



Leylines

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Canberra and Districts Leyland P76 Club Newsletter April 2007

*Next Meeting: Tuesday 10 April
Weston Ck Labor Club
From 7.30PM*

Jason Birmingham's Hairy Lime Executive at Wheels 07
Photo: Col Gardner

Presidential Pearls

Alex



Further to Bryce's heater tap replacement (Leylines 48) and my cooling system upgrade stories from last year, here is the good oil on a better price for heater taps.

Here is where I bought my heater tap from and, yes, it fits straight in to the P76 and it cost about 1/3 the price of a Repco unit or a bit less than half of that paid by our esteemed treasurer...but I can't tell him that or he may see fit to double my membership fees.

Leyland P76 Heater Tap NEW
Item number: 2

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Which reminds me of these pictures I took when visiting Joe Green earlier this year.

Now, I am the only one who finds it perverse that the heater hose on a P76 V8 is one inch diameter at one end and half an inch at the other? Not least frustrating aspect of this is the difficulty in obtaining a new heater hose, should the need arise.

Joe has an elegant solution, made more obvious when you are aware he's a plumber by trade. He has made up a length of copper tubing, with a fitting at one end that attaches to the water pump, once you cut a thread into it. The pipe then runs along the driver's side of the inlet manifold, then turns along the rear of the engine and bends up and finishes near the heater hose holes in the firewall.



Another shorter pipe is made up to go from the rear of the inlet manifold, where two ½” hoses can go directly to the heater and back.



All very neat. The only change I would make would be to paint the pipe black or sleeve it with a length of convoluted tubing or even rubber hose, as I feel the copper looks a bit out of place under the bonnet and would be bloody hot should you inadvertently touch it when fiddling with your carby or the like, should the desire to do so arise.

Editor's Note



Another month, another Leylines... Thanks to our two sterling contributors, Alex and Damo, for their usual excellent offerings.

I've had the Targa Florio out for a couple of drives recently, but only really to keep the battery charged and the fluids circulating. As the registration is due shortly, I'm thinking seriously going with the flow and converting the P76 to historic registration status. I figure that the kind of driving I'm now doing with it would easily fall within the historic rego guidelines. And as I already have my Renault 16 on historic plates, between the two of them I can cover my very occasional requirements for a second car for local running.

The next item up for attention on the P76 is a rear brake reline. I'm tossing up whether I'll do this myself or get it done professionally. My last rear brake reline on the Renault turned into a year-long epic. The problem was that once the relined shoes and new wheel cylinders were installed, the brakes kept binding. I could get them freed up with the adjusters, but as soon as pressure was applied through the pedal they would bind again. I tried every combination of linings and drums on and off for months. (As the car is outside under a carport I didn't do much in the winter, for obvious reasons.)

I had a mechanic friend take a look at it, and he thought that the brake fluid was not bleeding back after the brakes were applied. Then the penny dropped for me. The Renault 16 has a very sophisticated pressure limiting system to prevent rear brake locking, using a pressure limiting valve that is controlled by the height of the rear suspension, so that it is sensitive to load. I removed the valve and discovered that, after 37 years in an exposed position at the rear of the car, it had rusted solid and was not working at all. It seems that the boosted hydraulic system could force fluid through to the rear brakes, but it could only bleed back very slowly. I fitted another limiting valve and all was well. Presumably the old brake linings were so worn that the frozen valve didn't cause any problems with them in place. While this all sounds easy and logical sitting here at the computer, it wasn't so obvious lying on cold concrete in a carport with an icy wind blowing around.

Anyway, the point of this long digression is that working on old cars can be extremely frustrating at times, and I'm not sure that I want to face the possibility of another year-long disaster. I know I'm a wimp, but the older I get, the less inclined I am to lie on the ground, getting covered in grease, dirt and hydraulic fluid, and exercising my expletives...

See you all on Tuesday

Col



Jason Birmingham's Hairy Lime Executive

Damien Haas

In January, the Cootamundra Antiques held a run to Jugiong (covered in the February Leylines). The best represented single car on the day would have been the P76. The standout car at the run was definitely NSW Country P76 Club member Jason Birmingham's P76. Jason's P76 was certainly eye-catching and the photos do not do it justice. The paint is a very vibrant colour and the white interior makes for a very well presented vehicle.



Hairy Lime paint is immaculate. The black paint is a gloss black two pack which contrasts well.



White interior using Force 7 fabric and off-white vinyl. Jason had custom door trims made. Wheels are 15x7 Globes.



P76 engine (expanded to 5 litres) with Wilwood manifold, Rochester Quadrajet carbie and Holden distributor (among other modifications)



Close-up of the white interior. Stunning attention to detail. Front and rear passengers have inertia seatbelts

Like most of us, Jason has been assembling this car and collecting bits for some time. I know that the five litre engine was obtained from *El Presidente* about two years ago. Of course, it was in bits when Alex sold it. Now it has been rebuilt, fitted with a Wilwood manifold, modified to suit a Rochester Quadrajet 4 barrel carburettor (common on 308



Holden V8 engines), a Holden HEI distributor and upgraded Commodore spec Bosch alternator. Just like the interior, the engine bay is immaculate.

The Exec also has a five-speed gearbox, power steering and recently installed aircon. Front and rear passengers have inertia seatbelts mounted to factory seatbelt mounts. The fabric used in the interior is white fabric intended for Force 7s. It's the same type and pattern as the Executive fabric. While it looks stock, it's actually a very clever custom interior. The door trims are custom made and look factory, but are slightly different to the P76 door trims with a small rectangle of grey fabric inset.

This car is the product of a complete teardown to bare metal restoration. Jason sent me a CD with many photos of the rebuild process but unfortunately the PC refuses to now recognise the CD! So resto photos next month (perhaps).

It's encouraging to see some real money being spent on a Leyland P76. With prices for complete non-Targa Florio sticker pack cars still under 10K it's rare to see serious money poured into a P76. Jason should be congratulated for a sympathetic restoration and sensible mechanical modifications which retain the character of the car while upgrading its useability. Jason has already put some miles on the odometer with the trip to Jugiong in February and one to Canberra for the Wheels Expo in March.

Every day we learn something new

Did you see this little exchange on the P76 newsgroup?

Hi guys,

Thank you for your help on my last query on clips. It is greatly appreciated. I am now having another problem. The tail lights / number plate lights are not working. I believe that there is a fuse in line to them (in addition to the fuse box) and I believe that this is where the problem is, however I cannot locate this fuse. Does any one know where this usually is in the loom so that I can actually find it & check/ fix it?

With thanks :)

Resolvep76

have not found an inline fuse for rear tail and plate lights usually, if you have one I suspect it is after market fitment

Mark

I'm with Mark Ellery on this one there is definitely no factory inline fuse. Check the fuse box, if it's an original fusebox check the fuse and then the little brass clips holding the fuse they come loose. (Get a new old stock fuse box if you can much better in the long

run). Apart from that, and I'm no expert with electrics, detach and clean and re-attach all relevant earth wires, check the bulbs, check that wiring has not been cut or is frayed and disconnected. If all else fails speak to your local P76 club tech officer they are always helpful.

Mick

Check that your instrument lights are still working if they are not there is a factory in-line fuse hidden behind the r/h front kick panel. The hardest parts of the job is locating the fuse and the 2nd part is trying to line the kick panel screws back up I'm pretty sure that the tail lights and instrument cluster display lights are in the same circuit.

andrew

Well I have just got my chrissy present, I never knew that, thanks Andrew, do you know if this is the case on both left and right hand fuse box cars.

Mark

Well bugger me dead. I never knew that! Well done Andrew hows things over in Adelaide hope you are getting rain, its pouring here and cold as. How are your two P'S going got any more? Mick.

Hi, it's on all cars
andrew



Photo: Alex Shoobridge

Going going goooooonnnnee...

Alex

Last month I finally saw the back of the Targa Florio I sold at Easter 2003.



I bought the car from Bryce with the intent of restoring it, and spent a few years collecting various NOS parts, like lights, grilles, bumpers, and interior trim and switches. As well as another Targa just to get the proper wheels. Then, when the time came to start the resto in earnest, I called my mate (yes, I had friends once) who had a panel shop. I then discovered that since the last time I resprayed a car the price had more or less doubled.

The cost to spray a bare metal shell that was already free of rust and dents, that's right, more or less just stand there and spray it, started at \$4500.

So for less than the cost of paint, let alone reupholstery and engine reconditioning, I bought my PMAG Executive and put the Targa up for sale. I still have two more Targas, but looking at the cars at each Easter meeting I think Targas will end up being the most common P76 (non-model) in existence.

Eventually, back in Easter 2003, I sold the car to Karl, a Queensland club member who paid cash in full, and said he would organise collection of the car at a later date. Silly me, I assumed it would be just a few weeks later.

I said I had a friend (yeah I know) with a trucking company, and the last time he took a car to Sydney for me it cost \$100, (the same car that cost \$2400 to repaint) so I would find out how much to get the Targa to Brisvegas.



Turns out that over the past 10 years the cost of diesel and truck lease payments had risen somewhat, the current going rate as far as Sydney was \$650, by coincidence the exact same price Karl paid for the entire car.

Needless to say, the car stayed in the paddock and every now and then I would send an email enquiring after the car. Every year or so I would get an email back declaring an intention to collect the car but it stayed put, ensuring no grass grew beneath it.

My farmer friend who was custodian of my P76 collection expressed a desire to reduce the number of cars in his paddock. Apparently the local 'authorities' feel that farmland is for farming and not for a motor wreckers. So I could honestly declare:

"That car has been sold and will be going any day now, so that will be less cars which will be better eh?"

"Hmmm," he would nod knowingly, but seemingly unconvinced.

Then out of the blue Garth Morris called and said he was coming to town that weekend and could I take him to see the car to check what was required to move it. If it could be driven onto a truck it would be far cheaper to transport.

So much to my wife's dismay, off we went, spending yet another weekend day which could be better spent on some home improvement project, and not buggerising about with P76 crap.

We drove off to the other side of Cooma, to the top of the hill under the gum trees where the Targa had waited patiently for the last little while. Garth and I put a few litres of fuel in the tank, connected the battery we brought along, filled the radiator with water, poured a bit of fuel down the carby, turned the key and after a few splutters it fired up. We drove it from its home of almost 4 years, out in the open, atop an alpine hillside, down to the shed where we pumped up the flat tyre. The only drama was that the brakes were shot, as a result of the master cyl cap not being correctly closed during its pre purchase inspection many years earlier.

Interestingly, my wife uses this to subvert P76 knockers, almost always Dunnydore drivers, as she detests them and will take any opportunity that presents itself to harass them.

Case in point. I heard her on the phone telling one of her friend's husbands who had cast aspersions on the fact we spent our weekend undertaking P76 related activities.

"My husband left a P76 in a paddock in the open in the snow and summer heat for 4 years then took a battery and a jerry can and drove it away, bet if we did that to your car it wouldn't start ever again.....yeah that's right."

Back to the saga of the Targa, Garth went home intending to organise collection of the car. He, too, discovered the intent of truckies to perform other highway related pastimes, often commencing with the phrase *“Stand and deliver”*.

So a few weeks later he called to say he was coming back with a car trailer to collect his mate’s car. Birgit and I waited for him at the roadside in Bredbo from where we travelled in convoy to the far side of Cooma.

I observed that Garth’s car, an EF or EL Falcon, looked and sounded a bit sad. My observation of *“Too old for use as a taxi eh?”* was met with a very terse *“Never a taxi, just got a few k’s on it”*

I noticed that he would drop back on the hills even though we were only doing about 100km/h, and this was BEFORE he had put 1300kg of Targa on the trailer.

Birgit and I decided that it was probably just a Queenslander thing and left it at that. Upon arrival, Garth mentioned that he had slowed because the car was overheating. I guess it was a 36 degree day and they did seem to be using the heaviest car trailer in the universe. Something in the front of the car made such a noise I actually bent down to look under the car to try and see what it was, but who knows. All I knew was my Falcon sure as hell didn’t make any sounds like that. All things considered it did not bode well for the return trip but at least it would be more or less down hill.

Anyway we proceeded to load it onto the trailer. It started and drove up to the trailer with no great dramas, prompting the quietly spoken cocky who had been silently watching the removal of the old P76 from his farm to observe, *“Starts and sounds a lot better that that green car you got towing the trailer. If you get into any problems along the way you can always swap the cars around and keep going.”*

This elicited a very stern glare from Garth, and no more than a quiet snigger from me.

It was about then we then noticed fuel pouring from the front of the Targa. Inspection revealed that the rubber hose joining the fuel line on the chassis to the fuel pump had about 1.21 gazillion pinholes in it, and a beautiful 360 deg fountain of petrol continued to cascade even after the engine was hastily turned off. This prompted the farmer to point out that even though the place was a dust bowl it would still burn. So I quickly cut the hose and bent it over and clamped it off with a cable tie.



Garth and his mate tied down the Targa and checked the oil and water in their tow car. I said we would stay for a while then leave and if we saw them stopped on the roadside we would be sure to toot the horn and wave as we drove past....Yet another stern glare from Garth, as he turned and headed off into the distance.

After a chat and a bit of lunch we too headed off, half expecting to see them stopped on the side of the road, but we did not. We arrived back at Bredbo where the boys were with their grandparents. I sent Garth an SMS enquiring if all was well... "No, broken down" was the reply.

It turns out they got to the intersection of the Federal and Hume highways, in fact the actual overpass of the Hume, when the noise from the front of the car stopped, and the car stopped, when the lower serpentine belt idler bearing fell off.

I offered to procure a part from the Tuggeranong Repco and bring it to them, but they had organised a part and a new tow car to come from Sydney and rescue them.

I haven't heard from Garth since...



And now for something completely different

Tavarish Paul Hanley, our esteemed secretary, has provided these pix of of a two-door, roof chopped, P76 that John De Vries, the Hot Rod builder, made for a client some time ago. The P76? is now sitting in a shed somewhere in Victoria.





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