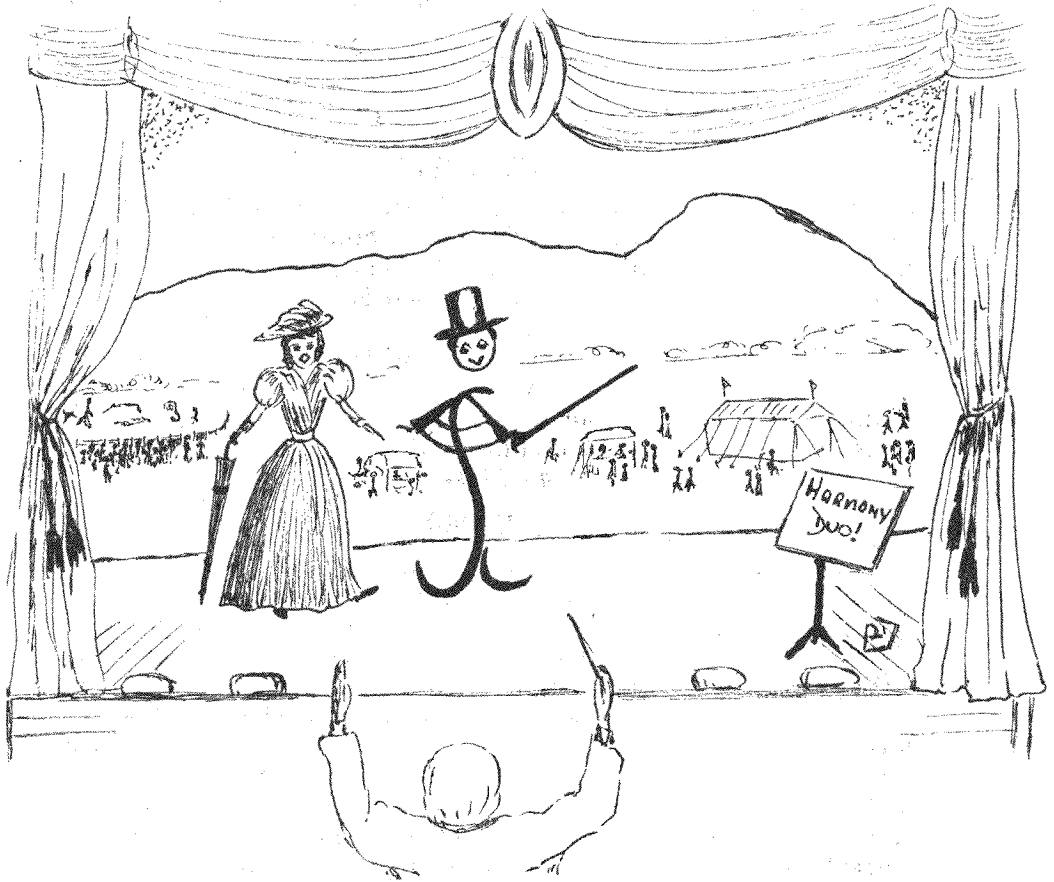


AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB



NEWSLETTER 70
JULY 1994

Hello.

Off again before the June Newsletter is 'put to bed' because we are having a holiday and have to get everything ready before we go. As I said at the end of issue no. 69 I haven't got too much time this month but at least, thanks to my correspondents, I have quite enough on the spike for the moment.

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CLUB AND COMPANY RALLY URGENT!

I am told that we urgently need Marshals to work AFTER 4.00pm on Friday AND at anytime on Saturday. Surely YOU can spend an hour to help the members of our great Club to get into parking position so that they too can enjoy themselves. There isn't a lot of work involved, just one small hour of your time, and the latest time will be around 9.00 pm. Please telephone *Ben Mansfield*, who is arranging the marshalling, and tell him that you will help. His telephone number is 0723 369 769. Let your fingers do a little walking, and while marshalling let your tongue do quite a lot of talking!

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VW CLUBMAN GL

We recently had a small problem with the driver's seat and, as we were visiting the factory for a committee meeting, we took the opportunity to get it put right. The seat began to jam when trying to slide it forward or back. Alan Major knew exactly what was wrong and his repair man (Paul) put it right in a matter of moments. The seat is held to the sliders by four bolts which need an allen key to tighten. In turn, the runners are held to the box beneath by another four similar bolts. It is possible for the bolts into the seat to become loose or even fall out and when they do they interfere with the sliding action and cause the problem. The remedy is, as I said, simple and can be carried out by anyone who has (or can borrow) a suitable allen key and has a few minutes to spare. Undo the four bolts holding the runners to the base box. Remove the seat by turning it on its side. DON'T try to take it out of the van because it is still held in by the slide restricting strap at the back. Take off the runners by sliding them. Do this carefully because one of the other bolts may be loose and you don't want to lose it! Now tighten the bolts holding the upper runner to the seat. Tighten **FIRMLY**. Replace the lower runners onto the upper ones (right way round, of course) and then re-bolt these to the box. Be careful how you insert the bolts and don't over-tighten them; you might

cause another sort of problem. Your seat should now slide easily. This may save you a bit of worry and a telephone call to the factory too!

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MEMBERSHIP !



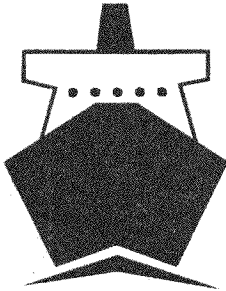
It seems that somebody out there has more knowledge than either your Committee or the Company because it has been suggested to owners of other makes of motor caravan that they can join this Club of ours. Somebody who has an A*t*h*m* has been told this "because it is all the same company!" May I draw your attention to Rule 3 in the Club Constitution?

3. 'Membership shall be open to all current owners of motor caravans **built or converted** by Auto-Sleepers Limited of Willersey, and a spouse or companion may be included in the Membership.'

I have specifically put the particular words into heavy type because that clause was designed to show owners of other makes that they may not join the Club. 'An Auto-Sleeper' is at risk of becoming a generic term, in the uninitiated ranks, for any motor caravan just as 'Dormobile' tended to be taken for any type of 'caravanette' (hideous term!). In the last few days *Sheila* has been approached by someone who has converted a 28ft motor coach into a motor home and "needs to join a club because they have difficulty in getting into some sites". Now there's a new reason for joining! (Needless to say the application could NOT be accepted!) In addition, may I reiterate yet again that possible members should NOT, repeat NOT be told to send £10 to *Sheila*. They should be told to contact her for details. Yes, I know I am getting boring but again it has happened and caused extra work so *Sheila* is getting bored with this problem too!

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FERRY NEWS



Following the bit I wrote for the March Newsletter there have been some developments.

P&O European Ferries have reduced even more the fares on the Clipper Line (Felixstowe/Zeebrugge) by extending the number of crossings under the low 'F' tariff. I was happy to learn that the crossing I had originally booked at £207 and which was later reduced to £155 is now down to £118. Since, as a stockholder I only pay 50%, the actual fare has, at the time of writing, become £59.00 for the van and two

people. Now that's what I call reasonable!

I was also somewhat surprised to find that the return fare for a van and two to the Isle of Wight is £52.00 for off peak travel. It certainly appears quite expensive for a thirty minute crossing.

A member has asked for information on ferries to the Western Isles. We haven't covered these because, as far as I know, the only ferries are operated by Caledonian MacBrayne. Contact them at The Ferry Terminal, Gourock, PA19 1QP. The telephone number for general enquiries is 0475 650 100; the FAX number is 0475 637 607. For Car Ferry Reservations telephone 0475 650 000 (FAX 0475 637 607). A call to the general enquiries number will get you a copy of their 'Ferry Guide to 23 Scottish Islands 1994' by return of post. Timetables and fares effective 25 April - 15 October.

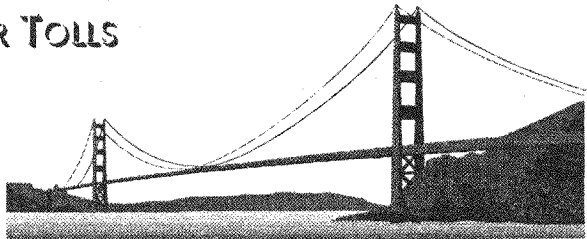
An interesting point was raised by *Audrey and George Johnston* who had thought to go to the Shetlands this summer. To get there with their Clubman they need a ferry. They tell me that the return fare for van and two people from Aberdeen to Lerwick would be £518.20 which they feel compares rather badly with the fares on offer by P&O on some southern routes, although this does include, I think, a cabin for the fourteen hour overnight crossing each way. P&O Scottish Ferries, PO Box 5, Jamieson's Quay, Aberdeen, AB9 8DL. Telephone 0224 572 615. It could be more interesting, and a fair bit cheaper [Ooh! What a pun - Ed.], to travel from Scrabster to Stromness (Orkney) and then on to Lerwick. Scrabster to Stromness 2 hours; Stromness to Lerwick 7 hours. There's a ferry at least once a day from Scrabster but the service to Lerwick is less frequent - why not enjoy a day or two looking around Orkney? An old (and therefore suspect) address I have for this service is P&O Ferries, Orkney & Shetland Service, New Ferry Terminal, Pier Head, Stromness, Orkney. Telephone 0856 850 655.

Phil Daley

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TAMAR TOLLS

We are indebted to *Colin Gill* who sent details of the revised tolls across the Tamar which came into effect from 23rd May 1994. If you cross the bridge with your car, van or motorcycle combination it will cost you £1.00 unless you use the bridge constantly



when you can get a book of 40 vouchers for £10.00 which means that each crossing costs just 25p. The same costs (£1.00 single trip) apply to the Torpoint Ferry except that the voucher book only contains 20 vouchers so the trips cost 50p each. If you use the bridge with a bicycle or solo motor cycle you can cross free. It is also free on the ferry for pedal cycles but solo motorcycles cost 20p. Other charges apply to commercial vehicles, coaches etc. but you are not likely to be driving one of those, are you? And if you are on holiday and a bit short of cash you can always go the other way into or out of Cornwall/Devon and pay nothing at all.

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Having read *Chris & George Jago's* letter we thought we would tell you our news. - As a retirement treat to ourselves we planned a memorable journey. Our trip-round-the-world involved 28 different flights over four months. We had a wonderful and interesting time calling on old friends in South Africa, Tasmania, Indianapolis and North Carolina - this was the main reason for our trip. We are glad to say the rest of the world is in good shape, the parts we saw are, anyway! Notable memories are many, the Drakensberg Mountains of Natal, the beauty of Penang, the cleanliness of Singapore, the awesome Barrier Reef, the smartness of Sydney and a visit to the opera. The wonderful wilderness of Tasmania, the peacefulness of New Zealand and the tranquillity of the islands of Mauritius and Fiji. In contrast Hawaii was very commercialised and seemed to be teeming with Japanese tourists. The wonders of California, the splendours of the Carolina golf courses, the magic of Florida and lastly the island of Barbados with its beautiful weather. Altogether, the trip of a lifetime. We would both like to pay return visits to Penang and New Zealand. Maybe when *Mary* retires?

In New Zealand we had every attention with our motor caravan hire firm - MAUI - Leisure Port, Richard Pearce Drive, Mangere,

Auckland with another depot in Christchurch. We had a Mazda Elite 4-berth, 3.4 litre diesel and it was very roomy for two of us. Of course, the layout was not as neat as in an A-S Talisman GL but it got us around North Island quite easily with *Mary* driving - it had power steering which we liked very much. We have no hesitation in recommending Leisure Port.

Mary & Mike Doody

A very nice story, I think, and it is pleasant to know that the other tale about the difficulties of hire vans in NZ are not the normal. These are two of our newer members and I'm very grateful that they kindly added this gem to my 'spike'

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THANK YOU

I would like to thank all those members who telephoned to offer me advice about our Vaillant water heater problem, especially the new members who did so, and Lenny Davis of Ron Reynolds who said he had taken many to pieces and successfully put them together again. The general opinion is that (a) the diaphragm is at fault - no, we had already renewed this as being the easy option, (b) the thermocouple needed replacing - A-S were kind enough to do this after our cry for help or (c) a possible lack of pressure from the water pump - no, this is very lively. The problem still exists but we have now passed the vehicle on to *Carol and Steve Bowler* who found that the water was running hot for the shower but cut out when filling the washbasin. (We used to find it worse at the sink.) I did notice that the flames were much shorter just before the cut-out. Turning down the temperature control eases the condition so that it is tolerable but it is irritating being unable to find an answer. If we do, we'll let you know! Incidentally Lenny Davis did give a bit of advice for those of us who will be facing the 'winterising' of the Carver Cascade water heater. He suggested that the drain plug should be left out and a piece of masking tape placed *almost* covering the hole so that any remaining water will drip out but dust will not blow in. The only snag I can see is remembering where you put the drain plug. The knife tray is my favourite spot.

Rita Daley

I like the masking tape idea, I shall try to remember that it is the bottom of the hole which needs to be left slightly open! For safety (?) last winter I put the plug into the cab of the Clubman - and promptly kicked it out when next I used the van. Luckily our local caravan stockist had the right spare - I discovered that there are two different plugs.

MORE THANKS

We would like to thank everyone who attended our first rally at Stover International, Newton Abbot from 20th-26th May, with special thanks to *Barbara & Jeff Worley* who gave most invaluable help and advice to us. The weather wasn't too good with five wet days out of six but it didn't seem to dampen the spirits of those attending - it seems we must have forgotten to fill in the order form for fine weather! Better luck next time. We did, however, manage a break in the rain for the welcoming get together on the Friday and again for the Sunday coffee morning and raffle. We were also lucky on the Tuesday evening when we held a small buffet and wine party in our van and awning. (Now just where do we get 'that' order form from?)

Carol and Gordon Hooper

The weather never seems to affect anyone at our rallies, does it? Congratulations to C&G on a very successful first rally.

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BENTLEY WILDFOWL AND MOTOR MUSEUM

We had 40 vans present for this rally even though it began on Friday 13th May! There was plenty for everyone to see and enjoy and the Saturday evening buffet, although a little crowded, was most enjoyable too. By special arrangement with Messrs Fish, McCaskill and Edgar (the famous Metro-Gnomes) rain fell on Saturday afternoon so that anyone who wished to could watch the Cup Final in their van without any feeling that they were missing something outside! The White Peacock paid us a visit on Friday afternoon and inspected the parade of vans (seeking food, we think) and on Sunday morning the blue version displayed the full tail for those who wanted to photograph it. All in all a very good weekend and we have already booked a weekend for 1995 - with the permission of our Rally Co-ordinators, of course!

Sheila and Harry Henthorne

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ELECTRICS



Nigel Emson is a very new member who read with interest the technical problems referred to in the Newsletters he received. He has asked me to pass on his telephone number to *Doreen & David Palmer* (Leg End Lec Tricks) as he may well be able to help them. The number is 0327 830 975, so give him a call and see what's what!

THE SAME SUBJECT!

I was interested to read the letter in the May edition from *Doreen & David Palmer* concerning the 12 volt supply in their Legend. It is unusual for both batteries to be charged from the mains charger in the motorvan. The vehicle battery is permanently connected to the alternator. In theory, putting a charger on the battery whilst the alternator is still connected should do no harm, because the diodes in the alternator should stop any current flowing through it. However, it is not a practice I would recommend. When I charge my vehicle battery on occasions during the winter I always disconnect it completely. But if the above is ignored there are other problems.

One way to charge both batteries at the same time is to do it using two diodes. The charger has to be disconnected from the usual circuit and fed to the two batteries via the two diodes. This is not easy because the charger is usually connected to the auxiliary battery within the Zig unit. Also there is always a voltage drop across a diode which means that neither battery ever gets fully charged. To overcome this problem split-charge relays are used. These are normally wired into the circuit which enables the auxiliary battery to be charged from the alternator when the engine is running. When the voltage rises it closes the relay which then connects the two batteries together and the both get charged from the alternator. When the engine stops, the voltage drops, the relay opens and the batteries are separated again. To use a split-charge relay from the charger means that something would have to tell the relay to close. And this means getting into the Zig unit - NOT recommended! Change-over switches could be installed but I do not see the point. My advice is to use the vehicle battery for the purpose for which it is intended and leave the auxiliary battery for all the rest. If you are on a mains supply, the charger will look after it. If not, and it goes flat you can at least drive away and get something done about it. It is quite easy to wire in sockets to the auxiliary supply to run a CB, radio/cassette etc. The clock current is negligible. But a word of warning - it is probably fine in summer but in winter when you are using more lights for longer and the other equipment too the amount of power used can sometimes be higher than the output of the charger.

Another good alternative, if using mains, is to buy a 12 volt power pack which must be well "smoothed" to avoid the hum on CB and audio equipment. It must be able to supply enough amps for the equipment. Using one, you do not need a battery at all - just plug the unit in to the mains and away you go.

In my opinion there is no reason why the two batteries cannot be interchangeable but, having been caravanning since 1973, I have never had two identical batteries. There is a school of thought which suggest that both should have the same capacity but I haven't been told of a technical reason for this. I would prefer to install a slightly larger capacity battery for the leisure equipment bearing in mind the physical size, of course.

Tony Smith

Thanks, *Tony*, for a clear answer to the question. I think I agree that the leisure battery should, perhaps, be a bit "bigger" than that of the vehicle for the reasons you state. And I believe that a special type of "leisure" battery was introduced so that it could be discharged and recharged more frequently than is the case of the vehicle battery. But with my vast(?) knowledge(?) of electrics I wouldn't presume to offer any real suggestions!

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A SITE FOR YOU

May we tell you about an excellent CL we have just discovered in South Wiltshire? It is owned by Mrs Shepherd, Downswood, Great Cheverell. It is 5 miles from Devizes, tree lined, and the site slopes gently providing excellent drainage. Our Talisman had no problem even after the wet weather. There are excellent walking and mountain biking facilities from the site and the scenery is superb. It is an excellent touring centre and there is a golf course a mile away. Why are we telling the world about it? Not for altruistic reasons, I'm afraid. Mrs Shepherd tells me that she gets so few visitors she is planning to close the site. Before finding this one we had despaired of finding a CL usable by our Talisman in anything other than perfect weather and we would be disappointed if it did close. How about a regular spot for members suggestions for sites suitable for motor caravans in poor weather conditions? We would find it useful.

Rosemary & Andy Newton

This could be a good idea, provided that we don't get flooded with suggestions. After all, the lists issued by both of the big clubs gives reasonable details of all small sites so we should be able to find something suitable - whatever the weather. We have never yet been stuck on any small site - only on a Caravan Club site when the wheels spun on the grass (waterlogged) and we had to be towed out. But any suggestions will be included if there is room.

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OBITUARY

We are sorry to learn of the passing of *Sheila Burr*. *Brian* tells us that she died on May 4th after a two year battle against cancer which was faced bravely. *Brian* goes on to say that they were never able to attend many rallies but they made some genuine friends through the Club. Our sympathies go to *Brian* and the family. *Brian* intends to continue motor caravanning and hopes to meet friends again in the near future.

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TALBOTS

I have been a member since December 1992 when I bought a Rambler based on a Talbot Express and since then I have read the Newsletter with interest. Had I read it before buying there is no way that I could have persuaded myself to buy such a vehicle! However, it was with some trepidation that I bought the Rambler as I have not regularly used a manual gearbox since I was a lad. But with a bit of practice and memory-jogging the art was again acquired. At first I did find that getting into reverse was very difficult but a phone call to my local Peugeot dealer soon put that right. He collected the van from my house, adjusted the linkage or something and it has been fine ever since.

I must admit that the gear change is not as smooth or as easy as on a modern saloon car. But I say to myself 'you are driving a commercial vehicle'. If you get the revs right when you change gear there are no problems, it is all a question of patience. Finally I must say that I am very impressed with the reliability of the vehicle. You can leave it for 2 or 3 weeks out in the cold and wet and it starts at the turn of the key. My partner looks longingly at the new Clubman on the VW chassis. I am tempted too, but I have grown rather fond of the Talbot - it's fun to drive.

Phyl & Warne Potter

From experience I can say that the VW Clubman is fun to drive too. But you are right, we do drive light commercial vehicles and cannot expect the same gear change, speeds etc. as on a sports or saloon car. We always look at, say, a Jaguar and think 'it costs as much as or more than our van but we'd rather sleep in ours! And you can't cook in there either!'

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AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB RALLY SUPPLEMENT

Mid-July to mid-September 1994

15th/17th July; Brynich Caravan Park, Brecon, Powys.

Site fee: £5.25 per night. Electricity: £1.50 per night. Rally fee: £1.50

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs G Gray, 71 Woodstock Gardens, Pencoed, Mid-Glamorgan. CF35 6ST Telephone: 0656 862423

Cheque payable to: G Gray

Directions: Site 1 mile East of Brecon, near junction of A40 & A470 Brecon Beacons National Park, Bridgend Canal nearby. Good touring centre. Excellent TV reception! A meal may be arranged in Brecon on Saturday night. The Owner has agreed to extend discounted site fees (normally £7.00 per night in July) until 22nd July for members staying on until Club & Company Rally in Malvern.

15th/17th July; Sunset View Caravan Park, Twyning, Tewkesbury, Glos

Site fee: £3.50 per van per night. No electricity. Rally fee: £1.50

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs T J Cresswell, "Cranton", Twyning Green, Tewkesbury, Glos. GL20 6DQ Telephone: 0684 293 347

Cheque payable to: T J Cresswell

Gently sloping grass site. Chemical toilet disposal and limited wash basins, toilets and pay showers.

Directions: From North head South on A38 from M50 junction 1 for about 1 mile. Turn left just after BP garage, site on right in 100 yards. From South take A38 North from Tewkesbury for about 2 miles. Turn Right just before BP garage. Site on right in 100 yards.

Two-course evening meal available at P H Saturday night at about £4.75 per head. If required please indicate on booking slip and state choice of Beef Bourguignonne / Lasagne / Vegetarian on booking slip. Apple Pie & Cream or selection of Ice-cream to follow. Two sittings, 7.30 and 8 pm. This site is 10 miles from Three Counties Show ground. Maximum 25 vans.

22nd/24th July; CLUB & COMPANY RALLY, Three Counties Show ground, Malvern Wells, Worcs.

The annual event for all members of the Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club.

Booking forms must have been received by the Club not later than 23rd June.

11th/14th August; Naburn Locks Caravan Park, Naburn, York.

Site fees: £3.00 per van per night. No electricity. Rally Fee: £1.50
Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs J Henwood, 1 Fairfield Avenue, Linthorpe,
Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS5 5HB Telephone: 0642 821 983
Cheque payable to: J. Henwood

Directions: Take outer ring road south of York (A64). Turn onto A19
northbound (to City Centre), in 100 yards turn left onto B1222. Site on bank
of River Ouse next to Naburn Locks, half a mile from Naburn, 4 miles south
of York.

A meal may be arranged for Saturday evening. The centre of York can be
reached by river bus, road bus or on foot.

No vans before 4 pm Thursday, please.

**13th/14th August; Scottish Motor Home & Tourer Show, Ingliston,
Edinburgh.**

Full details awaited. Site fee Friday night, £2; Saturday night, £4.50 to
include Craft Fair and Ceilidh; Sunday night, £2.

**19th/21st August; Worksop Rugby Club, Stubbing Lane, Worksop,
Notts.**

Site fee: £1.50 per van per night. No electricity. Rally fee: £1.50
Green field site. Toilets and wash basins available.

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs M G Robinson, 16 Maid Marian Avenue,
Bilthorpe, Nr. Newark, Notts. NG22 8SR Telephone: 0623 870635.

Cheque payable to: M G Robinson

Buffet on site Saturday night, £3 per person. Rally slips to reach Mick &
Pam not later than 12th August, please. Include price of buffet with slip
please, because of ordering.

Directions: From M1 Southbound, Junction 31, SP A57; 4th roundabout SP
Worksop Town Centre; 1st Left Stubbing Lane. From M1 Northbound,
Junction 30, SP A619; 4th roundabout SP Worksop Town Center; 1st Left
Stubbing Lane.

From A1 North & South, Roundabout at junction of A57 & A614. Take A57
SP Worksop Town Centre, 1st Left Stubbing Lane. Robin Hood hats to be
worn on entry.

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

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

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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

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:

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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!

26th/28th August; Hatton Country World, Hatton, near Warwick.

Site fee: £5.00 per night. No electricity. Rally fee: £1.50

Farm field site with chemical toilet disposal and limited wash basins & toilets.

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs R Price, 4 Green Lane, Woodstock, Oxford.
OX20 1JY Telephone: 0993 811 707

Cheque payable to: R Price.

Attractions: The Country World exhibits, Warwick Castle, Kenilworth Castle, Stratford upon Avon, etc.

Directions: Hatton is north of Warwick on the A4177. Turn onto B4439 and follow brown signs to Hatton Craft Centre. Closing date for booking 12th August.

26th August/ 4th September; German Rally, Wunningen, Mosel Valley.

Marshals: Don & Anna Johnson, 44 Lanehouse Rocks Road, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 9DQ. Telephone: 0305 776414

26th/29th August; Argoed High School, Bryn-y-Baal, Mold, Clwyd

Site fee: £3.50 per night. No electricity. Rally fee: £1.50

Toilets & water on site. Milk & papers available

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs J Greenwood, 55 Park Avenue, Mynydd Isa, Mold, Clwyd. CH7 6XR Telephone/fax: 0244 548 882

Cheque payable to: J Greenwood

Directions: Turn off A494 (Mold/Queensferry) into Bryn Road next to Rose & Crown pub (S P Mynydd Isa). Proceed over by-pass bridge, turn left at top of hill along Bryn Lane until end of houses then turn right into Argoed High School.

A meal will be arranged on Sunday evening. A social room available. Licenced club adjacent.

2nd/9th September; 7-Day Holiday Rally, Moreton Glade, Crossways, Dorchester, Dorset.

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

Well equipped site. Our fourth year here. Extra days at same rates.

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs J Worley, 26 Houndstone Park, Gunners Lane, Brympton, Yeovil, Somerset. BA22 8SQ Telephone: 0935 24049

Cheque payable to: B Worley

Directions: On B3390 next to Frampton Arms pub by Moreton Station. Trains to Poole and to Weymouth (via Dorchester). Lulworth Cove, Poole Harbour, Studland and other attractions nearby.

16th/18th September; Motor Caravan Show, Shepton Mallet

19th/26th September; 7-day Holiday Rally, Hidden Valley Touring & Camping Park, West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon

Site fee: £3.25 per night. Electricity: £1.50 per night. Rally fee: £1.50

A favourite site with all who know it.

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs J Worley, 26 Houndstone Park, Gunners Lane, Brympton, Yeovil, Somerset. BA22 8SQ Telephone: 0935 24049

Cheque payable to: B Worley

Please try to book before Jeff and Barbara leave for their rally at Moreton Glade.

Note: You need not book for the whole of the Holiday rallies - two or three days are acceptable. Arrange with marshal.

TALBOTS FIRST GEAR

For the benefit of other members may I explain how I cured my problem? The gear lever ball and socket is on the body which changes position relative to the control rod that actually makes the changes. It is adjusted first at the cab/chassis stage, then the body is put on and the adjustment needs changing but I don't think this is ever done. Then, with use, the engine and gearbox unit settles a bit on the mountings and further adjustment is needed. First mine would not engage first and second and after adjustment at the first service it would not engage fifth and reverse. These problems do not exist with the left hand driver version where the control is on the steering column and immediately above the gearbox. I tried one of these and it was very good. I then decided mine should be even better with the extra leverage and so it was, after my work on it.

First I removed the spare wheel and the control mechanism from the vertical rod out of the gearbox. The nut was loose. I put a tommy bar through the hole in the rod and with two pieces of cardboard and a marker pen I recorded where I could feel the rod should be for each gear. Next I reconnected the mechanism and made sure the nut was very tight. I then jacked up and removed the left front wheel and applied full lock to get the disk out of the way. There are two adjustable and nearly horizontal rods with ball joints at each end. I concluded that the one to do with left and right movements of the gear lever needed shortening by approx. $3/16$ of an inch. Before removing one ball joint I tied a piece of easily seen wire round the retaining spring clip in case I dropped it. A bit of a fiddly job but well worth it. After putting everything back in its place I did a test run which showed I had a gear change as good as any.

Some time after, it went sloppy again and this was due to two nuts which retain the socket at the bottom of the gear lever coming loose. When the lever is correct it should not lean left or right and its total left-right movement should not be more than about 2 and $1/2$ inches. The fore and aft movement should be similar.

Those with good mechanical ability should try to follow my instructions. Those without should give a copy of this letter to their garage mechanic. All a poor gear change needs is correct adjustment.

George Hall

George makes the whole job sound easy, doesn't he? But I will repeat what he says in the final paragraph but in a different way. If you are not sure of what you are doing, or don't think you have the

necessary skills DONT DO ANYTHING! The bit that worries me is the shortening of the horizontal (almost) rods. I'm not sure if this means cutting them or whether there is another form of adjustment - but I don't like tampering with such rods if there is any chance of me doing it wrong. And there is ALWAYS a good chance of that!

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TALBOT GEAR BOXES

A breakdown in France and a subsequent replacement box (just out of warranty but replaced free of charge) has done nothing to improve my faith in the reliability of the Talbot Gear Box. When I read the article on conversion to "Automatic" by G.Bullock in MMM November 1992 I became very interested. We, *Yvonne* and I, had decided that as some of us older youngsters sometimes get health problems two drivers would be better than one. An automatic would be an obvious advantage but the price of a van similar to our Talisman but with automatic gears would be prohibitive. So *Yvonne* started driving lessons and in April last year Carl and Geoffrey Wattkiss collected the van and took it to Bradford for conversion. The two week job actually took nine weeks and although this was extremely worrying it wasn't the inconvenience it could have been as *Yvonne* was on regular driving lessons. We got it back in June and in September *Yvonne* passed her test at the second attempt and within a week drove me to Houghton Mill (a lovely site).

It is now one year and about 6,000 miles on and, fingers crossed, it has not given any trouble. It's a dream in traffic, very useful as we live in a busy London suburb and it's our only vehicle. Being more cautious in my dotage I took it to a local "Automatic Specialist" and they pronounced it a thorough job. They said I could expect at least 40,000 miles without any major attention. Its only snag is the cold start which means 2-3 minutes tick over once a day. This accounts for a slight rise in petrol consumption especially on short runs. Apart from the fact that it is a German 4-speed box and not the 3-speed Ford box which caused earlier snags I know little about it. Care is still needed on soft ground, but I've not got stuck since the box was fitted. (Where's that piece of wood?)

Frank Clare.

Frank has sent in four items, all of which are interesting, and has repeated them to other magazines too. So you may see his name appear elsewhere.

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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Winifred and I spent a long weekend at the rally at Lytham and, like all present, thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. The lucky ones were those able to stay for seven nights. It was good to spend some time in the very fine County of Lancashire (the Lancashire Hot-Pot was superb!) and I made my way back over the Pennines with my missionary spirit rekindled. We spent Saturday in Blackpool and went up in the lift almost to the top of the Tower and then spent a pleasant time in the Ballroom with its fine Victorian decor. I hadn't been there since I worked in Blackpool for a short time in the late 1940's and it brought back many pleasant memories.



That rally was the first one the Club has run, on an unlicensed site, that our Exemption Certificate didn't cover because it was for longer than five nights. Through the Club's membership of the Association of Camping and Caravanning Exempted Organisations (A.C.C.E.O.) we were able to use their certificate, for up to 14 nights, to cover this rally. I do thank Bob Smylie, the Vice-Chairman of ACCEO who gave considerable help to *John Edden*, one of the Club's rally co-ordinators, who in turn led *Kath and Norman Benyon* through the intricacies of Exemption Certificates and how to complete all the required forms. *Kath and Norman* are to be congratulated on being the first Rally Marshals to undertake such a rally and they made it so successful and enjoyable for everyone present.

Heather Tidbury has written to me saying that because of increased work commitments she is finding it difficult to continue the ordering of Rally Plaques and wishes to relinquish the job. No doubt the increased Rally Programme has increased her work load too. *Robert and Nicola* [the junior *Tidbury's* - Ed.] have both become more involved in more activities and *Heather* wants to be able to support them. She has done sterling work for the Club for some years now and I am asking for a volunteer to take over this job. *Heather* will give all assistance to whoever takes over and she is willing to talk to anyone interested while at the Club and Company Rally. Please get in touch with her direct - her telephone number is listed on the back page of the Newsletter (as *John Tidbury*) - and talk about the work involved and then meet her at Malvern.

I look forward to seeing many of you at Malvern.

Arthur Irving

I saw on the television that they were painting the Blackpool Tower

in gold - now I know why! Because our Chairman was attending - after all the Tower is only 100 years old!!

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FRANCE PASSION

Mary White has sent in an interesting note which she received from *Joe Kenny* who is an ex-member of ASOC. "France Passion" is an invitation system aimed at camper drivers making short stops - between 24 & 48 hours - or parking overnight. Wine growers from 44 French wine producing departments are involved in the offer and it is expected that over 1,000 sites will be available. Each site is safe and obstacle-free and is located on the wine grower's property just a few metres from his house.

A book produced in five languages (French, English, Spanish, Italian and German) lists the invitations and details of the properties along with other useful information. It is available on written request for FF. 150 and it is the only item the camper driver has to pay for. It comes with a vehicle identification label plus a numbered invitation card registered in the name of the traveller. So each camper driver is identified which means that the wine-grower will only welcome those satisfying the criteria outlined by the France Passion formula. The system is the result of collaboration between a group of wine press journalists, the Confederation Nationale des Caves Particulieres (CNCP) and the Syndicat des Vehicules de Loisirs (SICVERL).

If you are interested you should write to France Passion, BP 57 - 84202 Carpentras cedex or you can fax them on (16) 90 60 48 69. Please mention the Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club Newsletter if you do write (or fax) because on their "DEMANDE D'ADHESION" form they ask by whom you are recommended. The "Carnet des Invitations 94" appears to be valid from 15/03/94 until 15/03/95 and the cost, as mentioned, is "150 F + 20 F de port". [I would imagine that the odd 20 francs is what we might call 'P&P'.]

It seems to me to be a very good scheme and not all that expensive. I imagine that it is a system rather like the CL's or CS's of the two big clubs but in a specialist area. If anyone does go forward and use the system, please let the rest of the members know what it is like when you return - more for the Newsletter!

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THE SPANISH RALLY

Geoff Scholey rang to say that he would like to meet all those who

have booked and the others who have shown interest in this rally at the Club and Company Rally this year. The meeting will be held in the Severn Hall at 10.30 am on Saturday 23rd July. So if you are going, or have expressed interest, please don't get too involved with the Company Shop or the other stalls and miss this meeting, will you? There has been a very good response to this rally so far and it should turn out to be very successful.

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WINTER SUNSHINE

This coming winter, 94/95, *Bill and I* plus our Executive "Eau Dear" will be travelling down to Portugal and Spain in the hope of greater warmth and sunshine and a view of the interesting sights on the way. We anticipate leaving for Bilbao in North Spain on the P&O ferry about the last week in November, travelling along the coast then in to Santiago da Compostela. From there into Portugal reaching the Algarve region about Christmas time. After exploring and perhaps having a longer rest, we hope to join up with the ASOC rally in Mojacar for February. Doubtless our timetable for the first two months will be altered as we go along - as the whim takes us.

The reason for my writing is that there seems to be some interest on the part of other members to undertake a trip of this sort; should anyone wish to travel some of the route with us or perhaps meet up on a regular basis for company - a chat and/or a meal - to exchange ideas about places of interest - to ensure that all is well or offer a little security, they are very welcome to contact us at home or we shall be at the Wunningen rally in August/September.

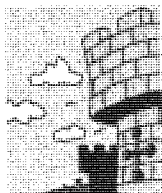
Sandy and Bill Burnett.

The telephone number for contact is 0473 626 500 but the address is not given for obvious reasons! It does seem a good idea for travelling contact to be kept in a similar manner to the request that people include a contact name and telephone number (or address) when attending rallies. You never know what may happen and it is re-assuring to be aware that contact can be made.

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CASTLE HEDINGHAM

Twenty one Auto-Sleepers travelled through mixed weather conditions to Castle Hedingham to *Stella and Ian Ross's* first rally as Marshals. Would the real Essex reveal itself? The promised trip around the castle



would, hopefully, reveal all. Would everyone be able to find a flat spot on the field? Despite appearances everyone found a flat spot to their liking, even those that wanted plenty of space around their vans.

The drizzle relented to allow us all to enjoy a chat and a cuppa around *Ian and Stella's* van on Friday evening, where *Ian* revealed that not only had he arranged a cream tea in the Castle but also a guided tour by the curator of the castle.

However, Saturday morning dawned as it intended to continue - raining. Did this put off the hardy ASOC? No, of course not! Many people enjoyed a stroll around the lovely castle grounds through the woodland and down to the lake, as well as into the village itself. By lunchtime, despite the rain, the enticing aroma of a barbeque drifted across the field as determined members enjoyed their barbeque under joined awnings. As cream tea time approached the rain relented and a queue of hungry members headed for the Castle (a word of thanks to *Ian* for arranging parking close to the Castle for members needing Privileged Parking). Despite the generous size of the cream teas, we were offered seconds (hands up all those who accepted), and at a very reasonable price too! Afterwards, our guided tour revealed much about medieval life in the Castle, from disgusting (hanging up food in the same room as the cesspit) to enlightening (the Castle has the largest Norman arch in Europe). The original owners were the real De Vere's (no, not *Audrey and Richard!*).

Sunday morning (yes it was still raining, but who cares?) found us back in the Castle tearoom, where *Ian* had organised coffee and the raffle. Raffle prizes were many and well distributed, even the Castle tea ladies won their fair share. After a vote of thanks from *Harry Henthorne* for *Stella and Ian's* efforts, a show of hands revealed that a large majority would love to come back next year. Hope to see many more of you there, you missed seeing the real Essex and laying to rest the myth of Kevin and Tracey for good.

David Perry

Can you see my hand up in the air? Because I certainly had another scone with jam and cream!

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VAILLANT WATER HEATERS

If you should need replacement parts for these heaters have a look in your telephone directory for a firm called Heating Replacement Parts and Controls Ltd. They have 39 branches, spread from Glasgow to Exeter. I could list them but I don't think *Harry* would allow me that

much space! Incidentally, they state on their invoices: "New gas safety regulations (ACOP) require the fitting of any gas carrying part or one which disturbs the gas supply must be carried out by a person belonging to a body approved by the Health and Safety Executive".

Phil Daley

I don't think that I would have enough space to list all the branches - it is surprising how much room an address takes up. And we only have 20 pages in total!

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STRATFORD MOTOR CARAVAN FAIR

As everyone was leaving the rally someone from the Club left a large black plastic tyre level behind. Because the Marshal was travelling on to Scotland and would not be attending the Club and Company Rally at Malvern we offered to look after it and bring it with us. So if you have lost this object please contact us at Malvern, or at Tewkesbury the previous week which we shall also attend.

Doris and Reg Gillham

People often take a bit of finding at the Club and Company Rally so I shall ask *Doris and Reg* to put a notice showing where they are on the board by the checking-in point - NOT at the entrance. If you have lost this level, please either find these good people or put your own notice on the same board and try to get together that way. Better still, go to Tewkesbury rally where there should be less people!

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FOR SALE

Flair - April 1993. 6,500 miles. 2.0 EFi engine. All the extras: Roof ventilator 3-speed two-way fan, fly screens to all windows, mains with second battery, front seat arm rests, tilt tolerant fridge, over-cab locker. Original total list price £22,055.00. Never raced, but rallied with great pleasure. £17,950. Telephone Cliff Abbott on 051 608 7454 or 051 608 0857, write to him at "Hillcrest", Red Hill Road, Storeton, Wirral, Merseyside, L63 6HJ or see him at the Club and Company Rally at Malvern. [Cliff kindly sent a donation with this advert - Thank you.]



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NRC Raleigh Motor Chalet de luxe awning. Free standing side connection awning suitable for most high top motor vans. Bought new Summer/Autumn 1993 and never used. We have just bought a coachbuilt. Cost new £320.00, will sell for £200.00. Please contact Lin or Ken Wade on 0454 315 120 or write to them at 65 Hampden Close, North Tate, Bristol, BS17 5UP.

[The *Wade's* also sent a donation - many thanks.]

#####

1987 Talbot Express Sportsman Elevating Roof. 43,000 miles. Privately owned. Service history. Engine uses no oil or water. Excellent interior. Exterior professionally refurbished (only superficial untidiness - no holes!) Can be seen in Dorset. £7,650.00. Please telephone Roland Potter on 0308 423 293 or 0326 317 686 or write to him at Flat 6, Mulberry Court, Falmouth, TR11 3HB.

[*Roland* also sent a donation and tells me that the reason for sale is because he has bought a Talisman!]

#####

Omnistor Bike rack "Carry-All 2-doors" for 3 bikes up to 40 kg. Fits vans with twin rear doors, eg Talbot Express. New price £150 - sell for £80. Telephone Jean and Alan Godbold on 0733 261 438 or write to them at 81 Ringwood, South Bretton, Peterborough, PE3 9SR.

[And another donation reaches the coffers - thanks very much.]

#####

Omnistor Awning 2.6 metres with Safari Room and complete with fixing brackets for Trident. Used three times only. Original cost £635 - Price £400. Please telephone Jack Evans on 0425 618 790 or write to him at 6 Partridge Green, New Milton, Hants., BH25 5RS.

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RALLY FINANCES

In October 1991 our Treasurer, *John Tidbury*, asked for a note to be included about the financing of rallies (other than the two big ones, of course) for the guidance of marshals and those who might like to be marshals. It is worth repeating now for the benefit of the many newer members since that time.

The aim of all rallies is for members to enjoy themselves and for the total costs to be covered by the fees received from members who attend. The major cost is the fees to be paid to the site and these are

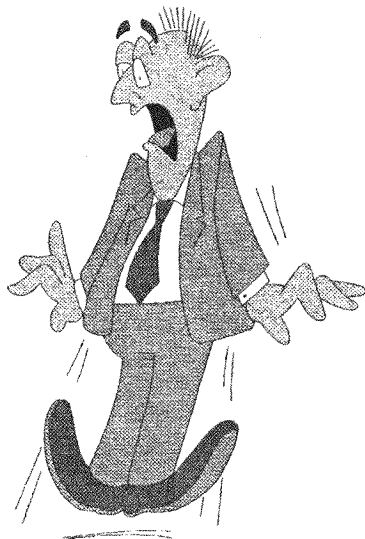
NOT reported to the Club. They are paid direct by the marshal to the site. The money will have been received when the bookings are made or when a member arrives. The Club does not expect the marshal to pay the site fee but it will have to be paid out of the rally fees received unless the site itself waives the charge for the marshal. Next is the cost of the plaques, about 50p for each one ordered. As these have to be produced in advance you can see why you are asked for an early booking if possible. This cost comes out of the rally fee as do the expenses for tea, coffee, biscuits, milk, sugar etc., for the gatherings on Friday evening and Sunday morning. The rally fee also has to cover any postage, telephone calls, duplicating etc incurred. Many marshals arrange a raffle for which prizes have to be purchased (or donated!) and these costs, not forgetting the raffle tickets, must be taken from the sale of those tickets.



The raffle profits and anything left over from the rally fees may be used, at the discretion of the marshal, to provide something extra for those attending or to boost Club funds. You can see that the marshal has a balancing job to do. If only a few members attend an expensive site it may be difficult to cover costs. At the other end of the scale a large turnout at a less expensive site may leave the marshal with a fair balance in hand.

Finally, the Club can stand an occasional loss from a rally so marshals can sleep easily even if their rally does not meet their forecast or hopes!

If you should need to cancel, the earlier you advise the marshal the greater your chance of a refund! I would also remind you of the need to give the marshal details, name and phone number, of someone who should be contacted in the event of any problems befalling you at the rally. You will all be aware that certain events have taken place at one or two rallies where the marshal has needed to contact a member of someone's family in a hurry. So do remember to complete **BOTH SIDES** of your booking slip.



So there is another edition safely off to the printers (the *Daleys*). Because of holidays and the fact that June only has 30 days, they will be hard pressed to print, collate, fold, pack and despatch in such a short time. So if your magazine is late this month, please bear with us (or take over!).

See you next month - or this month at Malvern?

Your Editor

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