

AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB



**NEWSLETTER 99
DECEMBER 1996**

Hello.

COMMITTEE CHANGE

At our recent meeting we learned, with regret, that *Steve Bowler* felt unable to continue as Chairman for the time being due to personal circumstances. As a result we have elected *Arthur Irving* to fill the vacancy for the time being. It is the unanimous wish of the Committee, as I am sure that it will be from all members, that *Steve's* circumstances will soon be resolved.

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We also learned that *Ron Wilson* has been suffering from problems with his back over recent months, such that he has been unable to get out and about. Our sincere best wishes are extended to him with wishes for a very speedy recovery. *Ron* has been a tireless worker during his time on the Committee, especially with regard to the arrangements which have been made with Wicksteed Park in Kettering for the Annual Dinner and AGM.

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STOP

With this Newsletter you will have received your renewal form - the pink piece of paper! Please make sure that (a) you haven't thrown it away with the envelope and (b) that you fill it in and send it to *Sheila Henthorne*, our Membership Secretary, even if all the details are the same as last year. It does help her to keep the records straight and to ensure that the due payments are received. Cases have been known where a bank or building society has omitted payment of the standing order or has paid it twice - or more! And some payments come through without the proper membership number reference on them so your form can help to trace these odd ones.

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The Annual Dinner and AGM

This rally will be held on 4th - 6th April 1997 at Wicksteed Park, Kettering. It is hoped that many members will attend. The focal point is the Annual Dinner, an excellent meal (with a vegetarian alternative) on the Saturday evening followed by dancing to the Dave Johnson Trio who play at the park regularly for Tea and Evening Dances. Included in the cost of the Dinner is an element to cover room hire. This off-sets the costs of hiring the rooms we use over the whole weekend.

As a result of suggestions received some changes are being

introduced for 1997. Bar meals, both hot and cold, will be available for purchase on Friday evening from 7.00 - 11.00 pm. There will also be a roast lunch available at a very good price on Sunday but this **MUST** be pre-booked. Again there will be a vegetarian alternative. Arrangements have also been made to allow camping on Sunday night - pre-booking is required for this also. Wicksteed Park must be vacated by ASOC members by 5.00 pm on Monday, 7th April 1997.

On Saturday afternoon representatives from some major suppliers of electrical components of A-S vans will be along to give a short talk on their products. This will be followed by a question and answer session to help members with their van maintenance. The Club Regalia Shop will, as usual, be open at various times over the weekend.

All members are most welcome to attend the Rally without attending the AGM. Members may, if they wish, just attend the Annual General Meeting on a day basis. It must be emphasised that there is no charge, in any way, to members who attend only for the Annual General Meeting itself. Make a note in your new diary NOW and be ready for the Rally Booking Form which will be included with your February 1997 Newsletter.

Arthur Irving & Andrew Entwistle
Joint Chairmen, AGM Sub-Committee

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Christmas is a'coming

Joyce & Gordon Matthews remind us of this event which is very close now. But you may just have time to get hold of the "Wash Cats" which are available from them at £2.00 each inclusive of P&P. These are handy mitts for washing the vans which were mentioned some time ago when they sent me one and I found it useful (also for grooming the cat - could be used on a dog too!). Their address is 35 Preston Park, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8LH and their telephone number is 0179 553 8913 if you want to get hold of them.

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VIEW TO THE REAR

Does anyone know of a company which manufactures the magnifying rear view aid approx. 10" x 8" which is used to parking in tight places etc.?

Also, we have been to Hastings today and find that there are no sea

front car parks that we can use as our Flair is too high for the barriers. We have written to the local council on the advice of the local tourist board and wonder if any other member would do the same.

Ann May

The rear view aid is called a Fresnel Lens and should be available in any decent motor caravan accessory shop. For you, *Ann*, perhaps I could suggest Bromley Motor Caravans or the caravan shop at Green Street Green.

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Power Assisted Steering

This is an SOS. to those members who have had P.A.S. added to their vans. I requested details some time ago but was not in the position of doing anything about it and mislaid the information given via the telephone! Because of a neck injury I now have to have P.A.S. or give up the van. So please, I would be grateful for names and addresses of firms who can offer this and are recommended. Thanks.

Eileen Langman

As previously mentioned, Specialised Vehicle Options, of Redman Road, Porte Marsh Industrial Estate, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 9PR is a company providing P.A.S. and of whom we have had good reports from members. Their telephone number is 0124 981 5141 and their manager is Mr M Holland-Smith. They were offering a discount for our members.

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Cruise Controls.

I wish to fit a cruise control to my 2 litre petrol Executive on the Peugeot Boxer chassis and wonder if any member is experienced in this field. If anyone can help please contact me by phone or fax on 0127 341 4544 or write to 30 Fairfield Gardens, Portslade, Brighton, East Sussex, BN41 2BH.

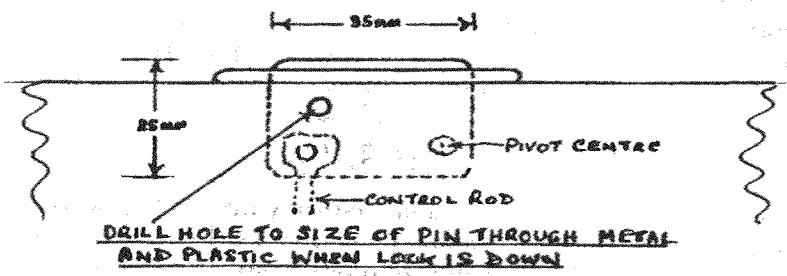
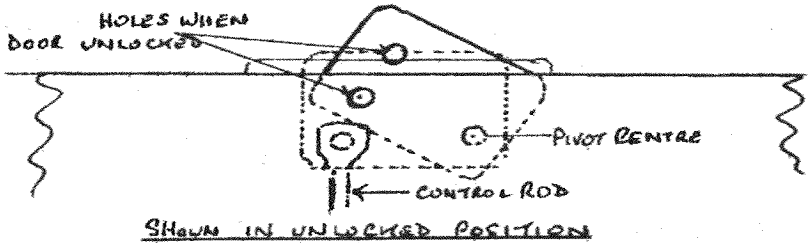
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Talbot/Fiat Security and Wheel Bearings.

I have read in the caravan press over the years of the problems encountered by many people with door security on these vehicles. Some people go to some length to counteract the potential thief, e.g. chains from one door to another, using the seat belts to lock to the seat base, etc. I thought it was about time that I put into print the very simple solution that I have been using for the last six years. It surprises me that no one else, to my knowledge, has ever duplicated this. Start by obtaining two

pins about 3 mm diameter and about 23 mm long. They can be nails, split pins etc. but I found the best to be masonry nails which are plated. If they are too long they can be ground off to the correct length.

With the door closed and the plastic catch pushed down into the locked position drill a hole of a size to accommodate the pin about 10 mm down and about 12 mm back through the door inner and through the plastic catch. You will come to a further obstruction after going through the plastic. This is an inner plate and it is better to carry on drilling carefully just to penetrate this plate. I say carefully because on the other side of this is the window. Use a hand drill because if you go at it with an electric drill it could be an expensive mistake! To stop this happening slide a thin metal (or even plastic) sheet down inside of the window in the area of penetration. This modification will stop anyone from opening the door even if they drill the outside plastic, the way it is mostly done by thieves. You cannot even open it with the key or from the inside without first removing the pin. Obviously, if you use one of the doors for leaving and entering the vehicle this idea cannot be used on that door. We always use the rear door on our Talisman to which I have fitted a five lever Chubb rim lock. In a case I read about recently the cab was robbed whilst the occupants were asleep in the van. This mod would have prevented that.



My Talsiman has just gone through its eighth MOT with no problems except that I was advised that both rear wheel bearings were rumbling a little and something should be done about them. As I do all my own servicing/repair work out came the Workshop Manual to see what was involved. This is a fairly straightforward job to the average DIY mechanic with a little care in fitting the bearing outers and inner seals and the torque required is nothing like that required for the front wheel stubs. It clearly states, in the Peugeot Manual, that the left side (near side) stub axle has a left-hand thread but I found that in fact it had a right-hand thread. It also states that the off side has a right hand thread which again is wrong. Each new wheel bearing kit contains one of each nuts so they are not handed but it makes me wonder whether the stubs were fitted initially during manufacture on the wrong sides. The nuts are in fact staked after being correctly end floated with the correct torque and they have been there for 10 years without a problem but it does make me wonder whether many other vehicles are like it. I have written to Peugeot Customer Services for the comments and it will be interesting to hear what they have to say (if they reply).

Bob Measom

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RALLIES

Bath Rally - October

We are sorry that we had to disappoint so many members who we were unable to accommodate. We received nearly 80 applications for 40 places. Unfortunately, there was also a Caravan Club rally on the same weekend so we were unable to get any extra pitches.

Josephine & John Barrett

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Having just spent a very pleasant weekend at the Bath rally we would like to express our thanks to *Jo & John*, the marshals and their assistants for all their hard work to make the rally a success. Despite the atrocious weather on Sunday morning, coffee and raffle carried on and everyone appeared to have had a good time. Thanks again.

Dorothy & David Ellis.

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Still Bath

Some marshals running their first rally are lucky, everything goes right for them. Not so *Jo & John*. They were let down by the site owners who gave their promised pitches to another club. The weather was not

too kind, even the borrowed tea urn broke down. In spite of this they, with their able assistants, put on a good rally which the members enjoyed. Well done, all of you. Let us hope that you will marshal another rally soon with a bit more luck next time.

Jeff Worley

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Bala - North Wales

Who would head for the mountains of North Wales when the weather forecast was for storms, gales and winds gusting up to 60 mph? On the other hand, what ASOC members, looking forward to the company of others at a Club Rally would let the same forecast deter them? So it was that a full turnout of 12 vans gathered around *Helen, Ruth & John Greenwood* at Lake Bala and enjoyed the weekend with all that they had promised. The autumn colours of the forest foliage and the dramatic skies were a joy to behold! A big "Thank You" is due to them and to their assistants *Betty and Andrew Entwistle* from all of us who attended and so enjoyed the weekend.

Leo Soble

We agree with *Leo's* comments about the colours of the trees which we have recently seen everywhere we have been. But he makes it sound a bit as though the trees came to visit the rally!

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SHOREHAM AIR SHOW

As a result of this show, which drew up to 25,000 visitors, the Royal Air Force Association charity benefited by around £40,000.00. Our rally raised £43.00 which was a splendid effort. Any member who wishes to get the professionally shot video of this year's event should phone or fax Shoreham RAFA on 0127 344 1545 or write to Reception Desk, Main Terminal Building, Shoreham Airport, West Sussex, BN43 5FL. The cost is £13.00 plus P&P.

There is a possibility that the rally might be over a longer period next year to let members see something of the area. The show dates are 30/31 August 1997.

Tony Fowler

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A Magnificent Seven

We start with the Shoreham Air Show, the first of a new venue. What a bargain weekend where all enjoyed a terrific air show plus many

other side attractions. Directly on to Moreton Glade to join with people who had arrived a few days previously for the holiday rally. The wine and cheeses evening was great and we followed the trail of Lawrence of Arabia and rubbed shoulders with Royalty (the duke of Kent) at the Tank Museum. On again to the next at Eype near Bridport. Quite a gathering of vans on a lovely cliff top site. The meal on Saturday was superb (not for the faint-hearted or for dieters!). There three rallies were running concurrently. A short break and then we were off to our very first rally in the north at Dingwall where we experienced yet another great, friendly atmosphere. The site was great and situated very close to the little town and shops. We didn't need to use the van (except for our own sight-seeing) as there were two very good excursions arranged and we used the buses. Some folks took advantage of Scotrail as they had a special offer during October - half price tickets, or anywhere for £8.00. Some did some really long journeys.

On our way South towards home we dropped in at the Whitchurch Rally. There was room so we stayed for the weekend and we were made very welcome. We did some personal visiting, going to and from Scotland, and we only had one day at home to do the usual chores (bills, etc.) before setting off to the East Horsley Rally. *Sally and Gerry Haxton* provided an excellent weekend. Finally to the Bath Shopping Rally. Firstly, the weather wasn't very kind. Secondly, *Jo and John Barrett* (the marshal) had a raw deal from the site owners only weeks earlier. Having been promised their numbered pitches almost a year ago the owners re-allocated them differently and it wasn't really suitable for a good rally. However our marshals pressed on and made a very successful rally - especially as it was their first attempt. Being a shopping rally, everybody did their own thing, cycled, walked or shopped till they dropped! A rather soggy journey home rounded off these rallies. Well done, all the marshals.

Ivy & Bob Smith
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BONFIRE RALLY - LYTHAM

Fifty vans assembled over the weekend. there were many familiar faces and several new ones too, all ready to brave the unsettled weather and have a good time. On Friday around 90 members visited Todd's Motor Caravans and Preston. We were welcomed by Paul Todd and his family. A well stocked bar, and a Hot Pot Supper to enjoy with a lovely

new Medallion to admire ensured that we all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. (There were plenty of other vans, too.) On Saturday afternoon many members went to the theatre to see Darren Day in Summer Holiday. Others wandered round Blackpool whilst at camp a band of merry men led by *Jack* slaved over hot rings to cook hot dogs for all. Later a fireworks display completed a very full day.

On Sunday morning, after coffee, the raffle was drawn and the rally ended. The marshals, *Kath & Norman Benyon with Barbara & Vic Kaye* thoroughly enjoyed themselves and would like to say a big thank you to all the people who helped in so many ways.

Barbara Kaye

Sheila and I have visited Todd's to have a small repair done while we were on holiday up that way. They are extremely good dealers and hosts.

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Accumulator Tanks

I have not seen the Shurflo version mentioned by *Harry Aubin* in November nor do I know the price. But I did make for myself something which works on the same principle and it has worked well. I used a piece of copper pipe 1.5" diameter by 10" long that I happened to have. I flattened one end and sealed it with solder, then cut a hole near the same end and soldered in a short piece of 0.5" copper tube. Finally I flattened the other end and sealed it. I inserted a T-piece in the cold water hose on the pressurised side of the pump and connected the 'accumulator' with its side-tube facing downwards at the lowest point. Thus, as the system is pressurised by the pump, water enters the accumulator at the bottom and compresses the air, spring-like, in the upper part. The accumulator was secured to a couple of suitable placed pieces of wood in the pump compartment. This is a clumsy starting point that may set other owners thinking of a neater design. Perhaps someone will come up with a more elegant solution, preferably making use of some ready-made item that would otherwise be thrown away.

Incidentally, I have also cut in half the panel that divides the pump space from the bottom section of the under-sink locker. One half of the panel was refitted as a door which I can remove on really cold nights so that warm air from the van helps to prevent the pump and its associated pipe work from freezing. I have no doubt that it is the supply pipe from the water tank to the pump that freezes first but at least that seems to do no harm.

While on the subject of pipes and hoses, here's another thought. The frustratingly slow rate at which water drains from the sinks and basins of some A-S vans has been aired before in the Newsletter. Someone's solution - I cannot find which issue it was in - was to use a sink plunger and although this works well it is a scutter (as we say in Scotland).

I had noticed that both waste pipes dip slightly before rising to their unions with the waste tank so forming a trap. Refitting the waste tank recently after its two-yearly clean out I tried reducing that dip without eliminating the trap. I did this simply by looping some plastic banding under each pipe and screwing it to the floor above. The waste water now goes out with a satisfying rush. Makes me wonder why A-S could not have got it right in the first place.

Barry Crawshaw

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How Tyred can you get?

I am amazed at the story of the eleven year old gas pipe in *Brenda and Wally King's* letter in October. When we have the annual SMMT check carried out on our Legend this invariably throws up some slight problem with gas pipes or appliances, such as a new pipe from the gas bottle. I do not like unnecessary regulation but one cannot help feeling that the SMMT check should be compulsory because failure to maintain our vans properly affects not only ourselves but others as well. The consequences of the gas which escaped from the *King's* van igniting hardly bears thinking about. There was obviously a danger to other vans or campers on nearby pitches, particularly in Spain or other countries where the 20 foot rule does not apply.

Peter Harrup

I can't help feeling that many of us follow the "if it ain't broke, don't mend it!" school. Often this is because many items go on almost indefinitely without causing problems. I recall a gas pipe problem in a previous house where the joint had become unstuck but because there was a good through draft under the flooring I didn't know about it until the time came to have the gas stove changed!

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MICHELIN TYRES

Having just read *Audrey & John Sutton's* experience (November) I felt I must tell you about our similar problem. We own a 1990 Legend. Last March we were going along the M.4 to the site at Baltic Wharf,

Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club. Rally Supplement.

Brave the north-east in January!

8th - 12th January (4 nights). White Water Caravan Club Site, Stockton-on-Tees.

Rally Marshals: Pauline & Neil Rogers.

Site fee: £5.00 per night. Electricity: £2.00 per night. Rally fee: £1.50

Booking slip to: Mr & Mrs N.C. Rogers, 3 Appleby Close, Aldborough St. John, Richmond, North Yorks. DL11 7TT Telephone: 01325 374540 Cheques payable to N.C. & P. Rogers.

Attractions: Possible use of Super Pitches, Sky TV hook-up £1.00 per night. Room available. Beefeater Restaurant just outside site (25% off main menu items. Special Emerald card required, details from marshals a.s.a.p.) Tees Barrage, Bird Watching, 14-screen cinema, bowling alley plus 50,000 sq. ft. of retail and fast food outlets closeby. Stockton Saturday Market. Bus stop nearby. Many local attractions with a possibility of a coach trip to Hartlepool Historic Quay & Jackson's Landing. Factory Outlet Shopping. Will arrange if sufficient numbers. Please indicate on form if interested.

Directions. From South on A1(M). Turn off at Junction 57 signed to Darlington & Teesside. Follow A66 for 16 miles. About ¾ mile past A1045 junction, turn off Left via slip road at signpost Teesside Park. In 200 yards at end of slip road turn Left at traffic lights. In ¼ mile at roundabout continue over Barrage Bridge. Follow caravan site signs.

Preliminary rally list for 1997 & Dates for your diary.

January

8th - 12th

White Water Caravan Site, Stockton-on-Tees.**

17th - 19th

Outdoor Leisure '97, Shepton Mallet.

February

15th - 23rd

Boat, Caravan & Leisure Show, National Exhibition Centre

March

20th - 24th

Wyeside Camping & Caravan Park, Rhyader, Powys. **

31st

Easter Monday

April

- 4th - 6th **A-S O C Annual Dinner Rally & A G M**, Kettering
11th - 13th **Hidden Valley**, Nr Ilfracombe, N. Devon
18th - 20th **Motor Caravan Jamboree**, Brands Hatch.
25th - 27th **National Motorhome & Tourer Show**, Peterborough

May

- 1st - 5th **Burn Gliding Club**, Burn Village, Near Selby, N. Yorks
5th **May Day Bank Holiday**
9th - 11th **Longleat Estate**, Nr. Warminster, Wilts.**
9th - 16th **Holiday Rally, Isle of Avalon**, Glastonbury, Somerset
23rd - 25th **Bentley Wildfowl & Motor Museum**, Halland, East Sussex.
26th **Spring Bank Holiday**
30th - 1st June **St. Pierre Caravan Park**, Portskewett, Chepstow.**

June

- 2nd - 9th **Scottish Holiday Rally, Oban**, Argyle
6th - 8th **Motor Caravan Fair**, Stratford-upon-Avon Racecourse
11th - 15th **Farm Meadow Caravan & Camping**, Banham Zoo, Norfolk**
13th - 15th **Morecambe Bay Traction Engine Club**, St. Michael's, Preston **
19th - 22nd **Camping & Caravan Club Site, Cambridge****
20th - 22nd **Carrington C.P.**, Milford-on-Sea, Lymington, Hants
20th - 29th **Holiday Rally, The Buckle C.P.**, Seaford, East Sussex
26th - 29th **Meadow Park** (formerly Bass Meadows), Burton-upon-Trent
26th - 1st July **Nidderdale Showground**, Pately Bridge, N. Yorks**

July

- 11th - 13th **"Club & Company Rally"**, Malvern
18th - 20th **Abbeygate College**, Chester.
24th - 27th **Holme Valley C. & C.P.**, Holmfirth, West Yorkshire
31st - 5th Aug **Cotswold Gathering, Moreton-in-Marsh**, Glos(Greenfield site)**

August

15th - 17th **Detling Transport & Country Festival**, Maidstone, Kent.**
25th Summer Bank Holiday
27th - 7th Sept Probable dates for **German Rally** - confirmation March/April.
29th - 5th Sept *Holiday Rally*, **Moreton Glade**, Dorchester, Dorset.

September

5th - 7th **Highlands End Farm**, Eype, Dorset.
7th - 14th *Welsh Holiday Rally*, **Brynich C.P.**, Brecon, Powys **
12th - 14th **North of England Motorhome & Tourer Show**, York
19th - 21st Motor Caravan Show, Shepton Mallet.
26th - 28th **Howgill Lodge**, Barden, Nr. Skipton, N.Yorks **

October

10th - 12th **Whitchurch Cricket Club**, Whitchurch, Salop.

November

28th - 7th Dec. Holiday Show, Earls Court, London

December

31st - 2nd January 1998 **New Year Rally**, Ilfracombe, North Devon.

Items in **bold type** are Club rallies or are National events with a Club presence.
Holiday Rallies, in italics, are Club events other than weekend rallies.

**New venues for 1997.

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!

Other rallies are in the planning stage but to meet the ever-growing demand, we do need more. If you have ever thought you would like to do something about that, why don't you pick up the phone and have a word or three with either Bob Brindle or one of the assistant coordinators who are able (and very willing) to give advice and help.

Rally Co-ordinator:-	Bob Brindle	01777 711588	(Retford, Notts)
Local assistants:	Jerry Haxton	01483 223476	(Woking, Surrey)
	Stella Ross	01708 228075	(Upminster, Essex)
	Jeff Worley	01935 24049	(Yeovil, Somerset)

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✂ Is this your first A-S O C rally? Please tick box YES NO
Number of people in your van: Adults Children

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

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

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

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

POST FORM TO REACH MARSHAL 10 DAYS BEFORE EVENT, IF POSSIBLE - PLEASE!

(Have you completed the other side?)

Bristol, when suddenly the van began to vibrate when we attained 60 mph. Our two dogs became very distressed and I felt a bit sick. *Brian* slowed down to 40 mph and all seemed to be OK. At the time the weather was most foul with rain and wind all the way down. Having got to Bristol late we parked up and had our tea. By this time it was pitch dark so we were unable to see anything wrong with the van.

Next morning we found the back offside tyre had two large holes where the tread was missing and the steel reinforcement could be seen. The back nearside tyre had a huge bulge down the middle approx. 12 inches long. Finding this made both of us feel a bit sick with the thought of what might have happened had they both blown.

The Warden was very helpful and directed us to Manor Tyres after phoning to make sure they had suitable tyres in stock. The short journey was very nerve racking. They fitted two new heavy duty van tyres for us and the fitter said that it was unusual for Michelin tyres to go in this way. We were so relieved to have the new tyres we did not think about getting the old ones checked until a few days later, by which time it was too late. Having read several letters relating to the same problem we wonder how many more owners have had similar experiences?

Jane & Brian Nippress

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DUETTO PROBLEMS AND SWITZERLAND

Re: *Joyce and Gordon Pearce's* letter in November about their drooping heat deflector over the hob on the Duetto. We had the same problem and our cure was simply to squeeze the hinge at each end with a small pair of Mole grips (pliers would do) to cause more friction on the hinge pin. We have had very few problems with our Duetto and all have been efficiently dealt with by the factory. The Propex heater failed to work from the start but was replaced immediately. The cab headlining got burnt by the sun's rays being reflected and focused on it by the polished chromium table base plate when parked on site. We've stuck a piece of carpet over ours but I think A-S now use matt finish base plates.

We spent the first two weeks of September in Switzerland staying on their excellent T.C.S. campsites. Absolutely fabulous!! Everyone we met was wonderful. Site fees were reasonable and paid for by Frizzell Caravan Club MasterCard who do not charge commission for foreign transactions. We did not need mains electric hook-ups because we have a Sporti leisure solar panel and inverter which supplied all the power we

needed including our colour TV and Caswell satellite system. It all worked extremely well. The Ford Transit 2.5 litre diesel behaved impeccably and climbed all the passes with ease. The Duetto's narrow width allowed us to negotiate towns and smaller roads without difficulty. Diesel fuel was about the same price over there as it is here. We crossed under the Channel via "Le Shuttle".

Hazel and Geoff Whatley

Surprising what results you can get with just a little squeeze, isn't it? (Yes, I did see other meanings too!)

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Help

I own a 1983/4 A-S Clubman which has a Bedford CF chassis and the now familiar coachbuilt body. The van has been variously modified by previous owners especially to introduce diesel in pursuit of economy. I have reverted, with some difficulty, to petrol in order to reduce noise and to increase response.

So much for history. I write to seek assistance and advice for a subsequent problem which almost caused my van to fail its MOT. The problem is headlight alignment. At the moment, after maximum downward adjustment, I am in danger of illuminating the night sky instead of the road (especially if I should have the audacity to carry a couple of bottles of wine in the fridge!). I now know that the previous owner was considering fitting accessory coil springs but he could not find any of the right size. Others have mentioned air bags and still more suggest an extra leaf fitted over the present setup. I recall that my very old Dormobile on a Bedford chassis had a similar problem. Lorries and vans of similar size carry heavy loads occasionally. Our vans are always loaded and I suppose the springs fatigue. Is there an economic answer to this problem which I guess may be widespread? I would be very grateful for any advice any experienced members could provide.

My second problem is quite different and less pressing but important none the less. I suspect that many motor caravanners may also be hearing aid wearers quite simply because many of us are in the 50+ age group. For such people, including myself, the car radio can only be used at high volume which causes problems to others especially on the closer packed sites and also to our partners travelling with us. The situation could be much eased if induction loop systems were readily available. I believe that it should be possible to adapt one outlet from a two or four speaker setup to drive a loop. The wiring would have to

produce a mono output to the loop and the resistances would have to be adjusted to provide balance and prevent anything being damaged. It might mean that a small amplifier with a volume cut out fuse would also be required. I am not an electronics expert but having experienced the joy of having a loop system in my home I know what a boon such a gadget could be in car and motor caravan. Are there any experts among our membership who could and would design such a system? Once again I would appreciate any advice that may be available. I expect you all know that loop systems were invented to allow the crew, in the noisy engine rooms of ships, to hear Captain's orders. Had there been a loop system in the van perhaps I would not have needed to abandon the diesel and perhaps, on reflection, a mobile loop system could be used by the drivers of heavy transport to protect their ears as well. Looking forward to any and all helpful responses.

Ron Daniel

This letter arrived addressed "Dear Editor, Dear Mr Henshaw, Dear Harry (select as appropriate)" It would seem that *Ron* has some difficulty in reading as well as hearing! I don't even know a Mr Henshaw! So far as the lighting problem goes, I rectified this on an early Bedford by removing the entire lighting unit and replacing it with a couple of washers behind the upper fixing point. This allowed the whole thing to tilt forward more. We have heard good reports of the various coil spring additions and also the Air-ride Suspension people who come along to the Club and Company Rally. We've also heard that the latter can be helpful when trying to level the van too!

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More Help Please

To make life easier when touring in freezing temperatures can anyone advise me how satisfactorily to insulate or heat the fresh and waste water tanks and associated piping on a Boxer Executive?

Sean Hollands

Suggestions, other than lighting fires underneath the vehicle, will no doubt be welcomed by *Sean* who lives at 8 Saxons Drive, Foley Park Estate, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 5HS or telephone 0162 275 8043

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CONTINUING THE BOXER SAGA

Some good news and some bad news, the bad first

I took delivery of my new Talisman on 16th August 1996. On our second trip out we noticed a shower of sparks coming from under the

front nearside of the engine. This was due to the main earthing wire to the engine just being "hooked" onto the end of a bolt with no nut securing it another thing to be checked by new owners. A month later, after returning from a trip, we had some vibration coming from under the bonnet. The van was due for its first service and I had one or two other things to be looked at (thanks to info in the Newsletter) so I just added it to the list. It turned out that I had lost a bolt from the power steering! Again an item to be checked by other owners.

Now for the good news

Following a recommendation from a member at the Shepton Mallet rally, I booked into the Warwick Wright garage in Brentford, West London. This was a good move. Not only did they find the PAS problem but they took copies of pages from the ASOC Newsletter (which I just happened to have with me!) with the relevant comments from members regarding draining and battery problems and attached them to the mechanics work sheet! Lo and Behold, all the work was done to my satisfaction at no charge whatsoever.

Well done, ASOC Newsletter and members comments therein. Keep up the good work.

Ron Greenland

Glad to have been of service!

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Have a Good Day?

It started well. A fine day and the VW Clubman booked in to have its 6,000 mile service at the local VW garage before our holiday while we went to play a few holes of golf. Two weeks earlier we had been to Van Bitz to have the van fitted, very efficiently, with an alarm system. (I had seen the system at the Club & Company Rally!) The decision for an alarm had been prompted by an incident in France when we were parked in a motorway picnic area. A car carrying two people sped into the parking area. A man jumped out and looked hard through the front windows of the van unaware that my wife was at the back and could see him. Presumably he saw nothing obvious worth breaking in for and moved over to an unoccupied lorry. Again unsuccessful, he re-entered the car and was rapidly driven away.

Now the alarm was fitted and because the battery should not be disconnected with the alarm switched on I went to switch it all off with the keys provided. No problem under the bonnet; the key turned easily.

The other switch located in the glove box was more difficult to access. The second key was difficult to get in and turn. Then I found that I had stupidly mixed up the keys putting both keys for the siren on my key ring and the others for the unit on my wife's. Although the keys were the same pattern the lock numbers were different. Age obviously takes it's toll!

Panic! Had I upset the system? I fitted the correct key, turned the switch on and then off. Then into the driver's seat to start the engine. Key turned, ignition on, diesel ignition light out but the engine would not fire. Try again - not a hope! Help! My mistake with the key had set the alarm systems immobiliser on and I was stuck. There followed a series of telephone calls to Eddie Jones at Van Bitz who patiently dealt with this idiot. As instructed, the glove box came out and the forced switch was disconnected. Still no joy at all. Back to the phone; detailed instructions on how to reset the alarm unit carried out. Still no luck. Another call and this time it was revealed how to over-ride the immobiliser via the connections to the alarm unit. Hand just about to pull out multi-plugs under the dash when a thought occurred.

With every new car I have an extra key cut to use when the car is to be serviced. I hate taking keys off my key ring. I suddenly remembered that the new Golf, which I had just ordered, had a special immobiliser which required a VW key set to work with the car. Did my Clubman perhaps have the same arrangement? A fervent prayer and the proper VW key was inserted. Joy untold, the engine started!

A call to Eddie to apologise and explain. Then hurriedly replace the wires, refit the glove box and off to the garage for service. Reception had been warned that we were delayed and as I handed the key in, the service manager said "Where is the vehicle, sir?". I pointed out the position and said that he couldn't miss it because it was a motor caravan with a high top. He looked a little worried and asked how high. Just under nine feet was too high for his workshop so he couldn't do the service. Helpfully, he telephoned the nearest five dealers none of whom were able to take the height. Eventually VW Customer Care found that it could be serviced in Luton. A week later, we had the service carried out. It was not a good day!

Neil Rostrow

PS. In Spain in September we left the van for about an hour in Altea. On our return the alarm gave an extra chirp so something had happened. Yes, we had had a break in. The toilet door and window were open and there were dirty footmarks on the toilet, but that was all.

Nothing had been taken so it had all been worth while having the alarm fitted. There were scratches by the sliding window near the catch. The toilet window had been opened by a blade being forced in to turn the catches at the bottom. The fly screen, which had been down, had been cut across with a knife close to the metal edge and was fairly easily mended. It would seem that the turn catches on this window are very vulnerable as they used to be on car quarter lights.

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YAN BITZ

Following on from the above, Eddie Jones of Van Bitz sent the following:

We were desperate for room at Brixham and, as any of our customers who visited us there will know, the access was difficult. Lynda and I decided some three years ago that we should be looking to purchase a farm site to give us the room and potential to expand and make a visit to us pleasurable for our customers. Cornish Farm is everything that we could want. Located just two miles from junction 25 of the M.5 with the access level and wide and only two miles from Taunton Town Centre, surprisingly we have four acres set in a lovely rural location. We have been issued with a Caravan Club C.L. Licence for our orchard and the new road and dump station allow us to accommodate the very largest motorhomes. The main vehicle workshop has been converted from a former threshing barn and an adjoining paddock has been laid with hard-core and topped with washed pea gravel to make an excellent overnight parking area regardless of the time of year. We are hoping that Spring '97 will see a new office, waiting area and showroom. A separate shower and toilet building is also in the pipeline to enable our customers with no facilities in their vans to 'stay over'.

It has been a very busy year for us and not only with the move to Taunton. We recently launched a new Thatcham Category 1 security system **Strikeback 'T'** which is recognised by all major insurance companies. We have also appointed and trained a new installation firm, Vanguard Witter based in Colchester. A copy of the '96 specification "Motorcaravan Alarm System: The Facts" is available, free of charge, from Van Bitz, Cornish Farm, Shoreditch, Taunton, Somerset, TA3 7BS or telephone 0182 332 1992.

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Obituary

Audrey Algar telephoned to advise us that her husband, *John*, had passed away on 12th October. Our condolences and sympathies are extended to *Audrey* and her family.

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Wanted

A-S wheel cap for late 1980's/early 1990's Talbot Express. Approx. 390 mm diameter with 13x30 mm diameter holes. Colour off white/beige. Telephone Trevor Hargreaves on 0120 288 6855 or write to him at 13 Churchmoor Road, Colehill, Wimborne, Dorset, BH21 2LN

#####

Towbar to fit 'K' reg. Talbot Symphony. Telephone Doug & Mary Wood on 0194 475 8474 or write to them at the address shown in the 'For Sale' section.

#####

We have bought a 1981 Bedford C.F. A-S two berth with elevating roof. Unfortunately it has no instruction book and we wonder if anyone has a copy. Also can we get replacement parts for the van? Please contact Harry Graham at 7 Millfield Avenue, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL6 1AT if you can help.

#####

Has anyone got a copy of the Owner's Handbook for the Talbot Express to spare or one that I could get copied, please? Arthur Wilmore, telephone 0165 262 8257 or write to 15 Station Road, Brasey, Barnetby, Lincs., DN38 6AP.

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FOR SALE

The Club has for disposal a Pitney-Bowes Electric Franking Machine (model no. 6300). This was used for the postage on the Newsletters before we went over to a commercial printer. Offers are invited for the machine and further details can be obtained from Rita & Phil Daley on 0121 706 1816 or by writing to them at 46 Ulverley Green Road, Solihull,

West Midlands, B92 8BQ. Any reasonable offer will be considered.

#####

As seen at the Club and Company Rally. Di Blasi folding Moped complete with carrying bag to fit neatly inside van. 50 cc - 'G' reg. Good condition. Current MOT. £400.00 (now £1500.00 new price). Telephone Duncan and Wendy Graham on 0176 835 2920 or write to them at Gilmour Mews, Battlebarrow, Appleby, Cumbria, CA16 6XT.



Thanks for the donation.

#####

Awning. 2.9 metre Omnistor Light to fit panel van. Special fitting to enable you just to bolt onto gutter rail. Hardly used. £150.00. Omnistor Safari Room, colour grey. Never used. £200.00. Tow bar and electrics by Witter to fit Ford Duetto. 6 weeks old. £100.00. All prices negotiable. Please telephone Jim Faulds on 0146 374 1414 or write to him at Airdens, Glaickbea, Kiltarlity, Inverness-shire, IV4 7HR.

#####

Boxer Harmony. 2 litre petrol, 1995 'M' reg. 8,000 miles. As new with extras. £19,500.00 ono. Please telephone Stuart Cornes on 0188 959 1326 or write to him at Dungarvan, Oak Road, Denstone, Uttoxeter, Staffs, ST14 5HT.

#####

Trophy 1994 'M' reg. 2/4 berth. 2.4 litre diesel, Automatic, P.A.S. 13,000 miles. Immaculate condition with fitted seat covers and carpet protection. No animals, non-smokers. Extras include towing bracket, cycle rack and fold away extension to work-top. Reason for sale - new Talisman on order. Cost £28,200.00 - will sell for £25,200.00. Please contact John and Iris Ackland on 0124 355 2064 or write to them at 2 Paddocks, Barnham, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO22 0HU.

#####

Free standing Hi-top Motor Chalet awning. As new, cost over £300.00, accept £200.00. Hardly used. Telephone Doug & Mary Wood on 0194 475 8474 or write to them at Kiddles Farm,

Wintringham, Malton, North Yorkshire, YO17 8HX.

Thanks for the donation.

#####



Toilet Tent, proofed green cotton and aluminium poles. Good clean condition. **FREE** to the first member to collect or arrange carriage. Alternatively, I might be able to deliver, depending on the area, or could meet the recipient at a mutually convenient venue - perhaps the Peterborough show in the spring. Contact Barry Crawshaw at 32 Lochty Street, Carnoustie, Angus, DD7 6EF, telephone 0124 185 2396.

#####

VW T4 Trident, 'M' reg (Aug.94). 16,000 miles. 2.5 litre petrol, Automatic, A.B.S. Electric windows, arm rests, blown air heating, immersion water heater, awning. Fully alarmed. No pets, non-smokers. Immaculate condition. £22,000.00. Phone Den Elkins on 0120 282 4863 or write to 15 Fairwood Road, Verwood, Dorset, BH31 6UA

#####

Silver Screen to fit 1995 Boxer Executive. £45.00 ono. Telephone Bill and Mary Dakin on 0163 681 2673 or write to Trehowel, Halam Road, Southwell, Notts. NG25 0AD.

#####

Paulchen rack carrier, VW T3 with non-drill kit. £35.00. Paulchen rack with 2 anti-theft bike carriers & non-drill kit. VW T4. £65.00. Telephone Joyce & Gordon Matthews on 0179 553 8913 or write to 35 Preston Park, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8LH.

#####

RAC 'N' ROLL Motorcycle/Scooter carrier. Cost £360.00 - for sale at £225.00. Aquaroll - £11.00. Submersible Pump - £5.00. Raleigh small wheel bike, 3-speed, dynamo, carrier and detachable shopping bag - £35.00. Fiamma Roll Tank for waste water - £30.00. Contact Don Thompson on 0163 423 3362 or write to him at 'Roseveare', 16 Tanglewood Close, Wigmore, Gillingham, Kent, ME8 0PH. Only 2 miles from junction 4 on the M.2.

All that now remains for 1996 is to wish every member, on behalf of your Committee, a peaceful and happy Christmas together with a prosperous and safe-driving New Year. Enjoy yourselves, enjoy your festivities and enjoy your Club in 1997.

The next issue of your Newsletter will be No. 100. Many of us will be quite surprised that we have got this far - especially as it was originally meant to be every other month! There is a reasonable amount "on the spike" at the moment but contributions are ALWAYS welcome. See you next year!

Your Editor
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