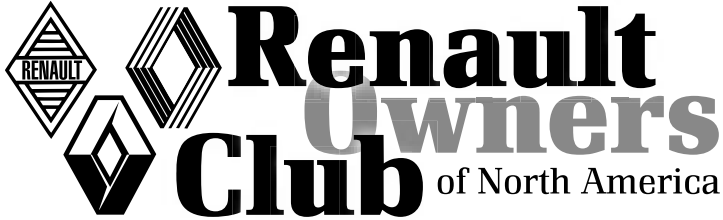


Renault News 71



1st Quarter 2004

February - March



Photo from Marvin McFalls

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Renault Owner's Club of North America

www.renaultclub.us

email: info@renaultownersclub.org

Established in May, 1991, La Jolla, California, USA

Founder Howard G. Singer

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Vice President/Club Liaison | Jesse Patton |
| Membership Secretary | Jacques Lynn |
| New Member Secretary | Ray Dietz |
| Online Memberships | Marvin McFalls |
| Treasurer | Dene Barrett |
| Editor of Index | Kurt Triffet |
| Editor of Marketplace | Kurt Triffet |
| Editor of <i>Renault News</i> | Marvin McFalls |
| Co-Editor | Allan Meyer |
| Publishers | Bob & Carol Howard |
| Webmaster | Kurt Triffet |
| E-Mail List Editor | Giff Kushma |
| Librarian | Michael Muller |

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| Alpine A310 Club rep. | Brad Stevens |
| ARROA Club Editor | Yves Boode |
| R5 Turbo Club rep. | Bill Dickinson |

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| Technical Advisors | |
| R5 Performance-Competition | Bob Fogt |
| R8, Fuego, Medallion- | Don McLaughlin |
| R18- | Ray Dietz |
| 4CV-Dauphine-R10-Caravelle | Jacques Lynn |
| R16 | (vacant) |
| Alliance-Encore-GTA | Sam Stuckey |
| Premier (Eagle) | Chris Davidson |

"Renault News" is the newsletter of the Renault Owner's Club of North America. This newsletter is published quarterly, along with the montly "Marketplace" ads. We are a non-profit, all-volunteer club. Our purpose is to help one another keep our Renaults in shape and on the road. Club publications will closely parallel the collective input of members.

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Ray Dietz, (276) 638-8563; 1250 Lanier Rd, Martinsville, VA 24112-5212

Renewals-Registry Information & Address Changes:

Send dues (as above) to **Jacques Lynn, (619) 561-6687;** 13839 Old Highway 80, El Cajon, CA 92021.
membership@renaultownersclub.org

Classified Advertisements: Send to *Marketplace* Editor:
Kurt Triffet – webmaster@renaultownersclub.org

Articles-Letters-Correspondence:

Marvin McFalls,
411 Dogwood Valley Road, Kingston, TN 37763
editor@renaultownersclub.org

Newsletter Production- Graphic Artist

Allan Meyer , P.O. Box 6695, Woodland Hills,
CA 91365-6695 allan_g_y_meyer@yahoo.com

Publishers

Bob & Carol Howard,
8537 Greenbriar Estates Rd, Edwardsville,IL 62025
publishers@renaultownersclub.org

Back Issue Requests: Send US\$ 2.00 to
Michael Muller, 4907 Meridian Ave. North, Seattle, WA
98103 m_muller22@hotmail.com

Inter-Club Liaison- Club Correspondence:

Jesse Patton (516) 669-2598;
52 Nicole Place, West Babylon, NY, 11704

Technical Advisors:

Ray Dietz (276) 638-8563;
1250 Lanier Rd, Martinsville, VA 24112-5212

Bob Fogt,
1145 Orchard Place, Mendota Heights, MN, 55118-4119

Jacques Lynn (619) 561-6687
13839 Old Highway 80, El Cajon, CA 92021

Don McLaughlin, (717) 834-4449;
390 Linton Hill Road, Duncannon, PA 17020

Sam Stuckey (865) 922-2236;
8544 Norris Lane, Knoxville, TN, 37938

American Alpine A-310 Club representative:
Brad Stevens (716) 394-3265
4652 Maiden Ln, Canandaigua, NY 14424

Alpine Renault Registered Owner's Association Club,
Editor:**Yves Boode (630) 904-8526**
3723 Parador Dr, Napierville, IL, 60564

R5 Turbo Club representative:
Bill Dickinson (818) 981-6595;
14548 Dickens St, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

New Member Introduction

By Marvin McFalls

January has been an excellent month for new members. While I wish to welcome all the new members I want to spotlight a couple. It isn't uncommon for the club to have new members join from other countries. In fact we now have members living in more than a dozen countries and on all six continents, how our little Southern California club has grown.

The first of these new members in Antony Louies. Antony lives in France which makes good sense for a Renault owner, however Antony is originally from England. He lives in St. Frambault and owns a gorgeous R17. One of the reasons he is joining our club is because he would like to ad air conditioning to his car. Air wasn't very common in Europe back in the 70s, but I am betting one of our members in California or the Southwest has or had a R17 with A/C. If you can help Antony out him is currently visiting his brother in California. The address is 70373 Orion Road, 29 Palms, CA 92277, 760-362-4009. He will be in California until May so let help him gather up all the R17 parts he needs for his return trip home, he even mentioned possibly taking a whole car back to France for parts.

Secondly, I want to introduce you to Jeysanchev Shamugham, and Team Renault Ethiopia. Jeysanchev and his friends are Renault fans in Africa. There hobby is to race their Renaults in Rallies across the continent. In Ethiopia most Renaults are either R4s or R12s. Earlier this month they competed in the Rift Valley Rally with great success. They used a R4 and competed in the 1300cc class. The rally took place over three days and was more than 1200 kilometers, 60 percent dirt roads and 40 percent tarmac. Much to their competitor's surprise, but not their own, they won their class. Similar to the United States, Renault has a bad name in Ethiopia, and there dealer network is disgraceful.

Jeysanchev and his friends want to show the public that Renault is indeed a good car. With little to no help from the dealers it is very difficult to get the word out, so they ask if anyone can help them with promotional materials or anything else it would be greatly appreciated. You may contact Team Renault Ethiopia care of: Jeysanchev Shamugham, P.O. Box 6936, addis ababa, Ethiopia or by e-mail at gracesch@telecom.net.et

I hope you enjoyed these profiles, and maybe this can become a regular feature in upcoming issues.

New Members October 2003

NOTE: The following October new members were omitted from the layout for Renault News 70 by mistake. My apologies, A. Meyer.

Best, Vaughn, 11731 Mt. Vernon Avenue, Grand Terrace, CA 92313
H - 909-825-5944, E-mail: bestrus@copper.net

Williamson, Jack, 2698 Locksley Place, Los Angeles, CA 90039
H - 323-668-2857, E-mail: jackw19@pacbell.net
1957 4cv, Green

Barnes, Thea, P.O. Box 1634, Tampa, FL 33601
H - 813-232-4715, E-mail: thea_barnes@hotmail.com
1987 Alliance GTA, Red, 103k miles

Sonderby, Michael, 1535 Tree Line Drive, Malvern, PA 19355
E-mail: msonderby@deloitte.com

Claeys, Donald, C/O Aces, 465 Blossom Road, Rochester, NY 14610
E-mail: jclaeys@aces88.com

Fisher, James, 1104 Edgebrook Drive, Garner, NC 27529
E-mail: jdox@bellsouth.net

Grare, Gabriel, 66 rue Verte, 80132 DRUCAT, France
E-mail: renault12@ifrance.com
Club Exchange: Renault 12 Club of France

New Online Members February 2004

Sitz, Ben, P.O. Box 544, Hines, OR 97738
E-mail: bensitz@hotmail.com

Giboo, David
E-mail: mw5c@mindspring.com

Ferrall, Craig, 7874 Montreal Court, Cincinnati, OH 45241
E-mail: cferrall@mariemontins.com

Johnson, Eric, 78 Highland Street, Townsend, MA 01469
E-mail: leatherrider@yahoo.com

Polson, Deborah, 8655 Horseshoe Bend Road, Ludlow Falls, OH 45339
E-mail: dpolson140@aol.com

R9 in México

Story and photos by Francisco Miranda

Jesse Patton wrote me a letter recently asking me about the Alliance/Renault 9 here in México. There are not as many of these cars as there once were. However my friend Jorge Mendoza still has one. Recently a friend of mine, Fernando Roldán, organized a tour to another friend's house, Javier González, near Cuernavaca, some 100 Km away. Jorge usually drives his very nice red Berlinette A110, but this time, as he was driving his wife and parents, he drove his Alliance. He bought it new in December 1985 and is the only owner the car has ever known. It spent its early days in México and later he drove it to Houston when he went over there to attain his Master's Degree in August 1989. He was there for the two years of the studies, until December 1991. He retired the car as a daily driver in 1995 and since then, he only uses it on special occasions.

The car is a 1985 GTS model two door. The exterior color is White and the interior is a blue vinyl. It features the same 1.7 litre overhead cam engine that many American models had. It also has a five-speed transmission. During his time in America, he bought the wheels, gas shock absorbers, spoiler, front bumper (from a Alliance GTA). After nearly twenty years on the road the car has only accumulated 69,000 Km (about 43,000 miles). Special thanks to Jorge for bringing his beautiful R9.



Patton, Renault Club Mentioned in Newsday

By Marvin McFalls

Yes, believe it or not we received a little publicity from a Pulitzer Prize Winning author. Les Payne writes for *New York, Newsday*. Mr. Payne had originally written a story about a time when he was serving in Vietnam and mentioned being in a taxi which he thought was hit with incoming fire, in actuality it turned to only be a large rock. In his haste to exit the cab he broke off the door handle. He thought the taxi he had been in was a Dauphine, but our Vice-President, Jesse Patton, quickly informed him it was not. Jesse sent him a photo of a 4CV Taxi from the streets of Saigon that jogged his memory. He went on to say: Patton informed me he is the Vice-President of the Renault Owners Club of North America, and that we could take care of broken door handles or any other Renault part needed.

It isn't often that one of members or the club gets mentioned in a non-car publications, so I thought we would give Jesse an 'at a boy' and hope that many of the millions of daily readers of Newsday enjoyed the recollection. At this point any write up we can get in a major publication is a accomplishment. Thanks Jesse for your continued support of the club.



Renaults in Provence

Text and Photos from Bibliopticus Alanskii

Vintage Renaults can still be seen in the rural areas of France. Quite unexpectedly, we ran across the "Musée d'Automobiles de Provence" on the way to Aix-en-Provence. The museum is a collection of vintage cars mainly placed on consignment for sale. The museum also featured several cars in the interior display areas which looked like permanent parts of the collection. The parts room was of particular interest and no one left empty-handed. The museum phone number is 04.90.73.36.53. Other scenes from around Provence are shown including an R5 in the Hotel Ibis parking lot in Avignon.



World's First Retractable Hardtop

By Marvin McFalls

During my recent trip to Paris we were driving around and Brent asked what "cc" meant on the back of a Peugeot 206 CC. I said it stands for coupe/convertible or coupe/cabriolet in French. I said this is the latest trend in Peugeot also offers the 307 CC and Renault came out with the Megane CC late last year. I mentioned that Ford introduced the first CC in 1957 although back then they called it a retractable hardtop. Claude was quick to point out that I was wrong, that Peugeot had one much earlier, he thought that the Peugeot 402 was the first model. The 402 was introduced in 1935 but the next day at Retromobile we were actually able to see the first CC.



It turns out that the 401 Peugeot the predecessor to the 402 was the first convertible with a retractable hardtop. While I can't tell you anything about the workings of the top I would assume that it is done by hand, I can't imagine it being electric or vacuum. However, America's answer more than twenty years later the Ford Fairlane featured: 10 relays, 10 limit switches, 4 lock motors, 3 drive motors, and over 600 feet of wire, to go from coupe to convertible. While it was definitely a modern marvel, after a little wear the odds of putting it up or down without problems was unlikely. Needless to say with all the problems this was the end of the hide-away hardtop for many years.



Top: Peugeot 402 streamlined convertible. Left: 401 Peugeot. Above and below: 1957 Ford Skyliner



Instead for the next forty years you would see many cars with large heavy hardtops that removed and had to be stored for the summer and hopefully not get damaged as it sits around your garage. From the early Corvette thru the modern Mercedes SL and even the Renault Caravelle featured a bulky removable top. To my knowledge Mitsubishi was the first to buck this trend. In 1995 Mitsubishi introduced its new Spyder SL. If you were crazy enough to spend \$58,000 you could have had the first car with a retractable hardtop in nearly forty years. Since 2001 when Mercedes Introduced the New SL, all the top of the line luxury cars have been scrambling for the an-



Above: Mercedes SL and its removable hardtop.



Left upper and middle: Caravelle with hardtop



Lower left: Mitsubishi 3000 Spyder with the operation of the top shown.



Above: Porsche Carrera GT showing stowage of the removable hard top halves in the limited front trunk space.



swer. Lexus has introduced the SC430 and here is how the hide-away hardtop works. The roof on the SC430 folds in half and stows in the trunk. When you press the button to lower the roof, the windows roll down and the trunk opens. It opens the opposite way, with the front of the trunk (nearest the front of the car) lifting up. After the trunk is open, the roof starts to open, folding in half as it heads for the trunk. The roof folds over until it is fully inside the trunk, at which point the trunk closes. The cool thing about the trunk is that it can still open just like a regular car trunk -- although with the roof down, there isn't much room in there. Cadillac didn't want to be left and they have entered the CC field with their new XLR.



Above: Cadillac XLR showing the retractable top stowed. Below: Mégane Convertible Coupe with its top operation. Right top to bottom: new Mercedes SL and view of the interior with the top lowered; Lexus SC430; Peugeot 206cc, with top operation.



But it just isn't luxury cars. Honda's S2000 as well as the Peugeot 206 exploded on the compact market, which have led to the midsize Peugeot 307 and Renault Mégane, but it doesn't end there. The new Nissan Micra has brought the CC to the sub-compact market, I won't be surprised if we see the new Renault Twingo with a Retractable hardtop model because the Micra and the New Twingo are both built on the same platform. However let's end this discussion with the latest first. Whether you call it a retractable hardtop or CC, Chevrolet definitely has the first truck. The SSR is taking America by storm. Over the next few years we should see many more new hide-away hardtops. It is definitely a trend on the rise. Like most automotive innovations over the last 100 years or so you can count on France to take the lead.

Renault Fuego

Translated by Michael Muller

For the eighties Renault decided to develop a modern successor to the popular R15 and R17 sport-coupes. Those were based on the mass-produced R12, whereas the new Fuego would be based on the R18, itself introduced in 1978. Renault stylist Michel Jardin designed the harmonious, round body, with the prominent glass hatch covering the trunk and showing off the ample space provided by this coupe. The grooves on the sides were intended by the designer to symbolically lead the air towards the rear. The name "Fuego", Spanish for fire, underlined the hot dynamics of the new model.



Above and below: Chevrolet SSR. Images for this story provided by Marvin McFalls, Bibliopticus Alanskii, Daimler-Benz Public Relations, Renault Public Relations, Lexus, Mitsubishi, and Peugeot.





The Fuego was presented at the Geneva car show in March of 1980. The two basic versions, the TL and GL both with the 1397cc engine delivering 64 DIN HP, weren't offered in Germany. Only the more powerful versions TS and GTS were available, both with the 1647cc engine delivering 96 DIN HP. While only the TX and GTX versions offered enough power to match the sporty looks of the new model. The aluminum 1995 cc motor, first used in the R20, delivered 110 DIN HP. GTS, TX, and GTX models sported a 5 speed transmission, central locking doors, a tachometer, and an adjustable steering wheel in standard trim. The GTX also came with a leather steering wheel and power steering, and the GTS models were available with an automatic transmission.



All images this page from Renault Publicity.



At the 1982 Paris car show Renault presented an unusual combination, pairing the two-door sporty coupe with a turbo diesel engine delivering 88 DIN HP. However, this model was never offered on the German market.

After the introduction of turbocharging in the R18, and in parallel to its success in Formula I racing, Renault followed suit with the Fuego, so Renault clients could take advantage of this modern technology. In fall of 1983 the Fuego turbo was introduced with a 1565 cc in-line four delivering 132 DIN HP. Standard features included rear disc brakes as well as an on-board computer tracking outside temperature, fuel consumption, range and average speed. At this point all Fuego models received a new, wider dashboard reaching over the center console.

Not available on the German market was the "clean" version offered in 1986. In this last year of production the GTX Kat, equipped with a catalytic converter, came with a 2165 cc

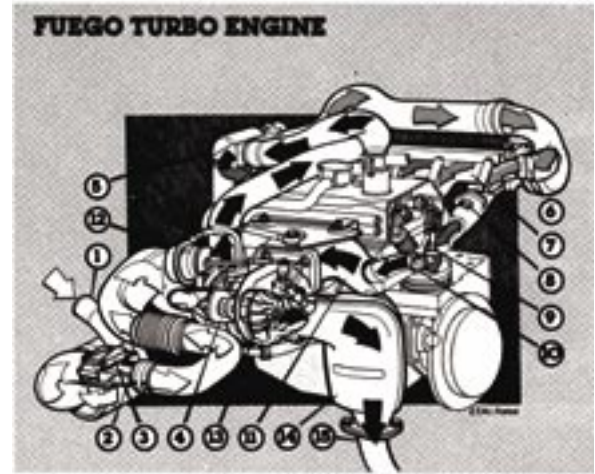
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engine rated at only 102 DIN HP. Production of the Fuego, which totaled 265,257 cars, ended in 1987.

This story originally appeared in *Renault Report* 3/2003

Editor's Notes: This article isn't complete as it doesn't recognize the original designer Robert Opron, nor does it mention that the Fuego was built in Argentina until the early 1990s. Or let us not forget the prototype Fuego Convertible. Lastly it doesn't discuss the U.S. models however the 1986 "Clean" version sounds very much like the U.S. 2.2 litre version Fuego. However, it is an accurate history of the Fuego from the German car market perspective. Thanks again to M.M. for translating and Rainer Hubner for sending us the *Renault Report*.



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AERODYNAMITE.

THE NEW RENAULT FUEGO TURBO. \$8,800.

49th Acapulco Rally

Story and photos by Francisco Miranda

On November 28th we took part in the 49th Acapulco Rally. As in previous years, the starting line was on Metepec, Estado de México, to save the early morning traffic going out of the city. My wife and I decided to spend the night in Toluca, so we took off on Thursday 27th, and after a brief dinner, prepared to rest for the long day ahead of us. Fernando Roldán and his wife came along with us, so we felt at ease in case either car would break down on the highway. I had to take the Dinalpin GT4 as the green 2 liters Dauphine was not tested yet for such a long trip, so I decided to take with me a spare generator and a regulator, as in the two previous years I had troubles with them on the GT4.

We met with friends at 9:00 AM for coffee and all the co-pilots were putting the final touches to their precious tool, the Route Book. My friend Fernando Roldán had spent long hours playing with his computer to solve the book in small increments and he shared with us what he had done. So we had a lot of the problem solved beforehand. Seventy crews were registered of all makes of vehicles including Renault, VW, Porsche, Chevrolet (Corvette, Camaro, Malibu), Audi, Nissan, Ford (Mustang, Focus), Dodge Super Bee, SEAT, Mitsubishi and Mini Cooper. Of course Dinalpin representing the Alpine Club México.

After the final checking of our cars and saying hello to friends, we were ready to start. At 11:20 AM we started our rally. We had our first problem going out of the parking lot. Instead of taking a right turn, we took a left and had to take a long road to somewhere, but not to where we were supposed to go. (We were not alone in such a mistake of the route book as other fellow rally contestants had the same problem). Some 5 minutes later, we asked for directions and we took the right way and we were back on time; we even had to stop for some 10 minutes for our turn. It was nice to test the speed of the car and everything was in working order. My main concern was the electrical charge, but it was wonderful to see the instruments correctly pointing to normal ranges. Temperature gauge, also on the cold side, was reaching to some 80°C most of the time. Outside temperature was not very warm yet, about 18°C.

At some point during a regularity stage, we felt very lost. We were counting on stopping before the control point and make up time, but being a secondary extremely winding road, there was no space to park. All of a sudden we saw the control taker and we were more than a minute advanced! At that point we felt the rally was going to be much more difficult than in previous years! There were a lot of milestones without numbers painted, so at least for us, it was quite difficult to keep the time/speed relationships with exactitude. There are plenty of crews who have installed a Terratrip™ instrument to help them with measurements, but it is not our case. Another disadvantage we have, is that our original 1300 cc engine cannot reach fast enough the average of speed



needed in short distances or times, along with a “very optimistic” speedometer that on average has a 16% deviation (unfortunately not constant throughout the range, being less deviation as the speed increases). There were some control takers every 100 meters, so if you knew you were ahead or lagging, we had no time to make up in such short controls. Nevertheless we kept the high hopes and very optimistic spirit enjoying such a sunny warm day in the beautiful countryside. It is very nice to pass through small towns and lots of children along the road waving and cheering you on.

The GT4 was giving 12-kilometer/ liter (28-miles/ gallon), which is rather good for such a hungry old-timer. After fuelling up, we also had our food with a traditional lunch of different meats with sauces, rice, etc. We had enough time to eat slowly and rest a little while or if needed, check the car for malfunctions. The next stage started some 10 kilometers away from the restaurant, so we started out some minutes early to be ready on time. We found a nice shade to park where other friends joined us and had opportunity to buy some mints or candy for the road in a small roadside shop.

We started right on time through the milestone but we were not fast enough for the speed needed (about 96 Km/hr) at the control post. Again, some minus points there. At this point is where we drive through the “Buzzard’s Canyon” which is mostly a very hot weather place. That day was no different with 30+°C (86+°F) and we had to drive somewhat fast (100 km/hr average speed). The temperature gauge topped 100° C and just to be safe, I opened the heater and it dropped to 90–95° very fast. That’s was great, because last year I remember we had to ride almost all the way with the heater open and we were burning our feet! Luckily, not this year.

We arrived at Chilpancingo where we had to make a stop at an esplanade. This year there was not a reception planned for us, so no free drinks, Playboy bunnies or gymnastic shows as in former years, but at least they were selling water and sodas that were badly needed. Again, enough time to stretch your legs, have a drink and take some photos.

From there, another regularity stage, this time with no controls (if only we knew before!) and after that, we took the main highway to Acapulco (Carretera del Sol) and we had the opportunity to ride quite fast. Again, the GT4 behaved real well and we even peaked some 6500-rpm, riding along with Pablo Alcocer in his A110 Cabriolet, enjoying the section quite a lot. Unfortunately, Fernando began having temperature problems there that forced him to slow down and stop every few kilometers to cool the car down, the same happened to the R8S as they had to abandon the rally because of overheating problems.

After such an adrenaline rush, we arrived in Acapulco and passed the final checkpoint just in time. We were invited to register for our hotel rooms at the Hard Rock Café, where they were offering refreshments or beers to the competitors. We decided to rest our ears somewhere else, going with a group of friends to have a quiet coffee and beers at a nearby coffee shop.



It turned out my spare generator was needed, but luckily not for the GT4, but for Alejandro Marin's beautiful 1966 A110 Berlinette. The bearing gave up just before Acapulco and it was easier just to replace the whole system rather than just repairing the broken part. He had a long record of no repairs before this year. In the previous five consecutive years Alejandro had been problem free. For me, this is the first year I didn't have to go to buy parts or repair anything, so we had time to stay the whole morning at the beach side in total relaxation. To gather competitors at the poolside, a two-hour Open Bar at noon was offered. For lunch we went to have some great seafood cocktails and fish dishes in the company of friends talking about the cars or rally details. The afternoon was spent talking with other friends and later Alejandro and his wife joined us for dinner. Pablo and his wife met us at the restaurant after the National Competition Prize Ceremony, and we went to have a drink at a beautiful bar. Quite a long day!



On Sunday we awoke early to have breakfast and prepare ourselves to check out and head back to Mexico City. Four cars in a row, all Alpines: Gaspar Arakelian and Alejandro Marin in their A110 Berlinettes, Pablo Alcocer in a Cabriolet and us in the GT4. We had to drive reasonable slow because Gaspar's car had a worn out tire. At Chilpancingo we stopped to buy a new one and from there it was normal highway speed. Very close to the restaurant "4 Vientos" where we planned to stop for lunch, the exhaust clamp fell off the GT4 and the generator in Alex car also started making noise. After a great lunch in this traditional restaurant, I gave Alex a small belt to bypass the generator keeping the fan and water pump working and we just had to live with the excess noise the remaining 120 kilometers. We got to the city safely and happy, already planning what things could be improved for next year's 50th edition of the Acapulco Rally.



We would like see many of you living in the United States to come down and enjoy a weekend in sunny Acapulco where plenty of activities are available, along with all the interesting Renaults and Alpines. This year Marvin McFalls was interested in coming down with other members, unfortunately there was a lack of communication with the RAC authorities that made organization very difficult, but next year with plenty of anticipation we can organize something for you to participate in the rally. In case you aren't able to bring your Renault (which would be a real pity), they even have an open category called "Copa RAC" for any vehicle. For example this year we saw competing a couple of Renault Scenic, Volkswagen Jetta and Pointer, SEAT Toledo, Ford Focus, etc. or the Group VI for sport cars like the Audi TT, Porsche Boxster or Nissan 350 Z.



As always, congratulations to the crews.
Any comments? DinalpinGT4@hotmail.com

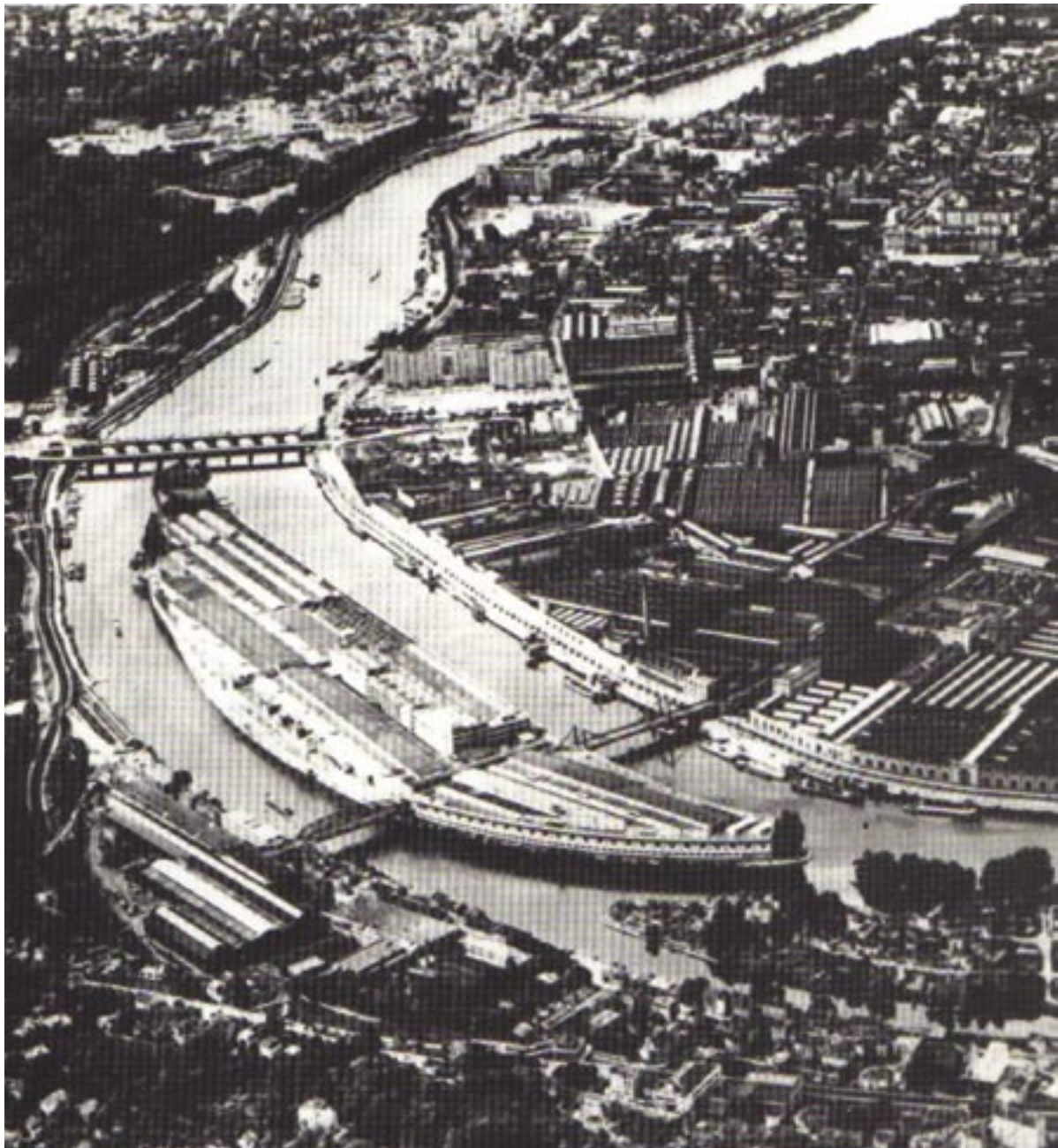
Île Seguin

Story by Marvin McFalls

After reading the title of this article many of you may be confused, Île Seguin or Seguin Island is not a well-known tourist stop when you are in Paris. However for a Renault enthusiast it is a must see. If you haven't figured out by now what I am talking about this is the site of main Renault factory in Boulogne-Billancourt. Original the Summer home of the Renault Family, what started out as a small workshop behind

the house, Grew to one of the largest factory complexes in the world by the 1930s. The majority of all Renaults were built here until the 1950s, and until last year it remained open as a workshop for the Renault History Department. The site is currently in the process of being demolished and will one day hopefully be the home of a new factory.

Photo: Renault Public Relations





Photos from Renault Public Relations and Doisneau.





Photos from Renault Public Relations and Doisneau.



Needless to say at this point it isn't easy on the eyes, but the site still has a lot of character. You can see many large cracks in the structures that were most likely caused by American or British bombs, as it was attacked on three different occasions during the war. The large factory in the middle of the Seine is still quite an impressive structure. It features a two-kilometer long test road that runs underneath the factory. It also features a bridge that most employees used to enter and exit the factory. If you are in Paris, I recommend you stop by, as it will be many years before the demolition is complete.



Images this page from Renault Publicity and Marvin McFalls.



