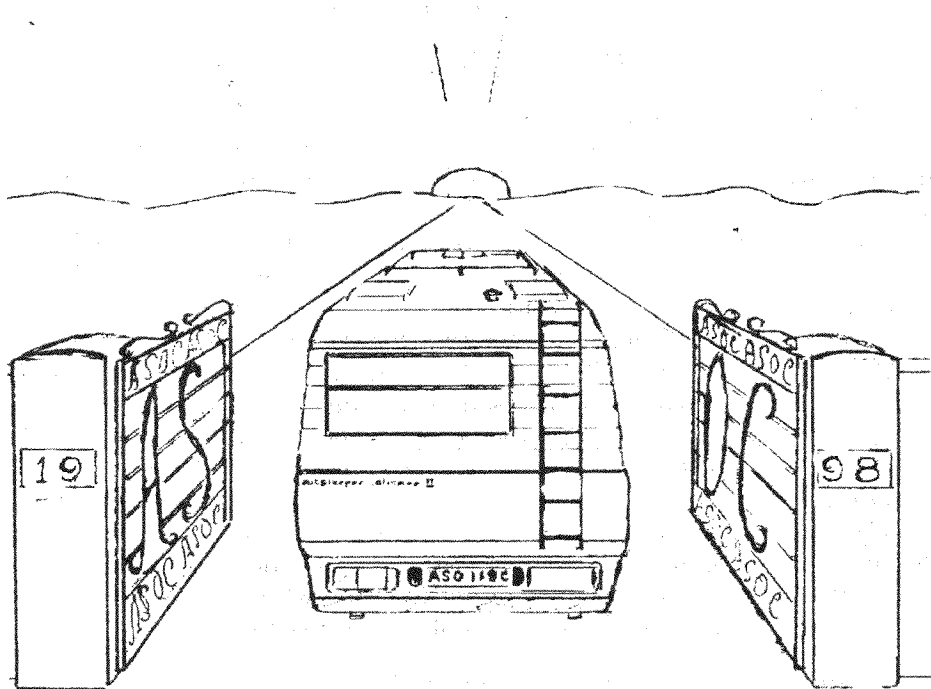


AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB



**NEWSLETTER 112
JANUARY 1998**

Hello.

Sheila Henthorne would like to thank everyone who has sent in their pink renewal forms nice and early. I hope that you have all remembered to fill the form in and return it because if you haven't this is likely to be the last Newsletter that you receive.

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PRESS RELEASE - 11TH DECEMBER 1997

Assured Future for Auto-Sleepers Ltd

After a review of the Company's activities in 1996, a plan was set in place to ensure the continued success of the United Kingdom's leading motorcaravan manufacturer. This has included the appointment of Stephen Small as Design Manager and more recently of Terry New as Production Engineer. It is now widely known that these personnel were recruited to develop and introduce its new range of styrofoam coachbuilt motorcaravans. These were launched at the 1997 Caravan and Leisure Show at which the Pollensa won the prestigious Caravan Industry Award for Motorcaravans. A further part of the plan is the sale of a controlling interest in the Company to its two senior managers, Bill Cook and Steven Riley. This exercise is seen by the vendors and purchasers as ensuring the continuity and future success of the Company. *Anthony Trevelyan* will continue to utilise his expertise in Sales, Marketing and Design and *Charles Trevelyan* will continue in his role with Customer Care and Quality. Bill Cook assumes the appointment of Financial Director with Steven Riley taking over as Managing Director, whilst paying particular attention to the operational activities of the Company.

This is a partnership of the new and past owners working together to improve the Company's performance and strengthen further its market position. Progression, not rapid change is to be seen as the key to the future. In this way the industry will see that Auto-Sleepers has an assured future, building on the broad experience of its new owners Bill Cook, Steven Riley, *Anthony Trevelyan* and *Charles Trevelyan*. We all trust that the Company will continue to receive the support it has in the past, from chassis manufacturers, dealers, suppliers, customers and press.

Many of the internal changes required to take the Company forward have already been implemented in the months prior to change in ownership, so as to make the transition as smooth as possible with the minimum disruption. Having laid these foundations for the future, steady but constant progress will take place to ensure that Auto-Sleepers retains its position in the Motorcaravan market.

Said *Anthony Trevelyan* "With the loyalty and commitment of our middle management, supported by the undoubted expertise of our workforce, this management buyout assures the future of the Company well into the next century".

[Although this was received after the normal closing date I thought it was of sufficient importance to delay matters slightly. We understand that this change will not affect the Club in any way. - Ed.]

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REGALIA

Will members please note that our Regalia Officer, *Ian Ross*, wants to do a good bit of re-organisation on how he stores the items currently on the list. As a result he will not be able to accept or action any orders for some time in the New Year - starting NOW! If you want anything, please wait until the end of March or early April before trying to get hold of him. Or perhaps have a look at the Club Shop at the Annual Dinner and AGM Rally weekend.

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Insurance

There seems to be some confusion about the insurance cover which the Club holds. You may have heard from uninformed sources that it only covers the driver of the van attending the rally. This is not so. Our insurance covers ANY PERSON who is officially attending a Club rally. For this reason it is very important that the Rally Marshal must be advised of any visitor to the rally, such as a friend or relative who may pop in to see you or even come along in your van. So if you bring any grand-children (or grand parents for that matter!) make sure that (a) the Rally Marshal knows about it and (b) the Rally Marshal agrees to it. Then the cover is in force. If someone "breaks in" on a rally by being on some other part of a commercial site, for instance, and comes across uninvited to the Club area in the hopes of being accepted and then has

an accident they would not be covered.

You will have noticed, no doubt, that the two major clubs for caravanners of all types have notices at the entrance to their sites that ALL NEW ARRIVALS AND VISITORS MUST REPORT TO THE WARDEN. This is for a similar reason.

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Design, Comfort and Charity

It is interesting to note that Stephen Small, the new Design Manager for A-S admits to previously designing, among other things, garage forecourt equipment. Can we therefore expect a new range of coachbuilts resembling mobile petrol pumps??

I noted the letter from *Peter Hacking* regarding the hard suspension on his Symphony which he now seems to have cured. To help his back problems further he could fit, as I have done on our (OLD) Legend, Bostrom seat suspension units as used on HGV's. These are adjustable to body weight and remove 70% of the low frequency vibration that causes back problems. The results have been excellent. Back problems when driving are now a thing of the past. Further details are available from: TEK Seating, Unit 7, Spa Business Park, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 3EN. Tel: 0189 251 5028. They are also at Melton Mowbray, Leics. Tel: 0166 448 0689. They also manufacture a range of replacement seats.

On the subject of rallies and proceeds of any raffle etc. going to Club funds and on no account to any charities, may I ask how it is that at the Club and Company Rally a large donation is always made to charity? I have no objection to said profits going to the Club or to charity but you cannot have two sets of rules. This surely requires some clarification?

Alan Chennels

I'm just trying to imagine a coachbuilt resembling a petrol pump. Dare I ask what one does with the hose and fittings? The point about money being given to charity is really quite clear. The big raffle at the Club and Company Rally, together with some income from other sources at that rally, has always been given to an approved charity selected by the Committee. The problem has arisen in the past on the small rallies when a raffle has been run, prizes have been purchased and some funds handed to a charity. The net result, to the Club, has been a loss - which

is something we need to avoid. Thus it has been said that if a marshal runs a raffle at a Club rally the profits (or loss if one is made) MUST go to the Club.

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LPG in Bulk

Lyn & Eddie Jones of Van Bitz have let us know that they can now offer a filling service for vans with built in LPG tanks. They will retail it at heating fuel prices rather than the road fuel prices which you might pay if you fill at a petrol station. The LPG filling service will normally be available during office hours.

They are, as you will know, near to Taunton in Somerset and suggest that you ring them on 0182 332 1992 for further information, directions, or to arrange a visit for filling or, of course, for their usual security offerings.

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Workshop Manual Saving

Any member with a Renault Trafic or Master who is looking for a workshop manual. I rang Peter Russek Publications and they told me that the price was £13.50 plus £1.00 post and packing. They also advised me that Renault main dealers stock their manual and gave me the name of my nearest garage. I therefore rang Willows Garage, Runcorn Road, Barnton, Northwich, Cheshire, CW8 4JA, telephone no: 0160 677 137 and was quoted £10.00 - a saving of £3.50! I collected a copy next day. The garage's Parts Department have offered to send a copy to any member who wants one at a cost of £10.00 plus 50p post and packing. There is also a supplement book covering diesel engines for £3.50.

Ron Barrow

I'm sure that many members will be grateful for this information.

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C.B. in Europe

A number of ASOC members who regularly holiday in groups or in pairs in Europe use their C.B. radios to communicate whilst on their journeys. Many have now decided to use the new CEPT sets which are

legal in many European countries and also in the UK. If any member should decide to do the same - just a word of warning. The Department of Trade and Industry have recently type approved a new 80 channel set which contains both UK and CEPT frequencies. I have spoken on the phone to three CB shops who each told me that these 80 channel sets are legal in Europe. **THEY ARE NOT!** These radios, type approved MPT 1382 should be marked "PR 27/97 - for use in UK only".

The only CB sets that will allow UK CB licensees to operate under the terms of their UK CB licence, in the undermentioned European countries, are sets with type approval marks MPT 1333 and ETS 300 135 and **MUST** be marked "CEPT PR 27 GB" or "PR 27 GB".

Countries that have implemented recommendations TR 20.02 and TR 20.07:-

Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Sweden, Vatican City and the UK. Three countries, Denmark, Norway and Portugal, require equipment to be marked "CEPT PR 27 GB" only. It should be noted that neither Italy nor Spain have yet signed.

George Wane.

I wonder how long it will be before many people will only consider a computer, a satellite dish and the Internet as a suitable communicator. I noticed, in the latest copy of "The Wire", that my old mob, the Royal Corps of Signals, has completed the last operator training course involving the Morse Code!

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PRO JOTTINGS

Your committee was busy during the last weekend in November. On the Friday morning the Club & Company rally sub-committee, chaired by *Brian Hooton*, attended the Malvern Showground to discuss next year's rally with the management. Snags from 1997 were discussed but it was generally agreed that the arrangements had been pretty satisfactory all round. We shall use the Avon Hall again but a different entrance gate. The showground will provide us with a mobile phone linked to their staff so that problems, if any, can be ironed out immediately. In the afternoon we travelled to Willersey to meet the A-S

members of our joint sub-committee. It was decided to follow our proven successful format but with a few alterations. There will be no fireworks as they are no longer allowed in the showground. There will be the usual display of new vans; trade stands and the company marquee will be present. We shall engage the same band as 1997 and the chosen charity for 1998 will be "Hearing Dogs for Deaf People".

On Saturday the full committee met and these arrangements, together with those for the Annual Dinner and AGM, were ratified. Our Treasurer, *John Tidbury*, reported that all was in order. *Sheila Henthorne* told us that membership was up by 106 since our last meeting; we now have a total of 1,658 vans as members including 21 who have rejoined the Club. *Neil Rogers* advised that 35 rallies have been arranged for 1998. He also said that he has a list of available sites but needs marshals for rallies on them. *Harry Henthorne* would like a few more items for the Newsletter for 1998 as he is running a bit short "on the spike". *Ian Ross* reported that the regalia is now much more under control. As stated earlier, he will be suspending sales in the New Year for a couple of months. For my own part I find that with some 45 other Owners' Clubs around it is much more difficult to get my monthly items published in the commercial magazines. This is not a new problem and we shall have to deal with the situation as it is. Our next meeting has been arranged for 28th February 1998.

Geoff Scholey

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Fresnel Lenses

Barry Crawshaw has contacted me to ask whether any member has experienced any incident similar to that described by *Brian Smith* in the October 97 Newsletter. This, you will remember, involved damaged caused by sunshine through a lens. If anyone has any comments, please write to 3 Clermiston Road North, Edinburgh, EH4 7BL or telephone 0131 336 3385. You may get the answering machine but you can leave a message.

Maurice Payne

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TECHNICAL INFORMATION GROUP

Index - NOVEMBER 97

<u>Sheet No.</u>	<u>Base Vehicle</u>	<u>Subject</u>
1	Clubman	Draughts
2	Clubman	Hot Drink Cabinet
3	Clubman	Water Systems - Frost Protection
4	Clubman (Early)	Refrigerator Winter Cover
5	Peugeot Boxer	Water over Gearbox and Battery
6	Boxer Executive	Extra Storage and Draught Exclusion
7	All Models	External Cover for Carver Heater Outlet
8	Boxer Symphony (Harmony/Duetto ?)	Cupboard inside N/S Rear Door- Behind Toilet compartment
9	All Models	Indicator Lights on 'Zig' Panel for 12 volt Supply and Water Pump
10	Coachbuilts, Rear-Step Warning Buzzer	Warning Light to Replace Buzzer
11	Clubman	Stepwell Step
12	Excelsior	Modifications to O/S Storage and isolate Carver Water Heater
13	Clubman	Insulating Cold Water Tank - Without Removal
14	All Models	Lightweight Table
15		
16	All Models	Reversed Polarity Connector
17	Boxer Symphony	Adding a toilet water tank
20	Boxer Cabs	Additional Door Pockets

Items Available on Loan

Various Instruction Manuals (see Newsletter October 97)

Talbot Express Workshop Manual. Various sections available.
Postage dependant on number of sections requested.

If you are interested in receiving any of the Information Sheets that have been produced to date please send :-

- 4 x 26p stamps for up to 4 copies
- 8 x 26p stamps for up to 8 copies
- 12 x 26p stamps for 9 or more copies

Maurice Payne

Write to the address shown in the previous item.

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Losing an Old Friend

Dawn of 18th July 1997 proved to be quite a nightmare. I was woken at 6.15 am by *Tom*, who was just leaving for work, to be told "The van's gone!" "Can't have" was my reply. He assured me that there was a dry area on the drive and we had some overnight rain. There was also the spare wheel cover and 3 rubber grommets in total. I dialled 999 and was put through to the police. Trembling like a leaf I told them what had happened. Older members will know what I mean when I say I thought I was talking to Rob Wilton. His reply was "I don't know which form to fill in for that and I'm very tired. I wish you had rung three-quarters of an hour later - I would have been off duty." He said they would put it on the stolen vehicles list and would get back to us. By 1.00 pm - some 6 hours later - I hadn't heard a thing so I dialled 999 again. This time I was severely ticked off and told that it was not an emergency and to get off the line. My reply was that it may not be to you but it's a tragedy to us.

We had been to the Malvern do so all our gear was on board including a brand new Fiamma awning fitted there. It even included the purchases we made at the rally. So I rang the police again - this time it was Rob Wilton's brother - I got nowhere. His only reply was that he would give me a crime number and I should inform the insurance company.

Now this opened a can of worms. First, we had always paid extra to cover us having a courtesy car if required as we need two vehicles. I was told straightaway that this did not cover theft, which was a blow. Then I learned that we would have to wait at least six weeks before anything could be done - in case the vehicle turned up. We got through somehow with kind friends offering lifts and with borrowing an old van for *Tom's* transport to work. I rang round the motor caravan dealers who gave me an approximate figure to replace our loss. Our special thanks to Diane and Lennie at Ron Reynolds who did their best to help us with my many phone calls during the battle with the insurance company. Six weeks after the loss came the offer from the insurers of £8,000.00. My blood pressure went sky high. I rang to ask them if they had omitted the first digit off this quote for a turbo-diesel Talisman GL. The brokers were quite helpful and said they would see what they could do.

Time passed - and the offer was doubled. But we didn't think we could possibly replace it for that amount. We were getting desperate, no weekends away, no holidays - to say the least - and transport was getting more difficult. We replied to an advert in MMM, a vehicle exactly like ours but a bit younger with 75,000 miles on the clock. It was for sale in Surrey. It had been bought in this country some 15 months earlier by two people from New Zealand to "do the Continent" as they say. It had been to Turkey, Greece, Africa and Spain - you name it - a lot of places. It had been their home all this time and it showed. The van stood up very well apart from fading upholstery and curtains plus tired seating. The grill and cooker was not as new. But all that is in hand and by next Spring we hope that Rachel III will be as good as Rachel II. As the New Zealanders wanted a quick sale so that they could go home and as they had other potential buyers we rang the insurance people and accepted their second offer so that we would not miss the purchase.

Many thanks to our friends both in and outside ASOC. We had great support and they put up with us in this terrible time. It was just like losing a close relative. Many of the things in the stolen van cannot be replaced but we have survived. Guard your vans. Ours had a good alarm and engine immobiliser fitted and neither we nor the neighbours heard a sound. We have a few surprises on Rachel III in case the thieves come back.

Dorothy Huntingdon

PS. Anyone got a spare Rotweiler?

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RALLY SUPPLEMENT

January 98

A Happy & Prosperous New Year to you all. Good rallying for 1998

12th-15th.February 1998.Grouse & Claret,Rowsley,Derbyshire.

Site Emergency Tel.No.(J.Miley,Landlord. 01629733233)

Rally Marshals: Doreen & Jock Hammond.

Site Fee:£6.00 per night (includes electricity.)

Rally Fee:£2.00(Couple)£1.00(single).Cheques payable to:Mrs.D.Hammond.

Booking slips to:Mr. & Mrs.J.Hammond,5 Bracken Wood,Off Skip Lane,Walsall,WS5 3LH. Tel.No. 0121 358 6823.

Attractions:Use of clubroom & boiler,bar meals in Grouse & Claret, Chatsworth Park & Garden Centre/Farm shop,Mill & Craft centre.Bus stop outside site-buses to Matlock & Bakewell for shopping.The area is a walkers paradise. Extra nights arranged with landlord.

Directions: On A6 between Bakewell & Matlock.

RALLY COMMENCES AFTER 2.00 P.M. ON Thursday.

LIMITED TO 29 VANS

27th-30th.March Larmer Tree,Rushmore Estate,Tollard Royal,Wilts.

Rally Marshals: Rosie & Terry Ball..

Site Fee:£ 16.00 per van for weekend. **NO Electricity.** Rally Fee:£2.00

Booking slips to Mrs.R.Ball,61 Merley Ways,Wimbourne,Dorset,BH21 1QW.Tel.No. 01202 883 050. Cheques payable to Mrs.R.Ball.

Rally is from midday Friday 27th.March to midday Monday 30th.March.

Please do not arrive before midday on Friday.Stay any number of nights.

The whole grounds have been booked for the weekend,suitable for wheelchairs.Dogs welcome ON LEADS(but not in gardens)Hall available for wet weather use & meetings.There is hard standing for over 50 vans plus an extra field. Toilets are available from about 8.00am. to 10.00pm..

Attractions: Licensed bar for Saturday night.A home cooked meal has been arranged if sufficient interest.Choice of Chicken,Steak & Kidney Pie or Vegetarian @ £8.00 per head for two courses including sweet.

Please send money and choice when booking.

Send SAE for leaflet on Larmer tree and /or confirmation of booking.
Directions. Situated just off A354 between Blandford Forum and Salisbury. From either direction on B3081 between Shaftesbury and Sixpence Handley. Follow Blue & White sign in Tollard Royal to the Larmer Tree.
Map ref. 943169.

Please support this re-arranged rally.

Spanish Rally(February 1998) is fully booked.

Dutch Bulbfields Rally (May1998) is fully booked.

New Rally, New Venue.

1st.-14th. June 1998. Camping Le Bohat, Brittany, France.

If you are interested in this rally please contact Dennis Oxley for further details as soon as possible on 0121 705 4006.

Rallies 1998

How about some more Green Field sites in Summer?

Please remember to check the availability of dates with me before booking a rally. *The availability of dates can change very quickly as new rallies are arranged so do not leave confirmation with me too long after checking dates.*

Please remember that rallies can be arranged at any time during the year as long as dates are checked and reasonable notice is given.

Please note that **ALL** information ie. dates, rally bookings and rally details for the Newsletter should be sent to the Rally Co-Ordinator;

Neil C. Rogers
3 Appleby Close,
Aldbrough St. John,
Richmond, North Yorks,
DL11 7TT.
Tel./Fax NO. 01325 374 540

Local Assistants: Jerry Haxton (01 483 223 476) Woking, Surrey.
Jeff Worley (01 935 424 049) Yeovil, Somerset.
Ray Whiley (01 603 452 593) Norwich, East Anglia.
Bob Brindle (01 777 711 588) Retford, East Midlands.

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!**

✂-----

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

Number of people in your van: Adults Children

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.....
Payment MUST accompany this slip - cheques payable to marshal.
**POST FORM TO REACH MARSHAL 10 DAYS BEFORE EVENT, IF POSSIBLE -
PLEASE!**

Rally: Date:

Your name and address (please PRINT)

..... Post code:

Membership No: Phone No: Van Reg:

Day/Time of arrival

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

Name: Phone:

Please complete both sides of the form!

Rally: Date:

Your name and address (please PRINT)

..... Post code:

Membership No: Phone No: Van Reg:

Day/Time of arrival

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

Name: Phone:

Please complete both sides of the form!

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Your name and address (please PRINT)

..... Post code:

Membership No: Phone No: Van Reg:

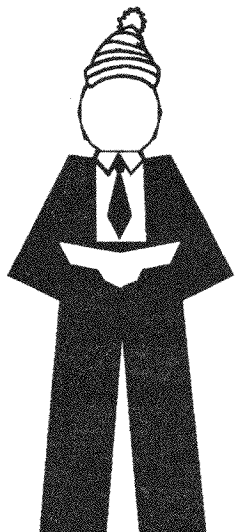
Day/Time of arrival

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

Name: Phone:

Please complete both sides of the form!

Chairman's Chat



My original opening line for you this month was to have been "By the time you are reading this *Betty and I* will be on the banks of the Nile enjoying the warm winter Egyptian sun." But as we know, some madmen have caused a carnage that will not be easily forgotten nor forgiven. I for one, try as I might, can not understand this fanatical approach to any religious cause. When in the past we have talked about our love of Egypt and it's truly absorbing history we are often asked if we would take our van and journey round the historical sights. "You must be joking!" is our reply. The driving standard is much worse than in Italy or around the Paris peripherique. The only instrument that the Egyptian drivers are taught to use is the horn, which they use ALL the time, day or night, crowded or clear. I won't go on at length here but ask me sometime if you see us about to relate the story of the traffic policeman in Cairo. Our friend who was with us could not believe the evidence of his own eyes. At the moment we are rapidly trying to sort out what to do with ourselves over the Christmas and New Year holidays as all our plans have been thrown into chaos by this mindless tragic event. Right that's the outburst over the holidays off my chest.

What about the New Year and the Club? *Neil Rogers*, our Rally Co-ordinator (lovely boy) tells me that we already have a goodly number of rallies arranged but more would be welcomed. Don't forget if you would like to run a rally then check first with Neil that the dates you wish to use are clear. **Don't book for a rally without that check** as we run into all sorts of problems. Plus it doesn't look too good for us with the site owners if a date is arranged and then needs changing because of existing rallies. Planning for our two set piece Club occasions is already well under way and in the case of the Annual Dinner Dance and AGM weekend, almost complete. Don't forget, you snowbirds who travel south for the winter months, to please, **please** let us know before you go if you wish to attend the weekend. As I keep reminding you, it is far easier to cancel an attendance than it is to fit in a late application. The Club & Company Rally is still some time ahead and yet the team charged with preparing for the event is busy and making plans for another great weekend, I hope. Probably next month *Geoff Scholey* will be passing on

the various bits and bobs from our committee meeting at the end of November. That reminds me! I asked last month if any of you good ladies would like to join our committee and up to now the silence is absolutely deafening. So come on, girls, how about having a go or at least asking us for some information of what the Club expects of you. To misquote a famous poster campaign of many moons ago "Your Club needs YOU!" We do, we do! Give the idea of joining us a whirl, you never know, you might just enjoy your self !

It only remains for *Betty and me* to wish you all a very happy and healthy New Year with lots of fun enjoying your various pastimes with your vans. Happy New Year! PS. Let us not forget all of our friends at the factory in Willersey. Happy New Year to you too!

Andrew Entwistle

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FROM THE FACTORY

As Christmas fast approaches everybody is looking forward to putting their feet up for a few days, and no doubt enjoying some form or another of Christmas spirit. From our last holiday at the end of August it seems a particularly long slog up until Christmas, especially bearing in mind all the fun and games associated with preparing for the Earls Court Outdoor Caravan and Leisure Show. This year, a total of 19 vans have been prepared to show standard, including the brand new Auto-Sleeper Styrofoam coachbuilt models. These being a rear dinette layout, a twin dinette layout or a twin bench seat model. (More about these in next edition.)

Vans for the Earls Court Show are put into production at the rate of 2 or 3 per week, so as to keep production throughput at reasonable levels. In fact the first vans for this years show went in to production as early as the week beginning 22nd September. What extra work is involved in preparing vans for the show you may well ask. Well, here is a brief resume of show van production.

In early September a team get together to finalise a list of all vans going to the show, and the specifications of those vans. This includes cushion and curtain colours, 2 or 4 berth options, and coachlines. When the list is approved orders are placed for all the relevant parts. This includes extra cable so the vans can be wired for show lighting, 4 way electrical sockets, number plates with the name of each model, and

the show lights themselves. The vans then go through the normal production processes, obviously causing some extra work on the way, especially for the electricians. Once the vans are finished, they then go through the normal Auto-Sleepers rigorous inspection procedures, before being presented to our two directors, who both give the vans a thorough and meticulous inspection. A specialist team then works on the vans to rectify any problems or faults.

Other tasks to be performed include the refurbishment of the desks and cupboards used on the actual stand, and renewing the steps placed by the side doors of the vans.

Whilst all this is going on the brochures and the 1998 Company Magazine have to be prepared, proof read, edited and submitted to the printers all in good time to enable all relevant literature, to be on the stand at Earls Court by 10-00 a.m. on Thursday 27th November. I now know what they mean by the saying "Hot off the Press."

By the time you get to read this article Earls Court 1997 will be all over and then we will not have to think about show vans until Monday 5th January 1998, with the N.E.C. Show, just around the corner.

On behalf of everybody at Auto-Sleepers may I take this opportunity to hope you all had a Merry Christmas and to wish you a Happy 1998

Phil Bennett

This was written on 27th November 1997 and I received it on the thirtieth - a little too late for the December Newsletter!

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Travellers - 1

On a trip up North we were late leaving friends and wished to press on for Scotland. So we stayed on motorways rather than on A roads and decided to park up at a service area at about 9.30 pm. For this privilege we were asked to pay £7.00 and while we could get to the service area facilities we parked adjacent to a motor lodge. This gave a location well away from road noise and we expected any hotel trade to be fairly quiet so we settled down for the night.

Possibly an hour or so later we were awakened by the noise of engines, by raised voices and general commotion as a train of travellers

'transits' arrived complete with caravans and kids. Caravans were backed up onto the grass, dogs let loose and plans to go for meals etc. shouted around. They appeared quite unaware of our presence among the parked cars and the commotion went on for about another hour.

We did not get the quiet night we had hoped for and so chose to have a very early breakfast before leaving the car park. We were tempted to make a noisy exit but decided against it. We had thought that for late stops these motorway service areas (the ones with the facility are listed in the back of the CCC Big Sites Book) would be a convenient option. But our experience shows that they have their drawbacks. If you are camping wild these are certainly the places to avoid.

Ted Bailey

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Travellers - 2

A compliment to our sort of van? We had pitched on a smallish site at Montgivray which was a third or more taken up by 'travellers' - quite friendly ones - and the loos were acceptable. About an hour after we had settled in we were joined by a Hymer. They told us that they nearly didn't come onto the site because of all the travellers. But then "they saw that there was an Auto-Sleeper on site, so it was bound to be OK!"

And a tip for those heading along the Rhone this winter. The site at Tournon sur Rhone listed as a municipal site in part 1 of the continental Caravan Club guide as closing at the end of October is now open all the year. The cost for a motorhome and two adults, with electricity, is 62 FFr per night. We understand that this is good until the end of March 1998. We think that the site has gone private. It is close to the town centre, beside the river and when we were there in late October it had warmed unisex loos and hot showers included. Incidentally, it is opposite the Crozes-Hermitage vineyards.

Jim Cresswell

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Blinds

With reference to *John Johnson's* request last month I can now tell you that the lubricant required is Holt's Rubber Nylon Lubricant. This can be obtained from most branches of Halfords and other accessory shops. The trick is to take the thin tube supplied with tins of WD40 and

fit it into the nozzle of the Holt's can. Then spray a very small amount into the slot which can be found inside each corner angle. This should last for two to three months each time.

In addition, the blinds sometimes stick when you try to lower them in the morning. This can be caused because the outer surface is metallic and may not be quite so pliable on cold mornings. You should lower the blind so far as it will reasonably go and then leave it (locked of course) until things warm up when it will slide easily for the rest of the way.

Arthur Rumsey

One thing we found out - the hard way - is that the side runners of the blinds can sometimes warp. In our case one bent slightly inwards towards the window and caused the blind to stick badly. The factory wizards cured it with a small screw in the outer edge to hold the rail more straight.

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NO SMOKING!

Our 'L' registered Talisman failed the MOT smoke test despite having come back from a long run. It may be a help to other owners of this rather dirty un-blown 2.5 diesel to know that it would pay to put a tin of Diesel Clean into the fuel tank (when fairly low) and drive five to ten miles before the test. Had I done this I would have avoided three hours at the test station!!

Norman Tamplin

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Insurance

I changed my 1996 Duetto for a 1997 Amethyst to get a bit more room. I then asked the insurance broker to adjust the cover and they charged me £90.08 for the paperwork. When I received the cover note I noticed that the cost of the vehicle was shown as £10,000.00 less than I paid for it! I phoned them to get it corrected but before they would send a new cover note I was charged a further £17.68 as the clerk had quoted the wrong price - based on the lower amount. It was their error but I still

had to pay. I hope nobody else has the same trouble with their insurers but it might be worth while to make sure the clerks know exactly what is to be covered and the cost of the vehicle.

David Palmer

I presume that the additional cost was because the Amethyst costs more than the Duetto rather than to cover the paperwork.

====ooo000ooo====

Wanted - Advice & Guidance

In September 1997 we spent a very enjoyable month touring parts of France in our Symphony. We now feel we would like to have a mobile home (the sort we could live in for several months of the year, perhaps renting it out in the high season), based in the Aude/Pyrenees Orientales area of France, e.g. Perpignan to Med coast and Spanish borders. This is not an area we know but we are attracted by what we have heard about it. We would also use our mobile home as a base from which to tour other parts of Southern Europe in our Symphony.

We would love to hear from members who have had experience of such a venture and could advise us on camp sites which accept static vans - facilities, locations, weather, access, tranquillity and so on. We are in touch with one or two English companies who place vans on sites in France and we will, of course, again visit ourselves if we decide to go ahead. However news from anyone who has travelled this road would be most welcome. Our address is 29 Happyland North, Worcester, WR2 5DH, phone 0190 542 1031.

Ann and Alan Hardwick

Thanks for the donation.

====ooo000ooo====

Wanted

Hope Safe-T Bar to fit VW Clubman GL. Tel
Derek Armitage on 0152 946 0231 or write to 3 Main
Road, Little Hale, Sleaford, Lincs. NG34 9BB.



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AVAILABLE

Due to wind damage I have some spares for a two and a half metre Fiamma 350 Florida roll-out awning. Only parts missing are the legs and front to van supports. No charge. Tel: Yvonne or Stuart Wood on 0148 460 4133 or write to 56 Stocksway, Shepley, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD8 8DN.

Thanks for the donation.

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FOR SALE



White GRP back-box. 48" long x 21" high x 12" deep. New and unused due to change of van. £125.00 (cost £200.00). Tel: John Loose on 0137 245 7822 or write to 11 Sheridans Road, Great Bookham, Surrey, KT23 4RZ.

#####

2 electric hook-up cables, as new. £10.00 each. Caravan Club monthly magazines 1989 - 1997, mostly in binders. Current Sites Book and Map etc. in leather wallet. £10.00 the lot. Monthly Motorcaravan Magazines 1993 - 1997 - free to good home! Contact Shirley & Roy Lefley at 10 Uplands Road, Measham, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, DE12 7HL.

Thanks for the donation.

#####

Fiamma roof rafter (cost £34.22) - £20.00. Silver Screens insulated front (cost £110.00.) - £40.00. Rear (cost £29.00) - £15.00. Summer weight front (cost £29.00) - £15.00. Toilet tent large (cost £66.00) - £30.00. All the above are new.

VW rubber front mats. £10.00. Folding table and chairs (cost £28.00) - £15.00. These are as new. Ramps, wind break (folds small), Elsan blue (unused), mallet etc. plus specially designed box to hold toilet. £20.00. Michael Marwood, 0133 270 4062 or write to Islay, 20 Woodgate Drive, Chellaston, Derby, DE73 1UX.

#####



Talisman, 'R' reg, August 1997, 4 berth.
Fiamma 4 bike rack. Low mileage, immaculate.
Non-smokers, no pets. Will deliver.
£28,000.00. Tel Ross Provan on 0049 5241
73568 (Germany) or write to c/o Met Office,
Princess Royal Barracks, Gutersloh, Germany,
BFPO 47. [If you write remember it needs a first
class stamp! - Ed.]

#####

VW Trophy, 94, 2.4 diesel. Full service record. 20,000 miles.
Immobiliser and alarm system. Fiamma awning and extras. One
owner, non smoker. £19,995.00. Telephone Ken Twist on 0167 653
3449 or write to 125 Needlers End Lane, Balsall Common, Coventry,
CV7 7AA.

#####

Top Box. Approx. 42 x 32 x 16 inches. £80.00. Back Box.
Approx. 56 x 26 x 15 inches. This box is fitted with two rails to carry two
Dahon bikes in semi-folded condition and is complete with the necessary
brackets to fit onto the back of the Executive. £100.00. Telephone Pat
& Peter Yeatman on 0170 526 4638 or write to 110 Sunnymead Drive,
Waterlooville, Hants., PO7 6BX.

#####

VW Trident, 2.4 diesel. 1995 'N' reg. As new. 13,200 miles.
Twin batteries, main 240v. Propex heating. 3 way fridge. TV aerial,
awning. No pets, non-smoking owners. Top of the range, all the extras.
£18,250.00 ono. Tel: Graham Hadlow on 0163 436 5509 or write to
7 Manor Court, Lower Twydall lane, Gillingham, Kent, ME7 2UX.

Thanks for the donation.

#####

1989 Ford Legend GL. 2 litre petrol, excellent condition. Only
20,000 miles. Usual A-S refinements plus oven, water heater, Omnistor
awning, 2nd battery and 4 new tyres. No pets, non-smokers. Arthritis
forces sale. £13,500.00. Tel: Ernest and Gertrude Jones on 0190 545
3748 or write to 9 Zermatt Close, Northwick, Worcester, WR3 7NQ.

Thanks for the donation.

#####

Fiamma two bike cycle rack to fit rear tailgate of VW type 2.



£50.00 ono. Silver Screen for cab area of VW type 2.
£25.00 ono. Tel/Fax Ray Wood on 0143 284 0429
or write to 10 Court Close, Little Dewchurch, Hereford,
HR2 6PT.

#####

Talbot Express Talisman, 'J' reg (Dec.91). 2.5
litre diesel with P.A.S. Air-ride suspension, good
tyres, silver screen, electric cable etc. £18,500.00. Tel: Ron Reynolds
Leisure Vehicles on 0127 463 0582. You could see it in Odey Road,
Bradford. Being sold on behalf of George Greenwood.

Thanks for the donation.

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The Future

As I have a little room left after everything has been put in place, I thought that you might like to know something of what I have in mind for the future. I am at present experimenting with the latest release of my Desk Top Publishing software (computer programmes to the uninitiated) and I hope to be able to give you a list of contents in each issue. The first attempt is on the back page. You will be able to flip through back numbers to find what you want. Let me know what you think of this, please.

From now on the back page will appear to be the same each month. Obviously the "Contents" details will change but that, generally, will be all. I reckon that this will save quite a lot of work in producing the Index every six months although it won't be quite so detailed.

I have now produced around 90 monthly issues I wonder if you are getting a bit fed up with me. I seem to be a bit short of oddments on "The Spike", so maybe you are. If not, please write with any items which will interest members. Sometimes those "snippets" take the form of rather lengthy screeds but all are welcome and help to fill the spaces.

Now, of course, the cover pictures are beginning to arrive from various sources which has relieved *Rita Daley* of the continual strain of producing one each month - so keep up that good work. Of course, I can always use more pictures. All you need to do is draw it out, preferably in **BLACK** ink or ball-point so that my scanner can register it. Any subject, the only proviso being that the letters A S O C are present somewhere in it. Look back, you'll find them!

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The **TENTH** of the month is the last day for items to reach

Your Editor

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All contributions from Members which appear in the Newsletter are published in good faith in the hope that they will prove useful or interesting. All reasonable care has been taken to ensure accuracy but none of the modifications has been tested by us therefore neither the Editor, the Club nor the Company will accept any responsibility for the consequences if you try them out.

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