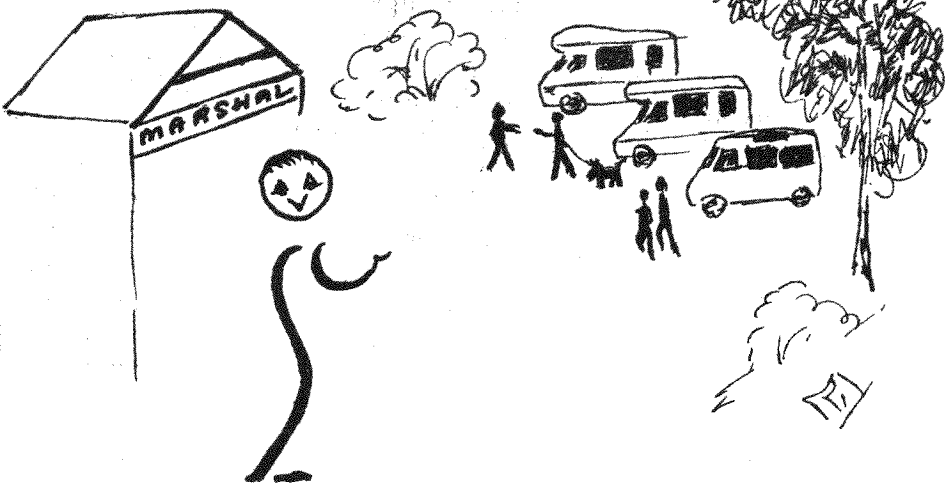


# **AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB**



# **1995**



## **NEWSLETTER 76 JANUARY 1995**

Hello.

Just as a starter, a very Happy New Year to you all. I hope that you have found the calendar useful and have taken note of the item printed on January 1st. You have returned your Renewal form to *Sheila Hawthorne*, haven't you? You haven't?? Tut! Tut! Do it **NOW!** If you have, well, there's a clever girl/boy!! (If you joined in September 1994 or later and your membership number is 1871 or greater you do NOT need to send a form in - and you probably didn't get one in December. Your membership continues until December 1995.) If you have sent the form (and cash) in and haven't yet had a reply, please telephone *Sheila* to see whether she has received it. She normally manages to get the membership cards out within one week of receiving the renewal. If you pay by Standing Order please wait because they cannot be processed until the details have been received from the bank via the Treasurer so it takes a bit of time. But if you haven't heard within a reasonable time from seeing the payment appear on your own bank statement please contact her. Sometimes things can take a little bit longer because, unlike many of our members, she is still in full time employment so that she can keep me in the way to which I am becoming accustomed! Even I pop into the office occasionally, just to keep my brain (who laughed?) working! Many thanks to everyone who sent cards to us with their renewals (and otherwise, of course!). I'm sure you will understand why you have not always been thanked individually.

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## Closing Dates



This is mainly for the newer members (and for the more forgetful older members too!) The closing date for the receipt of items for inclusion in the Newsletter is normally the 16th of the previous month. For the January issue, the closing date is 10th December and for July it is 10th June. This additional time is on account of holidays. I have, in the past, received items on about the 28th/29th/30th of the month and been asked to include it in the following issue! When I have assembled the Newsletter, it is sent to *Rita and Phil Daley* so that they can print, collate, fold, add the rally list and any other items, insert the whole lot into envelopes, label those envelopes, postage frank them and finally get them to the postal authorities for delivery to you. All of these things take time, so you can see why there has to be a deadline. In addition, please don't try to insist that your item/advert/what have you **MUST** be included in the next issue. I will offer no guarantee that it will appear in any issue, or at all,

although I will do my best to ensure that it does. But from time to time I do run out of space.

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## SCOTTISH SHOWS

Western Leisure have advised some dates for shows in Scotland in 1995. There's one in Glasgow, 1st-5th February, one in Strathclyde, 21st-23rd April and one in Ingleston 11th-13th August. No doubt fuller details will appear in the commercial magazines and any more information received will be passed on to *John Edden* for possible inclusion in the Club's Rally Programme.

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## Auto-Sleeper Magazine

I have been asked by *The Daleys* (The Who? NO! the *Daleys*) to add this little comment for the January issue:

We are once again including a copy of the magazine produced for Auto-Sleepers Limited with this Newsletter sent to Club Members in January. When the company first offered us some magazines to send to members we doubt whether they realised that within a few years we would be asking for 1250 copies! But we are sure that you enjoy reading about the new vehicles and the factory news as much as we do. This one has more new models than ever because of the availability of new base vehicles. But for the prices, well, you will have to wrangle with your dealer!

*Rita & Philip Daley*

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## earls court show 1994

*Sheila and I* took ourselves off to visit this show although we had no intention of buying a new van. (And we kept out of being inveigled into such a purchase, too!) We went along mainly to familiarise ourselves, sort of, with what A-S have brought out. We rather liked the new Amethyst on the Ford chassis but my own impression is that I wouldn't like it too much for driving because I couldn't see the front corners from the driving seat. It is hard enough with the VW but I can manage it if I lean forward. With the Transit chassis I didn't see either front corner even though my head was touching the windscreen. Obviously, it isn't necessary when driving along the highways and byways but it is a useful thing to be able to see when in thick, slow-moving traffic or in parking.

We found that we could very easily live with the gear lever and the brake lever positions on the new Boxer chassis from Peugeot because they

leave the centre aisle nice and clear. Time will tell what happens to the gear shift with use because I believe it is operated with cables. We liked the four-burner hob in the Executive but the sink is smaller than we have at present and might cause a bit of a problem when washing up some of the larger items; plates, saucepans etc.

We did rather like the electric lights which had been fitted in place of the roof vents - for show purposes only, of course. I wonder if I could "find" one of them, sometime, and convert it to 12v because they did give a very nice light in the vans. Then all that would need to be done is to find some way of fitting it so that the vent could still be used without affecting the light! No doubt one of our genius members will be able to solve that!

Having had a look round several of the other manufacturers stands we did rather like a few of the offerings. But those huge American jobs, particularly the semi-trailer with the fifth wheel coupling, left us cold - and not only for the price. The tractor unit appeared to have seating for at least six people in it without being crowded. I can just imagine trying to take something like that down some of the narrow Welsh, Scottish or Devon roads that I know. No, thank you. I do not intend to be confined to the motorways and to sites which have huge gateways and are not too far from them. And I wonder just how many gallons are needed per mile!

Overall, though, we were still attracted to the A-S vehicles because they do seem to offer, for our taste, the best on the market. So I suppose I shall have to keep on editing for the time being., 'cos the pay is so good! But when I win the multi-million pounds prize on the lottery.....!!!

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## INDEX

The index for issues 67 - 72 is now available so the usual routine, please. Send your Editor (charming, self-effacing fellow!) a self-addressed, stamped envelope of a size suitable to take a Newsletter and a copy of the index will be forwarded forthwith or even quicker!

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## *Chairman's Chat*



Like you, I received my Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club Calendar at the beginning of December and thought that I had better start filling in some of my own dates after seeing that some entries had already been made, including reminders of work to be done! After finishing the dates I then wondered if I actually had time to meet them as retirement leaves you with so little time!!

On your behalf I thank *Sheila and Harry Henthorne* for their initial work on the Calendar; to *Rita and Phil Daley* for the printing; and to all four for the time they spent collating, stapling and packing the Calendars into the envelopes. I was surprised to see, on the envelope I received, a date and time of 30/11/94 0305 and thought that was real devotion, by the *Daleys*, to Club affairs by getting some 1250 envelopes down to the Royal Mail at that unearthly time in the morning.

Also in the envelope was the preliminary Rally List for 1995 and thanks are due to the Rally Marshals and the Rally Co-ordinators for agreeing to run the large number of Rallies. I sincerely hope that no action has to be taken following the publication of the item on rallies in last month's Newsletter.

I noticed an item in the Caravan Club 'En Route' regarding "Inlet Hazard" which instanced fuel being accidentally put into the motor caravan drinking water inlet, causing the need for complete replacement of the water system. The item continued by warning owners to ensure that anyone using, filling or servicing their motor caravan knows what they are doing and that the water inlet and any necessary keys are clearly labelled. This warning, together with 'The Tailpiece' on page 19 last month, are enough to make everyone ensure that the right liquid goes into the right inlet on their motor caravan.

*Winifred and I* wish you all a very Happy New Year with lots of good motor caravanning.

*Arthur Irving*

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## **1994 AGM**

At the Open Forum following the Annual General Meeting various points were raised and now, after considerable research and time, the Committee make their replies.

1. Candidates standing for election to the Committee will be invited to provide a pen portrait of themselves, but Rule 16 of the Club's Constitution states "Candidates for election may, if they wish, submit a brief curriculum vita of their relevant activities".

2. To include the names of the Marshals on the Rally Plaques would require a much larger and completely new style of plaque at, of course, a considerable increase in the cost. A further complication was the choice of the form of wording for the names, e.g. "Mr & Mrs Bloggs"; "Fred and Jane Bloggs"; "Fred and Jane Bloggs with Jack and Jill"; "The

Bloggs Family" etc., etc. The Committee did not think that the suggestion was really practicable and have decided to continue with the present style of Rally Plaque. However, they have reverted to an earlier practice whereby each Rally Marshal will receive a small plaque with the words "Rally Marshal".

3. After much discussion the Committee decided to continue the experiment of holding the Club's Annual General Meeting in the morning and this will happen at the forthcoming AGM in April 1995.

4. Members of the AGM Rally sub-Committee have been involved in considerable time and expense looking for suitable venues capable of holding the AGM and having sufficient catering facilities. They have not been able to locate a satisfactory venue other than Kettering for 1995. They have explored the few, very few, venues suggested to them and have found them not satisfactory.

5. The Committee has explored the suggestion of the AGM Rally and the Club and Company Rally being combined and it was obvious that a very different format would have to be adopted if we are to attract the various Accessory Dealers and Auto-Sleepers Limited, together with the very considerable member opposition to the date chosen. The choice of venue would have to provide sufficient facilities, at satisfactory and reasonable prices, and to be within a close distance of Willersey. It is considered more satisfactory to continue the two rallies separately.

6. The need for attendance by St John Ambulance or a similar organisation will not arise at the forthcoming AGM at Kettering as their is a First Aid post, staffed by qualified Nurses, at Wicksteed Park.

7. The number of venues that have hard-standing suitable for the AGM are very few indeed if we require the same facilities for the AGM and Annual Dinner that we have previously enjoyed. Again, the sub-committee has taken the provision of hard-standing into their deliberations when investigating the couple of venues suggested to them.

8. Members, at the AGM, were asked if they had personal knowledge of potential Ministry of Defence sites suitable for the AGM. The sub-committee has investigated the one advised site as well as two others it had found. None were suitable.

9. To date, the results of the Questionnaire given out at the AGM have not been received by the Secretary.

*Arthur Irving*  
Chairman  
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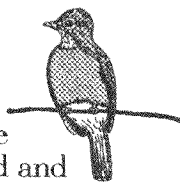
## Peugeot-Talbot Recall

Our Chairman, *Arthur Irving*, telephoned to tell me that he has had a recall notice issued for his 'F' registered Rambler. Apparently there may be some defect in the steering which could upset matters at, usually, the wrong time. It is something to do with the upper bearing cage, or some such term. Part of the letter suggests that if he no longer owns the vehicle, perhaps he should pass it on to the new owner. But as *Arthur* so rightly says, some of our members may have bought second-hand vehicles of around that date and will have no contact with any previous owner. So if you have an A-S van based on a Peugeot-Talbot chassis from around that date, which I believe to be the year of 1987/88, perhaps you should contact your local P-T agent to verify whether your vehicle should be included. And don't be put off if the dealer appears to know nothing about a recall, get them to contact P-T and verify matters for you. Safety is always the best route!

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### SQUEAKS LIKE A CANARY

I read with interest the letter in the November Newsletter from *Pbt Johnson* headed "Regarding our Talisman". We have a Legend and also had an annoying squeak which I tracked down to the fridge. The platform on which the ice cube tray stands vibrates and causes the squeak. *Arthur* (the better half) cut a small piece of wood and wedged this underneath between the base of the platform and the base of the ice-making compartment. Hey presto! No squeak!! Our lovely Legend is 5 years old so I guess that the fridge will be the same model.



*Margaret Fairburn*

I've got a vivid mental picture of *Margaret* creeping around the back of the moving van, lying on the floor, opening doors etc., when she was trying to trace the squeak. I shall have to have a look at our fridge too because we sometimes have a squeak which we haven't yet found. I'll bet, too, that if all the interior fittings were made of rubber and/or plastic to avoid squeaks and rattles we would still find them!

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### RALLY REPORTS

Thank you to everybody who came to our Fireworks Rally at Kirkby Stephen. We had a super weekend and we were sorry to see everybody leave. Special thanks to *Alan Guest* for bringing



all the food, to *Joyce and Tom Conway* for moving their van next to ours to help with lighting and also for warming up the onions (we hope that the smell has now left their van!), to all the ladies who helped serve the hot-dogs and parkin and a special thank you to *Uncle Ben* who is always there to help with the marshalling.

Nobody need worry about running a rally. You get so much help that they really are a combined effort.

Happy rallying for 1995.

*Kath & Norman Benyon*

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## Christmas Shopping Rally, Bath

Having just returned from this rally we would like to offer a word of appreciation for the superb work done by the marshals, *Jackie & Arthur Claxton* and their able assistants *Daphne & John Normandale*. The meal organised for the Friday evening at the adjacent hostelry was excellent and there was plenty of food for all, with extra helping for those who could manage them. Considering that the period covered the first weekend in December, the weather proved to be very kind and provided a considerable amount of sunshine.

It was particularly fitting, considering the amount of work that the *Claxtons* put into the arrangements, that they won the very attractive pencil-drawn framed picture of Bath Abbey. This was sketched, we believe, from material provided by *Jo and John Barrett* of Winsley near Bradford on Avon who attended last years rally and on that occasion won the drawing of the Pulteney Bridge.

Thanks to all concerned for a very enjoyable weekend, our second at this venue.

*Doreen & Brian Abrams*

These reports exemplify the spirit of all of our rallies and you can see why your Committee was perturbed to hear of a very few who don't seem to go along with things. I'm glad to learn that both of these rather late-in-the-year rallies were so successful.

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### *Custom Rubbish Bag Holder.*

I don't know if this idea has been brought to members notice as we haven't been "in the club" so to speak all that long. We got the idea from a local craft fair. If, like us, you keep all those old plastic carrier bags for use in the van as bin



liners and rubbish bags but never quite know where to store them then this may be of use.

Buy an ASOC tea towel, put a half inch hem at top and bottom, thread the top hem with ribbon or cord and the bottom with elastic. Sew the sides together to form a tube. Now stuff it from the top with those old bags and hang it from any hook or knob. Pull out a carrier from the bottom when required. It will even fit onto that small shelf above the sink in a Talisman preventing small items from sliding back and forth. And a Happy New Year to all members, if this is too late for the December issue!

*Nigel Emson*

As you can see it was too late for December. The idea is a good one and has arrived just after we had bought and fitted a plastic container to do the same job! And you could, if you want to, use another form of tea towel.

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## *Regalia*

That talk of tea towels reminds me that *Ian Ross* has advised me that he will not be accepting orders up to the end of March, instead of up to the AGM as I mentioned last month. He is doing a lot of stock taking and re-stocking as well as re-organising the price list etc. One point of good news is that the revised Regalia List will be published soon which will show a price reduction on a number of items.

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## **EARLY DAYS**

In 1962 my husband and I bought our first car - a Renault Dauphine - with which we regularly went camping. Many other Renaults followed and we progressed in 1971 to caravanning until a horrific accident on the M.6 broke my towing nerve. We went looking for a Renault camper van but found that they didn't make them. We finally decided on an A-S CX2000 on a Bedford base which our garage got for us through an agent. We understand that it was one of the first batch of these high tops because we wanted the blue interior and at this stage they were only manufacturing the gold. We were delighted with the van and thoroughly enjoyed many trips home to Scotland in it.

One evening our garage invited us to a promotional event to which several of the Renault 'bigwigs' from France would be on hand to answer queries. During the evening *Jock and I* were formally introduced to them as valued customers who had had a succession of Renault cars. They asked what we liked or didn't like about them and we pointed out that

there was no camper van in the range. They said that they were exploring outlets where they might send a Master/Traffic chassis for conversion. We straight away said that they should send one to A-S who do a super job and then told them about the merits of our van. They were interested and, when asked whether they could see it, were told that it was in the car park. We all went out of the showroom and into our CX2000. They went over it with a fine toothed comb and we even had to make the beds up for them. Afterwards they gave us some little gifts - wine, ice scrapers, key rings, magnifying glasses etc. - and a gallon of Elf oil for the van. Shortly after that we heard that they had decided to send a chassis to A-S and another to R... H.l.dsw..th for conversion. So maybe we played a little part in the Renault auto-sleeper story and maybe some present Club Member now has this 'famous' Bedford??

*Margaret Laidlaw*

This item has been "on the spike" for some time and I've only just got around to using it. Perhaps if *Margaret* likes to remember the registration number of the CX we could check with *Sheila Henthorne* to see whether it is still in the Club. Incidentally, after I had put this into the Newsletter, *Sheila* received the renewal form which says that *Margaret and Jock* are resigning. Mainly because they are in the far North, up in Scotland no less. As *Jock* is a Pipe Major, where else would he want to be?

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## ANDORRA

This is a favourite haunt of ours. Not only do we enjoy the mountains but we are not averse to taking advantage of the Duty Free shopping and fuel! Tucked into the Pyrenees between France and Spain this scenic little country could be described as a land island. It has only two "ports" in that there is a frontier crossing on its northern boundary near Ax-les-Thermes on the N.20 from Toulouse and a southern one which lies near Seo de Urgell in Spain.

The roads are good and well maintained. The climb over the 8000 foot pass at Col d'Envalira is carefully graded. Snow, even in the summer months, can block it especially on the French side. To avoid problems the access route from Toulouse is dotted with electronic indicators. We were happy to find the words "INFO ROUTE" displayed when visiting last March. The implication of this is clear roads, no snow or ice. "EQUIPMENT OBLIGATOIRE" means that chains or studded tyres or a 4-wheel drive vehicle are mandatory. "FERME" is obvious. Blank boards usually mean that all is well though they can be blank due to electronic failure!

Auto-

Sleeper



Owners'

Club

1995 Rallies

Prepared 15<sup>th</sup> December, 1994

## Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club

### February

10th - 12th Valentine's Rally, Grouse & Claret Pub., Rowsley

### March

17th - 19th Ross Park, Newton Abbott, Devon  
24th - 26th Fell End C P, Milnthorpe, Cumbria  
31st - 2nd Apr Ranch Caravan Park, Honeybourne, Worcester

### April

7th - 9th Tilford, Farnham, Hants  
*21st - 23rd Annual Dinner & AGM, Kettering*  
28th - 30th National Motor Home & Tourer Show.

### May

5th - 8th Marsh Farm Country Park, South Woodham Ferrers  
5th - 8th Burn Gliding Club, Burn, Selby, Yorks  
5th - 8th Long Hazel Dairy C S, Sparkford, Yeovil  
12th - 14th Laneside C P, Hope, Castleton, Yorks  
12th - 19th Isle of Avalon, Glastonbury, Somerset. (7 day rally)  
15th - 19th Mid-week Rally, Betwys-y-Coed, Gwynedd  
19th - 21st Bentley Motor Museum, Halland  
19th - 21st Chesildene C P, Bournemouth  
26th - 29th Ripon Rugby Club, Ripon, Yorks

### June

2nd - 4th Woburn Abbey, Woburn  
4th - 11th Scottish Rally, Oban, Strathclyde (7 day rally)  
16th - 25th Buckle, Seaford East Sussex (7 day rally)  
30th - 2nd July Birkenhead Rally, Merseyside.

## July

*21st - 23rd*      *Club & Company Rally, Malvern, Worcs*

## August

11th - 13th      Skipton Rugby Club, Skipton, Yorks  
25th - 27th      Argoed High School, Mold, Clwyd

## September

1st - 8th      Moreton Glade, Dorchester, Dorset. (7 day rally)  
14th - 17th      Beamish Museum, Chester-le-Street, Durham  
22nd - 24th      Chichester Camping, Southbourne, Dorset

## October

6th - 8th      Whitchurch Cricket Club, Whitchurch, Salop  
20th - 22nd      Penybont Rally, Bala, Gwynedd

## November

3rd - 5th      Merley Court, Wimborne, Dorset

This list is provided as a guide and is for information only. Full details of rallies, with address, directions to site and, sometimes, items of interest in the locality, are enclosed with the Club's monthly Newsletter. This is despatched to reach members on or near the first of the month and the rally information each contains usually covers events during the next two months. Booking slips are included with each newsletter.

**Please note:**  
**Rallies may be cancelled or new ones added at short notice.**  
**Check before travelling.**

Any member wishing to run a rally is asked to contact the appropriate Rally Co-ordinator before confirming the date with the site management so that any clash of dates can be avoided.

For rallies **NORTH** of Birmingham, contact:  
John Edden, 4 Nursery Lane, Hopwas  
TAMWORTH, Staffs. B78 3AS  
(01827 65850)

For rallies **SOUTH** of Birmingham, contact:  
Tony Jones, 49 Wessex Way, Highworth,  
SWINDON, Wilts SN6 7NT  
(01793 763032)

For those in the **South-West** peninsular, contact:  
Jeff Worley, 26 Houndstone Park, Gunners Lane, Brympton,  
YEOVIL, Somerset BA22 8SQ  
(01935 24049)

December 1994

In the event the climb to the border town of Pas de la Casa was easy enough. Pas is a place unto itself. The only town on the French side of the mountain, it is a magnet for day-tripping bargain hunters as well as, arguably, providing the best skiing in Andorra. The slopes face North and are usually snow covered from November to May. It is, too, very popular with motor homes. No one objects and there are good flat areas immediately across the border. In winter one can camp by the roadside; in summer there's plenty of open grassy space here. Fun, too, are herds of wild(ish) ponies which wander around begging hopefully for crusts! Great sweeping mountains encircle the town and are very impressive.

There are plenty of good buys here but, it must be said, that on the Spanish side, especially near to their frontier, shopping is cheaper. That means climbing over the top and grinding down the long rather dreary descent. If wanting to take a dislike to Andorra carry on down through the ribbon developed Encamp, Escaldes, Andorra la Vella, Santa Coloma and St. Julia. Unfortunately many people do this and vow never to return!

To find the real charm of the country take any of the side roads and they will lead you out into the mountain countryside. Perhaps the best route is to take the delightful new road to Ordino. This is a circuit rather than needing back-tracking. Coming from France, drop down through the ski resorts of Soldeu and El Tartar to the small town of Canillo (there are camp sites here). Look out for an insignificant turn to the right signed Col d'Ordino. It's hard to spot but be alert as you pass the somewhat futuristic Palau de Gel indoor sports complex. The main road bends to the right and the Ordino turn is in the back of this corner. There is a garage on the left (the second one in Castillo). This climb will take you up through spectacular pastoral scenery, lovely both in winter with the snow and under the greenery of summer. At the top is a very popular picnic area with good walking, easy on one side, quite tough on the other where the path leads to the top of the nearest peak, Casamanya.

The descent to Ordino village mostly through forest offers some superb views. As you get lower you can look down into the valley to Ordino itself and out towards the ski area of Arcalis. Ordino is certainly one of Andorra's more attractive larger villages. Small shops, a bank and a baker are here. There are camp sites along the Arcalis road. It's worth pressing on up this road to the ski slopes for the scenery and in spring, late June, for the wild flowers. At 5000 feet the mountains are literally ablaze with colour. Purpose built barbecues and picnic areas are strategically placed. The making of camp fires in the afforested area is naturally forbidden.

Turn left out of Ordino and in a couple of miles, much of it road works!, you'll reach the popular town, especially with the British, of La Massana. There's good shopping here also a main road leading back down to Andorra la Vella and the road to the frontiers again.

However, turn right for the mountains and take the direction for Pal. Up this road there is a very attractive camp site as well as a couple of small villages on the way to the wide open spaces of the ski areas at the top. Again there is very enjoyable walking up here and also specially built barbecues. Good drinkable mountain water fountains can also be found. In late summer wild raspberries reward the diligent searcher on the Col de Botella side. The tarmac road ceases at the high point. The rough unsurfaced track that continues does, in fact, lead down into Spain - **ILLEGALLY!** It gets quite a bit of use from 4X4 vehicles and not entirely for testing their dirt track driving abilities!

Returning to "earth", i.e. dropping back down to the capital and taking the road towards Seo is a bit of a shock to the system. Traffic jams, queues and so on! Shopping in the town is good especially at the Pyrenees department store. If you can find somewhere to park it's worth making the effort to get to see the Government building The Casa of the Walls and the surrounding ancient town which is carefully preserved in the heart of the bustling city itself.

The last filling stations before the frontier are grouped near several hypermarkets just below St. Julia de Loria. However, probably the best shopping is to be found at the ultimate mega-store - La Trobada - about a mile beyond the last fuel stations which accompany the Jumbo store.

Spanish customs will almost certainly stop you. But don't worry when they ask to see inside and to have hanging cupboards opened. This is a frequent procedure with campers as is being made to get out of your car and open the boot. They are no more strict than anyone else and are only doing the job - or at least showing that there is a job to do in these days of ever decreasing need for Customs Officers in the European Union.

To us Andorra is a delightful little country, admittedly being only half a day's drive away helps, but we really do like it there. The scenery is magnificent, the shopping fun, the crime levels minimal and the opportunities for wild camping better than most. The weather is good throughout most of the year although May tends to be rainy and November brings early wet snows. Remember, if you are visiting, that even if it is cloudy on one side of the mountain it is frequently sunny on the other side!

*Sue & Sefton Sandford*

Another item which has been "on the spike" for quite some time. But it does make Andorra seem an idyllic spot. "Half a day's drive" from London doesn't even get us to Scotland and only just about into Wales if we use a motorway (ugh!). I included this before I had a chance to see the A-S Magazine so I apologise for the apparent duplication!

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## Obituaries

I received a telephone call from *Bernie Wisely* to advise me that *Olive Piper* passed away on December 3rd after a long illness. They were a couple of likeable and popular members who joined the Club in the early days. Even during her illness *Olice* was always cheerful. Our sympathies go out to *Bryan Piper* in his sad loss and I know that this will be echoed throughout the Club.

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The Club has lost a good friend in *Ralph Dulson* who died on 1st December after a long illness. He was a kind and gentle man with a sense of humour and a ready smile. He was elected to the Committee at the Inaugural General Meeting in April 1989. He lived life to the full and if there was a dance band available *Joanne and Ralph* would be first on the floor ready to dance the evening away.

We have lost a special person and to *Joanne* we offer our prayers and condolences.

*Charles Trevelyan*

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## WASTE TAPS



Drum taps fitted to waste tanks are relatively easy to clean. Prise off the disc bearing the maker's name; it has a deep tongue on one edge. With this removed the centre of the tap may be unscrewed completely. Cleaning is now straightforward.

## WEINFEST WINNINGEN

It began with a wine-tasting on the first evening. The next morning members were gathered at the wine fountain in the village. I imagine that the week must have continued in similar vein as memories of it have become distinctly impressionistic. The abiding impression was of conviviality and good company!



To *Don, Anna, Bill and Sandy* thanks for making it all possible and for their guidance towards finding the many localities of interest.

*John Scott*

Two widely diverse snippets which is what this Newsletter is all about!  
Many thanks, *John*, particularly for saving my fingers and sending these items on disc which my machine could read!

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### ADVICE WANTED, PLEASE.

New members *Sheila and Denis Nobes* would appreciate any help they can get in their planning for a trip to Spain during February/March. They hope to go in 1995 and are looking for routes from Santander to the coast just south of Barcelona together with camp sites which may be open during the winter, especially inland from Santander. Letters should be addressed to them at Wheelgates, Pound Green, Arley, Bewdley, Worcestershire, DY12 3LF.

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Also *Dena & Tony Lamb* are intending to make a long (2 or 3 months) journey to Spain soon. They are taking the ferry from Portsmouth to Bilbao, travelling down to the south and then on to Portugal. They will probably return via Spain and France because they have only bought a one-way ticket allowing them to return whenever and by whatever route they please. They would welcome any hints, tips or advice please, but as soon as possible because their journey is imminent. Telephone them on 0332 517 005. They also tell me that they will be travelling in their Trident although they have been looking longingly at the Clubman GL. If anyone wants to swap, please let them know!!

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### BIKE RACKS

In response to *Mike Partridge* in the October Newsletter both Fiamma and Omnistor offer bike racks to be fitted to rear opening doors of van conversions. The racks hang on fittings bolted above and below the window of the right hand door, i.e. the one without the spare wheel. They are very easily removable - possibly TOO easily, although padlocks could replace the bolts. We used a two bike rack for several years on a Renault A-S conversion. However, the first time I loaded the bikes I noticed that the door metal skin was springing in. This was fairly easily remedied by removing the door lining and screwing a solid wooden bar behind the lower fixing points, jamming it between the inner and outer door skins. Thereafter we carried two bikes perfectly satisfactorily for many miles in Britain and France.

The door on which the bikes are hanging will open, but we didn't

subject the hinges to too much of that sort of strain, despite the fact that they seemed unaffected. I haven't seen a rack of this type that will take more than 3 bikes. For 4 bikes it might be a better idea to have a towbar fitted and get a rack that fits on the towbar. These are advertised freely in the commercial magazines.

*John Gibson*

I'm still not too certain what effect the addition of even a couple of bikes might have to the possible overloading of the vehicle. We can read in the commercial magazines how the permitted load for people, food, bedding, water, gas, fuel etc. can bring the vehicle very close to the maximum permitted weight so the addition of even a couple of very light bikes and a rack might take it over the top. Perhaps it would be better to put a towbar in and tug a small trailer of which there are many to be found. It isn't difficult; I've pulled a trailer with four motor-cycles on it all over the south of England to various shows. And with a lightweight trailer you wouldn't even have too much bother in reversing - just unhook and shove!

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## ADDITIONAL RACKS ETC!

Following the recent letters about cycle racks I wonder if anyone can help with our equally difficult problems of how to transport:

1. 1 or 2 sailboards and
2. A baby.

First, the sailboards. We have a 'K' reg. Trident which, of course, has no rain gutters. The only suggestion we have had so far is to have the trim removed, a proper gutter attached, a full roof rack fitted with 'J' bars hanging from this down the side of the van into which the board(s) can be slotted. This all seems rather excessive in terms of both cost and modification to the van. After all, the boards only weigh approx. 12kg each and are 3 metres long. We are wondering whether the 'J' bars could be fitted directly to the side of the van without the need for a roof rack? I would be really grateful if anyone could help us with this as we've just had a new baby (*Danny*) and so after 9 months of abstaining I am now looking forward to doing some wind surfing.

This leads me on to problem number 2. Has anyone found the best (and most sociable) way to sleep 2 adults and one baby in the Trident? It's obviously easy while *Danny* is in the carrycot but by next spring he will have outgrown it. A reply either via the Newsletter or by phone to *Chris* or me on 0225 483 868 would be very welcome.

*Karen Tew*

I'm not sure just what the people at Willersey would say to the idea of putting the 'J' bars directly on to the side of the van but personally I don't like it much. At least if a roof rack is fitted somehow the load is rather spread instead of being on a few bolts. Perhaps you should put a full roof rack up, then put some sort of netting into it and lay *Danny* in that! (Don't tell him I suggested it, because he will probably be bigger than me when he grows up!)

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## Tyre Pressures - with a difference!

*Andrew Wood* has written to say that if anyone is running with soft tyres they had better be careful. In the event of an accident where faulty tyre pressures can be proved to be the cause an insurance company would have no difficulty in repudiating the claim. I don't know whether he is speaking from bitter experience or from advice received but it is a worthwhile point to make!

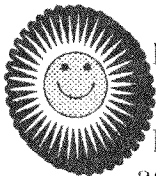
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## Amateur Radio Operators

*Peter Yeatman* has suggested that it might be an idea for all licensed amateur radio operators in the Club (Ham Radio Wallahs to the uninitiated!) to submit their call signs and BBS (or domicile, again for the uninitiated) so that perhaps a sked (translated as regular scheduled calling/talking/chat time) could be arranged between them all. His own call sign is G 0 PSF (that's a zero not a letter O in the middle there!) whereas mine is a lowly G 7 CMW (Call Me Wonderful!!!). He went on to suggest that the details should be sent to "the magazine" to be collated and advertised! Unfortunately I haven't got the spare time to make such an arrangement but no doubt if anyone would like to forward their radio details they could find *Peter's* address among the "For Sale" notices at the end of this issue! So CQ CQ all amateurs - send QSL to him!

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## SOLAR PANELS



*Nial Reynolds* note in the November newsletter prompts me to forward a different experience. In order to stay for more than a couple of nights on one site we would plug in to electricity. The basic need was to replenish the battery; the other benefits we could forego. Some five years ago I considered purchasing either a generator or solar panel. Experience had led me to the conclusion that generators are anti-social so I settled for a solar panel - a 20watt BP Solar. Like *Nial's*,

mine is fitted flat to the roof and is also permanently wired in parallel with the Zig unit on the basis of 'fit and forget'.

In use it has meant that, for six months of the year, we do not use site electricity. It has proved particularly useful in France where the site fees are cheap, but electricity is expensive. There is the added bonus that pitches can be chosen for the view rather than for proximity to electricity. In financial terms it represents a return of approximately £40.00 per annum. To be strictly comparable with *Nial's* calculation, I freely admit that the saving towards the world's energy resources is nothing like as great!

*John Scott.*

This rather looks like a case of "you pays your money and you takes your choice". I do agree with *John* that generators can be anti-social if they are used without thought. Even the quietest of them emit some noise and if you are trying to get children to sleep, to read or to enjoy the surroundings while sitting peacefully outside (or inside sometimes!) your van you can do without the noise. On one occasion we were subjected to a home-made generator powered by a small, apparently un-silenced two-stroke of high revs and with an owner whose charm(?) was only exceeded by his barrack room vernacular (with suitable apologies to most barrack rooms!)

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Renault RV50 Rimini. Elevating roof, four berth, v.g.c., replacement engine, rebuilt gearbox. MOT to January 96. Extras include mains electric, catalytic heater, free-standing side awning, toilet and tent, 4-way stereo cassette, alarm, map reading lamp etc. Two owners. A snip at £6,000.00. Phone Keith Pealin on 0151 677 1683 or write to him at 17a Beech Avenue, Upton, Wirral, L49 4NJ.

Keith kindly sent a donation with this advert and tells me that he is upgrading to a coachbuilt in 1995.

#####

Talbot Rambler 1989 (G). 2 litre unleaded petrol. One careful owner from new. 23,500 miles. Standard specification plus Grundig radio. MOT to September 1995. No known faults. £10,500.00. Telephone Tony Weston on 0332 840 591 or write to 67 Park Road, Duffield, Derby, DE56 4CR.

*Tony* also sent a donation and his reason for sale is due to old age and dry rot. I presume that he is referring to himself and not the Rambler!

#####

1986 Turbo diesel VX50. 4 berth. Red. Hot air blower, swivel cab seats, rear seat restraints, extra table, extra seat (storage), spoiler, chrome bumpers. Also available: NEW Silver Screens, side awning. Full service history. MOT to November 1995. One owner. Immaculate - needs to be seen. £9,500.00 ono. Please contact Albert Brown at 139 Bexley Lane, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4JJ. [Sorry, neither *Sheila* nor I can trace a telephone number.]

#####

1992 'J' reg Talisman GL. 2 litre petrol. 2/4 berth. Alarm system, Silver Screens. 11,000 miles. £18.950.00. Ill health forces sale. Would consider taking a Rapport in part exchange. Please contact Mac Cooper on 0559 371 445 or write to him at 29 Oaklands, Drefach-Felindre, Llandysul, Dyfed, SA44 5UR.

*Mac* sent a donation - many thanks.

#####

Fiamma 2 bike cycle rack to fit VW Transporter type vans. Extra fitting arm for bikes also included in the sale. £50.00 ono. Telephone Dena & tony Lamb on 0332 517 005 or write to them at 17 Milton Close, Mickleover, Derby, DE3 5QN.

Yet another donation received - many thanks.

#####

Honda Dax ST50, 'G' reg. with less than 300 miles on the clock (genuine). Absolutely as new. £650.00. Please telephone Peter Yeatman on 0705 264 638 or write to him at 110 Sunnymean Drive, Waterlooville, Hants., PO7 6BX.

#####

Ford Legend GL, 2 litre petrol, June 1989. 25,000 miles. Excellent features as praised by John Hunt in August 1994 MMM. 2 or 4 berth. Alarm, 2nd battery, blown air heating, cooker, cruise control, double glazed, flush toilet, 3-way fridge, flyscreens, mains hook-up, TV aerial, radio, Proximeter reversing alarm, roofrack with ladder, shower, Vaillant water heater. VG condition. Selling for medical reasons. £14,800.00 ono. Telephone Melvin Crapp on 0908 563 795 or write to him at 4 Littlemere, Two Mile Ash, Milton Keynes, Bucks., MK8 8DR.

#####

1992 Talisman GL, 2 litre petrol. 14,500 miles. 2-4 berth (factory fitted removable bulkhead and side pockets), "Morack" chassis mounted cycle rack, alarm, Silver Screen. Removeable radio/cassette. 1 owner from new. No pets. Non-smokers. For more information please phone Tony Turner on 0121 454 7347 or write to him at 35 High Point, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 3RX.

[No, I didn't miss the price out - it wasn't given! - Ed.]

#####

VW Trident. 5 cyl 2.4 litre diesel. 9,500 miles. New December 1993. Full year's tax. Dealer serviced. Immaculate condition with full A-S specification plus pull-out tape/radio, alarm system, blown air heating, Fiamma two-bike rack, mains hook-up lead and adaptor, two gas bottles. Non-smokers' vehicle. May travel for inspection (within reason!) Price: £19,500.00 ono. Please contact Jhansie or Iain Bruton, 37 Dunclair Park, Plymouth, Devon, PL3 6DJ or telephone 0752 220 402.

(Thank you for the donation.)

#####

Peugeot-Talbot Workshop Manual for sale. £25.00 plus post and packing as it weighs 6lb 6oz! Telephone Alf Campbell on 0309 674 898 or write to him at Happy Return, Nelson Road, Forres, Moray, IV36 0DR

#####

VW Clubman GL. 5 cylinder diesel. 30.2 mpg. Immaculate condition. Fitted with Hope Safe-T-Bar and Moped rack, Status TV aerial, Omnistor 3000 awning, Burglar alarm, Silver Screen. Wax-oyl injected chassis. Registered April 1993. 13,000 miles. One meticulous owner: £21,000.00. Telephone Norman McPherson on 0181 398 5355 or write to him at 118 Manor Road North, Esher, Surrey, KT10 0AG.

#####

1994 VW Trident, 7,000 miles. 2.4 diesel, p/a steering. Blue upholstery adapted for disabled passenger with Slideaway ramp, wheelchair clamps. Captains seats - swivel passenger seat. Two batteries, hot air heating, Gemini alarm, tow bar, two gas bottles (full). Fridge unused, cooker & crockery used once only. All virtually as new! Very reluctant sale. £21,700.00. Telephone Peter Enkel on 0638 750 140 or write to him at 5 Turnpike Road, Red Lodge, Bury st Edmunds, Suffolk, IP28 8JZ.

(Thank you for the donation.)

#####

Harmony, 1994 'M' reg. 2.5 diesel, P.A.S. All usual refinements - shower, central heating, swivel seats etc. Full unused crockery set. Extras include brand new Raleigh de luxe awning, Fiamma bike rack, s/hand covers and s/hand Silver Screens. 804 miles only. Still under Peugeot Lincare and A.A. warranties. £19,995.00. Please telephone Mrs Toni Berry on 0691 828 576 or write to her at The Compass, Porthywren, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 8LY.

It has been a bit of a tight squeeze this month so one or two items have had to be 'edited' rather fiercely. If yours was one of those cut about a bit I apologise!

That's all for this month, must get ready for Christmas now.

Happy motor-caravanning in this New Year and all the very best from:

Your Editor  
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144 Devonshire Hill Lane  
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Tel: 0181 808 9112

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