

It all started in 1993 with the purchase of GGM 456 N an Almond V8 with the standard Brown vinyl roof (nick-named "Yellow Belly"). This we purchased from an elderly gentleman living in a neighbouring village. We used the car every day for going to work until in 1995 we decided to get something a little more modern as the children were getting bigger and the mileage was creeping up!

So in 1995 we sold it to a good friend, on the agreement that we would have first refusal when they wanted to sell it. Consequently Chris (the new owner) instantly fell in love with it, well who wouldn't! For two years Chris and her family had many hours of happy motoring as well, unfortunately Chris also had as many hours of unreliability mainly due to an imbalance of the carburettors. In 1997 Chris reluctantly resigned herself to returning the car to us and finding something more reliable!

Therefore on July 1st 1997, Yellow Belly returned home.

Within a few weeks we set about taking her to pieces in order to renovate and restore her to her former glory. Unfortunately once stripped down to her shell there seemed to be many holes and areas needing attention. As we had previously restored a 2200SC a basic restoration project did not fill either of us with enthusiasm. Hence for two years Yellow Belly stayed in the garage in many pieces.

During the two years the car was in the garage Amelia began "nagging" Stephen to make this P6 into a convertible! She was sure the roof could be removed without any significant strengthening. However Stephen was not as easily convinced and would not remove the main support posts until he knew more.

Finally it happened, one evening in February Stephen was reading the P6 News when he saw it, a P6 Convertible for sale. He immediately phoned the number in the ad and arranged to view it on the following Sunday. Amelia was delighted; at last she might just be able to have the convertible she had always dreamed of. The Sunday turned out to be a miserable, cold, wet day but having the opportunity to look over the car in detail answered many questions.

Although the present owner had not done the convertible himself, and was unable to say who did, he was able to confirm it had been running around for 18 months without any particular strengthening and had not bent! This news was like music to our ears.

The following day we bought an angle grinder on the way home from work and took it in turns that evening to saw through each post until the roof was off!!

THE DIY ROVER P6 CONVERTIBLE



Amelia gets to work ...

The next few weeks were spent welding and filling. We had convinced a local panel beater by the name of Melvin to weld in new inner sills and plate any structural areas that needed attention (as with many cars of this age the more you looked the more you found!). The local soft top specialists (MLC) had been to visit it and assured us he would probably be able to make something to fit and advised us what extra panels would need to be made and fitted in order to attach the hood to the car. This aspect of the conversion was very carefully planned, as neither of us wanted to move away from the classic shape and style of the P6.



How many cutting discs did we buy Amelia?

Everything was ticking along nicely until midway through April. On to the doormat came a brochure for a European Classic Car Rally. It would start in Brussels and travel through Belgium, France and Germany ending in the Austrian Alps.

Immediately we fell in love with the idea of

driving through the Alps in our convertible! We signed up by return of post; they needed photographs and a current MOT certificate by the 12th July. Panic! The car was nowhere near finished it was still not at the stage where bits could be put back on! Hence the tempo increased now all spare time for either of us was spent on the car. Virtually every night after work and once the children were in bed we crept out into the garage and there we stayed until midnight, 1.00am or even later, trying to reach deadlines. As each panel was finished Melvin would collect them for spraying. In our infinite wisdom we had decided to change the colour from Almond to Glacier White. The interior was also a problem it was brown cloth!

We thought about covering the existing seats with leather however all the other interior would still be brown. We then searched the ads in the last three editions of P6 News and found an interior in need of some attention in Staines, having checked the interior was black leather we arranged a viewing. It was perfect for what we were looking for. We purchased the complete car there and then tentatively drove her home (without an MOT or tax!!).

We soon set about installing the black leather, it looked great. Obviously a few adjustments needed to be made for the new shape and coverings needed to be made for the parts previously unexposed.

As the panels returned so they were reassembled but there was still a lot to do. The rear doors needed to be welded to the rear wings and filled in, along with panels for the roof to be attached to. Many hours later of rubbing, and a batch of duff filler that wouldn't harden



*Voila! - Just fit the panels
and we have a convertible*

P6 Rover Owners Club

and so had to be removed, she was ready for the last bits of priming up and spraying. The really exciting stage had arrived!

One more major problem where do we mount the seatbelts, half the B posts weren't there! It needed additional strengthening in order to mount the seatbelts in the rear doors. To meet with safety laws for the MOT we consulted the local garage re 'The Law',

and peered in many convertible cars to see where they were mounted! We decided eventually to mount them at the top of the rear door just behind the front seats, an additional steel plate with a nut attached had to be welded in place to provide the strength.

It was the 10th July only two days left to change our application. With the paint still wet and thankfully a sunny day we drove her onto the driveway for a photo shoot and did she look good!

Now the application for a trip of a lifetime had been achieved the following two weeks were spent getting a MOT, re-registering as a convertible having an alarm fitted and driving her of course!

In the following months we experienced a great deal of interest from enthusiasts of P6's and the public in general. We were even stopped at some traffic lights and the couple in the car in front jumped out and asked if we had a few minutes to pull over and tell them about the car!!

Needless to say we adore her and did indeed fulfil the dream of driving through the Alps in a temperature of 30 degrees in a P6 convertible.

All in all it was perfect scenery, perfect weather, in a perfect car.

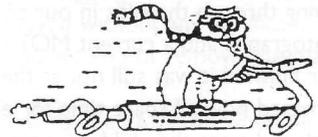
But that's another story!

Stephen & Amelia James



The Alps + P6 Convertible = Paradise

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