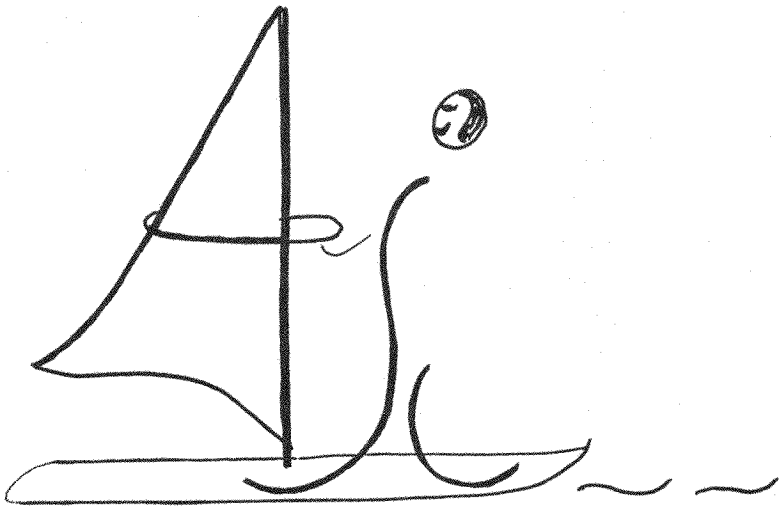

Auto-Sleeper

Owners' Club



Newsletter No 10

Greetings,

What a great time we had wandering through France, visiting favourite spots and finding some we had missed but always wanted to see. Four weeks of near bliss and we hardly thought about the Club at all, except on the rare occasions when we saw another Auto-Sleeper. We were a bit surprised to meet only two, one at Beaugency on the second night (and they arrived late and left early, obviously on passage,) and the second at St. Gervaise-d'Auvergne a couple of nights later. But then it was May and we kept to the side roads most of the time. We like side roads not only because there is usually even less traffic and stops to look at the scenery cause no inconvenience to others, but partly because I feel as though I am being a bit of a pioneer! That feeling disappears with a bit of a dull thud, sometimes... We were making our way back from Spain to France along some interesting, winding roads up the Pyrenees, almost no traffic until I saw a bus some way ahead. But it wasn't a bus, it was a coach and worse still, a double-decker! It really rubbed my nose in it, if you know what I mean, because there was no possibility of overtaking so we followed for miles and miles. The only bit of light relief was when it came, suddenly, to a tunnel, where it stopped in the middle of the road, hazard warning lights and all other lights came on and, after a fairly long pause, it positioned itself on the centre-line and proceeded in first gear. It was a rather long tunnel, too. I must admit it was a fairly tight fit but the driver had obviously done it before. We were probably on an international tourist coach route. So much for pioneering! For the record we had followed the C138 from El Grado via Ainsa to Broto where it became the C140, to Biescas where we turned right onto the C136 which brought us to France and the D934 to Eaux-Bonnes. All very pleasant. Except, perhaps, for the coach...

A letter from a Member who lives in Torpoint:-

"Dear Mr Daley,

I wonder if you would be prepared to publish the following in the Newsletter.

Have any other members had the same unfortunate experiences as myself. I took delivery of a new Talbot Rambler in early February, since then I have had the following problems.

Difficulty in changing down to second and first gears and the gear lever rattles like mad in fourth. Remedy, Lubricate and adjust linkage. (Still not much better)

Breakdown No.1: King lead from electronic ignition to distributor cut through after rubbing on the alternator pulley. Remedy, change all leads.

Breakdown No. 2: Engine missing, finally cut out. Mechanic cleaned jets. Twenty miles later engine missing again. Managed to get to main agents in Folkestone.

Remedy: changed petrol filter which appeared to be blocked with fine sand and also changed petrol tank which was all rusty inside.

I have nothing but praise for the conversion, it is certainly superior to any other on the road, but as far as the base vehicle is concerned it is the worst I have driven in over 40 years of motoring. The gear box is appalling, even double de-clutching, which should not be necessary, does not always work.

Yours sincerely,
J. Pritchard."

Having done what Mr Pritchard asked, I will make some comments which I hope will be of general interest. Firstly, there is nothing the Club or Auto-Sleepers can do about these problems, except to offer our sympathy, which of course we do, but that doesn't cure anything. The problem is one for the manufacturers of the base vehicle, the Peugeot Talbot Motor Company and they would expect complaints to be dealt with by their appointed agent, whose name and address should appear on the Warranty Card inside the maintenance handbook supplied with the vehicle. Base vehicles, be they Ford, VW, Renault, Talbot or whatever, are supplied direct from the factory to A-S who take them into their custody and carry out conversions as approved by the Manufacturer. The completed vehicle then goes to the A-S Distributor with whom you or I placed the order. Before it can be delivered a Pre-Delivery Inspection has to be carried out by an approved agent of the manufacturer who will then put his stamp on the Warranty Card to validate it. That is where to go if problems arise with the base vehicle. Yes, I know everybody knows that, but the point I want to make is this: Auto-Sleepers do not buy the vehicles, do not therefore rate as a large customer as far as the vehicle manufacturers are concerned and thus can have little influence with them. Don't expect A-S Ltd to be able to do much more than you can to get problems with the base vehicle put right.

In a lighter vein, we still have correspondence on the subject of Rallies (I'm happy to say):-

"Dear Phil,

I am writing to comment on the choice of rally sites. I agree with Aubrey Wagstaffe that there is no need for a fully equipped site when you have an Auto-Sleeper. Whilst the Cotswold Hoburne site may be a good example of its type I would personally not choose to stay there.

I have nearly always camped on Forestry Commission sites and found them most agreeable with their pleasant surroundings and easy access to forest and heathland. I trust such an alternative can be considered for a future rally site.

Yours sincerely,
Roy Raeburn."

Thanks for your letter, Roy. I hope it will produce more comments on sites. There are, of course, rallies and rallies. Once a year we do need something special in the way of sites for the Club's National Rally and AGM. We have already set up a sub-committee to search for a big site for next April, bearing in mind our requirements:- pitches for at least 400 vans, sufficient electric hook-up points for those who find them essential, room for the AGM which could be attended by some hundreds more, catering for large numbers if, as some of us hope, we (you and I for starters) agree we should have a meal together at some stage of the weekend even if we have to pay for it ourselves! But I must agree with you and many more who say one reason for buying a motor caravan was to achieve a high degree of independence. If I can add peace and quiet to that I am well pleased. The monthly rallies John has laid on were intended to help Members meet in small numbers and, until we get a Certificate of Exemption from the Department of the Environment we have to observe the Planning Regulations and use licenced Sites for our rallies. There is a demand for mid-week meets and I don't see any particular difficulty in arranging these informally. For instance, if I were to say that Rita and I expect to spend the nights of 12th & 13th July at the Forestry Commission site at Cinderford in the Forest of Dean (we don't, so don't make plans!) and it just so happened that a number of Club Members also found themselves there at the same time we could have a good old natter. The Deadline for the next Newsletter is the 20th of the current month and you know the address (or telephone 021-706 1816) It's up to you.

My motor insurance policy specifically excludes use for rallies, among several other things and while you know and I know that what they mean by rallies is not the sort of events we are talking about, can't you just imagine the cost involved in getting legal beagles to explain the difference in Court, if it ever came to that. So why don't we call our organised meetings, "Meets" and have done with it. The Rally Officer would then become the Meet Officer or Butcher. (Sorry John, nothing personal!)

John Cox asks me to say that requests for pitches among A-S Club Members at the Bath & West Show at Shepton Mallet, 22nd to 24th September, should best be sent direct to Member No. 008, Mr. I.E. Newton, Prospect Cottage, Prospect Lane, Frampton Cotterell, Bristol, BS17 2DR. (0454 775976). Ivan, who organises the motor caravan side of things there, advises pre-booking using one of the forms that will appear in the motor caravan journals nearer the date in order to save money, or pay at the gate. He would like to have a fairly firm idea of the number of ASOC members intending to visit by about the end of August so that a suitable area can be set aside for us. John Cox also wants Rally Marshalls, please for Rally No.8 at Cotswold View Caravan Park, Charlbury, 21st-23rd July and Rally

No.9 at Blacklands Lake, Calne, Wilts 18th - 20th August. A note with your booking slip, perhaps a little earlier than usual if you can help, please. It seems to be a job one can enjoy to judge from the following:-

"Rally Report No. 3. Honeybourne, Evesham.

A successful rally was held at the Ranch Caravan Park during the weekend of 5th to 7th May. We were blessed with glorious weather, hardly a cloud being seen the whole time of the rally.

We compliment John Cox for finding this site, which was ideal as we had our own field for the rally with plenty of site facilities. 44 vans attended over the weekend plus two day visitors. One Member was from Aberdeen and some others had travelled quite a distance. A Ploughman's Supper was provided on Saturday after which many went to the clubhouse on the site for liquid refreshment. On Sunday we had coffee and biscuits which was followed by the raffle.

A welcome surprise on Saturday morning was a visit by some staff from Auto-Sleepers' works who came to sort out any minor problems and give advice. Well done, lads. Much appreciated.

Finally a big "Thank You" to Alan and Doreen for assisting us in marshalling the rally and to others who helped in preparing food and providing hot water for the coffee morning.

Barbara and Tony Jones, Rally marshalls."

"CHAIRMAN'S CHAT.

One of the problems of being Chairman of a new club is getting to know the members. Like many of you, I believe, I had never been to a rally before that great gathering at South Cerney so I didn't really know what to expect. Since then my wife Daphne and I have been able to get to the rallies at Glen Trothy and Honeybourne and enjoyed them both greatly. I am gradually beginning to build up a list of those members I have met and got to know but it is a slow process, particularly if, like me, you don't have a good memory for faces. I rather like the idea that some clubs apparently have of members wearing badges showing their names. May I suggest that at this stage those of you who attend rallies might care to make your own name badges - later on we might get round to producing proper club ones.

On the subject of rallies two other points occur to me. Firstly on the matter of advance booking. As you know it is very helpful for John Cox to know how many people plan to attend each rally and that is why we ask you to send him your booking slip and cheque to arrive at least a week in advance. It does, however, seem a waste of time and money for him to send out receipts for each cheque he receives and you can assume that if you sent your cheque off in good time he will have received it. For those of you who want to be doubly sure will

you please send him a stamped self-addressed envelope with your booking slip in which he can send you an acknowledgement.

The other point concerns the nature of the rallies themselves. Rightly or wrongly I am getting the impression that most Members like the "low key" type of rally which we are currently organising rather than the "whoopie!" style with Tug of War and Bobbing for Apples. Am I right? Please let Phil know if you have any strong views.

Finally I know I am speaking for all the committee when I say that we urgently need to know from Members what they want from the Club. We did ask some questions on the application form regarding your interests but that was, in most cases, some time ago and your expectations may have changed. We would much appreciate your views on this most important matter - we are only on the committee to try and do what you want us to!

John Normandale. June, 1989."

These chairmen are all the same, aren't they - ask for information, give someone else's name and go off to France for ever! Well, three weeks, actually. To be serious, both Rita (Secretary) and I (Editor) want to hear from you, you have the address, the telephone number is 021 706 1016, only one line so you get one or the other, please don't phone before 7 o'clock on Sunday morning or after ten at night. We go out sometimes, so sometimes there will be no answer. Do try again.

I had a call one morning which gave me a bit of a shock. Quite a number of us have met John (Jack) and Doris Little either at the IGM or subsequent rallies which they found to be the sort of social activity they had been looking for in retirement. The sad news is that Jack had a heart attack, collapsed and died very suddenly. Doris feels she does not wish to use their Clubman by herself, understandably, so she has asked the Club for help in finding a genuine buyer. So, do YOU know someone who would be interested in a 1986 Bedford/Auto-Sleeper Clubman with automatic gearbox and only seventeen and a half thousand miles on the Clock? It passed it's first MOT just two months ago, has many, many "extras" including second battery, double glazing and a high-quality Pioneer radio cassette. She tells me it is in immaculate condition inside and out and, as they say, only has to be seen... Registration C 602 PRA. I think "Offers in the region of £14,000" sounds too low to me but that is up to Buyer and Seller. Genuine enquiries to:-

Mrs Doris Little,
HEYSHAM, Morecambe, Lancs
0524 53249.

SOME NOTES OF A TRIP TO TURKEY 12TH APRIL TO 23RD JUNE 1988.

We hope that the following notes will be useful to others following a similar route. For those thinking of making the long trip to Turkey, we can only say - don't hesitate! The only reason our trip took 10 weeks was that we wanted it that way! In fact we found 10 weeks in the "Tranny 'van" too long - maybe it will be different in the new Talisman?

GENERAL ITINERARY AND COMMENTS.

The route on the way out was arranged to visit various friends near Rotterdam, near Kassel in Germany, and in eastern Austria. We then joined the Yugoslav coast near Koper, and followed the coast, detouring to Mostar and Sarajevo, then back to the coast to the Albanian border. We had not previously seen the Yugoslav coastline. It is superb out of season and we will go again. We had minor problems with a few camps not yet open. Those at Trogir (Medena) and Dubrovnik (Solitudo) were excellent. At Mostar, where accommodation is scarce, we didn't like the look of Buna camp, and paid £10, without food, for a double room in a pension. On to Skopje and Bitola, entering Greece at Niki. We made the mistake of visiting North Central Greece via Kastoria, Neapoli and Edessa where we stayed at the Xenia Hotel, (no camp available). As well as many miles of dusty unmade road we also passed through the electrical power centre of Greece, with gigantic lignite mines and huge palls of brown dust - an area to be avoided! Halkidiki made up for the rest of N. Greece. Kalandra (Posidoni) NTOG camp was good. Sithonia was delightful.

Camps at Asprovalta and Alexandroupoli are recommended. Across the border into Turkey at Kipli. Crossed the Dardanelles at Gallipoli (Gallipoli). Just missed Anzac day, but met many Aussies and New Zealanders. The only camp in this area is Trova (Troy - Guzelyali) - adequate. Next camps Kervanseray mOCamps at Inciralti and Kusadasi. Could not find Guluk camp, so went down Datca peninsula. Didn't fancy "naturalist" camp(!), but found Forestry camp site. Camped next at a very pleasant site at Koycegiz, (Anatolia), with good food prepared by the proprietress. On to Kemer (Turhan Kisiltepe) and to Alanya. The proprietor at Koycegiz had recommended the Comertoglu motel camp at Alanya. This was very crowded, (with Germans especially!), and we moved next door to the very good Kervanseray camp, which has a useful little restaurant opposite. On to Burdur where we again found a Forestry camp site. Next Pamukkale - the silica terraces are a must. The camp was very crowded, without shade and dirty. On another occasion we would time our visit to avoid staying at Pamukkale. We now went cross country to Salihli where we took a room in the Mobil motel - for the same price as the Kervanseray camps! Although very noisy, it was clean and had a reasonable restaurant attached. On to Bursa, a rewarding visit. The camp (Kervanseray) is good and there is a

useful supermarket nearby. We were also able to get two 7 lbs gaz cylinders filled at a local gas depot for the equivalent to 68p (total cost!)

And so to Istanbul to the Kervanseray camp. We stayed three days and were picked up by minibus for reasonably priced day tours. This method of visiting Istanbul is recommended as parking in the city is virtually impossible, and the driving standard appalling - it's the only place we have seen cars driving along the sidewalk hooting at pedestrians to get out of the way!

This was the only poor Kervanseray camp we encountered and the facilities were over crowded. On any future trip we would use one of two better looking camps on the coast nearer to Istanbul.

Back into Greece at Kipl and on to the good NTOG camp at Alexandropouli. Then to Kavala - a tidy camp on the shore. After Thessaloniki a detour via Larissa to Meteora - a fantastic place - camped at Meteora Garden at Kastraki. Then back round the other side of Mount Olympus to Thessaloniki and on to the Yugoslav border at Bogorodica. Camped at Kattanova then up the fearsome two-lane Autoput to Zemun, 12 miles North of Beograd. Detoured to camp near Plitvice's green lakes and waterfalls - walked for five hours at this splendid place - tiring but magnificent! On to camp at Ptuj.

In Austria, didn't like look of camps in Graz, so went on to Wesenufer, a pleasant camp on the Danube. In Germany a good camp at Schwabisch-Hall, and another at Eternach a very pleasant little town in Luxemburg. Camped at Bastogne and visited the American war memorial. Camped at La Roche and then on to Calais.

DETAILED NOTES.

1. The roads in Turkey we found generally good with coarse textured black-top. A few relatively short stretches were being rebuilt and realigned and these were unsurfaced and rather dusty. The roads near the Greek border area are poor, possibly for strategic reasons, and care is needed to avoid large and deep pot holes.

2. Except in the principal towns traffic is light and driving is a pleasure. The traffic in Istanbul and Izmir is chaotic. The main E5 road leaving Istanbul to the north, is an experience, being a combination of parallel unseparated motorway and urban carriageways with local traffic, mostly moving in the same direction. The long distance buses on the Izmir to Ankara road are a bit ferocious. We found no small boys throwing stones, despite the apocryphal tales. Ford Transit "Dolmus" operate between towns. Our white Transit Auto-Sleeper was frequently mistaken for these minibuses, with disappointment to the locals! We were advised to avoid the roads in the interior, because of badly driven trucks and bad roads. In fact we found neither, although the centres of some small towns have pot holed roads.

3. We visited nearly all the archeological sites, and found them very worthwhile. We were given two tickets each, (because they have doubled the

The Motorcaravan Club of Ireland



CLONEE CO. MEATH.

TELEPHONE: 01-251364

WPL/AL,

27/APR/89

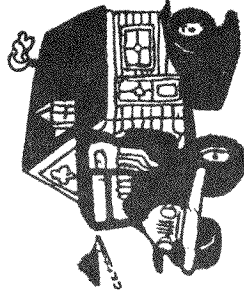
2nd International Motorcaravan Rally, 89.

Powers The Pot, Caravan Park, Harmeys Cross,
Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.

To all members and visitors,

As you will note from the above, we have decided to move the location of the second International Rally, to Powers the Pot, Caravan Park, near Clonmel, as we inspected the ground at Lilliput last week and despite reminding the owners of the land at Lilliput that the ground was not suitable for heavy vehicles without the drainage being attended to, nothing was done about it, and in fairness to everybody we decided that the alternative was to move the rally to Powers the Pot.

The Motorcaravan Club of Ireland



CLONEE CO. MEATH.

TELEPHONE: 01-251364

We feel that we have made an excellent choice in relocating the Rally 89, for only five miles, 8 K. away is the town of Clonmel, an excellent shopping town, steeped in history and tradition with very friendly people, Clonmel is very reminiscent of those picture postcards of rural Germany, The town is set in a magnificent setting just at the foothill of the Comeragh Mountains.

A short distance away from the Caravan Park is Kilsheelin, where Tipperary Crystal is manufactured, visitors may visit the showrooms and also visit the factory where they can see the crystal being blown, and unbelievably on a Sunday from 11 Am until 6PM. Visitors may make purchases from the showrooms, factory to consumer. Kilsheelin itself is a beautiful village, extremely well kept, and when you see the donkey and cart in the village green, you will get a flavour of the community spirit which abounds.

The Nire Vally is the setting, the scenery is absolutely breathtaking, the people are extremely friendly, the roads are pretty good, so all we now need is the weather, and that we are working on.

See you there.



for about 60 vans at present, perhaps in 1990 when the council have completed their work we will be able to use Lilliput.

We visited the Caravan Park at Powers the Pot and are delighted to report that not alone is the site perfect for our Rally but the scenery in the immediate locality (literally at your door) would give Killarney a good run for its money. The scenery is only matched by the hospitality of the owners of the caravan park Niall and Jo Carroll..

Niall and Joe run this caravan park as a home away from home, they have a lovely little wine bistro, meals are served, Jo makes some of the best Brown Bread we have ever tasted as well as apple tart your mum made..

Powers the Pot (theres a large cauldron stuck on the wall outside) is not what you call a Grade A, caravan park in the strict sense of the word, in our opinion we think the potential is enormous. We have awarded Powers the Pot a Four star sticker and we are also delighted to report that Niall and Jo have joined our Club.

There are magnificent hill walks just outside the caravan park and the park is used by hill walkers from all over Ireland, the park can accommodate up to thirty, in dormitory accommodation, the toilets and showers are good, they also have a kitchen facility for those who want to cook for themselves..

Only having the caravan park for a couple of years they feel that they still have a lot to do. We agree that there is scope for development, we do hope however that they dont lose the homeliness which you feel there.

For the Angler there is excellent fishing nearby in the River Suir, the site overlooks the Clommel Golf course, visitors are welcome, there are horse riding facilities also nearby, for the painter and the photographer not alone is the scenery superb but the natural light is fantastic...

prices!). But they are still cheap. The "Turquoise Coast" from Zanthos to Finike is a magnificent unspoiled corniche.

4. A "hazard" encountered at a number of camps was "Kontiki", "Das Rollende Bus", and other similar buses. These are bus loads of about 40 people with camping gear in a trailer behind the bus. Unfortunately they swamp the facilities to the detriment of others. In the Istanbul Kervanseray camp there was no water for one day as a result.

5. The former BP Mocamps are now Kervanseray camps. With the exception of the one at Istanbul, which is overcrowded and badly run, they are all good.

6. State Forestry camps are very cheap, and set in beautiful locations. The W.C.'s showers, and other facilities are not up to the high standard of the Kervanseray camps, and mostly have no hot water. Unfortunately we could discover no map showing their location.

7 Approximate rates in Apr to Jun 1988 for our 'van and two persons were as follows:-

	Camp per day	Exch Rate	Diesel Gall £	Petrol Gall £
Austria	: £3.75 -£7.50	25 Sch	1.53	1.71
Belgium	: £4.80	64 BFr.	1.11	1.74
Germany	: £6.13	3.05 DM	1.45	1.58
Greece	: £2.00 -£5.00	240 Drx	0.72	1.43
Luxemburg	: £4.50	64 BFr.	0.92	1.47
Turkey	: £3.00 -£7.03	2417 TL	0.73	1.45
U.K.	:		1.55	1.71
Yugoslavia	: £3.13 -£8.70	2435 to 3695 YD	1.05	1.29

8. During our trip the Yugoslav exchange rate moved from 2435 to 3695. It is now around YD 10,000! (20,500 26.6.89 Ed). It is wise in these circumstances to cash travel cheques a few at a time, instead of all at once, on entering the Country.

9. Beware of the Bank kiosks at the Turkish border. They are inclined to pay short. (We found others with similar "mistakes").

10 Minor border crossings have no currency exchanges and as the amount of local currency one can take in is very limited, this can lead to problems if no town with a bank is near. Also this problem is likely to arise when there is a one hour time shift and/or it is the week end!

11. It is not generally realised that the Post Office Gyro can be used throughout the EEC including Greece. This means that UK State Pensions can be drawn in the EEC providing prior arrangements are made in the UK. Also the Post Offices in Greece will exchange foreign currency. The banks in Turkish towns are most pleasant, offering glasses of sweet tea whilst the business is done!

12. Crossing the border into Greece and into Turkey can take an hour or more. In each country the vehicle log book and green card must be shown. The vehicle details are entered in the owners passport, and cancelled on leaving the country. (This only applies up to 3 months, after which a carnet must be obtained).

13. There are good duty free shops at the main border crossings.

14. Our 12 week trip cost us about £1700. We, (illegally?) took about £150 of tinned food with us. We dined mostly in the van, but ate out in the evening when the facilities were readily available.

15. Included in the above figure is the cost of medical and vehicle recovery insurance of £143. Incidentally only the AA would provide vehicle recovery insurance for Asian Turkey. The additional cost to non-members is £3. Also included is 12 weeks Green Card, for which we were charged £86.50, by our main insurance company. Our P & O shares enabled half price Dover to Calais return crossing at £67. We took form E 111 to obtain free hospital treatment but fortunately did not need it. Also included are maps and guide books at £78 and slide films at £104. Two new sleeping bags cost £58. International Driving Permits cost £6, but were not used. Also included, two passport renewals at £33.

16. Although we don't smoke, we took 200 duty free cigarettes which we found useful as gifts, particularly for obtaining services.

17. Our 12v mosquito tablet heater was a boon as usual.

18. We took replacement brake pads, oil and filters costing £29 and a tool box. The pads were fitted on site at Koycegizli

19. There were no problems with dirty diesel.

20. We travelled 8031 (true) miles and used 256 gallons of diesel at a total cost of £255. Our average miles per gallon was 31.37.

21. The charges on the Yugoslav Autoput are infuriating. A motor caravan pays the same rate as large trucks and trailers, whereas trailer caravans pay the car rate! The total cost of Yugoslav tolls, (mostly on the return route), was about £25. The Austrian tunnels which we used cost in total about £10.

22. It is essential to get from the various National Tourist Offices in London, maps showing camp site locations, as these are unobtainable in the countries themselves. The Greek one is useful but difficult to decipher.

23. It would be wise not to travel too close to the Eastern border of Turkey, because of the ethnic instability in this Area. Of course Ankara and the Northern areas are worth visiting, and will probably be included in a future trip.

Bruce Cunningham.

Another phone call earlier in the month was from a would-be member, Alan Eaton. He would be if he can locate a Diesel Talisman, at the right price. Anyone thinking of changing 'vans might find a telephone call to Alan on 0621 828637 worth the charge!

Another would-be member wants to locate a VHT or VX50 about 3 years old for private purchase. Direct contact with Mr P J Stanton, Springbank Cottage, Park Lane, Shorwell, Isle of Wight. (0983 740861).

If you thought we had got away from the subject of tyre pressures, sorry! You just didn't know what you were starting, did you, Mary C., when you put the simple question, "What are the correct tyre pressures for my VW?!"! A letter from Mr. W E Allen of Poole:-

"Dear Sir,

As I am very fussy about my tyres I have watched the correspondence on tyre pressures with interest, but wonder if a touch of neuroticism is creeping in. Motor caravans are mostly on commercial van chassis which are expected to cope with a variety of conditions from empty to fully laden without any tyre pressure adjustment. No commercial operator would accept the loss of time to adjust pressures during a working day even if he could persuade the drivers to do so. I take the simple way out: the vehicle handbook gives only one set of pressures, which in my case are confirmed by a sticker on the cab door pillar, and if these are O K for a variety of commercial conditions they're O K for me. In any case, with all the variables like fresh and waste water, the condition of the loo tanks, petrol and personal effects, not to mention 21 bottles of wine and a lot of beer on the return journey from France, the gross weight of the vehicle can vary quite a bit.

What interests me more is something I read somewhere about the stresses on the tyre sidewalls. A commercial vehicle spends its life covering large distances but running only at half load on average, and will often stand empty overnight and at week-ends. A motor-caravan however does less mileage and spends all its time nearly or fully, loaded and therefore the tyres have a more arduous life over a longer time. The result is that although they may have a lot of tread left the tyres can be effectively worn out. In my case I reckon the tread on the rear (undriven) tyres could last five years, but will they be unsafe before then? I should be interested in any views."

I agree, I got carried away and wrote too much on the subject. I intended to suggest to anyone dis-satisfied with the hard ride they get when using recommended pressures that they weigh front and rear and find the appropriate

pressures for them from the tyre makers. It would at least be safer than some suggestions seen in the Press, ranging from 65psi to 36psi. for a Talbot coachbuilt. Auto-Sleepers were doing some work on the subject, getting "typical" weights and the tyre makers' recommendations. They now find all sorts of different makes of tyres are fitted as initial equipment so A-S dare not recommend one front and one rear pressure because different makes have different needs. A legal view (here we go again!) is that a 'van involved in an accident might, just might, have it's tyre pressures checked. If, say, A-S had recommended a pressure of 48psi front for Michelin but the 'van was fitted with Mabor General tyres (made in Portugal) who stated 58psi was correct, there could be a case against the owner for using incorrect pressure and the owner could say, "But A-S recommended 48psi..." All highly theoretical and I wish I had never started it but "One can't be too careful...". I'm afraid there will be more yet. However, would it be a good idea for Mr Allen, and the rest of us I suppose, to change his wheels round every six months or 5,000 miles, spare to nearside front, nearside front to offside rear, etc? Correcting pressures afterwards, of course. This should result in even wear on all five tyres with the resulting shock of having to buy five new ones all at the same time. It also requires similar (identical) tyres on each wheel - I fitted a pair of knobbly Gislaved M & S on the front for extra traction, could have put them on the rear for the summer, I suppose but what about the spare, a Michelin? Doesn't life get complicated! Incidentally, I have recently had difficulty in getting two new Michelin 185/75 R 14's - had to settle for another make.

John Hunt does a nice report on the Talisman GL in the June issue of M M M. Under "Dimensions" he gives the Gross Vehicle Weight as 2800 kg. Is that the ACTUAL weight or the maximum permitted weight? It looks like a quote from the manufacturer's plate to me.

Something else everyone knows is the date of the 2nd International Motorcaravan Rally, organised by the Motorcaravan Club of Ireland, Clonee, Co Meath., 24th to 27th August, 1989. What one or two may not know is the place, because it has been moved. I was tempted to include a brief extract from the letter about it but have decided to let you have the whole works, as a supplement. I'm sure you will enjoy reading it and will agree a summary would have lost the flavour.

Since it is holiday time, I thought an extra bit of reading matter would be welcome so here is Bruce Cunningham's run-down of their visit to Turkey last year. I have put it on a separate sheet so that it can be kept by those anticipating a similar journey. Neville and Alma Blackshaw should be back from Turkey just about now so we look forward to their up-date! Neville reminded me of

my suggestion, temporarily shelved, of forming Regional or Area groups. He says he would be willing to act as co-ordinator, based on Cheltenham, if we go ahead. I will try to get a decision from the Committee at Cheddar on 8th July. I feel strongly that the Club, with 400 Members (400 X 2 would be more correct), is big enough to have such sections which would make it much easier for everyone to contact fellow-members. I will suggest a complete list of Members, in numerical order to facilitate up-dating, be sent to each Member. In addition an Area list, giving Name, Membership Number, Town and Post Code and Conversion (Talisman, Frisky, etc.) be sent to Members in each Area. I suggest doing it this way because I think someone living in, say, Devon and wanting to contact fellow Legend owner would rather not search through the full list. Especially not in two or three years' time! Also, people do change vehicles and a short list is easier (and cheaper) to keep up to date. I also think names should appear in the form "Phil & Rita Daley" rather than "Mr & Mrs P C Daley" because we belong to a Club. A number of Members have volunteered to act as co-ordinators so I will have to go through the files and do some research. The Areas I have in mind are:- South-East, South, South-West, West, North-West, North-East, East and Central. South would include the Channel Islands, West including Northern Ireland and North-East the East of Scotland, unless you have other ideas. That is what we want, Ideas, Please!

Mike Foster is starting out very shortly to tour Europe for 12 months, and asks if there are any essential extras it would be worth fitting to a Talisman GI before setting out. Ideas, please ASAP to me to pass on. Our thought was a Silver Screen for thermal insulation. I know Mike has done it before, because he says so in his letter, but for newcomers to foreign touring we can put you in touch with people who have kept a log of their travels, if you are interested. For instance, Mr & Mrs Conway, (No.345) have travelled extensively on the Continent and North Africa (First source of info. on the latter) and would offer details if interested parties contact the Secretary, first.

This could be the right place to put the
SECRETARY'S PAGE.

Before going on holiday - yes thank you, we had a lovely time, - I wrote to ferry companies asking about discounts. As you can imagine, they explained "No" in a variety of ways, but Sealink British Ferries did have a suggestion. They have a club, which you join by filling in one of the forms they have sent to me, and there is no charge. The idea is that each time you travel on a Sealink standard fare motorist ticket, you send your USED ticket to them and they send a special Sealink Auto Club Cheque worth 20% of your original fare, saving you money against your NEXT standard fare motorist ticket. My daughter's comment was

that it probably brought the price down to what everyone else is charging, but if you see ANY benefit please send a s.a.e. and I will let you have one of the forms by return. I do not have any spare sailing brochures though, but travel agents can supply them, and there is a discount application form in those. (Page 60).

Next, Europ Assistance insurance. They have suggested we might operate one of their Agency systems. The one most likely to be of interest to us consists of the Club dealing with the original application from Members, the completed forms and payment are then sent to Europ Assistance through the Club, and they deal with the rest of the paperwork direct, allowing us a discount. At the moment there are one or two questions, so details of this will have to wait until next month.

These contacts were all I had time for before handing over my job to Sybil and Ken Scotney, who sent out the paperwork to Enquirers and new Members while we were away. (We now have 395 Members). But I have now approached Auto-Sleepers Dealers, and will keep you informed. If anyone can suggest other people to approach, please let me know. Auto-Sleepers have already confirmed that 20% off a new vehicle is OUT!

Incidentally, Sybil realised after a while, that she had not written the number on some Membership Cards. This number appears on the receipt, if you still have that, otherwise I can let you know. I haven't circulated any new lists to the Committee Members yet, so they will not be of much help.

If anyone would like to obtain more details of the Easy Pressure Washer mentioned in a previous Newsletter, the address is:- Blowspeed Industrial Mouldings Ltd., Sandwich Industrial Estate, Ramsgate Road, Sandwich, Kent. Price £23.00 + £3.50 carriage and insurance. It will fit beneath the seat of a CX1000GTL or a Talisman. The drum is approx. 12" diameter and the stand, which should be left attached, is approx 16" wide at the pivot, 12" between the legs (slightly adjustable) and 9" high to the pivot. Since things can be tucked round and inside the washer, the loss of space is small compared with the advantage of fewer clothes to buy and to pack for an extended holiday. The used laundry water is always flushed into the EMPTY grey-water tank, and the following day's driving gets most of the sticky mess loose.

I also have some shallow made-to-measure plastic coated wire mesh trays for the shelves. There are three on the large shelf under the sink in the CX 1000. It is easy to get at things at the back, and when supplies are running down they can be put in one tray, and nothing rolls about. The people to approach are:- Hampster Baskets, Much Marcle, Ledbury, Hereford & Worcs, HR8 2PD. They have been making made-to-measure Freezer baskets for a long time, and Auto-Sleepers used them once in an earlier VW conversion I believe.

We also have a favourite emporium for camping equipment, Jackson's of Old Arley. If you find Nuneaton on the map, New Arley and ARLEY are to the WSW. The Arley Trading Estate is off a side road near a railway bridge. However, they have a large selection of items from caravans and tents, (via fly screen material by the yard, sleeping bags, 12 volt fans, stools & chairs, tableware & saucepans), to knobs and catches similar to those fitted to Auto-Sleeper conversions. They have walls covered in packets of fittings and it is a good hour's browse, but not on Thursday, they are closed. If you know of somewhere near to you offering anything like this please write and let us know.

I have also received a brochure from TMA, Athol Road, Walsgrave, Coventry, CV2 2DA. Tel 0203 616537. Open 9 to 1 & 2 to 5.45, Tuesday to Friday, 9 to 5.30 Saturday. They supply "alteration products", i.e. carpet, vinyl, seats, lights, racks for bikes, spoilers, nudge bars, etc and have a Mail Order service. No personal knowledge of them.

We have also received details of cab window insulation covers, "Silver Screens" to prevent heat loss in Winter and to reflect heat in summer. The price for the Talbot Express is £79, the New Ford Transit £99 etc. Supplier in this instance is:- J & M Designs, 11, Scott Avenue, Heckmondwike, West Yorkshire, WF16 9AH. Tel 0924 405009 or 400204 for prompt despatch of information pack. One Member at the IGM was using his, and said they were marvellous. Internal, sucker or Velcro fitted ones are also available for the quick getaway. AND THEY ARE OFFERING A SPECIAL 10% PROMPT ORDER DISCOUNT. (Letter dated 13th June, 1989.)

I must say that returning from holiday and facing the paperwork was daunting. I just didn't know where to begin. But it became a very enjoyable task as usual, and this example is why. A Mr Davis of Avon also has a computer and has a form headed "Communication", which he used to request information about the Club. The form has various headings, including "Your ref;" against which he has written, "NOTE ON WINDSCREEN"! I could hear him chuckle. I also have great pleasure in reading the comments on the Questionnaires. Some are meant to make me smile too, and thank you for those.

We managed to nab one A-S Owner whilst we were away. We missed the first at Beaugency as we didn't want to approach them too soon after they parked, then they went for a walk. By morning they had gone, and we felt cheated! The second one however, had joined us on a small village site and we didn't let him go without the wiper note but we didn't see another Auto-Sleeper until we got back to England a month later. Perhaps it was just as well!

Rita.

This is a postscript to my page. I have received an occasional Application for Membership with the Second Membership Card section filled in with

a daughter or son's name. This is fine if they are the people who normally accompany you, but if you have a wife or friend who normally accompanies you, the second card is meant for them. So far, we have agreed that families accompanying you in the same vehicle, are welcome. Whether this will prove impractical in time, we shall have to see.

RMD."

Following our recent experience of Brittany Ferries and in particular the very poor service they provide between Plymouth and Roscoff - old ship, slow, running one hour or more late over the last two weeks at least, inadequate accomodation, I thought it would be useful to have comments from other ferry users over the next few months so that some sort of report can be prepared for future reference. Can't see yet what action might be possible but we can consider that when we have the details. We would at least be able to warn other Members of bad service and point out the better routes and companies. Would you like to send, or phone brief comments (unless you feel absolutely carried away by something or other) to the well-known address or number. We will compile the data into something appropriate. I am not an habitual moaner and am certainly not looking for just the bad points - just your opinion, good, bad or indifferent. Membership number, ferry company, from where to where, comment. All done in twentyfive seconds, at the cheap rate, too! Ta!

If you have lasted the course, well done! Any contributions that will help stop me taking myself so seriously will be welcome. That does not exclude serious comment, of course. See you at Cheddar?

Regards,

Phil Daley.

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