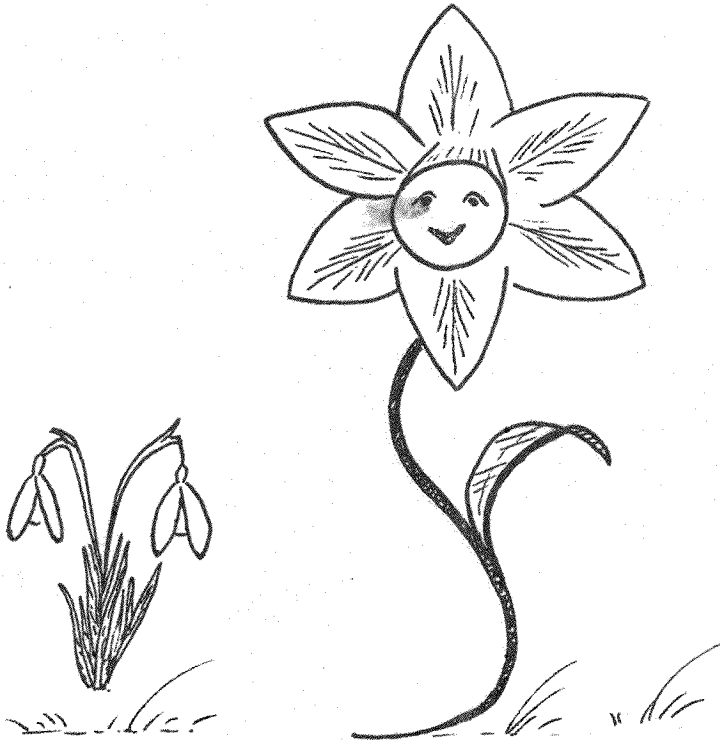


**A U T O - S L E E P E R
O W N E R S ' C L U B**



NEWSLETTER 30

MARCH 1991

Hello.

Here we are with the March Newsletter already. It seems only a couple of days since New Year, doesn't it? We are probably all thinking about the rally season now and if you are like me, having used the van during the winter for the day to day trips, you are beginning to wish that you had bought a van with an exterior colour scheme of "Mottled Road Muck" (The very latest innovation - saves a lot of cleaning!) Ah! If only.... Get the bucket and sponge out, lad, and gerronwivit! (After the snow, of course!)

I have some apologies to make. In the last Rally Supplement the Club marshals for the 7 day holiday rally which follows on from the National Rally were wrongly named. They should have been shown as Noelle & Alan JOHNS (Not Jones). I know that some people have already sent cheques to book for the rally and I'm sorry that their cheques have had to be returned for amendment. Also the marshals for the Brands Hatch Jamboree are given as Barbara & Dave Clarke which was correct. But the address given was not! Please note, if you want to advise them that you are going to the Jamboree that they live at 2 (TWO) Fleece Road, not at number three as previously shown. Sorry, Barbara & Dave, please give my apologies to your neighbour.

Your Committee met at Willersey on January 26th, a dull, miserable sort of day for travelling. All members were able to be present resulting in a lively discussion. Our Treasurer (Frank Stinchcombe) reported that the finances were in a healthy state and renewal subscriptions are still being received. Sheila Hammell (Membership Secretary) confirmed that she is still receiving renewals together with new members subscriptions. The latest membership number issued is (or should I say was then) 819, a total of 47 new members since the last committee meeting at the end of October 1990. Some 216 members have still to confirm their renewals, either by receipt of the standing order payment or by cheque (cash, even!). Several members had not forwarded their renewal forms so the Club records could be a bit out. Regalia came next and Dilys Stinchcombe reported on stocks and re-order quantities. Watch out at the National Rally for a new item among the regalia - I won't say any more now! Our Secretary, Peter Fisher, has written to a number of sources of prizes for the raffle to be held at the National with a good response. Charles Trevelyan has also contacted some dealers and suppliers with success.

My turn next, as Editor. Not very much to say (who said "that makes a change"?) except that I have been able to produce a small booklet for sale at the National, thanks to the efforts of two of our ingenious members. Jeff Worley (Rally Co-ordinator) spoke next and gave details of two further rallies arranged for June (see Rally Reports later). He also mentioned the walking holiday proposed for Scotland but this may have to be abandoned if an alternative marshal cannot be found.

The big item was, of course, the 1991 A.G.M. and National Rally. At that date there had been 115 bookings made (see below), compared with about 70 at this stage last year. The Salvation Army have agreed to lead a service on the Sunday; the St. John Ambulance will be in attendance for first aid purposes on Saturday and Sunday; several A/S dealers and accessory dealers will be in attendance; Auto-Sleepers themselves will bring a number of vehicles, will provide their usual shop and will provide an Advice Desk.

John Normandale reported on Europ Assistance, which has been well used this year, and then Peter Fisher and Phil Daley reported on the possibility of Areas of the country, as shown in the note passed round with last month's Newsletter (see also 'Phil's Rabbit' a bit later on). The committee agreed to meet again at the Honeybourne rally in March.

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RALLY NEWS

Jeff has arranged an additional rally for 31st May - 2nd June to be held at Lytham, near Blackpool, in Lancashire. The site is apparently 'on playing fields' and within easy reach of the town centre and the beach. For further details see the rally supplement in due course.

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"NATIONAL RALLY AND A.G.M.

Arrangements are now well advanced for the 'National' at Edithmead. a total of 200 bookings has already been made. Auto-Sleepers will concentrate their efforts this year on an ADVICE DESK and a display of new models. They will be supported by even more dealers and accessory suppliers than last year. A busy social programme will ensure that you can be as busy as you wish, while the site facilities are good enough to make

even a quiet stay enjoyable. We look forward to seeing you all again, in even greater numbers, but please book as soon as possible. It helps my negotiations with the weatherman!

Clive Jenkins"

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"CHRISTMAS RALLY

We found our way to the Abbey Wood site with no trouble - a plus for John Normandale and his invaluable directions. We arrived to find a very convenient pitch waiting for us just three hops from the loos and close to Geoff and Helen [Gray] so we were able to have a good old "Wagon Train - Do You Remember?" type session. John and Daphne had done so much to make everyone feel welcome upon arrival; we were quickly given very informative packs containing all one needed to know about transport and places to visit - AND a Christmas card!

Friday evening was spent at the local community centre where we had a warm and comfortable room to ourselves. Everyone collected their fish and chips or Chinese from the local take-aways just a step or two distant - someone managed to get lost! All this washed down from the contents of assorted wine boxes. No wonder ASOC has such a large membership. I managed to make much of my poorly ankle and wangled a lift to and fro with Daphne - the others staggered back not too late as we had to vacate the room at 10 pm.

Saturday was a 'do your own thing' day - the Boyds to Kew, Helen and Geoff off like Father Christmas to visit relations, we went "up to town", about ten minutes walk to the station and trains to Central London. Meg, the fool, thought the shops might be fun - Oxford Street very crowded and too exhausting for these country bumpkins so we decided to forego commerce for culture at the Museum of London near St. Paul's - a fascinating place, well worth a visit with so much to see. Also, a good point, a pleasant restaurant - what a joy to sit down - I had just walked down the stairs at Tottenham Court Road tube station as the escalator was going at such a speed I didn't dare step on it!

Saturday evening John and Daphne had arranged a "few snacks" for us at the Jolly Marshman pub - what a spread the landlord and his wife laid on for us. After the meal I was just getting into the quiz when disaster (or Angela's bug) struck - folks, it was a bug not the booze

- and my memory becomes somewhat blurred. A confusion of mops and buckets and a sound-alike Larry Grayson of a barman who kept saying to me "Madam, what an angel you are". I know it sounds unlikely but he did. Daphne's ambulance service returned us to the van where we survived the night and found Angela much recovered in the morning though still pale but brave.

Sunday, like all Rally Sundays, a coffee morning with an excellent raffle - the star prize, the Chairman's Christmas Hamper, won by Clive Jenkins - I didn't win so much as a cracker! Then after many "thank you's" and "Happy Chrismasses" we began to make our way home. We decided to venture onto the Woolwich Ferry, after the Wagon Train this held no terrors. We were most amused to find that having left quite a while later than the Boyd's we were waved aboard before them - I think they were disgusted. However, road hogs that they are, they passed us on the M 11 and vanished into the wild blue yonder.

It was a super weekend - despite one "hiccup" - and many thanks are due to John and Daphne.

Mary Colling

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"YOU ARE INVITED TO

an Auto-Sleeper weekend, April 19th - 21st, at Oxford International Campsite, which is just inside the south-west corner of the Oxford Ring Road. (map ref. 518038). All pitches allocated to us have electricity included in the price.

Visiting Oxford with a motor-caravan can be a nightmare as the Park & Ride car parks all have height barriers and there is only one City Centre (well almost) car park with suitable access. However the camp site is directly across the road from a Park & Ride with a very frequent (5 - 10 mins) service right into the City Centre. (70p return) I will not elaborate on the attractions of the City but don't forget the Open Top Bus Tour - starts where the Park & Ride bus stops so you can't miss it - can you?

Within 5 minutes walk of the camp site is a Pub (with Grub), a fish & chip shop, and Open till Late store with a good selection of groceries and a Post Office. Touchwood Sports (camping equipment, gas, etc.) is at the entrance to the site as is a petrol station.

Hope you'll come and join us; please send the booking slip in as soon as possible. We shall be on pitch Green 98 at the National Rally if you want to book then.

John, Heather, Robert and Nicola Tidbury."

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Booking forms for the Brands Hatch Jamboree should be available in the Motor Caravan Press. But you might get a form from Jeff Worley or Peter Fisher. Probably easier if you find one in a mag.

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"I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have helped me compile this year's rally programme.

The rally sub-committee: John Cox, Jim Henwood, Ron Mann, Joe Payne with help from Dave Clarke.

All members who have made suggestions or sent in slips and, most important, all those who have volunteered to marshal a rally (or more than one!)

*Jeff Worley
Rally Co-ordinator"*

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I have received a copy of "Freeway" which is the magazine of the Motor Caravan Club of Ireland. There are some interesting snippets of information inside. They held a poll about rallies and only 40% of their members who replied said they wanted them all season. They took non-replies as negative answers which gave them 90% against rallies! And only FOUR members volunteered to host a rally. Our Co-ordinator should take great heart from this.

They are holding the 4th International Motorcaravan Rally at Kilcornan House, Clarinbridge, Co. Galway from May 31st to June 3rd, 1991. The rally fee, per unit for the whole weekend is £33.00 for a FAMILY with children or £15.00 for UNACCOMPANIED ADULTS - (their capitals!) The rally fee "includes almost everything, Bar B Que, Supper, Bouncy Castle, entertainment etc. Teddy Bear Picnic and fancy dress.

County Galway is an attractive area so if you want to go get in touch with that club at Clonee, Co Meath or telephone them on (IRISH TELEPHONE CODE) 01-251364. If

you fancy a trip abroad, don't be put off. The vast majority of Irish people will be pleased to see you. I must write to their Editor and get him to send an item for the Newsletter.

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FOR SALE

When touring Scotland in our Flair the Visa Potty sprang a leak and I had to buy another one. I sent the faulty one back to Elsan who replaced it with another new one! This one, still boxed up, is "surplus to requirements" and available for £35.00. Interested? Contact Ron Winter at 177, Gudge Heath Lane, Fareham, Hants, PO15 6PY or telephone 0329 283391.

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Talisman II, 1988 'F' Reg. 16,500 miles. Many extras fitted including rear bumper, 75 amp/hr battery, extra reading lights (GL style), stereo radio/cassette, clock, barometer, Omnimax aerial, additional pocket to passenger door, grab handle inside rear door. Replacement windows have been fitted by Auto-Sleepers. Immaculate condition; the van has been kept under cover when not in use. Price: £15,500. For further details telephone Roger Moseley on 0270 811745 or write to him at "The Belfrey", Shropshire Street, Audlem, Cheshire, CW3 0AS.

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1. Gardiner portable 12v shower and tray - unused - complete £20.00.
2. Silver Screen (single) to fit 1987 Ford Transit - £15.00.
3. O.B.I. free-standing awning to fit elevating roof van - little used - (cost £290.00) - £90.00.

These items are available from Ted & Nora Crust at "Greendales", 10, Latimer Drive, Calcot, Reading, Berkshire, RG3 7AP. Their telephone number is 0734 419648 and they tell me that "being retired they can be contacted anytime". (How about 3.30 a.m.?)

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1 set of Dining area seats (6 pieces) made in the thicker modern style to fit a Talisman. Made from 'WELS' material which suits 1986/7 vans. £120.00.

Ring Margaret & Alan Spong on 081 890 4437 or write to them at 201, Hatton Road, Bedfont, Middlesex (near Heathrow airport.)

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Did you know that Auto Interiors have taken over the firm of David Dickson Upholstery Ltd? Peter Fisher told me this at the committee meeting. Prices are available by telephoning 061 941 4846.

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CHRISTMAS CARDS

A suggestion has been received that the Club's funds could benefit if we could provide these for members to buy. How does the idea grab you? (to use the modern idiom!) Please telephone or write to me to tell me whether you would buy them, and how many you might want. So much depends on your response. The idea is for something simple printed on paper which could be folded to make a card. This would probably be cheaper to produce and easier to store. What would you like to see on the card? Father Christmas driving a van in the snow? Picture (sketch, rather) of a winter site with a van on it? Robins, 'olly & mistletoe? And what sort of wording would you like? A.S.O.C. either in initials or in full on the outside with "Happy Christmas" or something inside?

Or would you like something which is blank inside so that you can write your own greeting or use it as a notelet? Perhaps with a sketch which is not significantly "Christmassy".

We are investigating prices at present so we can't give you any costs yet. Obviously, the more we can order the cheaper they become. We should probably have to have packs of 10 with suitable envelopes. When you let me know what you think of this idea perhaps you would also indicate what you might be prepared to pay for, say, a pack of 10. If you would all be prepared to spend only 5p then the idea is a non-starter! On the other hand if you wouldn't mind £50.00 per packet we shall be falling over ourselves to get them ready! We hope to have some samples available to show you at the National Rally.

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FACTORY NEWS

"I trust that by the absence of Factory News in our Newsletter for some months that some of you will not think we have disappeared off the face of the earth! On the contrary, much has happened in the past few months about which I would like to bring you up to date.

I reported that we were making good progress towards BS5750 and we continue to do so, particularly with the arrival of Steven Riley who has joined our Company as Technical Manager and is directly responsible for us achieving BS5750 by the end of 1991. Both he and Alan Curry have been more than occupied in writing detailed procedures and plans that cover every aspect of the production of our motor caravans. Furthermore, under the guise of BS5750, our Stores have been completely reorganised, new racking made and new procedures implemented.

We have, meanwhile, moved the Finishing Line into our new factory extension. This line is now managed by Gary Hunt who has the enviable position of running a section in a superb new factory which is well lit, well heated and has a floor off which you could eat your dinner! Also located in this new factory is the R & D Shop, still run by Bob Halling. He is assisted by Clive Lockyer, recently transferred from the Coachbuilt Factory, Alan Curry who moved from the Finishing Line and Rob Palmer whom many of you will remember from the National Rally last year. I can, of course, tell you little of what goes on in this department but we are confident that you will be more than impressed with our labours! Production of all van conversions remains under the able control of Neville Jelfs (one of our Club Founder Members) ably assisted by Graham Foxall who is responsible for the day to day running of the Main Factory prior to the vehicles moving to the Paint Shop.

Another aspect with which we are heavily involved is Health and Safety. We are, therefore, implementing improvements, large and small, throughout all our Departments. One significant investment is in both our Saw Mills where we now have full extraction equipment from each saw head and the air in both shops is now, I suspect, almost cleaner than what you breathe outside! Gone are they days when staff resembled the Abominable Snowman!

A word about our plans for the Company participation in the National rally. We have booked a marquee, fully floored, about 180' x 40' in one end of which there will be a wide range of new vehicles which we trust will

tempt at least some of you! In there too will be the indefatigable Phil Bennett and his Stores Shop which will be even larger than that at Billing. In the centre of the marquee will be a partitioned section for the Club Office and Shop with an even greater display of Regalia. At the other end will be a range of accessory stands selling all manner of useful items. Some accessory suppliers will be located outside the marquee with their own stand so you will have plenty to browse around.

The Volkswagen Hospitality Unit will be there too and we are most grateful for the very generous sponsorship from both Talbot and VAG (UK) Ltd who have helped to make this weekend possible.

Neville Jelfs and Alan Major will be in attendance and hope to renew many old friendships. Credit to them and to the other members of the Company who are sacrificing part of their Easter break to come and join in our various activities.

There will be a wide range of second-hand units from the various Dealers who are most kindly attending the Rally. Their Sales Staff will be assisting Tony Johnson in the marquee and will be more than pleased to answer any queries you may have or, better still, sell you a new vehicle! Both Anthony and I and our respective wives will be present with, in my case, our small son who will be almost a year old.

With kind regards to you all from everyone at Willersey - currently experiencing a blizzard, white-out conditions and horizontal driving snow - what fine camping weather.

Charles Trevelyan

Charles also sent a copy of a letter received by the Company from Andrew Canneaux (can't seem to find that name as a member!). Here is an extract from it.

"My engine trouble was efficiently rectified in Denmark. The Talisman wouldn't squeeze into their service bay but they agreed to carry out repairs on the forecourt. The problem was a faulty fuel pump and they managed to 'magic' one in about three hours - we were miles from the next town. Countless cups of strong coffee made the waiting bearable and I feel that the cost was reasonable. Very different from the average garage experience in England.

Our travels then took us to Berlin. Fascinating to see the rapid changes since the wall came down. An odd

contrast between the modern West and the "time mothballed" East. Even the tramway stops just yards short of the old divide. It will be a pity if a section of the wall is not preserved for all time as a sober reminder. Pottering through the Eastern countryside the trusty Talisman looked rather out of place among the Trabant's and Wartburg's. One scene that will stick in my mind was on a Sunday afternoon in Leipzig. A large group of people were gathered around the five or six windows of a small, single storey, department store. When we investigated the objects of their curiosity, we saw a window full of tinned food, one of pots and pans and, in the window drawing the attention of even the local police, just a couple of very dull looking domestic refrigerators.

Towards the end of summer we found ourselves in Yugoslavia. Wonderfully spectacular coastline, rampant inflation (literally, a fistful of notes would not buy a small beer) and probably the most miserable people I have ever come across.

Had a wonderful time in the Vaudois area of Switzerland. I was captivated by the little red train that "tooted" its way up the mountain road to La Barboleusaz. Loving trains as I do, I could hardly cope with nearby Aigle and its three separate privately owned metre gauge railways that run through the narrow, and sometimes twisting, streets of the town before they reach the countryside and mountains. It was heaven!

By the way, do you still receive moans about lost "Wheel Finishers", which is the smart word for wheel trims these days? I recently left two in the Eidelweiss back in Switzerland. Having enjoyed a cuppa and a slice of cake on top of the mountain, the trusty van carefully begins its descent. Although "low gear" is selected, frequent use of the brake is necessary to negotiate numerous hair-pin bends. The front discs are now getting hot - very hot! "Ah, look at the Eidelweiss over there." Bang! Clang! Clonk! "What was that?" "Nothing, dear." Actually, it was two flower-loving "Wheel Finishers" gone to smell the flowers! As the discs get hot so do the wheel finishers. The plastic from which they are moulded starts to distort and expand slightly. Soon, the metal clips which should grip don't and the trims go and do a David Bellamy!

Andrew A. Canneaux.

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Charles also sent a copy of a note written by George Eden, the Chairman of the M.C.C. who says "To those of you who require propane gas in the 7 kilo cylinders I'm afraid that I have to inform you that a representative from Calor informed me at the Earl's Court Show that they will not be filling this size, despite all our requests. However, do not despair, I have been informed that Flexigas of 115 High Street, Boston, Lincolnshire, PE21 8TQ and Supergas of Witney, Oxon., both fill propane in this size container and distribution from both companies is nationwide. Remember, butane ceases to gas off at 34° F whilst propane continues to gas off down to -40° F and is therefore favoured during the colder months".

[I shall be writing to both companies for details of stockists throughout the land for the use of Club members and will let you know more later. Ed.]

Gas. This is a perennial source of (inspiration exasperation, perspiration, desperation - you choose the word) to all of us who want ease and comfort in the van. Here is another letter but PLEASE HEED THE WARNING!

"I would like to know if any member could put my mind at rest. Is the following a safe idea? In my Legend I carry two 7Kg Blue (Butane) cylinders but during the winter months I would like to use the van as a picnic unit and perhaps on a C.L. for the weekend. BUT the Butane won't work below 0° C. Can I carry a Red (Propane) cylinder in the locker? I rang Calor Gas in Bristol and they said the red Propane cylinder MUST STAND OUTSIDE the van when in use and NEVER inside the locker!!

What I had in mind was one of each, using the Butane whenever possible as it is larger and cheaper. Then, if the temperature should drop, I could change to the Propane.

I would like to fit a 'Y' junction in the rubber pipe and have one line to each cylinder. I would use only one supply at a time but the changeover would be easier as I could turn off either cylinder.

It's a pity that Calor don't supply Propane in the equivalent of the 7Kg Butane cylinder. I see in M.M.N. that Calor will perhaps think about a 6Kg "if demand is enough". Funny lot! I haven't met anyone who uses their van in winter who wouldn't change over if the bottle size was larger.

Allen Gray."

WARNING! Don't even think about the 'Y' junction, Allen. I mentioned this to Peter Fisher who pointed out that the two gases are at different pressures. If you tried to use such a changeover system, you would be likely to get a combination of the two gases in the wrong place.

It might be a better idea, I think, if there was some sort of quick connector on the end of the rubber hose near where it joins the van gas-pipes. Then it would be a simple matter to change over and disconnect completely one or other of the two cylinders. But I don't know of any suitable gas-tight connector.

I have never heard of the need for the Propane cylinders to be used outside the van. I do know that some members have tanks fitted to their vans so that Propane can be stored - its cheaper in bulk. Any comments, please? Is there any greater danger from Propane stored within the confines of the vehicle than those which occur with Butane? Any specialist gas-fitters out there?

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Sheila Hammell has passed me a letter from a very recently joined member. The letter came with the application form and said that *Graham Bearn* had already benefitted from his membership after reading the Chairman's Chat about cycle racks in the January Newsletter. He went on to ask if there was any information about "cracks in the gel coat" on the coachbuilds. I think that the best advice is to contact his local dealer, or perhaps the Auto-Sleepers shop at the National Rally. I feel sure that I've seen or heard of what I can only think of as 'a sort of paint' which can be applied to such cracks and it will fill and cover them. There is, I suppose, always the glass fibre fillers which can be bought at accessory shops but, having tried to use them on a previous GRP bodied van, I found them not so easy. Any other suggestions?

And another letter which starts:- "Help, Please! Has anyone found a way to make permanently water tight the gap between an Omnistor 4000 awning and the Motor-home? We have a Legend, new July 1990, with a factory fitted awning for which I have made two waterproof end pieces and a canvas front with a large picture window and stable doorway. All these pieces zip together. This, with a fitted ground sheet and shaped 2ft high pieces along the bottom edge of the van, complete our extra room and very cosy it is. But it is so annoying whenever it rains to have water running down the side of the van and making not only the things in the awning

very damp or even wet but also in the van itself if we have the side window open (which we do at night).

There is a good half-inch gap between the awning casing and the side of the van and I would like to be able to seal this completely and permanently. We would welcome any suggestions.

Jean & Ron Rawling"

Their address is Meadow View, Parbrook, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9ET or telephone 0403 782756.

"Chairman's Chat" about front wheel slip on the Talbot brought the following:

"This is a serious problem for those of us who rally all year on green field sites with the Club and other organisations.

Before having the Quaife differential fitted our Talbot was unable to proceed across a field on many occasions when the grass was wet, especially if their was an uphill climb. Once, we were unable to cover the 5 feet from our van to the site road without the help of 6 hefty co-ralliers. Also once could not restart on a wet 1 in 7 camp site road.

Since having the Quaife things have been better but even so last November we were unable to cross a muddy field (uphill) and had to station ourselves near the field gate.

Incidentally, the club we rally with regularly makes arrangements with the farmer to have a tractor available for towing if needed. Although the majority of ralliers tow caravans they have less trouble than we do.

I have driven a great number of lorries and vans (military and civilian) over many years and I have never known any to have been so bad as the Talbot. I should be very interested to hear if any member has found a better, or even cheaper, solution to this problem. Like you, I have found those red plastic mats useless but I hope the Chairman remains lucky!

Dave Turner."

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"Phil's Rabbit

With the February Newsletter you should have received details of the proposed regions (call them what you will) and the statement that we intend putting a proposal to the A.G.M. in order to get the organisation set up. It is important that you should know what we have in mind and at least as important that you should know what we do NOT intend. We do NOT intend splitting the Club into regional groups, with separate committees or any other sort of controlling body. We feel most members like belonging to a National Club, without boundaries. (We're all in this together!) However, most have joined for companionship (what else?) and getting a Membership Number and a monthly Newsletter is not enough. While Committee members are usually available by telephone or letter, they are not spread very widely in a geographical sense and, anyway, some people would hesitate - unnecessarily - to contact a Committee member for a chat. So we feel the need for some easier, more local contact. Pete Fisher and I freely admit some of the proposed regions are so big the contact isn't going to be as local as all that but we had to start somewhere. Nothing we have put forward is 'engraved in stone', as they say, and if we can form several more, smaller and more intimate regions or groups, then by all means let us have a go. I have already had some constructive comment from Arthur Smith of Skellingthorpe. He suggests using Motorways as the dividing lines because they don't bisect towns. This is certainly worth looking at in more detail, Thank you, Arthur. We have the Members and the ideas, all we need is some volunteers to act as focal points. We already have a few of those, too. But then, I've been working on this for ages, haven't I?

The objects we have in mind are:-

- 1) Someone to say "Welcome to the Club" to each new member and to give them some idea of other members in the locality, together with an outline of who does what and what goes on.
- 2) Someone local who will have details of the models owned by members so that if someone has a rattle in a Rambler or a rumble in an RV50, they will be able to compare notes with the owner of a similar conversion.
- 3) Someone who would be prepared to arrange small, informal gatherings - "Charley and Clarissa have suggested meeting at the Fox & Firkin for a pub lunch on Thursday. Care to come?"
- 4) Someone who, without being nosy, could keep an ear to the ground. If a member is suddenly taken ill or incapacitated there would be someone in the Club who

could be contacted. "Possibly a 'Get Well Soon' card or a letter of sympathy would suffice but in other cases a camping car half day out or a visit might be more than welcome." That sentence comes direct from a letter from *Norman Cutler* (234) of Solihull. I think he might, just possibly, become the Contact Point for Region 5.

I hope you now have a better idea of what we have in mind and will seriously consider offering to get things started in YOUR region. What have you got to lose? On the positive side, just think how many friends you'll make!

Just phone your nearest Committee member, Pete Fisher (0:43 377777) or me (021 706 1816) and we'll be delighted to put your name on the list. We'll even try to answer any questions you may have.

Phil Daley."

You can even telephone your Editor if you would like to help out. My telephone number is on the back of the N/L every month. Then, as G & S said in 'The Mikado', we'll put you on the list!

Onto another matter now. "Dear Harry,

I am writing to ask if you could put a request into the next Newsletter asking any member for advice about the fitting and use of a modern CB radio in a VW Autosleeper Trooper when touring in the UK and on the Continent.

Peter & Jenny Berry."

I've used a CB in a previous van which had a glass fibre body and, because it was plastic, I had to make a "ground plane" (the 'earth' for the radio) under the roof. This was reasonably easy with a large sheet of metal which I fooled the 'electricians' of the radio into thinking it was bigger because I extended it with some strips of metal. In the case of the VW, being a metal body, the aerial could be a simple gutter mounting or 'through the roof' if preferred. So far as fitting the set itself is concerned, I would strongly recommend a slide-mount so that it can be easily removed and stored out of sight. For the same reason an easily removable screw-in or bayonet fitting aerial is to be preferred. I'm not quite up to date on the usages in the UK but I know that my sets won't necessarily communicate with the Continentals. They were using the AM range whereas the UK favours the FM and makes the AM illegal. If anyone

has up to date information, I'm sure that the Berry's would be pleased to hear from you at 9, Carcluie Crescent, Ayr, Scotland, KA7 4SP, or telephone 0292 42747. Or write to me, please, for inclusion in a subsequent issue - and I'll be interested to learn how many Chicken Box users we have in the Club.

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FERRY NEWS

"I have just received the new schedule from Brittany Ferries and there is an important change in the pricing arrangements for 1991. They have introduced length and height restrictions on all the Channel crossings and applied graduated charges according to height on the Plymouth - Santander route. The exact wording is this:-

"When quoted length is exceeded, £10 will be charged per additional metre or part thereof. Where maximum height of vehicle or trailer (including loaded roof rack) exceeds 1.82m there is a £10 surcharge up to a maximum height of 2.45m. Over 2.45m there is a surcharge of 50% of the applicable fare."

What does this mean to us? All current Auto-Sleepers are over 1.82m high and only the Sportsman, Frisky and Rimini are under 2.45m. All, except the Legend and Talisman, are under 5m in length. So, Sportsman, Frisky and Rimini will cost an extra £10 because of their height. All the others, except Talisman and Legend, will have an excess of 50%. The lucky owners of Talismans and Legends will, if rash enough to travel by Brittany Ferries, be faced with a £10 surcharge in respect of length and then 50% on top of that because of the height! Portsmouth to Caen, for Talisman plus two people, lowest schedule, £107.50, one way! Last year it would have cost £74.00.

On the brighter side, P&O European ferries have introduced reduced rates for wrinklies so Senior Citizens pay less than others on some crossings. For the Daleys, now that we both qualify, this means a crossing from Portsmouth to Cherbourg with the Tally, on Tariff E, for £66.00 which is only 61% of the B.F. fare. Being a shareholder in P&O I get a discount of 40% on this crossing so the nett cost is £39.60. We might even manage to stump up the extra £3 (60% of £5) each to travel Club Class! Dover to Calais, Tariff E, would cost us £47 less 50% = £23.50, which I consider very reasonable.

More Ferry News as I get the brochures but do make sure you shop around before booking!

Phil Daley.

Peter Fisher tells me that Brittany (and other) Ferries have sent in a prize for our raffle at the National. I shall put a full list of the prizes into a later edition of the Newsletter so that I don't miss any out - we could still get a few more!

Our erstwhile (now Assistant) Editor is always a very busy person in the interests of the Club. And he is very much a friend to the present Editor because of the items he submits. So here is another portion of:

"Phil's Rabbit - (again).

There has been some comment about rear-end sway with some Talismans. I haven't found this over 18,000 miles to date so I wonder if my old hobby horse, Tyre Pressures, is rearing its ugly head again. I would like to quote a little piece from a letter which appeared on page 17 of the December 1990 issue of M.N.M., from Mr. J. Goodley:-

"I was a little concerned by a slight rear end wallow. It was a windy day and this could have been the problem.... I found that three tyres were inflated to 40 p.s.i. and one to 45 lbs. The vehicle handbook and the sticker inside the nearside door recommend the front tyres should be 57 lbs and the rear 63 lbs. I corrected the pressures and handling was drastically improved."

I don't suggest every owner of a Talisman should inflate the tyres to the pressures quoted because they are for Full Load conditions and 'correct' pressures depend on the make and size of the tyre and the load carried but I draw your attention to this letter and the Editor's comments in the hope that you will find them illuminating. If your tyres are Michelins you could ring their Technical Division on 081 861 2121 or ring their nearest Commercial Distributor Centre."

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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Perhaps I spoke too soon last month about there being no closed season for Auto-Sleeping - the current spell of wet snow and slush is not really ideal weather for it!

In his report on the Abbey Wood Rally Ralph Dulson referred to the game of Rummikub as being addictive. Daphne & I can agree with that description - ever since Ralph and Joanne introduced us to the game some months ago we have become "hooked" on it. For those who haven't yet been introduced all I can say is buy a set (available from the bigger W.H.Smith, etc., shops) and you will soon see what I mean.!

When I spoke to the Editor about this Chat he asked me to keep it short as space is at a premium this month so I will willingly comply with his request. When the Club was in its infancy there was discussion as to where was the best place to display the stick-on Club badge, and the favoured location at that time was at the top centre of the windscreen, i.e. behind the rear view mirror. This seems to be a good place as it is easily visible to an approaching vehicle whether in the U.K. or abroad. Perhaps some of our newer members might like to consider this.

You will know that Dilys Stinchcombe has been selling very attractive personal name badges which also bear the name of the Club. It really is a great help for those of us of advancing years if members wear these to Club rallies. As mentioned in the December Newsletter these Identity Brooches now cost £2.90 each, post paid, or £2.70 if you collect them at a rally. If you hurry I expect Dilys could have yours ready for the National Rally.

Finally a message for those who haven't yet attended one of our rallies. Almost all those who do attend say "Oh, I'm not really a rally sort of person!" - but they all seem to enjoy them. The feature of our rallies is that we leave you to do what you want - there is the minimum of organisation and the maximum opportunity of meeting and getting to know like minded people.

John Normandale"

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Motor Caravan World have sent me a copy of their 18th Site Selector which is "a helpful guide both to occasional and club users" The price is £2 and it is available direct from them or from your local newsagent. All the sites are, of course, commercial and the entries cover these islands and parts of the continent too. Site fees are not shown but it could be a handy book to keep in the van.

They also tell me that booking forms for the 14th Motor Caravan Fair at Stratford Racecourse from 7th - 9th June are now available from their office.

And a quote from Motor Caravan Magazine who have given us a good write up again - "You may think we are over-generous with our coverage of events from the Auto-Sleeper Club, but their monthly Newsletter regularly turns up at our office".

That's what its all about, after all. Any Newsletter should try to keep members informed about that which interests them. And, preferably (in my book anyway), to keep it light-hearted. It is pleasing to know that our magazine is read in a wide variety of places

PLEASE NOTE The A/S desk at the National Rally will be an ADVICE DESK ONLY, repairs will NOT be carried out. There is a local dealer who could no doubt arrange for any necessary repairs but the Company will not be trying to do as they did last year. As bookings are coming in thick and fast SEND YOURS IN NOW! (or you might miss out and we don't want that, do we?)

As they say at the end of some of the best cartoons 'at the pictures' (if you remember those days) or 'on the telly'

That's all, Folks!

Till next month.

Your Editor

Harry Henthorne

69, Bingham Road, Addiscombe, Surrey, CR0 7EG.

Tel: 081 654 4216

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 any responsibility for the consequences if you try them out.

AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB

MINUTES

of the Annual General Meeting held at the Billing Aquadrome, Northampton on Saturday, 21st April, 1990 at 2.30 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN (John Normandale) began the proceedings by welcoming all Members and explaining that the President would speak first in welcome and this would be followed by the formal meeting. At the conclusion there would be an 'Open Forum' where Members could make comments about the running of the Club and suggestions for the future. As it was such a large gathering it would be necessary for Members wishing to speak to come to the microphone and they were asked to state their name and Membership Number (if they could remember the latter). He then called upon the President.

The PRESIDENT (Charles Trevelyan) said that he would like to extend a very warm welcome to all Members who had come to the Rally and hoped that everyone would enjoy themselves and that the weather would get better. He said that it was rather nice to be President because he did not have to do nearly as much work as he did at the Inaugural General Meeting. He has narrow shoulders and all the bad and difficult problems he could now pass on to the Committee. He thanked Members for coming, many from long distances and he specifically mentioned Malcolm and Carol Taylor who had, at that time, been Members for 23½ minutes. The new Members were applauded. He said that he had been advised that there were upwards of 335 vehicles present that afternoon, a considerable increase on the numbers present last year, which shows the success of the Club very firmly. There were some 530 vehicle Members of the Club, again a very significant increase, and he suggested that this was a jolly good reflection on all Members. He did not intend, as he put it, to 'Bang On' for very long but there were one or two points he wanted to mention. First to thank Clive Jenkins and the National Rally Sub-Committee for their hard work in organising everything for the weekend. He mentioned the numerous telephone calls and meetings in which they had been engaged to ensure that no detail should be overlooked. (Applause) His second point was the way that the Club was being run. He had heard nothing but praise for the Club from members of the Motor-Caravanning press, some of whom were present, and he singled out Rita and Phil Daley for the secretarial work for the Club and for their efforts in the production of the Club Newsletter and other publications. (Applause) His message to Phil and Rita was to keep on writing because without their work we should be in a hole. Frank and Dilys Stinchcombe not only run the accounts but also the Regalia for the Club and he suggested that the breadth of Regalia which was available in the other marquee was quite astonishing for such a young club. (Applause) He added that every cup of coffee which he has drunk at home has been out of an Auto-Sleeper mug. (Laughter) Talking of 'mugs' he wished to acknowledge the work of the other Committee Members not least Sheila Hammell and Harry Henthorne, the Membership Secretary and Assistant Newsletter Editor respectively (Applause) Ken and Sybil Scotney who drew the short straw because they live fairly close to Billing and were on the sub-committee and very heavily involved. (Applause) If all went wrong with the Club and the weekend, if the rain or snow came there would only be one person to blame and that would be John Cox because it is his fault that we were all together in the first place. (Laughter and Applause) At Auto-Sleepers he is known as 'Coxy-Baby' so it was "Well done, Coxy-Baby!" Finally to thank John Normandale for his work in guiding the Club as Chairman so a last round of applause was sought for him. (Applause) Last, but by no means least, he wanted to thank the members of Auto-Sleepers Limited staff who were standing at the back of the marquee grinning like Cheshire cats

for giving up part of their Easter holiday voluntarily to attend and help at the Rally. With thanks again for Members attendance and attention he handed over to the Chairman for the formal part of the meeting.

The Chairman began by inviting the members of the Committee to rise when he mentioned their name so that Members could recognise them.

1. NOTICE CONVENING THE MEETING. The Chairman asked if the notice, which had been circulated, could be taken as read. This was agreed.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Formal apologies had been received from:
Stella and Norman Cutler (234) from Solihull
Beryl and Aldo Lanteri (124) from Coventry.

3. COMMITTEE REPORT on the past year's activities (circulated). The Chairman did not discuss this in detail but merely leafed through the report. Highlights included Membership at the end of 1989 was 530; to late Member Number 653 has been enrolled but with some Members not renewing the current-membership total is about 530. Meetings of the Committee have taken place at three monthly intervals approx., but meetings of sub-committees have been far more frequent. Accounts will be discussed as part of the main agenda. The Newsletter. Without any shadow of doubt the Club would not have flourished as it has without the Newsletter. The Club has been fortunate in having the services of Phil Daley as Editor and, in recent months, he has received active support of Members who submitted items. The Inaugural Rally was a great success and a credit to the Founding Committee and Auto-Sleepers Limited who actively assisted. Some ten Rallies were organised in the year and were kept completely informal. These proved popular and among many who repeated their attendance were a number who had said that they were not rally-goers! For that year, and for 1990, rallies had been organised on licensed Sites but we have now received our Exemption Certificate which will enable the Club to organise rallies elsewhere, on 'Green Field' sites. Most of the work in obtaining the Certificate has been done by the Vice-Chairman, Clive Jenkins. The Committee is proud of the range and standard of Regalia on offer and very sincere thanks were due to Dilys Stinchcombe for all her hard work. At the Inaugural rally the Committee had been instructed to review the proposed Constitution and to provide a new version for this A.G.N. The outcome will be submitted shortly. For the Future the Committee is most anxious to hear what Members want the Club to provide and the Open Forum after this meeting will provide an opportunity for members to put forward their views. Finally the Chairman wished to extend his personal thanks to the Committee members for all their hard work and to the helpers such as Raffle Ticket sellers, Rally Marshals and others who have assisted in so many different ways. And for the very generous help and encouragement which has been received throughout from Auto-Sleepers Limited.

Adoption of the COMMITTEE REPORT Proposed by Bob Neasom (119)
Seconded by Mick Newell (140)

The Report was declared ADOPTED.

4. AUDITED ACCOUNTS to December 1989. (Circulated) The Chairman drew attention to a typing error. The Honorary Auditor had AUDITED the accounts and had not STUDIED them as printed.

Adoption of the AUDITED ACCOUNTS Proposed by Penny Ogle (465)
Seconded by Bill Spendlove (452)

The Audited Accounts were declared ADOPTED.

5. THE CONSTITUTION. (Circulated) After the sub-committee report had been discussed in full Committee a number of amendments had been made. The revised Constitution, the result of a lot of work, was now submitted for adoption.

Adoption of the CONSTITUTION Proposed by Kip Turner (474)
Seconded by Ian Monaghan (334)

The revised CONSTITUTION was declared ADOPTED.

6. ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE. The revised Constitution provides for six members of the Committee to retire each year. However the proceedings of the present A.G.M. were governed by the original Constitution so no retirement was necessary. As Members already knew two members of Committee, Rita Daley and Ralph Dulson had indicated their wish to resign and John Cox had indicated his willingness to be considered for another appointment. Thus three vacancies had arisen if the resignations were accepted. Two nominations had been received for John Tidbury (38) and Peter Fisher (336). A third volunteer was sought and was found in the person of Jeff Worley (453). It was therefore proposed that the remaining nine members of the Committee who were ready to continue together with the three volunteers be elected to form the Committee for the ensuing year.

Proposed by Ron Le Bas (599)
Seconded by Maurice Cave (513)

The new COMMITTEE was declared ELECTED.

A question was asked by Joe Payne (72) as to what other appointment was being offered to John Cox. The Chairman stated that this would be covered by the next but one item.

7. ELECTION OF HONORARY AUDITOR. No nomination other than the existing Honorary Auditor, Howard Duart (231) had been received. It was proposed that he be re-elected for the ensuing year.

Proposed by Ralph Dulson (93)
Seconded by Frank Stinchcombe (2) (Amid laughter)

The HONORARY AUDITOR was declared ELECTED.

8. APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS. Under section 9 of the revised Constitution which came into effect with this meeting it is possible for the Club to appoint Honorary Vice-Presidents. Such appointments shall continue while the appointee continues to be a Member of the Club. The President offered the names of John Cox and Rita Daley to be Honorary Vice-Presidents. This suggestion was applauded by all present.

Proposed by Eric Nuxlow (46)
Seconded by Margaret Coggins (486)

The President then thanked John and Rita for their work in the foundation of the Club and since and formally presented them with their Vice-President badges. Each recipient replied suitably. The President also thanked Ralph Dulson for his work in the Committee and wished him a happy retirement from that post.

9. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS. John Gobbett (560) proposed that the retiring Committee members should be presented with some tangible keepsake as a reward for their services. Other Committee members who retired at a

later date should be similarly recognised. The Chairman thanked him for his suggestion and said that it would be considered in Committee.

There being no further business the Chairman declared that the First Annual General Meeting of the Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club was closed at 3.03 p.m.

The Hand-bell was also rung to mark the end of the Meeting.

AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB

Send one of these slips to the Marshal named at least 10 days before the event. You can arrive at the site without booking and you will be welcomed but if the rally is limited you may be disappointed.

ALL CHEQUES PAYABLE TO THE MARSHAL BY NAME, PLEASE

R A L L Y S L I P

Site..... Date.....

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

Day/Time of arrival..... 1st Rally? Y/N Electricity? Y/N

Saturday night meal, if available? Y/N. Any Special Needs?.....

.....
Please send this slip to the Marshal with the fee. Please complete
BACK of slip IN FULL!

R A L L Y S L I P

Site..... Date.....

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

Day/Time of arrival..... 1st Rally? Y/N Electricity? Y/N

Saturday night meal, if available? Y/N. Any Special Needs?.....

.....
Please send this slip to the Marshal with the fee. Please complete
BACK of slip IN FULL!

R A L L Y S L I P

Site..... Date.....

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

Day/Time of arrival..... 1st Rally? Y/N Electricity? Y/N

Saturday night meal, if available? Y/W. Any Special Needs?.....

.....
Please send this slip to the Marshal with the fee. Please complete
BACK of slip IN FULL!

BLOCK CAPITALS, PLEASE

Address _____

Telephone No: _____

In the event of an emergency at a rally whom should we contact?

Name _____ Tel.No: _____

BLOCK CAPITALS, PLEASE

Address _____

Telephone No: _____

In the event of an emergency at a rally whom should we contact?

Name _____ Tel.No: _____

BLOCK CAPITALS, PLEASE

Address _____

Telephone No: _____

In the event of an emergency at a rally whom should we contact?

Name _____ Tel.No: _____

AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB
RALLY SUPPLEMENT
=====

April & May 1991

PLEASE MAKE YOUR CHEQUE PAYABLE TO THE RALLY MARSHAL NAMED AND SEND IT WITH THE COMPLETED BOOKING SLIP AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE, and preferably at least 10 days before the rally. YOUR NAME, ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER printed on the back of the slip will help the marshal. Last minute arrivals are still accepted but it does help the Marshal to advise the site of about how many will be coming and to have everything prepared. So the motto is EARLY BOOKING PLEASE, IF POSSIBLE!

5th-7th April. NATIONAL RALLY AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Home Farm, EDITHMEAD, Somerset. Please use separate booking form for this rally. Full directions will be sent with your receipt.

8th-14th April. 7 day Holiday Rally; Leverton Place, Green Bottom, CHANCE WATER, near TRURO, Cornwall. This will follow on from the National Rally.

Fees: £3.50 per night. Electricity £1.00 per night. Rally Fee £1.50

Marshals: Noelle & Alan Johns, 3 Jays, Lanreath, Nr. Looe, Cornwall, PL13 2NX.

Directions: 3½ miles west of Truro on A390 Truro - Redruth road.

Good centre for touring the area. Room available for social activities. Bar and snacks available.

19th-21st April. Camping International Site, OXFORD. Fees: £4.50 per night INCLUDING Electrics. Rally Fee £1.50

Marshals: Heather & John Tidbury, 26, Ferny Close, Radley, Abingdon, OX14 3AN.

Directions: From Ring Road on SOUTH side of Oxford take A4144 towards City Centre. In about 0.25 mile turn left at VW dealers. Site on right behind Texaco garage.

26th-28th April. Motor-Caravan Jamboree, BRANDS HATCH, Kent.

BOOKING FORMS and fees for this rally will be found in M.M.M. Please write A.S.O.C. clearly on the form and it is important to advise our marshals to ensure that sufficient area is allocated to the Club.

Marshals: Barbara & Dave Clarke, 2, Fleece Road, Long Ditton, Surbiton, Surrey, KT6 5JN.

Brands Hatch is, of course, on the A.20 - do NOT try to use the M.20.

26th-28th April. LADIES RALLY. Ebury Hill Camping & Caravanning Club Site, SHREWSBURY, Shropshire. This is a GREEN FIELD site. Fees £2.70 per night. Rally fee £1.50. (Follow-on rally to 3rd May.)

Marshal: Audrey Crouce and Margaret Harrison. Bookings to Audrey, please, at "Sydney", Sylvan Close, Higher Heath, Whitchurch, Shropshire, SY13 2TB.

Directions: On A.53 Shrewsbury to Market Drayton road. Turn right about 1¼ miles from A.49 junction s.p. Haughton - Upton Magna. Site on right.

Plenty to see in the area including Ironbridge Gorge. Marshals for follow on rally are Barbara & Jeff Worley.

28th April-3rd May. Follow-on Midweek Rally at the same site at EBURY HILL. Fees for extra days Normal Site Fee. Please tell Audrey when you book whether you wish to stay extra nights but DO NOT INCLUDE EXTRA CASH. Pay on Site, please.

Marshals: Barbara & Jeff Worley, 26, Houndstone Park, Gunners Lane, Brympton, Yeovil, Somerset, BA22 8SQ.

There is much to see in the local area, including Ironbridge Gorge.

10th-12th May. National Motorhome & Tourer Show, East of England Showground, PETERBOROUGH. Fees - normally £10.00 but special reduction for Club Members to £8.00.

PLEASE NOTE that final booking details have not yet been received. DO NOT BOOK DIRECT. We shall let you know later what to do.

Marshals: Not yet finalised.

17th-19th May. Holme Pierre Point Camping & Caravan Park, National Water Sports Centre, HOLME PIERRE POINT, Notts. Fees: £3.50 per night. Rally fee £1.50.

Marshals: Barbara & John Cox, 73, Westmead Road, Barton-under-Needwood, Staffs., DE13 8JR.

Directions: Turn left off A.52 Nottingham to Grantham road on outskirts of Nottingham. Follow signs to National Water Sports Centre.

Francis Edmund Stinchcombe.

Shortly after the March Newsletter had gone to press the Club suffered a grievous loss. On the morning of Wednesday, 20th February, Frank Stinchcombe, Founder Member and Treasurer, died at his home in Wotton-under-Edge. From the very beginning Frank was ready to help in any way he could to get the Club formed and went on to ensure that whatever he could do, from marshalling rallies and running raffles to hauling loads of regalia, he did, and with a joke, too.

Everyone who knew him will mourn the loss of a friend.
We offer our support and affection to Dilys.