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## LE FERMIER




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August/Septembep 2023 Vol 47 No 2 H Van: Palladinmoubilee


2 demi-muids ou 5 pièces de 228 litres. RAP IDE

## Postal Address

CITROËN CLASSIC OWNERS' CLUB of AUSTRALIA Inc.
The address of the Club and this magazine is:
PO Box 52, Balwyn, Victoria, 3 I 03.
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.

## 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.

## committee

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## Cover Image

The cover image was downloaded from www.carthrottle.com. It was posted by Samuel Pincin.

## Deadlline

The deadline for the next edition of 'Front Drive' is Sunday, 17 September and for 'démarreur' it is Sunday, 22 October.

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## 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:
Arthur and Nance Clarke
ack Weaver
Peter Boyle 2003

Ted Cross 2012
Rob Litte - 2012
Sue Bryant 2017
Brian Wade 2017
Leigh Miles 2022
Lance Wearne 2023

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ontributors
Contributors to this edition of 'Front Drive' include Chris Bailey Dominique Bellière, Bibi, Alan Brown, Andrew Cox, Serge Doumergue, Garth Foxwell and Fabien Sabatès.

## ctiroêning

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 be 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 yourVicRoads on-line account

SPARE PARTS \& TOOLS
Contact Max Lewis. Phone: 0458993 771 [if you do phone, please do so at a reasonable hour] or spareparts@citroenclassic.org. au

OTHER CLUBS
Vic www.citcarclubvic.org.au NSWwww.citroencarclub.org.au QLD www.citroenclubqld.org SA www.clubcitroensa.com WA www.citroenwa.org.au Tas www.citroentas.org

## Ed sed

I/V hilhile this edition of our magazine celebrates the 75th Anniversary of the launch of the H van which went on sale in 1948, it could be argued that its 'launch' was actually the prior year.
So, according to some the 75th Anniversary was last year I will not get into an argument over it. The important point is that with the H van Citroën created a whole new type of vehicle. Except the Double Chevrons did not. Well, actually it did... but it did it almost a decade earlier: back in May 1939 when it launched the TUB.
The TUB was officially accepted by the French Service des Mines on 12 May 1939 and in this edition the UK Citroën Club's commercial vehicle ex pert, Andrew Cox, tells the story behind [well behind] the H van.
How different was the TUB from the modern forward con-

trol van? How far have we really come? Dominique Belliere from the French Traction Club [Traction Universalle] has the answers in his comparison between the TUB and the 1994 Jumper vans. The similarities are closer than you might expect.
Our Queensland friend, Serge Doumergue, is back to with us again this month to tell us about his H van. While his van currently has the appearance of a Michelin delivery/service van it will soon be joining the Sapeurs et Pompiers in brand new bright red livery.
Some of you may remember my investigation into the history of Dave Rogers' early GSA and our discovery that it is the oldest road-going right hand drive GSA in the world. Well with no digging on my part we are able to bring the story of the oldest $H Z$ van, which at the time the article was written was still in the hands of its original owner The digging was undertaken by the late Fabien Sabatès.

I have always ascribed to the view that every Citroën, no matter how new it is, is a Classic. Maybe my appeal has not been falling on deaf ears as Club member Garth Foxwell has just bought a new car which in his own words is a 'Classic'. A new C5 $\times$
This model, and its develop-
Continued on page 6

$\sqrt{5}$he good news for this edition is that our social activities are ramping up for the rest of the year. Please check the magazine and the website for what is available for you to support. In October we have the French Car Festival which is being jointly run by CCOCA/CCCV so it is bound to be worthwhile attending. It is being held in Hawthorn at the Patterson Reserve [Hawthorn Farm er's Market site] on Sunday, 22 October. So please keep this date free ~ we want as many Citroëns as possible to attend, given we are the host clubs. More information coming very soon.
The new C5 $\times$ Citroën is being widely accepted locally, and some of our members have purchased them. For a modern Citroën to revert to its old roots and be recognized as having a superior ride quality is encouraging. Small engines rule at the moment the similar Peugeot 3008 is I.2-litre turbo locally] but these engines produce plenty of power, so think we just need to accept the new reality. Rita, our Facebook guru has one $\sim$ so they must be good.
Eric Bishop is busy improving his Traction drive shaft problem with new technology, and new member Dennis O'Keefe is planning to fit a power steer-
ing kit to his new arrival. Con gratulations to these two members for keeping one of the main purposes of CCOCA relevant. Eric's report can be found on our Facebook page, and will appear in the magazine at some stage soon I suspect.

We have another lovely IDI9 join our club plates scheme. Also, Jamie and Janelle Bryce have a well-known IDI9 in their garage ~ with a future Raid 2CV beckoning. Raymond and Lorraine Squire in Queensland now have a very un-molested and original Big 15 Traction [ex-Victoria] and have joined us. This car needed plenty of re-commissioning and Ray has been busy on his new treasure. CCOCA Spare Parts will be busy in coming months.
Lee Dennes is recovering from her accident and will keep you informed of future activities by email. We all welcome Lee back to keep us busy.
Ted Cross ~ President


## Ed sed

## Continued from page 4

ment, was covered in a recent edition and more recently Philip and I have taken one out for a test drive over here in the UK Unfortunately, the only pure petrol version of the car now sold here is fitted with the 1.2-litre motor. While we were very impressed, as was Garth, with the comfort level, we decided that with four-up for touring, with luggage, the small engine would rather struggle. Garth, like others in Australia, has the option of the 1.6 -litre engine If you are giving consideration
to a new car both Garth and would have to point you in the direction of the C5 X. Read his test drive in this edition.
Alan Brown is back with us after a few months under the pump of work. He completes his story of the reluctant Ven-déo-Australian nineteenthcentury castaway, although he clearly has left the door open for more stories from his part of France in future editions.
Something for everyone? I hope so!
Enjoy,
Leigh F Miles ~ Editor

## A-Tractions

Please note: To book or RSVP for a CCOCA organised event you must register on line at the club's website. Do not contact the organiser to register your attendance.
In line with Government guidelines CCOCA no longer requires proof of vaccination if you attend events arranged by CCOCA. The requirements of other organizations is not impacted by this decision.
The Club strongly recommends wearing a mask in areas where you cannot maintain social distancing.

## - August

## August Monthly

Meeting: Pub Meal
WHEN: Wednesday, 23 August
TIME: 19:30
WHERE: The Tower Hotel, 686
Burwood Rd. Hawthorn East

COST:Dinner and refreshments
to your account BOOKINGS: Essential by Monday, 21 August BRING: Your smiling face MORE INFO: Helen \& Ted Cross,
crossfam@ozemail.com.au


DO NOT CALL HELEN TO REGISTER! You must register/ book via the CCOCA website https://citroenclassic.org.au AUGUST BOOKING
The hotel has two parking areas with free parking after 18:00 Both are just off Burwood Rd. opposite the hotel entrance and adjacent to the entrance.
You may choose from either a 'Meal Deal' [the choice of several main meals, plus a pot of beer, soft drink or a glass of wine $\$ 25 \mathrm{pp}$ ] or order from the regular menu and pay the regular price. Dietary requirements catered for.
Please wear you name tag!

## - September

Pork Dumpling Cooking
Class
$\begin{array}{lr}\text { WHEN: } & \text { Saturday, } 16 \\ \text { September } \\ \text { TIME: } & 13: 00\end{array}$
WHERE: Southern Church
of Christ, 2 Chesterville Rd.
Cheltenham

COST:
\$15pp
BOOKINGS: Essential by
Wednesday, I3 September BRING: An apron and an appetite
MORE INFO: Rita Richardson, facebook@citroenclassic.org.au DO NOT CONTACT RITA TO REGISTER! You must register/ book via the CCOCA website https://citroenclassic.org.au SEPTEMBER BOOKING
Club member, and our Facebook Moderator Rita Robinson, assisted by her husband Mark, has offered the Club's chefs and budding chefs the opportunity to learn the art of making authentic North Chinese style pork dumplings. Numbers are limited to just 16 participants, so if you want to learn from an expert register soon! Your \$15 covers all costs, including ingredients.
September Monthly Meeting: Bingo Evening WHEN: Wednesday, 27 September

## A-Tractions

TIME:
WHERE: Frog Hollow Reserve Rooms, Fordham Ave. Camberwell

## COST

 FreeBOOKINGS: Essential for catering by Monday, 25 September

MORE INFO: Lee Dennes,
I.dennes@bigpond.net.au DO NOT CALL LEE TO REGISTER! You must register/book via the CCOCA website https:// citroenclassic.org.au
SEPTEMBER BOOKING
More details soon!

## - October

## Alistralian Nationa



08: 3 to 15:30
WHERE:
Seven Creeks Park
Euroa
COST: Show cars $\$ 10$, inc driver, general public \$5pp, under 16 free
BOOKINGS: On line booking essential
MORE INFO: www.australiannationalshowandshine.com.au EUROA SHOW WEBSITE
Euroa Show and Shine president, Ian Langlands said, 'With a renewed committee and new members it looks like the 2023 Show will be better than ever this year we will be screening the film 'Wide Open Road' The story of cars in Australia, this will be screened on Sunday


CCOCA members John and Jenny Grieve attended the 2015 National Show \& Shine at Euroa.

Ist at the Euroa Community Cinema, entry will be gold coin donation.
Major attractions will again include some of the most popular from last year, with the Euroa SES display to be re-located to a more visible location.
Negotiations are progressing well with the enormously popular Australian Defence Forces display which included the Hawkei and Bushmaster Armoured Protected Vehicles together with a group of ADF personnel to answer questions and explain the vehicles.
Car clubs will once again be back in force with Central Victorian Corvettes who were 2022's Best Club Display winners, this year facing a serious challenge from the Mercedes Benz Club of Victoria.
Commitments from many regular clubs and individual owners are starting to pile in, especially in the 1960s category: that dec-
ade being this year's featured era
Cost of living out of control? Not so with the Euroa Show and Shine, with the ridiculously affordable entry fees which have remained unchanged since 2016!
Tickets available on line www. ticketebo.com.auleuroa_anss


ALL FRENCH BOOKING
More details to follow once they have been finalised.

## - November

## 11th Gateway to <br> Gippsland Rally

WHEN: Friday, 3 to Monday 6,
November
TIME:
From 16:00
WHERE: Warragul and district COST: $\quad \$ 80$ per vehicle, plus $\$ 142$ per person [under 12 \$69.50, excl Dinner Dance] BOOKINGS:

Essential
MORE INFO:
Eric Bishop, 0409452170
events@wgvrcinc.com.au

All French Car Day
WHEN: Sunday, 22 October TIME: From 09:00 WHERE: Patterson Reserve, 484 Auburn Rd., Hawthorn COST

TBC
BRING: Everything for a day's picnic including table and chairs MORE INFO: Lee Dennes, I.dennes@bigpond.net.au DO NOT CALL LEE TO REGISTER! You must register/book via the CCOCA website https:// citroenclassic.org.au

 BOOKING
West Gippsland Vehicle Restorers Club Inc invites you to the 'Gateway to Gippsland Rally'. Melbourne Cup Weekend! Join us and enjoy the 2023 event in your Veteran, Vintage, Classic or Post-Classic Vehicle.

## A-riactions

- Friday, 3 November 16:00 to 19:00: Registration at Masonic Hall Korumburra Rd Warragul. Meet up with old friends and make new ones [tea/coffee/snack food]
- Saturday, 4 November 08:30: Completion of Registration at the Masonic Hall. Morning tea provided. 09:30: Official opening of the Rally and flag off before we take a scenic drive to Noojee Lunch at the Noojee Pub. The evening will be free for participants to do as they wish.

- Sunday, 5 November 09:00: Morning tea/coffee at the Masonic Hall.
10:00: A briefing will be given prior to the commencement of the Show and Shine event at the Masonic Hall.
12:30: Commencement of a short run to visit and have lunch at the Holden Museum in Trafalgar. Those not keen to visit the museum can take themselves to Old Gippstown at Moe or Yarragon to seek out something of interest to themselves.
18:30 for 19:00: Pizza/Movie Night at the Masonic Hall.
- Monday, 6 November 09:30: Meet at the Masonic Hall for morning tea/coffee. 10:00: Briefing followed by a drive to the Bryant Park Hill Climb venue in the Yallourn Haunted Hills area, this being described as the best Hill Climb track in Australia! Participants will be able to drive around the track for a bit of fun, but there will be NO RACING! Tea coffee and lunch will be available at their clubhouse. We will return to Warragul in the region of 15:00, and you can make your own way back having a look around the area possibly including a stop off in Yarragon. 19:00: Dinner Dance at the Drouin Golf Club [Cash bar available]. Tea/coffee provided. Dress Code: Appropri-
ate garment/s which would suitably compliment the make and year of your vehicle! ie 'Dress for the era'. There will also be an Auction of Motoring Memorabilia. A bus will be provided to pick up and drop off participants for this event from specified points in Warragul and Drouin ~ please advise, on your entry form, as to whether you wish to take up this offer. Exact time and location will be confirmed at the time of registration.
- Tuesday, 7 November 08:00 to 09:30: BIG BREKKY ~ Say farewell to all your mates.


## Yea Open Garden

Weekend
WHEN: Friday, 10 to Sunday, 12


MORE INFO: Marg Towt, marg.towt@bigpond.net.au DO NOT CALL MARG TO REGISTER! You must register/ book via the CCOCA website https://citroenclassic.org.au YEA WEEKEND BOOKING
The Yea Rotary Open Gardens is an annual event, which has been happening for the past II years. It showcases both town and country gardens found in


## A-rractions

the Yea and surrounding areas. Eight gardens are available to visit. Visitors to any garden will have the opportunity to speak to the garden owners, experience a wide range of individual and inspiring garden designs and enjoy the environs of Yea and its surrounds. Rotary volunteers man each of the gardens providing assistance and local information to visitors. In addition, the local Yea Garden Club holds its annual plant sale which has gained the reputation of providing many varied and unusual plants at very reasonable prices.

- Accommodation [2night stay] Alexandra Motel \& Motor Inn, 76 Downey Street Alexandra 3714.

Friday 10 \& Saturday 11 November. [03] 57722077 Bade or Cassie. Telephone book only. DO NOT book on line! This Motel will be held exclusively for our Citroën group until 10 October 2023. There are limited rooms, so book early! It is a 20 minute drive from Yea, and has local pubs and shops within a five minute walk.

## Looking Ahead <br> - March 2024

Pre Cit-In \& Traction Avant 90th Birthday

## Run, Tasmania

WHEN: Thursday, 14 to Friday,


## A-Tractions

will be first in best dressed, so book ASAP.
So get together with your friends and share IF POSSIBLE as this will less expensive and will help with accommodation tightness.
Telephone or email the venues; if you look on their websites they may appear 'booked out' because space is being held for us.
You will need to Register with me to get updates [see later] Apologies if I mislead you re run detail when chatting before, but venue changes happened. So recheck please.
Book and pay yourselves for all accommodation.
ROUTE

- Day I: Thursday, I4 March Ulverstone [22kms from ferry] Meet at Ulverstone Big 4 Caravan Park
- Accommodation

Big 4 Caravan Park, 57 Water St., Ulverstone. Barbara or Katrina [03] 64252624 or Beachway Motel. Ken, [03] 6425 2342. [About 100metres from Caravan Park].

- Day 2 Friday, 15 March Ulverstoneto Strahan[205km]
- Accommodation [2night stay]
Big 4 Caravan Park, 10 Innes St., Strahan. Jill or Ginny [03] 6471 7442. [Situated left on the way into Town]

- Day 3 Saturday, 16 March At your leisure in Strahan NB: APT Train will depart from both Strahan and Queenstown and both go halfway turnabout and return. Plenty to do otherwise including Gordon River Cruise both day and twilight including meals
- Day 4 Sunday, I7 March Strahan to Bothwell [248km] Travel to Bothwell, population under 400!
- Accommodation [2night stay]
Ratho Farm, 2122 Highlands Lakes Rd, Bothwell. Jo or Michael [03] 6259 5553. [On the edge of town, Miena side.]
This is home to the Southern Hemisphere's first Golf Course and still going with I830s house and outbuildings now used as accommodation for Weddings; so used to house larger groups. Great rustic charm with many shared outbuildings recently renovated mostly each room with own en suite and central area for shared meals/drinks etc. They have seven overflow en suite rooms upstairs in town [maybe I-2kms away and local pub similar digs with some AirBnB shared cottages. Tents/Vans are OK at Ratho Farm.


## A-Tractions

- Day 5 Monday, 18 March At your leisure in Bothwell Hobart is about I hour away [76km] if you wish to do a day visit to Mona etc
- Day 6 Tuesday, 19 March Bothwell to St Helens [207km] - Accommodation [2night stay]
NRMA Caravan Park, 18 St Helens Point Rd., St Helens. Now trades under Tasman Holiday Parks. sthelens@tasmanholidayparks.com [03] 63762332. Good Cabins/Tents/Vans/ Restaurant
NB: Will only hold until end of July, so book early but there are plenty of alternatives.
- Day 7 Wednesday, 20 March At your leisure in St Helens
A local club member will lead a scenic drive
- Day 8 Thursday, 21 March

St Helens to Bridport[ 120 km ]

- Accommodation in smaller venues only. We will be at Platypus Park Retreat 20 Ada St., Bridport. Gina [03] 6356 1873. Smaller some shared ' 70 s style but pleasant.
or Bridport Bay Inn Motel 79 Main St., Bridport. [03] 6356 1238, leanne@bridportbayinn.com.au Basic accommodation, book early held few just a months or share at The Old Pier

Apartments $6 \times 2$ bedroom, good spot also has a 3 bedroom cottage 2 km away. Colleen 0400352369 holding for a few months. NB: Plenty of AirBnBs

- Day 8 Friday, 22 March Bridportto Devonport[139km] Arrive at Cit-In for registration!
REGISTRATION
Contact Anne and Grahame to Register for Pre Cit-In run. Email is the best contact method: Please use 'Pre Cit' as the Subject so I actually notice them. vaughan.grahame@gmail.com
If you are desperate the mobile numbers are:
Grahame 0412593075 and
Anne 0409980100
- I need you to please email me when you have booked with your email/mobile details immediately. Car and registration number when it is convenient so I have some idea who is coming to organise meals, routes etc.
Also, I will acknowledge your contact but note we are overseas for approximately three weeks from I8 June.
Looking forward to the Event and Cit-In 2024
POST CIT-IN NOTE
Launceston is about one hour away and Hobart around three hours from Devonport and I hope you read all this and I will quiz!




Learn about the traditional lifestyle of Tasmanian Aboriginal people at the Tiagarra Aboriginal Culture Centre and Museum, which displays petroglyphs and designs in rock. Along the waterfront you'll also find more galleries and craft shops. Devonport's Historic Tall Ship Julie Burgess is a working wooden boat. A ship of significance to Australia's Maritime Heritage. Enjoy a unique experience and embody the spirit of adventure on board the Julie Burgess as you sail out of the Mersey River and into the Bass Strait and get close to nature and admire the scenic beauty of the North West Coast.
Devonport is a great hub for exploring the North West Coast and there's plenty to discover in the city itself as well. Visitors can enjoy the beautifu views and take advantage of the
proximity of some of Tasmania's most popular destinations.
Once you visit, you'll understand why, we promise, you'll want to come back. Again. And again.
PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

- Friday, 22 March

Novotel Devonport
Registration: From 14:00 Cocktail Function: $16: 00$ to 18:00 NB: Evening dining is available at Mr Good Guy Asian Restaurant and Bar [on site] or visit the local township for alternate places to dine.

- Saturday, 23 March

Show and Shine by the Mersey River. Lunch provided. Free afternoon, to explore Buffet Dinner ~ Paranaple Centre.

- Sunday, 24 March

Choice of Wine and Food Trail Tours.

## A-Tractions

Observation Competition.
Formal Dinner and Presentations ~ Paranaple Centre.

- Monday, 25 March

Farewell breakfast.
REGISTRATION
Forthcoming on our website www.citroentas.org
Details of costs etc to be advised.
CANCELLATION POLICY
The committee will make every endeavour to refund monies to people who submit a request. Each case will be considered individually.
ACCOMMODATION
Novotel Devonport is Devonport's premium 4-star hotel boasting an unrivalled location in the heart of the city. With city, park and water views, it is perfectly positioned within easy reach of shops, restaurants and the Spirit of Tasmania terminal. Relaxed, family friendly and welcoming. Home to the Spirit of Tasmania and known for its reserves, cycling, walking tracks, recreational facilities, beaches and rivers Devonport makes a
great base for your holiday to Tasmania with ease of access to explore the North Coast and neighbouring towns.

- Novotel Devonport Contact details
2 Best St., corner of Rooke and Best Sts., Devonport, Tasmania, Australia 7310.
You can book your accommodation by going to $w w w$. idem.events/r/citroen-carclub or follow the link below: NOVOTEL BOOKING
* Securing accommodation is your responsibility
ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION
A selection of alternative accommodation options, including motels, B and Bs and caravan parks, will be publicised on our Website www.citroentas.org shortly.
REACH ONE'S DESTINATION.
Come on board.
Spirit of Tasmania
www.spiritoftasmania.com.au
* Securing travel is your responsibility, sailing bookings are limited so don't miss out on this great adventure. Book now !!!!!


Tasmania
Explore the possibilities
Tasmania



Chit Chat Tuesday

WHEN: | Ist Tuesday |  |
| ---: | ---: |
|  | 5 September |
|  | 3 October |
|  | 7 November | 10:00

WHERE: Laneway Espresso Café, Dromana Cheap Eats
COST:
BOOKING: $\quad$ Not required
CONTACT: Warwick Spinaze 0407016719.

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


## Totally Traction

f
//recently wrote about the early Traction Avants that had no opening boot lid but two filler caps. I made a stab at the reason for no boot lid but am at a loss about the filler caps $\sim$ there being only one tank.
Some research was needed. I still have not found any explanation for there being two filler caps. However, they say it's all about the journey rather than the destination. During my investigations, I have reread several things and learnt a bit more about these very early Tractions.
One of my sources was Jerome Collignon's blog ~ https://jeromecollignon.blog4ever. com. M Collignon tells of his purchase of a 1934 IIAL and his troubles getting it fixed
These early cars did not have the wonderful rack and pinion steering with which most of us are familiar. Instead, they were blessed with a worm and sector steering box. My '59 Chrysler

has a recirculating ball steering box which controls the steering in a very similar way. The steering column is connected to the steering box which is connected to one of the front wheels. A bar, which at least in American car language, is called a centre link connects this wheel to the other one. Another item called a Pitman arm mimics the action of the steering box at the other

end of the link and controls the nearside wheel. In Tractions the centre link crosses above the gearbox with apparently very little clearance.
M Collignon tells of one of the people to whom he entrusted the restoration of his car increasing the clearance by machining metal off this link. In the Citroën parts diagram, the centre link looks to be a hol-

## Who invented the Radial?



MICMELIN, of course.

low tube so removing material seems quite foolhardy. This is one of a sorry list of bodges that more than one restorer inflicted on his poor car which, despite such people, was eventually made to work as well as it did when new. This was of course not as well as the later cars, otherwise there would not have been so many changes made in the first couple of years
According to Wikipedia the basics of rack and pinion were invented by the Chinese in the 16th century so it beats me why any car manufacturer would ever have bothered with any thing else. But they did $\sim$ in fact the 1934 owner's manual for the Super Modern Twelve amusingly calls it 'globular worm and roller type'. The internet suggests that BMW were the first to put rack and pinion steering on a car, but I can't find anything to say which car that was and when. Certainly, the Traction Avant was one of the first car types to adopt it. Other car manufacturers were slower ~ even my 2000 Ford Crown Victoria doesn't have it
In 1934, Citroën, the great innovator, whose logo signifies an expertise in making gears, designing a monocoque front-wheel-drive car to save weight and improve driveability, for some reason initially shunned a gear-based innovation that

## Totally Traction


would reduce weight and improve driveability. That, to me is one of the great unsolved mysteries of the 20th century. Right up there with the whereabouts of Lord Lucan.
The big functional advantages of rack and pinion steering are the lack of slop around the straight-ahead position which is inherent in recirculating ball steering boxes and the alignment of one wheel to the other. I would think that driving a Traction so equipped would be quite different from the later cars ~ especially if the early car was shod with Superconfort cross-ply tyres and the later car with Michelin X radials.

The Superconfort was a low pressure' tyre introduced by Michelin in 1932. The Superconfort Stop S came along in 1935 with a tread pattern optimized for braking on wet roads The radial Michelin $X$ didn't come along until 1949. Michelin say the first car to be so fitted at the factory was the Lancia Aurelia although Wikipedia says of the Michelin $X$ 'It was de veloped with the front-wheeldrive Citroën Traction Avant and Citroën 2 CV in mind' ~ no mention of the Lancia
An article by James Kraus on Auto Universum states 'In


## Totally Traction

949, the revolutionary Michelin $X$ radial made its public debut and was offered as optional fitment on Peugeots, the Citroën 11 and Simca 8.
It was the Italians who led the charge to fully embrace the advantages of radial tyre construction. Lancia was the first, specifying the $X$ tyre as exclusive factory equipment on their new Aurelia.'
I have experience of driving both my Chrysler and my Spitfire on both radials and cross plies and know which I prefer. But I have only ever driven my Traction on Michelin Ztyres. The contemporary road tests that have read make little mention of tyres at all and I suspect all

This and previous page are Citroën publicity photos of a pre-production ' 7 ' from 1934. Pre-production cars had only one wiper and there were other subtle differences from the production cars.
were of cross-ply shod cars.
A road test by 'The Motor' in September 1948, with a header 'I949 cars' lists the Light Fifteen and Six-cylinder as being fitted with 165/400 and 185/400 'broadbase' tyres. The numerical description seems to be quite similar to the way radials are described $\sim$ but it seems too early and the text makes no mention of any improvements in handling or tyre technology compared with previous experience. I am therefore not sure what 'broadbase' means in this context. 'The Motor' uses the same
'broadbase' term in a 1951 road test but, again, makes no further reference to what it means.
I had assumed that, following the introduction of radial tyres to the market in 1949, Citroën had offered them as standard on Tractions. Now I'm not so sure and I think that, whilst Citroën introduced the DS and ID cars with the Michelin Z they kept the Traction on cross-plies as standard. Does anyone know better?
Longstone Tyres will sell you Superconfort S tyres and have a really nice video on their website in which Michelin dem-

## Mathematics:

This comes from two maths teachers with a combined total of 70 years' experience. It has an indisputable mathematical logic.
This is a strictly... a mathematical view-point... and it goes like this:
WHAT MAKES IOO\%?
What does it mean to give MORE than 100\%? Ever wonder about those people who say they are giving more than 100\%?
We have all been to those meetings where someone wants you to give over 100\%. How about achieving 103\%? What makes up I00\% in life?
Here's a little mathematical formula that might help you answer these questions:
onstrate what you can do with your RWD Citroën if it is so fitted. It's worth a look to see the U-turns and zigzags. It's worth a look if you have a few spare minutes.
I started writing this column to learn about the Traction Avant. I have been very happy with my progress so far but it seems I am starting to ask questions for which answers are more difficult to find. I may have to increase my game ~ or be satisfied with not knowing some things.
Chris Bailey
f: A B CDEFGHIJKLM NOPQRSTUVWXYZ is represented as: 12345678 91011121314 I 516 I7 I8 I9 20 212223242526.

Then: H-A-R-D-W-O-R-K is $8+1+18+4+23+15+18+1 \mid=98 \%$ And K-N-O-W-L-E-D-G-E is
 But A-T-T-I-T-U-D-E is
$1+20+20+9+20+21+4+5=100 \%$ And, $\mathrm{B}-\mathrm{U}-\mathrm{L}-\mathrm{L}-\mathrm{S}-\mathrm{H}-\mathrm{I}-\mathrm{T}$ is $2+2|+|2+| 2+19+8+9+20=103 \%$ And, look how far ass kissing will take you. A-S-S-K-I-S-S-I-N-G 1+|9+|9+|1+9+|9+|9+9+|4+7 = $118 \%$
So, one can conclude with mathematical certainty, that while Hard Work and Knowledge will get you close, and Attitude will get you there. It's the Bullshit and Ass Kissing that will put you over the top.

## Bought a Classic

fr//just bought a Citroën 'Classic'! Yep, I just purchased [well the business did], a Citroën C5 X! A 'classic'? some may ask. Sure ~ this is the first Citroën model that is Chinesebuilt to be sold in Australia ~ as best I can fathom, so surely that already justifies 'classic' status.
Now, my middle name [Cam eron] is no accident. Spending money is anathema to me, so at this dollar level, things are very carefully considered. I have reviewed an inordinate number of 'Reviews' from all around the globe.
An American based in China, plenty of Poms, some Irish, the odd Dutchy, Scandie and Deutscher. Oh, and of course, some Aussies. My goodness, don't they have a 'set' against the French, or Citroën specifically. [If I see or hear the word 'Quirky' one more time...] Because Citroën claim this 'SUV'

element in the vehicle's presentation and form, the locals can't see that classification with any immediacy, so it gets marked down! Citroën also claim an 'estate' element, so our lot are out to test this to the zenith and suggest the vehicle to be only so-so or okay on this measure.

While Citroën don't seem to clearly claim it, the locals have to try to compare it with the German stuff, particularly the references to 'performance'. [I just got pinged for 55 in a 50 zone, so stuff performance!].
To be fair, the locals are at one with all the rest on one thing. It is a very comfortable car to drive. Widely, there is broad agreement that there is a 'luxury' or quality feel and element to the vehicle. There were questions about fuel economy in some instances. There was at times a little uncertainty about '0-100' times, but most who tested this were, it seems for the most part, pleasantly surprised.
Some questioned rear headroom, but one of the Poms was 'six foot four' and filmed himself in the rear with the driver's seat set as he had driven it. Legroom was still good! Headroom? He said it was okay. An Irishman at 'six/two' seemed a better fit.
The key might be tests on this measure in an 'Australian-spec' vehicle, as we get the sunroof as standard. Not all test vehi-
cles seemed to be fitted with this. But 'comfort' was clearly an impressive feature. One of the Poms even suggests 'ride comfort' is akin to a Rolls Royce! Another reviewer mentioned 'S Class' and others referred to the combined luxury and comfort factors as the equal of many other much more expensive European cars.
In my case, I purchased through Trivett ~Melbourne City Citroën. Pleasingly, an unfussed experience but particularly so when I said I wanted an 'extended' Test Drive. No problem, a date set, a few explanations about various features [personally, I think a 'screen' is best placed in the living room or on the office desk-top!] and off

I went.
I had the trip meter set to zero. Now, I contend I live on collectively, the '5hitiest' roads in greater Melbourne. This was my test drive route. Victoria Street to Smith Street Fitzl Collywobbles [fingers-crossed]. Here I thought I might present some modern luxe 'bohemian' style amongst such folk. Yep ~ turned a few hipster heads.
Next the Eastern Freeway to Burke/Heidelberg/Rosanna and Greensborough Roads. Then it was onto that pile of bituminous crap ~ Yan Yean Road, Arthurs Creek [not so bad], Cottles Bridge, Heidelberg-Kinglake to St Andrews, then progressively back through Kangaroo Ground, Eltham, Templestowe


## Bought a Classic

and onto the Eastern Freeway, eventually to North Melbourne.
First things first. $5.8 \mathrm{~L} / 100 \mathrm{~km}$ over that mix of driving! Not bad! I have already bettered that on my first tank, although that did include plenty of open road with four adults on board.
Comfort. Very impressive! Nothing more to say. I do think this 'progressive hydraulic cushion' suspension ~ apparently developed in the WRC program, is wonderful. It does offer some likeness to the Hydraulics of the past, especially in cruising settings. Here there are three modes of setting ~ Comfort/ Normal/Sport. Come to think of it, I have only driven in 'Normal' mode, so 'Comfort' may offer a greater comparison.
Obviously, things like driver settings are easily achieved with everything that moves ~ steering wheel, seats [and heated for my wife!], so finding the right position shouldn't be an issue for anyone.
One interesting find was that the roads I drove include a fair bit of 'local knowledge'. By this I mean there are a couple of pieces of road where one drives right against the left-edge of the 'black-top' and in the next motion we are on [at least] the centre-line. This bought a curious little nudge from 'lanekeeping assist. So there are some quaint new driving experiences to work through. [By
the way ~ I won!]
One of the things I was interested to try was this 'handling performance' that doesn't measure up to the Germans. On the stretch from Hurstbridge to St Andrews, the road surface is... let's say, variable. The road has lots of undulation and bends with at least one having an increasing radius. This was where I chose to undertake some more 'spirited' driving. No, it is not 'AMG' or Porsche performance, but it was comfortable and suitably stable in all regards and especially when set against the fact we are these days so 'speed-managed' and so likely to come up behind someone who emphatically states the speed limit is ' X ' and I will drive only at ' $X$ minus I' [or too often even less than ' $\times$ minus one'!]
I love the sunroof. I have always wanted one on a modern vehicle. This is my first! Oh no, I once had a Fiat 1500 with a sliding roof [40 plus years ago!] That was a fabulous car. Once averaged $137 \mathrm{kph} / 85 \mathrm{mph}$ from Ceduna to Port Augusta in it. [Feb, 1977]
I am still getting used to the screens. The big one in the centre full of all sorts of stuff, the drivers 'instrument panel', a much smaller screen, but I do like [now that I know], that I can have a series of formats of information and flip through them as
need be. It is really just a matter of just finding the elements of information you want.
The other 'screen' item is the 'heads-up display'. Apart from a brief experience in a BMW some years back, I had never driven with one of these. Again you can of course vary the information components here too. For the present I am employing it. I have read that this screen is not effective when viewed through your 'Polaroids', But you know, this July we are having, I haven't yet put my 'Polaroids' on!
What else? Ah yes, the vehicle has this 'SUV' element to its design. I was curious about this given I really didn't want to add another 'SUV' to the motoring landscape. [I won't go further on that!]. Living on a 'dirt road', I was interested in 'ground clearance'. My 'review' research went into overdrive on this subject. The C5 X is stated as hav-

ing 194mm of ground clearance. There is only one Hyundai SUV with greater clearance ~ the Palisade, no Kia, only the Mazda CX-9, but when it comes to some vehicles, I think they are measuring to the floor, not the diff! Next time [after you have sat with a C5 X in front of you] have a look at a Ford Everest! Claimed as 225 mm ! Really??? And there are plenty of others, that when sat behind them, claimed 'ground clearance' looks a bit dubious!. A very fascinating topic.
So, all-in-all, I am very satisfied with my C5 $\times$. Ride comfort is wonderful. Economy looks like I will be happy. It's distinctive in appearance and fabulous to drive.
If I am the first in the club with a Citroën C5 X, I shouldn't be the last!
PS: Finally, I couldn't afford a Heritage' plate, but created my own. I have a number plate that has only ever been on a Citroën! Twice! A whole new form of 'heritage'. The first number plate in my life is... with me again... Oh God, wasn't Dad pissed off when someone knocked off the 'wings'... and, when discovered that wonderful little external push/ pull button that turned on the rear lights! Garth Foxwell


## 50Years With the Oldest HZ

W:hen you look at it, it is difficult to imagine that this $H$ van was made in 1949, as the last ones made still look the same as the early ones, except of course for a few minor details.
On the 7th of November 1949, Mr B..., 43 years old, was behind the wheel of this H van in the Javel factory. He left the delivery hall slowly, he had to run in the engine. At that time, he never dreamt that fifty years down the line he would still have this van.
However this is the case. The van is still almost in as good
condition as when it left Javel. Mr B... is, at 93 years old, in almost as good condition as his van; steady on this feet, without glasses or walking stick, alert and lively and can still show those young'uns of 60+ a thing or two. Mr B... explained to me that he used the van for transporting goods and for removals, lots of removals. 'I bought this vehicle because we needed it for handling our goods, and to help the local transporters become more independent, as many of them were still using horses! With this van we could also go to the station to pick up goods or send off our goods. I

ordered my van from Carbour Freres in Lille. As I always liked to be the first person to drive my vehicles, I made it clear that I would only buy this van on the condition that no-one else ever drove the car, even just out of the factory.
Mr B... is a very particular person, a bit manic, who keeps everything he has ever owned and it is true that no one has ever driven any one of his vehicles since 1927. He has always insisted on this point. 'I did the same thing in 1927 with my BI4 which belonged to my father, | was the only person ever to drive it, then in 1937 I bought an

IIBL. With both these two cars I went to the factory to drive them out myself. I remember, that in 1937 all the Tractions were lined up, not at Javel but in a huge garage where they stocked the cars in order to liberate some space in the factory. It was a great big bare hall where the cars were packed in tightly. They squeezed in as many as possible. They went in and came out, that is all. At Javel one had to be very patient and wait your turn, it could be very long sometimes. For our BI4 Cabriolet, we waited, in vain, for several days until our car came to the end of the line. In Facing page: Mr B... and his HZ. He repainted his service vehicle in forest green with a white roof [against the heat], to make things easier when camping. 'We could', he said 'go camping anywhere at that time, there were none of the restrictions that there are today. In order to be left in peace and quiet, it was easier if the vehicle could not be seen from too far away. We tried not to stick out like a sore thumb.
Inset: The HZ series engine started with number 050001, it has the manufacturer's plate № 05002.
This page: The original light, placed in the centre of the registration plate. The HZ engine has not turned since 1977, but it has not stuck solid and still has good compression.

## 50Years With the Oldest HZ

the end we came to an arrangement with the supervisor. 'The first car off the line tomorrow morning will be your one', he told us. The next day, true to his word, the first one off the line was ours. Part of the delay was due to the fact that they wanted to change the torsion arms. This HZ van was the first one that was actually commercialised, as the very first one ever made was used by the factory for tests and came to a sorry end with a tram. This series of vehicles started with number 050002, but I was not especially pleased to have the first HZ, it
was just a vehicle like any other. I had the van transformed into a camping car for my family, there were six of us all together. A local artisan made it for me in such a way that each element could be removed or replaced easily. This meant that it was not a real camper, it had a double use; transporting goods and for family holidays. There was an ice box placed between the two front seats which we half filled with a large block of ice [it was not electrically run], a stainless steel sink and four beds. It is entirely lined with an insulation, for noise and heat, mate-

Facing page: For a service vehicle that has been stuck in a garage for 22years, it has not suffered in the slightest. The rear window is made of mica.
This page, clockwise: The original indicator [held open by a little piece of metal]. The fabric on the right side is in two parts; as it was originally, it was never changed. The spare wheel in its cleaver niche. The tyres are Michelin $17 \times 400$ s with special inner tubes which still contain the air that was put in them 50 years ago as Mr B... has never had occasion to pump up these lyres. [Except, of course, the day we went to take these photos]. Placing his trust in instruments Mr B. drove 'on the thermometer' [attached to the driver's handle] and thus knew when it was likely to freeze


## 50Years With the Oldest HZ



Facing page: The interior of the driver's cab. You can see 22,949 on the clock, which makes an average of 820 km per year, from 1949 to 1977 The interior was lined with wood with insulating material by a carpenter [do not look at the mess] This page: The original headlights were not powerful enough, so they were exchanged, at the time, for [old] 2CV lights.

rial between the outer skin and the inner lining. When the law changed forbidding the trafficators, I had them changed. The arms are still on the van and they could work again if I joined up the wires.'
This vehicle was not used as much as it could have been; it went once to Lille, once to the Spanish border and one time from Paris to Bretagne. In fifty years, it has only clocked up $22,949 \mathrm{~km}$
'It could get up to 88 kph however, I didn't like to take it over $3 / 4$ of its load, on average, so it never wore out and never did anything remarkable. I have always treated all my vehicles like this. The fastest I ever drove
this vehicle was $75 / 80 \mathrm{kph}$. I always took good care of it and I never had cause to change it for a more modern one over the years as it has remained as good as new and I have never required anything more. What is more it was also equipped as a camping car and I didn't want to start all over again! Even though I gave up using it as a camping car in 1952 when I bought a little country cottage.'
I, of course asked him the obvious question of, 'why did he keep a vehicle like that for half a century? It's a very long time! He said that he had 'grown attached to it and there may have come a time when I would need

## $50 Y e a r s$ With the Oldest HZ

it and also, I am an incorrigible collector. I always kept all my vehicles for as long as possible. They all had very low mileages and were all in almost mint condition. In 1951 | sold a Traction Avant that I bought in 1948, she only had $5,000 \mathrm{~km}$ on the clock.' This article was written by Fabien Sabatès and the photos were taken by Bibi. The article first appeared in May/June 1999 edition of 'Citropolis' and is taken from the Editor's archive.

The handle to open the side sliding door. The driver's footboard. The front indicator was added in the 1950s in order to bring the van into line with new legislation.


## Monsteur's Van has Been Moved Forward

 $S$hortly before the Second World War, a completely new type of commercial vehicle appeared: the 'cab-over' light van. At Citroën, it was called the TUB, and bore the seeds of half a century of commercial vehicles, right up to the Jumper.
There's something very moving about seeing the first and last vans produced by Citroën side by side. At the Aulnay plant, where the $Z X$ and $A X$ are manufactured, a rare example of the TUB [Traction Utilitaire série $B$ ] is kept, among other commercial vehicles. The TUB's career was short-lived, overshadowed by a war that prevented it from making its mark.

## From TUB to Jumper

But it did not go unnoticed, and numerous imitations honoured the innovation of its creators. Even so, its name will live on in the Type H , and even today, when we think of the TUB, we think of the ' H '.
Let's take a brief look at its history: studies began in 1935, at a time when a clientele of shopkeepers wanted a practical, multi-purpose single-box vehicle. A meticulous survey was carried out across France by Javel inspectors, who noted the needs of the French and the possible outlets. A set of specifications was drawn up, leading to the design of a prototype at the end of February 1937. The 9bhp powertrain of the Traction Avant was used on a plat-


## From TUB to Jumper



A major appeal to subcontractors delayed the launch of the TUB until June 1939. Its weak engine, when loaded, and its price prompted Citroën to offer it in an IICV version at the beginning of 1940; it was then increased from a load of 850 kg to $1,200 \mathrm{~kg}$, more suited to its potential users. Still on show at the 1946 Salon de l'Auto, it was not produced after the war but was replaced at the following Salon by the Type H , which went on to have the exemplary career we know so well.
Citroën took the lead over the meagre competition by launching this new utility vehi-

| A COMPARISON OF CHARACTERISTICS |  |  |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
|  | TUB [1940] | Jumper [1994] |
|  | 4.04 m | 4.65 m |
| Length | 1.96 m | 1.99 m |
| Width | 2.13 m | 2.14 m |
| Unladen height | 2.35 m | 2.85 m |
| Wheelbase | 1.54 m | 1.72 m |
| Front track | 1.612 m | 1.71 m |
| Rear track | $1,330 \mathrm{~kg}$ | $1,605 \mathrm{~kg}$ |
| Total unladen weight | 850 kg | $1,125 \mathrm{~kg}$ |
| Payload | $2,350 \mathrm{~kg}$ | $2,790 \mathrm{~kg}$ |
| Total laden weight | $1,911 \mathrm{cc}$ | $1,998 \mathrm{cc}$ |
| Petrol engine capacity | 11 cv | 10 cv |
| Administrative power | 4 | 4 |
| Number of cylinders | $78 \times 100 \mathrm{~mm}$ | $86 \times 86 \mathrm{~mm}$ |
| Borexstroke | dry single plate | diaphragm |
| Clutch |  | monodisc |
|  |  | 5 |
| Number of gears | 94.5 kph | 144 kph |
| Maximum speed |  |  |

For this table, we have taken as examples the
petrol Jumper and the TUB with an IICV engine.
cle, whose design lines can still be seen today on the Jumper.
Everything has evolved considerably, of course, and the Jumper adopts the most advanced techniques, but basically, the layout of the grandfather and the latest model are extremely similar. They say that engineers are sometimes visionaries.
The first 'light' van, the TUB said goodbye to the heavy chassis commonly found on all vans, and adopted a flat floor. How did it do this? All the mechanical components were grouped together at the front, thanks to two bold choices: front-wheel drive and a forward-facing cab. With this flat floor, Citroën finally responded to the user's main concern: to be able to take advantage of a low load sil and a useful volume that is easy to arrange. In this respect, the TUB and the Jumper do not differ much, with similar interior dimensions. The doors, however, are not arranged in quite the same way, with the TUB adopting a detachable horizontal lower tailgate and a liftable upper tailgate. But the sliding side door was already present on the older model, which also featured a cabin/load-volume divider fitted with removable wooden hatches, a principle later abandoned. Another interesting detail that has disappeared is the access to the spare wheel and battery via external panels.

## From TUB to Jumper

Already in its day, the TUB could be fitted with several different engines and different layouts: one of the first was an ambulance unit, as war had just broken out. Of course, this was a far cry from the extraordinary variety now possible on the Jumper, which has taken advantage of the multiple combinations of engines and bodywork. Similarly, the cockpit on the Jumper is of a level of comfort and habitability that was a long way off at the end of the thirties and which has simply kept pace with the progress made on cars The TUB had to make do with
simplified Traction equipment and rather spartan comfort. In truth, this cockpit sums up quite well the fifty years or so separating the two vans, and visibly reflects the progress made under the bonnet and floor of the Jumper. As a forerunner, the TUB was an intelligent trailblazer; the Jumper has followed in its footsteps.
This article was written by Dominique Bellière and first appeared in a 1994 edition of'RetroViseur' which celebrated Citroën's 75th anniversary. It was translated by the Editor with the assistance of www.DeepL.com/Translator [free version].

## Member's Model: Harry the H van

V/ ell, I just could not importing Bijou came H van. [Ed. Readers may recall that last month Serge shared with us the story of his acquisition of a Bijou. Clearly, this award-winning Citroën got his chevron juices flowing in a big way.]
It started very innocently; we went to the 19th World 2CV meeting in Sal bris, France in 201I. 7,034 cars attended this meeting, of these 190 were H vans. $H$ vans of all descriptions. It was instant love and I have to have one! Four months later
one arrived in Port Hedland. In its previous life it was a fruit delivery van on the Pyrenees, four years later it was done and registered on the same day as my Bijou. You may notice the similar colours, but as a Michelin delivery van
Harry the H van since 2015 has travelled to all Australian states bar the Northern Territory. It made a guest appearance at the 2017 Tasmanian Cit-ln and is on the road today going to Show and Shines and amazing people everywhere he goes. It is always 'l've seen this in movies.'



## Member's Model: Harry the $H$ van



## Member's Model: Harry the H van

Empty he travels at 85kph and $\quad 12.8 \mathrm{~L} / 100 \mathrm{~km} / 22 \mathrm{mpg}$ and revs a bit. Loaded up he travels at 95 kph and does $9.4 \mathrm{~L} / 100 \mathrm{~km} / 30 \mathrm{mpg}$ loves the weight and is smooth and much
more responsive than when empty.
Harry is set up inside with a removable camper set up, that way I can use him to carry building materials as we are for ever doing house renovations, and boy can you load him up and he loves it

Harry's next adventures are a camping week end in Blackbutt, Qld followed by a Vintage and Classic caravan rally in Mujimba, then in 2024 it's off to Tassy again.
We always travel with our two dogs and its such a versatile car when your fit out is removable and you can use it to carry building materials.

Harry's paint is getting tired as it does living in the tropics, so his next incarnation is going to be a fully decked out Par is Pompier with ladders and a
blue light. Watch out for him soon.

An oldie but a goodie. H vans rule.
Serge Doumergue


## 90 Years of the Traction Avant

International Traction Avant Meeting Thursday, 9 to Saturday, 11 May, 2024 Circuit de Charade, Puy de Dome, France


## Papybus Omnibus III



5
onjour chers amis Citroënnistes des antipodes.
As southern Europe bakes under record summer temperatures, with stories of wildfires in Greece, Turkey and elsewhere making headlines around our planet, The West France summer of 2023 has so far been appreciably more gentle than that of last year.
Regular readers will recall that a year ago this month your Ven-
dée correspondent lamented the non-functioning air-con of his venerable Papybus C8 after forty-degree evening apéritifs outside Rodolphe's Petite Cabane beach donga-café at Saint-Vincent sur Jard. With the evening light illuminating the golden strand between Clemenceau's 1920s summer house and the ruins of a Second World War German gun emplacement five kilometres along the bay, chilled beverages and Vendéo-Australian nineteenth-
century tales had been shared with octogenarian Marie-Pierre and Gérard, and a small band of beach regulars.
We did not know at the time that, after more than fifty years, this would be Gérard's last summer at Le Goulet; this makes the concluding part of our story particularly poignant, one year later.

Papybus Omnibus III Amglo's Story Concluded: Rescue or Kidnap
On that August 2022 Vendée evening, even with all four windows lowered, the heat inside the Papybus was reminiscent of our Australia days.
We drove the five minutes from the beach to Marie-Pierre and Gérard's holiday house, pausing at their neighbour's driveway to collect some tomatoes.


ROBERT MACKIIN


The handwritten sign invited us to help ourselves, and to leave a donation for the gardener's grandchildren, who promised to spend all proceeds at the summer fairground which pops up every year on the flood-plain behind the Clemenceau house. The fairground is called FESTY PARK, which always raises a smile amongst anglophones.
In no time Marie-Pierre assembled the ingredients for our impromptu supper. The sun had not quite gone as Christian and Rodolphe joined us and we sat down at the garden table. The church clock chimes 9.30; in the west of France at this time of year, the sun stays late and the twilight fades into midnight.
In between sunset and moon

## Papybus Omnilbus III

rise, while his wife prepares the omelette, Gérard tells us about Narcisse Pelletier's return to France after seventeen years living with the indigenous people of Cape York.
« It is quite a complex story, mes amis, but I shall try keep it brief. Last week I found a videoclip version on Youtube from the excellent ABC broadcaster in Australie. Less that two minutes I think; called «L Living with the Locals » The presenter had an interesting time attempting to pronounce the name of Nar cisse Pelletier! Perhaps it is accent of Le Kwinslond? And also, that presenter thought that the
locals called our Vendeen friend ANCO. In France, we always understood Amglo. Indeed it is the latter which appears on his gravestone in Saint-Nazaire, as we shall see later. »
Marie-Pierre brings out the orange-red salade de tomates, and two crisp baguettes.
«Seventeen years, mes amis! In April 1875, an English pearling boat called the John Bell anchored at Night Island off the Kwinslond coast. A landing party was sent to look for fresh water, and they spotted a white man among a group of local people. The locals ran away, terrified when they saw the sail-

 L. jeune Francate qui a paneo 18 annoeo au miliou den
ors, who were actually of Caribbean origin. Pelletier, naked and alone, was confronted by the sailors.
The story goes that Pelletier, who could not speak English, refused to accompany them back to the ship. The sailors returned without him, and Captain Joseph Frazer ordered them to go back to the beach, offer the local people some trinkets from the ship's supplies, and... persuade Pelletier to return to the ship with them... »
Gérard utters the the word « persuade » after a pause and with one raised eyebrow.
In our host's garden, a brightyellow omelette appears at the table, in a giant red-enamelled cast-iron frying pan.
«There is some ambiguity here between Pelletier's later version of events, and that of the Captain. Did Pelletier truly intend to leave? Was there a degree of force involved? Indeed, was this a rescue, or was it a kidnap? Pelletier always maintained that he was taken against his will... »
Gérard offers us all a glass of Vin de Mareuil, and leaves the questions suspended, as we clink our glasses and wish everyone bonne santé.
« If we have good health, then we already have a great deal! » exclaims Gérard.
«The rest of the story involves a succession of ships, as
well as some insights into our acquisition and retention of language, mes amis: The John Bell took him north at first, to the settlement of Somerset at the tip of Le Cap York. There he met with the Colonial Secretary, and also two men who could speak enough French to understand that Pelletier was indeed from La Vendée. Narcisse had, of course, lost the habit of speaking in his mother tongue. However, by all accounts Narcisse re-gained a degree of fluency quickly enough that after a few days he was able to write a letter to his parents. This letter, written phonetically and with Vendéen patois expressions still exists, and that is another story. >
Gérard pauses to suggest that we help ourselves to more omelette et salade de tomates, and refreshes our ballon de rouge de Mareuil
«He was then sent to Sydney on a steamer called Le Brisbane Coïncidence suprême! This ship, like Le Saint-Paul upon which Narcisse had been a cabin-boy when it had been wrecked near the Solomon Islands in 1858 is also transporting Chinese labourers to the Australian goldfields. You know that those unfortunate passengers of Le Saint-Paul, along with members of the crew, were massacred by the Solomon Islanders in terrible conditions... again, that is
another story, mes amis. I told you at Le Goulet that there was no happy ending to that shipwreck. »
Marie-Pierre is visibly moved, and returns to the kitchen. Gérard continues the story in the present tense, heightening the drama:
« On board The Brisbane there is a Lieutenant of the British Royal Engineers. His name is John Ottley, and he speaks French, having spent time in France as a schoolboy... He has many conversations with Pelletier, and keeps notes. Much later, towards the end of his life in 1923, the Lieutenant, who was by then Sir John Ottley, wrote a long letter to a friend about his conversations with Narcisse almost half a century previously. This letter also still exists »
Marie-Pierre has brought two Camemberts. We are spellbound by Gérard's storytelling, and astonished at his memory for detail.
« Of course, mes amis, Monsieur Wikipédia will tell you all of this! If you take the time to look, there is a very detailed article in French; perhaps three pages long. And a more brief version en anglais. »
Gérard passes the Camembert plate after carefully cutting a small triangle for himself, and I remark that Monsieur Wiki no doubt has his uses, but to hear Gérard relate this account, un-
der the mimosa in their garden on this summer night is unforgettable.
«Oui, bien sûr mon ami. Facts are one thing; context is quite another. This is also true of. . . place, of setting I believe! Is it not better to share this story in front of a glass of Mareuil and a Camembert instead of alone and in front of a screen? »
We all laugh.
«Anyway, Pelletier arrives in Sydney on 25th May and stays for 38 days. He is photographed by the local press, and is contacted by the French Consul. Remember that relations between France and Britain [and, by extension with Australia...] were not always... straightforward... in the nineteenth century! »
As the Camembert does its Tour de Table, Gérard makes mention of Napoléon III, naval blockades, mutual suspicion, coIonialism, imperialism and various other -isms. Then he returns to his thread of ships and language fluency.
«After being subject to the curiosity of Sydney townspeople, Narcisse is given a passage to Nouméa in NouvelleCalédonie, where he boards a French warship called Le Jura. Our former cabin-boy, shipwrecked at age 14 is now 3 lyears of age, remember. His voyage back to La France, via Le Cap Horn and Rio de Ja-
neiro takes many weeks. During this time he receives medical attention from the ship's doctor, in particular for a spear wound inflicted years previously, and which had never properly healed. By now his fluency in French is sufficient to allow him to write another letter to his parents; this is the third one, because he also wrote from Sydney, I believe »
We lapse into a last glass of Mareuil, and speculation as to how the technicalities of technology permitted the arrival of the letters in France some time before Narcisse arrived in person.
«This I do not know, chers amis. Perhaps there were steam ships to speed the mail? I am sure Madame Google would tell us! Maybe even your amis of antipodes Citroënnistes have answers to this? Were we not also entering the age of intercontinental telegraphy, a sort of proto-Internet !?
The fact is that when Narcisse arrived in Toulon in December 1875, he was met by his brother Elie, and they travelled by train to Paris together. We can only imagine the émotion at their reuniting... »
Rodolphe puts down his glass of rouge, and asks what happened then in Paris.
« Well, les amis, the rest of the story is very well-documented, because L'Histoire
du Sauvage Blanc made headlines in the popular press in late 1875 and early 1876. The story for this evening is already long enough, no? I will with pleasure lend you my book and leave you to research for yourself articles of Narcisse's return to his hometown of Saint-Gilles Croix de Vie on 2nd January 1876, the day after his 32nd birthday. You will find illustrations of the immense bonfire the townfolk had prepared in his honour, and you will easily find accounts of how Pelletier began to perform a ritual dance of the Uutaalnganu tribe there, on the dockside of Saint Gilles on that cold winter evening... Of course, our smartiephones would show us this immediately; but what a shame it would be to allow technology to intrude upon this precious time spent around this table! »
Gérard falls silent for a moment.
Christian is the first to speak: « Yes, I attended the Pelletier exhibition in Saint-Gilles in 2019. I think we could say that Narcisse had left Vendée as a Vendéen, but he had returned as probably the most Australien of Frenchmen. »
We all nod in a moment of silent, intercultural communion.
«It is rather sad that the rest of Pelletier's life may not have been particularly fulfilling. His doctor, a man called Constant

## Papybus Omnibus IIII

Merland, wrote an account of Narcisse's experiences. Proceeds from the sale of the book were given to our returnee, the intention being that this might help him re-integrate into society. We know that he married, but had no children... We know also that he lived for a year as a lighthouse keeper at the Phare de l'Aiguillon. And we know that when he died, aged 50 in 1894 at Saint-Nazaire, his occupation was recorded as clerk at the Harbour. The cause of death appears to have been nervous depression. »
The St Vincent church bell issues a single chime: 10.30 pm . The temperature is still in the ow thirties.
« He is buried in the cemetery at Saint-Nazaire. His grave had been somewhat abandoned; but in 2016 an association was formed «Les Amis Internationales de Narcisse Pelletier ». The grave was restored, and a new plaque with the addition of the name AMGLO was added. Each year, on the anniversary of his death the 29th of September, a modest ceremony takes place at the graveside. I should like to attend this year. Saint Nazaire is less than an hour's drive from Nantes. I will take our vénérable AX Thalassa »

Time has passed in that pecu liar way it has when the alchemy of good company, a great story


and a splendid summer setting does its magic.
Marie-Pierre has once more visited the kitchen, and returned with a white porcelain bowl of fresh figs. She addresses us as she places the bowl on the sky-blue tablecloth.
«Alan, perhaps you would like to turn on the ignition of your Papybus, and open the vitres électriques. The evening breeze will cool the intérieur better than your broken climatisation; you know, there are no moustiques this year, perhaps because the weather is so dry.
Now Gérard has finished the story of Narcisse, it is rath er too late tell you about the Nantes Omnibus connection. But I promise that I will tell you
when next we meet, and you can share it if you like with your amis of antipodes... »
As we drive away from the summer house a little later we are the last to leave. Christian goes first in his classic Land Cruiser Ute, followed by Rodolphe in the VW T6 van. We drive in front of the neighbour's summertime garden gate. The help-yourself makeshift tomato stall has been packed away for the night.
I glance into the Papybus driver's door mirror. There are our friends, framed in black and waving to us from the end of their driveway. Marie-France in a red and orange summer dress Gérard in his trademark white long-sleeved shirt

## Papybus Omnibus III



In the breeze-cooled interior of the C8, driving towards the romanesque church of St Vincent, then to our campsite figtree and the last glow of evening through the acacias, we reflect on how enriching the time spent with the Nantes friends has been. NSERT PAPYBUS NUMBER CAMPSITE PIC
We do not realise at the time that this evening of August 2022 would be the last time we would see Gérard.
Gérard died at his home in Nantes in February 2023.

Epilogue
Next week, we plan to meet up with Marie-Pierre at Le Goulet beach. I expect she will be sitting alone, quietly reading in a folding chair at the base of the sea wall just below La Petite Cabane.
The weather is forecast to be cloudy but dry.
I hope she asks us if the aircon is working better this year. And I look forward to her telling us, at last, about the link between Nantes and the Papybus Omnibus.
Watch this space Alan Brown ~ July 2023


## TUB: A History

/nn the mid 1930s, a light commercial vehicle looked like a car with a cargo body graftedon behind the front seats. Citroën offered variants of the Rosalie with a load capacity of 500 , 850 or $1,200 \mathrm{~kg}$. If you needed a higher payload, the salesman would have pointed you in the direction of the Type 23, newly launched in 1935. Both were

rear wheel drive.
From a manufacturing standpoint, designs like this made perfect sense. They didn't require special production lines; they could be built alongside their saloon counterparts and sent out as chassis-cabs to other companies for rear bodies of various sorts to be fitted However, they didn't necessarily meet the needs or expectations of rural France.
Just as Pierre-Jules Boulanger saw the opportunity for his 4-wheels-and-an-umbrella Toute Petite Voiture, which became the 2 CV , he also recognised that current commercial vehicles didn't necessarily suit everyone. Little over a year after becoming Vice President of Citroën, he commissioned a study to establish what France's butchers, grocers, smallholders and other rural enterprises wanted from a goods vehicle.
Of course, immediately after taking the helm at the ailing company, the first requirement was to restore profitability and address the shortcomings of the under-developed Traction Avant.

Top: In 1935 if your planned payload exceeded $\mathrm{l}, 200 \mathrm{~kg}$ the salesman would point you to the 'new' Type 23.
Below: If your load was smaller then commercial variants of the Rosalie with payloads of 500,850 or $1,200 \mathrm{~kg}$ were available.

Nonetheless, by the start of 1937, the Design Team, based at the old Mors works in the Rue du Théâtre, started to sketch out something that would address the requirements identified in the study. The customers' wish list included access to the cargo area from the driver's seat, enough headroom to stand up and ease of modification, so owner-drivers could tailor the vehicle's interior to meet their needs.
By the end of the year, the first prototype was taking shape. It was christened the T.U.B. for Traction Utilitaire Basse. The English version is a bit more long-winded, front wheel drive, low commercial vehicle. This
name is often rendered as Traction Utilitaire, Type B, but that's not how it was originally conceived.
Any book on the DS quite rightly talks about how futuristic that new car was compared with its predecessor, but the shock of the new must have been much the same when people saw this radical new concept of what a cargo vehicle should look like.
The TUB was officially accepted by the French Service des Mines [registration authority] on 12 May 1939.
The TUB introduced many of the features the H van would inherit, with its sliding door at the side ~ a first in Europe, front


## TUB: A History

wheel drive, flat floor, low loading height, cab-forward layout and rear tailgate.
Mechanically, the TUB drew heavily on the Traction Avant, inheriting its $1,628 \mathrm{cc}$, $25.4 \mathrm{~kW} / 34 \mathrm{bhp}$ engine, gearbox and brakes. The main difference between it and the H van is that it has a traditional chassis rather than an all-steel monocoque. The floor is plywood and the roof is made from vinyl, stretched over wooden formers. Manufacture of the body was sub contracted to Fernand Genève. The rated payload is 850 kg .
The large side door was intended to make kerbside deliveries easier.
This early publicity photo shows one of the target markets. A low loading height is very handy, if you're a cow.

However, the arrangement of the lower, rear panel looks a bit Heath Robinson, something that wouldn't be fixed until the H van came along.
Of course, we all know the significance of 1939. It was on September 3rd that Britain and France declared war on Germany. The picture over the page shows wartime covers over the headlights. Note also the single windscreen wiper, characteristic of the first TUBs to leave the line.
In February 1940 the I,628cc, 7CV engine was dropped, in favour of the I,91Icc, IICV Traction unit, developing $31.3 \mathrm{~kW} /$ 42 bhp . The maximum payload increased by a modest 170 kg to $1,020 \mathrm{~kg}$, but we can surmise that this change was driven primarily by a desire for standardisation.


## TUB: A History

At the time, the factory was mainly producing trucks for the Army; the Type 23, which also used the I,9IIcc engine, and the Type 45. This larger engined variant was homologated under a new name, the TUC.
In this case, TUC DOES stand
for Traction Utilitaire Type C, hence the retrospective assumption about TUB. [Just in case you're wondering, there was never any mention of a TUA].
Four months later, on 23 June 1940, a revised version, still re-

ferred to as the TUC, was presented for inspection by the authorities. This time, the chassis had been reinforced, raising the unladen weight by 50 kg and the maximum payload to $1,200 \mathrm{~kg}$.
The Citroën collection includes an example of the TUC, pictured below outside the Conservatoire, next to the last of the line, the 1981 model-year H van. [You may like to compare this with the images on page 4I. Ed.]
By this time, the country had been invaded by Germany and a new government led by Marshal Pétain set up in Vichy Petrol supplies were commandeered by the Wehrmacht and the population turned to other alternatives.

Several companies offered Gazogene conversions. As well as this one from Comète, the renowned luxury carmaker Facel had a similar offering.
The TUB/TUC was already known to have problems with rear-wheel lockup under braking when lightly loaded, so all that extra weight at the front must have made the handling rather interesting, but at the time, staying mobile overrode all other concerns.
Originally designed for urban deliveries, farmers and mobile shops, the TUB/TUC was born into a very different environment and soon became part of the war machine.
A couple of years before the outbreak of hostilities, the


## TUB: A History



French Army had invited proposals for a new model of ambulance. Top of the list of requirements; it had to be cheap to buy and economical to run. Conversely style and appearance were of no consequence. Based on cost, the Army favoured an alternative design over the TUB, that of the T60 from Chenard \& Walcker.
As the pictures show, the T60 was overtly utilitarian. Made from flat panels throughout and equipped with a 720cc twin cylinder, two stroke engine, it was unbeatable on price. Three prototypes were handed over for testing, and must have received a favourable response, because the vehicle was put into pilot production.

However when the reality of war became apparent, the Army changed its mind. They needed better performance and they needed volume production. Chenard \& Walcker could not deliver, so the military came knocking on Citroën's door.


## TUB: A History

was created, the TAMH ambulance, based on the I,9\|cc TUC.
In place of canvas, the upper side panels were made from steel, with a window set into each side, making it look more like the Chenard \& Walcker T60 than before. The bars are there to maintain strength, rather than retain the occupants. The innovative sliding side entrance was deleted and the rear fitted with two full height doors.
The ambulance could accommodate either six stretchers, or three, with seating accommodation along the side.
It's believed 713 examples of the TAMH ambulance were supplied to the Army, including 25 with reinforced suspension, intended to operate as mobile

X-Ray facilities. As a relief from all this black and white, here's a picture of this survivor, which appears regularly on the show circuit.
Inevitably, many ended up in the hands of the German Army, and examples were seen as far away as Greece and the Russian Front.
In the summer of 1940, in the face of approaching German forces, the management team from Javel decamped en masse

Inset: A picture of a rare surviving TAMH which appears regularly fn the 'show circuit'. Right: The rear of the TAMH was fitted with two full height doors. It could accommodate six stretchers or three, with seating alongside.

to Niort, some 400 km southwest of Paris. This marked the end of production for the TUB/


Although the factory contin ued to operate, with severely reduced manpower, under control of the Wehrmacht, production was limited to larger trucks
The amazing picture below from 1941 shows the main as sembly hall at Javel as it greeted the German occupying forces, with three TUCs still on the line.
Towards the end of 1940 there remained something like 100 civilian specification TUB and TUC models, either unfinished, or complete but unsold.
It was at this point that Fenwick Frères intervened. The company had close ties with Javel, having supplied electric vehicles for moving raw materials and semifinished goods around the factory since the early days. Given the lack of petrol and consequent efforts

## TUB: A History

to run on alternative fuels, Fenwick took this remaining stock and converted them to electric traction. Each one carried some 540 kg of lead-acid batteries. We don't know what range was available, but apparently users were recommended to stay well below the 48 kph maximum speed, to give them the
best endurance
Almost all were built to ambulance specification and supplied to civilian hospitals.
The batteries were mounted in two pods, one occupying the place originally taken by the spare wheel and the other in the equivalent position on the other side.



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