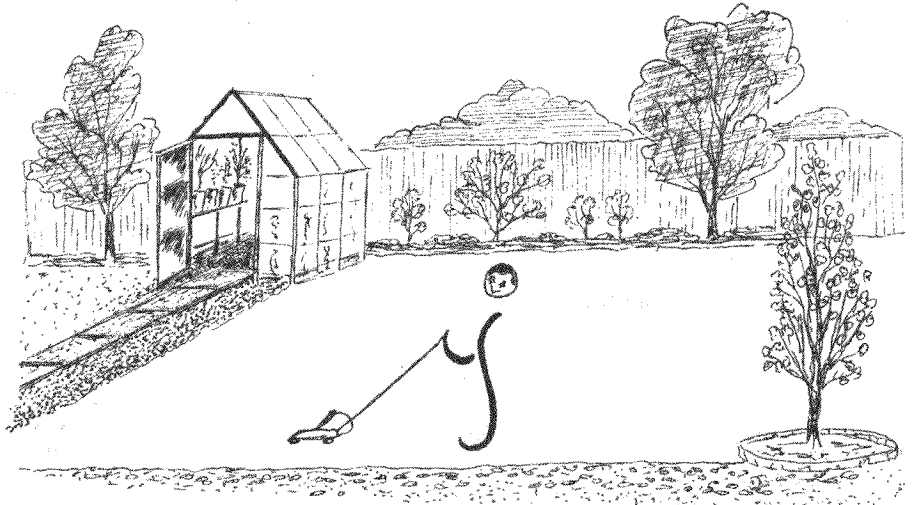


AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB



**NEWSLETTER 56
MAY 1993**

Hello.

We had a jolly good time at the rally at Wicksteed Park in spite of the AGM! Seriously though, this event is getting better all the time. Many members particularly liked the Annual Dinner and thoroughly enjoyed the feast that was set before us. Perhaps we should suggest in future that this is the Annual Dinner Rally and pop the AGM in as a bit of an afterthought - you don't have to attend! The weather was kind to us this year, just a couple of short showers which didn't really dampen anybody's spirits.

The revised Constitution was accepted and is now in force so we are set for another few years. No doubt as we progress we may see the need for other changes but I am sure that the sub-committee who prepared it together with the members who suggested further amendments to that proposal, are to be congratulated on their efforts to keep the Club on the straight and narrow. Our Treasurer assures us that we are on the right side of the taxman now - always a good thing - and that there is no need to increase the subs at present. Unlike a number of other clubs, we seem to be competent at our housekeeping and keeping the costs down!

It was good to meet so many old - sorry, long-standing (none of them are old - at least not in spirit.) - friends, and to make some new ones too. I managed to speak to some new members who were attending their first rally. They must have been a bit overwhelmed by all that was going on but they appeared to be enjoying themselves. They mentioned how friendly everyone had been to them and agreed with me when I suggested that although they might have arrived as strangers they would have upwards of 300 new friends by the time they left - even if they hadn't met them all!

The proceeds of the raffle this year, amounting to £325.00, was donated by the Club to the Special Care Baby Unit at the Southmead Hospital, Bristol where *Angela and Charles Trevelyan's* baby daughter lived and died. The cheque was presented to *Angela* after the Salvation Army service on Sunday morning.

For those of you who couldn't or didn't attend I must advise you that we had a most excellent cabaret act during the Saturday evening. The Ladies Chorale of the A.S.O.C. entertained us with a song, to the tune of "I am sailing". If you weren't there; if you were there and couldn't hear properly or if you were there and couldn't understand them here are the words sung to that tune:

We are members of Auto-Sleepers
And our outfits we treasure dear
When we Rally,, how we Rally
With our friends from far and near.

Summer, Autumn, Christmas, New Year
We enjoy it, never fear
In all weather we're together
Hope to do so for many a year.

At the end of the song I am advised that our President, *Charles Trevelyan*, was near to tears. I'm still not quite sure whether he was moved by the song or if it was just laughter which caused the tears! (Pause, please, while I find somewhere to hide from the ladies!)

While talking to *Charles* during the weekend I discovered a couple of very interesting things. First of all you will be as pleased as we all were to learn that in spite of the fire at the factory no jobs have been lost and indeed all employees were on the full pay which they earned in the week prior to the fire during the entire period of reorganisation. *Charles* also mentioned some "Exciting New Models" but wouldn't go into details of course. [Could they be blondes one asks? And gets kicked in the shins for such a remark too!] The factory is still on course to achieve the coveted BS 5750 for which they have been working. He also mentioned that they hope to hold an open day, possibly in connection with a Club rally, sometime "in the foreseeable future". I rather guess that it would not occur before 1994 seeing how traumatic 1993 has been for them. So you will have to watch very carefully for news of this event which has been eagerly sought by so many members. Keep a booking form ready for when the news arrives on your doormat - I wonder where there is a site big enough to take about 1,000 vans for a weekend which is within easy reach of the factory!

On the subject, generally, of rallies your committee was asked during the Open Forum after the AGM if we would reiterate the rules about the use of generators. The standard rule is that these should NOT be used after 10 o'clock at night nor before seven in the morning UNLESS the need is medical and necessary. (Medical does not include watching Doctor Kildare on the television at midnight!). Neither should they be used in such a way as to offend other users of the site. For most of us the situation doesn't arise because (a) we have second batteries which will last us for the weekend and (b) we are not that addicted to the T.V. But it has happened, as I'm sure you all know, that some unthinking person has kept a generator going when all the other campers only wanted peace and quiet. So

please, don't let our Club be responsible for any nuisance. We already have a good reputation that when we leave a site there is nothing to show that we have been there.

I was amused by a "Newsletter" (and I use the term with apologies) which I received from another club. It seems to consist almost entirely of a list of the officers, a few items for sale, and reports that "We had a meet at so-and-so; those present were blah, blah and blah" followed by the same news of other meets repeated ad nauseam! If this Club's Newsletter ever descends to that level, will you please shoot the Editor!

Just after I had sent last month's Newsletter off to the *Daleys*, I had a telephone call from *Carol Grey* to advise me that *Allen* had died after a stroke. Our condolences go to *Carol* in her loss. I had spoken to *Allen* after receiving the letter which I published last month and he was enthusiastic about the idea that he might soon be able to receive the Newsletter although he was no longer the owner of an A-S. We have lost a good friend.

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Fell End Rally

I am not one for writing letters normally but this is one that I just had to write. I would like to thank all our ASOC friends that were at Fell End Rally for all their kind thoughts and enquiries. *Margaret* just couldn't get over the number of phone calls. *Daisy & George /Wane/* must have thought that they had come out of retirement and had opened a telephone exchange!

I am sorry I did not get time to chat to you all before being taken ill during the early hours of Saturday when a doctor was called and he sent me to Lancaster Hospital by ambulance.

At any other site *Margaret* would have been stranded with two dogs as she doesn't drive. I cannot mention any names other than *Daisy & George* who treated us as their own family and also rearranged their whole week for us. *Margaret* had nothing to do as everything was arranged for her from having our van moved to their drive to a taxi service for visiting the hospital. She also had invites of coffee mornings and afternoon tea from other members and friends living in the area.

The friends who offered to drive the van back to Newcastle on Tyne came from as far as apart as Cumbria to Devon. Friends in Shropshire, who both drive, said they would take the van home on their way back - 200 miles plus out of their way! We are grateful

to the site owner who also offered his help.

I fell while I was in the van and broke a very important bit of furniture (The Toilet!) but it was mended as soon as *Margaret* mentioned it.

You can see why I have not mentioned anyone by name. We have had to cancel the next two or three rallies and let the wheels cool down but I'm on the mend and will be pleased to see you all in the near future.

Many thanks to you all once again.

Brent & Margaret Harrison ."

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THE MILK-TRAY MAN'

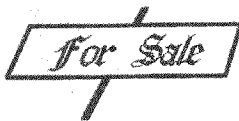
As we awoke on Sunday morn
The sun was shining bright
And *Norman* pointed to our cab
Oh! What a lovely sight.
A pale pink orchid nestled there
It was wrapped up very tight.
The card said "From the Milk Tray Man"
Had he come in the dead of night?
For I heard not a sound as I lay asleep
From his footsteps soft and light.
Twelve damsels he had called upon
And I hope he won't take fright
Should we return his sentiment
And kiss him with delight.

(To collect your reward come for tea.)

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Two views of the same rally and I think that together they say what this Club of our is all about. Will the person due to collect the reward offered, please form an orderly queue!

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VW Trident, 1992. Under 7,000 miles. Condition as new. Change of plans forces sale. £14,500. Please ring J. Martin (known as Toby) on 0273 818 102 or write to him at 3 Mariners Quay, Brighton Marina, Brighton, Sussex, BN2 5UZ.

Rambler GL, first registered 13 February 1993. Only 600 miles, never being used for camping, just being run in. 2nd battery, waste tank, radio/cassette fitted. Quick sale required, hence £17,500. Telephone Idwal Williams on 0745 856 424 or write to him at 85 Gronant Road, Prestatyn, Clwyd, LL19 9NA. Idwal assures me that when circumstances have been sorted out, which should be fairly soon, he will be buying another A-S.

Four 15 inch silver wheel trims of the type fitted to the VW Trident T4 - £20. Please telephone Roy Raeburn on 081 836 0941 or write to him at 8 The Close, Southgate, London, N14 6DN if you would like these trims.

Private Sale. A-S VW Poptop 2 litre petrol 1982. Usual Auto-Sleeper fittings plus Stereo, Bike rack, Bull Bar, Second Battery and many more extras. Kept in heated garage only. 33,000 miles. Full history. If you view you will definitely purchase at £6,500.00. Interested? contact Clive Denton on 0703 224 621 or write to 34 Charles Knott Gardens, Hulse Road, Southampton, SO1 2TF.

Clive sent a donation to Club funds which is appreciated.

Morack Bike Rack to fit Talisman. Takes 2 bikes and incorporates rear bumper. Simple four bolt fitting to chassis - NOT through bodywork. Cost £178 - will accept £75. Telephone Alan Wheeler on 0892 525 807 or write to 38 Bounds Oak Way, Southborough, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 0TN.

[This should have been in the April Newsletter but space prevented it - Ed.]

1979 Honda "Chaly" CF70 small-wheeled motor cycle. dual seat. 2,600 miles only. Immaculate, as new. £195.00 including helmet. Ring Alan Beckley on 0242 238 281 or write to 29 Piccadilly Way, Prestbury, Cheltenham, Glos. GL52 5DQ.

Alan says that he hasn't used this machine, which is now a collectable model, since he lost his wife nearly three years ago.

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Advice Required

A new member, *Derek Edmundson*, has an Executive on order. As a convert from the tugging fraternity, he has "been concerned about what seems to be a common problem with front-wheel drive traction on Talbot coachbuilts". He has been in touch with A-S and also the supplying dealers and has been told that town and country tyres will help.

I know that we have a lot of Talbot drivers in the Club and I wonder if anyone can give him any guidance on this. Not having driven a Talisman I can't answer but I haven't found any trouble with the VW Clubman which is front-wheel drive too. If you would care to send any comments to me I can make a resume of them for inclusion in a future Newsletter so that we can all gain the benefit.

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Talbot Gears

Most members with Talbot based Auto-Sleepers are, I believe, pleased with the general performance of their vehicles. The same cannot be said, however, about the gearchange, variously described as stiff, uncertain, notchy and, particularly with first and second gears, difficult to engage. The reason for this is not difficult to understand - the Talbot unit was designed in left-hand drive format with a steering column change lever. The adaptation to right-hand drive involves a long and complicated system of linkages, not conducive to positive engagement, particularly as the engine unit moves on its mountings when cornering.

A recent letter in MMM and *John Sutton's* in the February Newsletter recommended DD Motorhomes of Halland near Uckfield in Sussex who specialise in adjusting the gear linkage system. The gear change in 'Capuccino' has been better than some but I decided it would be worth giving this firm a chance to improve it. They have a smart new workshop in the Pacemanor Business Centre just off the Uckfield by-pass and their phone number is 0825 768 727. Keith Martin is in charge of the workshop and after working on the gearbox for about two hours he gave me a road test to make sure that I was happy with their efforts. There certainly was a marked improvement and for £48.46 including VAT I was happy with the outcome.

They do not claim miracles - the Talbot gearchange is never going to be silky - but if you are unhappy with yours and are within driving distance of Uckfield you might find it worthwhile to pay

them a visit. They have apparently dealt with over 85 adjustments already (in February).

What I find disappointing is - if a small non-Talbot dealer can adjust the linkage to what he describes as "manufacturer's specification" why cannot the vehicle leave the factory properly adjusted?

John Normandale.

John sent this in late in February but there wasn't enough space in the April Newsletter. Others have also told me of this adjustment service and the price certainly doesn't seem unreasonable.

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A different view of the same Problem

I bought my Talisman last year, J registered and with 2,800 miles on the clock. There have been a few problems but each time I try to get the dealer who sold me the van to sort them out they just don't want to know. One problem has been the gear linkage which has been rectified at a cost of £48 but again the dealers haven't even replied to my letter asking them to make a refund of this amount. It seems that they just don't want to honour the guarantee. Have you any advice about this or is there anyone I can get in touch with?

Jean Allen.

I believe that the problem is really that most of the dealers sell various van conversions, unlike many of the motor car people who only handle one make of new vehicle. The converters and builders of vans use so many different base chassis or vehicles that the dealers can't or won't handle any of the mechanical problems which may arise. From correspondence in the Newsletter and in the other motor caravanning magazines it would seem that the best resort, for mechanical problems associated with the chassis base, is to go to a dealer in that particular make of vehicle rather than a motor caravan dealer. Has any member any other suggestions, please?

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☐ 1992 Photo Competition ☐

It was quite a surprise for us to find my husband's name on the back page of the April Newsletter in connection with this competition and I feel that we owe you an explanation!

Yes, his name is Derek and the photograph was of our Harmony (not a Rambler). You were probably puzzled that the photo hadn't passed through the Club's hands. The reason was that the Harmony had to go to Willersey in July to have a wall panel replaced. We had to leave it overnight and had put two photos in an envelope marked 'Auto-Sleeper' on the dashboard, just in case they were any use to A-S. Someone must have taken the envelope for the next we knew was an acknowledgement from A-S. In due course we discovered that they had used one in their magazine and we were delighted to receive a cheque which we shall use for travel books.

We set off for the Dordogne (in "Harriet" of course) in Easter week and will let you know if anything printable happens.

Tonie & Derek Smith

Don't forget to take your cameras with you when you go on holiday/to rallies/out and about generally in your vans. Photographs will be wanted again this year (1993 in case you've forgotten!) and we should like to see some interesting shots of Auto-Sleepers in varied scenery. And don't forget either that you don't have to be a brilliant photographer - some of the best pictures are snaps!

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SOME SITES NEWS



ISLE OF WIGHT

Club members *Jacqui & Tim Ellis* of Southlands Camping Park, Newchurch, Sandown, Isle of Wight, invite any members who are on the island to give them a look in and have a chat. They can give advice on places to see, where to eat, etc. whilst on the island. If anyone would like to stay on their site they will give a 10% discount off site fees. They can also arrange complete packages including ferry and site.

If anyone is interested, please write to them or telephone 0983 865 385. The site is open from 1st April to the end of September in 1993. The Club has provisionally booked for a week long rally in early summer 1994 on the site.

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NORMANDY

I've received some details of a 'CL' type of site which will be in operation from Easter and should be open all year round. The address is Carole & Barry Humphreys, Home Farm, Le Val Pien, 61470 Bosc Renoult, France and the telephone number is 010 33 33 35 31 80

their fax number is 010 33 33 35 01 05. I quote from their letter:-

"Geographically we are ideally situated for a stop-over or as a touring base for Caen (War Memorial Museum; D-Day Landing Beaches); Bayeux (Tapestry); Paris & Euro-Disney; Rouen (Joan of Arc); Caen & Falaise (William the Conqueror); Alencon (Lace); Le Mans (Motor Racing); Mont St. Michel and the resorts of Honfleur, Deauville and Trouville to name but a few. We are approximately 1 hour from the Port of Caen (Ouistreham), 2 hours from Le Havre/Dieppe and 4 hours from Cherbourg/Calais.

We are on a plain surrounded by forests and small farms with a level, easily accessible two-acre site. We intend to create a small shop with milk from an adjacent farm, our own fresh eggs, fresh bread each morning from the village boulangerie and sundries. We keep some animals, including geese, chickens, ducks, sheep, rabbits, dogs, a cat and usually a couple of pigs. Please write, fax or telephone for more details or for directions.

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LOIRE VALLEY

One of our members, *Colin Gibbs* is associated with a holiday farm with a difference. Set in the heart of France's Loire Valley the seventeenth century farm, which is in a peaceful area and is surrounded by trees, has recently undergone total refurbishment. The modern barns can provide good under-cover parking. But here is the difference - the farm is run by Joyce Rimmell who is a fully qualified practitioner in Holistic Medicine (London College of H.M.). She gave up her nursing career to devote herself to alternative medicine and now specialises in therapeutic massage, aromatherapy and reflexology. The farm has a fully equipped studio where these tried and tested techniques assist the relief of tired muscles, tension, strains, swelling and congestion. For full details please contact Joyce direct at La Besnardiere, 49150 Fougere, France - telephone 010 33 41 90 15 20.

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IRELAND and SCOTLAND

John Cox has been at it again! He tells me in a letter that "I have been assured, both in an excellent guide-book by Cadogan Guides and by correspondence with the PRO of the Irish Motor-Caravanners Club that if you avoid certain areas of Ireland tourists have little to fear." "Irish Holidays" is written by Richard Attridge,

AUTO - SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB
RALLY SUPPLEMENT

May - June 1993

Please make your cheque payable to the Marshal BY NAME and send it with booking slip AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE. Preferably at least 14 days in advance. Late deciders, please telephone the marshal FIRST.

7th-9th May. National Motorhome & Tourer Show, East of England Showground, PETERBOROUGH.

Fees: Club rate £11.50 for 3 nights, £6 overnight (Last date for bookings 8th April). Rally fee £1.50

Booking forms will be found in MMM. Mark your form A.S.O.C. very clearly and send to Warners direct. Bookings received after 8th April cannot be guaranteed a place on the rally field.

Please send Rally Fee (£1.50) to our own marshal Mr. R. Williams, Samarkand, Sea Lane, Sandilands, Sutton-on-Sea, Mablethorpe, Lincs., LN12 2RA.0507 442 960.

14th-16th May. Hidden Valley C.P., West Down, ILFRACOMBE, North Devon.

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

Bookings to: Mrs. S. Wisely, 12 The Laurels, Roundswell Village, Barnstaple, Devon, EX31 3QY. Tel:0271 46 400

Directions: Site is on A. 361 Barnstaple-Ilfracombe. Braunton 4 miles; Ilfracombe 5 miles. A meal is being arranged on site for Saturday night. 50 Vans Maximum. Electricity available £1.50 per night.

21st-23rd May. Savernake Forest, MARLBOROUGH, Wilts.

Fees: £4.50 per unit 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 at top of Postern Hill, 1 miles south of Marlborough on A.346 (Salisbury road).

Pleasant walks in forest and into Marlborough.

21st-23rd May. Lions Club, Ballam Road, Lytham St. Annes, Nr. Blackpool, Lancs. Site on Playing Fields.

Fees: £3.25 per night. Rally Fee £1.50.

Bookings to: Mr. N. Benyon, "Holmfield Cottage", Bannister Street, Lytham St. Annes, Lancs., FY8 5HQ. Tel: 0253 736 245.

Directions: Leave M.55 at jnc.4. Signal right at traffic lights but be ready for sharp left turn signposted Ballam. At T-junction turn right; in one mile fork right at junction then sight on left in about 50 yards.

Close to town centre; hardstanding available if wet.

28th-30th May. Beverley Race Course, BEVERLEY, Yorkshire.

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

Bookings to: Mr. B. McLean, 47 Westlands Road, Sproatley, Nr Hull, North Humberside, HULL 4XG.

Directions: Race Course North side on A.1079 Beverley to York road 2 miles west of Beverley. Entrance at end of main stand. Toilets and washbasins are available.

29th May-6th June. Holiday Rally: Leverton Place, Green Bottom, CHACE WATER, near TRURO, Cornwall.

Fees: £3.75 per night. Rally Fee £1.50.

Bookings to: Mr. A. Johns, 3 Jays, Lanreath, Nr. Looe, Cornwall, PL13 2NX. Telephone No: 0503 220 542

Directions: At 3.5 miles west of Truro on A.390 Truro - Redruth road turn left (s.p. Chace Water). At small roundabout turn right and site is a few hundred yards on right.

Electric hook-ups available at extra charge. Good centre for touring the area. Bar and snacks available, also room for social activities.

4th-6th June. Barnstones Camping & Caravan Park, GREAT BOURTON, Banbury. LIMIT 50 VANS.

Fees: £4.00 per night Rally fee £1.50.

Bookings to: Mr. J. Cox, 73 Westmead road, Barton-under-Needwood, Staffs., DG13 8JR.

Directions: In Banbury take A.423 Coventry road. In 3 miles turn right into Great Bourton. Site on right in 120 yards.

2nd-12th June. Royan, France.

Bookings to: Mr. S. Bowler, 92 Welford Road, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands, B90 3HT. Tel: 021 745 8369

ALL details available from Steve.

11th-13th June. Motor Caravan Fair, STRATFORD-UPON-AVON.

Booking forms will be found in magazines - write A.S.O.C. clearly on form. The Club has no volunteer to act as marshal for this fair

Directions will be found in magazines.

21st-27th June. Buckle Caravan Park, SEAFORD, Sussex.

Fees: £1.50 per person per night + VAT. Rally fee £1.50.

Bookings to: Mr. G. Coggins, "Walda", Chyngton Road, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 4HB. Tel: 0323 895 901.

Directions: From A.259 Newhaven-Seaford road turn into Marine Parade by Abbots Lodge Motor Inn. Site 300 yards on right.

Holiday rally with many local attractions and day trips to France.

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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24 Killeaton Crescent, Dunmurry, Belfast, BT17 9HD, Northern Ireland - telephone 0232 602 679 and Richard writes to enquirers and includes a sites guide book, the rally programme of the Irish M.C.C. and a sheet telling of the places to visit throughout Ireland. He also offers to meet visitors at the ferry on the way in and escort them to a stopover for the night and will do the same on the return journey. You must, of course, give him the dates of your stay in Ireland and fair warning! He is English and has lived in Belfast for two years or so and his information is very interesting. He will appreciate a first-class stamp or a small donation for Club funds when you write to him.

John also mentions Brenda & Jack Robinson of Fife who will send lots of details about the Western Isles and that side of Scotland. If you want more information, please write to Mr & Mrs Robinson, c/o Mrs Penny Smith, 8 Swan Meadow, Pewsey, Wiltshire, SN9 5HW. You should include (1) the size of your van, (2) how long you have been motor-caravanning, (3) the date and duration of your holiday, (4) whether you have been to the West Coast before and (5) a stamped, self-addressed envelope at least 9" x 4". Penny is, of course, the Editor of MMM so please mark your envelope "SCOTLAND" if you write to her. *John* said that if you do take their advice for Scotland, they would like a card written to Penny as an appreciation of their efforts.

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Chairman's Chat

After seeing the Club's Annual Accounts, and at the end of this Committee's year, acknowledgement must be made of the tremendous efforts of *Rita & Phil Daley* who each month print the Newsletter and then, with the help of Club friends, collate, fold, insert into envelopes, address, stamp and deliver to the Post Office for despatch. I know that they will take issue with me when I say that this saves the Club well over £2,500 per year when compared with commercial printing which accounts for more than half of the excess of income over expenditure. (I am told that *Rita* is most adept at collating and folding the Newsletter while watching television). Thank you very much, *Rita & Phil* not forgetting your friends. Thanks also to *Sheila Henthorne* who not only produces the labels from the Membership List but also does the proof reading of the Newsletter [without which there would be many, many more mistakes! - Ed.]. In addition the *Daleys* have equipment compatible with that of the Editor to read his tape and convert it into the printed word. Our thanks also to the *Daleys* and the *Henthornes*

for allowing the Club the use of their 'modern' equipment. As I am not far removed from the Stephens Blue/Black Ink and steel pen nibs, I can only listen in amazement (and total ignorance) when they start talking about disks, software, hardware, mega bites, and the like - and I'm sure I have got the terminology wrong too!

In the December 1992 Newsletter I wrote about the hope of changes in the taxation on Propane gas - I had hoped that the tax would be reduced but I hadn't bargained for the Chancellor of the Exchequer who didn't lower the tax but gave notice of increases in the future, one in April 1994 followed by another in April 1995. He also immediately increased the duty, and thus the VAT, on road fuel. Since the Budget Statement I have noticed wide divergence in the price, locally, of diesel - anything from £1.99 to £2.45 per gallon - it certainly pays to shop around. The increase on L.P.G., both Propane and Butane, effective in April 1994 will be about 5.6p to 6.7p per litre for bottled gas and about 1.6p per litre for bulk gas. In April 1995 there will be a further increase of about 7p - 8p per litre for bottled gas and about 1.9p per litre for bulk gas. All this will add to the cost of our motor-caravanning and any ways of reducing the cost, whilst still maintaining full safety, must be looked at. But don't look to the Chancellor for help!

There was a good attendance at the AGM at Wicksteed Park when members were able to express their views on various aspects of the Club. The Committee will, of course, take note of those views. *Tony Jones* (and his new assistant *John Edden*) are both anxiously seeking new Rally Marshals. If nobody comes forward some very popular rallies may not take place. *Barbara & Tony [Jones]* have been the marshals at Honeybourne for the past five years and have said that this year's rally there was the last that they would run. They have now managed to find a marshal for 1994 BUT they have, or will have, run six rallies this year and *Tony*, as Rally Co-ordinator, is urgently looking for replacement marshals for the remaining five rallies.

Please, PLEASE, PLEASE, contact *Tony* or *John* and let him know that you will run one of the five rallies next year and allow your fellow Club members the opportunity to enjoy these popular venues.

Arthur Irving.

Thank you, *Arthur*, for your kind words about us all but you really have shown your ignorance of matters computing and technical. Tape; TAPE? What on earth would be the use of old fashioned stuff such as that, except for storage purposes? And I don't pass data on disc up to the *Daleys* either!!

For your (and perhaps other members) edification what happens with the Newsletter is this. Members send in contributions on paper or on disc in one of the various formats which our machine and its working system can understand. I then collate these and, by using a Word Processor (the 1993 equivalent of the typewriter or, in *Arthur's* case the quill pen!) arrange the content of the current issue. This is then transferred to a Desk Top Publishing programme which allows me to put in the squiggly bits like the heading of the Chat. Having printed off a draft copy which *Sheila* proof-reads for me, I finally produce a good copy on nice paper and send it off to Solihull. When it gets there a certain panic sets in as *Rita* completes the front cover picture and both *Daleys* set too and start printing. Afterwards, as *Arthur* says, it is just a simple (?) matter of collating, folding, packing and despatching so that you can all get your copy on time. Our thanks go to the folding party who cheerfully do this work every month.

I wonder how many of our members realise that we now print over 1,000 copies each month. But I am sure that they can understand why there has to be a cut off date for the receipt of items for the current issue of the Newsletter and why letters sometimes have to be shortened or even omitted altogether. We try to keep the length to the 20 pages because if we go above that the cost of postage could increase dramatically - as it does when we have other papers to include such as for the AGM etc.

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 W A Z
 O E R U Z
 R S C P L
 D H E

The places from the 1992 Newsletters were:

St. Malo
 St. Helier
 Jersey (x 2)
 Andorra
 America
 Oregon
 Balboa
 Phoenix
 Arizona
 Arctic Circle
 Akureyri
 Niort
 Auckland
 Singapore
 Geneva

Thailand
 Japan
 India
 Albertville
 Paris (x 2)
 Royan
 Sanjou
 Maine
 France
 Hendaye
 Spain
 New Zealand
 Zeebrugge
 Konigshof
 Rouen

Keukenhof
 Czechoslovakia
 Nieuwvliet
 Cognac
 Roquefort
 La Roche sur Yon
 Flaine
 Naples
 Johannesburg
 Pretoria
 Iceland
 Rijsberg
 Durban
 Cluses

There were fewer entries this time but even so, these caused some amusement. To quote a letter from *Sheila & John Read*:-

Having reached page 5 of the March Newsletter and not wishing to rush things for it's always interesting reading I came across the Wordsearch puzzle. As the Editor said 'send a list of places....' so out came all the 1992 Newsletters and I began my list! I had reached 150 and decided that would do for the time being. After a coffee break I decided to read a little more, and of course on page 6 - there was the real puzzle!!

Before I get more cross-eyed I'm giving up, or perhaps it should be we are giving up for *Sheila* says she can't see straight already!

We found 43 in all but BALBOA in Panama - surely not visited?? - so that leaves 42 and with Jersey and Paris appearing twice we presume we end up with 40. With 123 letters remaining unused we cannot help feeling we must have missed a lot more words; goodness knows where they are hidden!"

The result was that *Sheila & John Read* were the winners having found 43 of the places listed including the fact that Paris and Jersey were mentioned twice (deliberately!). A voucher for a free weekend rally is on its way to them.

With the onset of the "rally season" we will leave the quizzes for now - watch out for more in the autumn.

Heather Tidbury.

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On page 6 of the April issue there was an observation from *Jim Cresswell* regarding speed limits. At Wicksteed Park *Ernie Prince* gave me a copy of the vehicle speed limits for vehicles "Under 7.5 tons mlw (maximum laden weight, i.e. maximum gross weight for a vehicle as specified in Construction and Use regulations). These show that when travelling solo the maximum speed is 70 mph on a motorway, 60 on a dual carriageway and 50 on any other road where a lower limit is not otherwise applicable. When towing a trailer the speeds are reduced to 60, 50 and 50 mph respectively. As all of our vehicles are built upon chassis originally intended for light commercial vehicles it seems that these limits apply to us. So don't get confused when you switch from the family car to the van, you mustn't go quite so fast - in spite of some of the commercial

vehicles, vans and bigger, who seem cheerfully to disregard any limitations of speed, weights, road usage and the like. They seem to get away with it - but I'll bet that we wouldn't!

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Credit Cards

Has anyone had any problems recently when using these abroad? It seems that in France some of the local cards now have a micro-chip included (the so-called 'smart cards') and that users are being asked to tap in their Personal Identity Number (PIN) in full view of everyone around. This appears to be happening in hypermarkets, supermarkets and the like. British cards don't have the chip and are apparently being refused. This also goes against everything that the British card issuers tell us about keeping the PI Number secret. Our Secretary is making written enquiries about this apparent problem on behalf of the Club and we will let you know the outcome in due course. In the meantime, if you do experience any problems, please contact the card issuing authority and get them to sort it out. If you can also let me know, I shall be grateful and we can include the details in a later Newsletter.

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Ferries

Stena-Sealink do NOT, repeat NOT, offer any form of further discount on the Club rates. This seems fair enough because usually the Club rates are less than you might get even if you take into account the other discounts which might be available on account of age etc. After all, if S-S were to give all of the available discounts they would finish up having to pay people to use the ferries! It might even come to that if the Chunnel (a) ever opens, (b) is successful and (c) is reasonably cheap to use!!

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It's All in the Name!

Is there a collective noun for a "gathering of Auto-Sleepers"? And, if there is, does it fully describe the friendship and welcome therein encompassed?? We became members of ASOC in late 1992 and decided to attend the AGM as we enjoy reading the Newsletter with the chatty comments so obviously from 'real people'; too often the advertiser literature has comments which seem not only insincere but irrelevant.

We are now enjoying the comforts of our second Auto-Sleeper - a Harmony - having spent several happy years with a Frisky. We are just asking ourselves why we didn't join the Club sooner. Thanks to everyone who made us so welcome and who organised the very successful weekend.

In answer to the question posed earlier we suggest: a "Bed", a "Clutch", a "Generation" or perhaps a "Neighbourhood". This should result in some interesting suggestions being made to the Editor!!

Liz and Tony Buzzard

Thanks, *Buzzards*, for discovering that the Club is what we all intend it to be - relaxed and friendly. For the collective noun I'm not sure about the "Generation" because we have more than one generation present and "Neighbourhood" conjures up too much the additional word "Watch". Having seen various sites - from Stratford-on-Avon with 300+ vans to the smaller rallies with only half-a-dozen - AFTER the Club has left I would suggest a "Cleanliness" of ASOC members!! Any other suggestions, please? [I wonder what the collective noun is for a brace of Buzzards?]

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Phil's Rabbit



We all like to receive cheques; at least, you and I do but I'm beginning to wonder if our banks do, too. I'm told that there has been some difficulty, even polite refusal, when we have tried to pay in cheques made out to "ASOC" to the Club account. In fact, they weren't paid in but had to be returned to the members concerned to be amended to "Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club" because, according to the clerk concerned, that is the name of our account and "A.S.O.C." could stand for anything, even "Any Silly Old Club" if you like - and I don't! On the same theme, we must NOT make out a cheque to Tony Jones when the bank knows him as Mr A Jones. *Harry* [your Editor] has already reacted to this by amending the names of marshals shown on the rally booking slips so that the informal and friendly *Tony Jones* has been replaced by the formal **Mr A Jones**. Just so you know it's not the Club getting all stiff and starchy - we're having to do it to save everyone an awful lot of time, effort and postage. **"Check your Cheques!"**

You will know by now that the Club has joined the Association of Caravan and Camping Exempted Organisations (ACCEO). Not exactly exciting on first glance but it has already proved to be of use by enabling us to take out a better insurance policy, one that covers the sort of risks we can be exposed to much better than the previous policy did. Now that the revised Constitution has been

approved by the members at the AGM we will also have some protection for members while they are acting on our behalf. ACCEO hold two rallies each year; we won't be able to attend the first of the 1993 events since it takes place over the weekend of 30th April - 3rd May but the second, the Annual Meeting Rally will be held at Stafford Showground from 15th-17th October. It appears that member Clubs are invited/expected to send a voting delegate to this event but what restrictions there are on numbers of "ordinary" members attending and what goes on anyway has yet to filter down to me! Watch this space. Your committee is confident we will find quite a lot of benefits accruing from our membership of ACCEO over the next few years.

Following the AGM new officers were elected for the current Club year. Most of the key posts are unchanged but the load has been spread by appointing a new Regalia Officer and an Assistant Rally Co-ordinator. See enclosed sheet for full details.

The latest News Release from Volkswagen Press Office (7/4/93) says, inter alia, "The availability of a chasis cab range has helped increase the Transporter's penetration of the motor caravan market. In 1992 Volkswagen sold 773 motor caravans, with sales of around 850 expected in 1993 and market share is currently running at 23.1 per cent." I have certainly noticed a large number of new VW's coming onto Club records, either with new members or as replacements - the Clubman seems to be very popular. I can't resist the temptation to draw attention to the statement "Volkswagen sold..." as it emphasises what I have had to point out to people many times - Auto-Sleepers Limited don't sell motor caravans, they convert them for the base vehicle suppliers, in this case V.A.G (United Kingdom) Limited.

Tailpiece. *Carol and Steve [Bowler]* ask everyone who was at Wicksteed to forgive them their sudden and un-announced departure on Sunday morning. During the Salvation Army service *Zoe*, their old German shepherd dog, died in the van up on the hill. Although she had been ill for some time it still came as a very nasty shock when the inevitable actually happened. They were quite unable to behave as though nothing had changed and trust everyone will understand why they left without saying "Goodbye".

Phil Daley.

The cheque problem first reared its ugly head last year, so far as I was concerned, - when *Sheila and I* got married. We had one or two cheques made out to "Mr & Mrs" and as we hadn't got a joint account my bank refused them at first. After some argument they finally accepted them but more recently many banks have become

much more pernickety about the correct entries. So please, dear Members, do make sure that you complete your cheques correctly to help us all.

I'm sure that I speak for all members when I say that no apology is required from *Carol & Steve* and we sympathize with them in their loss. Dear *Zoe* was part of their family and part of the A.S.O.C. family too.

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STOLEN VEHICLE

STOLEN VEHICLE

Will all members please look for:

Legend **E 250 UOC**

which was stolen from outside 112 New House Park, St. Albans, Herts, AL1 1UP, the home of *Audrey & Roland Trulock*. The inside of the vehicle has undergone fairly extensive modification including the waste bin fitted into the rear door and the seating cannot now be adjusted to a double bed. The main distinguishing features on the outside are Stainless Steel turnbuckles in front of the nearside window and behind the rear door (fitted so that the Safari Room can be fastened), a roll-out awning, Top Box, a length of soil pipe on the roof rack containing windbreak, rafters etc. Also the name "LAURA" is on the side.

If anyone should see a vehicle answering the description, even if the registration mark appears different, please advise the police in St. Albans or the Trulocks at the address shown. Their telephone number is 0727 862 323. The vehicle was fully kitted out inside ready for their holiday.

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A-5 Conversions

We are led to believe that certain Members of the Club are under the impression that we no longer produce the Flair, Frisky and Sportsman.

Through the pages of the Newsletter, we would like to put the record straight. These vehicles will be produced on a Special Order basis and for which the retail conversion prices, exclusive of Value Added Tax, will be:

| | |
|-----------|-----------|
| Frisky | £5,820.62 |
| Flair | £6,679.62 |
| Sportsman | £6,228.62 |

The above are for vehicles built to a standard specification with lap only rear seat restraint straps.

In the event of any Members requiring further information, please contact Stuart Clements or Margaret Ellison in our Sales Office on 0386 853 338.

Charles Trevelyan
Director

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The next item has added potency following the loss mentioned.

INSURANCE

Following your request for items for the Newsletter. While doing the rounds of comparing insurance cover for our Rhapsody, I checked with one popular company specialising in Motor Insurance as to when the contents are insured. I was informed that the contents are only insured while you are camping. They are NOT insured when the vehicle is parked outside your property nor when it is being used as an everyday vehicle.

Martin McGrath

I shall have to check up with our insurers to see whether we are covered or not. It does seem slightly odd that the contents are only insured when you are actually camping. If it is a good enough risk when you are travelling, say, through London on the way to the ferry it would surely be much the same risk if you were travelling across to visit friends or relations in the everyday way. I can understand that if you take the van, fully laden, to work and park it in a side street where all sorts of individuals can gain access if they so wish then the risk is appreciably greater and such use ought, perhaps, to be discouraged. Equally, if the vehicle is parked outside your house/flat/tent or wherever you live, you really ought not to need to remove all the contents for insurance sake.

We are just having our drive, where the van is normally parked, relaid because the additional weight had cracked a few of the slabs. One of the workmen has told me that when they have finished I shall be able to park a tank on the drive. Maybe I shall have to, so that I can lock it up and nobody will be able to get in without a

rocket launcher or similar. Would that satisfy the insurers? Or would I have difficulty in getting cover for such a vehicle, even if I could persuade *Charles & Anthony [Trevelyan]* to convert the interior to A-S standards! Now there's a daydream. I don't think we would ever get stuck in muddy fields again and could probably tow anyone else out.

Thanks, *Martin*, for responding to my plea and also for giving such good information.

Once again, that's it for this month. Happy camping, see you at Savernake?

Your Editor
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