



## British & European Automobile Club (Southern Highlands NSW) Inc.

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# BEACon February/March 2021

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## 2020 AGM

10/2/2021

The much delayed 2020 AGM was held on 10<sup>th</sup> February at the Mittagong RSL Club. (This was not the 2021 AGM – that will be held, barring unforeseen circumstances, in a couple of months' time.)



President Geoff Wood had provided printed copies of his report on each of the tables.

'Thanks for coming today to attend BEAC's delayed 2020 AGM. We have left behind a year that is better forgotten, but will be remembered for a long time. It is hoped that 2021 will continue to allow more freedom with regard to the numbers allowed at gatherings, so the club can resume again.

There were only a couple of runs undertaken at the beginning of 2020 before the nation went into a lockdown on activities, which precluded BEAC from operating. The committee monitored the varying Covid-19 rules and agreed that we needed to be able to have at least 50 people gather outdoors before attempting to resume club activities. This is now possible

but the format will be slightly different, with picnic runs and dining at several different cafes and restaurants being an option. Ros will have all this under control.

While the club has effectively been in recess, the committee members have been attending to the continued regulatory matters, financial commitments and processing all those vehicles on Historic registration, which have been undertaken by Rob Stenvert.

In conclusion I would like to thank everyone for being patient over the last year and to express my sympathy to those relatives of members who are no longer with us.

Geoffrey Wood'

Fred Edney followed up with a concise Treasurer's report which confirmed that the club's finances are in good shape. Then followed the election of committee members. There was only one nomination for each position on the committee, so they were duly elected. The only change to the committee's make up was that after fourteen years of very meritorious service to the club, Tom Currie retired from the position of Secretary, and Anne Wood has replaced him.

So the committee now looks like this:-



Treasurer Fred Edney, President Geoff Wood and Secretary Anne Wood



Runs Co-ordinator Roslyn Bell



Membership/plates registrar Rob Stenvert



Webmaster Rob Turner



BEACon Editor Phil O'Regan

As Anne said about her taking over as Secretary 'I've got big boots to fill'! And that perfectly sums up the reason for the next item on the program – presenting Ton Currie with life membership of the club. Tom has devoted some 14 years to fulfilling the role of Secretary, and during that time, his liaison with regulators and understanding of the laws and regulations that govern us, along with his knowledge of our club constitution, has meant his sage advice has been an important contribution to the continued smooth operation of BEAC. His life membership is recognition of the value of his service.



Appropriately, the award was presented by our ex-president (and also life member) Bob Payne. It was great to have these two club stalwarts standing side by side with their certificates on display.





Finally, a discussion was initiated on the vexed question of restarting club runs. Even though many COVID restrictions have now been eased, there are still issues that need resolving before we go ahead. For example, it is doubtful that any venue could accommodate us if we were to turn up in the numbers that we were getting pre-COVID. If we are to gather as before at Burradoo to start a run, we would need to enforce social spacing, as the mere sight of a large number of cars and people there could attract unfavourable comment and attention. Would we need to have a COVID-safe plan for the run? How will the vaccinations program affect restrictions? Etc, etc.

The idea of picnic outings was raised and explored. They have the obvious advantage of being held outdoors, where restrictions are less, and don't incur the cost of a meal at a commercial venue. The committee believes that pre-COVID there was not a lot of support for picnic outings amongst our membership, but under the current circumstances, they are the most realistic option.

Our runs co-Ordinator, Roslyn Bell, has organised a picnic run as the first event back for 2021, to judge the interest of our members to return to the fortnightly gatherings.

Members please note the details in the Club Calendar later in this edition (and check the BEAC website Events page for links to current NSW and ACT government health advice and changes to restrictions.)

Phil O'

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## The Dowsett Comet (and other things)

Readers will remember in the last (December 2020) edition of BEACon, I published an article on the Apollo GT and the subsequent line of cars produced by Intermeccanica in Italy. I explained that Jenny O' does an online jigsaw puzzle every day, and the Apollo had come up as a subject puzzle one day. Well, lightning does strike twice, and she has done it again. The following photo of the Dowsett Comet came up as a puzzle a few weeks ago. I looked at it and thought 'Here we go again'!



The Comet follows a classic performance car formula, English or European body with American V-8 engine (the AC Cobra, De Tomaso, Jensen etc, etc).

Its GM LS3 6.2 litre V8 in this form produces almost 430bhp. Very adequate for a car weighing in at just over 1500kg. Performance figures back this up, with a 0-60mph (97km/h) time of just 3.9 seconds and a top speed of 150mph+ (241km/h). Price for this beauty is around 140,000 pounds sterling.



But interest in the car was heightened for me when I discovered who owned Dowsett Classic Cars – none other than ‘Ant’ Anstead.



Take it away Wikipedia: **Anthony Richard ('Ant') Anstead** (born 28 March 1979) is an English television presenter, motor specialist, car builder, designer and artist, best known for co-presenting the [Channel 4](#) automotive show *For the Love of Cars* with [Philip Glenister](#).

(I loved the format and characters in this show – Ed.) Each show begins with a quick discussion of the car that is to be featured in that episode. Some of the history, and why it is important to British motoring is covered. This is followed by Anstead attempting to locate one of these cars, typically through a barn find, to restore.

As the car is restored by Ant and his team at his car restoration company in Hertfordshire (Evanta Motor Co, although this is never mentioned in the show), Phil looks into the social side of the vehicles, meeting owners' clubs and attending events to get a feel for how the restoration should progress. Phil takes the lead in guiding Ant as to how he would like the restored project to look, but often has his mind changed through discussions with enthusiasts at events.

After the car is restored, Phil and Ant take it for a test drive before they are joined by several similar cars owned by car club members who give their opinions on the restored work. The car is then put on auction at the prestigious Coys of Kensington. (Probably the star restoration was the 1950 Land Rover Series 1, which the previous owner imported from [Tanzania](#) and left it in a barn for 41 years. The car set a world record for the selling price of a Series 1 - Ed.)

Since then Anstead has hosted a number of television shows and in 2015, he hosted [BBC Two's](#) live show *Building Cars Live*, alongside [James May](#) and [Kate Humble](#), and in 2017 Anstead took over as co-host of the show *Wheeler Dealers* (*neither show has been shown on free-to-air in Australia to my knowledge, but Wheeler Dealers can be seen on Discovery channel on Foxtel - Ed*).

But importantly for our story here, in 2005 Anstead joined the classic car world full time starting Dowsetts Classic Car Company, based at Dowsetts Farm in Herefordshire.

They design and hand-built in the style of the 1950s and 1960's British sports cars. These inspired bespoke sports cars evoke the design elements of Jaguar, MG and Aston Martin rolled into one smooth road and racing style car. They harness these designs to modern engineering & drivetrain technology. It is truly a work of love and dedication. Their website also says, "In addition, the company also carries out high-end classic car restorations and bespoke art and design work." The Comet is the latest product of their philosophy.

But there are other classics amongst Ant's latest creations, driven by his passion for classic cars and dedication to quality work. One is a kit to build a replica of Alfa Romeo's iconic Tipo159 GP car. This started life as a project to build such a car on "Wheeler Dealers", and has kicked on to the stage where one can buy a kit to create one for yourself. Starter Kit in this offer consists of bespoke chassis, hand built body panels, grill, exhaust, gear linkage, dash panel, propshaft (exchange) & steering column. Price for the kit is around 10,000 pounds sterling.

There are several add on kits which you can buy to provide much of the running gear (eg wheels kit, shock absorber kit etc). All you have to provide yourself is the engine and some components (eg sub-frame) from a Mazda MX-5.









So if you fancy yourself following in the footsteps of Juan Manuel Fangio, check out [tipo184.com](http://tipo184.com).

Phil O'

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### **CLUB CALENDAR – February 2021**

- **Runs start at 10 am at Cnr. Osborne Road & Moss Vale Road, Burradoo unless otherwise noted.**
- **Please Note: all PDF files and links are available on the club's Events Web Page**

#### **FEBRUARY 2021**

##### **Wednesday 24 February 2021 | Picnic Run to Nepean Dam**

- Venue | Avon Dam Rd, Bargo
- BYO everything for a picnic lunch
- Meet at: 10am, Corner of Moss Vale Road & Osborne Road, Burradoo
- Visit website | <https://www.waternsw.com.au/supply/visit/nepean-dam>
- Download Run Sheet | [BEAC Nepean Dam Picnic Run PDF](#)
- Please observe social distancing regulations and make sure you sign the attendance sheet.
- Contact | Ros & Kevin Bell | Mobile | 0421 029 900  
email | [events@beac.org.au](mailto:events@beac.org.au)



**Sunday 28 February 2021 | Shannons Wheels Canberra Region Display Day**

- Venue | Queanbeyan Showground, Glebe Ave, Queanbeyan NSW
  - Download Flyer | [Wheels 2021 Flyer PDF](#)
  - Download | [WHEELS 2021 SIGN IN SHEET PDF](#)
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## So Many Car Makers

After putting together the article on the Dowsett Comet, I started idly wondering how many other current car makers are out there that I have not heard of. So I asked Mr Wiki for a list of manufacturers in three European nations plus the UK. The result were interesting. France is listed as having 19 current makers (brands), Italy has 30, Germany has 36, and the UK lists an amazing 57 brands!

But once you start to analyse the lists, questions arise which highlight the shortcomings of the question being asked. Among the makers included are local divisions of brands originating in other countries, such as Nissan (UK) in England and Ford GmbH in Germany, makers of cars intended for racing only, such as Dallara and Wolf Racing in Italy, some who are developing a car but have not got it in production yet, and others who have stopped manufacturing but are supporting the owners of the cars that they made. In a few cases it is impossible to tell from the maker's website whether they are still producing or not.

Anyway, my purpose here is not to question the number of makers, but to introduce you to selected makes and models that many people in Australia would not know exist.

Let's start with France. Many people could name Peugeot, Renault, Citroen, Bugatti and perhaps even Alpine as French brands, but few would know of Bollore or MPM. Bollore is a transportation conglomerate which is now into electric vehicles. It makes a small four seat, three door car called the Bluecar, a number of which have been used in a car sharing program in Paris.



MPM is a manufacturer founded in 2015, to produce a smart little coupe called the 'Erelis', running a turbocharged Peugeot 1.2 litre 3 cylinder engine. Other models are under development.





Now if we go over to Italy, outside of Fiat and the well-known sporting marques, we find that many of the other manufacturers are producing electric vehicles or out and out racing machines. One name does ring a bell, and that is De Tomaso. Many will be aware of its history producing such cars as the Mangusta and the Pantera. But the company eventually fell on hard times and was sold several times until it was bought by a Hong Kong based consortium. Their first model under the new regime is the P72, a retro style sports car for road and race. It is good to see the De Tomaso name still survives.



So much is said about the big seven German manufacturers (Mercedes, BMW, Audi, Porsche, Ford GmbH, Opel and VW) that it is a bit of a surprise to find that there are 29 other companies listed. Some of these are 'go faster' companies, such as Alpina, RUF, Brabus and Schnitzer, modifying existing Porsche, BMW and Mercedes cars. But among the listed names is Borgward, who produced many different models up until the company's demise in 1963. Now the company is back, designing models for a Chinese manufacturer, and then selling them in Europe. The first of these is the BX-7 SUV.



Also on the list is Jetcar, which in contrast to its name, produces a small diesel engine car with two seats, one behind the other. In spite of its small size, it is good for 160kph. It is classified as a 'highway microcar' and its purpose dictates the styling.



And then there is YES! (Young Engineers Sportscar) cars. They make a mid-engine rear wheel drive sports car powered by various VW engines. The fastest variant has a 3.2 litre turbo V-6, good enough for 0 -100kph in 3.9 seconds and a top whack of 280 kph!





And so we move on to the UK. Where to start! The UK has always been a hive of activity when it comes to small independent car companies, and in contrast to the small Europeans, many of them are well known here in Oz. Names such as AC, Caterham, Morgan and TVR are in this category (note that Lotus, Aston Martin and McLaren are classed in the WIKI list as major marques). As with Italy, many of the specialists are producing extreme sports cars, such as Brooke Cars' Double R, with its 'race car with mudguards' styling. Why these things thrive in England with its weather I do not understand!





Others, inspired one thinks by Lotus and McLaren, go for the higher end of the market. One such is Noble, which has been around since 1999. Its current offering is the extremely quick M400, which for a while held the lap record on the Top Gear TV show's test track.



Now, I've just realised that the Wiki lists of manufacturers are not necessarily up to date or completely accurate, as one name missing from the UK list is Dowsett, makers of the Comet. That's ironic, as my article about the Comet above started the thought process that led to this article.

Anyway, it seems that, in the UK in particular, there is a strong tradition of building your own car, to challenge the big boys and to be able to say with pride 'I made that'!

Phil O'

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## HISTORIC VEHICLE SCHEME

- For members with BEAC Primary Historic Vehicle Registration, on a club run you must keep either a Club BEACon Newsletter or BEAC Events Web Page print-out in the car to justify the use.

### HISTORIC CONDITIONAL REGISTRATION - 60 DAY LOG BOOK SCHEME

A reminder that it is a condition of the 60 Day Log Book Scheme to sign off on your RMS Log Sheet **BEFORE** making a non-club run journey. Severe penalties apply.

Members with cars registered under the Historic Vehicle Scheme are expected to attend a minimum of **four** Runs / Events per year.

**Additional information covering the Historic Vehicle Registration 60 Day Log Book Scheme can be found on the BEAC website <https://www.beac.org.au/historic-vehicle-scheme/historic-vehicle-scheme-60-day-log-book-scheme/>**

**Please note: if you sell a car that is noted on the BEAC Member's Register, please inform our Membership (and Historic Plates) Registrar of the sale. If in doubt whether the car is on the Register, tell him anyway at [registrar@beac.org.au](mailto:registrar@beac.org.au) (he won't be offended)!**

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## MOTORING MIRTH



**Skidoos are for wimps!**

**Thank you to all contributors to this edition.**