



## BMC-Leyland Australia Heritage Group Inc.

September 2022

[www.bmclaheritage.org.au](http://www.bmclaheritage.org.au)



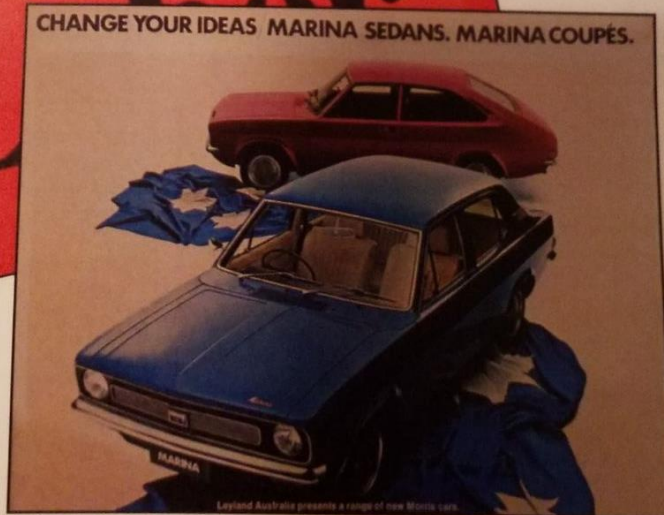
A non-profit association of some hundreds of former employees and interested persons whose mission is to preserve the heritage of BMC, Leyland Australia and its associated companies as a significant part of Australia's automotive manufacturing history.

NEWSLETTER  
ISSUE 79

## Marina Turns 50

It's time.  
Australian

CHANGE YOUR IDEAS. MARINA SEDANS. MARINA COUPÉS.



Leyland Australia presents a range of new Marina cars.

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#### Heritage Group Merchandise

**DVDs**  
The Car Makers  
Horses to Horsepower  
Austin Freeway Around Australia & 9 ½ Days  
Member Price all \$20 each.

**CD**  
Heritage Group CD 3rd Imprint \$20  
Photos, powerpoint presentations, reports and stories.

**Books**  
Building Cars in Australia \$40  
P76- The Inside Story (2nd Edit.) \$20  
BMC-Leyland Australia Vehicle Reference 1950-1982  
List Price \$85, Members @ \$45 limit of 1 per member  
Secrets of Style \$30  
Leyland Cars in Australia \$50  
A Chronicle

For sales and details of postage contact Roger Foy on 02 9449 1524 or email rogerfoy1@bigpond.com

Or visit [www.bmclaheritage.org.au](http://www.bmclaheritage.org.au)

#### On the Cover

It's Time- Leyland used it first!

#### Inside

3 Marina Turns 50  
6 Shannons Sydney Classic  
6 Morris Register National Rally

have the advanced technology of BMCs Front Wheel Drive, fluid sprung models the Marina was what the Australian market, rightly or wrongly, demanded back in 1972. It was also not the car the local management originally planned, but it did do what was required of it- it sold. A basic package that was well presented with inoffensive styling which a read of the road reports of the time show that the car was much better than it is now remembered.

Now is the time to book your seat at this year's Reunion. For the first time in quite a few years it will be back to (almost) normal, so we will be back in the upstairs room and able to talk to each other! There is a separate flyer with all the details included with this newsletter.

## THE 2022 REUNION

Venue  
**RYDE EASTWOOD LEAGUES CLUB**

Ryedale Road, West Ryde

**Sunday 20th November 2022**

The CAR DISPLAY will occupy the rooftop carpark.

so if you or the Car Clubs would like to bring along their BMC Leyland vehicles, please contact Roger Foy: (0449 1524 or 0438 461 1181). Display cars should be in place by 10.00am.

Ryedale Room will be open at 11.30am for the AGM followed by lunch at 12.30pm.

Cost \$45.00 per person includes 2 Course Meal (Main and Dessert) including tea/coffee & mints.

We look forward to seeing all our old friends again either as a BMC ex-employee or Car Club Member.

Bring your families/friends along & make 2022 a memorable event  
we've got a lot of catching up to do.



In the last edition it was noted that Kay & Tony De Luca had been awarded an OAM for services to motoring clubs and the community. Above is the day of the awards and shows from left to right: Tony's daughter Lisa Petrie, his son John De Luca, Her Excellency Margaret Beasley NSW Governor, Kay and Kay's daughters Liz Vermeulen, Tori Findley-Burns and Tony's grandson Andrew Powell who was standing in for his mum, Tony's daughter Anne.

Please note that the Heritage Group has a new mailing address:  
12 Acacia Drive Glenhaven, NSW 2156



# Marina Turns 50

*Gough Whitlam marched to power in 1972 with 'It's Time' but not before Leyland Australia announced that it was Time To Change Your Present Ideas.....*

With the name change from British Leyland to Leyland Australia complete, the stage was ready for the first stage of Leyland's long planned two model attack on the Australian market.

After some delays caused by supply problems, the last vehicle bearing the 'Morris' brand was released. That model, the Marina, wasn't the 'Model A' that was originally planned locally, and once it was selected, it wasn't going to be called Marina either. Both these decisions made by the powers that be back in the UK headquarters. Originally the Advanced Model Group, established in 1967, had concluded that a two-model approach was required locally. Both vehicles would need to share as much commonality of parts as possible. There was to be 4 seater sedan (Model A) that could then be stretched into a 6 seater sedan (Model B).

Early in 1969, after the merger of BMC and Leyland (really a takeover?), a visit from Leyland execs instructed the local team that Model A was to be the Marina and they were to concentrate on Model B. Also at this point, they were also told that Model B needs to grow. Model B, of course became P76 which was released in 1973.

## MARINA WILL CHANGE YOUR IDEAS

So it was that in April of 1972 the Morris Marina was released. Local engineers did Australianise the new model giving the car a fighting chance locally. As part of the local Leyland range, the Marina replaced the Morris 1500/1300 range. By its design and mechanical layout it could be argued that it was really a follow on to the Morris Major/Austin Lancer series as the car was a return to basic, conventional engineering as compared to the advanced front wheel drive and fluid suspension of the Morris 1100/1500 series. Locally, neither the Marina van, ute or stationwagon were available although a panel van was imported for consideration.

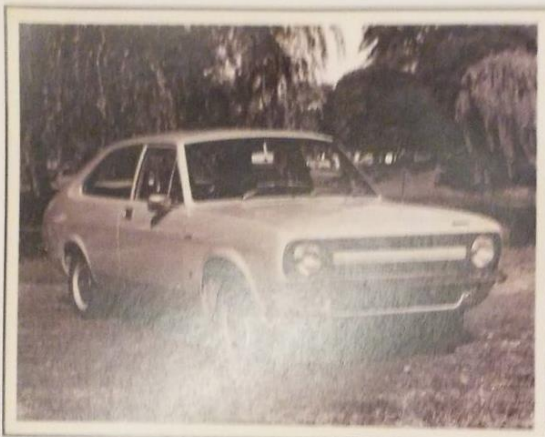


Leyland Motor Corporation of Australia Limited - Australis Morris Division

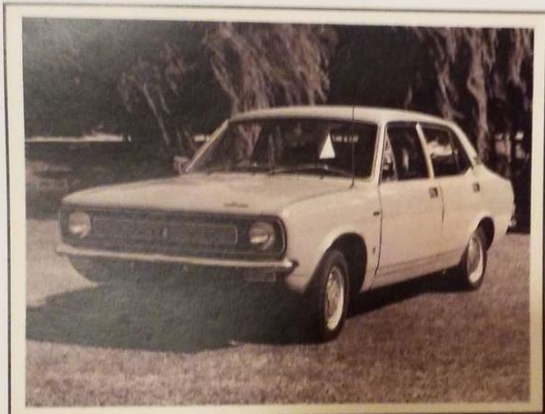




Press photos



Deluxe Coupe



Super Deluxe Sedan



TC Coupe

The Super Deluxe interior which added an extra dial to the binnacle (for a clock or tach), carpets different seat trim, trimmed door tops and woodgrain dash trim. All models had a padded dash and a glovebox lid that never quite lined up. Super also had eyeball vents on the dash.

The main local improvement was fitting the 'E Series' OHC engine in 1500 and 1750 form. This change was probably the most important change when compared to English build Marinas. But there were also some structural changes, improvements to the interior trim, as well as fitting front disc brakes to all models. Initially, a 4-door sedan and 2-door coupe were manufactured in two trim levels, Deluxe and Super Deluxe. A top of the range TC (for twin carburettors) was also available as a Coupe only. All Marinas featured flow through ventilation, a 2 speed fan for heating and cooling, centre floor mounted handbrake and single point floor mounted seatbelts. Locally, with the mix of body style, engines and transmissions, there were 14 models to choose from. Added to that, there were 13 exterior colours and 5 interior trim colours.

In the local press of the time, the Marina generally received praise for its simplicity, interior space, standard equipment and clean, modern if unadventurous looks. Leyland also made very good seats using foam and webbing in place of the usual springs which, with its modern looking padded dash was very inviting on the showroom floor. The front suspension, however, drew criticism as did the not always predictable handling. The Marina featured two steering column stalks for control of high beam, blinkers and windscreen wipers (a first for an Australian built car) and the E series engines were the only 4-cylinder engines manufactured in Australia at the time. It also had a solid steering lock.

During its local production Marina was exported in CKD and/or fully built up to various markets including New Zealand, South Africa, and PNG. At the end of local production, the Marina tooling was relocated to South Africa. In 1973 it became the 'Leyland' Marina as the name change swept through the local range of cars with the Mini also becoming 'Leyland Mini' in preparation of the coming P76.

Right from the launch the Marina did what was required, it sold. Within months manufacturing levels were increased to meet orders and Leyland's market share stopped going backwards. It also lowered warranty



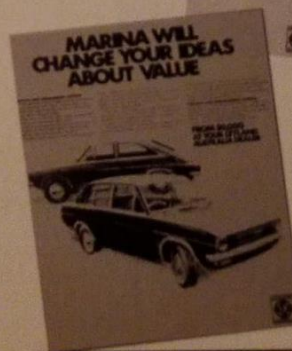
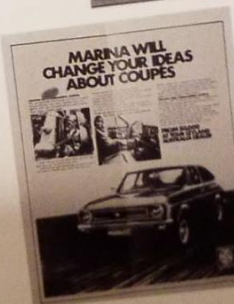
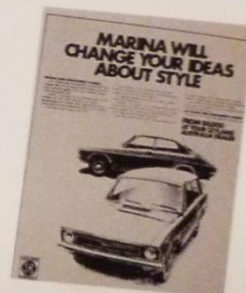
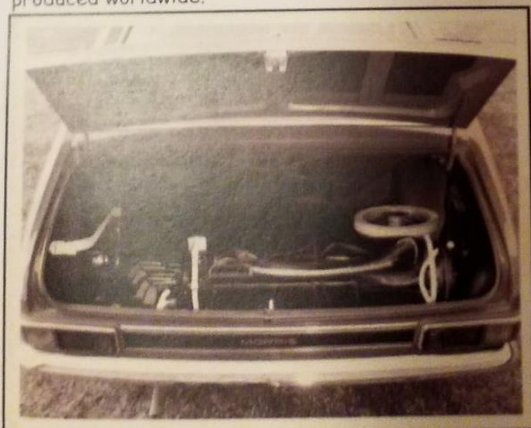


costs improving both the company's and Dealer's bottom line.

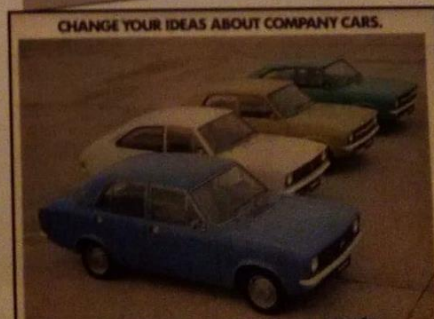
Right from the start the Marina used 85% local content with the body panels, tailshaft and gearbox coming from the UK as well as some minor components save as light and interior fittings. In 1973, the Morris Marina became the Leyland Marina, thus it was the last locally produced car to bear the name 'Morris'. This was in preparation for the forth coming P76, also to be a Leyland. The Mini had joined this nomenclature in February of the same year. Also, in 1973, the Marina received an update which included adding a six-cylinder E Series engine to the range and dropping the TC model. The update included new seats and trim, a modified front and grill, while the brakes and front suspension were uprated. The E Series 6-cylinder as fitted was only slightly heavier than the B series 1800cc engine used in the UK.

The Marina is now remembered more for having pianos dropped on them as seen in BBC's Top Gear or in 'worst car' lists. But the Marina was conceived quickly, on a tight budget and was only ever intended to be a stop gap model. It gave Leyland, both in the UK and in Australia a model the then market demanded: a conventional simple car that was easy to service and therefore cheap to run.

It still managed to sell to its desired market and although local production ceased with the closure of the factory in 1974, it remained in production in Britain for another 10 years. Around 30,000 Marinas were manufactured locally with over 1.16 million Marinas produced worldwide.



One of the objectives for Marina in the UK was for a larger penetration in the Fleet Car Market-locally the Company had the same objective.







## Marina Marketing

The company invested a lot of money marketing Marina and the company's renewed focus on growing their market share.

The Press Release happened over March 23rd and 24th while the public launch was on Friday April 7. All major newspapers then had multiple adds that day and then each Friday in April. A 60 second TV commercial featured on all main TV channels at the starting on April 7 and then a cut down 30 sec commercial finished the month.

At launch, the jingle said "It's time to change your present ideas Marina is here". That then became 'Marina Makes Sense' and although the front cover still stated 'a range of Morris cars' the 'Austin-Morris Division' had disappeared from the rear cover. Things were getting ready for P76 and the change to 'Leyland' branding. Also in 1972, some of Leyland's advertising wore the new tagline 'Leyland-The New Driving Force'.

With the launch in late 1973 of the upgraded Marina range and the Marina 6 advertising focus changed to 'all the good ideas of the Japanese, with the toughness and space of Australian Cars'. Also in 1973, the Mini received a makeover and became the Leyland Mini. With the launch of the P76, 1973 saw dealers stocking a complete new range of Australian manufactured cars.

Different paint jobs to help personalise your coupe



Matches were a popular giveaway in the 70s



TC Cuff-links



**We can show you a thing or two or three or four or...**

In all, we can show you twenty-two of our vehicles. And you can see them all in the Manufacturers' Hall. There's the full range of Leyland Australia cars, including the new X6 MGX Kimberley and Tauman, Mini Clubman and Marina. There's the Triumph and MG range of cars. Quicker. The new V12 E type Jaguar. And the new Rover 3500i. See them all on the Leyland Australia Stand.

**Leyland: the new driving force.**

## Around The World



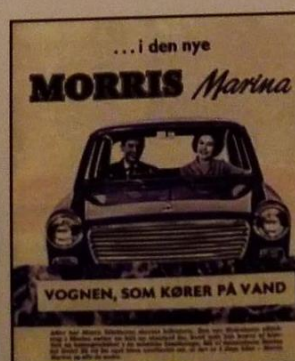
Above: Austin Marina- Canadian Spec.

Below: South African Spec post Zetland's closure.



You could buy a Marina in many markets around the world under different brands. By 1973 it was badged as a Morris, Austin and Leyland.

At Right: Austin Marina- the later American spec after the bumper bar rules were implemented.



The Gas-Saving Marina. Some family car. From some family of cars.

The 'Marina' name was first used by BMC on the Morris 1100 in Denmark



The new Morris Marina, beauty with brains "behind it."



The Original but, in this case, not the best: UK spec from 1971.

## What the Press said

### Real Huggy

Brian Hogben in the *Sunday Mirror* (2/9/1972)

5 reasons why he would recommend the car:

1. It's a nice looking car- no raving beauty but stylish enough.
  2. It's compact yet it offers a lot of passenger and luggage space.
  3. It is well built, thoughtfully engineered and tough.
  4. It wouldn't stack up against a Dino Ferrari perhaps, but it's a pleasant car to drive.
  5. It's cheap to buy and cheap to run, over the years.
- Also: 'We weren't exactly following funerals when we had the TC on the road but we still managed a marvelous 35.9mpg overall. The brakes- front disc and rear drum with \$25 worth of power boost - are excellent'
- Steering is perhaps a bit looser than we prefer although our lady test driver says it was just right for her. It was the lady test driver who said "It was a sweet, sweet car. It's huggy"

*The Advertiser* (Sydney newspaper) April 6th 1972

'We have got rather too accustomed to first off the line test cars having deficiencies in the interior trim but the Marina is very good in this respect. The only thing we could find wrong was self-tapping screw in a door kicker-plate not fully home by a full turn.' The front seats are good and those at the rear equally satisfactory 'passengers have good knee-room even with the driver's seat all the way back' The suspension is firm but the ride is well cushioned from road shocks and there is also a low level of road noise'

Mike Kable in *The Mirror*

A recent test embracing 1500 miles to assess the Marina....I drove a Super Deluxe sedan (with 1750cc engine, brake booster, radials and miles on the clock) from Sydney to Melbourne and back- It used no oil or water and the engine was as smooth as silk throughout- The Marina is the kind of car in which you almost immediately feel at home- 'Vision is excellent and the major and minor controls conveniently placed and clearly labelled....continental-type fingertip stalks for the lights and wipers and horn in particular are a welcome new trend'....ride is not as good as it could be, the car bouncing about quite a bit over broken bitumen and undulating surfaces....tends to weave in cross winds...but the handling is quite safe and predictable with an absence of body roll in fast cornering....rated the Australian built Single OHC engine quite highly....equal of any of the popular fours and better than most'

Gordon Newell in *Open Road*

A lasting impression is of the general good finish of the body work and paint. The neat good looking interior is above

### Marina SUCCESS WITH SIMPLICITY

"One criticism of the engine is the very noisy starter motor. Anyone who has never heard one is in for a shock."

average for the price....'The pedals, steering wheel, gear lever and hand brake are all thoughtfully located and the car is easily driven and safely controlled....' the gearbox is excellent....braking is equally good with no discernible fade' 'With its good fuel economy and its quiet, easy manner this is by far the best Morris since the Elite'

Barry Cooke in *Australian Motoring News*

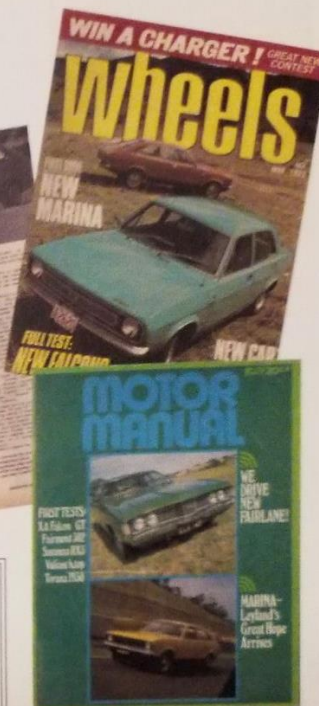
'The Marina is, considering the fact that it stands on a wheelbase of 96", a car of considerable space and comfort.' 'Boot space is another area in which the Marina stands out' As we anticipated, the simple straight forward suspension leaves a lot to be desired....handling is predictable. The car understeers a good deal - too much for our personal preferences....'

*Wheels magazine*

Experience with an English Marina in New Zealand held little hope for the car as a saviour in Australia for BL (or as it is known Leyland Australia). But the local car rates very highly as a competitor to the local Japanese- and other Australian- small cars. It is certainly a tribute to the local engineers.' 'It is an easy car in which to set up an understeer drift and hold through a corner and although the car bounces around on rough roads it holds the road surprisingly well. There is some scuttle shake inside the car....A spongy brake pedal doesn't prevent the brakes from pulling the car up straight and true.... Its simplicity, good finish and performance will open up a new buying area to Leyland.'

Tim Britten in *Motor Manual*

'Strong low-speed torque was one of the 1750 engine's most immediately noticeable characteristics and even in TC form it proved extremely tractable and fuss-free. The TC is a good car which I think will have no trouble in winning over the buyer who goes for practical 'performance' coupes'.







Shannons Sydney Classic went ahead this year with it's usual large display featuring most brands that have been sold in Australia since motoring began here. The Heritage Group was there in a garage organised by Kay De Luca, courtesy of the P76 Car Club.



Roger Foy's Austin Freeway, also on Pitt Lane, celebrating 60 years

As one of the vehicles celebrating an anniversary Marina had a spot on Pitt Lane. Three 6 cylinder Coupes, two from the P76 Car Club and one from the Morris Register, were on display- surely the rarest of Marinas.



The Heritage Group's display

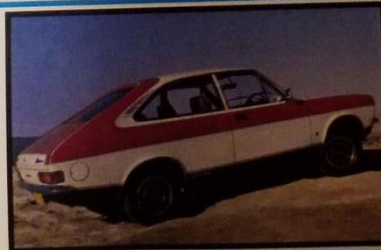


Over Easter this year the Morris Register's of NSW, Victoria, Queensland, ACT and South Australia met in Dubbo for their 23rd National Rally. As well as many fine examples of early Morris models there was an excellent line up of Zetland built product. 65 cars attended and a few moderns.



### Coming in Issue 80

1962 Freeway  
Major Elite  
MGB  
1972 Range Rover arrives  
1973 Marina Upgrade







BMC-LEYLAND AUSTRALIA  
HERITAGE GROUP



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Please tear off this slip and forward with your payment:

**PAYMENT FOR BMC LEYLAND HERITAGE GROUP 2022 REUNION**

Please forward this section with your payment of **\$65.00 per person** to:

Kay De Luca, 12 Acacia Drive, Glenhaven 2156 (Phone 0410 688 886)

RSVP: 06/11/2022

(Cheques/Money Orders payable to BMC Leyland Aust. Heritage Group)

OR: EFT your payment to: St George Bank BSB 112-879 A/c No.131 434 941

**Please give your preferred first name for nametags.**

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

PARTNER/FRIENDS NAMES: .....

YOUR ADDRESS: ..... P/CODE: .....

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

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

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

Please advise if you have a Special Dietary Requirement: .....