



14 September 2002

IN the days before computers, time was filled in, as the deadline approached for some written output, by tidying the desk and sharpening all the pencils. Now we have computers we are easily distracted from the blank screen by checking progress on the internet auctions or checking the email inbox. I am looking at a blank screen on a last-generation computer at our beach house 100 km from Melbourne. I have finished checking the auctions and the inbox and I hear the roller door of my neighbour's garage roll up. Some of his Peugeot collection has been sold recently. I wonder what is left? Cars are being shuffled. Sounds like a 6 cylinder. That would be the Austin Westminster from the 50s, nicely restored. Then obviously a diesel. That would be the Land Rover. Then, a sweet sound. No mistaking the 403. The 403 is his last Peugeot.



202 Ute in Sweden

Commercial vehicles are not good survivors. They have to work for a living and mostly they work hard. A 1949 202BH ute has appeared in Stockholm. It is in remarkable unrestored condition. For 40 years up until 1997 it worked on a market garden at la Valette just outside Toulon in Southern France. It then moved to Château St Estève one of the oldest vineyards in Provence. Early this year it moved 2500 km north to Stockholm where it is using its French registration and French countryside image to promote calvados type and other distilled liquors in Sweden. It is owned by Anders Wallberg. Picture from Christina Alvner.



GRM chasing a vintage supercharged ducktailed Alvis in GRM203

Walking on water

Over the years I have been told many stories about 203s and I have put most of them on paper. One recent story I couldn't really believe and I almost dismissed it as a development of the facts over the last 40 years. Then, on the same day I was told the story, I read of a car stunt in a movie that was real and didn't

involve digital manipulation. So I decided that anything was possible.

The scene, as told, was at night in hill country on a secondary road. It had been raining a lot but the driver knew the road well and was letting the 203 have its head. The driver was enjoying the drive. At one point, the road, as the driver knew it, swept down the side of a hill, across a narrow bridge and then up the other side

of a valley. The 203 swept down the hill but the narrow bridge wasn't there. Instead the road had been realigned through a ford while the bridge was being rebuilt and the ford was deep under the flow of the flooded creek. All this was observed very quickly, and before any reflex actions could be taken the 203 was onto the water. Water was thrown up everywhere and then, unbelievably, the 203 was on the road on the other side of the ford. The engine was drowned and dead so the driver settled down to wait for daylight to get help. Just before dawn a logging truck crossed the ford and stopped beside the 203. The water level had gone down during the night but it still came up to the truck's doors. "How the ... did you get there?" said the truck driver. The 203 driver didn't know unless the 203 had aquaplaned across the top of the water. The movie stunt was in the James Bond film "The Man with the Golden Gun" when Bond's car takes off from one side of a broken bridge and corkscrews through a full 360 degree barrel roll before landing on the other side of the bridge. And the stunt was real. So perhaps aquaplaning in a 203 is possible.



**2002 Worm Weekend
TUMUT, NSW
26th and 27th October**

The Amaroo motel is filling rapidly. When Amaroo is full there are 5 other motels and 2 caravan parks as well as B&Bs in Tumut. I can email you a list. Plenty of places for the Saturday night dinner. The midday Power Station tour is fully booked.



You will meet Bouncer the Bassett and Eric the Cockatoo (who thinks he is a dog) at Amaroo. You will meet the Poodle as well.

203 Specials

203 specials raced in Europe in the 50s with special bodies and modified engines etc. They didn't start out as 203 coupés, as coupés were about twice the price of sedans to buy. Car 5 was driven by Barbier, car 17 was driven by Dubreuil and car 129 was driven by Guiraud. The picture of 129 was taken during the 1955 Mille Miglia in which Guiraud came third in the Special Touring 1300 class behind two Fiats. He averaged 70 mph for the 992 miles. Stirling Moss averaged almost 100 mph in the Mercedes!



Above: This 203 special, driven by Guiraud, came third in the 1955 Mille Miglia. Right: The Dubreuil 203 special.

Distributors

I recently wrote about replacing the well-worn distributor in your old Peugeot with a new 504 distributor. Concern has been expressed that the calibration curves of the two distributors are different. This is agreed, but the point being made was that a new 504 distributor was much much better than a worn out original distributor. Peugeottech (Geoff Battersby) in Brisbane, 07 3260 7500, will rebuild your original distributor to the original specification. Ivan Washington has a 504 TI distributor in his twin-carbie 203. Ivan says that if you modify the head at all or raise the compression ratio then you need to change the timing to suit the new gas flows. Ivan's 203 has a lot of performance and the engine has not suffered over 10 or more years from high revs and wide-open throttle use.

16 Inch tyres

Alistair Inglis (from UK) drove his 203 Station Wagon on the London to Peking Rally a couple of years ago. Before the rally he tried a pair of Michelin 175 x 16 inch taxi tyres as used by London taxis (I remember Graham Lewis and I looking at these tyres on a taxi in London in 1990.

Our interest got a "Whatcha looking at Guv?" response from the driver!) Alistair said that they performed well but eventually, on Michelin's recommendation, he used a set of Michelin 185/75R 16C Agilis 81 van tyres. He had one puncture on the 15,000 km of the rally. Russell Hall says that Michelin 175 x 16 inch tyres for Lada Nivas are available on order in Australia.

403 Familiale

I asked the question last month if there were any 403 familiales (3 rows of seats) in Australia. Russell Hall says he saw one in Ballarat in 1969 and Dave Dunsmuir sent me a scan of the aluminium Peugeot plate stamped with 403L etc that is all that remains from the 403 familiale he had 15 years ago. It succumbed to rust.

The Worm Drive Register is for all worm drive Peugeots in Australia. It reproduces some parts and knows who has parts, reprints manuals, and keeps in contact with owners of older Peugeots overseas.

Back copies of the Worm Review can be downloaded from www.pccl.org
Gordon Miller 28 Olive Ave, Mount Waverley Vic 3149
Ph 03 9807 3586 (9am-9pm), wormreg@netspace.net.au
Paul Watson 5 Beatrice Street, Glen Iris, Vic 3146
Ph 03 9889 2721, paulandnola@bigpond.com



The Barbier 203 special

