

  **GEARBOX**  



  **DECEMBER 2024**  

HUNTER MODEL AUTO CLUB INC.

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**** CHRISTMAS GET TOGETHER TUESDAY 10 DECEMBER ****

---7.00pm for 7.30pm at the Edgeworth Sport and Rec Club---



A great HMAc AGM meeting and with 19 model competition entries on the night, a new record was set.

Congratulations and well done to everyone.

***** Above pic is Brian B's winning entry of Grand Prix racers.***

--- NOV 2024 'REAL' MODEL COMP -PLACEGETTERS ---

1ST – Brian B – Grand Prix racers **[***PIC ABOVE]**

[***Category - OPEN]**

2ND – Bill K – Bedford Car transporters

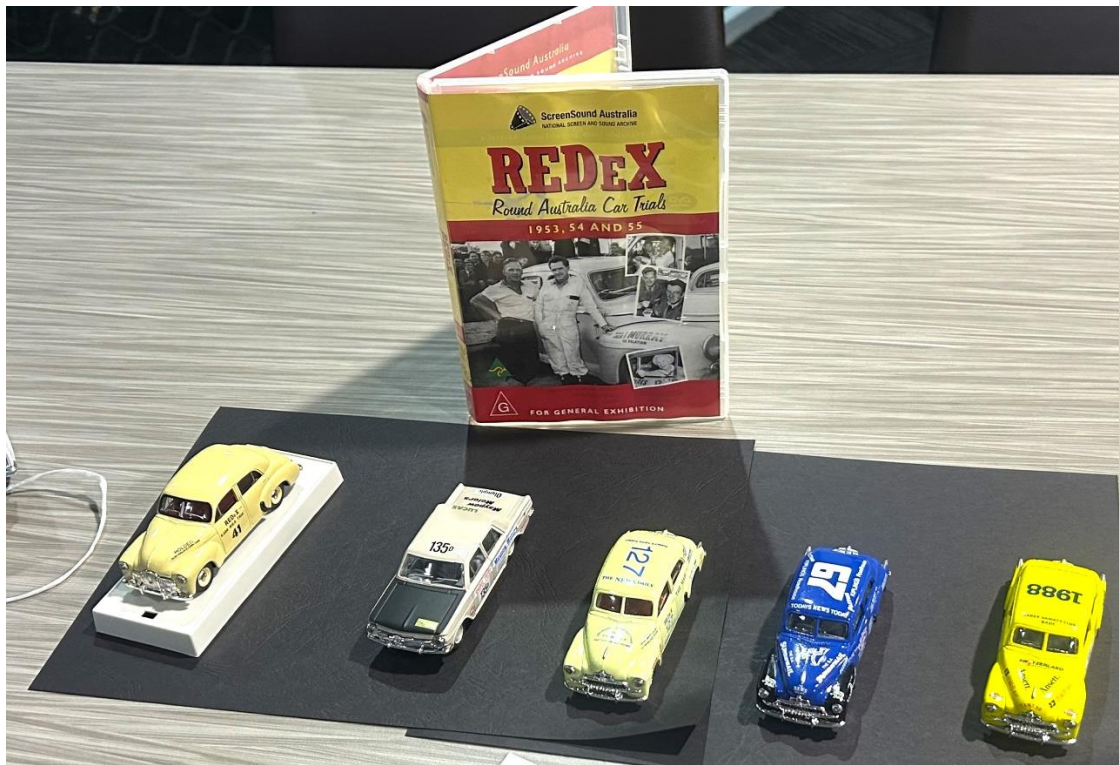
3RD – Ken – Holdens and trailers



-- The next four pics are a few of the other 19 entries that came close to a place --



Ben's Prado and Defender



Above - Ernie's Old Redex Rally cars. Below - Paul's Tractors



Scott's Aussie utes.

**** PLACEGETTERS - NOV 2024 'VIRTUAL' MODEL COMP – TOP TO BOTTOM ****

1ST – Terry – Aussie made muscle

[*** Category – OPEN]**

2ND – Bill K – Fords of the 50s

3RD – Ernie – Australian Field Service Ambulance



Entry F

Entry G



Certificate of Authenticity

Australian Field Service Ambulance
1955 Holden FJ Van

This is to certify that the
Australian Field Service Ambulance
1955 Holden FJ Van
is a precision-engineered die-cast model crafted for
The Matchbox Collectibles Ambulance Collection.
The Red Cross Series.
It is produced by — and available only from —
Matchbox Collectibles.™

Entry E

HUNTER MODEL AUTO CLUB INCORPORATED

Minutes of Club Meeting Held at Edgeworth Sport and Rec Club on 12 November 2024

Meeting Opened: 7.55 pm.

Members Present: 24 Apologies: 2 Visitors: 3

Welcome to Members and Visitors: President Andrew Vile welcomed the Club members and visitors.

Previous Minutes: Moved: Shane Neems Seconded: David White "That the October Club minutes be accepted".
Carried.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer reported that the Club funds stand at \$1,410.34 plus \$25.00 cash. Annual Fees are now due.

Moved: David Standen Seconded: Shane Neems "That the Treasurer's Report be accepted" Carried.

Correspondence:

OUTWARDS:

- i) Members and Others – November 2024 "Gearbox".
- ii) Members – November 2024 Model Competition and Meeting Reminders.
- iii) Members – Annual General Meeting Minutes and Treasurer's Report for November 2023.

INWARDS:

- i) West Aust Model Collector's Club (WAMCC) – October 2024 "Showcase".
- ii) Des Barnes (CTCS) – Club Magazine October 2024.
- iii) Jason Mitchell (South Hants Club) – "Wheel Nuts" Special Edition Autumn 2024.
- iv) P H Cheah (SMAC) – Well wishes to our Club and praise to Terry for the October "Gearbox".
- v) Jason Mitchell (South Hants Club) – Complimenting Mark's model making and display and positive feedback on "Gearbox".

Moved: Ben Wing Seconded: Allan Evans "That the Correspondence be accepted" Carried.

Matters Arising:

- i) Proposed Cruise on the Wangi Queen at Port Stephens – A decision to be made in the New Year.
- ii) Club Meeting 14 January 2025 – This will be our first meeting for 2025. Narelle Scott at Frontline Hobbies has invited us to the Private Opening Night of their Broadmeadow Store for our members. Secretary to confirm date and time with Narelle closer to the date.
- iii) 2024 Christmas Dinner Meeting – This will be held at our normal venue at Edgeworth Sport and Rec Club on Tuesday 10 December at 7.00pm for 7.30pm with wives, partners and guests most welcome.

General Business:

- i) Ideas for Club Activities in 2025 – a) Visit the Catalina Flying Boat restoration Project. b) Kurri Kurri PS Family Day Sunday 30 March. c) Show Us Ya Slotz Scalextric Day. d) Fighter World, Williamtown. e) Thirlmere Railway. Paul will investigate and report back to the Club on these proposals in the New Year.
- ii) 2024 Hot Wheels Legend Tour – Check out on the Net the Winner from 10 Finalists.

Model Competitions:

Results for November:

"Actual" Model Competition: "Open" – Any scale and up to five (5) models.

1st.....Brian Blyth.....Grand Prix Racers.....22 Points
2nd.....Bill Kenchington.....Bedford Car Transporters.....21 Points
3rd.....Ken McGregor.....Holdens and Trailers.....20 Points

"Virtual" Model Competition: "Open" - Any scale but ONE PHOTO ONLY.

1st..... Terry Payne.....Aussie Made Muscle.....21 Points
2nd.....Bill Kenchington.....Fords of the 50's.....20 Points
3rd..... Ernie Williams.....Australian Field Service Ambulance..18 Points

Next "Actual" Model Category – February 2025: This competition is in recess and will resume at our February 2025 meeting.

Next "Virtual" Model Category - December: "Vehicle associated with Christmas" – Any scale up to three (3) models but ONE PHOTO ONLY.

Meeting Closed: 8.10 pm

- More about 'MAMOD' by Mark -

Following on from Mark's article about Mamod, here is part 2 of his article. (Ed.)

As mentioned in the previous story on Mamod, as well as their stationary engines, Mamod released a range of workshop machines for them to run. These make for a nice display of a miniature version of the real thing.



Mamod also made some pond steam boats, but these were not a success. In fact they lost about £10 on each one that they made. These are now very much sort after. *See next pic.*



In 1961 Mamod released its first Mobile steam engine. The SR1 steam roller was an instant hit and in 1963 they released their most popular model the TE1 traction engine. Most of us older people can remember having one of these two (I had the TE1 and wish I still had it). *Mark.*



- Triumph Italia 2000 Coupe -

I recently spotted a Matrix 1:43 scale resin model of a **Triumph Vignale Michelotti 2000 Coupe** on eBay and it is an automobile I knew a little about having researched Giovanni Michelotti in the past. The little coupe is often referred to as the **Triumph Italia 2000 Coupe** or just **Italia 2000**. Unfortunately, as much as I'd like it, if I was to purchase this model, it would set me back well over A\$200 landed, so instead, I decided to write an article on the Italia coupe for the Gearbox, even if it became a bit of a jig-saw in setting out a sequence of events leading up to this automobile.



Triumph Vignale Michelotti 2000 Coupe modelled by Matrix in 1:43 scale resin.

In researching the Italia coupe, I found **Conceptcarz** had stated '*Designed by Michelotti and handcrafted by Vignale in Turin, Italy. The Italia was powered by a Triumph TR-3 engine and used a Triumph chassis. A combination of dependable and rugged British engineering with the beauty of Italian artistry.*'

As you may have gathered from previous articles in the Gearbox, I have admired many British and American vehicles that were re-bodied by the Italian coachbuilders. This applies to one-off concept or show cars through to those autos that actually went into production like this Triumph Italia 2000 coupe. It would appear that this trend in using Italian styling houses by both the top British and Americans auto makers, was taking root in the early 1950's and would continue on for decades. This was certainly the case for the Standard-Triumph Motor Company.

Giovanni Michelotti was one of the best known Italian stylists and, as well as for other automakers worldwide, he spent around ten years designing for Triumph. Some of the Italian design firms he had worked for early in his career included Bertone and Ghia. Michelotti often worked hand in hand with Alfredo Vignale of the Carrozzeria Vignale to turn out some beautiful collaborations. Some of the automobiles styled by Michelotti for Triumph included the Triumph Spitfire, Triumph Herald coupe, TR4, Triumph 2000 and the Triumph Stag. I read that hundreds of his designs came to fruition as either production cars, trucks or buses over a forty year plus career.



Around 1957, Triumph hired Michelotti as a consultant and designer relating to future Triumph projects and the first example he turned out was termed a Triumph 'Dream car', and known as the **TR3 Speciale**. It was shown at the 1957 Geneva Motor Show. **See above pic.** This was only a one-off design exercise, though you could see the influence it had on his design for the Triumph Herald, his next major project for Triumph. The TR3 Speciale opened the door to many special orders from various automaking firms as well as private commissions.

Meanwhile, the Italian Standard-Triumph distributor, Salvatore Ruffino, felt that an 'Italian' version of the doughty TR3 would also be a hit in Italy, so he approached Michelotti to build another concept sports car based on the TR3.

It was built by the Carrozzeria Vignale and shown at the 1958 Turin Motor Show where it received high praise and comments along the lines of *'this is how the TR3 should be.'* A second concept was then produced by the Carrozzeria Vignale for the 1959 Turin Motor Show and this second version may have been a slight re-design of the first concept by Michelotti, but never the less, it also received high praise. Briefly, after negotiation, Ruffino was granted permission from Standard-Triumph for this concept to go into production through the Carrozzeria Vignale plant in Turin and, based on the TR3A running gear, it became the *Triumph Vignale Michelotti 2000 Coupe*.

Over time the little coupe became known as the Triumph Italia 2000 Coupe and later the 'Triumph' name was deleted to become the Italia 2000 Coupe. It was a rear-wheel drive sports car powered by a twin SU carburettor 1991cc overhead valve straight four cylinder engine with around 100bhp or 74 kw of power. It had disc brakes up front and drums at the rear and used a four speed manual gearbox to attain a maximum speed of 110 mph or around 175 kph.

It is believed that 330 Italia 2000 Coupes were produced by Vignale between 1959-1961 with around six in right hand drive. A few were exported to America, but a shortage of spare parts and a high sales price conspired to stifle any success it may have had there. I also read that some motoring journalists believed that the takeover of Standard-Triumph by Leyland in 1961 was, in part, behind the ultimate demise of the Italia 2000 Coupe.

Back to the TR3 and Michelotti. The TR3 was a successful sports car, designed under the guidance of Walter Belgrove and Sir John Black and was released in 1955. However, notwithstanding an upgraded model, the TR3A, it eventually required a replacement which would be the TR4. Triumph now turned to Michelotti to style a body for their next model and even though development funds were tight, the TR4 body had to be wider and longer and had to remain 'body on chassis' as with the TR3. And here is the interesting thing, many believe that the *Triumph Italia 2000 Coupe* was actually used by Michelotti as a design prototype for the TR4. *Check out the next pics.*



At left the TR4 and right the Italia, both in 1:43 scale.

As an aside, another interesting part of the Michelotti TR4 story is that the TR3 body shell was built by the Mulliners Coachbuilding Company in Birmingham which was now owned by the Standard-Triumph Motor Company, but the Michelotti designed TR4 body shell was made in Standard-Triumph's new plant in Liverpool.



At left is the real vehicle and at right the Matrix 1:43 scale model version. They have done a reasonable job I think.

I think that the Italia 2000 Coupe is certainly a very stylish little automobile and it is a shame there was apparently conflict between Salvatore Ruffino and Vignale at some point which also helped sour the chances of the Coupe continuing in production after 1961.

To Finish up, **Drives Today** on-line wrote that *'this most Italian of British sports car greats is more than just an intriguing curio. It marries beauty with the sort of rugged running gear that can be fixed with a hammer. So many cars of this ilk are better in concept than execution, but that isn't the case here. The real shame is that the Italia didn't get to beguile a wider audience.'* Terry.

APOLLO – A GREEK GOD OF MANY STRENGTHS – THEN CAME THE HOLDEN APOLLO

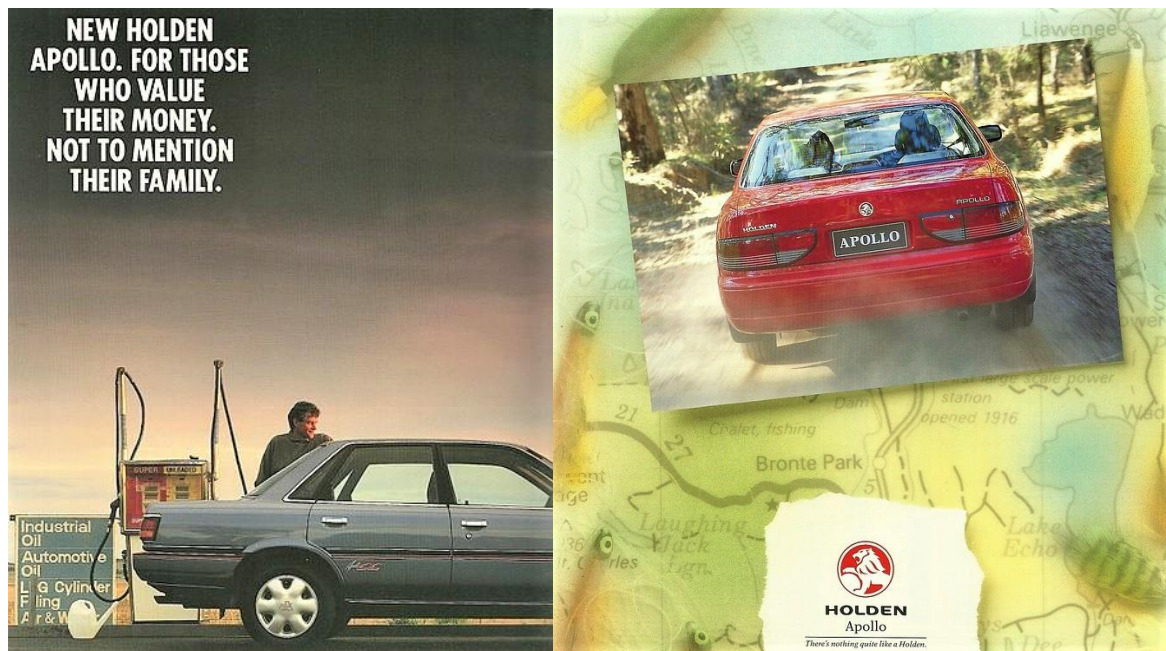
The following article is a 'Re-Visit' from an old *Gearbox*. What made me remember it was a story in **Classic and Sports Car** that reflected on the many automakers that used Greek names or derivatives of Greek mythical characters for their vehicle models. With regards to an American 1973 Buick **Apollo** they wrote, *'Apollo was quite a talented fellow. He was one of the 12 Olympian Gods, and was the Greek god of archery, music and dance, truth and prophecy, as well as many other just causes.'* The magazine also mentioned their British 1980 Vauxhall **Astra** where 'Astra' was derived from 'Astraeus', meaning 'star' and so it went on. In oz we had both a Holden Astra and a Holden Apollo.

So this is the old Gearbox Apollo story.

Doing some research reading recently, I found the following in the British on-line motoring site, **Honest John (Classics section)**, where they wrote, *'There's nothing quite like a Holden,' so said General Motors' Australasian brand in its 1995 sales literature, conveniently overlooking the fact that the brochure to which that bold statement was attached, was for the four-cylinder Holden Apollo.'* The writer more or less spoke about the Holden 'Apollo' as a car many of his readers would have never heard of, or even bothered to find out about, justifiably so as *Honest John* is a British on-line publication. The writer pointed out that the 'Apollo' was actually a *'Holden-badged variant of the tried and trusted Toyota Camry.'*

The published article was about a series of 'curios' or interesting motor vehicle tales, and I picked up on it immediately, not that I think it is an overly odd situation that should warrant a story in a British on-line motoring site. But there you go.

There were two Toyota models re-badged as Holdens, the above mentioned Apollo, and the Holden Nova which was a re-badged Toyota Corolla hatch-back. For the other side, Toyota re-badged the Commodore as a Lexcen. The next two ads for the Holden Apollo, show at left, the 1989 to 1992 model range shape and, at right, the same for 1993 to 1996.



Why did this happen? The *'United Australian Automobile Industries' (UAAI)* was formed as a result of the *Button Car Plan* introduced by Senator John Button in 1984. He was the Minister for Industry under the Hawke Labor Government at the time, and the aim was to have the Australian auto industry become more competitive world-wide by gradually reducing import tariffs. With sales of the re-badged vehicles over time averaging around 15% of the two parent companies production figures, it was never successful and was wound up in 1996. With hindsight, it can be said that there was an unwillingness within the Australian new car market to accept this concept. Interestingly, **Honest John** said, *'the Apollo was a perfectly decent car. Well made, refined, okay to drive, well-appointed and good value. Did the Australians take to it? Not really...'* Still, I found it interesting that this story would appear on a British website. *Terry.*

MARKS ICE CREAM VANS



The lead-in photo is from around the 1960s, the ice cream van is a Bedford HA van. Bedford were popular for conversion to ice cream vans, but to be fair, most of the vans you can think of have been made into one. This has left model manufacturers with a gold mine.



The things that sell the most are models that have a link to your childhood. We can all see ourselves in this photo from the past. It is from Britain and the giveaway are the houses in the background. As well, the Bedford HA was not found out here and what Australian kid would be seen wearing socks with sandals.



Top left is one most of us will remember as a model, the Ford 105E. This is a Walls ice cream van, one of the well-known ice cream makers in the UK. The other popular ones were Lyons Maid and Mr. Whippy. There were of course lots of smaller companies and one man operations, although model manufacturers tend to stick to the major players in the marketplace for their subjects, as these will sell more. **Top right** is Minghella who were big on the Isle of Wight, but only people who lived there, or went there for a summer holiday, will want a model of their vans.



Above photo is a Lyons Maid price list from the late 1960s and being a kid at this time I can tell you the most popular with me and my mates was the zoom probably due to a couple of things that were big at the time. One was NASA and the moon landing, but by far the larger was Thunderbirds (F A B Scottie).



This is part of the matchbox 75 series from the 1960s **in the above pic at left** and again, it is a Lyons Maid ice cream van which would have been more for the English market, as Lyons Maid is not known outside of the UK.

Above right is a Bedford CA. It was another popular van for conversion to an ice cream van from the Bedford stable. This is also true when it comes to models of it. Coachwork was very different from one to another, again leaving plenty for the model maker to choose from. This ice cream van is from Glasgow, not known for its hot weather. It is from 1970 and Glasgow did have a hot summer that year. The hottest day was 102 degrees Fahrenheit on the 8th of August, that is almost 39 degrees Celsius.



Above pic is another Bedford CA, a 1/43 model by Oxford Diecast. With the Spot-On models of the blue ice cream van, there were three very different ice cream vans all built on the same chassis.

Bedford were very popular for ice cream vans with the CA, HA and CF being the most common. Ford also had all bases covered with the 105E Anglia and Transit. This model **in the next pic** is the 105E made by Oxford Diecast. The Anglia has been a favourite of model makers for a long time. *Mark.*



- MORE 'ONLY IN BRAZIL' - THE PUMA STORY -



The *lead-in pic, as well as the next pic, is courtesy of Petrolicious* and shows an early version of the iconic Brazilian made **Puma GT**, and this model was actually a **DKW Puma GT** before it would later be replaced by the VW owned Puma GT models. In a *previous 'Special Edition' Gearbox*, we had a story on the *'1966 FNM Alfa Romeo Onca Coupe'* that had a body modelled on the early Ford Mustang, but with an Alfa grille. Genaro 'Rino' Malzoni, the same gent that designed the *Onca*, was responsible for the creation of the **Puma GT**. Malzoni, was an Italian born Brazilian Lawyer, and a successful sugarcane plantation owner, cattleman and, as well, a well-known motor racing enthusiast.

In 1945, VEMAG, was a company established in Brazil to assemble and distribute Studebaker, and later on, DKW vehicles. [DKW was part of Auto Union, later to be Audi.] VEMAG then added Kenworth, Scania-Vabis lorries and Ferguson to their auto assembly operations. In the early 1950's, the Brazilian Government introduced tax incentives to industries with VEMAG being an early recipient for the automobile industry and coming up with the slogan 'Brazilians producing vehicles for Brazilians.' High duties were imposed on imported products in order to protect the many growing industries in Brazil and forcing overseas investors to use local materials as much as possible. Volkswagen, who were also involved in the automaking industry, were soon able to use around 90 percent of local materials for the products they were turning out.

Initially, DKW-VEMAG produced their own 'universal' style van in 1956 that was a close copy of a German Auto-Union model. By 1959, and alongside other makes, VEMAG were producing more DKW automobiles in the form of a Jeep, a sedan and light lorries. They also had a motor sports department up and running at the same time under the control of Jorge Lettry and supported by Malzoni, a solid devotee of DKW. Malzoni wanted to build a fibreglass bodied GT coupe on the DKW structure in an effort to compete against the Brazilian Willys Interlagos. These were the Brazilian produced copies of an Alpine A108 that were outperforming the heavier DKW racers. Malzoni took his idea and sketches to Lettry who was impressed, but asked Malzoni who would build the bodies. Malzoni said he would, and soon formed the Sociedade de Automóveis Lumimari Ltda or '*Luminari*' company to produce the fibreglass bodies.

Originally, DKW was to supply the drivetrain for what would be a front wheel drive auto, powered by a DKW straight three cylinder two stroke engine, but they decided to build it completely. They would also organize dealers across Brazil to sell it and include warranty and maintenance costs in the deal. Lettry was directly involved in tuning up the little 1.1 litre DKW engine to send 100 hp or 74 kw to the front wheels and the end result was the **GT Malzoni**.

The first GT Malzoni model 'prototypes' appeared in 1964 in both racing configuration and as a road going model, but it was 1965 before the GT Malzoni hit the salesrooms in racing form with the road going model available a year later. Though the first few models had metal body shells, VEMAG immediately raced them. The GT Malzoni was quickly changed to a fibreglass body as the metal version, though reliable, quick and reasonably successful in winning major races in Brazil, was too heavy. VEMAG also entered a GT Malzoni in the 1965 '*1000 Milhas Brasileiras*' (1000 Brazilian Miles) Brazil's premier motor race over 1,000 miles. Then in 1966, the future Formula 1 World Champion for 1972 and 1974, Emerson Fittipaldi, together with co-driver Jan Balder, raced a GT Malzoni in this same event and were leading with a few laps to go before they had a mechanical issue that put them in third place at the finish. In 1965 and 1966, around 45 GT Malzoni models were produced before a major change would occur.

In 1964, Volkswagen purchased shares in Auto Union from Mercedes-Benz and a year later took full control. Then in late 1966, '*Volkswagen do Brazil*' took over DKW-VEMAG ending production of all DKW engines, though they allowed production of the GT Malzoni coupe to continue. VW also installed their development division in the old VEMAG industrial park where future VW Brazil models would be planned and developed.

Lettry had now joined *Luminari* and the *GT Malzoni* coupe, still with a DKW engine, was soon upgraded. It had a small rear seat added to comply with GT regs in motor sport, had a larger glass area, new rims, bumper bars, head lights, and tail lights. The redesigned body was longer and wider and the name changed to '*DKW Puma GT*.' The success of the new *DKW Puma GT* with ever increasing sales is what probably influenced VW to continue its production. **This model is shown in the lead-in pic and next pic.** Note that this model has a grille as it is front engined.



In 1968, and now under Volkswagen's guidance, the *DKW Puma GT* was totally redesigned and re-named as the *Puma GT*. It was slightly smaller and used the structure of the Brazilian Karmann-Ghia. It was now powered by a rear-mounted 1,493 cc air-cooled VW flat-four cylinder engine instead of a DKW unit, hence the previous model's grille was omitted. **Next pic** is a *1969 Puma GT* in 1:43 scale resin modelled by NEO.



It appears VW had no trouble in setting up this model, even though the previous DKW Puma GT versions had front mounted engines. VW also set up their dealerships throughout Brazil to sell the new *Puma GT* and, like VEMAG had done previously, would also take care of any warranty and maintenance cost issues. *Luminari*, produced more than 25,000 Pumas in total up to 1992, becoming Brazil's most celebrated sports car producer for over three decades. As well, the (VW) *Puma GT* was sold in over fifty Countries worldwide with a small number built in South Africa. *Terry*.



Above - 1971 Puma GTE convertible in 1:43 scale resin by NEO.