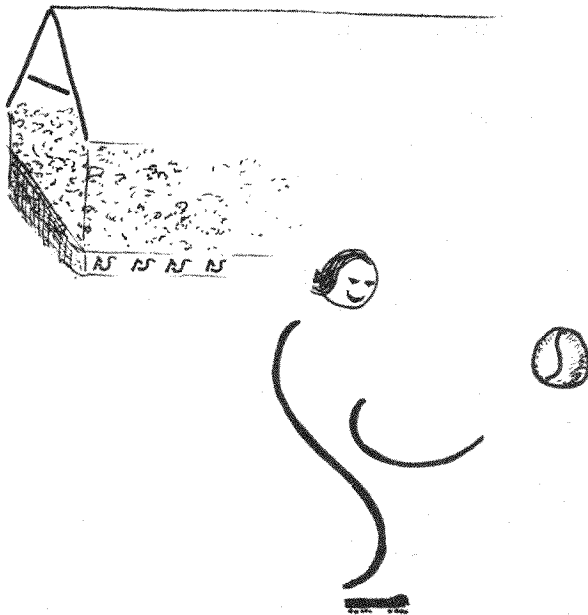


# *AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB*



Newsletter 21

JUNE 1990

Greetings!

The May Newsletter seems to have caused a certain amount of fluttering in the dovecote. I rather thought it might when I decided I had to include the letter from Aubrey Wagstaffe, even though it only reached me on the 26th (or was it the 27th?) of April.

Our printers, Jayne and Phil, did their best and delivered boxes of printed matter to us at about eight o' clock on Thursday evening. It just so happened (or had we dropped a hint?) that Carol and Steven (677) (daughter and son-in-law) had called in for a chat and a noggin a little earlier so we had a team of four to put paper into envelopes and stick them down. Rita decided to sort out the envelopes for those members attending the rally at Wombleton - having obtained the names from Jim the day before - to take with us since we were posting the rest (all 597 copies) on the Friday morning.

If all that seems a little hectic, well, life at this end is like that at times.

So that was how the News was brought to Wombleton in time for Vera to distribute at the Coffee and Natter session on Friday evening. Rally Marshall Henwood, Jim to his friends, started the ball rolling on Saturday morning by saying, "I wish you hadn't put that letter in, Phil, it's quite spoilt my day." I didn't need to ask "What letter"... During the day comments came in from all directions and, I am relieved to say, all agreed "the letter" had had to be published if only to show that members' opinions, pro or anti, would be aired in the Newsletter but no one agreed with those expressed by Aubrey Wagstaffe.

Which may have been a bit unfair. Some of the points he made need attention so perhaps it was the way he made them that attracted hostility. The thought that the Club is going through post-natal trauma is a shocking way of saying "the Club has grown so fast we need an urgent and on-going review of procedures". When John Cox, Frank Stinchcombe, Charles Trevelyan and Neville Jelfs sat down at Willersey in July 1988 to draft rules and constitution for a possible Club I believe they were thinking along the lines of a likely membership of 50 - 100 sometime in the near future. As I write this on 21st May 1990 the latest membership number I have is 678. Taking into account the 120 who have not re-joined, for a variety of reasons, from 1989 to 1990, we now have 558 Member-vans. Since we allow two members per van we have to cater (in the widest sense) for over 1100 people, plus junior Members. We have to realize this is a big Club. To continue the allegory, it has been a bit like Dad, who was

hoping for one baby, arriving at the hospital to find Mum had presented him with sextuplets! Delightful, but can we cope?

Of course we can cope. We have been improvising from the start and things haven't gone too badly, despite recent comments to the contrary! It has already been suggested that Regional Groups would help by spreading the load a bit, for example information on possible rally sites of all categories (more on that later) could be gathered by the Group co-ordinator (there must be a better term for it, please?) and, without splitting the Club into sections, each Group could have small meets at very short notice, while getting together from time to time to organise larger meets for the Club as a whole.

I am very sure the real reason for the existence of the Club is the feeling many Auto-Sleeper Owners have that it would be nice to meet and exchange ideas with other Owners. The Club exists to facilitate those meetings. Let's not make the whole process too cumbersome to be enjoyed. For the benefit of newcomers let me say what Regional Groups are - or rather, may become. Working clockwise from the Thames estuary we have first **South East Group** comprising Kent, East and West Sussex, Surrey and Greater London south of the river. Then **South Group**, Isle of Wight, Hampshire, Dorset, & Wiltshire. **South West Group** could be Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Avon, **West Group** being Gloucestershire, the Southern part of Hereford & Worcs and the south of Wales.

Two big groups occupy the North and will probably have to include our Scottish members at least for the time being; **North West Group** comprising the northern part of Herefs & Worcs, the northern half of Wales, Shropshire, north Staffs., Cheshire, Greater Manchester, part of north Derbyshire, Merseyside, Lancashire and Cumbria. **North East Group** could be Northumberland, Tyne & Wear, Durham, Cleveland, North Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, Humberside and South Yorkshire. **East Group** perhaps being Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, the eastern parts of Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and the NE part of Greater London. **South Central Group** would be Oxfordshire, Bucks, the NW part of Greater London, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. This would leave the West Midlands, south Staffordshire, Warwickshire and the western parts of Northants and Leics. to form the **Central Group**.

This sort of arbitrary split tries to give each Group roughly the same number of members but things keep changing so its quite hard to keep the address list up to date! The boundaries are only put down in very soft pencil and we would welcome other ideas. It could well be that Berkshire might fit better in South Central or Avon in West. Part of Herefs &

Worcs, at least as far as say, Bromsgrove, might be happier as part of Central. Between this Newsletter and the next I will try very hard to get out some abbreviated but up to date lists of members in each Group and send them to the "volunteers" who feel they may be able to act as co-ordinators or focal points. We can then discuss the whole thing and see where we go from there.

A few more points from Aubrey's letter. A larger Club needs more people to run it. By promoting, if that's the right word, Rita and John to Vice-Presidents we have made two vacancies on the Committee without losing the valuable knowledge they both have. As for the suggestion either of them found committee work too hard after a short spell, I wish to put on record that without Rita to keep the membership records here up to date, prepare the mailing list and over 600 address labels each month, stick same onto envelopes, help pack NLs and enclosures into latter, seal them and cart them to the Post Office, you just wouldn't get a Newsletter every month. Guess who types the enclosures (rally lists, booking slips etc.), types replies to members - we get quite a few queries every week. The effort involved in attending a few Committee meetings pales into insignificance beside that lot. I could go on but, ever mindful of my blood pressure, I won't.

The pitches were carefully measured and marked out on the two fields at Billing. I know because, with Clive, Ken, Dave and Jim plus Clive's son and his friend, I spent Wednesday afternoon until dark and all day Thursday helping to get it done. Why it didn't work out entirely as planned will be discovered - my guess, based on a photograph Dilys took of the marquee and surroundings, is that members didn't know they were expected to park right up to the pitch peg with the peg on the centreline of the van. Some vans appeared to be quite a way from the pegs...

I asked for your comments and got quite a few letters. I thought at first I would quote extracts but I don't much like taking a paragraph out of context, it can lead to misunderstandings so here goes with a few whole letters:-

**"A Lady's View of the National.**

I agree with the Chairman wholeheartedly, the weekend was most enjoyable.

In my view the organisers and helpers needed a great pat on the back and not a kick in the teeth as Mr. Wagstaffe's letter implied. Perhaps there were one or two slip-ups but no one is perfect.

I really do wonder why he visited Billing at all, on reading his letter it is pretty obvious that rallies are not his scene. I am only too pleased he wasn't in charge of the catering, the marquee would have been a Hot air Balloon with dozens of barbecues dotted around. What about the fire risk here - no different to wanting the vans 20 feet apart.

The social evening in my view spoke for itself, to see so many people dancing on the grass, to a very good group, who tried very hard to make the evening a Happy event.

By the way, Mr. Wagstaffe, you were fortunate to be in bed by 11 o'clock, the marquee didn't put itself in order for the following morning. Lots of people helped and many hands make light work.

The F and G registered vans are not always new to the game (as quoted). We are waiting for a G reg Talisman which will be our fourth Auto-Sleeper in twenty five years of motor caravanning. So we are by no means new to the game.

Reading Mr. Wagstaffe's letter made my blood pressure rise and I could cheerfully have boiled him on Regulo 20.

Finally, Tom and I did enjoy the Salvation Army service, they are such a happy band and what a lovely way to end a super weekend spent with friends.

Thank you all for a most enjoyable National, personally I did enjoy sitting down to meals prepared by someone else, makes a nice change for the Ladies of A-S O C.

*Joyce Conway, Lichfield."*

"Dear Phil,

As one of the newest members of the Club I'm writing to congratulate the organisers of the Billing Rally. We left home in a bit of a panic as both my wife, June, and myself had to work unexpectedly on the Friday and we had volunteered to marshal from 5 - 6pm! Well, we made it in time, just, only to find we had left our tickets etc., at home But we need not have worried, it was all sorted out in a few minutes by one of the organisers. The whole weekend was a success so I was surprised by Aubrey Wagstaffe's attack on the event.

This is our first year of motor caravanning and we own a "C" reg Transit Frisky, (why do all F & G reg owners have to be newcomers?) but we are past campers and caravanners. Billing was only our second rally. We were far too busy enjoying ourselves to notice if each van had a minimum of twenty feet exactly between itself and the next one, but we didn't notice any overcrowding.

The AGM was the first one of the Club, and well, a few minor mistakes may have been made, so what? The attack on John Cox and Rita

Daley regarding their honorary offices was appalling being totally inaccurate and uncalled for, "they", by which one assumes Aubrey means the committee, did not "dole out high offices", but the membership did by a show of hands. And did so because of the amount of hard work they both put in to get the club up and running. If he is so dissatisfied with the committee, there were two options open to him. Firstly, he could have voiced his opinion at the AGM. Secondly, there were three vacancies on the committee, I didn't notice him leaping forward to volunteer. And the lady, I do wish I could remember her name, was absolutely right in her plea to dog owners. We have a large, but friendly, Labrador, and consider it our responsibility to clean up after him and do not allow him to foul anywhere on the site. We too have noticed some irresponsible dog owners who should take note, otherwise they could find their dog banned from rallies.

One could go on answering Aubrey's letter but, if he feels motor caravanning is about getting away from hassle, noise and crowds, why did he join the club? Surely one joins a club to meet others with similar interests, by definition that means crowds, large or small, depending on the occasion and crowds make a certain amount of noise.

On a more constructive note Phil, in a past Newsletter you suggested that someone might be interested in collating information on Friskys and Flairs. If not already filled, I would like to volunteer for the job. If acceptable then please ask members to write to me. I'd also like to hear from all Transit based owners with regards to mechanical information, mods, etc.

Keep up the good work,  
Yours sincerely, *Paul Knight. (558)*"

That fills a gap in our group of Collators so thank you, Paul. I think all we need now is some enthusiast to look after mods to Leg Ends... Paul lives at 7, Beech Road, Horsham, West Sussex. RH12 4NR and his telephone number is 0403 67685.

"Dear Editor,

It was with interest and sadness that I read the letter from Aubrey Wagstaffe concerning the National Rally at Billing. We too arrived to find that our allocated pitch had been taken. This being only a very small hiccup, we were quite happy to pitch our Talisman at the end of the line. Sorry Aubrey did not enjoy the meal, I believe we had our value for money. Personally, I enjoyed the dinner. My husband did not enjoy the meal. It was not to his taste, but never the less we both enjoyed the company of fellow members. Perhaps we should ask ourselves what we expect to pay in relation to what we get? However, both my husband and I agreed that the meal was hot and the standard good bearing in mind the numbers catered for and the price we paid. Regarding the Disco and the 60's music we enjoyed that too. Perhaps Aubrey should have done some

dancing to warm up? I believe the music was very much in keeping with the "age" of members attending. We are not yet in our carpet slippers and shawls, nor do we have to be in bed before the clock strikes 12. If Aubrey preferred a more sedate atmosphere, there was the Cheese and Wine on Friday evening when one could talk and move around. After all, we must cater for all tastes, both young and old. I know that only a few members bring along children but these are the future members hopefully of our Club.

On a different note perhaps we could do a survey on the price of Aqua Chem Green. We paid £9.78 at Bowers at Billing. Visiting my local accessory shop it was priced at £8.70 and at the Slough Show £8.08 (special price).

Incidentally, we have paid more than £5 for a small pot of touch-up paint in our time. This does seem to be an expensive item. £7 or £14 for a larger pot seems to be the going rate.

Referring back to the Weekend at Billing, let's be thankful that we have the good fortune to own our Auto-Sleepers, our health to enable us to get around, and the ability to enjoy ourselves and the company of others.

*That's what the Club is about.*

*Geraldine and Barry Boulton. Talisman TEL553."*

There's more where that came from, some milder, some stronger but I think you will have got the message by now, even if you didn't send one yourself. To Bill Cooper of Harrogate in particular I want to say, "Thank you for your letter. It will be shown to the Committee at the next meeting (Wotton-under-Edge rally). I know Clive will appreciate your support."

Enough of all that. Since the Newsletter is about to be taken over by Harry Henthorne I think it would be a good idea to let him introduce himself and give you a bit of background by reproducing one of his articles:-

**"How it all began.**

Way back in the dim and distant past, about nineteen canteen if memory serves, a decision had to be made because a holiday was required. Previously we had been cyclists and, after a trial with a tent, had reverted to the famed "B & B" around the country. The tandem had had a sidecar attached for the baby and we had discovered that "B & B" plus Baby would not work very well. So what should we do? Hotels and Holiday Camps were out (cost!) and Stayathome did not appeal.

An advertisement on a local shop board seemed to provide a possible answer. It read "Morris J2 van for sale." We had a look at it, decided that there was a possibility and bought it for £45. And then the work began.

We "designed" some bunks with storage space below. The material used was plywood shuttering rescued from a local tip and thoroughly cleaned up. The upper bunks folded down to make a (sort of) back rest and were held up by 2" x 2" posts when in use. 2" thick foam was used for the cushions which proved to be too thin for real comfort. Primitive washing arrangements, plastic bowl and water container, were "fitted" and we bought a two-burner and grill stove. An old bedside cabinet just fitted into the rear corner to hold cooking pots and food and we were ready.

Our very first venture with this was to Wales. An eminently suitable van for the hill because of the low gearing but thank heavens there were no motorways then because our top speed was very small. At about 40 mph we gave up trying to talk! At one moment we collapsed with laughter when our small son said, in a slightly panicky voice, "Careful, Dad, you nearly got to 25 mph on that last hill!" (Going DOWN, of course!) But we went around Snowdonia for a couple of weeks and thoroughly enjoyed it. The bug had bitten!

The following year (only two weeks hols each year then!) we decided to try for John o' Groats. A friend, looking at the age and apparent condition of the van, suggested we would never make it. So, with great glee, we sent him a card saying "Who can't get where?" Again a thoroughly enjoyable couple of weeks. At that time we were mainly wild camping, partly because it was easier then (only in Inverness-shire did we see the signs "No Overnight Parking") and partly because the appearance of our van did not encourage "proper" van owners to talk to us. Maybe we were a very early form of hippies or whatever they're called today! It had many advantages, though, apart from saving.

I now have lovely memories of being parked almost under a bridge in the Scottish Highlands with only sheep for miles around. And another time in a remote part of Exmoor we found a little hidey-hole beside another bridge. In Wiltshire there was a spot where crickets were making a devil of a noise and in Lancashire we made tea in the early morning for a couple of passing policemen and two bus drivers! Then there was the spot beside the boat-house on the Kyle of Tongue and the quarry where we, and many others, stopped overnight because of the downpour which suddenly caught us. It was dark when we pulled up and we were amazed in the morning at the number and types of vehicles which had also stopped in the same spot! there was even a bus which was apparently being transferred between depots but the weather had made the driver stop.

In time the M.O.T. test caught up with us and the van failed because of rust in the floor under the driving seat. So with some regret we parted with it but started saving to buy a "real" van as soon as opportunity permit-

AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB  
RALLY SUPPLEMENT  
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June & July 1990

WILL YOU PLEASE SEND THE COMPLETED SLIP AND CHEQUE MADE OUT TO THE RALLY MARSHAL NAMED AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE, and preferably at least 10 days before the rally, so that the site can be informed and everything prepared in good time. Last minute arrivals are still accepted but it does help the Marshal if he knows how many to expect. EARLY BOOKING PLEASE, IF POSSIBLE.

11th - 14th June, (midweek) TRENTAM GARDENS. NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME, STAFFS. £4.50 per night plus £1.50 Rally Fee. Marshals Barbara and Jeff Worley, 26, Houndstone Park, Gunners Lane, Brympton, Yeovil, Somerset, BA22. 8SQ. "2 minutes from Junction 15, M6". A34 Northbound. At Ashgreen roundabout continue past both sets of entrance gates, turn L 300 metres after traffic lights into Whitmore Road, follow signs to Caravan Park. A34 Southbound At the Hanford roundabout take the A500 (S.P. Eccleshall, Market Drayton, Shrewsbury) proceed to the traffic lights and filter off left. After 1 mile, immed. before a sharp L.H bend, turn R - S.P. Trentham Caravan Park". The gardens and park will probably provide enough interest during your stay.

~~15th - 17th June. HALE-HALL CARAVAN PARK, CHEADLE, STAFFS. (Nr Alton Towers) £2.00 per night plus £1.50 Rally Fee. Marshals Barbara and John Cox, 73, Westhead Road, Barton-under-Needwood, Staffs. DE13 8JR. On I of B 5417 (Cheadle/Oakmoor). Site in about three quarters of a mile from Cheadle. CANCELLED Alton Towers is described as a 19th C. neo Gothic mansion with a splendid park and gardens. The adventure park is particularly good. Dove Dale north of Ashbourne is good Derbyshire walking country and very popular.~~

22nd - 24th June, NEWTON HILL TOURING CENTRE, BATH, AVON. £3.80 per night plus £1.50 Rally Fee. Marshals Heather and John Tidbury, 26, Ferny Close, Radley, Abingdon, Oxon. OX14 3AN. OS Map 172 grid ref. 715645. LEAVE BATH westwards on A4 or A36, these join to become a dual carriageway. In about 1m you reach new roundabout (The Globe pub.). Take 1st exit (sp Newton St Loe) Site is on Left just over a mile along this road, ignore all roads off to the R. FROM BRISTOL leave on A4 & continue to roundabout junction with A39 (The Globe pub.) Take 2nd exit then continue as above. FROM WEST COUNTRY head towards Bath on A39 if possible. When you reach the roundabout junction with A4 take 3rd exit and continue as above. HEATHER

SAYS SOME BACK ROADS IN THE AREA HAVE 6FT WIDTH LIMITS, so take care if you want to try short cuts to avoid the traffic in Bath.

The area round Bath has many places of interest including Wells, Longleat House and Wildlife Park (near Frome), Weston-super-Mare for a promenade and sea air, Cheddar, etc.

13th - 15th July, WALDERGRAVES CARAVAN PARK, MERSEA ISLAND, NR. COLCHESTER, ESSEX. £4.00 per night plus £1.50 Rally Fee. Marshals Sheila Hammell and Harry Henthorne, at 69 Bingham Road, Addiscombe, Surrey. CRO 7EG.

Head for Colchester, Essex. Follow signs for B 1025 s.p. East Mersea, or Mersea Island. About 2 1/2 miles after Abberton, take L fork, then after about 3/4 mile take 2nd turning on R. Follow site signs from L.Fork.

CAUTION: THE ROAD CROSSES A CAUSEWAY WHICH CAN BE COVERED WITH WATER AT HIGH TIDE. Also the road after the fork is narrow, twisty and badly maintained. Children may be playing on or near the road.

This site is on the Blackwater River nr. Brightlingsea and Clacton, and to the north is Colchester. I understand the site is right by the estuary and will encourage you to stay put. However, Colchester has an ancient history and the museum is housed in the castle keep, which is itself of interest. Stour Wood is an R.S.P.B.reserve, approx 15 miles east of Colchester on the south shore of the Stour Estuary close to Wrabness. And of course, at East Bergholt and Dedham on the Stour, you have the country John Constable enjoyed sketching and painting.

20th - 22nd July, CHESTER SOUTHERLY CARAVAN PARK, BALDERTON LANE, MARLSTON-CUM-LACHE, NR. CHESTER. £4.85 per night plus £1.50 Rally Fee.

Turn off A55 Chester By-pass at roundabout onto A 483 (Wrexham); in about 300 yds turn R into Balderton Lane. Site on R in 1/4 mile.

Some street plans of Chester have been photocopied for you, and you will not need reminding that you will be able to walk round the walls and through a town with an incredible history. If Chester is not to your liking, the seaside resorts of north Wales are worth looking at. Many a fortnight's holiday I have spent at Llandudno sitting in the car watching it rain. What a blessing a motorcaravan would have been. Then there is IKEA at Warrington with a remarkable furniture store, all products packed flat for home assembly. A good place to be if it should rain. Leave Junction 9 on M62 & take A49 towards Warrington. 1st R Cromwell Avenue, and R at 3rd Island.

HALE HALL. TEL:- JOHN COX RE REPLACEMENT RALLY  
0283 712394

AND) NOTE ON "YOXALL NR BARTON-UNDER-  
NEEDWOOD" in Newsletter June (No 2)

AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB.

Send one of these slips to the Marshal named 10 days before the event, and earlier if you can manage it. If you arrive at the site without booking, you will be welcomed, but please, only do this if absolutely unavoidable. If the rally field only holds a limited number you might be disappointed.

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R A L L Y S L I P

Rally Site.....

Name.....Membership No.....Van No.....

Time of arrival, Fri. pm.....Sat am.....other.....Electricity.....

We are/are not interested in a meal on Saturday night if a suitable one can be arranged.

Please send this slip to the Marshal named with your fee.

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ted. It was a convenient time to change because we were also in the process of moving house as well so there was no immediate prospect of funds being available for such a luxury item. So a little was put aside as we could and, having settled in the new home we found a local motor caravan sales place and started to keep watch for a replacement.

But in that old, decrepit, scruffy friend of ours we had covered the length and breadth of this country and enjoyed many miles of carefree motoring. She had proved to be reliable although slow; reasonably comfortable although quite chilly without insulation; more to the point she had whetted our appetites for that particular form of holiday which has led on, via three other vans to the present Clubman. (But more of that later!

*Harry Henthorne.*"

### "CHAIRMAN'S CHAT.

After all the excitement of the National Rally at Billing Aquadrome it made quite a pleasant change to have a more relaxed weekend at Brands Hatch. I had imagined that only a few members would come to the Jamboree organised by Bromley Motor Caravans - but I was wrong! Thirty five members booked for the weekend and several more joined on the spot, so there was a really good turnout. As this was specifically a Motor Caravan weekend I was surprised how many towed caravans were there. Pitches were not marked out and although we managed to keep our area of the rally field fairly tidy this did not apply to many other areas. The weather was excellent and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves, although some who attended the live show on Saturday evening were very concerned about the lack of safety precautions in the show marquee.

Two highlights of the weekend will stick in my memory. Firstly, at our lunchtime get together on the Saturday we were very pleased to welcome the Club's Honorary Auditor, Howard Duart and his wife Betty who had driven up from Sussex in their Frisky. It was the first time they had been able to attend any Club function and it was really good to see them both.

The second highlight as far as I was concerned was to see my wife, Daphne, being brave enough to have a parascending trip - in fact it was the second time she has done this, the first being in Penang, over the sea. This time it was over hard, dry land but all went well and her exploits are recorded on video! So are the similar trips undertaken by Ralph Dulson and Yvonne Mahoney from Jersey. Mad fools, all of them!

In two days time we shall be meeting my sister and brother-in-law from Australia who are coming over for about ten weeks. We are very much looking forward to seeing them again as its about seven years since we visited them on their sheep station "down under". They have a farm

of some 25,000 acres on the Eyre peninsula in South Australia and they are about 10 miles from their nearest neighbour. That really is isolation!

The name of the actual area where they live is "Nowhere Else". The story goes that a hundred or so years ago a surveying team was looking for a particular place marked on an earlier map and had almost given up - one said to the other: "Well, if it isn't over this next hill its nowhere else" - and it was so they called the place Nowhere Else!

What on earth has all that to do with A-S O C you may well ask? Well, what I am leading up to is that I shall not be able to attend so many of our rallies this year as I did last.

I have a feeling that Phil may want a fair bit of space for Members' letters this month so I will bring this rambling to a rapid close - Happy Rallying to you all!

*John Normandale. May 1990."*

### RALLY NEWS.

Here we are at the end of May and already we have had four successful rallies plus the National, plus the Club participation at the Brands Hatch Jamboree. The first one at Honeybourne I mentioned last month but should have added a note about the super selection of cheese and biscuits etc., etc., laid on by Barbara and Tony on Saturday evening, plus of course coffee and the Stinchcombe Raffle on Sunday morning. The pub in the village looked popular with members to judge by the number of Auto-Sleepers outside when we passed at lunchtime on our way to Hay on Wye.

Eighteen vans arrived at Kennford, Exeter for the Bank Holiday rally, marshalled by Audrey & Les Johnson; a report by Peter Fisher:-

"Dear Rita and Phil,

We hope you are fit and well and that you enjoyed Wombleton as much as we enjoyed Kennford. The general concensus was that Audrey and Les had done a very good job in arranging the rally, especially the weather. On the latter point they even managed to reduce the temperature a little on Monday for the homeward journey. Les also arranged a carvery meal over the road at the Gissons Arms which appeared to win universal praise from those who attended, both for quality and value.

As you probably know Clive could not stay for the whole rally due to other commitments, which left Jeff Worley and myself as the attending committee members. Since Jeff has much experience in club matters it was decided that I should do the honours on Sunday morning. I did not exactly cover myself in glory, since I initially forgot to introduce the new

members, of which there were several. Still, after a gentle reminder from Audrey the welcomes were made, and I hope that the newcomers enjoyed the weekend as much as the regulars. Surprisingly enough, on Sunday evening a Trooper rolled onto the rally field which we did not recognise. It turned out to be a couple on their way home making an overnight stop and it was just a happy coincidence that they chose the rally site to stop, we hope that Bob and Jenny enjoyed themselves and will join the club."

At Wombleton we had 25 vans, good weather and organisation of the standard we have already come to expect from the team of Marion and Jim Henwood plus Vera and Brian McLean. As I mentioned earlier, Rita and I arrived during Friday evening and handed a bundle of Newsletters to Vera for distribution at coffee time. Saturday dawned clear and very early to the apparent delight of the rooks in our attached rookery. We were free to do as we wished all day so at least half the vans disappeared to explore the many places of interest for miles around. A good time was had by all. Sunday was the day for the long-awaited Nature Walk organised by Joan Tubbs, see Rita's note later.

It was quite late in the afternoon before everyone returned to the site where the relaxed mood continued to prevail, leading Jim to suggest an eat-in on a bring-your-own-table plus chairs and food basis. So we did that. Very enjoyable it was, too. Rita had brought some of Dilys' regalia and opened a "shop" a couple of times to give those who hadn't been at Billing a chance to see what the items looked like. And to buy some. Billing was a long way from home for some people; Muriel and Barry Crawshaw, for instance who managed the 270-odd miles from Carnoustie to Wombleton. The extra miles to Billing (and back) ruled out the National for them so it was extra nice to see them here.

I have very little information on the Swansea rally, run by Dilys and Frank Stinchcombe, beyond a dull statistic - there were 27 vans there.

A note from Frank Stinchcombe:

"As promised at the AGM, Dilys and I have arranged for a rally on a Farm Site in Kingswood. The field is very level and has a good entrance.

The village hall, about 500 yards away has been booked for a get together on Saturday evening. It is hoped to provide a supper and a game of skittles, as well as some very light music. We shall also be selling regalia as well as Frank's famous pads.

The fees will be £1.50 per night plus £1.50 rally fee. There will be no charge for the hire of the hall or for the supper.

At the AGM a large majority voted for this kind of rally. We have

arranged it, now please come along and support us. The field will hold approx. 300 vans. Water is laid on and a disposal point will be available. There are no hook-ups.

**Date 28th - 30th September 1990. Rally No 17.** (Replaces Lower Lacon which has had to be cancelled).

**Places to visit:**

Slimbridge Wildfowl Trust.

Berkeley Castle.

Lord Somerset's Monument at Hawkesbury (135 steps).

Chipping Sodbury - Market town.

Westonbirt Arboretum is only a few miles away.

There are two swimming pools within 6 miles.

There is a Spar shop in Kingswood, about 400 yards from the site, where Mr C. Rolls will provide you with newspapers, groceries, wines and spirits and frozen food. The Post Office in the Spar shop will be open to 5.30 pm on Friday and from 0900 to 1300 on Saturday. The milkman will call at the site on Saturday morning.

Anyone wishing to come on Thursday or to stay on until Monday may do so. We shall be holding the usual raffle. Please let us know as soon as possible if you intend to come - booking slips will be sent to you with the Newsletter a little nearer the date but early warning will help in making arrangements with the Farmer and for catering."

**Remember, this is the weekend after the Bath & West Show.** How about linking the two and spending a week in this beautiful part of England?

**URGENT - CHANGE TO RALLY PROGRAMME.** 24th May.

John Cox has just telephoned to say he has visited Hale Hall and found the site quite unsuitable for a rally due to excavations and other building work. He has arranged a Green Field rally instead near his home. From the A38 (Lichfield/Burton on Trent) leave at flyover sign posted Barton-under-Needwood. Through village follow signs for Yoxall (B5016). On approach to Yoxall look out for ASOC signs, field on left. Price £1.50 per night plus £1.50 rally fee. No facilities (water at farm). Contact John (0283 712394) for more info. **RALLY 8, 15th-17th JUNE.**

**Talisman Mods.**

One for Bill this month instead of one from him! We now have a changing room in our Talisman. We bought some material to match the curtains and cut a length 72" x 32" wide. It was hemmed each side and at the bottom. Rufflette tape was stitched towards the top, allowing 1/2" above and about 2" in from the edges, and one large press clip, (such as Auto-Sleepers use) was fixed to each end, wrong side of the clip showing

on the right side of the material. The other halves of the clips were screwed to the back of the toilet door about 2" down and about 1" to 2" in from the edges. A further clip base was screwed to the carpet-covered wall over the hooch cupboard. With the right side of the curtain facing the front of the van it was then clipped to the left-hand side of the door and to the wall clip, and the rufflette tied off. It is only necessary to unclip the right-hand stud when using the curtain. When it is fixed to the door it is dropped through the towel ring and is neatly out of the way. Strong elastic might be better than the rufflette since the width of the door is slightly less than the space between door and wall clip, but it would need just the right amount of tension to work. I obtained the press clips from a Caravan Supplies shop as they are sold complete with tools to fit them. Whew!

A few months ago Bill mentioned, in his Talisman Mods, the problem of waste water flowing back into the shower tray from the tank. He has fitted a brass tap into the hose. George Wane suggested a washing machine tap might be lighter and we have bought one from B & Q and fitted it into our hose. Not only is it lighter but it has the advantage of a half-turn on/off action. Our method of connection is not perfect since it drips very slightly but trials continue! Other solutions or suggestions welcome.

We like to sleep with the side windows open in summer and I was told of a gimmick to prevent thieves forcing their way in. It was suggested that a piece of plastic grip, sold to hold decorative tea towels on display, if dropped into the slot behind the sliding window would stop the window being forced open. I tried this with a couple of paper grippers which are the same shape, triangular in cross section. Unfortunately, when I pulled the window open to simulate a break-in, the grippers shot into the air, whizzed past Philip, and landed on the front seat. I then locked the two together, borrowed the ones from Philip's window and, hey presto! Fresh air without "foreign" visitors. In our last van we had some wooden strips which served the same purpose but they were a bit "Andy Capp".

#### ADVERTISEMENTS.

**CLUBMAN 1985**, excellent condition. 40,000 miles. Extras include awning, second battery, charger and transformer, (240 volts to 12 volts), fly screens, Porta Potti, 2 gas bottles, hook-up cable and many miscellaneous spares. Excellent performance on a recent six-and-a-half month winter tour of Europe. Fully serviced. £11,500 for quick sale. This member warned us when he joined that he was emigrating to America so this is a genuine offer. Telephone John Weil on 06077 3647 - Nottingham area.

A couple in Warminster are looking for a replacement vehicle slightly younger than the one they have now. They want a Frisky but are prepared to consider a Talbot Sportsman or a Renault Rimini. If anyone is thinking of selling will you let us know and we will pass the details on.

We now have some more Brabantia Safety Boxes. Dimensions are:- Outer case: 8 5/32" long (lock of safe protrudes but you must have space in front of the outer case to extract the safe). Width 5 7/8", Depth approx 2 1/4" including bumps for recessing the screw heads. Prices as follows:-

Safe and Outer complete	£12.50	Post & Packing £2.50
Extra Outer	£4.50	Post & Packing £1.85
Safe & 2 Outer cases	£17.00	Post & Packing £3.00

The extra outer case is useful if you wish to keep the safe contents intact but transfer them to the house or another vehicle. We only have a few spare outers at present, and there will be a delay before further supplies can be obtained, so don't wait too long.

**"TRAVELLERS' TALES"** - including an article by JOHN HUNT - 75p + 24p postage.

**"FIRST TIMERS ABROAD"** - Advice for those hesitating over it collected from your fellow members. 75p + 15p postage. The two for £1.50 plus 24p post and packing. Today's bargain!

Both safes and booklet can be ordered from the Editor (until 20th June) or Dilys (address below) or can be obtained (stock permitting) at rallies without postal charge.

**IDENTIFICATION BROOCHES.** Your name over "Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club". Rectangular, with blue lettering and edge. £2.00 plus 50p p & p. Order these from Dilys Stinchcombe., 40 Hillesley Road, Kingswood, Wotton-under-Edge, Glos. GL12 8RU. Please write your name or nickname clearly. These are very useful at rallies when you know the face but can't remember the name. Don't let other members have this problem!

**NEWSLETTER BINDERS.** £4.00 plus 50p p & p from Dilys or at rallies when available.

#### **NOTICEBOARD.**

Bill Clarke has been getting information for members who wish to take their vehicles to the United States. He has gone into this very deeply but is stuck on the problem of vehicle insurance. It is necessary to have an insurer in America but so far we have had no reply from one address and a high quote from another. Does anyone in the Club know of an American

motor insurance company or can anyone suggest where we can get this information. If you can help, please let Bill Clarke know at 21 Highfield, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 3QD.

Bill is also involved with "High Lights" for the coachbuilt vans. He has obtained a discounted price from C.F. Parkinson Limited, Brunel Drive, Northern Road Industrial Estate, Newark, Notts. NG24 2EG. (0636 72631) Contact: Mr. David Petett, who will send you a special order form if you quote the Club and your membership number. Details of fitting these lights appeared in last month's Newsletter but we have some photocopies available and some will be given to Bill for anyone he meets at rallies. Cost of set of two front and two rear lamps £12.85 including VAT and p & p.

J & M Designs - Silver Screens to you - are offering a £10.00 cash prize each month for the best photograph taken of your vehicle wearing its Silver Screen and parked in an interesting situation.

Address:- "Silver Screens" Photo Competition, 11 Scott Avenue, Heckmondwike, W. Yorks. WF16 9AH

**WARNING.** At Wombledon the site owner demanded payment for the use of awnings by members, and went on to demand £3.50 per night for a very small (pup) tent used by a member's two children. I buckled on my "Vice President"'s badge and went to tackle him. I persuaded him that since we were bringing him some £300 he would not otherwise have enjoyed and since we normally agreed a price per outfit, regardless, that he should waive the charge for the tent, and he did. He assured us he would expect to be paid next time. What next time? However, although this has not happened before, if you wish to bring a tent, please let the Marshal know so that he can make enquiries before you arrive and we will be in a better position to negotiate. We would not like this couple or their children to stop attending our rallies!

#### **RALLIES, a General Note.**

Tony Jones asked me, at Honeybourne, to put in a little note about club rallies, particularly for the benefit of those new to the game. Our rallies normally start at 1600 on Friday and finish at noon on Sunday. If you arrive at the site before 4pm the marshal may not be set up to receive you and the site owner may query early arrivals; if you arrive on the site before noon you can expect to be treated by the site manager as a visitor and you may be asked to pay a fee to the site. Circumstances vary and some places where the Rally Field is apart from the Tourers normal rules are relaxed but, please, give the marshall a chance to get there first and catch his

breath. He may even have left work early to try to get there before you!

### **THANKS TO JOAN TUBBS.**

At Wombleton Rally, during the May Day Bank Holiday, Miss Joan Tubbs guided a group of eighteen people round a walk starting at Hutton-le-Hole. She was disappointed that the dry weather had reduced the number of wild flowers but none of her flock minded, and we would like to thank Joan for giving her valuable time. She is hoping to be able to fit in another walk to search for usual and unusual wild flowers next year. Meanwhile she takes "wildflower enthusiasts" abroad and holds photography classes and is a pleasure to be with.

One member who lives in Scotland is joining the "Winston Churchill" sail training ship for the Tall Ships Race this year so let's watch their progress and wish them well.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT.**

You received the Code of Conduct with the May Newsletter, now you have the Motorcaravan Code and the Country and Coastal Codes mentioned in the first paragraph. Will you please keep these somewhere safe, preferably in your van, so that you can refer to them when necessary.

### **DEADLINE.**

Since the July Newsletter has to be with the printer before we leave the country please let me have anything you would like to get into it right away. Anything received here after 9th June is most unlikely to make it.

### **REMINDER.**

The August, September and October Newsletters will be produced by Harry Henthorne. His address is:-

"Alberta", 69 Bingham Road, Addiscombe, Surrey. CRO 7EG. (081 654 4216). Your contributions, on any reasonable topic, will be most welcome during this "trial" period.

Your Editor,

*Phil Daley.*

46 Ulverley Green Road, SOLIHULL, West Midlands. B92 8BQ  
(021 706 1816)

### **DISCLAIMER.**

All contributions from Members which appear in the Newsletter are published in good faith in the hope that they will prove useful or interesting. All reasonable care has been taken to ensure accuracy but none of the modifications has been tested by us therefore neither the Editor, the Club nor the Company will accept responsibility for the consequences if you try them out.