historic rego no longer applied so the 203 was moved to the back of the garage and serious refurbishment was commenced. The major work was to get the body looking good, grinding and filling and spraying in white. The engine had been relined during Flash's tenure and was as new but the main problem is a dirty fuel tank giving unreliable performance despite acid washes and pressure blasting. The tank has internal baffles so the inside cannot be fully got at. Rubber hoses and line filters have partly solved the problem. An electric fuel pump has been fitted to solve the drying out of the carby between starts. Brakes have all been refitted with new rubbers and linings. The brake light failed and no replacement could be found so the old fitting was cut and a new plate welded on, threaded for a modern generic switch. The wiring needed

patches in places where the old insulation had broken off. The 57 203 has indicator lights rather than the authentic flapicators of the earlier models. The tail lights were rusted and the Bakelite globe holders all broken so some 63 VW tail lights were modified to fit and while not original fit the part.

So Classic NSW rego has been obtained and renewed every year with a pink slip being required and paperwork being duly stamped by the club. The clutch started to slip so a replacement was cleaned up and a 403A gearbox was installed as the original was noisy. Work left to do is mainly to solve the petrol problem and get the gear change aligned. I have all my 203 rally instrumentation and a prize radio so they may be installed in the future. My Peugeot 203 has been to one car show in Long Beach and received a mixed reception. But in my bucket is the wish to attend "Wheels" and "French Car Day".



The plan.

Happy motoring, Peugeot Pepe

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10 FCT April 2026

**Minutes of the General Meeting 24 March 2026
Raiders Weston Club**

Present

Brad Pillans, Greg Francis, Neil Birch, Ross Stephens, Charles Birch, Mike Ford, Leigh McEwan, Jim Taylor, Barry Mc Adie, Neil Sperring, Joel Krewaz.

Apologies

Colin Handley, Lisa Molvig

Introduction

The meeting opened at 8:12 pm.

Minutes of the previous meeting

Brad moved that the minutes of the February meeting be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting, seconded Barry. Carried.

Financial Report

Working Account balance is \$358.20, with 3 Term Deposits totalling \$15,835.71.

Neil made the suggestion to increase the buffer to \$4000 from the term deposit which matures shortly. The meeting approved this recommendation.

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

cactmc.org.au – report:

The council of ACT Motor Clubs meeting has yet to be had post Wheels 2026. David Rogers resigned from the Council. A new Registrar will be determined at the next meeting.

Feedback on The Wheels 2026 day was that the venue was cramped with too many partitions separating the clubs. Suggestions will be offered for the next Wheels event.

Social:

Lisa has advised that the next Battle of Waterloo will be held at the Spanish club with Chris for the 21st June. Chris Wells from MG club will be the chief organiser and Greg is involved in giving him a hand. So it'll be Battle of Waterloo organised by the MG Car Club and the French Car Club of Canberra. The aim is for the 21st (a Sunday) in June.

Close and NEXT MEETING

The meeting closed at 8:27 pm.

Next Meeting:

Tue April 28

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

https://fccoc.com.au/?tribe_events=french-car-club-of-canberra-monthly-meeting-27

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