

WESTWORDS

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE LEYLAND P76 OWNERS CLUB
OF WA

Leyland P76

LEYLAND P76 OWNERS CLUB OF AUSTRALIA (WA Division) Inc.

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General Meetings are held on the last Wednesday evening of every month at 7.30 PM (unless otherwise notified). The Meetings are held at

The AGM is held in July. For dates of club meetings and events, refer to the Coming Events section of this newsletter.

CLUB COMMITTEE FOR 2009-2010

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Gary Mentiplay.
Andrew Mentiplay Dennis Woodward
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Front Page Photo.

Photo: Lianne Shea



COMING EVENTS



Sunday 16 May 2010 National Motoring Heritage Day:

P76 Heritage Drive to Toodyay, Northam, and York.

Departs: Centrepont Midland at 8 AM sharp.

Morning Tea & informal street display at Toodyay: 9.30 to 11 AM. Lunch & informal street display in Northam: 12 midday to 1.30 PM.

Afternoon Tea & informal street display in York: 2 to 3.30 PM. Depart for Perth: 4 PM.

This is a great opportunity to give the cars on concessional licence a good work out with a pleasant drive in the country, with the whole family enjoying the outing whilst Visiting three historic towns.

Celebrate the heritage of Leyland Australia, and the all-Australian car the P76 !!

Saturday May 22nd from 10am—Inspection Day— At Dennis Woodward's house in Oakford. All concessional vehicles must attend with their vehicles. \$20 per car this year.

Tuesday May 25th— General meeting 7.30pm

At Kenwick Community Centre, 84 Kenwick Rd (cnr Kenwick and Brixton St Kenwick)

Tuesday June 29th— General meeting 7.30pm

At Kenwick Community Centre, 84 Kenwick Rd (cnr Kenwick and Brixton St Kenwick)

Sat/Sun 17/18 July 2010: P76 Club Annual Dinner - more details TBA

Tuesday July 27th— AGM 7.30pm

At Kenwick Community Centre, 84 Kenwick Rd (cnr Kenwick and Brixton St Kenwick)

Sunday 31 Oct 2010 BMC / Leyland Day - Manning Park Spearwood

Sunday 10 April 2011 VIIIth All Australian Car Day - Waroona

Easter 2012

P76 Nationals - more details TBA

SNIPPETS

Brett recently sourced a variety of parts for the P76 from Clark rubber such as boot seals, bonnet bumper stops, door seals bailey channels, bushes, clips and fasteners etc.
He has a complete list of parts and prices which I will run in a later edition but if anyone is interested please contact Brett on 0447788018 and he can give you the part numbers

THE 35TH BIRTHDAY OF THE TARGA FLORIO IS THIS YEAR.

TO CELEBRATE THE MILESTONE THE CLUB WOULD LIKE TO PUT ON A GOOD SHOWING AT THE BMC LEYLAND DAY LATER THIS YEAR.

SO FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE TARGA'S NO MATTER WHAT CONDITION PLEASE BRING THEM DOWN FOR THE DISPLAY THIS

**V8 OIL
FILTERS ARE
AVAILABLE
THROUGH
ANDREW
KLOOT HE
ALSO HAS
OTHER
SPARE PARTS
AVAILABLE
FOR
INFORMATION
CALL JAMES**

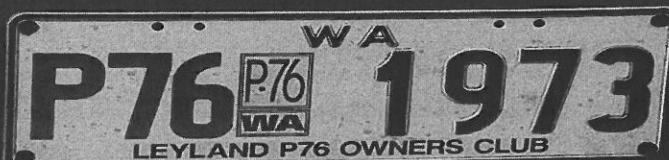
**WE ARE WORKING ON A CLUB SPARE PARTS
LIST LOOK FOR IT IN THE NEAR FUTURE**

**FOR SALE: Morris Minor 4 door sedan. Rolling shell—good condition
\$600.00 phone Tim McGarr 0414687078**



James has been in contact with EmbroidMe and we can now get our club logo put onto shirts, jackets and other clothing. The store has a range of clothing so you can pick something from their range or supply your own shirt and they will put the logo on it for you for \$7.00.

**EmbroidMe
Unit 3, 71 Mc Coy Street**



**Club Plates
Phone James on 9394 0152
(home) \$185.00 for more
details.**

**LEYLAND P76 OWNERS CLUB OF AUSTRALIA (WA
Division Inc.)**

MINUTES FOR MARCH 2010

OPENED:7:40

Apologies: Gary Mentiplay, Jim Mentiplay, Brett and Lianne Shea, John Metcalf, Adam Woodward.

Minutes for February: Moved as correct by Mick Le Cocq, seconded by Tony Moisley.

Correspondence In: Council of Motor Clubs, P76 Club SA x 3, Triumph Car Club x 3, Mini Owners' Club x 2, P76 Club NZ x 2, P76 Club NSW, Classic Car Club.

Correspondence out: Nil

Treasurer's Report: announced at meeting.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

All Aussie Day mentioned, meeting at Floopers, North Dandalup for a convoy.

Classic Car Show briefly discussed, as well as the **National Motoring Heritage Day**.

Members present that were off to the **National Meeting** spoke about some of the events expected to take place.

Cars and car parts for sale briefly mentioned.

The **Le Cocq bros. Drag Car** was also mentioned, talking about the time passes it was making and some of the technical challenges that came along the way.

CLOSED: 8:50 pm.



**COUNCIL OF
MOTORING
CLUBS OF W.A. (INC)**

ABN 5835277045

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

As at October 20 2009

2009 2009 2009 2009 2009

- | | | |
|------------------|-------|--|
| September | 20 | Superkhana – Speed Dome, Midvale (www.classicrally.com.au) |
| | 27 | Driving for Dreams Porsche charity parade and motorsport events (driving4dreams.org) |
| | 28 | Queen's Birthday public holiday |
| October | 25 | All Ford Day – Bassendean Oval (www.afd.asn.au) |
| | 25 | Mercedes-Benz Display Day – Swan Valley (www.mbcwa.org.au) |
| | 25 | BMC Leyland Day - 50th Anniversary of the Mini - Manning Park, Spearwood (9497 7754) |
| | 25 | British Auto Classic -featuring 50 Golden Years of Mini - Waroona (www.eventassist.org.au) |
| | 25-30 | 7th National Veteran Motorcycle Rally Albany (VMCCofWA-9524 1801) |
| November | 8 | Brockwell Run to Whiteman Park (www.councilofmotoringclubs.asn.au) |
| | 15 | 1-Day Classic touring road rally (AEM - www.classicrally.com.au) |
| | 22 | V8 Supercars WA Round – Barbagallo Raceway (www.wasco.com.au) |
| | 29 | Annual Charity Cruise - Perth to York (Monaro Car Club - www.monaro.com.au) |
| | 29 | Fiat Lancia Car Day – GO Edwards Reserve, Burswood (www.fiatlancia.asn.au) |
| December | 6 | Last Blast Superkhana – Speed Dome, Midvale (AEM - www.classicrally.com.au) |
| | 6 | Day of the Volkswagen – GO Edwards Park, Burswood (VW Club - www.vwclub.asn.au) |
| | 21 | Council of Motoring Clubs General Meeting |

Early advice of 2010 events

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|---|
| February | 21 | Norham Vintage Swap Meet (AVVVA www.avonvintagecars.org.au) |
| March | 13 | Ace Ford Club Annual Cruise - open to all cars (www.aceford.asn.au) |
| | 21 | Classic Car Show - Whiteman Park |
| | 27- April 2 | NCRS Corvette Train & Road tour Sydney, SW of WA to Perth (http://ncrs.com.au) |
| April | 2-5 | 22nd National Corvette Convention (www.corvettesofwa.com 0414 723 821) |
| | 6-9 | National Corvette Restorers Society Australian Chapter Meet - Joondalup (http://ncrs.com.au) |
| | 11 | All Australian Car Day VII - Waroona (www.eventassist.org.au) |
| | 23-26 | National Mercedes-Benz Rally & WA Club's 50th Anniversary - Perth (www.mbrally.com) |
| May | 16 | National Motoring Heritage Day |
| | 16 | British Car Day - Gingin |

**WE WANT YOUR EVENTS! PLEASE GIVE US DETAILS OF MAJOR CAR EVENTS
YOUR CLUB IS CONDUCTING IN 2009 - SEE BELOW FOR CONTACT DETAILS**

General enquiries to Council of Motoring Clubs of W.A. (Inc) Secretary, Peter Taylor on 9343 4605 pcwh@bigpond.com

Visit the Council of Motoring Clubs website - www.councilofmotoringclubs.asn.au

A comprehensive calendar of motoring events can be found at website: www.classicrally.com.au

NOTES:

1. This page may be published in your club magazine.
2. Details are subject to change without notice and no responsibility is accepted by the Council of Motoring Clubs of W.A. (Inc), its member clubs or its servants for incorrect information.
3. Calendar updates and additional information should be directed to Paul Blank on 9271 0101 or paulb@classicrally.com.au
4. CMC Website enquiries to the Webmaster via www.councilofmotoringclubs.asn.au

Council of Motoring Clubs of W.A. (Inc) PO Box 742, Subiaco, Western Australia, 6904

Concours Winners from this years National meeting

Best Executive	John Beatie VIC Bitter Apricot Reg PNK 987
Runner Up	Tony DeLuca NSW Crystal White Reg 30445-H

Best Super	Kevin Smith VIC Country Cream Reg IUK 453
Runner Up	Denise Mort NSW Country Cream Reg 38744-H

Best Deluxe	Peter O'Brien NSW Country Cream Reg 26839-H
Runner Up	Jeff Cutting SA Crystal White Reg 760 J

Best Targa	Neville Humphries QLD Omega Navy Reg MI P76
Runner Up	Jason Birmingham NSW Nutmeg Reg 39429-H

Best Modified	Jason Birmingham NSW Hairy Lime Reg LEY 076
Runner Up	Jason Brmingham NSW Plum Loco Taxi Reg P76

Judges Choice	John Beatie VIC Bitter Apricot Reg PNK 987
	Wayne Filmer SA NV Green Reg LEY P76
	Denise Mort NSW Country Cream Reg 38744-H

Best Car From Each State

WA	Riley & Lynne Bradley	Bold as Brass
SA	Andrew Lee	Blue Limo
VIC	John Beatie	Bitter Apricot
QLD	Neville Humphries	Omega Navy
NSW	Jason Birmingham	Hairy Lime

Grand Champion

Jason Birmingham NSW Hairy Lime Reg LEY 076

Encouragement Award

Scott Reynolds VIC Bitter Apricot Reg WOH 588

People's Choice Award

Jason Birmingham NSW Plum Loco Taxi Reg P76

**Congratulations to Lyn and Riley for
their award for the best WA vehicle**

Interview with Bruce Elson Part 1

Field Service Manager – BMC / LEYLAND AUSTRALIA

Can we start with a bit of background?

BE: I was born in Sydney in July 1943. I went to school partly in Hornsby, and then at North Sydney. Following schooling, I completed an apprenticeship with a Rover sub-dealer in Turrumurra, Grenville Motors.

I started at BMC Australia in 1964, as a mobile training school instructor. The mobile training schools used two purpose-built vehicles. They had been built in the UK by Marshall Bodyworks, and were powered by a BMC diesel engine of 5.7 litres, with a 5 speed gearbox. One bus was based in Victoria, and we used the second one in NSW and Queensland. The buses were fully air conditioned, and carried all service tools in luggage lockers underneath. They contained a classroom for around six people.

The mobile schools would tour around the dealers, conducting training sessions on all new models as well as refresher training. At that time, we were dealing with vehicles like the Mini, Morris 1100, Austin 1800, Wolseley 24/80, BMC J2 vans, etc.

Brian Clifton was my colleague, and we would tour NSW and Queensland with the mobile unit, using a Mini as a tender car. We ranged from the Vic/NSW border and up to the top of Queensland.

The Victorian mobile unit would cover Tasmania and South Australia as well as Victoria. The bus would be ferried across to Tasmania, and be used for all of their training schools.

BMC then moved to Regional-based Training courses ?

BE: The buses were very good, but it was fairly expensive to operate a mobile scheme – the instructors would be away for something like 4 or 6 weeks at a time. When BMC operations were established at Wacol in Brisbane (where Volvo are located today) as the Queensland Regional Office, Brian Clifton moved there with the bus and it was operated from that base. David Campbell and John Payne were QLD state service managers in the early days. Eventually the mobile training units were phased out, in favour of regional training centres, where the mechanics would be brought in to attend training courses. BMC had established training schools in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne. From memory we had something like 13 instructors throughout Australia.

The Victorian operation was based at Moore Road, Airport West. Arthur Rook was the state service manager, and the senior instructor was Dick Moseley, assisted by Ian Thomas, Ken Banfield and others.

Victoria, NSW and Queensland would conduct all of the courses at their training centres, whilst the factory ran the courses in South Australia and Western Australia. Keith Wells and myself would run two separate three day courses in Adelaide and Perth.

We would run a course from Monday to Wednesday and then another course from Thursday to Saturday in Adelaide, fly to Perth on the Sunday, and run another two courses in Perth during the following week. I loved being involved in the training schools – it taught you a lot very quickly. Ian Thomas and myself did the course on the BMC FG truck in Launceston and Hobart (Victoria and NSW would often combine to run the Tasmanian courses).

Before we would start a new course, all of the instructors got together to plan it, write all the notes, etc. In Sydney we had probably six people, Norman Long, John Watters, Luke McLaughlin, and others. The new vehicle model would be divided up into six parts, and each instructor would write up the lecture

notes and diagrams to suit that particular part. We would then present that to the other instructors who had come from interstate.

If you screwed up anywhere, you got into big trouble – it was always very interesting. We would ultimately come up with a school handout on all of the various components on the new model. We didn't have overhead projectors or computers in those days, so charts would have to be made up to accompany the handouts. John and I wrote up the 60/80 page handout for the Mini, as well as the Borg Warner 35 handout.

The interstate instructors would then go back and run the courses in their own areas. Brian Clifton used to look after Brisbane and Townsville, Darwin would generally come down to Sydney, whilst the factory would send people over to SA and WA. Roy South was the Chief Instructor during that era. The service training school came under the Service Department, under the control of Norm Prescott.

You then had a change of duties ?

BE: Around 1970, I moved out of the training school to become the exports service engineer. Bill Phillips had been in this job, but left the company to go to New Guinea. I then looked after all the export territories, verifying all warranty claims before passing them to Norm Burnett for payment. At that time we were exporting the Mini Moke to places like New Zealand.

I always enjoyed New Zealand, the people there were very good. They were a resourceful people, very good to deal with. They were assembling vehicles in New Zealand, but I don't think the CKD packs came from Australia. When I got involved, Dominion Motors were still going – they looked after the Nuffield distribution and assembly. The Austin Distributors Federation were looking after Austin vehicles, and South Island Motors were agents for Wolseley. There was no New Zealand Motor Corporation at that stage, that came later. They still had separate distribution and retail outlets. Dominion Motors had the Nuffield / Morris franchise, whilst Austin had Seabrook Fowlds in Auckland, Magnus Motors in Wellington, and David Crozier in the South Island.

Dominion Motors had two assembly plants in Auckland; the truck assembly plant in Newmarket, and a car assembly plant in Broadway (the building is still there today). They also had a plant in Carrabine Road, Wellington.

The Austin Distributors Federation had an assembly plant at Petone, in Wellington. Triumph had a factory in Nelson, which had been the old cotton mills. When NZMC was formed, it was an amalgamation of Dominion Motors, Seabrook Fowlds, Magnus Motors – all of them came together. They still had all of their assembly plants, and later the British Leyland commercials were merged into that as well. New Zealand did all of the amalgamation themselves – the Triumph brand joined later after the BMC/Leyland merger in the UK. British Leyland had an office in Wellington. Ken Green and Austin Taylor were the key people there (they were both ex-Triumph people).

What happened after the New Zealand experience ?

BE: I then came back to Australia to become Australian Field Service Manager, which covered exports as well. Norm Prescott was in charge of the Service Department. I had some specialist people like Keith Wells, Barry Solomon, and Gordon Oldfield working for me. The Service Department had to know how the cars

were produced and assembled, so that you could arrive at any solutions to problems as they occurred in the field.

The gearbox on the Morris 1500 caused enormous warranty claims. The casing was a major problem – if you pulled them apart like you would an A series power unit, you stood a very good chance of breaking the casing.

Why someone would design a gearbox like that always amazed me. Two circlips held a composite bearing and a roller bearing in a ball race – why did they design a gearbox with varying thickness circlips that had no eyes in them, so that once you got them in there, you couldn't get them out. They were bastards of things.

The power unit had been designed for a wider car than the 1500/Nomad – the Austin Maxi in England. Because the body of the 1500/Nomad was narrower, the gearchange cables were much tighter – the cables would stick, get full of oil, etc. The UK set up did not require any gearbox interlocks. The other problem we had was that it wore out the gearshift forks, and they were steel.

The synchro cones featured both 5 degrees and 7 degrees, which caused endless problems. Our service vans always carried an exchange gearbox when we visited dealers.

I remember Tony De Luca and I rebuilding a gearbox for a Morris 1500 for one dealer – this car belonged to a driving school in Victoria.

What about the BMC 1800 and the X6 Kimberley models ?

BE: I can recall a problem with the engine exhaust pipe on the 1800. It would “ratchet” around and choke the engine – you would have your foot hard on the throttle and have no power. The engine pipe down from the manifold would ratchet around and it would corkscrew off. The bracket at the bottom of the gearbox case wasn't clamping the pipe. The pipe would go around something like 1 ½ turns.

They had a problem in New Zealand with the 1800 that never occurred in Australia. They were suffering inlet valve seat distortion. New Zealand had a higher sulphur content in petrol than Australia, resulting in higher combustion chamber temperatures.

We carried out tests in Sydney on an Austin 1800 using only New Zealand petrol, and sure enough it suffered from valve seat distortion – you couldn't start the car because of a lack of compression. The fuel companies in New Zealand changed their formula, which cured that problem.

I had the “Planning Build” Tasman, a green car. Norm Prescott had the “Planning Build” Kimberley. They were essentially a good car. We had a problem with the bonnet, similar to the Austin 1800. It was a heavy panel, and needed reinforcing on the inside LH hinge.

The X6 models had a spin off type oil filter, and used two seals, one on the inboard side and one on the outboard side. The problem was that if it wasn't fitted exactly right, it would seal only on the inboard seal. With the high oil pressure on that E6 motor, it didn't take long before oil forced its way past the outer seal, resulting in a massive loss of oil. We eventually reduced the oil pressure from 90 psi to 45 psi – it was far too high.

What can you tell us about the Morris Marina ?

BE: At the time of the Marina introduction, both Norm Prescott and myself had pre-production Marina's. I think six were built off-line, and each department was allocated a certain number of these

cars. This was around Xmas 1971, and I couldn't help thinking: "what a horrible vehicle this is." After driving an Austin 1800 or Kimberley, you jumped into the Marina, and the new model did not fare well by comparison. You would drive across the Sydney Harbour Bridge, and hear this noise coming from the rear of the car – it was the top and bottom of the fuel tank panels flexing.

We formed our first Task Force around that time, with me looking after the mechanical aspects and others looking after the body problems. You still had your normal work to complete, in addition to task force duties. The company was very short of real technical people at that stage, and the Marina problems had to be sorted out. The company's experience over the preceding few years had been with front wheel drive models, whereas the Marina was a totally different package.

They had no end of trouble getting the front suspension set up right. It was a torsion bar system. During production and assembly, you had to make sure that the thing went onto the fixture exactly right, otherwise the car came down the assembly line like a lop-sided duck. We were fixing it everyday.

Regional conferences were held in all state capitals, with Charlie Wilkins, Bill Serjeantson and myself attending. We went through all the problem solving, things like dust leaks, door locks, etc. We would take a large box of parts, which went air freight to our destination.

The introduction of the Marina in April 1972 resulted in the setting up of a special task force at the factory, to find solutions and to pass these on to the dealers. The dealers were always complaining about things like water leaks.

The main problem was that you had to build it right on the line. You had to deal with these problems on the line – if you just push them off the line with the faults not fixed, you are just changing the problem to fixing it in the field. *Build them right the first time!*

Our labour force took time to adjust to the different methods required with the Marina, compared to the earlier FWD cars. There was a mylar strip on the front and back windows of the earlier cars, however on the Marina there was a chrome strip as part of the window rubber, which had to be carefully inserted into the body aperture. If it wasn't fitted correctly, it was bloody difficult to make it work – the water just pissed in everywhere. The rear air vents on the side used to go flop-flop-flop because the little rubber seals weren't fitted correctly. Little things like that happened, primarily because the workforce just weren't used to building a car like the Marina.

The dash/facia was probably the worst feature on a lot of our cars – including the Kimberley, Marina and P76. The dash was right in front of the driver, so any faults were always visible – too many gaps and poor fits. There were too many bits and pieces in its design, far too many bits to look at. The dash should have been made in one piece, or most of it anyway.

The Marina glovebox had to fit in three different planes. The top of the dash sloped one way, the bottom sloped the other way, and the lid then hinged from the bottom. The P76 was the same – the dash was the most complicated part to put together during assembly, to get all the gaps just right – the Kimberley was the same. The gaps are always where you don't want them – right in front of the driver.

We had a problem with the exhaust pipe on the Marina, it used to kink off, at the bottom just where it went into the gearbox bell housing. The pipe was being squeezed off, resulting in a loss of power because the engine was moving backwards and forwards.

When did you become aware of the P76 model ?

BE: We first heard of a new large car when they set up the Advance Model Group, upstairs in CAB 2. Barry Anderson, Syd Ferguson and Don Imison were all involved in the AMG when it was set up in the late 1960's. Initially they were looking at concepts. The Service Department were asked to look at certain things and to give an opinion. The Austin 1800 V8 was the first real concept to come out of the AMG.

Then came the MEP series of vehicles, P76 mechanicals inside HK Holden bodies. Finally there was the full-bodied P76 prototypes. There was a fair amount of security, especially around the experimental department. The prototypes were always locked away – you couldn't just walk into experimental.

Service got involved with the "Planning Build P76", a yellow V8 automatic. YX 410 was one of the first off-tool samples from the presses at Zetland. It was body number 4 or 5 from memory, and had been hand built by the planning people in the SMBD. After the completed body shell had been painted in CAB 1, it was moved to a special enclosed compound in CAB 3, just opposite the experimental department. Security was tight – you couldn't get in there unless you were working on the car. All of the components for this car were fitted as they became available, suspension, drive line, interior, etc. Service Dept people got involved, as they had to know how the whole thing went together – it was "hands on" experience.

The V8 engine was late coming back to us from Lynx Engineering. They were meant to do the machining of the raw blocks, as the V8 engine line was not complete in the Unit Plant (engine assembly building) at the factory. The car was completed, ready to go except for the missing engine. The block was brought back from Lynx, who were dragging their feet. This became the first V8 engine to be machined and assembled in the factory Unit Plant – all the bits had to be machined from raw castings. When complete and assembled, this V8 engine was fitted into the Planning Build prototype.

It was quite a lengthy procedure. There were lots of issues in putting that car together. The production people were responsible for building it, under the direction of Don Imison, who was then in charge of Planning. I drove this car to Bondi Beach for a quick photo session in very early 1973, with three other Leyland people aboard, including a visitor from NZMC. The car was first registered in November 1973 as my company car, and I later purchased it from the factory.

The P76 Press Launch must have been a very busy time for everyone ?

BE: A number of departments had to prepare four cars each for the P76 launch in Canberra in the autumn / winter of 1973. They were: experimental, service, production and I think product investigation. Something like 16 cars were prepared for the launch, the full range with 6 cylinder and V8 models, including Deluxe, Super and Executive. All of the cars were prepared off line, with a fair amount of detail going into them. Eight cars were sent down on trucks, and the other eight were driven down by a team of people.

I drove a 6 cylinder Level 2 (Deluxe) automatic. Our convoy meeting place was the Crossroads Hotel just out of Liverpool, at a very early hour. By the time I reached the Crossroads, my right leg was so sore it wasn't funny. The throttle pedal was very hard to push down. Kjell Eriksen was driving a Level 4 V8 (Executive), and when he arrived I told him it was damn hard work driving the car I had. We quickly got rid of a number of return springs: the gearbox return spring (throttle valve / downshift valve on the gearbox), plus the one on the cam, plus the carburettor return spring, as well as the galloping-great spring from the accelerator pedal to the underside of the firewall area. These were all "snipped off", and left in the car park of Crossroads Hotel, as we took off heading for Canberra. The car I was driving was a lot better after that.

After arrival in Canberra, we used the Larke Hoskins workshop, where all the cars were serviced and cleaned up in readiness for the Press Release. It was a long day, with plenty of hard work. We had accommodation at the Lakeside Hotel, and I insisted that a number of the special "P76 jackets" made for the launch were sent around to the people doing all the servicing and preparation (I got a purple jacket).

There were some production / assembly problems with the early P76's ?

BE: The P76 was an excellent car, but it was not a "production-good" car. It was probably beyond Leyland's capacity to build at that stage, with a lack of resources. As an example, that dash assembly relied on everything being just right, absolutely 100%. If it wasn't, it looked bloody terrible. When you put the padded dash cover on it may have looked all right, however the sheet steel behind that where the filler piece went in between the instrument cluster had to be spot on, likewise the steel-work on the lower A pillar – if that projected in you needed to prune that back to allow that filler piece to go in and fit properly.

There were also inconsistencies from component suppliers that exacerbated the assembly problems. The dash / facia was a recurring nightmare on the assembly lines.

The lower vent rail below the dash was another problem area, getting that to line up properly. Compare that layout with the simple layout that the workers had been previously used to with the Austin 1800. The switches for lights and wipers were poorly located on the P76, again contributing to fit problems during assembly.

In theory, the diecast corners of the car were a good idea, however in practice they were another problem area for assembly – trying to get them to fit the bodies became a labour-intensive task. The fitting of the front and rear light/indicator units into the diecast corners added to the problems. Everything had to be dead right for all of the items, otherwise you had problems. Everything relied on the contour of the guard being exactly as per the drawing, and then the retaining panels that the diecast corners bolted to had to be spot on also, otherwise the fit was dreadful.

The theory was fine – if you binged one corner of the car, then you just replaced the diecast corner panel. However the problem these gave during production cancelled out any advantages they might have had in general service. The tooling at the outside component supplier had to be spot on also, which meant another factor in poor body fits. I have no doubt that these corner panels are a curse to car restorers in more recent years, as they try to match up a set to fit the car body.

The P76 was a much superior car to its contemporary rivals, despite the fact that we didn't have the facilities that our competitors enjoyed at that time. We spent chicken feed on P76 development compared to the budgets our rivals had.

Part 2 in next months issue

Thank you to Gary and James for the article and to Bruce for allowing us to publish it

FOR SALE

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Ultra B-O-N-D



Nigel Woodward
PROPRIETOR

7a Caple Street, Willagee WA 6156

Mobile: 0419 912 915

Do you need a discount towing service
Give statewide towing a GO
Don't forget to tell him you're a P76 club member.
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10 Bellamy St O Connor 6163

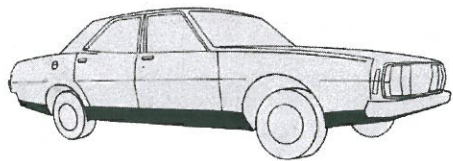


- Windscreen Chip Repairs
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- Plastic Headlight Polishing
- Bore Water Removal
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/ KWINANA W.A. 6167

LEYLAND P76 Owners Club of West Australia inc.



QLD P76 Owners Club
PO BOX 343
Carina
QLD 4152

