

WESTWORDS

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Can you identify this movie that featured the P76?

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE LEYLAND P76 OWNERS CLUB OF AUSTRALIA (WA DIVISION) Inc

Leyland P76

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

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

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

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EDITOR'S CORNER:

This 40th Anniversary year of the Leyland P76 is entering into its most interesting phase. The imminent weekend Club Run to Collie and Mandurah along with the upcoming Forrest Place display and the celebratory weekend in Canberra to be followed by the AGM and Annual Dinner in July are no doubt engaging the minds of your Club Committee. To "crown" it all off we have the amazing Peking to Paris 12,247km marathon Rally with the equally amazing Crown and Bryson team weighing in their P76 at No 90 out of a total 100 entries. The Rally is scheduled to end on the Saturday of the Canberra 40th Anniversary weekend. A top place for the Leyland entry would be a most fitting climax for the car's 40th birthday. Another interesting development is delivery, in June, of ordered Trax models of the 1974 World Cup Rally P76 originally crewed by Evan Green and John Bryson (*see page 6*). Their victory in the special stage of the Targa Florio racing circuit in Sicily gave rise to the release of the much-loved Targa Florio edition of the P76. Interestingly, but disappointingly, the May 60th Anniversary issue *Wheels* magazine includes an excellent article on the Targa Florio circuit that omits any mention of the *Wheels* 1973 Car of the Year's stunning performance in May 1974. Indeed the Leyland's only appearance in the special issue of *Wheels* is a postage-stamp size illustration near the centre of the cover collage. Your editor saw fit to email a comment to that prestigious magazine in the hope that the matter will be addressed in a later issue. But I'm not holding my breath

Finally, this month we begin an intriguing article by Ryan Ford in which he recounts the amazing story of how he got a long-neglected P to rise like a phoenix from the dust to conquer this wide brown land in aid of cancer research. Enjoy!



The Lighter Side's Collection of Driver's Tales to the Traffic Cop

***To avoid a collision I ran into the other car. :: A pedestrian hit me and went under my car.
I thought the side window was down but it was up, as I found when I put my head through it. :: If
the other driver had stopped a few yards behind himself the accident would not have happened. ::
She suddenly saw me, lost her head and we met. :: Three women were talking to each other and
when two stepped back and one stepped forward I had to have an accident.***

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sam,

Having read my latest copy of *WestWords* from "cover to cover" I note on the back page that this can be received by email. I would be more than pleased to receive future copies of *WestWords* in this format, and my email address is-(*address supplied*). I look forward to future copies along with the other nominated benefits of using email.

NB—Please pass on my regards to James and Gary. Thanks & best regards

Jim Lothian, 01/05/2013.

(Thanks Jim, we look forward to others following your fine example. Ed)

Hi Sam,

Thanks for the latest edition of *WestWords* and for the words of welcome.

Concerning the Movie P76, I suspect it is from "Road Games". Not sure of the date, but starred Stacey Keach and Jamie Lee Curtis, from memory...

Cheers. Geoff Smith, 27/04/2013.

(Spot on with the movie, well done Geoff! It was released in 1981 and also starred Marion Edwards and Grant Page. Check out the cover pic for this month's mystery movie. Ed)

□□□

COVER PICTURE

This is the last of our triad of movie stills featuring the P76. Feel free to write in with your suggestions as to the name of the movie, its release date and principal stars. Ed..

□□□

WA Club Parts List

Andy Mentiplay has prepared the following parts list for interested Members:

Targa Hubcaps – set -	-	-	-	\$100.00
Rear Speaker Grills -	-	-	-	10.00
Steering Column Bushes -	-	-	-	10.00
Short handbrake cables -	-	-	-	5.00
7" Headlight Surrounds -	-	-	-	5.00
Strut-top Bushes -	-	-	-	50.00pr
V8 Air Filter elements (Genuine Ryco A259)				35.00
Lower Front Guard Rust Repair Sections -				80.00pr
Timing Cover Seal -	-	-	-	45.00
V8 Oil Filters -	-	-	-	24.00ea

Contact Andy on 93932428 or 0457038877 to place an order.

The Lighter Side

One night Rodney was driving home along a road he knew well. When he reached the Stop sign he slowed down but did not actually come to a halt, whereupon a police officer pulled Rodney's car over.

'What difference does it make' said Rodney, 'slow down or stop'. 'I will give you a demonstration' said the officer and starting beating Rodney with his truncheon.'

Now would you like me to slow down - or stop?

LEYLAND P76 OWNERS CLUB OF AUSTRALIA (WA Division) Inc.
GENERAL MEETING 29 APRIL 2013

Opened: 7.20pm

Attendance: as per the Attendance Book

Apologies: Adam Woodwards, Andrew Mentiplay, Tony M,

Previous Meeting Minutes: No Minutes available

Correspondence: PO box is locked Mick will sort it out Wed

Treasurer's Report: As Per Statement .

GENERAL BUSINESS

New Member We have a new member to the club, Geoffrey Smith of Donnybrook WA
Gary spoke to the meeting about Code 404, this is for Concessional lic cars and now puts the onus back on the member to do the right thing.

Club Inspections Member cars on Concession will be inspected on the 11th of May at Andrew Mentiplays Place Next year we will inspect them at the Two Car shows in April/May.

P76 40th Anniversary Display: Is at Forrest Place Perth CBD on the 25th of June all members Present and past are encouraged to come up and have a look.

The Annual Dinner this year will be combined with the **AGM** on the 28th of July 6.00pm for 7.00 at a venue to be announced

Coming Events: The Auzzy Muscle car day at Pinjarra was well attended with a good turn out of cars Next year we may split the cars up so that we can make a return to the Whiteman Park car show that usually is on the following week, There is a club run on Down to Collie in May

The State Meeting Run this year will be held north of the Swan River Sat the 24th and 25th of August with a night in Gin Gin and a tour of the GT Falcon museum on the Sunday.

Members cars for sale Rona Sykes has sold her P76 to James but will remain in the club as an associate member

Drive in Kenny has arranged a night out at the Kingsley Drive-in Iron Man 3 will be playing; cost is \$10.00 a head

Canberra deadline to book in for the 40th Anniversary has been extended to May the 15th

Closed: 8.47 PM



COMING EVENTS

General Club Meeting:

MONDAY 24 JUNE 2013

7.30pm

At The Kenwick Community Centre

cnr Kenwick Road & Brixton Street KENWICK

P76 Fortieth Birthday Display. Wednesday 26 June. Forrest Place, Perth. Details to be advised.

40th Anniversary Canberra Celebrations. Saturday 29 June – Sunday 30 June. Run to Gundaroo (Sat 10.00am – 2.00pm); Formal Dinner, Rydges Lakeside Hotel, Canberra (Sat 7.30pm – 12 midnight); Concours, Old parliament House Lawns (Sun 10.00am – 3.00pm)

Combined Annual General Meeting and Annual Dinner. Sunday 28 July. Venue, time and guest speaker to be advised.

Joint Club Run. Sunday 15 September. Meet with Austin Club members at Centrepont Shopping Centre, Midland, 9.30am for 10.00am departure heading towards York for a BBQ Lunch and visit to a P76 “graveyard” property.

Annual State Meet. Gidgegannup. October. Visit to Tony’s Autos. Details to be advised.



PROJECT P.76

(This is the fourth in a series of articles submitted to WestWords by club member David Fox of Canberra.)

Chassis layout objectives and compromises

Basic Decisions

1. BLMC’s need for a car in the Australian medium size category is to be filled by the P76. Its size and price requirements dictated that it could not be based upon any existing or proposed UK Model.
2. The extremely limited engineering resources of BLMC (Australia) and the necessity to incur minimal tooling costs both dictated that the mechanical systems be simple, based on proven principles and comprise components which, where possible are used by other manufacturers.
3. It was realised that the technical resources such as front wheel drive, Hydrolastic Suspension, four wheel independent Suspension, etc. would be lost, and that the P76 mechanical layout could be received by the public as “just another motor car”.
4. It was also realised that our engineering resources would be hard pressed to execute this piece of conventional engineering as well as our competitors who have much larger facilities.
5. The basic chassis decisions have been taken in an attempt to meet the requirements of (2) above and at the same time produce a vehicle of more European character than our competitors.

Comment

This says it all!

BLMC (Australia) later Leyland Australia needed a vehicle to compete with the Holden Kingswood, the Ford Falcon and the Valiant range. But BLMC (Australia) were the poor cousin of the other car manufactures in Australia. This drove the need for commonality of mechanical systems such as door hardware, radiators, tyre sizes, gearboxes, differentials etc. Interesting that the design team thought that it could be considered “just another motor car”. This probably drove the advertising campaign “anything but average”. We now start to get a picture of basic decisions ie conventional engineering but European character.

More next month.

David Fox

STRANGE VEHICLES NO 3



Wonder where he keeps the spare!



1974 WORLD CUP RALLY

Order now for
delivery in June

The P76 rally car which gave rise to the Targa Florio...

Leyland's P76 was marketed as 'Anything But Average' and the newcomer was awarded Wheels magazine 'Car of the Year' in December 1973. Trax has released several street versions of the P76, but this latest model celebrates perhaps the most famous P76 of all time: Evan Green and John Bryson's 1974 World Cup Rally contender. Their most outstanding (and unexpected) achievement was setting the fastest time record on the Targa Florio leg of the UDT World Rally. This achievement inspired Leyland to use 'Targa Florio' as the brand name for its upmarket sedan released in 1974. Trax have taken great care to capture the unique 'camel filter' nose, twin-tube rear bumper and original 'Big Brut' livery of this trail-blazing rally car. Bring a piece of World Cup Rally history home today!



Note: A photograph of this model will appear in the next Trax catalogue.

Code TR42H

Leyland P76 - 1974 World Cup Rally / Evan Green and John Bryson \$42.95

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British Leyland: Chronicle of a Car Crash 1968-1978

By Chris Cowin

The following is Part 2 of a scanned extract from the above book.

The P76 was a vast rear-wheel drive sedan, styled partly by Michelotti but with a strong American flavour, and capable of carrying a 44 gallon barrel in its cavernous trunk. It shared little with any other British Leyland car, the exception being the engine which was either a 4.4 litre V8 developed from the Rover V8, or the 2.6 litre "E" series. The 4.4 version of the V8 had originally been developed for use in the Rover P8, aborted in 1971, and some other aspects of that vehicle's engineering, and that of the Rover SD1, are believed to have influenced the P76.

For a brief period all appeared set fair, with Leyland's new car being favourably reviewed by the Australian press and the V8 voted "Car of the Year" by Wheels magazine. There were plans to export the top-line Executive model to Britain to be sold under the Vanden Plas brand, and Leyland Australia pushed ahead with development work on an estate model and on the Force 7 coupé, a huge hatchback which shared few exterior panels with the saloon.

But Leyland's dreams rapidly began to sour during the latter part of 1973 and into 1974. In common with the rest of the world, Australia was hit by the oil crisis of October 1973, which both increased the price of fuel and sparked an economic downturn. The prospects for a car like the P76 darkened considerably. And production at the Zetland plant was hit by industrial disputes, fires, power failures and a shortage of components. It was a situation depressingly similar to that surrounding the later launch of the Rover SD1 at Solihull. In addition, it proved difficult to build the huge P76 within the tight confines of a factory conceived to build more compact vehicles.

There were also allegations that Leyland's American rivals, concerned at the threat to a market traditionally dominated, were behind a "whispering campaign" which sought to capitalize on some of the quality problems suffered on early cars, and may have put pressure on Leyland's suppliers to slow deliveries of components, which resulted in a stockpile of unfinished cars.

Meanwhile, 12,000 miles away, British Leyland had been plunged into deficit by the collapse in the UK and European car markets, exacerbated by industrial action, and during 1974 began to be seen as a candidate for nationalization. The losses which continued to be made in Australia were increasing hard to tolerate.

Matters came to a head in mid-1974, around the time Tony Benn was informing Donald Stokes that the State would step in to support British Leyland rather than see financial constraints force the curtailment of capital investment. In Australia Peter North and David Beech, seen as "the father of the P76", left the company while 1,000 employees were made redundant.

North was replaced by the 31 year old David Abell, formerly Treasurer of British Leyland, who stated he wanted to see Leyland Australia returned to profit within two years. During 1974 the Industries Commission of the Australian Government published a report criticizing over-capacity in the Australian car industry, and appearing to recommend a switch from four to three major producers as the solution. There was talk of raising the local content requirement of Australian-built cars, which though not a threat to the P76, limited Leyland's scope to cut costs on other models in future.

The report also fuelled rumours that Leyland, known to be experiencing problems with the P76, might cease production, which damaged sales and profitability further. Volkswagen, who had led the small car market during the sixties, had already retreated from Australian manufacturing, and would close their remaining assembly operations in 1976.

The British Leyland parent company reported a loss of £24 million for the financial year 1973/74 ending on September 30th, which included a £11.8 million provision for the cost of ceasing manufacturing in Australia, though the actual cost was later put at £16 million.

Amid much acrimony, the Zetland plant was closed in October 1974, with the loss of over 5,000 jobs. This spelt the end for the P76 of which 18,000 had been produced during 18 months, although CKD assembly continued in New Zealand into 1976. The Force 7 coupé was still-born, with all but 9 of the 57 pilot-build cars being sent to be crushed. The P82 project to replace the Marina was abandoned, as were plans to build a V6 version of the V8 engine. Tooling for the Leyland Marina and the 2.6 litre "Big Red" engine was shipped to South Africa.

The Force 7 was perhaps the ultimate monument to British Leyland's dashed ambitions, a car rather vaingloriously conceived in happier times which would have taken the Corporation into a completely new market segment. The development costs were not totally wasted, for much of the engineering of its vast hatch was carried over to the Rover SD1.

From being one of "the big four" in the car market, Leyland Motor Corporation Australia reduced car production to CKD assembly of the Mini and Moke which continued until 1978. The Zetland site was sold to the Australian Government for \$25 million, which disappeared into the black hole of British Leyland's corporate finances during 1975, the year the British State established a majority shareholding. For 1974/75, BLMC's losses ballooned to £123.5 million which included further provisions associated with the withdrawal not just from Australia, but also Italy and Spain.

Land Rover assembly from kits continued alongside the Mini at the Enfield plant, as did the direct import of specialist vehicles. During the early seventies some Rover, Triumph and Jaguar cars were imported to Australia having been assembled by British Leyland in New Zealand, but this gave way to direct import from the UK by the end of the decade.

Influenced by concerns of over-capacity in the industry, the Australian Government had encouraged Leyland to close Zetland rather than subsidize the operation, as the British Government felt compelled to do in the similar circumstances of Chrysler UK in 1975. It sweetened this bitter pill for Australia's politicians to brand the P76 as "a dud" which was the term used by Premier Gough Whitlam, or as "a lemon".

If Leyland had remained in the Australian family sedan business, it would have found itself needing to field a competitor for the downsized Holden Commodore that arrived in 1978, followed by the XD Ford Falcon of 1979, cars that were similar to the European Opel Rekord and Ford Granada and thus comparable to the Rover SD1. The disappearance of the previous Holden Kingswood and Ford XB Falcon would have left the P76 as "the last of the dinosaurs".

If manufactured in Australia (as in South Africa) the SD1 could have adopted the six cylinder and V8 engines of the P76, raising the intriguing prospect of a 4.4 litre Rover SD1. Leyland Australia did market the Rover from 1978, with some adaptations to meet local requirements, but as an import it was an expensive car sold in low volumes. CKD assembly of the Peugeot 505 was undertaken for a while, but by 1983 JRA Limited (as the company was renamed) was marketing only the SD1 and a Rover badged Honda Quintet alongside Land Rover and Jaguar models.

The Australian car industry continued to be plagued with over-capacity, despite Leyland's exit from manufacturing, not helped by the appearance of new plants building Japanese vehicles.

A surprisingly high number of the P76 cars survive, given that total production of 18,007 ranks the car midway between the Austin 3 litre and the Triumph Stag. Australia's relatively benign climate and the "rotodip" treatment applied during manufacture may have helped keep rust at bay. The car has also attracted something of a cult following, with Australian opinion sharply divided between those who believe P76 was an "Australian Edsel" or "half a car", and those who feel it was a brave attempt to build a true Australian car that deserved to do better.

To British eyes it appears just another "yank tank" at first sight, although splattered incongruously with the British Leyland roundel. The high rear end is standard practice today, but in 1973 earned the car the nickname "the cheese wedge", two years in advance of the Princess. Even if the oil crisis had not intervened, it is hard to imagine the P76 convincing as a luxury car in Britain as once planned, any more than Chrysler's short-lived 1968 attempt to replace the big Humber with the Valiant.

Whatever its merits, the attempt to put Leyland Australia on a sound footing, including the development of the P76, placed a severe strain on British Leyland's resources. David Andrews, former head of Leyland International, bracketed the Australian venture together with BLMC's ill-fated manufacturing scheme in Italy, which also involved the production of a market-specific car (The Innocenti 90/120), and the equally disastrous foray into Spanish car production.

These three projects cost British Leyland over £100 million, in the view of Andrews. Although inflation blurs the picture somewhat, this should be seen in the context of BLMC's total gross profit for the seven years 1968-75, of only £200 million.

Chris Cowin's book can be purchased via Amazon.com for approximately \$23 including postage

□□□

0-100kmh in 1.5secs!



No animals were harmed in the making of this picture

□□□

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER

For the third month in a row we welcome another new member to the Club. Jim Taylor travelled with your Editor to the recent All-Aussie Day at Pinjarra and was so impressed by his ride in a Targa and the Club display that he decided to join the action. Be sure to extend a hand to Jim when you meet him at a Club event.

The Lighter Side

While driving down a highway I approached a van which had on the back "Caution, this van is being driven by a blind man". As I passed this vehicle the name on the side indicated that it was a delivery van for "Acme Venetian Blinds".

A LEYLAND LEGEND: The Rise of a P76 Phoenix

By Ryan Ford

In the summer of 1996 our family was heading down to our little beach house in the bayside community of St Leonards, about 30km east of Geelong. As a beach loving, petrol headed 16 year old I always enjoyed going down there, going out on the water, hanging around the boat ramp, watching them come in and out and even getting Dad to teach me how to drive in the paddocks behind town. On this particular year we had a group of family friends coming down with us who had rented a house about a 3 minute walk from our own. I'd been going to this town my whole life, and as close as this street was to our house, I had never gone down it before. It was a dead end street

at the time that went nowhere of interest. As we arrived, I jumped on my bike and went up to meet them, but before I arrived at the front door, in a vacant lot just opposite their house a sad, rusty, abandoned car caught my eye. It was not something that I had recalled seeing before, which was unusual for a car loving teen like myself. As I walked around the foot long grass, it was obvious that the car had been there a long time. Rust had well and truly taken a grip on the poor thing, the rear quarters crumbled like dead wood when you knocked them, but what struck me was the Navy Blue colour and the neat white stripes and writing along the side and boot that read "Targa Florio". I went

up to my Dad who has a similar, but not as passionate, interest in cars and asked him "Dad, what's that??" and his reply was, "Why, that's an old P76"

Intrigued as I was, I sought to find out what I could, remembering that this was before the Internet was readily available. The car's history captured me, not only the controversy, but also the effort that Leyland was making to break into the lucrative, large car market at the time. I continued to visit the car whenever I could, trying to get a better understanding of it, what it was, why it was and why it did not succeed. This went on until one day, I went to visit the old girl and all that was left was a dead patch of grass where she last lay. I was saddened to think that she most likely would have been sent to the tip. Unfortunately, the condition that she was in probably did not warrant anything besides that. My old friend had departed, the Omega Navy Targa Florio was gone, but the interest was far from over.

Turning 18 came and went and I acquired a little Toyota T18, a good little learner car but I still had a very active interest in the P76. Just before I turned 20, a mate of mine bought himself a schmick XW Fairmont V8 with matching numbers. I thought to myself, maybe it's time to upgrade and low and behold, I found, in the bayside suburb of Seaford, a Targa Florio for sale for \$4500. We jumped in the car and headed down to be greeted with the rotting shell of an old Targa sitting in the front yard. We almost kept driving, but having driven nearly an hour, we thought we better at least have a look. It was a genuine Targa, had all the trimmings, but I was thinking, this thing is a waste of time as that body was beyond repair, until the fella said, "Come to my garage". There we were greeted with an almost factory body, perfect in every way, sprayed up and then the penny dropped; the rotten body was a donor car for this shell. This promised to be an amazing opportunity, but the size of the project, my finances and trying to convince the parents to let me keep not 1 but 2 cars in their 3 car driveway was too much, and I had to let it go. Soon after I acquired a 1967 XR Fairmont that was running, in reasonable, restorable condition and I still own it, the P76 dream was put to sleep... for a while.

Ten years passed and I still use to keep an eye on eBay and car sales to see what was out there, but this was nothing more than window shopping. Then in 2010 a few mates of mine told me about this rally that they had entered into where you have to spend under \$1000 and drive across the country and raise money for the Cancer Council. Not having immediately drawn parallels between the rally and using a P76 for the cause, I registered my interests. 2011 & 2012 came and went and given the huge amount of interest in the rally, we missed out both years. However, 2013 was going to be different, we registered early and we knew that there would be more places this year, and we knew it would be a big one. Come May 2012 I started looking at prospective P76 rally cars.

P76's are a rare commodity in Victoria, let alone getting a working one for under \$1000. But sure enough, one came up in Healesville, about 60k's, from home. Dad and I headed up there one Sunday, he was asking \$500 starting bid, buy it now for \$850. It appeared to be a Deluxe Luxury Pack V8 and on the surface presented ok. But the motor would not turn, the auto was a known

liability as it did not work and the spare tyre would have fallen through the floor, if there was one there. But with a budget of \$1000 and a non negotiable \$850 or best offer being asked, too many question marks hung over the head of this P and we had to walk. A few weeks later another Deluxe appeared near Bendigo. It had been sitting in a paddock for many years but we were told she was a runner, \$500 starting bid on eBay, this one sounded like it had potential. SOUNDED like it had potential, we found her with a boot speckled with rust holes, a rear screen that barely held itself in place, and this “running” motor, was not turning due to electrical issues. There were probably more spiders in the car than you would see in a lifetime, the dash was warped, the ignition clearly has issues as nothing lit up on the dash when you turned her on. Even if it did, the sheer state of disrepair that the body was in warranted a lot more than a little bog and spray, there were serious structural and safety issues with this one, once again, we walked. My efforts were appearing to be in vain, maybe a P76 was too far out of my budgets reach for the rally? \$1000 doesn't buy much of a car and maybe finding a sound body with a working motor seemed to be over extending my reaches a little bit. Then one day scouting eBay another P76 appeared, I hadn't noticed this one previously as it was not listed as a “Car” but more as “Parts” which sets par for the course really. The pictures were nothing too flattering, 2 cars, a Dry Red Super V8 and a rolling shell Bold as Brass Deluxe, both for \$500. The Super was relatively complete, albeit missing a door. The Deluxe appeared to have the missing pieces needed to put the body back together, but it was only 4 pictures, and they weren't pretty. They were located about 90mins from home, I didn't even call the seller up.

Some weeks passed, the 2 P76's were still for sale and no other P76's had come up that fit the bill, then an email came through. Our application had been accepted into the rally!! Without any real alternatives and having nothing to do that afternoon, I figured what the hell, Ill go down and see these 2 P's. Having spoken with the owner he advised that there should be enough parts in the collection to put 1 working car together, but a new Auto would be needed. He also said that the motor was a runner and the body was good. I was thinking . . . sure, I have heard this all before, but none the less, I made the trip down.

The Deluxe was the one I visited first, and she sat sadly in a paddock about 15 minutes south of Morwell. This car had obviously been handed around to many owners for many years who had progressively stripped her of any useful parts, but the body appeared remarkably sound for something that appeared to be as unloved as this was. Buoyed by this I made my way up the road to visit the Super.



Upon initial inspection, my heart sank and I thought I had just wasted an afternoon again chasing a P76 rally contender. The passenger door was missing, the bonnet was on the roof, the bumpers, the grill, and the indicator surrounds were all off, the radiator was missing, the water pump was nowhere to be seen, the alternator was nowhere to be seen, the wiring where the coil was supposed to be was a tangled mess. But worst of all, the main brown wires that run off the starter motor had shorted on the extractors and melted ALL the way around the engine bay back to where the alternator was supposed to be. But underneath this hideous mess lie a surprisingly clean body, the boot was spotless, the chassis was clean but had obviously been repaired at some stage, the rear screen was rust free and the Deluxe looked like it had everything I needed to get

her back together. I told the fella I was very keen but really wanted to hear the motor running, and he assured me that could be done. I don't know what I was thinking that day, if it were desperation after seeing many wrecks, or if I really did see the potential in this old dame, but whether I knew it or not at the time, I had just found the car I was going to drive around Australia in!



Two weeks later I was making the arrangements to pick the car up when I got a call from the seller, the motor would not turn. Hoping that it might be just a bad contact or weak battery, we soldiered on and took the car trailer down to the La Trobe valley for the 2 return trips needed for the cars. The engine cranking issue was hydro lock, once we took the spark plugs out she turned and pumped the water out, but an engine full of water!!??? How long had this been for. None the less as a result of the engine issue and failure to get it running, along with the seller appreciating what we planned to do with his old P's and auction it off at the end, the price was dropped from \$500 to \$200. We loaded them up and headed home, his parting words were, "These cars get under your skin", he could not have been more correct. *(to be continued next issue)*



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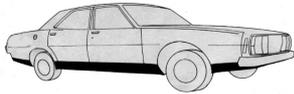
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