

Renault News

FOR THE NORTH AMERICAN RENAULT ENTHUSIAST | **SUMMER 2015** | 110



French Cars & Coffee

**Renault Owners
Club**

 OF NORTH AMERICA



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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

Communications Support Sandee Weiner

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.

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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 renaultclub.us

Or send payment, along with details about your cars to:

Sharon Desplaines

467 Mission Gorge Rd #81, Santee CA 92071

Tel: 619-334-1711 • 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 • hummer5@cox.net

Classified Ads

Place ads online at renaultclub.us/letstalk

Or mail brief ads to:

Kurt Triffet, 3333 San Luis St., Ventura, CA 93003

info@renaultclub.us

Marketplace display ads available

Renault Club Discussion Forum

renaultclub.us/letstalk

Articles, Letters, Correspondence

Marvin McFalls, 4800 Ball Camp Pike, Knoxville TN 37921

Tel: 865-387-1004 • moose01@earthlink.net

Newsletter Production and Publishing

Triffet Design Group • www.triffetdesign.com

Tel: 805 658-8646 • info@triffetdesign.com

Back Issue Requests

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Issues 1 to 57 only \$7

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Michael Muller, 4907 Meridian Ave. North,

Seattle, WA 98103 • 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

jacques@renaultparts.us

R8, Fuego, Medallion Don McLaughlin, 390 Linton Hill

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

Alliance, Encore, GTA

John Schuler, 120 Stirrup Lane, Kunkletown PA, 18058

Tel: 484 431-8050

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

Highland, CA 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

francisco.miranda@estudio19.com.mx

Racing Tech

Bobby Archer, 977 Bask Lane, Roanoke, TX 76262

Tel: 817 709-8074 • bobbyarcher1@msn.com

Alpine Renault Registered Owner's Association

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

Tel: 815 455-1944 • yvesboode@gmail.com

Gordini Engines, Custom Building

Martin Moe, Seattle, WA, Tel: 206-542-8440

R5 Turbo Club Representative

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

Tel: 818 981-6595

January 2015 New Online Members

Chase, Paul 61 Sawyer Rd Wells ME 04090
 pchase@maine.rr.com
 Fischer, Michael 13 Everglade Place Calgary Alberta
 Canada T2Y4M7, MichaelFischer@delorean.net
 Hall, David 15411 Felix Rd El Paso TX 79938
 dhall003@elp.rr.com
 Tamaki, Keishin 1374 Park Dr Vancouver BC Canada
 V6P2K6, ksin86@gmail.com
 Wolf, John 36420 Biltmore Place Willoughby OH
 44094, jwolfco@gmail.com

January 2015 Member Renewals

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Aldridge Welding Service | Indian Sailability AMS |
| Bartlett, Dorothy | Luke, John III |
| Carbon Frame Fix LLC | Olsen, Peter |
| Chiulli Roseanne | Purcell, Raymond |
| Dabney, Stephen | Sias, Jeff |
| Green Wheels Center | Thoroman, Ted |
| Gross, Thomas | Weiner, Sandee |

February 2015 New Online Members

Alvarez, Ian 78 Pine Orchard Rd Branford CT 06405
 malmaure@yahoo.com
 Weaver, John 2544 Tall Pine Lane Knoxville TN
 37920 DeLoreanss@aol.com

February 2015 New Postal Members

Kinsel, Robert 555 W. Vine St Canton IL 61520
 lubob6@yahoo.com

February 2015 Member Renewals

| | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Davis, Joseph | Olsen, Peter |
| Ketchpaw, William | Roe, Patrick |
| Lardani, Anthony | Simpson, Pat |
| Manickchand, Ryan | Shoen, Paul |
| Nicotera, Mark | Wicks, Frank |

March 2015 New Online Members

Edwards, Michael 52 Carroll St Falmouth ME 04105
 mikeedwards@matrixgb.com

Grant, Ralph 281 Loon Ct Foster City, CA 94404
 tom281@comcast.net
 Martin, Dale 675 North 8 Mile Road Midland MI
 48640 martinvic@Charter.net

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| Dimopoulos, Nicholas | Powers, Warren |
| Douglas, Malcolm | Rapoport, Jed |
| Gassman, Joe | Showers, John |
| Lane Motor Museum | Solstad, Edward |
| Luke, John III | Strus, George |
| Macek, James | Vanhorn, Kerry |
| Marrese, Damian | |

March 2015 Member Renewals

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Alvarez, Manuel | Kukulele, King |
| Beatty, William | Lazarus, Thomas |
| Brown, Mark | Macek, James |
| Carre, Gerard | Penner, Darrell |
| Davis, Joe | Richards, Allen |
| Hutchison, Charles | Spork Spelunking Productions |
| Kough, Robert Jr. | |

April 2015 Member Renewals

May 2015 New Online Members
 Cinaroglu, Kemal P.O. Box 690893 San Antonia TX
 78269, kemal@kc-international.com

May 2015 New Postal Members

Nakatosh Tattoo Company 1505 West Court
 Natchitoches LA 71457, olorin8@hotmail.com

Alvarez, Manuel
 Beatty, William

May 2015 Member Renewals

June 2015 New Online Members
 Hacker, Barton 5478 Crawford Dr. Columbus OH
 43229 barton.hacker@gmail.com
 Keen, William 7905 Orange Grove Road Chapel Hill
 NC 27516 Billkeen469@msn.com



Renault Frères 2015



Mille Miglia 2015

Renault Alconi

submitted by Marvin McFalls

The “Renault Alconi” was a special performance model of the Renault 8 & 10 (1108cc engine) vehicles, marketed by the Renault (Africa) division of Regie Renault (France) between the years 1965 and about 1968.

The R8 and R10 Renault vehicle was a fairly small, 4 door, rather close in the rear (hardly possible to accommodate say 4 rugby forwards though front seats were renowned for their comfort) 4 seater with rear engine that replaced the Dauphine model. As competition for the VW beetle, it offered considerably more power, and far superior fuel economy. Shortly after the arrival in 1963 of the (956cc) engined R8 model, racers began to modify them and race with great success in the “9 hour” International Endurance race at Kyalami race track, in highly modified form, driven by Scamp Porter. The car achieved a 4th place finish overall, including 1st in class.

This was a story book result. Soon after, to take advantage of the result, the Renault Africa management and two of Scamp Porter’s friends, (fellow racers who had helped in this R8’s engine upgrades), John Conchie and Eric “Puddles” Adler, talked together to capitalise on the competition successes and discuss marketing a high performance version of the Renault R8 to the enthusiastic ‘car mad’ South African public.

A larger-engined 1108cc version of the R8 was released early in 1964, and this version was utilized for the performance mules, which already had inherited the name “Alconi” by combining the last names of the two developers. Modifications were made to the motor, upping power to 68bhp (net), which cut acceleration time 0-60 mph by about 40% and increased top speed by about 20%. The only other alteration was the inclusion of a tachometer and distinctive Alconi badges.

One demonstration Alconi charged around South Africa in the hands of factory representatives, introducing the concept to their Renault dealers and at the same time testing the vehicle under duress, and a few other kits went to Renault staff members and owner enthusiasts for feedback.

At about this time, Adler and Conchie incorporated, launching themselves as Alconi Developments. They were motor racing enthusiasts, and between them had already established a performance development



reputation by competing in events quite successfully, with saloon cars like Fiat 1100, Simca Etoile and Fiat 1500. They started procuring parts and manufacturing components for the Alconi kits they were installing and selling, as well as for assembly into the first batch of vehicles due shortly from the assembly line. A newly introduced electrically controlled rolling road “Dynamometer” and Camshaft grinder was also ordered to assist their tuning business.

While this was in progress, the Porter brothers continued racing and rallying and, in the grueling 1964 July “Total LM Rally”(Johannesburg-Lourenco Marques, Mozambique), using another test Alconi-engined R8, managed to secure an overall win!

For the 1964 November “9 Hour” a number of Renault R8s, many with Alconi modifications and engines, competed, resulting in another 4th overall, 1st saloon car finish (Scamp Porter, A Chatz, drivers) ahead of a high powered sports car and saloon car field similar to the previous year.

Scheduled assembly and production of the first of a number of batches of 50 Alconi R8 vehicles started towards the end of 1964 or beginning 1965, and a “French Racing Blue” color was chosen. Somehow, the assembly plant erred with the mix and a bluish purple hue resulted. This became known as “Alconi blue” and all future R8 Alconis were made in this color. Purchase price was approximately 10% above the standard car.

Regie Renault (France) developed and offered the Renault R8 Gordini 1108cc in 1965 in South Africa, and a 1255cc version towards the end 1966, and these vehicles were also immediately available in South Africa. It came only in french racing blue, so the two performance R8 vehicles could easily be identified. Performance of the 1100 Gordini was hardly superior to the Alconi, and the price was about 15% higher.

From late 1966 onward, with the arrival of the Renault R10, production of the Alconi in batches of 50 R10s was initiated. Standard R10s were marketed with the Renault 1108cc Caravelle engine, with slightly better performance from a twin-choke weber carburetor. The production Alconis used their same upgrade kit on the newer R10 1108cc engine, but retained the production carburetor and the vehicle was slightly lower (1 inch) than its standard brother. Colour choices were initiated: Alconi blue with white flashes down the sides, Red with white flashes and white with red flashes. Production continued through 1967 and 1968 and possibly 1969.

In Alconi form, approximately 400 - 500 new vehicles were sold by dealerships. Many conversion kits were sold through the dealership and aftermarket. Owners were for the most part very enthusiastic, and it was especially sought after by the young "road racer" genre. Road handling with the rear engine was quite good, but could be tricky at times. However, suspect road holding was not at all the case with the track race cars, and they continued to establish the standard for saloon race car handling.

Without doubt, competition success helped all Renault vehicle sales and sales penetration in South Africa during this period substantially. Because the public in South Africa were "performance car" mad, successful competition achievements formed an integral part of the marketing plan for "Alconi" and "Gordini" sales.

This R8 Gordini (which had many different parts, and could not be fitted as a kit) in 1255cc form could accelerate about 5% faster than the Alconi, with top speed about 10% higher, and cost about 20% more than it. For racing purposes its power potential was superior, and racing participants opted for Gordini 1300cc engines in most events thereafter. Alconi vehicles also offered superior fuel economy to the standard Renault 8, which was already a class leader, so they accumulated overall wins almost every year in the annual "Mobil Fuel Economy Run". On many sections, more than 60mpg was recorded.

Renault Gordinis, (usually with many optional Alconi

manufactured racing parts) were dominant in their class in modified saloon sprint racing for the next few seasons, and the Renault 8 accumulated an unmatched endurance record, which no doubt helped vehicle sales.

No other vehicle, South African or overseas professional, achieved such endurance racing success as the R8, proving the vehicle's reliability and startling performance potential, as well as its unmatched reliability and wet weather handling, that gave it the ability to pass nearly all out and out Sports Racers during downpours.

After 1969, production of newer and heavier models of Renault, with front engines, started to come off the assembly lines, and the R8/10 model slowly became obsolescent, so factory racing support for these vehicles dried up. But privateers still continued to race for many seasons.

An overall Saloon car lap record was held at Kyalami (the only events in which the car competed) during 1968 and shared in 1969 by a 1300cc supercharged Alconi prepared R8, and later an R10 when its body style was changed. Interesting to note, Jody Scheckter, South Africa's only World Formula 1 racing champion, started his blossoming career in sprint races with a 1300cc Renault R8 with Gordini and Alconi modifications. The Alconi factory later supplied the equipment for the supercharged 1424cc engine with which Scheckter was able to compete and periodically take overall wins (in 1969/70)

Towards the close of the decade, it is possible that 1300cc R10s (engine from the R12) might also have been offered from the assembly line. By then, inevitably, newer and more modern concepts (R12) were in the pipeline to cater to the public's changing tastes.

The Renault R8 and R10 Alconi were only marketed off the showroom floor as new vehicles in South Africa. Renault Africa also supplied conversion kits through their parts department. Today original factory Alconi Renaults have become quite sought after as a collector car in that market. 💎



2015 Annual Club Alpine Mexico Lunch Party

by Francisco Miranda

A year went by very fast and it is time to celebrate our annual lunch. As in previous years, Janette and José Miguel Díaz Goñi kindly opened their doors of their beautiful house in the nearby sunny city of Cuernavaca. An occasion to mingle with the club members' as usually there is not much time to do so during the year.

We started the day early at 10 AM at Alberto González house, but I left my Gordini parked there and we drove in Alberto's Peugeot Pininfarina. A very smooth and comfortable ride indeed! My friends were starving, so we stopped at Tres Marias, a small town midway to Cuernavaca, where they sell assorted Mexican food. After I ordered some delicious duck tacos and my friends enjoyed other delicacies, we took to the road again. Not more than 2 miles later, we found heavy traffic. A semi-truck rolled over in a very dangerous corner called "La Pera" for its pear shaped form. This accident slowed us down, but it was so dangerous with some fluid spillover, that they had to close down that curve and detour all the heavy weekend traffic for more than 4 hours. We were lucky to pass early, as other friends that passed through there a few hours later suffered the traffic jam for about an hour in just a few miles drive.

At our arrival and after opening the house front door, we were received by the beautiful sight of the white A110 G-IV with its 180 BHP, delivered by the 2 liter engine along the other family cars, including a Renault Laguna break. Of course it was enough excuse at some point to gather round the cars to talk about them. It seems it is definitely a virus or a strange car sickness!

An exquisite lunch was served with hors d'oeuvres, different salads, vegetarian and non-vegetarian lasagnas and assorted desserts. Wines, beer, refreshments and liquors were offered starting early in the afternoon and going well into the late night hours.

This year it was decided to present some awards to the members who achieved something during the year: Mauricio Peña received an Award for the club's organization of the Guinness Record 2014 and La Gala del Automóvil; Juan Antonio Calvillo for organizing Renault Frères; Eduardo Wolf for his enthusiastic participation in car events. The special "Roberto Arnstein Award" was presented to Teodoro Hernández for unveiling his A110L-GT4 at Renault Frères. He

decided to share the award with his family, as they all contributed to the hard labor. An appreciation gift was also presented to Janette de Díaz Goñi for her kindness inviting us to their home.

As a bonus, we also celebrated Teodoro's 51st birthday with cake and a joyful happy birthday toast.

As you can see, it was a very busy day. Some friends stayed the night at a nearby hotel and some others returned to Mexico City, me included. From Alberto's house I drove back the blue Gordini to my place and got there at about 2 AM. A long but joyful day! 🍷



5th Annual International French Car Meet

by Marvin McFalls • photos by Jedrzej Chmielewski



Since the end of last year's show we have been excited to get to back Carlisle. Usually we start setting up on Friday, but this year John Vogler delivered my R16 and Encore early in the week and Don McLaughlin also came in early delivering his LeCar race car to the showfield. So on Friday morning the Famous Fuego along with myself left Knoxville around 12:00 AM, and we arrived in Carlisle a little after 8:30 PM. This gave me a few minutes to talk with Ed B. of Carlisle Events before heading to Building R. Around 9:00 AM we began checking in cars, Jamie Grigg with his incredible red Fuego had arrived along with my right and left hand men Sandy Lea in his Silver GTA Convertible and Lee Weaver who brought a VW Beetle Turbo (we forgave him eventually).



Inside of building R we already had Brent Lundgren's DeLorean. Walter Koopman had just arrived with his 1965 Matra Bonnet djet 5S. Both were part of the Renault You May Not Know display. Dale Martin had also arrived with his beautiful Renault 16 which was featured in the 50th Anniversary display along with my barn find R16. Special thanks to George and George Dimopoulos (cousins) who decorated the R16 giving it a barn fresh appearance.

As we continued to work on the display, I placed the Famous Fuego behind the building and we roped off the area with our Toys for Tots logo. It wasn't long before Brent Bartley also arrived with his Invitational Display vehicle; a Vespa 400 which represented the 5th Annual International French Car Meet. Also driving in with Brent was chef extraordinaire Dan Barton, who came in from Dayton, Ohio.



By this point the show field was starting to fill in as well the aforementioned elder George Dimopoulos had brought his freshly painted red GTA, along with John and Don in their silver GTA, and Nick Chennell in his white GTA all coupes and Tom Gross came in his Red GTA convertible bringing the total to six GTAs at this point. Our other early arriver was Tony Conception, a local car dealer who brought out his very nice Blue R10. In the past Tony had displayed the car at the show hoping to sell it. However this year he had given up trying to sell it and just brought it to display, little did he know!

With Building R now up and running we started a new tradition with a visit to the nearby Rolls Royce

Foundation. The Foundation is a combination Museum and restoration house for the foundation. I found out about the museum several years ago but this was the first time we were able to incorporate it into our Carlisle activities. Those who attended enjoyed the collection and the tour. We look forward to visiting again next year so plan to come on Friday if you want to see this incredible collection.

Following the Foundation Brent, Walter, and I headed to the grocery store to grab some provisions for our Charity French Dinner and a Movie, while Lee returned our chef, Dan, back to the fairgrounds to begin preparing the meal. By the time we returned, I was very pleased to see that everything was coming together. The Boy Scouts were even stepping in setting up the tables for dinner. It looked like for once everything was going to happen as planned.

Once I got over that euphoric feeling, I asked someone where are the Canadians? Our good friends from Quebec were scheduled to arrive around 4PM and it was now nearly five. The only member of their party to arrive was Paul Pietrzak. Paul left a few hours later than the rest of the group but had arrived around 4PM in his Red GTA Convertible. We made several attempts to contact our friends but no answer. So we decided to wait until 5:30 to start the dinner activities to give them a little more time. Shortly after six we started the dinner service with more than 50 people joining us from the Renault, Citroen, and Matra clubs.

Finally about 6:30 my phone rings. It turned out to be Marty Mckee and Aaron Cathey along with Aaron's family. Marty was driving his two owner Renault 18i wagon and Aaron came in his flat black GTA coupe. They had driven up all day from Tennessee. While they were late they were not last. Shortly after 7PM, I received the call from Stephane Larivee who was driving a gorgeous 1970 R16. The Canadians had finally arrived! Quickly I went to the gate to meet them and Ed B joined us with their passes. By 7:15 we had them checked in and entered the show led by Nicolas Reichenbach in the Renault 4TL, followed by Terry Gnesko in the 1978 LeCar, David Hebert in his 1983 Renault Fuego Turbo, and Nathalie Perreault in her 1985 R5.

Needless to say they made quite an entrance with the blue light flashing and siren blaring on the R4. Everyone ran out to see their cars and once we moved them through the serving line we began our movie. Our movie was French going along with the dinner theme and featured on of our Invitational display vehicles. The Famous Fuego is named so for being in





the film, "Who ReKilled Pamela Rose," an over the top comedy about two bumbling FBI agents that makes lots of digs at America. By shortly after 9pm we concluded the evening and went back to get some rest.

It was literally a minute after my head hit the pillow I was out. By morning I was recharged and ready to go again. While everyone met at the Middlesex for Breakfast, I headed to the fairgrounds to open the building and set up club tent. Luckily Jamie Grigg had also arrived early and he was gracious to help me hang the club and Toys for Tots banner and set up the display. By the time we returned to Building R, cars began arriving. One of the first to arrive was newcomer, Anthony Conceicao. Anthony drove up from Gainesville, Virginia in a nearly original red R5 GT Turbo. It looked perfect parked next to Jamie's Fuego. It wasn't long until another red car arrived. This was our good friend Norman Preser from Columbia, South Carolina, via Germany. Norm came up in his beautiful red Alpine A310. If you hadn't guessed next new car to arrive was red, this one an 1986 Renault Alliance convertible owned by Hector Lopez.

At this point all the cars had arrived except one. The last Renault to arrive would be via trailer as John Vogler and Nick Dimopoulos went to a nearby friend's to pick up a black GTA that John had sold him. Nick was planning to take it home to Massachusetts where he would dismantle it for parts. So at that point we had 25 Renaults on the grounds 9 GTAs, 5 R5s, 3 R16s, 3 Fuegos, and an Alliance, Encore, R18, R10, & R4. Along with the Three Renault powered cars Alpine A310, Matra djet, and DeLorean DMC-12.

With all the players in attendance it was now time for the special driving exhibition featuring Renaults You May Not Know. At Noon on the Carlisle Auto-cross, Walter Koopman drove the Matra djet while Nicholas, Stephane, and myself all took turns driving the modified R4 TL. So you may ask why the Renault 4 was included in the display? With over 8 million sold, of which zero sold here it is by far the best known Renault not known in the U.S.

Following the track demo we returned to building R where I met up with David LaChance for a series of interviews with Renault owners from Hemming's Motor News. Earlier that morning David had proposed a cross sectional story about Renaults and what attracted their owners to the marque. I think it will turn out to be a very popular piece when it runs. As always special thanks to David for leading the way in Featuring French cars regularly in his work.

After the interviews we moved into a toast of two

French classics. The two in question were the Citroen DS celebrating its 60th Anniversary and the R16 with 50 years of service. For the toast Paul and Rose Anderson provided a wonderful DS and Jean-Francois Bourque lent Stephane his classic R16. Brad Nauss of Citroens at Carlisle and myself gave elevator speeches about each model and then we raised our glasses of Perrier in honor of the two legends. It was a nice moment a definite coming together of the marques; we hope to continue to have events like this with Citroens at Carlisle in the future.

Next we had our 5th annual International French Car Show. At this point we have nearly as many awards as we do participants so let's just say nearly everyone was a winner. We followed that with our charity silent auction and raffle. Thanks to everyone that donated items and to everyone that won them, however the real winners were the children that will benefit for the funds we raised.

Finally, I was able to catch my breath for about a minute until we had a rain shower and had to quickly cover up our swap meet area. Meanwhile the word started to circulate that someone had bought the Blue R10. I had a feeling I knew who it was and went to speak with Brent Bartley. As it turned out the rumor was true, and Brent and Dan decided to leave early hoping the cooler temperatures at night would make it easier driving back to Ohio. With Brent and Dan gone, the rest of us decided to get cleaned up before going to diner at the Mayapple Country Club. This is the annual Citroen Banquet, and we were happy to be invited to join in.

There were 10 members of the club that attended so I ended up hosting the Canadians Terry, Paul, and Nicolas. Also at our table was surprise -surprise, David LaChance from Hemming's, so it truly is similar circles the Citroens and Renaults run in. At the other table Walter, Tom, Sandy, Hector and their guests enjoyed the company of my neighbors John and Barbara Rigby who came up from Knoxville in the Citroen DS. As usual the food was terrific and for a meat eater like myself it is the only banquet buffet that I regularly attend that has twice as many entrees as they do sides. Special thanks to Brad Nauss for inviting us. We hope we can attend again next year. That concluded another great day for me, while I am told the other Renault Table stayed up quite late talking about all things Renault.

Sunday morning we awoke to the dreaded R word. Yes, rain. Oh well, for the most part we were dry all day Friday and Saturday, so we couldn't complain. After breakfast we all headed back to the fairgrounds,





then began to tear down and pack up for the long drive home. However we had one more Renault owner stop in for a visit: none other than local Renault legend, Kirk Gibson, owner of the 1907 Vanderbilt Cup Renault. Kirk had a good time hanging out with the post-war Renault crowd and particularly enjoyed the French Police Car. He told us a story of once being in the back of one, I suggested he try the front and he shoe horned his large frame behind the wheel for a photo opportunity.

Once Kirk left we got down to the serious business of tearing down and by lunch time we were making light work of it. After loading up the R16 on the Famous Fuego, John returned with the truck and trailer to load up the Encore. By 2PM I was on my way south. Unfortunately a half hour after leaving Carlisle, I had a blow out on the R16. After a close call, I was able to get the tire changed and back on the road. I met up with Marty Mckee and Aaron Cathey in Virginia and we made our way south together. Once I made it to Christiansburg, VA I decided to get some rest before heading home the next morning. Marty and Aaron continued south and were able to make it back to Tennessee sometime in the wee hours of Monday morning. As for me I was back on the road by daylight and pulled in to my driveway around 10AM.



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It was another great Carlisle Import Show for the Renault Club. With a total of 28 Renault powered vehicles we tied our personal best for the event. Back in 2011 we also had 28 cars powered by Renaults. I would say let's shoot for 30 next year; however I might have to bring more than three cars I brought this year. After the wild ride I had this year I maybe will try to cut back for 2016. You never know, May 13-15 is still a good ways off. If I get started soon it might be possible. 🍀



Sixties Classic Cars Expo: A nice event in a nice neighborhood!

by Francisco Miranda

Colonia Roma is one of the hipster's places in Mexico City, being neighbors with La Condesa. These are old living neighborhoods with lots of history and now they have recovered fame and fortune with the opening of many art galleries, trendy restaurants and lots of bars where you can enjoy a nice beer from anywhere in the world "for a few quid" as they say.

This was the scenario for the expo, which we were expecting as a tour like the one we had years ago, but "the times they are a changin'" and now authorities considered it was a big problem to do such a parade, instead they closed the avenue Alvaro Obregon so many people could enjoy our cars, grab a bite of a nice entrée, a complete meal or just a cup of coffee in a book shop, and not cause a huge traffic jam.

The organizers were saying this was a rehearsal for a major event they are planning for next August, along with the city authorities to gather more than a 1000 old vehicles, so they can break the world record that the Dutch have of an old car gathering. Even the History Channel is involved, as well as other important endorsers. As you can see in the pictures, many people are involved in the event, even the head of the city neighborhood, shown here giving the opening speeches. Of course the Alpine Club and ROCONA will be participating in such a major and important event, so if you are interested, I am sure Marvin McFalls will be more than happy to give you all the necessary information as it becomes available.

As for the cars displayed, many new cars that usually do not participate in our customary displays, like Huixquilucan or La Gala, were displayed. To see Mavericks or Falcons in original state is always nice, as memories flood you from those early times.

We participated this time with only 3 cars: Juan Antonio Calvillo's Dinalpin A110, Carlos Calvillo's Floride and me with the Dinalpin A110-GT4. Alejandro Cortes, the Alpine Club's president arrived a bit later but couldn't bring a classic car this time.

After enjoying a nice cup of coffee with Carmelita and Carlos Calvillo (as we are early birds) and later on a nice cold beer and tasty appetizers with Eugenia and Juan Antonio, I had to take off to another event, sort of far away. As I was having a nice late lunch, because of the heavy Saturday traffic of Mexico's streets,





a huge storm started. As you may know, Dinalpins are not so fond of the rain or storms, as wipers tend to leak or stop, specially mine that the system was recently modified with VW parts, so I decided to head back home, as I was far away some 30 km (18 miles) away and it was starting to get dark as well. As I expected, the wipers arrested about midway! From there, and driving a highway, it got a bit tense. Luckily nothing happened and got back home safe and sound. Now it will be repairs time hoping this time they get it right (or at least better).

I guess minor malfunctions do not matter when you had a nice day with things you like, as having a nice conversation with friends and also surrounded by beautiful cars. 🍷



French Cars and Coffee

by Marvin McFalls

A little back ground on Harper: back in 1960s they started selling Schwinn bicycles. By the 1980s they decided to make the jump to cars. Unfortunately dealerships were hard to come by and the only mark available was Audi, which was by far the worst rated import car in the United States for reliability. However, they made it work, literally, and it wasn't long until they were awarded a Porsche dealership. Today they have a state of the art facility with the majority of the import brands in Knoxville including; Jaguar, VW, Fiat, Infinity, Alfa Romeo, etc.

Back in 2012 Harper Auto Group started a local Cars and Coffee in Knoxville, TN. With 200 cars at their first meeting, no one knew how much it would grow. As part of the more than 3000 cars in attendance on April 12th, quite possibly the biggest Cars and Coffee in the United States, the Renault Owners Club of North America decided to create a mini invasion. While we had high hopes, for this first event we settled on four cars. So at 7:30 on the morning of the show we met a Starbucks across from the mall. In attendance was John Weaver in his 1978 Renault LeCar, Aaron Cathey in his Renault Alliance GTA, Marty Mckee in the R18i Wagon, and myself in the 1984 Super Five.

While we were only a blip on the radar, many that came by reminisced about their Renault and a few even asked about where they could acquire one of these beauties. So we definitely made a few friends. We are hoping to stage a much bigger French invasion at the Fall Cars and Coffee. Last year's Fall C&C took place the same weekend as Euro Auto Festival. This year's Eurofest event will be featuring French cars and we are hoping some of the cars from the event will stop over in Knoxville on their way back home if there is a Cars and Coffee. As it is the year of the French car we are also planning a visit to the Lane Museum for Monday. So let's keep our fingers crossed Cars and Coffee is a go for October 18th 2015. 💎



Gendarmerie R4 Reborn

by Jean-Francois Bourque



Last year, we were heading to Carlisle Import Car Show with a convoy of six Renaults from the Renault's Club of Quebec. Nicolas Rampette-Reichenbach was driving his cool all original R4TL that he imported from France in 2010. The car was previously used by the French « Gendarmerie » (the State Troopers). However if you thought the good old Crown Victoria used by the Police in the US was a powerful machine, the R4TL with a 956cc is not all that. Nicolas was trying very hard to keep the pace and stay close to the rest of the group but he had to keep the gas pedal to the floor most of the ride and was barely reaching the 100km/h « 62 mph » mark on the speedo. When he arrived back home, he talked with our friend Stephane Larivée, Steph is our Renault Guru, about the idea to squeeze more power from this poor little motor. In the end they decided to use a spare Renault 5 engine Steph had lying in his shed and they agreed to try to fit it under the hood of Nico's R4TL!

This modification was done last winter. Here is how Stephane managed to install the R5 motor from a LeCar into Nico's « Quatrelle ». The operation looked pretty straight forward; however he quickly found that the particular shape of the R4 presented some challenges during the modification.

Let's get to the specs: the R5 and the R4TL share almost the same engine block. Basically it's the « Chevy 350 » of the French; this motor is nicknamed « Cléon » because it was made in that city in France. Its actual designation is Sierra. They made two versions of this motor, the « Cléon Fonte », made of cast iron (Fonte is Iron in French), used in the R4, R5, R6 and then, found its way to the 90's from the Alliance to the first version of the Twingo and even on the Clio. Overall it was a very popular, reliable and versatile motor with more than 14 million examples produced. They also made a cast aluminum version named « Cléon Alu »; this motor was installed on the R12, R16, R15, R17 and R18. In this case, Nico's car had originally a 956cc motor of 34 HP. The North American versions of the R5 (LeCar) were fitted with a 55 HP, 1397cc motor heavily restricted by the anti-emission system and using a 2 barrels carburetor. Both engines are similar in shape and size and they use the same engine mounts.

Installation:

Nicolas and Stephane wanted to keep a maximum of original parts around the motor to make it

looks like an R4TL motor. Steph didn't have so many options, if the engine block is the same, the clutch bell housing is too long on the R5 because it uses a floor shifter, so he decided to keep the original clutch bell housing and plug it to the original R4 4Speed transmission. The other problem was the accessory pulley on the R5. At the end of the cam shaft, a double pulley is used on the R5 to drive the optional AC compressor. The double pulley was too thick and was touching the frame. That was not a bad thing too because that forced him to install the original R4 cam shaft that has more aggressive cams. This modification helped to squeeze a little more HP to the little R5 motor. Steph retained the original valve cover of the R4 to respect the original look, but also because the valve cover has a smaller oil cap to let the shifter rod pass over it. On the R4, the shifter is in the dashboard and a very long and straight shifter rod runs all the way over the motor to the transmission.

The 2 barrel carburetor of the R5 was used and a new homemade air filter was done to look like the one installed originally on the R4. A larger main jet was installed to fine tune the motor to the R4TL cam shaft installed. He also got a rid of all the emission system on the R5 motor. A dozen of little tubes were pinched or plugged and all rubber tubes removed. He also removed the EGR valve and did some modification on the intake manifold for that purpose. At the end, its more HP gained over the original setup. For the ignition system, the old points and condenser were replaced by an electronic ignition system that is more reliable and offer a stronger spark.

Once the motor was installed and in place another problem was found: under acceleration, the whole motor was moving in the frame, the old rubber mounts for the engine were enough for a small 956cc motor, but not to support the new 1.4 litre! So Steph had no choice but to install new engine mounts of polyurethane plastic, much stronger and stiffer. That also led to another issue! The shifter rod was touching the exhaust manifold. Steph had to grind off a clearance between the two parts, and even after that, on very hard acceleration, the shifter rod can still touch the manifold.

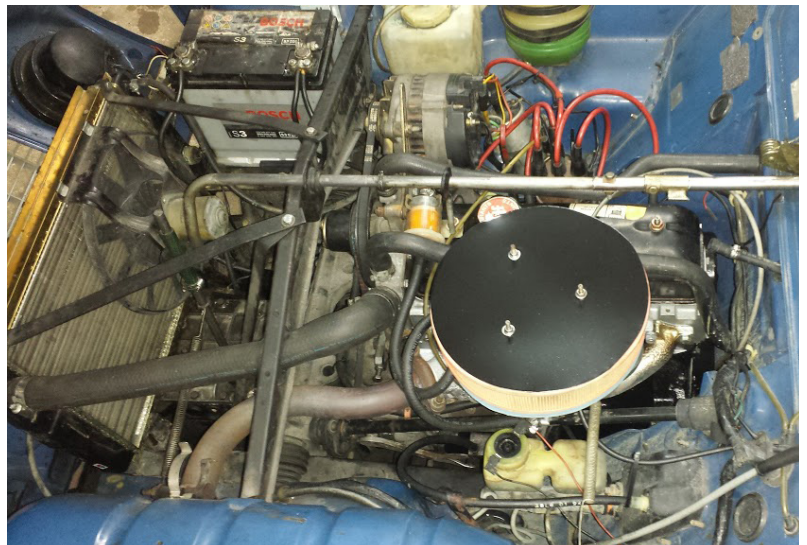
The last major modification done was the exhaust system. On the R4TL, the exhaust tube exit on the left side in front of the rear wheel. Nico and Steph decided to offer a little sport look and ran the exhaust tube all the way to the back and in the middle, under the bumper.

For the first time, this car can now leave two rubber marks on the ground! The frame is light on the R4 so

you can feel the acceleration and the little R5 motor offer a great deal of power in that configuration. The R4TL is now a very fun car to drive and can easily reach 115-130km/h « 75-80 mph » without problem. Nicolas had the chance to test the reliability of his new motor because he made the trip to Carlisle this summer without any mechanical issue. The modification was a great success and this time, his little 4TL was not the slowest car in the group!

For the show, Nicolas added the original « Gendarmerie » marking on his car and bought a nice blue police light with the typical « Pin Pon » French siren!

Now let's have a race with a State Trooper Crown Vic to see who will win! 🏁



Renault Frères 2015

by Francisco Miranda



The sixth year of this event and the third with Renault Mexico involved logistics and financing. The original purpose of the event remains as planned, to join all the different clubs of the make to spend a weekend surrounded by our cars in a place where you can enjoy and have a rest when your feet start to demand attention, thanks to the big commercial plaza of Cuicuilco.

This year was another successful date for the Renault aficionados with some 80 nice cars, parked in groups by its model or kind. All around the antique cars parking you can see the different areas Renault provides, like the hospitality for the clubs, the games and recreational area, the fast food vendors and other areas destined for the make's business transactions. At the far end of the parking area, a well designed test area for the new cars with dirt hills and water wells. Just outside these areas, there were the parking lots where you could test drive new cars like the Clio RS and the Twizy.

Taking up a good chunk of the area, the museum gathered the attention of the attendees, where this year was commemorated the 50 years when the Dinalpins started manufacture. Most of the models sold back then were shown:

- The three Berlinette manufacturing stages:
 - Pierre Vilalta's red 1100 cc 1965 restored under Miguel Cacheux supervision.
 - Arturo Arévalo second phase orange 1300 cc from 1968.
 - Lorenzo Sendra's 1974- 4 headlight version, also with a 1300 cc engine.
- The 1967 1100 cc silver Cabriolet from Alejandro Cortés, a fine unveiling of a restoration done by Carlos Calvillo. (I hope we can make a detailed description of this car for a future issue, as details have undergone with great precision).
- The second stage GT4, with my A110L-GT4 from 1972- 1300 cc engine, originally restored by Tomás Marín and cosmetically by Fernando Alonso with further maintenance by J Calvillo and M Cacheux.
- As a reminder of the origins of the Jean Rèdèlè factory and the commemoration of the 60 years of Alpine, a modified rally car version of the Group IV with a 2000 cc engine and all the racing original fea-

tures included, owned by José Miguel Goñi originally restored by Alberto Gironella and further finishing details by Juan Calvillo.

The restoration projects were present this year and even the results from a restoration project of a couple of years ago was shown by Miguel Cacheux and the new proud owner, Roger Roux, (who actually made the cover of the ROCONA's Newsletter recently) with its 1971 orange R8S. The first project, a very interesting one, the first ever built Berlinette, serial 001, with 956 cc engine as stated in the original factory register plate (blue body shell). The other project (yellow) will be Cacheux's own car that will surely come alive in a pristine way.

Although this year our good friend Marvin McFalls couldn't make the trip to Mexico, ROCONA was present and included in the opening speeches and as you can see in the pictures, throughout the event.

The importance of coexistence with other clubs was once again stressed. It is always nice to meet new friends and their families and we end up talking of automobiles and especially Renaults. One of the visitors arrived in a red Cabriolet, which happened to be the number one. Maybe one of these days we will be lucky to find the first GT4 as well. You never know!

Five cars were unveiled:

- 1971 orange R8S from M. Roux;
- A silver Cabriolet.
- White Dinalpin with Alpine looks and 2 liter engine;
- 1969 with 1300 cc blue Dinalpin with the 4 headlamp Alpine look, owned by Mauricio Peña and restored by Juan Calvillo.
- Tangerine 1976 R4L from Alejandro Cortés restored by Carlos Calvillo.

My apologies for our readers as unfortunately it was difficult for me to take detailed pictures of these vehicles due to the amount of people gathered round and later assorted diversions kept me away from the scene.

Outside the main event area, several Renaults from different models and makes were parked in the designated areas. Many enthusiasts that every year comes to the event and some take ideas from the well restored vehicles and apply them to their own. We hope every year we see better kept and maintained cars.

It is a nice event with a lot of planning and effort of the involved parties and we hope it keeps celebrating in the near future. We also hope Renault reach their expectations in order they keep backing us up





with this and similar events we may think of, that in the end, help them to promote their new products for other audiences, trying to make a connotation of glories past with their new products. 💡





Café Cuates

by Francisco Miranda



Two or three years ago I assisted to one of the first's reunions of these group an even though I enjoyed it, I never came back (waking up early on Sundays it's not my cup of tea!). It seems they had been more or less regularly meeting one Sunday a month: A nice way to spend a fresh and easy morning, talking about cars and assorted talks. Surely I will be getting in touch more often!

This time a group of about 15 friends reunited at a centric Starbuck Café where we could talk loosely without any club's guidelines or interests (which of course didn't happened as we ended talking about things which are not so welcomed in any group`s meetings). Anyway, politics aside, it was a different morning and nicely to see good friends from other clubs or associations, but that we all share a common taste for the Renault brand in any of its variations.

Unfortunately on my way back home I suffered an accelerator cable rupture which made me stop and drive real slow, as I only managed to accelerate the car at about 3000 rpm with a nut I found lying on the street. I was lucky to stop aside four policemen driving their motorcycles and as they were diverting the traffic in the busy avenue, I managed to rev up the car to continue my trip. Also, Roger Roux in his beautiful orange R8 (now with original French bumpers) stopped to give me a hand. Nothing much to do, but find an easy and fast solution in order not to upset the police force mandating to tow the car, so as I said, luckily I made it possible and after some ten minutes I got home safe and sound and with my hands mostly clean. :-)

The ups and downs of driving a 43 year old car! (not always fun sometimes). 💡



Back to the Past 2015

by Francisco Miranda

As with every year, the Alpine and ROCoNA clubs are always welcome at the Back to the Past event that takes place at the grounds of the National University (UNAM).

As we have said in previous years, this event is a very nice relaxed car show, with a model car exhibition and lots of attendees, mostly students, eager to ask about old technologies and many are interested and amazed by the design of the assorted makes. This year around a hundred vehicles gathered at "The Islands" as it is commonly know this area. As you can see in the pictures, plenty of space makes it comfortable for the public to inspect the cars.

Lunch, refreshments and coffee are always available and at about noon, the music show starts with several groups performing assorted epoch melodies from the 50's and 60's. Later on, a dance contest is opened and the public spend a nice day full of music and cars. 🍷



Forbes 4CV Muster

by Jacques Lynn



S haron and I flew to Sydney with the primary purpose of attending the April Forbes 4CV Muster. The east coast of Australia can be compared in some ways to that of the U.S. About the same size with a mountain range running along most of it north to south. The majority of the population is situated along the eastern coastal lowlands. Forbes is just over the mountain range somewhat south of Sydney. A town of maybe 10,000 country folks all with an Australian accent surrounded by farms, lots of sheep and cattle, occasional kangaroos and wallabies.

The “muster” was a mustering of Renaults put on by the 4CV Register of Australia car club. I will from here on use an article in the club's newsletter that describes the goings on very well. “Mademoiselle” is the name of Ernst & Sonja Luthi's 4cv. I want to thank them for their article and Frank Wicks, the club's National Co-ordinator, for permission to use it here.

On Green Thursday (that's what the Thursday before Easter is called back in Switzerland), Sonja packed the bags and the car (the VW) and tied down Mademoiselle on the trailer while Ernst was slaving away at work. So, all was ready for an early departure on Good Friday. Of course, it started to drizzle when we hooked up the trailer at 6 am on Friday morning. Heading west along the M4, we encountered a steady flow of traffic, but nothing too serious. It rained a bit and stopped and then rained again for a while. The biggest obstacle was the fog. It was quite thick all across the Blue Mountains and to Bathurst. However, the further west we travelled, the sunnier it got. By the time we arrived in Forbes, it was warm and sunny.

At the motel, we were greeted by a number of 4CV owners, before they rushed off to the camel races, traditionally held at Forbes on Good Friday; a dusty affair we were told. We were unpacking the car and Mademoiselle instead under the watchful eye of Col Redman, our rescuer from Targa Adelaide a few years back. The bolt is still holding up the exhaust. All afternoon, people arrived with 4CVs, Dauphines, Caravelles, 16s and 20s, and a lonely Megane and by 4 pm, at registration, the place was buzzing. We all collected our goody bags with maps and other details of the event. And then, just when the barbeques were turned on, the rain set in. A few brave men dragged the barbies under cover so we did not miss out on dinner after all. The motel let us use their dining room

so we could all eat in the dry.

Saturday dawned to an overcast dampish day. It was an early start for the first of many photo opportunities: Forbes Town Hall for the welcoming by the deputy mayor. He is a Mercedes man, but we don't hold that against him! After plenty of picture taking we headed back to Eugowra, where the ladies of St. Joseph's school put on a splendid morning tea for us. This really set the tone of the whole weekend. We were extremely well fed, always with a variety of cakes, quiches, sausage rolls, salads and umteen cups of coffee or tea. The ladies in the county really know how to put on a feast.

From Eugowra, we continued our travels to Manildra for lunch and an afternoon at the movies. Manildra has the oldest still used movie theatre in NSW called Amusu (amuse you for those not good at mobile talk). We had a good laugh at the movie despite it being a comedy around the motor cycle race on the Isle of Man (the famous TT) sometime in the 30s. Despite many mishaps, the guy won the race and the girl. Good part, it had an MG TA in it and we learned a lot about Lancastershire accents. While we were at the movies, it rained, but by the time we had consumed another feast (the scones were delicious), the rain had stopped and we had a dry run back to Forbes. Then came the more official dinner and AGM at the Services and Citizens Club. Although this was the AGM, it was a very relaxed and short affair, the meeting, that is. All office holders agreed to continue for another two years. The night was finished off with a Raffle, which unfortunately bypassed us completely.

Sunday dawned to a beautiful, warm, sunny day. We all arrived on time for yet another morning tea at the Old Railway Station at Forbes for pictures and food before heading to Parkes for a visit to the Henry Parkes Centre with the Elvis Museum (he had left the building) and a beautiful car and historic display. From there, we continued to the Radio Telescope for lunch and pictures. It was easy to relax and enjoy the park or explore the history of the telescope and its importance during the landing on the moon, back in 1969. But, as all good things have to come to an end, we had to return to Forbes for the traditional swap meet or to explore the McFeeters Car Museum.

This museum is worth a visit with its variety of cars. We were most impressed with the Campervan, built on a model T. And then, almost everybody congregated back at the club for dinner, as this was one of the very few places open on Easter Sunday. Before dinner though, we put Mademoiselle back on the trailer for an early start for the drive home on Monday morning.





And then there were the cars. At first glance for a newcomer, they look all the same. But on closer inspection, every 4CV has its own special twist: be that the mustache, the mirrors on the doors, the indicator lights, and the list goes on. Not to forget the tinkering that goes on under the bonnet, well boot really. There is a lot more to them that meet the eye. And Frank even allowed me to drive his car. Thanks Frank, I enjoyed the drive very much (and a smile from Forbes to the Moon and back she had). And best of all, there were no major incidents with the cars. There was only a slight overheating due to a small hole in the radiator, a fuel pump needed replacement, under performing brakes were reported and an inconsiderate 4x4 threw stones that shattered a windscreen. Oh, and lovely Mademoiselle had to be secured with two wooden blocks to prevent her from running away with a 4CV. And there was also a prize, the Mayor's choice, that went to Sally and Phil's beautiful Caravelle, a car previously exhibited at the Parkes car museum. Sally and Phil caught up with the previous owner after the visit to the telescope.

We had a lovely weekend in country NSW with a great bunch of like-minded people from all over Australia. Congratulations to those brave machines (and men and women) who came from Western Australia, Tasmania, Queensland and South Australia. We NSW and VIC drivers had it easy compared to you all. We really enjoyed following the 4CVs, Dauphines and Caravelles, sitting behind them for a while, admiring their difference and narrow tyres. Then overtake them to check out the next car. We also enjoyed having for company another stranger - Peter's Matra Djet - an Alpine contemporary and competitor at Le Mans. It was such a relaxing, laid back atmosphere, so all I can say is Thank you for letting us be part of it. We intend to be back in Griffith 2017.

"Griffith 2017" is the club's next Muster located South West of Forbes. Sharon and I are tempted to return for that one. 💎



Red Bull Renault F1 Road Show

by Francisco Miranda

After a 23 year absence, the great circus of Formula 1 will be back in Mexico. There have been many related activities promoting November's event, waking up public interest in the race.

One of these events was Red Bull's show that brought two of their racing drivers to give a demonstration of what the F1 cars are like. Australian Daniel Ricciardo and Spaniard Carlos Sainz Jr.; one with Red Bull and the latter with Toro Rosso Scuderia.

The main square in downtown Mexico City is quite a busy area but it didn't matter to Red Bull. Along with the help of the city's authorities, they managed to close the entire area a day before the event to get things properly organized, with plenty of security for attendees and for the show participants.

Being that Renault is the engine provider for both teams, Renault Mexico was participating in the event as well, jumping on the wagon to display some of their new vehicles, mainly the Twizy ZE and the Clio RS. Being a primary sponsor of Red Bull Racing, Nissan's Infinity line was also there.

Red Bull also wanted to have a parade of classic cars, so Renault invited the Alpine and the Gordini Sport clubs to participate in the show. Five cars from each club were needed to fill out a very strict grid: time was at a premium to accommodate all of the other activities. We were summoned to a meeting where we defined what we could do. Negotiations started as they proposed just a parade, but given our cars sport heritage cars the idea of a fast touring was eagerly accepted, increasing the one lap proposed to two but luckily it ended up three fast laps along with the Parade!

The Alpine Club chose the following cars: Juan Antonio Calvillo, Angel Espinosa and Alejandro Cortés with his Alpine A110, Fernando Maqueo R8 Gordini and me with the Dauphine 2 liter (closing event for me with this beauty, as I sold it a week before to Miguel Garza). Gordini Sport had Hector, Victor and Adrián Perez with two Florides and an R8S, Javier González with an A110 Cabriolet and Miguel Cacheux with the grey R10.

We had to be there very early, as the audience was expected to begin arriving at 6:00 AM. The main plaza was expected to hold 15,000 persons and after that



they would close it down, so people were there in order to secure their entrance. After that, all of the streets were thought to be full all along the prepared track. Huge video walls and sound systems were installed so nobody missed what was happening along other parts of the street. In the end, Red Bull claimed 150,000 persons gathered for the show.

We met at 6:45 AM three blocks away from the secured area to enter in an organized line. The originally proposed gate was changed the same day, so we had to find the new entrance but luckily not many people were there. You could see the excitement building already, even with small children excited to see us coming and admiring our cars. Upon arrival, Angel Espinosa's A110 had a mechanical failure. It was the first time he was driving it after some renovations, so temperature rose and the expansion water deposit exploded. A big cloud in the back of the car appeared and worried long faces all around could be seen. It was soon discovered the fault, so Angel called his mechanic to bring him over a new water bottle and whatever else was needed.

For many of us, what was urgently needed was a cup of coffee, so we went to the nearest coffee shop which was not yet open, but we only had to wait for 10 minutes or so. Finally we all sat down and had a good breakfast. The Gordini Sport guys started to arrive as well so we were almost ready for the show. When the mechanic came with the parts needed, they fixed it up real quick. Now we were ready!

Unfortunately we now had to wait a couple of hours for show time! In the meantime we had a stroll through the paddock and exhibition areas. Doors were open and the public was permitted to come in, so it was filling up real fast. High energy music started playing and even though we still had to wait a while longer, the noise build up was increasing the emotion.

The running order of the show had to be altered but luckily the changes helped us out, so people were already in place. Precisely the welcome speeches started at 11 AM. A drivers meeting was called and the instructions were strictly given. I was driving with my all-time friend Billy Gleason, and we were having such a good time getting things ready and watching the F1 cars. We decided to use vintage helmets to look more appropriate. Good choice, as we received many thumbs from the crowd on our appearance.

Daniel Ricciardo and Carlos Sainz gave a wonderful show alone and both driving at the same time as well. They drove Red Bull's RB7, the 8 cylinder car from past seasons. Fast and loud! Gustavo "Tavo" Vildósola

was also there driving and off-road Ford SVT Raptor Score 21 Trophy Truck. This was an incredible display of such a powerful vehicle with 830 horsepower. You can just imagine the noise this beast puts out! At one moment, all three drivers were out racing, spinning and making "donuts". The crowd was very happy cheering out loud.

Next it was up to the classic Renaults to follow that incredible exhibition. We were lined up according to the speed of the cars: Billy and I in my Green 2.0 litre Dauphine were behind three A110 Berlinettes and in front of an R8 Gordini. I can say that our participation was highly enjoyed with lots of clapping and cheering from the fans. We were even featured on Fox Sports TV coverage of the event. Every turn we took was cheered and welcomed. Of course we all thought we could have been driving at least 10 more laps! Not possible though, but the goal was reached... We had a complete adrenaline rush and we enjoyed a very busy and fun morning.

This was Alejandro Konstantonis first event as President of the Alpine Club and last for Alejandro Cortes. I want take this opportunity to thank Alejandro Cortes for his time given to the Club and for all the good times we have shared. Now Konstantonis comes with a different energy and we welcome him as President hoping to find new ways to enjoy our cars and meetings.

Also special thanks to Red Bull and Renault for giving us the opportunity to participate in such a big and special event. Good luck at the F1! 🍀



The Back Page - Mille Miglia 2015

photos by Yves Boode



The Mille Miglia is an incredible event. Each May there is a re-enactment of the famous Italian road race held originally 1927-1957. It is open to cars the same models as those that originally competed, plus a few others by invitation.

Unique Ferraris, BMWs, Bugattis and similar are among the 450-car field highlighting the event. It's not just exotics, though there are more rare cars than you can imagine. Plenty of celebrities participate, including TV host Jay Leno, actor Jeremy Irons, famous racing drivers including Jacky Ickx, Jochen Mass, Bruno Senna, Teo Fabi and others.

As a special highlight at Mille Miglia 2015, Sir Stirling Moss and his team colleague of the time, Hans Herrmann, took the wheels of the very 300 SLR cars that they drove to victory – 60 years ago.

Not to be out done, Renault had two special models in this year's event. A 1957 Alpine Renault A106 Mille Miglia that also competed 60 years ago, driven by Mark Geessink and Frank Maarsingh from the Netherlands. Also in attendance was a 1957 4cv driven by Dino Agresta and Patrizia Balduzzi of Italy.

Great fun was had by all who attended. 🏆

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