

Feature Car

1969 Holden HK Premier station wagon



ROAD-TRIPPING CLASSIC

WHEN IT CAME TO PACKING UP THE KIDS FOR THE BIG KIWI ROAD TRIP IN THE '60S, THE CHOSEN METHOD OF TRANSPORT WAS A CLASSIC HOLDEN STATION WAGON

Holdens have long been entwined in the lives of Ian and Jenny Ginns, from Ian's first ride in a Holden in 1967 — his mate's light green HR ute to the Barry's Point Road rubbish dump — followed by a succession of '60s and '70s HK, HT, and HG models, through to the 1978 Brougham in which they brought their newborn son home from the hospital. But it's this very rare and beautifully restored HK Holden Premier station wagon that the couple have poured their hearts into to enjoy for years to come.

Wagon Wheels
The HK's new life began when Ian and Jenny spotted a blue HK Premier wagon driving along the road. As they followed the Holden, it turned into a car dealer's yard, and the couple speculated that the wagon might be up for sale. As they stopped and waited, the Holden's owner emerged, giving Ian the chance to ask if he wanted to sell the Premier. The car wasn't for sale at that stage, but telephone numbers were exchanged and, as luck would have it, a few months later Ian received a call from the owner. He was no longer using the original, three-owner Premier and wanted to sell it to someone who would look after it. After taking his mate, Barry, to Hamilton to check the car out, a deal was done and Ian owned the wagon. That all happened back in 1987.
A spot of research by Ian confirmed that the Aussie-built Premier wagon had been originally shipped to New Zealand on the boat Karepo, arriving at Terry Motors in Blenheim (now Wadsco Motors) on April 8, 1969.

A Few Words on the HK
The 1968 HK ranks among the most important models in Holden's history, and at the time undoubtedly represented the manufacturer's most ambitious series to date, bringing a large array of additional models that were sleeker, looked more muscular and offered better safety features. Prior to the release of the HK, Holden's position on

the Australian and New Zealand markets had looked unassailable, but the arrival of Ford's V8-optional XR Falcon created a new set of buyer expectations, which left Holden with no other option than to introduce a seriously modernized full-sized vehicle line-up — one with the potential to drastically outshine the previous HD–HR models. Whilst six-cylinder engines still powered the majority of Holdens sold, the introduction of a single, Chevrolet 5.0-litre V8-powered HK model — usually equipped with two-speed Powerglide transmission — saw around 15 per cent of buyers opting for the bent eight. With pressure on Australian car manufacturers to contain costs and maximize Australian content, the subsequent models, the HT (halfway through the model run) and HG, received 4.2-litre and 5.0-litre versions of an all-Australian V8. The HK was also the first Holden to wear the soon-to-be famous Kingswood name for the volume-selling model, replacing the name Special, while the base-model sedan was called Belmont. The luxury, flagship model, the Premier, might seem sparsely-furnished when compared to the most basic of today's Holdens, but it was nothing less than prestigious transport when new. This model remained in Holden's line-up and, together with its less luxuriously appointed stablemates, offered a larger choice of engines, transmissions and options than had previously been seen in a mass-produced Australian car.



1969 HK HOLDEN PREMIER STATION WAGON	
ENGINE	Holden in-line six-cylinder
CAPACITY	3048cc (186ci)
BORE/STROKE	3.625 x 3.00mm
VALVES	Two per cylinder
C/R	9.2:1
MAX POWER	94kW at 4200rpm
MAX TORQUE	245Nm at 1600rpm
FUEL SYSTEM	Bendix-Stromberg single-barrel downdraught carburettor
TRANSMISSION	Three-speed column-change manual
SUSPENSION	Front: Independent with coil springs, stabiliser bar, direct-telescopic
	Rear: Semi-elliptic springs, acting
STEERING	Recirculating ball/power assisted
BRAKES	Drum/drum, servo assisted
DIMENSIONS:	
OVERALL LENGTH	4694mm
WIDTH	1814mm
HEIGHT	1435mm
WHEELBASE	2819mm
TRACK F/R	1451mm/1451mm
KERB WEIGHT	1390kg
PERFORMANCE:	
MAX SPEED	151kph
0-100KPH	14.7 seconds



From Tidy-up to Restoration
Ian and Jenny used the Premier for weekend travels to Warkworth for around 10 years. After that, apart from the odd run, the Holden was effectively laid up for about 12 years.
Ian put the Premier back on the road in 2013, with the help of his friend, Brian Thurston, who also used to work at Reo Motors in Takapuna, and Mike Parr of Mike Parr Automotive in Glenfield. Both Brian and Mike are as passionate about Holdens as Ian. The initial work included replacing all wheel cylinders and brake linings, as nothing much else had been done to the car, except for a new clutch and exhaust system installed back in 1986.
With that work complete, the wagon was back on the road, but only a few months later, Ian decided it was time to treat the Premier to a tidy-up. With that in mind the wagon was taken to Dave at Auto Blast in Porana Road, Glenfield. There, the Holden's underside was sandblasted and repainted with Resene Durepox. The car was then taken to Ian Hackett, of CarPro in Milford, for a small tidy-up, but things soon grew beyond that point.
Ian and Jenny were originally only going to strip and respray the Holden's roof, but ended up respraying the whole car after attending to a few minor rust repairs.
The interior was completely stripped of all panels, seats and carpet before the body work commenced.

The motor was also removed and checked. While it was out of the car, Michael Parr Automotive replaced the front timing gear and frost plugs, and installed a full gasket set.
The body was then taken back to CarPro where the front guards were removed, and all rust repairs completed. All the doors were removed, old car-park dings and dents were repaired, and the roof was fully stripped and painted in its original shade of Ermine White. The body was then repainted, using Glasurit paint, once again to the original colour — in this case, Hacienda Blue. To complete the wagon's exterior, the bumpers and wheel trims were re-chromed.
Once the Holden had been returned to Ian's home garage, he decided to install a more sporty HK GTS dashboard, one that included instrument gauges rather than warning lights — with the 'new' speedometer being recalibrated to reflect the wagon's original 94,000 miles (151,278km). Ian also installed the original seats, panels, and carpets, while Brian Thurston attended to any final mechanical work. As a nice period finishing touch, Ian also fitted a set of blinds for the rear side windows, these having been purchased from Australia.
The car was quite literally finished just days before our photo shoot, and while there are still a few minor jobs that need attending to, it's abundantly clear that Ian and Jenny will be enjoying their gorgeous, freshly refurbished Premier wagon for a long time to come.