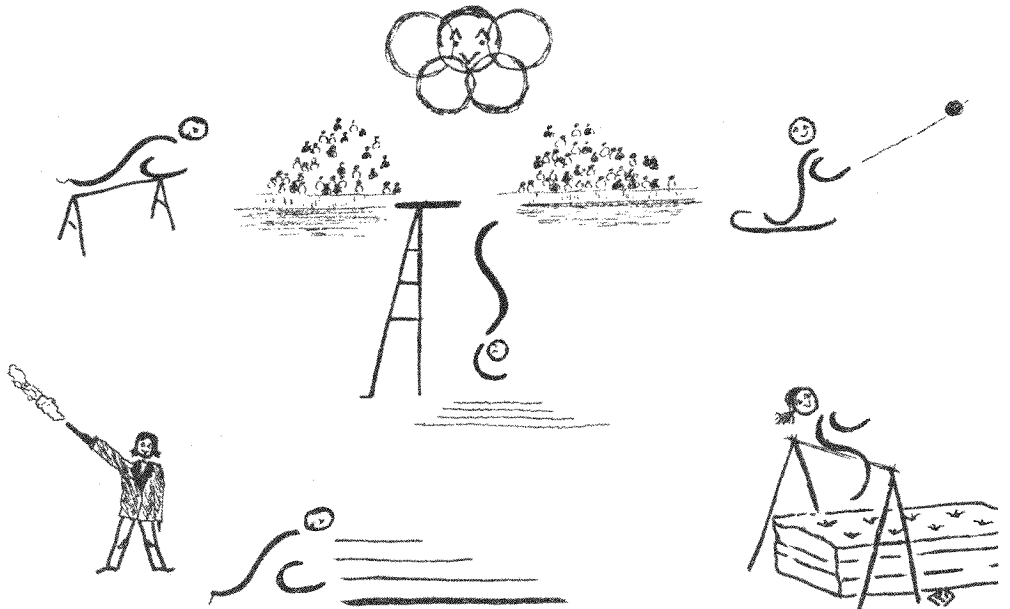


**AUTO-SLEEPER
OWNERS' CLUB**



NEWSLETTER 46

JULY 1992

Greetings!

It seems quite strange to use that salutation again after all these months but I won't try to get used to it, Harry will be back in the Editor's chair next month! Since I'm so much out of touch with the job I must say how very grateful I am to all the contributors because almost all I will have to do is string one letter after another; if the result lacks something of Harry's usual polish I'm sorry but it IS just for this month...

One or two important and urgent points I must make. Under the heading, "Future Rallies" Jeff mentions the three rallies in the South West ending at Shepton Mallet. Since writing that he has heard from Molly Coombes that Ken has been whipped off to hospital with a dickie ticker so he won't be running the rally at Kings Down Tail near Sidmouth. We all send our best wishes to Ken of course but we also feel it would be a shame to drop that middle rally for want of a Marshal. If you could possibly manage to run it (the ground work has been done), please give Jeff a ring and earn his gratitude.

Bookings are fairly pouring in for the "Club & Company Rally" - it looks like being the biggest one we've managed yet. The organisers are delighted and are stepping up plans for entertainment for you. I hope to be able to let you have more details on a separate sheet to be printed just before we post this Newsletter. Neville (Jelfs) who is putting on the barbecue was beginning to think that he and his helper would be unable to cope with the numbers but we have assured him there are many willing hands just waiting for the chance to join in. He'll provide the gas barbecue and the food as well as organising things so all we need is some assistant chefs - please let Barbara Cox or Heather Tidbury know if you fancy a short stint with the tongs!

On a recent joint visit to the Racecourse to plot and plan where various things should go Neville took the opportunity to have a close look at the footpath alongside the Avon which was to form part of the Riverside Walk and Treasure Hunt. Unfortunately he found it was quite unsuitable for that type of event so we'll have to cancel that item. However, Neville is seldom if ever at a loss and he proposes a replacement in the form of a General Knowledge Quiz to take place in the Falstaff Bar on Friday

evening. It will be run by Neville and Phil Bennett and I am told they have run a lot of these at various events with great success. More details in the Van Pack you may well be given on arrival at the Rally.

Vice Chairman's Chat

Usually the Vice Chairman's duties include such important matters as making sure the coffee is organised for the Committee meetings, but with the Chairman away this month and next, it is my privilege to write this entry for the Newsletter.

Don't worry, Arthur will be back soon.

The most important thing concerning the Committee at this time is the Club and Company Rally. Offers of help are coming in. Peter and Valerie Fullick are organising a bottle stall. Could members bring full bottles of any description, Peter says non-medicinal, to donate to the stall. Barbara Cox and Pat Payne are holding a bric-a-brac stall for small items so search out your lofts and cupboards, all items will be gratefully received. Rosemary and Tony Bevis are running the lawn darts. Barbara [Worley] is still looking for members to bake a cake or other edibles for her stall, home made jams and garden produce etc. are also acceptable.

But the most important thing to do is to turn up and help make the weekend a success. The profit from this rally will go to the McMillan Nurses, a truly worthy cause.

I have been asked by Arthur to form a Sub-Committee to look at the Club constitution which needs some tidying up. Any suggestions for consideration, please send to me A.S.A.P.

Towards the end of my time as Rally Co-ordinator, I added two more rallies to this year's programme which have not received any publicity yet:

August 28th-31st East Horsley, Surrey and
September 25th-27th Tanner Farm CC., Marsden, Kent.

Both these rallies are being run by new marshals so please turn up and support them and, who knows, they might become part of the regular team.

We had a good rally at the Stratford Show. I received a number of enquiries from AS owners interested in joining our Club.

We need to know who is holding the Club equipment - Anybody holding any of the signs please let Tony Jones know.

Happy caravanning

*Jeff Worley
Vice Chairman*

Future Rallies

In September, members may take advantage of three rallies planned to make a 17 day holiday:

4th-11th Moreton Glade near Dorchester - marshals Barbara & Jeff Worley

11th-18th Kings Down Tail Caravan Site near Sidmouth - marshals now urgently needed - please ring Jeff Worley.

Both these rallies may be attended for just the weekend or any number of days.

18th-20th Motor Caravan Show, Shepton Mallet - marshals Peter & Val Fullick but booking slips to Barbara & Jeff Worley, please. This is a good chance to rally in the South West with the Club after the peak of the holiday season is passed.

Jeff Worley

Rally Plaques - Sorry there were no plaques available at Comberton, Lytham and Stratford. The first is due to an oversight at M-Tags, the others due to the GPO losing a letter! If you haven't received your plaque yet, please contact me.

Rally Marshals - please remember I need definite numbers by the Tuesday 10 days before the rally. So please phone me Monday evening or early Tuesday evening. I also need to know if you are leaving home earlier in the week than the Friday of the rally to ensure M-Tags can post earlier if necessary.

Heather Tidbury - 0235 525730

Royan early June 1993

Is anyone interested in attending a one week (ish) rally at St Augustin, near Royan (north of Bordeaux)? We found a site here which is used for rallies by the Caravan Club and other organisations. The site has shower blocks with English toilets, Chemical disposal etc., a swimming pool, tennis courts, and a small shop. Adjacent to the site is a restaurant and snack bar. Within a reasonable drive are some very nice beaches (some naturist!), the towns of Cognac (brandy) and Roquefort (stinky cheese).

The general plan will be a relaxed holiday, with flexible travel arrangements according to the requirements of those going. Ferry bookings can be made for you, if sufficient want to travel together, but we are happy for you to decide whether to do a one day journey down (or back), or a meander down via the Loire etc. and meet up at the site on June 6th, departing Saturday June 12th.

Please write/telephone me if you are interested, letting me know your probable requirements. More details will be issued later if interest is sufficient.

Steve Bowler, 92 Welford Road, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands. B90 3HT (021-745-8369)

Easter weekend 1993 - Friday 9th April/Monday, 12th April. Stanford Hall, Leicestershire.

We have been informed that the Rotary Club of Rugby Dunsmore is holding an Easter weekend rally at Stanford Hall, near Lutterworth, Leicestershire. The cost is £15 per unit for the weekend or £14 if you pay in 1992, all proceeds to Rotary Charity. There is a Live band country and western night on Saturday, (bring your own Jeans/Stetson/boots & Gingham dresses) plus craft show and antiques and collectors fair, parachute drops, children's fancy dress, golf knockout, motorcycle trials demos, fly casting competition, helicopter rides, balloon ascents etc. as well as Stanford Hall itself.

Bookings to:-

Rotarian Tom Lewis, 16 Almond Close, Barby, Rugby. CV23 8TL Tel: 0788 891323 with details of number of adults, children, pets, and your name and telephone number.

"THE NATIONAL MOTORHOME AND TOURER SHOW - PETERBOROUGH May 8,9,10

The marshals were Bob and Monica Williams, enlisted at short notice. They were greatly assisted by Daisy and George Wane and Audrey and Sid Crouch. This rally is a BIG event.

The weather on the Friday, when most of us arrived, was cold and windy so poor Bob & George needed warm up stints since they spent hours out in it. It was all worth while, since we all fitted (just) on the field in neat rows - up to standard (like the Swift and Pilote Clubs adjacent to us!) Apparently, someone felt that our vans ought to be parked where the owner wanted - unfortunately, safety regulations (ambulance/fire-engine access etc.) will not allow that.

There was an excellent selection of dealers at the rally, far too many to mention, together with various food outlets, children's rides and entertainment during the day. Audrey did a magnificent job obtaining raffle prize donations for us - even including garden chairs! (I have written to these generous dealers to thank them). The only thing lacking was warm weather to make casual browsing possible - my ears got frozen so many times!! On the Friday evening there was speedway, and a "barn" where there was a disco and (real ale) bar. We found this to be a large hanger with wide open doors and very draughty (even Steve agreed to give that a miss due to the cold!).

The Saturday was a total wash out too - we had virtually constant rainfall together with bitter cold. The only bright interval came as dusk fell, and the superb fireworks display was able to be seen in its full glory.

Sunday was brilliant - the sun shone, the ground dried out, the site echoed with the sound of people catching up on a whole weekend's chatting (and the nasty rasping sound of some brave van owner having the spoiler sawn to fit nudge bars!). The coffee morning and raffle actually started early - people were so keen to have a chat and look at the regalia and prizes. The kettle boiling brigade must have used a cylinder of gas between them, with the number of people present! The whole event changed into a hive of

activity from quite early on.

Sunday alone made the rally worthwhile for me, without this opportunity to meet up, a lot of us would have gone away pretty fed up. I understand that last year it was very hot on the same weekend, in which case the site provisions were fine but I would like to see some contingency plan in future for cold weather - to provide somewhere warm for everyone to congregate!

We had quite a number of enquiries for Club golf umbrellas at the regalia stall (I wonder why?!) Perhaps we ought to include those in the regalia?!

Carol Bowler
SECRETARY

P.S. the dealers who gave prizes were: Autocraft Motorcaravan Centre, Mr R. Bone, Brooks Leisure, Dobblers Barbecue Coal, Eastern Caravans, Hagley Clock Clinic, JBL Services, J & M Designs, Leisurelink, L Sports & Leisurewear, Manfred Products Ltd, Mauvick Leisure Wear, Phoenix Trading, S & R Picker, St Christopher Clothes, Towbar Techniques, Mr R Thompson, Van Blitz, WACA UK Marketing, Mr S White."

"We are fairly new members of the club and have just attended our first rally. Although it was at Peterborough and there were a few other makes of vans there, it was enjoyable despite the rain! We now have our first rally plaque. Our other hobby is showing dogs (Shetland Sheepdogs) and as most shows are at weekends we have to decide which comes first, motor caravans or dogs? We intend to come to some future rallies - if other members see a Bedford Clubman being driven and organised by Shelties... that's us! We can assure you that they are very well behaved - our neighbours at Peterborough didn't know that we had more than a couple of dogs with us!

We have two problems that we hope fellow members may be able to help resolve. We have, unfortunately, lost a wheel trim and it was the type with the A/S motif moulded on to it. As you will know, these are no longer available. Has anyone suffered the same fate and been forced to replace the complete set and thus

ended up with spare old style trims? If so, we should like to negotiate the purchase of one or two to the benefit of both of us and the Club.

The second problem is the rear springing on the Clubman. It is low when unloaded and you can imagine the situation when going to the dog shows with all the dogs' camping gear as well as our own. (We stay two or three days at the Championship shows.) We would dearly love to fit the "Airide" booster system but have been advised that they do not make a fitting for the Bedford. Has any member successfully resolved this problem? We would be extremely grateful for any advice. It must be said that we can still use the van but would feel more comfortable if we could boost or replace the rear springs.

Audrey & Tony Bridge ."

[Symonspeed (Airide) will be at the Club & Company Rally. Ed]

"Happy Memories of the 1992 ANNUAL RALLY AND AGM

We planned to leave Taunton at 11.30 am, anticipating arrival at Wicksteed Park around 5.00 pm. By 10.00 am the Rambler had been cleaned and most of our chattels had been loaded for the first trip of the season.

I had just filled the water tank but to my horror, on entering the van, I saw a lot of water on the carpet around the wardrobe. Inside the wardrobe I found a puddle up to the edge of the bottom frame. My heart sank as I recognised frost damage to the water heater causing a cascade from the cupboard above. The trip to Wicksteed Park was off - or was it?

Rene mopped up the water while I telephoned the technical department of Vaillant Ltd. Helpful advice forthcoming included details and part numbers of the replacement components required; the name, address and telephone number of a dealer; and a full explanation of how to carry out the repair. Another telephone call to the dealer confirmed the availability of the components. By 11.00 am I was back home and after a quick cuppa I completed the repair by mid-day. By the time we had had lunch and completed our packing we were nearly three hours late leaving home but arrived at Wicksteed Park at 6.30 pm.

The important lesson that had been learned, and other members may like to note, was that although draining the water heater had been correctly performed, water from pipes at a higher level had drained into the water heater when the van was moved. A solution is to leave the drain cock open with a suitable catchment tray placed beneath.

The staff at Vaillant's Technical Department could not have been more helpful - members may like to note their telephone number - 0634 711 112

We were pleased not to have to abandon our attendance at the annual rally and enjoyed it as we have done previously. We believe that a map of the UK on which was indicated the starting point for each member attending would be of considerable interest, particularly if the pitch location at the rally field was also given.

Les Davey."

"PETROL CONSUMPTION OF RHAPSODY

I recently visited the factory and read your Newsletter No.42 in which it said that there was a poor response to the request for fuel consumption figures.

In June 1989 I purchased a new Rhapsody and kept details from then until now (when I am about to take delivery of a Talisman). I have plotted these figures on the accompanying graph and you will see that my figures agree well with yours. You will notice that over the major part of the graph the slope is virtually a straight line, giving a consumption of 24.4 mpg. Just occasionally I filled up with 4-star but mostly it is low grade and latterly lead free. About half of the miles have been covered in France.

I am at a loss to explain the different slope (giving 23 mpg) up to 4,500 miles where I wrote down the wrong figures from the mileometer. An error such as this would be expected to displace the graph but could not change the slope. I must assume that, with the new vehicle, I did not, perhaps, use the 5th gear as often as I do now and really a gradual curve should be drawn up to the

24.4 slope although I have drawn in two separate straight lines on the diagram.

Sincerely yours,
S.J. Fray

PS. These figures are supplied for your interest and can be quoted if you want to."

Mr Fray is not (yet) a member of the Club, he just happened to pick up a copy of the N/L while visiting the works. It is interesting to find out that his figures accord with those which Bob Measom prepared. The graph has not been reproduced due to lack of space but anyone wanting a photocopy has but to ask - a stamped, addressed envelope please. Ed.

"I have found two interesting ideas; one for addition to the van and one perhaps for regalia.

Firstly, I obtained two L.E.D's as warning lights for my water pump switch and my battery driven fridge switch on my A/S VW VX50. These came from Auto Electrical Services, 8 The Quad, Chester West Employment Park, Chester, CH1 4QP and the cost was approx. £20 fitted.

Secondly, I have obtained personalised number plates with my name on, but these could include "Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club" as well - or something similar. Enquiries should be made to Trailerway Towing Centre, Fiveways House, Northop, Nr. Mold, Clwyd, North Wales. I hope that this will be useful to other members.

John Greenwood."

"In response to your asking about the oldest A/S van, ours has been the oldest, we think, at the 1st and 2nd AGM. Sorry we couldn't be present at this year's AGM but we hope to be at Stratford if Bessie makes it.

Bessie is a 1973 Bedford CF. You may remember her at the national rallies, looking like a Gas van - two tone blue. We have now put on a white high top so she looks more like an Ice Cream

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

RALLY SLIP

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!

RALLY SLIP

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?.....

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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!

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**

July/August 1992

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!**

3rd-5th July. **KINGSBURY** Water Park, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands. (Camping & Caravanning Club site.) **LIMIT 30 VANS.**

Fees: £4.75 per night. Rally fee £1.50. **NO** electric hook-up, limited toilet facilities.

Marshals: Maureen & John Edden, 4, Nursery Lane, Hopwas, Tamworth, Staffs, B78 3AS. Tel: 0827 65850.

Directions: Leave M.42 at Junction 9 and follow Water Park signs. **IGNORE MAIN ENTRANCE TO WATER PARK.** Follow International camping signs to site.

The park covers 600 acres in the valley of the River Tame and has more than 30 lakes, a nature reserve, walking, fishing and water sports. You can, if you wish, bring your own canoe or inflatable.

10th-12th July. Forestry Commission site, Tackeros. **GREEN FIELD SITE - OWN SANITATION REQUIRED.**

Fees: £2.50 per night. Rally fee: £1.50.

Marshals: Kris & Terry Plant, Foxfield, Waste Lane, Balsall Common, Coventry, West Midlands, CV7 7GF.

Water available; waste disposal points

Directions: Turn east off A.34 Cannock - Stafford one mile north of Huntingdon, s.p. Rugeley. Site on right, about 2.5 miles.

17th-19th July. Bainbridge Ings, Hawes, North Yorkshire.

Fees: £2.00 per night. Rally fee: £1.50.

Marshals: Margaret Harrison and Audrey Crouch. Bookings to Audrey, please, at "Sydney", Sylvan Close, Higher Heath, Whitchurch, Salop, SY13 2TB.

Directions: From Bainbridge on A.684 turn south at s.p. Gayle. Site is 200 yards.

24th-26th July. Midland Railway Trust, Butterley Park, RIPLEY, Derbyshire. Fees £1.75 per night, plus a modest charge to cover entry to the museum and train travel.. Rally fee £1.50.

Marshals: Sheila & Harry Henthorne, 144 Devonshire Hill Lane, London, N17 7NH. Telephone 081 808 9112.

Directions: **IGNORE ANY SIGNS TO MIDLAND RAILWAY CENTRE.** A.610 to Codnor Clock Tower. Follow unclassified road (beside clock tower) s.p. Riddings and Somercotes for about 1 mile passing Codnor Gate Estate on left. At bottom of steep hill turn left into Coach Road. (If you pass Newlands Inn you have gone too far!) **BWARE OF TWO SPEED RAMP** in Coach Road. A few yards beyond second ramp fork right. Turn right in front of the workshops and proceed through gate.

This rally will appeal to those interested in steam railways. Lunch on a train on Sunday may be possible. There are toilets available close to the licensed buffet.

31st July-2nd August. Club & Company rally, Stratford-upon-Avon racecourse.

Fees: to be advised.
Marshals: Barbara & John Cox, 73 Westmead Road, Barton-under-Needwood, Staffs., DK13 8JR. Tel: 0283 712394.

7th-9th August. Hatton Country World, Hatton, Warwick.

Fees: £3.00 per night. Rally fee: £1.50.

Marshals: Kris & Terry Plant, Foxfield, Waste Lane,, Balsall Common, Coventry, West Midlands, CV7 7GF.

Directions: Hatton is just north of Warwick on A.41. Turn left onto B.4439 s.p Hatton Craft Centre. In 0.5 mile turn left into Craft Centre.

14th-16th August. Naburn Locks Camping & Caravan site, near York.

Fees: £2.35 per night. Rally fee: £1.50. (NO electricity).

Marshals: Marion & Jim Henwood with Vera & Brian McLean. Bookings to Jim, please, at 1 Fairfield Avenue, Linthorpe, Middlesborough, Cleveland, TS5 5HB.

Directions: The site is on the bank of the River Ouse next to Naburn Lock, 0.5 miles south of Naburn, 4 miles south of York. There is a bus and a river bus service into York.

21st-23rd August. Detling Steam and Transport Spectacular, County Showground, Detling, Nr. Maidstone, Kent GREEN FIELD site, but there will be some food stalls and a beer tent on site.

Fees: T.B.A. for the weekend (until Monday). Rally Fee £1.50.

Marshals: Sheila & Harry Henthorne, 144 Devonshire Hill Lane, London, N17 7NR. Telephone: 081 808 9112.

Directions: Leave M20 at jnc 6 onto A 249 sp Sittingbourne. Ignore signs to Detling village. Almost at top of hill turn left at sign for Exhibitors. Follow road round to entrance gate on right.

This will be of interest to anybody keen on old forms of transport. It is usually noisy (steam engines, tractors, buses, motorbikes etc.) but there is plenty to see for all age groups.

28th-31st August. Gocknorth Cottage, East Horsley, Surrey. GREEN FIELD site. Limit 25 vans.

Fees: £1.50 per night. Rally fee: £1.50.

Marshals: Doris & George Mitchell, 18 Haze Pit Road, Gt. Bookham, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT23 4BS. Tel: 0372 456310

Directions: Leave M.25 at Jnc.9 onto A.24 s.p.Dorking. At main jnc (with traffic lights) approx 0.5 mile BEFORE Dorking town turn right s.p. Guildford - A.25. In 0.5 miles go straight on at roundabout and immediately turn right at T junction s.p. Rammore. Road climbs steeply and undulates for approx.4 miles. Turn left into Gocknorth Cottage grounds just past Herb Nursery.

If you wish you may stay until midday on Tuesday. Site adjacent to private woods and M.T. paths. Many places of interest nearby. Nearest shop 5 miles but pub & restaurant within walking distance.

van! Sorry for any embarrassment we cause to Auto-Sleepers. Have we claim to fame, are we the oldest?

Pat & Bernard Sugden."

"What an enjoyable weekend the National Rally and AGM at Wicksteed proved to be. A lot of work behind the scenes before our arrival went towards the smooth running of everything.

Not so many vans as at the previous AGM - was it the price of the Saturday dinner? What an excellent meal it proved to be - worth every penny. Well done, Committee, and a special thank you to Ron Wilson.

Ruth & Alan Wilkes."

"Dear Sir,

This is my first season motorcaravanning around and I must admit the first time is quite daunting. My husband is still recovering from his heart operation, two children (aged 3 years and 11 months) and an inexperienced Mum are not the right ingredients for long holidays. We decided to take a three days/ two nights break in Angelsey. It went better than I had hoped. We have a Talisman and my husband had constructed a "bedguard" for the children to sleep in the overcab. Thank goodness that worked and they were safely penned in for the nights and for supper time!

After that experience we went to Norfolk for a week and managed to visit friends for a couple of days. That was really enjoyable. I am now thinking of joining other members at rally meetings but am unsure if other members appreciate having kids around at the meetings. I do not want the children to be an annoyance. Please throw some light on this matter. Its just that every time I read the newsletter about how much the members enjoy the rallies that they have been to, no mention of children at all, so that makes me think the way I do.

Anyway, enough of all that. I hope everyone enjoy their holidays as I am looking forward to touring Scotland for about 20 days,

children and all!!

Thanks to Mr Fred Cleal for his idea of the platform for driving. Makes driving more pleasurable for me. As I wear size 2 (Children's size) shoes long distance driving was a little wearing on the calves. Now no problem any more.
Yours sincerely, Fauziah Coffey".

I don't think anyone would disagree if I said that we take the presence of children at rallies for granted and that's probably why no mention appears in the reports. I know that several mothers would be glad to see more children at rallies so that they can help to entertain each other! Though perhaps at the tender ages of three and (nearly) one we wouldn't expect too much from these two just yet. Anyway, my message is, "Come along and enjoy yourself - that's what our rallies are for".

An interesting letter from Penny Ogle is reproduced in full because you must draw your own conclusions about the points she makes:-

"Dear Harry,

It might be interesting for members to know that after I advertised my Trooper for sale in a National Publication I received a call from a Mr Bill Peters saying his firm "matched purchasers with sellers for a registration fee of £39.90". If I made a credit card payment he was sure that a purchaser would be quickly found for me.

I don't part with money that easily but I was curious and obtained from him that the name of the firm was "Leisure Association Europe Ltd., 24 Rodney Street, Liverpool L1 2TQ". I then wrote saying it was not my policy to make business deals with telephone callers from firms not known to me. However if full details of his firm were sent, together with some names and phone numbers of customers who could be contacted for reference I would give it some consideration.

I was not too surprised that I never received an answer; from which I drew my own conclusions.

I did however have another phone call from a woman offering the same type of "instant" service - this I turned down rather abruptly!

Yours sincerely,
Penny Ogle 465"

I'm afraid we are about to return to a subject of gripping interest to a few members and incredibly boring to most - you have been warned!

Dear Editor,

The problem with the twist knob becoming stiff on Thetford's cassette loos is not new and I do not think A-S will be able to help.

A representative from Thetfords discussed this and other problems at a technical session held at the Caravan Club National Rally two years ago and the following fairly sums up the problems:-

a) the main seal on the cassette can cause problems. Thetford market neoprene seals all over the world but for some unknown reason the tap water in parts of Britain and Germany managed to penetrate the original seals causing them to wrinkle around the lips. If your seal is wrinkled, examine it to see if it has a small "G" moulded on it - no need to take it out of the cassette. If it has NOT, phone Thetford and they will send you a new seal with the "G", and which is of a new composition.

b) Thetford produced a modified linkage arm to ease the stiff-turning mechanism. I fitted one to my new cassette, now two years old, but frankly it did not seem to have much effect.

c) Thetford now produce their cassette loos with a knurled twist knob. I gathered they were not willing to make a free exchange of knobs because of the many thousands of plain ones already in use. However, if desperate, buy a replacement. Being mean, I will continue with a large rubber band around my existing one!

d) Lubricating the seal with a vegetable oil (NOT a mineral oil

and not Vaseline as mentioned in the Talisman Instruction manual). I use olive oil and this does really help.

I trust the above will leave Rita flushed with success!

Turning to other matters, a 3cm long piece cut from a discarded ball-point pen - the hexagonal type - will clip nicely into each of the catches of the sliding windows on my Talisman, foiling anyone who might try to operate the catch with a piece of stiff wire. Incidentally, when the hot sun is on the plastic side windows the two units bow in opposite directions, presumably because of the method of construction, so that there is a clear gap of 8-10 cm (Surely mm? Ed.) between the overlapping sections. Ample space to get a wire through!

On the question of insurance of van contents, the standard Safeguard Motorcaravan policy gives cover for contents up to £2,000 plus £750 cover for awnings.

With regard to levelling with a jack, I tried it once and found the security lock on the cab door would not unlock because the van had distorted. The same happens when I jack up to change a wheel. I suggest the problem is the risk of permanently distorting the van rather than of the jack failing.

I have a gas tank fitted to my Talisman. Buying Autogas which is subject to excise duty and VAT the price is about the same as buying propane in 11kg cylinders. Central heating gas is cheaper as it is tax-free but I have been unable to find anyone in my area who is prepared to supply it for my van.

Alan Wheeler. 446"

The Insurance company mentioned by Alan is:

Safeguard Scheme Management, Kerry House, Kerry Street,
Horsforth, Leeds LS18 4TP. Telephone 0532 581 614.

The problem of finding suppliers of "Domestic" propane is one we are working on... I'm alright, Jack because I buy mine from Travel Gas (Midlands) Ltd., Fazeley Street, Birmingham at 20p per litre. 25 litres weigh about 12kg and cost £5.00. But we ARE looking for other sources. If you know of some, please tell.

An insight into the horrors of the internal combustion engine is provided by *Martin McGrath*:-

"Recently I was talking to my brother who works in an oil company's research department and some points raised in conversation may be of interest following other articles on the subject in the club magazine.

UNLEADED/LEADED FUEL.

When an engine is at the running temperature the valves and valve seats are at such a high temperature that when the valves close (in effect, hammered shut) they are virtually spot welded to the seats. They are then broken apart when the valve is opened again. Micro deposits of valve and valve seat are transferred to each other and this will eventually result in poor sealing and deterioration in performance. (Ever spent a few happy hours grinding in a set of valves by hand? Ed.) The deterioration is related to the quality of the valves and seats. Lead in the petrol not only stops premature detonation of the fuel (pinking), it also lubricates the valves and places a thin film over the valves and valve seats which reduces the welding effect previously mentioned. The recommendation is to have the occasional fill up with leaded petrol even if your engine normally runs on unleaded. (Not, of course, if a catalytic converter is fitted - a mere sniff of tetra ethyl lead will kill the cat stone dead - and it'll cost you an arm and a leg to get it replaced. Ed)

Super/Hypermarket Petrol Stations.

Oil companies collect petrol from the refineries and transport it to the various distribution centres where it is kept in large tanks. It is then transferred to other tanks where various additives e.g. for cleaner burning, are mixed in. These additives are the only difference in the various oil companies' fuel. The major companies supply the Super/Hypermarkets' filling stations but it is the refined fuel from the large tanks without any of the additives. The recommendation is still to purchase at the supermarkets for price but every so often fill up at the major oil company's filling stations to get the benefit of the additives.

ENGINE OIL.

I was told that all the well known oils like GTX and Duckhams

etc., all have very similar qualities. On the other hand the synthetic oils are superior in every respect and are recommended to extend the engine's life. Apparently these oils were developed to eliminate turbo-charger failures. The problem with turbos occurs when the engine is switched off after a long run. Ordinary oil in the turbo can become carbonised because of the high running temperature of the turbo (it is driven by the exhaust gasses straight from the cylinders). When the engine is restarted this carbon can form a layer around the turbo causing it to shatter as well as blocking oilways. The use of synthetic oils helps to reduce this problem but it is still important to remember to allow the engine to tick over for a few minutes before switching off. This allows the turbo to cool down."

While on mechanical topics here is a letter I have received from *John Hunt*, Consultant Editor of MMM:-

Dear Phil,

I gather you will be taking temporary responsibility for the ASOC newsletter while Harry is away - so here's one for you.

On pages 12 and 13 (June) is a letter from Norman Tamplin about Fiat/Talbot fuel tank pressure problems. He also wrote on similar lines to MMM and, when his letter was published, we had a couple saying that the valve he refers to is designed to prevent fuel leaving the tank in the event of a crash or when the vehicle is inverted! In other words, it's not a vent.

There's been a lot of argument about this and it might be advisable to warn readers not merely to turn the valve round the other way but to seek the advice of a Fiat/Talbot agent - and let him bear the responsibility.

Pressure in the tank is a problem to which I don't know the answer. On the last Talbot I tested the filler cap was almost blown out of my hand as it was released. MMM has a consultant working on the matter but, so far, even his expert knowledge of the trade has not produced a satisfactory explanation or cure. Drilling a 1/16 inch hole in the cap will cure it - but does that lead to other troubles? I believe these tanks should be slightly pressurised.

Let's see if ASOC comes up with an answer sooner than MMM!

Since MMM published Mr Tamplin's remarks about loose silencer baffles, it has become apparent that this is another common defect. Some owners have had replacements free of charge under warranty so, if yours are suspect, get it done before the expiry date!

Kind regards

John."

I was very glad to hear from our Honorary Auditor the other day and to learn also that he wants to come to Stratford, if he possibly can. Let's hope he makes it, despite being so "devilish old"! I thought his letter might bring back memories of what went wrong when you last took delivery of a brand new Auto-Sleeper - I know our first one had a missing waste water tank which resulted in a pool of water (fortunately fresh) on the showroom floor when the taps were demonstrated! Here's Howard's note:-

"The Editor (pro tem)
ASOC Newsletter.

It is always heartening to hear about the splendid service provided by motor-caravan suppliers to their customers (mainly through MMM sources), but perhaps our members might be interested in what may happen when dealing with even the largest of agents.

As one or two members know, I'm devilish old and no longer able to climb around and under my Frisky doing the odd jobs that even recent pensioners can do on their tod.

Two years ago I arrived at my supplier (not in Sussex) on the day that was supposed to be convenient for them.

Himself was away sick (?) and the stand-in courteous but somehow half-hearted. Not a good start for the aged couple.

Having done ten miles learning the ropes I was amazed, when I got to looking around, that the petrol gauge was in the red. (At least I received £10 later).

By an extraordinary coincidence I found the petrol tank keys in the ashtray just as I was approaching the first petrol station. They were tinkling in protest at being hidden away!

One of the tyre valve extensions was missing and the tickover allowed me to motor at 22mph on the flat.

When I tried out the water pump I found that there was a hole in the pipe from the tank made by the hose rubbing against the rear wheel - and the time is now coming, hopefully, when I shall want to use the water system!!

A ventilator fan to be fitted on special order and appearing on the sales note was not there in spite of the fact that Himself of A-S and Himself of (!) arranged it in my presence. I suppose one has to be philosophical (?)

On another subject for oldies - A year ago my insurance company loaded me 20% - this year it was 25% - and next year it will be 33 1/3% . On my 90th (some hopes!) there will be no comprehensive offered. But, at least, a premium of £732 still reduces to £259.20 with every deduction possible and for being a good boy. But my voluntary and imposed excess is not too clever!

Yours sincerely,

Howard Duart."

FOR SALE

FOR SALE

FOR SALE

FOR SALE

BEDFORD AUTO-SLEEPER UTOPIAN. X REG.

Automatic, 46,000 miles. Elevating roof. In excellent condition all round. Fully equipped and virtually ready to go on holiday - just add food! Gaz bottles, Barbecue, Porta Potti, Electric fire, Gas light and many other extras. £3,500 o.n.o. The elderly owner sadly has gone blind, he is at present in the USA and I am trying to sell it for him. Ron Wallis, 22 Wavertree Road, London SW2 3SP (081 674 1956)

TALISMAN DIESEL, MARCH 1992. Owned by non-smokers. As new. £23,500 o.n.o. Sheila Corah (1121) 0773 852 333 (Derby).

RENAULT TRAFIC 1986 D Reg RV50 2 litre Diesel Auto-Sleeper. Second battery, mains hook-up, M.O.T Oct '92, Warm air heating, swivel seat, silver screen, in as new condition, £9,995 OR Exchange for Legend or Talisman Preferably Diesel with cash adjustment. D. Huntingdon, 4 Gainsborough Road, Dronfield Woodhouse, Sheffield. S18 6QT (Dronfield 417159)

SILVER SCREEN to fit new shape Talbot, used once or twice and in perfect condition. £55.00 Mrs Brenda Evans, Rose Cottage, Slade Lane, Thornton Hough, Wirral L63 4JU

TO FIT 1990 RAMBLER - Silver Screen, £40 Double bed conversion £30. Ken Honeyborne, Tamworth (0827) 896871

TOURING KIT for BEDFORD C.F 2.3 1984. New and used parts. NEW: Camshaft drive belt, Fan belt, Clutch cables, Distributor cap (electronic), Front and rear wheel cylinder repair kits. Petrol pump. USED: Starter motor, Alternator, Distributor, (complete) C B Type, Master cylinder with servo unit. Haynes manual, Gauges and switches. Telephone Tony Turner on 021 454 7347 evenings.

1986 - D Registered AUTO-SLEEPER VOLKSWAGEN VHT. 4-Berth. 31,150 miles, Two Owners. Automatic Transmission, 1915cc Petrol. £10,000 o.n.o. Phone 0926 429645

V W TRIDENT High top Auto-Sleeper. F Reg, Jan 1989. Only extras are tow bar and Alarm. £11,999 o.n.o. Mr Baldwin, 146 Reservoir Road, Gloucester. (0452 303981)

WANTED. A NON-MEMBER is looking for a Diesel Talisman. Contact Mr & Mrs Bowler on 021 745 8369

WANTED. Clubman or SV100 about 1984 vintage. Reply to Mr & Mrs Kinsey, 0633 251 327 (Newport, Gwent).

REMINDER: Photographs for the Competition. Your photographs are urgently wanted and should be with Rita Daley by 20th July. The Target date has been brought forward because the Leisure Show at Earls' Court (and the A-S Magazine) is in October.

Technical Tailpiece. *Dennis Galloway* says:- "I have, quite recently, had my normally aspirated Diesel "Executive" converted to a turbo-charged version by T B Turbos of Lancaster. I am pleased with the result. We plan to be at Stratford and anyone interested could see the installation and discuss it." If Dennis lets us know where he pitches his van at Stratford we'll put a note on the Notice board in the Falstaff Bar to help you find him.

FERRY LATE NEWS: Contact the Secretary for Sealink Stena details and discounts. (Carol Bowler).

This has been great fun, for a change, but I really think Harry must get back to work for the August edition! See you at Stratford,

Your (temporary) Editor,
Phil Daley.

46 Ulverley Green Road SOLIHULL West Midlands B92 8BQ

021 706 1616

STOP PRESS. "We should like to thank all our friends in the Club who sent cards to celebrate our wedding. They were very much appreciated.

Sheila and Harry Henthorne."

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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.

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