

# Renault News

FOR THE NORTH AMERICAN RENAULT ENTHUSIAST | FALL/WINTER 2023 | 127

## FRANCE & ITALY 2023



**Renault Owners  
Club** OF NORTH AMERICA



fall/winter 2023 | **IN THIS ISSUE**

France & Italy 2023 . . . . .	3	1953 Renault 4CV . . . . .	23
Hello Dolly! . . . . .	14	Croatia Adventure. . . . .	24
It's Called Suspension (R16) . . . . .	16	Wheel Balancing Beads . . . . .	25
The Meeting of the Marques that Wasn't . . . . .	18	A Splendid R6. . . . .	27
50 Years with an R8 . . . . .	20	Back Page - VRUMVRUM . . . . .	28

**Join us now on Facebook!**  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/291079754246181>

**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 . . . . . Kurt Triffet  
 Editor of Renault News. . . . . Marvin McFalls  
 Forum Moderator/Print Editor . . . . . Michael Heather  
 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.

This newsletter is not an official publication of Renault USA or Régie des Usines Renault. Permission to reprint original material is granted to any non-profit membership publication on a single-use basis if full credit is given to the author. Originally published items become property of the club.

**Address Changes**

Kurt Triffet, 339 Carol Drive, Ventura, CA 93003  
 renaultclubus@gmail.com

**Classified Ads**

Place ads online at <forum.renaultclub.us>  
 Or join our Facebook Group and post there.

**Renault Club Discussion Forum**

forum.renaultclub.us (phasing out January 2024)

**Our club Facebook Group**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/291079754246181>

**Articles, Letters, Correspondence**

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

**Newsletter Production & Publishing; Website Design**

Triffet Design Group • www.triffetdesign.com  
 Tel: 805 658-8646 • renaultclubus@gmail.com

**Back Issue Requests:**

**All back issues downloadable at club website.**

Individual hard copies (limited availability) US\$2 each:  
 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](https://www.facebook.com/groups/291079754246181)

**Technical Advisors:**

**4CV, Dauphine, R10, Caravelle**

No current advisor

**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, Tel: 604-565-9611 • bspeed1@shaw.ca



## Best of France and Italy 2023

by Kurt Triffet and Matt Cotton

Sunday, November 5th, was the annual Best of France and Italy show at Woodley Park, Van Nuys, CA. It's always a great show, and this one had some great cars. Only a few Renaults were present, but still super fun to run into old friends and meet new ones.

I had tried to organize a breakfast, but a recent bout of COVID (yuck) and also that the new Denny's we had talked about going to last year, was now shuttered (!) delayed my further research. That area is tough for deli/diner style restaurants. Next year!

Among the folks I ran into were, Steve Chichester, who came with his wife all the way from Seattle for the show; Pierre Yoyemant, who came with his Peugeot 304; Chris Davidson and his son Josh, who were selling a ton of NOS Renault parts and goodies, recently acquired from Jacques Lynn; Robert Neimeyer and his wife who showed up with the lone '64 Dauphine (a beauty); and Dene Barrett and his wife Pat, who is in the process of restoring his 1963 Caravelle.

I hope we can get more people out next year with their cars. I'm determined to bring my Caravelle again, despite the 60 mile freeway drive.

### From Matt Cotton:

The turnout was very different from my last visit in 2009 (and West Coast shows like this one generally have very different cars from East Coast shows).

In 2009, Pierre Voyemant showed his Simca 1118 and today he was back with his amazing Peugeot 304 (which he also had at home in 2009).

There was a Murena in '09 and today there was a '50s Talbot Lago coupe (like maybe an America.)

In '09 there was practically an entire row of big and small Facel Vegas, but today I only saw a lone Facel III, maybe a '63?

One lovely Panhard from around '59?

Just a few Peugeots; 304, 504, 405 and 505. I think there were a few more exotic Peugeots in '09.

From Renault there was just one, nice Dauphine and a row of 5 Turbos. Also, the LA Conner Police Le Car in the parking lot. And there was a very nice blue



#### 4 renault news

Alpine A110. No Alliance, no Medallion, no Premier. In 2009 there were Caravelles, R8s and R10s and "modern" '70s models.

Citroen showed a row of gorgeous DS's, one CX "legal import" from when they did that (pre-CXA) and an XM. I remember a handful of imported diesel CXs from the 70s "certified" with huge protruding bumpers and single rectangular sealed beam headlights. They were fascinating!

Also, an SM or two, a variety of pretty 2CVs and a Dyane Acadian.

LOADS of lovely Italians! Some "ordinary" 850, 124 and 128 Fiats and Lancia Appias, Flavia and GTVs that I distinctly remember from 2009 as well.

Definitely a ton of Italian exotics, certainly lovely, but they all look alike to me, LOL. 💎























## Hello Dolly!

from *The Renault Guide*, 2nd quarter 1968



# Hello, Dolly!

**M**rs. S. Dolly Watson of Lincoln, Neb. is driving a 1967 Dauphine and thoroughly enjoys it. This, of course, is nothing unique by itself, as any number of people drive Dauphines and like them very much.

Mrs. Watson, however, is a bit different. This isn't her first Renault, nor even her second or third. In fact, she's not even sure how many she has owned. But, one thing is positive, however. Her acquaintance with Renaults is not a recent one.

Mrs. Watson, who was Miss Dolly Delvaille at the time, recalls first becoming acquainted with Renaults in 1925, although, she adds, "I'm sure my father had Renaults as far back as 1920 or even earlier."

From 1927 through 1931, Miss Delvaille showed her

personal Renaults at various concours d' elegance along the French Riviera where her father owned several of the famed French casinos in Cannes and other areas.

In 1931, as the pictures indicate, she won the 23rd Concours d' Elegance with a cabriolet Renault Renastella with a custom body by Hibbard and Darin. What's more, in that particular event, every car entered had to be worth at least 100,000 French francs.

The Monte Carlo Concours and Grand Prix was not her first competition. In 1927, Miss Delvaille won the coveted 'Prix d' Honneur' with a Renault Nervastella with body by Million-Guiet.

"In those days, people didn't drive their own cars very much," she explains today in Lincoln. "In fact, my first recollection of a Renault is one of the chauffeur-driven models with the glass between the front and back seats."

A faithful Renault owner herself since 1927, she met her husband, B. Frank Watson, in France after World-War II had moved into Germany in 1944. Shortly after the end of the war, they came to the United States. She has owned several Renaults off and on since that time.

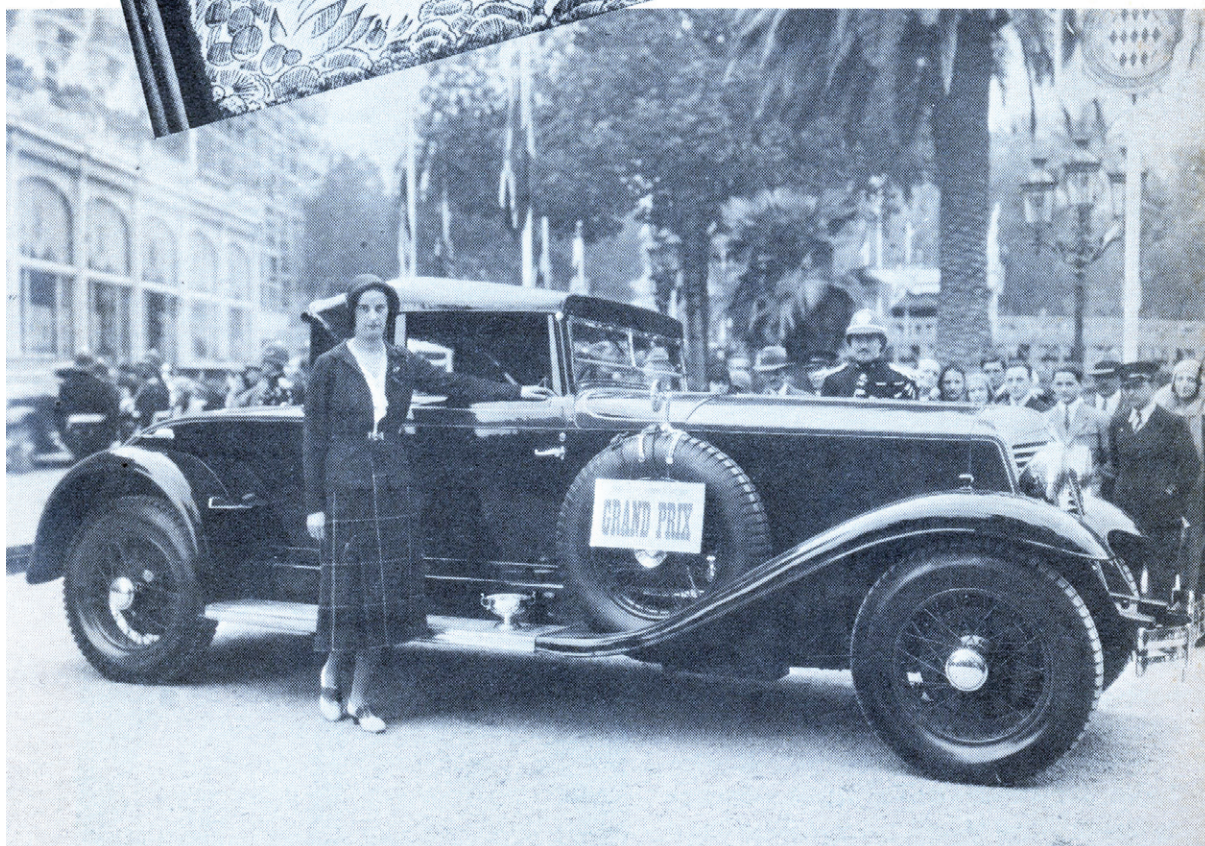
The couple's son currently is a senior at Yale, but, she adds, "He can't fit in my Dauphine. He stands 6 foot 5 and I'm afraid it's just a bit too small." Nevertheless, that doesn't mean she plans to unload the Dauphine for something bigger.

"I'll probably drive it until it falls apart. I like it very much and it looks better than the other models," she explains.

To which we can only add, "Vive la Renault! Whichever model it is." 🍷



Shown here is a certificate awarded Miss Dolly Delville, for her Grand Prix award in the 23rd Monte Carlo Concours d' Elegance in 1931.



Miss Dolly Delville, now Mrs. Dolly Watson of Lincoln, Neb., is shown here in 1931 standing alongside her Renault Reinastella with body by Hibbard and Darin with which she won the Grand Prix award at the 23rd Monte Carlo Concours d' Elegance. Each car entered in the event had to be valued at more than 100,000 francs.

## It's Called Suspension (R16)

from *The Renault Guide*, 3rd quarter 1968

**S**uspension, like the weather, is something a lot of people discuss but seldom, if ever, do anything about. At least in the U.S. it seems to be true, even though auto-motive suspension systems seem to have as much variation as does the weather. Predicting the action of suspension, however, is a great deal easier and far more reliable than is foretelling meteorological conditions.

Tailoring automotive suspensions to specific purposes no longer is the black art it once was considered to be. Every designer now knows specific systems to do specific jobs, though few seem to agree on just what the optimum layout is for the every-day, run-to-the-market passenger sedan.

Where domestic design seems stagnant and redundant, European design has continued to show the better way.

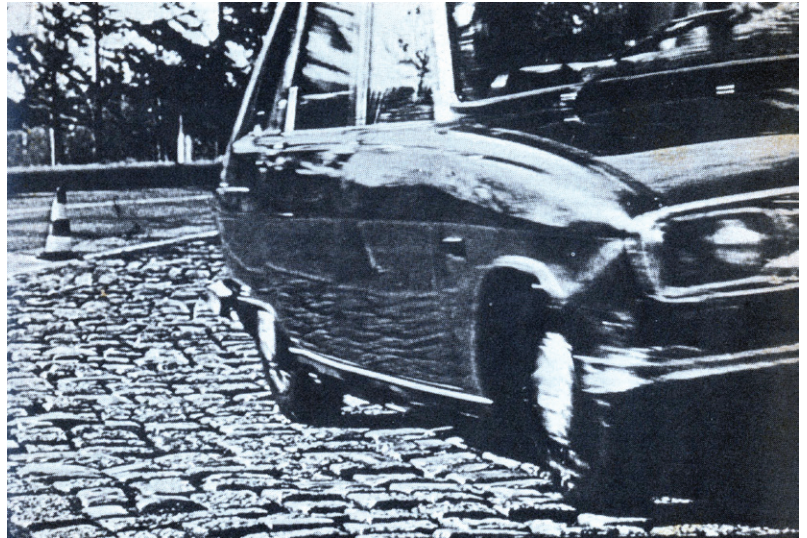
In designing the new Renault 16, the French designers had a wealth of experience upon which to draw. So, they established a set of specific goals for the car and then examined the various methods open to achieving them. Their solutions, as exhibited in the Renault 16, are both brilliant and unique. The 16 emerged with a fully independent suspension system for both optimum road holding and maximum passenger comfort, a space-saving springing layout and a package-designed chassis that promotes both quiet operation and an almost unbelievable amount of interior space for the compact outside dimensions.

Renault wanted long wheel travel and a soft ride to give comfortable traveling to the passengers and driver over any type of road surface. It wanted good handling and roadability for the obvious reasons of safety and driver satisfaction. That good ride and fine handling would be required anywhere in the world where the 16 would be marketed was a definite factor.

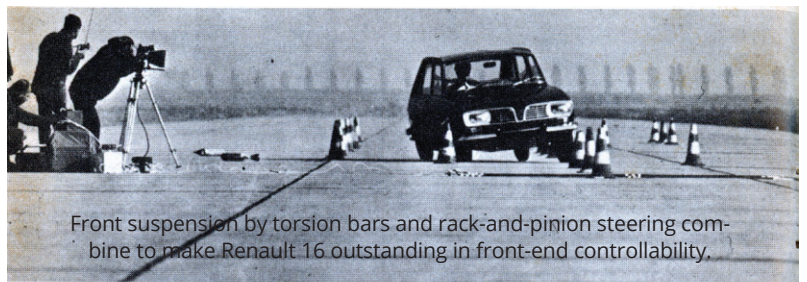
In adapting the independent suspension chosen to the overall package design, the Renault engineers turned to torsion bars for the springing medium. These gave numerous advantages over other types of springs such as coils, leaf and monoplate, including lighter weight, less complication and greater freedom of mounting. The new 16's front-drive, front-engine layout was selected to give optimum interior space, so the springs could hardly encroach upon that space with towers, humps or tunnels.

The front torsion bars lay horizontally, extending from the front suspension back under the passenger compartment to a cross-member just under the front seats. Adjustable anchors at the rear mountings allow precise preloading of the bars to maintain the desired body riding height. The bars are 40.86-in. long and .68-in. in diameter, which gives them a high oscillation frequency, or, more simply, a softer riding quality. The rate at the spring is 115 lb./in.

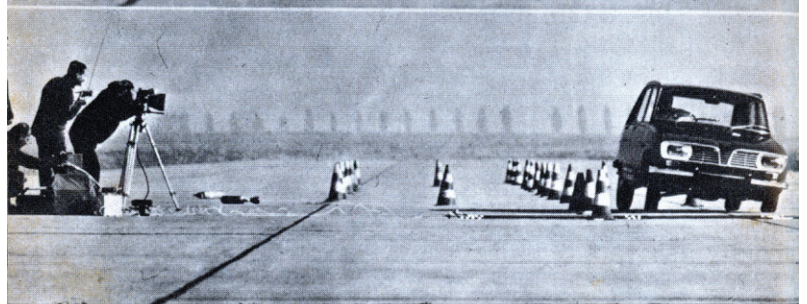
The rear torsion bars mount transversely, literally across the width of the car. They form the pivots for the trailing arms at their outer ends, and are anchored in adjustable pivots at their inner ends. Because they



Belgian paving block road is supreme test of suspension's rideability. Shocks and springs must be compatible to deliver smooth ride.



Front suspension by torsion bars and rack-and-pinion steering combine to make Renault 16 outstanding in front-end controllability.





parallel each other in a horizontal plane, they cause the left rear wheel to be located slightly farther back than is the right rear, thus giving the Renault 16 a longer wheelbase of 106.7-in. on its left side than the 104.3-in. wheel-base of its right side. The major benefit of all this is a flat floor with very little space taken away for wheel and suspension housing.

The rear torsion bars also were de-signed to be as long as practicable, to give long, soft travel to the wheels. The trailing arm/torsion bar arrangement allows the Renault 16 wheels to travel vertically through 11.8-in., a distance sufficient enough to carry any normal loading over the worst imaginable roads without danger of bottoming out.

Rubber bushings are used throughout the rear suspension to damp the vibration and shock of road action and prevent it from annoying the passengers.

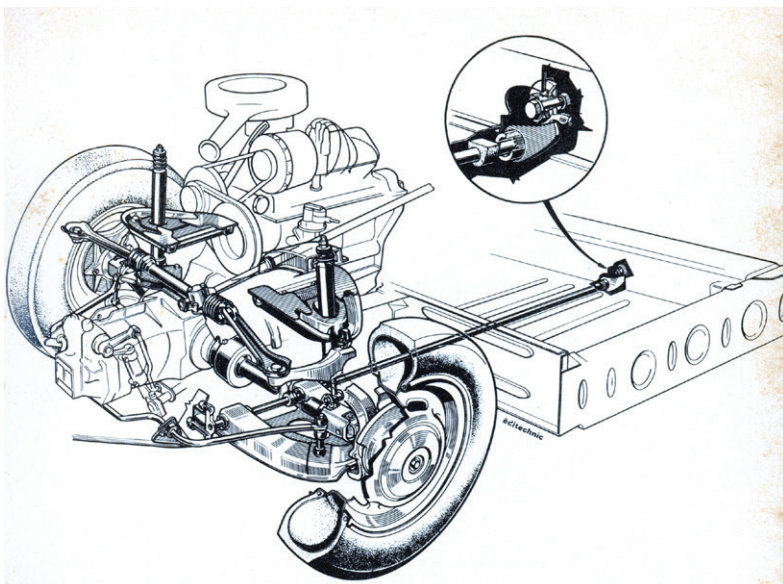
Rubber bushings also are used liberally in the front suspension for much the same reason. Damping out the vibrations before they reach the body prevents them from becoming irritating noises. To further soften road shock at the front wheels, a certain amount of compliance is built into the lower A-arm pivots, allowing the arms to displace longitudinally as well as vertically whenever the road wheels encounter bumps. This translates the suspension movement into a diagonal direction, which is easier to absorb, rather than a vertical motion, which produces harshness.

The basic front suspension design is one of parallel A-arms, with the lower arm working the torsion bar for springing. The telescopic shock absorber projects up-

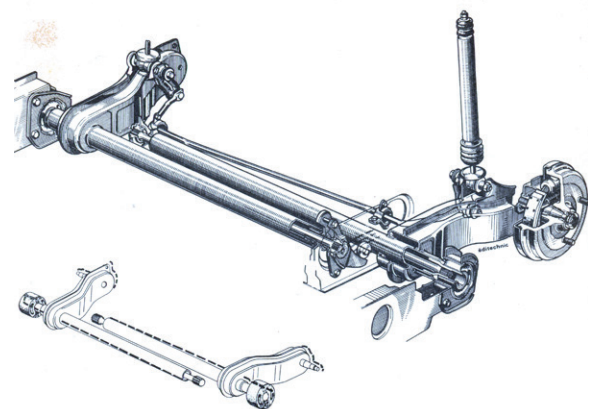
ward, through an opening in the upper arm, from the lower arm to the inner body structure. The hub carrier and steering knuckle, a forging of manganese-chromium steel, is connected to the arms through ball joints that are permanently lubricated. An anti-roll bar of .748-in. diameter inter-connects the two lower arms.

Rack and pinion steering was specified for the Renault 16 for its long-lived, trouble-free, good-response qualities. As used in the 16, it has an automatic wear compensator which keeps the rack and pinion teeth tightly meshed for the lifetime of the car. Additionally, the pinion shaft rotates in ball and needle bearings for precise steering action. The rack housing is closed off with rubber bellows to keep out dirt and moisture. Short tie rods off the ends of the rack shaft connect to the forged steering arms. The steering shaft has two universal joints in it to allow dislocation in case of an accident. The steering gear ratio is 23:1, which produces only four turns, lock-to-lock, of the steering wheel. Completing the chassis specification are the brakes, and for the 16, Renault engineers found a mixed, drum-rear, disc-front system works the best. (With a front-engine, front-drive layout, most of the weight tends to be on the front wheels, so these must perform most of the braking work.) The discs are single cylinder, floating caliper type with the rotors firmly affixed to the wheel hubs. Adjustment for wear on the pads takes place automatically; the hydraulic pistons have O-rings which hold them in position between stops. The rear brakes have iron drums cast integrally with the rear wheel hubs. A load-sensing hydraulic valve regulates the pressure to the rear brakes, thus reducing the possibility of rear wheel lock upon hard stops when the car is lightly loaded. 💡

Renault 16s swing arm suspension gives enhanced ride and increases handling ability.



Renault research and development teams used most modern methods to check out Suspension engineering on new car.



# The 4 CV That Didn't Go to the Meeting of the Marques

by Sandy Lea

**N**ick Dimopolous organizes a French Car Show every year entitled "The French Revolution". He's held the show at The Meeting of the Marques at Lime Rock during Labor Day weekend for the past few years. It was rainy and cold the first year I went and there were plenty of adventures that weekend. This year the weather was excellent, but the adventures happened nonetheless.

The plan was to put the 4CV on a trailer and bring it to Limerock for the day. This would be a trial run for a later trip this fall. I'd never driven a truck towing a trailer before so it would be a good chance to learn. Everett, my husband, liked that idea.

We rented the truck and a 6 x 12 trailer from U-Haul. The truck came with a backup camera and U-Haul graciously hooked the trailer up to the truck. They gave some advice, basically "Going forward is easy, except you have to take slightly wider turns. Backing up is difficult." Off I went! The idea was that we would find an empty parking lot and I could practice turning and backing up. So, we found one and turning became easier. Backing up? Well.....

It was 15 miles between the U-Haul store and our house, with a mixture of small roads, medium size road, and interstate driving. All went well until I got to our street. The street we live on is maybe 3 3/4 lanes wide, short and the lots are 44' wide. The truck and trailer are about 50' long. The truck and trailer would barely fit in front of our house. And that's when I learned that backing up isn't easy when you're learning! However, as the picture shows, I got the job done.

We gathered a neighbor and good friend and went to the garage to load the 4CV on the trailer. We got to the garage where I keep the car only to find another car parked in front of it. 15 minutes later we had that car moved. I used the remote control clicker to open the garage. Then, as the 4 CV hadn't been started in a few months, I put the battery (which I had charged the previous night at home) in the engine bay and tried to start the car up. We tried a number of things and the car Just Wouldn't Start, including swearing at it in French, using various wrenches and pliers to secure the cables to the battery, banging on the starter, swearing at it in English, etc. I was getting frustrated. I'm slightly older now than when I first started off with this hobby and, had I been 10 years younger (and per-





Galaxy S21 5G



Galaxy S21 5G

haps not as smart) I would have suggested we push the car out of the garage and onto the trailer.

U-Haul hadn't told us that the trailer back had sides. The width between the stanchions was 57". The width of the Renault, 56 ½". We were going to try and make it fit! Besides, ½ inch to spare? And it being late on a Saturday? Truly a sophomoric idea at best. Being older, and, dare I say "Wiser" we talked it over and decided against doing anything more to the car and trailer. We dropped the truck and trailer off at U-Haul, and by that time I was a whiz and driving it straight! However, half-way home from U-Haul I realized I'd left the clicker at U-Haul. Three times in one day to U-Haul? OK, Renault Gods, I get it! Plan B was to go to Limerock on Sunday without the car and hang with Nick and others of the Renault club.

Lime Rock, Gathering of the Marques, is like a morning Cars and Coffee on Steroids. The track is closed off and marques are assigned to different areas. The European area is on a slight curve before the circuit goes downhill. We are grouped with the Citroens, Peugeot's, Morgans, with the Alfas, Lancias, Maseratis, etc., across from us. There must have been 10 - 12 Citroens, 15 - 20 Alfas, Lancias and Maseratis, not to mention at least 6 Morgans and a Jomax (!), 3 Peugeot's, along with Nick Channel's beautiful white Fuego and Nick Dimopolous's R 5 Alpine Tribute. And a beautiful Preservation Class Simca, along with Tim Brown's ambulance.

The show is incredible and I encourage everyone to attend! The attendance, this year was amazing and the cars, well, "AHHHHHHHHHHH, HOLY SHIT, DID YOU SEE THAT?" sums it up nicely. Things started slowing down around 130 and then, much to everyone's delight, Hector Lopez and Shawn Kennedy showed up, thus increasing the Renault Club of North America attendance this year by 66%!

Everyone packed up and started leaving around 2. Everett and I decided to meander our way home and hoped to have seafood in Newburgh near the interstate (I thought I'd have lobster.....). The place was booked so we had an excellent meal of barbecued ribs and a really nice Gin and Tonic and made our way home before dark.

A few things were learned. The 4CV does NOT like to be left alone for a month or so. It gets lonely and then annoyed, so requires attention. Ah yes, a French car needing attention.... U-Haul is great for moving anything BUT cars! Limerock and good friends are priceless. 💎

## Fifty Years with a Renault R8

by John and Alex Waterhouse

**W**hen Alex and I were married in late-1970, almost our only assets were our clothes and two very tired Renault 4CVs. We still have my 4CV, a French-built right hand drive car imported to Australia in early 1951.

By 1973, we had spent time in chilly Mount Gambier in South Australia without a car heater, since mine had been removed by earlier owners of the 4CV, and we were back in Adelaide, both working. We looked around and heard of an R8 that was shortly to be traded in at the central Adelaide Renault dealer.. It was an immaculate, one owner car, purchased in 1965 but really a 1964 model. We purchased it for \$1100, a high price for a car that was 7-8 years old. A new R8 cost just under \$2,000 in the 1960s. My old Latvian friend and mechanic said it was the best secondhand car he had ever seen.

The car was so good that the previous owner regretted trading it in on a new R12. When years later one of his children spotted the car parked at Adelaide High School carpark on West Terrace, he left Alex a note on the windscreen and asked to get first refusal if we decided to sell it. It was the favourite car of all their family vehicles. John Williams, its first owner, later bought a lovely restored R8 1100. I made a point of finding him and visiting in 2007 when driving home from a Renault 4CV Muster in Cowra, NSW. He was truly gobsmacked to see the car again after 34 years.

So, what IS a 1964 Renault R8? The R8 was the successor to the very successful Renault Dauphine, of which more than 2 million were made, starting in 1956. The Dauphine was the first French car to exceed 2 million in production. For the late-1950s to early 1960s that was a large number. The Dauphine itself was the more sophisticated evolution model derived from the 4CV, which was first produced in 1947 as Renault's austerity post-war car. Success of the 4CV had been necessary to save the company from extinction after the physical and economic damage of the war years. The Dauphine had a longer wheelbase and more power, with better comfort, space and sound/vibration engineering. The R8 used the Dauphine floorpan but achieved better interior space and was a huge step forward mechanically.



John Williams, the first owner, in 2007 in Adelaide, 34 years later



First Wheels 'Car of the Year'



That said, the R8 has all the 4CV underpinnings of a rear engine mounted behind the transaxle with swing-arm rear suspension, very much following the original 1930s–1940s design concept. In the case of the R8, I'd argue that they mostly 'got it right'. It was sophisticated for a lightweight, small family car in 1962, its year of release. The R8 has an effective combination of supple, well-damped suspension and good seats, good cruising capability for the early 1960s and advanced features like four-wheel disc brakes (rare even in expensive cars in those days), a sealed cooling system, standard heater-demister and more. Released in Australia in 1963, it won the inaugural Wheels 'Car of the Year' award in Australia.

So, what of our R8? It was our main family car from 1973 to about 1984, when I got a company car (a Subaru 4WD wagon). We kept the R8 and of course it came with us to Perth in 1989. Alex used it to commute in Perth (to teaching assignments) and it remained very much an actively-used second car. It has been our favourite family car. We owned it before our daughter Liz was born – she loves it and we are not allowed to sell it!

Before coming to Perth we did several major camping holiday trips from Adelaide in the car, braving the snow country and a very wet year in the northern Flinders Ranges among several other trips.

Thirty years later, our R8 is still in regular use, my first choice for most pottering around the suburbs and occasionally venturing out of town. Its last drive of note was 9,000 km to a 4CV Muster in Griffith, NSW, in 2017. I have driven the R8 three times to NSW for Musters of our Renault 4CV Register of Australia.

Key to our car's survival has been care and attention. It is garaged, so protected from sun and rain except when driving. I service it carefully, although not much is needed. It has one grease nipple. Regardless of mileage, it gets an annual oil change or every 5,000 km if travelling across Australia. Coolant changes are critical on engines with alloy heads. I have replaced disc rotors once only and the rear hub nuts were unfastened for the first time when I changed the rear wheel bearings around 300,000 km.

Our R8 has now travelled about 370,000 km, most of them with us. In 50 years it has not once failed to get home under its own power. It has been tee-boned twice and repaired properly both times. It received a replacement gearbox in maybe the early 1980s (I forget) and I rebuilt the engine in 1988, since which it has had many oil changes and 3-4 tappet adjustments. Dependable barely describes the car. I have

fitted an electronic 123 distributor (excellent) but the car remains basically standard.

How many have survived? Ours is one of very survivors of the early model R1130 and I think the only one running in WA. I know of perhaps two more R1130 examples in the eastern states. Most survivors are later R8 1100 (R1132) models from 1965–1966. Then, Renault Australia won the Australian Rally Championship in 1970, Bob Watson driving the winning car. The R8 Gordini 1300 was an ageing design by then but its balance and effective traction, not to mention reliability, allowed Bob to beat all comers, regardless of power. These attributes led to many R8s being used for amateur rallying in the 1970s. As a consequence, accidents (and rust) have taken most R8s from our roads. Further, the model was only sold here for a short time, the derivative and more practicable R10 replacing it in 1966 and selling well until replaced by the far better R12 design. As far as I can ascertain, there are up to 10–12 R8 survivors in WA. Only one other is fully licensed so presumably two are being used. Others are on concessional licensing, under restoration or are ‘gunna’ be fixed or restored. We will see. Three of the 10–12 in WA are genuine R8 Gordinis, two of which are from South Africa (one via Zimbabwe). Two other Gordinis have been sold ‘over East’ in recent years.

We will continue to use our R8 regularly and revel in its comfort and convenience. Rarely can we park the car without a conversation with someone who remembers fondly the era of the rear-engined Renaults. 💎



Renault-1970 Australian rally

# champ

by the widest margin ever

Get the full facts that define the Australian Championship Renault win from the official source in the book 'A very interesting year in the desert' written by Bob Watson. It was written with the right of an expert on the subject. The Renaults you see in the photograph above are the ones that have consistently won the toughest rally in Australia since 1963. A very interesting book.

INDIVIDUAL SCORES	
RENAULT	42
FORD	39
FORD	3
FORD	85

DRIVERS	
WATSON	42
C. BOND	38
MALPASSE	31
MARGAFORE	21
MALPASSE	18
CHAPLET	14
CHAPLET	14
HOPKINSON	10

An 'anti-ordinary' feat from the 'Anti-ordinary' ones

**RENAULT**

1970 was a good year

# 1953 Renault 4CV

by Francisco Miranda



This is a survival car that Alejandro Cortes, our good friend and president of the Alpine Club, found in Granada, Spain in 2013. He imported it to Mexico City in May of that year. It had a long journey by truck from Granada to Malaga and then put into a container that brought it to the port of Veracruz, Mexico.

This is a worthy museum exhibit, due to its preserved originality. It has never been restored and still has its original paint and interiors with only 32,000 km (about 20,000 miles) on the clock. It even has the original tires of a not very common type as it is a 135X400, equivalent to a 15.8 wheel.

The car has the original title from 1953, making him the second registered owner in a span of 70 years. This car, although it was bought in Spain, is of French origin, it wasn't a production car of FASA Valladolid. It's the second version of the 4CV, as you can appreciate the instrument panel, commonly known as "ears", still runs on a 6–8-volt battery with its SEV Marchal coil and Ducellier electrical system. It has new rubbers for the windshield and rear medallion, which were destroyed over the years.

It has been exhibited at various car shows and has been awarded for its incredible state of preservation. It's one of the true best-preserved examples of 4-CVs in the world.

## Specifications:

**Engine:** Gasoline, Solex carburetor, ignition by contact points, water cooling system.

**Displacement:** 747 cm<sup>3</sup>

**Power:** 21 BHP

**Double air filter:** One dry element and oil bath.

**Hydraulic drum brakes** in the 4 wheels.

**Dimensions:** 3.63 m long, 1.43 m wide and 1.47 m height (142.9" X 56.3" x 57.87")

**Weight:** 600 Kg (1,322.7 lb)

**Top speed:** 90 km/h (55.9 mph)

Starting is manual by cable, an unusual system; you have an on/off switch that makes the electrical contact, but then you must pull a cable to get the starter to engage.

The first generation 4CV had 6 front moldings, also called whiskers, and the second generation only 3.

Because of the shape of the dashboard, they were commonly called horseshoes, ears, and chapels, depending on the year of production. 🏆

# Driving a Renault in the Illyrian Mountains of Croatia

by John Kuhn Bleimaier | Photos by Marina Bleimaier

**F**or those of us sports car enthusiasts of a certain age the Renault Alpine has a very special place in the open road pantheon. However, it has been a long time since the French grand marques have had a significant presence in the United States. After my most recent experience driving the Illyrian switchback mountain roads of Croatia in a 2023 Renault Clio, the Gallic motorcars have earned my especial respect.

I consider myself to be a sports car aficionado with a longstanding affiliation with the Sports Car Club of America and years in the saddle with a Porsche 914 and a Boxster. However, I know full well that an enthusiast motorcar does not have to be a stereotypical open roadster. Two of my personal favorite automobiles are my 1965 Mercedes Finback and my 2002 Mercedes C230K sports coupe, both with manual transmission. The latter vehicles can post respectable times on sporting back roads and can show their heels to their contemporary English ragtops in the twisty bits. A sports car is where you find it.

I rented a Renault Clio in the picturesque Croatian city of Pula with the objective of driving from there to the busy port city of Zadar where my friends and I chartered a 49 foot Jeaneau sailboat. My drive in the 1.5 liter turbocharged Renault turned out to be one of the highlights of my visit to the Croatian Adriatic coast. This French car has a relatively small footprint with a neat yet unassuming exterior. The critical element of the driving experience was undoubtedly provided by the car's close ratio six speed manual tranny. On give-and-take mountain roads it was possible to keep the high revving four banger in its torque sweet spot for optimum performance.

On the endless mountain curves I found myself dicing with local youngsters driving loud-piped crotch-rocket motorcycles. At a couple of points it was obvious that the two wheelers were impressed that an unprepossessing little sedan could hang in there in a tight spot. The Renault's crowning moment came when we overtook a Porsche Cayenne on a short straight in the foothills. The Porsche driver might have been a bit red-faced. However, I recognized that he was handicapped by his slush box transmission and bloated carrosserie. A sports car is where you find it... and I found it behind the Renault diamond logo on a distant mountain byway, between the devil's rock pile and the deep blue sea.

I haven't booked a lot of hours behind the wheel of French cars. Vehicles built by Renault, Peugeot, Citroen et al are thin on the ground here in the United States. In fact the last French car that I drove was a 1937 Bugatti with Gangloff coachwork. (Note that all classic Bugattis were built in Molsheim, France and wore French racing blue in international competition.) That French beauty will never be forgotten. However, I will also forever savor my driving experience in the mountains of Croatia at the helm of a true sports car, the Renault Clio.

I recollect an apt quote from the late General Charles DeGaulle, "France cannot be France without greatness." That applies equally to French automobiles, in my experience.

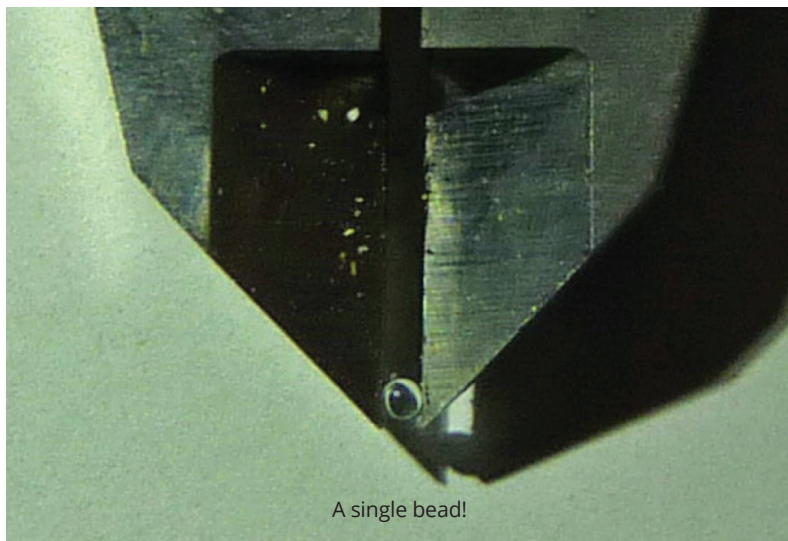
*July 29, 2023*





# Wheel Balancing Beads for Unconventional Wheels

by John Waterhouse



A single bead!



## Background

Recently, I became aware of a concept in wheel balancing that was new to me and new to most people I have spoken to. He and I have now both used them and they seem to work pretty well.

As it gets more and more difficult for Renault owners to find wheel balancing equipment for 1950s spider wheels and the later disc wheels with solid centres, this approach seems really worthwhile to me.

I can get local dynamic balancing of my three stud wheels and static balancing of spider wheels in Western Australia but this is pure luck. Neither are perfect, the three stud wheels not having perfect balance on the smooth freeway at 100 kph and the static balance not perfect at 80-90 kph in the 4CV. Many owners have to travel long distances just for a wheel balance.

## The concept

Wheel balance is usually achieved by adding small weights to the rim, both inside and outside, to compensate for imbalance due to slightly uneven weight distribution and out of roundness (which is also a dynamic mass imbalance). A well-balanced wheel can lose its smoothness if a weight detaches, a rim distorts slightly or even tyre wear. Then there is a rebalancing cost and the inconvenience of dealing with the issue.

The 'balancing beads' approach achieves balance dynamically, the beads moving inside the tyre to even out imbalances once the car is moving. I guess the beads sit exactly opposite the "centre of gravity" of the imbalances when the wheel is spinning. As tyres wear, or wheels distort slightly, the beads should achieve exactly the same dynamic balancing effect over time.

## The product

The beads come from USA, from 'Counteract', and their website is [www.counteractbalancing.com](http://www.counteractbalancing.com). They have an online table to decide what mass of beads is required – for a 155-15 tyre (Volkswagen beetle I presume) they recommend 4 ounces (114 g) and this is close enough to a rear-engined Renault wheel.

I measured several of the beads that escaped captivity and they ranged from 1.08 to 1.12 mm, The difference in size is probably somewhere around the error range of the caliper and the operator! They are

tiny, spherical and I have no idea how they are made!

### Installing the beads in your tyres with tubes

If you have tubeless tyre installation, it should be relatively easy to pour the beads inside the tyre before inflating it to seat the bead on the rim. Extreme care would be needed to keep the beads inside the tyre however, and they are perfectly elastic and spherical. They bounce around more than is easily imagined!

I imagine that most of us will use beads on wheels that are already on the car. That was my situation. This requires pouring them down the valve seat hole. This operation is far more tedious than it might seem. FAR more... I started by jacking the car up just enough to rotate the wheel to get the valve at the bottom and then deflated the tyre and removed the valve (this is necessary, to state the obvious). My wheels all have inner tubes.

Taking a friend's advice, I set up a funnel with a PVC tube that fitted over the valve stem and the funnel 'spout' and then poured the beads slowly out of their flimsy plastic bag, after cutting off a corner. They blocked in the tube immediately. The seat for the valve seal, is a ridge around the inside of the valve stem and the beads very easily bridge across the small hole into the tube.

The solutions are (a) to make a fine wire ramrod to push through the inevitable bead blockages in order to clear the beads by reciprocating action of the rod and (b) to feed in the beads unbelievably slowly, a few at a time, using finger and thumb to regulate the flow. I found it best NOT to feed the beads steadily, but a few at a time (for less than one second) and then leave a similar time of pausing to let them bounce past the stepped valve seat inside the stem of the tube! I cannot stress enough how tedious this is! But, slow and steady and they do go in.

It took me more than 45 minutes per wheel once I'd worked out a system. You need to sit on a low stool and manipulate the beads through a small hole cut in the corner of the (very flimsy) plastic bag that contains the beads. They are so small and elastic that they easily bounce out of the funnel! Whatever rate of feed you try, it will be too much at first.

I used an LED head torch for really bright illumination – and LED light reflects superbly from each bead, as it does from spiders' eyes when sleeping on the ground on a bushwalk by the way. There are two clusters of beads indicated in the photo, and all the points of light are individual beads or small clusters. They are small and lightweight enough for electrostatic forces to encourage clumping!



Three weeks later, there are tiny pinpoints of reflected light all over the place, and I hardly spilled any of them.

### Performance

I tested my first bead installation on Perth's Kwinana Freeway, with a 120 km drive to a local airshow. They work very well and the front wheels were smooth as silk. It was clear that I need to add more beads to the rear wheels!

### Availability and Cost

I imagine they are more readily available in USA than here in Australia, by going to the website is [www.counteractbalancing.com](http://www.counteractbalancing.com).

The cost to me was approximately US\$15 per 4 oz packet, plus postage. They seem to represent good value compared with multiple wheel balancing trips over several years..

My next packets of beads have just arrived, which speaks to my satisfaction.

## A Splendid Renault R6

by Tom Bruinink



know from experience that a R6 was untraceable in communist Poland in the 70s and 80s. And if a Western European-registered example crossed the border, the R6 was a huge attraction. In 2023, this has changed little. Konrad Nowakowski enjoys the rarity of his beautiful R6 GTL.

Living in a provincial town where the most prestigious car was a Polonez, the visit of a French family with a Renault 6 to its neighbors made a big impression on youthful car enthusiast Konrad. The model remained high on his wish list for years. During a holiday in Spain in 2016, he saw a beautiful example for sale. His Spanish-speaking sister - who has lived in Valencia since 2002 - made contact with the seller and arranged a test drive. In his mind, Konrad could already see himself driving through the narrow southern European streets. Unfortunately the asking price remained too high. Three years ago he had better luck, and found one that was within his budget.

Konrad arranged transport from Spain to Poland. Registration of the R6 on classic registration plates went smoothly. Such a registration has several financial advantages, but also means that the vehicle cannot be sold to a buyer outside Poland. A nice appreciation from the government regarding the cultural-historical value of this Renault.

In his efforts to restore the R6 as original as possible, Konrad has used friends to restore the chassis, engine and bodywork to perfect condition. And all without compromise, as evidenced by the original Pygmy radio that completes the immaculate interior. At classic events, his R6 is a real eye-catcher beside his cute Fiat 126p. 🐾



## VRUMVRUM

by Tom Bruinink

**O**n the website <https://vrumvrum.si> car enthusiast Simon Gaspirc offers the nicest cushions in the shape of the R4. At the moment the web-shop is in Slovenian and English language. Taking a look is already a great experience. Many classic car models in the form of a pillow. And all this for prices of around thirty euros.

Also interested in a red, blue or beige R4 TL in the size 32x13x14 cm? You bring something unique into your home. More info and ordering via [info@vrumvrum.si](mailto:info@vrumvrum.si) you can contact Simon. If people are interested in a Renault 4F6 let Simon know and he can maybe make this model in the future. 🙌



Renault Owners Club of North America  
339 Carol Drive, Ventura CA 93003

---