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BEACon January 2026

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Menangle Country Club

10/12/2025

The light of members' lives……no, not the cars, not the cars!!!

It was one of those outings…

Dec 10 was going to be our BEAC Christmas Party, which was then moved to Dec 17 because some dodgy mob had gazumped us for the 10th.

So, Brian Cox suggested "Why not put on a run to Menangle Country Club, I've heard it's pretty good there." And so it happened, Wed 10th December became a bonus BEAC run - but we didn't know how many would turn up…

Numbers for the run were not required, so we had no idea of how many would turn up. Menangle Country Club were contacted, and a 'solid' 30 was booked. Driving along Eridge Park Road at the back of Chevalier College, Indra asked how many were turning up. "Good question", I thought. "Maybe four" was my honest answer. "What??!! Only four!!??"

The Carpenters were meeting us at the venue, and I didn't know that the Atkinsons were meeting us en route, so maybe just 4 in total at the start? Honestly, driving through the Kangaloon Rd roundabout, we had no idea (not for the first time…). So, it was very pleasing to see the goodly number of classics and modern classics already at the Gardens. Local time for those from Bundanoon was always 10 minutes late.

"OMG", I thought, "There's Rob Stenvert's 'new' MG." It was the first time I had seen it up close, and Rob was busy talking to other BEAC members, so I didn't want to interrupt them to ask Rob's permission to sit in the car… WOW, what an unbelievably comfortable front seat! And just look at all that wood trim! And the vision out of the car, remarkable. Sometimes it's better not to ask for permission…

Looking at a BEAC lineup makes you see red.

Yes, we had a really good line-up of classics, and then some more turned up, like a magnificent Rover 2000 TC and an awesome-looking Alfa Romeo Brera, which is fast becoming my 'best looking modern classic car'.

I must agree with Owen's assessment of the Brera – a very elegant design.

The Rover is definitely a ‘best of British’.

What's in a name, or a number for that matter.

TD
65068 H

87239 H

76469 J

The briefing didn't take long, except for the tricky bit, which most people accepted at an attempt at humour: 'Allo 'Allo! This is where it gets a bit tricky; pay attention, I shall say this only once… We drove along some not-too-often-seen BEAC roads - but ended up at the Menangle Country Club, with all its warning signs re snakes.

136

121

Happy diners.

A varigated lineup at Menangle.

MG 4627

This way the Sindens get to say Merry Christmas to all BEAC members.

Must be some sort of ultimate dessert!

Lunch orders arrived in very quick time, and the desserts, OMG, the desserts! One anonymous club member ordered a chocolate tiramisu - but the chocolate was a coffee cup with tiramisu filling the rest.

Yes, this was certainly one of those BEAC events that turned into a most memorable outing - Menangle Country Club will certainly be on our list of events in 2026.

Cheers,
Owen Sinden

The Citroen H Van

As Jenny and I entered the Tulip Festival in Corbett Gardens, there it was! A Citroen H Van converted to make and sell crepes to the great unwashed visiting the display. I was struck by the immediate family resemblance to the Citroen 2CV Fourgon in BEAC's ranks. I could sense that an enquiry to Mr Wiki was on the cards. And this is what he said…….

The **Citroën H-Type vans** (most commonly the **Citroën HY**), are a series of panel vans and light trucks, produced by French automaker Citroën for 34 years – from 1947 through 1981. They are notable for their industrial design, using many corrugated metal outer body panels to save material, weight, and costs. Early models of the uniquely styled trucks were just named **Type H**, but soon they were differentiated by a second letter, using the last four letters in the alphabet – except for the type **HP** for (flat-bed) pickups. Thus the vans were built as the types **HW** through **HZ** – with the majority of them built as **Citroën HY**.

The Citroën H-types were developed as simple, low-cost, front-wheel drive vans after World War II, using the same design philosophy as on Citroën's 2CV, but featuring a frameless, unitary body-structure. A total of 473,289 of their variants were produced in 34 years in factories in France and Belgium.

'Our' H Van in Corbett Gardens.

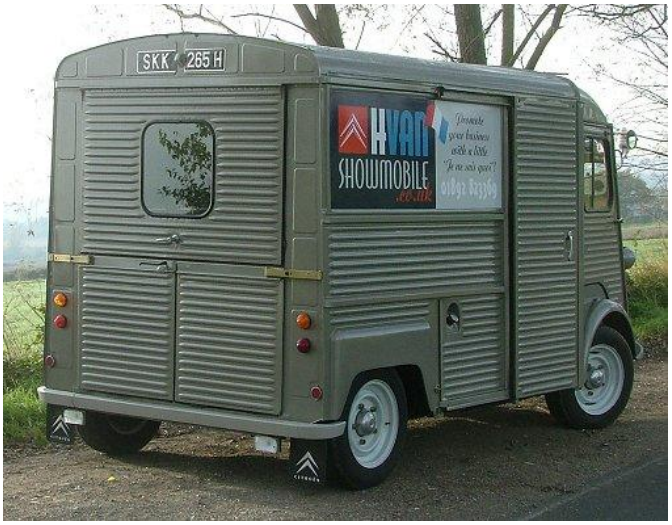
Like the 1934 Citroën Traction Avant, the H had a unitary body with no separate frame, front independent suspension, and front-wheel drive. For a commercial van, this combination provided unique benefits: a flat floor very close to the ground, and 6 ft (180 cm) standing height. Loading is by a combination of an upward-hinged tailgate with lower double half-doors at the rear, and optionally a sliding door on the side. There were short- and long-wheelbase models, and choice of short or longer rear overhang. The sides of the vans got varying treatments.

The distinctive corrugated bodywork used throughout the period of production was inspired by German Junkers (Aircraft) who used this technique starting during the First World War until the 1930s, the three-engined Junkers Ju 52 being the last to use this construction. Henry Ford adopted the same type of construction for the Ford Tri-Motor passenger aircraft. The ribs added strength without adding weight, and required only simple, low-cost press tools. The flat body panels were braced on the inside by 'top hat' box sections, installed at right angles to the ribs. The welded floor was strong enough to support a horse.

An early H Van ‘splitty’.

Very basic interior in the Citroen style.

H Van cattle variant.



H Van rear.

The engine, gearbox and many smaller parts are shared with other Citroën models. The engine and gearbox are nearly identical to those in the Traction Avant and later the DS, only mounted with the engine in front of the gearbox. The headlights were identical to those of the 2CV, while speedometers were successively borrowed from the Traction Avant and the Ami 6.

While the derated "Traction Avant" four-cylinder engine and the unsophisticated three-speed gearbox (non-synchromesh on first gear) offered only a modest top speed of just under 100 km/h, the chassis and suspension layout provided good roadholding qualities for a van of the era, especially on the short-wheelbase version: low-slung chassis, with very little overhang, combined with sophisticated totally independent suspensions (the front using double torsion bars instead of conventional coil springs). With 35 hp (26 kW), the downtuned 1.9-litre 11D engine in the initial, cast-iron-head variant offered more usable power than the 1.2-litre engine of its competitor, the 1950 Volkswagen Type 2.

The basic design changed very little from 1947 to 1981.

Vehicles left the Citroën factory with only three body styles: the standard enclosed van, a pick-up version, and a stripped-down body which went to non-Citroën coach builders and formed the basis for the cattle truck and other variants.

Rear hinged 'suicide' cab doors were used until the end of production in 1981, except on vehicles manufactured for the Dutch market where conventionally hinged doors were available from 1968.

Crepes amid the Tulips anyone?

Vintage H vans are still a common sight in Europe and in cosmopolitan cities around the world, serving as stylish food trucks evoking a retro continental image. Vintage versions are available as non-operating static displays or upgraded with modern engines and power steering.

Phil O'

WANTED

Your photo here

"Don't ask what your club can do for you, ask what you can do for your club."

I am sure that quote came from JFK himself, or something very similar. The important thing is: can you help your club?

A number of Committee members have decided to step down at the end of our financial year, so we need replacements. President, Secretary, Treasurer, Events Co-ordinator, Editor, Web Controller - if there is something you are interested in, please have a chat with one of the current Committee members about what is required (as an guide, the workload for each position is determined by the person in that position, or how much you are willing to contribute).

BEAC can only run if members are willing to step up to take on some responsibility. The Committee is an amazing team who work together; we'd love to have you part of the team.

Kind regards,
Owen Sinden
President
0412 687 135

Farming in a cold climate – even colour matched!

BEAC Christmas lunch
Bundanoon Hotel

17/12/2025

For the third year running, BEAC headed off to the Bundanoon Hotel to celebrate Christmas in style. Unlike last year, there was no run organised, just turn up to the hotel at midday. Jenny and I were late leaving home, and as always when you are late, we found ourselves following a train of council lawnmowers (big tractor towing a trailer, truck with smaller mower on a trailer, and another big tractor at the rear), who proceeded at a steady 30 kph all the way along Eridge Park Road and Moss Vale Road/Argyle Street to Moss Vale. But we still managed to get to the hotel before they fired the starting gun.

Back on familiar territory.

Peter Carpenter presented a challenging quiz.

Millie Atkinson won the door prize.

Gregory Paul and Jenny Tutin won the Christmas films quiz.

Before the food came out, Peter Carpenter presented us with a quiz to identify a car brand using images of car brand badges, some of which had the car brand name removed. I thought I knew car badges quite well, but I ended up missing a number of them.

When the main course arrived, it proved to be just as good as the last couple of years were. The meat in particular drew praise for its tenderness. The staff made sure that there was always adequate supply of any element of the meal.

Before dessert arrived, Ross Pollock challenged us with a quiz on Christmas themed or related movies. There were some quite sneaky or obscure questions to be answered, so it was remarkable that Greg Paul and Jenny Tutin won it with a score of 14 out of 15 correct.

Millie Atkinson was the winner of the lucky door prize – one of Wendy Paul's superb, decorated cakes. Thank you very much Wendy!

Throughout the whole gathering, the level of socialising was very high indeed, reflecting the fact that everybody entered the Christmas spirit and enjoyed themselves on this happy occasion. I thanked the Hotel staff on behalf of the club, but we also need to thank the committee members who organised the day. Well done everyone!

Phil O'

CLUB CALENDAR – February 2026

- **Please Note: upcoming run details, PDF files and links are available on the club's Events Web Page https://www.beac.org.au/events/**

- **Runs start at 10 am from the Botanical Gardens Car Park on the corner of Old South Road and Kangaloon Road, unless otherwise noted.**

- **Cars on the run are to leave the Gardens in the order of historic cars first, followed by modern classic cars (eg new MINI), then modern British and European cars and cars from other nations**

February

Please monitor the BEAC website's Events page for news of our first run in 2026.

Events run by other clubs

Last Sunday of each month - Cars and Coffee at Berrima.

Berrima District Historical Vehicle Club website http://www.bdhvc.com.au

Sunday 9th November and then the second Sunday of the month Cars & Coffee at Picton.

The First Ute?

I don't really know how I came to be asking myself the question 'when was the first ute created'? I think it was when I happened to see a photo of the 1907 International featured in this article. If you ask Mr Wiki, you'll get the story that I had heard before.

'The first "ute" is considered to be the **1934 Ford Coupe Utility**, designed and built by Ford Australia in response to a letter from a farmer's wife requesting a vehicle for both church on Sunday and carrying pigs to market on Monday. Designed by Lewis Bandt, this Australian invention is now an iconic vehicle.'

The 1934 Ford.

But as soon as I saw the photo below of the 1907 International Auto Wagon I exclaimed ‘that’s a ute’!

Subsequent photos of the car just reinforced that feeling.

Further trolling of the Internet did not locate any earlier vehicle with this configuration, so my contention stands that this was the original ute. The Auto Wagon was in production for almost ten years, and was instrumental in International's decision in 1912 to cease car production and make only trucks from that time onwards.

Phil O'

The BEAC Committee wishes all members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

See you all in '26.

MOTORING MIRTH

Thank you to all contributors to this edition.

Phil O'