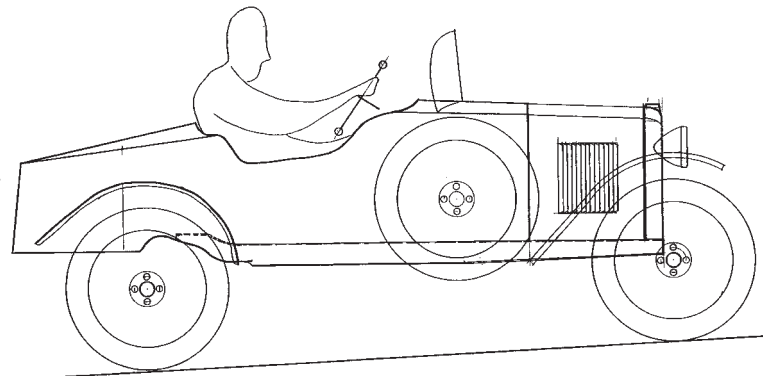




12 November 2000



**W**ELL it didn't happen. The Worm Drive Weekend (WOWE) turned into a worry worry weekend (WOWOWE). Entries had come in nicely when the big worry started. 10 days before the date of the WOWE I was told that the access track to the caravan park was flooded and was likely to be flooded for at least a week. All entries were advised by a "yellow alert" and advised to check on the Wednesday before driving off for the WOWE. The floodwater was coming from the Hume Dam. The dam was 99% full and water was being released to maintain a safety freeboard. Over the week I rang the Hume Dam, the Murray River Commission and checked the Bureau of Meteorology web site. Eventually Tony Howman from Deniliquin offered to drive down and check. He reported on Tuesday afternoon that the track was still flooded and that everything was very muddy. So it was agreed that there was no choice but to cancel the weekend. Pity.

That picture of Paris traffic in the October Worm Review drew a lot of comment. It came from Guy Nolleau. My caption said 1950s Paris traffic and the perceptive amongst you pointed out that there was a 404 (first released in 1960) in the picture. My excuse is that it is probably a pre-production 404! These do exist, as a Le Club 404 member is restoring one.

**P roots**

That other well known car firm starting with P had their roots in a firm of tinsmiths. Peugeot's roots in making spring steel stays for ladies corsets is much more up market.

**12 Months of GRM404**

I HAVE just paid the registration for my 404 cabriolet so that makes it 12 months on the road. The speedo now says 3000 miles. No major problems to sort out except hot starting with the Solex carbie. This has been a pain and I was once stuck for half an hour. Torque of 20 years ago was full of discussion of hot starting with Solex carbies but I don't think there was an answer. I don't understand why the Solex carbie on my 203 has always hot started. It didn't go too well when it iced up at steady accelerator positions in cold weather and it has since been fitted with a water heated carbie but it still starts first pull when hot. The cabriolet is now fitted with a new Weber carbie made for the 404 (they are still available) and the problem seems to have gone away. The Weber does have some idiosyncrasies that I am learning about. The cabriolet has drawn many comments but strangely never a glance from a 306 cabriolet. I have pulled up beside several 306 cabs at the lights and never got a glimmer of recognition. Pat Hetrel, wife of George the owner of a fabulous collection of cars including the Mercedes 540K cabriolet, always tells me that the 404 cabriolet is a pretty car. Last Xmas I had the cabriolet down at our beach house at Torquay. There was one of those rock concerts with campers, scaffolding stages, and rows of porta loos on a farm a few kilometres away. The bass that night sounded like guns on a distant battlefield. I was waiting at a roundabout the next morning when a van full of rockers, with roof rack piled with Eskys and camping gear, drove through. One passenger saw the cabriolet, hung out the window, thumped the door and yelled, "Great car granddad". Obviously some rockers have taste! My latest recognition was on the Mountain Highway. There was beeping with a distinctly French sound behind me and I was passed by a Citroen Berlingo van (still beeping). There are many disadvantages driving a cabriolet. I know they look pretty but they are noisy and not as secure, from intruders or if you try to loop the loop, and I am told that they leak, though GRM404 has so far been completely dry. I now know at least one advantage. I was passing a large nursery just as a Ford cabriolet drove out, hood down, with a large 2 metre high tree sitting on the passenger's seat. It was strapped in with the seat belt. I will keep it in mind with the Xmas tree season approaching.



The Weber carbie for the 404 is a 34 ICH model Weber part number 15290.336. Available through Hardiman Auto Supplies in Sydney. Phone 02 9771 5877.



**403s In South America**

The 403 had a lot of success in South America rallies and races. At the 403s introduction in Buenos Aires in 1956 it was driven into the Autodrome show by Julio Otamendi a well known racing driver. In the touring car section of the 1957 Argentine Gran Prix a 403 won its class and came second overall. In the 1959 race a 403 won outright. Similar places were achieved in the 1962 and 1963 Gran Prix. 403s were successful in Rallies in Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay.



Below: 203s lined up at Pomonal on the 1999 03 Weekend. Photo: Tony Knott

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

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**Humphrey who?**

When you are adjusting your valve gear spare a thought for Humphrey Potta. In the late 1700s Newcomen developed his atmospheric steam engine for pumping water from mines. It was huge with a 1400 mm bore and a 2100 mm stroke. The piston rod was connected to one end of a rocker beam and a rod hanging down the mine shaft to a pump was connected to the other end. Steam at tea kettle pressure was sucked into the cylinder on the up stroke and at the top of the stroke the steam was shut off and cold water sprayed into the cylinder. The steam condensed and air pressure pushed the piston down and lifted the pump. All this at 18 strokes a minute! A boy was employed to turn the steam and cold water off and on in the correct sequence. Humphrey Potta was one such boy. He must have been brighter than most for he rigged up a set of trips and triggers that opened and closed the valves automatically. The first valve gear? Probably, also, an early example of technological redundancy.



Right: A recent picture of a sad 203 coupé in France. Picture from Guy Nolleau.

