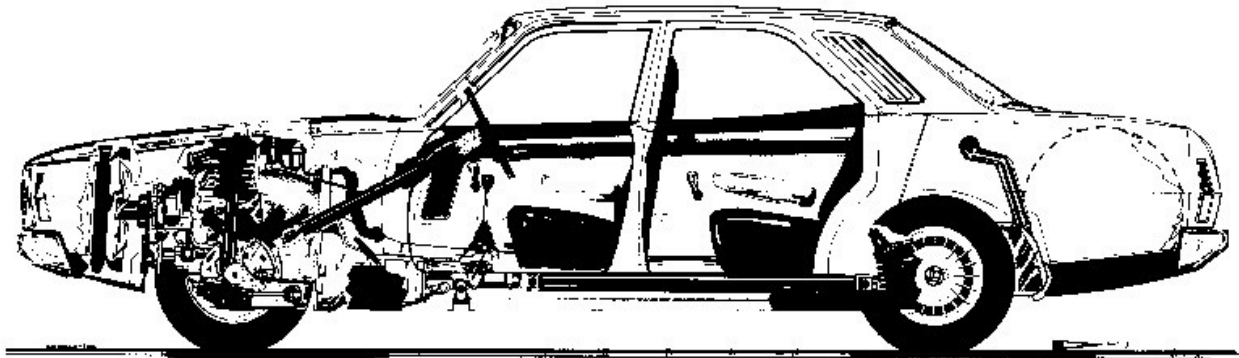


Leylines



Canberra and Districts Leyland P76 Club Newsletter April 2005



4 DOOR SALOON

Next Meeting:

TUESDAY 12 APRIL

at WESTON CREEK LABOR CLUB

MEETING STARTS SOMETIME AFTER 7.30

Presidential Pearls



Be warned! I have discovered an important fact.

You can actually have too many P76 parts.

Over the years, I have been collecting parts for the restoration of my Targa Florio, long ago abandoned when I discovered I could buy my Peel Me a Grape Exec for less than the cost of respraying the Targa.

For years, I have been scouring classifieds, auctions, national meetings and eBay in search of more and more bits.

I have even bought things got them home to hide away with the rest of my 'stash', only to find I already had that I bought the same things from a bloke in the trading post several years earlier.

So I have been collecting grilles, headlamp surrounds, indicators, tail lamps, bumpers, switches, carpets, bushes, grommets, catches, motors, diffs, engine mounts, linkages, cables, gauges, knobs, ducts, pins, locks, mud flaps, hoses, rubbers, brackets water pumps and various panels.

These last things are where the danger lies; I have a brand new full set of doors, a boot lid and a bonnet, as well as door skins, front guards and the lower front valance panel. All safely stored on the walls of the garage around the Exec.

On the weekend, I was moving some long lengths of timber about in the roof of the garage to make room to store a set of disused dinning chairs. As I pushed on the 6m long bits of 4x2s and 20mm box section steel, I heard a screech followed by a loud crash, followed by a number of quieter crashes. I realised immediately what I had done and uttered a few words I do not use in front of my children. Climbed down the ladder to survey the damage.

I had managed to dislodge the 2m long valance panel from its resting place in the roof and have it only just land corner first on the extreme driver's side edge of the bonnet leaving a large dent and a number of deep gouges in the paintwork.

Now I need to find an excellent spray painter who can make one of my spare bonnets look like the rest of the 30-year-old paint on the car. Otherwise, it will look silly with a vivid shiny looking bonnet, and front guard.

At least I can get the flaking C pillar vents fixed at the same time...

So be warned. Hoard P76 bits at your own peril.

Alex

Editor's Note



In mid-March, my wife and I were invited to join the Canberra Antique and Classic Club on a week-long tour of the Southern Highlands in the P76. The weather forecast was for high temperatures and Bernice asked whether I would be able to get the factory air conditioning fixed for the trip. My dear wife is a committed hot weather hater. The last time the air was working was about nine years ago. I spent a small fortune having it converted to R134a, and it worked for about nine months and then gave up, presumably out of gas.

With some trepidation, I called in at the Battery Terminal at Jamison. I've had good experiences with these guys and electricals on a number of occasions. They seem to be straight and very helpful, but I was imagining quotes for new compressors and evaporators, etc on a 30-year-old system. They had a quick look at it and suggested a recharge with ER12. This is now the recommended gas for older a/c systems as it operates at much lower pressures than R134a and is much kinder on ancient seals. The only drawback is that it is flammable, but then I guess so is petrol. So I entrusted it to their care one day. They evacuated the system, charged it up, put in some dye to trace any leaks, and ran it for a while. It worked OK, there were no obvious leaks, and the total cost was the standard a/c service charge of \$140. It worked like a charm for our trip, and was really appreciated even when the weather turned from 33 degrees to 18 degrees and raining. Great for demisting! It will be interesting to see how long the charge remains in the system.

We finished the trip by going down the south coast via Berry to visit Bernice's brother. The P76 ran well, with no problems for the entire trip of over 700 km. While we were down the coast, however, there was torrential rain, 85mm in 36 hours. I haven't seen rain like that for years. The Targa was parked outside during the deluge, and I discovered why the carpet on the passenger's front floor is discoloured. There's a considerable water leak from under the toeboard, and the water runs down onto the floor. This has obviously been an ongoing problem, as my late father-in-law put aluminium sarking under the carpets to try and keep them dry, coated the floor in bitumen to stop it from rusting, and tried to stop the entry of water by pushing sealant around the likely entry points from the inside of the car. Unfortunately, the latter work wasn't successful - the water just oozes out from under the sealant.

I've spent some time trying to find the entry point of water from the engine side of the bulkhead. Access is the problem. Those dual fans for the factory air take up a lot of space. I've cleaned out the drainage system in front of the centre of the windscreen with great difficulty, using screwdrivers and a vacuum cleaner alternately sucking and blowing. It seems that the rubber seal between the bulkhead and the dual fan assembly may be defective, so the next task is to try to seal it up as best I can, given the limited access, and then run some water down the screen to see what happens. More later.

The trip also gave me a chance to try out my newly reconditioned power steering rack. Ever since I've had the car, the steering has been unpleasant. (That's a nice way of saying that it has been a real b\$^t*#d to drive.) What an improvement! The car has been transformed. I can now see why the P got such good reviews for its driving characteristics when new. It was a pleasure to drive it through the curves coming up Clyde mountain on the way back from the coast. Long may it last. Now if I can only get rid of the 1,564,792 rattles from behind the dashboard...

See you on Tuesday

Col

P76 Colours

James Mentiplay from the WA Club has been busy looking at the various paint colours used on the P76 and came up with the following interesting item.

The P76 'colour range' has fascinated for as long as I can remember. It is the combination of crazy names given to some of the colours and the wild hues that they came in which intrigue me the most.

In Western Australia we saw very few, if any of the rarer colours such as Hairy Lime and Plum Loco. In my opinion, Leylands in these colours have an aura about them. The same goes for the Nutmeg and Aspen Green Targa Florios. Winterbottoms, not Leyland Australia, handled the distribution of the Leyland Targa Florio in Western Australia. It is for this reason that WA only received Omega Navy Targas. Hence, I have always had a special interest in the Green and Brown Targa Florios. It has always been extremely important to me to eventually purchase either or both colour Targas someday.

So it came to pass that my interest in the Leyland colour range should not stop there. As our Club Register of Leylands grew to several thousand, I decided to examine which colours really were rare and see if my gut instincts were correct.

How accurate could our register be without having every P76 built on record? Taking this variable into consideration, I cross referenced our register at the time that it listed only a couple of hundred Leylands with the current spreadsheet of several thousand P76s. At regular intervals in building the database, I completed a chart showing the breakdown of colours and their percentages per model. Amazingly, the figures have been virtually identical each time, which leads me to believe that my workings are fairly accurate. In addition, we have collected details of Leylands from every state, which provides an even more accurate representation of the P76 build variances.

The P76 was the first BMC/Leyland product built in Australia that was available with metallic paint. However, to date I have no record of any P76 being in a metallic colour until August 1973. As this was the fourth month of production it raises an interesting question mark as to why the delay? It would appear as if there was some delay due to technical problems, but I have not been able to confirm this with anyone from Leyland Australia.

Most of the colours that a Leyland P76 could come in were new to the range. Any exceptions I have listed in the following table:

COLOUR	INTRODUCED	DROPPED
Chrystal White	1969	1976
Chrystal White Re-Introduced	1978	1979
Country Cream	1971	1976
Dry Red	1971	1976
Bold as Brass	1971	1976

All other colours were still available to Mini owners even after the P76 ceased production. However, they were dropped in 1976 with the exception of Oceania Green, which was only made in small numbers in late 1974.

The metallic colours were available in the Super and Executive models. Leyland listed Omega Navy being only available for the Executive and P76, but our register shows a number of Supers (not including Targas) that were also built in this colour.

On the following pages, I have supplied a breakdown of each colour and the percentage built per model. I would like to stress though, that these are not the official production figures, but I do believe them to be very close.

COLOUR	DELUXE	SUPER	EXECUTIVE	OVERALL
Chrystal White	25.16	16.92	24.16	21.14%
Am Eye Blue	3.78	3.81	2.50	3.54%
Dry Red	5.92	5.55	7.27	6.47%
Home on the 'Range	5.42	5.60	3.05	5.03%
Bitter Apricot	10.52	7.62	6.11	8.30%
Oh Fudge	6.25	4.41	2.22	4.59%
Country Cream	12.33	12.27	12.50	12.34%
NV Green	2.46	1.19	1.94	1.77%
Corinthian Blue	7.23	8.34	4.44	7.19%
Spanish Olive	10.03	10.60	9.16	10.12%
Hairy Lime	0.16	0.47	0.55	0.38%
Bold as Brass	9.37	11.32	6.66	9.73%
Plum Loco	0.49	0.47	0.27	0.44%
Nutmeg	N/A	3.81	6.11	2.98%
Peel me a Grape	N/A	2.38	4.54	1.99%
Aspen Green	N/A	2.86	4.32	2.21%
Omega Navy	N/A	0.59	5.00	1.27%

Please Note:

1. I have not listed Oceania Green in the above figures because only a handful was built in this colour and it was not available until late 1974 near the end of P76 production.

2. The Nutmeg, Aspen Green and Omega Navy figures do not include Targa Florios, as these were the only three colours the Targas were available in.

In conclusion, based on our figures it would appear that the breakdown of the 600 Targa Florios is as follows.

Omega Navy: 420
 Aspen Green: 80
 Nutmeg: 80

Of interest also, is that almost all of the Nutmeg Targas were not fitted with factory air conditioning. However, virtually all of the Aspen Green Targa Florios came with factory air. The Omega Navy versions have a 50/50 split.

Some Unusual Coloured Leylands:

A) Black Leylands do exist! Our records indicate that four Deluxes and three Executives were built in this colour.

Two of the Deluxes were built for a Funeral Director in Sydney and came down the line in August 1973. They were Column Auto V8s and both are still registered, with one now residing in Canberra.

Of the three Executives built in Black, at least one is still exists and resides in Tasmania. This car was purchased by the Tasmanian State Government for use by the Governor and came down the production line in October 1973.

B) Another unusual P76 is a Coolabah Grey Deluxe Column Manual 6 cylinder that is home to Tasmania. It was built in July 1974 amongst the Targa Florio production run. *(Nov 04: Harold Whittaker, from Victoria commenced restoration of a Coolabah Grey Deluxe 6 column manual, which is probably the same car)*

I have been told that a number of other grey Leylands were built but I have been unable to confirm this.

Leyland Stories

There have been stories of other P76s being built in one-off colours, but once again I have been unable to confirm this information as being true. It is quite possible however, that Leyland Australia did custom make P76s in different colours for special order.

In Western Australia, Winterbottoms was the Distributor of Leyland Passenger Vehicles and was Australia's largest Leyland dealer. It has been confirmed by a Senior Executive of Winterbottoms that a Gold coloured Marina was ordered and built for the wife of Charles Angel, the Managing director of Winterbottoms at the time. Apparently, it was quite a long wait before Leyland completed the building of the car, but it did happen! Whether or not this car was built because of Mr. Angel's contacts at Leyland and Winterbottoms' considerable clout remains unknown. In speaking with other Leyland dealer principles in WA they never ordered any one-off colours and were never under the impression it was possible.

Another anomaly was a P76 that was built in the 'Home on the O'Range' colour with a Casino Blue interior. This car was sold through Dave Johnson Leyland in Fremantle. The existence of this car was confirmed by a salesman who used to work at Dave Johnson's dealership. He clearly remembers the car been particularly hard to sell. Also, Derek Harris of the WA P76 Club who bought a Targa from this some dealership remembers how awful the orange car looked with a blue interior.

James Mentiplay.

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