



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

FRONT DRIVE

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



*February 2022 Vol 45 No 5
BX ~ 40th Anniversary 1982-2022*

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. While Club permit renewals

can done via the post CCOCA encourages you to do this via the internet and email. It is faster, simpler and safer than the post. Payment can also be completed via your VicRoads on-line account.

Committee

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president@citroenclassic.org.au

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Membership

Annual Membership is \$35 and printed editions of 'Front Drive' are posted to Australian addresses for an additional \$45 per year.

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.

Support

Membership Secretary ~
Ian Macdermott 0419 362 375 [M]

treasurer@citroenclassic.org.au

Asset Custodians ~ Ted Cross
Max Lewis

AOMC Liaison Officers ~
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librarian@citroenclassic.org.au

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clubshop@citroenclassic.org.au

ICCCR Representative ~
Ted Cross [03] 9819 2208 [H]

Deadline

The deadline for the next edition of 'Front Drive' is Wednesday, 16 March, and for 'démarréur' it is Thursday, 14 April.

Contributors

Contributors to this edition of 'Front Drive' include François-Xavier Basse, Christophe Bonnaud, Richard Boudrias Alan Brown, Emerick Houplain Janine Pendleton and Ian Steele

SPARE PARTS & TOOLS

Contact Lance Wearne.
Phone: 0424 054 724 [if you do phone, please do so at a reasonable hour] or
spareparts@citroenclassic.org.au

CLUB SHOP

Club Shop is presently not operating. For further information please contact the Club's President.

OTHER CLUBS

Vic www.citcarclubvic.org.au
NSW www.citroencardclub.org.au
QLD www.citroenclubqld.org
SA www.clubcitroensa.com
WA www.citroenwa.org.au
Tas www.citroentas.org

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Cover Image

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Ed Sed

I can hear the cries of members already. 'What, another BX edition... so soon! What is the editor thinking?'. Well, to be honest the editor was clearly not thinking straight when he put together a BX edition for 'démarrreur' Volume 1, No 3.

To be honest back in late 2020, when I was putting that early edition of 'démarrreur' together I was simply trying to get another magazine together to give you something more to read in those early and very dark days of COVID.

I had not made plans for future editions and it was only when I started looking at forthcoming anniversaries that it twigged that 2022 is the 40th anniversary of the launch of the BX. Like the GS before it this model was perceived as an essential part of the marque's road to success under the 'guiding' hand of Peugeot.

Long-standing Club member,



Ian Steele, has written his first-ever article for CCOCA telling of he and Helen's BX experiences. There is, to my mind, nothing which compares with a member's personal experiences.

Forthcoming editions will look at a few A-Series cars. 2CV, Dyane, Ami 8: if you own, or have owned such a car why not get in touch as I know members would rather read about another member's experiences with a model than something I have 'stolen' from our Citroën friends in the UK, France or the Netherlands.

But back to this edition...

We have an English feature on buying a secondhand BX along with a French feature which pitches the family hack-based sports saloons from Citroën, Renault and Peugeot. The BX GTi 16-valve, the 21 2-litre Turbo and the 405 Mi 16. I had not realised how closely timed the launch of these three cars was. Indeed the article suggests a degree of collusion between the makers: the goal being to take on, and beat, the Germans who seemed to be eating this segment of the market right across France, Europe and indeed the world.

In the previous BX edition I shared an article about the Tundra ~ a design exercise by

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Prez Sez

Our club cannot run without a dedicated committee and this year there will be some critical position changes. This was my last year as the CCOCA President, and I want to thank all members for sticking with CCOCA during these difficult times. We have made several recent changes and there are few more surprises coming so please support your new committee at the AGM on the 16th March 2022. More details coming soon.

Read on and enjoy.

Ted Cross ~ President

Like most of you, I am hoping that 2022 will be a better year for us all, and that CCOCA business will get back towards normal.

There are some important club activities in 2022 for you to consider. By now, you should have already decided to attend CIT-IN at Cowra NSW. However, I believe the NSW club is still taking bookings if you still wish to attend. And also please don't forget to consider the optional pre and post CIT-IN tours. These are closing within weeks, so you need to act now to avoid disappointment.

I am keen to read more about the mighty BX models which are a feature of the issue. Can you believe they have become classics before our eyes and prices are rising around the world. In many ways the BX was one of the most successful Citroëns ever. And even with full Peugeot control turned out to be a super-reliable and profitable model that sold well and helped put Citroën back on the roads. The GTi 16-valve model is my personal favourite, but in Europe the diesels and 4WD models are being collected too. Perversely the Break or Station-Wagon models are sought after too.

Please don't forget that the 2022 AGM is a critical meeting to attend or send a proxy.

Continued on page 6



Ed Sed

Continued from page 4

Marcello Gandini of Bertone for Volvo. There are clear links between Gandini's BX and the aborted Volvo design. But Bertone's Marc Deschamps [who later penned the XM] also developed a BX coupé. The keen-eyed will see the style links between each car. The story of his work on this project is here. Did you know he also penned the GS Camargue? I certainly did not!

Take heart! It is not all BX. In the past I have bemoaned the fact that French motoring writers seem less inclined to be

critical of French cars than local writers used to be about the next 'new' Holden. But, wait. There is hope. In December 1954 *l'Automobile* magazine published an article headed 'A 30 Questions Indiscrètes'. Unfortunately only the questions that have a bearing on the Traction and its [unannounced] replacement have been kept. I will accept that 'indiscreet' is rather an overstatement. But you get the drift.

Finally, remember that bookings for CIT-IN in Cowra close on February 18. Don't miss out. Enjoy!
Leigh F Miles ~ Editor.

A-Tractions

Please note: To book or RSVP for a CCOCA organised event you must now register on line at the club's website. Do not contact the organiser to register your attendance. Given restrictions can impact events at short notice, please check the Club's website for the latest information regarding any listed event.

Note:

In order to attend any CCOCA organised, or advertised event, you must be fully vaccinated against Covid-19, or be able to present a valid Government-authorised exemption.

• February

RACV British & European Motoring Show

WHEN: Sunday, 20 February
TIME: Gate opens 10:00am
WHERE: Yarra Glen Racecourse, Armstrong Avenue, Yarra Glen
COST: \$15 per display car

BOOKINGS: Not required
BRING: All you need for a day out: chair, sun-screen, picnic, refreshments
MORE INFO: www.aomc.asn.au/britishandeuropean2022

The RACV Classic Showcase is organised by the MG Car Club and features the best of British and European vehicles.

PROOF OF VACCINATION REQUIRED FOR ALL 'LIVE' EVENTS

Entry costs \$15 per display car, which covers all occupants, and will be collected at the gate. Adult spectators not arriving in a display car will be charged \$8 to enter [\$5 with a RACV card]. Children enter free.

Food and refreshments will be available. There will be music, children's entertainment and trade stalls

In addition to the general display there is a Car of the Show Award which will be made from pre-entered competitors only. Car of the Show entrants will be parked in a special display area.

Admittance to the venue will

be within strict compliance with the Government's COVID legislation effective at the date of the show.

Monthly Meeting: Chicken and Chips Evening

WHEN: Wednesday, 23 February
TIME: 7:30pm
WHERE: Frog Hollow Reserve, Fordham Ave., Camberwell
COST: \$10pp
BOOKINGS: Essential by Monday, 21 February
MORE INFO: Lee Dennes, 0438 286 181

l.dennes@bigpond.net.au



DO NOT CALL LEE TO REGISTER! You must register/book via the CCOCA website <https://citroenclassic.org.au>

A-Tractions



• March

Monthly Meeting: BBQ Dinner & Annual General Meeting

WHEN: Wednesday, 16 March
TIME: From 5:00pm
WHERE: Frog Hollow
Reserve, Fordham Ave.,
Camberwell

COST: Free
BOOKINGS: Essential by
Monday, 28 February
MORE INFO: Lee Dennes,
0438 286 181

l.dennes@bigpond.net.au

DO NOT CALL LEE TO REGISTER! You must register/book via the CCOCA website <https://citroenclassic.org.au>

Yes, it is that time of the year again ~ the Annual General Meeting is rolling around. But it is early this year. Because of CIT-IN [starting on March 25] and 'Helen's Happy Holiday or Teddie's Terrific Tour or Dave's Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap' starting on March 19 we felt

the AGM should occur before either of these events.

This Meeting will also be a Celebration and Presentation of the rebranding of CCOCA.

You are invited to attend the AGM and receive your newly badged CCOCA apparel.

Come along and join us for the launch of the new look CCOCA which will take us into the next decade and beyond.

- 5:00pm ~ Picnic/BBQ, BYO everything.
- 6:30pm ~ President presents new CCOCA logo and members receive their personalised CCOCA apparel.
- 7:00pm ~ Annual General Meeting, followed by wine and cheese.

Every year the Committee exhorts you to come along to this important event, and almost every year we manage to have sufficient members attend to assure us of a quorum. Remember, if we do not get a quorum, we simply have to go through the whole thing again.

**PROOF OF
VACCINATION REQUIRED
FOR ALL 'LIVE' EVENTS**

So, please make the effort to come along.

VOLUNTEER!



Have you thought of standing for Committee?

All Committee positions are 'up for grabs'. A link to the Nomination Form will be sent to you shortly.

On a personal note from the Editor, being on the Committee is not an onerous job ~ Committee meetings occur once a month and often finish in just over an hour. The Club can only continue to prosper if the members take up the challenge of making the Club what you want it to be.

VOTE!



Voting for the 2022/2023 Committee is a very important right you have as a member of

CCOCA. So, come along and make sure you have your input. Or complete the 'Proxy Form' that is on the same link as the Nomination Form.

After the AGM is finished we will enjoy some wine and cheese. [Please drink responsibly].

*Pre-Cit-In Tour: Helen's
Happy Holiday or Teddie's
Terrific Tour or Dave's Dirty
Deeds Done Dirt Cheap*

WHEN: Saturday, 19 to Friday,
25 March

FROM: Melbourne

TO: Cowra, NSW

COST: Out of pocket expenses

BOOKINGS: Essential

BRING: Everything for 7 days
away

MORE INFO:

Ted Cross 0400 592 208 [M]

president@citroenclassic.org.au

Helen Cross 0419 356 963 [M]

03 9819 2208 [H]

crossfam@ozemail.com.au

*Cit-In 2022: Cowra, NSW:
Bookings close this month!*

WHEN: Friday, 25 to Monday,
28 March 2022

WHERE: Cowra, NSW

COST: \$320 per person

5 to 12yo \$175

Under 5 Free

BOOKINGS: Essential by 18
February

BRING: Everything for a long-
weekend away

WEBSITE: <http://citroencarclub.org.au/cit-in/cit-in.html>

A-Tractions

Post Cit-In Tour: Jeff and Joe's Joyous Journey

WHEN: Monday, 28 March to
Friday, 8 April 2022
FROM: Cowra, NSW
TO: Mudgee, NSW
COST: General outgoings
BOOKINGS: Essential
BRING: Everything for a week
away

CONTACT:
Jeff Goodchild 0407 404 058 [M]
goodchild47@gmail.com
Joe Schembri 0418 281 755 [M]
schem006@bigpond.com

• April

All-Citroën Concours d'Elegance

WHEN: Sunday, 24 April
TIME: From 10:00am



WHERE: TBC
COST: \$5 per car [Max. \$10 for
a fleet]
BOOKINGS: Essential
BRING: Everything for a picnic
in the sun
MORE INFO: Lee Dennes,
0438 286 181
l.dennes@bigpond.net.au
Dave Rogers [CCCV]
0422 229 484
drogers11@gmail.com

All details to be confirmed
closer to the date.

• May

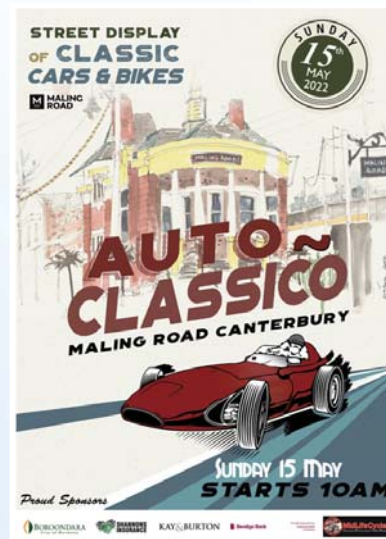
Maling Rd Auto-Classico

WHEN: Sunday, 15 May
TIME: From 10:00am

Chit Chat Tuesday

WHEN: 1st Tuesday
1 March
5 April
3 May
TIME: 10:00am
WHERE: Laneway Espresso
Café, Dromana
COST: Cheap Eats
BOOKING: Not required
CONTACT: Warwick Spinaze
0407 016 719.

Laneway Espresso Café ~
next door to the Dromana
Hotel, 167 Nepean H'way,
Dromana. Easy to find, plenty
of parking, under-cover seat-
ing if the weather is wet. This
is a low key 'DIY' event for
like minded Citroën owners
to meet and chat.



WHERE: Maling Rd., Canterbury
COST: Free to roam
BOOKINGS: Not required
MORE INFO: Peter Barclay,
Event Manager,
0417 338 438

[https://malingroad.com.au/
events/maling-road-auto-
classico-2021/](https://malingroad.com.au/events/maling-road-auto-classico-2021/)

Maling Road Autoclassico will
now be held on Sunday 15 May

2022 within the Maling Road
shopping precinct with over
200+ classic and modern exot-
ics cars on display.
Event organisers have secured
some great cars and clubs, and
expanded the event to cover
a broader range of classic and
modern cars from multiple
marques.



Ad Lib

During mid-January I decided to review/revamp the books held in the library including those out on loan.

This action is to put the library back on its feet as I intend to give away the library ownership sometime in 2022.

Roz and I have set our hearts on moving into a rural setting which could be anywhere in Victoria or even the Apple Isle.

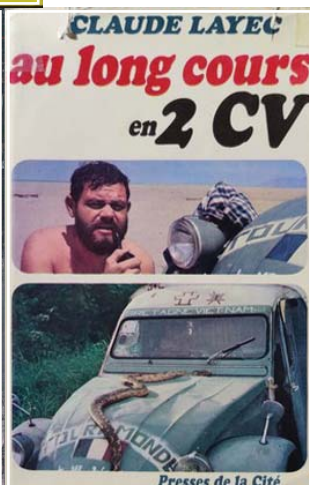
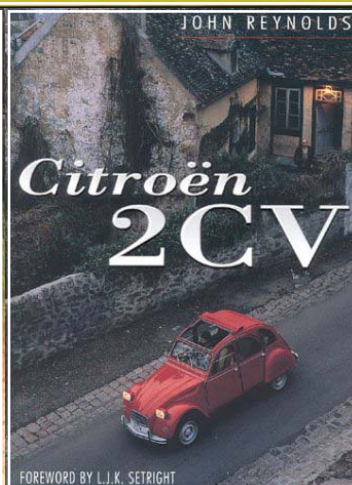
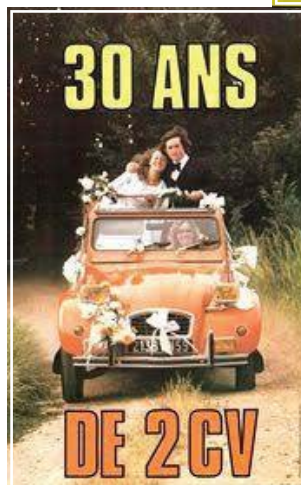
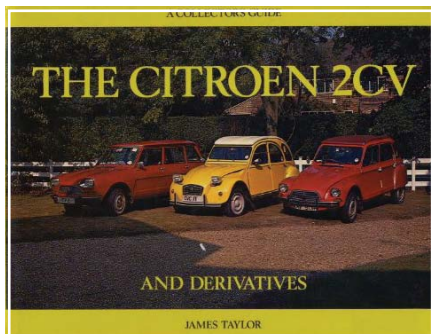
So at some point we shall be looking for a new Librarian and undertaking this work means whomever takes on the mantle of Librarian they will have a clear field or as clear as I can make it.

At this point, I have added up the books that I have in the library plus those out on loan but find that

we are missing seven titles.

These are:

- 1] Citroën D Vehicle D: Vehicles all types produced since September 1965, author is Citroën France in English.
- 2] Citroën CX Spare Parts Catalogue simplifié no cat 010.191. To our best understanding this is the Spare Parts Catalogue of CX models produced between 1979 and 1981.
- 3] 30 ans de 2CV, author unknown in French.
- 4] Citroën 2CV by John Reynolds in English.
- 5] Au long cours en 2CV by Claude Layec in English.
- 6] The Citroën 2CV & Derivatives by James Taylor in English and
- 7] Car-Picture-Art in English.



This is weighed up against the books that are noted on the library web site.

Many books on line have no pic attached [35 at the latest count] and as well there are a number of books not included on the site which also need uploading, along with an image [12 by my count].

All these will be photographed in the near future.

You won't believe this but out of the blue I had a call from a member who had borrowed books back in 2018 at the Oz Traction event at Horsham and recently had them returned to him... over three years ago.

They are 'Citroën: Daring to be Different' and 'Citroën: 80 years of Future'... there's a humorous twist of the tail here but I won't go into too much more as it may embarrass the borrower. Avid readers of Ad Lib may recall that we have been seeking the return of both these books since I took on the mantle of Librarian.

They were initially returned to our post office box but as they were too big to fit in they were put aside.

Usually a note is left in the box telling us that an oversize package which can be picked up from the counter.

It may have been missed as they were returned to the sender!

Please, when you borrow a

book from the CCOCA Library, do not lend it on to someone else as this makes keeping track of our valuable books unnecessarily difficult.

Finding out where missing books went to which borrower was made easier with the borrowers list set up previous to my restart as Librarian.

Unfortunately, the list is incomplete... and it seems the missing pages may have gone to God, hence I have been working in the dark.

Currently there are three books out on loan. Two are overdue, although [with good reason] at this stage I am not unduly concerned and the third is 'current'.

On Loan

- 1] 'An Omelette and Three Glasses of Wine',
- 2] 'DS in Asia' and
- 3] 'A Spanner in the Works'.

Recent Acquisitions

With this edition of 'Front Drive' having as its focus the BX you may have been inspired to learn more. If so the Library has a copy of Thijs van der Zanden's extremely comprehensive review and history of this important model.

It is filled with excellent images, some of which have not been previously published. It is available to be borrowed right now!

Max Lewis

Cit-In 2022: Cowra, NSW



WHEN: Friday, 25 to Monday, 28 March 2022

WHERE: Cowra, NSW

COST: Per person

Prior to 10 Nov '21 \$280

11 Nov to 15 Jan '22 \$295

16 Jan to 18 Feb \$320

5 to 12yo \$175

Under 5 Free

BOOKINGS: Essential

BRING: Everything for a long-weekend away

WEBSITE: <http://citroencarclub.org.au/cit-in/cit-in.html>

Information

With the COVID-19 pandemic in full swing at the time, the 2020 CIT-IN had to be postponed. After consultation with the various state Presidents, the CIT-IN originally planned for Cowra during Easter 2021 has now been rescheduled for late March 2022.

This will allow time for financial and psychological recovery with a better environment as regards weather and accommodation. It will be held during the last weekend of daylight saving [NOT Easter] from Friday, 25 March until 28 March 2022.

As Club President I urge everyone to come to Cowra as planned, only this time it will be an earlier weekend in 2022. I hope to see you at the upcoming bigger and better CIT-IN at Cowra.

Bruce Elsegood.

President ~ Citroën Car Club of New South Wales, Inc.

Itinerary

- Friday, 25 March 2022

Afternoon: Check In then proceed to meet and greet.

Evening: A light supper will be served at the meeting venue.

- Saturday, 26 March 2022

Morning: Show and Shine at the meeting venue.

Afternoon: Tourist activities including sightseeing of the town and local region.

Evening: Informal dinner and social get-together at the venue.

- Sunday, 27 March 2022

Morning: Observation Run to a place of local interest with included picnic lunch.

Afternoon: Tourist activities including sightseeing of the town and local region.

Evening: Formal dinner at the venue with speeches and prize giving.

- Monday, 28 March 2022

Morning: Farewell Breakfast at the venue then departure.

Registration

Registration for CIT-IN 2022 is now available and the form can be downloaded from the CCCNSW website.

<http://citroencarclub.org.au/cit-in/cit-in.html#register>

General Refund Policy

If you have registered and paid, but are unable to attend CIT-IN due to unforeseen circumstances, the Citroën Car Club of NSW Inc will refund your registration fee in part according to the following scale:

Before 1 Dec '21	100%
Until 1 Feb '22	50%
Until 10 Mar '22	25%
After 10 Mar '22	Nil

Covid-19 Refund Policy

In the event that CIT-IN Cowra 2022 is required to be cancelled by any government order due to COVID or other medical emergency, we confirm that 'Should the event have to be cancelled due to formal Government restrictions on medical or other grounds, we will refund the full registration payment made, less any non-recoverable deposits/payments made to venues and suppliers to the event.'

We are unable to estimate how much might be retained, as while we have tried to ensure that we as registrants are protected from loss due to cancellation, our arrangements with suppliers have various cut-off dates for termination where there may be some loss [as a result of non-recoverable expenditures already made by suppliers] depending on the time between the ruling to cancel and scheduled start date of the event. As a guide, the retention on the last deferral due to COVID in 2020 was \$25 per registrant.

As highlighted on the actual registration form, the CCCNSW [Inc] reserves the right to vary COVID management practices and guidelines to respond to health advice plus government supplier policies leading up to and during CIT-IN. We will continually monitor the requirements leading up to the event, and notify all registrants appropriately and in a timely manner as our policies on this develop.

As previously stated in the original invitation to register for CIT-IN @ Cowra 2022 outlining all of the terms and conditions which was part of the registration package. Please assure all of your members who are considering registering for CIT-IN that we are taking all steps available to us to ensure that members do not lose money as a result of the restriction due to COVID.

Cit-In 2022: Cowra, NSW

Accommodation

- The recommendation is to book early to avoid missing out due to occupancy rates at the Easter break.
- Please contact your chosen accommodation directly, rather than going through a booking agent.
- You will need to pre-book your accommodation to enable Registration.

Necessities

- Camp Chairs will be required if you intend sitting whilst having your picnic lunch at the destination of the Observation Run.
- Alcohol will be required to be bought from home or purchased on Saturday shopping in Cowra. Woolworths and Aldi have local bottle shops.
- A First Aid kit in the car would be advisable.

PROOF OF VACCINATION REQUIRED

Post Cit-In 2022 Tour

JEFF AND JOE'S JOYOUS JOURNEY

WHEN: Monday, 28 March to
Friday, 8 April 2022
FROM: Cowra, NSW
TO: Mudgee, NSW
COST: General outgoings
BOOKINGS: Essential
BRING: Everything for a week
away

CONTACT:
Jeff Goodchild 0407 404 058 [M]
goodchild47@gmail.com
Joe Schembri 0418 281 755 [M]
schem006@bigpond.com

Carrying on the tradition of having a run after the Cit-In, Joe Schembri and Jeff Good-

child are organising a Post Cit-In run. This will include visits to a number of attractions, some of which are popular and as Easter is during NSW school holidays the key message is BOOK ACCOMMODATION EARLY!

ITINERARY

- Day 1. Monday, 28 March
Cowra to Temora 150km
Main Activity: Visit the Temora Aircraft Museum or the Rural and Ambulance Museum.
- Accommodation in Temora
Koreela Park Motel, 32-134
Crowley St. [02] 6977 4987
or Goldterra Motel, 80

- Loftus St., [02] 6977 2433
- Day 2 Tuesday, 29 March
Temora to Canowindra
160km
Main Activity Visit the Fish Fossil Museum at Canowindra
- Accommodation at Canowindra
Blue Jacket Motel, 4 Bridge St. 0400 363 620, jack@bluejacketmotel.com.au or Riverview Motel, 3 Tilga St. [02] 6344 1633, info@rvmotel.com.au or Eddy's, Gaskill St. 0498 729 947
- DAY 3: Weds, 30 March
Canowindra to Katoomba
Main Activity Travel to Bathurst for Mt Panorama and Katoomba.
Optional Activity Early morning Balloon ride for up to 1 hour
- Accommodation in Katoomba [4nights]
Sky Rider Motel, 302 Bathurst Rd. [02] 4782 1600, stay@skyridermotorinn.com.au.
- DAY 4 Thursday, 31 March
Optional Main Activities Norman Lindsay Gallery, Lithgow Small Arms Factory and Museum, The Tea Rooms, Megalong Valley
- DAY 5 Friday, 1 April
Main Activity Leura, Echo Point [Three Sisters] and Scenic World Railway

- DAY 6 Saturday, 2 April
Main Activity Visit Blue Mountains Botanic Gardens.
- DAY 7 Sunday, 3 April
Katoomba to Hill End
Main Activity Inspect Energy Expo at Mt Piper Power Station
- Accommodation in Hill End [3nights]
Hill End Lodge, 3538 Hill End Rd. [02] 6337 8200, info@hillendlodge.com.au
- DAY 8 Monday, 4 April
Main Activity: Day spent at Hill End to visit the Gold Mining Museum
- DAY 9 Tuesday, 5 April
Main Activities Day spent at Hill End to visit Craigmoor or Akermans Historic House or visit the gold diggings, town walk or visit Bald Hill
- DAY 10 Wednesday, 6 April
Hill End to Mudgee 100km
Main Activity Visit Henry Lawson Museum and Pioneers Museum
- Accommodation in Mudgee [2nights]
Mudgee Riverside Park, 22 Short St. [02] 6372 2531
- DAY 11 Thursday, 7 April
Optional Main Activities Visit Wellington Caves and old Phosphate mine containing fossils, visit Lake Burrendong Dam and or visit the local Wineries at Mudgee
- DAY 12: Friday, 12 April
Breakfast at Mudgee, farewells and departure

Member's Models: BX en masse

Some months ago Leigh asked if I would do a quick few lines about Helen and my BX experiences.

I haven't written a club [CCCQ] article for a couple of years now, this the first for CCOCA.

My BX experience actually started in New Zealand when I went for an extended holiday look around in 1983/'84.

A bloke has to eat so I did a few Citroën jobs while there,

this led to a bloke who had just bought the new, just released BX 1.6 8-valve carby 5-speed car in the rather common colour, bronze/brown. 'The car that hates garages' As the sales pitch told us. He offered a drive.

Not much is remembered of that first BX drive that took me over the 'coat hanger' [Auckland's harbour bridge] but I do remember thinking it felt 'light' and 'tippy toey'. It wasn't just that the vehicle was light weight but traction and road grip

wasn't what an experienced Cit driver expected.

This certainly was confirmed after having approx 14 BXs over some 18 years of BX driving. There seemed to be too much relying on tyre grip, unlike many other Cits where the suspension and steering geometry does most of the work. Give me a GS for traction any rainy day.

Speaking of which, 'Where have all the GSs gone? They couldn't have rusted away with all their inherent oil leaks!

There possibly wasn't a BX model that was officially imported to Aust we didn't have

at some time. We also had several other private import models. Some of the models we had were, 1.9 GT, 1.6 manual and auto, TZI, TRS, TRI manuals and autos, sedans and wagons, an 8-valve 1.9 GTi from Malta, several 16-valves, 1.9 diesel.

In my opinion, and I've been supported in this, the most impressive BX was the 1.9 GT carby 5 speed; they bloody flew, had a better ride and were good on fuel.

A customer's car, an English imported 1.9 GT was even quicker. I ended up with this car as a wrecker when it needed a clutch, then the owner backed

This page: Four red 16-valve cars. A BX being worked on, while the shed is being converted into a full-blown workshop. Facing page: A cold windy morning camping on a hill near Inverell



Member's Models: BX en masse

his tractor into it. Somebody got a good motor!

We also had an English import 1.9 carby wagon, probably the same 1.9 GT motor as the sedan, it also was very impressive to say the least, and the last time I drove it, 12 months ago, it still was.

One day coming back from Toowoomba, with four adults and some baggage on board while on a quiet back road I was sitting on an indicated 100. After a while one of the blokes who I sensed was trying to get a quiz at the speedo said, after seeing MPH on the speedo, 'I thought we were doing a bit over 100'. Yep, the English speedo was reading miles. This car with over 300,000 miles on it only recently changed hands again when the owner bought a C5 wagon to replace his C5 se-

dan and the BX.

The very early BXs had what I thought was a clever bottom front suspension arm bushing arrangement in that they had rubber bushes similar to all late cars, as well as tapered roller bearings like we're used to on the rear trailing arms. The role of the bearings was to rotate, the role of the rubber bushes was to dampen the shocks and the noise. I've only seen one car with this set-up, the aforementioned very early English 1.9 GT. This car also had a fuel usage read out gadget, down in the console I think it was. It had a fuel flow meter in the fuel line to feed info to the gadget.

The diesel we had was not a turbo and didn't suit Australian driving conditions. Maybe if used on 110kph on freeways it would be OK, It loved 125/135kph on

the open road but on two lane roads you were forever up the bum of somebody flat out sitting on their regular 90. Well, that 1.9 D just didn't have the guts to overtake without a clear view ahead for some considerable distance.

Get 'em while you're wound up, different story.

Remind you of the good old days in an ID19? Less traffic back then so it wasn't such an issue.

There was actually a time when I thought I'd have a BX 16-valve for the rest of my days. Funny thing is I still have three of them. Two wrecks and a very nice red one that is looking for a good home. It's been in a dry shed with a cover over it for several years now. I also still have the 1.9 GTi. and a 1.6 automatic, all in the same shed. The 1.6 is like new, except the motor

corroded and over heated. It's only got 150,000km on it.

My first impressions of a BX 16-valve was, this goes pretty quick. Then realised there was less speed than the noise depicted. The Aussie 16-valves were detuned 'to save the planet'. Having only about 140/145 hp [Ed. Actually the introduction of a catalytic converter in July 1992 saw the output on all 16-valve cars to fall to 148hp/110kW. See page 35.] it didn't have the oomph of the 160 or so hp [119kW] of the real cars.

They also felt like you were going a lot faster than you actually were. Cruising in a CX2200 at 160 was like a symphony; unlike a BX sounding like the local rock band.

In the '80s, we'll blame Monsieur Dupont for what I think

The Maltese BX 19 8-valve GTi near the upper reaches of the Brisbane River.



En-route to Brisbane from Adelaide after the purchase of the 16-valve BX.

was his product, the crappy plastic they used for the dash. This product was used I suspect on many European makes, I have seen it in 928 Porsches. It was light, that's about the only good thing about it. It cracked, warped, rattled, broke, did I mention cracked. Maybe the European sun wasn't as damaging, but here!!!!

BXs did however help Citroën out of a black hole and back into the red, they served their purpose well.

After the BX along came the way underrated Xantia, basically an upgraded and improved BX with less character but WAY, WAY better road manners and they don't have that abortion of a flow divider valve that BXs have.

For those who don't know, BXs had a very reliable 5 piston



hydraulic pump, and a flow divider valve that was given the job of splitting the high pressure supply between the powersteering and the suspension/brakes. Even early XMs got this God forsaken thing, as did early Xantias. Very fortunately Aus. didn't get these early models.

Above: The remains of a mouse that failed to keep up with the treadwheel.
Right: Three 16-valve cars, with a 2CV. The shed is now a workshop. It just needs the bitumen.



Our Xantias and XMs got a two-in-one hydraulic pump. One half supplied the powersteering the other supplied suspension/brakes. This pump is without doubt the best hydraulic pump Citroën has used. Probably even better than the electric ones in C5s. And of course the single piston pumps on non-powersteer Ds There are many Xantias out there with 500,000+ km on them and the pump hasn't been touched.

Has anybody removed the flow divider valve from a BX and fitted one of these Xantia pumps? I can't see why it won't work. The actual mounting of it would be challenging though.

After reading the above you could be mistaken for thinking I recon BXs are a piece of shit. No I don't think that. They certainly did the job meant for

them, lots of people liked them, had some character and they didn't rust.

I enjoyed most of those we had, some I actually really liked, some I was glad to see the tail lights disappearing.

Helen loved the 1.9 GTi until somebody rear ended it. She still drove it for some time but then another 16-valve came along.

After all that though you're right, they're not my favourite car displaying the Double Chevrons.

Unfortunately BXs are sort after only in small numbers, let's hope this increases and enough are saved to be enjoyed in later years.

So finally if you've got a BX, and it's been said many times before... Keep 'em up n pumping
Steeley



Unconventional Wisdom

Loves driving, hates garages' was the slogan used to launch Citroën's stylish BX three years ago. We look at it as a used buy and find a car that's dramatically better than previous Citroëns used to be.

Just whether or not the BX is a 'real' Citroën is an argument yet to be settled, and one which will surely continue for a long time to come.

After all, say enthusiasts loyal to the more bizarre Citroëns offered in the past, the BX was created merely by raiding the Peugeot parts bins, and thus cannot be considered as any more than a Peugeot in drag.

But if the BX appeared to lack the total eccentricity found in most of its predecessors, its conception was a clever piece of marketing by Citroën. No longer could the firm justify the luxury of engineering exclusive to one model, so it was decided to use available drivetrains dressed up in what is a toned-down ~ yet still Citroën-esque ~ bodyshell.

This, it was hoped, would be a recipe exciting enough to retain the custom of those loyal to the marque, yet conventional enough to appeal to more reserved tastes, hence winning new friends.

Most of the engines used in the BX also see service in Peugeot

**Over 109 Miles An Hour
On The Road.
Under 108 Minutes A Year
In The Air.**



Even standing still the new Citroën BX16 leaves most cars standing. From start to finish its routine 12000 mile service takes less than 2 hrs. (That's faster than any of the Ford Sierras).

From the plugs to the brake discs all mechanical and body liftings have been designed for easy access and maintenance.

The gearbox can be taken out of the car without disturbing the engine.

The bumpers and front wings can be unbolted in minutes.

The transistorised ignition and 4 disc brakes never need adjusting.

How can a car this practical and economical give such outstanding performance?

It's because of the brand new 1580cc light alloy, overhead cam engine. Citroën have made it efficient enough to take the BX16 to well over 100 mph.

And with the five-speed box it delivers a remarkable 39 mpg at 75 mph.

Front wheel drive, rear trailing arms, a Macpherson strut layout and low profile tyres make for handling that's more than a match for the BX16's performance.

The one thing that doesn't match it is the price: \$5,600.

If you want to increase your pulse rate, test drive the new 109 mph. Citroën BX16.

If you want to lower your servicing bills, buy it.

The New Citroën BX. Loves Driving Hates Garages.

NO CARBURETTOR
NO DISTRIBUTOR
NO IGNITION
NO CHOKE
NO COIL
NO PLUGS
NO PETROL



**NO WONDER IT
SPENDS LESS TIME
IN THE GARAGE.**

CITROËN BX DIESEL
LOVES DRIVING, HATES GARAGES!



ots, if not necessarily in the same state of tune. At the bottom of the range there's the 1,360cc unit [used in Visas and Peugeot 205s], followed by the 1,580cc engine [shared by the Visa GTi, Peugeot 205 GTi, 305 and 309]. At the top you find the petrol 1,905cc unit seen in the 305, and the 1,769cc and 1,905cc diesels which are also used in Peugeots.

But in engineering terms, the BX wasn't a complete sell-out to corporate economics; Citroën's high-pressure hydraulic system still powered the all-disc braking, and sprung the front strut/rear trailing arm suspension. In true Citroën style, the ride height of the suspension system could be adjusted. Within the make-up of the BX, there were

also some genuine innovations; for instance a certain amount of weight-saving composite plastic was used for body panels, among the parts using this material being the bonnet and tail hatch [of most models].

Invariably, the BX sported certain characteristics which could only have come from the pen of a Citroën designer. But sensibly, these were reserved for the minor, relatively unimportant details.

There was a single front screen wiper, and the main instruments took the form of numerical read-outs rather than conventional instruments. There was also a set of CX-inspired fingertip controls instead of the more common column stalks.

Unconventional Wisdom



These details would naturally appeal to devotees of the double-chevron badge, but the way in which Citroën hoped to woo new customers was to try and convince them the BX would not be expensive to run as past Citroëns had been. Buyers had to believe the new car would not need to spend inordinate amounts of time in garages when only routine repair jobs were being carried out on the car.

Hence the unforgettable ad-line around at the time: 'Citroën BX. Loves driving, hates garages.'

Whether or not the BX does hate seeing the inside of workshops is something we'll look into later on, but it certainly seems the BX has freshened up Citroën's fortunes in the medium sector. While obviously not as common as Escorts, Astras or Maestros, the BX is not the rare sight on our roads that is the fate of some other import hopefuls.

Since the car was launched in Britain in September of 1983, and until March of this year, just over 34,000 BXs had been sold. Of that number, a little over 14,000 were 1600 models, while 1400s accounted for a lesser 6,000.

But perhaps the biggest surprise has been the diesel versions; almost 9,500 were sold May 1984 to March 1985. The estate models are perhaps too new to be completely relevant

to this survey, though Citroën tell us a little over 2,000 have been sold in the last year.

Evolution

The BX took almost a year to reach Britain following its introduction in France, so every car you see will be '83 on an A', as they say in the trade. Initially the range was simple, consisting of three 14s and two 16s.

At the bottom of the range there was the base model BX, powered by a humble 46.3kW/62bhp, four-speed version of the 1,360cc engine, and with skinny tyres and basic trim. Next up was the 14E, which had 7.5kW/10bhp mere and a five-speed gearbox. At the top of the 14 range was the RE, featuring the additional luxuries of central-locking and electric windows.

With the 16, the model choice was RS or TRS, both cars using a 68.6kW/92bhp version of the PSA 1,580cc engine. A five-speed transmission was fitted; sadly the power-steering available in France was not. As far as trim was concerned, the differences between RS and TRS were small: 'S' meant rear electric windows as well as front, different seat upholstery and rear headrests, a rev counter, and ether small variations.

In May of 1984 came the first of the diesel BXs, the 19RD, with RS-level equipment. At the same time, the god-send of power-assisted steering was

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also offered as an extra.

Then in October of the same year the 19GT appeared, powered by a carburettor-fed 1,905cc 79.1kW/106bhp engine. This had standard power-assisted steering, as well as electric windows, central locking, and an on-board computer. There had been a re-think on some of the controls too, for in place of the normal BX 'digital' instruments the 19GT uses a set of conventional dials. But the feelings of Citroën fans were partially spared, for the control pods and non-cancelling indicators were retained.

At the same time an automatic option was announced for 1,580cc models, though in fact it was a while before these cars became available.

With any other car this simply wouldn't be a milestone worth mentioning, yet due to the notchiness of the 16's gearbox,

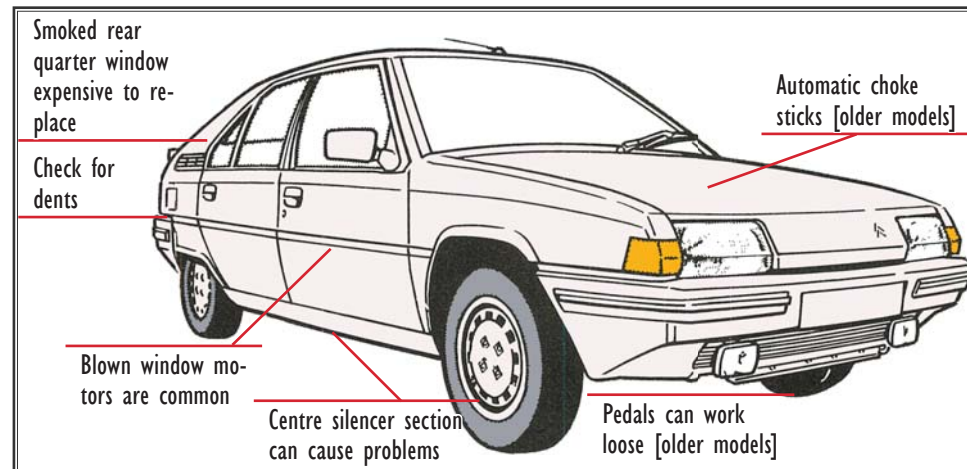
this option was set to transform the car, particularly when coupled to power-assisted steering. The automatic used was the four-speed ZF lock up unit already seen in the 305.

Increasing the scope of the BX theme was the July 1985 introduction of the estate. Three models were introduced: the 1,580cc 16RS, the 1,905cc TRS, and the diesel 1,905 19RD. At Motor Show time in 1985, the BX Leader arrived to take the slot of the 14 and 14E, offering a better value package. The 14RE then became special order only.

The Cars in Action

The first BX we tested was the 16TRS in October of 1983 ~ then the top-range model. We liked it enough to rate it top of a five-car test, though we did qualify our praise with a number of criticisms.

On the subject of engine refinement we said: 'Only at the



lowest of speeds is it quiet; hard acceleration brings out a disagreeable roughness, and at peak revs it is downright noisy. When cruising at motorway speed there is a constant din from under the bonnet... Gearing is surprisingly low for a modern aerodynamic car'.

The gearbox drew a lukewarm reception: The gearchange is much better than past Citroën shifts, though some clonkiness remains'.

Predictably, we wrote that we were highly impressed with the quality of the BX's ride: 'Sophisticated hydropneumatic suspension is always a guarantee of superb ride comfort, but the BX improves on existing Citroëns in many ways... But perhaps the biggest improvement is in Citroën's traditionally weak area: handling precision. The BX is the first Citroën that is actually taut to handle and fun to

drive fast on twisty roads.'

Under our 'accommodation' heading, the BX was the clear champion, and we praised it for excellent front/rear seat comfort and cabin space, though we weren't impressed by the poor rear visibility.

In our final group verdict it was said: 'We prefer the Citroën for its adventurousness, and for the fact that it at last backs up Citroën's legendary levels of comfort with enjoyable handling, good performance and the promise of low service costs as well as mere than competitive fuel economy.'

When we examined the 14RE in January of 1984, we commented that 1,360cc and 53.7kW/72bhp had a hard job powering the relatively large-bodied car. 'In gentle driving,' we said, 'the BX appears pleasantly flexible, but for mere urgent progress the engine has to be

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worked hard ~ often painfully so.' Again we pointed out that a higher fifth would be preferable.

On briefly sampling a 16TRS with automatic transmission and power steering, we were impressed by the car enough to make this comment: 'We like the automatic BX a lot, and feel that the ease and elegance of its driving must be exactly hew Citroën had intended the original, heavyhanded car to be. And as such it's second only to the rapid 19GT in our list of desirable BX models.'

Finally, we tested the 19TRS estate in November of 1985, and in a surprise verdict rated it a short way behind its corporate stablemate, the Peugeot 305 GTX. 'Superb load space' was how we described its carrying ability, but at the same time we commented that the tailgate was too heavy to lift, and that the estate's handling was down on that of the hatchback.

What to Look For

Undoubtedly, the BX in any form will be cheaper to run and repair than previous mid-range Citroëns, so you should anticipate BX ownership without the fear of bankruptcy. Gone are the overnight workshop sojourns that drivers of the CX and its predecessor the DS will have become all too familiar with.

In fact in the course of randomly contacting six Citroën dealers, we came across two

who had deserted the French marque completely ~ perhaps the BX and the car's improved reliability had deprived them all of their repair work!

Yet although the BX might well hate garages, don't expect it to be cheaper than other Escort-class cars. In our January 1986 giant hatchback test, we commented that parts prices for a 16TRS seemed a shade more than for rivals.

Citroën has exploited the BX's potential to the full, but luckily the post-launch development has not seen significant modifications which have rendered models obsolete. The most that has happened is that 14s and 14Es have been effectively rebadged the Leader.

So the earliest 16RS and TRS models are virtually identical to cars made in 1986 ~ good news for those on a limited budget. However, we would advise BX fanciers to go for as late a model as possible, for Citroën dealers have told us of some niggling faults that afflicted early cars. On starting up an early 16, the engine might sound 'tappety'. This doesn't necessarily indicate wear; it's just the way all the first cars sounded. Soon after, Citroën re-profiled the camshaft in order to quieten it down a bit.

Likewise, automatic chokes on the first cars could stick on, using more petrol and running infuriatingly quickly instead of tick-

ing over. Another initial problem reported by dealers was that the pedal set-up was not attached to the bulkhead strongly enough. This could cause a sloppy clutch action and, in the extreme, the pedals might eventually work themselves loose.

A further reason for buying a later model is putting yourself in the running for power-steering. This is unquestionably the best option there is on a BX, and if your driving is town-only, we'd say it's essential.

However, all this isn't to say you shouldn't buy an early BX ~ we ran one of the first 16TRS models in the country on long term test, and in 58,000km it let us down only once.

That occasion was a very odd affair, and we are glad to say that in researching this article we were unable to discover any repetition.

Shortly before the 20,000km service, our driver emerged one morning to start the car, but instead of the car firing up and

raising itself on the suspension, there was a loud underbonnet explosion and flames shot from the engine bay. It took a bucket of water to douse the inferno.

Even though a Citroën engineer from Slough inspected the car while it was at a local dealer, the cause was never properly established, and the explanation of fuel vapourisation in a cold engine didn't seem convincing. The plastic bonnet plus some ancillary engine parts were replaced, at no cost to us.

The incident never happened to our car again, and we are not aware of anyone else having had suffered the same experience.

We have heard of clutch cables snapping, and dealers believe this is due to the aforementioned pedal problem. But it would of course be highly obvious if this had occurred, and the cure is a sub-£10 part plus an hour's labour [in London this would cost around £16-£20].

As far as the engines are concerned, the 1.4 and 1.6-litre

PERFORMANCE						
	ENGINE [CC]	HORSE- POWER	MAX SPEED	0-97KPH [SEC]	FUEL CON- SUMPTION	INSURANCE GROUP
14/RE/RS	1,360	46.3/53.7	161	13.5	9.4	3
16/RS/TRS	1,580	68.6	175	10.8	9.1	4
19GT	1,905	78.3	183	9.7	10.1	5
16RS ESTATE	1,580	68.6	171	11.7		4
19TRS ESTATE	1,905	78.3	180	10.8	10.1	5
17RD	1,769	44.8	151	19.0		3
19RD	1,905	48.5	158	15.5		4

Unconventional Wisdom

units are tough and dependable, even if they aren't terribly refined. And it seems even the harder work the 1.4-litre has to endure does nothing to shorten life expectancy.

Talking of BX engines in general, one dealer we spoke to said: 'We get 115,000km cars coming in here, and they're as bright and perky as when they were new.'

It's worth looking at the condition of the exhaust system, as an added buzz on top of the engine note may mean the baffles in the centre silencer section have come loose. Again, this is something which should effect only older BXs, as a modification was later made to prevent the problem.

It seems there are few problems with the chassis; the hydropneumatic fluid system is usually leak-proof, and should give a lifetime's reliable service. However, make sure the car rises up from a start in the correct time; our car was a little slow, and Citroën told us at the time it was due to a sticking part in the height-corrector linkage.

The all-disc brakes should give good service. As one dealer put it: 'It might be worth checking the condition of the discs on high mileage cars, but they don't usually give trouble. Not like they do on the CX.'

At first, it seemed it was hard to get replacement tyres for BXs.

Our car needed new front covers at 25,000 [in 1984] and we had an unexpectedly hard time getting two Michelin 175/60 TRXs. Now however, the situation seems to have improved ~ ringing round suppliers showed that suitable tyres are readily available. [Ed. Of course these days trying to acquire TRX tyres has become a bit of a nightmare. The size for my Visa is not manufactured any more at all and there are no plans for a 'run' of them any time.]

Electrics should be reliable enough, but if there's a warning light glowing, check the system it relates to rather than assuming there's something wrong. For instance, an illuminated temperature light could well mean a faulty sender unit [the subject of yet another modification, to the car we understand].

One dealer told us that out of around 100 BXs he had seen, half a dozen came in with blown electric window motors. Hardly enough to suggest a pattern, but the motors are irreparable sealed units costing around £40 each. The oldest cars are only three years old so they should be rust-free, but check for dents at the back ~ diabolical rear vision makes the Citroën hard to reverse. Also look at the condition of the smoked plastic rear windows fitted to pricier BXs: the condition may be poor, and being bonded in replacement is

trickier than it looks.

BXs aren't tearaway Golf GTi style cars, but it's as well to check for accident damage and a good place to start is with the plastic bumpers. Factory-fitted, these are colour-keyed to the car, but if supplied as a part they come in grey and have to be painted to match. So if any paint has been scratched off to reveal grey, you'll know something, at some stage has happened.

Conclusion

Apart from a few flaws such as the heavy steering when unpowered, and the unnecessarily low gearing, we like the BX a lot. And it seems that basically it's also a sound, reliable buy on the used market.

After all, when an ex-Citroën dealer is prepared to say 'I'd have one myself,' it indicates that the car has to have quite a lot going for it.

While the cars aren't at their best in town, they make splendid long distance vehicles, and reliable drivetrains ensure that 115,000-plus should be absolutely no problem at all. Indeed, it seems that unlike CXs which clutter up the used car lots despite rock-bottom prices, secondhand BXs are in short supply. Many dealers we spoke to said they had nothing in stock, and when cars did come in they went straight out again.

This is all the more so with 19GTs, and we were told by

more than one agent that the diesel models are practically like gold dust.

Our favourite model? Unless finances dictated, we would leave the 14s alone [although the Leader looks good value], as they're limited in performance and aren't likely to be better on fuel or cheaper to service than the 16s.

If we couldn't stretch to a 19GT, we'd be perfectly happy with a 16TRS so long as it had power-steering [which is now fitted as standard, as it was to all Australian-delivered cars Ed], and if there was a lot of town driving to be done we might look for an automatic. These might be hard to find though as they will be in short second hand supply.

The diesels are good, too: economical, and by oil burning standards fast and fun to drive. Over a high mileage these cars should show running costs that owners of certain other Citroëns can only dream of!

But the last note is an ironic one. Given the BX's second-hand credibility, used values hold up quite strongly. So while running the French car will be lenient on your wallet, buying it in the first place will give it more of a pounding.

This unaccredited article first appeared in 'What Car?' in August, 1986 and it taken from the Editor's archive.

The French Counterattack



Summer 1987: The French manufacturers decide to put an end to the German hegemony on the sports car front. And three weapons are used to clean up the left-hand lane. Remember...

Such an alliance is like a total eclipse: it rarely happens. Did they get together? The fact remains that these three manufacturers launched their new

weapons at the same time in July 1987, for the transition to the 1988 model year. Sport Auto headlined on its cover: 'The new French squadron: are they as good as the Germans?', not hesitating to qualify this meeting as 'the match of the year'. Thirty-five years have now passed and we have redone the match on the road circuit of Linas-Montlhéry, as in that great era.

Let's start with the oldest of the lot, the Citroën BX, which was launched in October 1982. In its range, there was the very successful Sport version, which appeared in March 1985, but despite its undeniable qualities, its wild 94.0kW/126bhp from a Nivernaise decoction [Danielson] were not enough to divert lovers of vitamin-packed wagons from the Alfa Romeo 75 Turbo and V6, BMW 325i E3.0 and Mercedes 190 E 26,

which all exceeded the symbolic 111.9kW/150bhp mark.

The same aluminium XU9 is used as the basis here, but it receives a multi-valve cylinder head derived from that of the world champion Turbo 16s, with the management of fuel and ignition entrusted to a Bosch Motronic system. In fact, the two PSA cousins innovated with the first French multi-valve engine to be produced in series: congratulations!

The French Counterattack

The Caroline corner is negotiated here at over 130kph. This shows that the BX does not wallow and reveals its perfectly sound behaviour.



The result of the races: 119.4kW/160hp at 6,500rpm, that is to say a very good performance of 62.7kW per litre/84bhp per litre, knowing that at the time, only the BMW M3 E30 was doing better, among the naturally-aspirated cars, with 64.9kW/87bhp/L. As for the gearbox, the BX recovers the BEI from the Peugeot 205 and 309 GTi, but with gears adapted to the new engine speed range.

They Reveal the Colour

To better announce the colour, our Vallenga red BX is obviously dressed with all the rac-

ing gear in force in the 1980s: front spoiler, rear spoiler, fender and rocker extensions, front fog lamps, 14-inch aluminum wheels with 195/60 tyres and the '16 Soupapes' logo on the rear pillars and the tailgate. In short, it's a blast, but not as much as the Sport with its scalloped rear fenders and rectangular exhaust pipe. Of our three protagonists, the BX is also the most compact: 4.24m long, 1.68m wide and 1.36m high.

Let's move on to the interior. Here it's all leather. Apart from a '16 Soupapes' logo stuck inelegantly in front of the passen-

BUYING GUIDE ~ CITROËN BX 16VALVE

The BX is beginning to have its fans, particularly its sporty variants. Just 6,822 examples of this top version were produced in Phases 1 and 2. Two distinct versions: the GTi 16 valve [from July 1987], succeeded by the 16 valve in March 1989, with more enveloping bumper, smoked rear lights, new spoiler, fairing for the rear quarter vents, body-coloured side strips, oval exhaust pipe and new suspension settings. Catalytic converter from July 1992 [power reduced to 110kW/148bhp]. Expect to pay between €3,500 and €4,000 for a car in very good condition.

EXPRESS CHECK-UP

Perceived quality is not the BX's strong point, but it is remarkably robust, which allows it to reach high mileage. The good news is that it does not suffer from corrosion. The only downside to the bodywork is that the polyester bonnet [like the tailgate] is covered with paint that flakes over time, while the glued-on fender extensions [also polyester] can hide rust, retaining moisture. Reliable mechanics. If the oil pressure is low, beware of the connecting rod bearings, which will have to be changed. As for the hydropneumatic suspension, its reliability is real, but with age, it is not uncommon for the hoses of the low pressure return circuit [the famous 'octopus'] to fail. The suspension spheres

eventually leak and their diaphragms can become porous. Finally, noises in the front end indicate ball joints and/or links that need changing, while rear suspension arm bearings are another known weakness. Oil change and filter every 10,000km or every year, spark plugs every 15,000km, fuel and air filters every 20,000km, timing belt [with accessory belts and water pump] every 80,000km or five years, LHM oil change with brake bleeding and filter cleaning every 50,000km, coolant every two years, gearbox oil change every 100,000km

OUR GOOD ADDRESSES

- www.acitroenbx.com
- <http://cbxc.free.fr>
- www.bxworld.net
- <http://lunivers-des-citroen-bx-et-xm.asso-web.com>

5 REASONS TO BE TEMPTED

- Budget for purchase and use
- High level of braking
- Surprisingly responsive
- Tailgate and folding seat
- Sharp steering

5 REASONS TO THINK TWICE

- Unflattering image
- Driveability sometimes lacking
- Some parts hard to find
- Quality of materials
- Suspension degrades with time

The French Counterattack



Facing page, from top to bottom:

The XU9 J4 ~ which has been fitted with a set of red hoses ~ is both fast and reliable. As proof, our test car has 268,000km on the clock...

The exhaust tailpipe of the first phases is pigtailed like on the standard BX. Here it has been replaced by a phase 2 oval tailpipe.

The leather upholstery option adds a touch of luxury. We tested the rear seats on the road. They provide space and comfort for passengers.

The magic pull tab that allows you to vary the ride height and drive on the side roads... at the cost of a very degraded comfort.

ger and a pseudo sport steering wheel that is too tilted, there is nothing to hold you back except the seats, which are almost perfectly supportive. The instrumentation is complete but not very readable, but it does have everything that a sporty driver who pays attention to his mechanics could ask for: speedometer, tachometer and fuel gauge, water and oil temperature gauges and oil pressure gauge.

The control pods of the first generation BX have disappeared here, so that the cockpit, once original and as unergonomic as possible, has become sadly banal, but much easier to tame for a non-Citroënist.

The assembly? The quality of the materials? These are notions that should not be discussed here to avoid any annoyance.



VINCENT PAUTREL

'Sixth at the Eurocitro 2014!'

A mechanic by profession, Vincent is an unconditional fan of the BX and practically only drives this model. Follow his example...

'I passed my driving test on an BX 14 and that must have left its mark! This is my twentieth car and I still have several in my garage. At the moment I have two Ourane turbo-diesels, a 19T2S, a 16 Soupapes phase 2 and this GTi 16 Soupapes. My partner drives a Xantia Exclusive, which we use

for holidays.

But in fact we go on holiday more often with the GTi 16 Soupapes, despite the greater noise on board. I bought it for €300 in April 2010 and it has cost me just over €3,000, as I do most of the work. The next step will be a mechanical overhaul because it consumes a little bit of oil. I am quite confident for her future in the collection as she is beginning to attract the spotlight: at the last Eurocitro Concours d'Elegance, it finished in sixth place behind the Traction and the DS!

The French Counterattack

True to Peugeot tradition, the 405 remains the sharpest blade in this comparison: incisive front end, lively rear end. The perfect cocktail for cruising on small roads.



That said, apart from a poor contact on the 'door open' indicator, everything works and the car proudly displays 268,000km with its original mechanics. This should put a stop to some naysayers, who only swear by German cars.

Her Thing? The Happy Hour

When fired up, the XU9 J4 motor doesn't ruffle any feathers as an Alfa V6 or a BMW in-line six does. In fact, in touring mode, it behaves like a friendly four-cylinder engine, which is significantly more hollow than the XU9 J2 of the BX GTi [93.3kW/125bhp] or the XU9 JA of the 205 and

309 GTi [97.0kW/130bhp]. The maximum torque of 177Nm is set at 5,000rpm, so even with a gearbox with short and well-spaced ratios, you have to whip the mill, which fortunately has only 1,070kg to pull. As you can see, the party takes place on the top floor, once the 4,000 rpm mark is passed. The 5 to 7 is the great thing about the BX GTi 16 Soupapes, but then, you need space and no little blue men on the horizon ...

That said, we did not find the exciting mechanical character of the Sport, nor the homogeneity of its behaviour. The latter

BUYING GUIDE ~ PEUGEOT 405 MI 16

With 45,659 units produced, the 405 Mi 16 is approaching 35 years of age and it is not to be found around every corner, especially if you are looking for a car in beautiful original condition. Presented in June and marketed in September 1987, the first version was distinguished by its 14" aluminium wheels, replaced by 15" wheels in July 1989. The Mi 16 x4 four-wheel drive variant was introduced at the same time and featured a levelling system borrowed from the Citroën BX, a central viscous coupling and a limited slip axle. In July 1992, a catalyst: the Mi 16 is increased to 1,998 cc [instead of 1,905] and loses 4kW/5bhp, but benefits from a successful restyling [retouched rear, new dashboard]. In November 1993, an Mi 16 Le Mans ~ to celebrate Peugeot's victory in the 24 Hours ~ was offered, only in Lucifer red. In July 1994, the Mi 16 lost another 4kW and died out in July 1995. It costs €4,000 to drive a beautiful car.

EXPRESS CHECK-UP

The first Mi 16s [not catalysed] suffered from cylinder head problems, while the following ones are known to deliver less than the announced power. If the sheet metal is not a major problem, the same cannot be said of the finish of the first series, which is at the same level as the contemporary 205/309. The plastics age prematurely,

the assemblies leave something to be desired and the whole thing generates inevitable nightingales on board. Phase 2 is much more luxurious. Maintenance according to the Peugeot standards of the time: oil change every 10,000km, alternating with a more thorough service every 20,000km. Please note that the running gear of the Mi 16 x4 requires specific maintenance.

OUR GOOD ADDRESSES

- 405 Mi16 forum: www.forum405mi16.com
- The Peugeot 405 website: <http://405passionfree.fr>
- 405 forum: www.forum-405.com
- The 405 T16: <http://405t16.free.fr>
- Melun Rétro Passion: www.melun-retro-passion.com

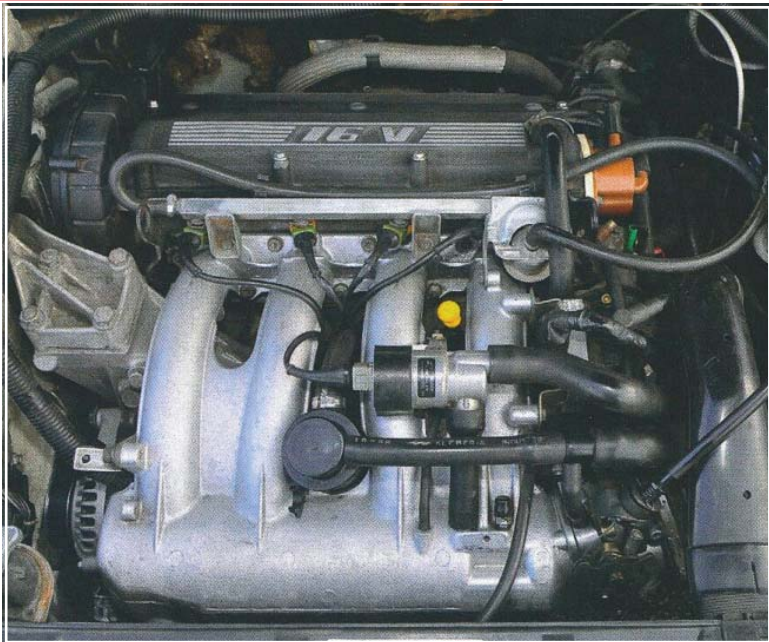
5 REASONS TO BE TEMPTED

- Raging engine [119kW/160bhp]
- Successful line
- Still very affordable
- Benchmark driving behaviour
- Comfortable, even with the family

5 REASONS TO THINK TWICE

- Finish [phase 1]
- Sanitized engine temperament [catalyzed Mi 16]
- Rare in original condition
- All-wheel drive not always ageing well [x4]
- Image still blurred within model

The French Counterattack



Facing page, from top to bottom:
Even when decked out in its sharpened hats, the 405 retains a natural elegance. Of the three, it is without doubt the one that has aged best.

Still the XU9 J4, in its original form. As long as you keep the original intake and exhaust, it remains quite discreet, even on the motorway.

A rare option, sometimes out of order or no longer waterproof: the two-position electric sunroof. Vincent tore his hair out to find a functional one.

You've grown older and become a parent? Trade in your 205 GTi for a 405 Mi 16 and enjoy your holidays with arms and luggage!

had impressed us with its perfect compromise between comfort and road holding. Here, the suspension is a bit too firm and it's a pity because the brakes ~ assisted by a Teves ABS ~ and the very sharp steering are enchanting.

However, rather than rethinking the hydraulics, Citroën 'simply' reduced the pressure in the spheres, which has the effect of stiffening them [from 55 to 45bars at the front, +18% stiffness; from 40 to 30bars at the rear, +25% stiffness]. This has a negative impact on traction on poor road surfaces.

This problem was partially corrected on the 16-valve model marketed in March 1989, which adopted more comfortable suspensions with modified



VINCENT DOUCHÉ

'My first car...'

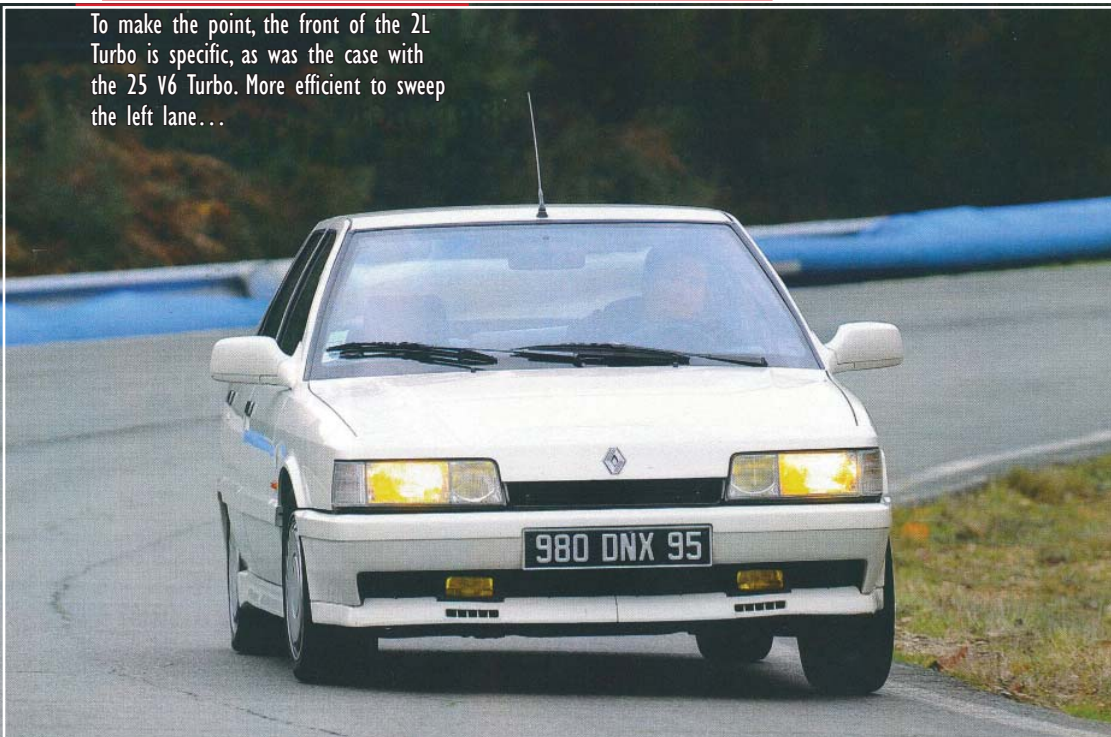
At 22, Vincent follows in his father's footsteps, who owns a 405 SR in which he did his accompanied driving.

'The Peugeot 405 is the car of my childhood. Once I had my driving licence, I couldn't see myself buying anything else. I couldn't see myself buying anything else. I found this Mi 16, stored in the grass, in June 2012 when it had 198,600km on it. It now has 209,000. The rocker panels were cor-

roded so I decided to I decided to dismantle it completely and rebuild it. I had a lot of trouble to get my hands on all the all the plastic parts, interior and exterior, as well as the sunroof. With some resourcefulness and a lot of elbow grease, I got out of it for about €3,000 and I have a nice car which I use for weekends and holidays. And most importantly, I know what was done on it and how it was done! When driving, it is less torquey at low revs than my father's SR 1.9 carburettor, but once it's up to speed, it's a treat. And the handling is really efficient and pleasant.

The French Counterattack

To make the point, the front of the 2L Turbo is specific, as was the case with the 25 V6 Turbo. More efficient to sweep the left lane...



lower wishbones and a larger rear anti-roll bar [21mm instead of 19]. These modifications make the car more comfortable, less understeerable, with a rear axle that is significantly more mobile on demand.

Miss Franche-Comté

Of our three protagonists, the Peugeot 405 wins the prize for elegance and, by the way, it wears the Meije white dress very well. It is also the most recent of the confrontation since the range was marketed in July 1987, against March 1986 for the Renault 21. No outrageous wing extensions here. The spoiler/

fin tandem is obviously part of the car, as well as discreet and well integrated rocker panels. On board, we're once again entitled to the leather option and wood inserts, which the buyer could afford at the Peugeot boutique. Like the BX, it comes with a two-position electric glass sunroof. It's the ultimate in luxury, if you will. Because, as a mass-produced car, the cockpit differs little from that of a basic 405. And at that time in France, they were rather light on materials and assemblies.

From this point of view, we can send the two PSA cousins

BUYING GUIDE ~ RENAULT 21 2L TURBO

Attention, a 'rather rare bird' 13,788 Renault 21 2L Turbo were produced between June 1987 and April 1993, including 875 Quadra [four-wheel drive], only available in phase 2 [presented in September 1989]. More fragile and older, phase 1s are harder to find in good condition than phase 2s, but they are the ones that will be most valuable in the collection. In all cases, prefer an uncatalysed version [before autumn 1992]. Indeed, the adaptation to the Euro 93 emission standards caused the 2L Turbo to lose 10kW/13bhp and a good part of its volcanic character. Turbo. A model in competition condition can be sold for € 7,500, but the majority of the market is between €2,500 and 4,500 for a model in good original condition.

EXPRESS CHECK-UP

Under-valued at the outset, the 21 has proven to be reliable. Among the known weaknesses: fragile heat exchanger, leaky air bypass valve, weak clutch key. The transmission is not much of a problem, but there are some concerns about the driveshaft on the Quadra, which is more prone to electronic problems [faulty pins]. If used properly ~ do not thrash it when cold and let it cool down at idle after use ~ and not 'tampered with', the turbo can last more than 150,000km. On the body side, inspect the side rails, the jack stands and

the rear floor in the vicinity of the exhaust for corrosion. Also check the suspension springs, which can corrode and may break. According to the manufacturer, the engine should be serviced with an oil change every 10,000km, with filter replacement every other time [100% synthetic oil] and a check on the sealing of the supercharger system. Air filter and spark plugs every 20,000km, fuel filter and gearbox change every 80,000km and timing belt every 120,000km or every five years.

OUR GOOD ADDRESSES

- Club 21 Turbo France: www.club-21turbo.com
- R21 2Utres Turbo: www.r21turbo.com
- Le club Renault 21: www.renault21.fr
- Melun Rétro Passion: www.melun-retro-passion.com

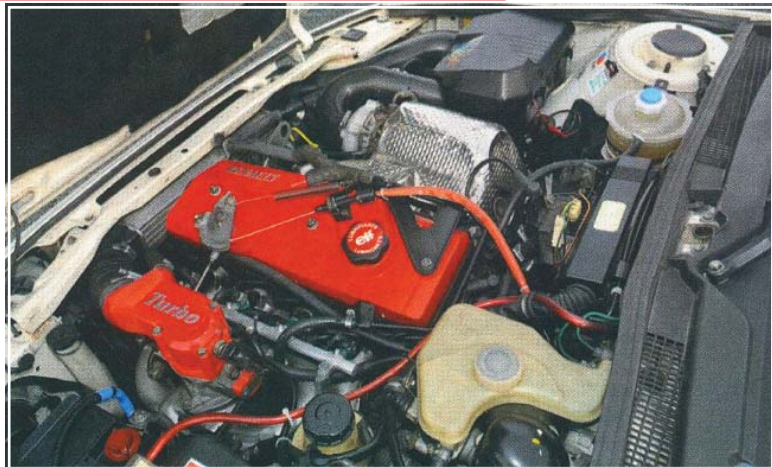
5 REASONS TO BE TEMPTED

- Real family car, real sports car!
- Rare and not too expensive
- Surprising comfort
- Reliable if not tampered with
- Royal habitability

5 REASONS TO THINK TWICE

- Exuberant look
- Dull driving position
- Consumption on/off
- Untraceable in original condition
- Period Renault finish

The French Counterattack



Facing page, from top to bottom:

The J-Type is enchanted by the addition of the Garrett T3: with 130.6kW and 270Nm, it puts everyone in agreement when it comes to timing.

An angular stern [with specific bumper and spoiler] and it's very explicit:

Renault 21 2L Turbo ABS, it's written in all letters. So that you understand who you are dealing with.

The Renault is also the only one to have 15" wheels with 195/55 tyres. In order to pass the cavalry, you need at least that.

Of our three sports cars, the R21 is the most family-friendly, especially as the front seats allow the rear passengers to stretch out their feet.

back to back. With 209,000km, our star of the day emits about as many 'nightingales' as the BX. However, we're still in the tolerable range, but the whole thing has nothing to do with a rotting Mercedes 190, for example. Compared with the BX, the instrumentation is more readable but less complete ~ no oil pressure gauge and the driving position is too high, like on contemporary Peugeots.

A Player on Demand

We won't go back to the mechanics, which the 405 shares with its cousin, except to say that in this case, it seemed more linear and fuller than in the BX. With the original exhaust system, discretion is the order of the day, including at the top of the rev counter. There is no



THOMAS STÉPHANE

'Discovered in the army!'

Stéphane is an unconditional fan of Renault sports cars ~ he actually misses his Clio Williams ~ and he met the 21 Turbo under strange circumstances...

'We are in 1997 and I am doing my military service. One day, we were asked to take two vehicles to a police station. We were expecting to find heavy goods vehicles or off-road vehicles and we were shown two Renault 21 2L Turbo for the

rapid intervention brigades [BRI]. As the delivery time was short, we had to act quickly. From the first acceleration, I said to myself: 'What is this car, it pushes like a plane!' I vowed to get one. This was done in 1995 with a Tungsten grey Phase 1, then a Phase 2 Quadra. The one you have in front of you, I bought it for €5,000 in 2007. Like everyone else, I put too much horsepower in the engine [between 250 and 300], so I broke it in 2012. I did it again, but in a wiser and more reliable configuration. I still have the tyres and shocks to make sure the running gear is up to the performance.'

The French Counterattack

need to say that the XU10 J4R5 that later equipped the ZX 16V and 306 SI6 BV6 is much more demonstrative than this XU9 J4: fuller at the bottom, more musical, more furious, it sublimates the original recipe. But it has never equipped the BX or the 405, so...

No, in fact, the crazy talent of the Sochalienné lies in its running gear. In spite of 14" wheels [it adopted 15" as of July 1989], it is driven like a GTi, while preserving a comfort, in our opinion, superior to that of the BX.

The first tight hairpin bend sets the tone: the front end goes where you lead it without ever straying from the trajectory. It's as chiselled as we could wish for. Precise and rigorous, the Mi 16 is also playful on demand, since you just have to lift your foot and the rear axle will roll up. It feels like driving a big 205 GTi with a slightly softer handling because the Mi 16, with its longer wheelbase and less precise settings, is more responsive than a 309 GTi 16 for example. In short, it's the ideal car for the young father of a family, nostalgic for his little car. The only thing to watch out for is the ABR [Peugeot's anti-lock braking system]: on a bumpy road or under heavy use, it can fail. A defect unknown to the BX, by the way...

Another World

It's strange how Renault sports cars always seem to be

more exuberant. The R21 is no exception and wears the white Panda tracksuit from head to toe. With its specific front end, turbine wheels, angular stern, spoiler, double exhaust pipes ~ replaced here by a single larger diameter pipe ~ it's impossible to confuse it with a basic version.

The festival continues on board with the instrumentation on a red background: speedometer graduated up to 260kph, oil pressure and turbo gauges, on board computer. The only thing missing is an oil thermometer. The centre console and the location of the ashtray are specific to the Turbo, while the rest of the dashboard is identical to the other models of the range.

The dashboard has a 'cap', the horizontal heating controls and the large void in front of the passenger whose usefulness remains questionable. The driving position and the seats are a benchmarks and the steering wheel offers a sufficiently thick rim.

The rear bench seat? A sofa with legroom and exemplary headroom. Plus a huge boot. This makes it one of the most welcoming sedans of the time.

Cannonball Shape

Under the bonnet is the 1,995cc J-Type, which was a favorite of the R20 TS. An aluminum block topped by a cross-flow cylinder head with

hemispherical chambers, add a Garrett T3 water-cooled turbo blowing at 0.9bar, a Renix electronic management system and you get, without forcing it ~ we shouldn't overshadow the R25 V6 Turbo ~ 130.6kW/175bhp at 5,200rpm and 270Nm at 3,000 rpm. Just the mention of these figures puts the PSA cousins to shame. On paper: a maximum speed of 227kph, 0 to 100kph in 7.45seconds and 1,000m from a standing start in 27.8sec.

On the other hand, the BX announces 218kph, 7.9sec and 28.8sec respectively and the 405, 220kph, 8.5 and 29.3seconds. And let's not talk about acceleration. At the time, Sport Auto measured the 100 to 140kph in fifth gear at 17.25 on the BX, 17.45 on the 405 and 10.1seconds on the R21!

That's the point: if our two multi-valve cars can go after cars of comparable power, the R21 tickles the exhaust of the ultra-sports cars. As a proof, the press did not hesitate to confront it to the BMW M3 E30, Ford Sierra Cosworth, Lancia Thema 8.32 or Mercedes 190 E 2.5-16. In short, the over 149.2kW/200bhp club ~ a club to which our little 'Frenchie' certainly deserves to belong.

However, things start out rather calmly. The musical style of the J7R-C752 has nothing of rock'n'roll about it. But its qualities are elsewhere. Starting with

its steering, which is ideally calibrated between softness and firmness. The same goes for the suspension: the body is well maintained, but comfort is assured in all circumstances. Docile, the R21 reveals the full extent of its talent on fast tracks. Silent, it devours the asphalt with serenity and offers cannonball-like acceleration in all gears. It pushes hard from 2,000 to 5,000rpm. Efficient if not fun, the road handling quickly gives the driver confidence, with a precise front end and a rear end that is riveted to the ground, unless you want to provoke it badly during a violent lift off the ground. The only downside is the braking: in common with the 405, the old-fashioned ABS can tangle the pedals on bumpy surfaces.

Thirty-five years later, the choice remains primarily a matter of taste and affinity. But if we exclude the fuel consumption chapter ~ which is not to the advantage of the turbo engine when you're going fast ~ it's clear that the Renault is a big step above its two rivals. Personally, my choice is made! This article was written by François-Xavier Basse, with photography by Emerick Houplain, for the January 2015 edition of 'Youngtimers' magazine. It was translated by your Editor with the aid of www.DeepL.com/Translator [free version]

Bertone's BX Coupé

This article was written in January 2020, so the reference to Vincent Cobée 'just' replacing Linda Jackson is not quite timely. However the time shift does not impact the value of this article.

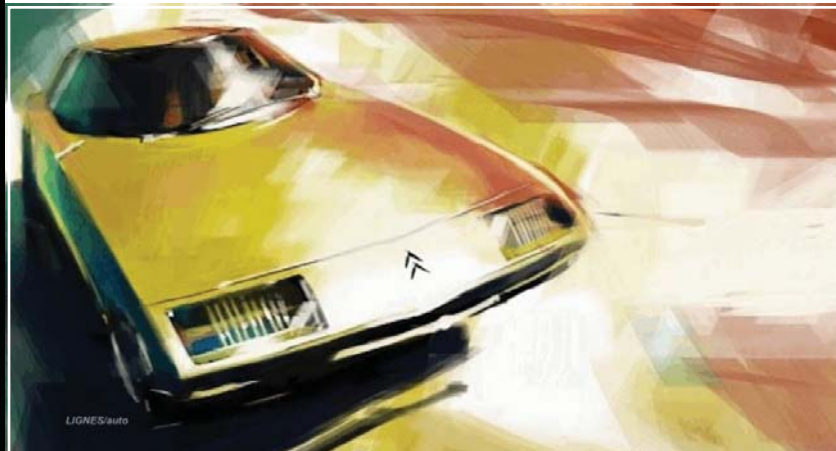
The Citroën brand has just changed boss. Vincent Cobée replaces Linda Jackson. During his quiet time [!], we offer him the opportunity to re-discover Citroën's rich heritage. Here, in detail, is the genesis of the Citroën BX coupé designed by Bertone, the same year the BX sedan was presented to the general public: 1982.

Dark, secretive and incomplete: the image below is the Citroën coupé designed by Bertone as it is preserved today in the reserves of the French manufacturer's Conservatoire. This is at least proof that it did exist, but we could not be satisfied with this mock-up, even though it is little known and very revealing of the concept.

We have to go back to the source of this project that could

have saved Bertone in the mid-1980s and certainly prevented the disappearance of this formidable representative of Italian creativity! Rewinding the tale back to the origins of the collaboration between the Italian master and Citroën takes us to the 1972 Geneva Motor Show where the Camargue coupé, designed by Bertone and based on the Citroën GS was presented

This concept car was partly designed by the Frenchman Marc Deschamps, who later took over the Italian design office from the masters Giugiaro and Gandini, no less... 'The Camargue was born at the very beginning of my period with Bertone. Marcello Gandini could not take charge of its design as he was too busy after the Turin and Brussels salons. There were only five weeks to complete the work. A record! We chose the theme of the GS coupé for two reasons. The first one was a bit trivial: because I had just bought myself a GS 1015! The second,



Left: Contrary to legend, the Bertone GS Camargue was designed by Marc Deschamps during his first visit to the Italian coachbuilder.

Below: Marc Deschamps



and no doubt more interesting, was that Bertone had been persuaded by the sales director to try to forge a link with Citroën, to imitate Peugeot's with Pininfarina.'

At the time, the production lines of the Italian coachbuilders' factories set up in the 1950s

already had to be made profitable when they were forced to support the production of giants such as Fiat and other groups. Peugeot had turned to Pininfarina, so why not court Citroën? It was a good idea for the Italian coachbuilder, since the BX saloon, the ZX, the Xan-



Photo : B. Canonne

Bertone's BX Coupé

Right: Planning of the G2 programme: the Citroën BX Bertone coupé

Below: Philosophy of the G2 program. '1] 4-seater Coupé ~ rear seats acceptable.

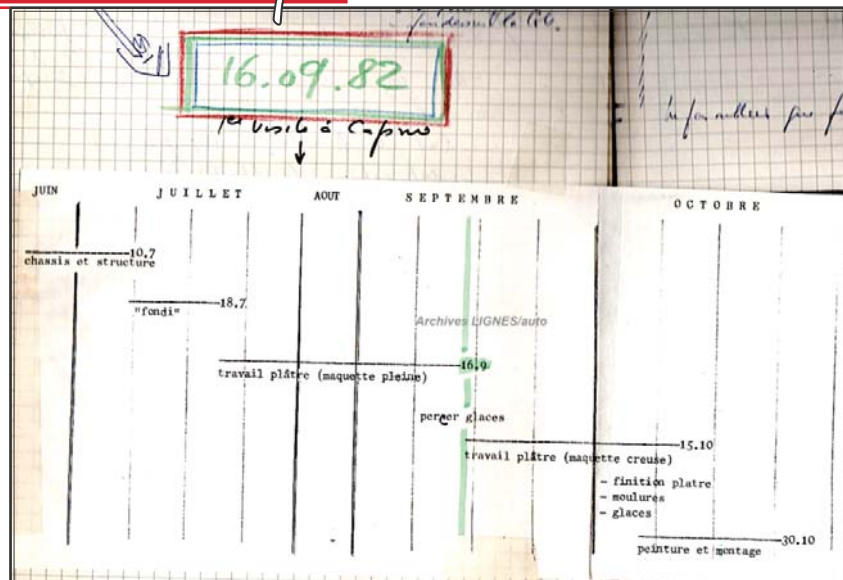
2] Overall volume about that of the BX, but lower. Completely different from BX.

3] Remarkable originality and personality [compared with the competition's coupés]

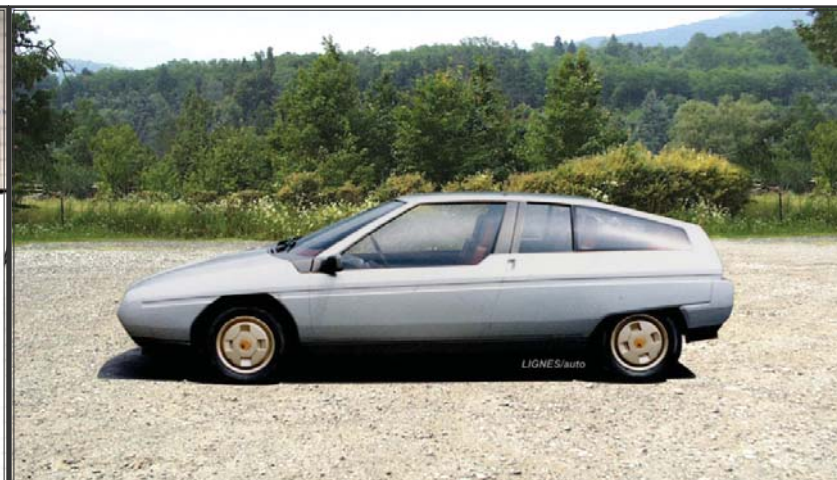
4] High class and refined interior

5] Sportivity and aggressivity

6] Flag carrier in the C range



COUPE' "BX"	
Archives LIGNES/auto	
T H E M E (philosophie)	
1)	COUPE' 4 places - places arrières acceptables
2)	VOLUME général à peu près celui de la Bn. BX, mais plus bas. Complètement différent par rapport à la Bn.
3)	ORIGINALITE' et PERSONALITE' remarquables (détaché par rapport aux coupés de la concurrence)
4)	CLASSE ELEVEE et RAFFINEE particulièrement à l'intérieur
5)	SPORTIVITE' et AGGRESSIVITE'
6)	PORTE DRAPEAU dans la gamme C



Bertone's Citroën Zabrus on a BX 4 TC base.

tia and the last great Citroën, the XM, were finally produced by Bertone's design studio in Caprie, near Turin. It was during this period that the project for a BX coupé was proposed to Citroën. The planning of the first plaster model dates from September 1982, the first 1:1

scale styling models were presented to Citroën management in April 1983.

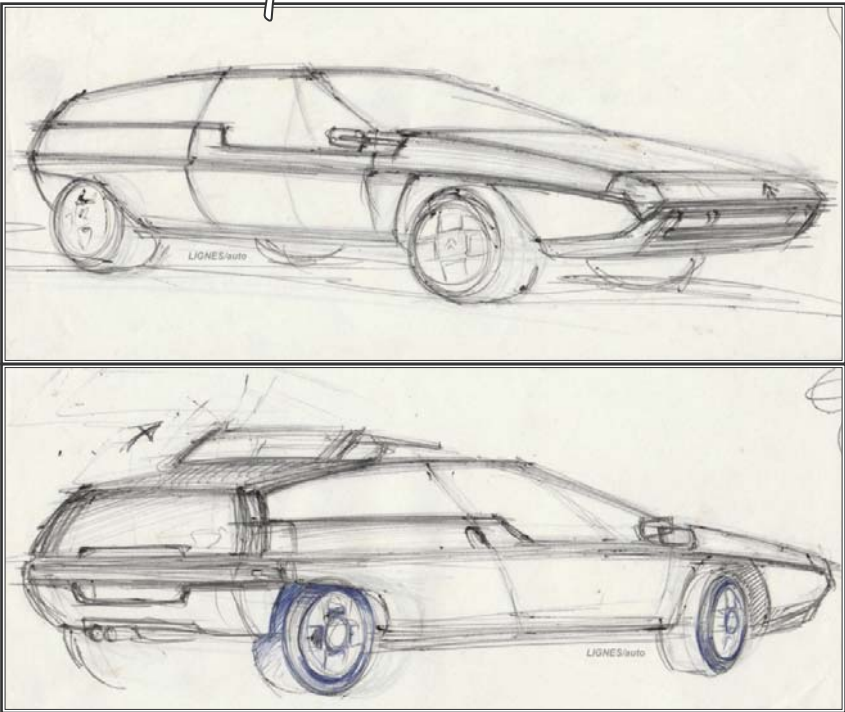
In the life of a design enthusiast, some encounters leave more of an impression than others. At the end of the 1980s, I had the opportunity to interview Nuccio Bertone

[1914~1997], the son of the creator of the eponymous Carrozzeria, at length. Inevitably, we came to talk about this project that I had been chasing for some time! Nuccio Bertone had obviously not shown me any photos, so I had to make do with a few words that confirmed that

this coupé did indeed exist. 'The studies for the BX coupé are a very logical continuation of our collaboration with Citroën,' he confirmed to me.

'We studied the hypothesis of deriving a two-door, four-seat coupé on the basis of the saloon we had designed. We

Bertone's BX Coupé



looked at all the areas, both in terms of design and production possibilities, and also the costs. We went further than we could have done, especially with a real change of style. Our coupé was amazing, with a top-of-the-range engine, in no way comparable to that of the saloon! For Citroën, the price was considered too high to launch this model into production. It was a real shame! I remember the afternoon when we discussed these problems with Xavier Karcher. [Citroën's number 2 with Jacques Lombard at the helm.]

'I tried to defend the project

by focusing on the production volumes which had to be high in order to make our investments profitable more quickly. At the same time, the price could be reduced a little. M Karcher then told me that our coupé would be a direct competitor of the BMW coupés in view of the price and that Citroën did not have the clientele for that! He was probably right, but I left the presentation room not really satisfied!' Bertone was to produce a Citroën BX coupé, but only one, in 1986. It was the Zabrus concept car.

Despite this refusal by the French brand to give the Ital-

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Bertone's BX Coupé



ian coachbuilder free rein to produce it, the BX coupé was to pave the way for the stylistic study of the XM, the replacement for the CX. The two Bertone creations have many points in common. Marc Deschamps was at the helm of the small design studio in Caprie. It was he who designed the Citroën coupé. Who better than him to reveal the secrets of this study, which was taken to the gates of industrialisation?

'Yes, I am the author of the lines of this coupé. At the time, we produced two full-scale styling models. The theme that we chose at the time was that of the hunting station wagon, which was beginning to be a fashionable concept. The specifications were quite simple, even though the technical ar-

chitecture was difficult to re-work, notably because of the bulky size of the front suspension, which required a fairly high bonnet,' says Deschamps.

'It was to be a two-door coupé but with four real seats. At Bertone, this project was very important because we were looking for a second or third product line to be manufactured in Grugliasco [Bertone's factories at the time]. At the same time, we were in discussion with Volvo and we had to get out of the industrial monoculture linked to the production of the Fiat X1/9 to survive. We finally saw what happened...'

Contrary to what Nuccio Bertone might have suggested at the end of the 1980s, Xavier Karcher did not necessarily



Nuccio Bertone and the XM, born seven years after the first work on the BX coupé.

want to kill this project known internally as 'G2', as Marc Deschamps recalls. 'As much as I can remember that Xavier Karcher was nevertheless rather favourable to the project, at the level of the PSA group, it was another matter. However, it was thanks to this BX coupé project that we started the debate on the style of the... XM!'

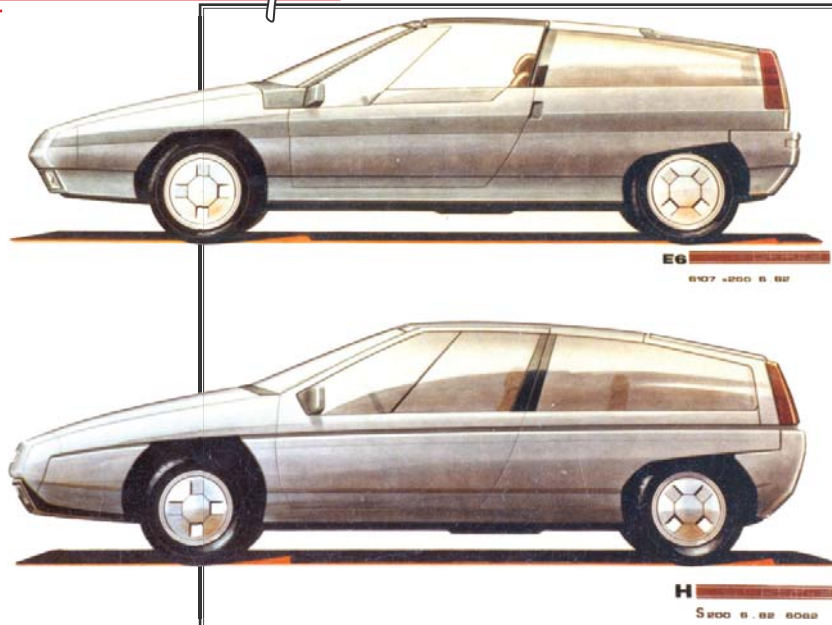
Without the study of the BX coupé, the XM would probably not have been designed as it was, as Marc Deschamps remembers: 'When we went with Nuccio Bertone to Neuilly [Citroën's headquarters since 1982] to make progress on the BX coupé project in 1983, I found myself having lunch with one of Citroën's product managers after our morning meeting. He asked me the age-old question

of how I imagined the car of the future. At the time, we were working on the Volvo 780 at Bertone and we had our heads full of different top-of-the-range concepts for the Swedes! So I told him that I could see a pseudo three-box for Citroën's future flagship. And he cut me off by telling me that I was wrong. You have to make a coupé', he said. And that's how, in the evening, while waiting for the plane to return to Turin and discussing with Nuccio Bertone, I drew a sketch of the future XM on a piece of paper, inspired by the BX coupé. That's how the legend was born that the XM's style was drawn on a plane!

A plane. The BX Coupé undoubtedly dreamed of becoming one with the famous 'top-of-the-range engine, in no way

Bertone's BX Coupé

Drawings of the 'G2' coupe, the BX Coupé seen by Marc Deschamps in 1982.



comparable to that of the saloon' but whose characteristics are still unknown today. Aesthetically speaking, the design by Marc Deschamps is in the vein of the creations of the time. The theme of the hunting estate is modernised in his proposal. The black panel below the windscreen was used on the XM.

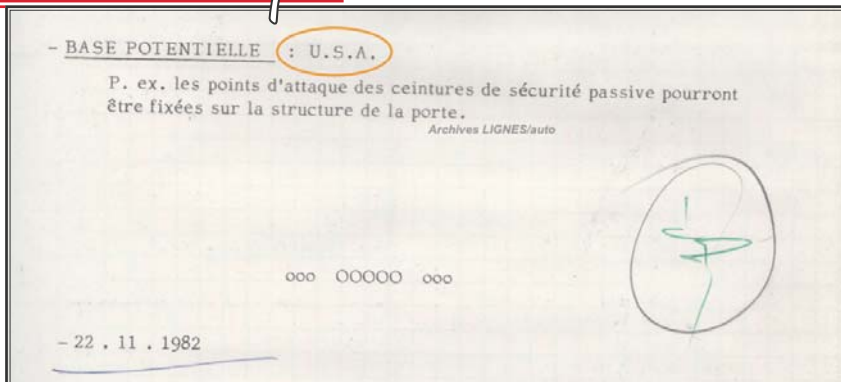
At the front, the Citroën coupé inspired the design of the Chevrolet Ramarro concept car drawn by Bertone in 1984. At the rear, the two models produced in Caprie offered

divergent solutions, with one of them having a slight Lamborghini Marzal feel! The lights are placed inside the tailgate with lighting that diffuses through the glass of the flap. On board, the dashboard is new and abandons the pseudo 'lunula' that was designed and used for the second generation of the BX saloon.

The materials seem outdated but, put back into context, they give the impression of a much more luxurious vehicle than the saloon, in accordance with the wishes of Nuccio Bertone himself and the specifications,

Bertone's BX Coupé

This note from November 1982 indicates that with an eye on the US market 'the attachment points of passive safety belts may be fixed to the door structure.'



which state that 'the BX coupé should have a high and refined class, particularly in the interior.' Everything is different in this environment and very few parts are common to those of the saloon. The advantage of this coupé came from its habitability but also from the volume of its vast boot which was accessed through a rather large hatch-back opening. Even the luggage shelf is functional on the model of the car... You can see how far the project went in its design with surprising details, such as the safety belts in the front

doors to meet the requirements of a possible version for the United States.

With a length of 4.30 m and a height of only 1.26 m, the Bertone coupé has a Cx value of less than 0.30 in the Pininfarina wind tunnel where it was tested. In short, it meets the philosophy required by the specifications, which wanted to make it 'the flagship of the brand in the range.'

But in 1983, Jacques Calvet was appointed boss of the PSA group. His objective was obviously to refocus the purely au-



tomotive activities in-house. The project of this Bertone coupé from the early 1980s was therefore not validated by this new management. Nevertheless, it allowed the rather original design of the large XM saloon unveiled in 1989 to be accepted.

From then on, the future of the association between the Italian coachbuilder and Citroën was going to be darker, just like that of the historic marriage between Pininfarina and Peugeot. In 1991 and 1993, the ZX and Xantia were still designed by

Bertone. These were the last two major works carried out together. This was followed by the highly criticized C5 sedan, and then the arrival of Jean-Pierre Ploué as head of Citroën design in 1999, which opened a new chapter of creativity for the French manufacturer. © This article by Christophe Bonnaud was written for the website Lignes/auto Archives [<https://lignesauto.fr>]. It is reproduced here with the permission of the author and may not be reproduced elsewhere without his express approval.

Looking Forward

Next issue of 'Front Drive'...
We celebrate 55 years of the Dyane.
Launched with the aim of replacing the
2CV... frankly that was never going to
happen. Read about this undervalued
classic next time.

If you own a Citroën Dyane, why not make a contribution
and send it to Leigh Miles at editor@citroendclassic.org.au
by Wednesday, March 16. Got a picture that merits sharing?
Send it as well.

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Janine Pendleton

Welcome! I am Janine Pendleton, also known as Obsidian Urbex Photography. My interest in urban exploration photography started in August 2015 with an impromptu trip to that classic UK site, Camelot Theme Park. I used to go here as a kid with my parents, so seeing its dilapidated and desolate state some 15 years later struck a chord somewhere inside me.

My passion is exploration of abandoned places, through photography. Answering the question 'What lies beyond that "No Entry" sign?' This is where you will find me, camera in hand.

- Urban Exploration ~ Exploration of abandoned, lost, de-

caying and forgotten places. Places which are not usually seen by the public.

- Dark Tourism ~ Exploration of places with a historical or contemporary association with death, macabre, catastrophe and tragedy.

I was hooked! I spent the rest of 2015 trawling the UK in search of abandoned places, making new friends along the way. In Spring 2016 I had my first trip to Europe, and things escalated from there. Over the last five years, I have travelled to places that I never thought could exist. I have had road trips and adventures aplenty, making friends and getting in situations that seem almost impossible to believe as I sit at home writing this.

Here is to many, many more adventures and photographs to come!

If you have enjoyed my website and adventures, please consider supporting me.

Any support is appreciated, and it doesn't have to cost you anything. I have a page with suggestions on Ways You Can Support Me, which range from engaging/sharing on social media to buying a small affordable print. I also have a tips jar if you would like to make a donation to my web hosting fees, and snack/coffee fund for road trips!

Janine Pendleton
Obsidian Urbex Photography



Air-conditioning your Traction

Richard Boudrias has been a member of La Traction Universelle in Montreal, Quebec for the past 30 years or so, following our meeting during the Raid Franco-Acadien in 1988.

After owning several Citroëns, Richard, alias the Beaver, sold his faithful 1939 IIBL cabriolet [that car is now in Switzerland], to offer more comfort to Louise, his wife, who has multiple sclerosis. Clearly there was the need for a new mount.

Louis Grenier, alias Louis XV, who owned fifteen 15-Sixes near Montreal, agreed to give him a 15-Six H which came from a member of the Northern section of the Traction Universelle [Pierre Wattecamps].

Let's hear from him...

Fifteen years ago I treated myself to a 1955 15-Six H with which I drive with great pleasure.

It was love at first sight that prompted me to restore it completely from bumper to bumper. There was as much time devoted to the bodywork and the upholstery as to the mechanics.

As restoring my body was out of the question, I took the initiative to make some modernizations to make it more comfortable and pleasant to use.

The first modification was to convert the electrical system from 6-volt to 12-volt in order to install an Easy-Drive power steering system.

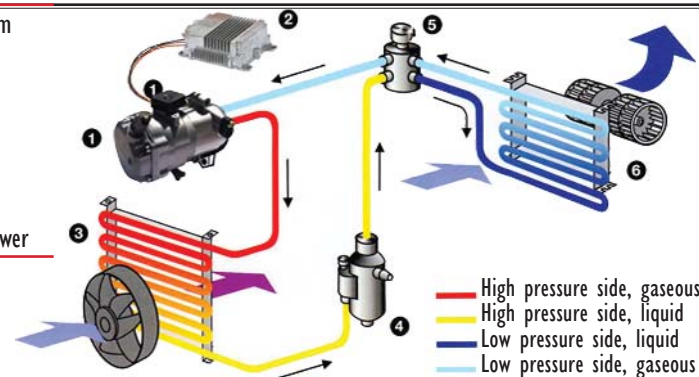
[Ed: In another article in this

The car in question in Quebec, Canada.



Air-Conditioning System

- 1 Compressor
- 2 Electronic Control
- 3 Condenser
- 4 Dryer
- 5 Expansion Valve
- 6 Evaporator and Blower



The complete unit, assembled and being bench-tested prior to its installation.



edition of 'Traction Avant' there is a description about the fitting of an Easy-Drive power steering system to the Traction Avant. I passed the information about this kit to Rob Little seeking his opinion on it as he had been heavily involved in the development of the local power steering conversion. His reply was:

'The kit we developed for the Traction also uses an electric steer motor for assistance, that in itself is not the matter for concern, it is the manner in which the assisted motor is integrated into the car's steering system. In Australia all vehicles must comply with the Australian Design Rules or ADRs as they are referred to, any modifications to steering, brakes, engine transplants, etc must be inspected and approved by an Automotive Engineering Consultant. It is illegal to weld any steering or brake component, therefore it is extremely important how components, such as steering

Air-conditioning your Traction



Left: After some thought and consideration, we decided to hide the compressor and electronic controls behind the spare tyre in the boot.

Below: The condenser with its fan is placed under the car in front of the silencer.



shafts are joined together, they must be fail-safe to ensure that people are not creating time bombs that look good but can possibly fail at some time in the future. Most of the kits I have seen offer a sleeve that fits over the steering shaft and is welded in position, sometimes in situ in the car, which makes it very difficult to obtain a consistent weld. One Traction expert in the UK I spoke to freely told me that this is how he fits them but added that he also places

a pin through the shaft and sleeve. Danger everywhere! In Australia, in the event of an accident that is caused by failure of a component that has been illegally modified, you could find yourself without insurance and be personally responsible for all damages, including compensation for death or injuries, one can only imagine the costs. I hope this explains the situation in a not too technical manner but some countries and particularly Europe are extremely lax in this area.'

So, should you come across reference on-line to the Easy-Drive power steering conversion, take Rob's advice and steer well clear of it. Pun intended.]

Then I went on a 'hunt' to find a completely electric air-conditioning system without pulleys or belts.

This painstaking search took a few years before I entrusted the project to André Fitzback from St-Hyacinthe who finally found the 'Holy Grail'.

He and his team designed and tested the system on a test bench that allowed air at 10°C to flow out of the flexible tube.

The system had to be installed properly to see how effective it was under normal use.

Despite the fact that said air conditioning works perfectly well, one improvement was to find a way to increase the amperage of the alternator or to



Top and centre: The dryer and expansion valve in front of the condenser.
Bottom: The evaporator sitting 'proudly' on the front floor.

Air-conditioning your Traction

The system has four flexible tubes allowing us to direct the cold air where we want it. This module looks like a Chernobyl type factory and will be hidden by a discrete console with air vents.

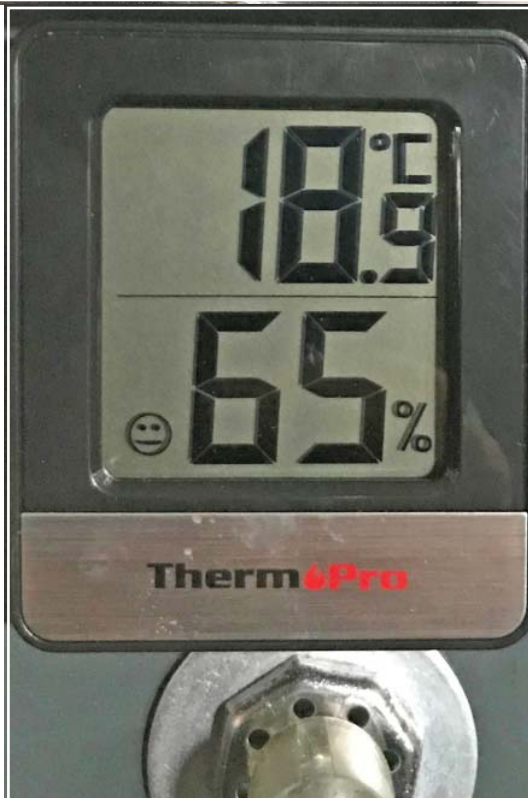


find a more powerful one of the order of 90A or more. In the meantime, I charge the Traction's battery to full capacity the day before a hot and humid trip, and that's it.

As I write these lines, I found an alternator completely identical to the one that Patrick Clément [Traction Universelle Rhodanie] sold me but which gives out 90A, thus theoretically solving the problem of the lack of amps. Now that everything is fine, it's cold...

Fitzback Garage in St-Hyacinthe, Quebec, exclusive representative for Easy-Drive and All Electric A/C.

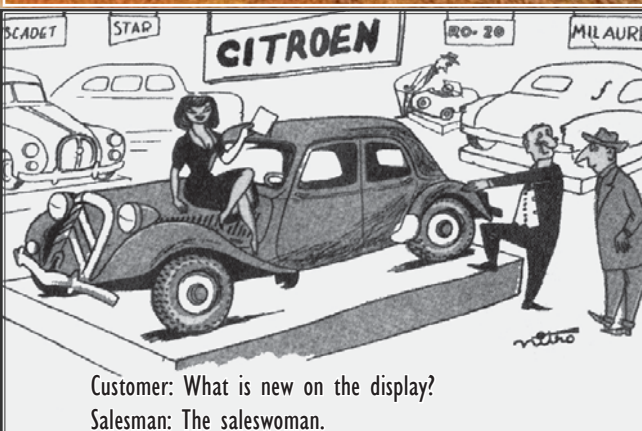
This article, by Richard Bodrias, originally appeared in 'Traction Avant' the magazine of



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30 Indiscreet Questions



Here is an extract from an article published in December 1954 in l'Automobile magazine, entitled 'Citroën Answers 30 Indiscreet Questions'. For the first time in 19 years in the press, it is an objective clarification of the 'House of Mystery' policy. There is no mention of the name of the person who answered except his or her function as spokesperson. Unfortunately, only the questions mainly related to the Traction have been kept.

Why haven't you replaced the 20-year-old IICV yet?

The reasons abound. First of all, if what is said everywhere is true, which we are sure it is: 'in 1934, the IICV was 20 years ahead', our opponents are obliged to admit that 20 years on they have not caught up! Of all these reasons, one is especially important to us: our production. In addition to the 321,029 9CV and IICV sold up to 1948, we produced 42,295 in 1949 and 63,692 in 1953. This growing production allows us to assume that this model is still popular with the public and still has a large number of fans.

Are you saying that the IICV has not been sold since the beginning of the year?

This is not true. There is no question of a lack of sales. To give just one example: let's mention the influx of orders in September '54, the month



Top: Return of the Commercial in 1953

Below: March 1954: the 15 Six Hydronumatic.

before the show. The '54 show was our best IICV sales show. The proof is in the delivery times: five and a half months in 1954 compared to three months last year.

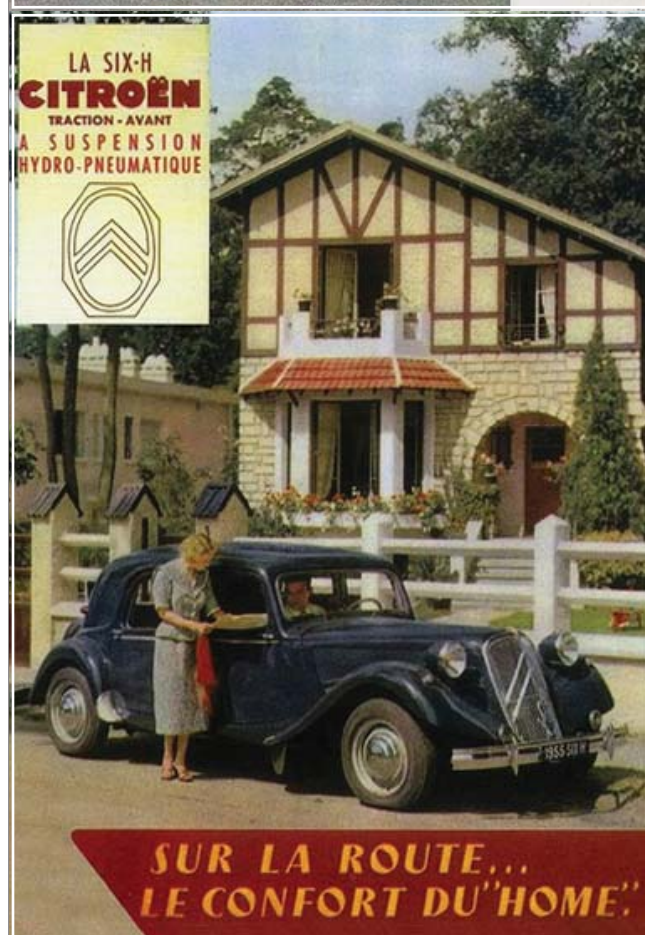
Do you not notice any signs of dissatisfaction among your customers?

Not at all! The size of our order book proves the contrary.

Editor's note: One fact is certain, in 1953 Citroën was still the second largest French manufacturer. It was beaten by Peugeot by 2,000 cars, but its production of IICV was 24,000 more than that of the Simca-Aronde and 39,000 more than that of the Frégate-Renault. Citroën was successful in exports, selling 13,815 IICVs outside France in 1953. Paradoxical as it may seem, the IICV is still going strong and we confess to being baffled by the growing demand for the IICV.

Don't you think that in 1954 this model is still outdated?

We don't think so. Outdated model, you say? Which other car, for the same price, can boast of going faster and safer than an IICV. It has been proven that this model regularly 'holds' good hourly averages. Especially in the corners, where some people often have to cautiously



30 Indiscreet Questions

LES FAMILIALES
8 PLACES

11 CV & 15 SIX
Traction Avant
CITROËN



take their foot off the gas, the IICV passes with ease.

Editor's note: 50,000km without a hitch is not unusual for an IICV. Moreover, in case of accidental breakdowns, the IICV benefits from a quick repair in the smallest village, thanks to the price and the abundance of spare parts. In the majority of cases, every Citroënist told us: 'I am not rich enough to buy another car than the II'.

Do you agree that the IICV has poor steering, poor suspension and high fuel consumption?

Left: Return of the Familiale in 1953, the first publicity for the 'big boot' vehicles.

Below: The vans: H [1,200kg] and HZ [850kg].

If such accusations were true, how could one explain the ever-growing infatuation of taxis with the IICV? It is undoubtedly because the IICV has certain qualities of longevity, comfort and economy. Its seats are real seats. As for its consumption, it does not exceed 9.5litres at an average of 70 and 10litres at an average of 80. Everything depends on the driver's driving style and the use he makes of the car.

At 100kph, doesn't the IICV consume 13 litres and over 14 litres at 110kph?

We do not agree with these figures. In any case, everything has to be paid for... especially speed, with us as with other vehicles.



What else was competing with the Traction at the time? Top to bottom: Peugeot's 203 [1948-'60] Renault's Frégate [1951-'60] Ford's Vedette [1948-'54], shown here as the premier 'Vendôme' model and finally, albeit perhaps in a more prestigious segment, Talbot Lago's Baby T15 [1951-'53].

Do you deny that you have depreciated your tools considerably over the last 20 years?

Those who happily bandy about such nonsense undoubtedly know nothing about the problems of modern industry. What was valid in 1934 is no longer valid. If the IICV seems to be the same as it was in 1934, it has undergone 10,073 successive modifications [steering, front axle, rockers, increase in power, decrease in consumption, etc...]. These modifications have necessarily led to new tools and new working methods. On the other hand, no one can deny the regular wear and tear of the equipment and the obligation to modernise.

Why do you refuse to allow the press to visit your factories, when André Citroën was the first to inaugurate this method of comparison by inviting even his No. 1 rival Louis Renault?

André Citroën was the first in many other areas. In particular, he was the first manufacturer in the world to deliver complete cars to customers and no long-

A TOUS USAGES

LES VÉHICULES DE LA SÉRIE H
ont été conçus et réalisés pour s'adapter aux utilisations les plus diverses. Ils sont :

Commodes : Une forme rationnelle et un grand volume utile (7 m³ 300 en plus de la cabine). Le plancher très bas (0 m 35 au dessus du sol en charge), la porte latérale coulissante, l'avant et les portières AR, les accroche-poulies facilitent les manœuvres. Le conducteur peut aisément passer de la cabine à l'intérieur du fourgon. Les véhicules H peuvent jouer le rôle de véritables magasins ambulants.

Rapides : Très maniables, ils tiennent aisément les moyennes commerciales de 60 à 65 km/h à pleine charge.

Économiques : Consommation en charge à 58.60 de moyenne : 14 à 15 litres aux 100 km avec la camionnette 850 kg 15 à 16 litres aux 100 km avec la camionnette 1,200 kg 13 litres à vide (sur les 2 modèles).

Confortables : Conducteur et livreur sont à l'aise dans la cabine avancée, ils ont une bonne visibilité. Ils disposent de sièges individuels, confortables et réglables, d'un chauffage et d'une aération réglables.

Sûrs : Les véhicules H bénéficient de tous les avantages techniques de sécurité et de tenue de route, qui sont le privilège exclusif des

CARACTÉRISTIQUES

Type H (1,200 kg) et HZ (850 kg)

LES CAMIONNETTES TYPE H ET HZ

Traction Avant

CITROËN

Automobiles CITROËN

Archives historiques

Principales caractéristiques :

Carrosserie : Conduite intérieure, cabine avancée "tout-acier".

Moteur : 4 cylindres 78x100. Cylindrée : 1,911 cm³. Puissances : fiscale 11 ch, effective 30 ch à 3,800 tours/minute. Soupapes en tête. Chemises amovibles.

Suspension : par barres de torsion.

Direction : indérigable à crémaillère.

Boîte de vitesses : 3 vitesses AV dont 2 synchronisées.

Freins : hydrauliques sur les 4 roues indépendantes.

Poids à vide : 1,300 kg.

Vitesses maxima : 78 km/h sur H 88 km/h sur HZ.

Pneumatiques : 5 pneus "Pilot". 19x400 sur H 17x400 sur HZ.

Principales cotes :

Société Anonyme André Citroën
117 à 147, quai de Javel - PARIS (XV)

30 Indiscreet Questions

The price list dated 10 March, 1954 [No 83].

er in [almost] separate parts. Mr André Citroën has achieved great things. But it was a whole era that is now over and done with.

The workers on the Quai de Javel were already complaining about these visits which disturbed them in their work. Even today our workers and technicians are hostile to all factory visits, not wanting to run the risk of under-production by being distracted from their work. Who could blame them, they are paid according to their production... A minute's inattention can be very costly to them and can also damage the entire safety system. These reasons are important enough to refuse any factory visit.

What is your daily production?

At the moment it is 689 vehicles a day, broken down as follows: 305 2CV saloons, 75 2CV vans, 179 IICV, 14 15CV Sixes, 66 1200 and 850kg vans, 28 23-2 ton types, 23 55-5 ton type trucks.

When will you bring out your next model?

When we deem it necessary. At least this is our official answer, which we sent to each of our dealers on 22 October 1954.

Will the next model be made of plastic?

Certainly not! The cost price of these materials is still far too

VOITURES PARTICULIÈRES

	Prix (francs)
2 CV	
Berline (5 pneus 125×400).....	341.870
11 CV (3 couleurs : noir, gris perle, bleu)	
Berline Légère (5 pneus 165×400).....	629.230
Berline Normale (5 pneus 165×400).....	664.330
Familiale (5 pneus 185×400).....	729.330
Commerciale 500 kg (5 pneus 185×400).....	765.330
15-SIX (4 couleurs : noir, gris perle, gris fumée, bleu)	
Berline (5 pneus 185×400).....	869.920
Familiale (5 pneus 185×400).....	934.920

CAMIONNETTES

250 kg - TYPE AU - 2 CV	
Fourgonnette (5 pneus 135×400).....	346.950
Supplément pour un 2 ^e siège...5.500 fr	
850 kg - TYPE HZ	
Plateau (cabine ouverte) 5 pneus 17×400.....	714.000
Plateau (» fermée) » » ».....	720.000
Fourgon.....	745.700
1.200 kg - TYPE H	
Plateau (cabine ouverte) (5 pneus 19×400).....	735.000
Plateau (» fermée) » » ».....	741.000
Fourgon.....	766.900

high for mass production.

Would the introduction of a new model lead to the abolition of the IICV?

Certainly not!

What will be the situation of the customer who ordered an IICV a few months ago?

They will have to specify whether they want to buy the new model!

This article, in this form, first appeared in 'Traction Avant', the magazine of 'La Traction Universelle' club of France. It was published in issue No 121 of July 2019.

A Day with Edna May the GSA

Two Meetings in Mouchamps

PART 3: PHILLIPE

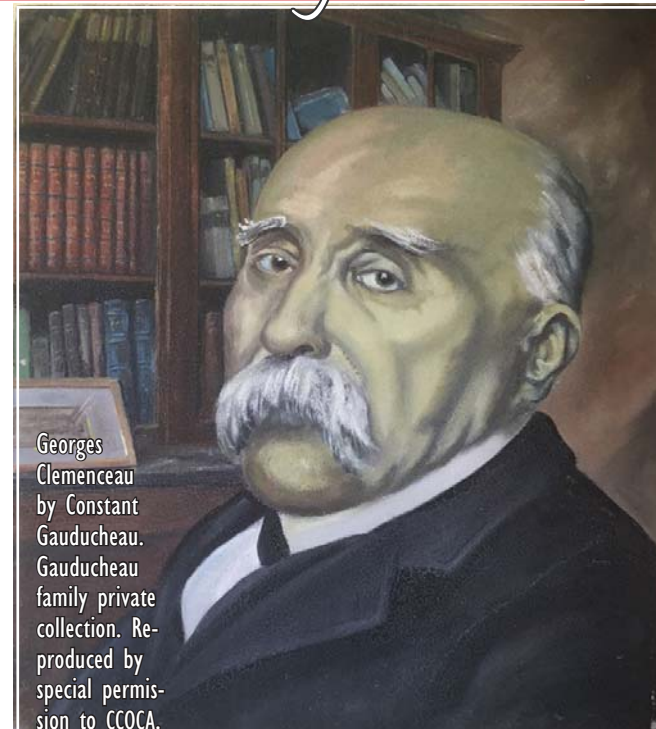
Chers amis Citroënnistes antipodéens, this is the third and final instalment of the Mouchamps meetings. It is not, however, the last story we will share about every day life in Mouchamps, or the last one to contain references to La Traction or to Georges Clemenceau. Many thanks to CCOCA members who have provided valuable technical information which has been used in these articles.

Winter

Here in Western France, it is a few days before Christmas: the shortest day of the year.

Our neighbours at the water-mill are having their house painted. I have just braved the chilly air to take a photo of the tradesman's vehicle. The painter comes outside for his casse-croûte. We chat amiably, and I ask if he minds if I photograph his van...

Edna May, the GSA, is parked outside my office under the leafless ash tree. 9:05am. The sun has yet to rise behind our neighbour Albert's Christmas tree plantation; the beep-beep of a reversing fork-lift echoes across Le Ruisseau du Parc. Albert is the biggest producer of organic « sapins de Noël bio » in Vendée and this is, naturelle-



Georges Clemenceau by Constant Gauducheau. Gauducheau family private collection. Reproduced by special permission to CCOCA.



A Day with Edna May the GSA

ment, his busiest month.

Regular readers will know that Albert's father, Edmond, born a hundred years ago this year, was custodian of my DS-pécial « Madeleine » until 1989. He had built up the farm during « Les Trente Glorieuses »; those years from the Fifties to the Seventies when farming in France underwent something of a revolution.

When Albert took over the farm, shortly before we arrived here from Western Australia in the mid-Eighties, he set about transformation from a traditional beef and poultry enterprise into something more environmentally-focused and more adapted to its 55hectares. With a stroke of genius, followed by much devotion and hard work, « La Sapinière » developed into the thriving business it is today.

Back in 1993, I wrote a story about Edmond : « De La Traction à La Xantia » ['démarreur', Volume I, No 3]

Today's tale will end with a variation on the Traction theme, and it begins not three days before the shortest day of 2021, but three days before the longest. And it begins 4kilometres upstream, following Le Ruisseau du Parc towards its source.

There are a number of ways to reach the village centre of Mouchamps from our house. The quickest is via the Sainte-Cécile to Mouchamps « Départementale D48 », which traverses the former Nationale 137 at the notorious crossroads at La Ferrandière... Most times, however, GSA Edna May takes me via the discreet « chemin de remembrement » which takes five minutes longer, roughly following Le Ruisseau. This morning, Edna and I went between bare fields to buy winter croisants. A hen harrier was hunting near to Le Château de la Bobinière, and a kestrel hovered above the hamlet of Vaisne, where the Vendée Chemin de Compostelle passes.



Summer

Exactly six months ago, I took the same back-road through sunflowers, the stems of which were the same colour as the GSA's paintwork. I paused to appreciate the calm and the beauty of the morning and to take a couple of photos of grazing Charolais and colour-coded white cattle-egrets.

It was the 18th of June, and I had been invited by Philippe Gauduchau, a spritely 86 year-old, to look at some of his father Constant's collection of artwork, photography and writings. As the GSA gurgled past Garage Villeneuve, Mouchamp's Citroën dealership, and in front of the sunlit façade of Le Petit Château des Cèdres, a guest-house of some renown where owners Frédéric and Agnès would be clearing away gourmet break-

fasts, I could not have imagined the treasure trove awaiting « chez Philippe et Françoise ».

The church clock chimed 10am as I parked behind La Mairie. Place des Senteurs. The town council had recently refurbished the square, and in between the paved parking spaces had been planted aromatic thyme, lavender and rosemary. The GSA's door brushed against the plants when I opened it, filling the car with the scent of the Mediterranean and of early summer.

Philippe was waiting at his front door.

« Ah, bonjour Alan. Vous arrivez à l'heure!

« Bien entendu, Philippe ; c'est une habitude anglo-saxonne! »

He laughs, and apologises that Françoise, his wife, will have to leave us at 10:30.



A Day with Edna May the GSA

« Elle chante en chorale devant le Monument aux Morts; c'est la commémoration du discours du Général de Gaulle à la BBC, le 18 juin 1940. Il y a 81 ans. »

Françoise greets me with a smile. She has prepared coffee for us, in the kitchen.

Philippe suggests we move into the living-room.

« Nous y serons plus à l'aise, et il y a des tableaux de Papa »

The sun streams in from the south-facing courtyard; we are surrounded by paintings, lit by the filtered sunshine. There is a glistening glass cabinet which contains a variety of cameras, some of which are clearly more than a century old.

« Alan, if you have no objection, perhaps I can show you today some of the items from my father's collection which we do

not usually display. I think they may be of interest to your Citroën friends of...Les Antipodes. »

Histoires de Famille

Philippe goes back along the short corridor which separates « le salon » from « la cuisine ». Half way along, I see him open an oak-panelled door which must lead into a store-room.

I am alone in the living-room. The house is quiet but for a ticking of La Comptoise. The not-quite in-tune sound of a practising Fanfare drifts across from the war memorial on the other side of La Mairie. I know that the flowerbed next to the memorial is planted with Australian bottlebrush shrubs; a nod to ANZAC allies; I picture the band setting up among them.

Philippe returns with three photo albums. Blue, green and

amber. He sets them on the dining table.

« My father made an album for each of us, his three children. Each year, he would choose his

favourite photographs of us, and write captions. He was also a calligrapher, you see. We rarely show these to anyone »

Philippe invites me to look at each lovingly-preserved album. The contents are remarkable.

The photos are much more than a collection of family snaps.

Each photo is a line of visual poetry. The pages are set out in such a way that the reader feels invited to share an intimate story; one of the love of a father, individually and collectively, for his children.



Petit Château des Cèdres, summer 2021. Author's DS driven by 'Châtelaine/Hôtesse extra-ordinaire' Agnès Auclair Facing page: Philippe Gauducheau and his sister Chantal, Place des Senteurs, summer 2021.



Françoise comes in from the kitchen, and says that she is on her way to take up her place in the choir. I realise it must be nearly 10:30; I had not noticed the passage of time. Philippe had been watching me, quietly commenting on this picture or that, adding details and memories.

As Françoise closes the door which leads to the courtyard, I say to my host that I think that I have guessed why he has chosen, from all of the hundreds of his father's works, these three particular items.

A Day with Edna May the GSA

« C'est pour la voiture, Philippe, non? »

La Licorne

He beams again.

« Yes, of course Alan. Do you recognise my father's car? It is

Frontispiece to Philippe's childhood album. Calligraphy and illuminations by his father.

From the album of Yves Gauducheau, make and model of car unrecorded... although your Editor surmises it is a Renault Celtaquatre. Clearly not a Nervestella or Primastella despite the 'Stella' reference in the note.

Facing page: La Licorne! Back to boarding school for Chantal, La Roche sur Yon, circa 1950

not a Citroën, but my father always told me when I was just 10 or 11 years old, so just after the war, that there was a Citroën link, with La Traction... »

« Oui, Philippe, mes collègues australiens connaissent bien la Traction Avant! »

« En effet Alan. You know my father, who was always careful to be accurate in his reporting, always referred to the Citroën mythique as simply La Traction. He explained to me once that the term Traction Avant was a... tautologie! Because Traction and Propulsion in French are sufficient to describe front

and rear-wheel drive! »

I smile and look back through the albums which are dedicated in an elegant hand to Chantal, Constant's daughter, and to Yves, his elder son. And to Philippe of course. In many of the photos, there is the car. Sometimes in the background, at other times with a member

of the family posing with the vehicle. It is not of a type with which I am familiar.

« Is it a Delage, Philippe? Or perhaps a Grégoire? Or Hodg-kiss? » I enquire, demonstrating my ignorance.

« Nothing so grand, Alan. It is a Corre-Licorne. A 1930s model. I think my father bought



Oui, cette "Stella" me plaît.



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it just after I was born, in 1935. He kept it for many, many years. When he travelled around Vendée, to make his sketches of the département's architectural heritage, it was in La Licorne. When he drove us to our uncle's house on the island of Noirmoutier during the summer holidays, also. And when my sister Chantal went to boarding school in La Roche sur Yon, it was also in that car... which by then was getting very old-fashioned compared with the cars owned by the city-folk! Tractions and Renault Frégates and such! »

Philippe asks if I would like another coffee, then returns to the kitchen and comes back with a pyrex coffee pot and the sugar-bowl.

I ask if I may make copies of

some of the photos, saying that I appreciate that these are precious family memories.

« Alan, if they are to be used in a story for the Australian readers, I am sure that my father would have been overjoyed to think that his works, so anchored in La Vendée which he loved so much, could serve as something to promote intercultural exchange »

And so, as the muted sounds of the choir and the military band resonate in the courtyard, Philippe holds flat the pages as I take pictures of Constant's... pictures.

As we carefully close the albums, I say:

« Yes, I think you are right, Philippe. I seem to recall that Licorne was in some way connected to Citroën for a while.

I cannot recall how, but I think that I know someone who will...

« You must visit again, Alan. I am sure we will have much more to talk about. But for now, I have one more picture to

show you which you might want to use in your article. »

He goes back into the kitchen, returning with a leather-bound album, approximately A4 size, and more than 2 inches thick.

Le Dernier Album

« My father made the cover, and etched the motif into the leather »

The word « Mouchamps » declares proudly the album's theme.

He opens it.

There, between the leather covers, is a moment in time, captured by Constant Gauducheau.

It is Rue Clemenceau...

« I think 1955, Alan. The

The final album with its hand-tooled cover and [below] Rue Clemenceau, Reproduced by special permission. From the Gauducheau family to CCOCA.



La Licorne de Constant, Île de Noirmoutier, Vendée circa 1948.



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butcher used to do his rounds in the split-windscreen Citroën H. Many Mouchampais from my generation remember it vividly. Almost all of the local « bouchers » and « charcutiers » had the same vans, you know; pure genius... because of the low floor they could stand up to serve! And speed or a fourth gear were not so important around the Vendée lanes! Their road-holding in muddy winter conditions was... légendaire, even when their Michelins were quite... beyond their youth! I think the H-Van used many components from La Traction, too...

« Yes, Philippe, of that I am sure. The engine was made to rotate in the opposite direction of course. I think the brakes and wheelhubs were a straight swap. But La Licorne? I'll go home and find out. »

« One last thing, Alan. I have an article written by my father not long before he died. He recalled being a young journalist at the Clemenceau burial in 1929. I think your Australian friends would like to read it if you translated it, perhaps. There is also a curious automobilian référence! I will prepare a copy for the next time we meet; shall we say 14th of July? »

« Of course Philippe, it will be my pleasure. I have an idea about your father's 1929 story, so give me a chance to think it through. And 14th of July sounds fine; perhaps we will even be invited to La Mairie! »

Philippe bids me farewell, for now, in the bright June sunshine of his courtyard. The almost-fledged house martin chicks hungrily crowd the openings of their nests. The band has gone silent; they will be making their



At the 2013 French Licorne event there were two 316 Rivioli models, just 50 chassis numbers apart and both in the same colour. A very rare occurrence. [<https://forum-auto.caradisiac.com/>]

way to the « vin d'honneur » in La Mairie. We promise to meet again soon.

As I drive past the Monument aux Morts, the church clock strikes twelve and three uniformed musicians of La Fanfare emerge, unsteadily from La Mairie and into the dazzling light. They salute the GSA and I wave back to them as they trip across La Rue Clemenceau.

Edna May takes me from lavender, via sunflowers, then to the shade of the ash tree in the driveway opposite my office.

Before lunch, I send an email to Leigh in Melbourne, where I know it will be late in the evening lockdown. [I think you were in lockdown Leigh, can you fact-check? Yes, Alan; either still or again the difference is purely pedantry.] It asks the recipient whether he has any knowledge

of La Licorne.

Characteristically, and despite the late antipodean hour, the reply is not long in arriving; it turns out that Traction bodysells were supplied to Corre-Licorne by Citroën in the late 1930s. The Corre factory mounted the monocoque shells onto their own chassis and [RHD!] running gear, making a Traction into a... Propulsion!

A photo arrives from Your Editor a few days later. It is one of La Dernière Licorne, a Rivioli, which the company reprised, albeit briefly, after the war, on the cusp of... Les Trente Glorieuses.

Alan Brown

December 2021

Automobilian Nomenclature
Footnote

Citroën revived the Rivioli name recently, chers amis Cit-



A Day with Edna May the GSA

roënnistes antipodéens.

And here is one of those stranger-than-fiction coincidences...

The photo on the previous page was taken by Constant Gauduchau, circa 1948, at the



La Roche sur Yon aerodrome.

According to Philippe and Chantal, it shows their brother Yves, nervously clutching the prop of their uncle's biplane. [We can imagine photographer Constant setting up the pose...]

Make and model of the car in the background unknown.

Now, note at the onlookers behind the perimeter fence...

Here is the same fence in November 2021... I went there plane-spotting with my grandson Victor, who is about the same age as Yves appears to be in the biplane photo...

Victor pointed out the new Citroën parked next to our trusty C8 Papybus... then the design detail which brought our story full circle...

Then he took this photo just for you...



For Sale

1964 DS19 BVH Motor and Gearbox

Rare as Rocking Horse poo!! Well almost!! 1964 DS19 BVH. A completely restored rolling chassis which has been stripped back to bare metal, primed, undercoated and finished in 75% 2 pack black. Must be seen to be believed. It comes with the following... Motor and gearbox still mounted in a rolling front section of the original car that was wrecked many years ago because of rust. All hydraulic components, gear change, pump, brain, drive shafts, wheels, radiator etc. still in position. The front was cut at the A pillar and includes the fire wall forward and has been stored in a dry shed. A full set of body panels for restoration, all glass, front and rear bumpers and a set of seats and door cards from the original DS19. This is a restoration that was started here in Gayndah but time has beaten us. We hope that someone will take this amazing project on and finish what must be one of the rarest DS19s in this country. Also included are some new parts and very special pieces specific to the early DS. Can easily be loaded for transport as it is a rolling unit.

This is a rare opportunity to purchase an extremely desirable DS19. Price \$17,500. For more details please contact Peter Huth anytime on Mob. 0419 649 499 or Email lamaisondecitroen@bigpond.com [D02/04]



1924 Citroën 5CV

I purchased the car in 1970 when it was living in a deserted fowl shed. The owner had been given the car by his spinster aunties who had owned it from new. The car was was totally complete ~ nothing missing. I took the car home, changed the plugs, changed the oil and filled the tank with fuel. Two or three turns on the crank handle and it fired into life. The question was should I restore the car or leave it in its basically good original state [there was some surface rust]. It has undergone a total rebuild including paint, new hood, new steering wheel and radiator badge, new leather upholstery with the original door pockets with the embossed leather Citroën logo and new beaded edge tyres. I have a lot of books on early Citroëns and some 5CV parts which I am happy to sell with the car. I am asking \$25,000 or near offer. By arrangement I could deliver the car. Registration is 49146 [SA registered]. Contact Richard Fewster, Richard.fewster@arran.com.au or 0418 820 209 [D02/01]





CITROËN CLASSIC OWNERS' CLUB OF AUSTRALIA

Australia's National Citroën Car Club

