

# Renault News

**104**  
Fall-Winter  
2013



## The Best of France & Italy 2012

### In this Issue

New Members .....	3	Mystery of the Marquis Final Edition .....	14
2013 Meets .....	3	Best of France & Italy 2012 .....	16
Bastille Day 2012 .....	4	Manic .....	22
Fate of the Gordini .....	7	The Ultimate Alpine Recreation .....	24
Return to Mexico .....	8	Jesse's Corner .....	27
The Return of El Tiburon .....	11	The Back Page .....	28
Alpine to Return .....	13		

## Renault Owners Club of North America

www.RenaultClub.us  
www.RenaultOwnersClub.org  
Email: info@renaultclub.us  
Established in May, 1991, La Jolla, California, USA  
*Founding Member:* Jacques Lynn  
President Marvin McFalls  
General Administrator Kurt Triffet  
Vice President/Club Liaison Jesse Patton  
Membership Secretary/Treasurer Sharon Desplaines  
Editor of Renault News Marvin McFalls  
Forum Moderator/Print Editor Michael Heather  
Spanish Translator/Editor Fernando Zavala  
Publisher Triffet Design Group  
Editor of Members/Cars List Stephen Lombardo  
Webmaster & Classified Ads Kurt Triffet  
Librarian Michael Muller

Renault News is the newsletter of the Renault Owners Club of North America. This newsletter is published quarterly. We are a non-profit, all-volunteer club. Our purpose is to help one another keep our Renaults in shape and on the road. This newsletter is not an official publication of Renault USA or Régie des Usines Renault. Permission to reprint original material is granted to any non-profit membership publication on a single-use basis if full credit is given to the author. Originally published items become property of the club.

### New Members

US\$25 for 1 year online membership: worldwide  
US\$45 for 1 year postal membership: (U.S. only)  
US\$60 International postal membership (including Mexico & Canada) Join online at <www.renaultclub.us/join.html>  
Or send payment, along with details about your cars to:  
Sharon Desplaines  
7467 Mission Gorge Rd #81, Santee CA 92071  
Tel: 619-334-1711  
Email: hummer5@cox.net

### Renewals-Registry Information and Address Changes

Renew online or mail payment to:  
Sharon Desplaines  
7467 Mission Gorge Rd #81, Santee CA 92071  
Tel: 619-334-1711  
Email: hummer5@cox.net

### Classified Ads

Place ads online at <www.renaultclub.us/forum>  
Or mail brief ads to:  
Kurt Triffet, 3333 San Luis St., Ventura, CA 93003  
Email: webmaster@renaultclub.us

### Marketplace display ads available

### Articles, Letters, Correspondence

Marvin McFalls, 4800 Ball Camp Pike, Knoxville TN 37921  
Tel: 865-387-1004  
Email: moose01@earthlink.net

## Newsletter Production and Publishing

Triffet Design Group  
www.triffetdesign.com  
info@triffetdesign.com  
Tel: 805 658-8646

### Back Issue Requests

**Order back issues on CD** online at club website.

### Issues 1 to 57 only \$7

Individual hard copies US\$2 each:

Michael Muller, 4907 Meridian Ave. North,  
Seattle, WA 98103

Email: m\_muller22@hotmail.com

### Inter-Club Liaison, Club Correspondence

Jesse Patton, 730 Railroad Pl, Apt A8, West Babylon, NY  
11704 Tel: 631 669-2598

### Social Media

**Facebook:** www.facebook.com/groups/291079754246181

### Technical Advisors

**4CV, Dauphine, R10, Caravelle** Jacques Lynn, 13839

Hwy 8 Bus., El Cajon, CA 92021 Tel: 619 561-6687

Email: jacques@renaultparts.us

**R8, Fuego, Medallion** Don McLaughlin, 390 Linton Hill

Rd., Duncannon, PA 17020 Tel: 717 834-4449

**Alliance, Encore, GTA** Sam Stuckey, 8544 Norris Lane,

Knoxville, TN 37938 Tel: 865 922-2236

**Premier (Eagle)** Chris Davidson, 3615 E. 28th St. High-

land 92346 Tel: 909 862-4780

**American Alpine A-310 Club** Representative

Brad Stevens, 4652 Maiden Lane, Canandaigua, NY 14424

Tel: 585 394-3265

**Club Alpine Mexico** Representative

Francisco Miranda, Villahermosa #9, Mexico City DF 10400

E-mail: dinalpingt4@clubalpinemexico.com

**Alpine Renault Registered Owner's Association**

Editor: Yves Boode, 2816 Broadway, Rockford, IL 61108

Tel: 815 455-1944

**R5 Turbo Club** Representative

Bill Dickinson, 14548 Dickens St., Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

Tel: 818 981-6595

**www.RenaultClub.us**

Fall-Winter 2013 Members Only section:

**Username: pachuco**

**Password: r5**



## October 2012 Member Renewals

Ashcraft, Mark	Masson, Martin
Gnesko, Terry	Mitchell, Kevin
Keith, Devin	Pfau, Edward
Komorous, John	Plamondon, Tim
Lowry, Scott	Seeley, David
Marresse, Damien	Ver Dow, Robert

## November 2012 New Online Members

Fouquette, Judy, 9099 Harding Ave NE, Monticello, MN 55362, JFouqu2995@aol.com

Marx, Daniel L., 3728 Bergamot Drive, Springfield, IL 62707, skipnskidmarx@att.net

## November 2012 Member Renewals

Alvarez, Manuel	Gutherie, Sid
Avery, Dennis	Hacker, Jeffrey
Bacus, Jade	Koopman, Walter
Boode, Yves	McEwen, Mark
Bonaime, Matt	Perryman, Richard
Brown, Larry	Simpson, Pat
Bruce, Douglas	Symonds, Chester
Cardaciotto, Nick	Waterhouse, John
Curtis, Stanley	Weaver, Joseph

## December 2012 New Online Members

Edwards, Allen ,2249 E. Hillery Dr. Phoenix, AZ 85022, crownkingal@q.com

Jordan, Austin, 3146 NE 108th St, Portland, OR 97220, ajordan26@yahoo.com

Salerno. Nancy, 441 River Road, Newburgh, NY 12550, nintichka@hotmail.com

## December 2012 Renewal Members

Arata, Louis	Maurer, Martha
Best, Jason	Payton, J T
Degnan, James	Rose, Ira
Hand, Robert	Thoroman, Cody
Kunz, Peter	Uflacker, Rene



# 2013 Renault Club Meet Schedule

By Marvin McFalls

Date	Event	Location	Contact
Mar 8-10	Amelia Island Concours	Amelia Is, FL	M. McFalls, moose01@earthlink.net
Mar 28-31	Australian Muster	Junee, Queensland	Frank Wicks, fwicks2@bigpond.com
April ?	Gran Concurso De La Elegancia	Huixquilucan, MX	Rex Parker, parker.fam1@verizon.net
May 20-22	Import & Kit, Int. French Meet	Carlisle, PA	M. McFalls, moose01@earthlink.net
June 14-16	Rendezvous 2013	Saratoga, NY	Driveshesaid.com
June 28-29	CHEER's International Car Show	Georgetown, DE	Walt Koopman, rbdjet61@verizon.net
July 5-7	R4L International ??? (One or	Thenay, France	M. McFalls, moose01@earthlink.net
July 20-21	Festival Renault ??? the other)	Montlhéry, France	M. McFalls, moose01@earthlink.net
Aug 16-18	Monterey Motorsports Reunion	Monterey, CA	Mazda Laguna Seca Raceway
Sept 6-8	Road America Vintage Races	Elkhart Lake, WI	Brad Stevens, bahnzai@hotmail.com
Nov 1st	Best of F&I at Woodley	Van Nuys, CA	Jock Lynn, geezer.jock@aol.com
Nov ?	United States Grand Prix	Austin, TX	Mike Deak, deak.mihaly@gmail.com



# Bastille Day 2012

By Francisco Miranda

**O**n July 14, in the framework of the celebrations of the French National Holiday, the Embassy of France in Mexico organized a parade of collection French cars, under the name "Paris - Mexico - Le Havre".

After a brief keynote speech by the Ambassador of France in Mexico, Ms. Elisabeth Beton Délégue, they offered us a nice breakfast. More than 30 French classic cars came out of the "France Residence", driving through Reforma Avenue, one of Mexico's most important avenues, heading for the Omega Tower, located next to the France Embassy. The second tranche of the parade was in direction of Colonia Condesa, ending at the House of France, where a French product market was organized.

Several Renaults like 4CV, Dauphine, Floride, DinalpinA110L GT4 and A110 Berlinette, R10, R8, R4, R5, Citroen DS19, 2 CV, Peugeot 404 Special Edition, all these cars of the years 1949 to 1974.

The Alpine Club was represented this time by Alberto González, Juan Antonio Calvillo and his son Juan, Mauricio Peña, Alejandro Konstantonis and me.

The parade was headed by Ms. Elisabeth Beton Délégue and her husband and several embassies' executives, along the Renault and Peugeot executives.

After the Omega Tower first stop, Konstantonis and I were accompanied in the Dauphine by Monica Pérez, the Communication Director of Renault. Later at the last stage of the parade we were joined by Alberto Gironella and his son. From the Gordini Sport we saw Miguel Cacheux and his son, Pedro Mora, Alejandro Cortés (wearing both clubs shirts), Hector Perez and Grupo Auto Francés with Lorenzo Sendra were also present.

The parade was organized in collaboration with the Mexican Federation of Collection Antique Cars (FMAAC) and International Federation of Antique Vehicles (FIVA), sponsored by Peugeot and Renault companies. Accompanied by police at all times very well organized and coordinated at times by Alejandro Cortés, even closing streets for us to pass or leaving the avenues open only for the parade's cars, we were greeted by people on the streets who momentarily joined us in the French celebration.

At the House of France, we were greeted with some champagne and later on we could buy the French goods, wines and food.

After a quick cheese & bread snack, we went on to a more formal lunch, this time some Mexican food, with Monica Pérez, Alejandro Cortés, Alejandro Konstantonis, both Juanes Calvillo and both Albertos Gironella. Rain left us enjoy the





day with only minor drizzles here and there, but now really to concern. 🌀









# Fate of the R8 Gordini

By Marvin McFalls

Just before Halloween I received a disturbing notice:

*To: Maher Terminals Customers,  
Please be advised the entire Port has sustained devastating damage and flooding. We are waiting for permission from Port Authority to access the Terminals so we can determine the extent of the damages. We will keep you advised.*

*Thank you,*

*Mahe Terminals*

This was in reference to Superstorm Sandy in which thousands if not hundreds of thousands of cars received flood damage. My frustration was compounded by the fact the car was shipped to the port a month earlier and I couldn't understand why it wasn't already in route to Rotterdam, Holland. My only hope for the car was that it might be in an container stacked on top of another one or hopefully two. The first week in November I received a notice that car had been shipped, which I took as a positive sign. Then I received a copy of the inspection which stated the windshield was cracked and there was minor paint damage.

Just today I heard from the buyer that car had arrived with only very minor damage. This was quite a relief. The new owner is quite pleased with car, and I am relieved. The amount of work that goes into exporting a car, isn't worth anywhere near the proceeds from the sale. However, when I hear a story like this it makes feel proud to have made this deal happen. 🍷





# Return to Mexico

By Marvin McFalls

**A**fter a long summer of driving my Renaults on the highways and byways of America, I was looking forward to a return trip to Mexico. After my last visit I had marked the calendar for the last weekend in October. This is the weekend of the Gala Internacional del Automovil or simply The Gala.

Thursday night I caught the last flight to Mexico arriving at Midnight. After a good rest, I did another Friday ritual in Mexico fought the traffic to Alberto Gironella's garage. My good friend Gustavo drove me as he has never visited the Renault Mecca. After hours of talking Renault it was nearly 10:00PM and we hadn't eaten dinner, so Gustavo and I returned to Santa Fe to try to find some dinner. Amazingly the first restaurant we visited was closed, so we continued back into Mexico City where we found an all-night place.

On Saturday morning I awoke early and met up with Benjamin and his Family. After fueling the R5 we were joined by Luis Hernandez, a fellow Renault Fuego owner, who was driving his Harley Davidson. After fighting the city traffic, we made our way to the road to Toluca. After passing the turn off to Huixquilucan we stopped for some breakfast. Then I drove the final stretch while Ben rode with Luis on the motorcycle.

The Gala is held at a tradition Mexican Hacendado (Ranch) that has been converted into Restaurante Jajalpa. The facility has beautiful manicured lawn and is a nice setting for a car show. As we entered the event, the first cars we see are Renaults and Alpines. We were welcomed to the event by Gordini Club President Hector Perez, and it wasn't long until we were joined by Alberto Gonzalez the President of the Alpine Club of Mexico.

With people still coming in we decided to check out all the other makes. Like most show the majority of the field was covered with new car displays, but they did a nice job of separating the new with rows of classics. I was really impressed with the displays of pre-war models as well as the Microcar Club of Mexico. By the time we returned to the Alpine display many of our friends had arrived.

This was the first time since March my good friend, Francisco Miranda, had displayed his car at a club event. After talking for a while we decided to get some lunch. What started out as Francisco, Benjamin, and myself, quickly became an Alpine club get together as we were also joined by Juan Calvillo, Angel Espinosa, and both Alberto's Gironella and Gonzalez. We enjoyed some good German food, beer, and conversation in Spanish and English.

Following lunch I spent the rest of the afternoon speaking with friends and checking out cars. The weather was perfect, what a great day. After the show I rode back to the city





with Juan and his family. After two no stop days I was really tired, I believe I fell asleep before 8:00PM. The next morning I awoke rested and ready to go again.

On Sunday, Gustavo and I travelled north thru the city arriving at a local shopping mall. Today's event was El Elegido del Publico or the People's Choice car show. At first I found it hard to believe that they would have two major car shows the same weekend. When you have a city with 26 Million it is possible to get hundreds of cars at two different sites.

For Gustavo, this was the first time he had shown his White Renault 12 since completing its restoration. We were invited to the event by our friends from the Gordini Club. With most of the Renaults and Alpines at the Gala, we did our best to put together a good showing. We had a total of ten cars including four R12s, two R18s, and one each R5, R8, R10, and Alpine A110.

Gustavo and I decided to check out all the other models. This show was dominated by American models particularly Mustangs, but the Datsun club was also well represented and the largest group of imports. Jorge Mendoza was the event Organizer for the Gordini Club. This was the first time I had seen Jorge since the Renault Frères in March so we spent some time getting reacquainted, as well as meeting many of the other Renault enthusiasts.

As typically happens at these meets we became better acquainted over some food. After getting some snacks the discussion turned to different restoration techniques, followed by a visit to the cars to compare and contrast. As it was getting late, Gustavo and I decided to take one more pass to see what other cars had come in late. In our walk I believe I saw the most unique hearse I had ever seen. I don't ever recall seeing a Mustang parked outside a mortuary.

After checking out all the great cars, we decided to head back to the city and have an early dinner. It had been another great day, after a nice meal I said farewell to Gustavo, until my next visit. Gustavo enjoyed the meet and we even discussed travelling to Guadalajara this winter for a Renault meet. Who knows when I will get back to Mexico, but I am sure it will be fun. 🇲🇽









# The Return of El Tiburon

By Marvin McFalls

Several years ago I was going thru a box of old magazines and found an article on a Renault based fiberglass car built in Florida. Known as El Tiburon or The Shark, built by Henry Covington, it peaked my interest. It wasn't long after publishing this story I met the owner, Dr. Geoffrey Hacker. As it turns out he owns three of these amazing cars one of the original coupes and two roadsters. He recently told me the story of purchasing the first car when he was only eighteen years old:

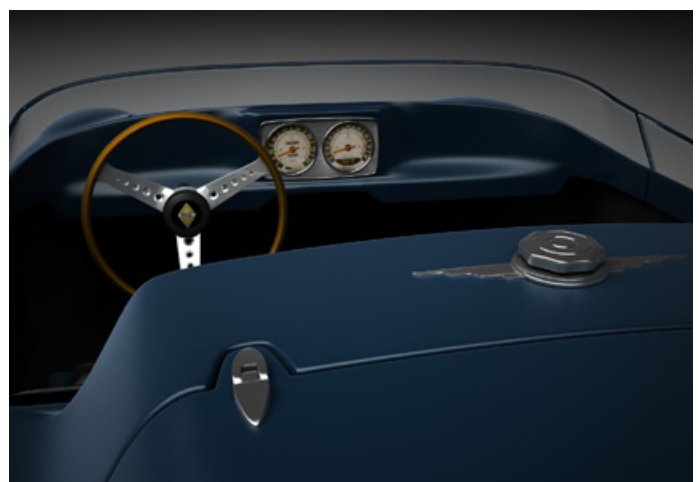
"When I was 17 years old, in 1979 my family moved to the Tampa Florida area. Since we were moving to a "beach" area, I thought I should work on the beach. While still in high school, I got a job at the Caribbean Gulf / Adam's Mark Resort on Clearwater Beach. To and from I would drive after school and while in college. And during one of these drives - I noticed it. A strange car parked behind a small building in downtown Clearwater Florida.

The car wouldn't leave my mind - and I didn't even know what it was called. So I finally got up the courage a 17 year old would have and asked about the car and if it was for sale. The man who owned it - 'Ole Man Rompon' was nice to me but firm: 'No young man...it's not for sale'. One day, in August 1980, I picked up a local Auto Trader and opened it up - as we all did back then - and low and behold the car was for sale. I drove right down to where the car was, burst thru the doors and asked about the car Mr. Rompon who owned the car was not there. But his son and daughter were - and they remembered me. They asked me what I would offer for the car and I told them "everything I had" - which was \$350. They pondered for a moment, told me they had an offer of \$500 but remembered how much I liked the car. 'Sold' they said!"

All Shark Roadsters were initially Renault based cars. Five fully running roadsters were built, and Geoff has pictures of each. One of these may have been the prototype - rebodied - so either 5 Shark roadsters were built plus a prototype giving a total of 6 separate cars - or the chassis of the prototype was repurposed bringing the total built for production to five.

Since that day Geoff's life has been led down the path of the fiberglass car. For more than three decades he has owned this Shark Roadster. He drove it throughout college and beyond. As the years have passed his collection of fiberglass bodied car has grown to the point where the Shark was put on the back burner. As projects have come and gone the Shark has always remained.

Just recently the organizers of the Amelia Island Concours invited Geoff to display a car at next year's event. Geoff decided it was time to complete the long overdue restoration of his first fiberglass car. So he and his team are working feverishly to complete the restoration in time for the March





8-10, 2013 event.

If you have the opportunity to be in North Florida in March please join Geoff and his team for the unveiling of the Shark Roadster. It should make quite a splash. 🌊





# Alpine to Return

By Marvin McFalls

In a somewhat unexpected announcement, Renault and Caterham have begun a partnership to create a new Alpine sports car, resurrecting the iconic brand and hopefully translating concepts such as the Alpine A110-50 to the road. The deal, which will see the creation of The Société des Automobiles Alpine Caterham in January 2013, could have sports tires on tarmac within the space of 3-4 years, though details of what exactly will bear the abandoned Alpine badge are currently couched in mystery.

“The future vehicles will be distinctive, differentiated, and carry the respective DNA of Alpine and Caterham Cars” is all the two companies would say today, though it’s clear that this isn’t just collaboration on a single model. “Renault and Caterham will combine their skills to build models in large and small volumes,” they say, “in order to widen their positioning on the sports car market.”

New models made as part of the partnership will be produced at the Alpine plant in Dieppe, France, saving it from closure. The Caterham Group will also grab a fifty percent

share in Automobiles Alpine Renault, which until now is entirely held by Renault SAS.

At present, the Dieppe facility produces Renault sport cars, the French firm’s niche performance models, and indeed The Société des Automobiles Alpine Caterham will be managed by Bernard Ollivier, who previously led the Renault Sport Technologies team. Since 2011, Ollivier has been VP of Transformation at Renault. 🌐





# Mystery of the Marquis Final Edition

By Marvin McFalls

I have been intrigued with the Marquis since 2001, since I received an original brochure featuring two cars, one called the Rogue, a sports roadster based on the Rosier Renault. The other car in the brochure was named as The Marquis and the text indicates that it was to be a replica of the R d l  "Renault Special" I received copies of this brochure and dozens of other from Allan Meyer a former editor of the *Renault News*.

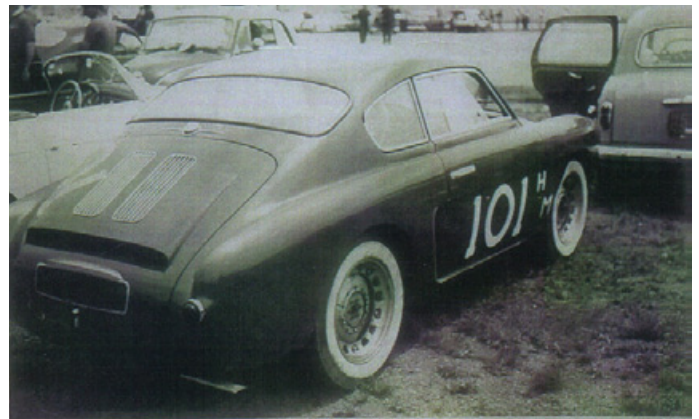
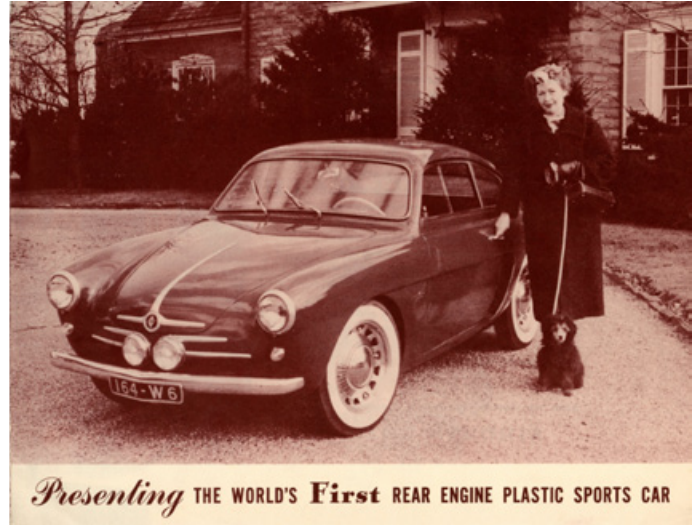
The company that had produced the brochure in question was PlastiCar Inc. A deal was made with PlastiCar to produce molds for R d l  in exchange for license rights in the USA. Arrangements were made for PlastiCar to purchase 150 chassis for Renault. The car was introduced at the 1954 New York Auto Show, and then sent to Doylestown Pennsylvania to make the mold. After several weeks with no word from PlastiCar, Jean R d l  arrive at their factory to find that his car the Marquis still had no molds made, and it had been parted out and the drivetrain installed in the Rogue. The deal fell apart

I just couldn't help but wonder what happened to these cars. In 2002 the first piece of the puzzle came together when I did a follow up story on the Rogue. I found it; it was in the final stages of a 5-year restoration of the only known Rogue built in 1954. This gave me hope that the Marquis might still be out there, and that one day I might find the Aluminum bodied Marquis.

After the initial stories I was contacted by Bill Harding, a long time Renault collector. He told me of seeing a car very much like the Marquis at an SCCA event in 1956. The event took place at the Upper Cumberland, Maryland Airport, and Bill said the car carried the letters HM, which in that particular case apparently meant that it was entered in the 750cc class, but he didn't recall seeing it race that day, after that It then disappeared for more than fifty years.

Over the next few years the trail was cold. I did find out that the R d l  aluminum car that was to be used as the mold and held by Zark Reed's PlastiCar Company had been put up for sale on a used car lot in Doylestown and purchased in 1955 by a local racer by the name of Bob Holbert. Not sure if Mr. Holbert was the one that brought the car to Maryland or not.

Then I got a break in 2008 when out of the blue a call came to my mechanic, Jonathan Burnette. As I would later find out the caller was Daniel Woods, the grandson of the car's owner more than half a century earlier Raymond Buckwalter. As it turned out in 1958 his mother, Mary Ann was given the car when she became old enough to drive. She recalled the trials and tribulations she went through with the car, as her father refused to have a charging problem fixed, and she would have to get push started on a regular basis.





Mr. Buckwalter, a bit of wheeler dealer, according to his grandson Daniel saw value in the car. When Mary Ann quit driving it, he placed it in a family barn in Lititz, Pennsylvania. After her father's death, in the late 1990's feeling nostalgic Mary Ann had the car repainted and tried to get it back in working order but couldn't find a mechanic to get it running. This is why Daniel had contacted Jonathan, trying to complete what his mother had started a decade earlier.

I was so excited after hearing from Daniel that I wrote the story of the discovery of the long lost Marquis. This caused quite a stir in Europe, and two other author's one from England and one from France worked with me to write stories. As we finally discovered the Marquis was the second Aluminum-bodied prototype commissioned by Jean Rédélé, designed by Giovanni Michelotti and built by Allemano in Italy. It competed and won the Dieppe Rally, before it was converted into the Marquis.

Once this news reached France, I was constantly bombarded with the questions about the car being for sale. As Mary Ann and Daniel had always hoped to restore as a tribute to Raymond Buckwalter, they were hesitant. As the cost involved in a complete restoration became clear to them, they knew they didn't have the resources to do it properly. Over the next year they toiled with the idea of selling the car.

Finally in 2011 the decision was made to sell the car, and of all the people that had expressed interest in the car one stood out above all. The Rédélé Family, who still own a good number of Alpines and display them in a private Museum in Paris were very interested in getting the oldest known car commissioned by their Father back in the family. After a great deal of negotiations the deal was made and the Marquis said farewell to the United States, and for the first time since 1954 its wheels rested on French Soil.

With little time to spare, the car was completely restored and displayed at Retromobile in Paris earlier this year. Who knew a copy of an old brochure would lead to all of this. I guess if you turn over enough stones eventually something interesting will crawl out. 🗨️





# Best of France & Italy 2012

by Kurt Triffet

The Best of France & Italy meet at Woodley Park in Van Nuys, CA on November 4th was a very nice event this year for our west coast members. Even though many were not able to attend, we did have possibly the largest showing of Caravelles ever.

The weather was nicely warm and classic L.A. autumn and I headed off to the meet bright and early from Ventura to meet our usual group for breakfast at Jerry's Deli in Encino. Longtime sleeping member ;- ) Joe Hernandez had contacted me prior to confirm and we ended up having a nice group. Dene and Pat Barret came down from Frazier Park with our longtime club friend Shin Yoshikowa, who drove up in a fabulously original Alfa. Chris Davidson, our former president showed up as well as a couple former members.

The show has the largest draw of Southern California Fiats, Alfas, Citroens, Lancias and all the ensuing exotics - Lambos, Ferraris etc. Rex Parker drove up in his Ferrari for the show. This is one of So Cal's best car shows to see cars you'll never see anywhere else. A big invite goes out to all of you who might be able to make it for next year's meet.

My personal highlight was blowing the head gasket in my '67 Caravelle about 20 miles from home driving back in the afternoon, but as these things go, it couldn't have been smoother or less damaging and has given me the chance to do much needed maintenance on my car. Thermostat. One should replace them after 16 years. ☺

























# My Manic Story

by Jerry Bimendyk

**M**y Renault adventure started in the late sixties and early seventies as a summer time job that I had acquired thru a friend who was a Renault mechanic at the local Renault / Fiat and import performance shop. The friendship was then expanded to the boss and his wife. This local shop was always on the go with the fastest and craziest projects that could be found and this became my introduction to the Performance world of Renault. It would later allow me to follow up on some of the local cars that had been sold and resulted in getting me a 1969 R8G, 1970 Manic GT, and my everyday driver which was a 1972 R12 with a modified 1565 motor with a 16TS head and the dual side-draft carbs.

The actual Manic story starts for me when I first saw and rode in the car. I had managed to get a spot behind the front seats sideways as the boss and mechanic raced along the roadway after performing a few performance upgrades. At the time I could only dream of owning such a car. A few years past and one day I noticed a Manic car off to the side in a yard on my way to work. I didn't stop because I didn't want to impose but I did continue to monitor the presence of the car in the yard. As time passed I noticed the car had a few issues and hadn't moved so I got up a bit of courage and dropped in to check it out. I knocked on the door and asked about the car and heard his story of how he had purchased the car from the dealership, and how he had lost control and rolled it and later blown the motor. I asked if he would sell the car, he was desperate for another vehicle and I managed to convince him to trade me for my old 1966 R10 that I had driven into his yard with. As a side note this was the same car that I previously could only have dreamt about.

My wife and I spent the next 5 weeks rebuilding the car and having it painted and started driving it—what proud owners we where!

Maybe I should make a additional note here, the car showed up a couple of weeks before we were to be married and funds where not plentiful so my wife agreed to the car taking first place over the furniture that was needed. That's when I knew I had a couple winners on my hands, both my wife and the car!

It was later that fall that my work place transferred me to what my wife and I thought was a remote God forsaken area with no place for us to live except for the company's sponsored apartment complex. My Manic didn't have a key for the door locks yet because I was still waiting for new locks from Renault so the car was left in my younger brother's care. It was a late fall Sunday night that I received a call from my parents stating that there had been a bad accident and my two younger brothers were in hospital and that my Manic was no more.

My younger brother had been out with his friends and they



*108 body removed and sitting on wooden platform*



*108 rusted out floor pan & frame rails remains*



*Start of the refurbishment of the floor pan*



*The Glass body being re-attached and final fibre-glassing being doing before the protective coatings will be applied*



decided to race to a local restaurant, missed the S bend and crashed into the roadway guy wires. The car had been severed into 3 pieces and the remains hauled off in the back of a pick up truck.

Before I continue both brothers did survive and the Mustang fast back with the big block motor had a run for its money until my brother over corrected into the corner and crashed.

I am going to skip ahead quickly and tell you that I moved the remains of my little Manic 3 times to my present location and that when I visited my brother the one who had been driving, the first thing he asked me about was, is the Manic okay and can we fix it. I didn't have the heart to tell him it was all in pieces, so I said to console him yes it can be rebuilt.

The manic car started me on a quest of how to build cars from the ground up so when it was time I would know how. Thirty six years later the fall of 2010, after having some bad set backs in life with health and finances and having been forced to go into a retirement mode, I was looking at cleaning up the left over Manic pieces and take them to the local dump.

I must admit when you lose your health and vocation you look at things differently! However just earlier my youngest brother and my parents had purchased a computer to help me along so one day I was trying to figure out how to get on the internet and decided to check on Manics and that's when Glen Woodcock's article—not sure which one it was but this one at least gets you into looking at the Manic: <http://manicgt.com/History.html>.

His site gave me a renewed interest in rebuilding my Manic and I started to follow his progress and would bother him often for info and parts. So I started collecting and finally this past summer of 2012 with Manic GT car # 108 I started to build and now I hope to complete a few of these wonderful Canadian built cars over the next number of years using my skills for my enjoyment / pleasure time.

Thanks again to Glen on his latest article on the Manic last fall that featured me as "The Manic Man."

As to date I have been able to collect 7 Manic cars and my original car's pieces still lying in the trees at the back of my property remind me of how I started with one Manic car that was broken into pieces that thru time created a passion for me in the automotive performance industry. 🌀



Same as picture #4 except the top side



The original car that I could only dream of with the owner of the dealership.



The collection of Manic cars as of fall 2011



# The Ultimate Alpine Recreation

By Roy Smith



*The Vialle Autogas team rallycross berlinette restored by John Wheeler. This would lead to the Ultimate Alpine project.*

At first glance you might think, "That's a nicely restored A110 berlinette – Group 5 perhaps– certainly looks interesting." Then you hear the figures from its owner; max power DIN HP 359.8, max torque DIN 325(441 Nms), weight 698Kg, and you're forgiven for thinking, "WOW!" Then "Impossible! No berlinette A110 ever saw those figures!"

You would be right. It's not an A110 berlinette, but unless you are a died-in-the-wool purist, unsettled by those who dare to look into the future of what might have been had Renault extended the life of the A110 model, you will find this fabulous recreation not only a true work of art and engineering perfection but, like its ancestors, one of the most beautiful shapes ever created for a motor car, and a worthy contender to extend the name of Alpine in the current world of the super-car aficionados.

It is the work of life-long English Alpine enthusiast and passionate berlinette fan John Wheeler. He fell in love with the cars when he saw his first one at the 1968 Monte Carlo Rally.

## The Vialle Autogas Alpine

John owned a few Alpine berlinettes in the late 1970s and 1980s. Each was restored and each one moved on. In 1984, he acquired a famous Vialle Autogas team rallycross berlinette rolling shell, which 1978 Dutch Rallycross champion Piet Kruythof had piloted in the 1977/78 European Championships (7th in 1977 and 4th in 1978). John had found the car after seeing an advert specifying for sale an ex-works Renault Gordini 16-valve engine. Subsequent investigations revealed that the owner was former rallycross driver Willem van Dalen, and not only did he have the engine—but the car too! He ended up buying both. "Everything was in a terrible state," says John. "It was waterlogged, corroded and the car had a severely bent chassis as it had suffered a huge crash in its last race!"

John set about restoring it. The restored chassis and body were taken to Tim Duffee of Darrian fame in Lampeter, South Wales UK, where the restored car was eventually reunited with its engine, a 16-valve Type 807-G4 double overhead cam 1774cc Renault Gordini.

With the Vialle car complete, John's mind turned to something else that had been nagging in his mind. Over the years, John's experience with the Alpine Dieppe-produced berlinettes meant that he had enjoyed both the good and bad points of the cars. Bad? Surely not? "Well, yes," says John; "Although in their day they had won pretty much everything and even today are still performing with excellent results. But they are not very easy to work on – the master cylinder location, for example, is very difficult to access. The components are at the back of the engine under the rear shelf. I am not a great fan of that swing axle and the subsequent wishbone suspension, which is on the Vialle car and makes it very twitchy and nervous."

The idea evolved to try to improve the car – in fact to build a "modern" berlinette. "I love the shape, the story of the car, its history and the great emotion of the cars. So I thought, as I like the cars so much, I will build my own. In 1991, I spoke to Tim Duffee and found that the wheelbase, track and general layout of the original Alpine berlinette were much the same on his grp/Kevlar monocoque chassis used on the Darrian. So I decided to go for it."

## MC220 Chassis 001

Road-going Chassis 001. The first recreation was an absolute delight. Planned for a production run, it proved too difficult to undertake, but the concept lived on.

The result was the Monte Carlo MC220, chassis 001, built primarily for the road. John says, "That 001 car was an absolute delight. We upgraded the original 8-valve engine with





a Renault 21 12-valve, 190-200-ish bhp, and the joy of that was not only the performance but the torque – just fantastic; compared with the Renault 16-derived engines it was enormous. I've done about 35,000 miles in it and it's been all round France and Europe. It has the semi-trailing arm rear suspension and it feels brilliant. It's been great."

### MC220 Chassis 002

John did have big plans to make loads of them, of course – that was the initial idea – but unfortunately the step up to production was too great. But he liked the idea so had two more monocoques made; one became Monte Carlo chassis 002, now owned by English Club Alpine Renault member Paul Godfrey. The second one, chassis 003, was put on the back burner at that time while John managed his business.



Chassis 002 was sold to English Club Alpine Renault member Paul Godfrey and it is the foreground here. In the background is the Vialle Autogas restoration.

### MC220 Chassis 003

John does much of the finishing himself and says it involves a lot of time and of course money; such projects do not come cheap. John's business retired in 2006, and he had

another "dream": to build the ultimate Alpine A110. The chassis to 003 lay quietly waiting its time. But what was the existing 'ultimate Alpine?' With his passion for the marque, he knew that the wildest creation previously had been the 1972 Turbo car; with its superlight body and near 200bhp turbocharged engine, it was indeed in its day, a monster. The first berlinette turbo car in the hands of Jean-Luc Th erier proved invincible in the 1972 Crit erium des C evennes. This iconic machine was to be the concept image that would lead John into what he says is his last one: chassis 003. Its specification is awesome, built with eight years' worth of improvements that have come along.



The body itself is of course very light, and the doors feature 5mm Perspex up-and-down sliding windows, the rear window also being 5mm Perspex.

John Wheeler: "I went up and spoke with Julian Godfrey Engineering. Julian is one of the UK's top turbo engine men. He built the European Rallycross Championship-winning Ford Cosworth-derived 500-600bhp engines, and now has one that's got nearly 925bhp on tap. I took all my bits over there and asked if he would be prepared to build the engine, map it, dyno it, etc. Julian has an incredible engine-mapping skill; that's what makes the difference."

### Chassis/Body

The front suspension is a fully independent Darrian strut system with rose-jointed wishbones, adjustable coil-over AVO dampers and rose-jointed anti roll bar. The rear suspension is fully independent by semi-trailing arms with adjustable coil-over AVO dampers; steering is conducted through a 2.75 high ratio rack and pinion. A tubular steel roll cage integral to the monocoque, is supplemented by a full cockpit roll cage of conventional design. The front of the monocoque houses the foam-filled tank ahead of which are a pair of special micro-bore radiators, one to cool the engine while the other goes to the intercooler. The wheels are currently 15" six spoke three-piece aluminium on Ford Cosworth hubs. The body itself is of course very light, and the doors feature 5mm Perspex up-and-down sliding windows, the rear window also being 5mm Perspex. The Alpine factory lift-back rear section opens in the



same way as the Vialle car to give easy access to the components at the business end of this amazing creation – the end where it all happens, of course.

## Engine

The basis is a Renault 4-cylinder 1995cc J7R 720 aluminium block with under-piston oil jets and modified to accept turbo oil return feed. JE forged pistons giving an 8.1 compression ratio are fitted to steel con-rods connecting to a steel billet crank that has been ground and nitrided. Ductile liners are home to the pistons and a modified trap-door baffled sump contains the Valvoline VR1 10W 60 semi-synthetic racing oil which runs through the engine at 70psi (4.83 bar).



*The 350+bhp is sent via the steel billet lightweight flywheel through a 200mm Sachs racing clutch and pressure plate with organic friction discs, to a modified Renault UN1 transaxle with an ATB Quaife differential with a single piece mainshaft.*

The cylinder head is a Renault 21 TXi 12-valve-skimmed 1.5mm, flowed and ported by the engine builder. A 21 turbo (Victor Reinz) head gasket seals it all off. Dual valve springs operate Nimonic 80A valves. A billet camshaft operates the Balinit C coated Oerlikon rocker arm pads to give 275° inlet and 264° exhaust operation. Timing is done by a JGE/Marelli camshaft pulley sensor. The electrics are looked after by a Ford coil pack, Magnecor HT leads, NGK BCR8ES plugs; a Ford 3-bar mapping sensor operates with a Motec M4 ECU. Raychem System 25 cables are used for the wiring loom.

Fuel is fed through a high-flow system to Bosch 381cc/minute injectors. The air arrives from a Pipercross cone filter into a 60mm Cosworth throttle body to a custom JGE modified Cosworth plenum chamber. The whole lot is turbocharged by a Garrett GT2860RS with 0.63 AR turbine, Ultimate waste gate and 3" Vband connector. The intercooler is an air/water unit (cooled by one of the dual radiators at the front) with 4 Laminova cores. A huge and very effective stainless steel exhaust system and silencer evacuates the gases.

The 350+bhp is sent via the steel billet lightweight flywheel through a 200mm Sachs racing clutch and pressure plate with organic friction discs to a modified Renault UN1 transaxle with an ATB Quaife differential with a single piece

mainshaft. Gear ratios: 1st 3.00, 2nd 1.94, 3rd 1.38, 4th 1.04, 5th 0.82, F/D 3.89.

The boost comes in with a whoosh instantaneously, zero lag, and suddenly we rocket forward with the speed of the space shuttle, the noise coming from the back sounding like the scream of the Valkyries.

## Driving the Ultimate Alpine

So what's it like on the road? Electrifying! Below boost it is a "pussy cat"; driving within the speed limits it is calm and smooth, though the clutch seems tricky, making it none too easy to potter along in traffic. At the moment, there is no sound-proofing, so one can hear everything – VERY LOUDLY! Pulling out of the restricted speed zones the throttle is squeezed, not stamped, and the boost comes in with a whoosh instantaneously, zero lag, and suddenly we rocket forward with the speed of a space shuttle, the noise coming from the back sounding like the scream of the Valkyries. A gear change takes us up from 3rd to 4th – incredibly, we were already in third gear before the acceleration started! A corner comes up and the car plants itself flat on the road with no roll or hint of tricky adhesion; in fact, John says, "It's almost like 4-wheel drive!"



*Julian Godfrey drove John Wheeler's car to a Class win at the annual National Speed Trials on 8th September 2012.*

I wonder just what will this be like off the line with full power on, and the massive torque punching through the lower gears. We could not find out, with only 70km the clock prudence was the better part of valour. We will wait eagerly to see if this incredible Alpine passion-driven recreation can become the fastest berlinette in the world. At this years Brighton Speed trials in Sussex England, current British Rallycross Champion Julian Godfrey drove John Wheeler's car to a Class win at the annual National Speed Trials on 8th September 2012, run on the famous Madeira Drive on Brighton's seafront in brilliant sunshine.

Running in Class 3 for 2001cc – 3500cc road-going cars, Julian's best time was 12.25 seconds with a terminal speed of 125mph. 🏁



# The Long Awaited Return of Jesse's Corner

By Jesse Patton

**A**fter reading a small column concerning Facebook (Whatever that is) and Marvin's fighting technology and the masses, I am here using Carter's neat-file stamp pad inker to rejuvenate my typewriter as I have trouble finding ribbon for my Underwood 310. Friends it is not easy swimming against the tide, but I like to keep it simple.

Back to the subject of this article, in the spring, John Shuler came down from Pennsylvania to work on the four Alliances I jockey around in. Now I am always breaking window regulator, the manual kind. On this visit Johnny brought down something different to deal with this annoyance. Back in 1994 Jeep had a problem that led to a recall. The problem was with the steering wheel airbags. The shop mechanics were issued a kit to deal with this. In the kit was a heavy duty shrink wrap material used in the modification and repairs. It is extra heavy duty and perfect for repairing those old plastic tubes in our window regulators which are brittle and dried out. Eighteen years ago there was plenty of this around. All I know is that John had collected plenty of it when he worked for Jeep-Chrysler and still has some.

Basically all you have to do is attach it to both sides of the break and strike a match! It really works great. I have looked around to see if I could match this material up so our members could pick some up for repairing their window regulators. To this point I have had no luck, if anyone out there has seen this type of material please let the club know about it.

Another sore spot for me has been the lack or non-existence of new replacement Radiators for the Alliance. Have I been missing something online? One month ago I lost an MB1 automatic transmission due to an internal break in the transmission cooler in my radiator. Must be a pinhole because the radiator repair shop could not find the source of the leak, and before I let them recore it I want it found and fixed. I use my Alliances as everyday drivers and it isn't getting easier, as a lot of you know.

We will win. Whatever, Wherever Whenever  
Jesse

*Editor's Note: As you may have discovered from story Jesse is not into technology, but if you know of any solutions to his problems you can reach me on Facebook, or e-mail at [moose01@earthlink.net](mailto:moose01@earthlink.net) I will be happy to pass along the info to our good friend 🍷*





## The Back Page



*"A Day In The Life... Geoff Emerick (on the left), The Beatles Recording Engineer taking a look to the Dauphine-Gordini engine. Also in the pictures Howard Massey, author of several books on pro audio and co-writer with Geoff of "Here, There and Everywhere" about his life recording with The Beatles."  
—Francisco Miranda*

Renault Owners Club of North America  
13839 Hwy 8 Business  
El Cajon, CA 92021