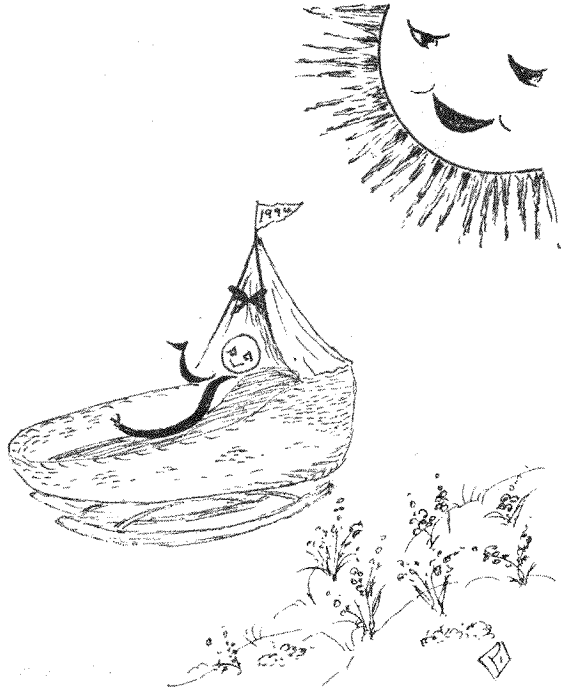


**AUTO-SLEEPER
OWNERS CLUB**



NEWSLETTER 64

JANUARY 1994

Hello.

First of all, I must apologise to anyone who wants to enter the Wordsearch puzzle in the December Newsletter. I quite forgot to say that it was a Christmas Wordsearch puzzle, so all the words relate to the festive season in some way, and to set a closing date for the receipt of entries. I understand that a couple of people have already sent answers in with lots and lots of words in their lists, some of which don't relate to Christmas at all. So to put matters right, I will now say that the closing date for receipt of entries by **Heather Tidbury will be First Post on Monday, 17th January 1994.** Two prizes will be on offer, the first for the most words which have been found, irrespective of whether they apply to Christmas or not and the second for the most words found which **do** apply to Christmas. If you haven't sent your entry in, do it now. I am amazed at the total number of words which have been found. After all, in a 20 x 20 grid there can only be 400 letters and with three snowmen that reduces it to 397. (All done without a calculator or mirrors!) I must thank *Heather* for all her work in concocting the wordsearch square and then for volunteering to accept and check the answers. By the way, you CANNOT use any of the snowmen as a letter of your choice!

It seems that the various comments about the lack of marshals has borne fruit because *Phil Daley* tells me that no sooner had he produced the list of rallies for 1994 than it was out of date. More than that, it is good to notice that some fresh names are appearing in the list of marshals and I thank you all for that.

On one of the renewal notices which *Sheila Henthorne* received was the comment that the Club was Amateur - in the very best sense of the word and may it continue so. What a wonderful compliment - it shows that the Club is doing the right sort of things which everyone wants.

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Chairman's Chat

The Committee, at their last meeting, Co-opted *Janet Sutterby* as a member until the AGM in 1994 and I welcome her.

At the AGM, *Carol Bowler*, *Sheila Henthorne*, *Harry Henthorne* and *John Tidbury* will complete their two years on the Committee and all, I am pleased to say, have agreed to stand for re-election. Additionally two names have been given to the Secretary, one of which is *Janet*, and they will be nominated for election.

It was reported to the Committee that we now have almost 1100 members (that is a van and two people as a "member") which we found most gratifying. This number must exceed the wildest dreams of *John Cox* (who started it all) and the other Founder Members.

The Sub-Committees charged with organising the Club's two main Rallies reported that much progress had been made so that both are, as usual, well planned for the enjoyment of Members.

- a. The Annual Dinner and AGM Rally will be held from Friday to Sunday, 8th - 10th April 1994, at Uttoxeter Racecourse; and
- b. The Club and Company Rally will be held at the Three Counties Showground, Malvern, from noon on Friday 22nd July to noon on Sunday 24th July 1994.

We await the Chancellor's Autumn Budget proposals (I write this in November to meet the Editor's deadline!) to see what effect it may have on their planning and any increases in the VAT rate will have to be passed on to Club Members, I'm afraid, but every endeavour will be made to minimise any increase.

For the Club and Company Rally the Sub-Committee intend to have a similar lay-out in the Severn Hall. May I ask for a volunteer, please, to take over the running of the Bric-a-Brac stall from *Barbara Cox* who, after two years, wishes to take a rest but she is willing to assist whoever volunteers - names to me, please. It is intended that the selling stalls and the hobbies stands will be open on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning ONLY so that those who man (or woman) these stalls and stands can have the afternoon free.

The Three Counties Showground will not be operating their Caravan Site in 1994 but there are Camping and Caravanning Club and Caravan Club sites about two miles away. There are also Certificated Sites and Locations as well as commercial sites in the area should anyone wish to stay near Malvern before the commencement of the Rally. For those who wish to stay over on the Sunday night, after the Rally, a special rate has been negotiated for that one night only.

The Showground Manager has written to me saying that although they are not operating their Caravan Site in 1994 they will, as a one-off, open the site at the time of the Spring Gardening show (6th - 8th May 1994) when there will be a special charge of £4.12 per unit per night plus £8.00 for a three-day ticket for the Show. Charges include VAT at 17.5% and this may change dependent

upon any VAT increase in the budget. In 1993 several members took advantage of the offer and enjoyed three great days. When I have more information in the New Year I will include it in a future Newsletter.

Winifred and I wish you all a bright and prosperous New Year in which to enjoy your motor-caravanning.

Arthur Irving

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Rally Report - with a Difference!

Some time ago I remember an article in the Newsletter asking for a different type of travel report instead of the usual "we've been here & there" type. Some years ago my wife and I planned to take our motor cruiser across the Channel along with other boat club members but I was taken ill some weeks before the event and it was decided that it would be unwise to attempt the trip in a small boat.

To avoid total disappointment, we decided to take our A-S over on the ferry and meet other boat club members at the harbour in Calais. This is a report written by my wife for the boat club magazine and it may be of interest to fellow members of ASOC.

Rosemary & Brian Perrins

The Calais Cruise

(as experienced by the Land Cruiser)

We planned to go in AQUAGEM on the Calais summer cruise,
So we studied navigation and made a shopping list for booze.
But Skipper Brian was poorly and AQUAGEM not ready
So we packed our motor caravan and went across by ferry.

To the Belgian port, Zeebrugge, and via Oostende to drive
Along the coast to Calais to see our friends arrive.
The wind was gusting Force 6 as we walked along the quay.
It didn't look inviting on the heaving, rolling sea.
No boats today from Lensbury. Relief as well as sorrow.
So back to Chateau Camping. We'll try again tomorrow.

A slight improvement, Monday, but will they come so far?
And then we see AQUARIUS, KIE-LOU and CAMP DE MAR!
With their Lensbury colours flying they come in with the tide.
We greet them at the mooring - they've had a bumpy ride.

A chance to stand on land again. Some time for relaxation. Our RT set helps van and boats keep in communication. Jeffrey comes back from the town, he's laden down with shopping. An invite then, from CAMP DE MAR. Soon champagne corks are popping.

We all enjoy our Calais meal, a friendly family venue. They bring more bread, and still more bread, as we go thro' the menu. Now "Bon Voyage" to all the crews, to Peter, Jack and Jeffrey. Our Land Cruiser is heading South. We'll see you back at Lensbury.

I was amused by the expression of a "bumpy ride" because somehow we don't seem to associate boats and bumps. Excluding the hovercraft, of course. The only time I've travelled across the channel on one of those we seemed to be constantly hitting kerbstones all the way over. Must have been fairly solid waves.

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Uaillant Water Heaters

We have now drained the Talisman water system for the cold spell which is, no doubt, just round the corner. Roll on next March! Having read with interest the item about taking precautions with this heater you may be interested to learn that we did all the things mentioned but water poured out when the van was commissioned in the following Spring!

What we discovered was that inside the front cover, where the take off points are for the hot and cold taps, should the heater be installed over a sink, there are two plastic plugs. Each of these plugs has a very small rubber washer in the end to make a water-tight seal when they are screwed in. The little jokers froze and distorted the rubber seal, causing a minor flood when we refilled the water system. They are NOT easy to purchase. The "Jacobs Rule" now is to remove them using a long reach 8mm Allen key, and put them in the knife drawer for safe keeping. After MANY telephone calls to the manufacturer I finally found a spares stockist in Malvern Link. They are: Sharpe and Sons, 251 Worcester Road, Malvern Link, Worcestershire, WR14 1SZ. The telephone number is 0684 892 878 and the Fax number is 0684 892 587. The part number for the plugs is 10-9911.

Incidentally, the water heater is full of fibre washers and if you have to service it at any time it might make things a bit easier if you have a complete set. The part number for these is 98-1002

Betty & Joe Jacobs

M.A.D Auxiliary Springs

I was delighted when Motor Caravan Magazine published my reply to an enquiry they had had requesting information about these springs. I have a Talisman II and was advised by the spring suppliers that heavy duty springs should be fitted to motor caravans. After sending off my cheque I received the springs by return of post and my friend and I fitted them in an hour. They were very easy to fit as the procedure is fully explained in the maker's instructions. I must add that a pair of spring compressors are needed for this task.

My reason for fitting the springs was that I have a motor cycle rack on the back of the Talisman and sometimes carry a 125cc motor bike. Despite having quarter elliptical helper springs fitted I had noticed that this extra weight on the back lifted the front end slightly making the steering very light and a bit unstable, especially in cross winds and whilst being overtaken by heavy vehicles on motorways. (I removed the helper springs before fitting the M.A.D. Springs.)

The following fortnight *Enid and I* travelled 730 miles on varying roads from Devon into Worcestershire, Shropshire, Hereford and the mountains of Mid Wales and I immediately noticed a marked improvement. The vehicle remained level and stable at all times. We have since travelled many miles without the bike on the back and again the definite improvement was noticed in the handling and stability, particularly in heavy motorway traffic.

Although only having these springs fitted since July the marked improvement in handling means that I would not hesitate to recommend them. At a cost of £100.00 they are well worth fitting. I hope that the above is helpful and of interest to Members.

Geoff Mackey

That sounds like a very good investment for the improvement in handling. Now, who carries a small car (Fiat 500cc?) on a rack at the back?

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Talisman #2

Back in 1990 when we had Talisman #1, I was interested in the retro-fitting of Power Assisted Steering to my petrol model. In the end, it became so complicated and expensive that I decided to wait until I changed to a newer van. In July this year, on our way back from a Scottish trip, we decided to visit Brownhills at Newark.

Nothing seemed too much trouble to them and after looking at every other make, including test drives, my wife and I put the Talisman GL at the top of our list. We therefore opted for the 2.5 unblown diesel version with P.A.S. A fair exchange price was agreed with changeover in September when they delivered the new van to Sussex and collected our used vehicle. I would commend the friendly way they do their business.

We have now had a short trip in the new van so herewith a few comments. The low speed torque and instant power from cold is much better for this fairly heavy vehicle. Once in 5th gear it rolls along all day at about 55 mph but of course, if slowed on a hill then one just has to be patient. The power steering makes parking so easy and the gear change is very much better. MPG about 29 which will no doubt improve as the engine frees off.

Bodywork and finish from A-S to their usual high standard but I have replaced the terrible tap on the waste tank with a straight through valve and 8 ft of flexible hose which clips up behind the rear valence. The sink will also have a trap fitted to overcome the smells. The Carver water heater works well but the long pipe runs waste hot water. The old geyser took a lot of beating, was it discontinued because of the E.C.?

Whilst at Malvern, which we enjoyed, Simonspeed removed the Air-ride suspension units which so improve this model of chassis. Stability is much improved and the constant dead weight of the heavy body is taken off the leaf springs. In his usual efficient manner, Simonspeed has since visited us at Birdham and fitted a new set to Talisman 2 at a most reasonable cost. Another supplier who deserves to succeed.

From the same pen - some Answers & Comments

Margo & Colin Lumb wondered where all the Riminis and Rapports have gone. After six years we have become accustomed to be the only Renault on a site and if there is another it doubles the numbers! We changed from a succession of Transporters over the years and have no regrets - the Rapport is always ready and willing and not in need of the advice and help so often offered or solicited in the Newsletter pages. There are two exceptions to this. First, the advice given by *Phil Daley* regarding the draining of the Vaillant water heater - the instruction about blowing the system through should be in LARGE RED CAPITALS LETTERS. [Sorry, no colour printing available - yet! Ed.]

Secondly (and inevitably back to the Talisman), the Sonabat Chantel

roof lights. These lights themselves are subject to ultra-violet degradation such that A-S had to get replacements specially imported. Then the four straps which break with use. We went to the Sonabat factory in 1991 and were given a number of these straps "gratuit" but the factory was unable to fit them. Montoir is on the North bank of the Loire, adjacent to St. Nazaire and close to a landmark Air Spatiale factory. We stayed on a municipal campsite at Savenay and borrowed the site warden's ladder to effect the exchange of straps. The problem is not to break off any of the fragile, probably brittle, parts of the rooflight frame. Subsequently, after a very fraught M6 journey in a gale, we have taped up the lights with external quality Selotape.

Norman Tamplin

I knew it! I knew someone would have the answer within the Club. And that's not all. Others have contacted *Bob Measom* (and me) with details of replacements and where to get them. I'm hoping that one of my correspondents who asked for *Bob's* telephone number will write in with the details for future publication. (Hint, HINT!)

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Ireland

As new members of ASOC we read with great interest the November 1993 issue particularly with reference to Southern Ireland. We were there for the whole month of April 1993, covered some 2,000 miles and enjoyed every minute of it. We travelled from Fishguard to Rosslare and enjoyed the hospitality of Stena Sealink.

Before boarding the ferry we were asked for identification (we gave our passports) and our reason for travelling. Our Legend was well and truly searched and sniffer dogs sniffed us over. Mirrors were passed underneath us looking for anything that shouldn't be there. We found this a bit un-nerving but had to agree that it was all necessary in present circumstances.

From the Tourist Office on the ferry terminal we bought a Camp site Information Booklet at the cost of approx. £1.00. We cashed Euro-cheques in the town and village banks and paid for petrol with our Visa cards which were also accepted in restaurants and shops (super-markets). The sites that we found open in April looked for cash in payment of their services, the majority of sites don't open until May.

Petrol was approx. £2.60 per gallon. The exchange rate was £1.00 = 1 Irish Punt. The cost of living is slightly higher than our own but bar meals are roughly the same as in England. We highly

recommend the Guinness! Village pubs are lovely but don't look for English standards of decor in some of them.

The Irish people are wonderfully friendly and so helpful and we guarantee that you will return home looking forward to returning to that lovely green island again. By the way, the reason that Ireland is known as "The Emerald Isle" is because it rains a lot - or it did in April this year.

From Rosslare we followed the coastline travelling west then north. The further north that you travel, the more the trees and telegraph poles lean to the East, the strong Atlantic winds having blown them to that position. That rugged West Coast of Ireland is a wonder to behold. At Killala we turned South and East leaving Ireland via Dun Laoghaire (pronounced Dun Leary if you don't already know!) and arrived in Holyhead having had a wonderful holiday.

Incidentally, we were advised by "the locals" not to leave our vehicle unattended in the larger towns, e.g. Dublin, Cork, etc., but to use public transport and leave the vehicle safely on the camp site.

Doreen and David Palmer.

And a brief note from *Emily & Frank George* tells me that they have travelled thousands of miles in both North and South of Ireland and it is just fabulous. BUT they say it is expensive and there is no Calor gas available in Eire. Petrol problems often consist of "We're not open until my hubby gets back from work at about 7.00 pm" - so fill up wherever and whenever you can! Take Irish Punts with you or you will pay dearly.

Both these letters echo my own experience within the forty shades of green. The folk are friendly but can be disconcerting. We had pulled up on the side of the road for a quick bite to eat when the van door was opened and a passer by enquired "You wouldn't have a shotgun on board, now, would you?" Needless to say we hadn't, but to this day I still wonder what would have happened if we had had one! We also found a lovely, small village called Golden where the local garage owner, when asked if there was a camp site around, summoned his son (we think it was) who led us about 100 yards to a field by the river and invited us to use that. When we tried to pay the following morning we received a smile and a shake of the head. But at no time did the garage owner actually speak to us.

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From a new(er) Member!

Approaching as we are the end of our first year as A-S owners and Club members we are pleased to record no regrets on

either count. We had a wonderful holiday touring France in May/June - positive luxury in comparison with previous years in our 1973 VW (bless her heart, she served us well for fourteen years). From correspondence in this and other publications it seems that we are not the only van owners who get emotionally attached to their vehicles, even to the extent of giving them a soppy name. Our first was "Herman" - a 1962 split-screen VW. Next came "Bertha" (she was blue and had four berths...well!). Our new 'baby' presented something of a problem. No inspiration, no help from the letters on the number plate. We almost decided on "Teafor" - short for "Tea For Two" (Trident model T4 - we being the two - get it? ... well, never mind!) In the end we decided that it would take too much explaining so we settled instead for "ILSA", i.e. Irene and Lionel's Super Auto-Sleeper. Anticipating the groans of derision, what about a small competition for the most original, soppiest or whatever name derivation. There must be some real gems amongs the membership!

The foregoing is a complete deviation from the original intention in writing which was prompted by the item on Tyre Pressure Gauges in the December issue. Does anyone have any experience of the small compressors for inflating tyres which operate from the cigarette lighter socket? Any comments or recommendations would be welcome.

Lionel LeVie

So far as the names are concerned, we can say you are most definitely not alone. My first van (self-roughly-converted) was called "Mimi" from the registration letters of MM. Then came "Biddy" the Bedford - also from the letters. Next arrived a Debonair (which we still have) called "Expy". The index mark is XPL 957 G so you can see where that came from. In addition, she is sometimes knows as "Mary Poppins" because she is fitted with Super-Calor, is made of Fragile Plastic and with XPL all we have to add is "Idocious"! (Sorry!) The next van was based on the Transit chassis and was always knows as "Tranny". Then along came "Kim" our Bedford based A-S Clubman with the registration letters of WKM. Now our Clubman GL is knows as "Gemima" from the GMX letters on the plate. There must be many others with similar stories (! hope!).

Several of our members use the small compressors - we have one on board. Normally I prefer to use the commercial air lines (preferably at Tesco's who don't charge for the air!) but the compressor is there for safety. A previous version, rather at the cheaper end of the scale, broke down on us and when investigated was found to mix a plastic cog with a metal cog. The result was that the plastic wore down extremely quickly and refused to take

AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB
RALLY SUPPLEMENT
February - April 1994

11th/13th February; Valentine's Rally, Grouse & Claret Public House & Caravan Park, Rowsley, near MATLOCK, Derbys. Hard standing, electric hook-up, meals, toilets, showers. Heated family room for our use over the weekend.

Site fee: £5 per unit per night. Rally fee: £1.50

Booking slip to: Mr J F Maltby, 28 Lansdowne Avenue, Newbold, Chesterfield, S41 8PL. Telephone: 0246 558 224

Cheque payable to: J F Maltby.

Directions: From junction 28 of M1 follow signs to Matlock then North on A6 towards Bakewell. Site approx 6 miles at Rowsley, on right.

Chatsworth House and Gardens nearby. **This rally is limited to 29 vans & is FULL.**

25th/27th February. The Leisure Show Rally, Alderbrook School, Blossomfield Road, Solihull, West Midlands. Coincides with the National Boat, Caravan & Leisure Show at the National Exhibition Centre (19th to 27th February). Heated classroom, water, hard standing and chemical toilet disposal available, no other facilities.

Site fee: £3.50 per unit per night. Rally fee: £1.50

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs S P Bowler, 92 Welford Road, Shirley, SOLIHULL, West Midlands B90 3HT. Telephone: 021 745 8369

Cheque payable to: S Bowler

Directions: From M42 Junction 4, take A34 towards Birmingham. Turn Right at third island (by Calendar's Restaurant) onto B4102 (Marshal Lake Road). Straight on over two islands, one set of traffic lights and another island; Alderbrook School on Right in 100 yards.

Since this is term time members MUST NOT arrive before 4.30pm on Friday

11th/13th March; College of Horticulture, Pershore, Hereford & Worcester.

Toilets, showers and clubhouse facilities. No electric hook-up. Two-course evening meal at £5.50 per head available on Saturday if booked and ordered by 26th February.

Vegetarian meal available.

Site fee: £3 per unit per night. Rally fee: £1.50

Booking slips to: Mr & Mrs A Wilkes, 33 Northwick Road, Evesham, Worcs. WR11 5AL. Telephone 0386 443 553

Cheque payable to: A Wilkes

Directions: College on A44 approx half mile East of Pershore or 6 miles West of Evesham. Signs on roadside. Enter by main drive and follow signs to Sports Field.

18th/20th March; Fell End Caravan Park, Hale, near Milnthorpe, Cumbria.

Hard standing, most (52) with electric hook-up. Terrestrial & satellite TV hook-up (fee). Heated hall for Friday & Saturday evenings & Sunday morning. Fish & Chips on Friday evening @ £1.90 per head if ordered and paid for when booking.

Site fee: £11.50 for 2 persons for weekend. Rally fee: £1.50

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs G G Wane, 2 Plantation Avenue, Arnside, Cumbria.
LA5 0HT. Telephone: 0524 761 657

Cheque payable to: G G Wane

Directions: From South leave M6 at junction 35 and drive North on A6. Just after Esso filling station on left turn left and follow signs to Fell End C P.

RESTRICTED BY SITE TO 55 VANS.

25th/27th March; The Ranch Caravan Park, Honeybourne, near Evesham, Hereford & Worcester.

Clubhouse, bar, meals, shop. A few electric hook-ups at extra cost.

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

Cotswold countryside and Cotswold Country Park, Broadway, Evesham and Tewkesbury nearby.

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs J Normandale, Tollgate Cottage, 57 Northtrade Road, Battle, East Sussex TN33 0HS Telephone: 0424 772765

Cheque payable to: J Normandale

Directions: Site entrance by railway bridge North side of Honeybourne on Broadway to Bidford-on-Avon road (Ryknield Street, unclassified).

1st/4th April; Easter Rally. Due to a serious fire at the College this rally at Chester has had to be **cancelled**. Duncan and Jean will try again!

8th/10th April; Annual Dinner and A G M Rally, Uttoxeter. See separate (yellow) booking forms enclosed with February Newsletter.

15th/17th April; Highlands End Farm, Eype, near Bridport, Dorset.

Site fee: £6.00 per unit per night. Electricity: £1.00 per night. Rally fee: £1.50

Meal on site Saturday evening. Site near Dorset Coastal Path, views over Lyme Bay.

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs M Torah, 14 Compton Road, New Milton, Hants B25 6EQ
Telephone: 0425 618 320

Cheque payable to: M Torah

Directions: Off A35 Bridport by-pass, follow signs to EYPE.

22nd/29th April; Isle of Avalon, 7-Day Holiday Rally, Glastonbury, Somerset.

Site fee: £5.00 per night including electricity (Hard standing). Rally fee: £1.50

Top class site, easy walk to town, Abbey and Tor.

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs D Lucas, Hollinghurst Court, 256 Sedlescombe Road North, St Leonards on Sea, East Sussex TN37 7JL. Phone: 0242 753 631

Cheque payable to: D Lucas.

Directions: From centre of Glastonbury take B3151 for 1,000 yards. Turn Right at SP Godney. Site on Left in 100 yards.

29th April/2nd May; Bank Holiday Rally at Burn Gliding Club, Selby and ACCEO
May Day Rally at Telford, details next month.

Rally: Date:

Your name and address (please PRINT)

..... Post code:

Membership No: Phone No: Van Reg:

Day/Time of arrival

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

Name: Phone:

Please complete both sides of the form!

Rally: Date:

Your name and address (please PRINT)

..... Post code:

Membership No: Phone No: Van Reg:

Day/Time of arrival

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

Name: Phone:

Please complete both sides of the form!

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Your name and address (please PRINT)

..... Post code:

Membership No: Phone No: Van Reg:

Day/Time of arrival

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

Name: Phone:

Please complete both sides of the form!

Is this your first A-S O C rally? Please tick box YES NO

Number of people in your van: Adults Children

Extras: Please indicate which you would like, **if available**:

Electricity: Yes No Saturday night meal if any: Yes No

Have you any special needs? Yes No If 'Yes', please specify:-

.....
Payment **MUST** accompany this slip - cheques payable to marshal.

POST FORM TO REACH MARSHAL 10 DAYS BEFORE EVENT

✂-----

Is this your first A-S O C rally? Please tick box YES NO

Number of people in your van: Adults Children

Extras: Please indicate which you would like, **if available**:

Electricity: Yes No Saturday night meal, if any: Yes No

Have you any special needs? Yes No If 'Yes', please specify:-

.....
Payment **MUST** accompany this slip - cheques payable to marshal.

POST FORM TO REACH MARSHAL 10 DAYS BEFORE EVENT

✂-----

Is this your first A-S O C rally? Please tick box YES NO

Number of people in your van: Adults Children

Extras: Please indicate which you would like, **if available**:

Electricity: Yes No Saturday night meal, if any: Yes No

Have you any special needs? Yes No If 'Yes', please specify:-

.....
Payment **MUST** accompany this slip - cheques payable to marshal.

POST FORM TO REACH MARSHAL 10 DAYS BEFORE EVENT

the drive so the compressor stopped working. It does pay to check on these items first.

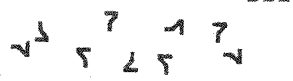


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Cross-Stitch Patterns



Betty and Joe Jacobs have been hard at work with some more patterns. The list now includes the Trophy together with the Trident and Trooper of the earlier versions with the rear engine. So now you can order these as well. Same procedure, **Two Second-class Postage Stamps** sent to me with the details of which pattern you require. Please make sure, if ordering the Trident or Trooper, that you state which version you need.



LUCKY SEVEN.



Some say seven is a lucky number and so it may be. I live in No. 49 so on that reckoning it should be a very lucky house. My birth date is 11-7-16, whose digits add up to 7. This year I had my 77th birthday on the eleventh day of the seventh month; eleven sevens are seventy seven so surely one could expect it to be a magic birthday. It was a happy day with good celebrations but nothing I would have described as truly magic; perhaps that was to come later.

On the following Saturday John, my son-in-law, and I walked up to the summit of Drum in the mountains above Llanbedr y Cennin in the Conwy valley. There was nothing special about this, we had done the same thing on New Year's Day. We had our lunch, sandwiches and half a meat pie, and contemplated the next step.

Foel-fras, about 550' higher and a mile or so away, looked forbidding but not impossible. It was about 2.30 pm and time was not on our side; soon we would have to think about returning. We decided to see how it went and pushed on down the slope to the col which separated the two peaks. On our left the mountains rolled away into the distance while on our right was the steep drop to Llyn Anafon. The wind was howling up from the lake, a bitter gale that struck a chill through to the bone. I was contemplating the virtue of having my Helly Hansen Varm suit and a pair of thick woollen mittens in my rucksack ready to put on when John spoke. "I don't think much of this, let's drop down to the lake and take the track back to the car. It will be a mile or so longer, but it is an easier route." Thankfully I agreed with him. As soon as we were off the ridge the wind lessened, life was easier and yet there was something curious about it.

"Drop down to the lake" was perhaps not the most fortunate of expressions. Over 880' feet below and little more than half a mile away it was almost a drop, a one in three descent over a mass of bilberry shrubs. These made a complete carpet, hiding the rocks and boulders left by a careless glacier, and concealing the chasms where the rivulets had cut through the peat and down to the rock below. It was a knee aching, ankle twisting experience far more exhausting than a simple stroll up to the summit of Drum had been.

As we descended, the mountains seemed to rise as a wall around us cutting us off from the rest of the world. We were being enclosed, engulfed in a special world of our own, a world where anything could happen. And it did. As we approached the lower levels we saw a pony. Not one of your sturdy Welsh mountain cobs but a small and delicate white horse whose long white mane and tail were flowing in the wind. On our approach it looked up and most daintily made its way towards us and stopped a few yards away. It was almost as though it was guided by an unseen fairy rider.

So it was, for this was the mount of the Fairy Princess of the Mabinogian, a fairy princess invisible to ordinary mortals, although when she came close to us I could just see the faint shine of her golden headband. Her voice was rich and surprisingly deep for so slender a figure. "Seisnig, strangers, from whence come you, and what is your business in this my land?" "We are from Llanbedr y Cennin, we have seen the splendours of Drum and Foel-fras, and would crave the boon of a drink from Llyn Anafon." "You speak our place names so well that your request is granted. Go your way and drink your fill. But remember I may still exact a price from you."

On the shore of the lake we rested awhile, drank our fill of the waters and of the splendid scenery around us. Refreshed and rested we went on our way, still somewhat intrigued by the suggestion that the fairy princess had said she might extract a price from us. Later on I was to find that she had.

We had taken a very special meat pie on the mountains with us, a delicious combination of meat and dried dates and prunes. Food for the gods it had seemed when we had the first half in the shelter of the cairn on Drum. The rest had been saved for later on if it should be needed, but when I unpacked, back at the camp, that second half was not to be found. The fairy princess had indeed ensured that it became food for the gods.

Perhaps I shouldn't have cooked it in a 7" tin!

Nial Reynolds

This item has been on the spike for a little while, just waiting for the space to print it. As a result, it prompted the following follow-up!

Mountain Magic

I see you have scorned the last bit about the fairies and the disappearance of the meat pie. Perhaps you don't believe in fairies. Watch it!

How do you account for this, boyo. We have an Ultimate Cruise control which is perfectly reliable, even along the Expressway from Chester to Conwy. But then it would be, that road isn't Welsh, it is a contraption of the English occupying powers. On our last visit we returned through Wales in the proper sense, along the A.5 from Llanrwst to Llangollen and so to Shrewsbury. It is a pretty winding road and not much use for the Cruise Control, but there are some straights where it looked as though it would be helpful. Each time I tried it, it refused to "lock on". I cursed it and wondered where the fault might lie. I tried it at least half a dozen times and it refused every time. That is until we were safely out of the mountains and the realms of the fairies, then it resumed normal duty and has continued ever since!

Nial Reynolds

I don't scorn fairies, ghoulies, ghosties or anything that goes boomp in the night! As Willy Waggedagger said "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in your philosophy". Just think, a century ago people would have laughed at the idea of everyone having a telephone, many having mobile versions, television, radio and computers. Yet today they are commonplace. So fairies, although not yet proven beyond doubt, cannot and should not be scorned.

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On Changing Fans

We are new members of the Club so we have little experience as to whether this contribution repeats earlier reports. The Editor can use his blue pencil as he desires. [Don't worry, he will! Ed.] Following many years of tenting and two of caravanning, we bought our first motor caravan 20 years ago - a mirage on a BMC J4 base - cramped and slow, 45 mph was really spee-ee-eeding. It had one advantage - it had automatic transmission.

Whist driving it around France I noticed the Renault Traffic van and thought that, with its low floor, it would make an ideal vehicle

for a motor caravan. Eight years ago we retired and decided we must have a better, faster, van if we were going to see all the places we wanted to visit. We chose the RV50 non-automatic and it served us well.

In January 1993, as we were on our way to the Cotswolds, we decided to call in at you-know-where and ask them the easiest way to run wires from front to back at roof level in order to fit extra speakers at the rear for the new radio I had been given for Christmas. On seeing the array of vans we decided that it was time for a change to a new van, preferably with an automatic gearbox. So we picked up the latest information and the names of dealers in our area. We consulted the magazines and dealers and came to the conclusion that the only van that would fit under our carport and give satisfactory headroom without raising the roof was the updated RV50 - the Rimini. Alas, it was not available as an automatic. The order was placed in February with delivery anticipated in April but it was not to be. We finally took delivery on 2nd August (we didn't fancy getting knocked down in the rush on Sunday 1st). "Why so long, in the present economic climate?" you may well ask. It was not the fault of the dealers nor of A-S (although perhaps one of them should have kept the odd van in hand just in case we came along!) - it was a French strike which caused the shortage of Traffics, or should I say, Primas.

Mair and William Copsey

There is quite a lot more about various mods which the *Copsey's* have made to the vehicle which I shall keep "on the spike" for the time being.

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Phil's Rabbit **Motor Caravan Security**



Recently *Dr A A (Sandy) Mudie* of Whitby asked for assistance with locating a firm who could supply and fit extra locks to his Rambler. I sent him what information I could find in very old Newsletters but, as you will see from his reply, that was pretty useless. To bring things up to date I can do no better than to quote from his letter:-

"The firms that you quoted have not been of much help; Keying Systems Ltd of Wetherby are no longer in business and I could find no trace of Simba Security Systems in Yellow Pages for either Newcastle or Leeds. Safeway Security Products of Birkenhead do exist and actually market the type of lock required, although I understand that the basic radial lock involved is manufactured by

Lowe and Fletcher of Bilston, West Midlands.

It is not easy to obtain 4 locks suitable for the Talbot panel van all with the same key. I am pleased to relate that at long last I have four such locks fitted to my Rambler and I am particularly happy with the workmanship and the end result. The work has been done by Trevor Park of Charnley and Park, 123 Park Road, Hartlepool, Cleveland TS26 9HS. Telephone:- 0429 222100. The locks cost over £60 for the four and now that he has done my van he could do subsequent vans well within a day for an inclusive charge of around £120, plus VAT."

Our thanks to *Sandy* for his untiring efforts and especially for letting us have the results.

Rally Booking Details

The number of rallies being run in 1994 looks like being a record for the Club, as it should be. I am glad to say that several volunteer marshals have come forward (we still need more!) and are keeping *Tony [Jones]* and *John [Edden]* busy sorting out available dates. More rallies means more work in the background to ensure things run as smoothly as possible; revised details of the events will need to be circulated quite frequently. Since we have two rally co-ordinators plus *Jeff Worley* who lends a hand in the south-west, it has been decided to have a central reference point or collator who will keep the master list of rallies. This will be compiled from information supplied by *Tony, John and Jeff* and revised lists will be sent to them as changes occur (for example, if *Tony* agrees a date with you, both *John* and *Jeff* need to know). In this way we hope to avoid clashes of dates and remove any uncertainty over availability of dates.

This needs only one change in the procedure as far as marshals are concerned and that crops up after the date and site have been agreed with the co-ordinators - instead of sending details of facilities available, the directions to site, limit to number vans imposed by the site, if any, and site fees, etc., to *Tony*, please send them to the clearing house. No prizes for guessing that that is me, *Phil Daley*, 46 Ulverley Green Road, Solihull, West Midlands, B92 8BQ (Phone:- 021 706 1816).

This ties in with another slight change in organisation which I'll mention as a matter of interest; I have taken over the preparation of the rally insert which goes out with the Newsletter. This will enable *Harry* to concentrate on editing the Club Newsletter. Since I will have the latest information (it is hoped!), the supplement will be right

up to date. I probably don't need to suggest to marshals that any late changes in the organisation of their events should be given to me as soon as possible; I may be able to extend the deadline for the inclusion of changes to the 23rd of the previous month but we'll have to see how things work out.

Tank Troubles

Ted Veness has had a real saga of problems with the petrol tank on his Rambler; the first one started to leak when filled to the brim, as in getting as large a helping as possible of cheap French super market essence. When the tank was removed a number of small holes were found in the top and these could not be repaired satisfactorily so a new tank was fitted. Ted was happy to say that Peugeot Talbot supplied the tank free of charge despite the vehicle being about four years old at the time. Then problems arose which seemed to indicate fuel starvation, even with plenty in the tank. Over a period of several months all the usual probable causes were examined and ruled out. Ted decided to get down to things with the van on his ramps and found the tank was caving in so he took the tank off and had it blown back into shape by a local specialist. When he came to refit the tank, *Ted* found that a green tube, about 5/8" in diameter, which runs from the top of the tank to near the top of the filler pipe, was crushed flat where it ran between the tank and a transverse chassis member. This was obviously meant to vent petrol vapour when the tank was being filled and, more to the present point, to allow air to enter as petrol was pumped out to the engine. When the tube, and the German-made valve fitted in it, was put right *Ted's* troubles were over (he hopes!).

Phil Daley

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GAS



Sheila and I went to the Caravan Show at Earls Court in early December this year. We gave it a miss last year because we thought that there wouldn't be too much to see which would be of great interest to us. This year we found out that it was a correct assumption - there wasn't a lot to look at which was very interesting. Of course, we had to have a look at the new Trophy and found it a very nice conversion.

But the most interesting item throughout the whole show, so far as we were concerned, was on the Calor Gas stand. Would you believe it, they are at long last bringing out the 6 kg cylinder filled with Propane. We spoke to a lady on their stand who told us that it would be available in "Spring 1994" and that Calor have been working

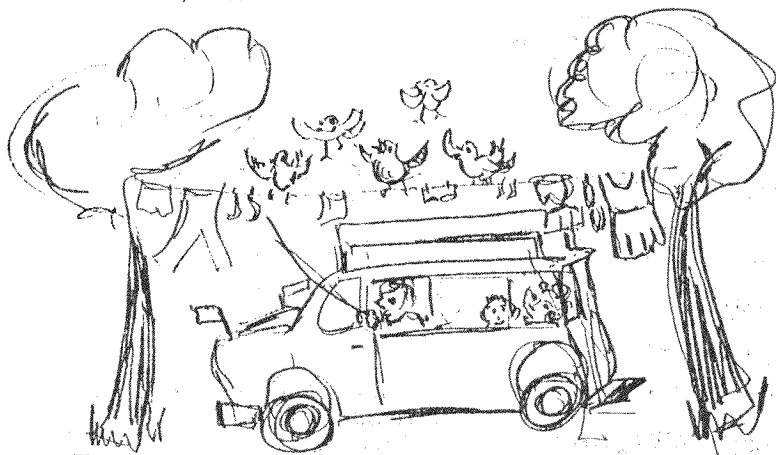
closely with the Caravan Club and the details will be advertised in En Route and other publications in due course. It apparently won't be available in every Calor outlet, only those directly involved with caravanning.

I expressed the hope that Calor would accept the 10 lb (4.5 kg) Butane cylinders in exchange for the new 6 kg Propane cylinders but she was unable to tell us what the company proposed in that respect. Perhaps we had better start writing to the Caravan Club, if we are members, and/or to Calor to make sure that we don't get lumbered with cylinders which we don't want!

Harry Henthorne.

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As a tailpiece, I've had a lovely sketch from *Sue & Sefton Sandford* together with a picture of their van standing in the sunshine beside some very blue water, just the thing to receive on a cold, blustery day in December. The sketch is reproduced, as best as I can, below.



PLEASE GET OFF THE LINE!

(HAD LAUNDRY OUT - VISITED BY GULLS - MORE WORK!)

Good News Extra

You may remember that in the December 1992 Newsletter there was a letter from *Ted Dukes* from Jersey who had "emigrated" there from Solihull many moons before. At the time he had just undergone heart surgery and was making steady progress. I have now had another letter from him in which he tells me that he has made a good recovery so has been able to keep his Talisman and use it for a month in France in the early summer. He sent a

photograph which I wish I could reproduce here which shows a narrow, country road with the Talisman on it but one of the big caterpillar-tracked excavators working just ahead and completely blocking the road. As *Ted* says, it just shows what owning an A-S can get you into! He also mentioned that he cheated, so far as travelling in France is concerned, by marrying a delightful French lady, *Michele*, who can take over when his own good French gives out. But as he married her 40 years ago I think we can allow that!

It also surprised him that his words appeared in the Newsletter last year so he will be doubly surprised this time; he ended his letter by saying that this was not intended to get him into the Newsletter again as he's much too modest. But it is nice to know that he has made such a good recovery - keep it up, youngster (he's only 76!).

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Talisman GL. 2.5 litre diesel. 'G' reg. August 1989. 49,000 miles. 4-berth. All the usual Auto-Sleeper refinements, shower, cassette toilet with electric flush, H/C water, 3-way fridge, blown air heating, Omnimax TV aerial. We are non-smokers, without children or pets and the van is in excellent condition both inside and out. £16,500 ono. Please contact Jean & Jim Tuck, 16 Deneburn Terrace, Consette, Co. Durham, DH8 8BD or telephone them on 0207 592 191 [A donation was received with this ad. Thanks - Ed.]

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1983 SV100. Diesel. Automatic. Usual A-S goodies plus spares and odd mods. Anybody interested, please call John Appleton on 0905 65 665 or write to him at Halcyon, Foredraught Lane, Tibberton, Droitwich Spa. Worcs., WR9 7NH for further details and price. [A donation was received with this ad too, so again thanks - Ed.]

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Symphony 2 litre petrol, 'K' reg (April 1993). 4,000 miles only. As new condition, second battery, fully alarmed, waste tank. Genuine reason for sale. £17,500. Telephone Jean or Jim Aldridge on 0525 376 882 or write to them at 42 Miles Avenue, Leighton Buzzard, Beds, LU7 8LG

#####

1991 Harmony - 2 litre petrol - 11,000 miles. Blown air heating, 3-way fridge, shower, cassette toilet, second battery, remote alarm. Extras include mud flaps, built-in waste tank, TV antenna with

booster. Superb condition. Non-smokers. £16,200 ono. Please ring Enid or Peter Avery on 0342 323 764 or write to "Mimizan", Furzefield Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 2EF.

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Ford Flair, currently on display at Cotswold Motor Caravans. The basic details are: August 1989 'G' reg. Under 14,000 miles. 2 litre petrol engine, 22/23 mpg. Extras include Omnistor pull out awning, with sun screen and a complete set of Silver Screens. Price £11,250. For more details telephone Eileen & Ken Shakesheff on 0885 488 046, write to them at "Pippins", 4 Apple Tree Close, Bromyard, Herefordshire, HR7 4UL or visit Cotswold Motor Caravans at Churchdown.

This is unfortunately a case where ill-health has forced the sale. Eileen and Ken have therefore resigned from the Club with regret. We wish them all the best for the future.

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The Irish Rally

Barbara & John Cox say that if you are intending to go to the rally in Southern Ireland, have you booked yet? And have you contacted *Steve Bowler* to book your ferry crossing? If you haven't, you should do so now!

The first site we intend to stay at is about 120-130 miles from the port (Rosslare) and the site fees will be about £7.00 per night. We are still waiting for the site owners to send the 1994 details but as soon as we have them we shall be in touch with everyone who has booked. The details will include site fees (with electrics), rally fee and site directions. For those who are going, if you write to the Irish Tourist Board, 150 Bond Street, London, W1Y 0AQ and say that you will be visiting County Cork and County Kerry, they will send you some useful information.

We need definite bookings, together with £20.00 non-returnable deposit, by January 15th if possible. We may be able to accept some late bookings.

Further details can be obtained from, and booking must be made to, *Barbara & John Cox*, 73 Westmead Road, Barton-under-Needwood, Staffs., DG13 8JR. Telephone number 0283 712 394.

Good heavens! Here we are at page 20 already and I felt that I had only just started. Never mind, more next month - provided that YOU keep the stuff coming in. Many thanks for the kind comments you have made on the renewal forms - and keep those forms coming in too, please, to help *Sheila* keep the records up to date. Bye for now!

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