

*Celebrating*

# LEYLAND P76 40TH ANNIVERSARY



# THE

## LEYLAND P76 OWNERS CLUB OF NSW INC.

Since 1982

# LEYLAND POST

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 56

JULY/AUGUST 2013

## IN THIS ISSUE

# P76 WINS WHILE CANBERRA CELEBRATES



### FULL DETAILS IN THIS ISSUE

ALSO INSIDE

LEYLAND P76 40TH ANNIVERSARY, PEKING TO PARIS P76 AND SHITBOX RALLY.

The Leyland P76 Owners Club NSW Inc is affiliated with the following organisations:



Confederation of Australian Motor Sport



Council of Motor Clubs



BMC/Leyland Australia Heritage Group



Council of Leyland P76 Clubs



Association of British Car Clubs



[www.p76clubnsw.org](http://www.p76clubnsw.org)

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## IMPORTANT NOTICES:

#Submissions to this newsletter are published mainly unexpurgated, and the opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Committee.

# Articles submitted for publication may be edited at the discretion of the Editor, under Committee guidance.

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## GENERAL MEETINGS:

**# The General Meetings are held on the Second Tuesday of EVERY MONTH at the Memorial Bowling Club, 26 Pritchard St West, Wentworthville.**

**Next Meetings - .All Welcome  
13th August, 10th September at 7.30 pm**

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This issues contributing writers: Steve Maher, Ryan Ford, Bert and Ainslie Colombin, Drew Griffith, Barry Anderson, Keith Gillian, Kay and Tony De Luca, Norm Julian.

This issues contributing photographers: Steve Maher, The BMC Experience, Kay and Tony De Luca, Ryan Ford, Endurance Rally Assoc, Keith Gillian, Gerard Brown, Top Gear P/L, Peter Velthius

# PRESIDENTS REPORT



AND ED SAID.....*STEVE MAHER*

**July/August 2013**

What an unbelievable time to be a Leyland P76 enthusiast. What with the 40th Anniversary Celebration and the Crown/Bryson/P76 win in the Peking to Paris. It really makes you proud to own a P76. The 40th Anniversary was nothing short of a blast. Undoubtedly the best weekend for P76 enthusiasts ever...EVER. The only down side is "How do we top that one?" I really must thank everyone involved in the organisation and execution of the event. There was a lot of effort and long hours that went into putting it together and running it. This event will go down in P76 history as a landmark event and you all should feel proud to have been involved in it, either as

an organiser or participant. The flow on effects and benefits to our club will be felt for some time. I am sure that this will give our club a real kick along.

Gerry Crown and Matt Bryson have done what Evan Green and John Bryson very so nearly did 39 years ago. Their winning of the 5th Peking to Paris Motor Challenge was no small feat. It was an outstanding result for them, as it was their second win in a row, for the P76, as it beat some of the worlds best classic cars and for Australia. We are very proud to have our club associated with their efforts and we congratulate them. I wont go into detail about either event here as there are extensive reports throughout this magazine.

Once again we have come to that time of year for the Annual General Meeting and I believe that some new blood will be brought to the committee and some old blood will be changing jobs. For my part I am happy to stay on as Editor of The Leyland Post as it's a job I enjoy. I am happy to throw the doors open to anyone who wishes to take on my job as President or National Council Delegate. Neither of these jobs is exclusively mine and so long as it's someone who can do the job justice and move our club further forward then I am happy to stand aside. Which brings us to a related issue. Club memberships are now due. Memberships need to be renewed as of the 1st of July and you cannot stand for a position nor vote in the election unless you are a current financial member. I would also like to welcome 4 new members to the club Chris Renehan, Roy Makin and Peter Velthius and Paul Patten. Peter is actually returning to us after a long time away, much the same as Paul. You can see news on Peter and Pauls latest purchases elsewhere in this magazine.

Tony De Luca and I have attended a workshop on how to run your club and there are more to come. These are organised by CAMS at no charge to us with presenters from NSW Office of Communities, Sport and Recreation. We hope that the knowledge gained from doing these workshops will help strengthen the club.

The next few months will be very busy for us. We of course have the AGM followed by the Shannons Sydney Classic at Sydney Motorsport Park, All British Day at Kings School, Parramatta, Muscle Car Masters at Sydney Motorsport Park, Council of Motor Clubs 50th Anniversary Lunch, and the BMC Leyland Australia Heritage Group Lunch. Lets make as big a splash as we can while celebrating the P76s 40th Anniversary.

As a final note I would like to thank all the members of our club for their support during the past year and in particular the members of the club committee. Standouts for the past year would be Kay and Tony De Luca. They put in many hours behind the scenes. Glenn Gray who has helped turn the clubs finances around with his successful parts selling and keeping the website running. Drew Griffith for his help with the P76 40th in Canberra. Shane Fox who has reshaped our historic registration and brought us into line with RMS regulations and Marty just for being Marty. It's been great working with you all.

## The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

We were treated to a wonderful experience of history and stories about Leyland Australia and all its creations. The real highlights for me were being able to work on the only P76 Station Wagon in existence and actually going for a ride in a very rare Leyland Force 7V Coupe. I had an amazing time!

**Andrew Griffith**

**Leyland P76 Owners Club of NSW**

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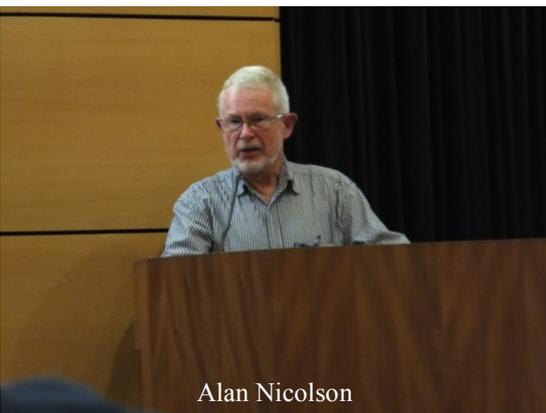
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# 40th Anniversary of the Leyland P76



## CANBERRA 28-30 JUNE 2013

The Leyland P76 40th Anniversary Celebration event would have to go down as the biggest thing in P76 history since the Official Launch 40 years ago. That's a big statement but I doubt there would be many who would think otherwise.



Alan Nicolson

Sitting here some five weeks after the event it's difficult to grasp how significant that weekend was but it is safe to say that it is still a popular subject when a group of Pnuts get together. Our club, as you know, was one of the main organisers of the event along with the Canberra and Districts Leyland P76 Owners Club. Even though the Canberra club were the hosts for the event our club played a bigger part than you may realise.

In the weeks and months leading up to the event there was a lot going on behind the scenes. The Canberra club does not have any public risk insurance which would have made some parts of the event risky to organise and other parts impossible. Our club offered to help by co-organising the event and using our public risk insurance that we have through CAMS. The weekend was broken into five activities, three "official" and 2 not "official". The first two were not "official", those being the Convoy To Canberra and

the Friday night Dinner N Drinks at the Ainslie Football Club. The three "official" parts were the Gundaroo Press Launch Rerun on Saturday morning, the 40th Anniversary Dinner on Saturday night and the 40th Anniversary Concours on Sunday. For some reason the Canberra club had chosen not to recognise the first two events as part of the "official" overall event. As co-organisers of the event the Canberra club asked us to help put together the Gundaroo Run, our own Drew Griffith took on this roll.

Our club became more deeply involved when it became apparent that the Canberra club was getting nervous about the financial side of the event proclaiming that if the event wasn't at least going to break even then they would pull the pin and not run the event at all. When this was announced we heard rumblings from people who had to book tickets on various forms of transport to get to Canberra. If the event not going ahead was a possibility then they weren't going to book tickets as if the event was cancelled at the last minute they would lose their money. Our club Committee felt that the event should definitely go ahead and as we were doing the event merchandising we felt that we should underwrite the potential losses of the Canberra club to guarantee the 40th Anniversary would go ahead - 100%. This was proposed to the Canberra club and they agreed. So now it was full steam ahead.



LtoR. Steve Maher, Roy Cullen, Alan Nicolson and Max Hamilton at the Friday night Dinner "n" Drinks

## THE CONVOY TO CANBERRA

As a substantial number of people and cars were coming from or through Sydney we decided to organise it so many of us could run down together in convoy. The meeting place was the Pheasants Nest 7-11 on the Hume Highway just out of Sydney at 10.30am on Friday 28th. No one really knew how many would turn up but by the time we left there were more than 20 P76s in the car park. We set off for our next meeting point at MacDonaldis in North Goulburn with grey threatening clouds overhead. At Goulburn we were joined by a few more P76s and we were supposed to be met by a journalist from the local newspaper. Unfortunately he didn't turn up as promised so after lunch and handing out some of the merchandise we headed off with about 30 P76s in tow through the centre of Goulburn and on to Canberra. It would have been quite a sight and a great way to kick off a great weekend.

## MEET 'N' GREET, DINNER 'N' DRINKS

The first organised social activity for the weekend started off as simply the Meet 'N' Greet, Dinner 'N' Drinks at Ainslie Football Club. A simple enough thing to put together but there was always the pressure to make this event bigger.



Shane Fox and Marty Stockwell with a line of Ps at Honeysuckle Creek

Unlike a Nationals where you have days to fill we had only 48 hours so we wanted to cram as much in as possible. For many people Canberra was a long way to go for just a weekend. We spoke to Alan Nicolson, who was an Experimental Test Engineer at Leyland Australia, and he agreed to be our guest speaker. A short time later Max Hamilton heard Will Hagon talking about the 40th Anniversary on radio. He lived near Will so went to visit him at his store at Kew. Max was the General Marketing Manager at Leyland Australia and he wanted to be involved. After a few phone calls we had our second guest speaker. Why have 2 when you can have 3? Noel Delforce contacted us saying a good friend of his who lives in Canberra wanted to come along. Roy Cullen worked in the Experimental Division at Leyland Australia and was responsible for among other things the Holden bodied prototypes. Another couple of phone calls and we had a full ticket. Three guest speakers who up to this point had never addressed a group from the

P76 Car Clubs. Another late idea was to have a meeting of Council Of Leyland P76 Clubs delegates before dinner on Friday afternoon. So from a simple social dinner 'n' drinks it was a pretty big afternoon and evening.

The Delegates Meeting was attended by delegates from 5 of the 9 clubs, a bit disappointing but some issues were clarified particularly on the parts side of things. Dinner was great and well attended by around 100 people. It was great catching up with many of our fellow Pnuts. After dinner we moved up to a private room where all who were there were treated to some interesting and engaging guest speakers. First up was Alan Nicolson followed by Max Hamilton and Roy Cullen. All three spoke of different aspects while working at Leyland and being involved with the P76 project but the common thread through each talk was how much they enjoyed working there, it was like a big family. Each of the speakers was presented with a TRAX model of their latest release, the Evan Green/John Bryson 1974 World Cup Rally car. Many thanks to Brett Jacobson from Top Gear for supplying the models to us.

## GUNDAROO PRESS LAUNCH RERUN

This was Drew Griffiths baby. He was organising this in conjunction with Alex Shoobridge from the Canberra club. As it turned out Drew did the bulk of the work despite the fact that his work has him based in Port Hedland WA for two weeks out of three. The effort he put in was reflected in the success of the run. The weather was less than perfect on that Saturday morning with the occasional drizzle and rain threatening all day. Despite this almost every P76 in attendance turned out. There were one or two who had car problems to sort out. All and sundry collected in the car park opposite the Rydges Lakeside Hotel at 8.30am and after a drivers briefing from Damien Haas and Drew approx 70 P76s set off for our first stop, Honeysuckle Creek Camping Ground. In 1973 this was the site for the



Tidbinbilla



Gundaroo

Space Tracking Station that provided essential communications for the 1969 Moon Landing. From there we moved on to the Tidbinbilla Deep Space Tracking Station where we got the chance again to line up lots of P76s, grab a coffee and a snack and check out the tracking dishes. From there we moved on to the town of Gundaroo where lunch was available. Drew had organised the local RFS station to do a gourmet BBQ and drinks and they did a brilliant job. The drive from Canberra to Gundaroo was about 160km so it was a good drive and a few of the BMC Leyland Australia Heritage Group guys got the chance to reacquaint themselves with their creation. To many of them it was a very emotional experience having not driven one for 35+ years.

## 40TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER

The 40th Anniversary Dinner was a formal affair held in the dining room of the Rydges Lakeside Hotel, the place where the press and dealer launches were held 40 years before. Headlining our guest speakers was Will Hagon who was the evenings Master of Ceremonies and Barry Anderson from Leylands Advance Model Group (the P76 was his baby) with Joe Torony, our clubs founding President and Roger Foy, Leylands Road Proving Supervisor. Each spoke passionately of their experiences with the P76 and also of the people who they worked with. That “it was a great place to work” theme played back again. Barry Anderson’s address transcript is reproduced in this issue of The Leyland Post with Barrys blessing. Just when you thought the night couldn’t get better we received a phone call from John Bryson who was in Paris to see his good friend Gerry Crown and his son Matt Bryson win their second Peking to Paris Motor Challenge, this time in a P76. Will Hagon announced this to the 150+ guests at the dinner and the news almost brought the house down. You couldn’t have scripted a better way to finish off the night. The NSW Owners Club Merchandising Machine was working at full pace both before and after the dinner, selling up a storm. There is no doubt a bunch of guys in dinner suits madly selling 40th merchandise was a sight to see. It seemed to put a spring in Key De Lucas step. Oh what a night!



## LEYLAND P76 40TH ANNIVERSARY CONCOURS

Sunday morning dawned to a beautiful sunny day, much better than we had had for the previous two days. Literally the perfect day for the Concours. There were more than 80 P76s on the lawns outside old Parliament House. Arguably the largest collective of P76s in 30 years or more. There were P76s from NSW, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and the ACT. Also there were three Force 7Vs the only existing station wagon and Troy Greens recently restored



P76 custom ute. There were a few extra cars that came to Canberra for the day including Roy Makin from Springwood and Paul and Gail Van Look who brought both of their Marina Coupes, one 1750TC and a 6cylinder. The sight of all these cars was truly impressive. Some of the local media were there as well as Street Machine magazine and Craig Watson from The BMC Experience. Craig had a stand and seemed to be doing a roaring trade. Also with a stand was David Snape from NRMA Veteran, Vintage and Classic Vehicle Insurance who also seemed to be working hard. Thanks to David and NRMA for sponsoring the event and supplying the 40th Anniversary keyrings that were only available to Concours participants. Speaking of working hard, Glenn Gray, Shane Fox and few others were back at it selling our 40th merchandise. We ended selling out of most things but if you forgot or missed out there are still a few things left. The final act for the weekend was to judge and award the trophies for the Concours. The

trophies were sponsored by the BMC Leyland Australia Heritage Group and our thanks go to them. The Concours award winners were as follows:

Best Deluxe	Peter O'Brien	NSW
Best Super	Greg Varveris	Tasmania
Best Executive	Russell Nicholson	NSW
Best Targa Florio	Gwen Livingstone	NSW
Best Modified	Rick Brain (Middys)	Victoria
Youth Encouragement Award	Ryan Ford	Victoria

The event on the whole was outstanding and a big thank you and congratulations to the members of our club for doing their bit to make it the successful and memorable event that it was. A huge Thanks to Kay De Luca for her work organising the merchandise and Glenn Gray (and crew) for selling nearly all of it. Thanks to the event sponsors, Top Gear P/L (TRAX Models), NRMA Veteran, Vintage and Classic car Insurance, BMC Leyland Australia Heritage Group and The BMC Experience magazine. Thanks to the Canberra and Districts Leyland P76 Owners Club for hosting the event in particular, Damien Haas, Bryce French and Col Gardner. This event will be hard to top, that’s for sure.

Limited stocks of 40th Merchandise is available. Contact Glenn Gray.





A Couple of Kiwis at Honeysuckle Creek



Barry and Barbara Anderson at Honeysuckle Creek



Will Hagon and Barry Anderson at Gundaroo



Gundaroo for lunch



Joe Torony



Roger Foy



40th Anniversary Formal Dinner



3 Force 7s and the wagon at the Concours

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**A FEW WORDS FROM BERT COLOMBIN**

We came - the sat nav was working.  
We saw - the football club was good, as was the hotel and Concours.  
We (well, Gerry an Matt, anyway) conquered.  
We went home - the sat nav failed the night before but we didn't care.  
I don't think we could have planned or achieved a better weekend.

# Barry Anderson's Talk – P76-40 Canberra 29 June 2013



Thank you Will Hagon for that introduction. And on behalf of the Victoria Park P76 people I thank the P76 people of Canberra & District, in particular: Damien Haas, Bryce French, Alex Shoobridge and Col Gardner for conceiving and getting this event underway. And Kay De Luca, and the P76 people of NSW for the great support they have given to make the event even better.

But I also want to thank each and every one of you here tonight. Firstly, on a personal level as, today's drive of a P76 after – for me - 37 years brings me back full circle to that most optimistic time in June 1973 when the market was eager for P76. I'm sure that all the Victoria Park guys here, who were all so much part of it, feel the same. Little did we know that - a scant 8 months later - UK Leyland would decide to close all its overseas plants and it would all be over.

But, more importantly on a higher, historical, level, my thanks to all the P76 people here tonight and to all the other P76 owners. You maintain – in the real - the heritage of that car and the companies and the people involved in building it.

P76 is important historically. It represents the end of an era. It is one of the few cars to be wholly conceived and designed in Australia. As of now, it seems unlikely there will be any more. It was the first and last car ever to be designed from scratch by any overseas plant of the Morris, Austin, BMC and Leyland empires. The P76 prototype was assembled at the MG works in Abingdon. It was the last prototype seen there. Technologically also, P76 came into being at the end of an era. It was designed at the dawn of the computer age but too early to use the technology. The computer was to have an enormous impact on the product itself, the way it was to be designed and the way it was to be made. It was to have an enormous impact on the type of skills the people involved would need. It was to render irrelevant and obsolete many skills that were absolutely essential - at the time - for the P76 to come into existence.

It was John Lennon who said “Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans.” History is like that – it's happening all around us and we don't notice. It's important that we record what has happened and who did it.

Tonight I won't talk about the car. You here all know far more about it now than any of us who built it. Rather I will talk about those now obsolete skills that were so necessary in the P76 days and about some of the people who had those skills and who came together to make the P76 possible - those people who had what we called “Automotive Green Fingers” and who greatly influenced me – and many others - and gave us the opportunity to participate in the great P76 adventure. But before I do, a couple of issues: First: hands up all here who have read THE BOOK. Thank you. The rest of you should see Roger Allen Foy tonight – this might be your last chance – not many left. Second, I will be proposing a toast later – so please don't drink your glasses dry.

Let's start by looking at just three examples to remind us of how it all was. Back then the styling studio would produce a full size clay model of the body skin surface. Draftsmen would then measure, by hand, the x-y-z co-ordinates of thousands of points on that surface and transfer them – again by hand - to a full sized drawing. This took time. They would then draw all the feature lines in three views and the cross sections of the surface at 10 inch interval along the length of the body. This became a very large and complex drawing. The drawn surface was always far from smooth and had to be corrected, point by point, until it was acceptably smooth. With thousands of points, this took a very long time.

The next step was to make a full sized wooden model: usually mahogany, carved by hand to the drawing shape and arranged so that sections, each representing one body panel, could be individually removed. This took more time again. Those wooden representations of each panel were then used on large machines fitted with pantograph mechanisms to mill the surfaces of the press dies that made the panels themselves. All these processes involved high levels of unique craftsman skills for many thousands of man hours. Today, thanks to computerized equipment. The clay model can be scanned by laser, the data loaded directly into a computer which, directed by a few specialists, will automatically smooth the surface. What took months, now takes days. And the mahogany model is no more. The smoothed surface data in the computer can be used to drive directly the computer controlled milling machines to make the tools for presses. We are fortunate today. A historic record of that now obsolete process - in the form of the mahogany model for the P76 sedan and station wagon – resides in Sydney's Powerhouse Museum, and some of your place mats tonight feature it. Similar revolutions have occurred to every aspect of the design, tooling and manufacture of the car.

Looking now at the product itself – just one example. When the P76 was being designed, man landed on the moon in a craft with the computing power of an early PC. Later, the space shuttle flew with computers having half a million lines of code. Today's airliners have 5 to 6 million lines of computer code. Today's top level luxury cars have nearly 100 millions lines of computer code. P76 and other cars of its day had not one line of code. A significant change indeed. Turning now to the people who had none of these modern skills but who brought the skills of the day to bear on the P76 project. Hundreds of technical staff from many departments made significant contributions – we have time to mention but a few. Focusing on those Product Engineering guys, who had those “Automotive Green Fingers”, who, in the absence of today's computer aided resources, were intuitive automotive engineers - who had it in their DNA long before that term was coined.

**Dave Beech:** I first met Dave when I was a cadet engineer. Recently arrived from Birmingham he was to get the Unit Plant equipped and up and running. He was staying at a hotel near my place and, unthinkably today, had no car. I, on the other hand, had a 1938 Morris 8 tourer with neither muffler nor adequate side curtains. I drove him to work for a few weeks and he wanted me to wear a chauffer's cap. Later, he did get a new Austin A50 and I got to drive it – the first new car I had ever driven! Dave, a quiet, reserved man rose to Technical Director. He was the champion of the P76 project. Without him it would not have eventuated. He chaired the concept meetings. He stuck his neck out, set up the Advanced Model Group and pushed project approval through UK. Later in mid 1971 when the UK halted the whole project, he ignored the directive, told no one at Victoria Park and soldiered on. He got the UK to re-start it 6 weeks later and the project was finished – even though that delay had disastrous effects on the prototype build progress. The press called him “The father of P76”. I guess that description was well earned.

**Bill Robinson** arrived with Dave. Bill, a foreman millwright, was to install all the machines and conveyors in the factory. He hailed from the “Black Country” between Birmingham and Wolverhampton - with an earthy turn of phrase. Under **Tom Jessop's** training scheme – an exemplary story in itself – I spent a month with Bill during the installation phase in the Unit Plant. He could align those transfer machines – some 100 feet long – perfectly. He could make those interlinked conveyors work flawlessly. But he was his own man and ignored the bean counters' directions when it came to overtime. I queried his reaction to their directives and he responded in best black country “You works overtime at beginning of adjectival project, not the end” No project ran late because of him. I wish I could say that I have always followed his work practice. We used to chat at tea breaks. He took a shine to me and he once said (I forget the context) “Choose your wife carefully – she'll be the best friend you ever have”. Fortunately, I did follow that advice - she is. So, like so many trainees, I was guided by Tom Jessop through my training. In late 1957 I joined the new Product Engineering Department for the last year of my cadetship.

**Bill Abbott.** Bill had just come from Holden as Chief Product Engineer. He was a GM truck engineer with a passion for and great engineering experience with trains – both steam and GM diesel engined. He went on the early runs of the restored steam loco 3801. He would measure its speed and calculate its horsepower on grades – on one trip claiming that they had just broken the power record for that loco class. He was President of the aero club at Bankstown. Hearing I had taken up gliding. He said to me – that won't do – join the aero club. I've booked a lesson – be there at 8am next Saturday. I was petrified, the Victa was so tiny. But I got over it and continued flying for 30 years. Bill was a member of the GMH team that, late in WWII, went to GM USA to finalise the details of the first Holden. He recalled bringing back the 48/215 drawings and specs himself by ship and how, although the submarine menace had subsided, he was nervous when one of the two propulsion engines failed. He asked us how the speed would be affected. He was testing us – the right answer was that a ship's power varied with speed cubed so the speed would reduce about 20%. He liked challenging us. He asked us how we would describe the role of the engine in the car. We all gave very rev-head types of answers. He said “No. It must be regarded as a necessary evil!” He could be very direct. One day I presented him with a report. I thought it was pretty good and had tried to make it stand out. He looked at it without opening it and said “It's not standard foolscap. I'll read it when I can file it”. Bill had few formal qualifications but had a great sense of automotive proportion, wide experience of product development and the ability to grasp and distill complex issues into clear memos. He was a gentle, unassuming man whom everyone liked and would work their hearts out for. He could talk to people of all ranks on equal terms. One Friday afternoon he announced that he was fed up and going to play trains. The next Monday he reported that he had gone to Cowan and spoken to the steam loco driver who invited him up on the footplate. The driver had said “But hang on, you'd better wait until I hose the bastard out or you'll come out looking blacker than a camel's .....” But he did drive the train. Bill was eventually Managing Director but was so unassuming that he seemed quite surprised when, at functions, he was treated as a VIP.

**Bill Serjeantson.** Bill Abbott brought Serjo with him from GMH to be Experimental Engineer. Serjo told me later that he had taken one look at the Car Assembly Building and said to himself “These Guys are Serious – I'm in!” A Canadian, he had studied at Loughborough and worked at Vauxhall UK before joining GMH. During WWII he had scoured the UK countryside looking for salvageable hydraulic parts from crashed aircraft to recycle them. One of his immediate WWII tasks was to review war reparations proposals. It was Bill who signed the report which rejected Dr Porsche's People's Car design as being “far too noisy and rough”. How different things might have been! As an aside, another war reparations tech transfer was a BMW vehicle which became the Bristol 301 and which gave Jack Brabham the engine that set him on his way.

As BMC Experimental Engineer, starting from scratch Bill built a team of techos that grew to 60, half of whom made, by hand and with great precision, prototype car components. The other half – the test guys - spent their time destroying those parts – in a very scientific way, of course. But Serjo was a character. A lovely guy, a passionate and skilled engineer he was always on a crusade. He had developed a smoldering dislike for Lucas batteries and the way he felt that company responded to our problems. So he had a simple set of test rigs made by the ingenious Clay Turner and started testing a range of battery makes. He called the Lucas reps in and showed them the test set up with Exide batteries just visible on a shelf. That got their attention! He disliked intensely the electric SU PD electric fuel pump that was used on the ADO9. We were making engines with a mounting on the cylinder block and a cam on the camshaft to drive a mechanical pump. But we still used this awful electric pump. He wanted to use AC mechanical pumps but UK wouldn't allow us to buy from the Americans! He found an Australian company – owned by a woman, a Mrs Goss. She made spurious copies of the AC pump for spare parts. He helped her to improve the quality – we built test rigs and tested lots of pumps - and eventually got them in – in time for the Major Elite. He didn't always win, however. He was in the UK when the E series engine was being developed and he learned that they were having great difficulty with the head gasket. The bores were just too close together. It was an Issigonis project and the problem was obvious but no-one was doing anything about it. He had already offended the locals by working in his shirt sleeves in the office. So he asked "Why don't you go into Issy's office, thump on the table and say the adjectival thing's no adjectival good. The response: "Oh we couldn't do that". It never did get fixed.

When it came to operating equipment, however, Serjo could be – shall we say - absent minded. So, at his send-off the Experimental boys built a set of operating fixtures depicting some of his escapades. One displayed a struggling windscreen wiper – he was often oblivious to the shuddering wiper blades he left running long after the screen had dried. One had a large boot being applied to an alternator pulley - once when an ignition switch failed "on" he was seen climbing into the engine bay trying to stop the fan belt with his boot. Roger had to rescue him - again. Another incident involved explosives, tree stumps on a small holding he had – and damage to the roof of the shack when he overdid it. Yet another involved our large vacuum cleaner that he took onto the roof of his shack to clean the chimney, resulting in cascades of soot on the inside of the shack and one burnt out vacuum cleaner. But it was a great send off, he took it all in good spirit. He was so well respected that he was presented by the company with a P76 on his retirement.

**Reg Fulford.** Serjo had relied heavily on Reg - another GM expatriate - who joined BMC at the same time. In his late teens, Reg had seen cars of a new design being routinely driven near his house in outer Melbourne. When he joined GMH in 1949 he realised that they had been prototype Holdens being tested on a durability circuit using public roads. He had spent 2 years at the GM Institute near Detroit – then the world's most prestigious automotive institute. In 1956 he helped chase the kangaroos from the Lang Lang Proving Ground site before it was fenced. By late 1957, having done test work on most systems of the FJ and FE models, he came to BMC as Test Engineer. Reg interviewed me for an undefined position. He was 28 and I was 21. He seemed so young but in a few months he showed great knowledge and maturity. He got the test section going: Accelerated structural road tests – we came to call them Bush Trips – over much of NSW and southern Queensland – always looking for unsealed roads; Customer Durability testing – recreating the operation he had observed as a teenager; The records system; Report writing standards; The engine dynamometer; Test rigs; and much more. Being in daily contact with us, Reg probably helped us the most in developing our engineering skills. He was a first class "boss", with great interpersonal skills and the first to admit he was not a designer. But he was a wonderful analyst - perhaps helped by not having any personal investment in a particular design solution,. This made him a wonderful sounding board and elder technical statesman. He had a wry sense of humour with unique expressions: A hectic time might be described "Busy!! - I was like the one armed paperhanger with the hives"; The design of an item of equipment that had failed was dismissed as "Pissant!"; Prunes on the breakfast table on one weekend away produced the exclamation "Ah my little black coated workers!"; And a classic: When things were very close together - "You couldn't get a gnat's knacker between them". I was fortunate to follow in Reg's wake for 10 years through Test Engineer and Experimental Engineer until in 1968 he took management responsibility for all product design and I was hived off to start on what became P76. Years later he became interested in THE BOOK and brought his analytical skills to bear on the "Report Card" chapters - to great benefit. There were, of course, others

**Reg Redfern:** Reg came out of retirement to set up the prototype manufacturing section. He was in the industry when cars were painted by hand using camel haired brushes and the rats used to play havoc with lacquer overnight. Reg was physically strong – he could pick up two of us – one under each arm – and walk. He was tough – he had been right in the middle of the fight against the Communists in the unions during the war – he said that on two occasions a sixth sense made him look up from his bench – to see a hammer flying towards him. But he was gentle and close to his staff. I shared an office with him and couldn't help overhearing him giving his men personal advice – on one occasion apparently contradicting advice he had given another a week before. On querying him he said "sometimes the best advice you can give is the advice they want to hear". Reg developed a team of craftsmen and contractors who could make almost any component in a car. And, without exception, their work was first class. He built the prototype wind-up window for the Mini – in such detail that he made small moulds for rubber parts. He built a Moke with increased ground clearance and a unique rear suspension to maximize traction. He built a wide ADO9 by slicing one down the middle and inserting a few inches – you couldn't see where the joins were.

**Clay Turner:** Clay – a genius at making test equipment. He came from Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation and was also a private pilot – in 1966 we flew to Ayres Rock together. He made a vast range of test rigs from old bits of equipment very quickly with minimum drawings, which Serjo loved– just 3 examples: The Wobble-Knocker fatigue testing machine. Simple, minimum instrumentation but good results - it was still being used 30 years later; A trailer to load cars so they could be driven at full throttle and constant speed on undulating roads - he used an aircraft propeller mounted vertically so the thrust would increase the axle load. The propeller was shrouded to prevent it ingesting small dogs; An elegant rig that lifted and lowered a weight on plastic door handles (2 at a time) to test design options to overcome failures. Plastic can fail by fatigue, just like steel. He, too, was gentle. He couldn't bring himself to say no to people who wanted him to fix things. A woman staff member asked him to clean the face of her watch. He did – with carbon tetrachloride. It certainly cleaned it, removing all the numbers from the face. So Clay reproduced them with biro – she never asked again; Someone pressed him to fix a small radio. He just gave it the long wait treatment. There were two others – both body engineers from GM.

**Ian Lovegrove.** When the 1800 Ute was first suggested, Ian and I were put together in a small office to look at what was involved. In a few weeks, we put the proposal together. Ian did the layout drawing and I was exposed, for the first time to the skills needed to create a whole of vehicle layout with the skin lines of a body. I did the mechanical bits and put the report together – the report that Bill Abbott had difficulty filing! When the Ute was approved, Ian was on other projects. I was allocated one full time, but very capable draftsman. The job was done with me spending only 2 hours a day at his side. Reg Redfern built the prototype and Roger tested it at Charleville. We completed the circle when Ian reclaimed the project, fixed problems the testing revealed and released the drawings for production. So, by late 1967 – 10 years after it was formed - the Product Engineering Department had designed and tested most systems of the car but never the whole car.

**Graham Hardy.** In late December of that year Graham Hardy – our Chief Body Engineer – and I were called into Dave Beech's office. There I learned for the first time: The Australian company wanted to go it alone and had produced a detailed plan for two new cars; Graham and I were to be pulled out of our positions as were 2 Production Engineers – **Syd Ferguson** (machining specialist) and **Don Imison** (body press specialist); We were to implement that plan - Starting now!

We all knew each other but had never worked closely together. We were all amazed and went home to think about it over Christmas. This Advanced Model Group spent 1968 on studies and developing the team; Lots of studies; **Ross Weber**, ex NSW Rally Champ joined us; We had him weigh every component of a Morris 1100 that had a car set cost of \$0.10 or more. This gave us lots of data about the relationship between weight and cost; We found that steering racks and alternators had the same cost per lb; As did complete bodies and seat frames. Ross became a cornerstone of P76 – he assembled all the P76 prototypes – including that first 3<sup>rd</sup> generation car in Abington. We did design, manufacturing and materials studies. Gradually it came together. The 1967 plan favoured a car with V8 engine, Front Wheel Drive and Hydrolastic suspension. So we designed a conversion for a stretched Austin 1800; Reg Redfern's boys built it. Guess who tested it. This was done in parallel with the cost studies and it was soon evident that it was economically impossible, so in early 1969 the decision was made to go RWD

We took on some very good people, like **Dave Williams**, a New Zealander and skilled draftsman, who had worked in UK for Ford on the initial design work of the CR Escort. Dave could remember almost all of Ford's EGPAS – European General Product Acceptance System – document and was invaluable during many layout studies. He was also a skilled styling renderer – many of the drawings on the P76 press release kit were his. We planned the prototype program and a literary search suggested the 3 generations concept – two using existing body shells: The first cars were rough mechanical mock ups that had the right geometry, performance, weight & distribution but no production design detail; The second batch were mechanically representative and suitable for formal testing; The third had representative bodies with what should, by then, be proven mechanical systems.

By the end of 1970, with the first generation testing complete and the second generation prototypes under construction the AMG's control of the P76 came to an end - after 3 years of perhaps the most gratifying years of my working life. It was time to involve far more people – those in the main design office. Graham, Syd and Don went back to their departments to stay with the project while the rest of the group went on to other projects, such as the Alloy V6 engine and 6 cylinder Marina. P76s rolled off the line a little over 2 years later.

So there you have a glimpse of those P76 people with Automotive Green Fingers who brought their – now obsolete – skills to BMC and brought about the P76. Nearly all are now long gone from us. But you here tonight you – also P76 people - still have the fruits of their labours and are preserving them. So I would ask you all to be upstanding as I propose a toast:

**Ladies and gentlemen - a toast – To P76 People – Past and Present**

Thank You  
JBA

# My Road to Canberra

In early April 2013 my wife and I were in the process of purchasing a new house part of that process was to finish parting out my old white Super and to start and move my late grandfathers Omega Navy Targa Florio that has sat untouched in my garage for 13 years. When I got the Targa running and moved it out of the garage, I took a photo of the car and whilst trolling through facebook I came across the page for the 40th Anniversary Celebration. I posted my photo to the page with a comment "The first time in the sun for 13 years " and within moments there were comments from names like Jason Birmingham , Mark Ellery , James Mentiplay , Stuart Brown , Norman Julian , Neville Humpherys , and Drew Griffiths. One comment from Norman Julian read "Come to Canberra and see probably the biggest collection of P's you or anyone else will ever see again " These words sparked something inside of me and so my road Canberra had begun .



Keiths grandfather and his Targa

Through further conversations with James Mentiplay I found out the price and some other information about the event. I was then contacted by Steve Maher with information about the NSW Owners Club and how to go about putting historic registration on my Targa and with that I became a club member. A few weeks later I attended my first meeting where I met a lot of the great people that make up part of the club and I was given all the paperwork that I need to put the Targa on historic rego by Club Registrar Shane Fox . Over next few weeks and a few trips to see Glenn Gray the clubs Parts Officer to get parts that I needed to get the car to pass a pink slip inspection and some late nights fixing the car, I got it registered on the 10th of June and my grandfathers old Targa was back where she belonged on the road.

There were a few more late nights getting the Targa all cleaned up ready for the trip to Canberra. On the 14th June my beautiful wife gave birth to our third child, a beautiful little girl, so in between the hospital sleep and looking after our other two children, I finished the car for the big road trip .My trip would not have been possible without the love and understanding of my wife which I'm sure a lot of other PNUTS would attest to as well .Before I knew it, the 28th of June had arrived and in the morning I packed the car and kissed the wife and baby goodbye and set off for the service station at Pheasants Nest .Seeing all the P76s from all over the country arrive there for the trip to Canberra was amazing and a sight that I will remember and cherish for all of my days. The rest of the weekend and all the activities in Canberra were great and the people I met and friendships that have been created from this trip I hope will be life long. I would like to thank all that were involved with organizing this event and to all that attended a big Thank You.

Keith Gillian



There were a few more late nights getting the Targa all cleaned up ready for the



# THE 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY FROM TWO HATS

Some people wear hats and some don't. Some wear hats that aren't worn on their heads. I'm one of those people who wear a few hats but not the kind that goes on your head. I was lucky enough to take a look at the P76 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in Canberra recently from two angles – one as the Secretary/Treasurer of the Leyland P76 Owners Club NSW and the other as Secretary of the BMC Leyland Australia Heritage Group.

In the lead up to this wonderful 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the P76, the NSW Owners Club was heavily involved in the planning – arranging merchandise orders, organising the Friday Night Dinner and the Saturday Run to Gundaroo, among other things.

The teamwork displayed by the members of the **NSW Owners Club** was awesome – everyone chipped in to do their bit and on the Saturday Night they even dressed up! (*At our monthly meetings I'm usually the only female present - along with young Amelia - and the guys don't bother to spruce up much, so it was wonderful to be surrounded by so many well dressed handsome guys!!*) Glenn Gray and his team ran an awesome shop in the back corner of the Dining Room at Rydges Lakeside – well done everyone!!

Friday Night's dinner at Ainslie Football Club was fantastic and gave everyone a chance to have a chat over dinner before heading upstairs to listen to the speakers who were all arranged by Steve Maher.

Saturday's Run to Gundaroo was a memorable occasion and we have to say big thanks to Drew Griffith and Alex Shoobridge for putting this together. Such a buzz to see so many P76s on the road together. In Tony's Executive we were accompanied by Barry and Barbara Anderson. Barry had a drive of the P76 from Honeysuckle Creek back to Gundaroo and he was impressed at how well the car was running after 40 years. We had to miss Tidbinbilla due to running repairs on the Station Wagon. I must also mention the Rural Fire Service at Gundaroo - what a fabulous job they did feeding all of us – well done!!

The name Barry Anderson leads me to my other hat – the **BMC Leyland Australia Heritage Group**. It was mentioned to the Heritage Group earlier this year that the P76 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary would be celebrated in Canberra at the end of June. The immediate response was that several members of the Committee would like to attend. They were eager to be involved and to meet more members of the P76 Car Clubs from around Australia.

Barry was soon seconded as a Guest Speaker on the Saturday night. Roger Foy was also engaged to give a talk on the UK Release of the P76 at the Saturday night. Back in May, Steve Maher, Tony and I went to visit Alan Nicolson at his home at Dural to ask if he would be interested in a speaking engagement at the Friday night event, which he duly accepted. I'm sure everyone enjoyed hearing what these people had to say about life working at the Zetland Plant.

The BMC Leyland Australia Heritage Group was also happy to sponsor the Concours Trophies at the Sunday event. What a wonderful day to finish off a great weekend.

Remarks from Barry and others from the Heritage Group was that it was great to see so many Car Club Members looking after one another on the roads – they enjoyed the camaraderie displayed over the weekend.

So the moral of the story is that the more hats you wear, the more great people you're likely to meet – I'm so proud of my involvement in these two groups – thanks to all of you for making the P76 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration such a memorable occasion for everyone.

**Kay De Luca**



## ANOTHER P FOR PAUL

Paul Patten, like many of us, can't stop at 1 P76. After bringing home the Phantom Mica car from Victoria, Paul and The Leyland Post went to the farm to check out Alan Firths Deluxe V8. Paul now has 2 P76s.



# THE AFTERMATH OF PROBABLY THE BEST WEEKEND IN THE LIFE OF THE P76

Kay, Roger Foy and I drove back from Canberra, leaving the grounds of Old Parliament House at around 3.30pm on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

Roger remarked that he hadn't had lunch as he was so busy talking to people, the time just passed. It would have been unfair to leave Roger hungry, so we decided to call into MacDonaldis near the Exhibition Centre at Watson. Denise Mort, Greg Bryant and Phil Crowther had the same idea as us, as they were well into the burgers when we arrived.

We then left Canberra around 4.15pm and drove straight through to West Pennant Hills with the P76 performing extremely well. We let the speedsters pass, as we were on a constant 100-105kph, arriving home just after 7.00pm.

It took Kay and I a few days to recover as it was a hectic weekend, as we had been on the Sunshine Coast for 4 days prior to Canberra looking after our two grandsons.

In the week after Canberra, both Kay and I were amazed by the number of emails we have received, praising the weekend and the success of the events celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the P76.

Thursday rolled on as we relived the success of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and we were visited by Steve Maher, to finalise a few loose ends. At that time we discussed what plans we had for the Shannon's Sydney Classic to be held on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2013.

Steve in his usual enthusiastic way was eager to promote the P76 for that occasion. We looked at the draft version of the Shannon's Sydney Classic vehicle allocations map, of which I had been preparing for the past 5 months. I must say I struggle with it every year, with positioning up to 2,000 vehicles for the day. Kay and Steve spotted an area that I hadn't allocated – an area which was closer to Pit Lane.

It was suggested by Kay that the P76 Owners Club rent a Pit Lane Garage for the event and promote the P76 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary even further. They both wanted me to change the location of the P76 Car Clubs and I strongly objected, as after 5 months of planning I didn't want my allocation map upset. As I had already advised our Plan Draftsman on the layout of the Map, I ranted and raved that I would not bend and change locations.

However after a heated discussion relented and changed the area where the P76s would be located. Kay and I then sent the changes to Allen Seymour, the Draftsman, who returned a further draft copy of the map the next day, with the changes made.

In hindsight both Kay and Steve were right – as the new location will be much better to continue the Celebration of the P76 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. I said to myself "Steve you've got your own way again!"

However, I must add Steve always has the interest of the P76 and the Club as his main objective and for this I must give him my admiration.

So let's enjoy the continued celebration.

We hope to have members of the Committee of the BMC Leyland Australia Heritage Group to help tell the P76 story to all who attend Sydney Motorsport Park on the day.

In conclusion the phenomenal enthusiasm of the P76 fraternity that has been shown recently will ensure that the P76 will rise to greater heights in the minds of all motoring enthusiasts and the public in general.

**Tony De Luca**



The Zetland Boys – Alan Nicolson, Roger Foy, Barry Anderson & Tony De Luca  
Photographed alongside Glenn Gray's P76 at Goulburn – Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2013



# PEKING TO PARIS P76

**CROWN, BRYSON AND P76 BEAT THE WORLDS BEST TO PARIS**



As you may remember we left Gerry Crown, Matt Bryson and their Leyland P76 leading the Peking to Paris Motor Challenge with a 22 minute lead on day 11, 1/3 of the way through the gruelling 14,000km rally from the eastern edge of Asia to the western edge of Europe. Day 11 was the rally's last day in Mongolia and day 12 the field crossed into Russia. The good news was the worst roads were now behind them, the bad news was they now had to traverse Russia, spending 10 days doing it and dicing with crazy Russian drivers. If you want to know how bad it gets just look up car crashes in Russia on YouTube. You'll get the picture. It's like playing some automotive kind of Russian Roulette.

The rally spent 2 days getting to Novosibirsk where competitors had their second rest day. By now rest days were repair and service days. The rally had covered approx 5,000km so far across some of the most desolate, remote and

rough country and it showed when looking around the car park of the rally's hotel stopover. Most of the field was in repair mode with very few cars only having to worry about servicing. One of those with little to worry about was Crown and Bryson. The P76 was serviced, which includes a complete spanner check. Racing across Mongolia had shaken everything loose. Even the engine mount bolts were only finger tight and they had been Loctited in. A new set of tyres were bolted on and they even had time to vacuum the inside of the car out. The P76 by now had extended its lead over the second placed Porsche 911 to nearly 24 minutes. The wounded Aussie Citroen was still hanging in there despite



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its damaged suspension hydraulics in third place just over 7 minutes behind the Porsche and the US built VW of the Layzells were still a threat in fourth. In fifth now was another all Aussie crew, the Kirkham's in their Datsun 1600.

Day 16 was by far the saddest day of the rally and in fact cast a shadow over the event for the next few days. Sadly one of the rally crews lost their game of Russian Roulette. The #92 Chevrolet C10, similar to Fords F100, crewed by English couple Peter Davies and Emma Wilkinson were hit head on at high speed by a Russian driving a VW Polo. Needless to say it was a horrific impact. The Russian driver and his baby daughter were killed as was Emma Wilkinson who was driving the Chev at the time whilst Peter Davies was resting in the passenger seat. Peter survived with none too serious injuries but it was a real mess. The accident site looked like a bomb had gone off, bits of car scattered everywhere. While the rally officials had to deal with the problem, the rally itself had to move on.

The third rest day was in Samara on day 20, still in Russia. The trip meter was now clicking around 8,000km since leaving Beijing. The top positions hadn't changed and the gaps between cars had stabilised.



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The P76's only problem had been broken shock

mounts. Not an uncommon problem you might say but on this P76 the bottom mounts were reinforced and the top mounts were tied into the roll cage. Nothing a welder couldn't fix though. The power steering pump had also developed a small leak but nothing to worry about. Road conditions were now significantly improving which would suit the likes of the Porsche much more. Two time trials were held at the Belgorod Circuit in Ukraine, the fourth country the rally was to pass through on day 23. The fastest time was clocked by the Lovett/Smith Porsche on both the tarmac and rallycross circuits but the P76 was only seconds behind.



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Day 25 was the last rest day of the rally in Kiev and after only 2 hours sleep Matt put a day into again servicing the P76. A rear bottom shock mounting bush was changed and new front radius rod bushes also fitted. When the second set of radius rod bushes failed back on day 4, Matt fashioned some out of some conveyor belt material. These had lasted right across Mongolia and Russia but now needed replacing. Our club had sent over some spare sets to meet up with the rally in Kiev and these were duly fitted. Other than that again it was just a service and spanner check. Matt



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reported no body cracks in the P76, a testimony to the strength of the P76 body shell. Other cars in the rally were not so lucky. Gerry and Matt's lead was now down to 23 minutes and the rally had covered some 11,000km. The second placed Porsche had come out of service with lowered and more aggressive suspension setting and proper road tyres. The P76 was unchanged.

The final run to the finish, which took them through Ukraine,

Slovakia, Austria, Switzerland and France, included a run around the Slovakiaring Circuit and some really tough hillclimbs through the Austrian, Swiss and French Alps. This was the Porsches hunting ground. Or was it? At the Slovakiaring circuit Time Trial the fastest car was the Aussie Holden HQ ute with a 350 Chev, the P76 was second and the Aussie Datsun third. Gerry and Matt were surprised as they expected to be only mid field. The Porsche was fourth. From here though it was all

Porsche. Peter Lovett and Tim Smith made the most of the favourable road conditions and were fastest car each day from Slovakia to the finish but each day they were only able to take seconds off the P76.



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earlier. Their winning margin was 19 minutes 12 seconds after 14,000km and 237 hours 30 minutes 10 seconds of rallying through eight countries across the top of the world. The Lovett/Smith Porsche was second and the Sherrard/Washington Citroen third. Just to give it a real Aussie flavour the Kirkham's in their Datsun were fourth. All four leading co-

drivers were Australian as were three out of the four drivers and three out of the four cars were prepared here as well. A testament to Australian ability. Gerry, Matt and the P76 deserved every bit of the rousing reception at the P76 40th Anniversary Dinner when the news was announced.



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When you reflect on the enormity of their accomplishment keep this in mind. The second placed Porsche 911 was built by Tuthill Porsche in the UK, the worlds foremost Porsche race and rally preparing company at a cost of several hundred thousand pounds to full East Africa Safari specs or better and driven by Peter Lovett who used to drive Group A Rover 3500s for Tom Walkinshaw. The P76 was prepared in a garage in Hornsby by Matt Bryson at a fraction of the price of the Porsche and it's lead driver was 81 years old. A truly, truly amazing feat.

Gerry and Matt we congratulate you.



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And so on Saturday the 29th June the surviving competitors and their cars travelled down the Champs-Elysees to Place Vendome in Paris. Gerry and Matt had done the impossible and won back to back Peking to Paris events and the P76 had proven to be the best out of the 96 starters who had left Beijing 32 days



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When you reflect on the enormity of their accomplishment keep this in mind. The second placed Porsche 911 was built by Tuthill Porsche in the UK, the worlds foremost Porsche race and rally preparing company at a cost



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# FROM SHITBOX TO SUPERCAR

By Ryan Ford

## Part 2



Before we knew it, the rally was here! We left home Adelaide bound not knowing if the old girl would ever see home again. She performed perfectly on the trip over and besides getting a little warm in the peak hour traffic going through Adelaide CBD, it was an event free trip.

Day 1 of the Rally was Adelaide to Coober Pedy, a lazy 850km through some of the harshest lands imaginable. Luckily the roads are sealed all the way so the P76 did this trip without incident and actually checked in 8<sup>th</sup> out of a rally of 200! Bearing in mind it is not a race, but this is indicative of a good average speed, and no mechanical issues. On the first night about 10 cars needed towing, there were overheating issues, a blown oil seal, head gasket replacement, but all the cars survived day 1! The P76 got a well deserved rest and day 2 we headed to Ayers Rock!

Day 2, again an event less trip, she tore up the roads and again did great time to

Yulara, I would love to be able to write more about this but the car went flawlessly and besides Ayers rock, there is not much to see! But the old P was starting to get noticed, 2 nights and not once got sent to the mechanics bay. Day 2 saw the death of 2 cars, a Transmission died and a water pump ceased. We got some sensational snaps of the car and the Rock too!

Day 3 and things started to get a little bit nastier on the roads, we were headed to the Great Central Road which meant 4 days of dirt road driving and this was really going to start to separate the men from the boys. The roads were unkind, corrugated, the red dust found its way everywhere. There were times you almost could not see the end of the bonnet. The cars were battered, seriously hard to the point where you were going only about 40kph as she was shaking so badly. The Jag in the picture here had constant fuel and electrical issues due to the harsh conditions, but the P76 carried on and again we were one of the first teams in. The first problem presented itself here, we had sprung a fuel leak from the return line at the tank. Not a serious one but enough to leave a puddle under the car. We attempted to patch it with "Knead It" but the rough roads saw that this kept failing.



Day 4 & 5 was very similar to day 3, rough unforgiving roads. The P76 continued to defy the odds and performed like a hero, with the exception of a smashed headlamp due to the stones, she was still running without fault. This road saw the demise of an Alfa which had ruined its engine and a Lada which broke its axle in fine form. Day 6 was the real test as on this night it bucketed rain

Day 6 saw us taking the dirt roads from Laverton to Kalgoorlie. This was by far and away the most challenging day. The roads started off kindly, but turned nasty quickly. The local authorities recommended we not use this road, but these warnings



were ignored. It started off with a very muddy patch where you needed to keep the speeds up but avoid spinning the tires or spin out. This was fun, and I was a little disappointed when we were through it, but little did I know how much worse was ahead! Deep puddles, muddy roads, parts that were over a foot deep and behind the wheel, you can only guess the best way, and I did get it wrong once or twice. At a few points water was entering the car through the worn door seals, the bow wave was clearly visible above the bonnet at points and all I'm thinking is "please don't stall!" Over a period of about 2 hours of bashing through the mud, and puddles, she only stalled twice and that was due to a worn cap on the coil allowing water to drip down it.





As we arrived in Kalgoorlie, we were a mess, but I don't think that we were prepared as to how bad to car was! The sills were full of dirt, inches deep, you could turn the headlights on but there would be no point as they were covered, the engine was a muddy mess. The mechanics bay was a busy place that night, many cars got water in to their electrics that didn't come back, but despite all of this, the mighty P76 made it through and only needed an oil top up. A remarkable effort.

Day 7 was just a 700km cruise in to Perth, but it turned out to be a little more eventful than I would have hoped. As we were coming into Perth we opted for a driver change, but we noticed a strong oil smell and a cloud coming up under the bonnet. There was an apparent oil leak from the rocker covers that was dripping on the exhaust. Just wanting to get there we carried on until about

10 km down the road the oil lamp flashed at me. DAMN! Why now in Perth, we pulled over and topped her up. The skies opened up and the rain struck as I was filling up the oil. The car has appeared to have some junk in her as she kept wanting to stall. Regardless, we carried on in to Fremantle. We had made it and at the award presentation ceremony got voted in Top 10 Rally Cars.

I was greeted at the finish line by James Mentiplay who has been following the rally and restoration from early on. He congratulated us, loved the story behind the car and the rally. He kindly invited me to bring the car around to the WA Club the next day so that we could give her a little TLC and see that she would make her way home to Melbourne without any issues. After changing the rocker cover gasket to stop the leak, the Fuel Filter which was orange, and running a can of Carby Cleaner through the junked up carb, she was running well again and on Sunday morning, we turned around and drove home!

We planned a 4 day \ 3 night trip, Norseman on day 1, Ceduna then Tailem Bend for a short skip home on day 4. On the road in to Norseman it was dark, very dark and having 1 of my high beams smashed probably did not help. But it was on the trip home that the desert dust started to make a nuisance of itself. Occasionally, when we would turn on the high beams, the lights would all go off, and we were driving in darkness!!! Luckily this only happened once or twice and only for a split second, but still enough to give you a fright! The next day was a 1200 km trek to Ceduna across the Nullabor and with the exception of a more desert dust interfering with the electric fuel pump connection (and a speeding ticket) the day went without incident. But day 3 coming up through Adelaide and heading out of town, I noticed the volt meter gauge was sitting at 12V. Please no, not now only 1 day from home! Darkness was falling and we were running on battery power. We went as far as we could and made Murray Bridge. Exhausted and crossing all my fingers and toes that it was a simple fix, we cleaned out the alternator and put her back in, 12 volts still. As a last resort I pierced the alternator line with my Amp Meter, 13V was coming out. So a simple cut of the wire and ran it direct to the battery and we were back! Again, that desert dust broke a contact somewhere, maybe ill try and find it one day, but the next morning we hit the road early and charged home!

What else can I say that what an exceptional car the P76 has been. From its sorry beginnings sitting in the back of a shed to conquering Australia, I don't think many cars cobbled together from countless different sources, none new or



reconditioned, could pull off with the P76 has achieved. I was subject to some slander by other rally goers and others in general for my choice of car, but as we all know, he who laughs last, laughs the hardest. We went places together that I'm sure the designers never intended her to go and it is a true testament to how little the public knows about this car and how much Leyland Australia got it right with the P76. Time has vindicated the car, and the smiles, compliments, and commiserations the car got far exceeded the criticisms. Many people asked me if she was going up for auction at the end, but after the amazing journey we have had and to the disappointment of many, I could nor bear to part with her, so she has has come home and has truly earnt her spot in the garage. Some still ignorantly refer to the P76 as the Aussie Lemon, I would say Aussie Legend. What a car!



# BMC LEYLAND AUSTRALIA HERITAGE GROUP

## 2013 REUNION—Sunday 29th September

### Celebrating 100 Years of Morris & 40 Years of P76

#### RYDE EASTWOOD LEAGUES CLUB

Rydedale Road, West Ryde will be the venue once again for this year's Heritage Group Reunion

***Please contact Roger Foy — 9449 1524***

If you would like to take part in the rooftop display.  
Cars on show should be in place by 10.30am

**Cost \$40 per head**

*includes full buffet (with carvery/hot dishes), desserts, tea/coffee & mints*

RSVP: 20/09/2013

#### PAYMENT SLIP FOR BMC LEYLAND AUSTRALIA HERITAGE GROUP 2013 REUNION

Please forward this section with your payment of \$40 per person to:

Kay De Luca, 7 Savoy Court, West Pennant Hills 2125 (phone 02 8812 2479 or 0410 688 886 )

**RSVP: 20/09/2013** (Cheques/Money Orders payable to BMC Leyland Aust. Heritage Group)

NAME: ..... AMOUNT PAID: .....

PARTNER/FRIENDS NAMES:.....

ADDRESS:..... POSTCODE:.....

PHONE:..... EMAIL:.....

*I would like to be seated with:*.....

*I would like assistance with transport: YES/NO (please circle )*

*Special Dietary Requirements:*.....

# NEW P76 TRAX MODEL

Top Gear P/L has recently released a new P76 model in their range, the Evan Green/John Bryson 1974 UDT World Cup Rally car. The model is reproduced in diecast metal and is 1:43 scale. Once again Top Gear have done a brilliant job with this model and is the 8th P76 model they have produced in their TRAX range plus the Force 7V in their Select Series. The models cost \$42.95 + post and you can order them online at [www.topgear.com.au](http://www.topgear.com.au). Part no. is TR42H



Word has it that this model wont be the last P76 to be made by TRAX. There could be another one as early as next year. Lets hope so.



John Bryson himself gave his blessing and assistance in producing the model. John is pictured here with Top Gear CEO Brett Jacobson. John received his own model from Brett and Brett was presented with an autographed model by John. Happy faces all round and John in particular was very pleased with the resulting model.

Club President Steve Maher was on hand to present Brett Jacobson with a Certificate of Thanks for his and Top Gears support of the Leyland P76 40th Anniversary Celebration



# LEYLAND P76 OWNERS CLUB of NSW Inc

## MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2013 AT 8.20 PM

Present: 12 Members as per attendance book. Steve Maher in the Chair. Welcome new member Paul Patten, who spoke about his new purchase - black De Luxe Sedan.

Apologies: Shane Fox.

Minutes Of Previous Meeting: Minutes of the previous Meeting were read and confirmed.  
Accepted: Glenn Gray; Seconded: Marty Stockwell

Business Arising: 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – defer to General Business.

Treasurer's Report: As Per Bank Statement Moved: Brian Hooper Seconded: Bert Colombin

Correspondence: Email in: Qld May Magazine; Westwords June Magazine; SA June Magazine; Classic Club May Magazine; VMC May Bulletin; Vic. Club Feb-April Magazine; Leyland Post 55; numerous re 40<sup>th</sup> Anniv. ACT planning; Merchandise quotes; CAMS Event Permit ACT; CAMS Annual Awards Dinner; CAMS Level 2 speed & non-speed licences; CAMS 60 years in Motorsport; National Trust Centenary Rally 19/10/13; David Snape NRMA.

Mail In: Phil Crowther notes; NZ Magazine May.

Correspondence: Email out: Draft May Minutes; 40<sup>th</sup> Anniv. Planning & merchandise quotes; David Snape NRMA; Leyland Post 55.

OUT: Mail: Leyland Post 55.

Reports: Registrar's Report: Not available.

Parts: Sold \$565 during the month; suspension parts need re-stocking.

Website: No changes. Alex Richardson information being scanned. Photos being accepted for the website.

### Activities Past:

Harry's Café De Wheels Nth Parramatta

National Motoring Heritage Day – 19/5/13 Bella Vista Farm – hugely successful day with the Club receiving lots of accolades from CMC and other Car Clubs who attended.

### Activities Future:

16<sup>th</sup> June 2013 Fire Museum at Penrith

40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in Canberra 28/29/30 June 2013

Shannons Sydney Classic – Sydney Motorsport Park – Sunday 18/8/13

All British Day – The Kings School Nth Parramatta – Sunday 25/8/13

CMC 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon – Ryde Eastwood Leagues – Sunday 15/9/13

BMC Heritage Group Reunion – Ryde Eastwood Leagues – 29/9/13

## New Members New Project

New old member, Peter Velthius has recently rejoined our club after many years away. He heard about the 40th Anniversary Celebration in Canberra and decided to come down on the



Sunday to check out the 40th Anniversary Concours. It goes without saying the Peter came away somewhat enthused and has been on the hunt for a car to restore like the black beast he used to have.

Welcome back Peter V.

Hopefully it wont be too long before we see this Deluxe V8 back on the road.



General Business:

Steve advised there are 70 cars and 150 people registered for the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

The itinerary and details of each event over the weekend were discussed. Working bee on the night of Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June re merchandise and the Press Kits.

It was agreed that the Club purchase a BMC Book (\$40) to present to Alan Richardson for the information he has made available to the Club. The Press Kits will be produced in a folder and made available for each Registrant at the 40<sup>th</sup>.

The Club has two Black & White TV Adverts from 1973 and these will be reproduced on disc for sale at \$5 per disc.

Some P76s are being used in film-making – report given.

It was agreed to purchase Club Badges for all Members at expected cost of \$7 each – try to have available for the 40<sup>th</sup> in Canberra.

New member Keith Gillian was congratulated on having his P76 on the road.

Next Meeting:

Next General Meeting – 9<sup>th</sup> July 2013

Closure:

Meeting closed at 9.55 pm.



# LEYLAND P76 OWNERS CLUB of NSW Inc

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Notice is given that the Annual General Meeting of the members of the Leyland P76 Owners Club NSW Inc will be held at Memorial Bowling Club, 26 Pritchard Street, Wentworthville on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2013 at 7.30 pm.**

**AGENDA FOR MEETING:**

Welcome and Introduction

Confirmation of Minutes of Previous AGM held on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2012

President's Address

Presentation of Financial Statements for the 2012/13 Financial Year.

Election of Executive:

President

Vice President(s)

Secretary

Treasurer

Historic Registrar

Parts Officer

Webmaster

Magazine Editor

Technical Officer

Publicity Officer

Activities Officer

# LEYLAND P76 OWNERS CLUB of NSW Inc

## MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 9<sup>th</sup> JULY 2013 AT 8.15 PM

- Present:** 14 Members as per attendance book. Steve Maher in the Chair.
- Apologies:** Shane Fox, Tony Brown.
- Minutes Of Previous Meeting:** Minutes of the previous Meeting were read and confirmed.  
Accepted: Tony De Luca; Seconded: Brian Hooper
- Business Arising:**
- Treasurer's Report:** As Per Bank Statement. Moved: Marty Stockwell Seconded: Scott Wilson
- Correspondence: IN:** **Email in:** Qld June Magazine; Westwords July Magazine; SA July Magazine; Classic Club June Magazine; Vic. Club May Magazine; numerous re 40<sup>th</sup> Anniv. ACT planning; Merchandise quotes, orders & registrations; CAMS Workshops, RetroAutos June Mag; Stock on Hand after 40<sup>th</sup>; congratulatory emails after 40<sup>th</sup>; Aberdeen Big Boys Toys 7/9/13.
- Correspondence: OUT:** **Email out:** Draft June Minutes; 40<sup>th</sup> Anniv. Planning, Registrations & merchandise quotes.

# MEDIA WATCH MEDIA WATCH

## The latest issue of **THE BMC EXPERIENCE**

is now on the news stands.

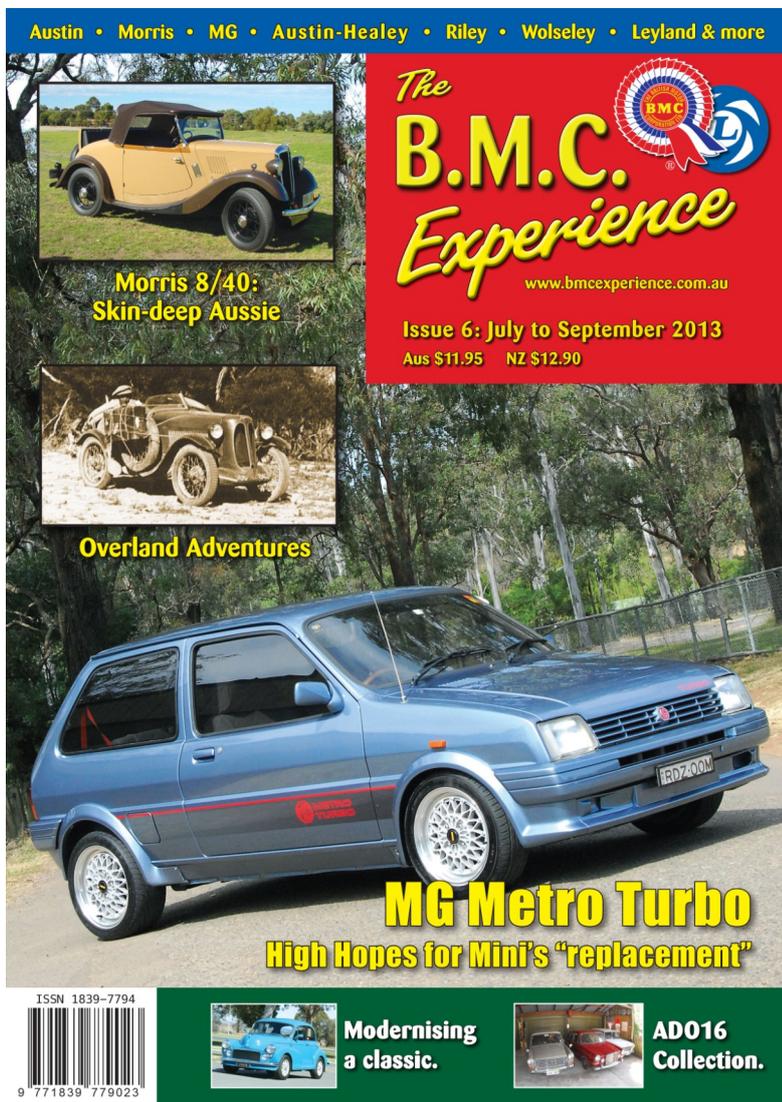
Features stories include:

- ◆ Council of Leyland P76 Clubs
- ◆ MG Metro Turbo
- ◆ Overland Adventures
- ◆ Morris 8/40
- ◆ Modernising a Minor
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Issue 6: July to September 2013  
Aus \$11.95 NZ \$12.90

**Morris 8/40:  
Skin-deep Aussie**

**Overland Adventures**

**MG Metro Turbo  
High Hopes for Mini's "replacement"**

ISSN 1839-7794



9 771839 779023

 **Modernising a classic.**

 **ADO16 Collection.**

Reports:

Registrar's Report: Shane would like all HCRS cars to attend either Shannons Sydney Classic or All British Day for inspection. Shane has purchased a 1963 Morris Major Elite. Mark Ellery has purchased a Blue Targa from Qld. Tony De Luca spoke about a phone call he received from Adam Pinnock. The Chevrolet will need verification from the US – the other 2 are LH Drive Limos. Need to clarify with Terry Thompson (CMC). Shannon has acquired a Country Cream V8 Super from a relative of Paul Barrett – it was last registered in 1993.

Parts: Some parts in merchandise sold in ACT. Some struts still available, suggest Club purchase the last struts from the National Body. All 2010 Merchandise has been sold.

Website: No changes – some changes will appear soon.

Activities Past:

Harry's Café De Wheels Nth Parramatta – Steve, Keith, Matt attended.  
40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in Canberra 28/29/30 June 2013 – defer General Business.

Activities Future:

Shannons Sydney Classic – Sydney Motorsport Park – Sunday 18/8/13  
All British Day – The Kings School Nth Parramatta – Sunday 25/8/13  
CMC 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon – Ryde Eastwood Leagues – Sunday 15/9/13  
BMC Heritage Group Reunion – Ryde Eastwood Leagues – 29/9/13  
Rick's Auto Museum in Canberra – invitation received to visit there.

General Business:

Copies of Australian Classic Car Magazine were distributed, courtesy of Les Pendlebury of the Hudson AMC Car Club.

Steve thanked all present for their input into what was a fantastic weekend in Canberra – thanks also to those Owners Club members who assisted with roadside assistance on other Club's vehicles.

Each weekend event was discussed in detail and it was thought that the whole weekend was a memorable event.

The National Council met on the Friday afternoon and the 2015 Nationals was discussed – decision was made to hold them in South Australia.

SA wants a National Parts Officer who would coordinate parts supply. Victoria charges premium prices for non-members. Each Club would deal in their own way. There were no representatives from WA, ACT or the NSW Classic Club.

Some delegates felt that future meetings should be held annually – however it was agreed that each 2 years would be adequate – to coincide with the Nationals.

The National Council needs to be promoted and a website is to be set up. Steve Maher will step down as Club Representative on the Council – Glenn Gray and Drew Griffith will be new delegates. A National Database for Historic Information is to be set up by the Victorian Club.

Concours Results:

De Luxe – Peter O'Brien - Country Cream (NSW Classic Club)  
Super – Greg Varveris - Home on the Orange (Tasmania)  
Executive – Russell Nicholson – Spanish Olive (NSW Classic Club)  
Targa – Gwen Livingstone – Aspen Green (Country Club)  
Modified – Middys – Pink (Victorian Club)  
Encouragement – Ryan Ford – General Lee Rally Car (Victorian Club)

Top Gear & Trax – Thanks to Top Gear for donating 8 models – these were presented to the Speakers at the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, along with one as a lucky door prize – plus 30 models which were sold over the weekend.

BMC & NRMA – our thanks go to these organizations for Trophy sponsorships. Letters to be sent to these.

Next Meeting:

Next General Meeting – AGM 13<sup>th</sup> August 2013

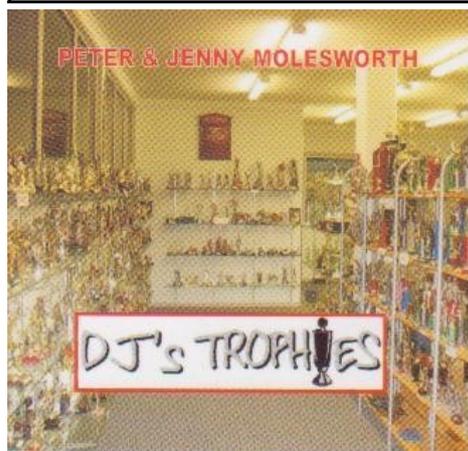
Closure:

Meeting closed at 10.15 pm.

# LEYLAND P76 OWNERS CLUB NSW

## 2013 Events Calendar

9-Jul	Club Meeting Wentworthville	Kay De Luca
2-Aug	First Friday Cruise to Harrys Parramatta	Steve Maher
5-Aug	Driver Training Day Wakefield Park	Classic Rally Club
13-Aug	Annual General Meeting Wentworthville	Kay De Luca
18-Aug	Shannons Sydney Classic Sydney Motorsport Park	Tony De Luca
25-Aug	All British Day Kings School, Parramatta	Kay De Luca
24/25-Aug	Milbrodale Mountain Classic Milbrodale	Steve Maher
1-Sep	Muscle Car Masters Sydney Motorsport Park	Steve Maher
6-Sep	First Friday Cruise to Harrys Parramatta	Steve Maher
10-Sep	Club Meeting Wentworthville	Kay De Luca
15-Sep	Council of Motor Clubs 50th Anniversary Lunch Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club	Kay De Luca
29-Sep	BMC/Leyland Australia Heritage Group Lunch Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club	Kay De Luca
4-Oct	First Friday Cruise to Harrys Parramatta	Steve Maher
8-Oct	Club Meeting Wentworthville	Kay De Luca
1-Nov	First Friday Cruise to Harrys Parramatta	Steve Maher
12-Nov	Club Meeting Wentworthville	Kay De Luca
16/17-Nov	Off Road Races Colo Park	Steve Maher
6-Dec	First Friday Cruise to Harrys Parramatta	Steve Maher
10-Dec	Club Xmas Meeting Wentworthville	Kay De Luca



PETER & JENNY MOLESWORTH

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