



## THE WORM REVIEW

June 2007

ON May 15 1967 my father-in-law drove his newly purchased Peugeot 404 sedan out of a showroom in Melbourne, registration number JTE317. He had traded in his 1962 403. He had retired to country Victoria, to Mount Beauty. Later that year I was given the privilege of a drive down the Kiewa Valley, an undulating curvy road ideal for demonstrating the 404's handling. I was very impressed and a few months later I was the owner of a white 404, registration number JWF404 (known as Joist Wide Flange 404 to my fellow structural engineers). JWF404 was eventually traded in on a 504.

About the time I retired, I inherited JTE317 and slowly refurbished it. So on the 15th it was 40 years old. Surely the 404 is one of the best cars made by Peugeot. In its day it was way ahead of most cars in handling, braking and quietness. I recall a passenger who was a Holden driver saying in amazement "You can hear the radio at 60 miles per hour!" JTE317 cost \$2550 plus registration and 3rd party insurance \$87.80. There has been a lot of inflation in those 40 years.



The birthday 404



Hank's bread van



Above: Peter and Carol Wilson off around Australia. Below: John and Guia Baird at the start.



Hank's personalised number plate



### Around Australia

Twenty six older Peugeots drove off on Monday 14th from Geelong on their 57 day 17,000 km drive around Australia. You can watch progress on [www.peugeotaroundaustralia.com](http://www.peugeotaroundaustralia.com)

Hank Verwoert led off in his 404 yellow bread van followed by one 203, two 403s and seven 404s as well as some 504s and 505s. Hank's bread van looked superb and is fitted out for sleeping for Hank and Jo. There is no bulkhead between the van and the driver and the extra room has allowed the fitting of more comfortable seats with more leg room than the normal 404 ute. Peter and Carol Wilson had a worrying trip to the Geelong start from Queensland. A persistent fuel blockage was only cured by a blow out of fuel lines in Geelong the day before the start. The last 1000 km before the start was only achieved by feeding petrol from a can on Carol's lap via a tube to the fuel pump.

### Slovenia

There will be three PCCV members at the L'Avventure Peugeot International gathering in Slovenia at the end of May, driving a 203 Familiale. Leigh Wootton, who lives in France, found the low km 203 and Richard Davies bought it. He will be taking Phil Torode and Ros King as passengers. This is the first time PCCV members have attended one of these annual gatherings since Graham Lewis and I attended the Peugeot centenary gathering in 1990.



Transport to Slovenia.

### Water pumps

Sam Mechkaroff still has a few 203-403 water pumps for sale. 03 9844 0484 evenings.



**One to 43**

I have found an interesting model car shop in Belgium [www.43r.com](http://www.43r.com) with cost of postage to Australia (see last month's Worm Review) €8.00 only. I got two models recently for this postage.

A 404 Tour de France 404 with scooped out rear doors with 3 bicycles, and a 203 van with a large KLG spark plug on the roof. A model of one of the procession of advertising vehicles that precedes the Tour de France.

**A Racing 203**

Ian Nuthall races a 203 in England. 1500 ccs twin carbies, extractors and all the safety equipment needed by the racing regulations including a leather bonnet strap and a roll cage. The *Classics Monthly* magazine interviewed Ian about his 203 and they were mesmerised, and gripped by an irrepressible yearning to have a go behind the wheel of the French flyer.

**Don't brake for the corners**

*"I thought that it was rather attractive because it was so different," Ian tells me when I ask what he likes about the 203. "It was a car that was appealing in its ugliness - or at least its unusualness. It had the original column-shift, and was not painted in a particularly nice colour. I realised that it was unlikely to be sufficiently competitive to be a front runner, but it would be such fun. "When I first drove it on the track, I was so surprised by how fantastically controllable and predictable it was. It is just amazing. If you are alongside a Jaguar Mk7, going up from the start line at Goodwood, of course he will be able put out more power along the straight but then he will have to break heavily at Madgwick, the first corner, whereas in the Pug you don't even lift off the throttle. So the 203 will overtake a Mk7 under full power through the corner. You enter the following straight 10 feet ahead having gone past him on the inside, his power will then take him past again after Fordwater, before going in the next corner at No Name, but once again you just won't have to brake, so with luck, you can actually sneak past again on the inside going into St Mary's. The 203 may not be hyper fast, but it is incredibly controllable, predictable and stable in a corner."*

*Not braking is an important part of Ian's Peugeot racing technique. It doesn't have a lot of speed, so you can't risk losing momentum, and drifting will scrub off enough speed, anyway. It all sounds rather brave to me.*

*"It isn't being brave" Ian laughs. "Once you get used to the car, you learn that it*



The logo on Ian Nuthall's 203

Ian Nuthall's racing 203

*can carry the speed through. Normally you would approach a corner and brake, but as you get to know this car, you build up the confidence. That 203 will go through every corner at Goodwood without braking. Despite the fact that it looks like it might be a car that you might not be able to control in a quick corner, it is actually extremely controllable. It will just surprise you,"*

*Beauty as they say is in the eye of the beholder. To say of the 203 "It was a car that was appealing in its ugliness" when you compare the 203 with those "beautiful" English cars of the late 40s and early 50s like the Ford "perpendicular" Prefect and the curvaceous Austin A40 both of which lugged around the dead weight of a chassis.*

*(Copy of article from Alastair Inglis)*

**203 Semaphores**

You need to be careful if you are removing your semaphore turn indicators from your 203 and early 403. The fixing is the screw circled on the picture. It holds a loose claw that clamps the semaphore body in position. The end of the screw is hollow and is belled out to stop the claw from falling off and disappearing down inside the body. But if you keep turning the screw you can unscrew the screw from the claw. So the trick is to unscrew until you feel resistance. Then you should be able to remove the semaphore and not lose the claw.



**The Worm Drive Register** is for all worm drive Peugeots in Australia. **Worm Review editor** is Gordon Miller.  
**203:** Gordon Miller 03 9807 3586 [pwdr06@ultramode.net](mailto:pwdr06@ultramode.net)  
**403:** Paul Watson 03 9889 2721 [paulandnola@bigpond.com](mailto:paulandnola@bigpond.com)  
**404:** Hank Verwoert 03 9783 2718 [verwoert@netspace.net.au](mailto:verwoert@netspace.net.au)  
**Back copies** can be downloaded from <http://worm.rkweb.org>