

Renault News

FOR THE NORTH AMERICAN RENAULT ENTHUSIAST | **SPRING/SUMMER 2017** | 114



**Renault Owners
Club**

 OF NORTH AMERICA



spring/summer 2017 | **IN THIS ISSUE**

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TRP 917

by Tim Peters



I have always been a “project person”. As a child I modified an old gas powered reel type lawn mower to create a go cart. Side effect was it could mow as well! By my sophomore year in high school, 1976, I could taste the freedom of a driver’s license. I had just one problem: no wheels. Daydreaming in health class I decided to build my own dune buggy as was the fad. I did not want to use a typical VW bug for the undercarriage. A trip to the wrecking yard produced a mid 1960’s R10 Renault.

The project started in the high school shop in Mt. Angel, Oregon. The body was cut off and I shortened the chassis for the dune buggy. A friend agreed to use his dad’s lathe to modify the 3 bolt wheel bolt pattern and convert it to a 5 bolt Chevy wheel pattern. The engine was completely rebuilt. Then I reconsidered my goals and decided in Oregon dune buggies were just an opportunity to get wet all winter, plus I had an old toy car Porsche 917 that did look cool. I decided that it must be possible to build a cool car out of fiberglass. Others I talked to had a better idea of what I was considering and tried to warn me, but the idea was stuck in my head. I visited Norman McDonald who was a plant foreman at Beechcraft Marine Corp in Salem. His advice: build a bookcase. None the less he told me what the first steps would be. I cut out the shape of the car from plywood and added some chicken wire and burlap to rough out the shape. Norman came down with a mobile foam sprayer and applied 3 inches urethane foam to it. After an eternity of sanding and puttying I had a rough shape. Classmates called it the “Batmobile”. Fiberglass was applied over this and the wood and foam was removed. By this time getting friends to come over and help was getting harder! I marked out and cut gull wing doors, a way to hinge the engine compartment and openings to install recessed head lights. Hours of sanding and fiberglassing again deterred friends from coming around to much.

My mind seemed to never tire of thinking of ways to make the project more complicated. I really wanted the old sequential T bird tail light effect and I liked the Toyota Celica controls on the steering column. The tail lights required a Ford mechanical relay system that was difficult to adapt to the Toyota control but eventually I succeeded. For cooling I replaced the rear radiator on the Renault with an electric engine fan and radiator mounted in the nose of the car. For a front windshield I used a 1969 Toyota truck windshield that I had trimmed by a glass shop to a more rounded

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shape. Side windows were from Elite Enterprises who manufactured the Laser 917 kit car. Bucket seats also came from them. I installed an over sized alternator and AC from misc. components picked up at a wrecking yard since the windows did not open but just had small round vents.

Meanwhile, still living the life of a fabricator, I fiberglassed the interior shell to accommodate the side vents for AC and the gauge panel that was mounted on the ceiling. By now it was 1978. My plan to have a cool car to drive to high school nearly thwarted as I was to graduate in 1978. Kept working anyway. JC Whitney had a first ever digital speedometer- trip computer for sale. Borrowed more money from Dad. Took the unit apart and mounted the display in the dash for a digital speedometer. The keypad was installed in the overhead console. It had a fuel use sensor and a sensor hooked to the speedometer allowing me to see both speed and fuel remaining. Since the windows did not open I build a small kit PA system and put a speaker under the front of the car and a mike in the console inside. Lots of fun!

In June I graduated. About that time I took the car to a painter and had Imron paint applied by Santiam Fiberglass. The owner Don Gelvik was inspired and spent extra time as well sanding and priming to get a good outcome. I thought it was ready to paint when I sent it to him but clearly lacked experience. Just getting a title was an ordeal. I tried to make sure I had all the required equipment installed. Oregon DMV required a letter detailing construction as well as copies of all receipts. I had to place the car on Joe Annen's farm flat bed and haul it to Salem DMV where they applied a vin number. Then I could apply for a title and License! I was on the road. Some driving learning curve, however, with such a short wheelbase. Where ever I parked it seemed a group of people would be discussing it when I returned. Brady GT? Laser 917? Possibly a Mercedes gull wing? Obviously built on a VW. No one ever guessed it was a Renault undercarriage and one of a kind fiberglass body. A TRP 917. My initials with the 917 designation, since it was modeled from that old toy car!

For 30 years the car sat in storage with a car cover on it. Then my heart returned to the project and I uncovered it. I thought of a major redo and conversion to electric but just could not destroy any of that hard high school student work. Brakes were completely non functional. Not knowing of anyone in the US that stocked parts I purchased them from France using Google translator to figure out what the web site said. Then found Jacques Renault Parts and he provided the parts to rebuild the engine. I re worked the wiring and added led brake and rear running lights. I wanted the

interior kept original but did replace the old radio with a single DIN GPS/entertainment/backup camera system. This really improved backing visibility.

Still left to do? The original paint is bubbling some and needs to be removed. Then the car needs complete repainting. There are some leaky rear trans axel seals and a complete new set of rear seals would be reasonable. But with an old car are you ever really done with repairs? 🙄



Life with My 1985 Renault Alliance

by Stephen Hall

Two things happened in May of 1985 that had never happened to me before. I became a father for the first time and I bought my first brand new car, a 1985 Renault Alliance.

This car was named Car of the Year by Motor Trend in 1983 and Canadian Government figures showed that, after the diesels, the 1.4 litre with a 4-speed manual transmission had the lowest fuel consumption of any car on the market. I was convinced. And yes, it does give me 50 miles per gallon, each and every gallon. And it does so without having to grind up thousands of tons of rock to extract all the rare precious metals that modern cars need to even come close to this efficiency. It seems to me that modern technology has gone somewhat backwards in this respect.



This car was my daily driver for many years and I figured that if it could cover the distance from the earth to the moon, namely 384,400 kilometres, I would be most pleased. Well, in 16 years we got to the moon and, although there had been a few bumps in the road which I will go into shortly, I figured I would shoot for the half million.

The purchase of another new car slowed the kilometre accumulation, but another 10 years still added 100,000. So by 2011 we got to 484,000. Deciding that correction of some rust problems and a bit of paint would help make it look spiffy for the half million celebration, I started removing bits and pieces to gussy them up. Well, each time I took off a fender or a bumper or whatever else, another problem was revealed and, before I realized it, I'd removed everything and the entrails lay scattered all over the garage floor.

Since I was also restoring a 1961 Corvette, which is another story for another time, the poor Renault had to take a back seat (actually it had no back seat, or front seat, or doors or hood or trunk or fenders or windshield or much of anything for that matter) and only a little progress was made in the next four years. When 2015 dawned, however, it also dawned on me that both my son and my Renault would be attaining the ripe old age of 30 and some celebratory action was called for. I therefore leaped into action and the Renault restoration is now on the front burner. All of the bodywork has been stripped, sandblasted and painted and the floor repaired and assembly is slowly taking place.

Before getting into titillating anecdotes, I would like to talk about its strengths and weaknesses, and there are plenty of both. Many of its weaknesses, however, are probably part of the learning curve for the introduction of a new car to the vicious Canadian climate and they may well have been resolved, had Renault not decided to bail out of the Canadian market in 1987.

As mentioned earlier, fuel efficiency is marvelous, although acceleration is sluggish. Absolutely nothing has needed to be done to the transmission. There is no slack or slip in the gearing, all the gear changes are snappy and the synchromesh is as perfect as the day it was born. The only thing needed for the engine was a new head gasket at 405,000 kilometres.

Weak points are mainly the front wheel bearings

and the outer CV bellows. On average, none of them last more than about 50,000 kilometres and sometimes they don't even last 20,000.

Other deficiencies are clearly evident just by looking. It boggles the mind that they were allowed to creep into the design but there is a relatively simple remedy for most of them.

There are two large openings at the top of the bell housing and the way they are placed, and the way the top surface is contoured, any oil leaking past the valve cover gasket has no choice but to drip onto the clutch. The judicious application of a thick bead of caulking rerouted any leaking oil safely away from the clutch.

The windshield washer pump is a puny little affair and is stuck on the bottom of the washer bottle, behind the front bumper, with no protection from the muck and grime kicked up by the front wheel. Its performance is pathetic at best in the Summer when the pump motor is reasonably warm. In the cold weather, however, when performance drops, it's next to useless. I installed a second system with the pump kept cosy in the engine compartment and it works great.

The exhaust manifold heat stove is a flimsy affair and rusts out in no time. Since the manifolds are between the engine and the firewall, and the exhaust manifold is underneath the intake, it's next to impossible to replace without undertaking some serious disassembly. I fabricated a more robust unit and installed it when I changed the head gasket.

The biggest blooper, however, is the "block" heater. They installed it, not in the block, but in the cylinder head, right next to the coolant temperature sensor. In the Winter, therefore, when it's plugged in, all it does is deceive the temperature sensor into believing that the engine is already warmed up. Consequently, on start-up, the engine stumbles and burbles until the water pump has pushed some cold coolant up towards the sensor, which then finally realizes that the engine is in fact freezing cold and adjusts the fuel mixture and idle speed accordingly. To overcome this I installed a heater under the oil pan.

The 30 years and almost half a million kilometres have involved some amusing and some bitter-sweet experiences and they help bring spirit into the life of this vehicle.

On new year's day 1995, with 250,000 kilometres on the clock, I was on the highway, taking my children to go skating on the Rideau Canal, when we hit a pile of slush. Suddenly we were indeed skating but not

on the canal. Round and round we went, careening backwards into a barrier, bouncing off and then, oh so slowly, rolling onto the side and ending up on the roof. I was not amused but the children thought it funny to be hanging upside down by their seat belts. Fortunately no-one was hurt but the back was all bashed in and the roof crushed, breaking the windshield. Looking on the bright side, however, the sides, the front and the mechanics were all intact. In fact all four doors worked and, if I crouched down in the driver's seat and pretended I was only four feet tall, I could actually drive it. In no time at all, another vehicle, that had been smucked in the front, was convinced to sacrifice its rear half and roof section, the two halves were joined together, and I was once again off and running.

Six years later, shortly before dusk on a winding country road, I was driving my son home after a driving lesson (his, not mine). We were happily rolling along, merrily chatting away, when we saw two deer run across the road a short distance ahead. They were far enough away and safely across so I didn't slow down. When we reached the place where they had crossed, however, all of a sudden a third deer leapt out and I slammed into it. The deer bounced up onto the hood and shattered the windshield. It then rolled into the ditch, immediately started violently jerking and thrashing its legs and eventually died. The police were called and the very nice police lady made a report. When she had finished, I asked if I could keep the deer and put it in my freezer. She told me that I was not allowed to and that it would be picked up and the meat given to poor people. I guess there are two lessons from this experience. When you see two deer cross the road, expect there to be a third one a few seconds later. And when a deer jumps out and bashes into your car, you have to cough up for the damage but don't get to eat the perpetrator.

Since Renault abandoned the North American market in 1987, parts for this car are a serious problem. I haven't been able to find even one recycler in Canada or the U.S. who has parts for this car. Also, even though the Alliance is almost identical to the R9 in Europe, the North American part numbers and VINs don't mean anything to Renault in Europe. Renault needs a European VIN in order to get into their parts system. Since I don't have a VIN of a European R9 identical to my Alliance, I cannot get parts from Europe. Also, even though Chrysler took over AMC/ Renault, Norm Mort tells me that they actually crushed most of the parts rather than sell them, at least here in Canada. The reason was to get them off the road as soon as possible and this also avoided warranty issues.

I'm not at a total loss, however, as I also have two

parts cars: a 1987 Alliance and a 1986 Renault Encore, which is the hatchback version of the Alliance. Unfortunately they both have the 1.7 litre engine and the '86 is an automatic and the '87 is a five speed. This reduces the availability of compatible parts somewhat but at least I have something. I do, however, have the parts microfiches for all models of all years of the Renault Alliance and Encore. This means that I can check to see if a part from one of my parts cars will fit my 1985, before I go to the trouble of removing it. I was very fortunate to get these microfiches. When I learned that my dealer was planning to change his allegiance from Renault to another manufacturer, I had a quiet talk with the parts representative whom I had come to know, and managed to convince him of the logic of my argument, that he no longer had any use for the parts microfiches. He was able to persuade his boss to let them come my way.

My fortuitous acquisition of these two other vehicles provided interesting lessons in human kindness and honesty and the capriciousness of lady luck.

One sunny afternoon in 2002 I pulled into the parking lot of a local shopping centre. As I turned off the engine, I noted in my mirror a male person of unyoung years observing me from a short distance away. As I got out of the vehicle, he started to approach me, exhibiting some perambulation difficulties. My immediate thought was, oh dear he's going to ask me for money. When he did reach me, though, he politely asked me if I wanted to buy his car. He said it was a 1987 Alliance and his wife had told him to stop driving because he had Parkinson's disease. He said he would sell it to me for \$200. I looked at the car and agreed to buy it because I could use it for parts.

We arranged for him to drive the car to my residence and we would then go to the vehicle license office to change the ownership. While I was at home waiting for him, I put in my shirt pocket, \$200 plus another \$100 for taxes and fees. He arrived as arranged and I gave him his money. I asked him if he wanted to count it and he said it wasn't necessary because he trusted me. We then went in my car to the license office and completed the paperwork, after which I took him home. I then completed several further errands before arriving back home a few hours later.

As I entered the house, the phone was ringing. When I answered, it was the gentleman from whom I had bought the car. He said that he had been checking his wallet after completing all his errands that day and there was something wrong, because he had too much money. He wanted to know if I was missing any money. It then dawned on me that in fact I had

given him his \$200, but I had also given him the \$100 I had added for the government, because it was all together in my shirt pocket. At the license office I had paid the necessary expenses out of my wallet. When I explained this to him, he said that this accounted for the discrepancy he had discovered, and invited me to come and pick up the \$100 I had overpaid.

I later returned to his residence and spent a wonderful evening with him and his family. They were of Lebanese/Syrian descent and constantly plied me with delicious treats from their traditional cuisine. His daughter told me that he had been beside himself, thinking he may have cheated me, and he had phoned continuously all afternoon until I picked up the phone. What a truly honest, admirable man. And what a lesson in character. I shall never forget him. We should all try to be more like him.

Coming into ownership of the 1986 Renault Encore proved an interesting experience in serendipity. One evening at a car show in the Autumn of 2004, I espied a 1968 Pontiac. Now I had owned an identical vehicle twenty-five years earlier and, before sending it to Pontiac heaven, I had completely stripped from it everything removable. When I say everything, I mean everything: engine, transmission, mirrors, radiator, alternator, radio, the lot. I don't really know why I did so but I had kept all this in the corner of my garage all those years and was eager to find it a new home. I therefore made the acquaintance of the owner of the espied Pontiac and offered it all to him gratis.

He came to pick it up a few days later and, when he saw my Renault, his eyes opened wide and he said that he also had a Renault but that it was of questionable roadworthiness. He offered it to me, also gratis, and I was very pleased to accept.

What is the likelihood, that the owner of a Renault Alliance with original parts for a 1968 Pontiac, would serendipitously come into contact with the owner of a 1968 Pontiac who had a Renault parts car to give away? Who would have thought that two such people, with this combination of vehicles, even existed, never mind that they would actually meet each other?

My Renault renovations are well underway, but I would really appreciate help with finding parts, in particular parts from an '83, '84 or '85, which are more compatible with my car than are parts from an '86 or '87. Alternatively, any year having a 1.4 litre engine and/or a 4-speed manual transmission would provide compatible mechanical and electronic parts. If you are able to help, please let me know at: wackrboy43@hotmail.com 📧

Back to the Past 2017

by Francisco Miranda

A year has passed and it was time for one of our annual most liked events, the Old Timer's and Veterans' Club, "Back to the Past".

The 7th edition was held on April 1st at the University UNAM's Campus, carefully organized and it shows the attention put to the last detail so everything runs smooth.

As in previous years, meeting time is early at 8 AM and by 4 or 5 PM it's time to all go back home, so we spend the day watching a lot of cars and sharing with friends nice and interesting talks, surrounded by the student's community, always eager to take pictures and lots of questions as well. This event has grown very popular and this year over 100 cars displayed and an approximate of 40,000 visitors throughout the day were gathered at Las Islas (security estimation). Throughout the day several musical groups play epoch music, mainly 50's rock n roll and many people start dancing and participate at the dance contest: Cha-cha, Mambo and Rock and as a special appearance, comic book TV series' music (Batman, Superman, Pink Panther and so on).

Upon our arrival, which is done in a well-organized manner in order to avoid an accident, we park our cars in designated areas per club or make. Unfortunately, not all club members arrive early and we don't share a common area. We were offered a snack breakfast with fruits and "tamales with atole" a regional food made out of corn flour, meat and hot sauce. For some of us, it's a bit too heavy, so we prefer to go to the nearby coffee stand and have a lighter cup of coffee and a roll.

Throughout the day, car owners were offered fruits, cookies and coffee at the club's tent, which doubles as a shelter from the hot sun and the chairs are fantastic for the aching feet after the long walks.

Carlos Calvillo and Alejandro Cortes were interviewed for the University's news radio program and they invited the public to be part of the normal activities the University organizes and especially the yearly event of the old cars, with a special focus on the Alpine and Renault cars, which by the way attracted a lot of the visitors' attention.

The Alpine Club was present with Carlos Calvillo 1960 Florida, Teodoro Hernández `74 A110L-GT4 which is in constant renovation, this time the suspension was repaired and the car looks more balanced with the height





adjustments made. I also drove my 1972 Dinalpin GT4 but I was parked at the central tier flanked by Jose Luis Torres' silver Dauphine and Roger Roux's yellow A110 Berlinette. A convenient place a few meters from the hospitality tent.

Vendors take care of a nice lunch with sausages (sorry, no beer allowed), sandwiches, tortas and Spanish omelets and assorted Mexican food, tacos and quesadillas included. No need to worry in carrying from home your own stuff.

We are thankful for the invitation, looking forward for next year's event. 🍷



Carlisle 2017

by Marvin McFalls

Since 2011 we have had a display on one side of Building R, as well as tent on the show field. With Carlisle Events discontinuing the kids' play area we were given the opportunity to use both sides of Building R. So we now have two unique invitation- al display areas as well as space for our charity dinner without having to move out Invitational vehicles. Usually, we leave on Friday but with this added setup I decided to leave a day early to get the cars ready for the invitational display and charity dinner. On Thursday morning I left Knoxville around 8:00 AM in my Black GTA convertible and arrived in Carlisle a little after 4:00 PM. I had met up with Jonathan Burnette along with his R10 coming up from Texas somewhere in Southwest Virginia. Around 5:00 PM we began checking in cars, within a few minutes, Brad Stevens, Sandy Lea, and Lee Weaver who had already arrived, were in place. Next, Nick and George Dimopoulos arrived in their White GTA Convertible. Also driving in with Brent Bartley and his R10 was Dan Barton who came in from Dayton, Ohio. Don McLaughlin had delivered his LeCar to the racecar paddock earlier that day.

With all the cars in place, we made our way to building T at 6:00PM for a pizza party. We immediately ran into my neighbors, John and Barbara Rigby. They had also travelled from Knoxville, bringing their Reliant Scimitar wagon which was part of an impressive display of import wagons. While everyone was eating, I had a couple minutes to work with Ed B. from Carlisle Events to work out some details for the weekend's activities. Once everyone was fed, we had to get them into their hotels. While Brad and Sandy stayed at one hotel, Brent, Dan and Jonathan were at another. Once everyone was settled we met back at John Vogler's house for the official welcome get together. As day turned to night we decided to call the party early and planned to meet for breakfast.

We awoke early the next morning. John Vogler and I went to eat, driving his Silver GTA coupe. Following a nice meal and conversation at the Middlesex Diner we went over to the fairgrounds. We saw a few more Renaults arrive including Garrick Costa from Ohio in his Alliance Convertible, as well as Jamie and Mary Grigg in their gorgeous Renault 10.

As the day went on, more cars were added to the displays in Building R at the end of the long row of French Cars. In the new, far side of Building R was my Black GTA convertible along with Jamie Grigg's recent-





ly restored R10. Both the GTA and R10 had reached historic milestones and since both were specifically built for the US market it seemed appropriate to feature them together. While in the main display, Brent and Jonathan's R10s were displayed on one side of the building and Brad's Alpine A310 was on the other side, along with Renault Quebec's contribution to the display Nathalie Perrault's 2001 Twingo. In the middle of the room was Paul Pietrzyk's Red GTA Convertible.

As the day wound down, the rest of the crew from Renault Quebec arrived including Nicolas Reichenbach in his R4L which would also be in the invitational display, as well as David Hebert who drove down in a 1987 Alliance 4-door. Sadly the two other Invitational cars from Quebec were damaged and could not participate. Benjamin Alliet's R5 GT Turbo was involved in an accident and was awaiting a new front bumper, Frederic Faveaux's Aventine broke a belt and was also in need of parts. Hopefully those two will be a part of next year's event.



With all the cars now in place, it was time for the R10 Seminar after I gave a brief history on one of the best models ever offered by Renault. I handed off the seminar to our special guest Jonathan Burnette. Jonathan showed the attendees how to balance an R10 wheel by using a homemade wheel balancer. As anyone who owns an older Renault knows it is impossible to balance these wheels on modern machinery.



Following the seminar we had two more Renaults arrive. First was George Thompson, who had driven his 1987 GTA Convertible up from D.C. as well as Joe Wagner and Linda Connell in Linda's Alliance. With everyone now here, it was time to start our charity dinner. This year Jamie and Mary Grigg out did themselves with fabulous food. Following the dinner we showed a couple of videos, then Jamie had a wonderful PowerPoint presentation featuring members and their cars. It was a great presentation with music and featured hundreds of cars and their owners. Following the movie we straightened up the building and called it a night.



As Saturday morning came, much to our surprise the temperature which had been near 90 degrees the day before was not going to get out of the 50s on this day. So off we went to the Middlesex Diner. As always, Joe Wagner and Linda Connell were sitting with regulars Lee Weaver and John Vogler, along with out of towners Nick Chennelle and Brad Stevens. Next to arrive was another local, Tom Gross in his 18i sedan. Coming down from New Jersey were Hector Lopez (who had driven Sandy Lea's 1984 Encore) and Shawn Kennedy who drove his Alliance Convertible.

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Bruce Hunter from Sarasota, Florida had also come in for the show. After enjoying breakfast and conversation everyone caravanned to the fairgrounds. As they were getting the cars lined up, Clayton Hoover arrived without one of his beautiful LeCars.

Finally our last Invitational vehicle arrived, it was Eddie Palaghita with his recently found Tangerine R12. With the help of all our great volunteers, we now had three displays up and running both displays in Building R, as well as the showfield display. So everyone spread out across the Carlisle fairgrounds but planned to return at high noon. Nicofest closed down the Autocross track to allow the 30 years of Renault GTA demonstration. Representing the club was our most experienced racer and our youngest. Don McLaughlin drove his GTA Coupe and George Dimopoulos drove the GTA Convertible. Don being the elder driver had the honor to go first. Once everything checked out, George was next. All told, we had five Renaults, including Eddie in the R12, Nicolas in the 4L and Nathalie in the Twingo. It appeared that the exhibition had put smiles on the faces of everyone in attendance.

Normally we make plans for our swap meet on Saturday afternoon but on this occasion Jonathan Burnette set up shop on Friday inside building R and offered parts for sale all weekend. This seemed to work pretty well and we may try it again next year.

At 2:00PM everyone returned to Building R for the results of the car show. This year Joe Wagner had the honor of passing out the awards for First, Second, Third places as well as Honorable Mentions. The reason Joe passed out the awards was two-fold: one, he has a very strong voice and everyone can hear him, but secondly he had planned a surprise for his girlfriend Linda. As it was her birthday and with all her Renault friends present they really surprised her. Joe had even arranged for Tacos for everyone since we had cake the previous evening.

Following the car show and surprise party, Sandy Lea awarded all the winners of the silent auction, and Nick Dimopoulos ran the charity raffle, while Dan Barton lead a team of volunteers collecting all the toys from the Toys 4 Tots toy drive. While everyone else continued to hang out in the building due to the unexpected cool weather outside in the fairgrounds

Following a full day of activities everyone was on their own for dinner, but plans were to meet back at the Middlesex for Breakfast on Sunday morning. As usual the entire gang came to breakfast. Also as usual, Renault Quebec were the last to arrive. As the

old saying goes, "better late than never." Around 10:00AM many folks headed for home and all of the fabulous volunteers returned to fairgrounds to tear down the displays.

By now it was near 12:30 and everything was packed up. It was time for everyone to say farewell until next time. It was another very exciting show and we are all looking forward to returning to Carlisle next year. If you didn't make it this year, hopefully you will join us for next year's meet. We are already kicking around ideas for next year's displays, special guests, and new and exciting activities. So make your plans to attend May 18-20 2018. 📌



A Brief History of DAF Cars

by Marvin McFalls



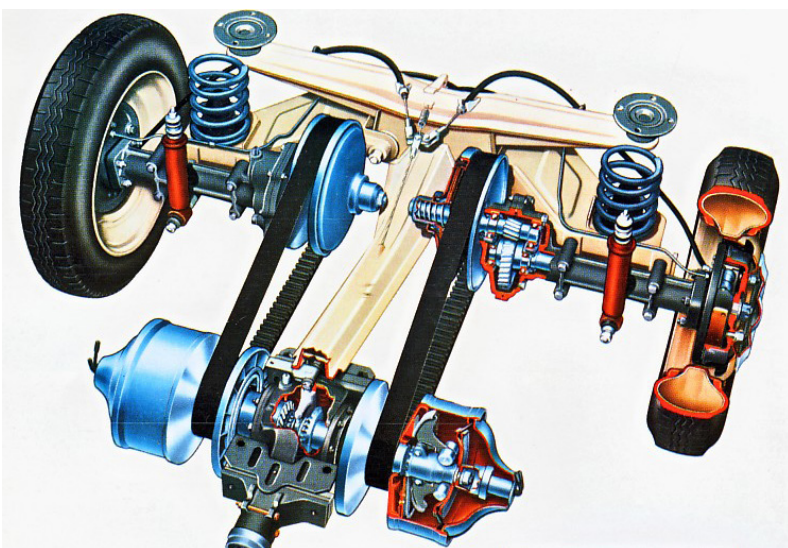
The DAF Variomatic was launched at the 1958 motor show in Amsterdam. The reaction from the press and public was astounding - here was a small, compact car which could comfortably carry four people and their luggage economically and also be very easy to drive. This was due to the simplicity and brilliance of the Variomatic fully automatic transmission. Until now, automatic transmissions tended to be only available on large cars. And conventional automatic transmissions were not very efficient.

The Variomatic was the brain child of Dr. Hub van Doorne (van Doorne's Automobiel Fabrieken - DAF) and was infinitely variable in its ratios - there were no noticeable gear changes. The pulleys in the transmission expanded and contracted, depending on speed, road conditions and driver's demand automatically. Final drive to the rear wheels was transmitted by rubber-composite drive belts. It became known as the "car of a hundred gears" and "the easiest car in the world to drive". There was a selector lever between the front seats - simply push it forward to go forwards and back to go back! And as with any other automatic car, there are just two pedals - accelerator and brake.

The engine capacity was increased in 1967 to 850cc with the introduction of the DAF 44 which was offered in sedan, wagon, and coupe forms, and carried on in production until 1975 in the DAF 46. However in 1968, the DAF 55 was launched which used the Renault 1108cc water-cooled engine. This car shared the same basic body shell as the 44. With the introduction of this larger four cylinder engine, DAF appealed to more customers. DAF continued with the air-cooled cars alongside the 55 and then later the 66, which replaced the 55 in 1972. The 66 also made use of the 1300cc version of this Renault engine, still of course using the Variomatic transmission, but a redesigned rear suspension using de-Dion set-up.

Following the takeover by Volvo, DAF models were taken off the market, apart from the DAF 46, and the 66 was replaced by the Volvo 66. Then in 1976, Volvo launched the Volvo 343, which would originally have been launched as a DAF 77 had DAF cars survived. The 343 was developed over the years into the Volvo 340/360 range and continued on the market, even with Variomatic until 1992.

Now you have the background on the DAF and



Renault's connection to the brand. I wanted to introduce you to quite possibly the earliest example of the Renault powered DAF. Late last year I was able to acquire what I was told was a DAF 55. Being that it had a Renault 1100cc engine I figured that was the case, but once I had the car home and did some research it turned out that this was actually a DAF 44 chassis.

After putting the car on the lift I couldn't see any signs of an engine change from the smaller two-cylinder engine so I believe that it is a pre-production DAF 55. So possibly this car was used for auto shows or even a test mule for development of the 55 model.

While my DAF 44 coupe is quite rare, possibly the only one here in the States, it turns out that there is club dedicated to DAF models here in the US. They claim to have over a hundred members! To learn more about DAF and to join the club visit: www.dafclubofamerica.org 📍



A Rare 1987 Renault R4TL from Spain, AKA “Eric The Red”

by Jeff B. Sias, Owner - Contributing Author, Diego Vasquez-Baglietto



Car collecting starts with owning your first car. In the 1980's my first car was of European design and while I no longer have the car, the “bug” to have something similar has stayed with me to this day. I grew up driving the “poor man’s Porsche,” better known as the Volkswagen Karmann Ghia. I’m still kicking myself now for selling this highly desirable and moderately pricy collectable.

Fortunately, second chances come along on the shoulder of life’s road. Some 35 years later, a modest career and good fortune afforded me another opportunity to delve into the past when I discovered the Renault R4TL. The “Cuatro Lata” (4L) or as the Spanish humbly say; “four cans” became my dream car. Simple, fun to drive, and a head-turner, the Renault R4TL became my car while living in Spain. The R4 was first introduced in 1961 (my birth year) and was in production until 1992 with limited modification other than in horsepower. French design imports under Franco’s communist regime finally became domestically produced in the 1970’s.

Even though over 8 million R4s were produced worldwide in a 30 year period the R4 yielded to newer, more comfortable, and safer models. Dependable? Yes. Mechanically these cars are like indestructible mini-tanks that can be held together with bailing wire, duct tape, affordable parts, and basic mechanical talent. As with most cars out of production nearly 25 years, the nostalgia eventually reemerges and a handful of Norte Americanos like me, frugal city-dwellers, farmers, and others seek out these reliable relics.

When I began to search for my own R4, I was surprised to find so many available scattered throughout the country. A vast majority of these cars are owned by old farmers or stuffed away in inherited barns of old deceased farmers whose heirs forgot about them parked because they are not fast, overly comfortable, equipped with bluetooth stereos, nor is there a huge local resale market. The vehicle safety commission would rather see them off the road, crushed, and well...turned into four cans....which is about as much metal as one could salvage. Most car finds have set for years thus their seals, hoses, and belt conditions are deteriorated, along with the dents, worn cushions and torn upholstery. Even though parts are available and affordable, the typical R4 needs significant work. Fortunately there are exceptions to the rule.

The car featured here is a red 1987 R4TL first sold in Madrid, that made its way to Montilla, Spain, a semi-continental Mediterranean climate with long, hot, dry summers and short winters. This hill town that produces Sherry type wines, primarily Fino, enjoys 3,000 hours of sunlight per year with rainfall less than 600mm (24 inches). The climate helped keep this particular R4 looking good considering all she's been through over the years. Fitted with an all original 1.1L four-cylinder engine with 60,000 Km or roughly 37,000 miles, although not immaculate with negligible rust and a hastily over-sprayed paint job.

I first became aware of this make and model in the small white-village of Rota, Cadiz provenance where Andalusian horses still reign supreme, and the Toreo (Bullfight) is still an art form. Most non-Spaniards collect paintings (I looked but didn't see any stray works by Picasso lying around), Moorish tiles and other pottery, or a beach tan to bring home, but I sought out a very affordable piece of motor history in which to drive away. Fortunately my employer afforded me the opportunity to bring one car, with an automatic transmission (which is more-rare than these old buggies) from the U.S. to Spain when I moved there. As a result I was able leave a Toyota Yaris there and bring back my Cuatro Lata.

Diego, a good Spaniard friend of mine, shared my interest and enthusiasm to search for an R4 in the 25 year old range (USDOT requirement in order to import). When we found this one in Montilla, a three hour drive, Diego set up an appointment and we went to see and test-drive it one Saturday. The Spanish don't go over an hour without stopping for coffee and toast in the morning. Two Ventas (Mom and Pop owned restaurants) later, we pulled into Montilla and got coffee. The heir of this particular 1987 R4TL didn't speak a lick of English and I matched his oration with no Spanish. Diego immediately got down to business so I thought. I do actually understand a lot of Spanish words but just can't always string them into context. I did pick up on the word "historia" and imagined Diego would be able to tell me all about the car's background. Unbeknownst to me when I asked about the conversation he spouted off the previous owner's life story. Spanish, being ultra-social characters, apparently tend to share their heritage, making personal connections before haggling over car prices.

The car looked great inside and out. The engine sounded tight but when I started driving my knee just about hit my chin before the clutch engaged. The price was right, the overall condition was far superior to other similar cars that caught my interest, and I was wired from all of the coffee.

"Let's take it Diego", I said. He grinned and said back; "One thing I like more about Americans than their friendship is helping spend their money."

Weak clutch and all, we ventured back to Rota on a full tank of gas and a prayer. Perhaps the Pope had blessed all R4s. The trip back kept me a little tense but in the end was unremarkable.

The following Monday I contacted an accomplished Spanish mechanic friend of mine who was a chip off the old block of his father who once worked in the garage of the local Renault dealer.

Tuned up with fresh fluids and new components that included a clutch assembly, calipers and brakes, point, plugs, rotor and cap, etc., I appropriately named and christened my collector car, "Eric The Red," because she was ready to journey back and discover the U.S.

The voyage to ship a rare jewel from Europe typically takes about 6 weeks. Two weeks into the trip I received an email stating "my shipment was undamaged" noting the vessel, leaving port in England, had caught fire destroying a couple hundred other cars.

I forwarded the email to Diego because he asked to be kept posted. His return reply was; "Nothing can destroy a Cuatro Lata!" It is remarkable that Eric The Red, the R4TL, made it back unscathed.

Since importing my Renault R4TL in July 2015, it has been a real head-turner here in Virginia Beach. Most people have to ask, "what is it?" I'm sure Picasso got the same reactions to his works of art. 🍷



Renault 8 Gordini R1134 1964-1966

by Marvin McFalls



As far as postwar Renaults are concerned probably the most iconic is the R8 Gordini. For a boxy compact sedan that's difficult to believe, but when you paint it French racing blue, with white racing stripes, people give it a second or even a third look. This rear-engine marvel -available in 95 (SAE) hp, 1,108-cc four-cylinder form through 1966, combined twin side draft-2-bbl. carbureted, cross-flow hemi-head with close-ratio four-speed gearboxes and upgraded suspension, brake and steering components, it quickly established a great track record in Europe and here in the US. With a modest price tag of only \$2345 about \$700 more than an R8 major, you got quite a lot of bang for your buck even in 1965.

Total R8 Gordini production amounted to only 11,607 cars, and only 2626 of the 1134 and a small fraction of those were imported to the US, so they're highly sought after and tend to trade hands quickly among the Sorcerer's fanatics.

I wondered, of the 2626 R1134s that were produced, how many of them actually made it to the U.S. Over the years I have heard estimates somewhere between 100 and 200, but my research shows it could even be less than that. From the club registry and other sources I have been able to determine there were only three batches of R1134s brought into the US. The first set had serial numbers in the 1300s, the next were in the 1600s the lowest number I have found in the batch was 1642 and the highest 1650. The final batches I have discovered were in the 2300s. All told the range of serial numbers from known cars consists of less than 40 vehicles assuming that cars were shipped out in series.

I have decided to try to update the registry on the North American R8 Gordini R1134. If anyone knows of any of these cars, even if it was sold off decades ago, I would like to have the serial numbers (if known) and copies of any photos you may have. Maybe one day we can have a better understanding of just how many R8 Gordinis made it to our shores, and who knows we may find a few more examples out there that have yet to be rediscovered. 💎



Best of France and Italy 2016

by Robert Baker

The Best of France & Italy Car Show, held in Woodley Park in the Van Nuys section of Los Angeles last November 6th, was as always a unique and wonderful event. As usual, the Renault owners in the region met for breakfast at Jerry's Deli, and then drove to the show. The show itself brought a diverse collection of French and Italian automobiles in a laid-back setting. Again this year, Jay Leno appeared in his Bugatti.

Los Angeles is a far piece from my home in western Colorado, but after a hiatus of several years, I wanted to go again. If I had known that I would be asked to write a note about the show for Renault News I would have taken either my 1958 4CV or my 1959 Floride/Caravelle. In fact, I was surprised when the only mention of the show that appeared in the Renault News was the cover and the note about the R-16 in Renault News #113. However, it turned out that since neither Jock Lynn nor Kurt Triffet brought their Renaults to this year's show, it has fallen to me to write something. If I had known ahead of time that I was to be the reporter, I would have gotten the names of the Renault owners that were there, since I believe that credit for owning a Renault must be given.

For the show, I choose my 1949 Simca 8 Berline. Five years ago I drove it the 1000 miles to L.A., but this year I convinced my wife Susie to accompany me, and in what must be a common experience for French car owners, she insisted on a more comfortable ride, so we trailered the Simca to Frazier Park, north of L.A., where Dean and Pat Barrett, the owners of an R10 and a Caravelle, allowed us to park the trailer.

At Frazier Park, Jock Lynn and Sharon Desplaines were happily ensconced in the Barrett's guest-house, while Susie and I stayed at Koko's Mountain Motel, in itself a unique experience. Jock's 4CV was having electrical problems (now happily fixed) and Dean's Renaults were not quite ready, so instead of the usual caravan of French cars into L.A., the little Simca was all alone on those busy California freeways.

I chose the Simca 8 because in the 1940's the French Simcas were really copies of the Fiat mark that originated Simca in France. I knew that the Italian contingent at Woodley Park would enjoy





seeing a Fiat/Simca, and I was pleasantly surprised to find my car's little sister, a Fiat Topolino.

At The Best of France and Italy there is very little of that attitude about original vs. modified cars that one finds at some shows, and one can find cars in every condition, from a pristine Facel-Vega to a road-used Citroen 2CV. Both the participants and the spectators are well versed in all aspects of European automobiles. Unlike the Ford/Chevy extravaganzas to which I usually take my Renaults in western Colorado and Utah, at Woodley Park there is a level of sophistication rarely found at car shows, and a good smattering of French speakers to make things interesting.



The nicest Renault there was the R16 TX featured on the cover of Renault News #113, owned by Tania Palmer and her husband, which won a prize for the best French car. Also at the show, the owner of a white Caravelle did yeoman's service in helping Jock put up the Renault Club banner.



Among the Renaults at the show, were a very nice red Dauphine and a red R8. I have been going to car shows for many years, and it is increasingly evident that both the participants and the spectators are getting a bit long in the tooth. Folks who like classic French cars fall into four categories: those who have owned a French car at some point in their lives, those who are interested in unique mechanical configurations, those who are fascinated by aesthetic designs, those that have been to France and recognize the cars. How to interest young people in collector cars in general, and French cars in particular, is a subject that should stimulate discussion among your readers. I think that French automobiles are in a good position to attract young owners because they are not expensive, and they are fun! 💡



The Southwest Unique Little Car Show

by Sharon Desplaines & Jacques Lynn

Many of you may have read the article written by Jacques and his problems with Butterpat to and from last year's Unique Little Car show in Phoenix, but we will get back to that later.

This April, we attended the Unique Little Car show in Upland, Ca. In preparation, Jacques labored and toiled, working on Butterpat until he felt she was fit for the journey of 240 miles to Upland and back.

I decided to trust Jacques and Butterpat for this trip and I rode along with him rather than follow in my car as I wisely did last year. This time it was a beautiful day and believe it or not, we made it in acceptable time. NOT ONE INCIDENT!

We gathered on Saturday at the Best Western Hotel in Cucamonga, 5.4 miles from downtown Upland, where the show was scheduled for the next day. We signed up for the show and received a packet of information and various promotional goodies. The plan was for all to caravan through Cucamonga and have a get together dinner at the home of our hosts Gregg and Kiki later that afternoon.

The caravan was long and rather disjointed. We were back quite a ways following a long line of those ahead, but with stoplights and various turns the caravan was breaking up. We had no idea where Gregg and Kiki's house was, as did many others. We had to keep together and follow the leader.

With apprehension we made it to a large cul-de-sac in a residential section that had room for all our cars to curb park. What a site to see all the colorful unique little cars parked together.

Gregg and Kiki's backyard was setup to seat everyone and served a delicious Italian Cuisine buffet. We were joined by Marvin McFalls and Rex Parker, who we hadn't seen for a few years. We also found Steve McCarthy at the next table, so the Renault Owners Club was represented by a few members.

The following morning we followed the map in our registration packet to downtown Upland where everyone was setting up. The logistics was a cross street in the middle of town all filled in wherever we could, nose to nose, in the center of the streets. The largest contingent of models were the Nash Metropolitans





who had pretty much filled up one leg of a cross street. Their club was the sponsor of the show.

At one point I was approached by a gentleman who asked if I was the Jock at last year's car show in Phoenix? He had for me an award which had been given out at the farewell meeting on the day after the show. Incidentally, we always skip the second day and head home directly after the first day's show. At any rate because I had so much trouble with the alternator and battery I won the booby prize in the Phoenix show. It was a very heavy award which he had brought this year in the hopes of finding me. It was so heavy he left it in the back of his truck at the Best Western. WoW!

Later I followed him to his truck where he uncovered my trophy. Someone had welded together a Metropolitan crankshaft, four rods and various other unidentifiable engine parts to look like an animal. With a large round nose it would have looked like a pig, but so as not to imply cut out two large dog ears from aluminum and attached them to the creature. Ah shucks, it is beautiful.

I am so grateful for the recognition. I think the only other award I ever won was as a 5th grader in summer camp. I received a first place ribbon in the chess tournament.

We made it home by 9:00 PM all in one piece. 🏠



Treasures Abound at the Mullin Automotive Museum

by David Cotner

Tucked away on a side street in a non-descript block of industrial buildings in southeast Oxnard is a museum that's less a gallery than a vast and glittering tribute to the pinnacle of automotive consciousness.

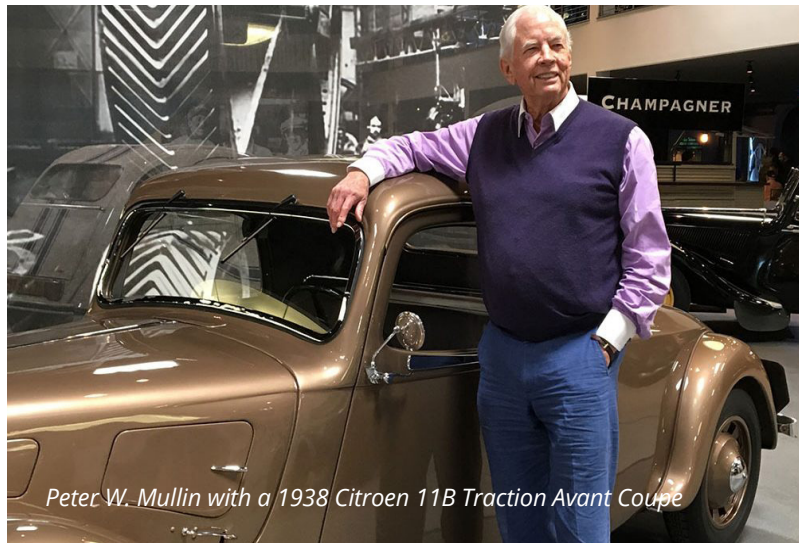
The Mullin Automotive Museum, founded by insurance magnate Peter W. Mullin, is at any given time filled with dozens of impossibly scarce examples of cars that represent the apex of automotive design. The unearthly silver sleekness that is the 1938 Hispano-Suiza Dubonnet Xenia. The scarlet Art Deco Delahaye, built to represent France at the 1939 World's Fair. The 1939 Delage D8 120 Chapron, blood-red and elegant, that once belonged to Howard Hughes. And the best car in the world, if there is such a thing.

It's the teardrop-shaped 1937 Talbot-Lago T150C S, borrowed occasionally for exhibition by the Guggenheim Museum and shown all over the world. The first item in Mullin's collection was a 1948 Talbot Record, and his love for collecting grew exponentially from there. The cost to do it was the least of his concerns.

"Numbers are not nearly as interesting as passions. Passions don't have any boundaries," he said, noting he wasn't sure exactly how many cars he has in his collection. "I'm not a numbers guy — a lot. My wife says too many."

When first entering the Mullin and experiencing all these cars in their totality, the superlatives flow in geometric progression, the quantity of automobiles boggling the mind until speechlessness gets the last word. Seeing these cars is, in many cases, like seeing a revenant from days when ghosts held power and awe in equal amounts.

One such specter here is called the Lady of the Lake. A 1925 Type 22 Brescia Bugatti, its road to becoming a legend started with its owner René Dreyfus, the world's most famous race car driver at the time. One night in 1934, Dreyfus thought he had an outstanding hand in a game of poker. Having no money on him, he put up the pink slip to his Bugatti — and promptly lost it to his opponent, Swiss bon vivant Adalbert Bodé. As Bodé continued to gamble for the next few weeks — losing money all the way — he decided to cut his losses and head back to Switzerland. A guard stopped him at the Swiss border near Lake



Peter W. Mullin with a 1938 Citroen 11B Traction Avant Coupe



1937 Talbot-Lago T150C S



The Lady of the Lake



Maggiore and, recognizing the car, checked its paperwork. The car's original owner had bought it from the Italian Bugatti plant, brought it into Switzerland and, unfortunately, neglected to pay 11 years' worth of import duties or taxes. The guard tells a broke and understandably dejected Bodé that he has to pay off the tax — four times what the Bugatti was then worth — to bring the car into the country.

So the Bugatti was confiscated. The guard was ordered to destroy the car.

As enterprising as he was thorough, the guard decided to sink the car in Lake Maggiore on the Italian-Swiss border, put some chains around each of the wheels, run them up on cinderblocks and secure the car down there. He'd wait for the heat to die down, retrieve the car, take it to Italy, get it restored and have a car that was once owned by notoriously poor gambler René Dreyfus.

But the chains he used were frail and, after about a year and a half, broke. The car slid 177 feet down an incline in the lakebed and remained there for almost 77 years.

It became a myth among the locals, who called the Bugatti the "Lady of the Lake." There were arguments over the years as to whether there was even a car down there. A local scuba diving club decided to voyage to the bottom of the lake, and discovered the Bugatti there in the icy cold waters. On its left side. Just waiting.

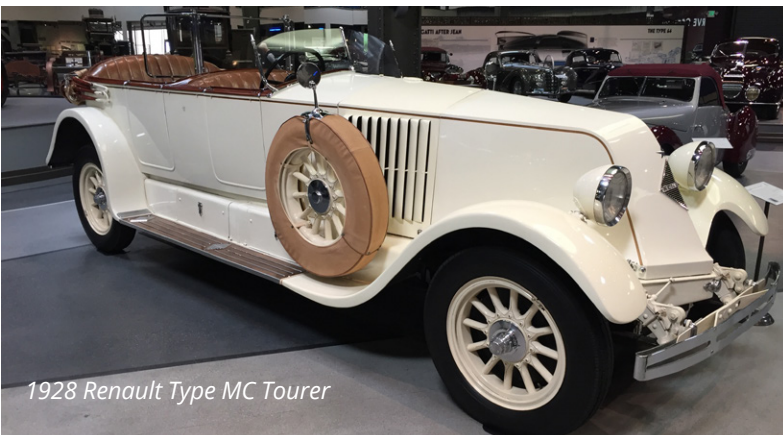
The legend became a tourist attraction. For dive certifications, people dove to the bottom of the lake to see the Lady. Sometimes they took parts of the car as souvenirs.

Then tragedy struck: One of the sons of the men from the Ascona dive club was murdered in gang-related violence. His family wanted to establish a trust in his name, and the scuba club wanted to donate, so they got the idea to raise the Bugatti out of the lake, auction it off and give the proceeds to the Tamagni Family Trust. In 2009, after a lot of planning and much fanfare, they were able to lift it from the depths.

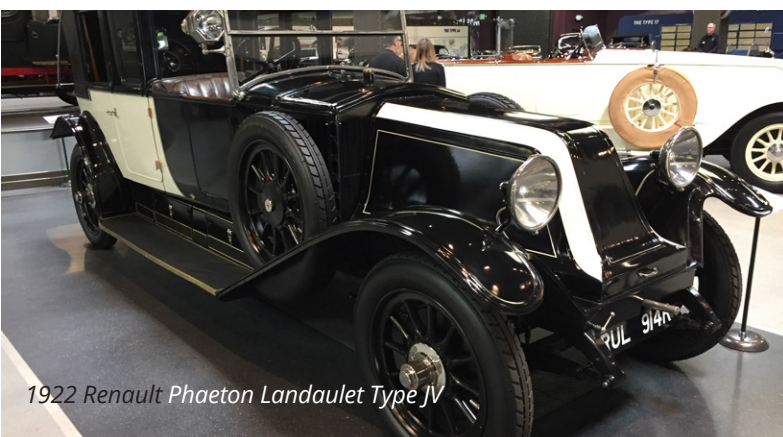
Mullin — the largest private collector of Bugattis in the world, second only to the French National Automobile Museum — saw the Lady of the Lake come up for auction at Bonham's. He figured the maximum amount he'd bid would be about \$30,000. It came down to two bidders: Mullin and someone who'd just sold his business for \$7 billion and had decided to go into the antique restoration business. He wanted to



1939 Delahaye Type 165



1928 Renault Type MC Tourer



1922 Renault Phaeton Landaulet Type JV

buy the car and restore it, to learn everything about what it takes to fix up a Bugatti. Mullin argued that the Lady was a piece of art created by two of the greatest artists in the world: Ettore Bugatti and Mother Nature. His goal was preservation — not restoration. A philosophical argument raged between the two men as money was bid back and forth.

The final bid? \$377,000.

“Once I knew that the Lady of the Lake was brought up to solve a humanity problem, all those factors weighed together, excellence, elegance and humanity,” Mullin said that cost became a non-issue.

A self-made man with a B.A. in economics from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and roots in La Habra, Mullin’s love for these classic cars began when he was living in Brentwood. One of his neighbors — and future buying partner Jim Hull — had a French car. A reporter was coming to photograph it for a magazine. The photographer went over to Mullin and asked if they could take pictures of the car in front of his house. Not knowing what kind of car Hull had in mind, he agreed. One Saturday morning, Mullin looked out the window and saw a Delahaye in front of his house.

“The Delahaye was the first car that gave me inspiration,” Mullin said of the post-World War II vehicle. “It was maybe the most drop-dead gorgeous piece of automobile sculpture that kind of got me hooked.”

Mullin fell in love with the art, design and streamlined nature of these cars.

“My passion is artistic things, sculpture or painting or photography,” Mullin said. “The reason is, that is what touches me. I started off in life at UCSB in my earlier days. I started off as an art major and early on I realized that everybody in class was more talented and everyone was starving. At 17 I was aware that I shouldn’t pick a path I would not likely to do well at.” He switched his major to economics — which thus began a career path that would prove to be exceptionally lucrative.

As Mullin began his car collection, it was the Bugatti that caught his eye.

“I fell in love with Bugatti,” he said. “Most think they are Italian, but Bugatti are all French cars. I started collecting them 30 years ago. I absolutely fell in love with the speed, engineering, artistic styling, sculpture, performance.”

Carlo Bugatti, the family patriarch, was a furniture maker, oil painter and silver craftsman; his furniture helped launch the Bugatti family’s fortunes. The furniture was so ornate that Bugatti needed artisans and a worldwide market where he could ply his wares. Consequently, he moved the Bugatti family from Milan to Paris. Carlo had three children — Ettore, his oldest; Deanice, his daughter; and his youngest, a son named Rembrandt. Ettore and Rembrandt both went to art school; Rembrandt at 14 was considered a genius. Ettore started designing cars on his own, bringing the parts home for assembly in his basement. A family friend gave him enough money to work for a year designing a car.

There’s a vast and valuable collection of Carlo Bugatti furniture gracing the Mullin Museum, as well as the artwork of Rembrandt Bugatti, striking in their fluidity and natural power. A sculpture of a stalking panther has such presence and grace that it seems as if it could leap off its pedestal at any moment. It’s the same lithe spirit that informed the Bugatti automobile designs. These sculptures are also the only remaining representations of the animals that Rembrandt sketched: During World War I, the Antwerp Zoo was forced to start killing its animals because it could not feed them. This must have exacerbated the depression that began after Rembrandt volunteered for paramedical work at the military hospital, which was further aggravated by financial difficulties. The artist committed suicide in 1916 at the age of 31.

Showing his designs to every car manufacturer in France, Ettore finally settled on Peugeot — but instead of selling the company the designs, he took the risky and unheard-of step of asking for a royalty on each car sold. The monies from these royalties were promptly plowed back into buying factories to manufacture automobiles. The early designs, beautiful as they were, admittedly sacrificed a certain amount of practicality: Bugattis were infamous for having brakes that seemed almost an afterthought. “I don’t make cars to slow down,” Bugatti once remarked, “I make cars to go fast.” With that in mind, it’s a wonder that these cars survived in the amazing shape in which they currently exist at the Mullin.

Despite all the many makes and models that populate both levels of the museum, not all the cars in Mullin’s collection are here. The most expensive car in the world, which Mullin picked up for a mere \$30 million, is currently visiting Phoenix at the Arizona Concours d’Elegance on a mission to raise funds for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. The 1957 Bugatti 57SC — originally intended to be made out of volatile magnesium — has been on loan previously at the Petersen Automoto-

tive Museum in L.A., on whose board Mullin also sits.

Mullin knows a good thing when he sees it. He set up a foundation to preserve these cars for the next 50 years.

Once they're under his roof, it's unlikely they'll be changing hands anytime soon. And yet it's not only pragmatism that's fueled and filled the museum. Collecting also takes a keen eye for a lucky break. Mullin has found cars everywhere, from the depths of Lake Maggiore to the shed in which a rare Delahaye was being used as a playground by neighbor kids to the

hoarded cars of the Schlumpf family in France.

Lords of a European textile empire, the Schlumpfs squirreled away over 750 French cars in a massive secret building complete with its own racetrack. Wiped out by the advent of synthetic fabrics in the '70s, their fortunes waned to the point that they stopped paying their workers' salaries — even while they continued to buy more cars. The secret was accidentally revealed in 1977 by some of the Schlumpfs' better-paid employees, at which point an angry mob stormed their secret garage and started setting cars on fire. One thing led to another, the authorities confiscated all the cars for unpaid taxes, and the Schlumpfs escaped to Switzerland.

Mullin got word of the offer from the lawyers for the Schlumpf estate after the family members died. In one swift move, 65 of the cars formerly belonging to the late Schlumpf family were his. Several of these are at the museum in unrestored, original condition — a testament to the ravages of time and shadowy dealings, stuck in a barn like treasures that perhaps no one can completely understand or appreciate in quite the same way that Peter Mullin does.

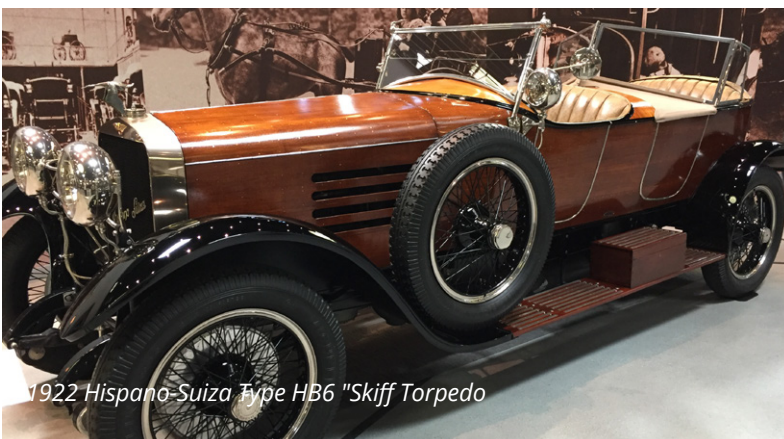
In addition to Mullin's many Bugattis, there's also a new exhibition of Mullin's Citroëns, those long, sleek French cars that look more like spaceships than automobiles.

"All of these years, I had been walking by Citroën and never really paid proper attention to them," he said. "One day it dawned on me, Citroën is celebrating in 2018 100 years of styling and engineering in France. It caused me to focus on finding the greatest examples of Citroëns. That was three years ago."

Over 40 different Citroëns representing over nine decades of tireless devotion to style and design are here in the largest North American Citroën retrospective ever undertaken. As with all the cars at the Mullin, the designs are stunning. And if all these cars were turned on at once, it would sound like a symphony.

The exhibition "Citroën: The Man, The Marque, The Mystique" runs through Spring 2018. Reservations to enter the Mullin can be scheduled at: mullinautomotivemuseum.com or call 805-385-5400.

Michael Sullivan contributed to this article. 💎



1922 Hispano-Suiza Type HB6 "Skiff Torpedo"



Henri Chapron made several DS models for Citroën

Renault Frères 2017

by Francisco Miranda

On Sunday April 9th, the 8th edition of the show took place with a display of over a hundred and twenty Renaults from the modern age. The Alpine Club, the Gordini Sport and Mexico clubs, with the participation of assorted Renault associations, put together this important event at the Plaza Cuicuilco grounds.

Planning and organization is basic in these shows, Alejandro Cortés has gathered a lot of the experience needed and knows many people from the Plaza and Federation, speeding up the paperwork in order to get security, permits, best areas possible, etc. Working with the other clubs' representatives, we were able to enjoy a nice, well planned event. Thank you for the big effort, guys!

Among the highlights of the event were the eight unveilings of the following cars: 1970 red R10; three Dinalpin A110 Cabriolets: Eduardo Wolf unveiled his red customized Cabriolet incorporating wider fenders, black streamlined bumpers and 6 headlamps; A 1960 Floride S with 845 cc engine, 4+R gearbox, Mississippi green colored, owned by Roger Roux and restored by Miguel Cacheux same as the metalized blue 1974 Renault 17, 1647 cc hemi head; two A110 Berlinettes and one A110L-GT4. Alejandro Cortés owns the wine-colored Bordeaux 1969 A110 and the red 1971 GT4, both cars restored by Carlos Calvillo but also incorporates lots of work done by Alejandro himself. As for the other cars, I don't have the information or details of the vehicles, which also were interesting for the eyes to see. Most welcome was Fernando Roldán's Dinalpin A110 with its original looks and under restoration process near completion. Loaded with a 2-liter engine modified by Roldán himself, it runs very smooth and fast.

As in previous years, some cars were parked inside the shopping mall as an invitation for the buyers to assist on the day of the event. This year, one of the three cars on display was José Luis Torres' 1960 silver Dauphine.

A noteworthy situation was the display of two Estafettes: My yellow/white truck is by far not displayable! I took it there as every year, loaded with the event's sound system that this year was at the end not needed, so I parked her quietly along the left-hand tent having the most unobstructed view as possible. Later on, the organizers asked me to park it in a "V" shaped configuration along a dull black 70's custom-



ized Estafette and a moped in the middle. Why? I have no idea! As in previous years, it attracts my attention to see so many people taking pictures and asking assorted questions of the truck, even a couple of what looked like professional photographers with plenty of camera equipment, were shooting like crazy in every possible angle! Some friends tell me (in laughs) that I should give her a transparent varnish coat and leave it as a Rat Rod car. Personally, I find the truck useful for my occasional needs to move a big or bulky package or assorted audio equipment. I hope someday I can restore her to the original factory looks.

A note explaining the term: Most rat rods appear "unfinished", regardless of their status, as only the vehicle's bare essentials are driven. These are built to drive, not exclusively for show. (Courtesy of Roger Roux)

Between the Estafettes and stage right was displayed this true, original Scenic first generation (MX), which is a vehicle that has been maintained both aesthetically and mechanically original from Mario Arturo Arévalo, loaded with most dealer accessories from the time. Not only pristine cars were displayed, as seen in other examples like the R12 Break, showing scars of time and battles fought or new Clio and Megane Sport, customized or factory preserved. All Renaults were welcome!

We were happy to see old friends that are rightfully considered classic Renault personalities, in the friend-

liest mood to answer questions and share stories to people from the public that cared to ask them: Pepe Siatos, Lorenzo Sendra, Alberto Pedroza and others spent a nice day in their element. Also, we had the visit from Luis Silva, President of the Federación Mexicana de Automóviles Antiguos y de Colección, which by the way, supported our event in more than one possible way. Thanks a lot!

The Federation grants some Official Certificates for the unveiled cars, as you may see in a picture with Cortés' GT4 constancy.

On display, we had the scale models tent where many of us found nice toys to take back home. Renault Talpan, a new cars' dealer took part on the event, bringing examples of the new line of cars, including the Twizy electric vehicle, Koleos, Sandero, Clio Sport, etc. This year there were no parts swap meet as the plaza' have a new ongoing policy with vendors, so we'll have to wait for another occasion to find some treasures hidden in the boxes.

As pictures reveal, many people spent their sunny Sunday in a very Renaultistic, familiar and friendly atmosphere. We had a delicious taco lunch accompanied by soft drinks, wine and beer. At about 5 PM cars started to part ways and we followed suit at about 7 PM, tired but happy with a sensation of accomplishment for the day just passed. My friends Alejandro Konstantonis with his friend Anaid and Jaime Hernández helped me to drive the cars, so when we got home we had some wine and a hearty cheese fondue to close the day.

Looking forward for next year event which I am sure will be something to remember as well. Hope some of you could visit us and be part of this interclub Renault Day.

Usually I thank the organizations or clubs for the invitations they extend us to participate in their events in a general manner but this time I would like to thank the people involved backstage to make this year's event possible, so if you'll permit me (and I may be excluding important working persons, so please excuse me for doing so, as this year it was not possible for me to participate), my special thanks to Alejandro Cortés with Teodoro Hernández (Alpine Club), Javier González with Hugo González and Roger Roux (Gordini Sport Club), Ignacio Trueba, Nicolás López, Federico Hernández (Mexico Club) for the hard work of planning and organization during the early stages, to Plaza Cuicuilco's for their support, Arely Rivas for her aid throughout the planning stages and all mentioned, along Jaime Janeiro for their work throughout the event. Lots of hard work rewarded with the results! 💎



Those Estafettes



The Back Page - R8 Gordini



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