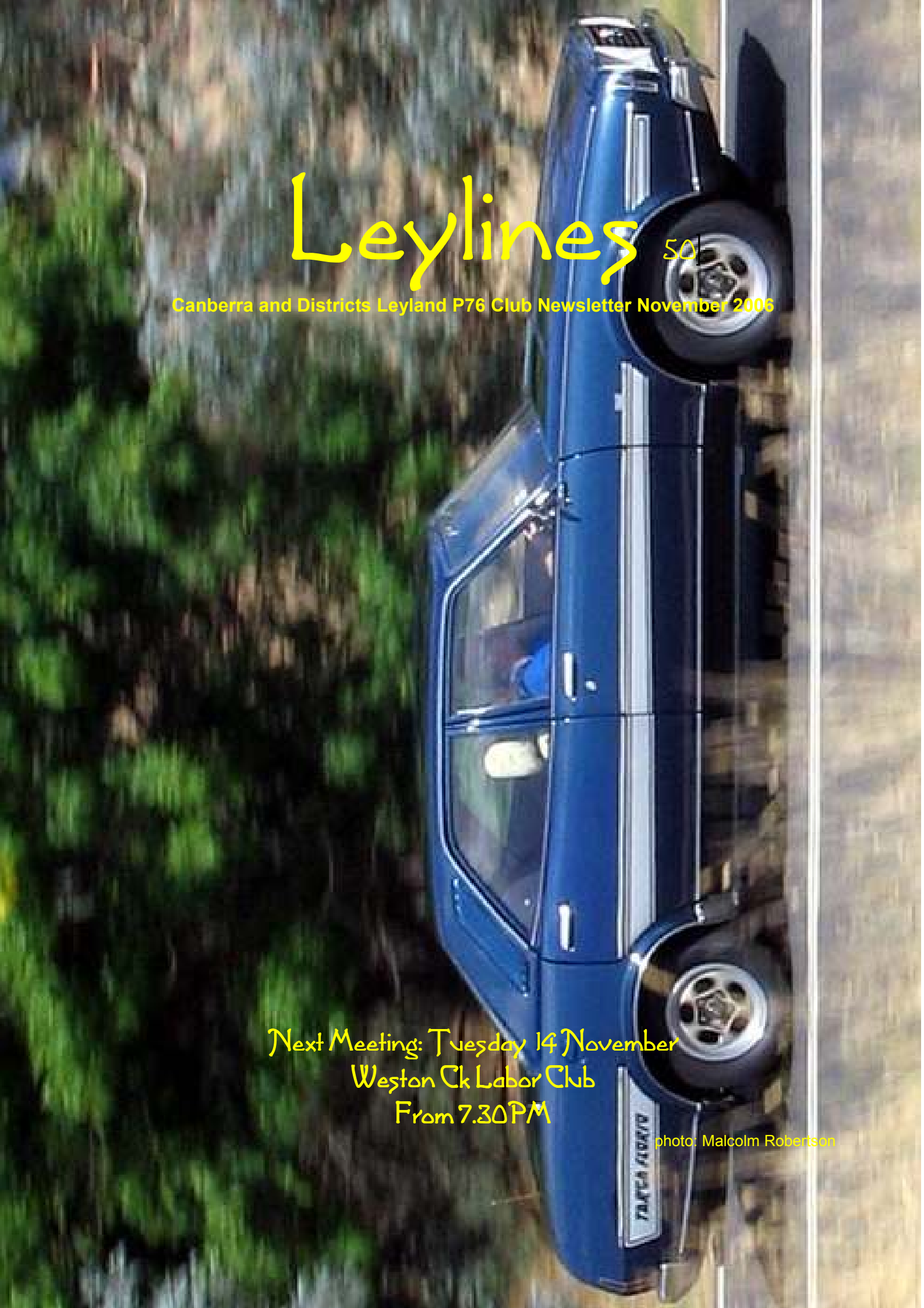


Leylines 50

Canberra and Districts Leyland P76 Club Newsletter November 2006

Next Meeting: Tuesday 14 November
Weston Ck Labor Club
From 7.30PM

photo: Malcolm Robertson



Presidential Pearls



Last month was a sad time with the sudden loss of a great ambassador for the P76. On behalf of the club I extend our greatest sympathy to Gwen and the Livingstone family at this time of sorrow.

Having known Michael Livingstone for over 10 years, I am sure he would have been very pleased with his funeral. An enormous group of family and friends gathered at his church to bid him farewell. Many of them were fellow motoring enthusiasts, so this also meant that there were very many great old cars as far as the eye could see.

His coffin left the church in a beautiful '60s Fairlane hearse, followed by the Targa Florio and Model A cars that the family rode in. Then what I can only guess, following were almost one hundred historic cars of almost every persuasion. I was a bit disappointed my P76 was back home in the garage still in a state of disassembly, but I know he was also most approving of the Typhoon and would not have been offended by its presence.

I always knew he was an enthusiast but I had never really stopped to consider just how car-mad he actually was. I had been to his house and seen his garage, and that should have given me a clue. Then there was the ever increasing memorabilia collection in the house, in a room I think was once the dinning room. But it wasn't until his funeral, when I listened to his family detail memories of his life, like the oversized toy cars he brought to the hospital for each new child and grandchild, and looking at his coffin adorned with images of P76s and Model A Fords, that I realised how so full of enthusiasm for cars he was.

Yet he still had more than enough time for his family and always time for a chat with a friend.

Goodbye Michael, we will all miss you.

Alex



Editor's Note



The significant happening in the P76 world in the past month was the sad passing of Michael Livingstone, one of the great stalwarts of the P76 movement. Alex, Damo, Geoff and Christian attended his funeral, and Alex and Damo's tributes are included in this month's Leylines.

Damo has also been busy pursuing his interest in P76 station wagons. He's been in touch with Warrewyck Williams who provided details of his replica wagon and its history. Damo has turned it into an article for Leylines, and it's a good read. And if you are looking to add to your collection of P76 literature, take a look at Damo's review of *Evan Green's World of Motor Sport*.

See you on Tuesday

Col

Exactly the same...only different

Alex

I was intrigued the other day to find yet another connection between the two different cars I drive. You see they both have model variants with almost the same name.

As you know, I drive an Executive P76 of which there was a 2 door variant called the Force 7. I also drive an FPV Typhoon of which there is now a luxury variant called the Force 6. And there is a Luxury version of the FPV GT called the Force 8.



Although I can't quite see the value compared to my current FPV, I think an extra \$10k for a smaller boot lid spoiler, electric memory seats, 19 inch wheels and red, rather than black seat leather, is a bit much.

But such are the vagaries of the universe I feel it much more likely that I would end up owning a Force 6 long before I had a Force 7. Especially after considering the ease of availability of a Force 6 compared to a Force 7, and the unwillingness of my wife to permit me to spend more than a few thousand dollars on anything remotely P76 related...

Michael Livingstone RIP

Damien Haas



Michael's much loved cars which made the final drive with him.

It was a shock to hear that Michael Livingstone had died. I knew he had been ill for some time but he seemed so optimistic. I found out, via email that he had died suddenly and I decided that I would go to his funeral. I have only met Michael maybe a dozen times over the course of the last three years or so, but he was an engaging, gregarious person who gave a lot to the P76 and the historic car movement broadly.

I emailed the rest of the ACT Club members and was glad to see that Alex and Geoff decided to also attend. Geoff's son Christian also came along.

The service was held in Cootamundra at the Sacred Heart church. There was a turnout of over 200 people. Many from Cootamundra, but also people who had travelled some distance to attend. I recognised ten or twelve folks from the P76 movement in the crowd. The historic car movement was out in force to farewell Michael.

Michael sure loved his cars. Especially the Model A and the P76. Painted on his coffin were his woody model A and his aspen green Targa, among others. There was also a small model of his woody Model A which his family had placed on the coffin. The eulogies from his family and friends all attested to his generosity, good humour, love of family, community spirit and of course his obsession with cars.



Fittingly, he was carried to the cemetery in a late '60s black V8 Fairlane hearse and accompanied by a procession of at least 60 historic and vintage cars. At the front was his family driving his Model A woody, Model A boat tail racer, Model A Tudor, Aspen Green Targa, and the red Capri he had bought for Gwen to celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary a few weeks earlier.

Naturally with so many fine examples of automobile present, people's thoughts turned to cars and there were lots of 'oohs' and 'aahs' and 'look at that one' as the procession of historic cars went to the cemetery behind Michael. I think Michael would have liked that. In a eulogy from one of his daughters, she mentioned that after he died on Sunday a

family member was checking his email and discovered that Michael had won an eBay auction for a car part after he had died.

I will miss Michael. I first met him a month after I joined the ACT P76 Club, at the 30th Anniversary Nationals. I was impressed with his Targa and asked him lots of questions all of which he answered patiently. I sat on the same table as Gwen and Michael at the Dinner at the Lakeside – to which Michael wore a suit AND supplied the original banner that hung at the P76 launch in the same establishment 30 years earlier. Despite a healthy sense of humour, he took this car stuff seriously. Anyone who saw the professionalism of the Easter nationals this year would agree with me. Gwen told me that she realised very early on she had to love cars as much as Michael did.



I spoke to him less than two weeks ago when we talked about him putting power steering into Gwen's car. He said he didn't have the strength anymore to drive a manual steering car. He and Gwen had been driving to Canberra weekly for (I think) stem cells to be harvested for his treatment.

Every time we met he would ask me when I was going to fix up my car. If you could all see how immaculately presented his cars were you would understand why he kept ribbing me about my black P76! I read an email from James Mentiplay where he talked about Michael raising the standard for the P76, and that is certainly true. Not only did he raise the quality of restorations and make other people spend more effort, time and care on their restorations, but he raised the standard and proclaimed the benefits of the Leyland P76 to all those who would mock it.



Michael Livingstone's award winning Aspen Green Targa Florio at Temora in August this year. I believe it was the last motoring event he attended.

It was truly moving for all that attended. I think Gwen and his family would feel better after seeing the enormous number of people that cared for Michael and had attended his funeral to pay their last respects. Farewell Michael.

Restoring the replica

Warrewyk Williams

It was 1989 when I first heard about the “clone” P76 wagon and had even contemplated converting a sedan to a wagon myself, but the further into it I looked, the more difficult the project appeared. Unless one has seriously investigated or has had a chance to see a factory-made P76 Wagon I don't believe they could appreciate the differences or work involved in building this type of vehicle.

When I was in Cootamundra for the P76 Nationals at Easter, I had chance to visit Michael Livingston who, due to health problems, had elected to sell the P76 ‘Clone’ wagon he had purchased from Anton Franks in Adelaide. As I understand, Anton himself had purchased the vehicle from Larry Cole, the gentleman who built the wagon in Mildura, Victoria. Though I have never met Larry personally, he has earned my great respect for not only building the wagon but his attention to detail in making this vehicle appear as close to a factory Executive model as could be expected.

From what I can piece together, Mr Cole took a V8 4 speed Deluxe P76 that had sustained front end damage to the front D/S corner of the vehicle including the D/S front guard and rebuilt it into the wagon, using a Bitter Apricot Executive as a donor vehicle as well as an XY Fairmont Wagon to supply the basic componentry of the rear tailgate area. I say basic componentry as after actually looking carefully at the construction of this area it becomes obvious there is precious little Ford left.



*The replica wagon after a cleanup. Nice Exec interior.
I like the fold down centre in the rear seat*

While the tailgate is based on a Fairmont tailgate, in reality only the inner panel has been retained as the sides and bottom panel areas have been remade to a P76 shape. Obviously the outer skin is from a P76 boot-lid but even the hinges are not Ford hinges, these items have been fabricated to suit the specific application. As the Ford torsion rods could not be used to relieve the weight of the tailgate when opening, a custom-made

torsion rod system was installed to suit the P76. Wiring for the electric window had been rerouted to suit the P76 application also. In fact as P76 tailgates go, from the outside at least, the only give-aways to its non-genuine heritage are the indented upper paneling, a leftover from the skin's boot-lid heritage, the key switch being mounted in the centre of the tailgate as opposed to the D Pillar on the genuine article (the factory-built Leyland wagon did not have this and thus presented a much cleaner rear end) and finally the tips of the hinges protruding from both lower, side, corners rather than from under the tailgate. (Personally I think this might actually look better!)



Fairmont tailgate and Larry Cole's handmade wagon tailgate.

The problem in this area is simply the sheer amount of rust present. Mr Cole while being brilliant with his panel beating seemed to fail when it came to proof-coating his work and this apparent unfortunate oversight has seen the tailgate rust out to a point where it is unrepairable. (I know Joe Green will say, and I'd agree, that nothing's unrepairable, but



the sheer amount of time and labour makes this exercise uneconomical.) While the wagon came with a spare Falcon tailgate, the precise problem here is exactly that – it is a Falcon and not a Fairmont tailgate – and while the two are similar, the wind-up window of the Falcon has additional substructure that would need to be cut out prior to its use for the P76. Fortunately, on my first foray onto eBay for some time I discovered a Fairmont tailgate in excellent condition and managed to secure this for the princely sum of \$21, an amount for which, I'm sure, the seller was not exactly impressed.

Obtaining the Fairmont tailgate is one thing, conversion for P76 use to quite another. As I mentioned previously, most of the Ford tailgate will have to be discarded before new sides and lower paneling are added and finally a modified boot skin. As I am insistent on the tailgate looking like the factory wagon, and not a sedan, the upper indented area will be removed and 'smoothed'. Only a subtle mod, but still a substantial one.

When took delivery of the wagon its tailgate was in the load area. While it didn't take long to fit the rear door, the key switch was missing and the electric window had to be operated via some wires hanging out of the full-length rust hole in the outer skin. Naturally, I not only had to wire this back up but made a couple of wiring mods along the way that would route the wiring in a more desirable manner to facilitate easier removal and installation in the future. The key switch problem was solved when I managed to locate a key switch from someone wrecking a Fairmont wagon (albeit without any keys) for \$10. A further \$32 at my local locksmiths finally resulted in a fully functional key operated rear window.

The tailgate support cables had both lost their swaged ends, meaning the tailgate couldn't be opened without having some support system available. Surprisingly, Ford still had these parts available but at the incredible price of \$48.50 each! Before deciding whether to replace them I had to remove them anyway, and this was a problem in itself. The special bolts holding the cables to the tailgate had rusted into position and the fact that ordinary spanners couldn't provide the necessary grip, and it was impossible to fit a socket onto the low-rise bolt-head, made sure they were going nowhere. After some thought, I purchased a cheap 5/8 inch ring spanner and modified it with a grinder for one specific purpose. This device, along with some WD40, allowed the removal of these cables with no damage to the unique collared bolts or the tailgate. The cables were re-swaged at a local ship's chandler, at a cost of \$7.50, and were fitted that day with no problems.

Another mystery highlighted by the tailgate is that if a Bitter Apricot Exec donated its front and rear, and in fact also its four doors, then what was wrong with this vehicle in the first place? Maybe it sustained underbody damage? This is perhaps something only Mr Cole can answer, but while on the subject of underbody I was pleasantly surprised to find that the wagon's underbody area was completely undamaged – very dirty and loaded with clay, but otherwise perfect. In fact, it displayed none of the usual scrapes and dents that every other P76 I have purchased (aside from a one-owner Super I bought in Tasmania) has shown.



While the rear was Fairmont-based, I suspect the rear-side windows are Cortina station wagon. This is another area where the dreaded tin-worm has attacked and where I am hoping to make some changes. The rubber rimmed Cortina glass (if that's what it is) will be removed and the frames changed to accommodate glass that is sealed in place in the same way as the P76 windscreen. As new glass will have to be made, an opportunity exists to realign the windows in an effort to take away the "droopy" look they have at some angles.

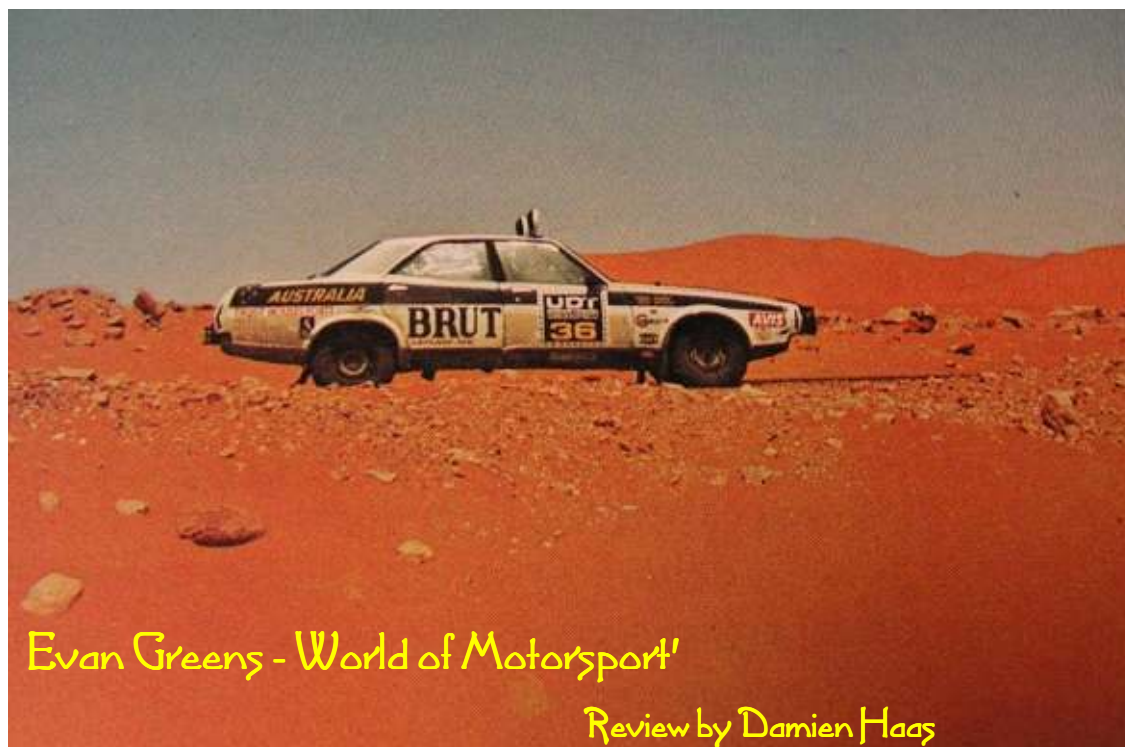
The final body related curiosity is the roof panel that is in fact not Ford but actually has been hand made to the P76 shape using another P76 roof panel. Honestly, the time and labour involved in this exercise alone is mind-boggling. And not just to me. As I've hawked the wagon photos around various panel shops I've noticed more than a few jaws drop as they suddenly realise the amount of work that has gone into this rig.

While Leyland never made an Executive wagon, Larry Cole had other ideas. The basic Deluxe sedan he started with was upgraded in every way. Power steering (although the rack is long gone), auto transmission, seats, door ajar lights, C-pillar lights, radio – all the usual Exec appointments, and even air conditioning. The most impressive attention to detail however, was reserved for wagon appointments like the fold-forward rear seat not made possible by installing a Force 7 rear seat, but actually achieved by making the existing rear seat into a fully operational wagon-style unit. Other little things, like the rear radio speaker (normally installed in the parcel shelf) that had been positioned, along with an Exec courtesy light, in the roof area just inside the rear window opening only added to the list of impressive attention to detail features.

One thing I can't fathom though, is that there appears to be no way to operate the electric rear window from the driver's seat, something that I intend to remedy at some time in the future. Another oddity is that the aerial is installed in much the same position as a sedan. I guess Larry had no way of knowing that Leyland's wagon would have the aerial installed on the front passenger-side guard, so this oversight is forgivable, especially considering the unique mount (remembering it was 1981 when this was built) required for this purpose. In fact, as I intend to install a stereo with an automatic antenna system, the aerial switch, I envisage, will ultimately become the control for the rear window.

Finally the colour. Once all the rust has been removed, and given that the wagon will have to be stripped entirely during the restoration process, a colour change is certainly possible. While NV Green is a beautiful colour, I have considered other options – Plum Loco, or even returning it to its original colour of Corinthian Blue. Ask my wife or daughter and they will tell you they don't like Corinthian Blue. I've even tried suggesting a metallic candy-apple version of this colour, which I think would look pretty cool, but since the paint is a long way off anyway I guess I've plenty of time to dwell on this facet of the project.

As for the future: Returning it to a 4 speed, fitting a dual exhaust system, adding some bigger wheels and rubber, lowering the suspension and retrimming the interior are all on the cards too... just a long way off. Stay tuned!

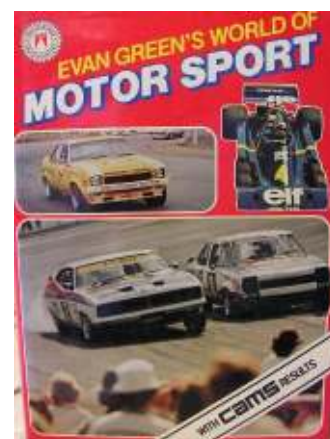


A few months ago, I acquired a copy of Evan Green's P76 and rallying classic *Bootful of Right Arms* from Mark Ellery. It was an excellent read, and I decided to find other books by Evan Green. A bit of Googling indicated that, as well as some fiction books, and motoring journalism for newspapers and magazines, Evan Green wrote a book called *Evan Green's - World of Motor Sport* in 1977. This book also had some more about the 1974 World Cup Rally in which the P76 performed so well, and also some info on the trip home in the rally car from Munich to Australia – by land to India, then by boat to Perth, then across Australia to Sydney – in two weeks!

Keeping a careful eye on eBay listings for P76 and/or Leyland, for several months, I never saw this book come up. In one of those flashes of inspiration that occurs several months late, I decided to type 'evan green' into eBay. Bingo.

'Evan Green's world of motor sport': no keywords, no listing that any search would really catch on. And 'buy now for \$7.50'. I hit 'buy now' and paid instantly.

The book arrived and I was captivated. The large colour photos and interesting story on the P76 and its trip back from Germany were worth the small price I'd paid. As well as the return trip story, which is a nice appendix to *Bootful of Right Arms*, there is a chapter on how to prepare a rally car. Evan Green selects a two-door Range Rover, and fits a 4.4 litre Leyland P76 V8. He observes that this was the engine that was going to be fitted to all Australian delivered Range Rovers if P76 production had continued, and that development work had already commenced. I'd not heard of this before.



Although only a few parts of the book are Leyland related, the colour photos are excellent, with some never appearing anywhere else – and in nice A4 size. The photos of the rally P76 in the red sand are worthy of being blown up to poster size.



The rest of the book is indeed about the world of motor sport with lots of Aussie touring car action from the 1970s and local F1, F2 and F5000 series covered. The international F1 scene scores a mention and has a nice photo of the 6 wheeled Tyrell F1 car from the early '70s that actually won a race - the 1974 Swedish Grand Prix. Green might have hoped that the book would become an annual, as

CAMS results for local racing in 1976 are published in some detail.

To fellow P76 enthusiasts, I'd encourage you to search this book out. It's a valuable item for a P76 collection.



Rolls with interesting extractor set-up



P76 V8 for Range Rover preparation



P76 in India



Land Crab in Rally prep



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