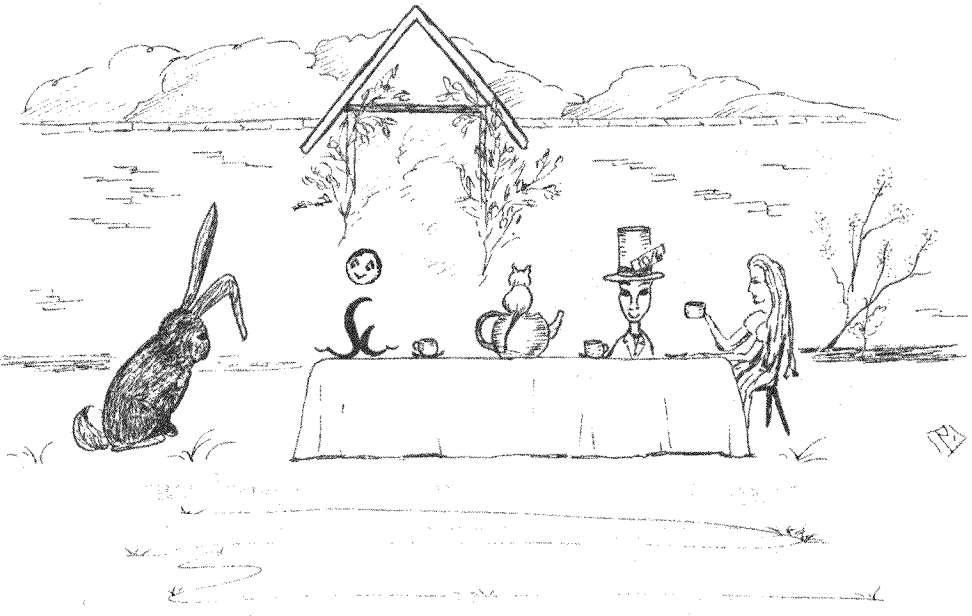


# **AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB**



**NEWSLETTER 54  
MARCH 1993**

Hello.

What were you doing during the windy weekend of January 22nd/23rd? *Sheila & I* went up to Leeds for a family celebration and stayed on a camp site just to the north of the city. It was there that we discovered that we were lacking certain essential items of equipment. We really ought to have had the type of steady jacks which one usually sees on the large crane lorries, the sort which swing out to the side for stability. Failing that, perhaps we should have drilled some largish holes in the top corners of the bodywork so that we could string solid guy ropes from there to 5 foot pegs stuck well into the ground. I suggest that the pegs should be five feet long because of the rather soggy condition of the ground - even without wheelspin we left marks in the ground when we moved the van and I think we even left footprints. Then, perhaps, we might have got a bit of sleep on the Saturday night in spite of the howling of the wind. As it was the van rocked - and rocked - AND ROCKED! To such a degree that we wondered whether it might turn over. Luckily for us, it stayed upright on four wheels but we were very glad when the morning came!

I wonder just what would cause the van to turn over? Obviously it is capable of swaying to quite an angle without danger but what is the critical angle? I know that buses have to pass a tilt test before they are allowed on the highways but I've never seen the same thing applied to vans.

I'm still not entirely convinced that the fir tree near to the toilet block was leaning at that angle when we arrived!!

-----ooo000ooo-----

## From Angela & Charles Trevelyan.

Dear Auto-Sleeper Enthusiasts,

I hope you will forgive this rather impersonal letter but both *Charles and I* have received so many kind letters and messages that we simply wanted to acknowledge each and every one as quickly as possible.

As you know, *Prudence* was born prematurely on 4 February. She really is an absolute dear and weighs only 1lb 6oz. She is currently in the Special Care Baby Unit at Southmead Hospital, Bristol and will remain in an incubator for at least the next two months. Understandably, we live by the hour, praying that she will survive and gradually get stronger and well enough for her to return home in early May.

Your kind thoughts have been so greatly appreciated by us both and by *Prudence* as well. We visit her daily and she has already established herself as a most courageous little girl with the most wonderful will to survive.

All we ask, therefore, is that you pray for her; she is in such excellent hands that we really feel that, with prayers from our many friends, she will survive and be well enough to come home in due course.

We will, of course, keep you posted of any developments and, once again, might I ask that you be so kind as to forgive this rather impersonal typed letter - I'm sure you will.

With love from us all,

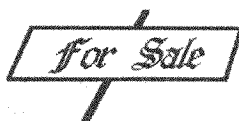
*Charles, Angela, Piers and Prudence.*

# # # # #

This letter was sent to our Chairman who, in turn, passed it to me for inclusion in the Newsletter.

I know that I speak for every Club Member in saying that there is nothing to forgive - we can fully understand the reasons for the so-called "impersonal" letter. Our prayers, thoughts and very best wishes go to *Prudence* and her family.

-----ooo000ooo-----



Talisman GL 1990. Petrol. 7,000 miles. Immaculate condition, no dogs, children or smokers. £17,950. Peter Shaw, Monks Lantern, Fairfield Close, Lymington, Hants, SO41 9NP or telephone 0590 673 392. [Somehow I omitted the price tag last month! Sorry, Peter.]

#####

Stainless Steel rear bumper for Legend (possibly same as Talisman but I'm not sure!) £45. 1 pair fold flat front seats & runners. Trimmed in Scilly (pink). Hardly used. No head restraints. Ex Legend but universal fitting. £75 ono. Please telephone Alan Chennells on 0628 664 132 in the EVENING ONLY. Or write to him at "Copper Beech", 9 Huntercombe Lane South, Taplow, Maidenhead, Berks., SL6 0PQ.

Talbot Harmony 1992 K-reg. 2,000 miles. 3 way fridge, cassette toilet, shower, charger, 2nd battery. Radio/cassette. Waste water tank. Immaculate. £18,000 ono. Telephone Walter Phillips on 0202 484 978 or write to him at 262 Fairmile Road, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 2LR.

#####

Eurovent 1992 Autochalet "Burg" side awning. New and never erected. £120. Telephone Effie Lund on 0732 871 546 or write to her at 1 Nevill Court, Town Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 6HZ.

Unfortunately she finds that it is impossible for her to use now so she is, with some regret, selling it.

#####

2 Brand new Dahon 3-speed folding bicycles with carrying bags. £265.00 each. Will separate. Write to John Allen at College Cottage, Martin, Nr. Fordingbridge, Hants. SP6 3LD or telephone him on 072 589 346.

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## January Wordsearch

Thank you to everyone who entered - some of the entries caused much amusement in the *Tidbury* household. *Nicola* declared she would not come camping in the van again if ANTS and BEES were allowed. We realise some people like to take plenty of food with them but to carry EWES, PIGS and HENS seems to be taking things a bit too far. We recommend you beware of the Chairman's van as he regularly carries his HAUL ((Burglars!) - his comment!) in his van. For those of you who like a tippie a visit either to the Chairman's or Newsletter Editor's vans should produce some HAIG.

Now to the serious part. A very high standard of entry was received but there was a clear winner (by ONE WORD!) and that was *Sheila and Harry Henthorne* who found 53 allowable words. I know that the Editor received the square for insertion in the Newsletter in mid-December but his solution arrived on my door-mat in the first week in January so he had it for less than a month which was the allowable time for entries. Thank you *Harry* for the multi-coloured entry. There was a draw for second place between *Alan Wilkes* (Memb.No.202) and our Chairman *Arthur Irving*. Congratulations to these three and all the rest of the entries. If you didn't win this time, have a go at the next wordsearch which, with any luck, *Harry* will find room for in this Newsletter. The 61 words that were allowed as being realistic to have in the van (i.e. I would allow them in my van!) were:

Accelerator  
AutoSleeper Club Badge  
Bed  
Can  
Cassette Toilet  
Curtains  
Drink  
Foil  
Fuel Tank  
Ice  
Light  
Mop  
Peg  
Plate  
Rag  
Servo  
Spoon  
Tap  
Tie  
Ventilator  
Wine Glass

Air  
Bag  
Blind  
Cap  
Cup  
Dashboard  
Egg  
Food  
Gas Bottle  
Key  
Man (!)  
Newsletter  
Pen  
Pillow  
Reel  
Shelf  
Steering Wheel  
Tea  
Tin Opener  
Water

Awning  
Bat  
Brake  
Carpet  
Cupboard  
Door  
Fat  
Fork  
Hubs  
Knife  
Map  
Oil  
Pie  
Plug  
Seat  
Silver Screen  
Table  
Teapot  
Tool  
Window

So a voucher for a free 2-night weekend with ASOC is on its way to *Harry & Sheila* and small consolation prizes to the two runners-up, *Alan* and *Arthur*

Now for the next **WORDSEARCH puzzle!**

**FOREIGN PLACES** (Towns or Countries) mentioned in **ANY** Newsletter in 1992. [Now I bet you wish you had a copy of the index - it won't necessarily list all of the places but it will show quite a few. Pause while I get inundated with requests? - Ed]

Please send a list of the places you can find to *Mrs. Heather Tidbury*, 26 Ferny Close, Radley, Abingdon, OX14 3AN by 1st April 1993.

Thanks, *Heather* for the voucher and for the new puzzle. But why wouldn't you allow the "DOOFR" which we found? We thought that every van ought to have one of these - it'll doofr this or doofr that! When we sent the puzzle answers in, it was not meant to be an entry as we didn't think that it was very fair because we had had the square before anyone else. We didn't realise that we sent the result in within the approved time!

-----ooo000ooo-----

J	E	R	S	E	Y	E	S	A	C	I	R	E	M	A	U	Q	A	X	N
B	O	L	A	M	T	S	E	L	Y	P	M	N	E	I	N	D	I	A	I
R	X	H	A	E	Y	D	U	R	B	A	N	I	H	K	F	E	R	P	O
P	Q	E	A	I	Z	S	T	H	E	L	I	E	R	A	I	O	O	N	R
F	L	A	I	N	E	B	X	I	N	E	O	H	P	V	U	A	T	S	T
O	O	U	X	S	N	Y	E	R	O	Q	U	E	F	O	R	T	E	I	A
H	I	C	P	N	I	E	U	W	V	L	I	E	T	L	B	E	R	R	A
N	U	K	A	X	E	A	S	A	E	I	E	R	B	S	E	L	P	A	N
E	W	L	R	I	J	N	S	B	E	R	G	O	A	O	N	E	T	P	O
K	M	A	I	N	E	W	X	E	U	A	I	Y	L	H	A	I	H	J	Y
U	X	N	S	E	U	E	C	N	A	R	F	A	B	C	E	R	A	A	R
E	Z	D	Y	G	A	A	V	E	N	E	G	N	O	E	Q	Y	I	P	U
K	O	N	I	G	S	H	O	F	Z	X	R	G	A	Z	P	E	L	A	S
N	M	A	E	U	X	Y	E	Y	A	D	N	E	H	C	A	R	A	N	E
N	E	U	O	R	P	D	N	A	L	A	E	Z	W	E	N	U	N	A	H
O	Z	Q	U	B	I	U	Y	I	C	E	L	A	N	D	D	K	D	U	C
J	E	R	S	E	Y	I	E	A	E	N	O	G	E	R	O	A	U	Q	O
U	X	Y	A	E	R	O	P	A	G	N	I	S	E	A	R	I	X	Z	R
A	A	R	I	Z	O	N	A	Q	E	L	L	I	V	T	R	E	B	L	A
S	U	O	I	E	L	C	R	I	C	C	I	T	C	R	A	A	E	O	L

This square contains many places **ABROAD** which were mentioned in any Newsletter in 1992. They may be towns or countries and, in the usual way, may be written horizontally (backwards or forwards), vertically (up or down) or diagonally.

The decider:- after you have found all the places - how many letters in the grid have not been used at all?

## Chairman's Chat

The Committee met at the end of January 1993, again in Birmingham, and amongst other things we discussed Club Regalia. I am pleased to say that *Steve Bowler*, the Regalia Officer, is keeping up with the standards set by his predecessors (*Dilys Stinchcombe and Wendy Fisher*) by searching for items that you would like to be included. He has listened to members at rallies, has been told of your requirements by *Kath Benyon and Rosemary Bevis*, the North and South Regalia Representatives and by taking notice of your answers to the recent Questionnaire. *Rosemary*, I am happy to note, is making good progress after her recent illness. *Steve* will have new items for you to see, and buy, at the AGM in April when we hope that the Club Shop will be in a larger room than last year to allow more people to get in and move around in comfort.

*Tony Jones*, our Rally Co-ordinator, told us that he had heard from a couple of members who hold Club equipment and thanks them for letting him know. BUT, does anyone else have any equipment and if so, please make his joy complete by telling him as soon as possible. He also would like to hear from members who would undertake Rally Marshalling. He can be contacted on 0793 763 032. Why not go to the rally at Honeybourne when *Barbara & Tony Jones* will be marshals and you can get practical advice from them?

During the meeting regular reference was made to the answers collated from the Questionnaire. These had an influence on our deliberations, especially in finalising the arrangements for the AGM rally and the interim arrangements for the Club and Company Rally in July. The Charity we would like to support this year will be decided at the next meeting - you gave us almost 50 charities by name! We shall have some Stalls, including a new one for books and magazines, so will you please keep those you were going to put in your local waste paper recycling container and bring them to Malvern to help the chosen Charity.

We hope to provide something for children attending the Club and Company Rally but this will depend on the support of members. The Questionnaire answers suggested (a) a supervised play area; (b) a get-together for children; and (c) educational walks. These need careful planning and, most importantly, volunteers to make the ideas work. Any offers, please?

With the February Newsletter you received a copy of the

proposed revisions to the Constitution and Rules and with this issue the official Notice of Meeting and the Agenda for the AGM. Next month you will receive the Committee Report. Please bring them ALL with you as it is not possible, due to the considerable expense, to have extra copies available at the AGM.

Finally, the Three Counties Showground will hold the Malvern Spring Garden Show from Friday 7th May until Sunday 9th May 1993. They have offered special rates for Caravanners for the three day show - 3 nights camping plus 2 x 3 day admission tickets to the show for £24.00. Special rates are also offered for additional tickets at £7.00 and additional nights at £4.00 per unit per night inclusive of VAT. Normal admission is £4.50 per day so the offer is a considerable saving. Interested members should contact The Cashier at the Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR13 6NW or telephone 0684 892 751 for further details and an application form.

*Arthur Irving."*

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***Sorry, Kath!***

We were sat in the lounge, having a laugh,  
When we got an irate phone call from Kath  
Nearly everyone's mentioned there in your rhyme  
Except for me", she said, "Didn't you have time?"  
So please, please, dear Ed., please mention her name  
or Norman's life will not be the same!  
There's Olive and Bryan and Beryl and Jim  
(Whatever you do, DON'T forget him!)  
And also, Tiger, Guy and Sally  
(They never miss an A.S.O.C. rally)  
That's nearly everyone, except for mi sen (myself)  
And I never did get that tea-bag from Ben!

*Pam & Mick Robinson."*

I'm glad to include this poetic version  
of what might be listed as "One Missing Person"  
And all must recall, if you're writing a verse  
that you must omit nothing, you mustn't be terse!  
(or else you'll get phone calls or  
SOMETHING MUCH WORSE!

-----ooo000ooo-----

I have been advised that *Don Kensey* has been ill recently but is now gradually recovering. I'm sure that I speak for everybody in the Club when I send him our very best wishes. Looking forward to seeing you, *Don*, when you can get to a rally - the AGM perhaps?

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My sister and I joined ASOC last year and had a very good first year's rallying. We attended 12 and enjoyed them very much. This year some friends have asked us if we'd like to join them in their villa in Spain but we find this quite daunting as we've never driven abroad before. *Steve Bowler*, whom we rang about the ferries, suggested that I write to ask for a couple of points to be printed so that members might be able to help.

Our plan is to cross from Southampton to Cherbourg so any tips on driving through France would be appreciated. We should then drive into Spain, to Orba which is on the Costa Blanca. Our main problem with this section of the journey is that we have read that Spain does not have any UN-LEADED petrol. Does anyone know if this is correct? If it is available, where can we get it? Our VW handbook indicates that we can do harm to our engine if we use the leaded petrol.

Basically, we need all the help we can get; we have written to the Caravan Club and the RAC regarding routes, insurance etc.

*Jackie Cooley."*

I'm sure that one of our tame geniuses out there will be able to telephone *Jackie* on 0323 892 220 or write to her at 26 Hurdis Road, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 2SP with suitable advice. See the response mentioned in the next item!

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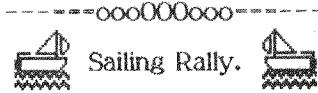
## Thanks

Please will you find space for the following in the next magazine. *Colin and I* wish to thank all who responded to our request for help for our Dutch trip. We have had quite a few phone calls plus a very helpful letter from our Chairman.

We have now picked our ferry route and our camp site (Gaasper) and booking is in hand. We are looking forward to our first trip to Holland in April now that it is all settled. Thank you all again.

*Jackie Boltwood."*

That's what our Club is all about - helping each other with the knowledge that we have gained. I'll bet that if there was a way to drain the brain of every member of the accumulated knowledge about foreign countries, camping etc., we could write a very large encyclopaedia!



"Just a brief note to advise members that there will be NO 'Barge Sailing Rally'. Only three couples have registered interest and even with this small number finding a mutually suited weekend free from other commitments for all parties has proved impossible. I shall, of course, write to those members who have been in touch.

*Jock Hammond."*

What a pity! This would have been a very novel rally and I was looking forward to printing a report on it. Never mind. Perhaps 1994?



*Peter Fisher* has sent in some details which may be of great interest to some members. "We had to get two new mirrors before the MOT on our Talisman. But at £60 - £70 each they seemed rather expensive. However an article from an old magazine put us on to: B.C.A. Leisure Ltd., Unit 7E, Westfield Mill, Mytholmroyd, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire, HX7 8SH. Their prices for Talbot/Fiat truck style mirrors - "D" shaped arms - are: Lens only, £6.12 including VAT; Mirror head complete £13.09 including VAT. Post and packing is £4.00 for either.

At these prices I would think that most owners would be well advised to get one as a spare."

I certainly agree with the idea of a spare mirror - head or glass. Having had one smashed off the Bedford we used to have by a Transit van which went past closely and very quickly, I know what it is like trying to find a replacement, especially when you are in the middle of your holiday. Thanks, *Pete*, for a very worthwhile address.

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

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1993

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**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 14 days before the rally. Last minute arrivals are still accepted but it does help the Marshal to organise the plaques, to advise the site of the numbers coming and to have everything prepared. So the motto is EARLY BOOKING PLEASE, IF POSSIBLE!**

---

19th-21st March. Merley Court, WIMBORNE, Dorset. **Limit 40 vans.**

Fees: £4 per night. Rally fee £1.50.

Bookings to: Mr A. Jones, 49 Wessex Way, Highworth, Swindon, SN6 7NT. Tel: 0793 763 032.

Directions: Site off roundabout at junction of A.31 and A.349 south of Wimborne.

Clubroom on site, meals available. Electricity available at extra charge.

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19th-21st March. Fell End Caravan Park, HALE, Cumbria. **BOOKING ESSENTIAL for this rally due to 40 van limit.**

Fees: £10.88 for unit and 2 persons for weekend plus £1.85 per person if Fish & Chips required on Friday evening. Rally Fee £1.50.

Bookings to: Mr G. Wane, 2 Plantation Avenue, Arnside, Cumbria, LA5 0HT. Tel: 0524 761 657.

Directions: Signposted off A.6 half a mile south of Hale.

Hardstandings with electrics (at extra charge) at all pitches. Hall on site (heated) for social activities Friday & Saturday evenings and Sunday morning. Extended stay by arrangement with site owners.

---

2nd-4th April. Ranch Caravan Park, HONEYBOURNE, Evesham, Hereford & Worcs.

Fees: £4.00 per night. Rally fee £1.50.

Bookings to: Mr.A. Jones, 49 Wessex Way, Highworth, Swindon, SN6 7NT. Tel: 0793 763 032

Directions: Site entrance by railway bridge North side of Honeybourne on Broadway to Bidford-on-Avon road.

Clubroom on site, meals available. Some electric hook-ups at extra charge.

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9th-12th April (Easter). Dunchurch, Near Rugby

Fees and Bookings: See details in February Newsletter.

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**16th-18th April. Annual General Meeting. Wicksteed Park, KETTERING**

**Please note that the venue is Kettering and not as originally announced.**

For full details see separate booking form sent with January Newsletter.

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See Newsletter for extra rally 30th April - 3rd May.

AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB

Send one of these slips to the Marshal named at least 14 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

\*\*\*\*\*

A.S.O.C. R A L L Y S L I P

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

Your full Name and address.....

.....

.....

Membership No.....Telephone Number.....

Day/Time of arrival..... Van No.....

Is this your first ASOC rally? Please tick box: Yes  No

No.of people in your van? Adults  Children

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

A.S.O.C. R A L L Y S L I P

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

Your full Name and address.....

.....

.....

Membership No.....Telephone Number.....

Day/Time of arrival..... Van No.....

Is this your first ASOC rally? Please tick box: Yes  No

No.of people in your van? Adults  Children

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

BLOCK CAPITALS, PLEASE

Requirements - Please note that these may NOT be available at all rallies. Your request for them will NOT necessarily mean that you will be provided with them

Electricity: Yes  No  Saturday night meal: Yes  No

Have you any special needs? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ If 'Yes' please detail what they are:.....

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tel.No. \_\_\_\_\_

Payment MUST accompany this slip - cheques payable to the Marshal by Name, please.

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BLOCK CAPITALS, PLEASE

Requirements - Please note that these may NOT be available at all rallies. Your request for them will NOT necessarily mean that you will be provided with them

Electricity: Yes  No  Saturday night meal: Yes  No

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tel.No. \_\_\_\_\_

Payment MUST accompany this slip - cheques payable to the Marshal by Name, please.

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## Trooping in America - Part 7

The estimate for transporting the Trooper back to Liverpool from Portsmouth, Virginia awaited our arrival in Tennessee. The quote of \$1,100 shipping plus \$530 for insurance was accepted and paid by travellers cheques (\$1.89/£1). Mrs Montgomery of Manaco Forwarders requested that we fax her both sides of the DVLC Log Book as proof of ownership; we did this at a cost of \$4 at the local library. The shipping papers were received at our next hotel stop and contained the agent's name and telephone number to where we were to deliver the van.

An invitation to address the business-jet pilots in St. Louis, Missouri, brought us three splendid days in that wonderful city. We visited the old Cathedral and Courthouse, the "Largest Brewery in the World" (where the range of Budweiser beers comes from), the restored Union Station with its hotel, shops, restaurants replacing the busiest rail centre in America. Finally we rode on the little train inside the structure of the Gateway Arch to the observation deck 630 feet above street level. The Museum underneath the Arch traces the route of Lewis and Clark who set out from St. Louis in 1803 to map the route of the Mississippi and Columbia rivers to the Pacific Ocean.

From St. Louis we continued East through the quickly turning autumn leaves showing breathtaking colours as we approached the Appalachian Mountains. We missed a meeting with friends in Ohio and arrived after dark at an unattended, remote and deserted KOA camp site south of Canton. With only a couple of distant campers in sight it was the only time we felt a little insecure and we were pleased to be on our way next morning.

Our drive to Charleston, West Virginia, down the I. 77 was in heavy rain and a "Motel 6" and "Bob Evans" restaurant were welcome sights. Next morning we continued on I. 64 through the mountains in clearing weather and with the autumn leaves on the heavily wooded hills overwhelming our senses. We made a quick detour to Glasgow and snapped the Baptist Church and the Volunteer Fire Brigade House before continuing to Charlottesville. Here amid the forest we enjoyed the company of our fellow travellers around the Saturday night camp fire.

Our last KOA night was at Williamsburg where the early English settlers made their new homes in 1607. Much has been preserved or re-created in the Colonial Town. The site of the first English landing in 1603 is at nearby Jamestown.

*Jenny & Peter Berry."*

# Royan Rally - 1993

Here is a little update on this rally. We are delighted to report that there are 34 confirmed bookings for this rally. Some people have, very kindly, expressed their regret that they cannot go. The three proposed coach trips will be taking place.

Some people have asked for some help in planning, navigating, or would just like a little moral support for their first drive in a foreign country. We will be contacting these and their potential helpers during the next month in order to enable arrangements to be made.

At the Kettering (AGM) rally we will hold a Royan Rally meeting so that faces can be put to names and any ideas or worries can be discussed. The day & time will be shown on the Club notice board.

Any further members who are interested in coming to Royan must contact us very soon, please, so that we can send the information pack and ensure there is a pitch for you.

*Carol & Steve Bowler."*

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## D R A U G H T S

I am writing in the hope that this letter may be published and, hopefully, some of our members may be able to help with a problem we have with our Talbot Talisman 2.5 TD. Since purchase in November 1992 we have been dogged by faults; if not Auto-Sleeper then Talbot faults - still ongoing.

However, the problem now is with the Talbot body. Has any member been troubled by a draught, (yes, another one), coming from between the end of the dashboard and the driver's door pillar and circulating up onto the driver's windscreen? This draught is very bad and a real pain in the neck!! The garage has sealed all visible holes under the bonnet and checked the driver's door seal but the problem still exists.

Perhaps if any member has come across this problem they would be kind enough to write to me at 27 Middleway Avenue, Wordsley, Stourbridge, West Midlands, DY8 5NB or telephone me on 0384 279 897. ANY advice on how to effect a cure will be greatly appreciated.

*Don Kensey."*

We have had something similar in a previous van, not a Talbot, and discovered that there is a thicker door seal made by the Sellotape people. This is just like the normal door sealing strip you can get in a DIY place but is about half an inch square for the metricated equivalent!). Because of the extra thickness this really seemed to work. (Also useful if you have problems with a fridge or freezer seal at home!) Come along, now, let *Don* know how to cure this, please. I'm sure somebody will know the answer.

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## *The Club*

From time to time there is some heart-searching as to the function of the Club. No doubt that it means different things to different members. Some enjoy meeting one another regularly at rallies. For my own part I may one day join them when I can plan my time sufficiently far ahead to be able to book.

That said, whether we rally regularly or not, we join the Club for mutual support in a common interest. At present I am conscious of benefiting more than contributing. It is just a year ago that *Barry Crawshaw's* contribution to the Newsletter galvanised me into action. I had contemplated the purchase of some P&O shares for some time. It proved an opportune moment. The shares stood at 100p; they are currently trading at 130p.

Having gained £180 in a year for my modest subscription I need to build up some credit among my fellow members. As there has been some interest in solar panels, in which I have a little experience, I am happy to pass on a few observations.

I bought a BP Solar Panel about four years ago and installed it on the roof of my Gl\*nd\*l\*, transferring it to my Talisman two summers ago. It charges the battery in normal daylight at 1-2 amperes. Surprisingly, it seems to provide some output under the roof of my 'car' port. It has meant that I now plug into the mains only from October to March when additional heating is welcome. The greatest benefit has been felt on French camp sites where pitches have been chosen for the view rather than proximity to facilities. Under these conditions the battery would retain charge for as long as one wished to stay.

One further point raised in recent Newsletters concerned the firmness of bedding. If anyone has this problem and lives near (or is passing) and IKEA store then examine their mattress overlays. They are available in three qualities. We find the standard one perfectly adequate.

Finally, some other organisations produce their Newsletters or house journals eight, nine, ten times per year instead of monthly. This gives the editorial teams a well-earned break. Maybe we should follow them. Thanks for your work.

*John Scott .*

First of all, *John*, although the Club asks members to book for rallies to help the marshals, it is NOT essential unless there is a limit to the number of vans which may attend. You can, and some members do, find that you have the time to come along at the last moment so you can turn up without booking and you will be very welcome. As a matter of interest, the rally that *Sheila and I* ran at the Midland Railway Trust last year and the year before produced not only two or three of our members who hadn't booked but also a couple of new members who joined as temporary members to try us out. So do come along, even if you only discover on Friday at 5 pm that you have Saturday and Sunday free. There's a rally close to you in early October this year!

I'm pleased to learn that you have profited from membership and thanks for the information on the solar panels. It is nice to learn from someone who has had experience, rather than listening to the guff produced by the salesman.

So far as the production of the Newsletter is concerned we are fortunate in that the printers (otherwise known as *Rita & Phil Daley*) are happy to produce it every month. And I'm quite content to carry on for the time being with the monthly issue. Don't forget that it is really up to the members as to how often it comes out. While they keep sending in items of interest, stories, poems, what-have-you, it is very easy to keep it monthly. I know of other publications which appear less frequently but in some of those (including one I receive every three or four months) it is obvious that the membership makes very little contribution and the poor editor is left scratching around trying to find items of general interest. Naturally, some of the things which get printed are of little or no interest to me, but I do sympathize with the Editor. Also it is noticeable that when there is a paid staff, there is a need to provide holidays and it is sometimes better to send the lot off for one month and skip publication. The committee of this Club, being all volunteers (no, we didn't twist too many arms!), don't need paid holidays! One or two members have appeared to be upset when one or other of the committee has not been available on the telephone when they rang - it seems that they felt that we ought to be available 24 hours per day! But some of our committee still have full-time employment and so put in quite a lot of work in the evenings and at weekends

to keep the Club running. None of us seek praise but while we have members such as yourself who so obviously appreciate what we are doing we feel that it is well worth while continuing.

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## **AN URGENT PLEA!**

Will you PLEASE make sure that your cheques in payment for the AGM rally are made payable to:

### **AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB**

and **NOT** directly to any one person. this is different from the usual routines for ordinary rallies but it **IS** necessary in this case. Cheques made payable to an individual are likely to be returned, causing additional work and delay in bookings.

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## **An Additional Rally**

*John Greenwood* will be running an additional rally this year. As the notice is rather short, you are advised to telephone him to book your place **BEFORE THE END OF MARCH**. There is a limit of **12 VANS ONLY** for this rally because the site is small. Booking is absolutely necessary so that arrangements can be finalised with the site as soon as possible. Rally details are:

30th April - 3rd May. High Beech C.S, Roughlee, Nelson, Nr. Burnley, Lancs.

Bookings to: Mr. J. Greenwood, 55 Park Avenue, Mynydd Isa, Mold, Clwyd, CH7 6XR. Telephone: 0244 548 882.

Fees: £7.00 per night inclusive of electricity. Rally fee £1.50.

**Limit of 12 vans only** for this rally and bookings **MUST** be made to John by the end of March - so telephone NOW!

Directions: Leave M. 65 at junction 13. Follow A. 682 (signpost shows Kendal, but if your reach Kendal you've gone 82 miles too far!!). In about 1 mile turn left in Barrowford at White Bear Inn (s.p. Roughlee). Go up (and down) a very steep hill (1 in 4) and cross river by bridge then turn left. Take immediate right turn up hill to site.

There are the usual facilities on the site (free), a local pub and lovely views **BUT** shops are 1 1/2 miles away!

🚢 STENA SEALINK 🚢

Thank you for the bookings already forwarded to us. I am awaiting replies to some queries regarding OAP discounts and whether Compass Points can be used against the Club rates. Our fares are apparently better than some of the P&O crossings with a 40% shareholder discount, so it is worth comparing before booking.

*Carol Bowler .*

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**"Poss. Sheep on Site"**

How often do we see this in the description of a CL? I always used to ignore it; sheep cannot be a nuisance, or can they?

We go up to North Wales for the New Year and stay on a convenient CL near our Daughter's house. This year the 185 miles drive was in those typically winter conditions of poor visibility and recently salted roads. The van was almost white at the end of it.

We went out on the Saturday afternoon and returned to find a flock of sheep on the site. They greeted us enthusiastically; never had they seen such a huge mobile salt lick! They really enjoyed themselves for the next couple of hours, until well after dark. As we listened to their rasping tongues at work we wondered about our paintwork, half expecting to see acres of bare metal the next morning.

When we surfaced the next day the sheep were already on their way to market, a good batch of well salted Welsh lamb. They had removed most of the salt up as far as they could reach and left the van with a camouflage mixture of salt, mud and clean paint. The fibre glass tape I had wrapped round the exhaust stub, and bonded with Hammerite to prevent rust, had been removed to expose acres of rust! I had put a piece of aluminium foil over the right hand side of the radiator to help the engine to warm up more quickly. This had been licked across to the left side. Had I left it there, covering the part in front of the fan, warming up might have been even more rapid, so I removed it.

I also found that the water level indicator showed "FULL" even though I knew it was empty. "Oh, dear." Problems. I wrote to A-S for advice. Next day I had a poke around with a view to seeing how the water tank could be removed to get at the sender for the indicator. In the course of my fiddles I found there was a junction in the wires, connected by a terminal block. I tried to undo it but

the screws were seized up. I cut it out and remade the join with a new terminal block. I idly tested the indicator and it worked! Later I realised that the salt spraying of the van had produced a nice saline solution which had crept into the junction and shorted the circuit. Next day I had a most helpful letter from *Charles Trevelyan* to the effect that there must be a short in the system, and giving details of how to explore the problem. I wrote to say that I had now sorted it out, and was surprised to get another letter from him expressing his pleasure at the outcome, and assuring me that he would be glad to help in any other future problems. What a lovely firm to deal with.

*Nial Reynolds.*

So often we hear of the help given by "Them down there at The Orchard" - of whatever level they may be. It is nice to know that there are still some manufacturers left in the land who can manage to turn their customers into friends!

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### ☞ ***Springs - Again!*** ☞

On my 1989 Talbot Rambler, after seven thousand miles, the vehicle developed a squeak from the back springs. After a number of visits to the agent without success, I asked my son, who is a commercial vehicle mechanic, if he could do anything to cure the problem without impairing the warranty.

So far the cure has lasted nearly two years (and twelve thousand miles) and is still working. The cure is:- One aerosol can of Uni-Lube (Ozone friendly). This is a chain and cable lubricant which you can get from motorcycle dealers.

Jack up one side of the vehicle until the rear wheel is about four inches clear of the ground, or until gaps can be seen between the leaves of the springs. Now, with the thin plastic tube attached to the nozzle of the spray can, inject the lubricant between the leaves. When the job is complete, wipe the surplus grease along the sides of the spring. This adds more protection to the spring. Repeat on the other side of the vehicle.

The lubricant is manufactured by Unicorn Chemicals of Blackpool.

*Alan Lovett.*

Thank you, *Alan*, for such a simple solution. Isn't it amazing how our members can find the answers to problems which completely fox the various agencies?

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### *Round-the-World, Scotland, Oil and Ferries!!*

I feel apologies are in order but I can't quite decide whether it's for not having contributed anything to the Newsletter for some months or for starting up again!

In October *Rita & I* flew to London, flew on to Los Angeles, spent a week or so up in the hills, then flew on to Auckland where we picked up a motor caravan (strong people, these *Daleys*!) for a three-week tour round New Zealand. We flew from Christchurch to Brisbane for a brief stop-over and on to Cairns. Having thoroughly enjoyed the Reef and the Rain Forest, we hopped a Jumbo to Sydney which turned out to be very much nicer than we had expected. Then another Boeing 747-400 to Perth, a lovely little city with so much to see, not only in Perth itself but to the South and North and even to the parched land to the East. On to Denpasar, Bali which was hot, humid and luxurious (the last applied to the hotels, not the villages). Singapore was a very pleasant surprise; extraordinarily neat and tidy for such a large city. My reason for mentioning all that, apart from the desire to show off, was to let members who are seriously interested know that we can let them have more information on any part of our trip. The address is 46 Ulverley Green Road, Solihull, West Midlands, B92 8BQ.

Running through the Questionnaires that most, almost all, new members fill in, I noticed some remarks about rallies which ended "What's wrong with Scotland?" *Barbara & Jeff Worley* ran a "Running Rally" a couple of years ago which went all round the edge, West, North and East. Participants suffered from unusually wet weather but that could have happened almost anywhere in these nice green islands. Apart from that we haven't seen any rallies in Scotland, which is a pity, but we couldn't even manage to raise a marshal for the Motor Caravan Show in Edinburgh so perhaps the idea lacks appeal. I'm sure that our Rally Co-ordinator, *Tony Jones*, would give his backing to anyone wishing to run a rally in Scotland, or anywhere else for that matter. If you know of a site you think would suite, know a member who would do the small amount of organising required or feel that you could do it yourself with a little help from your friends (fellow Club members, of course!), put pen to paper. We have members all over Scotland, 26 as at mid-February, and I have long felt that something should be done to improve their

social contact with each other and with other members. However (excuses, excuses!) it IS a long way from Solihull.

I noticed the other day that one of the major oil companies is providing a phone number for motorists who have used engine oil for disposal and nowhere to go, they think. Shell UK Oil, in the person of Steve Beckett, has written to every local authority in the UK in order to compile a list of safe disposal sites. Every pack of Shell Helix oil carries the Freephone number which you can ring to obtain directions to the nearest waste oil disposal point. This is aimed at reducing the environmental threat posed by the illegal dumping of 40,000 tonnes (staggering, isn't it?) of waste motor oil each year. The article continues:- "DIY car maintenance enthusiasts are not only breaking the law but poisoning the environment every time they pour old oil down the drain, bury it in the garden or burn it. If used oil is poured down the drain the chances are that it will end up in a watercourse where it can upset the natural ecosystem, damaging birds, mammals and insects with the ultimate potential for polluting drinking water sources. Burying it in the garden is no better. It is poisonous to earthworms and other soil invertebrates and its toxic components can persist long after the oil has broken down. Oil can also seep into ground water. Burning used oil is no solution either because it can release heavy metals such as lead and zinc into the atmosphere as well as being a source of considerable local nuisance." Thought you'd like to know.

You will probably be aware already that P&O European Ferries are starting a new ferry service on Wednesday, April 28th. This will operate between Portsmouth and Bilbao (Northern Spain) twice a week by the big (37,500 tonnes) *Pride of Bilbao*. Return fare for a *Talisman & Two* (any Auto-Sleeper over 1.83m high come to that) works out at £490 in the first part of May, going up to £534 for passages up to 27th June. If you are going to the "Royan Rally" you could take the one-way trip on Wednesday, 19th May for £249.00 and drive back; three crossings later in May would set you back an extra £20.00.... The number to ring for more information is 0304 240 077 - or your favourite travel agent! I still prefer to cross by one of the short sea routes, perhaps taking advantage of the massive Club discount on the Stena Sealing Line.

*Phil Daley.*

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Thanks, *Phil* for a valuable contribution. I'm sure that many members will appreciate the news about the disposal of waste oil. It is still surprising how many garage runways there are about today which have gravel between two concrete strips, or a gravel square inset, so that oil leaking from the sump can 'run away harmlessly' (as I have heard it described). But it is much better if it can go into a

proper facility so that it, like many other things today, can be recycled.

And the details about your round the world trip will be appreciated by many, I'm sure, who would like to follow in your footsteps.

I suppose the reason that we don't have many offers of rallies in Scotland is because the distances involved can be so great. Us southerners would find it a bit difficult for a weekend (can't get the Clubman onto Concorde) and, once up around the Great Glen, there seems to be a lack of roads. Years ago, when I needed a replacement dynamo for an earlier Bedford I was told that the nearest dealer was in Inverness. as we were in Fort William at the time --- ! 60 miles or so seemed a mite too far!

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And once again, space has run out so I will shut up for the time being. I was beginning to think that I was running out of items for inclusion in the Newsletter but, just as I was getting desperate, some more items arrived. I now have a couple of things on the spike in readiness for the next issue. So till then, it is Cheerio from him! (Who?) (Oh, him!!!)

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