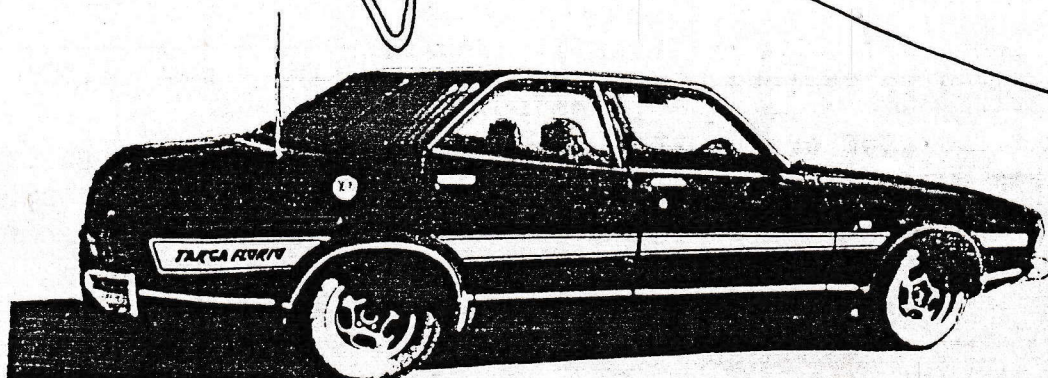


S.A. P76 CLUB NEWS

JANUARY 1991



CLUB INFORMATION PAGE

COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT -

Nigel Bray
24 Elijah Street
Morphett Vale 5162

PH- 382 6512

VICE PRESIDENT -

David Wallace
12 Kestel Road
One Tree Hill 5114

PH- 280 7276

SECRETARY -

Gerry Stewart
Kings Lodge, 117 Kings Rd.
Salisbury Downs 5108

PH- 250 2264

TREASURER -

Christine Cutting
21 ST. Helena Street
Flagstaff Hill 5159

PH- 270 3799

EDITOR -

Geoff Cutting
21 ST. Helena Street
Flagstaff Hill 5159

PH- 270 3799

PUBLICITY -

Kym Lindner
25 Maurice Road
Murray Bridge 5253

PH- (085) 324 967

NON-OFFICE BEARERS -

Alan Baker	- 261 1175
John Armstrong	- 337 5474
Richard Schlabowsky	- 388 7350
S.M.A.S.A. Club Delegate:-	
Steve Westmacott	- 297 9891

Spare Parts Co-ordinator:-

Brendon Jones	- 270 2255
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National Meeting Co-ordinator:-

Val Baker	- 2611 175
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MEETINGS

Club Meetings are held on the

1st Tuesday of each month except January at the Goodwood Scout Hall, Florence Street, Goodwood.

Time: **7.30** p.m.

DATES-

1991

February	5th
March	5th
April	2nd
May	7th
June	4th
July	2nd

August AGM - The Annual General meeting is held in August in lieu of the General Meeting for that month on a date to be decided.

1991

September	3rd
October	1st
November	5th
December	3rd

The Fine Print...

Meetings may change if and when the committee feels necessary as appearing through this page.

The opinions expressed within this publication are not necessarily those of the committee except where indicated.

The committee accepts no responsibility for any damage of any form which may occur as the result of using information appearing in this publication.

This is the official publication of the "**Leyland P76 Owners' Club of S.A. Inc.**" and is not for sale to the general public. Copies are included in a years Full Membership.

MINUTES

GENERAL MEETING - 4th December 1990

Held Goodwood Scout Hall

MEETING OPENED 8.07 pm

PRESENT: 20 (as per attendance book)

APOLOGIES: 1

MINUTES of previous meeting were read and accepted

BUSINESS ARISING : Bitter apricot car none interested Gordon to deal with it.

Paul Young still has trim for sale.

4 Dash mats for sale see Brendon

Kym organising rear dash mats \$ 40 see Dec mag 10 min order colours as for front. Alan had door capping done by same people a good job done.

Victor Harbor Diner Dance bookings please.

Spare Parts Directory WA & Qld to send details to Brendon 9 page book now available to look at. Please let Brendon know any more info ASAP. Geoff suggest Brendon listed as Parts Co-ordinator on Club info page.

David - Demo hub caps being made of aluminium 5 caps . Vic badges not exact originals.

Xmas Dinner raffle donated by Judy Trinnie tkts 3 for \$1

TREASURER'S REPORT: \$602 end Nov \$250 paid rear mat mould

CORRESPONDENCE : IN - Genie Performance Headers , Auto

Boutique NSW, Repco Door Trims, -Suit most vehicles scotchline striping etc. G R Poltridge Vic - re value and sale of car referred to Ron Harris .

Discussion arose re valuations Steve says Dawes are willing to give agreed value insurance, without inspection, if 3 members of club make a statement on value. RAA will back Insurance Inspectors quote. \$600 - 700 ins for \$10,000 25+ Certain requirements needed.

Interstate Mags: - Qld Hunter Valley Westwords

COMING EVENTS : as per mag

NATIONAL MEET: Dawes Ins supplying Brochures, No enamel badges in goody bag to be sold replaced by name tags.

Alan approached SA Brewing & Coca Cola re promotional gear should be ok.

Organiser to purchase trophies in next month - Nigel hopes to have a donation from Oil refinery towards these.

Kym - Parade ground out for parking alternative being considered, Popeye no later than 8.30 pm 70 per boat

David - working on form for people attending re details sizes shirts food allergies bedding etc

Kym suggests directory Parts put in Goody Bag to be decided.

MC agreed for P Theme night Bookings 105 Adults 13 Ch Booked out for meal . Campers supply own Breakfast & dinner.

Steve - Budget Cars sponsering 50% Comparison Test 6cl

Skyline, commodore and falcon Northside Trophies plaque \$6-7

SMASA: - Show 'n Shine First 100 entries prizes Smasa card not valid for Drags \$10 per per at Adelaide Raceway.

Mega Cruise 7pm at Steves.

GENERAL BUSINESS: Kym re floor mats \$150 per set min 15 orders P76 emblem see Dec mag.

Playing Cards embossed - \$15 see Di Bray

Kym - Advt for meet not in paper as there was no room

Suggests we have an alternative and pay for Special Events only.

MEETING CLOSED 9.22pm

BRAIN TEASER ANSWERS

1. 26 = L Of the A .. LETTERS OF THE ALPHABET
2. 7 = W of the A W .. WONDERS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD
3. 1001 = A N .. ARABIAN NIGHTS
4. 12 = S of the Z .. SIGNS OF THE ZODIAC
5. 54 = C in a D (with the J).. CARDS IN A DECK (WITH THE JOKER)
6. 9 = P in the SS.. PLANETS IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM
7. 88 = K on a P .. KEYS ON A PIANO
8. 6 = S on the A F .. STARS ON THE AUSTRALIAN FLAG
9. 0 = D C at which W F .. DEGREES C AT WHICH WATER FREEZES
10. 18 = H on a G C .. HOLES ON A GOLF COURSE
11. 90 = D in a R A .. DEGREES IN A RIGHT ANGLE
12. 200 = D for P G in M .. DOLLARS FOR PASSING GO IN MONOPOLY
13. 20000 = L U T S ..LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA
14. 3 = B M .. BLIND MICE
15. 100 = C in a M .. CENTIMETERS IN A METER
16. 24 = H in a D .. HOURS IN A DAY
17. 1 = W on a U ..WHEEL ON A UNICYCLE
18. 5 = R form the O S .. RINGS FORM THE OLYMPIC SIGN
19. 57 = H V .. HEINZ VARIETY
20. 11 = P in a C T .. PEOPLE IN A CRICKET TEAM
21. 1000 = W that a P is W .. WORDS THAT A PICTURE IS WORTH
22. 29 = D in F in a L Y .. DAYS IN FEBRUARY IN A LEAP YEAR
23. 64 = S on a C B .. SQUARES ON A CHESS BOARD
24. 40 = D and N of the G F .. DAYS AND NIGHTS OF THE GREAT FLOOD

COMING EVENTS

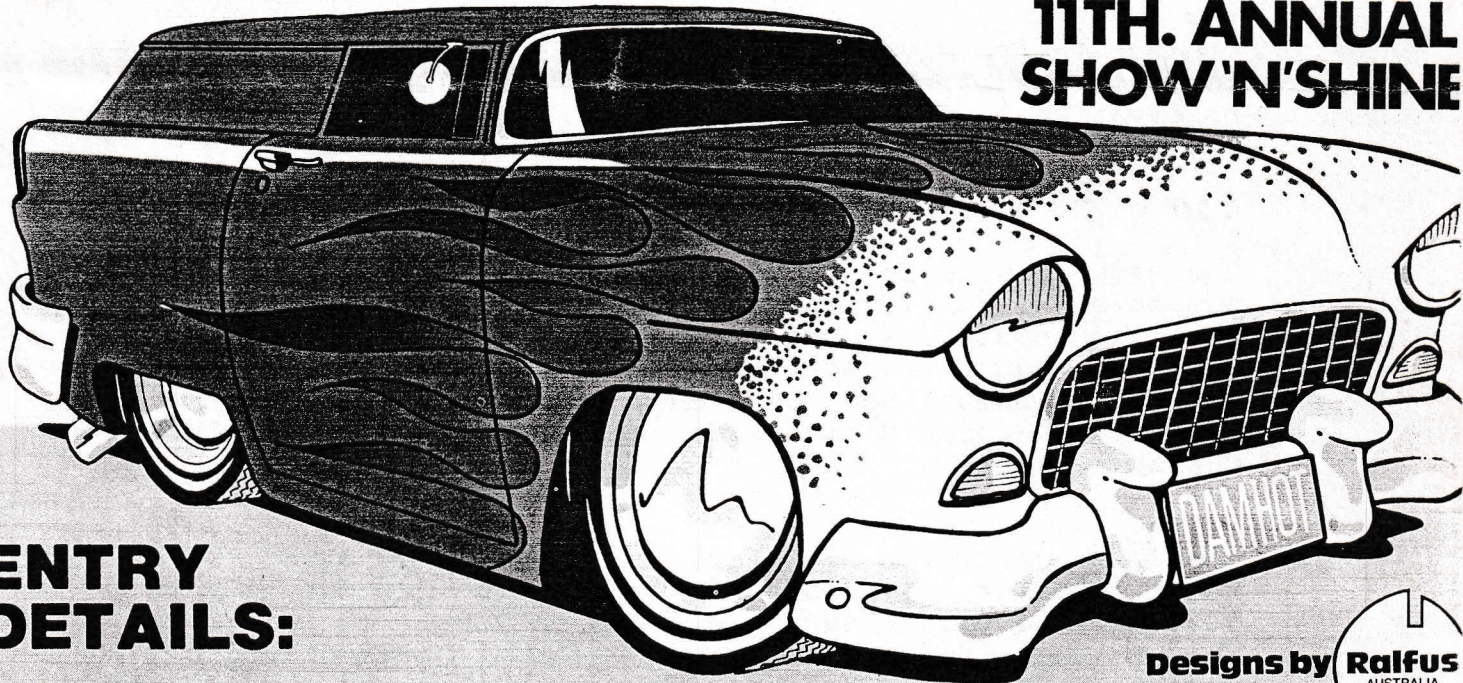
JAN 26th Show 'N' Shine see Advt

FEB ??????????????????????

MAR 29th Start Easter National Meeting Contact Val Baker
for Bookings and information

Easter 1992 Bookings open Jan 91 for SeaCat \$268 per car
\$198 per person return

11TH. ANNUAL SHOW 'N' SHINE



Designs by **Ralfus**
AUSTRALIA

ENTRY DETAILS:

PHONE:

(08) 356 2629

(08) 387 2020

P.O. BOX 853 COWANDILLA 5033

26th-27th JANUARY 1991
WAYVILLE SHOWGROUNDS

GENERAL

Sway Bars from \$50 : Roll Bars from \$10
Contact Ian Trinne 4935134

Complete Deluxe Imp Leather interior
Contact Paul Young 2589156

Dash Mats now available contact Brendon 2702255

Cruise: To sail from place to place for pleasure.
Collins Australian Dictionary, 1989 Edition.

Cruise: To aimlessly, and at leisure, traverse dark haunts with quest of obtaining short term partner of same sexual preference. (To say nothing of Gender!)
The Queen's (And I aint talking Royalty!) Vernacular, San Fransisco, 1978 Edition.

Cruise: To travel at moderate speed in line or lines of modified vehicles in areas of high profile and extreme observation.
The Street Machiners Handbook, Van Nuys, 1990 Editon.

Cruise: To hurtle blindly, at speeds well in excess of legal limits, from one obscure point of the compass to another, depleting finite fossil fuels at as significant a rate as is possible, while embarrassing yourself only in as great and equal a capacity, as you freeze your buns off. (See also:- "The most fun I've had since Grandma died!")
Hoto's Big Bumper Book Of "Don't Leave Me In The Shed For Six Months And Expect Miracles You Bastard", Volume III, 1990 Christmas Edition.

The 1st Mega Cruise was terrific. Warm, balmy night, we all stuck together, plus lots of sloooww city driving. All in all, top fun even though I was the only P.
The 2nd Mega Cruise came around. Another pleasant night with plenty of city driving, this time with a bit of distance and high speed limit roads, thrown in. There were 2 P's on this run.
Then came the 3rd Mega Cruise. This time I twisted arms. For months leading up to the run I talked to guys about the fun of cruising. (Not the type in definition two I hasten to add) "December", I said, "Hot Tropical Nights", I said, "The indescribable fun of travelling sedately in a convoy of trick, worked, shiney, sweet, sweet V8's" I babbled on, drooling like a loon by that time.
At the club meeting a mere four days before the run I had about ten cars arranged to participate, all of us getting together at my place a little earlier to travel to the official meeting spot en-masse.
Sound's good don't it. Well from now on the rest of this story is worse than a cheap Sidney Sheldon Disaster Flick.

Saturday was overcast and drizzling all day. This was pretty disconcerting in itself because my house is having major renovations and half of the back of it was missing at the time. (Who'd have thought it would rain in December at the height of the alleged Green-House effect!) The night itself was bloody freezing and blowing a gale. (Yeh, yeh, I know, it was Force 7) Anyway, several members of our Club, for one reason or another, did not turn up, but a dozen or so did

process. (Wait 'til Leone hears about that one Kym!) He would definitely have made a better butcher than a copper. Geoff's truck battery was then dumped into Hoto and as that sucker has enough spark to power Sydney for a week, Hoto leapt into life like a epileptic rap dancer. After swapping batteries without turning off, (a dangerous and highly non recommended practice I thought) we were once again doing our imitation of F18's at Top Gun School. Despite our best "pedal to the metal" efforts, we were late to the next catch up point. It was here that Geoff and Chris left, as Geoff was off to work. Work probably seemed like a great idea to Geoff by then. For the rest of us it was another blitzkrieg, this time though town to War Memorial Drive, arriving just as the crowd left. Another blast followed, this time down to Port Adelaide before rocketing up Junction Road to a new truckers servo near South Road. Kym almost got us lost, leading twenty cars into a one way street where we all proceeded to hang U'ies in as dangerous a manner as possible. Once at the servo, by now it was gone midnight, it was loiter around your car and undergo experimentation with the onset of frostbite to the nether regions. It was about this time Ian said something like, "A meal for two at a restaurant would have been cheaper." Warmer too! Around the same time Kym said, "Just think, I drove 70 kays from Murray Bridge to do this and now I've got to drive all the way home again!"

And what was the piece of resistance to the whole dismal affair, well all night it was freezing but at least it didn't precipitate, but then, about 500 metres before I got home, only two minutes before I got under cover, down came the rain. The perfect end to a perfect night!
You gotta laugh!!!

Steve and Hoto (who's still sulkin)

make the effort in five cars. (The Cuttings, Trinnes, Brendan and Co, Kym, Richard, Shane and Me)

On arrival at the official meeting spot one big mouthed smart arse called out, "Steve, we've arranged a special park for the P76's, it's at the back of the Shopping Centre. Ha, ha, ha!" And you should see the piece of shit he drives, Jesus. Bad weather and a bad comedian, things had got off to a poor start! Admittedly a bit of fun then followed as several of us proceeded to pick the alleged GT's to pieces and that made me feel a bit better.

Crank 'em up, and from Marion it was a run virtually to Maslins Beach, to a new shopping centre down that way. I don't know where the cameras were but they must have been around 'cause we sure as hell were making another sequel to "The CannonBall Run". Who arranged the speed limit amnesty I don't know but 150 km/h on the Lonsdale Highway (uphill) was a tad naughty chaps. Once at the aforementioned car park it was; let's play brass monkeys. Imagine a flat, featureless, treeless, bushless plain on the edge of the coast with a howling gale blowing straight from Antarctica. It was COLD. A man had to have a stubbie holder to keep his hand from sticking to the glass!

After a fair wait, and after watching several cars imitating the Bismark trying to evade the Royal Navy, (making lots of smoke for those of you with no imagination) it was time to move on. 'Cept my baby wouldn't start. She turned over better than a Cross hooker, had more gas than a Kuwaitie invader, but we weren't going no place.

By this time every other car, (excepting for P76s) in true street machiner tradition, had f...., no, I won't say that, they had roared off, with a grin and a honk, at my raised bonnet. Ian pleaded with me not to raise the bonnet 'til everyone had gone but...

That's when we realized that of the five P's on the run, all autos by the way, none had jumper leads, (I flattened my battery trying to start the car, with no thanks to Ry Cooder a little earlier) no one had a tool kit, in fact, everyone had one thing in common - a total bloody lack of preparation or anticipation - Nothing. During the next few minutes of procrastination over just what we should do, copious cruel and heart rending comments rained down upon Hoto and myself. I deserved them, poor, sweet Hoto didn't. As Richard said, "Hoto's telling you something Steve, "you can't leave me in the shed for months and then expect to take me out and thrash me!". How true Richard, you sure do empathise with the girl don't you. Back to the rabble, and the lack of anything. Next we sent Kym off to the nearby servo for some jumper leads, hoping that his "get out of jail free" card would get us some. What a dump, the entire servo, workshop and auto-shop had no leads, either to beg, borrow, steal or buy.

Fortunately, Kym had some multi grips in his car but this was only because they had been left there by a forgetful mechanic. (Larceny By Finding, or is it, By Mistake? Hell, Kym's a copper, he'll tell us!) Kym then proceeded to rip the terminals off Hoto's battery, destroying my Volt gauge in the

THE BRITISH INFLUENCE

British cars dominated the Australian motoring scene immediately after WW2. The Japanese industry scarcely existed, most European factories had been flattened by bombs and Australia lacked the dollars to import cars made in the USA. Australians turned to Britain where several long-established factories switched almost overnight from war materials to vehicle production.

A delighted British government did everything possible to cooperate. A national policy of 'Export or Perish' had already been launched and the government refused to supply car manufacturers with their quota of rolled steel (which was in short supply) unless half of their production was shipped overseas.

The unusual combination of circumstances provided a rare chance for Austin, Morris, Hillman, Vauxhall, Ford of England, Rover, Standard and Triumph to carve out a sizeable niche in Australia's expanding market. The first postwar cars arrived in 1945 and, by 1948, British cars were coming into the country as fast as they could be shipped.

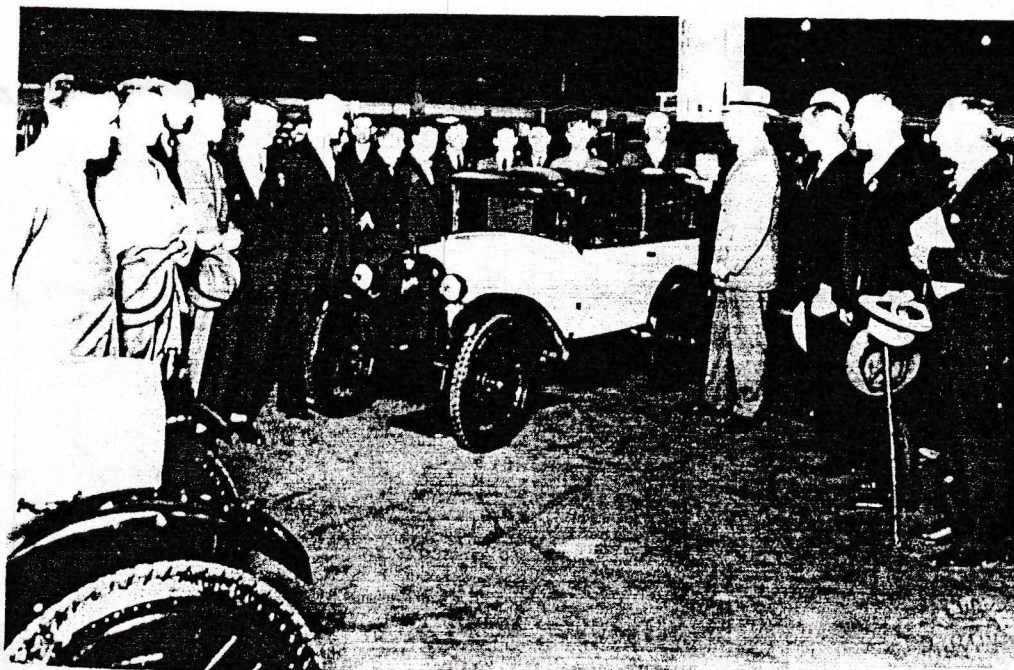
Many companies established assembly facilities. General Motors, for example, commenced building the four-cylinder Vauxhall Wyvern and six-cylinder Vauxhall Fourteen in 1946. The six-cylinder Velox series followed in 1949 and the more luxurious Cresta in 1955. Later came Vauxhall's Viva which evolved into the Aussie-made Torana. Ford also started assembling British cars in 1946, with the Australian-

bodied Anglias and Prefects. They were followed by a series of Consul and Zephyr models.

Next on the list came Aussie versions of Austin, Morris, Standard, Triumph, Wolseley, Hillman and Humber models. Britain introduced the cheaper sports car concept to Australia and the MGA, MGB, Austin-Healey Sprite and Triumph TR two-seaters were assembled here. The Triumph Herald convertible was another soft-top car with an Aussie accent.

The tradition of assembling British cars in Australia goes to the days before WW1 when Sydney-based F.H. Gordon & Company launched a modified Wolseley and called it the Australian Four. Numerous other attempts were made to assemble Australian cars based on British-made components. They included the 1922 Southern Six (with a Sage 2.4-litre engine) and the 1923 Chic which offered a choice between a 2.1-litre 'four' and a 2.7-litre 'six', both engines being made by Meadows.

The serious invasion of the market started immediately after WW2, with Austin and Morris leading the way. By 1950, Austin sold 16.3 per cent of new vehicles in Australia, followed by Nuffield products (Morris, MG, Riley and Wolseley) with 13.8 per cent. Australian Motor Industries (mainly Standard/Triumph) had a further 8.3 per cent, Rootes Group (Hillman, Singer and Humber) 6 per cent and Rover 1.9 per cent. By this time, GM-H was selling a mixture of Holden and Vauxhall models which, combined, gave the company 23



A major Austin sales push followed the launching of the baby Seven in 1924. The car was officially unveiled by Sir Dudley de Chair, Governor of New South Wales (standing next to the car, wearing a hat). Austin 7s were assembled in Australia and fitted with bodies made by Holden and others.

per cent of new sales. Ford Australia enjoyed a 15.1 per cent market share and, apart from some big cars, its output was based on British designs.

The combined British presence amounted to approximately 70 per cent of all new vehicles taking to the road.

It soon became apparent that the firms with the greatest potential to take command of the booming market were Austin and Morris. Both had a long and successful history in Australia and their dealer networks were geared for volume sales. The demand for British cars was so high that, in 1951, the largest Austin Distributor, Sydney's Larke Hoskins, made a record profit of one million pounds — equivalent to about \$30 million in today's buying power. That same year, news came that the Austin and Morris companies were to merge in Britain — and the future seemed unlimited.

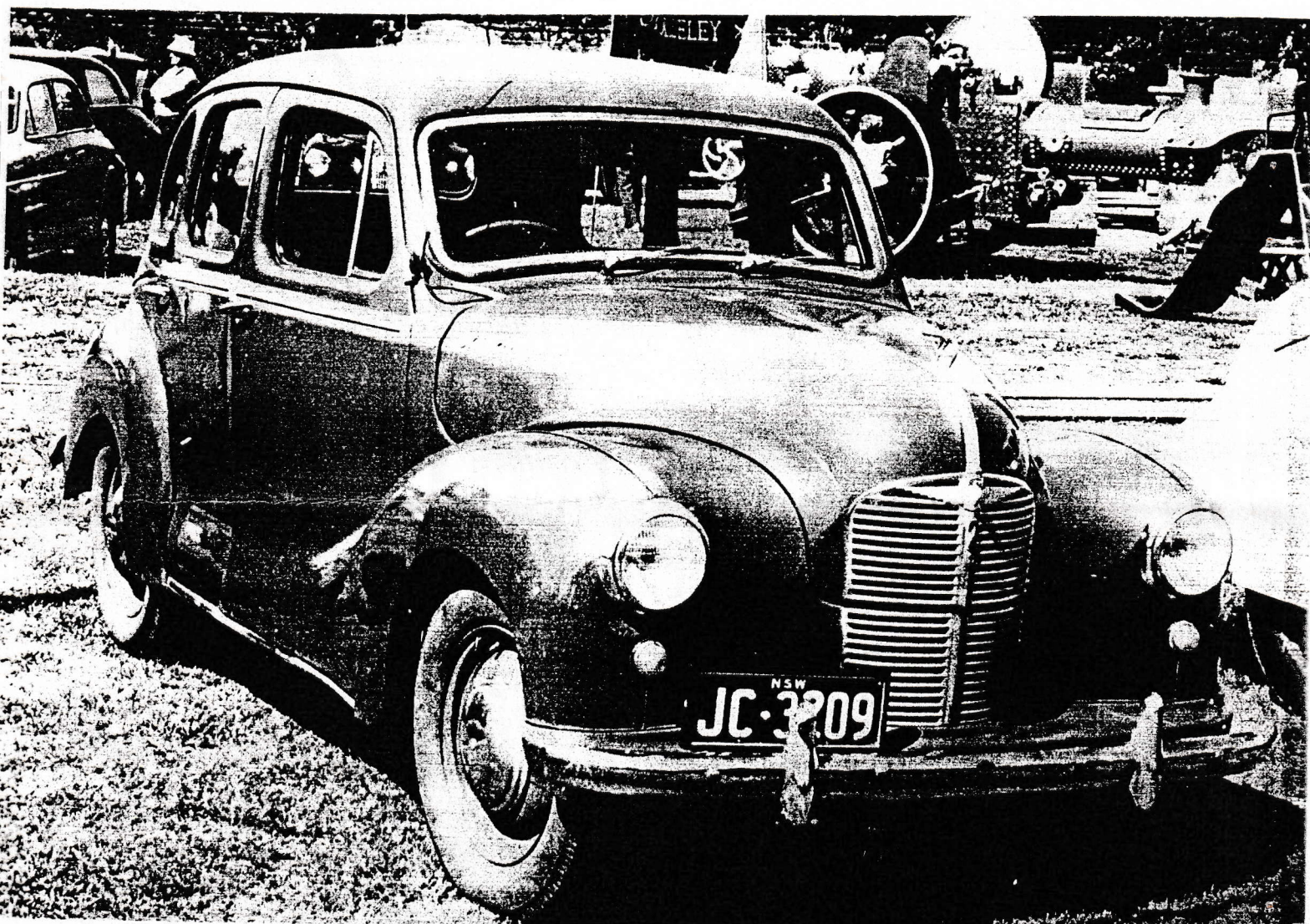
Austin's interest in Australia dates from the 1890s when Herbert Austin migrated to Melbourne and took a job with the Wolseley Sheep Shearing Machine Company. He started as an engineering trouble-shooter and became general manager when the firm moved its operations to Britain. Austin designed the first Wolseley cars in 1895-99 and put up his own shingle at Longbridge, near Birmingham, in 1905. Soon afterwards, a trickle of Austin models came here, including some single-cylinder baby cars in 1910. Austin's Australian connection increased further when his daughter married an Australian — Captain (later Colonel) Arthur Waite.

By that time, Austin had devised his famous baby Seven and, in 1923, shipped the first models to Sydney. In the same year, he appointed Australia's first full-time Austin factory representative, Bob Wallace. Arthur Waite followed him to Australia with instructions to increase the dealer network in anticipation that the baby car would sell strongly.

Waite had managed Austin's racing team in England and was keen to give the Seven its baptism of fire on the race circuit. He cabled the factory asking for a racing Seven to enable him to compete in the inaugural Australian Grand Prix, held late in 1928. The car arrived in time and Waite won the event. In the publicity which followed, he organised local assembly and many Austin 7s were sold with Holden-built bodies.

With this background and a dealer network already in place, Austin Motor Company moved quickly after WW2 to establish a full-scale presence. In 1948, Austin purchased the former Ruskin Body Works in Melbourne as the basis of a body-building operation. Pressed Metal Corporation in Sydney started to assemble Austin A40s under contract and soon CKD (completely knocked down) packs of components were being sent as rapidly as shipping space could be found.

Boom conditions for Austin and the industry in general prevailed between 1948 and 1958. During these years, Australia gained 1.4 million new cars while the human population rose from 7.6 million to 9.8 million. During the same period, GM-H increased its market share from 20 to 50 per cent,



The Austin A40 was a top-seller during the years 1948 to 1952, giving Austin its largest market share ever.

thanks to the overwhelming success of the six-cylinder Holden, billed as 'Australia's Own Car'. Despite the message coming from the marketplace, Austin and Morris tried to ignore the trend to 'sixes'. They spent huge sums on ultra-modern presses and transfer machines to enable them to wholly manufacture four-cylinder cars derived from British designs.

As with Austin, Morris car agents were established before WW2 when William Morris (later Lord Nuffield) personally came to Sydney to organise a sales operation. When he made his first postwar visit, immediately after the Japanese surrender, Morris learned that the huge Victoria Park racecourse (where Sydney's first speedway racing had been held) was for sale. He thought it would make an ideal site for a massive industrial complex centred around a Nuffield assembly plant — but his British board of directors turned down the plan.

Never one to take 'no' as an answer, Nuffield personally purchased the 40 hectare site and sold nearly half of it to Olympic Tyres, Lucas-Girling and James Kirby Pty Ltd, a component manufacturer. These sales alone paid for the whole complex. Within a couple of years, the demand for Morris cars had risen to the point where an assembly plant was urgently needed. The British board voted to buy Nuffield's remaining land for the purpose!

The new Morris plant opened in 1950 and became the group headquarters when BMC Australia was formed three

years later. The new group's policy was to assemble successful British models such as the Morris Minor and Austin A50/55. Unfortunately for BMC, the demand for six-cylinder Holdens continued to increase, largely at the expense of smaller four-cylinder cars. In four years, BMC's market share fell from 30.7 to 19.6 per cent. By 1958, the figure was down to 12.6 per cent.

Despite the bad news, the company decided to build what it claimed was the most modern car-making plant in the southern hemisphere. The former Victoria Park site was transformed by a battery of new presses and transfer machines. They were installed to mass-produce a new 1.5-litre design, released as two models, Austin Lancer and Morris Major. The cars were virtually identical, apart from their grilles, and were built with 96 per cent Australian content.

BMC's new plant was designed to build 50 000 vehicles a year at a time when the car market was running at 155 000 units annually. Unhappily for BMC executives, their sales forecasts proved wildly optimistic and the Austin/Morris market share dwindled still further. The company tentatively tried to invade the six-cylinder field with the Morris Marshall (1957-60) but the British-based design was not competitively priced against the all-conquering and more rugged Holden.

Things got worse for BMC when Volkswagen decided to manufacture the Beetle in Melbourne. The snub-nosed VW was initially a sales success and began to outsell other four-



Another British success story, the Morris Minor sold so well that BMC invested in major manufacturing facilities. This photograph was taken in 1958 when the 50 000th Minor was locally assembled. On the same day, the company announced it would compete against Holden and Ford in the six-cylinder market.



cylinder competitors. A frustrated BMC Australia turned to a profusion of models based on British designs — but success remained elusive. In 1960, Ford launched the six-cylinder Falcon. The vigorous competition which followed pushed BMC Australia into even deeper trouble.

Fortunately, an answer came in a very small package. The Mini Minor had proved a winner in Britain and was enthusiastically received here in March 1961. The first front-wheel drive car made in Australia in volume numbers, it proved a smash hit. By 1962, BMC had regained second place in the sales chart, with 20 per cent of the market, ahead of Ford, Chrysler and VW.

This success encouraged BMC to make a second attack on the six-cylinder market, using a design launched as Austin Freeway and the more upmarket Wolseley 24/80. Judged by Ford and Holden sales standards, they were dismal flops. The lost ground was recouped, however, when the front-wheel drive Morris 1100 went into production and began to outsell the Mini. The even bigger Austin 1800 — with a four-cylinder engine and front-wheel drive — followed. Its success was more modest, but at least the Australian production was profitable, which was more than the parent company could say of the British Austin 1800.

Despite the Mini and 1100, BMC Australia's overall market share continued to fall, reaching a dismal 13 per cent in 1966. To halt the dive, the company sought permission from England to tool up for a new design. This was the Morris 1500 sedan, built alongside a novel variation with a multi-purpose hatchback body named Nomad. Unhappily, the new car coincided with the start of the Japanese invasion — and

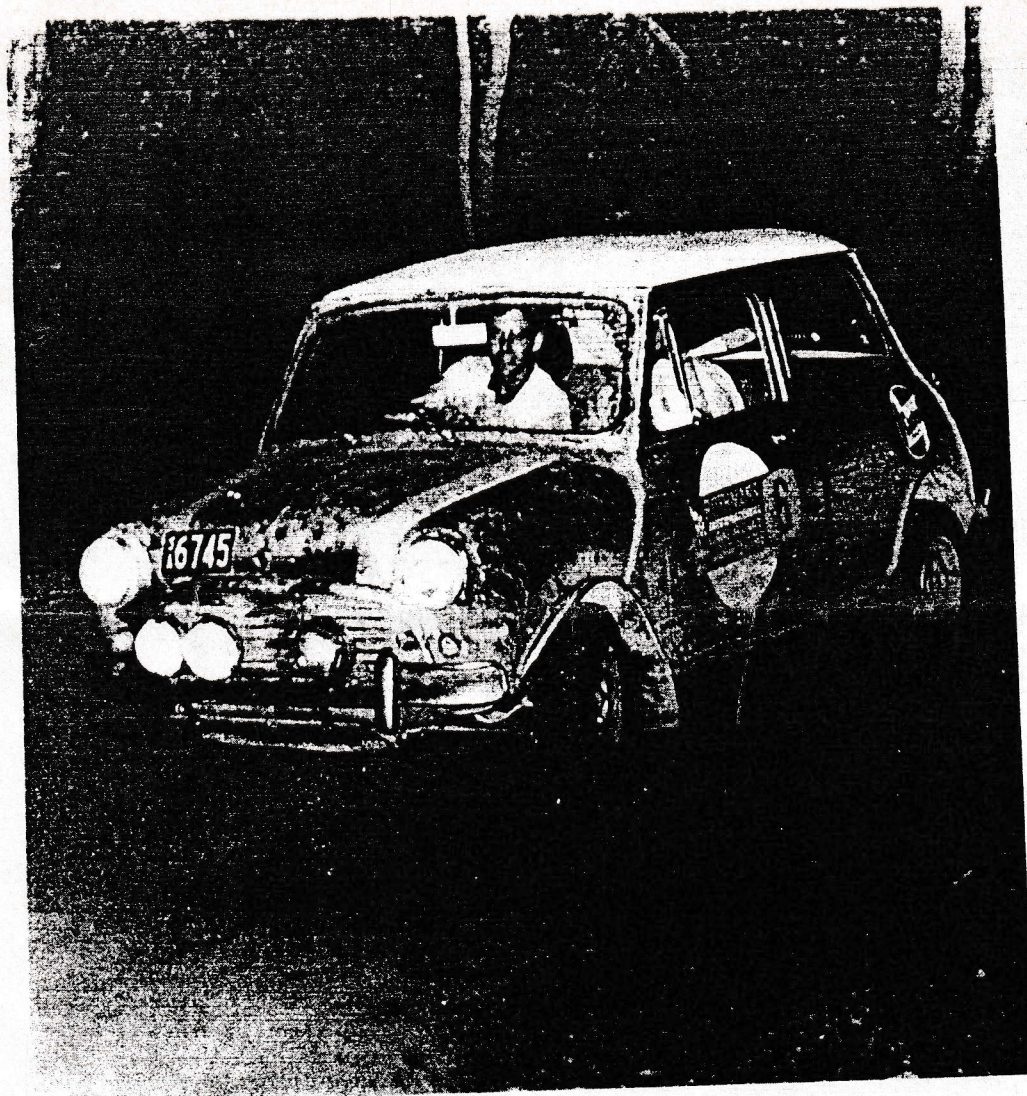
BMC's market share plummeted to a record low of 9.4 per cent.

In a move bordering on desperation, the company launched another new six-cylinder design, derived by extending the wheelbase of the front-wheel drive 1800 and adding two cylinders to its engine. Called the XJ series, the new-comer was sold as the Tasman and more expensive Kimberley. Plans to sell 30 000 units a year proved hopelessly amiss. Only 6765 were sold in 1971, 4367 in 1972.

Following a boardroom shuffle in England, the British Motor Corporation was taken over by the Leyland trucking group with Lord Stokes in command. He came to Sydney to announce that BMC Australia would change its name to British Leyland Australia (it later became Leyland Australia) and that a large amount of money would be spent introducing new products which would be vigorously promoted. These included four-cylinder and six-cylinder versions of the British Marina. The Aussie Marina enjoyed a short but lively life, at one time being the top-selling model the company produced.

Meanwhile, it was apparent to industry observers that BMC Australia could not survive as a major manufacturer. The final chapter in the story started in June 1971 when the company announced it would develop a new large car unique to Australia. It would be sold with a choice between six-cylinder and eight-cylinder engines.

Codenamed P76, the new car was a desperate gamble, especially as the company was losing money on every six-cylinder Tasman and Kimberley sold. A Sydney team started work on the mechanical design and engaged Italian stylist, Giovanni Michelotti, to design the body for a fee reputed to



BMC Australia used motor sport to publicise the Mini after launching it in 1961. The company enjoyed considerable success in rallying, rallycross and circuit racing.



be \$100 000. One instruction given him was to end the BMC tradition of having limited luggage space. He gave the P76 so large a boot that the lid could be closed on a 200 litre drum!

By June 1973, when the car was launched, the codename P76 became official. For a variety of reasons, including severe industrial trouble at the plant, sales were poor. Only 8000 P76s were sold in the first year and so plans were abandoned to produce a stylish coupe version called Force 7.

The end of the company as a manufacturing force came in October 1974, by which time total losses had reached \$70 million. The Victoria Park factory was closed and the company moved to a much smaller plant at Enfield, near Sydney, where Minis, Mokes, Land Rovers and other vehicles were assembled. The company also took over the importation and marketing of Jaguar and Rover cars.

In 1982, the name was changed from Leyland Australia to JRA Limited (standing for Jaguar Rover Australia). The firm took over the distribution of Peugeot cars and extended its already large coachmaking division. In 1987, a consortium including a management team led by managing director Phil Howell purchased the firm from its UK parent. A new company, JRA Holdings Limited, was established. The British-based Rover Group and Jaguar Cars each subscribed 20 per cent of the holding company's equity. The purchase price of \$66.6 million corresponded with the net assets of JRA Limited.

Despite the early promise, no other British company managed to stay in Australia as a major presence. Standard Motors — a long-established firm — was doing well in Australia prior to WW2 and local assembly started in 1936 using Australian-made bodies. Sales were so strong that a modern assembly plant was built in Port Melbourne in 1952. Within six years, the company was in financial trouble and a new firm, Australian Motor Industries, was created out of the rubble.

AMI continued to assemble Standard products and, in 1959, commenced building Triumph Herald models. This unusual — and in some ways advanced — design came to the market before it had been fully developed, and major problems such as bad water leaks into the body developed. When Federal Government actions introduced a major credit squeeze in 1961, AMI was forced to liquidate large stocks of unsold Heralds and Standard Vanguards. They also sold a large parcel of AMI shares to BMC.

Despite the setback, the assembly of Standard and Triumph cars continued and the company commenced assembling American Rambler and German Mercedes cars. A much more important decision was that AMI negotiated to assemble Toyota products. Today, Australian Motor Industries is almost wholly owned by Toyota and acts as the main marketing arm for all Toyota passenger vehicles.

Ford Australia assembled a range of British-made Anglia, Zephyr, Consul and Prefect models immediately after WW2 and was soon running second to Holden in the sales race. However, after the introduction of the Falcon in 1960, the company became increasingly dependent on six-cylinder cars for its main sales thrust. Production of two British-based designs continued, however. Cortinas (some models with Falcon engines) were produced from 1962 until 1982 and Escorts ran from 1970 to 1980. Ford then turned to Mazda of Japan for the components needed to build small cars and that was the end of British Fords in this country.

An Australian subsidiary of Rootes Group had a curtailed presence. When four-cylinder Hillman cars started coming here in the 1920s, the firm was owned by William Hillman. It was not until 1928 that William Rootes and his brother Reginald acquired control of the Hillman factory and the nearby Humber factory in Coventry. These firms were merged to form the Rootes Group. A subsidiary, Rootes Australia, began to assemble the lightweight Hillman Minx at Port Mel-

bourne in 1946. As the postwar market boomed, Rootes ambitiously purchased a large site at Harrisfield, near Dandenong, Victoria, and announced plans to commence local manufacture. This never eventuated.

Nevertheless, Rootes Australia had several successful years, assembling Hillman, Singer and Humber cars. The firm was going well when the British parent company ran into hard times, following the introduction of the baby Imp which was intended to do for Rootes what the Mini had done for BMC. Unhappily, the Imp — while being a perfectly satisfactory design — never proved popular anywhere. The exercise was very costly and caused acute financial problems within the group. As a result, the entire Rootes operation was sold to Chrysler. In December 1965, Chrysler Australia merged with Rootes Australia and, over a period of years, transferred the assembly and marketing operations from Melbourne to Adelaide. Hillman sales progressively declined and, by 1972, had virtually ceased.

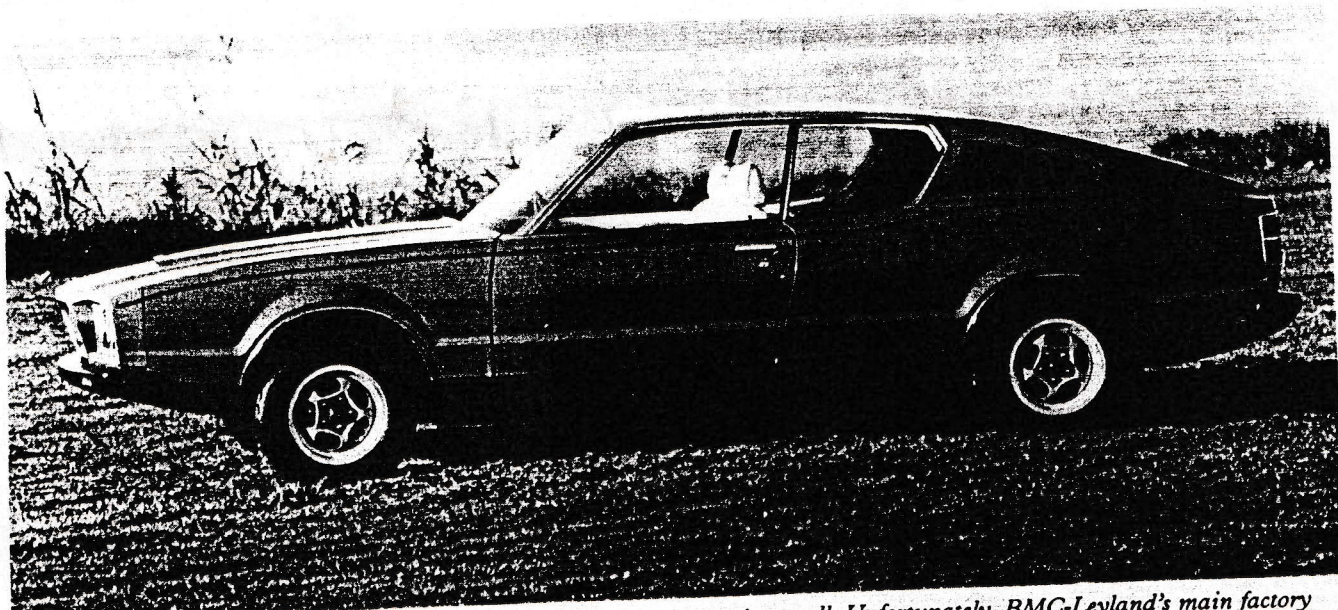
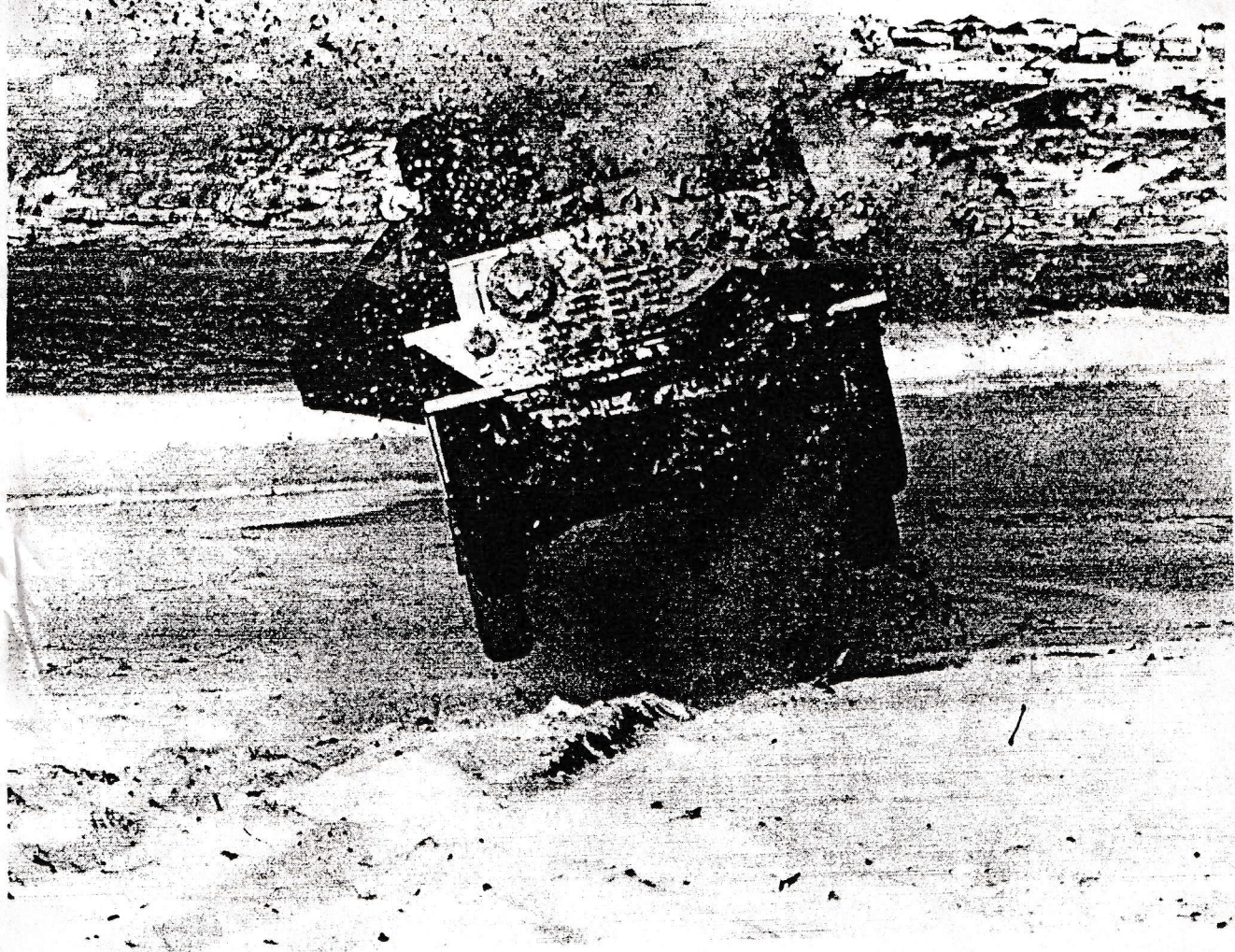
The earliest Rovers came here from 1906 onwards but it was only after WW2 that the company took the Australian market seriously. The cars were always fully imported but the go-anywhere Land Rover was assembled in Sydney from 1949 and quickly became a common sight on farms, construction sites and in military circles. It remained the country's top-selling four-wheel drive vehicle until the 1970s, when the Toyota LandCruiser took over.

The way in which the LandCruiser progressively stole Land Rover's market was a microcosm of a far wider scene. During the same period of time, the entire Japanese motor industry showed it could quickly adapt its products to suit the needs and wishes of Australian motorists. As a result, Japanese models steadily drove British family cars off Australian roads. By the late 1980s, only luxury models such as Aston Martin, Bentley, Jaguar, Lotus, Rolls-Royce and Rover were on sale. All were fully imported.



The Australian Morris Elite was a sales disappointment during the 1960s despite the work which went into toughening it for rough road conditions.

Opposite Page, Top: The Mini Moke produced from 1966 to 1981 was exported from Sydney around the world — but the total built over 15 years amounted to only 26 142.



Had it gone into production, the stylish 1974 Leyland P76 might have done well. Unfortunately, BMC-Leyland's main factory closed just before the car was ready for production. No car has since been wholly made here by a British-based firm.