

**AUTO-SLEEPER
OWNERS' CLUB**



NEWSLETTER 62

NOVEMBER 1993

Hello.

It is just at the end of September and here I am already starting on the November issue. The October one was sent off to our hard-working printing, folding and despatching people to deal with so I can start on the fresh items for you.

It has been drawn to my attention that we only provide two booking slips each month but we often have far more than two rallies. Some people would rather like more slips to be available. This would be a bit difficult as the normal rule because we are already close to the maximum for the 19p postage and we don't really want to go over the top. So what I propose to do later on, when we would not normally provide a rally supplement, is include perhaps four slips instead. It will then be up to you to hang on to the extras until you need them.

I'm also told that there has been a disappointing response to the request for more members to marshal rallies. I honestly cannot understand what is happening out there. Many members want to attend rallies but very few, it seems, are willing to do any work towards them. It is not as if it was a difficult task as I've often said before. But there is a very simple statement which **MUST** be made. We can only expect the marshals who are at present working to do so much. After that there will be **NO RALLIES**. Is that what you want? When *Sheila and I* have asked members attending our rallies if they would like to take over, or to run another one more local to them, we have been surprised when we have been told that they were "too busy" or "couldn't do it". So come along, please help **YOUR** Club to hold the rallies that you apparently want. Pluck up your courage, take up the challenge and offer to run or assist at a rally. After you have assisted at one or two, if you think you really need that, you'll find how easy and enjoyable it is. Please don't let this Club of ours fall into the trap of having lots of willing members - a few willing to work and the rest willing to let them!!

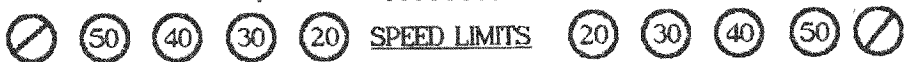
We've again received details of the "Campervan" holidays to Australia. It surprises me that with a letter dated 31st August 1993 they send the details of hire charges which last to 16th January 1994. But to give you an idea, in the period from 17th December 1993 - 16th January 1994 the rates per day range from \$A103 for hire of a 2-berth for 36-56 days up to \$A205 for a 6-berth for 7-20 days. In addition you would have to pay daily insurance charges and local stamp duty plus fuel, personal insurance, collision damage waver etc. And you have to get to Australia too! The people who sent the details are "Visit Australia Tours", a division of Eliza Travel Pty. Ltd.,

and their address is PO Box 385, Mount Eliza, Vic. 3390, Australia. They provided a fax number of (03) 787 7194 and a phone number of (03) 787 7633. So contact them direct for the latest prices and other information. Alternatively you might get some help from the Australian Tourist Commission Offices, Gemini House, 10-18 Putney Hill, London, SW15 6AA.

Newsletter Index

Just to let you know that the Index for issues 55 - 60 is now available. Please send me a stamped, self-addressed envelope of a size suitable for a Newsletter and I'll send one to you.

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One of our newer members read about these in the August Newsletter which he received as part of his enquiry pack. He writes that he works for Northamptonshire Police as their Communications Officer and made enquiries of a friend who is an Inspector in the Traffic Department. The reply that he received is "Providing the vehicle is equipped to carry no more than 8 persons including the driver, a motor caravan is classed as a private car." There is a further proviso that the vehicle is not longer than 12 metres [which I make to be nearly 40 feet!] but he suggests that this would hardly apply to us.

So my thanks to *John Randall* for such useful information. *John* also says that he bought his Flair in June this year after 12 months visiting dealers and much deliberation. He and his wife, *Allison*, have just returned from their first major outing, a week's holiday in Cornwall, and he confirms that they are hooked on motor-caravanning, like the rest of us! They look forward to meeting us all in the future.

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A REMINDER

Have you changed your van recently? Or perhaps you have changed your address or telephone number? Or even there just may be a small error on the label which brings you your Newsletter. In any of these events, have you told *Sheila Henthorne*, our Membership Secretary? Because she keeps the Club records up to date and prepares the labels for our printing friends up in the West Midlands. So if you haven't told her, the chances are that your beloved Newsletter might not get through to you, unless you have had words with the Post Office to redirect your mail. Please help *Sheila* to keep the records 100%. Thanks!

Artistry

John Greenwood wrote to *Charles Trevelyan* who kindly passed the details on to me. While *John* was on holiday in France he had a drawing made of his van, which is the VX 50. The drawing now looks wonderful in a frame on his dining room wall. He sent a photograph of the drawing which was also passed to me and I must say that it does look very good indeed. The drawing was done by a Mr. Gerry Greaves who lives at Lavavrie, Sauveterre La Lemance, 47500, Fumel, France, so if you happen to be in that area and you want your van drawn you will know where to go.



VW Trooper - G 750 FCS. Extending Roof. 1.9 litre Automatic. FSH. Blue Interior. Captain's seats, Pioneer stereo-cassette, twin batteries, two gas bottles, electric hook-up, Cobra alarm. Yes, this is the one that went to Canada and the U.S. (ASOC Newsletter, Oct.92 - Apr.93) 41,000 miles since new (May 1990). £12,000. (Sale due to need for more seats now!) Please phone Jenny and Pete Berry on 0292 442 747 or you can write to them at 9 Carclue Crescent, Ayr, Scotland, KA7 4SP

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Legend GL, 1991, 'G' reg. 2 litre petrol. 9,800 miles. All Legend facilities plus roof rack and ladder, fly screens and blinds. Non-smokers. No children. No pets. £18,950.00. Telephone Anne & Bryan Mackley on 0274 567 377 or write to them at 14 Mansfield Avenue, Eldwick, Bingley, West Yorks. BD16 3HJ.

[Another donation received, many thanks.]

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VW Trident. August 1990 'H' Reg. Rear engine, 1900cc petrol. 16,000 miles. Extras include hot air heating, swivel front seats, bike rack, 2nd battery, alarm, radio cassette. Illness forces reluctant sale. £12,800.00. Please telephone Janet and Ron Jones on 0543 686 135 or write to them at Laburnum Cottage, 18 Burntwood Road, Hammerwick, Walsall, Staffs., WS7 0JG.

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Wanted!

A much loved and cherished Rimini in good condition, Low

mileage; 'G' Reg or later. Please telephone Nora & Ven Venables on 0902 332 105 or write to them at 15 Langley Gardens, Merry Hill, Wolverhampton, WU3 7JN.

A gentleman who wants to join the Club is seeking a Flair with automatic transmission to replace the one which was stolen from him. He reckons that the price should be around £10,000.00. If you know of one which is for sale, why not give him a ring or write to him? His name is Mike Watson and he lives at 77 Latchmere Lane, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT2 5JF and has the telephone number of 081 546 6116 in the evenings or 081 846 8430 during the working day.

Sheila [Henthorne] received a plaintive letter from Mr Esmond Smith who has been on the look-out for a VW Auto-Sleeper for some time. He hasn't had any success yet because his finances are limited to around the £5,000 mark. What he wants is a high top in good condition. In his letter he says that "even a van of the 1980 period doesn't seem to be less than six or seven thousand at a dealer". If anyone can help his address is The Saltings, Broad Street, Orford, Suffolk, IP12 2NQ and the telephone number is 0394 450 234.

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RALLY REPORTS

A round dozen vans of lively ralliers attended the meet at the Square and Compass at Normanton-on-Trent and quickly got into the good food and real ale of the hostelry sited some 30 yards away. A coach trip to Lincoln on Saturday seemed to lighten a few wallets and purses but our meal for 23 at the pub that night compensated. It was nice to welcome *Ann & Ken Painter* from Orpington in Kent to their first rally. *Ken* was last seen fitting one of the star raffle prizes to his van and muttering "good 'ere, innit?" *Pam & Mick Robinson* won Sunday lunch for two - an escape from the stove for *Mick*. Membership numbers of those attending ranged from No. 1 to No. 1448 with the young pretender No. 1111 in attendance and in case of trouble we had No. 999.

The sun shone all weekend and was a great relief to me as this was the first rally that I'd run. It was not hard and I would recommend others to try it. Seeing the relaxed, smiling faces departing on Sunday was an added bonus. To be repeated next year!

Bob Brindle

See, I told you it wasn't hard. *Bob* seems to have enjoyed himself - and he was running this rally single-handed. Please read again my comments earlier in this Newsletter and go ahead and enjoy yourselves, too!

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The Club & Company Rally

We would like to say a big Thank You to all the organisers of the rally at Malvern in July. A lot of hard work must have gone into this but I'm sure that it was appreciated by everyone who attended.

A special Thank You goes to *Heather Tidbury* for her help in making our 1st Wedding Anniversary so memorable and to all of you who sent us cards.

Tricia & Ted Pratt

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Thanks

We would like to say how much we enjoyed our weekend at the Bath & West Show where we were able to join the rally without prior booking. [Normal for most rallies - Ed.] Please convey our thanks to *Steve Bowler* and the other two gentlemen who helped when we had self-inflicted damage to our van.

Our thanks also to *Arthur Irving* [who's he? - Ed.] for the return of our Silver Screen from the Club & Company rally in Malvern. Very many thanks to you all - very much appreciated.

Joan & Arthur Kelly

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A Holiday Rally in GERMANY

Being new members, our first rally was at Royan which we enjoyed. We asked where the Continental Rally would be in 1994 and the answer was negative. So we suggested a site we called into on our way. We intended to stay overnight but ended up by staying for 5 nights. This was a Winnigen, alongside the Mosel and only 10 km from Koblenz.

We were fascinated by the continual stream of barges from various countries which go chugging by. You could sit inside or outside the restaurant enjoying coffee and cake (not forgetting the cream!) and watching the ducks (or other birds). Later you could

enjoy a beer or wine, or a meal if required. Fresh rolls (from 8.00 am) for breckie and various other items are sold.

Alongside the road, the wines-strasse, the steep vineyards stretch for miles. Winnigen town, a short walk from the site past the large heated swimming baths, is worth a visit especially during the Winefest when the fountain flows with wine instead of water, the "Wine Queen" is crowned and the "Wine Witch" visits. (Don't say you've got one already!) Boat trips are a must. We have revisited Winnigen and negotiated a good discount for ASOC Members.

We suggest a rally from August 26th to September 4th 1994 approx. for the Winefest. If this whets your appetite please contact *John Edden* in the first instance as we shall be out of the country for a while. There is a possible limit of 30 units so it will be first come, etc.

Anna & Don Johnson.

Now that's a good sign, isn't it? Some new members willing and able to take on the job of a rally marshal, and for a holiday rally on the Continent too. I've been along the Mosel on a boat from Winnigen (which some people in our party insisted on calling Vinegar) and found the trip very pleasant. We particularly noticed one or two of the camp sites alongside the river - on one of which was a Land Ranger with British plates. [Does that date me?] We went up as far as Cochem which is quite a fairy-tale town. One of my memories of Koblenz is of the sight of the famous German store called "Woolworth"! Having been around the area on a coach as well I can thoroughly recommend it so do get in touch with *John* as soon as you can. And I can certainly recommend the "Erdbeer Torte" (strawberry cake) - with **THICK** cream on the top. Very bad for the cholesterol and the calories but oh boy!

IRISH RALLY - 1994

Preliminary details of the rally to Southern Ireland. It will start around Monday, 6th June 1994 (50th Anniversary of D-Day) and last until about Friday 24th June. The dates will be decided properly when we find out when Stena Sealink start their high season rates. The sites will be sorted out as soon as we receive the correspondence from our Irish contacts. We suggest that the first part of the rally will be held in or near Waterford so that members can visit the famous glassworks (Waterford Crystal). There could possibly be boat or coach trips arranged as well. The second part of the holiday would move into the Ring of Kerry, somewhere around Killarney, and we would try to organise something from there.

Members with dogs will be pleased to know that they can take them along and we have been told by our insurance company that a green card is NOT necessary. We would advise anyone attending to check this last point with their own insurance company.

We are told that the Fishguard to Rosslare ferry crossing is the best way but if Holyhead is nearer for you then the crossing to Dun Laoghaire is very good too. Of course, we recommend that you make your bookings through the Club by contacting *Steve Bowler* to arrange the trip through Stena Sealink.

We're not sure about the use of cheque cards and credit cards but will try to find out something about them. We may have to limit numbers to something like 30 - 40 vans maximum but again will let you know later.

Full details will be sent to those who have sent us a S.A.E. when we have decided on the definite sites etc.

Barbara & John Cox

You can take your cat along too - we did! And for those who think that with "The Troubles" going on that it might not be safe, my own experience is that you wouldn't know anything about it over there unless you were close to the border. You may be asked on your return to this country if you have been near the border but that is all.

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* **Cross Stitch Embroidery** *
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I mentioned that *Betty and Joe Jacobs* had been photographing various vans so that they could manufacture these patterns for you to embroider. They have received several requests for their designs but have not yet been able to do anything about them for two reasons. First - they were enjoying an extended touring holiday and have only just returned. Second - they have sent the film(s) away for processing and are awaiting the results.

They did not intend to get involved with the mailing of the final designs. What they will do is to send copies of each one to me when it is ready. I can then arrange for members to get a copy at a small charge for copying, postage, packing and a contribution to Club funds. It won't be too expensive, I can assure you.

In the meantime, those who have sent a stamped addressed envelope to *Betty & Joe* will received a copy of a circular letter

which says more or less what is shown here. Others will understand why they have had no reply so far. Some people have asked for a design for a very early, or even a "one-off" model. If our friends do not have a picture of such vehicle they will endeavour to photograph it/them at a future rally.

So please be patient. I'll let you know when the designs are available. Don't forget that the full designs shows which colours are suggested for which parts of the pattern. These I had to leave out in the Newsletter because of space limitations and print size problems.

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☐ Ladder Guards ☐

Les Davies has kindly offered three of his ladder guards to the Club. These will be used as competition prizes so that you can all have a chance of getting one. *Les* tells me that his manufacture of these guards is really taking off now, particularly as they are available for most makes of motor caravan and not just Auto-Sleepers. Even if he hasn't got the exact size readily available all he seems to need to know is the size of the ladder and he can make a suitable guard. No doubt in the future we shall see more and more of these on the ladders at the back of all types of van. Won't it be good to be able to think - "That's made by one of OUR members!"

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ABC 123 D

Index Marks

D 321 CBA

Whilst "en-Trunched" in the van at the rally in Norfolk I got to musing idly over registration numbers and wondered how many unusual, personal or funny number existed amongst our membership.

I'm really pleased with my JRB, the "JR" covering my 23 years in the oil industry or as the junior *Brindle* brother. Did the *Peacocks* find it an uplifting experience travelling in BRA? Do the *Strouds* XEL wherever they go? Are the *Mitchells* always in the PNK? Perhaps we need to ask *Pauline* or *Peter Cruse* if it's TRU about *Stanley Tyler's* CTV? *Gordon Denham* told how his grand-daughter remembered the registration of PJL on his new car. She reckoned it stood for "Pizza, Jelly and Lemonade". We know who spoils the kids now, *Gordon*.

There must be a lot more, maybe our members will let us know through the Newsletter.

Bob Brindle

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Some of Life's GOLDEN RULES

1. The FEMALE always makes the RULES.
2. The RULES are subject to change at any time without prior notification.
3. No MALE can possibly know all the RULES
4. If the FEMALE suspects that the MALE know most of the RULES she must immediately change some or all of the RULES.
5. The FEMALE is never wrong.
6. If the FEMALE is wrong it is because of a flagrant misunderstanding which was the direct result of something the MALE said or did wrong.
7. If RULE 6 applies, the MALE must immediately apologise for causing the misunderstanding.
8. The FEMALE can change her mind at any given point in time.
9. The MALE must never change his mind without express written consent from the FEMALE.
10. The FEMALE has every right to be angry or upset at any time.
11. The MALE must remain calm at all times, unless the FEMALE wants him to be angry or upset.
12. The FEMALE must not, under any circumstances, let the MALE know whether or not she wants him angry or upset.
13. The MALE is expected to read the FEMALE mind at all times.
14. The MALE who doesn't abide by the RULES can't take the heat, lacks backbone and is a wimp.
15. Any attempt to document the RULES may result in actual bodily harm.
16. If the FEMALE is undergoing PMT all RULES are null and void.

[I am indebted to our Treasurer, who's name I shall keep secret, for these words of wisdom. Ed.]

WANTED

MINUTES SECRETARY

Due to new work commitments, I am finding it impossible to make sufficient time to get the Committee Meeting minutes completed and issued in good time after the meetings.....

Is there someone there who is able to step in and help?

We meet roughly every two months on Saturday afternoon, usually in the Midlands area. The Club will pay reasonable expenses incurred for travelling, site fees etc. but you provide the time!! We try to ensure there is something for partners to do whilst the meeting takes place and there is time for a social gathering too, even if we aren't at a rally.

Initially, you would be co-opted onto the Committee until the A.G.M. at which point you can stand for election and, if successful, have a post on the Committee for a further two years.

If you feel that this might interest you, please telephone me to discuss. The next meeting is on 27th November in Solihull.

Carol Bowler, Secretary.
Tel/Fax: 021 745 8369

Incidentally, if you might be interested in joining the Committee, but not as Minutes Secretary, I shall be happy to talk to you and answer any questions (The A.G.M. will soon be here again!).

AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB

RALLY SUPPLEMENT

November 1993 - January 1994

Please make your cheque payable to the Marshal BY NAME and send it with the booking slip AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE, preferably at least 14 days before the rally. Late deciders please telephone the marshal first.

26th - 28th November 1993. Abbey Wood Caravan Club site, London.

Fees: £18.10 per couple for the weekend. Electrics £1.50 per night. Rally fee £1.50.

Bookings to:- Mr A J Claxton, 13 Albany Mansions, Upper Maze Hill, St Leonards on Sea, East Sussex TN38 0YD. Telephone: 0424 714 915

Directions: Leave A2 at Danson Interchange onto A221 signposted Bexley Heath. Follow international Caravan Site signs to Abbey Wood site.

Ideal site for visiting Greenwich, Docklands, Thames Barrier and London.

CHRISTMAS RALLY, 24th-27th December 1993 Hidden Valley, Ilfracombe, Devon.

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

This rally is fully booked.

January 21st-23rd, 1994 Milestone C P Great North Road, Cromwell, NEWARK, Notts

Fees: £5.50 per unit per night including electricity at all pitches. Rally fee £1.50
This rally is limited to 25 vans.

Bookings to:- Mr M G Robinson, 16 Maid Marian Avenue, Bilsthorpe, Nr NEWARK, Notts NG22 8SR. Telephone:- 0623 870 635

Directions:- From North or South on A1 towards Newark. Turn off for Cromwell. Site about 5 miles North of Newark.

Meal on site on Saturday night - Hot Soup, Pie & Peas, Hot Mince Pies. Charge £1.50 per head.

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. RALLY SLIP

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

PLEASE COMPLETE BOTH SIDES OF FORM!

A.S.O.C. RALLY SLIP

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

PLEASE COMPLETE BOTH SIDES OF FORM!

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.

BLOCK CAPITALS, PLEASE

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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.

This reminds me of the very old rhyme:

"Women may have many faults.
Men have only two.
Every [censored] thing they say
and everything they do!"
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Talbot Overheating

Chris Clayton telephoned with a problem regarding his Talbot Express. Apparently the cylinder head gasket was changed recently and since then the engine has been overheating rather badly, so much that he had to be taken home from Bradford to Carlisle on a transporter provided by National Breakdown. The overheating seems to occur mainly when the engine is working hard, such as on a hill or when travelling fairly quickly. He has been back to the garage on several occasions and they have checked various ideas but so far without success. He has also noticed that the temperature gauge, which used to give a fairly steady reading except in traffic jams, now appears to fluctuate rather more than he would expect. He wonders if anyone who has "greater mechanical knowledge of the Talbot" could give him any answers to this problem. He went on to ask about the old favourite, tyre pressures. The Talbot handbook suggests pressures of around 60-65 lbs but he cannot find a gauge which will go as high as that. His telephone number, if you can help, is 0228 32 150.

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Gyd's Dilemma

I must admit that I was amused by this item and it reminds me of one of my own.

After a shopping trip, one fine day,
Arthur parked our van in our parking bay.
My wheelchair from the van he takes
Then helps me on it, after checking the brakes.
I released my brakes so *Arth.* could push.
My chair moved quickly. I thought "What's the rush?"
Then voices from behind. I heard *Arth* say
"Lovely to see you. Didn't expect you today".
We all realised then I was going it alone.
Gosh, what a way of hurrying home.
They all came to my aid, I'm pleased to say,
But seeing our family made our day!

Please also tell *Syd* that we had no problems replacing the roof vent we damaged under the tree at the Whitchurch rally. We called at Gailey Caravans on our way home, bought one and *Arthur* fitted it the next day. So everything turned out fine after an enjoyable rally.

Maisie & Arthur Beardsmore

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Take heart, *Syd*, you are not alone in being forgotten! 30 years ago *Frank and I* were going to a dance. I was all dressed up to the nines with my long dress and a hair-do. *Frank* went to get the car saying "I'll meet you at the front door." Around the corner came the car and drove right past me. It was not until he met up with our friends (3 miles down the road) and was asked "Where's *Winifred?*" that he realised I was missing. He will never live it down. December sees our Ruby wedding so I must have forgiven him.

One of the forgotten people

Winifred Hopkinson

P.S. I wonder how many more of us there are>

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SPAIN

Lesley [Seccatore] and I would like to thank everybody who took the trouble to phone or write to give us advice regarding our trip to Spain. It all proved to be quite invaluable. We managed to drive from Dieppe through France and on down to Orba in Spain and back again quite uneventfully. Apart from getting lost once or twice which was only to be expected, I suppose, on our first trip abroad. Once again, many thanks to our very helpful Club Members.

Jackie Cooley

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Arry.



The Kennel

Me da lephth thee larst noosleter onn a lowe serfis wile e whent too make sum cawfee, ann it was oapn att payje phiftean. Ar ewe taykin thee Mickee hout ov mee an ori thee uvver dawgs wot kan right prope an av bin edifikated too an eye standerd? Mie too mayts an mee wil cum loockin four yew iff yew ar.

Yew av 'ad itt nowe. Eye woz gowin two rite an tell ewe abart thee madd iddiyot wot reee rekd reek smashd hup hour Arminie

earr kar kerr fing, butt eye doant phinck eye will nowe. No wot eye meen, 'Arry?

Hi remayne

Hempress Hesmerekder,

orlseyw knoan has M.B.B. (Muvver's Blond Bimbow) or yewsyewerly Oy Yew!

Pee Ess. Mie dadd sedd ewe woz knot taykin thee Mickee sew ittz orlrite. E sedd yew woz elping thee Frumill!

Yore frend

Emm Bee Bee



(Er Marc)

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Information, Please

In June 1990 I bought a VW Trident with which I was very pleased and later (1991) I added to my equipment a "Harrison Side Drive-Away Awning" purchased from Davans Caravans, Weston-super-Mare. They also supplied me with the "J" section aluminium with which to "Clip it to the Camper" and all was well. That is until attending the Club and Company Rally at Stratford-on-Avon in July 1992 when my wife and I succumbed to the temptation of the VW Trident on the T4 base with a Diesel engine. We took delivery in November 1992. What a wise decision we made and the difference has to be experienced to be appreciated. Apart from the difference in mpg which is at the moment averaging 38.5!

My problem is attaching the awning to the new van. Visiting Davans again for some more of the "J" section we were greeted with "We can't get it". Full stop. Tried another company with the same reply but was offered the advice "Try Harrison's direct" which I did and made a personal visit. They told me the same but did supply me with an alternative which I was told would work. However I have not used it as when offering up the plastic strip which is used to connect the canvas to the "J" section rail I found that it would only rest on the top of it and not clip down as it did on the original. So with any wind it would just lift off. Also I am more than reluctant to drill holes in anything unless I am more than sure that what I am doing is correct so the larger section "J" angle is lying unused.

Can someone offer advice please? Is there a better awning?

Mervyn Potter.

I can understand the reluctance to make holes in things and also the pleasure being gained from the T4. Can anyone help, please? *Mervyn's* address is "Bibury", 5 Sunnyside Road, Clevedon, Avon, BS21 7TE and his telephone number is 0275 873 315 if you can.

Mervyn also started his letter as "Dear 'Sir' Harry" but as I said in a previous Newsletter my name hasn't (yet) appeared in the honours list. So while I may be "dazed", I haven't been "knighted"!

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Scandinavia
and off-site camping

We have been lucky enough to spend a memorable three months touring Scandinavia this year. Briefly our route was to Gotebord, the Norwegian E6 as far as the NordKapp, Finland E4 to northern Sweden, the Baltic coast including the Gota canal and Oland island. Total mileage 5,000. If anyone else is planning to visit all or part of these areas next year we shall be happy to pass on to them the information we have collected. The trip cost us a total of £3,000.00; the major expense being petrol which was about £4.00 - £4.50 per gallon! This cost negative apart, it was a great journey that we shall always remember. Go if you can. The roads in all areas were good even in the far north and Scandinavia is still a safe country in which to camp off-site and there are many beautiful places in which to do so. Wild camping is made easier in some areas by the provision of chemical closet emptying facilities attached to the toilets of rest areas and every garage will have water hoses for refilling your tanks. The subject of off-site (or wild) camping is raised fairly frequently in the motor caravanning press and is not always approved of - for some very good reasons. It is, however, widely practised abroad and there must be others in the Club as well as ourselves who enjoy it where it is appropriate and try to be responsible about it. Could we perhaps help each other with ideas and information?

The camp sites we did use in Scandinavia were of the 3 star variety and they usually had a high standard of facilities which were fine, provided that the site was not busy. But the standards did not always apply to the grounds and some sites did not control overcrowding or noise too well. The Scandinavian camping culture is more relaxed than our own, overall, so one must "take the rough with the smooth" I suppose.

Our Talisman gave us no problems except for getting grit in the brakes which, according to the garage, has "scarred" a pad. At one point in northern Norway we saw German tourists comprehensively

washing the wheels of their campers with a hose. Does anyone know if it is possible (or desirable) to flush grit out of brake pads by this method?

Our only mishap was a dental one and *Eileen Kellard* can report that the Swedish dental service is kind, efficient and cheaper than the British version!

Janet Sutterby

Wild camping has only been frowned upon in recent years in this country mainly due to the "New Age Travellers" and the like who are trying to ruin it for the rest of us. It is also not recommended in certain areas, usually around the Mediterranean, because of problems which may arise with local louts. But if there are enough vehicles parked together it seems that all may be well when abroad.

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Chairman's Chat

Winifred & I have just spent most of the day at the Caravaner Salon 93 in Essen, Germany. This show is housed in 17 different halls in the Exhibition Centre and this year had more motor and trailer caravans than ever before so it was rather cramped. Next year it will be held in Dusseldorf in July and August.

There were over 220 different motor caravans and about 120 trailer vans, all shapes, sizes, base vehicles and prices. Those we saw ranged from about £16,000 to £108,000 - or the equivalent in Deutsch Marks - but as far as we could see from the catalogue there was only one U.K. manufacturer exhibiting.

Many conversions used the double opening rear doors to gain access to the rear of the fridge, sink and double burner stove (none had ovens) while in others there was direct access to the toilet compartment. We thought that this use of the rear doors was a loss because we find them most useful for access.

Internal woodwork was, for the most part, lighter than in previous years and this gave the appearance of more space. Some vans had only plastic surfaces and edging but didn't give the appearance of being very serviceable.

Many manufacturers had kept their prices low, obviously to attract buyers, but then the extras such as hot water, water pump, fresh and waste water tanks etc. raised the price by a frightening amount. It cost about £1,000+ to have these included and you were

expected to be satisfied with holes cut into the internal fittings to allow pipes and cables to be fitted. Presumably these would be boxed in later. Some vans had external lockers to hold three pairs of skis, ski poles and boots. This was considered to be a big selling point! For an extra amount, but we couldn't find out how much, blown air could be introduced into the locker to dry off your equipment. One dealer said you could fit 3 crates of beer into these lockers during the summer - no doubt cold air could be blown in to keep it cool.

I did notice that nearly all the grey water tanks, slung in the various chassis members, had large screw bungs which would allow full cleaning of the tank. All the fresh water tanks were installed inside the van to prevent freezing up in the winter. There were fewer Accessory Shops and we missed looking at these as usually there were many new things that interest us. On the other hand I didn't spend much!

During our holiday in Germany we have seen many more motor caravans than in previous years and fewer towed vans. Mostly, now, trailer vans are left on camping sites for the season and we have even seen motor caravans left too. Certainly more Germans are changing over to motor vans and at the Exhibition you could see that well known makers are now making more motor vans than trailers.

Many camp sites now have areas set aside exclusively for motor caravans and they have good service areas with waste emptying points that you can actually use (not like some Caravan Club sites). On some sites there was a charge of DM 1 (40p) for 200 litres of fresh water through a hose pipe. It is still free if you use a bucket to fill your tank!

At a number of sites there are areas, just outside the site fences, where motor caravans can stay overnight and there are even electric points provided - wild camping with facilities! You pay the site owner less than the normal charge, have the use of the site facilities but the electricity charges were high. You can only stay one night in these areas.

Arthur Irving

Arthur sent this address to "Herrn H. Henthorne" - I think his finger must have slipped slightly. But I wonder what our postman thinks when we get these foreign letters.

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ROVING RENAULTS

Where are all the Renault Riminis and Rappports? We bought our Rapport eighteen months ago after many years of camping - proper camping that is, under canvas! - and joined the Club a year ago. Since then, in an otherwise fascinating Newsletter, there hasn't been a whisper about Renaults, except perhaps for an odd mention in the For Sale column.

And then, at our first rally at the end of September, paddling round with the ducks by the Chester Southerly By-pass, there, among all the Harmonies and Clubmans - Clubmen? - and the stray Executive, there was just one Rimini. We parked next to it, of course, just to show solidarity.

But their owners don't seem to write, do they? That accounts for this letter, just so that the Renaults get a look in. Is it that they are so happy driving down the narrowest country lanes, enjoying the deference shown by approaching vehicles which rush for the nearest passing place at the first sight of these seeming monsters, -- - so happy that they don't have time to write? Are the Renaults so fault-free that nobody wants to describe any modifications, or needs to enquire how to fit a rack for six bicycles. It certainly can't be that they feel any kind of inferiority complex - Renault are admittedly the cheapest of Auto-sleeper's range - because we found the friendliest of welcomes at the rally, just as the Newsletter so often describes. Curious, isn't it? Any thoughts?

Those ducks? They hang around at the Chester Southerly site, waiting for the kind of rain we had on the Friday night. Then they splash around in the puddles, mostly just one-duck-sized puddles, decide that a puddle on the other side of the site road is bigger and waddle across in droves. If there is a van approaching they know that ducks have priority. It was a good rally for humans, too. Thanks to *Duncan Ellis's* careful marshalling nobody got bogged down and he and *Jean* provided a variety of activities to keep everybody happy. We'll come again.

Margo & Colin Lumb

The *Lumbs* kindly provided this copy on a disc in ASCII format but unfortunately our PC couldn't read it. The disc has been formatted for a different type of machine and although the general idea of ASCII is a Standard Code somebody forgot to talk to the various machine makers. So they format their discs in different ways. We can read, usually, any ASCII disc which has been prepared on an I.B.M. compatible P.C. Also, as we've said before, we can use the particular form of word processor called LocoScript

(either I or II) on 3", 3 1/2" or 5 1/4" disc. So if you have a computing device and want to try your luck, please do so.

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In Sympathy

I have just been advised that *Mary & Bill Dakin* from Southwell, Notts. sadly lost their son who was killed in a car accident in Germany. On behalf of the Club may I extend our deepest sympathy to them.

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STOLEN VEHICLE

You will remember that I included the letter from *Les Davey* in last month's Newsletter concerning the Rambler which has been stolen from him. Unfortunately, due to finger problems no doubt, I put the wrong registration mark down for the vehicle. It should read H 887 XTO and not as previously printed. Please keep a lookout for it.

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Plymouth Motor Caravans

Dear Mr Henthorne

I thought it may be useful to your members following the sale of Southern Cross Campers to know where Mike Lewis is situated.

As you are probably aware, Mike was Sales Manager at Southern Cross and has been in the motor caravan trade since 1980 and naturally, has a wealth of experience behind him.

Mike joined the Plymouth Motor Caravans' team back in March 1993 and although still involved in the sales side of the business, he also helps organise the many shows that we attend and acts as an assistant to our customer care manager.

Best wishes to all your readers and well done on an informative publication. Please accept this cheque for your club funds.

Yours sincerely,

David J Carpenter
Partner.

[I don't think I need to say anything, except "Thank You"! Ed.]



If you have a Vaillant heater and you don't want it to freeze,
Now's the time to drain it, 'stead of sitting at your ease
Or you might be deep in water - right up to your kneest!

(The next time you switch on the pump.)

Turn on all the water taps then wait for it to flow
And when it's almost over, then give a mighty blow.
Not with your fist, but with your mouth, I thought that you would
know!

(Up the spout, of course, to get those last little drops out before
they freeze round the diaphragm - and that's expensive! You didn't
have the pump on, did you?)

Now take the knurled knob off (The drips go up your sleeve)
And put it back most carefully - this you **MUST** believe
For if by chance you lose it, the trouble you can't conceive!

(It is an Auto-Sleeper adaptation and they don't fit the Vaillant now.
They only use Carvers - and if you have a Carver none of this is
much help anyway).

FOOTNOTE: If you use the isolator tap on the Vaillant so that you
can use the cold water from the tank without the water heater
filling, remember to turn it **FULL ON** in the Spring otherwise the gas
keeps cutting out and it is very irritating!

I'm indebted to the *Daley's* for this timely reminder. If you
have the Carver water heater, the draining routine should still be
carried out by removing (and retaining!) the drain plug which you
will find at the bottom of the flue vent in the side of the van.

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Christmas Cards

Just a last minute reminder, if you haven't already written and
addressed all your cards, that there are still some of the Club cards
available. *Rita Daley* has some of designs 1 and 2 available from 46
Ulverley Green Road, Solihull, West Midlands, B92 8BQ (Tel 021 706
1816) and I understand that there may be some others still available
from our other Assistant Regalia Officers (or whatever the correct
term is). *Rita* will be able to advise you.

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Here we are again, the back page (who said "At Last!"). [It must have been me.] Your committee will be meeting before the next Newsletter and there could very easily be quite a lot to report. We anticipate one of our longer meetings - we don't really seem to have short ones. So the December Newsletter could be interesting. See you!

Your Editor

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