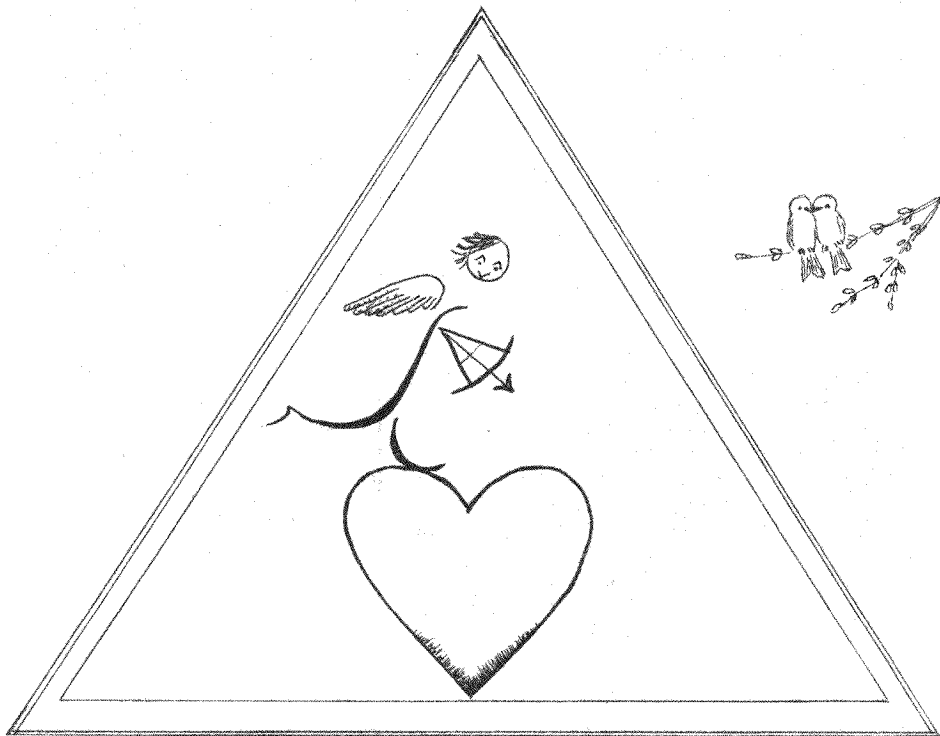


**AUTO-SLEEPER
OWNERS CLUB**



NEWSLETTER 65

FEBRUARY 1994

Hello.

First of all, may I say "Thank you" to all of you who sent cards to *Sheila and me*. We think that we have acknowledged them all when the new Membership cards were sent out but if we missed anybody, please forgive us:

Talking of Membership, I have been rather amused by the number of people who couldn't remember their Membership number. Have a look at the envelope in which you receive your Newsletter. You'll find a label on it with your name and address and your Membership number too! So you've got no excuse now for forgetting the number - at least after the start of the next month! That is unless you have omitted to send in your renewal form and fee for 1994 in which case this will be the last Newsletter that you receive. If you haven't sent a cheque or arranged for the standing order to be paid **DO IT NOW** before it is too late. And **PLEASE** make sure you return your pink Renewal form as well, even if there have been no changes and you are paying by standing order. Your form will help to keep the records correct. No doubt *Sheila* will receive some late renewals when folk wake up to the fact that they haven't received their Newsletter.

Thank you also to the many people who sent such complimentary remarks about the Newsletter. It is very good to know that we seem to be doing the right thing with it. As a number of you have said, it does take a bit of work - and most of it is after I have finished the editing and preparing. *Rita & Phil Daley* then take over and print around 1100 (yes, eleven hundred!) copies each month. They then collate, fold, insert into envelopes, stick on the labels prepared by *Sheila* and post the lot, aided and abetted by their merry band of packers. The whole task takes up quite a lot of their time and we are lucky to have people like that prepared to do the job. Our thanks are due to all of these people for their work for the Club. You have probably noticed that the Club now boasts a postage franking machine which saves a large amount of licking of stamps!

During 1993 the ferry bookings made through the Club have proved very worth-while to the members because of the discounts. But it must be pointed out that the Club can **NOT** take over prearranged bookings. If you make a booking direct with the ferry company you **cannot** then ask the Club to take it over or to change it. Also, you must make the booking through the Club if you want to take advantage of the discount which is offered. And you cannot combine the Club discount with any other to which you may be entitled. Please remember, the Club cannot take over any

prearranged bookings, so don't ask!

You will have read the very interesting article in Auto-Sleeper's 1994 magazine written by one of our early members, *Tom Conway*. *Tom* has recently had an illness requiring a stay in hospital and an operation. We understand that he is very much better now and send our best wishes to him and *Joyce* and hope that they will be on the road again shortly. It's all right, *Tom*, we won't be looking for an article about your hospitalisation!

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More about Additives and Gadget things

David Perry has kindly sent me some more details about the magnetic devices which are supposed to improve fuel economy and emissions. The following has been extracted from the Reliant Sabre and Owners' Club magazine "Slice" and was passed to *David* by a colleague. The writer has spent most of the last 25 years working on petrol engine design and development with particular reference to fuelling and emission control. He suggests that the claims often made are contrary to the laws of physical science and have not been substantiated by proper rigorous scientific testing. It appears that for any given fuel the sum of carbon monoxide percentage plus carbon dioxide percentage should be roughly constant, whatever the mixture (air/fuel) ratio. For European petrol this is around 15% which, for example, could be a rich mixture showing 7% CO probably accompanying a CO² of about 8% or a leaner mixture showing 1% CO should correspond to a CO² of about 14%. Some claims suggest a reduction of 15% in CO together with a decrease of nearly 11% in CO², i.e. a total reduction of carbon in the exhaust approaching 26%! Where does it go? In the experience of the writer the only two ways of achieving a simultaneous reduction in both gases is either to have the air/fuel mixture grossly rich or grossly lean so that a large part of the fuel goes straight through - but this sends the hydro-carbon sky-high, or to introduce a substantial air leak into the exhaust - but that means the measure would be of a mixture of exhaust and fresh air so of course concentrations would be lower.

He summarises by saying that people who want fuel economy would be better advised to spend the cost of these devices on checking wheel alignment, making sure that brakes aren't dragging, fixing any leaks in the fuel system and changing gear upwards at a few hundred rpm lower than they have been!

David also drew my attention to the Sunday Times of 12th December in which an article appeared linking the use of unleaded

petrol in vehicles without catalysts to an increased risk of leukaemia. This is caused by the increased level of impurities in unleaded petrol, largely benzene (3-4% instead of 2.5%) and aromatics (10% more). The quantity of benzene discharged has increased from 36,000 tonnes in 1987 to 50,000 tonnes in 1991 and the proportion coming from petrol has increased sharply. It is reported that scientists advising the European Commission have warned that this will trigger extra leukaemia. The Commission and the World Health Organisation are to investigate whether the exposure of workers in service stations and underground car parks (where the concentrations will be greatest) has made them vulnerable to the disease. Professor Roger Perry (no relation to our member!) of the Imperial College, London, is quoted as saying that it had been wrong to promote unleaded petrol before catalytic converters were in place to remove benzene. He condemned the green marketing of unleaded petrol as 'ludicrous'. He also said "If I had the option of being exposed to low levels of lead or very low levels of benzene, I would go for the lead any time".

This now leaves owners of petrol engined vehicles without catalysts in an awkward dilemma - should they risk children's development by using leaded petrol or risk leukaemia by using unleaded petrol?

My thanks to *David* for this most interesting continuation of a rather prolonged argument which seems to have no end, as yet. I'm using a diesel engine - I wonder what harm I'm doing? But even if we could go over immediately to clean, quiet, electric powered vehicles there would still be problems because the electricity has to be generated somehow - petrol, diesel, coal, atomic energy. Maybe we ought to press for further development of the Hydrox Fuel Cell where hydrogen was mixed with oxygen to generate power and the exhaust was pure water.

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A Poem

One Good Friday morning, twelve years ago,
To Honeybourne we went.
With care we towed our caravan
a lovely time we spent.
As Easter Sunday morning dawned
Thro' curtains it seemed so light
We drew them back to see the snow
And everywhere was white!
But as the afternoon came near
The sun began to shine.
'Twas our first towing holiday

and it turned out just fine.
Now hitching up just got too much
For "Arth" alone to do.
An Auto-Sleeper we now have,
It's just get up and go.o.o.
We hope to rally with the Club
Each chance that we can get
And look forward to our next one -
But hope its not so wet!!

Maisie Beardsmore

This has been "on the spike" for a little while but with the winter being with us I thought it appropriate to insert it now!

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Chairman's Chat

Looking back over various editions of the Newsletter I was interested to see the front cover for February 1993 and wonder if *Rita Daley*, the artist, is a long (very long - like 12 months) range weather forecaster. She had included an Ark and judging by some of the past month's weather, an Ark would have been needed in some parts of the country. To all those who have been affected may I say I hope you haven't suffered too badly. *Rita* produces a sketch each month in which the letters ASOC are incorporated and the sketches are very welcome. You will have noticed in the Regalia Lists, amongst other Club literature, references to "Rita's Little Man". He came about from her artistic approach to the use of the letters in her sketches and the Club, in its infancy, adopted the sketch as used on the cover of Newsletter No. 4. in January 1989 as a Club logo for tee shirts, sweaters and the like. The Club is indebted to *Rita* for her regular supply of sketches as well as for all the other work she does for us. Thank you, *Rita*

By the time you read this two rallies will have been run and I am sure that they have been most successful. Looking at the most recent Rally List it is very gratifying to see the number that have already been arranged and no doubt further additions will be made in the future but if you are contemplating running a rally, **PLEASE** remember to contact either of the Rally Co-ordinators (*Tony Jones* or *John Edder*) before you make any firm arrangements. One of the problems, for Committee members, of a full Rally List is that it cuts down the number of weekends that are available to hold a Committee Meeting. If we hold one at a rally it is rather inhibiting, especially for the Rally Marshals. Unfortunately, the rally arranged for Rowsley, near Matlock, is being held on the same weekend as

the next Committee meeting so obviously none of the Committee will be at Rowsley. But we will try to avoid clashing with others if at all possible.

With the January Newsletter you will have had a note about Ferry Concessionary Fares from Stena Sealink. I am told that the Club is still waiting to hear from the Ferry Company who are, no doubt, waiting for EuroTunnel's announcement on their intended fare structure. Not that motor caravans are allowed in the tunnel but, hopefully, you may receive the required details on concessionary fares.

With this issue you will receive the Booking Form for the Annual Dinner and Annual General Meeting Rally to be held at Uttoxeter Racecourse from 8th - 10th April. As there is a limit to numbers in the Dining Room early booking is advised if you want to attend the Dinner. There is NO limit on the attendance at the AGM. Of course, you may only attend if you still own an Auto-Sleeper and have renewed your Membership by completing and returning your pink form to *Sheila Henthorne*, the Membership Secretary and paying the Subscription. With the large number of members now in this Club, around 1,100 vans or 2,200 people at the moment, please assist the record keeping that *Sheila* does and make our Treasurer, *John Tidbury*, able to balance his books more easily. These records are essential so that the labels may be printed to despatch your Newsletter to you.

Arthur Irving

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Talbot Express - Traction

When I joined the Club earlier this year I enquired if anyone had information about the potential problem of traction with the front-wheel drive Talbot Express. We collected our Executive at the beginning of September and took the precaution of having the front tyres replaced with Michelin 195/75 XC M + S tyres. The wider section, compared with the standard 185's, was recommended as giving a larger "footprint". The chunky tread of these mud and snow tyres is very reassuring without producing any noticeable road noise.

Whilst it is still early days, I can say that we have not so far found any trace of wheelspin although we have been pitching regularly on grass - invariably wet. We have deliberately pushed our luck by not using boards so as to test the arrangement - even when we were in the middle of the receiving end of Hurricane

Floyd on a wet and muddy site in Devon. Being a pessimist by nature, I bought a set of snow grips which, so far, have stayed in their box.

There will obviously be occasions when almost anything will become bogged down and I hope that this letter will not tempt Fate sooner rather than later. However, I thought that members would like to know of our experience so far.

Derek Edmundson

You can be very sure, *Derek*, that there will come a time when everything gets stuck. *Sheila and I* can remember attending a Steam Rally in Kent towards the end of September one year and when we arrived we rather slid into a vague semblance of parking. The surface of the field in which the rally was supposed to take place had at least a couple of inches of almost liquid mud on the surface and the underlying soil wasn't much better. The weather, and the field, became so bad that the rally was called off. Then we all had to wait while the tractor boys came round and pulled us out in turn. But we were certainly sliding from side to side on the end of the tow - in spite of what we were trying to do to stay straight. The parting words from our tow-man were "drive very carefully for several miles until the mud gets right out of your tyres!"

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Talbot Express - Headlights

Back in November last year *Brian Burr* wrote to me when he discovered that the headlights on his 1991 Talisman had the wrong beam pattern, i.e. they dipped on the opposite side from that which we need in the U.K. He had not found this out before because he had only used the van during daylight hours up till then. You can imagine what a shock he had to find out that he had such a problem. He wrote to A-S who passed a copy of his letter on to Peugeot/Talbot. *Brian* has now received an apology from P/T which stated that his case was unusual. A-S also say that they have never had a complaint from other users of the P-T chassis. But *Brian* would like to suggest that any other member with an Express-based vehicle who hasn't used it in the dark (yet!) should check the headlamp beams to be sure. It is probable that this is one of those rogue cases which occurs in the best regulated of motor manufacturers, but it would be wise to check.

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Advice Wanted

Alan Edwards is planning to go across to Calais then taking two or

three days travelling to the area around St.Etienne/Lyon/Grenoble. There he will spend about a week and have a lazy drive back to Calais via Central France. Has anyone information about sites/routes/etc for such a trip? Please contact Alan direct on 0386 552 115 or write to him at Sunnholme, Wyre Hill, Pershore, Worcs. WR10 2HS.

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The South of France

We are planning on motoring to the South of France, possibly via Paris, and would like to see something of the Loire and Dordogne areas en route, then staying on camp sites in the South of France. Not busy seaside ones, a quiet scenic site is more to our taste.

Are there any members out there who have 'done' such a trip fairly recently and would be willing to advise/share ideas etc.? If so, please contact us as soon as possible on 0425 474 035 or write to us at 33 Croft Road, Ringwood, Hants. BH24 1TA. Thanks, and we hope to be at several rallies this year, God willing.

June & George Bentham

[See 'Life on the Left - later on - Ed.]

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The Christmas Rally

I am writing on behalf of my husband, *Sid*, and myself to thank *Sandra & Bernie Wisely* for all their hard work in arranging the Auto-Sleeper Christmas Rally at Hidden Valley, Ilfracombe, which we both enjoyed very much. Also our thanks to Sue and Melvyn Tucker, the proprietors, for making our stay so very welcoming - the food was great. We met old friends and made new ones too.

We would like to wish all Club members a very happy New Year for 1994. Thanks once again, hope to meet at further rallies.

Hazel Blaney

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The sunshine, on our way to Hidden Valley, was an omen of what the holiday held in store. Good company, good entertainment and excellent fare. 26 ASOC families out to enjoy themselves in a wonderful, festive atmosphere was a midwinter tonic for us all. Well done, *Sandra & Bernard*, you really have set a standard for the future.

Jeff Worley

We would like to record thanks for all the hard work that *Sandra & Bernie [Wisely]* put in to make the Club's first Christmas Rally such a success. We did enjoy it as did all the people that we spoke to. Everything went so smoothly. No one was forgotten. A birthday cake for one member and two wedding anniversaries were remembered. *Sandra* went round Christmas Eve and managed to get all at the rally to sign the birthday and anniversary cards. There was a present for everyone on Christmas Day.

The owners of the site treated us all as friends staying with them rather than as paying guests. The proof was in the large helpings of food on every plate at all meals! As you know, A.S.O.C. members are a helpful lot. Some of them offered to help out with some of the chores but the owners would not hear of it. We were guests.

It was such a great Christmas that we will remember it for a long while to come. The Christmas Rally plaque will be collectors' much sought after item in a hundred years time - at least for member collectors!

We hate to think of the hours of effort that *Sandra, Bernie* and the site owners put in to organise things for our enjoyment. So very many thanks from two satisfied customers.

Jo Jo and Johnny Gobbett

P.S. We wish all Club members a great year for 1994.

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And Finally!

Fifty one members spent four days and three nights enjoying and celebrating the Club's first Christmas Rally. On Christmas Eve there was a welcoming punch in the Club House before the evening meal of Venison with all the trimmings. Afterwards a local entertainer successfully got everyone into the Christmas spirit. Christmas lunch was all that we expected from Hidden Valley and more. The buffet in the evening was superb. Boxing day was just as sumptuous and in the evening we again had a buffet and entertainment, finishing at about eleven o'clock. On the final day we were treated to a tasty hot meal before setting out on the journey home.

The weather stayed kind and all expressed their enjoyment. Our thanks go to Sue, Melvyn and their staff for their hospitality. All the hard work was well worth while because the company we enjoyed made our Christmas memorable. May we take this

opportunity to wish all members a very prosperous New Year.

Sandra & Bernie Wisely

P.S. May I also ask members for used postage stamps, please. They will be used for the Guide Dogs for the Blind. Thank you.

In case you have any stamps to forward, the Wisely's address is 12 The Laurels, Roundswell Village, Barnstaple, North Devon, EX31 3QY. Stamps which arrive at the editorial address are already spoken for, partly for the same charity and partly for the Cats Protection League! - Ed.

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The Irish Rally

John Cox has asked me to tell you that he can still take bookings for the rally to Southern Ireland (Eire). The originally stated final date has been reached but if you telephone him (or *Barbara*) on 0283 712 394 you could still be in time. He tells me that the concessionary fare details, via our Club arrangement with Stena Sealink, makes the return crossing from Fishguard to Rosslare come out at around £160.00. So, to misuse the words of the song, "If you want to go across the sea to Ireland, you'd better talk to Johnny right away!"

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Helpful Members

Very many thanks for publishing my letter requesting help in finding a small supply of "Small J-Section Angle" to use in attaching my Harrison Awning to the Trident. Before the "Ink was Dry" on the Newsletter I had 2 telephone calls pointing me in the right direction, quickly followed up by 3 more, for which I am most grateful.

Unfortunately, at the same time as I had these calls, I fell and broke my right ankle and tore a ligament in my left which left me rather immobile, in great pain and not in a very happy frame of mind to pursue the advice. Then, about a week or so later, I had a telephone call from Mr David Todd, of Todd's Mobile Leisure Ltd, of Preston, Lancs, offering to send me the required material and he went to great lengths to tell me that it would be "NO PROBLEM!" At the time I was still in great pain and was not sure that I had heard correctly. So when the material was received I telephoned the company and spoke with Yvonne who told me that Mr David Todd was away in London but she would convey my thanks to him on his return and if my hearing was at fault she would arrange for an invoice to be sent. Well, no such invoice has been received, so

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!

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!

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

despite my "pain" my hearing was not at fault.

This action on Mr David Todd's part was so unexpected and gratefully received that I must ask you and our members who live in the Preston area to bear in mind that this company goes out of its way to be helpful. Their telephone number is 0772 35 360

Mervyn J Potter.

I am delighted to put this letter in. In this day and age it is all too rare for service of this quality to be received. But I am not unduly surprised because the company is based in Preston in Lancashire - a town which I have known through my family for more years than I care to admit. And I still have relatives living there - if only I can find my way round the "new" one-way system to get to them!

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And Again

Chris Clayton asked for advice regarding tyre pressure gauges and overheating problems on his 1966 Talbot Express CXL and now tells me that he had very many helpful telephone calls, most of them taken on his answering machine. He thinks, and hopes, that he has responded to all callers but in case he has missed anyone out he would like to thank you all now.

He bought a pressure gauge for £7.64 from ATS which records well above the 65 psi required for Express tyres. It is of the common pencil type but somewhat larger and seems to work satisfactorily. He also tells me that there is now an electronic gauge available from Halfords at £9.99.

The overheating turned out to be what they most feared - a crack in the cylinder head which meant that the head had to be replaced. A reconditioned head was obtained from a specialist firm in Telford but even that turned out to be a costly exercise. *Chris* praises Robsons of Wolsingham, from whom he had bought the van, who helped him sort out difficulties with the warranty company.

There have also been problems with the Propex heater and with the bodywork. The frame under the windscreen had rotted which meant a virtual reconstruction of that area. *Chris* now seeks advice on how to do a thorough Waxoyl treatment for Express vans, so can anyone help, please? You can telephone him on 0228 32 150 or write to him at 21 Rudchester Close, Sandsfield Park, Carlisle, CA2 7XL.

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And there's still more!

David Miles is a member who lives in Gloucestershire and has very kindly added a comment to his renewal form as follows:

"Anyone in the Forest of Dean District, passing through or otherwise, who is in need of any kind of assistance, day or night, I would be only too happy to oblige. My knowledge of basic vehicle maintenance is fairly good and I carry a reasonable amount of tools so most problems are not entirely out of reach. As well as this, I have connections in the motor trade, so just call me. It may save a lot of frustration."

His telephone number is 0374 620 110 and his address is Alwyn Cottage, Highfield Road, Bream, Nr. Lydney, Gloucestershire, GL15 6HU

Isn't that what this great Club of ours is all about? Thank you very much, *David* on behalf of all the members for offering such a service.

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Obituaries

We have just learned that *Tom Green*, of Crewe, lost his wife *Janice* in August 1993. We have also had a resignation from the Club because *Janet Jones* of Walsall, lost her husband *Ron* on 19th December. We would like to offer our sincere condolences to both people.

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Security Devices

Details have been received of yet another form of deterrent to would-be thieves of motor vehicles. This time it consists of a box which is secured over the pedals in the cab and apparently cannot be removed except by the keyholder. It is additionally fitted with an independent alarm which activates when the box is touched. The box also doubles as a small safe for smaller items which can be inserted. Unlike many security devices, it does not have to remain with the vehicle when sold but can be transferred to any replacement. It is known as Pedal Box Security and costs £249.99 plus VAT. For more details, or a no obligation demonstration, telephone 071 790 4343 or 0831 833 541 and speak to Bill Dobinson or Andy Ward.

Northumbria Police gave this device a very good report and it is to be included in their recognised product list w.e.f. October 1993. Their report includes the words "Congratulations you have produced a fine product which can proudly meet its claim".

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Help Wanted

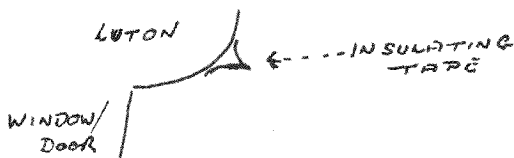
N.E.Freeland (Sorry, we have no details of the forename) is looking for a wiring diagram for a 2 litre VW. Can anyone help, please? The telephone number is 0242 528 371 or you can write to him at 10 Treeland Drive, Leckhampton, Cheltenham, Glos. GL53 0DB.

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Rain Repellent

One wet day I tried to use the cab windows to get some extra ventilation. But I found that the rain ran round the underside of the luton and came into the cab through the inch or two of open window. As a temporary cure, I fixed two 18 inch strips of insulating tape along the underside of the luton in a 'Y' shape over the cab side window. This intercepts the rain and sheds it before it can get down to the window. It works well and I am now looking for a suitably shaped piece of plastic to stick up there as a tidier and more permanent feature.

Jim Cresswell



It seems almost as if the "J section" material that *Mervyn Potter* has used (see earlier letter) might do this sort of trick very well. But I will ask *Jim* to let me know how he makes the permanent cure for future inclusion in the Newsletter.

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**Phil's Rabbit
or
Random Ramblings**



I wonder why so many inhabitants of these islands find so much difficulty in distinguishing "O", pronounced "Oh", from "0", which

is nought or zero, and even more puzzling, " I ", pronounced Eye, from " 1 ", which is the figure "One". It must be almost twenty years since I first started using a keyboard to put information into a computer and I can assure you I soon learned that multiplying some figure by 10 (or even 10 !) instead of by 10 got results that were not at all as expected! In a minor way I was slightly miffed to see references to M15 in some of Len Deighton's thrillers; M15 I could understand... But when I see our postage stamps, which I thought were the pride of British philatelists, proclaiming they are "1st" Class (presumably they meant to put "1st" but didn't know any better); even with Roman numerals it would be " I " and not " 1st ". As for 18p and 19p, I could weep! Perhaps I would outlive my welcome entirely if I mentioned my hate for those sadly ignorant people who will put a dot over uppercase " I " - there just isn't room for one! I must say I think this started in a no-longer-British island, North America, but we must unite to keep it out of Britain!

Phil Daley

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LIFE ON THE LEFT!



Asked by *Sheila and Harry Henthorne* for a contribution about having an A-S in France we were tempted to send a sack (well a small, second-class envelope anyway) filled with centimes! What is different? The first reaction is - nothing! But that's not true.

For a start, we ARE nearly "THERE", especially if the destination is Spain, the South of France, or even the Italian Riviera. Distances, though measurable, lie over open, uncrowded roads; through fine, scenic countryside. Routes pass through ancient towns, tiny villages, over mountains, through rolling farmland, forests and alongside busy waterways - WITHOUT FERRY TIMETABLES! That's for the lazy trips. If we're in a hurry the more than extensive European network of autoroutes is accessible within ten minutes. It just costs! Nonetheless, we can get to the Med in about five hours without passing a single set of traffic lights!

While on the subject of motorways and charges - camping cars suffer somewhat. We pay one and a half times the car rate. However, a closely guarded secret is that the DISABLED are entitled to use these highways at the car price. Be prepared to fight for this substantial discount. Actually the French are more than kind and sympathetic towards the handicapped, so if you are unlucky enough to qualify, don't hesitate to enquire and find out just what is available.

Another noticeable cost for us "shell on the back wheelies" is

fuel. Petrol is slightly dearer than in England, diesel 20%-25% cheaper, with the "greens" coming in between. Hypermarkets almost always discount fuel and, of course, make good places to shop as well. Additionally we quite often use them for "wild camping". Most have cafeterias and toilet facilities open 'til 2200, even on Sundays. But on the seriously negative side, the opportunist thief, particularly in Italy and only slightly less so in Spain, often lurks in the busy parking areas on the lookout for a soft target. As a matter of principle we sit down and have a cup of tea, or fiddle under the bonnet, whilst taking a good look round. Then, having locked the van and left it, we wander out of sight, turn and watch it carefully for a few minutes!

Robbery, though a worry, is not an overwhelming one. Over the last four years we have spent at least 500 nights happily motor-caravanning. Of these, exactly four have been passed in sites - we LIKE wild camping! During that time we have had three break-ins. The first, near Malaga, was the worst when the van was "turned over" in an unpleasant fashion - the good side was that the thieves didn't think much of our possessions! They just made an awful mess. The other two have been very quick "bag snatches", both with photographic gear.

Another item to bear in mind is the cost of servicing and parts. The French tend to see one coming! Christmas, a couple of years ago, we had a clutch cable rubbed through leaving us behaving like startled kangaroos in the fast lanes of Nice. A main Ford dealer seriously informed us that in France the Ford Motor Company forbade both the repair and supply of spares to Right Hand Drive Vehicles!! Luckily, a friendly taxi company (yes, there is such a thing) not only carried out a temporary repair, they did it for nothing.

We crept home, here's the open road business again, with hardly a dozen gear changes in the better part of 500 miles. Back home our local dealer had no inhibitions, especially concerning the price, about fixing the problem! I've always been a pretty handy D.I.Y-er mechanically - now I am considerably better. In extremis, use "AD PRO" group who are good all round and relatively reasonably priced.

Looking back over what I've written, it looks as though life is beset with problems. Not so. The problems stand out because they are so rare. We love the ability to be able to be up and off to the sunshine at the drop of a hat - well, at least the flick of Francis' weather forecast on SKY Satellite TV. If bad weather teases here we literally do look at the box. The beautiful Pyrenean mountains are about four hours to the South, onward to Spain's Costas, seven

or so. Portugal is a long way. It's better reached by Bordeaux and the Atlantic Coast, itself less than two hours. The flesh pots of the South of France are five hours or so away, although a friend did it in a miraculous three and a half! San Remo, on the Italian riviera, takes about 8 hours. To get to Venice means a night on the road as does Alicante while for Gibraltar it means two nights - but that's all part of the adventure.

All in all, what's really so different is: One - the freedom from ferries and Two - the enticing proximity of Western Europe - for better or for worse!

Sue & Sefton Sandford

These are a couple of our newer members and when I saw that they were resident in France I did ask *Sheila* to ask for a contribution. The letter which accompanied this suggested that it was "a couple of sheets of low grade typing on a very difficult subject"! But what a result, for which very many thanks. Maybe our correspondents would like to get in touch with the *Benthams*, see earlier letter!

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1988 A-S Rapport, 172lcc. All usual refinements. 2 owners. Very good condition. Financial circumstances force sale. 62,000 miles, hence price £8,250. Might consider part-exchange with cash adjustment. Telephone Les Mead on 0794 511 374 or write to him at 4 Bridge Road, Romsey, Hants., SO51 8JD.

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Pair of Michelin 185/75R 14C XCA tyres, used for genuine delivery mileage only. £100 (approx. half the price of new). Telephone Derek Edmundson on 0476 870 541 or write to him at Hunters Barn, 1 Blue Pot Lane, Eaton, Grantham, Lincs, NG32 1SR. [See the item "Talbot Express - Traction" - Ed.]

#####

Talisman II, May 1988 'E' reg. 21,000 miles. First class condition. Currently set up as 2-berth with removable bulkhead and side lockers in Luton but with the option of 4-berth using bed, ladder etc. supplied. Security system, Fire Extinguisher, Awning, otherwise standard. Non-smoking owners. £14,000. Telephone John Davies on 0705 484 972 or write to him at 4 Southbrook Road, Langstone, Havant, Hants., PO9 1RN.

John kindly sent a donation to Club funds - many thanks - Ed.]

#####

Eurovent rear fitting awning for high top van. Brand new, never been used. £275.00. Telephone Michael Wood on 0276 37 612 or write to him at 81 Branksome Hill Road, Sandhurst, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 4QF

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Eurovent Coachman free-standing annexe for Auto-Sleeper Clubman (or similar). A full height sleeve is hooked on to roof rack to provide a tunnel between van and awning. Plenty of space for door to open. The front has two doorways, can be folded half-way or removed altogether. A large picture window, which can be rolled up, is in left hand wall. The right hand wall has an opaque window with a mosquito net ventilator and zip down outer cover. Complete with ground sheet. Size 12' x 8'. Cost when new last Autumn £510. Used only once. Genuine reason for sale. Offers around £370 to Phyllis & Graham Campbell on 0202 693 447 or write to them at Moor Lodge, 26 Moor Road, Broadstone, Dorset, BH18 8BD, [Thanks for the donation received - Ed.]

#####

Legend GL. 2 litre petrol. 'F' reg. Christened "Tootsie" (Leg - End!). 24,500 miles. Extras include flyscreens and blinds, double glazing, Philips Auto-seeker radio/cassette with four speakers, full Moss security alarm and all-round window etching, stainless steel bumper, Omnimax TV aerial, Zemco electronic compass. Excellent condition - regretful sale. £14,950.00. Please telephone Ken Phethean on 0602 211 533 or contact The Orchard, 14 Kirk Lane, Ruddington, Nottingham, NG11 6NN.

#####

Ford Flair, automatic, 4-berth. October '87, 'E' reg. 29,000 miles. 2 litre petrol engine, 26-27 mpg. Extras include Cruise Control and Pirana Alarm. New upholstery. New white wheels. Waste tank, H&C water. Taxed and MOT until October 1994. Immaculate condition. £10,500 ono. Please telephone Renato Giazzi on 0753 856 809 or write to him at 32 Victor Road, Windsor, Berks, SL4 3JU.

#####

VW Trident, Rear engine, 1991 'H' reg. 24,000 miles. Many extras include awning, blown air heating, opening roof windows, swivel seats, cab table, factory fitted rear seat, 2nd battery, alarm, tow bar and electrics. AI van. £13,500. Please telephone Lesley or Joe Rood on 081 989 5277 or write to them at 47 Dover Road, Wanstead London, E12 5DZ.

#####

Talbot Harmony, 'J' Reg. 2 litre petrol engine, 16,000 miles. Non-smokers, no pets. Sleeps 4. 3 way fridge, blown air heating, cassette toilet and shower, H/C water. 2 gas burners and grill, built in cocktail cabinet, swivel front seats, 2 tables, flyscreens & blinds, Zig unit, second battery, mains hook-up. Silver screens for cold weather. Immaculate condition. £15,000. Please contact Kath & Harry Prince on 0530 243 457 or write to them at 249 Markfield Lane, Markfield, Leicester, LE6 0PR. [They tell me that they are 1.25 miles south from Junction 21 on the M1 - Ed.]

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Wanted!

Shafik Ladha is still looking for a C or D reg Trident 1600 cc diesel or turbo diesel for around the £7,000 price range. You may recall that he asked for a similar van in the September 1993 Newsletter but was unsuccessful. He has had a look in one or two dealers but says that their prices are higher than he can afford. If you can help him, please telephone 0533 830 152 after 6.00 pm, or write to him at 24 Vernon Road, Leicester, LE2 8GA.

#####

Windsurfing Roof Rack for VW T4. Telephone Karen or Chris Tews on 0225 483 868 (evenings only, please) or write to them at 34 Elliston Drive, Southdown, Bath, BA2 1LU.

I know what is required, that is a roof rack to take windsurfing boards. But I have a lovely mental picture of a roof rack sailing around the bay, hopefully without the van! Ed.]

#####

Has anyone got an owners' manual for the van part of a Bedford Clubman 'Y' registered (early 80's)? New members, Joan and Leonard Baldwin have checked with A-S but have learned that all their copies were destroyed in the fire. They would like to get hold of one and copy it if that is the only way and would, of course, pay the cost of postage etc. If you can help please telephone them on 0834 813 477 or write to them at "Seaheights", Sandyhill Road, Saundersfoot, Pembrokeshire, Dyfed, SA69 9PL.

#####

And has anyone got a manual for a 1980 Bedford CB22 please? New(fish) members Rita and Ken Rowland would like to borrow one for copying and will also willingly pay the cost of postage etc. Ken also tells me that he has a persistent leak which manifests itself around the drivers area in the cab. He has found, and secured, another leak in the top of the luton part of the vehicle and wonders

if this remaining leak is caused by capillary action. Any suggestions to cure the problem would also be welcomed. Please contact them on 0483 232 961 or write to them at Keritu, 128 Envis Way, Fairlands Village, Worplesdon, Guildford, Surrey, GU3 3NL.

#####

Wanted: a Talisman to cherish. F or G reg approx. Non-smokers and no pets preferred. Please contact The Newton family [that's Rosemary and Andy - Ed.] at 6 Yeatmans Close, Enmore Green, Shaftesbury, Dorset SP7 8LU or telephone 0747 53 593.

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STOP PRESS!!

Did YOU write to *Steve Bowler* on plain paper asking for a ferry booking? If so, please telephone him urgently because his puppy got to your note before he did!

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Shocking Revelations!!

We have two 60 Ah batteries to provide electricity for domestic purposes in our Rambler. That ought to be enough for anything, lights, the occasional bit of computer work and a very small electric whisk. The two latter items run off an inverter which gives 100W. I was surprised when after about ten days in our summer holiday we ran out of electricity. After all 120 Ah should give about 12 Ah per day for ten days, and we never use much.

I tried a quick totting up. Say 2 hours light a day at 2 Ah, that's only 4 Ah, and an hour or so on the computer every other day is only around another 4 or 5 a day, and the electric whisk is only used for a minute or so at a time so that can't use much. The total seemed to be about 7 or 8 Ah a day so I must have had a leak of at least 4 Ah a day. I raised my eyes to seek inspiration, and there it was. I had forgotten the tape-recorder which we sometimes use for several hours a day. I like music. Still that doesn't use much, or does it? Luckily I had the manual with me, and looked at the spec at the end. "Maximum current used less than 4 amps." So there it was, 4 Ah for about 4 hours a day is 16, and over 10 days that mounts up to 160 Ah. The use of the tape recorder more than made up the apparent deficit. I had always thought the amount it used was quite negligible!

The alternator was replaced this summer, and we all know that it can turn out 35 amps, so the batteries will soon recharge, or will

they? In the lead which carries the current to the battery there is a 10 amp fuse, I assume that the rate of charge must be less than that, so it will take well over 120 hours to re-charge the system fully from flat. A half hour local trip isn't going to make much difference. Electricity is a funny thing, I wish I understood it!

Neil Reynolds

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And here we are again at page 20. Just a brief footnote about the Talisman gear change. *Leo Soble* tells me that he too has been to Sussex but he doesn't think that there has been any real difference. It may be because of the mileage of his van or perhaps the expert is no longer with the company. Who knows?

Your Editor

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