

Leylines



Canberra and Districts Leyland P76 Club Newsletter June 2006



Club cars at Gundaroo

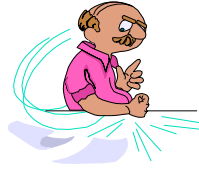
Next Meeting:

TUESDAY 13 JUNE

at WESTON CREEK LABOR CLUB

Meeting starts sometime after 7.30pm

Presidential Pearls



All I can do is apologise for not coming along last weekend, perhaps it is my age or the pressures of work, or probably some sort of speed related amnesia from driving my 370hp Turbo charged FPV....yes that's definitely it.

I was sure the drive was on the Sunday, despite having sent out an email just that week stating that it was on the Saturday.

Perhaps it would make things better if I told you I went to see the Dutton rally at the hill climb track in Queanbeyan, and spent the day watching Turbo Fords, Late model Porsches, Jaguars, Austin Healy's, Mitsubishi Evo's, WRX's and BMW M3's all afternoon.....no perhaps that would just make things worse.

No I think you must all come to the next meeting and teach me a lesson, take the presidency and give it to Damo.

Alex

Editor's Note



Four members made it to the lunch/afternoon tea drive to Gundaroo on Saturday 3 June. Bryce, and myself and my wife, Bernice, left at about noon from the Shell servo at EPIC (it's still the Canberra Showground to me) for a lunch, while David and Damo took the later 1pm departure for afternoon tea and coffee.

The *Grazing* restaurant in the old Gundaroo pub was extremely busy considering it was Saturday, but fortunately, they were able to accommodate several blow-ins. As Bryce said at one of our earlier meetings, the food is good but not particularly cheap. I guess that you pay for the 'atmosphere' of dining at a historic venue. While chatting over tea and coffee, no one could work out exactly why we held the outing on Saturday, and why the departure time was a nominal 1pm, which is too late for lunch and too early for afternoon tea. Maybe we made allowances for P76 breakdowns on the way to and from?

We lined the cars up in the street for photos before we left. I noticed one local drive past in his four-wheel-drive and do a double take at the four P76s. I guess that it was an unusual sight for downtown Gundaroo these days.

All starters enjoyed the day and it was a good chance to blow the cobwebs out of the Ps. A run like that does bring home just how well the P76 was designed and what a great cruising vehicle it makes. The balance between ride and handling is excellent, particularly noticeable on the uneven patches of the road around Sutton, where the P76's suspension dealt easily with the rougher road. One other thought that struck me as I was following Bryce out to Gundaroo was that the styling of the big Leyland is now much less 'way out' than it seemed 33 years ago. We've now become much more accustomed to the basic 'wedge' shape, and even the fussy details around the boot line are not as incongruous as they seemed years ago. My personal view is that cars in general have become uglier in recent years, and the P76 now looks quite respectable in comparison.

Many thanks to Damo for his contributions this month. They make up a goodly part of the newsletter. Contributions from other members would also be much appreciated. We'd all like to hear the story behind your car, useful technical tips, or whatever else you'd like to write about. (Well, within reason!)

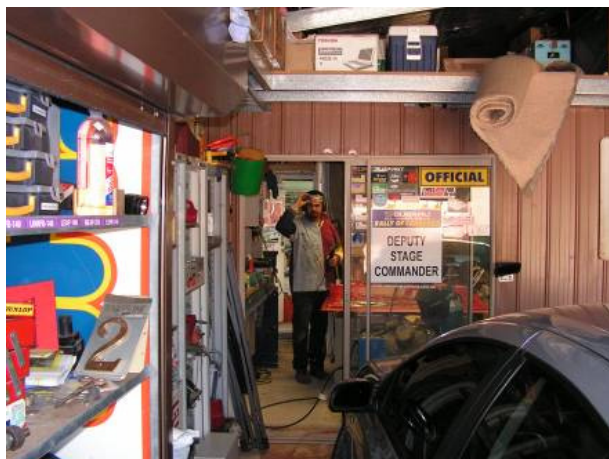
See you on Tuesday

Col

Around the Garages – *Part One*

Damien Haas

What men keep in their sheds is one of the great mysteries of the world. I thought it would be a fun thing to visit the members of our small club and have a look at the contents of their garages. I'm expecting to find P76s and life support systems.



The first shed I wandered into was *el presidente* Alex Shoobridge's. I've been in his shed before, and it has all manner of things P76 tucked away. The primary purpose of this visit was to collect an oil filter conversion bolt die tool that Neville Humphries lent the club three years ago. Upon arrival, I heard the unmistakable sound of angle grinding and discovered Alex with an AU falcon bonnet, a Mig welder, an angle grinder, and a can of bog.

Alex also owns a Ford Falcon Typhoon (I'm told it was bought primarily to act as a tow car for the dead P76s Alex is collecting in Cooma) and his project this weekend was to install a bonnet vent to aid the turbo cooling. *Naturally*, the vent selected was from a Peugeot 206.



After chatting about welding, turbos, eccentrics in the P76 movement etc, we headed towards the P76 compartment of Alex's shed - a separate, locked, roller-doored compartment in his garage for storing his car. The two Falcons are between his Peel Me Grape and the outside world. Hanging on the wall in front of his car are NOS panels including door skins, guards and front valances. To the left and not in picture are big boxes with labels in which

reside various second hand and NOS P76 bits and pieces.

This is a well-organised garage, and all tools and parts are stored logically. OH&S is also thought of with extractor fans in the work area, and no cords or oil patches or other dangerous objects lying about. It is also a large garage and the overhead space is not wasted, with a mezzanine in place. There are a few P76 parts up there as well, including some front clips. With three cars in the garage, space is at a premium but has been used

well. Partitions divide the garage into broadly the front where the Falcons live and are used daily, and the back half, which is Alex's domain and P76 Central. As his frequent projects are featured in these pages it is clearly a well used garage.

More next month.

More Misadventures

Damien Haas

As probably the only club member who does significant miles in his P76 (Melbourne and back several times a year, regular weekend long road trips etc), I like to make sure that mechanically my car is safe. Just over a year ago, I replaced almost every part in my front and rear suspension, at some considerable cost. Although the exterior paint is flaky and scratched and not to all tastes, mechanically the car is very sound. Which is why the event reported here came as a surprise.



Damo's much admired and well cared for P76

Recently I drove to Melbourne. On the return leg, the trip became very interesting. As I approached Albury, I noticed my steering was a bit heavy. I put it down to a tyre needing some air, which I could attend to when I refuelled. Naturally, the Hume Highway, being Highway One, Australia's premier road, contracts from divided road multi-lane highway to become a normal road through Albury. As I threaded through Albury's many 90-degree turns it felt as if a front wheel was folding in on itself - very, very strange and a sensation I've never experienced in the P76 before.

Finding a servo was not easy. I made it through central Albury, and on the way out along the last built up area before the Hume highway resumes, I decided to pull into the Caltex/Hungry Jacks on Wagga Rd to replace the tyre and refuel (the car and myself). Normally I would go to a servo just outside Albury where fuel is 3 or 4 cents a litre cheaper.

I was in the wrong lane, so in very slow traffic as a light changed, I switched lanes to get into the Caltex entrance, and suddenly I thought my front passenger side wheel had locked its brake. The car would move only with extreme right foot pressure applied to the accelerator. I had about 30-50 metres to go so I just floored it and left a big rubber mark on the way in. Something was seriously wrong.

I parked next to the air hose and got out to look, assuming I had a seriously flat and beyond salvation tyre. To my complete surprise - one wheel pointed straight ahead, the other in some other direction.

Bugger!

The last time I had this sinking feeling was in November last year when I was crossing the Loddon River, at a ford on a dirt road between Strangways and Newstead in central Victoria. The water didn't look that deep when I started across, but for some reason the car stalled mid-river, but after a few sphincter puckering moments it started and I slowly extracted myself. But back to this misadventure...

I had a look underneath and it was clear that a nut (and the pin that stops this pretty vital nut coming adrift) had come off the left side tie rod, where it meets with the wheel. It was just dangling in space and the attachments near the wheel were not attached. No steering.

As far as I can figure, the nut had come adrift on the Hume Highway between Melbourne and Albury, and centrifugal force had kept the wheel pointing roughly in the same direction as the car. Once my speed went below about 60 kph, the wheel just went in another direction.

Wandering up and down Wagga Rd looking for a mechanic to fix the car took some time. I figured if nothing was damaged it should be a simple repair. (I looked in the manual that I have in the boot first). It was around 11am and the only place I found that could look at it that day wouldn't be able to until 3.30pm. So I arranged a tow (I negotiated a cash price) to DM's mechanical repairs and then went back to the Caltex Hungry Jacks with a book and my mobile. Do you know Hungry Jacks has free soft drink refills? I've never drunk so much Fanta in my life.

About 2.30pm, I got a call saying the car was fixed. I wandered around and I was right, it was just that nut, and the repair cost \$30. I do need a wheel alignment though. I doubt if I will return to the place that performed the suspension work last year. The rear shocks are less than a year old and are already pretty soft and in need of replacement.

Reflecting upon the event, I can only say that I was extremely lucky. Lucky that the road from Melbourne to Albury is straight, multiple lane, divided road and doesn't require you

to stop or slow to 50km through podunk postage stamp sized towns. Imagine if the nut had come adrift on the NSW side. I'd crest a hill, turn, and the wheel wouldn't and I'd spear into the grill of a Kenworth. I'm a lucky boy...

Googling

Damien Haas

Last year I found that bizarre Buick 215 V8 powered monowheel and this week I went to Google video and typed in Leyland. There were several interesting video clips online mostly related to buses, trucks etc.

Once that caught my eye was titled 's1 club' and had a description of 'Queensland raceway – Clubman day'. You can find it at:

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=5439032843582697614&q=leyland>

You will need a broadband connection to view this, it's a big file.

It appears to be a few friends in stripped down and hotted up Japanese two door coupes racing on a closed circuit, shot from a video camera mounted in the back seat...



At about the five-minute mark a brown P76 flies past this turboed Japanese drift weapon – and is never seen again. In this still from the video you see the P76 cutting across the Japanese coupe. You then see the P76 accelerating into the distance but that's it. The Japanese car driver never gets near it again.

Perhaps someone in the QLD club can tell us who it is.

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