

FRONT DRIVE

Australia's National Magazine
For Citroën Owners And Enthusiasts



MEHARI 50th BIRTHDAY

JULY/AUGUST 2018 Vol 42 No 3

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POSTAL ADDRESS

CITROËN CLASSIC OWNERS CLUB of AUSTRALIA Inc.

The address of the Club and this magazine is,
PO Box 52, Balwyn, Victoria, 3103.

The Club's website is,
www.citroenclassic.org.au

Citroën Classic Owners Club of Australia Inc is a
member of the Association of Motoring Clubs.

The views expressed in this publication are not
necessarily those of CCOCA or its Committee.
Neither CCOCA nor its Committee can accept re-
sponsibility for any mechanical advice printed in,
or adopted from this publication.

The Club cannot accept any responsibility for, or
involvement in, any business relationship that
may occur between an advertiser and a member
of the Club.

Annual membership is \$55. For overseas mem-
bership add \$17.50.

MEETINGS

Club meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday
of every month [except December] at 7.30 pm.
The venue is the Frog Hollow Reserve Rooms,
Fordham Ave., Camberwell. Melway 60, B3

CLUB PERMITS

Club Permit applications to Vicroads must be ac-
companied by a RWC (pre 1949 cars can be in-
spected by a club safety officer), ownership vali-
dation and Vicroads forms endorsed by the club
including financial validation.

New Permit holders must supply the club with
approved photos, club permit number and expiry
date.

Club permit renewals can be sent to PO Box 52
Balwyn, Victoria. 3103 with a stamped return en-
velope or signed at club meetings/events if the
appropriate officers are present.

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Russell Wade	(03) 9570 3486 (H)

COVER IMAGE

Mehari of David Lane in the front
yard of the Editor, for a safety
check, after being sorted by David
Gries, circa 2008.

LIFE MEMBERS

The committee awards life mem-
bership to Club members in recog-
nition of their contribution to, and
support of, the Club. Life members
are:

Jack Weaver	1991
Peter Boyle	2003
Rob Little	2012
Ted Cross	2012
Brian Wade	2017
Sue Bryant	2017

OTHER CLUBS

Vic	www.citcarclub.org.au
NSW	www.citroencarclub.org.au
QLD	www.citroenclubqld.org
SA	http://clubcitroensa.com
WA	www.citroenwa.com
Tas	www.citroentas.org

DEADLINE

The deadline for the next edi-
tion of Front Drive is Monday
September 3

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CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

Helen Cross
Leon Sims
Brian and Elvira Smart
Lee Dennes

ED SED



Hi Members,

This issue relies on some photos taken on phones, as it did with the poor quality photo of Peter Boyle in the last issue. I am working on this, possibly updating my phone or even moving on to one of the (claimed) camera phones, ie camera first and phone a secondary function.

The mention by Ted in the Prez Sez regarding the ageing membership, prompted the article on the Robert Shannon award.

I am not hinting that we (CCOCA) put in an entry on behalf of some of our younger members, but rather, pointing out that this is potentially an Australia wide Award offering.

The last item in the magazine is to make you aware of the Citroën Centenary Celebrations that are taking place in France in 2019, just in case you wondered what Ted was talking about in his Prez Sez. Much more detail and contacts as well as newsletter subscription details are available on the CCOCA website. Note, it is all in French, but if you are using Google Chrome as your web browser, you will be offered a TRANSLATE box in the top right hand corner. I only checked Internet Explorer and it did not have the translation box offer.

The next issue is the 2CV 70th anniversary special issue, which I hope non 2CV owners will also enjoy.

Cheers.

Russell.



ACTING PREZ SEZ

Hello Members.

I am writing this message as Acting President after the early departure of Kay Belcourt. Kay remains an active and valued committee member and we all look forward to her continued involvement in CCOCA matters.

CCOCA has a full event calendar for you all and you may have noticed several Victorian country events recently. I personally would like to see some activities for our interstate members in future and I hope to achieve this next year. Speaking of next year, the Citroën marque celebrates 100 years of existence and we all know that Citroën has had some ups and downs over that period

Looking at the recent changes to the importer and dealers throughout Australia it is easy to get a little nervous that the mighty Citroën brand may not recover. I like to remain positive, but it is true that if modern Citroëns are sidelined then there could be a knock-on effect to our collectable cars.

Back to 2019, you will see somewhere in the magazine or on the website details of the 100 Ans celebrations in France. Followed shortly after by the 2CV World Meeting in Croatia. Helen and I hope to attend both of these events and encourage you to try and make a CCOCA event out of it too.

We have the French car Festival coming up in October, CCCV and CCOCA are the host clubs.

We want to get plenty of 2CV's along to celebrate 70 years of the 2CV and as many vintage models as possible for the coming 100 years anniversary. The location has moved this year as we are expecting up to 200 French cars to attend. This is always a good spot to find the model you are seeking if you don't have a Citroën already.

CONTINUED



ACTING PREZ SEZ CONTINUED



The Club has been running for 40 years now and we see an ageing membership. We are also a National Club and so the running of the Club falls on a few willing Victorian members. Lance Wearne in Queensland is a notable exception to this of course but recently we have embraced the idea of Committee meetings to include Skype reports. This has worked well, and we now feel any member (interstate or country) should be able to be active on committee in future.

We have decided not to fill the President's position for the rest of 2018 because the committee is already large enough and we look forward to a fresh election next March for the 2019 year. Being the 100th anniversary it would be a great year to be President of CCOCA so think about putting your name forward in 2019.

Regards.

Ted Cross.



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ACTIVITIES

AUGUST

Tuesday	7	Chit Chat Tuesday.
Wednesday	15	Healey Factory.
Sunday	19	Fire Engine Museum.
Monday	20	Committee Meeting.
Thursday	23	Boys Day Out.
Wednesday	29	General Meeting Conversational Evening, wine & cheese provided.

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday	4	Chit Chat Tuesday.
Monday	17	Committee Meeting.
Saturday	22	Garage Crawl. TBA
Wednesday	26	Vintage Wiring.
Thursday	27	Boy's Day Out.

OCTOBER

Tuesday	2	Chit Chat Tuesday.
Friday 12&13,14		Motorclassica.
Monday	15	Committee Meeting.
Wednesday	24	General Meeting 70th Anniversary Celebrations for the 2CV.
Thursday	25	Boy's Day Out.
Sunday	28	French Car Festival.

MONTH AUGUST

EVENT: Invitation from CCCV to join them at the Healey Factory



WHEN: Wednesday 15 August
TIME: 7.00pm
WHERE: 646 Whitehorse Service Road, Mitcham
COST: Nil
RSVP: Sunday 5 August
BOOKINGS: Wolfgang Siem
woljen@gmail.co,
0425 872 082

WEBSITE: <https://healeyfactory.com.au/>



Month August Fire Engine Restoration Workshop

When: Sunday 19th August, 2018
Time: 10.00am
Where: Fire Vehicle and Restoration Workshops Old Railway Sheds, Newport. Enter via gates at Water Tower opposite Williamstown Cemetery on Champion Rd. Plenty of parking at the site which is large. At its heyday 5000 people worked here.
Cost: \$8.00 per head.
Booking: Need to know by Tuesday 14th August.
Contact: Bruce Stringer
bwstring@smartchat.net.au Mb: 0412 342 706



We will meet for coffee at Platform 177 at 10.00am then visit the workshops where there are approximately 60 vehicles. We will be met by fellow club member Michael Moore who will be our guide. Michael is a real enthusiast and lover of these vehicles. He and his wife Susan were asked to represent the Museum in Sydney in March this year where Scania was showcasing 40 years in Australia with all its global leaders. Michael supplied a white Scania truck with gold livery built in 1991 with 275000 km on the clock and still driving like new. MFB fire trucks are always red.

Platform 177 is located at 177 Ferguson St. Williamstown on the roundabout at the Williamstown railway station and just a short distance from our venue. Coffee is hot and food very tasty. Afterwards there are plenty of places to go for lunch, stroll around the Williamstown foreshore, HMAS Castlemaine Museum and Science Works Museum. If enough members register a visit will be organised to the Steam Railway Museum next door which is normally not opened on Sundays but will do so for groups.

VISIT TO VINTAGE WIRING HARNESS

WHEN: 26 September 2018

TIME: Please arrive for a 7.00 pm start

FOR: Paul is the main provider of new wiring harnesses for our Classic Citroens. He has harness patterns for many older cars and his work is exceptional. He has patterns for 5CV, 2CV and Tractions.

(most models - French RHD and British RHD)

Paul can also add extra wires for indicators or similar

TO: Vintage Wiring Harness

WHERE: 477 Maroondah Highway Ringwood North

COST: No cost.

A light supper may be provided by the owner, Paul Vermont

BOOKING: Please let Ted Cross know if you are planning to attend by **19/09/2018** for catering.

BRING: Bring yourself and a friend if you wish.

CONTACT: Ted Cross 0400592208

WEBSITE: www.vinwire.com.au

We have all heard horror stories about classic cars burning to the ground due to faulty or old wiring looms. Even if you can't attend this night please take the opportunity to give your wiring a close check-over. Paul can be contacted by phone or email but is always busy with back- orders so you need to give him time to purpose build a new wiring harness.





Are you lucky enough to be the owner of one of the several million 2CV's that were manufactured?

Come along and celebrate the 70th birthday of this iconic little car.

Everyone welcome, 2CV or not

YES, there will be cake!

70th Fête d'anniversaire deux chevaux



Paris Salon 7 October 1948

Where: Frog Hollow Reserve

When: 24 October

Why: 70th Birthday Celebrations for the 2CV

Bring: Everything for a BBQ/Picnic

Time: 5.30pm

RSVP: For the cake of course. Monday 15 October 2018

Lee Dennes 0438 286 181

l.dennes@bigpond.net.au

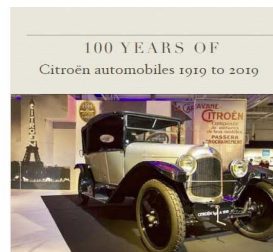


The Association of Citroën Enthusiasts is proud to host the 51st annual Easter Cit-in. The Cit-in is held by Citroën car clubs that are members of the Combine Citroën Car Clubs of Australia. ACE is pleased to host its fourth Easter Cit-in.

ACE Easter Cit-in 2019



Celebrating 100 years of Citroën
Katanning Western Australia
Friday, April 19 - Monday April 22.



100 YEARS OF
Citroën automobiles 1919 to 2019

The first delivery of a Citroën automobile was of a Citroën Type A as in the photo above.

The Citroën Type A was delivered to Mr Testemolle de Beaulieu in Dordogne France on July 4 1919. The Citroën cars were produced at the Quai De Javel factory.



ACE CIT-IN
Katanning Easter 2019



Celebrating the 100 years of Citroën Automobiles and 51 years of Cit-in.



PROGRAM

Friday April 19
Registration 3.00pm to 6.00pm
Welcome
Finger food

Saturday April 20
Show and shine
Lunch
Free afternoon
Dinner and entertainment

Sunday April 21
Morning church services
Easter egg hunt
Observation run
Lunch
Formal dinner
Presentation and prize giving
Citin 2020 launch

Monday
Breakfast
Farewells and post Citin.

The Shire of Katanning is centrally located in the 'heart' of the Great Southern. It offers the advantages of a rural lifestyle, with the convenience of easy access to the cities of Perth, Albany and Bunbury. While the area is essentially agricultural, the town is a regional centre with access to a range of recreation and leisure facilities, government, health and education services, as well as a diverse retail and business district. The townsite is situated on the Great Southern Highway, with the main entrance framed by the picturesque and adventurous All Ages Playground and the newly completed Welcome to Katanning roundabout. Perth is 286km to the north and Albany is 173km to the south. Adelaide is 2,599km to the east. Melbourne 3,325km. Sydney 3,841km.



ACE cars: This is Sergio's Bixou



ACE cars, Elizabeth with Arty electric Monsoon 20v and Elizabeth's AR400.



A statue of Frederick Henry Plesse (by sculptor Pietro Porcelli) was erected in 1916 and stands beside the railway line in Austral Terrace. The Plesse family constructed a regal mansion which was named "Kobeelya" and after being used for many years as a girls' boarding school, is now a conference centre managed by the local Baptist church. Katanning features a unique playground of oversized structures named the "All Ages Playground". The town has many other attractions, including a state of the art recreation, leisure and function centre. Katanning has a relatively large Muslim population, of about 350 people, and consequently has a mosque. The vast majority of local Muslims originated in the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, and travelled to Katanning to work in the local abattoir, which was established in the late 1970s. Other religious buildings include churches from Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Lutheran, Seventh Day Adventist, Uniting, and Wesleyan denominations, along with a Jehovah's Witness Kingdom Hall. The town also has a castle-like structure which was built as a winery. The town's entrance features an antique truck loaded with imitation wool bales, a windmill, and several sculptures of sheep made from corrugated iron.

For an interactive Registration Form visit <http://citroenwa.org.au/cit-in-easter-2019> Click on the form, complete, save to your computer and then email your registration to Jack Gibney at lovemonkey@westnet.com.au

MONTH ONGOING

CHIT-CHAT TUESDAY

Chit-Chat Tuesday continues the first Tuesday of every month at the Blue Ray Café, McCrae opposite the lighthouse from 10.30 onwards. This is a low key "DIY" event for like minded Citroën owners to meet and chat.

Contact: Warwick Spinaze 0407 016 719

BOY'S DAY OUT

WHEN: The fourth Thursday each month and the third Thursday in December.
TIME: 10.30 am for 11.30 departure.
Leaving from 1/29 Everist Rd, Ocean Grove Industrial Estate
WHERE: Portarlington Golf Club
COST: Lunch is \$10-\$12, plus drinks
BOOKINGS: Not Essential
BRING: An interesting car
CONTACT: Mike Killingsworth 0417 552 446



The "Boy's Day Out" is designed for blokes to get together and talk about cars or anything else to their heart's content. We meet at Mike's shed and embark on a short drive around the Bellarine, stopping on the grass at Portarlington for a chat before proceeding to the Golf Club for lunch. There we have a private room and conduct a raffle (tickets are free) for a magnum of wine and maybe a dinner voucher. After lunch everyone is free to travel home at their leisure.

It's definitely designed for the boys rather than couples and the only other requirement is to bring an interesting car (we're not pedantic about that - just don't want a procession of SUVs!)

We do get some interesting cars of all ages. The definition of interesting may be shape, age (very new or old), rarity, performance etc. Or maybe just an old Holden Statesman with a wardrobe tied to its roof!! Of course ANY Citroën is welcome!

2 CV High Country Huts Adventure

12th- 16th November 2018

As part of the 70th Celebration of the 2CV Ken & Chris Johnson have organized a 5-day get-together for 2CVs in the High Country around the Licola area in Victoria.

This will possibly include a day either side of these dates depending on where you live.

You will need to be able to **self-cater everything** once up the mountains.

Remembering it can be very cold and wet as well as hot and dry!

There is a **limit of 15 vehicles** due to the size of the campsite.

The trip is within the Alpine National Park and is subject to their regulations re the size of the party.

Therefore, the first 15 cars – that also means a limit of 4 persons per car- that fully commit can be part of the trip.

It is very important and fair if **only those truly committed** give their names and vehicle registration information to Ken and Chris by the **1st Nov 2018**.

Contact Ken & Chris for more information to help you decide if a High Country Huts Adventure is your thing!

Contact: **Chris and Ken Johnson 0488 992 714**

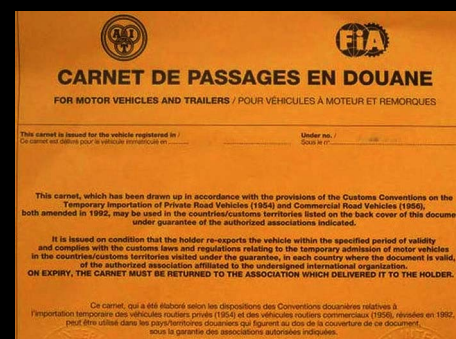
More details are available on the CCOCA website and will appear in Front Drive at a later date.

DAVE ROGERS RAID NZ TALK May 23rd



Nothing is ever as simple as it seems and so the complications or behind the scenes organisation behind the Raid New Zealand were revealed by Dave Rogers at the club evening.

Dave and Peter Dekker spent an incredible amount of time and effort in NZ, in effect doing a trial run of the raid, including, each buying a Citroën which was later stored in NZ until the Raid. Of course it helped that both Dave and Peter were originally from New Zealand and so had local knowledge as well as contacts and knew what to avoid.



Another interesting aspect was the issue of obtaining a CARNET (Carnet de Passages en Douane or CPD). This is like a Passport for a car allowing you to take a registered car, without the need for reregistration, to another country for a limited time (up to 12 months) by paying a bond up to the value of the car, to ensure you will re-export it. An issue was that the Victorian Club Permit is called a permit to avoid being liable for GST, if it was called Club Registration as in some other states it would not be GST exempt. Since the Permit is not recognised in NZ as Registration, Victorian participants had to move from Club Permit to full Registration to meet the condition of the Carnet.



More images from the Raid (left over from the last issue of Front Drive).

Teaching a 2CV to swim, lining em up, no need to go to Central Australia to meet a Road Train full of cattle.



Although not an official Club event, CCOCA receives an invitation, by way of free passes, to display some of our cars each year and a few members manage to make the trek to Winton.

This page features some of the more unusual stars of the track, upper right are two of the oldest racers on the day. Dare I refer to them in just as the Hilbilly racers?

To the right, defying gravity on the corners is a Morgan 3 wheeler, not seen before.

Even more unusual are the pair of Unlikely Lads (an English comedy duo), a pair of very ordinary British fifties saloons, showing you don't need half a million dollars to join the racing scene. At this stage, and throughout the race, the Austin (No. 77) was showing the game little Morris how it is done.

On the opposite page are some images from the invited display cars, of the 4 Citroëns, Ds dominate, the lower red one on NSW club plates.



Shown here are 3 images of vehicles of the Feral Sports Car Club, a Club with 6 out of their 12 members attending. The tatty white car with the teardrop caravan (above) incredibly is an SS, a precursor of the Jaguar, a very valuable car indeed.



BEACHSIDE BBQ RYE 27-5-2018



Despite a large number of events this year, seven of us took up the offer by Peter Sandow and Wendy Keam to leave Metropolitan Melbourne for another out of town event. The weather was cool and windy but there was just the correct number of people to fit around the table (Editors chair vacant while I took the photo). For those who have not seen Peter's car, he has shown impeccable taste by resisting the lure of glossy two pack paint, and actually paid extra to have a low gloss paint job to emulate the original type of finish the cars had in the fifties. (no criticism implied Phillip).



Above. The cars of the day, Peters Traction top left, Teds DS5 top right.

and the two lower shots of Phillip Rogers wonderful Slough built big six.

Lower. The final two shots of the day, courtesy of Helen Cross.

Left. The explorers on the beach put their backs to a stiff wind blowing across Bass Strait.

Right. The end to a very pleasant day, thanks to Peter and Wendy. Nice photo Helen.



Le TOUR de TRENTHAM



Saturday morning start at Trentham Station

For this article we have three authors, each giving their insights of the weekend. They are, Leon Sims, Elvira and Brian Smart and Russell Wade, the Editor.

Leon. It was by email that I read, that the long tradition of the Queen's Birthday Weekend AusTraction was to be cancelled. Hearing this, I contacted Lee Dennes and an alternative event was discussed. I suggested that our home town of Trentham might be a great alternative and so Le Tour de Trentham was born.

Lee promoted the possibility based on a plan that Sue and I put together to showcase our local area. In the space of five weeks of planning, we had 8 cars with 14 people participating. This included our intrepid Front Drive Editor, Russell Wade with camera in hand. Russell drove up from Melbourne on both Saturday and the Sunday taking the drives in convoy both days. I'll let Russell document his experiences of enjoying our diverse and idyllic country roads and picturesque terrain. I'll try to capture the moments that Russell unfortunately could not attend with the need to return home each night.

Attending the weekend were: Lee and Graham Dennes-2CV John and Susan Wyers -2CV

Elliot and Francoise-2CV Peter and Carmel-2CV Rob Barton-Traction B6.

Elvira and Brian Smart-DS Pallas Leon and Sue Sims-Traction L15 Russell Wade-Merc

Brian and Elvira We left Myrtleford on a very wet and cold morning and travelled as much as possible on secondary roads to Trentham. We arrived there prior to lunch and soon found ourselves a bakery. We checked into our accommodation, in our case, friends of Leon and Sue Sims who although not strictly a B&B offered us accommodation in the guest wing of their home. Sylvia and Michael were delightful, generous and friendly hosts. At 5.30pm we assembled at the Sims' home where we were greeted with a glass of bubbly and a folder full of maps, instructions and tourist brochures. We then travelled in convoy to the Trentham Railway Station for dinner, purchased from the Judda Bar Food Truck. As it was still raining and cold the Historical Society based at the Railway Station opened a room for us to eat, complete with an open fire. A very cosy and pleasant evening was had by all. As most of us had had a long day on the road we all retired early.

Saturday morning dawned bright and clear, and once again we made our way to the Railway Station to assemble for the day's run.

At 10.00 am 4 2CVs, 2 Traction Avants (a light 15 and a big 6), a DS23 and a Mercedes Benz headed off for Kyneton via some lovely countryside. Leon kept us off the main roads as much as possible and we travelled through scenery we would never have seen except for Leon's local knowledge.

Russell. We stopped off at the Trentham Falls, which, despite the lush green forest and surroundings, were showing signs of the drought affecting Eastern Australia, (an insert image shows the falls on a good day). The next stop, the Coliban Reservoir was also showing signs of unseasonal water shortage.



Above. Coliban reservoir on a good day.

Below, when we visited.



We then made our way to the Kyneton market, much of which was showcasing artisan food products and specialities of the region. Some of us wandered the main street of Kyneton, the sign on the right seen outside the fruit shop.



Leon. Only three days before the weekend I rang the Hanging Rock Winery to let them know that a group driving funny French cars would be invading them. On our arrival Deb who was in charge at the winery ushered our cars to a special parking area just for us.

Note the steaks in the fridge at the end of the bar.



Brian and Elvira. Casualty No.1: John Wyers' 2CV was the first casualty of the weekend - the ignition lock refused to work, so Brian and John gave it a drink of methylated spirits as we had no WD40, and that got it working.

From the winery we went to Mt Macedon for afternoon tea. Once again parking was at a premium being a long weekend.

Below. The Mt Macedon WW1 war memorial, replaced in 1995 due to storm and fire damage.





On our way home we stopped at the Pig and Whistle Pub near Trentham for a drink. The Wyers' were in accommodation across the road from the pub so John was able to imbibe freely, which was not an option for those who had to drive. At 5.50 pm we once again assembled at the Sims' home where a courtesy bus from the Pig and Whistle picked us up. A lovely pub with an open fire and a cosy atmosphere. The food was excellent, and the evening was spent in good company and much laughter. When we were done the courtesy bus took us back to Trentham.

Russell. Sunday morning was again a lovely morning, so good in fact, that Leon had switched from the sun on his noggin in his wonderfully original English L15 with the mega rare option of a factory steel sunroof, to the full wind in the hair effect with the top down in his MGF. We then left the historic Trentham Station again, this time for a drive through the hills and Wombat State Forest to the Daylesford Sunday market, a very popular market incredibly crowded on a long weekend. Most people managed a week's worth of exercise after having to park kms away and climb most of the streets leading uphill to the market. Some of the things for sale reminded me that Antiques Roadshow and other similar shows have a lot to answer for (rusty rabbit traps anyone?). A number of us retired to the historic 1857 Farmers Arms hotel for lunch, while others continued to search the antique stores in the area.



Sunday morning start, includes Leon's MGF and the Editors 300D Benz

Leon. I left our intrepid group to fight their way through the Daylesford tourist population for the day while I returned home to start preparing with Sue, our Sunday night spread.

With a very large piece of beef on the BBQ, salads, nibbles, the hoard arrived from 5.30 pm with bottles of wine under their arms.

We opened up our home on the Monday morning for a farewell coffee and tea before they all dispersed to their respective homes.

Sue and I were pleased to showcase Trentham and our surrounding district of the Central Highlands of Victoria. Its beauty never ceases to amaze us on any drive we take and we are still discovering new treasures after being here three years.

We have a saying in Trentham-it may be cold in Trentham, but the people are warm.

I hope our group of CCOCA members found this to be the case.

Leon and Sue Sims

PS. Elvira and Brian. *Casualty No.2: We got to within 4km from home. We stopped to turn right at a T-intersection but when we went to drive off the accelerator would not work - the mechanism had disconnected itself somewhere underneath. A rolled up tissue box and a couple of sticks jammed into the linkage near the carburettor gave us enough revs to slowly make it home in second gear.*

A big thank you to Leon and Sue for stepping into the breach and organising a wonderful and enjoyable weekend. All who were there are wanting to return to this lovely area at another time.

A great weekend was enjoyed by all.

Brian and Elvira Smart

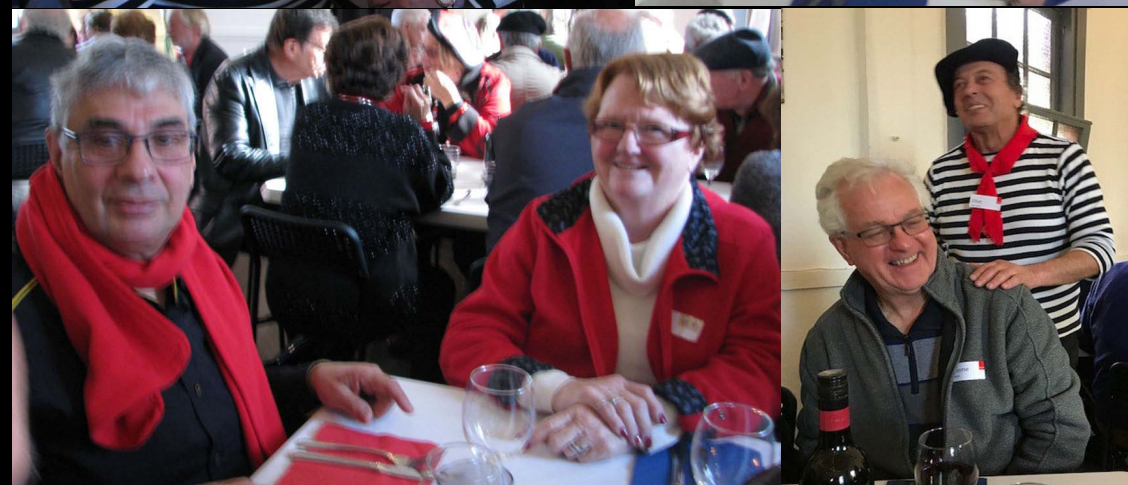


Hosts, Leon and Sue Sims

BASTILLE DAY RUN LILYDALE 15-6-2018



Above. The venue, L'Auberge French Cafe in Lilydale, images courtesy Lee Dennes.



MEHARI at FIFTY

As many country's economies improved, the frugal fifties morphed into the swinging sixties and after the economic shocks of WW2 abated, a few people's thoughts turned to novelty/weekend cars. One of the first to turn his thoughts into reality was Cali-fornian artist, surfer and boat builder Bruce F Myer, who used his fibreglass boatbuilding skills to come up with the iconic Meyer Manx beach buggy (right). Literally a fibre glass bathtub with mudguards bolted to a shortened WV Beetle floorpan.

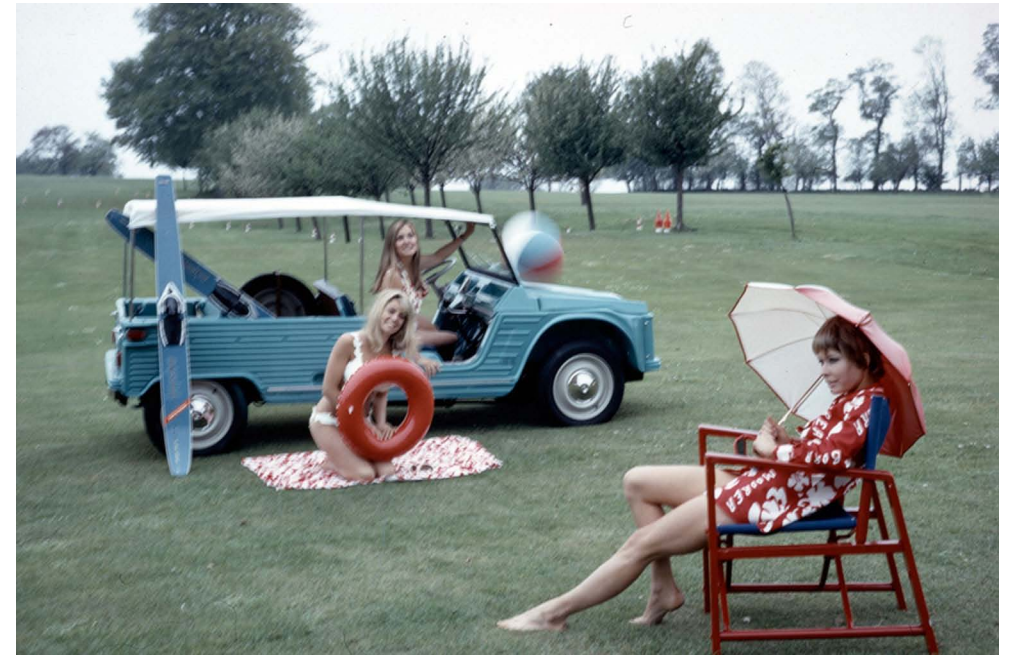


The Europeans thought they could do better than this Californian upstart. They came up with the Fiat Jolly (joker in Italian) with wicker seats (based on the Fiat 600), for the wealthy to put on their mega yacht or drive between their yacht and villa. And of course they could boast about the coachbuilder (Carrosserie) who kept artisans (tin bashers) in employment. In this case Ghia.

The English took a more utilitarian approach with the 1964 Mini Moke, with a simple folded sheet metal body and a Mini front and rear subframe (containing the mechanicals) bolted under each end. I believe they hoped to interest the Army to use it as an "air portable" vehicle, able to be dropped with a parachute.



Citroën introduced the Mehari (a name derived from the name of the fast running dromedary camel sometimes used for camel racing) in 1968. The French took a more middle of the road approach, hoping it would be a leisure vehicle on the Cote d'Azur as well as a simple utility vehicle for gendarmes, postmen, surveyors etc and a vehicle to sell in those warmer French Protectorates in Africa and the Pacific where details like side windows were less important.



The Mehari was based on a Dyane 6 platform and oily bits, but made by an entirely different method, a steel spaceframe was fitted to the platform and then clad with relatively flat ABS plastic panels (below). ABS stands for acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene, a copolymer introduced by the Borg Warner Corporation in 1954. The ABS is normally colour impregnated and so is more resistant to rubbing, grazing or scratch-ing than painted panels. Unfortunately, it is subject to UV degradation, ie it fades if left out in the sun for years. If you are one of the few who have never owned a Mehari you might well think you have never had anything to do with ABS. Some of its uses are:- Leggo blocks, keyboard keycaps, and many of the buttons and knobs in your car. In powdered form it is used to brighten tattoo ink and it is used as the feedstock filament in most 3D printers etc etc etc.



Mehari production ran from 1968 to 1988, the same year 2CV production stopped in France, so as you might expect there were running changes/improvements, but like a Volkswagen Beetle they all look the same at first glance, and they were also made in Spain and South America. Some were badged as Peugeots (right) where Citroën was less popular, and the Mehari Ranger (below) was more conventional in appearance, while the rear part of the Mehari was used on the 2CV based Citrovega (lower right). These are some of the many major and minor variations over 20 years of production in 3 countries.



Interestingly, apart from a special edition Azure (Blue) version all the colour names have a desert region connection.

The colours were, Rouge Hopi Vert Montana Beige Kalahari Orange Kirghiz
 Vert Tibesti Beige Hoggar Jaun Atacama Azure

Due to perceived demand, a proper 4X4 Mehari was developed, but unlike the 2CV Sahara 4X4 which had 2 engines (one in the front driving the front wheels and another in the rear driving the rear wheels), the Mehari by then had a much more powerful engine available and so used a 3 position transfer box as in other 4 wheel drives. This bigger transmission necessitated moving the spare wheel from under the bonnet to on top of the bonnet in a very Land-Roveresque position. The 4X4 Mehari was claimed to be able to climb a 60% incline (right) with it's low ratio transmission. The interior shot of the 4X4 (next page) shows the normal black gear knob and the other 2 for four wheel drive and the high low ratio (red and white).



So what of driving a Mehari? Different noises from the different structure, much the same weight as a 2CV so much the same performance, it just sounds to be going about it differently, feels much more spacious, there is much less intimate shoulder contact compared to a 2CV and because the body is wider the steering column is offset further from the centreline, the doors are incredibly flimsy (who needs doors?) and lastly the brakes feel different as all Mehari's have disc brakes front and rear.

So how did it all pan out with these novelty/weekend cars?

Bruce Meyer only produced about 6000 of his Manx beach buggies, but because of the lax copyright rules at the time it has been suggested that the total number of Manx beach buggies cloned around the world could be as high as 70,000.

The Fiat Jolly as modified by artisans cost about twice the price of the donor car (Fiat 600), so only about 200 were converted to Jollys, and many, having been carried on yachts or left on the quayside until a yacht returned, as well as having Italian rust-proofing (ie. none), suffered dreadful rust problems. The upside is that the Jolly is now the most valuable by a long way.

The Moke in its 3 variants, English, Australian and Portuguese achieved sales of about 50,000 but again was neglected (cheaper than a Mini when new) and so suffered a very high attrition rate due to rust, although later versions paid more attention to rustproofing and build quality.

And just to make you smile, the winner was.....Citroën with a total production run of 145,000 Meharis. The steel space frame of the Mehari was not immune to rust but fortunately it was out of sight so could be roughly repaired and the sheer number produced meant that there was a fairly good supply of spares.



Above. For those of you who were around in the late sixties but don't remember much about it, the above late sixties early seventies image will remind you of the hair and clothing styles of the time.

Right. In the late sixties a Gendarme demonstrating the new fangled two-way radio, taking up much of the load area of his Mehari.



A downside was that before the 2CV and Mehari gained classic/cult status the supply of cheap Meharis was so plentiful that a lot of people had fun and in the process getting rid of and or destroying them in the popular 70s to 80s French recreation known as 2CV CROSS. (above).

So Bruce Meyer (apparently still with us at 92 years of age), is probably having the last laugh as his simple, almost indestructible beach buggies are swept up in a wave of 60s and 70s nostalgia (together with the VW Kombi) and probably have a higher percentage survival rate than the more sophisticated European novelty cars.

The final nod to the Mehari is the reusing of the name on an electric recreational vehicle, introduced by PSA only last year under the moniker of E-Mehari (below).



ROBERT SHANNON AWARD

Under 30 and interested in Australia's
Motoring Heritage?

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1930 Invicta S Type

An Initiative of



The Robert Shannon Award is awarded to an applicant under 30 years of age who has shown a commitment to the Classic car movement and who owns a car over 30 years old. Most other states have Club Permit/Registration for cars over 30 years old, Victoria is an exception with a 25 year cut off age. Kalinda McIntyre is shown with her 1925 Overland type 93 earlier this year at the AOMC meeting.

The award worth up to \$1000 and is awarded to 1 or more young Classic Car enthusiasts each year. Kalinda's car was acquired as a stalled restoration with the body done, a Club working bee has improved the mechanicals, her mum's sewing machine has improved the seats and Kalinda intends to put the Award towards a hood, always useful in Melbourne. Well Done



WHEN IS A CITROËN NOT A CITROËN?



The Toyota push into Europe has resulted in several model sharing deals.

The TPCA joint venture at Kolin in the Czech Republic (Toyota Peugeot Citroën Automobiles) has produced cars for all three, Citroën C1 (above), Peugeot 108 (below right) and the Toyota Aygo (next page) whose name is derived from "i-go".



The cars are based on the Japanese Toyota Yaris that is/was sold here. These are very cheap, simple, light (805 kg, a 2CV is about 580 kg) and unsophisticated cars.

The wierdest aspect is, that since there is no diesel derivative of the Toyota Yaris in Japan, the diesel version needed in Europe, is actually a Toyota with a Citroën diesel engine.



FOR THOSE PLANNING WELL AHEAD

For those planning 11 months ahead, for the Citroën Centenary, you can get more details via the link on the RHS of the Club home webpage.



"I imagined our centenary, you will live it once in your life ... It is the Rally of the Century, family, festive, associative, imagined in my name by your friends of the association Celebration Centenary Citroën, with the help of many prestigious partners ..." That would have said André Citroën.
the Rally of the Century will be held from 19 to 21 July 2019 in France in La Ferté-Vidame in Perche, nature area, tourist charge of Citroën history.
the ACI, Citroën Héritage, Citroën Origin's, the Peugeot Citroën DS Adventure, Citroën Automobiles, our partners, the elected officials and La Ferté-Vidame invite you to these 100 years of ambitious Citroën, unequalled ...

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