

# **AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB**



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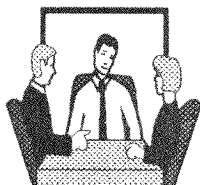
## **NEWSLETTER 77 FEBRUARY 1995**

Hello.

I received a letter just too late for inclusion last month. It was from Ifor Bracegirdle, who is not a member of the Club but owns an Auto-Sleeper, who has available a hob and glass cover which came from his 88/89 Rapport. It is one which he was told was prone to Tap breakage if the hob got hot due to heavy usage. He suggests that someone, somewhere, will have had some similar problems so if anyone is interested please write to him at 23 Bro Waun, Waunfawr, Gwynedd, LL55 4DQ. I'm sorry, but I haven't been given a telephone number.

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## COMMITTEE MEETING



Your Committee met at the Wythall Community Centre which is up (or down!) near Birmingham. *Sheila Hanthorne*, as Secretary, reported that the Exemption Certificate has been renewed (see Chairman's Chat later).

Then, as Membership Secretary, she reported that new members were continuing to join the Club and the renewals were coming in steadily. There have been a number of resignations and several members have not yet sent the renewal forms back to her with the full details so that the Club records can be kept up to date. She circulated a resume of the comments which have appeared on the renewal forms and, from the general tone, it seems that the Club is running in the way members want.

The Treasurer, *John Tidbury*, advised us that the Club funds are in a healthy state. For our Rally Co-ordinators, *John Edden* reported that there are around 31 rallies already arranged for this year so far. *Tony Jones* was unable to attend as he and some ice had a bit of an argument, to the detriment of his arm! *Ian Ross*, the Regalia Officer, was also unable to attend but we know that he is busy with stock appraisal.

Your Newsletter Editor told the Committee that he had received a couple of interesting letters. One, from a commercial motor caravan magazine Editor, praised the Club for bringing out into the open the difficulties which had been experienced at certain rallies. The other told us that the Club Calendar has had a greater effect than we would ever have thought possible. It has been used to help a young lady who suffers from Downs Syndrome to cope with the date throughout 1994. (We have sent the young lady a special copy with her own birthday clearly marked!) Otherwise, the items of interest for the Newsletter continue to appear, usually just in time to prevent panic taking too much hold.

The Public Relations Officer, *Cliff Abbott*, says that he continues to suffer from a degree of frustration. This is caused in part by the long lead times required by the commercial press. *Steve Bowler*, our Ferry Bookings Officer said that things were moving steadily. Stena-Sealink usually confirm the booking by return of fax message so that our members are able to receive their confirmation quickly. *Ron Wilson*, who is looking after the Annual Dinner and ACM Rally, confirmed that everything is either arranged or close to completion. Then our Chairman, for the Club and Company rally sub, told us that it is still early days yet for detailed information but that the basic ideas have been sorted out. Members who have volunteered their special experience to assist the Club will be contacted in the near future. Last, we learned, with regret, that *John Edden* will be leaving the Club.

Two items for your consideration arose during our discussions. The first is that we are still looking for somebody who is able and willing to carry out an examination of the Club accounts at the end of each year. For practical reasons it is hoped that someone who lives within, say, a 30 mile radius of Oxford will volunteer for the job because our Treasurer is still in full-time employment and cannot afford too much time to travel to the Examiner. The other item is that we are seeking volunteers to fill three vacancies on the Committee. As you will have seen, nominations, duly proposed and seconded must be with the Secretary on or before 4th March 1995. But if you would like to volunteer and cannot get the proposer and seconder, please contact *Sheila Henthorne* with your offer and see what she can arrange.

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## **WHAT IS ACCEO?**

The Association of Caravan & Camping Exempted Organisations is an Umbrella Organisation for caravan and camping clubs that hold a Certificate of Exemption (see note below\*). It represents the interests of all Member Clubs at national level and at present represents over 240 of the 300 clubs which have been issued with certificates. It has established a good working relationship with the Department of the Environment and other Government Authorities and is able to act on behalf of Member Clubs with these bodies. ACCEO can also prove services and access to facilities not directly available to the individual clubs. Rallies in National Parks cannot be held without first being approved by the appropriate National Park Officer. Approval is necessary some one year in advance and must be obtained through a 'Clearing' procedure which is accessible by ACCEO although not by clubs.

Whilst individual clubs may, by means of the Certificate of Exemption, organise rallies of up to five days duration, ACCEO is one of only four highly respected Organisations to be granted Exempted status which permits the Association and, subject to certain conditions, Member Clubs to hold rallies on unlicensed land of up to 15 days duration.

ACCEO is able to give advice on matters of vital importance to clubs and has issued a series of information sheets on specific subjects, some of which deal with the use and protection of Certificates of Exemption which are highly valued but which can be withdrawn. Clubs are kept informed on matters of interest and importance by the Association Newsletter 'ACCEO Matters' which is circulated at least twice a year. Two ACCEO Rallies are run each year, the 'National' at May Day Bank Holiday and the Annual Meeting in October. Arrangements are made by a volunteer 'host' club in conjunction with the Association.

A Head Office has been established at Bewdley in Worcestershire as a focal point for all ACCEO services and a comprehensive scheme of Insurances operates from there through their Brokers, K.Drewe (Insurance) Ltd. There are specifically 'tailored' insurance for caravans, motor cars, household, travel and a travel service. For more details telephone or fax on 0129 940 1407.

Finally, ACCEO exists only to protect the interests of caravanners in general and its Member Clubs in particular. It is totally independent and is run by a Committee of elected unpaid Officers who are all very experienced regular rallying caravanners themselves.

\*Explanation of the term Certificate of Exemption:- The "Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act, 1960" provides in Paragraph 6 of the First Schedule that:- "a site licence shall not be required for the use of land as a caravan site if the use is under the supervision of an exempted organisation and is in pursuance of arrangements made by that organisation for a meeting of its Members lasting not more than 5 days". Properly constituted leisure clubs whose main activity is Caravanning or Camping may apply to the Department of the Environment to become an 'Exempted Organisation' and subject to giving certain undertakings a Certificate of Exemption may be issued to that Club.

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This information has been extracted from Information Sheet No. 1 from ACCEO kindly sent to me by Alan E. King who was previously Editor of ACCEO Matters and is now Vice-Chairman of the Association.

## Peugeot-Talbot Recall

After reading this item last month, *Jackie Boltwood* kindly telephoned to advise that the recall also applies to 'G' registered vehicles. She has just received a notice from P-T in respect of their Rambler. In addition, I have learned, from *Maurice Wright* of Minehead, that an 'H' registered vehicle has been recalled too. Next I received the following:

I noticed your item in the January newsletter about the Peugeot-Talbot recall notice that *Arthur Irving* received. Well, it doesn't only affect 'F' registered vans because I also received the recall notice and my Talisman is 'J' registered. So many more A-S Talbot (and probably Fiat, because the Ducato and Express are identical - except for badges and diesel engines) owners need to check whether their 'vans are included. If the local dealer can't help perhaps it's worth trying the Recall Help desk on 0173 484 1331. The recall reference is XW6. According to the Express workshop manual the steering rack needs to be removed, then the pinion bearing can be replaced. Then the steering damper is adjusted and the rack replaced.

Let me try and explain what the mysterious 'upper pinion bearing cage' is. On an Express the steering column connects to a gear wheel (the pinion) which, when turned, pushes a toothed bar (the rack) from side to side and thence turns the wheels. The pinion is located by, and rotates in, a bearing - the upper pinion bearing. The cage is the outer part of this bearing.

*David Perry*

Finally, I learn from *John Scott* whose 1991 Talisman has been recalled and adjusted that it now bears a red sticker under the bonnet which shows the words PEUGEOT VEHICLE CERTIFICATION REF NO XW6. So perhaps if you have any Peugeot-Talbot or Fiat based van from around these years you would be well advised to contact your local P-T agent or the Recall Help desk mentioned to see whether your steering needs attention.

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Bath Rally, December 1994

**RALLY**

**NEWS**

Having attended our first ASOC rally we would like to thank all those people who made us so welcome and helped to make it a most enjoyable and lucky weekend. As we were a bit late arriving *Rita and Clive Jenkins* kindly waited for us and 'lit' the way along the towpath to "The Boathouse" where we joined *Daphne & John Normandale*.

*Jackie & Arthur Claxton* were perfect hosts and made sure we were settling in and enjoying ourselves. Saturday dawned wet and windy but the lanes and alleys of Bath were a joy to wander in although very busy.

Everyone gathered on Sunday morning for coffee, mince pies and a delicious fruit cake. We had enjoyed many hours puzzling over *Jackie's* cryptic clues and managed equal second in the quiz. Our number came out in the raffle, with all the prizes wrapped in Christmas paper, and it was with a ticket that *Dave Clarke* had just sold us. We won a beautiful glass engraved and donated by *Geoff Mackey*, a lovely memento for us. We spent an enjoyable hour with *Enid & Geoff [Mackey]* discussing past and present vans and promised to meet again at Newton Abbott in March. We have also put the dates for the two big Club rallies in our diary.

We left feeling that we had made some wonderful new friends, and by the way *Ginny* also won £10 in the National Lottery! Thank you one and all. We look forward to seeing you all in this New Year.

*Ginny & David Holley*

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## Hidden Valley - New Year

Having booked for an extra day as per the instructions, we arrived on Thursday. The weather was a bit mixed, we experienced rain, hail and sleet on the way down. We were welcomed by the Marshals and on the Friday the other ralliers arrived. That evening we sat down to a welcoming drink and a two course meal.

On Saturday evening we had a three course spread with the choice of either Haggis or soup for starters, Venison or Steak as the main course with the sweet trolley to follow. Then we had a fancy dress competition divided into three sections; Hats, won by *Ruth and Alan Wilkes*; Costumes - home-made or hired, won by us as Lottery Winners (which we weren't!) and finally a section for individuals won, I think, by *John Barrett* as a sailor.

On Sunday we had a three course lunch and a buffet meal in the evening. This was followed by a Country & Western evening which was almost as fancy as the fancy dress as we saw from the outfits being worn. On Monday a home-made Brunch was served for the homeward bound New Year revellers.

No praise can be high enough for the Rally Marshals, *Barbara & Jeff Worley with Carol & Gordon Hooper* and for the site owners and their kitchen staff who looked after us so well. The marshals donated their rally fees to the kitchen staff for their wonderful attention to us all over the

weekend. In all a rally we shall remember for a long, long time.

*Barbara & John Cox*

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## **Canadian Holiday - 1994**

We arrived in Calgary to be met by our friends. From there we travelled to Tunnel Mountain in Banff in their Motor home - ours, we felt, would have fitted into one corner! After a good rest we drove into Banff the following morning calling at Bow Falls en route. Banff is a real tourist spot and we found the shops there quite delightful if expensive. After spending two days camping, we began our journey to British Columbia travelling on the Trans-Canada Highway through the Rockies, a wonderful experience. We left the main highway to visit Lake Louise where there is a magnificent glacier. Although there was a nip in the air we were able to sit by the side of the lake and enjoy the warmth of the mid-day sun. The depth and colour of the lake has to be seen to be believed, as has the size of the Chateau. This appeared to be full of American and Japanese tourists. We finally made our way back to the Highway and were soon well on our way to Salmon Arm, our destination. Our friends' home is set on a hillside overlooking Shuswap Lake, a beautiful view to which we awakened each morning. Jet lag had caught up with us by this time and we were ready to rest up for a couple of days. We toured locally until Friday, 16th September when we set off to U.S.A. Our journeying took us through Vernon, Kelowna, Penticton and Oliver to Osoyoos where we had a short stop to visit our friends' daughter and her family. We then crossed over into Oroville where we spent the weekend. The warm weather had turned into a heat wave and we were glad of the canopy on the motor home! We camped by the side of Lake Osoyoos, an idyllic spot. What can we say about the lakes? Absolutely out of this world! The return journey to B.C. by the same route was almost unbelievable.

Again we were ready to relax for a day or two. Then on Saturday, September 24th, we set off for Jasper to stay with another relative. This time we travelled by car through the Yellowhead route. This was the beginning of our third week in Canada and the trees had turned to burnished gold. We just couldn't decide which was the more beautiful, the Mountains, the Lakes or the Trees. This journey was most inspiring...it just had to be!

We stopped in a beautiful spot by the edge of the Blue River for our lunch and it was with reluctance that we continued our journey. Our

next break was at the Terry Fox Mountain named after a young man who, although suffering from cancer and having only one leg, endeavoured to walk across Canada to raise money for Cancer Research. He didn't succeed in finishing the walk before he died and this mountain was named in his honour. As we sat in the park alongside we were able to catch a glimpse of the highest peak in Canada - a majestic sight.

From here we drove through the Mount Robson National Park and on to Jasper, Alberta. Our tour there took us to Jasper Lodge (incidentally this Lodge was shown on the T.V. Holiday programme the week after we had returned home). We had a picnic in the grounds and from where we sat we could see "The Old Man of the Mountain", a perfect profile of a man's face set on the mountain top. There was again a nip in the air and a slight breeze rustled the tall trees, such an unusual sound. Jasper is another tourist spot surrounded entirely by mountains, so picturesque in the evening light. Alas, our holiday was coming to an end and one morning we had to leave and make our way through varying landscapes to Edmonton. There we were welcomed by yet another member of the family with whom we stayed, enjoying their company, until it was time for us to make our way back to the airport at Calgary. A wonderful holiday, made possible by our very good friends and their respective families.

#### *Alice and Bert Jones*

This sounds like a marvellous trip and makes me a bit jealous! *Alice*, as many members will know, travels around in a wheelchair when outside the van. So now newer members will know why we have no "disabled" members in the Club only "Privileged Parkers" - you can't call people like this disabled, can you?

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#### *Chairman's Chat*

Cleaning and renovation time is fast approaching when your Auto-Sleeper Motor Caravan will be spruced up for the coming camping season - that is if you haven't been out, so far this year, in your van. I know that quite a number of members have already been camping including those who were at the Rally held over the New Year; *John Cox* has told me how enjoyable the rally was. Even the fool-hardy members of the Committee have spent a weekend together when they had their meeting in the Birmingham area in the middle of January.

To enable the Club to continue to hold Green Field Rallies and Rallies up to five nights *Sheila Henthorne*, the Club Secretary, sent off to the Department of the Environment the renewal application for our Exemption certificate which expires on 28th February 1995. The renewal of the Certificate has been received so that we can continue until 28th February 2000. During the five years that we have held the certificate many Green Field Rallies have been thoroughly enjoyed by many members. Obviously we require the certificate so that we can continue to belong to ACCEO (see earlier item) whose benefits include tailor-made Insurance so essential to a Club such as ours together with the facility to hold rallies of longer than five nights on unlicensed sites by using their extended Exemption Certificate.

ACCEO have contacted all member Clubs about problems which have resulted from some Caravan Site owners saying that their Caravan Site Licence would cover a Club's rally when, in fact, this is not so. A Club which accepts the Site Owner's word without further checking may be illegally organising a rally. **PLEASE**, if you are planning to organise a rally on behalf of our Club, do **NOT** make any firm arrangements with a Site Owner before you have contacted one of the Club's Rally Co-ordinators. He will give you all the required information and advice together with, if appropriate, the authority of the Club to hold a rally on your chosen site. Should the Club hold an illegally organised rally it would endanger the validity of the Club's Exemption Certificate with the loss of many, many advantages to us all.

Additionally, ACCEO offers discounts on ferry bookings on P & O European Ferries, Brittany Ferries, Sally Line, Hoverspeed and North Sea Ferries - to obtain a brochure or make bookings telephone 0129 940 1594 and quote the Club's name and your Club membership number. (If you can't remember it, look on the label on the next Newsletter you receive - it's on the bottom line at the right.) **BUT** *Steve Bowler*, the Club's own Ferry Bookings Officer, will deal with all your Stena Sealink bookings - contact him on 0121 745 8369, full details in *Steve's* letter included with last month's Newsletter.

ACCEO also offer insurance on Motor Caravans and Home Insurance with reduced premiums for over 50's and they can deal with those if you telephone 0129 940 5489, again quoting the Club's name and your Club membership number.

If you would like to re-live V-E day memories, after 50 years, you may want to join the 1995 ACCEO National Rally at the Fire Service College, Moreton-in-the-Marsh, Gloucestershire which runs from

2.00pm on Friday 5th May 1995 until the late afternoon of Monday, 8th May. The cost is £22.00 for 2 adults and you can wear your old uniform or demob suit if they haven't shrunk! Mine have!! Or would have done if I could find them!!! Closing date for applications is 8th April 1995.

*Arthur Irving*

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### **VW T4 TRIDENT**

We are wondering if anyone else has had a similar problem to ours. We have a T4 based Trident fitted with "Clim-Air" draught excluders on the front windows. Over a period of six months both driver's and passenger's side windows have shattered. On both occasions the van was parked up under cover, no stone chippings etc. The most worrying part is that sometimes when we are both working night shifts, our Norfolk Terrier dog sleeps on the front seat. Any comments will be most welcome. Both Volkswagen UK and Clim-Air are looking into this for us.

*Pat and Tim Allen*

I haven't heard of this before so if anyone can help.....

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### **ONE YEAR ON**

It is now about 16 months since we bought our Symphony and joined A.S.O.C. The Talbot does not have P.A.S. which I very much regret. The dealer did not mention how heavy the steering would be in comparison to the Renault coachbuilt which I sold. This aside, I find the van comfortable on long trips especially since I fitted a Cruise Control which I would not be without.

I thought I would submit a few of my comments about the vehicle and various "improvements" which I have made for our comfort in case they may be of interest to other members. I do not know if I am extra clumsy but the overhead bed locker was nearly always crashing down on my head when I was putting the bedding away. To avoid this I made up a two inch sleeve of metal that slipped over the brass strut and snugly fitted over the hinge in the middle. Once adjusted to the right size I wrapped some coloured insulation tape over it to smarten it up.

Like some other readers I have made a carpeted false floor, an ideal place to accommodate the annex poles. There is a useful area of space by the side of the passenger seat so I made a storage box approximately 15" x 8" x 8" and angled at the front to make it easier for us to get into an out of the vehicle. It too is covered with carpeting to match the rest. It is where we keep our pre-chilled Cola/Lemonade etc.

## **Rallies for February and March.**

**10th - 12th February; Valentine's Rally, Grouse & Claret Public House & Caravan Park, Rowsley, Matlock, Derbys**

Your rally marshals: John Maltby & Irene Cooper

Site fee: £5 per night. Electricity: NO Rally Fee: £2.00

Booking slip to: Mr J F Maltby, 28 Lansdowne Avenue, Newbold, Chesterfield, Derbys. S41 8PL

Telephone: 01246 558 224.

Cheque payable to: J F Maltby

Attractions: Chatsworth House and Gardens nearby.

Directions: From Junction 28 of M1 follow signs to Matlock then North on A6 towards Bakewell. Site approx 6 miles at Rowsley, on right. **Limited to 29 vans.**

**17th - 19th March; Ross Park, Ipplepen, Newton Abbot, Devon.**

Your rally Marshals: Anne & Don Scaplehome.

Site fee: £6.50 per night. Electricity: Included. Rally fee: £1.50

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs G Hooper, "Hunters Moon",

12 Wrefords Close, Exeter, Devon. EX4 5AY

Telephone: 01392 213 417

Cheque payable to: G Hooper.

Attractions: Hardstanding. Dartmoor & Torbay within easy reach.

Food available Friday and Saturday evening and Sunday lunch.

Directions: A381 from Newton Abbot towards Totnes for about 3 miles. Turn right opposite BP garage (site signed). Site in about 150 yards. Please notify if bringing a dog/dogs.

**24th - 26th March; Fell End Caravan Park, Hale, Milnthorpe, Cumbria.**

Your rally marshals: Andrew & Betty Entwistle.

Site fee: £11.50 for the weekend. Electricity: £1.30 per night.

Rally fee: £2.50 (Includes charge for electricity in hall).

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs A Entwistle, 8 The Dell, Mytholm, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire. HX7 6DP

Telephone: 01422 843 057 Closing date **10th March.**

Cheque payable to: A Entwistle

Attractions: Excellent site in Lake District National Park. A Bring & Buy sale will be organised if sufficient interest. Pie & Peas on Thursday evening (6.30 pm) charged at cost - order when booking, pay on arrival. Satellite television hook-up available @ 75 pence per night.

Directions: From Junction 35 of M6 take A6 northwards; just after Esso filling station on left turn left and follow signs to Fell End Caravan Park. **Restricted by site to 40 vans.**

**31st March - 2nd April; Ranch Caravan Park, Honeybourne, Evesham, Worcs.**

Your rally marshals: Tim & Fiz Goodfellow

Site fee: £4.25 per night Electricity: £1.75 per night(restricted)

Rally fee: £1.50

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs T Goodfellow, Chiltern Heights, Plowden Park, Aston Rowant, Oxon. OX9 5SX.

Telephone: 01844 351 668

Cheque payable to: T Goodfellow

Attractions: Good site, clubhouse, bar, meals, shop. Vale of Evesham, Tewkesbury, trains to Worcester.

Directions: Honeyboure lies on unclassified road (Ryknield Street) between Bidford on Avon and Weston Sub Edge. Site clearly signed south of railway bridge. **45 van limit.**

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?

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Rally: ..... Date: .....

Your name and address (please PRINT) .....

.....

..... Post code. ....

Membership No: ..... Phone No: ..... Van Reg: .....

Day/Time of arrival .....

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

Name..... Phone: .....

*Please complete both sides of the form!*

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

Number of people in your van: Adults  Children

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

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

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

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

POST FORM TO REACH MARSHAL 10 DAYS BEFORE EVENT



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

Number of people in your van: Adults  Children

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

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

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

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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

being very handy to grab a can if you get stuck in a traffic jam.

Do you ever drive off only to find after about ten minutes that there is a crash from the back when the cutlery drawer slides out and hits the floor? You curse yourself for not checking it first. Solve this problem by putting a screw sticking up on the top edge of the left-hand side at the back of the drawer and a second screw at right angles to it in the side of the drawer runner. Now the drawer will not fall out unless you take a screw out.

I have put an additional shelf in the cupboard over the gas hob to house plastic containers for coffee, tea, etc. On the bottom shelf I made baize covered wooden rings to locate the cups and milk jug. The original cup rack is used for mugs. The space over the plates has a rack for two egg cups and a wooden cradle over the bowls for our coffee pot. I have also added a detachable extension worktop across the rear doors, making life so much easier when preparing food or washing up. This doubles as a tray and stores when not in use in a rack between the back door and the fridge side panel.

I have replaced the corner basin which I felt to be inadequate with a fold down type, sited over the loo. The new basin could be filled from the shower head if you do not wish to deal with additional plumbing apart from the necessary new waste. Prior to this alteration I disconnected the flexible hose to the shower and added to the mixer a three inch piece cut from a spare hose. The sawn end was made good with a small piece of plastic tube and fixed with a suitable glue. It enables one to fill a kettle when the sink is being used or the cover is down. The shower fitment was still usable by taking the nozzle off and replacing the hose. How many times have you needed to use the loo on a sloping site only to find that the seat cover will not stay up? You have to hold up the lid when you have other more important matters on your mind. This problem is solved by fixing a small piece of Velcro to the lid and another to the back wall.

It is relatively easy to add a porch light over the rear doors as the wiring can be connected via the internal light over the doors but a word of warning if you install a switch to the left of the fan switch. Be careful to site the switch so that it does not foul the door to the crockery cupboard.

The small cupboard above the T.V. shelf accommodates four wine glasses held in place by Terry clips and four tumblers are stacked in pairs on baize covered locating rings.

We look forward to the Newsletter each month to find out what new

ideas other people have so that we can incorporate them into our "second home".

*Dudley Dymond*

It never ceases to amaze me how our members "adjust, adapt and arrange" things within their van to accommodate their own needs or fancies. And when I see the resulting workmanship I am sure that A-S themselves would be proud of the results.

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## **A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ONE AND ALL**

A few cautionary tales and a laugh at our expense. Last year I managed to prevent my husband from a DIY service to the fridge in the Legend. He took it to our nearest dealer to have the whole system checked when we had a window catch and door-lock fitted after our December 1993 break-in. Incidentally "they" did not manage to lever open the rear door, the handle (or whatever you call the bit you get hold of) broke but the latch held. However the sliding window was obviously a doddle.

After driving home in torrential rain he noticed that the toilet and wardrobe door frame was wet and getting wetter. Further investigation showed no problems with roof vents but the rubber seal round the space heater flue looked perished. It must have been disturbed when the inside was dealt with. The part had to be ordered and it seems to be OK now. As our holiday plans kept fading away we did not use the fridge, except on 12v as a cool-box for our picnic supplies. I noticed it was rather difficult to open the catch but assumed that my heavy-handed husband had pressed it down too firmly.

We eventually went to France in September intending to make our way in a leisurely manner to my sister's home, stay with them for about 10 days, then make off in the direction of Annecy as recommended by our son before heading back towards Calais. The journey down did not take as long as anticipated as we had really torrential rain right from home and most of the way to Pibrac (Nr Toulouse) where we stayed for 12 days only 2 of which were dry. I have never known such dreadful weather there and we've visited at all sorts of seasons in the last 20 years.

We decided to persevere with the rest of the plans so drove off in that direction. The weather perked up and was quite summery in the day. Consequently the nights were very cold; the stars were so clear that it almost seemed as if you could reach out and touch them. No sites were open and, as I cannot bring myself to sleep with the heater on, one night we awoke at 3am, made a drink from our flask and drove on until the

sun came up. Then we had another sleep till it was coffee-time. Just fancy, we do this for fun!!!!

Owing to the lie of the land we had slept opposite way round to our usual. As I was considering getting out of bed I was surprised to notice how much daylight I could see round the fridge. I was assured by "THE BOSS" that this was always the case but we were not usually facing it. A few more days/switchback roads/traffic calming humps later the real reason came to light. It was not screwed into the housing and was gradually retreating, hence my difficulty with the catch. There was a screw rolling about but, of course, the hole was damaged so a larger one was needed.

A big mistake was to head for a site recommended in one of the commercial magazines. It was closed and our French was not good enough to make further enquiries. The atmosphere in our Legend became rather tense as we had passed round the edges of some rather interesting places, but a walk round would have upset the timetable for our journey. 'HE' does tend to get the bit between his teeth at times. The rest of the holiday passed reasonably amicably, the air having been cleared by the usual 'heated discussion'! All went well until it came to the shopping. We had decided to leave it till nearer the port. Never again! I found Auchan at Boulogne oppressive, the choice very limited and the checkout operative was downright unfriendly. I usually enjoy a wander round and most stores are very busy but the general atmosphere is different.

I fancied a quick look at Mammouth near Calais but *Clifford* said he would stay in the van. So off I trotted with my remaining Francs and my specs. I found some different chocolate and some bottles not on the shelves in the other place, worked the price out so that there was not too much small change and felt quite pleased with myself.

This happy feeling was dispelled when I saw "HIMSELF" walking towards me with a grim look on his face. "I hope you have got your keys" he said in the voice he always uses when he's done something silly and is trying to re-direct the blame. It was, of course, my fault that he had leapt out of the passenger door and let it go, forgetting that we had the catches on because a friend of my sister's had had her handbag snatched whilst we were staying there.

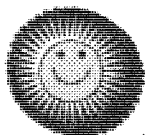
So there we were, outside, with all the keys, tools, emergency telephone number etc. inside. I hadn't even taken the dictionary. A steak knife and a screwdriver had to be purchased and it was frightening

how easy it was to get in, despite the diagonal pieces of wood used to stop the windows sliding back. Never again, ever, will I leave the vehicle without my keys. Nobody seemed even to glance in our direction during the 15 or so minutes it took to get in but I suppose most car thieves don't have a woman with a few items in a trolley standing there saying "you prize idiot" at intervals! What a relief to get back in!! So we have ended up minus a window catch again as at this time last year. Ah well, such is life! I see that in yesterday's newspaper Auchan is listed as the best supermarket so perhaps it was just my frame of mind at the time!

*Marie Winfield*

Luckily, I normally get out of the driver's door which cannot be slammed shut without unlocking itself.

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## SOLAR PANELS

Regarding the recent correspondence in the Newsletter and elsewhere on this subject I throw in my pennyworth for whatever use it may be.

Some few years ago I purchased a Kawasaki GD700 portable generator and soon found it limited to occasional use for driving small portable electric tools around the garden on account of the unacceptable noise level and nuisance factor on sites, both commercial and C.L.'s. When we purchased our Symphony last year I fitted a solar panel to the external, rearward facing surface of the toilet so that it "looked out of" the rear nearside door window. When parked up at home and not in use the rear of the van faces south and receives near optimum sunlight, albeit without the benefit of vertical elevation. This panel is only a 10 watt unit (Solarex MSX10L) and as such requires no regulator when applied across a 60 ampere/hour or more battery. To add to the versatility of this, I purchased from Alan Bee of SPORTi Leisure Products at the Bath & West Show last autumn, a FOX-D1 Digital Battery Monitor which is capable of being switched to read volts or charging current and by fitting a single pole changeover switch with centre off I have wired this unit so that I can switch the output of the solar panel to either the 2nd battery or to the vehicle battery. This arrangement means that when parked up at home and with the panel output fed to the vehicle battery the engine starts like the proverbial lark at all times even after a couple of weeks or more with the vehicle alarm continuously armed. When the van is being used in rambling mode (excuse the pun!) the auxiliary battery is switched to receive the output when on site.

I would not claim that this would provide an answer to the needs of all users since different people use their electrics in different ways but for us the arrangement is ideal and provides the right balance of cost versus benefit. For the record, on a bright sunny day with the panel facing due south, mid-day output is between 400 and 500 milliamps (nearly half an amp) and on a dull grey day about 80 milliamps is registered, more than enough to offset the drain of the alarm and not enough to cause loss of battery electrolyte due to overcharging.

I did become aware shortly after fitting this unit that it seemed to attract some "tailgaters" who were curious to identify the weird space age phenomenon which they were following (and in danger of becoming "attached" to!) so to eliminate this unwanted attention I purchased a pair of Silver Screens for the rear doors and now when motoring apply one to the nearside door on the basis that this provides no rear vision anyway and it does obscure the solar unit.

I hope these comments may be of help to someone and a very Happy New Year to all members.

*Brian Abrams (the technical end of Doreen!)*

And I always thought that these panels had to be on the roof!

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## Obituaries

We have just learned that *Jean French* of Ambleside died on 1st December 1994. Our sincere sympathy and condolences go to *Fred* and we are glad to report that he is continuing membership of the Club.

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*Gerald Coggins* of Seaford died on January 7th. He had spent a considerable time in hospital since he returned from the Hidden Valley rally in September 1994 and, more recently, had been progressing from one crisis to another. Our condolences and prayers go out to *Margaret*.

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## Cascade 2GE Water Heater

I cannot believe that I am alone in having experienced leak problems with the Cascade, certainly as fitted in 1994. My particular comment relates to a Clubman but could equally well apply to any Cascade installation.

In the offside floor of the Clubman, just inboard from the external flue, there is a hole about 3/4 inch in diameter. It is immediately under the two (hot and cold) hose connectors to the Cascade. If parked

absolutely level any leaking water should find its way out through the hole. However, if a finger pushed through the hole and around the floor comes out wet a leak exists! If parked other than level this may only become obvious when the carpet in mid floor is wet. Do NOT ignore a 'hunting' water pump.

Unfortunately both spigots to which the hoses are attached are made of a smooth (not ribbed) plastic, screwed into the back of the heater. Clearly it would be unwise to over tighten the jubilee clips. In my case we were on a French camp site. I removed the heater from outside, having disconnected the gas supply and clips from under the offside bed box (turn off gas at cylinder!) after removing the bed box lid. Owing to the proximity of the gas bottle cupboard, the hose connections are not accessible from inside. Having disconnected both hoses, I wrapped a few layers of P.T.F.E. tape round each spigot before remaking the joint. The repair was tested under heat before completely replacing and fixing the Cascade - there is sufficient spare cable and pipework inside to permit this. Had I been at home I would probably have lightly smeared the inside of each hose with Seelastik (instead of using the P.T.F.E. tape) as I have done for many years when replacing car cooling system hoses. To date the leak has not recurred.

A further leak found in 5 different Cascades going back to a 1984 trailer caravan relate to the external plastic drain plug. In each case, and only when hot, water has leaked down the outside body work. On each installation it was cured by replacing the existing thin 'O' sealing ring with a thicker one reaching beyond the plastic shoulder under the head of the plug.

Finally, the cocktail cabinet placed immediately above the fridge can result in a very warm lemonade - or whisky! - bottle. Could it be the position of the cupboard or the proximity of the clipped back door to the fridge vent outside?

*Gordon Finlayson*

Luckily, perhaps, we have never found either problem with our Clubman. I do wonder if the possibility of a hot bottle in the cocktail cabinet is more the result of warm sunshine (even through the clipped back door window) heating the outer skin of the van, rather than blaming the fridge.

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## YOUNG JIM

On Saturday night at the rally a concert will be held  
So if you are a CLUBMAN we hope you will attend.

No matter you're a SPORTSMAN it's a singer we require  
To sing in simple HARMONY in fancy-dress attire.  
You could come as good old Neptune, wave your TRIDENT in the air  
To all of the proceedings we're sure you'd add some FLAIR.

Young Jim rose to the challenge (he always was a TROOPER)  
His RHAPSODY in Blue, my dear, is really super-duper!  
The TALISMAN in his pocket, a TOPAZ fine and rare  
Made him confident and FRISKY, he'd do anything for a dare.  
The night arrived and all assembled, his performance to observe.  
Good RAPPORT with the audience he really did deserve

He checked upon his OMEGA, the time was five to nine.  
"A partner's needed urgently, with a voice as good as mine".  
He chose a friendly neighbour from the RECRO just next door.  
There was not time for practice, he just hoped his voice would soar.  
They set the scene in Italy, Venice, Rome and RIMINI,  
"Some music from the operas, light-hearted, not a SYMPHONY."  
The strains of "One Cornetto" came clearly through the air.  
A DUETT O simply wonderful, all could only stand and stare

The Committee had a problem, not the first it must be said,  
Just who should get the TROPHY? Young Jim, or his partner, Fred?  
After much deliberation the Chairman took the stage,  
"The EXECUTIVE decision is written on this page  
Deciding who should hold the cup near drove us round the bend  
Six months each, we do declare 'til their names become LEGEND".  
Our Young Jim had fame at last but he's really not a gambler.  
A life on stage is not for him, he'd rather be a RAMBLER

So that's the tale of our Young Jim, he's back again next year  
It's rather long, I've kept you late, perhaps you  
OUGHT TO SLEEP 'ERE!

*Brenda Wilson*

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## **SLEEPERS**

The CLUBMEN and the TALISMEN roared along, by jiminy.  
A-RAPPORTING and pillaging right down the way to RIMINI.  
Their Chief - I mean EXECUTIVE - just grabbed himself a TROPHY  
A little thing with TOPAZ eyes, and FRISKY, and called Sophy!

But that is all a LEGEND of the days of yesteryear  
The TALISWOMEN live a life of HARMONY and cheer.  
The SYMPHONY of friendship with the CLUBMEN and their wives,  
No more EXPRESSing enmity with TRIDENTs and with knives

The alpha and the OMEGA of life for them these days  
Is a FLAIR for peace and HARMONY in many varied ways  
But the problem for their TROOPERS and their RAMBLERS in  
DUETTO

Is the everlasting question - What the Hell is RECRO?

*Colin Lumb*

Just another couple of the poems submitted at last year's Club and Company Rally.

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Can anyone help with a wiring diagram for a 1989 VW Transporter, please? If so, please telephone N.E. Freeland (sorry, don't know the first name) on 0124 252 8371 or write to him at 10 Treelands Drive, Leckhampton, Cheltenham, Glos., GL53 0DB.



#####

We have recently purchased a Renault T.800 and although a 'Y' registration the vehicle has been stored in a barn since new and is in immaculate condition. Only 30,000 miles recorded and with documentation for every repair, adjustment and M.O.T. since new.

We would, however, like to upgrade the engine or gear box if possible and wonder if any member has carried out such an alteration. At 1397 cc the engine seems under-powered and the gearbox has too low a ratio for motorway travel. We shall be grateful for any advice or information which we may receive.

*Vivienne and Frank Clifton*

In part this goes back to the fact that we are all driving what are basically commercial vans and, as such, the gearboxes were designed for slower than motorway driving but with the torque required to pull fairly heavy (relatively-speaking) loads. Thus the ratios are bound to be lower than those for a car.

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14" white wheel trims (bolt-on) for Talbot Express.  
£25.00. Telephone Jean & Alan Godbold on 0173 326 1438 or write to them at 81 Ringwood, South Bretton, Peterborough, PE3 9SR.

Porta-Potti 245. £30.00. 2.6m Omnistor Light retractable awning (07B Horizontal) with all fittings, plus used-once-only brown/cream Safari Room 1.9m height with unused ground-sheet, off an A-S Rambler. £450.00. Reason for sale - changed to an Executive. Please telephone (or fax) Rose & Graham Stott on 0160 676 099 or write to them at 32 Landswood Park, Hartford, Northwich, Cheshire, CW8 1NF.

Many thanks for the donation.

#####

Purpose built mini car transporter trailer. Highly successful over 5 years of towing behind a Legend. £500.00 ono. For further details please telephone John Cuff on 0120 248 4984 or write to him at 52 Bridge Street, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 1EB.

#####

Talbot Executive, 2.0 petrol, Power Assisted Steering, September 93 "L" Reg. 10,000 miles. Taxed to August 1995. Alarm, Silver Screens, removable Clarion stereo. 2 Propane bottles, Electric cable, Step. 2 berth fully equipped luxury motor caravan with substantial interior storage. As new, very reluctant sale. £20,500.00 o.n.o. Telephone John or Pam McDonagh on 0163 534 767 or write/call at Clazey House, New Road, Newbury, Berks. RG14 7RX.

#####

Fiamma 300D Bike Rack for vans with double rear doors. Will carry 3 cycles. Brand new, still in box. £120.00. I can provide advice on fitting if required. Telephone Pam or Pete Jordan 0186 577 1397 or write to them at 72 Courland Road, Iffley, Oxford, Oxon. OX4 4JB.

#####

Talbot Harmony, 'J' reg 1991. 2.5 litre diesel. 32-35 mpg. All mod. cons. - central heating, shower, swivel seats, auxiliary battery etc. plus waste water tank, Van Bitz full alarm system and Airide suspension. Non-smokers. Excellent condition. £15,950.00. Telephone Peter Place on 0135 453 576 or write to him at 17 Kingswood Road, March, Cambridgeshire, PE15 9RT.

Many thanks for the donation received with this advert.

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## PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

During the Committee weekend members voted on the entries. The winner, by one vote, was *Rick Lockyer's* "Then and Now" showing a horse-drawn caravan passing a parked Clubman. Second was *Louise Story* with a picture of an overnight stop in Connemara when the van was

"impossibly" parked surrounded by rocks. Third showed *Alan Edward's* van parked by a lake with excellent reflections. 18 photos were each worth at least one vote. Well done, all. Now start thinking of the 1995 competition!

*Rita Daley*

Bit of a squeeze again this month to get everything in, but I made it! Just!! Next issue already started - so back to the printer and get this one up to Solihull.

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