

# WESTWORDS

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*The "11<sup>th</sup> Force 7" in Tassie (Courtesy: Nick Kounelis)*

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

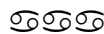
**The AGM** is held in July. For dates of club meetings and events, refer to the Coming Events section of this Newsletter.

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### **EDITOR'S CORNER:**

By the time you get to read this issue of *WestWords* the annual frenetic activity leading to Christmas will be over for another year. While for many the Festive Season provides opportunity to express and experience joy and benevolence not only with friends and family but also with total strangers. Sadly, however, the ugly side of pre-Christmas stress and emotional dysfunction can also become an omen of the approaching long, hot summer. Witness the dreadful display recently on television news of road rage between four men on the Tonkin Highway. One is staggered by the sheer insanity of people who place not only their own safety in peril but that of innocent fellow-motorists. Those of us old enough to remember the rather more sedate and tolerant era of motoring in the 50s, 60s and 70s view with some concern the effects of today's congested, impatient and highly stressful motoring environment on the attitudes of some modern drivers, particularly those of the younger generation who have grown up in the culture of instant gratification. The problem is compounded by the fact that even the most humble of modern cars have a performance capacity that can match if not exceed that of some exotic vehicles of yesteryear. The potent mixture of modern automobiles and youthful energy and impatience seems to reach its most deadly potential on crowded Australian roads during the sun-drenched summer months beginning with the onset of the so-called "silly season".

Each time I sink into the driving seat of my P76 I am momentarily transported back to those more tranquil times when motoring was somewhat less hectic, albeit with cars that were much less safe than those of today. Given the innovative safety features of the big Leyland car, I am quite sure that those 18,007 drivers of new P76s in the early 1970s enjoyed the best of both worlds: excellent performance and safer motoring on challenging but more civilized Australian road conditions.



### ***The Lighter Side Looks at Children's Humour* (See Special Note on p3)**

*A little girl was talking to her teacher about whales. The teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though it was a very large mammal its throat was very small. The little girl stated that Jonah was swallowed by a whale. Irritated, the teacher reiterated that a whale could not swallow a human; it was physically impossible. The little girl said, "When I get to heaven I will ask Jonah". The teacher asked, "What if Jonah went to hell?" The little girl replied, "Then you ask him".*

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

**GENERAL MEETING 26 NOVEMBER 2012**

Meeting opened 7.40pm

*Apologies:* Gary Mentiplay, Dave Neuzerling, Matt Truman, George Garofallou, Ken Domeyer.

*Treasurer's report:* As per Statement.

*New Members:* Brian Andrews, Alan Bell, and Crischeta Chin.

*Congratulations:* To Adrian and Kirsty Carr on acquiring their Corinthian Deluxe.

*State Meeting at Donnybrook:* Voted a success with 10 cars attending and getting to meet some country members.

*Coming Events:* Triumph Club has invited the P76 club to participate in a novelty driving event at Wandi on 9 December. Ken's Burger Run 19 January; Big Al's Poker Run 9 February; Club Shed Run 16 March; Next Club Meet 17 December with drinks (BYO) and eats. Ken Domeyer to make enquiries into a potential event at the Kingsley Drive-In.

*Cars for Sale:* Discussed.

*Parts for Sale:* Rubber Boot Mats: Some progress, with availability possible next year.

Carpet Boot Mats available from SA Club.

*All Aussie Day Pinjarra:* The P76 Club will, once again, be the feature club on the day in recognition of the car's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday. Trophies to be put up.

*Vale:* The meeting noted with deep regret the recent passing of Mavis Metcalf and Arch McNess. A notice had been placed in November *WestWords*.

*Technical:* Discussion took place on the steering shaft uni-joint wearing out in cars. Dennis Woodward to bring one along to the December meet. Oil filters still being checked out and water pump kits discussed.

*Club Windscreen Stickers:* Dennis handed over a number of club membership windscreen stickers.

Meeting closed 8.50pm.



*Just before going to press, news of the horrific massacre of 6 adults and 20 students at a New Town, Connecticut, primary school on Friday 14 December, cast a gloom over America's pre-Christmas celebrations. The decision to devote this issue's "Lighter Side" items to children's humour was taken prior to this dreadful news. As we all know, children are irrepressible, and it seems appropriate that we dedicate these items to the memory of the young victims and their slain carers. Readers are encouraged to spare a thought over the Festive Season for the parents, families and friends of those who lost their lives as a result of this barbaric tragedy.*

***The Lighter Side of Children***

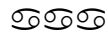
*A Kindergarten teacher was observing her classroom of children while they were drawing. She would occasionally walk around to see each child's work. As she got to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was.*

*The girl replied, "I'm drawing God."*

*The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like."*

*Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, "They will in a minute."*

## ***COMING EVENTS***



### **General Club Meeting:**

**MONDAY 28 JANUARY 2013**

**7.30pm**

At The Kenwick Community Centre  
cnr Kenwick Road & Brixton Street KENWICK



**Club Burger Run.** Saturday, 19 January. Meet 3.30pm to depart 4.00pm from Maritime Museum Car Park, Fremantle. Destination: Alfred's Burger Kitchen, Guildford.



**Big Al's Poker Run.** Saturday, 9 February. Refer to:  
[www.bigalspokerrun.com.au](http://www.bigalspokerrun.com.au) for details.



**Club Shed Run.** Saturday 16 March. Meet 12.30pm for a 1.00pm start from Centrepoint Shopping Centre Car Park, Midland. Destinations: (1) Adrian's Shed at Chittering, (2) Dave's Shed at Glen Forrest, and (3) Andy's Shed at Forrestdale. (BBQ---BYO meat).

**All-Australian Car Day.** Sunday 14 April. 10.00am-3.30pm. Pinjarra Paceway. Featuring the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Leyland P76. All cars are required to be in position well before official opening time. Club details to be advised. See advertisement on page 5.

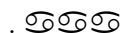
### ***The Lighter Side of Children***

*A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six year olds. After explaining the commandment to "honour" thy Father and thy Mother, she asked, "Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?" Without missing a beat one little boy (the oldest of a family) answered, "Thou shall not kill."*



## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER

We take this opportunity to extend a hearty welcome to the following new member of the Club: **Brian Andrews**. If you happen to visit New South Wales and meet up with Brian, please extend the hand of friendship and perhaps bring back a photo of Brian and his car to record the event.



## COVER PICTURE

Andy Frith of Tasmania is in the process of creating a Force 7 clone from a standard P76 chassis and a Force 7 panel pack. From the picture on the cover it can be seen that the vehicle is well on its way to seeking acceptance into the exclusive band of 10 Forces in the automotive world. However, despite the best efforts, nothing can detract from the fact that this vehicle will never become the genuine article. Nevertheless, its completion will be seen as a tribute to Leyland Australia's brave attempt to place a cutting-edge car in the highly competitive Australian motoring market of the early seventies. We look forward to the release of future pictures of the finished job sometime in the year to come and congratulate Andy on his achievement so far.



## *The Lighter Side of Children*

*The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic elementary school for lunch. At the head of the table was a large pile of apples. The nun made a note, and posted on the apple tray: "Take only ONE. God is watching." Moving further along the lunch line, at the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies. A child had written a note, "Take all you want. God is watching the apples."*



## THE OMEGA NAVY FORCE 7V STORY

*(Based on an article by Peter Gulliver that appeared in "New Zealand Classic Car" magazine October 2012, Vol 22, No 10)*

Beginning with a potted history of Leyland Australia's decision to develop a large car to go "head-to-head" up against the "Big Three": Holden, Ford and Chrysler, the article goes on to state that British Leyland, on hearing of plans to include a coupe version of the P76, became concerned that this could become a possible threat to their P8 project. As a result, David Abell was commissioned to travel to Australia and deal with the matter directly with the local management team. Apparently Abell insisted that Aussies wanted a medium-sized car such as the Maxi and the Marina. Ultimately, this development placed the Force 7 on death row.



*David Abell's vision of the Force 7*

The article argues that the main reason for shipping the Omega Navy prototype to the UK was for assessment by British Leyland's R&D department as part of their development of the Rover SD1. Once the vehicle had served its purpose it was apparently made available for the personal use of Lord Stokes. Subsequently, the car was sold privately by someone who later decided to have it auctioned.

The successful bidder was David Morton, or rather his wife, who refused to be out-done and placed a final bid at 3,200 pounds. The car remained in Morton's collection for more than two decades before he decided to go to auction. Back in NZ, Andrew Nicholson, a friend of Lance Wagstaff, a Toyota dealer at Hawera, alerted him to the auction listing. Lance placed the top bid by phone but the car was passed in at this and at a subsequent auction. Morton was finally contacted directly by Wagstaff, but apparently did not think the Kiwi was a serious buyer. Eventually, they agreed on a price and Lance paid a deposit to hold the vehicle.



*The Force looks at home in elegant settings*

While David Morton continued to doubt his intentions, Lance and friend Andrew caught a plane to the UK, phoned the unconvinced Morton and arranged a viewing of the Force 7V at his home.



*Appearances can be deceiving as the car needed some TLC.*

Initially, Wagstaff was a little disappointed that the car presented in a condition somewhat less than the advertised “immaculate” but he could see the vehicle was complete and unrestored. Morton continued to appear quite disinterested in the whole affair and seemed to be hopeful that the men would depart. However, Lance persisted and secured a test drive with Morton at the wheel. Although the big coupe shook and vibrated quite a bit, Wagstaff offered his hand to David and said “I’ll take it”. Even at this stage Morton was less than convinced of the New Zealander’s true intentions and made as if to put the car back in his garage. “No, you don’t understand, I am buying this car and I want to take it now,” said Wagstaff. David continued to oscillate, coming up with facile reasons not to proceed, but finally agreed to take the pair to the bank, where the cash was handed over. Lance jumped behind the wheel of the Leyland and drove off, leaving the confused Morton with mouth open to ponder what had just occurred. However, he was doubtless well compensated by the substantial but undisclosed sum that had just been deposited in his bank account.



*The view described elsewhere as the “big bum”:*

Following what was probably the car’s first tune up and oil change and before leaving the UK, Wagstaff and Nicholson motored to Manchester, then to Bristol, with the objective of filling the car with classic car parts on the way, then packing it into a container with heaps more spares, for shipping back to NZ.. In addition, they also satisfied Andrew’s interest in hot-air ballooning.

Other minor adjustments undertaken to the car included a change of fuel pump and the use of ‘hundred-mile-an-hour’ tape to secure the loose windscreen moulding. The lack of a compliance plate caused a few bureaucratic hiccups, but these were soon sorted and the Force was on its way back to Oceania, clocking up many more sea miles than it had on its odometer.

On arrival in New Zealand, Wagstaff found the local licensing authorities most co-operative in having the car made legally compliant. Apparently, unknown to Lance, a licensing officer, whose father had been present at the original Leyland auction at Sydney in 1975, followed the car's progress from the UK. This has enabled Lance to have the vehicle appear at various events around the country, such as the 2005 Leyland P76 Club of NZ Show.



*The Kivi flag and the proud owner say it all.*

Since acquiring the vehicle, Wagstaff has clocked around 10,000km with the car now sitting at 39,000km.

Apart from some planned minor cosmetic touches, Lance intends to preserve the Force in its original condition and maintain a low kilometer status.

While it may be the case that most Aussie P76 enthusiasts would prefer to have this unique vehicle come back to the land of its birth, it is comforting to know that it is safe in the hands of a keen collector.

At the very least the Omega Navy Force 7 could give some of us a reason for taking a holiday in the "Land of the Long White Cloud". Based on my recent email contacts with Lance Wagstaff, I am confident he would be happy to arrange special viewings of his prized possession to P76 enthusiasts.



*With "presence" like this, the Force would be difficult to ignore on the open road.*



**TEST YOUR P76 KNOWLEDGE**  
(from last month's issue)

1. On what date was the P76 launched?
2. Which one of the P76 range (Deluxe, Super, Executive) sold the most cars?
3. How many paint colours for the P76 were available during its production?
4. Who was known as the "Father of the P76"?
5. How did the Targa Florio model of the P76 get its name?
6. To the nearest hundred, how many Targas were produced?
7. Apart from Australia, in which other country was the P76 assembled?
8. In which month and year did P76 production cease in Australia?
9. In which month and year was the remaining Force 7s auctioned?
10. How many Force 7s are currently resident in WA?

**ANSWERS**

1. 26 June 1973
2. Deluxe (8169 units)
3. 18
4. David Beech, Managing Director of Leyland Australia
5. From the special stage win on the Targa Florio race route by the P76 during the World Cup Rally of 1974.
6. 500 (480 was the actual number)
7. New Zealand
8. November 1974
9. September 1975
10. Two

HOW DID YOU GO?



**INTER-CLUB NOVELTY DRIVING EVENT**

Sunday 9 December turned out to be a rather warm early summer day that found some members of the P76 Club fraternising with members of the Triumph Car Club in a novelty driving event to which we had been invited. The venue was the Equestrian Centre on De Haer Road in Wandi, part of a complex of buildings and facilities situated in the middle of a huge area of bushland, that ensured even more fraternising on the part of local bushflies.

The event consisted of a series of activities designed to test a driver's knowledge of his car's manoeuvrability as well as his own driving skills. Beginning with stopping one's car as close as possible before a double closed gate to allow the gate to fully open without touching the vehicle, then proceeding to use the car's turning circle to navigate a central post while tethered to the post without either allowing the centre point of the tether to touch the ground or causing the centre-post to topple due to overstretching the tether. Other challenges included reverse parking, driving as close as possible the length of one road wheel revolution, and setting a bar to the lowest point one thinks the car can drive under.

Three P76s entered the competition, with James M, Paul B and Dave N at the wheels, while Sam M did the photography and Dave B, Andy M and Peter S were supportive spectators. Around 5 or six impressive Triumphs also did the rounds of the circuit along with one very neat Standard Ten..

While official results are not currently known, Dave N was quite chuffed to be awarded with a trophy for romping home at the rear. All in all, an enjoyable couple of hours was experienced by all with the expressed wish that the clubs get together again in the future.



*Above: James M's "Peel-me-a-Grape" doing one turn of the wheel;*



*Above: The Stag about to circle the post.*



*The Standard Ten doing the "Country Gate" Test*

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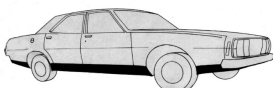
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