

AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB



**NEWSLETTER 83
AUGUST 1995**

Hello.

Oops! I appear to have upset some members with certain remarks in last month's issue. Their answers will be found a little later on. I am sorry if anyone felt aggrieved by what I said which was **NOT** intended to condemn anyone - just to show what has been reported to the Committee in the past and has been brought up at two (at least) of the recent Open Forums after the AGM. All I can say is that any Editor is bound to "get things wrong" sometimes - look at the National Press recently!

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Thank you to everyone who has sent in the details of their change of van. It does help *Sheila* to keep the records up to date. Every now and again she finds a new member appearing with a van which, according to the records, is in the possession of an existing member.

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The puzzle set by *Doris & Reg Gillham* as to how Wicksteed Park got hold of their home address has been solved. Wicksteed people sent the letter bearing their name to *Ron Wilson* who had completed all the arrangements and he added the proper address. Simple, when you know how!

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By the time you get this issue the Club and Company Rally will have come and gone. There have been a number of membership enquiries who wanted to attend the rally and, where possible, the booking form was sent off to them. However, there has to be a final time limit for bookings because of the administration necessary for such a large affair. So if you were a late enquirer and couldn't get in, sorry, but I'm sure you will understand. Your Committee doesn't just decide on a date and everything else just happens!

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FROM THE FACTORY

First and foremost we have won another award! At the Peterborough Motor Caravan Show the Peugeot Executive was chosen as the "Motorhome of the Year" by readers of Motor Caravan and Motorhome Monthly and Which Motor Caravan.

Now we are on our way to another award, but not with a motor caravan! Margaret Ellison, our Sales Office Co-ordinator, and Pamela Hadley, who looks after our Reception, have been chosen to represent

the County of Worcester in the All England Bowling Competition that takes place at Leamington Spa in August. Any support and spectators will be most welcome.

On a more earthly note our vehicles continue to sell well and it is good to see so many on the road when we go about our business, albeit usually in a car. However, one side of the business that is seldom seen by the Club is the need to comply with a multitude of legislative requirements. These are ably looked after by our Technical Manager, *Steven Riley*, who is not only a member of the Motor Caravan Section of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) but also sits on the National Caravan Council Technical Committee. The legislation with which we have to comply includes the NCC Habitation Code for Motor Caravans as well as many other issues, such as those relating to gas and electricity. The Company is a member of both NICIEC - who look after the electrical side of things - and CORGI who's dog like initials stand for The Council of Registered Gas Installers.

In addition, we also spend a considerable amount of time - and, regrettably, money - working towards requirements of Whole Vehicle Type Approval for motor caravans. In order to comply with the needs of Type Approval we are having to test our seats, seat belts and seat belt anchorage points and we are glad to say that we have already met with considerable success in this field. However, Type Approvals is not limited to just seats and seat belts, but includes all aspects of the vehicle and will involve us in considerable work in the future.

As if this was not enough, we shall shortly have to comply with the legislation relating to Electro Magnetic Compatibility. This subject is a minefield so we shall not endeavour to explain, other than to say that it relates to the electro magnetic field around any electrical wire and that the waves thus created can disturb electrical appliances in the immediate area. An easier subject, but equally time consuming, is the Environmental protection Act which will necessitate us installing our new state of the art paint shop which will enable us to use water based paints. (Sounds rather like distemper!) Then we have to comply with requirement imposed upon us by the chassis manufacturers which, to say the least, are extremely stringent. These are continually updated and within the last few weeks we have received further details from Renault France in the form of "Accord Technique" - this being the latest and by far the highest standard to which they require people such as ourselves to work. So all in all we are kept extremely busy. Sadly, we just do not have

enough time to use the motor caravan we make as much as we would all like. But there is always retirement to look forward to!

This news from the factory has been typed by Tina who has recently joined the Company and looks forward to meeting you all at the Club and Company Rally in Malvern.

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Unfortunately received just too late for last month. It arrived while we were away on holiday with most of the Newsletter already completed just waiting to be proof-read and the pictures put in. I don't know who wrote it either - there was just a compliments slip with it.

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Improvements

I have always intended to write to tell you of 'improvements' that I have carried out to my 1993 Talbot Symphony which might be of interest to other owners. Two things have prompted me at the moment. The first is a heavy downpour bringing me in from other jobs and the second, more importantly, I have two accessories which have caught my interest:

1. A Vehicle Immobiliser
2. And Audible Warning Device to make you aware that your battery voltage has reduced to 11 volts.

The immobiliser I have actually fitted to my vehicle. The installation is straightforward and can be done, in most cases, behind the dash to eliminate tampering. It works by cutting into two circuits. I chose the starter motor and the coil. The small box of tricks is fitted behind the dash and all connections made good. There is then a LED to fit to show the status of the system and a 'secret' micro-switch fitted wherever you wish to disarm the immobiliser and allow the circuits to become operational. So far mine has worked perfectly and has caught me out on a few forgetful occasions. This product comes hard wired to the box of tricks complete with instructions. If anyone is interested the price is £45.00 plus postage and packing.

The second device is again a small box of tricks to be wired into the 12 volt system, maybe in a cupboard or bed box. This constantly monitors the battery and when the voltage drops to 11 volts an audible alarm comes on to warn you of the need to charge the battery. In monitoring mode this unit has no current drain from the system; in

alarm mode it only drains 20 milliamps. I am told by the manufacturers that tests will be conducted to see whether 11 volts, in a single battery installation, is still enough to start the engine. In a twin battery set up it would be best to monitor the leisure battery. The cost of this unit is £12.95 including VAT, postage and packing. For further information on this unit contact C.S.A.Electronics, 18 Mansfield Close, Worthing, Sussex, BN11 2QR.

If anyone wants information about the immobiliser they should telephone me on 0127 359 4479 after 7.00 pm please or write to me at 130 The Gardens, Southwick, Brighton, Sussex, BN42 4AQ

Tony Fowler

Another couple of useful tips, to which *Tony* has added a couple more ideas. If space permits I will include these next month.

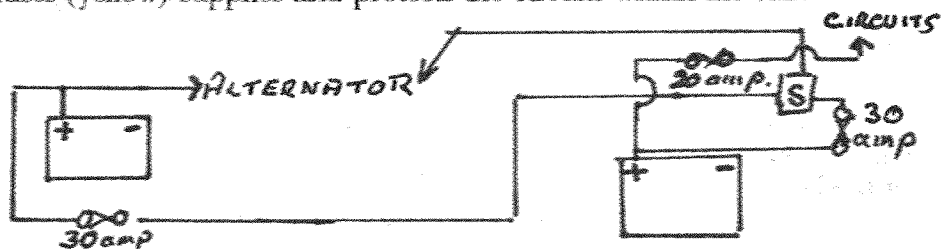
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Advice re Fluorescent Tubes

As an ex-Electrician and Engineer here is a tip that can extract the most life from these tubes. Turn them round (end on end) especially if a black or dark band appears at one end. As they are used on direct current they tend to polarise after a while. This is also useful for domestic tubes - and it gives an opportunity to clean them at the same time!



Regarding fuses - there are two 30amp fuses under the bonnet of the 1989 Talisman. One is near the vehicle battery which supplies the charging current to the caravan battery via the solenoid (relay) switch on the bulkhead above. Also there is one near the caravan battery in the wire coming from the solenoid to the battery. The 20amp fuses (yellow) supplies and protects the circuits within the van.



Either 30amp fuse is likely to blow on a surge current as the relay near the caravan battery is switched on when the alternator is charging. If this is a regular problem I would most certainly recommend that a vehicle electrical check is made by an qualified Auto Electrician. The

over-use of appliances in the van would tend to blow the 20amp fuse and not the 30amp ones.

Harry Bowker

Harry apologised for his "scrawl" and made the joke that he was "used to doing quotes on the back of a fag packet" - but since he's given up smoking he's finding it difficult to adjust to proper paper!

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I was interested in the letters concerning the fuse problems. This appears only to involve conversions on the VW T4 diesel. VW fit a 90amp alternator to this vehicle to cater for their standard battery of approx. 88 amp/hour capacity. When a second battery has, quite legitimately, been used without an electric hook up it can get a bit low. A battery in this state will take all the charge that an alternator will give, this can be up to around 80-odd amps. The fusing current for a 30amp fuse is approx. 55-60amps so it is quite easy for the problem to occur. I have written to A-S about this fault and they are investigating.

Betty & Paul Edwards

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12 VOLT CHARGING CIRCUIT.

May I join the correspondence about the 30amp fuse in the 12v charging circuit to the second battery - it is not restricted to the VW T4. I know of a Ford Transit that has blown two and has uprated from 25amp to 30amp. At the recent Seaford rally I found a VW Trophy diesel owner with a blown 30amp fuse and a near flat second battery. Having consulted Joseph Lucas Ltd. Maplins and my local VW agent may I submit the following views.

1. Diesel vehicles normally have alternators with a higher output than their petrol counterparts since they have larger capacity batteries to charge.
2. The problem should not occur provided that the second battery is not run down to the 11 volts shown by the Zig warning light. The alternator is capable of delivering 45-50amps - which does nothing for the health of a 30amp fuse. It will try to deliver this high amperage for at least 2 - 3 minutes before reducing - if the battery is low.
3. So far as Slow-blow and Anti-surge blade fuses are concerned, I am told that they do not exist, but I wonder. In any case, if available, they would only cope with the excessive current for seconds, not minutes. Ensuring that the refrigerator is switched on to 12 volts may

help by reducing the current available from the alternator - but I would not rely too much on it.

The only immediate solution, if faced with a flat battery and blown fuse, is to recharge from a mains source, replace the fuse and carry on. Of course, you could use a suitably heavier charging cable and employ a 50amp fuse.

My solution in the meanwhile in my Clubman is to fit a twin scale battery condition indicator (adapted voltmeter) on the dashboard and connected to the output side of the fuse via an 'ignition' controlled relay; also to earth. The upper scale has the added advantage of proving that the battery is being charged (i.e. that the fuse is intact) when the engine is running. Incidentally, the wiring diagram A3SAD11195 of June 1993 in the Clubman Manual states that the 30amp fuse holder is only fitted to models with batteries inside the vehicle. Both Clubman and Trophy have second batteries and 30amp fuse in the engine compartment.

Gordon Finlayson

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Pockets

Looking around our van (Legend) for yet more space to put things (we never have enough, do we?) my eye lit on the flaps behind the front seats. I bought some stick-on Velcro. You will need 24 inches cut into 6" pieces. Cut the paper down the middle and press together. Peel off the backing place on the side edges of the flaps and press onto the seat. Then screw the base of a press stud (like the ones used on the curtaining) and press home a cap that A-S put on the screws. Presto! Two new pockets.

Winifred Hopkinson.

Was that pun intended, I ask?

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Comments - Various.

Just a few comments and replies to some of the questions raised over the last few months.

Fuel Consumption (again)

Just to throw a spanner in 'the thoughts' of *Jack Dawson* (N/L 78) we must be the only people, it seems, who get LESS mpg when in France. Our non-turbo diesel Talisman normally returns 27-30 mpg, however

this year we obtained our worst ever consumption of 26.4 mpg on the return journey from Royan at 55-60 mph. I still consider this 'worst' figure to be very acceptable allowing for the fact that the vehicle contained two adults, two large children, everything from a two week holiday, had a top box and very large holdall on the roof and two bikes on the back rack.....Oh yes, and fifteen cases of beer, three cases of wine and a case of Champagne!!

Water Filler 2

Like *Dave Morris* (N/L 79) I also struggle to fill our Talisman's water tank when out of the range of a hose. My 'disposable' funnel is a one litre lemonade bottle (plastic) with the bottom cut off at about 45 degrees (also very useful for topping up with fuel should you run out and not have a proper can with a spout). Another thought is a new two gallon watering can which will empty into a side filler quite well.

Electrics can be Odd

(N/L 80). I think the reason *Jim* was told to discharge his battery fully and then recharge it was not due to 'memory' (Ni-cads only) as he thought, but so that the battery could receive a full and proper charge (24 hours with a trickle charger including gassing off) so as to remove and prevent sulphation on the plates which can reduce capacity and therefore output from the battery.

Advice Available 2

Rather like *Pauline and Gordon Hill* (but not so adventurous) we have just returned from our second trip to France and can therefore suggest a couple of 'wild camps' from Cherbourg to Royan via La Baule. I wonder if, like us, there are others who can recommend "W.C's" near places of interest around England, e.g. I can recommend a couple when visiting Goodwood and Silverstone. If others feel that this would be useful I could collate and list them. You can write to me at 9 Sands Close, Pattishall, Northants., NN12 8LU or you can send a fax to my company's fax machine on 0160 485 9428 but you **MUST** make sure that you mark the fax with my name.

Joan and Nigel Emson

The last item sounds like rather a good idea so if you have any suggestions please send them to *Nigel* as shown.

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Vice-Chairman's Chat



By the time you read this, the Club & Company rally will be over and hopefully a good time will have been had by all. In order for everyone to have this good time, a lot of work has to be done beforehand. As usual, by the few! This brings me to my theme this month - Rally Marshalling.

In 1992 *Carol and I* found what we thought would be a good continental rally site at Royan in France. A brief note in the Newsletter advising of an information leaflet led to over 100 enquiries! This was going to be our first rally as marshals so we thought we had better have a little practice rally a little nearer to home. The Round Table sent *Carol* (the then Secretary) details of an Easter Rally at Stretton on Dunsmore. We advertised the rally in the Newsletter and 21 bookings followed. Much more manageable numbers, an easy week-end we thought. Then, enter the weather! Arriving on site two A.S.O.C. members were waiting on the roadside. "The site our club has been given is soggy!" Find organiser, walk field and select a more suitable site. (The Hymer Club were given our old site) The three vans were parked at our new and dryer location and we settled down to await the rest of our members. I must point out that the rain was steadily falling ALL DAY. After watching several motor caravans get stuck in the mud I watched the rally stewards glibly sending everyone down one muddy churned up track. I decided to meet our members on the road and direct them over the slightly more firm routes. The net result, only one member got stuck and that was when he stopped to park up. Coffee evening was under our awning and after coffee, off duty for the day.

Day two started reasonably sunny; this could be the relaxing day I was looking forward to. Wrong! New club member to marshal. "How do you switch the gas on?" A quick check revealed that this happy couple had taken delivery of their van from the dealer who had given them two (empty) gas bottles as compensation for not fitting the awning in time. Gas was obtained but the water heater would not work. No problems, two other members had had similar faults and in no time the heater was in pieces and put right. Are you going to the Country and Western tonight? The tickets are free. Panic sets in, then off to the office just in time to obtain sufficient tickets for those who wanted to go.

To cut this short, the week-end organisers were not very organised and everything that could go wrong seemed to, but EVERYONE who attended joined in and helped the marshalls at the rally. The result of that week-end gave us the courage and we did run a 48 van rally in France. The reason for all the above is an attempt to answer the constant question raised at the A.G.M. Running a rally is NOT difficult and if more people ran them there could be three or more rallies each week-end and plenty of choice for all. To the people who are unable to attend a rally because it is full, it cannot be helped. If there is a limit on vans attending when it is reached there is nothing else the marshal can do other than to put you on a waiting list. There have been several rallies that I could not attend due to them being fully booked. My only disappointment was there was not another rally being held that week-end. In reply to *Harry's* comment last month, the so called 'northern' element do not go from rally to rally in the north of the country. A great many of them have developed strong friendships through the club and it is only natural that they will all try and attend the same rallies.

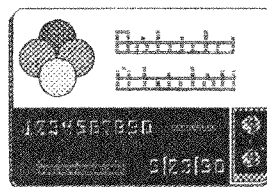
Please try not to complain if you cannot get on a rally. See if there is another one on the same week-end, run your own rally in the area where you want to spend a week-end. Believe me, once you have found a rally site, green field or organised site, the people attending will, in the vast majority of cases, give the rally marshalls all the help needed.

Steve Bowler

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ACCEO CREDIT CARD

This is now available to member Clubs and it may be of interest to some of our members. Unlike many cards, there are NO annual charges at all. In addition, you may have a cheque book so that you can issue cheques in the usual way but they will draw against the credit card limit instead of a bank or building society account. And if that wasn't enough, every £100.00 spent using the card will benefit ACCEO to the tune of 15 pence. It doesn't sound much, but it could add up to quite an income for the Association.



If you would like more details and an application form, please telephone Jean Groves at the ACCEO Head Office in Bewdley. The telephone (and Fax) number is 0129 940 1497.

Forthcoming Rallies.

4th - 6th August; Bilsby, Alford, Lincs.

Your rally marshal: Janet Sutterby.

Site fee: £5.00 for the weekend. Electricity: NO Rally fee: £1.50

Booking slip to: Miss Janet Sutterby, 3, Bilsby Road, Alford, Lincs. LN13 9EW. Telephone: 01507 462449

Cheque payable to: Janet Sutterby

Site details: Green field site at an old rectory; use of toilet and two community rooms. Cold buffet meal possible on Saturday if sufficient interest (£3.50 per head), advise when booking.

Attractions: Sea (6 miles). Bird sanctuary and National Trust properties (14 miles). Walks nearby.

Directions: A16 from Louth or Boston.. A1104 to Alford. A1111 towards Sutton-on-Sea. In 1 mile at Bilsby, look for church on the right, site on left.

Limited to 14 vans

10th - 13th August; Skipton Rugby Club, Skipton, North Yorkshire.

Your rally marshals: Jim & Marian Henwood

Site fee: £3.00 per night Electricity: NO Rally fee: £1.50

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs J Henwood, 1 Fairfield Avenue, Linthorpe, Middlesborough, Cleveland. TS5 5HB. Telephone: 01642 821983

Cheque payable to: J Henwood.

Attractions: Bring your barbeque (and food) for a get together Saturday evening. Toilets available on site.

Directions: From Town Centre follow signs for Station, turn right opposite station, then sharp left, over bridge then 2nd right.

NO VANS BEFORE 4pm THURSDAY.

25th - 28th August; Argoed High School, Bryn-Y-Baal, Mold. Clwyd

Your rally marshals: John & Helen Greenwood

Site fee: £4 per night Electricity: NO Rally fee: £1.50

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs J Greenwood, 55 Park Avenue, Mynydd Isa, Mold, Clwyd. CH7 6XR Telephone/ Facsimile: 01244 548882

Cheque payable to: J Greenwood.

Attractions: A meal will be arranged for Sunday evening at a local pub. Indoor room on site with all facilities available.

Directions: From the North [M6, M56, A5117, A550, A55, A494 direction Mold]. At Alltami traffic lights, (by the Tavern pub) TURN LEFT * into unclassified road. After about quarter of a mile take the next road on the right, Argoed High School is ½ mile on the LEFT. From the South. From Wrexham, A541 towards Mold, at large roundabout with Esso garage, take A494 (Direction Queensferry) and at Alltami lights TURN RIGHT...

* (as above).

1st - 8th September; Moreton Glade Holiday Rally, Moreton, Dorchester, Dorset.

Your rally marshals: Barbara & Jeff Worley.

Site fee: £4.25 per night Electricity: £1.60 per night. Rally fee: £2.00

Booking slip to: Mrs & Mrs J Worley, 26 Houndstone Park, Gunners Lane, Brympton, Yeovil, Somerset. BA22 8SQ. Telephone: 01935 24049

Cheque payable to: B Worley.

Attractions: A well-equipped site; our fifth year here. Extra days at same rates. Trains to Poole and to Weymouth (via Dorchester). Lulworth Cove, Poole Harbour, Studland and other attractions nearby.

Directions: Site on B3390 by Framton Arms pub by Moreton station (B R).

1st - 3rd September; White Hart, Old Leake, Boston, Lincolnshire.

Your rally marshals: Ray & Joan Young.

Site fee: £5 per van for the weekend (two nights). Electricity: NO

Rally fee: £1.50

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs R J Young, Sharnbrook Cottage, Main Road, Langton, Horncastle, Lincs. LN9 5JT Telephone: 01507 523467

Cheque payable to: R J Young

Attractions: This is a Pub & Caravan Site. Early Bird dinner on Saturday evening; choice of menu; meals available in pub at other times. Coach trip to Skegness on Saturday, £2 per head; pay on entry. Indicate if interested when booking.

Directions: Turn off A52 Boston/Skegness road about 8 miles north of Boston onto B1184, s.p. SIBSEY; pub in 200 yards on right before church. Enter pub car park and continue on to field at rear.

Limited to 25 vans.

8th - 10th September; Highland End Farm, Eype, Bridport, Dorset

Your rally marshals: Michael & Maureen Torah.

Site fee: £6.00 per unit per night. Electricity: £1 per night. Rally fee: £1.50

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs M Torah, 14 Compton Road, New Milton, Hants. BH25 6EQ Telephone: 01425 618320

Cheque payable to: M Torah

Attractions: Meal on site Saturday evening. South West Coast Path passes site. Views over Lyme Bay, West Dorset Heritage Coast.

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

URGENT APPEAL...

If you were at The Club & Company Rally last weekend did you find a rather special jumper, with sheep on it? Barbara Blackwell has lost one and is most upset. If you can help please contact her at 107 West End Avenue, Harrogate. HG2 9BU North Yorkshire.

8th - 10th September; Northern Motor Caravan Show, York Racecourse

Your rally marshals: Joan & Arthur Dewhurst.

You must complete the booking form to be found in the current copy of Motorcaravan Motorhome Monthly and post it with your remittance direct to the organisers. If you mark the form clearly "Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club" you may deduct £2 from the total fee (NOT £2 per night!)

Then complete a Club rally slip and send it with £1.50 to: Arthur Dewhurst, 323 Dugg Hill, Heversham, Milnthorpe, Cumbria. LA7 7EF. Cheque payable to A. Dewhurst.

14th - 17th September; Beamish Museum, Chester-le-Street, Tyne & Wear.

Your rally marshals: Neil & Pauline Rogers.

Site fee: £3.00 per night Electricity: NO Rally fee: £1.50

Green Field Site

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs N Rogers, 3 Appleby Close, Aldbrough-St-John, Richmond, North Yorkshire

DL11 7TT Telephone: 01325 374540

Cheque payable to: N Rogers.

Attractions: Beamish Museum (The North of England Open Air Museum) Durham City, Metro Centre. Pub food available at nearby pub.

Directions: From North & South follow A1(M). Turn off for Chester-le-Street, follow signs for Beamish Museum on A693 (signposted STANLEY), approx 4 miles.

Limited to 35 Vans.

15th - 17th September; Motor Caravan Show, Royal Bath & West Showground, Shepton Malet.

Your rally marshals: Stella & Ian Ross

Complete booking form with this issue, Members only, and send with fee to Show organisers.

Complete Club booking slip and send with £1.50 rally fee to: Mr & Mrs I Ross, 33 Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster, Essex. RM14 1DL

Telephone: 01708 228075 Cheque payable to:- I Ross

22nd - 24th September; Chichester Camping, Southbourne, Hampshire.

Your rally marshals: Arthur & Jackie Claxton.

Site fee: £6 per night Electricity: Included in site fee Rally fee: £1.50

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs A Claxton, Flat 13 Albany Mansions, Upper Maze Hill, St Leonards on Sea, East Sussex. TN38 0YD

Telephone: 01424 714915

Cheque payable to: A Claxton.

Attractions: Seashore walks, flat biking country, bus & train service to Chichester, Portsmouth & beyond.

A communal get together on Saturday evening - please bring your own barbecue & food

Directions: Site is on the A259, Chichester to Havant road, on the outskirts of Southbourne village.

Limited to 50 vans

27th Sept - 1st Oct; Cherry Tree Site, Sutton-on-Sea, Lincs.

Your rally marshals: Bob Brindle / A. N. Other

Site fee: £2.00 per night. Electricity, 25 only, £1.60. Rally fee: £1.50

Booking slip to : R Brindle, 43 Welham Grove, Retford, Notts. DN22 6TZ

Telephone: 01777 711588

Cheque payable to: R Brindle

Attractions: Level grass site, privately owned and run. Toilets and Showers (20p), water & Elsan. 10 minutes level cycle ride to sleepy Sutton-on-Sea. 15 minute level walk to Grange and Links Hotel/pub/restaurant. Bracing East Coast sea air, bring your bikes and walking boots. Good T.V. reception. Sandilands Golf Course.

Directions: Site on A52 Huttoft Road, 1.5 miles South of Sutton-on-Sea, 2.5 miles North of Huttoft - look for brown Cherry Tree Site signs.

Limited to 40 vans.

29th Sept/1st Oct; The Rural Life Museum, Old Kiln, Tilford, Farnham, Surrey.

Your rally marshals: Sylvia & Al Gatehouse.

Site fee: £3.50 per night Electricity: NO Rally fee: £1.50

Booking slip to: Mrs S Gatehouse, "Celestina", 21 Eashing Lane,

Godalming, Surrey. GU7 2JZ Telephone: 01483 422620

Cheque payable to: Mrs S Gatehouse

Attractions: The Museum itself, Frensham Ponds; Garden Centre with tea room - possible Cream Teas - please state if interested.

Directions: Take A287 out of Farnham (s.p. Frensham/Minehead) turning left opposite "The Mariners" P.H. From the South: A3 to Hindhead, turn left at cross roads traffic lights onto A287 (s.p. Frensham/Farnham) turning right opposite "The Mariners" P. H. From London: down A3 to Hindhead turning right at traffic lights then as above. Site approx 1½ miles from "The Mariners" on left just past Garden Centre.

Limited to 20 vans.

Seaford '95

Seaford's the place, or so they say, for a really relaxed and fun holiday

With plenty of sun and a gentle sea breeze to tone up your body and brown off your knees.

So to Buckle we came from A.S.O.C. to join *Margaret's* rally down by the sea.

What a welcome we got, a bright sunny day, though just a bit windy (but it's always that way).

Then came the real winds, with rain in a squall as we huddled indoors and sat through it all,

Listening to forecasts which weren't very nice - anything possible, except snow and ice!

But soon it all changed and our spirits rose high. What's a light breeze? The sun's in the sky.

Margaret's forecasts are turning out true and the breeze becomes halcyon, the sky remains blue.

Come Tuesday the day dawns quite early (as these days can) with rejoicing and laughter outside *Margaret's* van.

'Twas made bright with balloons and fun in the sun for today she is 60 - Jolly Well Done!

The day moves along with celebrations galore, mysterious trips out and *Margaret's* unsure

If her steps are unsteady (or is it the ground?) then a super faith supper with all gathered around.

Midsummer Day on Wednesday befell with lots of hot sun (and breezes as well)

So some trooped off to Seaford's street fair to browse over antiques - with no cash or care.

Thursday grew hotter and pleasant indeed, a bright, lazy day, till we moved off at speed

To the village of Barcombe and its pub 'The Royal Oak' to enjoy supper and skittles and the odd joke.

Instructions were clear - "Just follow that van" but it got itself lost (as anyone can!)

A short country trip became extended by far until *Gordon* came herding us back in his car.

For the rest of the evening organisation was great, no 'strikes' were struck, but others downed eight.

And *Gordon* scored zero (with three balls at that) but the ladies played prettily and beat the men flat!

Two more days followed with mixed sun and breeze to bring very tanned faces and many pink knees

With a grand 'take-away' supper on Saturday night - the assortment of dishes was an astonishing sight!

Now, as we leave to go on our separate ways we bless *Margaret* and team for such lovely days

Days that we'll all for a long time recall. Congratulations and thanks from each one of us all.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, TA.....!

Ron Lear

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SPAIN - 1996

We have had numerous enquiries regarding a second Spanish Rally - this time for 1996. However, we have decided against it at present.

Betty and I are intending to be in Spain this winter again and will be at the Los Gallardos camp site during February. We would welcome the company of any other Club members wishing to join us then. Some members have already arranged to do this and we look forward to meeting up with them. Best wishes to all.

Geoff Scholey

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Peterborough Show

An event destined to test the abilities of our marshals from beginning to end. Pre-rally, the Rally marshal found that a hiccup in our usual organisation had failed to negotiate our normal entry fee discount to members booked through the Club system. Warners said "see them at the show". There we found that the proprietors had sold off large amounts of land and specific pitch areas were positively at a premium. In the meantime, the Support Team were called upon to take over due to *Syd Crouch's* sudden illness. Thursday saw us contending with an almost gale force wind trying to mark out our pitches with sawdust(!), endeavouring to make the most of the area allocated to us. A Deputy marshal meanwhile was 'chasing' the show manager to discuss the discount. It was actually Saturday before he could be pinned down,

but he then promised that each Club member would receive an individual cheque for the discount due. I presume that this was fulfilled.

The magnificent attendance of 120 vans was finally received and placed by a footsore and weary team of helpers. The usual coffee gatherings were held, under rather difficult circumstances, and the raffle had some remarkable prizes gathered by a 'junior' team. To all those who 'rallied round' under the trying circumstances we owe our very sincere thanks, you were great. Warners were greatly impressed by our Club effort and promised fullest co-operation next year. We discussed the possibility of an attendance of 150 vans. Shall we see you there?

Cliff Abbott

Enclosed with *Cliff's* letter were two items from MMM, one from John Greenwood of Warners apologising for the problems with the rally and the other, from *Pat & Jim Allen* of Stoke-on-Trent, appreciating both the rally and our Club's efforts. If you have not had your due rebate on the rally fees from Warners, perhaps you should get in touch with them.

Cliff also enclosed some used postage stamps which go to swell our contribution to the Guide Dogs and the Cats Protection League. Many thanks.

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NOT THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

I read the letter from our Scottish members, *Mima and Roy Magna* in the July Newsletter with disbelief. The rally in question was only our third rally and so *Betty* and I were in a similar position. Also at this rally was another new member - *Bob Brindle* - I believe his third rally too. We arrived about an hour before the opening of the rally and were very efficiently shown to our pitch - and yes, it was near the "end of the line" just as we would expect when we arrived late-ish. The marshals were at this time doing their best to arrange awnings and covers to try to keep everyone dry during the opening coffee evening. Yes, when our Scottish members arrived, we were all huddled under the "awnings clutching our mugs" - what else, it was raining. They were obviously late in arriving as they say the opening coffee evening was in progress. They do concede that they were introduced as New Ralliers, they also say that they went off on their own for the day on the Saturday until the evening meal time when two members invited them to join their table - what more did they want?

Regarding their comments on the other positions on the rally field "at the end of the line" despite the line "opposite not being nearly full" - these spaces were not being kept for more well-known people and were

never filled because they were wet pitches due to Friday's rain. The marshals used the long line as there was a little slope off which saved anyone from being stuck. Also, I will never believe that either *Jim & Marion*, or *Brian & Vera* would ask anyone to leave their "names and money and go". This team of marshals has run somewhere around seventeen exceptionally successful rallies with evening meals for up to 120 people. Dealing with these numbers they just have to have names of people wishing to have the meal to enable them to make the arrangements with the caterers.

There is no doubt that *Mima & Roy* did not enjoy the rally. Yes, they were a bit late arriving. I would also suggest they were a bit late trying to book for the second rally they tried to join as it was full. Then, of course, they have been very late - 18 months in fact - in writing to condemn the Pooley Bridge rally.

I am very reluctant to criticise our Editor as I am very grateful to him for all the work he does on behalf of all the Club members but in this instance he was "delighted to be able to include this letter because it does rather prove a couple of points raised in the past". Now, *Harry*, these are your words which I submit to our members prove nothing. At the AGM from a show of hands it was proved that not many members could not get on to the rallies of their choice. I myself could not get on the German rally last August at the first application but was later offered a place which I accepted.

Finally, I wish to make these points. Since that rally these marshals have organised, I believe, four more very successful rallies without any reservation - thank you. *Bob Brindle* has run at least two popular rallies since then and is now on our Committee as Rally Co-ordinator. Thanks to him. *Betty & I* have run the Spanish rally and have now attended and enjoyed 25 rallies. *Harry*, our Editor, has produced 24 Newsletters in this time and whilst I enjoy his little comments usually, this time I believe he has set himself up as judge jury and in fact meted out sentence by condemning the marshals without first asking for their comments. I hope that *Harry* will accept my comments in the spirit in which they are intended and thanks to him, also.

It would appear from their letter that our Scottish members have not attended another rally in the 18 - 24 months since Pooley Bridge.
WE CAN ONLY GET OUT OF ANY CLUB A REFLECTION OF WHAT EFFORT WE PUT INTO IT.

Geoff Scholey.
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View of the Editor's Comment

re "The Other Side of the Coin"

The Editor, Spokesman for the ASOC, finds "delight" in printing this letter. I found no pleasure in reading it. Nor do I believe will any member of the ASOC, whether they be New Ralliers, Old Ralliers, or Members who do not Rally, that a Fellow member felt so unwelcome at our Rally that it took 18 months to put pen to paper.

In regard to the Editor's comments on Rallies, particularly Northern Rallies, the comments are both incorrect and unfair. I have organised and assisted in 15 Rallies for The Auto Sleeper Club, in which time I have never been fully booked. When it is a limited Rally it's very difficult to accommodate everyone. On two Rallies organised by another Marshal they struggled to reach 20 vans. We are supposed to encourage new Marshals not lose them. In view of all this, Skipton may be the last Rally I will organise for the club.

Jim Henwood

Thank you, *Geoff & Jim*, for putting these views forward. First of all I stand by my statement that I was delighted to print the letter - the Club as seen from another side. I would be wrong if I only printed the good reports and left any adverse comments out of the Newsletter. Second I pointed out that ONE OR TWO of the northern rallies have been called into question in the past. The point is not that a rally can be fully booked, we can understand that on the limited number problems. But when is it fully booked? It has been reported to the Committee on several occasions that a Member has found a rally to be full as soon as the details have appeared in the Newsletter. The matter was brought up at the Open Forum this year, yet again. No satisfactory solution has yet been found so we must carry on as best we can.

Another Member telephoned in much the same vein and added the comment that the Club should run more rallies. Perhaps if two or three were running every weekend during the season the problem would be obviated. With this I completely agree - but how do the Club arrange that? Marshals are volunteers - not employees! If more Members would volunteer to become Marshals then more rallies could be organised - by those Marshals, not the Club!

I am sorry if some members are upset by the views of others but that is in the nature of the world.

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AND FINALLY!

Since comments in the July issue of the Newsletter regarding northern rallies appeared I have been inundated with calls and personal complaints on the rally field. I suggested they write and express their personal view. My own is that they were unwarranted and unfair and only serve to drive a wedge into the "imagined" north/south divide.

With my Rally Co-ordinator's hat on, may I suggest we draw a line under this recent spate of rally marshal bashing. I am endeavouring to provide more rallies in varied locations and encourage new rally marshals to share the load with the "regulars". None of the recent correspondence serves to help me help the membership as a whole. Sort out grievances on the rally field, at the time, with the person or persons concerned. Be warned! Abuse them and lose them! Not, I am sure, what anyone wants!!

Bob Brindle

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Another Loo Story

Following the articles in April and May regarding the fitting of the CW200 cassette toilet in a Symphony, I am writing to say that I have successfully fitted one in my Symphony in place of the troublesome Fiamma. My thanks go to *Brian Abrams* who did all the exploratory work and for his notes and helpful hints. As a result, I found the removal of the Fiamma and the installation of the Thetford fairly straightforward. The work took me about three days, of which one whole day was spent removing all the mastic from the shower tray where the Fiamma had been fitted. Having now used the new loo while at the Seaford Rally I can recommend it to anyone whose van is fitted with the Fiamma. Incidentally, CAK Ltd of Kenilworth who advertise regularly in MMM are offering a very competitive price at present for the new Thetford.

John Barrett

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Obituary

We have been advised that *Rita Cornes* died recently. Our condolences and sympathies go to *Stuart* and his family.

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Service

"Fiver" has arrived - at last! "Fiver" is the name for our new Boxer Executive. It's our fifth van, four of which have been Auto-Sleepers. The

“at last” part is because we ordered this at the Caravan Show in December and eventually picked it up on 1st June. Probably quite a few other members have had similar waits due to production problems. At home everything was investigated, out came our storage items and “Fiver” was packed ready to set off the next day.

Oh, how it felt to be back on the road! Our first nature stop revealed a problem, the shower tray and carpet were wet. Thankfully we were only away for one night to try everything out.

A quick phone call to Roy Fox of Three Counties Motorcaravans who arranged for “Fiver” to be picked up at the leak investigated. Much to Roy’s and Auto-Sleepers’ surprise the loo was faulty. A new one was sent by express post and fitted to enable us to travel to Cornwall (to Beeny Bits) and then onto Devon (To Van Bitz).

Steve, at Beeny Bits, let us stay on the hard standing at his house and took us to Redruth railway station the next morning. We spent a pleasant day in Truro. As we wanted 2 Beeny boxes and security seat fronts fitted we stayed another night at Steve’s. He and his wife were extremely helpful and hospitable. Now all our “dirty” items can be stored outside in the Beeny box. Whilst there we mentioned to Steve our problem of not being able to obtain aluminium steady feet - we could only find plastic. He disappeared into his workshop, made a pattern and made us up some and fitted them there and then. How’s that for service? We were extremely pleased.

Next we travelled to Van Bitz and Brixham and stayed on Eddie’s drive for one night. The following day we walked into Brixham which is a lovely working fishing harbour. We sat and watched the fishing boats and yachts coming and going and the world generally going by. We enjoyed crab and prawn sandwiches and later strolled back. Eddie explained all the alarm details to us and we set off home. We had spent 3 lovely sunny days away, it was thoroughly enjoyable and the van made it special.

Our thanks go to Roy Fox for all his patience and assistance; the lads for their work on the replacement loo; to Steve for his hospitality and inventiveness and lastly to Eddie for making us feel secure and hopefully safe.

Now we are ready to set off for our delayed holiday to Ireland.

Rosie and Terry Ball.

As is very usual, it seems, people who deal with motor caravans are extremely helpful.

AWNINGS

Here's an odd request. We have received a telephone call from Brownhills regarding an awning which they have supplied to a customer. Apparently it is a stand-alone awning which fits to the side of a sliding door van. Their customer is dis-satisfied with the one supplied and insists that he has seen one which (1) fits against the van better and (2) is easier to drive away from and back to. Now I have no experience of this type of awning whatsoever but I hope that someone out there can assist. If you have any knowledge of an awning which would suit their customer, why not give Jeremy Peers a ring on 0163 670 4201 and tell him what you know. Mention that you saw the question in the Newsletter, please!



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Talisman, 1986, petrol, 4 berth, taxed and MOT to 1996. 3 way fridge, new curtains, double glazed, heater, oven, grill, hob, fresh and waste water tanks. New tyres, Waxoyl undersealed, bike carrier, radio/cassette, Fiamma awning, alarm and deadlocks. Full maintenance history.

Very good condition. £11,000.00 ono. Telephone Renato Giazzi on 0175 385 6809 or write to him at 32 Victor Road, Windsor, Berks., SL4 3JU.

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Omnistor 4000 Safari Room (3m) in coffee and cream - £150.00. TechniSat Satellite dish (flat) with fitting including and electronic satellite finder - £75.00. New main water pump "Shurflo" for Auto-Sleeper - £45.00. Doorway worktop for Legend - £20.00. 2 sets table feet and poles for outdoor use - £17.00 per set. Telephone Val or Pete Fullick on 0374 184 967 (Mobile phone) or write to them at 16 Corbin Road, Pennington, Lymington, Hants, SO41 8BN.

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1992 'J' reg Rambler GL. 2 litre petrol. 17,000 miles. Taxed to Jan 96, tested to April 96. Waste water tank, second battery, includes all Auto-Sleepers refinements. Excellent condition. £14,500.00 ono. Please telephone Janet & Dennis Sykes on 0170 955 1416 or write to them at 'Conway', Meadowbank Road, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S61 2ND. Ill health forces the sale. (Thanks for the donation.)

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Transform your T4. Four seven-spoke alloy wheels TJ x 15". VW part no. 601-VAG-051 (as fitted to Caravelle 'Eight'). Complete with 205 x 65 x 94V tyres and security nuts. Little used. £500.00. Phone

Malcolm Taylor on 0174 882 3979 or write to him at 25 Springfield, Skeeby, Richmond, North Yorkshire, DL10 5DY.
Many thanks for the donation.

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Honda ST 50 Dax lightweight motorcycle (no driving licence restrictions). 'T-bone' frame and three speed transmission. 420 miles only. Fully sprung with large section tyres, folding handlebars. Ideal go-anywhere supplement to motor caravan user. Together with two unused full facial Fimex helmets. £670.00 ono.

Also 25 metre electric hook-up cable, 4 pre-wired paired adaptors that cover every possible plug/socket English/Continental combination, 2 litres Elsan blue, 5 litres Castrol GTX, van dehumidifier, Lady's 12 volt Hot Brush, wire cable tow "rope". £35.00 ono the lot or will split. Please telephone Mr N E Freeland (sorry, haven't got the first name) on 0124 252 8371 or write to him at 10 Treelands Drive, Leckhampton, Cheltenham, Glos., GL53 0DB.

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Raleigh free-standing awning with inner tent and tunnel which fits caravan type rail but unzips from tent to provide drive away facility. Used on rear of Talbot Express. £130.00 ono. Please telephone Beth or Maurice Payne on 0131 336 3385 or write to them at 3 Clermiston Road North, Edinburgh, EH4 7BL

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VW VHT 1985 ('C' reg). 1.9 litre petrol. MOT until July 96. 63,000 miles but immaculate. Two owners since new - we've had her since 1987. 2+2 berth, swivel seats, alarm, second battery, gas heater, Porta-Potti, mains hook-up, bike rack, new tyres, stainless steel exhaust. change to Clubman causes sale! £6,800.00 ono. Please phone Rita & Peter Riley on 0163 524 8766 or write to them at 12 Sowbury Park, Chieveley, Newbury, Berks, RG20 8TZ.

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Ramps and clamps to load and secure a wheelchair in a van, never used. Cost over £600.00. Asking price £250.00. When sold a donation will be given to the "Roy Castle Cause for Hope" appeal. Please phone Stuart Cornes on 0188 959 1326 or write to him at Dungarvan, Oak Road, Denstone, Uttoxeter, Staffs., ST14 5HT

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Double bicycle carrier, purpose made to fit any Talbot with rear opening doors. £90.00. Please contact Clare Somerville on 0103 581 3310 or write to her at Tabard Cottage, South Street, Sherborne, Dorset, DT9 3LX. (Thanks for the donation.)

Now it is just about time to get everything, van - puss-cat - us, ready for Malvern. Fill up with water, diesel, food, stuff for stalls, stuff for working with over the weekend. And now I learn from the TV that the weather is liable to be "somewhat 'ot and 'umid" (not enough air for an 'H'). But it may get a bit fresher in the end. Let us hope that it isn't too hot and not too cold/wet either. Which way is Westwards? Shall we see you there?

Your Editor
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