



**CITROËN CLASSIC OWNERS
CLUB OF AUSTRALIA**
Australia's National Citroën Car Club

FRONT DRIVE

*Australia's National Magazine
for Citroën Owners and Enthusiasts*



October/November 2020 Vol 44 No 3

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 any responsibility 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.

Life Members

The committee awards life membership to Club members in recognition of their contribution to, and support of, the Club. Life memberships have been awarded to:

Sue Bryant	2017
Brian Wade	2017
Rob Little	2012
Ted Cross	2012
Peter Boyle	2003
Jack Weaver	1991
Nance Clark	1984

Citroëning

Club Permit applications to VicRoads must be accompanied by a RWC [pre 1949 cars can be inspected by a Club Safety Officer], ownership validation 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 envelope or signed at club meetings/events if the appropriate officers are present.

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Membership

Annual Membership is \$55 and \$5 for additional members [ie partners].

Meetings

Club meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of every month [except December] at 7:30pm. The venue is the Frog Hollow Reserve Rooms, Fordham Ave., Camberwell.

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Ted Cross	[03] 9819 2208 [H]

Note new email address

Cover Image

The cover image is taken from the website www.classicdriver.com and depicts a 6-H that was auctioned by Aguttes Auction House, in La Ferté-Vidame, at the Citroën Centenary, France, on July 21, 2019..

Deadline

The deadline for the next edition of 'Front Drive' is Monday, November 16, 2020.

Contents

ED SED	PAGE 4
PREZ SEZ	PAGE 5
A-TRACTIONS	PAGE 6
CIT-IN 2021 BENDIGO	PAGE 9
POST CIT-IN TOUR	PAGE 12
2CV WORLD MEETING 2021	PAGE 16
MEMBER'S MODEL 1	PAGE 18
ENGLISH ENTHUSIASM	PAGE 20
MEMBER'S MODEL 2	PAGE 28
LEARNING THE HARD WAY	PAGE 37
FRENCH ICONOCLAST	PAGE 40
TALKING TECHNICAL	PAGE 48
NEW STANDARDS	PAGE 52
A VERY ENGLISH AFFAIR	PAGE 61
6 CARS, 6 DAYS	PAGE 73
CLASSIFIED ADS	PAGE 79

Contributors

Contributors to this edition of 'Front Drive' include Graham Dennes, John Grieve, Michael Hose, Rob Little, Bob Shakley, Peter Stringer, Geoffrey Webber and Steve Wright

FOR SPARE PARTS & TOOLS
Contact Lance Wearne.
Phone: 0424 054 724 [if your do phone, please do so at a reasonable hour] or
spareparts@citroenclassic.org.au

CLUB SHOP
For Citroën models, memorabilia and other items contact Kay Belcourt at
clubshop@citroenclassic.org.au

OTHER CLUBS
VIC www.citcarclubvic.org.au
NSW www.citroencarclub.org.au
QLD www.citroenclubqld.org
SA www.clubcitroensa.com
WA www.citroenwa.org.au
TAS www.citroentas.org

Ed Sed

After two editions of Front Drive with barely a mention of the glorious Traction Avant, this edition takes strides to redress that imbalance. But, not merely 'a' Traction, but 'the' Traction: the Traction which must be regarded as the model's ultimate incarnation. The Six-H: the six-cylinder Traction with the unique benefit of self-levelling hydropneumatic suspension at the rear.

While your Editor does own a Light 15 he has to admit to being rather a novice when it comes to the Six-H. In undertaking the necessary research for this issue I have learnt so much. Did you know that the radiator and front suspension of the Six-H are different from that of a standard Six? While we probably think of the Six-H as a relatively rare model, in fact from its launch the H represented almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of Citroën's 6-cylinder production.

As well as the views and im-

pressions of a couple of local owners we also have an article from France [see page 40] and some perceptions from the Traction correspondent of the UK Citroën Club [CCCUK] on page 61.

I have also been fortunate to find an original English review of the Six-H from 'The Motor' magazine. I do not believe we have reprinted this article previously.

But it is not all 6-cylinder... Graeme Dennes has another 2CV trouble-shooting feature and we have Part 2 of Geoffrey Webber's '6 Cars, 6 Days' story.

COVID-19 continues to wreak havoc with the Club's plans for a return to Events for members. The latest casualty is the planned October Run to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the G-series cars. [GS, GSA and GZ]. Following discussions with Andrew Begelhole, the organiser, we have made the decision that we have no alternative but to defer this event to 2021. Dinner at Il Pizzaiolo in Thornbury has also been deferred. We have also just had news that this year's French Car Festival, hosted by the Peugeot Car Club has been cancelled as has Motorclassica.

So, use the time on your hands to enjoy this bumper edition of 'Front Drive'!

Enjoy,

Leigh F Miles ~ Editor.



Prez Sez

that the 2021 CIT-IN at Bendigo will still be possible. We do hope to make joint CCOCA/CCCV decision in the next month. There is every chance that it will go ahead as planned but the numbers attending may need to be limited. So, it would be great if you can sign up for this signature event and think positively for 2021.

The committee is anxious to restart Club activities and we will try a few new ways to bring our interstate members together in smaller groups to keep our Club relevant to us all. More news will be given to you soon.

In the meantime, please keep safe and keep using your favourite Citroën model as often as you are permitted to do so. I took my 2CV around our suburb last week and it started and went well after six weeks in hibernation. Spring has arrived and the sun is shining brightly and I can't wait to re-join society.

Ted Cross ~ President



This edition of Front Drive will entertain all club members but particularly if you have a Traction Avant in your sights or in your garage.

Our postponed AGM was a great success due to the Zoom meeting set up by the Club's Secretary, Tim Cottrell. Thanks to those who joined us. Welcome back to the re-elected committee and we are keen to have some informal Zoom meetings until life returns to something like normal.

Lockdown in Victoria has been an opportunity for several members to continue work on their Tractions. I have been in touch with some of them offering support and information. Mike Killingsworth and Stephen Gercovich have been hard at work getting their cars back on the road after long-term repairs and/or restoration.

Our new member Peter Anderson in Tasmania has called on the Club for some help with his recent purchase too. This camaraderie between members around Australia is the key to understanding why CCOCA exists. In Peter's case he now knows he has a small network of CCOCA members near him to encourage him to get his new Traction 11BL running sweetly for the first time.

Although Victoria is still under locked down we are very hopeful

A-Tractions

Please see Activities Coordinator Lee Dennes' report regarding A-Tractions on page 8.

• SEPTEMBER

New Nationwide Event!

September Club Meeting:
Zoom Informal Meeting

WHEN: Wednesday,
23 September

TIME: 7:30pm

WHERE: A computer screen
near you

After the success of our Zoom AGM the Committee has decided to hold our first Zoom-based Club Meeting in place of the Pizza Night which has had to be cancelled.

On Wednesday, Tim Cottrell will email you a link to the Zoom meeting space. So grab a refreshment, maybe your latest Citroën model, book or story to share and chat with CCOCA members all across the country.



• OCTOBER

Motorclassica 2020 ~ Cancelled

CONTACT:

info@motorclassica.com.au

After careful consideration, we have made the difficult decision not to hold Motorclassica in 2020. Instead, we look forward to bringing you an even greater spectacle next year when Motorclassica returns from 22-24 October 2021.

Motorclassica has always been much more than a car event. It is a celebration of friendships and cars, and we thank everyone who has expressed their continued support for Motorclassica.

Chit Chat Tuesday

WHEN: 1st Tuesday
3 November
1 December

TIME: 10:30am

WHERE: Provedore Café,
McCrae

COST: Cheap Eats

BOOKING: Not required

CONTACT: Warwick
Spinaze
04 0701 6719.

Provedore Café, McCrae Plaza, cnr Lonsdale St & Pt Nepean Rd, McCrae Easy to find, plenty of parking, under-cover seating if weather wet. This is a low key 'DIY' event for like minded Citroën owners to meet and chat.



CITROËN GS/A 1970-2020

• OCTOBER

Citroën GS/A
50th Anniversary Tour

WHEN: Saturday, 3 to
Saturday, 10 October 2021

FROM: Ararat

TO: Hamilton

COST: \$200pp

BOOKINGS: Now open,
closing 1 September

ELIGIBLE MODELS: GS,
GSA, Biorotor

CONTACT: Andrew

Begelhole,

0427 378 423

fdrdcit@yahoo.com.au

TOURING ROUTE:

- Starting in Ararat, overnight stops in Horsham, Ouyen, Renmark, Kingston SE, Mt Gambier, finishing in Hamilton.

ENTRY FEE INCLUDES:

- Welcome Dinner; J-Ward Tour; entrance fees to The Stick Shed, Nelson Airport Tour; a Pizza Meal and Farewell Dinner.

ACCOMMODATION EXPENSES:

- Entrants are responsible for booking their accommodation and all other expenses.

BOOKINGS/PAYMENTS:

- Available from 1st May via

CCOCA website citroenclassic.au/wordpress/

FURTHER ENQUIRIES:

Andrew Begelhole

0427 378 423

fdrdcit@yahoo.com.au

ITINERARY

- DAY 1. Saturday, 3 October



A-Tractions ~ Update

Hello Everyone,

I have been eagerly awaiting to hear from the Victorian Premier today, 6 Sept 2020, about updates regarding Victoria and the COVID-19 restrictions. Although we now have a roadmap to return to some form of normal here in Victoria, we still have a long way to go.

We are hopeful we will be able to have a Christmas gathering which will have to be completely different from our usual celebration. But it will allow us to gather in a park and have a BYO BBQ/picnic. The kitchen facilities at Frog Hollow will not meet the COVID-19 standards for food preparation and social distancing.

According to the road-map for Melbourne the number of people who can gather outdoors after 23 November is 50. By limiting attendance [RSVPs will be essential] we should be able to hold a Christmas event later this year. Keep an eye out for more information soon.

"If there are no new cases across the state for two weeks, Melbourne will move to the fourth step on November 23 and up to 50 people will be allowed to gather outside." ABC News

CIT-IN 2021

CCOCA and CCCV are encouraged by today's announcement that CIT-IN 2021 will take place as planned. This will be dependent on reaching 'COVID normal'

which is indicated below.

"If there are no new cases for 28 days, no active cases and 'no outbreaks of concern' in other states and territories, restrictions will be relaxed further.

No restrictions on hospitality, but patrons' records will be kept by venues.

There will be no limits on outdoor gatherings." ABC News

Meanwhile...

Why not organise your own gatherings with some like-minded Citroën friends and arrange a drive and a picnic within the limits of your State/Territory rules? Those of us who live in the Greater Melbourne area and are confined to a 5km radius and are only able to pursue essential services are very much looking forward to being able to break free of these bonds on 26 October.

"Melburnians will then be allowed to travel across the state, except to places with a higher level of restrictions. There will be no curfew, and no restrictions on reasons to leave home.

Up to 10 people will be allowed to gather outside." ABC News

It really is the simple things in life that we take for granted and miss the most.

Lee Dennes,

Activities Coordinator CCOCA
[Quotes have been extracted from ABC News: Melbourne's four-step plan from stage 4 lockdown to 'COVID normal', 6 September 2020.]

CIT-IN BENDIGO

APRIL 2021



CITROËN

BENDIGO IS PART OF VICTORIA'S HISTORIC GOLDFIELDS REGION AND IS A TOURIST DESTINATION. THERE WILL BE PLENTY FOR ALL TO SEE AND DO INCLUDING HISTORIC TRAMS, CHINESE INFLUENCES, THE POPULAR BENDIGO FESTIVAL AND THE CHINESE DRAGON PARADE.

WHILE CIT-IN WILL BE CENTRED IN BENDIGO, AS PART OF THE PROGRAM YOU WILL ALSO VISIT SOME WONDERFUL HISTORIC TOWNS IN THE DISTRICT.

Distance from Bendigo

- Melbourne 153 km • Adelaide 614 km
- Canberra 620 km • Sydney 836 km
- Hobart 871 km • Brisbane 1,599 km
- Perth 3,316 km

The National CIT-IN April 2021, jointly organised by cccv and ccoca, will be held in the beautiful country town of Bendigo. The program and application form have now been posted on the CCOCA Website www.citroenclassic.org.au. As you know there will be a rush for holiday accommodation when the lockdown restrictions are relaxed so you need to book ASAP as

our reserved accommodation may only be held until the end of July so please book well in advance. Accommodation is limited so please get in quickly. Book by phone or email only and mention CIT-IN to receive group rates. If you try to book online it could appear booked out or higher prices will be listed.

Here is a sneak preview of the event program.



Friday 2 April

- Registration at All Seasons Resort, 171 Mclvor Highway, Bendigo 3pm ~ 6pm.
- Welcome reception including generous supper 6pm ~ 10pm.

Saturday 3 April

- Show & Shine, Bendigo Festival, catered lunch at the festival.
- Spit-roast dinner with country theme.

Sunday 4 April

- Observation run visiting historic towns in the region, picnic lunch.
- Formal dinner at All Seasons Resort.

Monday 5 April

- Full buffet breakfast at All Seasons Resort
- Farewell

Venue

All Seasons Resort Bendigo.
www.allseasonsbendigo.com.au
 [03] 5442 8166

Accommodation

The resort has excellent rooms at competitive rates negotiated for the conference ~ but book early and mention Cit-In for special rates. Alternative accommodation includes to Big4 Caravan Park about 3kilometres away.

Cost [per person]

Early Bird [before 31.12.20] \$260
 Later bookings [01.11.20 - 31.10.21] \$275
 Just in Time [01.11.21 - 20.02.21] \$290
 Age 5 - 18yrs 50%

Information and application forms

www.citcarclub.org.au
www.citroenclassic.org.au

- It is important to remember this event is co-hosted by CCCV and CCOCA and by mutual consent and for accounting purposes all payments should be directed through the CCCV website. There will be more information coming soon from CCOCA.

This will be the first opportunity to enjoy the first post COVID-19 national meeting and we strongly recommend this event is supported by all CCOCA members. There is a possibility that the event may need to be modified closer to April but we are confident it will be substantially as displayed. We will keep you all informed.

Regards

Ted Cross ~ President, on behalf of the CCOCA committee

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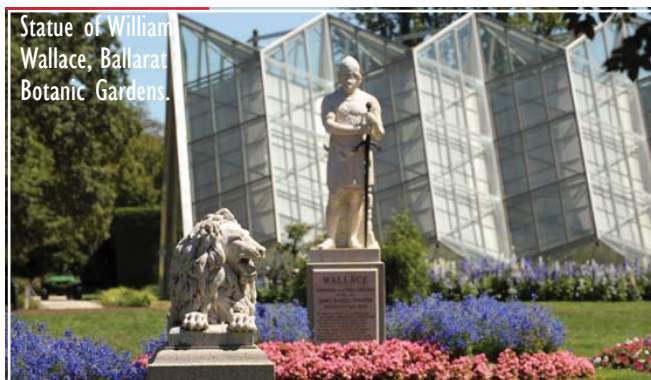




POST BENDIGO CIT-IN RUN 2021

WHEN: Monday 5 to Thursday 15 April
 WHERE: Central Victoria and Western District
 FROM: Bendigo
 TO: Horsham
 VIA: Ballarat, Lorne, Warrnambool, Hamilton and Halls Gap
 COST: TBA, see below
 BOOKINGS: Expressions of interest being taken now
 CONTACT: Brian James
 [03] 9728 5526
 0427 534 014
 brianjamesphotography@bigpond.com with 'PostCit-In' as the subject

ENTRY FEE: The actual entry fee is a TBA right now. There may be a small entry fee to cover some included meals, but no



Statue of William Wallace, Ballarat Botanic Gardens.



The banks of the River Moyne, Port Fairy



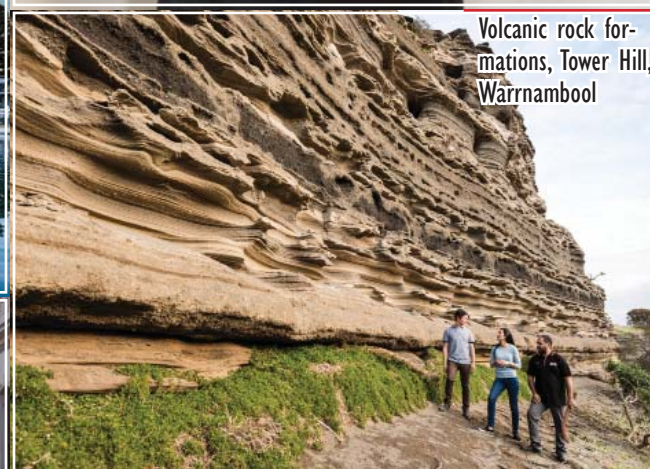
Sovereign Hill, Ballarat



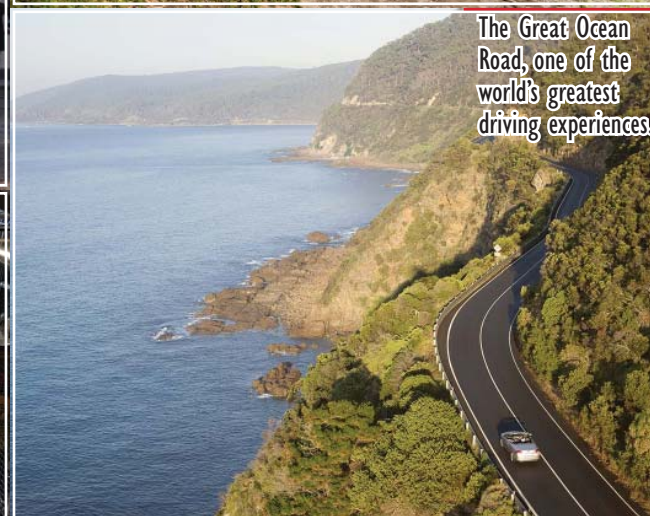
Maldon Vintage Machinery Museum



Poco Gelato; the finest in Port Fairy



Volcanic rock formations, Tower Hill, Warrnambool



The Great Ocean Road, one of the world's greatest driving experiences.

bookings have been made to date given the COVID-19 situation. If there is a small fee, participants will be advised, and this will be collected as cash in Bendigo.

ACCOMMODATION EXPENSES: All entrants are responsible for booking their accommodation and all other expenses. Full details are here.

BOOKINGS OPEN: Expressions of interest will be taken now.

BOOKINGS CLOSE: Again, COVID-19 has made planning difficult but adequate advance warning of booking closure will be provided.

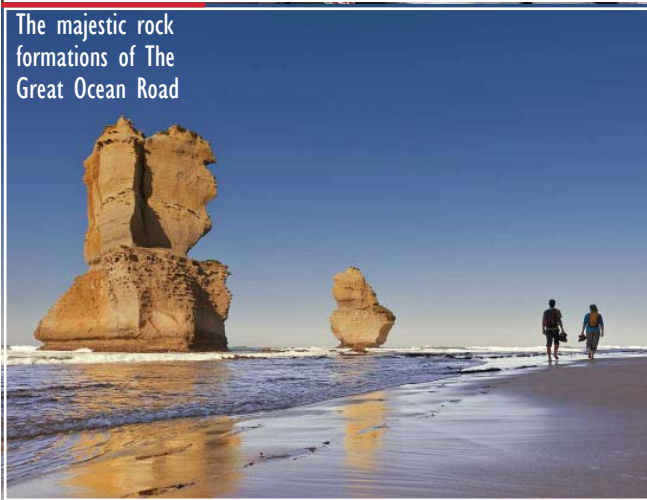
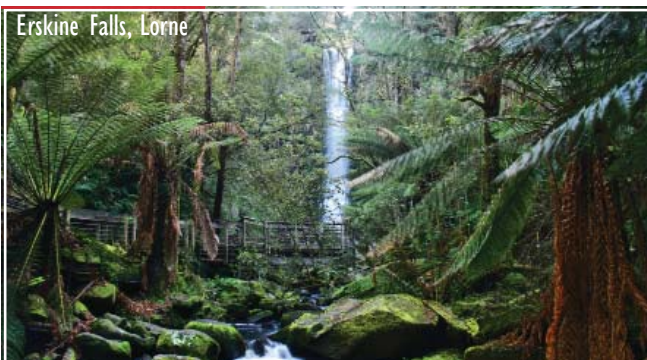
- Day 1: Monday, 5 April
 Bendigo to Ballarat 154km
 A short walking tour around Bendigo prior to departure for Ballarat via Maldon, Castlemaine, Daylesford and Creswick.
- Accommodation in Ballarat [2 nights]: Eureka Stockade Holiday Park, 104 Stawell St., Ballarat
 [03] 5331 2281
- Day 2: Tuesday, 6 April
 Sovereign Hill, Gold Museum, Ballarat Gardens etc.
- DAY 3: Wednesday, 7 April
 Ballarat to Lorne 158km
 Travel via Inverleigh for lunch.
- Accommodation in Lorne [2 nights]: Lorne Foreshore Caravan Park, 2 Ocean Rd., Lorne
 [03] 5289 1382



1300 364 797

lorne@gorcc.com.au

- Day 4: Thursday, 8 April
Teddy's Lookout, Erskine Falls.
- Day 5: Friday, 9 April.
Lorne to Warrnambool 207km
Twelve Apostles, Cape Otway
Light Station
- Accommodation in Warrnambool [2 nights]:
Warrnambool Holiday Park
& Mote, cnr Raglan Pde &
Simpson St., Warrnambool
[03] 5562 5031
info@whpark.com.au
Camp kitchen & BBQs
- Day 6: Saturday, 10 April
Warrnambool Heritage
Cheese, Visit to Warrnambool
& District Historical Vehicle
Club
- Day 7: Sunday, 11 April
Warrnambool to Hamilton
116km
Tower Hill, Port Fairy



- Accommodation in Hamilton
[2 nights]: Lake Hamilton
Motor Village & Caravan
Park, 8 Ballarat Rd., Hamil-
ton
[03] 5572 3855
info@lakehamilton.com.au
- Day 8: Monday, 12 April
Campes Motor Museum, The
Nigretta Falls, The Ansett
Museum
- Day 9: Tuesday, 13 April
Hamilton to Halls Gap 96km
- Accommodation in Halls
Gap [1 night]: Halls Gap
Gardens Caravan Park, 2223
Grampians Rd., Halls Gap
[03] 5356 4244
stay@hallsgapgardenscara-
vanpark.com.au
or Lake Fyans Holiday Park,

650 Mokepilly Road, Lake
Fyans 3381
[03] 5356 6230
stay@lakefyansholidaypark.
com.au

- Day 10: Wednesday, 14 April
Halls Gap to Horsham 80km
Total distance 811
Reed Lookout, McKenzies
Falls
- Accommodation in Horsham
[1 night]: Horsham Riverside
Caravan Park, 190 Firebrace
St, Horsham [03] 5382 3476
horsham@southerncross-
parks.com.au
- Day 11: Thursday, 15 April
We all head home with a
possible visit to Wimmera rail
bridge at Quantong

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2CV WORLD MEETING 2021 REGION DELÉMONT 27.7. - 1.8.21

The Coronavirus crisis in the first half of 2020 has seriously affected or cancelled all the events planned for this year at the global level. Most 2CV-related events have also been affected.

Despite these experiences, the Organising Committee [OC] of the 2021 World Meeting in Switzerland is continuing its work in a consistent and coherent manner to ensure that the event can take place in all situations. Therefore, the current plan will be maintained and, if necessary, adapted to take into account any health measures.

Should a situation similar to that of 2020 occur next year,

with the resulting legal restrictions on demonstrations and events, we will of course have to act accordingly.

In any case, we will make every effort to ensure that the 2021 World Meeting can be maintained with all participants pre-registered. Of course, in special cases, we also trust in the understanding and cooperation of all meeting participants and visitors.

After the cancellation of major events in 2020, such as the National in France, DET, ICCCR, etc, we are particularly looking forward to our 2021 World Meeting in Switzerland and will do our utmost to offer an interesting and beautiful meeting.

That is why it is important not only for us, but also for you, that as many participants as possible register by the end of 2020 and still benefit from the preferential rate, which is valid until 31 December 2020.

The Organising Committee, our Swiss friends of the 2CV and Citroën, as well as the region of

Delémont are looking forward to a special event that should not only meet the expectations and wishes of all participants and visitors, but also make us happy as organisers.

Thank you for your attention and see you soon in Helvetia!

The Organising Committee of the World Meeting of 2CV Friends 2021
Willi Brändli ~ President

WHEN: Tuesday, 27 July to
Sunday, 1 August 2021

WHERE: Delémont, Jura,
Switzerland

COST: From €100

BOOKINGS: Essential,
www.2cv2021.ch/inscription/?lang=en

CONTACT: mail@2cv2021.ch

The Meeting site is located in a beautiful natural environment just 5 minutes from the city of Delémont, capital of the Jura.

It is located in the heart of Europe, limiting the travel time to the destination for participants, for example 30 minutes from

Basel or 45 minutes from Belfort. Prices for the 24th World Meeting of 2CV Friends 2021 [until 31.12.2020]

- €100 ~ Citroën 2CV + HY
- €120 ~ Citroën pre-27.07.1990
- €130 ~ Citroën post 27.07.1990
- €200 ~ Other [non-Citroën]
- €40 ~ Person without a car, visitors 6 days. Choose this only if you are not travelling in a car. [eg bicycle, camping]

Vehicle prices always include the entry for the driver and co-driver. Additional passengers may be added as required.

To register online, you need information about the driver, passengers and your car [year, license plate, etc]. Payment is made by credit card.

Admission for day visitors is free. Their access is limited to the festival grounds and do not have access to the campsite.

You will get your ticket as a PDF for self-printing. The ticket will be available only after receipt of payment.



Member's Model 1

Peter Stringer

6-H 117: The story so far.



The chassis number 9/557513 places it as the earliest of all the known 6-Hs to be imported to Australia. A distance of 43,143 miles is recorded on the speedo. In its short life on the road it appears to have suffered some 'impact trauma'. There appears to have been a decent whack on the front mudguard passenger side where evidence of repairs to the hull and wheel assembly have been found.

So the long process of restoration has begun. The engine had been rebuilt many years ago [a pile of original receipts detail the work done] but never run. However, the gearbox upon inspection was missing a few teeth here and there. This has now been rebuilt as has all the running gear apart from the front suspension cradle. All the doors and removable body panels have been chemically stripped and de-rusted and I am now working my way through repairing them. The main body has not been attended to at this stage apart from the fun job of deconstruction. While the current colour is red it appears the original colour was a grey.



Note the sub floor ventilation! The rear suspension unit required a bit of gentle persuasion to remove and you may also notice there is a sun roof to contend with as well.



Bye for now, Rufus and I will keep you posted on progress.
Peter Stringer

English Enthusiasm

As the copy deadline approaches I have to think of something to write about ~ there is no plan. At this point I would normally be telling you about something that happened on the Traction Owners Club [TOC] Jersey Rally or my preparations for the TOC National Rally in the Lake District. These events tend to be a good source of stories of things that fell off, cars that fail to start ~ or maybe stop. This year is of course different and, when the copy deadline status changed from approaching to looming I had a rather blank page.

Then an email flooded in ~ not from Mrs Trellis in North Wales but from Leigh Miles in Victoria, Australia. [That is a joke for BBC Radio 4 listeners which would have worked better if Leigh lived in New South Wales.].

Leigh has just taken over again as Editor of the Citroën Classic Owners Club of Australia's magazine called 'Front Drive' and is looking for information for a future article on the 6-H. So ~ as I dig around for that I thought I might as well write it down for you. *Deux oiseaux avec un pierre* as one might say.

The problem that the 6-H set out to solve was, how to have very soft suspension and cope with the variation in load without ridiculous changes in the car's attitude. The 2CV took a dif-

ferent stance [do you see what I did there?] by starting with its unloaded hindquarters raised in the air and just provided a knob to adjust the headlamp aim when the nose was pointing skywards as you loaded the back seat with baskets of eggs. This was good enough for the small and primitive 2CV [I do love 2CVs ~ I even bought a new one once] but was not good enough for a family car which had aspirations to be a presidential limousine.

So, the problem can be stated as how to provide soft suspension that keeps the car level when fully loaded at the back. About 4 or 5 years ago I did write a bit about the alternative solutions that car makers were pursuing at this time. The Citroën system was the simplest of these and, I suspect for that reason, the most successful. In contrast you may remember the description of Packard's motor-driven diagonally-connected torsion bars. [Ed. I have included some notes about this at the end of the article.]

The 6-H may represent the ultimate Traction Avant. Alternative contenders for crème de la crème would be the Limousine or the Cabriolet. I would love to have a 6-H because I do like a bit of technical wizardry and I thought long and hard about whether to make a bid for the one that was for sale recently in the UK. I believe it sold for about

£36K which was a bargain for somebody. Unfortunately, my financial controller advised against such a venture and it would be a bit too large to hide ~ as would the hole in the bank account.

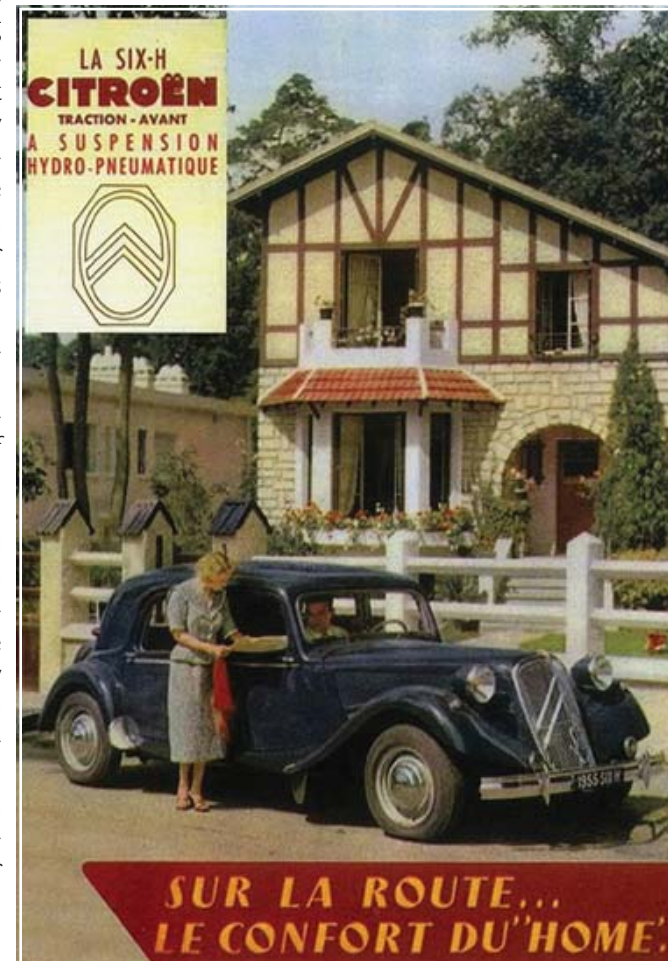
The 6-H, as you may well know, is a bit of a hybrid. The H stands for Hydraulic [or Hydraulique] but this is only applied to the rear suspension. The steering and brakes are conventional and unpowered. To make sense of the soft rear suspension the front is softened too. To lower the spring rate of a torsion bar you can either make it thinner or make it longer. There is a limit to how far you can reduce the diameter before you run into trouble [ie it breaks] so the safe solution is longer bars. Unlike any other Traction Avant the 6-H also has anti-roll bars at both front and rear. The rear anti-roll bar is a necessity for the suspension system to operate as the height corrector is mounted in the middle of it, in the same way as the DS and its successors.

There are therefore several ways to recognise a 6-H if you bump into one [not recommended], but a badge is not one of them. A parked car will show a sagging rear end if it has been sitting for a while. And the eagle-eyed may notice the extended tubes housing the longer torsion bars. A cynic might say the puddle of red fluid might be another

clue but that is not something I would suggest. Actually I am not sure the fluid was red. Strangely the owner's manual says nothing about which fluid is used but Technical Note 600 says it is 'the same as is employed for the brakes'. From looking through adverts of 6-Hs for sale it seems that many of them have been converted to the green stuff.

The 6-H served as a test bed for the DS ~ at least as far as the

A French advertisement for 'La Six-H... a suspension hydro-pneumatique'..



English Enthusiasm

pump, spheres and the height correctors are concerned. There was no hydraulic gear change or power steering on the Traction. The former editor of the TOC's 'Floating Power' is custodian of a Light 15 fitted with a BVH gear-box but that was a relatively recent conversion. I have never come across a 4-cylinder car with a hydraulic suspension conversion, but I find myself quite attracted to the idea.

The inside of the 6-H is just the same as the regular car ~ no change to the controls or instrumentation. The height control lever which you would use when changing a rear wheel is located

in the boot. There are three positions, high, low and normal. Low and high are for wheel changing and normal is for driving. There is no higher position that the DS has for driving across fields or 21st century British roads.

The rear suspension was fully independent, with the aforementioned anti-roll bar. So the suspension arms and stub axles were unique to the 6-H. The flexible brake pipes were replaced with swivels which sounds like asking for trouble. I do not really understand the reason for this as I do not think the allowable wheel travel is much greater than on a spring-sprung car. The Tech-

nical Note No 600 of 1954 says of this: 'the banjo union feeding the brake fluid, fixed on the arm must never be disconnected'.

And so ~ does this whole thing work? An article reprinted in the Brooklands Books 'Citroën Traction Avant 1935-1957' collection of contemporary road tests and reviews says 'The Citroën is remarkable for its roadholding ability but this is still further enhanced by the new suspension. Two pronounced humps right across the road were taken at speed and had the car's occupants not been notified they

would hardly have been aware of their presence. As a demonstration a bottle of champagne was uncorked and three glasses were filled at between 45 and 50 miles an hour on a winding section without a drop being spilled'. The book does not say from which organ this was reprinted but the authors seem to have their priorities right.

At idle the engine has to drive the pump and the transition to driving needed some smoothing out. Citroën therefore did have to modify the throttle linkage to improve driveability.

The relationship between the Élysée and Citroën dates back to 1954: prior to the Franay and Chapron conversions. 1954 was when President René Coty began using two models of the Traction 15/6-H Limousine with hydropneumatic suspension and additional heating.

Year	Production Site	No Made 15/6	No Made 15/6-H	1st 6-H Chassis No	Final 6-H Chassis No	Body Symbol	Price
1954	Slough, UK	29	2	9/547001	9/547002	BPVL	£1,474/9/2
1955	Slough, UK		75	9/557501	9/557575	FPVP	£1,474/9/2
Total	Slough, UK	29	77				
1954	Javel, FR	1,104	1,679	726 001	727 680		F940,000
1955	Javel, FR	58	1,349	727 681	729 062		F936,600
1956	Javel, FR	1	49*				
1957	Javel, FR		2 [#]				
Total	Javel, FR	1,163	3,079				
G. Total		1,192	3,155				

* Two of these were special order Familiales, presumably used for the Presidential Limousines of President Coty

[#] Both these were special order saloons.

Sources: French production numbers are quoted from Olivier de Serres book 'Le Grand Livre de la Traction Avant'. UK production is quoted from John Pressnell's 'Citroën Traction Avant'. Other data is from various 'usually reliable' sources. Having said that, the French chassis numbers shows more numbers than cars. In 1954 the discrepancy is one, but in 1955 it is 33. Manufacturing issues? Ed.



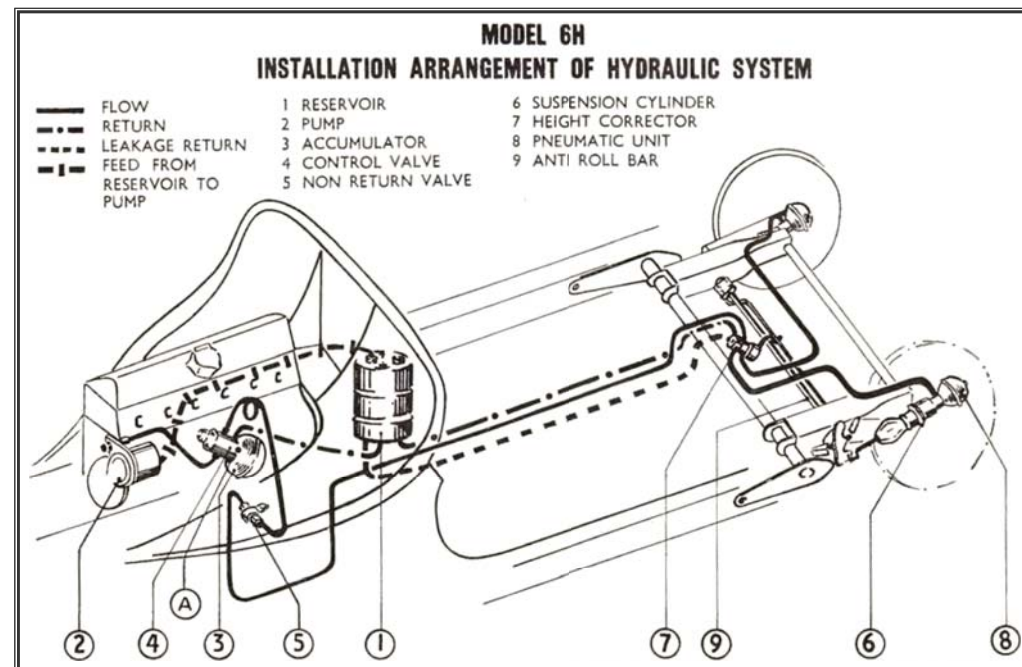
English Enthusiasm

Citroën introduced the 6-H in 1954 offering both Saloon and Familiale variants. Most were Saloons. 3,079 6-Hs were built in total, 77 of them in Slough and 306 were Familiales. From 1955 the only 6-cylinder cars built in Slough were 6-Hs. The 6-H was used as the basis of two vehicles built for President Coty ~ a closed body built by Franay and an open car built by Chapron. [It was the last vehicle to be commissioned from Franay prior to their closure. Ed.]

All 6-H Tractions are big boot, big body cars. If I had the time, the money, the space and the skills, I would like to build myself

a short but wide bodied, small boot 4-H with a Commerciale-style hatchback boot. I have always preferred the look of the Légère's side profile but the front and rear proportions of the wider Normale. It would be a pity to lose the rear legroom ~ at least my dog would think so ~ but sometimes function should give

President of the Republic, Charles de Gaulle, waves to the crowd on Bastille Day 1968. The convertible, designed by Henri Chapron, was commissioned by President René Coty along with a limousine built by Franay. The prime minister, Maurice Couve de Murville sits alongside the President, looking bored beyond belief!



way to form.

I am not sure whether the best starting point would be to get a Légère/Light 15 body and slice it down the middle and fill in the middle, or to start with a Normale/Big 15 body and take a few inches out from the C-pillar. I suspect the latter would be simpler as it puts all the difficult fabrication in one place. As I look out of the window at my Normale I know I am not going to do such a thing to that car.

This article by Chris Bailey, the Traction correspondent of 'The Citroënian', the magazine of the Citroën Car Club of the UK, appeared in the July 2020 edition of that magazine and was written in response to an email from

your Editor. Chris also writes for 'Floating Power' the magazine of the Traction Owners Club UK. This article may be reproduced elsewhere, after making contact with Chris via CCCUK.

Packard's Torsion-Level Ride

Citroën was not the only car manufacturer developing self-levelling suspension in the '50s. The 6-H became available from 1954. In 1955 Packard offered their Torsion-Level system and in '56 Chrysler came out with 'True Level Torsion Aire' which used an engine-driven air compressor pressurising airbags to restore the rear ride height. GM offered a similar option on the Cadillac the following year. Chris does not

English Enthusiasm

think Ford offered anything until the '80s. Notably both Rolls-Royce and Mercedes rejected the compressed air approach and took up licences on the Citroën system.

Leading the list of features for Packard in 1955 was Torsion-Level suspension, an interlinked torsion-bar arrangement the company's President, James Nance, acquired from a clever inventor, Bill Allison.

Operating on all four wheels, Torsion-Level was so impressive that Chrysler, which had planned to introduce their 'True Level Torsion Aire' suspension, put it off a year lest Packard claim its version was twice as good! A complicated electrical system allowed the suspension to correct for load and weight, and the in-

terlinking of all four wheels provided truly extraordinary ride and handling, especially over very rough surfaces.

Initially, the new suspension was not intended for Clippers, but at the last minute it went in as a \$150 option on the top-end Custom. It proved so popular that dealers were soon ordering it on 75% of Clippers, so availability was extended to the mid-range Super.

'What a fantastic ride', wrote Pete Molson in Motor Trend's Clipper Custom road test. 'Everything else dims by comparison'. Floyd Clymer reported, 'You can drive into a corner at high speed with this car and the body remains almost level... It was the most comfortable ride I've ever had'. Car Life said, 'Conventional

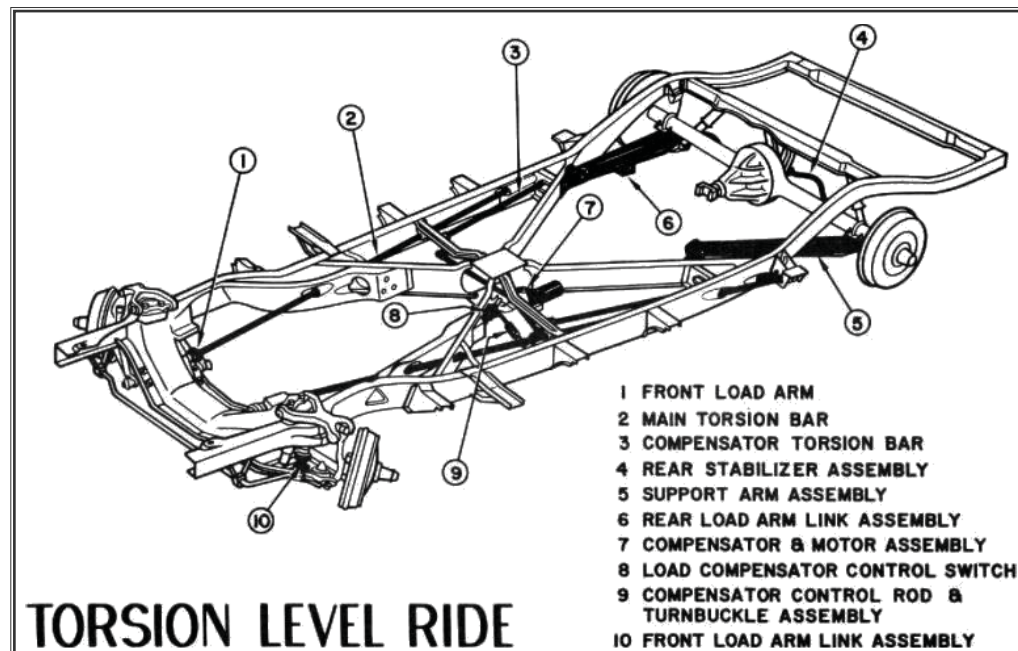
The New PACKARD

WITH TORSION-LEVEL RIDE



Creating True Pride of Ownership

200 HORSEPOWER PACKARD PATRICIAN



TORSION LEVEL RIDE

and coil leaf springs leave much to be desired... Not only is the 1955 Packard safer than many of its contemporaries, but it is much more comfortable'.

For those wanting a more technical description, here it is..

Basically, the entire car 'floats' on four points, the front and rear opposite twist lever arms of two long [2.8m] torsion bars, one on each side. The major advantage of this arrangement is that any reaction at the wheel, such as hitting a bump or pothole, is transmitted to the opposite wheel [front or rear] and not the frame, greatly reducing twisting stress on the frame. Another positive effect to wheel reaction is that the opposite [front or rear] wheel reacts

in the opposite direction, tending to keep the car dynamically level, in other words, very little pitch is experienced, if the shock absorbers are in good condition.

Two additional short [1.3m] torsion bars connect the rear suspension with a levelling mechanism. This electro-mechanical system, after a 7-10 second delay, applies more or less twist to the short torsion bars which lift or lower the rear. This keeps the car statically level, compensating for loaded weight such as additional passengers and/or luggage in the boot.

These extracts are taken from www.justacarguy.blogspot.com and www.auto.howstuffworks.com.

Member's Model 2

John and Jenny Grieve

1955 CITROËN BIG 6-H SEDAN
BODY NUMBER 6-H 158

I purchased the car from Kim Harding in Blackburn [Vic.] on the 6th of July, 1995, where it had been sitting in his shed for the past 10 years, after being dismantled due to a broken con-rod which had knocked holes in both sides of the engine block.

Over a 20 year restoration period, the engine block was repaired, fitted with ID con-rods,

As part of Citroën's 100th Anniversary celebrations, the company's then managing director Linda Jackson was in Melbourne for Motorclassica in October, 2019. Here she stands proudly next to the John and Jenny Grieve's beautiful Big 6-H

new pistons and liners, all bearings and timing gears were replaced and the cylinder head was fully reconditioned, the camshaft was also sent to Wades Cams for re-profiling and a light grind. [Yes, Wade's Cams was still operating in those days.]

A chance conversation with Gerry Propsting, a previous owner, at a Citroën meeting unveiled other unforeseen problems. Gerry commented that the splines on the torsion bars were so worn, he had hammered bro-

ken hacksaw blades into the silentblocs and filled them with Araldite epoxy glue. This led to the complete dismantling of the front end for repair. I was referred to an engineer in Airport West who undertook the work of re-instating the splines and heat treating the torsion bars. To my relief they came back looking like new. New silentblocs were fitted on assembly, drive shafts were fitted with CV joints, the steering rack was dismantled and re-conditioned, all other steering components were checked and replaced as necessary. Electric power steering was also fitted during this process.

The clutch and gearbox was overhauled, the gearbox was fitted with a NOS crown wheel and pinion, a new cluster gear and a first and reverse slider gear was also procured and fitted, along with new bearings. I had five

transmissions with the car and dismantled most of them before finding a perfect gear and synchro set that could be used in the re-assembly. The clutch pressure plate was adjusted correctly, a new clutch plate and thrust fitted, the clutch linkage and gearshift lock was adjusted to specifications in the workshop manual to give a clutch that operated with fairly light pedal pressure and smooth take-up. This car was fitted with a single plate clutch unlike the earlier models with twin plates.

The rear hydraulic suspension was totally re-built as the tapered roller bearings had worn into the swing arms, Citroën uses an integral part of the cast swing arm as a bearing cone and the bearings just rock on deflection rather than rotate. This leads to grooved wear on the cone area. The arms



Member's Model 2

were machined to take replacement bearings and then re-assembled, hydraulic components were sent to Pleaides in Queensland for reconditioning before being re-assembled. Originally I used a brake fluid/caster oil mix in the hydraulics. After enduring some problems with this, the decision was made to convert the system to LHM. Since the conversion the system has been 100% reliable and the worry of fluid spills has been overcome.

All brake components were replaced or reconditioned, Then came the problem of tyres and wheels, all of the 6-H series were

fitted with 165 x 400 tyres, this may have been due to the design of the new DS series, but it did leave these cars under-tyred, I was advised to run the larger 185 x 400 tyres that had been used on all earlier Big 6 series. So I ordered five 185 x 400 tyres and tubes from Longstone Tyres in the UK which arrived very promptly. The next problem

was finding wider wheels to suit the bigger tyres. After searching Australia and turning up nothing the search went to Europe. I had found that two of my wheels were OK to use leaving three to find. Finally, I was contacted by a man from France who had three that matched what I needed. These were purchased and dispatched. On arrival they were all

sandblasted and powder coated black. Big 6 wheels are not all the same, there are some differences between them, of course I needed the last of the series and I was very lucky to end up with a matching set.

The body was stripped back to bare metal and a lot of work done to repair previous accident damage and rust repairs including re-aligning the bolts on the front horns for the front cross-member.

The interior of the car and boot have been re-upholstered, wood graining and dashboard restored, new wiring harness fitted, all chrome work re-plated, it even



Member's Model 2

boasts an original Big 6 badge on the grille, which has been securely fixed in place and finally all windows have been replaced with new glass.

After 20 years, the car was again back on the road on 18 March, 2015, proudly displaying black and white number plates 'BIG 6H'.

Throughout the restoration I was ably assisted by my good friend Rob Little, who has a vast knowledge of all things Citroën. I met Rob when I first started my motor mechanic's apprenticeship over 60 years ago: we were friends then and our families have continued to have close ties ever since.

The history of the car as given

While the degree of 'under-bonnet' cleanliness is astounding, what you are supposed to be noticing is the sphere and pump near the engine block. [Compare this with the drawing on page 23.

to me is as follows: Supplied new from Commonwealth Motors to Hank Dogger of Dogger Motors, 690 Racecourse Rd, Newmarket, Gerry Propsting was it's next owner who sold it to Kim Harding in Blackburn, from whom I purchased the car.

This car is one of only 77 Slough-built Traction with hydraulic rear suspension, it's serial number 9/557555 indicates it was amongst the last 20 of it's type produced as the last serial number listed is 9/557575 and over the 25 years of ownership I am yet to see another one on the road. There are I believe, only five known Big 6-H Citroëns left in England, we know of six in Aus-

tralia, of which three are beyond repair. Our car is believed to be the only fully restored and registered Slough-built Big 6-H in Australia.

John Grieve

Wheels and Tyres

Reading John's article your Edi-

tor became interested in the matter of wheels and tyres on Big 6s in general and 6-Hs in particular. I doing background work for this edition it was clear to your Editor that it was a vexed question... a bit akin to production numbers.

On the AussieFrogs website I



There are three positions, high, low and normal. Low and high [shown here] are for wheel changing and normal is for

driving. There is no higher position such as the DS has for driving across fields or 21st century Australian roads.



Member's Model 2

found a conversation string from 2017. A 6-H owner wrote:

All Paris built cars were fitted with 165 x 400 tyres. That's well documented, but it appears they were also fitted with 165 x 400 rims as well. The reason behind this was that this was going to be the tyre and rim combination to be used on the future DS.

I was discussing my tyre size dilemma with an old friend, who also owns a Slough 6-H, and also worked at Continental Cars in Punchbowl in the early '60s as a mechanic, and he confirmed that the Slough 6-Hs that came to Australia were definitely fitted with 185 x 400 tyres.

Evidently, the reasoning being that the 165 x 400 tyres were too narrow for Australia's poor roads at the time [though some might say STILL!].

Gerry Propsting added that his car [which of course is John's car] was fitted with '185 x 400 four slot French rims.'

So, I sought some additional information from John and Rob Little. Rob came back with this additional information:

My comments on tyres are based on what I have read, been told and seen on other cars, as a relative newcomer to Citroëns that is what my comments are based on. I refer to the Brooklands book, 'Traction Avant Gold

John and Jenny standing proudly by their Traction after it won the trophy at Motorclassica in 2019 in the Post-War Classic Closed class. CCOCA did well, with Rob and Libby Little also taking a Rosette in the Modern Classic Closed class and then going on to win the trophy for the 100 Years of Citroën award.



Member's Model 2

Portfolio' where they road test a Slough 6-H, it is listed as being fitted with 165 x 400 tyres and wheels. People like Gerry Propsting encouraged us to fit the larger tyres and wheels to the car instead of the smaller tyres to improve the handling and I had been told from many sources that the 6-H was fitted with the smaller tyres. When we bought the car it had a mixed bag of tyre sizes and rim widths, so we really had little information to refer to.

The rim width used for the 185 x 400 is 20mm wider than that used on the 165 x 400 and that is what makes them harder to find. We were looking for wheels with four slots in them as that was what we had found in photos of Slough 6-H series, I considered them to be the later type used. Other types of wheels used were solid without slots. How many variations there were I cannot comment on as I really do not know. Maybe the cars delivered here were fitted with 185 x 400 tyres and rims, once again, I do not know, I must say that I have possibly only seen one other 6-H and that was at Gayndah and I could not tell you what size tyres were fitted.

[Someone such as] Greg Fienberg... would possibly be the one of the few people still around with first hand knowledge of these things and as a mechanic would certainly take notice of the

tyre sizes fitted. I would doubt if you could find anyone else or any evidence from Citroën to refute his statement.

While we were looking for wheels in Australia, I contacted many people, one of these was Bill Schenk, who I knew had a Paris 6-H and a normal Big 6, when I asked him about the wheels he suddenly realised why the Paris built car handled so differently, it was fitted with 165 x 400 tyres and wheels. Maybe you could ask Bob Shackley in Canberra, how many different types of wheels he has seen: he has had more Big 6s than anyone else in the country.

So, I did. Ask Bob Shackley, I mean. Here is his reply: "It is my understanding that the 6-H models were in fact fitted with 165 x 400 tyres not the 185 x 400s fitted to the Big 6 cars. I base this claim on advice received many years ago from Peter Huth and Les Hay from Gayndah. Les is quite encyclopædic on matters Citroën and was quite emphatic on this point. I don't know Citroën's rationale in fitting the narrower tyres. Also, I have come across a couple of 6-H wrecks in my travels and these were fitted with 165 x 400 tyres." I'd call that final... unless someone out there has more information to bring to the fore.

John Grieve, Rob Little, with extras from Leigh Miles and Bob Shackley.

Learning the Hard Way...

...or the Foresight Saga

There it was, a small ad in Wednesday's Age [there is hardly ever any kind of Citroën ad on Wednesday, let alone a 6-H]: 'Citroën, 6-cyl, hydraulic suspension etc \$250', and the address of a car yard in Northcote. After a quick trip in the Light 15, ritual tyre kicking and a quick foray down High Street, it seemed that due to numerous cracks, tired upholstery, a cloud of blue smoke, ingenious amateur wiring, and an advanced state of rustus destructicus, that \$250 was a little too much to pay [1971 prices].

So tactfully not making a decision and leaving our phone number, we left somewhat disappointed. Two weeks later we received a desperate phone call from the proprietor begging us to take the car at cost price of \$120. Next weekend, money and documents changed hands, and 6-H GKL 932 changed addresses.

Lesson Number 1:

Never weld near combustible material.

In a flurry of enthusiasm, the car was taken straight to an engineer to weld the cracks around the rear wheel arches. 'Shall I remove the rear seat?' 'No, just the squab will do'. With this, the torch was lit, the panel packed with wet asbestos rags [Ed. You can tell this is an article from long,

long ago. 1979 to be exact], and cracks began to become metal again. 'Strange, what's that flickering inside?' 'Oh, nothing'. 'But I smell smoke'. Two people began running around madly with extinguishers.

The engineer having decided that payment was not necessary, I drove the car home with the acrid smell of charred vinyl permeating my nostrils. Next stages proceeded smoothly; repair of rotted rear sills, and cracked left-hand scuttle. The car then sat for a while looking somewhat akin to a patchwork quilt, daubed with undercoat and Quickstop putty.

Lesson number 2:

Never give a painter a car without the doors attached.

Soon another fit of enthusiasm fell upon me, and, wielding spanners, screwdrivers and Penetrene, the old girl was soon undressed, doors, guards, boot, bonnet, etc., were stored, and the hull sent to the panel beaters for refinishing.

Economics dictated this idiotic procedure. I had enough to paint the hull, but not the minor panels. I was going to have these done later. No of course the doors didn't fit ~ they still don't ~ maybe one day I'll have it straightened properly.

Lesson number 3:

Do the mechanical restoration before the body if the car has to be kept mobile during its rebuild. [The nature of the par-

Learning the Hard Way...

ents' mountain goatlike abode dictated this].

Nasty stuff, hydraulic fluid ~ does wonders for freshly painted surfaces. I discovered this while waiting for the car to come up to height during one of its many short trips in and out of the garage. The hydraulic pump would have done justice to the Trevi fountain ~ it soaked up coins with gusto, and futile wishes weren't the only exclamations heard that day.

Matrimony gets in the way of projects such as these, and apart from another address change, the car again lay idle, until one day for the second time around, the patter of little feet, the onslaught of bassinets, bottles, and nappy bags began to make the Light 15 feel just a little cramped. Babies don't like sleeping standing up.

The old girl had to come out of retirement. Hurriedly she was carpeted, bumpered, legalised and registered: IOV 280. The new plates looked the best part of the restoration.

Still, I suppose it was more faithful than buying a Holden.

Lesson number 4:

Never rush.

Our first outing felt like riding a cart with lead bricks tied to square wheels ~ most un-Citroën-like. Three days work experimenting with damper valves for the rear suspension changed all that. Ah, what a nice feel-

ing, floating over bumps on the rear end. Somehow, this did not match the front with its firm [extra firm?] ride. A set of Light 15 rear shocks instead of the originals worked wonders. A trip to the Swan Hill Folk Museum really felt quite nice, even if it did consume more oil than petrol [clogged oil seal, we later found], and you overlook a sore right arm trying to counteract a tendency to steer only around left-hand corners.

For the rest of the first registered period, numerous investigations into particles of fractured manifolds and how to rebuild them kept the car firmly tied to home base. Thanks to Ray Hobbs for the location of a good one.

Its avid appetite for \$s saw a lapse in registration while the odd ticking sound deep in its 6-cylinder heart was cured [one broken ring] and the front stoppers relined. With the car again legalised, a more fitting number plate was bestowed: CV 015. Such power, such acceleration, such vibration as I braked for the lights.

Lesson 5:

With French rims, the size of the stud holes is critical to balance, even slight play leads to brake shudder.

English wheels were the cure: they are fixed far more securely.

I am only now over these last two months, after seven years ownership, beginning to appreci-

ate the concept of owning a 6-H. What it must have been like owning one from new! The unparalleled comfort, the superb braking and the excess of power is an exhilarating experience [after driving Light 15s]. Last Tuesday, the old girl took us from Mooroolbark to Korumburra, Wonthaggi, Phillip Island, and home again. The last stage, in pouring rain, we were sitting on a genuine 110kph, and seemed to overtake everything in sight with total assurance and safety.

Yes, the tedium has been worth it, and no, I am not going to sell it. One day it will have the restoration it deserves. [The owner prefers not to admit to a restoration such as this, and he will therefore pass un-named]. [Gerry's secret is safe with me. Ed.]

This article originally appeared in 'Front Drive' in Volume 2, #6 [1979].

Some Background from the Editor on 'Gerry'.

In September, 1971 'Wheels' magazine published 'French Without Tears', a review of the Trac-tion Avant. Here's what they wrote about 'Gerry' and his car[s].

Perhaps the best Light 15 in Australia is the 1951 model you see on these pages which is owned by 24-year-old Gerald Propsting of Box Hill, Melbourne.

It is one of three Citroën models he owns, the others being a 1939 11A under restoration and a

1965 DS 19 Pallas which serves as hack transportation.

And if that is not enough, Gerald's brother has a 1956 Light 15, his mother has a similar 1954 model and his father has a 1953 11 Normale.

The family Citroën tree reads like this: Mr Propsting senior's first car was a 1926 Lancia Lambda which was later swapped for a 1927 Lancia. In 1954 his taste for traction avant whetted, he bought a 1938 Light 15, but a gearbox problem blew the motor apart.

In 1960 Mr Propsting tried again with the Normale and this car has so far chalked up 170,000kms, many of them pulling a caravan. His wife's current Light 15 was bought just two years ago.

Gerald Propsting's history of Citroën ownership reads like a column from of the classified pages. His first Citroën was a 1952 standard model Light 15. This was replaced by a \$1,495 60,000km 1954 Light 15 but was recently sold to buy an ex-European NATO forces Pallas [\$2,400].

Meanwhile the current deep maroon 1951 Light 15 was bought with 145,000miles on the clock and has undergone a full and very complete restoration.

Such quality does not come cheaply. Gerald originally paid \$235 for the car unrestored and now it owes him over \$2,000

French Iconoclast



Members of longer-standing, and those of you who enjoy Julian Marsh's Citroënēt web-site will be well aware of his series of columns entitled 'Iconoclast'. Iconoclasm [is there such a word?] is rare amongst motoring writers... the only professional motoring iconoclast who springs into my mind is the awesome, sadly deceased, LJK Setright. While the English 'get' iconoclasm, it typically eludes the French. In my experience French motoring writers see everything through rose-coloured Franco-ophile glasses. But, all is not lost.

In 1938 the 15/6 was one of the rare production cars which could average more than 100kph on a trip; performance normally reserved for Delahaye [top right], Talbot [centre] or Bugatti [bottom]

Here is an article from a few decades ago where the author, Didier Lainé, is happy to take a swipe at what might well be the ultimate French motoring icon.

*I*t is hard to judge a car that was ranked as highly by the public in its time as the 'Queen of the Road'.

The 15/6 is more than a great touring car; it is a national institution such as the French make from time to time to prove to themselves, and to the world at large, that they have a touch of genius



And the 'Queen' achieved that position on the vote of the motoring population. It established its title over constant opposition and never let its reputation down. That is why it can be considered the greatest of the French popular cars, even though nobody's perfect, and the 'Queen' was no exception to the rule.

When it first appeared, it only represented a consolation prize to those Citroënists frustrated by not being able to try the mythical '22' at least once. The 15/6, when launched, was supposed to offer roughly what the '22' had represented four years earlier. What it had lost in panache, it had gained largely in handling, economy and simplicity.

In 1938 it was one of the rare production cars which could average more than 100kph on a trip. Performance such as this was normally reserved for cars such as the Delahaye 135, Bugatti Type 57 or Talbot T23.

But at the time, the public's attention was being more drawn to other things. Although a champion when launched, the car would not be recognised as the 'Queen' until peace had returned, France had returned to normal and an escapist demand had emerged.

After 1946, the French were anxious to forget the dark years, and wanted to be able to indulge themselves more, perhaps to remember a meeting with 'those

French Iconoclast

that had one'. So little by little, the legend grew, not without some exaggeration along the way.

Before long, fantastic figures were being unblushingly quoted, such as 'clocking 150 without even trying'. Soon after, claims that no other car had comparable performance were circulating.

Such claims were not really untrue, they were only a trifle optimistic. It was certainly true that, on a highway, a Delahaye 135 could beat it, and that its 130kph effective top speed was not quite so impressive after the war. But all the same, one could not admit too many weaknesses in it when all of France and abroad had their eyes fixed on it.

A group of enthusiasts became established who were having far too much fun driving their cars to be truly objective, and who, even more than the factory, boosted the reputation of the 'Queen'.

In just a few short years, it became the preferred transport of

leading citizens both in the country and in Paris. It has just as likely to be used by doctors, lawyers or wealthy businessmen as it was by politicians right across the spectrum, including the Socialists of the Rassemblement du Peuple Français [with the exception of Maurice Thorez, who displayed himself in a Delahaye, no doubt so that he could represent the people better.]

[Thorez, the Secretary-General of the French Communist Party, then at the height of its popularity, splurged on a pair of Chapron-bodied Delahaye 180 armoured saloons in 1949. These cost well over F3million each, at a time when most politicians were content sitting in a F840,000 Citroën 15-Six, causing much derision in the non-Communist press. Who bought Delahayes? The Reds, not the Americans. Ed.]

The sober black sedan was perfectly suited to the needs of the time. It was at the same time

luxurious and discreet, profoundly French in appearance, respectable and economical, and effectively hid from people's sight wealth that been acquired more or less honestly.

The 15/6 could not be taken as an obvious sign of wealth. It cost just F840,000 in 1952, less than a Fregate or a Vedette. A moderate degree of luxury, in short, which suited perfectly those who wanted to travel comfortably without attracting too much attention. And for the price it gave well-made velour seats, plenty of room in the back [even the General was comfortable], a middle-class appearance without ostentation, and, above all, exceptional handling on the road.

[Ed. The author is being eco-

nomical with the truth, as the data table shows the 15/6 was more expensive, by 6%, than the Frégate. Maybe it depends on which particular models you compare.]

But it did not only interest the middle-class; conservative or progressive. Since the War, it had been discovered by the thieves of Paris, Lyon and Marseilles, and they continued to employ it for some time to come.

Its exemplary discretion and indisputable efficiency were real arguments in its favour. It was regularly associated with the most spectacular hold-ups and boldest getaways, and it achieved those tasks with incomparable vigour. All the leading lights of the underworld in their thousands used



MODEL	FISCAL CV	1952 PRICE [FF]
SIMCA ARONDE	7CV	725,000
PEUGEOT 203	7CV	636,900
CITROËN 11BL	11CV	585,000
RENAULT FRÉGATE	11CV	795,000
CITROËN 11B	11CV	620,000
FORD VEDETTE	12CV	895,000
CITROËN 15/6	16CV	840,000



Große 8-Zylinder von FORD

Der 2.2 Liter Vedette ist unter den europäischen Personenwagen der einzige 8-Zylinder. Die 66 PS seines elastischen V8-Motors geben ihm ein hervorragendes Antriebsvermögen und eine hohe Geschwindigkeit. Als experimenteller vierstelliger Wagen hat er gut Platz für 5-6 Personen. Sein Kofferraum nimmt das große Gepäck für lange Reisen auf. Im Vedette vereinigen sich die Erfahrungen der weltweiten Fordorganisation.



Den amerikanischen Ford steht ihr Vorbildler ganz für Sie zu einer Probefahrt bereit. Viele Konstruktionen: herrlich! Geschwindigkeit, Manövrier, Getriebe, Fächer usw. lassen den geschickten Geschwindigkeit wahren Spielraum.

Speed secret mit FORD

FORD WERKE AKTIENGESellschaft KÖLN

Even in the 1950s the new generation of cars found the 'Queen' hard to beat. The Vedette would upend itself after flying beautifully through the air and the Frégate would fail on power as the 'Queen' continued to control the roads of France.

Six qualities which COUNT...



- 85 m.p.h. with ease.
- Overdrive fitted for economy — 28 to 30 m.p.g!
- Plenty of room for 6 adult passengers and all their luggage.
- Magnificent roadholding, as a result of independent 4-wheel suspension.
- Very low maintenance cost. (Example: Removable wet liners are replaceable at £15 per set of pistons and liners).
- Many luxuries fitted as standard, including soft furniture hide upholstery, heater, air-conditioning, windscreen washers, and white wall tyres.

Contact our nearest agent for a demonstration ride and let the Frégate's performance speak for itself.

THE 2-LITRE

RENAULT Frégate

Manufacturers in Great Britain since 1899. Distributors throughout the United Kingdom, all of whom carry full stocks of spare parts.

RENAULT LTD., WESTERN AVENUE, LONDON, W.3. SHOWROOM: 21 PALL MALL, S.W.1. (1991)

French Iconoclast

it for their foul deeds...

The I5, always black and always stolen, took a malicious delight in nimbly eluding French police all over the country. 'Peirrot le Fou' [Mad Pete] and his famous 'Traction Avant Gang' used it regularly for three years, with boundless confidence, which was amply justified by the results. Quai de Javel could hardly be displeased that 'their' car made the headlines frequently, or deny that the various events with which they were involuntarily associated were worth ten times the amount of publicity gained by the most spectacular publicity campaigns.

The 'Queen' served the crooks as well as it had served the Gestapo of the FFI, without ever protesting. Later on, it would win the hearts of civilians as well, so that production boomed.

By the beginning of the fifties, it had quite naturally taken over all the French roads that were ready for it. And even new generations found it hard to beat...

Where the Vedette would be likely to upend itself, where the Hotchkiss I350 would run out of breath, where the Frégate would fail on power, and where an American car would end up in a field after flying beautifully through the air, the I5 would go effortlessly, as it was known that it would always stay on the road. It was untroubled by unmade roads, and its tyres were equally at home on treacherous and slippery cobblestones and mountainous hairpins, where it left the rest for dead, leaving nothing more than the sight of the simple sign on the right rear how symbolic.

It effectively reigned over all kinds of roads, and its manoeuvrability, superior to all the French production cars of the immediate post-war period, enabled it to overtake in an instant, even approaching dangerous bends. With it, car travel lost much of its adventurous and hazardous nature. It could recover

from a good number of human errors, correct clumsiness, forgive mistakes and bad judgements... and if at times, it actually refused to help, well that was ample evidence that the driver had really overdone it.

Theoretically, it could enter a curve far too fast and still leave it as though nothing had happened, its four wheels still stuck firmly to the road. It could be driven quite brutally and still hold on. In most cases, it fell on its feet like a cat, and continued on its way with the unconcern of a thoroughbred. This is why, for many years, its chronic faults remained forgotten. It had to be admitted that it could have done with at least 15kph more speed to really head the rest. It was often forgotten that its comfort over bad roads was rather less than legendary. It was seldom acknowledged that its fifteen fiscal horses were rather too thirsty at speeds over 100kph. It often irritated its owners on account of

its lack of synchromesh on first gear, the heavy brake pedal pressures needed, without mentioning its very 'standard' finish and its poor visibility. And it has to be said that the steering was reluctant, and needed a lot of effort, particularly when manoeuvring in tight spaces or at rest.

The 'Queen' was perhaps a little too concerned with road-holding and did not pay enough attention to the smaller pleasures of life. And as she was proud and somewhat arrogant, she refused to make the necessary improvements, considering that her lead placed her beyond the reach of threats from others.

But eventually it had to be admitted that she had had her day, and that it was becoming urgent to go on to the next stage of the Citroën revolution. By 1952-53, she was no longer really current, even though many would deny the evidence before their eyes, and shut their ears to criticism.

To some extent, the Hotchkiss Gregoire had already lost its supremacy, and the new Dyna Panhard with only 850cc was the only one which could fill the gap. Sooner or later, the Queen's reign had to finish, especially as everywhere people were talking about the secret Princess which was to succeed her.

The new pretender was very promising, according to gossip and the grapevine; but Citroën



The 'Queen', and her sisters, served the Germans [far left], the Americans and the FFI [left] with equal fervour.

French Iconoclast

preferred to play for extra time, by keeping the old Queen in the running by making the most of her past record, so that the customers would take no notice.

Unconquered until about 1950, the I5 should perhaps have stopped then so as not to lose its reputation but it continued to carry on, with its noisy gearbox, truck-like steering and performance which had not changed since its introduction in 1938. It had been revolutionary only at the beginning of its career; and in the next seventeen years, had remained permanently deaf to any calls for change.

[While the author is suggesting that the I5 should have abdicated in 1950 or '51, it was in 1951

that production numbers actually peaked. Ed.]

From being revolutionary, she had become fiercely conservative and unchanging. In short, she could not believe that she was only mortal...

By 1955, many of those who would have chosen it in the past, only had eyes for her daughter, the DS. This car, more than anything else, shook the throne of the 'Queen' with its revolutionary concepts and its regicidal ways. The fallen Queen withdrew from the Grand Palais where she had so often been greeted by crowds of admirers, and retreated with dignity. A number of respectable middle-class families meanwhile refused to admit that

the coup d'état had taken place. Against all expectations, they continued to place their confidence in the old monarch, leaving the daring show-offs to take the risks with her descendant, which had not yet been properly sorted out. For quite a few years yet the exiled queen would display her familiar silhouette on the tranquil roads of the countryside, as if nothing had changed. And during this twilight period, the gates of certain aristocratic old dwellings still opened to allow its gleaming bonnet through. But the peak years had passed. In general, the death of grandfather [who had decreed that the I5 has the ultimate car] was followed almost immediately by its expulsion from the garage where it had beaten a happy retreat.

The 'Queen' then entered a period of total decline, and re-joined the 'II' at the bottom of the social pyramid. It often ended up in the hands of heavy-handed drivers who were too broke to maintain it in the condition it deserved. For the next fifteen years, I5/6s were re-sold to impecunious students and the like for less than F500, and some were even given away.

However at the beginning of the seventies, young people rediscovered them and took them up, as being consistent with their ideas. They started to revive the legend and restore its faded col-

ours. The 'Queen' had never been more popular ~ wherever she went, people would be heard to remark 'A I5!' admiringly, and the stories about the cousin who 'never had to open the bonnet in ten years' started to go the rounds again.

The 'Queen of the Road' had become the 'Queen of the New Collectors'. It really had to happen sooner or later.

Written by Didier Lainé and translated by Peter Simmenauer. Didier Lainé, who died in 2015, was a contributing writer to the magazine 'AutoRétro' from its foundation. After a stint on television he became the editor of 'Retroviseur'. While your Editor does not know the original source of this article, he presumes it is taken from the pages of 'Retroviseur' from about 1983.



Talking Technical

2CV Engine Problems

This is a list of typical engine problems that can beset the starting and running of a 2CV. The most likely solutions are suggested. The 2CV is getting older, and the chances of something failing increases with time because our older cars are made up of a large number of older parts getting ready to fail! The key to minimising problems is periodic preventative maintenance. Be vigilant about it. For example, do you know the age of the diaphragm in your fuel pump? It is much more convenient to replace items in the comfort of home before they fail rather than suffering the potentially huge inconvenience caused by items failing out on the road!

Use this information as a guide only. It is not intended as a substitute for a formal diagnosis. Although the entries are in groups, they are not in any specific order and some entries appear in more than one group.

GENERAL RUNNING ISSUES:

1 Ensure the engine static timing marks are clearly visible and correctly positioned. Check with a 6mm pin or drill inserted through the engine housing into the flywheel. If the marks are not present, apply the appropriate reference marks.

2 Ensure ignition timing is

correct at 800–850rpm using a strobe timing light and tachometer. An inductive pickup timing light and inductive pickup tachometer make the operation easy.

3 When the engine has warmed up, check/adjust idle speed and idle mixture for a smooth idle at 800-850rpm [Citroën's specifications].

4 If the idle mixture screw needs to be turned out more than say four or five turns to achieve a smooth idle, remove the idle mixture screw and check the needle point to ensure it is not bent, worn, damaged or broken off and lodged in the seat from over-tightening. If it is, replace it. Refer to the writer's article, *2CV Maintenance* for more details.

5 Engine idle speed too high and cannot be set to 800-850rpm? Refer to the writer's article, *2CV Secondary Choke Butterfly Adjustment*.

6 Engine has a rough idle that cannot be smoothed out with the idle mixture screw? Refer to the writer's article, *2CV Secondary Choke Butterfly Adjustment*. Could also be caused by valve timing, so check valve clearances.

7 Instant hesitation on throttle operation? Ignition coil high-voltage breakdown. Check using a known good coil.

8 Hesitation at speed? Fuel starvation. Ensure small mesh fuel filter under cap on forward

face of carburettor is clean.

9 Hesitation at speed? Fuel starvation. Replace fuel filter.

10 Hesitation at speed? Fuel starvation. Check fuel pump delivery. If insufficient, replace fuel pump diaphragm.

11 Ensure carburettor floats do not bind on the side faces of the float chambers. Adjust them if they do.

12 Ensure carburettor float hinge does not have excessive play, allowing floats to bind or twist. If too much play, tighten the hinge tangs a little to prevent looseness of the float.

13 Ensure both carburettor butterflies reach the *fully* open position at full throttle [to feel the dizzying power surge of the 2CV!].

14 Ensure carburettor butterflies do not go over centre at full throttle.

15 When engine is idling, if it eventually slows down and stops, the float valve may not be

completely shutting off the fuel, allowing the fuel height in the carburettor to slowly rise to the point where the engine is forced to stop. Replace the float valve.

16 Fuel mixture problem? Ensure the carburettor float height is correct with the carburettor cover gasket in place.

17 Engine backfiring through the carburettor? Most likely the fuel mixture is too lean so check carburettor float settings but could also be caused by insufficient inlet valve clearances or incorrect ignition timing.

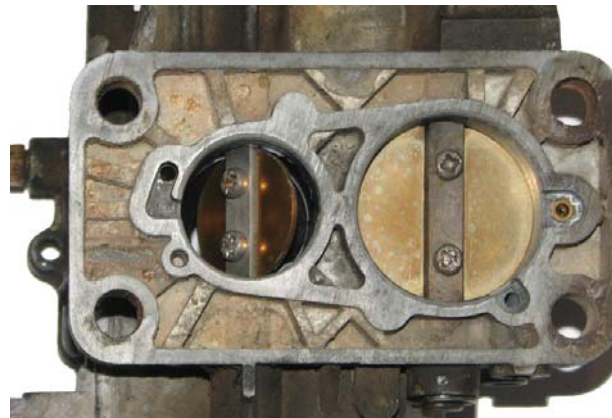
18 Engine backfiring into the exhaust system? Most likely the fuel mixture is too rich so check carburettor float settings but could also be caused by insufficient exhaust valve clearances or incorrect ignition timing.

19 Engine stops on throttle operation? Ensure the carburettor's [larger] secondary choke butterfly does not start to open before the [smaller] primary choke butterfly is about half open as in the photo on the left. If the secondary butterfly is opening too early, there is a problem with the linkages connecting the two butterflies. [See Photo 1, left]

20 Fuel leaking from carburettor? Float heights incorrect or floats binding. Adjust floats.

21 Fuel leaking from carburettor? Float valve not shutting off. Replace float valve.

Photo 1. Engine stops on throttle operation? Check the carburettor chokes.



Talking Technical

22 Slight oil leaks around engine seals? Ensure crankcase vacuum is not being lost because of poor sealing of the rubber ring under the oil breather cap. Ensure the rubber ring is in good condition and able to do its job. Refer to the writer's article, *2CV Oil Breather*. [Also see next item.]

23 Slight oil leaks around engine seals? Check that the oil breather is providing more than 50mm WG [Water Gauge] of crankcase vacuum at idle speed as specified by Citroën. If it is less than 50mm, replace the oil breather. This very small crankcase vacuum [50mm WG vacuum \approx -0.07 PSI] is critical to the operation of the 2CV engine. Ensure it is correct. [The writer's new 602cc engines with new oil breathers produce about 220mm WG at idle.] Citroën also states the crankcase vacuum should never drop to zero at any engine speed. If it does, replace the oil breather. Refer to the writer's article, *2CV Oil Breather*.

GENERAL STARTING DIFFICULTIES:

1 Follow the starting procedure stated in the 2CV Owner's Manual. On first start of the day, full choke and no accelerator. At other times, no choke and full accelerator.

2 Spark plugs. Replace. Gap to 0.7mm. Remove only when cold.

3 Points and capacitor [if

fitted]. Replace. Faulty points capacitor can cause the points to burn, migrate metal and bond together. Points capacitors are heavily stressed in points ignition systems. Easiest of all? Install electronic ignition, set the timing, then forget all about it! [See Photo 2, below.]

4 Coil has suffered a high-voltage flash-over between its windings. This is usually caused by plug leads having excessive resistance or plug gaps too wide. The spark voltage may be reduced as a result, causing hesitation at load, or the engine may not start or run. Check using a known good coil. Refer to writer's article, *2CV Ignition Coil*.

5 Bad plug leads. Replace the pair if one is over 5,000ohms resistance. More follows.

6 Ignition timing. Check with strobe timing light and tachom-

eter at 800-850rpm.

7 Weak ignition coil [weak spark]. Check using a known good coil.

8 Backfiring? Can be caused by a weak coil. Check using a known good coil.

COLD STARTING DIFFICULTIES:

1 Plug leads. Replace with genuine Bougicord 3166 leads. These are resistive leads with a resistance of 3,000ohms each as specified by Citroën. Do not use standard plug leads which can be 8,000 to 15,000ohms each, making starting much harder for the 2CV and possibly causing failure of the ignition coil by high-voltage flash-over. Refer to the writer's article, *2CV Ignition Coil*.

2 Cracked fibre spacer at base of carburettor. This can also cause backfiring on start-up and difficult cold running. Replace spacer, fitting a paper gasket on each side.

HOT STARTING DIFFICULTIES:

1 The almost universal cause of hot starting problems? Valve clearances closing up, resulting in the valves being open longer, causing reduced compression pressure, making the engine hard to start. Reset the valve clearances to 0.2mm when the engine is cold. Attend to this quickly to minimise overheating of the exhaust valves.

2 Faulty ignition coil. Internal damage reduces the spark volt-

age, potentially preventing the plugs from firing. Try another coil to check. Refer to the writer's article, *2CV Ignition Coil*.

3 Rich mixture. Check float height and idle mixture settings.

4 Ensure choke butterfly is fully open when choke is off.

5 Coil runs hot. Shorted turns in primary winding. The high current circulating in the shorted turns raises the temperature of the wire in the shorted turns and thus the coil temperature. The shorted turns also result in an increase in the average primary current which further raises the temperature of the coil. Neither of these conditions is part of the coil's normal operation, and so an increase in coil temperature flags an abnormal condition. The shorted turns also result in a reduction in the spark energy available at the spark plugs because of self-damping of the primary winding by the shorted turns, making starting difficult. In the worst case, the spark plugs may not fire because of insufficient spark voltage, preventing the engine from starting. In summary, a serviceable coil does *not* run hot! It was not designed that way! If it is hot, it is faulty. Straight to the bin! However, the coil may run warm in operation due to the normal current passing through the primary winding.

Graeme Dennes

Photo 2. Faulty points capacitor can cause the points to burn.



New Standards

THE CITROËN SIX [HYDRO-PNEUMATIC]. NEW STANDARDS OF RIDING COMFORT IN A CAR NOTED FOR ROADHOLDING AND ROOMINESS

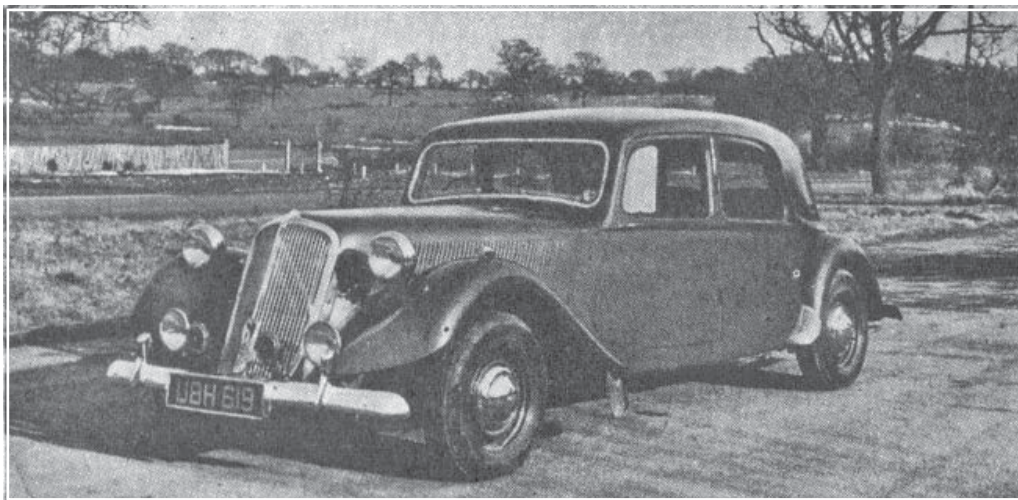
The point of cardinal importance in the new Citroën Six is the hydropneumatic suspension; what it is, still more important, what it does.

The main trend in private car suspension over the past 20 years has been to secure a progressively softer ride so that bumps are absorbed and to eliminate fore and aft pitching which can be an intolerable nuisance to anyone occupying the rear seats. The means adopted to achieve these ends have been uniformly to soften the front springs and simultaneously to increase the weight carried by the front wheels. The result of this forward concentration of mass has been two-fold. The car has been endowed with an arrow-like stability which promotes under-steering charac-

teristics, and with the front end tied down, as it were, a really flat ride can be induced over comparatively poor surfaces. Nevertheless, the modern flat ride has been achieved by a sacrifice of stability when cornering, of driveability on wet or slippery roads and it exists only so long as the hydraulic damping units are fully effective.

The idea of using air as a suspension unit is as old as the industry, for an air spring has, or can

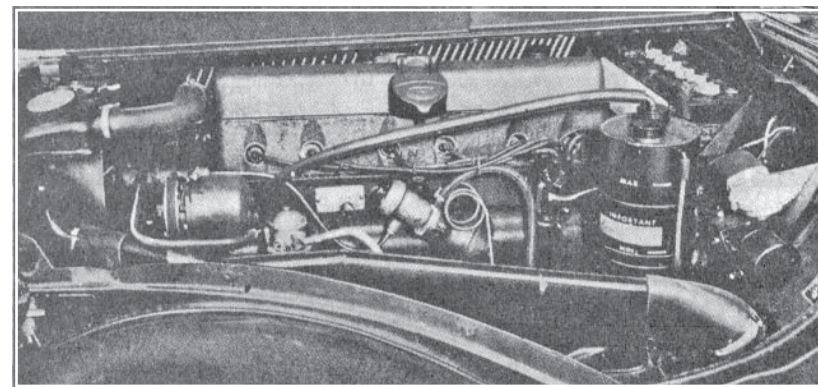
Inherent stability. Three factors combine to give the Citroën a unique combination of stability on main roads and comfort over rough tracks. These are the wide track, long wheelbase and low centre of gravity shown below and the soft, Servo-levelled pneumatic rear suspension system pressure-controlled from the hydraulic pump and reservoir seen beneath the bonnet.



have the important quality of a rapidly rising rate: that is to say it can be given the equivalent flexibility of a very soft mechanical spring at the beginning of its travel and will rapidly stiff-

en in resistance as the wheel rises to full bump. This gives in some way the equivalent of a built-in damper, but it has been found from experience that additional fluid damping is required. The main problem of the air spring is how to retain the air within the working chamber; for very high pressures are realized and the lubrication of moving parts is difficult. There has, therefore, been considerable interest in the possibility of containing the air within rubber bags so that the leak problem would not arise and the possibility of so doing has been increased in recent years by the introduction of improved rubbers both natural and artificial.

The rear springs on the new Citroën are made in this manner and they are supplemented by hydraulic dampers. This, however, is but the beginning of the story. The damper units are of piston type with two-way valves, and the damper fluid is used as the reacting medium between the



air spring and the frame of the car. That is to say, as each wheel swings on a trailing arm the piston of the damper moves in and out of the cylinder and after driving oil through a restricting valve compresses the gas in the sealed rubber container. The damper is kept constantly supplied with oil under pressure from a separate pump and, most important of all the supply of oil is controlled by a valve which is responsive to the

IN BRIEF

Price: £1,040 plus purchase tax £434 9s 2d
equals £1,474 9s 2d

Capacity 2,886cc

Unladen kerb weight 1,384kg

Fuel consumption 15.7L/100km

Maximum speed 135.4kph

Maximum speed on 1 in 20 gradient 112.7kph

Maximum top gear gradient 1 in 9.3

Acceleration:

16-48kph in top 9.7sec

0-80kph through gears 13sec

Gearing: 32kph in top at 1,000rpm,

122.3kph at 762m/min piston speed.

New Standards

angle of the car in relation to the road. This in effect changes the fulcrum about which the spring unit operates, the result of which can be seen in most dramatic form when the engine is started with the car at rest.

As one approaches the new Citroën it is seen to be very much down by the stem. The engine drives a seven-piston pump supplying brake fluid to a pressure accumulator and from this it is bled off to the suspension system. So a few moments after starting the engine the tail of the car comes up until it reaches the designed position. This will now hold irrespective of load and if the tail of the car be depressed by an outside force the car will be forced back to the level not only by the return action of the springs but also with the additional effect of the oil servo.

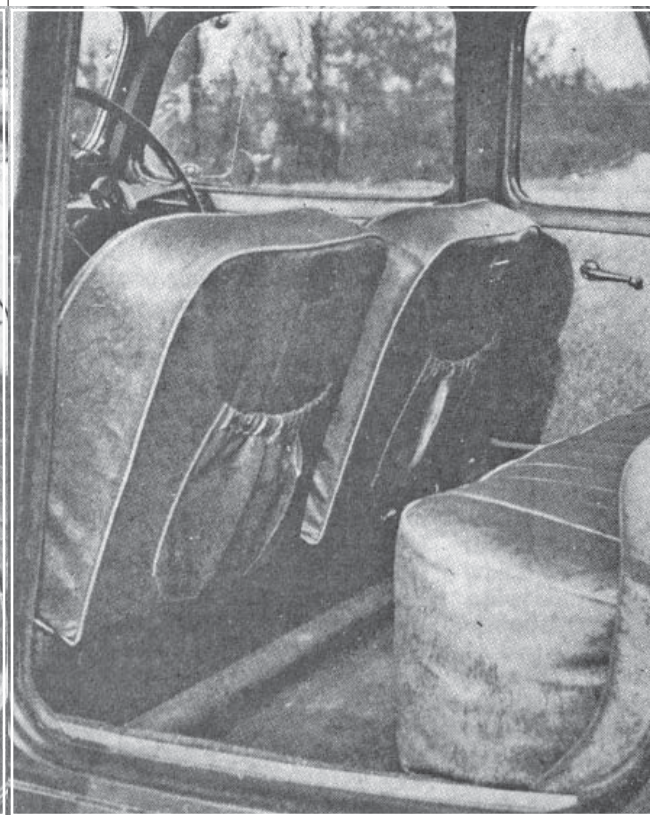
When the car is driven away on an ordinary southern English road the benefits of this apparently complicated arrangement are not immediately apparent. The driver certainly, and the passengers probably, are more immediately impressed with the high standard of stability which arises from some of the other novel features of the design. Having by modern standards an exceptionally long wheelbase, a track of 149cm and an unusually low centre of gravity, the car is almost wholly free from roll. This in conjunction with the remarkable



Conventional pattern. The control gear of the Citroën [including the finger-tip light switch and horn button] has not been greatly changed and the separate seats are outstanding for their exceptional comfort.

cornering power inherent in the Michelin X tyres gives a feeling of safety when sweeping through quite severe bends at between 100 and 110kph which must be experienced to be believed.

These qualities are partly the product of front-wheel drive, but a perhaps more important aspect of this arrangement is that the 60% of car weight carried by the front wheels which is required for a pitch-free ride is coupled with drive through the front wheels. Thus, the smaller proportion of weight carried by



Back seat comfort. The exceptional rear-seat ride of the Citroën is matched by deeply upholstered seats and detail amenities such as ash trays, map pockets and a foot rest are provided.

the rear wheels does not affect traction. This more than compensates for transfer of weight backwards as the car accelerates or climbs a hill. Hence, under conditions of snow and ice, speed can safely be maintained, especially once the driver has mastered the technique of 'power on' cornering.

The old criticism that cornering characteristics of front-wheel drive cars change completely as between power on and throttle closed, does not apply in this instance, for the difference, which

admittedly exists, is of a very small order. There may, however, be some reaction into the steering if wheel-spin develops when accelerating on the lower ratios. The turning circle is definitely on the large side, and the steering, which needs only 2½ turns from lock to lock, continues to be heavy in comparison with most modern cars, although it is substantially lighter than we have experienced on any earlier Citroën. As on all earlier examples of this rack and pinion system, it is highly positive, free from backlash and by virtue of the stabilizing effect of driven front wheels, free from road reaction except on the worst of surfaces.

Up to now this latest version of a basically 1939 motorcar has produced few surprises. As compared with the model tested by The Motor in 1954, the mean maximum speed has risen from 130.5kph to 134.4kph, there is no change which is significant in the acceleration or hill climbing factors, and but little difference in fuel consumption. The car feels smoother and quieter and there have obviously been improvements in finish and equipment of which mention will later be made. But let us now continue this journey in the mind's eye on the assumption that a normally smooth main road is succeeded by a secondary road which is pronouncedly wavy; one which will limit the comfortable speed

New Standards

of a normal car to, say, 80kph, or reduce the average vehicle which has run 50,000 to 65,000km to 50 or 65kph. The Citroën continues [*ex hypothesi*] at its normal cruising speed [bends included] of 110kph and the driver and passengers immediately notice ~ nothing! The increased flexibility of the torsion bar suspension at the front absorbs the punishment handed out to that end of the vehicle, and the combination of air spring characteristics plus the ride leveller ensure that every upward or downward movement of the body is limited to one or two oscillations, after which the back end is as it were clamped into its normal position.

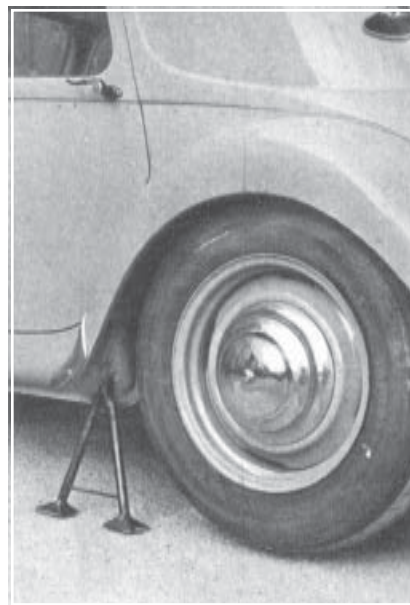
Let us continue on to even worse surfaces. When the driver chooses to demonstrate by taking the car on to unmade roads he instinctively braces himself for the shock which will attend the striking of 10 or even 13cm obstacles at speeds of between 100 and 110kph. But if the passengers can be persuaded to read a book or newspaper they will find that they continue to do so and have little or no knowledge of the road surface, appalling as it is, over which the car is being driven.

The Citroën hydro-pneumatic suspension, in fact sets standards of ride which are without parallel in our experience, and it is a particular merit of the car as a whole that the superlative comfort for

the passengers [and the back seat passengers in particular] is coupled with the high-speed stability which has for so long been the hallmark of the products of Quai de Javel.

Our Roads Too Good?

It may be unfortunate for the sales prospects of this model that the roads of England as a whole are too good to show off the new system to its best except on special occasions. Also such bad roads as do exist are mainly to be found in the northern and colder sections of the country and although the suspension of the Citroën gives it particular appeal as a chauffeur-driven vehicle it suffers rather badly in respect of interior ventilating and heating arrangements. Warm air is piped



from behind the radiator to a point just above the front passenger's feet, but in cold weather the temperature of the delivered air is little above the ambient and this benefit is dissipated before the incoming air reaches the back seat passengers. Moreover, as there is no air demisting, in humid conditions it is almost essential to drive with a window open. For these reasons the habitability of the car falls considerably below the standards one may reasonably expect for a car of this class and price and unfortunately, this is not the only anomaly perpetuated in this pre-war design. The enclosed luggage locker is largely occupied by the spare wheel, and the theoretical car-

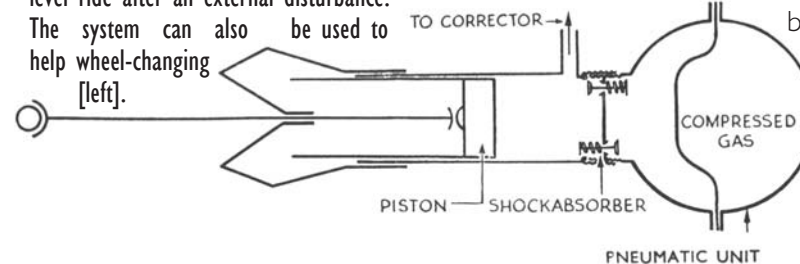
rying capacity is limited further by an awkward shape. Both the front windscreen and the rear window seem shallow in comparison with later designs and the conformation and styling of the body makes no pretence to modern standards.

As a by-product of the unique suspension system a rear wheel change becomes an exceptionally easy operation. Beneath the luggage locker is a three-position tap. If this is turned to 'high' additional oil is fed between the exceptionally soft pneumatic spring and the damper piston, and this raises the carcass of the car considerably above normal. Chocks may then be fitted beneath the hull and if the tap be turned to the 'low' position, oil will be abstracted which will result in the rear wheel rising clear of the ground. After changing the wheel the reverse procedure can be ended by returning the tap to 'normal'.

Top Gear Performer

Turning now from the dominant features of the car ~ many good, and some bad ~ to the more ordinary, an outstanding feature is the extreme flexibility of the low output, high torque six-cylinder engine. The top gear acceleration from 15kph upwards is both smooth and rap-

Hydro-pneumatics. A sphere containing compressed gas supports the weight carried by each rear wheel, a fluid column forming the reaction member between the spring and a piston 'on the suspension arm attached to the frame. The oil is restricted as it is moved by the piston and it is held permanently under a pressure, which is varied by a device sensitive to angle, so that there is both damping and a 'power push' to restore a level ride after an external disturbance. The system can also be used to help wheel-changing [left].

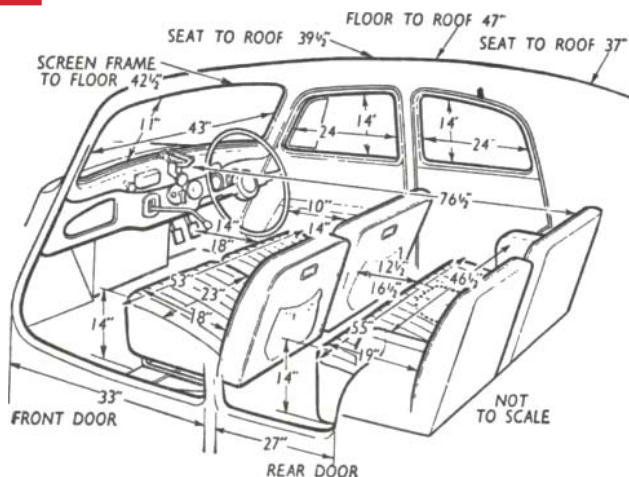


New Standards

id, but in addition speed can be reduced to a slow walking pace and the car then smoothly accelerated by placing one's foot hard down on the accelerator; Unless a gradient sensibly stiffer than 1 in 10 is met the indirect gears can be regarded as for emergency use only, especially in the case of bottom gear, as with a little practice smooth starts can readily be made in second. It is perhaps just as well, for the interlock which prevents a gear being released until the clutch pedal is fully depressed will not be found to everyone's taste. Nor does the fascia mounted gear lever really lend itself to a right-hand drive car.

As frozen roads were experienced through much of this test it is impossible accurately to report on the endurance and resistance to fade of the braking system, but previous models of this make have always shown up excellently in these respects.

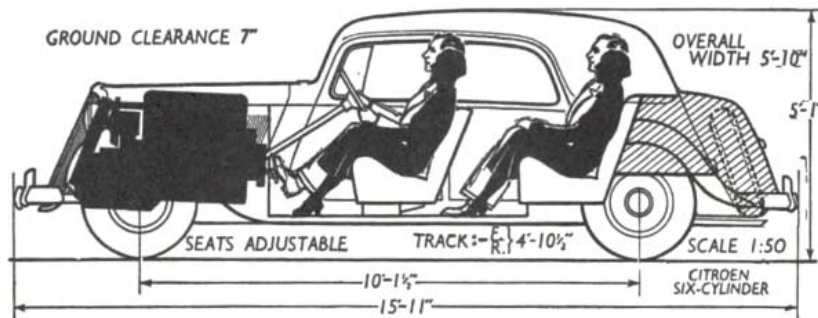
As indicated above, the type now tested compares very favourably with any earlier model in respect of smoothness. This



is partly due to the provision of sponge rubber under the carpets, and there is generally a high level of furnishing, the seats being large and softly sprung; in fact, for a woman the length of the rear seat is if anything excessive.

The cubbyhole on the fascia has a small opening, but is deep and inclined so that anything put into it will not emerge as the consequence of violent manoeuvres, and it is supplemented by large pockets in each of the front doors and two on the seat squabs.

The instruments are grouped neatly in front of the driver and are illuminated at fixed intensity through a separately controlled switch. One may perhaps question



MECHANICAL SPECIFICATION

ENGINE	
Cylinders	6
Bore/stroke	78/100mm
Cubic capacity	2,866cc
Piston area	286.5cm ²
Valves	0/h pushrods
Compression ratio	6.5:1
Maximum power	57.6kW @ 3,800rpm
Piston speed @ max bhp	807.7m/min
Carburettor	Solex twin DD 30 PAAL
Ignition	Coil
Sparking plugs	Champion H10
Fuel pump	AC mechanical
TRANSMISSION	
Clutch	Twin dry plate
Top gear	3.88
2nd gear	5.62
1st gear	13.29
Propeller shaft	Nil
Final drive	Spiral bevel
Top gear kph @ 1,000rpm	32
Top gear kph @ 304.8m/min [1,000ft/min]	48.8
CHASSIS	
Brakes	Lockheed
Brake drum diameter	30.5cm
Friction lining area	923cm ²
Suspension:	
Front	Torsion bar and wishbones
Rear	Hydro-pneumatic and trailing arms
Shock absorbers:	
Front	Telescopic
Rear	Nil
Tyres	Michelin X 165 x 400
STEERING	
Steering gear	Rack and pinion
Turning circle [between kerbs]	13.3m
Turns lock to lock	2 1/4

COACHWORK AND EQUIPMENT

Bumper height with engine running:	
Front	40.6/31.8 [max/min]
Rear	47.0/38.1
Starting handle	Yes
Battery mounting	On dash beneath bonnet
Jack	Automatic rear, bevel and screw type front
Jacking points	4
Standard tool kit	Tyre pump, grease gun, wheelbrace, adjustable spanner, screwdriver, pliers, box plug spanner and tommy bar, tool roll, rear jacking chocks and supports, Harvey Frost screw jack
Exterior lights	2 headlamps, 2 sidelamps, 2 tail lamps, 2 stop lamps, number plate lamp
Direction indicators	Semaphore self-cancelling
Windscreen wipers	2
Sun vizors	2
Instruments	Ammeter, fuel gauge, clock, speedometer, manual ignition control
Warning lights	Oil and charge
Locks [with ignition key]	2
Glove lockers	One on fascia
Map pockets	2 in front doors, 2 behind front seats
Parcel shelves	Behind back seat
Ashtrays	1 on fascia, 2 behind front seats
Interior lights	1 in roof
Interior heater	Duct from radiator
Car radio	Optional
Extras available	Fog lamps, windscreen de-icers, sunshine roof
Upholstery material	Leather
Floor covering	Pile carpet over rubber
Exterior colours standardised	Green, red, grey, black
Alternative body styles	Nil

New Standards

the policy of providing a speedometer which records up to a speed nearly 50% higher than the car is capable of realizing, and in addition to this the instrument provided on the test car was unusually erratic in its promise of more than could really be performed. The combined lighting and horn switch is a feature so useful that one is surprised that it is not universal. A recessed square on the end of a stalk is rotated clockwise to switch on successively the side plus dipped beam and side plus full beam lighting systems. Flicking the stalk away from the steering wheel will change from high beam to dipped beam, or alternatively from side lamps only to dipped beam, pressing the stalk inward sounds the horn which can be worked at two noise levels.

Superb Roadholding

The car tested was fitted with two fog lamps which are optional extras; an additional charge is also made for two Lucas deicers which can be fitted at the base of the windscreen, and it is worth noting that the latter is almost unique amongst present day cars in that it can be opened at its base to improve hot weather ventilation. To sum up, here is a car that blends superb roadholding with soft, yet controlled, suspension, that can be driven hard without anxiety concerning mechanical failure, is robust to the equivalent of AI at Lloyds, but which is in certain respects lacking in modern amenities.

This article first appeared in 'The Motor' in March 1955. The author's name is not supplied.

Looking Forward...

Next issue...

After a couple of delays the promised celebration of the 50th anniversary of the GS will be the focus of Volume 44, No 04! We will put Citroën's mid-size saloon, estate and coupé under the magnifying glass.

Have you owned, do you own, a GS or GSA? Why not share your experiences of this under-estimated car with other members? Send your contribution, no matter how brief, to Leigh Miles at editor@citroenclassic.org.au by Monday, November 2. Got a picture that merits sharing? Send it as well.

Introduction

It had never been my intention to own a classic car and for most of my working life I had company cars that were serviced and replaced every two to three years. When I was in my teens and a virtually penniless student, I had owned a number of 'Old Bangers' that were in various stages of falling apart. I became adept at car maintenance including being able to rebuild engines and gearboxes without too much of a problem.

Many years later one of my friends introduced me to the joys of travelling round Europe in a 1948 small boot Légère. At times there would be four large middle-aged men in this car bowling along the highways and byways of France. One of the many problems that we encountered, apart from running out of fuel on a regular basis was the fact the windscreen wipers didn't work and it was the responsibility of the front passenger to operate these manually. It was another ten years before the windscreen wipers worked again.

From there, I'm afraid, it was all down hill and I eventually ended up owning three different variants of the Traction Avant [TA], a 1954 Normale, a 1949 Light 15 and a rare 1954 6 Hydraulique.

1954 Normale

In 2009 I was made redundant from my job at HP and re-

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Top to bottom:
Start of the trip
to Arras in 2009.

Mike, the driver.
The Normale, with
its original owner
[1954-'88]

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tired [for the first of three times] and needed a hobby to occupy my time. Not knowing anything about model histories, mechanics, what to look for when buying a TA, I had assumed that I would buy a black something or other like everybody else. What I actually bought was a battleship grey Normale with an original factory fitted vinyl interior. The car had belonged to a French flour miller who had decided that a black car in a flour mill was going to show all the dust and the interior was vinyl so that it could be wiped down. My friend drove the car from Shrewsbury back to Stockport in a snow storm just before Christmas 2009.

The car was in wonderfully original condition with only 25,000 miles on the clock and it had been dry garaged and serviced. The downside was that the owner that I had bought the car from was 85 and had hand painted the car using a brush and roller in finest quality Dulux. The car also had a blown cylinder head gasket between cylinders two and three.

Over a period of six months I fully restored the exterior of the car; first having the removable panels dipped and electrophoretic coated. The person who sprayed the car could not find any information on the paint code and there was no original paint left so he matched the paint on the dash and hence my car is painted in 'a'



The Normale, fully restored at a recent wedding.

The Light 15 in the greenhouse, 2009.

The Light 15's interior, 2011



The Light 15, off to the sprayer.

Back from the sprayer.

Fully completed.

Citroën colour but not 'the' exterior colour. Needless to say, having bought the car I was back at work again within a month and that ended my first retirement.

1949 Light 15

Two years later having successfully restored my Normale, mainly painting and cosmetic, I decided that it was likely I was going to retire for a second time and I needed a car to work on. Something with a bit more challenge! I spoke to Traction Owners Club President, Bernie Shaw, who put me in touch with one of the members in Kent who had started, but had not completed, a renovation of a 1949 Light 15 that had been in a lockup since 1972. I went to see the car and I have must been having an off day as when I got the car home to Stockport, I had one of those 'What Have I bought?' moments. The car had deteriorated very badly over years and had not benefited from sitting in the lockup, old greenhouse and a second garage.

The front wings which had been perfectly salvageable in 2008 had been completely destroyed as they had been sand blasted, not primed or painted and left in wet brown paper. The rear wings were also not salvageable as they had been severely hacked about. Significant parts of the body needed welding including floor pan, doors, boot etc. as well as complete replacement of the interior. Having got to a significant amount of

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money I stopped entering the bills in the spreadsheet. During the renovation I was offered another job which ended my second retirement. The overall process took longer than anticipated as I was back at work and only able to work on the car at weekends.

Having now got two Traction Avants this should have been the end of buying cars however this wasn't to be and I bought a Slough built Big 6-H for when I finally retired.

1954 Big 6-H

Buying the 6-H was totally out of the blue as I had not really thought about buying another Traction. It was Easter 2013, it was pouring with rain and nothing worthwhile was on the television. I heard a ping from my email and it was from eBay with the daily offering of TA books and Dinky Toys. To my surprise there was a rare 1954 Slough-built Big 6-H being offered at what I considered to be a considerable discount. As only 77 of these cars were made and only a handful still in existence, I initially believed that it was an elaborate scam.

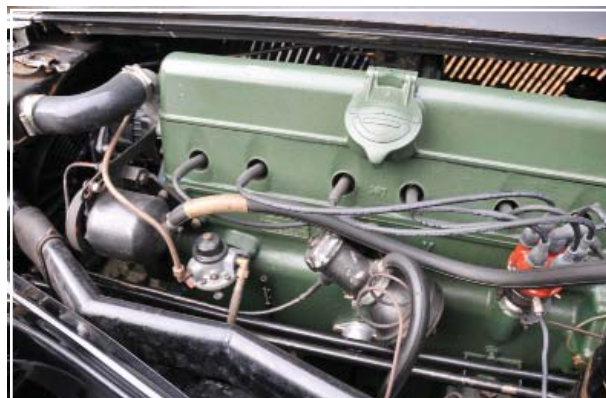
Having checked with club officials the car was real and had been restored by Steve Southgate in the early 1990s and had then been sold to a property developer who had fallen on hard times. The property developer had tried unsuccessfully to sell the car at Bonhams, but it had not met the reserve and hence was being sold



on eBay to raise money.

Arrival

The car arrived on a trailer from Berkshire and it was the



first time I had seen the car in the flesh. I had been told by Steve Southgate that the car had been in tip top condition when it had

been sold and it had done little mileage in the hands of the previous owner as he had a collection of nearly forty cars. The car arrived and started first time and essentially in very good condition. The bodywork that had been restored in the 1990s was still very good, the engine and gearbox had been recently rebuilt was also very good. The original leather seats which had been good when Steve Southgate sold the car had suffered badly, the car was prone to overheating and the hydraulics were shot. Still all problems that could be sorted out as this was basically a very solid car with a few niggles.

The car came with a complete history including the original log book, owner's maintenance notes, letters to Citroën, manuals and photographs of the car pre-restoration. It was interesting that the owner who had owned the car prior to Steve Southgate also had another non-hydraulic 6 that had to be sold together. The non-hydraulic 6 was later converted to be the only right-hand driver 6 roadster.

Early Days and Restoration

Having checked with the Traction Owners Club archivist it appears that this is one of the earliest 6-Hs made at Slough and may be even be the second. Slough made a total of 77 car and makes this a rare car. The car was built [calculated] on the 15/Nov/1954 and was first registered to 'H

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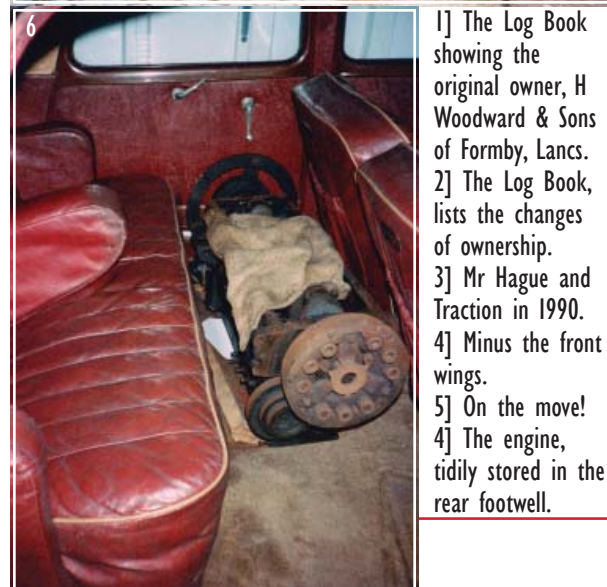
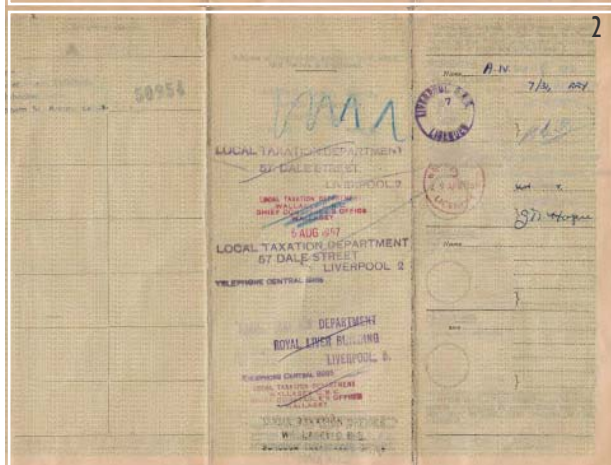
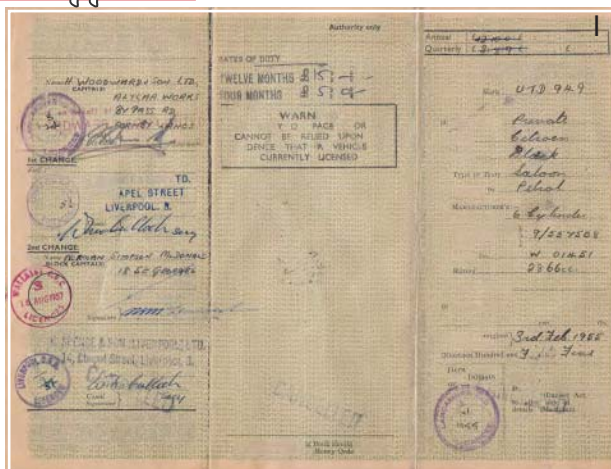
Woodward and Son Ltd Formby Lancashire, as a company car on the 3rd February 1955. The car had five owners before being sold to 'Josephine Muriel Hague' in April 1959. The car remained in the family until 1990 when it was bought by Steve Southgate for renovation.

It is my understanding that the car was used regularly until 1965 when it was taken off the road for renovation. Having spoken to the daughter of Mr Hague, she clearly remembers sleeping on a car blanket in the back of the car. After 1965 the diary for the car stops and little if no work was done over the next 25 years.

The car next surfaces when Steve Southgate bought this car and another Big 6 for renovation and / or spares. As it happens this 6-H went on to be fully restored and the other Big 6 was converted to 6-H Roadster. As I know Steve Southgate, he was able to provide me with photographs as the car was found and after restoration.

The car was remarkably complete, although it having been stored for many years had taken its toll on the outer sills and rear wheel well panel. This was mainly because the paint had been stripped off and the metal left bare for many years. In addition, the bottoms of the doors all needed replacing as this is a well-known rust trap.

The car's interior, including seats, door cards, dashboard and head



lining were all in good condition and reused. The original carpets were replaced with an equivalent deep pile carpet and underlay.

Recent Times

I have now had the car for some seven years in which time I have continued to improve the car. As I previously stated the car is very solid and near enough original. There were several areas that needed attention including:

1 Seats: Leather ripped and beyond redemption. New upholstery in antique Burgundy leather. Furflex round doors replaced.

2 Hydraulics: The hydraulic fluid used in original Traction Avants, DS and IDs used Liquide Hydraulique Synthétique [LHS] fluid. The 6-H when delivered had been filled with Liquide Hydraulique Minéral [LHM] that is not compatible with LHS.

3 Cooling: The car could only be used in the winter as it would overheat regularly after fifty to sixty miles.

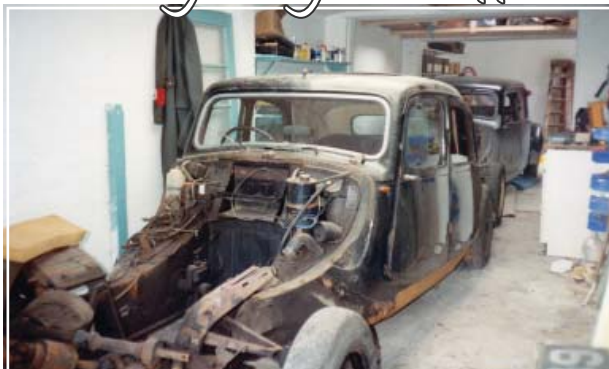
4 Alternator: The car had the original 12volt dynamo replaced with an alternator of unknown manufacture and a cooling fan of unknown parentage.

Hydraulics

Unfortunately, it was impossible to tell that the hydraulics were essentially shot. The car would rise up when the engine was started and that was about it. The ride was solid and even mi-

- 1] The Log Book showing the original owner, H Woodward & Sons of Formby, Lancs.
- 2] The Log Book, lists the changes of ownership.
- 3] Mr Hague and Traction in 1990.
- 4] Minus the front wings.
- 5] On the move!
- 4] The engine, tidily stored in the rear footwell.

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The car was remarkably complete, although time had taken its toll on the outer sills and

rear wheel well panel as the paint had been stripped off and the metal left bare for many

years. The bottoms of the doors all needed replacing: this is a well-known rust trap.



Left: These pictures were taken at one of the National Car shows in the UK. The car on the right of the upper picture was a 6 Limousine that was in the process of being renovated, also owned by Steve Southgate.

nor bumps in the road were felt. Being new to anything that had hydraulics I was at first puzzled as to what the problem was until it was pointed out to me that LHS

and LHM are not compatible and that putting the wrong fluid in destroys the seals and diaphragms.

Fortunately, one of the principal reasons for the existence of

the Traction Avant 6-H was to use it as a limited test bed for the hydraulics on the DS. As such the parts from the DS and the 6-H are in the main interchangeable and not overly expensive compared with parts for a modern-day car.

In order to get the hydraulics fully functional the following items had to be replaced:

- 1 All rubber hoses: Had gone soggy and were about twice their original diameters.
- 2 Suspension spheres: The diaphragms had completely failed.
- 3 Accumulator: The diaphragm had completely failed.
- 4 Height corrector: This had been replaced before I bought the car.
- 5 Hydraulic pump: The pump was working but took a long time to produce pressure.

I was fortunate with the hydraulic pump as the Traction Avant had a slightly different variant of the pump which used the mounting bolt and a banjo for the hydraulic feed whereas the DS had a separate fitting for the hydraulic feed. I have a suspicion that the combined fixing and hydraulics was prone to leakage. The conversion from the early pumps is straight forward and appears to be a case of changing the hydraulic pipe from a banjo to a standard fitting.

Once the hydraulics were refurbished the ride quality became exceptional; it glides along the

A Very English Affair

road taking bumps in its stride. In order to match the damping rate of the rear hydraulics longer torsion bars are used on the front. This has the knock-on effect that the radiator on the 6-H is slightly different.

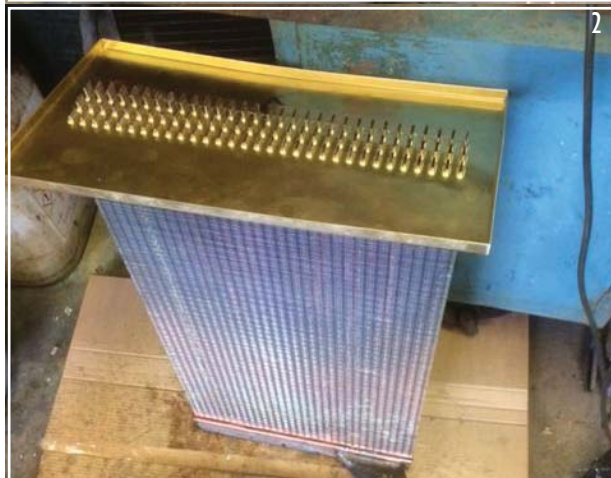
Cooling

The second problem that I did not notice immediately was the car was very prone to overheating, even with a 12" electric fan. The usual remedies were applied such as flushing the radiator and checking the timing but to no avail. After some aborted outings I found an article by a member of the Traction Avant Netherlands [TAN] who had written a very detailed article including many diagrams and photographs detailing how to have the radiator rebuilt.

The radiator has certain characteristics that make the refurbishment both more difficult and certainly expensive.

1 Most standard radiator are vertical whereas the radiator on the 6 and 6-H is inclined. This means that the plate for the matrix is non-standard and needs special punching [slots are elongated].
2 The starting handle goes through the radiator and hence has to have a 'Wet Box' for the starting handle.

I was fortunate that a friend recommended Luton Radiator who not only did commercial radiators but would renovate



- 1] The old matrix.
- 2] The new matrix, from above.
- 3] The completed radiator.
- 4] Dynator cf dynamo.
- 5] The Dynator fitted, but awaiting connection.



classic car radiators and would build a radiator from scratch. The 'Wet Box' was not a problem as they dealt with 'Refuse Lorries' that have a drive shaft that goes through the radiator.

The radiator was refitted and I assumed that the problem was eliminated; this was not the case and the old problem, although not as bad, was still present. As part of the refurbishment I had had the French-style filler cap converted to a more standard 4psi filler cap as the French filler cap never seated correctly. The 6-cylinder TA has a pressurised system unlike the 4-cylinder TA that is unpressurised. After some head scratching, I eventually found that under the large brass screw on the top of the radiator was a pressure relief valve that not only had failed seals but had been assembled upside down. The reason for the overheating was that the system vented coolant over fifty miles leaving the insufficient coolant in the system. I have disabled the valve and rely on the standard pressure cap and that fixed the problem. Now that the system is 'Coolant Tight' I use the Evans Waterless Coolant as an extra precautionary measure.

Alternator

The car originally had a Lucas 12volt dynamo providing 25amp. At some point, previous to my purchase, the dynamo had been swapped for an alternator which although had a higher capacity

was not fitting for the car. I have recently purchased a 50amp Dynator which has the dimensions, including shaft size and keyways, of the original dynamo.

I was surprised that this was available as the original dynamo was specific to the 6 [fan at one end and pulley at the other end] although most of the internal parts were standard Lucas. As can be seen from the pictures it is quite difficult to determine that this is indeed an alternator and not the original dynamo.

2020 and Beyond

Having retired for a third time I decided that the garaging at my home in Stockport was inadequate with certain work being practically impossible and certainly not possible on a rainy day. So, my next project, which took precedence over the cars,

Steve standing proudly next to his 6-H. If you would like to see more of Steve and his car they were featured in a television programme in about 2013. You can find it on YouTube: <https://youtube/DLiiGtXwGOo> I should warn you the first half of the show is about a Mercedes Benz!



was to design and build a new home, large garage with engine hoist and a workshop. This is now complete apart from some landscaping [and the chickens] which will be completed shortly.

In preparation for 2020 outings I completed the last few jobs on the 6-H which included new front wheel bearings, new front dampers, bushes and new shafts. The old drive shafts were very tired and although it was possible to get them renovated there was no guarantee that the cups would not spin in the yokes.

Removal of the wheel bearings is not for the faint hearted as the original Citroën tool has not been seen in living memory and certainly nobody in the Club had one. I doubt given that one side had a single bearing and the other side two bearings on a sleeve that the tool would have been able to remove them. I had one of my friends weld a plate to the tops of the bearings and used a large slide hammer to pull them off.

With the lockdown due to COVID-19 most, if not all events, have been cancelled. The Newby Hall event which attracts upwards of 1,500 cars was cancelled but hotels had just reopened so the car got a run anyway.

Next year will be the year when I do not have a house to build, the cars are all in fine fettle and hopefully we can work out how to live with Covid. Steve Wright

6 Cars, 6 Days: Part 2

shipped to Australia.'

[Ed. In 1955 Slough produced 111 Big 15s, plus the 24 Family 9s Nathan refers to and a single Commercial that was undergoing restoration for Continental Cars in Sydney.]

'This particular 9-seater car is one of three remaining on the

The interior of the Family 9 with its three folding occasional chairs. Strapontin, in French, if you are at all interested..



These notes processed from long hand, here recording and practising my story telling resulting from my six-day test drive trip. The experience raised quite a few old memories too. Covering 1,065 kilometres, my pre-arranged visitations that you have already read in Part One only took me to Stanthorpe. This section continues my journey across the border to Casino, Murwillumbah in the northern rivers area of NSW, and then back through the Currumbin Valley, to Brisbane and returning home to Lagoon Pocket in the Mary Valley. All this just before the COVID-19 restrictions closed Queensland's borders.

Day Four: Thursday 20 February.

So after two days and two nights in Stanthorpe, I headed south across the border through Tenterfield and then east on the Bruxner Highway [here trees ravaged by recent bushfires were sprouting new growth] arriving at Casino to stay overnight. I met Nathan Wade there, he was to finish work at nearby Lismore at 5pm.

Nathan Wade's Collection, Casino

Carefully folding back the blue car cover, Nathan proudly unveiled his pride and joy. Here Nathan explained, 'The long wheelbase Traction is a 1955 Big 15 Family 9. It is one of 24 that were built in Slough and all were

6 Cars, 6 Days: Part 2

roads and is the oldest surviving Family 9 in the world. Bought the car in ... and I am the fourth owner. This aqua green colour is not as good as its original,' as he pointed to a patch of old green paint in the engine bay. 'The shiny paintwork does look appealing,' Nathan said, 'after all, it did win the People's Choice Award at the 2018 Dalby CIT-IN.'

[Ed. The chassis number of Nathan's car is 9557003. The whereabouts of 001 and 002 are unknown. While there may be only three Family 9s 'on the road', the Club is aware of the existence/location of seven Family 9s.]

The interior was in good original condition. Well finished in a two tone brown trimmed with a mustard like checked pattern down low on the doors and seats. Noted the smaller fold back seats behind the driver's bench seat, obviously designed to

comfortably seat three children. Then there is another three-person bench seat behind that and still enough room in the back for some luggage.

Overnighting at their palatial residence, I had the visitors' room. 'That's yours Geoff,' said Nathan, 'Mum and dad stay there when they come down'. Next priority was dinner at their favourite watering hole, The Barn; our big steaks were tender, medium rare. We chatted about all their potential car club attractions in the Casino area. Changes were certainly evident, since Narelle and I last visited Casino in the early 1990s.

Day Five: Friday 21 February.

Next morning early to rise, after a good sleep. It was 5:30am NSW time! The two blokes had early starts, so Wayne left first in their new Chinese Haval, 'It is cheap, good for commuting,' he

said, 'has all the bells and whistles.' His was a 7am start as Curator at the Lismore Botanical Gardens.

Nathan also worked in Lismore, half an hour away, so we had just enough time to view his collection of interesting GSs and two little rare Visas in storage. Nathan was brought up in a family of Citroëns, and his passion showed as he told me the story behind each car. No time to have a drive this time, but there certainly will be time on my trip agenda in coming months. 'Please do come again,' were Nathan's parting words.

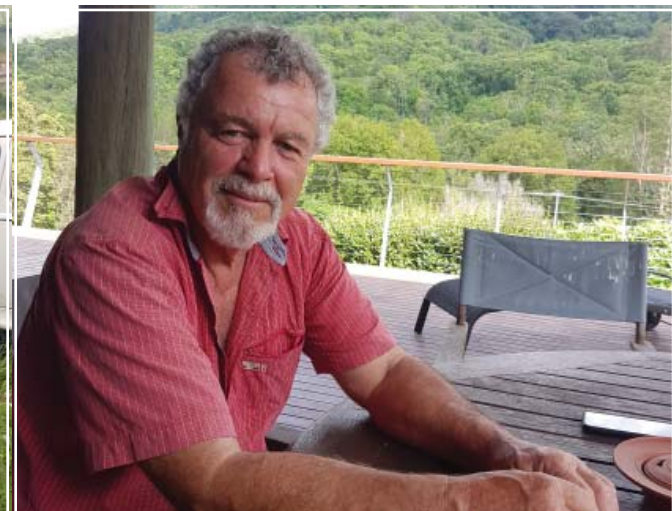
Good to hear that passion for GSs and I certainly enjoyed their hospitality. I then set out to my next stop, Damien Jenkins' collection, an hour and half away. Heading north east and connecting the Pacific Highway at Bangalow, the GPS route bypassed Murwillumbah and past their mag-

nificent Art Gallery. Ah... that is where it is. I will go back there for lunch and check it out. [An extension houses Margaret Olley's work. I'm no fan of her's, but I do know the architect, Bud Brannigan, he provided contacts for our DS book.]

Arriving at Damien's place, 'look out for our two rocks and the Citroën wrecks, you will know you have found us,' he said on the phone the night before. Sure enough, I found them, the GSs and a Peugeot 203, well past their best-before date, but a somewhat welcoming sight.

I had known Damien for over twenty years; he is really a petrol head and a mad collector of Peugeots and makes all sorts of mods to other mechanical things. He said he's never going to retire, but does find time to fiddle and work on his cars.' Quite therapeutic,' he says, and his loving wife

Below: Nathan at the rear of his GS X2. In case you are interested ZW represents Zimbabwe. Right: 'Look out for two rocks and the Citroën wrecks', was Damien's advice.



6 Cars, 6 Days: Part 2

Ronda supports him all the way. Quite a special couple really.

Catching up on old times over a cup of coffee, a cake, still warm from the oven and croissant, Damien said he was actually feeling a little weary today. 'I only just got home last night from our 10 day Tasmanian Motorbike adventure with my two sons and a few other blokes. Was tough for a young bloke like me,' he said with a smile, 'I thought we were not going to survive. We happened to come through that cyclonic weather in Sydney last week, but we made it.'

Having never owned a motorbike, I was in awe of what he had just achieved and apart from all his other escapades. I asked Damien, 'You're a Peugeot fanatic, what made you buy an old Citroën?' Grinning from ear to ear now, he said, 'I just wanted to have a Citroën experience be-

fore I die.'

I was intrigued; as he went on to say... 'Not only did I want to have that Citroën experience, that magic carpet ride, but I chose the GS model as I felt it was more pure to the Citroën philosophy of the '50/'60s. It had the air cooled horizontally opposed motor in front of the front axle and the design concept was originally designed for the D. For me as a Wankel Rotary lover, it was disappointing that Citroën dropped selling the Rotary powered GS and in fact bought back all the models they sold because of likely contingent warranty costs due to lack of development of the Wankel Rotary.

Damien then went on to say that there maybe a couple still in existence and that he knew of a GS owner in Brisbane who had fitted a Mazda Rotary engine to his GS. When Damien had last

spoken with him, he had replaced the Rotary with an electric motor. The first eGS?

I had since replied to Damien that our research had actually revealed a couple of GS Rotary contacts; one in Melbourne, Victoria and one in Colovale, NSW, and probably another in Tasmania, so watch this space.

Damien was actually battling his own health issues, but recent tests showed he was doing fine. 'I do not intend going for a while yet,' he said, 'I have quite had a lot of unfinished projects.'

Come on, I'll show you around.' So there were his Citroëns, the first one, a neat shiny little white GS Break ready and waiting. At that moment, an important call came through, so Damien excusing himself and left me to look over inside and out. I took many photos; the car looked a perfect example, in good condi-

tion, paintwork perfect, interior nicely finished, in a blue cloth, all original. [Knew he bought from Steeley.] The motor was tidy but there was that spare wheel in such an uncompromising position. You could hardly see the little flat 4-cylinder air cooled unit tucked in the front. It is fascinating to know that to remove the motor, the whole front bumper and grill assembly unbolts first, such is this car's unique design.

Phone call finished, 'Let's start her up and go for a drive, first it takes a little while to warm up the air cooled motor,' says Damien. Yes, sounded just like Lincoln's little GS I drove a few days ago, that unique throbbing purr. A storm had just passed through the area, water still on the road. Damien steered the GS, turned left off the highway, Mt Warning looming in the background, we headed up his favourite test track, found a

The GS's interior is in truly excellent condition: a credit to both Damien and the previous owner[s].

The garage door lifted to reveal this GS Pallas. The colour was battleship grey with a darker stripe along the below window level. Blame the previous owner.



6 Cars, 6 Days: Part 2

good place to stop and handed over to me. The gears were four on the floor in typical H-pattern, reverse towards me and down. There was the beautiful curved dash, a reduced version like the big SM, circular dials, the single spoke wheel and the DS indicator stalks.

Such an easy car to handle, I thought as we gathered speed through the gears. We motored along and up the next hill, through the green dairy countryside not far from the Tweed River. The driving position was good, gave me clear vision and I felt confident already. 'Keep the revs up in third,' says Damien, 'this is my test hill.' Well, she climbed easily; I maintained those revs in that third gear. Not much traffic on this country road, Damien and I chatted, counselled each other on all sorts of things and me, already relaxed. Driving this

Next to the GS Pallas was a 'non-standard' blue and white AK600 which brings smiles to every face.



little GS for the first time was such a joy.

Returning to Jenkins' residence, there were more Citroëns to look over. Lifting the roller doors, there rested a smart looking GS Pallas [The colour was like a battleship grey, had a darker stripe along the side doors below window level, done by the previous owner, he said.] Access to the boot area was brilliant. And the 15inch wheels featured rare solid aluminium wheel trims, Damien was proud of this one. And next to it was the blue and white 2CV van, an AK600 and what a charming little beauty. Brings smiles to faces every time he drives it.

The phone rang again, this time it was for me. My next appointment beckoning, just north of the Queensland border in the Currumbin Valley. It was Warren, 'How are you travelling Geoff? I have an appointment at 3:15pm?' 'Well, you better go, you will make it,' said Damien as I thanked him, such a great drive, loved his Citroëns.

So departing north from Murwillumbah and taking the winding route through Tomewin over the border ranges, I made good time. I really felt good about this trip. I had already made two visits today and another very interesting rendezvous coming up.

The final part of Geoffrey's journey will be in Volume 44, No 04 of 'Front Drive'.

For Sale

UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED ALL PRICES SHOWN
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1958 BERINI MOPED BICYCLE

28" Malvern Star gent's bicycle with original green pin-stripe paint. Has 3-speed Sturmey-Archer hub gears. Bought for £15 in Feb 1958, it is fitted with a 32cc Dutch Berini M-13 2-stroke motor that drives onto front tyre. Back-pedal brake. Good tyres. Mudguards & rear packrack. Rare machine. Family heirloom. Owners handbook and magazine articles. Goes well. Good condition. No reg'n required. [Some parts still available ~ see Berini website. Nearest agent is in Rotterdam] \$2,000. Contact: Warwick Spinaze, Tootgarook, Vic. 0407 016 719 [44/3]

1950 CITROËN 11B

My 1950 Citroën 11 Normale [209030] project is sadly going to be for sale, as I'm no longer able to get back into restoring it. The car used to be another member's car [Peter Fitzgerald] and was named 'Moriarty' way back then. In any case, it is complete, although the interior is a bit of a mess, partly disassembled interior by previous owner ~ and I kept it the way I got it... The crown wheel and pinion are worn beyond repair and would need to be replaced if restored to original. I have acquired an ID 19 engine and 4-speed gearbox with the intention of fitting that to facilitate better maintenance and drivability. There is also a spare rough boot lid and a second spare wheel. Along with it is an original set of parts list and workshop manual as well as a complete photocopy and scanned versions as PDF. I have a few photos of it out of the 'barn' when I poured a concrete slab in the barn in readiness to start working on the car a couple of years ago... \$10,000.00 ONO. Contact Details: E-mail joe.hovel@gmail.com or 0499 050 609. Joe Hovel, Bendigo. [44/02]

1971 CITROËN DS 21

Very extensive restoration carried out. New paint, upholstery, carpets, roof lining, exhaust system, electrics, dashboard, and all mechanicals. Drives superbly, and is close to a new vehicle. More photos and refurbishment invoices over the last 4 years available on request. WA Reg: IGNU 024, \$43,000 Stuart Pekin ~ Perth 04 0423 1712 [44/01]





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